

MS – Toolbox Meeting Records				MRG-CF-TCR-07
Rev: 2.0	Next Rev Date: July 2028	Issue Date:	July 2024	

Toolbox Talk No: 298			
Issue:	Cold Weather Safety in the Rail Corridor		
Location:	Via SMS Text Message, MRG Employee Portal	Date:	22/06/2026
Briefed by:	Via SMS and Portal	Time:	10.30
Points Raised and Comments			
Purpose of this Toolbox Talk Working in cold, wet and windy conditions can affect a worker's concentration, dexterity, reaction time and physical performance. Within the rail environment, these effects can increase the risk of incidents involving moving trains, mobile plant, electrical infrastructure, tools and uneven surfaces. All workers must be appropriately prepared for cold weather and continue to maintain full situational awareness throughout the shift. Why Cold Weather is a Risk in Rail Environments Rail personnel may be exposed to cold conditions during night shifts, early morning starts and possession works. Cold weather can also be accompanied by rain, wind and reduced visibility. Extended exposure may result in fatigue, cold stress and reduced ability to safely perform tasks. Common Hazards / Causes • Cold temperatures, wind and rain exposure • Wet clothing and inadequate cold-weather PPE • Reduced grip and hand dexterity when using tools • Slippery ballast, access ways and work surfaces • Reduced visibility from rain, fog or darkness • Cold muscles increasing the risk of strains and sprains • Reduced concentration and slower reaction times • Fatigue during extended night or possession works Mandatory Controls & Safe Work Practices Planning & Preparation • Check expected weather conditions before commencing the shift. • Discuss cold-weather hazards during the pre-work briefing. • Review the SWMS and ensure changing weather conditions are considered. • Ensure suitable shelter and rest areas are available where practicable. Clothing & PPE • Wear suitable layered clothing underneath required rail-compliant PPE. • Keep clothing as dry as practicable and replace wet clothing where available. • Wear suitable gloves while ensuring safe grip and dexterity are maintained. • Rail-compliant high-visibility clothing must remain visible and correctly worn. • Do not modify or remove mandatory PPE because of weather conditions. Working Safely • Warm up before undertaking strenuous manual handling. • Maintain three points of contact when accessing plant, vehicles or ladders.			

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- Take additional care on wet ballast, stairs and access routes.
- Maintain good housekeeping and remove slip and trip hazards.
- Take appropriate rest breaks during prolonged exposure.

Tools & Equipment

- Inspect tools and equipment before use.
- Ensure hands are warm enough to safely control power tools and equipment.
- Keep electrical equipment protected from wet conditions.
- Stop using equipment if weather conditions make its operation unsafe.

Rail-Specific Considerations

- Maintain full situational awareness around live rail, moving trains and mobile plant.
- Follow all instructions provided by the Protection Officer and rail safety personnel.
- Do not allow hoods, wet-weather clothing or other PPE to restrict hearing, peripheral vision or visibility.
- Maintain designated safe access and escape routes.
- Ensure adequate lighting is available during night and low-visibility conditions.
- Stop work if weather conditions affect the effectiveness of rail protection or safe communication.

Supervisor Responsibilities

- Monitor weather conditions throughout the shift.
- Confirm workers have appropriate PPE and clothing.
- Monitor workers for signs of cold stress and fatigue.
- Provide appropriate breaks and shelter where practicable.
- Reassess work activities where weather conditions deteriorate.

Worker Responsibilities

- Arrive prepared for expected weather conditions.
- Maintain required rail PPE at all times.
- Report cold stress, fatigue or reduced capability immediately.
- Report slippery surfaces and changing site conditions.
- Look out for workmates who may be affected by the cold.

Stop Work Authority

STOP WORK if:

- Weather conditions make the task unsafe.
- Visibility or communication becomes inadequate.
- Safe footing or access cannot be maintained.
- A worker is showing signs of cold stress or is unable to perform their task safely.
- Rail protection or other critical controls are compromised.

Emergency Procedures

- Move the affected person to a warm, dry and sheltered location.
- Remove or replace wet clothing where practicable.
- Notify the Supervisor immediately.
- Provide first aid in accordance with training and site procedures.
- Seek urgent medical assistance for serious symptoms or deterioration.
- Follow the site's Rail Emergency Response arrangements.