

ALBERTA INDUSTRIAL RAILWAY MENTORSHIP GUIDELINE

The information contained in this Alberta Industrial Railway Mentorship Guideline is intended solely to provide general guidance and information for the development of a mentorship program for railways. Those that utilize this Mentorship Guideline accepts full responsibility for its use. The Industrial Railway Safety & Operating Practices Committee does not warrant the accuracy, integrity, suitability or completeness of the content of the Mentorship Guideline and all information contained in the Mentorship Guideline is provided on an as-is basis.

1. GENERAL

This guideline applies to a company under the jurisdiction of the *Railway (Alberta) Act* that operates as an industrial Railway.

The objective of this Guideline is to provide railway companies with a tool that will facilitate the transfer of knowledge via a scripted and documented process. The Guideline does not replace the requirement to train railway staff rather it is intended to complement the classroom training.

NOTE: This Guideline can be used for either Industrial Railways, Short line Railways, or any other mentoring program other than Rail Operations.

The Mentor Guideline was developed in consultation with the Province of Alberta's Railway Industry namely: Cariboo Central Railroad Contracting Ltd, Canadian Heartland Training Railway, Keyera Corp., Railserve Inc. and Alberta Transportation.

2. SCOPE

This guideline has been developed to assist a railway to:

- Establish, implement and maintain a mentorship program;
- Amend the mentor program so as to ensure the mentor modules are applicable to the workers assigned modules;
- Assist in the development of mentors;
- Ensure knowledge transfer is documented;
- Provide a quality learning experience for the mentor and the mentored person(s).

3. DEFINITIONS

Mentorship: is a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person.

Line of Sight: at all times the employee must be within line of sight and visible to the mentor. While they are performing their tasks, the mentor is to be aware of all hazards and possible safety concerns and able to stop them if needed. In addition, the trainee is not to be so far away they are unable to hear verbal direction from their mentor.

Trainee Evaluation Form: is a document used to measure an employee's work performance, specific to each task module.

4. COMPANY RESPONSIBILITIES

A company should

- Have a documented list to identify mentor(s) by functional area;
- Develop a documented mentor using table A in the Industrial Railway Employee Qualification Standards;
- Develop a documented mentorship program, which must be captured within the companies Safety Management System (SMS);
- Ensure trainee documentation is kept on employee's file.

5. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF A MENTOR

A mentor should

- Have good communication skills to facilitate knowledge transfer, i.e. active listening and written skills, facilitating two way communication;
- Have the ability to recognize barriers of learning, i.e. fears the trainee may have and provide reassurance;
- Demonstrate effective leadership & coaching skills;
- Have the appropriate level of skills set specific to the role, equipment or function to be performed;
- Have completed training as per Table A of the Industrial Railway Employee Qualification Standards;
- Have achieved 90% score in each of the items in table A of the Industrial Railway Employee Qualification Standards, related to their job function;
- Be familiar with company policies, procedures, Safety Management Systems (SMS), General Operating Instructions (GOI), and any other site specific instructions relative to rail operations;
- Be deemed competent by the employer.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MENTOR

A mentor should

- Not allow trainee to work unsupervised, maintaining Line of Sight;
- Provide encouragement feedback to build confidence through positive reinforcement and coaching;
- Provide improvement feedback to build competence;
- Ensure feedback is balanced, weighted more on the positive feedback;
- Recognize and correct unsafe behavior.

7. MENTORSHIP PROCESS (HOW A MENTOR TRAINS A TRAINEE)

Process review - Prior to mentoring in the field the mentor must review the mentor process and mentoring task modules with the trainee.

Job Briefing - The mentor must ensure the trainee understands the process, hazards, and is made aware they have a responsibility to identify and communicate any concerns. Additional job briefings or updates may be required as conditions change.

Time spent mentoring - Assure the trainee there will be sufficient time allowed for mentoring and at any time the trainee is uncertain to ask the mentor to further explain/demonstrate the module task.

Hands On – The mentor will perform and/or simulate the appropriate tasks and provide the trainee opportunities to practice the task under mentor supervision. The trainee must be in the Line of Sight of the mentor at all times when allowing hands on practice.

Documentation – Throughout the mentor process, documentation of skill development of each task module must be maintained, including task module signoff.

Evaluation of trainee’s competencies - On the completion of each module tasks, the mentor must document the successful completion of the module, utilizing the Trainee Evaluation Form. At that time the mentor must request feedback and acknowledgement the trainee has understood the tasks and will comply with the railway regulations, General Operating Instructions (GOI) or company policies.

End process – On completion of all training modules, the employer must determine that:

- The trainee has successfully completed all module tasks,
- The trainee is confident that they have the ability to perform the required task, and
- The mentor is confident that the trainee can perform the required tasks.

8. TRAINEE’S RESPONSIBILITIES

- To cooperate with mentor;
- Not to work unsupervised;
- Be approachable, open to constructive feedback;
- Not conduct any task that they do not fully understand;
- Provide ongoing feedback on the effectiveness of mentorship program.