

Railway Safety Regulator Launches Regulator Standards by Godwill Maletle

The Railway Safety Regulator stepped onto uncharted grounds when it launched the first set of the Regulator Standards since the RSR's inception. The standards were launched on 7-9 December at RSR's regional offices in the Western Cape; KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, where operators, interested and affected stakeholders attended in numbers.

There are four Regulator Standards that were launched: Fatigue Management; Wheels, Axles and Bearings; Railway Stations and Occurrence Management. These standards serve as an amplification of the existing SANS 3000 series of standards. Presentations were made on each standard and operators were afforded an opportunity to ask clarity seeking questions.

In the past, the RSR used to develop standards through the South African Bureau of Standards which were then adopted by the Railway Safety Regulator Board in accordance with the Act. The Standards were used as regulatory and compliance tools for the railway industry in South Africa. These standards were in some instances found not to provide the adequate level of detail to thoroughly address identified and emerging safety critical issues.

“The Regulator Standards amplifies the current published SANS 3000 series of standards and should at all times be read in conjunction with the applicable SANS 3000 standards and any other normative standards”, said Mr Reginald Ntshingila, Head of the Regulations and Standards Unit.

“The Regulator Standards were developed with the same rigour as the national and international standards, and were adopted by the RSR's Board of Directors and are binding and enforceable. This basically means that every Railway Operator will have to comply with these standards”, said Ntshingila.

At the end of the session, it was announced that the standards were available from all RSR offices at a cost. The process to purchase them is outlined on the RSR website.

Technical workshops on the four standards would also be conducted from January 2017 onwards at different regions. During the workshops, operators are taken through each standard to ensure thorough understanding which in turn assist them to implement the requirement of the standards.

The introduction of the Regulator Standards will further assist the industry to effectively comply with Railway Safety Management requirements and to improve operator's railway safety performance. <http://rsr.org.za/>

