

Content Review of Training Modules within the RailVET Project

Date: 15th November, 2011

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Contents

- A. Content Review of Training Modules:
 - 02 - Train Preparation and Shunting
 - 03 - Railway Traffic Management
- B. Proposal for a module on language skills
- C. Evaluation

A. Content Review of Training Modules:

02 - Train Preparation and Shunting

1. Formation and Control of Train Sets

Part 1/2

This part corresponds to the profession known at Czech Railways as locomotive engineer, dispatcher, etc. The planned range can be considered adequate only if the listener will have a relatively high input level of knowledge, which should be an entry condition for the activities envisaged and in practice this is the case.

In the case of the Metro and similar rail systems, a similar situation is highly likely.

Part 2/2

In this part, it concerns positions equivalent to rolling-stock dispatcher, rolling-stock managing clerk, etc. Otherwise the same as in the previous section. From practice the time allocated for the listener is at the lower limit of acceptability, for the others it is greatly undervalued.

I have no comments concerning the contents.

2. Shunting

Part 1/2

This part corresponds to the profession shunter. At Czech Railways the usual preparation time is at the level of 60 hours.

Part 2/2

This part corresponds to the profession of shunting master. In the Czech railway system the level of knowledge for this profession is the same as it is for a shunter, however, it is necessary to have the prerequisite practice in the subordinate professional a shunter. In the case of merging the time allocations of the two parts, the resultant time is at the lower limit of acceptability.

I have no comments concerning the contents.

3. Checking Trains

This module is focused on the profession of rolling-stock foreman. However, a very extensive theoretical basis is required for this profession. For rolling-stock foremen in passenger transport, the theoretical preparation is in the range of approximately 250 hours, it is similar for rolling-stock foremen in freight transport. The content is appropriate; it would be suitable to develop it into multiple parts.

03-Railway Traffic Management

1. Proper and Effective Use of the Traffic Management System

For evaluating this part of the module, it is necessary to know the target group, or to know what position the graduate will take up. For personnel who manage rail transport – typically train dispatchers – the time allocation is completely inadequate. In the conditions of the Czech Republic, the theoretical preparation for train dispatchers is in the range of nearly 300 hours. In addition, the already-mentioned issue of ETCS is very extensive and considerably different from national safety systems, which are also contained in this part of the module. The proposed time allocation would be appropriate for the position of signaller, pointsman, where it seems sufficient. Then, of course, it would be necessary to revise the content of the module, as a signaller receives and carries out instructions and his responsibility is limited.

2. Setting Switches

The contents of this part of the module refer to the position of signaller or pointsman. The module is primarily aimed at the technical part of operating the points, but this is usually associated with other skills relating to communicating with other workers, both those involved in managing operations and the employees working on the train and in shunting. Therefore, it is appropriate to supplement the above issues in this part of the module. In the CR, the usual time for the theoretical part of the preparation for the work of a signaller or pointsman is 80 hours.

B. Proposal for a module design on the topic of language skills

From the perspective of a single European railway market, as concerns staff qualifications, the issue of the language barrier between the employees of the individual states is starting to come to the fore. In the future it may be necessary to start using some kind of universal working rail language, using the example of aviation and shipping. I propose to consider establishing such a training module with a focus both on basic language skills and on the terminology used in rail transport with particular reference to safety.

C. Assessment

In both assessed modules, it is clear that the time allocation for individual parts of both modules is undervalued or at the lower limit of acceptability. It is necessary to accurately identify target groups or the activities that the graduates will perform. It is further possible to set the default level of knowledge and skills as prerequisites for inclusion into the educational process in the framework of this project. The interconnection of the individual modules in the framework of this project is only introduced.

If it would be possible to set the default level of knowledge and skills necessary for inclusion into the educational process in accordance with this project, it would be possible to make preparation less time-consuming. The proposed time allocation would then clearly be at the lower limit of acceptability.

If the input level is not set, it is necessary for a radical increase in the time allocation, in particular for activities in the framework of the module Railway Traffic Management and the Checking Trains part of the Train Preparation and Shunting module.

Furthermore, I recommend addressing the idea of creating a module for the acquisition of language skills within the single European rail zone.