

Compliance Assurance Report

J Murphy & Sons Ltd

Address: Kennedy Road, Astley, Manchester, M29 7JU

Date of Assurance Visit: 12th-13th January 2022

NSAR Assurance Manager: Ross Clark

Effectiveness of the provider:

Previous Assurance Visit Overall Grade: **GOLD**

This Assurance Visit:

Compliance [Leadership & Management]: **GOLD**

Premises [Quality of Provision]: **GOLD**

QUALIFICATION LEVEL	3	4	5	5+
Number of Assured Trainer/Assessors		2		
Trainer/Assessors working towards		1		

DESCRIPTION OF THE SETTING:

This was the sixth visit to this provider, and the third report under the Quality Assurance Framework V3.0. This was the first visit conducted under the criteria of the RTAS Rules V2.0.

The provider delivers training and assessment events from three offices spread across the UK. J Murphy & Sons have other training centres based in Astley, London and Cannock. The rail training & assessment team are primarily based out of the main site in Astley. This site is located within the J Murphy & Sons depot, and consists of purpose built modular units and a dedicated external training areas.

The rail training and assessment team deliver a wide variety of Track Safety courses, ranging from PTS through to ES. The provider also has the capabilities to deliver a number of MC/CC competencies. The provider has the capabilities to conduct on site assessments. The training and assessment arm of the business is primarily set up to ensure the competencies of the internal operational staff for J Murphy & Sons.

However, the provider also offers their services to external clients when requested. The provider has been an NSAR quality assured provider since June 2013. During this time the provider has maintained high standards in compliance and delivery.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE ASSURANCE VISIT

COMPLIANCE [Leadership & Management]

GRADE: GOLD

Leadership & Management meets GOLD standard.

The provider's senior leadership and management team for training and assessment delivery has two key roles; a Rail Compliance Manager (RCM) who oversees the training department at a senior level, feeding information between the overarching company executives and the training team. The second key role is the Rail Training & Assessment Manager (RTAM). The RTAM monitors and manages the daily operations of training delivery along with the IQA and on site protection support for PTS track visits. The RCM and RTAM are involved in the daily running of the business, this is reflected in the standard of procedures and subsequent actions throughout the delivery cycle.

The RTAM currently manages two Trainers and/or Assessors who are qualified to level 4 and one who is currently working towards Level 4. The department is also supported by office staff for Sentinel and training administration.

At present the leadership and management at this provider is highly effective; clear communications from the senior management are provided and cascaded to the delivery team, these are actively monitored and reviewed regularly.

The provider has robust management systems in place, these form a strong foundation for compliance. The provider has a clear understanding of the RTAS rules, and the procedures reflect this by explaining "how" compliance is achieved and linking internal forms and processes to the RTAS clause within the procedure. This takes the form of a single Training and Assessment Compliance Manual; some minor additions are required to help to fully align it with the RTAS V2.0 clauses.

Events calendar management is compliant; courses are uploaded within the required timescales, as set out in procedures. No inconsistencies with the competency uploads were identified during the visit and data corrections are a rare occurrence.

Internal verification is very efficient and effective. Internal verifications are completed by a number of individuals within the training team, including the RTAM. These people are suitably qualified and have high levels of knowledge and experience within the industry and of the RTAS compliance requirements. This is reflected in the IQA reports, which not only includes compliance processes for documentation, but links to wider elements such as feedback data, course pass rate and post course question analysis findings. This forms a robust fault identification process and a root cause findings process that leads to specific, targeted actions being implemented, ensuring high quality improvement actions are made where needed.

Continuous Professional Development [CPD] management is compliant, the provider has sufficient procedures in place to ensure requirements for CPD are met and all Trainers/Assessors successfully complete the approved amount of CPD for the year.

Observations are carried out by the Leadership Team. Observation reports had been completed and had a high level of detail, including constructive feedback to individuals. These reports also form part of the IQA risk rating process. The reports are uploaded to the Skills Backbone when completed, which is good practice. The introduction of smaller “*walkthrough*” observations would help target findings from previous full observations. Highly detailed observation notes from the observer are provide with the completed report. These include wider aspects than just delivery such as; environment, health & safety and equipment for example. Findings from these are then communicated and actioned.

Meetings & Briefings are conducted regularly with the training team. There are set agenda points in line with the Quality Assurance Framework. The meetings include briefings to staff on updates and changes to standards, training materials and procedures. The meetings also use quality data from management systems and completed observations to feedback live data to the team, these include delegate feedback, post course question analysis, equality diversity & inclusion data, course

pass/fail rates, CPD and departmental IQA findings. The level of detail and topics discussed ensure meetings are highly effective.

Competence management within the provider is effective; Trainers & Assessors competencies are monitored through an internal management system and the introduction of an internal "Authority to Work" scheme shows commitment to competency management. The authority to work scheme involves the production of internal competency cards which displays the individuals competencies, capabilities and certificates outside of safety critical; health & safety, first aid and tools etc.

Online exams have been completed to date. Additional statements for online exam completion within the Centre Manual are required to help fully align with the RTAS V2.0 clauses.

The provider was well prepared for the Quality Assurance Visit. Documents were available on the Skills Backbone, and additional documents were provided through a dedicated Microsoft Teams site. Document requests during the visit were provided promptly and explanations given for the creation, implementation and use of the documents and systems. Managers were very receptive to constructive feedback and a real sense of wanting to continually improve was felt throughout the visit.

Overall, the visit indicated that this remains a highly effective and efficient provider, who delivers quality training and assessments. The leadership and management team are involved in the daily operations and communicate strengths and areas for improvement successfully; implementing actions when required. During the verification of completed course packs the required procedures for Training & Assessment practice and ethics were followed by staff and supported by management. Examples of this included provision of developmental & constructive feedback to candidates on assessments and following the process when candidates do not yet meet the required standard for competency. This demonstrates the integrity and honesty of the individuals throughout the team to deliver true, honest and effective training & assessment.

PREMISES [Quality of Provision]

Premises meets GOLD standard.

The premises is located in Astley Manchester and has good transport links to major roads. The building is a stand-alone building purpose built for the delivery of rail training and is located within the grounds of J Murphy & Sons operational depot.

Car parking is plentiful on the site with marked tarmac bays. Safety measures have been risk assessed and, where necessary, control measures have been put in place. These include speed limits, reverse parking policies, zebra crossings and segregated pedestrian walk routes.

Upon entering the facility, the reception area has a dedicated information board relating to company and industry Health & safety. Visitors are required to sign in and receive a full verbal briefing; this includes the relevant safety information for the site, the building layout, the evacuation process and applicable COVID-19 measures.

COVID-19 mitigation measures have been risk assessed and control measures have been put in place. These control measures appear to be effective and adhered to throughout the site. The provider has ensured these processes are in place for visits and staff accessing the building. The measures include purchase of additional equipment such as a temperature scanner at reception. Other measures include the provision of face masks, gloves and hand sanitising stations. Room occupancy levels and layouts have been adjusted to ensure social distancing and anyone entering the premises must provide evidence of a negative Lateral Flow Test [LFT] prior to attendance. The provider has also placed various COVID-19 signage around the facility including large banner stands to help display the companies process and increase adherence to rules.

Health & Safety arrangements have been risk assessed and control measures are in place, monitored and reviewed by the companies HSE department. Fire safety measures appear to be effective, with fire-fighting equipment being serviced and ready for use. The building has an integrated fire alarm system, system testing and evacuation drills are conducted and recorded. Fire assembly points and evacuation

schematics are displayed in every room. First aid facilities are provided with various First aid kit locations throughout the site and staff are suitably trained and hold relevant certificates. Practical areas have been risk assessed and control measures put in place include; H&S signage, barriers safety boards and signed task briefing sheets.

Welfare facilities at the site include water machines in classrooms and a dedicated canteen and break out room. The canteen has kitchen appliances for food and drink preparation and storage. The area has seating which provides attendees with space during breaks. The centre has separate toilets which are cleaned regularly and have sufficient facilities; including sanitary bins. A separate changing/wet room is also available for changing between used/contaminated PPE when going from classroom to practical areas. A covered dedicated smoking area is also available on the site.

Classrooms are learning friendly, large, clean and comfortable with modern desks and seating. The providers classroom uses modern Information Learning Technology [ILT], this includes HDTV screens and projectors. The classroom also houses a variety of interactive ILT, such as simulation kits, model railways, bespoke interactive signalers panel, and a working signal which can be manually operated. Along with these there are various displays that have been installed around the classroom to show components, PPE and tools. The remaining wall space has been filled with relevant industry signage or safety information. All these combined make the classroom a very learner friendly, highly engaging, and interactive environment.

The external practical area adjacent to the classroom has three track lines situated in ballast. There are also additional small stillages with separate components. The track layouts house a variety of components and railway infrastructure which is TIC approved. These include points, DCCR sections, crossings, worksite fencing and working signals. Surrounding the practical area is industry signage and worksite safety boards. This mimics the "feel" of a real worksite extremely well and within the safe boundaries of a training centre set up.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Compliance [Leadership & Management]

- Consider the introduction of “walkthrough” observations to target areas highlighted during full observation.
- Alignment of Training Manual online exam section to meet additional clauses in RTAS V2.0

Premises [Quality of Provision]

- Further investment and consideration to installing Interactive SMART boards in classroom would increase teaching strategies and supplement the equipment already present – equipment could link with Chromebook investment.
- Potential Improvement would be to install communication equipment between internal/external signals to enhance communication exercises.

JUDGEMENTS

Judgement	How the grade is achieved
Gold	Gold grade will be awarded when all Leadership & Management Compliance and Premises Specification requirements are met and/or exceeded with no Compliance Action Plan required.
Silver	Silver grade will be awarded when all Leadership & Management Compliance and Premises Specification requirements are mostly met with a minimal Compliance Action Plan required.
Bronze	Bronze grade will be awarded when all Leadership & Management Compliance and Premises Specification requirements are mostly not met with a significant Compliance Action Plan required or the Assured Provider is a new Provider with insufficient time passed to generate the required volume of evidence to demonstrate compliance to requirements.
Inadequate	Inadequate grade will be assigned when all Leadership & Management Compliance and Premises Specification requirements are not met with a large Compliance Action Plan required and/or where non-conformances identified are of a safety critical or deliberate breach nature. The provider will be suspended from delivery until it can demonstrate to NSAR that the areas for improvement have been addressed, which must be within 4 months. Where corrective actions are not implemented within 4 months Assurance to deliver training and/or assessment will be withdrawn for a period of no less than 6 months. Assurance to deliver training and/or assessment may be permanently withdrawn.
Next Steps	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The provider will receive their next Assurance Visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gold – between 15-18 months from the date of the last visit [subject to change]. Silver - within 12 months from the date of the last visit [subject to change]. Bronze – between 9-12 months from the date of the last visit [subject to change]. NSAR operates an unannounced visit regime, whereby the provider can be visited without notice at any time between assurance visits. In addition, Delivery and Observation visits of training/assessment delivery are undertaken to evaluate quality of Leadership & Management, Quality of Provision, Outcomes for Learners and Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare. Delivery and Observation visits can be both unannounced and notified. 	

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