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PRINCIPLES OF NETWORK OPERATIONS
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1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this rule is to set out:
- the operating principles of the Public Transport Authority (PTA) **Network**;
- the **Safeworking** system used; and
- PTA’s conditions for managing safe **Occupancy** of the **Track**.

2. **GENERAL**

The following are the underlying principles of **Safeworking**:
- a **Safety Assessment** must be completed before entering the **Danger Zone**;
- when in the **Danger Zone**, all **Workers** must be protected;
- **Workers** must have an identified **Safe Place** when on **Track**;
- if **Rail Traffic** cannot be separated from **Workers**, the **Rail Traffic** must be managed to ensure the safety of the **Workers** on the **Track**;
- **Work on Track** must only be carried out using a defined **Work on Track Authority** or method;
- the person who introduces the risk must ensure that the risk is appropriately managed;
- **Workers** must be provided with the applicable information;
- **Workers** must be warned about hazards in the **Rail Corridor**;
- **Competent Workers** must have the ability and responsibility to carry out a **Safety Assessment**, where required;
- common protocols and methods for communication must be adopted;
- Safe **Rail Traffic** separation must be maintained;
- Safe **Route Integrity** must be established for all **Rail Traffic**;
- **Rail Traffic Integrity** must be ensured before and during a journey; and
- an approved, simplified and common system for degraded operations may be formulated to apply in all **Systems of Safeworking**.
3. SAFEWORKING SYSTEM

3.1. ABSOLUTE BLOCK SYSTEM

Absolute Block is a system that ensures that Rail Traffic is not permitted to enter a Block until the previous Rail Traffic has passed completely out of the Block.

An exception to this is when providing assistance to Disabled Rail Traffic in accordance with the rules and procedures.

3.2. PERMISSIVE BLOCK WORKING

The object of Permissive Working is to facilitate the regular movement of Rail Traffic by dividing the line between Controlled Locations into Blocks and automatically maintaining the required distance between following Rail Traffic.

This type of working prevents Rail Traffic from entering a Block until the previous Rail Traffic has passed completely out of the Block, except when providing assistance to Disabled Rail Traffic in accordance with the rules and procedures.

All Signals displaying a Stop Aspect must be treated as an Absolute Signal.

3.3. DOUBLE LINE WORKING

The object of Double Line Working is to provide a separate line for Up and Down Main movements, allowing for greater density of Rail Traffic.

3.4. SINGLE LINE WORKING

The object of Single Line Working is to prevent Rail Traffic travelling in opposite directions between two Controlled Locations at the same time.

In Centralised Traffic Control (CTC), this is accomplished:

- in the case of following Rail Traffic, by electrically securing the Signals at Stop, unless the Block ahead of the Signal is Clear; and
- in the case of opposing Rail Traffic, by electrically monitoring the Occupancy of Rail Traffic and the indication of the Departure Signal at the opposite end of the Section. Therefore, it would not be possible for the Departure Signals at opposite ends of the Section to exhibit a Proceed Indication simultaneously.
4. Work on Track Authorities – For Work That Obstructs the Track or Affects Track Geometry

In all Systems of Safeworking, work that Obstructs the Track, affects Track geometry, and/or places Workers and Rail Traffic at risk, requires an Authority that is Issued by the Train Controller in one of the following ways:

4.1. Local Possession Authority

- The Local Possession Authority (LPA) is Issued by the Train Controller.
- The LPA is used for major or complex Work on Track for a specified period. This Authority transfers the management of a defined Section of Track to a Possession Protection Officer (PPO).
- Multiple Worksites are permitted within the LPA.
- Rail Traffic associated to the Worksites is permitted under the LPA.
- The PPO receives the LPA in writing on a Work on Track Authority Form.

4.2. Track Occupancy Authority

- The Track Occupancy Authority (TOA) is Issued by the Train Controller.
- The TOA permits Occupancy of a defined Section of Track for Work on Track while Rail Traffic is diverted or not Authorised to enter the Section, for a specified period.
- The TOA is for a single Worksite.
- Rail Traffic associated to the Worksite is permitted under the TOA.
- The Protection Officer (PO) receives the TOA in writing on a Work on Track Authority Form.

5. Work Methods – For Work That Does Not Affect Infrastructure Integrity

Work in the Danger Zone that does not affect Infrastructure integrity and ensures a Safe Place is available for Workers requires the Train Controller and PO to provide Protection in one of the following ways:

5.1. Absolute Signal Blocking

- Absolute Signal Blocking (ASB) is implemented by the Train Controller.
- ASB is used to protect Workers who occupy a defined Section of Track for work in the Danger Zone while Rail Traffic is not Authorised to enter the Section.
- The PO and the Train Controller record the use of ASB for Protection.
- The PO receives confirmation of ASB on the Absolute Signal Blocking Form.
5.2. LOOKOUT WORKING

- **Lookout Working** is used to protect Workers who occupy a defined Section of Track for work in the Danger Zone between Rail Traffic movements.
- The PO records the use of Lookout Working.

6. ACCESSING THE RAIL CORRIDOR FOR WORK

No-one is permitted to enter the Rail Corridor without the appropriate Authority.

6.1. ENTERING THE RAIL CORRIDOR FOR WORK

Before entering the Rail Corridor the PO or Competent Worker must log into the PTA Electronic Book On System.

If for any reason the PTA Electronic Book On System fails to record the details then the Infrastructure Control Officer (ICO) must be contacted.

7. REFERENCE

- Rule 3001 Local Possession Authority
- Rule 3005 Track Occupancy Authority
- Rule 3011 Absolute Signal Blocking
- Rule 3013 Lookout Working
- Rule 5001 Centralised Traffic Control System

8. EFFECTIVE DATE

1 November 2018