

Using Signal Key Switch Blocking

Introduction

Signal Key Switch (SKS) Blocking is a method of working in the Danger Zone that uses automatic signals fitted with a signal key switch to exclude rail traffic from a portion of track.

Establishing SKS Blocking

Protection Officer

1. Tell the Signaller:
 - your name
 - your contact details
 - your Safeworking designation
 - the type of work
 - the intended duration.
2. Identify the line name and nominate the worksite location as being between two signals.

Signals must be identified by their numbers.

3. Ask the Signaller for permission to implement SKS Blocking.

Signaller

4. Confirm the SKS Blocking details including:
 - the Protection Officer's name and contact details
 - the type of work
 - the duration of work
 - the line name
 - the nominated worksite location.
5. Use the signal numbers provided by the Protection Officer to identify the worksite location.
6. If practicable, permit the use of SKS Blocking.

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Protection Officer

7. If it is permissible to implement SKS Blocking, ask the Handsignaller to contact the Signaller to arrange to remove the key in accordance with *NPR 754 Using a signal key switch*.
8. When advised by the Handsignaller that the key has been removed and the signal is displaying **STOP**, contact the Signaller to confirm that rail traffic has been excluded from the affected portion of track.
9. Ask the Signaller for the Train Running Information for rail traffic planned to pass through the worksite.



WARNING

Train Running Information provides only a guide to planned movements and cannot be relied upon.

Signaller

10. Make sure that:
 - the last rail traffic to enter the affected portion of track is identified and its location is known
 - there is no rail traffic approaching the worksite.
11. Tell the Protection Officer:
 - the Train Running Information
 - the identification number of the last rail traffic to enter the affected portion of track and its last known location
 - that there is no rail traffic approaching the worksite.

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Protection Officer

12. Confirm with the Signaller:

- the Train Running Information provided
- the identification number of the last rail traffic to enter the affected portion of track and its last known location
- that there is no rail traffic approaching the worksite.

Managing rail traffic approaches to worksites

Protection Officer

1. Before authorising the Handsignaller to restore the key, make sure that workers and equipment are clear of the Danger Zone.
2. If it is safe for rail traffic to pass through the worksite, tell the Handsignaller:
 - to restore the key
 - to immediately remove the key from the switch when the leading vehicle has completely passed the signal.

Handsignaller

3. When told by the Protection Officer that it is safe for rail traffic to proceed, restore the key to the switch.



WARNING

If the protecting signal does not clear within the expected time after restoring the key to the switch, immediately advise the Protection Officer.

4. When the leading vehicle of the rail traffic has passed the signal, immediately remove the key from the switch.

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WARNING

If the key is not removed from the switch immediately after the leading vehicle of the rail traffic has passed the protecting signal, SKS Blocking must be ended.

Protection Officer

5. When the rail traffic has cleared the worksite, confirm with the Handsignaller:
 - that the key was removed immediately after the leading vehicle completely passed the protecting signal
 - that the protecting signal is at **STOP**.
6. Allow work to recommence.

Ending SKS Blocking

When all workers and equipment are clear of the Danger Zone and SKS Blocking is no longer required.

Protection Officer

1. Tell the Handsignaller that SKS Blocking is no longer required and to restore the key in accordance with *NPR 754 Using a signal key switch*.
2. Confirm with the Handsignaller that the key has been restored to the switch.
3. Tell the Signaller:
 - your name and the worksite location
 - that workers and equipment are clear of the Danger Zone
 - that the key has been restored to the switch.

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Signaller

4. Confirm with the Protection Officer:
 - their name
 - the worksite location
 - that workers and equipment are clear of the Danger Zone
 - that the key has been restored to the switch.

Keeping Records

Signallers and Protection Officers must record, in permanent form, the SKS Blocking details.

Network Procedures

NPR 754 Using a signal key switch

Effective date

29 September 2019