

Using a Track Occupancy Authority

Introduction

Track Occupancy Authorities (TOA) are used to occupy a defined portion of track within specified limits for an agreed period.

A TOA may:

- allow the track to be broken or obstructed
- allow rail traffic associated with the TOA to work within the specified limits
- be granted for track vehicles to travel singly or in convoy.



NOTE

The preferred method of obtaining a TOA is to take and safeguard the pilot staff or half-staff where practicable.

Obtaining a Track Occupancy Authority

The Protection Officer obtains a TOA from the Signaller responsible for the portion of track.

Protection Officer

1. Tell the Signaller:
 - your name
 - your contact details
 - your Safeworking designation
 - the type of work
 - the intended duration
 - if required, the limits of the worksites or the location of road/rail access points
 - the limits of the TOA.

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2. Identify the protection arrangements to be used.

Signaller

3. Confirm the TOA details including the:
 - Protection Officer's name and contact details
 - type of work
 - duration of work
 - line names
 - if required, limits of the worksites or the location of road/rail access points
 - limits of the TOA.
4. Make sure that:
 - blocking facilities have been applied to exclude unauthorised entry of rail traffic
 - 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 worksites or road/rail access points.



NOTE

Where the limits of a TOA extend into the yard limits controlled by another Signaller, the affected Signallers must confer to make sure all points of entry are protected.

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Authorising a Track Occupancy Authority

Signaller

1. Get authorisation from the Network Controller to issue the TOA.

Network Controller

2. Confirm the TOA details with the Signaller.
3. If the proposed limits of a TOA affect more than one Network Control area, the affected Network Controllers must confer and nominate a Coordinating Network Controller.
4. If entry to the TOA limits is controlled by more than one Signaller:
 - get an assurance from the affected Signallers that blocking facilities have been applied to prevent unauthorised entry of rail traffic
 - nominate an issuing Signaller.
5. Authorise the TOA.

Signaller

6. Tell the Protection Officer:
 - that blocking facilities have been applied
 - that the affected portion of track is protected
 - 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 worksites or road/rail access points.

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Protection Officer

7. Confirm with the Signaller:
 - that all points of entry into the affected portion of track are correctly protected
 - 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 worksites or road/rail access points.

Signaller

8. Where practicable, authorise the Protection Officer to take and safeguard one or more half-staffs for the TOA.
9. Once the Protection Officer has confirmed the assurances, issue the TOA.

Protection Officer

10. Where practicable, and if authorised, take and safeguard one or more half-staffs.
11. When authorised, put the required protection in place.

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Joint occupancy following a unidirectional rail traffic movement

A TOA may be authorised following a unidirectional rail traffic movement.

Protection Officer

1. Identify the line name and define the limits of the worksites or the location of road/rail access points as being between two signals.

Signals must be identified by their numbers.



NOTE

If the limits of the worksites need to be defined for multiple worksites, a signal before the first worksite and a signal after the last worksite must be used.

2. For track vehicle travel, identify the direction of travel.

Signaller

3. Use the reference points provided by the Protection Officer to identify the limits of worksites or the location of road/rail access points.

Joint occupancy with disabled rail traffic

A TOA may be authorised for a portion of track occupied by disabled rail traffic.

Signaller

1. Restrain all disabled rail traffic within the proposed limits of the TOA.
2. Make sure that the disabled rail traffic will not be moved before authority is obtained from the Protection Officer.

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Joint occupancy with stabled rail traffic

The limit of a TOA may be authorised to include one or more sidings occupied by stabled rail traffic.

Signaller

1. Make sure that the Protection Officer will place protection to prevent the unintended movement of the stabled rail traffic.
2. If known, tell the Protection Officer the scheduled departure time of stabled rail traffic.

Joint occupancy with a Track Occupancy Authority

A second TOA may be authorised for a portion of track where a TOA is current.

Signaller

1. Tell the Protection Officer requesting the second TOA to confer with the Protection Officer holding the current TOA.
2. Make sure that the Protection Officers have conferred and agree with the protection arrangements.
3. If the second TOA is for a track vehicle movement, confirm that the protection has been placed for the direction of track vehicle travel.
4. Where possible, apply additional blocking facilities.

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Joint occupancy with a Track Work Authority

A TOA may be authorised in an area where a Track Work Authority (TWA) is current.

Signaller

1. Tell the Protection Officer seeking the TOA to confer with the Protection Officer holding the TWA.
2. Make sure that the Protection Officers have conferred and agree with the protection arrangements.
3. If the TOA is for a track vehicle movement, confirm that the protection has been placed for the direction of track vehicle travel.
4. Where possible, apply additional blocking facilities.

Protecting worksites



NOTE

When using railway track signals, make sure that worksite protection markers are placed in the middle of the four-foot, adjacent to the railway track signal closest to the worksite.

network procedures

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Protection Officer

1. If required, place three railway track signals and a worksite protection marker between 500m and 1000m from the worksite.

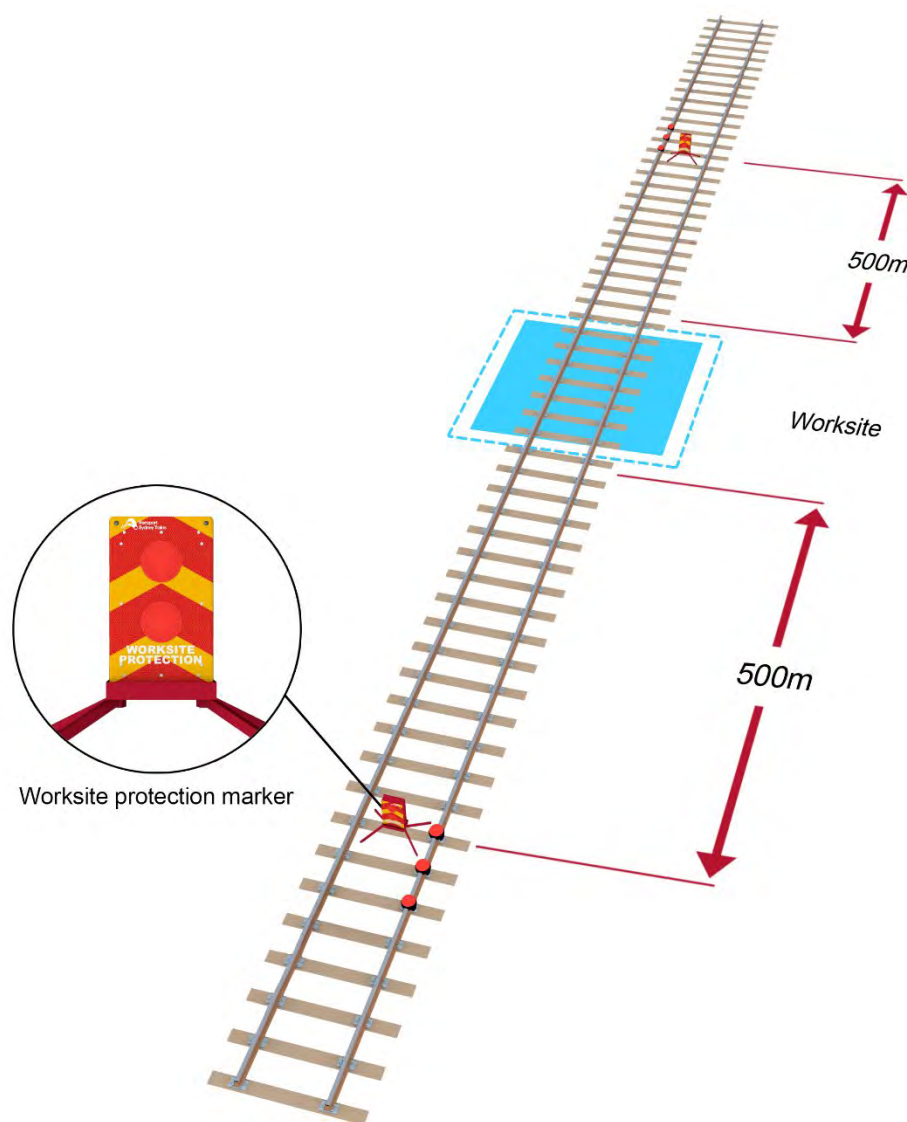


FIGURE 1: Example of protection arrangements for a single worksite

network procedures

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- 2. If a controlled absolute signal is within 500m of the worksite, a controlled absolute signal more than 500m from the worksite must be used for worksite protection.

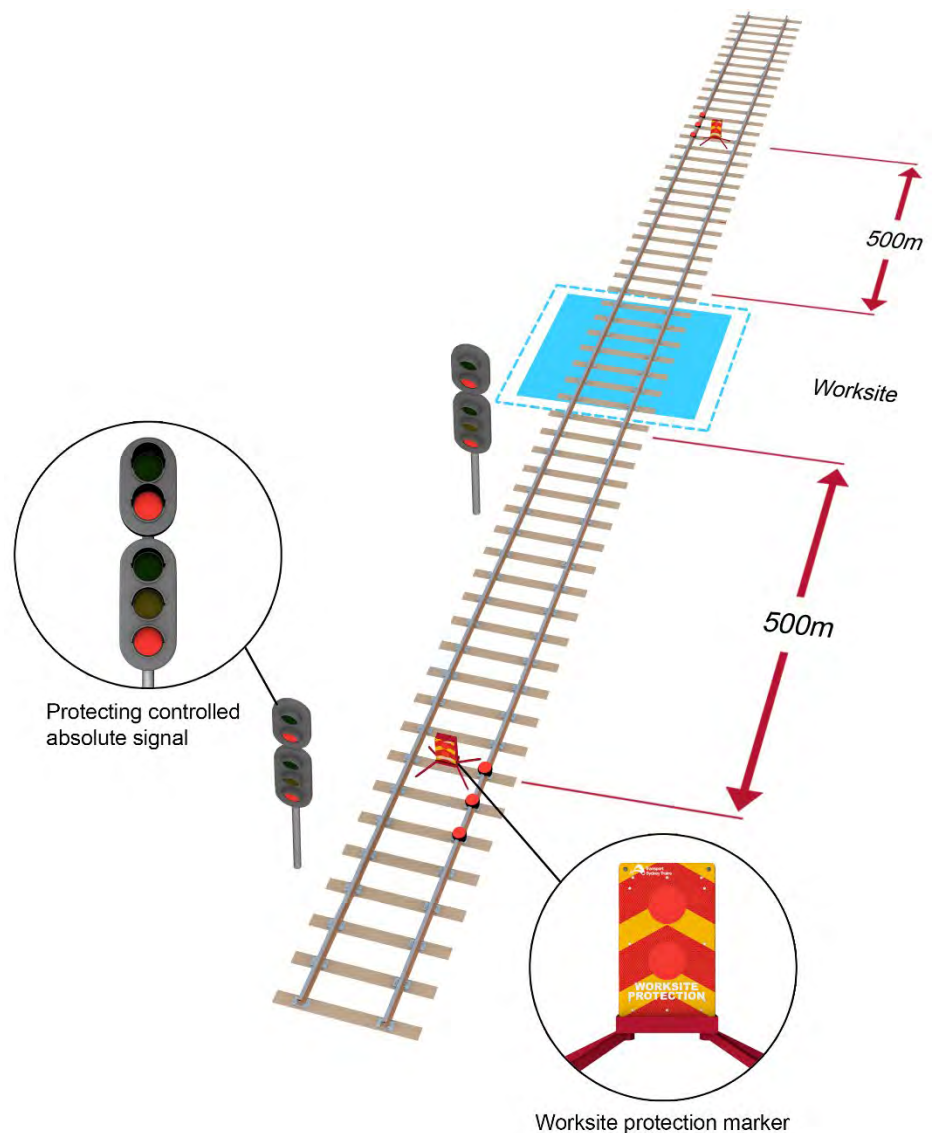


FIGURE 2: Example of protection arrangements for a worksite when the closest signal is less than 500m from the worksite, a signal more than 500m from worksite must be used for protection

network procedures

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- 3. If a controlled absolute signal less than 500m from the worksite is used to prevent access to the portion of track within the TOA limits, and a set of points is available for a different route, then clip and lock the points for the different route.

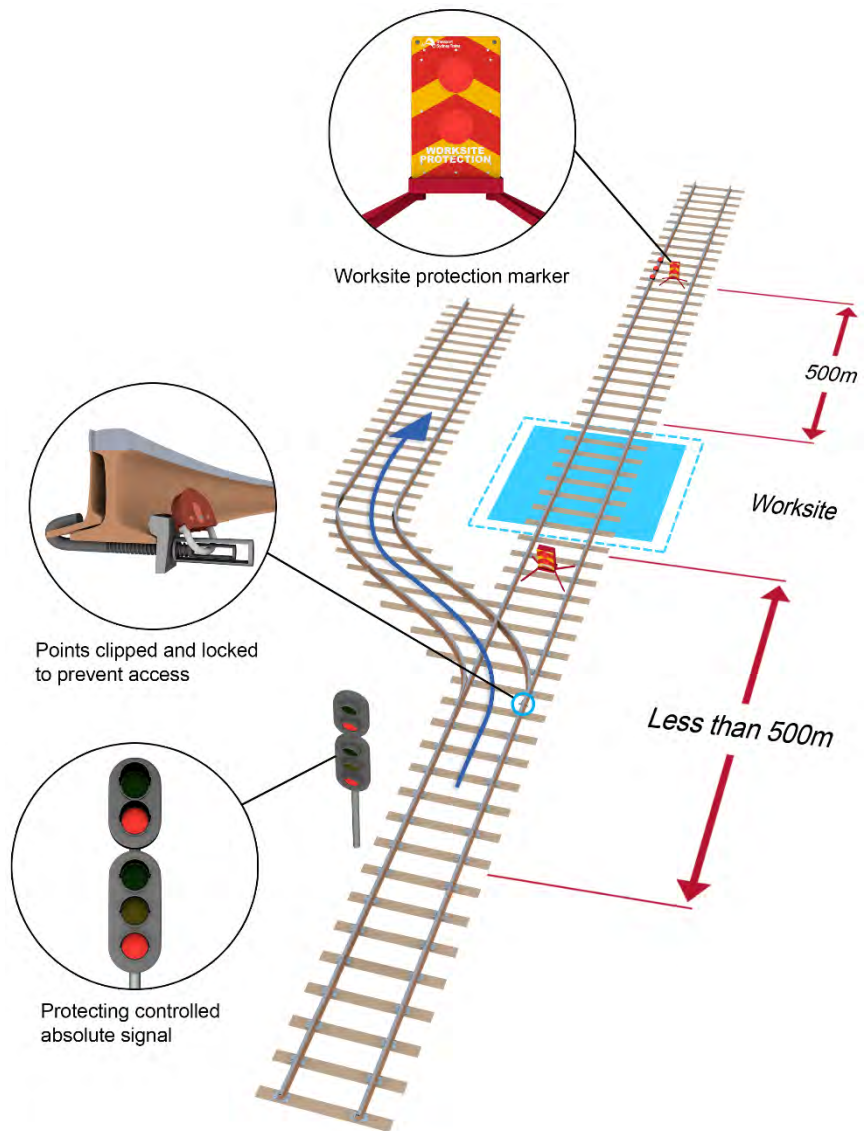


FIGURE 3: Example of protecting signal less than 500m from worksite, with points clipped and locked for a different route

network procedures

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- 4. If points cannot be clipped and locked for a different route, use a controlled absolute signal more than 500m from the worksite.

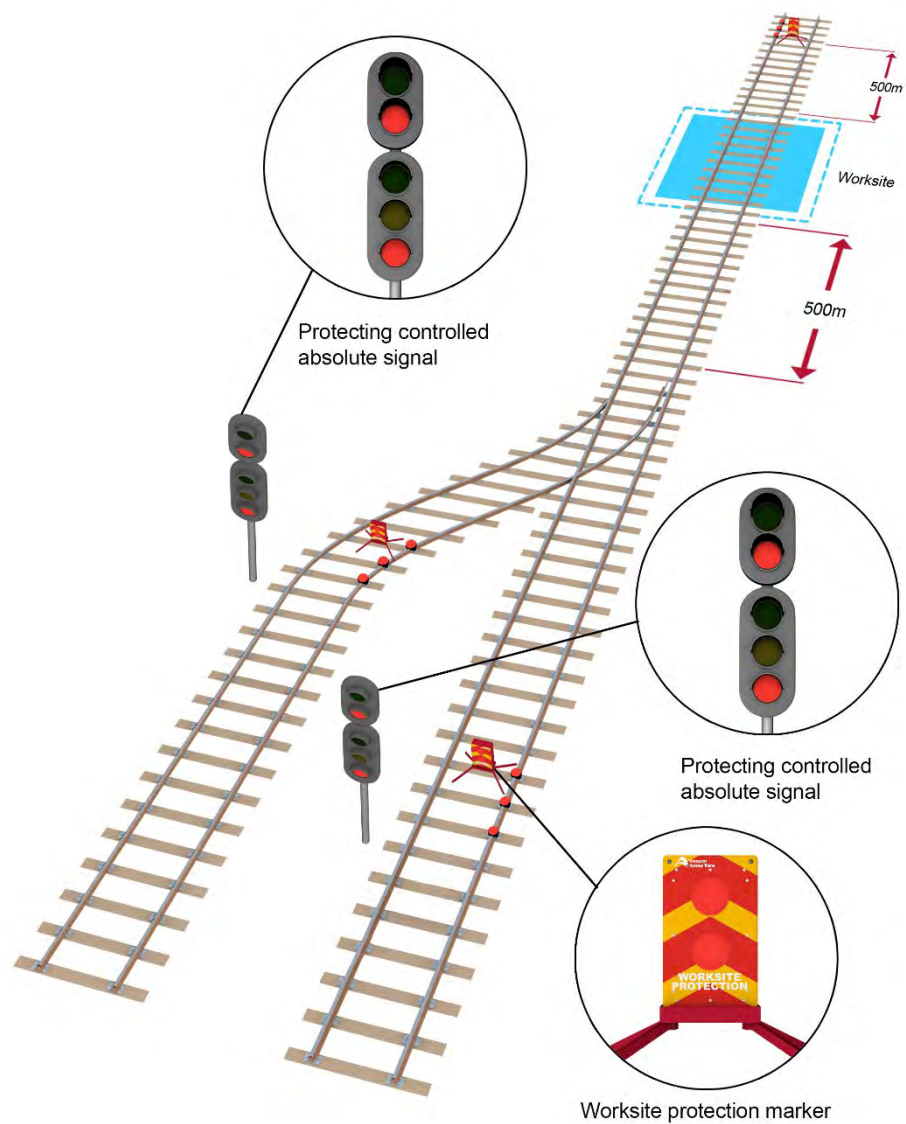


FIGURE 4: Example of protecting a worksite with signals more than 500m from worksite

network
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- Where multiple worksites are located within the TOA limits or additional work on track authorities have been authorised, three railway track signals and a worksite protection marker must be placed between 500m and 1000m from the entry end of each worksite.

If worksites are between 500m and 1000m apart, three railway track signals and a worksite protection marker must be placed midway between the worksites.

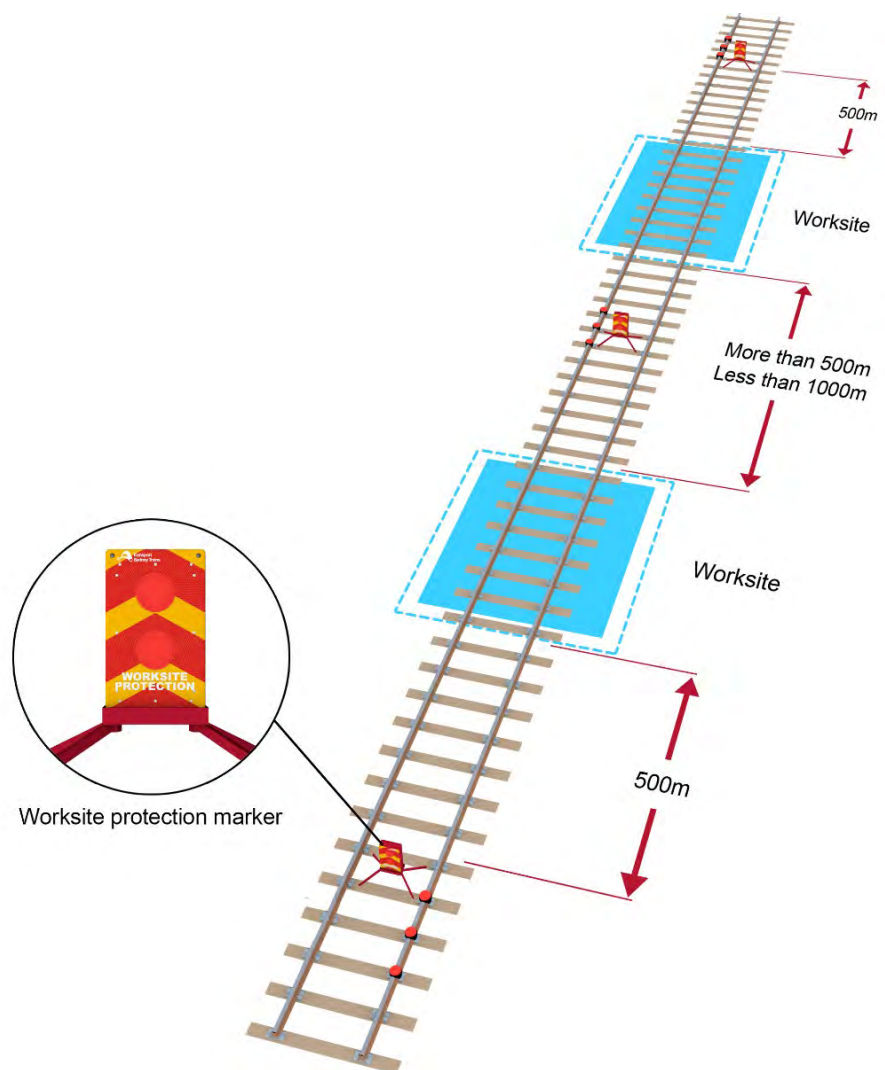


FIGURE 5: Example of protection arrangements for multiple worksites between 500m and 1000m apart

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- 6. Worksites less than 500m apart must be protected and managed as a single worksite.

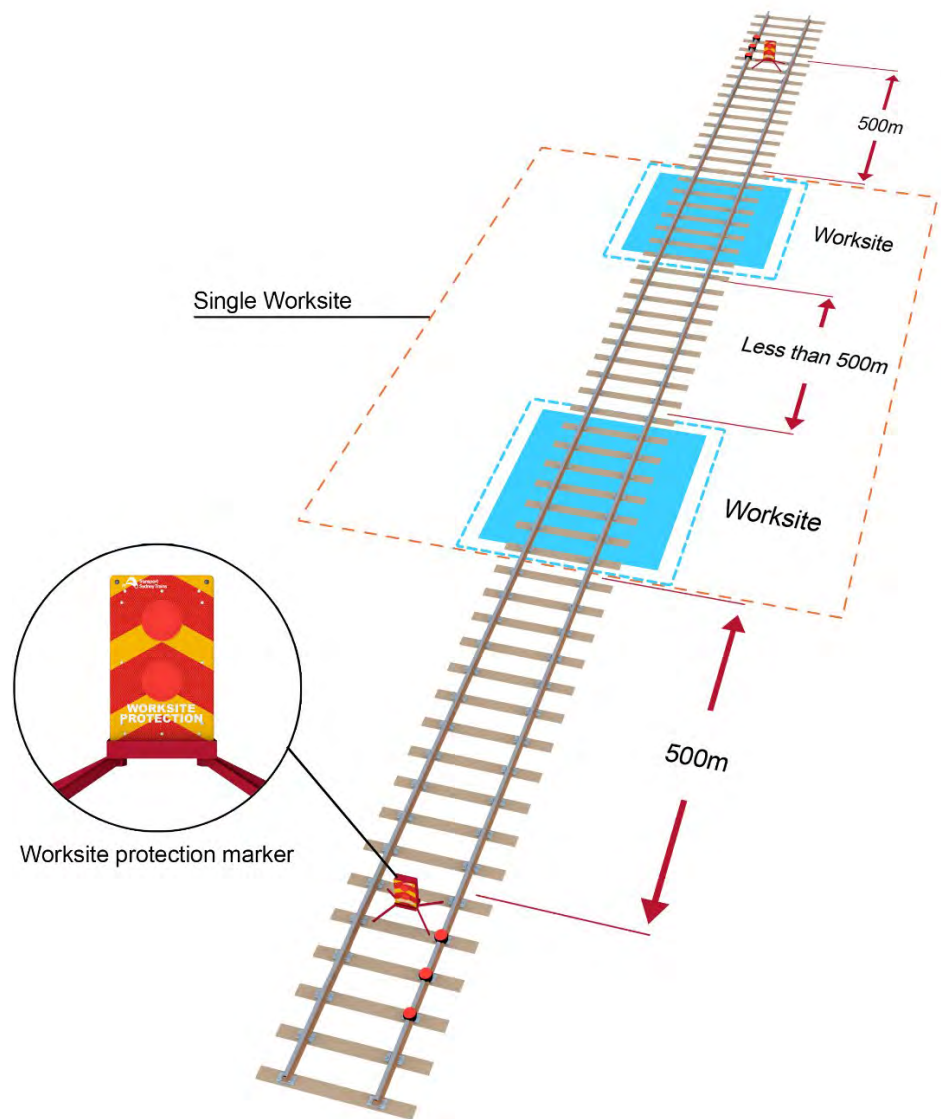


FIGURE 6: Example of protection arrangements for work sites less than 500m apart protected as a single worksite

network
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7. If stabled rail traffic within a siding is not associated with the TOA, three railway track signals and a worksite protection marker must be placed immediately in front of the stabled rail traffic to prevent unintended movements within the TOA. The worksite protection marker must be placed next to the railway track signal closest to the stabled rail traffic and in a position that can be seen from the stabled rail traffic.

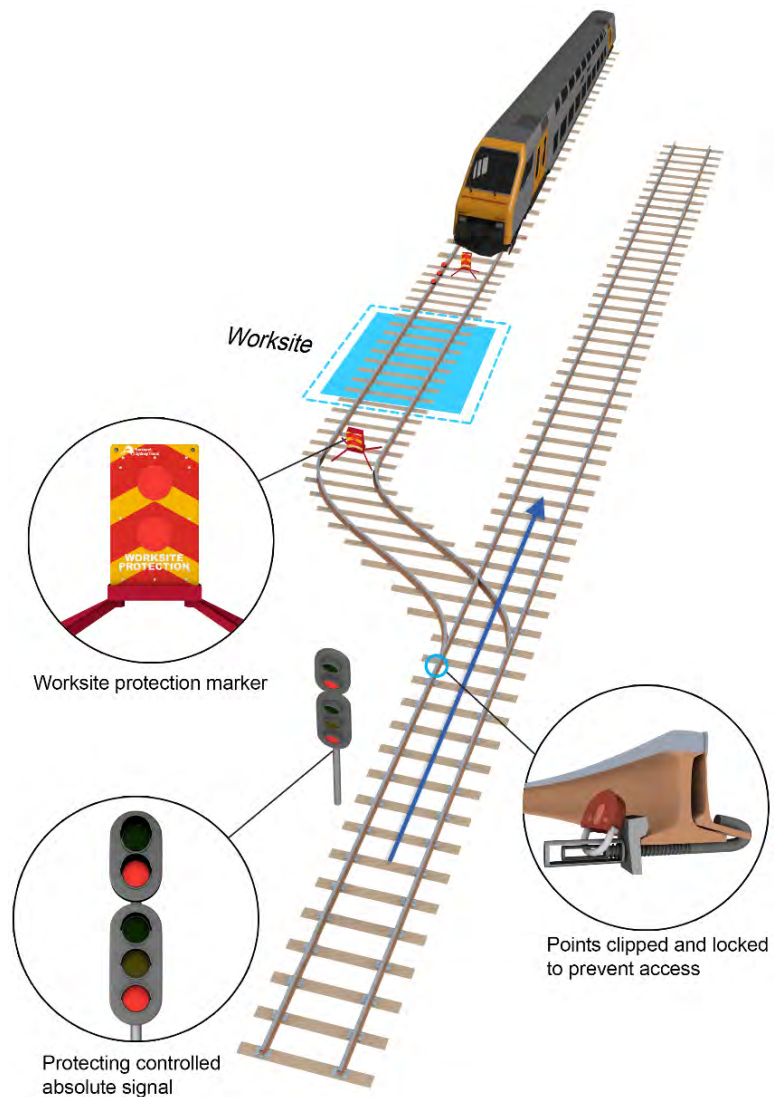


FIGURE 7: Example of protection arrangements for a worksite within a siding occupied by stabled rail traffic not associated with the TOA

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Obtaining an extension of time for a TOA

Protection Officer

1. If necessary, ask the Signaller for an extension of time for the TOA.
2. When an extension is authorised, record the new expiry time and the authorising Network Controller's name on the TOA form.

Signaller

3. Tell other affected Signallers about the new expiry time for the TOA.

Returning the track to service

Protection Officer

1. Make sure that rail traffic and equipment are clear of the Danger Zone.
2. Make sure that all workers have cleared the worksites.
3. Make sure that:
 - point clips have been removed
 - railway track signals and worksite protection markers have been removed
 - if necessary, signals have been restored to normal use
 - the track is safe for use.
4. If necessary, when advised that the line is certified fit for use, tell the Signaller.
5. Tell the Signaller that the work is complete and about any restrictions on track use.
6. If removed, replace the half-staffs, as required by the Signaller.
7. Fulfil the TOA.

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Signaller

8. Confirm with the Protection Officer:
 - their name
 - the worksite location
 - the TOA number
 - that workers and equipment are clear of the Danger Zone
 - that, if used:
 - half-staffs have been restored
 - points that were clipped and locked are available for use
 - that the TOA is fulfilled.
9. Remove blocking facilities.
10. Test signals affected by half-staffs.
11. Tell the Network Controller that the TOA is fulfilled, and about any restrictions on track use.

Keeping records

Network Controllers, Signallers and the Protection Officer must record, in permanent form, the TOA details, including protection arrangements.

Network Procedures

- NPR 704 Using Infrastructure Booking Authorities*
- NPR 707 Clipping points*
- NPR 709 Using railway track signals*
- NPR 710 Piloting rail traffic*
- NPR 712 Protecting work from rail traffic on adjacent lines*

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Effective date

04 December 2022