

Purpose

To prescribe the rules for working in the Danger Zone using Route Blocking.

General

Route Blocking excludes rail traffic from a defined portion of track for a specified period.

Route Blocking may be used if a Protection Officer has assessed that the work to be performed will not:

- require a work on track authority, or
- break the track, or
- alter track geometry or structure.



WARNING

If the safety assessment shows that a work on track authority is necessary, work must be carried out using:

- *MWT 302 Local Possession Authority, or*
- *MWT 304 Track Occupancy Authority.*

Route Blocking can be used by a single worker, in which case, the worker is also the Protection Officer.

Route Blocking excludes rail traffic for work:

- not requiring tools, or
- using tools which can be easily and immediately removed from the track by one person and are:
 - light, non-powered hand tools, or
 - light, battery powered tools or devices, or
 - light, powered hand tools.

Authorisation

Traffic Controllers may authorise Route Blocking where rail traffic can be excluded from a portion of track.

For each Route Blocking request, only one Protection Officer may be authorised for each portion of track, and only one Route Blocking authority may be issued for each portion of track.

If the Route Blocking requires more than one Traffic Controller to exclude rail traffic from a portion of track, the affected Traffic Controllers must:

- confer to make sure that all points of entry are protected, and
- nominate an authorising Traffic Controller.

The authorising Traffic Controller must use an *MRF 018 Route Blocking* form, to record the Route Blocking details, and issue the identifying Route Blocking number to the Protection Officer.

Route Blocking must not be used where a work on track authority is in place.

Protection Officer

At all times there must be a single nominated Protection Officer for each authorised track access using Route Blocking.

A Protection Officer must:

- tell workers about the:
 - location of safe places, and
 - safety measures in place, and
 - extent of the area protected.
- be the only person to speak to the Traffic Controller about safety arrangements, and
- make sure that the protection is in place before work starts.

When requesting Route Blocking, the Protection Officer must identify the line and define the worksite location as being:

- completely within a nominated dead-end siding, or

work on track

Route Blocking

- completely within the limits of a platform, or
- between any two of the following locations:
 - a Point Position Indicator, or
 - a platform, or
 - a set of points.

Signals and points must be identified by their numbers, and platforms must be identified by the station name and platform number.

Protecting Route Blocking

The authorising Traffic Controller must make sure that all points of entry into the affected portion of track are protected.

As a minimum, Route Blocking must be protected by:

- the protecting Point Position Indicator being kept at **STOP** with blocking facilities applied, or
- the protecting Service Stopping Point or Secondary Detection Device having blocking facilities applied, or
- remotely securing and blocking points to prevent access to the affected portion of track.

If protecting PPIs need to be cleared for an alternative route, the Protection Officer and Traffic Controller must agree about the movements and ensure that the worksite is located clear of the alternative route.

If a SPKS or ZIKS zone provides protection to the worksite, the protection officer must remove and secure the relevant SPKS or ZIKS key.

Before allowing work to start, the Traffic Controller must make sure and confirm with the Protection Officer that:

- all routes into the affected portion of track are set to STOP with blocking facilities applied, and
- all points and crossovers that give access to the affected portion of track have been blocked in a position that diverts rail traffic away from the affected portion of track, and
- there is no approaching rail traffic between the protection and the identified worksite location.

Traffic Controllers must not authorise unsignalled movements into portions of line where Route Blocking is in use.

Ending Route Blocking

To end Route Blocking, the Protection Officer must provide their name, the worksite location and the Route Blocking number and tell the Traffic Controller that:

- all workers and their equipment are clear of the Danger Zone, and
- there are no other work teams remaining in the Danger Zone, and
- points that were secured are available for use, and
- if used, SPKS and ZIKS Keys have been returned to their receptacle.

The Traffic Controller may end the Route Blocking after making sure that:

- the Protection Officer's name, the worksite location and the Route Blocking number correspond with the Route Blocking details, and
- confirmation that no other work team remains in the Danger Zone for the affected area, and
- the track is clear.

NOTE:

If the Route Blocking number is not available to end Route Blocking, the Protection Officer must provide:

- their name, and
 - the worksite location, and
 - their contact phone number.
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Keeping records

Traffic Controllers and the Protection Officer must record, in permanent form, the Route Blocking details.

work on track

Route Blocking

Procedures

MPR 703 Using Route Blocking

MPR 708 Using SPKS and ZIKS keys

MPR 712 Protecting work from rail traffic on adjacent lines

Effective date

28 April 2025