

Network Safeworking Rules and Procedures

Handsignals and Verbal Commands

Rule Number: 2003

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Document History

Version	Effective Date	Pages updated	Reasons for change
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1. Purpose

This rule details the protocols for giving movement commands to *Rail Traffic Crews*. The purpose of these commands is to control the movement of *Rail Traffic* through a *Fixed Worksite* or during *Shunting* operations.

2. General

2.1. Giving Handsignals

Handsignals must be given:

- facing the *Rail Traffic*;
 - During *Shunting* operations where it is not possible to face the *Rail Traffic*, the *Handsignaller* must be satisfied that the *Rail Traffic Crew* can see all *Handsignals*.
- in such a position that there can be no misunderstanding as to the purpose of the *Handsignal*;
- in a *Clear* and timely manner; and
- so that the *Handsignals* will be received and acted upon only by those who are being signalled.

A *Handsignaller* must:

- be in or have *Access* to a *Safe Place*;
- be in clear view of those who are being signalled; and
- have *Effective Communication*.

At worksites and *Fixed Signals*, the *Handsignaller* must remain at the designated position, unless they are:

- replaced by another *Handsignaller*; or
- no longer required.

If conditions such as visibility change, the *Handsignaller* must tell the *Protection Officer*.

Where *Handsignalling* at *Fixed Signals* and visibility changes, the *Handsignaller* must tell the *Network Controller*.

2.2. Responding to Handsignals and Verbal Commands

If the meaning of a *Handsignal* or verbal command is not understood, *Rail Traffic Crews* must stop to find out the meaning.

Rail Traffic Crews must:

- obey *Handsignals* and verbal commands; and
- acknowledge *Handsignals* and verbal commands other than those given as part of *Shunting*.

Where a *Stop Handsignal* is given for a *Fixed Signal* or worksite, the *Rail Traffic Crews* must target to stop at the *Handsignaller*.

Where the *Emergency Stop Handsignal* is given *Rail Traffic Crews* must stop immediately.

3. Use of Handsignals and Verbal Commands

Rail Traffic movements through a *Fixed Worksite* or during *Shunting* operations must be directed by continued *Handsignals* or regular verbal commands.

Handsignals must be given using:

- flags or hands during daylight; and
- lights during hours of darkness or *Low Visibility*.

Where verbal commands are used to direct a *Rail Traffic* movement the *Competent Worker* directing the movement and the *Rail Traffic Crew* must communicate at agreed intervals.

During *Shunting* operations, if the *Rail Traffic Crew* loses sight of the *Handsignal* or after *Travelling* half the nominated distance, there is no further *Handsignal* or verbal command, the *Rail Traffic Crew* must:

- bring the movement to a stop;
- sound the *Whistle*; and
- not move again until regular *Handsignals* or verbal commands are re-established.

When verbal commands are used for *Shunting*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* must be told the direction and distance to be *Travelled*.

A *Handsignal* must be continued:

- for an *ALL CLEAR Handsignal*, until acknowledged by the *Rail Traffic Crew*;
- for *NORMAL SPEED* and *WARNING/ CAUTION Handsignals*, until the cab of the leading rail vehicle has passed the *Handsignaller*;
- for a *STOP Handsignal*, until:
 - the *Rail Traffic* has stopped; or
 - the *Handsignaller* displays another *Handsignal*.

3.1. Handsignalling at a Fixed Signal

If *Handsignalling* at a *Fixed Signal*, the *Handsignaller* must:

- be able to see whether the *Fixed Signal* is at STOP; and
- if *Rail Traffic* is required to stop, give a *STOP Handsignal* until *Rail Traffic* has stopped.

If the *Fixed Signal* being held at STOP clears, the *Handsignaller* must:

- tell the *Network Controller* to set the *Fixed Signal* at STOP; and
- inform the *Protection Officer*, where provided.

3.2. Standing Clear of Fixed Signal

A *Handsignaller* must stand well away from *Fixed Signal* if:

- *Rail Traffic* is not required to stop; or
- not *Handsignalling* at a *Fixed Signal*.

4. Emergency or Danger Handsignals and Verbal Commands

Rail Traffic Crews must stop their *Rail Traffic* immediately if they receive an *EMERGENCY* or *DANGER* signal communicated by:

- vigorous and erratic waving of arms, a flag or a light; or
- a verbal command “*Emergency, Emergency, Emergency, Stop, Stop, Stop*”.

5. Stop Handsignals

Rail Traffic Crews must stop their *Rail Traffic* if they receive a STOP *Handsignal* communicated by:

- a red flag;
- a red light; or
- both hands held high.

6. All Clear Handsignals









An ALL CLEAR *Handsignal* tells *Rail Traffic Crews* that workers are aware of approaching *Rail Traffic* and the workers will remain *Clear* until that *Rail Traffic* passes.

A *Handsignaller* holds up a steady white light or one hand to give the ALL CLEAR *Handsignal*.

7. General Handsignals

The following figures show the *Handsignals* that must be used in the *Network*.

Figure 2003-1 Handsignals and Verbal Commands

Signal / Use	Verbal Command	Using Flags	Using Lights	Using Hands
Stop	"Stop" or "Red light" during <i>Shunting</i> operations only	 Steady red flag	 Steady red light	 Both hands held high
Emergency or Danger	"Emergency, Emergency, Emergency Stop, Stop, Stop"	 Vigorous and erratic waving of flag	 Wave any light in a vigorous and erratic manner	 Vigorous and erratic waving of arms
Warning/ Caution	"Reduce to, and Travel at Restricted Speed"	Nil	Nil	Nil
Proceed at Normal Speed	"Proceed at Normal speed"	Nil	Nil	Nil
All Clear	"I am aware of your approach"	Nil	 Steady white light	 One hand held up

8. Shunting Handsignals and Verbal Commands

Figure 2003-2 Shunting Handsignals and Verbal Commands














Signal / Use	Verbal Command	Using Lights	Using Hands
Move Away	“(ID) Move away from me”	 <p>Swing white light backwards and forwards beside body</p>	 <p>Hold one hand up and outwards and wave in a vertical circle</p>
Move Away Slowly	“(ID) Move slowly away from me”	 <p>Swing green light backwards and forwards beside body</p>	 <p>Hold one hand up and outwards and wave in a vertical circle. Hold the other hand up and outwards.</p>
Move Towards	(ID) “Move towards me”	 <p>Wave white light slowly back and forth across the body</p>	 <p>Wave one hand slowly back and forth overhead</p>

Figure 2003-3 Shunting Handsignals and Verbal Commands continued.

Signal / Use	Verbal Command	Using Flags	Using Lights	Using Hands
Move Towards Slowly	"(ID) Move towards me slowly"	Nil	 <p>Wave green light slowly back and forth across the body</p>	 <p>Wave one hand slowly back and forth overhead, holding the other hand up and outwards</p>
Close Up or Couple Up	"(ID) Close Up" or "(ID) Couple Up"	Nil	 <p>Wave green light slowly back and forth across the body</p>	 <p>Hold both hands up and outwards and repeatedly bring hands together to form an arch</p>
Admit	"(ID) OK to enter"	 <p>Wave green flag slowly back and forth across body</p>	 <p>Wave green light slowly back and forth across the body</p>	 <p>Hold one hand up and outwards</p>

9. Effective Date

3 February 2020