

Network Safeworking Rules and Procedures

Operation of Switchlocks

Procedure Number: 9024

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Document History

Version	Effective Date	Pages updated	Reasons for change
2.01	31 10 2020	Title Page	Rule reference changed to Procedure Number

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide instruction in the operation of *Switchlocks* in *Centralised Traffic Control (CTC) Territory* within the *Network*.

2. General

A *Switchlock* is a device used to lock a *Points* lever. The *Switchlock* must be initially released by the *Network Controller* or by the positioning of the *Rail Traffic* prior to a *Competent Worker* operating a lever.

Switchlocks are usually found on *Points* leading to or from an *Intermediate Siding* or non-signalled portions of yards in *CTC Territory*.

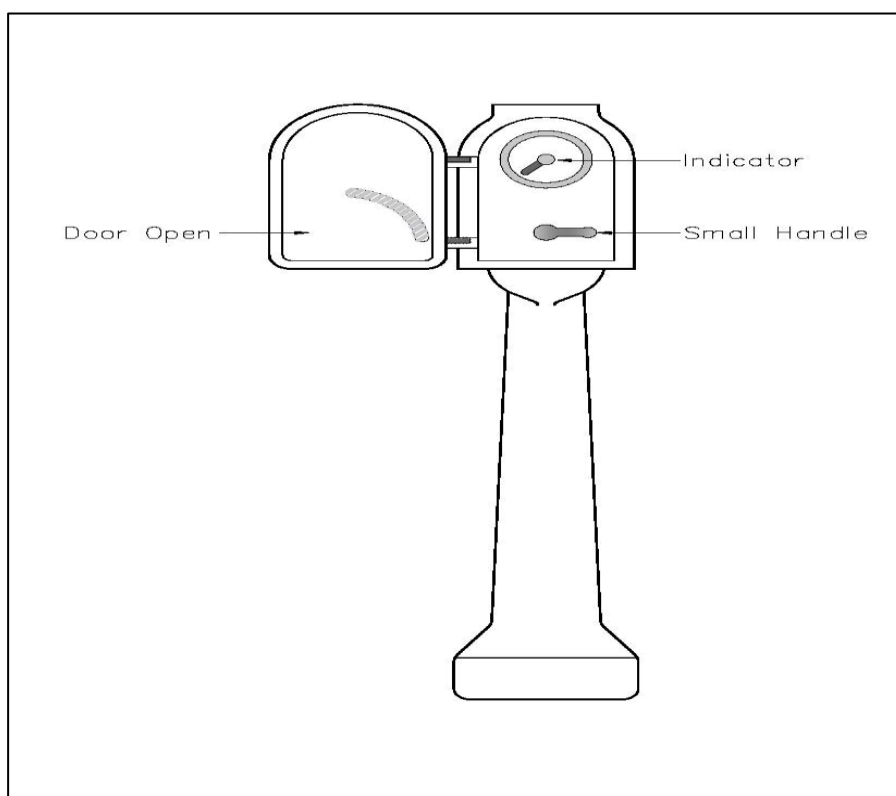
In *CTC Territory*, the *Points* leading into *Intermediate* and *Interlocked Sidings* are controlled by electric *Switchlocks*.

Switchlocks at *Interlocked Sidings* are controlled by the *Network Controller*.

Switchlocks contain an indicator to indicate the condition of the lock, a small handle to lock the *Points* and a door which is normally kept closed and locked.

Refer to local instructions as *Switchlock* procedures vary at some *Locations*.

Figure 9024-1 Typical *Switchlock*.



3. Operation

3.1 Interlocked Sidings

When it is necessary to operate a *Switchlock* at an *Interlocked Siding*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* or *Competent Worker* must:

- contact the *Network Controller* for permission and release of the *Switchlock*;
- open the *Switchlock* door, and once the free indication is displayed;
 - turn the small handle to the left position;
 - set the *Points* to the required direction; return the small handle to the right;
 - close and *Secure* the *Switchlock* door; and.
- advise the *Network Controller*.

The *Network Controller* can then return the *Switchlock* to the locked position and confirm with the *Rail Traffic Crew* or *Competent Worker* that the *Switchlock* is normal.

3.2 Rail Traffic Acceptance Buttons (TAB)



WARNING: The TAB button must be depressed until the *Rail Traffic* has passed the corresponding *Shunt* signal at Proceed.

A *Rail Traffic Acceptance Button (TAB)* is provided on the side wall of the *Switchlock* which, when pressed will permit a *Proceed* indication to be exhibited on the corresponding signal, provided the *Network Controller* has set the signal for the movement.

When the movement of *Rail Traffic* is *Clear* of the *Points* the *Rail Traffic Crew* or *Competent Worker* must:

- open the *Switchlock* door;
- turn the small handle to the left;
- restore the *Points* to their normal position;
- return the small handle to the right to the normal position;
- close and *Secure* the *Switchlock* door; and
- advise the *Network Controller*.

The *Network Controller* can then return the *Switchlock* to the locked position.

The *Rail Traffic Crew* or *Competent Worker* must then depress and hold the TAB to allow the signal to display a *PROCEED Aspect*.



NOTE: The *Network Controller* must be advised that the *Points* have been restored to normal and the *Switchlock* is Secured.

3.3 Emergency Release

At some *Locations*, the *Switchlock* has been fitted with an *Emergency* release to allow the *Switchlock* to be operated during a signalling failure.

The *Network Controller* must ensure there are no conflicting *Rail Traffic* movements approaching the *Switchlock* and it is safe to use the *Emergency* release.

The *Competent Worker* operating the *Switchlock* during a signalling failure must:

- contact the *Network Controller* to obtain permission to use the *Emergency* release;
- break the seal and push the *Emergency* release down as far as it will move;
- hold the *Emergency* release down and move the small handle to the left; and
- operate the *Switchlock* as required.

The *Emergency* release can only be restored by a *Signalling Maintenance Representative*.



NOTE: The *Fixed Signals* affected by the *Switchlock* will remain at STOP until the *Signalling Maintenance Representative* has restored the *Emergency* release.

3.4 Intermediate Sidings

Small white posts marked “A”, “B” and “C” are provided alongside the line near the *Points* to indicate the limits of the *Track-Circuit*.



NOTE: *Rail Traffic Crews* are required to contact the *Network Controller* for permission to operate *Switchlocks*.

3.4.1 Shunting rail traffic and leaving a portion standing on the main line

When it is necessary to release a *Switchlock* so that a *Siding* can be *Shunted*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* must:

- contact the *Network Controller*;
- stop the *Rail Traffic*; and
- detach the portion to be left standing on the *Main Line Track-Circuit* opposite the *Siding* on the approach side of post “C”, and *Clear* of the *Points* to be *Shunted* through.

The front portion of the *Rail Traffic* to be *Shunted* must be moved forward and the rear wheels of the last vehicle must be standing on the *Track-Circuit* beyond the *Points*, and between posts “A” and “B”. Then, with permission from the *Network Controller*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* must:

- open the *Switchlock* door; and
- turn the small handle over to the left.

The *Points* may then be operated to the required position by means of the *Points* lever, in accordance with Procedure 9012 Operation of Points.



WARNING: At *Intermediate Sidings* where a portion of *Rail Traffic* is left standing on the *Main Line*, if the *Points* are reset and the *Switchlock* handle has been returned to the normal position, the *Switchlock* will fail to release again and an *Infrastructure Representative* will need to be advised and attend.

At *Intermediate Sidings* when the small handle has been turned to the left, it must not be restored until:

- *Shunting* has been completed;
- the *Points* have been reset for the *Main Line*; and
- the *Points* lever has been *Secured*.

When all *Shunting* has been completed, the *Points* have been reset for the *Main Line* and, the *Points* lever has been *Secured*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* must:

- turn the small handle back over to the right, to its normal position;
- close and lock the *Switchlock* door; and
- advise the *Network Controller*.

3.4.2 Shunting Rail Traffic clear of the main line

When required to *Shunt Rail Traffic Clear* of the *Main Line*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* must position the *Rail Traffic* so that the wheels of the first or last vehicle of the *Rail Traffic* are standing on the short *Track-Circuit* between posts “A” and “B”, the *Rail Traffic Crew* may then operate the *Switchlock*.

When the *Rail Traffic* is *Clear* of the *Main Line* and the *Fouling* point, indicated by post “C”, the *Rail Traffic Crew* can restore the *Points* and *Switchlock* to their normal positions, then advise the *Network Controller*.

Before leaving the area the *Rail Traffic Crew* must be satisfied that it is all *Clear* and safe for the passage of other *Rail Traffic*.

Where *Rail Traffic* is to resume its journey, the *Rail Traffic Crew* must:

- obtain permission from the *Network Controller* to open the *Switchlock* door;
- observe the indicator and if displaying “Free”, set the *Points* to the required position, in accordance with Rule 9012 Operation of Points; and
- *Handsignal* the *Rail Traffic* onto the *Main Line*, in accordance with Rule 2003 Handsignals and Verbal Commands.

When the *Rail Traffic* is *Clear* of the *Points* onto the *Main Line*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* may restore the *Points* and *Switchlock* to their normal positions and advise the *Network Controller* before proceeding.



NOTE: On some types of *Switchlocks*, if the hasp that *Secures* the door is not tightly closed, the signal in the rear of the *Siding* will be held in the *Stop* position.

3.4.3 Returning to the originating station



WARNING: *Rail Traffic* must restore the *Points* to their normal position and be locked away inside a *Switchlocked Intermediate Siding*, before returning to a *Station* in the rear to prove no following *Rail Traffic* has entered the *Section*.

Where it is necessary on *Single Line*, for *Rail Traffic* to depart a *Station*, *Shunt* an *Intermediate Switchlocked Siding* and return to that *Station*, the *Rail Traffic Crew* before returning to the *Station* must:

- place the whole of the *Rail Traffic* into the *Siding*, completely *Clear* of the *Main Line*;
- restore the *Points* to normal; and
- close the door of the *Switchlock*.

This must be done to prove that any following *Rail Traffic* has not entered the *Section* from the *Station* in the rear.

The *Rail Traffic* can then operate the *Switchlock* as described in section 3.1 when ready to return to its originating *Station*.

4. Reporting Faults

When a fault or failure of a *Switchlock* at an *Interlocked Siding* occurs, the *Network Controller* must advise an *Infrastructure Representative* to repair the fault.

All faults or failures must be reported in accordance with Rule 2009 Reporting and Responding to a Condition Affecting the Network (CAN).

5. References

2003 Handsignals and Verbal Commands

2009 Reporting and Responding to a Condition Affecting the Network (CAN).

9012 Operation of Points

6. Effective Date

3 February 2020