

Rule Book Handbook 5
GERT8000-HB5
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Handsignalling duties

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1 Handsignals

If you have to give handsignals during daylight in good visibility you must use flags. If you have to give handsignals during darkness or poor visibility you must use a handlamp.

You must make sure the handsignal can be clearly seen by the person who it is intended for. Make sure it is not given in a way that it will be acted upon by someone else.

You must hold the flag or handlamp steadily and do not put it on the ground.

Be careful if giving handsignals near another signal that is at danger. Make sure you do not accidentally give a handsignal that could mislead a driver into passing that signal without authority.

2 Detonators

You must check each detonator to make sure the date of manufacture stamped on it is not more than five years ago.

You must not use any detonator that is older than five years; or is showing signs of rust or decay or is damaged. You must return these to your issuing point.

If you have to place a detonator at a signal, you must place it on the rail at the signal.

3 Signal-post replacement switch

Signal-post replacement switches (SPRS) are provided at some automatic and semi-automatic signals. When operated they place and hold the signal to danger.

Although called a SPRS, they are not always on the signal post but will be near to the signal and may be on a separate post.

If you are going to use the SPRS, you must first make sure the signal is showing a proceed aspect. If it is, you must:

- get the signaller's permission to place the key in the switch and operate it
- operate the key and then check that the signal has gone to danger
- tell the signaller the signal is at danger.

If the signal is not showing a proceed aspect when you arrive, you must tell the signaller and ask for further instructions.



Signal-post replacement key and switch

4 When a handsignaller can be used

You must be competent to carry out the duties of a handsignaller.

There is only one occasion when you may carry out handsignalling duties. This is when appointed by the pilot for single line working when a single line working section is to be divided. You may be appointed as a signaller's agent at the end of the single line working section.

During single line working, the signaller will give the intermediate handsignaller and signaller's agent authority for train movements.

You must not act as a handsignaller for any other activity.

5 Single line working (SLW)

5.1 Staying where appointed

Acting as a signaller's agent

When the pilot has told you where you are to be appointed to, you must not leave that location until another agent has taken over or the pilot tells you that you are no longer needed.

You will normally be appointed opposite the signal shown in diagram HB5.2. You must have a clear view of the end of degraded working sign.

Acting as an intermediate handsignaller

When the pilot has told you where you are to be appointed to, you must not leave that location until another handsignaller has taken over or the pilot tells you that you are no longer needed.

You will normally be positioned at a signal box on an absolute block line, or appointed to an other location on a track circuit block line to allow the single line working section to be divided into more than one section.

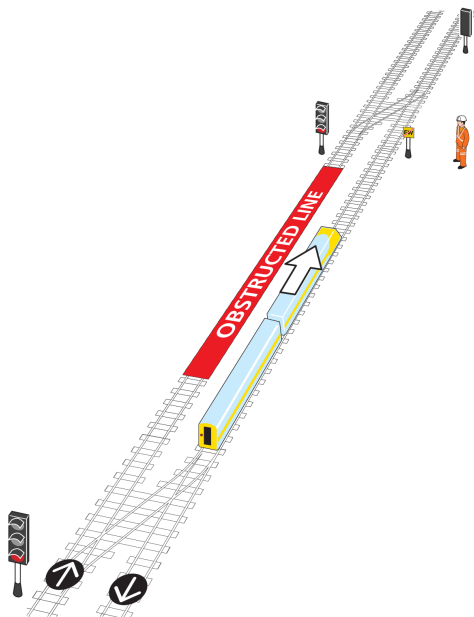


Diagram HB5.2

5.2 Trains travelling in the wrong direction

Acting as a signaller's agent

You must make sure you are in a position where you can clearly see the end of degraded working sign and all train movements past it.

If a train passes the end of degraded working sign when the signaller has not told you that it has permission to do so, you must immediately make an emergency call to the signaller to tell them what is happening.

Acting as an intermediate handsignaller

You must:

- on the line used for SLW, place one detonator on the rail opposite the signal
- display a hand danger signal to each train approaching in the wrong direction until the train stops.

When the signaller gives you permission for the train to proceed, you must:

- remove the detonator from the rail
- repeat the signaller's instructions to the driver
- show a yellow handsignal to the driver.

When the train has gone beyond your location, you must replace the detonator on the rail and then display the hand danger signal unless the signaller tells you the next train will be travelling in the right direction.

If the signaller tells you that the driver of an approaching train in the wrong direction has been authorised to obey your handsignal, and the signaller gives permission for the train to proceed, you must:

- remove the detonator from the rail, and
- show a yellow handsignal to the driver of the approaching train.

5.3 Trains travelling in the right direction

Acting as a signaller's agent

You do not need to observe trains passing the end of degraded working sign.

Acting as an intermediate handsignaller

You do not need to give handsignals to any train travelling in the right direction.

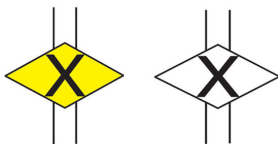
When you become aware that the next train will be travelling in the right direction, you must remove the detonator and hand danger signal.

You must replace the detonator and again display the hand danger signal once the train has passed.

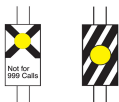
6 Telephones with limited clearance

Some signals or telephones are positioned where there is limited clearance between adjacent lines. You will not be appointed at a signal, and you must not use a telephone where one of the signs shown below are displayed, unless arrangements have been made for your safety.

A yellow or white diamond with the letter **X** displayed at the signal.



A yellow roundel on the telephone cabinet.



A red and white chequered board or labels with the words 'Warning-Limited clearance' displayed on the sign.



7 Using tents near the line

Tents are sometimes provided for you when you are carrying out your handsignalling duties.

If you have to set up a tent, you must make sure:

- the tent is approved by Network Rail for the location it is to be used at (this is especially important on electrified lines)
- the tent is firmly secured
- where possible, the closed end of the tent is facing oncoming trains
- the tent is no closer than 2 metres (6 feet 6 inches) from an open line.

However, if the speed on the open line is 20 mph or less, the tent can be as close as 1.25 metres (4 feet) from that line.

Uncontrolled when printed
Supersedes GERT8000-HB5 Iss 2.1 with effect from 06/09/2025
and comes into force on 06/12/2025

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