

THE USAGE OF RAIL AND FLANGE LUBRICATION ON BR - A REVIEW

The marked improvement in rail sidewear seen at recent test site following a lowering of cant is thought to result from changes in the standards of lubrication rather than the cant change itself. Even so, the full potential of lubrication is not being achieved and, for a variety of reasons, this picture is repeated up and down the BR system.

A review of current flange lubrication equipment and practices has shown:

- The devices used have poor reliability, particularly with older models and at higher speeds.
- The new type of grease-shot lubricator, while attractive in principle, does not live up to its promise at this point in time.
- Even when equipment is working, the grease does not always get to where it is needed to protect from wear through the curve.

The following actions should be considered as short-term improvements to the present situation:

- The wider use of Weco and Portec Protector devices, particularly for high speed track.
- The purchase of only 'obstructionless' lubricator models and continued conversion of older units now in stock.
- The use of four spreader bar installations at the start of curves for more even grease distribution.
- The wider use of lubricators mid-curve for extreme situations or longer curves.
- The recommendation to manufacturers for more adjustment to be provided for height setting of spreader bar plates.