

## TECHNICAL POLICY: ADVANCED SIGNALLING AND NETWORK CONTROL ON BR

This paper is a contribution to the forthcoming need to review signalling policy. Whilst attempts are being made to improve signalling by incorporating developments such as Solid State Interlocking and radio signalling, these do not make any basic changes in the present practice of signalling. Further, it is fairly certain that most of the major benefits to be derived from technical changes to the system have been obtained.

It is envisaged that a databank of route-specific and timetable information will be held in a computer forming part of the signalling system. In addition to automatically setting routes and controlling the speeds of interacting trains at junctions, the computer will also advise plain line coasting when possible within the timetable. It should not be difficult to include in this flow of information the details of the traction and route-specific knowledge which are the basis of the driver's and guard's route learning and traction training, making all train crew universally interchangeable and increasing their productive hours.

The work cannot be definitive but it suggests that there is a real attraction to radical changes in signalling which could realise the features discussed. Similar ideas are already being implemented by overseas railways. Signalling could either be very much cheaper, or it could be built with shorter life equipment to provide a system more responsive to commercial change.