

ALTERNATIVE ENGINEERING POSSESSION STRATEGIES

The costs and benefits of carrying out civil engineering work requiring possession of the track in short night time possessions, continuous single line possessions, or periodic complete route closures were compared to present practice. The study was based on the needs of the East Coast Main Line.

Periodic complete closure appeared to offer the greatest benefits. Continuous single line working also offers small benefits over the existing system. The effects of future electrification and the implications for diversionary routes are discussed.

As the work to date has indicated considerable financial gains from a changed possession pattern, it is recommended that the rail businesses carry the study forward. In particular there appears to be a need for further work in the following areas:

- The scope for reducing civil engineering costs by using methods and working practices designed around a periodic complete closure.
- The establishment of the ideal frequency of such closures.
- The identification of any costs associated with the changeover to a periodic renewals system.
- A strategy for changeover to a periodic closure pattern.