

SECONDARY ROUTE SIGNALLING POLICY

The purpose of this study was to devise a policy for signalling on secondary routes by evaluating the available technical options. Following discussions with the Provincial Services and Freight Sectors and Network South East, the routes to be considered have been categorised and a framework established for evaluating options. Assessments have been made of the relative costs of the two main alternative systems of enhanced radio electronic token block (ERETB) and block post interlocking (BPI) for three geographical areas, together with a comparison of RETB and no-signalman key token (NSKT) systems for branch lines.

This work has shown that NSKT is the lowest first cost option available for simple single lines with a minimum of crossing loops. For long branch lines with several passing loops and captive stock, RETB may be economic, particularly with the use of portable cab equipment. Opportunities for further application of basic RETB are limited on operating grounds.

For more complex routes there is little to choose on economic grounds between what is essentially an evolutionary approach, BPI, and the radically different alternative of ERETB. Further detailed evaluation of both options is required and this should take into account the emerging requirement for train-borne signalling from the Main Line Study.