

Transferable Lessons from Serious Operational Incidents / Investigations

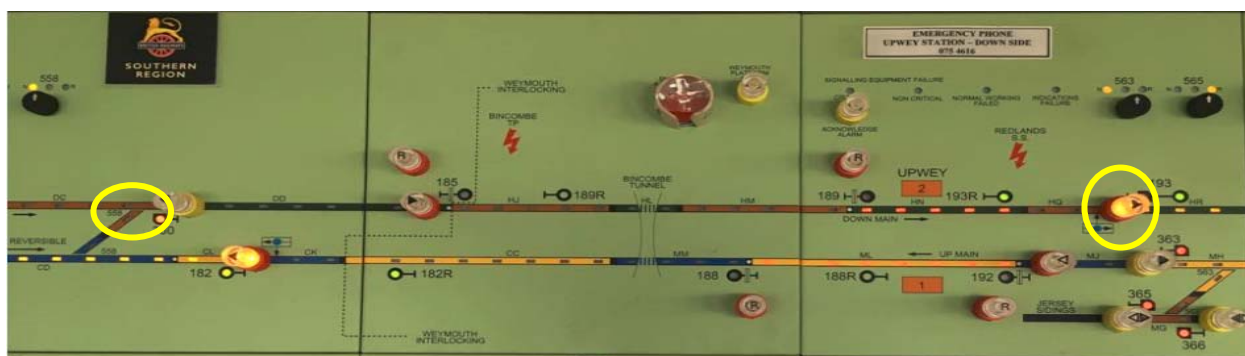


Issue No: NR/OPS/xxx

Date Issued: 30/08/2018

Line Blockage Irregularity at Dorchester

Dorchester signalling panel:



Summary of Incident:

At approximately 10:20 hours the signaller working Dorchester box was contacted by a COSS to request a pre-planned line blockage (both the Up and Down lines between Dorchester and Weymouth), the COSS and signaller discussed the blocking limits published on the GZAC notice and decided to change them from automatic signals to controlled signals. Further discussion took place on whether both the Up line and Down line would be required to be taken at the same time, a decision was made to take only the Down line from (clear of) 558 points to DR193 signal. The signaller did not repeat back the blocking points during the conversation but agreed they were okay. At the time the alterations were agreed the COSS was not at the site of work.

At 11:02 the COSS contacted the Dorchester signaller and requested the previously discussed line blockage, the signaller granted the block without reviewing and confirming the details on the NR3180 and provided an authority number and in doing so overlooked 1W57 which was in within the blocked limits on the Down line.

Learning points:

The signaller was thinking about the next fast service (1W17) in an attempt to give the COSS as much time between trains as possible, the signaller failed to realise that 1W57 had not yet cleared the blocking limits, if you are rushing to grant a line blockage; STOP and take 5 for Safety. The NR3180 is designed to ensure that you have that correct and robust conversation and not to rush to grant a line blockage.

Points to consider and further actions and precautions

The responsibility of the signaller is to ensure that all trains are clear of the line blockage limits and the responsibility of both the signaller and COSS/PC/SWL is to ensure that the rules are followed and that everyone working are correctly protected at all times,

How do YOU check that trains are clear prior to issuing the authority number?

Do you always repeat back the agreed blocking limits?

Do you understand the process for altering blocking points issued on a GZAC notice?

Briefed out to: All frontline Operations Staff