

work on track

Lookout Working

Purpose

To prescribe the rules for working in the Danger Zone without a work on track authority using Lookouts or an approved Automatic Track Warning System (ATWS) as the only safety measure.

General

If a safety assessment shows that it is safe, some kinds of work may be done in the Danger Zone without a work on track authority. Lookout Working is one of those methods of working.



WARNING

If the safety assessment shows that a work on track authority is necessary, work must be carried out using:

- *NWT 302 Local Possession Authority, or*
- *NWT 304 Track Occupancy Authority, or*
- *NWT 306 Track Work Authority.*

If Absolute Signal Blocking (ASB) is available, it is preferred over Lookout Working.

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WARNING

Lookout Working cannot be used as the only safety measure for:

- work on the overhead wiring, or
- work that breaks the track, or
- work that alters track geometry or structure.

Lookout Working may be used as a safety measure for work:

- not requiring tools, or
- using tools which can be easily and immediately removed from the track by one person and are:
 - light, non-powered hand tools
 - light, battery powered tools or devices.

Safety measures

The only safety measures used in this method of working are:

- Lookouts, or
- an approved ATWS.

An easily-reached safe place must be available if this method is used.

Work in the Danger Zone must not begin until safety measures are in place.

Workers must be able to immediately remove themselves and their equipment to a safe place when warned of approaching rail traffic.

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Protection Officer

There must be a Protection Officer for the period of the work.

The Protection Officer must:

- tell workers about the locations of safe places
- determine the number and locations of Lookouts or ATWS sensors and warning equipment needed to protect the work
- make sure that minimum warning times are satisfied for the locations of Lookouts or ATWS sensors
- if the work location changes, reassess track speeds and the locations of Lookouts to make sure that minimum warning times and communication with the Lookouts are maintained
- reassess safety measures if conditions such as visibility change
- be the only person to speak to Signallers about safety arrangements.



NOTE

Where worksites are established over a large area, the minimum warning time must be continually reassessed for the location of the Lookout and the location where work is taking place.

The Protection Officer must record the outcomes of any reassessed safety measures in permanent form.

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WARNING

If minimum warning times cannot be satisfied, then Lookout Working must not be used.

Liaison

Work in the Danger Zone must not begin until the Protection Officer has spoken with the Signaller about the use of Lookout Working.

The Protection Officer must tell the Signaller:

- their name and contact details
- the type of work to be done
- the intended duration
- the location of the work.



NOTE

Where Lookout Working is to be used within the limits of a Local Possession Authority (LPA), the Protection Officer must also contact the Possession Protection Officer about:

- using Lookout Working
- ending Lookout Working.

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Lookouts

Lookouts must:

- remain within sight and hearing of the worksite
- keep watch for rail traffic approaching the worksite from any direction
- immediately warn workers if rail traffic approaches the worksite.

Lookouts must not:

- work continuously at the same location for more than 60 minutes, or
- manage the passage of rail traffic, or
- operate ATWS warning equipment, or
- do any other work.



NOTE

Only one additional Lookout may be placed in each direction from which rail traffic can approach.

Additional Lookouts must remain within sight and hearing of the Lookout closer to the worksite.



WARNING

Lookouts must:

- not use radios or telephones to warn workers
- be alert for rail traffic which is unexpected or comes from the wrong running-direction.

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ATWS

If an ATWS is used to warn of approaching rail traffic, the Protection Officer must make sure that:

- unless specified in the Network Local Appendices, the worksite and sensors are located outside yard limits
- all signalled routes that could allow entry into the worksite are identified
- all sensors are individually tested.

On bidirectional lines, if only the sensor for the normal running-direction can be tested by rail traffic, a Qualified Worker must remove an X, Y or Z key to prevent rail traffic approach from the opposite direction.

ATWS must not be used where a work on track authority is in place.



WARNING

Workers must:

- not enter the Danger Zone until all ATWS warning equipment has been tested
- remain within sight and hearing of the ATWS warning equipment.

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Additional safety measures inside yard limits

The Protection Officer must make sure that:

- all points of entry into the worksite are identified and:
 - place a maximum of 4 sensors for the worksite
 - if necessary, points are clipped and locked to reduce the number of entry points.
- for unexpected wrong running-direction rail traffic approach:
 - a Lookout is placed
 - a track speed of 25km/h is used for minimum warning time calculations.



WARNING

Protection Officers must not perform Lookout duties when operating ATWS warning equipment.

Ending Lookout Working

To end Lookout Working, the Protection Officer must tell the Signaller when work is completed and the workers and their equipment are clear of the Danger Zone.

Keeping records

Signallers and the Protection Officer must record, in permanent form, the Lookout Working details.

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Network Procedures

NPR 708 Using X, Y and Z keys

NPR 711 Using Lookouts

NPR 712 Protecting work from rail traffic on adjacent lines

NPR 751 Calculating Minimum Warning Time

NPR 752 Using Wireless Automatic Track Warning Systems

Effective date

31 October 2021

pre-release