CHAPTER VIII

THE ABSOLUTE BLOCK SYSTEM

A. Essentials

8.01. Essentials of the Absolute Block System—

(1) Where trains are worked on the Absolute Block System—

(a) no train shall be allowed to leave a block station unless Line Clear has been received from the block station in advance and

(b) on double lines such Line Clear shall not be given unless the line is clear, not only up to the first Stop signal at the block station at which such Line Clear is given but also for an adequate distance beyond it;

(c) on single lines such Line Clear shall not be given unless the line is clear of trains running in the same direction, not only up to the first Stop signal at the block station at which such Line Clear is given, but also for an adequate distance beyond it, and is clear of trains running in the direction towards the block station to which such Line Clear is given.

(2) Unless otherwise directed by approved special instructions, the adequate distance referred to in clauses (b) and (c) of sub-rule (1) shall not be less than-

(a) 400 metres in case of two-aspect lower quadrant signalling or two-aspect colour light signalling, and

(b) 180 metres in case of multiple-aspect signalling or modified lower quadrant signalling.

B. Conditions for granting Line Clear

8.02. Conditions for granting Line Clear at a class `A` station—

At a class `A` station on single line or double line, the line shall not be considered clear and Line Clear shall not be given, unless--

(a) the whole of the last preceding train has arrived complete;

(b) all signals have been put back to ‘on’ behind the said train;

(c) the line on which it is intended to receive the incoming train is clear up to the Starter and

(d) all points have been correctly set and all facing points have been locked for the admission of the train on the said line.

S.R.8.02 The Station Master shall also comply with the provisions of S.R.3.49.2 & 3 before granting line clear for a train.

8.03 Conditions for granting Line Clear at a class ‘B’ station.—

(1) At a class ‘B’ station on double line, the line shall not be considered clear and Line Clear shall not be given, unless -

(a) the whole of the last preceding train has arrived complete;
(b) all necessary signals have been put back to ‘on’ behind the said train; and

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(c) the line is clear -

(i) at stations equipped with two-aspect signalling –
   up to the Home signal or

(ii) at stations equipped with multiple-aspect signalling or modified lower quadrant signalling –
   Up to the outermost facing points or the Block Section Limit Board (if any)

(2) At a class ‘B’ station on single line, the line shall not be considered clear and Line Clear shall not be given, unless –

(a) the whole of the last preceding train has arrived complete;

(b) all necessary signals have been put back to ‘on’ behind the said train; and

(c) the line is clear –

(i) at stations equipped with two-aspect signalling –
   up to the Shunting Limit Board or Advanced Starter (if any) at that end of the station nearest to the expected train, or
   up to the Home signal if there is no Shunting Limit Board or Advanced Starter, or
   up to the outermost facing points if there is no Shunting Limit Board or Advanced Starter or Home signal;

(ii) at stations equipped with multiple-aspect signalling or modified lower quadrant signalling -
   up to the Shunting Limit Board or Advanced Starter (if any) at the end of the station nearest to the expected train, or
   up to the outermost facing points if there is no Shunting Limit Board or Advanced Starter.

Note— At a class ‘B’ single line station, this rule does not forbid direct reception of a train from one side, when Line Clear has been given to the block station on the other side provided the distance between the Outer signal and outermost facing points in two aspect signalling and between the Home signal and outermost facing points in multiple-aspect signalling or modified lower quadrant signalling is not less than the sum-total of the adequate distance prescribed in rule 8.01 in regard to conditions for granting Line Clear and Rule 3.40 in regard to conditions for taking ‘off’ Home signal for the admission of a train even where Shunting Limit Boards or Advanced Starters have not been provided as prescribed in sub-rule (1) of Rule 3.32. See illustrative diagrams at the end of this chapter.

S.R. 8.03 The Station Master shall also comply with the provisions of S.R.3.49.2 & 3 before granting Line Clear for a train.

8.04 Conditions for granting Line Clear at a class ‘C’ station—
At a class ‘C’ station on single line or double line in two-aspect, multiple-aspect or modified lower quadrant signalling, the line shall not be considered clear and Line Clear shall not be given, unless-
(a) the whole of the last preceding train has passed complete at least 400 metres beyond the Home signal and is continuing its journey; and

(b) all signals taken ‘off’ for the preceding train have been put back to ‘on’ behind the said train:
provided that on a single line, the line is also clear of trains running in the opposite direction towards the block hut from the block station at the other end.

Note— During thick, foggy or tempestuous weather or dust storm, impairing visibility when the Station Master finds it difficult or impossible to see the position of one or more of the signals concerned, he shall not give Line Clear until he has complied with G.R.3.61 and has also advised, by telephone the Station Master of the station in rear, of the conditions prevailing and has instructed him to issue Caution Orders to the Loco Pilots of all trains to stop at the first Stop signal and observe its aspect and then proceed at a restricted speed of ten (10) kilometres an hour, and has received his acknowledgement. This note shall apply to all classes of stations while granting Line Clear.

C. Obstruction - Double Line
8.05 Obstruction on double line at a block station when a train is approaching—
(1) Class ‘A’ station –
When Line Clear has been given no obstruction shall be permitted outside the Home signal or on the line on which it is intended to admit the train, up to the Starter pertaining to the said line.

(2) Class ‘B’ station-
When Line Clear has been given, no obstruction shall be permitted outside the station section but shunting within the station section may go on continuously provided the necessary signals are kept at ‘on’.

(3) When signals have been taken ‘off’ for an incoming train on to a line which is not isolated, no shunting movement shall be carried on towards the points over which the incoming train will pass.

8.06 Obstruction on double line in the block section.—
(1) When Line Clear has been given, no obstruction shall be permitted in the block section in rear.

(2) Shunting or obstruction for any other purpose shall not be permitted in the block section in rear unless it is clear and is blocked back.

(3) Shunting or obstruction for any other purpose shall not be permitted in the block section in advance unless it is clear and is blocked forward:
provided that when the block section in advance is occupied by a train travelling away from the station, shunting or obstruction
may be permitted behind the train under special instructions taking into consideration the speed, weight and brake power of trains and the gradients on the section and as soon as intimation has been received that the train has arrived at the block station in advance, the line shall be blocked forward if it is still obstructed.

Note— See Rule 8.14 also.

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D. Obstruction - Single Line

D.1. Class ‘A’ stations

8.07 Obstruction on single line at a class `A` station when a train is approaching—
When Line Clear has been given, no obstruction shall be permitted outside the Home signal, or on the line on which it is intended to admit the train, up to the Starter which controls the train.

8.08 Obstructing the block section at a class `A` station on single line—
The block section shall not be obstructed for shunting purposes, unless-
(a) the Station Master has received Line Clear from the Station Master at the other end of the block section or
(b) the block section is blocked back or
(c) is occupied by a train travelling away from the block station at which the shunting is to be performed which shunting may be permitted under special instructions taking into consideration the speed, weight and brake power of trains and the gradients on the section. As soon as intimation has been received that the train has arrived, the block section shall be blocked back and
(d) the Loco Pilot or other person in charge of the shunting operations has received distinct orders from the Station Master to shunt in a manner directed by special instructions.

D.2. Class ‘B’ stations

8.09 Obstruction in the face of an approaching train at a class ‘B’ station on single line—
The line outside the Home signal in two-aspect signalling territory or outermost facing points in multiple-aspect or modified lower quadrant signalling territory in the direction of a train for which Line Clear has been given, shall only be obstructed when a Shunting Limit Board or an Advanced Starter is provided and under special instructions which take into consideration the speed, weight and brake power of trains, the gradients, the position of the first Stop signal and the distance from which that signal can be seen by the Loco Pilot of an approaching train.

S.R. 8.09.1. At stations where obstruction of the line in the face of an approaching train is permitted in accordance with G.R.8.09, it shall be specifically indicated in the SWR.
2. A Board shall be provided at these stations in rear of the Outer signal or Home signal, as the case may be, to warn the Loco Pilots of approaching trains that such shunting is permitted. This provision shall also be indicated in the SWR.
3. If obstruction in the face of an approaching train is permitted under G.R.8.09 in the SWR, shunting shall be carried out adhering strictly to the precautions laid down in G.R.5.20.
4. All restrictions required to be observed in performing shunting at the stations concerned shall be incorporated in the SWR and rigidly complied with.

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8.10 Obstruction within station section at a class ‘B’ station on single line—
(1) If the necessary signals are kept at ‘on’, shunting may be carried on within the station section, provided the provisions of Rule 8.09 are complied with for shunting up to Shunting Limit Board or Advanced Starter, where provided.
(2) When signals have been taken ‘off’ for an incoming train on to a line which is not isolated, no shunting movement shall be carried on towards the points over which the incoming train will pass.

S.R. 8.10 When Line Clear has been given for a train, shunting shall not be carried out under the provisions of G.R.8.10 (1) in thick, foggy or tempestuous weather impairing visibility.

8.11 Obstruction outside station section at a class ‘B’ single line station equipped with two-aspect signals—
The line outside the station section and up to the Outer signal shall not be obstructed unless a railway servant specially appointed in this behalf by the Station Master is in charge of the operations, and unless—
(a) The block section into which the shunting is to take place is clear of an approaching train and all relevant and necessary signals are at ‘on’ position or
(b) If an approaching train has arrived at the Outer signal, the Station Master has personally satisfied himself that the train has been brought to a dead stand at the signal: provided that the line shall not be obstructed under clause (b) in thick, foggy or tempestuous weather impairing visibility, or, in any case unless authorized by special instructions.

S.R.8.11.1. The line shall not be obstructed under Clause (b) of G.R.8 11 during night. Detailed instructions for performing shunting under the provisions of this rule shall be incorporated in the SWR.
2. If a Shunt signal is not provided on the LSS, the Loco Pilot shall be given a written authority to pass the LSS at ‘on’ for shunting purposes in the prescribed form (T/806). This authority shall be returned to the Station Master for cancellation as soon as shunting operation is brought inside the LSS.
3. A tail lamp or tail board shall be placed on the rear most vehicle or on the engine if no vehicles are attached on the side facing the station in rear so as to serve as an indication of the complete return of all vehicles before the cancel last signal is given.

8.12 Obstruction outside station section at a class `B` single line station equipped with manually operated multiple-aspect signals—
The line outside the station section and up to the first Stop signal shall not be obstructed, unless a Railway servant specially appointed in this behalf by the Station Master is in charge of the operations and unless the block
section into which the shunting is to take place is clear of an approaching train.

8.13 Obstruction outside the first Stop signal at a class `B` station on single line—
The line outside the first Stop signal shall not be obstructed unless the line has been blocked back.

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E. General Provisions

8.14 Block back or Block forward—
Block back or block forward shall be done only in accordance with the procedure prescribed by special instructions.

8.15 Authority for shunting or obstruction in block section—
While permitting shunting or obstruction in the block section, the Loco Pilot shall be given authority for shunting in the block section as prescribed under special instructions which authority may be -
(a) either a shunting arm of prescribed size and design on the same post as and under the last Stop signal, or
(b) a token of prescribed design, or
(c) a written permission to shunt.

8.16 Illustrative diagrams –
Class ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ stations on single line and double line are illustrated in the following diagrams, which are not drawn to scale.
Class ‘A’ Double line station in two-aspect signalling territory with Warner, Home, Starter and Advanced Starter signals
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Class ‘A’ Single line station in two-aspect signalling territory with Warner, Home and Starter signals

Class ‘B’ Double line station in two-aspect signalling territory with Warner, Outer, Home, Starter and Advanced Starter signals
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Class ‘B’ Single line station in two-aspect signalling territory with Outer, and Home signals

Class ‘B’ Single Line station in two-aspect signalling territory with Warner, Outer, Home, Starter and Advanced Starter signals/Shunting Limit Boards
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Class ‘B’ Double line station in Multiple-aspect signalling territory with Distant, Home, Starter, Advanced Starter signals and Block Section Limit Board
Class ‘B’ Double line station in Modified Lower-quadrant signalling territory with Distant, Warner, Home, Starter, Advanced Starter signals and Block Section Limit Board

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Class ‘B’ Single line station in Multiple-aspect signalling territory with Distant, Home, Starter & Advanced Starter signals/Shunting Limit Boards
Class ‘B’ Single line station in Modified Lower-quadrant signalling territory with Distant, Warner, Home, Starter and Advanced Starter signals/Shunting Limit Boards

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Class ‘C’ Double line station in Two-aspect signalling territory with Warner and Home signals
Class ‘C’ Double line station in Multiple-aspect signalling territory with Distant and Home signals

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Class ‘C’ Single line station in Two-aspect signalling territory with Waner and Home signals

Class ‘C’ Single line station in Multiple-aspect signalling territory with Distant and Home signals
Class ‘B’ Single line station in two-aspect signalling territory with Outer and Home signals

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Class ‘B’ Single line station in Multiple-aspect signalling territory with Distant, Home and Starter signals
Class ‘B’ Single line station in Modified Lower quadrant signalling territory with Distant, Warner, Home and Starter signals