

# PROCEED ORDER

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The Journal of the Signalling Interest Group Queensland

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*Track maintenance machine MMD 21 at Maxwelton in northwest Queensland adjacent to Direct Traffic Control Block Limit Board MX23 at the eastern end of the crossing loop. The Block Limit Board has an additional sign attached indicating that ATP is provided at each end of the yard.*

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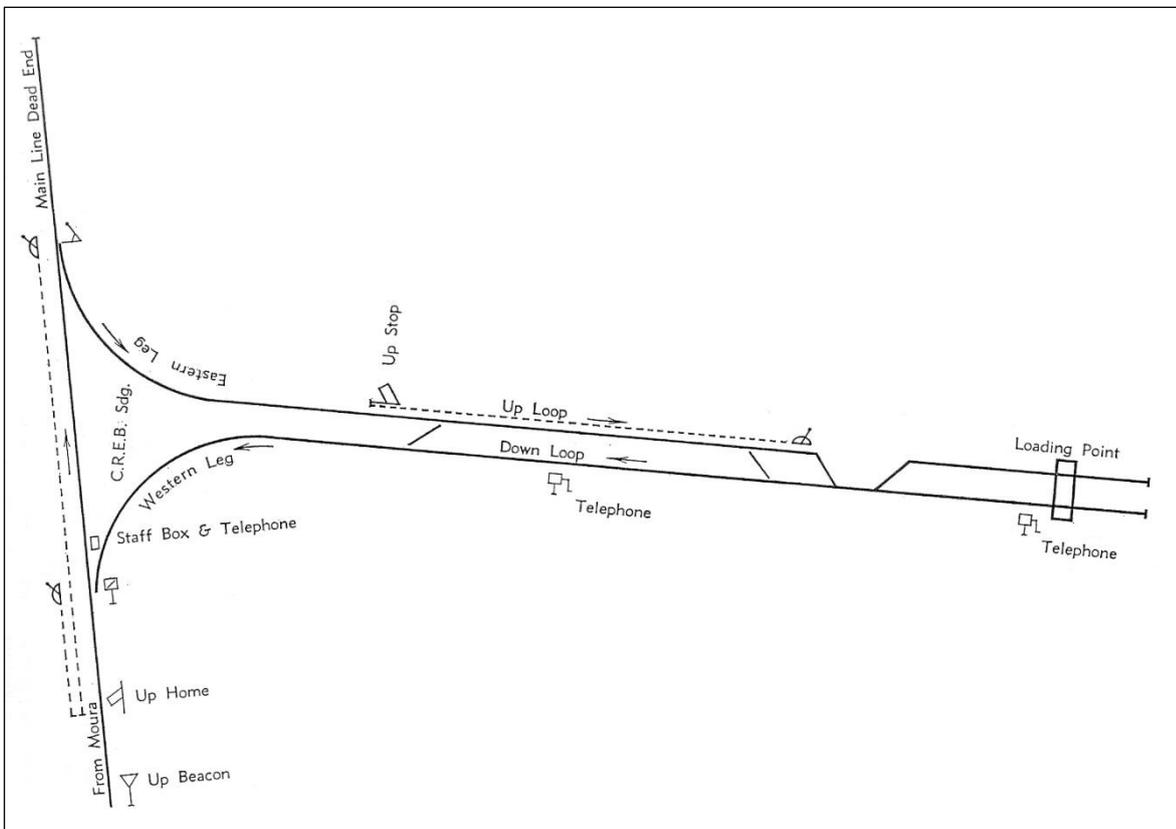
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# Signalling Moura Mine

Moura Mine was first connected by rail directly from Moura when the line opened on 13-1-1963. Approximately two years later a fork line was provided at Moura Mine and brought into use with the signalling arranged as shown in the diagram below. The Up Home signal had been moved further out towards Moura and the Up Stop signal provided. A previous Down Stop signal (fixed at Stop) at the clearance point of the loading bin roads was removed.

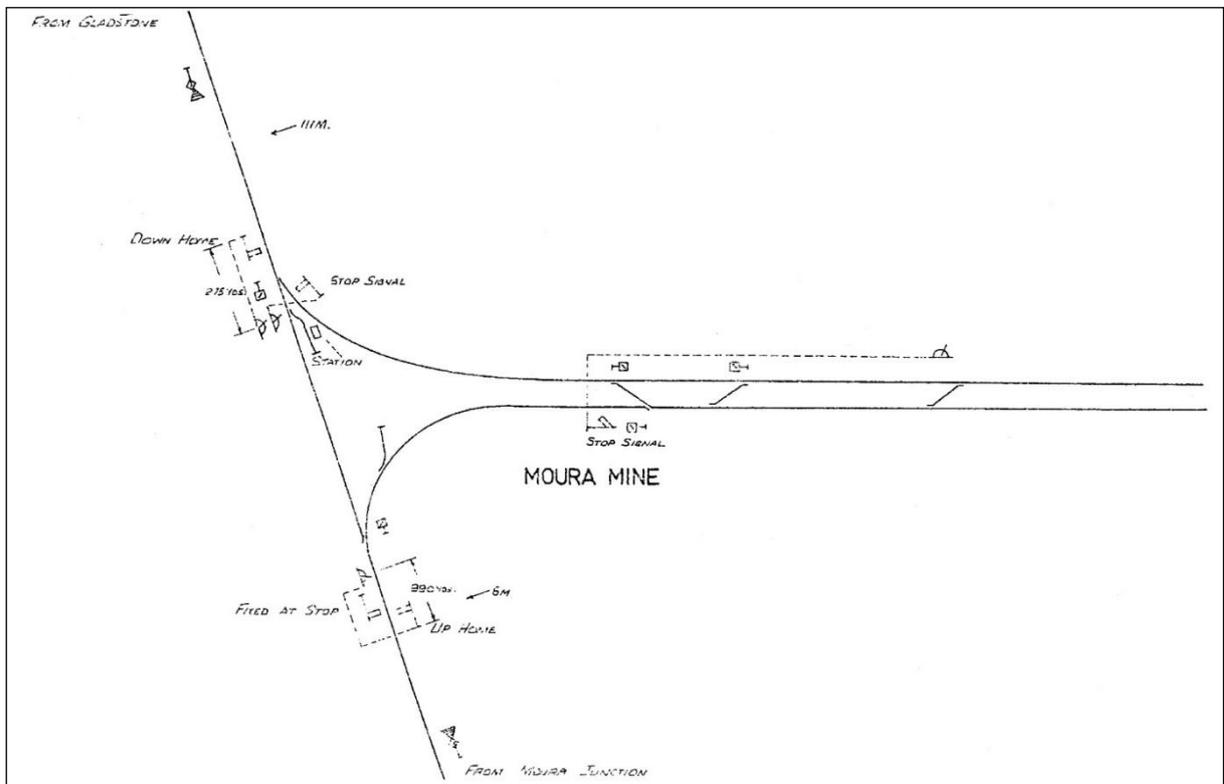
Only two semaphore signals were required along with a number of manual points and one set of TFP's (trailable facing points). The arrows on the diagram show the direction of travel typically used by coal trains. Empty coal trains from Moura would proceed along the main line to the dead end then reverse around the Eastern Leg of the angle and through the Up Loop to the loading point. Once loaded the train would pass through the Down Loop, around the Western Leg, through the TFP's and head towards Moura. The train guard and fireman operated the points and signals as required.

QR Weekly Notice 44 of 2-11-1967 states that a Station Master (4th class) and two Assistant Station Masters (5th class) would be placed at Moura Mine from a date to be fixed. The Moura Short Line linking Moura Mine directly to Gladstone opened for limited traffic on 22-1-1968.



Above: The 1965 signalling arrangement at Moura Mine after construction of the fork line.

The line initially operated with semaphore signalling throughout and Ordinary Staff & Ticket was the safeworking system. The signalling arrangement at Moura Mine is shown below and it is noted that the sidings under the loading bins each have "...sufficient accommodation for the loading of trains consisting of three coupled diesel locomotives, 60 VO wagons and a van".



Above: Signalling arrangement at Moura Mine following opening of the Moura Short Mine.

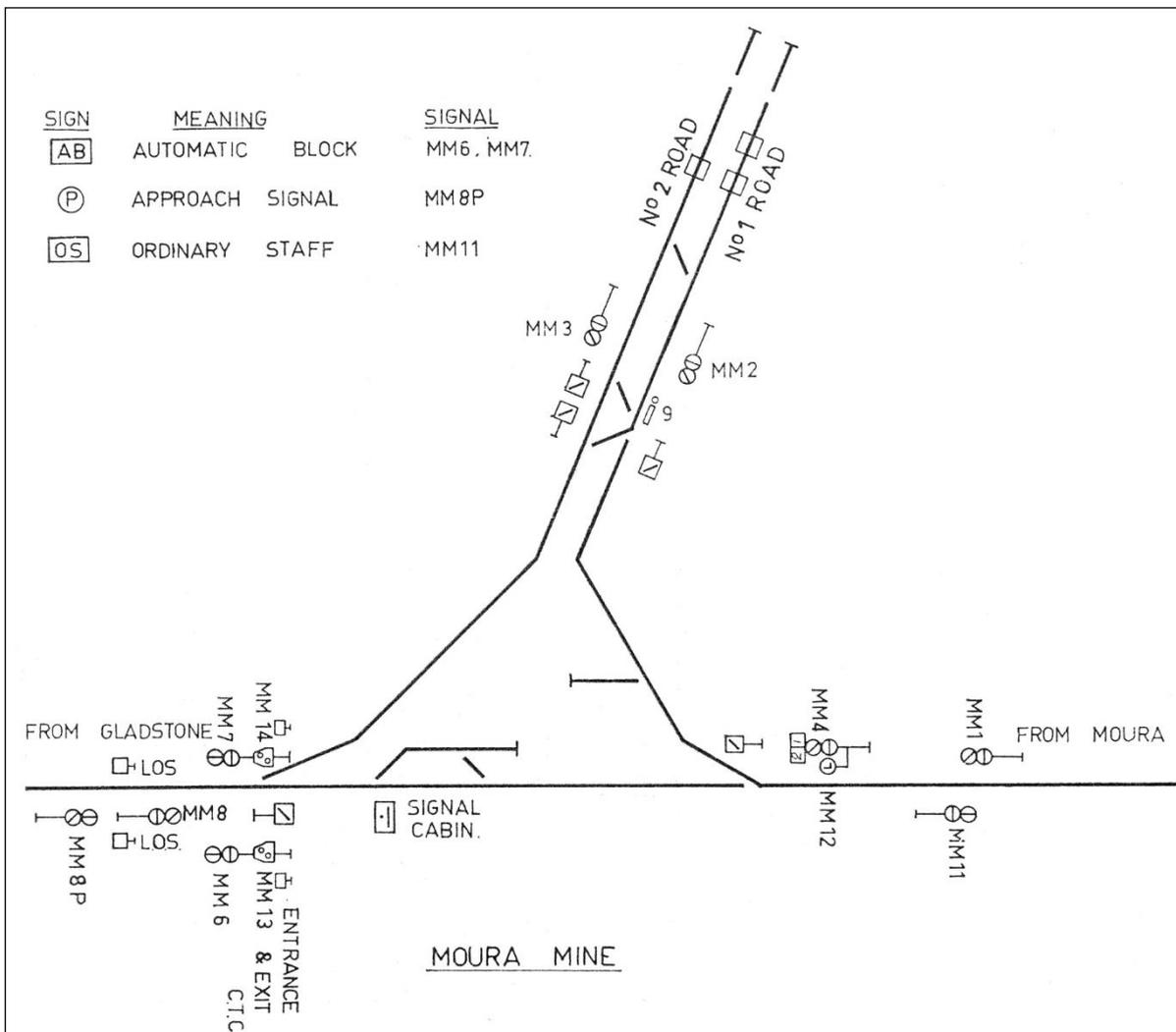
Operation was similar however trains now arrived from Gladstone and pulled past the station on the main line towards Moura. With the TFP's reset the train backed around the Moura leg of the angle and into one of the loading roads. Once loaded the train pulled forward around the Gladstone leg of the angle before departing towards Gladstone.

From 1971 CTC was commissioned on the Moura Short Line marking the first installation and commissioning of CTC in Queensland. The stations at Callemondah, Burra (siding), Stowe, Graham, Clarke, Mt Rainbow, Ballast Siding, Annandale, Earlsfield and Belldeen were under CTC control as well as the sections from Gladstone, South Gladstone and Moura Mine. This CTC panel was located in Rockhampton and also controlled a short section of the North Coast Line. Moura Mine station was operated from a local signal panel in the station building at Moura Mine.

Similar to other parts of the CTC from Gladstone TFP's were used except where electric power points had to be used. Moura Mine had five sets of TFP's and only one set of electric points. The same track layout

remained with TFP's normally set for the working of coal trains. Empty coal trains would arrive at Moura Mine passing Home signal MM8 at Yellow, trail through the points and stop facing MM11. With the TFP's normalised behind the train signal MM4 could be cleared to show a yellow aspect and the train backed around the triangle into No.1 Road behind signal MM2 for loading. In the event of the train being required to load in No.2 Road electric No.9 points would be used to allow the train to back into that road.

After loading signal MM2 (or MM3) would be cleared and the train would travel via the Gladstone leg of the triangle to face signal MM7. MM7 signal was controlled by both the panel operator at Moura Mine and the Train Controller in Rockhampton and when showing a green aspect, the train could trail through the points and depart towards Gladstone.



Above: Signalling arrangement at Moura Mine with locally controlled colour light signalling, trailable and electric points.

Freight trains from Moura to Gladstone enter Moura Mine passing signal MM1 showing a yellow aspect. At signal MM4 the "L" indicator numbered MM12 would be illuminated in conjunction with a red aspect in signal MM4 indicating that the train crew must manually reverse the TFP and

continue along the main line towards the station building. To depart towards Gladstone signal MM6 is placed at proceed showing a green aspect again with cooperation between the Train Controller and panel operator at Moura Mine.

This signalling arrangement continued at Moura Mine for many years until a balloon loop was installed to streamline train operations at Moura Mine. The triangular connection was removed with the balloon loop connected and facing Gladstone. The local panel was decommissioned, and the new signalling was remotely controlled by the Train Controller in Rockhampton. The local signal panel however remained in the station building at Moura Mine but was disconnected. Station staff were withdrawn from Moura Mine and the station became disused and surplus to QR's operational requirements. The building was removed and relocated to Moura then moved again to a private property. The panel remained in the building until located and obtained for a private collection.



*Above: A close up view of two signal switches (No.8 & No.11) on Moura Mine's local signal panel. Note the slightly different style knobs and the engraved identification labels.*

The panel was wall mounted and manufactured by McKenzie & Holland in Australia. Although not exactly part of the first CTC system in Queensland it was installed at the same time and directly interfaced with the CTC through signals MM6 and MM7 which have "CTC CONT." indications adjacent the signals on the panel. This is the only piece of hardware associated with QR's first CTC system known to still exist. The author would appreciate any information about any other hardware existing elsewhere from this CTC installation or any other early CTC installation in Queensland.

## About 'Proceed Order'

The name of this periodical is 'Proceed Order' which is a term possibly familiar to former railway employees, or railway historians, and refers to a safeworking system used in Queensland.

In Ordinary Staff or Electric Staff territory when there was little traffic running it was wasteful of time for trains to stop at every Staff Station to exchange the Staff. Under certain circumstances it was allowed for trains to obtain a 'Proceed Order' and proceed through several Staff Stations without any Ordinary Staff or Electric Staff being on the engine. The Station Master at each end of the sections where the Proceed Order was going to be issued would secure the Staff under lock and key, and when this was confirmed as being done could apply to the Train Controller for the issue of a Proceed Order. The form, once written out, was handed to the Driver of the train. It goes without saying that trains running on a Proceed Order did not cross any other trains until arriving at the station where the Proceed Order terminated.

This small magazine is intended to cover some of the activities and research conducted by the Signalling Interest Group Queensland and will initially be published quarterly in March, June, September and December. No doubt the content will vary but the format chosen was deliberate due to the editors fondness of Sunshine Express and The Signalling Record both of which were black & white A5 format for many years. The Signalling Record is still published in this format, and once several magazines are bound into a hard cover book it presents an easy to handle product with a wealth of information contained in it.

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## On the Network

The most recent change to the Queensland Railway network which is obvious is the completion of the new signalling between Roma Street and Corinda. The old 1960's era four-aspect colour light signals and signal gantries are all gone and have been replaced with new LED signals, mostly on new lightweight signal gantries. Additional signals have been erected on the two middle tracks to enable them to be used bi-directionally when needed. Additional points have also been installed between Roma Street and Milton to allow extra train movements to and from Milton when events are scheduled at Suncorp Stadium.

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## Research Room

One area of interest which will be covered in future articles in this journal is the development of the Ordinary Staff and Ticket system in Queensland. While it seems like a basic and simple system there are many as yet unanswered questions regarding the designs of early Ordinary Staffs, the use of Green Ordinary Staffs, and the perhaps experimental use of Victorian design Ordinary Staffs.

Recent efforts have been directed to trying to document Ordinary Staffs that still exist and see if they match the only two known drawings of Ordinary Staffs and Ticket Boxes used in Queensland. Whist generally they do match standard designs there are discrepancies, and two possible examples of Green Ordinary Staffs have been found. The earlier design of Ordinary Staff has two pins protruding from the side of the Staff however the drawing only shows the dimensions for Red, White and Blue Staffs. It appears that Yellow and Green Staffs of this type also existed and the measurements of these are now becoming clear.



*Above: A standard Red Diamond Ordinary Staff which has seen many years of use judging by the battered and dented brass tubing, and the timber head which has been worn away at the sides.*

## Museum Monitor

With the advent of Facebook the sharing of many things, including photographs, has become considerably more simple. It also makes it easier to track down items of interest for those interested in signalling or safeworking. A recent example is a photograph shared of the Tourist Information Centre at Alpha which is housed in the old Guards Room. The photograph shows a Red Diamond Ordinary Staff as part of the collection which is just the kind of object required for the above research.



*Above: The Ordinary Staff at the small museum at Alpha as seen on Facebook - waiting for research to investigate.*

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## SIGQ

SIGQ was founded in 2003 to provide a platform where people interested in the history and development of Queensland's railway signalling and safeworking systems could share information. A Facebook Group was established later and has been very popular with members. Although it has moved and been renamed a web site has been in existence from 2003 and today can be found at <https://sigq.weebly.com/>

A contact form is included on the web site at the bottom of the Home page which can be used to contact this group regarding information on the web site or in this magazine.

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