

Swiss signals. Part 3, Subsidiary signals

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Subsidiary Signals

by John Jesson

(Continued from Page 11 June 1990)

HILFSSIGNALE (Subsidiary signal)

The Hilfssignal is a diagonal row of yellow lights positioned beneath the main signal, on the same post. When unlit, it has no meaning but when lit it authorises the driver to pass this main signal at danger and proceed to the next main signal, which should be expected to be at danger. If, when approaching a signal at danger, the driver sees the Hilfssignal already lit, he must, before proceeding, stop at the signal until the Hilfssignal is extinguished and re-lit.

BESETZSIGNALE (Occupied track signal)

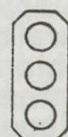
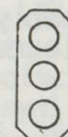
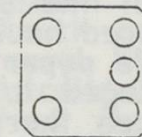
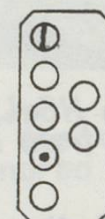
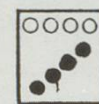
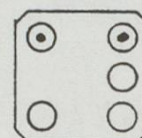
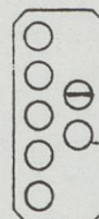
The Besetzungssignale is a horizontal row of yellow lights positioned beneath the main signal, on the same post. When the Besetzungssignale is lit, the main signal will show Fahrbezug 2 or Fahrbezug 6, while a Vorsignal on the same post will be unlit. The meaning of the lit Besetzungssignale is that the track section ahead is occupied. An example of this would be when a train is running into an already occupied platform.

GLEISNUMMEREN- and RICHTUNGSSIGNALE (Track number and Direction signals)

Gleisnummernsignalen and Richtungssignalen (also called Buchstabensignalen - Letter signals) are used at Hauptsignalen (and, exceptionally, at Vorsignalen and Rangiersignalen) to give additional information as to the route the train will be running on. This information is either in the form of a number (Gleisnummernsignale), signifying which track number the train is routed to, or a letter (Richtungssignale), signifying the direction the train is taking (as at a diverging junction), or a track group (as with a freight train arriving at a large yard).

In either case, the digit is illuminated and is usually in the form of a dot matrix (A series of individual lights forming the digit).

Should the digit of a Gleisnummernsignale at a Gruppensignale not be clearly recognised, its meaning must be clarified (A Gruppensignale is a single Hauptsignal which controls departures from a group of tracks). At all other locations, should a digit be unlit, or because of a defect, not be recognisable, it should be ignored.



RIGHTUNGSPFEIL

(Direction arrow)

A Richtungspfeil, when used, indicates the track for which the associated signal is valid.

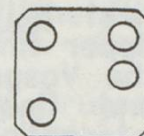
Colours: Black arrow on white background, sometimes with black border.



WEIDERHOLUNGSSIGNALE

(Repeater signal)

At some stations where the driver's view of the departure signal is obscured, a Weiderholungssignale has been installed which informs the driver whether the departure signal is showing clear or stop. The top two (horizontal) lights, when illuminated, mean that the departure signal is showing stop, the lower two (diagonal) indicate clear.



SIGNALRUCKMELDER

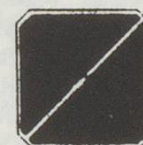
I found this difficult to translate. The UIC dictionary defines them as repeating signals, whilst a straight dictionary translation gives re-registered signals. The best I can do is to call them "Clarification signals". They come in various forms and give advice or clarification either to station staff or the driver. A good example is the indicators on platforms at Zurich Hauptbahnhof, which show a small "v" above a larger letter (when illuminated), advising staff from which direction the train has come. (eg "v/E" ... from Enge).

"H" and "S" PLATES

These round white plates with a black letter "H" or "S" are used for the orientation of drivers when approaching a Haltestelle or Station without an entry signal. They are mounted, usually on one of the catenary masts, at the braking distance from the middle of a Haltestelle or the first point of a station.

"FIXED DISTANT"

Although not called a fixed distant signal, this is the function of this plate, used at the braking distance from an entry signal which does not have a Vorsignal. Also mounted on the catenary masts, it is a square black board with a white border and a white diagonal stripe.



INVALID SIGNALS

Invalid signals, or signals not in use, are obscured either by a white diagonal cross fixed across the face of the signal, or by having the signal head covered by a black plastic sack or cover. The usual reason for this is during a re-signalling project, when the new signals have been installed but the old signalling is still in use.

Next issue, shunt signals.