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Modular steelwork eliminates track possession for rail projects

Modular design of steel ancillaries used in the installation of signalling and trackside equipment has helped to solve logistical and scheduling issues on two recent Network Rail renewal projects.

Technorail has supplied over 50 steel stagings for the installation of location boxes as part of replacement of life-expired signalling on the Marks Tey and Colchester to Walton-on-the-Naze and Clacton-on-Sea lines. Work commenced Jan 2007, with final signalling due to be commissioned in May this year.

James Spikesley, site agent for Mouchel, the civils contractor for the bases and equipment installation, said: "Due to delivery issues with another supplier, we ran the risk of running out of track possession. Technorail guaranteed they could meet our scheduling needs, both in terms of product volume and deadlines.

"Not only this, their staging solution broke down into smaller modules, meaning we could move the platforms to site without risking infrastructure or personnel in terms of manual handling, and without relying on track possession."

The competitors' unit would have been delivered at full staging size (2.1m), requiring on-track plant, and therefore track possession, in order to move them.

Equipped with handrails and steps, stagings play a very important role in safeguarding personnel working on trackside installations, locating the work area away from the dangers of high speed trains. They also provide protection of vital installations from the growing risk of flooding and the higher peak water levels generated by flash storms and inadequate run-off.

Mr Spikesley added: "The flexibility of the Technorail product and levels of service have been very good. They altered their handrail dimensions to suit requirements and also adapted the manufacturing lengths of some of the module elements to allow for central location of equipment rather than at the back."

Cabinet upgrading, Watford-Bushey

For cabinet upgrading work between Watford and Bushey, Network Rail engineers have been able to effectively 're-skin' existing GRP cabinets with a fastrack yet high security solution, also from Technorail.

This involves the removal of the outer GRP skin of the existing cabinet, leaving the still serviceable framework and base intact for installing the new steel cabinet. It has reduced site preparation, as well as the need to dismantle signalling and other trackside services, avoiding track possession, disruption to train services and significantly speeding up the renewal process.

Network Rail has renewed almost 200 full size cabinets in this way, with Technorail delivering consignments in line with programme needs.

Location cabinets are one of the most visible targets of vandalism. The consequences of their violation can be extremely serious, not just in terms of the potential disruption to signalling, telecommunications and train services, but also the risk of injury or death of the assailant if electrical supplies are tampered with.

The high security design of Technorail cabinets hardens trackside installations against criminal attack, and typically includes:

- One-piece folded doors back and front
- Robust hinges
- Integral, simultaneous rotating shoot-bolt locking system
- Shrouded, hardened hasp and staple locking to prevent 'cropping' of padlock and to suit rail industry approved padlock systems.
- Completely encased, integral stainless steel operating handle
- Internal mounting provision for secure installation of equipment.
- Multiple bolt-down footprint
- Sloped top for water shedding

Technocover also offers different grades of hot dip galvanised coating, called Duragalv, adjusted to give required service life with local atmospheric corrosivity rates, such as coastal saline, factored in. The highest specification, at 140 microns, will support comparable service life to stainless steel while offering significant cost savings.

ENDS

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Photos: supplied as high res JPEG attachments



Modular design of stagings, allowing components to be easily transported to site with reduced reliance on track possession, can ease the pressure of railway construction programmes.



Outdated GRP cabinets on the Watford-Bushey line are being reskinned with high security steel replacements from Technorail. These reuse the existing cabinet frame and base for faster installation without the need to disconnect services and the potential disruption to train running times.
Reskinned cabinet shown on right.



Hardening of location cabinets using Technorail Ultrasecure 'wrap-around' cases, designed for site installation without track possession.