16. APTA PR-E-RP-017-99
Recommended Practice for 27-Point Control and Communication Trainlines for Locomotives and Locomotive-Hauled Equipment

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APTA Commuter Rail Executive Committee

Abstract: This document defines the Recommended Practices for 27-point MU control and communication trainlines, including functional hardware and interfaces on the vehicles with circuit functions, for use on new/rebuilt locomotives and locomotives-hauled vehicles.

Keywords: control command, trainline, 27-point
Participants

The American Public Transportation Association greatly appreciates the contributions of the following individual(s), who provided the primary effort in the drafting of the *Recommended Practice for 27-Point Control and Communication Trainline for Locomotives and Locomotive-Hauled Equipment*.

Dick Bruss

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</tbody>
</table>
Contents

1. Overview ............................................................................................................................................. 16.3
   1.1 Scope ............................................................................................................................................. 16.3
   1.2 Purpose ......................................................................................................................................... 16.3

2. References ........................................................................................................................................... 16.3

3. Definitions abbreviations and acronyms ......................................................................................... 16.4
   3.1 Definitions ..................................................................................................................................... 16.4

4. General ............................................................................................................................................... 16.5
   4.1 Purpose of 27-point trainlines ..................................................................................................... 16.5
   4.2 Types of trainlines ......................................................................................................................... 16.5
   4.3 Configurations ............................................................................................................................... 16.5

5. Application to vehicles ...................................................................................................................... 16.7
   5.1 End location (left/right/both) ....................................................................................................... 16.7
   5.2 Provisions for future installation ................................................................................................. 16.8
   5.3 Mounting ....................................................................................................................................... 16.8
   5.4 Keying and identification ............................................................................................................. 16.8
   5.5 Junction boxes ............................................................................................................................... 16.8
   5.6 Car wire routing ............................................................................................................................ 16.9
   5.7 Wiring ............................................................................................................................................ 16.9

6. Testing ............................................................................................................................................... 16.10
   6.1 Wiring .......................................................................................................................................... 16.10
   6.2 Proof-of-design ............................................................................................................................ 16.10

7. Wire function tables ......................................................................................................................... 16.11
   7.1 Categories of function ................................................................................................................. 16.11

8. Illustrations ........................................................................................................................................ 16.11
   8.1 Tables .......................................................................................................................................... 16.11
   8.2 Figures .......................................................................................................................................... 16.12
1. Overview

1.1 Scope

This document defines the Recommended Practices for 27-point MU control and communication trainlines, including functional hardware (e.g. jumpers and receptacles) and interfaces on the vehicles with circuit functions, for use on new/rebuilt locomotives and locomotives-hauled vehicles.


1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define 27-point jumper cable and associated receptacle contact functions and installation requirements on vehicles so as to allow intermixing of cars and locomotives of varying designs while maintaining mechanical and electrical compatibility of the trainline systems.

For special functions not already in general use, it is recommended that the specifying entity, be it an authority or railroad, approach APTA for a recommendation as to how to address the property-specific functions.

When developing new equipment specifications, it is highly advised that a careful review between the specifying authority and operating railroad(s) be made of the trainline control system requirements (both electrical and mechanical) to identify any subtle issues that may not be contained in this document.

2. References

AAR S-512-1994, 27-Point Control Plug and Receptacle Standard

APTA PR-E-RP-009-98, Recommended Practice for Wire Used on Passenger Rolling Stock

APTA PR-E-RP-002-98, Recommended Practice for Wiring of Passenger Equipment

APTA PR-E-S-001-98, Standard for Insulation Integrity

APTA PR-E-RP-019-99, Recommended Practice for 27-point Jumper and Receptacle Hardware

For references in Italics, see Section 2.
3. Definitions abbreviations and acronyms

3.1 Definitions

3.1.1 27-Point jumper cable: A cable assembly, having a 27-conductor plug on one or both ends, which is used to provide a flexible electrical connection between two cars and/or locomotives.

3.1.2 27-Point receptacle: The receptacle(s) mounted on the ends of rail vehicles into which the 27-point jumper cables mate.

3.1.3 jumper, fixed: A cable assembly, having a 27-conductor plug on one end and the other end permanently fixed to the vehicle, which is used to provide a flexible electrical connection between two cars and/or locomotives.

3.1.4 looping: The process of connecting a jumper cable between two adjacent receptacles on the same vehicle. This is normally done on the exposed end of the last car of a train and establishes circuits identifying that point as the end of the train for various trainline circuits.

3.1.5 power car: For the purposes of this recommended practice a vehicle which serves the propulsion and/or head end power purpose(s) of a locomotive but is part of a semi-permanently coupled trainset. Typically, only one end of a power car is suitable to be attached to the train.

3.1.6 receptacle, dummy: A receptacle that is used to hold the free end of an unconnected jumper cable. The dummy may include contact(s) to establish end-of-train circuit functions for the trainline, or it may be a purely passive device with no contacts.

3.1.7 trainline: For the purposes of this recommended practice, an electrical cable system that allows electrical signals to be sent over the entire length of the train. Types include power, control, communication and data, often with more than one function contained within the same cable. The trainline may connect to equipment in each vehicle, or may simply pass through, providing a signal path between vehicles on opposite ends of that vehicle.

3.1.8 trainline, car control/communication: A trainline (referred to within this document as "Communication") whose function is primarily to convey car control and communication signals throughout the train. Typical signals include: door controls and indications, public address, brake applied/ released indications, etc.

3.1.9 trainline, multiple unit (MU): A trainline whose primary function is to convey traction and dynamic brake commands and indications. This trainline is used to provide those signals between:

- Locomotives coupled together
- Cab car and locomotive
- Locomotives or power cars placed at opposite ends of the train
4. General

4.1 Purpose of 27-point trainlines

An electrical trainline allows a single point in the train to issue commands to all or some of the vehicles simultaneously. Likewise, indications are provided from one or more points in the consist to a central monitoring point.

4.2 Types of trainlines

The two types of 27-point trainlines defined in this document are listed below. Normally, operation of these two types of trainlines is completely independent.

4.2.1 MU (multiple unit)

This trainline is used to convey signals relating to traction, dynamic brake and traction/locomotive status indications among locomotives of a consist. In push-pull consists, it is used to convey these signals between cab car operator console and the locomotive.

Vehicles conforming to this recommended practice are generally compatible with most freight locomotive MU trainlines (as defined in AAR S-512-1994). Individual railroad rules and operating practices govern intermixing of this equipment.

Electric locomotives equipped for push/pull service are equipped with two MU trainline systems. One system (identified White) is currently used exclusively between some electric locomotives. The White system uses an analog throttle control.

The second (identified Black) is used exclusively between cab cars and electric locomotives. The black trainline employs send/receive "diesel" digital throttle logic. The use of the "Black" MU system for push/pull allows universal use of cab cars with both diesel and electric locomotives, without the requirement for two different types of MU trainlines systems on all cars.

4.2.2 Communication

This trainline is used to convey control and indication signals, as well as audio (for public address, intercom, etc.) throughout the consist. Most of the functions reside only within the passenger cars, however several signals are conveyed to the locomotive and cab car to indicate train status for such items as brakes applied/released.

4.3 Configurations

A single jumper cable for a given type of trainline is required at vehicle-to-vehicle coupling. Refer to Figure 1.

4.3.1 MU Trainline system configurations

4.3.1.1 General

- 27 conductor trainline
– 74 VDC nominal voltage, ungrounded
– Voltage source from locomotive
– On/ off commands/ indications except for two (2) analog

4.3.1.2 Locomotives:
– 4 MU receptacles, two on each end of locomotive
– 1 MU jumper coupled between units when two or more locomotives are coupled
– Receptacle arrangement and location per Figures 2 and 3
– Conductor function assignment per Tables 1, 3 or 4

4.3.1.3 Power cars:
– 2 MU receptacles, on the end connected to the rest of the consist
– Receptacle arrangement and location per Figures 2 and 3
– Conductor function assignment per Tables 1, 3 or 4

4.3.1.4 Cars equipped for push/ pull operation:
– 4 MU receptacles, two per end (one receptacle per end is permissible, but not recommended because cars cannot be turned end-for-end)
– 1 MU jumper coupled between adjacent vehicles
– Receptacle arrangement and location per Figures 2 and 4
– Conductor function assignment per Tables 2, 5 or 6

Note: The MU trainline connects to equipment only on locomotives, power cars and cab cars, and merely passes through other intermediate vehicles.

4.3.2 Communication trainline system configurations

4.3.2.1 General
– 27 conductor trainline
– 74 VDC nominal voltage, grounded negative
– Shields for audio wiring grounded at one point only per vehicle
– On/ off commands/ indications
– Audio analog signals on balanced lines
4.3.2.2 Locomotives

- 4 communication receptacles, two on each end of locomotive
- 1 communication jumper coupled between units when two or more locomotives are coupled
- Receptacle arrangement and location per Figures 2 and 3
- Conductor function assignment per Tables 8 or 9

4.3.2.3 Power cars

- 2 communication receptacles
- Receptacle arrangement and location per Figures 2 and 3
- Conductor function assignment per Tables 8 or 9

4.3.2.4 Cars

- 4 communication receptacles, two per end (one receptacle per end is permissible, but not recommended because cars cannot be turned end-for-end)
- 1 communication jumper coupled between adjacent vehicles
- Receptacle arrangement and location per Figures 2 and 4
- Conductor function assignment per Tables 8 or 9

Note-- Generally, the communication trainline connects to functions on all passenger carrying cars and passes through non-passenger cars, such as express equipment. Some but not all functions connect to equipment in the locomotive; this typically includes indications of train status, such as all brakes released, door closed, etc.

5. Application to vehicles

5.1 End location (left/right/both)

The location of the receptacles on the end of the vehicle should conform to Figures 3 or 4.

5.1.1 Locomotives

Receptacles for a given function (MU, car control, etc.) should be provided on all four corners of the locomotive. Exception: The black MU trainline receptacle is only required on two diagonal corners of electric locomotives (front right and left rear positions).

5.1.2 Power cars

Receptacles for a given function (MU, car control, etc.) should be provided on both sides of the train end of the power car, to allow it to be used on either end of the consist.
5.1.3 Cars

Receptacles for a given function (MU, car control, etc.) should be provided, at a minimum, on both ends of a car, and, for a given function, on the same side of the car. (For example, the MU cable system might be only on the left side of the car and the communication cable only on the right side.) On intercity passenger cars, the receptacles should be located on all four corners of the car to allow the cars to be rotated end-for-end. On all other cars, it is strongly recommended both trainline systems be applied to all four corners of each car.

5.2 Provisions for future installation

If the trainline is installed on one side of the car only, provisions should be provided for future installation on the second side, which include: receptacle mounting hole covered with a blanking plate, conduit for wiring and sufficient room in the junction boxes to add the additional receptacle wiring.

5.3 Mounting

The plate to which the receptacles (and jumper flanges, if used) are mounted should be reinforced to resist, without bending, forces produced from pulling the locked jumper out of the receptacle, such as by an unauthorized uncoupling. The jumper cable should be sacrificial relative to the car body components under these conditions.

Receptacle mounting should be such that there is adequate clearance between jumpers, receptacles and uncoupling rods, diaphragm/buffer, couplers, air hoses, etc. Variables include:

- Coupler motion horizontally and vertically
- Relative motion to adjacent vehicle, in curve, passing through crossover, in buff and draft, etc.
- Whether jumper is inserted into receptacle or not

There should be no interference that restricts the receptacle cover from being fully opened to allow insertion or withdrawal of jumpers.

5.4 Keying and identification

Receptacles and jumper cables should be keyed, color coded and labeled per paragraph 4.1 of APTA PR-E-RP-019-00 to prevent cables having different functions from being cross-connected. Labeling should be provided on the receptacle cover and/or adjacently on the car body.

5.5 Junction boxes

A stainless steel junction box, equipped with stud type terminal blocks, should be provided near the end of each vehicle to provide for the connection of the receptacle pigtails with the vehicle car body wiring. The terminal blocks for different functions MU, communication, etc., should be

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2 For references in Italics, see Section 2.
physically separate. Individual terminals should be permanently labeled for each specific wire name.

### 5.6 Car wire routing

#### 5.6.1 End to end

Wiring practice should generally conform to *APTA PR-E-RP-002-98, Recommended Practice for Wiring Passenger Equipment*, with the following additional requirements:

- Wiring connecting the 27-point receptacles from one end of the vehicle to the other should be run in conduit or equivalent.

- Where trainline wires are required to cross, (such as forward and reverse wires), this should occur at the B-end (rear) of the vehicle.

- The wiring for the different types of trainline systems (MU and communication) should be mechanically separated, including separate conduits, so as to minimize the risk of EMI and to prevent accidental cross connection, either from installation or from mechanical injury sustained in service.

- The routing of the trainline cables, particularly under car, should be selected so as to ensure it is well protected from mechanical damage, especially from wayside debris.

### 5.7 Wiring

#### 5.7.1 Standards

Wire should conform to *APTA PR-E-RP-009-98, Recommended Practice for Wire Used on Passenger Rolling Stock*.

#### 5.7.2 Terminations

The preferred method of termination should be with vibration-resistant, ring-tongue, and crimp type lugs.

#### 5.7.3 Continuity

All like pins of the trainline cable systems should have continuity between all like receptacles, whether the function is currently in use or not.

#### 5.7.4 Spare circuit availability

In addition, all 27 wires of each of the trainline systems should be brought within the vehicle to suitable terminal blocks so current spares are easily available for future assignment.

#### 5.7.5 Spare wires end to end

All undesignated function pins and conductors should be marked as spare wires and should be installed between end-of-car junction boxes for each trainline cable system. Spare or unused wires should not be grounded.
6. Testing

6.1 Wiring

6.1.1 Insulation

The requirements for tests are those contained in *APTA PR-E-S-001-98, Standard for Insulation Integrity*.

6.1.2 Continuity

Tests should be undertaken to ensure that:

- Continuity exists between all intended contacts of all receptacles
- Continuity exists between trainlines and each vehicle connection to the trainline circuits
- No wires are unintentionally grounded
- No wires are shorted or cross-connected to unintended circuits

6.1.3 Functional tests

In addition, each conductor of each trainline should be exercised to ensure the equipment to which it is connected transmits/receives the trainline signal correctly.

6.2 Proof-of-design

An engineering Proof-of-Design type test should be conducted on the new vehicles.

6.2.1 New vehicle tests

At a minimum, a pair of vehicles should be tested, but should there be more than one vehicle type, all types should be included in the test. In addition, new vehicles should be tested with all types of existing vehicles with which the new equipment is to be operated.

6.2.2 Functional tests

These tests should include operating each conductor of each trainline in all possible modes of operation (including new car to existing car and the reverse, existing car to new car), to demonstrate proper functioning of all controls and indications.

6.2.3 Cable swing and interference

In addition, receptacle and jumper location and potential interference with coupler, uncoupling rods, diaphragm/buffer, couplers, air hoses, etc. should be checked while:

- Manipulating jumpers into and out of receptacles
- Swinging coupler
– Curve test of two (or more) coupled vehicles through minimum radius curve and sharpest crossovers in both buff and draft.

7. Wire function tables

7.1 Categories of function

The following tables identify wire functions in two categories:

– Pre-Assigned, and

– Suggested Use

7.1.1 Pre-assigned wire functions

"Pre-Assigned" functions are those for which a wire is exclusively assigned for all vehicles, regardless of whether the function itself exists on the vehicle. For example, dynamic brake functions may not be installed on a specific locomotive, but the wires in the trainline will be assigned exclusively for that function and cannot be used for other purposes.

7.1.2 Suggested use wire functions

"Suggested Use" is a function which is currently in use on some vehicles, and if those vehicles are to be intermixed with other model vehicles, the same function must be assigned. These wire functions are herein designated as “Spare”, with suggested function, if any, in parenthesis.

7.1.3 Diesel MU AAR trainline standard

The diesel locomotive MU configuration is based on the AAR Standard S-512-1994, and will allow inter-mating of APTA standard locomotives with most freight locomotive types.

7.1.4 Communication trainline conventions

Two alternate communication trainline functionality conventions have been provided. The intercity version (Table 8) provides a convention suited for long haul or commuter equipment. The commuter version (Table 9) provides an alternative that is already in use in a number of commuter-type operations.

8. Illustrations

8.1 Tables

1. MU System for Diesel-Electric Locomotives

2. MU System for Cab Car Compatible to Diesel-Electric Locomotive

3. MU System for Electric Locomotives

4. MU System for Electric Locomotive equipped for Diesel Logic Cab Car Control

5. MU System for Dual Mode Cab Car Compatible with: Diesel-Electric or Electric Loco
6. MU System for Car Pass-Through

7. (Reserved for future use.)

8. Communication System for Intercity Equipment

9. Communication System for Commuter Equipment

8.2 Figures

1. Typical Consist 27-point Jumper Cable Arrangement

2. 27-point Receptacle Positions

3A. Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors – Locomotive F-end

3B. Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors – Locomotive B-end

4A. Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors – Low-level Car

4B. Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors – High-level Car
Table 1 MU System for Diesel-Electric Locomotives

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<th>PIN</th>
<th>WIRE DESIGNATION</th>
<th>WIRE GAUGE</th>
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<td>14</td>
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NOTES:
- THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF EACH LOCOMOTIVE IS COMMON TO ALL LOCOMOTIVES VIA THIS WIRE.
- THE LEAD LOCOMOTIVE FEEDS +74 V TO TRAILING UNITS VIA THIS WIRE.
- ANALOG

UNLESS NOTED, ALL SIGNALS ARE OFF-ON MAINTAINED AT 0 OR 74 VDC.

FUNCTION
C=COMMAND
I=INDICATION
A=AUDIO

TRAINLINE STANDARD
27 POINT MU SYSTEM FOR DIESEL-ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES

TABLE 1
Table 2 MU System for Cab Car Compatible to Diesel-Electric Locomotive

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<th>PIN</th>
<th>NAME</th>
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NOTES:
- The negative side of each locomotive is common to all locomotives via this wire.
- The lead locomotive feeds +74 V to cab car via this wire.
- Analog

Notes:
- Unless noted, all signals are off-on maintained at 0 or 74 VDC.

FUNCTION
C=COMMAND
I=INDICATION
A=AUDIO

Trainline Standard: 27 Point MU System for Cab Car Compatible to Diesel-Electric Locomotive

Table 2
### Table 3 MU System for Electric Locomotives

#### 27 POINT MU FUNCTION CHART (WHITE RECEPTACLE)

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<th>WIRE GAUGE</th>
<th>FUNCTION NAME</th>
<th>VOLTAGE RANGE (VDC)</th>
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**NOTES:**

- D> THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF EACH LOCOMOTIVE IS COMMON TO ALL LOCOMOTIVES VIA THIS WIRE.
- E> THE LEAD LOCOMOTIVE FEEDS +74 V TO TRAILING UNITS VIA THIS WIRE.
- F> MOMENTARY ACTUATION
- G> CIRCUITS 22/27 FORM A CURRENT LOOP TRACTION COMMAND.

#### NOTES:

- UNLESS NOTED, ALL SIGNALS ARE OFF-ON MAINTAINED AT 0 OR 74 VDC.

#### FUNCTION

- C=COMMAND
- I=INDICATION
- A=AUDIO

#### TYPICAL OF AEM-7

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Table 4 MU System for Electric Locomotive Equipped for Diesel Logic Cab Car Control

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**NOTES:**

- UNLESS NOTED, ALL SIGNALS ARE OFF-ON MAINTAINED AT 0 TO 74 VDC.
- [D>]: THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF EACH LOCOMOTIVE IS COMMON TO ALL LOCOMOTIVES VIA THIS WIRE.
- [D>]: THE LOCOMOTIVE FEEDS +74 V TO CAB CAR VIA THIS WIRE.

**FUNCTION**

C=COMMAND
I=INDICATION
A=AUDIO

**TRAINLINE STANDARD:**

27 POINT MU SYSTEM FOR ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE EQUIPPED FOR DIESEL LOGIC CAB CAR CONTROL
Table 5 MU System for Dual Mode Cab Car Compatible with: Diesel-Electric or Electric Loco

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NOTES:
1. THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF EACH LOCOMOTIVE IS COMMON TO ALL LOCOMOTIVES VIA THIS WIRE.
2. THE LOCOMOTIVE FEEDS +74 V TO THE CAB CAR VIA THIS WIRE.

A

FUNCTION
C=COMMAND
I=INDICATION
A=AUDIO

TRAINLINE STANDARD:
27 POINT MU SYSTEM FOR DUAL MODE CAB CAR COMPATIBLE WITH DIESEL-ELECTRIC OR ELECTRIC LOCO

UNLESS NOTED, ALL SIGNALS ARE OFF-ON MAINTAINED AT 0 TO 74 VDC.
Table 6 MU System for Car Pass-Through

#8 and #9 cross within the car
and also in the MU jumper
### Table 7 Trainline Standard

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<th>WIRE DESIGNATION</th>
<th>WIRE GAUGE</th>
<th>FUNCTION NAME</th>
<th>VOLTAGE RATING (VDC)</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
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**NOTES:**
- Shield common for all 5 shielded pairs 1-point ground to carbody; shield is continuous over length of locomotive / car.
- Derived from PA unit.
- Transformer coupled to 600 ohm balanced line coupled.
- The negative side of each car 74 VDC system is common to all cars via this wire. The negative is grounded to the carbody in each car at the battery. Cross within the car and also in the communication jumper.

**FUNCTION:**
- C = COMMAND
- I = INDICATION
- A = AUDIO
- F = FUTURE

**27 POINT COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINLINE STANDARD</th>
<th>27 POINT COMMUNICATION SYSTEM</th>
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</thead>
</table>
|                     | TABLE 7 8

**NOTES:**
- Unless noted, all signals are on-off maintained at 0 or 74 VDC derived from car battery system.
- These 3 are powered from locomotive battery system.
- Communication line measured in db.
- Momentary 74 V signal (push button).
- 2-conductor shielded.
Table 8 Communication System for Intercity Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pin#</th>
<th>Wire Designation</th>
<th>Wire Gauge</th>
<th>Function Name</th>
<th>Voltage Range (VDC)</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Current Required (mA)</th>
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Notes:
- Shield common for all 5 shielded pairs 1-point ground to carbody; shield is continuous over length of locomotive / car.
- Derived from PA Unit.
- Transformer 600 Ohm balanced line coupled (4 places).
- The negative side of each car 74 VDC system is common to all cars via this wire. The negative is grounded to the carbody in each car at the battery.
- #14/15, 16/17, 18/23 cross within the car and also in the communication jumper.

Function:
- C=Command
- I=Indication
- A=Audio
- F=Future

Notes:
- Unless noted, all signals are off-on maintained at 0 or 74 VDC derived from car battery system.
- These 3 are powered from locomotive battery system.
- Communication line measured in dB.
- Momentary +74 v signal (push button).
- 2-conductor shielded

Trainline Standard: 27 Point Communication System for Intercity Equipment

16.20 Volume III - Electrical
### Table 9 Communication System for Commuter Equipment

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<th>PIN#</th>
<th>WIRE DESIGNATION</th>
<th>WIRE GAUGE</th>
<th>FUNCTION NAME</th>
<th>VOLTAGE RANGE (VDC)</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>CURRENT REQUIRED (MA)</th>
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**Notes:**
- Unless noted, all signals are off–on maintained at 0 or 36 VDC derived from car battery system.
- These are powered from locomotive battery system.
- Communication line measured in dB.
- ** Momentary +36 V signal (push button).
- ▲ 2–conductor shielded
- 2/11, 17/27 & 18/26 cross within the car and also in the communication jumper.
- C=command
- I=indication
- A=audio
- F=future

**Alternate Trainline Standards:**

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<th>WIRE DESIGNATION</th>
<th>WIRE GAUGE</th>
<th>FUNCTION NAME</th>
<th>VOLTAGE RANGE (VDC)</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>CURRENT REQUIRED (MA)</th>
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Figure 1  Typical Consist 27 point Jumper Cable Arrangement

- If electric locomotive, use black MU receptacle
- If car is equipped with communication and MU receptacles on both sides, jumpers can be applied on either side

INTERCITY CONSIST

PUSH—PULL CONSIST
Figure 2  27-point Receptacle Positions

1. ALL RECEPTACLES MUST BE ON RIGHT SIDE, FACING CAB CAR.
2. OPTIONAL IF NOT EQUIPPED SPACE PROVIDED FOR FUTURE INSTALLATION.

FIGURE 2  27 POINT RECEPTACLE POSITIONS
Figure 3A   Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors - Locomotive F end
Figure 3B  Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors – Locomotive B-end
Figure 4A  Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors Low-Level Car
Figure 4B  Standard Locations: End of Vehicle Trainline Connectors - High level car

[Diagram showing standard locations for high level car connections]