

Process For the Specification of Position Data

Background of the Invention

The invention involves a process for the specification of position data for several routes, in particular vehicle routes. For fleet management, particularly in the area of local public transit, it is necessary to have available precise position data of the route to be driven. For example, the activation points for the triggering of LSA (light-signal-system) telegrams for priority switchover of traffic signal systems must be reproducible with tighter tolerances. Furthermore, the position data can also be used to control an optic and/or acoustic stop (i.e., bus stop or metro stop) signaling inside the vehicle as well as for the triggering of an arrival indication at the bus stops prior to arrival. Depending on the position of the vehicle at a particular point in time, a specific waiting time would result at the individual stops. This projected waiting time can be indicated, for example, as "Arrival in XY minutes". Position data are also used to determine adherence to the route schedule. By comparing the reference position data to the actual position data, deviation from schedule - later or earlier - can be determined in a simple way, and can be signaled to the driver, and possibly to the riders.

The position data management for several routes has previously occurred separately for each individual route. Essentially equidistant position data is determined for each route. Junctions or co-uses of position data of other routes

are also not provided for if the routes only deviate from one another in a small partial section. The volume of data is correspondingly large. The low flexibility with regard to route changes is furthermore disadvantageous, in particular
5 for the necessity of bypass sections.

Summary of the Invention

The invention is based on the task of specifying a process of the generic type in which the required volume of data is reduced, and which is characterized through
10 flexibility in terms of simpler adjustability to changed conditions.

The task is resolved according to the invention by dividing the routes up into partial routes, such that route sections that are common to at least two routes form common
15 partial routes in which at least one point of each partial route is used for the specification of position data. Through the introduction of common partial routes, which are managed to an extent as a data record for several routes, a considerable reduction of the volume of data to be stored
20 results.

In an advantageous embodiment, the beginning point and/or the end point of each partial route is used for the specification of position data, whereby the quantity of data is reduced to a maximum of only two position data records each
25 for each partial route of the entire line. Therefore it is sufficient if only the first, or the last, partial route is also characterized by the starting point, or end point.

Except for this one partial route, the remaining partial routes are clearly defined by only their starting, or end point. All partial routes can be used simultaneously as a data basis for additional routes, since the beginning and end point of the common partial routes are accepted. With intermediate partial routes, the starting or end points of neighboring partial routes can be referenced.

Especially interesting is a process in the case of rail-bound routes, wherein the position of switchpoints is used for the specification of position data. Since, for example, a streetcar system is limited to fixed routes that are predetermined by the rail network, partial routes can each be defined in a simple way between two switchpoints. Branch lines that form the starting point, or the end point of various partial routes, are thus clearly identified.

Bypass lines can also be integrated into the partial route formation without a problem. Therefore, the volume of data to be managed can be kept lower if the partial routes that form the bypass routes, are already known at least in part from other routes.

The position data can be managed according to the specific route, by entering the position data into a database preferably of a central control unit but also or alternatively into an on-board computer of the vehicle. If entered into a central control unit, the data can be made available to the vehicles traveling on the corresponding route by means of a mobile data storage unit, e.g., the position data of a route,

including by-pass(es) when applicable, can be entered into the on-board computer of the vehicle by means of a magnetic card or a disc. Route plan specifications, in some cases with incorporation of planned bypass lines can be very flexibly converted in this way.

Therefore, the position data of a route, including by-pass(es) where applicable, can be entered into a respective mobile data storage medium for each route. Each vehicle that travels on the corresponding route can thus be quickly supplied with the required position data and alongside other vehicles. For example, before starting his/her route the driver can load the position data of the particular route assigned to him/her into the onboard computer by means of a magnetic card, disc or similar medium that goes with this route.

Brief Description of the Drawing

The invention will be more clearly understood with reference to the following description in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which the single figure schematically shows a route distribution in connection with explanatory tables.

Detailed Description of the Invention

Illustrated in the Figure are two routes that only differ from one another in a middle section C. Partial routes 1 and 3 are common to both lines, while in the middle section C, each route has its own partial route 2, or 4. Both routes

connect a beginning point A and an endpoint B and consist of 15 segments each, or 3 partial routes each, whereby the segment distribution can be conducted in reference to the stops. Both of the upper tables show the data management according to the prior. It is obvious that both routes are treated as completely separate and independent from one another. The lower tables characterize the claimed process, in which a partial route management is introduced. The partial routes 1 and 3 are the same for both routes. The exact combination of the partial routes is given in the 4 lowest tables. These can be referred to in route planning and route management. The savings potential with regard to the data maintenance is very considerable, in particular with very complex line management, in which the same partial routes are used by different routes.

The invention is not limited to the embodiment described above. Rather, a number of variants that make use of the features of the invention are possible, even in a fundamentally different type of embodiment.



What is claimed is:

1. A process for the specification of position data, in particular geographic coordinates, for several routes of at least one vehicle, said method comprising the steps of dividing said routes into partial routes, such that route sections that are common to at least two routes form common partial routes; and using at least one point of each partial route for the specification of position data.

2. A process according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the beginning point and end point of each partial route is used for the specification of position data.

3. A process according to claim 1 or 2, wherein, with rail-bound routes, the position of switchpoints is used for the specification of position data.

4. A process according to claim 1 or 2, wherein at least one bypass section is incorporated into the partial route formation.

5. A process according to claim 1 or 2, further comprising the step of entering the position data into at least one of a central control unit and an on-board computer of the vehicle.

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6. A process according to Claim 5, wherein, the position data of a route, including by-pass(es) when applicable, is entered into the on-board computer of the vehicle by means of a mobile data storage medium.

7. A process according to Claim 6, wherein, the position data of a route, including by-pass(es) where applicable, is entered into a respective mobile data storage medium for each route.

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