

# ACEA Annual Conference

Perdido Beach Resort

Orange Beach, AL

May 11, 2016

*Railroad Coordination Updates*

Adam Sanford, P.E.

Design Section Engineer

Bureau of County Transportation

# Covered Topics

- Why have the Railroad Coordination requirements changed?
- New Railroad Coordination Documents - 7 months ago and what is still changing
- Railroad Coordination Procedures - How in the world do I get through the steps and get my project authorized?

# Why has this changed?

- In accordance with Title 23 CFR 635.309(b), all Federal-aid projects require a **statement of railroad coordination** verifying all relevant work has been completed or that necessary arrangements have been made to complete the work.
- How are we going make this **statement**?

# Certification of RR Involvement

- Required for ALL projects
- Has 3 options:
  1. Project has no railroad involvement
  2. All railroad arrangements/coordination have been made and will be done as part of the project as part of the project cost.
  3. All railroad arrangements/coordination have been made and completed prior to project completion at no cost to the project.

Page 8.10 in Procedural Guidelines for County Projects.

# Page 8.10 PGCP

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICATION OF  
RAILROAD INVOLVEMENT

Federal-Aid Project  
Construction No. \_\_\_\_\_  
CPWS # \_\_\_\_\_  
Description \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County \_\_\_\_\_

Original \_\_\_\_\_  
Update \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with the provisions of 23 CFR Part 635.309(b), this is to certify that:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ The above referenced project has no railroad involvement or coordination that would need to be undertaken and completed as required for proper coordination with the physical construction.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ All railroad arrangements/coordination have been made for the above referenced project to be undertaken and completed within the project as part of the project cost.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ All railroad arrangements/coordination have been made for the above referenced project to be undertaken and completed prior to project completion at no cost to the project.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
County Engineer

No railroad  
involvement

If a project has no  
railroad involvement,  
this document is all that  
is required.

# Passive Warning Devices



# Active Warning Devices



# RR Warning Devices Checklist

- Required when there is an at grade railroad crossing within the limits of the project
- Has two parts:
- Part 1: Must determine if any of the series of statements apply to your project
- If any of them do, the crossing will require active warning devices (gates, bells, and lights)
- Part 2: Must select one of the two statements, either the traffic control devices that are the highway owner's responsibility **do** or **do not** meet MUTCD standards. If not, they will be updated as part of project.
- Found on page 8.11 and 8.12 of PGCP



# Pages 8.11 and 8.12

## Railroad Crossing Warning Device Checklist

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal-Aid Project No. \_\_\_\_\_  
County: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
Roadway: \_\_\_\_\_  
Crossing No.: \_\_\_\_\_

The following checklist is an aid to determine the adequacy of existing rail-highway traffic control devices, when a rail-highway crossing falls within the construction limits, or when the crossing is located within ALDOT right-of-way limits on Federal-Aid projects. This checklist is developed according to the regulations listed in Title 23 CFR 646.214 (b)(3)(i)(A-F).

### Check the statement that applies to this rail-highway crossing:

- (A) Multiple main line railroad tracks.
  - a. Main line.-The term "main line" means a segment or route of railroad tracks over which 5,000,000 or more gross tons of railroad traffic is transported annually.\*
- (B) Multiple tracks at or in the vicinity of the crossing which may be occupied by a train or locomotive so as to obscure the movement of another train approaching the crossing.
- (C) High Speed train operation combined with limited sight distance at either single or multiple track crossings.
  - a. A high speed train is one that travels at a speed greater than 79 mph.\*
    - \* Note: no rail routes within Alabama are identified as High Speed
  - b. Limited sight distance is where available sight distance is less than desirable intersecting sight distance as defined by AASHTO.
    - \* Sight distance is based on field measurements.
- (D) A combination of high speeds and moderately high volumes of highway and railroad traffic.
  - a. All four conditions below must exist to meet (D). Basically an "AND" condition.
    - Definitions:
      - \* A high speed roadway is one that has a posted speed of 50 mph or more.\*
      - \* Moderately high volumes of highway traffic are when a highway's volume exceeds a Level of Service of 'D' (near capacity).\*
      - \* A high speed train is one that travels at a speed greater than 79 mph.\*
      - \* Moderately high volumes for a railroad traffic are when the railroad's volume exceeds a Level of Service of 'E' (at capacity).\*

\*Data Source: Included in Rail Crossing Inventory  
Revision Date: 10/26/2015

Page 1 of 2

[Type here]

Part 1

## Railroad Crossing Warning Device Checklist

- (E) Either a high volume of vehicular traffic, high number of train movements, substantial numbers of school buses or trucks carrying hazardous materials, unusually restricted sight distance, continuing accident occurrences, or any combination of these conditions.
  - a. If any of these conditions exist then (E) is met. Basically an "OR" condition.

### Definitions:

- High volumes of vehicular traffic are those highways that are operating at a Level of Service of 'E' or greater.\*
- High number of train movements will be identified as those rail lines where the railroad's volume exceeds a Level of Service of 'F' (above capacity).\*
- Substantial school bus traffic is defined as locations that have twice the county wide average for school bus crossings.\*
- Substantial hazardous materials truck traffic is defined as locations that have twice the national average for hazardous materials truck traffic.
  - \* Note: National average, trucks transporting hazardous materials 7.2%.
- Unusually restricted sight distance is defined as sight distance that is restricted by a permanent, fixed object; or due to a severe skew of the crossing, where the acute angle between the rail line and highway is 30 degrees or less.
- Continuing crashes are applicable only to those sites that currently have 'lights and bells' but not 'gates' and there are documented crashes at those locations after the installation of the 'lights and bells' (Data Source: CARE).

- (F) A diagnostic team recommends active devices.
- None of the above statements are applicable to this crossing.

### One of the statements below should also be selected:

- The condition of existing traffic control devices that are the responsibility of the highway owner for maintenance (typically advanced warning signs and pavement markings) located at this crossing, are adequate and meet current MUTCD standards.
- The condition of existing traffic control devices that are the responsibility of the highway owner for maintenance (typically advanced warning signs and pavement marking) located at this crossing, are adequate but **do not meet** current MUTCD standards and will be updated during the construction of the subject project.

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
County Engineer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Type name of County Engineer

Data Source: Included in Rail Crossing Inventory  
Revision Date: 10/26/2015

Page 2 of 2

[Type here]

Part 2

# But... Not So Fast

- The RR warning devices checklist as shown on pages 8.11 and 8.12 will be changing soon.
- “Why are you doing this to me?” you say.
- Well, there have been some challenges with the RR survey form. This document is to be signed by the railroad.
- What are we going to do? We can't let our projects? The rail section of the Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs has a solution.... Pending final approval

# Diagnostic Review

- **If approved** by the front office, every at grade RR crossing on a Federal-aid project will receive a diagnostic review.
- RR and roadway data will be analyzed as well as the existing warning devices.
- Sight distance will be evaluated.
- The RR warning devices checklist will be incorporated into this document.
- Then it will be determined if improvements are recommended.

**NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT  
PROCEDURES**

# Railroad Coordination - From Planning to Letting

- Identify which projects will require railroad coordination in your county's 3-5 year paving plan and budget funds accordingly.
- Go ahead and schedule a diagnostic review asap.
- If any work is to be done on the RR ROW, a RR agreement is required (see section 8). This includes upgrading the warning devices and shall be done as soon as the PER is approved.
- Once a diagnostic review and the RR agreement has been secured (if applicable), a Certification of RR Involvement (page 8.10) can be sent in with the Construction plans and other required supporting documentation.

# Questions?

- For more information about railroad involvement procedures, please see section 8 of the Procedural Guidelines for County Projects or call me @ (334) 242-6719.