Pedestrian Issues and Safety Initiatives in Railroad Corridors

Sponsored by
ITE Combined Grade Crossings Committee TENC 102-02
SEC. 201. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SAFETY.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide guidance to railroads on strategies and methods to prevent pedestrian accidents, incidents, injuries, and fatalities at or near passenger stations, including—

(1) providing audible warning of approaching trains to the pedestrians at railroad passenger stations;

(2) using signs, signals, or other visual devices to warn pedestrians of approaching trains;

(3) installing infrastructure at pedestrian crossings to improve the safety of pedestrians crossing railroad tracks;

(4) installing fences to prohibit access to railroad tracks; and

(5) other strategies or methods as determined by the Secretary.
Structure of the Guidance

- Hazard analysis approach to enhancing safety
- Train-borne and station-sited audible and visual warnings
- ADA considerations, swing gates, safe access for all users
- Infrastructure at pedestrian crossings to improve safety
- Accommodating high passenger and train volumes
- Passenger stations in multiple track territory
- Station signing and the importance of maintenance
- Fencing at or near passenger platforms
- Enforcement initiatives at or near passenger stations
- Public outreach and crossing safety education programs
- Summary
“…Expect a train on any track, at any time, from any direction.”

Pedestrian Safety Issues in Multiple Track Territory
Significant volumes of mainline freight traffic move all throughout the day and night... while busy passenger schedules run all day long.
Use of intertrack and platform fencing.

...from Risk-based Hazard Analysis.
Guidance Document now available

- Input was solicited and received from many sources in industry and government
- Document was reviewed by several of FRA’s safety partners
- Document is available on FRA website:

http://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/details/L03533
The FRA gathered information on signs, signals, pavement markings, or other devices being used to enhance the safety of pedestrians at or near passenger stations.

It should be noted that some of the devices depicted in this document are not included in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

Devices not currently shown in the MUTCD
The Federal Highway Administration is the custodial agency for the MUTCD. FHWA has established a process for the incorporation of new devices into the Manual.

Agencies utilizing devices that are not currently included in the Manual are strongly encouraged to participate in the MUTCD experimentation and interim approval process, which is described in detail in Section 1A.10 of the Manual.
What about Truncation of Ped Phase for Crossings with Traffic Signal Preemption?

- Impacts vulnerable user groups the most by zeroing out their time to cross - Yikes!
- Including required pedestrian crossing time in the calculation of Right Of Way Transfer Time can make this drastic step unnecessary.
High Speed Rail and Pedestrian Crossings

• Grade crossings on HSR corridors should be closely examined for elimination or consolidation.
• For crossings that remain in place, investigate the need for technology or hardware upgrades to devices – crossing surfaces, as well.
• Device Replacement (due to age/obsolescence)
• Refuge areas, channelization, signs, signals
• FRA also encourages development and evaluation of new or innovative treatments
California Public Utilities Commission

Pedestrian-Rail Crossings In California

A Report Compiling the Designs and Devices Currently Utilized at Pedestrian-Rail Crossings within the State of California

May 2008

Richard Clark, Director
Consumer Protection & Safety Division
California Public Utilities Commission

Safety Partners Also Active
Trespassing

• In 2011, 413 people died in the United States as a result of railroad trespassing.

• On average, two people are killed or injured trespassing on railroad property every day in the United States.

• FRA works with Operation Lifesaver, railroads, rail labor, state transportation departments, local communities and schools to educate the public about the dangers of railroad trespassing.
Right-of-Way Fatality and Trespass Prevention Workshop

http://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0612
Demographic Study of Trespasser Fatalities
New “Rail Crossing Locator” app

This app is designed for both iPhone and iPad.

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Other FRA Grade Crossing Activities

• Emergency Notification Systems
• State Grade Crossing Action Plans
• Model Legislation packages
• Mandatory Reporting of Crossing Inventory Data
• Researching New Technologies, Human Factors studies
Research

• GIS Mapping of Trespasser and Grade Crossing Incidents

• Examine effectiveness of countermeasures in place; identification of “hot spots”

• Display existing data in a visual format to help understand interacting variables and complexity of each incident.

• Volpe Center, AAR, GW University
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