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National Safety Program Plan - Excerpts



**Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Railroad Safety
FY 2017**

National Safety Program Plan

Carrying forward a process started in FY 2006, the Office of Railroad Safety (RRS) continues to make fundamental changes to its safety goal setting, planning, and prioritization process. The careful preparation and adherence to an annual safety action plan will help RRS to better focus and integrate its safety improvement efforts. The NSPP is RRS' annual (fiscal year) document designed to ensure the sound implementation of the National Safety Program, including identification of both recurring and nonrecurring special-emphasis activities for the year. At the national level, the focus continues on having a rigorous oversight and inspection program, based on strategic use of data and proactive approaches for early identification and mitigation of risk.

Quarterly Assessments

The NSPP is issued to every employee in RRS. The Associate Administrator for Railroad Safety and Chief Safety Officer and senior leadership will continue to discuss the quarterly status submissions in FY 2017. Expected benefits of integrated planning include better safety analysis and focus throughout RRS on the most serious safety concerns—in essence, a prioritization of safety needs, methods to address and correct them, and a quarterly schedule for doing so.

An element included in the NSPP is the NIP, which establishes quantitative objectives for the inspection of major railroads, by State, based on risk analysis. The NIP improves resource allocation and provides for better decision making based on data and qualitative judgments.

The NSPP identifies initiatives and projects that represent a special focus on specific safety concerns beyond regular day-to-day activities. Routine inspections and other regular activities are not included in the NSPP but remain as performance goals and targets for RRS personnel, from safety inspectors to HQ Staff Directors. A few examples of routine tasks are: regular inspections, accident investigations, Switching Operations Fatality Assessment (SOFA) activities, Operation Lifesaver (OL) presentations, regulatory waiver investigations, and regulatory seminars and orientations for railroad personnel. Examples for Staff Directors include the development and uniform dissemination of guidance regarding the correct application of the Federal regulations, interaction with railroad industry personnel and the public on safety issues, development of new regulations and standards, recommendations to the FRA Railroad Safety Board on regulatory waiver applications, and Locomotive Engineer Review Board decisions.

Region 6 2017 Colorado Area Action Item

Project Number: R6-HGR-03-17
Name of Project: Denver RTD and Chambers Road Hazardous Materials Transport Route Crossing Safety Initiative Support
Timeframe: October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017

Description of project and purpose: The Region 6 grade crossing safety team with support from the FRA headquarters Grade Crossing and Trespasser safety group will continue to engage related stakeholders to support review and potential improvements to this high hazard crossing. This crossing has been identified by FRA as a high risk crossing given the estimated routing of hundreds of loaded and residue Hazardous Materials transport vehicles. This project given the multiple stakeholder jurisdictions will require communication and collaboration to determine the most appropriate means necessary to minimize risks to the railroads, the public and the transport vehicle customer group.

Related - FRA National Crossing and Trespasser Safety Division Action Item

Project Number: HQ-HGR-06-17
Name of Project: Improve Highway-Rail Crossing Safety
Timeframe: October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017

Description of project and purpose:

- FRA will undertake a number of activities to improve safety at the Nation's highway-rail grade crossings. Collisions at highway-rail grade crossings are the second leading cause of rail-related deaths. These activities will provide additional tools and information for States and other stakeholders to reduce crossing collisions.
- FRA will analyze various sources accident and fatality data to identify the types of motorists involved in grade crossing accidents, as well as the underlying safety conditions where collisions occur. This will help FRA to target its education/outreach activities, build more effective predictive modeling, and inform motorists, law enforcement, and railroads on best-practice methods to prevent accidents at grade crossings.
- FRA will create an action plan for improving FRA/FHWA coordination around the "Section 130" program.
- FRA will collaborate with FHWA on an update to the DOT "Railway-Highway Grade Crossing Handbook," which includes comprehensive guidance on topics ranging from engineering strategies and risk assessment to protective devices.
- FRA will partner with the City of Orlando, FL to conduct a survey of drivers that have violated traffic laws at highway-rail grade crossings to try to determine the various reasons that drivers do not comply with the laws.

Link to FRA Highway-Rail Grade Crossings Overview

<https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0156>