

TR-040348



2601 SR 509 North Frontage Road
Tacoma, Washington 98421

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RECORDS MANAGEMENT

MOUNTAIN DIVISION: Operated for the City of Tacoma

04 FEB -2 AM 11:43

January 29, 2004

Mr. Mike Rowswell
Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. SW
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

STATE OF WASH.
UTIL. AND TRANSP.
COMMISSION
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FEB 02 2004

WASH. UT. & TP. COMM.

Dear Mr. Rowswell,

Per our discussion, Tacoma Rail is requesting in writing changes by The Utilities and Transportation Commission to its' current flagging procedures. After an extensive review of these procedures and operating practices, staff has proposed language for amendments to the ruling made by the WUTC regarding the train operations of the Tacoma Rail Mountain Division on the Morton Branch between Milepost 13.0m and Milepost 65.0m and also on the Chehalis Branch between Milepost 13.0c and Milepost 67.0c. The proposed language is outlined for consideration by the WUTC.

Current Flagging Practices Table

The Carrier's Flagging procedures and crossing occupancy times are as follows:

MILEPOST	LOCATION	ACTION	REFERENCE	NOTES	TIME
47.2c	Tilly Road crossing	3	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Proceed	DAYLIGHT only
62.2c	* West 1st Street crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
62.4c	* West Main Street crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
62.5c	* West Locust Street crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
62.9c	* Alder Street (Mellen St) crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
15.0m	204th Street crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
16.2m	82nd Street crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
16.9m	224th Street crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
17.9m	Meridian/SR 161 Hwy crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
23.3m	Orting/Kapowsin Hwy crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
45.3m	Elbe North/Hwy 7 crossing	1	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only
66.5m	Morton/Hwy 7 crossing	2	G.O.# 8; Mtn Safety #1	STOP & Protect	DAYLIGHT only

ACTIONS - CURRENT

- 1 = STOP train prior to entering crossing; crew member on ground or in vehicle must stop traffic in both directions until train OCCUPIES crossing
- 2 = STOP train prior to entering crossing; crew member on ground or in vehicle must stop traffic in both directions until ENTIRE TRAIN OCCUPIES crossing
- 3 = STOP and proceed after signals activate and traffic has stopped. If crossing signals fail, crew member on ground or in vehicle must stop traffic in both directions.

GENERAL ORDER REFERENCE

- G.O.#8 (10/23/02) - Stop and Protect Crossings On TRMW (copy of revised General Order per WUTC action, attached)
 - a) completely STOP the train prior to occupying the crossing
 - b) crew member on the ground is to flag crossing and warn traffic until the train occupies the crossing
 - c) use fusees when visibility is limited or at night

*in addition to the above instructions, the following will also apply to the 4 Centralia grade crossings listed above:
 DAYLIGHT only and anyone flagging the Centralia crossings listed above, must be equipped with a Safety Vest, Hard Hat, and a STOP/STOP paddle.
- Mtn Division Safety Bulletin #1 (1/2/02) - Account rusty rail conditions approach all grade crossing w/automatic signals at Restricted Speed and ascertain whether signals are working properly before entering crossing

Proposed Amendments Table

MILEPOST	LOCATION	ACTION	REFERENCE	NOTES	TIME
47.2c	Tilly Road crossing	3 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Proceed	ANYTIME
62.2c	* West 1st Street crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
62.4c	* West Main Street crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
62.5c	* West Locust Street crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
62.9c	* Alder Street (Mellen St) crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
15.0m	204th Street crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
16.2m	82nd Street crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
16.9m	224th Street crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
17.9m	Meridian/SR 161 Hwy crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
23.3m	Orting/Kapowsin Hwy crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
45.3m	Elbe North/Hwy 7 crossing	1 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME
66.5m	Morton/Hwy 7 crossing	2 or 4	Revised G.O.# 8; Mtn	STOP & Protect	ANYTIME

ACTIONS - PROPOSED

- 1 = STOP train prior to entering crossing; crew member on ground or in vehicle must stop traffic in both directions until train OCCUPIES crossing
- 2 = STOP train prior to entering crossing; crew member on ground or in vehicle must stop traffic in both directions until ENTIRE TRAIN OCCUPIES crossing
- 3 = STOP and proceed after signals activate and traffic has stopped. If crossing signals fail, crew member on ground or in vehicle must stop traffic in both directions.
- 4 = In the event local police are providing vehicular grade crossing protection, the railroad flagging procedures are waived

GENERAL ORDER REFERENCE

- The REVISED G.O.#8 (10/23/02) - Stop and Protect Crossings On TRMW (copy of revised General Order per WUTC action, attached) will be amended to reflect any new WUTC changes.
- Mtn Division Safety Bulletin #1 (1/2/02) - Account rusty rail conditions approach all grade crossing w/automatic signals at Restricted Speed and ascertain whether signals are working properly before entering crossing.

ASSUMPTIONS

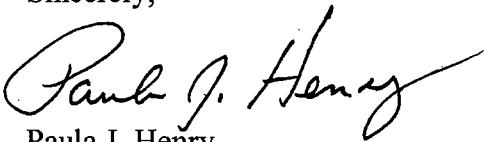
- The automatic public grade crossing signals should be in working order before a train or engine occupies the crossing. However, in the event that a signalized grade crossing does not work, it then must be protected by a flagman equipped with a safety vest. The flagman will stop vehicle traffic before the train or engine occupies the crossing.
- The non-signalized grade crossings listed above should be treated the same as a signalized grade crossing that is not functioning.
- The design of the automatic grade crossing warning signals that are currently installed, are as efficient in darkness as they are in the daylight hours, therefore occupying the crossings at night time is not unsafe and request to operate over these crossings at night.

Tacoma Rail has implemented the commitments made to the operating rules, improving crew communication, the daily field operations schedule notification process, and jurisdictional cooperation activities as mentioned in the previous letter I sent to you dated November 14, 2003. Effective January 27, 2004 Tacoma Rail will notify you directly through daily e-mails, if train operations occur at any of the above mentioned crossings.

Please advise me as to the process and schedule for making modifications to the current WUTC order. If you have any other questions regarding our operations, please do not hesitate to call me at (253) 405-0767.

Tacoma Rail is committed to provide the highest level of safety while maintaining a high quality of service.

Sincerely,



Paula J. Henry
Assistant Superintendent
Tacoma Rail