

ASSIGNMENT OF CROSSING INVENTORY NUMBERS

Requirement:

All crossings in the United States, public, private and pedestrian, both at-grade and grade separated (underpasses and overpasses) are required by Law (RSIA of 2008) to have a DOT Crossing Inventory Number assigned and the number should be posted at the crossing. The only exception is for a crossing that is to serve temporary construction activities and will not be in place longer than six months. For Crossing Inventory purposes, a crossing is defined as those tracks that exist between a pair of the same type of warning devices.

A crossing inventory number contains six digits followed by an alphabetical letter. The numbers are generated using a special algorithm where the alphabetical letter is a check character to insure that the number is valid. The number is like a “street-name sign” and should be posted, preferable, on both sides of the crossing on the signal mast, crossbuck post, sign post or pole, or it could even be spray painted on a railroad tie. Responsibility for procuring or making the number signs is the responsibility of the railroad. They are usually made of aluminum, about motorcycle license-plate size, and can be commercially purchased from Keyes-Davis in Battle Creek, Michigan, for between \$8.00 and \$25.00, depending on the number purchased (phone 269-962-7505). As an alternative, the number can be posted on the Emergency Notification System (ENS) sign on both sides of the crossing.

The responsibility for assigning a number to a crossing and for filing the initial inventory report is that of the “Operating Railroad,” that is, the railroad that actually operates over the crossing and which would file an accident report if such occurred. This is also the case for crossings that are on private property, such as in a plant area owned by a private corporation, or in a rail yard of the Operating Railroad. If multiple railroads operate over a crossing, then the responsibility falls to the primary railroad that owns and/or maintains the trackage, or dispatches the trains.

Crossings on Private Property and Railroad Yards:

Where there are crossings in a rail yard area belonging to a railroad, a private company, a port, or a dock area, one number can be assigned to include all crossings within the private property limits. The railroad should clearly post that number where the railroad enters the private property, e.g., “All Crossings in this Complex are Assigned Crossing No. 123-456X.”

The primary purpose of posting the number is to have it easily available to accurately report the location of an accident, if such occurred in a rail yard on railroad property, or in that of a private company.

Assignment of Crossing Numbers:

Valid crossing numbers can be obtained by contacting Thomas Woll, FRA Washington Headquarters, at 202-493-6290, or by email at tom.woll@dot.gov. Please provide the total number of crossing inventory numbers needed (not locations), and the name, title, company, mailing address, phone and fax of the requestor. The valid numbers will be sent by U.S. Mail -

allow about two weeks for delivery. These numbers are to be used for new crossings and for any crossings that have been identified as not having an assigned number (a careful detailed search should be made for any existing number before assigning a new number).

The actual assignment of a number to a crossing is performed by the railroad when the number is placed on a completed Inventory Form, and the Form is returned to FRA for processing into the National File (this processing takes about three months). It is important that this occur as quickly as possible for any existing crossings that do not have a number (see the requirements of the RSIA of 2008).

The U.S. DOT Crossing Inventory Form:

The U.S. DOT Crossing Inventory Form 6180.71 can be obtained from FRA's Office of Safety Website or by contacting Tom Woll. The two-sided single-sheet Inventory Form must be used, and all data must be provided for crossings that are assigned new numbers. The two-sided Form provides for easy photocopying for distribution to appropriate parties.

For public at-grade crossings, the railroad needs to complete Parts I, II, III & IV. The railroad must then send the original completed Form to the appropriate "State Crossing Inventory Contact" (available on FRA's Website) for completion of Part V, Highway Information, and any other State/Highway required data. We suggest that the railroad copy the FRA on the transmittal correspondence. The State will complete Part V, send a copy back to the railroad, and forward the original to FRA for processing into the National Inventory File.

However, as an alternative, it is suggested that the railroad may wish to obtain the Part V directly from a local highway engineer, or the State Inventory Contact, and put the information on the Form before distribution. In that way, the railroad knows that all the required data was provided before it left the control of the railroad. This includes providing the actual data for Latitude and Longitude.

For private, grade-separated (including public) and pedestrian crossings, only Part I information is required. However, FRA will accept and input any additional information that the railroad desires to provide. For private, grade-separated, and pedestrian crossings, the railroad should send the original Form directly to FRA and a copy to the State for information purposes.

Questions or Need for Assistance:

If you have questions or need further assistance regarding the Crossing Inventory Program, the "GX" computer software program for updating inventory data, or the PCAPS/WBAPS accident prediction calculation process, please contact Tom Woll at (202) 493-6290, or via the Internet at tom.woll@dot.gov. Mail completed Inventory Forms to: Thomas P. Woll, Federal Railroad Administration, 1200 New Jersey Ave, SE, Mail Stop - 25, Washington, DC 20590.