

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Federal Railroad Administration has identified roughly 260,000 public and private highway-rail crossings in the United States. Most aspects of jurisdiction over highway-rail grade crossings reside with the states. Within some states, responsibility is divided between several public agencies and the railroad. In other states, jurisdiction over highway-rail crossings is assigned to a regulatory agency with various names such as the Public Utility Commission, Public Service Commission, or State Corporation Commission. Still, other states divide the authority among public administrative agencies of the state, county, city and town, having jurisdiction and responsibility for their respective highway systems.

State and local law enforcement agencies have the responsibility for the enforcement of traffic laws at highway-rail crossings. In a number of cases, local government bodies are given responsibility for certain operational matters related to crossings; and this is accomplished through various ordinances.

Purpose and Scope

This *Compilation of State Laws and Regulations on Matters Affecting Highway-Rail Crossings, Fourth Edition* is intended to provide an up-to-date and more expansive look at the various state laws and regulations concerning every aspect of the regulation of highway-rail grade crossings, and driver behavior at those crossings. This edition compiles all of the laws and regulations of the fifty states and the District of Columbia into one comprehensive, easy-to-use document. It is intended to provide a one-stop reference for researchers, engineers, students, legal practitioners, and those individuals who make their living working in the field of highway-rail grade crossing safety. The reader will find this *Fourth Edition* useful when assessing differences and similarities in the laws among states, seeking distinctions between desirable and undesirable laws, and when conducting legal research.

The source material collected for this book was obtained from various online research software packages and from the volumes of laws and regulations published by each state and the District of Columbia, through both the hard copies and individual state web sites. The style of legal citation used in this *Fourth Edition* is obtained from *The Blue Book, A Uniform System of Citation, Seventeenth Edition*. Cambridge, Mass. (Harvard Law Review Association, 2000.)