



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

AUG 17 2010

In Reply Refer To:
HOTO-1

Mr. Michael J. Martino
Senior Director, Operations
Association of American Railroads
425 Third Street, S.W.
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Mr. Martino:

Thank you for your July 22 letter requesting an official interpretation regarding the compliance date for implementing the change from diagonal stripes to vertical stripes on railroad gates. Specifically, your question relates to the relevance to highway-rail grade crossings of the fourth to last item in Table I-2, which shows a compliance date of January 17, 2011 for "Automatic gates, flashing-light signals, and blank-out signs at highway-LRT crossings per Part 10 of the 2000 MUTCD."

The answer to your question is that there is no compliance date for implementing vertical stripes on gates of any type, including gates at highway-rail grade crossings and gates at highway-LRT grade crossings. The intent of the January 17, 2011 compliance date was to grant a 10-year compliance period for new Part 10 Standards that were included for the first time in the 2000 MUTCD, which became effective on January 10, 2001. There is no intention that the conversion to vertical stripes on gate arms be included in this previously existing compliance date for highway-LRT grade crossing provisions.

It should be noted that a 10-year compliance period starting from the effective date of the 2009 MUTCD was proposed for Section 8C.04 in the Notice of Proposed Amendments (see Lines 48 and 49 on Page 590 of the NPA), which was to be in addition to the January 17, 2011 compliance date (see Lines 42 and 43 on Page 591 of the NPA) referenced in the previous paragraphs of this letter. After analyzing the comments that were received to the docket, the FHWA deleted the proposed 10-year compliance period for Section 8C.04 in the 2009 MUTCD.

Because there is no compliance date for the conversion to vertical stripes on gate arms, it is the FHWA's official interpretation that existing gates with diagonal stripes may be left in place for the remainder of their useful life or until systematic upgrading takes place at the crossing.



For recordkeeping purposes, we have assigned the following official interpretation number and title: "8(09)-2 (I) – Compliance date for vertical stripes on RR gates." Please refer to this number in any future correspondence regarding this topic.

Thank you for your interest in improving the clarity of the provisions contained in the MUTCD.

Sincerely yours,


for Mark R. Kehrli
Director, Office of Transportation
Operations