



U.S. Department of
Transportation
Federal Railroad
Administration

Railroad Safety Advisory Committee
Task Statement: Speed Enforcement Wayside Warning Signs

Task No.: 16-01

Date initially presented to the RSAC: April 7, 2016

Purpose: To consider specific improvements to enhance rail safety by standardizing the design and placement of railroad speed signs for both temporary and/or permanent speed restrictions.

Background: Although many railroads do post speed restriction signage, some railroads have elected not to utilize such signage or use a variety of signs in limited circumstances and varying locations. This may present an issue for operating crews operating in unfamiliar territory or in extreme weather conditions as it may be difficult for the operating crews to determine the exact location of a speed restriction. Where mile posts are used to identify speed restrictions in conjunction with train orders, missing or obscured mile posts could result in operating crews overlooking the restriction entirely.

Description: Review and consider the following:

- FRA and railroad accident data to identify incidents involving excessive speed or improper braking where speed restriction signage may have prevented or mitigated the incident.
- Current policies and practices of Class I railroads regarding speed restriction warning signage and identify best practices.
- The safety and economic implications related to the standard placement of speed restriction warning signs either ahead or behind a speed restriction to allow for proper train handling.
- If signage design and placement should be standardized for both temporary and/or permanent speed restrictions.
- If standard timelines for replacement or repair are necessary if speed restriction warning signs are missing, damaged, or unrecognizable.
- Impact of technology, such as PTC implementation, on the necessity of speed restriction warning signs.

Issues requiring specific report:

The Warning Signs Working Group will consider the issues presented in the description above, specifically report its recommendations to the Committee, and if appropriate, develop guidance, voluntary standards or draft regulatory language to address these issues.

Refer to/establish following working group: Warning Signs Working Group

Target Dates: Report initial recommendations and ongoing work plan to the Committee by no later than one year from kick-off meeting date.

Disposition: Accepted

Accepted Date: April 7, 2016