



**M O V I N G T H E
AMERICAN
ECONOMY**

***Federal Railroad Administration
Implementation of PTC Systems***

**Implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC) Systems
as Required by the *Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008***

General Background

Section 104 of the *Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008* [Public Law 110-432, Div. A] requires that certain railroads implement positive train control (PTC) systems to prevent train-to-train collisions on certain rail lines by the end of 2015. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) must (1) review and approve or disapprove railroads' required plans for implementation of PTC systems, (2) issue regulations necessary to implement the section (including rules specifying essential functionalities of the PTC systems), and (3) prohibit installation of PTC systems that have not been certified by FRA.

Railroads Required to Implement PTC Systems

- Each Class I railroad; and
- Each entity providing regularly scheduled intercity or commuter rail passenger service.

Types of Rail Lines on Which Each Covered Railroad Must Implement a PTC System

- Its main line over which intercity or commuter rail passenger service is regularly provided;
- Its main line over which poison- or toxic-by-inhalation hazardous materials are transported; and
- Other tracks as FRA may prescribe by regulation or order.

“Main line” means a segment or route of tracks over which 5 million or more gross tons of railroad traffic is transported annually. However, FRA may through regulation designate additional tracks as “main line” as appropriate for purposes of this section. In addition, FRA must prescribe a regulation defining “main line” for intercity or commuter rail passenger routes or segments over which limited or no freight railroad operations occur.

Key Dates Related to the Requirement to Implement PTC Systems by 2015

- On **October 16, 2008**, the *Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008* was signed into law.
- On **December 10, 2008**, FRA began moving forward with development of new PTC implementation rules by seeking recommendations from its Railroad Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC).
- By **April 24, 2009**, RSAC is to report to FRA on its recommendations to implement PTC systems.
- By **April 16, 2010**, railroads must submit their PTC implementation plans to FRA which must approve or disapprove the plan within 90 days of receipt.
- By **December 31, 2012**, FRA must report to Congress on progress in implementing PTC systems.
- By **December 31, 2015**, railroads must implement their FRA-approved PTC system plans.

For additional information, please contact:

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December 2008**