U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Railroad Administration

Memorandum

Date: 3 April 2007

Reply to Att. of: MP&E 07-01

Subject: Inbound Inspection & Record-keeping Requirements Related to Extended Haul Trains

From: Ed Pritchard
Director, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance

To: Regional Administrators
Deputy Regional Administrators
Motive Power and Equipment Specialists
Operating Practices Specialists

The Power Brake Regulations contained at 49 CFR 232 .213, provide that the inbound inspection and record-keeping requirements for extended haul train operations will not be required after April 1, 2007, unless the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) determines there is a need to continue these practices based on relevant safety data. See 49 CFR 232.213(a)(6) and (a)(7).

In addition to numerous regular inspections of extended haul train operations, formal week-long audits were performed at various locations to determine the railroad's compliance with the regulations, and whether the quality of the inspections and tests indicates a need to continue the performance of the inbound inspections and related record-keeping. Based on these inspections and audits, FRA found that the number of defective conditions identified at inbound inspections were minimal. As there is no appreciable safety data to support continuation of the inbound inspection and record-keeping requirements, FRA is allowing these practices as prescribed in 49 CFR 232 .213(a) (6) and (7) to sunset as of April 1, 2007.

FRA inspectors will continue to be vigilant and ensure that the railroads perform the proper outbound inspections on extended haul trains, including Class I brake inspections at the end of the extended haul run if the train is to continue beyond that location. Prescribed inspections on cars picked up enroute by extended haul trains will also be closely monitored.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding these instructions, please contact either Mr. Ron Newman at 202-493-6241 or Mr James Wilson at 202-493-6259.

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