



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Memorandum

Date: June 15, 1998

Reply to Att. of: MP&E 98-19

Subject: Safety Appliance Arrangement on "Differential" 100-Ton Covered Hopper Cars
Built by the Thrall Car Manufacturing Company

From: Edward R. English
Director, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance

To: Regional Administrators, Deputy Regional Administrators,
Motive Power & Equipment Specialists and Inspectors

On "pressure differential" 100-Ton Covered Hopper Cars, built by the Thrall Car Manufacturing Company, the end platform and end platform handholds are less than 60 inches long because of structural considerations.

Structural justification for the design is to place supports on the flat end sheet, at locations that will prevent over stressing the sheet when the car is pressurized.

A letter was sent to the Thrall Car Manufacturing Company, General Electric, and Rail Car Services with the following information:

Concerning the safety appliance arrangement on "Differential" 100-ton covered hopper cars. Specifically, the end platforms and horizontal end platform handholds having a length of less than 60 inches.

Please be advised that due to the structural design of these cars (curved sided), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will not take exception to the end platforms and horizontal end platform handholds having a length of less than 60 inches. FRA will consider these cars to be of special construction and conform to those requirements as specified in Title 49, CFR, Section 231.18.

Please be governed accordingly.

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