



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Memorandum

Date: June 15, 1998

Reply to Att. of: MP&E 98-48

Subject: Securement of Handrail to the Locomotive Carbody North American Cab Structure

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

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

Some locomotives having the wide body North American cab configuration has the upper end of the front vertical handrail not properly secured to the carbody. The Safety Appliance regulation, Section 231.30(e) (1) (I) states in part that each vertical handhold... be securely fastened to the locomotive with one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) inch or larger bolts or rivets....

Some locomotives have the upper end of the front vertical handhold bolted to a bracket, welded to that section of the carbody that comprises the outside of the front sand reservoir. Although there appears to be adequate strength in the welded bracket, this is not permitted because the regulation specifically requires that the handhold be securely fastened with a bolt or rivet.

However, FRA has permitted welding of some permanent fixtures on locomotives to which safety appliances are mechanically fastened. The welding was made under quality controlled conditions with a full enclosure penetration weld of the fixture to the locomotive, using modern shop welding practices which provide 100 percent full strength requirements of the joint.

This condition, if found, is not to be taken as a defective condition, but should be brought to the railroad's attention for corrective action.

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