



# Memorandum

U.S. Department  
of Transportation


**Federal Railroad  
Administration**

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Date: January 10, 2005

Reply to Attn of: G-05-08

Subject: Roadway Worker Protection Technical Bulletin  
Audible warning from train for work over large area

From:   
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To: Regional Administrators  
Deputy Regional Administrators  
Track Supervisory Specialists  
Signal and Train Control Supervisory Specialists  
Operating Practices Supervisory Specialists

There are various types of on-track safety provided for in Part 214 including train approach warning, individual train detection, and working limits. Roadway work groups and lone workers must use one of the above forms of on-track safety to foul a track while in the performance of duties. In addition, section 214.337 states: “*Each railroad shall require that the locomotive whistle be sounded, and the locomotive bell be rung, by trains approaching roadway workers on or about the track. Such audible warning shall not substitute for on-track safety procedures prescribed in this part.*” The implementation of this requirement will necessitate railroad operating rules regarding notification to trains that roadway workers are on or about the track. This notification could take the form of portable whistle posts, train movement authorities, or highly visible clothing to identify roadway workers and increase their visibility. This section is not optional with a railroad, and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) intends that it will preempt any local restrictions on the sounding of locomotive whistles.

## **§214.339 Audible Warning From Trains/Large Scale Maintenance**

Question: What are the requirements for sounding of locomotive horns when trains pass large scale maintenance activities?

As trains approach each roadway worker or roadway work group located within a large scale maintenance project that is being conducted, the locomotive whistle shall be sounded and the

locomotive bell rung<sup>1</sup>. The practice of sounding the locomotive whistle and ringing the locomotive bell only one time on the approach to a large scale roadway work group does not meet the intent of the regulation.

The specific sequence and duration of whistle blasts to be sounded approaching roadway workers shall be established by each railroad's operating rules to sufficiently warn roadway workers who may be on or about the track.

*This bulletin is based on consultation with FRA's Office of Chief Counsel. Anyone desiring a formal legal interpretation on any issues discussed in this bulletin should contact that office.*

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<sup>1</sup> Electric multiple unit trains are generally not equipped with bells and FRA inspection activity will account for this mechanical characteristic. In addition, when railroads are conducting reverse movements, it is expected that the locomotive whistle will be sounded and the bell rung in accordance with §214.337 when approaching roadway workers.