

Memorandum

Date: June 24, 2026

Subject: Track and Structures Technical Bulletin T-26-01, Final Rule: Repealing the Runoff Parameter from FRA's Track Surface Requirements for Track Classes 1 through 5, Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 213

From: Yujiang Zhang, Staff Director, Track and Structures Division, Office of Railroad Safety

To: All Federal and State Track Inspectors, Track Specialists, State Program Managers, and Safety Management Teams

This technical bulletin is intended to provide awareness to all Federal and State inspectors who perform inspections of Track Classes 1 to 5. On April 28, 2026, FRA published a final rule in the *Federal Register* titled "Repealing a Track Surface Requirement" (91 FR 22733). This rule became effective on May 28, 2026.

Paragraph (a) of section 213.63 requires each track owner to maintain the surface of its track within certain parameters set forth in the table. Prior to this final rule, the table contained limits for five parameters: "runoff," "profile," "crosslevel," "warp," and "twist." This final rule removed the first parameter, "runoff." No changes were made to the other four parameters. Inspectors should reference the new table below when assessing a railroad's compliance with § 213.63.

Track surface (inches)	Class of track				
	1	2	3	4	5
The deviation from uniform profile on either rail at the mid-ordinate of a 62-foot chord may not be more than	3	2¾	2¼	2	1¼
The deviation from zero crosslevel at any point on tangent or reverse crosslevel elevation on curves may not be more than	3	2	1¾	1¼	1
The difference in crosslevel between any two points less than 62 feet apart may not be more than * 1 2	3	2¼	2	1¾	1½
* Where determined by engineering decision prior to June 22, 1998, due to physical restrictions on spiral length and operating practices and experience, the variation in crosslevel on spirals per 31 feet may not be more than	2	1¾	1¼	1	¾

¹ Except as limited by § 213.57(a), where the elevation at any point in a curve equal or exceeds 6 inches, the difference in crosslevel within 62 feet between that point and a point with greater elevation may not be more than 1½ inches.

² However, to control harmonics on Class 2 through 5 jointed track with staggered joints, the crosslevel differences shall not exceed 1¼ inches in all of six consecutive pairs of joints, as created by seven low joints. Track with joints staggered less than 10 feet apart shall not be considered as having staggered joints. Joints within the seven low joints outside of the regular joint spacing shall not be considered as joints for purposes of this footnote.

As a result of the new rule, the Track and Structures Compliance Manual 2026 Vol II Ch 1 Track Safety Standards Subparts A-F need to be updated and republished. In the interim, this technical bulletin serves to provide awareness of the updated language.