



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad  
Administration**

# Memorandum

Date: June 15, 1998

Reply to Att. of: MP&E 98-35

Subject: Multi-Unit Articulated Flat Cars - Crossover Platform

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

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

TTAX 5 unit All Purpose Spine Cars are equipped with handbrakes which face outward at each end of the five unit consist. The handbrake arrangement is designed so that it can be operated while standing on the sill step or from the ground.

When a 48 foot container is placed on the "A" end unit, the end "crossover" platform is partially covered by the container and has only 10 inches exposed. The "crossover" platforms on these TTAX cars and/or platform extensions on other multi-unit articulated flat cars is not a requirement of the current safety appliance standards. Additionally, they are not used for the proper operation of the handbrakes.

Therefore, the FRA will not take exception to these TTAX 5 unit All Purpose Spine Cars when loaded on the A and B units with 48 foot containers that partially cover the end "crossover" platforms.

However, FRA requires that safety appliances or supports for safety appliances must be mechanically fastened. Brackets that are applied to a car structure other than a tank car, solely for the securement of safety appliances are to be mechanically fastened to the car structure.

Please be governed accordingly.

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