



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Memorandum

Date: June 15, 1998

Reply to Att. of: MP&E 98-5

Subject: Standard Level and Low Level Auto Rack Cars -
Safety Appliance Arrangements

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

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

Since the origination of the radial door and its application to auto rack cars, many clearance problems have developed. Because of the nature of these problems, the **vertical** relationship of the side ladders and sill steps has been altered in such a manner that there are variations of misalignment from 5 to 13 inches. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) feels that this has created a potential safety hazard and that FRA needs to establish guidelines to implement improvement in this area.

FRA and the Car Manufacturers determined that the following dimensions be adopted:

Standard Level Cars

All cars

Relationship of Sill Step to Side Ladder

2-3/16 inch maximum

Low Level Cars

Built 1978 & prior

5- inch maximum

Built after 1978

4- inch maximum

Please be governed accordingly.

#