



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad  
Administration**

# Memorandum

Date: January 26, 1999

Reply to Att. of: MP&E 99-01

Subject: Clarification for Initial Terminal Road Train Air Brake Tests - Section 232.12(d)(1)

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

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

Recently, there have been numerous inquiries concerning the amount of brake pipe reduction required when performing an initial terminal brake test. In 1982, FRA issued a technical bulletin stating FRA's policy. The following information from the earlier TB is still in effect and should clear-up any misunderstandings regarding this matter. Inspectors should be governed accordingly.

"In recognition of the objectives of the train air brake tests, the pressure maintaining characteristics of the 26L locomotive air brake equipment, the greater sensitivity of modern control valves on freight cars, and good practice with respect to cutting the brake pipe pressure maintaining feature out and in, an alternative brake pipe reduction sequence will provide an equally acceptable *Initial Terminal Air Brake Test* when 26L type equipment is utilized.

A single brake pipe reduction of a minimum of 20 pounds, but not to exceed a full service reduction, will produce similar results and may be made in place of the specified sequence required in Section 232.12(d)(1) of a 15 pound reduction followed by an increase to full service."