

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL  
No. 1223 Session of  
1987

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BELARDI AND DALEY, APRIL 29, 1987

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS, APRIL 29, 1987

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 66 (Public Utilities) of the Pennsylvania  
2 Consolidated Statutes, providing for inspection of highway  
3 crossing safety devices by railroads or carriers.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Title 66 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
7 Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

8 § 2707. Inspection of highway crossing safety devices.

9 (a) General rule.--Railroads or carriers shall be required  
10 to inspect highway crossing safety devices as required by this  
11 section.

12 (b) Monthly inspection.--At least once a month, the  
13 railroads or carriers shall:

14 (1) Inspect the relays to ascertain proper condition.

15 (2) Open the alternating current power feed to place the  
16 installation on standby battery.

17 (3) Operate the crossing protection and determine that

1 there are no burned out lamps and that the auxiliary devices  
2 such as crossing bells and no turn and second train signs are  
3 operating properly.

4 (4) Measure the voltage of the main batteries at the  
5 crossing while the charge is off and batteries are supplying  
6 the lighting load and record the values.

7 (5) Wipe dust off the flasher roundels using a soft  
8 cloth and, if necessary, water and determine as far as  
9 practicable that the adjustment of focus has not been  
10 disturbed.

11 (6) Observe that no obstruction interferes with the gate  
12 operation or obscures views of the lamps.

13 (7) Restore the alternating current power and protection  
14 to normal operation and determine that all rectifiers are  
15 energized by alternating current. If a definite hum is not  
16 detected at each rectifier, check the actual charging current  
17 to insure that batteries are being charged.

18 (8) Measure the voltage of the main batteries and track  
19 cells while the cells are on charge and record the values.  
20 Values must be in accord with the values shown on the  
21 manufacturer's instructions for the type of cell, or the  
22 rectifiers should be adjusted for those values.

23 (9) Inspect the main and track batteries at the highway  
24 location for the height of the electrolyte, tightness of  
25 connections and cleanliness.

26 (c) Quarterly inspection.--At least once every three months,  
27 the railroads or carriers shall:

28 (1) Check the actual charging current, not the rectifier  
29 output, of all batteries at highway and approach locations  
30 and record the information on the battery record card.

Charging currents and voltage of cells under charge should be adjusted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for the particular battery and temperature. If it is necessary to add water, this shall be recorded on the battery record card.

(2) Inspect all bond and fouling wires within the approaches to the crossing.

(d) Annual inspection.--At least annually, the railroads or carriers shall:

(1) Check the visibility and focus of signals and check the visibility and condition of signs, including railroad advance warning signs on the highway and crossing signs or their equivalent.

(2) Check the electric gates to ascertain that when the gates start to assume the horizontal position flashing lights start to operate. Check the gates to see that they reach the full horizontal position per the manufacturer's instructions.

(3) Check the electric gates to see that the gates raise to full upright position in not less than the time required per the manufacturer's instructions.

(4) Check the number of flashes per minute and adjust per the manufacturer's instructions.

(5) Check the flashing contacts by observing that at least one lamp on each crossarm is burning when the flasher is at rest.

(6) Check the voltage at lamps after the alternating current power has been off and the flashers have operated for 12 minutes. Gate arm lamp voltages should be checked at the junction box or gate mechanism case.

(7) Take the hydrometer readings on all nickel iron and

1 nickel cadmium cells to ascertain that the specific gravity  
2 is in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.  
3 Values and temperature of the electrolyte shall be recorded  
4 on the battery record card.

5 (8) Take the specific gravity readings of the lead acid  
6 type batteries at the main and approach locations in  
7 accordance with the manufacturer's instructions before the  
8 addition of water.

9 (9) Where the circuit controllers are in service on  
10 outlying switches to cut out operating of crossing  
11 protection, test each circuit controller with proper  
12 obstruction between the switch point and stock rail when the  
13 switch is reversed and observe that the relay so controlled  
14 functions as intended.

15 (10) Check the gate arm torque adjustment in accordance  
16 with the manufacturer's instruction.

17 (11) Check the time delay of starting circuits.

18 (12) Check the time delay of cut-out circuits.

19 (13) Where protection is automatic using directional  
20 stick relays, check the operation for each track in each  
21 direction and, after the tests are completed, observe that  
22 the directional stick relays are deenergized.

23 (14) Test the grade crossing predictors, motion sensors  
24 and overlay track circuits in accordance with the  
25 manufacturer's instructions.

26 (e) Records.--All inspections, tests and any corrective  
27 action taken shall be recorded. A set of blueprints shall be  
28 kept at every highway crossing protection location. They shall  
29 be kept up to date and pertain to that specific location.

30 Section 2. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission shall

1 adopt regulations within 90 days of the effective date of this  
2 act in order to implement this act.  
3 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.