



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: December 2, 2013

In reply refer to: R-13-38

The Honorable Joseph C. Szabo
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
Washington, DC 20590

On November 5, 2013, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) adopted its report concerning the November 15, 2012, highway–railroad grade crossing accident in Midland, Texas, in which a freight train collided with a parade float, resulting in 4 fatalities and 12 injuries.¹ Additional information about this accident and the resulting recommendations may be found in the report of the investigation, which can be accessed at our website, www.nts.gov, under report number NTSB/HAR 13/02.

As a result of this investigation, the NTSB issued 6 new recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration, city of Midland, National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, National Association of Towns and Townships, United States Conference of Mayors, International City/County Management Association, and International Festivals and Events Association, including the following recommendation to the Federal Railroad Administration:

R-13-38

Work with the Federal Highway Administration to (1) include guidance in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) for the installation of advance warning devices, such as movement-activated blank-out signs, that specifically use the word “train” to indicate the preemption of highway traffic signals by an approaching train, and (2) amend the MUTCD to indicate that preemption confirmation lights, while not intended to provide guidance to the general public, would be useful in providing advance information on train movements to law enforcement and emergency responders.

¹ See *Highway–Railroad Grade Crossing Collision, Midland, Texas*, Highway Accident Report, NTSB/HAR 13/02 (Washington, DC: NTSB, 2013).

This safety recommendation is derived from the NTSB's investigation and is consistent with the evidence we found and the analysis we performed. Chairman HERSMAN, Vice Chairman HART, and Members SUMWALT, ROSEKIND, and WEENER concurred in this recommendation. Member WEENER also filed a concurring statement, which is appended to the accident report.

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement it. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov.

[Original Signed]

By: Deborah A.P. Hersman,
Chairman