IOWA DOT

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On-Track Railroad Safety

REFERENCE GUIDE

The Cardinal Rule of Railroading

Always expect a train or equipment to move on any track in any direction at any time!

On-Track Safety

On-Track Safety offers protection for Roadway Workers in the railroad field environment. It is provided through operating and safety rules that govern track occupancy by personnel, trains, and on-track equipment.

On-Track Safety is facilitated by the **Employee in Charge (EIC)**, a railroad employee responsible for the On-Track Safety of others.

The EIC must be qualified under the railroad operating rules and On-Track Safety program.

Responsibilities of the EIC include:

- Insure proper On-Track Safety is provided prior to fouling track.
- Must conduct a job briefing before allowing fouling of the track.
- Insure all members of the work group acknowledge understanding of job briefing.

Other persons involved in On-Track Safety include:

Watchman / Lookout
A person (employed by the railroad) who has been trained and qualified to provide warning of approaching trains or equipment to Roadway Workers. A Watchman / Lookout is assigned solely to watch for approaching trains and on-track equipment and is responsible for the following:

- Providing advance warning of at least 15 seconds to Roadway Workers.
- Identifying the place of safety for Roadway Workers.

Watchman / Lookout cannot be used if:

- Work makes the track impassable to trains.
- Roadway Workers and equipment are unable to clear the track immediately.
- Noise affects hearing oncoming trains and equipment or a warning from the Watchman / Lookout.
- Sightlines are compromised.

Flagman

- A person designated by the railroad to direct or restrict the movement of trains and equipment. A flagman must be qualified on railroad operating rules and in On-Track Safety and must know the proper methods and signals to stop trains and equipment.

Job Briefing

A key function of On-Track Safety is the Job Briefing, which occurs between the EIC and other Roadway Workers at the start of each workday.

A proper Job Briefing must include an understanding of the following:

- Identification of the designated EIC.
- Type of On-Track Safety provided.
- Track and Time limits of authority.
- Track(s) that may be fouled.
- On-Track Safety provided on adjacent tracks, if necessary.
- Procedure to arrange for On-Track Safety on other tracks, if necessary.
- Method of warning when using Watchman / Lookout.
- Designated place of safety when clearing.
- Designated work zones around machines or equipment.
- Safe working and traveling distances between machines or equipment.

An additional Job Briefing will occur throughout the workday anytime:

- Working conditions or procedures change.
- Other workers enter working limits.
- On-Track Safety is changed or extended, and before being released.

On-Track Safety is secured to separate train operations from Roadway Workers, as shown in the figure below and described on the next page.

Securing On-Track Safety

Keep Trains Away From Us	Keep Us Away From Trains
Working Limits • Exclusive Track Occupancy • Foul Time • Train Coordination • Inaccessible Track	• Train Approach Warning • Individual Train Detection

Working Limits

Working Limits are defined as a segment of track with definite boundaries upon which trains may move only as authorized by the Roadway Worker having control over that segment of track.

Working Limits are required anytime:

- Work may delay or stop train movements.
- Workers or equipment cannot get into the clear immediately.
- Physical conditions compromise sight lines or the ability to clear.

Roadway Workers can establish Working Limits over two types of track:

1. Controlled Track:

- A track over which movements are made only via the authority of a Train Dispatcher or Control Operator.
  - Train Dispatcher remotely controls the movement of trains and equipment over a large operating territory
  - Control Operator generally controls a remotely controlled switch or derail, interlocking, or control point. Authority is often provided to Roadway Workers by a Track Warrant or Form B Bulletin issued by a Train Dispatcher, or other authority as designated by the railroad.

2. Noncontrolled Track:

- A track over which movements are made in accordance with railroad operating rules and **without authority provided by a Train Dispatcher or Control Operator**.

Establishing Working Limits involves:

- Obtaining exclusive use of a section of track.
- Making a section of track inaccessible to trains.
- Using a combination of both methods.

Methods of Establishing Working Limits on Controlled Track

Exclusive Track Occupancy

- Working limits are placed under the control of one Roadway Worker, the EIC.
- Working limits are defined by physical features designated by the railroad (i.e. station location, milepost location, siding switch, etc.).
- Trains and equipment moving through working limits are done at the discretion and direction of the EIC.

Foul Time

A method of establishing working limits in which a Roadway Worker (EIC) is notified by a Train Dispatcher or Control Operator that trains will not operate over a specific section of track until the EIC reports the entire work party and all equipment are clear of the track.

The EIC must repeat track number, track limits, and time limits back to the Train Dispatcher or Control Operator.

Foul time is issued only after withholding authority of all trains into the working limits.

Methods of Establishing Working Limits on Noncontrolled Track

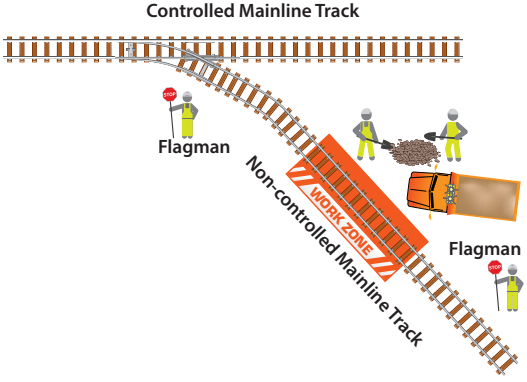
Inaccessible Track

- A method of establishing working limits on Noncontrolled track by physically preventing entry and movement of trains and equipment.

The following three figures identify means of facilitating On-Track Safety on Noncontrolled tracks.

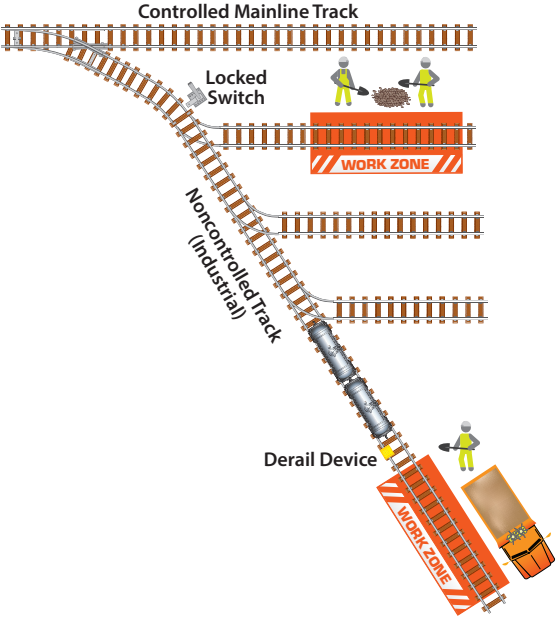
1. Flagman

A flagman with instructions and capability to hold trains and equipment



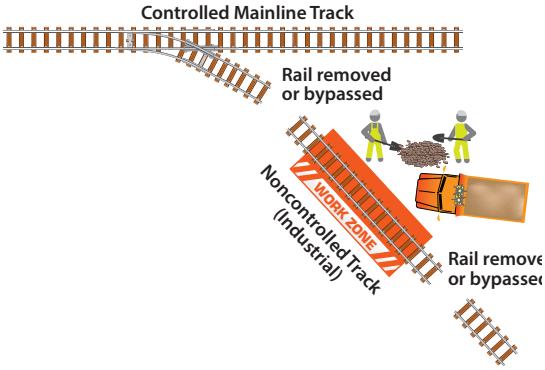
2. Effective Securing device

A switch or derail lined to prevent access and secured with an Effective Securing Device (a mechanism that is vandal and tamper resistant and designed to be applied and secured by the group for which it provides protection only) is shown below.



3. Discontinuity

A discontinuity in the rail that precludes passage of trains into working limits is shown below. Always have a Job Briefing before fouling any track.



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