

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS & TRAINMEN
A DIVISION OF THE RAIL CONFERENCE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS
UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD WESTERN REGION
GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT



Discipline Alert

Rule 5.4.2B: Unannounced Yellow Flag

Two recent FTX events on the Portland Service Unit have drawn the attention of the Officers of your Brotherhood, and demand that you take precautions to protect yourself.

The first involved an 8000+ foot train on the Portland Subdivision. An unannounced yellow flag was placed at Milepost 55. According to the Portland Area Timetable #3, SI-05, Equations (effective June 26, 2005), the distance between Mileposts 55 and 57 is 1.5 miles (7920 feet). Rule 5.4.2B reads as follows:

When a yellow flag is displayed and the restriction is not specified by a track bulletin, track warrant or general order, once the train is **2 miles** beyond the yellow flag, crew members must:

1. Continue moving the train but at a speed not exceeding 10 MPH.
2. Resume speed only after the **rear of the train** has:
 - a. Passed a green flag.
 - or**
 - b. Traveled **4 miles** beyond the yellow flag and the train dispatcher has verified that no track bulletin or track warrant is in effect specifying a temporary speed restriction at that location.

As you can see, this particular test presents a dilemma for the Engineer; specifically, are you required to be at 10 MPH at Milepost 57 (1.5 miles or 7920 feet) or two miles (10,560 feet) from Milepost 55? Until the Carrier's interpretation of their rule as it applies to this type of situation can be determined, we recommend to the following course:

1. Utilizing safe and efficient train handling techniques endeavor to reduce your speed to 10 MPH at the second physical milepost location (in this case, MP 57) from the location of the unannounced yellow flag.
2. Operate your train at 10 MPH until the **REAR-END** has passed a point four miles (21,120 feet) from the yellow flag.

Obviously this scenario might result in your operating your train at 10 MPH over a distance that far exceeds four miles (21,120 feet) plus train length that the rule anticipates. But in a dubious situation such as this, which by its very nature is intended to create a cloud of **DOUBT AND**

UNCERTAINTY, it is imperative that you take the safe course, invoke the provisions of Rule 1.1.1, and protect yourself accordingly.

The second FTX involved a southward UP train on the BNSF Seattle Subdivision. An unannounced yellow flag was posted near a physical milepost by one manager, while a second manager lie in wait at a point four mileposts further south. It is alleged that prior to the rear-end of the train passing the second manager's location, the train began to accelerate as the head-end passed by, allegedly reaching a speed well in excess of 10 MPH and sufficient to result in a decertifiable event.

MESSAGE BEING CONVEYED BY THE CARRIER

100% rules compliance is demanded. Unrealistic operating scenarios designed to test your ability to "multi-task" will be the norm, with the intent to fail you! Any deviation from the Carrier's interpretation of the rules will be handled with formal discipline and federal decertification.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF YOUR BROTHERHOOD

1. As part of your initial job briefing, calculate two miles in feet: $5280 \times 2 = 10,560$. This is where your **head-end** needs to be at 10 MPH after passing an unannounced yellow flag. (See above Portland Subdivision example for a possible exception!)
2. Calculate four miles plus your train length (y): $y = (5280 \times 4) + x$; where x equals your train length and y equals the point at which the **rear-end** of your train has passed a point 21,120 feet (four miles) from the unannounced yellow flag. (And you thought you would never have a legitimate use for high school algebra...)
3. If your train length changes enroute due to a pick-up and/or set-out, conduct a rolling job briefing and recalculate the value of y based on the changed value of x .
4. Keep in mind that Pulse HEUs will not count beyond 19,999 feet. You will need to reset your counter and begin a new count when you get to that point. If you are on a locomotive that has dual computer screens, set the distance counter on one screen with your train length to count down as you might normally do. Set the other screen's distance counter to count up from zero and keep that screen at the ready when the time comes for you to perform in this scenario.

Slow down; protect your job, your certification, and your family's financial well-being. Take the advice of the Carrier and read your rule book on a daily basis. Be cognizant of and anticipate unusual circumstances. The Carrier expects 100% rules compliance from you; endeavor to accommodate their expectations!