

B.L.E.T Division 236
September 13, 2007
Discipline Alert

Air Brake and Train Handling Rules

30.11: Transfer Train Movements Test

A train making transfer movements that does not exceed 20 miles in one direction is considered a transfer train. Intermediate switching is permitted on Transfer Train movements.

Test the air brake system on a transfer train as follows:

- Couple brake pipe hoses between all cars.
- Charge the brake system to at least 60 psi as indicated by a gauge or device at the rear of the train.
- Make a ~~±5~~ 20 psi brake pipe reduction.
- Verify that the brakes apply and remain applied on each car until release signal is given. Any car whose brakes release prior to signal given to release the brakes may be re-tested once. On retest, the brakes must remain applied for at least 3 minutes. Release will be initiated after the 3-minute period.

Note: Cars added to the transfer train must be tested as outlined above at that location before proceeding. If cars are set out during a transfer train and yard movement, determine that brake pipe pressure at the rear car has been restored before proceeding.

System Special Instructions

Change part 3 to read:

Make a 20 psi brake pipe reduction.

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In a recent discipline hearing the issue of when to make a "Transfer Train Movement Test" was at the heart of the case. There appears to some confusion as to the requirements of this rule.

The following communication excerpt is from UPRR L.P. Bonneville, Director Road Operations PDSU #18, Union Pacific Railroad, pbonneville@up.com Office: 530.872.1955 who clarifies when this test is required.

Please ensure that above quoted GCOR is complied with. Failure to do so will result in a Level (4) violation and a FRA decertification.

- **Distance of over one mile and or,**
 - **The existence of grade crossings.**

So if these two conditions do not exist, then a transfer train movement test is not required. The key is for the crew to be governed by the above bullets and do a job briefing with the yardmaster with the way the work is going to be performed if the governing factors are present. If there are any questions after a job

briefing then the key is for the crew to collaborate with a manager. Preferably with the yardmaster present so that the yardmaster has a clear understanding of the requirements of the work.

- Below is an excerpt from a FRA document explaining to Inspectors the application of the Power brake law dated March 2006.

FRA's general rule of thumb as to whether a trip constitutes a "**train movement**" requires five or more cars coupled together that are hauled a distance of at least one mile without a stop to set off or pick up a car and not moving for the purpose of assembling or disassembling a train. However, FRA may consider movements of less than one mile "train movements" if various circumstances exist. In determining whether a particular movement constitutes a "train movement," FRA conducts a multi-factor analysis based upon the discussions contained in various court decisions on the subject. See e.g. United States v. Seaboard Air Line R. R. Co., 361 U.S. 78 (1959); Louisville & Jeffersonville Bridge Co. v. United States, 249 U.S. 543 (1919). The following factors are taken into consideration by FRA: the purpose of the movement; the distance traveled without a stop to set out or pick up cars; the number of cars hauled; and the hazards associated with the particular route traveled (e.g., the existence of public or private crossings with or without crossing protection, the steepness of the grade, the existence of curves, any other conditions that minimize the locomotive engineer's sight distance, and any other conditions that may create a greater need for power brakes during the movement). The existence of any of these hazards would tend to weigh towards the finding of a "train movement," since these are the types of hazards against which the power brake provisions of the Federal rail safety laws were designed to give protection.

Then:

Transfer train: may pick-up and set-out cars while enroute. Any cars picked-up will have to receive, at a minimum, a transfer train brake test. However, this does not start a new 20-mile transfer train unless a transfer train brake test is performed on the entire train at that particular location. Yes, a train could travel 100 miles as a transfer train, if a transfer train brake test is performed at every 20 mile segment of the trip.

Please remember that if in doubt always follow **GCOR 1.1.1: Maintaining a Safe Course, In case of doubt or uncertainty, take the safe course.**

R.J. Lehmann
Local Chairman