



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Discipline: Engineering (General)

Category: Procedure

Removal of Speed Restrictions involving Passive Level Crossings

EGP-36-01

Applicability

New South Wales	✓	RIC (NSW CRN)	
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Document Status

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1.0	18 Nov 09	Standards	Standards Engineers	Manager Standards	Exec Manager SS&P 23/11/2009

Amendment Record

Version	Date Reviewed	Clause	Description of Amendment
1.0	18 Nov 09		PP-163.1 v1.0 renumbered to reflect approved numbering scheme and updated to provide clarity about temporary and permanent restrictions.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The aim of this procedure is to establish the process for the lifting of speed restrictions on portions of railway lines that may impact on nearby areas of interface with the public, particularly crossings at grade and is equally applicable to road and pedestrian crossings.

1.2 Scope

This procedure covers the removal of speed restrictions involving passive level crossings in NSW.

1.3 Procedure Owner

The Manager Standards is the Procedure Owner and is the initial point of contact for all queries relating to this procedure.

1.4 Responsibilities

The Team Manager is responsible for managing the process.

1.5 Reference Documents

- PP-163 Speed Restriction Management

1.6 Definitions

The following terms and acronyms are used within this document:

Term or acronym	Description
TSR	Temporary Speed Restriction
PSR	Permanent Speed Restriction

2 Background

2.1 Speed restrictions

Temporary Speed Restrictions (TSR) are used on a temporary basis and are lifted as quickly as possible to enable Train Operators to resume their normal business operations. Permanent Speed Restrictions (PSR) are in place usually because of the more serious long term issues.

This may cause trains to travel through level crossings at a reduced speed from the normal operating speed because a speed restriction is in force in the immediate proximity of the level crossing. This may impact on areas of public interface i.e. pedestrian or level crossings.

2.2 Effects on Public

Members of the public should always obey controls that exist at a level crossing. However it is clear that members of the public travelling over a passive level crossing use judgement about train proximity based on the usually observed speed of the trains in deciding whether to stop or proceed. When a speed restriction is in place for a long period of time the public become accustomed to the trains moving slower and their behaviour patterns may be influenced, accordingly.

When the speed restriction (temporary or permanent) is lifted and the train proceeds through the level crossing faster, it takes time for the public to recognise this and to adapt to faster travelling trains, so the public should be notified and advised when the speeds of trains will return to normal operating speed.

3 Procedure

3.1 Application

This assessing tool is only to be implemented where:

- 1) A speed restriction (temporary or permanent) has been in place for 3 calendar months or more and the speed restriction reduced the train speed through the crossing by more than 20 kph.
- 2) Where the crossing protection is passive.

3.2 Assess impact on public in areas of influence

Prior to implementing the removal of the speed restriction in the vicinity of level crossings that have been in place for more than 3 calendar months and is a passively protected crossing in the ARTC NSW network it is necessary to assess the impact on level crossing users. The ARTC Team Manager responsible for lifting a speed restriction should assess the impact of such actions.

The following are examples of the factors that need to be considered in assessing this impact on the public.

- **Status of level crossing**
 - Public
 - Private
- **Who is affected by the speed restriction?**
 - A private level crossing to a single farm
 - A private level crossing used by many members of the public i.e. at a bulk handling facility
 - A public level crossing on a national highway
 - A public level crossing in a small town
 - A pedestrian crossing near a school
- **Impact of the time of the year**
 - Is the speed restriction to be lifted at a time of the year when many non local persons use the level crossing i.e. at holiday time or during harvest time?
 - Is the speed restriction being lifted when fog or climate conditions can affect the visibility of and sighting of approaching trains?
- **Protection status of the level crossing**
 - Passive Protection (Yield signs)
 - Passive Protection (Stop signs)
 - Passive Protection (No signs or "Look for trains" signs)
- **Geographical impact**
 - The areas of impact can be considered as those areas where trains are accelerating or decelerating to/from normal line speed/from/to that required at the actual speed restriction.
 - These can be considered as 2000m before and after the caution/clearance boards for a speed restriction.
- **Time based impact**
 - Has the period of imposition of the TSR been of short duration such that the general public could not be expected to become familiar with more slowly moving trains i.e. less than 3 calendar months

- **Train speed increase impact.**
 - Any increase in allowable train speed of more than 20 kph is to be managed as set out in this procedure. If normal line speed is 80 kph and the TSR that was applied was 20 kph, then the difference is 60 kph and therefore the impact on the public must be addressed.

4 Application of the Assessment

The ARTC Team Manager responsible for lifting a speed restriction should address the assessed impacts on the public at interface areas such as level crossings in a degree appropriate to the level of impact to the public at such interface areas (i.e. level crossings).

- ADDRESS THE PUBLIC REQUIREMENTS - initiate an appropriate level of publicity campaign at least one month prior to increasing the speed in the vicinity of the level crossings and repeat 1 week prior to increasing the speed in the vicinity of the level crossing.
- Report the actions taken to the Delivery Manager in the next Monthly Report.

Depending on the extent of the impact one or more of the following is to be used: -

- Letter box drops
- Advertisements in local papers
- Advertising in local and regional newspapers
- Advertising in local, regional and National newspapers
- Erection of additional temporary signage at the level crossings to draw motorists attention to increased train speeds
- Higher level of publicity / community advice involving ARTC, RTA Media and Communications Managers.