



February 21, 2014

**Subject: Update FTA 10-4-13 URGENT SAFETY ADVISORY  
NTSB Urgent Safety Recommendation R-13-036  
Redundant Protection to Prevent Unintended Train Movement in Rail Yards**

On Friday, October 4, 2013, the Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Peter M. Rogoff, transmitted an Urgent Safety Advisory in response to Recommendation R-13-036 issued to the FTA by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

R-13-036 was issued based on preliminary findings from the NTSB investigation of the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) train collision that occurred on September 30, 2013. The preliminary report is available at: <http://www.nts.gov/doclib/reports/2013/DCA13FR014.pdf>.

Preliminary findings indicate that an unmanned out-of-service train moved out of the yard, under power, and travelled approximately one mile of mainline track before it collided with an in-service, stopped passenger train. The NTSB recommendation to the FTA is as follows:

Issue a safety advisory to all rail transit properties asking them to review their operating and maintenance procedures for stored unoccupied cars to ensure the propulsion and brake systems are left in a condition that would not facilitate unintended movement and that redundant means of stopping unintended rail car movements, such as wheel chocks and/or a derails are used. (R-13-036) (Urgent)

While the investigation into the cause of the unintended movement is still ongoing, continuing operational safety concerns have been identified regarding the need for both improved protection against unintended train movements, as well as proper techniques for cleaning rail car electrical components. An inspection of one of the unmanned cars involved in the collision revealed that improper techniques were used to clean the electrical junction box, which allowed water to enter electrical components.

These concerns are significant enough for FTA to update the 10-4-13 Safety Advisory. Through this update, FTA recommends that each rail transit agency:

- Conduct a safety risk assessment to evaluate the adequacy of practices and procedures in place to manage the movement and storage of out-of-service railcars in yards and maintenance facilities.
- Review procedures for cleaning electrical equipment, with special attention to conduit entry points and other areas susceptible to unintended water intrusion or contamination from the cleaning process.
- Document the results of the assessments, and take action to address any identified concerns or issues requiring further investigation.

Please contact FTA's Duana Love at (312) 353-3882 if you have any questions.