

FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION
Grade Crossing Signal System Safety Regulations
(Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 234)
SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION
OMB Control No. 2130-0534

Summary of Submission

- This submission is a request for an extension without change of the last three-year approval granted by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on July 3, 2023, with an expiration date of July 31, 2026.
- The Federal Railroad Administration (hereafter “FRA” or “the Agency”) published the required 60-day Notice in the *Federal Register* on April 23, 2026. See 91 FR 21866. FRA received zero comments in response to this Notice.
- The total number of burden hours requested for this information collection submission is 5,042 hours, which is unchanged from the last submission.
- The total number of responses requested for this information collection submission is 60,252, which is unchanged from the last submission.
- While there is no change to burden or the method of collection, FRA has revised estimates under Question 13, Annual Cost to Respondents, and Question 14, Cost to the Federal Government. These adjusted estimates more accurately reflect the current costs related to this information collection. Question 15, Explanation of Program Changes and Adjustments, provides a detailed explanation of the revised estimates.

1. **Circumstances that make collection of the information necessary**

Section 23 of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 1988 (Pub. L. No. 100-342) amended section 202 of the Federal Railroad Safety Act of 1970, by adding a new subsection q as follows: “The Secretary shall, within one year after the date of the enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 1988, issue such rules, regulations, orders, and standards as may be necessary to ensure the safe maintenance, inspection, and testing of signal systems and devices at railroad highway grade crossings.” The Secretary delegated rulemaking responsibility to the FRA Administrator per 49 CFR § 1.89(a).

FRA has found that the risks to the traveling public and railroad employees from highway-rail grade crossing accidents involving warning system malfunctions can be reduced. Motorists lose faith in warning systems that frequently warn of an oncoming train when none is present. There is an even greater risk of an accident when a warning system fails to activate when a train approaches. In 49 CFR Part 234, FRA requires

railroads to take specific actions upon receipt of a credible report of a false activation or activation failure.

Part 234 requires railroads to take the following actions when they receive a credible report of highway-rail grade crossing warning system malfunction: (1) notify train crews and law enforcement agencies of the malfunctioning warning system; (2) provide for alternative means of actively warning highway users of approaching trains; and (3) repair the system.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used

FRA uses telephone notifications to assemble a database of every reported impact between on-track railroad equipment and an automobile, bus, truck, motorcycle, bicycle, farm vehicle, or pedestrian at a highway-rail grade crossing involving an activation failure. These notifications must be provided to the National Response Center at a toll-free number within 24 hours of such an accident/incident. FRA uses this information to discern different types of grade crossing accident/incident patterns or trends and to develop and implement appropriate safety strategies – both immediate and long-term – to prevent similar accidents/incidents in the future.

After receiving a credible report of warning system malfunction, a railroad is required to notify incoming train crews and the appropriate law enforcement agency (or railroad police) so that measures can be taken to warn motorists and other highway users at the subject crossing until repairs have been completed.

FRA uses grade crossing warning system failure reports, FRA F 6180.83, in conjunction with its grade crossing inspection program, to help railroads craft better solutions to address potential causes and contributing factors that result in warning system malfunctions. In particular, FRA reviews these reports to obtain information that is used to implement more effective safety programs to reduce accidents/incidents attributable to these types of failures in the future. With this information, FRA can correlate accident experience and equipment malfunctions with types of circuits and age of equipment. FRA can then pinpoint the causes of crossing warning system failures and investigate them, if necessary, to determine whether existing maintenance, inspection, and testing standards are effective.

With this submission, as outlined in the published 60-day notice,¹ FRA is updating the existing Form FRA F 6180.83, “Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Warning System Activation Failure Report.” While the proposed revisions do not reduce the 10-minute average response time, they streamline the form and are intended to obtain additional clarity from responses provided in the “Corrective Action” section. In addition, FRA made cosmetic changes to the visual layouts and design of the form that are considered

¹ 91 FR 21866 (2026).

de minimis.

Finally, FRA uses the required records, which railroads must keep for one year, as a ready resource to analyze possible causes and contributing factors related to grade crossing accidents/incidents and to devise effective strategies and programs that will serve FRA, railroads, law enforcement, and other entities interested in reducing the number and severity of these types of accidents/incidents and in promoting greater rail safety throughout the United States.

3. Extent of automated information collection

FRA highly encourages and strongly endorses the use of advanced information technology, wherever possible, to reduce burden on respondents.

To reduce burden on respondents, FRA F 6180.83 “Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Warning System Activation Failure Report” is available for download at <https://railroads.dot.gov/safety-data/forms-guides-publications/forms/618083-hwy-rail-crossing-warning-activation-failure>. The form is a fillable PDF and can be submitted via email to fra.af_fp.reporting@dot.gov.

4. Efforts to identify duplication

The information collection requirements are not duplicated anywhere. Similar data is not available from any other source.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses

The burden incurred from this collection of information is fairly minimal. The larger railroads maintain the majority of grade crossing warning systems in this country. Therefore, the greater portion of the burden falls on these larger railroads, while smaller railroads experience a minor portion of an already very small burden.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information

If this information were not collected or were collected less frequently, railroad safety throughout the United States would be jeopardized. Specifically, without the required telephonic notifications, FRA would not receive prompt notification of impacts between on-track railroad equipment and automobiles, buses, trucks, motorcycles, bicycles, farm vehicles, or pedestrians at highway-rail grade crossings.

Without this collection of information, it would be more difficult for FRA to monitor and evaluate the actions taken by railroads to warn incoming train crews and the public at these affected grade crossings.

Also, without the required notification to train crews and appropriate law enforcement authorities, upon receiving a credible report of a warning system malfunction, railroads might not promptly initiate efforts to warn highway users and incoming train crews about the malfunction, thereby increasing the risk of a serious accident/incident with corresponding injuries and possible fatalities.

The collection of information enhances safety because it requires railroads to take certain steps. Specifically, railroads must take the following actions: (1) prior to any train's arrival at the crossing, notify the train crew of the report of warning system malfunction and notify any other railroads operating over the crossing; (2) notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the crossing, or railroad police capable of responding and controlling vehicular traffic; and (3) provide for alternative means of actively warning highway users of approaching trains. As a result, all affected parties—train crews, law enforcement agencies, and motorists/pedestrians—can be warned and take effective measures to reduce the likelihood of an accident/incident occurring.

Without the required records, it would be more difficult for FRA to compile databases with information about grade crossing warning system malfunctions. As a result, FRA's railroad safety program would be significantly impaired. Specifically, FRA might not receive prompt notification of the locations, times, and dates of grade crossing warning system malfunctions, the time and date of repair, or any actions taken by railroads prior to the repair and reactivation of the affected system. Without these records, FRA might miss critical information that could be used to establish the cause(s) of an accident/incident and to devise effective strategies and programs to prevent similar types of accidents/incidents from occurring in the future.

The frequency of submission of information is presently as infrequent as possible. Requesting any of the required information less frequently would impede FRA's safety program and put at risk railroad employees and the traveling public.

7. Special circumstances

This collection of information does not require collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines delineated in 5 CFR § 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Compliance with 5 CFR § 1320.8

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) and 5 CFR part 1320, FRA published a notice in the *Federal Register* on April 23, 2026,² soliciting comment from the public, railroads, and other interested parties. FRA received no public comments.

²91 FR 21866 (2026).

Consultations with representatives of the affected population:

As a part of FRA's oversight and enforcement, individuals from the railroad industry are generally in direct contact with FRA's inspectors at the time of site inspections and can provide any comments or concerns to them.

9. Payments or gifts to respondents

There are no monetary payments or gifts made to respondents associated with the requirements of this information collection.

10. Assurance of confidentiality

Information collected is not of a confidential nature, and FRA pledges no confidentiality.

11. Justification for any questions of a sensitive nature

The information collection does not contain any data of a personal or sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information collected

The estimates for the respondent universe, annual responses, and average time per response are based on the experience and expertise of FRA's Office of Railroad Safety.

CFR Section	Respondent universe	Total Annual Responses (A)	Average Time per Response (B)	Total Annual Burden Hours (C = A * B)	Wage rates ³	Total Cost Equivalent in U.S.D (D = C * wage rates)	PRA Analysis
234.7 Accidents involving grade crossing signal failure.							

³ The dollar equivalent cost is derived from the 2024 STB Full Year Wage A&B data series using the appropriate employee group hourly wage rate that includes a 75-percent overhead charge. For Transportation (Other than Train & Engine) staff, this cost amounts to \$83.32 per hour.

—(a) Telephone notification to the NRC	784 railroads	2 phone calls	2 minutes	0.10 hour	\$83.32	\$8.33	Each railroad shall report to FRA every impact between on-track railroad equipment and an automobile, bus, truck, motorcycle, bicycle, farm vehicle, or pedestrian at a highway-rail grade crossing involving an activation failure. Notification shall be provided to the NRC within 24 hours of occurrence.
234.9 Grade crossing signal system failure reports.							
—Report to FRA on Form 6180.83, “Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Warning System Activation Failure Report”	784 railroads	250 reports	10 minutes	42 hours	\$83.32	\$3,499.44	Each railroad shall report to FRA within 15 days for each activation failure of a highway-rail grade crossing warning system. FRA Form No. 6180-83, “Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Warning System Failure Report,” shall be used for this purpose and completed in accordance with instructions printed on the form.
Subpart C Response to Credible Reports of Warning System Malfunction at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings							
—234.105/106/107 Activation failure, partial and false activation. Notifications to required parties	784 railroads	30,000 notifications	5 minutes	2,500 hours	\$83.32	\$208,300.00	After receiving a credible report of warning system malfunction, a railroad is required to notify incoming train crews and the appropriate law enforcement agency (or railroad police) so that alternative measures can be taken to warn motorists and other highway users at the subject crossing until repairs have been completed.
234.109 Recordkeeping.							
—Recordkeeping	784 railroads	30,000 records	5 minutes	2,500 hours	\$83.32	\$208,300.00	Each railroad shall keep records pertaining to compliance with this subpart. Records may be

							kept on forms provided by the railroad or by electronic means.
Total ⁴	784 railroads	60,252 responses	N/A	5,042 hours		\$420,107.77	

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents

Grade crossing signal system failure reports are now sent electronically via email to fra.af_fp.reporting@dot.gov.

There are no additional costs to respondents other than those detailed in Question 12 of this supporting justification

14. Estimate of Cost to Federal Government

The annual administrative cost to the Federal Government for time spent reviewing Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Warning System Activation Failure Reports is \$34,190.

GS-Grade Level/Step	No of Employees	No. of Reports ⁵	Hours Per Plan Each	Total Hours	Wage Rate ⁶	Burdened Wage Rate (x 75%)	Total Cost
GS-14/5	1	250	1	250	\$78.15	\$136.76	\$34,190

15. Explanation of program changes and adjustments

This is an extension without change to a current collection of information. The previously approved burden of 5,042 hours and 60,252 responses remain the same for this submission.

Under Question 13, estimated total annual costs to respondents reflect no additional costs. The previously reported cost of \$22,660 for telephonic notifications and postage expenses are no longer pertinent to the program because all reports are submitted via email. Specifically, Activation Failure Reports are sent to fra.af_fp.reporting@dot.gov, so there is no longer a postage cost associated with standard mail. Further, railroads communicate the necessary notifications using a phone system already established and paid for as part

⁴ Totals may not add due to rounding.

⁵ This number is the annual responses reported under Question 12 for § 234.9, Grade Crossing Signal System Failure Reports.

⁶ The hourly wage rate was calculated using the 2026 GS locality pay table for Washington-Baltimore-Arlington, DC-MD-VA-WV-PA see <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2026/general-schedule/>.

of general operating costs. Expenses related to required toll-free lines are reported under OMB Control No. 2130-0591, System for Telephonic Notification of Unsafe Conditions at Highway-Rail and Pathway Grade Crossings.

Under Question 14, the cost to the Federal Government has increased to more accurately reflect the time spent by FRA staff on report submitted by the railroads. This increased the total cost from \$5,912 to \$34,190.

16. Publication of results of data collection

FRA plans no tabulation or publication of responses.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date for OMB approval

FRA intends to display the expiration date.

18. Exception to certification statement

No exceptions are taken at this time.