

## HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
20102(1) .....	45:16.  45:22.  45:38 (last sentence).  45:61(a).  45:61(b)(1).  45:431(e).  49:App.:26(a).	Apr. 14, 1910, ch. 160, §1, 36 Stat. 298; restated June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §13(3)(E), 102 Stat. 632. Feb. 17, 1911, ch. 103, §1, 36 Stat. 913; June 7, 1924, ch. 355, §1, 43 Stat. 659; restated June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §14(1), 102 Stat. 632. May 6, 1910, ch. 208, 36 Stat. 350, §1 (last sentence); added June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §15(1)(C), 102 Stat. 633. Mar. 4, 1907, ch. 2939, §1(a), 34 Stat. 1415; Dec. 26, 1969, Pub. L. 91-169, §1, 83 Stat. 463; restated Nov. 2, 1978, Pub. L. 95-574, §5, 92 Stat. 2461; June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §16(1)(A), 102 Stat. 634. Mar. 4, 1907, ch. 2939, §1(b)(1), 34 Stat. 1415; restated Dec. 26, 1969, Pub. L. 91-169, §1, 83 Stat. 463; June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §16(1)(B), 102 Stat. 634. Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91-458, §202(e), 84 Stat. 971; restated June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §7(a), 102 Stat. 628. Feb. 4, 1887, ch. 104, 24 Stat. 379, §25(a); added Feb. 28, 1920, ch. 91, §441, 41 Stat. 498; Aug. 26, 1937, ch. 818, 50 Stat. 835; Sept. 18, 1940, ch. 722, §14(b), 54 Stat. 919; restated June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §17(1), 102 Stat. 635.
20102(2) .....	(no source).	

Clause (1) is substituted for the source provisions to avoid repeating the definition of “railroad” in each chapter in this part.

Clause (2) is added to distinguish between railroad transportation and the entity providing railroad transportation.

**Editorial Notes**

## AMENDMENTS

2008—Pub. L. 110-432, §2(b), added pars. (1) and (4) and redesignated former pars. (1) and (2) as (2) and (3), respectively.

Par. (3). Pub. L. 110-432, §407, amended par. (3) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “‘railroad carrier’ means a person providing railroad transportation.”

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

## DEFINITIONS APPLICABLE TO DIVISION A OF PUB. L. 110-432

Pub. L. 110-432, div. A, §2(a), Oct. 16, 2008, 122 Stat. 4849, as amended by Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title XI, §11316(j)(2), Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1677, provided that: “In this division [see Short Title of 2008 Amendment note set out under section 20101 of this title]:

“(1) **CROSSING**.—The term ‘crossing’ means a location within a State, other than a location where one or more railroad tracks cross one or more railroad tracks at grade, where—

“(A) a public highway, road, or street, or a private roadway, including associated sidewalks and pathways, crosses one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated; or

“(B) a pathway explicitly authorized by a public authority or a railroad carrier that is dedicated for the use of nonvehicular traffic, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and others, that is not associated with a public highway, road, or street, or a private

roadway, crosses one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated.

“(2) **DEPARTMENT**.—The term ‘Department’ means the Department of Transportation.

“(3) **RAILROAD**.—The term ‘railroad’ has the meaning given that term by section 20102 of title 49, United States Code.

“(4) **RAILROAD CARRIER**.—The term ‘railroad carrier’ has the meaning given that term by section 20102 of title 49, United States Code.

“(5) **SECRETARY**.—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Transportation.

“(6) **STATE**.—The term ‘State’ means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.”

**§ 20103. General authority**

(a) **REGULATIONS AND ORDERS**.—The Secretary of Transportation, as necessary, shall prescribe regulations and issue orders for every area of railroad safety supplementing laws and regulations in effect on October 16, 1970. When prescribing a security regulation or issuing a security order that affects the safety of railroad operations, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall consult with the Secretary.

(b) **REGULATIONS OF PRACTICE FOR PROCEEDINGS**.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations of practice applicable to each proceeding under this chapter. The regulations shall reflect the varying nature of the proceedings and include time limits for disposition of the proceedings. The time limit for disposition of a proceeding may not be more than 12 months after the date it begins.

(c) **CONSIDERATION OF INFORMATION AND STANDARDS**.—In prescribing regulations and issuing orders under this section, the Secretary shall consider existing relevant safety information and standards.

(d) **NONEMERGENCY WAIVERS**.—

(1) **IN GENERAL**.—The Secretary of Transportation may waive, or suspend the requirement to comply with, any part of a regulation prescribed or an order issued under this chapter if such waiver or suspension is in the public interest and consistent with railroad safety.

(2) **NOTICE REQUIRED**.—The Secretary shall—

(A) provide timely public notice of any request for a waiver under this subsection or for a suspension under subpart E of part 211 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or successor regulations;

(B) make available the application for such waiver or suspension and any nonconfidential underlying data to interested parties;

(C) provide the public with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on a proposed waiver or suspension under this subsection before making a final decision; and

(D) publish on a publicly accessible website the reasons for granting each such waiver or suspension.

(3) **INFORMATION PROTECTION**.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to require the release of information protected by law from public disclosure.

(4) **RULEMAKING**.—

(A) **IN GENERAL**.—Not later than 1 year after the first day on which a waiver under

this subsection or a suspension under subpart E of part 211 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or successor regulations, has been in continuous effect for a 6-year period, the Secretary shall complete a review and analysis of such waiver or suspension to determine whether issuing a rule that is consistent with the waiver is—

- (i) in the public interest; and
- (ii) consistent with railroad safety.

(B) FACTORS.—In conducting the review and analysis under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consider—

- (i) the relevant safety record under the waiver or suspension;
- (ii) the likelihood that other entities would have similar safety outcomes;
- (iii) the materials submitted in the applications, including any comments regarding such materials; and
- (iv) related rulemaking activity.

(C) NOTICE AND COMMENT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall publish the review and analysis required under this paragraph in the Federal Register, which shall include a summary of the data collected and all relevant underlying data, if the Secretary decides not to initiate a regulatory update under subparagraph (D).

(ii) NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING.—The review and analysis under this paragraph shall be included as part of the notice of proposed rulemaking if the Secretary initiates a regulatory update under subparagraph (D).

(D) REGULATORY UPDATE.—The Secretary may initiate a rulemaking to incorporate relevant aspects of a waiver under this subsection or a suspension under subpart E of part 211 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or successor regulations, into the relevant regulation, to the extent the Secretary considers appropriate.

(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to delay any waiver granted pursuant to this subsection that is in the public interest and consistent with railroad safety.

(e) HEARINGS.—The Secretary shall conduct a hearing as provided by section 553 of title 5 when prescribing a regulation or issuing an order under this part, including a regulation or order establishing, amending, or providing a waiver, described in subsection (d), of compliance with a railroad safety regulation prescribed or order issued under this part. An opportunity for an oral presentation shall be provided.

(f) TOURIST RAILROAD CARRIERS.—In prescribing regulations that pertain to railroad safety that affect tourist, historic, scenic, or excursion railroad carriers, the Secretary of Transportation shall take into consideration any financial, operational, or other factors that may be unique to such railroad carriers. The Secretary shall submit a report to Congress not later than September 30, 1995, on actions taken under this subsection.

(g) EMERGENCY WAIVERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may waive compliance with any part of a regulation prescribed or order issued under this part without prior notice and comment if the Secretary determines that—

- (A) it is in the public interest to grant the waiver;
- (B) the waiver is not inconsistent with railroad safety; and
- (C) the waiver is necessary to address an actual or impending emergency situation or emergency event.

(2) PERIOD OF WAIVER.—A waiver under this subsection may be issued for a period of not more than 60 days and may be renewed upon application to the Secretary only after notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the waiver. The Secretary shall immediately revoke the waiver if continuation of the waiver would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of this part.

(3) STATEMENT OF REASONS.—The Secretary shall state in the decision issued under this subsection the reasons for granting the waiver.

(4) CONSULTATION.—In granting a waiver under this subsection, the Secretary shall consult and coordinate with other Federal agencies, as appropriate, for matters that may impact such agencies.

(5) EMERGENCY SITUATION; EMERGENCY EVENT.—In this subsection, the terms “emergency situation” and “emergency event” mean a natural or manmade disaster, such as a hurricane, flood, earthquake, mudslide, forest fire, snowstorm, terrorist act, biological outbreak, release of a dangerous radiological, chemical, explosive, or biological material, or a war-related activity, that poses a risk of death, serious illness, severe injury, or substantial property damage. The disaster may be local, regional, or national in scope.

(Pub. L. 103–272, §1(e), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 863; Pub. L. 103–440, title II, §217, Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4624; Pub. L. 107–296, title XVII, §1710(b), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2319; Pub. L. 110–432, div. A, title III, §308, Oct. 16, 2008, 122 Stat. 4881; Pub. L. 117–58, div. B, title II, §22411, Nov. 15, 2021, 135 Stat. 742.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised Section</i>	<i>Source (U.S. Code)</i>	<i>Source (Statutes at Large)</i>
20103(a) .....	45:431(a) (1st sentence cl. (1)).	Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91–458, §202(a) (1st sentence cl. (1)), (b), (c), 84 Stat. 971.
20103(b) .....	45:431(d) (21st–last words).	Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91–458, §202(d), 84 Stat. 971; restated July 8, 1976, Pub. L. 94–348, §5(a), 90 Stat. 819.
20103(c) .....	45:431(d) (1st–20th words).	
20103(d) .....	45:431(c).	
20103(e) .....	45:431(b).	

In this part, the word “rule” is omitted as being synonymous with “regulation”. The word “standard” is omitted as being included in “regulation”.

In subsection (a), the words “(hereafter in this subchapter referred to as the ‘Secretary’)” in 45:431(a) (1st sentence cl. (1)) are omitted as surplus because the complete name of the Secretary of Transportation is used the first time the term appears in a section.

In subsection (b), the words “within 180 days after July 8, 1976” are omitted as expired. The word “pre-

scribe” is substituted for “take such action as may be necessary to develop and publish” for consistency in the revised title and with other titles of the United States Code and to eliminate unnecessary words.

In subsection (d), the words “after hearing in accordance with subsection (b) of this section” are omitted as surplus because of the language restated in subsection (e) of this section.

### Editorial Notes

#### AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 117-58 amended subsec. (d) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Secretary may waive compliance with any part of a regulation prescribed or order issued under this chapter if the waiver is in the public interest and consistent with railroad safety. The Secretary shall make public the reasons for granting the waiver.”

2008—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 110-432, §308(1), substituted “Nonemergency Waivers” for “Waivers” in heading.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 110-432, §308(2), added subsec. (e) and struck out former subsec. (e). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Secretary shall conduct a hearing as provided by section 553 of title 5 when prescribing a regulation or issuing an order under this chapter, including a regulation or order establishing, amending, or waiving compliance with a railroad safety regulation prescribed or order issued under this chapter. An opportunity for an oral presentation shall be provided.”

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 110-432, §308(3), added subsec. (g).  
2002—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 107-296 inserted at end “When prescribing a security regulation or issuing a security order that affects the safety of railroad operations, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall consult with the Secretary.”

1994—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 103-440 added subsec. (f).

### Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 107-296 effective 60 days after Nov. 25, 2002, see section 4 of Pub. L. 107-296, set out as an Effective Date note under section 101 of Title 6, Domestic Security.

#### REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 103-272, §4(t), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1372, provided that:

“(1) Not later than March 3, 1995, the Secretary of Transportation shall complete a regulatory proceeding to consider prescribing regulations to improve the safety and working conditions of locomotive cabs. The proceeding shall assess—

“(A) the adequacy of Locomotive Crashworthiness Requirements Standard S-580, or any successor standard, adopted by the Association of American Railroads in 1989 in improving the safety of locomotive cabs; and

“(B) the extent to which environmental, sanitary, and other working conditions in locomotive cabs affect productivity, health, and the safe operation of locomotives.

“(2) SUPPORTING RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS.—In support of the proceeding required under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Secretary shall conduct research and analysis, including computer modeling and full-scale crash testing, as appropriate, to consider—

“(A) the costs and benefits associated with equipping locomotives with—

“(i) braced collision posts;

“(ii) rollover protection devices;

“(iii) deflection plates;

“(iv) shatterproof windows;

“(v) readily accessible crash refuges;

“(vi) uniform sill heights;

“(vii) antiladders, or other equipment designed to prevent overrides resulting from head-on locomotive collisions;

“(viii) equipment to deter post-collision entry of flammable liquids into locomotive cabs;

“(ix) any other devices intended to provide crash protection for occupants of locomotive cabs; and

“(x) functioning and regularly maintained sanitary facilities; and

“(B) the effects on train crews of the presence of asbestos in locomotive components.

“(3) REPORT.—If, on the basis of the proceeding required under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Secretary decides not to prescribe regulations, the Secretary shall report to Congress on the reasons for that decision.”

#### RAILROAD POINT OF CONTACT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

Pub. L. 117-58, div. B, title II, §22426, Nov. 15, 2021, 135 Stat. 756, provided that: “All railroads shall—

“(1) provide railroad contact information for public safety issues, including a telephone number, to the relevant Federal, State, and local oversight agencies; and

“(2) post the information described in paragraph (1) on a publicly accessible website.”

#### REAL-TIME EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title VII, §7302, Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1594, as amended by Pub. L. 117-58, div. B, title VI, §26003, Nov. 15, 2021, 135 Stat. 883, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 5, 2022, the Secretary [of Transportation], in consultation with appropriate Federal agencies, shall issue regulations that—

“(1) require a Class I railroad transporting hazardous materials—

“(A) to generate accurate, real-time, and electronic train consist information, including—

“(i) the identity, quantity, and location of hazardous materials on a train;

“(ii) the point of origin and destination of the train;

“(iii) any emergency response information or resources required by the Secretary; and

“(iv) an emergency response point of contact designated by the Class I railroad; and

“(B) to provide the electronic train consist information described in subparagraph (A) to authorized State and local first responders, emergency response officials, and law enforcement personnel that are involved in the response to, or investigation of, an accident, incident, or public health or safety emergency involving the rail transportation of hazardous materials;

“(2) require each Class I railroad to provide advanced notification and information on high-hazard flammable trains to each State emergency response commission, consistent with the notification content requirements in Emergency Order Docket No. DOT-OST-2014-0067, including—

“(A) a reasonable estimate of the number of implicated trains that are expected to travel, per week, through each county within the applicable State;

“(B) updates to such estimate prior to making any material changes to any volumes or frequencies of trains traveling through a county;

“(C) identification and a description of the Class 3 flammable liquid being transported on such trains;

“(D) applicable emergency response information, as required by regulation;

“(E) identification of the routes over which such liquid will be transported; and

“(F) a point of contact at the Class I railroad responsible for serving as the point of contact for State emergency response centers and local emergency responders related to the Class I railroad’s transportation of such liquid.

“(3) require each applicable State emergency response commission to provide to a political subdivi-

sion of a State, or public agency responsible for emergency response or law enforcement, upon request of the political subdivision or public agency, the information the commission receives from a Class I railroad pursuant to paragraph (2), including, for any such political subdivision or public agency responsible for emergency response or law enforcement that makes an initial request for such information, any updates received by the State emergency response commission.

“(4) prohibit any Class I railroad, employee, or agent from withholding, or causing to be withheld, the train consist information from first responders, emergency response officials, and law enforcement personnel described in paragraph (2) in the event of an incident, accident, or public health or safety emergency involving the rail transportation of hazardous materials;

“(5) establish security and confidentiality protections, including protections from the public release of proprietary information or security-sensitive information, to prevent the release to unauthorized persons any electronic train consist information or advanced notification or information provided by Class I railroads under this section; and

“(6) allow each Class I railroad to enter into a memorandum of understanding with any Class II railroad or Class III railroad that operates trains over the Class I railroad’s line to incorporate the Class II railroad or Class III railroad’s train consist information within the existing framework described in paragraph (1).

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CLASS I RAILROAD; CLASS II RAILROAD; CLASS III RAILROAD.—The terms ‘Class I railroad’, ‘Class II railroad’, and ‘Class III railroad’ have the meaning given those terms in section 20102 of title 49, United States Code.

“(2) CLASS 3 FLAMMABLE LIQUID.—The term ‘Class 3 flammable liquid’ has the meaning given the term flammable liquid in section 173.120(a) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(3) HAZARDOUS MATERIAL.—The term ‘hazardous material’ means a substance or material the Secretary designates as hazardous under section 5103 of title 49, United States Code.

“(4) HIGH-HAZARD FLAMMABLE TRAIN.—The term ‘high-hazard flammable train’ means a single train transporting 20 or more tank cars loaded with a Class 3 flammable liquid in a continuous block or a single train transporting 35 or more tank cars loaded with a Class 3 flammable liquid throughout the train consist.

“(5) TRAIN CONSIST.—The term ‘train consist’ includes, with regard to a specific train, the number of rail cars and the commodity transported by each rail car.

“(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section may be construed to prohibit a Class I railroad from voluntarily entering into a memorandum of understanding with a State emergency response commission or an entity representing or including first responders, emergency response officials, and law enforcement personnel.”

#### ALERTERS

Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title XI, §11407, Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1684, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary [of Transportation] shall promulgate a rule to require a working alerter in the controlling locomotive of each passenger train in intercity rail passenger transportation (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code) or commuter rail passenger transportation (as defined in section 24102 of title 49, United States Code).

“(b) RULEMAKING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may promulgate a rule to specify the essential functionalities of a working alerter, including the manner in which the alerter can be reset.

“(2) ALTERNATE PRACTICE OR TECHNOLOGY.—The Secretary may require or allow a technology or practice in lieu of a working alerter if the Secretary determines that the technology or practice would achieve an equivalent or greater level of safety in enhancing or ensuring appropriate locomotive control.”

#### LOCOMOTIVE CAB STUDIES

Pub. L. 110-432, div. A, title IV, §405, Oct. 16, 2008, 122 Stat. 4885, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 2008], the Secretary, through the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee if the Secretary makes such a request, shall complete a study on the safety impact of the use of personal electronic devices, including cell phones, video games, and other distracting devices, by safety-related railroad employees (as defined in section 20102(4) of title 49, United States Code), during the performance of such employees’ duties. The study shall consider the prevalence of the use of such devices.

“(b) LOCOMOTIVE CAB ENVIRONMENT.—The Secretary may also study other elements of the locomotive cab environment and their effect on an employee’s health and safety.

“(c) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the completion of any study under this section, the Secretary shall issue a report on the study to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

“(d) AUTHORITY.—Based on the conclusions of the study required under (a), the Secretary of Transportation may prohibit the use of personal electronic devices, such as cell phones, video games, or other electronic devices that may distract employees from safely performing their duties, unless those devices are being used according to railroad operating rules or for other work purposes. Based on the conclusions of other studies conducted under subsection (b), the Secretary may prescribe regulations to improve elements of the cab environment to protect an employee’s health and safety.”

[For definitions of “Secretary” and “railroad”, as used in section 405 of Pub. L. 110-432, set out above, see section 2(a) of Pub. L. 110-432, set out as a note under section 20102 of this title.]

#### TUNNEL INFORMATION

Pub. L. 110-432, div. A, title IV, §414, Oct. 16, 2008, 122 Stat. 4889, as amended by Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title XI, §11316(j)(7), Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1678, provided that: “Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 2008], each railroad carrier shall, with respect to each of its tunnels which—

“(1) are longer than 1000 feet and located under a city with a population of 400,000 or greater; or

“(2) carry 5 or more scheduled passenger trains per day, or 500 or more carloads of poison- or toxic-by-inhalation hazardous materials (as defined in sections 171.8, 173.115, and 173.132 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations) per year,

maintain, for at least two years, historical documentation of structural inspection and maintenance activities for such tunnels, including information on the methods of ingress and egress into and out of the tunnel, the types of cargos typically transported through the tunnel, and schematics or blueprints for the tunnel, when available. Upon request, a railroad carrier shall provide periodic briefings on such information to the governments of the local jurisdiction in which the tunnel is located, including updates whenever a repair or rehabilitation project substantially alters the methods of ingress and egress. Such governments shall use appropriate means to protect and restrict the distribution of any security sensitive information (as defined in section 1520.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations) provided by the railroad carrier under this section, consistent with national security interests.”

[For definition of “railroad carrier”, as used in section 414 of Pub. L. 110-432, set out above, see section 2(a) of Pub. L. 110-432, set out as a note under section 20102 of this title.]

#### RAILROAD BRIDGE SAFETY ASSURANCE

Pub. L. 110-432, div. A, title IV, § 417, Oct. 16, 2008, 122 Stat. 4890, as amended by Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title XI, § 11405, Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1682, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 2008], the Secretary shall promulgate a regulation requiring owners of track carried on one or more railroad bridges to adopt a bridge safety management program to prevent the deterioration of railroad bridges and reduce the risk of human casualties, environmental damage, and disruption to the Nation’s railroad transportation system that would result from a catastrophic bridge failure.

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations shall, at a minimum, require each track owner to [sic]—

“(1) to develop and maintain an accurate inventory of its railroad bridges, which shall identify the location of each bridge, its configuration, type of construction, number of spans, span lengths, and all other information necessary to provide for the safe management of the bridges;

“(2) to ensure that a professional engineer competent in the field of railroad bridge engineering, or a qualified person under the supervision of the track owner, determines bridge capacity;

“(3) to maintain, and update as appropriate, a record of the safe capacity of each bridge which carries its track and, if available, maintain the original design documents of each bridge and a documentation of all repairs, modifications, and inspections of the bridge;

“(4) to develop, maintain, and enforce a written procedure that will ensure that its bridges are not loaded beyond their capacities;

“(5) to conduct regular comprehensive inspections of each bridge, at least once every year, and maintain records of those inspections that include the date on which the inspection was performed, the precise identification of the bridge inspected, the items inspected, an accurate description of the condition of those items, and a narrative of any inspection item that is found by the inspector to be a potential problem;

“(6) to ensure that the level of detail and the inspection procedures are appropriate to the configuration of the bridge, conditions found during previous inspections, and the nature of the railroad traffic moved over the bridge, including car weights, train frequency and length, levels of passenger and hazardous materials traffic, and vulnerability of the bridge to damage;

“(7) to ensure that an engineer who is competent in the field of railroad bridge engineering—

“(A) is responsible for the development of all inspection procedures;

“(B) reviews all inspection reports; and

“(C) determines whether bridges are being inspected according to the applicable procedures and frequency, and reviews any items noted by an inspector as exceptions; and

“(8) to designate qualified bridge inspectors or maintenance personnel to authorize the operation of trains on bridges following repairs, damage, or indications of potential structural problems.

“(c) USE OF BRIDGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall instruct bridge experts to obtain copies of the most recent bridge management programs of each railroad within the expert’s areas of responsibility, and require that experts use those programs when conducting bridge observations.

“(d) REVIEW OF DATA.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program to periodically review bridge inspection and maintenance data from railroad carrier bridge inspec-

tors and Federal Railroad Administration bridge experts.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF BRIDGE CONDITION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A State or political subdivision of a State may file a request with the Secretary for a public version of a bridge inspection report generated under subsection (b)(5) for a bridge located in such State or political subdivision’s jurisdiction.

“(B) PUBLIC VERSION OF REPORT.—If the Secretary determines that the request is reasonable, the Secretary shall require a railroad to submit a public version of the most recent bridge inspection report, such as a summary form, for a bridge subject to a request under subparagraph (A). The public version of a bridge inspection report shall include the date of last inspection, length of bridge, location of bridge, type of bridge, type of structure, feature crossed by bridge, and railroad contact information, along with a general statement on the condition of the bridge.

“(C) PROVISION OF REPORT.—The Secretary shall provide to a State or political subdivision of a State a public version of a bridge inspection report submitted under subparagraph (B).

“(D) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary, upon the reasonable request of State or political subdivision of a State, shall provide technical assistance to such State or political subdivision of a State to facilitate the understanding of a bridge inspection report.”

[For definitions of “Secretary”, “railroad”, and “railroad carrier”, as used in section 417 of Pub. L. 110-432, set out above, see section 2(a) of Pub. L. 110-432, set out as a note under section 20102 of this title.]

#### § 20104. Emergency authority

(a) ORDERING RESTRICTIONS AND PROHIBITIONS.—(1) If, through testing, inspection, investigation, or research carried out under this chapter, the Secretary of Transportation decides that an unsafe condition or practice, or a combination of unsafe conditions and practices, causes an emergency situation involving a hazard of death, personal injury, or significant harm to the environment, the Secretary immediately may order restrictions and prohibitions, without regard to section 20103(e) of this title, that may be necessary to abate the situation.

(2) The order shall describe the condition or practice, or a combination of conditions and practices, that causes the emergency situation and prescribe standards and procedures for obtaining relief from the order. This paragraph does not affect the Secretary’s discretion under this section to maintain the order in effect for as long as the emergency situation exists.

(b) REVIEW OF ORDERS.—After issuing an order under this section, the Secretary shall provide an opportunity for review of the order under section 554 of title 5. If a petition for review is filed and the review is not completed by the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date the order was issued, the order stops being effective at the end of that period unless the Secretary decides in writing that the emergency situation still exists.

(c) CIVIL ACTIONS TO COMPEL ISSUANCE OF ORDERS.—An employee of a railroad carrier engaged in interstate or foreign commerce who may be exposed to imminent physical injury during that employment because of the Secretary’s failure, without any reasonable basis, to issue an order under subsection (a) of this section, or the employee’s authorized representa-