

Subpart A—General

§ 214.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) The purpose of this part is to prevent accidents and casualties to employees involved in certain railroad inspection, maintenance and construction activities.

(b) This part prescribes minimum Federal safety standards for the railroad workplace safety subjects addressed herein. This part does not restrict a railroad or railroad contractor from adopting and enforcing additional or more stringent requirements not inconsistent with this part.

§ 214.3 Application.

This part applies to railroads that operate rolling equipment on track that is part of the general railroad system of transportation.

§ 214.5 Responsibility for compliance.

Any person (an entity of any type covered under 1 U.S.C. 1, including but not limited to the following: a railroad; a manager, supervisor, official, or other employee or agent of a railroad; any owner, manufacturer, lessor, or lessee of railroad equipment, track, or facilities; any independent contractor providing goods or services to a railroad; and any employee of such owner, manufacturer, lessor, lessee, or independent contractor) who violates any requirement of this part or causes the violation of any such requirement is subject to a civil penalty of at least \$1,052 and not more than \$34,401 per violation, except that penalties may be assessed against individuals only for willful violations, and where a grossly negligent violation or a pattern of repeated violations has created an imminent hazard of death or injury, or has caused death or injury, a penalty not to exceed \$137,603 per violation may be assessed. See FRA's website at

www.fra.dot.gov for a statement of agency civil penalty policy.

[57 FR 28127, June 24, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 11620, Mar. 10, 1998; 69 FR 30593, May 28, 2004; 72 FR 51196, Sept. 6, 2007; 73 FR 79701, Dec. 30, 2008; 77 FR 24419, Apr. 24, 2012; 81 FR 43109, July 1, 2016; 82 FR 16132, Apr. 3, 2017; 83 FR 60746, Nov. 27, 2018; 84 FR 23734, May 23, 2019; 84 FR 37072, July 31, 2019; 86 FR 1757, Jan. 11, 2021; 86 FR 23253, May 3, 2021; 87 FR 15867, Mar. 21, 2022; 88 FR 1126, Jan. 6, 2023]

§ 214.7 Definitions.

Unless otherwise provided, as used in this part—

Adjacent tracks mean two or more tracks with track centers spaced less than 25 feet apart.

Anchorage means a secure point of attachment for lifelines, lanyards or deceleration devices that is independent of the means of supporting or suspending the employee.

Body belt means a strap that can be secured around the waist or body and attached to a lanyard, lifeline, or deceleration device.

Body harness means a device with straps that is secured about the person in a manner so as to distribute the fall arrest forces over (at least) the thighs, shoulders, pelvis, waist, and chest and that can be attached to a lanyard, lifeline, or deceleration device.

Class I, Class II, and Class III have the meaning assigned by, Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations part 1201, General Instructions 1-1.

Competent person means one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the workplace and who is authorized to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them.

Control operator means the railroad employee in charge of a remotely controlled switch or derail, an interlocking, or a controlled point, or a segment of controlled track.

Controlled point means a location where signals and/or other functions of a traffic control system are controlled from the control machine.

Controlled track means track upon which the railroad's operating rules require that all movements of trains must be authorized by a train dispatcher or a control operator.

Deceleration device means any mechanism, including, but not limited to,

rope grabs, ripstitch lanyards, specially woven lanyards, tearing or deforming lanyards, and automatic self-retracting lifelines/lanyards that serve to dissipate a substantial amount of energy during a fall arrest, or otherwise limit the energy on a person during fall arrest.

Definite train location means a system for establishing on-track safety by providing roadway workers with information about the earliest possible time that approaching trains may pass specific locations as prescribed in §214.331 of this part.

Designated official means any person(s) designated by the employer to receive notification of non-complying conditions on on-track roadway maintenance machines and hi-rail vehicles.

Effective securing device means a vandal and tamper resistant lock, keyed for application and removal only by the roadway worker(s) for whom the protection is provided. In the absence of a lock, it is acceptable to use a spike driven firmly into a switch tie or a switch point clamp to prevent the use of a manually operated switch. It is also acceptable to use portable derails secured with specifically designed metal wedges. Securing devices without a specially keyed lock shall be designed in such a manner that they require railroad track tools for installation and removal and the operating rules of the railroad must prohibit removal by employees other than the class, craft, or group of employees for whom the protection is being provided. Regardless of the type of securing device, the throwing handle or hasp of the switch or derail shall be uniquely tagged. If there is no throwing handle, the securing device shall be tagged.

Employee means an individual who is engaged or compensated by a railroad or by a contractor to a railroad to perform any of the duties defined in this part.

Employer means a railroad, or a contractor to a railroad, that directly engages or compensates individuals to perform any of the duties defined in this part.

Equivalent means alternative designs, materials, or methods that the railroad or railroad contractor can demonstrate will provide equal or greater safety for

employees than the means specified in this part.

Exclusive track occupancy means a method of establishing working limits on controlled track in which movement authority of trains and other equipment is withheld by the train dispatcher or control operator, or restricted by flagmen, as prescribed in §214.321 of this part.

Flagman when used in relation to roadway worker safety means an employee designated by the railroad to direct or restrict the movement of trains past a point on a track to provide on-track safety for roadway workers, while engaged solely in performing that function.

Foul time is a method of establishing working limits on controlled track in which a roadway worker is notified by the train dispatcher or control operator that no trains will operate within a specific segment of controlled track until the roadway worker reports clear of the track, as prescribed in §214.323 of this part.

Fouling a track means the placement of an individual or an item of equipment in such proximity to a track that the individual or equipment could be struck by a moving train or on-track equipment, or in any case is within four feet of the field side of the near running rail.

Free fall means the act of falling before the personal fall arrest system begins to apply force to arrest the fall.

Free fall distance means the vertical displacement of the fall arrest attachment point on a person's body harness between onset of the fall and the point at which the system begins to apply force to arrest the fall. This distance excludes deceleration distance and lifeline and lanyard elongation, but includes any deceleration device slide distance or self-retracting lifeline/lanyard extension before they operate and fall arrest forces occur.

Hi-rail vehicle means a roadway maintenance machine that is manufactured to meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and is equipped with retractable flanged wheels so that the vehicle may travel over the highway or on railroad tracks.

Hi-rail vehicle, new means a hi-rail vehicle that is ordered after December 26,

2003 or completed after September 27, 2004.

Inaccessible track means a method of establishing working limits on non-controlled track by physically preventing entry and movement of trains and equipment.

Individual train detection means a procedure by which a lone worker acquires on-track safety by seeing approaching trains and leaving the track before they arrive and which may be used only under circumstances strictly defined in this part.

Informational line-up of trains means information provided in a prescribed format to a roadway worker by the train dispatcher regarding movements of trains authorized or expected on a specific segment of track during a specific period of time.

Interlocking, manual means an arrangement of signals and signal appliances operated from an interlocking machine and so interconnected by means of mechanical and/or electric locking that their movements must succeed each other in proper sequence, train movements over all routes being governed by signal indication.

Lanyard means a flexible line of rope, wire rope, or strap that is used to secure a body harness to a deceleration device, lifeline, or anchorage.

Lifeline means a component of a fall arrest system consisting of a flexible line that connects to an anchorage at one end to hang vertically (vertical lifeline) or to an anchorage at both ends to stretch horizontally (horizontal lifeline), and that serves as a means for connecting other components of a personal fall arrest system to the anchorage.

Lone worker means an individual roadway worker who is not being afforded on-track safety by another roadway worker, who is not a member of a roadway work group, and who is not engaged in a common task with another roadway worker.

Maximum authorized speed means the highest speed permitted for the movement of trains permanently established by timetable/special instructions, general order, or track bulletin.

Non-controlled track means track upon which trains are permitted by railroad rule or special instruction to

move without receiving authorization from a train dispatcher or control operator.

On-track roadway maintenance machine means a self-propelled, rail-mounted, non-highway, maintenance machine whose light weight is in excess of 7,500 pounds, and whose purpose is not for the inspection of railroad track.

On-track roadway maintenance machine, existing means any on-track roadway maintenance machine that does not meet the definition of a "new on-track roadway maintenance machine."

On-track roadway maintenance machine, new means an on-track roadway maintenance machine that is ordered after December 26, 2003, and completed after September 27, 2004.

On-track safety means a state of freedom from the danger of being struck by a moving railroad train or other railroad equipment, provided by operating and safety rules that govern track occupancy by personnel, trains and on-track equipment.

On-track safety manual means the entire set of on-track safety rules and instructions maintained together in one manual designed to prevent roadway workers from being struck by trains or other on-track equipment. These instructions include operating rules and other procedures concerning on-track safety protection and on-track safety measures.

Personal fall arrest system means a system used to arrest the fall of a person from a working level. It consists of an anchorage, connectors, body harness, lanyard, deceleration device, lifeline, or combination of these.

Qualified means a status attained by an employee who has successfully completed any required training for, has demonstrated proficiency in, and has been authorized by the employer to perform the duties of a particular position or function.

Railroad means all forms of non-highway ground transportation that run on rails or electro-magnetic guideways, including (1) commuter or other short-haul rail passenger service in a metropolitan or suburban area, and (2) high-speed ground transportation systems

that connect metropolitan areas, without regard to whether they use new technologies not associated with traditional railroads. Such term does not include rapid transit operations within an urban area that are not connected to the general railroad system of transportation.

Railroad bridge means a structure supporting one or more railroad tracks above land or water with a span length of 12 feet or more measured along the track centerline. This term applies to the entire structure between the faces of the backwalls of abutments or equivalent components, regardless of the number of spans, and includes all such structures, whether of timber, stone, concrete, metal, or any combination thereof.

Railroad bridge worker or bridge worker means any employee of, or employee of a contractor of, a railroad owning or responsible for the construction, inspection, testing, or maintenance of a bridge whose assigned duties, if performed on the bridge, include inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, construction, or reconstruction of the track, bridge structural members, operating mechanisms and water traffic control systems, or signal, communication, or train control systems integral to that bridge.

Restricted speed means a speed that will permit a train or other equipment to stop within one-half the range of vision of the person operating the train or other equipment, but not exceeding 20 miles per hour, unless further restricted by the operating rules of the railroad.

Roadway maintenance machine means a device powered by any means of energy other than hand power which is being used on or near railroad track for maintenance, repair, construction or inspection of track, bridges, roadway, signal, communications, or electric traction systems. Roadway maintenance machines may have road or rail wheels or may be stationary.

Roadway maintenance machines equipped with a crane means any roadway maintenance machine equipped with a crane or boom that can hoist, lower, and horizontally move a suspended load.

Roadway work group means two or more roadway workers organized to work together on a common task.

Roadway worker means any employee of a railroad, or of a contractor to a railroad, whose duties include inspection, construction, maintenance or repair of railroad track, bridges, roadway, signal and communication systems, electric traction systems, roadway facilities or roadway maintenance machinery on or near track or with the potential of fouling a track, and flagmen and watchmen/lookouts as defined in this section.

Roadway worker in charge means a roadway worker who is qualified under §214.353 to establish on-track safety for roadway work groups, and lone workers qualified under §214.347 to establish on-track safety for themselves.

Self-retracting lifeline/lanyard means a deceleration device that contains a drum-wound line that may be slowly extracted from, or retracted onto, the drum under slight tension during normal employee movement, and which, after onset of a fall, automatically locks the drum and arrests the fall.

Snap-hook means a connector comprised of a hook-shaped member with a normally closed keeper, that may be opened to permit the hook to receive an object and, when released, automatically closes to retain the object.

Train approach warning means a method of establishing on-track safety by warning roadway workers of the approach of trains in ample time for them to move to or remain in a place of safety in accordance with the requirements of this part.

Train coordination means a method of establishing working limits on track upon which a train holds exclusive authority to move whereby the crew of that train yields that authority to a roadway worker.

Train dispatcher means the railroad employee assigned to control and issue orders governing the movement of trains on a specific segment of railroad track in accordance with the operating rules of the railroad that apply to that segment of track.

Watchman/lookout means an employee who has been trained and qualified to provide warning to roadway workers of

approaching trains or on-track equipment. Watchmen/lookouts shall be properly equipped to provide visual and auditory warning such as whistle, air horn, white disk, red flag, lantern, fuse. A watchman/lookout's sole duty is to look out for approaching trains/on-track equipment and provide at least fifteen seconds advanced warning to employees before arrival of trains/on-track equipment.

Working limits means a segment of track with definite boundaries established in accordance with this part upon which trains and engines may move only as authorized by the roadway worker having control over that defined segment of track. Working limits may be established through "exclusive track occupancy," "inaccessible track," "foul time" or "train coordination" as defined herein.

[57 FR 28127, June 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 65975, Dec. 16, 1996; 67 FR 1906, Jan. 15, 2002; 68 FR 44407, July 28, 2003; 76 FR 74614, Nov. 30, 2011; 79 FR 66500, Nov. 7, 2014; 81 FR 37884, June 10, 2016]

Subpart B—Bridge Worker Safety Standards

§ 214.101 Purpose and scope.

(a) The purpose of this subpart is to prevent accidents and casualties arising from the performance of work on railroad bridges.

(b) This subpart prescribes minimum railroad safety rules for railroad employees performing work on bridges. Each railroad and railroad contractor may prescribe additional or more stringent operating rules, safety rules, and other special instructions not inconsistent with this subpart.

(c) These provisions apply to all railroad employees, railroads, and railroad contractors performing work on railroad bridges.

(d) Any working conditions involving the protection of railroad employees working on railroad bridges not within the subject matter addressed by this chapter, including respiratory protection, hazard communication, hearing protection, welding and lead exposure standards, shall be governed by the regulations of the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

§ 214.103 Fall protection, generally.

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section, when bridge workers work twelve feet or more above the ground or water surface, they shall be provided and shall use a personal fall arrest system or safety net system. All fall protection systems required by this section shall conform to the standards set forth in § 214.105 of this subpart.

(b)(1) This section shall not apply if the installation of the fall arrest system poses a greater risk than the work to be performed. In any action brought by FRA to enforce the fall protection requirements, the railroad or railroad contractor shall have the burden of proving that the installation of such device poses greater exposure to risk than performance of the work itself.

(2) This section shall not apply to bridge workers engaged in inspection of railroad bridges conducted in full compliance with the following conditions:

(i) The railroad or railroad contractor has a written program in place that requires training in, adherence to, and use of safe procedures associated with climbing techniques and procedures to be used;

(ii) The bridge worker to whom this exception applies has been trained and qualified according to that program to perform bridge inspections, has been previously and voluntarily designated to perform inspections under the provision of that program, and has accepted the designation;

(iii) The bridge worker to whom this exception applies is familiar with the appropriate climbing techniques associated with all bridge structures the bridge worker is responsible for inspecting;

(iv) The bridge worker to whom this exception applies is engaged solely in moving on or about the bridge or observing, measuring and recording the dimensions and condition of the bridge and its components; and

(v) The bridge worker to whom this section applies is provided all equipment necessary to meet the needs of safety, including any specialized alternative systems required.

(c) This section shall not apply where bridge workers are working on a railroad bridge equipped with walkways