



*National Housing Center  
Washington, DC  
September 23, 2010*

# VEHICLE/TRACK INTERACTION TASK FORCE UPDATE TO THE RSAC Committee



*By John J Mardente, Task Force Leader,  
(FRA-Passenger Rail Division)*



## **Update and Enhance FRA's Vehicle/Track Interaction Safety Standards for High Speed and Cant Deficiency Operations (49 CFR 213 and 238)**

RSAC Vehicle/Track Interaction (VTI) Task Force (TF) Convened, April 2004; tasked by the Passenger Safety Working Group to consider revising Parts 213 and 238, issued in 1998 and 1999, respectively, in order to reflect experience gained from qualifying several vehicles for high speed and high cant deficiency operation.

- 25 Task Force Meetings to Date of NPRM, three (3) since
- Numerous Technical Subgroup Meetings
- Regular Updates to the Passenger Safety WG (recently on September 16, 2010 in Chicago)



## Key Issues Addressed by this Task Force:

1. VTI Safety criteria (acceleration and wheel force limits)
2. Qualification requirements
3. Requirements for high cant deficiency operations
4. Track geometry limits
5. Inspection and monitoring requirements
6. Controls on wheel profile and truck equalization
7. Ensuring consistency among:
  - Low speed track safety standards (49 CFR Part 213, Subparts A-F)
  - High speed track safety standards (49 CFR Part 213, Subpart G)
  - Passenger equipment safety standards (49 CFR Part 238)



# Task Force Participants (2004-present)

## Industry, Labor, Government

John Mardente FRA, Office of Railroad Safety, **Task Force Leader**

Cynthia Gross FRA, Office of Railroad Safety, **Facilitator**

- Dan Alpert FRA, RCC
- Al Bieber STV
- Lou Cerny Consultant/AAR
- Steve Chrismer LTK Engineering
- Mike Coltman Volpe
- Gary Fairbanks FRA MP&E
- Magdy El-Sibaie FRA, R&D
- Jason Heineman ENSCO
- Rick Inclima BMW
- Larry Kelterborn Interfleet
- Kevin Kesler ENSCO (now FRA)
- Peter Klauser Consultant
- Jon LeBlanc Volpe
- Nicolas Lessard Bombardier
- Eric Magel NRC-CSTT
- Brian Marquis Volpe
- Ron Newman FRA, Office of Safety
- Tom Peacock APTA
- Frank Roskind FRA, RRS
- Mark Stewart Interfleet
- Dave Staplin Amtrak
- Phil Strong PS Consulting
- Ali Tajaddini FRA, R&D
- Mike Trosino Amtrak
- Brian Whitten ENSCO



## Task Force Approach

- Consider results of current research, VTI test data, and international practices to address safety (derailment) criteria
- Use models to conduct dynamic simulation studies
- Maintain and improve public safety without introducing unnecessary burdens on industry
  - Realistic limits and requirements that are practically attainable
  - Regulations that permit new technology and are reflective of existing equipment with established safety record
  - Minimize impact of proposed changes on current operations
- Remove requirements that have no added safety benefit
- Develop proposed NPRM language & achieve consensus amongst TF (approved by Working Group on December 11, 2007)



## Updates

1. Received Passenger Safety Working Group (PSWG) approval in Orlando, FL December 11, 2007 meeting
2. Assigned Docket No. FRA-2009-0036.
3. FRA Team dutifully crafted NPRM, consistent with the Task Force (PSTF) and Working Group (PSWG) guidance collected to date. FRA noted where it varied from that guidance. Meeting Minutes are published in [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and were referenced as needed.
4. FRA High Speed Passenger Rail Safety Strategy
5. NPRM published in Federal Register Monday, May 10, 2010. Comment Period ended Friday, July 9, 2010
6. GOAL: Final Rule by end of 2010



[www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov)

Commenters, as of September 16, 2010

1. Anthony Bohara (SEPTA) / *Docket 2009-0036-06*
2. Association of American Railroads (AAR)/ *Docket 2009-0036-11*
3. Bombardier / *Docket 2009-0036-04*
4. European Union / *Docket 2009-0036-0013*
5. Florida Rail Enterprises / *Docket 2009-0036-10*
6. National Railroad Passenger Corporation (AMTRAK) / *Docket 2009-0036-09*
7. New Jersey Transit (NJT)/ *Docket 2009-0036-05*
8. North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) / *Docket 2009-0036-07*
9. Philip Strong / *Docket 2009-0036-12*
10. SNCF/ *Docket 2009-0036-08*
11. European Union/ *Docket 2009-0036-13*

**Total Comments  $\approx$  100**



## Plan and Goal of Task Force

1. Reconvened Task Force to discuss relevant comments received for each CFR Part and respective Section.
  - August 5/6, 2010
  - August 23, 2010
  - September 7, 2010
2. Task Force is actively reviewing and discussing all of the comments.
3. Request Working Group's permission to accept by mail ballot this Task Force's recommendations