



U.S. Department of
Transportation

Federal Railroad
Administration

Railroad Safety Advisory Committee Task Statement: Safety Technology in Dark Territory

Task No.: 10-02

Date initially presented to the RSAC: September 23, 2010

Purpose: To prescribe standards, guidance, regulations, or orders governing the development, use, and implementation of rail safety technology in dark territory, as required by SEC. 406 of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (Act).

Description:

- Review the applicable content and scope of the existing signal and train control regulations as authorized by the Signal Inspection Act and the Federal Railroad Safety Act in order to determine their application to the use of safety technologies in dark (non-signaled) territory.
- Review the applicable content and scope of other existing federal regulations which are associated with the use of advanced technology and may provide additional insight/direction.
- Assist FRA in developing/identifying additional appropriate/applicable standards, guidance, regulations, or orders responsive to the legislative mandate.
- Help to ensure the appropriate and safe development and use of safety technologies in dark territories.
- Help to determine a reasonable method for safety technology inventory and system awareness by FRA.

Issues requiring specific report:

- What criteria should be used to determine existing rule applicability?
- What criteria can be developed for the regulated community to determine cost effectiveness?
- How can the use of safety technology in dark territory address risk mitigation and what impact can such technology have on a railroad's Railroad Safety Technology Plan required by 49 USC 20156(e)?
- Will underlying functions of safety technologies (e.g., switch position monitoring, track circuit integrity, other similar rail safety technologies), as determined by the Secretary, be implemented well before eventual PTC systems?
- How should modifications or discontinuances of safety technologies be addressed following initial implementation?

Source: 49 U.S.C. § 20162, as enacted by section 406 of Division A, Public Law No. 110-432.

Refer to/establish following working group: Safety Technology in Dark Territory Working Group

Target Dates: Report recommendations for proposed or interim final rule (as determined by FRA in consultation with the Office of the Secretary of Transportation and the Office of Management and Budget) by September 30, 2011.

Disposition: Accepted

Date: 23 September, 2010