



# Ohio Rail Development Commission

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## **ORDC/ODOT To Announce New Standards, Policies & Procedures for Railroad Preemption of Traffic Signals In Close Proximity to Railroad Crossings**

### **- Training Sessions For Local Officials Scheduled -**

Since the 1995 Fox River Grove, IL commuter train-school bus collision and the ensuing NTSB investigation and report, considerable research has been conducted regarding the subject of railroad preemption of highway traffic signals in close proximity to highway-rail crossings. The results have greatly increased the understanding of the complexity and range of issues that often arise at such locations, and have significantly advanced the state-of-the-art relative to strategies, solutions and technologies available to both minimize the potential for train/vehicle collisions and, concurrently, improve traffic operations at such locations.

In 2008, ODOT, in cooperation with the ORDC, engaged Campbell Technologies Corporation (CTC) of Ft. Worth, TX, one of the premiere consulting firms in the country in the area of railroad preemption. CTC's tasks were, first, to review all of ODOT's then current practices, policies, procedures and guidance relative to this subject matter, and to assist ODOT in updating these documents to current state-of-the-practice. The second task is to "roll out" ODOT's updated practices by conducting a series of trainings for ODOT, ORDC and PUCO officials, MPO officials, municipal and county engineers, and other interested parties including traffic signal design firms, equipment suppliers and local traffic signal installation and maintenance contractors. The third task is to compile a list of all traffic signal locations in the State that are either presently preempted by railroad signals, or currently are not but possibly should be. The final task is to review all of the locations identified in the third task to determine if they are in compliance with the new standards and practices and, if not, to make recommendations as to what corrective action(s) may be needed. Then, after these needs are determined and prioritized, ODOT and ORDC will endeavor to work with the local officials to assist in funding any needed changes as resources become available.

The first task is very nearly completed with final approval and adoption of the updated sections of ODOT's Design Manual expected within the next few weeks.

ODOT and its contractor will conduct at least five (5) “regional” trainings to familiarize attendees with the new ODOT standards and practices, discuss the issues involved, and explain the potential problems that can occur if such issues are not properly addressed. Currently, it is planned to conduct these roughly 3-hour long trainings in the Columbus, Cincinnati, Toledo, Cleveland and Akron/Canton areas during the first week of November. The times, dates and locations of these trainings are listed below. Additional such trainings can be scheduled at other locations if there is sufficient interest. Also, as current ODOT and ORDC databases relative to affected locations on local roadway systems may be incomplete, these sessions will also be used to solicit local agency assistance in identifying the locations to be reviewed under task four. All city, municipal and county traffic engineers and/or public works officials with railroad crossings in their jurisdiction are encouraged to attend as well as local contractors engaged in the installation and maintenance of traffic signals for local agencies.

For additional information, contact Susan Arduini at ORDC, ph: 614-644-0307 or email [Susan.Arduini@dot.state.oh.us](mailto:Susan.Arduini@dot.state.oh.us).

Regional trainings will be conducted as follows:

Columbus Area – Monday, November 2, 2009 at 1:30 PM at the ODOT Headquarters Building, 1980 W. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43223 – basement level auditorium.

Cincinnati Area – Tuesday, November 3, 2009 at 10:00 AM at ODOT District 8 offices, 505 South SR-741, Lebanon, Ohio 45036 – Conference Rooms A, B & C.

Toledo Area – Wednesday, November 4, 2009 at 10:00 AM at ODOT District 2 offices, 317 East Poe Road, Bowling Green, Ohio 43402– Lobby Rooms A & B.

Cleveland Area – Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 8:00 AM at NOACA offices, 1299 Superior Avenue (at East 13<sup>th</sup> St.), Cleveland, OH 44114 – Board Room

Akron/Canton Area – Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 1:30 PM at ODOT District 4 offices, 2088 S. Arlington Road, Akron, Ohio 44306 –