

MEETING MINUTES

ITE Grade Crossing Committee Meeting

Date:	January 18, 2024
Time:	8:00 am – 9:00 am PST
Location:	Microsoft Teams meeting

Participants:

Karen Hankinson
Rick Campbell
Carmen Talavera
Debra Chappell
Douglas Noble
Antonino Genoese
Brian Gilleran
Maryam Hedayati
J. Mark Mathis
Nicole Jackson
Jeannelia Liu
Joanna Bush

John Ayers
Stephen Laffey
Pierre Marcotte
Brent Ogden
Paul Rathgeber
Phil Poichuk
Shayne Gill
Esther Strawder
Sanjeev Tandle
Tom Lancaster
Gyan Sinha
Casey Murdie

Garreth Rempel
Richard Smith
Steven Venglar
Louis Rubenstein
Roger Boettcher
Amanda Austin
Erik Andersen
Stephen Kay
Megan Lenard
Mike Cybecki
Nick Ptak

AGENDA

- **Introductions**
 - Karen Hankinson started the meeting by going through introductions for all attendees.
- **General ITE News/Events:**
 - Spring Technical Conference
 - March 19th and 20th – 11 am to 5pm
 - Annual Meeting
 - Held in Philadelphia this year, July 21st to 24th.
 - Program development is in progress, and the railroad crossing proposal was highly ranked and will be on the list.
 - Karen is in conversation with PennDOT to set up a local tour
 - MUTCD 11th Edition + ITE Resources/Materials
 - Doug Noble shared that the new edition is out. Several new items were proposed, mostly approved from the grade crossing perspective.
 - Going through the associated disposition of comments relative to ITE's comment letter on the notice of proposed amendments.
 - Crowdsourcing reaction from the ITE council and committees.
 - Preparing action-specific action plans that will be executed in the next few weeks.
 - ITE is planning to prepare some webinars that will discuss the changes with the new edition. We will wait on Federal Highway to see what webinars they will develop.
 - Our committee page will be updated to have new links.
 - Karen mentioned that each state has the option of adopting the federal MUTCD or creating its own state standard or supplement.
 - Rick Campbell mentioned the railroad or LRT committee within the National Committee is



- preparing a document of Errors, editorial changes, and recommendations, so we'll probably have that out in the next 10 days to two weeks to go to FHWA.
 - In the short term, the Federal Highway will issue a first revision to the manual incorporating PROWAG. That will be the first step towards the FHWA's adoption of PROWAG.
 - A lot of changes to the diagnostic team
 - Software files the Manual will be available soon from FHWA, and ITE will be creating a print version for sale that will be indexed and have a few other elements for useability.
 - Karen mentioned that the next committee meeting will probably be an hour and a half to highlight some of the larger topics that were included in the 11th edition.
 - Committee Action Plan
 - Karen shared the Committee Action Plan and introduced the executive committee and liaisons.
 - Open position: Webinar Committee Liaison
 - 2 webinars a year, and the scope of the role includes acting as a coordinator to find folks to lead the webinars.
 - Karen will share the action plan with the committee.
 - Maryam Hedayati provided a general update from Canada, whereby at the end of 2024, all public and private grade crossings will comply with the Canadian's grade crossing regulations.
 - Paul Rathgeber shared that there will be a National Highway Grade Crossing Safety Conference in San Diego. They are looking for presenters and topics. Folks reach out to Paul if they are interested in presenting.
 - Brian Gilleran shared that FRA will be holding an in person workshop at Rutgers University on January 31 – February 1 about Upcoming Grade Crossing Safety and Trespass Prevention.
 - This will be held in Summer 2024, a date has not been finalized.
- **Committee Products Updates:**
 - Another Train Coming Technical Paper
 - Brent Ogden has prepared the draft, and Doug has provided some comments after his review.
 - This paper discusses passive and active sign implementation, lessons learned, and future use.
 - Paper will go through peer review, and comments will be incorporated all at once.
 - Roundabouts and Grade Crossings Quick Bite
 - Joanna Bush mentioned that the first committee meeting will be on February 8th.
 - The committee will look for emerging topics and look for useful guidance.
 - Doug mentioned that there is a brief section on roundabouts in the recommended practice document, and we could look into expanding that section.
 - Traffic Signal Maintenance at Grade Crossings Quick Bite
 - Will be completed and is part of the committee action plan.
 - Looking for technical reviewers to help get this quick bite out.
 - Recommended Practice: Preemption of Traffic Signals Near Railroad Grade Crossings + MUTCD 11th Edition Updates
 - The recommended practices document was created a few years ago with the intent to get this information out to practitioners.
 - While we wait for the FHWA process, we need to review what was adopted and refine this document as needed.
 - The committee is looking for volunteers and a lead for this multi month effort to review.
 - initially looking for a high-level review to develop a timeline for providing a detailed review and narrative update so we can plan and collaborate with the committee to get that product.
- **Committee Webinars**
 - Cyclist Safety at Grade Crossings
 - Will be held on February 29, generally 2-3 pm EST.
 - Nicole Jackson & Antonino Genoese will be the presenters.
 - MUTCD 11th Edition Part 8 Changes



- Doug suggested that we start putting together information while we figure out when it fits with the overall schedule for the different webinars.
- Nicole envisioned that this effort would potentially be finalized by the end of spring.

- **FRA's Blocked Crossing Database – General Discussion**

- This topic came up at the end of our last meeting as part of Gareth Rempel's presentation.
- Gareth mentioned that they (TRAINFO) performed a study for TRB and the National Academy of Science analyzing very long trains to compare TRAINFO data monitoring blocked and occupied crossings to the FRA Blocked Crossing Database. The goal was to determine the accuracy in terms of blockage times reported, duration of blockage, and train length.
- Ten crossings in Houston and Jacksonville were analyzed in a three-month period in 2023.
- Gareth mentioned that they are planning to produce an interactive map that will take all the FRA block crossing report data and map it against train volume, traffic volume, cross-product accidents and fatalities, and traffic delays.
- Eric Anderson shared that a Tennessee state legislator passed a law requiring the Tennessee DOT to provide a report on the number of blocked crossing reports. This creates an issue of false records.
 - Gareth agreed that this is a real concern; however, there is a way to remove duplicate records.

- **Open Forum**

- Brent mentioned that ATPA has some grade crossing standards that he will be helping to update.
 - They were primarily for LRT and will need to confirm the applicability for commuter rail
 - Brian mentioned that he is also on this committee for APTA.
- Karen mentioned that the next meeting will be sometime in May.
- Doug reminded us that through the ITE community, a discussion forum can be used by anybody at any time, have a conversation about any topic.