

Track Inspection Regulatory Update

How do US regulations compare to international regulations?

What is FRA doing to promote technology like automated and autonomous track geometry measurement systems?

What does the future look like?



Inspection Comparison

In general, rail systems in Europe and Asia are trending towards further reliance on automated geometry inspections

Transport Canada-

Visual Inspections – Similar to US required frequency of 2x weekly on main tracks

Automated Geometry Inspections – Requires TGMS inspections at frequency based on MGT and class of track, generally 3-4x annually

Ultrasonic Inspections – Similar to US requirements, frequency based MGT and class of track, generally 1-5x annually



Ongoing FRA Efforts

Initial RSAC conversation in 2014-2015

Test Programs and Waiver starting in 2018 (BNSF, CN, CSX, CP, NS, and UP Test Programs ended on 11/23/22, BNSF has ongoing waiver)

RSAC Track Standards Working Group Task 19-05

FRA ATIP Fleet of automated and autonomous vehicles including new Ultrasonic Rail Testing hi-rail vehicle



Considerations Moving Forward

Currently no consensus on a method to allow reduced visual inspections

Lack of regulatory required automated geometry testing allows industry significant freedom to deploy new technology without restrictions

Maintenance data could be helpful in this discussion

FRA Office of Research and Development continues to fund research of new inspection technology



Thank You

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