



REGULATIONS SAVE LIVES

Federal Railroad Safety Act (FRSA)

Established federal authority over railroad safety, unifying oversight and enabling national safety standards.

19
70

49 CFR Part 234 Final Rule

Introduced mandatory inspection, testing, and maintenance requirements for grade-crossing signal systems.

19
94

Enforcement and Updates under 49 CFR Part 234

Expanded FRA enforcement of inspection, recordkeeping, and failure-response standards nationwide.

20
00

State Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Action Plan Requirements

Directed states to develop formal safety plans under the Rail Safety Improvement Act.

20
10

FRA Guidance on Testing Intervals

Reaffirmed required monthly and annual inspection schedules under Part 234 Subpart D.

20
20

1973 Sec. 130 Railway-Highway Crossings Program

Created federal funding for states to eliminate hazards and install warning systems at public crossings.

1996 Amendment to 49 CFR Part 234

Clarified testing intervals and inspection procedures to improve consistency and accountability.

2005 Emergency Notification System Requirements

Required railroads to post emergency contact information and reporting instructions at crossings.

2014 Part 234 Amendments

Strengthened reporting rules and clarified documentation for inspection and failure responses.

Impact of Federal Regulation

Since the passage of the Federal Railroad Safety Act in 1970 and the implementation of 49 CFR Part 234 in the 1990s, highway-rail grade crossing collisions have declined sharply nationwide. Before federal oversight, annual incidents often exceeded 10,000. Through consistent inspection standards, systematic maintenance, and uniform enforcement, **COLLISIONS ARE DOWN 70% SINCE 1970**—demonstrating how national regulation transformed crossing safety from a local concern into a lasting public-safety success.



www.BRS.org