

Section 130 Program Overview

Project Prioritization

James (Jim) Dahlem
FHWA Office of Safety
Washington, DC



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

 **Safe Roads for a Safer Future**
Investment in roadway safety saves lives
<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov>

SECTION 130 PROGRAM

- Federal funds provide **\$220,000,000** annually for the “elimination of hazards” at public railway-highway grade crossings
- Section 130 funds are set-aside from a State’s Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds.
- Minimum of \$1.1 Million to each State
(Texas received the most in FY 2014 with \$17.5 Million)

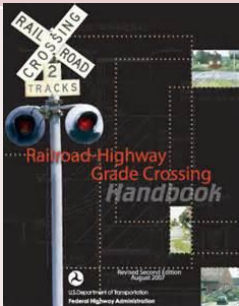

Funding and Eligibility

- Federal Share is typically 90% for Section 130 funds, States pay 10% of the project costs
 - Certain safety projects can be funded at 100% Federal share, including grade crossing closures and traffic control/signalization, according to 23 USC 120(c)(1)
- Section 130 funds can **NOT** be used for:
 - Pedestrian trespassing away from a grade crossing such as fencing along a railroad right-of-way
 - Private Crossings

Background / History

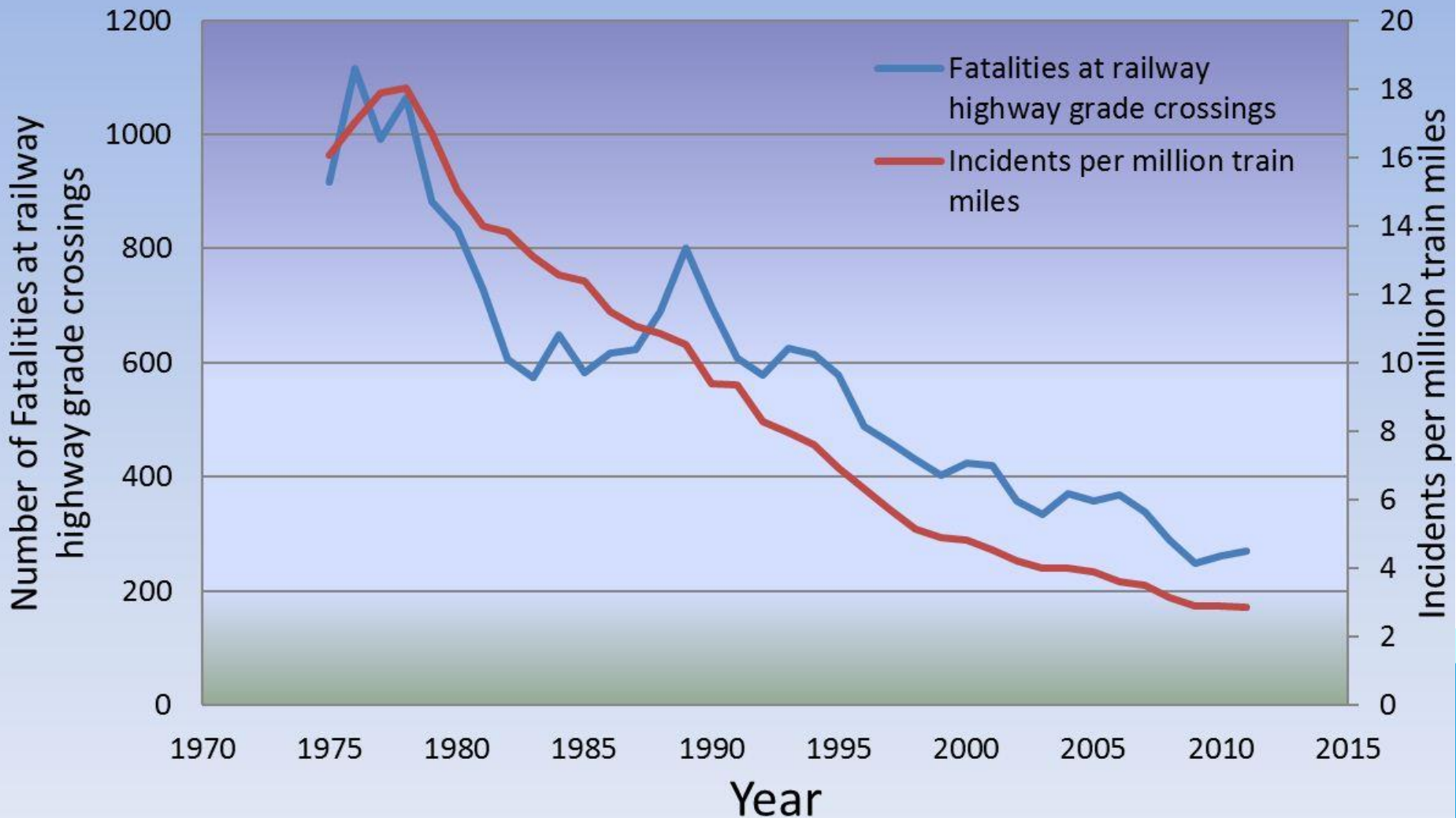
- 1987 – Surface Transportation Act created Section 130 of Chapter 23 of the United States Code for public crossings with \$160,000,000 for public crossings. 598 fatalities at public crossings.
- 2005 – SAFTEA-LU authorizes \$220 million for Section 130. 327 fatalities at public crossings.
- 2012 – MAP-21 continues Section 130 Program at \$220 million per year.

Roles - FHWA and FRA related to railway-highway crossing safety

FHWA	FRA
Oversees and administers the Section 130 program with State DOTs	Regulates grade crossing and trespassing safety issues with railroads
Oversees public grade crossings and grade separation safety issues, regulates the public road agency	Oversees public and private grade crossing and grade separation issues, regulates the railroad
Publishes the MUTCD Section 8	Oversees the national crossing inventory
Publishes the Grade Crossing Handbook 	Oversees quiet zone issues 

Safety Trend

Trend of railway-highway grade crossing fatalities and incidents



Project Selection and Prioritization

- States must use a data-driven process to prioritize and select projects (HSIP).
- States must develop a survey and schedule of projects per 23 USC 130(d)
- Most States have a simplified Hazard Index (HI) Formula that only takes into account the exposure at a crossing (The “NH Hazard Index”).

Project Selection and Prioritization

New Hampshire HI Formula:

$$HI = (V) * (T) * (Pf)$$

V = Vehicle Traffic

T = Train Traffic

Pf = Protection factor based on the type of protected devices

Does not factor in issues like sight distance, adjacent intersections, school buses, etc.

Project Selection and Prioritization

- A few States use more complex formulas to take into account those factors:
 - New Jersey Transit uses 24 factors in a formula

Grade Crossing Scores and relative Rankings

Line	Crossing	Weighted Score	Rank
Lehigh	Inman Avenue	258.75	1
Lehigh	Cedar Avenue	246.75	2
River Line	River Street - 69th Street *	242.00	3
River Line	Old Hook Road	227.50	4
West Trenton	Route 601	226.50	5
Port Reading	St. George Avenue	221.50	6
River Line	New Bridge Road	216.50	7
River Line	West Clinton Avenue	208.75	8
Lehigh	Rahway Avenue	206.25	9
River Line	Durie Avenue	203.00	10

- California uses an Excel spreadsheet with various formulas
- Not many States (if any) are using benefit-cost ratios

Project Selection and Prioritization

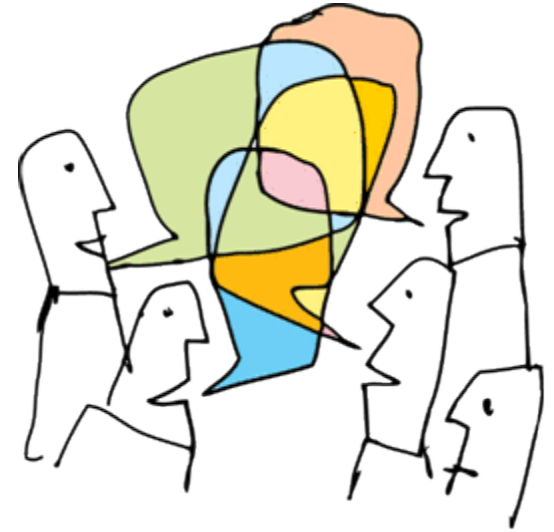
Challenges of prioritizing projects include:

- Actual crash data at railroad crossings can take on a random nature (for instance no fatalities for a few years and then a multiple fatalities in a single year)
- Most railroads are privately owned so data such as number of trains, or access to the right-of-way for site-visits, can be limited
- A lot of high-priority sites are on locally-owned roads (off the State-system)

Project Selection and Prioritization

Questions and discussions

- How do other countries fund and regulate crossing safety?
- How do States and other countries prioritize and select projects?



Additional Information

James (Jim) Dahlem
FHWA Office of Safety
(202) 366-9265
james.dahlem@dot.gov

www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov