Locking Controlling Locomotive Cabs

In a safety advisory issued the same time as Emergency Order 28 (EO 28), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) recommended securing unattended controlling locomotives of all trains against unauthorized entry, which includes locking the cab doors. Immediate adoption of this recommendation was impractical due to variations in locomotive designs and lack of an industry standard lock.

While locomotive design variations still exist, most railroads, including BNSF Railway, have adopted the D575-style locking mechanism as a standard for new locomotives and are retrofitting existing locomotives with this design. The standard configuration contains a sliding bolt and a D575 high-security lock mounted on the external front door, as illustrated in the following photos:

What is changing?

Adopting the D575 lock as an industry standard and distributing corresponding keys has positioned BNSF to begin locking controlling locomotive cabs as defined by a new Air Brake and Train Handling rule. Effective May 1, 2014, the following new rule is added.

ABTH Rule Change Effective May 1, 2014

102.3.1 Locking Locomotive(s)

A. Before leaving locomotive(s) unattended, lock cab doors of the lead controlling locomotive when the exterior front door is equipped with a D575-style locking mechanism, as follows:
   1. Lock the back door from inside the cab.
   2. Exit the cab through the front door.
   3. Lock the exterior front door from the outside.

   Exceptions: Lead controlling locomotive cab doors may be left unlocked:
   • In a yard where an employee such as a yardmaster or terminal trainmaster is on duty continuously.
   • On a track where employees regularly inspect, test, repair or service rolling equipment (e.g. engine servicing area, main track fueling location, etc.).

B. After conditioning a distributed power remote consist, lock all locomotives in the remote consist equipped with a D575-style locking mechanism as outlined in paragraph A.
Questions for Discussion

1. Why does the FRA recommend unattended controlling locomotives be locked?

   The recommendation helps ensure the controlling locomotive cab is secure against unauthorized entry. This recommendation is one of two made by the FRA relating to prevention of unauthorized movement of trains following the tragic event in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, Canada, in 2013. The other involved removing reversers from unattended locomotives and was implemented by BNSF in September 2013, along with changes required by EO 28.

2. What does a D575 key look like?

   To the right are two examples of D575 keys. Contact your supervisor if you do not have a D575 key, if your duties require access to the locomotive controlling cab.

3. Why must the back door be locked from the inside?

   The back door is not equipped with a D575-style lock on the outside of the door. The back door must be locked from the inside in order to make the D575 lock on the outside of the front door effective against unauthorized access to the controlling cab.

4. When necessary to lock cab doors of the lead controlling locomotive, must the doors of any trailing locomotives in the consist also be locked?

   Only the lead controlling locomotive cab doors must be locked when equipped with D575-style locks. After conditioning remote distributed power (DP), such as when making up a DP train, lock cab doors of all locomotives in the remote consist equipped with a D575-style locking mechanism.

5. Why is there an exception to locking control cabs at some locations?

   The exception provides operational flexibility where employees may access multiple locomotives during the course of normal duties and certain employee presence can address potential unauthorized access to these locomotives.

6. Is it necessary to lock a D575-equipped controlling cab on a train or locomotive left at an interchange location or where a non-BNSF employee requires access to the controlling cab?

   Yes. Other railroads and service partners have been notified of BNSF’s intent to lock control cabs. Most railroads have issued D575 keys to their employees as they work toward equipping their own locomotives with the standard lock. BNSF is working with service partners to ensure keys are distributed to those who require access to controlling cabs.

7. Do cab locking requirements apply to a non-BNSF locomotive operated by a BNSF crew?

   Yes, if the exterior front door of the locomotive is equipped with a D575-styled locking mechanism.

8. What should be done if a D575 lock is defective?

   Identify and report the lock as you would any other defective equipment.

Please note that rules and policies that are in effect at the date of issuance of this Safety Briefing are subject to change. Contact Safety/Rules to determine validity before you use the information in this briefing at a later date.