SAFETY APPLIANCES

The Safety Appliance Acts provide that all locomotives and cars be equipped with power brakes so that brakemen will not be required to use the hand brake for that purpose of controlling the speed of trains; that all cars must be equipped with automatic couplers so that cars may be coupled automatically by impact, and uncoupled without the necessity of men going between the ends of the cars; and that all cars must be equipped with secure grab irons and handholds on their sides and ends for use in coupling and uncoupling. The use and placement of these safety appliances are required to be uniform.

One section of these Acts cover power brake systems and authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to set minimum percentages of power brake cars on any train. It also provides that the Secretary shall fix the rules, standards, and instructions for the installation, inspection, maintenance, and repair of power and train brakes, with the proviso that any changes in the rules must be for the sole purpose of achieving safety. This will be summarized in detail under the separate heading of "Power Brakes."

The FRA's safety appliances regulations set forth the requirements for the dimensions, location, number, and manner of application of the safety appliances on all types of cars and locomotives including track motor cars. The safety appliances covered are hand brakes, brake step, running board, sill steps, ladders, end ladder clearance, roof handholds, side handholds, horizontal end handholds, vertical end handholds, uncoupling levers and drawbars.

If a car becomes defective or insecure while in transit it may be hauled to the nearest available repair point even if it is to a point on a connecting carrier's line. If the nearest point is on the railroad hauling the car it must be repaired on that railroad. In all cases it must be necessary to make such repairs and such repairs cannot be made except at such a repair point.

49 U.S.C. §§ 20301-20306, 20102
49 C.F.R. §§ 231.1-231.30