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| ***REPLACE WITH YOUR MASTHEAD*** | | |
| **VFIS logo black JPG** | **SOG Title:** | |
| **SOG Number:** | |
| **Original Date:** | **Revision Date:** |
| **ABC Fire Department General Operating Guideline** | | |

**Railroad Crossing Policy**

***This is a sample of a standard operating guideline (SOG) on this topic. You should review the content, modify as appropriate for your organization, have it reviewed by your leadership team and if appropriate your legal counsel. Once adopted, make sure the SOG is communicated to members, implemented and performance monitored for effective implementation.***

**Purpose:**

To establish safe practices that address when an emergency vehicle comes to an unguarded railway grade crossing.

**Procedure:**

The emergency vehicle shall come to a full stop at unguarded railway grade crossings. Caution shall be exercised at grade crossings where warning lights and/or gates are provided.

It is not always possible to hear an approaching train, due to the Doppler Effect\* and the type of locomotives used on some rail lines (particularly electric locomotives); otherwise “normal” appearing highway vehicles, equipped with rail wheels, are also used by railroads and may be encountered at grade crossings. Emergency vehicle drivers should become familiar with the specific characteristics of the rail lines in their area.

Warning devices and crossing gates are generally reliable, but can fail due to the harsh conditions to which they are exposed—these devices are designed to fail in the “safe” mode. When approaching a grade crossing with lowered gates and/or active lights and no apparent rail traffic, the emergency vehicle shall come to a full stop prior to the crossing; before proceeding, the emergency vehicle driver shall visually confirm that no train or other rail vehicle is approaching on the tracks. Complete confirmation may require that members physically dismount the vehicle to visually check the tracks.

*\*The “Doppler Effect” is the perceptible change in the frequency and wavelength of a sound wave as it moves relative to an observer.*

***This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization’s needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm or damage to personnel, property and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control representative.***

**References:**

West Redding (CT) VFD – GOG 10-EVO-1021 Developed/Revised/Reviewed by VFIS ETC