



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Memorandum

Date: June 15, 1998

Reply to Att. of: MP&E 98-33

Subject: Amtrak Baggage and Mail Handling Cars

From: Edward R. English
Director, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance

To: Regional Administrators, Deputy Regional Administrators,
Motive Power & Equipment Specialists and Inspectors

The FRA policy concerning the operation of baggage and mail handling cars by Amtrak is that they are not subject to the requirements of 49 CFR Part 215, *Railroad Freight Car Safety Standards*.

The baggage and mail handling cars operated by Amtrak in passenger train service are equipped with "H" tightlock type couplers, which reduces jackknifing forces, and passenger car trucks that have greater vertical spring deflection, thus giving lower natural frequencies of vibration. Also, the dynamic response of these cars are somewhat similar to Amtrak passenger cars.

Currently, the only FRA regulations pertaining to passenger cars are Part 221 - *Rear End Marking Device*, Part 223 - *Safety Glazing Standards*, Part 231 - *Safety Appliance Standards*, and Part 232 - *Power Brakes and Drawbars*. However, if it is determined that any Amtrak equipment is defective, unsafe, or not being in a serviceable condition, the condition must be handled for corrective action. When such conditions are found they should be handled with Amtrak supervision for correction and a memorandum detailing your actions forwarded promptly to your regional specialist.

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