



Illinois Department of Transportation

2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

September 17, 2002

STRUCTURE CLEARANCE OVER RAILROADS

COUNTY ENGINEERS/SUPERINTENDENT OF HIGHWAYS
MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS/DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

02-19

This letter is intended to make you aware of the Rail Carrier Safety Requirements for Tracks, Facilities, and Equipment contained in [625 ILCS 5/18c-7401\(8\)](#) of the Illinois Vehicle Code. This statute as revised (June 2, 2000) states, "A vertical clearance of not less than 23 feet above the top of rail shall be provided for all new or reconstructed highway bridges constructed over a railroad track. The commission may permit a lesser clearance if it determines that the 23-foot clearance standard cannot be justified based on engineering, operational, and economic conditions."

Previously the Bureau of Local Roads and Streets (BLRS) Administrative Policies Manual (Figure 5-9i and 5-9j) required consent of the affected railroad for less than 23 feet of clearance. Additionally, clearance below 21'-6" required an Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) order. The Illinois Vehicle Code now mandates ICC permission for anything less than 23 feet.

Note that this applies only to new construction and reconstruction. Reconstruction shall be defined as "at a minimum, complete replacement of the superstructure and could include work on the substructure and foundation. Improvements other than new construction or reconstruction will not be subject to this provision."

Requests for a variance of the clearance requirement should be included on the petition to the ICC. Petitions to the ICC are to be initiated by the local agency or their consultant and should typically be done prior to submittal of the Project Report.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact your district office or Scott Paden at (217) 782-6127.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darrell W. McMurray".

Darrell W. McMurray, P. E.
Engineer of Local Roads and Streets

SPP/spp