
Speed Limit on Approach to Active Level Crossings Policy

Policy statement

Speed limits at level crossings actively controlled by flashing lights or flashing lights and boom gates, and on the approaches to them, shall be set to a maximum of 80 km/h.

This policy does not alter other requirements for safety assessment and management of level crossings.

Purpose

Crashes at level crossings, although not frequent, are potentially catastrophic. The purpose of this policy is to help reduce the risk of crashes at level crossings between road vehicle and train by reducing road speeds on high speed approaches to actively controlled level crossings. Reducing the road speeds to a maximum of 80km/h allows the motorist more time to react and decreases the likelihood of vehicles not being able to stop at level crossings.

Scope

This policy applies to all actively controlled level crossings on high speed roads in NSW (currently 137).

This policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the NSW *speed zoning guidelines*, Australian Standard 1742, Part 7: Railway crossings; and the safety interface agreement applying to the relevant level crossing.

Policy

An actively controlled level crossing on a high speed road must be treated as an at-risk location in accordance with Section 2.3.6 of the NSW Speed Zoning Guidelines, and a speed limit of no more than 80 km/h must be installed.

A speed limit of 80 km/h at active level crossings must be adopted unless:

- a lower speed limit would be appropriate in accordance with the NSW *speed zoning guidelines*
- there are curve warning signs with an advisory speed plate of 45 km/h or less in which case a limit of 60 km/h or less is to be adopted
- within 400 metres of a road terminating.

As per section 2.3.6 of the Speed Zoning Guidelines, speed zoning of actively controlled level crossings must be undertaken under a route-based approach. Speed zoning must minimise the impact of the reduced speed limit to motorists, without compromising safety and without excessive numbers of changes in speed zones. Wherever possible, speed zones should conform to the desirable minimum lengths in the Speed Zoning Guidelines, but exceptions are permitted if necessary to meet the purpose of this policy, reflecting the particular nature of level crossings, such as those located on side roads close to major thoroughfares.

As per Section 2.3.6 speed limit signs at at-risk locations where the speed limit has been lowered must have a supplementary plate depicting the risk of a level crossing ahead. The supplementary plate is to read 'RAILWAY CROSSING'.

In accordance with the *Rail Safety National Law*, safety management must accord with an interface agreement with the rail transport operator. Changing a speed zone at a level crossing requires consultation with signatories to the related interface agreement.

Implementation

Ensure the proposed speed zoning is discussed with all relevant stakeholders such as the local council and the NSW Police Force. The CRS communications approach to speed zone changes must be used to notify stakeholders and road users of the change in traffic conditions.

Evaluation

The Centre for Road Safety will monitor and evaluate the implementation of lower speed limits at level crossings.

Action

This policy commences on the 16th October 2019 and applies as the standard practice for speed zoning at actively controlled level crossings and on their approaches. Transport for NSW will identify the highest priority sites for speed zone reviews. Transport for NSW will include more detailed guidelines for speed management at level crossings, for inclusion in the NSW Speed Zoning Guidelines.

Further information

Centre for Road Safety, Transport for NSW

<https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au>

NSW speed zoning guidelines

Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator

<http://www.onrsr.com.au>

<http://www.transportregulator.nsw.gov.au>

Requirements for interface agreements between rail infrastructure managers and road authorities

Standards Australia

<http://www.standards.org.au>

Australian Standard 1742, Part 7: Railway crossings