



Association of American Railroads
Safety and Operations • Business Services
425 Third Street, SW • Washington, D.C. 20024

CIRCULAR No. OT-2-C

IN EFFECT AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2012

RECOMMENDED OPERATING PRACTICES FOR "SCHNABEL" AND OTHER SPECIAL CARS EQUIPPED WITH SPAN BOLSTERS

TO THE MEMBERS:

There are several high-capacity cars in existence which require special handling. The major factors which are considered by the AAR Mechanical Division, ***any one of which would designate a car for inclusion in this category***, are listed below:

1. Car owner's request for special handling.
2. Car is equipped with a reduced pivot arrangement.
3. Car is equipped with lateral and vertical jacking arrangements, which move the main car frame.
4. Engineering analysis indicates car to be unstable in regular service, either loaded or empty.
5. Car is unstable in regular service either loaded or empty, as determined by actual observation or derailment experience.
6. Car has 16 axles and moving loaded.
7. Car has more than 16 axles.

In order to ensure the safe movement of these cars, the following operating practices are recommended:

SECTION I RECOMMENDED OPERATING PRACTICES

1. Advance authority for movement should be obtained from Clearance Officers named in the Railway Line Clearances publication.
2. Advance notice should be furnished by the originating carrier, to all other carriers concerned, including switch lines, in connection with the movement of the car, either loaded or empty. Originating carrier should advise all other carriers concerned of the value of the car and lading, separately (i.e.: the car's total value when loaded, and the value of the car when empty).
3. Advance handling instructions should be issued to all operating personnel involved in the handling of these cars, either empty or loaded.
4. When loaded, the car should be as close to the locomotive as permissible, considering rail and bridge loading factors. It should be accompanied by an operating officer and handled only in a special freight train not exceeding 10 cars, at a maximum speed of 25 miles per hour, and should not be subject to pusher service or moved over humps or flat switched with motive power detached (except as noted on [Exhibit A](#)).
5. Handling roads must be certain that the train has proper braking capacity to handle the load, particularly in view of the unusual weight and relatively short trains that will be handling this traffic. Each load must be accompanied by sufficient cars that can be used as brake cars in the event it becomes necessary to set such load out between terminals.
6. When car is empty, and before forwarding, the originating carrier must be certain that it is properly locked together and secured. Other carriers concerned should pay particular attention to ensure that the equipment remains in this condition while en route over their lines. When empty, the car may be moved in a local freight train not to exceed 100 cars in length at the rear of the train, at a maximum speed of 40 miles per hour, except cars with restricted speeds indicated in [Exhibit A](#). Such cars must not be placed in a train requiring pusher service and cannot be humped or flat switched with motor power detached. Car may be moved over hump under locomotive control.

A list of the equipment to which these recommended operating practices currently apply is shown in the attached [Exhibit A](#).

SECTION II
SPECIAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 36-AXLE SCHNABEL CARS

1. Car should be moved only in special trains, both empty and loaded.
2. Maximum operating speed loaded is 15 m.p.h. and 25 m.p.h. when empty.
3. Personnel trained in operation of car systems should travel with car during all movement.
4. Car, both empty and loaded, should not be subjected to pusher service, moved over humps, or flat switched with motive power detached.
5. Special train consist should not exceed ten cars.
6. Survey of track conditions, clearance obstructions, and car operation requirements should be conducted in advance of authorization for movement.
7. Advance handling instructions should be issued to all operating personnel involved in handling this car, either empty or loaded.
8. Advance notice should be furnished by the originating carrier to all other carriers concerned, including switch lines, in connection with the movements of the car, either loaded or empty. Originating carrier should advise all other carriers concerned of the value of the car and lading separately (i.e., the car's total value when loaded, and the value of the car when empty).

Supersedes Circular No. OT-2-B dated May 1, 1992.

By direction of,

Nichole Fimple

AVP Business Services/Executive Dir. Rules and Standards
Association of American Railroads

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CIRCULAR NO. OT-2-C

Exhibit A (Revised August 1, 2026): Recommended Operating Practices for "Schnabel" and Other Special Cars Equipped with Span Bolsters

Equipment ID	Equipment Type Code	Mechanical Designation	Outside Length	Truck Count	Axle Count	Gross Rail Load (GRL)	Restricted Speed Empty	Restricted Speed Loaded	Notes	Owner
BBCX001000	L090	LS	115' 6"	8	20	1,424,000	45	25		Emmert Leasing LLC
CCRX040010	L090	LS	109' 6"	8	20	1,464,000	50	25		HLI RAIL AND RIGGING, LLC
FRR18800	F431	FD	146' 2"	8	18	1,183,500	40	25		FRACHT FWO INC
FRR163650	F431	FD	144' 10"	8	16	1,144,000	45	45		
FRR163651	F431	FD	144' 10"	8	16	1,144,000	45	45		
GEGX021154	F431	FD	153' 10"	8	16	1,258,000	40	40		General Electric Company - Gas Turbines
GEGX021155	F431	FD	147' 10"	8	16	1,260,000	40	40		
GEX080000	F431	FD	136' 0"	6	16	1,091,500	40	40		General Electric Company
GEX080002	F431	FD	141' 0"	8	16	1,117,000	40	40		
GEX080003	F431	FD	154' 6"	8	20	1,488,600				
HEPX000200	L090	LS	123' 3"	8	20	1,466,000				HLI RAIL AND RIGGING, LLC
HEPX000201	F431	FD	146' 2"	8	16	1,144,000	45	45		Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario
HLIX0002018	L090	LS	123' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25	2,3,4,5,6	HLI RAIL AND RIGGING, LLC
KRL003601	L090	LS	231' 8"	10	36	2,574,000	25	15	Section II	Kasgro Rail Lines
KRL164000	F431	FD	149' 6"	8	16	1,144,000	45	45	1,2,3,4	
KRL164001	F436	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,144,000	45	45		
KRL164002	F436	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,144,000	45	45		
KRL164003	F436	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,140,000	45	45		
KRL164004	F436	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,140,000	45	45		
KRL164005	F431	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,260,000	45	45		
KRL164006	F431	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,153,600	45	45		

Equipment ID	Equipment Type Code	Mechanical Designation	Outside Length	Truck Count	Axle Count	Gross Rail Load (GRL)	Restricted Speed Empty	Restricted Speed Loaded	Notes	Owner
KRL164007	F431	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,144,000	45	45	1,2,3,4	Kasgro Rail Lines
KRL164020	F436	FD	148' 10"	8	16	1,140,000	45	45		
KRL204002	F431	FD	165' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25	2,3,4,5,6	
KRL204040	F431	FD	165' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25		
KRL204041	F431	FD	166' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25		
KRL204042	F431	FD	166' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25		
KRL204043	F431	FD	165' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25		
KRL204044	F431	FD	166' 0"	10	20	1,422,000	45	25		
KWUX000010	F431	FD	145' 4"	4	16	1,231,100	50	25		Siemens Energy Inc
KWUX000102	L090	LS	135' 8"	8	22	1,732,500	45	25		
KWUX000200	F431	FD	165' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	50	25		
KWUX000301	L090	LS	135' 8"	8	22	1,783,250	45	25		
LBR204000	F431	FD	165' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25	2,3,4,5,6	FRACHT FWO INC
LBR204001	F431	FD	165' 0"	10	20	1,430,000	45	25		
TEXX0001135	L090	LS	167' 6"	10	20	1,575,000	45	25		BNSF LOGISTICS LLC

Note: Restricted speeds are owner's specifications. Owner's contact information can be found on [FindUs.Rail](#).

Note: Cars with 16 or more axles only move in special train service when loaded.

Note 1: Train Position Loaded – No restrictions.

Note 2: Train Position Empty – Rear of train within five cars from rear of train.

Note 3: Handling Instructions – Do not hump.

Note 4: Handling Instructions – Do not subject to pusher/helper service.

Note 5: Special Train Loaded – Trailing tonnage not to exceed 1200 tons.

Note 6: Handling Restriction: Loaded or Empty – Reduced pivot car must not be moved over track in excess of 14-degree curvature without supervision of Car Operators to shift car for stability.