

Subject: CSX Canac Remote Control Overspeed

Dan and George: Today in phone conversation with Don Robey, Chief Engineer, Remote Control Locomotives, CSX, Jacksonville, Fla. was informed following. CSX has about 33 total Canac equipped pusher/hulk locomotives in Ohio, Illinois, Michigan and Maryland. They are starting Monday, Feb. 7, 2005 to change over one of the two speed sensors on the front truck to a location on the rear truck of these locomotives. This to rectify the problem with possible overspeed hazard if both speed sensor axles are located on one truck. The plan is to have one on each inside axle, front and rear trucks, diagonally opposite the other, i.e. R-2 and L-3 location. He tells me CSX will try to have all these locomotives changed over in 30 days. He says the changeover will take about 8 hours per locomotive and these are going to be done at Cleveland, Grand Rapids, Avon, Indiana, and maybe Cumberland as the shops get the units in a rotation sequence from CSX transportation.

Mr. Robey also advises that while this is going on, Canac will have field representatives changing the software on these units to give a better response to wheel slip/slide events in remote control operations. At present there have been many reports of wheel spinning during heavy tonnage switching movements of Canac rcl, especially in and around Toledo resulting in heavy rail burns on switch leads, etc. But since there are no Federal requirements for wheel slip/slide protection in switching ops., little could be done from the MP&E side, only Federal track regs. if rail burns lead to fractures. But it occurred to me as to whether these Canac remote control pusher/hulks even have slip/slide protection, especially now they are being used on the main line where slip/slide protection is required under Federal regs? Mr. Robey and a Canac design engineer I spoke with both said that these Canac rcl pusher/hulk units have always responded to wheel slip/slide events on the power units. The Canac computer up to this time has been responding to train line indications of wheel slip from the power unit by 1st, holding load at the current speed and not going to a higher speed commanded, and if after 5 seconds the slip is not corrected, going to sanding and stepping down load to lower speed setting 'till slip corrected. Robey says in addition that remote control operators have not had the training to avoid wheel slip situations - like not commanding a 10 mph speed setting from a standing stop with heavy tonnage but gradually moving up to it. Moreover, the operators haven't had the capability to respond as quickly as an engineer who is sitting at an engineer's console would when a wheel slip indication light came on. The rcl operators can't be aware of wheel slip as quickly as an engineer is and don't know how to avoid it - they can't feel it the way an engineer can. The new software from Canac is supposed to improve the Canac rcl response to wheel slip indications from the power unit by reducing the time frames for responses such as sanding and load reductions when wheel slip events occur and by providing a "talker" message to the Operator Control Unit (OCU) that wheel slip is occurring so the operator can further reduce the speed selection command if needed. Finally, Robey says CSX is going to be giving further training to the operators on avoiding and dealing with wheel slip in their operations.

This to all concerned as information.