

Board Policy No. 23 Railroad Construction Scheduling and Management

Summary

This policy establishes principles and procedures for managing the impact of construction on NCTD coastal (San Diego Subdivision) and inland (Escondido Subdivision) rail corridors.

Scope

This policy covers construction and maintenance impacts such as slow orders, partial shutdowns, and complete shutdowns on the San Diego (“coastal” or “COASTER” corridor) and Escondido (“inland” or “SPRINTER” corridor) Subdivisions. The policy covers construction/ improvement and maintenance activities performed by NCTD, SANDAG and other third parties performing construction, and maintenance activities within NCTD right-of-way. This policy applies to both projects that benefit NCTD and projects performed on behalf of external entities that impact NCTD operations.

Principles

1. The Board policy is to provide high-quality rail service consistent with the operating plan of both passenger and freight operators.
2. The Board recognizes that capital activities are required to maintain a state of good repair and to support capital enhancements.
3. Complete shutdowns, Absolute Work Windows (AWW), are periods of time, typically 48-hour periods occurring during weekends, when all train traffic is annulled. Complete shutdowns typically impact the entire corridor.
4. Partial shutdowns include Single Track Absolute Work Windows (STAWW) and Freight Absolute Work Windows (FAWW). STAWWs are scheduled only on double tracked sections and annul all train traffic on one track. All traffic is diverted onto the live track. FAWWs are periods when freight traffic is annulled, but passenger service is not impacted. Partial shutdowns are scheduled over shorter segments of track and at times that minimize impacts to service.
5. Project designers, construction managers, and NCTD shall fully evaluate construction means and methods in order to minimize disruption of rail service during construction.
6. Project designers and construction managers must clearly demonstrate the need for a slow order, partial shutdown(s) or complete shutdown(s) by submitting information and alternatives to NCTD during the project development/ design phase of the project.
7. AWWs are generally scheduled between the months of October and March, AWWs between the months of April and September are generally prohibited due to increased ridership and local and regional events.
8. Project/construction managers requesting a partial shutdown (STAWW, FAWW) shall consider passenger and freight schedules and provide partial shutdown alternatives and benefits to NCTD should a partial shutdown be permitted.
9. Unless significant unforeseen circumstances arise, such as emergency or exigent circumstances, NCTD will honor the published AWW schedule and consider every partial shutdown request on the railroad.

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10. Project/construction managers requesting partial shutdowns that may impact NCTD railroad operations shall consult with NCTD as soon as they become aware of a potential impact to NCTD's rail operations.

Responsibilities

1. NCTD's Executive Director or his/her designee is responsible for the administration of this policy. Safety shall be the Executive Director's top priority in administering this policy.
2. The Executive Director or his/her designee is responsible for ensuring that a calendar is maintained that identifies all shutdowns on the inland and coastal corridors.
3. The Executive Director or his/her designee is responsible for developing agreements and guidelines for continuity of operations during construction. The agreements and guidelines should address seasonal constraints, coordination with other corridor users, notification requirements, project types (track, signal, or bridge), and work location (Escondido or San Diego Subdivisions, Mile Post location and impact to service).
4. Project/construction managers involved in project planning and/or construction that may impact NCTD railroad operations shall consult with NCTD as soon as they become aware of an impact to NCTD's rail operations. Earlier consultation supports improved coordination and minimizes potential delay(s) to projects.
5. Project/construction managers are responsible for ensuring that they have developed sufficient plans that detail the nature of the proposed construction project and its impact on NCTD.
6. Project/construction managers are responsible for meeting all applicable regulatory and NCTD requirements including the execution of appropriate agreements to support the mitigation of construction impacts on NCTD's property.
7. Project/construction managers are responsible for ensuring project planning and design consider and identify the impact of construction and discussing alternatives with NCTD as part of the project planning process and throughout the project development process.
8. Project/construction managers will utilize the established AWW calendar when developing preliminary construction schedules during a project's design phase. The project manager shall coordinate with NCTD if it is believed that NCTD and the project would benefit from a revision to the established AWW calendar.
9. NCTD, in collaboration with SANDAG and NCTD's rail partners, BNSF, Metrolink, and Amtrak, will coordinate the timeframe or dates of the shutdown consistent with NCTD and SANDAG's Guidelines for Continuity of Operations During Construction and execute agreements/gain concurrence with impacted parties prior to initiating a procurement for construction of a project.
10. Project/construction managers are responsible for identifying a process to eliminate or reduce the potential of slow orders resulting from construction. Slow orders shall be mitigated with special equipment such as a Track Stabilizer, or non-revenue train trips, to ensure continuity of rail operations. Project/construction managers are responsible for tracking all construction related slow orders and submitting the information to NCTD in a monthly report.

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Master Construction Calendar


NCTD shall maintain and manage a master construction calendar that identifies the anticipated dates for the next twenty-four (24) months that are available for NCTD tracks to be shutdown to rail service for capital or maintenance projects.

1. When scheduling construction that will impact operations, NCTD shall consider significant local and regional events.
2. Complete track shutdowns on the coastal corridor are prohibited during the months of April, May, June, July, August, September, November and December unless an exception is granted by the Executive Director.
3. Complete track weekday shutdowns on the rail corridors are prohibited unless an exception is granted by the Executive Director or his/her designee.
4. NCTD reserves the right to annul, shorten, or modify a pre-scheduled shutdown date listed on the master construction calendar for emergency or exigent circumstances. If a pre-scheduled shutdown date is not being utilized for a construction project up to one month prior the scheduled date, the shutdown date shall be annulled.
5. When scheduling construction activity on the rail corridor, NCTD shall notify all surrounding and potentially impacted public agencies and municipalities.

Exceptions

Any deviations from or exceptions to this policy, except where authority has expressly been delegated to the Executive Director or his/her designees herein, requires Board approval.

Approvals



Board Chair

10/21/2021
Date



Executive Director

10/21/2021
Date



General Counsel

10/21/2021
Date

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DATE ISSUED	REVISION No.	RESOLUTION No.	COMMENTS
10/18/2012	ADOPTED	12-10	
10/17/2013	1	13-07	2013 REVISION
10/16/2014	2	14-04	2014 REVISION
10/20/2016	3	16-10	2016 REVISION
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10/17/2019	5	19-06	2019 REVISION
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