



Florida Department of Transportation

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FDOT Secretary Directs Unprecedented Rail Safety Measures, Launches Statewide Education Initiative

~ Directive positions FDOT as nationwide leader in rail safety ~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – As part of its promise to ensure safety is the top priority across the state’s rail corridors, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Secretary Kevin J. Thibault, P.E. today issued an immediate directive calling for the implementation of unprecedented rail safety measures and the launch of a statewide education initiative. The directive has the explicit goal of preventing additional fatalities on or near rail crossings on state roads and state-owned land crossings.

“One fatality on our rail crossings is one too many, and I am committed to doing everything I can as Secretary to prevent additional tragedies from occurring across our state,” said **FDOT Secretary Kevin J. Thibault, P.E.** “Under the leadership of Governor DeSantis, FDOT has been empowered to implement bold ideas that will increase the safety of our transportation system, and I am confident today’s directive not only exceeds industry safety standards, but it also designates Florida as a nationwide leader in rail safety.”

Secretary Thibault’s directive includes the following actions:

- Immediately begin implementing an engineering countermeasure called “dynamic envelopes” at every existing FDOT roadway and state-owned land rail crossing across the state.
- Require the inclusion of a dynamic envelope in the standard design of any future railroad crossings on FDOT roadways or state-owned land rail crossings.
- Launch a data-driven statewide rail safety education initiative. “Operation STRIDE” (Statewide Traffic and Railroad Initiative using Dynamic Envelopes) will be conducted in conjunction with rail partners to include earned, social, and digital media.
- Partner with state and local law enforcement agencies, including the Florida Highway Patrol, sheriffs, and police chiefs, to help enforce rail safety laws.
- Continue to partner with local and private rail partners by sharing FDOT rail safety design standards and framework and encouraging their participation and implementation of the safety and engineering efforts.



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“This announcement truly showcases that FDOT is committed to keeping those who utilize the state’s transportation system safe and could serve as a national model,” said **Florida Transportation Commission Chairman, Ronald Howse, P.E.** “I applaud the Governor’s leadership and Secretary Thibault’s bold and unprecedented actions to address rail safety in Florida.”

In 2014 and 2017, FDOT conducted dynamic envelope pilot programs in south and central Florida, respectively. Following the installation of the dynamic envelope, traffic data indicated that the number of vehicles that stopped on or too close to rail crossings was reduced by at least 15%. Today’s directive combines additional engineering countermeasures with education and enforcement countermeasures; therefore, FDOT anticipates even more compliance with rail safety laws.

The attached memorandum from the FDOT Chief Engineer was sent to FDOT’s senior leadership today and work to implement the dynamic envelopes on more than 4,000 rail crossings across Florida is anticipated to be completed by March 2022. The estimated cost is nearly \$60 million and will be absorbed by FDOT over the next three fiscal years.

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