

## For Information Only

### Blocked Railway Crossing Potential Impact on Emergency Services Response Time

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#### Resolution

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## Executive Summary

This report serves as an update to Council in response to a concern raised by residents of the impact to emergency services response if a railway crossing is blocked.

## Background

Residents have expressed concerns of the risk of a delay to emergency response imposed by trains occupying crossings when emergency vehicles are en route to a call. Rail companies are governed by federal law, specifically the Canadian Rail Operating Rules (CROR). Section 103 (d) of the rule states that when trains are standing or switching operations at a public crossing, the train “must not obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic for a longer period than five minutes at a time. When emergency vehicles require passage, employees must co-operate to quickly clear the involved crossings.”

In November 2016, Emergency Services hosted a meeting with officials from CN Rail, and the City’s Emergency Services Departments (Emergency Management, Fire and Paramedic Services) to review residents’ concerns and find solutions. During stakeholder discussions, various crossings were identified as having potential impact to emergency services response to request for service. As such, these identified crossings have been flagged by our dispatch centres (Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) – Central Ambulance Communications Centre and Greater Sudbury Police Services 9-1-1 Communications Centre) to allow for more efficient response in the event there is a delay due to a blocked rail crossing.

The group has developed a notification protocol that directs the dispatch centres to contact CN Rail Traffic Control (RTC) when a request for service is received in the identified areas. Notifying the rail company is to prevent a delay in response to the emergency call. CN Rail will advise the dispatch centre if they are taking measures with the trains to ensure the crossing is clear, until the emergency call has been completed. If an emergency vehicle arrives at the crossing and a train is obstructing the route to the call first responders will notify the dispatch centre and advise if the train is moving or is stopped. In most cases if the train is moving, it is more advantageous for first responders to remain at the crossing and wait for the train to clear.

If a train is blocking a crossing for an unknown period of time, alternate routes are available to Emergency Services vehicles in these circumstances. The dispatch centre will advise the responding emergency vehicles of the most

#### Signed By

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appropriate alternate route. In some cases meeting points “Emergency Access” have implemented to address an alternate route. When the “Emergency Access” needs to be utilized, Emergency Service vehicles will be met by a rail company employee at the designated meeting point and guide the responding vehicles around the rail yard.

This collaborative communication strategy between CN Rail, the MOHLTC – Central Ambulance Communication Centre, Greater Sudbury Police Services 9-1-1 Communications Centre and Emergency Services was implemented on December 1, 2016. On December 14th an unannounced test was conducted, all partners responded well and the operating procedure worked as intended.

All stakeholders are committed to ongoing education, training and routine testing to ensure staff is familiar with the established operating procedures.