Challenges in Managing Preempted Signals

- Various Owners
- Updated and Useful Inventory for preemption
- Recording design decisions consistently
- Regular inspections
- Controlling changes at crossing or at signal
- Office of Commissioner of Railroads (OCR) role
Various Owners

- 98 (about) Interconnected inventoried crossings Statewide
- 31 on State Highway system
- Decentralized control and responsibility
- Multiple Municipalities, some with only one interconnected signal
- 5 WisDOT Regions
Inventory

- State has detailed inventory of all crossings
- Fields for preemption unclear
- Updates necessary, outside of NW Region not regularly updated
- Improve contact information signals and railroad
- Calculation documents could be stored here
- Review/Inspection documents
Design Calculations

- WisDOT owned signals and Federally funded project
- Local traffic signals – varies
- Funding traffic signal upgrades is a challenge under Safety program
Recording Design Decisions

- Historically Inconsistent Stored/Filed
  - Estimate requests
  - Correspondence
  - OCR documentation
- WisDOT owned signals and federally funded local signals
  - Stored calculations in file
  - Moving forward linking those documents to inventory
- Local signals
  - WisDOT has no authority
  - OCR has regulatory authority over crossing safety
Annual Joint Inspections

• Inconsistent between Regions, Municipalities, and Railroads
• WisDOT’s challenge in staffing time/priority at Regions
• Finding the right contact
• Inspection is initiated by Railroad

• Require annual inspections? OCR can require this
  • Monitoring process?
  • Enforcement?
Changes Impacting Crossings

- Changes at the crossings covered by OCR process
- Contact Stickers in both railroad bungalow and traffic cabinet
- Clear identification of wiring
- Traffic Changes (larger queues)
- Railroad Operation Changes
• State Regulatory Authority for Crossings
• Issues Orders by Administrative Law Judge and signed by the Commissioner
• Record of Decisions and petition process
• Annual Inspections
  • Adding to Order
  • Management of submittals and compliance
Next Steps

• Update Inventory Database Structure
• Statewide Training for WisDOT and Municipal Traffic Engineers
• Update WisDOT Design Manual
• Coordinate with OCR on process to manage inspections statewide
Questions?
Advice?

Lisa A. Stern, P.E.
Chief of Railroads & Harbors
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
lisa.stern@dot.wi.gov 608-266-1010