

- Good afternoon everyone, and thank you Sean for sharing SUMA's perspective on this matter. Now I'd like to share with you the rural perspective.
- As some of you may know, there are 296 rural municipalities in Saskatchewan. While not all of these RMs have federally-regulated public grade crossings within their boundaries, Saskatchewan rural municipalities are home to hundreds, if not thousands, of grade crossings.
- An RM can have dozens of crossings within their crossings alone. In fact, I have heard from numerous RMs that have upwards of fifty grade crossings within their boundaries alone.
- All of this is to say that meeting the requirements of the *Grade Crossing Regulations* is no small task for rural municipalities.
- Over the past several months, SARM has been focused on helping municipalities meet the November 27, 2016 deadline for the information sharing aspect of the *Regulations*. We have spent a lot of time with our own Board, as well as with SUMA, exploring the options available to municipalities.
- As Sean mentioned, the possibility of a group procurement project between SARM and SUMA was discussed, but our information gathering determined it wasn't feasible on a province-wide scale, especially given the short time frame.
- So instead, we have been working hard to communicate the resources that are available to RMs, including Transport Canada's Grade Crossing Inventory, contacts at Transport Canada that RMs can get in touch with directly when questions arise, and sharing the most recent traffic count maps we have on file with RMs.

- On that note, I'd like to mention that SARM has traffic count maps for every RM. These maps are funded by MREP and completed by the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure every five years for each RM on a rotating basis. These maps might not have traffic counts for every road within in your RM that has a crossing, but they definitely provide a starting point. Please feel free to send me an email to request your traffic count map.
- Not only has this file kept the policy department busy, but SARM's engineering department has also been actively engaged on this matter. From their review of the [information sharing form](#) and [job aid](#) provided by Transport Canada, we believe that many RMs should be able to gather the data internally if they so choose.
- However, we also know that many municipalities have already or currently are in the process of getting quotes from engineering firms to have the work done. Either approach is acceptable.
- While municipalities are under no obligation to have engineers gather or approve the data to meet their information sharing requirements, for some municipalities this is the easiest route. The deadline is quickly approaching and summer is a busy time for public works employees. For many municipalities, there are simply not enough hours in the day to have the public works employees gathering this information during the summer months, which are, of course, peak construction season.
- For the municipalities that are looking to hire engineers, I would encourage you to contact your neighbouring rural and urban municipalities to see if there is an opportunity to do a group buy of services and save money on a more localized level. We've heard that many municipalities are doing this already and seeing positive results.
- For those that interested in collecting the information internally, SARM's engineers have put together a few tools. First, we have created a [form](#) to help you document the measurements you will take in the field.

- Once out of the field, you can use this form to enter the measurements into a [spreadsheet](#) we have created that will auto-calculate your measurements. The spreadsheet will walk you through what to enter and will perform calculations to achieve grade crossing angle, average approach gradient, departure time, and stopping sight distance.
- Finally, to help you visualize these calculations, we have put together a few short “how-to” videos of Daniel Segal, our Director of Municipal Bridge Services, conducting the field measurements. At the end of our presentation, we will play one of these videos for you as a sneak peek, but all of the videos will be available for viewing on the SARM website in the coming days.
- Now, to switch gears. To this point in this presentation, we have focused on the information sharing requirements. While meeting these requirements is a big job, especially for municipalities with dozens and dozens of crossings, this is only the first step in reaching compliance with the *Regulations*.
- Once the November 2016 deadline passes, municipalities will need to turn their attention to the next step which involves several requirements to improve safety standards. This must be done by November 2021.
- The standards a road authority is required to meet differ between existing public grade crossings, public grade crossings that have been changed, and new public grade crossings. We anticipate this to be an area of confusion, as maneuvering through the *Grade Crossing Regulations* and *Grade Crossing Standards* to determine what needs to be done for each of your crossings can be difficult and time-consuming.
- Transport Canada, however, has informed SARM that they are developing a detailed compliance manual, explaining in plain language, the respective obligations of railways and road authorities, and possible approaches to meeting requirements. What we’re hoping to see from this document is a

clear, concise user-friendly manual that municipalities can use to determine next steps. In our view, municipalities need an easy-to-use tool that will help internal staff determine what work needs to be done and if outside professional services, like engineers, will be required.

- Transport Canada has also informed us that letters will be sent to Reeves and Mayors advising them of the requirements and responsibilities their municipality may have under the regulations.
- SARM views this as very important step in the road to compliance. Municipalities need to understand which aspects of the *Grade Crossing Regulations* and Grade Crossing Standards are applicable to each of their crossings.
- Because this may be challenging and require significant time and effort, we are hopeful that Transport Canada will be able to provide as much clarity and support as possible so that all parties can play their part in improving the safety of public grade crossings, which is of course the objective of the regulations.
- To conclude this presentation, I'd like to now show you our video on calculating clearance distance.