

Freight train industry to miss safety deadline

April 16 2014, by Joan Lowy

The U.S. freight railroad industry says only one-fifth of its track will be equipped with mandatory safety technology to prevent most collisions and derailments by the deadline set by Congress.

The Association of American Railroads said in a report Wednesday that about 20 percent of the approximately 60,000 miles (100,000 kilometers) of track being equipped with the technology will meet the deadline of Dec. 31, 2015. Previously, the association had estimated 40 percent would meet the deadline.

The association blamed the Federal Communications Commission, saying the FCC is holding up the installation of 22,000 antennas on track wayside that are necessary to complete installation of the technology, known as positive train control.

The commission is requiring railroads to ensure that each antenna will not disturb sites of importance to Native Americans.

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