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EARLY WARNING

Friday, August 08, 2008

C-10796

EW-5226

Subject: Scrap Loading in Gondola Cars

To: ALL SUBSCRIBERS

File Number: LR-8.10.4

Problems with gondolas loaded with loose scrap have existed for several years. Over this time there have been reports of material falling from cars, striking locomotives, rail cars, signals and private property. During the past year increases in incidents have heightened safety concerns. Several member railroads have reported serious injuries, near miss injuries, derailments, and rail car set outs caused by loose scrap metal falling off or hanging from these cars. Railroad employees have been struck by metal scrap hanging from the cars or have tripped over scrap metal lying on the ground. These loads were either improperly loaded or the material was loaded in such a manner as to allow it to migrate over the sides or ends of the cars. Despite efforts by the railroads working with their shippers to bring these loads into compliance, the problem continues to exist.

In an effort to address this problem, the AAR Open Top Loading Rules Committee has approved revisions to Figure 87, Section 2 of the Open Top Loading Rules. The major revision is to restrict loose scrap metal to be loaded below the top of rail car sides and ends at any point of the load. These revisions are being finalized and will be formally circulated for comment throughout the industry. In the mean time, in the interest of safety to railroad employees and the general public, the Rules Committee has requested that action be taken to address this issue during the comment period.

Therefore, this Early Warning is being issued to immediately restrict the height of all loads of loose scrap metal in gondola cars to be below the top of the car sides and ends of any car. This restriction is illustrated in the attached Sketch 1. Text changes are also noted by side bar indicators on this figure. Carriers should bring this information to the immediate attention of all customers that load loose scrap in gondolas or other open top cars. This restriction will become effective August 20, 2008 on all originating loads. Severity Code 06 has been assigned. This requires the restriction of the height of all loose scrap loads to be below the top of the sides and ends of gondolas or other open top cars as of August 20, 2008.

Sincerely,
James P. Grady
Assistant Vice President - Technical Services

Safety & Operations

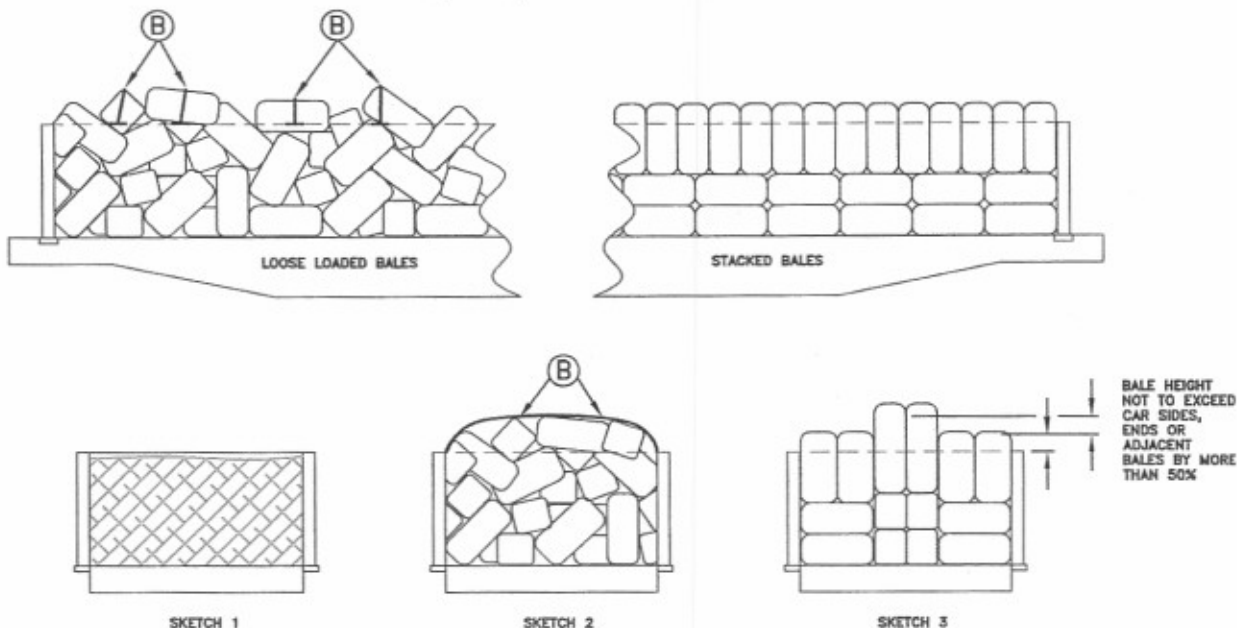
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AAR Open Top Loading Rules Manual

Fig. 87 (Rev. 08/08)
(New 02/60)

SCRAP, METAL, LOOSE AND BALED—GONDOLAS



Item	No. of Pcs.	Description
A		Brake wheel clearance: see General Rule 2 in Section 1.
B	2 per 8 ft or less of load length extending above car sides. Add 1 for each additional 4 ft of load length.	High tension bands: 2 in. x .044 in. Locate to contact and secure top baled scrap not in compliance with Note 1.
C	As required. (not shown in drawing)	Wire mesh or netting: of sufficient strength, width, and length to cover complete top of car. Secure to lading strap anchors. Do not secure to safety appliances, such as handholds and ladders. Not required when loaded to provisions of Notes 3 and 4.

Notes and Additional Requirements:

1. Baled scrap, extending above car sides and ends must engage car sides, ends and adjacent bales by minimum of 50% of bale. See Sketch 3.
2. Light scrap metal (e.g., loose tin or aluminum stampings, etc.) must be secured with wire mesh, netting and/or material of equal strength to prevent displacement by suction in transit. Heavy or baled scrap may be substituted and loaded on top of light material provided height limitation of Note 1 is not exceeded.
3. Loose scrap metal must be below top of car sides and ends of the car at any point of load. See Sketch 1.
4. Light scrap metal loaded 12 in. below top of car sides and ends requires no securement or covering.

Reference the General Rules in Section No. 1 of the *Open Top Loading Rules Manual* for additional details.