§ 238.313 Class I brake test.

(a) Each commuter and short-distance intercity passenger train shall receive a Class I brake test once each calendar day that the train is placed or continues in passenger service.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (i) of this section, each long-distance intercity passenger train shall receive a Class I brake test:

1. Prior to the train’s departure from an originating terminal; and
2. Every 1,500 miles or once each additional calendar day, whichever occurs first, that the train remains in continuous passenger service.

(c) Each passenger car and each unpowered vehicle added to a passenger train shall receive a Class I or Class IA brake test at the time it is added to the train unless notice is provided to the train crew that a Class I brake test was performed on the car within the previous calendar day and the car has not been disconnected from a source of compressed air for more than four hours prior to being added to the train. The notice required by this section shall contain the date, time, and location of the last Class I brake test.

(d) Each Class I brake test shall be performed by a qualified maintenance person.

(e) Each Class I brake test may be performed either separately or in conjunction with the exterior calendar day mechanical inspection required under § 238.303.

(f) Except as provided in § 238.15(b), a railroad shall not use or haul a passenger train in passenger service from a location where a Class I brake test has been performed, or was required by this part to have been performed, with less than 100 percent operative brakes.

(g) A Class I brake test shall be performed at the air pressure at which the train’s air brakes will be operated, but not less than 90 psi, and shall be made to determine and ensure that:

1. The friction brakes apply and remain applied on each car in the train until a release of the brakes has been initiated on each car in response to train line electric, pneumatic, or other signals. This test shall include a verification that each side of each car’s brake system responds properly to application and release signals;

2. The brake shoes or pads are firmly seated against the wheel or disc with the brakes applied;

3. Piston travel is within prescribed limits, either by direct observation, observation of a piston travel indicator, or in the case of tread or disc brakes by determining that the brake shoe or pad provides pressure to the wheel. For vehicles equipped with 8½-inch or 10-inch diameter brake cylinders, piston travel shall be within 7 to 9 inches. If piston travel is found to be less than 7 inches or more than 9 inches, it must be adjusted to nominally 7½ inches. Proper release of the brakes can be determined by observation of the clearance between the brake shoe and the wheel or between the brake pad and the brake disc.

4. The communicating signal system is tested and known to be operating as intended; a tested and operating two-way radio system meets this requirement;

5. Each brake shoe or pad is securely fastened and correctly aligned in relation to the wheel or to the disc;

6. The engineer’s brake valve or controller will cause the proper train line commands for each position or brake level setting;

7. Brake pipe leakage does not exceed 5 pounds per square inch per minute if leakage will affect service performance;

8. The emergency brake application and deadman pedal or other emergency control devices function as intended;

9. Each brake shoe or pad is not below the minimum thickness established by the railroad. This thickness shall not be less than the minimum thickness necessary to safely travel the maximum distance allowed between Class I brake tests;

10. Each angle cock and cutout cock is properly positioned;

11. The brake rigging or the system mounted on the car for the transmission of the braking force operates as intended and does not bind or foul so as to impede the force delivered to a brake shoe, impede the release of a brake shoe, or otherwise adversely affect the operation of the brake system;

12. If the train is equipped with electropneumatic brakes, an electropneumatic application of the
§ 238.315 Class IA brake test.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, either a Class I or a Class IA brake test shall be performed:

(1) Prior to the first morning departure of each commuter or short-distance intercity passenger train, unless all of the following conditions are satisfied:

(i) A Class I brake test was performed within the previous twelve (12) hours;

(ii) The train has not been used in passenger service since the performance of the Class I brake test; and

(iii) The train has not been disconnected from a source of compressed air for more than four hours since the performance of the Class I brake test; and

(2) Prior to placing a train in service that has been off a source of compressed air for more than four hours.

(b) A commuter or short-distance intercity passenger train that provides continuing late night service that began prior to midnight may complete its daily operating cycle after midnight without performing another Class I or Class IA brake test. A Class I or Class IA brake test shall be performed on such a train before it starts a new daily operating cycle.