

secretariat@reviewcta-examenltc.gc.ca

Attention: Honourable David L. Emerson

Hello, let me introduce myself.

My name is Dana Ewashko, I am 51 years old male and a certified financial planner. I like to think of myself as a level headed individual and try to use the commonsense approach to life and it's challenges.

I am glad to be given an opportunity to voice my concerns here. I live in Viking Alberta about 4 blocks from the CN Wainwright subdivision, one of the busiest rail lines in North America.

I have many concerns when it comes to the way Canada's railways are being operated, the most troubling though for me is the excessive noise and vibration pollution. I understand every crossing and municipality is unique, thus when talking about the anti whistling process, I will only comment on the regulations as they pertain to Viking's geography and situations.

I have been trying to stop the horns in my town for 14 years. I have friends and relatives that work on the railroad and am aware of the railways concerns. I wish to make myself very clear here, I have done more research than most on this subject and I understand the anti whistling process and wish to tell you it is flawed. Firstly you cannot expect the taxpaying public to fund the safety assessments required, the taxpaying public is not the one disturbing the peace numerous times every night ! We (the Town of Viking Alberta) have LGB controls at both crossings, we are lucky in that regard, but a common belief is, if we stop the horns people will die. We do not have a foot traffic problem here, the problem we have is a lack of funds and a council that is unwilling to research the facts for themselves. We have a public that is split between a better quality of life for some and the old traditions, The uninformed public are the ones that can not think for themselves and just believe what CN has been preaching for over a century. IE: the old perception that the locomotive horns were here first, they were not here first, there were steam engines with whistles, not 6000 hp diesels with 130 db air horns! What we have is a industry that is so set in it's ways it still refers to the AIR HORNS as whistles????? This is important as proof of an industry unwilling to change and get with the times. Technology exists that could make the air horn unnecessary, except in an emergency! But the industry is scared it will cost them some money, why else would CN not want to put aircraft style recorders and video inside the locomotives. "CN said we want to take a wait and see approach" why because it had 45 new locomotives on order? Probably, stall the process and save a bunch of money. Well back when we had 2 steamers a week pull through Viking there was never a noise issue, the train came along, stopped, picked up the cream cans from the farmers and took them to Edmonton. All was good, the train served the local population. But we now have 50 trains a day pulling through town. Some at 60 MPH, and with the length and weight of these double stacked trains at that speed, the noise and vibrations are unbearable. Not to mention the safety issues CN is having currently, over loading the trains thus asking the old rail beds to hold the weight and speed of these new trains they are building. The condition of the rails doesn't matter one bit if your wheels fall off the cars! The number of wheels I see stacked up along this main line (Wainwright sub) is unnerving. These cars should never have left the yard with bad wheels. And the horns,,,, good god,,,, imagine your asleep then at 2 - 3 - 3:08 - 3:13 - 4 - 4:10 - 4:15 - 5 - 5:30 - 6 - 6:30 am HORNS! I asked Christina (I am on a first name basis with CN's customer relations girl in Winnipeg) for her home phone number so I could call her every time one of CN's trains woke me up, oddly she refused, guess she didn't like the idea of being woke up that often during the night ? But no one cares if I get woken up that often. Understandably the horns do not affect everyone equally, but that doesn't mean it is not a problem. I have complained to CN's Christina many many times, and it gets me nowhere. This is not fun for either of us, yet all I ever get is the same ole, "federal safety regulations" BS. **THUS** we need to change these regulations and make damn sure the regulations have enough **TEETH** to force the rail companies to work with the public not just hide behind the regulations and keep doing whatever they want. **REMOVE** the words reasonable from the act as we can not expect CN/CP to ever be reasonable when it comes to noise and vibration or in anything they do for that matter.

The lack of sleep is causing me work, health and safety issues, The horns cause safety issues for everyone and they don't even realize it. Imagine your family driving from Edmonton and I am going there for a meeting and fall asleep, cross the center line killing everyone. Don't blame me, Blame CN's horns, I try to get enough rest but most nights it is impossible. Blowing horns at night in a residential area is **NOT** reasonable from my point of view!

Below I will list the issues in point form with possible recommendations.

Vibration / Noise – slow down through town, safer as well as less noisy. Or at least coast through the towns, picking up the throttle once past town.

Horns – STOP blowing at every crossing, if sight lines are good and engineer can see there is no traffic coming, or at controlled crossings, like Viking has, stay silent. Do I blow my horn at every intersection while driving? NO that would be stupid! People are becoming complacent with the horns because many have the ability to block them out, because they are so frequent. How many times in the city have you ignored a car alarm? I attended Transport Canada's grade crossing meeting in Edmonton where the CP officials told me the engineer can't be looking out the window the entire trip, he has paperwork to do,,,,, really? Too stinking bad, I don't want the guy driving the train to be doing ANYTHING else but paying attention to the rails ahead. We have distracted driving laws here. Obey them.

Anti whistling process / Safety assessment – let CN pay for this, they are the ones disturbing the peace – I suggested a tariff of one dollar per container from the shipper, wouldn't cost CN or the government a dime, other than collecting the money from the shippers– Also liability is used as a scare tactic against municipalities; I have proof of this in form of a 2001 letter from the union to the town. (this is what stopped our anti whistling process back in 2001).

Sound Barriers and or safety fences – see above^^^^ Tariff on container or cargo will easily pay for these

Side tracks – this is where a **large source** of the noise problem stems from. Why did CN build the bypass track next to a town, lots of room out in a farmer's field, this is source of extra horns, and diesel fumes (worse in the winter). Jet aircraft have to throttle back after liftoff when flying over the residential areas, why do trains get to pull out at max power? Especially at night. And let the trains and or employees use radios to communicate to each other not the horn, again, especially at night. The sidetrack beside town is a total disaster, The noise issues and diesel fumes of idling engines is unacceptable, this was extremely evident during the Fabian derailment where we had a locomotive idling there for 5 days straight.

Crude oil / dangerous goods – slow down, don't park dangerous goods in town (I had complained to Christina about this as well) There are oil cars currently parked in town as I write this! Have a dedicated dangerous goods day, ship all dangerous goods slower & on a specific day of the week, notify the fire chiefs of the contents of that days trains. Reporting 3 months after the fact is unacceptable. WORTHLESS !

Blocked access to Highway 14 or 36 south - The head of our ambulance service told me that in the last 2 years the number of times a train has blocked them from getting to the highway has quadrupled, I asked if he records this, he said yes but his answer was no, when I asked if he sends this info to anyone? Transport Canada needs to be monitoring this.

In summary, the noise at night is my biggest complaint I have. Surely there is a better technology that can be used to notify people a train is coming. Perhaps we need some ads that will teach people to look both ways when crossing the tracks? Every year we get a new crop of drivers, impatient, inexperienced, and texting seems to be more important than getting safely to the party. What about cameras at the crossings? We have them for red lights in most cities!

When is the federal Government going to hear the public's outcry for help. The horns, noise and vibration might not affect you directly, but you could lose loved ones to the constant noise issues, if some poor sleep deprived soul falls asleep at the wheel killing everyone in a car crash.

With all due respect Lisa Rait, CN is laughing at you, you said you made progress in your interview but clearly CN is thumbing their nose at you and doing what they want.....I was about to send this submission Oct 7th till I heard CN had a problem at Clair SK, this comes a week after 2 derailments in 24 hours in my province. This is the 29th derailment this year in the prairies alone. Clearly CN is not concerned with safety like it says, seems profits are more important! And why did the 100,000/day fine for lack of sufficient grain shipped get reduced to 100,000 per week? It should have been a million per day to start with.

Please I beg you to help provide me with peace and quiet for a good night's rest. If you would like to discuss any of my concerns or ideas please contact me at 780-336-2058.

Sincerely

Dana M. Ewashko CFP