

ADDITION OF A TURNTABLE DEPLOYMENT LIGHT BY AL RODI

After a recent motorcar run, a friend and I were discussing what could have been a serious problem. While on the return trip, his turntable alarm sounded. Immediately stopping, he discovered that due to a mechanical failure, the turntable had indeed begun to drop. After securing the turntable, he returned to the yard for repairs. He commented that while wearing the headset, in conjunction with “normal” noise associated with motorcar operation, the alarm was difficult to hear.

In my past life as a powertrain engineer on transit buses and railcars, certain alarms, such as low air and engine trouble, consisted of BOTH an audible alarm and a light (either solid or flashing). Adding such a light seemed to be a relatively easy task. A little research on eBay yielded an inexpensive flashing red LED marker light.



The limit switch already installed in my car, a Square D 9007 type limit switch with roller arm, has DPDT (double pole double throw) contacts. This means there were enough terminals to not only add the warning light, but to also wire it in such a way that the alarm and light could each be on their own fused circuit making them redundant to each other.

Locating the light on the front wall of the cab in the field of view is a good location to catch the operator’s attention. The addition of an indicator light, in addition to the alarm already required, could be a safety benefit, providing an additional level of warning to avoid a potentially serious accident.

