SAFETY COMMITTEE CONSIDERS THE BEST WAY FOR MOTOR CAR OPERATORS TO SIGNAL A STOP

By Stan Conyer

The Safety Rule Committee is considering changes in the way motorcar operators signal a stop. Motorcars did not come from the factory with stop lights as automobiles have today. In fact, many of our cars were built before stop lights were required on automobiles. The designers of motorcars had no idea that their machines would be used as our activity uses them, in groups of several motorcars full of sightseers. Our hobby has had to develop a method of signaling the car behind of an intended stop.

Our rule book states that the intention to stop should be signaled by the use of a flag, a stop light, or a flashing red light. The most accepted method of signaling a stop is with the display of a red flag. This works well except when the visibility is restricted by darkness or weather. It is also difficult to display a flag from a car which has closed doors or curtains. Closing the throttle, disengaging the clutch or belt, applying the brake, and displaying a flag by a single operator can be a handful.

Many operators have installed stop lights of varying types. A stop light is generally defined as one or two red lights that are activated by the same motion that applies the car's brakes. Generally, if flashing lights are used, they flash when the brake lights are activated.

A third method is a light that is turned on by a separate switch to signal a stop. This method as well as the red flag method only works if the operator never forgets to signal his stop while applying the brakes. Some owners have installed a switch on the brake lever which can more easily be found and turned on when a stop is to be signaled.

Installing an automatic brake light is not difficult and greatly enhances the safe operation of the motorcar. On cars with electric lighting systems, simply install an automotive type stop light switch in a manner that when the lever or pedal is in the disengaged position the switch is held open or off. When the lever or pedal is moved, the switch goes closed and applies voltage to the brake light. A brake light can be one or two red lights added with the original equipment tail lights.

Some operators have replaced the original equipment lights with two filament automotive type tail/stop lights.

On cars without a lighting system, an auxiliary battery system can be added. These lights can be applied in a way that can be removed if the owner wishes to keep the historical integrity of the car.

Probably the best way to signal a stop is a combination of a stop light and a red flag. At night, a flash light should be used in place of the flag. Any method of signaling a stop is only as good as the car operator and the maintenance of his equipment.

The safety committee is considering changing the wording of the rule covering this subject. We would like to hear from you concerning this subject or any other having to do with safety. Write to:

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