

November 5, 2007

In Reply Refer To: HSSD-1/CC-102

Mr. Owen Denman, PE President, Barrier Systems Inc. 180 River Road Rio Vista, CA 94571-1208

Dear Mr. Denman:

Thank you for your letter of August 2, 2007, requesting the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) acceptance of tangent, flared, and median versions of the X-TensionTM Technology End Terminals for use on the National Highway System (NHS). The original system, the X-350TM Guardrail Terminal was developed by Armorflex, Ltd., and accepted by FHWA in our July 9, 2005, letter CC-91. Barrier Systems, Inc. has since acquired the rights to use the X-350TM Guardrail technology and has developed it further. Accompanying your letter were reports of crash testing conducted by Holmes Solutions, an approved test laboratory which was formerly a facility of the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand, and DVD video of the tests. You requested that we find the terminals acceptable for use on the NHS under the provisions of National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 350 "Recommended Procedures for the Safety Performance Evaluation of Highway Features."

Introduction

The FHWA guidance on crash testing of roadside safety hardware is contained in a memorandum dated July 25, 1997, titled "<u>INFORMATION</u>: Identifying Acceptable Highway Safety Features." The original Armorflex X350 tangent terminal for use with strong-post W-beam guardrail includes an impact head through which two anchor cables are threaded, breakaway line posts, a slider/slider bracket assembly, a cable anchor bracket, and a foundation anchor. For side impacts to the rail, tension is transferred via the cables to the foundation anchor to provide containment and redirection. For head-on and angled impacts directly at the end, friction between the cables and a convolution in the impact head dissipates crash energy. The slider/slider bracket assembly allows the first W-beam rail segment to slide back along the second segment and away from the impacting vehicle.

Your present request is for: 1) modifications to the original tangent version, 2) a flared version, and 3) a median version, using the name X-TensionTM Technology Guardrail End Terminals. The enclosed chart "National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 350 Test Matrix – X-Tension Testing Program" details the original matrix of tests used to validate the Armorflex X350 design, a Test Requirement Analysis of the needed impacts to validate the Flared Offset Configuration and the Median Terminal, and a Component Modification Analysis.



Testing

You discussed the proposed test matrix with Mr. Nicholas Artimovich of my staff and reached agreement on the tests detailed in the enclosed testing program chart mentioned above. The following tests were conducted and the test data summary sheets are enclosed for reference:

NCHRP Report 350 test 3-30 for the <u>flared</u> configuration. NCHRP Report 350 tests 3-31 and 3-32 for the <u>median</u> configuration.

We concur that these tests are satisfactory to show NCHRP Report 350 compliance with the following:

- The modified tangent, flared, and median configurations using either wood (CRT) or steel line posts (first two posts crimped near the ground line) as shown in the enclosed drawings.
- The tangent, flared and median configurations use a small "kit" of key components that are used in conjunction with standard W-beam guardrail, wood or composite block-outs, steel line posts or CRT wood posts and standard guardrail component hardware to make up any of the noted configurations noted in the enclosed drawings.
- The amount of offset for flared applications can be between the tangent position (no offset) and the fully flared (1.2 m offset) as tested.
- Recognition of the redirective capability of the system from the first post. Therefore, the system qualifies as a "Redirective, Non-Gating" Terminal under the definitions in NCHRP Report 350.

Findings

The results of the testing met the FHWA requirements and, therefore, the devices described in the various requests above and detailed in the enclosed drawings are acceptable for use on the NHS under the range of conditions tested, when proposed by a highway agency.

Please note the following standard provisions that apply to the FHWA letters of acceptance:

- Our acceptance is limited to the crashworthiness characteristics of the devices and does not cover their structural features, nor conformity with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- Any changes that may adversely influence the crashworthiness of the device will require a new acceptance letter.
- Should the FHWA discover that the qualification testing was flawed, that in-service performance reveals unacceptable safety problems, or that the device being marketed is significantly different from the version that was crash tested, it reserves the right to modify or revoke its acceptance.
- You will be expected to supply potential users with sufficient information on design and installation requirements to ensure proper performance.
- You will be expected to certify to potential users that the hardware furnished has essentially the same chemistry, mechanical properties, and geometry as that submitted for acceptance, and that they will meet the crashworthiness requirements of FHWA and NCHRP Report 350.

- To prevent misunderstanding by others, this letter of acceptance, designated as number CC-102 shall not be reproduced except in full. This letter, and the test documentation upon which this letter is based, is public information. All such letters and documentation may be reviewed at our office upon request.
- The X-TensionTM products are patented devices and considered "proprietary." The use of proprietary devices *specified by a highway agency* for use on Federal-aid projects must meet one of the following criteria: (a) it must be supplied through competitive bidding with equally suitable unpatented items; (b) the highway agency must certify that it is essential for synchronization with existing highway facilities or that no equally suitable alternative exists or; (c) it must be used for research or for a distinctive type of construction on relatively short sections of road for experimental purposes. Our regulations concerning proprietary products are contained in Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 635.411.
- This acceptance letter shall not be construed as authorization or consent by the FHWA to use, manufacture, or sell any patented device for which the applicant is not the patent holder. The acceptance letter is limited to the crashworthiness characteristics of the candidate device, and the FHWA is neither prepared nor required to become involved in issues concerning patent law. Patent issues, if any, are to be resolved by the applicant.

Sincerely yours, lorge Ekve George E. Rice, Jr.

George E. Rice, Jr. Acting Director, Office of Safety Design Office of Safety

Enclosures

Historical Purposes Only

| | | | | | X-Tension Testing Program |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| | | | | | |
| - | | the second se | | | ninal - Tangent Configuration (FHWA Approval Letter HAS-10/CC-91) |
| Test | Vehicle | Speed | Angle | Results | Test Requirement Analysis |
| 3-30 | 816.5 | 99.7 | 0 | Pass | Required |
| 3-31 | 2025 | 99.5 | 0 | Pass | Required |
| 3-32 | 817.5 | 101.3 | 14.6 | Pass | Required |
| 3-33 | 1975 | 101.5 | 14.4 | Pass | Required |
| 3-34 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | _Test 3-37 proved CIP and LON are at the same location, slightly after post 1, making 3-34 & 3-35 redundant (Ref FHWA Letter |
| 3-35 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | HAS-10/CC-91) |
| 3-37 3-39 | 1988.5 1988 | 98.9 98.3 | 20,2 | Pass Pass | Required Required |
| 3-39 | 1900 | 90.3 | 19.0 | Pass | Required |
| | | | | | on Guardrail Terminal - Flared Offset Configuration |
| Test | Vehicle | Speed | Angle | Results | Test Requirement Analysis |
| 3-30* | 837 | 98.7 | 0 | Pass | Required - This test was modified in accordance with FHWA discussions to create the most severe impact condition. The vehicle was offset toward the traffic lane and the occupant mass was moved to the inside to maximize the yaw rate and see potential for intrusion into the side of the <u>vehicle</u> . |
| 3-31 | | | | N/A | Test 3-31 on this system in the flared configuration is less severe than the impacting characteristics of tests 3-32 & 3-33 on the system in the tangent configuration |
| 3-32 | | | | N/A | Test 3-32 & 33 were not required because they were run on the system in the tangent configuration. The performance of the system under test 3-32 & 33 conditions while the system is in the flared configuration is not significantly different than what was |
| 3-33 | | | | N/A | tested in the tangent configuration. The modified test 3-30 accurately demonstrates the impacting characteristics of frontal impacts with the greatest potential for failure. |
| 3-34 | | | | N/A | Because the analysis of 3-37 below holds true, and the analysis of 3-34 & 35 hold true for the system in the tangent configuration |
| 3-35 | | | | N/A | tests 3-34 & 35 in the flared configuration are redundant. |
| 3-37 | | | | N/A | Test 3-37 was performed in the tangent configuration. Discussions with FHWA determined this test was unnecessary. |
| 3-39 | | | | N/A | The severity of test 3-39 in the flared configuration is less than that of the system in the tangent configuration because the angle impact is lower. |
| | | | - | | |
| | | | | | X-Tension Median Terminal |
| Test | Vehicle | Speed | Angle | Results | Test Requirement Analysis |
| 3-30 | | | | N/A | Test 3-32 demonstrates the performance of the system during frontal impacts with the greatest potential for binding the system and causing failure. Because the design does not introduce any additional energy absorbing components to the standard X- Tension (tangent or flared) system and the additional mass is minimal, Test 3-30 was determined to be unnecessary. |
| 3-31 | 2005 | 99.3 | 0 | Pass | Because the design does not introduce any additional energy absorbing components to the standard X-Tension (tangent or flan system and the additional mass is minimal, Test 3-31 was determined to be unnecessary. However, this test was run to verify crimped posts 1 & 2 and unweakened posts 3-6 does not effect ride down acceleration. |
| 3-32 | 843 | 103.6 | 15 | Pass | Required |
| 3-33 | | | | N/A | Because the design does not introduce any additional energy absorbing components to the standard X-Tension (tangent or flan system and the additional mass is minimal, Test 3-33 was determined to be unnecessary. |
| 3-34 3-35 | | | | N/A N/A | Because the analysis of 3-37 below holds true, and the analysis of 3-34 & 35 hold true for the system in the tangent configuration tests 3-34 & 35 on the X-Tension Median terminal are redundant. |
| 3-37 | | | _ | N/A | The X-Tension Median Terminal is stronger than the X-Tension tangent system as the additional rail components on the back of the system add to the section rigidity and do not reduce the structural capacity of the tangent system tested. The redirective capacity of the system is equal to or greater than the tangent system that was successfully tested under 3-37 conditions. This tay as determined to be unnecessary. |
| 3-39 | | | | N/A | Because this test was successfully tested on the X-Tension tangent system, it is redundant. The X-Tension median terminal do not introduce any changes to the components interfacing with the vehicle in this test. Also, the structural components are not reduced in capacity. This test was determined to be unnecessary. |
| * = Mod | ified Test | | | | \mathbf{S} |
| | | | | | Compared Madification Andrei |
| | Ans | alveis of chan | nes made | to compor | Component Modification Analysis nents of the X-Tension system following original NCHRP 350 testing of Tangent System |
| st | System | Part No. | | ription | Component Modification Analysis |
| 30, 31, , 33, 34, , 37, 39 | Tangent | | Posts | | All X-Tension testing on the Tangent configured system used steel wide flange posts notched at ground level. The system is approved to use timber CRT posts as well. Reference FHWA letter HAS 10/CC-91 for system details. |
| 3-30* | Offset | B061099, B061100 | Post 1 (top), Post 2, Post 3 | | The flanges of Post 1, 2, and 3 were "crimped" at ground level to weaken the post for head on impacts with light vehicles. The weakened posts perform similar to those tested during the original X-Tension Tangent testing (notched steel posts or timber or posts). The lateral strength of the post is equal to or stronger than what was tested in the X-Tension tangent matrix. All other posts on the system were standard wide flange steel posts, unweakened. |
| 3-32 | Median | B061099, B061100 | Post 1 (top), Post 2 | | The flanges of Post 1, 2, and 3 were "crimped" near ground level as in test 3-30". The crimps on Post 1 were lowered to allow post to fold closer to the ground. Post 2 was also notched on the reverse side at the blockout/panel attachment hole. This was only on the reverse side and does not effect the system as previously tested in tangent or offset configurations. |
| | | B061098 | Post 1 (bottom) | | The bottom reciever channel for Post 1 was modified to allow Post 1 to fold lower to the ground and reduce the possibility of interaction with the floor pan of light vehicles. The modification removed a portion of the back side of the receiving channel. Th channel was made thicker and reinforced to facilitate driving the post. The modification does not effect the lateral strength of the post and only benefits the longitudinal break-away function of Post 1. |
| 3-32 | Median | | | | post and only benefits the folgituarial break-away runction of Post 1. |









