

How to Access Crossing Data from the FRA Office of Safety Analysis Website A Brief Guide

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1. Accessing the FRA Office of Safety Analysis Website:

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Office of Safety Analysis Website provides access to railroad safety data from files maintained by FRA. These include the National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory data, and information from the Railroad Accident Incident Reporting System. There are two methods to access the Website:

1. FRA Home Page Method:
 - Go to the FRA Home Page at <http://www.fra.dot.gov> .
 - In the upper left hand corner, click on “Safety.”
 - In the pop-up window, click on “Safety Data.”
 - The FRA Office of Safety Analysis Home Page will appear.
2. Direct Method to this Website:
 - Go to <http://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/> .
 - The FRA Office of Safety Analysis Home Page will appear.
 - Suggest adding this page-link to your “Favorites.”

Upon reaching this page, the user will be able to view Sections and Line Items of railroad safety information that are available. From this page, users can run queries, download data, access publications and forms, and view current statistical information about railroad safety. The user can scroll down this page and click on the links for the information that is desired. See Figure 1.

There are two Sections that are applicable for Crossing Data. They are:

- 5.0 – Highway-Rail Crossing Accidents, and**
- 8.0 – Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory (See Figure 2.)**

By clicking on one of the Line items in these Sections, the visitor is taken directly to that portion of the Website which contains the desired data. There are several other links on this page that are worthwhile investigating for possible use. Under “**8.0 - Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory,**” there is a subsection called “**Canned Queries for Public and Private Crossings**” that may provide specific data that might be desired.

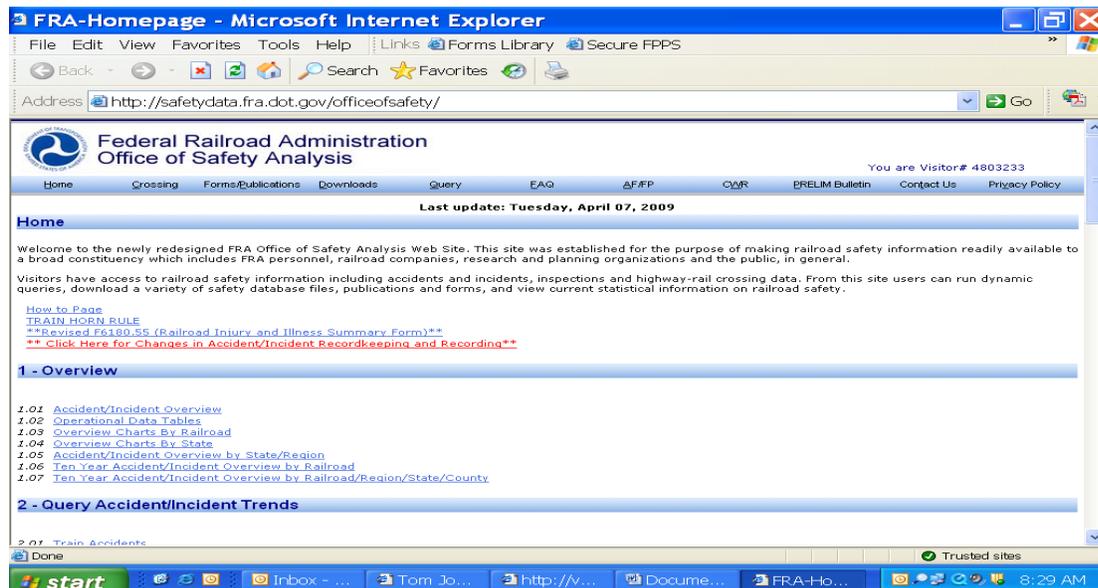


Figure 1. The FRA Office of Safety Analysis Home Page

On the Home Page, there is a Link Bar with Tabs that will take the user directly to specific sections of this Website. The following Tab Links are on the Bar:

Home:	This Home Page (Figure 1.)
Crossing:	Crossing Inventory & Accident Reports
Forms/Publications:	Inventory & Accident Forms, and past publications
Downloads:	Download Inventory/Accident Data
Query:	Develop specific queries for crossing data
FAQ:	Frequently Asked Questions
AF/FP:	Signal Activation Failure and False Proceed files
CWR:	Inspections of Joints in Continuous Welded Rail
Prelim Bulletin:	Most current preliminary Railroad Statistics Bulletin
Contact Us:	Safety Data Contacts for the FRA Office of Safety Analysis
Privacy Policy:	FRA Privacy Policy for collected data

This Guide will show how to access crossing data from first clicking on the **Crossing** Tab.

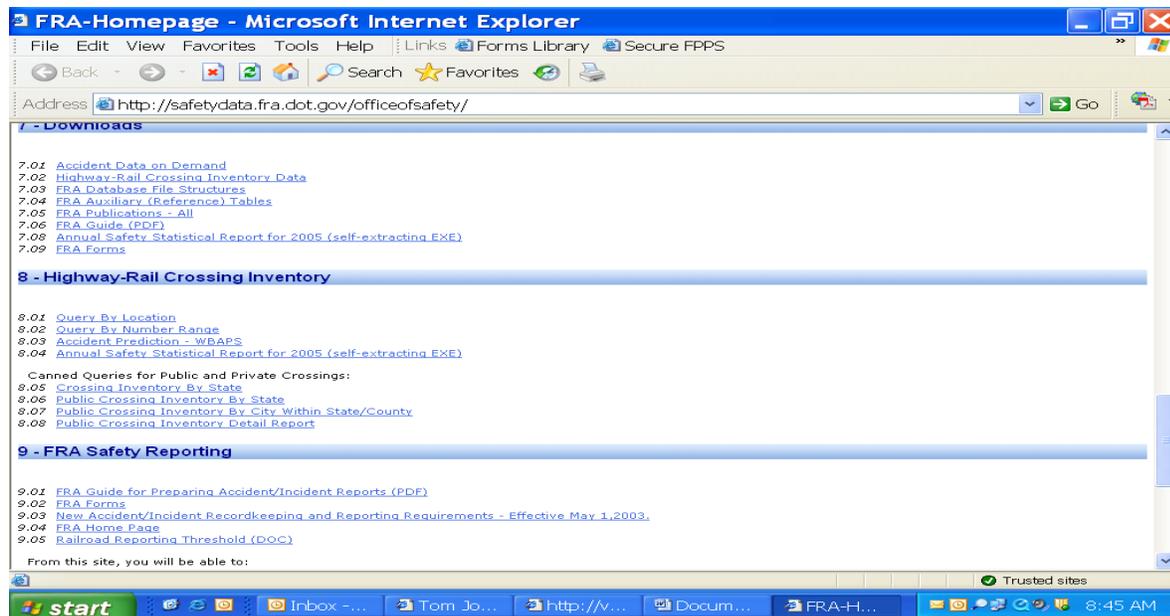


Figure 2. Home Page “Section 8.0” links directly to Crossing Inventory Data

2. Accessing National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory Data for a Single Crossing:

Click on the **Crossing** Tab located on the Link Bar. The “**5.02 – Query and Generate Crossing Accident (and Inventory) Reports**” page will appear. See Figure 3. The top portion of this page allows the user to enter the crossing number and obtain inventory or accident reports.

To access Inventory data for a single crossing, enter the Crossing ID Number in the “**Crossing #**” box. Select the “Report Type” for Inventory and then the “Inventory Type” for Current for the current Inventory Report, or for History for the current and all historical inventory reports. Then, click on the **Generate Report** button.

If any records are found, a report will appear that displays the National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory data for the crossing number entered. If “History” was selected, all of the records containing both the current and historical data will be displayed. The page with the most current crossing record will be first and will be indicated by the words “Current Record” beside the Effective Date field at the top right. Pages with a date following “End-Date of Record” are historical records for the same crossing. The user can view, print, and save these reports.

If there are no records for this crossing number in the file, one of two messages will appear. The first is “Crossing Number is Valid, but No Records are found.” This means that the entered crossing number is a valid number, which was probably assigned to a crossing by the railroad, but the railroad or the State never sent the Crossing Inventory Form to the FRA to be put in the National File. Thus, it is not in the National File.

The second message might be that “The Crossing Number is Invalid.” This means that the number entered is not a valid crossing number, that is, it is not correct. The user needs to check to see if it was entered correctly, or back track to the source to obtain the correct valid number, and try again.

To look for another crossing, close the report, and click on the **Crossing** Tab again, or click on the user’s computer Windows Tool Bar **BACK** button.

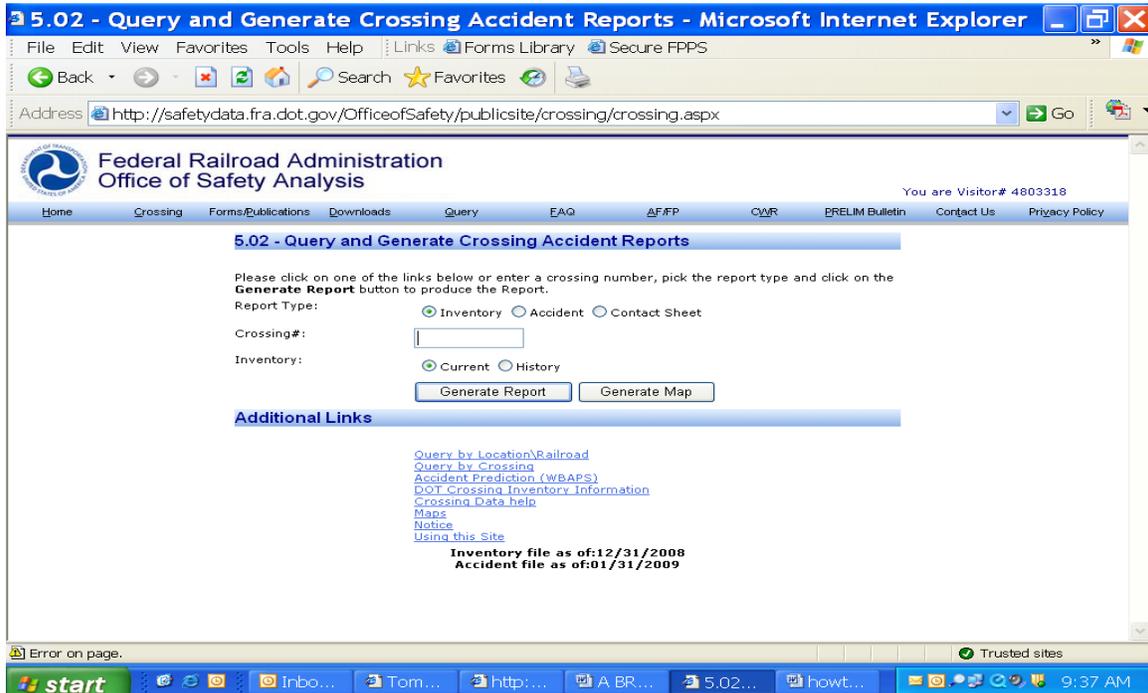


Figure 3. Webpage “5.02 – Query and Generate Crossing Accident (and Inventory) Reports”

The second portion of the page contains **Additional Links**. These include:

- Query by Location/Railroad:**To run a query for a list of crossings for a State, County, City, or Railroad, or any combination thereof.
- Query by Crossing:** To run a query for a range of crossing numbers.
- Accident Prediction:** To run Accident Prediction data using WBAPS.
- DOT Crossing Inventory Information:** This will take the user to the Crossing Inventory Program Webpage which contains a vast amount of important information related to the Inventory Program.
- Crossing Data Help:** Help for using this Website
- Maps:** Will take the user to a map for locating a crossing.
- Notice:** FRA Legal Notice.
- Using this Site:** Users can view information about generated reports and obtain query instructions.
- Dates:** Indicates the last date that the data for this Website was updated.

One of the most common uses of the Website is to locate a specific crossing or identify a group of crossings located in a State, County, City or on a Railroad, or any combination thereof. To do this, the user, under “**Additional Links**,” needs to click on **Query by Location/Railroad**. See Figure 4 and Section 4 of this Brief. Choose the State, and then either County or City (if it is positively known that the crossing(s) is located within the City). It is suggested to not specify a Street because spellings vary and are often not correctly spelled. Also, it is suggested to chose “All” Railroads for the first query search, and then narrow the list down by choosing a railroad if there are too many crossings in the initial list. If the user does decide to choose a Railroad, be careful because it is possible that the sought crossing maybe under a different railroad name, possibly a previous railroad owner.

In choosing a Railroad, click on the down arrow and initially a short list of the most major railroads will appear. If the desired railroad is not in the short list, close the dropdown window, and click on the line underneath the box, “Click here for a complete listing of all Railroads” and all 650 railroads will appear in the dropdown window. Be sure to select the Crossing Type, Position and Status desired before clicking on the “**Run Query**” button.

If a range of crossing numbers is desired, click on the **Query by Crossing** link, enter the range of numbers desired (**From** and **To**), and click on **Find Crossing(s) Range** button. You can enter a partial crossing number (3 or more digits), and obtain a list of all crossings in the National File within that range.

When the list of crossings appears, the total number of crossings resulting from the query will show at the top left and the total number of pages will be indicated. Click on the **Next** button, or the **Go To Page (GO)** button, in order to access the additional pages. The user can also click on the **Show All** button and all of the pages will be reduced to just one page.

To obtain an Inventory Report for a crossing, or group of crossings (up to 10) from the list of crossings generated, click on the little check box(s) on the left side to select the desired crossing record(s) to view or print, and then click on the **Generate Report** button to get the actual reports for the checked crossings. (Note: To deselect checked records, click on the **Uncheck All** button.)

3. **Accessing Accident/Incident Data or Contact Data for a Crossing:**

To obtain Accident Report(s) for a crossing, from the **Crossing** tab, go to the **Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory & Accidents Page**, enter the **Crossing #**, select “**Report Type:**” as “Accident,” and then click on the **Generate Report** button. If any records are found, the Accident Reports will be displayed.

If the “Contact Sheet” is selected, a Contact List report will be generated. To obtain the names to contact for more information about a crossing that is located on the Contact Sheet, select “**Report Type:**” as “Contact Sheet,” and click on the **Generate Report** button.

4. **Accessing National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory Data for Crossings for Specified Locations (State, County, City) and/or by Railroad:**

From the **Crossing** tab, **Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory and Accidents Page**, click on the **Query by Location/Railroad** link.

Figure 4. Query by Location/Railroad Webpage for locating Crossing Records

In the “**8.01 Query by Location**” window, specify the location criteria desired. For example, to obtain crossings in Montgomery County, MD, for all railroads, click on the down arrow following the **State** box and select ‘Maryland’ (MD-24). Then, click on the circle button in front of **County**. Then, click on the down arrow following the **County/City** box and select ‘Montgomery’. Then, make sure the Railroad box shows **ALL**. Next, click on the **Run Query** button.

Note: If you wanted to obtain crossings in Montgomery County, MD, for a particular Railroad, instead of selecting “ALL” in the Railroad box, click on the down arrow and select the railroad. The selection of Railroad names lists only the major railroads. If the railroad desired is not in this list, close the dropdown window, and click on the note below the box, “Click here for a complete list of Railroads.” Then click on the down arrow again and the complete list of all 650 railroads will appear. Make the desired selection.

If any crossing records are found after the query is generated, a list of the results will appear as shown in Figure 5. In this example, eleven (11) crossings for all railroads located in Montgomery County, MD, are displayed.

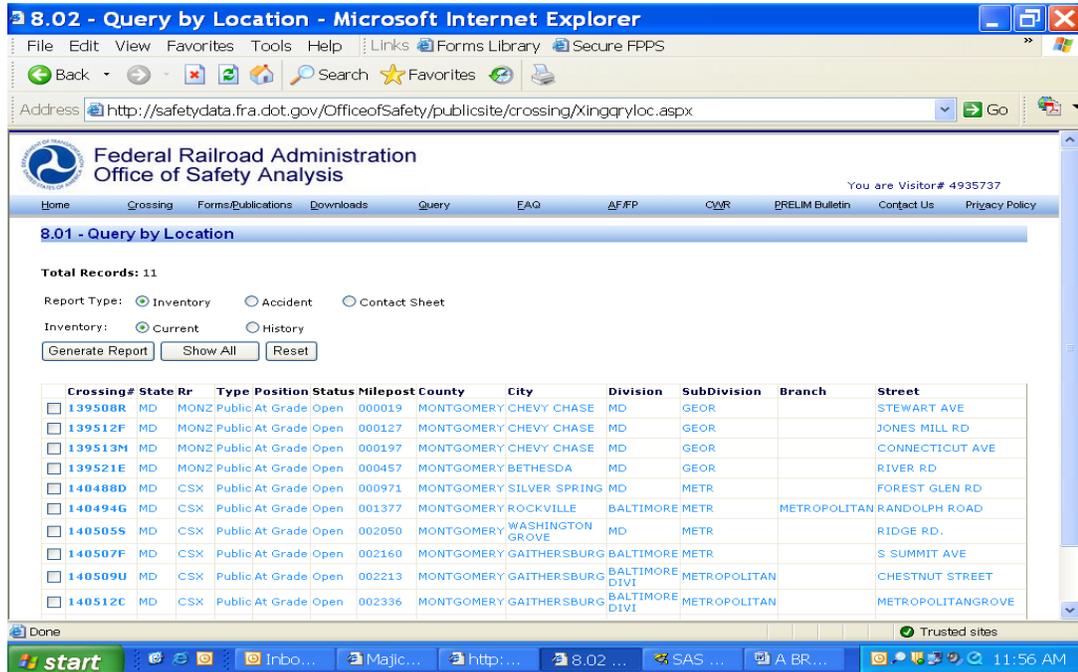


Figure 5. List of crossings for Montgomery County, MD, using the “Query by Location/Railroad” link.

Scroll through the list and click on the little check box on the left preceding each crossing where it is desired to view the specific inventory data for that crossing. Then click on the “Report Type” desired, either “Inventory,” “Accident,” or “Contact Sheet.” For the report type “Inventory,” select either “Current” (to see only the current Inventory report) or “History” (to see the current and historical Inventory reports). Then click on the **Generate Report** button to get the report records to view, print, or save. .

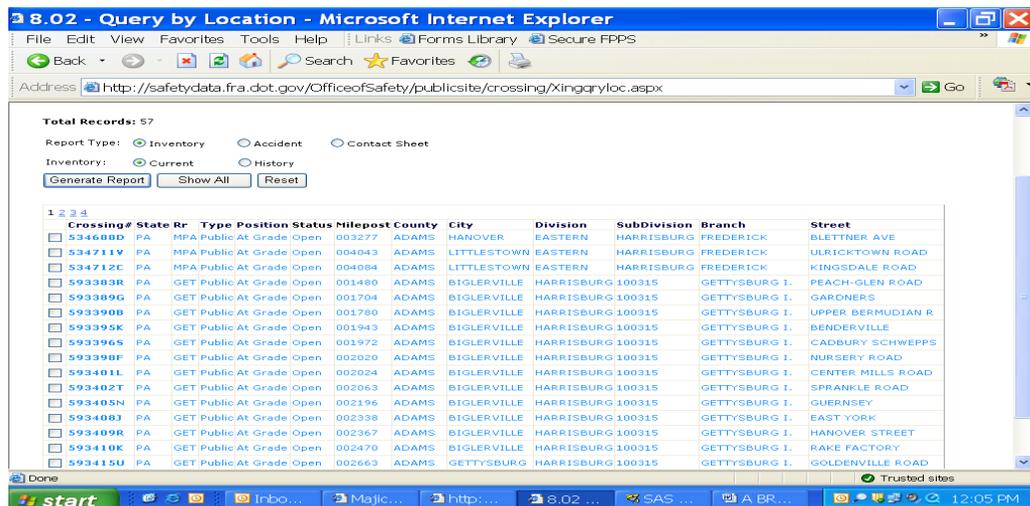


Figure 6. List of Crossings generated from a query showing 4 pages of data.

In the example in Figure 6, below the button “Generate Report,” there are the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, where the number “1” is in black and the other numbers are in blue. This is shown when there is more than one page resulting from the query. In order to navigate to the different pages, just click on the page number. To get rid of the pages and show all the results on one page or in one list, click on the “Show All” button. To clear the

checks that may have been selected to view specific crossing reports, just click on the little check box again, or click on the “Reset” button to remove all of the checked boxes.

5. Downloading Crossing Data:

To download crossing data for a State to a user’s computer from the National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory file, click on the **Downloads** tab. A list of Download selections will appear as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Download page to select data to be downloaded to the user’s computer.

Click on the **Highway-Rail Crossing Database Files** link. The **Download Hwy-Rail Crossing Inventory Files** window will appear as shown if Figure 8.



Figure 8. Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory Data Download Page.

To get information about the data, click on the **About Data** button. In the **Download Hwy-Rail Crossing Inventory Files** window, click on the down arrow at the end of the **File** box. Select the type of data desired from the following choices:

Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory by State,
Public Crossings (National file only),
Private Crossings (National file only),
Crossing History (National file only).

Click on the down arrow following the **State** box and select a State. Then click on the **Generate File** button. The download file name (examples: gcispubl.exe, gcispriv.exe, gcishist.exe, gcis24.exe (which selects the particular State desired – for example, 24 is for the State of Maryland) and size of the file will appear. A pop-up box as shown in Figure 9 will appear allowing the selection to either **Run** or **Save** the file.

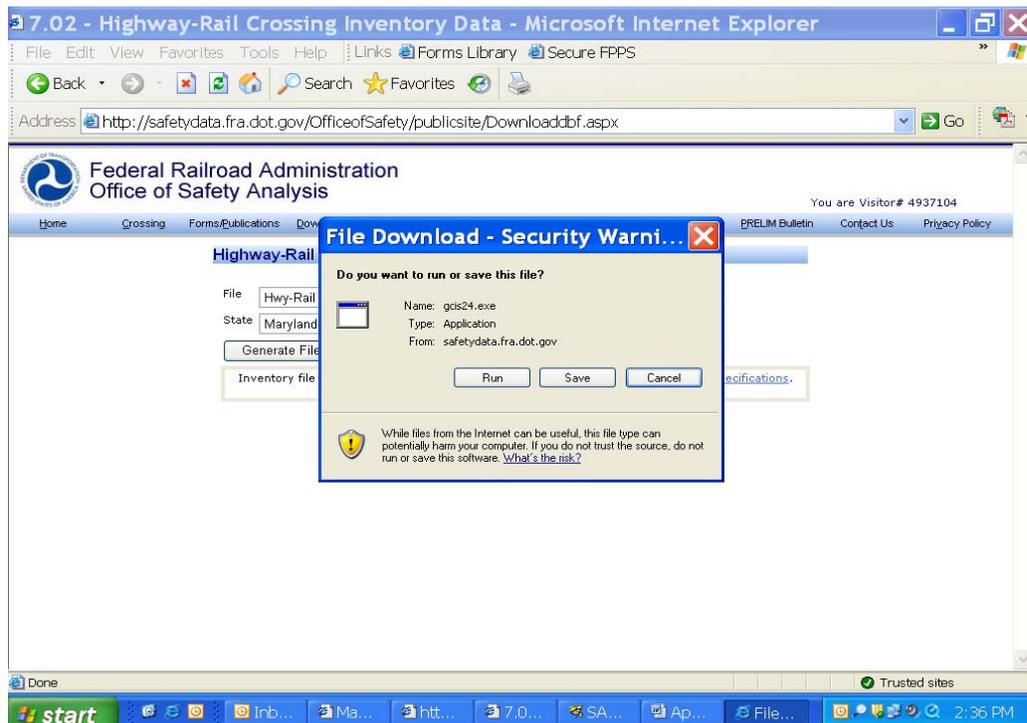


Figure 9. Download Data page showing the choice to Run or Save the data file.

If **Run** is selected, a screen will appear as shown in Figure 10.

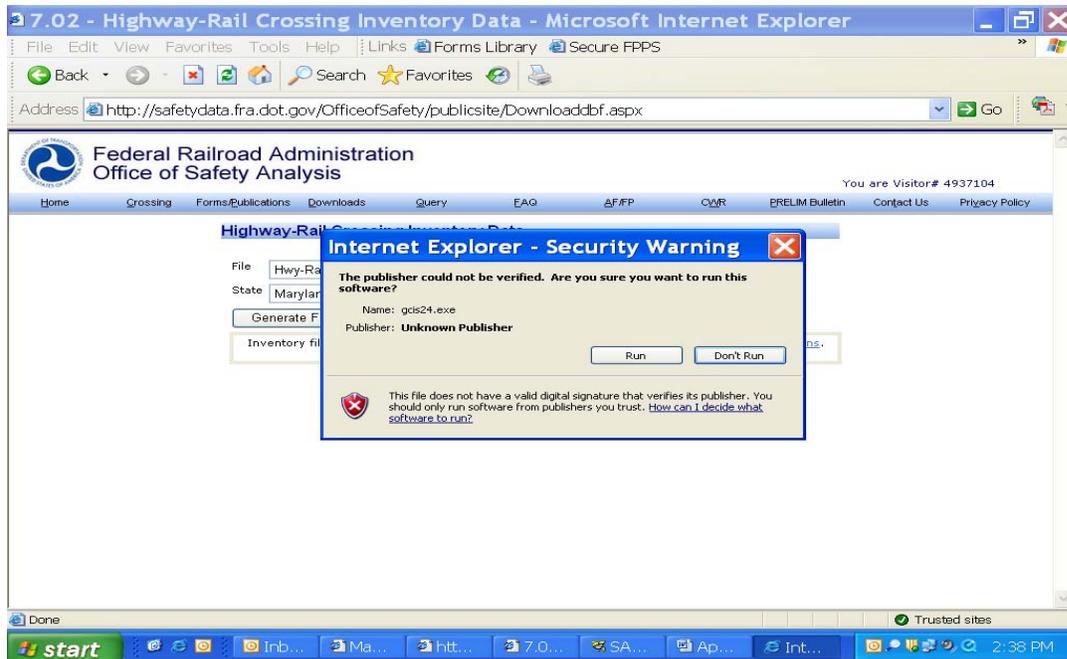


Figure 10. Download Data page when **Run** is selected.

Click on the “**Run**” button and the screen in Figure 11 will appear allowing the choice to **save** the file in any location desired on the user’s computer. **ALWAYS REMEMBER TO DOCUMENT THE FILE NAME AND THE LOCATION WHERE THE FILE IS SAVED.**

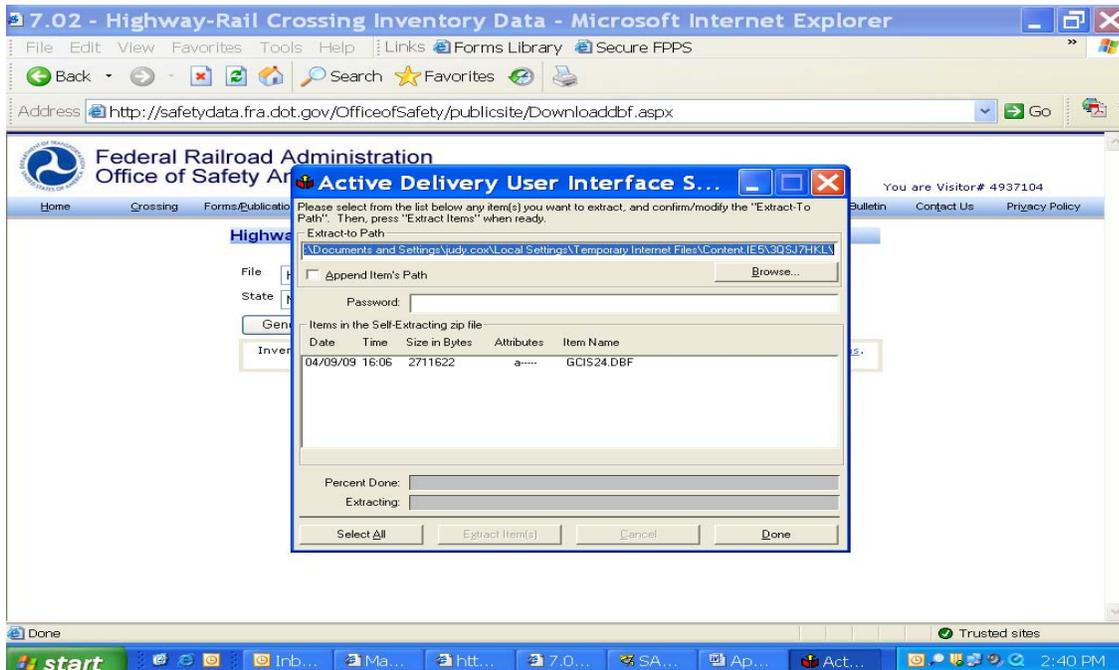


Figure 11. Download Data page for saving a data set, both the location and file name.

Click on “Browse” to select the location on the user’s computer where the file will be saved. Highlight the “Items in the Self-Extracting Zip File” box. See Figure 12.

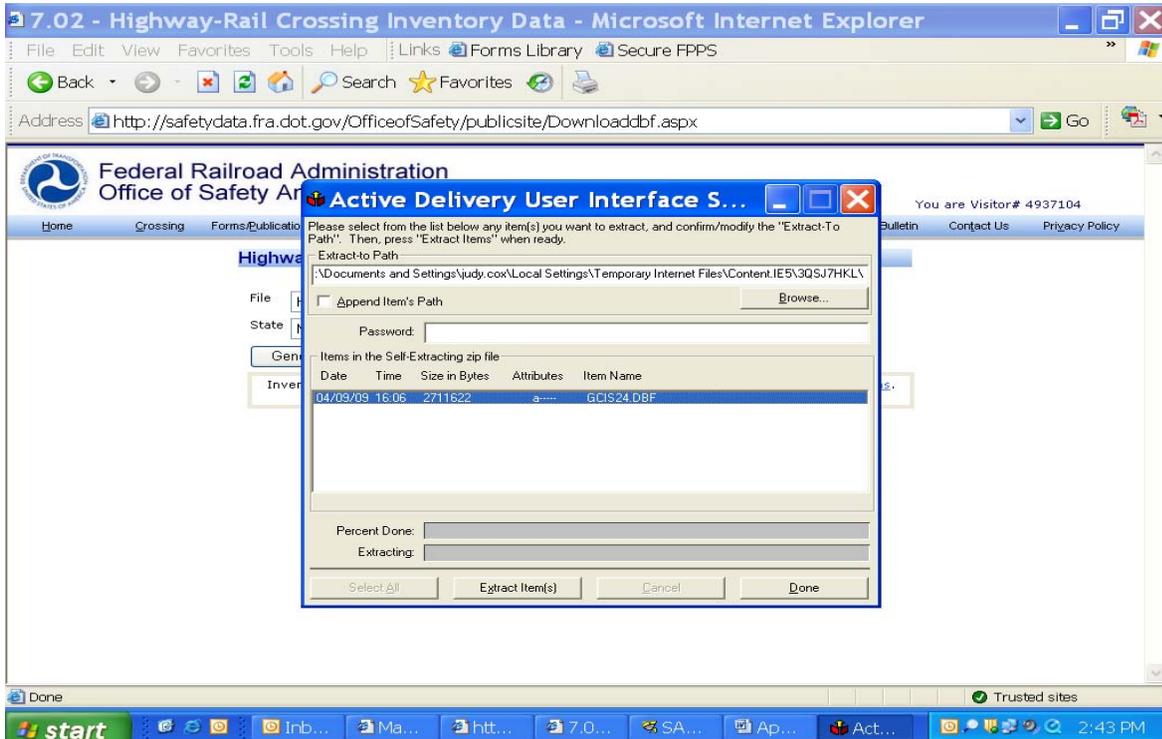


Figure 12. Download Data page showing Items in the Self-Extracting Zip File.

Click on the “Extract Item(s)” button. After it has completed, click on the “Done” button.

The file can now be viewed. Go to the location where the file was saved on the user’s computer. Click on the file name and the file will open in a .dbf format. The file data can then be viewed. See Figure 13.

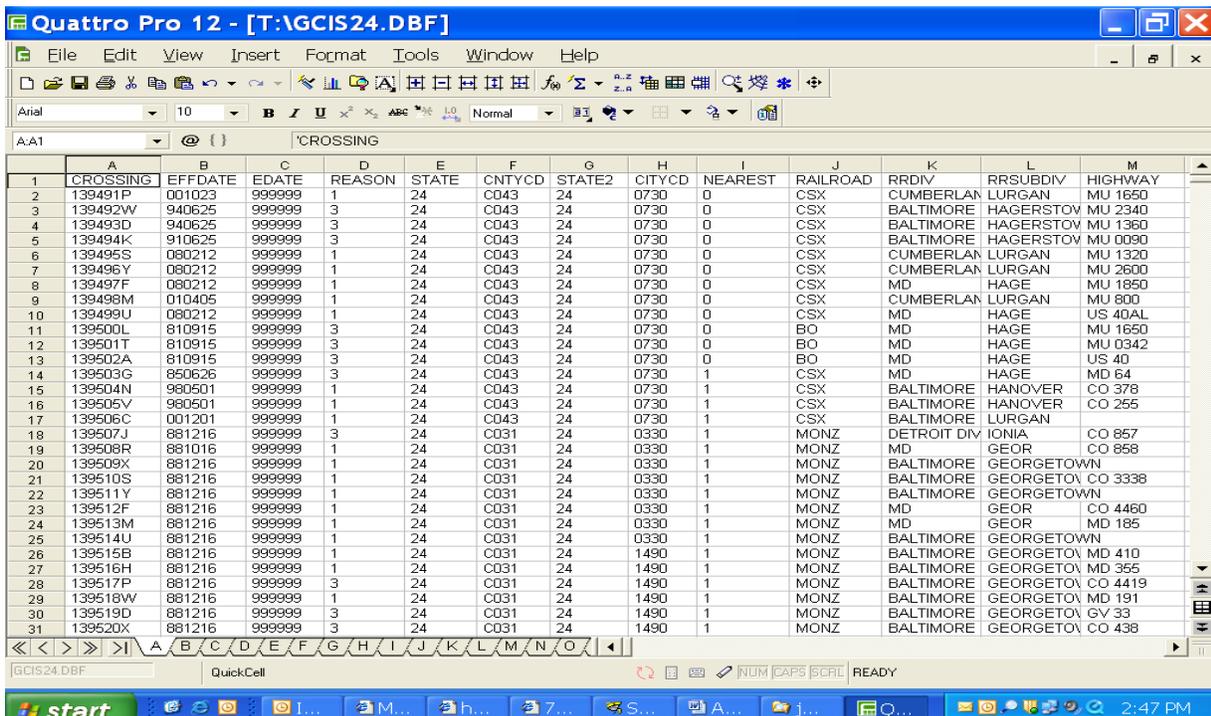


Figure 13. Viewing the Download Data in a .dbf Format.

6. Obtaining Accident Prediction Reports – WBAPS:

WBAPS is FRA’s Highway-Rail Crossing Web Based Accident Prediction System. WBAPS generates reports listing open public at-grade highway-rail crossings ranked by predicted accidents per year. To access WBAPS, click on the **Crossing** tab which takes the user to the **Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory & Accidents Page**. Click on the **Accident Prediction – WBAPS** link, located under the title “Additional Links.” The WBAPS Webpage will appear. See Figure 14.

First, choose to Search by: **Location** or **Crossing**. Then, select the State, and the County or City desired. Then, click on the “**Select**” button to place the selection in the box “Location Selected” box. (Note: The user can select multiple cities or counties by holding down the “CTRL” key while selecting.) The State and County (or City) selected will appear in the box at the bottom left of the page. The user can also combine Counties and Cities in several States by repeating the process until the desired locations are listed in the “Locations selected” box.

If a specific railroad is to be selected, click on the down arrow and select the desired Railroad by again clicking on the “**Select**” button and the railroad will appear in the “Railroad Selected” box at the bottom right of the page. See Figure 14.

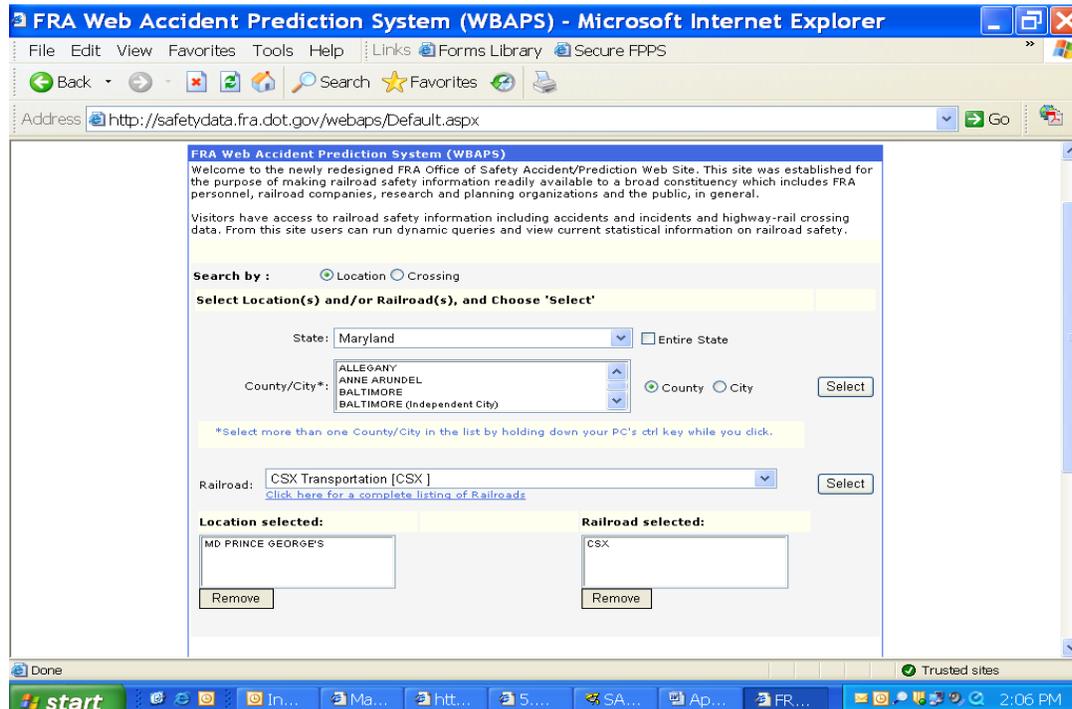


Figure 14. Web Based Accident Prediction System (WBAPS) Page.

Scroll down the page and where the number of records to be displayed or printed will appear. Also, there is a choice of including a cover page, the accident prediction ranking, the crossing profile (brief of inventory data), the accident history, and/or the contact list. Chose either

“VIEW Report” (the normal selection to view the data and print it), or “DOWNLOAD” to download to the user’s computer and save the result for future reference. See Figure 15.

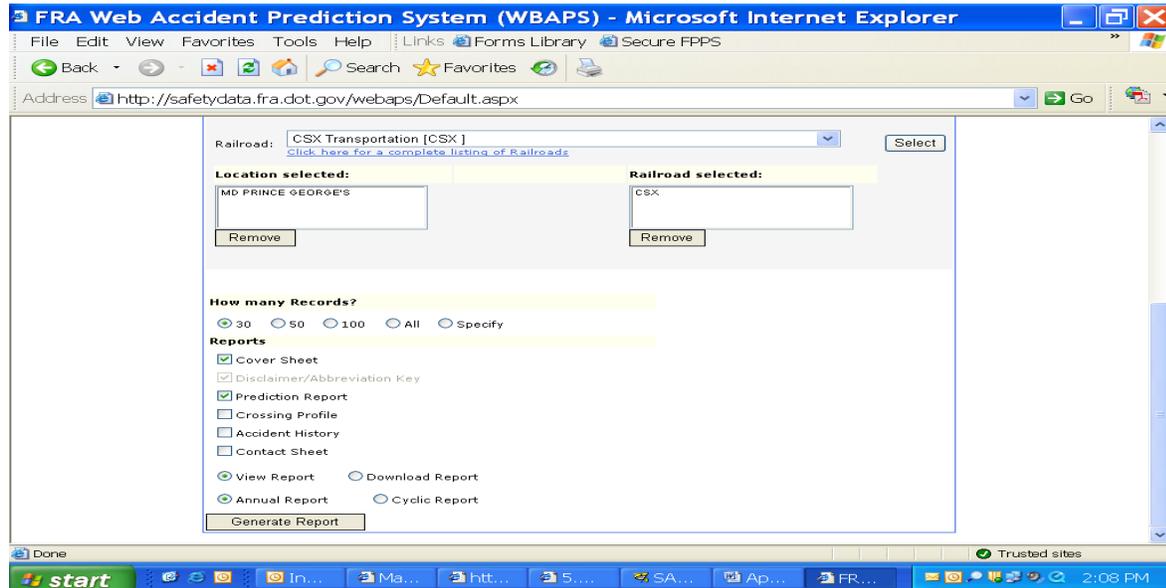


Figure 15. WBAPS choices for the Number of Records and the Reports to be generated.

After making the selections, click on the “**Generate Report**” button. A report with the pages selected, including the Accident Prediction list, will appear as follows in Figure 16.



Figure 16. WBAPS Accident Prediction List of ranked crossings.

A page that provides the definitions for the codes used in the report will be displayed as part of the Report as shown in Figure 17.

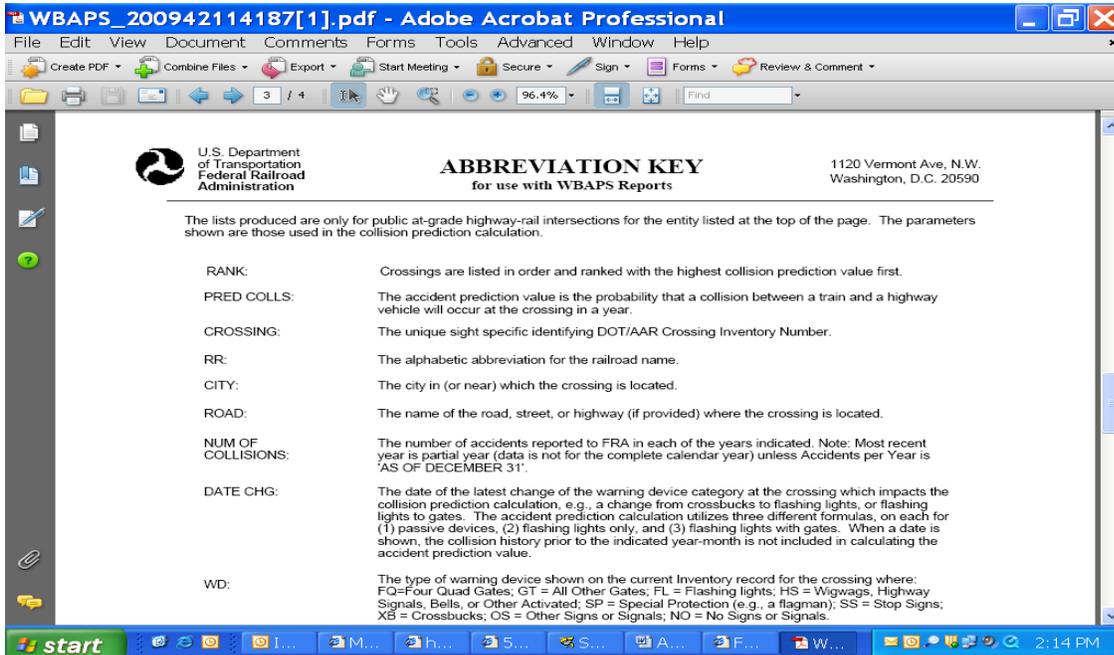


Figure 17. WBAPS Abbreviation Key page

7. **Getting Help:**

For assistance with using this Website, or to answer any questions, contact the FRA Project Office Help Desk at 1-888-372-9393.