

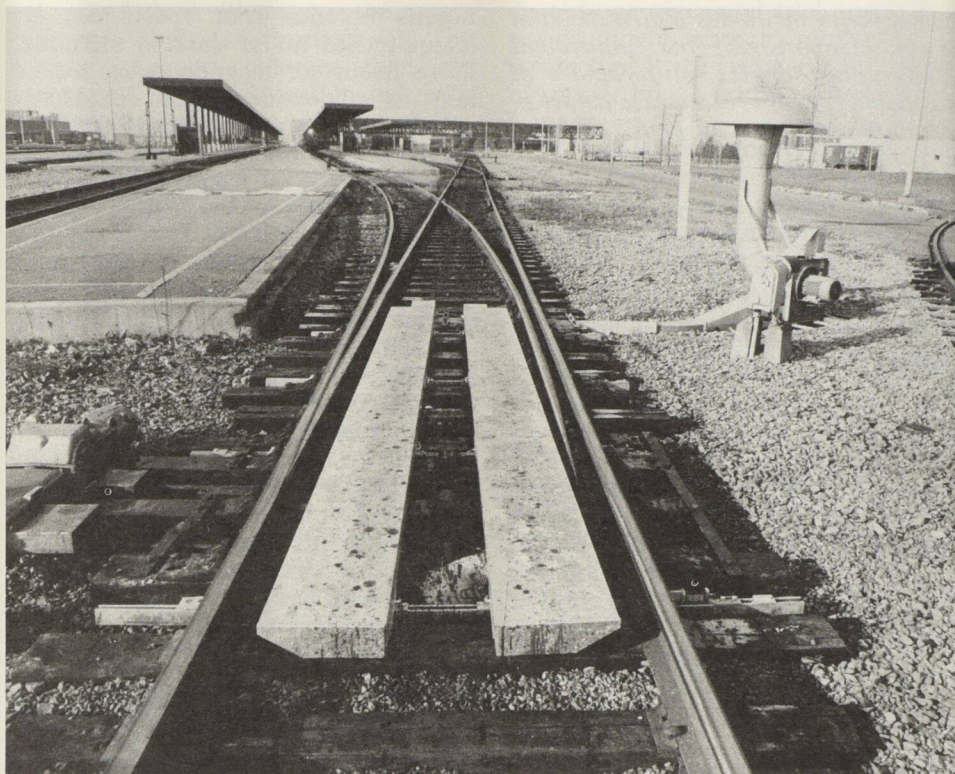
Railroad switch protector

An air umbrella

NRC-designed equipment for protecting railroad switches from snow and freezing rain is being manufactured by Onex Industries to keep Canadian railways moving.

Each winter, snow and ice cause failure of railway switches used to transfer traffic from one track to another. Mr. T.R. Ringer of NRC's Division of Mechanical Engineering has provided a solution to the problem with a system which deflects snow and freezing rain away from the critical area of a railway switch by producing a continuous jet of air which acts like a curtain or umbrella; it can operate successfully under a variety of weather conditions — in particular strong cross winds, and wet, adhesive snowfalls. Hovey and Associates Ltd. of Ottawa, contracted under the Program for Industry/Laboratory Projects (PILP) to manufacture prototypes for rigorous trials, demonstrated the feasibility of the system in Canada's different climatic regions in cooperation with Canadian National Railways. Onex Industries Ltd., a sister company of Hovey and Associates, has been licensed to manufacture and market the Horizontal Air Curtain switch protector. □

Sadiq Hasnain



NRC/CNRC

The electric motor (right-hand corner) blows air through the ducts (center) and over the rails at 160 km/h, protecting this switch located in the Ottawa terminal from falling snow.

Le moteur électrique se trouvant dans la partie droite de la photo injecte dans ces canalisations (au centre) de l'air dont la vitesse est de 160 km/h lorsqu'il atteint cet aiguillage de la gare d'Ottawa, empêchant la neige de le bloquer.

Hovey and Associates Ltd.

