



Railroad Safety Advisory Committee



Appropriate Train Crew Size Working Group Update

TO

The 50th Railroad Safety Advisory Committee Meeting

Washington, DC
October 31, 2013



Task No.13-05



Appropriate Train Crew Size Working Group

First meeting:

October 29, 2013

Wardman Park Marriott, Washington DC



Task No.13-05



The Task Statement requires a report to the full RSAC on the following issues:

- Safety benefit or detriment from crew redundancy, including review of data from current deployment practices;
- A review of existing regulations;
- A determination of costs and benefits;
- Development of draft regulatory language that considers existing methods of train operations.



Task No.13-05



Regarding the Task Statement

- FRA pledged to address all of these issues as part of the Working Groups activities.
- However, FRA decided to approach this task differently.



Task No.13-05



The Appropriate Crew Size Working Group was Established by an Emergency RSAC Meeting:

- The Public demands action on these critical issues.
- Timeliness is very important.
- We have very short time scales.
- We need to move forward and provide a recommendation to the full RSAC by next April.



Task No.13-05



Rather than engaging in extensive discussions to determine and establish stakeholder positions, FRA defined it's Position on Appropriate Train Crew Size right up front.



Task No.13-05



FRA's Position:

- FRA believes railroad safety is enhanced through the use of multiple crew members.
- FRA also believes that it is difficult to comply with current safety regulations and operating rules when operating with a 1-person crew.

Task No.13-05

FRA's Position:

- FRA believes that its safety regulations were written with a least a 2-person crew in mind and that operating with a 1-person crew may, in some cases, compromise railroad and public safety.
- FRA believes that a second crew member provides safety redundancy and a method of checks and balances on train operations.



Task No.13-05



FRA believes that a requirement should be developed – as a baseline – for a minimum of a 2-person crew for freight and passenger trains



Task No.13-05



With a 2-person crew established as a baseline, FRA understands that there are valid exceptions where the safety risk does not support the need for a second person.

FRA also believes that exceptions could be directly identified in the regulation based on:

- Train speed
- Tonnage
- Technology
- Commodity carried, or
- Other identified factors



Task No.13-05



FRA also believes that additional relief through a special approval process should be included to address other crew arrangements that do not meet the specific exclusions set forth in a regulation.

Special approval would be granted based on a safety case that demonstrates that combinations of operating rules technology and/or other factors will maintain an appropriate level of safety.



Task No.13-05



However, FRA does not currently contemplate providing relief for operation of unit oil or ethanol trains.



Task No.13-05



Caucus:

- Labor and Management Caucused on FRA's proposal and came back with suggestions.



Task No.13-05



After the Caucus:

- Labor was supportive of FRA's initial proposal.
- Management had concerns about FRA's initial proposal and wanted to focus on the data and the task statement.



Task No.13-05



FRA is developing an Agenda for the next meeting which is scheduled for the week of December 16th.



Task No.13-05



Agenda Items for Next Meeting:

1. Review available safety data.
2. Evaluate whether and how crew redundancy affects railroad safety.
3. Report on whether there is a safety benefit or detriment from crew redundancy.
4. Review the existing regulations and consider the impact of crew size on the performance of any task or activity.



Task No.13-05



QUESTIONS?