



RAIL

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD

66th Meeting Railroad Safety Advisory Committee

Amit Bose, FRA Administrator

3-Part Push To Increase Freight Rail Safety

What USDOT is doing

- Advancing Train Crew Staffing Rule
- Initiated a safety inspection program on routes over which high-hazard flammable trains (HHFTs) and other trains carrying large volumes of hazardous material travel
- Initiated a focused inspection program of legacy tank cars and the entities that have chosen not to upgrade to the safer tank cars (DOT 117)
- Deploying the resources from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, notably through the CRISI and Railroad Crossing Elimination programs
- Pursuing further rulemaking on high-hazard flammable trains (HHFT) and electronically controlled pneumatic brakes (ECP)

Call to Freight Industry

- Join FRA's Confidential Close Call Reporting Program
- Deploy new inspection technologies without seeking permission to abandon human inspections
- Expedite the phase-in of safer (DOT 117) tank cars
- Provide proactive advance notification to state emergency response teams when they are transporting hazardous gas tank cars through their states
- Provide paid sick leave

Call to Congress

- Increase the maximum fines that USDOT can issue to rail companies for violating safety regulations.
- Expand and strengthen rules governing high-hazardous shipments, including high-hazard flammable trains (HHFT)
- Modernize braking regulations and increase the use of electronically controlled pneumatic brakes (ECP)
- Speed up the phase-in of safer (DOT 117) tank cars
- Increase funding to expand hazardous materials training for first responders

FRA Rulemakings

The **chronological list of announced rulemakings since February 2023**, which are also publicly available in the [*Federal Register*](#) includes:

- [Emergency Escape Breathing Apparatus](#) Final Rule
- [Passenger Equipment Safety Standards; Standards for High-Speed Trainsets](#) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)
- [Signal Employee Certification](#) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)
- [Dispatcher Certification](#) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)
- [Locomotive Recording Devices](#) Final Rule
- [Freight Car Safety Standards Implementing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)

FRA continues to advance a Train Crew Staffing Rule, which would require a minimum of two crewmembers for most railroad operations to keep workers and communities safe.

BIL Safety-Focused Grant Awards in 2023

FRA is directly funding infrastructure improvements to make freight rail safer for people working on, living near, and travel along railroad tracks, which includes:

\$1.4 billion in CRISI grants

- Largest amount ever awarded for rail safety and rail supply chain upgrades through the CRISI program, and four times higher than nationwide investments in previous years
- Projects nationwide will improve nearly 1,900 miles of track, replace or rehabilitate aging 50+ bridges, enhance highway-rail grade crossings, and more

\$570 million in Railroad Crossing Elimination grants

- 400+ at-grade crossings nationwide will be improved, helping to reduce the number of collisions and fatalities that occur annually at grade crossings

\$5 million to establish the National University Rail Center of Excellence

- First-of-its-kind initiative dedicated to developing the future workforce while advancing research and expansion that enhances the safety, efficiency, and reliability of passenger and freight rail



FRA Safety Culture Assessments

As part of the Administration's response to the East Palestine derailment, FRA conducted its 60-day assessment of Norfolk Southern's safety culture from March 15 through May 15, 2023. The assessment identified four major findings:

- NS's communications are not always open and effective and require improvement.
- NS's employees and the organization do not always work to foster mutual trust.
- NS's training and resources are not always effective at supporting safety efforts.
- NS frequently focused solely on enforcing compliance with minimum safety standards.

FRA conducted a similar 60-day assessment of BNSF from October 10 through December 8, 2023. FRA is in the process of finalizing those findings into a report.

FRA plans to conduct complete safety culture assessments of the remaining Class I freight railroads in 2024.

- The safety culture assessment of CSX is expected to begin on January 22, 2024, with the assessments of Union Pacific, Canadian National, and CPKC expected to begin in April, June, and August, respectively.



FRA Safety Advisories & Safety Bulletins

Drawing attention to safety concerns and issuing guidance through Safety Advisories and Safety Bulletins is one tool FRA is utilizing to advance safety. The **chronological list of advisories and bulletins issued since February 2023**, which are also publicly available on FRA website includes:

Advisories:

- 2023-01, [Evaluation of Policies and Procedures Related to the Use and Maintenance of Hot Bearing Wayside Detectors](#), March 3, 2023 (Supplement issued June 14, 2023)
- 2023-02, [Train Makeup and Operational Safety Concerns](#), April 11, 2023
- 2023-03, [Accident Mitigation and Train Length](#), May 2, 2023
- 2023-04, [High-Impact Wheels Causing Damage to Rails and Track Structures](#), July 6, 2023
- 2023-05, [King Pin Assemblies in Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Warning Systems](#), September 26, 2023
- 2023-06, [Roadway Maintenance Machines – Importance of Clear Communications and Compliance with Applicable Rules and Procedures](#), September 26, 2023
- 2023-07, [Review and Implement New Predictive Weather Modeling and Proactive Safety Processes Across the National Rail Network To Prevent Weather-Related Accidents and Incidents](#), November 24, 2023

Bulletins:

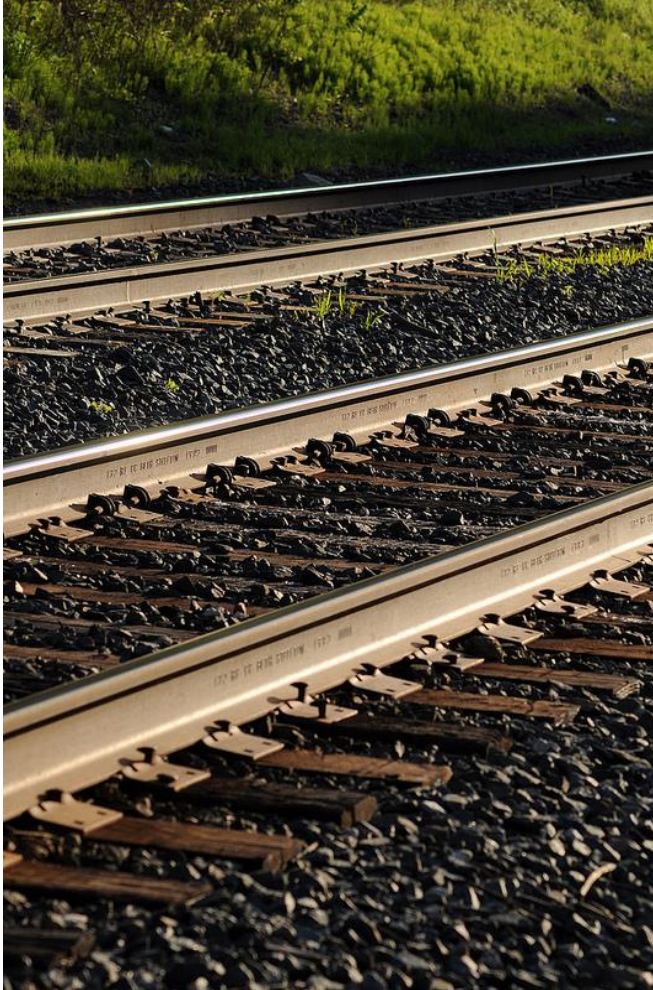
- 2023-01, [Switching Operation Accident](#), Weber City, Amputation, March 6, 2023
- 2023-02, [Highway-Rail Grade Crossing and Shove Movement Accident](#), Cleveland, OH, March 16, 2023
- 2023-03, [Train Collision Involving a Mis-Aligned Switch – Dark Territory](#), May 9, 2023
- 2023-04, [Trainee Switching Fatality Involving a Shove Movement in a Yard](#), July 6, 2023
- 2023-05, [Shoving Movement Close Clearance Fatality](#), August 16, 2023
- 2023-06, [Employee Amputation – Flat Switching, Kicking Operations and Securement](#), September 11, 2023
- 2023-07, [Employee Fatality – Crossing Tracks](#), September 29, 2023
- 2024-01, [Employee Fatality – Securement of Rolling Equipment](#), February 13, 2024
- 2024-02, [Positive Train Control Error and Malfunction](#), February 13, 2024

FRA Engagement Efforts

- ❑ **Meetings with Industry Leaders:** East Palestine, OH; Washington, DC; North Platte, NE; Kansas City, MO; Pueblo, CO; Decatur, IL; Elkhart, IN; Conway, PA; and Bellevue, OH
- ❑ **Derailment & Accident Site Visits:** East Palestine, OH; Cleveland, OH; Raymond, MN; Reed Point, MT; and Pueblo, CO
- ❑ **Focused Grade Crossing Efforts & Roundtables:** Houston, TX; Birmingham, AL; and Hammond, IN
- ❑ **FRA Safety Staff Trainings:** FRA gathered nearly 500 agency safety personnel from around the country in groups over a 3-week period to conduct bi-annual safety training.
- ❑ **FRA Rail Share:** FRA hosted 400+ representatives from Class I railroads, labor, rail carriers, and others to discuss supporting rail employees in culture and safety management. Attendees joined breakout sessions on safety management system regulations, fatigue risk reduction programs, safety culture assessments, and other topics.
- ❑ **FRA Grade Crossing Symposium:** On January 17, 2024, FRA gathered stakeholders to discuss efforts underway to improve grade crossing safety, including safety initiatives, focused-blocked crossing activities, and FRA grant funding opportunities.



BIL – Status of Safety Provisions



- Sec. 22401. Railway-highway crossings program evaluation.
- Sec. 22402. Grade crossing accident prediction model. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22403. Periodic updates to highway-rail crossing reports and plans.
- Sec. 22404. Blocked crossing portal. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22405. Data accessibility. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22406. Emergency lighting.
- Sec. 22407. Comprehensive rail safety review of Amtrak. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22408. Completion of hours of service and fatigue studies. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22410. Operating crew member training, qualification, and certification. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22411. Transparency and safety.
- Sec. 22412. Research and development.
- Sec. 22413. Rail research and development center of excellence.
- Sec. 22414. Quarterly report on positive train control system performance. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22417. Federal Railroad Administration accident and incident investigations. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22418. Civil penalty enforcement authority.
- Sec. 22419. Advancing safety and innovative technology.
- Sec. 22420. Passenger rail vehicle occupant protection systems.
- Sec. 22421. Federal Railroad Administration reporting requirements. **COMPLETE**
- Sec. 22422. National Academies study on trains longer than 7,500 feet.
- Sec. 22423. High-speed train noise emissions.
- Sec. 22424. Critical incident stress plans.
- Sec. 22425. Requirements for railroad freight cars placed into service in the United States.
- Sec. 22427. Controlled substances testing for mechanical employees. **COMPLETE**

PTC Outages

- **March 23, 2023** (Fort Worth, TX) – BNSF Back Office Server failure, resulting in a 7-hour PTC outage, impacted 605 trains
- **August 28, 2023** (Atlanta, GA) – Norfolk Southern experienced a 10-hour systemwide PTC outage
- **September 6, 2023** (Homewood, IL) – Canadian National experienced a 1 hour and 10 minutes PTC outage, impacting 100 trains
- **September 29, 2023** (Atlanta, GA) – Norfolk Southern experienced a 4-hour PTC outage, impacting 340 trains
- **October 18, 2023** (Atlanta, GA) – Norfolk Southern experienced a 2-hour systemwide PTC outage caused by a clock drift related to a configuration setting
- **October 31, 2023** (San Carlos, CA): Caltrain experienced a 3-minute PTC outage, which had a ripple effect on the Dispatch System for approximately 10 minutes.
- **November 28, 2023** (Homewood, IL) - Canadian National experienced two unplanned outages due to a misconfiguration in its data storage infrastructure, with the two outages combined lasting 41 minutes and impacting 77 trains
- **January 6, 2024** (Bedford Park, IL) - Belt Railway Company of Chicago experienced a PTC outage, impacting 25 trains due to a network outage
- **February 26, 2024** (Chicago, IL) – Metra experienced a 2 hours and 22 minutes PTC outage, impacting 65 passenger trains, 4,713 Metra customers and an unknown number of tenant customers

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