December 8, 2021: At approximately 11:50AM EST a 27 year old male contractor with 2 years of service was walking within the gage of an out of service track marking rails for scrap. A spiker, made a reverse move and fatally struck the employee.

Take Away

While this recent tragedy has not yet been analyzed, the FAMES Committee reminds all roadway workers to remain vigilant. Ensure that during the on-track safety briefing, identify if RMMs will be present and take actions to manage any additional risks associated with their presence. Last, but not least, remember to always establish clear communication between Roadway Maintenance Machine operators and workers on the ground and maintain proper clearance.

The FAMES Committee consists of safety representatives from a cross section of rail labor, railroad management, and federal regulators. FAMES is a continuous improvement process that relies on the candid sharing of available data and the views of its participants. To enable the process, FAMES explicitly refrains from making any findings regarding whether any past or present practice or protocol satisfies any legal duty or standard of care.

The views, opinions, and recommendations contained in this report are those of the FAMES Committee and do not necessarily represent the views, opinions, or recommendations of any specific railroad, labor organization, or governmental agency.