

SAFETY BULLETIN

2024-01

SUBJECT: Employee Fatality – Securement of Rolling Equipment

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is investigating an accident that resulted in fatal injuries to a locomotive engineer during yard switching operations. At the time of the accident, the fatally injured engineer, who had approximately 30 years of experience, was operating a locomotive on the east side of the yard and working with a conductor and brakeman to switch cars. Another crew was switching cars on the west side of the yard and had set out 35 cars. At some point, those 35 cars from the west side of the yard track rolled uncontrolled towards the east, colliding with the locomotive, occupied by the engineer, that was located on the east yard track switching lead. The collision ejected the engineer from the locomotive cab and the engineer succumbed to his injuries.

Although FRA's investigation into this accident is ongoing, FRA is issuing this bulletin to remind railroads and railroad employees of the importance of ensuring rolling equipment is properly secured at all times, including ensuring:

1. Employees understand the importance of complying with railroad rules for securement of rolling equipment;
2. Railroads provide employees adequate training on railroad operating rules and procedures for proper securement of rolling equipment;
3. Railroads provide employees appropriate periodic oversight of compliance with railroad operating rules and procedures for proper securement of rolling equipment;
4. Railroads empower employees to seek immediate clarification of any safety rule, including rules related to the securement of equipment; and
5. Railroads remind employees of the dangers associated with improperly secured rolling equipment.

The purpose of this Safety Bulletin, which is informal in nature, is to ensure the railroad industry, including railroad employees, are aware of this recent accident that resulted in a fatality of an employee. As FRA completes its investigation, it may take additional actions with respect to this accident.

For further information, please contact John Mayser, Operating Practices Specialist, at john.mayser@dot.gov or (202) 493-8008.

Issued: February 13, 2024

##