

SAFETY BULLETIN

2024-07

SUBJECT: Conductor Main Track Fatality

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is investigating a fatality that occurred on the afternoon of September 4, 2024. A 34-year-old conductor, with approximately 13 years of service, was on the ground inspecting his northbound freight train due to a hot wheel notification. The conductor was standing in a curve, within the foul of the adjacent southbound track, and was facing south. A southbound commuter train, traveling at approximately 55 mph, came around the curve behind the conductor and fatally struck him.

FRA is actively investigating this accident and is issuing this bulletin to remind railroads, railroad employees, and railroad contractors of the importance of ensuring that safety briefings and training sessions cover and identify location-specific safety risks and relevant operating rules. Specifically, FRA reminds railroads of the following:

1. Railroads must ensure that their training programs adequately prepare employees to fully understand operating rules and communication requirements.
2. Railroads must ensure employees fully understand the risks of working on or around main tracks and the need for situational awareness in these situations.
3. Railroads must conduct operational tests of employees to ensure their compliance with operating rules and personal safety requirements when working on or around main tracks.
4. Railroads can provide coaching and/or additional training to workers found not to be in compliance during operational tests to help keep workers safe on or around main tracks.

FRA also reminds railroads of the recommendations made in “Staying Alert and Situational Awareness,” FRA Safety Advisory 2010-03, which is available on FRA’s website at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2010-10-18/pdf/2010-26089.pdf>.

The purpose of this Safety Bulletin, which is informational in nature, is to ensure the railroad industry, including railroad employees and contractors, are aware of this recent accident that fatally injured an employee. FRA may take additional action as it completes its investigation into this accident.

Issued: September 27, 2024