



U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 8, 1992

FRA 02-92
Contact: Molly Hart
Tel.: (202) 366-0881

FRA ISSUES EMERGENCY ORDER
REQUIRING INSPECTION OF TANK CARS

Federal Railroad Administrator Gil Carmichael has issued an emergency order requiring that "dual-diameter" pressure railroad tank cars be inspected for cracks that could lead to failure.

A dual-diameter tank car is specially constructed to transport hazardous materials in large quantities. The tank cars in question are approximately 30 years old.

The Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) action is consistent with a March 13, 1992, recommendation of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). FRA and the NTSB investigated an accident that occurred near Dragon, Miss., on Jan. 18, 1992, in which a dual diameter car carrying liquified petroleum gas (LPG) released its contents.

At FRA's request, all cars of the same design have been withdrawn from service pending inspection. A majority of the cars inspected so far had significant defects.

"We want to make sure that all dual-diameter tank cars that transport hazardous materials are safe," Carmichael said. "Therefore, we are taking this step to verify that the fleet is safe and in compliance with existing federal regulations."

Under the order, car owners must designate and self-inspect a certain number of each design for immediate inspection. If any car is found to have a defect, then all tank cars of that design must be inspected before loading.

"Tank car builders and owners, the railroads and government agencies have been working to define and address this problem," Carmichael said. "It is now clear that we need to accelerate our efforts to ensure that the most volatile hazardous materials are transported safely."

The emergency order requires that sufficient additional cars for each design type be inspected, to determine that other designs are not subject to the tank car cracking problem.

In addition to LPG, dual diameter tank cars transport anhydrous ammonia, vinyl chloride and other compressed gasses that are subject to violent ignition or that could be immediately harmful to persons in the area of a vapor cloud should a release occur. Dual diameter cars are authorized to carry up to 125 tons of hazardous materials. The FRA estimates that between 5,000 and 6,000 dual diameter cars remain in service. A minimum of 1,000 cars will be subject to inspection under the emergency order.

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U.S. Department of
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News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 16, 1992

FRA 03-92

Contact: Molly Hart

Tel.: (202) 366-0881

FRA ANNOUNCES 1991 DRUG,
ALCOHOL TESTING RESULTS

The Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) said that drug and alcohol testing in the railroad industry in 1991 showed a reduction in the positive rate for the third consecutive year.

In mandatory post-accident testing, 1.5 percent of the employees tested positive for prohibited use of alcohol or drugs, down from 3.2 percent in 1990 and well below the 1988 mark of 6 percent, the highest rate recorded. In reasonable cause testing, 2 percent of employees tested positive for alcohol or drugs, down from 2.2 percent in 1990 and well below the 5.4 percent figure in 1988. Reports of random testing for drugs for 1991 indicate a positive rate of .9 percent based on more than 50,000 tests. The 1990 positive rate was slightly above 1 percent.

"It is gratifying to see a continuing decline in the use of alcohol and drugs in the railroad industry," FRA Administrator Gil Carmichael said.

The FRA rules require the collection of blood and urine samples following certain major train accidents, collisions and employee fatalities. Samples are analyzed for alcohol and controlled substances at an FRA contract laboratory. In addition, FRA requires random drug testing of employees, such as engineers, brakemen, dispatchers and conductors, as well as pre-employment, certain return-to-duty and follow-up drug testing. It also authorizes the railroads to conduct "reasonable cause" drug and alcohol testing.

"We are pleased that the men and women in the railroad industry refuse to tolerate alcohol or drug use by their co-workers," Carmichael said.

I. SUMMARY OF RAILROAD MANDATORY POST-ACCIDENT TESTING

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	CUMULATIVE
Qualifying Events:	179	178	161	149	157	824
Employees tested:	770	682	607	524	552	3,135

POSITIVE FINDINGS:

Alcohol	3 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)	6 (1.0%)	1 (0.2%)	2 (0.4%)	15 (0.5%)
Controlled substances/ (prohibited use)	39 (5.1%)	38 (5.6%)	18 (3.0%)	16 (3.0%)	6 (1.1%)	117 (3.7%)
SUBTOTAL	42 (5.5%)	41 (6.0%)	24 (4.0%)	17 (3.2%)	8 (1.5%)	132 (4.2%)

Prohibited drug use by substance:

Marijuana	30	25	9	11	3	78
Cocaine	6	8	8	0	2	24
Marijuana & cocaine	1	2	1	0	0	4
Other	2	3	0	5	1	11

(All numbers may not add exactly because of rounding.)

NOTE: Data for 1986 deleted due to a lack of full year experience.

II. RAILROAD RANDOM DRUG TESTING RESULTS

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>
Number of urine tests:	35,228	50,436
Number of urine tests positive:	365	447
Percentage of urine tests positive:	1.04	.9

 Substances in positive urine:

o marijuana.....	175	238
o amphetamines.....	0	1
o cocaine.....	194	248
o opiates.....	10	17
o phencyclidine.....	2	2

<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>381</u>	<u>506</u>
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III.

RAILROAD ALCOHOL/DRUG TEST RESULTS
FRA REASONABLE CAUSE

	<u>87</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>91</u>
Supervisory observations:	481,941	527,455	427,973	506,015	786,505
Rule G violations:	321	446	409	391	340
# breath alcohol tests:	593	1005	973	2662	2,798
# breath tests positive:	24	46	31	32	37
% breath tests positive:	4.0	4.5	3.2	1.20	1.32
# urine tests:	5502	8925	9779	12,223	12,792
# urine tests positive:	378	491	428	297	287
% urine tests positive:	6.9	5.5	4.4	2.42	2.24
# urine tests positive--one or more controlled substances:			353	255	258
% urine tests positive--one or more controlled substances:			3.6	2.08	2.02
Total Tests:	6095	9930	10,752	14,885	15,590
Total Positives:	402	537	459	329	324
Total Positive Rate:	6.6	5.4	4.3	2.21	2.08
Substances in positive urine:					
o alcohol.....	80	67	78	74	40
o marijuana.....	198	222	171	90	108
o depressants.....	14	17	12	3	0
o stimulants.....	69	106	151	111	116
o narcotics.....	12	30	22	28	12
o hallucinogens.....	0	1	2	1	0
o other drugs.....	14	22	15	43	29
o Amtrak*.....	-	38	-	-	-
<u>Totals:</u>	387	503	451	355	305

NOTE: Data for 1986 deleted due to a lack of a full year's data.

*Amtrak declined to provide a breakdown of substances for 1988.

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U.S. Department of
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News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 10, 1992

FRA 11-92

Contact: Molly Hart

Phone: (202) 366-0881

GRADE CROSSING ACCIDENTS
DOWN IN FIRST SIX MONTHS

The number of people killed or injured as a result of accidents at railroad crossings continued to decline in the first six months of 1992, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) reported today.

The FRA said during the January-June period this year, there were 263 fatalities at highway-rail crossings, a 15 percent drop from the 308 killed over the first six months of 1991. Injuries totaled 976 compared to 1,056 over the six-month period a year ago. Accidents in the first half of the year totaled 2,380 compared to 2,642 for a similar period in 1991.

For calendar year 1991, the FRA reported a total of 565 fatalities and 1,923 injuries as a result of grade crossing accidents, which have been declining since 1989.

"Nationwide, highway-rail crossing safety has improved over the years, and we're pleased with the downward turn in accidents, but we recognize that efforts to promote safety must continue," Federal Railroad Administrator Gil Carmichael said.

In addition to promoting safety at highway-rail crossings, the FRA plans to improve research for better rail crossing warning signal devices and eliminate unnecessary crossings.

Carmichael said, "I believe that at least 25 percent of the nation's 174,000 crossings are redundant and can be eliminated by the year 2000 with little or no adverse impact on the traveling public."

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U.S. Department of
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News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 14, 1993

FRA 01-93

Contact: John F. Fitzpatrick

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FRA ANNOUNCES 1992 DRUG
AND ALCOHOL TESTING RESULTS

The Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced today that random drug testing in the railroad industry last year showed a reduction in positive test results for the third consecutive year. Reports indicate that of more than 42,000 random tests administered in 1992, only 0.8 percent tested positive.

In mandatory post-accident testing last year, 2.1 percent of the employees tested positive for prohibited use of alcohol or drugs, down from 6 percent in 1988, but slightly above the 1.5 percent recorded in 1991. The FRA said, however, that the number of employees who tested positive for drugs or alcohol decreased in 1992 to 7 compared with 8 in 1991. The increase in the percentage rate was the result of a significant reduction in the number of employees tested, from 552 in 1991 to 332 last year.

In reasonable cause breath alcohol testing, 1.16 percent of employees tested positive, down from a high of 4.5 percent in 1988 and down from 1.32 percent in 1991. In 1992, 2.07 percent tested positive for controlled substances, down from a high of 3.6 percent in 1989 and slightly up from the 2.02 percent in 1991.

"It is gratifying to see that alcohol and drug testing in the railroad industry continues to have a positive impact on safety," said FRA Acting Administrator S. Mark Lindsey. "Once again, there were no fatalities in train accidents where someone tested positive. The reversal of alcohol and drug abuse trends can be attributed to the interest and dedication of the men and women in the railroad industry. Their refusal to tolerate alcohol and drug abuse has resulted in safer railroad operating conditions."

The FRA alcohol and drug testing rules apply to railroad workers and require the collection of blood and urine samples following certain major train accidents, collisions and employee fatalities. Samples are analyzed for alcohol and controlled substances at an FRA contract laboratory. In addition, FRA requires random drug testing of employees subject to the Hours of Service Act, pre-employment, return-to-duty following a positive test and follow-up drug testing.

Regulations are being developed to require random, reasonable suspicion and pre-employment alcohol testing and reasonable suspicion drug testing.

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I. SUMMARY OF RAILROAD MANDATORY POST-ACCIDENT TESTING

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	CUMULATIVE
Qualifying Events:	179	178	161	149	157	109	933
Employees tested:	770	682	607	524	552	332	3,467
POSITIVE FINDINGS:							
Alcohol	3 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)	6 (1.0%)	1 (0.2%)	2 (0.4%)	1 (0.3%)	16 (0.46%)
Controlled substances/ (prohibited use)	39 (5.1%)	38 (5.6%)	18 (3.0%)	16 (3.0%)	6 (1.1%)	6 (1.8%)	123 (3.5%)
SUBTOTAL	42 (5.5%)	41 (6.0%)	24 (4.0%)	17 (3.2%)	8 (1.5%)	7 (2.1)	139 (4.0%)
Prohibited drug use by substance:							
Marijuana	30	25	9	11	3	4	82
Cocaine	6	8	8	1	2	2	26
Marijuana & cocaine	1	2	1	0	0	0	4
Other	2	3	0	4	1	0	10
(All numbers may not add exactly because of rounding.)							

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II.

RAILROAD RANDOM DRUG TESTING RESULTS

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>
Number of Urine Tests:	35,228	50,436	42,599
Number of Urine Tests Positive:	365	447	336
Percentage of urine tests positive:	1.04	.9	.8

Substances in positive urine:

o marijuana.....	175	238	188
o amphetamines.....	0	1	14
o cocaine.....	194	248	134
o opiates.....	10	17	10
o phencyclidine.....	2	2	3
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>381</u>	<u>506</u>	<u>349</u>

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III.

RAILROAD ALCOHOL/DRUG TEST RESULTS (AND)
FRA REASONABLE CAUSE

Supervisory observations:

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	
	481,941	527,455	427,973	506,015	786,505	848,867	
		<u>87</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>91</u>	
						<u>92</u>	
Rule G Violations		321	446	409	391	340	382
Breath Alcohol Test:		593	1005	973	2662	2798	2580
Breath Test Positive:		24	46	31	32	37	30
% Breath Test Positive:		4.0	4.5	3.2	1.20	1.32	1.16
Urine Tests:		5,502	8,925	9,779	12,223	12,792	12,468
Urine Tests Positive:		378	491	428	297	287	272
% Urine Tests Positive:		6.9	5.5	4.4	2.42	2.24	2.19
# Urine Tests Positive (number of employees) Controlled Substance:				353	255	258	259
% Urine Tests Positive (number of employees) Controlled Substance:				3.6	2.08	2.02	2.07
TOTAL TEST:		6095	9930	10,752	14,885	15,590	15,048
Total Positive:		402	537	459	329	324	302
Total Positive Rates:		6.6	5.4	4.3	2.21	2.08	2.00
Substances in Positive Urine:							
o alcohol.....		80	67	78	74	40	50
o marijuana.....		198	222	171	90	108	97
o depressants....		14	17	12	3	0	0
o stimulants.....		69	106	151	111	116	122
o hallucinogens..		12	30	22	28	12	0
o narcotics.....		0	1	2	1	0	12
o other drugs....		-	38	-	-	-	30
TOTALS:		387	503	451	355	305	311

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U.S. Department of
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News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, May 5, 1993

FRA 02-93

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**RAILROAD ACCIDENTS DECLINED
LAST YEAR, FRA SAYS**

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced that railroad accidents declined 12 percent in 1992 and highway-rail crossing accidents and related injuries were the lowest ever recorded.

"This marks 1992 as the safest year ever, measured by both the total number of train accidents and the train accident rate. While these numbers are still too high, we are heartened by this continuing downward trend," said FRA's Acting Administrator S. Mark Lindsey at a hearing of the House Subcommittee on Transportation and Appropriations.

Preliminary data for 1992 indicates that the number of railroad accidents decreased from 2,658 in 1991 to 2,340 in 1992, a decline of 12 percent. The train accident rate (accidents per million train miles) decreased by 14.8 percent, from 4.61 in 1991 to 3.93 in 1992.

Accidents at highway-rail crossings decreased by 9 percent, from 5,386 in 1991 to 4,900 in 1992. There were 575 fatalities and 1,969 injuries associated with these highway-rail crossing accidents.

Employee-on-duty injuries comprise almost 90 percent of the total railroad-related injuries each year. In 1992 there were 17,631 employee injuries, a decrease of 10 percent compared to the 19,626 on duty railroad employee injuries reported in 1991. The employee injury rate (injuries sustained per 200,000 employee hours worked) decreased from 7.41 in 1991 to 6.82 in 1992, a decline of 8 percent.

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Again, 1992 reported the lowest number of employee injuries and the lowest employee injury rate. There were 35 employee fatalities in 1992, the same number as 1991. While a single fatality is one too many, this represents the lowest number of employee fatalities ever recorded.

Trespasser fatalities, as a percentage of total railroad-related fatalities, are second only to highway-rail crossing fatalities. In 1992 trespasser fatalities comprised 45.6 percent of the total railroad fatalities and highway-rail crossing fatalities 49.2 percent.

The 533 trespasser fatalities in 1992 reflected a slight increase compared to the 524 trespasser fatalities in 1991 and shows a continuation of the recent rising trend in the number of trespassers killed on railroad property.

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**Federal Railroad
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News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, August 11, 1993

FRA 04-93
Contact: John F. Fitzpatrick
Tel.: (202) 366-0881

FRA AMENDS RULE FOR UTILITY TRAIN SERVICE EMPLOYEES

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) today amended current safety requirements to ensure protection of certain railroad employees and at the same time eliminate unnecessary costs and inefficiency.

Today's action establishes the conditions under which certain railroad employees, designated as utility train service workers, may augment a train or yard crew for a limited time period, such as brief switching operations, without traditional "blue-signal" regulations. It is based on the premise that utility workers can safely work under the same conditions as other train or yard crew members provided appropriate safety standards are established and maintained.

The "blue signal" regulation, established in 1976, prescribes special safety requirements for protection of railroad employees, other than train and yard crews, engaged in the inspection, testing, repair and servicing of railroad rolling equipment. Train and yard crews are not subject to this regulation when they work as a unit, in communication with the locomotive engineer, on equipment they are assigned to operate.

FRA's rule has the potential to save the industry \$55 million in the first year and could also generate approximately 200 new jobs for utility train service employees. This action allows a safe way for railroads to increase the efficiency of their operations.

Due to technological changes and collective bargaining, the typical size of train and yard crews has been reduced over the years. According to FRA, the safety of railroad employees and train operations is better served by permitting the use of utility workers to supplement today's smaller crews. This action will not affect the collective bargaining agreements between rail management and rail labor organizations, nor will it affect the traditional division of work among railroad crafts.

The amendment, which will be published in the Federal Register, does not change current "blue signal" regulations applicable to mechanical employees.

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