

Average Burden Per Response: 15 minutes.

Estimated Average Burden: 12,500 hours.

Written comments and recommendations regarding the information collection(s) should be sent within 60 days from the date of this publication, directly to the SSA Reports Clearance Officer at the following address: Social Security Administration, DCFAM, Attn: Nicholas E. Tagliareni, 6401 Security Blvd., 1-A-21 Operations Bldg., Baltimore, MD 21235.

In addition to your comments on the accuracy of the agency's burden estimate, we are soliciting comments on the need for the information; its practical utility; ways to enhance its quality, utility and clarity; and on ways to minimize burden on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

II. The information collection(s) listed below have been submitted to OMB:

Waiver of Benefit Payment—0960-0533

Form SSA-149 is required to document the fact that benefits due are not being paid, because the beneficiary, (for personal reasons) has requested nonreceipt. Personal reasons can range from religious, patriotic, or political beliefs to situations where continued receipt of payment causes some adverse effect. The respondents are beneficiaries who wish to waive entitlement to benefit payments.

Number of Respondents: 100.

Frequency of Response: 1.

Average Burden Per Response: 2 minutes.

Estimated Annual Burden: 3 hours.

Written comments and recommendations regarding the information collection(s) should be directed within 30 days to the OMB Desk Officer and SSA Reports Clearance Officer at the following addresses:

(OMB)

Office of Management and Budget,
OIRA, Attn: Laura Oliven, New
Executive Office Building, Room
10230, 725 17th St., NW.,
Washington, D.C. 20503

(SSA)

Social Security Administration,
DCFAM, Attn: Nicholas E. Tagliareni,
1-A-21 Operations Bldg., 6401
Security Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21235

To receive a copy of any of the forms or clearance packages, call the SSA Reports Clearance Officer on (410) 965-4125 or write to him at the address listed above.

Date: September 11, 1997.

Nicholas E. Tagliareni,

Reports Clearance Officer, Social Security Administration.

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BILLING CODE 4190-29-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Safety Advisory

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of safety advisory.

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing Safety Advisory 97-2 addressing safety practices to reduce the risk of casualties from runaway locomotives, cars, and trains caused by a failure to properly secure unattended rolling equipment left on sidings or other tracks.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dennis Yachechak, Operating Practices Specialist, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance, FRA, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., RRS-11, Mail Stop 25, Washington, D.C. 20590 (telephone 202-632-3370), or Nancy L. Goldman, Trial Attorney, FRA, Office of Chief Counsel, FRA, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., RCC-12, Mail Stop 10, Washington, D.C. 20590 (telephone 202-632-3167).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A fatal head-on collision between a Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) freight train and an unattended, runaway UP locomotive consist near Fort Worth, Texas, on August 20, 1997, has caused FRA to focus on the effectiveness of certain railroad procedures for protection of people and property from hazards caused by failure to properly secure locomotives, cars, and other rolling equipment left unattended on sidings or other tracks.

FRA and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) are investigating the accident. In addition, FRA inspection teams are on UP's property to conduct safety assurance reviews on all aspects of the issue. The facts and findings developed in the investigations will be published when the individual investigations are complete.

In the meantime, FRA's preliminary findings indicate that the UP crew applied the hand brake on the lead locomotive of the locomotive consist and then applied the independent air brake. The crew then released the independent brake to verify that the hand brake would hold, which it appeared to do. The crew then reapplied the independent brake. Three of the four

locomotives in the locomotive consist were already shut down. The remaining locomotive was then shut down and the crew left the locomotive consist unattended. Sometime later, however, it is believed that the air brakes eventually leaked off and that the single hand brake did not, by itself, sufficiently secure the locomotive consist, enabling it to roll out of the siding eastward and onto the main track where it collided head-on with a UP freight train.

Securement Procedures

The Federal power brake regulations at 49 CFR 232.13(f) require that, "The automatic air brake must not be depended upon to hold a locomotive, cars or train, when standing on a grade, whether locomotive is attached or detached from cars or train. When required, a sufficient number of hand brakes must be applied to hold train, before air brakes are released. When ready to start, hand brakes must not be released until it is known that the air brake system is properly charged."

Based upon FRA's review of the Fort Worth incident, and its awareness of other incidents involving improper securement of rolling equipment, it appears evident that further guidance regarding securement procedures may be of assistance to our nation's railroads. This advisory may be especially beneficial to those railroads that may not be aware of current practices in the industry regarding securement of rolling equipment. Accordingly, FRA believes that the following recommended procedures for the proper securement of unattended rolling equipment can be taken to reduce the likelihood of future accidents, which each railroad can then adapt to meet its own individual circumstances.

Recommended Action

FRA believes that the likelihood of further accidents, such as the one that occurred on the UP on August 20, 1997, would be greatly reduced by the inclusion of certain additional measures into railroads' procedures for securement of unattended locomotives, cars, and trains left on sidings or other tracks. Therefore, FRA recommends that each railroad adopt and implement its own procedures incorporating the following actions, or equally effective measures, with respect to a locomotive, car, or train that is left unattended:

1. Consistent with the railroad's rules and procedures, place each locomotive, car, or train on a track that is protected by a permanent derail or apply a portable derail, if available.

2. On cars: (a) Apply the appropriate number of handbrakes; to assist

crewmembers in this regard, railroads should develop and implement a process or procedure, such as a matrix, that would provide specific guidance in determining the appropriate number of hand brakes to apply, considering grade, tonnage, and other local conditions prevalent at the time of securement, for example, high winds or extreme cold; (b) where appropriate, remove slack from the train, or as commonly referred to in the industry, "bunch the slack"; and (c) detach any locomotives from the cars to allow an emergency brake application.

3. On locomotives, fully apply all hand brakes on all unattended locomotives in the consist. If the grade exceeds one percent, or whenever it is otherwise required by railroad rules, in addition, chock or chain the front and back of at least one pair of wheels in the locomotive consist. Railroads should develop and implement procedures that would then verify that the hand brakes will hold the locomotive consist. Further, railroad instructions should address: (a) The throttle position; (b) status of the reverse lever; (c) position of the generator field switch; (d) status of the independent brakes; (e) position of the isolation switch; and (f) position of the automatic brake valve. The above procedures should also take into account winter weather conditions as they relate to throttle position and reverser handle.

FRA may modify Safety Advisory 97-2, issue additional safety advisories, or take other appropriate necessary action to ensure the highest level of safety on the Nation's railroads.

Issued in Washington, DC on September 15, 1997

Edward R. English,

Director, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Safety Advisory

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of safety advisory.

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing Safety Advisory 97-3 addressing safety practices to reduce the risk of accidents arising from the authorization of train movements past stop indications of absolute signals.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dennis Yachechak, Operating Practices Specialist, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance, FRA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., RRS-11, Mail Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590 (telephone 202-632-3370), or Nancy L. Goldman, Trial Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel, FRA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., RCC-12, Mail Stop 10, Washington, DC 20590 (telephone 202-632-3167).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A fatal head-on collision between a Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) freight train and an unattended, runaway UP locomotive consist near Fort Worth, Texas, on August 20, 1997, has caused FRA to focus on railroad operating rules and procedures pertaining to protection against conflicting train movements when train dispatchers and control operators authorize movements past a stop indication of an absolute signal.

FRA and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) are investigating the accident. FRA has also initiated an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of train dispatcher procedures employed by UP. FRA inspection teams are on UP's property to conduct safety assurance reviews on all aspects of the issue. The facts and findings developed in the investigations will be published when the individual investigations are complete.

The collision occurred in single track, centralized traffic control (CTC) territory. Preliminary FRA findings indicate that an unoccupied UP locomotive consist unintentionally rolled out of a controlled siding eastward onto a main track. A UP dispatcher noticed on his computer screen that the siding switch was out of correspondence, and that the main track segment beyond the switch was occupied. At least three times, the dispatcher radioed the runaway light locomotive consist, in an attempt to contact a crewmember. Not getting a response, the dispatcher then contacted a signal maintainer. Meanwhile, a UP control operator at Fort Worth, authorized a westbound freight train to pass a stop indication of an absolute signal at the west end of Centennial Yard in Fort Worth, and proceed onto the main track at restricted speed. Subsequently, the runaway light locomotive consist struck the westbound freight train at a speed of approximately 60 miles per hour. The UP engineer and engineer pilot were killed, and the UP conductor was seriously injured.

Operating Practices

FRA rules require each railroad to periodically instruct its employees on

the meaning and application of the railroad's operating rules (49 CFR 217.11), and also require each railroad to periodically conduct operational tests and inspections to determine the extent of compliance with its code of operating rules, timetables, and timetable special instructions (49 CFR 217.9).

UP train dispatcher rule 20.6 pertains to movements in adjoining territories and requires that, "Train dispatchers must not issue track warrants, track bulletins, or instructions or take any action that may affect safe train operation on another train dispatcher's territory unless the dispatchers reach an understanding." Rule 9.12.1 of the General Code of Operating Rules pertains to CTC Territory and requires that, "At a signal displaying a Stop indication, if no conflicting movement is evident, the train will be governed as follows: Before authorizing the train to proceed, the control operator must know that the route is properly lined and no conflicting movement is occupying or authorized to enter the track between that signal and the next absolute signal governing movement or the end of CTC where applicable."

Initial findings of the FRA investigation of the collision indicate, in part, that the train dispatcher and control operator did not communicate with each other as to the cause of the stop indication on the absolute signal at the west end of Centennial Yard. It appears that the train dispatcher did not contact the control operator of the adjoining territory and inform him of the track occupancy. Likewise, it appears that the control operator did not verify the cause of the stop indication by determining whether a conflicting movement was occupying the track segment between that signal and the next absolute signal governing movement, before authorizing the westbound train to pass the stop indication.

Recommended Action

FRA believes that the likelihood of further accidents, such as the one that occurred on the UP on August 20, 1997, would be greatly reduced by the inclusion of certain additional measures into the railroads' operating procedures. Therefore, FRA recommends that:

1. As soon as possible, but preferably within seven calendar days of the date of publication of this Safety Advisory in the **Federal Register**, each railroad should:

(a) Ensure that a railroad operating supervisor personally contacts each train dispatcher and control operator responsible for controlling train