



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Sent VIA E-Mail

Date: January 31, 2012

Ronald Hynes
Acting Deputy Associate Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Hynes,

Thank you for your letter of December 19, 2011 explaining FRA programs and research related to fatigue management. As we prepare for a presentation of the draft report to the Safety Board Members on the Red Oak, Iowa train collision, currently scheduled for April 24th, I am requesting your help to clarify the status of several FRA initiatives. For convenience, I have listed them in the form of questions. Where appropriate, please indicate if responses to questions refer to passenger railroads, freight railroads, or both.

1. What is the expected date for issuing the Fatigue Management Program guidance document that is referenced in your letter?
2. What is the expected date that the Railroaders' Guide to Healthy Sleep website will go on line.
3. Will the FRA require railroads to provide fatigue educational training to their employees?
4. If so, will railroads be able to refer their employees to the material provided in the website "Railroaders Guide to Healthy Sleep" to satisfy this requirement?
5. Will there be a requirement for recurrent training on fatigue?
6. What is the expected date of publication of information related to developing fatigue risk management systems that is referenced in your letter?
7. What is the expected date of publication of information to the passenger rail industry regarding fatigue mitigation strategies and the development of FMPs that is referenced in your letter?

8. Does the FRA currently have plans to evaluate the effectiveness of biomathematical models in the railroad industry (i.e., their effectiveness in reducing fatigue-related incidents or accidents)? If so, please describe.
9. Please describe any feedback the FRA has received from the railroads regarding the use of the biomathematical models.
10. Please provide an estimate (%) of railroads who are currently using biomathematical models.
11. For railroads that chose not to use biomathematical models (i.e., FAST), how will the FRA evaluate a railroad's strategy for developing schedules that consider operator fatigue?
12. What are FRA's plans on providing training on the use of biomathematical fatigue models?
13. If the FRA is currently providing training to railroads on the use of biomathematical models, does this training include any possible limitations of these models?
14. If available, would you please provide the NTSB with the written portion of this training.
15. What is the status of the development of locomotive alerting regulations out of the NPRM that was issued January 12, 2011 with a comment period that closed March 14, 2011?
16. What is the status of the regulation on medical fitness for duty of safety critical railroad personnel?

It may be useful to meet with you and appropriate staff to discuss these questions. I will be in contact to consider best calendar options for such a meeting. Please contact me at 202 314 6432 if any questions need any clarification. A response within 2 weeks will be helpful and very much appreciated.

Thanks for your help on this.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Flanigan
Investigator-in-Charge
