

Fatality Analysis of Maintenance-of-way
Employees and Signalmen



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Dedication:

The FAMES Committee dedicates its efforts to all roadway workers who have lost their lives in the performance of duty and to the families, loved ones, and coworkers they have left behind.

Introduction to the FAMES Committee

Mission Statement:

The Mission of the Fatality Analysis of Maintenance-of-way Employees and Signalmen (FAMES) Committee is to analyze all fatalities and selected related incidents in order to make recommendations to reduce the risk of future occurrences and eliminate fatalities to roadway workers.

Introduction to FAMES

On April 24, 2009, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) invited railroad labor and management representatives to Washington, D.C., to form an ad-hoc committee to review roadway worker fatalities which occurred since January 1997. Additionally, the Committee was tasked with reviewing roadway worker fatalities at highway-rail grade crossings that are not classified as Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) events. The Committee became known as the Fatality Analysis of Maintenance-of-way Employees and Signalmen (FAMES).

FAMES is a voluntary, consensus-based Committee focused on identifying risks, trends, and factors impacting roadway worker safety. FAMES will periodically issue findings and recommendations based upon its review of available safety data. The Committee's activities are focused on education and prevention. The findings and recommendations of FAMES are separate from the regulatory process.

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Purpose and Scope

The purpose of FAMES is to achieve the goal of zero roadway worker fatalities by:

- Identifying risk factors through data analysis
- Presenting the analysis and findings of FAMES to YOU, the railroad worker
- Providing recommendations on improving the safety of roadway workers
- Providing recommendations to eliminate roadway worker fatalities at highway-rail grade crossings that are not classified as RWP events
- Encouraging implementation of improved safety practices

FAMES analyzes available data related to roadway worker fatalities. All FAMES activities and discussions are confidential and not available outside of the committee.

FAMES Analysis Process

FAMES includes railroad representatives from labor, organizations, management, and the FRA. The Committee holds regular meetings to review all fatal roadway worker accidents. Below is a brief description of the data-driven analysis process employed by FAMES:

1. Case Selection: FRA provides FAMES with accident investigation reports involving roadway workers who were fatally injured in on-track safety related incidents.
2. Case file review includes, but is not limited to:
 - FRA Accident Reports
 - FRA Interview Reports

- FRA Inspection Reports
- Eyewitness Reports
- Coroner Reports
- Police Reports
- Toxicology Reports
- Satellite Imagery
- Weather Information
- Sketches and Photos
- Operating Rules
- Railroad Timetables
- National Archive Reports
- Employee Statements
- Work/Rest Schedules
- Work and Training Records
- First-Hand Knowledge

3. FAMES follows four steps to review each case:

- a. Review the case file: Each member of FAMES independently reviews the case file. FAMES then reviews the case as a group.
- b. Record the facts: With group consensus, quantitative and narrative case information is entered into a database. This includes information such as weather conditions, employee information, work activity, track topography, equipment, employee training and experience, and other pertinent facts.
- c. Discuss the facts: The team discusses the operating characteristics, conditions, and events to understand the circumstances of each fatal accident.
- d. Reach consensus: FAMES discusses each case until there is consensus agreement on Possible Contributing Factors (PCF) and External Circumstances (EC).
 - PCFs may have been mitigated by some action or decision by one or more roadway workers or managers. More simply put, something that may have prevented the fatality (e.g., better training).
 - ECs exist but cannot be mitigated by some action or decision (e.g., weather conditions).
 - FAMES does not rank these factors; they are cataloged in a database to help identify commonalities or trends.

4. Case Analysis: Commonalities are shared characteristics among cases that may lead to a common solution. Commonalities discovered through this process lead to case classifications and recommendations.

5. Classify Cases: After completing an extensive analysis of each case, FAMES groups cases based upon PCFs, ECs, and other commonalities into subject-specific classifications for further investigation.

6. Reports and Recommendations: With consensus, FAMES develops subject-specific, data-driven reports. FAMES reports include facts, commonalities, statistics and recommendations which serve as educational tools to reduce the risk of future occurrences and eliminate RWP fatalities.

Description of a Roadway Worker

A roadway worker is any employee of a railroad, or of a contractor to a railroad, whose duties include inspection, construction, maintenance, or repair of railroad track, bridges, roadway, signal and communication systems, electric traction systems, roadway facilities or roadway maintenance machinery on or near track or with the potential of fouling a track, and flagmen and watchmen/lookouts for roadway workers.

Moving Forward

FAMES continues to meet regularly and issue reports and recommendations concerning specific roadway worker safety issues. FAMES' goal is to help raise safety awareness, promote a strong safety culture, and contribute to the broader effort to eliminate roadway worker fatalities through education and heightened awareness.

FAMES Participants and affiliations

- American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association
- American Train Dispatchers Association
- Association of American Railroads
- BNSF Railway
- Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division
- Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen
- Canadian National Railway
- CSX Transportation
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Kansas City Southern
- National Railroad Construction & Maintenance Association
- National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak)
- Norfolk Southern Railway
- Union Pacific Railroad

FAMES committee members must be approved by group consensus.

FAMES relies on the candid sharing of available data and the views of its participants. To enable the process, FAMES explicitly refrains from making any findings regarding whether any past or present practice or protocol satisfies any legal duty or standard of care.

The views, opinions, and recommendations contained in this report are those of FAMES and do not necessarily represent the views, opinions, or recommendations of any specific railroad, labor organization, or governmental agency.