

RAILROAD WORKER SAFETY AND HEALTH

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In 2006 there were 2,903 train accidents reported to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) of which 35.5% were primarily due to human factors causes. There has been little progress in reducing train accidents since 1980, and human factors have accounted for approximately one-third of train accidents during this period. While FRA regulates the railroad industry to ensure safety, regulations alone do not seem to be sufficient to further reduce the rate and severity of train accidents.

This symposium will discuss projects on work schedules and fatigue, early response to trauma, the demonstration of a close call reporting system, the demonstration of a behavior-based safety program, and the use of root cause analysis in accidents. These projects aim to reduce accidents and enhance employee safety and health by reducing the human factors causes of accidents by non-prescriptive programs that function within the regulatory and operational context.

The use of non-prescriptive strategies to reduce accidents and enhance the safety and health of railroad employees is new in the history of FRA. The projects that will be described in this symposium have been ground-breaking in the railroad industry and will be closely watched by safety experts for years to come.

Chair: Thomas G. Raslear, Ph.D., Federal Railroad Administration; **Presenters:** Richard Gist, Ph.D., Kansas City, Missouri Fire Department; Steven R. Hursh, Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine; Jordan Multer, Ph.D., Volpe National Transportation Systems Center; Thomas G. Raslear, Ph.D., Federal Railroad Administration; Joyce Ranney, Ph.D. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center; Stephen Reinach, M.S., Foster-Miller, Inc.; **Discussant:** Michael K. Coplen, M.A., Federal Railroad Administration.

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