



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: November 3, 2015

In reply refer to: R-15-35 through -37
R-13-21 (Reiteration)

The Honorable Sarah Feinberg
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
Washington, DC 20590

On October 28, 2015, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) adopted its report concerning the August 7, 2014, accident in which Union Pacific Railroad local train LUM41-06 traveled into a Ken's Foods, Inc., warehouse, ran through the end-of-track bumping post, and then collided with the inside wall while switching cars.¹ Additional information about this accident and the resulting recommendations may be found in the report of the investigation, which can be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>, under report number RAB-15/07.

As a result of this investigation, we issued five new recommendations, including two to Union Pacific Railroad and the following three recommendations to the Federal Railroad Administration:

R-15-35

Enhance your medical standards by identifying a list of medical conditions that disqualify employees for safety-sensitive positions because of the conditions' potential for negatively affecting rail safety.

R-15-36

Enhance your medical standards by identifying a list of medications whose use disqualifies employees for safety-sensitive positions because of the medications' potential for negatively affecting rail safety.

¹ National Transportation Safety Board, *Locomotive Engineer Has Seizure While Operating Train, Arden, Nevada, August 7, 2014*, RAB-15/07. (Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board, 2015).

R-15-37

Once disqualifying medical conditions and medications have been identified, develop specific criteria (such as standards for medical test results) that may allow employees who have been disqualified but have been determined by a subsequent, individualized assessment to pose no increased danger to rail safety to obtain a medical certification.

We also reiterated one previously issued recommendation to the Federal Railroad Administration:

R-13-21

Develop medical certification regulations for employees in safety-sensitive positions that include, at a minimum, (1) a complete medical history that includes specific screening for sleep disorders, a review of current medications, and a thorough physical examination; (2) standardization of testing protocols across the industry; and (3) centralized oversight of certification decisions for employees who fail initial testing; and consider requiring that medical examinations be performed by those with specific training and certification in evaluating medication use and health issues related to occupational safety on railroads.

Chairman HART, Vice Chairman DINH-ZARR, and Members SUMWALT and WEENER concurred in these recommendations.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement them. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov.

[Original Signed]

By: Christopher A. Hart,
Chairman