Railway Operations Safety Stats and Facts

FACTS

The most common causes of train accidents include:

1. Negligence
2. Human error
3. Reckless pedestrians and drivers
4. Mechanical failure
5. Speedy trains
6. Defective tracks
7. Derailments
8. Unprotected railroad crossings
9. Stalled cars on the track
10. Suicides

STATS

- In 2019, 1246 rail accidents were reported to the TSB.
- Freight trains accounted for 33% of all trains involved in rail accidents in 2019. Three percent (47 in total) were passenger trains, with the remaining 64% comprising mainly single cars/cuts of cars, locomotives, and track units.
- The largest proportion of reported rail accidents comprised non-main-track derailments (48%). Typically, most non-main-track accidents are minor, occurring during switching operations at speeds of less than 10 mph.
- In 2019, 14% of rail accidents involved vehicles or pedestrians at rail crossings, below the 16% average of the previous 10 years.
- In 2019, 169 accidents involved dangerous goods up from 125 in 2018 and above the 10-year average of 127. Eight accidents resulted in a dangerous goods release in 2019, compared with 4 in 2018, and the 10-year average of 4.

- Rail fatalities totalled 72 in 2019, up from 57 reported last year and approximately the same as the previous 10-year average of 73. Crossing fatalities totalled 28 in 2019, up from 19 in 2018 and above the 10-year average of 22.
- A total of 64 serious injuries resulted from rail occurrences in 2019, down from 91 in 2018 but above the 10-year average of 59. Trespasser injuries totalled 17 in 2019, down from 30 last year and below the 10-year average of 20. Fifteen railway employees were seriously injured in 2019, down from 17 in 2018 but above the 10-year average of 11. Crossing accidents resulted in 31 serious injuries, down from 42 in 2018 but above the 10-year average of 27.
- There were 4 main-track collisions in 2019, down from the 2018 total of 5 and down from the 10-year average of 5. No fatalities or serious injuries resulted from main-track collisions in 2019.