

**Please Post Immediately**



- **Since 1992, nine fatalities have occurred in September**
- **Three September switching fatalities occurred within thirteen days:**

**Dublin, GA 9/12/03**

**Ogden, UT 9/14/03**

**Fresno, CA 9/24/03**

## Nine September Switching Fatalities, 1992 through 2003

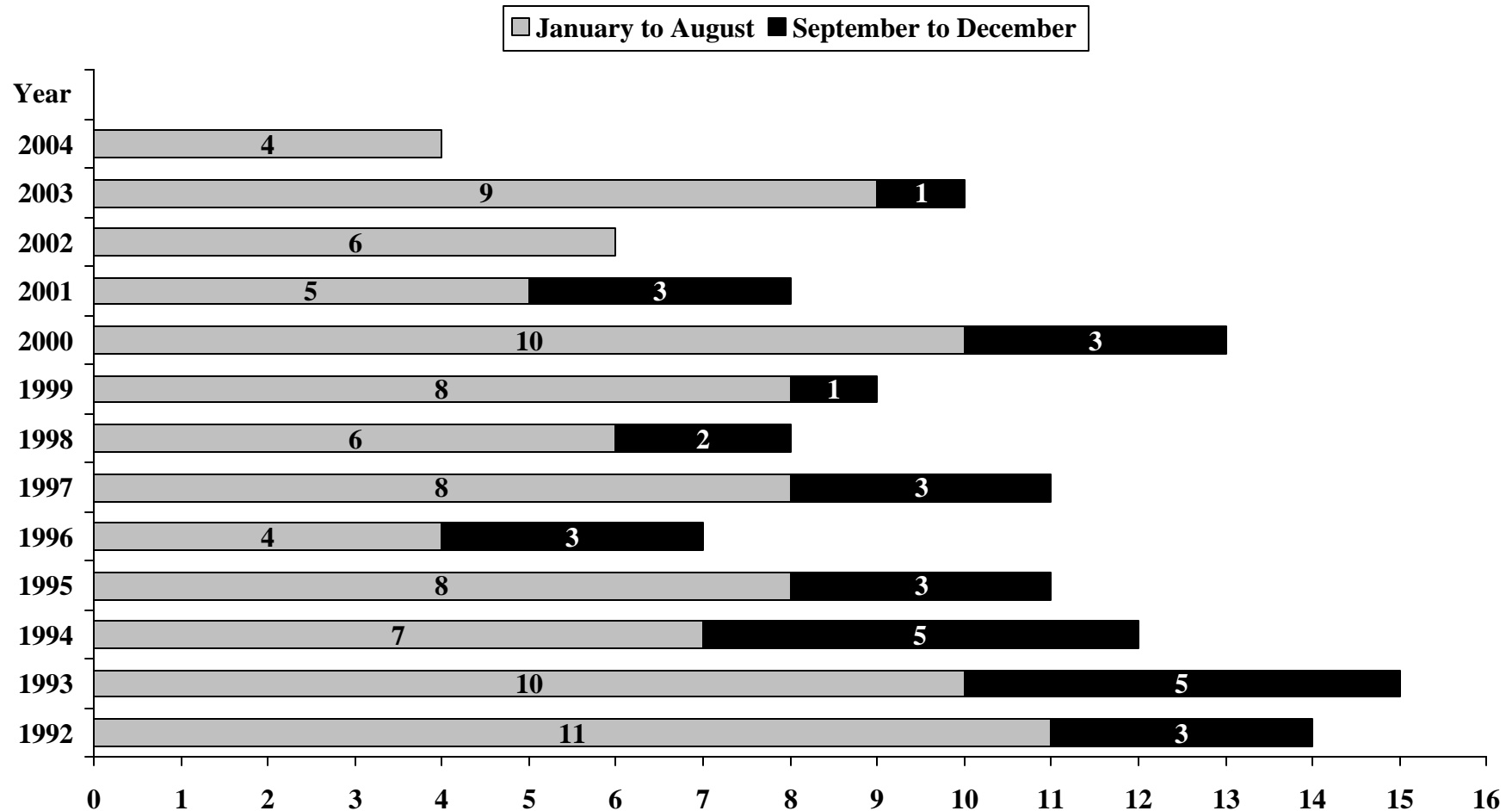
Date	RR	Location	Age	Service (yrs)	Employee's Job	Employee Act	Employee Location	Fatal Event	Movement Direction
9/02/93	ATSF	Carlsbad, NM	55	24	road conductor	crossing between	on track	struck by on-track equip.	shoved
9/20/94	ARR	Clear Site, AK	49	20	road brakeman	sitting	in car	derailment	shoved
9/03/96	DGNO	Dallas, TX	43	20days*	road brakeman	standing	on end of car	ran into on-track equip.	free-running
9/14/99	AM	Van Buren, AR	47	0.5	road conductor	adjusting coupler	between tracks	struck by on-track equip.	shoved
9/09/00	BNSF	Keokuk, IA	53	27	yard conductor	walking	on track	struck by on-track equip.	shoved
9/02/02	CSXT	Madisonville, KY	52	24	road conductor	walking	on track	struck by on-track equip.	shoved
9/12/03	GC	Dublin, GA	45	0.2	road brakeman	walking	on track	struck by on-track equip.	shoved
9/14/03	UP	Ogden, UT	53	26	yard conductor	releasing handbrakes	on end of car	lost balance	free-running
9/24/03	BNSF	Fresno, CA	35	2.25	yard conductor	riding	on side of car	fell or dislodged from car	shoved

\* Had returned to work for approximately 20 days after ten years of no service. Prior to the ten-year service gap, employee had ten years of service.

## Nine Switching Fatalities in September, 1992 through 2003

- The average age of the 9 employees was 42.1 years old. The average length of service was 21.1 years.
- Shoving was the direction of movement in 7 fatalities. The 2 other fatalities were free-running movements. The Switching Operations Fatality Analysis Group considers shoving a Special Switching Hazard requiring extreme caution. Fifty-three (53) percent of all switching fatalities involve shoving.

## Achieving the SOFA Zero Switching Fatality Goal



Switching Fatalities, 1992 to 2004.  
(note: 2004 count as of August 17, 2004)

The gray bar indicates the number of switching fatalities for each year occurring from January to August; the black bar indicates, from September to December. In 2002, the lowest year for switching fatalities, there were no fatalities in the September to December period. The SOFA Working Group is working towards the goal of Zero Switching Fatalities by emphasizing the Five Operating Recommendations and awareness of Special Switching Hazards.

## PLEASE MAKE SEPTEMBER A SAFE SWITCHING MONTH

The SWG\* urges employees engaged in switching operations to be aware of The Five Lifesavers. The 'Lifesavers' are a shortened version of the Five Operating Recommendations, which can be obtained by downloading the *SOFA Report* from the FRA's Web site: <http://www.fra.dot.gov/Content3.asp?P=102>

- Secure equipment before action is taken.
- Protect employees against moving equipment.
- Discuss safety at the beginning of a job or when a project changes.
- Communicate before action is taken.
- Mentor less experienced employees to perform service safely.

**SWG urges employees engaged in switching operations to recognize Special Switching Hazards like:**

Close Clearances

Movement of Mainline Trains

Operations When Shoving Is the Direction of Movement

Places or Objects Causing Tripping, Slipping, Falling

Unexpected Movement of Railcars

Free Rolling Railcars

Unsecured Cars

Motor Vehicles and Loading Devices

Equipment Defects

\* The SOFA Working Group (SWG) is comprised of representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA), the Association of American Railroads (AAR), the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), the United Transportation Union (UTU), and the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center (VNTSC).

## SOFA-defined Severe Injuries <sup>1</sup>

### Injuries

### Amputations <sup>2</sup>

January 1992 to May 2004

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
JAN	11	13	16	15	21	12	11	11	1	0	2	1	0	0	2	2
FEB	17	15	9	9	9	13	17	14	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	2
MAR	14	12	17	11	10	10	13	10	3	4	3	2	1	1	3	1
APR	8	10	6	10	12	6	9	13	1	2	0	1	2	0	1	1
MAY	6	12	8	8	12	14	9	5	1	2	3	0	2	2	2	0
<b>YTD <sup>3</sup></b>	<b>56</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>
JUN	9	10	8	11	8	5	10		2	1	1	0	1	0	0	
JUL	9	14	10	8	10	7	6		1	5	1	0	4	0	1	
AUG	13	10	11	14	8	10	7		1	0	1	4	0	1	0	
SEP	10	11	15	10	20	12	5		2	4	3	2	5	4	0	
OCT	12	12	16	10	5	11	9		2	5	2	2	0	0	2	
NOV	12	9	12	11	13	14	10		2	2	2	2	3	0	1	
DEC	18	9	7	22	12	9	8		4	1	0	4	1	1	2	
<b>totals</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>114</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	

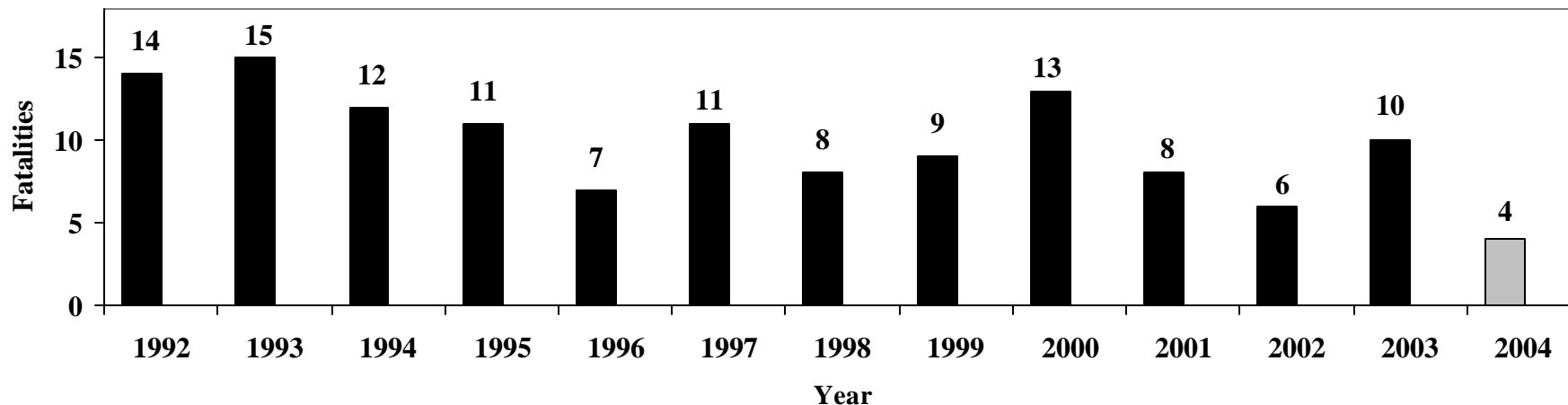
<sup>1</sup> 'Severe Injuries' were defined by the SOFA Working Group as (1) potentially life threatening; (2) high likelihood of permanent loss of function, permanent occupational limitation, or other permanent disability; (3) likely to result in significant work restrictions; and (4) result from a high-energy impact to the human body. 'Severe Injuries' include amputation, dislocation of the neck, loss of eye, electric shock or burn, and fracture to any bone except the lower arm, fingers, foot, and toes, See *Severe Injuries to Train and Engine Service Employees: Data Description and Injury Characteristics*. July 2001. This report may be found on the FRA website.

<sup>2</sup> Amputations are a type of SOFA-defined Severe Injury and are counted in 'Injuries'. Amputations are broken out separately because of the extreme nature of trauma to employees engaged in switching operations, and the potential for permanent occupational limitation.

<sup>3</sup> May is the latest month of Severe Injuries available from the FRA's Web site as of August 13, 2004.

## 128 Switching Fatalities Since 1992

The Switching Operations Fatality Analysis (SOFA) Group has reviewed each switching fatalities back to 1992. Since then, there have been 128 fatalities. There are risks to employees engaged in switching operations. On average, 10.3 fatalities occur each year. Already there have been 4 switching fatalities in 2004. **Please take caution. And observe the Five Operating Recommendations; and recognize Special Switching Hazards.**



## Four Switching Fatalities in 2004...Make September Switching Fatality Free

- On January 14th, a NS conductor, with four years service, was killed when struck by a train he was switching in Kankakee Yard, Kankakee, Illinois.
- On March 10th, a 46-year old Metro North Commuter Rail conductor, with 27-years service, was killed when struck by his own equipment at the Metro North Stamford Yard, Stamford, CT.
- On May 13th, a 38-year old Michigan Southern Railroad conductor was killed when he apparently slipped and fell from a car he was riding near Sturgis, Michigan.
- On May 18th, a 35-year old Norfolk Southern brakeman, with 6-years of service, was killed when the lead car he was riding was struck by a tractor-trailer in Elwood, Indiana.

(Note: Information on the four switching fatalities is preliminary, pending investigation.)