



**Department  
of Transportation**

**Federal Railroad  
Administration**

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**SAFETY ASSURANCE AND  
COMPLIANCE PROGRAM  
(SACP)**

**Year-2002 Accomplishments  
Year-2003 Audit Plans**



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**FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION  
SAFETY ASSURANCE AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM**

**I. Executive Summary**

**Background** - The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the arm of the Federal Government charged with promoting and ensuring the safety of the Nation’s railroad industry. This is accomplished through the promulgation and enforcement of safety regulations and the onsite monitoring of railroad operations. The goal is to prevent fatalities and injuries related to both railroad operations and the release of hazardous materials from rail cars, and to enhance the security of railroad operations nationwide. This involves cooperative efforts among FRA, railroads, States, local communities, railroad contractors and suppliers, other Federal agencies, as well as the public (especially members of the public who use highway-rail grade crossings or who enter onto railroad property).

One of the many tools FRA uses to maintain rail safety is the *Safety Assurance and Compliance Program*. The FRA established this program to facilitate permanent solutions to safety issues by using the expertise of the various facets involved on each of the major railroads to find the root causes of safety problems; develop solutions cooperatively with railroad management and employees; and focus both inspection activity and the use of enforcement tools on the most serious safety risks revealed by our inspections and our accident data.

This report was prepared in response to the request in the Conference Report of the Omnibus Appropriations Act for FY 2003 for a summary of the SACP activities in fiscal year 2002 and the Agency’s audit plans for fiscal year 2003.

**The Current State of Railroad Safety** - As judged by most indicators, long-term safety trends on the Nation’s railroads are very positive and, while no death or injury is acceptable, progress is being made to continue these positive trends. Although the numbers are preliminary, year 2002 proved to be one of the safest since FRA started collecting data.

- The total number of rail-related accidents and incidents dropped by 13.4 percent from year 2001 (13,926 vs. 16,087, respectively)—a historical low for this category.
- The accidents/incidents rate (total accidents and incidents per million train-miles) declined 14.1 percent (19.43 vs. 22.61).
- The lowest number of railroad-employee fatalities ever, 20, occurred.
- The employee-casualties rate (fatalities and injuries per billion work-hours) dropped by almost 14 percent.
- All rail-related fatalities in year 2002 numbered 948, a 2.4 percent reduction over year 2001.