



## **Federal Railroad Administration Railroad Safety Advisory Committee Fact Sheet**

### **About the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC)**

#### History

- The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) originally convened RSAC in 1994 as an ad hoc regulatory advisory committee to address roadway worker safety. That process produced a new rule resulting in the reduction deaths and injuries of track side workers, and demonstrated the need for a permanent formal, collaborative advisory committee.
- In March 1996, FRA established the [Railroad Safety Advisory Committee](#) (RSAC) to provide advice and consensus-based recommendations to the FRA on railroad safety matters. Today, 60 voting representatives drawn from 39 member organizations representing large and small railroads, rail labor organizations, state associations, rail passenger representatives, manufacturers and suppliers.

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#### RSAC Background

As a Federal Advisory Committee, RSAC provides invaluable input to the FRA regarding the development new regulations, the review and revision of existing regulations, statutory requirements, and identification of non-regulatory alternatives for the improvement of railroad safety in the United States. RSAC also provides advice and recommendations on specific tasks assigned to it by FRA, which the agency utilizes as the basis for some proposed and final regulatory actions.

#### RSAC Process

- FRA identifies a problem that may be solved through regulatory action. FRA sends a written problem statement to RSAC in the form of a “formal task.”
- RSAC may accept or reject the task, or ask that it be restructured.
- Once accepted RSAC establishes a working group with the necessary expertise to define the safety problem presented, gather relevant facts, develop a range of options, and decide upon a recommended option.
- When a task is assigned, FRA sets a target date for the presentation of the RSAC's recommendations to the FRA Administrator. FRA may withdraw a task from the RSAC at any time and promulgate a rule through traditional rulemaking.
- RSAC receives the working group report and considers whether to adopt the recommendations.
- Once adopted, RSAC makes recommendations to the FRA Administrator for action. Following the FRA Administrator’s approval, FRA publishes proposed and final rulemaking actions.

#### RSAC Members

The RSAC is made up of 60 voting representatives drawn from 39 member organizations representing large and small railroads, rail labor organizations, state associations, rail passenger representatives, manufacturers and suppliers. In addition, it has non-voting advisors from agencies with rail safety responsibilities in Canada and Mexico, and advisory representatives of the National Transportation Safety Board, Transportation Security Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. Click [here](#) for the membership list.

*Significant Accomplishments*

Since 1996, the RSAC has accepted [39 tasks](#) resulting in rulemakings covering critical safety areas such as:

- Track Safety Standards
- Locomotive Crashworthiness
- Passenger Equipment Safety Standards
- Roadway Worker Protection