Questions for Phone Interviews with System Level Officers (8)

This interview concerns the track inspection process. The Federal Railroad Administration will use this information in preparing a Report to Congress as required by the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008. Your answers and comments will inform possible future FRA policy and regulatory actions and improve overall railroad operational safety.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may choose to end your participation at any time. This data collection is authorized by law. Your identity will be kept private and known only to myself (the interviewer) and the study manager.

Public reporting burden for this information collection is less than 1 hour, including time for explaining the interview process, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. I am required by law to give you the OMB control number which is OMB No. 2130-XXXX and the expiration date is YYYY.

1. How long have you been in your current position at your railroad?
2. How many years of experience do you have doing track inspection or supervision?
3. How many miles of track does your railroad have?
4. How many track inspection personnel, both inspectors and supervisors, do you currently employ? How do you determine if this is adequate?
5. What is the typical size of a track inspector's territory on your railroad? (mainline inspectors – track miles, yard inspectors – number of sites)
6. What types of the following training does your railroad provide for track inspection personnel?

	Never	Every other year	Every year	More frequently
on-the-job training	☐	☐	☐	☐
FRA track standards training	☐	☐	☐	☐
FRA safety standards training	☐	☐	☐	☐
other track inspection related training (please specify) _____	☐	☐	☐	☐

What type of additional track inspection training, if any, do you think they should have? How frequently?

7. How do you determine whether inspection should be on foot or via hi-rail?

8. Does your railroad have a recommended speed for hi-rail inspections? Do you have a maximum speed for inspections? How did you establish these speeds?
9. (a) Does your railroad inspect more frequently than FRA regulations require? If so, could you provide an example? What was the reason you or your railroad chose to inspect more frequently than FRA regulations require? (b) Does your railroad inspect to FRA minimum safety standards or are your standards more stringent? If so, could you provide an example? What was the reason you or your railroad adopted more stringent standards than FRA regulations prescribe?
10. What types of special automated inspections do you do? How frequently? In what way are they useful?
    a. Ultrasonic rail flaw detection
    b. Gage restraint measurements (GRMS or PTLF)
    c. Track geometry measurements
    d. Vehicle track interaction (impact loads and vehicle dynamics)
    e. Anything else?
11. Are there any other inspections that you would find helpful? If so, what are they?
12. With regard to the table that you completed prior to this conversation, could you suggest a means to improve detection of those conditions that you indicated as "not readily detectable"?
13. What changes, if any, would you recommend in current FRA track inspection requirements?
14. Are there any other aspects of the inspection process that you would like to comment on for FRA consideration in preparing its Report to Congress?

Please complete the following table and send it to your interviewer prior to your phone conversation.

Track Condition	How do your inspectors commonly detect each condition? (Check all that apply.)				
	Visual		Results of Automated Inspection	Not readily detectable	Not applicable on my railroad
	on foot	hi-rail			
Geometry					
Gage dimension less than/greater than allowable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alinement deviation exceeds allowable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maximum crosslevel exceeds allowable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Runoff at end of raise exceeds allowable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deviation from uniform profile on either rail exceeds allowable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difference in crosslevel (warp) exceeds allowable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reverse elevation on curve exceeds allowable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ballast					
Insufficient ballast	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fouled ballast	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ties					
Ineffective/defective ties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rail seat abrasion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Track constructed without crossties does not effectively support track structure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rail/joints					
Broken rail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Worn rail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rail-end mismatch	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cracked or broken joint bar	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Insufficient number of joint bolts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Loose/worn joint bars	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Torch-cut or burned bolt hole in rail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Track Condition	How do your inspectors commonly detect each condition? (Check all that apply.)				
	Visual		Results of Automated Inspection	Not readily detectable	Not applicable on my railroad
	on foot	hi-rail			
Switches					
Stock rail/ switch point not seated or functioning as intended	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Loose, worn, or missing switch components	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fasteners/anchors					
Insufficient/ineffective fasteners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Insufficient anchors to restrain rail movement at turnouts or CWR	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Frogs					
Insufficient flangeway depth/width	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Worn or defective frog/frog components	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Misc.					
Heat kinks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Right-of-way obstructions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Object between base of rail and the bearing surface of the tie plate causing concentrated load	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Insufficient/defective tie plates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Missing or damaged signage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Track washouts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Poor drainage/pumping ties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Excessive vegetation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Defective derail conditions(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐