



Memorandum

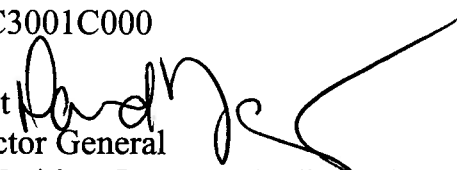
**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement—
Notification of Audit of the Federal Railroad
Administration's Oversight of Track-Related
Safety Issues
Federal Railroad Administration
Project No. 08C3001C000

Date: October 31, 2007

From: David Tornquist 
Assistant Inspector General
for Rail and Maritime Program Audits and
Economic Analysis

Reply to JA-50
Attn of:

To: Federal Railroad Administrator

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) plans to conduct an audit of the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) oversight of track-related safety issues. Train accidents and incidents caused by track-related problems can have long-term consequences, including death, injury, environmental damage, and economic loss. From 2002 through 2006, the railroads reported 5,084 train accidents to FRA that were caused by track-related problems. These accidents resulted in 8 fatalities and 359 injuries and caused about \$627 million in damages to railroad property and equipment.

The objective of this audit is to evaluate FRA's oversight of track safety on the Nation's freight rail lines to determine whether FRA identifies track defects that may affect safety and takes appropriate actions to improve railroad operations. Specifically, we will analyze the results of FRA's inspections of track, roadbed, and related structures and investigations of derailments and other accidents caused by track defects. We will conduct this audit at FRA Headquarters in Washington, D.C., and in selected FRA regional offices.

We will soon contact your audit liaison to schedule a formal entrance conference to discuss this audit. The Program Director for the audit is Brenda R. James and the Project Manager is Wendy M. Harris. If you have any questions or require additional information about this audit, please call me at (202) 366-9970, or Brenda James at (202) 366-0202.

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cc: Gina Christodoulou, RAD-43
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