



# Inside **THE** RAIL

From NASA's Confidential Close Call Reporting System



ISSUE 7

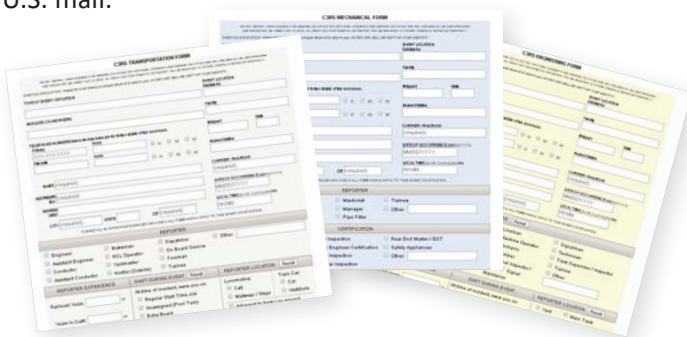
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## TIPS FOR EXCELLENT REPORTING TO C<sup>3</sup>RS

C<sup>3</sup>RS is a Confidential Close Call Reporting System designed to improve railroad safety by collecting and analyzing reports which describe unsafe conditions or events in the railroad industry. C<sup>3</sup>RS has nine railroads currently participating in the program and has received over 16,000 reports since inception in 2011. Employees can report safety issues or “close calls” **voluntarily and confidentially**. What can you do to help? Here are some Tips and Tricks for Excellent Reporting.

### Ways to Submit Your Report to C<sup>3</sup>RS

NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS has developed three report forms: Transportation, Mechanical, and Engineering, which are tailored to specific employee crafts. You should use the form that pertains to the craft you are working in. Even if you encounter a safety issue that involves a Mechanical or Engineering issue as a Transportation employee, you should fill out the Transportation Report Form. Submit your report through NASA's secure C<sup>3</sup>RS website at <https://c3rs.arc.nasa.gov>. Or, return the postage paid paper report form to NASA via U.S. mail.



### Who Can Report?

Employees whose carrier and craft are covered by a written Implementing Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU) can participate in NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS and receive a waiver from discipline in exchange for providing your valuable safety information.

NASA **removes all personal and third party references, dates, times, and related information** which could be used to infer your identity. In the history of NASA safety reporting, reporter or carrier confidentiality has never been compromised.

### What Can I Report?

C<sup>3</sup>RS welcomes **close calls** and safety concerns. A close call is any condition or event that may have the potential for more serious safety consequences. Just a few examples of close calls include:

- A train going above authorized maximum speed (provide the overspeed amount and if PTC was involved)

- A train striking a derail without derailling
- Run-through switch incidents
- On-track protection
- Blue Flag Protection
- Equipment or signal failure
- Communication, Training, or Procedural Issues

### What Shouldn't I Report to C<sup>3</sup>RS (Outside the Scope)?

NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS follows the Implementing Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU) between the carrier, affected labor organizations, and the Federal Rail Administration (FRA). According to Article 6.1 of the governing IMOU, incidents that are considered **outside the scope** of the program include:

- Damage that meets/exceeds FRA reporting threshold (currently \$10,700)
- Any injury to a person
- An event resulting in an identifiable release of a hazardous material
- Real Time Observation / Efficiency Testing
- Tampering or willful act, alcohol or drug use, or sabotage

### Tell Us Your Whole Story!

To ensure you are submitting a report that would result in a safety improvement, ask yourself:

- What was the event?
- When did it happen?
- Who discovered it and prevented it from becoming more serious?
- Where were the other crewmembers at the time of the event?
- Why do you think this happened or what might have contributed?
- Were there any human factors (communication, fatigue, distraction) that may have contributed?
- What was the result?
- What could prevent this event in the future (any ideas for corrective actions)?

Providing **detailed and complete reports** is vital to making the railroad industry safer. Once NASA de-identifies and analyzes your report, your carrier's Peer Review Team uses this information to develop corrective actions to help prevent more serious incidents or accidents in the future.

## Will NASA Call Me?

A NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS Expert Analyst may call you if you do not include sufficient information or to better understand the safety issues you are sharing. It is very important that you **return our call within 3 days** so that your identification (ID) strip (sent by U.S. Mail) can be returned quickly. The more information you include in your report, the faster the ID strip can be returned to you!

## What Can I Expect after I Submit a C<sup>3</sup>RS Report?

- If you submit your report on the C<sup>3</sup>RS website, a page will pop up with a verification code. This verification code is proof that your report has been securely transmitted to C<sup>3</sup>RS, but is **not** your identification (ID) strip.
- Each report is read by two NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS Expert Analysts within 5 days to look for system-wide alerting potential.
- The report, including the text description you provided to us, is completely **confidential, de-identified, and analyzed** by C<sup>3</sup>RS Expert Analysts, each with over 10 years of railroad operational experience.
- A NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS Expert Analyst may call you to obtain additional information if you do not provide enough information for their analysis.
- NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS will remove the ID Strip at the top of your report, date stamp it, and return it to you by U.S. Mail. This ensures that your personal information (name, address, carrier name, etc.) has been removed from your original report. Retain this ID strip as it is your **proof of report submission**.

## Example of a Report with Insufficient Information

**WHO?** *I forgot about the TSR and went overspeed.* **WHERE?** **WHEN?** **WHY?** **?**

A C<sup>3</sup>RS Expert Analyst would need to contact you to understand the who, when, where, what the overspeed amount was, and why you thought it happened. This may take longer to process and get your ID strip back to you.

## Example of a Good Report

**WHO** **WHEN** **WHERE** **WHAT** **WHY**

*I was the **Engineer**. It was **just after midnight, about 20 minutes into my shift**, and I had been **working for 5 days straight**. I had **entered a Temporary Speed Restriction about 2 miles before I stopped at the station platform**. After the passengers boarded the train, the train left the station. I glanced down at my speedometer and noticed that I was **overspeed by 13 mph**. I forgot about the TSR because I was **distracted by a passenger on the tracks and had stopped at a station within the limits**.*

NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS Expert Analysts analyze and de-identify each report and may call you for additional information

NASA C<sup>3</sup>RS sends your de-Identified report to your carrier's Peer Review Team (PRT)

PRT conducts Multiple Cause Incident Analysis (MCIA) on each report

PRT develops corrective actions for implementation at your carrier. Examples of successful corrective actions include:

- Speed restriction throttle reminder tags
- Switch position indicator lights
- Wayside signs and signals added and / or repositioned

Report Intake By Craft January to December 2018	
Transportation	4,078
Mechanical	175
Engineering	80
Signal	1

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Monthly Report Intake Previous 3 Months 2019	
February	311
March	353
April	386