



Minimum Train Crew Size Facts

- **Minnesota's freight trains currently operate with 2 crew members**
- Railroads transport goods of all kinds including hazardous materials. The second crew member is essential to HazMat response when train derailments occur in our state. This person communicates with first responders when they reach the site, opens blocked road crossings to provide access for emergency and clean up vehicles, de-couples the rest of the train, moves it to a safe distance mitigating the damage and potential for additional release or explosion, and maintains accurate train placement lists and waybills identifying the cargo involved.
- **The second crew member can open blocked crossings allowing school busses, fire trucks, ambulances, police, and the general public to reach the other side of the tracks. Railroad workers are Minnesotans first and we live in the communities we operate through. We care about the impact the equipment we operate has on the public.**
- In the tragic event of a collision at a public grade crossing, emergency responders must not be expected to climb on, under, or about railroad equipment without protection. With the current staffing of two people, a radio equipped crew member is the first person on scene and in control of train movements immediately, allowing the emergency response teams safe access to the injured. A two-person crew also allows one member to offer Samaritan response and first aid to injured persons in the event of a collision or accident.

- **The use of modern technology in railroad operations has increased the number of duties on the existing two-person train crews. Positive train control, trip optimizer, and handheld electronic reporting devices are all extra tasks and distractions on top of the previously existing responsibilities.**
- Minnesota and the communities within are not experimental proving grounds for the railroads to implement trial and error practices. The stakes are too high and a minimum standard for public and worker safety must be set.
- **While the issue of crew size has been debated at the federal level, there is no existing regulation or law that would preempt Minnesota from passing this bill into law. HF 4323 is quite simply a minimum standard public and worker safety bill that steers clear of any federal conversations and mirrors what other states have done.**
- It has been proffered by some that minimum crew size is a collective bargaining issue. This is a false statement. Minimum crew size is a worker safety and public safety issue. Railroad safety is not collectively bargained for, and is separate from that process. The public has a right to weigh in when railroads operating massive trains carrying hazardous materials through their communities make changes that affect their safety. **The public is not afforded a seat at any collective bargaining table and this bill would set a basic safety standard that is the current normal operating practice.**

