



(May 27, 2009)

**First, let's get the facts right**

Over the past three years, we have been witness to a growing number of on-duty employee fatalities and career-ending injuries.

Too often, the news of these fatalities and injuries travels with inaccurate facts based on hearsay or carrier statements intended more to protect the carrier from liability than to determine the root cause of the accident.

Job briefings and town hall meetings conducted by the carriers too often assess blame, naming of rules that were violated -- but rarely do they discuss the entire body of evidence that eventually comes out in National Transportation Board hearings and FELA lawsuits.

Statements such as, "95 percent of all accidents are because of human error," are factually inaccurate. It is well established that fatigue, training and unsafe work environments contribute substantially to many accidents.

Only through accurate reporting can we properly determine the cause of accidents and, more importantly, work to correct the conditions that caused them. Only an emphasis on education and correction -- not on assessing blame and imposing discipline -- will make the workplace safer.

A purpose of this Web page is to ensure more accurate reporting of serious accidents.

We will be placing safety alerts on this page, and those alerts also will be broadcast via e-mail to those signed up with the UTU International for such e-mail alerts. If you are not already signed up, **[click here](#)** to register to receive safety alerts.

We also suggest those alerts be posted at on-duty reporting points and be otherwise shared with your fellow crew members.