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# South African Transport and Allied Workers Union Head Office

Jeremy Cronin  
Chairperson  
Transport Portfolio Committee  
Parliament

Fax : 021 4033205

24<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Dear Comrade Jeremy

### National Railway Safety Regulator Amendment Bill

In response to your request for a comment on the above Bill, Satawu is broadly in support of the amendments.

In particular we support the introduction of fines which can be imposed on operators who do not comply with Safety Standards (new Section 45A of the Act).

We are a little concerned about the introduction of fees for services such as training and advice (amendment to Section 17 of the Act). We believe this may discourage stakeholders from calling on the Regulator to assist them and to provide training.

We would like to put on record that we feel the RSRegulator to be very distant from railway workers. We were excited at the inception of the Regulator as we had hoped that they would play a role in raising railway safety awareness generally. However we are unaware of any programmes or activities that have sought to involve railway workers, or members of the public for that matter. We are of the view that the Regulator needs to take on a much more public persona. This is something we intend taking up directly with the Regulator.

For your interest and information, I attach some statistics from Transnet Freight Rail which were provided to us in a recent meeting with management.

Comradely greetings

Janic Barrett  
Policy Research Officer

6<sup>th</sup> Floor Sanlam Centre  
203/212 Jeppe Str Cnr Vonwielligh Str  
Johannesburg, 2000  
RSA

P.O.Box 9451, JHB, 2001  
Tel: (011) 333-6127/9247  
Tel:(011) 336-0309/0300/0275/0250  
Fax: (011) 333-8918/9199

Email: dean@satawu.co.za

## Transnet Freight Rail accident statistics

	Actual 06	Target 07	Actual 07	Fatalities 07
Train on train collisions	10	12	12	0
Passenger train derailments	2	2	2	0
Goods train derailments	188	170	179	
Shunting derailments	526	595	577	
SPADS	95	127	117	
Level crossing accidents	143	161	129	13

Employee fatalities have been as follows :-

2004/05	11
2006/07	9
2007/08	9

In 2007/08 of the 9 fatalities, four were as a direct result of railway operations.

The immediate causes of the deaths were

1. Service driver struck by a metal bar
2. Service driver struck by a container
3. She assistant struck by a steel rod
4. Fire officer in a vehicle that capsized
5. Infra assistant in a road vehicle collision
6. Yard official under the wheels of rolling stock
7. Train assistant in a derailment
8. Flagman in a road vehicle that overturned
9. Traction linesman electrocuted

The Disabling Injury Frequency Rate (DIFR) target was 1.2% which was met.

The employee fatality figures do not include non-employee fatalities e.g. civilians at level crossings. Thirteen non-employees were killed at level crossings in 2007/08. 82 were seriously injured.