

# Biz NS

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**NORFOLK SOUTHERN**  
One line, infinite possibilities.

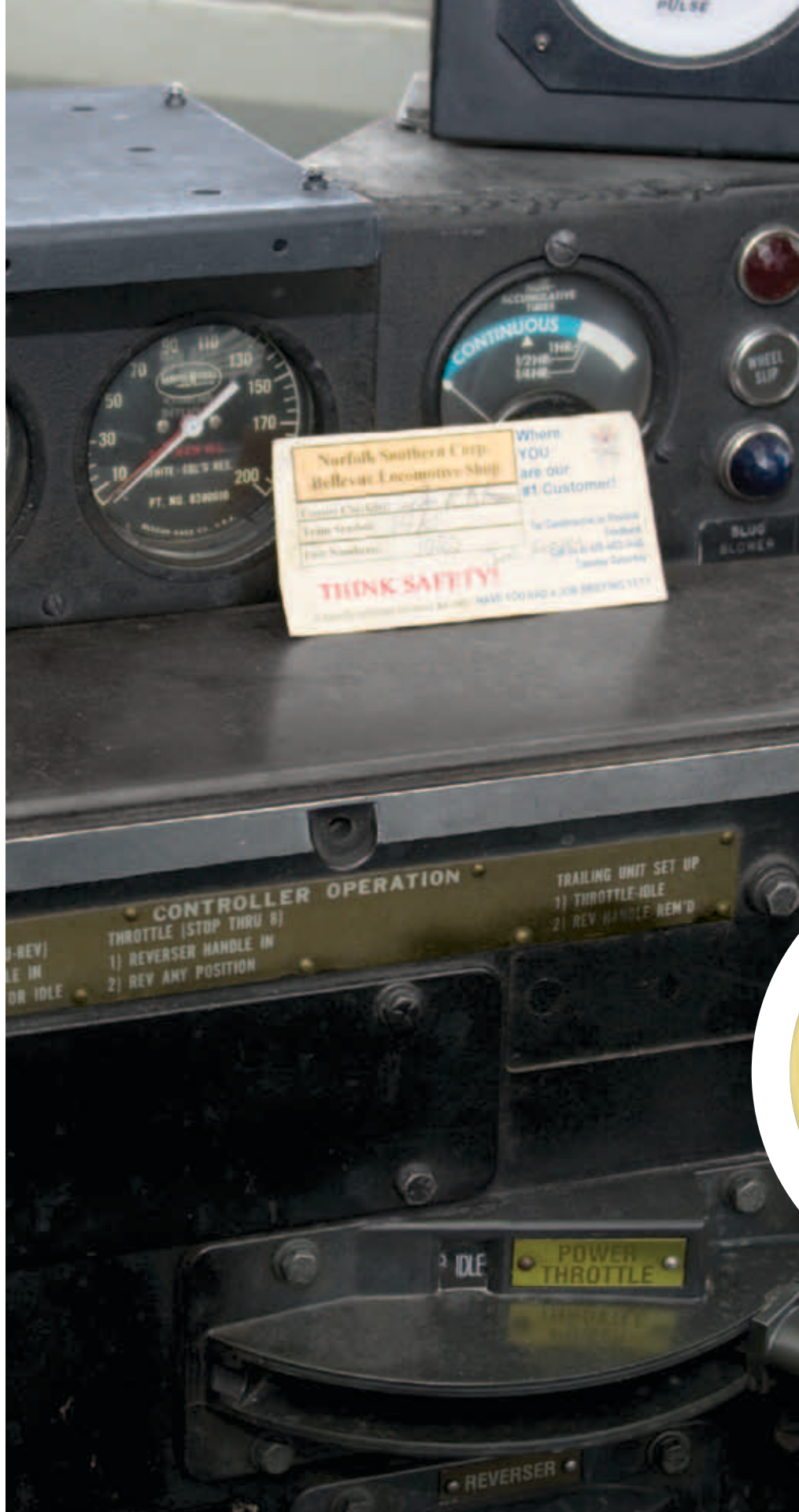


Safety  
Through  
Teamwork

# Biz NS

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# Teaming Up For Safety

Across Norfolk Southern's system, operations employees are finding creative ways to turn safety into a team sport.

On the Central Division, employees have done so literally. During the past year, they have created a division football league and an Iron Railroader Challenge in which the various terminal and line of road locations compete as teams to achieve the best safety record.

At the Bellevue, Ohio, mechanical shop, employees who fuel and inspect outbound locomotives now leave a service card in the engine cab for train and engine crews, giving them a checklist of work performed and the name of the employees who did it. The cards also include a safety reminder.

Engineering department track gangs systemwide are reaching out to transportation train and engine crews to deliver safety messages and offer a helping hand when needed.

The goal of these and many other initiatives across the railroad is to bring transportation, engineering, and mechanical employees together in a united effort to eliminate workplace injuries.

Those efforts are producing results. In 2010, NS achieved an injury ratio of 0.89, the lowest in company history based on number of injuries per 200,000 employee-hours. The engineering department recorded a 0.50 injury ratio, establishing another NS safety record. Such employee performance earned NS, for the 22nd consecutive year, the E.H. Harriman Gold Award as the rail industry's safest Class 1 railroad – an unparalleled feat.

■ Far left: To improve its working relationship with transportation, the Bellevue mechanical shop created a card that is signed by employees who service locomotives for outbound train and engine crews. The card includes safety reminders.

■ Left: For the 22nd consecutive year, NS employees in 2010 won the Harriman Gold Award as the U.S. rail industry's safest Class 1 railroad.





What follows is a look at some of the success stories involving interdepartmental cooperation to ensure that every employee goes home safely.

### A team sport

The sports-themed safety competitions on the Central Division have sparked more communication and cooperation across departments, said **Dave Dixon**,

superintendent of Debutts Terminal in Chattanooga. Dixon last fall suggested starting a division football league, and he developed the Iron Railroader Challenge this year to keep the momentum going.

"It's really worked out," Dixon said. "I've seen more people talking across departments, making sure people were double-checking switches and making sure train movements were aligned."

In the competitions, each "team" on the division, whether at a terminal or line of road, is comprised of transportation, engineering, and mechanical employees. An injury, regardless of department, counts against the entire team, and having zero reportable injuries is a minimum requirement for winning. Employees on winning teams have received ball caps, T-shirts, sweatshirts, and NS watches as prizes.

Dixon said more employees are speaking up at interdepartmental safety meetings about potential hazards they've seen on the job. He's also noticed that employees from different departments are more willing to point out unsafe behavior to each other – a big key to improving safety, he said.

"A transportation employee who sees an unsafe action while a maintenance-of-way employee is working on track is more apt today to go up and say, 'Hey, what are you doing?' " Dixon said. "The most important thing is getting employees on the ground communicating, because that goes a lot further than a supervisor telling them about a safety rule."

### Reaching out

NS rules require that employees in program maintenance watch passing trains for possible defects. Last year, engineering department field gangs took that a step further. They now routinely make radio or one-on-one contacts with train crews and pass along safety messages, said **Jeff McCracken**, assistant vice president engineering maintenance-of-way.

"It might be weather related, it might be about climbing on and off equipment, or whatever we think might be applicable to the day," McCracken said. "It's not a big thing, but it goes a long way to build camaraderie and keep everybody aware."

Members of the S-9 surfacing gang, for example, stay in radio contact with train crews hauling freight past their work site, said **Charlie Mallett**, gang supervisor. If a train crew needs a ride or help moving equipment, the S-9 gang will assist whenever possible, he said. Not long ago, gang members drove a conductor to get a replacement for a broken car knuckle.

"One of the train crews asked me one day why we were talking to them," Mallett said. "I told him, 'Because we care about your safety, too. We're not out here to set you guys up. We're here to help you.' He thought that was amazing."

In the Central Division competitions, a "team," whether at a terminal or line of road, is comprised of transportation, engineering, and mechanical employees.

■ At left: **Dave Dixon**, terminal superintendent, Chattanooga.

■ At right: **Robert Adams**, shop laborer, is chairman of the Bellevue locomotive shop's safety committee.

■ At right below: A locomotive in the Bellevue shop is readied for outbound train service. Among other things, the shop cleans and supplies the cab; fuels, oils, and services the engine; and pumps and cleans the toilet.

## Happiness is a clean cab

The Bellevue locomotive shop created a service card to improve its working relationship with train and engine crews, said **Robert Adams**, a shop laborer and safety committee co-chairman. The shop's senior general foreman, **Chuck Bentler**, came up with the idea.

The card is signed by shop employees who clean and supply the locomotive cab, pump and check the toilet, and fuel, sand, and service the engine.

"We were getting complaints from transportation that cabs were not being cleaned properly and that we were delaying their trains," Adams said. "Well, these cards create accountability by the mechanical shop. When I sign my name to something, I'm going to make sure it's done. You're taking responsibility by putting your name on it."

In addition, the cards have a printed message to "Think Safety!" as well as a friendly reminder: "Have you had a job briefing yet?" The Bellevue shop, Adams added, takes safety seriously, having gone more than 1,200 days without a reportable injury.

For Adams, the card is a reminder that "it's all about helping each other out."

Midway through 2010, Bellevue's terminal safety committee began focusing its monthly safety blitzes on train and engine crews, said committee co-chairman **Derek Duffield**, a union yardmaster. On one blitz, members handed out trash bags to crews as a reminder to properly dispose of trash in the locomotive cab.

Trash in the cabs is a safety concern, Duffield said, because discarded bottles and trash are potential tripping hazards.



Transportation, engineering, and mechanical employees have representatives on the safety committee.

"If there's an issue, we've got all these different departments working as one to get it fixed," Adams said. "Diversity to me is pretty much people coming together to work as one, and that's what is amazing at Bellevue."

“Teamwork is about making sure all employees are safe, no matter where they work.”

– **Darnell Wood Sr.**, terminal superintendent, Conway



### Expanding the reach

In Pennsylvania, the Conway Terminal safety committee recruits members from territories outside the terminal’s operating district, including those who work on the Mingo, Conway East Road, and Conway West Road territories.

“They have train and engine employees who come in here on a frequent basis, and we like to have their input,” said **Darnell Wood Sr.**, terminal superintendent. That has helped the committee expand its reach for safety.

One example: After a road crew member from Mingo reported overgrown brush and weeds alongside NS track near a major steel customer, the Conway safety committee arranged to have the potential hazard removed.

“Our committee got the ball rolling and actually cleared up an item on somebody else’s district,” Wood said. “In days long ago, if something didn’t impact Conway Terminal, we may not have done anything about it. We decided to take care of it because that’s what teamwork is all about. It’s making sure all employees are safe, no matter where they work.”

### Turning conflict into cooperation

Because of a change in business conditions, NS in 2000 merged the transportation and mechanical departments at Norfolk Terminal into a single department, dubbing it “transmechanical.” That consolidation ended three years ago, but a lasting benefit has been improved lines of communication, said **Jeff Yates**, terminal superintendent.

“Both departments work much closer together, and that has resulted in a more productive, efficient, and safe operation,” Yates said. “The terminology I use a lot here is that we don’t have lines drawn in the sand. I know the coal pier can’t run if the equipment doesn’t work, and the mechanical guys recognize they won’t have jobs if we don’t dump coal. We need each other for it to work.”

**Mike Phillips**, a locomotive engineer at Portlock Yard, chairs the Norfolk Terminal Pride and Safety Committee. Once a transportation-only committee, it now includes all operating departments.

“The safety team belongs to everybody, from the top man to the person who’s been here for six months,” said Phillips. “We want everyone to be heard.”

The importance of working together is illustrated by efforts to prevent rule violation derailments, said **Jim Spicer**, a carman at Portlock and co-chair of the pride and safety committee. Spicer calls derailments “an opportunity that didn’t have to be for someone to get hurt.”





■ At left: Locomotive engineer **Mike Phillips** and conductor **Wayne Troester** man a locomotive at Norfolk Terminal, where employees have worked hard to improve interdepartmental communication and cooperation.

“If we’re working a track and cars derail, we don’t feel like being squeezed by a couple hundred tons of steel, so the transportation guys have got to be looking out for us just like we have to look out for them,” said Spicer.

**Pete Johnson**, carman and co-chair of the terminal’s car safety committee, said expanding membership on the pride and safety committee to all operating departments has been a factor in improving teamwork.

“Years ago, transportation and mechanical were always at each other’s throats looking to blame if something went wrong,” said Johnson, a 30-year terminal veteran. “Now, everybody gets a larger view of what’s going on, and rather than pointing fingers, we can work together to find solutions when things aren’t going the way they should be.”

During 31 years at the terminal, **Roy Robinson**, gang leader mechanical and chairman of the terminal’s coal pier safety committee, also has witnessed the turnaround. At a pride and safety committee meeting earlier this year, Robinson reported that heavy rains had washed out a gravel road to the coal car hump yard.

■ Below: Safety leaders **Roy Robinson**, gang leader mechanical, **Pete Johnson**, carman, and **Jim Spicer**, carman, are involved in efforts to improve safety by promoting teamwork at Norfolk Terminal.

“I didn’t expect it to get fixed for a week, but within three hours after that meeting the road was finished,” he said. “I was stunned. That was beyond any expectation I had, and that’s what makes the difference in safety. I’ve got people looking out for me who I didn’t know were looking out for me, and that’s the only way you’ll ever accomplish the double zeroes, no incidents, no injuries.”

**Wayne Troester**, a conductor who stepped down this year as chairman of the pride and safety committee after more than a decade, said adherence to the railroad’s SPIRIT values has been key to interdepartmental cooperation.

“I’ve always said that if you put safety first and lead by example, performance will follow,” he said. “If you use integrity in all your dealings, you will get respect, and then teamwork will fall into place. When you work as a team, the innovations will come along to do a better job. They all follow safety, and that’s what I think has made Norfolk Terminal a success.” ■ BizNS



# Engineering Raises the Bar on Safety



Engineering employees in 2010 set a new benchmark for safety.

Their 0.50 injury ratio was the lowest ever recorded by a Norfolk Southern operating department and set a new rail industry standard.

The achievement, based on reportable injuries per 200,000 employee-hours, is noteworthy because engineering employees are exposed to potential work hazards daily as they maintain NS' rail, track, bridges, signals, and roadway.

"This is a major event," said **Tim Drake**, vice president engineering. "Years ago a 0.50 would be something nice to dream about, but now it's a reality. It took every part of the department to get to that 0.50, and I'm so proud of the people for what they've done."

The department earned the NS Chairman's Award for safety, an honor given only for exemplary performance. The department surpassed the previous safety record for an NS operating division, a 0.53 injury ratio set in 2008 by mechanical employees.

Many engineering work groups had noteworthy achievements in 2010. For the first time, production gangs – the traveling gangs that install rail, crossties, and ballast – had zero reportable injuries. In the communications and signals department, Group 1 on construction lines north reached 1 million employee-hours with no reportable injuries, while the Lake Division C&S finished five years with zero reportable injuries and incidents. In October, the entire engineering department worked without a reportable injury.

One reason the record is particularly satisfying: About 30 percent of the department's employees have less than two years on the job.

"We've been training these new hires not only how to work safely but also how to do the job correctly," Drake said, "From the start, we're getting that buy-in for the high standards that we demand."

## Supervision steps up

Much of the success goes to supervisors' efforts to keep safety at the forefront, Drake said.

"I've never seen such an insistence to safety awareness and focus and attention to duty as I saw last year," he said. "If supervisors show the dedication and spend the time and the energy, the employees are going to follow."

That effort involves communication, training, and teamwork.



"With all the new employees we're hiring, you'd think we would have more incidents and injuries, but it's the opposite. The injuries have progressively gone down, and I'd say the training has been instrumental in that."

– **Mike Reid**, NS chief engineer





■ Left: NS communications and signals employees are responsible for installing and maintaining train signals, railroad crossings, and switch machines. Pictured at far left are train signals installed at Howell interlocking in Atlanta; the signals are remotely controlled by Georgia Division dispatchers. At left is a grade-crossing signal.

■ Far left: At the railroad's March safety meeting, CEO **Wick Moorman** presents **Tim Drake**, NS vice president engineering, with the 2010 Chairman's Award. The department achieved a 0.50 injury ratio, setting a new company record in safety.

"It's making sure we get good, quality people when we hire them; it's great training from the day they walk on the property; and it's excellent supervision making sure their people do things the right way," said **Jeff McCracken**, assistant vice president engineering. "We focused stronger on every aspect of our safety process and made sure we stayed on top of it every day. Too often in the past, we would get kind of complacent after getting into the year and start slipping up. We didn't do that last year."

## Structured training pays off

The injury-free performance by the system maintenance-of-way gangs proves that all employees can work injury-free, said **Mike Reid**, NS chief engineer. Reid oversees NS' program maintenance, which includes the system production gangs.

"These people are out there every day in the line of fire, so to speak, performing the work," Reid said. "They are installing ties, laying and welding rail, and surfacing track. They have the highest exposure to potential hazards, from weather, to walking conditions, to the work itself. For the entire group to go without an incident is absolutely unprecedented. It's a deal where everybody was pulling in the same direction."

Reid said the department's introduction of structured training about four years ago – after a notably bad year for injuries – is showing results. Each week, craft employees participate in short training sessions that include topics such as roadway protection and equipment operation rules. Gang supervisors train on leadership and management skills. Everybody is tested to make sure they understand the material.

"With all the new employees we're hiring, you'd think we would have more incidents and injuries, but it's the opposite," Reid said. "The injuries have progressively gone down, and I'd say the training has been instrumental in that."

## Watchful eyes

One of NS' track surfacing gangs, S-9, has gone more than 7,800 days without a reportable injury. The gang, with 12 employees, works across the system to maintain track ballast, the layer of rocks that provide foundational support for the track.

The secret to their success?

"We talk about safety all day long," said **Charlie Mallett**, an S-9 supervisor. "In our morning meeting, we talk about things that happened the day before, including any close calls or things that could have been close calls, and we encourage anybody who has a safety issue to bring it up."

Under an initiative Mallett suggested, the gang now elects two safety chairmen every quarter. One works near the front of the gang and the other near the rear. "That's been a big help because there's more eyes looking at things at each end of the gang," he said. The co-chairmen also help conduct equipment inspections and field safety audits. "They may see something a machine operator doesn't," he said.

The department's R-3 dual rail gang has had similar success, said **Tracy Collier**, a gang supervisor. The 78 members of R-3 work with ribbons of rail 1,440 feet long, and they must guard against rail rolling over onto feet or ankles before it is spiked down on crossties. To enhance safety, R-3 positions a supervisor and a foreman near the front, middle, and rear of the gang, which can be spread more than a mile apart from end to end.

"We strategically place them in areas that are more labor intensive and where there are potentially more hazards," Collier said. "That way if we come across a situation we can head it off before it becomes a problem."

R-3 has more than 1,100 days without a reportable injury. **Travis Taylor**, a machine operator and chairman of R-3's safety committee, said supervision encourages discussion about work issues and is good about addressing concerns. That has improved safety by fostering good work attitudes and morale, he said.

"There's an open-door policy," Taylor said. "We feel comfortable that we can tell supervisors something and it's going to get done or corrected. Everyone out here wants to work safely so they can go home to their families every weekend."

## Talk it through

On the Northern Region, the two groups comprising the C&S construction lines north – Group 1 and Group 2 – together have worked nearly 1.8 million employee-hours without a reportable injury. The groups have a total of 17 gangs of five to nine members each that travel the region installing railroad crossings, train signals, and switch machines. A key to their success is a commitment to thorough job briefings.

"They talk about what they're going to do, how they're going to do it, and what they're going to do to do it safely," said **Jeff Vicari-Baker**, superintendent C&S Northern Region. Employees, he said, are empowered to question foremen and supervisors if they think safety would be compromised in any way.



"Everybody discusses the work," Vicari-Baker said. "It boils down to saying, here's the way we're going to do it, and then giving everybody the opportunity – I call it an obligation – to speak up if they think there's a better, safer way. The idea that five heads are better than one is true in a gang."

C&S assigns new hires to construction gangs systemwide to receive mentoring and training under the guidance of a foreman and experienced signalmen, said **Ray Rumsey**, assistant vice president C&S.

"This gives them the benefit of these experienced employees and seeing the work processes and attention to detail that go into having a real safe operation," Rumsey said. "As they move on to division maintenance jobs, they'll know what goes in to making a safety process successful."

## Employee buy-in

The Lake Division C&S, which achieved 1 million employee-hours of injury-free service in late 2009, has succeeded by letting employees take ownership of the safety process, said **Mick Ireton**, division C&S general superintendent.

"If you can get individuals buying in to what we're trying to do and correcting and looking after each other, that's a big deal," Ireton said. "Getting people to take ownership of their own safety really makes a big difference in the attitudes."

Leading the effort is a safety committee made up of agreement employees from each of the division's 10 territories. Last year, the division launched an initiative to have the committee representative in each territory meet with new hires within their first week on the job.



■ Far left: NS' system production gangs install and maintain track cross-ties, rail, and ballast. Here, new cross-ties near a track switch are ready to be spiked into place.

■ Left: Employees and machines with the TS-8 timber and surfacing super gang install new ties along a stretch of track in North Carolina.

"They have a face-to-face safety meeting, talking about what we've accomplished in safety, what our goals are, and what we expect," Ireton said. "It gets everybody off on the right foot to start with that kind of focus and emphasis, where it's not coming from your supervisor but from one of your co-workers."

## Working as a team

Last year, system gangs that report to **Johnny Tharpe**, general division engineer, formed a committee that meets every quarter to observe a different gang in the field. One person from each rail, surfacing, and timber and surfacing gang on his area serves on the committee.

That has helped strengthen safety practices across the division, said **Bill Evans**, senior supervisor of the TS-1 timber and surfacing gang.

"After they've been out with a gang, they'll meet as a group later in the afternoon and discuss their findings and go over things the gang might improve on," Evans said. "It's not something to knock the gang down or to be critical. It's something to build from and to help us."

## The personal touch

In the field, Evans tries to talk one-on-one every day with members of his gang – something the engineering department encourages to build better working relationships.

"You can often find out if something is on their mind that might be distracting them to the point they shouldn't even be out there," Evans said. "Or they might have an issue with something that I can take care of."

Given the large machines they deal with, the work environment that system gangs encounter can be unforgiving. Evans doesn't let his gang forget that.

"The biggest thing I tell my employees on a daily basis is to just stop and think before doing something," he said. "Most times they don't have problems running a machine down the track. It's when something breaks down, or when they get into a little different situation that they can get into trouble. I tell them to stop and think about what could go wrong, or what the right tool to use is. It's about making sure that all our people go home safe." ■ BizNS



From September 2009 thru mid-May 2011, NS' tie, rail, and surfacing gangs had worked more than 2.9 million employee-hours without a reportable injury. Non-agreement employees on the gang had more than 151,900 injury-free hours from October 2009 through April, for a combined total of more than 3.1 million hours without a reportable injury.

# A New Focus: The Behavioral Side of Safety

## Seven Steps to Safety Success

*Job safety briefings*



*Communication and teamwork*



*Maintain situational awareness*



*Recognize consequences – manage risk*



*Safety and operating rules adherence*



*Personal protective equipment*



*WellNS*

You've been taught the safety rules, had a job briefing, and been issued personal protective gear.

Now that you're out on a Norfolk Southern job site, how are you going to use those tools to ensure that you and your co-workers stay safe? The answer boils down to the decisions you make and the actions you take, says **David Julian**, NS vice president safety and environmental.

"Norfolk Southern has always done really well on what I call safety engineering – our job safety briefing process, the creation of operating and safety rules, developing the right tools and technologies for the job, and our efforts to address unsafe working conditions," Julian said. "Our opportunity for improvement is with engaging employees to understand the behavioral side of safety – how they evaluate and recognize the consequences of at-risk behavior and make the correct decisions for a safe outcome."

NS this year plans to step up its focus on behavior-based safety, and Julian said he is looking to supervisors and local safety committees to spearhead the effort. The initiative has two key components: to promote more peer-to-peer employee contacts on the job, and to recognize co-workers who display good safety habits.

In the past, workplace safety audits primarily were used to spot unsafe conditions, such as tripping hazards. Now, NS wants supervisors and safety committees to watch for employee work behaviors that create potential hazards.

The purpose is not to embarrass or punish employees but to reinforce and recognize safe behavior, Julian said. It's also about making sure that employees – especially the growing number of new hires – understand the consequences: Taking short cuts or failing to follow NS' safety process can result in injury or death.

"This does not mean we want people to go out and try to find somebody doing something wrong," Julian said. "It's about making sure all of our employees know the right way to do something, and letting them know that if they do it the right way, they will reduce their risk of injury. It is moving toward positive reinforcement and treating each other with respect, so we have open lines of communication."

Employees will hear more about the initiative during the year, Julian said. As part of the effort, the safety department has created a seven-step checklist that outlines the key aspects of NS' safety process. It is posted in work areas across the system.

"When you create a work environment where you're positively reinforcing safe behaviors," Julian said, "you really can develop the right attitudes and the safe working habits. That's where you get the sustained results." ■ BizNS

# Safety Belongs to the Thoroughbred

Scenes from 2011 Safety Expo in Norfolk



■ NS' safety expo in March featured operations equipment and creative game booths promoting safety from divisions across the railroad. Among them: (top left) NS' Rail Test Car 10, used mainly on the Georgia Division to test for rail defects; (above) **Ron Tindell**, left, senior general foreman, and **Mike Pandolph**, mechanical supervisor, both of Conway locomotive shop, stand beside a safety wheel shop employees created; (left) **Latoya Seals**, assistant to VP IT in Atlanta, volunteers at an IT safety booth; (at right) Brainy, the costumed ambassador for the NS public safety campaign "Train Your Brain," greets employees and guests.

# NS' Hammond Nominee

## Monk Wilkerson: It's a matter of attitude



**Monty "Monk" Wilkerson** has a daughter who teaches third grade. The first thing students see when they walk in her classroom is a sign that hangs from the ceiling and reads: "Smile - Attitude is everything."

That's a message that Wilkerson, an NS yard locomotive engineer in Danville, Ky., believes railroaders should take to heart. Having a positive, winning attitude is the key to working safely, he said, and he should know: He's just completed 35 injury-free years on the railroad.

"Whenever you're not on top of your game you could get in trouble and open yourself up for possible injury or accident," Wilkerson said. "If you're carrying around a bad attitude, you're certainly not on top of your game."

Wilkerson's commitment to safety – both on the job and in the community – explains why NS selected him as the company's Harold F. Hammond award

nominee for 2010. The rail industry award goes to a U.S. railroad employee who has demonstrated outstanding safety achievement in the workplace and the community.

Around Danville, Wilkerson is known as a person who takes the initiative to promote safety – whether it's coaching co-workers about safe work practices, alerting supervisors to potentially unsafe yard conditions, or talking to children about railroad crossing safety. At the yard, he doesn't hesitate to pick up trash or tidy things up to make it safer.

"No matter what type of circumstances he faces, Monk always has a way to look at things in a positive light," said **Thomas Dunlap**, superintendent Danville Terminal. "His co-workers know that when they work with Monk, he's going to do it according to the operating rules. They know he is genuinely concerned about their safety and making sure they get home safely. I'm glad he's on my team."

Wilkerson has served many years on the Danville Yard/2nd District safety committee, and currently is chairman. Under his leadership, the yard in April celebrated 800 days without a reportable injury.

Family is a big area of focus for Wilkerson. He helped organize an annual Family Day cookout for the yard, driving home that safety is central to NS' family values. When

NS introduced WellNS, a program that encourages employees to improve their fitness and overall health, Wilkerson lost 30 pounds. Then he initiated a "Biggest Loser" contest with co-workers and their families to help promote WellNS.

He spreads the safety message in his community as well. For the past 15 years, he has been a presenter for Operation Lifesaver to educate children and adults about the importance of observing railroad warning signs and signals.

Through his church and numerous charities, Wilkerson reaches out to those in need in his community. In one example, he started a recycling program to collect aluminum cans at Danville Yard and gave the proceeds from selling the cans to a local organization that works with physically and emotionally abused boys. As a member of a local Gideon camp, he distributes Bibles to nursing homes and other facilities.

"As far as attitude goes, I'm a man of faith, and the spiritual side of my life helps tremendously," Wilkerson said.

Wilkerson said he is proud to be NS' Hammond nominee, but he doesn't view his contributions as anything extraordinary.

"I'm just an ordinary man who tries to do a little extra," he said. "I would call upon anyone to do that."

■ BizNS



*"I'm just an ordinary man who tries to do a little extra. I would call upon anyone to do that."*

**- Monk Wilkerson,**  
locomotive engineer and  
Hammond nominee

■ Left: At NS' safety awards meeting, CEO **Wick Moorman** recognizes **Monk Wilkerson** as the railroad's Hammond nominee.

■ Top: **Monk Wilkerson,** NS' Hammond nominee, talks to fellow employees about the importance of attitude and safety.



## Roanoke Shop Celebrates a Safety Milestone



■ **Chuck Sloan**, left, shop manager, and **Ross Thacker**, machinist, both of Roanoke locomotive shop, show off the bell the shop received in recognition of achieving 1 million employee-hours without a reportable injury.

After 13 years at Roanoke locomotive shop, **Ross Thacker** has become so safety conscious that he finds himself doing job briefings before starting work projects at home.

"It gets so ingrained here that you take it with you everywhere," said Thacker, a machinist and chairman of the shop's safety committee.

That culture of safety is reflected in the shop employees' performance. In March, they reached a coveted safety milestone, working 1 million employee-hours with no reportable injuries. That record earned the employees a Best Mechanical Shop safety award for 2010.

**Chuck Sloan**, shop manager, credited the achievement to teamwork and employee buy-in to the safety process.

"It's a cooperative effort between labor and management," Sloan said. "It takes the commitment of every employee at the shop to have this kind of success."

Making the accomplishment more remarkable is that about 70 percent of the shop's 200 or so employees have less than five years of experience. Members of the shop safety committee have taken the lead to mentor new employees, Thacker said.

"Safety gets drilled into them from Day 1," he said. "This new generation of craft employees coming in knows what they see, and they see the company stressing safety and trying to fix issues. I'm seeing more of a 'Let's do this together' attitude. The company really has put a lot of effort into this."

The Roanoke facility is a heavy repair locomotive shop that handles overhauls and catastrophic engine failures. Pinch points to hands and fingers are a prime hazard as shop employees disassemble and assemble engines and structural components of 400,000-pound locomotives.



■ At left and right: To recognize employees for safety performance, the Roanoke shop held a family day celebration. It gave employees a chance to show spouses and children around the shop, driving home the message that safety is central to NS' family values.

Other potential exposures that must be covered are electrical shocks, sharp edges, moving locomotives, and heavy tools. The shop's last injury occurred in October 2007, Sloan said, when an employee injured his thumb while operating a shearing machine used to cut metal.

Agreement employees lead the shop's safety committee and select a chairman from a slate of nominees. "The chairman serves a term and if he's not doing the job, he can be voted out," Thacker said.

Thacker attributes the shop's safety success to these key factors:

- Shop management offers solid support. Shop supervision attends meetings and ensures priority is given to addressing shop maintenance items that pose potential safety hazards.

"If it's something that has to do with safety it gets fixed pretty quickly around here," Thacker said. "Management helps us out with issues we can't solve ourselves, and that's a big, big part of why our shop has done so well."

- The safety committee is proactive. As chairman, Thacker has expanded shop safety audits to look for unsafe conditions and unsafe behavior. With busy workloads, craft employees sometimes have difficulty finding the time for audits, but "it is an important aspect of the job, and we need to make time," he said.

Employees are encouraged to discuss safety with co-workers. "As a committee we talk about how they can approach people who may be doing something they deem unsafe," Thacker said. "Nobody gets mad if you approach them the right way. You can ask, 'Is there a better way you could do this task, or is there anything you could do to make it safer?'"

Employees hustling to get a job done may overlook precautions, such as using a knee pad when kneeling. "They're not trying to break a rule or take a shortcut, they just have a lot going on and sometimes things slip," Thacker said. "That's what these audits are for, to bring those things to light. We tell people not to get in a hurry, but to think about what they're doing and do it safely."



- Shift safety meetings are interactive. The shop works multiple shifts seven days a week. About 18 months ago, as part of a larger mechanical department initiative, the shop began using PowerPoint presentations to discuss safety issues before each shift. The presentations include daily rule reminders, mechanical safety bulletins, and incident reports systemwide. Younger employees in particular seem to like that visual approach, Thacker said.

"It's one of the best things we've implemented in I don't know how long," he said. "Instead of somebody reading from a paper, this gives them pictures and color and things to look at and keep everybody's attention."

- Shop employees are on board with safety. People realize how important safety is to them and to NS, Thacker said. "The guys take it to heart really," he said. "They understand that a safety audit is not something that's meant to get them in trouble or to be used against them. People have come to understand that they're a tool for us to better ourselves." ■ BizNS

# Frank Hopkins: An NS Iron Man

During a 21-year career with the Baltimore Orioles, Cal Ripken Jr. set a major league record for playing in 2,632 consecutive games, earning the title of baseball's Iron Man. When it comes to durability, however, Ripken has got nothing on Norfolk Southern's **Frank Hopkins**.

When Hopkins joined NS predecessor Norfolk & Western, Dwight D. Eisenhower was president, steam locomotives still operated on the system, and most track work was done by hand.

Now 72, Hopkins, a machine operator with Roanoke Terminal's track maintenance department, has worked nearly 54 years with the railroad – all of them injury-free.

His example has rubbed off on co-workers: The terminal's track maintenance employees finished 2010 with zero reportable injuries and completed two years injury-free in April. The employees, part of NS' engineering department, install ties and rail switches, repair broken rail, and respond to derailments and other emergencies that shut down a main line. They are exposed daily to potential work hazards around heavy equipment and moving trains.

"We're very proud of our safety performance, and Frank's career record is an inspiration to all of us," said **Chuck Richardson**, supervisor track maintenance. "He's a good employee. He's always there and very dependable."

Earlier this year, the Eastern Region Safety Planning Committee recognized Hopkins at a meeting in Roanoke.



■ **Frank Hopkins** attends a family day celebration in Roanoke to promote safety.

"This was an unbelievable moment," said **Georgia Lewis**, NS manager grade crossing safety, who attended the event. "It's not every day that someone has 53 years of service at the railroad, but this man has 53 years working safely and injury-free. It sets the example of everything we are about and shows everybody it can be done."

Hopkins, a modest man of few words, has lived by a simple formula to keep safe on the job.

"I just watch what I'm doing and look and think before I do it," he said. "You've pretty well got to keep focused and be careful about what you're doing because if you don't, you're going to get hurt. That's what I tell the younger guys."

Hopkins has spent his railroad career working track maintenance. He left high school to take a job as a section laborer, following his dad, brother, and other relatives in the business.

When he started, laborers installed ties by hand and climbed up in rail cars with ballast forks to unload track ballast. Over the years, as the railroad began introducing machinery, Hopkins has operated tie handling machines, cranes, tampers, and bulldozers.

Retirement doesn't seem to be on his mind. "I kind of enjoy doing what I'm doing," he said. ■ **BizNS**



# Hats Off to 2010 Safety Performance Winners

NS honored 61 groups at the annual safety awards meeting in March

## Outstanding Performance

Engineering Department

**Dearborn MW&S**

Mechanical Department

**Central Territory,  
Georgia Territory,  
Harrisburg Territory,  
Illinois Territory, Lake Territory,  
Piedmont Territory, Shaffers  
Crossing Locomotive Shop**

## Most Improved

Mechanical Department

**Harrisburg Territory**

Transportation Department

**Alabama Division, Toledo Terminal**

Engineering Department

**Lake MW&S, Piedmont MW&S**

## Best Non-Operating Groups

**Delmarva Business Unit, Intermodal  
Operations, Marketing, Material  
Management, Treasury**

## Best Support Services

**Centralized Yard Operations,  
Crew Management, Engineering  
Miscellaneous**

## Best MW&S Shop

**Charlotte Roadway Shop**

## Best MW&S Gangs

**Dayton, Harrisburg, Ft. Wayne,  
Greenville**

## Best MW&S Division Group 1

**Harrisburg**

## Best MW&S Division Group 2

**Georgia**

## Best MW&S Region

**Program Maintenance**

## Best C&S Construction Regions

**Eastern, Northern Group 1,  
Northern Group 2, Western**

## Best C&S Territories Group 1

**Lake, Piedmont, Virginia**

## Best C&S Territories Group 2

**Georgia, Illinois**

## Best Mechanical Shop Group 1

**Conway**

## Best Mechanical Shops Group 2

**Bellevue, Elkhart, Enola, Roanoke**

## Best Mechanical Territory Group 1

**Virginia**

## Best Mechanical Territory Group 2

**Pocahontas**

## Best Transportation Terminals Group 1

**Atlanta, Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis**

## Best Transportation Terminals Group 2

**Detroit, Linwood, Sheffield**

## Best Transportation Division Group 1

**Pittsburgh**

## Best Transportation Division Group 2

**Harrisburg**

## Best Operating Division Group 1

**Harrisburg**

## Best Operating Division Group 2

**Virginia**

## Best Transportation Region

**Northern**

## Best Mechanical Department Car

## Best Engineering Department Maintenance of Way & Structures

## Best Regional Operations Northern

## Chairman's Award Engineering

# NS Heroes

At its March awards meeting, Norfolk Southern recognized 21 employees for going above and beyond the call of duty to help others.

During a heavy rainstorm at 2 a.m., **Tim Amos**, track supervisor, Buena Vista, Va., spotted a person under a bridge standing on the roof of a flooded car. Amos called emergency responders and stayed until help arrived.

**Brian Catherine**, clerk, central yard office, Atlanta, remained in the office past his shift to ensure that Emergency Medical Services personnel had the information they needed to locate a person who had been reported injured on a railroad track.

**Fred Smith**, carman, Roanoke, Va., entered a burning house and pulled to safety a neighbor who had been overcome by smoke.

**Julie Uselton**, conductor, Chattanooga, Tenn., was in a taxi headed to Oakdale, Tenn., when she saw a badly injured person lying in the road near a wrecked vehicle. Uselton provided aid and comfort to the person until emergency services arrived.

After seeing smoke coming from a house, Police K-9 Specialist **Jonathan Cook**, Chicago Heights, called emergency responders and evacuated an elderly woman who was unaware the house was on fire.

**Joel Shipp**, senior technical engineer mobile equipment, Charlotte, N.C., performed the Heimlich maneuver on a colleague who began choking on food over lunch. His quick thinking and training are credited with saving the colleague's life.

During flash flooding in his Hannibal, Mo., neighborhood, **Mike Lockey**, roadway machine mechanic, evacuated his wife to higher ground and then drove a backhoe through rising waters to rescue three families and pets from their homes.

**Torrance Smith**, fireman and oiler, and **Patrick Young**, electrician, both Atlanta, along with several other co-workers, provided aid to a co-worker who had a seizure at Atlanta Engine Terminal and remained until an ambulance arrived.

■ Safety heroes receive a lantern as their reward for going above and beyond the call of duty to help others.



**Hansel Conine**, conductor, and **Sterling Hobbs**, engineer, both Valdosta, Ga., were working a local industry train when Conine saw a truck strike a tree. As the truck caught fire, Conine helped a passenger out of the vehicle and pulled the driver to safety while Hansel called police. They remained until emergency responders arrived.

While working the tower at Oliver Yard, yardmaster

**Carrie Demers**, New Orleans, called 911 to report a fire at a warehouse near NS property, possibly helping to save two lives.

**Roger Childress**, flagging foreman, Knoxville, Tenn., was flagging for a CSX employee at a shared diamond crossing when the CSX employee fell ill. Childress put the man in his truck and drove him to emergency medical services personnel for needed care.

**Joe O'Brien Sr.**, carman, Bellevue, Ohio, alerted neighbors that their house was on fire and made sure everyone got outside safely.

While working on a signal crossing upgrade in Vance, Ala., **Will Cambron**, senior project engineer, Southern Region Lines West, Louisville, and members of signal construction gang 687 went to the aid of people injured in a crash involving a car and SUV. Gang members were **Bruce Hawthorne**, floating signalman, Birmingham, Ala.; **Wes Vaughn**, signal maintainer, Chattanooga; **Chris Noles**, signalman, Chattanooga; **Justin Jones**, floating signalman, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; and **Tommy Ross**, foreman signal construction, Strunk, Ky.

**J.C. "Chuck" Andrews**, foreman maintenance of way, Jackson, Ala., responded during the night to a January bridge fire that injured an NS train crew. Unable to drive to the scene, Andrews ran a half-mile, partly through swamp and briars, to provide aid to the conductor and engineer and help coordinate rescue efforts. ■ BizNS

# Turning the Table at Inman Yard



*Inman Yard is getting the railroad version of an extreme makeover.*

NS is investing approximately \$25 million to modernize the Atlanta yard, installing a locomotive turntable, a new fueling and servicing facility, and a locomotive repair shop. The improvements are designed to boost operating efficiencies, reduce expenses, and enhance working conditions for employees.

Atlanta is home to the largest yard and local locomotive fleet on Norfolk Southern's network. With Inman at the center of this activity, the upgrade should result in significant savings in time and costs, said **Don Graab**, assistant vice president mechanical.

"Atlanta is a super important terminal for intermodal, and it's appropriate for us to have a modern and larger facility at Inman for locomotive maintenance," Graab said.



"We've been operating with bare bones resources there, and we're beefing up."

The repair shop will enable Inman mechanical employees to perform all but the heaviest repairs on locomotives. Currently, yard locomotives in Atlanta must be towed to Chattanooga's locomotive shop for repairs and routine maintenance. Also, because Atlanta is a key intermodal crossroads, a lot of "bad order" road locomotives – the term for engines needing repairs –

accumulate at Inman and are towed by "hospital" trains to Chattanooga.

At minimum, being able to work on engines at Inman will save two days of down time due to travel to and from Chattanooga.



■ Six locomotives can be serviced simultaneously at the ergonomically designed fueling and service facility at Inman Yard. Fuel, water, oil, and sand dispensers feature finger-touch controls and retractable hoses that eliminate tripping hazards and heavy lifting.

The Inman improvements are part of a systemwide upgrade for the company's mechanical department operations, Graab said. The new fueling facility is based on a design adopted over the past decade for similar facilities constructed in Decatur and Macon, Ga., Detroit, Elkhart, Ind., Birmingham, Ala., and Enola, Pa.



■ **Steven Weathers**, general foreman locomotive Inman, helps oversee the new mechanical facilities. He says the upgrades are good for the company, reducing costs, improving efficiencies, and enhancing work conditions for employees.

## Inman a key cog For NS

Inman plays a big role in the overall scheme of NS' network and flow of traffic, said **Jim Dobbs**, NS senior manager facility engineering.

In addition to the big road units that regularly run through the yard, Inman serves approximately 40 yard and local engines. Typically, about five to eight locomotives must be towed every day to Chattanooga for repair and maintenance, said **Tom Holland**, NS manager yard and local fleet in transportation.

"We'll be able to do that maintenance at Inman and within eight to 16 hours have that engine back available to transportation for yard and local service," Holland said. "That should help our overall performance and save money."

The Inman shop will be able to handle four locomotives at a time, said **Mike White**, senior general foreman locomotive who is transferring from Chattanooga to run the new shop. Among other things, the shop will have the ability to change out traction motors, a significant addition to Inman's repair capability.

Taken together, the yard's upgrade "benefits not just our operations but the company as a whole," said **Steven Weathers**, NS general foreman locomotive at Inman.

Construction of the shop should be completed in early summer. The fueling facility is now fully operational. The turntable also is being used.

## A matter of ergonomics

The new aluminum-sided fueling facility, unlike the old one, is covered with a roof that will shield employees from rain and inclement weather. It is equipped with a series of stations where employees can rapidly dispense fuel, compressor and lube oil, water, and traction sand, as well as empty engine cab toilets. They can service six locomotives simultaneously.

In a key improvement, the stations feature a modern ergonomic design with retractable hoses and other finger-touch controls. Employees no longer have to drag hoses across the floor or climb ladders to service locomotives. There's also a "smart" sand system that detects when sanding stations are low and automatically refills them from a storage silo. Sand is dispensed by locomotive engineers to gain better wheel traction in certain situations.

"Ergonomically, there are a lot of changes," Weathers said. "It eliminates tripping hazards and it's a lot more efficient, which is going to speed up the process."

## A turn For the better

The turntable adds to the savings and efficiencies. The 100-foot-wide circular structure, constructed within a pit, is the first built on NS' system in more than 60 years. The structure's metal components were manufactured in Richmond, Va., shipped by rail to Inman, and assembled on site with large cranes.

■ Right: The new turntable at Inman Yard turns a Dash 9 locomotive that will lead an outbound intermodal train from Atlanta to Charlotte, N.C.

At Inman, the turntable is used to turn north-facing locomotives to dispatch outbound trains traveling south or to work in the hump yard.

Turntables have been used since the days of steam locomotives, which were designed to run primarily in one direction. The Inman turntable is among 17 now operating on NS, with the oldest dating to 1906. Before Inman, the last one built was in 1948 at Chicago's Calumet Yard. In the 1970s, the railroad launched a program to modernize the existing turntables.

At Inman, the turntable is used to turn north-facing locomotives to dispatch outbound trains traveling south or to work in the hump yard. Before, locomotive consists that needed to be turned were operated by transportation crews to a wye, a three-legged track for turning engines, about two miles from the yard. To reach it, NS trains had to cross track controlled by a competing railroad and could face delays of up to eight hours.

With the new turntable in place, the yard can turn locomotives in as little as 40 minutes. "We're usually turning an engine or two every shift, so 40 minutes vs. eight hours is significant," Weathers said.

The turntable has numerous safety features. The operator stands in an enclosed cab that has a windshield wiper attached to the front window. The structure consists of a metal grate floor with rail running down the middle for the locomotive. The operator moves a joystick to activate the turntable, which revolves like a slow-moving Merry-Go-Round.

**P.L. Young**, NS gang leader trainer and electrician, has been certified as a locomotive service engineer to operate the turntable. He gives the equipment a thumbs up.

"This helps us out a lot," Young said. "When transportation calls for locomotives, we can line them up and have them ready." ■ BizNS





#### ON THE COVER:

For a railroad to achieve zero reportable injuries, all employees must work as a team. Operations employees in Norfolk Southern's mechanical, transportation, and engineering departments are finding ways to work together to reduce injuries and ensure that everyone goes home safely at the end of the day.

BizNS presents an in-depth look at the challenges and opportunities Norfolk Southern faces. It is produced by the Corporate Communications Department.

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## Contest is on For 2012 NS Wall Calendar

Featuring scenic photographs of Norfolk Southern trains, the NS wall calendar graces the walls of thousands of customers and rail aficionados. It's time now to focus those cameras on the 2012 calendar.

Entries for the calendar will be accepted until Aug. 1.

It's a big deal to have a photo selected. You win \$500, get 50 calendars, and your name and photo appear on 115,000 copies. The contest is open to active employees of NS and its subsidiaries.

An employee can enter up to five images. Digital photos must have a resolution of at least four megapixels and be submitted on a CD along with a README file giving specifics of each photo and photographer information. RAW or TIF images are preferred. Do not oversharpen, photoshop, or clean up your images.

For slides, submit only horizontal images. For large format transparencies or prints, send the entire negative strip. For each photo, provide the location, time of year, and any relevant details you know.

Go to [www.nscorp.com/calendar](http://www.nscorp.com/calendar) for more details and to print an entry form. Still have questions? Contact **Rhonda Broom**, manager advertising and promotions, at (757) 629-2706 or at [rhonda.broom@nscorp.com](mailto:rhonda.broom@nscorp.com).

**Send entries to: 2012 Calendar Contest, Norfolk Southern Corp.,  
Three Commercial Place, Norfolk, VA 23510-9217**

Good luck, and please practice Thoroughbred safety when shooting photographs.

