

Dec 20, 2013

(Letter To Officials, Advocates And The Public)

Just re-stating the position of Rails Inc on improving train and public safety in the wake of the disaster at Lac Megantic, Quebec, and of other hazmat train incidents:

Retro-fitting old tank cars and improving the new models are both essential jobs, and must of course be pursued without further delay. But let's not leave out a simple, quick to implement, and possibly cheaper deterrent to these horrific events:

Never leave any en-route train, especially a hazmat train, unattended.

Not for one second. Ever. Besides stopping a runaway before it becomes a runaway, this common sense procedure greatly reduces the chances of theft, hijacking or terrorist attack.

If existing work rules, whether in place for worker safety or corporate profit, allow such trains to be left alone, the rules must be scrapped.

Ideally, hazmat trains would haul a caboose and maybe a well-trained armed guard into the bargain. Such guards could be recruited from the ranks of returned combat veterans.

The costs incurred by these changes are well worth bearing, whether by the railroads or (more likely) their customers. Think of them as insurance premiums.

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