

Railway safety

What does society expect?

John Cartledge

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Role of Passenger Focus

- Investigating grievances
- Liaising with operators
- Monitoring service quality
- Representing passengers to government and regulators

The legal framework

- Prescriptive rail-specific legislation
plus
- Industry-set standards
within context of
- Generic “goal-setting” laws

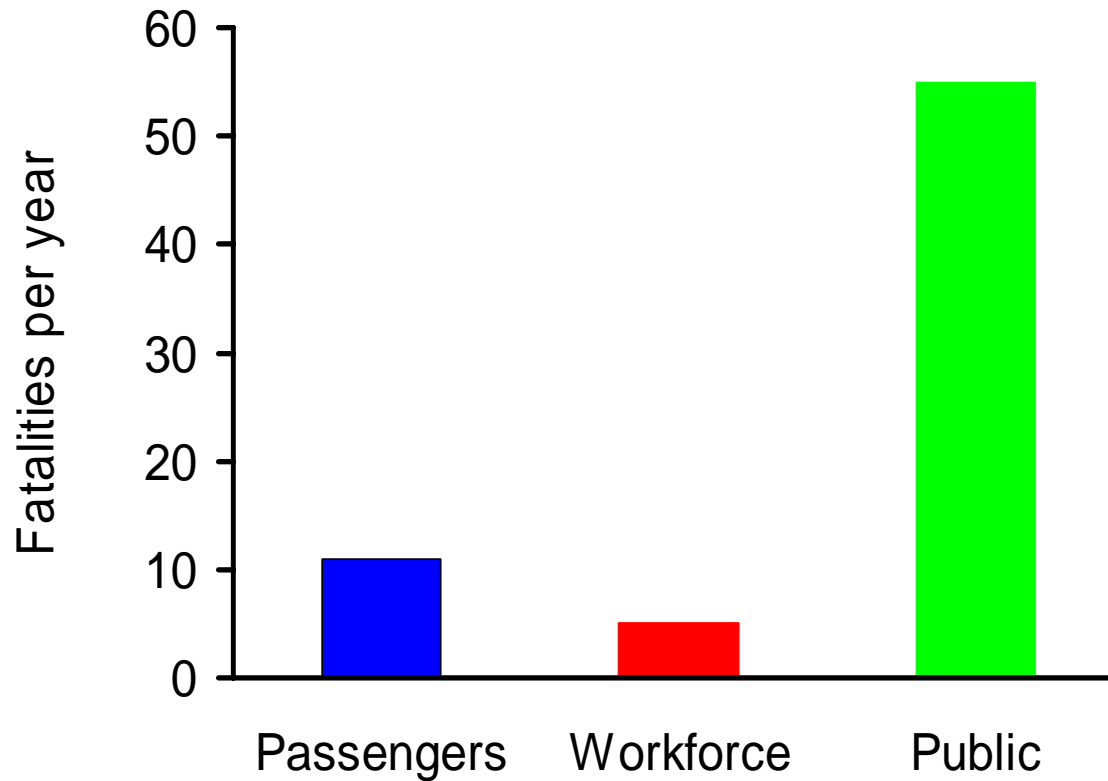
General duty

- To reduce risk to a level which is “as low as reasonably practicable”
- This is the “ALARP” test
- Costs of safety measures need not be disproportionate to their benefits

Calculating safety benefits

- Direct accident costs avoided
plus
- Value of casualties averted
therefore
- These must be quantified

Risk of fatalities



Fatalities + weighted injuries

One FWI = one fatality

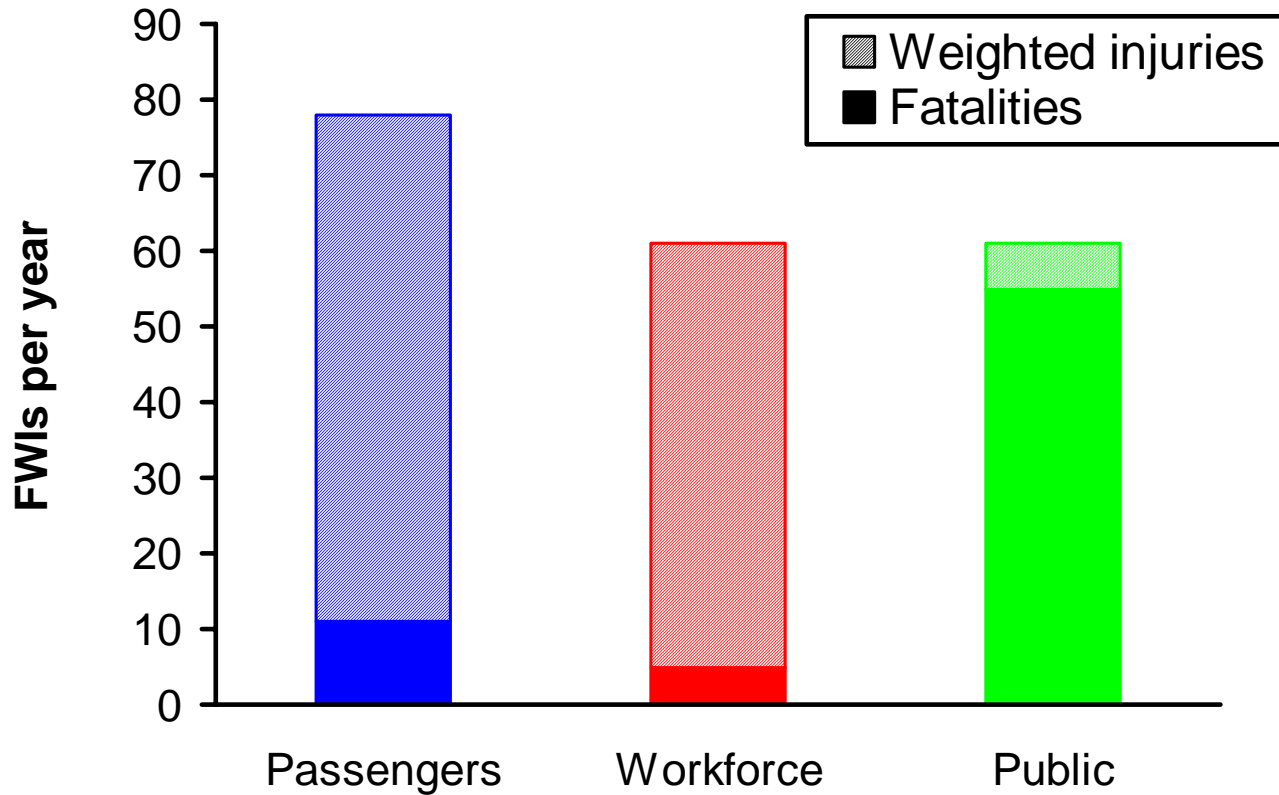
or

10 serious injuries

or

200 minor injuries

Risk of FWIs



Value of preventing FWIs

- Derived from “willingness to pay” research
- Current value £1.4m (€2m) per FWI
- “ALARP” test satisfied if marginal cost of preventing FWIs substantially exceeds current value

“Societal concern”

- Railway accidents can have political consequences
- Particular aversion to multi-fatality events
- These account for 15% of deaths in road accidents
- But 82% of those in train accidents

Media priorities?

10

National

Courts

Man remanded over suitcase murder

A man appeared before Sevenoaks magistrates in Kent yesterday charged with the murder of Terry Edmonds, 17. Philip Bell, 21, of no fixed abode, is charged with murdering her between April 16 and 30. Bell was remanded in custody to appear before Maidstone crown court for a preliminary hearing on August 21. No pleas were entered and no bail application was made. Terry, from Hadlow, Kent, was last seen after she got off a train at Tunbridge Wells at 6.25pm on April 17. She lived in a nearby Christian homeless hostel. Her body was found in a green suitcase 12 days later. *Press Association*

Accident

Four killed as lorry and car collide on M25

Four people died in an accident that closed a section of the M25 yesterday. The accident occurred near junction five, on the anticlockwise carriageway heading towards the Dartford tunnel in Kent. A lorry collided with a Volkswagen car, Kent police said. The lorry driver suffered chest injuries and was taken to Farnborough hospital in Orpington. Police have not yet released the identities of the dead. The M25 was closed at junction six anticlockwise, causing long tailbacks. Crash investigators carried out checks on the vehicles involved and examined the road surface for damage. *Press Association*

Legal

Royal solicitors face off in Mills-McCartney divorce

Heather Mills McCartney was in her divorce from Sir Patrick, yesterday by hiring him reportedly won a £17m settlement. Prince Charles. Anthony Julius will represent Lady McCartney as she negotiates a settlement, which could be worth as much as £200m. Mr Julius will face Fiona Shackleton who represented the Prince of Wales in the royal divorce. The news came as a source close to Sir Paul dismissed as "rubbish" stories that he had locked his wife out of his London home yesterday. *Press Association*

theguardian

Thomas the crash engine leaves children fearful

By Adam Fresco

THE televised adventures of Thomas the Tank Engine feature too many crashes and could be leaving children terrified of going on a train, a psychologist said yesterday.

The little engine and his steam-driven friends, created by the Rev A.W. Awdry in his *Railway Stories* books, have

become a television expert on how children react to programmes, said: "Thomas the Tank Engine is aimed at a pre-school audience who tend to be more likely to see the programme as reality. They haven't learnt to disconnect what they see around them from what they see on television.

"As a result there is a possibility that the sheer amount of crashes they see on Thomas could frighten them. Seeing lots of crashes on TV means they could end up absolutely terrified of going on a train."

He said there was evidence that children who watch programmes that consistently portray the same image tend to think there is more danger



Really useful? Thomas's show is criticised for its crashes

"Thomas the Tank Engine is giving children the wrong information," he said. "I'm sure the Rev Awdry, who was a rail enthusiast, would not approve of these new stories which seem to contain a crash in every episode.

"The programme should be stressing the fact that trains are safe, not showing crashes all the time."

A spokesman for ITV said: "Obviously we take the content of our children's programmes very seriously and it is something that is regulated. However, we are entirely confident that *Thomas the Tank Engine*, which has been on air for many years, is suitable for children.



'Don't worry son, in real life trains don't move'

THE TIMES

ter University, the sheer volume of accidents in the ITV programmes could have an adverse effect on young minds.

Dr Young, who is the Independent Television Commis-

than there actually is. "Seeing disasters and accidents time and time again can affect some children and their fear threshold becomes more sensitive."

Dave Rodgers, 66, of the Railway Enthusiasts Society, accused the programme-makers of distorting the truth and worrying children unduly.

International Railway Safety Conference
Dublin 2006

Passengerfocus 
putting rail passengers first

Are passengers concerned?

- Multi-fatality accidents have not led to significant loss of demand
- No greater passenger willingness to pay to avert multi-fatality events
- “Rail industry should pay” – but source of funding unspecified

Other factors affecting passengers' perceptions

- Dread
- Likelihood
- Equity
- Helplessness
- Culpability
- Mistrust

Public misperceptions

- The most frequent “railway accidents and incidents” are believed to be derailments, collisions, landslides, falls from carriages and injuries due to overcrowding
- Twice as many people believe that cars are the safest form of transport as believe that trains are

What affects public confidence?

- Problems which impact on users
- Lack of coherence in industry
- Conflicts of interest
- Lack of transparency
- Lack of accountability
- Failure to understand what public requires

What must industry do?

- Seek “compact with public” on acceptable level of risk
- Communicate in terms that public can understand
- Ensure that public voice can be heard
- Engage in dialogue on its record and its strategy

Questions to be answered

- How can rail industry develop dialogue?
- Who should it be speaking to?
- What questions should it ask?
- What does society expect?
- What does ALARP really mean?