



# TSC WESTERN REGION VIEW

TSC ENGINEERING – WESTERN REGION



**ABOVE:** Bobby Odom, director-Rules, Safety and Training, speaks during the conference. **LEFT:** Conference participants include, front row, kneeling from left, Patrick Grijalva, El Paso Signal facilitator; Scott Jackson, Utah facilitator; and Daniel Villaseñor, Roseville facilitator; standing, from left, Steve Cox, West Colton Signal facilitator; Warren McWilliams, Pocatello facilitator; Trent Ward, Western Region coordinator; Chris Sieber, Portland facilitator; Eric Perez, Los Angeles I-Team member; Allen Mims, Arizona Signal facilitator; Chad Phelps, Salt Lake Signal facilitator; Trek Fitzgerald, Sunset Service Unit facilitator; Jose Garcia, Los Angeles Signal facilitator; Isaac Reyes, Western Region Signal facilitator; and David Wickersham, chief engineer-Maintenance of Way, Western Region.

## Annual TSC Conference Fosters Communication

TSC facilitators, coordinators, I-Team members, safety coaches, managers and union leaders from throughout the system united in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Nov. 13-15 for the annual Total Safety Culture Engineering Conference to discuss one subject: How to keep people from getting hurt.

Director-Rules, Safety and Training Bobby Odom opened the ceremony Nov. 13 by covering the latest incident and injury statistics. Many reflected progress in declining incidents, with some of the credit going to TSC. Odom, who compiles safety numbers regularly, was quick to remind attendees what they were really seeing in the numbers.

“Let there be no doubt in your mind that every single time I talk about how low the number is, I remind everyone that it’s still people,” he said. “Let’s not sanitize ourselves by playing wrap-up in numbers — that’s you and me up there.”

The top three causes of injuries this year are handling material; walking, stepping and climbing; and hand and power tools. Combined, these categories account for 70 percent of all injuries in 2012.

Vehicle collisions, track equipment collisions and track authority violations are the three top issues in terms of severity. Discovering the root cause of each incident to analyze the decision-making process of employees can be a challenge, which is why feedback from employees on the ground is so important. Facilitators and I-Team

members are the eyes and ears of Union Pacific, and participants were reminded as such.

“We need to lead by example, and you are all leaders out there,” Odom said. “Have the courage to tell people if they are doing something unsafe.”

Keeping trucks cleaned according to the 5S system, regularly wearing seat belts and not using cellphones were some safety initiatives established at the conference. Odom challenged attendees to crack the puzzle of distracted driving, and streamline the Close Call/Near-Miss Hotline and Stop the Line process.

Both topics received ample questions and comments during the conference, illuminating an opportunity for more clarity and focus.

Using common sense and avoiding unnecessary risk also came to light when put in the context of an employee wanting to see his family after a long week’s work.

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The conference’s first day featured speakers and audience discussion. The second day was reserved for breakout discussions, during which employees in their respective regions shared successes to

# Congratulations on a Productive Year



Trent Ward, TSC Western  
Region coordinator

We have had a successful year on the Western Region, and each of you should be proud for working hard to contribute.

In 2012 we became more cross functional and worked closely with TE&Y, Mechanical, B&B, water service and work equipment mechanics to spread the good work.

We have enhanced many tools in the field, such as joint bar holders, rail tong holders, portable derail holders and securement baskets. Service unit data sharing is about 90 percent on the region — which is phenomenal. Our regional monthly conference calls now are on the first Tuesday of each month. I encourage all of you to participate.

Our biannual regional cross-functional summit kicked off in Roseville. Western

Region safety leaders gathered to brainstorm local solutions to local problems, which is critical to TSC's success.

We now have a safety coach in the region, and more people are beginning to step up to get involved.

Our Courage to Share process may be our most successful venture yet, as more employees are feeling comfortable sharing close calls and near misses with co-workers. They also are using Stop the Line, which is crucial to avoiding confusion and unnecessary risk.

As passionate safety leaders, we need the courage to motivate those around us to make the right decision in the moment. Too many incidents happen because of complacency

and not asking the right questions. No employee should feel intimidated to ask a question or Stop the Line. If someone is negative and discourages such behavior, be nice, but don't let their bad attitude deter you from doing the right thing.

As the holiday season fills us with joy, let us remember to keep an eye out for potential hazards in our personal lives. Situational awareness, attention to detail, communication and having the courage to say something can each take place at the dinner table just as much as they can on the open track.

From my family to yours, have a wonderful holiday season and happy new year!

## Standard Work Here to Stay

Changing behavior and using data to mitigate risk through problem-solving is the essence of Total Safety Culture, which also falls in line with UP Way and Standard Work.

During the Nov. 13-15 TSC Conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa, managers spoke passionately about the need for Standard Work and how the concept benefits the railroad and its employees.

Tina Grow, director-Total Cost of Ownership, took the floor to shed light on where the railroad is headed.

"Influencing behavior — you people understand this," she said. "You go out there every day and ensure no one cuts corners. UP Way will help us do this through reducing risk and variability by standardizing the way we do things."

Driving to the root cause of incidents helps streamline workflow and reduce waste and at-risk behaviors. Grow used an example of welders taking their time to weld rail properly, so they don't have to return later to correct the job.

"We might need you to get the track weld in and get off the tracks, but that doesn't mean you should rush and do a poor job," she said. "The last thing we want to do is detect a bad weld and have to drive back out there with more material and schedule another gang to come out again — just think about the waste in that process."

This is why employee engagement is fundamental to enhancing Standard Work on all fronts. Employees are the experts. If managers don't give them sufficient opportunity to provide feedback on jobs, they are doing a disservice to themselves, their co-workers and the railroad.

As jobs are performed through the years, certain tools and procedures are developed and maintained. The goal of UP Way is to channel those findings into future training methods so everyone performs each job the best and safest way possible.

"Rather than telling people 'This is what you do,' have the employees create the Standard Work," Grow said. "We need that ownership to help define the few places that make a difference in our safety numbers."

Being more focused and specific about work procedures and



Conference speakers include, from left, Bobby Odom, director-Rules, Safety and Training; Tina Grow, director-Total Cost of Ownership; and Rick Inclima, BMWED director of safety.

tools helps standardize UP Way as a training target.

"I'm not saying everything is perfect, but we're working through it," Grow said. "With your feedback, we are making it better."

Maintaining a standard is important when it comes to the Signal Department's approach to testing crossings, said Jose Garcia, signal maintainer, facilitator and safety captain.

"If we standardize across the board, it will remind us to cover everything and make sure we don't leave anything out," he said. "It's a critical part of our job. If we don't perform it correctly, the unit might not work properly."

As a passionate Los Angeles-area safety leader, Garcia said no one is averse to standardizing their work; in fact, they see it as a good thing.

"We need to make things smoother and maximize time we get out there on the track," he said. "It will help us work more efficiently and keep trains moving."

# Stay Safe Through the New Year



*Dave Wickersham,  
chief engineer,  
Maintenance of Way*

As this newsletter goes to press, Western Region Engineering is finishing its fourth year with a sub-1.0 FRA reportable safety ratio. That not only means we again take first place honors, but most importantly, it means our teammates are going home safely to their families, friends and loved ones!

2012 was an excellent year. We saw our Total Safety Culture team members continue to ramp up their engagement as more and more of us get involved. Injuries are down, conditions and processes are being improved and more cards are being completed. Track-caused derailments were reduced 16 percent with a 12-year-low mark of 76 derailments.

To put that in perspective, our region had 850 track-caused derailments in 1999. Our region has 46 slow-order miles out of a total of 10,500 main line miles. Signal delays to trains were reduced an incredible 38 percent this year over last year. We rebuilt three more Jordan Spreaders, which brought our total rebuilt count to 10 out of 13.

Our West Sacramento training facility is up and running. A total of 163 employees completed one-week classes in the track and welding areas. All of our trucks have gone through the 5S process, and we are starting to get the MTM secondhand track storage areas through the process. My thanks to the Salt Lake City team, which filmed a 5S video that went viral on the 5S process.

We also completed an aggressive 2012 capital maintenance program. Some highlights are 1.4 million ties installed, 240 miles of new rail laid, 14 major yard rehab projects, 36 major bridge projects, Positive Train Control installations and numerous signal improvement projects. We replaced the track through a 6,000-foot tunnel near Portland, removed timber tunnel sets in a 1,200-foot tunnel on the Ayer Subdivision, and replaced 1,200 feet of double track and concrete crossing planks in Jack London at Oakland.

On the new construction side, we added an additional 41 miles of double track on the Sunset Route; continued the construction of a new rail yard and high-speed fueling facility at Strauss, N.M.; continued with the double-track flyover at West Colton, Calif.; cut over new passenger depot tracks at Sacramento; and added three siding extensions on the PNW route, just to name a few.

## Next Year, More Big Plans

On the safety side, we plan to have our TSC region summit in March and give all our managers refresher TSC training by the end of June. Thank you for getting your trucks through the 5S process. I ask you to do the hard part — sustain the trucks that way! We plan to continue the storage rack 5S process.

Our biggest risk of injury continues to be driving to and from the job site — not on the job site. TSC teams are doing a great job of highlighting defensive driving. I ask all our drivers to make sure we are current on all inspections, to be careful driving, and most importantly, watch out for that other guy.

Also, be vigilant with your hot work to prevent fires. 2012 was a very good year for us in this area.

On the derailment side, 2012 was the first year that switch point and broken rail yard derailments were higher than wide-gauge derailments. Check out the new standard work document on inspecting switches. We are planning to invest \$40 million in yard rehab and industrial lead rehab projects in 2013!

Our 2013 capital maintenance program is again aggressive! Highlights include nearly 1.5 million ties, 340 miles of new rail, 15 major yard rehab projects, 27 major bridge projects, more PTC installations and signal projects. A couple key projects include the replacement of a 900-foot truss bridge on the Brooklyn Subdivision in Oregon and replacement of the track through the 10,000-foot Tunnel 41 at the top of Donner Pass. Construction projects will continue at Strauss Yard, the West Colton flyover, another 30 miles of double track on the Sunset Route, and more siding extensions on the PNW route, among others.

I thank all of you who took the Courage to Care pledge this year. Fatalities have no business on our railroad! Please stop the line if you feel an unsafe situation is developing. Let us know so we can celebrate that event. When others describe us as a “get-r-done” team, I cringe and take offense. Yes, we pride ourselves in getting work done efficiently, but not when it results in unsafe conditions! We celebrate making the railroad maintenance facilities better every day, but not at the expense of safety. Help me keep “the Courage to Care” alive in 2013!

Thanks for your efforts to make us a winning team.



*Lori Scharff, director-employee relations, speaks to a packed room during the TSC Engineering Conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa.*

## Annual TSC Conference Fosters Communication Continued from page 1

create slideshow presentations noting the past year’s accomplishments. Each presentation was complete with photos and detailed descriptions of risks successfully mitigated in the field as a result of TSC.

During the final day, participants presented their findings to senior Engineering Department managers. Eric Perez, track inspector and Los Angeles Service Unit

I-Team member, attended the conference in place of Facilitator Narciso Acosta.

“It was great to see the support and interest from management, and I enjoyed listening to them speak,” said the eight-year employee.

Perez acknowledges support from management to allow him and others to participate.

“They help us out a lot, and we appreciate it,” he said.

# Help Stop Distracted Driving

Historically, driving has been the leading cause of Engineering fatalities, and has been the case the past several years.

The advent of electronic consumer gadgets enables drivers to distract themselves more easily than ever before — and it's getting worse. With more than 40,000 motor vehicle crash deaths a year in the United States, traffic accidents are the No. 1 cause of death for people ages 1 to 35, according to the National Safety Council.

In 2000, there were 14.4 million text messages sent worldwide each month. By 2005, the number increased to 9.8 billion. Three years later, the number exploded to 110 billion.

Currently, only 10 states fully protect citizens by prohibiting cellphone use while driving. This is a big deal for Signal, Engineering and B&B employees, as they drive for work more than other departments.

Chris Sieber, Portland facilitator, has taken it upon himself

to educate the public and private sectors about the dangers of distracted driving and how to avoid it. He already has burned 20 presentation video DVDs to distribute to other employees so they and their families also can learn.

He said there has been a big turnaround with attitudes toward distracted driving.

"Every time I present more information, I get more input from the people on the ground," Sieber said. "By participating in the talks and hearing other people share experiences and advice, we are bringing safety to the forefront and making a difference."

This digital device epidemic is taking a particular toll on the youth demographic, but even so, 47 percent of adults still admit to texting while driving, according to a May Washington Post report.

Thinking about the wife or child of a co-worker or friend might help start a conversation about why cellphones aren't worth the risk while driving.



**ABOVE:** From left, Arch Welder Josh Cyganik with his son, Carson, 4; wife, Holly; and son, Parker, 14. **LEFT:** Holly's photo of the sticker her husband, Josh, affixed to her dashboard

## Cyganik's Sticker Photo Sparks Interest Online

New "no cellphone" stickers distributed during a recent safety meeting in La Grande, Ore., prompted one employee to surprise his wife by affixing it in her car to remind her of his concern for her safety.

She found it the next morning and posted a photograph of the sticker on Facebook with the tag line, "look at what my husband did."

Within minutes, dozens of comments poured in from friends excited about the idea and wondering where they could obtain the sticker. Most people shared a personal story about their son, daughter

or spouse for whom they are concerned, believing a dashboard sticker could help open their eyes.

The husband was Arch Welder Josh Cyganik, who said watching distracted driving videos hit home. He is concerned about the safety of his wife, Holly, and their children, Parker and Carson.

"My wife talks on the phone more, and I have a 14-year-old and a 4-year-old," he said. "I thought it would be a good example because I don't want my kids to see me driving with a phone."

Cyganik, who joined Union Pacific less

than a year ago, is a former police officer who still serves as a reserve officer. Witnessing the aftermath of vehicular accidents has fueled his passion for keeping himself and others safe on the road.

"It's not just about you, it's about the family you go home to," he said. "You have to think about what could happen and how it would affect everything around you."

Cyganik noted that distracted driving includes all electronic devices and even eating fast food behind the wheel.

"The more people this sticker helps, the better, because it helped me," he said.

TSC facilitators, coordinators and UP managers gather at the fourth annual TSC Engineering Conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa. More than 100 people participated in the event.



# Stop the Line, Save a Life



Signal Construction Facilitator Fred Amick, foreground, takes the Courage to Care pledge alongside other safety leaders during the conference.

Stop the Line is intended to prevent accidents and potential injuries by granting any employee the power to cease all production the moment he or she thinks something is wrong.

Whether or not they are correct is irrelevant because every time the line is stopped, the entire team encounters an opportunity to learn by discussing the concern. Although some may be hesitant at the notion of slowing the pace of work, these opportunities are critical for growth as a company. They help ensure everyone is on the same page.

“Employees need to understand they are the ones in charge,” said Joe Santamaria, vice president-Engineering. “If the employee doesn’t feel safe doing something, why are they doing it?”

Putting production on hold until other

problems are fixed is perfectly legitimate. Any employee or manager going against the safe route for the sake of productivity is only thinking in the short term. Often, people need to be reminded of the big picture.

The role Stop the Line plays with Standard Work, Total Safety Culture and Courage to Care is too clear to ignore. Employees must understand any risk involving their jobs is not worth taking, no matter the production schedule or how much work they have left. Questions must be answered before safe procedures can be taught, and sometimes people are unpredictable — which is why extra precaution is the best alternative.

“We want to know why people choose to do things — is it because they don’t recognize the risk or something else?” Santamaria asked. “Do we set a high enough value on

not taking that risk? Or maybe the environment they work in implies the opposite.”

Trent Ward, Western Region coordinator, said rather than letting people learn from mistakes, employees should always be encouraged to Stop the Line the moment they are concerned or don’t understand.

“We want to intervene when something’s wrong and not set someone else up for failure,” he said.

Being proactive in an area employees are concerned about is how Western Region safety leaders stay ahead of the curve. They plan to be the driving force in streamlining the concept of stopping the line.

“We want to make people think stopping the line is a good thing, rather than something they need to be hesitant in doing,” Ward said.



**ABOVE:** Lance Fritz, executive vice president-Operations, engages the audience during his presentation at the TSC Conference. **LEFT:** Sunset Service Unit Facilitator Trek Fitzgerald, left, talks with Chris Sieber, Portland Service Unit facilitator, during a break between presentations.

## Connecting the Dots with Courage to Care

Part of the role as leader or manager is to walk the walk and lead by example. Lance Fritz, executive vice president-Operations, is no different.

He opened his presentation during the Nov. 13-15 Total Safety Culture Engineering Conference with a personal account of how he avoided using his cellphone while driving to the event.

“When I drove out of the parking lot, I didn’t make a call on the road – it’s a personal commitment,” Fritz said. “I had a very strong temptation to blow off that commitment, but today I didn’t. It doesn’t mean I’m perfect, but today I didn’t.”

He then described the positive changes experienced in the Engineering Department. Track-caused derailments are 75-80 percent better than 10 years ago. Rail defects are down 25 percent, and Union Pacific is getting longer life out of existing rail, Fritz said.

“Thanks to investment and work, the railroad is looking better and is in better condition,” he said. “We are near-record levels of service and generating demand in pricing power.”

Management and TSC leaders are leveraging technology, using problem-solving skills and a disciplined approach to interpret observation data. Standard Work also has seen a big push with the UP Way, with more people taking an active role in defining how their work is accomplished safely, efficiently, and with the necessary high quality output.

Fritz also acknowledged the number of fatal injuries this year, noting an increased need for employee engagement to bring safety initiatives home for the people.

“We are the safest railroad we’ve ever been, and I was thinking our safety strategy and

activities were keeping us safe, but clearly they are not enough,” he said. “It’s flat-out not enough. Those activities have to be done with passion and commitment. Everyone on the railroad has to buy in to make them effective.”

Western Region facilitators are familiar with this idea, as they already have begun a Courage to Share method of discussing close calls and near misses. Local safety leaders created a Courage to Share form employees can complete and drop in the same collection box as observation cards.

No names, locations, dates, times or details are included on the form – in fact, they are discouraged. Forms are scanned and organized for display at local safety meetings, where employees discuss and learn from the incident in hope of not repeating the same mistake.

“They’ve had the hotline for years, but people are hesitant to actually call it,” said Trek Fitzgerald, Sunset Service Unit facilitator. “The local approach is more effective in the beginning, and we plan to share it regionally and, eventually, systemwide.”

Since debuting the idea in August, the Western Region TSC group has received six cards reporting local close calls and near misses. All information is shared on the local Quickr site for employees. The idea is to use the TSC approach in incident reporting.

“This way, we can take a bad experience and turn it into a learning experience,” Fitzgerald said.

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The Courage to Care commitment served as a backdrop to the conversation. Fritz reminded employees they cannot force it or audit for it because the nature of Courage to Care is inside each individual person with nothing enforced.

“All I can do is commit to doing it, realize

it needs to be done and ask you to join me,” he said.

Fritz noted the need to maintain the personal commitment without making it with a rule. He challenged attendees to develop a solution to keep co-workers safe.

“It’s a missing element, and it can’t be missing: How do we connect to a place deep in your heart where it says ‘I’ve heard this, and it matters,’” he said. “We have to figure out how to do that.”

During a question-and-answer session, attendees expressed concern about how UP Way, Courage to Care and TSC worked together.

“None of these are replacements for the other — we need the UP Way to get to Standard Work so we can do our jobs the best and safest way possible,” he said. “We need TSC to help our work teams increase safe behaviors and enhance tools for the job. And we need Courage to Care as a reminder that we all have to be personally committed in order for this to work. They are perfect dovetails with each other.”

The question is not which came first, but rather, do these ideas reflect the values we hold as individuals?

“I haven’t switched a car or installed a frog,” Fritz said. “I’ve never tamped, never fixed a locomotive and never installed a turbo charger. None of the management team does now.”

By empowering employees and making them aware of what the railroad is trying to accomplish, they will perform their work better, he said.

“You and I are no different — we each play an important role in safely serving our customers,” Fritz said. “I play a role that requires a different skill set, which is no more or less valuable, just different.”



## It Won't Happen to Me

The optimism bias is one that causes a person to believe they are less at risk of experiencing a negative event compared to others.

The optimism bias is seen in numerous situations. For example:

- People believing they are less at risk of being a crime victim.
- Smokers believing they are less likely to contract lung cancer or disease than other smokers.
- First-time bungee jumpers believing they are less at risk of an injury than other jumpers.

Having an awareness of possible safety risks is good; denying that it could happen to you is not.

What does this look like in our world? For example:

- A carman believes he/she can change a brake shoe without cutting out the trucks because he/she is quicker than other carmen.
- A switchman believes his/her vast experience over other switchmen allows him/her to better judge when it is safe to cross between close-standing, unsecured cars.
- An Engineering employee believes his/her truck is bigger than the other crew's, so no seat belt is necessary.



Can you think of a time when you might have performed an unsafe act because you believed it wouldn't happen to you? Would you write it down so it can be shared with co-workers through our local TSC newsletter? Your story may keep a co-worker from getting into the same situation. Please put your card in the TSC card box.

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The best protection is knowledge of how to recognize a potentially dangerous situation as it develops, and knowing how to handle the situation or STOP THE LINE.



# MANAGER SPOTLIGHT

## Mike McMerrick, manager-track maintenance

“Since he’s taken over as MTM, participation and involvement have increased substantially. He is a big supporter of the process and encourages employees to be involved with TSC because he believes it’s a good thing. He sends two employees from the I-Team to my meetings every month. Anything we need, he supports and does what he can.

We had a gentleman who had trouble hearing, so we found him a little microphone for his ear plug. The employees here think he’s the best thing that’s come around since they’ve

been here. He connects well with people and gets to their level. He doesn’t talk down to them. Instead of discipline, he wants employees to share stories so everyone can learn from them.

He is skilled at opening dialogue among employees, and they feel comfortable having conversations with him.”

— Scott Jackson, Utah Service Unit TSC facilitator



## Marc Rubino, Sunset Service Unit manager-track programs

“Marc was one of the first to help kick off TSC on the Sunset Service Unit. He is a huge supporter in every way, whether he’s talking it up at I-Team meetings and conference calls or sharing ideas on a DO-IT process. He regularly takes time to stop and meet with gangs in the field to talk about TSC. He has seen how the process can work and is committed to seeing it succeed on the service unit. Without the support from Marc and our management team, our TSC process wouldn’t be where it is today.”

— Trek Fitzgerald, Sunset Service Unit TSC facilitator

For news coverage, contact Travis at the newsletter office by phone at 402-475-6397, fax 402-475-6398, mail information to 2201 Winthrop Road, Lincoln, NE 68502-4158, or email [travis@newslink.com](mailto:travis@newslink.com). This material is intended to be an overview of the news of Engineering – Western Region. If there are any discrepancies between this newsletter and any collective bargaining process, insurance contracts or other official documents, those documents will govern. Union Pacific continues to maintain and reserves the right, at any time, to alter, suspend, discontinue or terminate all plans and programs described in this newsletter. This newsletter is not an employment contract or any type of employment guarantee.

Thanks to everyone on the TSC Engineering – Western Region for taking the time to contribute to this newsletter including, but not limited to, Narciso Acosta, Warren McWilliams, Allen Mims and Trent Ward.



The cross-functional work group enjoys a break following the Dec. 7 cleanup project.

## Cross-Functional Cleanup Enhances Tucson's West End

Volunteer employees from all crafts participated in a cross-functional cleanup in Tucson Dec. 7 as part of a proactive safety measure to avoid potential winter-related hazards.

The Sunset Service Unit TSC group led the project, focusing on cleaning leads, switch stand areas and toe paths on the yard's west end. The group consisted of employees, managers and union representatives,

with each helping remove trash to prevent potential slip, trip and fall hazards.

Numerous plastic water bottles were picked up and properly discarded. When hidden beneath snow, these bottles can pose tripping hazards.

Employees brought a backhoe to help remove tie plates, broken knuckles, brake shoes and other heavy debris.

TSC Facilitator Trek Fitzgerald said the cross-functional nature gave the project extra mileage.

"Working together helped different crafts realize how their work habits can have an effect on one another's work environment," he said. "The whole thing was a huge success. We are planning on doing it again after the first of the year."



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