

# Biz NS

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Moving ahead with SPIRIT

# Biz NS

Mar/Apr '13

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On the right  
track with  
culture change



■ **Mark Manion**, executive vice president and chief operating officer, encourages the approximately 1,000 NS employees attending the 2013 Safety and Service Expo and Awards Ceremony to positively influence everyone they meet.

A year into culture change, operations leaders at Norfolk Southern are heartened by the progress they see across the railroad.

“People in a wide variety of areas seem to be more engaged in doing positive things to help make a difference,” said **Mark Manion**, executive vice president and chief operating officer, who has led the company’s efforts.

“Our SPIRIT culture seems to be evolving and moving along at a pace that is better than even I thought it would be. It’s taking the form of safety improvements, it’s taking the form of service improvements, and it’s taking the form of simply finding ways to work more efficiently.”

NS has adopted the use of behavioral science to improve the work environment. A focus is on building trust and better relationships among supervisors and crafts employees, who represent about 24,000 of the railroad’s approximately 30,000 employees.

A major change is the railroad’s emphasis on more positive reinforcement and coaching to encourage safe and productive work behaviors. In the past, many managers encouraged safety primarily by catching and disciplining employees who failed to follow operating rules.



## SPECIAL FEATURE

**EXCLUSIVELY ONLINE:** Click the above button for stories and photos from the 2013 Safety and Service Expo and Awards Meeting.



“This is allowing us to reach common ground on things like safety, efficiency, and eliminating waste. I am extremely excited about the opportunities here.”

– **Terry Evans**,  
vice president  
transportation

The vice presidents of NS’ three operating departments said they have been impressed by the positive energy unleashed by the culture shift. **Terry Evans**, vice president transportation – at 12,000 employees the largest operating department – said it has helped NS find common ground among supervisors and agreement employees.

“Over the years, that has been something we’ve not done a good job of identifying,” Evans said. “This is allowing us to reach common ground on things like safety, efficiency, and eliminating waste. I am extremely excited about the opportunities here. When you talk about 12,000 folks working together with one goal in mind, the company wins, the customer wins, and I think the country wins, because what we do is important to our economy.”

**Mike Wheeler**, vice president engineering, said he has seen more employees getting involved to help improve the company’s performance.

“Our biggest thing with the culture improvement is just continuing to get more and more engagement of our employees, getting them involved in bringing up ideas on how we do things better,” Wheeler said. “Folks are more willing to talk to us, tell us what’s going on, how they think things can be done better, what they can do to help improve, and what we can do to help improve.”

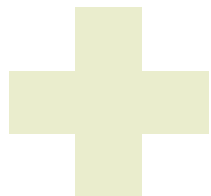
**Don Graab**, vice president mechanical, said the culture effort “has been more impactful and further reaching than I would have anticipated. You’re seeing managers collaborating across departments, and I think you’re seeing signs of increased trust from our craft employees and an interest in projects that they would not have had in the past.”

Early on, Graab said he was concerned that employees would resist adding service as a focus for local safety committees. His worries quickly faded. “They welcomed the change and are now making contributions to service as well as safety, and that’s a wonderful good news story,” he said.

Now, mechanical is taking a more balanced approach to safety and work priorities.

“This doesn’t mean we’re emphasizing safety any less,” Graab said. “We just have a healthier managerial and employee environment now because we’re bringing some balance to it. We had become zealots for safety to the point that I think it sometimes deterred us from being successful in the service arena.”

Every month, the company’s Operations Division Safety and Service Committee, headed by Manion, visits a different work location on the system. **David Julian**, vice president safety and environmental, said the trips give him a chance to meet and talk with many employees about their impressions of culture change.



# safety + customer service + productivity

“All the evidence and feedback supports that we’re going down the right path,” Julian said. “People really like the emphasis on positive reinforcement, recognizing the things they’re doing well, whether it’s around safety or around their productivity and work. Our people are the ones who make this company work, and everybody likes to be reinforced on things they’re doing right.”

## A pivotal year

This year could prove pivotal to the continued success of culture change – equipping agreement employees with skills to help them lead the effort in behavior-based safety performance.

During the first year of rollout, operations supervisors were trained in behavioral science techniques. Starting in the second quarter of 2013 and continuing throughout the year, training will be expanded to include the company’s approximately 24,000 agreement employees. Craft employees will receive a half day of training that will cover such things as how to use positive reinforcement to strengthen on-the-job relationships with co-workers. The classes will be taught by pairs of nonagreement and agreement employees.

“The workforce training will focus on peer-to-peer interaction but also will help them understand how their supervisors are using positive reinforcement and constructive coaching,” Julian said. “We’re focusing on peer-to-peer training because employees can and do have a big impact on each other.”

The training classes for agreement employees will help speed up the process of culture change, Evans said.

“There are things that some folks maybe don’t fully understand about what we’re doing,” he said. “They know it’s good, but trying to help them figure out what it’s all about is the next step for us.”

Later this year, NS plans to expand the training to include supervisors and employees in non-operating positions.

“Where we ultimately want to get to is people reinforcing each other and people talking with each other in a way that helps everyone get better,” Manion said.

The primary challenge for NS going forward is to sustain the positive changes occurring and to continue advancing employee engagement, said **Judy Agnew**, senior vice president of safety solutions for Aubrey Daniels International, NS’ consultant on behavior-based safety.

“We have been very impressed with how quickly the culture has begun to change, how quickly people have begun to use the principles of behavior-based safety,” Agnew said. “It’s remarkable, really. The next level is to get people reinforced by doing the right things because they see the impact of what they’re doing.”

## Platform For SPIRIT values

The changes are a platform to bring the company’s SPIRIT values to life, Manion said, so that safety, performance, integrity, respect, innovation, and teamwork aren’t just buzzwords. NS introduced the SPIRIT values in 2007.

“We’ve waved them in front of people like a flag,” Manion said. “Telling somebody this is what we want is not particularly compelling, but it’s motivating if people experience positive consequences as a result of their involvement with things specific to the SPIRIT values.”

For example, if a supervisor or co-worker spots an employee doing something to promote teamwork, the thing to do is to recognize the person on the spot, Manion said.

“Now that person has received a positive consequence of the specific actions taken, and that has real meaning,” Manion said. “That is the science behind what we’re doing.” ■ BizNS



## NS teams aim to improve productivity

“We’re looking at ways to improve service that will benefit the entire network, not independently from a transportation standpoint or from a mechanical or engineering standpoint.”

– **Neville Wilson**,  
director car maintenance

■ A maintenance of way worker performs track work on the Monongahela line in Waynesburg, Pa.

In every operating department across the railroad, employees are working on ways to improve productivity and customer service. Field supervisors and craft employees are joining together on projects that save money, reduce train delays, and boost operating efficiencies.

The effort began last winter, when **Mark Manion**, executive vice president and chief operating officer, asked his senior operating officers to identify ways the railroad could get better in three areas – network velocity, asset utilization, and workforce productivity. He wanted them to consider how NS could operate an even more efficient railroad and to generate ideas for productivity improvements that had practical applications. During three separate staff meetings, they met to brainstorm and prioritize ideas, select the best projects, and refine implementation plans.

“By the end of February, we had launched 32 separate teams with a leader on each team and with specific objectives to improve productivity,” Manion said. “The only caveat is that the benefits need to improve the velocity of the railroad or reduce costs without adversely affecting velocity.”

Participants in the productivity teams include employees from transportation, network and service management, maintenance of way and structures, communications and signals, and locomotive and car shops. NS also brought in employees from finance to help develop financial metrics to document savings and from operations research to offer guidance on efficient project management.

## Culture change at work

Longtime employees say they are impressed by the scope of the effort.

"I was really encouraged at how many initiatives surfaced so quickly, and many of them seem very valuable and low-cost to implement," said **Don Faulkner**, superintendent Juniata Locomotive Shop and leader of a project to reduce terminal dwell time of outbound trains.

Having cross-functional teams with representatives from all three operations departments is in line with NS' culture change because it supports service improvements and has everyone working toward a common goal, said **Neville Wilson**, director car maintenance and leader of a project to improve intermodal operations.

"We're looking at ways to improve service that will benefit the entire network, not independently from a transportation standpoint or from a mechanical or engineering standpoint," Wilson said.

"What's different about this endeavor is the unprecedented cooperation between all of the operating departments," said **Craig Marin**, director budget, who is involved in analyzing cost savings. "It's at a level that I've not seen before."

Taking the extra step to document financial benefits demonstrates the railroad is serious about producing real results, he added.

"You want the correct metrics for what you're trying to improve upon but you also want to see if there is a trickle down to cost savings, improved asset turnover, or some other financial metric," Marin said. "We're all focusing on removing non value-added steps. That means we get a better running railroad by improving on-time percentage and turning assets faster, which provides better customer service and a more regular work environment."

For a flavor of the work being done, here are examples from three of the productivity teams that will save money and speed up movement of trains across the system.

## LOOKING BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Not so long ago, Norfolk Southern measured the effectiveness of its safety program using injury ratio statistics. The number of injuries per 200,000 employee hours was the key measure to determine which railroad would win the annual Harriman Gold Award as the industry's safest.

Last year, rail industry leaders agreed to shift away from safety as a competition to an approach focusing on teamwork, best safety practices, and safety successes across all railroads.

"We do not pay as much attention now to statistics," Mark Manion, executive vice president and chief operating officer, told employees during NS' safety and service awards ceremony in March. "We still keep one eye on them because we need to know where we stand."

Now, NS is emphasizing "leading indicators" of safety processes over numbers. Some of those indicators are employee attitudes and the quality of safety checkups and job safety briefings.

For the record, NS employees in 2012 finished with a ratio of 0.81 injuries per 200,000 employee hours. That's slightly higher than the 0.75 ratio in 2011, an all-time best company and industry record, but lower than the 0.89 ratio in 2010, which at that time was the railroad's best-ever safety performance.

"There's always room for improvement, but compared with our history and the industry's history, that's still a very good number," Manion said. "What makes me feel good is the foundation we're putting in place."

By that, Manion means NS' focus on behavior-based safety and the workplace safety processes that will drive the improvement.

"As long as we're focused on behavioral science, the numbers will take care of themselves," Manion said. "I'm fully confident that over time we will see fewer injuries, fewer serious injuries, better customer service, and a more efficient railroad."

## Making the link

Faulkner is leading an initiative labeled “departure yard efficiency.” It has involved making changes in some rules and procedures to speed up train departures from terminals.

Under the effort, yard carmen are assigned to link head-of-train and end-of-train radio devices before road engine crews arrive to board an outbound train. The devices, which hook into a train’s air brake system, communicate by radio signal and let the train engineer monitor the brake pipe pressure on the rear of the train. Before, road crews often handled the task, resulting in delays when the devices didn’t link up and had to be replaced. Now, the carmen can uncover problem devices before a road crew arrives, eliminating delays.

Another time-saver has been to allow the road crew to remove yard air from the cars before departure. Carmen hook up outbound cars to yard air hoses to conduct brake tests, protecting themselves with locked derails or switches and posting blue flags to keep the track secured. Before the initiative, road crews arriving to take an outbound train contacted a carman to remove the locks, flags, and air before coupling up the cars, causing delays when a carman wasn’t readily available. Now, carmen drop the flags and remove the locks after conducting the brake tests and the outbound road crew removes the yard air.

“This is something that might shave 10 or 20 minutes off each yard departure, and that’s significant,” Faulkner said. “This involves transportation and mechanical, and, to me, there’s more cooperation going on to help all of us be more efficient and eliminate waste. I think it’s refreshing

that we’re all being open-minded to help each other reduce dwell time in the yards and get these trains out of town.”

## A needed lift

Wilson is heading a productivity project known as “PIT stop.” It grew out of NS intermodal’s R3 initiative, which is designed to save time and money at intermodal terminals by matching the right containers, the right cars, and the right business lanes.

PIT stop involves making wheel set changes and other light repairs to rail cars on intermodal ramp tracks rather than switching them out of a train and moving them to a shop repair track.

“There’s a lot of time and delay associated with switching these cars out, and that’s contradictory to the service levels we try to accomplish in intermodal facilities,” Wilson said.

This initiative has become a capital project, with money put in the budget to purchase equipment needed to replace wheel sets on the ramps — a device that lifts intermodal cars, called a MAC JACK®, and forklifts to move the wheel sets.

NS’ operations research group turned up valuable data to support PIT stop during a study of car repairs at Chicago’s intermodal terminals, Wilson said.

“They identified a lot of waste, costs, and delays associated with switching cars out of the intermodal tracks and transporting them to Calumet Yard to be repaired,” Wilson said. “Chicago is our busiest hub, and they identified the potential savings by purchasing these lifts. Across the system, the savings would be significant.”







## Let 'em roll

NS' three regional general managers are leading an initiative dubbed "please let me roll." It is aimed at making sure all handbrakes are released on rail cars before a train departs the station.

Running a train with handbrakes applied can damage wheels, break rail, and trigger derailments.

"All of the general managers have had conversations with the 11 division superintendents about this, and the divisions have run with it," said **Bob Bartle**, general manager Northern Region. "The superintendents have directed their field staff and members of the safety and service committees to make contacts, display posters, and manage other activities to make a big deal of this important productivity initiative."

Typically, outbound trains are assembled over several work shifts, meaning yard crews on each shift pull blocks of cars, set them on tracks, and apply a sufficient number of handbrakes to hold them in place. In some yards, that could mean applying three handbrakes for every 10 cars – 30 handbrakes for 10 cuts of 10 cars.

To tackle the problem, yardmasters and yard crews are communicating better at shift changes about where cars with handbrakes are located. Some yards also have gotten more people involved in eyeing blocks of outbound cars to spot applied handbrakes.

"It's the awareness in the field, holding people accountable, and providing positive recognition where it is deserved that will make the difference," Bartle said. "We have some locations that haven't had problems, so we want to make sure we talk to those employees about this initiative as well." ■ BizNS

■ FAR LEFT: **Shawn McGhee**, fireman and oiler, Atlanta/Inman Yard, dials the end-of-train number into the head-of-train device on the locomotive's control stand.

■ LEFT: At the other end of the process, Inman Yard carman **Erik McLaurin** links head-of-train and end-of-train radio devices.

■ ABOVE: Carman **Dave Schaal** works with brake wheels at Luther Yard in St. Louis, Mo.



## NS CULTURE CHANGE: Mechanical employees on the leading edge

"If we're really going to be injury-free, we have to get peers talking to peers about what they're doing that puts themselves at risk."

— **Don Graab**,  
vice president mechanical

■ A locomotive sits outside the Enola Diesel Shop. In 2012, the shop became the first NS work group to attain 2 million consecutive employee hours of reportable injury-free service.

When **Don Graab** first heard NS' move to a behavior-based safety process described as a "culture change," he thought use of the term seemed too aggressive. Not anymore. A year later, that is exactly what is occurring, and Graab, vice president mechanical, and his department are helping lead the charge

"Originally, I was not turned on by that phrase, culture change, but it's an appropriate phrase," he said. "It's not an overstatement. There's a huge shift going on."

The Mechanical Department, Graab said, has embraced the railroad's move to a behavior-based safety process, an approach that has managers giving positive feedback to employees who demonstrate safe work practices. That is a shift from past rail industry practices, when most efforts went into emphasizing compliance by punishing rule breakers.

During the past year, the department has promoted positive change. Mechanical supervisors, for example, led a pilot to analyze workplace injuries and incidents with a tool called PIC/NIC Analysis®. The post-injury review has helped managers and craft employees better understand why workers behave in ways that result in injuries. To improve relationships, Graab began requiring managers of pay bands B5 and above to discuss their job performance in one-on-one sessions with direct reports.

"We continue to look for ways to promote the idea that behavioral-based methods offer benefits to working injury-free," Graab said. "People learning these techniques fairly quickly realize that the benefits aren't limited to safety. They also can move employees to be more service-oriented and more concerned about efficiency."

## Best safety performance

The efforts are producing good results. Mechanical territories on the Piedmont, Pittsburgh, and Illinois divisions had zero reportable injuries in 2012. Locomotive shops at Roanoke, Va., Bellevue, Ohio, Enola, Pa., and Elkhart, Ind., had the same success.

The Enola Diesel Shop in 2012 became the first NS work group to achieve 2 million consecutive employee hours of reportable injury-free service. Other groups chalked up 1 million consecutive hours, including St. Louis mechanical, Illinois Division mechanical, and Sheffield mechanical. The Valdosta, Ga., mechanical forces were part of a larger operations group, including transportation and engineering, that reached the million-hour mark.

That all added up to mechanical employees finishing 2012 with the lowest injury ratio among NS' operating departments – a 0.60 ratio per 200,000 employee hours.

"I see the behavioral-based safety process raising the level of trust between management and employees," Graab said. "I also see it creating an atmosphere where peer-to-peer conversations that prevent injuries can be nurtured and grown. If we're really going to be injury-free, we have to get peers talking to peers about what they're doing that puts themselves at risk."

## Let's have a PIC/NIC

The PIC/NIC project has proved valuable enough that Graab adopted the tool as standard department procedure after most injuries. Mechanical's two

assistant vice presidents, **Doug Corbin** and **Calvin Cox**, have led the effort.

The PIC/NIC was developed by Aubrey Daniels International, an NS consultant that specializes in helping companies improve performance through behavior-based programs. The "P" and the "N" stand for positive and negative consequences that occur when a person behaves a certain way. The "I" and the "C" represent whether a person expects the consequences to be immediate and certain vs. occurring in the future or uncertain.

"The PIC/NIC Analysis helps you to understand why somebody takes a risk," said Cox. "The real benefit is that, once you know why a person takes a risk, you can look at what we can change to reinforce correct behavior."

The PIC/NIC reviews reveal that a common cause of injuries is taking shortcuts to save time. Rather than walking across a shop floor to get the proper tool for an engine repair, for example, an employee "made do" with an available tool and got hurt as a result. If they had a quick task and personal protective equipment, such as ear plugs or safety glasses, was not handy, some workers did the job without it.

"We have encouraged our shop employees to get involved in PIC/NICs, and it's been eye-opening for some of them," Cox said. "They are saying this is a great process to go through and figure this out without the usual confrontational manner."

Now, mechanical safety and service committees are getting involved in identifying changes that might be made to prevent risky behaviors.

"Our guys are focusing less on injury ratios and looking more at things they can do and measure to improve processes, which in turn lowers injuries," said **David Price**, Lake Division manager mechanical operations. In a March meeting, for example, Price said members of the Watkins Yard car shop's safety and service committee in Columbus, Ohio, told him about a solution they devised after noticing that some shop employees weren't using hearing protection.



■ Electrician **Meri Wilson** works on a locomotive at St. Louis' Luther Yard.

"Our guys are focusing less on injury ratios and looking more at things they can do and measure to improve processes, which in turn lowers injuries."

– **David Price**,  
Lake Division manager  
mechanical operations

"They discovered that the hearing protection equipment wasn't where it was needed," Price said. "People had to walk about 100 feet to get it. So they moved the protection to make it readily available, and now people are using it."

In PIC/NIC parlance, Price said, the committee turned a NIC – the immediate negative consequence of having to walk to get the protection – into a positive.

"To hear the carmen talk about that was pretty rewarding," Price said. "It's like you've reached another level."

## Open talk about job performance

As part of NS' effort to improve work relationships, ADI, the consultant, developed a job-performance survey taken by all Operations Division supervisors at pay bands B5 and above. The supervisors were rated by their bosses, peers, and direct reports in 17 areas of performance on the "360-degree" survey, including such things as communication and teamwork.

The supervisors discussed the results, collected anonymously, with an ADI consultant to identify areas for improvement. Graab took the survey a step further, requiring that his department supervisors meet individually with their B3 and B4 reports to review the results.

"I wanted them to meet eyeball-to-eyeball with their subordinates," Graab said. "It's an impactful thing. I think it's going to accelerate cultural change, and I think it explains why there's truly a cultural change occurring."

Price said the five managers who report to him appreciated the opportunity to have a one-on-one conversation. They got to compare how Price's boss and their peers as a group rated his performance and talk about his perceived strengths and weaknesses.

Initially, Price said he did not understand why Graab required the sessions.

"After I sat down with them, I definitely could see the value of it," he said. "They were being opened up to information that they never would have had the opportunity to see prior to this behavioral approach. My guys appreciated that. It was obvious to them that NS is not just talking about culture change, we're walking the talk." ■ BizNS

# Shop employees use brain over brawn

**Editor's note:** Employees at Norfolk's 38th Street Car Shop earned honorable mention in NS' first Ergo Cup competition. An article in the January/February BizNS inadvertently listed employees at Detroit's Melvindale Car Shop, who had a separate project, as working at 38th Street. Both shops deserve recognition.

The Norfolk and Detroit ergonomic projects address different work conditions but share a similar outcome: They both improve the safety and efficiency of operations.

Employees at the 38th Street car shop undertook a project dubbed "Raising the Bar for Material Storage" to address car shop parts and other material stored outside, such as truck springs and grab irons. While parts stored inside the shop were easily accessible, outside material was kept in crates on ground-level pallets, requiring employees to bend down to pick up. **Jim Welch**, senior general foreman, wanted to make it easier and safer for employees.

"If possible, I didn't want a single thing stored at 38th Street that an employee had to bend over to pick up, whether inside or outside," Welch said.

With input from the shop's safety and service committee and other employees, a team led by **Bobby Carlow**, general foreman, and comprised of car repairers **Bruce Williams** and **Tony Miller** and firemen-oilers **Ramon Cardona** and **David Morefield**, devised a solution.

They first contacted vendors to buy a commercial storage platform. Unable to find anything within budget that met all of the shop's needs, they turned to Williams, the shop's metal fabricator, for a custom solution. He delivered a design that enabled the shop to build four tables for the price of one commercial table and that satisfied all the needs.

As employees moved parts from the ground to the new tables, they labeled them and stored heavily used items closer to the work. Employees now work much more efficiently, in addition to minimizing bending and the potential for injury, Welch said.



■ Carmen at Melvindale Car Shop in Detroit, left to right, **Bill Hamel**, **Duane Pianga**, and **Mike Bleser**, helped design a reailer transport and storage system, which is mounted on the front bumper of a work truck.

At the Melvindale shop, four carmen – **Bill Hamel**, **Larry Batho**, **Duane Pianga**, and **Mike Bleser** – designed and fabricated a transport and storage system for reailers. The reailers, used to guide derailed locomotives and rail cars back onto the tracks, weigh about 90 pounds and require two people to lift. Before developing the new system, Melvindale carmen transported reailers inside a cage in the back of a wreck truck.

"When they got to a work site, they'd use a crane and lower the cage to the ground, and you'd have to fish around in the cage to get them out," said **Terry Williams**, the shop's senior general foreman.

The carmen solved that by crafting a storage system mounted at waist level on the front bumper of wreck trucks. The new system cuts 15 to 30 minutes off unloading and setting up the reailers and reduces chances of crew member overexertion.

"It's a lot safer and a lot quicker as far as efficiency," Williams said. ■ BizNS

## GOING TO SAFETY LEADERSHIP FORUM

# St. Louis safety and service committee: All about teamwork and communication



“As I look back over my 33-year career, I don’t think I’ve ever seen a location where three departments perform at such a high level and as a team.”

– **Mel Crawley**,  
terminal superintendent

Employees in two of the operations departments at Norfolk Southern’s St. Louis Terminal – mechanical and transportation – have achieved 1 million employee hours of reportable injury-free service. As of early February, engineering employees had worked more than 3-1/2 years without a reportable injury. The terminal’s safety and service committee has played a leading role, promoting teamwork across departments and helping to find innovative ways to improve safety and customer service and solutions.

To recognize their accomplishments, NS has selected the St. Louis safety and service committee to represent the railroad at the industry’s first AAR Safety Leadership Forum in Chicago in April. The forum, sponsored by the Association of American Railroads, replaces the longstanding Harriman Awards ceremony, which focused on injury ratios. At the forum, NS representatives will join other railroads to celebrate the teamwork and collaboration that go into keeping employees safe and preventing workplace injuries.

NS’ Operations Division Safety and Service Committee, chaired by **Mark Manion**, executive vice president and chief operating officer, selected the St. Louis group from among four finalists to represent NS. The runners up were the safety and service committees at Harrisburg Consolidated Terminals, Charleston, S.C., and Detroit.

The St. Louis committee, part of the Illinois Division, is comprised of agreement and nonagreement employees in transportation, engineering, mechanical, claims, and police.

“It’s an honor to be recognized for what we do here in St. Louis,” said **David Schaal**, NS carman and welding instructor. Schaal has served on the safety and service committee for three years and was chairman in 2012. “We have good people. When you start with good people, you can only get better.”

**Mel Crawley**, terminal superintendent and committee member since February 2009, said the recognition is “a remarkable tribute to the professionalism and character of the employees who work here in St. Louis. As I look back over my 33-year career, I don’t think I’ve ever seen a location where three departments perform at such a high level and as a team.”

Employees in the three operations departments inspire, motivate, and listen to one another, which is the greatest benefit to NS, Crawley said, adding, “It is the collective ideas and diversity of the groups that make the team stronger; not just one individual or group.”



## All about teamwork

Committee members agree that a team-oriented approach is the only way to achieve their goals in safety and service. "If you involve everyone, you can do nothing but succeed," said Schaal. "Everyone here is a member of the committee – we are simply the representatives who attend the meetings."

"We want to be the safest and most efficient operation we can be," said **David Neumann**, track supervisor. "Working well with each department is the first step in achieving that goal."

The terminal's operations employees continually work to improve communication, said Schaal, recognizing that working efficiently across departments requires everyone to have a clear idea of the responsibilities and inner-workings of each department.

"When it comes to safety, there is no room for micromanagement," he said. "It has to be a team effort, because everything we do affects the next person. Fully understanding what each department does allows us to do our own jobs better."

A new training initiative to foster that understanding got started this year. The idea is to have a representative from each department spend a day with employees from another department to learn about their jobs and what it takes for them to be successful in safety and service. Afterward, the representative will debrief employees in their own department on what was learned.

"We are always looking for ways to adapt, advance, and innovate," said **Brian Holman**, yardmaster.

Crawley said managers try to set a positive work atmosphere by taking action on employee suggestions for improvements in safety and service.

"Better ideas come from the bottom up, especially since our employees are the ones actually providing the service," Crawley said.

"Every employee has valuable input," said Neumann. "When they present a concern, it is taken seriously and immediately addressed."



■ TOP: Engineer **Mark King** prepares his locomotive for service at the A.O. Smith Yard in Granite City, Ill.

■ ABOVE: Carmen **Dave Schaal**, left, and **Winfield M. Estwick** believe teamwork enhances the St. Louis Terminal's safety and productivity.



As part of the company's culture change efforts, both managers and craft employees on the committee are emphasizing positive reinforcement to sustain safe work practices and behaviors.

"I've seen a notable difference in employee morale, which directly correlates to our safety record," said Holman.

"A little bit of recognition goes a long way," added **Mathew Lienemann**, a welder and current committee chairman. Lienemann said he hopes to implement a "Loud and Proud" communications initiative this year that encourages all workers to clearly call in signals and mile posts to radio dispatchers to notify employees of train locations, thus improving safety.

Committee members agree that their departments are working much better together as a result of the culture change initiative.

"Efficiency and productivity levels have increased now that they view each other as one team working toward similar goals for the same railroad," said **Nina Corrigan**, a claims agent and four-year committee member.

## Innovating for Service

In addition to exceptional records in safety, the St. Louis committee has fully embraced NS' focus on improving service, Crawley said.

"Customers depend on us and trust that we will provide service damage-free," he said. "We must provide service at a competitive level, or we can't sustain and grow our business."

The committee recently oversaw the design and development of a container door tool that enables an employee to close the doors of intermodal containers while standing on the ground. Using the tool helps keep freight moving through the yard and prevents potential injury from employees having to mount and dismount cars to do the task.

In another initiative, the committee designed and installed raised bins to store yard materials such as brake shoes and air hoses, reducing the potential for slips and trips, as well as increasing the efficiency of yard operations. ■ BizNS

■ NS welder **Mathew Lieneman**, left, and **David Neumann**, track supervisor, at the A.O. Smith Yard in Granite City, Ill.



# 'Safety saves lives'

It was the fourth quarter of a football game on a late summer day in Bethalto, Ill. With less than two minutes to go, the O'Fallon Little Panthers, down by two points, were five yards from scoring a game-winning touchdown.

Suddenly, someone on the sidelines began screaming, "He's not breathing!"

**Reginald Warren**, a Norfolk Southern conductor at St. Louis Terminal, was standing nearby rooting for his 8-year-old son, **DeMario Tolan**, a member of the Panthers. Warren ran over. Lying on the ground was Panthers head coach Roger Gass.

In the excitement, Gass had collapsed and gone into cardiac arrest. At first, Warren thought Gass was having an asthma attack. Somebody yelled if anyone knew CPR. Warren, a military veteran certified in CPR training, and another Panthers parent stepped in to assist. They started compressions, monitored Gass' breathing, and checked his pulse continually.

"Anything and everything I could do to help this man was the only thing on my mind," said Warren. He and the other parent, **Scott McDaniel**, stabilized Gass and continued to administer CPR until an ambulance arrived. Because of their quick action, Gass survived. He even returned to a Panthers practice a few days later.

Warren and McDaniel became hometown heroes. They received plaques the following Saturday during halftime of a Panthers game, and the local newspaper ran an article with their photograph.

NS recognized Warren as well, naming him one of the railroad's 2012 Heroes.

Warren said he struggles with the thank-you's. "I just did something I was supposed to do," he said. "It's what I hope would be done for me if I were in the same situation."

■ **Reginald Warren** joined NS after a 15-year military career.

**Mel Crawley**, St. Louis Terminal superintendent, said Warren's actions demonstrate what "team spirit" is all about. "Reginald is just that kind of guy," said Crawley, who nominated Warren for an NS Heroes award. "His leadership ability and military training set him apart and have provided him an excellent foundation to be a great railroader."

Warren joined NS in March 2012 after 15 years in the Marine Corps and Navy.

While on his sixth deployment, he began looking into civilian job opportunities. Railroading had appealed to him from a young age, and he decided to pursue it.

Safety training, he said, is essential for everyone. "Oftentimes in the military and as a railroader, you are placed in potentially dangerous situations," he said. "When the time comes that your training must be used, you perform – it's automatic. The more training you have, the better."

Warren encourages all NS employees to learn CPR so they will be fully prepared in emergency situations. "Safety saves lives – period," Warren said. "Without safety, you can't do this job." ■ BizNS

*"The more training you have, the better."*

– **Reginald Warren**, conductor





## Harrisburg earns NS' first productivity award

■ ABOVE: NS Division Manager Intermodal **Mark Canfield** supervises a UPS trailer lift at Rutherford Yard in Harrisburg, Pa.

■ RIGHT TOP: Foreman **Richard Lewis** at the Rutherford Yard.

■ RIGHT: At the safety and service awards ceremony in Atlanta, members of NS' senior management team prepare to congratulate representatives of Harrisburg's safety and service committee for earning the railroad's first productivity award.

The safety and service committee at Harrisburg Consolidated Terminals set the bar in 2012 for its efforts to increase operational efficiencies. The committee, which represents terminals in Harrisburg, Rutherford, and Enola, Pa., generated ideas that saved NS money, improved customer service, and boosted train performance.

For its work, the committee won Norfolk Southern's first ever productivity award, presented in March in Atlanta during the 2013 safety and service awards ceremony.

"The cornerstone of our committee has always been safety, but last year we decided to put an emphasis on how important our service is," said **Larry Ooten**, a carman who was committee chairman in 2012 and a co-chairman this year.

The committee earned recognition for its work on two projects in 2012 that increased operating efficiencies and improved safety. One reduced the number of handbrake delays at the Harrisburg and Rutherford intermodal terminals. The other established procedures for Mechanical Department employees at the two yards to perform car inspections at the same time that NS contractors are on the tracks loading and unloading containers.

In both cases, the committee took the lead, conducting yard blitzes to collect information from employees doing the work and to raise awareness about the need to make changes to improve service times.

“Any time you make a change you want to make sure it’s safe, but along with that we also looked at what it can save in time,” Ooten said. “If it can save us time, it will save us money.”

During discussions, the committee determined that too many outbound trains were being delayed on line of road by rail cars that left the yards with handbrakes still applied to the wheels. That can cause costly damages to car wheels and rail and trigger derailments.

The committee assembled a team to test yard tracks to determine the minimum number of brakes required to safely secure outbound blocks of rail cars. The results showed that far fewer handbrakes were needed than the current rule required. The team’s research also concluded that the Harrisburg and Rutherford terminals are so flat that a time-consuming brake test, known as a C-102 and required under NS’ operating rules, was unnecessary.

The upshot: NS eliminated the C-102 tests for those yards, dramatically reducing the number of handbrakes applied during setup of outbound blocks of cars. In turn, handbrake delays on trains built in those yards dropped substantially. The committee also helped implement a new rule that requires written documentation identifying the track location of cars with applied handbrakes. That information is shared with the yardmaster at each shift turnover.

On the other project, the safety and service committee closely coordinated efforts with intermodal contractor ISA to develop safe procedures for allowing NS mechanical crews to inspect cars during loading and unloading of trains. That included inviting management representatives from NS customers UPS and J.B. Hunt to attend committee meetings and talk about service issues.

On average, the new work procedure is saving one to three hours daily per track on car inspection, loading,

and release time at the two terminals. In the past, many cars loaded before inspection were later found in need of repairs, which meant they had to be unloaded and switched from the train, causing delays.

“There are days when you might load six or seven tracks, so it doesn’t take long to connect the dots – you’ve saved half a day we would have lost by working apart,” Ooten said. “From that, think about how much more work is going to be accomplished.”

Supervisors said culture change has created a more positive work environment, motivating employees to look for ways to improve productivity.

“I’ve seen more cooperation and open communication between mechanical and transportation,” said

**Paul Claussen**, supervisor mechanical at Enola Car Shop. “They’re meeting regularly and working a lot safer.”

“I think it has empowered people to do a better job just because they have a little more pride in their work,” added

**Todd Comer**, senior general foreman. ■ BizNS



# DETROIT TERMINAL: Looking out for each other

After watching a movie depicting the tenacity of meerkats living in a hostile environment, the Detroit Terminal's safety and service committee realized the small desert mammal was the perfect mascot. Three years later, three fiberglass meerkats have become popular fixtures in Detroit and across the Lake Division.

The meerkats represent one facet of the committee's innovation and creativity for enhancing safety.

"Meerkats watch over each other until they physically can't stay awake any longer. They survive by always looking out for each other," said **David Arnovitz**, superintendent Detroit Terminal. "At the Detroit Terminal, we learn the rules, follow them to the best of our ability, and look out for each other."

When Detroit employees prevent an injury or other incident, the safety and service committee presents them with a "Change the World" award. As part of the recognition, the employee's name is displayed around the neck of one of the meerkats.

Looking out for one another has helped Detroit transportation employees go for more than seven years without a reportable injury and achieve more than 1 million consecutive employee hours of safe operations. The most northern NS terminal to earn the million-hour bell, Detroit railroaders often deal with harsh weather conditions that challenge operating employees.

"We're family, and it's important for us to take care of our own," Arnovitz said. "Everybody feels that way, but this committee is able to translate that into action and creativity." ■ BizNS

■ Norfolk Southern Oakwood  
Yard in Detroit, Mich.



# CHARLESTON TERMINAL: A proactive approach

When the flooring in a trailer office at Cosgrove Yard in Charleston, S.C., caved in, the terminal's safety and service committee sprang into action, with members bringing in tools and using their handyman skills to make repairs.

"We had guys who decided they wanted to do it and ended up saving the company about \$3,000 because we didn't have to hire a contractor," said **Chris Ritchie**, trainmaster, North Charleston Terminal. "We have a lot of folks who volunteer their own time and tools and work well together."

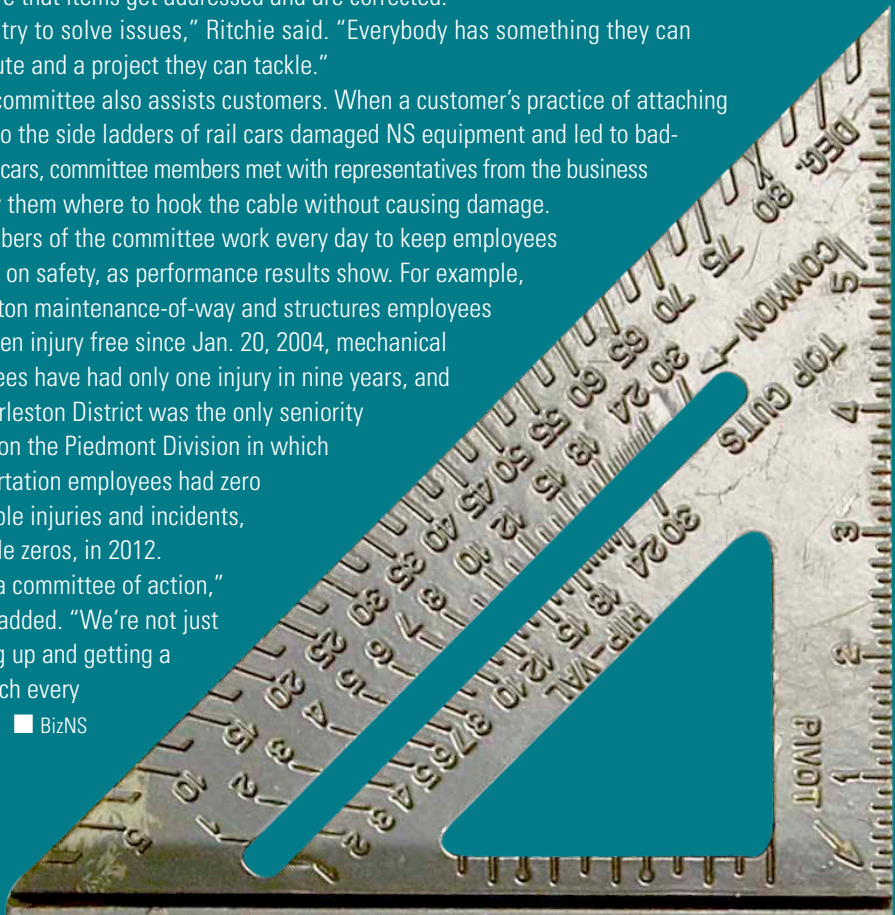
Performing fix-it jobs is just one example of the committee's proactive role fostering safety and service at the terminal. Ritchie said the group aspires to handle everything it can in house. Issues brought up during monthly committee meetings are assigned immediately to members to handle, and a subcommittee was formed to ensure that items get addressed and are corrected.

"We try to solve issues," Ritchie said. "Everybody has something they can contribute and a project they can tackle."

The committee also assists customers. When a customer's practice of attaching cables to the side ladders of rail cars damaged NS equipment and led to bad-ordered cars, committee members met with representatives from the business to show them where to hook the cable without causing damage.

Members of the committee work every day to keep employees focused on safety, as performance results show. For example, Charleston maintenance-of-way and structures employees have been injury free since Jan. 20, 2004, mechanical employees have had only one injury in nine years, and the Charleston District was the only seniority district on the Piedmont Division in which transportation employees had zero reportable injuries and incidents, or double zeros, in 2012.

"It's a committee of action," Ritchie added. "We're not just showing up and getting a free lunch every month." ■ BizNS





## KARIN STAMY: NS legal eagle finds niche in safety

“Karin has the ability to lead teams of people to work effectively together. She is good with details but also understands the big picture and how to get results.”

– **David Julian**,  
vice president safety  
and environmental

■ **Karin Stamy**, system director safety, speaks to employees during the NS safety and service awards ceremony.

Some people build a career path based on where they envision themselves later in life. **Karin Stamy** has followed a different path. She studied to become a biochemist, but ended up as a lawyer. In the late 1990s, she joined Norfolk Southern’s law department, specializing in environmental cases. Along the way, she spent a year in the field working as an assistant trainmaster.

Now, as her career continues to unfold, Stamy’s unique blend of knowledge and experience is proving ideal for her latest role: NS system director safety. Stamy has held the job since May 2012, moving her family from Norfolk to Atlanta.

“Karin’s background as an attorney provides her with strong communication skills, and she has the ability to lead teams of people to work effectively together,” said **David Julian**, vice president safety and environmental. “She is good with details but also understands the big picture and how to get results.”

One of Stamy’s former law department associates, **Andy Corcoran**, general solicitor, described her as a go-getter. “Very few people I know could go into that position and bring to the table what she has, take it on with as much energy as she has, and do it so successfully,” said Corcoran, who continues to work on projects with Stamy. “There is no doubt in my mind that Karin already has made an impact to improve safety for Norfolk Southern.”

## Advancing the railroad's mission

As system director safety, Stamy is in the thick of NS' culture-change effort to improve safety and the work environment. She oversees a team of 16 employees involved in five critical areas: general workplace safety; grade-crossing safety; property loss prevention; government reporting; and industrial hygiene.

Stamy said her team's purpose is to create and sustain a safe workplace for employees while enhancing public safety.

"My goal is to support and advance the company's mission while contributing to productivity and continued great performance," said Stamy. "I'm pleased to have an impact on everyday employee operations, especially on matters that mean the most to them, such as working in a safe and productive environment."

## From science to law

Stamy's career path could have been much different. Always good in math and science, she entered college with thoughts of becoming an engineer or scientist. After earning an associate of applied science degree in engineering from Dutchess Community College, she went on to earn a bachelor's in biochemistry from Cornell University in 1987.

After graduating, she decided that entering the business world with only a bachelor's degree would be limiting. She set her sights on graduate school, but instead of choosing science, Stamy switched gears to law, a profession she thought was interesting and dynamic. In 1992, she earned a law degree from State University of New York.

In her first legal job, with a law firm in Buffalo, N.Y., Stamy was assigned to environmental cases because of her science background. The practice focused on technical issues involving environmental compliance and cleanup sites. In 1998, after six years at the firm, she left to join Norfolk Southern's law department.

"I discovered the job opening at NS while working online and thought it would be a fascinating experience to practice law in the railroad industry," Stamy said.

Based in the railroad's Norfolk headquarters building, Stamy continued working on environmental-related issues. She became heavily involved in negotiating outcomes for environmental cleanups, permitting, and compliance, and in assessing risks and liabilities associated with purchasing property and building new facilities. That brought her in close contact with the safety and environmental department, which oversees NS' environmental management programs. Her legal expertise in that area is a benefit in her new role.

## Experience in the field

After several years behind a desk doing legal work, Stamy asked for an opportunity to experience the operation side of the railroad. She wanted a better understanding of the roles agreement employees play, safety issues the railroad faces, and how the railroad operates overall.

She got her wish in September 2006. She landed an assignment as an assistant trainmaster at Norfolk Terminal, a busy operation that handles export coal at Lamberts Point, intermodal freight, and general merchandise traffic.

"As a transportation supervisor, I quickly learned that railroad operations are complicated and that safety is critical," Stamy said. "Focus and situational awareness are necessary because, whether looking at it from a transportation, mechanical, or engineering standpoint, our business is to move heavy and potentially dangerous equipment over an engineered rail structure."

At the terminal, Stamy worked as part of a team of supervisors responsible for managing operational efficiencies and every aspect of safety. After a year in the field, Stamy returned to the Law Department. The experience proved invaluable in her current role.



■ **TOP:** Karin Stamy participates in NS' safety and service awards ceremony in Atlanta in March. Above, she shares a light moment with CEO Wick Moorman during the 2010 Tour de Cure.

"Focus and situational awareness are necessary because, whether looking at it from a transportation, mechanical, or engineering standpoint, our business is to move heavy and potentially dangerous equipment over an engineered rail structure."

– Karin Stamy,  
system director safety

"Without it, I wouldn't fully understand our operation and the issues surrounding safety in the railroad," she said.

Julian said he has been impressed by Stamy's efforts to bring together a diverse group of employees as a true team. "Even though the functions of the five work units she oversees are different, they all come together as one through Karin's leadership," he said.

A key part of her job is to coordinate the behavior-based safety training that is central to NS' culture change initiative to improve safety and customer service. The training emphasizes the use of positive reinforcement to sustain safe workplace habits and drive continued improvement in safety processes.

Stamy's group is working with the Railroad Research Foundation on a pilot program to educate

operations employees, especially train and engine crews, about the dangers of using electronic devices on the job. Such devices, including smart phones, can distract employees from attention to duty and lead to accidents or injuries. The pilot will include peer-to-peer coaching and training by contractors Aubrey Daniels International and Fulcrum. ADI has assisted NS on introducing behavior-based safety practices into the workforce, and Fulcrum will play a key role developing employee messages to discourage use of electronic devices on the job.

After six months, the pilot will be evaluated, and a report will be issued to the FRA. If successful, the program could be implemented across NS.

## A busy life after work

Outside of work, Stamy manages time to volunteer in the community. In 2006, while in Norfolk, she helped organize a team of NS employees for the Tour de Cure, a cycling event held in 44 states to benefit the American Diabetes Association. Since then, participation in the annual event has grown from six employees to more than 200 companywide. Stamy served as captain of the Norfolk team.

"I took on the team captain's role because I like to ride my bike, and I enjoyed leading a team who shared my cycling passion and came together to support a great cause that affects many of our friends and family," said Stamy.

Stamy balances her professional life with the demands of a growing family. In February, she took maternity leave to have her second daughter, Jane. Stamy and her husband, **Kevin Pyne**, have another daughter, Katy, who turns 2 years old in May.

"The move from Norfolk to Atlanta was a difficult transition for me and my family, but we are becoming well-acclimated," said Stamy. "Though my current position brings a lot of new responsibility to the table, I always make time for my family." ■ BizNS





## Keep the 'hot' trains rolling

■ **TOP:** UPS premium freight prepares for transport at NS' new Memphis Regional Intermodal Facility, Rossville, Tenn.

■ **BELOW:** Henry Aldridge, conductor, Morrisville Yard, Pa.

To get someone's attention at a Norfolk Southern intermodal terminal, just say these two words: "hot train." They are the trains you don't want to slow down. Hot trains move premium freight for customers such as UPS, the railroad's largest premium shipper, and often guarantee on-time delivery. Premium freight is the highest priced and most profitable of NS' intermodal business, which explains the attention. In turn, hot trains receive the highest priority routes, the fastest schedules, and priority handling at terminals.

If a hot train encounters a problem, NS' premium service group in intermodal operations acts immediately to brainstorm solutions.

"We always offer a solution," said **Kevin Saunders**, group manager premium service. "For a customer like UPS, if we've missed service, we might take a box down and pay to have it trucked to a location, or we might run an extra train, if we have to. We've afforded them a very premium service, and that includes recovery of lost time, if necessary."

Employees know how important hot trains are.

"They're the trains that pay the bills," said **Henry Aldridge**, a yard conductor at NS' intermodal terminal in Morrisville, Pa., outside of Philadelphia.

### Reliable, cost-effective, and green

About 70 percent of NS' premium freight moves on the Northern Region, mostly between Chicago and terminals in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. UPS parcel freight makes up more than half of the business. Other premium customers include FedEx, Yellow Roadway, and White Arrow, "less than truckload" companies that move most of their freight on pallets.



NS markets its premium business as a way for shippers to transport goods more efficiently and cost-effectively than using trucks over the highway. In addition, UPS and other premium shippers are paying more attention to the environmental benefits of shipping long-haul freight by train, including reduced fuel use and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

The real key to NS' premium business is the railroad's superior network and service reliability, said **Randy Survant**, director intermodal marketing.

"For years, our service was our contract – as long as we performed to where we said we would, we got the business," Survant said. "In recent years, we've gone to a more formal contract, but performance is still what drives our focus. It's what brings business to the table."

FedEx partnered with NS to launch its first systematic rail intermodal service in 2011 based on the railroad's performance, he said. Now NS, as a preferred rail carrier, handles 90 to 95 percent of FedEx's rail business in the eastern U.S. Currently, FedEx is NS intermodal's largest less-than-truckload customer.

"Our responsiveness to their needs is why they're with us," he said.

"For years, our service was our contract – as long as we performed to where we said we would, we got the business ... Performance is still what drives our focus. It's what brings business to the table."

– **Randy Survant**,  
director intermodal  
marketing

■ Intermodal containers are loaded onto rail cars at NS' Morrisville, Pa., yard.

## The 21E – one hot train

Delivering failure-free premium service takes planning, hard work, and, sometimes, even luck. For a flavor of the effort involved, consider the 21E, one of the hottest of NS' hot trains.

Running every Tuesday through Saturday, the 21E departs NS' Morrisville intermodal terminal at 5:40 a.m. and arrives at 8:15 the next morning at BNSF Railway's Willow Springs terminal outside Chicago. Along the way, it makes stops at NS intermodal terminals in Rutherford and Pittsburgh, picking up blocks of containers and trailers loaded with UPS packages. When the 21E reaches Willow Springs, at least 95 percent of its freight is for UPS.

The approximately 800-mile run takes just under 27 hours. The train, usually 4,000 to 5,000 feet long, is operated tag-team style by four separate train and engine crews with the assistance of 17 NS dispatchers across three divisions. The dispatchers ensure that it gets priority, said **Ryan Scacco**, assistant superintendent dispatch, Harrisburg Division.

"The dispatchers have to identify the shortest and fastest route and then execute that," he said. "Our schedules for premium trains like the 21E are aggressive because of the marketplace. Customers can easily look to our competitors to move their freight."





## No missing a UPS box

Considering all that could go wrong, NS does a remarkable job day in and day out making sure the 21E meets UPS service demands. There could be engine problems, issues with rail cars, problems with signals or traffic, a broken rail, a malfunction of a train on the track ahead of it, or bad weather.

Other railroads also are a factor. When the 21E leaves Morrisville, for example, it crosses a territory operated by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority. NS has a narrow time window to clear the area between Philadelphia commuter trains, which means the 21E must keep to its schedule.

That makes planning critical. It starts with having the right number and types of cars available at Morrisville – hitch cars for trailers and well cars for containers.

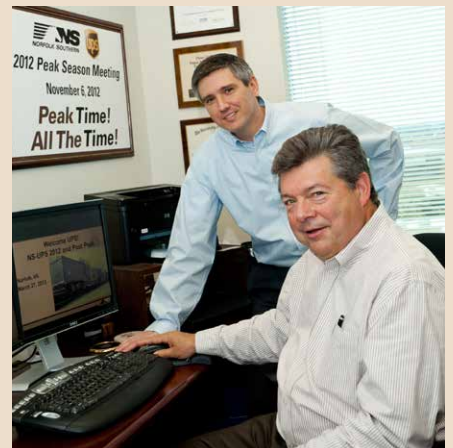
“We make sure we have enough cars to cover their freight,” said **Phil DiPietro**, division manager intermodal east. “In my world, you do not miss a UPS box, period.”

A second-shift train and engine crew at Morrisville “sets up” cars that will move on the 21E, a task that must be completed by midnight. Currently, that job is handled by Aldridge and **Tom Brennan**, engineer. They typically switch cars onto two tracks – one for blocks of hitch cars, the other for well cars.

Brennan, local chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, has 40 years of service, starting with Reading Railroad. He said he and Aldridge, a Conrail veteran, take pride in working safely and efficiently to meet deadline.

“Anything later than midnight tends to back things up,” Brennan said. “That’s always something in the back of our minds. We understand how time sensitive the UPS traffic is.”

In addition to setting up cars, Aldridge and Brennan preinspect the locomotives that will pull the 21E to ensure they are road ready.



■ TOP: A UPS outbound load arrives at the NS Toledo Airline Intermodal Terminal.

■ ABOVE: **Randy Survant**, right, director intermodal marketing, and **Kevin Saunders**, group manager premium service.

“Our schedules for premium trains like the 21E are aggressive because of the marketplace. Customers can easily look to our competitors to move their freight.”

— **Ryan Scacco**,  
assistant  
superintendent  
dispatch



■ UPS trucks line up at NS' Morrisville, Pa., yard.

UPS freight begins arriving around midnight and streams in past 4 a.m. Most is trucked from UPS' nearby Willow Grove, Pa., sort facility. As freight rolls in, NS contractors use cranes to lift it on the cars.

The road T&E crew that runs the 21E out of Morrisville is based in Harrisburg. The crew arrives the day before on a train moving intermodal freight from the West Coast and Midwest. They lay over in a hotel to get mandatory rest before reporting for work the next day to take the 21E to Rutherford and then to the fuel pad in Harrisburg.

Road conductor **Henry Rupert**, who has worked the 21E, said the road crew might report to the Morrisville yard at 3 a.m. to pick up paperwork and make preparations. The crew begins assembling the train from the set-up tracks around 4:15.

“We take the power and go up against the first track and grab those cars,” Rupert said. “Then we pull out and shove back to get the cars in the next track. That’s called making a double. I’m doing everything in my power to move that train on time.”

## A railroad orchestration

When the 21E departs Morrisville, it carries a mix of UPS and regular intermodal freight. On its first stop, at Rutherford yard, the 21E sets off some freight and picks up more UPS trailers and containers.

Rutherford yard, part of the multi-yard system known as Harrisburg Consolidated Terminals, handles about a dozen premium trains daily. To keep the 21E on schedule, Rutherford’s employees have 45 minutes to set off and add cars. Dwell time for a regular intermodal train is about two hours.

“There’s a lot of orchestration going on with every move,” said **Travis McConnell**, trainmaster at Harrisburg. When 21E arrives, yard employees have everything lined up and ready to go, including track switches and outbound cars. “The road conductor never has to get off the train,” McConnell said.

A yard utility man at Rutherford came up with an idea to use a paint roller extension pole to expedite handing off paperwork to the incoming 21E crew. A rubber band attaches the paperwork to the pole, which is lifted up to the locomotive. “The conductor just opens a window and grabs it off the extension,” McConnell said.

When asked to describe what happens if Rutherford takes longer than 45 minutes to get the 21E on its way, McConnell had a ready response.

“We don’t let that happen,” he said.

As the 21E continues its journey, the same commitment to service that keeps the train on time and the customer satisfied awaits on the Pittsburgh and Dearborn divisions. ■ BizNS

## FAILURE-FREE UPS SERVICE:

# Promises made, promises kept

For the second consecutive year, Norfolk Southern delivered failure-free premium service for UPS during “peak season,” a four-week period between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve.

NS moved 16,103 loads. With each load containing 1,500 to 2,000 packages, NS delivered as many as 32 million packages on time and undamaged. That stellar performance did not go unrecognized.

In an interview, **Ken Buenker**, UPS vice president corporate transportation services, said the parcel carrier appreciates NS’ commitment to customers and service.

“A lot of organizations worry about the bottom line and don’t really manage forward for a decade’s view of ‘what you do today can affect you for a long time,’ ” Buenker said. “It can take years to win a customer, but you can lose one in a day. I think the Norfolk Southern organization understands that there’s long-term value creation by doing what you promise, regardless of what that means.”

Buenker added that NS shares UPS’ business culture of being flexible and willing to try different things while being careful not to overcommit.

“The beauty of working with Norfolk Southern is the commitment to doing what we are committed to – and that’s doing what we promise,” Buenker said. “When we use your services, you are an extension of our brand, and we are entrusting you with a lot of customer relationships, many of them built over decades. Norfolk Southern does not say it’s going to do something if it can’t do it, and that is what good business partners do.”



“I think the Norfolk Southern organization understands that there’s long-term value creation by doing what you promise, regardless of what that means.”

– **Ken Buenker**,  
UPS vice president  
corporate  
transportation  
services

### Teamwork makes it happen

Typically, UPS volumes on NS increase 10 to 15 percent during peak season, said **David Osborne**, NS group manager intermodal service. Achieving failure-free service requires effort from a lot of people, he said.

“This is not just about intermodal,” Osborne said. “It’s the train and engine crews, it’s the transportation folks in the field, it’s the mechanical folks. Nobody wants to be the person who fails, and nobody wants to see our company fail. There’s a lot of pride put into this.”

Planning begins weeks in advance. It includes a daylong meeting in Pittsburgh among intermodal, transportation, and mechanical to review UPS requests for special train movements and to discuss plans to handle emergencies that could cause service failures, such as weather, a locomotive breakdown, or derailment. Mechanical, for example, positions repair trucks and crews in key locations where UPS freight is moving to ensure an immediate response. On the Pittsburgh Division, where UPS freight moves at specific times in the evening, the Transportation Department staffs the dispatch desk with two chiefs to provide management coverage in an emergency.

Once the season starts, intermodal holds twice daily conference calls to discuss UPS movement plans. "Communication among the folks in marketing all the way to the folks in the field is heightened and improved by going through this process," Osborne said. "That communication is the most important thing."

## A strong partnership

During all of 2012, NS handled approximately 173,000 UPS loads, or well over 300 million packages. As testament to its service, the railroad finished the year with a failure rate of about 1 percent. That translates to 99 trains out of every 100 meeting NS' on-time service commitments.

"UPS is a great customer who makes us a better transportation company because of what they demand," said **Kevin Saunders**, NS group manager premium service. "It helps us run our trains on time, which benefits everybody."

NS strengthened its partnership with UPS after Hurricane Sandy. Thanks to advance planning, NS' intermodal network was minimally impacted by the late October storm. For nearly a week, NS transported

additional loads of UPS freight that could not move over the road or on competing rail lines because of flooding and other storm-related damage.

"They asked us to move shipments in special lanes that we normally don't handle," Saunders said. "They also asked us to keep our facilities open the best we could, assuming it was safe, and we honored nearly everything they asked for."

UPS repaid the favor during peak season. In December, an NS train hauling UPS traffic was delayed by another train that experienced mechanical problems. It arrived four hours late into NS' Croxton yard, missing the day sort at UPS' Meadowlands' package sort facility. To assist, UPS sent drivers to pull two UPS trailers from Croxton to the Meadowlands facility, assigned employees to hand pick about 500 packages, and then trucked them to destination in Buffalo to ensure on-time arrival.

By doing so, UPS saved NS' failure-free season.

"Because we were able to flex and take on additional freight when UPS was in a bind, they helped protect our perfect season," Saunders said. "That's something we earned." ■ BizNS



# The right thing to do

For the fifth year, NS is participating in Corporate Compliance & Ethics Week, May 5-11, a national event that highlights the importance of workplace ethics and compliance. The theme is "Compliance Begins With You."

NS' Ethics and Compliance Department will host daily activities for employees about how The Thoroughbred Code of Ethics helps everyone perform their jobs and promote our SPIRIT values. Check <http://ethics.nscorp.com> for information and to find out how you can win a Code Bear.



## From the NS archives

Norfolk and Western Railway's main line in western Virginia once was maintained by section gangs such as the one pictured here working track west of Glenvar in Roanoke County in May 1944. During World War II, maintaining the tracks contributed to national defense, when the railroad moved troops and coal that powered wartime industries. Glenvar, a small community between Poor and Fort Lewis mountains, was part of N&W's Radford Division, which covered lines between Roanoke, Bluefield, and Bristol.

For its first 100 years, the railroad relied almost entirely on manual labor to keep the tracks, roadbed, and rights of way in operating condition. Rail gangs used hand tools, such as pickaxes, shovels, tie tongs, and mallets, to repair and replace track. Section gangs ranged from three to 12 men who surveyed and repaired sections of track ranging from four to 12 miles. The most arduous work was done during spring maintenance, when this photograph was taken.

— *Jennifer McDaid, NS historical archivist*

*On the cover: Lights from an NS model locomotive give off streaks of light depicting the infinity sign, representing the infinite possibilities for safety and service at NS. Photo illustration by Casey Thomason*

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## Mr. Tolliver goes to Washington

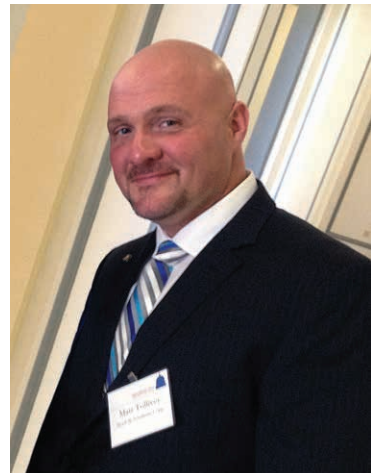
Railroad employees from across the country converged on Washington March 14 to let members of Congress know how important the industry is to the U.S. economy. **Matt Tolliver**, a conductor/engineer from Norfolk Southern's Andover Terminal in Virginia, was among them.

NS provided Tolliver with an all-expenses paid trip to the 2013 Railroad Day on Capitol Hill as the winner of an employee essay contest on the virtues of freight rail. His essay, titled "Common Sense," won from among 110 entries.

Participants from NS and other railroads met with U.S. senators, representatives, and their staffs to discuss the government's impact on the industry. While there, Tolliver expressed concerns about the future of coal and the dangers of raising the weight limit for commercial trucks.

The central message of Tolliver's essay is that rail offers a practical solution to America's transportation needs because it is safe and efficient, decreases highway congestion, and lowers fuel consumption. He also noted that rail supports 1.5 million coal-related jobs in the U.S. "We can't afford to lose the jobs we have due to more EPA regulations," he said.

The trip included a dinner with select congressional leaders and a tour of Congress. "I feel I was given a learning experience that few ever get," Tolliver said, "and I am thankful that I could be a part of it." ■ BizNS



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