

mta track worker

mta track worker is a vital profession within the transportation industry, specifically dedicated to maintaining and ensuring the safety and reliability of subway and train systems operated by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). These skilled workers play a crucial role in the upkeep of tracks, signals, and related infrastructure, enabling millions of commuters to travel safely and efficiently every day. Their responsibilities encompass a wide range of tasks, from routine inspections to emergency repairs, making them indispensable to the smooth functioning of urban transit networks.

Understanding the Role of an MTA Track Worker

What Does an MTA Track Worker Do?

An MTA track worker is responsible for maintaining the physical condition and safety of the railway tracks and associated infrastructure. Their duties include:

- Inspecting tracks for defects or damage
- Repairing broken or worn-out rails and ties
- Installing new track components
- Ensuring proper alignment and stability of the tracks
- Maintaining signals and safety systems along the tracks
- Responding to emergency repair requests
- Performing routine track cleaning and clearing debris

These tasks require a combination of technical skills, attention to detail, and strict adherence to safety protocols.

Key Responsibilities of an MTA Track Worker

The responsibilities of a track worker extend across various operational facets:

1. Track Inspection and Maintenance

- Conducting visual inspections
- Using specialized tools and equipment to detect issues

2. Emergency Repairs

- Responding promptly to track failures or incidents
- Repairing or replacing damaged components

3. Installation and Construction

- Laying new tracks
- Upgrading existing infrastructure

4. Safety and Compliance

- Following federal and state safety regulations
- Participating in safety training sessions

5. Coordination with Other Departments

- Working with signaling teams, train operators, and dispatchers
- Communicating effectively during repairs or emergencies

Qualifications and Skills Needed to Become an MTA Track Worker

Educational Requirements

Most positions require at least a high school diploma or equivalent. Additional technical training or certifications in railway maintenance are highly valued.

Physical Fitness and Skills

Being a track worker demands physical stamina and strength, as tasks often involve lifting heavy materials, working outdoors in various weather conditions, and standing or kneeling for extended periods.

Key skills include:

- Mechanical aptitude
- Attention to detail
- Good communication skills
- Ability to work in a team
- Safety-conscious mindset

Training and Certification

Prospective track workers typically undergo specialized training programs provided by the MTA or other accredited institutions. Certifications in OSHA safety standards, track safety procedures, and equipment operation are often required.

Work Environment and Safety Considerations

Work Environment

MTA track workers operate primarily outdoors, often in challenging environments such as:

- Tunnels
- Elevated tracks
- Busy urban areas

Work schedules may include overnight shifts, weekends, and holidays, especially during maintenance windows or emergencies.

Safety Protocols and Precautions

Given the inherently dangerous nature of working near active train lines and heavy machinery, strict safety protocols are enforced:

- Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as helmets, high-visibility clothing, gloves, and safety boots
- Following lockout/tagout procedures to prevent accidental train movement
- Utilizing specialized signaling and communication devices
- Attending regular safety training sessions
- Conducting risk assessments before starting work

Training and Certification Programs for MTA Track Workers

On-the-Job Training

Most track workers begin their careers with comprehensive on-the-job training, learning essential skills under the supervision of experienced personnel.

Formal Certification Courses

Certifications that enhance employability and safety include:

- OSHA Construction Safety and Health Certifications
- Track safety awareness courses
- Equipment operation licenses

Continuous Education and Skill Development

As technology advances, ongoing training ensures workers stay current with new safety standards, tools, and techniques.

Career Pathways and Advancement Opportunities

Entry-Level Positions

Most new entrants start as track laborers or assistants, gaining hands-on experience in maintenance tasks.

Mid-Level Roles

With experience, workers can advance to roles such as:

- Track Maintenance Supervisor
- Safety Coordinator
- Equipment Specialist

Long-Term Career Development

Dedicated workers may pursue certifications or further education to qualify for specialized roles such as:

- Track Inspector
- Operations Manager
- Safety Director

These positions often come with increased responsibilities, higher salaries, and leadership opportunities.

Challenges Faced by MTA Track Workers

Physical and Environmental Challenges

Working outdoors in all weather conditions, dealing with noise, vibrations, and confined spaces pose significant physical challenges.

Safety Risks

Potential hazards include:

- Falls from elevated tracks
- Being struck by moving trains
- Exposure to hazardous materials
- Electrical shocks

Scheduling and Work Hours

Irregular shifts and emergency response duties can disrupt personal life and require workers to be adaptable.

Importance of MTA Track Workers in Urban Transit Safety

Ensuring Passenger Safety

Regular maintenance and prompt repairs prevent accidents and service disruptions, protecting thousands of daily commuters.

Maintaining System Reliability

Well-maintained tracks reduce delays, improve ride quality, and extend the lifespan of infrastructure.

Supporting Emergency Response

In emergencies, track workers are on the front lines, restoring services swiftly and safely.

How to Become an MTA Track Worker

Step-by-Step Guide

1. Meet Basic Qualifications: High school diploma or GED, physical fitness
2. Gain Relevant Experience: Prior work in construction, maintenance, or transportation
3. Apply for Open Positions: Monitor MTA job postings and submit applications
4. Complete Training Programs: Attend required certifications and on-the-job training
5. Pass Safety and Skills Assessments: Demonstrate knowledge and competence
6. Begin Employment: Start as a track laborer or assistant and gain experience

Additional Tips

- Develop a strong safety record and awareness
- Build physical endurance
- Stay updated on industry standards and best practices
- Network with industry professionals

Conclusion

The role of an MTA track worker is fundamental to the safety, efficiency, and reliability of New York City's subway and rail systems. As a physically demanding yet highly rewarding profession, it offers numerous opportunities for growth and specialization. With the continual expansion and modernization of transit infrastructure, skilled track workers are more vital than ever in keeping urban transportation running smoothly. Aspiring candidates who are committed to safety, technical skill, and hard work can find a fulfilling career path in this essential industry.

Keywords for SEO Optimization:

- MTA track worker
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- railway track maintenance
- transit infrastructure careers
- train track repair
- MTA employment opportunities
- track safety standards
- railway infrastructure training
- urban transit maintenance
- career in transportation industry

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main responsibilities of an MTA track worker?

MTA track workers are responsible for inspecting, maintaining, and repairing subway and train tracks to ensure safety and operational efficiency.

What qualifications are required to become an MTA track worker?

Candidates typically need a high school diploma or GED, relevant work experience, and training in track maintenance and safety protocols. Some roles may require specific certifications or licenses.

How does the MTA ensure the safety of track workers during maintenance?

The MTA implements strict safety procedures, including track shutdowns, use of protective equipment, and adherence to federal safety regulations to protect workers during maintenance activities.

What are the common hazards faced by MTA track workers?

Common hazards include working near moving trains, exposure to electrical systems, heavy machinery, and environmental conditions like noise, heat, or cold.

How has technology impacted the role of MTA track workers?

Advancements like automated inspection systems, GPS tracking, and digital maintenance records have improved safety, efficiency, and precision in track maintenance tasks.

What training programs are available for aspiring MTA track workers?

The MTA offers specialized training programs that cover safety protocols, track inspection, repair techniques, and equipment operation, often including on-the-job training.

Are MTA track workers unionized?

Yes, MTA track workers are represented by unions that advocate for their rights, negotiate wages, and ensure workplace safety standards.

How has recent infrastructure investment affected MTA track workers?

Infrastructure investments have led to increased hiring, upgraded equipment, and more extensive maintenance projects, creating more job opportunities for track workers.

What career progression opportunities exist for MTA track workers?

Experienced track workers can advance to supervisory roles, specialized maintenance positions, or move into training and safety management within the MTA.

What is the typical work environment for an MTA track worker?

Track workers operate in tunnels, on elevated tracks, and at street level, often working during overnight or off-peak hours to minimize train service disruptions.

Additional Resources

MTA Track Worker: An In-Depth Examination of the Unsung Guardians of Subway Safety

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) plays a critical role in New York City's urban infrastructure, facilitating the movement of millions daily. At the heart of this expansive network are the MTA track workers—the dedicated professionals responsible for maintaining, inspecting, and ensuring the safety of the subway tracks that form the backbone of the city's transit system. Despite their vital function, they often operate behind the scenes, with little public recognition or understanding of their demanding roles. This article aims to shed light on the multifaceted responsibilities, challenges, safety protocols, and the evolving landscape faced by MTA track workers.

The Role and Responsibilities of an MTA Track Worker

MTA track workers are specialized technicians and laborers tasked with the upkeep and safety of the subway infrastructure. Their duties encompass a broad spectrum of activities essential for smooth and secure transit operations.

Track Inspection and Maintenance

- Regularly inspecting rails, ties, ballast, switches, and signaling equipment for signs of wear, damage, or deterioration.
- Performing preventive maintenance to avoid derailments, track buckling, or signal failures.
- Replacing worn-out ties, leveling tracks, and tightening or replacing rails.

Construction and Repair Work

- Installing new tracks or upgrading existing ones during scheduled service disruptions.
- Repairing damaged sections caused by accidents, weather, or vandalism.
- Working on complex track geometries, including switches and crossovers.

Emergency Response

- Responding swiftly to track-related emergencies such as derailments, obstructions, or equipment failures.
- Clearing debris, repairing damaged infrastructure, and restoring service as quickly as possible.
- Coordinating with other departments during incident management.

Coordination and Communication

- Collaborating with signal maintainers, electricians, and supervisors.
- Using specialized communication tools to coordinate work during night shifts or in congested areas.

The Demanding Nature of the Job

Being an MTA track worker is physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. The work environment presents numerous hazards, requiring rigorous training and discipline.

Physical Demands

- Working in confined, underground, or elevated spaces.
- Heavy lifting, operating power tools, and handling heavy materials.
- Exposure to weather elements, including extreme cold, heat, and precipitation.

Work Hours and Shifts

- Often working overnight or during low-traffic hours to minimize service disruptions.
- Shifts can extend beyond scheduled hours, especially during emergencies or major upgrades.
- The unpredictable nature of emergencies can lead to long, irregular working hours.

Health and Safety Risks

- Risk of injury from moving trains, electrical hazards, or falling debris.
- Exposure to dust, fumes, and other airborne hazards.
- Potential for psychological stress given the high-stakes environment and the critical importance of

their work.

Safety Protocols and Training

Ensuring the safety of track workers and passengers is paramount. The MTA has implemented comprehensive safety protocols, but the inherent risks of working on active rail lines necessitate rigorous training and adherence.

Training Programs

- New hires undergo extensive classroom and on-site training covering safety procedures, equipment operation, and emergency response.
- Continuous education includes updates on new technologies and safety standards.
- Certification requirements often include OSHA standards and specialized track safety courses.

Protective Equipment and Tools

- Hard hats, high-visibility clothing, gloves, and steel-toed boots.
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as insulated gloves when working near electrical components.
- Implementation of safety barriers and warning signals during active work.

Work Zone Safety Measures

- Use of flagging and signaling systems to alert train operators and other workers.
- Establishing secure work zones with barriers and signage.
- Communicating effectively using radios and hand signals.

Technological Innovations

- Deployment of robots and drones for inspections in hazardous or hard-to-reach areas.
- Use of sensor-based monitoring systems to detect track deterioration early.
- GPS and real-time data analytics to coordinate and track maintenance activities.

Challenges Faced by MTA Track Workers

Despite safety measures, MTA track workers confront numerous persistent and emerging challenges.

Aging Infrastructure

- The subway system's infrastructure is decades old, with many tracks and components nearing the end of their intended lifespan.
- Frequent repairs and upgrades are necessary, often during limited windows of low traffic.
- The complexity of modernizing without disrupting service adds layers of difficulty.

Budget Constraints and Funding Issues

- Funding shortages can delay essential repairs or upgrades.
- Budget constraints may lead to understaffing or reduced safety training resources.
- Prioritization of projects can sometimes compromise thoroughness or timeliness.

Safety Incidents and Accidents

- Despite stringent protocols, accidents such as falls, electrical shocks, or being struck by moving equipment still occur.

- High-profile incidents often lead to scrutiny on safety practices and working conditions.

Technological and Systemic Changes

- Transitioning to new technologies can require retraining and adaptation.
- Resistance from long-standing workers accustomed to traditional methods.
- Integration of automation and robotics raises questions about job security and safety.

Vulnerabilities to External Factors

- Vandalism, sabotage, or terrorism threats pose additional risks.
- Natural disasters, such as hurricanes or flooding, can severely impact track conditions and worker safety.

The Human Element: Stories from the Field

Many MTA track workers exemplify dedication amid adversity. Their stories reveal the human side of this crucial profession.

- The Veteran Worker: Having spent over two decades in the field, he describes the changing landscape of safety standards and the evolution of tools. His account emphasizes the importance of mentorship and continuous learning.
- The New Hire: Recently certified, she speaks about the challenges of entering a physically demanding environment and her commitment to safety protocols despite initial fears.
- Emergency Response Hero: During a derailment incident, a team of workers responded swiftly,

risking personal injury to prevent further damage and ensure passenger safety.

These narratives underscore the commitment, resilience, and professionalism of MTA track workers, often unrecognized by the public but vital to transit safety.

Improving Conditions and Future Outlook

The future of MTA track work involves embracing technological advancements, policy reforms, and cultural shifts to enhance safety and efficiency.

Modernization Efforts

- Integrating sensor networks for predictive maintenance.
- Automation of routine inspections where feasible.
- Upgrading aging infrastructure with minimal service disruptions.

Enhancing Safety Culture

- Regular safety drills and refresher training.
- Promoting open communication about hazards.
- Implementing incentive programs for safe work practices.

Addressing Workforce Challenges

- Recruitment drives targeting younger workers.
- Competitive compensation and benefits to retain experienced staff.
- Opportunities for career advancement and specialization.

Policy and Funding Advocacy

- Lobbying for increased federal and state funding.
- Advocating for policies that prioritize infrastructure safety and modernization.
- Community engagement to raise awareness of the importance of track workers.

Conclusion

The MTA track workers are the unsung heroes of New York City's transit system. Their expertise, resilience, and unwavering commitment keep the city moving safely beneath the bustling streets. While facing numerous challenges—from aging infrastructure to safety risks—their role remains indispensable. Recognizing their contributions, understanding their struggles, and supporting their ongoing efforts are essential for ensuring a safer, more reliable subway system for generations to come.

As urban centers worldwide grapple with infrastructure demands, the story of MTA track workers offers valuable lessons in dedication, safety, and innovation—reminding us that behind every smooth ride lies a team of professionals working tirelessly in the shadows to keep the city alive.

[Mta Track Worker](#)

mta track worker: Practices for Wayside Rail Transit Worker Protection Christopher A. Kozub, 2012 TRB's Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Synthesis 95: Practices for Wayside Rail Transit Worker Protection is designed to highlight knowledge, practice, lessons learned, and gaps in information related to wayside rail transit worker protection programs.

mta track worker: Subway Slayings C.S. Poe, 2022-10-28 Detective Everett Larkin of New York City's Cold Case Squad has been on medical leave since catching the serial killer responsible for what the media has dubbed the "Death Mask Murders." But Larkin hasn't forgotten that another memento—another death—is waiting to be found. Summer brings the grisly discovery of human remains in the subway system, but the clues point to one of Larkin's already-open cases, so he resumes active duty. And when a postmortem photograph, akin to those taken during the Victorian Era, is located at the scene, Larkin requests aid from the most qualified man he knows: Detective Ira Doyle of the Forensic Artists Unit. An unsolved case that suffered from tunnel vision, as well as the

deconstruction of death portraits, leads Larkin and Doyle down a rabbit hole more complex than the tunnels beneath Manhattan. And if this investigation isn't enough, both are struggling with how to address the growing intimacy between them. Because sometimes, love is more grave than murder. Also available as an audiobook! Memento Mori series reading order: #1 Madison Square Murders #2 Subway Slayings #3 Broadway Butchery #4 Hudson River Homicides Same Universe Spin-offs: Southernmost Murder (standalone) Snow & Winter series reading order: #1 The Mystery of Nevermore #2 The Mystery of the Curiosities #3 The Mystery of the Moving Image #4 The Mystery of the Bones #5 The Mystery of the Spirits #1 Interlude (Snow & Winter short story collection) An Auden & O'Callaghan Mystery series reading order: #1 A Friend in the Dark #2 A Friend in the Fire #3 A Friend in the Glass Keywords: gay romance, police procedural, slow burn, opposites attract, detective, whodunit, serial killer, partners-in-crime, mm romance, medical condition, grumpy sunshine, workplace romance, lgbt mystery

mta track worker: MTA Board Action Items New York (State). Metropolitan Transportation Authority, 2007-04

mta track worker: *Z Magazine* , 2007

mta track worker: *Federal Register* , 1999

mta track worker: *Transit Talk* Robert W. Snyder, 1997 New York City may seem to be a place where everyone is a stranger, yet transit workers provide a human presence on a late-night bus or an empty subway platform. Few of us give any thought to these invisible workers-until something goes wrong. *Transit Talk* takes readers into the world of MTA New York City transit employees, as they describe their lives and work, from the most visible subway conductor to the seemingly invisible mechanic. There are nearly 44,000 transit workers like those you will meet in *Transit Talk* , and every day they help five million of us travel to work, to school, to weddings, to funerals, to hospitals, to vacations. These workers labor daily on subway tracks inches from high-voltage powerlines, risking their lives for passengers they'll never know. The city can feel large and fragmented, but the transportation system and its workers create common threads in the lives of all New Yorkers, threads we take for granted. Together, their stories create a human tableau of life and labor in the city within a city that is the MTA New York City Transit. Transit workers find satisfaction in fixing a damaged subway car, gain wisdom from mastering a dangerous workplace, nurse emotional wounds from tending to someone injured in an accident, battle frustration from difficulties with management, and express satisfaction when reflecting on a productive career. They tell of how years spent in the same shop create bonds between workers. They talk of the burden of laboring in a twenty-four-hour system with night shifts and weekend workdays that take them away from families. You'll hear painful tales of informing next-of-kin of a death on the tracks as well as joyous anecdotes of workers delivering a baby in a subway car.

mta track worker: *Unions Flying High* Ted Reed, 2025-01-16 Complex and closely watched, the U.S. airline industry has long been a stronghold of union labor. Airline unions function as democracies that organize strikes, raise concern about important safety issues, and back mergers that would not move forward without their support. They use their power to improve workers' lives and to enhance safety, which can be threatened by corporate over-commitment to ensuring profits. This book draws from the experience of Miami Herald's former airlines reporter, Ted Reed, who offers an insider's view of the unions' victories, losses, and larger-than-life leaders. From the beginning of his career in the late 1980s, it was evident that covering the airline industry also meant covering the labor unions that represented nearly every group of employees. His 30 years of experience have spanned multiple major strikes and other union events, and the stories he shares are critical to understanding the role of labor organization in the airline industry.

mta track worker: *The Death and Life of American Labor* Stanley Aronowitz, 2014-10-07 The decline of the American union movement—and how it can revive, by a leading analyst of labor Union membership in the United States has fallen below 11 percent, the lowest rate since before the New Deal. Labor activist and scholar of the American labor movement Stanley Aronowitz argues that the movement as we have known it for the last 100 years is effectively dead. And he explains how

this death has been a long time coming—the organizing and political principles adopted by US unions at mid-century have taken a terrible toll. In the 1950s, Aronowitz was a factory metalworker. In the '50s and '60s, he directed organizing with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers. In 1963, he coordinated the labor participation for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Ten years later, the publication of his book *False Promises: The Shaping of American Working Class Consciousness* was a landmark in the study of the US working-class and workers' movements. Aronowitz draws on this long personal history, reflecting on his continuing involvement in labor organizing, with groups such as the Professional Staff Congress of the City University. He brings a historian's understanding of American workers' struggles in taking the long view of the labor movement. Then, in a survey of current initiatives, strikes, organizations, and allies, Aronowitz analyzes the possibilities of labor's rebirth, and sets out a program for a new, broad, radical workers' movement.

mta track worker: *New Labor Forum* , 2006

mta track worker: *When Tito Loved Clara* Jon Michaud, 2011-03-08 Clara Lugo grew up in a home that would have rattled the most grounded of children. Through brains and determination, she has long since slipped the bonds of her confining Dominican neighborhood in the northern reaches of Manhattan. Now she tries to live a settled professional life with her American husband and son in the suburbs of New Jersey—often thwarted by her constellation of relatives who don't understand her gringa ways. Her mostly happy life is disrupted, however, when Tito, a former boyfriend from fifteen years earlier, reappears. Something has impeded his passage into adulthood. His mother calls him an Unfinished Man. He still carries a torch for Clara; and she harbors a secret from their past. Their reacquaintance sets in motion an unraveling of both of their lives and reveals what the cost of assimilation—or the absence of it—has meant for each of them. This immensely entertaining novel—filled with wit and compassion—marks the debut of a fine writer.

mta track worker: *Maintenance Productivity Practices* Frank W. Venezia, 2004 This synthesis will be of interest to transit agency staff responsible for vehicle maintenance and planning at their agencies. Staff can use this report to learn from the experiences of other agencies, as well as to compare their experiences with those of other agencies. It documents and summarizes transit agency experiences, using various maintenance productivity improvements and programming. The report summarizes the experiences of agencies that vary in size, union affiliation, and operating conditions. It provides descriptions of successful programs and creative modifications to existing programs.

mta track worker: *Flirting with Disaster* Tracy Brown, 2013-11-05 Chloe Webster is an around-the-way girl pursuing her journalism degree at Hunter College. Then she meets Trey, a handsome and well dressed cat with hood swagger. When Trey tells Chloe that he is pursuing a degree in psychology, Chloe thinks she has finally met someone who has his head screwed on right. But as Chloe's flirtation with Trey intensifies, secrets are revealed and she finds that she's playing with fire, in Tracy Brown's *Flirting with Disaster*.

mta track worker: *The Pendergast Files* Douglas Preston, Lincoln Child, 2017-08-15 This discounted ebundle of the Pendergast Files from Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child includes *Relic* and *Reliquary* *Relic* — Just days before a massive exhibition opens at the popular New York Museum of Natural History, visitors are being savagely murdered in the museum's dark hallways and secret rooms. Autopsies indicate that the killer cannot be human... *Reliquary* —When two grotesquely deformed skeletons are found deep in the mud off the Manhattan shoreline, museum curator Margo Green is called in to aid the investigation. Margo must once again team up with police lieutenant D'Agosta and FBI agent Pendergast, as well as the brilliant Dr. Frock, to try and solve the puzzle. Books by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child *The Pendergast Series* *Relic* *Reliquary* Other books *Mount Dragon* Books by Douglas Preston *The Kraken* *Project Impact* *Blasphemy* *The Monster of Florence* *The Codex* *Jennie* At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

mta track worker: *Against Security* Harvey Molotch, 2014-08-24 How security procedures

could be positive, safe, and effective The inspections we put up with at airport gates and the endless warnings we get at train stations, on buses, and all the rest are the way we encounter the vast apparatus of U.S. security. Like the wars fought in its name, these measures are supposed to make us safer in a post-9/11 world. But do they? Against Security explains how these regimes of command-and-control not only annoy and intimidate but are counterproductive. Sociologist Harvey Molotch takes us through the sites, the gizmos, and the politics to urge greater trust in basic citizen capacities—along with smarter design of public spaces. In a new preface, he discusses abatement of panic and what the NSA leaks reveal about the real holes in our security.

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mta track worker: *Essential COM* Don Box, 1998 Offering a distinctive approach, this book will teach readers not only how to use COM but how to think in COM. COM can greatly improve the efficiency of applications, but COM fluency is a difficult task. The book is a top resource for developers who need to make the transition from superficial understanding to deep knowledge.

mta track worker: Back on Track Mark Aldrich, 2018-02-15 A fascinating account of one of America's most important industries and its dangers. Throughout the early twentieth century, railroad safety steadily improved across the United States. But by the 1960s, American railroads had fallen apart, the result of a regulatory straightjacket that eroded profitability and undermined safety. Collisions, derailments, worker fatalities, and grade crossing mishaps skyrocketed, while hazmat disasters exploded into newspaper headlines. In *Back on Track*, his sequel to *Death Rode the Rails*, Mark Aldrich traces the history of railroad accidents beginning in 1965, when Congress responded to bankrupt and scandal-ridden carriers by enacting a new safety regime. Aldrich details the federalization of rail safety and the implementation of a massive grade crossing program. He touches on post-1976 economic deregulation, which provided critical financing that underwrote better public safety. He also explores how the National Transportation Safety Board acted as a public scold to shine bright lights on private failings, while Federal Railroad Administration regulations reinforced market incentives for better safety. Ultimately, Aldrich concludes, the past 50 years have seen great strides in restoring railroad safety while enhancing industry profitability. Arguing that it was not inadequate safety regulation but rather stifling economic regulation that initially caused an uptick in train accidents, *Back on Track* is both a paen to the return of more competitive railroading and the only comprehensive history of the safety of modern American railroads. Praise for *Death Rode the Rails* A masterful study of the complex evolution of railroad safety.—*American Historical Review* Students of rail safety, and today's Class I railroad managers, need to read this volume.—*Trains* Aldrich has created a masterpiece. His research is extensive, drawing on a rich variety of obscure yet relevant sources.—*Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* One of the first large-scale scholarly studies of railroad safety in America.—*Railroad History* A thought-provoking and well-grounded contribution to the history of American economic development.—*Journal of American History* Pioneering . . . A central message of Aldrich's book is that 'little accidents' played a crucial though until now largely hidden role in the gradual evolution of a risk society.—*Technology and Culture* A work of merit . . . essential reading for historians of transport safety, business, and technology.—*Journal of Transport History* Impressive and thoroughly researched . . . Demonstrates how railroad safety evolved from the intersection of market pressures, technology, and public sentiment.—*Journal of Southern History*

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