

Statement attributable to Brightline spokesperson:

Brightline is fully committed to the safety and well-being of train crews and operates in compliance with all federal laws and regulations governing rail operations. Our locomotive engineers & conductors are the backbone of our service, and we go above and beyond federal requirements in supporting them with compassionate assistance and stress management options, including relief days. Our commitment to the entire crew is demonstrated by providing a dedicated team of outside health care professionals available to engage Brightline Teammates for individual mental health support. Elements of this program are voluntary but provide an excellent resource for anyone who would like to utilize the assistance.

We again ask that everyone does their part to prevent the impacts of these tragic, but avoidable incidents. We all need to do our part – motorists, pedestrians and community members – to act safely and follow the laws around the tracks.

Does Brightline track the number of incidents (fatal or otherwise) each conductor or engineer has been involved in at the company?

Yes

Was Darren Brown involved in 16 fatalities? He said he was told this by the company when he was there. Was the high fatality count addressed by Brightline in any way? Did he leave on good terms?

Darren Brown was involved in 6 fatalities while at Brightline.

How does Brightline address employees being involved with multiple traumatic incidents? (Are there any limitations placed on employees after a certain number of incidents? At what point, if any, does the number of incidents trigger a mandatory mental health intervention, paid leave, or a change in assignment to a less high-risk role?)

The safety and well-being of our teammates are a top priority and we have a dedicated team to help respond to teammates per a critical incident stress plan. We do provide support from a third party that is available to our team.

What are key components of Brightline's Critical Incident Stress Response (CISM) plan?

We abide by Part 272 for the Critical Incident Stress Plan [eCFR :: 49 CFR Part 272 -- Critical Incident Stress Plans](#). In addition to complying with these requirements, we also offer a dedicated team to provide support services.

What training do conductors and engineers receive on anticipating and managing the psychological effects of a fatal incident before one occurs?

Conductors and Engineers receive emotional/stress management training in addition to an initial introductory meeting with a Critical Incident mental health professional to establish a relationship.

Is any mental health intervention offered to attendants or non-crew members?

Brightline provides mental health resources and offers access to EAP, Critical Incident Health Provider and group therapy sessions for any teammate involved in an incident.

After a conductor/engineer is involved in an incident and particularly a fatality or serious crash, is there a mandatory amount of time they are relieved from duty? If it is not mandatory, why not? What is that timeframe, and is it paid leave?

In accordance with the Critical Incident Stress Plan (49 CFR Part 272), teammates directly involved in a critical incident may request to be relieved from duty and will receive compensation for the remainder of their scheduled shift on the day of the incident.

Additionally, they may request up to three (3) additional consecutive workdays off for recovery. Those additional days are paid if taken. Within 24 hours of the incident, our Critical Incident mental health professional will contact the affected teammate to offer support, which includes up to two follow-up consulting sessions.

Are crew members drug tested after an incident? If not, why not?

They are tested in accordance with federal law (49 CFR Part 219).

What involvement do conductors/engineers have in the incident investigation? What steps, if any, are taken to minimize the crew's exposure to the accident scene (e.g. exposure to the deceased, involvement in cleaning/investigation)?

The crew's involvement is to provide situational awareness of the incident to Brightline Operations Center to assist emergency responders.

Did Brightline require conductors to personally check to see if the person who was struck was alive/deceased?

The crew's only expected involvement is to provide situational awareness of the incident to Brightline Operations Center to assist emergency responders.

How soon after an incident is the crew required to provide a formal statement or report? Do the conductors/engineers fill out the incident reports themselves or someone else at Brightline?

Local law enforcement interview teammates involved immediately on scene. The only form they fill out is a Brightline statement form within 24 hours.

What specific long-term mental health services are offered? Is the service confidential and provided externally to the company?

(We are aware that Dr. Anthony "Tony" Gonzalez "EAP guy" has been a helpful resource for conductors and would like to interview him.)

The types and duration of mental health services are tailored to the needs of the teammate. Yes, they are confidential. The range of support in place varies based on need and is available to all Brightline teammates.

Does the company have a policy for follow-up check-ins with employees in the weeks and months following an incident to monitor for delayed symptoms of PTSD, depression, or anxiety?

Managers and People & Culture will reach out and follow up with teammates and will direct teammates to the care available.

Is a crew required to hit the emergency brakes when they spot a 'trespasser'? The incident reports show that there were incidents where the emergency horn was blown but no brakes were applied - is that allowed per policy/FRA rules?

Crews are required to take immediate action when a trespasser or vehicle is seen to be fouling the tracks.

Are crew members required to be looking at the tracks at all times? The incident reports show some incidents where crews were not aware they struck someone until after the fact.

Yes, and we have both an engineer and conductor in the locomotive during operations.

There have been some incidents where a trespasser or motorist has run into the side of the train. In these circumstances, the crew may not immediately know that a strike has occurred.

What is the protocol for medically and psychologically clearing a conductor to return to duty? Does this involve a mental health professional, and what criteria are used to determine fitness for duty?

Brightline follows all federal laws including those requiring teammates to undergo a fitness for duty evaluation after a disability leave of any kind.

How does Brightline measure the effectiveness of its post-incident psychological support programs?

Our program is based on industry best practices and evaluated routinely.

Does the company track the mental health outcomes of conductors involved in fatal incidents (e.g., how many were diagnosed with PTSD or took extended mental health leave in the past five years)?

The company respects the privacy rights of its teammates in seeking medical help of any kind, including mental health services.

Are crew members discouraged from accepting a re-crew and taking time off? How does the company encourage it/what is the messaging in training?

Teammates are always offered relief.

Does the company have a policy in writing regarding involvement in a fatal strike/EAP use/mental health interventions?

Answered above.

How often are the company's post-incident protocols reviewed and updated based on new research or best practices in trauma management?

Routinely

How have they changed since Brightline was launched and incidents started occurring?

Changes are evaluated and implemented based on the best interest of our crew and in accordance with federal law.