

# **HIGH ALERT:** **Railway Security Gaps Endanger America**

*American Lives, First Responders, Rail Workers At Risk*

**Mr. Michael Chertoff  
Secretary  
United States  
Department of  
Homeland Security  
Washington, DC**

**Dear Mr. Chertoff:**

As a First Responder – law enforcement officer, firefighter, emergency medical services provider, hazardous materials handler, physician or nurse – I am among those who will be called to service in the event of a hazardous materials spill, accident, or terrorist attack on the nation’s rail system. I am deeply disturbed to learn that the safety and security of the rail network is fraught with vulnerabilities:

The FBI has declared the U.S. rail network a likely target for terrorists, and the Department of Transportation calls the materials shuttling along the rail lines weapons of mass destruction. The Chlorine Institute says a 90-ton tank car targeted by an explosive device could create a toxic cloud 40 miles long and 10 miles wide. According to the U.S. Naval Research Lab, such a toxic plume could kill 100,000 people in 30 minutes. It is not uncommon for such tank cars to sit in easily accessible and unattended rail yards for hours.

Workers who responded to the Teamsters Rail Conference Safe Rails/Secure America survey of safety and security measures on the U.S. rail network report they have no system – other than the railroad radio – to alert First Responders of a hijack, attack, or other emergency. They have received little or no training with regard to security or their roles in the rail carriers’ security plan. They have had inadequate training in safety/terrorism prevention; inspections of infrastructure; hazardous materials; or OSHA’s Emergency Action and/or Emergency Response plans.

Such vulnerabilities place my life, the lives of rail workers and millions of American residents in jeopardy in the event of an attack on the rail network.

I call on the Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration to protect American lives by demanding that rail carriers immediately implement a viable security plan to be enforced by the TSA.

Sincerely,

**First Responders for Rail Security**

---

Name (please print)

Profession

---

Address

---

City/State

---

Signature

 Please fax completed forms to the Safe Rails/Secure America Campaign at (202) 624-6910.