

Suicides and other fatalities from train-person
collisions on Swedish railroads;
a descriptive epidemiologic analysis as a basis for
systems-oriented prevention

Helena Rådbo, Inge Svedung, Ragnar Andersson
Dep. of Health and Environmental Sciences
Division of Public Health Sciences
Karlstad University
S-651 88 KARLSTAD

Address for communication:

Helena Rådbo
Dep. of Health and Environmental Sciences
Division of Public Health Sciences
Karlstad University
S-651 88 KARLSTAD

helena.radbo@kau.se

Phone: +46 54 700 1977

Fax: +46 54 700 2220

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Abstract

Problem: Suicide is a dominating, although hidden, safety problem on Swedish railroads. The aim of this paper is to describe the epidemiology of fatal train-person collisions as a basis for systems-oriented prevention. *Method:* Data on collision circumstances were collected from narrative reports at the Swedish National Rail Administration. *Results:* The events were evenly distributed by months and weekdays, however most suicides occur in day-time while unintentional events usually occur at night. Most train-person collisions happened in densely populated areas, and 75 % of the suicide victims were waiting on the track before the collision. Significance test between types of injury event (suicide, accident or unknown intent) showed small or no differences. *Conclusion:* Traditional approaches to accident prevention by systems modification seem largely applicable to combat railroad suicide as well. *Impact on industry:* Our findings show promising preventive potentials.

Keywords: railroad; railway; suicide; prevention; injury; accident