REPORT: FE-02-97

RAILROAD: Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP)

LOCATION: South Fontana, California

DATE, TIME: Jan. 12, 1997 , 10:15 p.m., PST

PROBABLE CAUSE: The Conductor lost his grip during a shoving move and fell in front of the lead car.

FATALLY INJURED EMPLOYEE:

Craft..... Transportation

Activity..... Switching

Occupation ..... Conductor

Age..... 60 years

Length of Service..... 35 years

Last Rules Examination..... Oct. 19, 1995

Last Physical..... Sept. 5, 1978

Last Drug Test..... Aug. 3, 1993

Circumstances Prior to the Accident

After receiving the statutory off-duty period, a Train Crew, comprising an Engineer, Conductor, and Brakeman, reported for duty on Jan. 12, 1997, at 6 p.m. PST, at Taylor Yard, in Los Angeles, California. The Crew performed deadhead service to the West Colton Yard, California, arriving at about 8 p.m. The Crew then performed the required air brake test prior to departure from West Colton Yard. The train consisted of four UP locomotives (8667, 6863, 9671, 9742,) and 50 loaded cars containing coiled sheet steel. It weighed 6,200 tons, with 124 tons per operative brake, and was 3,180 feet in length. The train departed West Colton Yard, milepost 535.0, at about 9:30 p.m., in the westward (timetable) direction, destined for the South Fontana siding.

After arriving at the east end of the South Fontana siding, milepost 530.4, at about 10 p.m., the train was diverted onto the siding and stopped. The locomotive consist was detached from the

train and moved out of the west end of the siding onto the main track, where it reversed direction

eastbound, passing the train left on the siding.

The locomotive consist then re-entered the east end of the siding to couple to the rear of the train, allowing the locomotives to push the train into the Kaiser Steel Plant. The South Fontana siding had a westward descending grade of 0.64 percent.

The Engineer pulled the train eastward on the ascending grade, while the Brakeman walked westward to board the lead car. The Conductor boarded the lead car prior to the eastward movement. As the Brakeman approached the lead car he told the Engineer, via radio, to stop the train. After the train came to a stop, the Brakeman boarded the north side of Car No. CTRN 500056.

The Conductor stood on the platform on the south side of the car, holding onto the handrail. The Conductor then instructed the Engineer, via radio, to shove the train west toward Kaiser Steel.

It was dark and moderately rainy, and the temperature was 42º F.

The Accident

The shoving movement was being made at a speed of approximately 8 mph. The Engineer said that he was controlling the speed of the train by using the independent brake. The Brakeman was still positioned on the north side of the lead car, standing on the platform and holding onto the handrail. The Brakeman stated the Conductor was also still positioned on the south side of the car, standing on the platform and holding onto the handrail. After the train moved about 10 car lengths, slack action occurred, and the Brakeman saw the Conductor fall from the side of the car face down, over the south rail, in front of the train. The lead wheel on the south side of the lead car, CTRN 500056, ran over the Conductor, causing fatal injuries.

Immediately after the Brakeman saw the Conductor fall, he instructed the Engineer, via radio, to stop the train because a man was injured. The Engineer immediately made an emergency application of the train air brakes. The train came to a stop in about five car lengths. The Engineer attempted to contact someone at the West Colton Yard office via radio, but was unsuccessful. A passing eastbound train stopped at the accident scene, and the eastbound Train Crew Members were able to contact the West Colton Yard office, via radio, and inform them of the accident. Personnel at the West Colton Yard office then called 911 for emergency responders.

Please see the attached diagrams of the West Colton Yard to better visualize the accident scene and the chain of events leading up to the fatality.

Post-Accident Investigation

When the train was moved east and stopped, the drawbars and couplers of the 50 loaded cars

were ‘stretched’ or in draft position. When the westward shoving move occurred, the drawbars and couplers of the cars began to ‘bunch’ into buff position. The Engineer said he was using the independent brake to control the speed of the train. While making the shoving move, the Engineer applied the independent locomotive brake, which caused the drawbars and couplers to change rapidly from buff to draft, causing a violent surging movement. The Conductor lost his grip at this point and was projected forward, falling in front of the wheels of the lead car.

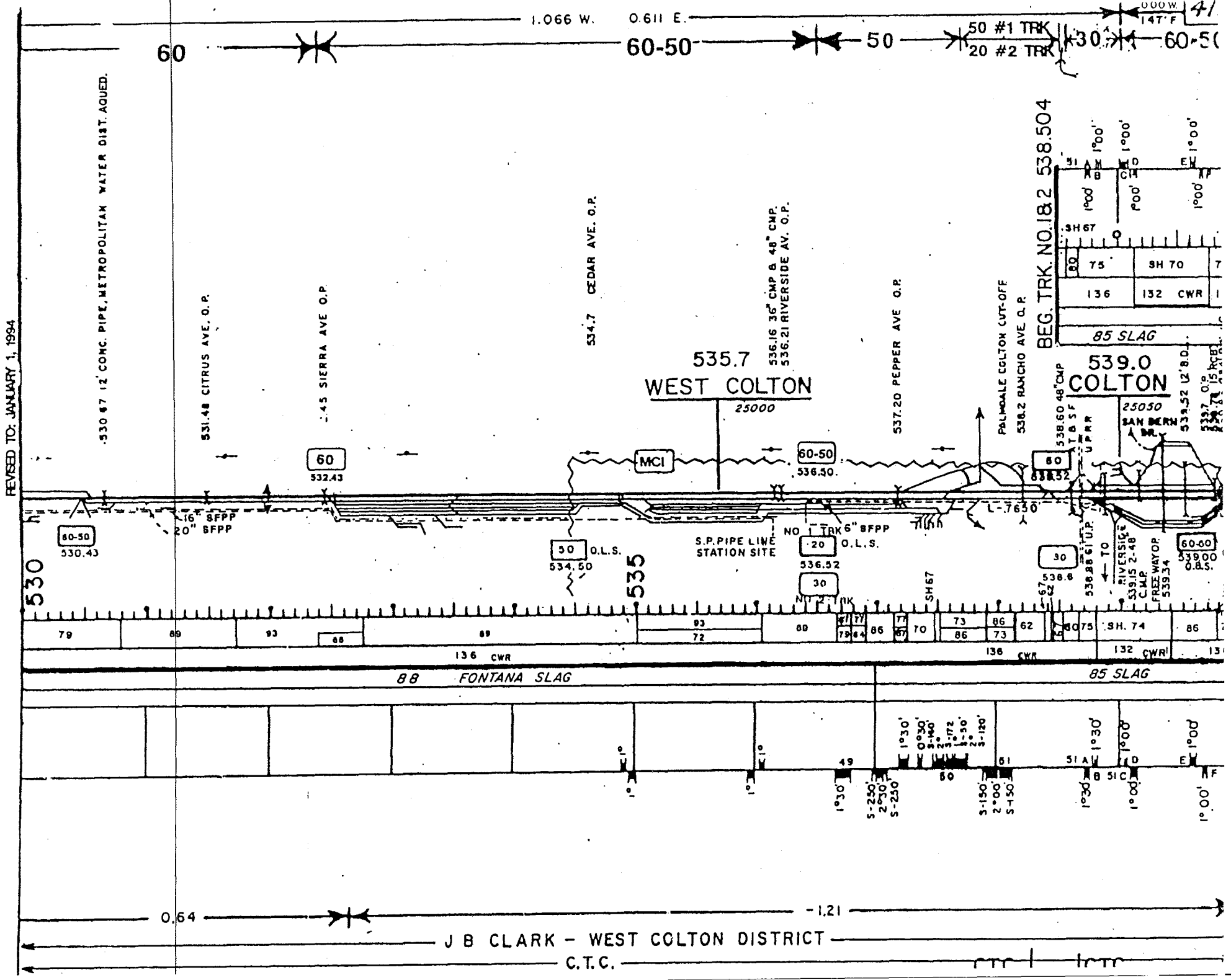
The Post-Accident Investigation revealed that the wheel of the lead car had passed over the Conductor, causing the fatal injuries. The train traveled five car lengths from the point of impact to a stop. The Conductor’s body was severed at the hips. Medical emergency personnel arrived at the scene shortly after the accident occurred and pronounced the Conductor dead at the scene of the accident. The San Bernardino County Coroner indicated the cause of death was multiple blunt force injuries.

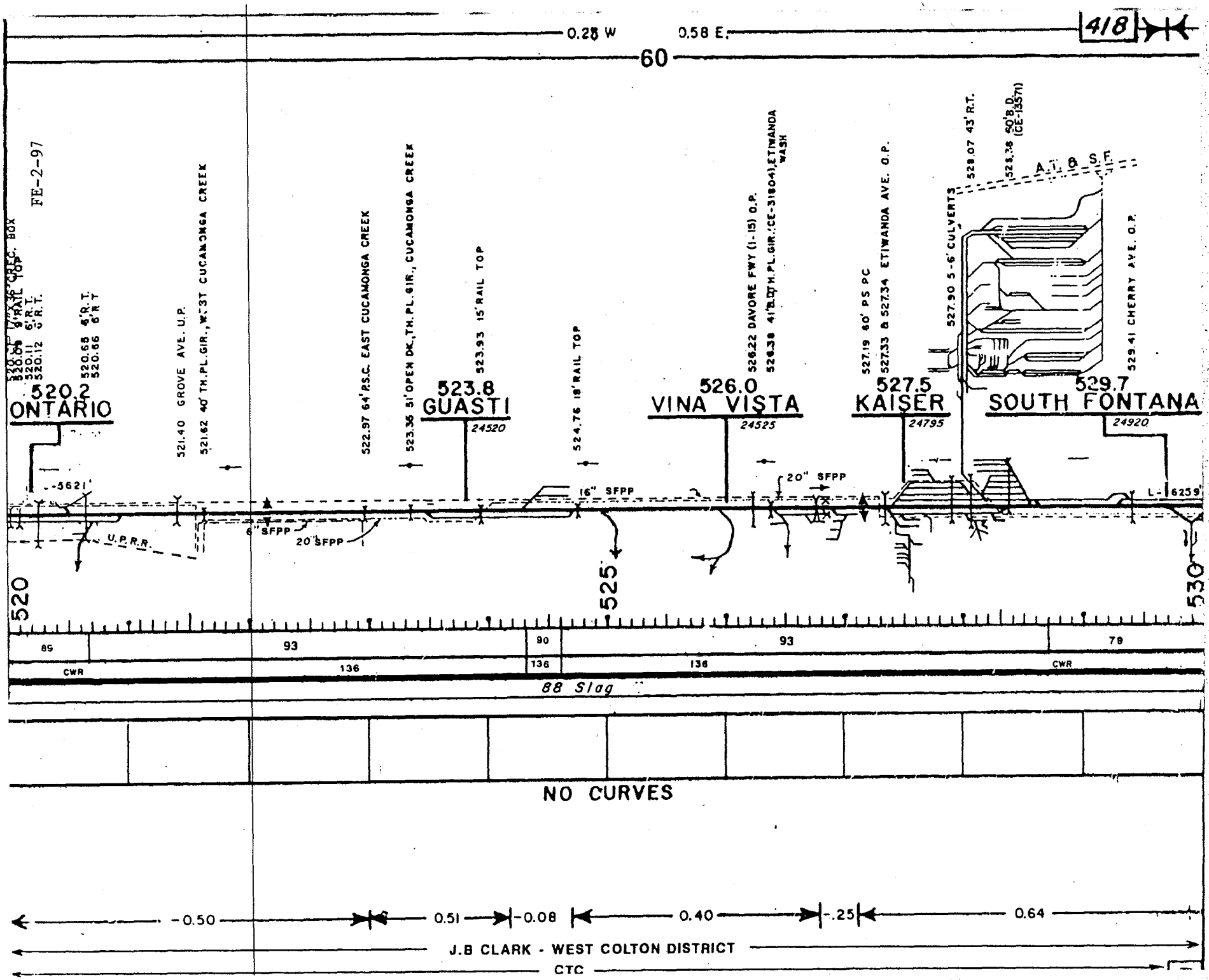
The Engineer said that he had switched at Kaiser Plant in the past, but had never done so making a shoving movement. The Brakeman said that he had never worked on a shoving move with this number of loaded cars.

Post-Accident Toxicological tests, mandated by the Federal Railroad Administration, were conducted on the Engineer, Brakeman, and the Conductor with negative results.

FE-2-97

REVISED TO: JANUARY 1, 1994




0.28 W
0.58 E
60
FE-2-97
520.2
ONTARIO
523.8
GUASTI
24520
526.0
VINA VISTA
24525
527.5
KAISER
24795
529.7
SOUTH FONTANA
24920
GROVE AVE. U.P.
40° TH. PL. GIR., W. ST CUCAMONGA CREEK
64° P.S.C. EAST CUCAMONGA CREEK
51'OPEN DK., TH. PL. GIR., CUCAMONGA CREEK
15° RAIL TOP
18° RAIL TOP
DAVORE FWY (I-15) O.P.
41°8.07° TH. PL. GIR.: (CE-31804), ETIWANDA WASH
60° PS PC
ETIWANDA AVE. O.P.
5-6' CULVERTS
43° R.T.
50° B.B. (CE-13571)
A.T. & S.F.
CHERRY AVE. O.P.
16" SFPP
20" SFPP
6" SFPP
20" SFPP
U.P.R.R.
L = 6259'
520
525
530
89
93
90
93
79
CWR
136
136
136
CWR
88 Slag
NO CURVES
0.50
0.51
0.08
0.40
.25
0.64
J.B CLARK - WEST COLTON DISTRICT
CTC