

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: August 9, 1979

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Forwarded to:

Mr. Stuart M. Reed  
President and Chief Operations Officer  
Consolidated Rail Corporation  
Six Penn Center Plaza  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

R-79-60

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About 5:08 a.m. on January 31, 1979, Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) freight train CNEN-0 collided with the rear of standing Conrail freight train SYEN-0 at Muncy, Pennsylvania. The lead locomotive unit of train CNEN-O was destroyed, the second locomotive unit was heavily damaged, and 14 cars were damaged. Four cars of train SYEN-O were destroyed, and one car was heavily damaged. Two crewmembers were killed and three were injured. 1/

The accident resulted when the engineer and the front brakeman of train CNEN-O failed to operate the train at a speed required by signal indication that would have permitted the engineer to stop the train short of standing train SYEN-O. The failure of the operating rules to require the conductor to be located in a position to properly supervise the safe operation of the train contributed to the collision.

The speed of train CNEN-O remained between 30 and 40 mph after it departed Williamsport, Pennsylvania, en route to Muncy. Crewmembers on the caboose stated that there were no brake application on the train before the collision. The crewmembers of the standing train stated that they did not hear a warning whistle from the approaching train and first became aware of the train when they saw its headlight. Because the crewmembers of train CNEN-O apparently did not take action to avert the accident or warn the crew, the Safety Board concluded that the engineer and the head brakeman were not alert as required by your operating rules.

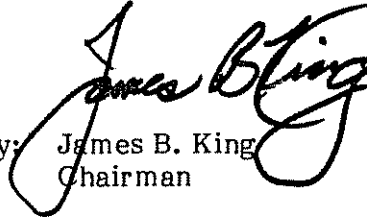
Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Consolidated Rail Corporation:

1/ For more detailed information read "Railroad Accident Report—Rear-End Collision of Two Consolidated Rail Corporation Freight Trains, Muncy, Pennsylvania, January 31, 1979 (NTSB-RAR-79-6).

Insure that its train operations are conducted in accordance with its operating rules. (Class II, Priority Action) (R-79-60)

KING, Chairman, McADAMS, GOLDMAN, and BURSLEY, Members, concurred in the above recommendation. DRIVER, Vice Chairman, did not participate.

By: James B. King  
Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James B. King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J".