

Log R-653C



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: MAY 30 1995

In Reply Refer To: R-95-29

Mr. Robert Magnaghi
Director
Department of Public Safety
Osceola County Fire and Rescue
17 South Vernon, Room 112
Kissimmee, FL 34741

On November 30, 1993, a 184-foot-long vehicle operated by Rountree Transport and Rigging (Rountree), Inc., was en route to deliver an 82-ton turbine to a Kissimmee Utility Authority (KUA) electricity generating plant under construction near Intercession City, Florida. The private access road to the plant facility crosses over a single railroad track owned by CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT). Because of the configuration of the truck and the profile of the roadway, the cargo deck of the vehicle began to bottom out on the roadway surface as it moved across the tracks. The Rountree crew proceeded to adjust the height of cargo deck to gain greater clearance while the vehicle straddled the track. They had finished raising the cargo deck and were preparing to move the vehicle when the lights and bells at the grade crossing activated. Seconds later, National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) train number 88, the Silver Meteor, carrying 89 passengers, struck the side of the cargo deck and the turbine. The locomotive and the first four cars of the eight-car consist derailed, pushing the turbine and parts of the Rountree vehicle in front of them.¹

No deaths resulted from this accident. Six persons sustained serious injuries and 53 persons suffered minor injuries, and had to be evacuated to area hospitals. The Rountree vehicle and the turbine were destroyed, and the locomotive and the first three railcars were damaged extensively. Total damage from the accident exceeded \$14 million.

¹ For additional information, read Highway Accident Report--Collision of Amtrak Train No. 88 with Rountree Transport and Rigging, Inc., Vehicle on CSX Transportation, Inc., Railroad near Intercession City, Florida, November 30, 1993 (NTSB/HAR-95/01).

From its investigation of this accident, the Safety Board identified several safety issues, including hazard identification and avoidance. When the train derailed, the locomotive and several other cars came to rest above and/or near two high-pressure hazardous liquid pipelines owned by Central Florida Pipeline Corporation (CFPL). However, in formulating immediate emergency actions, the only potential hazard that on-scene emergency responders readily identified and closely monitored was the diesel fuel leaking from the locomotive. No emergency responder in the derailment area noted the pipeline markers and reported the presence of the pipelines to the incident commander.

Safety Board investigators examined the standard operating procedures developed by the Osceola County Emergency Management Division for incident commanders at railroad incidents involving either passenger or freight trains.

In determining potential hazards following passenger train derailments, the SOP states, "[There is] little or no hazardous materials problem other than the train's own fuel." The SOP focuses on emergency response manpower and material requirements and passenger identification. It also includes evacuation guidelines for train incidents involving hazardous materials. The SOP does not include determining the presence of or potential endangerment to hazardous facilities, such as pipelines, or other facilities buried within the railroad right-of-way.

Before this accident, the CFPL had provided a representative of the Osceola County Fire Department with information about the location of the pipelines at a seminar. However, the fireman had put the documents in the fire chief's vehicle without telling him. Consequently, the incident commander was not aware of the pipelines until a CFPL representative arrived on-scene about 3:05 p.m., which was 2 hours, 23 minutes after the accident and after CSXT contract clean-up crews brought bulldozers and other heavy excavation equipment that might endanger the pipelines into the area.

The Safety Board believes that Osceola County should revise existing risk identification standard operating procedures for railroad incidents to require that when formulating initial emergency response plans, responders determine whether potentially hazardous facilities are present at the site, and whether they pose a risk. The standard operating procedures should emphasize that when a determination is made that such facilities pose a potential risk, the incident commander should notify the facility operators and should monitor and maintain protective control measures at the site both during the initial emergency response and during subsequent wreckage removal and recovery operations.

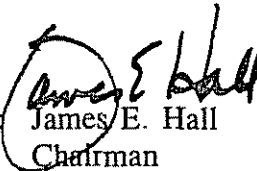
Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board makes the following recommendation to the Osceola County (Florida) Emergency Management Division--

Revise your standard operating procedures for a railroad incident to include immediately determining whether pipelines are present and whether they may pose a risk during the initial emergency response effort and subsequent wreckage removal operations. (Class II, Priority Action) (R-95-29)

Also, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations H-95-7 to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, H-95-8 and -9 to the Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association, H-95-10 to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, H-95-11 to the National Sheriffs' Association, H-95-12 to the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances, P-95-31 to the American Gas Association, P-95-32 to the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America, P-95-33 to the American Public Gas Association, P-95-34 to the American Petroleum Institute, P-95-35 to the Central Florida Pipeline Corporation, P-95-36 to the State of Florida Division of Emergency Management, R-95-24 and -25 to the Association of American Railroads, R-95-26 and -27 to the American Short Line Railroad Association, R-95-28 to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, and R-95-30 through -32 to the CSX Transportation Corporation.

The National Transportation Safety Board is an independent Federal agency with the statutory responsibility "to promote transportation safety by conducting independent accident investigations and by formulating safety improvement recommendations" (Public Law 93-633). The Safety Board is interested in any action taken as a result of its safety recommendations. Therefore, it would appreciate a response from you regarding action taken or contemplated with respect to the recommendation in this letter. Please refer to Safety Recommendation R-95-29.

Chairman HALL, Vice Chairman FRANCIS, and Member HAMMERSCHMIDT concurred in this recommendation.

By: 
James E. Hall
Chairman