

Log R-659C



National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C. 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: DEC 15 1995

In Reply Refer To: R-95-48

To All Class 1 Railroads
(address list attached)

About 5:21 a.m., Pacific standard time, on December 14, 1994, a westbound Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company (Santa Fe) intermodal train, PBHLA1-10, collided with the rear end of a standing westbound Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) unit coal train, CUWLA-10, at milepost 61.55, near Cajon, California, on the Cajon Subdivision of the Santa Fe's San Bernardino Division. The two crewmembers from the Santa Fe train were injured when they jumped from the moving train before the collision. Two helper crewmembers on the rear of the UP train detrained before the collision because they had heard radio conversations among the Santa Fe crewmembers, the train dispatcher, and UP crewmembers. As a result of the collision, a fire broke out that burned the two UP helper locomotive units. Four Santa Fe locomotive units and three articulated five-pack double-stack container cars were also destroyed. Total estimated damages were \$4,012,900.¹

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the collision was insufficient available train braking force for the Santa Fe train due to a restriction or blockage in the trainline between the third and fourth cars. The Safety Board concludes that there would have been no accident had the Santa Fe train had a two-way end-of-train (EOT) device, which offers a key advantage that a one-way EOT device does not. The two-way device allows the locomotive crew to telemetrically initiate an emergency brake application at the end of the train. Thus, the whole train can be braked even if the trainline is blocked, as it was in this accident.

¹ For more information, read Railroad Accident Report--*Rear-End Collision of Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Freight Train PBHLA1-10 and Union Pacific Railroad Freight Train CUWLA-10 near Cajon, California, December 14, 1994* (NTSB/RAR-95/04).

The Safety Board has a long history of advocating the use of two-way EOT devices. As a result of a runaway train near Helena, Montana, on February 2, 1989, the Safety Board recommended that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA):

Require the use of two-way EOT telemetry devices on all cabooseless trains for the safety of railroad operations. (R-89-82)

The FRA, which has not yet implemented the recommendation, has recognized the importance of requiring two-way EOT devices in its proposed changes to the "Power Brake Regulations."² The comment period for the proposed changes was extended to April 1, 1995, and the FRA has been evaluating the responses. The Safety Board is pleased that 6 years after the recommendation was made, the FRA has finally addressed the need for two-way EOT devices. Nonetheless, the Safety Board believes that until a rule requiring two-way EOT devices is in effect, runaway train accidents like Cajon will continue to happen, and the Safety Board is superseding Safety Recommendation R-89-82.

The National Transportation Safety Board therefore issues the following recommendation to all Class 1 railroads:

Pending the adoption of a formal rule by the Federal Railroad Administration, implement the use of two-way end-of-train telemetry devices on all cabooseless trains by March 31, 1996. (Class II, Priority Action) (R-95-48)

Also, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations R-95-41 through -43 to the Association of American Railroads, Safety Recommendation R-95-44 to the Federal Railroad Administration, and Safety Recommendation R-95-47 to the American Short Line Railroad Association.

The Safety Board is vitally 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-95-48 in your reply. If you need additional information, you may call (202) 382-6840.

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

By:


Jim Hall
Chairman

² *Federal Register*, Vol. 59, No. 179, Friday, September 16, 1994, "Proposed Rules," page 47678.

List of All Class 1 Railroads

Mr. Robert D. Krebs
President and Chief Executive Officer
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation
1700 East Golf Road
Schaumburg, Illinois 60173-5860

Mr. James A. Hagen
Chairman
Consolidated Rail Corporation
Two Commerce Square
2001 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101-1417

Mr. John W. Snow
Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer
CSX Corporation
901 East Cary Street
One James Center, 20th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Mr. E. Hunter Harrison
President and Chief Executive Officer
Illinois Central
455 North Cityfront Plaza
20th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Mr. Michael R. Haverty
President and Chief Executive Officer
Kansas City Southern Railway
114 West 11th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64105-1804

Mr. David R. Goode
Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer
Norfolk Southern Corporation
Three Commercial Place
Norfolk, Virginia 23510-2191

Mr. Edwin V. Dodge
President and Chief Executive Officer
Soo Line Railroad
Post Office Box 530
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440

Mr. Jerry R. Davis
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Southern Pacific Lines
1860 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80295

Mr. Ronald J. Burns
President and Chief Executive Officer
Union Pacific Railroad
1416 Dodge Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68179

Mr. Thomas M. Downs
Chairman and President
National Railroad Passenger Corporation
60 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002