

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C. 20594



Safety Recommendation

Date: November 30, 1993

In Reply Refer To: R-93-23

Mr. W. Graham Claytor, Jr.
Chairman and President
National Railroad Passenger Corporation
60 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

R 645

On July 31, 1991, National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) train 82, Silver Star, was en route from Tampa, Florida, to New York, New York. The train consisted of 2 diesel-electric locomotives, 3 baggage cars, and 15 passenger cars.

At 5:01 a.m., its last six passenger cars derailed at milepost S329.6 on CSX Transportation Inc. track in Lugoff, South Carolina. The accident occurred near the E.I. DuPont May plant on a single main track that has a parallel auxiliary track, which is known as the DuPont siding. The derailment occurred at the Orlon crossover switch that connects the main track and the auxiliary track. The derailed passenger cars collided with the first of nine hopper cars that were stored at the siding.

Six operating crewmembers, 16 on-board service (OBS) crewmembers, and 407 passengers were on the train. Twelve OBS crewmembers and 53 passengers sustained minor injuries, 12 passengers sustained serious injuries, and 8 passengers sustained fatal injuries.¹

¹For more detailed information, read Railroad Accident Report--*Derailement and Subsequent Collision of Amtrak Train 82 with Rail Cars on DuPont Siding of CSX Transportation Inc. at Lugoff, South Carolina, on July 31, 1991* (NTSB/RAR-93/02).

The train had a public address (PA) system that functioned after the accident. According to both the OBS crewmembers and the passengers, no one used the PA system either to provide information or to seek the service of a medical practitioner, as required by Amtrak rules. The conductor and the OBS crew chief said that they were attending to seven severely injured passengers in the last two cars, and while so occupied, they were unable to use the PA system to give instructions to the passengers or other OBS crewmembers. Later, the conductor briefed emergency responders about the number of injured people and the consist of the train.

The operating and OBS traincrews did not use the PA system to locate passengers who had any medical expertise. The conductor and the OBS chief were attending to several severely injured passengers; however, the other crewmembers should have used the PA system, as required by Amtrak rules, to give information about the emergency and related instructions to passengers and crew. The OBS crewmembers and the passengers in the front section of the train stated that the passengers were not informed about why they were stopped for so long or that the train was derailed. These OBS crewmembers did not advise the passengers over the PA system, as required by Amtrak rules, about the length of the delay or other means of travel for a long period of time. Passengers in the fourth car stated that it was nearly 2 hours before they were told what had happened and that it was almost another 1 1/2 hours before they were instructed to leave the train.

According to the passengers, several OBS crewmembers did not react expeditiously to the emergency, while others began to help immediately. When newly hired, the OBS crews receive 4 hours of training on emergency response, including the proper use of the PA system. Amtrak has no mandatory refresher training program for its OBS personnel. Amtrak rules currently require personnel to use the PA system to contact medical practitioners, advise passengers in an emergency, or announce delays between stations. The use of the PA system is especially important during evacuations at night and in tunnels to prevent passengers from panicking in the darkness. Amtrak rules should be amended to require the operating and the OBS traincrews attend refresher training in the use of the PA system during emergencies to locate medical practitioners and to instruct passengers.

Train crewmembers, according to Amtrak, are responsible for providing first aid until the emergency responders arrive; however, Amtrak rules do not require OBS personnel to be trained in first aid. Furthermore, Amtrak does not currently have a written policy requiring OBS personnel to attend refresher training in first aid or in emergency response procedures. The conductor and the OBS crew chief responded immediately to help the injured passengers. If they had been trained in first aid, their efforts to treat the injured may have been enhanced.

First-aid training should be required for Amtrak conductors and OBS crewmembers to enable them to assist passengers during emergencies. Whether the administration of first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation would have been instrumental in saving lives in this accident is not known; however, it may have been helpful. Amtrak operates in some remote areas where emergency responders may not arrive immediately on scene. In those cases, only passengers or crewmembers can provide immediate medical treatment. Therefore, the National Transportation

Safety Board believes that Amtrak should require all OBS personnel to periodically take training in the emergency operating rules and in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of the public address system during train emergencies.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the National Railroad Passenger Corporation:

Require that all on-board service personnel periodically take training in the emergency operating rules and in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of the public address system during train emergencies. (Class II, Priority Action) (R-93-23)

Also, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations R-93-18 through -22 to CSX Transportation Inc.

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 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-93-23 in your reply. If you need additional information, you may call (202) 382-6840.

Chairman VOGT, Vice Chairman COUGHLIN, and Members LAUBER, HART, and HAMMERSCHMIDT concurred in this recommendation.


By: Carl W. Vogt
Chairman