

Log H-352
SP-20

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: January 20, 1983

Forwarded to:

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SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

H-83-3 and -4

On July 9, 1982, a 4-door Cadillac sedan, carrying nine occupants, was traveling westbound on Woodland Drive in Lake View, Arkansas, approaching a railroad/highway grade crossing. The passenger car was driven onto the crossing and was struck broadside by the lead locomotive of a Missouri Pacific (MP) freight train traveling southbound. Eight of the occupants in the Cadillac were killed and one was seriously injured. None of the train crewmembers or company officials aboard the train were injured as a result of the accident. The accident occurred at a public crossing known as C.S. Woodland Drive, located 292 feet south of MP 342 on the Missouri Pacific Louisiana division line between Paragould and McGehee, Arkansas. 1/

MP currently has an active program for reporting near misses in the Louisiana Division, which services Arkansas. Engine and traincrews are encouraged to be on the look out for hazardous material trucks and schoolbuses that violate grade crossing safety laws and to report to the proper authorities any violation that they might encounter. Arkansas statute 75.638 requires that all hazardous material and public transportation vehicles (i.e. schoolbuses) stop for all grade crossings.

MP should expand their active near miss program to include the reporting of all violations of grade crossing safety laws. The information compiled from the near miss program could be used by the State to warn violators and to identify other appropriate action as required. The reporting system could also identify hazardous grade crossings and provide insights on recurring problems at hazardous crossings which require attention.

The operating railroad personnel, such as engineers, trainmen, and conductors, that are actively involved in the near miss program should also be encouraged to participate in the Operation Lifesaver program. They are the people best able to relate their day to day experiences with respect to near misses and accidents. Hopefully, this will serve to further convince the local public of the importance of grade crossing safety. Information relating to near miss experiences should be shared with local officials so that they can study the crossing involved to determine what action is needed to prevent near misses and future accidents.

1/ For more detailed information, read Highway Accident Report--"Automobile/Missouri Pacific Railroad freight Train Collision, Woodland Drive, Lake View, Arkansas, July 9, 1982" (NTSB-~~HAR~~-83-1).
RHR


As a result of its investigation of this accident, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Missouri Pacific Railroad:

Expand the company's ongoing near miss reporting program in the Louisiana division to require that operating and engine crews also report vehicles other than hazardous material trucks and schoolbuses that violate grade crossing safety laws. (Class II, Priority Action) (H-83-3)

Encourage company operating employees in all districts to increase their participation in the Operation Lifesaver program in order to disseminate to a wider section of the public their experiences with near misses and accidents that occur along the train line over which they operate. (Class II, Priority Action) (H-83-4)

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." (P.L. 93-633). The Safety Board is vitally interested in any actions taken as a result of its safety recommendations. Therefore, we would appreciate a response from you regarding action taken or contemplated with respect to the recommendations in this letter.

BURNETT, Chairman, GOLDMAN, Vice Chairman, and McADAMS, BURSLEY, and ENGEN, Members, concurred in these recommendations.


By: Jim Burnett
Chairman