

R-322

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: August 15, 1980

Forwarded to:

Mr. A. S. Boyd
President
National Railroad Passenger Corporation
400 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

R-80-30

About 4:00 p.m., on March 14, 1980, westbound Amtrak train No. 7, the Empire Builder, derailed two locomotive units and eight cars while moving at 37 mph through a 6°08' curve on the Burlington Northern track at Glacier Park, Montana. Of the 170 passengers and 20 crewmembers, 115 persons were injured and 35 were hospitalized. Property damage was estimated at \$546,800. 1/

Investigation of this accident disclosed that the baggage car on train No. 7 was being operated with a number of defective conditions which could cause the derailment of a passenger train. Although the defects did not cause or contribute to the cause of the derailment at Glacier Park, the missing springs on the lead truck, the improper coupler height, the missing bolts in the centerplate of the lead truck, and the missing lateral clearance shims on the lead axle indicate inadequate inspection and maintenance of the car.

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

Prohibit the use in revenue service trains of passenger train cars with defective conditions that may affect their safe operation.
(Class II, Priority Action) (R-80-30)

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


for By: James B. King
Chairman

1/ For more detailed information read, "Railroad Accident Report-- Derailment of Amtrak Train No. 7 on Burlington Northern Track, Glacier Park, Montana, March 14, 1980 (NTSB-RAR-80-6)."