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NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: August 19, 1977

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Forwarded to:

Mr. J. P. Fishwick  
President And  
Chief Executive Officer  
Norfolk & Western Railway Company  
8 North Jefferson Street  
Roanoke, Virginia 24042  
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SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

R-77-25

About 9:15 p.m., on October 19, 1976, at New Haven, Indiana, Norfolk & Western Railway Company (N&W) freight train Extra 1376 West collided head-on with N&W yard locomotive unit No. 3363, which was pulling 55 freight cars. One locomotive unit, a caboose, and one car of Extra 1376 West, and the yard locomotive and one car were derailed. The brakeman on the locomotive of Extra 1376 West was killed and four crewmembers were injured. The estimated cost of damages was \$168,400. 1/

The investigation of the accident disclosed that the last 5 cars of the 11-car Extra 1376 West did not have their airbrake systems connected to the rest of the train. When adding the last seven cars to their train, the crewmembers did not inspect the cars as required by company rules and the Federal Power Brake Law of 1958. Consequently the uncoupled air hoses between the fifth and sixth cars from the rear and the closed angle cock on the east end of the sixth car were not detected.

The N&W places the caboose directly behind the locomotive on this local switch run between Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Fostoria, Ohio. However, with the caboose at this location and without a portable air gauge, the crewmembers could not check the air brake pressure as required by N&W rules and Federal regulations. Subsequently the crewmembers had to

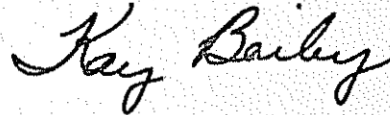
1/ For more detailed information on this accident, read Railroad Accident Report - Head-on Collision of Two Norfolk & Western Railway Company Freight Trains, New Haven, Indiana, October 19, 1976 (NTSB-RAR-77-6).

walk toward the front of the train to board the caboose after switching cars. With the same seven cars always remaining at the rear of the train the crewmembers failed to check the airbrake pressure with a gauge at the rear of the train, and failed to observe the application and release of the brakes on the rear car when performing the airbrake tests at intermediate terminals.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Norfolk & Western Railway Company:

Establish policy and procedures that will insure that all trains are operated in compliance with the company's rules and the Federal power brake regulations. (Class II, Priority Followup) (R-77-25)

TODD, Chairman, BAILEY, Vice Chairman, McADAMS, HOGUE, and HALEY, Members, concurred in the above recommendation.



for By: Webster B. Todd, Jr.  
Chairman