

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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AMTRAK TRAIN 188 DERAILMENT NEAR

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PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

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Docket No.: DCA-15-MR-010

MAY 12, 2015

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Interview of: BRANDON BOSTIAN

30th Street Station  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Friday,  
May 15, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: DAVID BUCHER  
Railroad Accident Investigator

## APPEARANCES:

DAVID BUCHER, Railroad Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

STEPHEN JENNER, Ph.D., Human Performance Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

MARY PAT McKAY, M.D., Chief Medical Officer  
National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL FLANIGON, Investigator-in-Charge  
National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL BULL, Operating Practices Inspector  
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

JOHN HINES, System General Road Foreman  
Amtrak

WILLIAM BATES  
National Safety Team  
SMART Transportation Division

CARL FIELDS  
Safety Task Force  
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET)

ROBERT GOGGIN, Esq.  
(Counsel on behalf of Mr. Bostian)

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:45 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 MR. BUCHER: This is Dave Bucher, Rail Accident  
4 Investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board. And  
5 this is the interview of Brandon Bostian, locomotive engineer for  
6 Train 188. It is May 15, 2015 and the time is 1:45. We're  
7 located at the 30th Street Station in Philadelphia and the  
8 interview is relative to NTSB's accident number DCA-15-MR-010.  
9 And that's the accident that occurred on 05/12/15 in Philadelphia,  
10 Pennsylvania.

11 Seated to my right I have?

12 MR. HINES: John Hines, System General Road Foreman for  
13 the Amtrak.

14 MR. BATES: William Bates, B-a-t-e-s. SMART, National  
15 Transportation Safety Team.

16 DR. McKAY: Mary Pat McKay. That's M-a-r-y, P-a-t,  
17 M-c-K-a-y, Chief Medical Officer for the NTSB.

18 MR. FIELDS: Carl Fields, F-i-e-l-d-s, Brotherhood of  
19 Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

20 MR. FLANIGON: Mike Flanigon with National  
21 Transportation Safety Board. Last name F-l-a-n-i-g-o-n.

22 MR. BULL: Mike Bull, B-u-l-l, Operating Practices with  
23 the FRA.

24 MR. GOGGIN: Robert Goggin, attorney for Brandon  
25 Bostian, G-o-g-g-i-n.

1 DR. JENNER: Stephen Jenner, J-e-n-n-e-r, with the NTSB.

2 INTERVIEW OF BRIAN BOSTIAN

3 BY MR. BUCHER:

4 Q. Okay. Brandon, Dave Bucher again. Like we said before,  
5 if you could just go back to the day of the accident --

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. -- and just relate to us your day, from the time you got  
8 up and from right on through?

9 A. I will do the best I can.

10 Q. Absolutely.

11 A. Obviously, hard to sleep, that sort of thing.

12 I think we signed up at 1:20 at New York, Penn Station.  
13 Had a job briefing, went over our TSRBs and our Form D's.  
14 Operated Train 2121 to Washington.

15 The trip down to Washington was uneventful from New York  
16 to BWI Airport. And then after leaving BWI Airport, we had a  
17 technical problem with the train set. I think the fault code was  
18 something along the lines of speed data not available. And so we  
19 did a lot of troubleshooting but then took a delay and arrived in  
20 D.C. late.

21 And Washington, I had dinner in the food court with a  
22 friend who lives in Washington. After dinner I signed back up in  
23 the crew base at 6:30. We had another job briefing. I used the  
24 same copy of the NTSB -- I'm sorry, the TSRBs that I had gotten in  
25 New York. I used the same copies of the TSRB from our return

1 trip, went over Form D's. I can't remember if there were any Form  
2 D's either way. And then it was a -- that was a fairly uneventful  
3 trip. I don't remember anything particularly out of the ordinary.

4           Unfortunately, the last memory I have on the way back is  
5 approaching and passing the platforms in North Philadelphia. I  
6 remember turning on the bell, and the next thing that I remember  
7 is when I came to my senses I was standing up in the locomotive  
8 cab after the accident.

9           I got my cellphone out of my bag. I turned it on. When  
10 it came on, while it was powering up, I think I got off the engine  
11 and walked towards some passengers that I heard. When the phone  
12 came on, I turned off airplane mode, and then when it reconnected  
13 with the network, I called 911 and I said that the -- that a train  
14 had derailed. And at the time I did not know what my location.

15           The 911 operator said that it had been reported, and  
16 soon after that, I saw emergency personnel coming over some  
17 tracks. They told me to sit down while they tended to the  
18 passengers and then they pointed me towards the triage area. I  
19 went to triage and I got a green tag. They eventually put us in a  
20 police paddy wagon and took me to Albert Einstein Hospital and I  
21 got treatment there over the next few hours.

22           I'm trying to remember. I think that they said that I  
23 had a concussion and definitely stitches in my forehead, stitches  
24 on my left knee, a sprain on my right knee, and cuts and abrasions  
25 on both shins. They gave me a CAT scan. They were concerned

1 about brain issues because they asked if I had lost consciousness  
2 and I said that I wasn't sure. I didn't know what happened. They  
3 took x-rays of my knee.

4 They officially discharged me from the hospital, but I  
5 -- or from the ER, but I stayed on the same gurney while Amtrak  
6 management came and gave me the post-accident toxicology test.

7 I forgot. I should go back. While they were treating  
8 me on the gurney, there was a detective from Philadelphia Police  
9 Department who asked for a statement and Philadelphia Police  
10 Department took a blood sample. And then going back to Amtrak,  
11 they took a blood sample and a urine sample.

12 And then Philadelphia Police transported me in a police  
13 SUV to a police station and I waited there for many hours. And I  
14 got in touch with Mr. Goggins [sic] and then he got me out of the  
15 police station and then I went home -- I went to a hotel. My  
16 family, Michael, had driven down from Boston, which is where he  
17 lives. My parents had flown from Memphis and arrived at the same  
18 time, and we checked into a hotel.

19 Q. Okay, just -- Dave Bucher. And just a couple follow-up  
20 questions and then we'll start around the room a little bit. And  
21 related to the train operations, when you left D.C. and for --  
22 through the trip, as long as you can remember, there were no  
23 mechanical issues with the train or airbrake problems?

24 A. I don't remember having any issues with the airbrakes.  
25 The only issue that I found, and I did not write it up because I

1 normally write up issues at the end of the trip -- the only issue  
2 is relatively minor. There was really excessive wind noise off  
3 the fireman's side engineer window. So leaving D.C., when you got  
4 above -- when I got above, you know, 70 or so, it got really loud  
5 and so I tried to make sure that the locking mechanism was fully  
6 secured.

7           But I noticed that there was a lot of -- I don't know  
8 what you would call it, but a lot of, like, almost like dried  
9 black tar around the frame of the window, like they had tried to  
10 fix it. But it was a brand new locomotive, and so -- like I said,  
11 minor issue, but that's about the only thing I can recall.

12           Q.    Okay. There were no problems with the operation of the  
13 locomotive otherwise?

14           A.    There's nothing that really sticks out in my head.  
15 Obviously the -- all of our engines have minor issues.

16           Q.    And do you remember -- and I'm testing you a little bit  
17 here. Between leaving Philadelphia and North Philadelphia, do you  
18 remember passing any other trains in either direction?

19           A.    Actually, I should've mentioned that earlier. I have  
20 one significant event was that a SEPTA train had a problem. They  
21 called a dispatcher. The windshield had been broken and busted  
22 out and they put the train in emergency and they were debating as  
23 to whether or not they wanted medical attention.

24                   I radioed them. I think they were around a curve. It  
25 must've been the curve between Mantua and Lehigh. They -- around



1 the far side of the curve. I couldn't see their marker lights,  
2 but I figured they were on the other side. So I sent them a radio  
3 message or whatnot just telling them that I was coming up on 2 --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- and they didn't have protection.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I think that an Amtrak train passed going the other way.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Or it may've been SEPTA.

10 Q. And that was going the opposite direction? There was  
11 also an opposite direction train?

12 A. I think that there was an opposite direction train.

13 Q. Okay. Thank you.

14 A. If I remember right.

15 Q. Okay. I'm going to pass off to my right.

16 A. Okay.

17 BY MR. HINES:

18 Q. Hi, Brandon. John Hines here. Brandon, how long have  
19 you been working on this particular job?

20 A. Well, they just changed all of the schedules recently.  
21 I think I've -- well, one I got bumped. I took the 5 days. Went  
22 on another, got bumped, took the 5 days again. Maybe a week or  
23 three. I'd have to look at a calendar. I don't think it's more  
24 than 3 weeks and it was not less than one week. But I don't  
25 remember specifically. It was relatively new.

1 Q. Okay. No further questions.

2 MR. BATES: William Bates. No questions.

3 DR. McKAY: I don't have anything now.

4 MR. FIELDS: Carl Fields, BLET. No questions, Brandon.

5 BY MR. FLANIGON:

6 Q. Mike Flanigon. Was this a regular run for you?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. So 5 days a week; 6 days a week?

9 A. Five days a week.

10 Q. Five days a week? And where were you in that work  
11 cycle?

12 A. Last day of the week.

13 Q. Last day of the --

14 A. Right. Wednesday and Thursday are the days off.

15 Q. And so you start in New York? What time do you go on  
16 duty typically?

17 A. 1:20, I think.

18 Q. 1:20 in the afternoon?

19 A. Right.

20 Q. Go to Washington. Have how much time off typically?

21 A. If the train's on time, I think that you have about  
22 roughly 90 minutes before -- I think. I'd have to look at my  
23 calendar for the exact times. I think my train going down was  
24 about a half hour late, so we had about an hour.

25 Q. About an hour, okay.

1 A. I think.

2 Q. You mentioned the wind noise. And that was on the  
3 fireman's side?

4 A. I'm sorry, did I say fireman's side? I meant engineer's  
5 side.

6 Q. Engineer's side?

7 A. I'm so sorry.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Engineer's side.

10 Q. So during the trip this night, was your window closed or  
11 open a crack or --

12 A. For a while I tried to crack it open and see if it would  
13 decrease the noise. I think I eventually came to the realization  
14 that it was better closed, if I recall correctly.

15 Q. So leaving Philadelphia you're closed, as far as you can  
16 recall, or open?

17 A. I can't say for certain, but I think I remember it was  
18 closed.

19 Q. Okay. Do you recall any -- out of Philadelphia,  
20 anything about rocks being thrown at you?

21 A. I don't remember any rocks.

22 Q. Shots?

23 A. The SEPTA train mentioned that and I was concerned.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So I probably closed the window even if it was open --

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. -- when I heard that.

3 Q. Understood. And this was one of the newer locomotives.  
4 Had you worked with those locomotives frequently?

5 A. The job that I was on, I was on the job for probably  
6 about 9 months or so, that worked almost exclusively high-speed  
7 train sets. So I very rarely operated the new motors with that  
8 job. And then I -- the job I bumped onto, and they rearranged  
9 that train. I think that was Train 198. It would've been a high-  
10 speed down, I think, and Train 198 back. 198 was typically an  
11 AM-7. But --

12 Q. So you've worked --

13 A. But --

14 Q. -- you know, rough order magnitude, a dozen, 2 dozen?  
15 How many times?

16 A. Probably 2 dozen-ish, somewhere there, I would say, over  
17 the course of the year.

18 Q. And you feel like you were familiar with that equipment,  
19 operating it?

20 A. I think it takes a long time to be really familiar, but  
21 I felt comfortable with it.

22 Q. Do you recall any conversation with your crew dispatcher  
23 in Washington? Did you have any kind of -- either a train  
24 dispatcher, crew dispatcher?

25 A. I think that the employee behind the desk in the crew

1 base is called a crew dispatcher, and I'm friendly with her. I'm  
2 sure I said hi. I don't remember much else.

3 Q. Okay. Let's see. Oh --

4 A. But just to be clear, when I say that, I mean I -- that  
5 does not mean that I called crew management services in Delaware.  
6 I did not call them.

7 Q. Okay. This would've been like a local --

8 A. It's a confusing title. Yeah.

9 Q. -- a local person?

10 A. I don't know why they call them a crew dispatcher,  
11 but --

12 Q. Last question. After the derailment, and you talked  
13 about the cellphone, having it out, did someone ask you to borrow  
14 your cellphone?

15 A. Yes, a passenger did. And then, now that you mention  
16 that, she borrowed the phone and then somebody called back on the  
17 phone while I was sitting in triage, and I happened to recognized  
18 that she was sitting a few feet away and I passed the phone along.

19 That also reminds me, while I was sitting on the triage  
20 area, that an Amtrak employee came by named Josh, I think, and  
21 talked to me briefly.

22 Q. Okay. That's all. Thanks.

23 A. Okay.

24 BY MR. BULL:

25 Q. Mike Bull, FRA. I just wanted to go back to when you

1 were in D.C., you said you had dinner with a friend in the food  
2 court. And that was -- how much prior to reporting for duty was  
3 that? What time was that?

4 A. I only had about an hour off, so that entire hour was at  
5 the food court.

6 Q. Okay. And this friend is not a railroad employee?

7 A. That's right.

8 Q. Okay. The only other question I had was I think you  
9 stated your phone was in your backpack?

10 A. Right.

11 Q. And you were able to get to that relatively easy?

12 A. I don't remember how I got the phone.

13 Q. You just -- okay.

14 A. But I got the phone somehow.

15 Q. Okay. Good. Thank you. That's all.

16 MR. GOGGIN: I have no questions.

17 BY DR. JENNER:

18 Q. This is Steve Jenner with the NTSB. You're doing great.  
19 Do you need a break or anything?

20 A. I mean, right now I'm feeling okay.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Actually groggy, but I don't know if a break at this  
23 point would help.

24 Q. Okay. I'm just going to jump around a bit for some  
25 clarification.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. And I'll apologize up front if it's redundant, but I  
3 just want to make sure we got it right.

4 I was interested in your experience hearing about the  
5 SEPTA train and rocks or something happening with that train. And  
6 so if we can just go back and if you recall where you were when  
7 you first heard about this and what you recall that the events  
8 were?

9 A. I just remember I think I was at about Mantua and they  
10 just called and they said something about a windshield being  
11 busted by rocks or something and that they were in emergency.  
12 They didn't say they were in emergency until three or four radio  
13 transmissions later. And there was a little bit of debate as to  
14 whether or not they needed medical attention.

15 Q. Okay. So --

16 A. And I think that they had that debate before I went by  
17 the train, if I remember right.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I don't think that there was -- I don't remember any  
20 more radio conversation after I passed them.

21 Q. Okay. So I think you mentioned three to four  
22 transmissions. So this is back and forth with who?

23 A. The train engineer on SEPTA sounded very upset and it  
24 sounded like the dispatcher was trying to get clear information as  
25 to whether or not he needed medical help. And the train engineer

1 was not being very clear and so they went back and forth.

2 Q. Okay. So three or four transmission occurred and --  
3 approximately?

4 A. Somewhere, I think.

5 Q. Okay. And then you passed -- you rode past SEPTA. Did  
6 you -- able to get a good look at the train?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. What was your reaction to this? Did you call --  
9 did you make a radio transmission?

10 A. I called the -- made a radio transmission to the SEPTA  
11 train that said I was approaching on track 2. I think the words I  
12 usually use are hot rail main 2 or something like that. They  
13 never responded back, though.

14 Q. Okay. Do you recall being concerned for your own  
15 safety?

16 A. I was a little bit concerned for my safety. There's  
17 been so many times where I've had reports of rocks that I haven't  
18 seen anything, that I felt like it was unlikely that it would  
19 impact me. And I was really concerned for the SEPTA engineer. I  
20 had a co-worker in Oakland that had glass impact in his eye from  
21 hitting a tractor-trailer and I know how terrible that is.

22 Q. Okay. So you were concerned for SEPTA. I'm sorry, were  
23 you concerned for yourself, that this may also happen, possibly?

24 A. Slightly. But I figured there's a good chance that they  
25 left. Whoever was throwing rocks and shooting probably had left.



1 I wasn't, you know, super concerned, I don't think.

2 Q. Okay. Going northbound -- I'm sorry, eastbound, in the  
3 direction that you were going, roughly speaking, how many times  
4 have you gone, traveled, you know, this same route in your career?

5 A. There's, I mean, no way to tell. I'd have to get out a  
6 calculator.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. When I -- I moved out here 3 years ago, so you figure  
9 roughly one round trip every day, 5 days a week. The first few  
10 months wouldn't necessarily be five times a week, for training.  
11 Whatever the number works out to.

12 Q. So obviously you were qualified over the territory.  
13 What was your comfort level of the territory, and particularly  
14 Philadelphia area?

15 A. Pretty comfortable.

16 Q. All right. Okay, on a normal trip, if I can have you  
17 describe how you may normally handle your train going through that  
18 area? There are different speed restrictions and there are some  
19 curves, and if you can walk us through how you would normally  
20 handle it?

21 A. Right. Are you talking about leaving Philadelphia?

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. So leaving Philadelphia, you would -- we'll just say  
24 you're on a normal track, like a 304 would normally be 30 miles an  
25 hour in the station.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. That's assuming your cab signals work, of course. If no  
3 cab signals, then you're delayed in interlocking and it's  
4 restricted speed. But assuming you have a good cab signal and the  
5 cab signal allows it, you're good for 30. And then you come out  
6 and when you go past -- I forgot what they call the signal, but it  
7 was a signal mentioned in the timetable speed chart where the  
8 speed goes up to 40 for type B trains.

9 Q. Can I give you a chart and just have you walk us through  
10 it, if that -- does that help you or --

11 A. I don't know if it would help me on that chart. Just, I  
12 mean, I know what the signal looks like.

13 Q. Okay. I'll put this here --

14 A. And as far as the --

15 Q. -- if you want to refer to it.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. It's up to you.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: This signal's not on that map  
19 anyway.

20 DR. JENNER: Okay. Okay.

21 MR. BOSTIAN: So you have prototype B train and it would  
22 be 40 until you get to -- you go underneath the signal up on an  
23 overhead bridge, which is the home signal, I think, for Girard.  
24 And that first curve is a 30 curve. You're 30 all the way over to  
25 the river.

1           Track speed goes up to 70 for B trains. They're down to  
2 60 at Lehigh through North Philadelphia. When you clear  
3 Clearfield, you're good for 70 again, but there's a 65 curve  
4 pretty close. And so it just depends on, I guess, how the train  
5 is performing whether I try to hit 70 or not.

6           After the 65 curve, there's a straight-of-way. It leads  
7 you through Shore into a 50 curve for B trains. The track speed  
8 between the two is 80 for B trains. And then you have the 60  
9 curve coming out of it, out of there. And then up to 110, B  
10 trains.

11           BY DR. JENNER:

12           Q.    Okay. In particular -- thank you for that -- as you're  
13 approaching the 50 curve, you're going at a higher speed and so  
14 you would have to reduce down to 50. How would you handle that?  
15 At what point would you begin braking?

16           A.    On a typical day I would normally begin just maybe a  
17 half train length or so before the Shore home signals, I think.  
18 And then you've got the SEPTA el that, I don't know, should be  
19 doing probably about 70 or 65 there, and then get down to 50 for  
20 the curve.

21           Q.    Okay. When you're operating at night, what additional  
22 challenges might you have, in terms of recognizing areas where  
23 you --

24           A.    Right.

25           Q.    -- can start braking and other operations?

1           A.    With that curve in particular, you cannot see the rail  
2 curve until you're a car length or two away.

3           Q.    Okay.  So --

4           A.    So traditionally I -- and like I said, I don't remember  
5 what the circumstances were on that, on obviously the incident  
6 date.  On prior days, I've sometimes had freight trains on -- I  
7 can't remember what they call the freight track -- off to the far  
8 right.  But if a train is coming towards you with their headlight  
9 even on dim, I mean, you don't see the curve until you're in the  
10 curve, basically.

11          Q.    So are there any type of cues that you use if you can't  
12 see the --

13          A.    The cues would be the Shore signal and the el bridge.  
14 And then there's a signal box to the left.  There's sometimes you  
15 can see it and sometimes you can't.

16          Q.    Okay.  Thank you.  And operating this type of new  
17 equipment that you were on the day of the incident -- I'm sorry,  
18 did you -- if you answered this already, about how many times you  
19 may have operated this equipment before?

20          A.    It's hard to say.  Not very much, because I spend about  
21 9 months running primarily high-speed train sets.  And then it was  
22 in the last few weeks when they changed the jobs, I think, in late  
23 March, I took two 5-day bumps.  So take 2 weeks out of that, so it  
24 might be roughly a month where I was on a schedule that would  
25 occasionally see those engines.

1 Q. Okay. So that was just in the last -- since late March  
2 that you started operating that equipment?

3 A. Right. And then I -- and the time prior when I was on a  
4 prior job -- occasionally holidays, service disruptions, things  
5 like that, I would be put on other trains, and occasionally the  
6 other trains would have the new motor and most of the time they  
7 would have the AM-7.

8 Q. Okay. Did you receive any type of training for  
9 operating new equipment?

10 A. New equipment in general or this new --

11 Q. Well, this one in particular that's --

12 A. There was a class in New York about -- I think I was in  
13 the class, I mean, a long time before I saw a train in service.  
14 And then there was a familiarization trip one way, from Sunnyside  
15 Yard to New York -- I forgot when that happened -- with the road  
16 foreman.

17 Q. Okay. So from D.C. to Philly, what was your comfort  
18 level operating this equipment?

19 A. Comfortable.

20 Q. Okay, okay. Great. Thank you. I'm also interested in  
21 your, you know, overall training and background and your work and  
22 rest cycle. But what I think I'd like to do is just see if other  
23 people have questions first.

24 A. Is it okay if we take a break?

25 Q. Absolutely.

1 MR. BUCHER: Absolutely.

2 MR. BOSTIAN: Okay.

3 MR. BUCHER: Let's take a break.

4 (Off the record.)

5 (On the record.)

6 MR. BUCHER: This is Dave Bucher and now we're back.

7 BY MR. BUCHER:

8 Q. Okay. I have one follow-up question, Brandon, and it  
9 concerns just your experience with the new engine.

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. We understand that it was sporadic; you would get one on  
12 this 188 job. Before you were assigned the 188 turn or position,  
13 did you operate the locomotive previously?

14 A. Sporadically.

15 Q. Sporadically? Okay.

16 A. Very, very sporadically.

17 Q. Okay. All right. That's the only question I have right  
18 now.

19 MR. HINES: No questions. John Hines.

20 MR. BATES: William Bates. No questions.

21 BY DR. MCKAY:

22 Q. So again, it's Mary Pat McKay and I'm the chief medical  
23 officer for the NTSB, so I'm going to ask some questions kind of  
24 how you were feeling in the day of the accident and a couple of  
25 days before that. Were you feeling well, unwell, had a cold,

1 anything going on from a medical standpoint?

2 A. I think I felt -- I don't remember feeling bad.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. The only like that was, I was slightly hungry and it  
5 took a long time to get through it after this incident.

6 Q. Yeah. Okay.

7 A. But I -- I remember feeling hungry before.

8 Q. Are you a guy who regularly takes any medication?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Is there any reason why might've been taking over-the-  
11 counter medicines or herbal or diet medicines in a few days before  
12 this happened?

13 A. I don't remember taking any medication a few days  
14 before. If I did, it would've been ibuprofen or something like  
15 that for a headache, but I don't remember.

16 Q. Okay. Okay. Anything particularly stressful going on  
17 in your life the last few weeks or months?

18 A. Not really. I mean, my weekends are always very busy.  
19 So just, like, scheduling out what I want to do on the weekend, I  
20 guess. But that's a good problem to have.

21 Q. Agreed. Okay. And on the day, as you were going  
22 through the day itself, feeling any kind of weakness or nausea,  
23 sick in any way?

24 A. No.

25 Q. You mentioned headaches a couple of times. Obviously

1 you have a pretty good reason to have a headache now.

2 A. Right.

3 Q. In fact, several.

4 A. Right.

5 Q. But is that something that's a regular issue for you or  
6 has been?

7 A. No, I wouldn't say a regular headache issue.

8 Q. Okay. Okay. I think I'm good.

9 So -- you'll ask about sleep and (indiscernible)?

10 MR. BUCHER: Yeah.

11 MR. FIELDS: Carl Fields. No questions. Thank you.

12 BY MR. FLANIGON:

13 Q. Mike Flanigon. Just one kind of following up on Mary  
14 Pat's questions. Have you ever previously had any incident where  
15 you passed out or lost consciousness or blacked out?

16 A. I'm not aware of that, but I don't know if -- by  
17 definition, you wouldn't be aware. I'm not aware of that  
18 happening before.

19 Q. Okay. That's all.

20 BY MR. BULL:

21 Q. Mike Bull. When we have accidents like this, we  
22 typically routinely ask people about their fatigue issues or  
23 possible fatigue issues. So I'd like to go back, like, a few days  
24 prior to the accident and kind of get an idea of your sleep cycle  
25 and the type of sleep that you were getting, if it was good sleep,



1 not so good sleep. So if we could start, like, on Saturday prior  
2 to -- do you remember? I mean, I understand if you don't --

3 A. Yeah, I --

4 Q. -- because not many people do. But if you --

5 A. That's the problem. I don't remember thinking that  
6 there was an issue.

7 Q. Okay. Do you know what time you typically go to bed?

8 A. I would typically go to bed probably at about somewhere  
9 in the 2 to 4 a.m. range on this job.

10 Q. Okay. How is your sleep? Do you sleep soundly? Do  
11 you, like, just sort of -- do you get into the deep REM type sleep  
12 where you're --

13 A. Well, obviously the last couple of nights --

14 Q. Obviously, yeah.

15 A. -- I have not slept.

16 Q. I understand.

17 A. In general I haven't really noticed a problem with  
18 sleep. I'm pretty fortunate.

19 Q. You have not noticed a problem?

20 A. Right.

21 Q. Okay. You typically get, like, 7, 8 hours at a time?

22 A. I'd say 6 to 8.

23 Q. Okay. And that was typical from Saturday leading up to  
24 the Tuesday of the incident?

25 A. Like I said, I don't remember anything atypical.

1 Q. Okay. Okay, that's fine. Do you typically take naps --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- other than your sleep period? Okay.

4 A. I'm not good with naps.

5 Q. How about your alertness level on the day of the  
6 incident? Do you feel like you were fully alert or somewhere in  
7 between or kind of tired?

8 A. I don't recall feeling tired.

9 Q. Okay. Okay, one other thing. How about how much time  
10 does it take you to commute to work --

11 A. Right.

12 Q. -- when you report to New York? Approximately.

13 A. I usually leave my house about an hour before I sign up.

14 Q. So driving time is less than an hour?

15 A. I take the subway.

16 Q. Subway? Less than an hour?

17 A. Typically.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. But it's the MTA.

20 Q. Understood. Okay. And this is your regular assignment  
21 for how long prior to this?

22 A. Like I said, I just can't remember a specific time  
23 frame.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. But I have my calendar.

1 Q. That's fine. I think that's about all I have right now  
2 for that. Thank you very much.

3 BY DR. JENNER:

4 Q. Okay. This is Steve Jenner. I want to backfill some of  
5 the gaps there. What are your normal days off?

6 A. Wednesday and Thursday.

7 Q. Okay. So that's your weekend, so to speak? Okay. So  
8 I'm going to see what we can do about getting a little more  
9 details. So Friday you worked?

10 A. Right.

11 Q. And that would be from New York to D.C., back to New  
12 York?

13 A. Right.

14 Q. Okay. Saturday, same trip. Okay. So what time would  
15 you report for duty on Saturday in New York?

16 A. I'm trying to remember because it's different on  
17 different days of the week. On Saturday, I would've worked 2253.  
18 I don't think that there's a 4:00. I think that's a 3:00, so I  
19 think I'd be 2:20.

20 Q. 2:20 p.m.?

21 A. That's right.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. But I was new enough on this job I had to look at my  
24 calendar every day --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- to see the sign-on time.

2 Q. So 2:20 p.m. and then you'll go to D.C. and make a  
3 return trip. And what time would you arrive back in New York?

4 A. And this is Saturday?

5 Q. This is Saturday.

6 A. Saturday there's a 90, Train 90 coming back. We usually  
7 get in about 11:00 or midnight or so.

8 Q. Okay. And do you pretty quickly head for home after  
9 that? And is that about an hour trip to get home?

10 A. It can take up to -- it can be a long trip home because  
11 MTA does construction work at night and when you get in at 11,  
12 you're right in the thick of it.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So I usually get home, I think, about 1.

15 Q. Arrive 1 a.m. at home.

16 A. If 90 is close to on time. I can't remember if it was  
17 on time last weekend.

18 Q. That's fine. So what do you do once you get home? Now  
19 it's 1 a.m. technically Sunday morning, so Saturday night/Sunday  
20 morning.

21 A. Right.

22 Q. Do you recall what you would do? Do you eat something?  
23 Do you go to bed? Do you unwind?

24 A. I unwind --

25 Q. Okay.

1           A.    -- for a hour or three.  I try not to eat any -- well, I  
2 don't eat anything because I feel like I'm hungry in the morning  
3 either way, so --

4           Q.    Okay.  So unwind for 1 to 3 hours and then when do you  
5 sleep?

6           A.    After that.

7           Q.    So maybe 2 to 4 a.m. you fall asleep?

8           A.    Right.

9           Q.    Okay.  And how long would you sleep to?

10          A.    I usually wake up about 3 to -- 2 to 3 hours before  
11 signup time.

12          Q.    Okay.

13          A.    So I think that's around -- I try to go for at least 6.

14          Q.    So can you help me out with times?

15          A.    So probably, like, I'd say 10:00 or 11:00 in the  
16 morning.

17          Q.    Okay.

18          A.    The day of the week.

19          Q.    Okay.  So 10 to 11 a.m. Sunday morning.  So what will  
20 you do after you wake up?

21          A.    I usually try to give myself about an hour to get  
22 ready to go to work and then I go to work.

23          Q.    And so you would depart Sunday for work about what time?

24          A.    Saturday and Sunday are the same schedule.  What time  
25 did we figure out I signed out --

1 Q. For Saturday, about --

2 A. -- Saturday is --

3 Q. -- 2:20 p.m. is when you're on duty.

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. Roughly.

6 A. Right.

7 Q. So about 1:20 p.m. --

8 A. 1:20.

9 Q. -- you would depart for work? Okay. Okay. So similar  
10 routine as Sunday?

11 A. At work, yeah.

12 Q. Yeah. Okay. So you would arrive back to New York  
13 around 1 a.m.?

14 A. Um-hum. Back to my house.

15 Q. Back to your house about 1 a.m.? Okay. Okay, and what  
16 would your routine -- similar routine there? Unwind, you know,  
17 for an hour or three and then sleep for -- for how many hours  
18 might you sleep?

19 A. The goal is usually 6.

20 Q. Okay. When you sleep 6 hours, how do you typically feel  
21 waking up? Is that what your body needs? Or do you need -- you  
22 tell me.

23 A. I usually feel pretty good.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. When I say goal, what I really mean is minimum. If I

1 sleep less than 6 hours, then I feel tired.

2 Q. Okay. So now, Tuesday -- so Monday you -- what is your  
3 schedule for Monday, if you recall?

4 A. It's the -- it's the same as Tuesday.

5 Q. Okay. Do you recall Monday night what time you would  
6 arrive back to your -- well, back to New York?

7 A. Mondays I work Train 198. It gets in at, like, 10:30 or  
8 so, I think.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. The subway runs better.

11 Q. So maybe an hour trip to get home --

12 A. Yeah, 11:30.

13 Q. Okay. Okay, so this is a little earlier than the  
14 previous nights. So what happens at 11:30? What do you do?

15 A. Pretty much the same routine.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. My routine is typically driven by the signup time the  
18 next day.

19 Q. Okay. So have you arriving back home 11:30, and what  
20 time would you have fallen asleep Monday night or Tuesday morning,  
21 early Tuesday morning?

22 A. Tuesday my signup would be 2:20, I think. No, 1:20.  
23 And I try to get up about 3 hours in advance, so that would be  
24 10:20 wake-up.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I'll push that back to 11:20 if I stay up too late.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And like I said, my goal is to get a good 6 hours.

4 Q. Okay. Are you usually successful getting 6 hours?

5 A. I'd say most of the time.

6 Q. Okay, good. Great. Thanks. That's -- you did great  
7 there. Thank you.

8 A. Okay. That's a lot of thinking.

9 Q. Yeah, yeah. Some people just give up early. So you  
10 stuck to it, so thank you. This is not supposed to be a trick  
11 question, but do you know if you, you know, snore at night?

12 A. I don't know.

13 Q. Okay. Have you ever been told by someone who you live  
14 with --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- that you snore? Okay. Have you ever been diagnosed  
17 with any sleep disorder?

18 A. No.

19 Q. You know, like insomnia or sleep apnea or have you ever  
20 been to a sleep clinic or anything like that?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. So overall, and just to follow up on the  
23 questions, your overall health is good?

24 A. Well, not right now.

25 Q. Yeah. I'm sorry. Prior to the incident.



1 A. Yeah, it's good.

2 Q. Okay. I don't see you wearing any glasses. Do you wear  
3 contacts?

4 A. I recently got a Lasik surgery.

5 Q. Okay. So do you still need glasses for reading --

6 A. I don't need glasses.

7 Q. -- or anything like that? Okay. Is your hearing  
8 normal? Are there any requirements for -- any restrictions?

9 A. No. There's no restrictions on hearing.

10 Q. Okay. When did you get Lasik?

11 A. January.

12 Q. Okay. How did that go for you?

13 A. Unbelievable.

14 Q. Okay. No problems post-surgery?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Okay. Okay. I think those are my questions so --

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. -- for now. Thank you.

19 MR. BUCHER: Dave Bucher. I don't have anything else.

20 BY MR. HINES:

21 Q. John Hines. One question. In some locations along the  
22 Northeast Corridor and the overhead catenary we have speed  
23 restriction signs. Do you know if there are speed restriction  
24 signs coming or approaching Shore in a eastbound direction?

25 A. I don't know.

1 Q. No further questions.

2 MR. BATES: William Bates. No questions.

3 DR. McKAY: Mary Pat McKay. No further questions.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. FIELDS: Carl Fields, BLET. No questions. Thank  
6 you.

7 MR. FLANIGON: I have none. None for me.

8 DR. JENNER: None for me either. Thank you.

9 MR. BOSTIAN: Can I add about the speed restriction  
10 signs?

11 MR. BUCHER: Absolutely. Go ahead.

12 MR. BOSTIAN: In my work habits, I don't really look for  
13 the speed restriction signs because a lot of times they're either  
14 missing or they're the wrong train type or they're wrong. So  
15 that's why I don't recall if they have a speed restriction sign  
16 for that curve.

17 BY DR. JENNER:

18 Q. One thing we didn't --

19 DR. JENNER: I'm sorry, do you have anything to -- can I  
20 ask --

21 BY DR. JENNER:

22 Q. Okay. One thing we didn't ask you, just about your  
23 injuries. Can you describe your injuries as a result of the  
24 accident?

25 A. I got stitches in my forehead, a sprain on my right

1 knee, a concussion, which leads to headaches and nausea -- well,  
2 it's hard to eat right now. I feel like I'm always hungry but  
3 never want to eat. And then I've got stitches in my left knee and  
4 then cuts and scrapes on my shins.

5 Q. Okay. You were able to give a lot of good detail, I  
6 think, on events leading up to moments before the accident. How  
7 do you think your memory is recovering?

8 A. I don't know. It's really hard to say. I don't know  
9 what the timeline should be.

10 Q. Right. Do you feel that you're remembering a few  
11 details in the last couple days? Do you feel any improvement  
12 coming on?

13 A. No. I have --

14 Q. I don't think I have anything else.

15 MR. BUCHER: Anyone else?

16 BY DR. McKAY:

17 Q. Sorry. It's Mary Pat McKay again. Are you taking  
18 medicine now? I mean, you look like you're really, like you're  
19 hurting.

20 A. They gave me prescription ibuprofen, but just getting up  
21 and in and out of chairs and hitting the thresholds and stuff on  
22 the wheelchair is a long way from the car.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 DR. JENNER: Do you need a physician name, if -- are you  
25 being -- do you have --

1 BY DR. MCKAY:

2 Q. I mean, yeah, if you're willing to give it to us, do you  
3 have a primary care physician?

4 A. I do. I don't remember his name off the top of my head.  
5 He's in Rego Park.

6 Q. Okay. Maybe that's something that we could -- you could  
7 get for me later.

8 A. Sure.

9 BY MR. FLANIGON:

10 Q. What was the city?

11 A. Rego Park, New York.

12 Q. Rigo, R-i-g-o?

13 A. No. R-e-g-o.

14 Q. R-e-g-o?

15 A. Two words: Rego Park.

16 MR. FLANIGON: I have one more, Steve.

17 BY MR. FLANIGON:

18 Q. When you described -- I think it was Steve asking what  
19 you typically do coming out of Philadelphia, described some  
20 gradually increasing speeds and a curve and then I -- if I'm  
21 remembering right, you come into a stretch that's 80-mile-an-hour  
22 track prior to this 50-mile-an-hour curve. With the type of  
23 locomotive you were on, on the day of the accident, typically what  
24 throttle position would you use to go from the lower speed up to  
25 the 80 miles an hour? Will that be the -- and I understand that

1 these locomotives, they don't have the notches, the indents --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- like some of the older locomotives. But just sort  
4 of --

5 A. Right.

6 Q. -- where would you put the throttle typically?

7 A. For any sort of speed increase, my practice is to -- I  
8 gradually increase the throttle. I don't slam it all the way open  
9 when I'm going slow. But if you're going kind of fast, it's okay  
10 to slam it open. But I typically accelerate in full throttle and  
11 then back off as I approach the maximum speed.

12 Q. Okay. And as we've made you kind of walk through the  
13 sequence of events and thinking about, well, just generally the  
14 territory and the equipment and the night of the accident, is any  
15 more coming back to you --

16 A. No, not really.

17 Q. -- approaching that curve?

18 A. I wish that there was.

19 Q. That's all I have.

20 BY MR. BUCHER:

21 Q. Brandon, Dave Bucher, and I have one more question,  
22 changing gears a little bit. And the question's about the ACSES  
23 train control system, the civil speed enforcement --

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. -- and we understand that it's not in use at all

1 locations between D.C. and New York, but there are a few locations  
2 where it is in effect.

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. Could you just take a minute and give us your -- give us  
5 a little bit of your experience operating through those areas with  
6 it and then without it?

7 A. I'm not quite sure, like, what you're asking.

8 Q. Well, if you -- I understand it's south of Philadelphia,  
9 there's a section between Perryville and a little bit north and  
10 then there aren't any more for a while until you get north of the  
11 accident area. But what is your expectation when you operate a  
12 train through there and operate through that section of ACSES and  
13 then section without it? How do you operate the train?

14 A. The operation is pretty similar except for there's a lot  
15 of beeping because every time you hit a curve it beeps. The  
16 display will show you the track speed. The goal is for ACSES not  
17 to take over because we're all qualified on the territory, but you  
18 know that it will apply the brakes or it'll warn you if you come  
19 close to exceeding the speed.

20 Q. Okay. Okay, that's fine.

21 A. I don't know what else to say.

22 DR. JENNER: Yeah. I do --

23 BY DR. JENNER:

24 Q. Okay. Just some very basic questions about your  
25 background in terms of when you started working in the rail

1 industry.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. If you can just walk us through when and where and what  
4 positions you held?

5 A. Right. My first railroad job was in college. I worked  
6 for 2 years at Columbia Terminal Railroad in Columbia, Missouri.

7 Q. And when was this? What years?

8 A. I graduated in '06, I think. I left the Columbia  
9 Terminal a year before graduation, so make it through '05. And  
10 then I started there -- I worked there for 2 years, so that would  
11 be probably '03 to '05.

12 Q. Okay. And in what capacity?

13 A. I was an office assistant.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And then over one of the summers, I was a brakeman.

16 Q. The summer of?

17 A. Would've been the middle summer, so '04.

18 Q. Okay. I'm sorry, in what -- as a?

19 A. Brakeman.

20 Q. Okay. Okay, so that's '04, '05.

21 A. Right. And then I started at Amtrak in 2006 as a train  
22 conductor, assistant conductor. I worked out of St. Louis,  
23 Missouri. In 2008, I moved to San Francisco, California.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I worked on Caltrain service. In 2009, I think, I went

1 to engine school. And then Caltrain cut service and they had me  
2 go to Oakland for student engineer training.

3 Q. Is this still 2009?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And I was a student engineer in Oakland through 2010.  
7 In 2011, a job opened up on Caltrain and I bid into it. In  
8 2012 --

9 Q. I'm sorry. 2011, were you a qualified engineer at that  
10 point?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Okay. And what year did you get your -- date was your  
13 qualification?

14 A. 2010.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And then in 2012, we lost the Caltrain contract and I  
17 moved to New York and spent about a year qualifying.

18 Q. Now you're already a qualified engineer. Are you now,  
19 like, becoming familiar with the territories you're operating  
20 over? Or what was that process --

21 A. Right.

22 Q. -- for the year?

23 A. I'm not sure what you would officially call it, but I  
24 think of it as being a promoted engineer, qualifying on a new  
25 territory and equipment.



1 Q. Okay. So that was 2012 --

2 A. Through '13. And then I marked up and worked out here  
3 since then.

4 Q. So work here since 2013?

5 A. In New York, yes.

6 Q. How, you know, in the most -- how would you  
7 conceptualize your training overall? Were you happy with the type  
8 of training and simulation and tests and things like that?

9 A. I think that there are a lot of ways the training  
10 could've been better, but I feel fully qualified to operate  
11 trains.

12 Q. Okay. If I could get you to elaborate how you think it  
13 would be better?

14 A. That's kind of a vague thing, I guess. I mean, just  
15 maybe more simulator training.

16 Q. More --

17 A. Simulator --

18 Q. -- simulator training?

19 A. -- focused.

20 Q. And what would more simulator training, how would that  
21 help you? In what areas?

22 A. Right. I don't know. Honestly, it's hard to talk about  
23 with my head thing going on.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I have -- there's a lot of thoughts that I have on it,

1 but it's kind of hard to, like, come up with a summary --

2 Q. Okay. That's fine.

3 A. -- without being here all day. Is it okay if we don't  
4 go into that?

5 Q. That would be fine. Would it be okay if maybe in the  
6 future, if you're comfortable, talking about it?

7 A. I'd be open to that.

8 Q. Okay. Great. You don't have to answer now, but  
9 sometimes we end this process with thoughts you may have to -- you  
10 know, as you've heard earlier, we're interested in making the  
11 industry safer. And if, based on your experiences before and  
12 since, if you have thoughts that you can either share now or at a  
13 later time about if there's --

14 A. Right.

15 Q. -- additional training of equipment or procedures --

16 A. Right.

17 Q. -- that you think would make the industry safer, then  
18 we'd really like to hear from you about that.

19 A. That would be -- concerns of general safety for the  
20 industry as a whole, that would probably be better left to another  
21 time.

22 Q. That sounds fine.

23 A. As far as this incident goes, I really wish I could  
24 remember. I can't even say, because I don't really know what  
25 happened.

1 Q. Okay. Well, thank you for giving this thought.

2 A. Okay.

3 MR. BUCHER: Dave Bucher. Going around again, but I  
4 have no more questions.

5 MR. HINES: John Hines. No questions.

6 MR. BATES: William Bates. No questions.

7 DR. McKAY: Mary Pat McKay. No questions.

8 MR. FIELDS: Carl Fields. No questions.

9 MR. FLANIGON: None.

10 MR. BULL: Mike Bull. No questions.

11 MR. BUCHER: Okay. That concludes our interview with  
12 Mr. Bostian. Thank you.

13 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:           AMTRAK TRAIN 188 DERAILMENT NEAR  
                                  PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
                                  MAY 12, 2015  
                                  Interview of Brandon Bostian

DOCKET NUMBER:           DCA-15-MR-010

PLACE:                      Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

DATE:                        May 15, 2015

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed  
to the best of my skill and ability.

---

Karen A. Stockhausen  
Transcriber