

**NTSB Docket Item
DCA-05-MR-009
Metrolink collision and derailment
Glendale, California
January 26, 2005**

**Excerpts from
Metrolink Manual of Instructions for Chief Dispatchers**

EXCERPTS



METROLINK

MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

CHIEF DISPATCHERS

Effective 1201 AM, Thursday, July 1, 2004

Supplementary to
the General Code Of Operating Rules and
the Manual Of Instructions for Train Dispatchers.

The purpose of this manual is to assist the Chief Dispatcher in the performance of their duties and to provide uniformity in the application of all rules and instructions pertaining to dispatching.

Any changes to this manual will be issued as MCD Notices over the signature of the Superintendent-Dispatching.

A copy of this manual is available in the MOC office for reference.

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NOTES

SECTION 1: GENERAL CODE OF OPERATING RULES

1.0 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief dispatchers report directly to the Superintendent-Dispatching.

Chief dispatchers ensure that all territories owned and/or operated by SCRRA are dispatched safely and efficiently. They supervise, assist and provide guidance to train dispatchers in the performance of their duties to ascertain that all rules, regulations, and instructions are complied with.

In the event of an unusual occurrence or incident, the Chief Dispatcher is responsible to make all required notifications (affected railroads, officers, contractors) in a timely manner and arrange for service recovery, if necessary.

1.1.3 ACCIDENTS, INJURIES AND DEFECTS

When an accident, injury or defect is reported the Chief Dispatcher must ensure that proper safeguards are taken, and that necessary personnel have been notified.

When a report of a passenger injury is received, the Chief will first determine if the passenger requires medical attention, and arrange if necessary. Then the Chief will make all necessary notifications, complete the proper form, and see that the Manager, Claims Administration is paged and receives a copy of the report. If the passenger declines medical attention, the conductor will submit an unusual occurrence report (indicating that medical attention was offered and declined) and no further action will be necessary.

If an MOC employee is injured, the Chief Dispatcher will assess the need for medical assistance, call for EMT if necessary, complete the required paperwork, make the appropriate notifications and arrange for follow-up as required.

When any equipment in the dispatching office is reported defective, the Chief Dispatcher will secure it (if necessary), apply a 'defective equipment' form stating the problem and report it by e-mail to the Superintendent-Dispatching.

1.3.1 RULES, REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

A current copy of the Manual of Instructions for Chief Dispatchers is available for reference in the MOC.

Chief Dispatchers must keep the office copy and their personal copies current. Personal copies must be available upon request.

1.3.2 GENERAL ORDERS

General Orders are prepared as required under the authority of the Superintendent-Dispatching. Documents requesting revisions to the General Order are reviewed by the Superintendent-Dispatching then forwarded to the Chief Dispatcher preparing the General Order for issue. After all the documents are processed they are filed with a copy of the General Order.

A track bulletin must be issued at least 24 hours in advance of a new General Order. The track bulletin will remain in effect for 6 days after effective date. Beginning on the day that the General Order track bulletin is issued, the General Order will be faxed once each night to all locations where track warrants are sent. This will continue for the six days following the effective date of the General Order.

A list of e-mail addresses and fax numbers will be supplied and when a new General Order becomes effective, it will be e-mailed or faxed to those on the list.

When a new General Order takes effect, the chief is required to compare the new information to track bulletins in effect to determine what information in the track bulletins need to be deleted.

When a new timetable is implemented, the number series of the General Order returns to No 1.

1.3.3 CIRCULARS, INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICES

Before beginning each day's work, the Chief Dispatcher going on duty must review the Chief's Job Briefing and all pertinent instructions.

Chief dispatchers are responsible to issue MTD notices that update the Manual of Instructions For Train Dispatchers and MCD notices that update the Manual of Instructions for Chief Dispatchers under authority of the Superintendent-Dispatching.

1.4 CARRYING OUT RULES AND REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Any alleged rule violation by any railroad employee or contractor must be immediately investigated and reported to the Superintendent-Dispatching.

Incidents must **only** be discussed with those directly involved except as instructed by the Superintendent-Dispatching.

1.13 REPORTING AND COMPLYING WITH INSTRUCTIONS

Chief dispatchers are required to keep current on all rules and instructions including the Manual of Instructions for Train Dispatchers and the Manual of Instructions for Chief Dispatchers.

Chief Dispatchers must investigate any reports regarding non-compliance with instructions.

1.15 DUTY - REPORTING OR ABSENCE

Chief dispatchers report for duty at the time assigned for the position. If delay may cause a chief to arrive late, the MOC must be notified.

A chief who needs to mark off must notify the chief on duty or the Weekend Duty Chief, as soon as possible. The Weekend Duty Chief needs to mark off to the Superintendent-Dispatching.

1.17 HOURS OF SERVICE LAW

On a day when a Chief Dispatcher is required to dispatch, the Chief Dispatchers Hours of Service Report for the appropriate date must be completed as federally required otherwise the Non-Hours of service column must be completed for time worked.

The Hours of Service Law must not be violated unless authorized by the Superintendent-Dispatching.

1.27 DIVULGING INFORMATION

Do not divulge information regarding delays, incidents or train operations to any unauthorized person. Company, State or Federal officers, contractors and any other railroad personnel making inquiries not related to their area of responsibility must be referred to the Superintendent-Dispatching.

1.29 AVOIDING DELAYS

The Chief must be alert and aware of any circumstances that may affect the safe and 'on- time' movement of scheduled passenger trains.

While it is the dispatcher's responsibility to dispatch the trains on their territory, the Chief must be available to assist and advise the dispatcher when necessary.

1.36 EXCESSIVE DIMENSION LOADS

An 'Excessive Dimension Load' logbook is maintained on the Chief's desk.

Approved clearances with an assigned HW number are located in the High Wide folder in the Chief's file drawer.

The requests for clearances received from the UPRR and BNSF are forwarded to the engineering department for approval. When approved, the request is returned with an assigned HW number. Upon receipt, the car number, clearance number, etc is logged into the book.

When the MOC is notified that an excessive dimension load will operate on a specific train, the train symbol is logged into the book in the appropriate column. The excessive dimension clearance file for that car number is given to the dispatcher over which territory the car will operate for proper handling.

1.44 PREPARATORY JOB BRIEFINGS

The Chief will conduct a Preparatory Job Briefing with train dispatchers going on duty at 550AM, 150PM and 950PM. These briefings will include any or all of the following subjects:

- Rule of the Week
- Special Train Movements
- Maintenance of Way Notices
- New MTD Notices
- Policies and Procedures
- Any other pertinent instructions or concerns

Additionally, the Chief will complete the Chief's Preparatory Job Briefing Shift Form and file it with the Chief's Job Briefing.

2.0 RAILROAD RADIO RULES

Chiefs are required to randomly monitor radio channels available for use in the MOC to ensure that radio rules are being complied with. Any exceptions noted are to be investigated and corrected.

2.10 EMERGENCY CALLS

The chief is responsible to ensure that emergency calls or beacon activations are immediately answered in accordance with the rules.

Any time an emergency beacon (all emergency activations) is activated, e-mail the Superintendent-Dispatching.

3.0 STANDARD TIME

See the Manual of Instructions for Train Dispatchers

3.1 STANDARD CLOCKS

The Chief Dispatcher is required to issue a track bulletin at least 24 hours in advance of a time change. The track bulletin will remain in effect for 6 days after the effective date.

4.0 TIMETABLES

4.1 NEW TIMETABLE

The Chief Dispatcher is required to issue a track bulletin at least 24 hours in advance of a new timetable. The track bulletin will remain in effect for 6 days after effective date.

When a new timetable takes effect, the Chief is required to compare the new information in the timetable to the General Order and track bulletins in effect to determine what information on those track bulletins can be deleted.

SECTION 3: OPERATING EFFICIENCY & SAFETY TESTING GUIDE TESTING

(Revised April 19, 2004)

Introduction

Safety and a safe work environment for our employees, customers, trains, M/W equipment, track and facilities are our highest priorities. Carefully designed rules and procedures have been created and implemented to ensure this.

Chief Dispatchers are required to perform regular monthly testing to guarantee that **all** train dispatchers are in compliance with these rules and procedures. Rules must be enforced in a firm and consistent manner. Testing for rules compliance must be fair and impartial.

If it becomes necessary to coach a train dispatcher due to an apparent rule or procedural failure, it should be done firmly, courteously and while circumstances are still fresh in the dispatcher's mind. Keep in mind, one of the greatest benefits of testing is the educational value realized when a failure is detected and handled quickly.

Chief Dispatchers must use the Metrolink Efficiency Test Program as a tool to verify that train dispatchers are working safely and efficiently applying the rules and other related publications in their daily operations.

Testing of train dispatchers is conducted randomly throughout the month. This method of testing communicates clearly to train dispatchers what is expected of them. By reviewing particular rule requirements and their application, both train dispatchers and chief dispatchers can gauge the level of rules proficiency. An important aspect of operations testing is 'follow-up' which provides a train dispatcher with positive feedback on his/her performance. This provides the testing chief dispatcher with an opportunity to praise a 'job well done' or correct any operating deficiencies before they can become incidents.

Handling of Test Results

Quality testing is of the utmost importance and the rules must not be circumvented. Failure to comply with these rules and procedures must be taken seriously.

Testing can have two (2) results, pass or fail and will be noted as follows:

P – Pass

F – Fail

A pass or fail must not be evaluated by the ability to recite the text of the rule but must be determined by the train dispatcher's understanding and application of the rule or instruction.

If a train dispatcher is tested and passes, the chief dispatcher should make the train dispatcher aware of this accomplishment whenever possible.

If a failure is observed, the chief dispatcher must address the situation with the train dispatcher. The chief dispatcher must determine whether the failure was due to a lack of understanding of the rule requirement or as a result of a conscientious decision to violate.

The chief dispatcher must personally see or hear a rule or procedural failure while testing. If it cannot be determined that the train dispatcher has failed a test, the train dispatcher will be given the benefit of the doubt.

Continued noncompliance or serious rule violations will be handled in accordance with SCRRRA's Positive Discipline policy.

Procedure

The ideal testing scenario is for the chief dispatcher to observe processes by use of traffic control management view workstations and monitoring of voice recording systems. Unfortunately, this process may limit the Chief Dispatcher's testing opportunities. It then is advisable for the Chief Dispatcher to make a testing opportunity. Occasionally, it may be desirable to test without the event occurring to insure understanding of some unique processes. For example, we do not want to wait for an emergency to test for emergency preparedness. Other tests may be question and answer dialogue between Chief Dispatcher and Train Dispatcher. To test for understanding of current instructions, it may be necessary to ask the question and evaluate the response. This procedure may be an opportunity to correct a misunderstanding before it becomes a failure.

At times sitting with the dispatcher and monitoring conversations and dispatching processes in real time accomplishes the best test results. For example, to evaluate the dispatcher's actions associated with the Digicon Track and Time process, it is imperative to know that correct information has been entered and that the field employee repeats that information correctly before the final 'OK' is given.

In all cases, when authority or permission is transmitted, the Chief Dispatcher must observe that the dispatcher's transmission includes all written information or text displayed as dialogue by the system and is in compliance with supplemental instructions. The Chief Dispatcher must also observe that the authority or permission is issued at a speed that allows the field employee ample opportunity to copy and that the dispatcher has verified that the authority or permission is repeated correctly. The dispatcher must not perform any other tasks that would interfere with concentration while the authority or permission is being repeated.

Monthly Test Requirements

Each Chief Dispatcher must submit a minimum of 60 efficiency tests per month. Each dispatcher must be tested a minimum of 10 tests per month and must include:

- Rule 1.5 as stated in 'Mandatory Test Requirement' of this document
- A minimum of three (3) safety critical rules as listed in 'Safety Critical Test Requirement' of this document
- One (1) emergency preparedness test as stated in the 'Emergency Preparedness Test Requirements' of this document
- At least five (5) other tests relating to their jobs as explained in 'Other Test Requirements' of this document.

Chief Dispatchers must ensure that all train dispatchers are tested every month, except:

- Train Dispatchers who are absent the entire month are not available to be tested.
- SCRRRA does not require the testing of Chief Dispatchers even when assigned to a dispatching position.

Once a Chief Dispatcher has completed testing of a Train Dispatcher, the tests must be entered in the Metrolink Efficiency Test Program within five (5) days from the date of testing.

Mandatory Test Requirement

It is a mandatory test requirement that all dispatchers be tested randomly on Rule 1.5 each month.

Emergency Preparedness Test Requirement (EP)

An Emergency Preparedness Test must be performed on each dispatcher every month. This is to determine that the dispatchers are familiar with their responsibilities regarding emergency communications, protection procedures and calling procedures and use of required forms listed below:

Grade/Non-grade Crossing
Derailment
Earthquake
Injury/Fatality
Rule Violation
False-Proceed Indication
HazMat
Vandalism or Suspicious Activity

For these tests, use 'EP' in the RR Column, 'S' in the Book column and 'A', 'Q' or 'S' in the Test Number column. Use Comment line to describe test or results, if necessary.

Safety Critical Test Requirements (SC)

The General Code of Operating Rules and other related publications including Timetable, Special Instructions, Train Dispatchers Manual of Instructions, General Order and MTD Notices are all safety critical and the process of testing does include all rules, procedures and company policies: however, train dispatchers must be tested on at least three (3) of the following safety critical rules per month.

- Rule 1.44 – Duties of Train Dispatchers**
(Job Briefings)
- Rule 2.14 – Mandatory Directive**
(Verbal TW or TB, Unforeseen Restriction,
Track and Time)
- Rule 6.1 – Repeat Instructions**
(Pay Exclusive attention to Readbacks)
- Rule 6.4 – Reverse Movements**
 - Rule 6.4.1 - Permission For Reverse Movements**
 - Rule 6.4.2 – Movements within Control Point or Interlockings**

- Rule 6.21 – Precautions Against Unusual Conditions**
 - Rule 6.21.1 – Protection Against Defects**
 - Rule 6.21.2 – Water Above Rail**
 - Rule 6.21.3 – Heat Condition Speed Restriction**
- Rule 6.23 – Emergency Stop or Severe Slack Action**
- Rule 9.5.1 – Changing Established Route**
- Rule 9.5.4 – Authority to Proceed**
- Rule 9.12 – Stop Indications**
 - Rule 9.12.1 – CTC Territory**
- Rule 9.13 – When Instructed to Hand Operate Dual Control Switch**
- Rule 10.1 – Authority to Enter CTC Limits**
- Rule 10.3 – Track and Time**
 - Rule 10.3.1 – Protection of Limits**
 - Rule 10.3.2 – Protection of Machines, Track Cars or Employees**
 - Rule 10.3.3 – Joint Track and Time**
- Rule 14.1 – Authority to Enter TWC Limits**
- Rule 14.2 – Designated Limits**
- Rule 14.4 – Occupying Same Track Warrant Limits**
- Rule 14.5 – Protecting Men or Equipment**
- Rule 15.1 – Track Bulletins**
- Rule 15.2 – Protection by Track Bulletin Form B**
 - Rule 15.2.1 – Protection for On-Track Equipment**
- Rule 15.4 – Protection When Tracks Removed from Service**
- Rule 15.9.1 – Checking Correctness**

For these tests, use ‘SC’ in RR column, ‘O’, ‘S’ or ‘M’ in Book Column and actual rule number tested in Test Number column. Use Comments line to describe test or test results, if necessary.

Other Test Requirements

The preceding requirements do not eliminate the need to test all train dispatchers on all rules that apply to their job. During the testing procedure, the chief dispatcher must be aware of and include a minimum of five (5) others rules applicable to any of the processes being observed. For example:

If a chief dispatcher is testing a dispatcher on Rule 2.14 – Mandatory Directive that is safety critical other related rules might include: Rule 1.1 – Safety, Rule 1.1.2 – Alert and Attentive, Rule 1.6 – Conduct, Rule 1.13 – Reporting and Complying with Instructions, Rule 1.44 – Duties of Train Dispatchers (proper paperwork completed), Rule 2.1 – Transmitting, Rule 2.2 – Required Identification, Rule 2.4 – Ending Transmission.

Additionally, at any time SCRRRA’s Director of Operations may request that dispatchers be tested on a specific rule.

Test Codes

RR Column

SC - Safety Critical

GC – General Code

TT – Timetable

EP – Emergency Preparedness

Book Column

O – Operating Rules (i.e. GCO, SCO)

S – Special Instructions (i.e. TTS, EPS GCS, SCS)

M – Manual of Instructions (i.e. GCM, SCM, TTM)

Test Number

Record actual rule number or, if Emergency Preparedness Test, use:

A – Actual, **Q** – Question and Answer or **S** – Simulation.

Follow Up

Every month, Chief Dispatchers will receive a print out of all tests completed. These print outs will be reviewed to determine if there are any patterns of noncompliance and if so discuss these rules with the dispatchers in job briefings. If additional instruction is warranted, the Rule Instructor will cover the material in the “Train Dispatcher 5-Day Refresher Course”.

Diversion Testing of Trains

Prior to the beginning of each month, the Superintendent – Dispatching will randomly select a number of Metrolink train symbols for diversion testing. These train schedule numbers will be given to the chief dispatchers who will determine when and where these trains will be tested during the month.

When testing occurs, the chief dispatcher will instruct the dispatcher for the route of the train to be tested to either hold a signal or vary the route of the train at a particular location. The chief dispatcher will listen for a member of the crew to call out acknowledgment of the “yellow” signal or for the reroute at which time the dispatcher will be instructed, if necessary, to continue the ‘line up’ for the train.

If circumstances prevent the completion of testing for a particular train at that time, the test will be aborted and will resume at a later date during the month. Testing of chosen trains will continue throughout the month until all of these trains have been tested.

The process will be repeated each month with a new set of randomly selected trains until every Metrolink train has been tested at least once annually.

If a failure occurs send an e-mail to the Superintendent-Dispatching and enter it on a test form for documentation of non-compliance. The Superintendent-Dispatching will forward all failure notifications to the Manager of Operations.

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