

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

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

EXCERPTS



METROLINK

MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

TRAIN DISPATCHERS

Effective 12:01 AM, Thursday, July 1, 2004

Supplementary to the General Code of Operating Rules

These instructions supersede the Manual of Instructions for Train Dispatchers dated June 30, 2002 and other instructions inconsistent therewith.

The purpose of this manual is to supplement the General Code of Operating Rules. It will be used to assist the train dispatchers in the performance of their duties and provide uniformity in the application of the General Code of Operating Rules, Timetable, General Order, notices and other instructions as they pertain to dispatching.

Any changes in this manual will be issued as MTD (Metrolink Train Dispatcher) Notices over the signature of the Superintendent-Dispatching.

When necessary to revise a page in this manual, it will be indicated by the revision date in the lower left hand corner of the revised page. If it becomes necessary to revise the entire manual, the revision date will be located beneath the effective date on the front cover.

A copy of this manual is available in the MOC (Metrolink Operations Center) dispatching office for reference and train dispatchers have been instructed in its' use.

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NOTES

1.0 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Train dispatchers must provide for the safe and efficient movement of trains, engines and on-track equipment.

They must keep all connecting regions, terminals, adjoining territories and stations informed of any movement for which they could be affected.

When communicating, dispatchers must be brief and concise, avoiding terms that conflict with or deviate from those prescribed by the rules.

When issuing instructions there must be a thorough understanding between all employees involved so as not to place any employee in a position requiring or suggesting a rule violation.

Deviation from any rule, safe practice or instruction is unacceptable.

1.1 SAFETY

Safety is the most important aspect of your profession. **Do not take shortcuts that will impact the safe performance of your duties.**

Promptly report any unsafe or unusual conditions to the immediate supervisor.

1.1.3 ACCIDENTS, INJURIES AND DEFECTS

When an accident, injury or defect is reported, the dispatcher must provide necessary safeguards as soon as possible.

When notification is received from any source that a train may have a dangerous defect, the dispatcher must immediately inform the train using quickest means available. If unable to contact the train, place the next controlled signal in direction of movement at Stop.

Affected trains on adjacent track must be notified immediately of identity of disabled train, location and reported defect.

1.1.4 CONDITION OF EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS

If a dispatcher, when there is no chief dispatcher on duty, must contact a signal or communications technician to correct a condition in the MOC, a contractor call sheet must be filled out and left on the Chief Dispatcher's desk.

When equipment in the MOC is reported defective, fill out a "Defective Equipment" form, leave a copy with the defective item and submit the original to the Chief Dispatcher desk for handling. If possible, remove the defective equipment from operation.

1.3.1 RULES, REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

A current copy of the following documents will be kept available for reference in the MOC:

- General Code of Operating Rules (GCOR)
- ML & SDNR Timetable/Special Instructions
- Manual of Instructions for Train Dispatchers
- MTD Notices
- General Order
- SCRRRA Emergency Response Procedures
- Hazardous Materials Guidebook

It is the responsibility of all Chief and Train Dispatchers on duty to keep the office copy of these documents current.

It is the responsibility of each dispatching employee to keep their personal copies current and available upon request.

MTD Notices authorized by the Superintendent-Dispatching may be issued to supplement, modify or cancel the instructions in this manual.

When reviewing the "Rule of the Week", dispatchers should be prepared to discuss the rule as it applies in each of the following:

- GCOR
- SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
- GENERAL ORDER
- MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR TRAIN DISPATCHERS
- MTD NOTICES
- TRACK BULLETINS

Train Dispatchers going on duty are required to attend a Preparatory Job Briefing conducted by a Chief Dispatcher at 550AM, 150PM and 950PM. These briefings will include:

- Rule of the Week
 - As designated from the GCOR, Manual of Instructions for Train Dispatchers, Timetable, General Order and Track Bulletins
- Special Train Movements
- Maintenance of Way Notices
- MTD Notices
- Policies and Procedures
- Any other pertinent instructions or concerns

1.3.2 GENERAL ORDERS

A track bulletin will be issued at least 24 hours in advance of a new General Order and will continue for 6 days after it is in effect.

When a General Order takes effect, it is the responsibility of all dispatching employees to make the appropriate revisions or notations in their personal copy of the GCOR, Timetable or any other required document.

1.4 CARRYING OUT RULES AND REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Promptly report any alleged rule violation to the immediate supervisor and do not divulge this information to any other person except as instructed by the Superintendent-Dispatching or his designee.

1.6 CONDUCT

While on duty, train dispatchers must conduct themselves in a professional manner. The use of foul language and derogatory comments is prohibited.

1.10 GAMES, READING OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of personal phones is not permitted in the MOC Dispatching Office. While an employee is on duty in the dispatching office, personal phones and pagers must be set on "silent mode" .

Computers in the MOC are for company or railroad business only and must not be used for personal entertainment (i.e. internet, games, etc.)

1.13 REPORTING AND COMPLYING WITH INSTRUCTIONS

Train dispatchers must not use rule numbers in lieu of proper instructions except as required.

Train dispatchers must immediately report any noncompliance of instructions to their immediate supervisor.

1.15 DUTY – REPORTING OR ABSENCE

Train dispatchers going on duty must arrive by 550AM, 150PM and 950PM to attend a Preparatory Job Briefing with the Chief Dispatcher prior to properly relieving outgoing dispatcher by assigned off duty time.

When a dispatcher is delayed and will arrive late, they must make every effort to notify their supervisor.

Train dispatchers assigned to the Extra Board must be available at all times except when not rested to perform service (See Rule 1.17 below), or prior arrangements have been made with the Superintendent-Dispatching and/or Schedule Desk.

1.17 HOURS OF SERVICE LAW

Train dispatchers must not perform service in excess of 9 hours in any 24-hour period. Any violation of the Hours of Service Law must be immediately reported to their supervisor.

Train dispatchers are required to fill out appropriate "Hours of Service Report" each day that dispatching is performed. Upon reporting for duty, a Train Dispatcher must sign the Hours of Service Sheet and when going off duty, after logging off of the Digicon, sign out on the Hours of Service Sheet.

If arriving late or working over 8 hours 10 minutes per day, an explanation must be written on the back of the Hours of Service sheet to include date and reason for lateness or excess time worked.

1.23 ALTERING EQUIPMENT

Modification of company equipment in the MOC is prohibited without authority of the Superintendent-Dispatching.

1.27 DIVULGING INFORMATION

Train dispatchers must not divulge information regarding delays, incidents or train operations to any unauthorized person. Any unauthorized person requesting this information must be referred to the Superintendent-Dispatching or designated employee.

Company, state and federal officers, contractors or other railroad personnel inquiring about incidents not related to their area of responsibility must be referred to the Superintendent-Dispatching or designated employee.

1.29 AVOIDING DELAYS

Train dispatchers must be alert and inquisitive concerning information affecting operations and should plan as far in advance as practicable, taking into consideration details which may affect train operations, to avoid unnecessary delays.

Controlled signals may be cleared sufficiently in advance of a train to avoid delay.

Train dispatchers must not allow mechanical personnel to delay passenger trains for repairs on any main track unless mechanical employee in charge communicates with the Chief/Train Dispatcher and it has been determined that the repair is necessary.

A Train Dispatcher must promptly notify the Chief Dispatcher when a freight train is expected to arrive on Metrolink territory during peak commuter hours. This is to allow time to determine the disposition of the freight train.

1.34 FLAT SPOTS

If notified that a car or engine has condemnable flat spots and must be set out, the train dispatcher will:

- Instruct train of nearest available location* where car can be set out. (**Metrolink locations are listed in the special instructions specific to each subdivision in the Timetable.*)
- Immediately instruct trains traveling within or approaching affected area to reduce speed not to exceed 10mph over affected track until track supervisor is contacted for instructions. The train dispatcher will then be governed by instructions from track supervisor.
- Apply restrictive label to affected track.
- Notify the immediate supervisor, mechanical dept. and/or foreign railroad, if applicable.

1.36 EXCESSIVE DIMENSION LOADS

See Miscellaneous Instructions – All Subdivisions

1.40 REPORTING ENGINE DEFECTS

Train dispatchers must promptly notify the supervisor, mechanical department and/or if necessary foreign railroad, when an engine defect or failure is reported. In addition, the Dispatcher must enter this information in Digicon or on written train sheet .

1.44 DUTIES OF TRAIN DISPATCHERS

Train dispatchers must be familiar with the physical characteristics of the territory to which they are assigned, particularly grade conditions, locations of siding, yards, signals and special instructions.

To prepare for going on duty, a dispatcher must:

- Review the current General Order, track bulletins in effect and the “Live File”.
- Read and understand the Job Briefing including any documents it references
- Check off the items listed and signing the Job Briefing
- Log onto the Digicon
- Sign all written train sheets (if applicable).

To prepare for going off duty, a dispatcher must prepare a Job Briefing listing:

- Authority track warrants in effect, if any
- Track bulletin requests that need to be issued on the upcoming shift
- M/W notices (including present and upcoming shift)
- Unusual conditions
- Print a track bulletin summary to include with Job Briefing
- Any track bulletins or additional restrictions that have not been delivered to all affected trains.

NOTE: The dispatcher being relieved of the River Sub. East Bank must include information for that territory on the Job Briefing and make a copy for the dispatcher taking over the East Bank.

Manual of Instructions for Train Dispatchers

The train dispatcher going off duty must log off of the Digicon and must not sign the Hours of Service sheet until the dispatcher going on duty has logged on.

Federal regulations require that weather conditions be recorded on all train sheets (including Digicon) at 1201AM, 600AM, 1201PM and 600PM. Train dispatchers will use the weather conditions sent to the MOC by the contracted weather service to record this information to meet these requirements.

Train dispatchers must carefully check entries made on Digicon and/or written train sheets, being certain to check entries made by previous shift to avoid duplication or omission. If train sheet is incomplete, secure missing information and enter it before train is operated on Metrolink territory. Federal regulations require that the following items be complete on all trains:

- Accurate train symbol
- Name of conductor and engineer
- On duty time
- Engine numbers of entire engine consist
- Car counts (Loads-Empties-Tonnage-Length)

A train must not be authorized onto Metrolink property without first verifying its' information on the train sheet and making the necessary corrections as required by Federal regulations.

Note: When creating a train in Digicon, use all the spaces for the train symbol.

When creating freight trains, enter the first CP location (i.e. Meats, Harold, Las Posas) in the "Station" field of the Digicon train sheet that the train will occupy. If while editing a train sheet, it is seen that the CP point of origin is incorrect, correct it.

Federal regulations require that reports of unusual occurrences** be recorded. Train related incidents must be recorded in the "Unusual Occurrences" section of the Digicon or the written train sheet. When recording unusual occurrences, be sure to list the name and occupation(if employee) of the person reporting the incident, time reported, other pertinent information and all trains delayed, if any.

**In the event of an unusual occurrence (grade crossing accident, hazardous condition, earthquake, etc.), use the appropriate incident form to ensure that all required notifications are made noting the time.

All written records must be maintained in a neat and legible manner in blue or black ink. Records of train movements must be made immediately. All records are legal documents and their accuracy is essential.

The use of correction fluid, eraser or other means of altering any written information on a written train sheet is only permissible where crew and train information and unusual occurrences are recorded.

When an incident occurs and there is no chief on duty, the dispatcher completing an incident form must leave it and all other pertinent documents on the Chief's desk for logging, distribution and filing.

2.1 TRANSMITTING

The use of terms such as “All right”, “Roger”, “OK” or any other word or phrase that can be interpreted as an affirmative reply must not be used in general transmissions.

Rule numbers must not be used in lieu of proper instructions **EXCEPT** as required.

When a verbal format is quoted in a rule the exact format must be used. The same must be required of employees with whom train dispatchers are communicating.

2.2 REQUIRED IDENTIFICATION

When transmitting or acknowledging a radio communication, a train dispatcher must begin with required identification: “METROLINK _____ SUB”, over.

Dispatchers must not use the initials “ML” as part of the required identification.

2.10 EMERGENCY CALLS

It is a federal regulation that radios be monitored at all times. When it becomes necessary for a dispatcher to be absent from an assigned desk, it must be personally ascertained that another dispatching employee will monitor those radios during the absence.

Emergency beacons installed above each dispatching desk will flash when a crew member on a train equipped with a radio keypad has pressed 911. When this occurs, the train dispatcher must respond via radio, “Metrolink _____ Sub, who is reporting an emergency?, over” The beacon will reset when the train dispatcher responds to the call.

If no one responds, the dispatcher must contact each train on the assigned territory to ascertain if an emergency exists.

2.14 MANDATORY DIRECTIVE

When issuing a mandatory directive via radio, **the train dispatcher must state which mandatory directive will be issued.** Mandatory directives are listed in the GCOR.

Before issuing a mandatory directive the employee who is going to copy must state their name, occupation, location and readiness to copy. If the employee fails to provide this information, the dispatcher is required to ask for it for the record.

When a train dispatcher receives any information that affects the movement of trains en route, an ‘Additional Restriction’ form must be filled out to identify the details of the restriction and affected trains.

- All affected trains en route required to receive the restriction must be listed on the form.
- When a train is notified, indicate the location, employee’s name, time and dispatcher’s initials.
- If the restriction is to remain in effect for an extended length of time, a track bulletin will be issued.

- The 'Additional Restriction' form must remain on the desk until all affected trains en route have received the restriction and it has either been voided or a track bulletin has been issued.
- If a track bulletin is not required and the Additional Restriction has been voided, the bottom of the form must be completed and filed in the desk's Dead File.
 - An Additional Restriction form is complete when the employee who placed the restriction or an employee from the same craft contacts the dispatcher and removes it. To complete an additional restriction, indicate the name of the employee removing the restriction on the 'Removed by' line, date and time of removal and draw a diagonal line across the restriction.
- When a track bulletin is issued and all affected trains en route have been notified, the form will be placed in the section entitled 'Additional Restrictions' in the Track Bulletin book on the desk.
 - When the restriction is removed from the track bulletin, the track bulletin with the completed Additional Restriction form must be filed in the desk's Dead File.

Restrictions not delivered to all affected trains en route and the symbols of affected trains who have not received the restriction prior to shift change must be included on your Job Briefing.

Mandatory Directives may be relayed by a qualified employee when direct communication is unavailable.

2.14.1 VERBALLY TRANSMITTING AND REPEATING MANDATORY DIRECTIVES

When transmitting mandatory directives:

- Single digit numbers must be stated then spelled
- State multiple digit numbers by number and digit
- Identify a decimal point by "point, dot or decimal"
- If necessary, for clarity, words will be pronounced, then spelled.

2.16 ASSIGNED FREQUENCIES

Each dispatching pod has assigned radio channels. Each radio channel has one assigned radio frequency; except, the "LOCAL" channel which has three radio frequencies. Train dispatchers are prohibited from changing the frequency on any radio in the dispatching office.

When a radio malfunctions, notify the communications department, do not attempt to make corrections.

3.1 STANDARD CLOCKS

Digicon time will be used in lieu of standard clocks in the MOC dispatching office and must be correct within 30 seconds.

Each day, the chief dispatcher or a train dispatcher on third shift will verify correctness by calling the current time service number in the Timetable. If Digicon time is not within

MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUCTIONS - VALLEY SUBDIVISION

Controlled Siding CP Currier – CP Fletcher

Controlled siding between CP Currier and CP Fletcher is owned and maintained by the UP and must not be used for meets or to store equipment without authority from the UP AGYM.

Flow of Traffic

Glendale and Burbank: Passenger trains must operate westward on No. 1 Track and eastward on No. 2 Track.

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