

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

COLLISION OF LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD *
(LIRR) TRAIN NO. 2817 WITH THE *
PLATFORM AT ATLANTIC TERMINAL, *
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, JANUARY 4, 2017 *

* Accident No.: DCA17FR002

* * * * *

Interview of: DERRICK MACK

LIRR Facilities
Jamaica, New York

Saturday,
January 7, 2017

APPEARANCES:

TOMAS TORRES, Rail Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ANNE GARCIA, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

JANET LEE, Deputy Regional Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration

JOSEPH MEADE, Operating Practice Inspector
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

BOB TOMASZEWSKI, Operating Practices Inspector
Federal Railroad Administration

ROBERT MARALDO
Public Transportation Safety Board
New York State Department of Transportation

MARK ELLIOTT, Director of Investigations & Analysis
Long Island Rail Road (LIRR)

BRET BECKER, Superintendent of Engine Service
Long Island Rail Road

DONALD HILL, Safety Task Force
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen (BLET)

WILLIAM BATES
SMART National Transportation Safety Team

WILLIAM NEARY
SMART National Transportation Safety Team

DOMINIC AMENDOLARE
SMART National Transportation Safety Team
(Observer)

E.J. CHINO Vice President
SMART 645
(On behalf of Mr. Mack)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:13 a.m.)

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2
3 MR. TORRES: Okay. We can get started. Time's 11:13 a.m.
4 This is a NTSB informal interview. My name's Tomas Torres, T-o-m-
5 a-s, T-o-r-r-e-s. Today's date, January 7th, 2017. And we are at
6 Jamaica, Queens, New York on the Long Island Rail Road JCC
7 facility, in connection -- we're going to interview --

8 MR. MACK: Derrick Mack.

9 MR. TORRES: What's your title?

10 MR. MACK: I'm an assistant conductor on run 202.

11 MR. TORRES: Okay. We're going to interview the assistant
12 conductor in connection with the accident that occurred at
13 Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn, New York on -- that occurred on
14 January 4th, 2017. The NTSB accident number is DCA17FR002.

15 The purpose of the investigation is to increase safety, not
16 to assign fault, blame or liability. The NTSB cannot offer any
17 guarantee of confidentiality or immunity from legal or certificate
18 actions. A transcript or the summary of the interview will go
19 into the public docket.

20 The interviewee can have one representative of the
21 interviewee's choice.

22 Do you have somebody?

23 MR. MACK: E.J.

24 MR. TORRES: Okay. Do you understand this interview's being
25 recorded?

1 MR. MACK: Yes.

2 MR. TORRES: Please state your name and spell it out.

3 MR. MACK: Derrick Mack, D-e-r-r-i-c-k, M-a-c-k.

4 MR. TORRES: Do you mind if we address you by your first
5 name?

6 MR. MACK: That would be fine.

7 MR. TORRES: Thank you.

8 MS. GARCIA: Anne Garcia, G-a-r-c-i-a, human performance
9 investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board.

10 MR. MEADE: Joe Meade, M-e-a-d-e, FRA operating practices
11 inspector.

12 MR. BECKER: Bret Becker, B-e-c-k-e-r, superintendent of
13 engine service for the Long Island Rail Road.

14 MR. ELLIOTT: Mark Elliott, E-l-l-i-o-t-t, director of
15 investigations and analysis, Long Island Rail Road.

16 MR. TOMASZEWSKI, Bob Tomaszewski, T-o-m-a-s-z-e-w-s-k-i,
17 operating practices inspector for the FRA.

18 MR. MARALDO: Rob Maraldo, M-a-r-a-l-d-o, with New York State
19 Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Safety Board.

20 MR. HILL: Donald Hill, H-i-l-l, BLET Safety Task Force.

21 MR. BATES: William Bates, B-a-t-e-s, SMART National
22 Transportation Safety team.

23 MR. NEARY: William Neary, N-e-a-r-y, SMART National
24 Transportation Safety Team member.

25 MR. CHINO: E.J. Chino, C-h-i-n-o, vice president SMART 645.

1 MS. LEE: Janet Lee, L-e-e, deputy regional administrator,
2 Federal Railroad Administration.

3 MR. AMENDOLARE: Dominick Amendolare, A-m-e-n-d-o-l-a-r-e,
4 SMART Transportation Safety Team, observer.

5 INTERVIEW OF DERRICK MACK

6 BY MR. TORRES:

7 Q. Okay. Tomas Torres with the NTSB. Derrick, can you please
8 give us a description of your work history here with the railroad?

9 A. Was hired in March of '96. Worked in the transportation
10 department from then until now. I'm currently assigned to run 202
11 as the assistant conductor.

12 Q. So you hired in 1996?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. On the day of the incident, where were you at, or what time
15 did you go on duty? Can you describe that day?

16 A. That day, we -- I go on duty at 5:25 a.m. I was on train --
17 I operated Train 903 into Atlantic Terminal. At the time of the
18 incident, I was on the west end of 5 track on Train 904 waiting to
19 leave Brooklyn for West Hempstead.

20 Q. And you were inside your train?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. In what car?

23 A. The sixth car of Train 904.

24 Q. So you were at the very rear?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Did you see or hear anything that day?

2 A. Yes, I was -- I heard the crash, basically. I heard the
3 noise. I originally thought it was possibly like an explosion on
4 my train. So when I looked out the window, I could see smoke on
5 the platform, and headed in that direction to see what was going
6 on with my train. I thought it was possibly a fire or an
7 explosion on my train.

8 Q. And what did you do after that?

9 A. I checked my train, tried to get in contact with my crew, saw
10 that the incident was actually happening on track 6, and tried to
11 assist over there.

12 Q. And when you went to assist, what did you do?

13 A. There was already -- at that point, there was a door open. I
14 went in the door, and people were detraining. I went in the door,
15 walked up to, I think it was the third car, and opened -- manually
16 opened another door and assisted people detraining.

17 Q. At any time did you see the engineer of that train?

18 A. I did not.

19 Q. Train 6?

20 A. I did not.

21 MR. TORRES: Anne.

22 BY MS. GARCIA:

23 Q. Anne Garcia. Couple questions. So, first, just for clarity,
24 when you say that you manually opened the door, could you walk us
25 through that process?

1 A. I opened the door from the inside. Above the door there's a
2 door cover that you can lift and release the door by a lever, and
3 push the door open.

4 Q. Okay. So where did you enter the train, then?

5 A. There was an open door around, I think it was the second or
6 third car.

7 Q. Okay. And then how did you determine that you needed to open
8 that door? You walked in one door. What did you do?

9 A. Well, when I walked up to -- when I first tried to enter the
10 train, I tried to key onto the train, and the doors wouldn't open.

11 Q. And which car was that?

12 A. I think it was the third car.

13 Q. Okay. And what was the passenger flow at the time for
14 that --

15 A. It was pretty, you know, chaotic, people exiting the train.
16 Some people were on the platform already, you know, injured.

17 Q. Okay. Did you see any other railroad employee or crew
18 members?

19 A. I saw the conductor. She was in the, I believe the second
20 car. And she was, you know, kind of -- I don't think she was sure
21 of what happened at that point.

22 Q. Did you speak with her?

23 A. I just told her that I was going to help get them off the
24 train, get people -- open the door. I didn't know what she was
25 doing. She was -- I didn't know what her next move was, but I

1 just continued through the train to try and open the door.

2 Q. Okay. What was she doing?

3 A. She was -- I passed her in the vestibule. She didn't know
4 what happened at that point. I think she was shook up from the
5 accident.

6 Q. Okay. Thank you. And did you see other crew members?

7 A. Not at that point. I only saw her.

8 Q. Okay. At what point did you --

9 A. Now I know that I saw the brakeman. I didn't know who -- I
10 didn't, I don't know who was part of that crew other than the
11 conductor, because she was in uniform and near the position where
12 most conductors would be coming into a station.

13 Q. Okay. And were you in uniform?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. So did any passengers -- did you have an interaction
16 with passengers?

17 A. Not directly. Some were, you know, some on the platform
18 were, you know, screaming, basically, for help, what should they
19 do. But not -- I didn't have any direct contact with them.

20 Q. Okay. Did you go into the first car?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. Which cars were you in?

23 A. I was in the third and fourth car.

24 Q. All right. Okay. And did you see the assistant conductor
25 from that train?

1 A. When -- yeah, I saw him on the platform later.

2 Q. Did you have a chance to speak with him?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I didn't know he was the assistant. I know that now.

6 Q. Okay. And we understand that there were other employees
7 there, that there was the yard engineer that was scheduled to take
8 the train out, and there was also the conductor that was going to
9 work with him as crew. Did you see them?

10 A. I saw the engineer when I was basically leaving the train. I
11 saw him. I didn't know he was working that train. I didn't know
12 who he was. I know who he is because I know him, but not what he
13 was doing that day.

14 Q. Was he in uniform?

15 A. Engineers don't wear uniforms.

16 MS. GARCIA: Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

19 BY MR. ELLIOTT:

20 Q. Thank you for going over to assist. And I just wanted to
21 ask --

22 MR. TORRES: State your name.

23 BY MR. ELLIOTT:

24 Q. Mark Elliott. At any time did you attempt to key a door open
25 on the train with a dream key?

1 A. Yeah. That's the first way I tried to enter the train, from
2 the outside, I tried to key a door open and it wouldn't open.

3 Q. And then you entered through a door that was already open?

4 A. I went to -- that was already open, and opened another door,
5 and assisted people detraining.

6 MR. ELLIOTT: Thank you. That's all.

7 BY MR. TOMASZEWSKI:

8 Q. Bob Tomaszewski with the FRA. Did you notice anybody taking
9 windows out?

10 A. No. I saw a window out. I didn't see anybody take it out.

11 Q. Did you see people coming out of it? Or it was a just window
12 was out?

13 A. I didn't see anybody come out. I saw, you know, the gasket
14 out and the window out.

15 MR. TOMASZEWSKI: Okay. Thank you.

16 MR. MARALDO: Rob Maraldo. No questions.

17 MR. HILL: Don Hill. No questions.

18 MR. BATES: William Bates. Thank you for all your help. No
19 questions.

20 MR. NEARY: William Neary. Thank you, but no questions.

21 MS. LEE: Janet Lee. No questions. Thank you.

22 BY MS. GARCIA:

23 Q. Anne Garcia. So you mentioned that you started your career
24 with the railroad back in '96. And in what position was that?

25 A. As an assistant conductor.

1 Q. Okay. So your whole career has been that?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. What are your regular workdays and hours?

4 A. Basically 5:20 to 3:45, Monday to Friday.

5 Q. Okay. In your experience as assistant conductor, have you
6 ever been in a situation where you had to pull the emergency
7 brake?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. Thank you. And how long have you been working with
10 the conductor and the engineer on your train?

11 A. I've been on this job for about 2 months. And me and the
12 conductor worked together previously for a couple of years.

13 Q. Okay. So you were over on the incident train lending
14 assistance, doing what you could in that immediate situation. At
15 what point did you know that you had to get back to your train?

16 A. I saw my conductor on my train. And he was coming through my
17 train, and I stepped over and he said, hey, we were making the
18 train.

19 Q. Okay. So you were back on your train?

20 A. I went back to my train.

21 Q. Okay. And at that point, what was -- how did you determine
22 that that was the best place for you to be? You left the incident
23 train because --

24 A. My conductor told me we were making our train.

25 Q. Okay. Good. Did you notice -- at that time did you speak

1 directly with your conductor or was it from a distance?

2 A. Directly. Face to face.

3 Q. Okay. And how did he seem? Did he seem --

4 A. He was, you know, not panicked, but, you know, harried by the
5 commotion, you know, and he said we're making our train.

6 Q. Yeah. Thank you. Did you notice that he was injured at all?
7 Any blood, or --

8 A. His one finger was bleeding.

9 Q. Okay. Thank you. And did you speak with your engineer?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. Did you see him at all?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. So at that point, what did you do?

14 A. I got to the rear of my train and waited for the train to
15 charge up so we could prepare to leave.

16 Q. Okay. And did you leave on time?

17 A. Close. I think it was like a couple minutes off.

18 Q. Okay. Good. Thank you.

19 A. Okay.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions. Thank you.

21 MR. BECKER: Bret Becker. No further questions.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No further questions. Thank you.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, no further questions.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

3 MR. TORRES: Tomas Torres with the NTSB. I don't have any
4 further questions. So if everybody has no more questions, the
5 interview is concluded at 11:28 a.m.

6 (Whereupon, at 11:28 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
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