

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*
*
*
*
*
*

COLLISION OF AMTRAK TRAIN 280
WITH MAINTENANCE-OF-WAY EMPLOYEE
ON OCTOBER 29, 2014 IN
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK

Docket No.: DCA-15-FR-003

* * * * *

Interview of: TODD HART

Albany Amtrak Station
Rensselaer, New York

Thursday,
October 30, 2014

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: RICHARD HIPSKIND
Investigator-in-Charge

APPEARANCES:

RICHARD HIPSKIND, Investigator-in-Charge
Railroad Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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

TOM HEBERT, Safety Task Force
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET)

JIM FINNEGAN, Grand Lodge Representative
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

MATTHEW PORTO, Director of Safety
Amtrak

WILLIAM COLLINS, Signal and Train Control Inspector
Inspector-in-Charge
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

PAUL HRASKA, Operating Practices Inspector
Federal Railroad Administration

ROBERT WINSTEL, Signal and Train Control Specialist
Federal Railroad Administration

DAN TOTH, Operating Practices Inspector
New York State Department of Transportation

GEORGE GERNON, Investigator
Amtrak Police Department

JOSEPH H. KROSS, Local Chairman, Division 752
Division 752, BLET
(Representative for Mr. Hart)

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>I N D E X</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Todd Hart:		
By Mr. Hipskind		6
By Dr. Jenner		11
By Mr. Collins		17
By Mr. Hraska		18
By Mr. Porto		19
By Mr. Hebert		20
By Mr. Hipskind		20
By Dr. Jenner		23
By Mr. Collins		27
By Mr. Hipskind		28

1 Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen.

2 MR. COLLINS: Bill Collins or William Collins, C-o-l-l-
3 i-n-s, Signal and Train Control Inspector for Federal Railroad
4 Administration, Inspector-in-Charge.

5 MR. GERON: George Gernon, G-e-r-n-o-n. I'm an
6 Investigator with the Amtrak Police Department.

7 Mr. WINSTEL: Robert Winstel, Signal and Train Control
8 Specialist. Last name is spelled W-i-n-s-t-e-l.

9 MR. HRASKA: Paul Hraska, the last name is H-r-a-s-k-a,
10 Operating Practices Safety Inspector, Federal Railroad
11 Administration.

12 MR. PORTO: Matthew Porto, P-o-r-t-o, Director of
13 Safety, Amtrak.

14 MR. HEBERT: Tom Hebert, BLET Safety Taskforce, H-e-b-e-
15 r-t.

16 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay. And, Mr. Hart, would you please
17 introduce yourself and spell your name.

18 MR. HART: Todd Hart, H-a-r-t, locomotive engineer with
19 Amtrak in Albany-Ressenalear.

20 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay. Todd, may I -- can we talk on a
21 first name basis.

22 MR. HART: Sure.

23 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay. Do we have your permission to
24 record our discussion, our interview with you today?

25 MR. HART: Yes, you do.

1 York, Syracuse for locomotive engineers. It was as a conductor.
2 I was qualified in Niagara Falls and Cleveland. I've operated
3 also to Montreal from here and Rutland. That covers our entire,
4 basic territory.

5 Q. Okay. I think, Todd, I think it will work out best if
6 -- tell me a little bit about on the day of the accident, when you
7 reported to work, where did you report, and just tell me a little
8 bit about if there was anything eventful from reporting to work up
9 to where the incident took place.

10 A. I reported to duty at 9:06 in the morning. It was a
11 typical day, nothing really major. We had our crew briefing. We
12 had a Form D that we had a new speed restriction on the Hudson
13 Line. We covered that, discussed the train's tardiness. The
14 train, when it came in on a bell, the station master alerted us
15 and we went out, boarded the train, had the briefing with the
16 inbound engineer. He said everything was fine with the locomotive
17 except one thing which we'll probably not mention here. The train
18 had to be fueled and after the fueling was done, we had to be
19 permission from the lab operator to proceed as we were in advance
20 of the signal in order to facilitate fueling of the locomotive.
21 We were on track 1 and the only way for them to fuel is by pulling
22 the train into the interlocking at CP 142. The conductor gave me
23 the high ball, okay to depart, and we proceeded, crossed over CP
24 142 to track 2 and headed south.

25 Q. And this was for Train 280.

1 A. Train 280, Amtrak Train 280, yes.

2 Q. Okay. And that's kind of a -- is that a daily run?

3 A. Yes, I do it three times a week.

4 Q. Okay. And again from where to where? From?

5 A. From Albany to New York City.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Penn Station.

8 Q. And just because a lot of people don't know, what, what
9 is the maximum speed that you run out there?

10 A. 110 miles per hour.

11 Q. Okay. And in and around the area that -- where you were
12 approaching where the incident took place, do you have some
13 recollection of maybe what you were operating at speedwise?

14 A. That general area is 90 miles per hour. Just a little
15 bit prior to the location, there's an 80 mile an hour speed on a
16 curve.

17 Q. Okay. And so from Albany going south, anything of note,
18 anything remarkable that we need to know or understand prior to
19 the incident?

20 A. I don't think there's anything. It was just signals,
21 waiting for our train in Hudson and then we crossed over from 2 to
22 1 in Hudson after leaving Hudson Station at the commuter station
23 stop.

24 Q. Okay. One track, is that kind of a normal occurrence,
25 what you just described?

1 A. Not usually.

2 Q. Okay. Most of the time, as southbound Train 280, what
3 track do you generally run on or what track do you generally
4 occupy?

5 A. Typically we do track 2 south. Track 1 usually runs
6 north.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But it is 261 territory. Tracks run either way, both
9 ways, any time.

10 Q. Okay. Well, let's, let's come right to -- we were out
11 there today, the investigating group was, and we kind of saw the
12 lay of the land. So kind of take us through coming around the
13 curve, and there's three fundamental questions I would like for
14 you to address in your own words. You know, when you came around
15 the curve, what did you see? What did you do? And why did you do
16 it? Okay.

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. Take your time.

19 A. I came around the curve, and I saw two fluorescent
20 orange coats. One was underneath, down below and to the left of
21 the track on the land side. It looked like that person was in a
22 pit. The other person was walking south on -- in the gauge of
23 track 1 that was traveling down on. The minute I see any orange,
24 sometimes I get tricked by an orange cone. I see orange, we have
25 to blow, by rule, one long and short, and then a succession of two

1 short sounds, to alert the roadway workers that we're on their
2 approach. I began sounding that particular signal. As I got
3 closer, I got more frantic about it and I'm sure at some point in
4 time, I believe I laid on the horn and just flat out flew the horn
5 straight. I put the airbrakes on prior to dumping the train, to
6 try to give the person at least a chance to look around to see me.
7 At one point in time, the person's right hand went up and waved
8 me, just gave me one wave, and -- but they weren't moving. They
9 were still in the gauge. And I don't know exactly how far it was
10 away, but I just had a feeling that the person wasn't getting out
11 of the way and that's when I put the train in emergency. And then
12 we had an impact with that person.

13 Q. And the train came to a stop.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you and the other gentleman, you stayed on the head
16 end, the locomotive?

17 A. That's correct.

18 Q. And I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I
19 figure you called out to somebody for an emergency.

20 A. I made an emergency call giving the track designation,
21 southbound. I did it once, and there was no response from anyone
22 else. I made the emergency call a second time and the dispatcher
23 got on the radio and said, roger, 280, you're in emergency. After
24 he said that, that's when I --

25 Q. It's okay. Eventually emergency responders showed up.

1 A. Yeah. The first people to show up were two employees.
2 They were working on the undercutter job, just south. I believe
3 they were around Tivoli (ph.).

4 Q. Is that, is that what some people refer to as the plow
5 or is that a different thing?

6 A. I believe that's different.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. The undercutter, they're burying cable conducts for
9 putting in fiber optics to replace the telephone lines so we don't
10 have any problems in hurricanes any more.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Hopefully.

13 Q. I'm thinking that eventually you were relieved and
14 another crew was brought out to take the train --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- on to Albany.

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Okay. Listen, Todd, thank you for hanging with us on
19 this. That's all I've got for right now, and I want to give Dr.
20 Jenner a chance to ask any question. So let's see what's on his
21 mind.

22 MR. HIPSKIND: Steve.

23 DR. JENNER: Okay. Thank you.

24 BY DR. JENNER:

25 Q. Need a break or anything?

1 A. No, I'm good.

2 Q. Great. You're doing great.

3 A. Thanks.

4 Q. Just a couple of gaps to fill in. As you were coming
5 around the curve, did you need to blow the whistle for any
6 crossings at that point?

7 A. No, I had already blown the signal for Cheville Road
8 (ph.).

9 Q. I don't know the territory to well. So where is that in
10 relation to the curve?

11 A. A mile or so, maybe two. It's 103. something.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 103.6.

13 MR. HART: 103.6.

14 BY DR. JENNER:

15 Q. So that would make it about two miles or so.

16 A. About two miles.

17 Q. Okay. And there was no other reason for you to sound
18 anything?

19 A. Not until Tivoli Road, milepost 99.

20 Q. Okay. After -- you were headed in that direction?

21 A. That was my next location, yes.

22 Q. Sure. Okay. Can you tell us about your visibility that
23 day at the time? Was there fog or clouds or rain or anything?

24 A. I don't recall fog. There was rain. Rain was
25 intermittent, could have had a light dusting -- or not dusting,

1 light, light rain all the way down. Turn the air, you know, turn
2 the windshield wipers on five minutes, and the next thing they're
3 screeching, driving me nuts and you turn them off and turn them
4 back on again two minutes later and on and off, on and off.

5 Q. Um-hum. How around right around the curve area in that
6 position? Do you recall if it was raining harder or lighter?

7 A. I think it was light.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. If anything, it was light. I don't remember it being
10 really heavy.

11 Q. Okay. How long have you been operating over this
12 territory?

13 A. All total?

14 Q. Well, just consecutively. Has it been a week, a month,
15 a year?

16 A. I've been back going to New York now approximately a
17 month and a half. Prior to that, I was in the yard approximately
18 two years.

19 Q. Okay. And the last one and a half months, has there
20 been a lot of activity, maintenance-of-way workers in that area?

21 A. There's a ton of it. Just from outside the window here,
22 it's as much as it is here. It's all the way down.

23 Q. So nothing unusual in this day to see people out there
24 doing work?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay. In the month and a half that you've been
2 operating there, is sometimes one track out of service and then
3 the other track would be out of service? Can you elaborate on
4 that?

5 A. Mostly it's with the undercutters, wherever, whichever
6 side of the rails that they can easily put the conduit. Sometimes
7 we'll run track 1, they're putting it on the landside of track 1,
8 there's rock cuts and there's no way they're going to drag that
9 sucker through there. So they cross from one track to the other.
10 No, no prior knowledge until I get down there, and I find I have
11 to cross over here and pass George and the boys down wherever
12 they're working.

13 Q. Okay. Are you now diverted from 1 to 2 during portions
14 of the trip?

15 A. Sometimes I'm on full rust patrol.

16 Q. Well --

17 A. Going back and forth --

18 Q. Oh, I see.

19 A. -- on every single CP.

20 Q. Okay. In, more closely in the last several days, let's
21 say, has one track been out on consecutive days versus the other?

22 A. Track 1 was the past few weeks, and the day prior to the
23 incident, track 1 was being used by the undercutter.

24 Q. Okay. When you see maintenance-of-way people in -- on a
25 -- around the track, is there a type of custom about how they walk

1 along the ballast? Do you see people inside the gauge or outside
2 the gauge?

3 A. Most normally, unless they have track out of service,
4 particularly just out down here, they've got the track as out of
5 service. It's on our bulletin. Yeah, they walk on that track
6 without a problem. But as far as being on my track, no. usually
7 the only people who are, if I'm operating track 2, and they've got
8 track 1 out of service, the only thing you might see would be the
9 whistle, I don't know what you guys, the signal department call
10 those guys with the whistle board, portable handheld whistle
11 board, they'll be over but they'll be in the clear on, on the
12 river side of track 2. I believe the day of the incident here
13 around the 142 area that there was two guys and only one of them
14 had a whistle board in his hand.

15 Q. Okay. But none of them around the curve?

16 A. There was no one, prior to the curve or -- well, there
17 were two after the curve obviously --

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. -- but, no.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. There was no prior orange coats, whistle boards prior to
22 that curve.

23 Q. Okay. When you described the employee who was struck,
24 as you were getting closer, I think you said she raised her hand
25 to acknowledge, perhaps to acknowledge your presence there. Is

1 that raising hand, is that a common practice for workers to do?

2 A. Yeah, they -- everybody usually says, you know, hi, how
3 you doing? Most of the time they're looking at me and -- but,
4 yeah, they -- they'll wave to say, yeah, I hear you, I know you're
5 coming.

6 Q. Right. But when you say most of the time they're
7 looking at you, if they were walking away from you, would you
8 expect them to turn around and look or --

9 A. Oh, yeah.

10 Q. Most of them do that?

11 A. They should be turning around the minute they hear the
12 horn.

13 Q. Right. Do most of them do that?

14 A. Most everybody that I, I see, I mean there's tons of
15 people. I can't watch every single one of them. I've got to
16 watch my gauges and everything, but --

17 Q. Sure.

18 A. -- for the most part, everybody I see usually turns
19 around, sees me, gives me a wave and I keep going on my way.

20 Q. I see. Okay. What I'd like to do is -- I have standard
21 questions just about your work/rest history --

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. -- and your health but I'd like to give people an
24 opportunity to ask like operational questions first, and then come
25 back to that later.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. Okay. Thank you.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm all set.

4 MR. HIPSKIND: Any --

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm actually good. I'm fine.

6 MR. HIPSKIND: So, Mr. Toth?

7 MR. TOTH: Nothing.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing.

9 MR. FINNEGAN: I'm fine.

10 MR. HIPSKIND: Mr. Finnegan?

11 MR. FINNEGAN: That's correct. I'm fine.

12 MR. HIPSKIND: No questions.

13 MR. FINNEGAN: No questions.

14 MR. HIPSKIND: Mr. Collins.

15 BY MR. COLLINS:

16 Q. Where was the slow order? You said you had a Form D
17 with a slow order?

18 A. I don't recall offhand right now. I'd have to look in
19 my bulletin.

20 MR. HIPSKIND: But is -- excuse me. This is Dick
21 Hipskind. But the point there is it was in a different location.

22 MR. HART: Yeah, it was in --

23 MR. HIPSKIND: And it had nothing to do with the
24 accident curve.

25 MR. HART: It was down below. I think maybe it started

1 at 91, milepost 91. So it was nowhere near where we were at yet.

2 MR. COLLINS:

3 Q. And there was no exceptions taken to the locomotive
4 operation.

5 A. No.

6 MR. COLLINS: Nothing more.

7 MR. HIPSKIND: Thank you, Mr. Collins.

8 MR. GERNON: George Gernon, no, I don't have any
9 questions.

10 MR. HIPSKIND: Mr. Winslett.

11 MR. WINSTEL: Mr. Winstel, no questions.

12 MR. HIPSKIND: Mr. Winstel. Okay.

13 BY MR. HRASKA:

14 Q. I don't know if Mr. Jenner is going to ask you this, but
15 I'm just curious.

16 MR. HIPSKIND: Please identify yourself.

17 MR. HRASKA: Paul Hraska.

18 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay.

19 BY MR. HRASKA:

20 Q. How many hours off before you came to work
21 approximately?

22 A. I believe it was around 17 hours.

23 Q. Thank you.

24 MR. HRASKA: Nothing further.

25 MR. HART: I haven't done my time slip yet. I haven't

1 had the opportunity to get it in yet.

2 MR. HIPSKIND: And, Matt, anything?

3 MR. PORTO: Yeah, I do.

4 BY MR. PORTO:

5 Q. You said for the past few weeks, track 1 was out.

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. And it changed yesterday.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. How was that communicated out?

10 A. It wasn't.

11 Q. Okay.

12 MR. PORTO: No further questions.

13 MR. HART: The only way I know is when I go by the work
14 guys and, you know, I know them and I know the locomotives that
15 they use are the switcher engines and when I come around at one
16 point, I think, if I remember, the day before, I saw them down in
17 -- below and that's not a typical day, and they were on track 1
18 but as far as being told which track they're using today, tomorrow
19 or the next day, we're not told. It's just by signal indication,
20 they cross us over, the dispatcher knows and he lines us up.

21 MR. PORTO: Thank you.

22 MR. HART: Um-hum.

23 MR. PORTO: Nothing further.

24 MR. HIPSKIND: Tom, do you have any questions?

25 MR. HEBERT: Just one question. Tom Hebert, BLET.

1 BY MR. HEBERT:

2 Q. Todd, when you left Hudson Station, you said you crossed
3 over from 2 to 1?

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. What CP point is that?

6 A. 114.

7 Q. 114. All right. Thanks.

8 MR. HEBERT: That's all I have. Thank you.

9 BY MR. HIPSKIND:

10 Q. Todd, let me -- I just want to revisit some visual about
11 some of the things you said, and I just want to be clear. We're
12 interested in the body mechanics, the body positioning, and I've
13 pieced together some of the things you've said and you correct me
14 where I'm wrong on this, but when you came around the curve and
15 you see two orange things, one is down and away from the track.
16 So let me say that a different way, not in the foul of the track.

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. And the person that was struck definitely up in the
19 track and I want to be certain about this, between the rails?

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. You have to say yes.

22 A. Yes, they -- she was between the rails.

23 Q. The other thing I want to be clear about is her -- it
24 was a she, right?

25 A. Yeah, I later found out it was a woman.

1 Q. All right.

2 A. I couldn't tell at the point.

3 Q. She had her back to you all -- the whole time?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And you are certain about that?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. Now -- and what -- and she was walking and
8 walking away?

9 A. She walking south --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- in the gauge of the track.

12 Q. One track.

13 A. Track 1.

14 Q. Okay. And we talked a little bit about that she, and I
15 want to distinguish between left and right, she raised her
16 right --

17 A. Right hand.

18 Q. -- right hand, right arm?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And in a waving motion?

21 A. Just like a wave off.

22 Q. A wave off.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And I -- we don't know what she thought or what -- but
25 you have seen other people do that.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And I want to revisit, typically you take that as an
3 acknowledgement of your signal from the horn?

4 A. Right.

5 Q. All right. Let's talk about her left hand, her left
6 arm. Do you have a recollection of where it was at or if it was
7 holding anything?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. All right. And at no time did her head turn
10 around, at no time did her body turn around to where you saw her,
11 right?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. All right. And I appreciate that this all happened
14 rather quickly.

15 MR. HIPSKIND: That's all I've got, and let me stop and
16 ask your representative, are there any points of clarification for
17 things that you heard thus far that you want to inject?

18 MR. KROSS: No, not at all. I noticed that you did
19 mention at the beginning here that you said it was 290, but the
20 train was 280 --

21 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay.

22 MR. KROSS: -- that we're talking about.

23 MR. HIPSKIND: And we'll have the transcriber make that
24 correction.

25 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay.

1 MR. KROSS: Other than that, I don't have anything at
2 this particular time.

3 MR. HIPSKIND: All right. Gentlemen, let's go through
4 -- I know, Steve, you've got some work/rest things. So let's
5 delve into that and if any of the rest of you have any questions,
6 we'll give you an opportunity one more time, okay.

7 DR. JENNER: Okay. Steve Jenner.

8 BY DR. JENNER:

9 Q. Just a clarification to one of Dick's questions. When
10 he says do you have a recollection of if she was holding anything
11 in her left hand, you said no. So is that, no, you don't have a
12 recollection or, no, she was not holding anything in her left
13 hand?

14 A. I have -- I did not see her left hand at any given point
15 in time. I don't know if she was holding it and I don't recall if
16 it may have been bent holding something, I don't know.

17 Q. Very good. Thank you.

18 MR. KROSS: Excuse me. Can I say something at this
19 particular time? This is Joe Kross, the BLET representative.

20 MR. HIPSKIND: Sure.

21 MR. KROSS: I believe we do have a download of this on
22 the locomotive, a video tape.

23 MR. HIPSKIND: We are aware of that.

24 MR. KROSS: Okay. So the questions for this, the actual
25 download, would be redundant at this particular time, would it

1 not?

2 MR. HIPSKIND: Somewhat, but we have not seen the video
3 or the clarity of what it looks like. So looking at Todd and the
4 other gentleman as they were there, an eyewitness, we don't mind
5 hearing their account of it.

6 MR. KROSS: Okay. And the video has been secured at
7 this particular time, yes or no.

8 MR. HIPSKIND: It has.

9 MR. KROSS: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay. Great.

11 BY DR. JENNER:

12 Q. Okay. If I can do a little -- understand your work
13 history, this accident happen on Wednesday, a little before noon.
14 Do you recall your schedule on Monday and Tuesday when you worked?

15 A. I didn't work Monday. I worked Tuesday.

16 Q. You were off --

17 A. I was off on Monday.

18 Q. Okay. And Tuesday, what time -- when did you work?

19 A. I worked the same train, 280, 291, Albany to New York,
20 New York to Albany.

21 Q. And what time on duty and off duty for that?

22 A. 9:06 a.m. When the heck did we get in here. 5:45 I
23 believe, 291. We haven't made it on time a lot. So you have to
24 bear with me.

25 Q. Fair enough.

1 A. I think it was 5:45, off duty -- arrival in Albany.

2 Q. Okay. So you were off duty just about 5:45 to 6:00.

3 Okay. What did you do after that? Did you drive --

4 A. Tuesday?

5 Q. This is Tuesday, yes.

6 A. Okay. Tuesday, put my stuff away. Went up and picked
7 my wife up from her work and, see, I got my son. No, excuse me.
8 I got my son first from his job, and then I came home or came back
9 and picked my wife up and then we drove home.

10 Q. Okay. Okay. What time did you go to bed that night?

11 A. Probably 10:00, 10:30.

12 Q. Okay. And what time do you get up in the morning?

13 A. Usually around 7:00.

14 Q. And how long is your commute to here, to your station?

15 A. About 35, 40 minutes.

16 Q. How did you feel starting work? Were you alert? Feel
17 good?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I was great. I even made a comment, I wonder what
21 screwy things are going to happen today. Every day's a weird one.

22 Q. Okay. Thank you. And I just have standard questions
23 about your overall health. How is your overall health?

24 A. Good.

25 Q. I see you're wearing glasses right now. Is that for

1 distance or reading?

2 A. Reading.

3 Q. Reading, okay. Your last physical whenever that company
4 physical, is your --

5 A. I had to take one because my certificate expired in
6 August. So I believe I took it the month before, September.

7 Q. Just a couple of months ago?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay. Hearing normal, hearing normal and vision normal?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Well, not the vision. That's -- they screwed up, they
13 screwed up on my vision test and that's when I had to go see my
14 own doctor and get these.

15 Q. I see. Any other -- okay. I won't say other. Any type
16 of chronic conditions that you take medications for?

17 A. I don't take any medications right now.

18 Q. Neither prescription or over the counter?

19 A. No. Cold medicine when I have a cold, and I don't have
20 a cold now.

21 Q. Sure. Great. Thank you. Thanks for that information.

22 DR. JENNER: That's all.

23 MR. HIPSKIND: Mr. Toth, any questions?

24 MR. TOTH: Dan Toth, no questions.

25 MR. HIPSKIND: Thank you.

1 MR. FINNEGAN: Jim Finnegan, no questions.

2 MR. COLLINS: Bill Collins.

3 BY MR. COLLINS:

4 Q. You said that 280 was late coming into the station.

5 A. About four or five minutes.

6 Q. Nothing significant.

7 A. Not significant, no.

8 Q. And coming back on 291, that was -- you didn't come back
9 that day, did you?

10 A. No.

11 Q. But the trains had been running late more or less
12 because of construction or just --

13 A. A combination of some of the construction. They were
14 also working up in Schenectady. So I know there's some things
15 going on up there but most often time it's when I check the train,
16 I check the train on my cell phone before I leave home, and most
17 of the time it's more significant when it's coming from Albany out
18 in the western area, Syracuse, Rochester area.

19 Q. Okay. Thank you.

20 MR. COLLINS: No other questions.

21 MR. HIPSKIND: Thanks, Bill. George?

22 MR. GERNON: No questions.

23 MR. WINSTEL: Bob Winstel, no questions.

24 MR. HRASKA: Paul Hraska, no questions.

25 MR. PORTO: Matt Porto, no questions.

1 MR. HEBERT: Tom Hebert, no questions.

2 BY MR. HIPSKIND:

3 Q. Todd, we're to that good spot now. I, I just want to --
4 my sense in hearing some of the questions and some of your
5 answers, is, is there an area for safety improvement in your
6 opinion, about how you travel up and down the Hudson Line? And
7 what I'm really talking about here is I get about the signal
8 system and double track and dispatchers and running the work
9 crews. I get that. I understand that. I think you are
10 understanding of that, too, but do you have any thoughts on what
11 might make things better or --

12 A. My personal opinion, is we've got so many new people
13 here, and they just need more training. They need to remember to
14 respect what it is that they're doing with hundreds of tons of
15 metal screaming down the tracks and if they make one mistake, it
16 could be life altering.

17 Q. The speed that you were operating at, it's been that way
18 for some time.

19 A. Since I've been here.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Since I was a conductor in '92.

22 Q. All right. Well, listen, you have my business card, and
23 give some thought, and you can call me at any time. There's other
24 gentlemen around the table who are part of the investigative
25 group, and if you want to reach out and talk to them, but I want

1 to keep an open dialogue if after today and a lot of this trauma,
2 if you have a thought about anything, I want to keep those lines
3 of communication open, okay.

4 A. Understood.

5 Q. If there's nothing else, let's wait and talk to Andrew
6 Lumber (ph.) and see what he has to say, and if there's nothing
7 else, Todd, my sincere appreciation for coming in here today. I
8 know it's a little bit difficult and -- but you guys were there,
9 and we just, we just needed to reach out and have this dialogue
10 with you.

11 A. I understand.

12 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay. So with that, the interview is
13 closed. Thank you, gentlemen.

14 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: COLLISION OF AMTRAK TRAIN 280
 WITH MAINTENANCE-OF-WAY EMPLOYEE
 ON OCTOBER 29, 2014 IN
 COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK
 Interview of Todd Hart

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-15-FR-003

PLACE: Rensselaer, New York

DATE: October 30, 2014

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.

Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber