

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN RE: :

THE ACCIDENT INVOLVING : NTSB Accident No.

AMTRAK TRAIN #89 AND A : DCA16FR007

BACKHOE IN CHESTER, :

PENNSYLVANIA ON :

APRIL 3, 2016 :

INTERVIEW OF: Michael Warner

Friday,
April 15, 2016

Chester, Pennsylvania

BEFORE

STEPHEN M. JENNER, NTSB
DONALD HILL, BLET
WILLIAM BATES, SMART
JONATHAN HINES, AMTRAK
GARY WHITE, FRA
MELVIN WICHELMANN, BLET
ANDREW CIUBA, SMART
JIM GEE, FRA
RYAN FRIGO, NTSB

This transcript was produced from audio provided by the National Transportation Safety Board.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

1:14 p.m.

MR. JENNER: Good afternoon. Today is April 15th, 2016. The time is 1:14 p.m.

My name is Stephen Jenner. I'm an Investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. We are currently in Chester, Pennsylvania, investigating an Amtrak accident that occurred on April 3rd, 2016, in Chester.

We are here to interview crew members of the Amtrak train, and we'll be talking to Mr. Michael Warner, who is a conductor with Amtrak, who was on that train.

Before we get -- we begin, I would like to go around the room and have us introduce ourselves, and spell your name, and say who you're with please.

Again, I'm Stephen Jenner, S-T-E-P-H-E-N, J-E-N-N-E-R, with the NTSB.

MR. HILL: I'm Donald Hill, D-O-N-A-L-D, H-I-L-L, with the BLET Safety Task Force.

MR. BATES: William Bates, W-I-L-L-I-A-M, B-A-T-E-S, SMART National Transportation Safety Team.

MR. HINES: Jonathan Hines, J-O-N-A-T-H-A-N, H-I-N-E-S, Amtrak System Road Foreman.

MR. GEE: Jim Gee, G-E-E. FRA Inspector.

1 MR. WICHELMANN: Melvin Wichelmann, M---E-L-
2 V-I-N, W-I-C-H-E-L-M-A-N-N, BLET Safety Task Force.

3 MR. CIUBA: Andrew Ciuba, A-N-D-R-E-W, C-I-
4 U-B-A, SMART Transportation Division Local 1370
5 Chairperson.

6 MR. WHITE: Gary White, Federal Railroad
7 Administration. The name is G-A-R-Y, W-H-I-T-E.

8 MR. FRIGO: Ryan Frigo, F-R-I-G-O,
9 Investigator in Charge, National Transportation Safety
10 Board.

11 MR. JENNER: Okay, and Mr. Warner, if you
12 can just give us your full name.

13 MR. WARNER: Michael Warner, W-A-R-N-E-R,
14 Conductor for Amtrak, conducting on 89 that morning.

15 MR. JENNER: Great, thank you. We
16 appreciate you being here, and what we'd like to do is
17 just hear your story and we're going to let you have
18 the floor there, and my only request is just if you can
19 start off when you went on duty and where it was and
20 what time, and just take us through there.

21 MR. WARNER: Sign up time for 89 is 5:25
22 a.m. in Penn Station. I had a job briefing. Job
23 briefing was two AC's which were Damien Robinson and
24 George Copeland, and my engineer was A.J. Hunter,
25 Alexander Hunter.

1 That morning, we discussed TSRB's. We had
2 no Form D's that morning. The safety rule, how many
3 passengers we got on the train. Because that train is
4 now combined with 131, it's no longer just a long haul
5 train.

6 So, we pick up like all the regional
7 passengers from New York to Washington, and they
8 combine the train, making it longer. So, now, the
9 first three cars are passengers going from New York to
10 Washington. That's where they sit at, and then the
11 next five cars belong to the passengers that taking
12 long haul trains from Washington to Savannah, Georgia.

13 Then in the rear, they have business class
14 car and the last car is the baggage car. So, all
15 together it's 10 cars on that train.

16 We leave at 6:05 a.m. in the morning.
17 Everything was pretty normal, and when we got to -- we
18 make like -- now, we make regular stops. We make local
19 stops, such as Metro Park, BWI and CAROLTON {phonetic}
20 which we -- 89 never used to make those stops. They
21 just went straight from north to Trenton, and then
22 Phillie and all the major stops. So, now it make
23 regular stops because the trains are combined.

24 We got to Philadelphia. We had a heavy load
25 of passengers getting on at Phillie, about 80-something

1 passengers. The train at that time, when we left
2 Philadelphia, the device said that we had about 341
3 passengers on it.

4 We were during our lift, and that's like
5 short while after we left Philadelphia, while we doing
6 the lift, working up -- I'm in the fourth car doing the
7 lift, and just -- train just started breaking, like
8 automatic. Everybody that was standing up on the
9 train, the little -- so, you standing up, we broke so
10 hard, we just flew, and then you just heard a big bang,
11 and outside the train, all you could see was a lot of
12 smoke, and you know, people was -- started screaming
13 and crying. I hit the back of one of the chairs with
14 my knee -- my knee hit the chair and I fell on top of a
15 passenger.

16 I asked the passenger if she was okay,
17 because she spilt coffee. She said it didn't burn or
18 whatever. So, what's going on, and I said, "I don't
19 know. I have to find out."

20 So, everybody just, you know, sit down and
21 relax. Let me find out what's going on, and I heard
22 Damien on the radio, and he's like "I got injured
23 passengers up here. I need your help conducting. I
24 need your help."

25 So, started running up towards the -- ran

1 through the third car, where like regional passengers
2 and there were people grabbing their bags, screaming,
3 "It's a bomb," and just real chaotic scene.

4 You know, I'm yelling, "Okay, everybody sit
5 down, relax, sit down, move towards the back of the
6 train. Leave your baggage there," and I go up to the
7 second car, see some of the windows are blow out and
8 I'm like, "Wow. This is like crazy." I still don't
9 know exactly what's going on, or you know, what we hit.

10 Calling the -- Alexander on the radio, but
11 I'm not getting no answer. So, I don't know what's
12 going on with him, if he's okay or what.

13 I finally get up to the first car, and the
14 back doors are open. It's people jumping onto the
15 tracks on both sides, running across the tracks. So,
16 I'm like, "Hey, hey, guys, what are you doing? Get
17 back on the train. Get back on the train." It's
18 people like, "No, I'm not getting on the train. It's
19 safer out here."

20 So, it's like I'm explaining to them,
21 "Listen, it's safer on the train. It's probably trains
22 coming this way. You know, you got to get back on the
23 train before you get hit, crushed." It's people behind
24 -- it's a freight train about four tracks over. It's
25 people behind the freight train already. I see people

1 climbing under the train knuckle between the trains,
2 going on the other side and I'm like -- I says to
3 Damien, "You all right?" He's like, "Yes."

4 The people that were in the front that --
5 the train got ripped apart. So, all the chairs were
6 like turned into each other, and the people that were
7 stuck there, I'm like okay -- well, he's like, "There's
8 this doctor." It's a lady doctor over there. She's
9 helping some people. I said, "Okay, fine."

10 Those people over there, get those people to
11 get back on the train, on the engineer side and I went
12 on the firemen side. I went down, opened the truck and
13 had all the people come back up, gathered everybody.
14 That didn't take too long, except for one lady who did
15 not want to get on the train. It took a little while
16 to get her back on the train.

17 Made everybody go back. Called on the radio
18 to my flag, which was George Copeland, and said, "Make
19 an announcement. Keep everybody in the last couple of
20 cars." You know, he called me back and said the PA is
21 not working. So, I said, "Well, just walk through.
22 Make sure everybody is in them last four or five cars.
23 Don't let nobody off the train. Give them water or
24 whatever, and just let them know we got emergency
25 coming, if anybody is injured. We'll get them help.

1 To just sit tight and relax."

2 Then I went up front to Alexander, and I got
3 up to the engine, I seen it was off the track. I see
4 it was a lot of damage on the side of the car also,
5 onto the engine and when I walked up, I didn't hear
6 nothing. I was calling him on the radio and I didn't
7 hear anything.

8 I walked up to the front and then I seen
9 like just whoever we hit, like all the body parts on
10 the front of the engine and I opened the door, and I
11 seen Alexander, you know, laying on the -- oh my God,
12 is this guy down? This guy is not dead? He reached up
13 and I said, "What happened," and he said, "We hit a
14 backhoe. I don't even know what the backhoe was doing
15 on there."

16 I said, "I heard you blowing the horn." I
17 heard the horn blowing, but he said, "Yes, I don't know
18 what they were doing on this track."

19 I said, "Are you okay?" He's like, "I can't
20 breathe. You know, I can't breathe." So, I just threw
21 the train in emergency and I ducked and I said, "Yes,
22 you know, I felt it."

23 But so, then I said, "Okay, well," I called
24 on the radio, told CTEC4 and mile post 16.2 north of
25 Hook, and I heard sirens all around. So, then I came

1 back on the train, and to see about those people. I
2 told Alexander, "Don't get down. Just wait right
3 there, you know. We got emergency coming. I'll be
4 right back."

5 Got back on the train, and all the people
6 that was still sitting there was asking them, "Well,
7 who needs help? Who needs immediate attention, and
8 everybody else who doesn't need help, I need you to go
9 to the back of the train."

10 So, called CTEC and they said that, you
11 know, they cut the power. It's nothing coming through.
12 I said, "Good, because you know, the train is off the
13 track. We're falling off the track." It's people were
14 running. I hope I got everybody back on the train.

15 Police were there. They called also. Fire
16 department got there first. Couple of firemen got
17 there, and you know, once they got the train, they took
18 over with the doctor that was on there. Emergency
19 services, helping the injured, trying to find out how
20 to get them off and stuff, and came back and said it
21 was -- I think United Methodist Church, right off the
22 side.

23 I said, "Okay, well, you know, you only try
24 to get the injured people off and see if we can get
25 everybody to a spot. Get them off the train."

1 Said, "Okay, well, everybody that's not
2 injured is in the back of the train. You can walk
3 through and see if anybody else needs help," and a
4 couple of people said that they were injured and they
5 needed help.

6 So, we evacuated the train after that.
7 Damien stayed. He was in pain, but he stayed, and
8 helped us evacuated, then I told him, "Just go to the
9 hospital and make sure, you know, yourself is all
10 right."

11 Alexander went to the hospital. They took
12 him out also, and people that were badly injured, they
13 took -- EMT's took them out. The fire department took
14 everybody else off the train, made sure everybody got
15 off the train. It's just -- I mean, it's a real scary
16 situation. Like, it's just like you walk up there and
17 for a split second you're like, "Oh, wow. This is
18 crazy."

19 From the outside, the pictures, you don't --
20 you can't really tell how bad it is, unless you're on
21 the inside looking at, you know, the inside of the
22 train. It's people stuck in between the seats. It's
23 people on the floor. It's people crying. It's people
24 bleeding. It's -- everybody is screaming for help, and
25 then you got the other crazy people. "It's a bomb,"

1 and they're yelling and they're grabbing suitcases and
2 we're like, "Look, leave the suitcases. We'll get your
3 suitcases. You know, right now, it's an emergency. We
4 need everybody to just listen." That's the only way we
5 could help everybody. If you listen and you do what we
6 tell you, you know, we can help you. If you don't, you
7 know, you're going to cause a lot of rucks, so please
8 just listen to us, and basically, everybody did.

9 After a while, like they calmed down and
10 they seen it wasn't a bomb, or you know, the dust
11 cleared, because with all the smoke, you would have
12 thought that something blew up, and when you heard the
13 big bang, that's what you thought, something blew up.
14 You didn't know what was happening.

15 I didn't know what was happening until I got
16 up there, and you know, he told me what he hit, but I
17 could feel everything going up under the train, you
18 know, all the pieces, and you could just hear
19 everything.

20 He hit the brake. I guess he tried to hit
21 the emergency brake before, you know, he got into it,
22 because you could feel, you know, like the train coming
23 to a sudden stop and everybody is just everywhere.
24 Whoever was on their feet, which is me, Gabrielle and I
25 think it was one or two passengers who just came from

1 the café car, getting something, and the lady flew.
2 She flew right into the door. I flew right into the
3 back of the seat and I fell on top of a passenger.

4 Gabrielle flew and the other lady that was
5 behind me, when I got up, she was on the floor. So, I
6 would figure that she -- I didn't see her, but I would
7 figure that she hit the floor also.

8 So, I mean, it was just real chaotic.
9 Emergency services got there pretty quick. Fire
10 department got there pretty quickly. Amtrak police got
11 there, maybe about two minutes after they got there,
12 and I spoke to the fire chief and you know, he is,
13 "Which way can we get people out?"

14 Some of the traps doors was stuck on
15 engineering side. We couldn't open the stairs, because
16 I guess when it hit the backhoe, it looked like the
17 side of the cars were all scraped up. So, I guess it
18 punctured like some of the doors where it was stuck or
19 something.

20 So, we just opened up most of the doors, so
21 the air could go through, so people could get air, and
22 then we evacuated everybody from towards the back of
23 the train and let them go to the church.

24 My flag, George Copeland, we had some minors
25 on the train. He went with the minors and he stayed

1 with the minors the whole time that they were off of
2 there.

3 So, as I understand it, until they told him
4 he had to go to the hospital, he even took the minors
5 to the hospital with him.

6 But that was basically it. After we cleared
7 the train and this guy DABINSKI {phonetic} came on and
8 they're like, "Okay, well, you know, I'm going to get
9 the luggage off and you know, we going to get you guys
10 to the hospital and stuff," and lady by the name of
11 Debra JOWERS {phonetic} came and took me to the
12 hospital for the, you know, the FRA procedures, and
13 they got me back to Wilmington. I didn't even want to
14 get on the train. I'll tell you, no lie, I didn't even
15 want to ride the train here.

16 But got back home and that was it. It was
17 just a real day. I would never want to experience
18 something like that again. Not good at all. Not good
19 at all.

20 MR. JENNER: Great, thank you for that
21 description. That was really very helpful. You want a
22 break?

23 MR. WARNER: No, I'm ready.

24 MR. JENNER: Great. The more information
25 you give, the less questions we have. So, you're in

1 good shape then.

2 Just a few for me. I wasn't clear what care
3 you were in.

4 MR. WARNER: I was in fourth car.

5 MR. JENNER: Okay.

6 MR. WARNER: Fourth car is the first long
7 haul car that we have. I was walking up towards the
8 third car. The first three cars are designated for
9 regional passengers, which are from New York to
10 Washington, and they get cut off in Washington, D.C.
11 They take off those first three in Washington.

12 MR. JENNER: Were there passengers in each
13 one of the other cars?

14 MR. WARNER: Yes.

15 MR. JENNER: Okay, and is there another
16 assistant conductor? Was there an assistant conductor
17 with you?

18 MR. WARNER: Two. Damien Robinson.

19 MR. JENNER: I'm sorry, in the same car?

20 MR. WARNER: Oh, no. Damien Robinson was in
21 the first car.

22 MR. JENNER: Right.

23 MR. WARNER: And George Copeland, I believe,
24 was back maybe either in the café car or the car before
25 the café car.

1 MR. JENNER: All right.

2 MR. WARNER: We all have three cars. So, he
3 does the last three. Damien had the first three, which
4 were the regional, and I got the middle, the middle
5 three cars.

6 MR. JENNER: I don't think we've talked to
7 an assistant conductor before. I don't think anyone
8 mentioned anything about the service crew.

9 MR. WARNER: Okay.

10 MR. JENNER: Can you give me --

11 MR. WARNER: The (inaudible) crew?

12 MR. JENNER: Yes, can you tell us --

13 MR. WARNER: They were very good. You know,
14 they helped. When I had George on the radio, I asked
15 him -- Gabrielle was one of the train assistants, and
16 Patricia Smith. She was the other train assistants.

17 They helped me keep everybody on the train.
18 They helped me get everybody back to the back of the
19 train, in their seats and helped keep everybody calm.
20 They distributed water and they gave them as much
21 information as we had at the time, about what was going
22 on.

23 I think George probably did mention to them
24 that we had a fatality, and that there was no bomb on
25 the train or there was, you know, no fire. So,

1 everybody just sit tight and relax.

2 So, I guess once most people figured out
3 that it wasn't a bomb, then everybody, you know, became
4 a little bit calmer, when they figured out that we hit
5 something, and you know, it got a little calm.

6 MR. JENNER: Okay, in terms of --

7 MR. WARNER: And --

8 MR. JENNER: I'm sorry, go ahead.

9 MR. WARNER: It was like a matter of --
10 everything happened so fast. It was just like a matter
11 of minutes, before everything happened. I believe it
12 was like around 7:49, you know, around that time. So,
13 you know, it was just -- everything happened so early.
14 A lot of people were sleeping.

15 So, you know, they probably woke up into the
16 minutes that everything was going on, and with the
17 other people screaming, that's what made everybody else
18 think something else was going on.

19 MR. JENNER: Okay, your coordination with
20 the emergency responders, how do you think that went?

21 MR. WARNER: That went good. I mean, when
22 they came, we just showed them everybody that was
23 injured. We told them where all our injured people
24 were, and we told them where everybody else was located
25 on the train, and they went up and they took care of

1 the most seriously injured passengers, and then they
2 went back through the train, to find out who else
3 needed assistance, and then whoever else said they were
4 injured, they came forward, some people from the back
5 of the train, you know, "My neck and my back."

6 MR. JENNER: Right.

7 MR. WARNER: But you know, I mean, I can't
8 say if they were injured or not, you know?

9 MR. JENNER: Right.

10 MR. WARNER: But it wasn't too many people
11 in the back of the train that was injured. I'd like to
12 say that. Most people -- a lot of people that were up
13 in the front weren't injured, and they came back and
14 they were sitting up in the front.

15 So, it wasn't too many people that I could
16 seriously say, that was back beyond the fifth or the
17 sixth car that were, you know, majorly injured, unless
18 they were standing up in the café car or something like
19 that, and it wasn't that many people standing up.

20 MR. JENNER: All right. In the fourth car,
21 what was the -- what were the worst injuries that you
22 saw from the fourth car?

23 MR. WARNER: Just people falling, people
24 hitting their head, maybe the table trays falling off
25 the back of the seats or whatever. Nothing real major.

1 The third car, when I got into the third
2 car, everybody was panicking. So, they were all
3 grabbing their stuff, and they all were running both
4 ways, trying to push out the doors until, you know,
5 just told everybody keep going to the back, keep going
6 to the back, keep going to the back, go to the back of
7 the train.

8 MR. JENNER: Okay.

9 MR. WARNER: And the second car was a little
10 chaotic too, and most of those passengers had got off
11 the train, some of the passengers from the first car
12 and the second car.

13 The first car was designated quiet car. So,
14 a lot of passengers, they had opened the door
15 themselves and jumped off the train on both sides, and
16 we got all of them back up. It had to be about 25
17 people running across the tracks, and we got every
18 single last one of them, including the last lady, who
19 took a little while to get her back on, we finally got
20 her back on the train.

21 MR. JENNER: All right.

22 MR. WARNER: And we told her to go to the
23 back.

24 MR. JENNER: So, the people who went off the
25 train, was it just the source that -- through the first

1 car or did people evacuate from other cars, as well?

2 MR. WARNER: No, just from the first two
3 cars --

4 MR. JENNER: First two cars?

5 MR. WARNER: -- those first few doors.

6 MR. JENNER: Right, okay.

7 MR. WARNER: Right.

8 MR. JENNER: Okay.

9 MR. WARNER: Just from those -- somebody up
10 there knew how to pull the handle down and they opened
11 the doors on both sides and just had people jumping out
12 or some trying to jump out, and I think one lady was
13 stuck, trying to jump out. Her clothes got caught or
14 something, and I think Damien helped her, either cut
15 her clothes so she can get un-stuck or I don't know
16 what he did to get her free, but he got her free from
17 the door.

18 MR. JENNER: Okay.

19 MR. WARNER: I mean, for somebody new, you
20 know, he was scared, but he kept his head on his
21 shoulders, and you know, he reacted very quickly and he
22 did a very good job. Everybody did a very good job,
23 but he -- you know, he was right up there in the first
24 car. So, lot of people would have probably just had a
25 heart attack.

1 MR. JENNER: Great. Well, thank you.
2 That's all the questions I have. What we'll do is go
3 around the room --

4 MR. WARNER: Yes.

5 MR. JENNER: -- and see if there are any
6 follow ups.

7 MR. HILL: Donald Hill, BLET Safety Task
8 Force. Once again, you and your guys, from what I
9 hear, did a great job.

10 MR. WARNER: Thank you.

11 MR. HILL: All right. Just have a couple of
12 questions. How often have you worked with the
13 engineer?

14 MR. WARNER: Maybe about three times, three
15 or four times.

16 MR. HILL: And would you say the same for
17 the rest of the crew that you worked with?

18 MR. WARNER: No. Damien, it was my first
19 time working with him, and George is my regular flag on
20 that job. Gabrielle, I worked with him a couple times.
21 He's a -- he works the extra board, I think for train
22 assistant, and Patricia, I believe she's a regular on
23 there. I worked with her a couple times, and Juanita,
24 throughout the years, she was there, let's say, I
25 worked with her a couple of times.

1 MR. HILL: Okay, is this your regular
2 assignment?

3 MR. WARNER: Yes, it is.

4 MR. HILL: And how long have you been with
5 Amtrak?

6 MR. WARNER: Eight and a half years.

7 MR. HILL: And you're based out of New York?

8 MR. WARNER: Yes, sir.

9 MR. HILL: When were you certified, last --
10 your last certification?

11 MR. WARNER: What do you mean? Certified?
12 Like you mean --

13 MR. HILL: Certification as a conductor.

14 MR. WARNER: Last year.

15 MR. HILL: Do you know the month?

16 MR. WARNER: No, I don't remember.

17 MR. HILL: Okay, and when did you qualify
18 with Amtrak?

19 MR. WARNER: I believe 2009, I qualified.

20 MR. HILL: And were you --

21 MR. WARNER: For conductor you mean,
22 qualified?

23 MR. HILL: Yes.

24 MR. WARNER: Yes, 2009, I believe.

25 MR. HILL: And when did you get promoted?

1 I'm sorry.

2 MR. WARNER: To --

3 MR. HILL: To conduct.

4 MR. WARNER: -- conductor?

5 MR. HILL: Yes.

6 MR. WARNER: Yes, 2009. Maybe about --
7 maybe July or something.

8 MR. HILL: And was the train on time?

9 MR. WARNER: The train was on time.

10 Actually, we might have been like two or three minutes
11 late.

12 MR. HILL: Okay.

13 MR. WARNER: But pretty much on time. We
14 were in -- like, well, about much -- because of heavy
15 travel or baggage, like that, but we weren't really off
16 time by much.

17 MR. HILL: Did you hear any communication at
18 all on the radio, with regards to wayside workers?

19 MR. WARNER: No, didn't hear nothing.

20 MR. HILL: Okay, did you hear any radio
21 communication at all? Do you recall south of Phillie?

22 MR. WARNER: No.

23 MR. HILL: Okay, all right. Like I said,
24 you know, that's all I have for you. You did a great
25 job. Thanks.

1 MR. WARNER: Thank you.

2 MR. HILL: Okay.

3 MR. BATES: William Bates, B-A-T-E-S. SMART
4 National Transportation Safety Team.

5 Mike, have -- in an instance like this --
6 first of all, thank you for what you've done and --

7 MR. WARNER: Thank you.

8 MR. BATES: -- in a troubled situation.
9 Have you had training? Did the Amtrak training help
10 you in this situation?

11 MR. WARNER: Yes, they -- block training.
12 You know, they show you safety procedures and they show
13 you videos on if something happens. So, we do get
14 training.

15 They gave us a tunnel class for smoke, you
16 know, show how to evacuate, where to go, certain places
17 like that. But I don't think any training will prepare
18 you for, you know, what you go through when it's going
19 -- when it's happening. It's like spur of the moment
20 thing. You forget everything, and then it comes back
21 to you. It's like, what is going on, and then you're
22 like, you know, it's like, okay, well, what do we do
23 first? What we got to do? You know, where is the
24 safest place?

25 That's the first thing I was thinking, like,

1 well, what's going on up here? What is the safest
2 place, and if we could get everybody else out the way,
3 when we can figure out what's going on with everybody
4 else that we need to help or you know, everything like
5 that.

6 So, but they do give us training, training
7 materials, videos, stuff like that. Every year for
8 block training, we get it.

9 MR. BATES: That's all I have.

10 MR. HINES: Michael, thank you. This is
11 Jonathan Hines, Amtrak. Thanks for being here.
12 Commendable job. You're a regular on this position?

13 MR. WARNER: Yes, sir.

14 MR. HINES: And you work Train 89 every day?

15 MR. WARNER: Only Saturday and Sunday.

16 MR. HINES: And what is -- what trains do
17 you work on your other days?

18 MR. WARNER: Wednesday I work 51. Thursday
19 and Friday I work 151 in the morning, and I work the
20 high speed (inaudible) 2110, that's Thursday and
21 Friday.

22 Saturday, I work 89, and I bring back 140,
23 and Sunday I work 89 and I bring that back, and Monday
24 and Tuesday are my relief days.

25 MR. HINES: When we were talking with

1 Damien, he mentioned that there was an employee
2 (inaudible).

3 MR. WARNER: Right.

4 MR. HINES: Did you -- do you know who that
5 employee was?

6 MR. WARNER: I don't know at this time. I
7 don't know who he was. I did speak to him. He did
8 help us. He helped us a lot. He helped us get some of
9 those people back on the train that were running
10 across, and he helped us push people back, even helped
11 when we were evacuating, you know, some of the people.
12 But I don't know who he was. That was the first time I
13 seen him actually.

14 MR. HINES: Okay, did he even mention what
15 department he worked for?

16 MR. WARNER: No, he just said he -- he just
17 said he had a head EMPASS {phonetic} and he needed to
18 ride that in, or whatever, and I told him at Wilmington
19 -- he got on at Phillie, but he got on at the back, and
20 I told him, "Well, at Wilmington, you know, go up and
21 talk to A.J." He's the engineer, you know, and let him
22 know.

23 MR. HINES: Okay, thank you.

24 MR. WARNER: Okay.

25 MR. JENNER: Gary?

1 MR. WHITE: Mr. Warner?

2 MR. WARNER: Yes, sir.

3 MR. WHITE: Outstanding job.

4 MR. WARNER: Thank you.

5 MR. WHITE: Outstanding. Couple of
6 questions, some of them, you've probably already
7 answered, and I was scribbling. Who made the initial
8 emergency call? Was it you?

9 MR. WARNER: I think it was Damien.

10 MR. WHITE: Damien?

11 MR. WARNER: Yes.

12 MR. WHITE: Okay.

13 MR. WARNER: I think Damien was the first
14 person I heard on the radio, saying emergency, and he
15 called me.

16 MR. WHITE: Okay, did you hear an immediate
17 response from the dispatcher? Were there any problems
18 with communication at all?

19 MR. WARNER: No, I didn't hear -- it's funny
20 because I used to hear everything on my radio and then
21 they did this thing with some low frequency or whatever
22 on the radios, and now, I can't hear anything except
23 the engineer sometimes, or maybe the crew.

24 But I used to be able to hear everything on
25 my radio. Now, it's very limited to what you can hear.

1 So, sometimes they might have a transmission
2 come across and you won't hear it until the engineer
3 says something back and then you'll be like, "Oh, CTEC
4 called or this person called?" You know? But that's
5 how that works.

6 So, if they did say anything, I didn't hear
7 them, but I answered them, but you know, I answered
8 them and I said, "Okay," he called me to say, "Hey, I
9 got injured people up here," and I said, "Okay, I'm
10 coming. I'm coming." Lot of people in between the
11 cars, trying to run off.

12 So, I'm like jumping over suitcases, trying
13 to get to the front and get everybody to the back.
14 Just real crazy.

15 MR. WHITE: So, there was absolutely no
16 difficulty between crew members communicating --

17 MR. WARNER: No.

18 MR. WHITE: -- it was just, you didn't hear
19 the response from -- any responses of dispatchers on
20 the hand-held?

21 MR. WARNER: No, I didn't hear anything
22 until I got off the train and I called them and told
23 them where we were at, and we needed help.

24 MR. WHITE: So, you called them on the cell
25 phone?

1 MR. WARNER: No, I called them on the radio.

2 MR. WHITE: The radio?

3 MR. WARNER: Right.

4 MR. WHITE: Okay, okay.

5 MR. WARNER: And then when I spoke to him on
6 the radio, he told me to call him on his cell phone.
7 So, that's when I called on the cell.

8 MR. WHITE: Okay, was there any problems
9 determining where you were located, the mile post?

10 MR. WARNER: Not the mile post. The mile
11 post, I knew. Where we were at, it was -- it's nothing
12 but bushes on the side and then on the other side was a
13 freight train.

14 MR. WHITE: Okay.

15 MR. WARNER: So, you really couldn't see any
16 landmarks, to tell you, you know, what we normally look
17 for, like we're here, we're here, we're here. I just
18 knew we left Phillie and I knew Hook was like -- we
19 didn't pass it yet. So, I knew we were probably like,
20 you know -- after I got out and looked, maybe about
21 like 200 yards away from it, something like that.

22 MR. WHITE: Okay, all right.

23 MR. WARNER: I know we were north of Hook.

24 MR. WHITE: Okay.

25 MR. WARNER: So, when I called, I told them,

1 I said, "We're north of Hook." It was 16.8, something
2 like that. That's what I told them.

3 MR. WHITE: All right, did you have a
4 determination or account of any ADA passengers or any
5 disabled passengers onboard?

6 MR. WARNER: We had a couple. We had a
7 couple passengers. We had one -- one lady who, she had
8 -- I think she had bypass surgery or something and she
9 was having problems breathing. We isolated her.

10 MR. WHITE: Okay.

11 MR. WARNER: In the café car. Made her sit
12 by herself and had the EMT come and rush to her.

13 MR. WHITE: Okay, so, she was basically the
14 first person off?

15 MR. WARNER: No, she -- they -- she -- it
16 was hard to get her off. So, they left her back there.
17 She was probably the last, but they came up on the
18 train with -- you know, anything that she needed, and
19 she said she was okay, but she just was letting them
20 know, she was having like a little problem breathing.

21 MR. WHITE: Okay, and you already said that
22 the crew did go car to car to make the announcements.

23 MR. WARNER: Yes, they walked through every

24 --

25 MR. WHITE: Because the --

1 MR. WARNER: -- car, yes.

2 MR. WHITE: Okay, did you all make
3 announcements or did you delegate or did everybody take
4 their section of the train and do what they had to do?

5 MR. WARNER: Well, I wasn't back there at
6 the time. After that -- you mean after the accident?

7 MR. WHITE: Yes.

8 MR. WARNER: Yes, after the accident, I
9 called George on the radio and I told him, "Make
10 announcements." He called me and told me that the PA
11 system wasn't working.

12 So, I told him, "Just make sure everybody is
13 okay, and you guys walk through the cars and let
14 everybody know what's going on, and we got emergency on
15 the way." So, you know, just relax and as soon as we
16 get everybody, we'll evacuate everybody. So, that's
17 what they did.

18 MR. WHITE: Okay, all right, except for the
19 ones that panicked and ran away like scared rabbits,
20 did most of the people pretty much cooperate with you?

21 MR. WARNER: Yes, you know, we didn't have -
22 - I mean, once they calmed down and figured out it
23 wasn't a bomb that's -- I think everybody was scared
24 and it just took one person to start yelling 'bomb',
25 and everybody just went with it, "It's a bomb," and it

1 just went back.

2 MR. WHITE: Okay, all right. This might be
3 -- did you notice the emergency lighting come on? Did
4 you happen to notice if that activated?

5 MR. WARNER: I didn't notice.

6 MR. WHITE: All right, did you -- did the
7 initial first responders, did they first talk to you or
8 did they talk to the first uniform they saw or what?

9 MR. WARNER: Yes, they spoke to me.

10 MR. WHITE: Okay.

11 MR. WARNER: And Damien, and we told them
12 where everybody was that needed -- the seriously
13 injured passengers. We told them where they were, and
14 they got on the train and they spoke with the doctor,
15 and I was with -- I was with Alexander at the time --

16 MR. WHITE: Okay.

17 MR. WARNER: -- waiting for somebody to come
18 help him.

19 MR. WHITE: Okay, all right. Like I said,
20 once again, outstanding job.

21 MR. WARNER: Thank you.

22 MR. WHITE: Not only you, but your whole
23 crew. It's a reflection on your whole crew. You guys
24 got it squared away.

25 MR. WARNER: Thank you.

1 MR. WHITE: That's all I've got.

2 INTERVIEWER: Mr. Warner, I just have one
3 question for you. Prior to the accident, were there
4 any problems with the PA system?

5 MR. WARNER: No, we didn't have any problems
6 with it. Damien made all the announcements. Made all
7 the announcements for each stop. He made safety
8 announcements. He made all them. He made very good
9 announcement. Didn't have any problem out there, going
10 through the whole train. Didn't have any problems with
11 the PA system.

12 INTERVIEWER: Thank you.

13 MR. JENNER: Okay, this is Steve Jenner.
14 Few more questions.

15 MR. WARNER: Yes.

16 MR. JENNER: But if I can get your work
17 schedule. I'm changing pace here.

18 MR. WARNER: Okay.

19 MR. JENNER: And just the last couple days.
20 So, this incident happened Sunday.

21 MR. WARNER: Right.

22 MR. JENNER: Did you work Saturday and
23 Friday?

24 MR. WARNER: Yes, Saturday I worked 89/140.

25 MR. JENNER: Okay.

1 MR. WARNER: And that sign up time is 5:25
2 and I get back to New York at approximately 3:50.

3 MR. JENNER: At 3:50 p.m.?

4 MR. WARNER: Yes, p.m.

5 MR. JENNER: Okay, and what do you do after
6 you arrive?

7 MR. WARNER: Saturday, I picked up my
8 granddaughter and my son came and got her about 9:00,
9 and I think I was watching TV. I was watching sports,
10 waiting for North Carolina and Villa Nova go at it, and
11 I fell asleep with the TV watching me. I normally go
12 to bed like around 9:30.

13 MR. JENNER: Okay, and how did you sleep
14 that night? Good sleep?

15 MR. WARNER: Yes, I didn't have no problems.

16 MR. JENNER: Okay.

17 MR. WARNER: Yes.

18 MR. JENNER: And when you went on duty
19 Sunday morning, how did you feel?

20 MR. WARNER: One-hundred percent.

21 MR. JENNER: Okay.

22 MR. WARNER: I didn't have any problem.

23 MR. JENNER: And did you work Friday?

24 MR. WARNER: Friday, I worked 4:00 a.m. sign
25 up on 151, and we get back to New York at 2110 at about

1 1:50, 1:45 or 1:50.

2 MR. JENNER: Okay, great. Just some general
3 questions for our medical officer back home.

4 I think you described your injuries as a
5 result, just bruises -- well, you tell me, did you get
6 injured?

7 MR. WARNER: When the train came to
8 emergency, it stops so sudden and short, I hit my knee
9 against the back of the chair. So, that was -- it was
10 a little hurt, and I guess, you know, it jerked through
11 me.

12 So, I fell like in between the chairs, hit
13 the back of one chair, but I fell on top of the
14 passenger, and you know, my body is kind of sore.
15 Like, my back is -- my back and my shoulder is kind of
16 sore, and my leg is, you know, a little stiff, but I
17 didn't sustain any, you know, cuts or -- I had one
18 little cut on my knee from hitting the back of the
19 chair.

20 MR. JENNER: Before this incident, how was
21 your overall health?

22 MR. WARNER: It's good.

23 MR. JENNER: Any medical conditions?
24 Chronic or acute?

25 MR. WARNER: Nothing.

1 MR. JENNER: Nothing? You're good overall?

2 MR. WARNER: Yes.

3 MR. JENNER: Okay, great. Thank you for
4 that.

5 MR. WARNER: Yes.

6 MR. JENNER: I'll look around the room, to
7 see if there are any follow up questions.

8 Great. I'm going to ask you one more
9 question.

10 MR. WARNER: Okay.

11 MR. JENNER: With your experience on this
12 and based on your training, and this incident, is there
13 anything that you think could have helped you with this
14 incident, in terms of additional training or additional
15 equipment or procedures or I'll throw it your way.

16 MR. WARNER: I don't know. I don't think so.
17 I think like -- I don't think any -- in a situation
18 like that, where something just -- you know, something
19 just happens out of the blue, I don't think you can
20 really prepare for that, like you know, mentally while
21 it's happening.

22 It's just like -- you know, I think I was in
23 state of shock, even until I got to the hospital, you
24 know, everybody is like, "Oh, you did," it's like you
25 know, you do what you have to do. Just do what you

1 suppose to do with that job, but it's like, you know,
2 even seeing it, and I sat there I almost threw up, and
3 I'm like, "Oh, my God," like, you know, "We killed
4 somebody," you know, I see the guts all in the front of
5 the -- the blood splattered all the way across the
6 first two cars. I'm like, "Oh, man, this is crazy."

7 I'm like -- it's -- you know, it's kind of
8 upsetting, but I don't think nothing could prepare you
9 for that. Like, you know, no training.

10 You can see it and you could watch the
11 videos and you know, you know what you suppose to do or
12 you know, you can get an idea of what has to be done,
13 but I think every situation is different, depending on
14 what happens, you know, what happens on the train or
15 whatever. It's totally different.

16 It's like when you get up there, it's like,
17 you know, when I seen all those people and I'm like --
18 everybody is like, "Help me, please," and I'm like,
19 "Okay, we're going to help. Just, you know, calm down,
20 relax." It's just a crazy, chaotic scene.

21 Like, I don't really think there's nothing
22 that really prepares you for that. You know? Maybe if
23 they -- if they -- like, I don't know, like they get
24 cameras on the train or something, and they show the
25 videos of what's going on, of what really happens.

1 Like, they give us training videos on what
2 we suppose to do if this happens, and it's like a real-
3 make or whatever. But if they show you the real videos
4 when you go to class, because we working it. So, if it
5 does happen, you know, you probably have a better idea,
6 you know, or you might be a little bit more prepared if
7 you see something real, than something that's just, you
8 know, that's just a re-make or how they try to, you
9 know, show you what happens if this happens.

10 MR. JENNER: Yes.

11 MR. WARNER: If you see the real thing
12 happening, then you might be a little bit more prepared
13 than if, you know, but, it's -- it depends on what the
14 situation is or what happens.

15 Yes, and then, you know, everybody is
16 different. So, might have some people that panic
17 quicker than others. You might have some people that,
18 you know, their common sense kicks in, and it's like,
19 okay, we got to do this, got to do that. Then you got
20 some people that's like, "Man, I'm not dealing with
21 this. Crazy." You know?

22 I mean, I told the lady and she was like --
23 I said, "I understand why you running away, but you
24 know, the safest place for you now is on the train,"
25 because these tracks are still live. It could be a

1 train coming and you know, you can get killed
2 instantly, running away from somewhere that's safer for
3 you, that you think is not safe for you. You go and get
4 killed.

5 Then she finally got back on the train,
6 thank God, but she was giving me a hard time. She was
7 cursing and everything, "I'm not getting on this f'in
8 train. I don't care what you say. It's safer out
9 here." I'm like, "It's not safer out here. You
10 standing on live tracks. You got to go inside."

11 But I don't think there's really too much to
12 prepare you for it, you know, if you happen to be in
13 that situation. I don't think so.

14 MR. JENNER: Okay, again, I will thank you
15 very much for being here and telling us your story, and
16 we -- you know, we're getting a real good picture about
17 what happened. So, we appreciate you guy's help for
18 that.

19 With that said, it is 2:00 and we're done
20 with you.

21 MR. WARNER: Thank you.

22 MR. JENNER: Thank you.

23 (Whereupon, at 2:00 p.m., the interview was
24 concluded.)

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: Accident Involving Amtrak Train #89 and a
Backhoe
NTSB Accident No. DCA16FR007
Interview of: Michael Warner

DATE: 04-15-16

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 39 inclusive are to the best of my professional ability a true, accurate, and complete record of the above referenced proceedings as contained on the provided audio recording; further that I am neither counsel for, nor related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this proceeding has taken place; and further that I am not financially nor otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.



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