National Transportation Safety Board

Report of Interview

Of

William Faulhaber, Manager of Training
Norfolk Southern Railway
McDonough, Georgia
September 19, 2006

Concerning Training of NS Train Crews

Regarding
Rear-end Collision of NS Train No. 226A117 & NS Train No. 22R
Near Lincoln, Alabama
on January 18, 2006

NTSB File Ref.: DCA-06-FR-004

Conducted by: Russell F Gober
Operations Group, NTSB

ACCIDENT

Location:	Lincoln, Alabama
Date:	January 18, 2006
Carrier:	Norfolk Southern Railway (NS)
Trains:	East Bound NS Train 226 (Freight) Eastbound NS Train 22R (Freight)
Location:	Western Region – Alabama Division
Line:	Between Birmingham, AL and Atlanta, GA
NTSB Number:	DCA 06 FR 004

The Accident

On January 18, 2006, at 4:17 p.m., CST, eastbound NS freight train No. 226 had a rear end collision with NS train No. 22R. On impact No. 226 had 3 locomotives and 7 head cars derail and stopped train No. 22R waiting in Coosa siding had the rear three cars derail on impact from the collision. The collision occurred in the Lincoln community, Talladega County, Alabama.

On the last signal before reaching Lincoln Train 226, took the signal located at Riverside as a clear signal and increased speed from restricted speed to track speed. Track speed is 55 mph in the curves as it moved toward Lincoln. No. 226 was moving about 53 mph as it entered into the open switch of Coosa siding. The collision occurred just past the siding switch at milepost 757.9. Train No. 22R had entered the siding and was waiting for train No. 226 to pass on the main track. After No. 226 passed No 22R it was going to move from Coosa siding to make a switch the Honda Plant at Lincoln, Al.

The striking train crew was comprised of an engineer, conductor and conductor trainee. All three crewmembers were injured in the collision and were transported to a hospital in Talladega, AL.

The crew of train 22R was comprised of an engineer, engineer trainee, conductor. They were unaware of the collision. After the accident their train went into emergency braking while they were stopped and the train dispatcher advised them to check for a possible collision. None of the crew of train 22R was injured in the incident.

At about 4:20 p.m., emergency responders were notified and arrived on-scene about four to five minutes later. The incident commander was advised of hazardous materials in train 226's consist. It was later determined that as a result of the collision, intermodal

containers on train 226 were breached. NS estimated that a total of about 250 pounds of sodium cyanide was released from this container.

NS estimated that a total of 7,000 gallons of diesel fuel were released at the accident site. The fire consumed a large amount of the fuel.

A fire ensued after the collision and spread to the rear auto rack cars of train 22R. Additionally, the fire spread to train 226's containers carrying rolls of paper. Fire suppression efforts ceased upon notification of potential presence of sodium cyanide in the wreckage.

The timetable authorized speed for the curves between MP 763.2 and MP 758.0, which is west of the siding switch, is 55 mph for intermodal freight trains. The authorized speed through the turnout and on the siding is 30 mph on NS's Alabama Division, East End District

The derailment occurred during bright daylight hours, in sunny, clear skies, with light winds from the west or southwest at 6—8 mph and a temperature of about 60^{o}F. The relative humidity was recorded at the Anniston Airport at 35% at 3:53 p.m. and at 39% at 4:53 p.m.

NS's initial and preliminary estimated total damages are $4,775,000. This damage estimate does not include accounting for all lading, car, and environmental and wrecking costs.

Report of Interview:

According to the Manager of Training at the NS Training Facility at McDonough, Georgia on Tuesday, September 19, 2006. At the training facility, NS uses their operating rulebook and computers to teach operating rules training.

NS trainee's start railroad operations training in a training program at the Norfolk Southern corporate training facility at McDonough, GA. McDonough is a mix of classroom and field instruction. The NS has a non-signaled test and training track at McDonough where conductor trainees operate track switches, couple cars and work on freight trains in yard operations. The training consists of sufficient class and field training to enable the freight service trainee to become a qualified Conductor/Trainman. Field experience will include training with yard, local, and through freight crews. At the conclusion of the training and successful completion of the required written exams, the employee will be a qualified conductor. Then they work for 8 – 16 weeks on the hired division and take the test for conductor.

According to the manager of the training program, they expect the new employees to learn the territory on the hiring division. During the on the job training, the trainee must learn the signals and be able to identify them from the operating rulebook.

The trainees are taught that they must comply with all NS operating rules, and especially rule No. 27. Rule 27 is quoted below:

NS Rule 27 Additional Signals

> "A signal imperfectly displayed, a signal functioning erratically, the absence of a light, a white light displayed where a colored light should be, or the absence of a signal at a place where signal is usually shown, must be regarded as the most restrictive indication that can be given by the signal and must be promptly reported to the dispatcher, control station, or yardmaster".

In the training program, they teach the different Signal Heads and Number of Lights per Aspects. In most situations, each aspect can have only one light. If more than one lamp lights, the signal is improperly displayed.

The signals they use to train are different than the ones used on the line of road. However the trainees are taught to identify them according to the rules and then they learn the different types on line of road from the road foremen and train crews.

They have a computer set up that has the signals displayed for training purposes.
NS has not made any changes to the rules or the training program as a result of the Lincoln collision.

The Norfolk Southern Railway has a Traffic Control (TC) system on the line between Birmingham, Alabama and Atlanta, Georgia. On this line, the train dispatcher is located in Birmingham, Alabama. The train dispatcher controls all operations on the line and issues all movement instructions and manages all control points from there. A TC remote control location is often referred to as a Home, Signal or a Control Point (CP).

> The trainees are taught that in a traffic control system, there is two distinctively separate type signals. They are positive block signals and intermediate signals with a number plate, which allows the signals to be passed at the most restrictive speed. They are taught that you must not pass a positive signal unless the indication allows. The positive block is part of a traffic control system with permissive intermediate block signals. See as follows:

The Norfolk Southern Railway has a Traffic Control (TC) system on the line between Birmingham, Alabama and Atlanta, Georgia. On this line, the train dispatcher is located in train dispatcher's office in Birmingham, Alabama. The train dispatcher controls all operations on the line and issues all movement instructions and manages all control points from there. A TC remote control location is often referred to as a Home, Signal or a Control Point (CP) or a positive block signal.

In a traffic control system, there are two distinctively separate type signals. They are positive block signals of which the most restrictive is a stop indication. The other is the intermediate signals of which is a restricting which slows the movement looking out for

other trains or obstructions, not to exceed 20 mph. The intermediate signals allow trains to close up movements between positive block signals.

The accident occurred on the Norfolk Southern Railway on the Alabama Division, Western Region at Coosa Siding, MP 757.9 on the territory between Birmingham, Alabama and Atlanta, Georgia, in Lincoln, Alabama.

The train dispatcher located in Birmingham, Alabama controls the territory. Trains are routed over the track by a traffic control system (TCS) signal system controlled by the train dispatcher. The train dispatcher manages the system by operating the control points of the TCS, between these control points there are intermediate automatic block signals, which govern the speed of trains by signal indication, and operating rule definitions.

The NS current operating rules went into effect on November 15, 2005. They are in use along with bulletins and Orders that are effective daily that governs the operations of trains on the division. The Division Superintendent issues these special instructions and bulletins. The NS Alabama Division Timetable No. 15 was made effective on Sunday, July 13, 2003.

End.

RFG