NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

In the Matter of:

* Docket No.
DERAILMENT AND SUBSEQUENT * DCA-05-MR--009

COLLISION OF TWO METROLINK * COMMUTER TRAINS IN *
GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA *

Thursday, January 27, 2005

INTERVIEW OF:

ROD ELLICAR AND RON DAILEY

PRESENT: MIKE FLANAGAN

1	PROCEEDINGS
2	MR. FLANAGAN: This is Mike Flanagan, and we
3	are interviewing Rod Ellicar and Ron Dailey who are
4	chief dispatchers at Metrolink regarding the train
5	collision yesterday. It is about 9:50 a.m.
6	And if I could just confirm that I have both
7	of your permission to tape record the interview.
8	MR. DAILEY: You have mine, Rod Dailey.
9	MR. ELLICAR: Rod Ellicar, yes.
10	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. Great.
11	Let me start with just a general question and
12	maybe we will start with Rod, number 1 person, he is
13	closer, if you could just describe for us what happened
14	from your standpoint, you know, when you got notified
15	and sort of what happened from there.
16	MR. DAILEY: The River Valley dispatcher,
17	Melvin, turned around and told me he had an emergency,
18	this was approximately between 6:00 a.m. and 6:03 a.m.,
19	somewhere right in there, that he had an emergency,
20	possible train sideswiped another train, train 901 and
21	100 and that it was at Chevy Chase, Drive and he
22	needed emergency personnel vehicles there. From that
23	point we have a call out procedure sheet, procedure to
24	calling out all the people on that sheet as well as our
25	first call was to the Metrolink Sheriff and reported

the, what the information that I had at point to them

that we needed emergency vehicles at Chevy Chase and

Gabe Crossing -- And that was my initial thing with the

information that I had, what I recall and then

everything came in from there, so, what we actually had

and what we all know ended up happening there.

MR. FLANAGAN: Now, as this developed, you initiated this, in fact we just listened the tape a few minutes ago, you had some information, train on the ground, train got struck.

MR. DAILEY: Yes.

MR. FLANAGAN: But not a lot of information just some, some adman out there. As that developed, you got more information from the field or did you --

MR. ELLICAR: I pretty much localized and went to the people who were there on scene.

MR. DAILEY: Once the people there were, see, we were trying to gather information. I was trying to contact, several times trying to contact the conductors to find out what type of condition they were in and trying to get some body counts as far as injuries and what types of injuries we may have and actually what happened, did we strike it, or did we not strike it? And I believe I got, I called the Sheriff at one point, or the Sheriff called me back and was telling me that

- 1 the Glendale Fire Department was responding. And I 2 believe my first instinct, first information that it was the train hit a train, was from them, before my 3 field personnel got there. I don't actually recall who 5 gave me the information that it was actually a train versus train. If it was them or if it was my quy, 6 7 because I did get in touch with, we got in touch with 8 one of our train masters in L.A. and sent him out that way to find out what was going on.
- 10 MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
- 11 MR. DAILEY: And as I got that information,
 12 that was going on and we started setting up, I made a
 13 suggestion to one of the guys to use the Cosco parking
 14 lot as the incident command center because I knew the
 15 territory.
- 16 MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.
- MR. DAILEY: And once we found out that it

 was behind Cosco in Lot C, in that area, it seemed like

 a good location.
- 20 MR. FLANAGAN: Yes, and it turned out to be an 21 excellent location.
- 22 MR. DAILEY: Yes.
- 23 MR. FLANAGAN: I think for staging and
 24 emergency equipment and all.
- 25 MR. DAILEY: Yes.

1	MR. FLANAGAN: How did you come to be familia:
2	with the territory?
3	MR. DAILEY: Through, well, actually a long
4	time ago I actually started off in the Department,
5	'91, '92. And we did a lot of work in that territory,
6	and then when I came over to the Metrolink I was in the
7	Department and just familiarized myself with that,
8	and then as I was a dispatcher with Metrolink, through
9	our qualifications, for working that subdivision,
10	qualified, making road trips and stuff like that,
11	maintaining with the track people.
12	MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.
13	MR. DAILEY: It just so happened that is one
14	area that I am very familiar with because I helped put
15	in the system. There are a lot of trenching out there.
16	MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.
17	MR. DAILEY: All along there.
18	MR. FLANAGAN: It is going to need a lot of
19	repair, unfortunately.
20	MR. DAILEY: Right.
21	MR. FLANAGAN: Yes. That is an advantage with
22	a system like Metrolink versus Union Pacific, where you
23	can't always
24	MR. DAILEY: Right.
25	MR. FLANAGAN: on the whole system and so

1	that was good.
2	MR. DAILEY: It was helpful
3	MR. FLANAGAN: Before going on, both of you
4	fellows work pretty much side by side, is that correct?
5	MR. DAILEY: Correct. It is we have a
6	list, I will take the first hour, you takes the second
7	half, or I have got this guy, you got that guy. Kind
8	of work hand in hand on it with situations like this
9	arise.
10	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. Good.
11	MR. DAILEY: The confirmation back and forth,
12	okay, I talked to okay, I talked to
13	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
14	MR. DAILEY: So that we are not calling the
15	same person, like doubling up on calling.
16	MR. FLANAGAN: Yes. Okay. Sounds like a good
17	system.
18	Let me kind of pose the same question to Rod,
19	number two, that was Ron Dailey, we just talked to, and
20	Rod Ellicar, Mr. Ellicar, if you could
21	MR. ELLICAR: I just really assisted, we had
22	one guy that is in charge, he is calling the shots. And
23	this particular day he was there.
24	MR. FLANAGAN: Who was that?
25	MR. ELLICAR: Rod. He was the one Normally

it is me, that was the job I worked every day, but I

was suppose to go to a class, so I didn't come in at

the normal time. He was here, and I just came in -
got two people.

MR. FLANAGAN: Yeah.

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6 MR. ELLICAR: And I was suppose to go to a 7 So, I was here, and I remember the first thing class. 8 I did is I told the girl, to get ready, get the 9 derailment set up, slow the -- and I reached in and pulled the sheet out and I handed it to Rod, who was 10 calling the shots. I didn't, the first couple are no 11 12 brainers, we call certain people to do it. And we 13 check to see, went through the checklist. I remember trying to get ahold of Rick, I know I talked to him 14 15 eventually and I took care of the trackman, I called 16 the, Mr. Wright, the higher up track person. It is not 17 the actual track man but he is in charge of Maintenance 18 of Way in that area. The signal desk was already 19 notified because the signal guy was in the office. 20 have an office back there where we have a signal person 21 there all the time.

22 MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.

MR. ELLICAR: And I talked to him. I called a number of people and got messages, initially, when they called me back like the two safety people, both of them

did call me back, but, initially I just left them a 1 2 message on their page. Ed was the same thing, I left 3 him a message on his page, and I went through everything else, I eventually called him at home and 5 Louis, I talked to Louis. And I made sure that the call center was notified as far as people go. And then 6 7 basically that is, that is about it. I, I just 8 answered the phone and helped the TC. I went to 9 different phones, I listened to what he, we had the Sheriff there. We had people and he kept me informed 10 of everything was going on. And everything that I had 11 12 done, or had called. And that was about it. 13 MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. 14 MR. ELLICAR: Until, I am going to say, I 15 really don't know the time, but I am going to say 16 roughly it was nine o'clock, long after the incident, I 17 called RamRod, I went over and he took over the, what 18 do we call that line, the new one, communication line. 19 MR. DAILEY: (Inaudible.) 20 MR. ELLICAR: He took that, and I took his. And then I, I immediately after the incident, I also go 21 22 to work on two power equipment because we know all 23 these people get on in the afternoon. 24 MR. FLANAGAN: Okav.

MR. ELLICAR: And I, you know, our Sheriffs

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1 was there and notified. And we had our people there. 2 MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. MR. ELLICAR: That is about it for me, as far 3 as the actual incident goes. 5 MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: A short time after I 6 made the initial call -- I made an assessment with the dispatcher of what did he have. What did you have 8 lined up and he told me he had a train lined up on one and a train lined up on two. Went back to the car, 10 made a quick replay to make sure I got what was out 11 12 there, that we didn't have any type of diticom system 13 problems, just a quick -- if that was true what he was saying, you know, if we had any -- anything like that 14 15 to determine if I needed to do something with my 16 dispatcher also. 17 MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Something there. 19 MR. FLANAGAN: Okav. 20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And we determined that pretty quickly that the dispatcher -- everything looked 21 22 okay. 23 MR. ELLICAR: It is what he saw. 24 MR. FLANAGAN: Would that go into the determination of a post accident test? You know, 25

1	talking to
2	MR. ELLICAR: Talking to dispatcher.
3	MR. FLANAGAN: No, no, the replay and looking
4	at what the dispatcher's action and would that go into
5	the decision of whether there would need to be a drug
6	alcohol test?
7	MR. DAILEY: incident, initially, yes.
8	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
9	MR. DAILEY: I mean, we prefer that, you know,
10	we look at that just to make sure that what he said he
11	saw on the screen was what was suppose to be there.
12	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
13	MR. DAILEY: And, you know, we rely on the
14	signal system and the dispatcher, it seems to be what
15	it said and we listen to recordings, too, to determine
16	that. Yes, that is part of the initial, to determine
17	if that person is
18	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. I have a question about
19	passenger counts. Did any of that information somehow
20	come into the dispatcher center on a daily basis?
21	MR. DAILEY: We get them in on a daily basis,
22	and we keep those records and we also have, they are
23	inputted into what we call a log system. We have a
24	report that goes out every day. And we use, we have a

hard copy and a computer copy where we can look in,

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1	into the system and see those particular trains that
2	are involved in an incident or any train that operates
3	on our railroad.
4	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. So did that come into
5	play in this incident, somebody asked, you know, can
6	you tell me how many people are on these trains and
7	MR. DAILEY: It was, yes, we knew an average
8	of the amount of people that would be on that train.
9	Yes, correct.
10	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. Thank you. But, in terms
11	of real time there is not, does the conductor call in
12	or
13	MR. ELLICAR: No.
14	MR. FLANAGAN: No. It is like on ticket sales
15	or do you have like field people
16	MR. ELLICAR: Actually, the conductors have a
17	count that count from what I understand.
18	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
19	MR. ELLICAR: They walk through and count the
20	people up in the cars as they are making their rounds.
21	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. And then they turn that
22	in at the end of the day.
23	MR. ELLICAR: At the end of their run.
24	MR. FLANAGAN: End of the run.

MR. ELLICAR: Yes. And that train would come

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1	into L.A. and they would hand it to a platform
2	supervisor, he would in turn fax it up to our office
3	and an OP person would coordinate and input that data
4	into the system.
5	MR. FLANAGAN: So, wait a minute, if I am
6	understanding, so, when an incident like this happens,
7	you have got a good feel based on averages of typically
8	how many people are going to be on that train.
9	MR. DAILEY: Correct.
10	MR. FLANAGAN: But, you don't have any kind of
11	real time information that, you know
12	MR. ELLICAR: (Inaudible.)
13	MR. FLANAGAN: (Inaudible.)
14	MR. ELLICAR: No.
15	MR. FLANAGAN: Three and five like it was the
16	day yesterday.
17	MR. ELLICAR: Correct, no, we just have pretty
18	much
19	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
20	MR. DAILEY: An average.
21	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. Do you remember what
22	that, we can look it up later, I was just curious as to
23	what it would have been for that day

if I recall looking at it, something like that.

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MR. DAILEY: I think 100 averages about 172,

1	MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.
2	MR. DAILEY: And I have
3	MR. FLANAGAN: We can look that up. Okay.
4	For either one of you, just a general
5	question on you feel things went, from, you know, and
6	obviously a bad thing happened, but once that happened,
7	you had to deal with it, and how did the whole dealing
8	with it go do you think?
9	MR. DAILEY: Right. I think it went well. I
10	have been in this office on a couple of past incidents,
11	and I think we have taken stuff from those and applied
12	it to this, I think it went well. We had people, we got
13	our EIC person, first person in, our contact. I think
14	it went well. I think our communication lines were
15	going well, gathering information as it was coming in.
16	MR. FLANAGAN: Yes. EIC would be your
17	employee in charge who would
18	MR. DAILEY: Yes, first person who is going to
19	arrive at the scene, I set that up, that is the person
20	I am going to talk to until the incident commander gets
21	there.
22	MR. FLANAGAN: Right.
23	MR. DAILEY: And takes charge.
24	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
25	MR. DAILEY: You are my eyes, you are going to

- tell me what is going on, who has arrived, possible traffic, he is my Q&A person.
- 3 MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
- 4 MR. DAILEY: And I think it went quite well.
- 5 I think we just do it.
- 6 MR. FLANAGAN: Who was that first person?
- 7 MR. DAILEY: Wayne Demming, who was the person
- 8 that I spoke to, he was the first one there.
- 9 MR. FLANAGAN: D-E-M-I-G.
- 10 MR. DAILEY: Yes.
- 11 MR. FLANAGAN: And he is the train master.
- 12 MR. DAILEY: Yes.
- 13 MR. FLANAGAN: Does he work for Metrolink
- 14 **or** --
- 15 MR. DAILEY: Amtrak. Okay. Great. And from
- 16 your standpoint?
- MR. ELLICAR: I thought, every time we have an
- incident, we flow better, I mean, you know,
- unfortunately, and the feedback we get from the
- 20 Sheriff's Department, to tell us, you know, that like
- the Glendale Sheriffs called us back and to say the
- 22 parameters in Glendale and everybody is there. So,
- 23 from that point, if you know all the stuff that, our
- 24 backgrounds, what we do. Okay, so that part of it is
- taken care of, at least for now.

1	MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.
2	MR. ELLICAR: And we got all that feedback and
3	we got good feedback from the field, throughout the
4	incident. And
5	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. Steve Jenner, do you have
6	any questions you wanted to ask?
7	MR. JENNER: Okay. A question that occurred to
8	me is when the dispatcher, you talked earlier, is
9	focused on this situation, how was the rest of his
10	territory managed in terms of train movements and
11	keeping operations normal?
12	MR. DAILEY: You take a look at it, and you,
13	you know, you find out what is going on, you ask the
14	guy if he is okay, you know, basically, if he says
15	okay, good. And you say so you look at his
16	territory and as your assessment is going on, you just
17	take a look and say, okay, line this guy up to here.
18	Line this guy up to there, or you may just, don't worry
19	about it. Bring them up to a red signal. And the lady
20	that was on radio monitor, and we asked other
21	dispatchers to look out, too, you know, just take
22	and radio calls and stuff like that.
23	MR. JENNER: Okay.
24	MR. DAILEY: Basically, you worry about that,
25	the main that is going on, and you can bring trains to

- 1 a stop, you bring them to a stop.
- 2 MR. JENNER: So what happened on this
- 3 occasion?
- 4 MR. DAILEY: On this occasion, that early in
- 5 the morning, pretty much your trains are lined up, you
- 6 know, for a long way. There is not much freight
- traffic, if any is out there, and it is our rush hour
- 8 peak, the trains are basically lined from Lancaster all
- 9 the way to Burbank. And, you know, we have, when I got
- the call and looked at the screen, it wasn't a major
- 11 concern to me about the trains. Everything was lined,
- 12 blocked out the territory where the situation was at,
- 13 keep trains out of that area, and that is what I
- concentrating on.
- 15 MR. JENNER: Okay. So, it sounds like your
- 16 primary focus is on the accident and you manage the
- 17 rest of the territory --
- 18 MR. DAILEY: Correct. The primary focus is on
- the incident, and keeping trains out of there,
- 20 establishing blocks outside, so nothing else can get
- into that area. Looking at the immediate area, stop
- the signals if necessary, contact any trains that may
- 23 been by a signal that could get in there, and
- immediately look at that and fix that.
- MR. JENNER: We went through the tapes, the

calls and just trying to get a picture of -- of the total, you know, devastation.

3 MR. ELLICAR: Yes.

MR. JENNER: How, when in this process is the decision made about how much emergency response equipment is to show up? Who is making that decision?

MR. ELLICAR: That is determined by the, our initial call, on this particular incident, not knowing that there was a train derailment when the initial call was made, just a possibility, and that the train crew didn't know if it struck him or not, from what the dispatcher was telling me, and I called the Sheriff, I just need emergency response out there. Not how many I would I need.

MR. JENNER: Okay.

MR. ELLICAR: And then they would gather that, unless I got the information before them, that person in the field, would determine we need, you know, a set of triage, and that sort of thing. Yeah. If I had known that at the time when I called the Sheriff, that I was two or three cars on the ground, I would have let them, I would have gave them that information. I would have then given them an idea of what they needed to, you know, four or five companies, or whatever.

25 MR. JENNER: Okay.

1	MR. ELLICAR: But, that is handled in the
2	field by those, the professionals that deal with that
3	stuff.
4	MR. JENNER: Okay. About the passenger count,
5	that is an issue that we are interested in, any time
6	there is a passenger train derailment. As far as you
7	understand the conductor has an accurate running count
8	from station to station about how many passengers are
9	on his train?
10	MR. ELLICAR: I am not aware if it is from
11	station to station or not. Just in areas, in this
12	route, if he does know, when I leave Lancaster, when I
13	leave Burbank, that I don't know.
14	MR. JENNER: Okay. You had mentioned a
15	clipper of sorts.
16	MR. ELLICAR: Yes, a clipper that counts the
17	passengers, from when I rode trains, I have seen those.
18	MR. JENNER: Okay. Would that have any, does
19	that piece of equipment used for counting passengers?
20	MR. ELLICAR: I believe it is, I am not
21	positive of that.
22	MR. JENNER: Okay.
23	MR. ELLICAR: Yes. I don't really get too
24	involved with the conductor
25	MP .TENNED: I think I heard you earlier ask

- 1 you inquired about body count, and I quess the 2 fatalities and injuries, did you get a number back at any point? 3 MR. ELLICAR: I got a number back from, I think the first accurate count I got was from Ed Petersen, or I believe the Sergeant. I think my first 6 initial report was 75 injured and possibly five fatalities, as far as passenger information. 8 9 MR. JENNER: Yes. MR. ELLICAR: Yeah, 75 injured and possibly 10 five fatalities. When I was notified and that was, a 11 12 sergeant had called me and told me he was at the scene, 13 it was a Metrokink sergeant. MR. JENNER: Okay. Do you have any idea what 14 15 time, around what time you received this information? 16 MR. ELLICAR: I think I wrote the time down on 17 my notes. 18 MR. JENNER: Okay. 19 (Pause.) 20 MR. ELLICAR: It wasn't, I know, I don't 21 believe it was during the first 45 minutes of the 22 incident.
- 25 time frame.

MR. JENNER: Okay.

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MR. ELLICAR: I don't believe it was in that

1	MR. JENNER: Were you getting pictures on TV
2	before
3	MR. ELLICAR: I think about seven, 7:05, we
4	turned the TV on.
5	MR. JENNER: About an hour after.
6	MR. ELLICAR: Yes.
7	MR. JENNER: Okay.
8	MR. ELLICAR: Somewhere in that area, the
9	national news. I mean, we knew what we had at that
10	point, were getting the information in, that it was
11	pretty bad, people calling and saying what they were
12	hearing on the radio and stuff like that.
13	MR. JENNER: Okay. Have you, did either one of
14	you have to manage an emergency situation like this?
15	And while you were in current positions or as
16	dispatchers?
17	MR. ELLICAR: We have been involved in a
18	couple. We were here And we have done it before.
19	MR. JENNER: How would you compare the
20	MR. ELLICAR: That I was talking to so many,
21	in my opinion, I guess it didn't seem to be as it
22	seemed to be a little more possibility as well. And
23	they knew what they had to do, and what needed to be
24	done. On my opinion, from being in that office, what I
25	was getting on the phone, with communications.

1	MR. JENNER: Okay. Do you have anything?
2	MR. DAILEY: You have two chiefs there,
3	everyone it flows a little bit better, you know. It
4	is tragic but, I mean, as far as the operations in the
5	building and what we got for the field, what they could
6	get, when we got there, we got it. And I am sure that
7	it was Glendale who was responded. I am going to say
8	in five or six minutes the phone rang from the
9	Sheriff's and Glendale was there and the TV was there,
10	and the parameters. And I am sure that, I mean,
11	immediate response. They knew what to do. And at that
12	point, I am sure, they could handle everything as far
13	as whatever assistance they needed for that.
14	MR. JENNER: Okay.
15	MR. DAILEY: I thought everyone goes smoother.
16	MR. JENNER: Okay. Great, thank you very
17	much.
18	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. We can go around the
19	table here, if anybody
20	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The only question I
21	have is are there normally two chiefs on duty?
22	MR. DAILEY: In daylight.
23	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.
24	MR. DAILEY: (Inaudible.) We try to structure
25	it that way where we have two.

1	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So you were just coming
2	in to go to a class and
3	MR. DAILEY: No, I was suppose to come to the
4	class at eight o'clock. And I came in, I was going to
5	come in at six anyway, I forgot about the class, so, I
6	was still here at 5:30. Normally there would not be
7	two of us here at 5:30. It would be, one would be
8	walking in right when that incident happened.
9	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.
10	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
11	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just the (Inaudible.)
12	Your question earlier about emergency response
13	Metrolink (Inaudible.)
14	MR. DAILEY: Yes, yes.
15	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. FRA?
16	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you know
17	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. Before we wrap up, do you
18	have anything you want to add or
19	MR. DAILEY: Not really.
20	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay.
21	MR. ELLICAR: No. I think what we had, I think
22	everybody did well with that situation, you know, all
23	parties involved, the people in the field.
24	MR. FLANAGAN: Okay. Well, thank you very
25	much. I appreciate it.

1	(Off the record.)
2	MR. FLANAGAN: We have got the tape back on.
3	One more comment from Mr. Ellicar.
4	MR. ELLICAR: I think we were really had good
5	notification procedures and getting people in the field
6	and getting people moving. It really is a team effort.
7	This whole organization is everyday more and more that
8	team effort comes into play. And, you know, after 12
9	or 13 years that we have been here, everything flows
10	that much better, through the Sheriff's Department in
11	getting the people and responding to where things are.
12	So, it is good.
13	MR. FLANAGAN: That is good to hear. Thank
14	you, both.
15	(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)