

Birmingham, AL
01/20/06 – 10:20 PM

G. R. Comstock

The following derailment is reported:

<u>Train</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Supervisor</u>
226A117	01/18/06	4:17 PM CST	Coosa, AL - MP758	S. E. Smith

At 4:17 PM, Wednesday, January 18, 2005 eastbound train 226A117 struck the rear of eastbound train 22RA116 at the west end of Coosa Siding, MP 758 (32 miles east of Norris Yard) at 53 mph per the engine tape. This incident occurred in Traffic Control Territory. The weather was clear and the temperature was 53 degrees. The sun set at 5:01 PM CST.

Train 22R had taken the siding at Coosa and 226 reported to have seen the rear of 22R in the clear in the siding prior to impact. 226 had called a Clear signal at Riverside (MP 760.6 -- the signal previous to Coosa). The switch at Coosa (MP 758) was lined for the siding. Three engines and seven cars of 226 derailed. The rear three cars of train 22R derailed.

All three crew members of 226 sustained non-life threatening injuries and were transported via ambulance to Citizens Baptist Medical Center in Talladega, AL. The crew members of 22R were not injured. There was an evacuation of approximately 500 citizens, as reported by local news, within a one-mile radius of the accident site.

Below are the details of this incident.

Incident

Train 22R

On 1/18/06 Assistant Superintendent S. W. Ewers interviewed Engineer P. D. Vance at 11:40 PM, LET J. D. Cannon at 11:55 PM, and Conductor M. L. King at 12:25 AM (on 01/19/06). The following are the details of these interviews.

The crew of 22RA116 was called for 1:35 PM CST in Birmingham, AL. The crew consisted of Engineer P. D. Vance, Conductor M. L. King, and LET J. D. Cannon. They departed Birmingham (MP 791) eastbound at 2:20 PM with 73 X 8, 6046 tons, 8276 feet. They had engine UP 4562 in the lead (short nose east) and NS 9795 (in the trail). Both engines were on-line.

The crew met westbound train 173 at Lovick (MP 788) before stopping at Leeds, AL (MP 782) to pick up Road Foreman B. S. Tipton for the purpose of a train ride. As 22R was pulling up to stop, they were notified by an Engineering Department employee that they had a trailer door opened on the 66th head car. As RFE Tipton got on the engine, he was informed by Conductor King that he was going to take this opportunity to dismount and close the door on the 66th head trailer. Because pulling down 66 car lengths would have multiple crossings blocked in downtown Leeds, King drove Tipton's company vehicle east to Lincoln, Al (MP 754) where King would get back on the train.

Train 22R (cont'd)

The crew proceeded east without meeting any additional westbound trains. LET Cannon was operating the UP 4562 from the south side. Engineer Vance was seated on the north (fireman's) side in the front seat. RFE Tipton was also seated on the north side in the rear seat. Conductor King was not on the train. 22R encountered a clear signal at Pell City (MP 763). 22R's crew then states Dispatcher Sandy L. Lavett informed them they would be taking the siding at Coosa (MP 758) to allow 226 to get around them. Lavett subsequently informed 22R they would be coming out behind 226, continue eastbound, and do their work at Lincoln, AL (MP 754) off of the Main Line. 22R then received an Approach signal at Riverside (MP 760.6). Both the 22R Engineer and LET expected to get an Approach Diverging signal at Riverside because of the conversation they had with the Dispatcher concerning heading at the next signal, which was the west signal at the siding at Coosa. However, when RFE Tipton saw the Approach at Riverside, he thought the Dispatcher was simply still in the process of "setting the switch" into the siding.

22R proceeded eastbound and came around the 3.0 degree right-hand curve "looking out." 22R received a Diverging Approach at Coosa and proceeded into the siding passing the signal at 4:03 PM per the Dispatchers Board. LET Cannon did not set his foot counter. Engineer Vance, LET Cannon, and RFE Tipton all thought they would fit. 22R was stopped in the siding when LET Cannon asked Engineer Vance if he (Vance) thought they were in the clear. Vance said they were. One-Two minutes later, Cannon and Vance heard 226 call a Clear signal at Riverside. This was specifically recalled because it confirmed to them that they were in the clear. 22R's train was 8277 feet long. The siding at Coosa is 8780 feet. The Engineer stated they stopped 5 car lengths (250 feet) west of the signal at Embry (east end of the siding). Road Foreman Tipton stated they stopped approximately 450 feet west of the signal at Embry.

At 4:17 PM, 22R's train went into emergency per the engine tapes. They had been stopped for 4½ minutes per the engine tapes. They did not feel any impact and were not aware of any incident. LET Cannon reset the PC-valve and got a reading of 67 lbs on the rear. 22R's EOT then went out. At approximately the same time as the EOT going out, Dispatcher Lavett called 22R on the radio and asked if they were having problems because she still had a track light on. 22R's Engineer replied they were not having problems and that they had been stopped in the clear for some time. LET Cannon attempted to move his train eastward but was unable to. By this time Conductor King was driving up to the head end. RFE Tipton was going to drive King back to the rear when the fire trucks began approaching the scene.

Road Foreman B. S. Tipton

On 01/19/06 Assistant Superintendent S. W. Ewers interviewed Road Foreman of Engines B. S. Tipton at 01:40 AM. The following are the details of this interview:

Tipton stated that prior to reaching the signal at Riverside; 22R had a conversation with Dispatcher Lavett. During this radio conversation, Lavett informed the crew of 22R that they would be heading into the siding at Coosa to let 226 around them. Tipton states 22R received an approach signal at Riverside. Tipton took no exception to this indication because he thought Sandy was "setting the switch" at Coosa. Tipton states they had a Diverging Approach at Coosa.

Tipton believed the LET had set his counter. Tipton stated that he and the LET had participated in a Q&A session coming up the road, and the use of counters was specifically discussed. However, Tipton did not know for sure that the LET had set his counter.

Road Foreman B. S. Tipton (cont'd)

Tipton recollection was that it took 17 minutes to get from the signal at Coosa to a stop. Tipton stated he instructed the LET to go no faster than 20 mph because he wanted the LET to use the Dynamic Brake only to bring their train to a stop. Tipton recalls the signal at Embry being just west of the overhead bridge at the east end of the siding. Tipton also recalls that they stopped approximately 450 feet short of the signal at Embry. After stopping, Tipton recalls the LET asking the Engineer if they fit in the clear, and the Engineer replied "yes." Approximately one minute later train 22R experienced an undesired emergency brake application while they were stopped. Tipton did not feel any impact. After the emergency, the LET reset the PC-valve and the pressure rose to 67 psi. Tipton also stated the train stayed stretched the entire time they pulled through the siding.

Train 226

On 1/18/06 Assistant Superintendent S. W. Ewers interviewed Engineer A. Smith Jr. at 7:00 PM, Conductor M. M. Quinn at 7:20 PM, and ACT B. M. Mashburn at 7:50 PM. The following are the details of these interviews.

The crew of 226A117 was called for 1:15 PM CST in Birmingham, AL. The crew consisted of Engineer A. Smith Jr., Conductor M. M. Quinn, and ACT B. M. Mashburn. They departed Birmingham (MP 791) eastbound at 2:50 PM with 22 X 1, 3583 tons, 4581 feet. They had engine ns 7137 in the lead (short nose east), NS 7138, and NS 7143.

226 had an approach signal at Irondale Junction (MP 791.8), so they contacted Norris Yard Terminal Trainmaster L. W. Maye. They asked if they could not get a better signal leaving here other than an Approach. Maye replied to the negative; due to the fact that train 198 was departing ahead of them out of the East Yard. Shortly thereafter 226 heard 198 call the signal at Central (MP 782.7). At the same time, 226 had an approach signal at Lovick (MP 788). Train 226, however, stopped short of this stop signal at Lovick because they knew 198 would be complete with their diverging move on to the CGA line shortly, and 226 would be able to depart on a clear. All three crewmembers of 226 state that while they were stopped at Lovick on the Approach, the signal initially dropped to a Stop signal before going to clear. This was somewhat of a surprise and was discussed among them. They did not, however, notify the dispatcher.

226 did not speak with the dispatcher. They did, however, hear the conversation between Dispatcher Lavett and train 22R. The entire crew of 226 was aware they would be getting around 22R at Coosa. They received an Approach indication at Pell City (MP 763). They reduced their train speed down to 2-3 mph as they moved through a 2.0 degree left hand curve just west of the signal at Riverside (MP 760.6). The crew then observed a clear signal at Riverside calling it over the radio and inside the cab of the engine. Engineer Smith stated he picked the speed of the train up once they saw they did not have a Restricting signal. When the Clear signal was observed at Riverside, the crew of 226 was not surprised in that they thought the 22R was in the clear ahead at Coosa. The Engineer stated although he was picking the speed of the train up, he still passed the signal at Riverside at a low speed allowing a good look at the signal. All crew members state they observed the Clear signal. The Engineer and LET of 22R heard 226 call the Clear signal at Riverside.

226 proceeded eastbound toward Coosa. Engineer Smith stated they were traveling at approximately 40 mph, with the throttle in #7 or #8. As they came out of the 3.0 degree right hand curve, the Conductor and ACT observed the signal at Coosa (MP 758) to be in the clear position, the rear of 22R in the clear, but the switch lined toward the siding. The Engineer does not recall what the signal was at

Train 226 (cont'd)

Coosa: only that the rear of 22R was in the clear and the switch was lined for the siding. Engineer Smith immediately placed the train in emergency but 226 struck the rear of the 22R.

The crew members of 226 climbed out of the locomotive and moved from the scene. They stated there was a large amount of diesel smoke.

Dispatcher S. L. Lavett

On 1/18/06 at approximately 11:00 P.M. Assistant Superintendent S. W. Ewers conducted an interview with Dispatcher S. L. Lavett. The following are the details of this interview.

Lavett related that when Train 22R was east of Holt, she received a call from the Conductor assigned to the Honda Local Train A28A118 at Lincoln, AL. requesting that Train 22R be lined down the Main Track to be in position to set off cars destined to the Honda plant. As a result, Lavett decided to move Train 22R into the siding at Coosa for the purpose of allowing Train 226 to pass Train 22R. Lavett stated that she asked Train 22R if it was OK for her to take the signal down at Coosa to get Train 226 around them. Lavett states she also informed the crew she would head them into the siding at Coosa for the purpose of getting Train 226 around them where they could later hold the Main Track at Lincoln to complete their work.

Lavett stated that she first placed the signal at Coosa to stop, which she stated took approximately 7-8 minutes to run time. She then lined Train 22R into the siding at Coosa which was executed without exception. Subsequently, at 4:11 PM she entered and stored a route down the Main Track for Train 226 at Coosa. Also stored by her was a route at Embry (which is the East end of the siding at Coosa) for Train 22R to follow Train 226 out at Embry and proceed down the Main Track between Embry and Lincoln.

Lavett also stated she never saw Train 226's route on her board, and the O/S circuit into the siding at Coosa never cleared of the track light causing her to "wonder" what was taking Train 22R so long to clear up in the siding at Coosa. She then called Train 22R on the radio at approximately 4:20 P.M. and asked the crew if they were having problems when she continued to see the track light on. Per Lavett, the crew radioed back, that they were not having any problems and asked if they were in the clear. Her response to the crew was "No" with the crew relating to her, they would pull the train on down further to clear up.

Lavett later stated during the interview that when she saw the Main Line track light come on east of Coosa that she attempted to contact Train 226's crew 4-5 times via radio, but the crew did not respond.

Medical

All crew members of 226 were transported via ambulance to Citizens Baptist Medical Center, 604 Stone Ave., Talladega, AL 35160. The injuries were as follows:

Engineer Aaron Smith Jr.

Complaints:

Cut on bridge of nose (2 stitches), cut under right eye (3 stitches), blows to his head and chest, pain in his head, bad headache, sore all over, burning in the lungs (which he believes was from the diesel smoke/fumes), and a bad bruise on the right leg above the knee.

Engineer Aaron Smith Jr. (cont'd)

Additional medical information:

Smith was seen by Dr. Stan Jett. X-rays taken of his knee were negative, blood gas test was normal, CT scan was clear, lungs sounded good. Smith was admitted to the hospital. Smith was blood and urine tested under FRA Subpart-C authority. Barbara Taylor was consulted on this issue.

Conductor Monty M. Quinn

Complaints:

Pain in his right shoulder, small cut on the right side of his head that did not require stitches, ribs hurting on right side, pain in lower back, lungs felt tight at the half-breath stage but no burning.

Additional medical information:

Quinn was seen by Dr. Stan Jett. X-rays of his shoulder, back, and ribs were negative, blood gas test was normal, CT scan showed a questionable bruise in the right temporal lobe but there were no markings on Quinn's skin to correspond to this trauma. A Radiologist is going to review the CT scan further. Quinn was admitted to the hospital and was released on 01/20/06. Quinn was blood and urine tested under FRA Subpart-C authority. Barbara Taylor was consulted on this issue.

ACT Blake M. Mashburn

Complaints:

Sore back, broken right ankle, small cuts on hand that did not require stitches.

Additional medical information:

Mashburn was discharged at his request. He was given a splint for his right foot due to a broken ankle was advised to see an orthopedic surgeon. Mashburn was blood and urine tested under FRA Subpart-C authority. Barbara Taylor was consulted on this issue.

Other Medical Information

The entire crew of 22R (Engineer Vance, LET Cannon, Conductor King) and RFE Tipton were all tested under FRA Subpart-C. In addition, Dispatcher Lavett was blood and urine tested under FRA Subpart-C.

Dispatchers Board

The following is the order of events concerning 22R and 226 from departure at Norris as noted on the Dispatchers Board:

215pm	Route stored at Lovick for 22R to depart on the No.2 main track behind 173
225pm	Signals lined eastbound for 22R at Henry Ellen to Anniston on main track behind 173.
235pm	Signal lined at Lovick for 22R to depart.
240pm	22R takes the signal at Lovick
243pm	Route stored at Lovick, Henry Ellen and Central for 198 off No.2 main track to follow 22R.
247pm	Signal lined east at Lovick for 198 off No.2 main
248pm	22R takes the signal at Henry Ellen
252pm	22R takes the signal at Central
255pm	22R takes the signal at Leeds; 198 take s the signal at Lovick

Dispatchers Board (cont'd)

256pm Route stored at Lovick, Henry Ellen & Central for 226 off No.2 main to follow 198; also route stored at Leeds to Anniston for 226 to follow 22R.

303pm Signals lined at Henry Ellen and Central for 198; also signal lined at Lovick for 226 following 198

304pm Signals lined at Lovick for 226

306pm 198 takes the signal at Henry Ellen

311pm 198 takes the signal at Central

315pm 226 takes the signal at Lovick, signal lines at Leeds for 226

317pm Signals lined at Henry Ellen and Central for 226

317pm 22R takes the signal at Coleman

322pm 22R takes the signal at Brompton

323pm 226 takes the signal at Henry Ellen

325pm 226 takes the signal at Central

326pm 226 takes the signal at Leeds; signals lines at Coleman for 226

331pm Signal lines at Brompton for 226;

333pm 226 takes the signal at Coleman

335pm 226 takes the signal at Brompton

337pm 22R takes the signal at Roberts

340pm 22R takes the signal at Holt

343pm Signals lines at Roberts for 226

348pm Signal taken down at Coosa for 22R to line into siding; signals lines at Holt for 226

349pm 226 takes the signal at Roberts; route stored at Coosa for 22R into the siding and route stored at Embry to follow 226

352pm 226 takes the signal at Holt

355pm Signal lined at Coosa for 22R into the siding

403pm 22R takes the signal at Coosa

411pm Route stored at Coosa for 226 down main track behind 22R

417pm Track light comes on main track between Coosa and Embry, approx time of incident

Damage

22R	TTGX 975015	81 st head car	Burned \$ 60,000
	TTGX 961374	80 th head car	Burned \$ 60,000
	TTGX 981963	79 th head car	Burned \$ 60,000
	TTGX 989038	78 th head car.	Burned \$ 30,000
226	NS 7137	1 st locomotive	Burned \$ 650,000
	NS 7138	2 nd locomotive	Burned \$ 350,000
	NS 7143	3 rd locomotive	Burned \$ 350,000
	CSXT 620230	1 st head car	Burned \$ 175,000
	DTTX 747935	2 nd head car	Burned \$ 175,000
	DTTX 740713	3 rd head car	Burned \$ 175,000
	VTTX 97567	4 th head car	Not burned \$ 130,000
	BNSF 253397	5 th head car	Not burned \$ 140,000.
	DTTX 750538	6 th head car	Not burned \$ 90,000
	RTTX 252034	7 th head car	Not burned \$ 100 (A-end derailed)

Damage (cont'd)

Total Equipment	\$2,445,100
Lading	\$3,114,850
Total Equipment and Lading	\$5,559,950
Track	\$45,000
C&S	Unknown at this time
Total	\$5,604,950

Clearing

10:30 PM, January 19, 2006

Delays

Delayed

270A118	30'
22QA118	33' 10"
374A118	30' 45"
153A118	28' 15"
154A119	31' 31"
374A119	4' 38"
173A118	37' 45"
172A119	8' 40"
I4EA115	76' 23" Late off the KCS

Re-routed

173A119
225A119
21KA119
219A119
22RA117

Annulled

22QA119
153A119
270A119

Cause

Under investigation

S. A. Murry

