

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES

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In the matter of:
METROLINK TRAIN NO. 111
COLLISION WITH UNION PACIFIC
RAILROAD LEESDALE LOCAL,
September 12, 2008,
Los Angeles, California
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* Docket No.: DCA-08-MR-009

Radio Transmissions

Friday,
September 12, 2008

1 **(Talking sensor: Metrolink detector milepost 451.367**

2 **miles per hour, no defects. No defects.)**

3 SPEAKER: It looks like 111 all red. Ramer out.

4 SPEAKER: (indiscernible) Chatsworth.

5 SPEAKER: Metrolink 429.

6 (End of recording)

7 * * *

8 **(Talking sensor: Metrolink detector milepost 451.367**

9 **miles per hour, no defects. No defect.)**

10 SPEAKER: It looks like 111 all red. Ramer out.

11 SPEAKER: Let's try to take it past Chatsworth.

12 SPEAKER: Metrolink 429.

13 (End of recording)

14 * * *

15 SPEAKER: Looks like 111 green signal. 451 out.

16 SPEAKER: 11 clear (indiscernible).

17 (End of recording)

18 * * *

19 SPEAKER: Metrolink 111, green signal. 450 out.

20 (End of recording)

21 * * *

22 SPEAKER: Metrolink 111, green signal. 448 out.

23 (End of recording)

24 * * *

25 SPEAKER: (indiscernible) green signal.

1 SPEAKER: Metrolink 111, (indiscernible), Burns
2 (indiscernible).

3 (End of recording)

4 * * *

5 SPEAKER: (indiscernible).

6 (Talking sensor: Metrolink detector milepost 444.5 no
7 defects, no defects.)

8 (End of recording)

9 * * *

10 SPEAKER: Yellow.

11 (Talking sensor: Metrolink detector milepost 7 -- X
12 number 27.)

13 SPEAKER 1: Metrolink Ventura stopped at the Leesdale.
14 Over.

15 SPEAKER 2: Alert.

16 SPEAKER 1: Metrolink Ventura sub, Leesdale local.
17 Over. Metrolink Ventura sub. Metrolink 111. Over.

18 SPEAKER 2: (indiscernible) 6. (indiscernible) courier.
19 Over.

20 SPEAKER 1: Metrolink Ventura sub. Metrolink 111.
21 Over.

22 (End of recording)

23 * * *

24 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Emergency. Emergency.

25 DISPATCHER: Are you past the signal?

1 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Emergency.

2 SHERIFF: Everybody get out the door and get out right
3 now --

4 DISPATCHER: Are you past the signal?

5 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: On fire in the front, 111, just
6 west of Chatsworth.

7 DISPATCHER: What's wrong?

8 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: On fire west of Chatsworth
9 Station, collision. Emergency. Emergency.

10 DISPATCHER: You got --

11 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Emergency. On fire. On fire.
12 (Dispatcher speaking to other office personnel)

13 DISPATCHER: Call PD.

14 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Repeat on fire.
15 (Dispatcher speaking to Conductor Heldenbrand)

16 DISPATCHER: Did you guys have a collision?

17 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: You copy?

18 DISPATCHER: Hey, I'm -- yeah. Hold on a second. I'm
19 on the phone with the PD.
20 (Dispatcher speaking to police department)

21 DISPATCHER: I don't know as of yet.

22 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Major collision --

23 DISPATCHER: Okay.

24 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: -- many injuries.

25 DISPATCHER: All right, good deal. All right.

1 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Please send help ASAP.

2 DISPATCHER: 111.

3 (Dispatcher speaking to Conductor Heldenbrand)

4 DISPATCHER: Yeah, we got them coming.

5 (Dispatcher speaking to police department)

6 DISPATCHER: You guys know where it's at? All right,

7 good deal.

8 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: About a quarter mile, railroad
9 west Chatsworth Boulevard.

10 DISPATCHER: Quarter mile west of Chatsworth Boulevard.

11 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Estimate many --

12 DISPATCHER: Chatsworth Avenue.

13 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: -- injuries. Major, major
14 collision.

15 DISPATCHER: He got a lot of injuries. He says he's got
16 a lot of injuries.

17 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: On fire.

18 DISPATCHER: On the train. All right. All right, bye.

19 (Dispatcher speaking to Conductor Heldenbrand)

20 DISPATCHER: What did you guys hit?

21 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: I don't know. We, we just left
22 Chatsworth going westbound probably near Devonshire, I should say,
23 Chatsworth-Devonshire.

24 DISPATCHER: Okay. And did you --

25 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: This is Conductor Heldenbrand

1 speaking.

2 DISPATCHER: Did you get past the signal at Topanga?

3 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: I don't think so.

4 DISPATCHER: Because we had a track -- we, we lost the
5 switch there at Topanga. You had the Leesdale on the approach at
6 Topanga.

7 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: I think, I think we had --

8 SHERIFF: Let's get off the phone. We --

9 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: Okay. I'll call you back. I
10 got to get out.

11 DISPATCHER: All right. Good deal.

12 CONDUCTOR HELDENBRAND: I'll call you right back.

13 (End of call)

14 * * *

15 (Dispatcher speaking to Chris)

16 DISPATCHER: Talk to Bailey when he answers it.

17 Hello?

18 (Conversation between Chris and Rod Bailey)

19 CHRIS: CT -- CP Topanga.

20 MR. BAILEY: Hello.

21 CHRIS: Hey, Rod, it's Chris.

22 MR. BAILEY: Yeah.

23 CHRIS: Hey, I'm talking to you because Serge (ph.) is
24 tied up. We've had a collision out here.

25 MR. BAILEY: What?

1 CHRIS: Yeah. Metrolink 111 has -- first reports we're
2 getting they've run into the Leesdale at just west of CP Topanga.

3 MR. BAILEY: Holy, shit.

4 CHRIS: Yeah, we got, we got the sheriff on the phone
5 right now. We're trying to get -- first reports are we got a lot
6 of injuries on the train.

7 MR. BAILEY: Was there a flag? Was it flagged?

8 CHRIS: No, it was not flagged. It was all under signal
9 indication. Serge --

10 SPEAKER: Metrolink 111.

11 CHRIS: -- off the phone here.

12 (Chris speaking to Dispatcher)

13 CHRIS: I've given him a quick briefing.

14 DISPATCHER: Did you ever get Leesdale on the radio?

15 (Chris speaking to Rod Bailey)

16 CHRIS: We're still trying to get the Leesdale on the
17 radio. We've heard from the conductor on 111.

18 SPEAKER: Ventura sub Leesdale. Yeah, we're aware the
19 PD and the authorities are --

20 MR. BAILEY: Who had the signal, the Leesdale or
21 Metrolink?

22 SPEAKER: -- en route to the location at this time.

23 CHRIS: Right now, Rod, I think that 111 went by the
24 signal at Topanga.

25 MR. BAILEY: Is that a head-on collision or a side

1 collision?

2 DISPATCHER: Yeah, he says it's bad, too. He says
3 there's a lot of injuries.

4 (Chris speaking to other office personnel)

5 CHRIS: Okay. Hey, so it's 111 did go by is what we
6 think what happened?

7 SPEAKER: No, I (indiscernible) --

8 (Chris speaking to Rod Bailey)

9 CHRIS: Okay. We don't know for sure yet. We don't
10 know yet, Rod. Here's Serge.

11 DISPATCHER: Yeah, 111, he -- the dude -- the conductor
12 was so frazzled, he couldn't tell me. He was back in the body of
13 the train. All he could say was that they were in a collision.

14 SPEAKER: There's fire all --

15 DISPATCHER: And he says there's a fire.

16 MR. BAILEY: All right. Was it a head-on or a side --

17 DISPATCHER: I don't know. He couldn't tell me if he
18 went by the signal or not. And, and he was on the -- he was
19 talking to a sheriff right, right then and the sheriff told him to
20 get off the phone because they were trying to take care of the
21 people. He was telling everybody get off the train. I heard him
22 in the background. So I'm going to call him back here in a
23 second.

24 MR. BAILEY: (indiscernible) you having at Topanga?

25 DISPATCHER: It's west of Chatsworth Street, 444.7 is

1 Chatsworth.

2 MR. BAILEY: All right. I'm on my way back out there.

3 DISPATCHER: Okay.

4 MR. BAILEY: Call Ron Ellister (ph.) to see if he's
5 available to come assist.

6 DISPATCHER: Okay.

7 MR. BAILEY: Because he's the closest.

8 DISPATCHER: All right.

9 MR. BAILEY: And call Denise Terrell (ph.). I'll call
10 Gary and Ed. Call Denise Terrell and update her with what you
11 have right there.

12 DISPATCHER: Okay.

13 MR. BAILEY: All right?

14 DISPATCHER: All right.

15 MR. BAILEY: And then Rick Dahl (ph.) after that.

16 DISPATCHER: Okay.

17 MR. BAILEY: Rick Dahl first.

18 DISPATCHER: Okay.

19 MR. BAILEY: Thanks.

20 DISPATCHER: Bye.

21 (End of call)

22 * * *

23 DISPATCHER: Metrolink Operations, Serge.

24 MR. LUCIK: Hey, Serge, Lucik here. What do you guys
25 got going on? (indiscernible) --

1 DISPATCHER: Who's this?

2 MR. LUCIK: Anthony Lucik.

3 DISPATCHER: Where are you at?

4 MR. LUCIK: I am going from Santa Clarita. I'm
5 (indiscernible) --

6 DISPATCHER: Call Rick Dahl.

7 MR. LUCIK: -- to get a (indiscernible). What do we
8 have?

9 DISPATCHER: I'm trying to find out from the conductor.
10 He said there was a collision. He can't tell me if he hit a
11 train or if he hit a car. He was back in the body of the train
12 and he was trying to get the passengers off and he was going to
13 call me back. And I've been trying to call him back, but the
14 phone's been ringing off the hook.

15 MR. LUCIK: Okay.

16 DISPATCHER: So go down to Chatsworth Street and it's
17 just railroad west of Chatsworth Street.

18 MR. LUCIK: It's just west of Chatsworth?

19 DISPATCHER: Yeah.

20 MR. LUCIK: Right by the Chatsworth platform, correct?

21 DISPATCHER: No, no, no, no. That's Devonshire Street.

22 MR. LUCIK: Okay.

23 DISPATCHER: It's north of there.

24 MR. LUCIK: Okay. Just north of there. Off of
25 Chatsworth Boulevard?

1 DISPATCHER: Off Chatsworth -- yeah, Chatsworth Avenue,
2 yeah.

3 MR. LUCIK: Okay. Copy that.

4 DISPATCHER: All right. Bye.

5 MR. LUCIK: Bye.

6 (End of recording)

7 * * *

8 SPEAKER: 111, green signal. 4480.

9 SPEAKER: 8491, green (indiscernible).

10 (End of recording)

11 SPEAKER: 8491, green, Davis.

12 SPEAKER: 111, Marsten, yellow. Burns (indiscernible).

13 (End of recording)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: METROLINK TRAIN NO. 111
COLLISION WITH UNION PACIFIC
RAILROAD LEESDALE LOCAL,
September 12, 2008,
Los Angeles, California
Interview of Christopher Watson

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-08-MR-009

PLACE: Chatsworth, California

DATE: September 12, 2008

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to
the recording.

Kay Maurer
Transcriber