

**Record of Conversations – Lexington County Sheriff  
RRD18MR003**

On the afternoon of February 7, 2018 NTSB Chief Medical Officer Mary Pat McKay and Mark Williams of the FRA spoke with Maj. JJ Jones and Lieutenant Billy Aiken of the Lexington Co. Sheriff's Office.

Maj. Jones explained that he was called and arrived within about 30 minutes of the accident. The first Sheriff on the scene was Officer Carvajal and he had called for "every deputy in the county" which called everyone else off the jobs they were working (about 30 deputies). In addition, officers from Richland, Cayce, Springdale, State Police and later even Game Wardens came to assist. After about 25 minutes, the Major was turning law enforcement away or sending them back to other duties in the County. The Sheriffs knew that there were about 8 EMS units on in the County and they all came.

Lexington Co. Administrator Jo Mergo arrived even before the Major. Initially, command was set up in a white Tahoe parked near the scene; when the mobile ICC arrived, it was set up somewhat further away because it didn't fit.

Among the tasks were to try and separate the occupants from the flowing diesel fuel – this was accomplished with a bulldozer but they were not sure exactly where that came from. Because most of the injured were able to walk, they were separated by "injured go left and uninjured go right" which helped the process. But once evacuated, the people got cold and wet.

A shelter in a school was quickly set up through pre-existing community contracts and partnerships. This was the local Community Action Team or "CAT" which lists multiple contacts for various services. This source made the response much faster. The Sheriffs commented multiple times about the support they got from the community. They just had to ask and local services provided support. They mentioned that "this wasn't the first time" and talked about previous experiences, mostly with hurricane preparations and recent flooding. Again, working with the community, food and drink were provided by the time the shelter opened at about 4-4:30 in the am. Some of the occupants had been sheltered in police vehicles to keep warm and a decision was made to ferry occupants to the shelter in police vehicles as other options were not quickly available. The Red Cross participated and had hot food for breakfast by 9am.

To their knowledge, no law enforcement officers transported injured people to the hospital.

Both the Maj and Lt discussed their routine training – annual live drills with Fire and EMS for mass casualty events; last one was in December at the airport. Quarterly school based active shooter drills again involving Fire and EMS. This is a three-service system, all paid, at the county level and the words "We all work for the county" were repeated. The services all have interoperable radios and in part because they know each other personally through years of practice and experience, they work very well together. They reported no significant issues.

The Lexington County Sheriff's department has worked with CSX Railroad for officer training in the past. Major Jones did not recall any training with Amtrak.

They will provide final incident reports, likely next week when they are complete.