

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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COLLISION OF AMTRAK TRAIN #91 AND *

A STATIONARY CSX TRANSPORTATION *

TRAIN NEAR CAYCE, SOUTH CAROLINA * Accident No.: RRD18MR003

FEBRUARY 4, 2018 *

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Interview of: KENIO BRIGHT

Dispatching Center
Jacksonville, Florida

Tuesday,
February 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

TOMAS TORRES, Rail Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

RICKY PAGE, Rail Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

DAVE BUCHER, Chief, Railroad Division
National Transportation Safety Board

ADAM MARSHALL
Federal Railroad Administration

STEVE AMMONS
CSX Transportation

STEPHEN REAVES
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MICHAEL TURNBULL
Federal Railroad Administration

CORY CLAYPOOL, Representative
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

MATTHEW STEWART
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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. TORRES: This is an NTSB informal interview. My name is
3 Tomas Torres, T-O-M-A-S, T-O-R-R-E-S. Today's date is February
4 the 20th, 2018. And we are at a CSX train dispatching center in
5 Jacksonville, Florida interviewing a train dispatcher in
6 connection with the accident that occurred at Cayce, South
7 Carolina on February the 4th, 2018. The NTSB accident number is
8 RRD18MR003.

9 The purpose of the investigation is to increase safety, not
10 to assign fault, blame or liability. NTSB cannot offer any
11 guarantee of confidentiality or immunity from legal or certificate
12 actions. A transcript or summary of the interview will go in the
13 public docket.

14 The interviewee can have one representative of the
15 interviewee's choice. Do you have somebody?

16 MR. BRIGHT: (Indiscernible).

17 MR. TORRES: Okay, thank you. Do you understand this
18 interview is being recorded?

19 MR. BRIGHT: Yes.

20 MR. TORRES: Please state your name and spell it.

21 MR. BRIGHT: Kenio, K-E-N-I-O. Last name Bright,
22 B-R-I-G-H-T.

23 MR. TORRES: Okay, thank you.

24 MR. STEWART: Matthew Stewart, last name S-T-E-W-A-R-T,
25 representative.

1 MR. AMMONS: Steve Ammons, A-M-M-O-N-S, CSX.

2 MR. REAVES: Stephen Reaves, R-E-A-V-E-S, Amtrak.

3 MR. MARSHALL: Adam Marshall, M-A-R-S-H-A-L-L, Federal
4 Railroad Administration.

5 MR. TURNBULL: Michael Turnbull, T-U-R-N-B-U-L-L, Federal
6 Railroad Administration.

7 MR. BUCHER: Dave Bucher, B-U-C-H-E-R, NTSB.

8 MR. PAGE: Ricky Page, NTSB, P-A-G-E.

9 MR. CLAYPOOL: Cory Claypool, C-L-A-Y-P-O-O-L, Brotherhood of
10 Railroad Signalmen, representative.

11 MR. TORRES: Okay, Tomas Torres with the NTSB.

12 INTERVIEW OF KENIO BRIGHT

13 BY MR. TORRES:

14 Q. Kenio, can you please give us a brief description of your
15 work history with CSX?

16 A. Been a dispatcher now about 13½ years.

17 Q. Did you start out as a train dispatcher?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And what are your duties as a train dispatcher?

20 A. Supervise safe, orderly movement of train and on-track
21 equipment.

22 Q. Okay. Which subdivision do you work or dispatch?

23 A. The Columbia Sub, the CN&L subdivision in Eastover,
24 Orangeburg, Creston Subdivision, McCormick, Spartanburg Sub, and
25 Augusta Subdivisions.

1 Q. Okay, and do you work the same subdivision every day or --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So you dispatch on all those divisions at --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- on the same day?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. So how many divisions is that?

8 A. At least seven. Let me go again. There was CN&L, Columbia,
9 Eastover, Orangeburg, Creston, the McCormick -- did I say Augusta?
10 Yeah, the Augusta Subdivision. So that's seven of them.

11 Q. Okay. So what's your regular workday?

12 A. Well, I'm the relief dispatcher, so I work two first shifts,
13 two seconds and a third. The two first shifts are pretty busy;
14 second shift, busy, but not as; and third is normally relaxed.

15 Q. More relaxed?

16 A. More relaxed. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Okay. Can you describe the territory where the accident
18 occurred? You know, what kind of territory is it?

19 A. Normally it's a signal territory.

20 Q. And when you mean signal, what is it in reference to?

21 A. TCS. You know, you can line signals. Not dark territory.
22 So pretty much signal indications out in the field.

23 Q. So you request certain signal indications for the trains?

24 A. Right.

25 Q. That's how they're authorized to move?

1 A. Right. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. So how well in advance are you aware of a signal
3 system suspension? You know, when do you get notified?

4 A. They normally put it out at least a week in advance.
5 Sometimes it could be more so, but at least a week.

6 Q. Okay. And how is that covered? I mean, is it just on the
7 bulletin or is it discussed?

8 A. Some are bulletin, and they put a package on your desk. And
9 normally we do have a job briefing in person with your chief or
10 our designated representative.

11 Q. Can you describe the package? You know, what's in it?

12 A. Normally it has the actual bulletin that goes out that says
13 for whatever crews that it pertains to, who they need to contact.
14 And they have a briefing prior to going on duty and -- let's see
15 what else is in there. It shows the limits of the suspension.
16 What else is in that thing? That's pretty much it, the limits and
17 where it's at, and the bulletin that goes out so people can be
18 notified via their messages when it goes into effect.

19 Q. Okay. And you say your chief dispatcher discusses that with
20 you?

21 A. Normally that's how we do it, yes.

22 Q. And what's discussed? What's the discussion pertain --

23 A. I mean, if you're working it, you know, they normally come
24 down to the desk to make sure you're abreast of where it's at and
25 what it entails.

1 Q. And how about the communications between you and the train
2 crews?

3 A. Far as the communication with me and the train crews, like I
4 said earlier, the train crews should get briefed by one of their
5 supervisors to where the suspension is at. And you know, and they
6 call me. I give them the limits and the track, what they need.

7 Q. Great. On the day of the accident, what shift were you
8 working?

9 A. Third shift.

10 Q. And what time did you go on duty?

11 A. 2230.

12 Q. On what date?

13 A. Saturday the -- February the 3rd, I believe it was. Yes.

14 Q. And so what -- did you have a job briefing with your chief
15 train dispatcher on that day or --

16 A. Via telephone. It was a short briefing, but not in person.
17 No.

18 Q. And what was that discussion about?

19 A. Just basically asked me did I read the package. You know, I
20 was like, yeah, I, you know, skimmed over it to look at the
21 limits.

22 Q. Okay. And so tell me the day -- that day's events, you know,
23 when you're dispatching.

24 A. Well, leading up to the occurrence, Amtrak left Raleigh,
25 heading lined up. So everything's going smooth all the way up

1 until we got to Columbia, of course. But had a pretty clear
2 railroad, and around about Mcbee, South Carolina, I called the
3 777's -- the triple 7's crew just to give an idea of how much time
4 we were going to have still occupying the main. Because our duty
5 is to make sure Amtrak don't stop, so we try to keep a clear
6 railroad for them. And give them a heads-up, to not rush them,
7 but let them know, hey, this guy's coming, you know, plan your
8 clear-up.

9 So I told them, as a courtesy, I would call them again -- the
10 777, I would call them again when the Amtrak got around Lugoff, a
11 station stop, just to put in his mind you got about an hour when
12 you need to get in the clear. And I did so. And I didn't tell
13 those guys again until they reported the switches back to me.

14 Amtrak got up to Columbia and, you know, I told them, gave
15 them the track. Well, before I did that -- excuse me. The 777
16 called me and gave me the switches, said they were in the clear.
17 I took the times, so -- you know, I said, okay, I understand we're
18 switch position awareness form, lined and locked. And I asked him
19 again. I said, just verifying you're in the clear. Only because
20 this signal suspension, we normally don't operate under that type
21 of mode of operation. So I just wanted to be clear, we are locked
22 up and clear Silica Siding. They verified that they were. And I
23 even asked them how many cars were in the siding, just for my
24 knowledge. They told me 34, 2 engines.

25 And then maybe 2, 3 minutes after that, I talked to 91, gave

1 them the track, and they proceeded on.

2 Q. Okay. So the conductor on the -- 770?

3 A. 777, yes, sir.

4 Q. They contacted you and released the authority?

5 A. They contacted me to give me the switches, because they
6 informed me that they must have had three switches that were given
7 to them on the previous shift, second shift. So they reported the
8 switches were lined and locked for the main. So then -- and after
9 they did that is when they gave up their authority.

10 Q. Then you verified what he told you or you repeated it?

11 A. Well, normally, the recording is all the verification I need.
12 But I did say over the air, I understand -- copy the switch times
13 and verify your switch position awareness form has been initialed.

14 Q. Okay. So when you go from one system to another, like from
15 signal to non-signal, how does that work? You know, what's -- how
16 does the operation change?

17 A. Well, in signal, if they were out there, normally you would
18 have a track light in there and when they clear up, it goes out.
19 And in this dark territory, that's pretty much I can't see. I
20 don't know what's going on out there. So that's when I have to
21 trust the times that they're giving me reversed and back to the
22 main. And I don't really know what's out there from that point,
23 so that's what I had to go on, is what was given.

24 Q. On your screen, do you see anything on the screen? You know,
25 anything different when it's -- the system's suspended?

1 A. Normally you don't. Sometimes you do. You know, it just
2 varies. In this particular night, I don't recall seeing anything
3 abnormal. It could have been, but I don't recall.

4 Q. I mean, do you see any type of track indications of any type?

5 A. I don't think you do. I mean, you don't see the track, I
6 don't think, so --

7 Q. I mean --

8 A. But I don't do this very often far as signal suspension, so I
9 really --

10 Q. So when it's suspended, you don't really monitor that segment
11 of track?

12 A. Yeah, it's kind of like dark territory, like giving a block.
13 So you really can't see them tracking.

14 Q. On that day, that local, what kind of authority did it have?

15 A. It had pretty much a track authority. Because in a
16 suspension mode, it's like dark territory. So they got their
17 limits from point A to point B, what they needed to do the work.

18 Q. Okay. And during the suspension, do they need authority to
19 operate the switches?

20 A. Yes. Yes, they do. So like I said, I didn't give the
21 switches, but I took them back. They must have gotten them on a
22 previous shift. The second shift dispatcher issued the switches.

23 Q. Okay, and do you remember who -- the name of the conductor?
24 Or, you know, were you familiar with him?

25 A. I've heard the name years ago because I've dispatched that

1 territory when I first started dispatching back in 2005. But I
2 hadn't worked with him in years. So I'm saying he probably was
3 just coming back to the territory, from what I understand. But I
4 haven't talked to him in years, no.

5 Q. And during -- when the signal is operational in that segment
6 of track, how do the crews operate? You know, say, for example,
7 the signal suspension was not in effect. How would they have
8 conducted their switching there?

9 A. Basically they would ask to come out between -- they changed
10 everything now. They would ask to come out between the Richland
11 holdout and the south end of Dixiana. And then we would put up a
12 track block before we tell them to come up. You know, put a block
13 up: 777, you have permission to enter the main between point A
14 and point B. And that's how they come up.

15 But far as saying, you have permission on switches -- and
16 when the signals are working, we don't ask them what particular
17 switch they're handling because the signal system would throw that
18 track light or protect us in that manner. So that's how they
19 operate.

20 Q. So if you were to see a signal -- I mean, an indication, what
21 would you do? If they had a -- if they got in the clear and you
22 still saw an indication, what would you do? Or what --

23 A. You talking about in TCS?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. Oh, in TCS, I would ask them, you know, can you check the

1 switches just to ensure that you got them lined and locked.

2 Q. And does that happen frequently, or is that unusual or --

3 A. No, it's not really unusual. No, sir.

4 Q. Are you familiar with PIM?

5 A. PIM, yes.

6 Q. Did you review it that day?

7 A. That day I don't think I did the PIM. Do you have it handy?

8 Q. Yeah, there's a segment there that says, for signal
9 suspensions, "When a signal system is suspended and an alternate
10 method of operation is in effect" -- then go to 2. "If necessary,
11 instruct the first movement through the limits to stop at all
12 power-operated switches, secure the switches in hand position as
13 outlined, either by dispatcher message or special instructions."

14 I know these were hand throw, but like, in this instance,
15 when would you instruct a train to be looking out for a switch?

16 A. In the suspension -- in this instance, I had no reason to do
17 that because I was trusting the crew, the information, but --

18 Q. No, I'm trying to get an understanding of under PIM, IMS --
19 PIM. When would this pertain to?

20 A. Now in that --

21 Q. Like when would you use this? When would you instruct a
22 train to --

23 A. I'm assuming, the way that's being written there, is
24 affirming TCS. And I say, hey, guys, you reported having
25 everything restored and I still got a track light out there. Then

1 I probably would tell the next guy, hey, there's a track light in
2 the block, head on through there looking out, in that case.

3 Q. Now is there any reason why it only pertains to power
4 switches and not hand throw? I mean --

5 A. Now that I don't know.

6 Q. You don't?

7 A. No.

8 Q. No, I'm just --

9 A. I'm serious. I don't really know why that's there like that.
10 I can ask somebody to try to get clarification. I'm not certain.

11 MR. TORRES: Okay, at this time, I'll pass it on.

12 MR. BRIGHT: Okay.

13 MR. TORRES: Ricky?

14 MR. PAGE: Page, P-A-G-E. NTSB. Good afternoon, sir.

15 MR. BRIGHT: Good afternoon, sir.

16 MR. PAGE: How are you?

17 MR. BRIGHT: Very well, sir.

18 BY MR. PAGE:

19 Q. Were you issued a signal suspension or dispatcher job
20 briefing package?

21 A. It was on the desk, yes.

22 Q. Okay. Did somebody job brief with you?

23 A. Via telephone, but it was a -- not an in-person, detailed
24 briefing.

25 Q. So what was -- again, what was in your suspension package?

1 A. Just the limits and, you know, if you're going north, if
2 you're going south, this is what you do.

3 Q. Were there any instructions to job brief with the T&E
4 employees? For you to job brief with them as a dispatcher?

5 A. Well, I mean, pretty much. I mean, I know they job brief
6 with their supervisor. But, I mean, if it was a question, yeah,
7 we would, I guess, if they -- wasn't a clear understanding of
8 what's going on, yes.

9 Q. Did you receive any CAD special instructions? You know what
10 a CAD is?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Did you receive any special instructions about the CAD
13 system?

14 A. Now that I don't recall.

15 Q. Did you have a liaison or a person filling in between you and
16 the signal department while you were on duty?

17 A. No.

18 Q. To interact with you about the signal suspension?

19 A. No, I didn't. Usually we do have somebody, but --

20 Q. Sir?

21 A. I said usually we do have somebody from a -- a civilian that
22 comes in and that works for the signal suspension group, and
23 somebody in the -- excuse me -- would be in the building. But in
24 this case, no, it was just me.

25 Q. Okay, thank you. Did anybody talk to you about track

1 occupancy lights or that you would still be able to see a track
2 occupancy light --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- during the signal suspension?

5 A. No. Like I said, it was nobody briefed us on anything.

6 Q. Okay. When F77 made his move down there, do you remember
7 seeing that on your board? When F77 went south to the auto ramp
8 in the north Silica, do you remember seeing it?

9 A. No, I don't recall seeing a track light at all. That's what
10 I'm -- you know, because had I seen one, I probably would have
11 said, hey, guys, check the derail. Because that would have been
12 abnormal. But I don't recall seeing a track light.

13 Q. You don't recall seeing a track light as he progressed out of
14 the south end of Cayce Yard?

15 A. Well, you know, I don't think I was there. Do we have the
16 times he left? Because I want to say he was already in the block.

17 Q. I think he was in the block around 2000; is that correct?

18 A. Yeah, see, I was third shift, so I wasn't there.

19 Q. You wasn't there?

20 A. Yeah, that's why I said I don't recall that.

21 Q. Okay. Thank you, sir.

22 A. No problem, sir.

23 Q. Let's see. You familiar with the term tape load? Tape load?

24 A. I've heard it. Yes, sir.

25 Q. EC1 authority shouldn't -- must be issued on paper during the

1 tape load, and then after the tape load, you'll be notified by the
2 CAD's team when the tape load is complete?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. Were you notified by the chief dispatcher when the tape load
5 was complete, that you may apply track switch and signal blocking
6 devices and place train IDs and issue electronic EC1 train track
7 authorities?

8 A. I wasn't here when that occurred, but in the past, I have
9 been briefed on it, yes.

10 MR. PAGE: All right. I have no further questions.

11 MR. BUCHER: Dave Bucher, NTSB.

12 MR. BRIGHT: Yes, sir.

13 BY MR. BUCHER:

14 Q. Can you give me an estimate -- I know you probably don't know
15 exactly -- how many other trains you were handling at the time of
16 the accident? Doesn't have to be exact. I'm just looking for a
17 ballpark.

18 A. Yeah, I'm just rough guessing in my head, because I got a lot
19 of territory. But I know at the time for sure at least two, 91
20 and 92. I think I had maybe five. It wasn't very busy at all.

21 Q. Okay. That's fine. And you already sort of started my next
22 question. About how many miles of territory on this desk?

23 A. Everything -- it's a combo job now. They took two jobs and
24 made it one. So it's about 800 and something miles. I don't know
25 the exact number.

1 Q. So they combine it on third shift? Is that what you mean by
2 a combination job, or just combined it permanently?

3 A. No, sir. Combined permanently. That's why first shift is so
4 busy.

5 Q. Okay. So just going back to my first question, five or six
6 trains on third shift at a time is typical? Is that --

7 A. It can be more, but that particular night, it was a very good
8 night up until the unfortunate circumstance. And things were
9 moving, and cleared the railroad up pretty good.

10 Q. Great. Thank you. Just to piggyback a little bit on
11 Mr. Page's questions about the signal suspension package --

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Do you have that as a paper copy on your desk or electronic?

14 A. Paper copy.

15 Q. Paper copy.

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Okay. And last question. As part of your qualifications for
18 this job, have you ever ridden over this territory?

19 A. On this job I have not. Now I know it fairly well because
20 I've worked it for quite a while, when I first hired out, then I
21 moved to another area and I came back 2 years ago. So I know it
22 fairly well, but never ridden it, never went on the road with it.

23 Q. Never took a road trip, in other words?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. Okay.

1 MR. BUCHER: That is all I have at the moment.

2 MR. TURNBULL: No questions from Mike Turnbull.

3 MR. MARSHALL: Adam Marshall, M-A-R-S-H-A-L-L. FRA.

4 BY MR. MARSHALL:

5 Q. When you -- you stated when Mr. Torres was asking you a
6 question, when you -- when they were giving you the switch back --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. -- you said that you didn't have to repeat the time back to
9 them, but this occasion you did?

10 A. No. What I repeated back to them -- they gave me whatever
11 times they gave me. I don't know it off the top of my head. They
12 gave me the times, and I just come back with the response, F777-
13 03, understand; copy switch position -- or copy the times on the
14 switches; I understand the switch position awareness form has been
15 initialed. That way, I get them to tell me that yes, we lined and
16 locked them, signed our forms.

17 Q. Was there a -- you said -- was there a reason you went the
18 extra step this time or --

19 A. Just because it's a signal suspension time and this is
20 something we normally don't do. So just -- on the bottom of that
21 signal suspension packet, it says on there just be extra careful,
22 or something to that effect. So I just said, let me just ask them
23 again. It don't hurt to ask. So that's what I did.

24 MR. MARSHALL: Okay. That's all I have.

25 MR. REAVES: I got -- Stephen Reaves, R-E-A-V-E-S. Amtrak.

1 MR. BRIGHT: Yes.

2 BY MR. REAVES:

3 Q. Just a few questions. I think you were asked this last time,
4 but have you worked a signal suspension before?

5 A. I have.

6 Q. Okay. When you put a -- during a signal suspension, whenever
7 you would issue an EC1, does the screen change colors to show you
8 the limits of the EC1 during a signal suspension?

9 A. I think it goes green, I want to say.

10 Q. And when you issue an EC1, is it required to look at the
11 screen to see if the limits match up with what you are manually
12 putting in?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. The colors that are represented on the dispatcher screen, on
15 the CAD screen, are those in a manual to where you can read to --
16 or somebody could look up to see what they represent as far as
17 what red would mean, what a magenta would mean?

18 A. I don't think it's a book, but that's in -- I'd have to ask
19 around and find out. I mean, I haven't seen that.

20 Q. Okay. Do you know what the colors -- if you look up at the
21 dispatcher screen, what those colors signify, what they represent?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Last question. Whenever you're clearing up dark
24 territory, signal suspension, and the conductor or engineer is
25 giving up the authority and they're giving you back the times on

1 the switches, do you have to manually put those times in or do you
2 just have to hear that those times are --

3 A. Basically, like I stated earlier, the radio recording is
4 really technically all I need. Sometimes, you know, I peck it in
5 there; sometimes I don't. It just depends.

6 Q. So the system, I guess -- so you don't have to actually put a
7 time in anywhere before it will allow you to release the EC1?

8 A. Oh, no, sir. No, sir. No, sir.

9 MR. REAVES: That was all the questions I had.

10 MR. AMMONS: Steve Ammons, CSX. I can't think of any
11 additional questions I have since the last time we did this.

12 MR. CLAYPOOL: Cory Claypool. I have no questions.

13 MR. TORRES: Ricky?

14 BY MR. PAGE:

15 Q. During your job briefing, did anyone tell you that there was
16 an available process to look at track occupancy lights as trains
17 progress through the block under signal suspension?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Do you know if a hand-throw switch with electric lock will
20 place a block light on or off under normal circumstances without a
21 signal suspension?

22 A. I think it should. And, you know, if the signals are up, I'm
23 thinking it is. Now a suspension, I'm not sure. But if I'm
24 understanding you, I mean, if you open the switches, it was --

25 Q. If you opened -- if you reversed a hand-throw switch with

1 electric lock --

2 A. Yeah, in normal circumstances.

3 Q. In normal circumstances --

4 A. Yeah. Yeah.

5 Q. -- would it put a block light on?

6 A. It should, yeah. If the signals are working like they
7 should, yes.

8 Q. But you're not sure under a signal suspension?

9 A. Right. I'm not sure about that.

10 MR. PAGE: Thank you. That's all the questions I have.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm good.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm good.

13 MR. TORRES: I don't have any further questions, so this will
14 conclude the interview. Thank you for showing up.

15 MR. BRIGHT: No problem. Thank you, guys.

16 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: COLLISION OF AMTRAK TRAIN #91 AND
A STATIONARY CSX TRANSPORTATION
TRAIN NEAR CAYCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
FEBRUARY 4, 2018
Interview of Kenio Bright

ACCIDENT NUMBER: RRD18MR003

PLACE: Jacksonville, Florida

DATE: February 20, 2018

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.


Transcriber