



SURVIVAL FACTORS HIGHWAY

ATTACHMENT 10

OFD ENGINE 65 INTERVIEWS

HWY15MH006

(26 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of: *

METROLINK GRADE CROSSING ACCIDENT *

OXNARD, CALIFORNIA * Docket No.: HWY-15-MH-006

FEBRUARY 24, 2015 *

Interview of: CAPT. 1

FF 1

FF 2

FF 3

Oxnard, California
Wednesday,
February 25, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: NTSB INVESTIGATOR
Survival Factors Investigator

APPEARANCES:

NTSB INVESTIGATOR Survival Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

INTERVIEW

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So what I'll do is first just have you guys tell me what position you had on the truck and what level of training you are, whether firefighter, firefighter EMT, or that level of thing.

CAPT. 1: Right. Okay. I'm the captain, CAPT. 1. So I was Captain 65 that day and EMT training.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So firefighter EMT?

CAPT. 1: Yes.

FF 1: FF 1, an engineer or driver, EMT, firefighter EMT.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: What was your last name? Oh, -----?

FF 1: FF1

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Right there. Okay.

FF 2: FF 2. I was Firefighter 1, and I have a paramedic license, but I can only function as an EMT with Oxnard Fire.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. And do you work separately as an EMT?

FF 2: No, just here.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Or -- I'm sorry -- as a paramedic?

FF 2: No. I worked for Gold Coast prior to getting hired with Oxnard Fire.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. But you're not actively a paramedic right now?

FF 2: I'm not functioning as a paramedic anymore.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Okay.

FF 3: And FF 3. Yeah, good luck. You might want to read --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Oh, I got it on the thing, yeah.

FF 3: -- on the roster, yeah. My last name's right there. And I'm an EMT, as well as Firefighter 2 that day on the engine.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So I think the most efficient way to do it is to -- I think we should start with the driver. Describe how you were dispatched, how you got to the scene, if there are any issues with that and, and then we'll go from there.

INTERVIEW OF FF 1

FF 1: Okay. Let's see. I was in the middle of probably falling back asleep after another call. So the call came in about, what, 5- -- a little bit before 5:45. And the dispatch did say it was a train incident, something about train versus --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Versus a truck.

FF 1: -- truck. So that was the initial dispatch as we were waking up, getting out of bed. Jump on the engine -- put our gear on, jump on the engine, head towards the call, which we knew exactly where it was. They also mentioned something about a fire involved. So --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: What station was the truck, the equipment parked at?

FF 1: 1450 Colonial Road. That's Fire Station No. 5.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. And so there was a report of fire?

FF 1: Yes. So we head eastbound on Camino Del Sol. We made a right turn onto Rice, is when we first saw the smoke and fire too, right? We could see it.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We saw the fire pretty much right when we made the turn --

FF 1: Yeah. Right as soon as we make the turn onto Rice, heading southbound.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 1: We couldn't see the train yet, until we got about maybe, I don't know, 50 feet from the tracks. And a few vehicles are on the intersection. I had to make my way around the vehicles.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: These were police cars?

FF 1: No, they were just --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, there were still civilian vehicles in intersection.

FF 1: -- civilian vehicles around the intersection. As I make -- trying to figure out where to position my apparatus, I made a left turn onto 5th Street from Rice, trying to set up the fire engine to attack the fire. But then my captain said let's let the next engine take care of the fire and let's us go in to check out the train. Because at that point, we could see the first --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: You could there were victims on the train and --

FF 1: Well, not necessarily victims, but we could see the train on the side -- on it's, you know, side. The fire --

CAPT. 1: Yeah, I mean, I can speak to that. Because when we get on scene, it's my --

FF 1: It's his call.

CAPT. 1: -- call what we're going to do. And I could see we had Engine 61 and the battalion chief were already on 5th Street, you know --

FF 1: Behind us.

CAPT. 1: -- pretty close to our location. So as we pulled up next to the fire, that's when I caught sight. We could see Car 206, the one perpendicular to 5th Street, and see that it was on its side. So at that point I made the call to have 61 initiate the fire attack so that we could go in and start assessing the train. So, oh, now you can get back to it --

FF 1: Right.

CAPT. 1: -- but that was how we made the call to get to the train at that point.

FF 1: And so I parked the engine. My first thought was I saw people climbing out of -- well, I think it's the back or the front or whatever of -- what was the number?

CAPT. 1: 206.

FF 1: 206, people climbing out. And so that was my first initial reaction was to go there and help them off the train.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So you saw people evacuating Car No. 206?

FF 1: Yes.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And how were they evacuating? Through the windows, through the doors? Or how --

FF 1: It was -- what's the rear of the car?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The end doors.

FF 1: What's that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The end doors.

CAPT. 1: They were coming out, yeah.

FF 1: End doors. End door was off or out, so there was just a bunch of, like, what, metal -- there was a metal -- they had to, like, kind of jump over the metal frame on the door.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Like a frame, yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 1: That was all mangled.

So I helped them out. There was like two or three people coming out. I help them out, and then I look inside; it's all dark. I flash my light and there's two people standing inside and then they're saying there's another person in here that can't walk. And so at that point I said, are you guys hurt? They said no. I said, can you guys walk? As I'm standing in -- you know, right outside the car. They said, no, we're okay. So I jumped in, went into the car, heading toward that person that couldn't walk.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 1: So I instructed the other two people to -- if they were okay, to walk out, and so they did.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 1: And there was somebody already, I don't know who, at the end of the car, you know, waiting for them to help them out.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 1: So there was one person there. I started talking to that person. And said, I have back pain; I can't move, or I can't walk. I said, anything else hurting? He said, no, it's just my back right now. So one of the firefighters said, what do you need? I said I need a backboard; we're

going to need to take C-spine precautions on this person. And so I stayed there with him until I got a couple of the firefighters in there with me and helped him out.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. And then so you took him out to where?

FF 1: Just to the outside of the car where there was other -- four other firefighters waiting to receive him to take them to the -- just, what, maybe 10 feet --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

FF 1: Yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So just outside you transfer -- transferred him to other firefighters?

FF 1: Yes.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. And then what'd you do?

FF 1: And then I went back inside to do another quick look for more people.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 1: And there was nobody else in there.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So you did a sweep then, didn't find anyone?

FF 1: Correct.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And then what'd you do?

FF 1: And then I came back out.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And then --

FF 1: I got out of the car. And then looked for you, I think.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, we were reassigned --

FF 1: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- into the treatment group.

FF 1: Yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay, reassigned to treatment. Okay, so let's stop that there. And then --

FEMALE SPEAKER: Can I ask one question?

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Yeah. Go ahead.

FEMALE SPEAKER: So Car 206 is this one, right?

FF 1: Yes.

FEMALE SPEAKER: And did you come -- when you were talking about going in, you went in this side?

FF 1: Yes.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Okay.

FF 1: Yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Oh, which side is that? So that's your --

CAPT. 1: This is our engine here.

FF 1: This is our engine. This is the first on scene engine with us and then --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So as the side's resting -- the side of the car resting on the -

FEMALE SPEAKER: Road.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: -- what street is that?

FEMALE SPEAKER: 5th Street.

FF 1: 5th Street.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: 5th Street. Side of -- or end of Car 206 on 5th Street, okay. You guys have questions for FF 1?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: How long did it take to get there once you received the call?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There were a lot of units.

FF 1: Let's see.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: We can get all the dispatch logs.

FF 1: Yeah, I mean --

CAPT. 1: It looks like from the --

FF 1: -- I can't recall. I don't -- I'm not sure.

CAPT. 1: -- from the time of dispatch till we were on scene was 5 minutes. It looks like 5:45 was our dispatch time; arrival 5:50.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It was still dark, right?

FF 1: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Was there any light in the car at all?

FF 1: Not the one car I was in. No light in it. We were using all our flashlights.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And you guys had no -- or I'll get -- I think as a group we'll be able to address whether or not there was any actions with the -- like, or can you describe

what you saw with the fire or did you not have a good view of the fire that -- the fire, any kind of fire?

FF 1: There was a fire on the truck, but not -- or the trailer part of it, but we just drove past that to go to the trains.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Got it. Okay.

Okay, so let's go back to you then.

CAPT. 1: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN CAPT. 1

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So go ahead and -- detail that he's already provided that you don't need to expound on, don't bother with that. But other things that you observed or saw --

CAPT. 1: Okay. Well, like I -- I mean, like he stated, we left the station, eastbound Camino Del Sol, south on Rice. Before we made the turn, I saw the fire; we all saw that there was fire. So I just radioed that back to dispatch to let him know that we did have visual on something that was burning, but we weren't aware at the time what it was.

So like I stated, we pulled up to the intersection and as we got to the truck -- which the only reason we really knew it was a truck was just based on dispatch information, because it was fully involved. There was no way to really tell what it was and, you know, it turns out later it was the trailer. We did not get a visual on the truck, which was a little further east, the actual pickup.

As I stated, I knew that 61 was coming right behind us, so I put them fire attack. We drove, staged the engine, as you can see in that picture.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: That was 61 that you put on fire attack, right?

FF 1: Yes. That's us right here, and 61 you can't see because they're further down.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They're in the corner, yeah.

FF 1: They stopped over here where the fire was.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

CAPT. 1: So I think I said -- you know, as we turned the corner, that's when I first got a visual on 206 and realized that we did have a derailment and that at least, you know, one car was off the tracks. It was dark and there wasn't scene lighting, so until we parked the engine, it was hard to really get a visual on what we had.

So my crew, you know, we got out. Technically I'm going to be incident command, being first on the scene, but the battalion chief came in pretty close behind, so I just went into an investigation mode to try to see what we actually had at the train site. My crew at that point started looking into the individual cars. It ended up where FF 1 was at 206; FF 2 -- you were in 211, correct? And then 645 was FF 3. And at that point -- we hadn't even seen 645 when we pulled up

on scene because of it being behind 211, you couldn't see it from our vantage point and with the lighting.

So as they went in to try to see what we had. There were walking wounded, and obviously for our triage, if we can get them cleared from the scene and walking over to where we wanted to establish triage, which was east of the train on 5th -- the people who could at least walk under their own power we wanted to get out of there.

As they were going into each car, I was making, like, a hot lap and trying to interface with each one to see if they could get an idea of a count and, you know, what we had in each car. I was having a bit of a hard time because as I was looking through each opening of each car, it would only get so far of a visual and they were having to go further in to kind of see what we had. And then there was some delays as we were trying to clear the actual walking wounded from the scene before we could get in the cars.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Can you estimate about how many people were still in -- I mean, I know that there's people constantly flowing out of the train, but just approximately --

CAPT. 1: Sure.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: -- number of how many people remained in the train when you guys first got there?

CAPT. 1: It would be -- I mean, at the time, I had no idea because I couldn't get a visual. To me it seemed like there was 8 to 10 people outside kind of milling about --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

CAPT. 1: -- mostly at 206. And as I worked my way further back, there was a handful more at each location. But I think the first estimate I was able to give the IC, I believe I said that it appeared that there was 30 minors and approximately 8 immediates, and that was just what the account at each car before we could get, you know, triage complete.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So after you got the easily walking wounded out --

CAPT. 1: We had more units showing up at that time, so Truck 61 came in. Their captain was able to establish the actual triage area, start putting the tarps out. Gold Coast EMS supervisor showed up and he was going to be our transportation group supervisor, so he was over in the triage area and then he was able to get one of the paramedics off an ambulance to be the treatment unit leader. So we're just starting to send everybody to the green tarp who could walk, and people who had absolutely no medical complaints were just north of the triage area by the tracks, just to keep them --

FF 1: Separate from --

CAPT. 1: -- separate.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So you're kind of coordinating the clearing of the train and the identification of the wounded on the train that need assistance?

CAPT. 1: I was mostly trying to get a number to the chief so that the could get additional resources, you know --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Got it.

CAPT. 1: -- more fire units, more ambulances and so forth. These were the guys who were in there actually putting tags on, and then we ended up with, like I said, Truck 61's crew, Truck 68, and a couple other engines -- I believe 63 showed up. And they were actually doing the hands-on triage, putting the tags on and getting the walking wounded out, and then packaging up the other --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So while the other firefighters are starting to interface with the victims, you were basically acting as a liaison between those guys and the IC?

CAPT. 1: Yes.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

CAPT. 1: Yeah. So I mean, I was given an assignment of medical group supervisor, so I would have triage and treatment underneath me, and then I was working with the rescue group supervisor. But there was a little bit of bleed over there just because I was already, as the first on scene, kind of in --

FF 1: The rescue part of it.

MR. CAPT. 1: Yeah, the rescue --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Who is the rescue group supervisor?

CAPT. 1: That would be Truck 68's captain, ----- . He shouldn't be -- oh, he is on today's roster; he's working overtime. But he's not on our shift normally, but he was there -- or, yeah, yesterday as well.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So he was the rescue --

CAPT. 1: Rescue group sup.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. And who -- were you the one that decided where to put the triage center?

CAPT. 1: Myself and Truck 61 Captain -----.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

MR. CAPT. 1: We face-to-face and decided that it should be just east of where we were on 5th and, you know, since we had traffic blocked and, you know, a good flat area to work with and it seemed good.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Okay. Do you guys have any questions for him before I move on to the --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just the lighting in Cars 211 and 645. Did you have any lighting when you guys entered?

CAPT. 1: 211 there was lighting.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There was lighting?

CAPT. 1: Yes. They were on.

FF 1: Which one's 645?

CAPT. 1: The last one. Furthest from the road.

FF 2: That's the one I went in, right?

MR. CAPT. 1: No, I don't know about that --

FF 2: 645 had lighting in it as well.

FF 1: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And how did the passengers get out of those cars?

FF 2: 645 --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Through the end.

FF 2: -- only through the one end because -- I guess it was that --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Through this, both of these ends is where we got them all out.

FF 2: Yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So let's go ahead and start with you then.

FF 2: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF FF 2

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So just describe, you know, your actions on scene.

FF 2: Okay. Once the engine stopped, I hopped out. I grabbed the medical equipment and I walked just to the west side of this car right here. There was -- the first two victims I came across were sitting on the ground basically right next to the train.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And so that is -- so you went to the west side --

FF 2: Of 206.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: -- of 206? Okay.

FF 2: They're basically sitting, like, right next to it. If it would've -- you know, if you would've flipped it up, they would've been under it, so --

I basically, when I dropped my bags right near them, I just pulled out all of our triage tags, started triaging them, asked them if they could walk. They said yeah, but they couldn't stand

up. So I helped them up, gave them their tags, and told them to go -- there's a group of people starting to gather right here. I just told them to walk over there and then someone would direct them.

And then I made my way towards 211 and then searched --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So you triaged about how many people at that -- 206?

FF 2: Those were the only two people --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Outside of 206.

FF 2: -- outside of 206 that I triaged. The rest were walking from the area of 211 and 645, I guess it was, right?

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And then about how many people did you triage walking?

FF 2: By the time I made it to 211, I probably triaged from between 7 and 10 people, and just told all of them to continue walking to the street.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So then you got to --

FF 2: And there were actually some people who were not injured, so I didn't give them a triage tag. I just told them to walk to the street also, though.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And about how many were, do you think were -

FF 2: Probably three or four.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 2: So it took me probably somewhere between 5 and 10 minutes to actually make it to this car.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So that's from Car 206 to Car 211?

FF 2: From the time -- yeah, from the time we got there to the actual car, probably close to 10 minutes. Because I was just triaging everyone I came across along the way.

By the time I made it to this car, Truck 61 was already inside of it and they were having everyone who was still inside who could walk, climb out. So but when I got there, I think there was two people ready to climb out, so I helped them out, and then there was another, I think, five or six patients who couldn't walk. So I think by the time I got there there was, like, seven people, seven or eight people still left in that car. And two of them were ready to climb out, so I helped them out. So --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Climbed out of what?

FF 2: Of this end of the car. I helped them climb out, right here.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay, so helped to climb out. And that's the --

FF 2: 211, this end.

FEMALE SPEAKER: That would be the A end of 211.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And that's -- do you remember what orientation that is? Northeast, southwest?

FF 2: This is east going this way.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: East. Okay.

FF 2: So at that point, after I helped them out, I climbed inside and started helping place triage tags on some of the other patients. Like I said, the Truck 61 guys were already in there triaging, so I only put one more tag on someone in there. And I think there was -- I think it was five people who were left in there who said they couldn't walk.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 2: So at that point, I think I -- yeah, I believe -- I climbed out and it appeared that everyone else had been triaged already, so I just climbed back in and started helping get the patients loaded to be moved.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So you helped load patients onto the backboards?

FF 2: Yeah. So, yeah, people were handing in backboards and then we were shuffling down to the patients, and then I helped load two of the patients and carry them out.

I believe -- let's see -- so once you get to the, you know, where it splits, top/bottom, I went to the bottom side and we loaded two patients down on that side. And then other people were placing people on backboards on this side, which would be the top of the train.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Okay. So then after -- so you helped load patients onto backboards, helped get them -- carry them out. And then what happened next?

FF 2: So yeah, after we got all the patients out of this car, I climbed out, came over to this car to see if they needed any help. I think I just assisted -- I just was at the edge and helped them pull one person out who was already on a backboard and then --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Which car is that? That's 265?

FF 2: This one. 645.

FF 1: 645.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Oh, 645.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Six is on that side and --

FF 2: And then at that point CAPT. 1 came over and said that we were going to head over to the treatment area.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. And then I'll -- we'll talk about treatment area after this.

Okay. Do you guys have any --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: For 645 -- I've gotten an idea, at least a rough idea, of what the number of people and the severity of the injuries in these other cars. 645, did you ever look inside of it?

FF 2: The only time I went -- the only time in the early stages that I went to that car was just to help that last person out. Yeah, so --

FEMALE SPEAKER: So in 211, the one that you went into, what were the types of injuries that you saw on the people who couldn't walk?

FF 2: So on the people who could walk?

FEMALE SPEAKER: Couldn't walk.

FF 2: Oh, couldn't walk. Okay. So on the side that would be the bottom side of the train, the two patients that I was helping treat, one had a head laceration and was complaining of lower back pain. And then the other patient was complaining of, like, shoulder pain and back pain, and then also, I believe, her leg was in pain as well.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is this your other (indiscernible) --

FEMALE SPEAKER: Oh, yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- number here?

FEMALE SPEAKER: These are ours.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Do you want to scoot that chair over --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: -- and we can just put him here.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right, guys (indiscernible), musical chairs.

FF 1: Musical chairs, just kind of roll --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So there was one with head lacerations, lower back pain, another with shoulder, back and leg pain?

FF 2: Yes. And as far as the -- I believe, on the topside, I think -- I know one of them had back pain because I helped, like, shuffle the backboard to the exit and when they were bringing her to where it -- where both sides, you know, the top and bottom meet. And as far as the other patients on there, I don't remember or I don't remember hearing anything.

FEMALE SPEAKER: And so can you describe what you remember about where they were located? You said they were on the bottom. Were they between seats? Were they in the aisle -- well, they would've been up against the windows or seats, top, bottom, tables?

FF 2: So, both patients were -- had their back to the roof, what would be the roof, and their legs were going in between the seats. So we had to kind of, like, you know, angle them, kind of

shuffle them a little bit. Basically, we put the backboard on -- which would be the side of the train and kind of you know, we had to angle them and then kind of --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So at the windows --

FF 2: So their backs -- both of them, their backs were facing the roof. So they were basically, yeah, I guess, sitting. I don't know if they -- I don't remember them actually sitting on the windows or in between the windows.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Were the windows intact?

FF 2: As far as -- the only window I saw that wasn't intact was on this one. It was, like, popped out, like in between here. But all the windows on this one, some of them were cracked from the rocks that were next to the tracks, but most of the other windows I saw were intact.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Okay. Let's see. There were bikes in this car, right?

FF 1: 645, right, yeah.

CAPT. 1: 645.

FF 2: I think there was a bike on --

FF 3: One in 645 and there was another in --

FF 2: Which one did we look for the belongings in? Was it this one or --

FF 3: Yeah, this one had a bike in it.

FF 2: Okay. Yeah, this one had a bike on the bottom, yeah, because I went down and you went up.

FF 3: Yeah.

FF 2: Yeah. And I just left it there. It was still strapped --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Still strapped? That's what I wanted to hear.

FF 2: Yeah. And then same with there was a bike on this one, I believe, also. And that one was still strapped.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So that's Car 611?

FF 2: 211.

FEMALE SPEAKER: 206.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Sorry.

FF 2: Well, 206.

FEMALE SPEAKER: That's why I have to have (indiscernible).

FF 2: Too many numbers.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Yeah. And it was still strapped as well?

FF 2: Yeah. Both of them that I saw were still strapped.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. All right. Yeah, hold on a second.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Quick -- I'm going to head over to the press conference.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Sure.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Captain -----, who's a deputy, he's going to help you guys, whatever you need, what other crews. 61's scheduled to be here shortly.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Great.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just so you know.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Perfect. Thanks.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But if you need another one, he'll get -- meet them out here for you.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Yeah. So when we transfer over, I'll probably call up another one --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Got it.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) guys.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Let's move on to FF 3.

INTERVIEW OF FF 3

FF 3: All right. So we kind of established, what, getting on scene? So when I got off, I could tell there was going to be a lot of patients. We have two trauma bags, so he grabbed the one. I grabbed my own set, made my way over to -- I don't know what number. The 211?

FF 2: Yeah.

FF 3: 211 --

FEMALE SPEAKER: Yes.

FF 3: -- and 645? So I saw Firefighter FF 2 go over to the right and meet up with those people that were on the ground, so I knew to go left because the right was taken care of. So as soon as I got behind 211, I started the walking wounded, just calling out, getting them to start moving. That took a little bit.

So both doorways to both passenger cars were basically in the same area, so I was able to multitask and get -- yell out to both ways, hey, stand up if you can walk, walk towards me.

Most people were still in shock, kind of in a daze, so it took a little bit of, you know, if you can move and walk, come on out.

So by that time -- once people started coming out from 211, then I just committed myself over to 645. There was some random person there who was not on the train, but he wanted to get on, and I just suggested for him to -- I think he was just a bystander trying to help, at least that's what it seemed like from what he was saying. I told him he can help me out by just directing everyone to an open area. So I was pointing him out towards here, away from the trains. I said, hey, if you can --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: To the -- so that's to the --

FF 3: So I was pointing to go east.

FF 2: East.

FF 3: East direction, away from here.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: To east and towards the --

FF 3: Yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: -- towards the road?

FF 3: I tried to give them a landmark, like, a light, just because that was away from the trains. So at that point, people started coming out. There was a good crowd of people standing, so I wasn't able to enter the train until we tried to get some of those people out. I was helping them out.

Once I was able to get in, there was a few people, just below --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So the people that were standing out there, they were -- so there was passengers that were on the train that kind of gathered at the doorway and they weren't clearing from the train?

FF 3: They were spread out. They were spread out, and I don't know if they were dazed or what, but -- they were able to walk. They had minor injuries, and so, you know, lacerations, contusions and abrasions, and maybe complaining of, like, wrist -- one arm or one wrist or something. But they were still able to get out. So I try to use the people that were not injured to help me out so I can continue in and start triaging people down to the end so I can go past.

And I think the one person that was down on the ground was near the front of it and he was -- so head towards the roof and he was laying kind of diagonally, with his legs towards the seat and the windows were kind of behind him. He was the only person that was unable to get out by himself. And so I triaged him; I tagged him. Then I continued on searching the top portion --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: You tagged -- which color did you tag him?

FF 3: "Immediately." Oh, no -- sorry -- he was "delayed" originally.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So yellow?

FF 3: Yellow, yes. And then when I came back -- so I continued my triage. No one else was there. Came back around, and at that point I switched it over to -- because no one else was there. He was the last patient in there. I switched him over to immediate. Because at that point, when I first came onto him, he met all the criteria for a delayed.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 3: Yes. And at that point I came down to the end, and that's where I'm not sure what company truck -- was it Alamillo, whoever that was --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 68.

FF 3: 68? Truck 68's crew came to the door and asked what we needed and that's where I said we need to package this patient.

FEMALE SPEAKER: What sort of injury?

FF 3: He was complaining of right-sided chest pain. He was complaining of mid and lower back pain and he was also complaining of left arm pain. He did have a notable deformity on his left arm. But he was alert and oriented. And the only thing that changed from the time when I first went by him to the time when I came back was his cap refill was taking longer. So I figured I might as well make him an immediate, because originally it was quick; he had good perfusion going on. When I came back, it took him -- it was slower. So that's why I changed it from delayed over to immediate, because I had the opportunity to.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So it looked like his blood pressure was dropping?

FF 3: Yeah. But I didn't have any -- I'm not -- I'm in triage, so I'm not assessing anything like that, so -- and at that point we got the equipment, packaged him, and got him on the backboard, got him outside with the help of Truck 68. And then from once we got him over to the treatment area, came back, that's where we got reassigned to treatment area.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Lighting --

FF 3: The lighting was on.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It was on?

FF 3: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Any windows broken?

FF 3: Shattered on the bottom. I think a few of them were broken. Not --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Fully out or just partially?

FF 3: No, not completely out. Just like some --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They still held?

FF 3: They held, yes. So because everyone was walking on them and I was -- it freaked me out because I didn't want to step on them, but -- yeah, they were, they seemed good.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: So just a general question for all of you guys. So it sounds like you guys were going in to assess who was there and get head counts and all, and so forth. The equipment that you grabbed, it sounded like it was not backboards, but your immediate tags?

FF 2: Just tags.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Tags and bags. So who brought in the backboards and other back supply equipment?

FF 1: The truck companies --

FF 3: Truck companies that came in.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

FF 2: The other units that I mentioned were your Truck 61, Truck 68, Engine 63.

FF 3: Yeah.

FF 1: That's because they came up to the end of the trains and they would ask what do you guys need?

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Right.

FF 1: And so we'd say I need a backboard. There's one patient here that we need a backboard. So, okay, it's on the way. Hey, backboard. You know, run and bring it back --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Got it.

CAPT. 1: Yeah. And like I said, from my standpoint, I was kind of trying to get a count as we were going and the numbers that I have were, we ended up with one that we had to remove from 206, five from 211, and then the one from 645, in terms of packaging them up and bringing them out on backboards.

FF 1: With backboards.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So one from 206?

CAPT. 1: Um-hum. Five from 211. And then the one from 645.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When you tagged them, did you label them by car number that you pulled them out or you just remember that --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No. I don't think -- it's just the triage tag.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You just remember the numbers?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

CAPT. 1: Yeah, well, I mean, I was getting a count because I was medical supervisor at the time, so I was just trying to see how many personnel I needed to send and equipment to each car.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: All right. So let's -- so when we go to the treatment area, when you guys were reassigned to treatment -- is it better to go one by one again or did you guys all kind of do the same sorts of things?

CAPT. 1: Mine will probably be the quickest, because again, I was more in a supervisor role. So once the rescues were complete, we did secondary search of each car.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Let me just, for the tape, this is CAPT. 1?

MR. CAPT. 1: Yes.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

CAPT. 1: We did a secondary search of each car, confirmed that there were no additional patients, and then at that point, the units that were in rescue were reassigned to treatment, which included 65. I didn't, at that point, have any patient contact, so these three could give you a little more information on the actual patient care.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So --

FF 1: ----- I think I helped -- actually I know I helped two other patients in the green tarp put onto a backboard.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And so those were the ones that got upgraded to yellow or --

FF 1: Yes. Both of those did get upgraded to yellow. There was a medic there, so he's the one that made the call. And then there was so many people there helping out that that was it. I helped package those two patients and then we're pretty much, just after that, looking to see where we can help and put a blanket on people that were already on backboards.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: What kind of injuries did the two that got upgraded have?

FF 1: They were complaining of back pain, lower back, both of them were. But they were walking fine. They were standing there for a while and then, you know, they both said my lower back hurts. So that's where the medic made the call, okay, let's just put them on backboards.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And do you know who medic -- what medic that was?

FF 1: I don't. I can't remember.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 2: I know who it was.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay?

FF 2: Last name A-r-a-i, triage leader. I mean, not triage, treatment --

CAPT. 1: Treatment leader.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Treatment leader? Okay. So the --

FF 2: I helped him put those patients on the backboard.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So this is --

FF 2: FF 2.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: -- FF 2? Yeah. So why don't you go ahead and describe what you did at that treatment center?

FF 2: Okay. I started at the green tarp. I helped backboard those two patients. I took two patients who were standing -- oh, actually I took both the patients who were placed on backboards, I took their vital signs. I took another guy's vital signs who was standing, and then moved on to the yellow tarp, where I took another set of vital signs on another patient.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 2: After that, or after we backboarded those two patients, we also moved them to the yellow as well, so -

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 2: -- after I was done taking those sets of vital signs, everyone else had had their vital signs checked, so I started helping load patients into the ambulances or onto the gurneys.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. And about how many patients did you help load onto gurneys?

FF 2: I helped two patients loading onto gurneys and then helped one get loaded in the ambulance on the -- one one of the bench seats. And then after that, I was just helping, like, put blankets on --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Do you have a policy of how many, like, how many people riding in ambulances or is there --

FF 2: As far as patients?

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: -- a specific -- yeah.

FF 2: Well, usually they -- I wouldn't say, like, a policy, but they usually try and keep it, like, one advanced life support patient per monitor, basically. In situations like this, you know, I know I've personally transported four patients at one time from an MCI before.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You got a rule of thumb and you adapt as needed?

FF 2: Right. So if you can fit, you know, two --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Well, this one had a mix where the more severe would go into one ambulance --

FF 2: Right. Like, you can mix too. You can put one immediate, one delayed, and a minor in the front seat if you wanted to. But it's ultimately up to the guys in charge of transporting, you know --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Right. Did you feel like there --

FF 2: -- how many patients go in each ambulance.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Did you feel like there were sufficient resources on scene when you were looking to package, or to --

FF 2: It seemed like, you know, there was a couple points where, you know, we were waiting on an ambulance, but they weren't -- they weren't very long and it wasn't that long. Once we started loading patients, it seemed like they were steadily leaving at a pretty decent, you know, pace. It didn't seem like it took forever to get everyone off scene, so --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Okay. So at the treatment area, FF 3?

FF 3: All right. So just we kind of walk up and you kind of see where everyone goes and where help is needed. I think I saw them both go to start putting people on backboards. And I saw that you could tell someone was -- one of the medics, I'm not sure who it was, was going over to one of the patients on the red tarp, and another firefighter was there and they looked like they were trying to splint something. So then I assisted with splinting an arm.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 3: And we helped load him onto a gurney and then they took him off and loaded him onto a ambulance to transport.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 3: At that point I came back and they were still putting more people that had gone from minor to delayed. So I came over and assisted them with a few of those patients and then helped move them from the green tarp over to the yellow tarp.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 3: And then in there, I just assisted anytime anyone -- I think I helped load two more patients after that first one on the gurneys and I helped load one onto an ambulance.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Okay. I think we've got a pretty good account. Is there any other questions? Is there any questions that you guys have for me or any items that I didn't ask that you think are important?

CAPT. 1: The only other thing, once we were finished in the treatment area, we were then tasked with reentering the cars and trying to collect personal items just in case we were able to get them to the patients who were minor or on scene still. So we did re-access the cars at that time and we ended up going in all three of them at one point. So I don't know if they had any observations at that time, once patient care and triage was done.

Is there anything else at that point that stood out to you?

FF 1: Nope.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Did you notice anything about the conditions of the cars at those points? Deformed seats? Broken windows? Blocked exits? Like any, I mean, any notable --

FF 3: That was --

FF 2: 645, nothing that was -- it was pretty clear. That one was pretty held together. I guess there wasn't much damage in the sense that things weren't broken out. I just the one thing I noticed was we weren't going -- no one was coming out that front, I guess. All the lights were on. Everything was intact. Nothing was -- none of the seats were all, were messed up or anything.

FF 3: I noticed one of these doors was open, like, maybe like this much. And I only know that because my foot went through it.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: And so that's the door partially open on --
do you guys know what --

FF 3: I believe it was this one. This is the first one we went in when we went to look for stuff, right?

FF 1: I thought went in 211 first --

FF 3: Or was it this one -- 211 first.

FF 1: -- and then -- yeah.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

FF 3: It was one of these ones. I can't remember.

CAPT. 1: Because, yeah, because the truck guys were in 645 and then we jumped over --

FF 3: Yeah. And other than the, like, spidered windows, I didn't really notice anything else. So --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You may have covered it --apologies for late arrival -- you may have covered it already. The rail cars were on their sides. You have the end doors because they all separated, right, so you were able to access those okay. Doors flop in one direction. Did you have trouble opening any of the doors, in terms of going against gravity, because they're fairly heavy doors?

FF 3: All those doors were open. There was just that one bar that was hanging down in the middle. I don't know what thing's for, but --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, it's a transfer bar. Normally when you lock on the car, it comes down to your (indiscernible)

FF 3: Okay. So yeah, so that's the one thing that was at all in the way, but --

FF 2: Yeah, I didn't open any doors.

CAPT. 1: Yeah. No doors were --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No access difficulties there?

FF 3: None at all, yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And you didn't pop any windows because the railcars were on their sides, because they're way up in the air, basically?

FF 3: Yeah, none.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because I did notice some of the windows looked like they had been pulled, but you didn't know who pulled them?

FF 2: I know, like, on this one, the one window was popped and --

FF 1: Yeah, one was --

FF 2: -- it was, like, sitting, like --

FF 1: Fell right out.

FF 2: -- right in between right here.

FF 3: It was on the ground.

FF 1: But I think the, maybe, passengers opened it up.

FF 2: Yeah.

CAPT. 1: That's what it seemed.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Okay. That's fine.

CAPT. 1: Yeah, that's what it seemed. Because when we arrived on scene, it was already open.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And nobody was close to falling out through an open window that had opened up on the downside? No?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: None of us.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What car was that?

FF 2: Where the window was popped out? The one I saw was 206.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was 206, yeah. There you go.

FF 2: And I didn't see that until we, like, we were walking through to -- looking for any personal items.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And the upright 263 car, no problems accessing there? Because the side --

CAPT. 1: The side door was open. I know I did a primary search when we --

FF 1: Yeah, I did the secondary.

CAPT. 1: -- were originally checking ,and then we did -- others go through as well, did a secondary.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good. Good. I have to ask you a stupid question, but no fires or anything like that you observed, right?

CAPT. 1: Correct.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have to ask you.

CAPT. 1: In the trains? Not in the train.

FF 3: In the trains.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just the fires down yonder from the -- I mean, given that it passed through that area, sometimes you have -- may get a little bit on the cars.

CAPT. 1: There was -- yeah, there were no hazards that we were aware of, no fire and, you know --

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

CAPT. 1: -- it was clear to access for that.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Stokes baskets versus backboards. Is that your preference, backboards?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Backboards.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Baskets?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No baskets.

FF 2: Yeah, like, as far as we're loading the patients, we wouldn't have been able to get the Stokes basket in there, evenly. It would've had to have been like this. So --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: My pet peeve with windows and such, they're far too small for maneuvering a basket around.

CAPT. 1: Even a Stokes, you're normally going to want them on a backboard to put into a Stokes and then, you know, haul with a Stokes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right, right, right.

CAPT. 1: So we have all backboards.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

NTSB INVESTIGATOR: Good. All right.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: METROLINK GRADE CROSSING ACCIDENT
 OXNARD, CALIFORNIA
 FEBRUARY 24, 2015
 Interview of CAPT. 1, FF 1, FF 2,
 and FF 3

DOCKET NUMBER: HWY-15-MH-006
PLACE: Oxnard, California
DATE: February 25, 2015

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