

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

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SEPTA TRACK WORKER FATALITY \*

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA \*

Accident No.: RRD19FR009

JULY 8, 2019 \*

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\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: AALIYAH FOREMAN

Transportation Manager, SEPTA

SEPTA Headquarters  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Thursday,  
July 12, 2019

## APPEARANCES:

DAVID BUCHER, Chief, Rail Division  
National Transportation Safety Board

GEORGE GOOD, Accident Investigator  
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

RICK DOLBIN, Project Manager, State Safety Oversight  
(SSO), Rail Transit Safety Review Program (RTSRP)  
PennDOT

AMELIJA SORG-TAYLOR, Project Analyst, RTSRP  
PennDOT

ANTHONY HARRIS, Project Officer, RTSRP  
PennDOT

JOSEPH WILSON, Operational Safety Officer  
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority  
(SEPTA)

JAMES CREEDON, Director of Transportation, Subway  
Elevated Division  
SEPTA

DEAN JONES, Training  
SEPTA

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. BUCHER: Good morning, everyone. This is Dave Bucher. I  
3 am the chief of the Rail Division for the National Transportation  
4 Safety Board. Today's date is July 12, 2019. We are at the  
5 Headquarters of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transport Authority,  
6 SEPTA, located in Philadelphia, PA.

7 We are interviewing Aaliyah Foreman who works as a  
8 transportation manager for SEPTA. The interview is in connection  
9 with the accident that occurred on July 8, 2019, at Erie  
10 interlocking. The NTSB accident reference number is RRD19FR009.

11 The purpose of this investigation is to increase safety, not  
12 assign fault, blame, or liability; however, NTSB cannot guarantee  
13 confidentiality because this interview will go into our public  
14 docket as background information. Only your name will be entered.

15 The Interviewee can have one representative, which you chose  
16 not to have one today. Do you understand that the interview is  
17 being recorded?

18 MS. FOREMAN: Yes.

19 MR. BUCHER: Thank you. Before we start the interview, let's  
20 go around the table and introduce ourselves. Please spell your  
21 last name and who you are representing and please speak clearly so  
22 we can get an actual recording. And my name is David Bucher, B-U-  
23 C-H-E-R, with NTSB.

24 MR. GOOD: George Good, G-O-O-D, Federal Transit  
25 Administration, accident investigator.

1 MS. SORG-TAYLOR: Amelija Sorg-Taylor, S-O-R-G - T-A-Y-L-O-R,  
2 project analyst representing PennDOT Rail Transit Safety Review  
3 Program, Safety Review Oversight.

4 MR. JONES: Dean Jones, J-O-N-E-S, SEPTA.

5 MR. CREEDON: James Creedon, C-R-E-E-D-O-N, director of  
6 Transportation, SEPTA.

7 MR. HARRIS: Anthony Harris, Project Officer, RTSRP.

8 MR. DOLBIN: Rick Dolbin, with PennDOT, State Safety  
9 Oversight, D-O-L-B-I-N.

10 MR. WILSON: Joseph Wilson, W-I-L-S-O-N, SEPTA System Safety.

11 MR. BUCHER: Okay, and Aaliyah, if you could give your name  
12 and spell the last name.

13 MS. FOREMAN: Aaliyah --

14 MR. BUCHER: Sorry.

15 MS. FOREMAN: -- Foreman, F-O-R-E-M-A-N, transportation  
16 manager at SEPTA.

17 INTERVIEW OF ALAYAH FOREMAN

18 BY MR. BUCHER:

19 Q. Great. And like I said prior, could you just, for purposes  
20 of the group and the transcript, start with your -- beginning of  
21 your day leading up to the accident and anything you feel is  
22 important.

23 A. Okay. My station is at Olney. I'm on the southbound  
24 platform. Throughout the morning we did several rides between  
25 Olney and Fern Rock, just discussing, with the operators, the

1 different speeds, the signs, and making sure they're paying  
2 attention to the signals. We do four rides in the morning. After  
3 that we do a movement sheet for a load line with the Ridges. Then  
4 we go on our swing. When we came back from swing, we did a  
5 partial movement sheet, and then we started doing the cashier  
6 emergency light checks between Girard, and we got up to North  
7 Philadelphia. And then that's when we heard the mayday call. We  
8 went upstairs, caught the bus, and then flagged down a SEPTA  
9 police officer to get from Allegheny to Erie.

10 Selina and myself -- Selina was my trainee -- we arrived  
11 there. We went down the steps. I told Selina to go to the train.  
12 I met with SEPTA police, fire, EMS, they were already there when  
13 we got there. The fire department was waiting for confirmation of  
14 power, saying that it was out and they want to test it to make  
15 sure it was out.

16 I went into the track area to check on the gentleman -- well,  
17 both gentlemen that were in there, Mr. Nixon and the --  
18 Mr. Monroe. Mr. Nixon was very upset. I tried to get him to calm  
19 down. So he just kind of like sat to the side and, you know, just  
20 chilled out for a bit. The fire department finally came over,  
21 after they confirmed that power was out. They put some, I don't  
22 know what those things are called, on Mr. Monroe to check for  
23 pulse and things like that. They didn't find one, so they did say  
24 that he had passed away. So we were waiting for the medical  
25 examiner to come out.

1           So that's when everyone started coming, the detectives, the  
2 incident investigation gentleman, my AD, we were all -- it was a  
3 lot of people down there. Some more track people came. One of  
4 the track foreman is Joe, he came, and we were trying to get  
5 people off. It was two trains in between stations. We were  
6 trying to get those trains evacuated also.

7           Sharon got the one backed into North Philly. It was between  
8 Allegheny, Erie. She was able to get that train back into North  
9 Philly, and I moved it. Quentin Robinson, which is my other AD,  
10 he got the train that was between Wyoming and --

11 Q.   Who is Sharon?

12 A.   Sharon Matt (ph.) was my other AD, also. Quentin got the  
13 train to evacuated that was sitting at Wyoming station, and I was  
14 trying to get the train that was involved in the incident  
15 evacuated as well.

16 Q.   Okay. Great Should have, if you're, are you, is that it  
17 basically, or?

18 A.   Yes.

19 Q.   Okay. I just have a few question, and then we'll go around  
20 the table.

21 A.   Yes.

22 Q.   So you were doing basically, like, check rides with the  
23 operators for the beginning of your day?

24 A.   Yes.

25 Q.   For most of the day? Okay. Okay, and did you happen to ride

1 with the engineer that ended up being the striking engineer prior?

2 A. No, because we do rides between Olney and Fern Rock. The  
3 Ridges stop at Olney.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So we only do locals and express.

6 Q. Okay. But you had ridden with the engineer, I think his  
7 name --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Jenkins.

9 BY MR. BUCHER:

10 Q. -- Jenkins? Mr. Jenkins in the past?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. All right. What was your, just some overview of what  
13 you -- his qualifications were?

14 A. His operations were fine.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I've never had an issue or had to reinstruct him or anything.

17 Q. Okay. All right. Just a few questions since you're  
18 experienced with traveling through the accident area pretty  
19 regularly. How often do you think you would encounter track  
20 workers working in Erie interlocking?

21 A. Me, myself?

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. Or as operator?

24 Q. Well, riding through with, even riding with an engineer and  
25 doing a track ride, going through the -- I'm just getting an idea



1 for going through the area when track workers are --

2 A. Just a few times, not many; I haven't seen them out there  
3 that many times.

4 Q. Okay. And they -- do you feel that they're -- I'm trying to  
5 get to their signaling for the operator to see them with the  
6 flashlight is where, I guess I have you had experience with them  
7 using flashlights to stop the train or signal that they are in the  
8 area?

9 A. No. Usually they're in the area between -- the middle area  
10 between 3 and 4 track. They're usually in that middle area. I've  
11 never seen them in the actual interlocking.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. They're usually in that middle area, clear out of the way, so  
14 there is usually no reason for them to give a signal. I've never  
15 seen them have to give a signal to stop.

16 Q. So you've never seen the flashlight signal to stop or --

17 A. To proceed, yes.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. But never to stop.

20 Q. Never to stop. Okay.

21 MR. BUCHER: All right, I'll pass it.

22 BY MR. GOOD:

23 Q. George Good, G-O-O-D. Just a question -- so the train was  
24 sitting there for a while when you got there on location?

25 A. Yes. The train --

1 Q. The incident train?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. I was just curious, were there, did you happen to notice if  
4 there was passengers looking out the window or --

5 A. Well, it was way ahead.

6 Q. It was way ahead. They couldn't see anything?

7 A. They couldn't see the back, right. They couldn't see  
8 anything.

9 Q. And you operated the train out of there eventually, at some  
10 point?

11 A. I did not. Quentin Robinson --

12 Q. Oh, okay.

13 A. -- took over operation of the train and took it and unloaded  
14 it.

15 MR. GOOD: Okay. That's all I have for now.

16 BY MR. CREEDON:

17 Q. James Creedon, C-R-E-E-D-O-N. Aaliyah, you said the fire  
18 department was there when you got there?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. But they weren't in the track area yet?

21 A. No.

22 Q. They, they were waiting for power confirmation?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. So they didn't have one of their boxes with them?

25 A. I didn't see any boxes with them.

1 Q. Okay. That will be it. Thanks.

2 BY MR. HARRIS:

3 Q. Anthony Harris, H-A-R-R-I-S. I just have one questions. How  
4 long have you been in that position, your current position?

5 A. My current position? Three, a little over three years.

6 Q. Okay. That's all.

7 BY MR. DOLBIN:

8 Q. Excuse me. Rick Dolbin, D-O-L-B-I-N. My question is, have  
9 you seen inspectors? And do you see them regularly throughout  
10 your travels up and down?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And who -- have you seen these two inspectors that day or,  
13 you know, during the day --

14 A. No.

15 Q. You never saw them, or noticed them?

16 A. No.

17 Q. You had mentioned that earlier that you typically just don't  
18 see them, in that area regularly. It's not a part of your day to  
19 day activity?

20 A. No.

21 MR. DOLBIN: Okay. That's it. That's all I have. Thank  
22 you.

23 BY MR. WILSON:

24 Q. Joseph Wilson, I have just a couple. You mentioned a swing.  
25 What are your hours of work as a transportation manager for this

1 day?

2 A. Six a.m. to 10 a.m., and then I go on swing from 10 to 2. I  
3 come back from 2 to 6 p.m.

4 Q. Okay. During the course of your shift, you monitor the  
5 radio?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Did you happen to hear if control center put out any  
8 announcements over the airways about any railway workers in the  
9 area?

10 A. I don't recall.

11 MR. WILSON: Okay. All right, that's all I have.

12 BY MR. BUCHER:

13 Q. Dave Bucher again. Just a couple more. Just to follow up on  
14 the radio question, how often -- or do you regularly hear requests  
15 for track workers over the radio?

16 A. Yes. They usually will call the train dispatcher and let him  
17 know that they're in whatever area there in, between what station  
18 and what station, or interlock interlock, and let him know that  
19 they're in the track area.

20 Q. Okay. Great.

21 BY MR. GOOD:

22 Q. George Good. Just one last question. Have you have you ever  
23 heard, in your experience over the radio, somebody, an operator,  
24 or an operation's person saying that they had a near miss, or the  
25 workers were too close to the track, or - have you ever heard

1 that?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. You have?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. How many times have you heard that, or that concern?

6 A. Very few.

7 MR. GOOD: Thank you. That's all.

8 BY MR. JONES:

9 Q. Dean Jones, J-O-N-E-S. Have you ever done a rule compliance  
10 on railway workers?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And have you had any failures? Or many failures on rule  
13 compliance checks that you got off of railway workers?

14 A. No, I don't believe I have had any failures.

15 MR. JONES: Okay. That's all I have.

16 MR. CREEDON:

17 Q. James Creedon, C-R-E-E-D-O-N. Railway worker checks for you  
18 mostly are contractors though, correct?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. Not our employees?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Okay. Thank you. I'm done.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: None. None for me.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

25 BY MR. BUCHER:

1 Q. Okay, I have one more. Ballpark -- this is Dave Bucher.  
2 Ballpark, how often do you run into railway workers that you don't  
3 see, you haven't heard about? In other words, you're traveling  
4 along, and you see railway workers that haven't called the train  
5 dispatcher and announce their location? I mean, just randomly  
6 encounter. Does that happen often in a train trip?

7 A. I've never experienced it, no.

8 Q. Okay.

9 MR. GOOD: I have a follow-up question.

10 MR. BUCHER: Okay.

11 BY MR. GOOD:

12 Q. George Good. For the near misses, just, is there a process  
13 that formally reported that you know of, if somebody -- if there's  
14 a near miss that there's a formal process to report that?

15 A. I wouldn't know that.

16 Q. You wouldn't know.

17 MR. GOOD: Okay. Thank you.

18 BY MR. DOLBIN:

19 Q. May I ask just one? Rick Dolbin, D-O-L-B-I-N. I'm unclear  
20 in my mind that, I guess, as a PennDOT person outsider, as my  
21 vision as that, as you travelled back and forth regularly, daily,  
22 you see workers, or I would think you would see these guys,  
23 inspectors, you know, regularly as part of the day, or weeks, or I  
24 think they're in there every couple of days, or every, once a week  
25 or something.

1 A. Um hmm.

2 Q. But, I get the opinion that most of the operators don't see  
3 them as part of the day to day business. Is that, am I unclear in  
4 that? I guess I have the expectation that you would see them, and  
5 notice them, and go beyond, but I don't think you said that you  
6 see them like that. Do you notice them? Or are they just part  
7 of, I don't mean that to be --

8 A. No, it's fine, but I don't operate regularly. So, I wouldn't  
9 know from an operating point of view.

10 Q. But as you travel, you're not looking out, right? You're  
11 doing something different.

12 A. Right, but from my point of view, between Olney, the rides  
13 that I do take between Olney and Fern Rock, I rarely see track  
14 inspectors out there, right there.

15 Q. And is it because they're not necessarily right in front of  
16 you, they're out of the way of the operation of the  
17 (Indiscernible), safe or something?

18 A. Most likely they're in the vents, and the wall, or in the  
19 middle part that I was explaining.

20 Q. Right. Um hmm.

21 A. They're usually there in, out of the way, so they're really  
22 not seen.

23 Q. Which is what they're supposed to be doing.

24 MR. DOLBIN: Yeah. Okay. Thank you. That's it.

25 MR. BUCHER: Okay, I think's that's it.

1 MS. FOREMAN: Thank you.  
2 MR. BUCHER: We appreciate your, thank you for coming.  
3 (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: SEPTA TRACK WORKER FATALITY  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
JULY 8, 2019  
Interview of Aaliyah Foreman

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD19FR009

PLACE: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

DATE: July 12, 2019

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.

  
Deborah Dowling Sweigart  
Transcriber