

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

FIRE ABOARD SEPTA TRAIN NEAR THE *

CRUM LYNNE STATION IN RIDLEY PARK, *

PENNSYLVANIA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025 *

Accident No.: RRD25FR006

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Interview of: BRENDAN MONTGOMERY, Assistant Conductor
Southern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Saturday,
February 8, 2025

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BACHMEIER, Investigator-in-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD KRAHOLIK, Track Group Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board

RAYMOND BOYER, General Chairman
Sheet Metal Air Rail Transportation, Local 61

LONNIE SWIGERT, Safety Task Force
The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

GREGORY MOSS
Sheet Metal Air Rail Transportation-TD

JOSHUA QUILLEN, Operating Practices
Federal Railroad Administration

CLARENCE HILLIARD, System Safety
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

SHANDEL WILLIAMS, System Safety
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

I N D E X

ITEM

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Interview of Brendan Montgomery:

By Mr. Bachmeier

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By Mr. Kraholik

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:01 p.m.)

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3 MR. BACHMEIER: Good afternoon. My name is
4 Michael Bachmeier, and I am the NTSB Investigator-in-Charge of
5 this accident.

6 We are here today on February 8th at 1:01 p.m. in SEPTA
7 headquarters to conduct an interview with Brendan Montgomery who
8 works for SEPTA.

9 This interview is in conjunction with NTSB's investigation of
10 the accident near Crum Lynne. The NTSB Accident Reference Number
11 is RRD25FR006.

12 The purpose of the investigation is to increase safety, not
13 to assign fault, blame or liability.

14 Before we begin our interview and questions, let's go around
15 the table and introduce ourselves. Please spell your last name,
16 who you're representing and your title.

17 I'd like to remind everyone to speak clearly so we can get an
18 accurate recording.

19 I'll start off and then pass it off to my right. Again, my
20 name is Michael Bachmeier. The spelling of my last name is
21 B-a-c-h-m-e-i-e-r, and I am the NTSB IIC for this accident.

22 MR. MONTGOMERY: I'm Brendan Montgomery, assistant conductor.
23 Last name's spelled, M-o-n-t-g-o-m-e-r-y.

24 MR. BOYER: Raymond Boyer, general chairman of SMART
25 Local 61. Last name, B-o-y-e-r.

1 MR. SWIGERT: Lonnie Swigert, S-w-i-g-e-r-t, investigator,
2 BLET Safety Task Force.

3 MR. MOSS: Gregory Moss, M-o-s-s, representing SMART-TD.

4 MR. QUILLEN: Joshua Quillen, Q-u-i-l-l-e-n, FRA, Operating
5 Practices.

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Shandel Williams, W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s, assistant
7 safety officer, SEPTA.

8 MR. HILLIARD: Clarence Hilliard, H-i-l-l-i-a-r-d, SEPTA
9 safety officer.

10 MR. KRAHOLIK: Todd Kraholik, K-r-a-h-o-l-i-k. Track group
11 chairman for NTSB.

12 MR. BACHMEIER: And we have a few observers in the room.

13 MS. SHAW: Stephanie Shaw, S-h-a-w, NTSB.

14 MR. PERKINS: Robert Perkins, Regional Railroad,
15 P-e-r-k-i-n-s.

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Terrance Williams, W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s, operations
17 service manager for SEPTA.

18 MR. MCDANIEL: Kenneth Mcdaniel, M-c-d-a-n-i-e-l. FRA,
19 signal, train control inspector.

20 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay, thank you. Brendan, do we have your
21 permission to record our discussion with you today?

22 MR. MONTGOMERY: Yes.

23 MR. BACHMEIER: Do you understand the transcriptions will be
24 part of the public docket, as such, we cannot guarantee any
25 confidentiality?

1 MR. MONTGOMERY: Yes.

2 MR. BACHMEIER: As discussed, you have a representative with
3 you today, is that correct?

4 MR. MONTGOMERY: Yes.

5 MR. BACHMEIER: I'd like to ask everyone to clearly announce
6 your name and title before questioning.

7 With that, let's proceed.

8 INTERVIEW OF BRENDAN MONTGOMERY

9 BY MR. BACHMEIER:

10 Q. Brendan, can you give us a synopsis of your work experience
11 taking us up to your present job with SEPTA?

12 A. Yes. So I started in -- start date was July 8th of 2024.
13 From there, I did training. Exactly how much do you --

14 Q. Yeah. When did you get marked up?

15 A. I don't have an exact date.

16 Q. Okay. On the accident date of February 6th, can you kind of
17 give us -- what car were you located in?

18 A. Initially I was stationed between the first and the second.

19 Q. First and the second?

20 A. Hm-hmm.

21 Q. Did you notice any odor?

22 A. Yes, but I'm not sure exactly what it was.

23 Q. You could smell an odor, but you just didn't know what the
24 odor was?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. Did you notice that right away, right when you boarded
2 the train, or did it get worse as the trip went on that day?

3 A. It got worse as the trip progressed.

4 Q. Did you notify your conductor or engineer?

5 A. I notified my engineer because he was closer to me. I was
6 near the first and second cars so he was right there.

7 Q. Okay. Did you notify him over the radio or just went up and
8 talked to him?

9 A. Verbally.

10 Q. Verbally?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Over the radio or face to face?

13 A. Face to face.

14 Q. Face to face, okay. So, when did you guys move the
15 passengers from the first car to the second car?

16 A. I believe that was at Crum Lynne.

17 Q. At Crum Lynne?

18 A. Yeah.

19 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay. Lonnie, I'm going to pass off the
20 questioning to you.

21 MR. SWIGERT: I just want to say, you guys did a hell of a
22 job, and I don't have any questions for you.

23 MR. MONTGOMERY: Appreciate it.

24 MR. MOSS: Gregory Moss, and I have no questions for you.

25 MR. MONTGOMERY: Appreciate it.

1 MR. QUILLEN: I have no questions.

2 MS. WILLIAMS: No questions.

3 MR. HILLIARD: No questions.

4 MR. KRAHOLIK: Todd Kraholik, NTSB.

5 BY MR. KRAHOLIK:

6 Q. So you got hired as an assistant conductor. Do you
7 automatically move to conductor after a certain amount of time, or
8 how do you -- or do you just stay assistant conductor and have to
9 apply for a conductor job?

10 A. No, we go back for a promotion class.

11 Q. Is it at a certain time limit or timeframe?

12 A. I'm not sure about that.

13 Q. Don't know about that, okay. And you had a trainee on the
14 train the 6th, did you help in training him, or is that strictly
15 the conductor?

16 A. No. That's for a conductor.

17 Q. Gotcha. Have you ever had training on the evacuation plan at
18 SEPTA? If an emergency happens on the train, do you know how to
19 evacuate them off the train?

20 A. As far as like actually running the drill?

21 Q. Yeah. Like, have you ever ran a drill?

22 A. Not that I recall.

23 Q. So that would only be -- they only, like, teach to conductors
24 pretty much?

25 A. We went over certain stuff as far as evacuation but as far as

1 running an actual drill, I don't recall that.

2 Q. Okay. But you did go over the big steps type thing, gotcha.
3 I understand.

4 Just to clarify, the odor you smelled, I know you couldn't
5 tell what it was, but was it smoke, like, what is a smoke smell?

6 A. I'm not sure.

7 Q. Not sure, okay. Do assistant conductors have radios or no?

8 A. I don't have one personally.

9 Q. Okay. Do you know if other assistant conductors do or no?

10 A. I'm not sure.

11 MR. KRAHOLIK: Okay, gotcha. That's all I have.

12 MR. BACHMEIER: No further questions on my part. Lonnie.

13 MR. SWIGERT: I got nothing.

14 MR. MOSS: No questions.

15 MR. QUILLEN: No.

16 MS. WILLIAMS: No questions.

17 MR. HILLIARD: No questions.

18 MR. KRAHOLIK: I don't have any.

19 MR. BACHMEIER: Brendan, do you have anything you'd like to
20 add?

21 MR. MONTGOMERY: No.

22 MR. BACHMEIER: If we have any follow-up questions, would you
23 mind if we contacted you?

24 MR. MONTGOMERY: That's fine.

25 MR. BACHMEIER: On behalf of the NTSB, I'd like to thank you

1 for your time, cooperation and professionalism getting the
2 passengers off the train in an orderly fashion. I mean, it was
3 remarkable to see what your crew did there.

4 MR. MONTGOMERY: Appreciate it.

5 MR. BACHMEIER: Thank you. That concludes this interview.

6 (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: FIRE ABOARD SEPTA TRAIN NEAR THE
CRUM LYNNE STATION IN RIDLEY PARK,
PENNSYLVANIA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025
Interview of Brendan Montgomery

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD25FR006

PLACE: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

DATE: February 8, 2025

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.


Christina H. Neilson
Transcriber