

NTSB Issues Preliminary Report On Goodwell Train Wreck

Preliminary Report The information in this report is preliminary and will be supplemented or corrected during the course of the investigation. On Sunday, June 24, 2012, about 10:01 a.m. Central Daylight Time, eastbound Union Pacific Railroad (UP) freight train ZLAAH-22 and westbound UP freight train AAMMLX-22 collided head-on while operating on straight track on UP's Pratt Subdivision near Goodwell, Oklahoma. As a result of the collision, both crewmembers on the eastbound train and one crewmember on the westbound train were fatally injured. The other crewmember on the westbound train jumped from the locomotive prior to the collision and survived, with no major injuries. Fuel tanks from the derailed locomotives were ruptured, which created a diesel-fed fire. Damage was estimated at \$14.79 million. Environmental conditions were daylight, clear skies, and a temperature of 89 degrees Fahrenheit with visibility of 10 miles. The eastbound train consisted of four locomotives (three in the lead and one in the rear of the train) and 108 cars of mixed freight (108 loads and no empties). The total train length was about 7,915 feet with a weight of about 6,328 trailing tons. The lead three locomotives and first 24 cars derailed. The 24 derailed cars were articulated intermodal cars with double stacked containers. The westbound train consisted of three locomotives (two in the lead and one in the rear of the train) and 80 carloads of automobiles, with no empty cars. The total train length was about 7,743 feet with weight of about 5,760 trailing tons. The two lead locomotives and first six cars derailed. Train movements on UP's Pratt Subdivision are governed by signal indications of a traffic control system. The maximum authorized speed for freight trains in the area of the accident is 70 mph. Event recorders from the lead locomotives of both trains were severely damaged during the collision and the data could not be retrieved. Event recorder data from the rear locomotives of both trains, as well as recorded data from the signal system, is being examined to determine train speeds and signal aspects prior to the collision. Initial data review from the rear locomotives indicates that the eastbound train was traveling about 64 mph and the westbound train was traveling about 38 mph at the time of the collision. Parties to the investigation are the Federal Railroad Administration, Union Pacific Railroad, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, United Transportation Union, and the Guymon Fire Department.

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