

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

REPORT NO. 3359
BURLINGTON-ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD COMPANY
IN RE ACCIDENT
AT TEAGUE, TEX., ON
AUGUST 31, 1950

SUMMARY

Date: August 31, 1950

Railroad: Burlington-Rock Island

Location: Teague, Tex.

Kind of accident: Derailment

Train involved: Freight

Train number: Extra 701 South

Engine number: Diesel-electric units 701A, 701B,
701C and 701D

Consist: 64 cars, cabooses

Estimated speed: 35 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable and train orders

Track: Single; 1° curve; level

Weather: Cloudy

Time: 4:40 a. m.

Casualties: 5 injured

Cause: Train entering turnout at excessive
rate of speed

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO. 3359

IN THE MATTER OF MAKING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS
UNDER THE ACCIDENT REPORTS ACT OF MAY 6, 1910.

BURLINGTON-ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD COMPANY

October 25, 1950

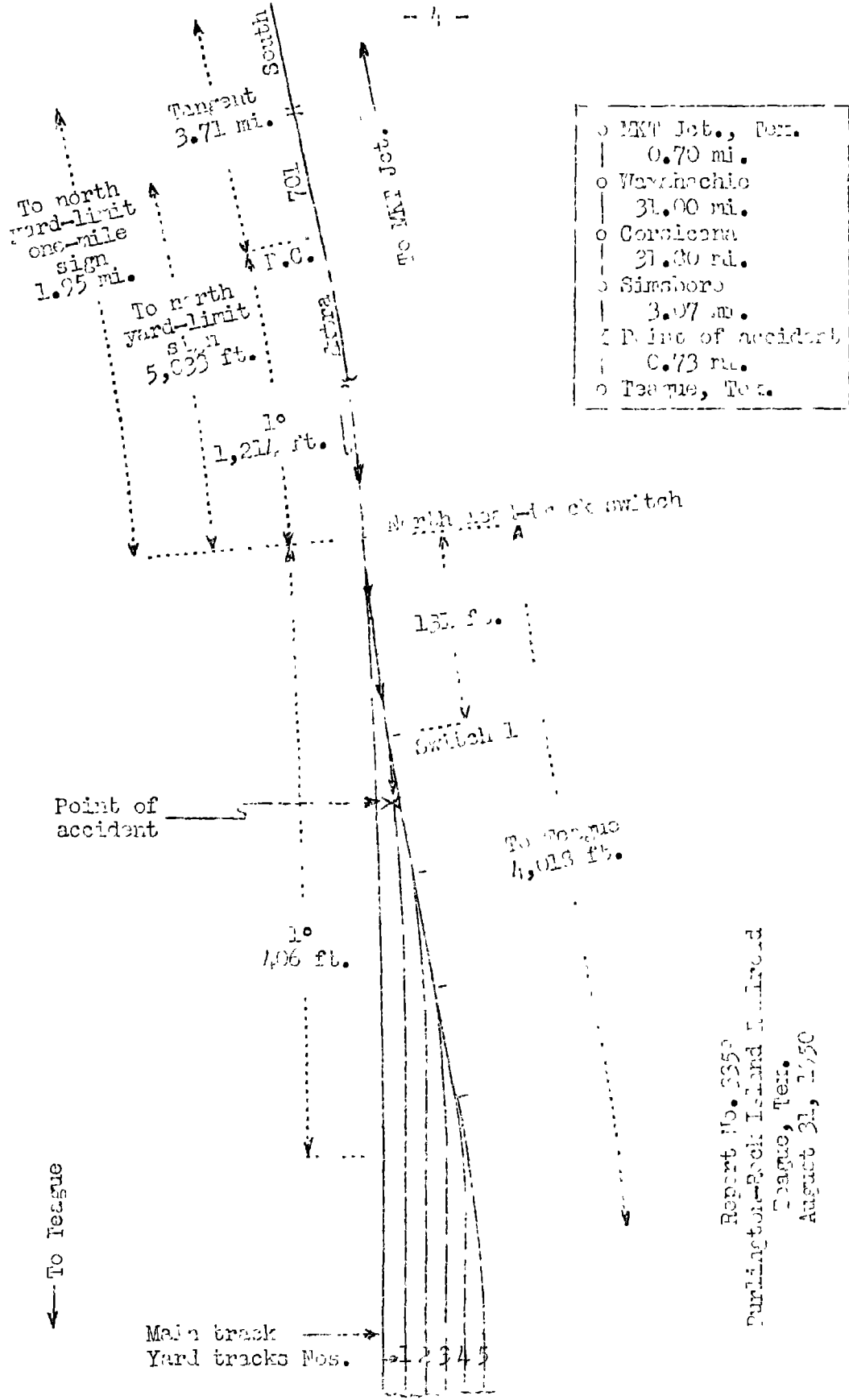
Accident at Teague, Tex., on August 31, 1950, caused by
a train entering a turnout at an excessive rate of
speed.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On August 31, 1950, there was a derailment of a
freight train on the Burlington-Rock Island Railroad at
Teague, Tex., which resulted in the injury of four train-
service employees and one trespasser.

¹ Under authority of section 17 (2) of the Interstate Com-
merce Act the above-entitled proceeding was referred by the
Commission to Commissioner Patterson for consideration and
disposition.



Report No. 3350
 Burlington & Rock Island Railroad
 Teague, Tenn.
 August 31, 1950

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Joint Texas Division extending between MKT Jct., near Waxahachie, and Teague, Tex., 67.3 miles, a single-track line, over which trains are operated by timetable and train orders. There is no block system in use. Within yard limits at Teague five yard tracks parallel the main track on the east, and from west to east are, consecutively, tracks Nos. 1 to 5. At a point 4,018 feet north of the station at Teague a lead track diverges from the main track and connects with the north ends of tracks Nos. 1 to 5, inclusive. The north switch of track No. 1 is located 131 feet south of the north lead-track switch. The north yard-limit one-mile sign and the north yard-limit sign are located, respectively, 1.95 miles and 5,033 feet north of the north lead-track switch. The accident occurred at the north turnout of track No. 1. From the north on the main track there is a tangent 3.71 miles in length and then a 1° curve to the right 1,214 feet to the north lead-track switch and 406 feet southward. The grade is practically level at the point of accident.

The structure of the north turnout of track No. 1 consists of a No. 7 rigid-type frog 12 feet long, 75-pound rails and 15-foot switch rails. The lead is 63 feet 2 inches in length. The curvature of the turnout is 12°30'.

This carrier's operating rules read in part as follows:

DEFINITIONS.

RESTRICTED SPEED.--Proceed prepared to stop short of train, engine, obstruction or switch not properly lined.

93. * * *

* * *

Within yard limits * * * extra trains * * * must move at restricted speed.

* * *

107. * * *

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(6) * * *

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When the conductor or engineer fails to take action to stop the train, and an emergency requires, brakeman and fireman must take immediate action to stop the train.

The maximum authorized speed for all trains is 10 miles per hour on turnouts.

Description of Accident

Extra 701 South, a south-bound freight train, consisted of Diesel-electric units 701A, 701B, 701C and 701D, coupled in multiple-unit control, 64 cars and a caboose. This train departed from Corsicana, the last open office, 35.6 miles north of Teague, at 3:55 a. m., passed the north yard-limit one-mile sign and the north yard-limit sign of Teague yard, and, while entering the north turnout of yard track No. 1 at an estimated speed of 35 miles per hour, the engine and the first 47 cars were derailed.

A separation occurred between the first and second Diesel-electric units. The first unit stopped on its left side, across the main track and tracks Nos. 1 and 2, and at an angle of 30 degrees to them. The front end of this unit was 661 feet south of the north lead-track switch. The front truck was torn from this unit, and it stopped west of the main track and 75 feet north of the unit. The second unit stopped with the front end north of the first unit and on track No. 3. This unit leaned to the west at an angle of about 15 degrees. The third unit remained coupled to the second unit and stopped upright, across tracks Nos. 3 and 4 and at an angle of 90 degrees to them. The fourth unit remained coupled to the third unit and stopped on track No. 4. This unit leaned to the east at an angle of about 15 degrees. The derailed cars stopped in various positions on or along the tracks. All Diesel-electric units were badly damaged. Thirty-seven cars were demolished and ten other cars were badly damaged.

The conductor, the engineer, the fireman and the front brakeman were injured.

It was cloudy at the time of the accident, which occurred about 4:40 a. m.

Diesel-electric unit 701A is equipped with 24-RL brake equipment having a safety-control feature. However, the safety control feature is not used on Diesel-electric units in freight service on this line.

Discussion

The rules of this carrier require that extra trains must move at restricted speed within yard limits. When the engineer or the conductor fails to take action to stop the train, and an emergency arises as a result of such failure, brakemen and firemen must take immediate action to stop the train.

The north lead-track switch and the north switch of yard track No. 1 of Teague yard were lined for entry of Extra 701 South to track No. 1. It was the practice for these switches to be so operated by a member of a yard crew working in Teague yard. The members of the crew of Extra 701 South expected to find the switches lined for movement of their train into the yard.

As Extra 701 South was approaching Simsboro, 3.8 miles north of Teague, the speed was about 50 miles per hour. The engineer, the fireman and the front brakeman were maintaining a lookout ahead from their respective positions in the control compartment of the first Diesel-electric unit. The conductor and the flagman were in the caboose. The brakes of this train had been tested and had functioned properly when used en route. The headlight was lighted brightly. In the vicinity of Simsboro, the fireman left the control compartment and entered the engine room to make a routine inspection of the equipment. Both the engineer and the front brakeman observed the Teague yard-limit one-mile sign when the engine was a short distance north of it. The engineer said that after the engine passed the yard-limit one-mile sign he made a 10-pound brake-pipe reduction. The brakeman said that he called the engineer's attention to the yard-limit sign and that the engineer answered him. Immediately after the engine passed the yard-limit sign the brakeman discovered that the engineer had lost consciousness. At that time the automatic brake-valve handle was in lap position, the independent brake-valve handle was in release position, the transition lever was in No. 3 position and the throttle lever was in No. 8 position. The brakeman said he attempted to arouse the engineer, but he did not take action to apply the brakes. The fireman said that when the engine was in the vicinity of the yard-limit sign he observed that the speed of the train was not decreased at the usual rate. He returned immediately to the control compartment but the accident occurred before he could take any action to apply the brakes. The conductor and the flagman had access to the conductor's valve in the caboose. The conductor said that, when the 10-pound brake-pipe reduction was made, a run-in of slack occurred and he was thrown to the floor of the caboose, and was unable to take action to stop the train before the accident occurred. Both

the conductor and the flagman said that the run-in of slack dislodged a lamp in the caboose. The flagman said that escaping oil immediately became ignited, and he was engaged in extinguishing the fire when the accident occurred. The derailment occurred about 3 minutes after the brake-pipe reduction was made.

Each member of the crew of Extra 701 South knew that they were approaching Teague yard, and they understood that their train was required to be operated at restricted speed within yard limits. They also understood that they were required to take action to control the speed of their train if the engineer failed to do so. The engineer said he lost consciousness before the engine passed the yard-limit sign and did not remember any of the events which followed. The front brakeman had access to the automatic brake-valve in the control compartment of the first Diesel-electric unit and knew where the brake-valve handle was located. He was an experienced employee and had made several trips between MKT Jct. and Teague on Diesel-electric units. The accident occurred about 1-1/2 minutes after he discovered that the engineer had lost consciousness.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by a train entering a turnout at an excessive rate of speed.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twenty-fifth day of October, 1950.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.