

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

REPORT NO. 3440
CAMAS PRAIRIE RAILROAD COMPANY
IN RE ACCIDENT
AT ARROW, IDAHO, ON
NOVEMBER 11, 1951

SUMMARY

Date: November 11, 1951

Railroad: Camas Prairie

Location: Arrow, Idaho

Kind of accident: Rear-end collision

Trains involved: Freight : Freight

Train numbers: Extra NP 1648 East : Extra NP 6015 East

Engine numbers: 1648 : Diesel-electric units 6015D, 6015C, 3015B and 6015A

Consists: 85 cars, caboose : 15 cars, caboose

Speeds: Standing : 35 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable and train orders; yard limits

Track: Single; tangent; level

Weather: Clear

Time: 11:10 a. m.

Casualties: 3 killed; 2 injured

Cause: Failure properly to control speed of train moving within yard limits

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO. 3440

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

CAMAS PRAIRIE RAILROAD COMPANY

January 28, 1952

Accident at Arrow, Idaho, on November 11, 1951, caused
by failure properly to control the speed of a
train moving within yard limits.

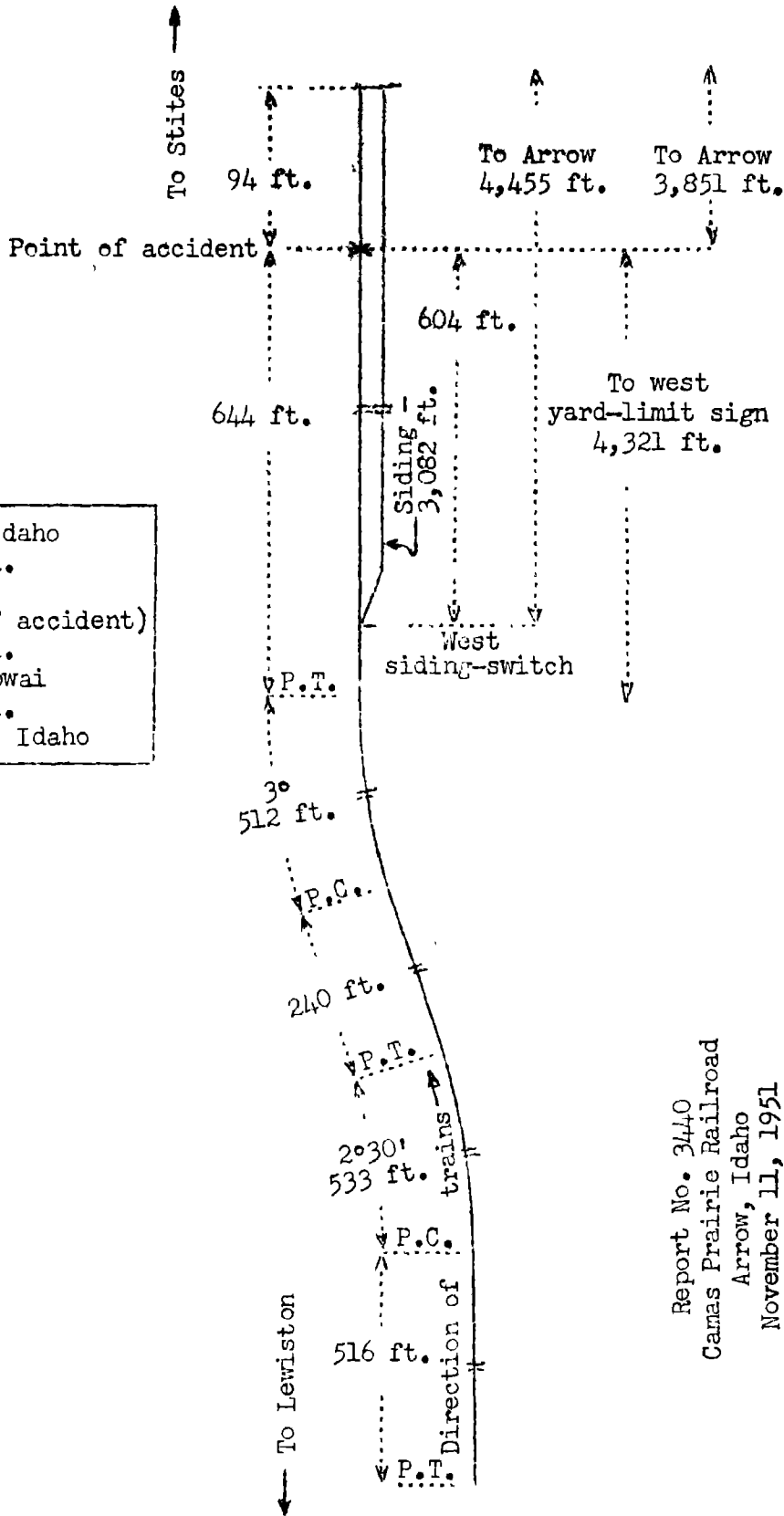
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On November 11, 1951, there was a rear-end collision
between two freight trains on the Camas Prairie Railroad
at Arrow, Idaho, which resulted in the death of three
employees, and the injury of two employees.

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.

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| o | Stites, Idaho |
| | 62.7 mi. |
| X | Arrow |
| | (Point of accident) |
| | 4.1 mi. |
| o | North Lapwai |
| | 9.4 mi. |
| o | Lewiston, Idaho |



Report No. 3440
 Camas Prairie Railroad
 Arrow, Idaho
 November 11, 1951

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the First Subdivision extending between Lewiston and Stites, Idaho, 76.2 miles. In the vicinity of the point of accident this is a single-track line, over which trains are operated by timetable and train orders. There is no block system in use. Trains of the Northern Pacific Railway regularly are operated over the Camas Prairie Railroad between Lewiston and Arrow, 13.5 miles east of Lewiston. At Arrow, a siding 3,082 feet in length parallels the main track on the south. The west switch of this siding is 4,455 feet west of the station. The accident occurred on the main track, within yard limits, at a point 4,321 feet east of the west yard-limit sign and 3,851 feet west of the station at Arrow. From the west there are, in succession, a tangent 516 feet in length, a 2°30' curve to the left 533 feet, a tangent 240 feet, a 5° curve to the right 512 feet, and a tangent 64' feet to the point of accident and 94 feet eastward. In the vicinity of the point of accident the grade is level.

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

DEFINITIONS.

Restricted Speed.--Proceed prepared to stop short of train, obstruction, or anything that may require the speed of a train to be reduced.

93. * * *

Within yard limits the main track may be used without protecting against second and inferior class, extra trains and engines.

Within yard limits second and inferior class, extra trains and engines must move at restricted speed.

* * *

The maximum authorized speed for the trains involved in this accident was 30 miles per hour.

Description of Accident

Extra NP 1648 East, an east-bound freight train, consisted of engine 1648, 85 cars and a caboose. This train stopped at Arrow at 10:30 a. m., where switching operations were performed. After the switching operations were completed and the train was ready to depart eastward, the rear end was struck by Extra NP 6015 East.

Extra NP 6015 East, an east-bound Northern Pacific freight train, consisted of Diesel-electric units 6015D, 6015C, 6015B and 6015A, coupled in multiple-unit control, 15 cars and a caboose, in the order named. This train departed from North Lapwai, 4.1 miles west of Arrow, at 11:04 a. m., and while moving within yard limits at Arrow at a speed of about 35 miles per hour it struck the rear end of Extra NP 1648 East.

The caboose and the rear eight cars of Extra NP 1648 East were demolished. The first and second Diesel-electric units and the front truck of the third Diesel-electric unit of Extra NP 6015 East derailed to the north and stopped with the front end of the first unit 377 feet east of the point of accident. The first unit leaned to the north at an angle of about 45 degrees and the second unit leaned to the north at an angle of about 30 degrees. The first and second Diesel-electric units were considerably damaged. The first three cars of Extra NP 6015 East were slightly damaged. One car of a cut of cars standing on the siding was considerably damaged and six other cars on the siding were slightly damaged.

The engineer and the swing brakeman of Extra NP 6015 East, and the conductor of Extra NP 1648 East were killed. The fireman and the front brakeman of Extra NP 6015 East were injured.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred at 11:10 a. m.

Discussion

Extra NP 1648 East stopped on the main track within yard limits at Arrow at 10:30 a. m., where switching operations were to be performed. After the switching was completed, the train was assembled on the main track, with the caboose 604 feet east of the west siding-switch. A cut of 15 cars was standing on the siding with the west end of the most westerly car about 300 feet east of the west switch, and

the eighth car from the west end was adjacent to the caboose of Extra NP 1648 East. The engineer and the fireman were in the cab of the engine, the front brakeman and the flagman were in the vicinity of the front end of the train, and the conductor was in the caboose. As the train started to move eastward, the rear end was struck by Extra NP 6015 East.

As Extra NP 6015 East was approaching the point where the accident occurred the engineer and the fireman were in their respective positions in the control compartment of the first Diesel-electric unit. The swing brakeman was seated between the engineer and the fireman. The front brakeman was in the control compartment of the fourth Diesel-electric unit. The conductor and the flagman were in the caboose. The brakes of this train had been tested. Because of the cars standing on the siding and curvature of the main track, the view of the caboose of Extra NP 1648 East from the control compartment of the first Diesel-electric unit of Extra NP 6015 East was restricted to about 980 feet. The fireman said that when the caboose came into view the engineer immediately placed the automatic brake valve in emergency position. Examination of the tape of the speed-recording device of Diesel-electric unit 6015A disclosed that the speed of Extra NP 6015 East was 47 miles per hour when the brake application was made and was reduced to about 35 miles per hour when the collision occurred.

This accident occurred within yard limits and, under the rules of this carrier, Extra NP 6015 East was required to be operated in such a manner that it could be stopped short of a preceding train. All surviving members of the crew of Extra NP 6015 East understood this requirement and were aware that the train was being operated within yard limits. They said that they were not aware that the train was being operated at a speed in excess of the speed restriction.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by failure properly to control the speed of a train moving within yard limits.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twenty-eighth day of January, 1952.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,
Secretary.