

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

INVESTIGATION NO. 3067
CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE, ST. PAUL AND PACIFIC
RAILROAD COMPANY
REPORT IN RE ACCIDENT
AT VAN, IND., ON
FEBRUARY 1, 1947

SUMMARY

Railroad: Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul
and Pacific

Date: February 1, 1947

Location: Van, Ind.

Kind of accident: Rear-end collision

Trains involved: Freight : Freight

Train numbers: 77 : Extra 580
North

Engine numbers: 568 : 580-314

Consists: 16 cars, caboose : 2 auxiliary
water cars,
96 cars,
caboose

Speeds: Standing : 5 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable and train orders;
yard limits

Track: Single; 3° curve; 0.58 percent
descending grade northward

Weather: Clear

Time: 10:26 p. m.

Casualties: 1 killed; 1 injured

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

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION NO. 3067

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

CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE, ST. PAUL AND PACIFIC
RAILROAD COMPANY

February 28, 1947

Accident at Van, Ind., on February 1, 1947, caused by
failure properly to control the speed of the
following train moving within yard limits.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

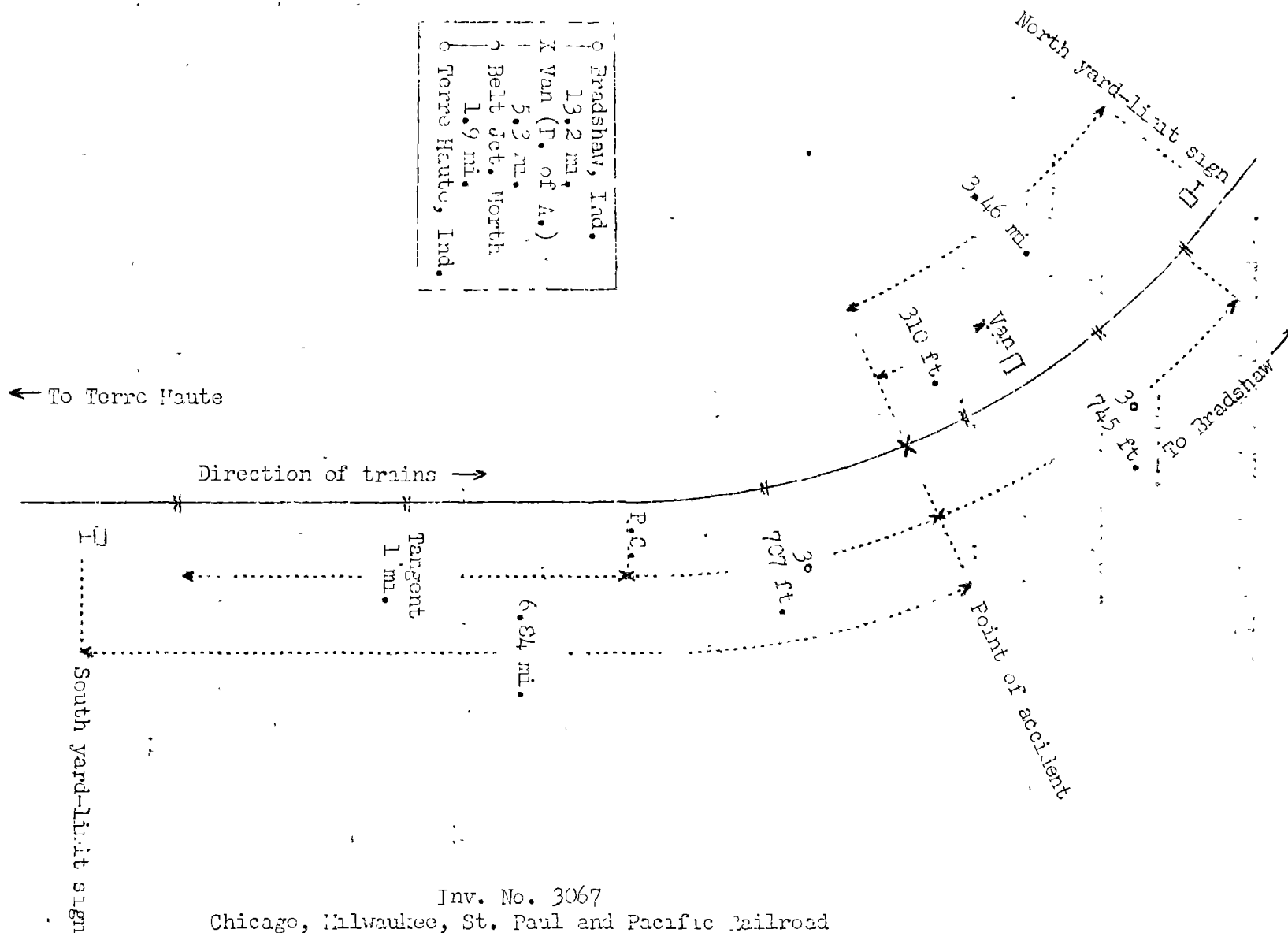
PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On February 1, 1947, there was a rear-end collision between two freight trains on the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad at Van, Ind., which resulted in the death of one employee, and the injury of one employee. This accident was investigated in conjunction with a representative of the Indiana Public Service Commission.

¹

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

o Bradshaw, Ind.
13.2 mi.
X Van (P. of A.)
5.3 mi.
o Belt Jet. North
1.9 mi.
o Terre Haute, Ind.



Inv. No. 3067
 Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad
 Van, Ind.
 February 1, 1947

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Terre Haute Division extending between Terre Haute and Bradshaw, Ind., 20.4 miles, a single-track line, over which trains are operated by timetable and train orders. There is no block system in use. The accident occurred within yard limits on the main track at Van, 5.3 miles north of Belt Jct. North, at a point 6.84 miles north of the south yard-limit sign, 310 feet south of the station and 3.46 miles south of the north yard-limit sign. From the south there is a tangent about 1 mile in length, then a 3° curve to the left 707 feet to the point of accident and 745 feet northward. The grade is 0.58 percent descending northward.

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.

* * *

Description of Accident

No. 77, a north-bound second-class freight train, consisting of engine 568, 16 cars and a caboose, departed from Belt Jct. North, the last open office, at 9:50 p. m., 10 minutes late, and stopped on the main track at Van about 10:10 p. m., with the rear end standing 6.84 miles north of the south yard-limit sign. About 16 minutes later, while the engine was engaged in picking up cars from a yard track some distance northward, the rear end of No. 77 was struck by Extra 580 North.

Extra 580 North, a north-bound freight train, consisting of engine 580, 1 auxiliary water car, engine 314, 1 auxiliary water car, 96 cars and a caboose, in the order named, departed from Belt Jct. North at 10:08 p. m., passed the south yard-limit sign and while moving at an estimated speed of 5 miles per hour it struck No. 77.

The caboose, the rear car and the rear truck of the second car ahead of the caboose of No. 77 were derailed. The caboose was demolished, and the derailed cars were damaged. None of the equipment of Extra 580 North was derailed. The front end of the first engine was damaged.

The flagman of No. 77 was killed. The front brakeman of Extra 580 North was injured.

The weather was clear at the time of the accident, which occurred about 10:26 p. m.

Discussion

No. 77, a north-bound second-class train, stopped on the main track within yard limits at Van about 10:10 p. m. to perform switching. About 16 minutes later, the rear end of this train was struck by Extra 580 North, at a point 6.84 miles north of the south yard-limit sign.

When the collision occurred the conductor and the front brakeman of No. 77 were in the vicinity of the engine, which was engaged in assembling cars to be picked up from a yard track some distance north of the rear portion of the train. The flagman was in the caboose, and he was killed in the accident. The marker lamps on the rear of the caboose were lighted, and displayed red to the rear.

As Extra 580 North was approaching the point where the collision occurred the speed was about 15 miles per hour. The headlight of the first engine was lighted brightly. The brakes of this train were in the charge of the engineer of the first engine. The brakes had functioned properly where used en route. The enginemen of both engines, and the front brakeman, who was on the first engine, were maintaining a lookout ahead. The engineer of the first engine said that when his engine was about 1,800 feet south of the point where the accident occurred he made a 15-pound brake-pipe reduction, in compliance with a whistle signal given by the engineer of the second engine to stop the train, which was given so that the engineer of the second engine could inspect the guides of his engine. When the first engine was about 500 feet south of the point where the accident occurred the fireman

of the first engine and the front brakeman saw the lighted red marker lamps of the preceding train, and called a warning to the engineer. Then the engineer moved the brake valve to emergency position. The speed of Extra 580 North was about 5 miles per hour when the collision occurred. Because of buildings on the inside of the curve on which the accident occurred, the view of the track ahead from a north-bound engine is materially restricted,

The accident occurred within yard limits, and, under the rules, Extra 580 North was required to be operated in such manner that it could be stopped short of a preceding train.

Cause

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

Dated at Washington, D.C., this twenty-eighth day of February, 1947.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson,

(SEAL)

W. P. BARTEL,

Secretary.