

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON

REPORT NO. 3367

CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND AND PACIFIC
RAILROAD COMPANY

IN RE ACCIDENT

NEAR TROY, KANS., ON

SEPTEMBER 29, 1950

SUMMARY

Date: September 29, 1950

Railroad: Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific

Location: Troy, Kans.

Kind of accident: Head-end collision

Trains involved: Freight : Freight

Train numbers: Extra 495 West : 996

Engine numbers: U.P. 495 : 1916

Consists: 2 cars, cabooses : 22 cars, cabooses

Estimated speeds: 25 m. p. h. : 15 m. p. h.

Operation: Timetable and train orders

Track: Single; 3° curve; 0.76 percent ascending grade westward

Weather: Cloudy

Time: 9:10 a. m.

Casualties: 5 injured

Cause: Inferior train occupying main track on time of opposing superior train without protection

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

REPORT NO. 3367

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

CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND AND PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY

November 20, 1950

- Accident near Troy, Kans., on September 29, 1950, caused
by an inferior train occupying the main track on the
time of an opposing superior train without protection.

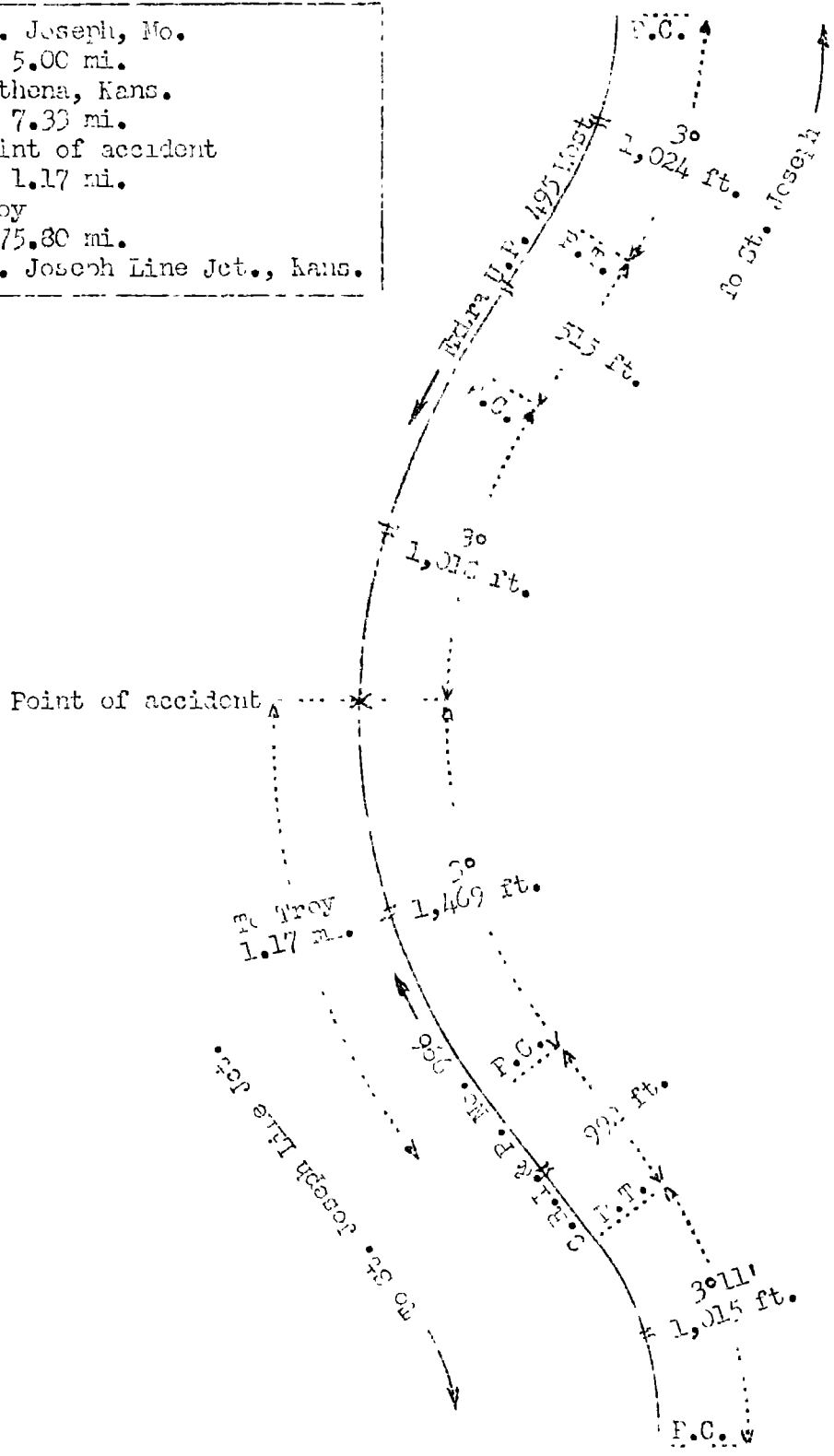
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION¹

PATTERSON, Commissioner:

On September 29, 1950, there was a head-end collision between two freight trains on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad near Troy, Kans., which resulted in the injury of five employees.

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 St. Joseph, Mo.
| 5.00 mi.
- o Wathena, Kans.
| 7.33 mi.
- X Point of accident
| 1.17 mi.
- o Troy
| 75.80 mi.
- o St. Joseph Line Jct., Kans.



Report No. 3267
 Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad
 Troy, Kans.
 September 29, 1950

Location of Accident and Method of Operation

This accident occurred on that part of the Missouri-Kansas Division extending between St. Joseph, Mo., and St. Joseph Line Jct., Kans., 89.3 miles. 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 Union Pacific Railroad, hereinafter referred to as the U.P., regularly are operated over that portion of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, hereinafter referred to as the C.R.I. & P., extending between St. Joseph and Troy, Kans., 13.5 miles west of St. Joseph. The accident occurred on the main track at a point 12.33 miles west of St. Joseph and 1.17 miles east of the station at Troy. From the east there are, in succession, a 3° curve to the right 1,024 feet in length, a tangent 615 feet, and a 3° curve to the left 1,018 feet to the point of accident and 1,469 feet westward. From the west there are, in succession, a 3°11' curve to the left 1,015 feet in length, a tangent 992 feet, and the curve on which the accident occurred. The grade is 0.76 percent ascending westward.

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

DEFINITIONS.

Train Register.--A book or form which may be used at designated stations for registering signals displayed, the time of arrival and departure of trains, and such other information as may be prescribed.

Register Station.--A station at which train register is located.

73. Extra trains are inferior to regular trains.

83. Train Register Requirements.-- * * *

* * * the conductor * * * will enter all required information in the train register * * *

85 (a). * * * a train must not leave its initial station on any subdivision * * * until it has been ascertained that all superior trains due have arrived and left on single track * * *

This information must be ascertained by conductor and engineer in one of the following * * * ways:

(1) By checking timetable and train register;
* * *

(3) By use of timetable and register check on prescribed form filled out by the conductor; * * *

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87. Protection When Failure to Clear.--When an inferior train fails to clear a superior train by the time required by rule, it must be protected at that time as prescribed by Rule 99.

* * *

89. Clearing Time, Opposing Trains.--An inferior train must clear the time (in timetable or train order) of an opposing superior train not less than 5 minutes before the leaving time of the superior train.

99. Flagging Rule.-- * * *

When a train stops under circumstances in which it may be overtaken by another train, the flagman must go back immediately with flagman's signals a sufficient distance to insure full protection * * *

* * *

99 (b). When necessary, the front of the train must be protected as prescribed by Rule 99 by the forward trainman or by an engine man.

* * *

The maximum authorized speed for the trains involved was 40 miles per hour, but it was restricted to 25 miles per hour on the curve on which the accident occurred.

Description of Accident

Extra 495 West, a west-bound U.P. freight train, consisted of engine U.P. 495, two cars and a caboose. This train departed from St. Joseph at 8:40 a. m., passed Wathena, the last open office, 5 miles west of St. Joseph, at 8:51 a. m., and while moving at an estimated speed of 25 miles per hour it collided with No. 996 at a point 1.17 miles east of the station at Troy.

No. 996, an east-bound second-class C.R.I. & P. freight train, consisted of engine 1916, 22 cars and a caboose. This train departed from Troy at 9:05 a. m., 3 hours 55 minutes late, and while moving at an estimated speed of 15 miles per hour it collided with Extra 495 West.

The engine of Extra 495 West was derailed and stopped upright and in line with the track. The frame was broken and the front of the engine was badly damaged. A separation occurred between the engine and the tender. The tender and the caboose were slightly damaged. The engine of No. 996 stopped upright and in line with the track, with the rear driving wheels on top of the front truck of the tender. The cistern of the tender was torn from the frame and pushed westward against the front end of the first car. The third, fourth, and fifth cars, and the front truck of the sixth car were derailed. These cars stopped in various positions on or near the track. The first and the fourth cars were badly damaged, and the other derailed cars were somewhat damaged.

The engineer, the fireman, the conductor, the front brakeman, and the flagman of Extra 495 West were injured.

The weather was cloudy at the time of the accident, which occurred about 9:10 a. m.

Discussion

Under the rules of this carrier, a train must not leave its initial station on any subdivision until its crew has ascertained that all superior trains due have arrived and left. If the initial station is a register station, this information may be ascertained by checking the train register or by use of a register check on the prescribed form, which is filled out by the conductor. An inferior train must clear the time of an opposing superior train not less than 5 minutes or provide protection as prescribed by Rule 99.

At St. Joseph, train order offices are located at the passenger station and at the yard office. The train-order office at the yard office is closed between 5:30 p. m. and 8:30 a. m., and during that time all train orders are transmitted for delivery at the train-order office at the passenger station. A train register is located at the yard office. Another train register is maintained at the yard office of the U.P., but this register is used for registering the time of arrival and departure of U.P. trains only.

On the day of the accident, the crew of Extra 495 West reported for duty at St. Joseph at 8 a. m. The train-order office at the yard office was closed, and the conductor obtained train orders for his train from the operator at the passenger station. These train orders authorized the movement of this train from St. Joseph to Troy, but did not confer authority to proceed with respect to opposing overdue superior trains. No. 218, an east-bound second-class U.P. freight train, was due to arrive at St. Joseph at 11 p. m., and No. 996 was due to arrive at 6:45 a. m. Unless these trains had arrived at St. Joseph, Extra 495 West was not permitted to leave, except under flag protection. After the conductor obtained the orders at the passenger station, he proceeded to the yard office of the U.P. He checked the train register at that office and ascertained that No. 218 had arrived, then prepared a register check for delivery to the engineer. He then proceeded to the yard office of the C.R.I. & P. and entered the required information in the train register at that office, but did not consult his timetable and did not check the train register to ascertain whether No. 996 had arrived. When he delivered the train orders and the register check to the engineer, the engineer also failed to consult his timetable. All superior U.P. trains had arrived, but the conductor and the engineer overlooked the fact that No. 996 also was overdue at St. Joseph.

As Extra 495 West was approaching the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 25 miles per hour. The enginemen and the front brakeman were in their respective positions on the engine, and 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. On the curve on which the accident occurred, the view of the track ahead from the left side of the cab of a west-bound engine is restricted to a distance of 375 to 500 feet by vegetation along the track. The track ahead is not visible from the right side of the cab. When the fireman and the front brakeman called a warning, the engineer immediately initiated an emergency application of the brakes, and the collision occurred a few seconds later. The fireman, the front brakeman, and the flagman were too seriously injured in the accident to be questioned during this investigation.

As No. 996 was approaching the point where the accident occurred the speed was about 15 miles per hour. The enginemen were maintaining a lookout ahead from their respective positions on the engine, the front brakeman was on the deck of the engine, and 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. No train order restricting the movement of No. 996 with respect to Extra 495 West had been issued. The engineer first became aware that Extra 495 West was occupying the main track when he observed that train approaching at a distance of several hundred feet. He immediately initiated an emergency application of the brakes, but the collision occurred before the speed of the train was reduced.

Cause

It is found that this accident was caused by an inferior train occupying the main track on the time of an opposing superior train without protection.

Dated at Washington, D. C., this twentieth day of November, 1950.

By the Commission, Commissioner Patterson.

(SEAL)

W. P. BAHTEL,
Secretary.