On Monday, June 3, 2019, about 3:23 a.m. central daylight time, a 1995 Ford 15-passenger van, occupied by a 30-year-old driver and eight passengers, was eastbound on Mississippi State Highway 16 (SH-16) east of Scooba, in Kemper County, Mississippi. At the same time, a 2020 International Harvester Corporation (IHC) box truck, occupied by a 28-year-old driver, was traveling west on SH-16. As both vehicles approached the Pushacoona Creek bridge, the truck crossed the highway centerline into the eastbound lane. The van driver applied the vehicle’s brakes and steered left, crossing over the centerline and into the westbound lane. Both vehicles were on the bridge when the right front of the truck hit the right front of the van head-on. The truck overrode the front of the van and penetrated the passenger compartment. After impact, the van was pushed rearward as both vehicles rotated clockwise. The van came to rest with its rear bumper on the north guardrail (on the west side of the bridge approach) and with its front facing south (figure 1).

The highway at the crash location has several curves (figure 2). The traffic lanes are separated by a solid yellow line for westbound traffic and a broken yellow line for eastbound traffic.
Guardrails and rumble strips line the highway shoulders on both approaches to the bridge, but the highway has no centerline rumble strip. The width of the bridge deck limits the space between the edge of the travel lanes and the concrete bridge rails.

**Figure 2.** Overhead view of SH-16 and crash location. Arrow points to where van came to rest against Pushacoona Creek bridge guardrail. (Adapted from Google Earth)

The van was owned and operated by Sharp Forestry, whose principal place of business is Columbus, Mississippi. The vehicle had departed from Macon, Mississippi, and was en route to Monroeville, Alabama, where the occupants were to work trimming trees. The van’s occupants were not wearing seat belts. All eight passengers died in the crash. The driver suffered minor injuries and was taken to a local hospital. The Mississippi Highway Patrol cited the driver for not having a driver’s license.

The truck was operated by Overnight Parts Alliance, whose principal place of business is Birmingham, Alabama. The carrier operates 85 straight trucks and employs 91 drivers. It had nine reportable crashes in the past 24 months. The truck driver had a class D noncommercial driver’s license, issued by Alabama, and a valid medical certificate.¹

All aspects of the Scooba, Mississippi, crash remain under investigation as the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) determines the probable cause and examines potential safety recommendations to help prevent similar crashes. The NTSB is working alongside the Mississippi Highway Patrol, which is conducting a separate, parallel investigation.

¹ The box truck had a registered gross vehicle weight rating of 25,999 pounds, below the weight at which the driver would have been required to hold a commercial driver’s license.