



National Transportation Safety Board

Chattanooga, TN School Bus Operator Oversight

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Overview

- History of Durham School Services
- Precrash tracking of driver complaints
- Postcrash systems to improve driver oversight

Durham School Services

- Subsidiary of National Express LLP
- Contracted by Hamilton County Department of Education
- Durham operated in 32 states with more than 13,000 drivers

Hamilton County and Durham School Services

- Hamilton County had limited oversight of Durham operations and drivers
- All complaints forwarded to Durham
- Hamilton County did not document resolutions

Tracking of Complaints Against Driver

- Recorded in paper notebooks or emails, not in employee file
- Discrepancies in complaint documentation
- No complaint resolution tracking
- No policy or systematic way to process, document, and investigate complaints

Driver Behavior Monitoring Systems

- Precrash
 - Limited video available
 - Only supervisor reviewed, no resolution tracking
- Postcrash
 - New camera systems installed
 - Third-party reviewers
 - Durham notified of unsafe events

Additional Postcrash Safety Actions

- National Express
 - Online tracking of complaints, prioritization, and resolution
- State of Tennessee
 - Annual training for transportation supervisors
 - Formal policies for responding to bus safety complaints
 - Minimum age of 25 years for school bus drivers

Summary

- Durham
 - Lacked systematic complaint tracking
 - Failed to provide adequate oversight
- Durham and Hamilton County
 - Lack of documentation and resolution
 - Failed to remove unsafe driver



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