



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: November 24, 2014

In reply refer to: R-14-57 through R-14-64
R-14-07 and R-14-12 (Reclassification)

Mr. Joseph Giuliatti
President
Metro-North Railroad
347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters. We are providing the following information to urge the Metro-North Railroad to take action on the safety recommendations being issued in this letter.

On November 19, 2014, we adopted our report *Organizational Factors in Metro-North Railroad Accidents* in which the results of five investigations involving Metro-North Railroad were discussed. The accidents examined included: (1) the May 17, 2013, derailment and subsequent collision in Bridgeport, Connecticut; (2) the May 28, 2013, employee fatality in West Haven, Connecticut; (3) the July 18, 2013, CSX derailment on Metro-North tracks in The Bronx, New York; (4) the December 1, 2013, derailment in The Bronx, New York; and (5) the March 10, 2014, employee fatality in Manhattan, New York.¹ Additional information about these accidents and the resulting recommendations may be found in the report of the investigation, which can be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>, under report number SIR-14/04.

¹ National Transportation Safety Board. *Organizational Factors in Metro-North Railroad Accidents*. SIR-14/04 (Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board, 2014).

As a result of this investigation, we reiterated Safety Recommendations R-12-16, R-13-21, and R-14-34; reclassified Safety Recommendations R-08-06, R-14-07 and R-14-12; and issued 17 new recommendations, including one to the Long Island Railroad; three to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority; two to the Federal Railroad Administration; one to the Association of American Railroads, the American Public Transportation Association, the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, and the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers; one to the American College of Physicians; one to the American Academy of Family Physicians; and the following eight recommendations to the Metro-North Railroad:

R-14-57

Establish and implement a system to collect and analyze operational data to identify and mitigate adverse safety trends.

R-14-58

Require, as part of your risk management program, that representatives from all your divisions and labor organizations (1) regularly review safety and operational data from all divisions to identify safety issues and trends and (2) share the results across divisions.

R-14-59

Implement a confidential close call reporting system, or similar nonpunitive safety reporting system to encourage all employees to report safety incidents, and ensure reports are regularly reviewed as part of a safety risk management program with the results shared across all divisions of the organization.

R-14-60

Develop and implement a robust internal audit and oversight program, in coordination with your safety risk management process, to ensure that all employees and managers comply with your established safety procedures.

R-14-61

Develop and implement a comprehensive training program for your employees on how to conduct effective internal auditing, operational testing, safety risk management analysis, and corrective action implementation.

R-14-62

Revise your medical protocols for employees in safety-sensitive positions to include specific protocols on sleep disorders, including obstructive sleep apnea.

R-14-63

Develop and publicize to your safety-sensitive employees a list of medications, including over-the-counter and prescription medications, that may not be used by locomotive engineers or conductors in active service.

R-14-64

Develop and implement protocols to routinely screen and fully evaluate your safety-sensitive employees for sleep disorders and ensure that such disorders are adequately addressed if diagnosed.

In addition, we reclassified the following recommendations to the Metro-North Railroad:

R-14-07

Survey your system and install approach permanent speed restriction signs where permanent changes in train speed apply, to alert train operating crews of the reduced speeds.

This safety recommendation is now classified “Open—Acceptable Response.”

R-14-12

Revise your track inspection program to include requirements (1) to traverse each main track by vehicle or inspect each main track on foot at least once every 2 weeks, and (2) to traverse and inspect each siding, either by vehicle or on foot, at least once every month.

This safety recommendation is now classified “Open—Acceptable Action.”

Acting Chairman HART, and Members SUMWALT, ROSEKIND, and WEENER concurred in these recommendations.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement them. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov. If it exceeds 10 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

[Original Signed]

By: Christopher A. Hart,
Acting Chairman