



New York “Metro-North” Derailment, December 1, 2013

NTSB Investigation



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Presentation Overview

- Overview of New York City's Metro-North railroad passenger train derailment.
- NTSB investigation public information.
- Potential causes.
- NTSB rules for “party” status in an investigation.





New York City's "Metro-North" Passenger Train Derailment December 1, 2013



Head-end of train ("cab car") rests at edge of river





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)



Two cars on their sides, three cars leaning, two upright





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)



View from middle towards rear of train





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)



View of curve, surrounding area





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)



Head-end of train





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)



CRAIG RUTLEAP

Controlling “cab car” head-end at edge of river





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)

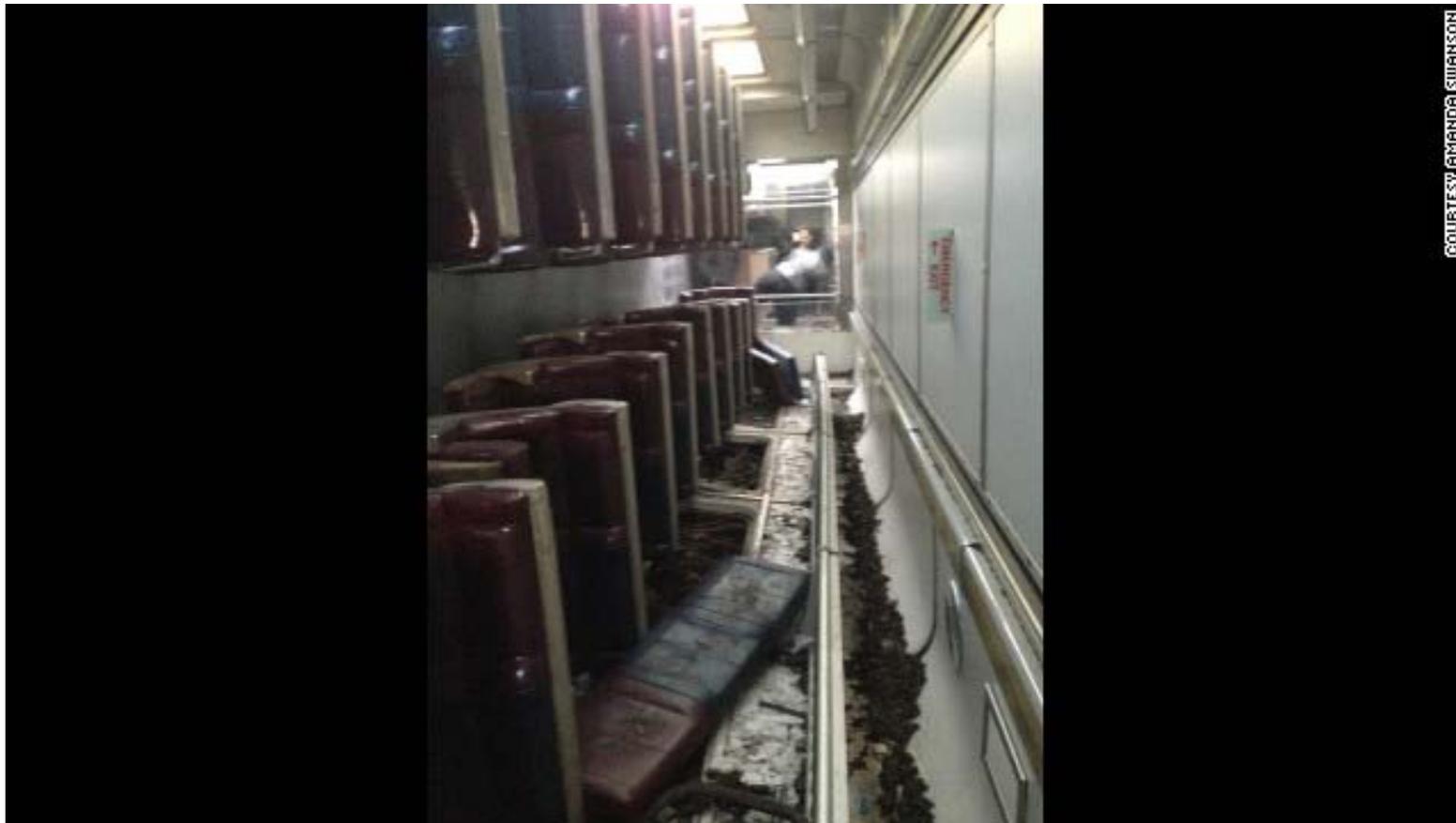


Cars that slid on their sides





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)



Inside of car on its side, showing broken windows, gravel (“ballast”) incursion





Metro-North Derailment (cont.)



Service restoration work, removing cars





Potential Causes

- NTSB Investigation Procedure:
 - Every possible cause “on the table.”
 - Gathers all possible facts.
 - Works to progressively eliminate possible causes.
- Causes Currently Primarily Under Consideration:
 - Human failure:
 - Error.
 - Medical event.
 - Mechanical Failure:
 - Brakes.
 - Power, but operating brakes would override.
- Prevention Measures:
 - Existing measures, such as “deadman pedal,” induction alerter.





NTSB Investigation Information Released

- Accident occurred about 7:20 a.m., Eastern Time.
- Event recorder indicated speed was 82 mph into the curve.
- Maximum allowable track speed was 30 mph in curve.
- Maximum allowable track speed was 70 mph prior to curve.
- So far, mechanical inspections reveal no brake anomalies.
- Initial terminal and running brake tests were made.
- Several station stops prior to derailment were made without incident.
- Alcohol screens were negative for all crew members.
- Drug screen analysis not yet complete.





Rules for “Party” Status in NTSB Investigation



NTSB Investigator-In-Charge (IIC) Mike Flanigon





NTSB “Party” Rules (cont.)

- Rules are established to:
 - Allow parties with diverse perspectives and expertise to participate.
 - Yet still maintain the integrity of the investigation.
- Parties must sign an agreement to not disclose investigation information without NTSB approval.
- NTSB: Union, Association of Commuter Rail Employees (ACRE), divulged information contrary to the agreement.
- Union’s party status revoked; union dismissed from participation.
- NTSB’s purpose is to prevent special interest influence, and to maintain the integrity of the investigation.





NTSB “Party” Rules (cont.)

NTSB’s Chairman Deborah A.P. Hersman:

"While we value the technical expertise that groups like ACRE can provide during the course of an investigation, it is counterproductive when an organization breaches the party agreement and publically interprets or comments on investigation information."

“Our rules exist to avoid the prospect of any party to an NTSB investigation offering its slant on the circumstances of the accident.”

