

Train Derailment – Slidell, LA.

Amtrak Passenger Train

April 20th, 2011

Train Derailment

- The following presentation details an incident that occurred in Slidell on April 20th, 2011. We will discuss how proper training, equipment and organization lead the successful outcome of the incident. We will also discuss lessons learned during the incident.

Slidell, LA.

- 8:06 AM – Amtrak Passenger Train strikes an 18 wheeler flatbed loaded with the shell of an M1117 Armored Personnel Carrier. The train consists of 2 locomotives, a baggage car and multiple passenger cars. The train also strikes two M1117 Armored Personnel Carriers ready for delivery.
- The train was carrying 13 crew members and 65 passengers. It was North bound en route to the Slidell Train Station. The railroad is owned by Norfolk Southern.

Emergency Response

- Slidell Fire Dispatches: Rescue 11, Ladder 11, Tender 11, Engine 12, Engine 13, Engine 14, Engine 16, Engine 17, Engine 18, Hazmat 17, Deputy Chief, 2 District Chiefs, and the Command Staff.
- Slidell Police Dispatches: multiple police units and their Command Staff.
- St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office Dispatches: multiple units.
- Acadian Ambulance Service Dispatches: multiple units.

Aerial View – Hwy 11 & Textron



Aerial View



Ladder 11

- Ladder 11 arrived on scene and found the locomotives to be on fire. Captain Rudesill established Incident Command and gives a good size up of the situation. Ladder 11 initiates Fire Attack.
- Having attending the Amtrak Passenger Train Rescue School in Meridian, Mississippi, Captain Rudesill knew how to shut down the fuel supply and kill the locomotives engines. Rescue 11 and Tender 11 arrive and assist Ladder 11 in extinguishing the fire. Engine 12 catches a hydrant and lays into the scene.

Scene Activities

- *Objectives for first 15 minutes – from Unified Command*
- *1) Life safety*
 - *A) Passengers / Amtrak employees*
 - *B) Truck Driver - Rescue*
 - *C) Emergency Response Personnel*
- *2) Fire control and extinguishment*
- *3) Fuel containment*

- *E-13 and Acadian located and treated all passengers, driver, and engineer.*
- *L-11 extinguished fire and applied foam to area of spill*
- *City applied sand to area building a berm keeping fuel from spreading to drainage pipes.*

Rescue of the Driver

- Engine 13 and AASI personnel removed the driver from the truck. He was transported to SMH with moderate injuries.
- Engine 13 secured a small fuel leak from the saddle tank of the truck.

18 Wheeler Tractor Trailer



Passengers

- Triage all passengers.
- Treat all injured passengers
- Transport any passengers needing to go to the hospital.

- Tracking passengers – accounting for all passengers and keeping them together. Amtrak personnel, Engine 13 and Acadian Ambulance Service handled this assignment.

Passengers

- The passengers were taken off of the train and moved across the street to a local café. AASI and fire crews assisted Amtrak personnel in the operation.
- Often during incidents like this many passengers will just leave the scene on their own. This causes serious problems with accountability.



Passengers



Command Post

- *At 09:02 Unified command was established at Front St. & Cleveland.*
- *Chief Rhyce – Incident Commander*
- *Captain Joffrion - Liaison Officer*
- *Captain Thiel - Logistic Officer*
- *Captain Greg Kelly – Haz-Mat officer*
- *Chief Billman – Safety Officer*
- *Chief Kaufman – Public Information Officer*

Incident Action Plan

- The Unified Command quickly put together a Incident Action Plan. The following issues were discussed:
 - Hazards –
 - Diesel Fuel was leaking from the locomotive fuel tanks.
 - High Voltage electrical lines run underground at the incident scene.
 - Large natural gas lines also run underground at the incident scene.
 - Hwy 11 is a heavy traffic roadway through Slidell.
 - Passengers on the train needed to be triaged, treated and transported.
 - Contain the diesel fuel leaking from the fuel tanks.

Unified Command

- Norfolk Southern Representatives arrived on scene and reported to the Command Post.
- The City of Slidell Public Works Director arrives on scene and reported to the Command Post. The Train Conductor also reported to the Command Post.
- Working together in Unified Command was key in having an organized response to the incident.

Command Post



Responders On Scene



Responders On Scene



Snapped coupler



Snapped Coupler



Locomotive resting on Low Boy



Foam Operations



Diking Operations

- The City of Slidell Public Works Department did an excellent job in responding to the incident. Public Works sent 2 dump trucks and a front end loader loaded with sand.
- We meet with the supervisor and planned out the formation of the needed dike. The Public Works created a very good dike that contained the diesel fuel.

Diking Operations



Additional Agencies

- FBI – The FBI sent over a helicopter and picked up a Slidell Police Officer to conduct aerial surveillance of the incident scene.
- Fire Departments from Pearl River, Lacombe, Mandeville sent multiple containers of foam.
- Red Cross responded to the scene and assisted in the response.

Aerial View



On Scene Operations



On Scene Operations



Shell of M1117



Impact damage to the lead locomotive



Off Loading of the Fuel Tanks

- The contractor brought in 2 trucks to off load the diesel.
- Fire Department Hazmat Officer was assigned to the off loading operation and ensure it was done properly.
- Grounding and bonding was conducted before the operation was started.

Off Loading the Fuel Tanks



Recovery



Recovery



Lessons Learned

- The Incident Command System is used on every incident. We use it on call from car fires to hurricanes.
- Unified Command was established early and the needed ICS positions were filled.
- Relationships with other agencies was so very important. The Fire Department and Law Enforcement have outstanding working relationships. Also the Public Works, Red Cross and others is important.

Documentation

- Using the Incident Command System we used throughout the incident. We filled out the required forms and kept track of resources, equipment and personnel. This allowed us to be reimbursed for our expendables.
- Site Safety Plan was also completed and filed for future reference.
- Medical monitoring forms were completed at Rehab and filled for future reference.

Training

- Approximately 15 firemen that responded to the incident have attended the Amtrak Train Rescue School in Meridian, MS.
- Hazardous Materials Training – About 100 firemen are trained to the Operations level while about 60 are trained to the Technician level.
- Trans Flow Study – We have the list of products that are transported on the Norfolk Southern Railroad and the CSX Railroad. Luckily the only hazard material that we had to deal with was diesel fuel. The hazard materials that were located at Textron was Acetylene and Diesel fuel. These were not involved in the incident though.