HR 41 003

Before The

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

IN RE:

INVESTIGATION INTO SEPTA TRANSPORATION AUTHORITY

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April 24, 1987

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Public Hearing held in the Kiva Auditorium, Temple University, Broad Street and Montgomery Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, commencing at 10:00 a.m., on the above date, before Marsha Hunter-Breen, Court Reporter and Notary Public of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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1987-132

A P P E A R A N C E S :

REP. GORDON LINTON, CHAIRMAN

DAVID L. KRANTZ, on behalf of REP. RONE

J. LUCYK, Member

REP. SCOTT CASPER, Executive Director

REP. CHARLES NAHILL, Memeber

REP. PAUL J. LANDIS, Minority Executive Director

REP. DENNY O'BRIAN, Member

REP. MARIO CIVERA, Member

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I N D E X

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Pursuant to House Resolution 41, we would like to call the meeting of the Full House Transportation Committee to order. Business of the committee today is the beginning of the investigation into the SEPTA Transportation Authority.

Pursuant to House Resolution 41, we are planning to conduct a thorough investigation beginning with hearings today to look into various aspects of the SEPTA Transportation Authority.

According to the resolution, there have been several serious accidents throughout the system. As it has been reported by numerous sources, the conditions of rail bridges are in disrepair, whereas SEPTA funding sources must be reviewed to

indicate the areas operating capital budget, as public confidence in the investigation of any ongoing problem by a system would better be served by interested investigation.

The House of Representatives directs and the House Transportation Committee conducts overall exclusive investigation of operations, management and financial conditions of the system, and an investigation shall commence.

May we ask the first witness to appear before the House Transportation Committee. I see we have a management team from SEPTA: Mr. John Prader, the Acting General Manager; Mr. Robert Wooten, who is Assistant General Manager, Public Affairs; Mr. Richard Fasy, Manager of SEPTA's System Safety and Mr. Frank Wilson, Assistant General Manager of Operations.

I would like to introduce to all who are in the audience the members of the Committee who are here.

To my left Mr. E.J. Lucyk from Schuylkill County. To my right, Mr. Charles

Nahill of the Minority Subcommittee.

We also have with us David Krantz on behalf of Representative Kaltagirone. We have to my immediate left, Scott Casper, the Executive Director of the House Committee and Mr. Paul Landis to my far right is the Minority Executive Director of the House Transportation Committee.

Thank you very much, gentlemen, for appearing before the Full Committee of the House this morning.

Good morning. Please give your name and title as you begin your testimony.

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JOHN T. PRADER,

a witness before the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. PRADER: Good morning. My name is John T. Prader. I am Acting General Manager of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, better known as SEPTA. I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony before your committee on the subject of safety. I will make some brief introductory remarks to be followed by testimony on several specific areas.

Safety is of paramount importance in the operation of the SEPTA system. The Authority's Admission Statement refers to the delivery of safe, attractive and effective transportation with safety listed first as the highest priority.

SEPTA's concern for safety is interwoven into all aspects of the system's operation: Employee training, operating rules and procedures, equipment programs and our approach to setting priorities for

capital projects.

The history of the SEPTA operations bears witness to the fact that if a segment of the system is determined to be unsafe or deteriorated, we will shut it down rather than expose our riders to potential hazards. This has been the case regardless of whether the unsafe element was a bridge, vehicle-type or a stretch of track.

The most highly visible aspect of a transit system's safety program is the service on the street. Any accident is most certainly a regrettable occurrence. Important in the long run is the Authority's program to identify the causes of an accident and to identify and implement changes that will prevent a similar accident in the future. SEPTA has comprehensive accident investigation and follow-up procedures in place.

In addition, efforts to identify causes of accidents or changes in accident patterns are continually under way. Safety is strongly emphasized in the day-to-day

operations.

Training for new employees covers safety rules and procedures and safety aspects of the equipment and facilities on which they will work. SEPTA conducts periodic compliance tests to ensure safety rules are being followed and retraining programs for current employees highlight safety. Daily communications with the operators include safety reminders and the Regional Rail Division provides a safety calendar with the safety rule of the day to encourage employee awareness.

The age and condition of some aspects of SEPTA's physical plant and fleet require a high degree of vigilance to assure continued safe operation. SEPTA concentrates its maintenance efforts and directs its limited capital resources to maintaining safe operations. Vehicle inspections are conducted on a regular basis. Safety inspection programs for bridges, track, signals and other basic elements of the system are ongoing.

In the future however, major capital investments will be needed if the entire SEPTA system as it currently exists is to remain safe and in operable condition.

Another aspect of passenger safety is that which we refer to as passenger security. Efforts to assure the passenger a crime-free ride have included the establishment of a SEPTA Police Force, a continuation of City of Philadelphia Transit Police program. These have resulted in a substantial reduction in the crime on the SEPTA system.

Finally, SEPTA is concerned with the safety and health of our employees. We have undertaken several programs for both capital and operating funds to improve the conditions under which SEPTA employees work.

I have with me Robert T. Wooten, Assistant General Manager of Public Affairs; Frank J. Wilson, Assistant General Manager for Operations and Richard L. Fasy, Manager of System Safety who will join us shortly. They will provide information on a number of

specific topics. We stand ready to work with you on these issues and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

SEPTA stands committed to operating safe service and anything this committee can do to help us further assure safe operations will be greatly appreciated by the Authority.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you, Mr. Prader.

Is there someone else from your team with prepared testimony?

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ROBERT T. WOOTEN,

a witness before the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. WOOTEN: I propose to show some slides which, unfortunately for you gentlemen, are going to be behind you. But I would like to give an overview of the SEPTA system for the folks on the committee who are not particularly familiar with it.

This map is obviously a graphic representation of the SEPTA High Speed System. Both City Transit, Suburban Transit and Regional Rail Division lines that emanate or spread from Center City Philadelphia out throughout the region, depending on what kind of statistical base you use, SEPTA is either the third -- or fourth -- largest transportation system in the United States.

This is a representation of ridership figures. As you can see, in 1987 projected figures for link trips do show an increase in the transit side of -- and I will make

the distinction.

Transit, in SEPTA terminology, is everything but the Regional Rail Division or the old commuter rail network. Since we took over direct operations of the Regional Rail Division, which occurred in 1983, you can also see there has been an increase in ridership in that division.

This is a representation of our revenue increases. As you can see, rather clearly here, since 1979 the amount of moneys that are self-generated by the Authority have also increased.

Another statistic applied to transit authorities across the country is what percentage of their expenses do they cover out of self-generated revenues. In fiscal year 1986, SEPTA achieved a 61 percent cost recovery. To put that in some sort of perspective, that is the highest cost recovery ratio of any major transportation system in the United States.

And finally, as a statistical index and one we are rather proud of, it is an

indicator within the transit business of the distance your vehicles travel without failing in service. As you can see, again on a comparable basis for all modes, there has been a marked improvement on mean distance between failures. Obviously, the most outstanding one is the bottom one on the Broad Street Subway, which in 1979 was on the verge of closing. But with the acquisition of a new fleet and some conscious maintenance efforts, there has been a tenfold improvement on the Broad Street Subway and translated into ridership increases.

That is a photograph of a SEPTA bus, 1979, up at Summit Loop. That is a Route A bus. That is not an atypical photograph for that period in time. That is generally what a SEPTA Surface City Transit Division bus looked like eight years ago. Since that time, we have taken quite a number of steps.

One of the first ones was a general overhaul, a rebuild really, of 270 1968 General Motors buses. If you came in via

Broad Street this morning you probably saw some of those buses in service.

In addition, we have been engaged over the last seven years in a regular bus fleet acquisition purchase. They are General Motors buses that were acquired by SEPTA and came on the property in 1980 and 1981. There were almost 300 of them in the purchase. Most of them are used in city transit but a portion of them are used in suburban transit.

I just want to point out to you, if you remember what we refer to as the "Queen of the Fleet," that first bus that I showed you covered with graffiti, when that photograph was taken, that bus was five years old. When this photograph was taken, that bus was six years old and is indicative, we believe, of the care and investment or reinvestment that the Authority makes in its equipment.

This is a regular bus acquisition program beginning in 1982. Part of it is part of the statewide bus pool, with

subsequent acquisitions afterwards. Neoplan buses have been acquired by the Authority on a delivery schedule of 150 or 120 of those vehicles per year and by the end of this fiscal year we are going to have over 1,100 of those vehicles in service within the Authority.

Again, as part of the bus acquisition plan, we have acquired 50 articulated buses, which are a third longer, as you can see, and are used on very, very heavily patronized routes in the City Transit Division.

Also there is an old trackless trolley. We will run through these quickly. They have been replaced within this decade by 110 of those vehicles.

PTC trolleys of the late 1940's vintage, some of them in service, but they look like this. What we have done with our own forces is a major rebuild of those vehicles.

In addition, in the southwest, the routes that come from Southwest Philadelphia

into Center City and also on the Media, Sharon Hill line and Suburban Transit Division, we acquired 141 of these light rail vehicles. That is a P&W car. That is one of the newer ones.

Frank, correct me. Is that about 1931?

MR. WILSON: That is about right.

MR. WOOTEN: That is one of the newest of those. They are vehicles that we acquired from the Chicago Transit Authority as a stopgap to use on the P&W. They are from the early 1950's.

As with the bus picture I showed you earlier, there is a photograph of the Market-Frankford line cars and what they used to look like when they were out in service in the beginning of this decade. That is the interior. Again, that is not atypical.

These cars were built in the early 1960's. We have done a major overhaul and are still engaged in a major overhaul of those vehicles. I ride that line most days

and that is what the interior of a Market-Frankford car looks like now. That is what the exterior of a Market-Frankford car looks like now and that is what the exterior looks like.

I made reference to the Broad Street line. That is what the Broad Street cars looked like. I think we were down to 28 or 29 of those vehicles that could actually get out on the line back in August of 1979; and the interior.

Those were acquired, I guess, '82, '83, 125 of them; air conditioned, obviously reliable, 84,000 miles mean distance between failure, well maintained at the Fern Rock shop, which has also undergone some massive capital rehabilitation and the interior of the station.

In addition to equipment and as part of our policy to, and as John alluded to, security or the sense of security for the people who had to go down and stand on platforms like that, even if they weren't physically threatened I think there was some

psychological threats to those folks and their inclination to go down and ride the system was less because of that. We have on the Broad Street and on the Market-Frankford engaged in a station rehabilitation program.

There is the Tasker Avenue station in the South Philadelphia portion of the line. As you can see, both the lighting, the opening of the stairwells and getting rid of the slats, those things, we think, give people not only a sense of comfort but also a sense of security. There is more visual contact with the other passengers.

Just another one on the southern portion.

That is 2nd Street on the Market-Frankford as it used to look. The Market-Frankford portion is the keystone of SEPTA service. Almost a quarter of a million people ride that on a daily basis. It now looks like that.

We will just run through these. That is 8th Street, again on the Market-Frankford, and that is 8th Street

now.

In addition, as another element of our capital investment strategy if you buy new equipment, what has happened in the transit industry throughout this country is, if you go out and buy large new fleets and don't do anything about the facilities to maintain those fleets up to modern standards, you will consume that asset and you will be back in the same boat.

That is the old Allegheny depot. I believe it was built 1907, 1912, that vintage. Obviously, that is a trolley barn. That was razed. In the present site you will also note there, to the right of the picture, the buses parked outside which was very close to those rowhouses on 27th Street and often got us into difficulty with the neighbors who did not appreciate a line of buses starting up at 4:00 or 4:30 on a cold winter morning. That building was razed. We temporarily relocated to another site and built the new Allegheny depot which we opened a little less than a year ago.

That is the interior. That is the storage area. As you can see, those buses are stored now all off the streets. That is the maintenance side of Allegheny.

Pictures of the LRV's, the early Subway Surface System from Southwest Philadelphia to Center City in conjunction with that whole program of renewal opened, I think, in 1982 when this car started to arrive.

That is the Elmwood depot. That is where those cars sleep and running maintenance is performed. That is the inside of Elmwood.

That is the photographic shot of the 69th Street area complex. That is shared by our Suburban Transit and City Transit Divisions. The new building almost smack in the middle of the 69th Street motor shop, the terminal is undergoing reconstruction now. The large building to the upper left is where the overhaul of the Market-Frankford cars is performed. That is the interior of that motor shop and I think

demonstrates what most folks don't see; over 2,500, 2,600 vehicles. SEPTA is more than simply a place to store those vehicles or a place for drivers and operators to collect them and count the revenues.

We are also a very, very heavy manufacturer and industrial facility which is requisite to maintain that fleet.

That is one of the Market-Frankford cars in the shop obviously in the process of its overhaul.

That is an artist's rendering of what the 69th Street terminal will look like once that construction is completed, and the interior.

A major project that we are involved in now, probably one of the largest construction or reconstruction projects in the history of Philadelphia, is the rebuild of the Frankford Elevated portion of the Frankford-Market line; over five miles from Girard Avenue up to the terminus at Bridge Street. I emphasize it is the keystone to the SEPTA system and we are going to rebuild

that structure from the vertical columns up. As part of that, we are going to redo the Bridge Street terminus.

That is the other end of the Market-Frankford terminus. You saw 69th Street earlier. This is at the other end and will look like that once it is completed. This also depicts 69th Street. I think the difference between SEPTA and many other transit authorities, not only in Pennsylvania but nationwide, because of our high speed system, because of the geography of the Philadelphia region, over 42 percent of the people who ride transit SEPTA transfer at the Olney terminal or Erie or any one of the high-speed stations; 52nd Street and particularly in the northeast section of Philadelphia or the western suburbs, Delaware County and take one vehicle in and transfer to the El or to the Broad Street Subway and this will be the new transfer point.

This is the railroad. I haven't shown any photographs of the railroad yet.

Historically, I want to emphasize that SEPTA, by federal statute, a law passed in 1981, was obliged to assume direct operational control of the Regional Rail Division as of January 1, 1983. The clear stated purpose of that legislation was to free CONRAIL of the obligation of operating commuter service. Why? Well, the reason was consummated about two weeks ago. It was to make CONRAIL attractive to private investment, to get it out of the business that would not make its books attractive on Wall Street. It was sent to SEPTA and it obviously worked.

If you follow the stock sale, CONRAIL was sold on the open market and the citizens of Pennsylvania were left with the obligation of preserving the commuter rail network.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Is that an editorial comment?

MR. WOOTEN: You may interpret that as you wish, Mr. Linton, but yes.

The first picture I showed you is

the Silver Liners which are the major bulk of our fleet. These are the oldest vehicles, the red and blues of the early 1930's which we still utilize in service. Silver Liners, I think there are four variations of those vehicles. The largest, the bulk of our fleet is from the mid-1970's but when we got them from CONRAIL they had not been overhauled. We have bids on the street now. We expect to move relatively soon, do we not, John, on the beginning of the overhaul of those vehicles?

I point out to you again the comparison to transit where we have done overhauls, major overhauls on our own buses at the Wyoming shop, the Market-Frankford cars at 69th Street. We do not have the facilities, our own facilities, to do the major overhaul of the Silver Liners.

The old Reading Railroad back shop, as you probably know, was in Reading. The back shop for the Pennsy was either in Altoona or down in Wilmington and they are not ours. We were left to light running

maintenance facilities.

That is one of them. That is Wayne Junction which was the old Reading Railroad shop. This is the interior.

That is the other one on the Pennsylvania Railroad side of Paoli. If you have been following in the papers, there has been a lot of debate between SEPTA, the predecessor and the Environmental Protection Agency concerning the fact that there are considerable amounts of PCB's in the ground at that facility. I think we debate lots of things but we don't debate the fact that they exist.

The Pennsylvania Railroad used them as coolants in their transformers for decades until the 1970's, when people became concerned about that particular substance. Folks told me that it was poured out as a ground cover, used to clean your tools off at the end of the work day.

That PCB environmental concern was one of, again, an editorial comment, one of the things that came over to us in this

transfer.

That is a shot of Roberts Yard. The other thing that is different on the SEPTA Regional Rail Division and has occurred within the last three years is the opening of the Center City Commuter Connection, a tunnel that runs through Center City and links what used to be two stub-end railroads; the Reading side, which ended at Reading Terminal, and the Pennsylvania Railroad's operations which ended at Suburban Station. That yard was built in conjunction with that.

Philadelphia is the only city in North America that has a through railroad operation. It has, in my opinion, tremendous potential for travel patterns within Southeastern Pennsylvania. But it has also caused some heartache and concerns about service reliability because when you link two railroads and those lines merged, the Media line to the West Trenton, if something goes wrong in West Trenton, they feel it in Media. You don't have the

operational flexibility that you used to have in two stub-end terminals.

That is a shot of the station, the Market East station, which is in the tunnel, is really the replacement for the old Reading Terminal. That is another line which is open for operation since the takeover.

That is a shot down at the Airport of the Airport High Speed Line which does allow pretty good service from the Philadelphia Airport to the central business district in Philadelphia. Running time is about half an hour. It runs on the half hour, every half hour, 12 hours, 18 hours a day, seven days a week.

I think the point I am trying to make as I run through these very quickly is SEPTA's Transit Divisions were in a serious state of decay in the early 1980's. The things that I showed you, the pictures, the shots, the vehicle acquisitions, the overhaul of some of those newly-acquired vehicles on a program basis have lent

themselves to increased ridership, much greater efficiency and an improvement in system safety.

Three years into that program, we then acquired a very, very complex large railroad system. One of the things that the federal government has not done since we acquired that railroad has sent us any more capital moneys. As a matter of fact, capital funding from the federal government has declined over that same period of time.

It is no secret that CONRAIL and its predecessor, one of the reasons why they had to get it off their books is the fact that those capital assets were seriously, seriously deteriorated. Passenger railroads, short-haul passenger railroads do not make money. They require a subsidization. They were transferred to the various public transit authorities; New York and New Jersey and here. We have now at least diverted some of our capital resources to the railroad. We have done relatively extensive track work and I will show you

more.

We need to do a lot more stations. I will be frank with you: stations are not the priority. Stations aren't as important. They don't matter unless the trains run.

One thing we have done -- that is a picture of a station that was improved -- we have tried to lease them to private sources, asked them to improve them and maintain them. That is Elkins Park which, I believe, is occupied by a real estate firm.

But the railroad that we have inherited is a massive, massive infrastructure. I have to leave with the committee copies of various reports, including a report done by former Secretary of Transportation, William Coleman, which pretty well defines, and has been substantiated, that the rail system is in need of over a billion dollars' worth of rehabilitation. Again, it is a system of rather antiquated vintage.

We have one improvement. Reading Railroad, in the old days under CONRAIL,

used to suffer rather consistently some power problems. We have put in solid-state converters up at Wayne Junction which has markedly improved that situation. Work still has to be done but it has been a marked improvement. See the difference there between the old style and new style power distribution boards?

And the bridges. When Mr. Linton read the resolution he mentioned that. Very quickly I will run through this.

There are over 400 bridges on our Regional Rail Division. A project that we are starting to move forward on, and as a matter of fact, it is the most infamous part of this particular viaduct, is right down the street here at 9th and Columbia.

You don't notice it too much if you drive in Philadelphia. But basically out of the old Reading Terminal and at the hookup from the tunnel through North Philadelphia is basically a series of bridges and elevated structures to bring that four-track railroad out towards Montgomery County.

Three years ago, I guess, at 9th and Columbia we had to close that newly-opened tunnel. Close inspection in a boys club, we ripped off a slat ceiling and revealed serious, serious deterioration. These are other elements of that same structure, and a close-up.

This is, well, you know, the most infamous or famous of the bridges.

Pursuant to our takeover, we did start to inspect the structures that we were going to take over. That is Crum Creek Bridge in Delaware County on the Media line between Swarthmore and Sylvan Setting. It also looked like that when you got down underneath it. It is 100 feet high, 1,000 feet long. That really shows you what it looked like. We had to close that railroad. The Media line became the Swarthmore line for a year. We spent over $1 million to rehabilitate that structure.

I thank you for your attention.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Do any members of the committee have any specific questions

regarding Mr. Wooten's presentation?

REP. LUCYK: I would just like a copy of that map, that first map that he had of the whole SEPTA system.

Could you supply me with a copy of that, please?

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Could you provide copies of that map to the members of the Committee? It would be helpful.

MR. WOOTEN: Yes, indeed.

REP. KRANTZ: The ridership on the bus, as I recall from the first slide, had like '83, I think like 244,000. Then it went down to 229,000. Then it went back up like 20,000.

Why was there a decrease and then an increase?

MR. WOOTEN: We had a strike.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Rick, I imagine we are going to plan some on-site visits with the Committee. We appreciate the opportunity to see the slides and the overview. The Committee feels there are many things we want to do such as go on

on-site visits. We will be looking forward to scheduling those with Mr. Casper and the SEPTA staff so we can get in to look at various aspects of the system in person.

Mr. Wilson?

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FRANK J. WILSON,

a witness before the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. WILSON: Good morning, gentlemen. My name is Frank Wilson, Assistant General Manager of Operations.

I would like to take a few moments to focus on this discussion on the primary purpose of this session this morning. That is safety of the SEPTA operations and more particularly looking at the incidents that we had sent some material to you on.

We had forwarded to the Committee our investigation reports on nine incidents that happened in the SEPTA operation, primarily on the Regional Rail and the Norristown High Speed Line over the last 30 months.

What I would like to do is use those incidents as a means of focusing this morning on our operation and how it affects the safety and health safety in the things we do. With respect to accident investigation and also with respect to

ongoing normal business, I will deal with the whole safety issue.

If you look at the nine incidents as a whole. I will do that first, I will look at them collectively and step back for a moment and look at all those inspection or investigation reports and examine them to see if there is a message there: What is happening in the system, where is it happening, what can be done or was done about those.

A few things can easily be seen. Four of those incidents, in our view, was due to human error. And I will say human error contributed to negligence. Three of the accidents were found to have presence of drugs or alcohol in one or more of the employees. One incident was due to the result of construction design and defect. One was an incident that was due to vandalism.

When you look at those causes, the immediate question that comes to mind is: Let's talk a little bit about the human

side, human error. We all know human beings are subject and prone to error. Why in this operation and why at the P&W? Why not? Why don't we see this type of performance in other parts of our business; that is what we ask. I think if you look at that I think the next logical question is what the organization, the Authority, is doing about it or can do about prevention of human error in the system?

I will submit at this point that the safeguards that exist in our operation are many. If you look at each individual operation, for the most part, one thing kept going wrong; either in hardware or the human side most likely will not result in an accident. Multiple things have to happen because of the overlapping in safeguards and prevention methods that exist.

Those things come as a result of the industry looking at self-improvement measures, safety-enhancement measures that is applying the technology of those improved operating procedures over a long period of

time.

Nonetheless, we will step back and say when you have a number of incidents due to human error and negligence, what is the organization doing about that? I would like to review some of the programs that we have in place, some of the very recent.

For the first time in modern time, about a year ago, we began entry-level testing for operators. It had been common practice for sometime for maintenance employees and skilled employees doing maintenance and construction work. But it was not a common practice here to test for skill level for bus drivers, trolley operators, train engineers and conductors. We have implemented that element of the program in an effort to get the skill level in the organization up.

Obviously, anyone walking through the door does not have the skill to operate a transit vehicle. That has to be an acquired skill and then it becomes a training obligation that the organization has. And I

want to give you, by way of illustration, just a quick review of what we do, the kind of training programs that are involved with taking a person off the street and having them become full-fledged operating engineers on our railroad.

The program runs approximately 190 days. The individual will go through various elements of training. The first 17 days, two weeks, three weeks are spent on operating rules and regulations: How does the railroad work, what does it do, and how does it work safely? Then there are 10 to 15 days on equipment, equipment handling, what the equipment acts like.

As Mr. Wooten showed you, there are four or five different types of equipment and the idiosyncracies of the differences of that equipment must be understood.

They are trained in air brakes and how to handle them; the power and braking system on the cars; to understand how they function; how they work in conjunction with one another to provide back-up in the

fail-safe operation.

They have got to learn three sets of operating rules: SEPTA's, AMTRAK's and CONRAIL's. They have got to pass tests for three organizations, SEPTA, CONRAIL and AMTRAK. CONRAIL and AMTRAK tests are administered by those two organizations and not only do they have to pass the tests administered by us, they have got to pass the tests of the two other railroads.

Probably the most challenging aspect of the training program on the railroad is the fact that they have to learn 200 to 300 miles of railroad. They have to know the physical characteristics, where the stations are, where the braking points are, where the signals are, what types of signals do you look for. So you take maybe 48, 50 days to learn that.

And then there is on-the-job training which is called "posting" where you ride with an accomplished engineer, veteran engineers and conductors. In that program then all those elements of that program are

brought together.

While there are various quizzes and tests given at different points in the training program, there is a comprehensive test at the end; a test on the signal system, a test on the physical characteristics. When this individual graduates from the program he has had a very, very extensive exposure to the entire railroad operation.

This program that I have just explained to you is unique in our industry. We have talked to our sister organizations: New Jersey Transit, Metro North. They do not have a program such as that. We have talked to them about how we developed it, how it is administered and the benefits of it.

We are one of the few organizations that take individuals without prior railroad experience and make them full-fledged engineers. The reasons we do that are many and I won't get into them. But suffice it to say, if you look at the demographics of

our labor force here, we are, again, atypical when you compare us to other railroads; fairly young, not as much experience.

And again, there are reasons for that. The turnover is somewhat high. When the railroads came to SEPTA there was an escape valve, if you you will, for employees to leave the organization. That was a concession to labor and perhaps rightfully so, because when the federal government decided it was going to divorce the commuter operation from CONRAIL, the employees, to a certain extent, were disenfranchised. They didn't ask for that split and they were given the ability to flow back and there were caps put on the number of people able to flow back in any given period of time.

But nonetheless, there is an ability to hemorrhage or leak experience out of our organization and because of that, because of the fact we needed to be able to feel a growing level of service -- as Rick showed you, ridership is increasing -- the burden

on us to produce full-fledged, qualified engineers became very, very great in a relatively short period of time after we took the railroad. We had an obligation. We have this turnover and we have developed what we think is one of finest training programs you will find in the transit business or the railroad business.

We talked a little bit about that and we will test the individuals coming out of the railroad side as well as the transit side. So we raised the skill levels for the entry-level person. We expose them to as much training as you are going to find in the industry and then beyond that we have got policing mechanisms, policing in the sense of quality control. A lot of what you saw here in the specs is a result of quality control, such as clean equipment. We don't put an unclean piece of equipment on the street. That is important. But when you look at the human side, at the safety side, quality control is as important, or more so.

The way quality control is translated

now in our operation is rules compliance testing, rules compliance surveillance and when you look at the railroad, or the transit side of the business, there are many, many rules that the employees must be aware of.

Even more than being aware, they have to be proficient. Not every individual is going to take training at the same rate and be as proficient as the next employee even though he is exposed to the same training and experience and environment. So our obligation is then to go out and do this quality control.

Our supervisory personnel and instructors have to go out on a systematic basis. It is not just, you know, we send a supervisor out and say: Go check on Mr. Jones. What is he checking for? And when he checks, what record is there of the type of performance or the type of proficiency that Mr. Jones has?

So we systemized and organized our rules compliance and our quality control

aspect of that part of the business in a way that tells us a couple of things are very important to us; which operators have problems with rules? And that then is a key to us; if we need to remove that individual operator from service and provide additional instruction to him in those areas where he is not as proficient as he should be.

The second very important aspect of the program is what rules do most people violate most often. And that is important because that becomes a directive for our training instruction program. Obviously, if we have 30 percent of the employees violating a given rule, we are not doing a very good job in the instruction program. So that is going to be the intelligence and the feedback into the system that says: Adjust this; give more time and better quality instruction so that the employee is more proficient. So that whole rules compliance program becomes our intelligence into the operation of the employee and really drives, really gets to the aspect of

operator proficiency and it is the corollary to human error and negligence.

That program has been developed on the transit side of the business, I would say in recent times, so it is something we have added to the business. It is somewhat commonplace in the railroad and it is a good feature of the railroad that we have looked at and looked at strongly when we inherited it. That is why we pulled it over to the transit side of the business as well, and let's strengthen it over on the railroad side. It was a major commitment to that.

In addition to all that, we have one final quality control check. That is an annual re-certification, another annual test, a written test in some cases, a performance test. These employees have got to perform well. A passing grade is 85 percent. In certain aspects of the test, they have to have 100 percent; for instance, signals.

So when you look at our employees and you look at where we have been and where we

are right now in terms of setting the mark high for standards of employment, and then the very impressive and comprehensive training program and quality control and the rules compliances and an annual test, they have got to be the most tested group or work force that is in the service industry. And rightfully so, because we have a great responsibility and liability if they are not. So those things are there and they are functioning.

In addition to that, once you are satisfied the individual is properly trained and proficient -- you have heard the notion that familiarity breeds contempt. The more familiar you become with a thing, an operating rule or practice and the more routine your job is, the more automatic you become in operating. And a lot of our work is very routine; operating a train in a lot of respects is routine; operating a bus, in a certain respect, is routine. There certainly is some external stimulus that happens from time to time and it is still

very complex, but it is a little like driving your car home; not in a daydream but you got there but you don't know how you did it.

And so what we have taken to do within the last year or two is using our radio technology or radio capability on a real time, on-line basis to basically hit the employee over the head and say: Here is the safety tip of the day or safety rule of the day or safety message of the day. Don't follow vehicles too closely; make sure you make a comfortable stop; under this rule means thus and such. If you want to call it brainwashing, it is that. It is a little bit of that. We will interrupt his day-to-day trip with a safety message and tell him be mindful of this. It is kind of like a voice coming out of the blue saying, "Fellow, pay attention. This is something that you ought to remember and something you had in your training that you use day in and day out."

What we are telling them is to be

aware of it, not just today but in normal operation. So we have taken to doing that as well, to bring the whole issue and notion of safety, instead of day-to-day, to an hour-by-hour part of his operation.

That, in an overview, is pretty much, with some slight variation from the transit side of the business to the railroad side of the business, what we are currently doing to ensure that the person we put in an operating position is fully qualified. We have got enough checks on his qualifications from time to time to make sure they are really sharp. When you step back from that you say: Is that enough? Obviously, the praise is going to come but it is never enough. What else can you do?

Let's look at that. We talked about the soft side of the business. Let's talk a little bit about the hard side of the business and why, in certain systems, certain accidents can happen and why, in other systems that we have, they can't happen or they happen very, very

infrequently or are nearly impossible.

What I am getting to is that in some respects our business technology has overcome human error or has removed the element of human error from the business. If you want, I have some illustrations here I would like to show you but I want to put two parts of our operation into contrast for you.

If you look at the Norristown High Speed Line, the subject of four of the accidents; you look at our railroad, the subject of five of the accidents; if you look at our high speed lines, the Market-Frankford or the Broad line, which you saw, there is at least one major, major element that is different. It is a technological difference that aids in our being able to remove the employee from a hazardous situation.

As we look at it in the railroad and on the P&W the employee is our last line of defense, absolutely, flat out, that is it. We can have all our rules. We can have all

our training. We can have all the signals and all the cars work fine. But you still have the human being that is responsible for obeying all those rules and regulations and signals.

On the transit side of the business, we have removed the employee as the last line of defense and we have replaced him with technology and yes, there is no technology that is fail-safe. But more often than not, the technology is going to catch the human error that is made.

So what I am going to show you, if I can, is just a few simple photographs and the technology is very, very basic and simple. On our high speed lines the cars are equipped with sort of like a grab iron. The grab iron is connected into the braking system on the cars. It exists on the -- this photograph is on our railroad lines. There is a signal and what I want to illustrate here is the fact there is nothing here in the track area. All you have is a signal. An employee or a train comes up to

this area, he has got a signal to obey and despite a feature on the train, which we will talk about in a minute, he can blow by the signal. There is nothing physically to stop him.

This is our P&W operation or the Norristown High Speed Line. Again, here you have a signal, both directions. Here, with this signal you will have -- these are bonds. That is an electrical device that separates the current. That is not going to stop the train. So you have got basically free movement along here. The signal is not obeyed. So there is no way to physically stop that train on this particular line.

This is a photograph of our Market-Frankford line. This is where we have the technology. Here you see the signal standard. Over in this left corner -- and I'll give you a blow-up of this -- this is what you call a trip-stop. Now, when this signal is red or indicating a train behind it to stop, this trip arm is up, it is in an up position. As the train

passes over that, if he were to violate the signal, by merely having this arm in an up position, it is going to interrupt an air line and apply the brakes in an emergency mode. So you're going to get a very abrupt but a very effective stop. But it is a fact this arm can be tied down by mistake. This can fracture, but it is an element that is tied into the signal system that we don't have on the railroad or the Norristown High Speed Line. It is a rather unsophisticated but very reliable piece of hardware.

This is just a close-up shot of the same device, but it works in conjunction with the signal. Here the signal would be at proceed, or green. It is in its relaxed position. When the signal is at stop it would be up and you have got what we consider a fail-safe position. That again does not exist on the other two lines.

So that makes the question: Add trip stops on the railroad and add trip stops on the Norristown High Speed Line to replace the human being as the last line of defense.

Well, that is a good solution. It is an expensive solution. Expense is not the reason why it is not done. But until we can do something like trip stops -- and there are other ways of doing it. There are other ways of providing that kind of fail-safe hardware technology to remove the employee. Until we can do that, we stress, we continue to stress the proficiency and the talent, the skill level of the employee in many, many ways.

Now, the railroad has one element of protection that even the Norristown Line does not have. It is not as effective as the trip stop. But what it is is an electronic device so that if a car runs through a signal or if a signal ahead of him is changing to a less favorable signal, in other words telling him to slow down, he gets what is called an alerter buzzer. And the alerter buzzer is just a kind of a slap in the face, something is changing ahead, you are going to have to change your operation, acknowledge the fact that your

cab signal has changed from a favorable to a less favorable aspect, in other words, go slower, pay attention. All it is is a buzzer.

Now, he has got an acknowledger switch. If he presses the acknowledger switch, the system we have assumes that he heard it, understands it and is complying. So his only obligation is to say, "Yeah, I heard it." But he doesn't have to do anything. He doesn't have to slow the train down. He doesn't have to obey the new signal that has been displayed. He can still run by that signal. So it is kind of a half-hearted, not very effective means of giving us the fail-safe that we have on the Market line. This is standard equipment on most passenger railroad cars.

There is, however, a couple of things that are being done on the harder side of the business, on the technology side of the business on those two parts of the systems of the railroad. In conjunction with the Federal Railroad Administration and very

recently as a result of the unfortunate accident that AMTRAK and CONRAIL had in Chase, Maryland, the FRA administrator has asked all passenger railroads, including SEPTA, to add an additional fail-safe, a much more effective fail-safe feature to the equipment.

What it is is basically speed control. This is a real safety device. If an engineer is motoring down the road at a clear signal and he can go at track speed, which may be 80 miles an hour, and if the cab signal changes, he gets his alerter and he does not acknowledge it, or he does but does not put the brakes on, the system will brake it for him. It will bring him down to the allowed track speed. It will bring him down in a comfortable way. The brake will be applied in a service application. It won't be an emergency type where people will fall forward.

We are fully supportive of that, the obligation we have got through this, acknowledging that we are going to do that.

This is a $10 million investment which we have to implement over a three-year period.

There is a few other aspects to improving safety on the railroad that we are also buying into. One of the incidents we had here was a contractor, basically a signal design contractor, putting together a brand new signal system for hardware between Suburban Station and 16th and Market and 30th Street. And the incident that was described here for you, or sent to you, was an AMTRAK train and a SEPTA train. The SEPTA train had its switch set forward to cross over. The AMTRAK train was not supposed to move but had a clear signal. Obviously, it is a violation but there was a design flaw and there was an installation flaw. And those types of things are not supposed to happen on railroads. Despite the levels of safety and safeguards, it did happen in this instance.

We are adding to the system what is known as run-through protection on all our signal systems at interlockings where trains

cross over and meet and diverge so that if that ever happened again, as unlikely as that would be, that the entire switching plant, the entire signal plant and the people who control that, everything is removed from their control and is basically locked up, nothing moves. That, coupled with the speed control on the equipment should give us and other railroads who use those features the safest operation possible. Again, that is a very expensive proposition but we have committed to doing that.

On the P&W side and the Norristown High Speed side we are making similar investments. We have had the cars designed. We have been tantalizingly close to having that program funded for a couple of years. We are inches away, we hope, from getting federal grants to purchase those cars. But more than nice, brand new, sexy equipment running up and down the roads, they will bring us the technology that we do not have to take safety in that quantum leap. They

will give us the cab signals: We will have train control. We will have speed control. We will have been able to remove those operators as the last line of defense and they will be as state of the art as is available.

It will be done electronically and not mechanically, like the Market-Frankford cars, but every bit as effective and certainly brings us into basically the twentieth century in terms of transit and railroad technology.

So, we are that far apart, we are a grant away from being able to improve safety to that measure on that line. In addition to the car barn equipment, there is expensive signaling equipment that is scheduled to be done. We do have the grant for the signal work. We are just waiting for the money for the cars.

In as summary fashion as I can provide, that is really the essence of where we stand, not only these incidents but any incident. While we are waiting for the

technology, the investment to come to fruition, we have not given up, have not said, "Well, we will go easy on the employee." We are devoting an extreme amount of effort, intensive effort in the training, development and surveillance only until that technology can assist us, to relieve us of some of that burden. It is not that when that technology appears we will back off from the strict standards. We will continue to do that. But it is awfully critical for us to be in a position to make those investments.

I think I will stop at this point. Mr. Fasy has arrived. I think he needs to tell us a little more about the safety process and the safety investigation process that happens here.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. Fasy, before you begin, I don't want the members to take too much information in before they start asking some questions. They may have something that is resting on them that they may want to deal with right now.

Are there any questions from the Committee for Mr. Wilson?

Representative Nahill?

REP. NAHILL: During your presentation I was beginning to see a walking time bomb. I am glad to hear what you said at the end.

Throughout the presentation, several things jumped out. One was a young work force relatively inexperienced; an infrastructure that is out of date and in dire need of repair -- I may be overstating that but I think that is darned close -- and equipment that is in need of replacement or total revamping. Putting all three of those elements together, I have to admit that I am amazed that maybe we haven't had more problems.

This grant you are talking about, what kind of dollars are you talking about and what kind of lag time are we looking at if it is approved and we can begin to implement?

MR. WILSON: The grant for the cars

would be approximately $40 million and as I said the specifications and engineering for the cars is complete. We have had those specifications on the street for bids from car builders. We have not taken the bids in yet because we don't have the funding yet. I think we are looking at perhaps one year for design and prototype manufacturing. We will have a couple of cars built and delivered and we will test them extensively to make sure that they function as intended and then we will go into maybe a two- or three-year production and acceptance program. So we are about four years away from having that equipment in daily service.

REP. NAHILL: Will that include all the lines, all the rail lines?

MR. WILSON: That is just the Norristown High Speed Line.

REP. NAHILL: Just Norristown?

MR. WILSON: The other investments on the railroad in terms of signal speed control is a $10 million investment. The schedule that the Federal Railroad

Administration has outlined in conjunction with us is a one-year design procurement to get the hardware and a two-year installation. So starting in, let's say, 14 months, we will have certain cars equipped with it. You won't have to wait three years until you get the benefits of it. You will be deriving the benefits over a three-year period. So a portion or a percentage of your fleet will be so equipped. It is a little bit different than introducing a brand new fleet all at once. You will have the benefits in a relatively shorter period of time.

REP. NAHILL: When do we expect this $10 million?

MR. WILSON: I wish I expected that $10 million. I don't know where that is coming from. We have not been assured what the source of funding is. My suspicion at this point is that we have an obligation to do it, so we will not do something else.

REP. NAHILL: I am kind of surprised. We are talking about $40 million or $50

million, which obviously is not peanuts, but it is not a billion dollars either. I heard that figure talked about, bandied about earlier.

What should we be doing to help? What can we do to facilitate this changeover? I understand it takes time. However, I really am not thrilled about possible continuation of accidents while we wait for Uncle Sam to decide whether he is going to help us out and going to be gracious to us.

Is there something we could be doing in the meantime to bring that program on line quicker and not sit and wait for Washington to act with their normal lack of speed?

MR. WILSON: Without being facetious, you can give us a mortgage, lend us the money. We will pay you back.

I am not sure I am the person or this is the time to get into funding alternatives, but I think there are some. I think there is a way for us to have access

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to, even if you want to call it private-sector money, with some State support as a guarantee that it will be able to pay the bill if SEPTA can't, knowing that the assurance to the State would be the federal desire to fund the program.

I think in terms of the Norristown High Speed Line there is a desire. They funded the terminal at 69th Street. They funded the terminal at Norristown. They funded the track. They funded the signals. I don't believe they are going to walk away from the cars. It would be somewhat foolhardy if they did.

So in terms of a State risk in supporting us, going to the marketplace to borrow the money to do it now rather than wait for the federal bureaucracy to work, that may be an alternative.

But when you look at it in terms of one project, obviously it is a very important project because of the safety implications, there are other projects like that; like in the last slide we saw with the

bridges. That is a bigger bill. That is a $200 million safety problem. When you go to the marketplace, is it easy to go for 50 or 250 and with the State-supported credit? Those are the kinds of things in terms of innovative financing, very responsive action that I would say are probably very doable without having to wait for the feds to act.

REP. NAHILL: Would there be some way you could get those responsible parties ought to get in touch with us? Maybe we out to sit down and take a good, hard look and start to question all our sources to see if we cannot be of some assistance to you?

MR. WILSON: I will be happy to do that.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I would like to recognize Representative Mario Civera from Delaware County who has joined the Committee and also Representative Denny O'Brian from Northeast Philadelphia.

Mr. Wilson, I would like to ask a couple of questions.

You talked about the entry-level skill testing. I guess that has been in operation for about a year now?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: What kind of testing are you involved in for the ongoing employees? How do you involve them? I know you have an annual recertification. Is that the only testing that is done during the course of the operation?

MR. WILSON: The annual recertification test is a formal testing process and at this point, unless the individual is changing jobs where he would have to pass the job for the next job, that is the extent of the testing. The rules compliance, we call it testing, we call it surveillance, that is what it is, is informal. It is mainly the performance of the employee which is being tested, not his ability to write down answers or fill in blanks on a written test. So to the extent an instructor or supervisor does a rules compliance surveillance on an individual,

that is an in-the-field, on-line, real-time performance test.

How many of those tests are given to each individual? We have avoided the notion of quotas. What we have asked the supervisory team to do in some cases, I stress certain lines where we had difficulty, some cases stress certain employees where they are having difficulty, in some cases stress certain rules, like obeying signals, because they are very, very important from a safety standpoint.

So there are certain campaigns and I can't tell you how many times an individual could expect to be tested. But they are -- I don't call it risk, but they all have the same exposure to be tested any given day. You may have an individual tested for the performance test two or three times during the course of a year and some maybe ten times. It depends on where he is working, what the campaigns are.

Formal testing and written tests are done once a year, and the recertification.

The performance test happens periodically during the year.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: What happens if, in fact, an operator fails the formal performance test?

MR. WILSON: The first -- well, look at how you can fail the test. You can fail by answering incorrectly the number of questions that are not safety sensitive. Most of the questions are but some are minor compared to others. In that case, the employee would be reinstructed, perhaps at that time or later. The instructor will gauge whether he fully understands the mistake he made, then be recertified.

If the areas on the test or the questions that are answered incorrectly are very serious, the reinstruction would not be just face-to-face over an hour or two or three. He may be pulled out of service two, three, four days, a week, to go through the formal. It is not an informal impacting of knowledge. You go through the whole training module again so that you come back

recertified.

Now, if you get an individual who demonstrated even after the training that he couldn't pass the test, he would be removed from service.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: When the individual is removed, I would say during the interim period for the performance testing, he fails the test, is removed for additional training, as you have described, is he still on the payroll at that point?

MR. WILSON: He is still on the payroll, I think, at the training rate. There is a different rate of pay.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: What is the difference?

MR. WILSON: Substantial. Say for a fully-qualified engineer it could be $13 an hour. The training rate at this point just changed to $7.50 -- $7.40.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Are there any other members of the Committee who have any questions for Mr. Wilson at this time?

REP. LANDIS: Yes. I am

Representative Landis.

I didn't hear anything about physicals. How often do you give your operators physicals?

MR. WILSON: Once a year.

VOICE: Engineers are annually. The conductors, passenger retainers and tower operators are every two years.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Could you identify yourself.

MR. TRYON: I am Paul Tryon, Assistant General Superintendent for Rules and Instruction with SEPTA.

REP. LANDIS: Is that policy or federal?

MR. TRYON: Policy.

REP. LANDIS: The drug testing, I have gotten clippings from newspapers about drug problems.

Do you have a problem with drug testing?

MR. WILSON: The drug-testing program that is in place right now consists of the following pre-employment screening: A drug

test will be administered as part of the physical after returning to work after being separated from service 30 days or more. Anyone who has been away from the Authority on a rehabilitation program, someone who has come to us voluntarily and said, "I'm afflicted with a drug problem," or an alcohol problem, "Will you help?" the medical department will seek the help and put him through a rehabilitation program. When he is good enough to return to work, he is then put on a longer-term testing program; say he will be brought in perhaps monthly for follow-up testing and we will do that as well.

And we have, at this point, probable cause or reasonable suspicion testing. If there has been an accident, there is a rule violation or some unusual event that has happened in the system that is not easily explained or equipment failure or any other circumstance, like something very unusual, we will ask that individual to submit himself for a drug and alcohol test.

Of course, we have been in the forefront. The last element or dimension of the program would be random testing. We are presently before Judge Ludwig in Federal District Court in trying to fashion or forge a program to do that.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. Scott Casper, Executive Director of the Committee.

REP. CASPER: Gentlemen, first question: Do you have a bridge inventory on the Rail Division with the efficiency ratings on each of those bridges?

MR. WILSON: Yes, we do. That bridge inspection program is done annually. I believe we are going to bring or supply a copy of that report to the Committee.

REP. CASPER: Fine.

What percentage of your bridges would you say are substandard?

MR. WILSON: There are two categories of substandard. I would say 60 to 70 percent are substandard, with about half of of those being in what we call the critical category, meaning they have got to be

replaced in less than two years.

REP. CASPER: So one-third of your bridges, in other words, are in the critical stage where they have got to be replaced and they have top priority?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

REP. CASPER: I smiled at you, but do you have a performance record on either relatively minor operating deficiencies or minor problems concerning the fact that they may be harbingers of things to come? I don't know if I am clear on that.

MR. WILSON: I understand. For instance, if an individual could be observed or operating a tad too rapidly through the slow zone, maybe it is five or ten miles an hour, that doesn't ordinarily, depending on his record, doesn't ordinarily result in discipline. He will be warned and an entry made in his record, should be made in his record to that effect.

So when you look at an employee's performance record you will see a whole range of things; accidents that he has had,

personal injuries, if he is accident prone. When we look at his sick time, you will look at his absentee rate, you will look at his actual performance, you will look at discipline that has been assessed over the tenure of his employment. That, taken as a snapshot of the individual over a period of time, you get a sense of whether this is a weak link in the system or this is an anchor; is this a good individual in your operation.

One element we are adding to that, we have been looking at as a surrogate for performance on the job, we have been looking at it as far as I can recall, but we are going to do it more intensively, and that is a person's driving record.

REP. CASPER: My next question.

MR. WILSON: Good anticipation.

We have been working with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and we have been getting annual updates on individual driving records. We are now going to go to perhaps monthly reporting or even every two weeks.

What we are looking for are indicators of someone who has got bad habits using their own automobile. What you are able to do with that information is questionable. We are not going to yank someone out of service and say, "You are now on discipline or discharged because you have gotten 15 parking tickets and you haven't paid your fine," or, "You go through stop signs," or, "You run red lights."

When you look at the moving violations or look at the point totals, you say, "This is someone we ought to pay attention to." Then that is someone who, as I mentioned to Mr. Linton, may appear on our campaign. Let's look at this operator and see if some of those bad habits fall over onto the job.

Of coure, you have got to be careful that doesn't became a witch hunt, that it doesn't become harassment. We have got to have very strong criteria, see what his driving record looks like before we put someone on the check list.

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I don't think we are in a position at this point, and I don't think anyone really is, to say, "Because of what you do on your own time we are going to discipline you here at work," or, "We are not going to let you work."

On the other hand, if you show up without a license, if you show up to work and defraud the organization, try to operate a mass transit vehicle and you do not have a valid driver's license, you don't belong here and you will be discharged. You will be given 10 days to produce a valid driver's license.

Sometimes the Bureau of Motor Vehicles is not the most efficient department.

REP. CAPSER: I have heard that comment.

MR. WILSON: And there are mistakes made. So you grant the individual 10 days to straighten it out or even more time if he can give you some reason to believe that he has some problem with the Bureau of Motor

Vehicles, or perhaps we will intercede on his behalf.

But if he cannot produce it and it has been suspended, especially for a moving violation, he will be removed from the employ of the Authority.

The other aspect of that whole driver's license audit that I did not mention was that as an individual comes to the organization for employment, his driving record will be screened at that point. And if he has had his license suspended multiple times and he is working on his 10 points, I am not sure whether we would hire the individual to begin with. That is another wrinkle or aspect to the driver's license indicator.

REP. CASPER: That is a basic.

I am more concerned in an instance where someone has been employed as an operator for a number of years and, of course, the longer he is employed as an operator, the longer their driving record becomes, either safe or unsafe. Certainly

you shouldn't be interested in a couple of parking tickets and I don't think you are interested in that, either.

But if an operator is going to go through two stop signs or a red light and a stop sign over two or three years, that seems to be presenting a greater chance that he or she would run a signal on the rail line at work.

It is the same concept, even though you can say it is on their own time. But people have traits, whether they operate an automobile or whether they operate a rail line. I think both are relevant.

Is there any discussions being had with the Department of Transportation that when a DUI record comes in from the District Justice or from the Common Pleas Court from the various counties, when a point violator or a moving violation comes in and the Department of Transportation assesses points on that person's operator's record, that when they get the notification in the mail stating they have points for that violation

that you get that same notification of points?

MR. WILSON: We have made that request. We did not get as positive a response as we would like. In other words, they said, "No, we can't do that."

REP. CASPER: That is a positive response.

MR. WILSON: The way we try to deal with it, we figured out how to do that. One way we do it is we send a computerized tape off to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and if we send the information, they will send it back. So what we have to do is obviously send that tape more frequently.

The other aspect of that is that we can get that kind of information but we have to get it through our Police Department. Apparently our police have access to certain data and I can't recall now who -- maybe it is the same state institution that tabulates the data. But we have got to make that request to the Police Department to get it.

What we asked for was two things when

we send the report, two things in the exception reports: Send us all the people who have DWI's; send us all the people with eight points or more. So we seek to get that kind of look into the operation.

But so far as I know, the only way for us to get it is through the Police Department.

REP. CASPER: When you say the "Police Department," you mean the Philadelphia Police Department or the --

MR. WILSON: The SEPTA Police Department.

REP. CASPER: SEPTA's Police Department.

MR. WILSON: I don't know what the magic is there.

REP. CASPER: Thanks. Fine.

At the same time, it means a certain amount of interfacing on a periodic basis rather than an individual basis.

If something happens, you are notified perhaps it could be pursued, too, in Harrisburg, possibly check that out and

see what might be done about that.

MR. WILSON: That would be helpful.

REP. CASPER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. Wilson, before we move on, a couple of questions.

Regardless of the performance testing, do you have written guidelines and procedures as to when individuals -- it sounded to me earlier somewhat arbitrary in terms of your deciding which operator would be tested and particularly tested repeated times.

MR. WILSON: Do we have written guidelines as to who should be tested or when?

CHAIRMAN LINTON: When you do the testing for your management, how do they determine which operator they are going to test, what the conditions are that subjects them to the testing?

MR. WILSON: The goal is, the policy is to make sure we get to see each operator throughout the course of a year, more than once. That is the general provision. I may

have misled you in that while we are attempting to do that, there are other campaigns overlaid on top of that.

For instance, if we want to look at speeding violations or people who don't respect slow zones and we have had reports of that happening, well obviously -- well, I shouldn't say obviously -- we have slow zones in more places than I would like. We have them in certain areas. Let's say it is on our R-3 or R-5, Paoli-Doylestown. We have a substantial number of slow zones, we have reports of people speeding. Well, that is where we will go to do the test. We will get those operators or engineers that operate over that route; not every engineer will. So because of that campaign, those people will be subject to more tests than, say, the standard.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Who decides on the campaign?

MR. WILSON: Well, we do. You might, as a customer; FRA. Anyone who has got any involvement with our organization can relay

information to us that will lead us to follow up on.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: So campaigns develop as you get information. There is a problem in a specific area. Then you decide at that point that you want to institute a specific campaign?

MR. WILSON: That is one way.

The other way, the management of the railroad will say they want to campaign these selective rules because we haven't done it in a while and we feel that given the daily reports that we see it is warranted.

So there is a systematic way that management will do it and there is kind of a flexible way that will accommodate external sources to drive those campaigns.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Do you have any flow chart procedures that you use in terms of these particular performance tests and also narrative procedures that you could submit to the Committee?

MR. WILSON: We can give you a

preprinted booklet or performance test form that will list the rules and it will be tabulated, it will be coded for computer tabulation and the rules are very specific. So the rule -- if you are going out there and look at manual block operation, they meet certain things in the rule book. It is not that the individual going out will decide on his own what he is looking for. The rule is the rule and he is compliance tested for that specific rule. I will give to you our rule books and I will give to you the testing form or the surveillance form that is used to record the entries as to whether they comply, what extent they did or didn't.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Will that provide us with actual procedure that the tester is using to perform the test?

MR. WILSON: Yes, we do.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: In terms of testing your rolling stock, what is the procedure for testing your rolling stock on the Rail Division?

MR. WILSON: On the railroad we have daily inspections. We have 45- and 90-day inspections and we have what is called the two-year air brake inspection. All of those are requirements of our Railroad Administration. We comply with all those.

In addition to that, we have superimposed other inspection routines that no one else requires other than the Authority. They are preventive maintenance inspections. Again, they are campaigns on certain components of cars. That is what we call the repeater program.

In other words, if a car has come up on a daily report as having a malfunctioning relay, that car will then be pulled out of service and grounded until that problem is fixed. Cars can last anywhere between one day and one month on this repeater program. When the car is put back into service it is put on a tracking scheme. There are certain individuals in the organization that will look at that car's performance under a microscope for 30 days.

If it goes 30 days without a repeat for that particular problem, it is considered a clean car and repaired properly. If it fails again, it is yanked back in and gone over again. It is a discipline we have imposed on ourselves to slowly, because we have got a lot of cars, build the integrity of the fleet back up because these cars have never seen the maintenance they should have over the last 12, 15 years.

That is one more layer of inspections we have added.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I imagine there is a formal place where the records of these inspections are maintained so they can be reviewed by management so you know what the standards of operation are of your vehicles?

MR. WILSON: Yes, all those inspections. We do have procedures and have defined them and we have records on the repeater program, as well. We can make those available.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: We would like

those.

Who conducts the inspection of trains? Who actually --

MR. WILSON: The employees. The hourly employees, the foreman of the shops.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Do you have specific individuals trained to conduct the inspections?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Who conducts the training?

MR. WILSON: The training is done by the shop management.

On the transit side, we have State certificated inspectors for the buses and trackless trolleys, trolleys. But again, there we have hourly employees who get training, then become certificated themselves. And then we have representatives from management who are certificated as well.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Your hourly employees conduct the inspections. They are trained by the shop managers; is that what

you said?

MR. WILSON: There is an instruction group that does the training on the transit side. Those instructors are certified by the state.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: On the transit side, I understand that. What about on the rail side?

MR. WILSON: To my knowledge, that instruction is done by the shop management.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Who does certification on the rail side?

MR. WILSON: There is -- I don't believe there is a certification process similar to what we have on the transit side for the instructors.

We are required to keep -- there is a certification process that exists on the railroad side. We are required to keep inspection records for the FRA's inspection. So there is oversight certification process, if you will, for the railroad side of the house. Those records are subject to review by the FRA.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: But you are describing a review on the transit side. Your inspectors are certificated?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: On the rail side you are saying your inspectors are not certificated; is that what I am hearing?

MR. WILSON: There is a certifying agency on the transit side and that is the State. On the railroad side, to my knowledge, there is not a certifying agency. But the instruction is done in a similar fashion. It is done by shop management.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Do you see a need for certification on the rail side?

MR. WILSON: I don't believe there is a need for certification, so to speak, similar to what we have in transit because the work that we have done on the railroad side of the house is every bit as effective. There is an outside, independent review of that inspection process and I am not sure it would add a whole lot to the inspection routine.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Where have your accidents occurred in most recent years? What area has it been, the rail? Have the majority of accidents occurred on the rail?

MR. WILSON: I would say the ones we are talking about here today, yes.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Serious accidents have occurred on the rail?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Do you think that certified inspection or certification of your individual would be of some assistance in cutting down on these accidents?

MR. WILSON: No, sir, because of the review I did on the nine incidents we had here before us today indicated not one of those incidents was a result of equipment failure or car failure. They were addressed and it was an issue where there was human failure. It was not on the inspection or maintenance side. It was the operation side.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I think we will hear from the Federal Railroad

Administration. They will have a chance to comment as to their findings, too.

Any further questions?

REP. LANDIS: Following up on some of the things, you said you are required to keep records by FRA?

MR. WILSON: Yes, sir.

REP. LANDIS: How often do they come in and look at those records? Is it regularly or after an accident and they come check up on a particular car?

MR. WILSON: I don't mean to be disrespectful but we have the FRA here. They will be talking. They can address the question.

In my experience they have been on our property regularly, certainly not just after accidents. They do a very thorough job, not just equipment records inspection. It is all aspects of the railroad.

REP. LANDIS: Is that the outside independent agency you were referring to?

MR. WILSON: Yes, sir.

REP. LANDIS: On your transit side,

how often are the State Police on the premises? Everyday?

MR. WILSON: I don't believe the State Police are on everyday. We are visited by a State Police officer periodically. Maybe we could ask Mr. McCormick here, who is our Chief Automotive Officer, to tell us a little bit about the visits we get from the State Police and how frequently they are here.

REP. LANDIS: It was my understanding they were supposed to have somebody on the premises all the time, based on their last investigation of SEPTA and the results that came out of that. We were just curious if they have somebody on your property everyday.

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JEFFREY McCORMICK,

a witness before the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. McCORMICK: My name is Jeffrey McCormick. I am the Chief Automotive Officer at SEPTA and, as such, am responsible for maintenance, repair specifications of all rubber-tired vehicles on the city transit side.

We have actually two troopers personally assigned to SEPTA. Their responsibility includes both diesel power and electric traction vehicles, including the RC Transit Division and electric traction vehicles.

They are stationed at the Belmont headquarters. They are not stationed at our headquarters. They may visit periodically on a more-than-daily basis, actually, and review all the records, review inspections, do sampling inspections and check out recertification by the State Department of Transportation of our inspectors.

REP. LANDIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Representative Civera?

REP. CIVERA: Excuse me for being late, maybe this question was raised, but to go back to the rail and the rail service, you stated that those cars are periodically or everyday they are checked. What is the average on the P&W line, the average age of those cars? That question might have been raised before I came in.

I know they are quite old, but what would be the average age of them?

MR. WILSON: Fifty-five years old.

REP. CIVERA: And a 55-year-old car, I am kind of concerned about that, the cars and your interpretation of the cars and because of accidents on the P&W, especially the one that was involved at the 69th Street Terminal.

A 55-year-old car, what is the line of inspection or what is the daily routine of inspection of a 55-year-old car? Is it done everyday?

A 55-year-old car has maintenance problems, as far as my interpretation. Have they been rebuilt? What is the procedure that you people have with that line there?

MR. WILSON: The operating components of the car, the power system, the braking system, the lighting system, the compressors, those elements that are safety related to the car are inspected every time the car is brought in for inspection. There is two types. I will address the older equipment.

I gave you a number, 55, and that is SEPTA-owned equipment. We did purchase -- I am not sure whether you were here during the slide show or not -- we did purchase ten vehicles from Chicago. Those cars are 30 to 35 years old, but they are two types of P&W cars that we call 60 type. Those cars are inspected three times a week.

There is a 200 type, or bullet cars, inspected twice a week. And the elements of those cars that are inspected cover the components.

As I mentioned, on the P&W itself, we do have -- they look like railroad cars and they act like railroad cars, but in terms of inspection and certification, they are part of a State system. So we could have a State certified inspector there and from time to time the State Trooper will visit that site.

The condition of the cars, as I am sure you are aware, this summer we took the fleet out of service for approximately eight weeks. It happened in around the time of the collision with the terminal. When we had the collision, allegedly it was a car problem. Allegedly the brakes did not function.

So we did a very quick inspection, very quick investigation and found that, in our view, the brakes worked fine. But since we didn't know why we had the collision, the only prudent thing to do would be not to run the cars until we knew what caused the incident.

If one car can do it, the theory is any car can do it. We are not confident to

run the cars until we find out what the cause is. We worked diligently, not only with ourselves and our own Safety Department, but also the National Transportation Safety Board. As we got closer to what we believed the real cause of the incident was, we became more confident to be able to restore service, except at that point we had a logistic problem. We only had eight or ten cars that we felt we could really rely on everyday because these cars had been pushed and pushed and pushed to the limit.

The irony of it is, our oldest fleet is the simplest fleet in terms of technology, but they are the most reliable cars we have. Every car ran everyday and ran reliably everyday and it is a testament to the skills of those people in the shops to be able to do that day in and day out. There is no other fleet in our operation and I don't think in the business that ran as reliably as those cars.

So you've got to ask yourself as a

professional how long can we push it until we invest money that we don't have in these cars? And so that is exactly what we did. We said we can't fulfill the service with eight to ten cars a day and have the wheels run off those cars because at some point you are asking for a safety problem.

So we took a step back, not because of the collision, not because of what we found in that investigation but because of the fact that logistically we could not comfortably field enough cars everyday and satisfy ourselves that we had enough cars in the shop to do the proper maintenance and inspection on them. So we took a step back and said, "We'll take an eight-week hit in service to ensure that when we come back in service this fleet is as reliable and safe as we want it to be."

We did that. We invested heavily in those cars and sent some of those cars, in some cases, even out of that shop and sent it to one of our more modern back shops in the system and had very skilled people put a

lot of hard effort and a lot of rejuvenation back into the equipment. Under the cars were steam-cleaned; wiring was reworked; some structural work was done. We had our own engineers look at the cars from a systematic standpoint and say what work needs to be done; not that the car was unsafe, but if we are going to run this car for the next four or five years and we are going to run them everyday, then you have got to invest in this fleet or if you are serious about safety, you are going to have to ground the car.

So we took the eight-week time period to do all that work, assure ourselves that we have a safe car as could possibly be run over the next four or five years. Then we made a commitment that we think is going to be able to get us to bridge the gap and that is within six months we are going to take two or three cars down and completely disassemble them again and see how well they took, how well the rehab took; do we need to bring them all in again or can we do them

one car at a time? Do we have enough time just to rehab or the effort that we put into the car wholly being effective and then at the end of the year, do the same thing.

We keep these kind of like in intensive care between now and when we have the new equipment show up. So that is, I think, an extraordinary effort.

In addition to that, in order to give us flexibility to pull two, three cars and take them apart and keep them in the shop for two or three weeks, if that is what is necessary, we had to get other equipment to build the fleet up so we have enough cars to do that. That is why we went to Chicago to purchase cars that we did, cars that we felt were reliable, cars that we felt our employees could maintain reliably and safely in the system. We have done that. We think we are going to go back and get a few more Chicago cars. That is an extraordinary intensive care effort that was required in every respect.

Safety was the highest priority in

our decision not to run and our decision to make that investment. As I said, we didn't know where this money was coming from.

REP. CIVERA: The Chicago cars that you purchased, before they are brought into the yard, is there a complete inspection? Are they gone over? Are they just put on the line?

They are not that new, either. They are quite old, from what I read in the paper.

MR. WILSON: We sent our engineers to Chicago and as ironic as it is, these cars were being scraped in Chicago. They have seen their better days in Chicago.

We sent our engineers to Chicago to work with the people who knew the cars intimately and got their inspection records and got the car's history record and we picked over and got the best of the lot.

So there was a complete inspection in Chicago and when they came to Philadelphia, there was again a complete inspection.

We invested approximately $15,000 to

$18,000 per car in upfit and modifications, door controls, communications, some wheel work, some truck work, so that they were as fit as any that we had and we were not taking a piece of cast-off from one system and the next day having it show up here. After we did the mechanical and electrical work on the cars, we even had enough pride in the business and the service out there in painting them red, white and blue; not just let them go green and white. We even went to that extent to feel the best we could.

REP. CIVERA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I have one other question and we will proceed.

You alluded earlier to turnover at this Rail Division in terms of operators. I know some of that has to do with wage differential between our system and competing systems and particularly at the initial phasing of the system. That was one of the clauses that was in the labor negotiation, I believe.

What is the nature of our turnover now? What is the rate of turnover we have on the system currently in terms of operators? Could you give me some average length of stay?

MR. WILSON: I would like to say since 1983, the first three years, there was a lot of components to the turnover. I will address that the best I can.

You have the flow-back provision. It happens twice a year, in May and in November, and up to ten percent of your work force can flow back.

The first four, maybe five flow-back periods, the first two, two-and-a-half years, we were getting maximum flow back. So we were losing, let's say, 20 people by the engineer rank, 20 conductors, maybe 40. So we were losing 40 people twice a year, 80 people in a year, just due to the flow back.

There is not an insignificant number of people who, because of rule violations, are discharged from the Authority. I don't have the number on that but I would say it

is more than 10 in a year. So we are up to maybe 90 in a year, maybe 100 in a year.

The flow back, however, has changed. We have not lost in the next year, we did not lose anywhere near the 10 percent. It is a good sign to us. It is an indication that the transition was beginning to work and that we are able to stabilize a little bit. As a matter of fact, we were able to, because of recruitments that we were doing, we were successful at a point, we were able to add service back in.

The flow-back provision for the conductors ends this year so we expect this year to have the maximum rate because it will be the last opportunity for anyone to go. And, of course, this is a year where we are doing collective bargaining and anytime you do that, there is a lot of uncertainty. We are very hopeful that we will continue as normal. But people, when they assess their careers, they will decide whether they want to take the risk or not. That is why we decided to have the maximum amount of flow

back this year.

Wage differential, I can't sit here before you today and say it is not a factor. It is. An engineer can make $18 an hour to work in New Jersey, 90 miles up the Turnpike, and the best he can make here is $14, $15 an hour, $13 an hour. It has gotten insensitive to some people. In fact, when we recruit people, we are kind of buffered by a couple of different forces.

When we recruit people, we are looking for the highest standard person we can get. We test them extensively. We are looking for people with skills, high level skills and you get those people and ask them to work for nine months or six months for $6 an hour.

These people have alternatives. They have other options. So they choose to exercise those options from time to time and work somewhere else halfway through a training program. That we look at as part of the turnover because we have invested in the instruction program and then we never

get the benefit from it.

We have tried to deal with that by adjusting -- attempting to adjust the wages at the entry level during the training period as best we can. Obviously we have got to respect the contract we have got. The wage rates are in place. We recognize that as an obstacle and dealt with that.

So the turnover aspect, to us, has got a number of different faces to it and as I said, fortunately one of the flow backs ends and we attempted to deal with the wage differential at the entry level and I think that as time progresses and the transition takes root, that that turnover problem will dissipate. But it has been a substantial problem in the last three years.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Could you provide the Committee with some data reflecting the turnover problem, also highlighting those various components, as you have described today, on possible reasons for turnover and in addition do you conduct any kind of accident interview? Is there any way you

can try to grasp that information so you can get a real fix on why your employees are leaving?

MR. WILSON: Our Human Resource Department, being the responsible part of the organization to do that, I believe in certain cases they do and they can provide some insight into that.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you.

We have done a performance evaluation and they tell me I haven't been performing too well in allowing opportunities for breaks. I think after Mr. Casper asks his final question, we will break for lunch.

REP. CASPER: With regard to equipment deficiencies, possibly track conditions, signal conditions, I understand there is a Safety Committee function to have an opportunity for feedback between the operating employees and those officials up the line with those responsibilities.

MR. WILSON: There are a variety of Safety Committees. There is a longstanding Safety Committee in our transit side and I

will say the City Transit Division and the Red Arrow Division, where they will meet on a somewhat regular basis and there will be an agenda of items that are brought up by the rank and file, by union representation as well as management, and there they will kind of assess the priorities and kind of put together a set of marching orders for things to be done and then the following meeting reports are done as to progress or lack of those elements.

On the railroad side, however, it has not been, what is the right word, as vibrant a process. As you know, there are 13 different unions on the railroad side and each operates independently within their own structure. We've attempted to, even in the contracts that we are negotiating now, to institute a Safety Committee, a formal institutionalized Safety Committee similar to what is on the transit side to deal with that.

In the absence of that, at least one of the unions has taken a very aggressive

posture with respect to things that need repair, things that need fixing, things that are safety hazards, going about collecting that data on their own and reporting to us periodically. The link in how we relate is kind of in its formative stage, has not meshed. The degree of communication is not what they would like and probably not what we would like. I think the whole process of it has begun and we will see a lot more progress in that area than we have in the past.

When the FRA came and did their safety assessment visit, they weren't entirely convinced these formal institutional Safety Committees made a lot of sense, at least on the railroad. I think if you look at the fact that on the transit side we are dealing with one, basically one union who has got the ability to coordinate within itself and sit down with management and maybe see a lot more progress than you would dealing with one management, 13 unions.

Their suggestion was interesting: Why don't you let it be informal? Why don't you let it be work-related? Why don't you let it be independent? Why don't you have a lot more? Why does it have to be so structured?

We thought about that for a while, said, "Let's do that." We instituted what was considered workplace safety groups. For the most part, it deals with the maintenance side of the house. It is easier to deal with them. They are in a location so daily it will be kind of a safety orientation or discussion, pre- or post-shift or weekly, monthly and there are various safety campaign awards suggested, perhaps campaign contests, things like that.

But on the railroad side, we are kind of pleased with the reaction we have gotten with the decentralized rather than highly centralized approach to it. On the operating side, the conductors, passenger attendants, UTU, appears to have a more centralized process. I think we ought to be

flexible enough to work the way they want to work.

I think it can be done a number of different ways. On the one side of the house we are centralized and do it regularly. On the other side, we started a decentralized basis, taking a lead from the FRA comments and it seems to be working fairly well.

REP. CASPER: Your operators on the rail side are UTU?

MR. WILSON: Yes.

REP. CASPER: Suppose the operator encounters a slippery spot on the rail at a given milepost, does he report that directly to the foreman of the terminal point where he gets in or to his union or how does that work, that formal type?

MR. WILSON: It is done a number of different ways. An engineer might, or a conductor might tell the next road supervisor he sees or he might tell a dispatcher over the radio. It might be handled a couple of different ways.

As a matter of fact, there is a somewhat formal way of recording the information, passing it onto his union steward or union leader who will collect the information, give the information to us.

A lot of reports we get come from radio reports to our trouble desk or to the tower, then to the trouble desk or recorded on a, if it is equipment problems, MP-11 form. It is a defect sheet for the car. What we find is when we get the reports through the radio system or through the defect cards, we have a higher success rate in getting those thing addressed and fixed, getting into the pipeline for repair.

When it is done informally, a supervisor knows or talks to another person he knows, he says, "By the way, we have got this problem here," I would like to be able to say the supervisor writes that down and dutifully goes to the phone and says, "Now fix this," but I can't say that. It is one thing and he gets four other things. At the end of the day, if he is thinking of that,

it comes to mind when he debriefs, fine; if it doesn't, it doesn't. That is the part we are not really meshing very well with.

Also, we will respect the fact that the union wants to play a leadership role in collecting that information and giving it to us in a batch. What we have decided to do with that is to assign two management personnel to work with a union personnel to start working off those lists the things that have been collected, kind of get it in some priority level because they have the greatest hazards and then work our way down. I think that is good, too, except we shouldn't wait until these groups come --

REP. CASPER: Right. I can see if it is a track condition. But if it is a balance problem or this type of problem, I can understand that it wouldn't be so structured. But if it is a slick spot on the rails or something unique, either due to nature or whatever, there might be more immediacy that obviously would be needed than just if he sees the supervisor that he

knows. That is fine.

MR. WILSON: I think those kinds of things, I think when an engineer sees those kinds of things, more often than not, he will report it over the radio. That gets to the trouble desk and gets more immediate response than your vanilla-flavored problem.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Is there a formalized process where the engineer knows what conditions are to be reported in a certain way? For instance, if there is an immediate problem, is there a rulebook guideline that says if there is an immediate problem, you use this procedure to inform the rest of the system of what the emergency is?

MR. WILSON: I refer that question to Mr. Tryon, Chief of our Instruction Department. I want you to get an exact answer to it. I think I know how it works day-to-day but I want you to hear the exact ruling on that.

MR. TRYON: Paul Tryon, Assisant Superintendent on Rules and Instruction.

There is a rule in our operating rules that provides for any employee that observes a hazard that would affect the safe movement of any train they must report it immediately by the fastest communication to the train dispatcher so they can get the people out to fix it right away.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: The fastest communication?

MR. TRYON: That would be radio if the train has a radio. If it has a radio malfunction it would be the closest telephone. But it must be as soon as possible to the train dispatcher so they can take protective measures to either keep the trains off the track, call the trouble desk, have the qualified employees go out and inspect the track or signals or whatever it is.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you.

The Committee will recess until 1:15. Thank you.

(A luncheon recess ensued.)

Philadelphia, PA
April 24, 1987
1:15 p.m.

(All parties being present, the proceedings resumed as follows:)

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CHAIRMAN LINTON: Call the meeting to order.

Mr. Fasy, you may begin your testimony.

MR. FASY: Thank you.

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RICHARD L. FASY,

a witness before the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. FASY: Good afternoon. My name is Richard Fasy. I am the Manager, System Safety Department for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority. It

is my pleasure to address this hearing today on safety, et cetera.

We will begin by outlining for you the formation and history of the System Safety Department and concluding with pertinent issues with which it deals on behalf of the Authority.

In the late 1970's SEPTA under conditions of deferred maintenance, aging shops and decaying equipment was experiencing an unusually high rate of fires, equipment failure and accidents. The General Manager of SEPTA, late in 1979, formed a Safety Office reporting directly to him. He appointed me as its manager, charged me with the responsibility to conduct inspections of fixed facilities and to investigate accidents and fires wherever they occurred.

Through the early 1980's, those two roles took most of the efforts of that department. By 1982, the System Safety Department was expanded to deal with additional issues, such as environmental

hazards, industry hygiene and educational programs. Currently the System Safety Department is comprised of the following: A Fire Marshal with over 30 years of experience in fire prevention and protection procedure and assures all city and state and national fire codes are known and enforced throughout SEPTA. In addition, specification review by this Fire Marshal assures compliance with standards and new procurements and rehabilitations. A certified safety professional as Chief Safety Supervisor manages five safety officers who conduct investigations and inspections and educational programs for general safety assurance. The Supervisor is certificated by examination by the certifying Board of the American Society of Safety Engineers. His extensive background in over 20 years of experience in safety management assures the Authority credible and timely response to many safety issues. The Administrator of Safety Statistician assures appropriate use of modern office

equipment and captures safety data on a PC network to afford the Department's experts the information needed to identify problems and formulate recommendations and proposed programs to resolve safety issues.

Finally, a safety engineer on the department's staff interfaces with SEPTA engineers and managers as they formulate change and design new structures. This assures that proper safety concerns are reflected in new work prior to implementation. In addition, the safety engineers's role expanded to include environmental law compliance involvement with the Federal EPA and the State DER as well as the Right to Know compliance. The safety and environmental engineer assures compliance with the Toxic Substance Control Act, the Comprehansive Environmental Responsibility and Liability Act or Super Fund, the Underground Storage Tank Regulations, the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Act, BOCA and other regulatory enforcements at all levels of government.

In July 1987 an additional safety officer as well as environmental engineer will be added to the Department's staff. The primary purpose of the Safety Department is threefold: To educate, to advise and to monitor. Education includes both education of employees as well as education of management to carry out in its daily operations safety awareness and adherence. Education of employees includes special programs on safety awareness and operation as well as in the industrial areas and shops. It includes respiratory protection, chemical controls, personal protective equipment, environmental compliance and protection. System Safety advises management on the changes new safety rules may require, engineering concepts, designs and changes, new policies that may affect management and other safety-related issues that may arise from time to time. In addition, the System Safety Department interfaces with regulatory and governmental agencies relating to safety, such as the

Department of Environmental Resources, the PUC, the EPA, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, National Transporation and Safety Board, the Federal Railroad Administration and the Urban Mass Transit Administration.

The monitoring role is twofold: we have safety inspections and audits and accident investigations. Inspection of SEPTA property for safety adherence is performed by rule in every operating department and by exception once a year by the System Safety Department. In addition, spot inspections are conducted by safety officers without prior notice. These inspections are conducted under SEPTA policy and assure exposure of problem areas and assure resolution as well as adherence to regulations and codes.

Accident investigation is another responsibility of the Department. These are conducted under SEPTA policy and involve a team of investigators from various departments with expertise in subjects

relating to the accident. Members of the Safety Department chair these investigations. The purpose of investigation is to determine cause and make sound, realistic recommendations to prevent recurrence of a similar-type accident. In addition, the reports also record precisely what happened enabling periodic reviews of the accident. It is another management tool for formulating policies and changes to enhance improvements to the system. The System Safety Department reports monthly both short-and long-term recommendations resulting from these investigations. This assures that the intent of the investigation is carried out and no recommendation is left forgotten or unaddressed.

The System Safety Department has addressed many issues over the last several years. As a support department, the Safety Department provides expertise and direct support in specialized fields to other SEPTA departments. For example, most SEPTA facilities are over 25 years old. Common

material used in the construction of those materials was asbestos, now identified as disease-causing material. In its decaying state, its fibers cause lung abnormalities and a disease known as asbestosis. SEPTA surveyed all shops and fixed structures and identified areas containing asbestos. A team was formulated for the fixed structures that had to be abated.

In addition, the maintenance process is carried out by SEPTA car and bus mechanics, which involves the use of asbestos-lined brakes, or resistors, were addressed by instituting proper engineering methods to prevent any exposure to those workers.

The System Safety Department addresses issues such as designing new equipment, such as the Norristown High Speed Line cars and the rehabilitation of the Cresham Bridge on the Chestnut Hill Branch. Relative to procedures, the System Safety Department is working in task forces composed of several departments'

representatives, formulates safety procedures and its injury-reporting procedures to cover occupational injuries. Through the use of certificated industrial hygienists, the Department has analyzed and identified and recommended mitigating procedures for engineering controls to abate various industry problems involving machinery, welding or ventilation.

Working in conjunction with SEPTA's risk manager and SEPTA's insurance group, the System Safety Department has addressed the relative safety of SEPTA-owned warehouses and buildings, determining such critical issues as chemical storage requirements and building code compliance.

One of most important issues the Safety Department is now addressing is compliance with the Pennsylvania Right To Know Law. SEPTA has compiled an inventory of all chemicals it uses by manufacturer and location. We have identified the chemical abstract codes and level of hazards associated with its use. In addition, all

materials' safety data sheets on each of the products are on hand at each of the user locations.

An educational program is now under development. Educational material to be used will be provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

I have tried, in a brief period of time, to relate to you the organization of the Safety Department, some of the specific safety issues confronting SEPTA. As you may understand, there are other safety issues relating to the replacement of equipment and the training of operating personnel to compliance testing and countless other issues which relate to SEPTA. I think Mr. Frank Wilson has done an excellent job in relating those to you today.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you.

Any questions from the members of the Committee?

You must have a very fine presentation. No one has any questions.

Thank you very much.

I thank the members of the SEPTA team. I suspect we will be hearing from you as we continue with our hearings in the future. We are also looking forward to coming out, as I said earlier, to on-site visits and have an opportunity to talk to you about your procedures that you have talked about and get a close-hand look at the way you handle some of these safety procedures you have discussed today.

Our next witness to testify is Mr. Dennis Thompson, President of Local 61, United Transportation Union.

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DENNIS MICHAEL THOMPSON,
a witness before the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. THOMPSON: I would like to thank you for this time.

I am Dennis Michael Thompson, President of United Transportation Union, Local 61. I am also the Chairman of the Safety Committee of Local 61. I am here on behalf of Mr. Tex Crawl, UTU legislator in Harrisburg. I have been ordered in here by our Union officers. I am an active, working conductor for SEPTA. There are rules on our books stating that I cannot talk to the media or press and I don't classify you as the media or press so I am going to speak.

REP. CASPER: Excuse me, Mr. Thompson.

I believe the Chairman of the House Transportation, Amos Hutchinson, sent a formal letter to Mr. Tex Crawl, UTU, specifically requesting that you be permitted to testify today.

MR. THOMPSON: Yes, that is correct.

REP. CASPER: Just pointing that out for the record.

MR. THOMPSON: Just to go on here, Mr. Coleman done a survey on SEPTA. The FRA has done extensive surveys. On May of 1986, Local 61 formed a Safety Committee. We have been submitting safety forms, safety documentation to SEPTA. SEPTA has yet to respond to any of our safety problems.

This week on Monday morning, Tuesday morning, excuse me, they invited myself, our local chairman and also our local legislator to a special safety meeting. This is the first time SEPTA recognized our committee. There is 13 rail unions. We are the only one that had documentation submitted to SEPTA. We will grant you there is a lot of things to be taken out, but there are a lot of important things in here. We go on about platforms, poor signals, bad lights, Matlack up in Norristown dumping some kind of chemical from tank cars into truck cars, splattering all over the train platforms

where the crews are and passengers are.

Couple of other things I want you to know. We do go under tests for rules. These men are not paid for this, first of all. We are out there twelve hours a day for eight hours' pay; go on them trains for six, sometimes seven hours without getting off. We take five-hour breaks and take one train home. We have men working five-car trains by themselves. We are losing revenue everyday.

We have air tests. We go once a year. We do take physicals, as Mr. Tryon said, except in the State of New Jersey we are responsible for taking a physical once a year. SEPTA allows conductors twice a year. We have problems with PCB's. Passengers are riding cars with PCB. I know you are aware of what is going on up in Paoli.

I am going to submit a 22-page report to the committee. When you find time to go through it, I appreciate it. There is a lot in here. I don't want to go into it all or we will be here all day. But I did bring

enough copies to furnish everyone with it.

As I spoke earlier, there is a lot of hazards out there. We were talking earlier about the signals. When we were a form of CONRAIL, we never entered a block with a train in the block. In SEPTA, we do. It causes quite some problems.

Lots of our members -- SEPTA does lose a lot of people to New Jersey Transit. Lots of it is poor management and not enough pay. I mean, when it was CONRAIL, it was two train masters. SEPTA, they don't have any road supervisors. It is just a witch-hunt trying to find problems but not to help you. I feel they are out there to get you. Most of the mechanics out there operating the trains tell you the same thing. It is ridiculous. We feel they are not helping. A lot of times, they are hurting us. No matter where we go, there is one. They are not there to assist us. Hundreds or thousands of people ride free everyday. I have documentation from members that bring five-car trains from Marcus Hook,

250 people riding free. There is nobody at the doors to help the people off, people falling and breaking ankles. It is a mess out there.

That is all I have to say, gentlemen. I don't want to say any more.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

You made reference to the fact that under the CONRAIL system you never entered a block when there was another train.

MR. THOMPSON: They have signals to where if you are in a block there was always a stop signal behind you.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Could you tell me what a block is?

MR. THOMPSON: A block is a fixed signal. In other words, say you are on Broad Street and you are at Spring Garden, our next is Race, if you are sitting at the Spring Garden, you can't, the car behind you can't come in to Spring Garden until you leave there.

Understand what I am trying to say?

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Sure.

MR. THOMPSON: The Market-East can be sitting in a station. A train can come behind you and also have a signal to allow you to enter into there. Even though the rules are telling you to run at restricted speed, look out for obstructions, broken rail ahead, it is still unsafe to us. We feel it is unsafe. It should not be allowed in that block whatsoever. It is little things. You will see a lot of stuff once you get out there and investigate.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: You made reference to New Jersey Transit. I know over -- after the CONRAIL divorce, as it was described earlier, New Jersey Transit is operating rail. Do you know if they have continued with the same system in not allowing a train into another block?

MR. THOMPSON: That I am not sure of, sir, since I am not qualified on New Jersey operation lines.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: The Safety Committee that you serve on, is there a

process for your members to provide you with information and is there a procedure that you use? I understand you to say you were just beginning to establish a relationship with SEPTA to allow you to provide that information. How does your memebership work through the system to get that information to you?

MR. THOMPSON: Well, as earlier spoken, first of all we are to report to SETPA's management any time we feel there is a problem, immediately. I would say at least 95 percent of the people out there operating the trains do do that. We, as the local, come up with a simple form asking the members to write anything they see as far as -- not just for members operating the train but also for passengers. We always break it down to make it easier. If SEPTA owns that car or it is an AMTRAK station or it is AMTRAK railroad, wherever it might be or whoever is operating it, we ask for comments. We ask if it is high risk, low risk, what it might be. We do not turn this

documentation over to SEPTA. This is for personal local information only.

The other day at SEPTA's meeting they wanted us to turn the documentation over to them with the members' signatures. We only have five outstanding members that are doing this. For almost a year we have been compiling all this information. We agreed we would work with SEPTA. There was no problem with working with them.

After the Coleman study it is clearly the highest recommendation for the union officers and for rank and file of each local to get involved. We know it is a major concern for the riders out there that safety is the biggest problem because we are being sued everyday for broken ankles, what have you, doors closing on them, tons and tons of things. But we come up with a simple form. The members fill it out. We throw it in our computer, kick it back out. We have also a form where OT logs transportation where members are working five-car trains by themselves. They have eight doors open up,

one conductor on a train and one engineer. Passengers are boarding the train and exit the train by themselves. There is no one there to help you step off the train. There is holes in the platforms, no lights, tons of things.

In order to come after, to attack that problem, we decided to come out with another simple form. We started this last month.

We are losing thousands and thousands and thousands just not being able to collect fares. There is not enough men on the trains.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: How many? You say on a five-car train there is one conductor currently?

MR. THOMPSON: See, what is happening, sir, they have a lot of people in the program now, trying to get more people qualified. They just don't have the people out there to man the trains.

We are trying to move the trains as fast and as safe as possible to keep the

passengers from screaming and yelling at us. Some day I would like to have you with me, undercover. I will show you 50 people screaming and yelling at the drop of a hat, five minutes late.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I plan to do that.

MR. THOMPSON: Hope so.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Is there a standard number of conductors that is required to be on the train?

MR. THOMPSON: No, there is not. There is nothing set in the contract, nothing I know of, any rules of SEPTA to force them to put so many people on a train. They have revenue agents come and tell us how many should be on there required to man that train. Usually there is two men for three cars, two men for four cars. It all depends on the amount of revenues that is collected.

Even if it did have a full crew, we are still operating with people not at the doors. Exiting people are up and down the steps themselves. No one is there to catch

them if they fall out the doors.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Is there someone that comes around and conducts passenger counts? Is that the revenue agents?

MR. THOMPSON: Well, that is the conductor's responsibility to count the amount of people on the train.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Is there somebody that comes to check on you to monitor whether or not you are collecting the revenue and tickets?

MR. THOMPSON: It is a random test. They pop up at the station. They monitor us.

Then SEPTA has a bunch of people come out and ride the trains, count heads. You can be out there by yourself on a five-car train and they come and say, "I am here to count how many people are on the train." Forget the count, get their money. Sometimes you wonder.

We realize that they are losing a lot of people. They are losing people everyday. With the flow-back with Jersey Transit

raiding them, because SEPTA is by far the best in the country as far as training people. I don't think it is quote, long enough. I would like to see it longer.

Also, SEPTA crews operating on the rail are qualified over 500 miles of railroad. You go into AMTRAK, CONRAIL; half of their crews ain't qualified over 50 miles of railroad. There is a lot of railroad remain to log in your head to go through the operation.

One day I can run Marcus Hook to Warminster; next day Paoli to Doylestown. Everyday you are changing your routes; temporary blocks, speed restriction, signals to be removed from service; you have to keep up to date. One little incident, you are down the road.

It is a lot to ask for someone that is not making a big dollar today.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: How do they make the assignments?

MR. THOMPSON: First we have a pick. Three picks a year, and by your seniority

you have the right to hold the best position you like closest to your home. But if you are a man that cannot hold a position you go on the extra board. On the extra board you can be signed up in Warminster, Doylestown, Paoli, Chestnut Hill, Suburban, Market East. You are putting 50,000 miles a year on your car for $11 an hour and some guys $7 an hour. That is a lot to ask a guy. They pay you half-hour travel, a half hour. That comes down to $10, not even. Meanwhile you get a speeding ticket because you are late for work. Then they want to look at your speeding record.

Just keeps going on and on, sir.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: You mentioned there are days you have training and you are not being paid?

MR. THOMPSON: In SEPTA we are responsible for going to book of rules once a year on your birthday month, air class once a year on your birthday month. We are responsible for going to AMTRAK book of rules once a year and CONRAIL. We are paid

for CONRAIL and AMTRAK. These are on our day off. You have to remember it is mandatory in SEPTA that you work six days a week.

So I take the month of July, my month, I don't have any days off. Mind you, I am working 12 hours a day. I start at 5:00. I am done at 5:00 at night. It takes me 50 minutes to get to Warminster and 50 minutes to get back from Warminster. You are talking 14-hour days for eight hours' pay. That is why they can't hold people. Not only is it your birthday, you don't have the day to go out and have a good time.

I must add, don't take a lot of this, what I am saying, as a bitter employee. I am not a bitter employee. I am proud to work for SEPTA. I think SEPTA has come a long way. I think they have done a lot.

I am former CONRAIL, hired under the Reading Division. They are okay to work for. SEPTA is trying. They have lots of problem but things can better, I think.

Morale is one of the biggest things

out there. You stub your toe, no matter what you say, they don't believe you. As far as having an investigation -- well, we don't have them anymore. I should say interviews. You are constantly called in and interviewed and then you get back out on the train by yourself, four cars, nobody else there. You get some senior citizen trying to ride on a rush-hour train. You have to go out, throw switches, you forget, you know, next thing you got two cars on the ground. It all comes in together as far as we are concerned.

Then we have one or two good people in your local trying to submit safety forms to look out for the best interests of riders, management, find out who is doing what, it really comes in.

Myself, I have been tested four times for drugs and alcohol, not any moving violation. I have been sent to the company psychiatrist three times. Just for your own records, I am D.M. Thompson. I have the most letters of commendation from passengers

at SEPTA in a rail division. I have been written up in the company magazine. They call me Mr. Personality on the job. I have even put a little act in my game everyday. I am real. I am drug free. They can test me any time they want. It is a little embarassing when they want to stick you with a needle. You got three supervisors taking you to the hospital. I am here for five hours, not getting paid and three guys are watching me, getting paid. These are the things that upset a lot of people out there. That is why we are having safety problems, because their minds are not there. Take a 12-hour day; you can't get your car fixed, you can't even go to the doctor.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: When you go for drug testing under request by the Authority, you are not paid for the time?

MR. THOMPSON: Sir, we have people, they wouldn't even pay their bills. The Union had to get involved just to pay the medical bills. We had an incident --

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Before you go into

that, can you answer that question, the situation you described?

MR. THOMPSON: I was never paid for any of my drug or alcohol testing. That was not under the regime there is now. The previous regime, the superintendent is no longer here, thank God, because you would be here all day if he was.

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CHAIRMAN LINTON: What about now, under the current regime?

MR. THOMPSON: No, they do not pay you, not that I know of, anyway.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: No further questions.

Representative Nahill?

REP. NAHILL: Under what circumstances would you be permitted or is it permitted for one train to enter a block when another one is? What is the reasoning behind allowing that? There must be a reason.

MR. THOMPSON: Speed up the service, get the trains through.

REP. NAHILL: Does it make that much

difference?

MR. THOMPSON: My personal opinion, no. It is only in the Center City Commuter Tunnel where it is happening.

REP. NAHILL: If they were not permitted to enter the block what kind of a problem would you foresee?

MR. THOMPSON: Five-minute delay. They come out with a new rule they are not supposed to be in there. Still and all, you are getting a signal. Like I say, there is so much on a man's mind operating a train for six hours without stepping off and turning that train around at each location and not being able to use a facility to wash or relieve oneself because half the places we do turn our trains do not have facilities. We have women conducting them trains. We have men conducting them trains. They don't get off. We can't stop to get a cup of coffee or bite to eat. I don't know what most of the people are doing out there for a living, but it is tough when you can't stop for ten minutes to relieve yourself.

As far as brake test, I want to talk about that for a minute. For years it was the conductor's obligation to make a brake test. Now they use car inspectors. We get an air slip, it is fine. Those people are qualified to do their job. When we relieve a crew we go back, watch air gauges move to see if the brakes are working. We never once inspect the wheels or never once inspect the brake rigging. We don't look to see if anything is hanging or dangling or whatever. We just go back and watch gauges move. If the gauges move, the brakes are okay, we go.

REP. NAHILL: Is that because there is so much pressure to perform on time?

MR. THOMPSON: I personally think it is.

REP. NAHILL: What role does the conductor play during a trip as far as safety is concerned?

MR. THOMPSON: First of all, the conductor is the boss of the train. He is responsible for the movement of the train.

His responsibility is revenue, collecting all the money, make sure everybody is seated, no feet on the seat. He is responsible for the air brakes. He is responsible for signals, speed, speed restriction.

REP. NAHILL: When you say "responsible for signals," what did you mean?

MR. THOMPSON: Well, he has got to know as much as the engineer; where they are, what they come up to. If he is on the head end he is responsible.

REP. NAHILL: Is he supposed to watch the signal?

MR. THOMPSON: If he has time.

REP. NAHILL: So you would have the engineer and conductor both watching? Is that normal, ideal?

MR. THOMPSON: If you are coming from, say, Lansdale. Your last stop is North Broad. You are done collecting all your fares. You should be on the head end watching the signals. Most of us are there

to make sure everything is going down properly.

In the old days, there was a fireman. The fireman was the apprentice engineer. Most engineers wouldn't allow the fireman to operate the train for years. Now, with the systems that are going on in this country, they did away with firemen and there is no more apprentice engineers. They have taken so many new guys, people that are not experienced so nobody trusts anybody. So there is always somebody watching. It is the place to be if you are a conductor.

REP. NAHILL: If you had a five-car train and you are the only conductor, how would you --

MR. THOMPSON: You don't. You can't get through the second car.

First of all, I should say SEPTA conductor is on the hind end of the train. To my knowledge, is the only place in the country where they push the conductor back to the end of the train. The conductor was always in the first car, close enough to

receive orders, make the speed restrictions properly.

See, a lot of times if you are in the first car, you can see the signals by looking through the windows, if you know where they are. It comes from experience, knowing what curve to pop your head out, what curve to look at, certain angles. You can see the signals. There is an emergency valve in the car. If you see the signal don't look like yours, you stop the train.

All this stuff has changed now. It is just move them on, move them on.

REP. NAHILL: Why would they put somebody in the back?

MR. THOMPSON: I don't know that. I wouldn't know, sir. Since I have been working SEPTA, conductors are supposed to be in the hind end.

REP. NAHILL: That is SEPTA's policy?

MR. THOMPSON: SETPA's policy. See, when you back a train up, if something goes wrong, we had a flagman. He was qualified on the signals, physical characteristics to

make a reverse move. Now, we have what is known as passenger attendants. They put holes in tickets; that is it. The majority of them are not qualified on the characteristics. Some of them have been through certain parts of SEPTA's programs but not really skillful enough to make a move, say, to back a train up to an interlocking or make a reverse move. Most of them don't, some don't even know how to tie hand brakes on you.

REP. NAHILL: What would be the average train crew ten years ago, five-passenger train heading out to Doylestown?

MR. THOMPSON: You would have a head brakeman, flagman, a conductor and engineer.

REP. NAHILL: So you would have four. What would you say is the average crew now?

MR. THOMPSON: Two.

You have to remember there are lots of doors open up, nobody is helping these people off. There is an old cliche in the railroad: If you are looking to get off for

the summer, just ride a SEPTA train and get off. It is a damned thing to say, sir, but it is true. I don't know how many people are suing SEPTA but this is what we look after. It is coming out of the budget or somebody is getting for free.

REP. NAHILL: You think it is all lines, not one particular line?

MR. THOMPSON: Every line.

Then you have the snowy season where they don't come out and remove the snow fast enough. People fall down in the stations that have never been in the station. They take the train one day and say, "There is a good claim, fall down."

It is a disgrace, really is.

REP. NAHILL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Representative Civera.

REP. CIVERA: Mr. Thompson, on the one-man, five-car situation that you described this afternoon, does that prevail during rush hour, also?

MR. THOMPSON: That is what I am

speaking of. A bargain train, what we call bargain train, operates from 9:00 to 4:00. We can handle two and three cars because 90 percent of it is senior citizens and they are a different type of people. You have to remember, you have a lot of people riding the system everyday looking for a free ride. They know where to sit. They can monitor the crew getting off, see how many people are on the train. They go up to the front car. If they see you in the front car, they go to the back car. There is a lot of "beats," we call them in the business. We go after them.

Then you have the people that buy tickets only to Jenkintown. They are going all the way to West Trenton. Instead of paying $4, they are paying $2. That is how it is out there.

REP. CIVERA: You described to the Committee the reports, the safety reports that was designed by, you said by your local which was composed of five men that were doing it for the first year.

MR. THOMPSON: What it started as, as a local president I now oversee the contract. I don't oversee grievances. All I do is oversee the local meetings. We were being bombarded with people complaining about bad steps, lights and all that. I developed a simple safety form for check mark; put down the station you think is bad, grab irons missing. It developed. All we had was six members that have been really involved in it.

Anyone can fill them out. We allow engineers, coach cleaners, car inspectors. Anyone can fill a form out. We don't reveal any information. We don't change a thing. If you read some of this you wouldn't believe it.

REP. CIVERA: You are saying that it was not designed for a select five men?

MR. THOMPSON: No, sir.

REP. CIVERA: An entire local could have chosen to do so.

How many are in your local?

MR. THOMPSON: Well, there is only

about 215 left.

REP. CIVERA: My point is out of 200, let's use number 200.

MR. THOMPSON: Yes. That is good.

REP. CIVERA: Why only five?

MR. THOMPSON: Laziness. People want to constantly complain but not get involved. SEPTA testified the same thing. They have some good conductors, engineers, and some bad ones. We believe if we address the problem, we will fix the problem. They do try to fix it and read a lot of things we bring to them. There is nothing in this committee they have brought to us that they even recognize. That is why we are here today. We are bitter that they have not recognized our committee. I would say there is about 30 guys have really submitted a safety form to the local. We have five that do outstanding jobs.

REP. CIVERA: How many reports within a year's time did you submit to SEPTA or you couldn't submit or wanted to submit?

MR. THOMPSON: We submitted 12

monthly safety findings.

REP. CIVERA: Those 12 monthly safety reports, they identify -- in other words, you have a problem with the train car. It identifies the problem within the car, say, bad lighting or the doors don't properly work, say number 513, for example.

MR. THOMPSON: Here is a perfect example. Car number 252, engineer on the B end, no radio, it was found. There is another one, brake shoe missing; ordered to run the train between Wayne Junction and Trenton, New Jersey and return from Wayne Junction to Chestnut Hill.

We just put down what they put in these reports. We have grab irons missing where a crew member goes to reach and it is not there. He falls out of the train.

REP. CIVERA: Has that ever happened?

MR. THOMPSON: Yes. We have lots of people fall out of trains, sir. We had a -- well, he wasn't a member -- he fell out of the train, new guy. He is no longer with us. He quit; just didn't like the job.

First of all, what you have to realize, gentlemen, it is hard to just walk down a moving train to begin with. The train shakes. It is all over the place. Most of these guys out there ain't experienced enough to walk down the train. When I came on the train I walked around the freight yards for a month before I was allowed to touch anything; to watch people. What they do is they put a little white band around your arm. Everyone points to you: Watch that guy, watch that guy.

Now, we don't know who is who anymore. They come in, come in 60 at a shot. By the time they get done training, there is four of them left. So the turnover is horrendous. Their training process, it is a good school but it is tough. I mean, it is tough. I don't know how they get that many. It is too much, too quick.

REP. CIVERA: That is all, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. Thompson, we

would like to thank you for your testimony. If you have information for the committee, we welcome it.

MR. THOMPSON: Yes. I will submit our last safety report to the committee.

I would like to add that, as I stated previously, that SEPTA did recognize our committee this week. They agreed to sit down with two safety officers and start developing a pattern to where we could get to the bottom of our problems.

One other thing I would like to add is out facilities. I forgot about this. We do have five-hour breaks. We have a lounge. When you are downtown, come visit us. Will you, please?

CHAIRMAN LINTON: We will do that.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you.

Mr. Edward English, Chief of Maintenance Programs, Federal Railroad Administration.

Mr. English, thank you for coming to

testify for our committee. You may begin.

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EDWARD ENGLISH,

a witness before the Transporation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. ENGLISH: Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am Edward English, Chief of Maintenance Programs for the Federal Railroad Administration. The FRA appreciates the opportunity to appear before you to discuss FRA activities on SEPTA.

Our main goal in life is railroad safety and we do have safety jurisdiction over the High Speed Rail Lines of SEPTA. These activities form of regular inspections wher or SETPA's compliance with federal rail regulations. We also have conducted a full system assessment on SEPTA which went beyond the compliance with federal regulations. We looked at things such as morale, staffing, their overall planning process and we looked at this in all areas of rail safety.

Back in 1983 and '84, SEPTA did have a number of accidents and because of this accident history, it created a concern in FRA. We made the decision to conduct that detailed system assessment.

The assessment was conducted in April of 1985 and, as I said, focused on all areas of rail operation. It included the signal train control system, locomotives, a rolling stock. We looked at tracks, bridges, the adequacy of employee training, the number of employees employed and also we looked at all their pertinent records. This activity involved some 30 to 40 federal inspectors from around the nation and we prepared a very detailed report that was submitted to SEPTA after the field investigation was completed.

Some of the areas that we found where we had concern, some areas that we felt SEPTA did have some problem were particularly in the areas of training and education. We found that their safety programs, particularly local safety

committees, were not active. We felt that their injury investigation, cause determination, remedial action for accident investigation for their supervisors was not adequate. We felt emergency response programs could be improved. We looked at facilities and bridges; felt many of them are antiquated and should be replaced such as towers, shops and, of course, bridges.

We found that in some areas there was noncompliance with federal regulations. And these areas included blue signal protection for employees working on equipment, hours of service, power brake regulations. We found some pager problems in the signal system.

As I said, we prepared a very detailed report, presented it to SEPTA and then conducted a follow-up inspection about a year later. That was in the beginning of 1986.

In 1986 we found that SEPTA had addressed a majority of the items that we had concerns with. They had accepted many of the recommendations that we had. They

had established very detailed training programs, expanded their programs at their training facilities. Their maintenance concerns and their rules compliance improved considerably. Just one prime example, in the areas of signals, the original assessment, we found a defect ratio of around 50 percent. On the return follow-up inspection that defect percentage was much, much lower. And they had made vast strides in that signal area.

Since the follow-up inspection, we have been conducting regular inspections on SEPTA. We have had a number of follow-up meetings with SEPTA management still concerning the safety and dealing with our recommendations and the implementation of those recommendations. We have found that again they have still continued to make improvements in all areas.

We have found that one of our recommendations to change out hollow axles on one series of cars is progressing. They are way ahead of schedule. Their problems

with signal testing should be cleared up probably by this June.

Their operating practices, as far as efficiency tests, efficiency observations, has improved greatly. Their instructions to their employees and supervisors have improved. We feel that the assessment has served its purpose and SEPTA's management has taken those recommendations and implemented them.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you, Mr. English. I would like to start with a round of questioning.

I heard you make reference to a munber of employees. There was a concern regarding the number of employees. Could you elaborate on that?

MR. ENGLISH: We looked at staffing. We looked at the number of employees assigned to each supervisor. We looked at the number of employees assigned to a particular discipline; for example, in the track department or signal department, to determine that did they have enough people

to perform the maintenance that was required to not only comply with federal regulation but to maintain the property to the standards that it should be.

And I might add, we did not find anywhere that they did not have sufficient number of maintenance employees to handle the projects that were involved.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Dealing with the maintenance program, was any of your investigation related to any of the testimony from Mr. Thompson regarding number of men on a train?

MR. ENGLISH: No, sir, we did not. We felt that that was a matter that would best be dealt with between labor management negotiations as far as the number of people assigned to a train.

REP. CIVERA: Mr. English, the situation that has, in your opening statement because of your investigations because of high speed line situation and Norristown line which comes into my district, did you people investigate the

accident that occurred in August of '86, 69th Street Terminal? Were you involved in that investigation?

MR. ENGLISH: I can't answer that. We look at so many accidents I am not sure whether we looked at that or not. We can certainly check and we can let you know. Right offhand, I don't know whether we did or not.

REP. CIVERA: Mr. Chairman, would it be proper, if it was, that we could get some kind of copy of that from the federal government?

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Sure.

REP. CIVERA: That is all I have, Mr. English.

MR. ENGLISH: I have an answer from our local office. They advise me we did not look at that. That line is not under our jurisdiction. It is part of the transit facility. We only look at the rail sides. I am sorry.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Representative Nahill?

REP. NAHILL: How would you rate SEPTA four years ago and how would you rate SEPTA today, as quantitatively as you can? To say they are getting better doesn't really give me an idea.

MR. ENGLISH: It is difficult to rate any railroad because even four years ago there were a lot of things about SEPTA that were good. You can't just say SEPTA four years ago was bad. I think that to put it in the proper context when you look at the results of our assessments in 1985 and what we found, compared to what we find today, there is vast improvements, much better communication between FRA and SEPTA. I think SEPTA is making some big major improvements. I think something that illustrates this, and one of the committee members asked for a little while ago, was bridge records.

We found that even though SEPTA's bridge group was a very competent, efficient group, they were just, at that time, just then putting together long-range programs

and looking down the road to try to program repairs. And now they have a very extensive computer program where they look at all sorts of things that are fed into it by their bridge inspectors; a big improvement from what we had before.

We look at signal testing, a major problem. Now, to be very honest, they are still not up to where we think they should be, but big improvements in making those tests and making those tests at the proper times.

We looked at something that we have discussed quite a bit here today. That is safety committees. We felt at the time of the assessment that that was something very important, to get the input of employees, get management and labor together to discuss these problems. As you have heard they are well on their way to having these committees in place and I think getting them to work properly. To make a comparison, I don't think I would want to do that. But to say they have made progress and give you some

of the examples, I think that is a fair statement to make.

REP. NAHILL: Let me approach it in a slightly different direction.

How do they measure up to other major transit systems across the country? Comparable? Behind? Ahead?

MR. ENGLISH: I think I have to be very careful in how I answer this.

REP. NAHILL: Some areas ahead, some behind, some comparable?

MR. ENGLISH: You have just answered your own question. Again, I don't want to compare because it is not, I don't think that is fair to do that. I think that SEPTA again, has done well. They have come a long way since taking over a plant that obviously lacked as much maintenance as maybe it should have had. They made progress. We certainly don't want to tell them to stop where they are but I think they have done a fine job. I think they continue on they will be a system to be very proud of and a system to look up to across the country.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: What areas do they need to continue on to be a system to be very proud of? I am still trying to get that answer.

MR. ENGLISH: That is a different question, compare one railroad versus another. As I said, I don't want to do that.

Where do we think they should continue on? There is the area that we mentioned, the area of bridges is something. Even though they have a very, very long-term program and adequate program to address the problem, bridges it is something that is very important to SEPTA and something that has to be addressed. They have to continue on making those bridge repairs.

We look at the signal area. There are some 500 centrifugal relays that FRA feels should not be in the SEPTA system. We told SEPTA they should come out at the time of the assessment and they have been making progress to get them out. There are still 500 left that have to be taken out and

to make the system, I don't want to say safe because it is safe, but a centrifugal relay is something that is outdated, difficult to maintain and it can lead to false proceed signals if not maintained properly and tested on a very regular basis. But we think they should come out. It would make that system that much easier to take care of.

We look at some of the facilities, some of the towers, some of the shops, antiquated. We feel that that affects the proper functioning of many of the people and proper operation of the system. We think they should be rebuilt. I think that some of the slides that we saw today certainly illustrate some of the examples of some of the older shops and facilities they have that need to be addressed on some long-term basis. They can't be left there.

We looked at the track system. The track system is a good system, today. We really don't see immediate problems but that is something that you have to stay on top

of. You must provide adequate ties and service. You must have a continuing program to replace rails so you don't, all of sudden, get to the point where you have a system that needs many, many miles of rails. A problem in the area of operating practices, I think it is necessary that they continue with their training programs to continue not only to train new people but to bring the old-timers that have been around for a while back in for retraining to make sure they don't forget something, make sure they continue to understand the later technology that SEPTA is trying to bring on the property.

An area that they have to continue with is training of their supervisors. We have heard comments today about many of the people on SEPTA do not have as much experience as some other railroads. I think that applies not only to training crews but also flows over into the supervision. That is only natural. It is a new property. Many, many of the people are new and we do

feel that training should flow over into supervision to make sure they understand their function and how things work, how they can properly supervise those people. Again, that is something they can't let down on.

In the area of cars and locomotives, again, you have to have a continuing program to replace that equipment. It does not last forever, as some of you have commented today. I think a program to regularly replace equipment is a necessity.

We have addressed, I think, all of these items in our assessment and our follow-up report and we would be more than happy to provide the committee with copies of those, both of those. Of course, I think it is good to point out here that that report, the original report, is two years old. The follow-up is a year old. So you have to take that in context and think of the improvements that have been made since the follow-up inspection and take the information, put it right where it belongs.

REP. NAHILL: Do you plan to

follow-up on your follow-up?

MR. ENGLISH: We are on a continuing basis. As I said, we meet on a fairly regular basis with SEPTA management. We have people on SETPA's property probably, I don't want to say everyday, but I don't think we miss many days if it is not everyday.

We have a regional office here in Philadelphia that is staffed with inspectors from all disciplines; track and signal, operating practices and hazardous materials and equipment and locomotives and we have people assigned to SEPTA in each one of those areas. The regional office receives staff assistance from Washington when it is necessary. We do have industrial hygienists, chemical-type people who do provide assistance and they have been here looking at SEPTA.

So you say, are we going to follow-up. We have been and we will continue to work with SEPTA, continue to follow-up with them to make sure that they

do comply with the regulations and the recommendations that we have made are implemented or at least discussed and tried.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. English, I was asking questions earlier about inspectors, those employees who actually do the inspection on the system. I was questioning about certification training and I was told that many men are trained by the managers in the shop, shop manager I think I was told.

Is that a comparable procedure to other railroads, other railroad systems?

MR. ENGLISH: Yes, it is. It is a normal practice in the rail industry to use management trainers to train maintenance and inspection personnel.

I may add something concerning SEPTA. They have a really extensive training facility. Some of that does flow over into the maintenance end or inspecting end. It is not just one individual or shop foreman, so to speak. It is a more formalized process than that.

So when you say training that

is done by a shop foreman, is that normal, yes, it is normal. I think SEPTA has taken that a step beyond.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Do you find their inspection procedures are good ones and similar to ones used in other rail operations?

MR. ENGLISH: Yes. We have federal regulations in all areas that require inspections at regular intervals. We require records to be kept of those inspections, what is found and the remedial action that is taken.

We not only review the records on a fairly regular basis but we also go out into the field with those inspectors to make sure they are doing the work properly.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I am curious. Secretary Dole has a team that is in from UMTA. Apparently there is still some feeling that there is still some safety areas that need to be looked into. From hearing your testimony you have seen a notable increase in improvements since your

previous inspection.

MR. ENGLISH: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Is there any discussion between UMTA and FRA?

MR. ENGLISH: Yes, sir. We have had very extensive discussions with them before they started their formal investigation and I can assure you we will continue to have conversations with them based on their findings.

Even though I said there is big improvements, we think that SEPTA has come a long way, we also, as I said, feel they should continue on with these efforts. I am not sure what UMTA has found in this endeavor but I can assure you that we will certainly look at that report, take whatever action is necessary on our part to implement those recommendations or discuss those recommendations.

It is my understanding that that UMTA study is only on the Norristown line, also.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: That is right. I was wondering. That is also part of the

rail lines you have looked at?

MR. ENGLISH: No, sir. I said we did not have jurisdiction over Norristown.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. Casper?

REP. CASPER: Mr. English, I believe Mr. Evans had mentioned that the P&W high-speed rail line was on the transit side, therefore the FRA didn't take a look at it. That is confusing to us. Why would that be considered part of the transit side instead of rail division?

MR. EVANS: It is not really a rail division. There is trolleys at the Norristown High Speed Line. We have nothing to do with the trolley operation.

REP. CASPER: You say trolleys. They are high-speed, light-rail vehicles that aren't so light, having rode several years ago while I was in high school. They are the same type of vehicle, you are saying, because they are single cars instead of multiple?

MR. ENGLISH: We have jurisdiction over lines that are commuter lines and parts

of what is called the general railroad system. We do not have jurisdiction over lines that are considered transit lines. That is strictly UMTA jurisdiction.

There was some question when SEPTA first took over operation of the commuter lines, if we even had jurisdiction at all on their lines. Conversations with their legal department and our chief counsel department, it was determined yes, we did.

For me to sit here and say this line is and this line isn't, I can't do that. But generally we take parts of heavy rail, parts of general system commuter. We do not take transit.

REP. CASPER: I guess it is what you call P&W. It is interesting to know it might be considered a trolley line.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Any further questions from staff or members of the committee?

I have no further questions, Mr. English. Thank you for your testimony and

coming down and testifying before our committee.

MR. ENGLISH: I will provide you with copies of the reports.

MR. WOOTEN: Excuse me. I brought them.

MR. ENGLISH: You have already gotten them.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you, Mr. Wooten.

We will now have Mr. Glenn Lehman, from the Rail Division of the PUC, Public Utilities Commission.

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GLENN S. LEHMAN,

a witness before the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, testified as follows:

MR. LEHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Glenn Lehman, Manager of Rail Safety, Public Utilities Commission, Bureau of Safety and Compliance. We have jurisdiction over seven FRA tracks, equipment and operations inspectors.

Let me preface this a little bit with the way we have it organized. Generally speaking, the track that lies between Parksburg, which is in the east and Pittsburgh, which is, of course, towards the western part of the state, comes under us. We generally have all of the track involved there excepting the Main Line and the B & O Railroad and the portion of the B & O or CSX, between Butler and the New York state line.

About 95 percent of our track inspection particularly is done on CONRAIL.

This was done and as a result, when SEPTA came into being or when we got the jurisdiction to go on there, we struck a deal with the FRA, since SEPTA was in their back yard and would save both time and money for each of us, they would take and do all the inspecting when they were there and available. My nearest inspector would have been out of Harrisburg. I have a track inspector in Scranton, one in Harrisburg and one in Pittsburgh that generally covers the state. The equipment inspector, one in Harrisburg, two in Altoona. The operations inspector generally covers the area between Pittsburgh and Williamsport/Altoona district. So I just wanted to preface this with the way the organization is laid out.

We have really not done too much with SEPTA. I have handled some complaints. If we get some definite complaint or problem I will go to them and handle it in that respect.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I would like to ask you some questions. Prior to taking over

the rail line, did the PUC have any interaction with the CONRAIL line?

MR. LEHMAN: Yes. With CONRAIL, yes. We did at that time.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Passenger?

MR. LEHMAN: Passenger trains.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Passenger trains also?

MR. LEHMAN: Yes, anything that is part of the general transportation system. But when SEPTA took over, that is back in '82 or '83, then we had nothing to do with SEPTA. We couldn't get on SEPTA because the legislature just gave us that in January of '86.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: So even though they were operating the same lines that you formally inspected when CONRAIL was operating the commuter lines, because SEPTA took over the operations you no longer inspect them?

MR. LEHMAN: We had no authority to go on, at that time.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I recall a while

ago there was some controversy regarding the PUC not being able to inspect the Paoli yard.

Do you recall that?

MR. LEHMAN: No, I don't recall it. Explain what they meant by it. I don't quite understand.

REP. CASPER: Mr. Lehman, you mentioned the past legislation. That was the item, that in particular that prompted that legislation.

MR. LEHMAN: Let me explain. Prior to SEPTA taking over those lines, we used to go to Paoli to the car people, particularly to look at their operation. But after SEPTA took over and until this time in '86, then we weren't legally supposed to be there. Now, the FRA handles this. It being in their back yard, they have made the assessments even before that. Mr. English explained, and Tom Evans, that probably they have somebody on their railroad everyday, in some capacity, one form or another.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: This is really

hindsight now. I would be curious to know what kind of reports we have of the lines during the time CONRAIL was operating those lines prior to SEPTA taking over, looking at what kind of inspections were going on and how we allowed the system to continue to operate and what was being done, looking at bridges that were deteriorating and other things that were going on.

MR. LEHMAN: Let me point out, the FRA ordered us and PUC is not responsible for the bridges. FRA does not take over railroad bridges. I am, the Public Utilities Commission, in conjunction with those bridges that pass over the highway, bridges that pass over the railroad or those that pass underneath, those portions, yes. But the railroad bridges, per se, the train runs on over the creek, does not come under our jurisdiction, over or under a highway only.

REP. CASPER: That is most of them. The bridges under the commuter do go over.

MR. LEHMAN: That is correct, yes.

They go over the highway or under the highway, then they come under our jurisdiction.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Most of them go over and under highways. Do you think those records would be available?

MR. LEHMAN: We could look. I would say probably yes.

Right now, I might add, you probably are aware, we have a terrific bridge program going right now. The people have appropriated the moneys.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Those are for highway bridges?

MR. LEHMAN: Yes, over railroads, too, but not railroad bridges, per se.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: We will get together one of these days.

MR. LEHMAN: I just wanted to point that out. We don't, in fact nobody, I might say, outside of the railroad itself, inspects railroad bridges, not even the federal government. I just wanted to point that out in passing.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: That is good for us to know. Thank you very much, Mr. Lehman.

Any others?

REP. LANDIS: You had mentioned that you have an agreement with the FRA for the FRA to do the inspections of SEPTA.

MR. LEHMAN: Yes.

REP. LANDIS: Is that since the act of 1986 or before the act of '86?

MR. LEHMAN: Well, it was probably before, somewhere around that time.

REP. LANDIS: The act of '86 gives you the power to look at SEPTA?

MR. LEHMAN: Yes.

REP. LANDIS: Why? You just don't have enough people that you would want to come down and look at it?

MR. LEHMAN: Yes, that is right. Part of it is in their back door, like I said. They can go there anytime where we have to go 90 or 100 miles. Then people have to stay overnight.

REP. LANDIS: Well, looking at the PUC, basically a representative of the

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, you might want to extend your authority, since you have it now, to come on down there instead of letting them do it.

MR. LEHMAN: We can, if you think that is the way it is. We handle that portion of the state.

REP. LANDIS: I was just thinking when the legislature went to the trouble of passing the act to give you the authority there must have been some logic to it when they did it.

MR. LEHMAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. Scott Casper?

REP. CASPER: I don't want to belabor this but maybe you have an insight, Glenn. P&W line, the high-speed, super heavy trolley we have running up and down the Main Line, the FRA says it is not a railroad. I guess after 20 years my memory gets foggy. I remember a very heavy rail vehicle going 80 or 90 miles an hour down the track. In any event, you have, in the PUC, from Parksburg to Pittsburgh, which is not in

that area, so I take it the PUC doesn't inspect that rail line, either, the P&W, that is?

MR. LEHMAN: It is a very hazy area.

REP. CASPER: I am getting that opinion.

MR. LEHMAN: We once had jurisdiction, and probably still do, over trolley lines. I am talking back maybe 60, 70 years ago when I was yea high. They were in their heyday. You could take a trolley car from Windber, Johnstown or go to Evansburg to Windber by trolley car, which was a long way around. Today that is long gone.

Traditionally, since I have been with the Commission, we have not touched the trolley lines. They exist here in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh predominantly and I think Pittsburgh, they are about gone in Pittsburgh. So we haven't, our regulations are not really up to date as far as trolley goes. It is a very hazy area.

We are FRA people, per se. The FRA

does not recognize it. You heard Mr. English. This is the route we take because we are FRA people.

REP. CASPER: Well, if it is not this and not that, I guess we call it something in the middle. P&W, I don't know if lots of people have different opionions, but the P&W does not appear to be your traditional trolley line or even not really your light rail type of line.

MR. LEHMAN: From a track standpoint, I have no problems. I have qualified people. But mechanically, in the equipment department, I have no people. I have people that are not qualified on trolley cars. They aren't, they have no expertise.

Trackwise, I have no problem. I have got track inspectors. The track is the same as ours, bona fide railroad.

REP. CASPER: It is a heck of a trolley to get propelled, to be running into things like that.

In any event, it is a matter to be pursued, I think, for the committee.

REP. LANDIS: I have a question that just came up.

If you don't have trolleys; they don't have trolleys, they have trains and you are from Pittsburgh to out there outside of Philadelphia, Parksburg, who has the subways? Do you regulate the subways? Do you have jurisdiction?

MR. LEHMAN: No.

REP. LANDIS: That is a combination of both?

MR. LEHMAN: We don't have subways because it is not part of the general transporation system.

REP. LANDIS: In Pittsburgh it is just about, in a month, going to open up their light-rail system.

I was wondering, there is no one regulation? In other words, between the two of you, no one regulates subways? It is left up to the property to do it? There is no one to oversee it, legislatively?

MR. LEHMAN: It is not part of the general transportation system. Therefore,

we don't handle it.

REP. LANDIS: All right. I am lost.

MR. LEHMAN: That is what it says in the manual.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: I think we better look at the manual.

Mr. Lehman, thank you for your testimony. I think there is no more further questions from the members of the committee.

I believe that is our last witness for today.

REP. CASPER: That is the last witness we have.

CHAIRMAN LINTON: We would like to adjourn this meeting. I would venture to say the next avenue for the committee will be on-site visits on SEPTA properties. I guess we will get a chance to look at that light-rail vehicle that seems to be very heavy that nobody is looking at.

Thank you all for your attention.

(Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence noted are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me on the public hearing of the above matter, and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

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