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Title 49 —Transportation

Subtitle B —Other Regulations Relating to Transportation

Chapter VIII —National Transportation Safety Board

Part 840 Rules Pertaining to Notification of Railroad Accidents

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PART 840—RULES PERTAINING TO NOTIFICATION OF RAILROAD ACCIDENTS

Authority: Sec. 304(a)(1)(c), Independent Safety Board Act of 1974, as amended (49 U.S.C. 1903).

§ 840.1 Applicability.

This part contains the Safety Board's accident notification requirements, and its authority for inspection, examination, and testing of physical evidence, and describes the exercise of the Safety Board's priority accorded to its activities when investigating railroad accidents.

[47 FR 49408, Nov. 1, 1982]

§ 840.2 Definitions.

As used in this part, the following words or phrases are defined as follows:

- (a) **Railroad** means any system of surface transportation of persons or property over rails. It includes, but is not limited to, line-haul freight and passenger-carrying railroads, and rapid transit, commuter, scenic, subway, and elevated railways.
- (b) **Accident** means any collision, derailment, or explosion involving railroad trains, locomotives, and cars; or any other loss-causing event involving the operation of such railroad equipment that results in a fatality to a passenger or employee, or the emergency evacuation of persons.
- (c) **Joint operations** means rail operations conducted on a track used jointly or in common by two or more railroads subject to this part, or operation of a train, locomotive, or car by one railroad over the track of another railroad.
- (d) **Fatality** means the death of a person either at the time an accident occurs or within 24 hours thereafter.

[41 FR 13925, Apr. 1, 1976, as amended at 47 FR 49408, Nov. 1, 1982]

§ 840.3 Notification of railroad accidents.

The operator of a railroad shall notify the Board by telephoning the National Response Center at telephone 800-424-0201 at the earliest practicable time after the occurrence of any one of the following railroad accidents:

- (a) No later than 2 hours after an accident which results in:
 - (1) A passenger or employee fatality or serious injury to two or more crewmembers or passengers requiring admission to a hospital;
 - (2) The evacuation of a passenger train;
 - (3) Damage to a tank car or container resulting in release of hazardous materials or involving evacuation of the general public; or
 - (4) A fatality at a grade crossing.
- (b) No later than 4 hours after an accident which does not involve any of the circumstances enumerated in paragraph (a) of this section but which results in:
 - (1) Damage (based on a preliminary gross estimate) of \$150,000 or more for repairs, or the current replacement cost, to railroad and nonrailroad property; or
 - (2) Damage of \$25,000 or more to a passenger train and railroad and nonrailroad property.
- (c) Accidents involving joint operations must be reported by the railroad that controls the track and directs the movement of trains where the accident has occurred.
- (d) Where an accident for which notification is required by paragraph (a) or (b) of this section occurs in a remote area, the time limits set forth in that paragraph shall commence from the time the first railroad employee who was not at the accident site at the time of its occurrence has received notice thereof.

[53 FR 49152, Dec. 6, 1988]

§ 840.4 Information to be given in notification.

The notice required by § 840.3 shall include the following information:

- (a) Name and title of person reporting.
- (b) Name of railroad.
- (c) Location of accident (relate to nearest city).
- (d) Time and date of accident.
- (e) Description of accident.
- (f) Casualties:
 - (1) Fatalities.
 - (2) Injuries.

- (g) Property damage (estimate).
- (h) Name and telephone number of person from whom additional information may be obtained.

[41 FR 13925, Apr. 1, 1976]

§ 840.5 Inspection, examination and testing of physical evidence.

- (a) Any employee of the Safety Board, upon presenting appropriate credentials is authorized to enter any property wherein a transportation accident has occurred or wreckage from any such accident is located and do all things necessary for proper investigation, including examination or testing of any vehicle, rolling stock, track, or any part of any part of any such item when such examination or testing is determined to be required for purposes of such investigation.
- (b) Any examination or testing shall be conducted in such a manner so as not to interfere with or obstruct unnecessarily the transportation services provided by the owner or operator of such vehicle, rolling stock, or track, and shall be conducted in such a manner so as to preserve, to the maximum extent feasible, any evidence relating to the transportation accident, consistent with the needs of the investigation and with the cooperation of such owner or operator. The employee may inspect, at reasonable times, records, files, papers, processes, controls, and facilities relevant to the investigation of such accident. Each inspection shall be commenced and completed promptly and the results of such inspection, examination, or test made available to the parties.

[47 FR 49408, Nov. 1, 1982]

§ 840.6 Priority of Board investigations.

Any investigation of an accident conducted by the Safety Board shall have priority over all other investigations of such accident conducted by other Federal agencies. The Safety Board shall provide for the appropriate participation by other Federal agencies in any such investigation, except that such agencies may not participate in the Safety Board's determination of the probable cause of the accident. Nothing in this section impairs the authority of other Federal agencies to conduct investigations of an accident under applicable provisions of law or to obtain information directly from parties involved in, and witnesses to, the transportation accident. The Safety Board and other Federal agencies shall assure that appropriate information obtained or developed in the course of their investigations is exchanged in a timely manner.

[47 FR 49408, Nov. 1, 1982]