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Veteran TTC employee killed after being struck by service train

By ELIZABETH CHURCH

Two other TTC workers taken to hospital after service car strikes tunnel foreman

A veteran transit supervisor is dead after being struck by a subway in a predawn accident that sent two other TTC workers to hospital, including the driver of the train.

Peter Pavlovski, 49, a tunnel foreman who held the post of "road master," had worked with the TTC for 22 years and was known widely by staff, transit CEO Andy Byford said.

Mr. Pavlovski was part of a crew of eight working on the northbound track of the Spadina line just north of Yorkdale station, when he was hit around 4:45 a.m. Friday by a service car heading in the opposite direction.

Another crew member working with him was taken to hospital where he was treated for head injuries and later released. The driver of the service train used to transport materials and workers also was taken to hospital.

"As you can imagine, [the driver] was completely devastated by this incident and he has been taken to hospital with extreme shock," Mr. Byford told reporters.

Mr. Byford described Mr. Pavlovski as a family man who also was a dedicated member of the "TTC family."

"On a terribly shocking day for the TTC, our condolences go out to Peter's family and his co-workers throughout the commission," he said, adding later, "quite simply, we are devastated."

Bob Kinnear, head of the transit union, estimated that between 150 and 200 workers are involved in maintenance work on any given night during the brief window when trains are not running.

He described them as a "tight group," who work in difficult and often dangerous conditions. Friday's tragedy, he said, has affected them all.

"So many things can potentially go wrong," he said. "You always have to be aware of your surroundings."

Both the union and the TTC would not discuss details of the accident, which is under investigation by the Ministry of Labour, the police and transit officials.

"It is too early to say for certain what the root cause of this tragic incident is," Mr Byford said.

All TTC staff take training before they can work at track level, he said, and rigorous safety measures are in place. Signals and flags are usually used to warn subway drivers of crews, and trains pass at reduced speeds, he said.

Morning rush-hour subway service was also affected elsewhere because of delays getting trains out of the Downsview subway depot. Service between the stations resumed early in the afternoon, in time for rush hour.

It has been three decades since a transit worker was killed in an accident with a subway train and five years since a TTC worker was killed in a workplace accident, TTC officials said.

TTC maintenance worker Tony Almeida, 38, was crushed to death in April, 2007, when the work car he was driving crashed into the wall of a subway tunnel. The TTC pleaded guilty to Ministry of Labour charges in the incident and paid a \$250,000 fine, and the report blamed a lack of safety procedures for the crash.

TTC Chair Karen Stintz said flags will be lowered at city buildings until Mr. Pavlovski's funeral takes place.

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