

<http://www.ktvu.com/news/news/local/bart-train-hits-kills-2-workers-possibly-driven-ma/nbST5/>

Posted: 4:33 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 19, 2013

## **BART train kills 2 workers; possibly driven by manager** - KTVU.com

WALNUT CREEK, Calif. —

A train that struck and killed two BART employees Saturday afternoon north of the Walnut Creek station had an “experienced operator” at the controls but was operating in automatic mode under computer control at the time of the accident, according to BART officials.

The two people, one BART employee and one contractor, were struck and killed by the out-of-service BART train at about 1:45 p.m. Saturday as they conducted track inspections between the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill stations, BART officials said in a statement.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to the families of two workers who have just been killed on the BART tracks," said BART General Manager Grace Crunican during a press conference at the scene of the accident. "This is going to take a long time to investigate but I am confident that we will get all the facts and information gathered."

The employees, both BART engineers, were walking on the tracks around one mile north of the Walnut Creek station with one inspecting the track while the other acted as a lookout, the statement said.

Both had “extensive experience working around moving trains in both the freight train and the rapid transit industry,” according to the statement.

Trains were not running Saturday due to a strike that started the day before, but BART officials have said they were conducting routine maintenance runs.

The train, which was on a maintenance run from Concord to Richmond to have graffiti removed, had an experienced operator at the controls, the statement said.

At the time of the accident, however, the train was being run on automatic mode under computer control, the statement said.

BART trains were not carrying passengers during the strike, but BART officials have said some managers have been trained to operate the trains for maintenance purposes in the event of a strike. It is not clear, however, whether the train's operator in Saturday's incident was a manager.

The operator was being interviewed later Saturday afternoon and was expected to undergo drug test, according to BART Police Deputy Chief Benson Fairrow.

BART announced back in early September that its considering contingency centered around using managers to operate trains if union workers went on strike again.

One of the BART engineers that was killed in Saturday's crash was confirmed to be a member of the local branch of AFSCME, a nationwide union representing municipal employees.

The Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555 said on its official Twitter account in response to the deaths Saturday afternoon that it would not picket tomorrow “out of respect for the families involved.”

Just before 7 p.m., the NTSB tweeted that it was sending two rail investigators to report on the accident.