

# 2015 Oxnard train derailment

The **2015 Oxnard train derailment** occurred on February 24, 2015 when a **Metrolink** passenger train collided with a truck on a grade crossing and derailed at **Oxnard, California, United States**. The train engineer died from his injuries a week later and 29 others were injured.

## 1 Background

An overpass has been planned for the Rice Avenue crossing where the accident occurred for almost two decades. Funding has not been available in Ventura County for the estimated \$35 million grade separation project.<sup>[1]</sup>

## 2 Accident

The accident occurred at 5:44 a.m. local time (13:44 UTC) when a passenger train collided with a 2005 Ford F-450 pick-up truck and trailer on the Rice Avenue grade crossing in Oxnard, California. The train derailed, with three carriages falling onto their sides and a fourth remaining upright, as did the locomotive which was pushing the train from the rear.<sup>[2][3]</sup> The train was traveling from **East Ventura to Los Angeles** and was accelerating after leaving the **Oxnard station** 2 miles (3.2 km) away from the crash site.<sup>[4]</sup> It was traveling at 64 miles per hour (103 km/h) when the emergency brakes were applied<sup>[5]</sup> and had slowed to 56 miles per hour (90 km/h) when it hit the truck.<sup>[5]</sup> The train's usual cruising speed is 79 miles per hour (127 km/h);<sup>[6]</sup> it was traveling under that speed.<sup>[7][8]</sup>

The truck was seen by the train crew to be on fire before the collision.<sup>[6]</sup> The train was being operated by a student engineer with the train engineer in the control cab with him.<sup>[9]</sup> The truck driver is reported to have driven along the tracks having turned too early before the intersection at Fifth Street. The truck was 80 feet west of the intersection, facing the train when the accident occurred.<sup>[2][10][11]</sup>

There were 48 passengers and three crew on board the train.<sup>[12]</sup> Of those, 30 were injured.<sup>[13]</sup> Initially 28 of the injured were taken to hospital; 20 were released and eight were admitted, four of them said to be in a critical condition.<sup>[6][14]</sup> Later two more passengers were transported to hospital and released.<sup>[14]</sup> Victims were treated at the **Community Memorial Hospital, Los Robles Hospital & Medical Center, St. John's Regional Medical Center, St. John's Pleasant Valley Hospital** and **Ventura**

**County Medical Center**.<sup>[15]</sup>

The truck driver was Jose Alejandro Sanchez-Ramirez, 54, who does not speak English, and who had a previous **DUI** conviction in his home state of Arizona.<sup>[16][17]</sup> Sanchez-Ramirez left the scene on foot following the accident, but was later apprehended about a mile away.<sup>[18]</sup> He was booked on suspicion of **hit and run**.<sup>[19]</sup> Sanchez-Ramirez was held in custody needing to post \$150,000 bail to be released.<sup>[20]</sup> On February 26, Sanchez-Ramirez was released from jail.<sup>[21]</sup>

## 3 Aftermath

Metrolink trains between **East Ventura** and **Moorpark** were canceled. A bus service was laid on for passengers traveling to these stations.<sup>[3]</sup> Local roads around the scene of the accident were closed.<sup>[4]</sup> **Amtrak Pacific Surfliner** service between **Los Angeles** and **Goleta**, that uses the same **Union Pacific** coast line, was also cancelled.<sup>[14]</sup>

The train engineer, Glenn Steele, 62, was one of the critically injured and died one week later.<sup>[22]</sup> After the accident, Steele experienced two cardiac arrests on Wednesday February 25th, but lived after those events.<sup>[23]</sup> At the time of his death, Steele was the most senior engineer with Metrolink,<sup>[24]</sup> having spent half of his 42-year long Amtrak career with Metrolink.<sup>[25][9]</sup> Steele died at **Cedars-Sinai Medical Center** early on March 3rd.<sup>[26]</sup> A resident of **Homeland, California**, Steele was a grandfather.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 4 Investigations

The **National Transportation Safety Board** has launched an investigation into the accident.<sup>[18][13]</sup> A Go-team was dispatched to the scene.<sup>[27]</sup> The train was fitted with a forward-facing camera in the cab car.<sup>[2]</sup> The **NTSB** has verified that the forward-facing camera was recording data and the collision itself was recorded by the camera.<sup>[11]</sup> Although it was initially stated that the truck became stuck on the tracks, **NTSB** later clarified that it is unclear if the vehicle was stuck and that it was not a typical grade crossing incident where a vehicle is crossing the tracks and is stopped or struck before completing the crossing. The vehicle was not in the crossing nor between the crossing arms.<sup>[11]</sup>

The **Federal Railroad Administration** opened an investi-

gation into the accident, the twelfth at the crossing in ten years. An average of eight passenger and 24 freight trains use the line in each direction each day.<sup>[3][28]</sup>

## 5 See also

- List of grade crossing accidents

## 6 References

- [1] Weikel, Dan; Nelson, Laura J. (March 1, 2015). "Spending on rail crossing safety upgrades varies widely across Southland". *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved March 3, 2015.
- [2] "California train derails after collision with truck". *BBC News Online*. February 24, 2015. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [3] "Metrolink train slams into truck in Oxnard; driver arrested for hit-and-run". *KABC-TV*. February 25, 2015. Retrieved February 25, 2015.
- [4] "Metrolink Train Derails In Oxnard After Colliding With Truck On Tracks". *CBS News Local*. February 24, 2015. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [5] "NTSB Member Robert Sumwalt's third briefing on the Metrolink grade crossing accident in Oxnard, CA." (video (25m 32s)). National Transportation Safety Board. February 26, 2015. Retrieved February 26, 2015.
- [6] Covarrubias, Amanda; Rocha, Veronica; Sahagun, Louis (February 24, 2015). "Metrolink train hits truck, derails in Oxnard; truck driver in custody". *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [7] Moreno, John A.; Romero, Lynette; Spillman, Eric; Pascucci, Christina; Pamer, Melissa; Hawkins, Kirk; Chenc, Kimberly (February 25, 2015). "NTSB Obtains Video, Data Recorders From Train in Oxnard Metrolink Crash". *KTLA*. Retrieved February 26, 2015.
- [8] Rocha, Veronica; Serna, Joseph; Mejia, Brittny (February 26, 2015). "Metrolink derailment: No charges filed against truck driver for now". *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved February 26, 2015. The Metrolink train was traveling 56 mph when it hit the truck, well below the 79-mph speed limit, Sumwalt said.
- [9] Rocha, Veronica; Serna, Joseph (3 March 2015). "A week after Metrolink train crashes into truck, engineer dies". *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved 3 March 2015.
- [10] "NTSB media briefing, February 24, 2015." (video (19m 20s)). National Transportation Safety Board. February 24, 2015. Retrieved February 25, 2015.
- [11] "Member Sumalt holds second on scene media briefing on grade crossing accident in Oxnard, CA." (video (20m 43s)). National Transportation Safety Board. February 25, 2015. Retrieved February 26, 2015.
- [12] "OXNARD: 28 hurt when Metrolink train crashes into truck (UPDATE)". *The Press-Enterprise*. February 24, 2015. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [13] "Grade Crossing Accident, Oxnard, CA". National Transportation Safety Board. February 24, 2015. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [14] "Metrolink train hits a vehicle in Oxnard". *Ventura County Star*. February 24, 2015. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [15] "Dozens injured in Metrolink train collision transported to area hospitals". *KABC-TV*. February 24, 2015. Retrieved February 25, 2015.
- [16] Whitcomb, Dan (February 25, 2015). "Truck driver in California train crash had DUI conviction: L.A. Times". *Yahoo! News*. Reuters. Retrieved February 26, 2015.
- [17] "Metrolink train crash: Train's camera captured video of truck crash (update)". *KPCC* (Pasadena, California). Associated Press. February 25, 2015. Retrieved February 26, 2015. Ramirez only speaks Spanish, and two people he encountered in the area could not understand him, the lawyer said.
- [18] Mohny, Gillian (February 24, 2015). "Metrolink Crash: Driver Flees Scene After Train Collides With Truck". *ABC News*. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [19] Ashley Soley-Cerro; Lynette Romero; Melissa Pamer; Kareen Wynter; Christina Pascucci; Courtney Friel; Kimberly Cheng; Steve Kunj; Kirk Hawkins (February 25, 2015). "Truck Driver Taken Into Custody on Suspicion of Felony Hit-and-Run in Metrolink Crash". *KTLA*. Retrieved February 26, 2015.
- [20] Lloyd, Jonathan (February 25, 2015). "Truck Driver in Custody in Train Crash That Injured 28". *KNBC*. Retrieved February 26, 2015.
- [21] "Driver freed without charges in California train crash". *Washington Post*. Associated Press. 27 February 2015. Retrieved 1 March 2015.
- [22] Serna, Joseph; Rocha, Veronica. "Train engineer dies of injuries suffered in Metrolink crash with truck". *LA Times*. Retrieved March 3, 2015.
- [23] Kurzweil, Anthony (3 March 2015). "Engineer Aboard Metrolink Train That Collided With Truck in Oxnard Dies". *KTLA* (Los Angeles). Retrieved 3 March 2015.
- [24] Antczak, John (3 March 2015). "Engineer in Southern California train crash dies". *San Francisco Chronicle*. Associated Press. Retrieved 3 March 2015.
- [25] Watts, Amanda (4 March 2015). "Engineer in California Metrolink train crash dies". *CMN*. Retrieved 3 March 2015.
- [26] Chu, Hanna (3 March 2015). "METROLINK ENGINEER DIES FOLLOWING OXNARD TRAIN CRASH". *LABC* (Los Angeles). Retrieved 3 March 2015.

- [27] "NTSB Launches Go-Team to Grade Crossing Accident in Oxnard, CA". National Transportation Safety Board. Retrieved February 24, 2015.
- [28] "Pacific Surfliner". Amtrak. Retrieved March 3, 2015.

## 7 Text and image sources, contributors, and licenses

### 7.1 Text

- **2015 Oxnard train derailment** *Source:* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2015%20Oxnard%20train%20derailment?oldid=649957798> *Contributors:* Zntrip, Mjroots, RickyCourtney, Jeremyb, Michaelh2001, Cydebot, EP111, Trackinfo, Mr. Matté, RightCowLeftCoast, IJBall, Josve05a, Fettlemap, Jeremyb-phone, Paul Badillo, Libertarian12111971, Bvfg7756 and Anonymous: 2

### 7.2 Images

- **File:Arrow\_Blue\_Left\_001.svg** *Source:* [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/27/Arrow\\_Blue\\_Left\\_001.svg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/27/Arrow_Blue_Left_001.svg) *License:* Public domain *Contributors:* Own work *Original artist:* User:Sameboat
- **File:Hyundai\_Rotem\_Cab\_Car.jpg** *Source:* [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0f/Hyundai\\_Rotem\\_Cab\\_Car.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0f/Hyundai_Rotem_Cab_Car.jpg) *License:* CC BY-SA 2.0 *Contributors:* 2010-12-06 10.10.37 *Original artist:* Justin N from Riverside, CA, USA
- **File:P\_train.svg** *Source:* [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/e/e3/P\\_train.svg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/e/e3/P_train.svg) *License:* Cc-by-sa-3.0 *Contributors:* ? *Original artist:* ?
- **File:SanFranHouses06.JPG** *Source:* <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ec/SanFranHouses06.JPG> *License:* Public domain *Contributors:* Scanned from the personal collection of en>User:Infrogmaton Originally from en.wikipedia; description page is/was here. *Original artist:* ?
- **File:Sunset\_at\_Huntington\_Beach.jpg** *Source:* [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Sunset\\_at\\_Huntington\\_Beach.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Sunset_at_Huntington_Beach.jpg) *License:* CC-BY-SA-3.0 *Contributors:* Taken by User:DHN *Original artist:* User:DHN

### 7.3 Content license

- Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0