



# Preliminary Report Railroad DCA14FR007

*The information in this report is preliminary and will be supplemented or corrected during the course of the investigation.*

On Monday, March 24, 2014, about 2:49 a.m., central daylight time, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Blue Line run 141 train derailed after colliding with an end-of-track bumper post at the Chicago-O'Hare International Airport Station. The lead car derailed and struck a station escalator used by the public to access the airport terminals. The train operator and 32 train passengers were transported to hospitals. The damage to the equipment and the station was estimated to be \$9.1 million. The temperature was 19° F.

Seconds before the derailment, the train was traveling about 26 mph as it crossed a fixed trip stop that activated the train emergency braking system. Due to the train speed, the distance from the fixed trip stop to the track bumper post was too short to stop the train.

The train operator told investigators that she had fallen asleep as her train entered the station. The last signal that she recalled seeing was a yellow-over-red signal aspect, which indicated the next signal would require her to stop the train. She said that she awoke as the train crossed the fixed trip stop, which was just beyond the stop signal. The operator had worked nearly 60 hours over the previous 7 days; she was working her third consecutive night shift. She told investigators that she had inadequate sleep on Saturday. She also said that she had felt tired when she started work on Sunday evening, which was just hours before the accident.

Parties to the investigation are the Federal Transit Administration, the Regional Transit Authority, and the Chicago Transit Authority.



**Figure 1.** View of derailed train car that struck the escalator.