



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Highway Accident Brief

Accident No.: HWY-98-FH-029
Accident Type: Collision with school bus
Location: Chappell Hill, Texas
Date and Time: April 7, 1998; 4:10 p.m.
Vehicle 1 (V1): 1995 Navistar car carrier
Vehicle 2 (V2): 1989 International/American Transportation Corporation (AmTran) school bus
Injuries: 2 serious, 33 minor injuries

Accident Description

The truckdriver stated that he was traveling east on U.S. Highway 290 about 56 mph when he struck a stopped school bus on Nicholson Lake Road. (See figure 1.) The truckdriver said that prior to the collision he braked and swerved to the left, but the right front of the truck struck the left rear of the school bus. Two students sustained serious injuries; 31 students, the busdriver, and the truckdriver sustained minor injuries. Both vehicles were destroyed.

The truckdriver stated that he did not see the school bus because he was late and had been looking on his clipboard for a telephone number to call a business. He found the telephone number and was placing his clipboard between the seats when he looked up and saw that the school bus was stopped. He had been awake for 14 1/2 hours and, except for a 45-minute nap, had been on duty for 13 1/4 hours and had been driving for almost 10 hours. By the time the driver would have completed his shift, he would have been awake for 18 hours, on duty for 15 hours, and driving for 12 hours. When asked how he felt, the driver stated that he was "physically tired" but believed that he was mentally alert.

State/Federal Oversight

Texas has adopted most of the *Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations* with some variances. Pertinent to this accident are the variances for the hours-of-service and the record-keeping regulations. Texas allows intrastate drivers to drive 12 hours a day and does not require drivers to keep hours-of-service records. The carrier was rated satisfactory in July 1994.

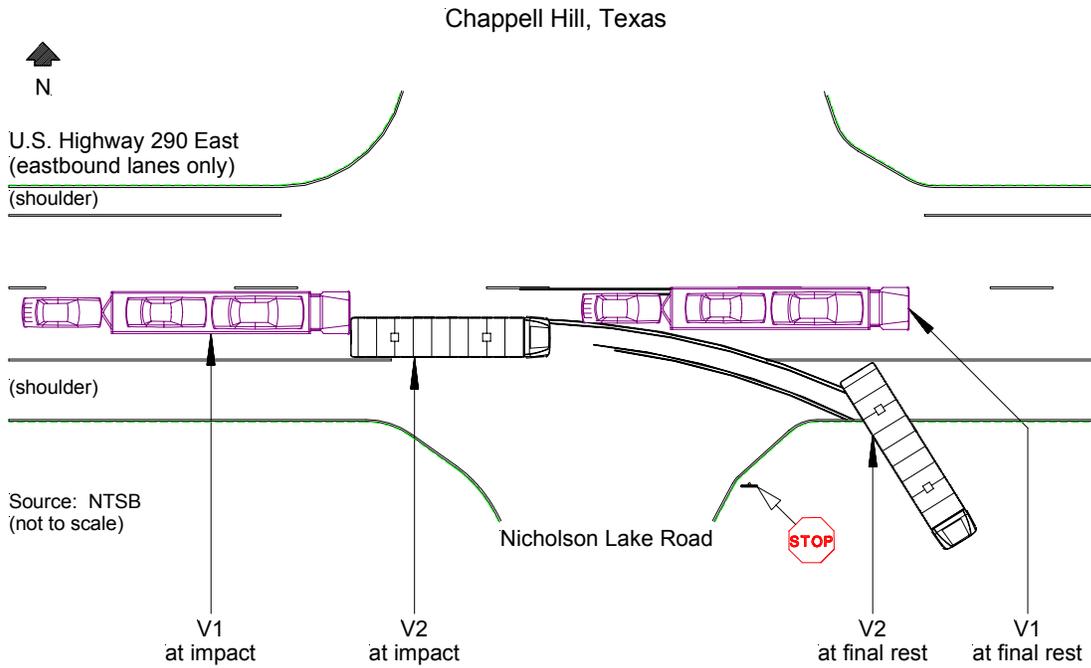


Figure 1. Accident diagram.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the accident was the truckdriver's inattention to driving. Contributing to the accident may have been the truckdriver's fatigue.

Adopted: September 17, 2002