

## Opening Statement

Good morning and welcome to the Boardroom of the National Transportation Safety Board.

I am Robert Sumwalt, and I'm honored to serve as the Chairman of the NTSB. Joining me today are my colleagues on the Board, Member Earl Weener and Member Bella Dinh-Zarr.

Today, we meet in open session, as required by the Government in the Sunshine Act, to consider two very similar commuter rail accidents that happened within 13 weeks of one another. In both cases, the trains struck bumping posts at the ends of their tracks and continued into train stations.

The first happened on September 29, 2016, on the New Jersey Transit commuter railroad at Hoboken, New Jersey. One person died and 110 others were injured, and the passenger station was badly damaged.

In the second accident, on January 4, 2017, a Long Island Rail Road train overran its track at the Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn, New York, injuring 108 people.

On behalf of my colleagues on the Board and the entire NTSB staff, I would like to offer our sincerest condolences to the the loved ones of the person who died in Hoboken. To the hundreds who were injured in these two accidents, we hope you are on the way to the fullest possible recovery.

Today we'll discuss, as we've discussed so often in this Board Room, the role of fatigue in two more railroad accidents.

And we'll discuss, once again, Positive Train Control, or PTC, which can stop a speeding train automatically. In both accidents that we discuss today, the track segments were excluded from PTC requirements.

Also, we'll discuss System Safety Program Plans, which should formally identify and mitigate hazards. Both railroads had such plans, and both railroads had

experienced earlier, less severe, end-of-track collisions. Yet there was no evidence of formal hazard analyses for trains operating into terminating track.

Today, the NTSB staff will briefly present the most pertinent facts and analysis found in this special investigation report. Our public docket, available at [www.nts.gov](http://www.nts.gov), contains even more extensive information.

Staff have pursued all avenues in order to propose findings, probable causes, and recommendations to the Board. We on the Board will question staff to ensure that the report, as we adopt it, truly provides the best opportunity to enhance safety.

Now Managing Director Dennis Jones, if you would kindly introduce the staff.

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