1. CASE: 9408
2. PROPERTY NAME: Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (Centro)
3a. ACCIDENT TYPE: Collision
3b. Accident Severity Index: 3.5
4a. DATE: July 07, 2007
4b. TIME: 4:15 p.m.
5. ACCIDENT LOCATION: East Genesee & Walnut Street
6. TOWN/CITY/BOROUGH: Syracuse, NY
7. SUMMONS: None
8. BUS NUMBER: 2508
8a. YEAR: 2005
8b. MAKE: New Flyer
9. NUMBER OF INJURIES: 7
10. FATALITIES: None
11. HOURS OF SERVICE: Off in the last 24 hrs/ 41 hrs & 46 min in the last 7 days
12. SYNOPSIS:

At approximately 4:15 pm, Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (Centro) bus #2508 was traveling westbound on East Genesee Street, approaching the intersection of Walnut Street, on a green traffic signal. At the same time, an auto (Toyota Camry) was traveling northbound on Walnut Street and disregarded a red traffic signal, and entered the intersection of Genesee & Walnut Streets. The bus T-boned the auto on the passenger’s side and both vehicles came to rest in the intersection. The operator secured the bus, checked on his passengers, and the auto passengers. The bus operator asked a passenger to call 911, as he was calling dispatch for assistance. The Syracuse police and fire departments responded to the scene. The bus operator claimed no injuries. Five bus passengers claimed minor injuries and were transported to a local hospital, treated, and released. The driver and one passenger of the auto were transported to a local hospital, treated, and released. The bus and bus operator records were reviewed and found to be complete, in order, and up-to-date.

In the vicinity of the accident site East Genesee Street, is a four lane road divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating two westbound and two eastbound lanes of travel. Walnut Street is a one-way road, accommodating two northbound lanes of travel. Both roadways are straight, level and asphalt paved. Parking is permitted at the curbs. The intersection is controlled by four overhead traffic signals, with pedestrian signalization. At the time of the accident it was daylight and the weather was clear and the road condition was dry. There were view obstructions at the southeastern quadrant of the intersection. The posted area speed limit is 30 mph.

Bus #2508 is a 2005 New Flyer transit type bus with a seating capacity of thirty nine passengers (low floor). Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) are conducted every 4 months or 6,000 miles in accordance with the System Safety Program Plan and the manufacturer’s recommended service intervals. In addition, all Centro buses undergo a critical safety inspection every 3,000 miles. The most recent PMI was completed on June 18, 2007 and the bus had traveled 2,400 miles at the time of the accident.

A post accident inspection of bus #2508 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with Centro maintenance staff on July 9, 2007. No defects were found that would be considered causative to the accident.
Decelerometer tests were performed on the braking system and showed stopping distances that met Centro’s adopted standards for passenger vehicles of the NYSDOT Regulations (Title 17 of NYCRR, Article 3, Part 720).

The bus operator was hired by Centro on July 23, 2001 and completed the standard “Bus Operator Training Program”. A review of the driver’s New York State Department of Motor Vehicle’s records showed no violations or suspensions. New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law, Article 19-A records were complete and up-to-date. The bus operator had no previous accidents with the company. The post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus operator 1 hour and 34 minutes after the accident was negative.

In an interview with the PTsb staff, the operator stated he entered the intersection and scanned left, right and left. The bus operator stated a large tree to his left obstructed his view on Walnut Street. The operator stated he noticed an auto (Toyota Camry) traveling northbound on Walnut Street (one way), run through a red traffic signal at the intersection of Genesee & Walnut Street. The bus operator stated he T-boned the auto, striking the passenger’s side. The operator stated he secured the bus, and then checked on his passengers.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the collision was the failure of the auto driver not to obey a red traffic signal. Sufficient crash scene information was not available to indicate that the bus operator was a contributing factor in the accident.

Centro reviewed the accident on July 11, 2007, and found it to be non-preventable. A letter rating the accident non-preventable was placed in his file.

On June 24-25, 2008, the PTsb staff conducted a site review specifically for Centro’s preventability program. The PTsb staff reviewed the past three years of preventable and non-preventable accidents/incidents. The areas of concern were preventability determination, retraining and progressive discipline. The PTsb staff determined Centro’s preventability program is in compliance with their System Safety Program Plan and industry standards and expectations.

Based on the actions taken by Centro in this case, the Public Transportation Safety Board staff makes no further recommendations.

INVESTIGATOR: M. F. Gluskin

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CHIEF, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SECTION        DATE

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DIRECTOR, PCSB, NYSDOT                        DATE