PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
ABBREVIATED BUS ACCIDENT REPORT

1. CASE: 9718
2. PROPERTY NAME: Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA)
3a. ACCIDENT TYPE: Collision  3b. Accident Severity Index: 2.60
4a. DATE: March 18, 2008  4b. TIME: 3:03 p.m.
5. ACCIDENT LOCATION: Bailey Avenue & William Street
6. TOWN/CITY/BOROUGH: Buffalo
7. SUMMONS: None
8. BUS NUMBER: 2506  8a. YEAR: 2005  8b. MAKE: Gillig
9. NUMBER OF INJURIES: 5  10. FATALITIES: 0
11. HOURS OF SERVICE: 12 hrs:50 min in the last 24 hrs/ 41 hrs: 32 min in last 7 days
12. SYNOPSIS:

At approximately 3:03 p.m., NFTA bus #2506 was traveling southbound on Bailey Avenue approaching the intersection of William Street. The bus operator stopped to alight passengers. The bus operator then checked oncoming traffic and proceeded to make a right turn on a red light onto William Street. At the same time a tractor-trailer continued across the intersection, traveling westbound on William Street, failed to obey a red traffic signal and struck the left middle section of the bus, redirecting it into a used car lot driveway (Bailey Avenue & William Street) where it came to final rest. The tractor-trailer continued to cross the intersection and rolled to final rest in the eastbound lane heading westbound. The bus operator notified dispatch of the accident. Local fire and police responded to the scene. The bus operator, three bus passengers, and the tractor-trailer driver were transported to various local hospitals. The bus was towed to NFTA Cold Springs bus garage and secured.

In the vicinity of the accident site, Bailey Avenue is a two way north/south roadway divided by a solid double yellow barrier pavement marking. Parking is not permitted at the curbs. William Street is a two way east/west road divided by a solid double yellow barrier pavement marking. Parking is not permitted at the curbs. Both roadways are straight, level and asphalt paved. At the time of the accident it was daylight and the weather was dry and clear. The posted area speed limit is 30 mph.
Bus #2506 is a 2005 forty-foot transit type bus with a seating capacity for forty passengers. Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) are conducted every 6,000 miles in accordance with the NFTA's System Safety Program Plan and the manufacturer’s recommended service intervals. In addition, all NFTA buses undergo a critical safety inspection every 3,000 miles. The last PMI was completed on March 13, 2008 and the bus had traveled 310 miles at the time of the accident.

A post accident inspection of bus #2506 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with NFTA maintenance staff on March 21, 2008. No defects were found that would be considered causative to the accident. Decelerometer tests were not performed due to the extensive chassis and frame damage. A visual inspection of the brakes was performed, and all brake components were found to be within accepted standards.

The bus operator was hired by NFTA on May 6, 1985 and completed the standard bus operator and defensive driving training. A review of the driver's New York State Department of Motor Vehicle's records showed no violations or suspensions. Article 19-A records were found in order and up to date. A review of the driver's NFTA record for the last three years revealed one preventable accident on 05/12/2005 (operator backed into fence pole). He was given 1 point on his record and was reinstated by a supervisor. A post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus operator 3 hrs and 7 min after the accident was negative. The delay in administering the drug and alcohol test was due to the bus operator being treated at the hospital.

A local police officer interviewed the bus operator at the scene of the accident. The bus operator stated he was on Bailey Avenue at the intersection of William Street waiting for oncoming traffic to clear. The bus operator stated he began to turn right on a red traffic light when he was struck by a tractor-trailer traveling westbound through a red traffic light at the intersection of Bailey Avenue and William Street.

The PTSB staff interviewed the driver of the tractor-trailer involved in the accident. The driver stated he operates in interstate commerce, and has a current CDL license with no restrictions. The driver said he has been employed for the past thirty-one years driving tractor-trailer for his current employer. The driver stated his employer has not provided defensive driver training courses, safety meetings or special awards for safe drivers. He also said he has been accident free for the past 5 years. The driver indicated he has diabetes and has had low sugar episodes (<50 mg/dl when testing ) when on medications. The driver stated he tests his sugar level 3x per day but didn’t test day of the accident. The driver stated that prior to the accident he was traveling southbound on North Ogden Street, then made a right turn onto William Street, one block before the intersection of Bailey Avenue. The driver stated he could not remember how fast he was traveling on William Street (speed limit is 30 mph) as he proceeded through the intersection striking the bus. The driver also said that after the accident a local police officer ask what happened and the driver stated he didn’t know. The driver said he did a pre trip that day and the brakes were good. The driver also said he was not driving his regular assigned tractor.
According to the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse and National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), people with diabetes, a blood glucose level below 70 mg/dl is considered hypoglycemia (low sugar). Hypoglycemia causes symptoms such as hunger, shakiness, nervousness, sweating, dizziness or light-headedness, sleepiness, confusion, difficulty speaking, anxiety, and weakness.

The investigation further revealed after reviewing an onboard camera, that prior to entering the intersection the bus operator should have visually scanned to his left and seen the tractor-trailer approaching from his left before initiating his turn onto William Street. There were no obstructions blocking his view.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the bus accident was the failure of the truck driver to yield a red traffic signal. Although the tractor driver exhibited signs of confusion, typical of a low blood sugar reaction, staff could not confirm this condition existed at the time of the accident.

Equally contributing to the accident was the bus operator initiating an improper right on red turn, not properly scanning left, and not utilizing his employee trained defensive driving skills.

NFTA informed the PTSB staff that for the past year the bus operator has been on disability and will not return to a safety sensitive position as a bus operator. Therefore, the accident was not rated for preventability. If the operator should return as an employee, the NFTA will notify the PTSB Staff of their intended action.

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

**Source: American Diabetes Association - Provided for information only**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal Blood Glucose Levels in People Who Do Not Have Diabetes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upon waking-fasting</td>
<td>70 to 99 mg/dl**</td>
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<tr>
<td>After meals</td>
<td>70 to 140 mg/dl</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Target Blood Glucose Levels in People Who Have Diabetes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before meals</td>
<td>70 to 130 mg/dl</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 to 2 hours after the start of a meal</td>
<td>below 180 mg/dl</td>
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**mg/dl (milligrams/deciliter) is the standard unit for measuring bg (blood glucose)**