On April 4, 2008, at approximately 10:05 am, MTA New York City Transit (NYCT) bus #9417, traveling westbound on Narrows Road North, was stopped for a red traffic signal. After the light turned green the bus started to move and when it was in the middle of the intersection the bus was struck in the left middle side by a truck moving from the bus driver’s left to right. After the impact both vehicles were redirected and continued in the north-west direction to the final rest. The bus driver, six bus passengers and the truck driver claimed various injuries, were transported to local hospitals, treated and released. The bus and the truck, both, sustained extensive damage. NYC Police responded to the accident and no summonses were issued.

In the vicinity of the accident site, Narrows Road North is a 34 foot wide, one-way road accommodating three westbound travel lanes. The Hylan Boulevard is a 36 foot wide, one way road, accommodating two northbound travel lanes. Both roadways are straight, level and asphalt paved. Parking is not permitted at the curbs. At the time of the accident it was daylight and raining. The area speed limit is 30 mph.

Bus #9417 is a 1998 RTS transit type bus with a seating capacity of 40 passengers. A review of the bus records indicated that Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) at Yukon Depot are performed at regular 6,000 mile intervals and the most recent was completed on February 13, 2008. The bus had traveled 4,668 miles at the time of the accident. A review of the maintenance history of the bus revealed no safety related defects that could be considered causative. Due to the extensive damage of the bus and clean maintenance record no road brake tests were performed.

The bus driver was hired by MTA NYCT, on May 13, 1985, and completed the standard “New Bus Operator Training Program”. A review of the bus driver’s Department of Motor Vehicles records showed no violations or suspensions. New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law, Article 19-A records were complete and up-to-date. A review of NYCT records revealed no collision accidents for the last three years. The post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus driver 3 hours and 27 minutes after the accident was negative. The delay in administering the drug and alcohol test was due to the bus driver being transported to a local hospital and treated.
In an interview with the PTSB staff, the bus driver indicated that while traveling westbound on Narrows Road North he stopped the bus for a red traffic signal at the intersection with Hylan Boulevard. When the light turned green the bus driver scanned the intersection and observed a truck, approximately 25 – 30 yards from the intersection, moving from the bus driver’s left to right. The bus entered the intersection and was broadsided by the truck, which ran the red traffic signal.

In an interview with the PTSB staff the driver of the truck stated that he was traveling in the second travel lane, northbound on Hylan Boulevard. He stated that he noticed the bus stopped for a red traffic signal. The truck driver claimed that when he was close to the intersection and the traffic signal for him turned to yellow, the bus started to move into the intersection. He applied the brakes but was unable to prevent the collision.

The investigation showed that according to the final rest positions of the bus and the truck, the statements of both drivers, it is most likely that the bus entered the intersection on a green traffic signal and the truck violated a red traffic signal. Subsequently, the front of the truck struck the left middle side of the bus.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the accident was the failure of the truck driver to stop for a red traffic signal and yield the right-of-way to the bus.

The MTA NYCT reviewed the accident on May 15, 2008, and found it to be preventable. The bus driver was issued a ten day suspension. On April 8, 2008, the bus driver attended and successfully completed a Performance and evaluation class at the training center. The bus driver was found to be in full compliance and was returned to passenger service.

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