## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
### ABBREVIATED BUS ACCIDENT REPORT

1. **CASE:** 9889
2. **PROPERTY NAME:** Capital District Transportation Authority
3a. **ACCIDENT TYPE:** Mechanical Failure
3b. **Accident Severity Index:** 0.0
4a. **DATE:** September 2, 2008
4b. **TIME:** 11:00 am
5. **ACCIDENT LOCATION:** Hoosick Street, Troy, NY
6. **TOWN/CITY/BOROUGH:** Troy, NY
7. **SUMMONS:** None
8. **BUS NUMBER:** 2030
8a. **YEAR:** 1998
8b. **MAKE:** Orion 6
9. **NUMBER OF INJURIES:** None
10. **FATALITIES:** None
11. **HOURS OF SERVICE:** Off duty in last 24 hrs/8 hrs in last 7 days.
12. **SYNOPSIS:**

   At approximately 11:00 am, the bus operator of Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) bus # 2030 was traveling eastbound on Hoosick Street when the bus lost electrical power and the engine shut down. The bus operator was unable to restart the engine. The bus operator opened the emergency air release valve to open the front doors, secured the bus, and evacuated twenty passengers to a safe location. He then called dispatch. The bus operator walked to the rear of the bus and observed smoke, and oil dripping from the engine compartment. An off duty volunteer fireman identified himself and he requested to use the onboard fire extinguisher to extinguish flames under the left rear side of engine compartment. Local police and fire departments responded to the scene. The bus was not equipped with a fire suppression system. The bus was transported to CDTA maintenance facility at the Troy facility and secured.

   The environment did not play a role in this incident.

Bus #2030 is a Orion 6 transit type bus with a seating capacity for thirty two passengers. Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI's) are conducted every 6,000 miles in accordance with the System Safety Program Plan and the manufacturer’s recommended service intervals. The most recent PMI was completed on August 29, 2008 and the bus had traveled 93 miles at the time of the fire. There were no safety sensitive defects noted in the last sixty days prior to the accident that were considered causative to the fire.

A post fire inspection was performed on September 3, 2008, with the PTSB staff and CDTA maintenance staff. The most probable cause of fire was a direct electrical short of the positive battery cable connector, that broke off at the alternator stud and grounded itself against the lower part of the alternator, causing a short through the engine block.
The bus operator was hired by CDTA on June 23, 2008 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. A post accident drug and alcohol test was not administered to the bus driver due to the nature of the incident.

In an interview with the PTSB staff, the bus operator stated he was traveling eastbound on Hoosick Street when the engine stalled. The operator said he tried to restart the engine and it wouldn’t restart. The operator stated he lost all electrical power. He secured the bus and opened the emergency air relief valve to open the front doors in order to evacuate the twenty passengers to a safe location. The operator stated that a volunteer fireman was behind the bus and identified him self to the operator, then asked for the onboard fire extinguisher. He walked to the rear of the bus with the operator and noticed oil dripping and thick smoke coming from the engine compartment. The local fire department arrived on the scene and extinguished the fire.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the fire was a direct electrical short of the positive battery cable connector, that broke off at the alternator stud and grounded itself against the lower part of the alternator.

CDTA reviewed the incident and found the bus fire to be preventable.

In response, CDTA management instructed all foremen to insure the left interior access panel is removed and the following items are checked; alternator, positive 24 volt cable, connector, and alternator stud, during every preventative maintenance inspection.

A verbal warning was placed in the mechanic’s personnel file and he was retrained.

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

INVESTIGATOR: M. F. Gluskin

CHIEF, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SECTION  DATE

DIRECTOR, PCSB, NYS DOT  DATE