



The Chief

Struck While Setting Up Safe Zone

National Transportation Board Probes Death of Track Worker

By BOB HENNELLY

The National Transportation Safety Board is undertaking a full investigation of the deadly workplace accident on the G line that killed one Track Worker and seriously injured a second earlier this month, this newspaper has learned.

While the NTSB has a mandate to investigate every civil-aviation accident, a spokesman for the agency said it looks at a very small sample of fatal workplace accidents that involve non-air-related transport sectors. "We pick those very selectively and they have to be really significant, because if we are going to use scarce investigative resources, we want to make sure it makes a real difference in safety for the workers and the public," the spokesman said.

Strong on Forensics

"The NTSB determines the probable cause of the accidents and issues safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents," according to the NTSB website. The NTSB is well-known for its comprehensive forensic capabilities, detailed re-enactments and site reviews, as well as thorough interviews.

A TWU Local 100 team of safety

representatives has also been working with the Federal Transportation Administration and the Public Transportation Safety Board in their review of the workplace fatality.

The accident occurred when both employees were attempting one of the most high-risk maneuvers that subway track workers have to execute in order to define safe zones to do track work. "This happened out on a curve, walking in the opposite direction of train traffic, setting up the flagging lights to give motormen notice a work crew was present," said Mr. Samuelson.

In May 2007 the New York Times reported that since 1946, 238 transit track workers had been killed on the job. That historical review was prompted by the death of two transit workers a month earlier in separate accidents. The back-to-back fatalities prompted the agency to form a track safety panel. Back in 2013 a signal maintainer was killed by an E train in Queens.

Worker's Funeral Held

Funeral services were held Nov. 10 for Louis Gray, the 53-year-old New York City Transit Track Worker who was struck and killed by a train while he was trying to set up a safety work



Louis Gray

zone on the G line in Brooklyn. Mr. Gray, the married father of three, had joined the transit agency back in 2001.

His co-worker, Jeffrey Fleming, 49, who was seriously hurt in the incident, was released from the hospital last week. Mr. Fleming joined the agency in 1999.

Mr. Samuelson said that he and his fellow union members were all touched by Mayor de Blasio tweeting out a message of condolence to the Gray family and Local 100. "That was very decent of the Mayor," Samuelson said. "He has not done that before. It was appreciated."

