



**SITUATION REPORT # 3**  
**NEW JERSEY STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**  
**December 5, 2012, 1000 Hours**

**A. CURRENT SYNOPSIS:**

The NJ ROIC and NJOEM are currently monitoring the Train Derailment in Paulsboro Borough, Gloucester County, New Jersey. NJ ROIC operational level is currently at a Level 2 (NJ ROIC Enhanced Operations) as of 0800 hours December 3, 2012, and NJOEM personnel are staffing the SEOC. NJOEM will provide situational awareness reports to the State, County, Local and allied agencies throughout this event. Updates will follow as needed.

**B. INCIDENT:**

Approximately 0715 hours, November 30, 2012, a Conrail freight train was derailed when a railroad bridge, spanning the Mantua Creek collapsed. Six (6) railcars were derailed and four (4) were partially submerged in the Mantua Creek. One (1) railcar, which contained vinyl chloride, was breached causing an air and water release of vinyl chloride. Paulsboro Borough declared a State of Emergency for the municipality and established a curfew as of 1900 hours. The incident occurred near the 200 block of East Jefferson Street. Initially, residents within one half mile were advised to shelter in place. On this same date at 1600 hours, an evacuation order was issued for residents in the area of Commerce Street, Railroad Avenue and Broad Street affecting approximately 45 residents.

Effective December 4, 2012, 1600 hours, a decision was made to expand the evacuation area to now include Broad Street to Spruce Street, Spruce Street to the railroad tracks, the railroad tracks to Delaware Street, Delaware Street to 7<sup>th</sup> Street, and 7th Street to the Mantua Creek. Due to the consistent elevated readings, the emergency declaration was amended to extend evacuations affecting approximately 100 homes and approximately 300/400 residents.

**C. RESOURCES DEPLOYED/REQUESTED:**

No additional resources are requested at this time.

#### D. ACTIVITIES:

Gloucester County declared a Countywide Emergency Proclamation effective December 4, 2012, 1400 hours in response to the Paulsboro Borough train derailment.

A smaller crane is continuing to conduct debris clean up at the scene and will remove the dolphin and fender material to allow the barge mounted larger crane access to the site. A barge mounted larger crane is currently moored on the Delaware River and will be utilized for rail car removal. Two additional barges have arrived and are staged awaiting removal of damaged rail cars.

There are approximately 200 emergency responders on scene assisting with the recovery efforts of the train derailment.

Currently, 204 hotel rooms are occupied by individuals evacuated from the affected area. The American Red Cross Shelter located Kingsway High School was closed at 2000 hours last night.

Dive teams conducted an assessment the ethanol rail car and found no damage.

DEP conducted water samples were completed in several areas of the affected area and no level of concerns were detected.

A public information meeting schedule at Nehaunsey Middle School, Gibbstown between 1830 – 2000 hours. There continues to be a push to get more information out to the community. Gloucester County is checking the availability of the County CERT to assist with getting information to the hotels.

Operations Scheduled for today:

- Obtain pressure readings from the rail cars.
- Begin the process of removing VC from the breached rail car which includes adding 3000 gallons of acetone.
- Utilize unmanned SONAR to check the rail cars.

#### **DEP Summary:**

- Most feasible plan is to use Acetone as a solvent to create a more liquid mix of the remaining vinyl chloride. This is necessary in order to access remaining VC in the tank.
- The Acetone/VC mix would be recovered via a hose and pump back to the same tank-truck used to haul the acetone.
- Vapors would be recovered during the process by vacuum suction to railcars.

- Chemists feel that the reaction of Acetone and VC would not be violent.
- The goal is to remove the product to the greatest extent possible and then render the tank-car safe to move (below LEL). Nitrogen will be used to flush remaining vapor from the car.
- It is expected that the insulating jacket is saturated with VC. The suggested solution is to flush the insulation with water.
- A backup method of capturing vapor is being worked out; it involves the use of carbon impregnated with potassium permanganate (only suitable material to scrub VC vapors).
- Conrail will be adding more contractor personnel to allow working two shifts to speed up the operation.
- Addition of acetone is expected to began Wednesday.
- Operation to achieve endpoint of rendering the railcar safe may not be completed until Sunday.

Federal Agencies:

- National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)

State/Allied Agencies:

- NJSP Emergency Response Bureau-South
- NJSP Hazardous Material Response Unit
- NJSP Incident Management Unit
- United States Environmental Protection Agency
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- United States Coast Guard
- Atlantic Strike Team

County Agencies:

- Gloucester County Office of Emergency Management
- Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office
- Gloucester County HazMat
- Paulsboro Police Department
- Paulsboro Fire Department

Private Sector:

- Conrail
- CSX Rail

E. WEATHER FORECAST:

- Today: Sunny, with a high near 58. Northwest wind 13 to 16 mph.

- Tonight: Clear, with a low around 33. Northwest wind 6 to 13 mph.
- Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 44. Light and variable wind.