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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

FALSE PROCEED SIGNAL REPORT

REPORT FOR (month/year)  
March 1996

DATE  
March 31, 1997

REPORTING CARRIER (railroad & region or division)

Norfolk Southern Corporation  
Division - Pocahontas

All railroads subject to Regulations of the Federal Railroad Administration shall submit a false proceed signal report, original only, to the Federal Railroad Administration within five days after a false proceed occurs. If no false proceed occurs during any calendar month, a report showing "No Failures" must be filed within ten days after the end of the month.

Copies of this form will be furnished upon request to the Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration, Office of Safety, Washington, D.C. 20590

MAIL TO

Federal Railroad Admin.  
Suite 440, North Tower  
1720 Peachtree Rd., NW  
Atlanta, GA. 30309

REPORTING OFFICER (signature/title)

Chief Engineer - Eastern Region  
Communications & Signal Dept.

A failure should not be counted more than one time in items 1, 2, 3, and 4; the failure should be classified under the basic system or appliance of which it forms an essential part. E.g.: assume grounds cause a block signal to indicate a false proceed causing corresponding indications of a cab signal system on each train approaching this point, such failures should be included in item 1, Block Systems.

A false proceed failure is a failure of a system, device or appliance to indicate or function as intended which results in less restriction than intended.

The following abbreviations may be used in the report.

- A - Automatic
- AB - Automatic block
- ACS - Automatic cab signal
- APB - Absolute permissive block
- ATC - Automatic train control
- ATS - Automatic train stop
- CL - Color light
- CPL - Color position light
- E - Electric
- EM - Electromechanical
- EP - Electropneumatic
- FP - False proceed
- MB - Manual block
- M - Mechanical
- P - Pneumatic
- PL - Position light
- SA - Semiautomatic
- TC - Traffic control

TYPE OF SYSTEM	DATE	LOCOMOTIVE NUMBER	DEVICE THAT FAILED	LOCATION (city and state)
1 BLOCK SYSTEMS <input type="checkbox"/> AB <input type="checkbox"/> APB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ATC	3/24/97	8805-8893	phantom signal	Williamson
2 INTERLOCKING <input type="checkbox"/> REMOTE <input type="checkbox"/> MANUAL <input type="checkbox"/> AUTO-MATIC				
3 AUTOMATIC SYSTEMS <input type="checkbox"/> ATS <input type="checkbox"/> ATC <input type="checkbox"/> ACS				
4 OTHER (specify)				

NATURE AND CAUSE OF FAILURE/CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN

At approximately 12:00 noon, Train No. U06-581, running eastbound, called an **advance approach** indication on signal N-471.2 shortly after emerging from Williamson Tunnel. The crew, consisting of Engineer and Conductor and accompanied by Trainmaster, all reported seeing this indication, but as they got nearer to the signal, they reported it "dropped" to an **approach**. Facts later were used to determine that an **approach** was the proper signal they should have received on N-471.2 as the next signal at Williamson had never been lined for their route.

Signal personnel were called to investigate and could not duplicate the reported incident. Appropriate signal tests were made at both Williamson and at signal N-471.2 with no exceptions taken. The signal system was returned to service with appropriate limitations until a test for a phantom aspect could be made.

At about the same time the next day, a reenactment was made with a similar lead locomotive configuration. Trainmaster accompanied the signal personnel. With help, it was determined that the **advance approach** had first been noted in a 6' left-hand curve leading to the signal at a point approximately 1270 feet from the signal. The **approach** indication had been noticed at about 950 feet from the signal. Whereas it there was bright sunlight on the day of the incident, this next day it was overcast. It was observed that the signal indication could not be seen until they got to about 950 feet from the signal. then acknowledged that what he had observed further out than 950 feet on the previous day could not have been the lighted aspects because of the signal alignment. At about 12:15 PM the sun did come out bright and a possible phantom **advance approach** was observed from the sun reflecting off the tops of the signal hoods. The signal hoods are slightly faded with a lot of bird droppings on them. This was a very dim looking phantom, and should not have been construed as being a signal.