



At least 17 hurt after MBTA trolleys collide on Mattapan line



SCOTT EISEN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Firefighters helped injured passengers off of a Mattapan high-speed MBTA trolley after it crashed near Cedar Grove station.

By [Travis Andersen](#), [Matt Rocheleau](#) and [Adam Vaccaro](#)

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A collision on the MBTA's Mattapan high-speed line near the Cedar Grove station injured at least 17 passengers, officials said.

The collision between two trolley cars occurred after 3 p.m., according to authorities.

"It's the most scariest thing that's ever happened to me," said Antonio Rodriguez, an 18-year-old Hyde

Park resident who was on the trolley that was struck from behind by another car.

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He said his trolley surged forward about 100 yards upon impact, and he suffered a chest injury and a headache after hitting his head on a seat.

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Another man, Rodriguez said, had “a major head injury” and was bleeding profusely from his head.

“I didn’t even know what hit us” at first, Rodriguez said, adding that other passengers started shouting, “A trolley hit us, a trolley hit us.” “I was speechless at the time,” he said. “My chest was tight.”

Steve MacDonald, a Boston Fire Department spokesman, said in an interview from the scene that two trolley cars that were traveling inbound had collided. He said the collision had occurred on a stretch of tracks that was flanked by the Cedar Grove Cemetery on one side and a river walkway on the other.

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To access one of the trolleys, first responders had to go through the cemetery and cut through a fence, MacDonald said. The other trolley was closer to Cedar Grove station.

One trolley suffered front-end damage, MacDonald said, and authorities were examining both affected cars after the crash.

Boston District 8 fire Chief James Greene described the crash as “a rear-end collision, or that’s how it appears at this time.”

He said the injured people who were hurt suffered “mostly minor” injuries, including “lacerations — head, neck, and back type of injuries.”

Ana Karina Vivas, a spokeswoman for the Boston Public Health Commission, said in an e-mail that 16 of the 17 people who were injured were taken to local hospitals.

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The advertisement is a horizontal banner. On the left, a blue background contains the text 'SKI & STAY STARTING AT' in white, followed by a large white '\$71' and 'PP/PN' in smaller white text. To the right of this is the Waterville Valley Resort logo, which includes a green and white circular emblem and the text 'WATERVILLE VALLEY RESORT'. Below the logo is an orange button with the text 'BOOK NOW'. On the far right of the banner is a photograph of a person in winter gear skiing down a snowy slope.

MBTA spokesman Joseph Pesaturo said there was contact between two trolleys and the incident is under investigation.

“At approximately 3:15 PM, two trolleys made contact on the inbound track between Cedar Grove and Butler,” Pesaturo wrote. “Minor injuries have been reported. The cause is under investigation. Shuttle buses are replacing service in both directions on the Mattapan Line.”

MBTA Police Superintendent Richard Sullivan said in an e-mail Friday night that a preliminary investigation suggests that neither the age of the trolleys, which are about 70 years old, nor the mechanics of the trolleys played a factor in the crash. As of 9 p.m., MBTA police still had to conduct a thorough inspection of one of the trolleys involved in the collision, he said.

Photos from the scene showed one of the affected trains sitting askew on a snow-covered track, and a second car had significant front-end damage.

Pesaturo said there is no indication cold weather was a factor in the crash.

Officials brought a bus to the Butler MBTA station in Dorchester for first responders and investigators to warm up in after working in the bitter cold.

A similar incident [occurred in 2014](#), when an out-of-service trolley hit another trolley containing commuters near Cedar Grove station, causing minor injuries to several people.

The 10 trolleys on the Mattapan line are notoriously difficult to repair — sometimes requiring the T to

get parts from transit museums.

The MBTA is expected to finish a study early next year that will dictate whether the vehicles remain in service in the future.

Some community advocates consider the trolleys' age and history part of the line's charm and have rallied to keep them in service.

Mike Bello, Martin Finucane, and Danny McDonald of the Globe Staff contributed to this report.

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