Anchorage - February 19, 1948

Mr. J. T. Cunningham Acting General Manager

This in reply to your letter of February 17 regarding rear coupler on Engine 555 braking off at Broad Pass.

The following information received from Mr. M. T. Hughes, Master Mechanic:

"This class engine is equipped with coupler castings which bolt to beam back of tank. This, as you know, has caused considerable trouble in the past, especially when used as a Snow Fleet engine. At times these engines have very rough handling. It would be impossible at time of inspection to observe whether bolts had cracks or fractures without removing them completely from casting.

I have a statement from Road Foreman of Engines Walls which I am attaching to this letter. He states he was with this engine when they left Curry on February 12, 6:45 A.M. He claims there was nothing wrong with this coupler at that time. This engine worked two days on the Snow Pleet and I understand coupler broke off February 13 at 10:15 P.M. Undoubtedly these bolts had broken during these two days of service and lost out, as Walls states the back of this engine was covered with snow and ice making the loss invisible to the engine crew until coupler dropped."

We are having spring pocket couplers installed on these engines as they come through the Back Shop for repairs. This, I believe, will eliminate any further trouble of this nature.

G. A. Benedict

Tabudit.

Supt. of Motive Power

& Equipment

TH:dee

Encl.

Enchorage, Alaska February 17, 1945

Tr. . T. kughed

peferring to ax 472 reporting coupler casting falling off Engine 555, this Engine left Eurry boundhouse at 6:45 a.m. February 12, 1948 in good shape. Having been used on the snow Theat two days without being in a roundhouse for thorough inspection, also covered with ice and snow at the time we traded it off for Engine 70) at Brued wass 12:15 p.m. Petruary 13, it was toposable to notice that two of these botto were thesing.

This accident was not due to rough condiing of trein.

i :bl

Traveling Engineer

Anchorage - February 17, 1948

MR. G. A. BRNEDICT:

Please note AX 472 reporting that a drawbar fell off engine 555. The report also states that only two bolts were holding this drawbar in place.

Please furnish a complete report covering this accident together with an explanation on why, by proper inspection, it could not have been determined that some bolts were missing.

J. T. Cunningham Acting General Manager

JTC:mf

Form 212-AHE ALASHA RAHEDAD

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR THE ALASKA RAILROAD

(AX) TELEGRAPHIC REPORT OF ACCIDENT

GEFFRETRUCTIONS—use Signal "AX" to indicate to Receiving Operator to copy on this blank. The Signal GEFFRETRIAL MANAGER gives precedence over other telegrams.

Operators in transmitting will send NUMBERS and ANSWERS only.

Answer all questions in blank. TIME DATE FROM M February 13, 1948 TOPE Broadpass-JFS HIS GAB HAS File 1. (a) Date February 13, 1948 (b) Time 11:00 PM (c) Weather Windy and Cold (b) Nearest 304 (c) Estimated distance and direction from Milepost named ain track Nearest Station ---- Broadpass (a) Train 27 (b) Engine 1013 (c) Conductor val ters (d) Engineer Grume (a) Kind of Freight (b) Direction of South Cars in (a) Loaded 5 (b) Empty 28 (c) Percentage of air 100% (d) Gross Weight 625 Nature of Accident Draw bar fell off Engine 555 Cause Grystallized from cold and only two bolts holding 9. What has been done for and disposition made of injured persons:___ 11. Is there a siding by which trains can pass around wreck? --10. Is main line obstructed?. Is assistance needed north or south end of train? 13. Will temporary track have to be constructed? 14. What kind and quantity of track, car, bridge, or other material is wanted?______ 16. Damage to engine.... 17. If cars off track, give initials, numbers, and destination. Give estimated damage to each car and contents, and state which, if any, will have to be transferred. (If any cars empty, so designate)_____ 18. Is engine off track?__ 19. How long to clear main track? 20. Help required? 21. Curve or straight track? 22. Detention to trains..... 23. Remarks: Only two bolts holding - Not much strain used - Apparently Crystallized.