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# Concord train tragedy probed; protester tries artificial limbs

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One week after losing his legs to a Navy train, S. Brian Willson Tuesday took the first step toward walking again.

"He has feet now," said his wife, Holley Rauhen, after Willson put weight on his temporary prosthetic devices.

Willson, who was protesting alleged U.S. arms shipments to Central America, was hit by the train Sept. 1 on the railroad tracks outside the Concord Naval Weapons Station. One of his legs was cut off in the accident; the other was amputated.

Willson's condition was upgraded from fair to good, and he may be moved from John Muir Hospital in Walnut Creek to a rehabilitation unit today or Thursday, said Sandra Ryan, a hospital spokeswoman.

Meanwhile, three investigations into the incident continued Tuesday, with most of the inquiry by the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department to be presented this morning to Bob Kochly, the county's senior deputy district attorney. The Sheriff's Department on Tuesday refused to disclose the contents of its report, but Warren Rupf, assistant sheriff, said it revealed who ordered the Navy train to move.

Rupf also said that about three days before the incident the Navy circulated an internal memo warning its train crews that demonstrators might attempt to jump onto the tracks.

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A sheriff's official says a report on the incident in which Willson was maimed reveals who ordered the Navy train to move.

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Kochly wouldn't say Tuesday when his office would decide to file criminal charges.

The other two investigations are being handled by the Navy and the Federal Railroad Administration. The railroad inquiry could be hampered because protesters ripped up about 300 feet of track outside the base Saturday.

"That could definitely put a crimp in things," said Tom Simpson, a Federal Railroad Administration spokesman. "Now, I don't know where we stand."

Simpson said that his agency had hoped to re-enact the incident using the same three-car train and track. "We wanted to do some braking tests, and look at the stopping distances at certain speeds and the lines of sight," he said.

The Navy has refused to comment on its investigation or on when munitions trucks or trains would resume crossing Port Chicago Highway to the base's port. The track still has not been repaired.

Dan Tikalsky, spokesman for the base, said the Navy would not comment on a request by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors asking the Navy to remove its railroad tracks from public property outside the base.

The supervisors suggested Tuesday that the Navy instead use truck routes on its own property, reducing the possibility of confrontations with protesters. One supervisor, Sunne Wright McPeak, said this could be accomplished by building a truck tunnel linking the Navy's underground munitions storage facilities to nearby docks at Suisun Bay.

The supervisors also asked the Navy not to move trucks or trains if demonstrators were present until the Navy notified the Contra Costa County sheriff's office and allowed deputies time to arrive at the scene.

The supervisors criticized the Navy for failing to give the Sheriff's Department a half-hour notice before moving trains on the day Willson was injured. Navy and sheriff's office officials had agreed to allow the deputies time to remove demonstrators from the track. Willson was struck 24 minutes after the sheriff's dispatcher was notified — before a deputy had arrived at the scene.

**State News**



Ron Burda — Mercury News

**PROTEST** — Officer pulls a protester from the hood of a truck leaving the Naval Weapons Station in Concord on Tuesday. The truck was thought to be hauling explosives.