



JPB Board of Directors
Meeting of August 3, 2023

Correspondence as of June 16, 2023

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1	RE_ Memorial Day Disaster
2	RE Confirming Official Registered Office for PCJPB
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6	FW_ Caltrain Customer Service Recording Form_ 887908

From: [Sarah Nabong](#)
To: brianwblake@gmail.com
Cc: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: RE: Memorial Day Disaster
Date: Monday, June 12, 2023 10:06:22 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dear Brian Blake,

Thank you for contacting Caltrain. We are sorry to see, however, that it was due to issues you and your family had with our service, especially as it was on Memorial Day weekend. We sincerely apologize for the poor experience. Kindly note, your concerns regarding our ability to handle the ridership levels you encountered on Memorial Day were forwarded to the proper parties for review. A copy of this correspondence will also be sent to our Board of Directors.

Admittedly, the reason for this overcrowding comes from our earlier decision to adjust our trains' length from the standard 5-cars to 4-cars. While we understand this may seem strange in light of your recent travel with us, current Caltrain ridership is actually lower than pre-pandemic averages. In order to improve overall service reliability, we determined reducing the amount of equipment we committed per train would be the most effective course of action for the time being.

Unfortunately, this shorter train length could not contend with the amount of passengers we experienced during Memorial Day. The day was not only a holiday with inviting weather, it also a San Francisco Giants game day. We at Caltrain are aware that ridership can fluctuate during special events, and Caltrain has been monitoring the amount of passengers we typically see these days during Giants games. But even with the information we had gathered previously, we did not predict just how far beyond the average Memorial Day weekend would prove, with Caltrain experiencing the highest Giants game ridership for weekend scheduled service we have seen in quite some time.

We are working on a plan on how to better manage Giants game ridership with the resources we have available to mitigate or prevent incidents like this going forward. We are also looking forward to returning our trains to 5-car lengths rather than 4 once our average ridership fully recovers. We know none of this changes what you and your relatives experienced riding with us, but we do hope it at least softens the poor impression you were left with of our service. Again, we apologize for the trouble, and we thank you for taking the time to reach out to us with your concerns.

Kind regards,

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2

1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070

Phone: 650.508.7925

Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



To Whom it May concern,

For reference, I never write to complain to companies (let alone public transitor systems) or even ever write yelp reviews... but today's experience on Caltrain was truly one of the most frustrating and disappointing experiences on Bay Area public transit. I work in public service (law enforcement) so I fully understand holiday staffing and am sympathetic to other staffing issues facing your industry, but as a 30 year patron of Caltrain, today's lack of preparedness for the ridership around the time of the Giants game (pre and post game) was an embarrassment. We had two grandparents and an infant and toddler with us and couldn't get seating on board the ONLY 5-car train (#237) northbound to the game. That part wasn't as surprising as was the lack of visibility from any Caltrain employees (not one) helping anyone board the packed trains. Several groups of patrons just walked away from even trying to board from pretty much every stop north of milbrae. My mother in law was pushed around and had beer spilled on her from rowdy patrons, again not Caltrains fault persay but the meet congestion, lack of planning, and lack of staffing, felt very obvious.

On our return attempt(S), we left the hame early at end of the 7th inning to assure a seat on the "game train" ...we were SO EXTREMELY UPSET to see the line for the game train AND the next local (4:58pm) were already so long that both those trains left early and full forcing us to wait in line just to hopefully catch the 5:58pm. Our whole group was just so defeated and disappointed with the lack of planning, forethought, and "care for the customer" as the staff working the station also were so clearly unempathetic to the problems shrugging their shoulders as clearly the issues were out of their hands....which is why I write to you here. My whole extended family spent the next several hours waiting around discussing how we all voted in the last major election to give Caltrain more money since it was a service we valued. Today, that service was not valuable in the least and made us all regret that decision.

I'm not sure what the remedy is, many staff today said "we didn't expect that many people" so my first thought is to open lines of communication with the giants tickets sales to Better gauge ridership...but regardless I hope that this email gets read by at least one person who can relay the frustration in hopes that at least one family in the future

From: Board (@caltrain.com)
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2023 1:43 PM
To: 'Ashcon Minoiefar'
Cc: Board (@caltrain.com)
Subject: RE: Confirming Official Registered Office for PCJPB

Hello – yes this is the official “headquarters” address for the PCJPB. We are a special district separate from the County of San Mateo.

Best,

Dora Seamans
Executive Officer/District Secretary

From: Ashcon Minoiefar <aminoiefar@WalkupLawOffice.com>
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2023 12:52 PM
To: Board (@caltrain.com) <board@caltrain.com>
Subject: Confirming Official Registered Office for PCJPB

You don't often get email from aminoiefar@walkuplawoffice.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good Afternoon,

I would like to confirm that the address listed online (1250 San Carlos Ave., San Carlos, CA, 94070-1306) is the office registered address for the PCJPB per the Roster of Public Agencies? San Mateo does not list the roster online. As the PCJPB operates over several counties, I would like to confirm that the office is officially registered at the above address within San Mateo County.

Thank you

Ashcon

Ashcon Minoiefar
Civil Justice Fellow



415-981-7210 | 650 California Street, 26th Fl.
walkuplawoffice.com | San Francisco, CA 94108



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From: Ted Neu <tedneu1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 13, 2023 6:17 PM
To: Sarah Nabong; Waltonstaff (BOS)
Cc: Board (@caltrain.com)
Subject: Re: RE: Dangerous behaviour by CalTrain staff

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Thank you Sarah, I appreciate your thoughtful reply. I have noted that this is incident #887881.

To be clear, all the riders involved were on the platform well in advance. It was not a matter of folks running for the train. We were just situated too far south on the platform. Either the train pulled up further than we expected or the train was shorter than normal.

The group of (mostly) strangers realized the error and was trying to get to the nearest door. It seemed that the train conductor closed the doors intentionally or was grossly negligent. I've seen this many times before from CalTrain operators. It is rare on other systems like the New York MTA.

On Tue, Jun 13, 2023 at 1:42 PM Sarah Nabong <nabongs@samtrans.com> wrote:

Dear Edward Neu,

Thank you for contacting Caltrain. Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors was referred to me for response. The board members will receive a copy of our correspondence.

It is never our intention to depart without all passengers on the platform ready to board. We normally suggest riders arrive at least 10 minutes prior to their train's arrival, but we understand this is not always a realistic expectation. Please note this has been filed as Report #887881, and the Caltrain comments mentioned in your feedback were forwarded to proper parties for their attention to further address. Nevertheless, we understand your commute still suffered, and we sincerely apologize for the inconvenience. Your feedback is appreciated.

Kind regards,

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2

1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070

Phone: 650.508.7925

Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



This is a complaint about dangerous behavior by your conductor on train 253 on Sunday 6/4/23. This was the 5:15pm train.

At San Mateo, a large group of us were not aware of where the closest door would be. When the train stopped well up the track from our group, we all hurried to make the door.

At least 6-8 people were trying to board the train when the doors were closed. One young lady had her hand in the doors so they opened automatically.

The conductor did not care about rider safety.

When I confronted him afterwards he repeatedly said that 1) He has a schedule to keep and 2) Nobody actually missed the train.

Your employee "Andrew" had total disregard for the safety of riders.

By the way, this happens often enough that it seems to be part of the culture at CalTrain. I have used public transit across the United States. CalTrain is the only system where conductors actively try to ensure that passengers hurrying to make a train are left behind!

Please reply.

Edward C. Neu

SF

From: VTA BART Phase II <vtabart@vtabsv.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 14, 2023 7:59 PM
To: Board (@caltrain.com)
Subject: VTA's Business Resource Program in the Works!

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VTA's Business Resource Program in the Works!

Among the many moving parts of VTA's BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension Project (BSVII,) are meticulous plans to support small businesses who may experience some disruption during construction of the biggest transportation infrastructure project in Santa Clara County history.

While the start of major construction is still a year away, the BSVII project team is working hard to find ways to make the process as pain-free as possible for small businesses along and near the BART alignment from 28th Street in San Jose to Santa Clara.

Although most of the work will occur behind construction fences, there will be increased truck traffic, and periodic sidewalk and parking restrictions when construction starts. To help alleviate the disruption to businesses, VTA developed a **Business Resource Program** (BRP) to better support our small business community during the construction period. This program will focus on small businesses who often rely on foot traffic, such as "mom-and-pop" eateries and shops.

Plans call for the Business Resource Program to start before construction begins, and includes four main elements:

- **"Shop Local" marketing** is a branded strategy to promote local businesses in the area.
- **Signage and Wayfinding** will help direct patrons to small businesses and be coordinated with other construction and wayfinding signage.
- **Small Business Resource Connections and Support** will provide a range of services and training to help businesses improve their resiliency.
- **Direct Financial Assistance** program will provide targeted grant funding to eligible small businesses who have directly experienced construction-related business disruptions.

Additionally, a multi-lingual **Business Liaison Team** will address overall business support and outreach efforts by serving as a direct communication resource between VTA's BSVII project team and the community.

The BRP was developed in coordination with VTA's BSVII Small Business Task Force, the City of Santa Clara and San José, and it incorporates the many lessons learned from projects built around the country.

We hope these initiatives will help our community during the necessary construction period. And we are confident in the tremendous benefits of this transit infrastructure investment and added public transit access.

Stay tuned for more about the VTA's BSVII Business Resource Program, including discussion at the [upcoming VTA Board of Directors meeting on June 16, 2023.](#)

Project Background

VTA's BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension (Phase II Project) is a six-mile, four-station extension of BART from Berryessa / North San José Station (opened 2020) through downtown San José to the City of Santa Clara. The Phase II Project is planned to include an approx. five-mile subway, three stations with underground platforms (28th Street/ Little Portugal, Downtown San José, and Diridon), one ground-level station (Santa Clara), a train maintenance and storage facility, and additional facilities.

Have a question for us about Phase II?

Visit www.vta.org/bart or email us vtabart@vtabsv.com



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VTA BART Phase II

vtabart@vtabsv.com

(408) 321-2345 BART Silicon Valley Hotline



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You requested information about VTA's BART Silicon Valley Extension Phase II.

Our mailing address is:

Valley Transportation Authority

3331 N First Street

San Jose, CA 95134

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From: Caltrain Modernization Project <calmod@caltrain.com>
Sent: Friday, June 09, 2023 1:50 PM
To: lara.cummings1357@gmail.com
Cc: Sarah Nabong <nabongs@samtrans.com>
Subject: Caltrain Work in Menlo Park

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Hello, Lara. Thanks for reaching out about night work on the Overhead Contact System for Caltrain Electrification near the Menlo Park station.

We will be working in the Menlo Park area for the next 2-3 weeks but are working our way north as the poles are spread out 40-50 feet, so while noise may continue to be heard in the distance, the noise should get quieter every night as crews head away.

At some point crews will head back on the other side of the track, dependent on track access and productivity, but again, it should be for a short time only as poles are spread out so we don't stay in the same location for more than a night or two.

This type work is done on nights due to safety and the access required to complete this type of work.

Once this work is complete, the wiring and regulating should be a lot quieter.

Thanks again for reaching out to us.

Best,

The Caltrain Electrification Team

From: Lara Cummings <lara.cummings1357@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 7, 2023 3:51 AM

To: Board (@caltrain.com) <board@caltrain.com>

Subject: Train construction at 3:30 a.m.

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Hello,

I am sitting awake wondering why there is construction being done on the rails right now outside of Menlo Park station.

This has been going on since around 3 a.m. Insufferably loud clanging and banging on a gigantic metal pole-It sounds like a construction zone in my apartment. Some of us have to work early in the morning. Is it not enough to make us suffer Caltrains constant, incessant air horn? We have to be roused by 3 a.m. construction now too?

Sleep deprived and disgruntfully yours,
Lara

From: Sarah Nabong
Sent: Friday, June 16, 2023 2:46 PM
To: bragman4@yahoo.com
Subject: Caltrain Customer Service Recording Form: 887908

Dear Bonni Silverman,

Thank you for contacting Caltrain. We are sorry to see, however, that it was due to issues you had with our service. We sincerely apologize for the poor experience.

Admittedly, the reason for this overcrowding comes from our earlier decision to adjust our trains' length from the standard 5-cars to 4-cars. While we understand this may seem strange in light of your recent travel with us, current Caltrain ridership is actually lower than pre-pandemic averages. In order to improve overall service reliability, we determined reducing the amount of equipment we committed per train would be the most effective course of action for the time being.

Unfortunately, this shorter train length could not contend with the amount of passengers we experienced. We at Caltrain are aware that ridership can fluctuate during special events, and Caltrain has been monitoring the amount of passengers we typically see these days during Giants games. We are working on a plan on how to better manage Giants game ridership with the resources we have available to mitigate or prevent incidents like this going forward. We are also looking forward to returning our trains to 5-car lengths rather than 4 once our average ridership fully recovers. We know none of this changes what your experience riding with us, but we do hope it at least softens the poor impression you were left with of our service. Again, we apologize for the trouble, and we thank you for taking the time to reach out to us with your concerns.

Kind regards,

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2
1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070
Phone: 650.508.7925
Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



From: [B Silverman](#)
To: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board (@caltrain.com))
Subject: 6/4 Caltrain Experience
Date: Monday, June 5, 2023 7:40:24 AM

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Hello, I want to share my most resent experience on Caltrain.

I road Caltrain to go to the SF Giants game on Sunday 6/4 (train that arrives around noon at SF). I boarded the train at San Mateo, and they were blocking the doors as the train was so crowded.

I have been taking Caltrains to the Giants game since the ballpark open and yesterday was one of the WORST experience. You no longer have weekend ballpark train specials, and it appear from what I have heard from your conductors, reduced the number of cars on the trains. First of all why????

The train was packed beyond capacity. How do I know this? First, It was so crowed that the aisle (both levels) had people standing. Second- your conductors made announcement you should not board the train as it is a SAFETY HAZARD- yet people continued to board the train. Finally, at San Bruno, they would not allow any people to get on the train.

Can you not do something about this? Someone will get hurt from the shoving, the heat. I have seen people passed out.

Please do not say you have had to cut service due to rider ship. Why would people take Caltrain with this experience?

I wanted to share this experience, in hope you will do something...

Thank you
Bonni Silverman
415 606 5718