June 9, 2011

National Railroad Passenger Corporation
Steven C. Faulkenstein, Deputy Chief Engineer
30th Street Station
29th and Market Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Faulkenstein:

Re: Light Plant Safety Emergency

In the early morning hours of Tuesday, June 7, 2011 in North Philadelphia a B&B Crew was making repairs to station roof. The were using a portable light tower to light up the job site. When they were finishing up the job Brian Kilgore, B&B Mechanic, allegedly began to lower the light tower and in fact mistakenly raised the light tower. As a result, the light tower came into contact with the energized catenary and subsequently caused serious injuries to B&B Mechanic Kilgore.

Our initial investigation of this accident indicates the following:

1. The light plant was not bonded (grounded) and if it had been properly bonded, the accident would have happened but the injury would not have occurred; and

2. The controls on the handle for raising and lowering the light plant show that “in” raises the light plant and “out” lowers the light plant. Obviously this is confusing on its face in that anyone could mistakenly take “in” to mean to bring the light plant tower down and “out” means to bring the light plant up.
We would request that Amtrak immediately take all of the light towers out of service until they are inspected and that they are each provided with bonding wire (grounding straps) before they work under energized wires and that the controls of the light plants are clearly marked “up” and “down” instead of “in” and “out.”

Kindly advise me of your intentions.

Yours truly,

Jed Dodd
General Chairman

cc Amtrak Officers
Liaisons