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On its first ever run along a faster new route, an Amtrak Cascades train bound for Portland derailed on a curve and plunged off an overpass onto I-5 south of Seattle Monday, killing three people and injuring more than 70 others. (AP photo)

Going Too Fast

Amtrak Cascades crashes on inaugural run

The Amtrak train bound for Portland and Seattle making its first ever run along a faster new route was hurtling 50 mph over the speed limit when it jumped the track and plunged off an overpass south of Seattle Monday, killing at least three people, injuring dozens more and crushing two vehicles.

Bella Dinh-Zarr, a National Transportation Safety Board member, reported sever-

al hours after the crash that the data recorder in the rear locomotive showed the train was going 80 mph in a 30 mph zone when it derailed along a curve, spilling some of its cars onto I-5 below.

Dinh-Zarr said it is not yet known what caused the train to run off the rails and too early to say why it was going so fast. Investigators were looking into whether the engineer was distracted by the presence of

an employee-in-training in the locomotive, a federal official said Tuesday. In previous wrecks, investigators looked at whether the engineer was distracted or disabled.

The train, with 85 passengers and crew members, was making the inaugural run along a fast new bypass route that was created by refurbishing freight tracks alongside I-5. The 15-mile, \$180.7 million project was aimed at speeding up service by

bypassing a route with a number of curves, single-track tunnels and freight traffic.

Positive train control - technology that can automatically slow or stop a speeding train - wasn't in use on this stretch of track, according to Amtrak President Richard Anderson.

Regulators have pressing railroads for

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