

# NATF Redacted Operating Experience Report

## Vehicle Fire and Brake Loss While Driving

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## Topic

Vehicle Fire and Brake Loss While Driving

## Description

While driving a newly acquired work truck on the freeway at approximately 70 miles per hour, an employee noticed smoke entering the cab. In addition, instrument warning lamps were illuminated. The employee attempted to stop the vehicle, but the brakes failed.

To slow the vehicle, the employee maneuvered partially onto the freeway shoulder and attempted to shift the transmission into “park.” As black smoke filled the cab, the employee attempted to exit the moving vehicle using the driver-side door but stopped due to the presence of flames. Instead, the employee jumped from the moving vehicle through the passenger door, landing on a bush. The vehicle continued for a few hundred feet where it stopped and became completely engulfed in flames.

The vehicle was a truck with V10 gas engine, and the manufacturer unable to determine the cause. We have had no other issues with similar vehicles, nor could we find this type of problem outside our company. We may never know the actual cause of the fire as the vehicle had an all-aluminum body and was burned down to the frame rails.

We left the cause of the fire as “to be determined” at this point and focused our attention on the employee’s lack of knowledge on stopping a vehicle experiencing brake loss.

## Lessons Learned

1. Inadequate training and knowledge on stopping a vehicle experiencing a brake loss.

## Actions Taken

1. Created and posted a bulletin in the company newsletter describing how to stop a vehicle experiencing a brake loss. The newsletter is accessible to all employees and searchable through the company portal.

## Extent of Condition

Transmission and distribution employees drive all types, makes, and models of company vehicles that could experience a catastrophic brake failure.