

FE-2012-01

Person Interviewed: Phillip C. Dodson
Roadmaster Texas Division East
BNSF Railway

Place of Interview: BNSF Office Airpark Dr.
Amarillo, TX

Date of Interview: January 13, 2012

Interviewed by: George P. Rasco,
Railroad Safety Inspector/S&TC

Others Present:

In an interview regarding the employee fatality that occurred on January 9, 2012, on the BNSF tracks, Kansas Division, Hereford Subdivision near mile post 552.3, in Amarillo, Texas, Mr. Dodson stated in substance, the following:

Mr. Dodson began by stating that he is 52 years of age and resides in Vega, Texas. He has worked for the BNSF for 32 years and has been a roadmaster for the last 12 years.

Mr. Dodson stated that he and the welding supervisor had arrived at the Loram grinding machine between 7:30 AM and 8:00 AM on the morning of January 9, 2012. Because this was the first day the machine would be working on his territory they were going to do an equipment audit and safety briefing with the crew. The BNSF employee who acted as the pilot for the grinder was having problems with his truck and was running late. Once the BNSF employee arrived they performed a tool inventory of his vehicle. After the inventory was complete they entered the cab of the J-6 rail grinder and began a safety briefing with the crew. They discussed several safety issues such as watching for fires and safety at road crossings as well as safety before production. They also directed the crew that the main goal of the day was to move the machine from the Amarillo yard to the Red River Valley sub, near their work area. The briefing lasted for over an hour. After the briefing the welding supervisor and Mr. Dodson left the machine. They were planning to perform a stop test on the J-6 rail grinder while it was traveling to the work location. Mr. Dodson stated that while they were waiting for the machine, outside of the yard, they saw fire trucks, an ambulance and police vehicles moving towards the BNSF yard. They returned to the area of the yards where the machine was now located and saw the emergency vehicles. Once they had stopped the operator of the J-6 rail came straight to them. The operator was yelling that the BNSF employee had told him to back up. After calming the operator they went to the machine where they saw the emergency responders attempting to revive the BNSF employee. After a couple of minutes one of the EMT's stated he would not revive. They stayed at the site assisting in the investigation until late that afternoon.

#