



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations

August 18, 2015

Mr. David L. Freeman
Senior Vice President, Transportation
BNSF Railway
2600 Lou Menk Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76131

Dear Mr. Freeman,

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) acknowledges BNSF Railway's July 28, 2015, letter of clarification regarding the NTSB's Train Braking Study, dated July 20, 2015, related to electronically controlled brakes (ECP). The NTSB's study sought to document the stopping performance capability of generic train sets equipped with conventional, distributed power pneumatic (DP) and ECP brake systems. The NTSB study documented that the calculated results of demonstrated ECP brakes technology can reduce stopping distances, reduce kinetic energy and result in lower, more uniform in-train-forces, all of which can minimize accident severity.

Your letter offers a number of comments related to operational experience associated with the use of ECP brake technology. Enclosed with your letter are three exhibits: BNSF Comments to the NTSB's Train Braking Study, TTCI Modeling (an analysis performed in response to the PHMSA NPRM applied to the Casselton, ND derailment), and an Assessment of the Enhanced Braking Requirements in the Hazardous Materials Enhanced Tank Car Standards and Operational Controls for High-Hazard Flammable Trains Final Rule of May 1, 2015.

As a party to the Casselton, North Dakota, investigation, BNSF was encouraged to submit written proposed findings drawn from the evidence produced during the course of the investigation, a proposed probable cause, and/or proposed safety recommendations. Your letter and enclosed exhibits do not contain any of the aforementioned items. Nevertheless, we recognize the value of providing your letter along with the exhibits as information in the public docket. In doing so, the NTSB does not confirm or endorse the claims, accuracy or factual completeness of BNSF's statements in its letter and exhibits. The NTSB strives to accurately identify and report all relevant facts, conditions, and circumstances related to each accident or incident it investigates.

We appreciate BNSF's participation and continued support in this and future investigations.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Hall, PE
Director