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Date: 11-3-17

Witness: 

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

Investigation of: \*

\*

EMPLOYEE FATALITY \*

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD \* Accident No.: DCA17FR009

QUEENS VILLAGE, NEW YORK \*

JUNE 10, 2017 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: ERIC HALVORSEN

Long Island Rail Road Offices  
Jamaica, New York

Friday,  
September 15, 2017

## APPEARANCES:

JOE GORDON, Chairman, Track and Engineering Group  
National Transportation Safety Board

TOMAS TORRES, Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

DON WILSON  
Track and Engineering  
Federal Railroad Administration

GLENN GREENBERG, Deputy Chief Engineer  
Engineering Department  
Long Island Rail Road

MARTY SACCENTE, Accident Investigations Manager  
Engineering Department  
Long Island Rail Road

WILLIAM BATES, National Transportation Safety Team  
SMART

DOMINIC AMENDOLARE, Transportation Safety Team  
SMART

DON HILL, Safety Task Force  
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET)

ANTHONY LAVORATORE, President  
SMART Transportation Division Local 29  
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Halvorsen)

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. GORDON: Good afternoon. My name is Joe Gordon. I am  
3 the NTSB Track and Engineering Group chairman for this accident.  
4 We are here today on Friday, September 15th, at the Long Island  
5 Rail Road Office in Jamaica, New York to conduct an interview with  
6 Mr. Eric Halvorsen, who works for the Long Island Rail Road.

7 This interview is in conjunction with the NTSB investigation  
8 of the June 10th, 2017 accident where a westbound passenger train  
9 operated by Long Island Rail Road struck a roadway worker in  
10 Queens interlocking in Queens Village, New York. The NTSB  
11 accident reference number is DCA17FR009.

12 The purpose of this investigation is to increase safety, not  
13 to assign fault, blame or liability.

14 Before we begin our interview and questions, let's go around  
15 the table and introduce ourselves. Please spell your last name,  
16 who you are representing. I would like to remind everyone to  
17 speak clearly for the recording.

18 I'll start off, and then we'll pass it off to my right.  
19 Again, my name is Joe Gordon, G-o-r-d-o-n, the spelling of my last  
20 name, and I'm the NTSB Track and Engineering Group chairman.

21 MR. HALVORSEN: Eric Halvorsen, H-a-l-v-o-r-s-e-n, Track  
22 Foreman, Long Island Rail Road.

23 MR. LAVORATORE: Anthony Lavoratore, L-a-v-o-r-a-t-o-r-e,  
24 Local 29 President. Here to represent Eric Halvorsen.

25 MR. WILSON: Don Wilson, W-i-l-s-o-n, Federal Railroad

1 Administration, Acting Specialist Region 1.

2 MR. GREENBERG: Glenn Greenberg, G-r-e-e-n-b-e-r-g. I'm the  
3 deputy chief engineer of the Long Island Rail Road.

4 MR. BATES: William Bates, B-a-t-e-s, SMART National  
5 Transportation Safety Team.

6 MR. AMENDOLARE: Dominic Amendolare, A-m-e-n-d-o-l-a-r-e,  
7 SMART Transportation Safety Team.

8 MR. SACCENTE: Marty Saccente, Accident Investigations and  
9 Engineering, Corporate Safety, S-a-c-c-e-n-t-e.

10 MR. HILL: Don Hill, H-i-l-l, BLET Safety Taskforce.

11 MR. TORRES: Tomas Torres, T-o-m-a-s, T-o-r-r-e-s, NTSB.

12 MR. GORDON: Okay. Thank you. And is it okay during the  
13 interview if I call you Eric?

14 MR. HALVORSEN: Please.

15 MR. GORDON: All right. Thank you, sir. And we spoke about  
16 some of this before, but do we have your permission to record  
17 today's interview?

18 MR. HALVORSEN: Yes, you do.

19 MR. GORDON: Thank you, sir. And you understand that the  
20 transcript will be made part of the public docket and, as such, we  
21 can't guarantee any confidentiality?

22 MR. HALVORSEN: That's fine.

23 MR. GORDON: Okay. You do have a representative with you  
24 today?

25 MR. HALVORSEN: I do.

1 MR. LAVORATORE: Anthony Lavoratore, L-a-v-o-r-a-t-o-r-e.

2 MR. GORDON: Thank you.

3 INTERVIEW OF ERIC HALVORSEN

4 BY MR. GORDON:

5 Q. Okay, if we could just start off, Eric, if you would give us  
6 your background, kind of from the time you came to work for Long  
7 Island and your progression to the job that you're in now?

8 A. I was hired in 1996 as a trackman. I worked myself -- I made  
9 some rosters, made the foreman rosters in approximately 2004. And  
10 I've been working several jobs but, for the last 12 years,  
11 primarily as a foreman, and for the last 4 or 5 years as a switch  
12 inspection foreman in Division 2.

13 Q. Okay. So as a switch inspection foreman, is part of your  
14 responsibility Queens interlocking?

15 A. Yes, it is.

16 Q. Okay. So you're well familiar with the interlocking and the  
17 operation in there?

18 A. I am.

19 Q. We'll kind of focus on Queens interlocking. During your work  
20 doing switch inspections, what form of on-track safety do you use?

21 A. We use TAW, watchman lookouts, and foul time.

22 Q. Okay. And do you have a work group that's assigned with you?

23 A. I work with signal department, and they provide a watchman  
24 and the maintainers that do the actual switch inspection, cranking  
25 the switches, while I take my measurements.

1 Q. Oh, okay. Okay. So just so I understand, the signal  
2 department's out there, they're doing their work on the  
3 obstruction test and different things like that?

4 A. Right.

5 Q. You're looking at the switch from a track perspective to make  
6 sure everything is tight and where it needs to be?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Okay. All right. Well, thanks. So, on a normal day, if  
9 you're going out to Queens interlocking to work, just kind of talk  
10 to us about, you know, where you meet and kind of the progression  
11 to -- we've showed up for work there and, you know, what happens  
12 between then and when you're out on the track actually doing the  
13 work.

14 A. Okay. We meet at Queens Freight, where the signal department  
15 has their headquarters for their maintainers. Depending on what  
16 switches we have assigned for that day, we may drive to that  
17 switch, to that area and get out. The maintainer that I work with  
18 on a regular basis provides the job briefings. We take care of  
19 our job briefings and, you know, talk about what we're going to  
20 do. We'll get up into position. He calls the tower, gets the  
21 time, because we have to have foul time to be able to obstruct a  
22 switch, of course, so we were taking it. And we do the work that  
23 we have to do.

24 Q. Okay. So in that role, the way you described that, would the  
25 signal maintainer be working as the roadway worker in charge?



1 A. He is.

2 Q. Okay. Okay. So, is that work always done with foul time  
3 when you're working in the interlocking, understanding that if  
4 you're throwing a switch, but do you ever work in the Queens  
5 interlocking where you wouldn't have foul time?

6 A. Work? You know, you have to, I guess, define what you mean  
7 by work. I mean, if we're walking from one switch to another, we  
8 walk under flag protection. But when we're actually doing the  
9 work that we're doing, they're doing -- I guess, they use foul  
10 time because they are taking control of the switch. If we are,  
11 say, waiting for that foul time, I may still be looking at certain  
12 things that I have to be -- I'm responsible for, with flag  
13 protection.

14 Q. Okay. Okay. All right. That helps us understand that. So  
15 when you're using flag protection, train approach warning, kind of  
16 talk to us a little bit about the notification that you would get,  
17 and then what you would do. After the flagman notifies you of an  
18 approach of a train, what happens after that?

19 A. Yeah, we clear out to whatever, you know, we determined.  
20 Because the switches are, you know, on north and south side,  
21 whatever, you know, and depending on which track the train is  
22 coming on, we'll, you know, we'll clear out to the best, closest  
23 place of safety.

24 Q. Okay. And is that place of safety -- when you say clear out,  
25 are you clearing out to the field side of the tracks?

1 A. We generally do. It's not always. If the train -- if we're  
2 on, you know, the track on, say, like main line 3, which is on the  
3 north side, and the trains come on main line 4, which is three  
4 tracks over on the south side, we may -- I may continue looking at  
5 it, you know, with my TAW.

6 Q. Okay. So that train's passing on the far side over. It's  
7 not obstructing the view of your watchman?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. And so you'll continue to work under watchman lookout. Okay.

10 A. Correct.

11 MR. GORDON: I think that's all I have for right now. I'm  
12 going to pass it around the table. Nothing?

13 BY MR. GREENBERG:

14 Q. Eric, I had a question. One reason that I'm glad that you're  
15 here today, because I know that you, like I said, work in Queens  
16 in a situation where they need foul time because of the work the  
17 signal guys are doing, like the obstruction tests and stuff. It's  
18 been stated by a number of people, including your supervisors,  
19 that it is difficult to get foul time in Queens. Is that your  
20 experience with working with the switch inspection?

21 A. Not necessarily with switch inspection. You know, I've  
22 worked with the maintainers a lot. The towers understand what  
23 we're doing. It's FRA-mandated testing, so they understand that  
24 it has to get done. You know, we work with them. If they've got  
25 trains on the approach, you know, we do what we can to not slow

1 down trains. And they generally work with us pretty well. But  
2 that's my experience as working with signal, doing the switch  
3 inspection.

4 Q. Is that typical of the other interlockings that you work in,  
5 as well, Valley, Jay, Hall -- well, you don't work Jay and Hall,  
6 but you do Valley, right?

7 A. I have done Jay and Hall, but yeah, I mean, it's been my  
8 experience with doing switch inspection that they work with --  
9 signal maintainers generally have a rapport with the block  
10 operators. They know what we're out there doing, you know, to  
11 where we're not going to, you know, do anything that's going to  
12 affect OTP, and they understand that.

13 MR. GREENBERG: Thank you.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

16 BY MR. HILL:

17 Q. Don Hill, BLET. Just a couple questions. You said the term  
18 TAW. Would you, for the record, explain what that is?

19 A. Train approach warning.

20 Q. I'm sorry. Say that again. Train --

21 A. Train approach warning.

22 Q. Okay. And you stated you worked as a foreman and a switch  
23 inspection foreman, correct?

24 A. Correct. Which is the same thing, essentially.

25 Q. So you said that's the same thing, essentially?

1 A. Yeah, well, I'm a track foreman and one of the job  
2 designations as a track foreman is switch inspection, doing switch  
3 inspection. There's no special qualification other than being a  
4 track-qualified foreman.

5 Q. So do you primarily work with the signal department?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Have you worked with the track department outside of the  
8 signal department as a foreman?

9 A. Oh, yes. Yes.

10 Q. When you've worked as a foreman outside of the -- exclusively  
11 with the track department, have you experienced any problems  
12 getting foul time?

13 A. It's been a while since I've done it. I can't think of any  
14 specific times where -- you know, I can't give you a specific  
15 time. There are instances where I have had -- looked to get foul  
16 time and you get a lot of questions that you don't understand why.  
17 I mean, I'm not -- you know, what do you need to do? Not that --  
18 you know, I'm not going to get foul time if, you know, I'm just  
19 out there trying to slow a train down. There's going to be a  
20 reason. If it's a cracked bar, I've got to take the, you know,  
21 take the bar off, which basically creates a pull apart to put a  
22 new bar on.

23 You know, I don't know that the -- you know, I don't know  
24 what transportation's responsibilities are for documentation  
25 purposes, possibly, but they have gotten, I think, better over the

1 years understanding, you know, that we're out there just trying to  
2 do what we have to do.

3 Q. Thanks. Are you qualified as a watchman as well?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And your duties as a watchman, or the duties of a watchman is  
6 you use the flag to point which direction to clear?

7 A. Yeah, that's the procedure of a watchman, is to point in the  
8 direction of which to clear.

9 MR. HILL: Okay, that's all I have. Thank you.

10 BY MR. TORRES:

11 Q. Okay. Tomas Torres with NTSB. So you're familiar with  
12 Queens interlocking, correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. What can you tell us about that interlocking? Is there any  
15 specific challenges to it?

16 A. No, I mean, Queens interlocking, I don't feel, is  
17 particularly -- you've got good sight in both direction primarily.  
18 If you go down to the east end, there's a little bit of a rise as  
19 you're coming through Queens Station. You know, trains, you can't  
20 see them, but you can see them in plenty of time to clear no  
21 matter where you are working. But, you know, you can see, like,  
22 both directions really well. There's plenty of room to clear, you  
23 know, north and south of the interlocking, so there's no, like,  
24 close clearing spots, tight spots, you know. It's not elevated  
25 like in a bridge where you have nowhere to clear.

1 Q. And does that apply, too, if you're working on the inside  
2 tracks, or I mean --

3 A. Yes. I mean, you may have to step over the third rail, a  
4 couple third rails and cross tracks, but you generally have good  
5 enough sight distance where you can see and you have time.

6 Q. And you have the time to go out to the field side?

7 A. Sure.

8 Q. So how do you determine what method of protection you use? I  
9 know you explained that earlier but, you know, when you're out  
10 there, how do you assess the situation?

11 A. Well, our method of protection is train approach warning for  
12 working in there. Now, if we get with signal and they have to  
13 crank open switches and do obstruction tests, they are taking  
14 control of the switch from the tower, so they have to get  
15 permission, get time. We call it foul time. I'm not sure if  
16 that's exactly what it is, but, you know, it's time to do the test  
17 on the switch. And, you know, that's going to cause signals to go  
18 down and stuff for the approaching trains, so --

19 Q. So when you make a decision to have a watchman lookout for  
20 protection, do you have a job briefing?

21 A. Oh, yeah, we have a job briefing. We always have the  
22 watchman lookout.

23 Q. Yeah. Can you explain to us how you do that when you make  
24 the decision you're going to have watchman lookout protection?

25 A. Well, when we meet, we get to the area of the interlocking

1 that we're working in, you know, we do our job briefing. We have  
2 a watchman lookout assigned, and that's what he does until we're  
3 done doing the test that we do. He stays out there. He watches  
4 for us the entire time.

5 Q. But when do you decide you're going to step away, like the  
6 predetermined safe zone?

7 A. As soon as we see headlights and we have -- we give the tower  
8 back control of the switch, we give up our foul time. You know,  
9 we'll see a train approaching. Generally, they'll give us a  
10 certain amount of time. They'll say, okay, you've got the switch  
11 for 5 minutes. But before the 5 minutes is up, we'll give the  
12 time back. When we see the train on the approach, the watchman  
13 will blow the horn and we'll clear to our designated spot.

14 Q. So you make the designation prior to being on the track, or  
15 is it something that's continuously changing?

16 A. That, for us, can change because of the nature of switching.  
17 And then, you know, the fact that there's four tracks at Queens  
18 interlocking, we will clear to the -- if it's a westbound train on  
19 Track 3 and he's coming through Floral Park and we're going to  
20 clear out, we'll clear to the south side because we're not -- you  
21 know, so we're not crossing in front of an oncoming train. We'll  
22 cross to the opposite side, you know, if we're in a center track.

23 Q. So do you ever use a live track?

24 A. No. No.

25 Q. No? Does anybody come out to see how you're doing out there,

1 see how -- if you're employing the right protection?

2 A. We've had system safety come out and observe us and watch  
3 what we were doing. I think the last time was around Thanksgiving  
4 of last year.

5 Q. So last year is the last time they came out and --

6 A. The last time I seen them.

7 Q. That you seen them. Do they give you feedback? I mean,  
8 like, other than --

9 A. Yeah. The gentleman that came out knew the maintainers. I  
10 believe he was previously with the maintainers. And he came out  
11 and, you know, talked to them, talked to us, you know, told us we  
12 were doing the right thing.

13 MR. TORRES: Thank you.

14 I'll pass it on to Joe.

15 MR. GORDON: Thank you.

16 BY MR. GORDON:

17 Q. You're doing good. Do you need a break or anything?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Or you can push on through. So you've got a lot of  
20 experience, a lot of time out there, over 20 years, right? So  
21 your understanding -- I mean, I appreciate you telling us about  
22 how you guys do your work. And, you know, of course, the work,  
23 when they're checking switches, it's going to affect the signal  
24 system and, therefore, foul time is a necessity.

25 How often do the -- and, you know, this is nothing we're



1 holding you to, hours or anything like that, but how often do you  
2 see the track -- you know, the other work groups out there working  
3 in Queens interlocking when you're in the area?

4 A. I mean, I see them when they're out there. You know, how  
5 often is it? I couldn't really speculate.

6 Q. I mean, is it normal for them to be out there when you're  
7 doing your work to have a --

8 A. The local track gang, the track gang that is local to Queens,  
9 because their shanty's right there, I mean, they work all over the  
10 place, so it's not like, you know -- I don't know what they're  
11 doing from a day-to-day basis. I know they cover a large area.  
12 They cover Hempstead. They could be, you know, in a lot of  
13 different places.

14 Q. Okay. And you've worked the role as both a switch inspection  
15 foreman and a foreman where you were working as the roadway worker  
16 in charge?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Knowing the nature of the work, do you feel like that  
19 sometimes train approach warning is used because it's an easier  
20 thing to do, you don't have to -- like in the job that you're in  
21 now, you have to -- your gang has to talk to the tower operator,  
22 you're in constant communication. If he tells you you've got 5  
23 minutes, there's a pretty good understanding that in 5 minutes, or  
24 shortly after that, there's going to be a train coming through  
25 because that's the reason that he's given you the amount of time

1 that he has.

2 A. Right.

3 Q. A roadway worker, just a gang foreman, does he have that same  
4 conversation with the tower operator before he goes out?

5 A. I can't speak for, you know, other gangs and how they  
6 operate. You know, I only know what I did, what I like -- you  
7 know, the way I liked to work when I did it, had a gang out there.  
8 Train approach warning was the method of operation that we  
9 employed unless you were going to do something to the track to  
10 make it unsafe, and then you had to do -- you know, go farther.  
11 You know, you have to do a foul time, whatever it is, like I say,  
12 to change a bar.

13 Q. Right. Okay. Would there ever be a time when you would use  
14 train approach warning through the station where you couldn't --

15 A. Absolutely. If there was nowhere to clear, you know, that we  
16 came across that, you know, on a regular occasion where we were  
17 working through a station and there was -- you know, maybe there's  
18 nowhere to clear, under the platforms you had solid -- you know,  
19 you had to get foul time to be able to do what we needed.

20 MR. GORDON: Okay. All right. Thank you.

21 I'll look around the table one more time.

22 MR. GREENBERG: I've got (indiscernible) --

23 MR. GORDON: Okay.

24 BY MR. GREENBERG:

25 Q. Just to clarify then, so even when you guys have time, and I

1 know the distinction there, and you're on, say, main line 1 with  
2 time on, say, 131-E, or something like that, your watchman will  
3 still give you warning that you've got railroad, right?

4 A. Absolutely.

5 Q. And the direction, but will just tell you -- knowing, because  
6 he's obviously right with you, that you have time, will just tell  
7 you to stay right where you are, correct?

8 A. Right, and to just don't step out.

9 Q. Yes. Watch it, I got a westbound on 3 or on 2?

10 A. Exactly. He'll all out what train, what track it's on, and  
11 he'll, you know, monitor it to make sure it doesn't change. In  
12 that situation, you know, if he's coming down into the  
13 interlocking, he'll watch, you know, like the Hempstead or  
14 something. Of course, a Hempstead train is going to cross over  
15 131, but --

16 Q. Yeah, I know. Right. Just use that as an example.

17 A. Yeah. But yeah, I mean, he keeps an eye out and makes sure  
18 that, you know -- not dragging something, nobody steps out.

19 Q. And the key thing is just to advise you guys that, hey, we  
20 got railroad, just stay where you are?

21 A. Exactly. Exactly.

22 Q. Don't step out.

23 A. Exactly. You know, you don't want somebody to all of a  
24 sudden say, oh, I need a tool and step across the tracks. So,  
25 yeah, he makes sure everybody -- they always call out there's a

1 train coming, stay where you are.

2 Q. So then you're essentially using two forms of protection,  
3 basically, right?

4 A. Yeah. Well, yes. When you've got foul time and TAW you  
5 don't need -- you have two forms.

6 MR. GREENBERG: Thank you. I just wanted to verify that.

7 BY MR. BATES:

8 Q. You know, Queens interlocking is one type of interlock and,  
9 in earlier testimony, 15 seconds. When you have that type of  
10 interlocking, in your experience, do you think 15 seconds is long  
11 enough or do you need --

12 A. Well, the 15-second rule is you have to be in the clear 15  
13 seconds before the train arrives at where you are. I mean, yeah,  
14 I think that is sufficient.

15 You know, like I said, I can only speak for what I do, you  
16 know, and with the signal department, we always have time on a  
17 switch. You know, other interlockings that I do work in, you  
18 know, like Valley, there's curves on the end, there's  
19 obstructions, stations, tower, so we keep our foul time until we  
20 are in the clear and then we give the foul time back. So, you  
21 know, it gives us that much more -- you know, a little more  
22 protection just to get in. Sometimes, you know, we've got to  
23 cross a bridge, so we get the foul time on the interlocking on the  
24 switches so they can't, you know, run within there.

25 MR. BATES: Thank you.

1 BY MR. HILL:

2 Q. Don Hill, H-i-l-l. Just a couple clarity questions on the  
3 15-second rule. Thanks for clearing it up, because you said you  
4 need to be clear prior to the train reaching your location; that's  
5 correct?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. Is that something that's written in any book, rulebook or  
8 anything?

9 A. Yes, I'm sure it is. I couldn't tell you where. I know I  
10 just had RWIC class last week and, you know, it's also reinforced  
11 every time you go through the RWIC, RWP, you know, and they give  
12 you demonstrations exactly for that.

13 Q. And for the record, you have RWIC classes annually?

14 A. Annually, yes.

15 Q. And that's something that's stressed in class --

16 A. Oh, absolutely, yes.

17 Q. -- to make sure you comply with that rule?

18 A. Absolutely. They go over many scenarios as to, you know,  
19 situations and how to clear, where to clear, how to set up your  
20 watch protection.

21 MR. HILL: Thank you, sir. Thank you.

22 BY MR. TORRES:

23 Q. Okay, Tomas Torres. What are your regular hours?

24 A. 7:30 to 3:30.

25 Q. Do you work a lot of overtime?

1 A. Me, no. My wife works. I got kids that are getting bigger,  
2 but --

3 Q. How about the men you supervise, do you know their hours?

4 A. I actually don't have anybody that reports directly to me  
5 right now.

6 Q. Okay. One standard question: What's your education?

7 A. High school diploma.

8 Q. And what kind of continuous training you have here for the  
9 Long Island Rail Road?

10 A. RWIC, RWP, CW -- RWP, roadway protection, right to know,  
11 continuous welded rail. Is there more? I mean, I can't even  
12 think. We're getting a lot of training. Training, it seems like  
13 it gets more and more --

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Operating rules.

15 MR. HALVORSEN: Oh, yeah, and, you know, I got my periodical  
16 book of rules and, you know, signal, because I'm a track car pilot  
17 as well.

18 BY MR. TORRES:

19 Q. Yeah, what's that? Right to know, what is that?

20 A. That's like workplace hazards and things like that, kind of  
21 like a general workplace hazard thing.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Slips, trips and falls.

23 MR. HALVORSEN: Chemical exposures. Right, slips, trips and  
24 falls. You know, don't work under, you know, painters on a  
25 ladder. You know, stuff like that. That's kind of, I think, a

1 generic type workplace safety thing. It's not specific to the  
2 railroad.

3 MR. TORRES: Thank you.

4 BY MR. GORDON:

5 Q. Okay. So you said you just recently went through the roadway  
6 worker training. Your understanding just coming out of that  
7 training, is it prohibited on Long Island Rail Road property to  
8 remain in a live track using train approach warning? That's not a  
9 trick question. What's your understanding?

10 A. Yeah. I mean, I'm trying to think. I would say that it's  
11 not as long as you have -- the track that you're in, you still are  
12 maintaining the protection, you know, your TAW, your train  
13 approach warning with you as you're in that track, and you do  
14 have, you know, a place to clear, a pre whatever.

15 Q. Predetermined place of safety?

16 A. Predetermined place of safety available to you in a  
17 sufficient time if you get a train on that track.

18 Q. Okay. And, of course, your situation would be different. I  
19 fully understand if you're working in a switch and there's foul  
20 time in that switch and train approach warning is just your extra  
21 layer of protection, you would be okay to stay in that track --

22 A. Right.

23 Q. -- as you and Glenn discussed. But if you were just -- if  
24 they're just using train approach warning, no foul time involved,  
25 say, they're working on one of the inside tracks and a train

1 passes on the outside track, is that something that it would be  
2 okay for them to stay in that inside track?

3 A. I say I believe it is as long as you can -- the train that's  
4 passing is not obstructing your view to the track that you're in  
5 or, you know, the tracks between you and your predetermined place  
6 of safety.

7 Q. Okay. And do you remember, following the June 10th accident,  
8 do you remember any discussion or focus on that point from Long  
9 Island Rail Road?

10 A. Specifically no. We do have the RWP and RWIC classes  
11 annually. It's covered pretty extensively during that time, and  
12 we have the opportunity to ask any questions.

13 MR. GORDON: Okay. Thank you.

14 I'm going to look around the room and see if we have any  
15 other questions.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, maybe just one.

17 MR. GORDON: Okay.

18 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

19 Q. You asked the one, so I only have one left. It's not  
20 really -- it's more just because I'm not familiar with the  
21 operating rules of your railroad, because believe it or not,  
22 different railroads are different, you know. And so, when you get  
23 foul time inside of an interlocking in Queens, let's be specific,  
24 in Queens, does that come from the Queens tower actually after  
25 they talk to the dispatcher or does that actually come from the



1 dispatcher?

2 A. I'm not in the tower. I'm not sure. The way I understand,  
3 they have to go through the dispatcher anytime they give out foul  
4 time.

5 Q. Okay. But it is the tower you get it from or the signal  
6 department?

7 A. Right.

8 Q. It is the tower?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. That's who he's speaking to is the operator. Queens tower, I  
12 believe, is a -- not train dispatch -- train director.

13 Q. Yeah, right. Yeah. Yeah, most of the territories I have  
14 doesn't have that setup, so I'm not familiar with it. That's why  
15 I was asking.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Thank you.

18 MR. GORDON: Around the room, it looks like we don't have any  
19 further questions.

20 Eric, thanks for coming in and talking to us. I do like to  
21 always give the people that we identify to come in and talk to us  
22 an opportunity to share anything with us, you know, if there's  
23 anything that -- safety improvements or anything that concerns you  
24 with the work that you do out there on the track. Nobody knows  
25 the work that you do, you know, better than you guys that are out

1 there with your boots on the ground every day. If you have  
2 anything to add for the record?

3 MR. HALVORSEN: No, just, you know, I appreciate, the work  
4 that you do, too, as well, and, you know, looking out for guys  
5 like us and, you know, the safety of railroaders everywhere.

6 MR. GORDON: Yeah, I know, you know, the guys in this room,  
7 working, you know, on this investigation with them, they want to  
8 see everybody go home at the end of the day.

9 MR. HALVORSEN: Absolutely.

10 MR. GORDON: That's the name of the game. So we appreciate  
11 you coming in. I will provide contact information to you. I've  
12 got your contact information. I would like to ask, when we're  
13 going back and reviewing this, if any other questions -- you know,  
14 something we may have missed, if it would be okay for me to reach  
15 out and follow up with you?

16 MR. HALVORSEN: Yes.

17 MR. GORDON: Okay. Thank you. And with that, we will go off  
18 the record.

19 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

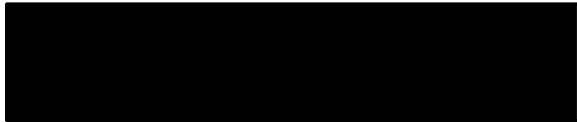
IN THE MATTER OF:           EMPLOYEE FATALITY  
                                  LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD  
                                  QUEENS VILLAGE, NEW YORK  
                                  JUNE 10, 2017  
                                  Interview of Eric Halvorsen

ACCIDENT NO.:               DCA17FR009

PLACE:                        Jamaica, New York

DATE:                         September 15, 2017

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed  
to the best of my skill and ability.

  
Lisa Fuerstenberg  
Transcriber  
