

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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RAIL WORKER FATALITY, *
ESTILL, SOUTH CAROLINA, *
NOVEMBER 30, 2018 *

Accident No.: RRD19FR002

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Interview of: RANDALL LONG

Estill, South Carolina

Saturday

December 1, 2018

APPEARANCES:

TOMAS TORRES, Rail Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ROBERT "JOE" GORDON, Technical Working Group Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL HOEPF, Ph.D., Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

NATHAN WOLFE, Operating Practices Inspector
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STEVE AMMONS, System Road Foreman, Safety
CSX Transportation

MATTHEW MEADOWS, Senior Director of Safety
CSX Transportation

MATT CAMPBELL, Safety Team
SMART Transportation Division

ROY MORRISON, Director of Safety
Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division
International Brotherhood of Teamsters (BMWED-IBT)

RANDY DUMEY, Safety Task Force
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET)

RUSSELL FARMER, Union Representative
(On behalf of Mr. Long)

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. TORRES: My name is Tomas Torres, T-O-M-A-S, T-O-R-R-E-S.
3 Today's date is December 1, 2018. We are at Estill, South
4 Carolina, interviewing a welder helper in connection an accident
5 that occurred here at Estill, South Carolina on November 30th.
6 The NTSB accident number is RRD19FR002.

7 The purpose of the investigation is to increase safety, not
8 to assign fault, blame or liability. NTSB cannot offer any
9 guarantee of confidentiality or immunity from legal or certificate
10 actions. A transcript or summary of the interview will go in the
11 public docket.

12 The interviewee can have one representative of the
13 interviewee's choice. Do you have somebody?

14 MR. LONG: Yes, sir.

15 MR. TORRES: Okay. Do you understand that this interview is
16 being recorded?

17 MR. LONG: Yes, sir.

18 MR. TORRES: Okay. Please state your name and spell it.

19 MR. LONG: Randall Long, R-A-N-D-A-L-L, L-O-N-G.

20 MR. TORRES: Okay. And your representative?

21 MR. FARMER: Russell Farmer, R-U-S-S-E-L-L, F-A-R-M-E-R, and
22 I'm his union representative.

23 MR. GORDON: I'm Joe Gordon. I'm the track and engineering
24 and roadway worker protection; I'll be looking at those aspects of
25 the accident. G-O-R-D-O-N. I'm sorry.

1 MR. AMMONS: Steve Ammons, A-M-M-O-N-S, CXS, safety
2 department.

3 MR. MEADOWS: Matt Meadows, CSX, M-E-A-D-O-W-S.

4 DR. HOEPF: Mike Hoepf. That's H-O-E-P-F, with the NTSB.

5 MR. CAMPBELL: Matt Campbell, SMART Transportation Division,
6 C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L.

7 MR. MORRISON: Roy Morrison, BMWED. My last name is
8 M-O-R-R-I-S-O-N.

9 MR. DUMEY: Randy Dumey, R-A-N-D-Y, D-U-M-E-Y, BLET
10 spokesman.

11 MR. WOLFE: Nathan Wolfe, FRA. Spelled W-O-L-F-E.

12 INTERVIEW OF RANDALL LONG

13 BY MR. TORRES:

14 Q. Okay. Randall, you go by Randall?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. Okay. Randall, on the day of the incident, yesterday, can
17 you describe your day, like when you went on duty, what took place
18 leading up?

19 A. Well, we left the office, stopped and got fuel. Come down to
20 Estill, got beside the track, talked about what we were going to
21 do, got everything ready, got out, started working. I was
22 watching. He started grinding, ground everything out. And he
23 started welding, and then a train came through. I stopped him.
24 We both got out the way, split the train; they went by. He went
25 back to work and finished up welding. Got his grinder, started

1 grinding, and had been grinding a while. And he -- after he
2 ground for a while, he looked at me and said, we're done, start
3 rolling up the leads. And at that time, I turned around and was
4 facing the truck, rolling up the leads on the side. And something
5 caught my eye --

6 Q. Take your time or we can take a break.

7 A. And when I turned around, he was in the track, and it hit
8 him. And when the train passed by, I walked down there, and I
9 could tell he was dead. And I called David, and just everything
10 kind of went to a blur for a while. And everybody showed up.
11 Then I left with Walter Wright to go take my drug test, and then
12 he took me home.

13 Q. Okay. So what time did you report to, you know, on duty?

14 A. To the office?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Seven.

17 Q. So when you reported on there, can you describe what took
18 place, you know, who did you talk to, what was discussed?

19 A. Well, we went in, sat down. David, we had our job briefing,
20 and he told me I was going with the welder, and that was pretty
21 much it. We got up, went out, got in the truck, left.

22 Q. And do you recall what that job briefing consisted of?

23 A. I mean, he just basically told everybody what they were going
24 to do that day, what section they're going to do, what the welders
25 were going to do, and then that's -- that's about all that

1 happened.

2 Q. And this is a roadmaster?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. So he assigned everybody duties --

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. -- what they were supposed to do?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. And he assigned you to go --

9 A. With the welder.

10 Q. -- with the welder?

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. And what's usually your duties?

13 A. I'm usually a trackman on the section.

14 Q. And so on that day they asked you to help the welder?

15 A. Right.

16 Q. Okay. So once they assign you that job, then you traveled

17 -- I mean, did you know exactly what you guys were going to do?

18 A. Well, I knew we were welding on the frog.

19 Q. Okay. Did you know the specific location?

20 A. I knew Estill. I didn't -- well, he had on the list Estill,

21 and if we finished out in time, Fairfax.

22 Q. Okay. So once you arrived to the worksite, can you describe

23 what happened; what interaction was between you and your co-

24 worker?

25 A. He told me that we were going to weld this frog and, you

1 know, that we got him -- we was going to use watchman/lookout. We
2 got out, got everything ready, got everything set up, and then he
3 started grinding.

4 Q. So when they assigned you to this job yesterday, what was
5 your role? What was it supposed to be?

6 A. To assist the welder.

7 Q. Yeah. I mean --

8 A. I mean --

9 Q. And so between you two guys you discussed that you would be
10 the watchman/lookout?

11 A. Right.

12 Q. And can you explain to us what that is?

13 A. I mean, you basically watch out for him, make sure nothing's
14 coming.

15 Q. So once you get the equipment onto the track, he starts
16 welding?

17 A. No, sir. He had to grind first.

18 Q. Oh, grind. And so how long was he doing this? I mean, how
19 long were you guys there? How long were you at the site?

20 A. I don't know. We probably got there at approximately 8,
21 8-ish.

22 Q. So you were there for a couple hours. And so he was on there
23 grinding first?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And do you recall how many trains went through there while

1 you guys were working?

2 A. One went through, and then the one that struck him.

3 Q. So on the first one, how did you guys get out of the track?

4 A. I seen it coming. I went up; I said, John, you got a train
5 coming. And he got out the track, put the grinder down, and then
6 stepped over the track to the other side, and we split the train
7 as it was coming through.

8 Q. Oh, you mean split the train, you inspected it from one
9 side --

10 A. One on one side; one on the other.

11 Q. So when you communicated with him to get out of the track,
12 was it verbally? I mean, or did you go over there?

13 A. Yes. Yes, verbally.

14 Q. I mean, how far were you from him at that time?

15 A. Five foot, 6 foot.

16 Q. Pretty close? So that train went by, and then you guys
17 continued working on there?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. And what was it you guys -- still grinding?

20 A. I think he had a little grinding left, and then he started
21 welding on the frog.

22 Q. And so between trains, do you recall how much time elapsed?

23 A. Not really. I couldn't even give you an estimate. I really
24 don't know how long it was between one and the other.

25 Q. So when the second train arrived, explain to us where you

1 were at and what were you doing.

2 A. He had told me that we were done, to roll up the welding
3 leads, and I turned around and was facing the truck rolling up the
4 leads on the side of the truck, and that's where I was standing.
5 And I -- something caught the side of my eye, and when I turned
6 around, he was still in the track.

7 Q. Did you hear the train approaching?

8 A. No, sir.

9 Q. Didn't hear a horn, bell?

10 A. No, sir.

11 Q. Were you guys wearing ear protection?

12 A. No, sir. I was standing right beside the welder, which was
13 running on the side of the truck.

14 Q. And was the welder, was he wearing ear protection?

15 A. He had in Bluetooth earbuds, or I know for a fact he had one
16 in. I don't know if both were in or not.

17 Q. But he had at least one in one ear?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. Was that for a cell phone or was it for hearing protection?

20 A. I don't know what he -- I mean, I don't know what his
21 intended use was, but I know he had one, at least one in his ear.

22 Q. So you never saw a headlight?

23 A. No, sir. I was facing at the truck.

24 Q. Okay. And you were, again, doing what when you're facing the
25 truck?

- 1 A. Rolling up the welding leads.
- 2 Q. The cables?
- 3 A. Yeah. The leads that --
- 4 Q. The cables?
- 5 A. -- go to the welding box.
- 6 Q. Okay. And on the equipment like the grinder or welder, you
- 7 know, what's the sound level? I mean, does it --
- 8 A. I mean, the grinder and the welder are both pretty moderate.
- 9 I mean, it's not super loud.
- 10 Q. And you're not required to wear ear protection while using
- 11 the equipment?
- 12 A. I mean, I don't -- I think he's supposed to if it's loud
- 13 equipment.
- 14 Q. Um-hum. And what were you guys wearing? I mean, were you
- 15 required to wear a vest or --
- 16 A. I had on a full shirt that was yellow with reflective.
- 17 Q. And the welder, what was he wearing?
- 18 A. While he was welding, he had on a yellow jacket, welding
- 19 jacket. But he removed his jacket once he was done welding and he
- 20 just had on a black T-shirt.
- 21 Q. And is that jacket like florescent like a safety vest or --
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. And what color is that again?
- 24 A. Yellow.
- 25 Q. Yellow. Like that yellow?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. And you say you never heard a train approaching?

3 A. No, sir.

4 Q. Didn't hear a horn?

5 A. No, sir.

6 MR. TORRES: Okay. At this time, I'm going to pass it on to
7 Mr. Gordon.

8 BY MR. GORDON:

9 Q. Thank you, Randall. You doing good? You need a break or
10 anything?

11 A. No.

12 Q. All right.

13 A. I'm okay.

14 Q. Work history. Let's go back to when you hired out, and just
15 kind of tell us about what you've done, what different jobs, and
16 give us a progression there.

17 A. I was hired January 2015. I was hired in Charleston, South
18 Carolina. I worked there probably close to a year, and then I was
19 rolled from Charleston. I went on to a extra team putting in
20 ties. I was rolled from there, and I went on to T5, which is the
21 system tie gang. And when I was there, I started off feeding
22 spikes for the spiker. And then I went over to the plate room,
23 and then back to the spiker. And then whenever the gangs cut off,
24 I had no way to hold, so I was off for -- right at a month. And
25 then I was brought back to work, working in Florence on the

1 section. Then I left Florence, bid back to Charleston, and then
2 left Charleston. Or, actually, I got rolled from Charleston, and
3 went to Yemassee and been there since.

4 Q. Okay. So as far as working with a basic force or a section,
5 how many of your months or years on the railroad have you spent
6 with the basic force?

7 A. I mean, other than when I went to the extra gang doing ties
8 and on a big gang, I've always been on the section.

9 Q. On the section. Okay. And on a -- working on the section,
10 were you assigned as a watchman very often? Did you --

11 A. We very -- we don't really use watchman often.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Because there's -- I mean, there's not a lot we can do under,
14 you know, a watchman.

15 Q. Okay. So you're typically working with the track section out
16 making repairs --

17 A. Right.

18 Q. -- and so you're not normally using the train approach
19 warning or watchman/lookout? So can you talk to us a little bit
20 about your training with train approach warning? Just, you know,
21 if you had to walk somebody that was new to watchman/lookout as a
22 form of on-track safety, if you -- can you just walk us through
23 kind of what the -- you know, what you need to know in order to be
24 a watchman?

25 A. I mean, basically, I mean, you got sight distance, and

1 basically your lone job is to make sure he's out of the track
2 before you do anything else.

3 Q. So you mentioned sight distance. What -- when you got there
4 to the location where you were welding on the frog yesterday, was
5 there a discussion about the sight distance about anything having
6 to do with the sight distance or clearing time or anything like
7 that?

8 A. No, sir.

9 Q. Okay. And had you worked with the welder before? Had --

10 A. Yes, sir. I've done it a few times.

11 Q. Okay. How many times would you say probably, if you had to
12 guess? I'm not holding you to it, but --

13 A. I don't know, maybe six or eight.

14 Q. And every time you worked with the welder, you were assigned
15 as a welder helper, and then did he -- did you always use
16 watchman/lookout or were there times that you --

17 A. No, sir. Most of the time, you know, it's an EC-1 dropping
18 welds.

19 Q. Okay. Had you ever been out welding a frog or switch point
20 with him before?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Then train approach warning those times?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. Are you able to get track time? Are you qualified in
25 the system?

1 A. No, sir.

2 Q. So the welder is -- he is qualified to get track time?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. And did he attempt to get track time that morning, talk to
5 the dispatcher or anything?

6 A. No, sir.

7 MR. GORDON: Okay. I'm going to pass it on to Mr. Ammons.

8 MR. AMMONS: Thank you. Steve Ammons, A-M-M-O-N-S, CSX
9 Safety.

10 BY MR. AMMONS:

11 Q. Mr. Long, are you qualified as an employee in charge?

12 A. No, sir.

13 Q. What type of training have you had this year, safety
14 training?

15 A. Earlier in the year, I think we had on-track worker,
16 environmental, and I think FRA. We were actually scheduled to
17 have class Monday for on-track worker, environmental, and I think
18 FRA again for the fourth quarter, this coming Monday.

19 Q. Have you been trained on watchman/lookout?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. When was the last training you attended for that?

22 A. I can't remember.

23 Q. Don't remember. Was it this year or was it annual training?

24 A. I think it was at the end of the year.

25 Q. End of the year?

1 A. I think so.

2 Q. Okay. When you and Mr. Youmans, you got your job briefing
3 that morning from the roadmaster, and he assigned -- the
4 roadmaster assigned you to be with Mr. Youmans, correct?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. And to go to Estill and if you had time, I think you said to
7 go to Fairfax afterwards?

8 A. Fairfax.

9 Q. When you guys arrived or prior to arriving, did you guys talk
10 about what type of protection you were going to use? And, if so,
11 who made that decision?

12 A. I mean, when we got there, he just basically said we're going
13 to do it under watchman. I don't think it's going to take us very
14 long, and that's --

15 Q. Was that a mutual decision or was that his suggestion or
16 yours or --

17 A. I mean, I guess -- really, I guess, it was his suggestion. I
18 just -- he was in charge.

19 Q. And had you -- what other options would you have had besides
20 that? If you chose a different option, what would that have been?

21 A. The only other option would have been get an EC-1.

22 Q. Okay. And it would have been Mr. Youmans that would have had
23 to have done that, correct?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. Did you guys have a working radio with you?

1 A. I know the inside radio worked. And thinking back on it now,
2 I don't -- I never heard the outside radio. I don't know if it
3 worked or not.

4 Q. Is that -- is there a procedure to test a radio, do a radio
5 test prior to beginning work activity?

6 A. Yes, sir. You're supposed to make sure you got a working
7 radio.

8 Q. Did you guys get a chance to do that?

9 A. No, sir.

10 Q. So when the -- as you guys split the first train, watched it
11 by, and then -- let's back up a little bit. So when you arrived
12 on site you said that you set a watchman/lookout.

13 A. Right.

14 Q. Decided that was going to be the protection, you set that up.
15 And then and Mr. Youmans proceeded to start grinding first on the
16 frog?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Was he grinding when the first train came by? Do you recall?

19 A. I actually think he had already began to weld. I'm pretty
20 sure.

21 Q. And you talk about, what's the -- what is the process, the
22 procedures that have to take place when you transition from
23 grinding to welding?

24 A. Basically you take the grinder out of the track, and you got
25 your welding box set up, you got your leads hooked up, and you

1 just put on your welding shield or welding helmet and your jacket,
2 and start welding.

3 Q. About how long does that process take?

4 A. Five minutes.

5 Q. Five minutes. So you think that he was welding when the
6 first train came by?

7 A. I think so.

8 Q. Okay. And so then after that train train passed by, he
9 resumed welding or was he finished at that point?

10 A. No, sir. He still had welding.

11 Q. All right. And then after the welding, he had to do some
12 more grinding?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. And was he -- did you say he was grinding when the second
15 train approached and ultimately came by?

16 A. I'm guessing that's what he's doing. He -- at that point he
17 had done told me to put something up, and I turned around.

18 Q. Where was he at when he told you that you guys were done and
19 you decided to start rolling up the leads? Where was he
20 physically at?

21 A. He had stepped over the frog and -- I mean, he was still in
22 the track.

23 Q. Still in the track. Okay. Is it -- I know you talked a
24 little bit about you had worked with him before. Had you two
25 guys, particularly as a team, worked before using this type of

1 protection?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. You had. So you had done both with this and receiving an
4 EC-1?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Okay. Any idea what's the decision point to use EC-1 versus
7 a watchman/lookout?

8 A. I have no idea.

9 Q. Is --

10 A. I mean, I guess, maybe worrying if the dispatcher is going to
11 give you the time to do it maybe. I don't know. I mean, like I
12 said, I'm not qualified to get an EC-1. So --

13 Q. Are you familiar with this area? I know you said you're
14 working out of Yemassee so you're somewhat familiar with the
15 Columbia Subdivision, at least this end of the --

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Are you familiar with the train traffic that operates daily
18 for the Columbia Subdivision?

19 A. Not really. We don't -- we're not over this way much.

20 Q. Okay. Do you guys, when you -- not just yesterday, but in
21 general do you attempt to get a train lineup to see what's out
22 there, that you're up against, I guess, competing for track time
23 or --

24 A. I mean, I know a lot of times on the section, Trevor, our
25 foreman, he'll ask what's out there. I mean, I don't know really.

1 Like I said, I don't work with the welders a lot.

2 Q. Okay. How would you describe the weather yesterday morning
3 when you guys were out there during that time from when you first
4 arrived until when the accident occurred?

5 A. I mean, it was fair weather. It wasn't real sunny. I mean,
6 it wasn't hot. Just kind of not cold, not hot. Just a day.

7 Q. What can you tell me about the requirements for someone
8 that's performing grinding duties fouling the track as far as
9 personal protective equipment?

10 A. I mean, hard hat, shield, leggings, and I think that's it. I
11 mean, I don't --

12 Q. Is there any high-visibility vest required at that point for
13 grinding?

14 A. I honestly don't know. I've heard that the welders are not
15 required to wear a vest while they're doing welding or dropping
16 weld.

17 Q. But you -- and you, but you did state that while he was
18 welding he was wearing a jacket?

19 A. It was -- yes, sir, because of the long sleeves for the
20 sparks.

21 Q. All right. Okay. Do you know what he -- do you remember
22 what he was wearing underneath the jacket when he took it off?

23 A. A black, black or dark gray -- I think it was a CSX shirt.

24 Q. Like a T-shirt?

25 A. Right.

1 Q. Was it short sleeve?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. Okay. When he's out there grinding -- when anyone is out
4 there grinding like that and you're standing adjacent there
5 performing watchman/lookout, what type of noises are around you?

6 A. I mean, you got the truck being idled up. At that point in
7 time the welder was still running. And you got your traffic
8 passing by. I mean, and your grinder.

9 Q. Did Mr. Youmans, yesterday when you were traveling to the
10 site and working with him, did he seem normal like every other
11 time that you've worked with him?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. No issues with him? Okay. And you were well rested?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. And you felt fine yesterday?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 MR. AMMONS: All right. I think that's all I've got for now.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. LONG: Yes, sir.

20 DR. HOEPF: Thank you, Steve. This is Mike with NTSB.

21 BY DR. HOEPF:

22 Q. You still doing okay?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. Okay. So I just -- I apologize if some of this is redundant.
25 Just to complete the first time around, go around, try to just

1 make sure we cover, you know, kind of the day of. So I just -- I
2 might, you know, kind of be redundant just make sure we got
3 everything. So you guys, you get to the office around 7?
4 A. I'm normally there 20 minutes ahead.
5 Q. Okay.
6 A. 6:40 -- 6:35, 6:40.
7 Q. Okay.
8 A. I mean, on a daily, but we're not required to report till 7.
9 Q. Okay. Okay. I got you. And then do you live close by? Do
10 you have a long drive?
11 A. About 15, 20 minutes.
12 Q. Okay. So do you know what time you woke up yesterday?
13 A. 5:30-ish.
14 Q. 5:30-ish. Okay. And then is that your normal, like, tour of
15 duty?
16 A. Yes, sir.
17 Q. You work pretty -- yeah, okay. Could you just for the
18 record, could you give me your schedule just typically just for
19 like a week?
20 A. Typically it's 7 to 3:30.
21 Q. Seven to 3:30. Okay. I got you. Okay. So you get there,
22 you get your job briefing. Is Mr. Youmans there at the -- at your
23 -- is that like (indiscernible) is your station or do you call
24 it --
25 A. Yeah. It's our office.

1 Q. Oh, okay. It's your office.

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. Okay. So you guys are both there for this job briefing?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Telling you what you're going to do. You guys hop in the
6 truck, and you get there, worksite, about 8 o'clock, working for a
7 couple hours. Cut me off if I'm getting any of this wrong here.
8 You said the weather was fair. What was the visibility like?

9 A. It was clear.

10 Q. It was clear. You could see; there was no haze or
11 anything --

12 A. No, sir.

13 Q. -- going on? How's your vision?

14 A. It's good.

15 Q. Okay. Any medical issues or anything that --

16 A. No, sir.

17 Q. Didn't have a cold or take anything like that?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Just standard questions. Don't, you know --

20 A. Right.

21 Q. -- (indiscernible) that. Okay. So as a watchman, what
22 equipment do you have?

23 A. I mean, working radio and your normal PPE.

24 Q. Okay. Do you have a whistle?

25 A. No, sir. I didn't.

1 Q. Okay. You didn't have a -- did you have an air horn?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. Okay. Did you have a banner, like a stick with a sign or
4 something on it?

5 A. No, sir.

6 Q. Okay. So when you -- I'm just trying to get an idea how the
7 -- you know, is the idea that, like, you were going to go tap him
8 on the shoulder or something when he was working or was it like
9 a --

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. -- it was like a tap man function? So you're kind of -- you
12 know, you're relying on that, you know, that physical touch, so --
13 correct me if I'm wrong, but is that -- you know, you're not using
14 an audible warning to get his attention?

15 A. Right.

16 Q. You were supposed to go up and --

17 A. Right.

18 Q. -- touch him. So -- okay. I got you. I got you. Okay.

19 Then we talked a bit about noise. It's a noisy environment.
20 You've got the truck idling. You've got traffic going by. You've
21 got -- so the welder was still on around the time of the incident?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Okay. And that's, is that -- that's pretty moderately noisy?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. And then were you wearing ear protection?

1 A. No, sir.

2 Q. Okay. So you're not wearing ear protection, but you noticed
3 that Mr. Youmans had earbuds in?

4 A. I know for a fact he had one in.

5 Q. Okay. So like was that -- like you were on one side of him?

6 A. Right.

7 Q. And so you could see -- do you remember if -- was it like,
8 you could see it was in his right ear or maybe his left ear?

9 A. I'm not sure which ear it is. I actually -- he put it on
10 before he went out to -- on the track.

11 Q. Okay. And I don't want you to speculate or anything. So you
12 don't know if he was using that as a source hearing protection or
13 maybe he was listening to some of his favorite music or something
14 to --

15 A. I mean, I couldn't tell you.

16 Q. Okay. So, and, again, I apologize. This is redundant. So
17 you start off -- he starts off grinding, then he goes to welding.
18 And then I just want to just kind of go in, you know, close to the
19 accident sequence time here. Mr. Youmans tells you that he's
20 wrapping up; is that right? You're kind of coming to the end of
21 the task?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Okay. And so he's concluded his welding, but the welding
24 machine is still running?

25 A. Right.

1 Q. And so at that point, at Mr. Youmans instructions, you start
2 winding up the cable --

3 A. Right.

4 Q. -- for the welding?

5 A. Yeah. The leads that go to the welding box.

6 Q. Okay. So what's, I mean, what is kind of going through your
7 mind at this point? So you're -- are you thinking the job is
8 done?

9 A. I mean, yeah.

10 Q. Okay. So your presumption -- what is your presumption of
11 Mr. Youmans? Is it that he's no longer working at that point?

12 A. I mean, I assumed he was done.

13 Q. Okay. So he tells you I'm done, you know, start wrapping up,
14 start wrapping up the cable, so that's what you go do. So your
15 back is turned, so --

16 A. Right.

17 Q. I mean, at the time of the accident you don't know exactly
18 what he was doing or --

19 A. I really don't.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I mean, the train caught my eye, and when I turned he was
22 standing there.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. I mean, it was just that quick.

25 Q. Yeah. And so would your presumption be, do you -- would --

1 do you think the train did or did not blow its horn? Maybe you
2 didn't hear because of the noise. I mean, I don't want you to
3 speculate, but any ideas in terms of --

4 A. I don't know. I mean, all I know is I never heard it.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Now whether he blew it or didn't blew it, I don't know.

7 Q. Yeah. Okay. So all you know is the welding was done, and
8 maybe he was finishing up some grinding activity or maybe he was
9 just gathering the materials. You're not sure?

10 A. Maybe.

11 Q. I don't want to put you in a --

12 A. Right.

13 Q. -- I'm just -- while we're covering it, I just want to get to
14 the best of your recollection. Your back is turned, and he's out
15 there some sort of end of the day kind of activity. Is that a
16 fair characterization?

17 A. Maybe. I mean, I don't really know what he was doing.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I mean, I had my back turned to him.

20 DR. HOEPF: Okay. All right, that's all I got for right now.

21 Thanks, Randall.

22 MR. CAMPBELL: Matt Campbell, SMART Transportation.

23 BY MR. CAMPBELL:

24 Q. I just got a couple questions. You're doing good, by the
25 way. Your next -- so he tells you you're done and you get -- put

1 the leads on the truck and all that kind of stuff. Where was the
2 next place you all were headed for work that day?

3 A. Once we were done there, we were going to go to Fairfax if
4 time -- if we had, you know, enough time.

5 Q. And then was there anything on the agenda after Fairfax?

6 A. No, sir. That was the two job tasks we were given at job
7 briefing.

8 Q. Job briefing that morning. So has there been any kind of
9 change lately, past couple of weeks, in you all's work activities
10 or it's been kind of status quo?

11 A. Pretty much basic stuff.

12 Q. Basic stuff.

13 A. With the exception of Monday. We went down to Savannah to
14 help them put in some diamonds, and we reported to work at 3 a.m.
15 and got off at 6 or 7-ish.

16 Q. This Monday?

17 A. Right. This --

18 Q. So last week. Week before?

19 A. The week before that, I was on vacation for a week, the week
20 of Thanksgiving.

21 Q. And your normal schedule --

22 A. Seven.

23 Q. -- 7, around 3:30.

24 A. 3:30.

25 MR. CAMPBELL: That's all the questions I have right now.

1 MR. MORRISON: Roy Morrison, BMWU, M-O-R-R-I-S-O-N.

2 BY MR. MORRISON:

3 Q. I was just wondering -- so your typical day-to-day duty is a
4 trackman, work with the section.

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Over this past week have you been working with Mr. Youmans?
7 How many times? Or is this the first time?

8 A. He was -- he went down to Savannah with us Monday, but him
9 and his normal partner were doing separate from us.

10 Q. Doing the welding activities?

11 A. Right. They were doing torch cutting, and we were --

12 Q. Who is his welding partner?

13 A. Lewis Trainor.

14 Q. Okay. So this particular week, this would be your first time
15 with Mr. Youmans for the -- going with him for the day, and you
16 were assigned yesterday morning?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. And so in the job briefing in the morning when your
19 roadmaster lined you out, Mr. Youmans is in charge, so that's the
20 person he lined out with?

21 A. Right.

22 Q. Were you present when that happened?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. And was there any discussion at the time as to what type of
25 on-track safety to use or anything like that?

1 A. No, sir.

2 Q. Okay. And who drives the truck? Who drove the truck
3 yesterday?

4 A. John.

5 Q. John did?

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. So --

8 A. I don't have a CDL.

9 Q. Does -- now I came off Union Pacific, so I'm still getting
10 used to all the different variables. Does CSX have a Bluetooth
11 policy when you're driving a vehicle, hands-free?

12 A. I'm pretty sure you're not supposed to be talking on it any
13 while you're driving.

14 Q. Right. So is there a possibility that it was like a
15 Bluetooth ear -- headset to go to talk to your phone that he had
16 in his ear, or was it like a --

17 A. I mean --

18 Q. -- Bose earbud?

19 A. No. I mean, it was like a Bluetooth that you would hook to
20 your phone.

21 Q. Okay. All right. So it could be used to speak on the phone?

22 A. Right.

23 Q. And if your roadmaster were to make any changes between when
24 you left your job briefing site to when you're going to your day,
25 John's the guy that they would have called --

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. -- for that? And that would be -- if he's driving, that
3 would be the only way he could have answered that call other than
4 the radio?

5 A. Either answer it like that or pull over.

6 Q. Okay. And so was John the only welder you'd ever worked with
7 in your six or eight times a year? Have you had a lot of
8 experience in that --

9 A. No, sir.

10 Q. -- basically filling a welder helper position?

11 A. No, sir. I mean, I worked with one other guy at one time.
12 His name is Jamie Garng (ph.).

13 Q. Okay. So you and John were pretty familiar with working
14 together?

15 A. Somewhat.

16 Q. Somewhat.

17 MR. MORRISON: I don't have any other questions at this time.

18 MR. TORRES: All right.

19 MR. DUMEY: Randy Dumey, BLET.

20 BY MR. DUMEY:

21 Q. So when he had you hanging up the cables, you basically
22 walked to the truck, hanging them up --

23 A. Right.

24 Q. -- do you feel you were distracted by doing that?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Who shuts the welder off normally? Would you do that or
2 would he have to do it?

3 A. Normally he would do it once he's completed and ready to get
4 in the truck.

5 Q. Okay. This is going to be a crucial question maybe. What
6 position was he at when he was struck; do you know? You said you
7 turned around and thought he might have been standing like he was
8 done?

9 A. I honestly can't remember if he was standing or bending. I
10 mean, it just -- when it caught my eye, I turned, and I could tell
11 he was there, and it happened so fast.

12 Q. Okay. What caught your eye?

13 A. I'm guessing the train.

14 MR. DUMEY: Okay. That's basically all I've got for now.

15 MR. WOLFE: Nathan Wolfe, W-O-L-F-E.

16 BY MR. WOLFE:

17 Q. You stated you are qualified to be a watchman/lookout?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. Are you familiar with the timetable speed here at the north
20 end of Estill?

21 A. No, sir.

22 Q. When you were lined up to go with the welder by Roadmaster
23 Poston, did he make any suggestions to John or yourself about what
24 type of on-track safety you should use?

25 A. No, sir.

1 Q. Are you familiar with the statement of on-track safety chart
2 that has the sight distance and speeds and the clear time?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. Did you and the welder discuss sight distance, footage,
5 timetable speed and clear time?

6 A. No, sir.

7 Q. Did you decide on a pre-determined place of safety to clear?

8 A. Yes, sir. Beside the truck.

9 Q. Did you have a cell phone on your person?

10 A. Yes, sir. I had it in my pocket.

11 Q. Did you use that cell phone at any time while you were
12 performing watchman/lookout duties?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. Would it be safe or would it be fair to say that you left a
15 position that would have prevented you from warning the welder of
16 an approaching train?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Would it be safe or fair to say that you did not devote your
19 full attention to watching for trains?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. How much rest did you have before starting on Friday morning?
22 What was your quit time on Thursday?

23 A. 3:30. No, sir -- I'm sorry -- 4:30. Because I was riding
24 with the train inspector.

25 MR. WOLFE: That's all I have.

1 MR. TORRES: Okay. Tomas with the NTSB.

2 BY MR. TORRES:

3 Q. You said you used train approach warning before?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Can you explain how you used it and what kind of situations
6 it was used?

7 A. Doing the same thing we were doing yesterday, just different
8 locations.

9 MR. TORRES: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR. GORDON: Yeah. So Joe Gordon, NTSB.

11 BY MR. GORDON:

12 Q. We'll start around with a second round, just kind of fill in
13 some blanks if anybody has any more questions. You good to keep
14 pushing through?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You need a break or anything?

17 A. (No audible response.)

18 Q. Okay. So I'll -- just one thing just for clarification
19 because the people that transcribe these, they don't always know
20 the railroad terms. When you were talking about being rolled and
21 going to a different -- that's you're displaced from your
22 position, and then you're making a displacement to another
23 position where you hold -- where your seniority carries you?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. Okay. So there was a -- and I think you've already hit on

1 this, but there was a welder up by the track or was there a welder
2 actually between the -- as far as the welding machine, where was
3 that?

4 A. The machine?

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. It's a black box, and it sits in the track or it was sitting
7 in the track.

8 Q. Sitting in the track between the frog and the guardrail?

9 A. Right.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. But it's -- when trains come through, it don't -- it's low
12 enough that we usually -- it stays there.

13 Q. Okay. So that's not something that you've got to clear?

14 A. No, sir.

15 Q. If you go over and tap him, he just basically steps away,
16 lays the lead down --

17 A. Lays --

18 Q. -- in the gauge --

19 A. And then steps out.

20 Q. -- and then steps out of the track?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Okay. That's good. You knew where I was going with that,
23 looking at how much time it took to clear. So with -- what would
24 you say was the time that it would have taken for him to get from
25 the location where he was welding over to the predetermined place

1 of safety, which you said was the truck? How long do you think it
2 would have taken? On that previous clearing, you know, just a
3 ballpark.

4 A. Seven seconds, maybe, I guess. Not far.

5 Q. Okay. And I know, you know, that we already had the
6 discussion about the sight distance and timetable speed and those
7 things, but is there anything else from your training as a
8 watchman, anything about clearing times, you know, predetermined
9 place of safety, how long you need to be there before a train
10 arrives or anything like that, that you can recall?

11 A. I think you have to be there in your predetermined place of
12 safety 15 seconds.

13 Q. And based on what you saw from sizing up the scene, you had
14 enough sight distance in order to give that warning and get into
15 the predetermined place of safety?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Okay. Briefings. If you'll just talk about a typical day?
18 You have your work assignment in the morning.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. And is that -- do you guys consider that a job briefing?

21 A. I mean, it is a job briefing, but normally you would have
22 another one at the jobsite.

23 Q. So maybe just to characterize them as a -- as the work
24 assignment's kind of a job briefing, and then when you get out on
25 scene it's -- or, you know, or to the work location, it's more of

1 a on-track safety briefing --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- where you're talking about the specifics. So the job
4 briefing was conducted back at headquarters. The on-track safety
5 briefing, was it just no more than a discussion of "I'm going to
6 be welding; you're going to be watching"?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Okay. So really then -- but there was a discussion about
9 predetermined place of safety or was that just from past practice?

10 A. No, just past practice, you know, that's always where our
11 predetermined place of safety is.

12 Q. Okay. Now you said that the welder said that he was done and
13 he told you to start rolling up the leads. So in your -- you
14 know, in your mind at that time were you still providing train
15 approach warning or had your duties changed when he made that
16 statement?

17 A. I mean, he was still in the track. I just turned and done
18 what I was told to do.

19 Q. So with him still being in the track there, his only form of
20 on-track safety was watchman/lookout train approach warning,
21 correct?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Okay. So in your normal position, if they're not assigning
24 you to go with the welder, if you're working with the basic
25 section, can you describe what the on-track safety briefing is

1 with those, if there was any difference between a normal on-track
2 safety briefing that you would have with the basic force and the
3 safety briefing that was held the morning of the accident?

4 A. I mean, I'm with a section normally, you know, he calls, gets
5 the EC-1. Everybody listens, writes it down, this is the track,
6 whatever, this is what we got, this is what we're doing. And we
7 either sit on the track and do the work or if we can get beside
8 the track and do the work.

9 Q. And you said before that on the basic force you guys don't
10 typically use train approach warning, it's an EC-1. Is that the
11 main line only or --

12 A. Most anywhere we go.

13 Q. Anywhere? Okay. So your relationship with the welder, did
14 -- I know you said you had worked with him before and you guys
15 worked well together. Did you feel comfortable -- you know, I
16 don't know what his seniority was as opposed to yours, but, I
17 mean, you know, we all know of the concept being your brother's
18 keeper.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. Did you feel comfortable if there was something that
21 concerned you out there, would you have felt comfortable bringing
22 it to his attention, whether it was having the earbuds in his ear
23 or what form of on-track safety? I mean, did you feel like, you
24 know, in your position as the watchman you could have brought
25 something unsafe to his attention? Or, you know, kind of help us

1 understand that dynamic there.

2 A. I mean, other than his earbuds, I mean, I just let him do his
3 thing, I mean.

4 MR. GORDON: Okay.

5 (Interruption at the door.)

6 MR. GORDON: Yeah, so I believe that's all the questions I
7 have.

8 Mr. Ammons.

9 MR. AMMONS: Yes. I've got a few follow-up.

10 BY MR. AMMONS:

11 Q. I apologize if you've already answered this question. I
12 heard you describe going on duty and having your job briefing.
13 Where was that on-duty location?

14 A. Yemassee.

15 Q. Yemassee.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. How far away is that depot or office from the location that
18 you traveled to?

19 A. Thirty minutes.

20 Q. Thirty minutes.

21 A. Thirty, 40 minutes.

22 Q. So when you're out there with him and he indicated to you
23 that he was done and you started to -- did he tell you to roll up
24 the leads or is that just something just a natural thing that you
25 knew to do, or --

1 A. No. He said, roll -- go ahead and start rolling up leads.

2 Q. And so from what he -- and when he told you that, were you
3 providing what you considered appropriate watchman/lookout when he
4 told you, hey, I'm done? Were you providing by the guidelines
5 watchman/lookout at that point or were --

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. -- you doing something else?

8 A. No, sir. I was standing there.

9 Q. So from the time that he told you that to the time that you
10 saw something out of the corner of your eye, which probably was
11 the train, when the accident occurred, what -- ballpark, how long
12 was that?

13 A. Two minutes maybe.

14 Q. Two minutes.

15 A. Yeah. I mean, I rolled up one lead and started on the second
16 one, and it caught my eye. I turned and --

17 Q. When you're rolling up the lead, so it caught your eye. I'm
18 assuming -- correct me if I'm wrong, please -- that your location
19 at that point is between the main track and where Mr. Youmans was
20 at, and the truck that you were working with. Is that correct?
21 You were standing --

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. -- on the driver's side of the truck?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. The whole time?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. Was your back to the movement of the direction of the train
3 travel?

4 A. Yes. I was standing this way. Track is behind me.

5 Q. And do you recall if Mr. Youmans' back would have been to the
6 direction the train travel with the type of work that he was
7 performing out there?

8 A. I'm not sure which way he was facing.

9 Q. Well, when you were providing watchman/lookout and watching
10 him work, was he always sort of in one position?

11 A. No, sir. He -- I mean, it depends on what side he's
12 grinding. You know, he'll turn around one way, turn around the
13 other way.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Whatever makes it easier for him.

16 Q. When you caught the movement out of the corner of your eye,
17 and you -- I think you said you saw him there and he gets struck,
18 do you remember what position he was in?

19 A. I'm pretty sure his back. I'm not sure. I'm -- I would
20 guess his back was to the train.

21 Q. Okay. And so you said that was about a couple minutes from
22 the time he told you I'm done until the accident occurred?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. Okay. Let's go back to the first train that came through
25 there. Where were you positioned at, at that point when he was --

1 A. I was standing outside of the track right at the end of the
2 ties, and I seen him coming. And I stepped in, told him he had a
3 train coming, and he brought the grinder over, sat it down, walked
4 to the other side of the track.

5 Q. Did that train -- was that train traveling in the same
6 direction as the second train?

7 A. No, sir.

8 Q. So --

9 A. It was in the opposite direction.

10 Q. So that train was traveling southbound?

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. So where you're looking at it, was that train traveling from
13 right to left?

14 A. Yes. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Okay. And the northbound would have been going left to
16 right?

17 A. Left to right.

18 Q. And you were on the same side both times?

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. Same approximate position other than --

21 A. Other than I -- well, my back was turned, and I was closer to
22 the truck on the second one.

23 Q. Do you recall which, north, southbound, did you have about
24 the same amount of sight distance with the visibility?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Do you recall how much sight distance you had when you first
2 saw that southbound train, the first train? Do you recall how
3 long it took from the time you saw it to the time that it got to
4 your location?

5 A. I'm not sure. It was plenty enough time to get him and get
6 him out of the way.

7 Q. Did you see that train -- did you hear the train? Did you
8 hear that train blowing its horn, the southbound train?

9 A. Yes. As it got closer, yes.

10 Q. Did you see --

11 A. I seen his headlight first.

12 Q. You saw the headlight before you heard the horn?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Okay. All right. So going back to the first train there,
15 Randall. You said earlier that you split the train.

16 A. Right.

17 Q. You stayed on --

18 A. I stayed on the truck side.

19 Q. Truck side.

20 A. John went to the other side.

21 Q. Okay. Is that typical, even with a predetermined place of
22 safety and you're performing watchman/lookout duty, for you to do
23 that? Or is there a reason why he wouldn't have gone to the
24 predetermined place of safety as well?

25 A. Well, when he first -- when I first told him, he came over to

1 the truck and sat the welder down and then we split the train,
2 which is what we're told to do with a passing train.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Is if there's more than one person, split the train, which is
5 what we're told to do with a passing train.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Is if there's more than one person, split the train.

8 Q. Prior times working with Mr. Youmans, had you seen him using
9 that Bluetooth device before?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. Had you ever talked to him about it at all?

12 A. No, sir.

13 Q. Okay. Did you talk to the train crew at all?

14 A. No, sir.

15 MR. AMMONS: Okay. I don't have any further questions.

16 DR. HOEPF: Mike, NTSB. Still doing okay, Randall?

17 MR. LONG: Yeah.

18 DR. HOEPF: Okay. We'll take a break if you need it. We're
19 -- I'm sure we're almost done.

20 MR. AMMONS: Excuse me. Can I ask one more question,
21 Mr. Hoepf? I'm sorry.

22 DR. HOEPF: Sure.

23 BY MR. AMMONS:

24 Q. So I asked you about if you talked to the train crew. This
25 is Ammons again. Did you talk to the previous train crew when you

1 watched them by? Did you tell them that it was a good inspection
2 or anything like that?

3 A. No, sir.

4 MR. AMMONS: No. Okay. Thank you. That's all.

5 BY DR. HOEPF:

6 Q. Let me just kind of follow up a couple of things that Steve
7 was talking about. You said the first train you saw was -- you
8 said you saw the light before you heard it.

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. But when the train did come up, did you hear that train okay?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. So you got there around 8 o'clock, and only one train
13 going by between then and the second train, so 2 hours and 20
14 minutes or something like that. So sounds like it's pretty -- I
15 mean, you know, not a lot of train -- I mean, not a lot activity.
16 So, I mean, would you kind of characterize that as sort of a low
17 workload kind of situation? You're standing around. I mean, was
18 it -- were there any other, like, tasks that you need to get
19 pulled into or were you pretty much just kind of standing 5 feet
20 behind him the whole time?

21 A. That's it, just standing.

22 Q. Okay. Okay. So Mr. Youmans, he would be considered the
23 employee in charge then. I mean, it sounds like he's kind of the
24 guy running the show here, and he's the one that's driving. He's
25 got a CDL license.

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. He's the employee in charge. He's the one that picked the
3 track protection. I mean, would it be fair to say that, you know,
4 you're kind of the -- you know, taking his lead, taking his --

5 A. Right.

6 Q. -- direction there?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Okay. And you can probably kind of see where I'm going with
9 this. You know, it's -- he tells you to start wrapping up these
10 leads, and did you feel like that was just kind of what you needed
11 to do because, you know, he was running the show? I mean --

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. I mean, yeah, so were you concerned about that at all at the
14 time of, you know --

15 A. I mean, I didn't think about it. He -- you know, I was doing
16 what I was told.

17 Q. Right, right. Okay. So at the time of the collision, the
18 incident, I think you said the welder was running. Can you just
19 describe the equipment that's laying out there? So the welder is
20 running, but you're wrapping up the cable. That's all by the
21 truck there?

22 A. Yes. Right beside where the cables are, where I'm standing.

23 Q. Okay. And, I'm sorry, I'm not -- I'm not really a
24 railroader. The grinder is -- how big of a contraption is that?
25 Is that like --

1 A. I mean, it's this big.

2 Q. Okay. So like 1 foot by 1 foot?

3 A. It's not very big.

4 Q. Okay. It's relatively small. Was he -- he was just holding
5 that?

6 A. He had it in his hand when he told me to roll the leads up,
7 yes.

8 Q. Okay. So he's, like, standing there in the main line track,
9 and he tells you, hey, let's wrap up here. Was the grinder
10 running then?

11 A. No. It was off.

12 Q. It was off. Okay. How does that work? Is it like you push
13 a button?

14 A. It's just --

15 Q. You have to hold the button to run it?

16 A. Just a switch. You flip it one way, flip it the other.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Or actually more like a lever, not really a switch.

19 Q. Okay. And do you -- okay. So the grinder is off. The
20 welding -- the welder is on. In terms of the welder, is that --
21 the noise level, is that not as loud though because it's not
22 actively being used or --

23 A. No. It stays idled up --

24 Q. Oh, it stays --

25 A. -- until you idle it down.

1 Q. Okay. So whether he's actively using it or not it's the same
2 noise level?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. And so you're in the -- sort of at the door of the
5 truck there, and the truck is idling?

6 A. Yes. It's idled up.

7 Q. Okay. Is it -- so is the truck, I mean, it's a pretty big
8 truck. I mean, is that pretty decent amount of --

9 A. I mean, yeah.

10 Q. -- noise or is -- I'm just trying to get a relative feel. Is
11 the welder the louder piece? Is the truck the louder piece?

12 A. I mean, I don't know. They're both moderately loud, I mean.

13 Q. Okay. And then --

14 A. I can't tell you exactly.

15 Q. That's okay. I'm just trying to get a general feel for it.
16 And then, okay, so you're sort of -- are you sort of between -- is
17 the welder between you and Mr. Youmans? Is there -- is the welder
18 kind of --

19 A. The welder --

20 Q. -- kind of right there by the truck?

21 A. The welder is in front of me right here.

22 Q. Oh, okay.

23 A. Right at my face as I'm rolling these things around this
24 thing.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Around the two posts that they go.

2 Q. And, I'm sorry, I haven't seen the welder. How big is the
3 welder?

4 A. It's pretty big. I mean, it's -- I don't know. It's mounted
5 on the side of the truck.

6 Q. Okay. So you're right by that. I'm just trying to get an
7 idea. You heard the first train without a problem.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Second train, you don't recall hearing it. I'm just
10 wondering is it because of the -- you know, I don't want you to
11 speculate, but it seems like maybe the -- because of the equipment
12 that you're by.

13 A. Maybe.

14 Q. Yeah, okay, that's -- okay. So when you guys were -- when
15 Mr. Youmans instructed you to start wrapping up, were you guys in
16 any sort of rush to get to the next task? Was there a sense of
17 urgency?

18 A. No. I mean --

19 Q. Okay. And, you know, really I'm just -- and this is pretty
20 much the end of my, you know -- I mean, I -- we're just trying to
21 figure out is there something, you know, is there anything odd
22 that day? I mean, is there anything, you know -- just a normal
23 day?

24 A. Just a normal day.

25 Q. Yeah. Okay. And then, yeah, and then just a part of that,

1 you know, we always have to look at fatigue, and it -- you said
2 you got up at 4:30 the previous day?

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Do you know what time you went to sleep?

5 A. I don't know. I ain't got no idea.

6 Q. Yeah. Okay. The prior day --

7 A. 3:30.

8 Q. 3:30. Do you know what time you went to sleep that night?

9 A. No, sir. I mean, normally on average probably 10 o'clock.

10 Q. 10 o'clock?

11 A. Maybe.

12 Q. Yeah. Okay. I mean, I know -- you don't have to be precise
13 there.

14 So do you have any suggestions for just in the future to
15 prevent an accident like this from happening again? Anything that
16 could have been done better; any sort of lesson learned here or --

17 A. Getting an EC-1. I mean, therefore, you know, a train can't
18 come. I mean --

19 DR. HOEPF: Yeah. Okay. Well, thanks, Randall. That's all
20 the questions I've got.

21 MR. CAMPBELL: Matt Campbell, SMART Transportation Division.
22 Just a couple questions.

23 BY MR. CAMPBELL:

24 Q. I just want to ask you about safety culture.

25 A. Right.

1 Q. So you say you've been working at Yemassee for a while. And
2 so at your job briefing in the morning when you're given your
3 assignment for the day, is it -- are you encouraged or is it
4 talked about like speak up if you see something wrong with safety?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. So there's a safety culture there to --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. And is there any -- I believe you said earlier you've worked
9 in several locations --

10 A. Right.

11 Q. -- rolled and that kind of stuff. Is there any difference
12 here and Yemassee, since you've been working here, you know, is
13 there more or less safety culture, about the same as it was, say,
14 on a tie gang or somewhere else?

15 A. I mean, it's all just -- I mean, it's all safety culture. I
16 just feel like Yemassee is a very tight-knit group.

17 Q. Right. Yeah, small, small tight-knit, kind of family-type
18 group.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. I understand. And so the -- I think you made it clear. We
21 just want to -- the welding machine is on the truck. You're
22 facing the welding machine.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. It's on?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. Got noises there. And you're rolling up those welding leads.

2 A. And the truck's idled up.

3 Q. And so when you were watching, and he said, I'm done, you
4 know, you took it that he's done, he's not getting back in the
5 track, and you went to do your job and rolled -- well, you thought
6 your watch, your watching was done then --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- based on what he told you? You figured, took his word for
9 it that he was done --

10 A. Right.

11 Q. -- and went on to do your duties.

12 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. That's all I have.

13 MR. MORRISON: I don't have any more questions.

14 MR. DUMEY: Randy Dumey. I got a couple.

15 BY MR. DUMEY:

16 Q. Sorry. I'm locomotive engineer. I'm not familiar with your
17 work that much. But earlier you said that the welding machine was
18 in the tracks. Is there a separate box?

19 A. Yes, sir. The leads come from the truck from the big welder,
20 and go into a small black box maybe -- I don't know -- that long
21 and probably that wide. And the leads hook to that, and then
22 that's where your spool of wire is which runs to your wire -- to
23 your trigger for your welder.

24 Q. Okay. Do you all get a train lineup? I think you was asked
25 that earlier. Do they tell you we're going to have this many

1 trains between this time and this time?

2 A. I don't -- I really don't know. I mean, I know when I'm on
3 the section sometimes the dispatcher will say, hey, you know, we
4 got a lot. Some days he just says I can't give it to you right
5 now or I can give it to you right now.

6 Q. Do you think that might have kind of triggered to look out
7 more if you knew there was going to be two trains running through
8 there?

9 A. Possible.

10 Q. Who unhooked the leads off of that machine that was in the
11 track? You --

12 A. I did.

13 Q. You did. Did you roll the leads up or do you, like, drag
14 them to you and then roll them? Or you pick them up and carry
15 them?

16 A. They -- we run them under the track in the check, and you
17 just pull them out, and stand at the truck and pull it to you and
18 just wrap them up.

19 Q. So you're saying the leads were under the track?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. This grinder, what does it run off? Is it hydraulic?

22 A. Hydraulic.

23 Q. So it's -- you'd have a hose running to it?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. We was out here at the site this morning, and we seen a spot

1 where it looked like some cables had been run over by the train.

2 Do you know what that could have been?

3 A. Had been run where? Over by the train?

4 Q. Mashed on the rail.

5 A. That was probably his hydraulic hose that was hooked to the
6 grinder.

7 Q. But it looked more like wire casing. A hose, it wouldn't
8 have --

9 A. I don't know. I don't know what that could have been.

10 BY MR. GORDON:

11 Q. This is Joe Gordon, NTSB. Just for clarification, the MIG
12 welder, the small box was still in the track?

13 A. Right.

14 Q. Right. So there would have been leads associated, you know,
15 leads attached to that small box as well?

16 MR. DUMEY: He said they run them under.

17 BY MR. GORDON:

18 Q. Well, the cables that you're talking about running under are
19 the ones coming from the machine?

20 A. Coming from the truck.

21 Q. Over to the --

22 A. To the box.

23 Q. -- MIG welder.

24 A. And then from the box you have a lead that's the trigger that
25 runs from the box to wherever you're welding at. It's what you

1 use.

2 MR. DUMEY: So that could have been what was lying on the
3 track --

4 MR. LONG: Possibly.

5 MR. DUMEY: -- that got run over?

6 That's all I've got right now.

7 MR. WOLFE: Nathan Wolfe, FRA.

8 BY MR. WOLFE:

9 Q. Randall, were the toolbox doors open as well as the truck cab
10 door? You stated you were putting the welding leads away.

11 A. Right. But they don't go in a box. They wrap on the side of
12 the truck.

13 Q. Okay. Were there any other --

14 A. But I'm pretty sure the truck door was closed, but the
15 toolboxes right here may have been open. I'm not sure.

16 Q. So there was the cab -- the door to the cab of the truck was
17 closed?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. When the welder asked you to -- said they were done, you were
20 done, and to start rolling up the leads, was he in the clear?

21 A. No, sir.

22 Q. When you're acting as a watchman/lookout, when is your role
23 as a watchman complete?

24 A. When they're clear.

25 Q. There's seven provisions to use train approach warnings

1 provided by watchman/lookout. Are you familiar with the second
2 one that says the watchman/lookout shall not be assigned any other
3 duties while functioning as a watchman/lookout? Were you aware of
4 that?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Did you effectively watch for your welder?

7 A. Not when he told me to go put the leads up.

8 MR. WOLFE: That's all I have.

9 DR. HOEPF: I just have a couple but --

10 MR. TORRES: I want to ask him one.

11 DR. HOEPF: Oh, you have more. Sorry.

12 MR. TORRES: Tomas Torres with NTSB.

13 BY MR. TORRES:

14 Q. Has a manager ever observed you, tested you for train
15 approach warning or any type of protection?

16 A. I mean, I'm not sure.

17 Q. I mean, do they ever go out there?

18 A. I mean, yeah, he comes out and watches us work sometimes.

19 Q. Is there an entry when you got observed or that you got
20 tested?

21 A. I don't know.

22 Q. You don't know if they do that or not?

23 A. I mean I -- he's never approached me and said, hey, I watched
24 you do whatever.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I mean, he may have watched me.

2 Q. But you never got any feedback?

3 A. Not on watchman/lookout.

4 MR. TORRES: That's all I have.

5 MR. GORDON: We'll go this way. I think that we'll try to
6 make this the last round. You're getting, getting very close to
7 the end. I've just got a few.

8 BY MR. GORDON:

9 Q. You said that you with the -- on your normal assignment,
10 which would be with the section, you guys don't use
11 watchman/lookout very often but you have used it in the past. If
12 you're working, say, you're the one working and you've got a
13 watchman watching for you --

14 A. Right.

15 Q. -- if that watchman starts to do something else, you know, if
16 he were to talk over to the -- he or she were to walk over to the
17 truck and grab another set of tools or anything like that, is
18 there -- what are you trained to do at that time?

19 A. You should stop and get in the clear.

20 Q. Stop and get in the clear. Have you ever had that situation
21 come up before where you had to clear when the watchman stopped
22 work?

23 A. No, sir.

24 Q. Okay. And are you familiar with a challenge -- we call it a
25 good faith challenge, if the on-track safety at the work location

1 isn't -- you know, if you could just tell us in your own words a
2 good faith challenge and how that process works?

3 A. So, I mean, basically if you don't feel that it's the right
4 protection, I mean, you do a good faith challenge. And you can't
5 go to work until everyone comes to an agreement.

6 Q. Okay. Then have you or anybody ever -- that you've worked
7 with as far as been -- that you've been there when a good faith
8 challenge has been initiated?

9 A. No, sir.

10 Q. Okay. And I think the other one -- well, one more. You
11 mentioned to Steve when he asked the question about, you know,
12 about how long it was between him telling you to roll the hoses
13 and then -- and the accident, and you said around 2 minutes.

14 A. I mean, maybe.

15 Q. To the best of your recollection. Did you hear any -- did
16 anything as far as the noises from behind you change? Like did
17 you hear the grinder start up or anything?

18 A. I didn't hear anything.

19 Q. Okay. And you were right there in front of --

20 A. Yeah, all I could hear was the welder.

21 MR. GORDON: Okay. That's all I had.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have anything else.

23 DR. HOEPF: Just two, just a couple quick follow-ups.

24 BY DR. HOEPF:

25 Q. You said -- you were talking about split the trains.

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. Just why is that?

3 A. So I guess you can get an inspection on both sides, make sure
4 -- you know, if something's hanging off of the other side and both
5 of you are over here, you know, nobody knows that something's
6 hanging off the other side.

7 Q. Oh, okay. So that's not, like, pertaining to what you're
8 doing. That's just like a CSX like, you know, let's get an
9 inspection on these trains. Okay, all right.

10 And the other thing I've just got is you were talking about
11 -- I asked you -- you know, really the whole purpose about this is
12 what could be done better, you know, and you said just get, you
13 know, get an EC-1. And, I mean, are you -- have you ever or maybe
14 just been aware of, heard about, you know, locker room type talk,
15 is it -- I mean, is there difficulty getting track authority to do
16 work? I mean, is there sort of a reluctance to -- because one of
17 the things -- let me just give you a little bit of background.

18 Like it seems to me that train approach warnings, there's
19 been -- I've heard some discussion of scope creep, where it's
20 being used in situations where, you know, maybe be better to get
21 the track-out authority. But sometimes, you know, dispatchers are
22 reluctant to give, you know, give people the track time to do the
23 work they need to do. Have you -- has that been in your
24 experience at all that you've --

25 A. Had difficulty getting track time?

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 DR. HOEPF: Okay. That's all I got. Thanks, Randall.

4 MR. CAMPBELL: I don't have any questions for you.

5 MR. MORRISON: Roy Morrison, BMWED.

6 BY MR. MORRISON:

7 Q. I got just a couple quick questions, and maybe you already
8 said that. That day, did you guys talk to the dispatcher at all?

9 A. No, sir.

10 Q. And my second thing is just really kind of a point of
11 clarification. We talked about the hydraulic hoses earlier. The
12 hydraulic hoses are high pressure, and they're actually reinforced
13 with wire inside the rubber, correct?

14 A. I mean, I don't know what's in the wire, but -- I mean, I
15 know hydraulics run through.

16 Q. Yeah. So that is in fact how they're -- rubber, and then
17 it's reinforced with wire mesh and there's more rubber. Just so
18 that everybody understands there is wire in the hydraulic hoses.

19 MR. MORRISON: And that's all I got.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have any.

21 MR. TORRES: Okay. There's no more further questions. This
22 will complete, conclude the interview.

23 Thank you. Appreciate your time.

24 MR. LONG: Yes, sir.

25 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: RAIL WORKER FATALITY,
 ESTILL, SOUTH CAROLINA,
 NOVEMBER 30, 2018
 Interview of Randall Long

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD19FR002

PLACE: Estill, South Carolina

DATE: December 1, 2018

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.



Katherine Motley
Transcriber