

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

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: SEAN LOTT

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  
Federal Railroad Administration

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)

NATHAN OGLESBY  
(On behalf of Mr. Lott)

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. TORRES: This is a NTSB informal interview. My name is  
3 Tomas Torres, T-O-M-A-S, T-O-R-R-E-S. Today's date is December  
4 1st, and we are at Estill, South Carolina, interviewing the  
5 Engineer in connection with an accident that occurred in Estill,  
6 South Carolina, on November 30th. The NTSB accident number is  
7 RRD19FR002.

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

13 The interviewee can have one representative of the  
14 interviewee's choice. You got somebody?

15 MR. LOTT: Yes.

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

18 MR. LOTT: Yes.

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

20 MR. LOTT: Sean Lott, S-E-A-N, last name Lott, L-O-T-T.

21 MR. OGLESBY: Nathan Oglesby, N-A-T-H-A-N, O-G-L-E-S-B-Y.

22 MR. TORRES: Okay.

23 MR. GORDON: Okay, Joe Gordon, G-O-R-D-O-N, with the NTSB.  
24 I'll be looking at the track and engineering and roadway worker  
25 protection aspects of this accident.

1 MR. AMMONS: Steve Ammons, A-M-M-O-N-S, CSX Safety.

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

3 DR. HOEPF: Mike Hoepf, H-O-E-P-F, with the NTSB.

4 MR. CAMPBELL: Matt Campbell, SMART Transportation Division,  
5 C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L, National Safety Team.

6 MR. MORRISON: Roy Morrison, M-O-R-R-I-S-O-N, BMWED's  
7 Director of Safety.

8 MR. DUMEY: Randy Dumey, R-A-N-D-Y, D-U-M-E-Y, BLET, Safety  
9 Task Force.

10 MR. WOLFE: Nathan Wolfe, FRA, last name W-O-L-F-E.

11 INTERVIEW OF SEAN LOTT

12 BY MR. TORRES:

13 Q. Okay. Tomas Torres with the NTSB. Sean, can you please tell  
14 us, the day of the accident, what time you went on duty, and what,  
15 you know, what transpired all the way, leading up the accident?

16 A. Yes. The day was, November 30th, 2018. We were on duty at  
17 0700. All the way up the accident?

18 Q. Yeah, yeah, I mean, just, you know.

19 A. Okay, we got on the engines. They were at Track 8. I  
20 prepared the engines to, you know, set it up, for trail or lead.  
21 After that, of course we went through our briefing before we got  
22 on the engines, and once I got on the engines, then go ahead and  
23 get our day started. Conductor was getting the rest of the  
24 information and got all the information that he needed and  
25 everything. So once he, once we got on the engines, you know,

1 Yard Master instructed us to, we was going to wait on a yard job  
2 to get out of the way. Then we were instructed to go to Track 12  
3 and then double it to six. So, once we dumped the train out, we  
4 hung the EOT light, and the whole nine, and he got a ride to the  
5 head. Then we had to stop at a signal. I think that was a clock  
6 block, not for long, not even 10 minutes.

7       Once the -- it was a Q037, I think, they were going to  
8 Savannah yard, and once they cleared out of the way, we proceeded.  
9 And we saw another train in Garnett siding. And we got in it,  
10 well, we got in the siding waiting on them. And we slowed down to  
11 a stop. Once they passed by, we were -- we got the light to leave  
12 out of the siding and went back the main. So we, once we got  
13 clear out the siding, we were maximum authorize speed once we got  
14 on the main, the main track. The siding was 24, 25 miles an hour  
15 once you cleared out of, once you clear out the siding, you're  
16 able to go 50 miles an hour. That was as fast as our train can  
17 go. Track speed was 60, so --

18       We proceeded down. We had all clear signals. And once we  
19 got to the Estill signal, there are multiple crossings once you  
20 pass the south-end signal, there are multiple crossings, so we  
21 continued to blow. Once we got to the, I think by the second,  
22 maybe the third crossing, we were blowing, and we can tell there  
23 was some kind of debris on the north-end of the Estill signal. It  
24 looked like debris. Something was in the track. Maybe looked  
25 like, maybe a trash bag or something like that got hung up on the

1 frog, or the track, or what have you, and the siding. So we  
2 really couldn't make heads or tails of it, so we continue and as  
3 we got closer, I say about that, I know there's a Jenks store  
4 right on the -- there's a store, you know, on the road right next  
5 to the track, and somewhere in there we noticed a truck.

6 As we get closer, we noticed a CSX truck, and we noticed  
7 there a high visible vest, that somebody was outside the truck.  
8 Their back was to us and they were, I guess, he was looking in the  
9 truck or towards the truck, but his back was toward us. And as  
10 got closer, we just laying on the -- I'm blowing and blowing, and  
11 I would say I can't give you a range of how close we were before  
12 we noticed that that was an employee that was in the track, but by  
13 the time we noticed it, it wasn't long before we -- I'm laying on  
14 the horn and I just -- from what I could see was like in a split  
15 second, it was like, oh, that's, you know. And so, immediately, I  
16 hit the brakes. Did what I can do to stop.

17 But it was from -- I'm trying to be as accurate as I can, but  
18 that was, it was so fast. It was like, that's somebody in the  
19 tracks. So it -- I -- it was just so quick. And I remember, I do  
20 remember turning my head and once I heard the thump, once I heard  
21 the thump, things just like -- I can't recall too much. All I  
22 know is after that, we were slowing down, and I do remember  
23 blowing the horn the whole time. I had my hand on the horn. But  
24 once I turned my head, it was -- I can't -- that part is a little  
25 fuzzy. That part there is -- you know, I can't give you an

1 accurate, accurate description of that.

2 And, once we stopped, tried to gather ourselves as much as we  
3 can. Our conductor got down. Well, we called the dispatcher. He  
4 was, the conductor called 9-1-1. Called up the dispatcher to let  
5 him know. Once we did that, the conductor, he got down to start  
6 walking back toward the, back to the incidence. And once he got  
7 back there, I was -- I stayed on the engine and I think the  
8 dispatcher may have called and asked us, like, do you -- the  
9 closest milepost, to how close we were, and he may have asked us a  
10 few more questions. And by that time, my engineer -- I mean, my  
11 conductor, he let me know that he was on the rear.

12 There was an officer that come up and asked me, you know, my  
13 name and I gave him my information. After that it, it was just  
14 more -- some more people. Then the terminal superintendent, he  
15 came on the engine and, you know, he asked us some questions,  
16 and --

17 Q. As you were approaching, you said you saw something that you  
18 thought might have been a trash bag.

19 A. Yeah, I something like that.

20 Q. And where was that -- I mean, was it in between the tracks,  
21 or off to the side?

22 A. No, it was between. It was like, it was between the tracks,  
23 like, wherever the frog is, something like that, it was somewhere  
24 like that. We were too far off, but we can tell like it was like  
25 -- is that a log or something? A trash bag got hung-up on the



1 tracks or something? We just couldn't make heads or tails of it.

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. And as we got closer, I could -- and before impact, and we  
4 knew that there was, that was an employee. I can see why we  
5 thought that, because he had on dark clothing. But he was in a  
6 squat, bent-over position, like, head down, squatted low, and I  
7 think I saw that, maybe, that wasn't long when I saw that, and  
8 we're going so fast. That's why I think it was just --

9 Q. What was the speed of your train at that time?

10 A. I think approximately, I was, I was told 48 at the time I  
11 knew, by the time we was up there, I knew it was, we were around  
12 45. I was told 48, but, did I actually see what my per hour we  
13 were, I didn't, uh-uh.

14 Q. But you were operating according to your train speed and --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- and the signal indications.

17 A. Yes, yes. We had a clear signal. Last authorized speed for  
18 our train was 50.

19 Q. And as you were sounding the horn, did any of those two  
20 employees look, or --

21 A. Oh, no. Never responded.

22 Q. As you were on top of that employee, did he ever look up or  
23 anything, or?

24 A. No. Never. And once we saw a CSX truck, and we can see that  
25 employee standing outside, he couldn't hear either. Neither one

1 of them responded to the horn or anything like that, that, that I,  
2 that I could recall. Like all the way thorough it, as far as I  
3 can recall, neither one of them never, it was like, never saw us,  
4 never heard us, nothing. Never saw the, all we saw was the  
5 employee on the side, all we saw was his back, but he was outside  
6 the, I do remember that, he was outside the truck.

7 Q. Um-hum. Do you recall your train profile, like length,  
8 tonnage?

9 A. Yes, length, we were like, the actual numbers, I think it was  
10 like 4500, 4561, 45 and 651. Our tons was approximately 6600. We  
11 had 74 cars, yeah. Length, about, yeah engineer learn that length  
12 is one of the first things your going to know, so, I know we were  
13 over 4500 feet, so -- 74 cars, and 6600 tons, approximately.

14 Q. And as you were approaching, did you conductor say anything,  
15 you know, --

16 A. I think we both were like, what is that in the track? You  
17 know, as we were coming up, we both were like that, we could --  
18 like I said, we couldn't make heads or tails, like, yeah, but  
19 maybe, something. We just knew it was dark. It just could have  
20 been a log or something. We just, we just --

21 Q. Yeah, and as you saw that, you know, when you couldn't  
22 distinguish what it was, you could see the other employee?

23 A. We, I think we saw the -- we saw something in the track  
24 first.

25 Q. Um-hum.

1 A. Because we couldn't see the truck till we got closer.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yeah, so we couldn't see the truck. There's a tree or  
4 something right there, so we had to get closer to actually see it.

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. So once we saw that, we saw the truck, and as I'm blowing the  
7 crossings, I'm like, what? We could see a person outside that  
8 truck, but --

9 Q. Do you recall what he was wearing?

10 A. I know he had a vest. But what he was actually --

11 Q. No, no, yeah, I mean, I'm looking for, he had a vest.

12 A. Yeah, yes, yes. He had a vest. So, that's really what stuck  
13 out, really, because, you know, I mean to see that vest. I don't  
14 -- just seeing that vest was, seeing him, and I just --

15 Q. So when you saw him, the other employee at the truck, was  
16 your focus with him now, with, on him, or, or did you go back to  
17 where, what was on the track?

18 A. Actually, it was like, I didn't really focus on that, you  
19 know. I just, it was just like okay, we, we see people next to  
20 the track all the time, you know. It was like, okay, an employee  
21 next to the track. After that, we still didn't make heads or  
22 tails of, like, what's in the track by the time I saw that  
23 employee. We still couldn't tell. And, by the time we, I, we  
24 could tell it was an employee, that's when things got kind of  
25 like, for me, like, oh, that's somebody. And after that, it was,

1 like, it was so quick. It was so quick before we knew, like,  
2 that's somebody in the track. That's an employee. So --

3 Q. So, and what, how did you handle the train from there on  
4 forward?

5 A. Oh, I remember trying to attempt to go to emergency, but at  
6 that time, everything is just so, it was like I knew we was going  
7 to hit somebody and not, and I just knew, like, we about to hit  
8 him, and that half a second, thinking that, it was like, do  
9 something. I don't know, coming out the throttle, but I remember,  
10 vaguely do I remember, like, I know we were in suppression once we  
11 stopped, and the whole nine, but I was trying to like, just  
12 through that, but at what time before we hit him, right when I  
13 knew? That part is, like, really fuzzy. That's really fuzzy.

14 Q. Okay at this time I'll pass it to Mr. Gordon.

15 BY MR. GORDON:

16 Q. Okay, thank you. Joe Gordon, NTSB. Sean, I appreciate the  
17 recount of, of what went on. I know that's a difficult thing, you  
18 know. Thanks for walking us through there with as much detail as  
19 you did. You mentioned that it's, it's not uncommon to see  
20 workers around the track. How often on a, you know, say a given  
21 week, how often do you, do you see workers when you're out there,  
22 you run this, this subdivision, is a normal run for you?

23 A. Not so much normal. I'm on the extra board.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So, when engineer is not available, I have to come this way.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I, I can't say how much I come this way, but I, you know, I  
3 know the territory, you know.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. I've been here enough, but. Throughout a week, if I work,  
6 out of seven days, if I worked three or four days that week.  
7 Seeing someone next to the track, and from one destination to the  
8 next, oh, man --

9 Q. Or just an average on the trip.

10 A. -- it's three or four, yeah, I'm trying to brief here, I'm  
11 trying --

12 Q. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

13 A. Oh, man, if we see three or four a day, multiply that by four  
14 or five, so, I --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. That's the best I can come up, I mean, --

17 Q. So, on a, on a give trip if you were going the, the same trip  
18 that you were making this time, three or four --

19 A. Yes, (indiscernible) --

20 Q. -- workers, or workers around the track --

21 A. Somewhere around, yes.

22 Q. Okay. And --

23 A. Could that, that's also like, like by gates, signals, or --

24 Q. Right.

25 A. -- they might not be as close, but they're around the track,

1 yes.

2 Q. Okay, okay. So I don't know you're background, did you come  
3 in to train and engine service? I that what you've done since  
4 you've been with CSX?

5 A. No, I went to engineer school. I started in 2003. Went to  
6 engineer school in February of 2007. Recession hit, cutbacks, I  
7 did not start training again, because I was cut back to a  
8 conductor. The end of 2013, I went back to training on the  
9 territory, running and everything, so. I started back running,  
10 consistently marked in 2014, early 2014 --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- but, at that time I had to work out of Waycross for about  
13 a year and a half, and I think I came back to this, to Savannah,  
14 just working out of Savannah in, that was 14, let's see, maybe  
15 somewhere, maybe late 2015, probably longer, yeah, somewhere late  
16 2015, '16. I started working out of Savannah consistently.  
17 Probably had to go back a week here and there, but I say around  
18 2015, '16 I started running out of here and, but at that time,  
19 coming to Kayce wasn't a, it wasn't -- you didn't come this way a  
20 whole lot because you just had the local.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. That's pretty much, we didn't have a lot of freight trains  
23 going back and forth to Kayce, so, most of my trains were from  
24 Savannah/Waycross, Savannah/Jacksonville. Trains off the log. I  
25 pretty much just did what's on the extra board.

1 Q. Okay, okay. So, yeah, transportation department the whole  
2 time, though. You, you've not worked in any of the other  
3 departments? Engineering or signal or anything like that? You --

4 A. No, sir.

5 Q. Okay. So when you see these workers out on a, on a trip over  
6 this way, three or four time, you know, and understanding  
7 sometimes that's around crossings and things like that, but had,  
8 do you, have you ever had what would be considered a near miss  
9 where the employees don't notice that you're coming and, and, you  
10 know, make a quick trip out of the track, bolt out of the track?  
11 Anything like that?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Not that you, okay.

14 A. Not that I -- no.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Not even as a conductor.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. No, I really, I can't recall.

19 Q. And as far as, and I know this is an uncomfortable thing, but  
20 as far as even not railroad employees, have you ever had a  
21 situation where you've hit a pedestrian, or a trespasser, or  
22 anything like that?

23 A. Oh, no.

24 Q. This is the first, first incident?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. I'm sorry that you had to go through that. That's all I have  
2 right now. I'll pass it to Mr. Ammons.

3 BY MR. AMMONS:

4 Q. Thank you. Sean, Steve Ammons, CSX Safety. So, so Joe hit  
5 on something I was going to, well first of all, let me echo what  
6 Joe said. I'm sorry for what you had to deal with yesterday. I'm  
7 an engineer too, so.

8 A. Oh, okay.

9 Q. I've been involved in a few of those types of situations,  
10 though fortunately not with another employee, but sorry that you  
11 had to be a part of that yesterday. Going back on some of Joe's  
12 last questions there, your, your past history as an engineer, so,  
13 so, 2007 engineer school, so, 11 years ago, back and forth a  
14 little bit, a couple different locations, but you consider  
15 yourself well qualified, well experienced engineer?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. And as far as like an emergency situation like this,  
18 you said that this is really your first time having something like  
19 this, --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. -- where you struck someone, or something like that.

22 A. Yeah. Well, yeah, I, we hit a log truck and actually, I was  
23 training, so I wasn't running.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. And we was on the Brunswick side, and he was coming out of



1 the, the facility, and, but it was a empty log truck and, but we  
2 hit the tail part of it. And the guy got out. He was, you know,  
3 he was looking around, he was fine, I mean. They came and, you  
4 know, just messed the truck up.

5 Q. Still an intense moment when it happens, when it first  
6 happens, correct?

7 A. Oh, yes, definitely, definitely.

8 Q. And, and, and there's a lot of, as an engineer, and again  
9 based off of your experience and your training, there's a lot of  
10 judgment that the engineer has to make approaching an emergency  
11 situation.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Can you talk a little bit about that? What kind of things  
14 that you have to think about, as far as how you handle your train  
15 and react?

16 A. Yes, I will. To this magnitude, I don't know if there's  
17 training for this, because I thought I probably be able to handle  
18 stuff on this train, considering how long I been out here, but in  
19 a situation where, if it's like, I've hit deer and dogs and all  
20 kind of little debris type things, logs, and that part just comes  
21 with it, because I've done it before, you know. And it's like,  
22 you know, okay, that's what that is. And, you know, you just kind  
23 of go through it, but in an emergency situation, we have been  
24 trained to like, hey, you know, stop your train, hit emergency,  
25 but --

1 Q. Well, well let me, let me see if I can clarify my question a  
2 little bit to help you with your answer. So if you're, if you're  
3 trying to make a split-second decision, --

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. -- on how to react to the situation such as this, and, and  
6 from listening to your, your description to Mr. Torres, it was, it  
7 was a last, I mean, bang, bang second before you realized --

8 A. Right.

9 Q. -- that was a person in the track and then your reaction.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Is that correct?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. So even if you had time to try to decide if you needed to  
14 place the train in emergency, what kind of things do you have to  
15 consider before you place a train in emergency?

16 A. The, what we are carry, what we have, you know, --

17 Q. Why, why is that important?

18 A. Because, depending on your territory, like, you know, they  
19 have some chemicals or something like that there, Bam, you know.  
20 The whole town can be, you know, harmed by that. So in a split  
21 second, you, you do have to think about, like, okay yeah, how much  
22 I'm carrying, where we are, things like that and given this  
23 situation, well I won't even say that situation, but a split-  
24 second decision, man --

25 Q. You, you answered my question.

1 A. Okay, yeah.

2 Q. You've got to think about what's in your train, right? Train  
3 forces what happen when a train's put into emergency.

4 A. Yeah. You're thinking about what, yeah, exactly. Like  
5 what's in our train, yeah, exactly.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. So it's, I mean, they, they will tell us, you know, you go to  
8 engineer school, where they do inform us, like, you know, safety,  
9 bring it to a safety, a more safety stop, you know, if you can.  
10 You know, you don't, if you're on a territory where if you slam on  
11 the brakes all of the sudden, but, you know, that could cause a  
12 catastrophe, so.

13 Q. Do you, do you know, and we've got that download, we have a  
14 good idea, and, but I'm just curious, do you know how long it took  
15 you approximately to stop that train once you started applying the  
16 brakes?

17 A. No. Like I said, it was, it was a time where --

18 Q. Do you think it took you a train length? 74 cars? It's okay  
19 if you don't know.

20 A. I, I don't know.

21 Q. I'm just curious. Okay.

22 A. I don't know.

23 Q. When you, and or the conductor, finally identified that that  
24 was a person in the tracks, if you had placed the train in  
25 emergency, you said you were trying to, but if you had actually

1 got the handle over to the emergency position, would you have been  
2 able to stop?

3 A. Oh, no, no, no, no. no. no.

4 Q. Okay. Is it common, and I think you probably hit on this,  
5 but is it pretty common to see trash bags, debris, that kind of  
6 thing in the tracks?

7 A. Yes. Yeah. Not a whole lot, but you do, you do see things  
8 like that.

9 Q. Is it common when you see these roadway workers, or railroad  
10 workers, on or about tracks throughout your day? You said  
11 sometimes, three or four times a day.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Can you describe what you see? What type of PPE you see them  
14 wearing?

15 A. Yeah, mostly you see hard hats, some don't. For the most  
16 part, I think, most have vests on because, like, if you have a  
17 work authority, and we see quite a deal of those, mostly the guys  
18 will have vests on because you just, the vest's so visible and you  
19 see a lot, you know, eight, nine people and they have vests on.

20 Q. When you guys finally identified that that was a person in  
21 the track, could you tell if he was standing? Squatting?

22 A. No, no, he was squatting.

23 Q. He was squatting?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Was his back to you?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Your train messages yesterday, did you guys have any 707 type  
3 work authorities on your train messages?

4 A. No.

5 Q. You rules qualified?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Have you had rules training this year?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Did you learn anything from them?

10 A. Oh, yeah.

11 Q. The, the gentlemen that you saw with, I think you said you  
12 saw one at the truck.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Describe that, I mean, where, what vicinity of the truck, or  
15 in that area was he at?

16 A. I would saw he was driver's side, because the, the truck was  
17 pointing toward the way we was traveling. And, so, I'm not sure  
18 if the door was open, but I do remember seeing him outside the  
19 truck, and his head was pointing that way also. Maybe a little  
20 bit to the right, leaning in the truck like this, or it could have  
21 been straight like this, but all I saw was the back and his back.

22 Q. So you guys were travelling north. The truck was facing,  
23 pointing north?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And he was directionally facing --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- same direction, north as well.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And did he have a vest on?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Had anyone contacted you on the radio, or to tell you  
7 that anybody was in the area working on track or anything like  
8 that?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. Did you ever talk, you or the conductor, that you know  
11 of ever talk to the, to the surviving member that was out there?

12 A. No, I didn't talk to anyone.

13 Q. Okay. That's all I got, thank you.

14 BY DR. HOEPF:

15 Q. Mike with the NTSB. Doing all right Sean? You need a break  
16 or anything?

17 A. No, no, I'm fine.

18 Q. Okay, all right. Yeah, again, it's, sorry I know it's, we  
19 all appreciate you coming to talk to us. I know it's, I know it's  
20 been tough. I think you've pretty much covered things. I've just  
21 got a couple of peppered in questions. So I can't, I can't  
22 estimate distance at all, but, I don't know, maybe if you could  
23 again, did you, did you give us an estimate of just, you know,  
24 when you first, best guess, of when you saw there was some sort  
25 of, something, some sort of obstruction in the track? I mean,

1 could you guess was that, I mean, 500 feet? I mean, I have no  
2 idea, I don't even know what it would be. It would be hard for me  
3 to guess, but could you guess?

4 A. It was more than that.

5 Q. Or maybe there were some features around that where you  
6 could --

7 A. Yeah, that's what I'd like to say, maybe that, you have the  
8 south-end signal, then you have the first crossing is not too far  
9 from there, so, maybe approaching that second crossing, we were  
10 kind of like, you know, what is that? You know, so --

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. -- somewhere around there, maybe, we were like, what is that?  
13 You know, so --

14 Q. Um-hum. So, so the conductor is, he's in the cab with you?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And so you guys were, you're, you're kind of looking, and  
17 you're kind of having this conversation of --

18 A. Well, we're not really, I don't, I can't recall if we ever  
19 said, hey, what is that, to each other.

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. But I think we both kind of looked like, what is that? And  
22 then as we got closer, we were like, that's a log, you know, like  
23 I wasn't thinking it's a log. I don't know if I said it to him.  
24 He was like, and he may have said something like, I don't know  
25 what that is. And as we got closer, like I said, we saw the

1 truck, we saw someone outside the truck, and then --

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. -- still couldn't make heads or tails what was in the track.  
4 And then by that time, it was, we was right up on it, so.

5 Q. Oh, yeah, I know how, totally understand that. Again, I  
6 mean, by the time you actually had visible, visible, you know,  
7 visual confirmation that it was a person there, I mean, any, any  
8 guess on the distance that was?

9 A. No, I, it was close. It was, it was, it was so close, like  
10 by the time I seen that's a person, I was saying we're about to  
11 hit it.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. And, you know.

14 Q. Well, and, and so I don't want to lead you along here, but, I  
15 mean, it sounds to me, you know, you see people working a lot,  
16 but, again I'm kind of leading you here, but, I would a guess that  
17 you kind of recognized the yellow vests and protective, you know,  
18 the reflective gear that people where.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. I mean is that, I mean, --

21 A. I mean, it was -

22 Q. -- or do you look for something different? I mean, when you  
23 see people, is that what you're looking for? Or are you looking  
24 for like --

25 A. I, I guess a little of both, because with the vest



1 (indiscernible), people moving around and things like that, and  
2 since he had dark clothes on, and he just bent over, we were just  
3 like, from our point of view, he was, it was something just still.  
4 You know, it was like it didn't, you know, move or anything like  
5 that. I don't, yeah, if, if he had a vest and he was just bent  
6 over, I can't, I can't say, like. It'd open our eye more because  
7 it's like, you know, we see vests.

8 Q. Um-hum.

9 A. And we like, well it's something, because it's visible, but  
10 what have you. So, like I said, coming up to it, you just  
11 couldn't tell heads or tails of what it was, really.

12 Q. Right. So, like, the, I mean, you can't know for sure, but  
13 had, had he been wearing a vest, probably would've made it a  
14 little bit easier to detect that that, you know, that there was a  
15 person there.

16 A. Not sure, but maybe. I'm, I, the vest is, like, it is, you  
17 can, day and night, you can see a vest pretty good, for the most  
18 part. As much as I been running, you know, you can, you see, you  
19 see, you see the vest and you see them, like, they're doing, if  
20 they're standing, you know, like the guy next to the truck, he was  
21 standing. So you saw the vest, and, like, you know. Maybe if he  
22 was standing, it would have been much more visible. But  
23 considering he was bent over so low, and not a lot of activity  
24 with his, nothing like that, not that I can recall, but --

25 Q. So when you say he was bent over low, I mean, is, okay, so is

1 that like he's kind of like crouched with, you know, his, you  
2 know, quads and his calves kind of like almost, you know, touching  
3 each other, like he's just down?

4 A. (Indiscernible).

5 Q. Or is he sort of like half down, half up?

6 A. Oh man, knees bent, back bent, like that.

7 Q. I mean, obviously, it's tough to tell, but I mean, if, if you  
8 had to guess, I mean, did it look like he was kind of working on  
9 something?

10 A. Yes. I mean, considering, yes. I couldn't tell, like, what  
11 he hands, what he had, or nothing like that, but that position, I  
12 guess I'm just kind of thinking, like, he had to be working, so  
13 why would he just be in the middle of a track, just bent down like  
14 that, you know?

15 Q. Yeah, right.

16 A. Yeah, so I'm, I'm, you know, I just kind of, just figure he  
17 probably working on something.

18 Q. He was in a position consistent with somebody who would be  
19 working.

20 A. Right, exactly, exactly.

21 Q. Yeah, okay, okay, I got you. I know you've already kind of  
22 covered this, but can you kind of walk out anything else visually  
23 you saw as you approached there? You said there was a truck. You  
24 said you saw there was another person standing there with a vest  
25 that was, you said they were facing the truck, or they were facing

1 north?

2 A. Facing north.

3 Q. Facing north.

4 A. The truck was facing north. He was facing north also. Yes,  
5 we saw his back. I mean, yeah, because --

6 Q. Oh, okay. Okay, so you see, you're looking at his back,  
7 okay.

8 A. Yes, yes.

9 Q. I got you, I got you. Did it, did it, could you tell if the  
10 person who was at the truck was doing anything with the truck?  
11 Were they, did they have any equipment? Or machinery, or anything  
12 they were holding, or maneuvering? Or --

13 A. I --

14 Q. -- arms at the sides? Or --

15 A. That part no. I, I, I just know he was outside the truck,  
16 but I couldn't tell if he was actively, you know, doing something,  
17 had something in his hand, or what have you. But I, I do recall  
18 seeing him outside the truck, but.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Did you see any cables or any other equipment, sort of in  
22 the, in the area?

23 A. I couldn't see any.

24 Q. Was there, were there any cables coming from the truck that  
25 you could see?

1 A. No, I, I definitely couldn't tell you that.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I don't know how, really couldn't tell you that.

4 Q. Okay. I appreciate it. I know we're, I know it's tough to  
5 recall. We're just, you know, anything. Just trying to get  
6 anything you can remember. How was the, how was the weather that  
7 day? Yesterday?

8 A. I think it was, sun was out, it might have been, well not so  
9 much sun, I, I, I don't think it was a dull day. It might have, I  
10 don't, it could have been dull, because I remember getting my rain  
11 suit. So by the time we got here, I can't, I think it was,  
12 nothing like, it wasn't like the bottom about to fall out of  
13 nothing like that, you know, --

14 Q. Um-hum.

15 A. -- distinctively, but --

16 Q. I guess what I'm kind of getting at, how was, how was the  
17 visibility? You know, was it, was it you see clearly here? --

18 A. Oh, it, yes, yes. I can see.

19 Q. -- was it hazy, or was it --

20 A. Yeah, I could, I could see, yeah. So, you know, it's about  
21 like 10:00 in the morning, so, you know, I could, you know, I  
22 could see.

23 Q. It's daylight? It's light out.

24 A. Yes, yes, uh-uh.

25 Q. Okay, okay. And then, I just, just want to follow up briefly

1 on something that Steve was talking about. I'm, yeah, I'm not a  
2 railroader, so that, so my understanding is that, you know, you  
3 don't just, any old day, just throw a train into emergency  
4 braking. I mean --

5 A. Right, right, yeah, that's right.

6 Q. -- that's something that, you take that, you know, you take  
7 that decision with some, a grain of salt, or some, you know, you  
8 have to think about something like that?

9 A. What, actually putting the train in emergency?

10 Q. Yeah, yeah. I'm just saying, like, that you wouldn't just do  
11 that just --

12 A. Just for any old thing I see?

13 Q. -- at the drop of a hat?

14 A. No.

15 Q. That would be something you would, okay. And I guess what  
16 I'm getting at with that is, is, you know, you see there's some  
17 debris on the track. I'm just wondering, you know, what is like  
18 the protocol for that? You know, I mean, if it's a trash bag, I  
19 guess, I wouldn't assume you would stop the train?

20 A. Right.

21 Q. You know, what if it was a deer, would you put it in  
22 emergency braking?

23 A. No.

24 Q. If it was a log, would you? I mean, what's kind of -- can  
25 you walk me through, like, what would it take for you to, you

1 know, like, what --

2 A. What, and what keeps playing in my head is that, by the first  
3 time -- by the time we say it was something in the track, if he  
4 would have stood up, I'd a known, like, okay, that's somebody.  
5 You know, like, if it go from here to here -- I don't want to say  
6 I definitely would have known, but it would have triggered  
7 something like, Olay, you know, like that could be something, you  
8 know. Like, I don't know what could be in the middle of the  
9 track, but that can damage an engine, but it -- it may have rung a  
10 bell better if, by the time we, that we thought we saw some  
11 debris, we did see something. But if he was just stand and move,  
12 or something like that, that probably would have been more of a,  
13 like, that's a red light, like, wait a minute, you know. But  
14 considering it was just still, from our distance, it was just  
15 still. And I don't know how tall he was, but, you know, it was  
16 squatting, you know, you rise up, maybe another foot or some  
17 inches or what have you? But I don't know how -- if I could have  
18 definitely say yeah, for sure, if he would have, you know, I --

19 Q. Um-hum. Yeah, and that's (indiscernible) --

20 A. I don't know.

21 Q. It's okay. I was just, I mean, I'm just clarifying that,  
22 again, you wouldn't throw the train in emergency braking because  
23 of a trash bag, and, you know --

24 A. Right.

25 Q. -- it's -- there's some ambiguity in terms of you don't know

1 what it is until you're right upon it. I mean, is that a fair  
2 characterization?

3 A. Yes.

4 DR. HOEPF: Okay, great. Thank you, Sean. I'm going to, I'm  
5 going to pass it on.

6 BY MR. CAMPBELL:

7 Q. Matt Campbell, SMART Transportation Division. Just wanted to  
8 first tell you that you've done a great job in here today, and I'm  
9 sorry, you're having to go through this. I don't have a lot of  
10 questions for you. I think everything's, a lot of it's, you know,  
11 you cleared, but I will, you know, you mentioned earlier that you  
12 hit deer and hit different things, and I myself have hit  
13 mattresses, and it's common to hit debris on the track --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- you know, and I believe Mr. Ammons said you, as an  
16 engineer, you really have to take into consideration what you're  
17 hauling, --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- you know, before you pull that lever. And so you're not  
20 just going to throw the train into emergency and risk a  
21 derailment, or a chemical spill, or whatever, for something's  
22 that's just debris and all that. And if you knew it was a person  
23 or a car, then you would, but, --

24 A. No.

25 Q. -- but anyway. That's all I have.

1 A. Okay.

2 BY MR. MORRISON:

3 Q. I just, Roy Morison, BMWED. I'm not familiar with the  
4 territory around here, but you said you saw the, you said you guys  
5 first noticed something in the track two crossings after the  
6 south-bound signal, so, from when you saw that, to the moment of  
7 impact, over or under, do you think that a mile, over and under?  
8 More than a mile?

9 A. By the time we noticed debris, I would say, it'd a probably,  
10 it'd a have to be under a mile, or --

11 Q. Just under, under a mile?

12 A. If that, my best guess.

13 Q. That's really the only question I have.

14 BY MR. DUMEY:

15 Q. Randy Dumey, BLET. I think you might have of done been asked  
16 this, but when you seen that guy at the truck, do you recall if he  
17 was rolling up cables, or --

18 A. No, no I can't.

19 Q. -- doing anything? Were you over that crossing when you seen  
20 him? Or before that crossing, before then, before you hit him?  
21 There's a crossing there, I guess would be south --

22 A. Um-hum, yes, sir. Oh, you're saying the crossing, the last  
23 crossing there, where the incident happened? When we hit him?

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. That last crossing?



1 Q. It would probably be there, south of that post office.

2 A. Um-hum. Yeah. I, man, I was blowing the horn and, because  
3 there's multiple crossings, so I lay on it because there's so many  
4 buildings and cars can just come around, so I try to -- I always  
5 come through there blowing hard. We see the truck before we got  
6 to the crossing. I can't --

7 Q. I know from when we was out there a while ago, like south of  
8 there, maybe three-quarters of a mile or so, it looks like it  
9 comes up hill.

10 A. Right, it has a little -- yes.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. So, might a been --

13 Q. So you think you seen him when you crested that grade, or  
14 after that, or?

15 A. I don't think so, I, because of this is something that, you  
16 know, we had to, you know, before we, well we, because of the  
17 truck and it's position, right at that crossing, and maybe, I --

18 Q. So you noticed the truck, probably at that crossing, first.

19 A. Um-hum, yeah.

20 Q. Okay. When the, you got close enough, that you could tell,  
21 was trying to distinguish if it was a trash bag or anything. Do  
22 you see any dust flying, or sparks or anything? From a grinder?

23 A. Not that I can recall.

24 Q. Okay. That's all I have right now.

25 BY MR. WOLFE:

1 Q. I'm Nathan Wolfe, FRA. How much rest did you have before  
2 going on duty at 0700 Thursday?

3 A. Oh, I was -- I had been off since, I think my last on-duty  
4 day was that Sunday. I got home Sunday evening and made it to my  
5 off-days, and first, by the time I came off my off-days, it was  
6 the first train I was called for.

7 Q. And what was your actual on-duty location?

8 A. Savannah, Georgia.

9 Q. You mentioned that once you saw the truck and then you saw  
10 the roadway worker beside the truck, did you, do you remember if  
11 you rang the bell once you saw a roadway worker? Did you turn the  
12 bell on?

13 A. I couldn't --

14 Q. Not the horn, but the bell.

15 A. Oh, the bell, automatically was coming on, once you, --

16 Q. It was?

17 A. Yes, once you blow the horn.

18 Q. Yeah, okay.

19 A. The, the bell automatically comes on. Yes, sir.

20 Q. Okay. And why is your, why was your train only good for 50  
21 mile an hour?

22 A. For freight, that's the, yes, considering what we had, --

23 Q. It's just based on your consist?

24 A. Yes, a lot of times, yes, um hmm.

25 Q. It's all I've got.

1 BY MR. GORDON:

2 Q. Yeah, just, probably just a couple of statements and, you  
3 know, just kind of seeing if, if I'm characterizing it right.  
4 And, and I know that you just answered one of the questions that I  
5 had, but, what, what's the training when you see workers on or  
6 about the track? What are you --

7 A. Oh, we blow the horn, even if, even if they have  
8 authorization to be there, and we have to talk to them --

9 Q. Right.

10 A. -- and they know we're coming, and they say, okay, you are  
11 clear to pass by. We still blow the horn. We still have a 14-L,  
12 we have to blow to pass them, so.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. We always blowing, even if they're not, even if they're not  
15 on our messages, that somebody's going to be in this area to  
16 work --

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. -- once we see them, we, you know, I'm blowing like, hey, you  
19 know, like (makes sound) you don't have to blow a 14-L, but we do  
20 blow consistently all the way through it, you know, even if  
21 they're not on the messages to operate in that area, so.

22 Q. And, and you were blowing the horn continuous -

23 A. Oh, yes.

24 Q. -- as you got closer to this --

25 A. Oh, yeah.

1 Q. -- especially once you realized that it was, that it was a  
2 person.

3 A. Yes, because, like I said, those, and that area, it's just  
4 such a bad area. Some of those building are right near the track,  
5 and some of those cars, even though they see the gates, they have  
6 pedestrians and people just, just want to try to get by, beat the  
7 train, so. You know, that's what a lot of the guys and our DSLE,  
8 is the guys that trained us, and their like, in this area, certain  
9 area, they're going to say, hey, blow this horn, because they  
10 going to try to, you know, just, you know, so.

11 Q. Um-hum. Yeah, and so, you know, just to let you know, when  
12 we're, when we're talking about the, you know, we're trying to get  
13 a perspective of what you're seeing, but, but we also, or what you  
14 saw, but we, we also understand that when, when you're our there  
15 running a train, you know, operating a train, you're, you're  
16 looking at this track structure that's uniform, for the most part.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. You know, the cross ties are spaced uniformly, the rails are  
19 a certain distance apart and everything looks uniform. So when  
20 you see something that's not uniform, then that's when you start  
21 to evaluate it. So that's, that's most likely the reason that you  
22 picked this up as soon as you did.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. You knew this is something that's not uniform.

25 A. Right.

1 Q. But then, at the same time, you know, with roadway worker  
2 protection, and I know with you being in, in transportation, you  
3 know, you, you're probably not familiar with all the ways that  
4 roadway workers are, have available to protect themselves, but one  
5 of the ways, most ways keep the trains from the workers. Okay, so  
6 you, so you've got a 707 authority that you've got on your  
7 bulletin. You've got stop boards. You've got to talk to a  
8 roadway worker in charge before you operate through that area, so  
9 everybody knows you're coming because they just gave you  
10 permission through. Then you've got, you know, an exclusive track  
11 occupancy where they'll get a form --

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: EC-1.

13 BY MR. GORDON:

14 Q. -- EC-1, they'll get an EC-1 like you guys would get to  
15 operate. Only they're getting a block from signal to signal. And  
16 then, you know, you can't come in there because they're holding  
17 it. So there's another form of on-track safety that requires that  
18 the workers watch for the train. Their -- they don't have any  
19 formal protection. Their protection is, we've got to get out of  
20 the way of the train.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. So they're only required to be in their place of safety,  
23 whatever that may be, 15 seconds before your train arrives. So,  
24 you know, there are times, and, and I'm just telling you this, you  
25 know, to, you know, to put your mind at ease. You have to be

1 thinking that they're going to comply with the rules.

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. You know, your train can't go into an emergency any time you  
4 see a worker on or about the track, right? So, you know, just to  
5 let you know, you know, there are different ways that they protect  
6 themselves and, you know, and in this case --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. -- you know, fully understand the position that he was in and  
9 what you were seeing, and, you know, I thank you again for what  
10 you were able to do, and, and again just say, sorry, sorry that  
11 you had to go through that. That's all I've got.

12 BY MR. AMMONS:

13 Q. This is Ammons again. Just one, just one follow-up. I  
14 apologize for being a little long winded and set this question up,  
15 but reaching back to your experience again, up until yesterday,  
16 it's apparent from you saying that you had never had an emergency  
17 situation like this, that you never hit another person that was on  
18 or about the tracks.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Is that correct?

21 A. Yeah, yes.

22 Q. So with that said, two-part question, so with that said, when  
23 you, before yesterday, positively identified someone that was on  
24 or about the tracks that, that was fouling track. What did you  
25 do? You blew the horn?

1 A. Say that again, I'm sorry.

2 Q. Before yesterday, whenever you have identified, I'm assuming,  
3 being an engineer --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- like you had, you've seen people on or about tracks --

6 A. Right, right.

7 Q. -- that you're operating a train, and when you see that,  
8 you --

9 A. Yes. Yes, even if they're not on the track, even they like,  
10 we have people just hobos, oh yeah, people are going to lay on the  
11 tracks or what have you, we blow, I'm blowing.

12 Q. And you're, you're sounding the horn, correct?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And so, sometimes, those people, if it's like my experience,  
15 past experience, sometimes those people immediately move, and  
16 sometimes they don't.

17 A. That's right.

18 Q. But until yesterday, had always removed themselves from harm.  
19 Right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. So it wouldn't make sense, would it make sense in your mind  
22 to place a train in emergency every time you saw someone on or  
23 about the tracks and you positively identify someone?

24 A. Place it in emergency? Because seeing it in the distance,  
25 no. I mean, like, if somebody trying to come across, I'm blowing,

1 blowing and it look like they going to keep coming, and that part,  
2 that's just like, Whoa, they're not going to make it, they're  
3 going to try it, maybe, but if they're way off or something like  
4 that, I'm not, no, no.

5 Q. Yes, that just thought, brought another thought in my mind.  
6 Yesterday, when you, when you and or the conductor finally  
7 identified, that is a person.

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. Did you even have time to see if he heard you? Or realize,  
10 if he heard the horn or not?

11 A. No, he didn't have time, because I remember saying to myself,  
12 he don't hear, he doesn't, he, he, he doesn't hear the horn. And  
13 as quick as I thought it, you know, we was just right there, you  
14 now.

15 Q. It was over with, what you thought.

16 A. Yeah, yeah, I mean.

17 Q. Okay. That's, that's all I got.

18 BY DR. HOEPF:

19 Q. All right. Mike again, NTSB. Just a couple quick follow-up  
20 questions or you. I absolutely know we've covered this, so I, I  
21 don't, hate to beat this to death, but the individual you saw  
22 standing by the truck, again, just to the best of your  
23 recollection, wearing a vest, they were facing north? And so, as  
24 in, you know --

25 A. Along, the, yeah, the, the way we were moving, he was facing



1 that way.

2 Q. Okay. I'm just, I'm just, I'm just trying to piece together  
3 in my mind what, why he would be looking north. I mean, was there  
4 anything to -- because the truck was, would have been then sort of  
5 east of the track, right?

6 A. Yeah --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The truck, was facing north.

8 MR. LOTT: It was on the east-side.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Joe, you noticed that the truck --  
10 the truck is facing north. It's facing north.

11 BY DR. HOEPF:

12 Q. All right, so, if he was facing the truck, he would have been  
13 facing east, and so he wasn't facing the truck, he was facing  
14 north, like looking --

15 A. Oh, okay, well, okay, the front of the truck is facing north.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. So, I guess, I can say he was facing the direction the truck,  
18 the truck was in, like the hood --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- was facing north. He was like, you know, facing that way,  
21 because all we could see was his back, maybe his side, but mostly  
22 his back.

23 Q. Okay, okay.

24 A. That way, yeah.

25 Q. Can you tell if he was walking? Or, maybe just standing? I

1 mean, you can -- I understand you were going by quickly, but  
2 just --

3 A. Yeah, I can't -- if he was taking a few little steps, or  
4 something like that, but, as, as for moving? I can't say how much  
5 he was, yeah, that's --

6 Q. Okay, yeah, I don't, I -- that's totally okay. I just wanted  
7 to clarify it. Okay, and then, just a couple basic human  
8 performance questions. Don't take any offense to any of this. Do  
9 you, do you wear glasses or contacts?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Is your, is your, do you have any issues with your vision?

12 A. No, I actually had a, I had my recertification where I had to  
13 go to get my physical and everything checked out fine. I just had  
14 that in April.

15 Q. All right. And then any other conditions, medical or  
16 otherwise, that your have affected your ability to do your job?

17 A. No, no, no.

18 Q. Okay, excellent. Thanks Sean.

19 MR. CAMPBELL: I do not have any questions.

20 MR. MORRISON: I don't have any questions.

21 MR. DUMEY: Randy, I don't have any either.

22 BY MR. TORRES:

23 Q. Okay, I just have some basic questions. Do you remember the  
24 last 3 days of your work schedule?

25 A. The last 3 days?

1 Q. Yeah, prior to the accident?

2 A. Prior to this accident? I was off. I went to the store a  
3 few times, probably had to the grocery store, but nothing like  
4 going out. I didn't --

5 Q. Yeah, but you have sufficient rest, between trips?

6 A. Oh, yes, yes, yes. Like I said, I was off Sunday, yesterday,  
7 Friday. Yeah, that was the first, that was the first time I went  
8 back to work since my off days.

9 Q. Okay. Do you take any prescriptions, or drugs, or non-  
10 prescription drugs?

11 A. No.

12 Q. No.

13 A. Is there anything that you would like to add, you know, that  
14 might help, you know, increase safety in a situation like that? I  
15 mean, any ideas?

16 Q. Yes. You can just have it on the messages that, even if they  
17 don't have a 707, somebody's out there working, Dispatcher, you  
18 just have it on the messages. Just saying, hey, they're going to  
19 be working right here. Something like that, just. That should  
20 have never happened. Should have never happened.

21 BY MR. DUMEY

22 Q. If the dispatcher would have told you earlier in the trip,  
23 that they was going to be out there in this area, would you have  
24 come through there any different?

25 A. Oh, yes, big time.

1 Q. So it would help if --

2 A. Yes,

3 Q. -- you had a heads-up where you could be --

4 A. Definitely, definitely.

5 MR. TORRES: Okay, there's no further questions, this will  
6 conclude the interview. Thank you.

7 BY MR. AMMONS:

8 Q. Well, I do have a question. I'm sorry. Based on Randy's  
9 question. So how differently would you have come through there?  
10 This is Ammons. So you would have come through different?

11 A Well, if they said someone was supposed to be out there --

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. -- and then, considering we saw something, some kind of  
14 debris --

15 Q. So that's based off of you seeing something. You would have  
16 come through there differently.

17 A. Yes, considering --

18 Q. But you wouldn't have been planning to come through  
19 differently?

20 A. If, if they, if he would have said, okay, someone's going to  
21 be at the north-end of Estill --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- and I see, and if we're coming in, I probably won't come  
24 in as hot, and, I mean, if you can run your line of speed, and  
25 they just saying, look out, then if you -- if they're telling us

1 not to decrease our speed, then, you know, it's just like, all  
2 right, look out.

3 But mostly, most, I think all of the, like, sometime they say  
4 where the crossings, they was like, hey, go prepared, no faster  
5 than 15 miles an hour, looking out for traffic, things of that  
6 nature. So I would think, if they're saying, hey, we've got some  
7 people out there working, you know, be mindful. But we see that  
8 already without then telling us, you know. So, but if he would  
9 just say, hey, somebody's going to be working out here, and if we  
10 just, if we -- even if we're coming line speed, seeing something  
11 like that, once we couldn't make heads or tails, that definitely  
12 would have been, like, okay.

13 Q. So you're saying, you would have reacted differently once you  
14 saw something, and you, prior to that had a warning been --

15 A. If they, prior to that they telling us to have a warning, --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Yes. Yes. Yes.

18 Q. That's, that's all I got. Thank you.

19 BY MR. GORDON:

20 Q. Sorry, sorry. So, just while we're on the topic, last  
21 question, does it make sense to slow trains down when workers are  
22 in the area, do you think? I mean, I'm not saying that's the,  
23 that's not -- I'm not asking if that is a protocol or not. I'm  
24 just saying, you know, from your prospective, would it be safer if  
25 you, if you knew like a zone coming, and you would, and, you know,

1 you'd have orders to slow down as you allow those work areas?

2 A. If someone's working and we don't know it, and we see workers  
3 out there, slowing your train down wouldn't be bad. But we see it  
4 so much, you know, but one thing you can't do is get conditioned  
5 to it like, you know, everything is just going to be the same,  
6 like yesterday. You can't do that, not at all. But if we can --  
7 you know, I mean, it depends on how fast we're going. If we're  
8 going like 50 miles an hour and here it is. But then 500 feet  
9 coming around a curve, when we see some workers, you know, how  
10 much -- what can we do, you know. It's like we're going so fast,  
11 just to slow down. But, you know, once we see them, we're blowing  
12 the horn, you know, even if they, like I said, even if they -- I  
13 don't care who, what it is. I mean, like, we saw a dog and I'm  
14 trying to blow the horn, you know, like, hey, get out of the way,  
15 you know, so --

16 Q. Um-hum.

17 A. Anything like that, you know, we just, we're trying not to,  
18 you know, hurt anything or anybody, especially, you know, anybody,  
19 so --

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. But that, if you can see them off in a distance, and if it's  
22 a rule to come out and say, hey, slow down, I'll call them on the  
23 radio, or something like that, you know. That could help.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. Like, yeah.

1 Q. Thanks.

2 MR. TORRES: Everybody good? Okay, this will conclude the  
3 interview. Thank you very much.

4 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

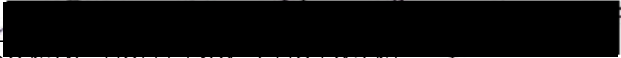
IN THE MATTER OF:            RAIL WORKER FATALITY,  
                                 ESTILL, SOUTH CAROLINA,  
                                 NOVEMBER 30, 2018  
                                 Interview of Sean Lott

ACCIDENT NO.:                RRD19FRF002

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.

  
Deborah Dowling Swelgart  
Transcriber