



Issued: December 2, 2022

Preliminary Report: RRD23FR002

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this report will be corrected when the final report has been completed.

PSC Group Train Conductor Fatality

Beaumont, Texas
October 28, 2022

On October 28, 2022, about 12:02 a.m. local time, a PSC Group train conductor was struck and killed by train 3832 during a reverse movement at the ExxonMobil refinery plant in Beaumont, Texas.¹ The train consisted of 1 locomotive and 19 tank cars. The conductor, part of a four-person PSC Group train crew, was protecting (spotting) the train movement from the ground to position the rear tank car near the end of track 7 for product loading. (See figure.) Visibility conditions at the time of the accident were dark with clear skies, and the temperature was 64°F.

¹ (a) PSC Group (formerly known as Petroleum Services Corporation) provides contract railroad switching services to ExxonMobil. (b) Track 7 in the area of the accident is track embedded in concrete.



Figure. Overhead image of the accident location at the ExxonMobil refinery plant. (Source: Google Earth Pro.)

In postaccident interviews with National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigators, the engineer stated that the conductor radioed for the engineer to reverse the train a distance of five cars.² The conductor then requested an additional distance of three cars. The engineer lost radio communication with the conductor after the three-car request and, hearing no response from the conductor, placed the train into emergency braking in accordance with PSC Group operating procedures. An ExxonMobil employee who was scheduled to complete product loading on the tank cars arrived at the loading area and found the deceased conductor. He immediately notified the ExxonMobil control center to dispatch the refinery plant's response team.

While on scene, NTSB investigators photographed and documented the accident scene, collected data from the locomotive's forward- and inward-facing image recorder and event recorder, examined the train's air brake equipment, obtained recorded radio communications between crew members, and completed interviews. The NTSB's investigation is ongoing. Future investigative activities will

² Railroad personnel commonly use railcar lengths to communicate distances during switching operations.

focus on PSC Group's procedures for tank car switching operations and ExxonMobil's procedures on upkeep of the facility in the area of the accident.

Parties to this investigation include the Federal Railroad Administration, PSC Group, and ExxonMobil.