



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
**Investigative Hearing**

Norfolk Southern Railway general merchandise freight train 32N  
derailment with subsequent hazardous material release and fires,  
in East Palestine, Ohio, on February 3, 2023

<b>GROUP</b>	G
<b>EXHIBIT</b>	
29	

Agency / Organization

**NTSB**

Title

# **Interview Transcript – NS Conductor Trainee February 5, 2023**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN DERAILMENT  
IN EAST PALESTINE, OHIO  
ON FEBRUARY 3, 2023

Accident No.: RRD23MR005

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Interview of: JAVON JORDAN, Conductor Trainee  
Norfolk Southern

Sunday,  
February 5, 2023

APPEARANCES:

ZACH ZAGATA, Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

JOSEPH CEYROLLES, Local Chairman  
SMART Transportation Division

DAVE GOODEN, Division Superintendent  
Keystone Division  
Norfolk Southern Railroad

KRAIG BARNER, General Manager, Northern Region  
Norfolk Southern Railroad

JOSEPH CLAY, Operating Practice Inspector  
Federal Railroad Administration District 2

JEFF MITCHELL, National Safety Director  
SMART Transportation Division

SHAWN LAWTON, Investigator  
Safety Task Force  
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

DEWAYNE DEHART, General Chairman  
Safety Task Force  
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

JORDAN GIBSON, Observer  
Federal Railroad Administration

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. ZAGATA: Good afternoon, my name is Zach Zagata and I am  
3 the NTSB ops groups chairman for this accident. We're conducting  
4 the interview on February 5th, 2023, with Javon (ph.) Jordan, who  
5 works for NS. This interview is in conjunction with NTSB's  
6 investigation of the accident near East Palestine, Ohio, the NTSB  
7 accident reference number is RRD23MR005. The purpose of the  
8 investigation is to increase safety, not to assign fault, blame,  
9 or liability.

10 Before we begin our interview and questions, let's go around  
11 the table and introduce ourselves. Please spell your last name  
12 and title. I'll start off and then pass to my right. Again, my  
13 name is Zach Zagata, Z-a-g-a-t-a, and I am the NTSB operations  
14 group chairman.

15 MR. JORDAN: My name is Javon Jordan, J-o-r-d-a-n, and I am  
16 the conductor trainee for Norfolk Southern.

17 MR. CEYROLLES: Joe Ceyrolles, Conway West, local chairman,  
18 conductor, flow-back engineer. My last name is spelled  
19 C-e-y-r-o-l-l-e-s.

20 MR. GOODEN: David Gooden, G-o-o-d-e-n, Division  
21 Superintendent with Norfolk Southern on the Keystone Division.

22 MR. BARNER: Kraig Barner, B-a-r-n-e-r, General Manager,  
23 Norfolk Southern.

24 MR. CLAY: Joseph Clay, FRA, inspector, District 2. C-l-a-y.

25 MR. MITCHELL: Jeff Mitchell, M-i-t-c-h-e-l-l, SMART

1 Transportation, National Safety Team.

2 MR. LAWTON: Shawn Lawton, L-a-w-t-o-n, BLET safety task  
3 force investigator.

4 MR. DEHART: Dewayne Dehart, D-e-h-a-r-t, General Chairman,  
5 BLET, and I'm a member of the task force, observer.

6 MR. GIBSON: Jordan Gibson, G-i-b-s-o-n, FRA observer.

7 MR. ZAGATA: Okay, thank you.

8 Do we have your permission to record our discussion with you  
9 today?

10 MR. JORDAN: Yes.

11 MR. ZAGATA: Thank you. Do you understand the transcripts  
12 will be part of the public docket, as such we cannot guarantee any  
13 confidentiality?

14 MR. JORDAN: Yes.

15 MR. ZAGATA: Okay, thank you.

16 INTERVIEW OF JAVON JORDAN

17 BY MR. ZAGATA:

18 Q. To start off with, if you could give us an overview of your  
19 railroad career.

20 A. Well, I started with Norfolk on October 24th, I started my  
21 training down in McDonough, we did a 3-week training program and I  
22 started the on-the-job training October 25th, I believe, was my  
23 first train out. Overall, you know, I had no previous experience  
24 as far as the training and I believe that down with McDonough I  
25 had a pretty -- you know, pretty good general knowledge as far as,

1 you know, just the basics. First trip out, you know, was the  
2 actual, you know, real on-the-job experience, you know, so I'm  
3 currently still learning everything, you know, still learning, as  
4 it goes on. So, you know, everything that happened is kind of,  
5 you know, new but as far as, you know, I believe the training that  
6 we received was well enough to kind of prepare before the  
7 situation. So other than that, you know, that's why I'm actually,  
8 you know, from my training, I'm kind of -- well, actually, I am,  
9 you know, just lucky and -- lucky to be alive out of that  
10 situation, so --

11 Q. I appreciate it. So this was your first trip?

12 A. This wasn't my first trip, this was like the first major  
13 incident that I experienced with the railroad.

14 Q. How many other trips have you made prior to this one, do you  
15 think? Just ballpark.

16 A. Ballpark, I couldn't really tell you. I know I've been  
17 making trips for about 2 -- for about 2 months, you know, I've  
18 probably done about 2 months' worth of trips, you know, there and  
19 back.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: At least 15, right, Javon?

21 MR. JORDAN: Yeah, at least 15. Maybe at least 20, about 20  
22 trips, 20. I would say about 20 to 25. It might have been about  
23 25 trips now that I think about it, because we needed to have at  
24 least 20 trips to and from, in order for our training program, we  
25 needed to have these 20 trips to and from and I do -- I did get

1 the 20 trips to and from and I did five extra to be marked up, so  
2 -- and I'm at that -- well, I'm at the period to be marked up, so  
3 it was about 25 trips.

4 BY MR. ZAGATA:

5 Q. Okay. Had you worked with this crew before? Did you know  
6 them?

7 A. No, I have not worked with this crew before.

8 Q. Okay. All right, now if you could give us an overview of  
9 your day from when you went on duty up until derailment and after.

10 A. Okay. So the crew that I went to Toledo with, it wasn't the  
11 same crew that I had coming back because, you know, we're advised  
12 they don't want us to catch any -- you know, as being new, they  
13 don't want us to catch any intramural trains, they want us to  
14 catch, you know, freight trains, I guess, to get the experience  
15 of, you know, any type of work that needs to be done.

16 So when I was rested, I want to say maybe an hour after I was  
17 rested, I made the call, the crew call, to be placed on the next  
18 freight train coming out. So they called me about -- I checked  
19 and it was supposed to be ordered around 1:30, was supposed to be  
20 the order for that train. Well, it was due -- when they called  
21 me, they called me about 11:20-ish and gave me a time of 10:15, so  
22 I don't know why the time limit changed from, you know, 1:30 to  
23 1:15. But, you know, I got dressed and I went out and I met with  
24 the crew and then the crew that was there, apparently they were  
25 kind of shocked that -- they were originally called for a



1 different train, the 576, and somehow they ended up on the 30  
2 train. So with that, I mean, that was the discussion that we had  
3 when we got on the train, we just trying to figure out how did  
4 that happen and what -- in the midst of that, the train arrived,  
5 you know, we went and we got our paperwork, we went to the consist  
6 to see what we had on the consist, we checked the consist, we  
7 checked the brake slips and everything and made sure everything  
8 was, you know, operating.

9 So we started to pull and everything, everything was going  
10 well, we was discussing, you know, we're going over the speed  
11 limits again, you know, seeing -- you know, make sure I know the  
12 speed limits and pinpoint certain areas out, you know, and I was  
13 asking questions and as, you know, we're pulling in, everything --  
14 everything was going well, I was calling the signals, as I was  
15 supposed to, listening out for the detectors, repeat back the  
16 detectors, you know, all the detectors we was getting no defect,  
17 no defects, I was in the -- we were a long train, we're a very  
18 long train, we had about a hundred 50 cars, we had a DP in the  
19 middle and also two engines up front.

20 So I was actually very alert as to listening out for  
21 detectors because of how long we were going up and down those  
22 hills. I would say we passed detector number 60.9, you know, and  
23 I remember there was a train that was actually passing by and they  
24 had got the detector and no defect, and we also got the detector,  
25 no defect, I was listening to that. About the same time I was

1 paying attention to, like, the speeds, you know, seeing how fast  
2 we were going up and down the hills, so I do remember looking and  
3 seeing that we were out like maybe between 20 -- we were between  
4 27 to 31 miles per hour. At some point, I did -- I believe I seen  
5 21 miles per hour. At the time of the derailment, we went -- we  
6 was going through East Palestine. As we was going over the  
7 detector, we got the -- we got the critical alert and -- and when  
8 we got the critical alert, we said that's us, that's the critical  
9 alert, we went to bring it down to, you know, bring it down to a  
10 safe stop.

11 In the midst of that, we went into emergency. We went into  
12 emergency, when that happened, first thing I knew from training  
13 was I got on the radio, called emergency, emergency, emergency,  
14 gave the milepost, engine, you know, where we were, then tell the  
15 dispatcher, alert the dispatcher. Once we alerted the dispatcher,  
16 we alerted wayside and that's when, you know, wayside got on there  
17 and they said they didn't get the alert yet, they didn't know  
18 exactly where -- the alert yet.

19 They asked the number and all that, they was going to give us  
20 the report and they looked and they said that apparently --  
21 wayside said they got the -- they had got a hot wheel detector  
22 alert or said something about the hot wheel detector alert was  
23 running hotter, it wasn't running that hot, they picked up later,  
24 something that happened with it picking up and they didn't call us  
25 on that, we don't know why they didn't call us on that, but

1 apparently, they said that this -- the accident that they got was  
2 101, that's the accident number, you know, they gave us the --  
3 they gave us the number of the car that it's supposed to be and I  
4 realized they said it was including the two engines, it was  
5 supposed to be number 20, number 25 or something like that,  
6 including the two engines, or 23 including the two engines. He  
7 gave me the car number and I looked at the car number and I'll  
8 also add, I was at it, too, and I seen that possibly right next to  
9 those, what the two next to those were, you know, the HAZMATs that  
10 we have on the train.

11         So you know, that being said, I automatically took them into  
12 account, okay, this possibly may be the HAZMAT train that  
13 derailed, I'm going to pull out my HAZMAT to see, you know, what's  
14 the steps, you know, what to do in a situation and, you know, we  
15 discussed this, the dispatcher telling us stuff and letting us  
16 know, you know, possibly, you know, they had got a report,  
17 possibly might've been a fire.

18         So I -- you know, the conductor, you know, got up and got  
19 ready to walk out, you know, I wasn't able to walk out with him  
20 because of your experience and so as he went to walk out, you  
21 know, I just decided to look and I seen cars that was derailed and  
22 I seen flames, so I decided to call the conductor back and told  
23 him he needs to, you know, cut away, you know, cut away and move  
24 forward and he came back on the engine and we called the  
25 dispatcher and asked the dispatcher what to do and it says, by the

1 law, it says we supposed to cut away and the dispatcher said yeah,  
2 you need to cut away and we cut away, he pulled up, and we just  
3 basically sat there and was just discussing, trying to figure out  
4 what to do next and I tried to get a hold of the trainmaster by  
5 phone to see, you know, if we needed to pull away farther or, you  
6 know, what the status was. He didn't answer, he was en route.  
7 Called Joe, you know, alert Joe of the situation and we just -- at  
8 that point we just kind of sat there to wait to see, you know, how  
9 to proceed.

10 And once we got the go-ahead, you know, they called us,  
11 finally called us and told us to proceed back, we proceed back,  
12 well, we're on the train and let them know that -- does the  
13 superintendent want to meet with us and, you know, went up to see  
14 the superintendent, you know, he wanted to make sure we was okay  
15 and we went over to Woodley (ph.) Hospital to get, you know, to  
16 get drug tested. We had to take a urine sample and a blood test  
17 and basically, that was the day.

18 Q. I appreciate that. Where were you positioned at on the  
19 train?

20 A. We were going -- we were on Main 1.

21 Q. No, but where were you at in the cab, where were you?

22 A. I was in the conductor's seat.

23 Q. Okay. Where was the conductor at?

24 A. The conductor was behind me --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- on the -- in the secondary seat or whatever it's called.

2 Q. Okay. What did the wayside say when you called or they  
3 called you or -- can you go over that one more time for me?

4 A. We called wayside --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- when it happen, you know, we contacted wayside to figure  
7 out, you know, to get the accident number and to figure out, you  
8 know, if that was the accident that we got and what was -- what  
9 car it was.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. We called them and then figure out, you know, with the alert,  
12 you know, about the alert, what was the alert reading and  
13 everything. When we called them, they said they haven't gotten  
14 the alert yet, they haven't gotten the alert yet and to stand by  
15 to see what's going on and then that's when they came back and  
16 said that hey, this is the same alert, we had an alert on one of  
17 -- I mean, on axle 101, the alert that we had, it's reading that  
18 you guys had a hot wheel, you know, at 60.9 that came in late or  
19 something, they said something about it coming in or they didn't  
20 give it to us because it read no defects, in the cab, you know, it  
21 read no defects to us so that's why we continued on.

22 Q. So just to clarify, that would've been the detector just --

23 A. Before, right.

24 Q. -- just before.

25 A. Right.

1 Q. He said you were running not on that one, but you guys didn't  
2 get it.

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Right.

6 Q. I appreciate that. Do you feel like your training up to this  
7 point prepared you for a situation like this?

8 A. I want to say yes, I don't know if it's because of me, as a  
9 person, and me paying attention to the light, you know, there was  
10 a situation similar that happen, a bad situation in North  
11 Carolina, somewhere in North Carolina, with a HAZMAT, chloride  
12 train, and basically like the whole community, practically a lot  
13 of them died. I kind of, in my head, figured out why and kind of  
14 thought about what would happen in this situation, what do they  
15 do, you know, what -- how could this be prevented.

16 So, you know, if you ever go in emergency, what to do, and I  
17 always just had that in my head and it just happened to go in  
18 emergency and I just -- I did exactly what, you know -- what they  
19 say about the rules that should happen, you know, you go through  
20 the process of calling an emergency on the radio, that include  
21 alerting the crews around us and I knew that we had a crew that  
22 was near us and I talked to that conductor and, you know, he said  
23 that they had picked up a signal, a restriction signal, and it  
24 dropped and he wasn't sure why until he heard me call the  
25 emergency on the radio which gave him the alert, the heads-up. So

1 as they was riding past -- by the way, they were actually looking  
2 out to see, you know, if they could see anything and they actually  
3 had cars on their rail, so they couldn't go any farther. I don't  
4 think that they seen the flames or the fire. I happened to spot  
5 the flames and the -- I happened to spot the flames and when I  
6 called the conductor back, as he was walking, he looked up and he  
7 seen them and he came back to the head end.

8 Q. That's --

9 A. So --

10 Q. Oh, go ahead.

11 A. -- the question that you have, sorry.

12 Q. No, that answered that. So as far as communication with the  
13 conductor on the other train, that was over the radio you called  
14 him?

15 A. Yes, it was over the radio --

16 Q. Okay, okay.

17 A. -- with the other conductor.

18 Q. Do you feel like, as far as the emergency response, they got  
19 there pretty quick or how did you feel about that?

20 A. I won't say emergency response. We didn't receive an  
21 emergency response. I mean, where we were positioned, you know,  
22 they was blocked off, you know, there was -- we couldn't see, we  
23 couldn't see anything, you know, we were up ahead. All I can see  
24 looking out, I could just see flames and I could see like -- and  
25 it was dark, so I could see, it looked like there was cars on the

1 rail and flames. But eventually, I did see -- I eventually did  
2 start to see lights and stuff coming down the road, this was  
3 probably -- it was -- it was a delay in that, but prior, it  
4 might've already been, you know, that might've been extra backup,  
5 so --

6 Q. So as far as checking your status, did the dispatcher ask if  
7 everybody is okay as far as the crew or something or --

8 A. No.

9 Q. Did anybody ask you as far as the status of the crew?

10 A. I'm trying to think if the trainmaster got on the radio and  
11 he asked that. I think the trainmaster might've --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- called and said are you guys all right, I think that  
14 might've been -- I'm trying to recall it, but I do think the  
15 trainmaster did.

16 MR. ZAGATA: Okay. Appreciate it. That's all I got for now,  
17 I'll pass it to my right.

18 MR. GOODEN: This is Dave Gooden with Norfolk Southern, no  
19 questions.

20 BY MR. BARNER:

21 Q. Kraig Barner, Norfolk Southern, just a couple, really just  
22 clarification. Start date, you said your start date in McDonough  
23 was October 24th?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What was your start date of field training? Out here --



1 A. Okay, let me see.

2 Q. -- actually, when you got done in McDonough.

3 A. I'm trying to think. I think if I came back from McDonough  
4 on the 11th, 2 days, the 11th would've been like Monday or Monday,  
5 which was Tuesday, it was the Tuesday after the 11th because I  
6 came for the orientation that Monday --

7 Q. Eleventh of November?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So it would've been that Tuesday after the 11th, which was  
11 the -- I want to say it was the 14th, 13th or 14th. I think it  
12 was the 14th.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. The 14th of November. I remember I (indiscernible) coming  
15 out at 7:30 in the morning.

16 Q. Other than telling you great job to have the foresight when  
17 you went in emergency, looking at your wheel report and HAZMAT,  
18 helping the conductor. Very nice job with that, thank you.

19 A. Appreciate that.

20 MR. BARNER: Nothing further from here.

21 MR. CLAY: Joseph Clay, FRA, no questions.

22 MR. MITCHELL: Jeff Mitchell, SMART, no questions.

23 BY MR. LAWTON:

24 Q. Shawn Lawton, BLE, I got a couple questions. It was a hell  
25 of an experience to turn around and see you today. I've never

1 gone through that, so I can't imagine what you're going through  
2 and what you guys saw. When you came to a stop, were you on a  
3 curve, were the locomotives on a curve and the train was bent  
4 around the curve, straight, could you see the derailment when you  
5 guys stopped, if you looked out the back of the cab?

6 A. I didn't see the derailment, like, well -- so I looked at the  
7 elevation, so I -- it's kind of weird because it's like my first  
8 time out there and trying to really get a feel for everything and  
9 trying to realize like, you know, looking -- going up and down  
10 hill, like on a train, it's just everything kind of looks  
11 straight, but you know, kind of like the monitor kind of helps get  
12 an idea and then like, you know, still learning, so we were going  
13 downhill.

14 Curve-wise, I'm not sure -- I'm trying to pinpoint that  
15 location, you know, I do think there is a curve coming around that  
16 location, a small curve coming around East Palestine, and looking  
17 back, because I -- when I can look back, I actually did see a  
18 curve, a curvage (ph.), but I don't -- like I said, that's what I  
19 seen, you know, trains -- I could kind of slightly see that there  
20 was trains on the ground.

21 But when I looked, on the other end is where I seen flames on  
22 the other side and then the smoke. So I didn't see the  
23 derailment, like as far as when it happened, didn't see it, but  
24 you know, I did see the flames and I did see like -- it did look  
25 like there was trains on the ground. Then there was -- it

1 might've been a little curve or there's a curve in that area.

2 Q. Did you guys dismount, you and the conductor, were you guys  
3 off and started walking back and then we called each other back  
4 and got back on the locomotive?

5 A. So originally, we got geared up and then I was originally  
6 going to walk out and then wrong, okay, wait, this conductor don't  
7 have a year experience, so you know, by the rule, you know, I'm  
8 not supposed to be out there with that conductor on the ground, so  
9 I'm not, you know, at the engine, you can sit with the engineer.  
10 We agree. The conductor got off, he went to go walk, but you know  
11 me, I knew the situation, okay, there's a possible fire, you know,  
12 I decided let me look out and see, if I can see anything, you  
13 know, look for any flames, any smoke, and I looked out and seen  
14 flames, seen the smoke.

15 And I looked on the other side and I was like okay, it does  
16 look like -- kind of look like there are cars on the ground, but  
17 when I seen that, I said hey, conductor's walking out there, I'm  
18 pretty sure there's big flames out there, I'm not sure if he seen  
19 it or not, so I said I'm going to get on the radio and call him  
20 back, you know, I'm talking to the engineer, and I just got on  
21 anyway, I said 32N (ph.) to, you know, conductor, he answered, I  
22 say you need to cut away, we need to pull, you know, there's  
23 flames and I'm looking there, there's HAZMATs. Then the engineer  
24 said just call him back, so we called back and they told the  
25 dispatcher, asked the dispatcher, you know, as far as what to do

1 and, you know, he said cut away, you guys need to cut away.

2 Q. So the conductor got off the locomotive and started walking,  
3 you and the engineer are still up there, you guys decided to call  
4 the conductor and say hey, we got something going on back there,  
5 is it a normal practice for a conductor trainee to stay on in the  
6 locomotive? I would figure you would follow him out there to go,  
7 you know, this is --

8 A. Right, so -- so right, because we're supposed to -- that's  
9 part -- we are supposed to follow the conductor and, you know, but  
10 if a conductor doesn't have a year experience, right, we're not  
11 supposed to be out on the ground with the conductor.

12 Q. Okay, so the qualified conductor, if he's less than a year --

13 A. Right.

14 Q. Okay, all right, they don't take a trainee with them, okay.  
15 Could you just describe again, I know you had mentioned it, when  
16 you were talking to the other train, you guys talked to each  
17 other, obviously you had an issue, you said something about he had  
18 a signal that went away or restricting, it got knocked down or  
19 something?

20 A. That was a phone conversation that I had with him.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. That was a phone conversation after and I forgot who it was.

23 Q. Oh, afterwards.

24 A. Yeah, I didn't realize who it was. I actually went down the  
25 last trip with him, you know, that's when I met that conductor and

1 I didn't realize that was him, he was there, but he told me he was  
2 there, you know, he told me that was him. But the conversation  
3 that I had with him over the phone, he was saying -- it was  
4 actually two texts, two texts, he was saying that yeah, he was --  
5 he was there, he said hey, he said we did -- we did get a -- you  
6 know, a signal that dropped and he said he wasn't sure, you know,  
7 of what it was until, you know, when I got that call and I heard  
8 the -- they heard the call on the radio and then they figured out  
9 that's what it was.

10 Q. So he would probably -- not to put words in your mouth, but  
11 if it dropped to a restricted, he wasn't running on a restricted  
12 and it dropped, so he's probably running on better signals, in CAP  
13 (ph.) signal territory it dropped and restricting --

14 A. Well, right, but I'm pretty sure they were supposed to be  
15 right -- if they had to go by the book, a restricted signal, so  
16 when that happens they should be running off a restricted signal.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But is it still -- you never know exactly, you know, how fast  
19 or, you know, as far as you're supposed to go like a half speed,  
20 stopping distance speed or I'm not sure if, you know, they were  
21 just out -- it was more so the heads up, there is definitely  
22 something going on, you know what I mean, just to, you know, to be  
23 careful. Automatically I will say that, you know, once they got  
24 that signal they were on a restriction, they just didn't know, as  
25 far as where it was or what it was, but they knew maybe something

1 might be wrong, so yeah, it was just a heads up. But once they  
2 heard emergency, this is like okay, well, there's a train in an  
3 emergency, that's the reason for the signal.

4 Q. Do you guys, as NS employees, do you have rules that when you  
5 pass other trains, do you -- is it common practice for crews to  
6 give each roll-bys when you're on the move, is it a rule, is it  
7 just common courtesy?

8 A. The rule is it's supposed to be that the conductor should be  
9 -- as he's standing and inspecting the cars as they roll by, as  
10 they come by.

11 Q. Okay, so you do have roll-by, there's a rule to look at?

12 A. I believe so.

13 MR. LAWTON: That's all, that's all I have.

14 MR. JORDAN: There was a policy.

15 BY MR. ZAGATA:

16 Q. Zach Zagata, NTSB, just a follow up on that. So that's when  
17 your train is stopped, right? You're standing --

18 A. I think it stopped, yeah, I heard it was going to stop, so --

19 Q. Okay, so two trains, they're both moving, is there any  
20 requirement, do you know?

21 A. Me, personally, when a train comes past, you know, I learned  
22 from one of the conductors, I like to get up and move away and I  
23 like to look at the train as it comes by. It's coming by pretty  
24 fast, but I don't -- I know we're supposed to look out, I don't  
25 know as far as what the rule is about that, but you know, as a

1 courtesy, I always look out just in case, you never know.

2 Q. I appreciate it. Just to clarify, did you call out emergency  
3 over the radio or did the engineer and the conductor?

4 A. I called the emergency on the radio.

5 Q. Okay, all right. As you guys were sitting there after the  
6 derailment and as you started digging in the HAZMAT paperwork, you  
7 had everything prepared as far as, you know, location of the  
8 HAZMAT in the train, did you expect emergency responders to come  
9 up there and talk to you to find out about what you had for HAZMAT  
10 in your train or something like that or --

11 A. So that's where -- I was very confused. I kind of would  
12 expect something, you know, maybe, but like, again, we wasn't sure  
13 exactly what happened, so as far as how bad it was or anything,  
14 but as far as -- I was kind of (indiscernible) to think okay, that  
15 was the question I asked, like hey, you know, do we need the  
16 HAZMAT papers and -- but, you know, apparently he already had it.  
17 Apparently, that they're supposed to already have it, but I know  
18 that there was a trainmaster that was en route and I was waiting  
19 for that trainmaster, but apparently the trainmaster must have --  
20 you know, was there, so I'm pretty sure maybe they had the consist  
21 or somehow they had it already.

22 MR. ZAGATA: Got you. Appreciate it.

23 Pass it off to my right. Dave, any additional questions?

24 MR. GOODEN: No. Dave Gooden, no questions.

25 MR. BARNER: Kraig Barner, no questions.

1 MR. CLAY: Joseph Clay, no questions.

2 MR. MITCHELL: Jeff Mitchell, no questions.

3 MR. LAWTON: Shawn Lawton, no questions.

4 BY MR. ZAGATA:

5 Q. All right, Zach Zagata, last questions for you. In your  
6 opinion, is there something to be done to prevent something like  
7 this from happening, you know, something that can be done  
8 different as far as the emergency response that would be --

9 A. You know, it's the -- like if the detector read no defect,  
10 this kind of scares me, you know, luckily it wasn't on like the  
11 head end or, you know, in closer because we would've -- excuse me.  
12 You know, possibly we could've derailed and it's just -- I think  
13 that from my understanding that it -- the railroad to the oil or  
14 the oil plant and it's just like well, if it was the engine that  
15 derailed, you know, like that without -- you know, and if so,  
16 would the emergency response been there, because we never -- we  
17 didn't get any type of -- you know, no emergency response, they  
18 didn't respond to us.

19 We didn't see anybody, we seen no one on the whole trip to --  
20 and, you know -- but in my head I'm thinking maybe it's blocked  
21 off, but even if it is, you know, I seen people on the bridge  
22 taking, you know, pictures and everything, but other than that, I  
23 didn't -- I mean, I was expecting maybe someone to come, you know,  
24 check on us and, you know, I didn't see that. So I mean, it kind  
25 of -- it is -- it's a little concerning, you know, as far as



1 should we -- should they have come and checked on us.

2 Q. I appreciate that. Last question, if we have additional  
3 questions, is it okay to contact you?

4 A. Yes.

5 MR. ZAGATA: Okay, all right. Well, with that, we'll  
6 conclude the interview. I appreciate it.

7 MR. JORDAN: Thank you.

8 (Whereupon, the interview concluded.)  
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the


NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:           NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN DERAILMENT  
                                  IN EAST PALESTINE, OHIO  
                                  ON FEBRUARY 3, 2023  
                                  Interview of Javon Jordan

ACCIDENT NO.:               RRD23MR005

DATE:                         February 5, 2023

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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen D. Martini  
Transcriber