



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

GROUP	G
EXHIBIT	
16	

Agency / Organization

Cardinal Joint Fire and Canfield Fire Department

Title

Interview Transcript – Fire Chief

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: DON HUTCHISON, Fire Chief
Cardinal Joint Fire and Canfield Fire Department

Via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday,
May 5, 2023

APPEARANCES:

RICHARD DOWNS, Survival Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CYNDI LAKE, Safety Division
National Transportation Safety Board

MARC DOUGHERTY, Hazmat Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TROY LLOYD, Railroad Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CHIEF PAUL CAREY, Party Representative
International Association of Fire Fighters

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:06 p.m.)

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3 MR. DOWNS: It is May 5th, 2023. The time is about 1:05 p.m.
4 This interview, which is being implemented virtually utilizing
5 Microsoft Teams, is being conducted by the investigative staff of
6 the National Transportation Safety Board out of Washington, DC in
7 connection with the Norfolk Southern Railway train derailment that
8 occurred in East Palestine, Ohio, on February 3rd, 2023. The NTSB
9 accident number reference is RRD 23MR005.

10 This is an interview of Chief Don Hutchinson, who's
11 affiliated with the Cardinal Joint Fire and Canfield Fire
12 Department.

13 Chief Canfield -- or Chief Hutchinson, thank you for joining us
14 today. And if you could kindly please spell your last name and
15 state your current job title for the record.

16 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah, I'm the Fire Chief of the Cardinal
17 Joint Fire District, which is located in Canfield, Ohio. My
18 spelling is H-u-t-c-h-i-s-o-n, just one N at the very end of
19 Hutchison.

20 MR. DOWNS: Very good. Thank you, sir.

21 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah.

22 MR. DOWNS: Do you understand that this interview is being
23 recorded?

24 MR. HUTCHISON: Yes.

1 MR. DOWNS: Thank you. Now before we start this interview
2 and questions, I'd like to advise interview participants that NTSB
3 interview procedures under 49 CFR 831.7 afford persons being
4 interviewed the opportunity to be accompanied by one
5 representative of their choosing in which that participating
6 representative can be anyone or the interviewee can elect to have
7 no representative to be present. So I'll ask you, Chief, have you
8 elected to have a representative, a company you in this interview?

9 MR. HUTCHISON: No.

10 MR. DOWNS: Thank you. Now the purpose of this investigation
11 is to improve is to improve safety and not to assign fault, blame
12 or liability. The sole mission of the NTSB is to improve
13 transportation safety and prevent accidents, and as such the NTSB
14 cannot offer any guarantee of confidentiality or immunity from any
15 legal proceeding by any other agency, whether it's local, state or
16 federal.

17 Also, I just wanted to note to all the participants here. A
18 transcript of this interview will be compiled and placed in the
19 public docket for this investigation, which will be available
20 through the NTSB website, that being www.nts.gov.

21 Now with the above admin items covered, let us go around the
22 virtual room here and introduce ourselves. I ask that you please
23 state your name, then spell your last name. What entity or company
24 that you are represented or affiliated with and your employment
25 title? I would like to remind everybody to please speak clearly

1 for the recording and transcription. Now, as we've already
2 identified the interviewee, I'll start out with myself and then
3 we'll go around in the virtual room here. My name is Richard
4 Downs, D-o-w-n-s. I'm a Survival Factors Investigator and panel
5 one chair of this hearing. And I am an investigator, survival
6 factors investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board
7 out of Washington, D.C. Okay? We'll go around the room.

8 MR. DOUGHERTY: Good afternoon. My name is Marc Dougherty,
9 D-o-u-g-h-e-r-t-y, and I'm a Hazardous Materials Accident
10 Investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board,

11 MR. LLOYD: Okay. Food afternoon, Chief. My name is Troy
12 Lloyd. I'm a railroad accident investigator with the National
13 Transportation Safety Board. Spelling of my last name is
14 L-l-o-y-d.

15 MS. LAKE: And I'm Cyndi Lake. Last name is spelled L-a-k-e,
16 and I work in our safety division at the National Transportation
17 Safety Board.

18 MR. DOWNS: Good.

19 MS. LAKE: You're muted, Rick.

20 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah. Yeah, and I want to hear.

21 MR. DOWNS: Sorry about that. We'll start again.

22 MR. HUTCHISON: There you go.

23 MR. DOWNS: Thank you, as we have everybody identified.

24 Thank you, Chief, for joining us today again, and we welcome your
25 responses in your own words. And if any question is unclear or if

1 you don't understand the question, please don't hesitate to ask
2 the questioner to clarify or restate the question. And if you
3 don't know the answer to any questions, of course it's fully
4 permitted to indicate that you don't know.

5 MR. HUTCHISON: Okay.

6 MR. DOWNS: We don't want you to speculate.

7 MR. HUTCHISON: Okay.

8 MR. DOWNS: Okay, Chief, a little bit of background. Can you
9 tell us about your background, your education and your expertise
10 please?

11 MR. HUTCHISON: Oh, expertise. Oh yeah, right. No, I've
12 been Deputy Chief here back in 2001. I took that as a full-time
13 job. Prior to that I was a paid on-call firefighter, paramedic
14 captain. And prior to that I worked in the hospital full-time.
15 an the heart/lung machine for open-heart surgery. So keep people
16 alive while the surgeons work on their heart. Went to school at -
17 - through the University of Pittsburgh for that. And prior to
18 that, I worked at University of West Virginia Hospital, WVU down
19 there in Morgantown. And prior to that, I was a paramedic in East
20 Palestine, so on their part-time paid on-call fire department.
21 Back in -- became EMT and firefighter in '78. Took my basic
22 volunteer firefighter class, took the EMT class and 82 took
23 paramedic class and Canton, Ohio. And then it was probably about
24 8 years later, probably about 1990. I went and got my Firefighter
25 2 for Ohio, so. And that was whenever I was living up here in

1 Canfield. Because I took a hospital job running heart/lung
2 machine here and working part-time firefighter here. Then in 2001
3 it was time to make the move. They had a deputy chief's job open
4 here and I took that full-time. Went to the Ohio Fire Academy for
5 my fire safety inspector 1 and 2. And then also with that, we
6 continued to move on. I was basically pushed on to training.
7 Brought in HAZMAT group from Findlay, Ohio. Findlay University,
8 they have like a regional HAZMAT team that travels over the state
9 teaching HAZMAT and that. And then started teaching Firefighting
10 1, 2 at the local vocational school here in Mahoning County, and
11 that's right in my backyard. There are training towers in my fire
12 district, so it works out really good for us. We get extra points
13 for that.

14 MR. DOWNS: Very good, Chief. Quite a resume, thank you.
15 Let's see, we've covered your positions. I got my checklist here.
16 How long in your current position, by the way?

17 MR. HUTCHISON: Eleven years. It'll be 12 next month.

18 MR. DOWNS: Fair enough. Okay, very good. And can you give
19 us a synopsis briefly of your duties as a chief, as a chief of the
20 department?

21 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah. I have a five-board member, because we
22 are a fire district. So we cover 25 square miles. And that's
23 City of Canfield and the Township of Canfield. So I have two
24 governmental bodies to deal with. We have one Township trustee,
25 one City Council person. We have one citizen from the City, one

1 citizen from the Township, and one at-large member who are my
2 bosses. Over top of that I have three fire stations. I have a
3 total of 24 full-time. Myself and a deputy chief are the upper
4 administration. I got three captains working lieutenants right
5 now as we speak. Then I have 20 -- sorry. I have 21 paid on-call
6 part-time firefighters, both full-time and part-time. Both have
7 union contracts, so I get to deal with unions every day of my
8 life. The biggest thing is keeping the ball rolling; back in 2017
9 we started transporting with ambulances. And we had one ambulance
10 and we were up to four now, so.

11 MR. DOWNS: Very good like, what a duty roster you got going
12 there.

13 MR. HUTCHISON: We're growing fast, too -- almost too fast.
14 Yes.

15 MR. DOWNS: Very good. And you said you report to this
16 commission, this fire commission?

17 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah, it's a fire board.

18 MR. DOWNS: Fire board, okay.

19 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah, it's --

20 MR. DOWNS: Is that --

21 MR. HUTCHISON: -- it's almost like a --

22 MR. DOWNS: -- is that an elected group, or are they
23 appointed? Or what's the fire board setup?

24 MR. HUTCHISON: They're -- four are appointed, as in two from
25 the City and two from the Township. And the fifth one is elected

1 by those four, as a at-large.

2 MR. DOWNS: At-large, very good. All right, that concludes
3 my introductory questions. We'll go around the room. I think Mr.
4 Dougherty here has the floor. Thank you.

5 MR. DOUGHERTY: Thank you.

6 BY MR. DOUGHERTY:

7 Q. Chief, good to see you. Good to talk to you briefly the
8 other day on the phone.

9 A. Yeah.

10 A. I know we had a little bit of a brief conversation about the
11 East Palestine derailment. But if you could, it's really just
12 going to be you having the floor at this point. If you could just
13 walk us through your response to the East Palestine derailments,
14 starting with the initial call regarding the derailment up to the
15 vent and burn as as much as you can in detail. Not necessarily
16 timelines or times because I know at this point it's gonna be
17 probably a little bit fuzzy. But if you could just walk us
18 through.

19 MR. DOWNS: And let me interject, Chief. You're welcome to
20 refer to any kind of notes or documentation you might have, or a
21 copy of the CAD run, for example, of your dispatch if that'll
22 help. Again, we're not looking to be too fussy on the timestamps
23 here. Approximations are just fine. Unless you happen to have
24 the time stamp in front of you that's -- you're welcome to. But
25 again, this is --

1 MR. HUTCHISON: No, I do not.

2 MR. DOWNS: -- again, this is just a dialogue. We want to
3 get the flow of activities here. Thank you.

4 MR. HUTCHISON: I -- the only thing I really have here nearby
5 is I have the 214 active log, activity log for that evening, that
6 Friday evening. I don't know if that helps or not, but I have
7 that right here.

8 MR. DOWNS: Whatever you need. Thank you.

9 BY MR. DOUGHERTY:

10 A. Well, that Friday I was at home watching TV. And my best
11 friend, who lives in East Palestine, called me and you -- said,
12 "You won't believe what's going on here." And he goes, "What is
13 that?" And he goes, "The whole sky is nothing but a fireball."
14 And I goes, what? Get out. He goes, "No, we had a train
15 derailment." I said get out. And so I turned my radio on to see
16 who else was going and I hear all these fire departments from
17 Mahoning County heading down that way who are on our radio, 800
18 radio system. And just more phone calls, more texts, more from
19 everybody, to the point where I started -- I called the local EMA
20 director, who was a fire chief, Chief Frost, and I said who's all
21 going to this thing? And he goes, "Sounds like they're just
22 calling everybody." And I goes, okay. And I says well, do we
23 have any tankers left in Mahoning County? Because I'm a member of
24 the Ohio Fire Chiefs Water TAC Committee which you know, tries to
25 set this up and make sure you don't deplete all your resources.

1 So I made a call to Chief Baird and he told me his tankers were --
2 both were on the way to East Palestine. Then I spoke to Chief
3 J.R. Warren (ph.) from Coytesville (ph.). And I said, are you
4 going to East Palestine. He says, "Well, we're getting ready to."
5 I says, you are the only tanker -- tankers available in Mahoning
6 County on the what -- East Side. I have the only tanker available
7 on the West Side. So I was keeping our largest tanker back for
8 that. So whenever we got contacted, I talked to my captain,
9 Captain Tish (ph.) and advised him to send our Engine 102, which
10 is 1,000 gallons pumper tanker, has a drop tank on it, you know.
11 It's set up -- it can do, you know, a class. I think it's a Class
12 4 tanker operation, so it's not much. So I sent two full-time
13 firefighters on that, and then I followed them down. And that was
14 right around 10:00 in the evening. So it was over an hour later,
15 we got contacted. But I'd already heard everybody else being
16 dispatched and towed and on their way. So I asked -- we asked
17 dispatch on the way down there. Even my crews and their engine
18 asking dispatch if they had a frequency, and no frequency was
19 available, no channel, was no contact with them. Just gave us the
20 address and it came up on our iPad, you know. Well, being from
21 East Palestine, I grew up a block from the railroad tracks. So I
22 knew right where Pleasant Drive and Taggart Street was. Taggart
23 Road, I think that was the official address we were given.

24 We was coming into town. I was behind our pumper and couple
25 other fire departments, tankers. And I just called directly into

1 their 911 center and said -- spoke to I believe it was Nikki Hayes
2 (ph.). And then I said, Nikki. I goes, this is Hutch. I'm on my
3 way in. We have three tankers in front of us. Where do you need
4 us? Then she called the incident commander, who was, uh, believe
5 it's -- I think his ID was Chief 122 or like that. And that would
6 be Assistant Chief Gorby. And they said just come to Tube Tech,
7 which I knew the old building Tube Tech. I don't know if any of
8 you have been on the scene, that blue building.

9 MR. DOUGHERTY: Yep.

10 MR. HUTCHISON: That's where we were being called to. So
11 yeah, so that's where we were heading to.

12 So we get to Center Town. We had to go up over the West
13 Street bridge and then head out from West Taggart Street to East
14 Taggart Street. We arrived there and it was like a parade. Just
15 trucks lined up the whole length. Well, I ended up having our
16 truck pull in behind our neighboring department's ladder truck,
17 Boardman.

18 I went around everybody and I pulled up to where the first
19 drop site -- drop tank site was. And I got stopped by Assistant
20 Chief Scott Rice (ph.) from Springfield Township Fire department.
21 And he sees me and he starts yelling in a dead panic. I goes,
22 what's up? And he goes, "Do you have a pumper here?" I goes,
23 yeah, I got my pumper tanker out back here. Get him up here.
24 We've had -- everybody's failing. Nobody can pump water. Okay.
25 And I mean, at this time you can see just fire everywhere in the

1 sky. So I contacted our guys on the radio. I said -- I said soon
2 as this truck pulls out from behind this drop tank, I want you to
3 pull up here.

4 And then they pulled it in. And the way the tank was set,
5 they were trying to get off the road behind it. And they were on
6 an angle and they just dropped the hard section in there. Then
7 they started feeding Salem's ladder truck, and also a hand line
8 that was being in the blue building that we were told to respond
9 to.

10 The one thing that this Chief Rice and I -- I said, so what
11 -- who's in command? What's going on? He said, "Me, I'm in
12 command of this area." He said, "There's nobody else around". He
13 goes, "They're -- all of East Palestine's down there or across the
14 railroad tracks." I said, okay. I said so how are we gonna work
15 this? He said, "You take care of up here, up on the road. I'll
16 take care of down at the the building site." I said okay, that'll
17 be fine. I said, what channel are we working on? He said, "State
18 Mutual Aid, channel 3." So I said, okay.

19 So in Mahoning County, all the radios get programmed the
20 same. So you know, you can just announce whatever channel you're
21 working on and go in from there. So that's what we end up having
22 to do. And just basically, I kept my guys up at the fill site
23 with our pumper, and then had a couple other people that were
24 floating around. I sort of grabbed them and made them a part of
25 our water drop off area.

1 Just speaking with other fire chiefs who were there who were
2 on the north side. It was just whatever they wanted to do they --
3 they got to do. They had a captain on the north side, from East
4 Palestine. I know that. And then east of us, at the lake oil
5 site, I know East Palestine had their pumper and their ladder
6 truck down there, and quite a few numbers -- their members down
7 there.

8 So we were asking, where is the command post? And they said,
9 well it's at Lake Oil area where all the other drop tanks and
10 trucks at.

11 So the Boardman Township, which is next door to us, they're
12 assistant chief walked down this -- get anymore instructions, what
13 we needed where we were at. And he came back and they said just
14 keep doing what you're doing. And that was the only thing I
15 received from there.

16 As in anything -- staging, anything like that? No, there was
17 nothing like that. So --

18 MR. DOUGHERTY: Okay.

19 MR. HUTCHISON: -- that's --

20 MR. DOUGHERTY: Yeah. Appreciate that.

21 BY MR. DOUGHERTY:

22 Q. How about HAZCOM, as far as the hazardous materials that are
23 on the train. Can you tell me a little bit about that and how
24 that was communicated when you all had found out about the
25 hazardous materials on the train.

1 A. Well, I was on -- en route there, and I received a phone call
2 from the Assistant Chief from Poland, or Western Reserve Fire
3 District, Assistant Chief Jim Stewart (ph.). And he goes, "I
4 heard you're on your way?" I said, yeah, I'm going down. I'm
5 just following my guys with our small tanker. And he said, "Well,
6 I'm hearing two things. I'm hearing ethanol and cases of malt
7 liquor on fire. And that's where I believe the video I was sent
8 by my best friend shows the railcars on fire, and I guess they
9 were all loaded up with malt liquor. So that was the only thing
10 that that -- until much later, after we were told to leave the
11 area did we find out exactly what was in there. And that's why my
12 guys -- myself and my guys were up on -- up on the road. Like,
13 they were 600 feet away from the fire itself.

14 Q. So, are you familiar with the AskRail app?

15 A. Yes, I am now.

16 Q. Oh? Oh, okay.

17 A. I wasn't then.

18 Q. You weren't then, okay.

19 A. I don't have railroad in town, but I do do a lot of mutual
20 aid to Austintown and Boardman. They all have rail lines, Poland
21 and that. So I do now, have it now.

22 Q. Okay. Okay, well thank you for that information. Mr. Lloyd,
23 I think you popped on for a second like you had a question. I'll
24 pass it off to you. Thanks, Chief.

25 MR. LLOYD: I was saying I was having trouble with my camera.

1 I was seeing if it was still working. It's like, my sound was
2 buffering, but not. Thanks, Marc.

3 BY MR. LLOYD:

4 Q. Hey Chief, how you doing? It's Troy, from the NTSB, Lloyd,
5 L-l-o-y-d. So just a couple questions that I guess, jarred me.
6 So what do you mean that someone tells you that someone was having
7 trouble pumping water? Does that mean problems with tank-to-pump
8 discharge throttle up?

9 A. Everything was freezing that night.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Because five -- five degrees.

12 Q. Yep.

13 A. And I heard that their primers froze. They started pumping
14 water. Primer froze, and they had ran their tank empty so they
15 couldn't even try to --

16 Q. So they couldn't --

17 A. -- backflush to get a prime.

18 Q. -- yeah, so they couldn't circulate.

19 A. And they put -- yeah, they had a really tough time. So they
20 had two pumpers in there before ours. And after we got ours in
21 there it, you know, it -- it ran terrific. I mean, we ran for the
22 next three hours, I believe.

23 Q. All right.

24 A. From 11:00 until 2:00 a.m., I think we got evacuated, or
25 2:15.

1 Q. Okay, so the pumping situations, the water relay, pumping
2 situations wasn't more of a -- it was more of a weather-related --

3 A. I believe so.

4 Q. -- pumps freezing up rather than a training issue where
5 people's driving these -- people's driving these engines and
6 they're really not certified --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- to be pumping water.

9 A. I -- I could not honestly answer that question either way. I
10 was told one thing, but was all hearsay, you know? That -- but I
11 was told that, you know, they showed them how to reprime it from
12 their tank one time and then after that, their primer wasn't
13 working at all.

14 Q. Okay yeah, we'll go with that.

15 A. Most of the time (ph.) --

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. -- you know what I'm saying. Holding it up in the air and
18 dropping it in, getting it to work, so.

19 Q. Yeah, I got you.

20 A. Whatever it takes.

21 Q. So you gave a pretty good synopsis, you know, on what
22 happened when you first got there. So yeah, you're there within
23 how many minutes when all heck's breaking loose?

24 A. Oh, it was probably hour, hour-and-a-half.

25 Q. Oh, okay. So they're pretty much --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And with that hour, hour-and-a-half, you know, are they still
3 engaged in suppression activities where they're within the hot
4 zone?

5 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, there was -- in fact, we were feeding
6 Salem's ladder truck. And there was a two-and-a-half hand line
7 into the building, going out the back door.

8 Q. Yeah, right.

9 A. And I take -- whenever I was saying you have guys where? And
10 they said, well it's been identified as it's plastic pellets on
11 fire on the railcar that was against the building burning. And
12 that's what they wanted to save. It wasn't liquid, but the liquid
13 was running down through each trough on each side of the railcar.

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. And the firefighters were in that, my understanding.

16 Q. So at that point, they pretty much identified that this was a
17 pretty significant flammable liquid vinyl chloride fire. But they
18 still --

19 A. Right (ph.)

20 Q. -- took the impression to go in, with the hot zone, with some
21 inch-and-a-half, deuce-and-a-half. That's not really gonna do
22 much anyway. That they still made that decision to do that,
23 correct?

24 A. Yeah, well they actually got the trough that was burning, you
25 know. Or shall I say the drainage areas that was burning. They

1 got that out and then they worked on the car, because the car was
2 up against the building. And it spilled over with those plastic
3 pellets burning. And the one thing I guess I -- I never heard
4 ethanol mentioned until we were kicked out of the scene. I was
5 not -- vinyl chloride. I was told about ethanol but not about
6 vinyl chloride until later that time. And I think that's probably
7 after, I would have to guess, you know, some of the rail officials
8 got there and knew what was on the train.

9 BY MR. DOWNS:

10 Q. Chief, was the building, the blue building, actually on fire?
11 Or was just the rail car up against it?

12 A. The rail car was up against it, on fire. I never got close
13 enough, to tell you the truth. All's I saw was the flames behind
14 it.

15 Q. But there were no flames inside the blue building where the
16 initial incident command was set up. No flames or smoke.

17 A. Yeah, there was smoke, some smoke in it. But I, you know, I
18 don't know of any flame or nothing in there.

19 Q. Okay, but --

20 A. But the incident command was like, another 1,000 feet down
21 the road at the Lake Oil building.

22 Q. Oh, so we're talking separate buildings here. Okay.

23 A. Correct, yeah.

24 Q. I was confused.

25 A. There were --

1 Q. Okay, I was confusing buildings.

2 A. There was like, three different sites of fire departments.
3 One at the Pennsylvania-Ohio border where Lake Oil is. And I
4 think they're trying to protect those fuel tanks.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. The next one was buildings where we were at, the blue
7 building, the Tube Tech buildings. Because the rail cars were
8 right up against them, burning. And then I know there was trucks
9 from Pennsylvania on Pleasant Drive, north of Taggart Street, at
10 that crossing, from Chippewa. I seen their trucks there. And
11 then there were numerous trucks from Mahoning County on the north
12 side of the tracks to where an old furniture factory sat, and they
13 just started drafting out of the supply water for their sprinkler
14 system. They just cut the fence and pulled a truck up and started
15 sucking water out of that, so.

16 Q. Okay, very good. Apologies, Troy, for interrupting there.
17 Go ahead, Troy.

18 MR. LLOYD: Yeah, and not a problem. I apologize for the
19 background noise. I don't have power in my house, so I had to
20 move to an alternate location.

21 MR. DOWNS: Okay.

22 MR. LLOYD: They're putting in cable lines and wanted to hit
23 my underground power and stuff in my yard. So, sorry about the
24 background noise.

25 BY MR. LLOYD:

1 Q. Yeah, but continuing on, Chief. So hey, so talk to me about
2 -- to get to your level as a fire chief at a career, paid on-call
3 station. Is State of Ohio part of the Pro Board Accreditation
4 Program?

5 A. They are in the -- at the Ohio Fire Academy is, yes.

6 Q. So is there -- does Ohio have a roadmap of specific training
7 classes that one has to obtain to become a Firefighter 1,
8 Firefighter 2, Fire Officer 1?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Things, you know, the classes that you have?

11 A. Yeah, the -- well the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association pushes
12 that. They have the ladder and that's what I've always followed
13 that way. And they do the same thing, you know. If you do -- you
14 do Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2, and also their testing is IFSAC
15 and Pro Board certifications at the Fire Academy. So, in fact my
16 oldest son just went through the Ohio Fire Academy last fall. Got
17 his Firefighter 2, and he got both IFSAC and Pro Board there. I
18 guess training wise, the Ohio Fire Chiefs push you to do more.
19 And I took their Ohio Executive Fire Officer class, which is two-
20 and-a-half years, and it was held in Columbus. And they get some
21 of the same instructors that National Fire Academy bring in, fire
22 wise. And then, I don't know.

23 Q. So explain to me. We heard in a recent interview of 36-hour
24 trained -- 36-hour trained fireman that can also be a fire chief,
25 incident commander. Explain that. Explain that to me.

1 A. Well, that's what I took when -- back in 1978. It's a 36-
2 hour basic firefighters card. And now they call it the 36-hour
3 volunteer firefighters certification. Meaning if you're a
4 volunteer firefighter, you just need that type of certification to
5 be on the fire department. And as long as it's not a paid-for
6 position, you know, a volunteer, that's all the certification you
7 need to end up having to be it.

8 Q. So with --

9 A. And --

10 Q. -- so with 36 hours, one can be a fire chief, making life
11 safety, property conservation, incident stabilization decisions?

12 A. That's correct. Now, if it was a --

13 Q. Okay, I think that's all I have for right now, Mr. Downs. If
14 the Chief wants to continue.

15 A. Yeah. Now, if you are a paid department, now you have to
16 have the -- much more training, you know, Firefighter 2, if you're
17 full-time.

18 Q. Right, so real quick --

19 MR. DOWNS: So the differential being paid versus voluntary.

20 MR. HUTCHISON: That's correct.

21 MR. LLOYD: Yeah, so who decides to brick wall that one
22 should have this but one should have the other? I mean, but it's
23 -- we're all there for the same reason, to protect life and
24 property. Well, who considers that brick wall between voluntary
25 and career?

1 A. I believe it's the Department of EMS, that's who does the
2 certification for Ohio firefighters.

3 MR. DOWNS: EMA or EMS?

4 MR. HUTCHISON: EMS, yeah.

5 MR. DOWNS: All right.

6 MR. LLOYD: So Emergency Medical Services does the fire
7 department.

8 MR. HUTCHISON: They do the certification for us, shall I say
9 like that. They do -- they don't do the training. They do the --
10 they are the ones that run the, I guess, the testing or the --
11 they monitor the, all the outreach places, you know, outside of
12 Columbus. And even our vocational school, you know. Like, they
13 have their people with Ohio Department of EMS that do the fire --
14 I guess how do I just want to say it -- fire classes and
15 accountability, and the record inspections and that.

16 Q. They administer and monitor and keep the records of the
17 process. Is that what you're saying?

18 A. Yes, yeah. So just like myself. I just had to recertify as
19 -- they streamlined it because they put it all under one. Because
20 it used to be you would have one date for your fire card, another
21 date for your paramedic card, another date for your fire inspector
22 card. And now they streamlined it, they're all the same dates.
23 You go in and you recertify through one group. So I just
24 recertified my fire safety inspector, my paramedic and my 240 fire
25 card, and my fire instructor car.

1 MR. DOWNS: Very good, Chief. Thanks for that. Troy,
2 anything further on your side?

3 MR. LLOYD: Yeah, I got a neighbor that wants to make a lot
4 of noise, but just one question. Any incident commanders on-scene
5 that just had this vague 36-hour training that was making some
6 decisions, first-choice decisions?

7 MR. HUTCHISON: I believe their Assistant Chief from East
8 Palestine. That was -- he had his 36-hour card.

9 MR. LLOYD: Okay, thank you. That's all I need, thank you.
10 Thank you --

11 MR. DOWNS: Okay, thank you. Ms. Lake.

12 MS. LAKE: No questions from me at this time.

13 MR. DOWNS: Questions, very good. Thank you. Anybody else
14 before we proceed here? Marc, do you have anything more?

15 MR. DOUGHERTY: I have just maybe one or two more, Chief.
16 Appreciate all the information you've given so far. Oh, Chief
17 Carey's on as well.

18 BY MR. DOUGHERTY:

19 Q. So Chief, I should say, if I could. Can you tell us -- you
20 had mentioned some of the communication issues with the
21 derailment. If you could elaborate a little on those issues, or
22 maybe a lot if you want to, and how the communications went, where
23 the breakdown was, and if there is a fix for that for the State of
24 Ohio or --

25 A. Right.

1 Q. -- and where you see the issues lie.

2 A. Yeah, as a matter of fact just a month ago we had the
3 Governor's administrative assistant and representatives from
4 MARCS, which is a Ohio based statewide radio system. Our fire
5 department along with every other fire department in Mahoning
6 County has been trying to get the 800 system currently here in
7 Mahoning County onto the Ohio MARC system because then we would
8 have then more interoperable communications than what we have
9 currently.

10 And just give you example. If you would go back three years
11 ago, I could not talk to my next door neighbor because they were
12 on the 800 system, I was not. The fire department to the north
13 was on the 800 system. So the three big -- and also the City of
14 Youngstown. The three big fire departments were on the 800
15 system. So we were invited to come, but we would have to bring
16 couple million dollars to get -- get onboard. And then finally
17 they opened it up. And then we got a grant and we slowly got into
18 the -- that system and was -- were able to just do the 800 local
19 system.

20 Well in the meantime, the fire departments and the police
21 departments met with the MARCS group here in -- from Ohio. And
22 this was like a year, a year-and-a-half ago and they wanted --
23 looking at over \$400 -- four million dollars just to get started.
24 That was just starting costs. And we just -- we don't have the
25 money for that or -- there's no way in the world.

1 So this meeting we just had here a month ago, after this
2 derailment. We showed them where we're at. Showed them how bad
3 the communication was. It was -- the only people you could talk
4 to were the people from your own neighborhood, so to say, who were
5 there. And we went onto that State Mutual Agent on that, work
6 (ph.) within our circle.

7 Yeah, that -- it was publicized in the newspaper. That was
8 our biggest problem, we felt, communication, not knowing what was
9 there, what was going on. So I think the MARC system may be
10 coming to Mahoning County so, like that.

11 Q. Okay, all right. Thanks Chief, appreciate it. I think
12 that's --

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. -- my last question.

15 MR. LLOYD: Okay, Marc. I got a follow up, if you don't
16 mind.

17 MR. DOWNS: Go ahead, Troy.

18 BY MR. LLOYD:

19 Q. Hey, Chief. Kind of back when Marc was talking to you at
20 first, answering some questions. Talk to me about the multiple --
21 it sounds like the multiple command posts and the multiple command
22 decisions that were taking place, rather than a functional unified
23 command where there's only the Incident Commander and the division
24 officers placed out.

25 I know you were saying this guy was on this side, this guy

1 was on this side and making decisions. Who -- who came up with
2 that plan or was it just people just showing up and just coming up
3 with their own incident action plan?

4 A. I couldn't tell you. But I just -- everybody just showed up
5 as -- as it was. Because I know one captain from East Palestine
6 was on the north side of the tracks, but there was nobody from
7 East Palestine, where I was, about 1,000 feet west of that Ohio-
8 Pennsylvania line area.

9 Q. And is that normal that you would need a representative from
10 a particular fire department within each, I would say,
11 geographical area or division? Or could that incident commander
12 appoint a division leader or division officer to oversee that
13 function?

14 A. Well, just like what we do here. We do on Medic (ph.) Mutual
15 Aid with Boardman, which is the second largest community on our
16 County. We do -- fact, we were called there this morning.

17 When I would arrive there or my deputy chief would arrive
18 over there, we would go in, ask their incident commander what do
19 you need from us? We may do the Charlie side of the fire. So
20 that's what normally happens there. And then we report back what
21 we -- what we're seeing.

22 Just last year, we had an apartment building. They asked
23 myself and our ladder company to go to the Charlie side of the
24 building, and we had two people in the smoke on the third floor
25 balcony. So we end up rescuing them that way. So I let them know

1 to send an EMS out back to meet up with us and take care of those
2 people. That's more the -- how we operate up here. So it's more
3 working together and making it a true incident command system.

4 Q. Right. So under the 36-hour training or even the Firefighter
5 1 or Firefighter 2. Is the Presidential Directives of NIMS, is
6 that mandatory for one to have, you know, 700, 800, 100, 200, if
7 you wanted to expand it to the 300/400 level, if you had that
8 opportunity. But talk to me about the NIMS training that's
9 required --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- for a command officer.

12 MR. DOWNS: That's the incident command training three and
13 400 level, right?

14 MR. LLOYD: Yes.

15 MR. HUTCHISON: Yes, that's -- yeah. I make all my full-time
16 take that. They're not happy, but they -- I make them take that.
17 The -- normally in Ohio, that I understand, 36 hours normally may
18 get the 700/800, you know, incident command, just the basics.

19 MR. DOWNS: Right.

20 MR. HUTCHISON: And then once you're into Firefighter 2, then
21 you work onto your 100/200. And then 300/400 is all optional,
22 from there on out.

23 BY MR. LLOYD:

24 Q. Yep, so we may have responding fire chiefs that don't have
25 the basic 100 or 200 NIMS training, that's just the standard --

1 A. Right.

2 Q. -- the standard definitions and stuff of incident -- incident
3 management.

4 A. Right, correct. That'd be correct.

5 Q. Yep, thank you.

6 A. Yep.

7 MR. DOWNS: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Lloyd. Chief Carey has
8 joined us. Chief, for your benefit. I'd ask you to kindly please
9 identify yourself. Chief Hutchison, Chief Carey has been joining
10 us for most of the interviews. You arrived later, Chief Carey, so
11 I'll have you introduce yourself, your background quickly, and
12 then you can present a few questions.

13 MR. CAREY: Okay, great.

14 BY MR. CAREY:

15 Q. Good afternoon, Chief.

16 A. Hey.

17 Q. Thanks for joining.

18 A. Yep.

19 Q. Sorry I was late, I got a late notification on this panel.
20 My name is Paul Carey, C-a-r-e-y. I'm a retired Boston Fire
21 Department District Chief and HAZMAT Operations Chief, and I'm
22 here on behalf of the IAFF. Chief, I missed your initial
23 introduction. Are you a career chief?

24 A. Yes. Yeah, I have three stations, 24 full-time, and 20 part-
25 time, paid on -- and they're scheduled. I have a full-time --

- 1 Q. Yeah, they pay -- paid on-call people as well?
- 2 A. Yeah, paid on-call, but that's mainly part-time. Because
3 they both have unions.
- 4 Q. Right.
- 5 A. I'm a full-time union and a part-time union, so.
- 6 Q. I get it. So my understanding as far as your involvement was
7 you responded Mutual Aid basically for water supply issues,
8 correct?
- 9 A. Right, yeah.
- 10 Q. With a pumper and a tanker?
- 11 A. I kept my tanker back because we were the last tanker on the
12 west side of our County.
- 13 Q. Oh, okay.
- 14 A. Everybody else's county, so I sent our smaller pumper tanker.
- 15 Q. Good. And I get the sense that you were pumping into a
16 ladder truck and supplying a hand line that was doing exposure
17 protection?
- 18 A. Right, yep.
- 19 Q. Okay. Do you know -- you talked about that trough or trench
20 fire that was involving flammable liquids. You were supplying
21 water to that operation?
- 22 A. Correct. That was --
- 23 Q. Okay.
- 24 A. -- the railcar that was in that trough --
- 25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. -- that one time was on fire, they sprayed it off. And I was
2 told there was plastic pellets that had come out of that rail car
3 against the building.

4 Q. Right. Did they -- did they utilize any foam that you know
5 of, or was it just water?

6 A. No, just water.

7 Q. Just water? And one final, for clarification --

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. -- on this certification. You said that the EMS people
10 certify the firefighters?

11 A. Yeah, they just -- they don't do the training. They do the
12 card. So like whenever my cards were just up on my birthday.
13 Because it used to be you had to do your paramedic card at one
14 time, your firefighter card another time, your fire safety
15 inspector card at a third time. And they said, let's just put
16 them all together, put them under the Department of EMS. They'll
17 be the certifying agency for fire, EMS and like that.

18 Q. So I would assume that during that certification, there's not
19 requirement for the person to demonstrate competency in doing
20 different tasks as a firefighter?

21 A. Your initial. Your initial one, yeah. And it --

22 Q. And who? Who does that? Who certifies and observes them
23 demonstrating the tasks?

24 A. The local training center, the local vocational school. Like
25 I said, I have one right out behind us here. They have

1 instructors there, you know, who are licensed through Department
2 of EMS but they're, you know, fire safety instructors, firefighter
3 instructors, as am I also a -- we also have to have a live fire
4 burn instructor card with (ph.) you, that also.

5 Q. Right. And does the State Fire Marshal enter into any of
6 this?

7 A. They just, they have their own training site. But whenever
8 you take the written tests, they have to do the check-offs of --

9 Q. Right.

10 A. -- of you being adequate, you know -

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- to do the job. Then the test, written test part portion
13 of it is through the Department of EMS for the -- that they are
14 the, whatever you want to say it. They set up the testing for
15 you.

16 Q. Okay, so for this 36-hour card --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. -- that people renew. It's just basically classroom, written
19 there's no demonstration of competency with skills?

20 A. You do have to have some refresher hours. But then also the
21 Fire Chief, local Fire Chief has to sign off on it too, like that.

22 Q. So does he -- he sign off that they have demonstrated the
23 skills needed?

24 A. Right, but then the firefighter themselves has to show the
25 accredited hours that they have received like that. And I believe

1 it's not many for 36-hour person.

2 Q. Yeah, I get. Okay, that's all from me. Thanks very much,
3 Chief. And appreciate your service.

4 A. Yep, thank you.

5 MR. DOWNS: Very good. Thank you, Chief Carey. One more
6 time, we'll go around the room. Any final questions before we
7 head to our wrap up? Okay, and hearing none.

8 BY MR. DOWNS:

9 Q. So as we're wrapping up this interview, my final questions in
10 this are as follows. Chief, relative -- Chief Hutchison.
11 Relative to your role in the accident event. In retrospect,
12 knowing what you know now, might you be able to offer any thoughts
13 or observations on lessons learned, or is there anything that you
14 might have done differently so to help circumvent challenges,
15 pitfalls and the like?

16 A. Well, who was it? The one chief was asking about when we
17 arrived there with our truck, hooking into that drop tank. That
18 drop tank was set up that the -- whenever I say the drain tubes
19 were on the outside of the tank. So it's like, you can only fill
20 the drop tank up three-quarters. It was running out the -- out
21 the sides. So I think there's a training problem there that needs
22 to be addressed. And that's what this water --

23 Q. Yeah, that's a -- it sounds like a hardware problem, yes?

24 A. Somebody leaves their equipment in a position that soon as
25 you fill it up it -- it's leaking out if you fill it to the top.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay, very good. Thank you.

4 MR. LLOYD: So there was --

5 MR. DOWNS: Anything else?

6 MR. LLOYD: -- there was an off level?

7 MR. HUTCHISON: Not much. No, not really. Because we had it
8 off the road, on the side on a driveway. But the tube, the drain
9 tubes on all -- I had two tanks. They were both outside, tied up.
10 And whenever it got from six inches from the top of the tank, it
11 was running out the drain, so.

12 MR. DOWNS: And that's --

13 MR. LLOYD: And it should have been tied on the inside.

14 MR. DOWNS: Yes.

15 MR. HUTCHISON: That's how we keep ours, right.

16 MR. LLOYD: That's how they're supposed to be, yes.

17 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah.

18 MR. LLOYD: In my fire department recollection.

19 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah, so that was a big one, and then just --

20 MR. LLOYD: Do they teach that in the 36-hour course?

21 MR. HUTCHISON: No. No.

22 MR. LLOYD: Okay.

23 MR. HUTCHISON: No, I don't think they have enough time for
24 that one, so. But normally whenever you get to your fire
25 department, then they start teaching you everything else, so.

1 MR. DOWNS: Right. Okay, Chief Hutchison. Anything else you
2 can think of you'd want to add as lessons learned?

3 MR. HUTCHISON: Communication's the number one.

4 MR. DOWNS: Okay.

5 MR. HUTCHISON: Everybody was -- everybody was coming in in
6 the blind, so to say. That's -- that was it.

7 MR. DOWNS: Okay, very good.

8 MR. HUTCHISON: Yep.

9 MR. DOWNS: Okay, finally last question. We've asked a
10 number of questions today. So to close, is there anything we
11 haven't asked you or might there be information or knowledge that
12 you have relative to the accident, particularly the emergency
13 response, which you believe might be important to the
14 investigation, which you'd care to share with the investigation?

15 MR. HUTCHISON: Just it all comes back to communication with
16 all acting members. And there needed to be a unified command
17 sooner, whole lot sooner.

18 MR. DOWNS: So as an overall observation relative to when you
19 arrived on scene and when you departed. By the way, when did you
20 depart, roughly?

21 MR. HUTCHISON: Right around 3:00 a.m. Because they asked
22 everybody to evacuate. I think it was 2:00, 2:15, in that area.

23 MR. DOWNS: Very good, okay.

24 MR. HUTCHISON: And a lot of the younger firefighters says,
25 well why are they making us leave? Then I said, "Because probably

1 the railroad arrived and we're waiting, waiting to see one of
2 these cars go flying over our head." And that was my exact quote.

3 MR. DOWNS: Okay.

4 MR. HUTCHISON: But we went to their Main Street Fire
5 Station, and it was -- we thought -- I was under the assumption we
6 were gonna set up a unified command then and you know, start
7 working things through, and it didn't happen, so. So I --

8 MR. DOWNS: So it -- so the incident command process when you
9 were on scene there. Would you say it was an -- a functional
10 orderly unified incident command?

11 MR. HUTCHISON: No.

12 MR. DOWNS: Your impression?

13 MR. HUTCHISON: No. No, I wouldn't say that at all. As I
14 was telling another chief who I was talking to just the other day.
15 I said, only if you live in a large city where you have large
16 fires, large you know, large emergencies every year would you be
17 able to handle that, I believe, in a correct manner, be honest
18 with you.

19 I mean it -- they didn't -- I understand, they're doing the
20 best they could do with what they had. The Fire Chief was out of
21 town.

22 MR. DOWNS: Right.

23 MR. HUTCHISON: Assistant Chief was running it and -- but it
24 was just too overwhelming, I guess, too taxing, overwhelming. And
25 need to have more, better like pre-plans all around, including

1 myself.

2 MR. DOWNS: All right. And that maybe goes back to the
3 lessons learned thoughts.

4 MR. HUTCHISON: Yeah.

5 MR. DOWNS: Very good.

6 MR. HUTCHISON: Exactly it, yes.

7 MR. DOWNS: Unified Command had not been set up by -- hold on
8 there, Chief Carey, a second. You're muted. Hold on. Unified
9 Command had not been set up by the time you departed roughly at
10 3:00 a.m. Is that correct?

11 MR. HUTCHISON: No, right. And --

12 MR. DOWNS: Very good, okay Chief.

13 MR. HUTCHISON: I gave their captains the phone number for
14 the Ohio Fire Chiefs Emergency Response Plan, which I guess they
15 did call on Saturday afternoon.

16 MR. DOWNS: Right, well after -0-

17 MR. HUTCHISON: And --

18 MR. DOWNS: -- well after the on-scene, initial on-scene
19 response.

20 MR. HUTCHISON: -- yeah. Yeah, and then that brought in
21 Butler County Incident Command bus and their whole team, which
22 they travel. They travel parts of the country, you know, our
23 area, and set up incident commands and like that. And they did a
24 pretty good job from there, that point off.

25 MR. DOWNS: Very good. Okay, thanks so much. Chief Carey, I

1 see you had your hand up, as it were? You're muted, by the way.

2 MR. CAREY: No, that -- no, that was a mistake, Rick. I'm
3 all set.

4 MR. DOWNS: Okay, very good. All right. Well, that wraps up
5 our questions.

6 MR. HUTCHISON: Okay.

7 MR. DOWNS: Thanks very much, Chief Hutchison. And if you do
8 happen to think of something in addition to the above questions
9 and answers as have been offered, we welcome you to please, kindly
10 please contact us through -- she'll be our contact. Was that
11 again you, Ms. Lake?

12 MS. LAKE: Sure, that works.

13 MR. DOWNS: Okay. If you think of anything else, by all
14 means, ship -- slip her an email or a phone call and we'll just
15 note it for the record.

16 MR. HUTCHISON: Okay.

17 MR. DOWNS: Very good. Chief Hutchison, again thank you so
18 much for your time and for your responses today. This will
19 conclude our interview. The time is 1:59 p.m. We can conclude
20 our recording.

21 (Whereupon, at 1:59 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
22
23
24
25

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 Don Hutchison

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD23MR005

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: May 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.

Suzanne Ventura

Suzanne Ventura,
Transcriber

Downs Richard

From: Downs Richard
Sent: Tuesday, May 30, 2023 8:50 AM
To: Lloyd Troy
Cc: Lake Cyndi; Dougherty Marc
Subject: FW: NTSB / East Palestine, OH (RRD23MR005) - Interview Transcript transmittal [for review] + Errata Sheet

May 30, 2023

Mr Troy Lloyd / Panel 1 Chair – further to this, this to document that the Interview Transcript and the corresponding Errata Sheet transmittal, as described in the message below, had been sent to the identified Interviewee [recipient of the message below], to afford an opportunity to provide transcript corrections / comments, in which no reply had been, as yet, forthcoming in response to this transmittal inquiry.

Accordingly, given the approaching due-date for the required submission of Exhibits into the public docket for the Public Hearing, which would include the Interview Transcript and corresponding Errata Sheet, this to document that the Interview Transcript [as received from the agency transcription contractor], and the corresponding Errata Sheet [as sent to the interviewee], will be placed into the public docket for the Public Hearing, which will include a copy of this message, as documentation of the transmittal non-response.

Further, if an Errata Sheet [with, or without, described transcript corrections / comments] for this transmittal non-response is subsequently received by the Panel 1 investigation, that responded documentation will be correspondingly placed into the public docket for the Public Hearing, as a follow-up docket-placement item, such to reflect that an Errata Sheet for the subject Interview Transcript had been conveyed to the investigation. -- Richard Downs, Jr., P.E. / Panel 1 [investigative support]

From: Downs Richard
Sent: Friday, May 19, 2023 11:24 PM
To: dhutchison@cardinaljointfire.com
Cc: Lloyd Troy <Troy.Lloyd@ntsb.gov>; Lake Cyndi <Cyndi.Lake@ntsb.gov>; Dougherty Marc <Marc.Dougherty@ntsb.gov>
Subject: NTSB / East Palestine, OH (RRD23MR005) - Interview Transcript transmittal [for review] + Errata Sheet

May 19, 2023

Chief Don Hutchison / Cardinal Joint Fire and Canfield Fire Department –

First off, I want to thank you for your support to the NTSB Investigation, and for your participation in the interview as conducted in the investigation. The interview resulted in an official transcript that will be very useful to our investigative process and provide valuable insight to support the NTSB's Public Hearing, that is being scheduled to address the above referenced accident investigation.

As mentioned during the interview activity, you (as the interviewee) are afforded the opportunity to review the transcript that's generated from the interview recording, such to provide prospective transcript content corrections feedback to the investigation, which you would like to propose for consideration by the investigation.

Accordingly, to that end, attached please find a .pdf copy of your interview transcript (as received from the transcription contractor), which is hereby provided for your review / corrections response opportunity, along with an Errata Sheet (transmittal form).

Correspondingly, given the above, to execute this transcript review / feedback process, kindly please printout the attached transcript document and Errata Sheet, which will enable your review of the full transcript, in which the Errata

Sheet is used in your reply transmittal. Completion of the data in the Errata Sheet is self-explanatory (... simply check the appropriate response box, affix a signature, and date, and if needed, attach any identified transcript changes -- per the Errata Sheet).

Kindly please return to me, via reply email, the completed Errata Sheet, along with any transcript changes, in which it's requested that you kindly submit your response, even if there are no transcript changes identified, by **not later than May 24, 2023**.

Lastly, please note, [1] that investigation transcripts must be maintained as confidential at this time, in which the transcript is for your use only, and not for release outside of the investigation, and [2] I welcome you to contact me, or any of my Tech Panel 1 colleagues (cc'd here, for your convenience), should there be any thoughts or questions regarding this transcript review / Errata Sheet response process.

Thank you for your support to the investigation, and for your assistance and cooperation in this response.



Richard M. Downs, Jr., P.E.
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National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations
Washington, D.C. 20594

Date: May 19, 2023

Interviewee: Don Hutchison / Cardinal Joint Fire and Canfield Fire Department

Reference: **Errata Sheet** Transmittal / **Transcribed Interview**, regarding the February 3, 2023, Norfolk Southern Railway train derailment and fire, in East Palestine, OH -- NTSB Investigation number RRD23MR005

As indicated during the subject interview, attached for your attention and response, please find a copy of the transcript of your interview that was conducted on May 5, 2023, which was compiled as a preparation activity [element], of an NTSB Public Hearing, that is being scheduled to address the above referenced accident. Kindly please review the enclosed transcript for accuracy, and please utilize this sheet to convey (to the investigation) any necessary editorial changes.

Your response in this may be either ...

- [1] submission of an 'itemized tabulation' of your suggested transcript changes (i.e., in a tabulation format, cite the relevant page and line number, along with any suggested change(s)), -- or --
- [2] you may 'redline' (i.e., manually, or digitally markup, with an inserted corresponding notation) any suggested changes to a copy of the transcript, to which kindly please initial any changes cited, in which only the individual pages containing the cited changes need to returned in your response.

When replying, please use this transmittal sheet for your response, even if there are no changes identified in your review, to which, please be sure to apply a checkmark to one of the three statements below, and please affix your signature and date. It's requested that you kindly please submit your response to me, via **reply email**, by **not later than** the CoB of **May 24, 2023**.

I have reviewed the enclosed transcript(s) from the above referenced accident, and ...

- I have no comment(s) to offer,
- my comments are submitted herewith (as an itemized tabulation), --- OR ---
- my comments are indicated on the attached / marked-up ("redlined") transcript copy.

Respondent's signature _____ Date _____

Please note that investigation transcripts must be maintained as confidential at this time, in which the transcript [provided at this time, for your accuracy review] is for your use only, and not for release outside of the investigation. Upon NTSB receipt of your errata sheet response to this, a copy of the transcript and corresponding errata sheet may be placed in the public docket. If you have any questions, I welcome you to contact me by phone, or by reply email.

Thank you for your support to the investigation, and for your assistance and cooperation in this response.

-- Richard Downs, Jr. / Technical Panel 1 – Emergency Response Efforts



Richard M. Downs, Jr., P.E.
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Sr. Survival Factors Investigator
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