

Human Performance/ System Safety Factual Report Drop-In

Norfolk Southern Corporation

Employee Fatality in Bayview Yard in Baltimore, MD

February 7, 2019

RRD 19 FR 004

The Human Performance/ System Safety investigation focused on the Conductor and includes Behavioral Factors, Operational Factors, Environmental Factors and applicable NS Rules.

1. Behavioral Factors:

a. Toxicology report:

Following the accident, specimens obtained from the Conductor by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (ME) of the State of Maryland were provided for testing by the Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI) of the Office of Aerospace Medicine, of the Federal Aviation Administration. The specimens were tested and found to be negative for the presence of illicit drugs and alcohol.

b. Work-rest history:

Investigators were unable to obtain a work-rest history for the 35 year old Conductor from the family member that he lived with. NS stated the Conductor had not worked the days preceding the accident and his work schedule was 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

b. Work load:

The work load on the day of the accident was normal, with no unusual work requests or requirements.

2. Operational Factors:

a. Training:

The Conductor completed the NS training program for Conductors. This training began with a 3-week course in McDonough, GA followed by 60-days of On-the-Job Training (OJT) at his reporting station (Bayview Yard, Baltimore, MD). During OJT, the Conductor Trainee is assigned a Mentor to assist with training. During his interview, the Mentor stated that he had voiced concerns regarding the Conductor Trainee being ready to be certified.

b. Experience and Disciplinary Actions:

The train crew consisted of an Engineer and Conductor (deceased). The Engineer was employed by NS for 29 years and the Conductor was employed by Norfolk Southern for six months

c: Equipment and Cell Phone Information:

The Conductor was wearing his NS assigned personal protection gear, to include a reflective vest, and was carrying his NS-provided radio, brake stick and lantern, as required. The Conductor was using his radio preceding the accident, to communicate with the Engineer to direct their shove movement on the yard tracks. The Conductor's personal cell phone was located stowed in his grip; he was not using his personal cell phone during the time preceding the accident. His cell phone usage report will be included in the docket.

3. Environmental Factors:

a. Weather

The NTSB's Senior Meteorologist provided a weather report for Baltimore, MD on February 7, 2019, from the weather reporting location at Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, located approximately 9 miles southwest of the accident site at approximately the same elevation. This report stated the weather observed at the time of the accident was a variable wind at 3 knots, visibility of 6 miles in mist, temperature of 43 degrees Fahrenheit (F) and no precipitation reported during the past 24 hours.

b. Time of day

The train crew went on duty about 6:00 a.m. and the accident occurred about 7:00 a.m. EDT. The NTSB's Senior Meteorologist reported that The United States Naval Observatory website indicated Sunrise at 0708 EST.

4. Pertinent NS Rules and Regulations:

Four days after the accident (February 11, 2019) NS issued a Safety Alert which referenced and discussed two NS Rules for employees to review "to minimize risks when operating on tracks restricted account close track centers and riding equipment."

NS Operating Rule 20(a)(4), Prohibited Acts – Riding equipment on tracks restricted account close track centers, prohibits employees from riding equipment on tracks designated by Special Instructions to be restricted account close track centers.

NS Operating Rule 27 Close Clearance states that some equipment on adjacent track will not clear a person on the top of side of a car or engine.

5. Interviews:

The Human Performance/System Safety group and Operations Group conducted interviews at NS Bayview Yard, Baltimore, MD. Transcripts from the interviews are provided in the Docket.