

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

COAL TRAIN DERAILMENT & BRIDGE *

COLLAPSE NEAR PUEBLO, COLORADO * Accident No.: RRD24FR001

ON OCTOBER 15, 2023 *

* * * * *

Interview of: CHARLES GODINEZ, Welder
BNSF

Hampton Inn and Suites
Pueblo, Colorado

Tuesday,
October 17, 2023

APPEARANCES:

TROY LLOYD, Track Group Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board

RICHARD SKOLNEKOVICH, Rail Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

DARIUS MACK, Rail Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

GENE THOMPSON, Accident Investigation Team
BMWED

MATTHEW HAMMOND, AVP and Chief Engineer
BNSF Railway

MICHAEL COOK, General Director, System Safety
BNSF Railway

ADAM MILLER, General Director, Maintenance Support
BNSF Railway

BRIAN CHAVEZ, Track Specialist, District 7
Federal Railroad Administration

LARRY MILLER, Track Inspector, District 6
Federal Railroad Administration

BLAIN LUCK, Rail Integrity Specialist
Federal Railroad Administration

BRIAN TAYLOR, Local Chairman
BMW Representative for Mr. Godinez

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. LLOYD: All right. We're on the record. Good afternoon.
3 My name is Troy Lloyd. I'm with the National Transportation
4 Safety Board. Today is October 17, 2023, and we're conducting an
5 interview with BNSF welder, Charles Godinez, and you want to go by
6 Chuck, correct?

7 MR. GODINEZ: Yes.

8 JUDGE ALMANZA: Okay. Not a problem. This interview is
9 being conducted at Hampton Inn and Suites in Pueblo, Colorado.
10 This interview is in connection with a BNSF train derailment and
11 subsequent bridge collapse that occurred in Bragdon, Colorado, on
12 Sunday, October 15th, 2023. The accident occurred on main track 1
13 along BNSF's Pikes Peak Subdivision. The NTSB accident reference
14 for this accident is RRD24FR001.

15 So the purpose of the interview is so we can gather some
16 facts, you know, gather all the facts you know. It's not to
17 increase -- it's to increase safety, not to do anything with blame
18 or pointing fingers or anything like that. The NTSB cannot offer
19 any guarantee or confidentiality from legal or certificate action.
20 A transaction -- or the summary of the interview will be placed in
21 the public docket of the employee interviews that are being
22 conducted. You're going to get a copy of anything and everything
23 that we talk about at the table, okay.

24 MR. GODINEZ: Okay.

25 MR. LLOYD: You do have a BNSF representative with you. Is

1 that correct?

2 MR. TAYLOR: BMW.

3 MR. LLOYD: Or BMW representative. Do you want to give your
4 name and title?

5 MR. TAYLOR: My name is Brian, B-r-i-a-n, Taylor, T-a-y-l-o-
6 r, and I'm the local chairman for BMW.

7 MR. LLOYD: All right. Thank you, sir. All right. And
8 before we go -- before we start the interview, I'm going to go
9 around the room. I'm going to start again. To my right, we'll
10 start with Rich here. Make sure you -- when we get to you, you
11 spell -- say your first name, spell your last name, who you work
12 for and what your title is. Okay. And just speak clearly. I'm
13 going to start out with myself.

14 My name is Troy Lloyd. I'm with the National Transportation
15 Safety Board. The spelling of my last name is L-l-o-y-d, and I'm
16 the NTSB track group chairman for this accident.

17 MR. SKOLNEKOVICH: Richard Skolnekovich, S-k-o-l-n-e-k-o-v-i-
18 c-h, NTSB, rail investigator.

19 MR. MACK: Darius Mack, M-a-c-k, NTSB, rail investigator.

20 MR. THOMPSON: Gene Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n, BMWED,
21 accident investigation team.

22 MR. HAMMOND: Matthew Hammond, H-a-m-m-o-n-d, BNSF Railway,
23 AVP and chief engineer.

24 MR. COOK: Michael Cook, C-o-o-k, BNSF, General Director of
25 System Safety.

1 MR. CHAVEZ: Brian Chavez, C-h-a-v-e-z, FRA, track
2 specialist, District 7.

3 MR. MILLER: Larry Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r, Federal Railroad
4 Administration, track inspector, District 6.

5 MR. A. MILLER: Adam Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r, BNSF, general
6 director, maintenance support.

7 MR. LUCK: Blain Luck, L-u-c-k, FRA, rail integrity
8 specialist.

9 MR. GODINEZ: Charles Godinez, G-o-d-i-n-e-z, welder, BNSF.

10 MR. LLOYD: All right. Thank you, Chuck. So I'm just going
11 to start out. This is Troy Lloyd, L-l-o-y-d, from NTSB.

12 INTERVIEW OF CHARLES GODINEZ

13 BY MR. LLOYD:

14 Q. Chuck, tell me -- give me your history of your railroad, when
15 you got hired out for the BNSF, dates, if dates are brief, all the
16 way up until you got certified, and even in positions in between
17 that you've held. So.

18 A. Well, I got hired on in January of 2015 as a conductor
19 actually at Artrea (ph.), Colorado. I went through the 15 weeks
20 of training, everything, on-the-job training. My final day, I
21 took the final test. They said you passed. You're all
22 furloughed. You have nowhere to go. So I was furloughed for 4
23 months, and then they opened up the maintenance side, and I went
24 to Gillette, Wyoming for training, and there I ran into Phil
25 Gribble (ph.) which I've known for a long time, and he convinced

1 me to come as a welder. And ever since then, I've been as a
2 welder.

3 Q. So what does it take to be a welder for BNSF?

4 A. Well, actually once you get hired on, they'll send you to
5 class and everything in Olathe, Kansas, Kansas City. They'll
6 teach you everything you need to know about it.

7 Q. So that's something if you take interest in, you can put in
8 for it, and they send you to the training, right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. All right. So talking about the training, what's in -- I
11 know this. I saw your name out there on the rail. So do you do
12 frog welding as well?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. And is that a different training between
15 (indiscernible) or gotay (ph.) versus BA frog welding and things
16 of that nature?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. All at the same place? Was it all -- once you come
19 out as a welder, you're certified in frog welding and --

20 A. Before I'm pretty sure it was all at the same place, but now
21 I think they have different ones. So.

22 Q. Is it a different training between welding frogs and welding
23 rail?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. So you went to, you went to two different training

1 schools to become a rail welder plus a frog welder?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. So, let's get into the nitty-gritty here. So, we know
4 we're looking at some thermite welds out there. So, that
5 particular day, I saw your name out there on 5/24 of 2023. There
6 was some -- a new switch point software that was put in. Talk to
7 me. So what's -- talk to me what you would do procedure-wise to
8 do a weld.

9 A. Basically after we get our track authority or track time,
10 we'll just starting laying all our tools out, everything, cut a 1
11 inch gap in the rail, 1 to 1 1/8 inch gap. Line the welds,
12 preheat it anywhere from 6 to 8 minutes or sometimes we actually
13 go longer in winter depending on how the rail looks and drop
14 thermite and grind it.

15 Q. So you're talking about cutting a gap. Does anything dictate
16 on how much is cut out and what's -- why do I even need to cut
17 anything? Why don't I just bring it back and weld it? Talk to me
18 about that.

19 A. Because you need a gap for the thermite to actually weld the
20 rails together. You need at least a 1 inch gap.

21 Q. Okay. Does anything come into play on that such as weld
22 temperature, weight of rail, things like that or is it always a 1
23 inch, 1 1/8 inch gap?

24 A. Actually it's now 1 1/8 inch is what our welding supervisor
25 tells us but it doesn't -- but it has nothing to do with rail

1 temperature or anything.

2 Q. So have you ever seen where you went to cut a rail to do a
3 thermite weld or every see a joint and it pops?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. What do you do in that case?

6 A. Depending on the rail temperature, you'll pull it back,
7 either cut more and pull it to an inch or just pull it and shoot
8 it depending on rail temperature and the circumstances we're on
9 right now at that time.

10 Q. Yeah. So if I'm going to do, if I get some rails and I'm
11 going to do welding and it does pop, is there anything I do
12 because I know I've got some anchors that should hold that in
13 place. So before I pull it, do you guys pull through anchors,
14 pull through spikes? Do you knock of a certain amount, certain
15 footage before you pull it or anything like that?

16 A. At lot of times, we'll go 200 feet in each direction, not
17 anchors, to de-stress.

18 Q. And how do you do that in the switch? That's so complicated
19 with moving parts and pieces and having frogs. And so how do you,
20 how do you handle that situation?

21 A. Switches are tough because like you say, you can't really
22 pull because of -- you'll pull everything out of order, you know
23 what I mean.

24 Q. Yep.

25 A. So.

1 Q. So do you remember the particular day you welded in the
2 switch point and stock rail out there?

3 A. No, I don't.

4 MR. LLOYD: Okay. That's all I have right now. Darius.

5 MR. MACK: Darius Mack, M-a-c-k.

6 BY MR. MACK:

7 Q. You mentioned the variance in preheating time. I guess just
8 tell me kind of how do you know how -- I mean how do you know if
9 it's going to be 6 minutes or 10 minutes?

10 A. We actually time it. We have timers. We have little stop
11 watches that we time it from the minute we start preheating.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And once we get around -- once I get around 7 minutes, you
14 just -- I -- we're trained to keep an eye on the rail and look at
15 it so to where it's like a cherry red --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- before it starts -- because if you go too far, it'll start
18 sweating, and then it'll melt.

19 Q. Okay. So that was my next question. I mean if you underheat
20 it or overheat it too long, is there issues with both of those or
21 one or the other or --

22 A. Yes, over, yes. You have to cut it all out and start all
23 over again.

24 Q. Okay. Just tell me a little bit about I guess the gang, the
25 welding gang. Is it just you and helper? Is it multiple people?

1 How is that set up and what are their other duties in that gang?

2 A. My truck, it's just me and a helper, a grinder.

3 Q. Okay. And that grinder's duty is, of course, to grind, but
4 is there any other duties?

5 A. Yeah, he helps me do everything, set up and --

6 Q. Okay. As for the preheating part of it, that's just both of
7 you or that's the grinder?

8 A. That's mainly on me to pay attention to it.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. He's supposed to pay attention also, but it's mainly -- it
11 all comes back to me. My name's on it as we all know.

12 MR. MACK: Okay. That's all I have right now.

13 MR. THOMPSON: Gene Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n. On question.

14 BY MR. THOMPSON:

15 Q. Do you feel that you've been adequately trained to do your
16 job?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Thank you.

19 MR. HAMMOND: Matt Hammond, H-a-m-m-o-n-d. No questions.

20 MR. COOK: Michael Cook, C-o-o-k. No questions.

21 MR. CHAVEZ: Brian Chavez, C-h-a-v-e-z. I have one question.

22 BY MR. CHAVEZ:

23 Q. I have one question. On an average day, how many welds do
24 you do on say just an 8-hour day?

25 A. Two usually.

1 MR. CHAVEZ: Okay. No further questions.

2 MR. MILLER: Larry Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r. One question.

3 BY MR. MILLER:

4 Q. When you're on a track to weld, do you feel like you have
5 adequate time to do the process in the allotted time that the weld
6 should be shot at?

7 A. Yes. Depending how much -- I make sure that the dispatcher
8 gave me enough time for me to take it and do it and take my time
9 to do it right, or else I won't do it at all.

10 MR. MILLER: Okay. No more questions.

11 MR. A. MILLER: Adam Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r. A few follow-up
12 questions here.

13 BY MR. A. MILLER:

14 Q. Chuck, can you tell the group what frog welding is?

15 A. Frog welding is basically say you have a manganese frog,
16 we'll go in and if it's chipped out, we'll go in and air arch --
17 either air arch or grind out whatever we need, and then we'll go
18 in and we'll go in and we'll actually arch weld and build it up
19 with material and then regrind it and reshape the frog again.

20 Q. Okay. Then you made some comments and they've been repeated
21 About dropping a weld. Can you talk about the process for a
22 thermite weld in a little more detail about how you set it up and
23 then what's happening, you know, after you preheat, post-heat and
24 what that dropped weld means?

25 A. Okay. Basically once we get our 1 inch gap, we get it

1 aligned and everything, get the rails lined to where everything's
2 ball, web, base, everything's lined up, then we'll fit our molds
3 on the sides. The molds will go on each side, and we'll put our
4 -- we call it the frog under. We'll put it on, tighten it up, so
5 our molds hold steady. And then after it's all set up like that,
6 and everything's good and we're not showing any gaps all around,
7 then we'll come back and we'll pack it with sand all the way
8 around on both sides. Once the sand's packed, we'll come in,
9 check the torch, light the torch, preheat it, start the preheating
10 process anywhere from 7 to -- 6 to 8 minutes or whatever we need.
11 And then once it's done, we'll take it off, and we'll put the
12 thermite keg on top and light it with an igniter, and once it all
13 flares up, it'll drop out of the bottom hole and fill up the molds
14 and the side. And then after that, after 5 minutes, we'll take --
15 break everything down, all the molds, everything off, and we'll
16 start the grinding process.

17 Q. Okay. Back to the training in Kansas City. How long were
18 you there at the Kansas City facility for training?

19 A. Two weeks for, two weeks for thermite, a week for rail end, a
20 week for frog. I think there was only -- and then a week for
21 basic is when I went. They had a basic.

22 Q. Did you do all the classes at once or was it -- did you go
23 for a couple weeks and then come back and then go back?

24 A. No, it was broken up.

25 Q. Okay. Back to while you're welding in switches, you talked

1 about pulling and not pulling things apart. Typically in
2 switches, how do you handle, you know, if you're welding or making
3 a thermite weld, what are some of the procedures that you do if
4 you're not going to make a pull?

5 A. If we're not going to make a pull, basically do the same,
6 just cut the 1 inch gap and shoot it where it's at.

7 Q. Okay. What do you have as a resource when you talk about,
8 you know, depending on rail temperature, you've got to make a
9 pull, knock anchors, those kind of things. What are some of the
10 resources that you have to reference so you know how much to pull?

11 A. We actually have -- we have a temp gun we have on the truck,
12 and then I also have a printout sheet of the pull chart that
13 actually tells you the rail temp is 60 degrees and then you go
14 back and you figure the chart, and it tells you how much to pull
15 out of it.

16 MR. A. MILLER: Okay. No further questions.

17 MR. LUCK: Blain Luck, L-u-c-k, FRA.

18 BY MR. LUCK:

19 Q. Now, just a few questions, Chuck. It's not going to be that
20 bad, but how much time do you -- what is your minimum time that
21 you'll accept to do one thermite weld?

22 A. Like right now, I have a new welder trainee. So he's
23 learning but about an hour and a half right now.

24 Q. So you won't even attempt on unless you have an hour and a
25 half of track time?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. And you have one assistant with you, a grinder?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Yourself and one grinder?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. When you're aligning the welds, you're using wedges --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- I'm assuming?

9 A. Lining plates.

10 Q. Lining plates. Can you explain that a little bit?

11 A. Well, we have two different type. We have one type that goes
12 -- they go, they go over the tie, under the rail and it has like
13 little hooks where you can -- you move side to side to adjust side
14 to side on both of them. Or, we have the flat lining plates that
15 actually go under the rail and that also moves it side to side and
16 then we go up and down with hydraulic jacks.

17 Q. And throughout that process, you're using a 3 foot straight
18 edge, correct?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Do you -- what's the tolerances on the alignment that you
21 want for a thermite weld?

22 A. The top -- oh, man, I hate this. The tolerance for the top
23 on the thermite weld is I think 7 to 9/1000ths.

24 Q. Okay. Can I ask, have you ever had a weld failure?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Do you recall your last one?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Would you mind elaborating a little bit?

4 A. As a matter of fact, it was about 2 weeks into it when my new
5 trainee just started, and we were out there. And, it was, it was
6 too close to the tie, that we shouldn't have shot it, but it was
7 too close to the tie. We tried packing sand in there good enough,
8 and we didn't, and when we put the crucible on top and all the
9 thermite poured out, it just came out the bottom. And it started
10 ties on fire and burned a hole in the rail, and --

11 Q. I'm not picking on you, man, but how many occasions, just
12 estimate, do you -- would you say that you had a weld failure over
13 the course of your welding career?

14 A. That was my second one.

15 Q. Second one?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And when that happens, you have to cut it out and put a whole
18 new rail and that creates two welds then, correct?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Can I ask a little bit about -- are you using propane or
21 acetylene?

22 A. Propane oxygen.

23 Q. Propane oxygen?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And what pressures would you run with that?

1 A. 65-15.

2 Q. Okay. And is that temperature sensitive, ambient temperature
3 sensitive? Does it change with cold weather or hot weather?

4 A. No, it's pretty much the same.

5 Q. Okay. What's the coldest ambient temperature that you're
6 allowed to weld at?

7 A. Zero.

8 Q. Zero.

9 A. Zero degrees. Below 0 degrees, we're supposed to shoot mini
10 welds unless it's a -- it says according to the book, emergency or
11 roadmaster.

12 Q. Okay. And one other procedural question. So after you do
13 the weld, you break the top of the weld off, correct?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Do you immediately hammer the horns down or what happens to
16 the horns and when do you knock those off and grind the web so to
17 speak?

18 A. Once we take -- at 5 minutes, we break -- we take all the
19 metal off, and then at 6 minutes, we'll break the top off. We'll
20 put it on, and we'll shear it at 7 minutes. And then at 7
21 minutes, we'll knock the top and we'll knock the rises down flat,
22 and then he'll start his grinding.

23 Q. Okay. So you grind initially?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So it's not by any means a finished grind. You leave it

1 crowned and then let it cool and then come back and do a finish
2 grind or do --

3 A. No, we do a hot grind.

4 Q. And that's it. That completes it?

5 A. Yes.

6 MR. LUCK: No further questions at this time.

7 MR. LLOYD: I have a couple back-up questions. This is Troy
8 from the NTSB, L-l-o-y-d.

9 BY MR. LLOYD:

10 Q. So once that weld is shot, okay, and everything looks good.
11 You inspect everything. Everything's in line, put the track back
12 in service and you go maybe to the next weld, right?

13 A. (No audible response.)

14 Q. What's the safety behind once Chuck shoots this weld, that
15 it's a 100 percent weld? Is there any hand testing that's done
16 within a certain time limit to show that that is a good weld?
17 It's solidified correctly. It's good to go.

18 A. No, not that I know of.

19 Q. Okay. And do you any type of weld checks, hand testing to
20 measure that you've got 100 percent --

21 A. No.

22 Q. -- good weld? Okay.

23 MR. LLOYD: That's all I have right now. Darius.

24 MR. MACK: Darius Mack, M-a-c-k.

25 BY MR. MACK:

1 Q. The last question I've got is as far as that weld, number 71,
2 that we're looking at on the -- involved in the derailment, was
3 there anything in the process, I guess, that was abnormal on that
4 one that you can recall?

5 A. I want to say I can't recall even when I shot that because
6 I'm already at like I think 161 for this year, and normally if
7 something does go abnormal, we'll stop and tear it down.

8 MR. MACK: No other questions.

9 MR. THOMPSON: Gene Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n.

10 BY MR. THOMPSON:

11 Q. So weld 71, that means what? Is that your 71 for the year?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And what do you averagely shoot a year?

14 A. This year was a bad year because I was out sick, and our
15 truck was down. But last year we had -- I think we had 298 welds
16 last year, and this year, we're at like 100 and -- I forget what I
17 just said, 149 or 50 right now. So we have what -- basically
18 since I've been here, we've been averaging about 200 a year.

19 Q. And did I hear you correctly, you only had two failures?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 MR. THOMPSON: No further questions.

22 MR. HAMMOND: Matt Hammond, H-a-m-m-o-n-d. No questions.

23 MR. COOK: Michael Cook, C-o-o-k. No questions.

24 MR. CHAVEZ: Brian Chavez, C-h-a-v-e-z. No questions.

25 MR. MILLER: Larry Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r. No questions.

1 MR. A. MILLER: Adam Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r. A few follow-up
2 questions.

3 BY MR. A. MILLER:

4 Q. As you were talking about tolerances for aligning your weld,
5 it was mentioned like -- what units was that in? Is it inches --

6 A. Inches.

7 Q. And then when you align welds, what would happen if you
8 didn't align the weld right?

9 A. Because your rail won't be lined up perfectly, and say if you
10 get any pump or anything, it'll cause it to break even faster.
11 The weld will actually break. So when we line it, we actually
12 line it to where the webs lined. The base and the web are lined,
13 and then your gauge site and then your top. You're actually
14 crowned but --

15 Q. And then anything you can recall after you completed the
16 welding process and finished grind? Are you required to write on
17 the rail anything?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What things can you recall that you're supposed to write on
20 the rail?

21 A. Welds -- weld number, name, date, temperature,
22 (indiscernible).

23 MR. A. MILLER: Okay. No further questions.

24 MR. LUCK: Blain Luck, FRA.

25 BY MR. LUCK:

1 Q. To your knowledge, has there ever been a weld defect
2 identified by Herzog or Sperry or any of the ultrasonic testing?

3 A. No, never.

4 MR. LUCK: No further questions.

5 MR. LLOYD: This is Troy from NTSB, L-l-o-y-d. Just two
6 back-up questions.

7 BY MR. LLOYD:

8 Q. Is there a requirement where field welds have to be a certain
9 distance from one another?

10 A. Yes, 4 feet.

11 Q. So 4 feet. So I can have a field weld and then 4 feet,
12 another field weld?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Okay. And in your history, have you ever had to go out, and
15 they said, you know, we need to weld these joints, but do you
16 have, do you have the power to sit there and say, look, this joint
17 is too banged up, too battered. We can't do anything. It can't
18 be welded. We need to put a plug rail on.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. Have you ever seen that before?

21 A. Yeah, actually this year is the first year I've ever done it,
22 but we got up there, and it was battered too badly.

23 Q. Yeah. And how do you -- how would you weld if you would go
24 into different sections of rails, such as say a 136 versus a 119
25 or something like that? Is there -- how would you -- talk to me

1 about that process.

2 A. They actually make comp kits for that to where you could
3 shoot the different size rails.

4 Q. Is there any type of particular engineering instructions or
5 restrictions that -- where you would -- comp welding's allowed.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Is there any type of speed restrictions to that or is that
8 just --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- full steam ahead?

11 A. Yes.

12 MR. LLOYD: Okay. I'm good. Mr. Darius.

13 MR. MACK: No other questions.

14 MR. THOMPSON: Gene Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n. No questions.

15 MR. HAMMOND: Matt Hammond, H-a-m-m-o-n-d. No questions.

16 MR. COOK: Michael Cook, C-o-o-k. No questions.

17 MR. CHAVEZ: Brian Chavez, C-h-a-v-e-z. No questions.

18 MR. MILLER: Brian Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r. No more questions.

19 MR. A. MILLER: Adam Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r. One question.

20 BY MR. A. MILLER:

21 Q. When you do a comp weld, is there any requirements that you
22 have to satisfy for rail sizes to make the comp weld?

23 A. I don't understand.

24 Q. So can you weld -- make a thermite weld between 115 pound
25 rail and 136 pound rail or do you have to --

1 A. I'm not sure. I've never seen that, but I've seen it between
2 like 132 and 141. We actually have comp kits for that.

3 Q. Okay. What other weld kits have you used through your
4 career?

5 A. Besides the comp kits?

6 Q. Or just provider. Is it --

7 (Crosstalk)

8 A. -- also.

9 MR. A. MILLER: Okay. No further questions.

10 MR. LUCK: Blain Luck, L-u-c-k, FRA. One follow-up question.

11 BY MR. LUCK:

12 Q. So you made comment with an earlier statement that when
13 you're doing the preheat, you said the rail could start to sweat?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Can you explain that to me? Do you want sweating? Do you
16 not want sweating?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Can you kind of walk us through that preheat process a little
19 better?

20 A. When you're preheating, you'll look down and you'll see the
21 rail ends will start turning like a real bright orange, and that's
22 where you want it. If you go too far, it'll actually get like
23 little beads of sweat on it. And once you hit that point, it's
24 either stop then or else it'll just melt, and you don't want that.
25 So you want to try to catch it right before it starts.

1 Q. So you have a stopwatch right around your neck.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And, you have that stopwatch for when you first start
4 watching it.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And that's just kind of eyeball thing then when you think,
7 hey, we're good to go. Let's take the torch out.

8 A. Yeah, 6 to 8 minutes is the norm.

9 Q. So at 5 minutes, do you started watching it or 6 minutes
10 or --

11 A. The whole time. We watch the whole time during the preheat.

12 MR. LUCK: All right. No further questions.

13 MR. LLOYD: Yep, one more. This is Troy again from the NTSB.

14 BY MR. LLOYD:

15 Q. How do you know if you're got a good welding kit versus a bad
16 welding kit? Is there expiration dates on these welding kits?

17 A. Two years only.

18 Q. Okay. And you look at that?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You look at the welding kits. Have you ever seen any expired
21 stuff? And what do you all do? Just toss in the dumpster.

22 A. Yes, we get rid of them. We dispose of them.

23 MR. LLOYD: Okay. That's it for me. What else you got?

24 MR. MACK: Nothing else.

25 MR. LLOYD: Darius, nothing. Gene?

1 MR. THOMPSON: Gene Thompson. No questions.

2 MR. LLOYD: Matt.

3 MR. HAMMOND: Matt Hammond. No questions.

4 MR. COOK: Michael Cook. No questions.

5 MR. CHAVEZ: Brian Chavez. No questions.

6 MR. MILLER: Larry Miller. No questions.

7 MR. A. MILLER: Adam Miller. No questions.

8 MR. LUCK: Blain Luck. No questions.

9 MR. LLOYD: I have no further questions either. We're off
10 the record.

11 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: COAL TRAIN DERAILMENT & BRIDGE
COLLAPSE NEAR PUEBLO, COLORADO
ON OCTOBER 15, 2023
Interview of Charles Godinez

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD24FR001

PLACE: Pueblo, Colorado

DATE: October 17, 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.


Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber