

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COLLISION

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GRANITE CANYON, WYOMING

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Accident No.: RRD19FR001

OCTOBER 4, 2018

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Interview of: JASON CARRIGAN

Manager Operating Practices

Via Telephone

Saturday,

October 6, 2018

## APPEARANCES:

TED T. TURPIN, Railroad Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

DONALD MAI, Operating Practices Safety Inspector  
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

JOHN ALLBERRY, General Director Safety  
Union Pacific Railroad

BRIAN FRANSEN, Primary Investigator  
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen  
(BLET)

CARL SMITH, Safety Team Member  
SMART Transportation Division

KOREY McDANIEL, Safety Team Member  
SMART Transportation Division

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. TURPIN: So, my name is Ted Turpin and we're conducting  
3 interview in connection with an accident that happened near  
4 Granite Canyon, Wyoming on October 4th, 2018. The accident is  
5 number RR19FR001 [sic]. Today is October 6, 2018, and we are at  
6 the Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, Wyoming, interviewing by phone a  
7 supervisor who I believe observed a pickup at Laramie of the  
8 striking train. Is that correct, Jason?

9 MR. CARRIGAN: That is correct. Yes, sir.

10 MR. TURPIN: All right, thank you. So first, if you'd state  
11 your name and spell it, and then we'll go around the room and  
12 everybody will introduce themselves.

13 MR. CARRIGAN: Jason Carrigan, C-A-R-R-I-G-A-N.

14 MR. McDANIEL: Korey McDaniel, M-C-D-A-N-I-E-L, SMART TD  
15 Safety Team.

16 MR. MAI: Donald Mai, FRA, OP Inspector, Denver, Colorado.  
17 M-A-I.

18 MR. SMITH: Carl Smith, C-A-R-L, S-M-I-T-H, SMART  
19 Transportation Division, Safety Team.

20 MR. FRANSEN: Brian Fransen, F-R-A-N-S-E-N, BLET Safety Task  
21 Force.

22 MR. ALLBERRY: John Allberry, A-L-L-B-E-R-R-Y, UP operating  
23 practices.

24 MR. TURPIN: All right. Mind if I call you Jason?

25 MR. CARRIGAN: That is fine, sir.

1 MR. TURPIN: All right. And you do understand this is been  
2 recorded?

3 MR. CARRIGAN: Yes, sir.

4 INTERVIEW OF JASON CARRIGAN

5 BY MR. TURPIN:

6 Q. Just tell us what happened at Laramie.

7 A. When I went over the bridge on I-80, they were stopped on the  
8 main line away from their cut. They were already in the yard.

9 When I went a little bit further west on I-80, they were in track  
10 8, already sitting there, went down into the yard, went to the  
11 south end in the yard -- the yard in Laramie basically runs north  
12 and south -- went to the south end of the yard, saw the engineers  
13 getting in his seat, window open. Grabbed my binoculars. Did not  
14 see the conductor sitting up there, did not see the conductor when  
15 I went by where they were tied into at track 8.

16 Moved down to the north end a little bit, just at the end of  
17 the cut, to find the conductor. He had just hooked up his  
18 handheld air gauge and was waiting for the air to come up.

19 Probably stood there 2 to 5 minutes, waiting for the air to come  
20 up on the rear. Air came up. They announced it over the radio,  
21 make the set. Engineer made the set. Conductor walked the set.

22 Each car he bent over that he could not see the piston on the  
23 gondolas, he literally bent over and looked for the piston  
24 extended. Did his set and safety inspection on the west side of  
25 the cars, walking southwardly. Crossed over. Called for the

1 release on the radio. Did the release on the east side of the  
2 cars, walking northerly. And when he was completed, got his air  
3 gauge off, informed the engineer they were ready to go. He  
4 climbed on the east side of the cut of the cars, pulled up.  
5 Engineer, while they were pulling out, contacted the dispatcher,  
6 stated they were ready to go. Dispatcher on the radio said, will  
7 you clear DLS? Engineer said, yes, we will.

8 From there, I went around to the old depot in Laramie, which  
9 would be 2nd and Kearney Street. Visually watched them from, oh,  
10 about a block, block and a half away. When I got there, he had  
11 just made his safety stop. Watched him make his joint, do his  
12 stretch. And when they were done doing whatever else they had to  
13 do, per the rules, they toned up the dispatcher and said they were  
14 ready to go.

15 Q. Okay. So all this was primarily for efficiency testing?

16 A. The corridor manager had called Jon Ellefson and said he had  
17 two problems: the MC -- MNPCP was is stalled on the hill and the  
18 MGRCY crew said that the weather was bad in Laramie and that it  
19 was unsafe to perform their work, and he needed one or both of us  
20 or whoever he had to go and handle the situations.

21 Jon went and took the stalled train and sent me to Laramie to  
22 check on the weather and see what was going on with the crew on  
23 that GRCY. When I got to Laramie, it was 55 degrees, partly  
24 cloudy -- partly sunny, however you look at it, and the weather  
25 was fine. There was water -- it had rained and, ironically, I

1 ended up with a flat tire on my vehicle. So when I was done with  
2 them, when they departed, I went to the tire place at 3rd and  
3 Kearney, in Laramie. Talked to the gentlemen inside and said,  
4 hey, just by chance, did it storm through here earlier? And he  
5 said yes; it blew, it lightnined. One come off the mountain,  
6 like it always does, and then it went away and then it cleared up.  
7 So when I was there it was nice, but they did actually have bad  
8 weather, yes, sir.

9 Q. Did you hear the crew have a conversation with the dispatcher  
10 while you were traveling there?

11 A. No, sir. No, I only have a handheld. My big radio has not  
12 come into my vehicle yet.

13 Q. Okay. Just to let you know, by the way, that the crew opted  
14 to do the work. They had reported the bad weather -- we just  
15 talked to the dispatcher. The dispatcher said, let me check and  
16 see if we can make a decision on it because the bad weather. And  
17 then the weather started to clear and the crew said, it's okay,  
18 we'll go ahead and do the work now.

19 A. Okay. Like I said, when I got there -- I called the  
20 dispatcher at 1524 to tell him that it's -- or the -- I'm sorry --  
21 the corridor manager, at 1524, on my work phone, and stated, man,  
22 it's 55 degrees and nice; I'm not really sure what they're talking  
23 about, but they're doing the work right now. I'll call you back  
24 if they have any problems or when they're ready to depart.

25 At 1534, I called him back and told them their work was done

1 and they were headed back to their -- rest of their train on the  
2 main line.

3 Q. Okay. I just wanted to fill that gap. You might have  
4 wondered why -- you know, somebody strong-armed them into it. No,  
5 they actually decided to, once the weather cleared.

6 A. Okay, okay.

7 Q. And nothing that you were doing -- there was any way to know  
8 how well the set and release was on the rear of the train,  
9 correct?

10 A. No, sir. No, sir.

11 Q. You will never in a position to observe the rear of the  
12 train?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. And the only thing the engineer would've been using at the  
15 time would've been the readout on the end of train device,  
16 correct?

17 A. When they made their double, that is correct. When they made  
18 their pickup, they used the conductor's handheld device.

19 Q. Right. And he's only doing that on the 19 cars?

20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. Right. Did you hear them on the radio make a second  
22 application, because they pulled out and then they waited for a  
23 train to go by?

24 A. No, sir. Never heard any of that.

25 Q. Okay. Yeah, because I think -- and we're going to look at



1 the event recorder. I think there was a second or a reapplication  
2 of the brakes while they were sitting and waiting.

3 A. Okay. He had given himself plenty of head room for the  
4 pickup, so that very well may be. I'm not aware of that.

5 Q. Okay. So did you know this engineer?

6 A. No, sir. I've been here a month. I came from St. Louis.

7 Q. Well, that was easy for you.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: St. Louis to Laramie.

9 MR. CARRIGAN: Yes, sir.

10 MR. TURPIN: Welcome. Welcome.

11 MR. CARRIGAN: Couldn't be happier. Couldn't be happier.

12 MR. TURPIN: Well, good. That didn't even have a drip of  
13 satire to it. That was good.

14 MR. CARRIGAN: I can tell the satire in the tone of your  
15 voices.

16 MR. TURPIN: Well, I live in Redondo Beach, so whatever.  
17 Anybody have any questions? Go around.

18 BY MR. ALLBERRY:

19 Q. Hey, Jason, did you ever talk to the crew, I mean on the  
20 radio or up in the cab or anything?

21 A. No, sir. And my reasoning for that was simple: After coming  
22 out of craft, after 14 years on the ground and running, I just  
23 know how things work, and all I've would done was agitate the  
24 situation and slow their work down. So all I did was not miss a  
25 chance or an opportunity to observe them do their work. And they

1 knew I was there. They saw me go up and down the road to the  
2 yard.

3 Q. Okay. That was my next question. So you didn't put in an  
4 efficiency test or anything?

5 A. No, sir. I am not DSLE qualified. That will be on  
6 Wednesday.

7 Q. You're not FTX qualified yet?

8 A. No, sir. I will be that on Tuesday.

9 Q. That make sense. Because yeah, I mean, if I'm -- my field  
10 experience, man, if I'm watching a crew for 20, 30 minutes, I'm  
11 getting the credit for the test. So --

12 A. I would love to get the credit for the test, but I figure I  
13 just will not pass an opportunity to keep on learning, so -- like  
14 I said, I get -- Tuesday and Wednesday, I get certified.

15 Q. Good. Hey, I only have another one. Did you happen to see,  
16 and I think I might've asked you this the other day, did you  
17 happen to see any trespassers, anybody in that yard, anybody  
18 around that main line when you were in Laramie?

19 A. No, sir. And the main reason why is it's fenced all the way  
20 around. There's the main access when you come in from the west.  
21 and there is one crossing all the way down at the, basically,  
22 north end of the yard or the main line on the east side. And  
23 that's the only two ways in and out, unless you're crawling fences  
24 and jumping off bridges.

25 Q. Good.

1 BY MR. FRANSEN:

2 Q. Brian Fransen. Did you -- you said that you noticed it was 2  
3 to 5 minutes for them to get enough air to do the set on those 19  
4 cars. Is that -- what would -- I mean, was it closer to 5 or 2?  
5 Or do you have a better recollection of that, or just --

6 A. It was no more than 5 minutes I sat there and watched him  
7 wait for his air to come to the proper reading on the end of air  
8 gauge.

9 MR. FRANSEN: Okay. Okay, that's all I've got. Thank you.

10 MR. SMITH: Hi Jason, Carl Smith, with SMART.

11 BY MR. SMITH:

12 Q. I just -- while you had your binoculars out, did you happen  
13 to notice any of the pistons on any of the cars?

14 A. No, sir. I did not. The cars -- the pistons on the cars on  
15 the gondola, he was bending over and looking underneath to try and  
16 find them.

17 MR. SMITH: Okay. That's all I have.

18 MR. CARRIGAN: And I will say for the record, the conductor  
19 did an outstanding job on his inspection and set and release.

20 MR. MAI: So Jason, Don Mai with the FRA. I've got a couple  
21 of questions for you.

22 BY MR. MAI:

23 Q. How do you know the portion of the train that was left on the  
24 main line was secured? Or --

25 A. How do I know that?

1 Q. Yeah, or would you know that?

2 A. No, I would not know that.

3 Q. Okay. And the portion -- you said there was a crossing  
4 towards the north end of the yard. Was that train long enough to  
5 block that crossing?

6 A. Just barely. Maybe he had 86 cars when he came in, so it  
7 would be very close. Yes, very close.

8 Q. Okay. And you said there was no trespassers at the scene  
9 because -- and it's a fenced in yard, right?

10 A. That's correct. And the crossings are both UP crossings.  
11 They're not public crossing; they're private crossings.

12 Q. Even that one on the north end?

13 A. Yes, sir. The only way it leads -- the only place it leads  
14 you when you're coming in is into the yard, and it's an access  
15 point to get out of the yard.

16 Q. Okay. So there's no public crossings that that train might  
17 have fouled?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Okay. Did you hear the conductor request red zone after he  
20 coupled back into his train?

21 A. I did not. I was too far way at that time to hear him with  
22 the handheld.

23 MR. MAI: Okay. Thank you.

24 MR. McDANIEL: Korey McDaniel, with SMART. Just an operation  
25 question.

1 BY MR. McDANIEL:

2 Q. The local at Laramie sometimes does the air test; is that  
3 correct?

4 A. Uh-hum. That is correct. Well, the only reason I know that  
5 is because I was able to speak with Bob Dunlap yesterday.  
6 Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. Yes.

7 Q. Do you know what determines that? Like timing or --

8 A. I believe timing, yes, sir. If they have time. That day  
9 they were stretched for power, so they did not have time. That is  
10 what Bob said, anyway.

11 Q. And did you -- sometimes, you know, the cement cars can get a  
12 lot debris or, you know, cement dust on them. Did you observe any  
13 of that while you were watching them?

14 A. Those cars looked to be almost brand new. They were in  
15 perfect shape.

16 MR. McDONALD: Okay. Thank you.

17 MR. ALLBERRY: I've got one more, Ted, a follow-up with that.  
18 Kind of what Don was getting at.

19 BY MR. ALLBERRY:

20 Q. So in the yard it's fenced off, but their train that they  
21 left on the main line, is there a crossing anywhere there close on  
22 the main line at Laramie?

23 A. They would've been close to crossing at the rear of their  
24 train, close to it, depending on their footage and how far it is  
25 from where he left his standing cut to the rear of his train.

1 MR. ALLBERRY: Okay, we can -- and we can go out and have  
2 that looked at.

3 MR. TURPIN: But they would've been clear of the crossing,  
4 not on it?

5 MR. CARRIGAN: That's iffy. That's iffy. I'm not sure what  
6 the distance from there to there, where he left his engine --  
7 where he left his head end cut to the rear of the train, I'm not  
8 sure what that distance is. He'd have been close to that  
9 crossing.

10 MR. TURPIN: Yeah.

11 BY MR. ALLBERRY:

12 Q. Did he have his train, then? So I'm not familiar enough with  
13 Laramie. So if you pull up there and stop to make your cut -- so  
14 they cut light power.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. But he held back.

17 MR. TURPIN: He held back to hold the 19.

18 MR. CARRIGAN: Yes, sir.

19 BY MR. ALLBERRY:

20 Q. So when he got his 19 back on the train, where would his head  
21 end have been? Like is there a switch in relationship or a signal  
22 or something?

23 A. He would've been between, roughly -- he would've been smack  
24 there between 566, CPW566 -- or 565 and the old depot, if you know  
25 where the old passenger depot is in Laramie.

1 MR. MAI: That's where his head end would've been?

2 MR. CARRIGAN: Somewhere close to there. Yes, sir.

3 BY MR. ALLBERRY:

4 Q. Between 565 and the old depot. His head end after he got the  
5 19 back on?

6 A. Pretty close. Yes, sir.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Because I had a clear view of his -- where they made their  
9 joint, from where I was sitting at in my vehicle. So he would've  
10 been pretty close to that.

11 MR. ALLBERRY: Okay. Thanks.

12 MR. TURPIN: This is Ted again.

13 BY MR. TURPIN:

14 Q. Do you know how long the cars had been there, sitting there?  
15 The ones he picked up?

16 A. As far as I know, according to Mr. Dunlap, they were put  
17 there by the local that early morning, noontime, something like  
18 that.

19 Q. Okay. Of that day?

20 A. Yes, sir, that day.

21 Q. And that local switches everything with air?

22 A. I do not know. I'm not aware of that.

23 Q. Okay. But he -- well, I'm assuming they had air in them,  
24 though, or at least, you know, sitting there in emergency.

25 A. The cars?

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. Yes, sir. They were laced up and ready to go. He had no  
3 laces to make or anything like that.

4 Q. Well, also because of the time it took to charge them, that's  
5 pretty short; they must have had air in them. Not that we assume  
6 everything around here, but we may double check. Okay.

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 MR. TURPIN: Thanks.

9 MR. MAY: So Jason, Don Mai, FRA again.

10 BY MR. MAI:

11 Q. You're new to that territory, correct?

12 A. That is correct. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Okay. The cement plant that the local -- that the switch  
14 engine would've picked those up, is that not south of town? South  
15 of the interstate?

16 A. I believe -- yes, sir. I believe it is south of town, yes.

17 Q. So I -- well, I assume that they used air to bring them in.  
18 All right. Do you -- you probably don't know this, but if you can  
19 answer, that'd be great. Have any audits of that industry been  
20 done to where they're dragging air hoses through the cement and  
21 all that kind of stuff? Do you know of anything like that?

22 A. No, sir. I do not. I am unaware of that.

23 MR. MAI: Okay.

24 MR. McDANIEL: This is Korey McDaniel with SMART again.

25 BY MR. McDANIEL:



1 Q. Can you tell me who Mr. Dunlap is?

2 A. Foreman General II, I believe, Laramie, Wyoming.

3 Q. He's a foreman of the crew that was on the local?

4 A. No, he's the mechanical foreman. Mechanical Foreman II,  
5 Laramie, Wyoming. He's in charge -- he's the car man, basically.  
6 Is the easiest way to put it.

7 MR. McDANIEL: Got it. Thank you.

8 MR. CARRIGAN: If they have air problems or anything, they  
9 call him.

10 MR. MAI: So quick question. Again, Don Mai, with the FRA.

11 BY MR. MAI:

12 Q. And help me out here. Train goes into the yard. They cut  
13 off -- they tie their train down, they cut off and go into the  
14 yard to pick up cars. They do the initial turnover test on those  
15 19 cars, come back to the train, couple back up the train. The  
16 only thing they're required then is a set and release; correct, on  
17 the rear of the train they left sitting?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. Okay. At that point are they required to re-test their ETD?

20 A. Are they require to re-test their EOT?

21 Q. Correct. To see if it would will put the train in -- or  
22 emergency or penalty, whatever you want to call it?

23 A. No, sir.

24 Q. Okay. That's only on the initial test when they test the  
25 entire train, correct?

1 A. Yes. Yes, sir.

2 Q. Okay. And Don Mai, again, with FRA. So you had a pack set  
3 with you; is that correct? A handheld?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. And you don't know what the range that is as far as --

6 A. It really, honestly, depends on where you are: flat ground,  
7 hilly ground, the territory, the buildings in the way. Sometimes  
8 you can reach out a long way; sometimes it'll reach 7,000, 8,000  
9 feet. It's just depends on the terrain between you and the head  
10 end.

11 Q. Okay. And refresh my memory. I believe Laramie kind of sits  
12 north-south, correct? The tracks?

13 A. That is correct, yes.

14 Q. And fairly flat, correct?

15 A. That is correct, yes.

16 MR. MAI: Okay. That's all I've got. Thank you.

17 MR. TURPIN: Anybody else?

18 MR. McDANIEL: Korey McDaniel, with SMART.

19 BY MR. McDANIEL:

20 Q. Did anybody interview the local that day? The crew that put  
21 the cars there?

22 A. I am unaware of that.

23 MR. McDANIEL: Thank you.

24 MR. TURPIN: I think that's it, Jason. That kind of  
25 concludes our interview here. Thank you.

1 MR. CARRIGAN: Okay. Thank you.

2 MR. TURPIN: Don't hang up.

3 MR. ALLBERRY: Yeah, don't hang up, Jason.

4 MR. CARRIGAN: Okay.

5 MR. ALLBERRY: We'll get you off -- I got a couple questions  
6 for you not related to this.

7 MR. TURPIN: Uh-oh.

8 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

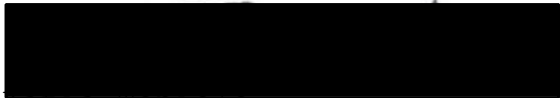
IN THE MATTER OF:           UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COLLISION  
                                  GRANITE CANYON, WYOMING  
                                  OCTOBER 4, 2018  
                                  Interview of: Jason Carrigan

ACCIDENT NO.:               RRD19FR001

PLACE:                       Via Telephone

DATE:                         October 6, 2018

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.

  
Katie Tonello  
Transcriber