UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *
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UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COLLISION *
GRANITE CANYON, WYOMING * Accident No.: RRD19FR001
OCTOBER 4, 2018 *
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Interview of: JON ELLEFSON
Manager Operating Practices

Plains Hotel
Cheyenne, Wyoming

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

I N D E X

I N T E R V I E W

MR. TURPIN: My name is Ted Turpin. We're conducting an interview in connection with an accident that happened near Granite Canyon, Wyoming on October 4, 2018. The accident number is RR19FR001 [sic]. Today is October 6, 2018, and we're at the Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, Wyoming, interviewing the locomotive supervisor for the territory.

Could you please state your name and spell it?

MR. ELLEFSON: Jon Ellefson, J-O-N, E-L-L-E-F-S-O-N.

MR. TURPIN: All right, thank you. You understand this is being recorded?

MR. ELLEFSON: Yes, sir.

MR. TURPIN: Thank you. And we'll go around the room, and everybody state their name and spell it, and their title.

MR. ALLBERRY: John Allberry, A-L-L-B-E-R-R-Y. Union Pacific, operating practices.

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

MR. McDANIEL: Korey McDaniel, K-O-R-E-Y, M-C-D-A-N-I-E-L. SMART TD Safety Team.

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

MR. MAI: Donald Mai, M-A-I. OP safety inspector, Federal Railroad Administration, Denver, Colorado.

MR. TURPIN: All right, thank you.

And this is Ted Turpin, T-U-R-P-I-N, NTSB.

Do you mind if I call you Jon?

MR. ELLEFSON: That's fine.

MR. TURPIN: Okay, Jon.

INTERVIEW OF JON ELLEFSON

BY MR. TURPIN:

Q. Let's start with, just tell us what you know of the accident.

A. I was assisting the train that was on main track 2 that evening, that had the -- at that time it was a break in two. But that was due to trying to -- we were trying to do a helper service over the hill that had stalled out approximately milepost 526, 525, somewhere in there, just -- they were just past the interstate by-dock that was referred to earlier. And was assisting that train with trying to get it moving again. It stalled out, so --

While we were in process, I called the corridor manager and asked if I could get the Granite crew, which was up there and had three units, and they were putting together a ballast train, if they could come down and give us a little shove over the top. We just didn't seem to have the horsepower that we needed; the rail was wet.

So they came down, and we had a discussion about tacking it on the head end of the -- or the rear of that train on main track 2. And we determined that because of the hazmat that was on the rear of that train on main track 2, we couldn't shove against it

with a man-helper. So we ended up coming against the head end of that train and then just coupled into it. Made the appropriate power and axle adjustments on it, and then we were -- we had just started to pull when one of the units dropped its load and we had broke a knuckle on a unit while trying to get it started.

So we were in the process of tying things back down and changing that knuckle out when the unsecured equipment call came out. At that time I was in my pickup just across the track. At that time the train -- the eastbounder was coming by at the same time, so we were on the radio making sure everybody was getting in the clear. And there were several conversations going between all different crews out there. We had a Granite crew, the crew on main track 2 that was stalled, and then you had the eastbound crew. So all of these conversations -- I'm not sure who was saying what, but there was quite a bit of dialogue about stopping trains, getting in the clear. And that's what was taking place at that time.

At that time I heard a -- I believe the -- I believe it was the dispatcher giving the runaway or the unsecured equipment call: Emergency, emergency, emergency; unsecured equipment, milepost -- I thought he said 520 -- or, excuse me -- 530 first. And then there was a second call about 2 minutes later, maybe a minute and a half. I don't know. Time was hard to tell out there, and trying to recall it is almost impossible right now for me. But it was somewhere in -- I don't think it exceeded 2 minutes, there was

a second callout for unsecured equipment milepost 528: Emergency, emergency, emergency; all personnel get in the clear.

And so, the train on main track 1 that was eastbound had stopped. That crew was talking to the other crew members that were working over on main track 2, and everybody was cross-checking with each other. At that time I took my pickup and I was heading west along the right-of-way road up to milepost -- I got as far as milepost 5- -- probably 527, maybe 527 and a quarter. And there was a huge dust cloud up there, and there was equipment on the right-of-way road. So --

I didn't hear impact. I didn't see anything until I got up there, because I was kind of -- it was dark at that time, or right at dusk that -- kind of that real dark portion of dusk. You could still see the silhouette, but you can't see any real distance.

So that's kind of what I heard. I heard no -- we heard no radio communication from the train or the equipment. We weren't sure what had happened. The first discussions we were having on the radio were possibly cars that had rolled out from the quarry up there. Maybe something had happened with those cars that are tied down up there, because it was just a callout for unsecured equipment. And then later on I had my CAD screen up on my phone, which basically shows the dispatcher layout, and I saw the GR was up in that area. So then I knew it was an actual train that had come in behind there, and saw the equipment. So --

Q. Okay. All right. Thank you. Let's shift now and talk more

of your supervisorial responsibilities.
A. Okay.
Q. And go ahead and explain those.
A. So title is manager of operating practices, which we're in charge of safety, which includes compliance for the locomotive engineers, the Class 1 engineers: certifications, performance, those types of duties; making sure their licenses are current, in good standing, that their train handling skills are consistent with Union Pacific expectations and the FRA.
Q. Are you assigned a specific number of engineers?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. How many do you have?
A. I believe right now I've got 32.
Q. Okay. And do they work all directions out of Cheyenne?
A. No. They work -- the way that the districts are divided up, every crew out of Cheyenne assigned to my area works west.
Q. Okay. So you have from Cheyenne to where?
A. Green River, basically.
Q. Green River?
A. Yeah. But the primary assignments that I have are engineers that are based in Cheyenne, part of the fifth and sixth districts for Union Pacific.
Q. Okay. And there was an earlier discussion, that pool is actually -- has an intermediate point as well, right?
A. So there's two pools. I'll refer to the slang names for

each. It's a short pool and a long pool. The short pool is the pool that runs from Cheyenne to Rawlins, Wyoming; would be 510 to 683. And then the other pool is the long pool, which will run from Cheyenne to Green River; 510 to 817.

Q. Okay. And why are there two pools?

A. I don't know if it's agreement or if it was something that was agreed upon through the unions. I believe that's what it was.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Might be the amount of speed, yeah.

MR. ELLEFSON: Okay, yeah. It was -- I'm not sure.

BY MR. TURPIN:

Q. Well, somebody mentioned type of train has to do with it as well.

A. Yeah, it -- the trains that run on the long pool are typically your -- classification that UP uses is Z train, K train, I train. It's the intermodal-type trains, the faster trains. And then the --

Q. Higher priority?

A. Higher priority. Correct. Because they can -- their speed, the number of miles, the crew usage, it just makes sense to run those through that long pool. They will from time to time get an empty soda ash train or an empty grain train, if something's moving in that direction, you know, east or west, to expedite that. There's some speed involved with it. So they're kind of the, they're kind of the fast carrier side of it.

And then you have the heavier freight trains, the slower

moving. They usually typically fall under that short pool group that does a crew change in Rawlins.

Q. Okay. So let's talk now the -- specifically about this locomotive engineer that was in the striking train. Do you recall the last time you rode with him?

A. June 4th.

Q. And from where to where?

A. We went to Laramie and took the train back towards Cheyenne.

Q. You vanned over and you brought it back?

A. Yeah. Yeah, correct. Yep. That's correct.

MR. FRANSEN: So Laramie to Cheyenne is the actual --

MR. ELLEFSON: Correct. The actual -- I think the mileage I put down was either 566 to 510 or 565 to 510, was the actual miles.

MR. FRANSEN: Sorry.

MR. TURPIN: No, you just say -- the transcriber won't recognize who it was.

MR. FRANSEN: Yeah, I'm sorry to interrupt.

MR. TURPIN: Just say your name. That's all right.

MR. FRANSEN: Brian Fransen. Sorry about that.

MR. TURPIN: That's fine.

BY MR. TURPIN:

Q. All right. So you were picking up a parked train or an hours of service train?

A. Yeah, we picked up a -- we stopped a train in Laramie and

then got on board and changed out the -- the engineer took another seat and then Jason ran.
Q. Okay. How'd he do?
A. Excellent.
Q. How big a train?
A. I'd have to pull the specifics on it. I don't have it in front of me.
Q. Was it comparable to the accident train?
A. I would hate to even speculate on that. It was a K train. I remember that. A K train is kind of a lower priority intermodal. A little larger. I believe I've got my ride book with me. If you want to pull that information, I can give it to you.
Q. We may ask for it afterwards.
A. Okay.
Q. So we're dealing with -- the two trains in this accident, one of them was 12,000; one of them 13,000. Is that pretty much the norm on the tonnage now for the mixed brake?
A. Again, this is just observation. I haven't, like, sat down and calculated average train sizes or average weights. But they are large and they are heavy, and I would say that that is a pretty comparable train for an average.
Q. Okay. What's the biggest you've seen out here?
A. 12,000 feet, and I've seen some around 18-, 19,000 ton.
Q. For the 12 and the 13 that was involved in this accident, both of them are basically equipped with three locomotives. One

of them, they opted to keep on the point and the other a DPU. Do you know why they make that decision?
A. Which train are you speaking to?
Q. Well, the strike -- the struck train had a DPU.
A. It did, mid-train.
Q. Mid-train. What makes that decision?
A. I'm not sure who made that decision, who did the train makeup. I think that train came out of Pocatello, I think. It was a PCNP. So it would have been -- that determination either would have been done at the terminal or en route, if they did some car movement. I don't know if there was any cars added to that train. Typically that distributed power is added for a couple purposes: one, additional braking power, and then for coupler strength, if they need any kind of grade. So --
Q. All right. So the striking train, though, everything was up on the head end. That decision would have been made, what, at Green River?
A. That's where that train originated. I'm not sure if it had work at Rawlins or not. Sometimes that train does work at Rawlins. It'll pick up some cars there from the local, and then it does work at Laramie, usually two, maybe sometimes three times a week.
Q. Does the -- do the Green River trains often have everything on the head end, or do they use the DPUs too?
A. Most common. Yeah, that's the most common train you see with

them. I don't recall seeing a DP on a GRCY, a Green River train.
Q. Okay. All right.
A. It typically comes in conventional. Just two or three, possibly four, units by FRED, you know, the EOT on the back. So --
Q. Okay. That's good. How many times can you recall that you'd actually been with this engineer, or ridden with the engineer?
A. That was the first time. Yeah.
Q. Oh, and no previous?
A. No. Uh-uh.
Q. Okay. How long has he been working on this territory?
A. I would have to look back on his work history. I'm not sure. I'm thinking he was an engineer for at least 3 years, possibly longer.
Q. What prompted the check ride?
A. It was his certification ride. His recert, his annual.
Q. The annual or the 3-year?
A. Or 3-year -- 3-year. Yeah.
Q. When you do the annuals, I mean, what do you -- do you call them a check ride too, or you call them something different?
A. It's an annual event. Yeah. And then we'll monitor that. We do a cert --
Q. And then the 3-year, you actually do call it check ride?
A. Yeah, you do a cert ride. Yeah.
Q. Okay. All right. Thirty-two engineers. Is that a handful

or just right?
A. It's pretty manageable, I think. Yeah.
Q. So where was your seniority?
A. Denver, Colorado.
Q. Out of Denver?
A. Yeah.
Q. How long you been here?
A. In Cheyenne?
Q. Um-hum.
A. I took -- accepted the position in November of '17, late November '17. I really didn't get qualified to the position until -- I think it was the first or second week of January this year. Had to go through a DSLE class and a few other courses. So --
MR. TURPIN: And I think I'll go around the room now. John?
MR. ALLBERRY: I don't have anything.
BY MR. FRANSEN:
Q. So this is your first job in management?
A. No.
Q. Brian Fransen. Sorry.
A. No, not my first job. I was in technical training.
Q. Oh, okay.
A. So I did RCO, new-hire conductor. Taught all the curriculum for the railroad for about 7½ years prior to that.
Q. And you don't have any idea why trains, specifically Green River trains, that are made up are not DP'd to come over Sherman

Hill or anything?
A. I do not, no.
Q. Is there a guy -- a MOP, an M-O-P, in Green River also?
A. There's two.
Q. There's two?
A. Yeah.
Q. Some management there --
A. Yes.
Q. -- that will maybe know why? I'm just curious why they're never DP'd if they're that big a train.
A. Yeah, I --
Q. Why do you think that would be --
A. Yeah, I couldn't answer that.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Coupler strength.
MR. FRANSEN: It's a really big train to be conventional over a hill like that.
MR. ELLEFSON: I think it's -- yeah.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. Coupler strength. Tonnage.
MR. FRANSEN: That's the only questions that I had.
MR. McDANIEL: Korey McDaniel, SMART TD.
BY MR. McDANIEL:
Q. My question is about training for the engineers on mountain grade. Do you know how long they have to run on mountain grade and how often they have to run on mountain grade to be qualified?
A. Are you talking about the FIT portion or --

Q. Well, the engineer -- let me ask it two ways. Do you know how many runs they have to do as a student engineer to be qualified in mountain grade? And then how often --
A. I can speak to that territory. The standard that I understand right now is 60 trips.
Q. Sixty trips?
A. Yeah.
Q. And then, if you don't run on it -- let's say you work in different territory or work a different craft or something and you come back to that territory, mountain grade territory, how many qualifying runs do they have to get to be requaled?
A. You would do some pretraining and then do a performance ride and check that -- or they'd do a check ride on that person.
Q. Do you know how many runs they have to get?
A. I think it would depend on the -- you know, you try to work that out with the individual, what their skill set was, prior experience. And then kind of evaluate that against, you know, how long they've been away from that territory.

But the whole plan is to make sure -- and we all take that grade seriously around here. It's to make sure that they do get adequate trips, training, get cut in, and then we do an observation ride and try and get a cert ride in after that to get them recertified.

Q. Do you know if there was a situation with Jason, if there was -- if he had to be requalified on mountain grade?

A. I do not. Not specifically, no.
MR. McDANIEL: Okay. Thank you.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have no questions.
MR. TURPIN: Don?
MR. MAI: I don't have any right now.
BY MR. TURPIN:
Q. So had this engineer been operating the entire time since you've been a supervisor here in January?
A. Yes, sir. Yes.
Q. Okay. Sixty trips -- roundtrips?
A. Yeah.
Q. Or 31 --
A. Yeah, it'd be 60 rounds. Yes.
Q. Sixty round trips?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And those are with -- assisted; they're with somebody?
A. With a Class 1 engineer, correct.
Q. On the requalify, do they sometimes call you and say, I'm ready?
A. That's for the initial qualification of 60.
Q. Right. And then on the requal, do they call you and say they're ready? Or do you just --
A. Well, we talk to somebody they've ridden with. We try to set them up with an engineer and then talk to that person that they've been running with, you know, kind of get some feedback on the

individual. Balance that between the feedback from the engineer that they've been with and then, you know, kind of where -- kind of what they -- where they're at, and then go evaluate it.

Now I will say this, that when we do any kind of a qualification ride, that train has to exceed 4,000, 4500. We don't allow them to qualify on a real light --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Z train.

MR. ELLEFSON: Yeah, kind of --

MR. TURPIN: Light engine?

MR. ELLEFSON: Yep. That just does not -- yeah. That is not a qualifying run. It's got to -- you know, we want them at 4- to 5,000-ton, something that's going to test that skill level.

MR. TURPIN: Okay. Go ahead.

MR. SMITH: Carl Smith. Do you have any specifications, Jon, for heavy trains? Do they have to have -- handle so many 12,000, 14,000, 18,000-ton trains? Is that in there?

MR. ELLEFSON: Not that I'm aware of, no.

MR. SMITH: Okay.

BY MR. FRANSEN:

Q. Brian Fransen. So if -- in this situation like what Mr. Powell was talking about there, if he's -- let's say for 8 months he's an engineer, and then he gets put back, you know, or he's a conductor for 7 months, then he's back -- set up as an engineer. Does he have to do anything before he's set up, or does he remain qualified as long as he keeps running over this territory?

A. He'll remain qualified technically, right? But the thing that we like to do is have him take another familiarization trip before they mark up.
Q. Okay. But he can take that option --
A. Yes.
Q. -- doing that?
A. Yep.
Q. And you say Jason had remained marked up as an engineer this -- for the last 4 years or 2 years or something like that?
A. I couldn't say specifically, but I think he's been set up for 3 years now. And I'm not -- I don't know if there were setbacks or not. I just don't have his full work history.
MR. FRANSEN: All right.
MR. ALLBERRY: Ted, I got one. John Allberry.
BY MR. ALLBERRY:
Q. Jon, Jason was qualified on the territory?
A. Yes.
Q. And with you as his supervisor for whatever it's been, 10 months, good engineer to your --
A. Excellent engineer.
MR. TURPIN: On a 1 to 10?
MR. ELLEFSON: Nine and a half. There is no ten. Well --
MR. TURPIN: Ted Turpin. And had you ever got any feedback from other crew members?
MR. ELLEFSON: I will say this, and I, and -- everyone -- I

did not know him. That was kind of the beauty of this whole situation, looking back on it now. Brian Tooley was my mentor. Been an MOP here, I think, 13, 14 years. He knows these folks. He knows this territory better than anyone. He didn't say a word. He says, you need to go Jason's cert ride. I said, okay. So I went out and did Jason's cert ride.

And when I got back, he said, how did he do? And I said, Brian, I don't know if I missed something, but I don't think so. I said, I watched him on every move. I said, I have never seen a person handle a train so well in my life. His skill set, his throttle modulation, air dynamic braking, understanding of the rules, everything, was flawless. His reputation among his peers, and I encourage -- and I'm sure you will, talk to a lot of folks. I think you'll hear that same consistent message with all the folks.

MR. TURPIN: Yeah.

MR. MAI: Don Mai, FRA.

BY MR. MAI:

Q. Quick question on his work history. Being bounced back and forth from conductor to engineer, can you talk on that?

A. I don't really have a lot of it in front of me. I could try and answer it.

Q. And the reason I ask, it looks like in 2018 he was -- seven times he was set back as a conductor, if I'm reading this correctly.

A. In 2018? I'm not sure about that. He's been running since I've been here, I believe.
Q. Okay. Am I reading that correctly on his work history there? Looks like he worked as a conductor in September sometime?
A. Of this -- no, I don't think so. I mean, I'll double-check this, but I -- yeah, I don't know about -- I don't know if that's accurate. I don't know how that -- what that printout from EQMS, you know, is accurate --
Q. And the only reason I ask the question, I just wondered about -- you know, I'm an engineer one day and next month, for the next month, I'm a conductor. Now I go back -- now I'm an engineer for 3 days, I'm set back up. And then I get bumped again because --
MR. TURPIN: Right. But you said Jason has been an engineer since you got here, Jon?
MR. ELLEFSON: Yes, sir.
MR. TURPIN: Okay.
BY MR. TURPIN:
Q. So efficiency testing. Just kind of an overview, or operational testing with -- by the FRA.
A. Sure.
Q. Your FTX program -- is that what it is?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Yeah. You have a minimum requirement?
A. Yes, we do. Right now it's 26 structured tests per month.
Q. And a structured test is qualified by --

A. Something that changed the environment. We change the environment for the employee.
Q. Okay. It's more of an active kind of test than it is passive?
A. Correct. Yeah, I would call it a proactive. Yeah.
Q. So listening to somebody blow a horn would be non-structured?
A. Yeah, it'd be --
Q. Setting a red signal?
A. That's structured. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And you have 20.
A. Twenty-six.
Q. Twenty-six.
A. Yeah.
Q. Any problem maintaining your numbers?
A. Have not. No. I can see several months, so -- on that.
Q. Okay. When's the last time you tested on the grade?
A. A week ago.
Q. What were you doing?
A. Stop tests. 519. And if you look back at my record, which I'm sure you will, there's going to be -- you're going to see a lot of testing at that location. 519 is right at the base of that grade, and it -- I will say this. It irritates some of the crew that we test there because, one, they're almost home. The second part of it is coming down there and maintaining that PTC through those intermediates and that control point down there at the base.

And when I explain why I'm doing it, they fully understand. So --
Q. Good. How long has PTC been in effect?
A. It was in place when I arrived here. So --
Q. Yeah. Okay.
MR. TURPIN: I think I don't -- I'm done.
MR. ALLBERRY: I don't have anything.
BY MR. SMITH:
Q. Hey, Jon. Carl Smith. Jon, as an MOP manager of operating practices, have you had any concerns from anybody in Cheyenne about the weight that -- the weight of the trains and the length of the trains?
A. Yes. Yeah.
Q. Often? Irregular? Disgruntled? Where would you classify that?
A. I wouldn't say often, but there have been concerns. And typically it evolves around as the weather changes, for the air. And so there's been some concerns about the length and -- but, I mean, I wouldn't say it's chronic. I think that they've -- they manage it. They do actually pretty well with it, so -- but yeah, there's been some concerns that -- yeah.
MR. McDANIEL: Korey McDaniel. I got some follow-up questions to that. How about the communication with FRED because of the length of the trains in that territory? Have you heard any loss of com or --
MR. ELLEFSON: We've had some, yeah. But nothing, I don't

think, extraordinary. I mean, that I'm aware of, anyway. You know, I'm just going off the calls that I get and respond to, the feedback I get, so it's not a -- you know, I'm not tracking it, so -- but I wouldn't say it's any more than normal. Typically if it exceeds -- you know, they've got a repeater in there to help with that.

MR. SMITH: So -- Carl Smith.

BY MR. SMITH:

Q. So there is a repeater. And you said not any more than normal. What would be normal --

A. I think we're, I think we're looking --

Q. -- loss of the EOT?

A. What's that?

Q. I said what would be the normal --

A. Oh, you start getting beyond 8500 feet, then you start getting some -- you get possible issues.

Q. Daily? Monthly? Weekly?

A. I would hate to pin it down. I really can't be more specific.

Q. And there is a repeater?

A. Well, there is -- they're available, yeah, if you start exceeding that.

Q. Okay. I guess -- switchman here. Explain to me the EOT repeater, if you could, please. I haven't dealt with it.

A. Well, it's a DP repeater.

Q. Okay. So it would be --
A. Yeah.
Q. So a train without a DP wouldn't have --
A. Right. It would be a repeater and then the DP --
Q. Right.
A. -- yeah, EOT. Yeah.
Q. Okay. All right. That's on that. So the train that was the struck train would've had a DP repeater, correct? But a conventional one wouldn't?
A. No, it didn't need a repeater because the DP wasn't far enough back on that one. I don't believe. I'd have to look at the list, but I don't think it exceeded that.
Q. But a conventional train does not have any kind of repeater, correct?
A. No. No, sir.
MR. SMITH: Thank you.
MR. TURPIN: Okay. All right, Ted Turpin.
BY MR. TURPIN:
Q. I actually -- one more, or a couple more. Earlier the engineer gave an interview, and he said that there are guidelines as to basically when you're in trouble. If you're 5 miles an hour over the speed, you have to take action, or if you're exceeding 18-pound reduction in the brake pipe.
A. Correct.
Q. Have either one of those circumstances occurred while you've

been here? Has an engineer called you up and said, I needed to stop the train, or you've heard of that or --

A. No. No, sir. Not that I'm aware.

Q. Nobody's exceeded the 5 over or exceeded the 18?

A. Not that I'm aware of. No.

Q. Okay. Do you have the event recorder read out -- is it read out by a program for UP?

A. The LDARs?

Q. Yeah. Is the event recorder data read out automatically, and send you flags on if somebody's exceeded speed and so on?

A. Sorry. I'm assuming you're asking do we get notifications?

Q. Yes.

A. Okay. The notifications go to the PTC manager.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. Of exceptions on the train?

A. Yeah. The exceptions that I get through my queue is emergency applications, UDEs, and break-in-twos.

Q. And they come by what? Text message now or --

A. They come through the system, through the EQMS system.

Q. And so if a guy -- if someone exceeded 5 miles an hour over the established speed and brought the train to a stop, you wouldn't get a flash message on that?

A. The PTC system would notify on that.

Q. If it had tripped a parameter within the PTC system?

A. Correct.
Q. Okay. Okay. I got you. All right.
A. Now we do random reads every month on certain numbers of engineers who are going through -- I'm going to use the term tapes. We're going through the downloads looking for that specific activity.
Q. Okay. See if somebody runs hot too much?
A. Correct. Yeah, as part of our process for compliance.
Q. All right. Just curiosity. You actually broke the knuckle on the locomotive, on the westbound?
A. Yeah. 13,000 ton.
Q. Yeah. Right at the back -- the rear locomotive? It wasn't in the middle of the consist, right?
A. No. No.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah, it was an F.
MR. TURPIN: Ow. All right. Anybody else?
MR. ELLEFSON: But it happened because of the drop load on one of the ACs.
MR. TURPIN: Right.
MR. ELLEFSON: So it caused a lunge and then it snapped. So --
MR. TURPIN: No, that --
MR. ELLEFSON: It wasn't for train handling or mishandling. It was just --

MR. TURPIN: No, no, no, I understood that. But -- yeah.
MR. ELLEFSON: -- the equipment was having some issues and we were just trying to get it moving.
MR. TURPIN: Yeah, when the engines fell down. Yep.
MR. ELLEFSON: Right.
MR. TURPIN: Yeah.
MR. FRANSEN: So I guess I got a quick question.
BY MR. FRANSEN:
Q. So you were the first person there, basically, correct?
A. Well, I happened to be out there helping that train on main track 2 where these other eastbounders were getting -- coming around or coming at us. So yeah, I was out there assisting on that --
Q. I mean after the collision, I think you stated you drove up the road and you saw the cars on the track?
A. I drove up the road, yeah, not really knowing what had happened. Because of the position where I was at, the curvature of the track, I couldn't really see up on the hill. So I drove up there to get a better view, and that's when I saw the dust and then the cars laying there. So I don't know if I was the exactly first person, but I'm pretty sure I was the first person in the area.
Q. So what did you do? Did you call dispatch?
A. I contacted the corridor manager immediately. Yeah.
Q. 911?

A. He took care of the RMCC, correct. And we got emergency personnel out there, yeah.

MR. TURPIN: Don? All right. Everybody done?

All right. Get these things shut off. Thank you.

Oh, I'm sorry. Unless you got something else you want to add?

MR. ELLEFSON: No.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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: Jon Ellefson
ACCIDENT NO.:	RRD19FR001
PLACE:	Cheyenne, Wyoming
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.

Ei
Transcriber