

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

Investigation of: \*

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RAILWAY WORKER FATALITY \*

INVOLVING WHEELING & LAKE ERIE \* Accident No.: RRD24LR006

RAILWAY NEAR JEWETT, OHIO ON \*

JANUARY 15, 2024 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: DOROTHY KILGORE, Operations Coordinator  
Genesee and Wyoming Railroad

Genesee and Wyoming Dispatch Center  
Coshocton, Ohio  
& via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday,  
January 17, 2024

APPEARANCES:

BEN STROT, Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

WES MCQUINN, Signal Inspector  
Federal Railway Authority

CHAD BROSKI, Track Safety Inspector  
Federal Railway Authority

TIM SLUSSER, General Manager  
Ohio Central Railroad Systems

SCOTT BUNTEN, Safety Task Force Investigator  
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

DAVID CASACELI, Investigator-in-Charge  
National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

(3:04 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 MR. STROT: All right. Good afternoon. My name is Ben  
4 Strot. I'm an accident investigator for the NTSB. Today is  
5 Wednesday, January 17th, 2024, and we are meeting at the Genesee  
6 and Wyoming, Coshocton, Ohio via Teams -- and via Teams with the  
7 Genesee and Wyoming dispatching center. This interview is being  
8 conducted in reference to NTSB Accident No. RRD24LR006, an  
9 employee fatality near Jewett, Ohio on the Genesee and Wyoming  
10 railroad that occurred on January 15th, 2024.

11 The NTSB is an independent federal agency charged with  
12 determining the probable cause of transportation accidents and  
13 promoting transportation safety. It is not a part of the DOT, FRA  
14 or any other regulatory agency. NTSB has no regulatory or  
15 enforcement powers. And we will publish recommendations to any  
16 party that we believe can act on those recommendations to prevent  
17 accidents from happening in the future. There are several phases  
18 to the process. We're currently in the fact-finding phase that  
19 will be followed by analysis, probable cause finding, and finally  
20 any recommendations that we see necessary.

21 Today, we are here to speak with Dorothy Kilgore, operations  
22 coordinator. But before we begin, let's go around the table,  
23 introduce ourselves to the transcriptionist. Please be sure to  
24 speak up, speak clearly and spell your last names out as we go  
25 around.

1 I'll start off. Ben Strot, S-T-R-O-T, with the NTSB.

2 MR. MCQUINN: Wes McQuinn, M-C-Q-U-I-N-N, FRA Signal  
3 Inspector.

4 MR. BROSKI: I'm Chad Broski, B-R-O-S-K-I, FRA Track Safety  
5 Inspector.

6 MR. SLUSSER: Tim Slusser, S-L-U-S-S-E-R, General Manager,  
7 Ohio Central Railroad.

8 MR. STROT: We'll go to the screen. Scott, if you'll --

9 MR. BUNTEN: Okay. Scott Buntten, B-U-N-T-E-N, Brotherhood of  
10 Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen National Safety Task Force  
11 Investigator.

12 MR. STROT: And then Dorothy.

13 MS. KILGORE: Dorothy Kilgore, K-I-L-G-O-R-E, Operations  
14 Coordinator.

15 MR. CASACELI: And David Casaceli, C-A-S-A-C-E-L-I, NTSB  
16 Investigator-in-Charge.

17 MR. STROT: Thank you. Just a reminder. As we go around to  
18 ask questions, please remember to restate your last name or your  
19 names for the transcriptionist.

20 INTERVIEW OF DOROTHY KILGORE

21 BY MR. STROT:

22 Q. So, Ms. Kilgore, do you mind if we go by Dorothy, first name  
23 basis?

24 A. Yes, that's fine.

25 Q. All right, thank you. And before we start, do you understand

1 this interview is being recorded?

2 A. I do.

3 Q. Okay. And as such, do you understand it will be made part of  
4 the public docket and we cannot promise confidentiality?

5 A. Yes, I do.

6 Q. Okay. Appreciate that. So just to start off, you know, the  
7 first question is just about your experience. Can you tell us,  
8 you know, what experience do you have with the railroad industry  
9 and how did get into the position that you're in now?

10 A. I didn't have any experience until I got a job at Genesee and  
11 Wyoming. I applied -- I do believe it's been almost two years  
12 I've been in an OC position. I applied and got the job and moved  
13 up to Vermont, and that's when my railroad experience started.

14 Q. Okay. Can you tell us a little bit about what the OC  
15 position or operations coordinator entails, like, what are the  
16 roles and responsibilities of that position?

17 A. Mostly, it is calling the crews, getting them cabs, putting  
18 away plans, and just making sure that everything's set up for the  
19 next OC that comes in, because we do work 24/7. But we also do  
20 handle all the emergency calls that come in.

21 Q. And when you say emergency calls, is that -- does that  
22 include crossing warning notifications, things like that?

23 A. So anyone that calls our emergency line, it is usually an  
24 operation coordinator who picks up.

25 Q. Okay, gotcha. All right. That's the only questions I have.

1 MR. STROT: Wes.

2 MR. MCQUINN: It's Wes McQuinn.

3 BY MR. MCQUINN:

4 Q. This emergency hotline you were talking about, is that the  
5 800 number that is on the ENS sign at the grade crossing?

6 A. Yes, that is correct.

7 Q. Okay, thank you. That's all I got.

8 MR. STROT: Okay. Anything on experience?

9 MR. BROSKI: No, nothing on experience.

10 MR. STROT: Scott.

11 MR. BUNTEN: No, nothing on experience.

12 MR. STROT: All right. Tim.

13 MR. SLUSSER: Nothing on experience.

14 BY MR. CASACELI:

15 Q. Dorothy, this is David -- sorry -- again with the NTSB.  
16 You've been with the Genesee and Wyoming for two years. Do you  
17 have any other experience before that in, like, a safety sensitive  
18 position or something similar?

19 A. I had a lot of jobs. A -- yes, I mean, as far as answering  
20 an emergency line, no.

21 Q. Okay, thank you.

22 MR. STROT: Okay.

23 MR. CASACELI: I'm good.

24 MR. STROT: All right.

25 BY MR. STROT:

1 Q. Next question to ask you, Dorothy, is what -- can you just  
2 kind of -- I know your conversation with Mr. Davis was pretty  
3 short on that day, on Monday -- or Sunday, I guess. But can you  
4 just walk us through what you remember about what was going on at  
5 the dispatching center, what you were doing at that time and, you  
6 know, from that -- from the point you got the call to the point  
7 you called Mr. Davis?

8 A. Okay. So I don't personally remember calling him, to be  
9 honest.

10 Q. Um-hum.

11 A. I deal with over 1500 emergency calls a year. But normally  
12 we take an emergency call, we send that ticket up through an email  
13 to our dispatcher. The dispatcher will tell us who to call,  
14 whether that's a road master or signal maintainer. We look at our  
15 whiteboard. Our whiteboard will tell us who is in control of that  
16 signal, which signal maintainer it's for. Based off of that, we  
17 give them a call and if they pick up, we tell them what's going  
18 on, whether that's a signal malfunction or broken gate, anything  
19 along those lines. They say whether they're going to take that  
20 call and put the ticket in their name or not. And then if it's  
21 not going to be them, we call a different signal maintainer until  
22 we get one that's actually going to take the call. And then from  
23 there, we put the Asset Pro (ph.) ticket in and that's what I do  
24 for every single emergency call that has to do with signals. And  
25 I believe that's what I did with that one.



1 Q. Okay. And that's totally fine. I mean, I know you deal with  
2 a lot of different calls every day, so I totally understand if the  
3 brief conversation you had is not one of them that stood out. So  
4 process-wise, you said that you take the call from the emergency  
5 line, and then who did you say you sent that up to next?

6 A. So we take the call and we put it in the email, and we call  
7 the information -- the email -- we send that email up to the  
8 dispatchers and our trouble desk, which is the same thing. It  
9 just -- it's two different email areas. And then we wait until  
10 the dispatcher gets back to us to tell us what they want us to do  
11 and we go from there.

12 Q. Okay, gotcha. And then you said -- just more process-type  
13 stuff -- when you say you look at the whiteboard, is that just  
14 literally a grease board with people's names on it on who to call  
15 or --

16 A. Yes, we have a live whiteboard, kind of looks like an Excel  
17 sheet that has --

18 Q. Oh.

19 A. -- all our railroads and all the crossings, so that's how we  
20 find which crossing they're talking about by the DOT number. And  
21 then from there, they're color-coordinated on which signal  
22 maintainer takes care of which crossing.

23 Q. Okay, all right.

24 MR. STROT: We'll go around. Wes, questions?

25 BY MR. MCQUINN:

1 Q. Wes McQuinn. Just wanted to clarify. You said you sent an  
2 email to the dispatcher and then he contacts you back. How does  
3 he contact you, another email or phone call?

4 A. Through an email. We're all on the same area, so he'll send  
5 an email --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- for -- so it's --

8 Q. Okay, thank you.

9 MR. MCQUINN: That's all.

10 MR. STROT: Chad.

11 BY MR. BROSKI:

12 Q. Hi, Dorothy. This is Chad Broski, FRA Track Inspector. Do  
13 you ever receive calls -- follow-up calls from, particularly  
14 signal maintainers, in this instance, a signal maintainer that's  
15 called out on a trouble ticket or emergency for false activation  
16 at a road crossing? Do they then -- have they ever called you  
17 directly back to clear a ticket -- a trouble ticket?

18 A. So as an OC, we can't clear a trouble ticket. Sometimes they  
19 do call the emergency line and I'll send them -- I'll transfer  
20 them over to the dispatcher. But as an OC, we cannot clear  
21 tickets.

22 Q. Okay. And thus you had not heard back from Mr. Davis at --

23 A. It's not --

24 (Crosstalk)

25 Q. I'm sorry, say that again.

1 A. It's not normal for them to call back.

2 Q. Okay. Last question. Are you familiar with railway worker  
3 protection? That term railway worker protection? Have you --  
4 (Crosstalk)

5 Q. You have no training on railway worker protection?

6 A. Does that have to do with our hours-in-service? That's the  
7 only thing I would know about.

8 Q. No, this is for individuals like the signal maintainer that  
9 would be potentially in foul, meaning they could be in the -- on  
10 the track itself where they could potentially get struck by a  
11 train. So there are certain rules and regulations by the Federal  
12 Railroad Administration to ensure their safety, and that's what we  
13 define as railway worker protection. And I was curious to know if  
14 this is something that people have spoken to you about or maybe  
15 you've had some sort of training on railway worker protection at  
16 all.

17 A. So before we ever call a signal maintainer up to a crossing,  
18 we do have to have a Form C put on it, which I do believe would be  
19 under that railroad protection.

20 Q. Got it. Thank you, Dorothy. I appreciate your time.

21 MR. STROT: We'll go to Scott.

22 BY MR. BUNTEN:

23 Q. Hi, Dorothy. I have one question. You say you don't recall  
24 calling Mr. Davis, but do you recall the call that came in, the  
25 original report?

1 A. Honestly, I do not. We -- the false activations, that's what  
2 we call them -- basically the signal's activated with no train  
3 around -- we get those -- that's the majority of the calls that we  
4 get. So it's just a standard call to me.

5 Q. Okay. All right. I understand. Thank you.

6 MR. BUNTEN: I have no further questions.

7 MR. STROT: Tim.

8 MR. SLUSSER: No questions.

9 MR. STROT: Dave.

10 MR. CASACELI: No questions.

11 MR. STROT: All right.

12 MR. BROSKI: I guess I do have a follow-up.

13 MR. STROT: All right. Go right ahead -- no, go right ahead.

14 BY MR. BROSKI:

15 Q. One thing more, Dorothy. I apologize. This came to my mind  
16 after I stopped there. Job briefings. Do you use any job  
17 briefing forms when you speak to the signal maintainers? Anything  
18 that's -- maybe on a piece of paper -- you talk to the signal  
19 maintainers about a false activation or any callouts, trouble  
20 tickets?

21 A. No, there's no preset wordage that we are supposed to use. I  
22 do just tell them what it is. Normally I tell them false  
23 activation, at what road and mile post, and if they want the DOT  
24 number, I will also give them that. And if they ask for the Form  
25 C number, I will also give them that, too.

1 Q. Thank you.

2 MR. BROSKI: That's it.

3 MR. STROT: Okay. Anybody else have any follow-up questions?

4 BY MR. STROT:

5 Q. The only follow-up question I had for you, Dorothy, is have  
6 you ever called a signal maintainer to call them out to a crossing  
7 or anything that had them give you -- add more information than  
8 what you gave them, basically trying to have a briefing with you  
9 over the phone? Have you ever had anything odd like that come up?

10 A. They do ask if there's more information because if I just say  
11 the gates are broken or the signals are going off, they'll ask if  
12 I know anything else and I would let them know if the caller says  
13 that it was both gate arms or it was a just the signals, or if  
14 they've been going off for a few hours or anything like that. But  
15 if they just start asking more technical questions, I do let them  
16 know that I am not a dispatcher. I do not know what's going on  
17 out in that area, and (indiscernible) for them if they need me to.

18 Q. Okay. I appreciate it.

19 MR. STROT: All right. One last round. Nobody? Okay.

20 Well, Dorothy, that is the end of the questions that we have for  
21 you. I hope that was easy enough for you. Last question that I  
22 ask everybody is do you have anything else that you'd like to add  
23 to the interview, any questions that we might have forgotten to  
24 ask you.

25 MR. CASACELI: I think we lost her -- she's back.

1 MS. KILGORE: I'm sorry. No, I don't.

2 MR. STROT: Okay, okay. All right. Well, do you -- if we  
3 have any follow-up questions for you, are we okay to contact you  
4 at the number you gave us?

5 MS. KILGORE: So during my work hours, you'd probably have to  
6 get hold of one of the managers because we're not allowed to have  
7 our phones on us per railroad policy.

8 MR. STROT: Yes.

9 MS. KILGORE: But after my work hours, that number is good to  
10 call.

11 MR. STROT: Okay. I appreciate that. And just on behalf of  
12 the NTSB, we'd like to -- we appreciate your cooperation, your  
13 detail and information you shared with us today. Thank you so  
14 much.

15 MS. KILGORE: Thank you.

16 MR. STROT: Have a great day.

17 (Crosstalk)

18 MS. KILGORE: You, too.

19 MR. BUNTEN: Thank you.

20 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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25

CERTIFICATE

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


IN THE MATTER OF:            RAILWAY WORKER FATALITY INVOLVING  
   WHEELING & LAKE ERIE RAILWAY  
   NEAR JEWETT, OHIO ON JANUARY 15, 2024  
   Interview of Dorothy Kilgore

ACCIDENT NO.:                RRD24LR006

PLACE:                         Coshocton, Ohio & via Microsoft Teams

DATE:                         January 17, 2024

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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marisu Abellar  
Transcriber