

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

TRAIN DERAILMENT NEAR NEW CASTLE, * Accident No.: RRD23FR011
PENNSYLVANIA ON MAY 10, 2023 *

* * * * *

Interview of: WILLIAM EVANS, Signal Maintainer
Norfolk Southern

New Castle, Pennsylvania

Monday,
May 15, 2023

APPEARANCES:

RUBEN PAYAN, Signal Group Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board

TOM HENRY, Signal and Train Control Inspector
Federal Railroad Administration

JUSTIN PIER, Grand Lodge Representative
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

SAM SOPHER, Chairman
BRS Local #2

GARY BEDELL, Director, CNS Keystone Division
Norfolk Southern

IRVIN WHITE, Motive Power and Equipment Inspector
IIC
Federal Railroad Administration

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. PAYAN: Good morning. My name is Ruben Payan. I'm with
3 the -- an investigator with the National Transportation Safety
4 Board out of DC. Today is Monday, May 15, 2023. We are in New
5 Castle, Pennsylvania, conducting interviews for NTSB Accident
6 RRD23FR011, the NS derailment in New Castle, and this accident is
7 William Evans, signal maintainer for Norfolk Southern.

8 MR. EVANS: I'm aware.

9 MR. PAYAN: Thank you.

10 All right. I'm going to go around the room and introduce
11 -- have everybody introduce themselves. Please state your name,
12 who you represent, and your title, and please spell your last
13 name. And when we start the interview make sure everybody's phone
14 is off. And when we switch speakers please state your name, and
15 then ask your questions.

16 Again, my name is Ruben Payan. My last name is P-a-y-a-n. I
17 am with the NTSB, and I am the Signal Group Chairman for this
18 accident.

19 And I'll go off to my, my left here.

20 MR. HENRY: My name is Tom Henry. I'm with the Federal
21 Railroad Administration, signal and train control.

22 MR. PIER: Justin Pier. Pier, P-i-e-r, I am Grand Lodge
23 Representative for the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen.

24 Mr. SOPHER: Sam Sopher, S-o-p-h-e-r, Local 2 BRS Chairman.

25 MR. EVANS: William Evans, Norfolk Southern, signal

1 maintainer, Youngstown Line.

2 MR. PAYAN: Spell your last name.

3 MR. EVANS: E-v-a-n-s.

4 MR. BEDELL: Gary Bedell, Director, CNS Operations, Keystone
5 Division, Norfolk Southern. Last name is B-e-d-e-l-l.

6 MR. WHITE: Irvin White, W-h-i-t-e, FRA, Motive Power and
7 Equipment inspector, IIC.

8 INTERVIEW OF WILLIAM EVANS

9 BY MR. PAYAN:

10 Q. So okay if I call you bill?

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. Okay, Bill, Mr. Sopher here is representing with you?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Okay. Just get that on the record. All right. So to start
15 here I'd like to ask you if you could take us through your
16 railroad career, when you hired on, and the different positions
17 you've held up to your current position.

18 A. I was hired July 7, 2014. I went through the training
19 process which included three weeks in McDonough, Georgia, what we
20 call ST1. Then I worked on a construction gang as a trainee for
21 three months. Returned to McDonough, Georgia, for another three
22 weeks for what we refer to as ST2. Then I worked with maintainers
23 as a trainee for five months. One more trip to McDonough,
24 Georgia, for three weeks for ST3. Upon completion of that
25 returned to a construction gang. Was tested and qualified, and

1 was on that construction gang for about another month before I got
2 my first permanent job which was nightshift in Cleveland. Was
3 there for around six months. Reported to Conway Yard in January
4 of 2016. Was at that job for several years until I got bumped to
5 the local construction gang for around nine months. Spent that
6 nine months mostly in Conway Yard doing a yard upgrade. So I
7 didn't really get to do a lot of traveling in that position. And
8 then went back to daylight in Conway Yard. Again got bumped out
9 of that position 2021 or end of 2020. And few months in Alliance,
10 few months in Ashtabula. Then I went and held the Leeds to Bell
11 job for I think about two years. And then some things started
12 opening up back home. So I went to Salem for a few weeks, and
13 then Alliance for a few weeks, and then the Youngstown Line. I've
14 been on this current job for -- since January, end of January of
15 this year.

16 Q. Okay. So you've been, you've been on your current territory
17 since January?

18 A. Since the end of January of this year.

19 Q. What are the limits of your current territory?

20 A. My current territory goes from Youngstown Line, CP Bright,
21 not including Bright to, to just short of CP Lowell on the
22 Youngstown Line.

23 Q. Okay. So just outside of the Conway Yard?

24 A. Well, it's a little ways outside of CP Bright.

25 Q. Oh, okay.

1 A. So a few miles from Conway, but the Youngstown Line only.
2 And I stop short of the control point at Lowell.

3 Q. Okay. And do you have like set work hours?

4 A. Yes. My normal schedule is Monday through Friday, 7 to 3:30,
5 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

6 Q. Okay. So we're out here for the derailment that happened
7 Thursday. And we've heard that there was some work being done out
8 there by the track, track people. So can you take us back to when
9 you were notified, how you supported that track work, and when you
10 got notified, and kind of the process of what you did and --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- when the accident happened?

13 A. Monday morning, May the 8th, Surfacing Gang 2 was going to be
14 surfacing over that location where that detector is at. I was
15 notified the week prior, I think, the Friday before that. So I
16 reported and started my day there at the detector at Vail, Mile
17 Post 91.9. And I communicated with the surfacing gang. Actually,
18 I didn't start at Vail. I started at Bright where the surfacing
19 gang was at, and I talked to them there just to make sure they
20 were going to be able to get out and do their work. I didn't want
21 to disassemble the detector if they weren't going to get to it
22 that day. That was early in the morning, and then they said, yes,
23 we're going to get out, they're going to get time.

24 So I went from Bright to Vail, and I disassembled the
25 detector. Took everything off of the rail except for the dragging

1 equipment detector portion. I only removed the, the panels. I
2 left the cam shaft in place because it wasn't necessary. It was
3 surfacing only. They weren't replacing any ties. So it was not
4 necessary for me to remove the whole cam of the dragger.

5 And then upon completion of the surfacing work reassembled
6 the dragger. For the disassembly I did that by myself. In the
7 reassembly process my co-worker Dustin helped me reassemble it.
8 He was just helping me out. I did the reassembly. Upon
9 completion of reassembling the dragger, I performed the checks
10 from the MS 404. I redid alignment calibration on both, both
11 scanners, ran test trains, kicked the dragger, made sure it was
12 functioning properly, and applied heat to both scanners to make
13 sure that they were functioning properly.

14 Q. Okay. So let's go back a little bit. Monday, the 8th,
15 you're told you're going to a surfacing gang.

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Was it just that one location Vail?

18 A. As far as CNS work goes it was Vail and -- signal locations
19 which I checked on those after just to make sure they didn't do
20 any damage in the wires or anything. I did follow them after
21 reassembling the dragger. I followed them to the locations that
22 they had surfaced, and there was no, no issues.

23 Q. So was it a continuous surfacing of the spots?

24 A. There was a few spots, yes. And it was -- I don't have it
25 memorized, but it was about three miles from Bright which it ended

1 about quarter mile past the dragger basically where the road
2 crossing is at by the dragger. And then they picked up again a
3 few miles later.

4 Q. Okay. And Vail was the only (indiscernible) detector it
5 affected?

6 A. Yes. That was the only detector.

7 Q. On your territory or on the whole surfacing gang?

8 A. For my territory. I don't know about the rest.

9 Q. Okay. And so, so when you say you disassembled it can you go
10 a little bit more specific?

11 A. I removed the scanner heads, the transducers. Disconnected
12 the cables. Moved them out of the track away from the track so
13 that they wouldn't be damaged by the surfacing.

14 Q. Okay. They're not just electrically disconnected. They're
15 just --

16 A. Those, the transducers were never electronically
17 disconnected. One, the east rail scanner was not disconnected
18 because it was -- there was no need to disconnect it. The west
19 rail scanner cable was disconnected in order to remove that from
20 the track.

21 Q. Okay. So it was two opticals or the two sensors, and then
22 the transducers also?

23 A. The transducers were not disconnected. They were left
24 connected. I just took them under the rail.

25 Q. Off the rail?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. Okay. And then the MS 400 --
- 3 A. 404.
- 4 Q. -- 404, you went through some of the steps. Does any of that
5 require interaction with the dispatcher or with the ATC desk?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. No. None of the tests require repetition from them?
- 8 A. No. The tests are internal. We run test trains. I do --
9 all the tests is local. Never reported back.
- 10 Q. Okay. And when you're running your test trains how do you
11 verify that it's a good test?
- 12 A. When you run a test train it creates a log of the parameters
13 the detector is seeing, and it shows in detail like when we apply
14 heat to it, it will show you which axel in the test train with the
15 heat applied.
- 16 Q. Okay.
- 17 A. And it also alarms. And you have the option to broadcast it
18 over the radio or not. When I do tests I don't broadcast it over
19 the radio normally. But locally you can hear the, the speaker
20 announce the alarm.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. To make sure it's working.
- 23 Q. So are you working under the surfacing gang track time or?
- 24 A. Yes. Well, I got track time after -- the actual tract time
25 on that Monday, I know I did some work under ITD because they

1 hadn't had time yet. I JO'd with them at some point later. I
2 think that was for when I was working on the signals.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But and I also used some watchman lookout for some portion of
5 the day as well.

6 Q. Okay. Was there any problem getting track time or --

7 A. No, no. There's never a problem getting track time usually
8 in this area.

9 Q. So there wasn't -- you weren't being rushed to get --

10 A. No.

11 Q. -- trains running?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. No.

15 MR. PAYAN: Okay. I'm going to stop right here for real
16 quick and pass it on.

17 Any questions, FRA? State your name, and then ask your
18 questions.

19 MR. HENRY: Tom Henry, H-e-n-r-y, is the last name.

20 BY MR. HENRY:

21 Q. When reassembling was there a -- did you know what there was
22 a particular order that you're supposed to put the transducers on
23 or was it something that you were unaware of or --

24 A. I knew that there was a specific order. I disassembled, and
25 I was certain that I set the transducers in the -- outside the

1 track in a manner that when I put them back they'd be the same.

2 Q. Okay. And you -- the transducers you left connected to the
3 cable.

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. So you just pulled the cable and the trans --

6 A. I pulled them, I pulled them off the track with the cable
7 still connected sitting oriented in a way that I thought for sure
8 I would put them back the same, same way.

9 MR. HENRY: Okay. I guess, basically that's all I would have
10 to add or question.

11 MR. PIER: Yeah, I've got a couple. BRS, Pier, P-i-e-r.

12 BY MR. PIER:

13 Q. First question can you speak to the construction of the
14 transducers and how they're identified specifically even lengths
15 of cable?

16 A. The transducers are standalone. They each have a mounting
17 bracket of their own. So there's two separate mounting brackets,
18 and two separate transducers. They are labeled A and B. I don't
19 know. The cable lengths are -- one of them has a longer cable;
20 one of them has a shorter cable, but there's a lot of play. Not
21 completely obvious that they're different lengths, but they both
22 reach to both spots on the rail. I set them out of the gauge of
23 the track thinking when I put them back that they would be put
24 back the way they were when I took them off but --

25 Q. So short of the A, B, there's no other indication --

1 A. No.

2 Q. -- that you could have disarranged? Okay. And then my other
3 question would be so the dragger, what's the status of that
4 dragging equipment detector? Is it in service or out --

5 A. Yes. It's in service.

6 Q. It is in service.

7 A. It is in service, yeah.

8 MR. PIER: That's all the questions I have.

9 MR. PAYAN: Okay. NS.

10 MR. BEDELL: No questions.

11 MR. PAYAN: No questions.

12 FRA.

13 MR. WHITE: Irvin White, FRA.

14 BY MR. WHITE:

15 Q. One question about the -- you mentioned the Form MS 404.

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Is that a form you fill out for each time you take out or put
18 back a detector in service?

19 A. It used to be. There's no filling out of forms with the
20 update from March 11th. I think it's March 11th is the latest
21 update on the MS 404. So I'm not -- we're not filling out forms.
22 We're just performing the tests.

23 Q. So it has a sheet of instructions and that's it --

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. -- you fill in as you take the steps and initial off that --

1 A. No --

2 (Crosstalk)

3 A. No longer is that part of it.

4 Q. Going to your background. I understand you've had this line
5 since January of this year, but you've been a signal maintainer
6 for a period of time. Have you dealt with detectors over the
7 years? Is it something new that they've added to your workload?
8 How has this process been for you?

9 A. I've dealt with them I would say somewhat. We used to have
10 electronic leaders that were kind of more involved with the
11 detectors, but I -- my last territory I didn't have detectors on.
12 The territory I held for a couple years I had (indiscernible)
13 track detector at one location.

14 Q. So if you would approximate how many years have you been
15 dealing with detectors in your background?

16 A. Three.

17 Q. Three years. And do you feel comfortable with the training
18 that you received for doing the detectors, and have you ever
19 encountered a situation similar to this one where the transducers
20 got put back in reverse?

21 A. I feel confident in the training. We definitely got a lot
22 more of it lately, and I have not seen the -- me personally I have
23 not seen the transducers reversed before but --

24 Q. All right. You just opened the door. You said you've had
25 more training recently. Could you please describe that?

1 A. Well, after the incident with the East Palestine, company-
2 wide I think everyone had to do online training that was created
3 out of prudence, prudence, I guess there. So we all refreshed on
4 detectors at that point.

5 Q. Online training. And approximately how many hours was that?

6 A. Approximately two, I would say.

7 Q. And that online was it instructor (indiscernible) was it
8 based like a DVD or an online course?

9 A. Online. There are no instructors.

10 Q. No (indiscernible) instructors. In your work duties on a
11 daily basis when you have questions do you have access to people
12 to --

13 A. Always.

14 Q. -- reference and --

15 A. Always. Not only -- mostly my fellow maintainers but the
16 supervisors as well. I've never not been able to ask questions
17 when I, when I had them.

18 MR. WHITE: Thank you.

19 MR. PAYAN: All right.

20 BY MR. PAYAN:

21 Q. You doing okay? You need a break or --

22 A. I'm good, sir.

23 Q. All right. So getting back to the transducers. Some more
24 questions. On the -- how many, how many defect detectors do you
25 have on your territory?

1 A. I have two that are combination dragging equipment and hot
2 box detectors, and one that is a dragging equipment detector only.

3 Q. Okay. And on the -- the ones that are hot bearing detectors
4 is there a Norfolk Southern standard? When we went out there we
5 noticed that the transducers were marked A and B. Does the
6 Norfolk Southern have a standard for certain direction you put an
7 A B or B A, certain sequence?

8 A. I believe that would depend on the location, but I don't have
9 that memorized enough to know which one is oriented where.

10 Q. That's my question. I mean, does the NS require a certain
11 standard for installing these that makes it easy for you to -- A B
12 goes northbound or B A goes northbound?

13 A. Well --

14 Q. Are they all the same is what I'm asking?

15 A. I'm not sure if they're all the same.

16 Q. Okay. So the -- after you finished installing it, do you
17 remember what time that was when you put it back in service?

18 A. I would estimate around 2 p.m., probably.

19 Q. 2 p.m. Monday?

20 A. 1 to 2 p.m., on Monday.

21 Q. Somewhere Monday afternoon?

22 A. Yeah. It would have been early, early afternoon.

23 Q. Okay. And between Monday and Thursday the accident train
24 were trains running?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. If you had to estimate per day, how many, how many trains on
2 that line?

3 A. Estimate I'd say five or six.

4 Q. Five or six per day? Did any of those trains -- did ATC ever
5 notify you that they weren't getting data from -- about those
6 trains?

7 A. No.

8 Q. So there was no, no -- ATC never contacted you about possibly
9 not getting -- not receiving train data?

10 A. No.

11 Q. No? Okay.

12 MR. PAYAN: I'll go around the room one more time.

13 Mr. Henry.

14 BY MR. HENRY:

15 Q. You mentioned when you were hired you had training basically
16 three 3-week sessions?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Were hot box detectors part of that training?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay. So since you had the territory yourself or as a
21 maintainer the only course you've had was the one 2-hour --

22 A. There's --

23 Q. -- training on hot box detectors is that correct?

24 A. That's -- we, we've -- I've done training with other
25 maintainers as we work detectors in --

1 Q. Informal.

2 A. Informal training I guess it would be.

3 Q. Okay. And then formal training?

4 A. As far as other detector training we've had -- I've seen a
5 few PowerPoints that they put out. But as far as like a formal
6 training class I haven't done any --

7 Q. Okay. And --

8 A. -- for that.

9 Q. -- your recommended maintenance practices, is there anything
10 stated what you do when you disassemble? You said you don't fill
11 out a form per se when you test after putting something back in.
12 Is there -- is the reason for that just because you keep yourself
13 on a cycle, and you're -- that's why the last one you did was in
14 March instead of -- you disassembled it, you tested it again. Why
15 wouldn't you take credit or why doesn't the railroad have you
16 take --

17 A. I don't believe -- it's not part of our -- it's not tracked
18 and recorded in our, in our system for testing. It's not in the
19 stamp.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So we use calibration dates, and our supervisor lets us know
22 when they're due. There's a -- he keeps a running log of -- with
23 our daily brief that basically tells you when, when our detectors
24 are coming up due for calibration. And the rest of it we just
25 keep on our own. So --

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. It's --
- 3 Q. How often do you actually fill out the form?
- 4 A. Well, we, we stopped filling out the form with the new update
5 from March 11th. So you, you were present when I did it, and it
6 was actually April 25th was that date that you came out on that
7 detector.
- 8 Q. Okay. You didn't fill out --
- 9 (Crosstalk)
- 10 Q. -- a form on that one either?
- 11 A. I did for that one. It's in the -- yes.
- 12 Q. Oh. So you've done one since March then?
- 13 A. I did, but I did -- I filled out a form, but I should have
14 not because --
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. -- March 11th update had --
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. -- a different procedure.
- 19 Q. So by policy how often do you actually fill out the form?
- 20 A. We don't. We don't fill out the form.
- 21 Q. That little checklist you don't --
- 22 A. No, not any longer.
- 23 Q. So there's no record, written record, of when the testing is?
- 24 A. No, sir.
- 25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Other than in the system if it tells you when calibrations
2 are due. It does record that.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. When the calibration due date is --

5 Q. But the results or anything like that aren't recorded
6 anymore?

7 A. No.

8 MR. HENRY: Okay. That's it for me.

9 MR. PAYAN: BRS.

10 MR. PIER: I've got nothing.

11 MR. PAYAN: NS.

12 MR. BEDELL: No.

13 MR. PAYAN: All right.

14 BY MR. WHITE:

15 Q. Having gone through this situation would you have a
16 recommendation or how would you like to see things improve so
17 something like this wouldn't happen again?

18 A. Obviously, my recommendation would be to add -- add an
19 emphasis in the MS 404 stating that orientation of the transducers
20 needs to be verified in the procedure (indiscernible).

21 Q. Anything else?

22 A. No, sir.

23 MR. WHITE: Thank you.

24 MR. SOPHER: Can I ask a question?

25 MR. PAYAN: Yes.

1 MR. SOPHER: Sam Sopher, BRS.

2 BY MR. SOPHER:

3 Q. That detector site bell does it -- when it gives the end of
4 train message does it announce a direction the train is traveling?

5 A. No, it does not.

6 Q. All right. What would you see on the log if you had the
7 transducers switched as far as the direction? Would it just show
8 that the direction was wrong?

9 A. It wouldn't show the direction being wrong. It would just
10 show a direction.

11 Q. Correct.

12 A. You would have to know the train, what direction the train
13 actually traveled to know if it was wrong or not.

14 Q. So it would show --

15 A. To just get north and south --

16 Q. It would just show in the log that the direction was opposite
17 of what the train was actually going?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. Does that affect the overall functionality of the detector in
20 any way?

21 A. No.

22 MR. SOPHER: I'm done.

23 BY MR. PAYAN:

24 Q. So going back to the testing frequency. What are the testing
25 frequencies that NS requires?

- 1 A. I believe they're 30, 90, 180, and 365 day.
- 2 Q. It's the same, same?
- 3 A. It's not. They're different for each.
- 4 Q. What do you do on each one, if you can remember?
- 5 A. 30 days basically cleaning lenses, inspecting the mounting.
- 6 It's mostly a visual inspection. The new procedure does want us
- 7 to, to run tests, and activate the detector.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. And then it's more involved for each time cycle. That's why
- 10 I have to pull the form out --
- 11 Q. Okay.
- 12 A. -- to be detailed about that. So --
- 13 Q. Okay. And at the Vail detector location are there -- are the
- 14 circuit plans correct? Are there circuit plans there?
- 15 A. There's generic circuit plans there.
- 16 Q. Generic.
- 17 A. And the circuit plan didn't match the -- that, that
- 18 particular location.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. Or --
- 21 Q. Are -- do they tell you transducer location on the circuit --
- 22 A. I believe they do.
- 23 Q. Did they match what was there?
- 24 A. I'm not sure.
- 25 Q. So they're just generic for --

1 A. They weren't for the Vail location so I don't --

2 Q. They serve any purpose at all?

3 A. They give the general set up of dragging, dragger location
4 that -- yeah, they, they serve a purpose. They have a set above
5 the location, any -- generic dragger location.

6 Q. But not, not for transducer location?

7 A. I believe the transducers were on there and --

8 Q. But they might or might not match the correct position?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. Okay. But other than that you don't have any reference to
11 how the transducers should be placed? I'm saying if you took them
12 off, and had to leave the scene for some reason, somebody came
13 back on, what could they reference to put them back on correctly?

14 A. It should be the print or the -- you could also look at the
15 transducer alignment through the equipment itself with the LED
16 that activates for which gate A or B transducer you're activating.
17 You can check it that way.

18 Q. Okay. So --

19 (Crosstalk)

20 A. -- I didn't check it that way. I was, I was certain that I
21 take -- took them off the rail, put them back the same way that I
22 had taken them off and, obviously, that wasn't the case.

23 MR. PAYAN: Okay. Last time, yes.

24 MR. HENRY: Tom Henry, FRA.

25 MR. EVANS: Yes, sir.

1 BY MR. HENRY:

2 Q. The plans are they like a generic set that comes with the
3 detector or are they NS generated plans for that location? I
4 mean, is that part of the detector's installation or is -- are --
5 is it a set of plans made by --

6 A. I'd have to look at the plans to see exactly what they said,
7 but they were not plans for that location.

8 Q. Do you think they were for a different location or are they
9 generic plans?

10 A. I'm not sure.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I'd have to look at them again. I did not, I did not look at
13 them on May 8th when I reassembled it like I said because I
14 thought for sure I just kept the orientation the way it had
15 been --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- and reinstalled it that way.

18 MR. HENRY: Thanks.

19 MR. PIER: Just a quick question. Pier, P-i-e-r.

20 BY MR. PIER:

21 Q. Just to go back on what brother Sopher said. So just to be
22 clear, you physically heard as well the -- despite the transducers
23 being reversed a critical alarm went out over the radio and was
24 duplicated?

25 A. When I performed the test on Monday, yes. That's where we --

1 I did heat test on both rails. So it was two separate test
2 trains. A separate test train for the dragging equipment
3 detector.

4 Q. Both with the transducers transposed, and then back in the
5 (indiscernible) order?

6 A. That was performed on Saturday the 13th with the NTSB, FRA
7 present. So the transducers were put back and in the proper
8 orientation on that day. But on Monday I just ran test trains.
9 When you run a test train you choose the direction. The
10 transducers are kind of out of the picture for that. So --

11 Q. But to be clear it still alarmed?

12 A. Yes, it did. It alarmed.

13 MR. PIER: That's all.

14 MR. PAYAN: Last chance, NS.

15 MR. BEDELL: No, nothing.

16 MR. PAYAN: FRA.

17 MR. WHITE: I'm a bad penny that keeps coming back. It's
18 Irvin White, FRA.

19 BY MR. WHITE:

20 Q. You have three detectors in your area currently that you're
21 working?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Are they the same or different?

24 A. The three draggers are the same. The two hot box detectors
25 are the same.

1 Q. The hot box detectors, do you have their operative manuals
2 available to you when you're doing your functions?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And is that like a paper copy or is that electronic in
5 your --

6 A. We have both.

7 Q. Okay. Are there requirements for doing additional
8 inspections after weather events?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. What triggers that?

11 A. I believe that the MS 404 states snow or excessive weather
12 event. I don't know specifically who would make the call on that.
13 I would assume that supervision would say, hey, we've had a lot of
14 weather, we need to check these detectors out. I don't --

15 Q. So that's not a job function that you would assign to
16 yourself? Somebody, your supervisor would tell you, hey, we've
17 got, you know, snow or ice storm, you need to go check the lenses,
18 clean them, whatever?

19 A. If it was -- I mean what is excessive? I don't know what the
20 standard would be for what's a -- or where the, where the
21 threshold would be for excessive weather to, to trigger a
22 requirement to inspect. I think common sense would apply with
23 that. If we had a lot of snow you have to make sure that your,
24 your equipment is clear from snow.

25 Q. You were working with another individual this day. So there

1 were two of you there present?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. So typically does one take a lead; do you work as equals?

4 How does that normally work in your situation?

5 A. I think every situation would be different, but in this case

6 I was definitely the lead. I was directing everything. I

7 reinstalled things. He assisted me with tools or holding the

8 other end of the wrench or -- but I was the one making the

9 decisions on it.

10 MR. WHITE: Thank you.

11 BY MR. PAYAN:

12 Q. All right. Just a few more questions here. Do you ever have

13 interaction with the ATC desk? Do they ever reach out to you for

14 anything?

15 A. Yes. Occasionally. I mean, we have a trouble desk system

16 that if there's problems or issues they generate the tickets, and

17 let us know the problems, and it's a trouble ticket that we need

18 to go look into.

19 Q. Such as? Can you --

20 A. Detectors not working properly.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. They will generate a trouble ticket. It will go to me. And

23 if I don't accept the ticket, it continues on down the line until

24 someone addresses it. But my interaction with them is usually

25 just with the trouble desk. I don't know when you say ATC I don't

1 know exactly who you're referring to.

2 Q. So you're saying the trouble desk and ATC are two different
3 things?

4 A. As far as I know I think they are.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I communicate mostly with the dispatcher.

7 Q. Oh, okay.

8 A. That's most of my communications is with the dispatcher, and
9 occasionally with the trouble desk.

10 Q. So you're not, you're not aware what the ATC desk does or who
11 exactly they are?

12 A. No.

13 Q. So just a few of our standard questions here. Is the NS a
14 safe place to work?

15 A. Yes, it is.

16 Q. It is. Okay. And is there anything that you think --
17 besides your recommendation of the MS 404 orientation anything
18 else you can think of that can help us prevent this kind of
19 accident?

20 A. I don't know the other details that caused this accident, but
21 I do know that our equipment was working as intended with the
22 exception of the direction of the train which I believe has no
23 bearing on the functionality of what the detector is supposed to
24 do as far as transmitting a warning to the train crew. And the
25 detector did that.

1 Q. Okay. Your job require you to high rail sometimes?

2 A. It does.

3 Q. In your high railing experience you ever find any radio dead
4 spots?

5 A. I do in my truck. Every truck radio is different. But I
6 have experienced spots where I couldn't communicate very well.

7 Q. Is there any that you remember between Vail and New Castle?

8 A. There are. There are. But that's with my truck radio. It's
9 Milepost 88 to 84 or so. Actually 84 is pretty decent. I'd say
10 88 to 86 that's kind of a dead spot, but that's with my radio in
11 my truck. So --

12 Q. Right. And how bad is -- complete or scratchy or --

13 A. It's not complete failure, but it's hard to --

14 Q. Hard to get?

15 A. Hard to get sometimes.

16 Q. Okay. Pretty consistent?

17 A. I wouldn't say it's consistent.

18 Q. Intermittent.

19 A. It changes with the atmosphere or whatnot.

20 Q. Sure.

21 A. Some days it's better than others, but there are some.

22 Q. Okay.

23 MR. PAYAN: That's all the questions I have.

24 Anybody else have anything?

25 MR. WHITE: White, FRA.

1 BY MR. WHITE:

2 Q. Just like to go back. So you, you're not aware of any radio
3 issues lately between the detector and New Castle?

4 A. You would not -- I don't think you would hear that detector
5 all the way at New Castle, but I haven't had any radio issues
6 other than what I just mentioned, and but now I, I don't know of
7 any radio. That's kind of not my --

8 Q. Does the MS 404 cover the radio portion of the detector?

9 A. I'm not sure.

10 Q. Have you had to deal with radio issues on detectors in your
11 experience?

12 A. I have not.

13 Q. Who would do that if there was a known problem?

14 A. Probably our communications people.

15 Q. Different group?

16 A. Different section within our department, yes.

17 MR. WHITE: Thank you.

18 MR. PAYAN: Somebody else?

19 MR. PIER: Pier, P-i-e-r.

20 BY MR. PIER:

21 Q. Is there another department that has -- let me think the best
22 way to ask this. Does the track inspector ride the track daily
23 and listen for call-outs from the, from the detector?

24 A. I can't answer for them. I don't -- I know that they're out
25 there. I don't know their schedule.

1 Q. But you don't know if it's a requirement that they verify
2 the --

3 A. I do not know.

4 Q. -- test?

5 A. I do not know if it is.

6 MR. HENRY: Tom Henry, FRA.

7 BY MR. HENRY:

8 Q. When there is an alarm at a hot box detector it would send
9 two radio transmissions, correct?

10 A. If there's an alarm at a hot box detector, it will send an
11 alarm immediately --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- when it detects the defect. And when a train clears the
14 detector it will send a transmission twice stating the --

15 Q. Is that --

16 A. Stating the alarm. Or if there's no defects it will also
17 send it twice.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So it does -- if there's an alarm, it will send it
20 immediately, and then it will send two transmissions of whatever
21 the end result is once the train clears the detector.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. So if there's an alarm, there will be at least three
24 transmissions.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. If there's no defects, it will be two.

2 MR. HENRY: Okay. That's all.

3 MR. PAYAN: Okay. Anybody else?

4 All right, well, if it's okay with you if we have any
5 questions come up is it okay we reach out to you?

6 MR. EVANS: Absolutely.

7 MR. PAYAN: All right. On behalf of the NTSB thank you for
8 your time, and I know this is not the best way to spend your
9 Monday morning, but we do appreciate cooperation. And if you
10 think of anything else, I'll give you my card and please, please
11 reach out and let us know.

12 MR. EVANS: Yes, sir.

13 MR. PAYAN: All right. And with that it is 8:29, and we'll
14 stop the interview.

15 (Whereupon, at 8:29 a.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

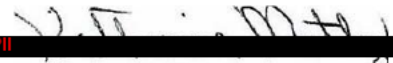
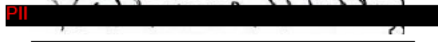
IN THE MATTER OF: TRAIN DERAILMENT NEAR NEW CASTLE,
PENNSYLVANIA ON MAY 10, 2023
Interview of William Evans

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD23FR011

PLACE: New Castle, Pennsylvania

DATE: May 15, 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.

Katherine Motley
Transcriber