

Readout of Federal Railroad Administration Meeting with Labor Representatives in East Palestine, O.H.

Monday, June 12, 2023

EAST PALESTINE, OH — On Monday, June 12, FRA Administrator Amit Bose and FRA Chief Safety Officer Karl Alexy traveled to East Palestine, Ohio, to meet with members and representatives from multiple unions to discuss ongoing U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) efforts to improve freight rail safety and increase accountability.

Discussions on advancing safety across the rail industry and for people working on and living near railroads included a status update on the Norfolk Southern Railway supplemental safety assessment announced earlier this year, as well as more recent actions such as FRA's supplemental safety advisory on the Use and Maintenance of Hot Bearing Wayside Detectors announced earlier this month.

Other topics raised at the meeting included progress being made to provide paid sick time to more rail employees and the importance of Class I railroads joining the C3RS Program, which will be discussed at a working group meeting on June 21-22. Labor representatives also provided feedback on issues that they believe would help improve railroad safety.

The meeting builds on a similar meeting that FRA and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) held with representatives from the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers – Transportation Division (SMART-TD), Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWED), Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS), Brotherhood of Railway Carmen (BRC), and International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) in February following the Norfolk Southern Railway derailment in East Palestine.

On June 22-23, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), an independent federal agency leading the investigation into the cause of the February 3 derailment, will hold a two-day investigative hearing in East Palestine, Ohio, as part of their ongoing investigation. The USDOT will have multiple representatives present at the hearing, and the Department continues to assist the independent NTSB investigation.

For more information on the two-day NTSB hearing—click [HERE](#).

For more information on USDOT and FRA actions to make rail safer—click [HERE](#).