



NEWS RELEASE
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Public Service Commission Hires Railroad Track Inspector

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) recently hired the first railroad track inspector as part of the new state Railroad Safety Program. Karl Carson comes to the PSC with 23 years of railroad experience and is very familiar with track inspections. Carson will be starting with the Commission August 17.

“We set the bar high for this program and I am extremely pleased with the quality of our first inspector,” said Commission Chairman Julie Fedorchak, who holds the railroad portfolio. “Karl has in-depth railroad industry knowledge, including years of track experience that will be extremely valuable in getting our program off on the right track. His background gives him significant technical credibility within the industry, and will give him a strong start as a regulator.”

Carson was previously a Division Engineer with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF). He has worked for BNSF since 1992 and was in management since 2004. Positions he held with BNSF include Roadmaster and Assistant Director of Maintenance Production where he supervised maintenance and replacement of track and track components. He is originally from Minot, N.D. He attended college at Bismarck State College and also served in the North Dakota Army National Guard.

The track inspector will be responsible for conducting track inspections using federal railroad and roadway worker safety standards/regulations to inspect and identify track and roadway worker safety deficiencies.

This position is part of the new state Railroad Safety Program advanced by the Commission in the PSC’s budget and approved earlier this year by the Legislature along with the authority to hire two inspectors. The hiring process for the second position, a mechanical inspector, is currently ongoing. The state inspectors are hired by and entirely accountable to the Public Service Commission. At the same time, they will be trained and certified by the Federal Rail Administration and work in partnership with the local and regional federal inspectors. State inspectors will inspect to federal safety standards and have the same enforcement authority and tools as federal inspectors.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, grain elevators, auctioneers, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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