



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

July 2, 2024

Mr. Shannon Mason
Norfolk Southern Railway
System General Road Foreman of Engines
950 W. Peachtree St. NW
P.O. Box 56
Atlanta, GA 30308

Dear Mr. Mason:

This letter responds to the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) submission dated November 3, 2023, to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) seeking approval of its material modifications to the NS Conductor Certification Program received by FRA on May 21, 2024. NS has complied with FRA's procedures for submission and approval of programs described in appendix B to 49 CFR part 242.

Your submission states that on October 18, 2023, the railroad provided a copy of its program modification to Mr. Jeremy Ferguson, President, International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers Transportation Division (SMART-TD), representing the railroad's employees subject to 49 CFR part 242. FRA received comments from SMART-TD on January 11, 2024, regarding the program modifications. Following a series of meetings between NS, FRA, and SMART-TD to review the comments and clarify any questions, FRA understands that no further updates to the program are planned by NS at this time.

Based upon its review of NS's program modification and consideration of all SMART-TD comments, FRA has determined that the modified program conforms with the requirements of 49 CFR part 242. NS's program modification provides more details about the conductor certification process and updates contact information, as well as improves the transparency of the program in relation to the minimum requirements of 49 CFR part 242, appendix B.

FRA reminds NS that in accordance with section 22410 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL),¹ FRA is performing audits of the training, qualification, and certification programs of locomotive engineers and conductors subject to 49 CFR parts 240 and 242, including an assessment of the type and content of training, to determine whether programs provide locomotive engineers and conductors the knowledge, skill, and ability to safely operate a locomotive or train. These audits will be performed at least once every 5 years for each Class I railroad. This approval letter is not related to any current or future audit of NS's certification programs under the BIL.

¹ Public Law 117-58, November 15, 2021.

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If you have any questions regarding this approval, please contact Mr. Kevin Lewis (Kevin.Lewis@dot.gov) or Mr. Kurt Erikson (Kurt.Erickson@dot.gov) at (202) 366-0978 or FRAOPCERTPROG@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Hayward-Williams
Director, Office of Railroad Systems and Technology
Office of Railroad Safety