



# PRELIMINARY REPORT

## RAILROAD

### Alabama Export Railroad Contractor Fatality

**Prichard, Alabama**  
**November 17, 2020**  
**RRD21LR005**

*The information in this report is preliminary and will be either supplemented or corrected during the investigation.*

On November 17, 2020, at 2:30 p.m. local time, a Continental Rail Incorporated maintenance-of-way contractor working for Alabama Export Railroad (ALE) near Prichard, Alabama, was killed, and a second contractor was seriously injured while performing track maintenance. The contractors were installing railroad ties in a section of track at MP 4 on the Beauegard track. The contractors were using a hi-rail boom truck and a backhoe to aid them with their work.<sup>1</sup> Preliminary information indicates that inaccessible track protection was not established when ALE train A-MEMOB1-16 entered the work zone and struck the hi-rail boom truck and the backhoe. At the time of the accident, the six contractor track laborers were working on the tracks under the supervision of an ALE roadway worker in charge.



**Figure 1.** Accident site. (Photograph provided by the Federal Railroad Administration.)

---

<sup>1</sup> *Hi-rail* refers to a dual-mode vehicle which can operate both on rail tracks and a conventional road.

The National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) investigation into this accident is ongoing. Future investigative activity will focus on roadway worker protection, operating rules, training of employees/contractors, and internal and external oversight.

No parties were established; however, the ALE and the Federal Railroad Administration are cooperating with the NTSB in the investigation.