



**TO** Kathy Hunter, Director, Transportation Safety  
**FROM** Bob Boston, Rail Safety Program Specialist  
**DATE** May 25, 2021  
**SUBJECT** **Assignment 2019.0508 Order TR-160512**  
**Proposed BNSF Trackage Acoustic Detection System**  
**Close Docket TR-160512**

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### **Background**

On May 16, 2016, BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition requesting exemption from WAC 480-60-050(1), which requires railroad companies to maintain a side clearance of at least 8 feet 6 inches from the center of the tracks to the nearest structure. The Company filed a revised petition on May 26, 2016.

BNSF proposed to install a Trackage Acoustic Detection System (TADS) on its Seattle Subdivision near milepost 28.2 in Sumner, Washington. The main objective of TADS installation is to provide early detection of defective wheel bearings on railcars passing by.

### **Discussion**

Assignment 2019.0508 was issued on May 6, 2019 to check on the status of the TADS installation. An inspection of the area at and near milepost 28.2 revealed there is no TADS detector present. Several emails were sent to BNSF requesting the status of the proposed installation. No responses have been received from BNSF regarding the Sumner TADS.

The assignment was closed on April 27, 2021 and a copy of this memo has been placed in Cases to close docket TR-160512.