

**REPORT:** FE-17-97

**RAILROAD:** Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Company (BNSF)

**LOCATION:** San Bernardino, California

**DATE, TIME:** June 18, 1997, 3:29 p.m., PST

**PROBABLE CAUSE:**

The Driver of a 1-ton BNSF truck (with Crew cab) was transporting five BNSF Maintenance-of-Way (MOW) Employees south on California Freeway 215 when he fell asleep, causing the truck to overturn.

<b>EMPLOYEE:</b>	<b>Craft.....</b>	<b>Maintenance of Way</b>
	Activity.....	Transport of MOW employees from the job site to the yard at the end of their shift.
	Occupation.....	Track Foreman
	Age.....	45 years
	Length of Service.....	20 years
	Last Rules Training.....	May 26, 1996
	Last Safety Training.....	Oct. 5, 1994

**Circumstances Prior to the Accident**

The BNSF MOW Crew reported for duty at 6 a.m., on June 18, 1997, at the San Bernardino Rail Yard. Prior to departure, the Driver performed a safety check of the BNSF truck, California License No. 4A05322. The Foreman conducted a safety job briefing on the day's activities with the Section Track Crew. At approximately 6:30 a.m., the Crew departed the yard en route to E Street in Hesperia, California, milepost 0.03 on the Lucerne Valley Subdivision. The Crew was assigned to add walkways for pedestrian traffic at E Street by extending the existing concrete crossing panels. The Driver and the Track Foreman were in the front seat and three Trackmen were seated in the rear seat. At approximately 8 a.m., upon arriving at the job site in Hesperia, the Foreman called the BNSF Train Dispatcher and informed him that the Lucerne Valley Subdivision was out of service for June 18, 1997.

The Lucerne Valley Subdivision was on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, as noted in the Southern California Division Timetable No. 2, effective Oct. 1, 1996.

Upon arriving at E Street, the Foreman contacted the BNSF Track Supervisor and informed him

that there were some bad ties at each end of the crossing. The Foreman was instructed to replace the ties and informed that the Track Supervisor would come and inspect the job site later. Between 9:30 a.m. and 12 p.m., the Crew replaced three ties on the east end and two ties on the west end of the crossing. The concrete crossing panels were then placed next to the previously installed panels to extend the pedestrian crosswalk. The Welding Foreman arrived at the crossing to weld the angle iron surrounding the concrete crossing panels. At about 12:30 p.m., the Welding Foreman asked the Track Foreman to take the Crew back to the section house in Hesperia to get more welding rods so he could complete the project.

The Crew departed E Street and went to the section house to obtain the welding rods as requested. Returning to E Street, the Crew Members delivered the welding rods and ate their lunch. After lunch, at 1:30 p.m., the Crew cleaned up the scrap around the job site. The Foreman instructed the Driver to take the Crew back to the section house where they unloaded the scrap from the truck. At 2:30 p.m., the Foreman contacted the Roadmaster and informed him that the job was completed and they were returning to the yard in San Bernardino.

Traveling up Main Street in Hesperia, the Foreman instructed the Driver to stop at a hamburger restaurant so he could use the rest room. When the Foreman returned, the Crew got back into the truck and departed for San Bernardino. At 2:45 p.m., the Crew Members entered Interstate Highway 15 and drove in the slow lane at about 55 mph. At approximately 3:20 p.m., they merged onto Interstate Highway 215 and stayed in the slow lane traveling at about 55 mph.

The sky was clear and visibility good. The temperature was 97° F.

### **The Accident**

While southbound on Interstate 215 at 3:30 p.m., the truck drifted to the right onto the dirt shoulder, continuing for approximately 300 feet. Then the Driver attempted to re-enter the highway, veering to the left. The Driver was unable to regain control of the truck and over-corrected back to the right. As a result, the truck went over an embankment, overturned, and rolled onto the perimeter fence, coming to rest on top of the Track Foreman who had been partially ejected. ***Please see the attached five diagrams of Interstate 215, Hesperia, California, to better visualize the accident scene and events that led up to the fatality.***

### **Post-Accident Investigation**

The California Highway Patrol accident report and the interviews of witnesses at the scene of the accident revealed the Driver of the BNSF truck apparently had fallen asleep, allowing the truck to leave the highway. Then, while attempting to re-enter the highway, the Driver lost control of the truck, resulting in the truck going over the embankment and turning over. The passenger was partially ejected, and the vehicle rolled over and came to rest on top of him. According to the CHP report, the victim had not been wearing a seat belt at the time of the accident.

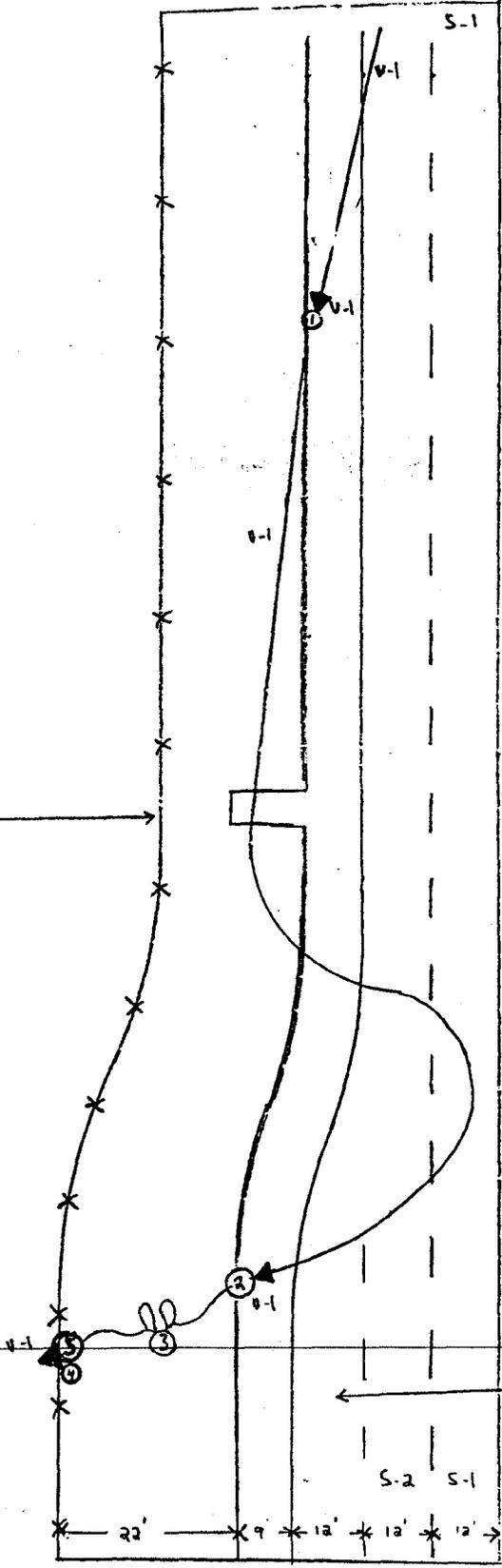
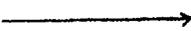
The Driver and passengers were tested for drugs with negative results.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
FACTUAL DIAGRAM

DATE OF COLLISION			TIME (2400)	NCIC NUMBER	OFFICER I.D. NUMBER
MO. 6	DAY 18	YR. 97	1530	9860	11960

ALL MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE AND NOT TO SCALE UNLESS STATED (SCALE -

PERIMETER FENCE



SIB I-215



INDICATE NORTH

TRAUS RD TO SR30

DRAWN BY	I.D. NUMBER	MO. DAY YR.	REVIEWER'S NAME	MO. DAY YR.
I.L. JACKSON	11960	6 18 97		

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
**FACTUAL DIAGRAM**

DAY OF COLLISION		TIME (2400)	NCIC NUMBER	OFFICER I.D. NUMBER
MO. 6	DAY 18	YR. 97	1530	9860
				(1960)

ALL MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE AND NOT TO SCALE UNLESS STATED (SCALE -



INDICATE NORTH

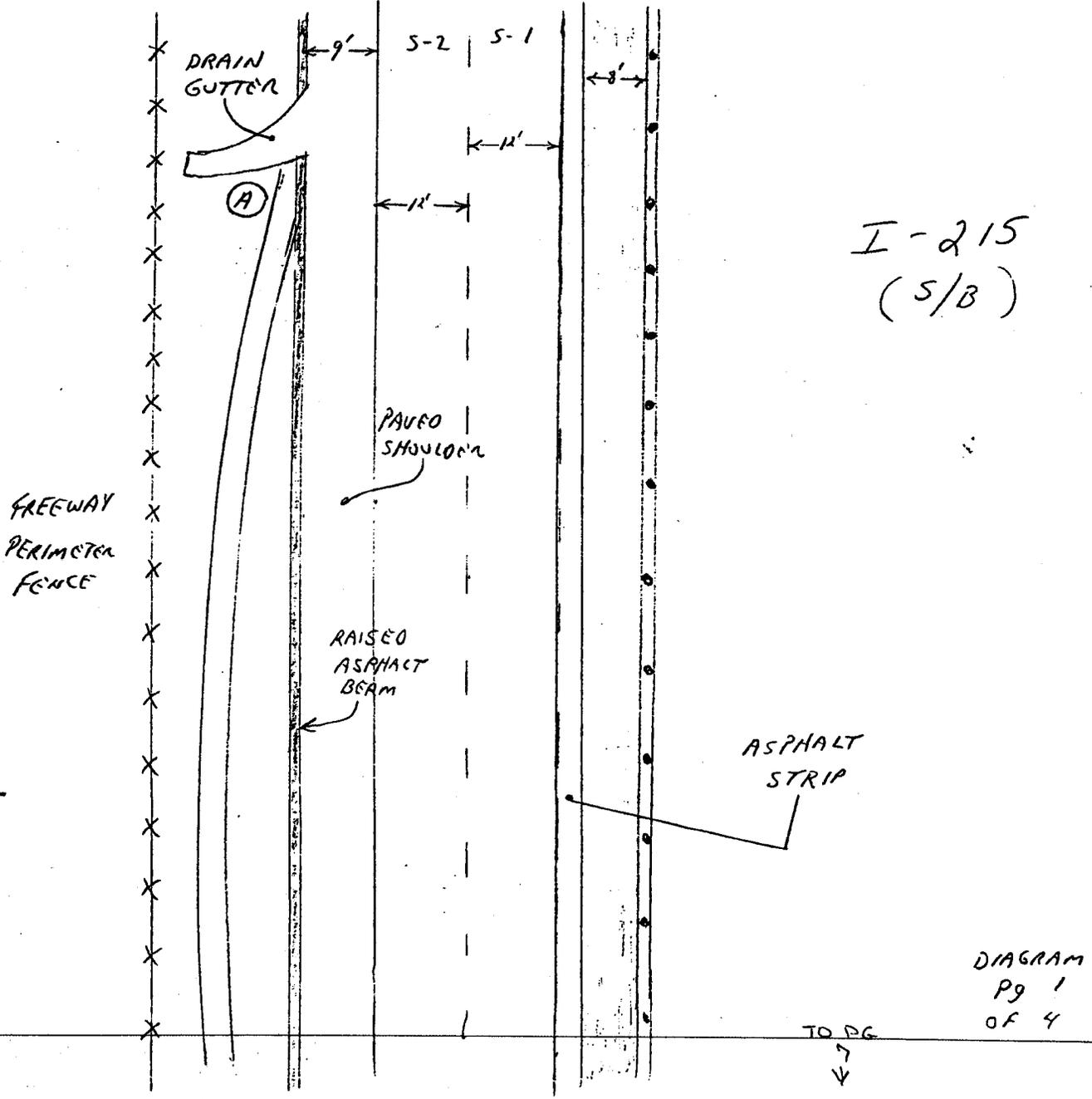


DIAGRAM  
 Pg 1  
 of 4

DRAWN BY	I.D. NUMBER	MO. DAY YR.	REVIEWER'S NAME	MO. DAY YR.
K. WHITMORE	8814	6 20 97		

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
**FACTUAL DIAGRAM**

DATE OF COLLISION			TIME (2400)	NCIC NUMBER	OFFICER I.D. NUMBER
MO. 6	DAY 18	YR. 97	1530	9860	11960

ALL MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE AND NOT TO SCALE UNLESS STATED (SCALE -

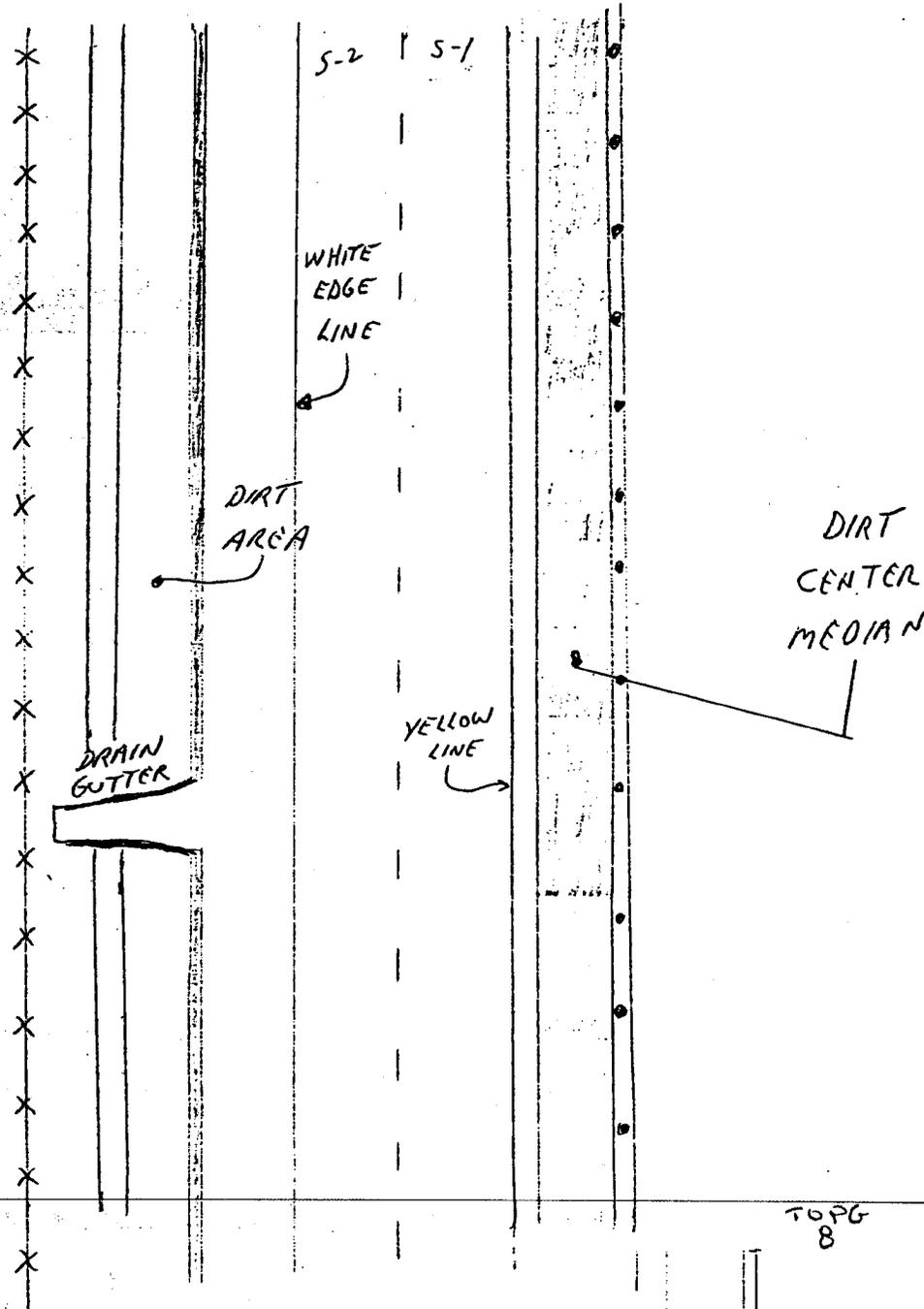


DIAGRAM  
 Pg. 2 of 4  
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DRAWN BY K. WHITMORE	I.D. NUMBER 8814	MO. DAY YR. 6 20 97	REVIEWER'S NAME	MO. DAY YR.
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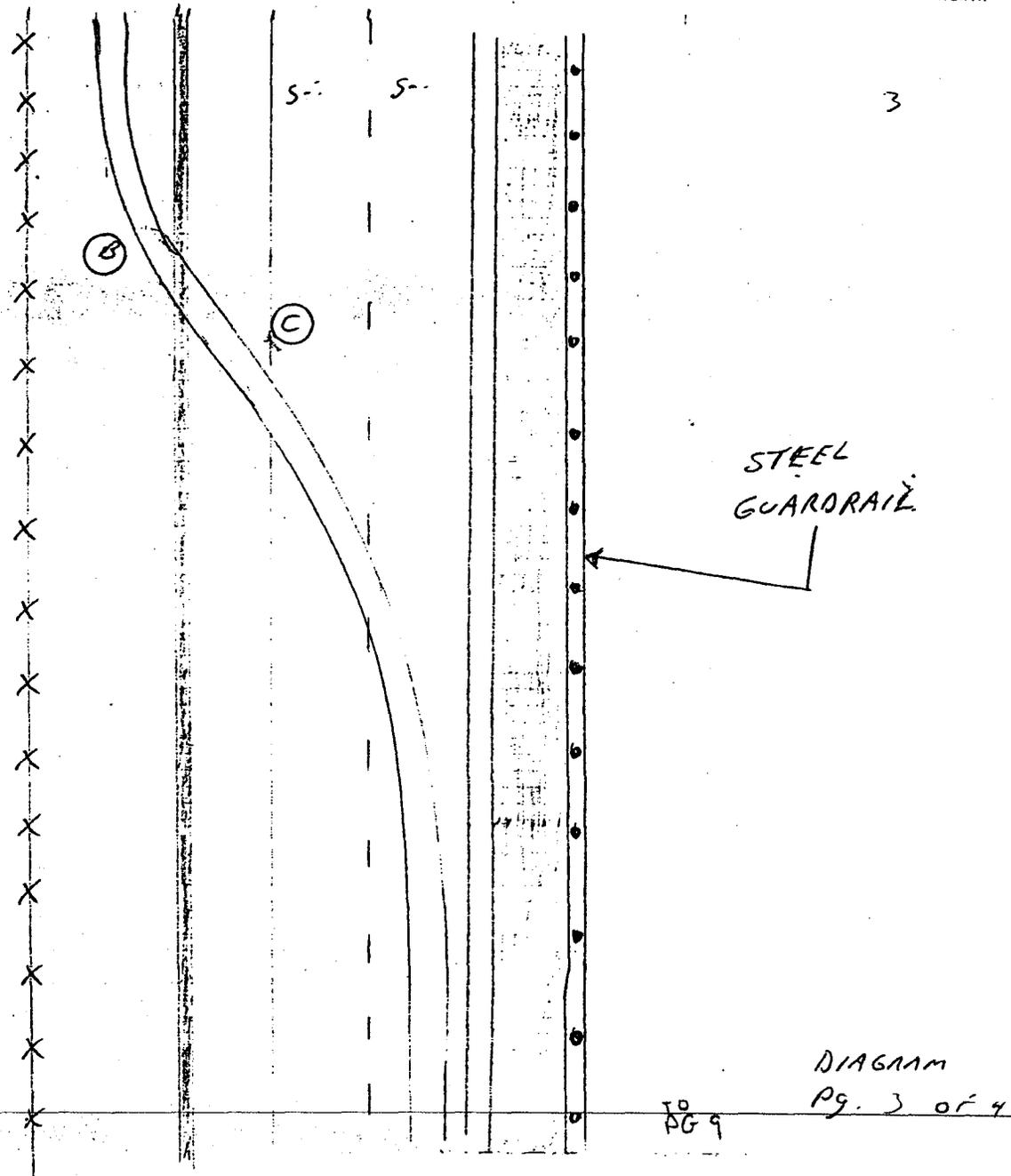
STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
FACTUAL DIAGRAM

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INDICATE NORTH



DRAWN BY	I.D. NUMBER	MO. DAY YR.	REVIEWER'S NAME	MO. DAY YR.
K. WHITMORE	8814	6 20 97		

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
FACTUAL DIAGRAM

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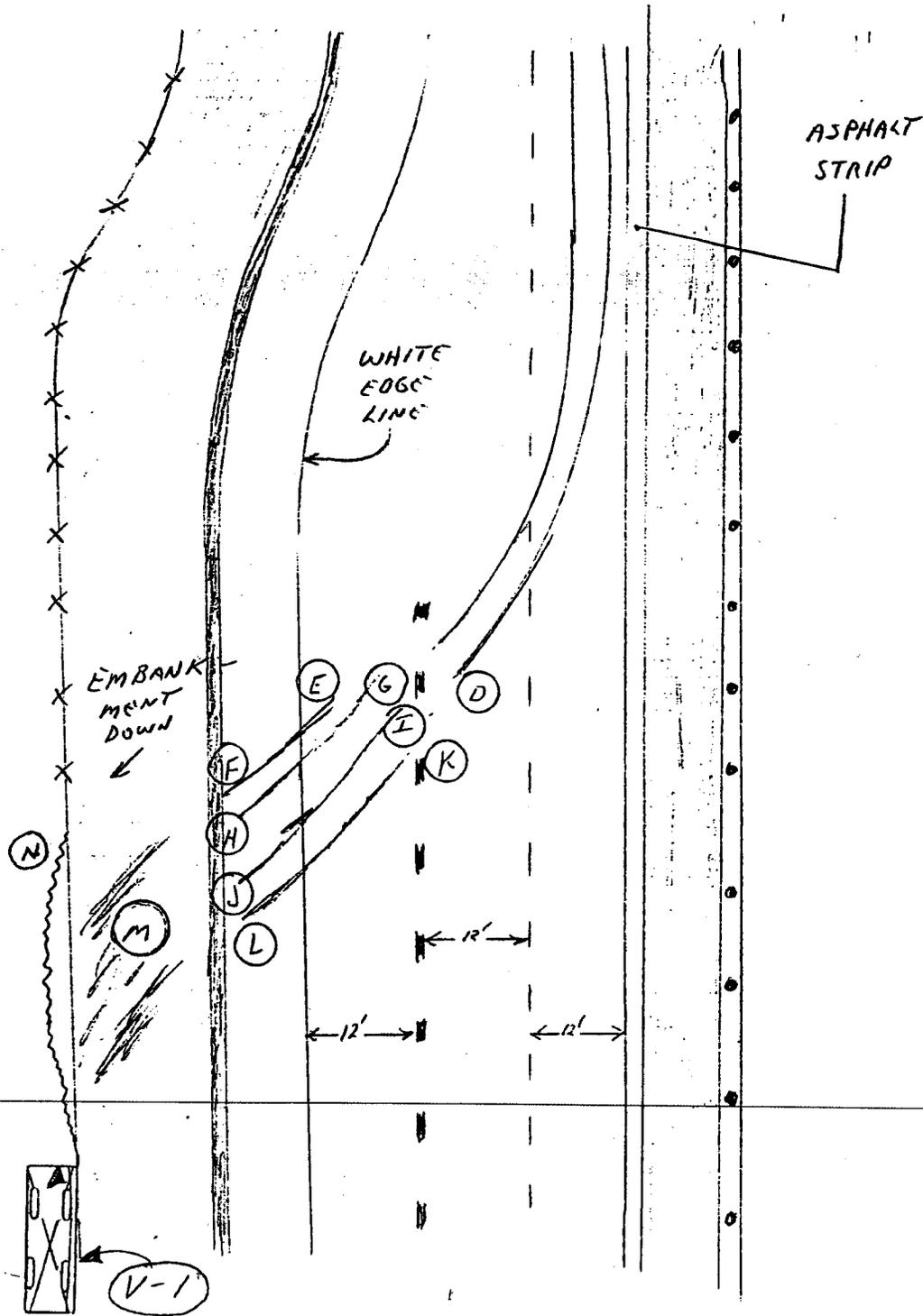
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MO. 6	DAY 18	YR. 97	1530	9860	11960

ALL MEASUREMENTS ARE APPROXIMATE AND NOT TO SCALE UNLESS STATED (SCALE -



INDICATE NORTH

4



\*  
DIAGRAM NOT TO SCALE AND CONDENSED SOMEWHAT TO SHOW ENTIRE SCENE  
K.W.

DIAGRAM  
Pg. 4 of 4

DRAWN BY K. WHITMORE	I.D. NUMBER 8814	MO. DAY YR. 6 20 97	REVIEWER'S NAME	MO. DAY YR.
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