



BRB No. 25-0383 BLA  
Case No. 2019-BLA-05367

ARTHUR D. BROWNING

Claimant-Respondent

v.

HOBET MINING, LLC

and

Self-Insured Through ARCH COAL,  
INCORPORATED

Employer/Carrier-  
Petitioners

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF WORKERS'  
COMPENSATION PROGRAMS, UNITED  
STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Party-in-Interest

**NOT-PUBLISHED**

DATE ISSUED: 08/04/2026

ORDER

On October 1, 2025, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, within whose jurisdiction this case arises, held in *Hobet Mining, Inc. v. Director, OWCP [Meredith]*, 156 F.4th 385 (4th Cir. 2025), *reh'g denied* (Mar. 16, 2026), that Arch Coal Company, Inc. (Arch),<sup>1</sup> the parent company of Hobet Mining, could not be held liable as a self-insurer for the payment of benefits arising out of a miner's employment with Arch's former subsidiaries, including Hobet Mining, when Patriot Coal, the subsequent owner and

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<sup>1</sup> Arch Coal, Inc., is also known as Arch Resources. Arch has merged with CONSOL Energy and is now known as Core Natural Resources. Employer's Motion to Dismiss at 1 n.1.

self-insurer of Hobet Mining at the time the claim was filed, went bankrupt. The parties agree that *Meredith* controls this case.

On October 14, 2025, Core Natural Resources (Employer), filed a motion to dismiss Hobet Mining as the responsible operator and Arch as the responsible insurer in this case pursuant to *Meredith*. On January 27, 2026, the Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (the Director), responded to Employer's motion, requesting the Benefits Review Board suspend the briefing schedule in this case until the status of the holding in *Meredith* becomes clear.

On July 23, 2026, as the decision in *Meredith* is now final, the Board issued an Order granting Employer's motion to dismiss Hobet Mining as the responsible operator and Arch as the responsible insurer, and ordering the Director to inform the Board within seven days whether he elects to contest entitlement in this case. *See* 20 C.F.R. §§725.414(a)(3)(iii), 725.497(d). In a July 30, 2026 response to the Board's Order, the Director states he does not oppose Claimant's entitlement to benefits.

In view of the above, the Board dismisses this appeal and remands this case to the district director for the payment of benefits by the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund. *See* 26 U.S.C. §9501(d)(1)(B); 20 C.F.R. §725.1(c), (e).

SO ORDERED.

JONATHAN ROLFE, Acting Chief  
Administrative Appeals Judge

DANIEL T. GRESH  
Administrative Appeals Judge

GLENN E. ULMER  
Administrative Appeals Judge