



BRB Nos. 24-0331 BLA
and 24-0332 BLA
Case Nos. 2021-BLA-05801
and 2023-BLA-06188

AUDREY L. CLINE)
(o/b/o and survivor of CHARLES G. CLINE))

Claimant-Respondent)

v.)

HOBET MINING & CONSTRUCTION)
COMPANY)

and)

Self-Insured Through ARCH RESOURCES,)
INCORPORATED)

Employer/Carrier-)
Petitioners)

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

Party-in-Interest)

NOT-PUBLISHED

DATE ISSUED: 07/16/2026

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),¹ the parent company of Hobet Mining & Construction Company

¹ 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 Mot. to Dismiss at 1 n.2.

(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 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 filed a motion to dismiss Hobet Mining as the responsible operator and Arch as the responsible insurer in these cases pursuant to *Meredith*. On April 9, 2026, the Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (the Director), filed a motion to hold the appeal in these cases in abeyance until *Meredith* is not subject to further appeal.

On June 30, 2026, the Benefits Review Board issued an Order denying the Director's motion to hold the appeals in these cases in abeyance, granting the motion to dismiss Hobet Mining and Arch, and ordering the Director to inform the Board within seven days whether he elects to contest entitlement in these cases. *See* 20 C.F.R. §§725.414(a)(3)(iii), 725.497(d). In a July 6, 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 these appeals and remands these cases 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
Administrative Appeals Judge

MELISSA LIN JONES
Administrative Appeals Judge

GLENN E. ULMER
Administrative Appeals Judge