

ANC25MA018

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

Attachment 2

FlightSafety International Personnel Transcripts

May 27, 2025

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:

FATAL COMMUTER PLANE CRASH NEAR
NOME, ALASKA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025 *

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Accident No.: ANC25MA018

Interview of: KAYE VARNEY, Pilot Instructor

FlightSafety

via Zoom videoconference

Tuesday,
March 18, 2025

APPEARANCES:

STARR BLUM, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist/Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SABRINA WOODS, Ph.D., Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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INTERVIEW

(8:04 a.m.)

MS. BLUM: Okay, today is March 18th, 2025, it's 8:04 Pacific Daylight Time. My name is Starr Blum and I'm an operational factors investigator with the NTSB and we're in the process of investigating the accident on February 6th involving Bering Air Flight 445.

First off, we want to extend our condolences to you and your colleagues, sorry that we're here, but as you know, our role is safety and the whole point is so that we can try to determine the probable cause of this accident. So I want to assure you that talking to pilots and instructors and check pilots and management, like, this is totally a usual thing for us, we do this in all investigations, so know that we're not here for any certificate action, we don't have any enforcement power, we're simply here for safety.

We will be recording this interview so that it can be transcribed. After we receive the transcript, our group will make corrections and then that transcript will be provided to you to make corrections, as well.

And so now let's go around the room so everyone can introduce themselves.

Paul.

MR. SUFFERN: Yeah, good morning, everyone. My name is Paul Suffern, as Starr mentioned, I'm a meteorologist is my background, I've been at the NTSB about 14, 15 years and before that, I worked up in Alaska for the National Weather Service.

MS. BLUM: Sabrina.

DR. WOODS: Hi, thank you for being here. I'm Sabrina Woods, I'm a human performance investigator, my job and my role is essentially determining all the

1 external and internal factors that help us be able to do the job that we do. Thanks for
2 being here.

3 MS. BLUM: Okay, Kaye, so please, just all we ask is that you answer the
4 questions to the best of your recollection. If you don't know the answer to a question,
5 "I don't know" is a perfectly fine answer, and if we pause and -- if we're pausing, it's just
6 because we might be taking notes because we're thinking of another question, so
7 don't mind that. You are entitled to have a representative of your choosing present
8 during this interview, is there someone you'd like to have as your representative?

9 MS. VARNEY: I choose to have Charlie Smith as my representative.

10 MS. BLUM: Hey, Charlie, can you please introduce yourself and spell you
11 name?

12 MR. SMITH: Yes, I'm Charles H. Smith, I'm with the law firm of Cantey and
13 Hanger in Dallas, Texas, and I've been involved in aviation practice for about 45 years
14 now, been a longtime pilot since '67, flight instructor and typed in Lears and Citations.

15 MS. BLUM: Would you mind spelling your name for the recording?

16 MR. SMITH: Smith, S-m-i-t-h.

17 MS. BLUM: Okay, perfect.

18 MR. SMITH: Yeah.

19 MS. BLUM: So we ask, Charlie, that you refrain from answering any
20 questions for Kaye but, again, as we spoke about, you guys can go off line and confer
21 at any point, if you need to. And again, if anybody needs a break at any time, just let
22 me know and we'll pause the recording.

23 MR. SMITH: Okay, good enough. Thank you, Starr.

24 MS. BLUM: You bet. Does anyone have any questions?

25 (No response.)

1 MS. BLUM: Okay, let's start out here.

2 INTERVIEW OF KAYE VARNEY

3 BY MS. BLUM:

4 Q. Kaye, can you please say and spell your name?

5 A. My name is Kaye, spelled K-a-y-e, last name Varney, V as in Victor-a-r-n-e-
6 y.

7 Q. Okay. And what is your job title?

8 A. I am a pilot instructor for FlightSafety.

9 Q. Okay. What are your certificates and ratings?

10 A. I have a single-engine ATP license, commercial multi-engine land license,
11 I have my CFI, MEI, and instrument instructor.

12 Q. I'm sorry, what was the last one?

13 A. Instrument instructor.

14 Q. Okay, got it. And what would you say your total flight time is?

15 A. In aircraft, 3,800 hours.

16 Q. Okay. And how much of that is PIC?

17 A. I would estimate it's probably at least 3,700 of it.

18 Q. Have you flown the Caravan, the airplane?

19 A. I have not, I've done a couple ride-alongs in the right seat, but I have not
20 flown the aircraft, I've flown the sim.

21 Q. Okay. What was your date of hire at FlightSafety?

22 A. Don't remember the exact date, but it was the beginning of September of
23 2016.

24 Q. Okay. And were you instructing from that point until now?

25 A. Yes, in the Caravan G1000 program.

1 Q. Okay. So you've been in the Caravan that whole time?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. All right, excellent. So could you give us like a brief history of your
4 aviation background?

5 A. So in my senior year in high school I was looking for colleges to try to
6 figure out what I wanted to do, I ended up looking at Pacific Union College in Upper
7 Napa Valley, I specifically looked at their aviation program and started flying in fall of
8 1998 as a freshman for the college. I graduated with a bachelor of science degree in
9 aviation in 2002. When I graduated, there wasn't a lot of aviation jobs at that point, so I
10 did temp work for about a year, then the college was looking for more instructors
11 because they had an increase in students and I started working for the college in 2003
12 as a flight instructor. I eventually became the chief flight instructor for the 141
13 curriculum and did that for 10 years. The last seven to eight years I was there, I was
14 also the department chair for the aviation program, which kind of by default made me
15 the airport manager, because the college owned and operated their own airport.

16 And around 2015, 2016, I was kind of looking for something a little
17 different. With all the jobs I was doing, I was getting a little burnt out. I had a friend
18 that had done training at FlightSafety and he mentioned, they're looking for instructors,
19 so I started looking at FlightSafety and got -- applied and got hired in September of
20 2016 and have been here doing that ever since.

21 Q. Okay, great. Thanks for sharing that with us. So as an instructor, do you
22 do simulator and classroom or both?

23 A. So for FlightSafety, I do initial and recurrent simulator training, I do initial
24 and recurrent ground school training for the G1000 program. I also -- let's see,
25 probably about two, two and a half years ago I started doing check rides, as well, that's

1 where I got my ATP license, single-engine land at FlightSafety so I can give single-
2 engine ATP check rides as well as 135 check rides and check rides for various countries
3 that also need flight checks.

4 Q. Okay. Sounds good. How do they determine what you're going to do, if
5 you're going to be an evaluator or a sim instructor, how does FlightSafety pick a
6 person?

7 A. So it kind of depends on where they have a need. When I was hired, they
8 had a need for more sim instructors at the time, so I started getting qualified in the sim
9 first. My first qualification was initial sim course training in the simulator, I eventually
10 got the recurrent sim qualifications. Then as time went along and they had some
11 availability to get me trained in the ground school, I got recurrent ground school
12 qualified and then the initial ground school qualified.

13 Once they started needing more examiners to give check rides, that's
14 where they started asking, you know, do I have enough hours for the ATP license,
15 which I did, so I worked on the single-engine ATP pilot license and check ride and once
16 I completed that, then they started working on getting me qualified to give ATP check
17 rides to get my TCE qualification. And once that happened, then they started giving
18 me the 135 qualifications and then started collecting letter of authorizations from
19 different 135 operators to do those check rides, as well.

20 Q. Okay. So what does TCE stand for?

21 A. Training center evaluator.

22 Q. Okay, got you. So would you say now, in your current job, that's mostly
23 what you're doing is evaluations?

24 A. It's a large percentage of what I do.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. But it's not everything I do.

2 Q. Okay. It's more of an instructor question, but are there manuals that you
3 utilize doing your job?

4 A. So we use the checklist for the manufacturer, for Cessna, we use the AFM
5 for Cessna, FlightSafety has their own pilot training manuals and training guides and
6 client guides. We also have
7 FAA-approved lesson plans because this is a 142 flight school, so everything that we
8 do has an approval from the FAA in regards to documents as one of these.

9 Q. Okay. How are those manuals and plans kept up to date?

10 A. So we have -- a lot of it's for clients and instructors, we have access to the
11 electronic versions of them now, which should be the most current revision, but we also
12 have the printed copies and pretty much we're always comparing the printed copies
13 and those revisions to what is the most current revision electronically.

14 Q. Okay. So we know that Bering Air has an EFB for their pilots, when you're
15 doing a 135, do you have access to their EFB and the programs that they're using?

16 A. I have access to their training program because we have a copy of that
17 because that's what we're doing our training under, is under their approved 135
18 curriculum. In regards to their EFB, usually when I'm doing check rides I am doing it
19 through their electronic form and seeing what they have access to and how they use it.

20 Q. Okay. So you're familiar with Bering Air's EFBs?

21 A. To an extent, yes.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I see them use it, so they show me how it works.

1 Q. Okay, great. How many -- well, I don't know if you could probably answer
2 this question, how many training sessions are there with a pilot during initial and then
3 recurrent? I'll ask Terry this later, too.

4 Q. So there is a few variations now, depending upon the training program.
5 Initial is either a four-day sim training or a five-day sim training depending upon the
6 operator. With Bering Air, I can't remember if they do the five-day or not for the initial.
7 I know for recurrent they will do three days of training and the fourth day's a check ride.

8 The initial ground school is going to be three days of training and the
9 recurrent ground school is also three days and it usually coincides with the sim training,
10 so they'll either have sim first, ground school second or they'll have ground school first
11 and sim second.

12 Q. Okay. So you are just -- with Chad, regards to Chad, you just had the one
13 evaluation with him, is that correct?

14 A. So the last time he came through for recurrent, all I did was give his 135
15 check ride, that was the only contact I had with him for his recurrent.

16 Q. Okay. So the 293 and the 297?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Can you explain the grading process during a sim evaluation?

19 A. So for a sim evaluation, when I'm doing a check ride, I am using -- we
20 usually use the standards of the ATP ACS now, so that's basically what we're
21 referencing and determining are they within standards or outside of standards, so we
22 have the satisfactory/unsatisfactory. We have a list of tasks that we have to complete
23 and that's usually, again, based on the ACS and the 8900 that we also reference as an
24 examiner.

1 And we go through procedure, the common scenario I use is I'll usually
2 use two different airports, we go back and forth between the two, there's four different
3 approaches we do, there's different maneuvers that we do, and I'm just evaluating are
4 we within standards or outside of standards, do they recognize any deviation from
5 standards and correct for it immediately or do we get out of standards and stay outside
6 of standards, which is considered unsat.

7 Q. Yeah, that leads me to my next question, then. So if somebody's not
8 performing within standards, can you stop and retrain and continue or is it an unsat
9 right away?

10 A. For a 135 check ride, if they complete something that's unsat, we can stop
11 the check ride, we can retrain that task, then restart the check ride, recheck that task
12 and if they fail the same task twice, the entire check ride is unsat to that point and that
13 involves getting out of the sim, more training, rescheduling. But they can continue if
14 they retrain and recheck that one item and if it's satisfactory, we continue with the
15 check ride. If we encounter a second item that is unsatisfactory, again, pause the check
16 ride, retrain, recheck, and then if they are satisfactory on the rechecking, you continue.
17 If they are unsat on a third item, that also unsats this check ride.

18 Q. Okay, that makes sense. So they can do two different areas of operation,
19 you can let them do one, you can retrain them on that, but if they get a third in the third
20 operation, it's done.

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Or if they fail or they unsat something twice, it's done.

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay. Are you required to take notes or provide comments in the training
25 -- or the evaluation form that you're filling out?

1 A. So once I'm done with the check ride, anything that was unsat and had to
2 be retrained/rechecked, there's a note that gets put on the 8410 for that. Those
3 comments also get added into my comments for our FlightSafety records. And then --
4 yeah, we include comments on okay, what airports were used and that's leased (ph.) on
5 usually the standard of what we do, was the check ride completed satisfactory, was
6 something -- what airports did we use and if anything was unsat and had to be
7 retrained, what were those items and that's what we record.

8 Q. Okay. Have you had a chance to review Chad's last recurrent, his record?

9 A. I looked at the check ride portion of it, I haven't looked too much at the
10 actual training record recently. I know when -- before I give a check ride, I always
11 review that to make sure that everything was trained, everything was trained and met
12 standards and all the approaches, if any that had to be trained, were trained.

13 Q. Do you recall, were there any notes on Chad's evaluation for any unsat
14 items, do you recall?

15 A. I know on the check ride itself, we -- the notes I had was he was -- landed
16 short initially on the short field landing, which was unsat, so we had to retrain and
17 recheck that. Everything else that we trained and checked met standards.

18 Q. Short on a short field, so he was before the numbers, is that what you
19 mean?

20 A. So I usually let them choose the touchdown spot, so for the runway that
21 we usually are using, I don't know what specific spot he chose, but usually it's either
22 going to be the numbers, which if you land short puts us in the -- puts us on threshold
23 because there's threshold markings, which is still the runway, or it's the aiming blocks,
24 which is the thousand-foot markers and if you land short, again, it's still on the runway
25 and on pavement.

1 Q. I got you, okay.

2 A. He landed a little bit short and so that was unsat.

3 Q. Okay. And he was sat the next try?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. He was on point or just a little bit well within the distance beyond the
7 point.

8 Q. Okay. Do you remember what airports you went to?

9 A. For him, I used JFK and LaGuardia.

10 Q. Okay. Do you remember anything else that was remarkable about your
11 evaluation with Chad, whether it was good or maybe not so hot?

12 A. Glancing at the notes that I was able to find, because this was back in
13 September when I did the check ride, it looks like pretty much everything was
14 standard, there was a few things where, you know, might've been a little bit late in
15 programming the procedure, but he got it within the amount of time. Again, this is
16 kind of more from my perspective of well, I would have -- might have gotten the set up
17 a little bit sooner, but he still met the standards and completed everything that we
18 needed to complete to standards.

19 Q. Did he tell you about setting up the Garmin 1000?

20 A. Yeah, yeah.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So button pushing, basically, was maybe a little late in arming the
23 approach mode for the flight director, but we still did it, still centered the needles, so
24 flight assistant.

1 Q. Okay. When you do a check ride, are they required to -- I mean, is part of
2 the scenario weather and performance, like weight and balance?

3 A. Yeah, so for the 293 part of it, there is -- we have a systems oral questions,
4 so we're talking about the G1000 Caravan, the sim specifically is the 675 horsepower
5 engine and not the 867 horsepower engine, so we're talking about those type of
6 systems and asking various questions. You know, I usually give a couple of different
7 weather METAR scenarios for okay, here's what the weather is going to be at our
8 departure airport, here's what the weather's reporting at our destination, the weather is
9 likely to change throughout the check ride.

10 We also, as part of the 293 checks, we're doing performance and
11 limitation calculations, there's also weight and balance calculations that they do, I give
12 them information, they look at the needed, necessary charts or the weight and balance,
13 however they calculate it for their company and do the information, calculate it, give
14 me an answer on what those numbers are.

15 Q. Okay. So do you recall, was there -- I believe there's the EFB portion and
16 then a whiz wheel, did Chad -- or did you provide the wheel to determine CG?

17 A. So we do have a whiz wheel for Bering that they use in our 135 office and
18 so yes, we do use the whiz wheel for weight and balance, I'll give them various
19 numbers and they put all that information in and give me an answer and calculate are
20 we in CG, outside of CG, if we're outside, how do we fix it type of questions.

21 Q. Okay. Just to -- so I know the differences between Bering's Caravans in
22 the sim, you mentioned that the horsepower is lower. Do simulators have the TKS
23 system in them?

1 A. They do. We have -- the G1000 does have the TKS system, we do use it.
2 On checking, I don't use any icing scenarios, but during training they do encounter and
3 are using it and training using it. And also, it's talked about in ground school.

4 Q. Okay. So then you have the low speed awareness system, too, in --

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. Okay. But they don't encounter anything with that on an evaluation.

7 A. Correct.

8 MS. BLUM: Okay. I think for now I'm going to pass it off to Paul. Thank
9 you.

10 BY MR. SUFFERN:

11 Q. Thanks, Kaye, appreciate your time again this morning, it's helpful. As a
12 sim and flight instructor there, what kind of -- can you kind of step me through what
13 weather you touch on and what portions throughout your -- throughout your work?

14 A. So there are types of weather in regards to sim training, it all kind of has to
15 do with what type of approaches are we doing, how -- the weather, is the weather
16 going to be good enough so we can actually get to the minimums and see runway and
17 land. Sometimes we'll drop the weather down to get to minimums and there is no
18 ground contact, so you have to go around. We do train various fogs, the different RVR
19 values. Bering, specifically, will have 1800 RVR for takeoff and 1800 RVR for landing, so
20 we'll train that. We train -- there is an icing day, so usually we'll do a scenario where
21 there's icing. Now, in regards to the temperatures and how much icing will vary a little
22 bit from instructor to instructor, but it does meet the icing criteria, which means yes, we
23 have to do the TKS checks, we're going to be needing to use the TKS system.

24 The sim is a little bit challenging in regards to we cannot see our wings, so
25 we cannot see ice accumulation on our wings because we can't see them, we can't see

1 ice accumulation on the windshield, but the instructor, from my standpoint, I can tell
2 whether we are accumulating ice or not and what surfaces. The sim does not tell me
3 how thick the ice is, it just tells me what percentage of the aircraft's -- that part of the
4 aircraft is covered in ice.

5 I can program how quickly the ice accumulates and how much
6 percentage of ice -- or how much surface of -- let me rephrase that, the percentage of
7 surface I want ice covered, so if I want the entire surface covered with ice, I can
8 program that, if I want part of it covered with ice, I can program that. We're always
9 telling the pilots, you know, because we don't have the wing light that we can see the
10 wing, because we don't have a wing, always just ask the instructor, "Do I have ice
11 accumulation?" The sim does a pretty good job of demonstrating ice accumulation in
12 regards to we will see differences in airspeed with ice accumulation. We'll also see
13 differences in vibration, especially if the prop starts to accumulate ice. We also can
14 change things like okay, the base of the clouds, top of the clouds, so for icing, you
15 know, what are different ways that we can escape icing, well, start asking questions, do
16 we know the tops, do we know where it's warmer weather, do we know where's it
17 colder weather, where are some of those options.

18 Q. Okay. Thank you, that's -- that's very comprehensive and helpful. As far
19 as the simulator, I know you mentioned that there's no wing, obviously, to look out
20 there. Can you -- can you program where the ice accumulates as to aft of the
21 unprotected surfaces on the wing, I mean, is that available or is it just, you know, where
22 the ice protection TKS or boots or things like that would be?

23 A. So that's -- we can't get quite that specific, we can just program how rapid
24 the ice accumulates and how severe the ice is, so if the ice is severe enough where the
25 TKS system, for example, cannot keep up, yeah, you're going to see that and feel that

1 and notice the effects of that. We can also program where, okay, the ice is going to be
2 -- yeah, the ice is severe or yes, it's more moderate maybe in accumulation, where the
3 TKS, depending upon what settings you have available for the TKS, it may be able to
4 keep up just barely or it can't keep up, so we can kind of program at what point the
5 TKS system is no longer useful or we also can program malfunctions with the TKS
6 system, where it just -- it's not working, which means if we encounter ice, we can't keep
7 it off.

8 Q. Okay. And throughout that, could you kind of step me through the
9 different, I guess, techniques that are trained or expected of the pilots as far as getting
10 out of icing scenarios and is that something that it's FlightSafety or the manufacturer or
11 the operator that determines what you're supposed to do as far as icing?

12 A. So we always start with basically the checklist first that the Cessna has for
13 the TKS system, so how do we check the system, how do we verify it works, what are
14 signs or indications of malfunctions with the system, and then go along with okay, what
15 are the -- you know, what is the weather information that we have, what are the reports.
16 Pilot reports very helpful because that tells us what's actually going on, otherwise
17 probably having to -- you know, someone's going well, we think or the ice might be
18 here or might be worse, but we're not sure.

19 In regards to icing scenarios, you know, we always have limited amount of
20 time we can spend in icing because we have a tank of TKS fluid, once we run out of
21 fluid, we no longer have a working system, so it's something we always need -- we
22 always try to make sure the pilot is aware of, is yeah, we have the fluid, as long as we're
23 using it and we still have fluid, it will still work, but the minute we run out, we're going
24 to encounter challenges. So we have different settings in regards to the TKS system,
25 we have a primary norm, which means okay, that's using the least -- the TKS fluid's

1 being used, but using it at the lowest amount or slowest rate. So for normal
2 operations, TKS norm, if it's keeping the ice off, we're good, we have a certain amount
3 of time in regards to fluid remaining that we can continue using. If ice is starting to get
4 -- accumulating and the primary norm is not able to keep it off, we do have primary
5 high, which now is using the fluid at a faster rate, it shortens our amount of time we can
6 continue in icing.

7 We do also have a max flow airframe option, which that is using a half
8 gallon of fluid a minute and any time I'm working with pilots, I always tell pilots if we
9 have to use the max flow airframe in flight, we are looking for a way out because we're
10 going to run out of fluid sooner than later and we need to get out. And then that kind
11 of leads to the discussion of well, how do we get out of icing.

12 And a lot of pilots, you know, based on private or commercial training,
13 hopefully have had some sort of discussions in regards to inadvertent icing encounters
14 or avoiding icing encounters, because most of those aircraft used for primary
15 commercial do not -- are not certified for icing conditions. So hopefully we at least
16 have some basis of or idea of how you get out, you know, turn around, climb, descend,
17 what are some of your options. With the TKS system, you always have to be like yeah,
18 just because you have the system doesn't mean you're not going to get ice
19 accumulation or it's going to keep the ice off, so we always want to check our surfaces.
20 For the Caravan, we do have a wing light for the left wing, we also have a red
21 windshield light or kind of like it's a little red light which shines up on our windshield,
22 which in the sim we'll see the little red dot if we do have ice accumulation, but because
23 there's no ice for it to refract across, it's very hard to see it and recognize it.

24 Whereas, in aircraft, if you have ice forming on your windshield, you get
25 the little red light that shines on it, it will refract, which is a lot easier to recognize. With

1 the TKS system, we also have that low airspeed awareness system which will activate
2 any time we get -- the official airspeed is 97.5 knots plus or minus two knots, I always
3 tell pilots stay above a hundred knots in icing to keep that system from activating.

4 But if that system activates, that definitely means we are having ice on the
5 aircraft because the power cannot maintain the airspeed above that, so we have to start
6 doing things. We have different scenarios that we can use in the sim based on the
7 pilots that we're working with and whether they're dealing with areas that are more
8 prone to icing, we do work with pilots that fly in areas that they never see ice and if they
9 do, they're not flying in it because they never see it and it scares them.

10 Q. Okay, thank you. It's my understanding that the Caravan, the one with the
11 TKS, obviously, is approved to fly into certain levels of icing, flying into known icing or
12 FIKI, how is it taught or determined if you're flying into an area where it's outside of the
13 flight into known icing conditions, for example, like SLD or freezing rain, how is that
14 determined or taught?

15 A. So it's something that we always want to, you know, mention in regards to
16 okay, yeah, SLD or, you know, we're in Kansas for the Caravan program, so we're
17 dealing with freezing rain that we could encounter and scenarios of where, we know
18 the aircraft, the more ice it accumulates, the less it flies, any aircraft with ice
19 accumulation, especially thick ice accumulation, is not going to continue flying.

20 So with those type of scenarios, it's okay, if we inadvertently get into areas
21 of moderate to severe icing or SLD, we need to look for a way out and we start talking
22 about how do we get out. If we have to, you know, divert, can we divert, do we have
23 enough TKS fluid to get out, at what point does it become an emergency where we just
24 need to declare emergency and do whatever we need to get on the ground because
25 things are getting worse, not better.

1 Q. Okay. As part of that, is there any review of any -- whether it's ground
2 school or anything like that or on their EFBs, any review of weather charts and
3 reviewing those to know that okay, today, during this scenario, my out is to the east
4 because there's clear skies or cloud ceiling's higher or something like that, is there any
5 review of weather charts or weather forecasts or anything?

6 A. With our training, for like what we have in regards to FlightSafety, I think
7 we do have a few references of, you know, here's a chart, how do we read it, but a lot
8 of it just comes down to the instructor and conversations that we have for sim training.
9 So usually when I do the scenarios for icing in the sim, I always tell them okay, we are
10 purposely going to encounter some malfunctions with the TKS system, so either just
11 the normal system operating and it can't keep the ice off or we're going to have
12 malfunctions which also is going to affect ice accumulation because if the system's not
13 working correctly, it can't keep ice off.

14 And I'll usually give them just basic okay, here's the overview of what we
15 know about the weather in this area, here's the current airport information for the
16 airport we're taking off from, here's the current weather reports for the airport we're
17 landing at, there will be differences in temperature, there will be differences in cloud
18 ceilings, differences in -- you know, we might have falling snow at one airport, we may
19 have rain possibly at another airport or it's just overcast, but I vary the temperatures
20 and I'll usually give them okay, we know what the tops of the clouds are and, you know,
21 if we have to have an escape route based on this information, what would be the best
22 way out and that's kind of how I teach it from the sim perspective.

23 Q. Okay. I think you mentioned, a couple questions ago, talking about, I
24 mean, you have Caravan folks coming from all over and so clearly, you have folks, as in
25 this case, from Alaska and then you have folks that, as you mentioned, don't -- rarely

1 see icing or anything like that. Is there a different way to teach or go through certain
2 sim scenarios or ground school or anything like that, depending on where the pilot
3 and/or operator is coming from, like we'll teach Alaska pilots just slightly differently
4 because they may encounter it as opposed to a Caravan pilot in Florida?

5 A. That's what we teach, that's pretty much stays all the same in regards to
6 the TKS systems, here's the system, here's the -- you know, manufacturer checklist, this
7 is how you use the checklist, this is how it normally operates, here are some of the
8 malfunctions that are possible with this system, but we do -- might spend a little bit
9 more time depending upon where the pilot's from and how big the class is for like
10 ground school on, you know, in more of the more in-depth scenarios, because we work
11 with pilots that also have -- you know, with the TKS system, it is optional equipment for
12 a Caravan, not all Caravans have that system, and so we do work with pilots don't even
13 have the TKS system.

14 So for them, we're actually more emphasizing inadvertent icing encounter
15 because if you encounter icing, you don't have a system to get the ice off, or in this
16 case an anti-ice system, now how do you respond and how you do deal with that,
17 because there is -- and for Cessna there is an inadvertent icing encounter checklist
18 which can apply for both the Caravans that have the TKS system and they didn't have it
19 turned on, and with the Caravans that do not have the TKS system.

20 Q. Okay. As you're going through the training, is there any discussion or
21 training on how to use the autopilot in icing conditions?

22 A. Yes. So with our autopilots, you know, at this point there's nothing that
23 prevents us from using it, but we're always going to recommend disconnecting it, our
24 recommendation is usually every 15 minutes or so if you're -- as you're flying through
25 icing conditions because the autopilot can often cover up symptoms of ice

1 accumulation, but once you disconnect it you can all of a sudden feel the controls are
2 heavier, you can feel more of the vibrations if the prop is starting to pick up ice.

3 You can also maybe feel more of the -- what the autopilot was kind of
4 covering up in regards to control surfaces, you know, movement of the yoke, so if it's
5 hard to move the yoke compared to what it was before you took off, yeah, that could
6 be a sign of ice accumulation.

7 So we do have, you know, scenarios of okay, yeah, disconnect the
8 autopilot, can you -- does it feel different, because with the sim we can always program
9 ice accumulation so we can give them a comparison of what the aircraft feels like with
10 no ice on it versus what the aircraft feels with ice on.

11 Q. Okay. If there are new weather things that are available for you as a pilot
12 or an operator to bring in a new tool or maybe the Weather Service has developed
13 something new, where do you, as a sim pilot, go to get your weather questions
14 answered, does FlightSafety have a meteorologist or anything like that you can reach
15 out to, to get answers to any weather questions that you have?

16 A. As far as I know, we don't have a meteorologist that we can go to for
17 FlightSafety. We often will go through a lot of FAA documents because they have, you
18 know, advisory circulars for weather and stuff like that. A lot of our questions --
19 scenarios, we go to our program manager, which then can start asking questions to the
20 director of training, and if we can't find the answer, then that's where they start looking
21 for other people that can help us.

22 Q. Okay. And then I think you mentioned earlier, talking about getting
23 reports of icing or other weather conditions there in flight, how is that we gave I guess
24 for pilot reports, how is that taught in the simulator and things like that, as far as getting
25 pilot reports, passing those along in all kinds of different pilot report scenarios?

1 A. So a lot of it comes down to comes down through, just the briefing parts
2 that -- before we get into the sim, oh, okay, what information do we look for, how do
3 we find the information for weather, so we're always, you know, asking pilots what is it
4 that you do, how do you do this, where you can find the information. Nowadays, with
5 things like ForeFlight and stuff, you can often pull up, you know, current actual weather
6 on your iPad or your tablet through that system. Or, you know, you can call and get,
7 you know, a weather briefing from Flight Service, things like that. And then as an
8 instructor, we kind of will be like okay, if you're looking for this type of information we
9 can kind of fill in that as the information of okay, this is what we know and maybe
10 there's a pilot report that was reporting, you know, moderate to severe icing over this
11 location at this altitude.

12 So as they're flying in the sim, if they start asking those questions to ATC
13 because, as an instructor, we're -- the instructor will also be ATC, Flight Service, you
14 know, all that, so they are, you know, thinking to ask those type of questions for -- to
15 gather more information, they can ask hey, was there reports of the top of clouds or
16 they start asking those questions to ATC and we respond to that based on the scenario
17 we want, you know, okay, do we want them to be able to know that oh, yeah, the tops
18 are at this altitude, we can give that to them, or like well, we don't have any reports at
19 this point.

20 Q. Okay. You just touched on your answer, just stepping through and you
21 mentioned ForeFlight or Flight Service and things, are you -- as they're -- as the pilots
22 are stepping through their -- maybe their EFBs and stepping through the different
23 charts, are you -- do you have a standard set of "we like to look at these eight pictures
24 on ForeFlight" or things like that as they're going through preflight or is that kind of left
25 up to the individual pilot and then you, as an instructor, will fill in "well, they looked at

1 these seven, but this eighth one would've been really good to look at," do you fill --
2 kind of fill those in or do we stick -- or do you just kind of stick with whatever the
3 technique is that the pilot's using?

4 A. So we always start with what the pilot is used to using and then we
5 basically give feedback on how they use the system and going "okay, that works but
6 this might work better" and we give recommendations at that point, but we always
7 base on how do you get information, what is your method, and start there.

8 MR. SUFFERN: Okay. Thank you, Kaye, that's all the questions I have for
9 right now, it's been really helpful, thank you.

10 MS. VARNEY: You're welcome.

11 MS. BLUM: Sabrina, do you have any questions?

12 DR. WOODS: I just have one.

13 BY DR. WOODS:

14 Q. I've kind of been able to extrapolate, like, what's desirable in these
15 training sessions, what you look for, what you do, but just for clarity, what constitutes an
16 unsat in icing training for you, as an instructor?

17 A. For me, as an instructor, not recognizing some of the clues that the sim
18 will give that we're accumulating ice and they're not responding to that, so they're not
19 noticing that okay, we're at level altitude, autopilot's on and our airspeed is
20 decelerating and they're not recognizing it, so all of a sudden we get the low airspeed
21 awareness system activating, so there's a late recognition with that. A lot of that will
22 then come down to -- for training purposes, we have -- you know, as time allows, we
23 can okay, retrain.

24 We also have the option of asking for additional time if it is completely
25 unsat and we can't get it to satisfactory within the remaining time, and then just do they

1 know how to use the system. If, you know, the outside air temperature is below
2 freezing at this point and we're in visible moisture and they do not turn the system on, I
3 start asking some questions at that point.

4 Q. I'm just jotting down some notes. So for your technique, personally, as an
5 instructor, is it kind of -- is it a flight failure thing or is there some point where you just
6 say okay, we're going to stop this training and now address the situation, I guess, how
7 long do you wait for them to provide the information or the inputs that are desirable to
8 continue training?

9 A. So for training, a lot of it is okay, we have -- here's our icing scenario, this
10 is what we're going to do, what we're wanting to encounter, so I always want them to
11 know what -- okay, this is what normal operations look like, and then at some point
12 we're going to get some malfunction which means okay, here's what the abnormal stuff
13 starts to look like so we have something to compare what normal flight operations look
14 like versus what icing accumulation starts looking like or ice accumulation with
15 malfunctions or with additional challenges, because when we're training in the sim,
16 yeah, we're not just doing a normal flight from Point A to Point B with everything
17 working correctly, because with the training we always have to, you know, train
18 additional malfunctions or approaches and stuff like that.

19 And just timing-wise always depends on, do I have time to sit here and
20 watch what's going on, do I have time -- you know, we run out of time and do I need to
21 start -- you know, with training, I can just sit there and go okay, when we see what's
22 going on, what are some of our options to correct for this, let's try this method, let's try
23 that method, does that make a difference.

24 Q. And to reconfirm, this is not something that is part of a check ride, it's only
25 during training scenarios.

1 A. Correct. For our check rides, we do not train any icing or check any icing,
2 it's all done during the training course.

3 DR. WOODS: Okay, thank you. That's all I have, thank you, Kaye. Thanks,
4 Starr.

5 MS. BLUM: Okay. You doing good, Kaye, do you need a break, are you
6 good?

7 MS. VARNEY: I'm good.

8 BY MS. BLUM:

9 Q. Okay. So going back thinking here, so your curriculum stays the same,
10 you told Paul, based on it doesn't matter where the pilots -- what region they're coming
11 from, so do you deal with -- have you been with a lot of Bering Air pilots who you
12 taught or evaluated?

13 A. I do work with the pilots, I don't know how many of the pilots I've worked
14 with over the years, I would have to -- that would be something I'd have to look up. I
15 know in regards to when they come for training, I think there's a couple of examiners
16 here, I'm one of them, that will give the check rides to them, so I, you know, do give
17 them check rides. I usually see them more for the check rides now than I do for the
18 training part.

19 Q. Okay. So when they come -- have they ever talked to you about what it's
20 like flying up there in Alaska?

21 A. Some of them have, you know, explained some of what they do and as --
22 you know, different pilots have different personalities, some are a little bit more willing
23 to share experiences and what they've encountered, but yes, I do work with pilots that
24 were like oh, yeah, I did encounter this, you know, icing condition that was a little
25 unexpected or no, everything was working correctly, we used the system, got through

1 the ice, got out, ice stayed off the aircraft, the system did what it was supposed to, so I
2 do hear some stories from different pilots based on their experiences and where
3 they're flying.

4 Q. And I know it's hard to -- you know, icing scenarios in the sim versus, you
5 know, in the actual airplane is -- the fidelity makes it a little bit more difficult, but in
6 your, you know, position, do you feel that most of these pilots, when they're talking to
7 you about these icing scenarios, are prepared and they are knowledgeable, for
8 instance, like how to handle getting into severe icing or how do I choose my exit
9 strategy?

10 A. Yeah, so especially the pilots that fly in winter conditions more regularly,
11 they do already have a lot of these scenarios already kind of figured out and we kind of
12 see that in the sim when they're doing the recurrent training, you can tell that okay,
13 yeah, they've been exposed to this or they've encountered a scenario that, you know,
14 might have made them nervous and so they're a little more aware now of icing.

15 We also deal with pilots that, you know, are new to icing conditions
16 because they haven't flown aircraft that were certified for it yet or haven't flown in areas
17 where they had exposure to the icing conditions and so then that's where the sim
18 comes in handy again, because we can show, here's normal operations, here's the
19 abnormal operations, can you see the difference and do you know why it's important to
20 stay alert and pay attention to what's going on and know where to get information.

21 Q. Okay. Not to put you on the spot, but could you expand, like, could you
22 teach me how I would choose my exit strategy, what would I base my decision making
23 on, whether I'd be climbing or descending or turning around, can you expand on that?

24 A. So exit strategies, it all comes down to hopefully you got enough weather
25 information before you took off so you know where warmer weather is or less clouds

1 are to get out of the clouds or get warmer, because we always have to first consider, if
2 there was no icing behind us, just turn around. If there's not -- if that isn't the best
3 option and we know where the tops of the clouds are, climbing is going to be an
4 option and if you're going to climb, you need to start climbing soon because if you
5 have ice accumulation, it's going to change the performance of the aircraft, so you're
6 going to have to start climbing soon. Descending is another option and again, you
7 know, usually as you descend, it will get warmer temperatures, but you also need to
8 pay attention to, okay, yes, are we getting closer to zero degrees, you know, Celsius
9 where now we're dealing with more clear ice problems or is it something where you
10 can get -- descend where it's actually above freezing.

11 You know, from my experience of, you know, I flew in Northern California
12 a lot and yeah, climbing was -- oftentimes was going to be a better option because
13 descending will put us down into valleys, which gives us less options. So it all comes
14 down to what's -- are you familiar with the area, did you get the weather information
15 and is there an airport, even if it's somewhere closer to you, that has better weather,
16 gather the information, evaluate and make a decision on how to exit.

17 Q. Okay, great. Thanks for that. Do you have any techniques that you teach
18 about when that decision needs to be made? Like let's say they're flying along and
19 they're starting to encounter some, is there a way that FlightSafety or yourself teaches
20 like okay, this is -- this is no joke, we need to start changing our altitude or diverting?

21 A. So one of the techniques in regards to the Caravan program is air speed,
22 so a hundred and 20 knots just kind of works for a lot of different scenarios with the
23 Caravan in different types of operations. So with icing, if we cannot maintain a hundred
24 and 20 knots or faster, we are looking for a way out. That's telling me that the ice that
25 has accumulated on the aircraft is getting out of control and we are going to run out of

1 options very soon, so it's one of the techniques that I use and also, in regards to the
2 Caravan, with ice accumulation, a hundred and 20 knots with the flaps up is the
3 minimum speed that is listed for that aircraft.

4 Q. Okay. Yeah, I've been confused between the two as I'm learning this
5 because I didn't fly the Caravan, I wasn't sure if the 120 means you got to stay above
6 that because the TKS system failed or you ran out of fluid or if that was the min speed
7 in, you know, the heavier icing conditions, the severes, the SLDs.

8 A. So it's going to be the severe because if the TKS system is working and is
9 keeping the ice off, our minimum airspeed for the aircraft is 95 knots for the Caravan.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. But that's also going to activate that low airspeed awareness system, so
12 my recommendation is stay above a hundred knots in icing conditions, a hundred and
13 20 knots or higher is preferred.

14 Q. Okay, so severe, you'd be 120, but -- and in light rime as long as you're
15 above a hundred, is that correct, that's what you teach?

16 A. So with -- 95 knots is the minimum based on the checklist for the Caravan
17 --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- with icing and you cannot use more than 20 degrees of flaps or for the
20 EX, more than takeoff approach, so you're never using full flaps in icing. There's no
21 checklist anywhere that tells us to do that. With ice accumulation, though, that's where
22 the hundred and 20 knots comes in or you have a hundred and 10 if you have 10
23 degrees flaps or for EX, the takeoff approach flap setting, that's the minimum.

24 Q. Okay. That's what I see, it's ice accumulation is the --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. And going to back to the autopilot, what are the limitations that
2 you teach about the autopilot in icing?

3 A. So specifically, there's really no specific limitation that we can find in
4 regards to this autopilot for the Caravan, the G1000 system, but there is usually a note
5 that states, you know, in icing conditions you're going to want to disconnect it
6 periodically to make sure that the autopilot is not covering up symptoms of ice
7 accumulation. And so a recommendation is always going to be about every 15
8 minutes it's a good idea to just disconnect, you know, maybe do a shallow turn or a
9 pitch change, make sure everything feels good and then you can reengage it. If you're
10 -- you know, for pilots that get a little bit nervous, we always tell them you can just turn
11 off the autopilot and just keep -- hand fly the aircraft and usually, that's where we
12 recommend for if we do have a failure with the TKS system and we get ice
13 accumulation, we do, at that point, usually recommend just disconnect the autopilot,
14 don't use it, hand fly it because you're going to feel the effect of the ice a lot sooner
15 than the autopilot being on.

16 Q. Okay. When the -- with the POH and the AFM, do you guys use Bering
17 Air's -- like, do you have the Supplement 1 for the TKS system in your manuals when
18 you're instructing them?

19 A. We have the supplement for the TKS system in our AFM that we use. If
20 there's any variations for, you know, the company, for Bering Air we do have, I think,
21 their checklists that we have access to. In regards to their specific supplement and
22 stuff, I can't remember if we have access to that or not. I know in regards to what we
23 teach, we just use the AFM specifically, that has the supplement for the TKS system.

1 Q. Okay. Got you. Let's see. Going back to initial training and then
2 recurrent, what would you say, in your opinion as an experienced instructor, evaluator,
3 that pilots struggle with the most in the Caravan training?

4 A. It's kind of hard to give just one thing because we deal with so many
5 different pilots from different backgrounds, that sometimes some of our pilots, you
6 know, they're new to a turbine, so some of the things that they're struggling with is just
7 power control because they're coming from a piston background, so
8 over-torquing is going to be something you're more likely to see with them.

9 Whereas pilots that are used to turbine, it might just be getting used to
10 okay, where these locations of switches are because they haven't flown a Caravan yet.
11 So it's kind of hard to give a definitive okay, what is one thing everybody struggles with
12 because that will vary from week to week based on the type of pilots I'm working with.

13 Q. Fair enough, yeah, that's a pretty broad question. Have you had pilots
14 wash out before? Go home?

15 A. Yes, we have had pilots that have not completed the training at
16 FlightSafety because they were not satisfactory meeting standards.

17 Q. Have you ever had a Bering Air pilot wash out?

18 A. Not that I've worked with, no.

19 Q. Okay. And lastly, like, have -- have you ever heard any of the Bering Air
20 employees voice any concerns about their company or the training or anything like
21 that?

22 A. Not that I recollect, no.

23 MS. BLUM: Okay. Thanks, Kaye, appreciate it.

24 Paul.

25 BY MR. SUFFERN:

1 Q. Yeah, just a couple more questions. Kaye, are you -- we were given
2 access to the ice and rain recurrent slides, basically. Do you work on that or is that
3 someone else at the company that works on that?

4 A. We have another instructor that's the -- I can't remember their title, but
5 he's the one that oversees that and it's more make updates or changes as needed as
6 things evolve with the Caravan.

7 Q. Okay, so you don't have any input in that, it's another instructor?

8 A. Yeah. I use the slides, but yeah, there's somebody else in the company
9 that will oversee that and work with, you know, Cessna and Textron and FlightSafety to
10 make updates and figure out how it's laid out.

11 Q. Okay. All right, because yeah, I'm stepping through the different
12 scenarios and then the scenario that we have here in the Northeast, the only mention of
13 weather, it looks like, is a METAR out of the departure airport, but I don't see any other
14 graphics or weather charts for the en route phase or destination airport or anything like
15 that, so it sounds like I'll ask that to another individual.

16 I guess my last question, then, is, you know, just as a pilot, not putting on
17 your FlightSafety hat, but just as a pilot that goes out and flies, are there any weather
18 tools that you use that you wish could be improved, whether it's a forecast, whether it's
19 how often something updates, is there anything, as a pilot, you wish weather-wise was
20 better?

21 A. Well, considering I don't fly regularly anymore, I don't access those tools
22 as often as I used to. When I worked for the college, I did teach some weather-related
23 courses and so some of it was just, you know, figuring out how to interpret some of
24 those weird charts that I don't use regularly. But nowadays with a lot of the access
25 through, you know, iPads, tablets and stuff and there's ways you can actually get to

1 translate some of those for me, it's a little easier than trying to figure out wait, what
2 does BR stand for again. So nothing that comes to mind because, again, I don't use
3 them regularly anymore.

4 Q. Okay. I guess not the last question, but just thinking and related to, I
5 guess, the question Starr was asking earlier, from the pilots that you hear and you
6 interact with, is there a -- is there something that they mentioned to you, weather-wise, I
7 wish this tool, weather tool, was better or this graphic was a little easier to understand,
8 just from all the pilots you interact with, do you hear anything there?

9 A. I don't know that I've heard anything in regards to that. Most of them are
10 just, you know, happy to have it a little bit more easily accessible now, I guess, because
11 you can get the weather subscriptions for the G1000 so you can pull up active weather
12 that way. With iPads and tablets, you have more easy access to it and not having to do
13 the old, you know, 1-800-WEATHER brief phone call like back in the day, so --

14 MR. SUFFERN: I understand. That's all the questions I have. Thank you,
15 Kaye, I appreciate your time.

16 MS. BLUM: Sabrina?

17 DR. WOODS: I don't have any additional, thank you.

18 BY MS. BLUM:

19 Q. Okay. Well, Kaye, we always ask this question at the end, in regards to
20 this investigation and helping us, is there anything that we didn't ask you that you wish
21 we would have?

22 A. No, nothing comes to mind, I think you pretty much asked questions plus
23 some that I didn't even think of, so --

24 MS. BLUM: Well, we really appreciate your time and we're going to go
25 ahead and end the recording at 9:10 a.m.

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(Whereupon, at 9:10 a.m., the interview concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL COMMUTER PLANE CRASH NEAR
NOME, ALASKA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025
Interview of Kaye Varney

ACCIDENT NO.: ANC25MA018

PLACE: via Zoom videoconference

DATE: March 18, 2025

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true
and accurate transcript which has been transcribed to the best of my skill and ability.

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of David A. Martini.

David A. Martini
Transcriber

ERRATA SHEET

Witness: NTSB Interview of: KAYE VARNEY, Pilot Instructor FlightSafety
Case: Accident No.: ANC25MA018
Date: via Zoom videoconference Tuesday, March 18, 2025

PLEASE MAKE ANY CORRECTIONS/CHANGES BELOW AND NOTE THE REASON FOR SAME

PAGE	LINE	CHANGE	REASON
Page 7, Line 7		seat not "seats"	accuracy, there is only 1 right seat
Page 7, Line 21		"fall of 2019" should be fall of 1998	2019 is the incorrect year
Page 8, Line 10		Replace "they were always like well," with he mentioned	More accurate
Page 8, Line 20		Change "single-engine license" to single-engine land	More accurate
Page 9, Line 14		Replace "get - - to get an" with give	More accurate
Page 12, Line 24		Replace "being" with getting	More accurate word usage
Page 13, Line 17		Remove "- - yeah"	Extra word
Page 13, Line 17		Replace "also add" with include	Better wording
Page 13, Line 18		Remove "okay, what airports were used and that's leased (ph.)"	Run-on sentence
Page 13, Line 19		Remove "on usually the standards of what we do,"	Run-on sentence
Page 13, Line 20		Remove "was something - -"	Extra words
Page 14, Line 17		Replace "in the - - puts us in" with on	More accurate
Page 15, Line 22		Remove ",so flight assistant"	Extra words with no meaning
Page 20, Line 9		Remove the word basically	Extra word not needed
Page 20, Line 13		Remove "are the - - you know, what"	Extra words not needed
Page 20, Line 15		Remove "probably having to - -"	Run-on sentence
Page 20, Line 16		Remove "you know, someone's going well,"	Makes answer more understandable

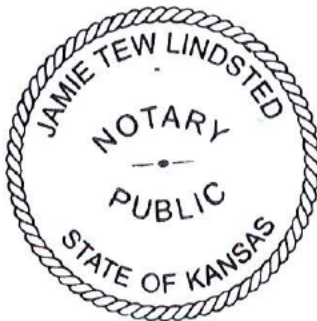
Page 21, Line 2	Replace "lowest" with slowest	More accurate
Page 22, Line 2	Replace "wipe" with light	Aircraft has a wing light NOT wing wipe
Page 22, Line 3	Replace "red wind - - er kind of like" with a red windshield light	Correction
Page 22, Line 13	Remove "plus or minus five or"	Plus or minus 2 knots is correct not five
Page 23, Line 8	Replace "often" with could AND remove "so just"	More accurate
Page 23, Line 8	Replace "okay, yeah," with where	Correction
Page 24, Line 2	Remove "I don't - - for like"	Extra words
Page 24, Line 7	Remove "right, you know, I'm - -"	Extra words
Page 25, Line 10	Remove " , it's like okay,"	Do not need extra words
Page 25, Line 11	Remove "- - you know,"	Extra words
Page 25, Line 13	Remove "do"	Extra word not needed
Page 25, Line 16	Remove "you know, in a more of the"	More accurate answer
Page 26, Line 20	Replace "of okay, yeah," with where you	More accurate
Page 27, Line 11	Remove "kind of" AND replace "the" with our.	Correction
Page 27, Line 12	Remove " , usually, and stuff with the"	Run-on sentence
Page 27, Line 13	Remove "FAA"	Correction
Page 27, Line 21	Remove "- - usually, what most of it"	Correction
Page 27, Line 22	Remove "comes down through, just"	Extra wording
Page 27, Line 22	Replace "- - " with we gave	Correction for missing words
Page 28, Line 12	Remove "from - - " AND "as an instructor, we're - -"	Extra wording
Page 31, Line 8	Remove "what's - - you know,".	Correction
Page 31, Line 9	Replace "do" with when	More accurate
Page 31, Line 10	Remove entire line	Run-on sentence
Page 31, Line 11	Remove "know,"	Correction helps answer make sense

Page 33, Line 6	Replace "Yeah" with Yes	More accurate
Page 33, Line 17	Replace "- - okay" with show	Correction
Page 34, Line 3	Replace "day and like we'll," with consider	Correction
Page 40, Line 12	Replace "VR" with BR	Correction to answer

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I, Kaye Varney, have read the foregoing deposition and hereby affix my signature that same is true and correct, except as noted above.

[Redacted Signature]
Date: 5/23/2025

SWORN TO before me this 23rd day of May, 2025.



[Redacted Signature] 5/23/25
Notary Public Exp. 11/13/2028

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:

FATAL COMMUTER PLANE CRASH NEAR
NOME, ALASKA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025 *

*

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*

Accident No.: ANC25MA018

*

Interview of: DYLAN TODD, Pilot Instructor

FlightSafety

via Zoom videoconference

Tuesday,
April 1, 2025

APPEARANCES:

STARR BLUM, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist/Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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INTERVIEW

(8:06 a.m.)

MS. BLUM: Okay, today is April 1st, 2025 and it's 8:06 Pacific Daylight Time. My name is Starr Blum and I'm an operational factors investigator with the NTSB and we are in the process of investigating the accident on February 6 involving Bering Air Flight 445.

We want to thank you very much for being here, it's going to help educate us and hopefully help us determine the probable cause of this accident, that's the whole point of us being here, safety and preventing this from happening again. Talking to pilots, instructors, sim instructors, ground school instructors, this is all a totally normal part of our process, we do this all the time, so please, let you know, just to let you know this is a very familiar part for us, if it's unfamiliar for you.

Again, we're not here for any certificate enforcement, we don't have any enforcement powers, we have no regulatory powers and that way we really are just here for safety and I want to reiterate, same with Rob, who is with the FAA. We'll be recording this interview so it can be transcribed. After we receive the transcript, we'll make corrections and then that will be provided to you to do the same and eventually it will end up in the public docket. So I'd like to go around the room now and have everyone introduce themselves.

Paul.

MR. SUFFERN: Paul Suffern, meteorologist, NTSB, been there about 15 years, before that I worked up in Alaska for --

(Audio malfunction.)

MR. TODD: Hello, it's kind of cutting out on me.

MS. BLUM: Yeah, mine cut out, too.

1 MR. TODD: Yeah.

2 MS. BLUM: Hey, Paul, can you start again? You cut out.

3 MR. SUFFERN: Paul Suffern, meteorologist, been there about 15 years or
4 so and before that I worked for the National Weather Service up in Alaska.

5 MS. BLUM: Sabrina?

6 (No response.)

7 MS. BLUM: Sabrina?

8 DR. WOODS: Sorry, I didn't hear you, I apologize. Hi, Dylan, Sabrina
9 Woods --

10 MR. TODD: Hi.

11 DR. WOODS: -- I'm a human performance investigator, as Starr
12 mentioned earlier, my role, she's kind of like cockpit door and forward, and my job is to
13 essentially assess how people are able to be able to do their job in their environment.

14 MR. TODD: Okay. Nice to meet you.

15 MS. BLUM: Rob?

16 MR. PECK: Yeah. Good morning, Dylan.

17 MR. TODD: Good morning.

18 MR. PECK: Rob Peck, Anchorage FSDO up here, I'm a frontline manager
19 brought in to help Starr and this team here just because I have about 3,000 hours in the
20 Caravans that we're talking about.

21 MR. TODD: Okay.

22 MS. BLUM: Great. So Dylan, we just ask that you answer the questions to
23 the best of your ability that you can recall.

24 MR. TODD: Okay.

1 MS. BLUM: If you don't know the answer, "I don't know" is a perfectly fine
2 answer.

3 MR. TODD: Okay.

4 MS. BLUM: And if we're, like, taking notes and looking down, it's just
5 because we might be thinking of another question, so don't mind or think anything of
6 that.

7 MR. TODD: Okay.

8 MS. BLUM: You are entitled to a representative of your choosing.

9 MR. TODD: Yeah.

10 MS. BLUM: Is there someone here you'd like to have as your
11 representative?

12 MR. TODD: Yeah, Charlie Smith.

13 MS. BLUM: Thank you. Charlie, will you please introduce yourself for the
14 recording?

15 MR. SMITH: Yes, I'm Charlie Smith, I'm an attorney in Dallas, Texas, I work
16 for the law firm of Cantey and Hanger.

17 MS. BLUM: Thank you. Please refrain from answering any questions for
18 Dylan and if you guys need to confer, we'll stop and you guys can talk on the phone or
19 however you'd like to do it and of course, if you need a break, please say so and we'll
20 stop and reconvene when you're ready.

21 MR. SMITH: Very good, thank you very much, Starr.

22 MS. BLUM: You bet. Okay, anybody have any questions?

23 (No response.)

24 MS. BLUM: Okay, let's begin.

25 INTERVIEW OF DYLAN TODD

1 BY MS. BLUM:

2 Q. Dylan, if you would, would you please state and spell your name?

3 A. It's Dylan, first name, D-y-l-a-n, and my last name is Todd, T-o-d-d.

4 Q. Thanks. And what's your job title?

5 A. I am a flight instructor at FlightSafety, so -- Caravan.

6 Q. Okay, great. And what are your certificates and ratings?

7 A. I am a commercial pilot, I have instrument rating, I also have an instructor

8 certificate with instrument privileges, as well, on that, yeah, so -- CFI, II.

9 Q. Okay, great. What's your ballpark total time in aircraft?

10 A. About 1400 hours total time.

11 Q. Okay. And how much of that -- do you have Caravan time?

12 A. I do not. So all the training I've done for Caravan has been at FlightSafety,

13 yes.

14 Q. Okay. In the sim?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And how much of your total time is PIC?

17 A. Let's see, I'll have to think about that one for a second. Probably around

18 1300 hours or so, I would imagine, yeah.

19 Q. Okay, great. When did you get hired at FlightSafety?

20 A. So this is probably -- been over two years ago, so this is going into year

21 three, so about -- been working here about two, about -- little over two years now, so

22 yeah.

23 Q. And was all that as instructor in the Caravan?

24 A. Yes. So actually, I did do a part-time position when I first got hired on as

25 an intern in the Hawker 4000 program, was an SIC, so that was kind of my introduction

1 into FlightSafety, so started off doing that, then I applied for a full-time instructor
2 position.

3 Q. Can you give us just a CliffsNotes version of your aviation background?

4 A. Yeah, so I did all my aviation training at the University of K State up in
5 Salina campus for the professional pilot program. After graduating from there, I
6 worked for Hesston College for four years as a flight instructor in the Part 141 program,
7 lots of dual instruction for private, instrument, commercial, instructor applicants, things
8 like that before working at FlightSafety.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Lots of dual given in airplanes there and so it kind of helped step my way
11 into this job, so yeah.

12 Q. Okay. I was going to ask, so you just do the Caravan, can you tell us what
13 manuals that you -- let me back up.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. With the accident pilot, Chad, what portion of his training did you do?

16 A. I did his ground training for his recurrent ground school.

17 Q. Okay. And how many days of -- was that?

18 A. That is a total of three days.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So if you're familiar, they'll usually do sim training first half of the day, then
21 do ground school or vice versa, just depending on the schedule. So it's four hours a
22 day in ground school for three days for a total of 12 hours.

23 Q. Twelve hours, okay. And do you ever teach in the sim, as well, or do you
24 always do ground?

1 A. I do, I do. I do not do 135 clients, so this particular client I wouldn't be
2 able to do sim instruction on, but I am able to do ground school instruction on, yes.

3 MS. BLUM: Okay, great. I'm going to hand it off to Paul and I'll come
4 back around the second time around.

5 MR. TODD: Okay, very good.

6 MS. BLUM: Okay, thanks.

7 BY MR. SUFFERN:

8 Q. Hey, Dylan, thanks again and sorry, probably no video, I've had some
9 storms here last night and --

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. -- hoping the Internet would be better, but apparently not. Yeah. So can
12 you kind of step me through, you know, teaching the ground school there and what
13 you --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- run through as far as weather?

16 A. Yeah, so as far as the ground school is concerned, I usually just hit on the
17 main systems, primarily the TKS system that our clients use. Now, as far as like weather
18 theory and all that, we don't -- that's not in our approved lesson plans, I do not talk
19 about weather theory like ice formation or anything like that, I predominantly talk about
20 the system and that's kind of what our course is built around, it's the understanding
21 that the pilot there for training already has kind of a basic understanding of weather,
22 whether that's ice formation or whatever that may be.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Yeah, so your -- the expectation is, is that the pilots are coming in with
2 some background weather knowledge, whether that is by the operator and/or their
3 own personal flying time, is that your expectation?

4 A. Yeah, exactly. Their initial training operator, stuff of that nature, yes.

5 Q. Okay. And so as part of ground school, I think we have the
6 -- we were able to review the PowerPoint, I think, the ice --

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. -- and rain recurrent PowerPoint there.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. Are you the one that comes up with that PowerPoint, that scenario?

11 A. I haven't, no, I'm not the one who creates the PowerPoints or the
12 presentation, that's usually what we consider like a SME, a subject matter expert, that
13 kind of puts those things together, yeah. I don't know, I could be doing it in a few
14 years, who knows. No, I just basically present the information to the clients that's in
15 those presentations, for discussion.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Do you know who, as far as S-M-E, who came up with the ice and rain
19 recurrent PowerPoint or --

20 A. I'm not a hundred percent sure on that, I'd have to get back to you on
21 that, I don't know.

22 Q. Okay. No, that's totally fine, that's --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. It's not -- this is not a -- as Starr mentioned --

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- this is not a quiz or anything like that, I just --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- just trying to understand there, okay. And so on the PowerPoint it looks
4 like it just talked about, it just gave a METAR, so this particular PowerPoint that I'm --

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. -- discussing is a flight, it looks like from Boston up to Nova Scotia going
7 through some ice there --

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. -- in the scenario and that just gives a METAR for Boston but doesn't
10 discuss any other weather --

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. -- products, en route or --

13 A. Right.

14 Q. -- on the way there, is that something that as you're stepping through the
15 scenario that you would kind of run through with the pilot, you know, what --

16 A. So usually, with that information, how I kind of teach that in ground school
17 is -- kind of comes back to more of a CRM aspect, threat error management concept of
18 making sure that pilots are being proactive rather than reactive, especially if they're
19 flying through known icing conditions, you know, to be planning for those things and
20 be looking at weather reports kind of in general is kind of how I would talk about that
21 sort of situation. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. And so you were talking about those different scenarios, how do
23 you teach what is flight into known icing?

24 A. Yeah, so definitely, like normal icing conditions, moisture-laden clouds
25 that you might find and -- yeah, just basically normal icing conditions. So definitely, it

1 does mention in the AFM on -- POH, you know, staying away from any liquid, you know,
2 cold conditions of rain or anything like that, super-cooled large droplets, things like
3 that, so freezing rain, freezing drizzle, so definitely not encouraging anybody to
4 definitely go through any of those situations if it's not certified for that, so that's kind of
5 how some of those conversations go.

6 Q. Okay. And are -- as part of the ground school, are you having a
7 conversation that if, for unbeknownst reasons the pilots do get into one of those, like,
8 where -- what would be the techniques to get out of --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- those types of situations, can you step me through that?

11 A. Yeah, so you know, just depending on the situation, I have mentioned,
12 you know, if you are accumulating ice faster than what the system can shed, you know,
13 you better be quickly deciding on a way how to get out of that as soon as possible, that
14 situation, whether, you know, it could be a climb, a descent, turn around, going back, a
15 diversion, we don't -- you know, system works great but we don't want people
16 lingering in icing conditions for like prolonged periods of time, so that's never a good
17 idea.

18 Q. Okay. And then do you talk about, like, different weather resources while
19 they're in flight or discussions with air traffic control about how to do that or is it the
20 pilot, you know -- the meteorologist factor, I'm going to mess it up, but it's aviate,
21 navigate, communicate or something like that, is that --

22 A. Yeah, I've mentioned ideas like that, you know, aviate, navigate,
23 communicate. I think the main thing I'd probably focus in on there is crew resource
24 management, whether that's working with ATC as a single pilot, in this case it would
25 be, you know, you could get, you know, weather reports from ATC for cloud tops or,

1 you know, different airports if you were diverting, and kind of implementing more of
2 that CRM aspect, yeah, that does come up sometimes in ground school.

3 Q. Okay. And then is it discussed --

4 (Audio malfunction.)

5 MR. TODD: You're cutting out a little bit, Paul.

6 BY MR. SUFFERN:

7 Q. The -- okay. Hopefully it comes back. I'll restate that. So is it discussed in
8 ground school when the -- what it looks like on the airframe or things like that when the
9 TKS system is not keeping up with the icing?

10 A. Yeah, that is a discussion point. It does talk about that in the POH, you
11 know, ice building on the aft of the protected surfaces or the airframe, ice on the
12 windshield, on the curved surface of the windshield, it does state like environmental
13 conditions basically to where the ice protection system is not keeping up, so that's
14 cues. Also talks about, you know, degrade of airspeeds, as well, so if you're
15 maintaining an airspeed and then loss of 10 knots or more, that's definitely a condition
16 where you would want to exit the ice immediately.

17 Q. Okay. Is there any kind of risk assessment or pilot --

18 A. I do.

19 Q. -- tweaks that you discuss --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- as far as ground training?

22 A. We do talk about the Flight Risk Assessment Tool, FRAT, yeah.

23 Q. Okay. Can you step me through that?

24 A. Yeah, so the FRAT, Flight Risk Assessment Tool, I kind of actually use the
25 PAVE acronym kind of a thing, what they're trying to implement, the FAA, is use the

1 PAVE acronym to fill out the Flight Risk Assessment Tool instead of, you know, there
2 was a traditional way we were doing numerical values, but now I guess they're trying to
3 train it to use a narrative format so, you know, hey, you know, it's the "Pilot," that could
4 be -- kind of goes into the IMSAFE checklist, whatever that may be with the pilot that
5 day; "A," for aircraft, you know, is there anything broken or missing on the aircraft,
6 anything you have to reference, like in the MEL; and then the "enVironment" from
7 which you're operating in, kind of thinking about that.

8 Let's see, what else? Yeah, "enVironment" and any, like, "External
9 pressures" that you might be experiencing that day. So this kind of gets pilots thinking
10 about the big picture for the flight that day and just kind of to help us, you know,
11 become more proactive rather than reactive. I don't remember all the definitions, but
12 as we're kind of going through the PAVE checklist, we kind of -- for our background, we
13 try to determine is it going to be probable or if it's a high risk or low risk and it uses a
14 matrix, and then we look at it, at all the information together, look at it and determine
15 how can we eliminate risk from that flight, so that's kind of -- you know, kind of the key
16 points of it, really. I know that's something we'd always train back where I used to
17 work, at Hesston, we'd always have our students kind of fill that out, just to start
18 building that risk mitigation concept and mindset. Yeah.

19 MR. SUFFERN: Okay. Thanks, Dylan, I think that's all the questions I have
20 right now.

21 MR. TODD: All right, thank you.

22 MR. SUFFERN: I'll hand it back to Starr.

23 MS. BLUM: Sabrina, do you have any questions?

24 BY DR. WOODS:

1 Q. Just a quick one on that FRAT process, is that something that is a part of
2 your curriculum or is that something that you personally have added to the already
3 established curriculum?

4 A. That's actually a part of our curriculum that talks about the FRAT, yeah.

5 DR. WOODS: Okay, that's all I have. Thanks, Starr.

6 MS. BLUM: Okay. Rob?

7 BY MR. PECK:

8 Q. Good morning again, Dylan, thanks again.

9 A. Good morning.

10 Q. Earlier on there, you mentioned a -- I guess the fact that you don't do 135
11 candidates.

12 A. Correct, I don't.

13 Q. Do you know what the differences are and requirements, I guess, for your
14 instructors?

15 A. Differences in how, I guess, the training itself?

16 Q. Well, no, what makes it that you're not doing 135s and somebody else is, I
17 guess.

18 A. Oh, that difference? So it's a time requirement because I was short of the
19 ATP requirements is why I'm not able to do the 135 clients is what it ended up being.
20 So I need to meet the requirements of ATP certification before I can do 135 clients,
21 that's why.

22 Q. Okay.

23 MR. SMITH: That's on sim you're talking about, right?

1 MR. TODD: Correct, that's on the sim training, I can't do their training for
2 sim. Ground school, yeah, I get any client, so of course, this -- I had this client in
3 ground school, so that was -- that was fine.

4 BY MR. PECK:

5 Q. Um-hum, um-hum, okay. What, just in general, because if I understand it
6 correctly, you didn't actually fly the Caravan, the TKS airplanes, but what kind of
7 feedback have you gotten from your students over the years about the TKS system and
8 how it works
9 and --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- heard of any -- or situations where it wasn't working?

12 A. Well, kind of on that first question there, I've had clients who used to
13 operate the booted system and then later on, you know, they were flying the TKS
14 system and they'd say that the TKS system was a great improvement than the old
15 legacy or the boot system, so most of them -- I think I only ran into one client that
16 preferred the boots, but the majority of them, TKS.

17 As far as the TKS system is concerned, I haven't really ran into very many
18 clients that said they ever ran into any major problems when operating the TKS system
19 except for maybe things like "oh, it's kind of a mess, it's slippery on surface," things like
20 that, but not as far as operationally, to my knowledge, any problems or malfunctions, I
21 think.

22 Q. When you're discussing the TKS system in one of the ground school --

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. -- do you discuss different problems, potential problems with the TKS
25 system?

1 A. Yeah, so I definitely get into, like, low pressure/high pressure situations
2 and kind of walk through the checklist for those or if the system stops working or, you
3 know, it's not sufficient, picking up more than it can handle, yeah, I go over all that.

4 Q. You, I think it was with Paul's questioning, you mentioned --

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. -- talking about CRM, single pilot CRM.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. You talked about ATC, do you go into anything other than ATC when
9 you're talking about the single pilot CRM?

10 A. I mean, this can even go into, you know, kind of just a part of the course,
11 CRM is kind of built organically through everything we do whether, you know, using
12 the checklist, implementing that, you know, it could be even using resources in the
13 airplane, if there's passengers, you know, it can kind of help you out of a tight spot
14 sometimes, so using all of your available resources. But yeah, for definitely exiting
15 icing conditions, definitely working with ATC and making them aware that you need,
16 like, immediate or making it very clear to ATC.

17 It's kind of the main points but, yeah, CRM could be, you know, definitely
18 a teamwork using all of those available resources, you know, for weather information.
19 I'm not sure what this particular individual, what capabilities they had in all the G1000
20 but, you know, I kind of get into discussion with the avionics sometimes, you know,
21 pulling up weather reports, you know, listing all this for ATIS, you can get weather
22 advisories, things like that, so yeah, using all available resources, for sure.

23 Q. Okay. How about -- you mentioned exits, exiting icing, right?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. What kind of strategies do you, if any, do you guys discuss in that --

1 A. Yeah, I mean, again, predominantly I try, you know, teach the system but
2 this can get into the CRM kind of aspects of decision-making skills, things like that, you
3 know. First of all, kind of hitting from the beginning of that, I always kind of tell my
4 clients, you know, any major incidents or accidents can be avoided by preflight
5 planning, so we definitely need to be on the side of proactive rather than reactive, so
6 getting all the available weather information and if you do plan on flying through
7 known icing conditions, having an exit strategy at hand just in case you need to get out
8 of there and then whether that's a climb or a descent or turn around or a diversion, it
9 just kind of depends, you know, hopefully on the information you have at hand to make
10 that decision, so --

11 Q. Okay, so I guess to summarize, and tell me if I'm wrong there, that you're
12 saying talk with ATC, right, and --

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. -- come up with maybe your best path forward and just kind
15 of --

16 A. Yeah, that could absolutely be the case, yeah. You know, to ask for
17 PIREPs, things like that, too, from ATC, trying to get information.

18 Q. Right, right. Do you ever talk about the G1000's capability of the ADS-
19 B/TIS-B information coming in with regard to all that?

20 A. Sometimes. Probably doesn't come up in every class, but yeah,
21 sometimes I do, yeah, ADS-B, I think a lot of them have the satellite weather, Sirius XM
22 capability, as well, so yeah.

23 Q. How about speeds, you talked briefly --

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. -- there, you mentioned the decrease of 10 knots --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- but how about any other speeds, do you guys foot stomp or anything
3 like that in that --

4 A. Say that again for that last part, for what?

5 Q. For just a foot stomp, a different speed --

6 A. Oh, speeds.

7 (Cross-talk.)

8 MR. TODD: Yeah, so if you look in the POH/AFM, you know, particularly
9 in icing conditions, I believe the faster the better, really, but the POH/AFM mentions,
10 you know, for a normally operating system you want to be at least about 95 knots, okay.
11 Now, for an abnormal system, it says at least a hundred and 20 knots, so that's kind of
12 the main things. I talk about the -- there's a low awareness airspeed indicator works 97
13 plus 5 or 97.5 plus or minus 2 knots is an indication as -- if you were to start slowing
14 down and where -- you know, if you weren't paying attention, obviously, it would alert
15 you as a protection, yeah.

16 BY MR. PECK:

17 Q. Okay. And then you were talking about the PAVE --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- (indiscernible) stuff, and you made a comment about eliminate risk, do
20 you hit on just mitigating risks if you can't eliminate them?

21 A. Yeah. You know, I talk about ways to mitigate, you know, you might have
22 to delay the flight, you might have to cancel the flight, you might have to find an
23 alternate means to get to the destination airport, so yeah, I do hit on that in ground
24 school, yes.

25 MR. PECK: I don't have any further questions, thank you.

1 MR. TODD: Yeah.

2 MS. BLUM: Okay. Thanks, Dylan, you doing okay?

3 MR. TODD: Yeah, I'm good.

4 MS. BLUM: Don't need a break, okay.

5 MR. TODD: Yeah, I'm doing good.

6 MS. BLUM: Okay, good.

7 BY MS. BLUM:

8 Q. So I understand that operators give their manuals to FlightSafety and
9 that's, you know, what the (indiscernible). So of the manuals that Bering Air has
10 provided you, what manuals do you use to teach with in ground school?

11 A. So when I'm in ground school, I know our -- we've got lots of different
12 clients, I usually just stick to the main course material, I don't get to the specific training
13 for that individual, I kind of keep it more generalized around the ground school
14 discussion, so I don't get into their specific, you know, S-O -- you know, their standard
15 operating procedures or anything like that because, again, there's lots of other clients
16 I'm teaching, too, that aren't a part of that 135 operation, they're just, you know, there
17 for 61.57 or something like that, so --

18 Q. Okay, but how about the POH, I'm assuming you use POH/AFM
19 or --

20 A. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, of course. Yeah, all of our clients would still use that
21 POH/AFM. I thought you were talking more specific along the lines just for that
22 company, but yeah --

23 Q. Yeah, both actually, so --

24 A. Okay, yeah.

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. Yeah, I use the POH/AFM, definitely, for all of our clients, yes. That's a --

2 Q. Are you using the one that's the specific Bering Air, the 876 shaft
3 horsepower G1000 or is it a different one?

4 A. So yeah, so it would be 867 shaft horsepower PT6A-140, that would be
5 specific to that client, yeah. So a lot of times, you know, depending on the class in
6 there, you're going to have the 675 Caravan PT6A-114 Alpha or the 140, so we do kind
7 of have to teach both of those. You know, if I have some clients that are just one or the
8 other, I'll stick predominantly to that and if I have both clients, I do kind of have to hit
9 both of those items because there is two tests that we have, one specific to the 114
10 Alpha PT6A and the EX Caravan, that's what this client would've been flying, yeah, for
11 the 867.

12 Q. Okay. And what I'm really curious about is in ground school at
13 FlightSafety for these EX pilots, do you teach from Supplement 1, which --

14 A. I do.

15 Q. You do.

16 A. Yes, I do. Yeah. I actually present the supplement in class and kind of just
17 I go through the supplement with them, just kind of point out pertinent and important
18 information that kind of pertain mostly back to what we're covering in the slides but
19 yeah, I always present that so that they're aware of where it is and where all the
20 information is coming from, yes.

21 Q. Yeah, and how about, like, the limitations therein, I mean, you started
22 touching on the speeds --

23 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- because there seems just to be a general confusion with sometimes
2 people we talk to about those speeds, but you mentioned the low speed awareness
3 and the --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- 97.5 plus or minus 2.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Are there any other, in regards to usage of the autopilot or speeds going
8 into icing, like, can you tell us how you teach that?

9 A. Yeah, for the autopilot, is that more what you're getting at there?

10 Q. Yeah, the speed and the auto --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. Yeah, so icing conditions with the autopilot, it does recommend that you
14 disconnect every 15 minutes to feel if there's any masking that the autopilot could be
15 inducing or trim control forces that aren't normal or indications of the airplane
16 collecting ice and part of that low speed awareness system, when it is triggered,
17 because the indication basically flashes white yellow or white amber, light amber, but
18 the stall warn intermittently, way above stall speed and it actually disconnects the
19 autopilot for you, but POH also says if it doesn't and that indication goes off, you have
20 to turn off the autopilot and that is the limitation. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Are there --

22 A. Does that answer your question?

23 Q. Yeah, no, it does.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. That's great. Is there any other limitation as far as getting into SLD or --

1 A. Right.

2 Q. -- freezing rain or --

3 A. That's never recommended because it's not certified for no, no airplane is
4 certified for that, there's never been testing done for that, so definitely, that's -- if they
5 do end up in SLD, that's definitely a "get out right away" situation, for sure.

6 Q. Yeah. In regards to the autopilot, turn it off?

7 A. Yeah, no autopilot, yeah, correct, turn it off.

8 Q. Is that something that you would normally touch on in ground school or is
9 that something that you kind of think the pilots should know?

10 A. I don't recall. I mean, it could come up sometimes, but I generally don't
11 get into it, I don't think, too often. I feel like the pilots should know that, but I can't
12 remember every ground school I've ever taught, every time or not, so yeah.

13 Q. No problem. Just trying to figure out, you know, what they're getting at
14 FlightSafety, what they're getting at Bering Air, like --

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. You know what I'm saying, just the --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. I know the training is incredible, that they have both,
19 but --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. -- just want to make sure, like, if there's any gaps there --

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. -- or with the (indiscernible).

24 A. The POH does mention that if you are in those conditions, for that
25 Supplement S1-2, that you can't use the autopilot, so yeah.

1 Q. Do you work with them with their EFBs, have you looked at them, messed
2 around with them?

3 A. For this particular company?

4 Q. Uh-huh.

5 A. No, I have not.

6 Q. Okay. So do you teach anything about weight and balance or talk with
7 them about --

8 A. So I know a lot of our 135 companies have different various ways of doing
9 weight and balance for how their particular company does it, again, I don't cover, you
10 know, I do a generalized, like the longhand method basically using the charts in the
11 POH, we get, you know, total moments, get the total weights, you know, then subtract
12 the weight for, you know, a taxi run-up and all that, and then plot it in a moment versus
13 weight graph to see whether they're in the center of gravity or if they're too far forward,
14 too far aft.

15 And then a lot of times I'll have them convert it over with those numbers
16 using the center of gravity chart and then plot on that because I think that's a little bit
17 easier to see and a little bit easier to interpolate. That's mostly what I do for weight and
18 balance, but I don't get into, like, how they would use, like, their whiz wheel or anything
19 like that, again, I have multiple clients in the class, I do believe, you know, the company
20 trains them how they want that done, so I just do, like, the generalized method in the
21 POH is how I teach that, yes.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I do get into, like, you know, the limitation for weights and things like that,
24 making sure I always tell them to make sure you're not overweight, so -- because they

1 make themselves a test pilot at that point, so there's no charts or graphs for an
2 overweight airplane, so definitely hit on that, as well, I'll talk about weight and balance.

3 Q. Have you ever ran into, like, so in this airplane it has the best TC, right,
4 from aeroacoustics.

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. Do you -- what do you teach for the maximum gross weight if
7 -- is there anything between --

8 A. Yeah. I teach the basic numbers for the airplane coming out of the
9 factory, 88-42, 88-0-7, 8500, I don't teach like the 8-3 or anything like that. I know a lot
10 of our clients have it, but again, like how the course is written is for the basic POH/AFM
11 numbers, not for STCs or anything like that, no, I don't teach that.

12 Q. Fair enough, that makes sense.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. So do you recall working with Chad?

15 A. I really don't, to be honest. I think this was like back in September now, a
16 little over six months ago, so I don't remember anything about the individual, in
17 particular. He didn't, like, stand out in any way. I did go back and kind of look at his
18 records, you know, just to see how he did because I was kind of curious, after I had
19 learned that he was actually in my ground school, so -- but I don't remember anything
20 in particular about him, no.

21 Q. Was there anything in the records that indicated that he had issues with
22 anything?

23 A. Not -- no. It looked pretty -- it actually looked pretty good from what I
24 remember, it's been a few weeks since I looked at them, I think he had like a 2, maybe,
25 in there for like one thing, seemed like his check ride was successful, seemed like he

1 knew what he was doing, but nothing that I remember like really standing out to me as
2 a concern, no.

3 Q. And I'm assuming that it's the same as the sim, a 2 is just, like, maybe you
4 have to do it one more time to proficiency.

5 A. Yeah, yeah, so you can basically do 2-1 and then you're proficient, so they
6 had them maybe redo it again and then they were proficient and then they can grade
7 them as a 2-1.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Have you worked with quite a few Bering Air pilots, just --

11 A. It's kind of hard to remember for sure because I have so many different
12 clients and so many different companies, but I can't -- I don't know, I can't recall.

13 Q. Okay. So my follow up with that is have any of them ever expressed any
14 concerns with flying with the company or any pressures that they might be
15 experiencing or any stories they shared with you?

16 A. No, I don't recall any of that, that conversation ever coming up for that
17 particular company or even, really, any company. I hit on those things and talk about
18 those things as part of CRM, air management concepts, but I think for most, all the
19 companies that I've seen or worked with are pretty understanding and not pressuring
20 our pilots in making decisions that aren't good, so --

21 MS. BLUM: Okay. Well, thank you, it's been helpful.

22 MR. TODD: Yeah.

23 MS. BLUM: Paul, do you have any follow-ups?

24 BY MR. SUFFERN:

1 Q. Yeah, just a couple and yeah, just for you, Dylan, you know, with your
2 background as a pilot and things like that, if you needed answers to weather questions,
3 is there any meteorologist on staff or if not, is there a point of contact that you would
4 use or that FlightSafety would use for weather questions?

5 A. So again, a lot of that basic weather theory isn't built into our course, if
6 clients did have questions on that, I could say not officially a part of our course, you
7 know, I could like recommend things, you know, as a friend, you know, like the NASA
8 icing course or things like that, but as far as someone on staff, no, there's nobody I'm
9 aware of that I could go to with those questions and I could work with the program
10 manager and, you know, find answers for those questions, but there's nobody that we
11 have on staff that's like a SME in weather or anything like that, to my knowledge, so --

12 Q. Okay. And then with your background as a pilot, is there any weather
13 tools that you wish that you had as a pilot or you had as a ground school instructor to
14 help you do your job better?

15 A. Any weather tools, like for use in ground school or --

16 Q. Yeah, weather tools, whether in --

17 A. Are you talking about teaching the ground --

18 Q. Well, for teaching ground school, yeah, ground school first and then just
19 you, as a pilot, second.

20 A. Okay. Yeah, if it could be built into the course, yeah, maybe -- nothing I
21 can really think of in particular, but kind of just for me, as a pilot, but yeah, I mean, you
22 know, weather products, you know, all the graphical area forecast information, finding
23 icing layers, CIP/FIB tools, you know, looking at -- let's see, what else, METAR reports,
24 TAF reports, winds aloft for temperatures, things like that, you know, the things I
25 definitely used as a pilot, myself, and then again, as far as teaching ground school, that

1 would have to be, you know, approved through the course, which is an FAA-approved
2 course to be able to teach that. But yeah, if that could be approved, then yeah, I'd
3 definitely go over those things with the clients.

4 MR. SUFFERN: Okay. Thanks, Dylan, that's all the questions I've got, I
5 appreciate your time today.

6 MR. TODD: Yeah.

7 MS. BLUM: Sabrina?

8 DR. WOODS: No questions for me, thank you.

9 MS. BLUM: Rob?

10 MR. PECK: Dylan, you're still doing fine, you don't need a break or
11 anything, you're good?

12 MR. TODD: I'm fine, doing good.

13 BY MR. PECK:

14 Q. You mentioned the NASA icing course, have you taken that, yourself?

15 A. I have reviewed it, yeah, it's been a moment, but yeah, I've looked it over.

16 Q. Yeah, I've done that one, too. I thought it was an interesting study.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. How about the Cessna icing course, have you ever done that?

19 A. I have not done that, I'd really like to. It's kind of curious on the
20 information that our clients are getting through that course. It's not a requirement as
21 instructors here that we have to go through that course, but I would be kind of curious
22 as to what they are instructing them on in that particular course. I do mention that, for
23 sure, in the limitations section that that does need to be completed annually if they're
24 going to be flying through known icing conditions.

1 Q. Um-hum. You talked with Starr there about weight and balance a little bit.
2 Do you -- in those discussions you talk about overweight --

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. Do you go into any detail at all about the disadvantages or the potential
5 dangers, I guess, from (indiscernible) --

6 A. Yeah, I do. Yeah.

7 (Cross-talk.)

8 BY MR. PECK:

9 Q. Especially in conjunction with icing or anything like that?

10 A. Yeah. Kind of a little bit of even a history on that, particularly interesting
11 enough, in Alaska, lots of the icing accidents, like when an airplane first started coming
12 out wasn't just ice, it was also aircraft that were overweight taking off, tailwinds, shorter
13 runways, so it was really just adding to that error chain for something to happen.

14 And I do, you know, I mention if you take off with an overweight aircraft
15 there is no performance charts for an overweight aircraft, so you are making yourself a
16 test pilot and then on top of an icing environment, who knows what could happen in
17 that type of situation, you know. Performance and stall speed have already increased
18 with the added weight, who knows if you're going to add ice on top of that, you know,
19 definitely putting yourself in a very unfavorable position, not something I don't think
20 any pilot or instructor would recommend doing, obviously.

21 Q. How about just from the balance part of that --

22 A. Yeah, yeah.

23 Q. -- be it forward or aft, do you discuss advantages --

24 A. Yeah, so if you're loading passengers, you don't want to load the biggest
25 ones towards the back, so one thing, you could tip it on the tail, so trying to keep them

1 towards more of the center of the airplane. I do talk about forward CG out of balance,
2 for example, you might not have enough elevator authority to rotate the airplane
3 properly off the ground or maybe you can do a proper flare and then, you know, with
4 aft-heavy airplanes, a little bit of a trim being out of place on rotation, you could strike
5 the tail, or during flight they could make stall, you know, recovery much tougher and/or
6 maybe impossible with an aft-loaded airplane, so I do discuss that with the clients, yes.

7 Q. Okay. And you kind of alluded to this, but do you have any requirement
8 and/or have you just done, I guess, any kind of review of past Caravan accidents or try
9 to glean -- you kind of answered that a little bit already, but --

10 A. A little bit, yeah, a book I had read about the Caravan that kind of talked
11 about the history of some icing accidents, it's been a while since I reviewed it, but it
12 may have been it kind of stuck out to me, it wasn't just oh, there was just a little frost on
13 the wings, it was something else, the pilot was in a rush, he took off with a tailwind and
14 then also found out maybe they were a hundred or 200 pounds overweight on top of
15 that, so that's kind of mostly what I remember from those discussions, so yeah.

16 Q. But it's not a part of being an instructor there in Wichita?

17 A. What's not part of it?

18 Q. Going back and looking at past accidents and --

19 A. No, it's not like a requirement or anything, I mean, it would be
20 encouraged, I would feel like but, you know -- trying to think, I don't think any of our
21 lesson plans have like a particular, you know, case study pertaining to just like an icing
22 situation. It does talk about even when we're talking about like a CRM threat error
23 management, we could pull something from the database and discuss that with clients
24 and go over that information as a topic of discussion, so we could. It is, in a way, I

1 guess, built into the course but there's no like specific ones that like oh, we have to do
2 this one or that one for threat error management concepts and CRM.

3 Q. And I know you said you didn't do the actual sim for the 135s, but in
4 general --

5 A. No.

6 Q. -- doing the sim stuff, do you do any scenarios, I guess, in which you --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. -- are in big-type icing conditions where, at least, you're trying to simulate
9 that it's --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- overwhelming the TKS system, that type of scenario?

12 A. Typically, what I do, I'll run through like a system malfunction, whether a
13 high pressure or a low pressure and run the checklist for that and then determine their
14 decision-making skills after they've, you know, dealt with the issue. A lot of times in
15 training we're required, you know, got to do so many approaches, I want them to kind
16 of, you know, continue the flight, you know, still exit the icing conditions, we talk about
17 that and continue with the approach but yeah, I usually do have them run through like a
18 scenario, you know, low pressure, high pressure, usually, around the checklist, so -- so
19 that they're understanding the system predominantly.

20 MR. PECK: That's all I have, thank you.

21 BY MS. BLUM:

22 Q. Okay. We always ask this question at the end, Dylan. Is there anything
23 that we didn't ask you that you wish we would have? Anything you'd like to tell us
24 about or things that you think we should look into or could help with this investigation?

1 A. Well, I did read your guys' preliminary report and I thought it was a little
2 shocking for how overweight the aircraft was, surprised that didn't really get
3 mentioned in the interview, but again, I guess I did kind of talk about weight in general,
4 but nothing that really stands out to me at this moment, yeah. I mean, I think you kind
5 of hit the main things there on what I cover in the ground school with this individual
6 that you guys would need to know, so --

7 MS. BLUM: Okay, great. Yeah, I mean, that's why I asked have you ever
8 heard from any Bering Air pilots, that's --

9 MR. TODD: Right, right.

10 MS. BLUM: -- one of the things that's been reported to
11 you --

12 MR. TODD: Yeah, I --

13 (Cross-talk.)

14 MR. TODD: I don't recall anything in particular, so yeah.

15 MS. BLUM: Okay, well, we really appreciate that and with that, we will end
16 the recording at --

17 MR. TODD: Okay.

18 MS. BLUM: -- 8:56.

19 (Whereupon, at 8:56 a.m., the interview concluded.)
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL COMMUTER PLANE CRASH NEAR
NOME, ALASKA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025
Interview of Dylan Todd

ACCIDENT NO.: ANC25MA018

PLACE: via Zoom videoconference

DATE: April 1, 2025

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true
and accurate transcript which has been transcribed to the best of my skill and ability.



Karen D. Martini
Transcriber

ERRATA SHEET

Witness: Dylan Todd
Case: ANL25MA018
Date: 5/8/2025

**PLEASE MAKE ANY CORRECTIONS/CHANGES BELOW
AND NOTE THE REASON FOR SAME**

[illegible]

Date: 5/8/2025

Notary Public

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:

FATAL COMMUTER PLANE CRASH NEAR
NOME, ALASKA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025 *

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Accident No.: ANC25MA018

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Interview of: EALON TERRY HOLLOWAY, JR., Simulator Instructor

FlightSafety

via Zoom videoconference

Tuesday,
March 18, 2025

APPEARANCES:

STARR BLUM, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist/Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SABRINA WOODS, Ph.D., Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CHARLES H. SMITH, Esq.
Cantey Hanger, LLP
Representing Mr. Holloway

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INTERVIEW

(12:17 p.m.)

MS. BLUM: Okay, today is March 18th, 2025 and it is 12:17 Pacific Daylight Time. My name is Starr Blum and I'm an operational factors investigator with the NTSB and we are in the process of investigating the accident on February 6th involving Bering Air Flight 445.

First off, we want to extend our condolences to you and your colleagues, we're sorry that we're here but, as you know, the NTSB is -- our role is safety and trying to determine the probable cause of an accident and prevent anybody else from going through this again.

We will be recording this interview so that it can be transcribed. After we receive the transcript, our group will review it for any mistakes and then you will be given the transcript, as well, so you can provide your feedback and it will eventually go into the public docket.

Let me go around the room and just let Paul and Sabrina introduce themselves.

MR. SUFFERN: Hey, Terry, my name is Paul Suffern, as Starr said, my background is meteorology, so I've been an investigator with the NTSB about 14, 15 years or so, before that I worked for the National Weather Service up in Alaska.

MR. HOLLOWAY: Nice to meet you.

MR. SUFFERN: Thanks.

DR. WOODS: Hello, I'm Sabrina Woods and I'm a human performance investigator, my role here is to essentially help determine within the case any of the things that either enable us to do our jobs well or maybe even prevent this from being able to do our jobs and give that assessment.

1 MR. HOLLOWAY: Okay, nice to meet you, Sabrina.

2 MS. BLUM: So we just ask that you answer the questions to the best of
3 your recollection. If you don't know the answer to a question, "I don't know" is a
4 perfectly fine answer, and if there's something that you don't understand, just please us
5 ask us to clarify. And if you see us looking down or typing, it's just because we're
6 taking some notes and maybe thinking of another question. You are entitled to have a
7 representative with you at this interview, is there someone you'd like to have?

8 MR. HOLLOWAY: Well, Charles Smith.

9 MS. BLUM: Thank you. Okay, Charlie, will you please introduce yourself
10 and spell your name for the recording?

11 MR. SMITH: Yes, Charles H. Smith, S-m-i-t-h, I'm with the law firm of
12 Cantey and Hanger in Dallas, Texas.

13 That's H-a-n-g-e-r, Hanger. Cantey and Hanger.

14 MS. BLUM: Okay. Thanks, Charlie. So we just ask that you please refrain
15 from answering any questions on Terry's behalf and -- but if you do not want him to
16 answer a question or you want to confer with him, we can take a short break and you
17 guys can confirm off line.

18 MR. SMITH: Okay.

19 MS. BLUM: Okay. So does anybody have any questions before we
20 begin?

21 MR. SMITH: No.

22 MS. BLUM: Okay.

23 INTERVIEW OF EALON TERRY HOLLOWAY, JR.

24 BY MS. BLUM:

25 Q. Okay, Terry, could you please state and spell your full name?

1 A. Sure. My full name is Ealon, E-a-l-o-n, middle name Terry, T-e-r-r-y,
2 Holloway, H-o-l-l-o-w-a-y, and I'm a junior.

3 Q. Okay, great. And what is your position at FlightSafety?

4 A. I am a sim instructor in the Caravan G1000.

5 Q. Okay. When did you get hired by FlightSafety?

6 A. About two and a half years ago.

7 Q. Okay. And have you been an instructor that entire time in the Caravan?

8 A. I have. Um-hum.

9 Q. Okay. Do you teach any other roles, do you have any roles in other
10 airplanes or ground school or is it just --

11 A. No.

12 Q. It's just sim?

13 A. Strictly sim instructor --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- in the G1000.

16 Q. Okay. Have you flown the actual airplane, the Caravan?

17 A. A little bit, yeah, yeah. I come from the corporate arena and my boss
18 bought one for a short period of time, so we flew that with him, but he sold it and that
19 was the end of my training.

20 Q. Okay. How many hours would you say you got in the Caravan?

21 A. I'm not sure. I didn't log it, much to my chagrin now. At the time, I was
22 flying a Citation VII so I didn't really feel I needed to log the Caravan time, as well.

23 Q. If you were going to ballpark it?

24 A. Under 50.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Good enough. And that was going to be my next question, will you give
3 us a little, small background of your aviation --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- history?

6 A. I got into aviation -- well, I got my love from my father and got into
7 aviation, I got my CFI, double I, and MEI in the early '90s and kept it current through
8 the early to mid-2000s. Didn't use it a whole lot, but I thought I would keep it current
9 just to -- you know, in case I needed to use it. Initially, I was -- did primary flight
10 instructing, instrument flight instructing, a little multi-engine instructing, not a whole lot,
11 but -- then I flew charter for a company at Wiley Post Airport and that was a good
12 experience, I got to fly quite a few different types of aircraft, I flew -- my first type was
13 the Sabreliner and then the straight-wing Citations and III, VI, and VII types, so --

14 Q. Nice. It sounds like you've had some good experience in the background
15 there before you came to FlightSafety.

16 A. Yeah, I hope so, yeah.

17 Q. Yeah. Well, one of the reasons we want to talk to you today is because
18 you had interaction in Chad's last recurrent. Have you had a chance to review those
19 training records?

20 A. You know, I looked over them briefly online. As an instructor, maybe we
21 remember the extremely good ones or the extremely bad ones --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- and he didn't hit either mark, you know, I would say he was
24 unremarkable.

1 Q. Okay, that was going to be one of my questions, was there anything
2 remarkable, good or bad, but --

3 A. Really not, no.

4 Q. Okay. Okay. So I'm just curious, does management ever sit in and
5 observe whether it's ground or sim?

6 A. Yes, yeah, on a regular basis my program manager sits in -- gosh, I don't
7 know, I've sat with him two or three times in the time I've been here and get his
8 feedback and, of course, I trained quite extensively here before I ever met a client,
9 which is unique to the FlightSafety experience as an employee.

10 Q. What kind of experience did you get, what kind of training did you get?

11 A. Just how to interact with clients and I had never flown the G1000, the
12 Caravan I flew was steam gauges, so -- yeah, I spent time, methods of teaching, quite
13 extensive, really.

14 Q. Okay, that's good.

15 A. It was a good experience.

16 Q. Okay. How long was your training, would you say?

17 A. I probably trained here for two and a half months before I ever met with a
18 client and, of course, I was supervised for a period of time, so that was a good
19 experience also, getting feedback from senior instructors.

20 Q. Yeah. Okay, great. Just for context, like, how many pilots would you say
21 you instruct a month, on the average?

22 A. It varies, it really does. It depends on whether I am training initial clients
23 or recurrent clients, Part 135 clients.

24 Q. Is there a matrix of how many 135s you get compared to like 91, is there --
25 how do your assignments work, is there a matrix?

1 A. It's less.

2 (Laughter.)

3 MR. HOLLOWAY: Yeah.

4 BY MS. BLUM:

5 Q. All right. So looking at the training record for the recurrent, how do you --
6 what is your grading system? Can you explain it to us?

7 A. Sure. A grade of 1 is proficient. A grade of 2 is maybe not successful on
8 the first attempt but successful in that sim period, so a little bit of additional training
9 with the client. A grade of 3 means that we're going to have to add some training to
10 the client, usually found with initial clients. And a grade of 4 is basically, we stop
11 training. Any time there's a grade of 3 or 4, I let my program manager know there's a
12 problem, you know.

13 Q. Okay. What is the next step usually when somebody has a 3 or a 4, is it
14 another lesson?

15 A. Well, that is basically up to the program manager and management.
16 Once we find a grade of 3 or 4, we take it up with the program manager and in the
17 case of a 135 client, like Chad, you know, we would take it up with either their POI or
18 director of training.

19 Q. Okay. When you see on the training record a 2 and a 1 --

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. -- in this -- in the same session, what does that mean?

22 A. Maybe not proficient or not proficient at their first attempt, maybe with
23 some remedial training within that sim session, they prove proficient.

24 Q. Is that common to see?

25 A. I think so, yes.

1 Q. Okay. Yeah, I see on Chad's training records, he got a 2-1 on pre-takeoff
2 checks and he also got 1 for recovery in unusual attitudes.

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. I don't know if you can recall that --

5 A. No, I really can't, Starr, you know, I see a lot of clients.

6 Q. Okay. What does -- how do you set up the unusual attitude portion for
7 the in-flight maneuver?

8 A. IMC.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So they're doing it with reference to instruments. I give them a pitch
11 change and a bank change with the engines set at a mid-power setting and it's up to
12 them to recognize the potential dangers and take corrective action.

13 Q. Okay. And what would -- what would make you give a 2 for that?

14 A. You know, I can't say specifically with Chad --

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. -- but generally, it -- this may be a delay or a lack of changing power to
17 correct for the pitch attitude.

18 Q. Okay, yeah.

19 A. In general terms.

20 Q. Um-hum. I know what you're saying. Are you required to take notes or
21 provide comments about a student?

22 A. I am, yeah.

23 Q. For every lesson or when do you have to make comments?

1 A. Yeah, every lesson, I have an area available to make comments on and I
2 don't remember specifically that I made comments on Chad's case, which means, you
3 know, like I said, unremarkable.

4 Q. Okay. I also saw, just for my clarification --

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. -- on the power-off stall demonstrations, it shows an X. I know that that
7 AC applies directly to 121 carriers, do you guys teach power-off stalls?

8 A. We teach -- yes, yes, we do. Are you specifically talking about AC, what is
9 it, 120?

10 Q. Yeah, 120-109.

11 A. Yeah, yeah. We train that, of course, each flight training record is unique
12 to that customer, so --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- you know, yeah, if the AC 120 is in there, we train usually at altitude and
15 power off or cut.

16 Q. Okay. I don't know if the AC is applying to Chad in particular or what --
17 would it apply to one student or not another?

18 A. Um-hum. I don't have that information myself.

19 Q. Okay. I just see that there's an X on there and I was just curious if you
20 recalled why you didn't do the power-off stalls.

21 A. Oh, I would say I did. Right, yeah, the X meaning it was trained, not -- not
22 that a grade was given.

23 Q. Oh, so you can do that, you can just say it was trained but there's no
24 grade?

25 A. On that particular maneuver, we can.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I don't have that option.

3 Q. Ah, I see.

4 A. I can't give a 2-1 or a 3 or a 4 or a 1 on that maneuver, I just have to grade
5 with an X.

6 Q. Check the box.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay, I got you. Thanks for that, that's helpful. Let's see. Do you teach
9 stalls in icing conditions?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. And how about cold weather operations, what do your lesson
12 plans look like with cold weather ops?

13 A. Usually -- specific to the Caravan, right?

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. We train a day of cold weather ops and go to the icing procedures
16 checklist in addition to the normal checklist.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Does that answer your question?

19 Q. What would the -- partly. What would the scenario you would give the
20 pilot be for cold weather ops?

21 A. You know, I think it's important to mention that if the pilot is from Alaska,
22 we train icing. If they're from the Bahamas, we train icing. So it's not a unique thing to
23 train icing with a client, every initial and recurrent, regardless of where they're from.

24 Q. Yeah, that's great.

25 A. Yeah, yeah.

1 Q. But in the sim, like what -- how would you conduct, like, if it's a flight from
2 an airport to an airport, I'm just trying to understand like what the --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. -- scenario would be.

5 A. For example, I would set the temperature to, say, minus 20 centigrade
6 and set the sim up so it is in visible moisture, perhaps a snowstorm --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- and have them do icing procedures from the prestart throughout the
9 flight.

10 Q. Okay. Do you teach exit strategies?

11 A. Absolutely, you know, probably -- probably maybe the best is if you are
12 flying and you encounter icing, you might think about an alternate or a 1-80 back out of
13 the icing, you know. The Caravan is certified for known icing, but I don't know the
14 circumstances with Chad's crash in particular, I saw on the news that there was a
15 Caravan that crashed and it looked like there was very little forward movement, from
16 what I saw on the news, but that's basically all the information I have on his crash.

17 Q. So is it safe to say, whether it's initial or recurrent, that every pilot will have
18 a lesson in known icing conditions?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. Do you guys train about flight into unexpected or
21 un-forecasted icing conditions?

22 A. In the sim?

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. You know, we can't really simulate traveling into a front, for example, but
2 we can drop the temperature on them and put them in icing conditions --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- with the idea that always an alternate or a 1-80 back out of icing would
5 be a great idea.

6 Q. Okay. Do you have a technique you teach the pilots about when to make
7 that call when it's time to exit?

8 A. At the first indication of an encounter, you know. If -- well, it's been my
9 experience, Starr, that maybe a hot wing would be the best idea or boots or TKS,
10 whatever you have, you know. If boots are deice, the TKS system is anti-ice, so there's a
11 little different technique involved in each system.

12 Q. How would you teach that in a TKS-operated airplane?

13 A. Well --

14 Q. For the technique of when to exit.

15 A. When to exit? Probably when you're getting the icing. You know, if
16 you're flying around in the clouds, that's fine with the TKS system, you know,
17 temperature, we train if it's plus five or below, we turn on the system and you're in
18 visible moisture, of course. We turn on the system because it is anti-ice as opposed to
19 a deice.

20 Q. Sure. So I understand, like, it keeps up -- from talking to pilots that have
21 flown it, it keeps up pretty well, but it's just when -- how do they know when it's too
22 much, you know, that the --

23 A. Well, we have a couple of different settings on the Caravan, a normal
24 setting, which is, you know, your first encounter. We have a high setting, if that's not

1 doing it, I'm to get out, you know. And of course, we have -- we teach that 100 percent
2 of icing systems have to be on line for you to fly in ice.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. And you have to aim your way -- complete the e-course to fly into known
5 ice.

6 Q. The Textron courses --

7 A. Yeah, exactly.

8 Q. -- is that what you're talking about?

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. Yeah, okay. What about the autopilot in icing conditions, what do you
11 teach with regards to the autopilot?

12 A. To avoid any adverse trim that might make itself -- you know, that icing
13 might affect is to click off the autopilot occasionally and make sure that the plane is not
14 flying out of trim or has not been adversely affected aerodynamically.

15 Q. Okay. So I'm wondering if FlightSafety has the supplements that Bering
16 has. If I look at their POH and their AFM --

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. -- they have -- and Supplement 1 is the TKS ice protection system for
19 cargo pod-equipped airplanes --

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. -- and this is the 867 horsepower EX.

22 A. Okay, um-hum.

23 Q. But do you guys have access to that supplement, too, or is it just you have
24 the POH?

1 A. You know, we have access to supplements available to us. Specifically,
2 that supplement, I can't answer that question. I don't know.

3 Q. Okay, I'm just wondering if, you know, when you're working for another
4 135 or another operator, because you can't -- I mean, the planes aren't the same, the
5 books aren't the same, I'm just wondering --

6 A. Right.

7 Q. -- what you have available to you.

8 A. It's what they have submitted and been approved by the FSDO (ph.).

9 Q. Okay. How about weight and balance, do you teach weight and balance?

10 A. We do. Before every flight, we brief -- or every sim flight, we brief an
11 aircraft weight and an aircraft fuel. You know, weight and balance specifically is trained
12 in ground school more than in the sim, we don't really have time to address the weight
13 and balance in the sim.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But yes, we definitely make sure it's -- each flight, that they are briefed on
16 weight of the aircraft and how much fuel, therefore the weight of the fuel that's on
17 board.

18 Q. Are the pilots making those calculations or are you just handing them the
19 load?

20 A. It's part of the pre-brief.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Yeah, the preflight briefing (indiscernible).

23 Q. Okay. I've never flown the Caravan, so in your opinion, is the CG critical in
24 this airplane?

1 A. You know, you would probably need to ask someone that has more time
2 in it, most of my flying was VFR, well within CG.

3 Q. Fair enough. Have you worked with many Bering Air pilots?

4 A. I have, a few. Yes. How many, I don't even know if they can tabulate that,
5 to tell you the truth.

6 Q. Okay, so you have had a few, though, at least?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Yeah. And how do you feel about working with them, I mean, do they
9 come prepared, do they perform well?

10 A. Each pilot's an individual, you know. Like I said, Chad was just -- if I had to
11 pick one word, I'd say unremarkable.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. He doesn't stick out as being a superior or an inferior pilot.

14 Q. Do you see any reoccurring issues, whether it's Bering Air pilots or just
15 pilots in general in the Caravan, that need work, needs work?

16 A. No, I really don't. It's had a 40-year lifespan, at least,
17 so --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. -- it must be okay in most respects to be still building it after 40 years.

20 MS. BLUM: Yeah. Okay, well, I think that's going to be my first round of
21 questions, so --

22 MR. HOLLOWAY: Okay.

23 MS. BLUM: -- Sabrina -- I know Sabrina has another meeting she's going
24 to have to get into, are there any questions you have?

1 DR. WOODS: No, I don't have anything at this time, so sorry about that,
2 Terry, I do have to drop off in about 10 minutes.

3 MR. HOLLOWAY: I understand. These things happen.

4 DR. WOODS: Thank you for your time.

5 MR. HOLLOWAY: Thank you.

6 MS. BLUM: Okay, Paul.

7 BY MR. SUFFERN:

8 Q. Yeah, thanks again, Terry, for your time. I'm going to step a little bit into
9 meteorology, but before I do that, I wanted to follow up on a couple of questions that
10 Starr had.

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. One of them was you mentioned when you're flying in icing conditions
13 with the autopilot, that you would teach to turn it off occasionally, could you give me a
14 time frame for how long occasionally is for you?

15 A. I believe it says 10 minutes. Are you looking for a specific time frame, is
16 that --

17 Q. Just what occasionally -- if you're -- you know, you're talking to a pilot and
18 things like that and they -- you tell them occasionally and they ask you well, how long is
19 -- because occasionally could mean --

20 A. Right.

21 Q. -- one minute to some pilot or --

22 A. Right.

23 Q. -- 20 minutes to another pilot or something like that, so what's
24 occasionally for you?

25 A. Ten minutes.

1 Q. Okay. And then one other just quick follow-up question, for the weight
2 and balance, do you ever give a scenario to a pilot where they would be overweight?

3 A. Do I train that?

4 Q. Yeah, you just hand them a scenario and -- where they have maybe, you
5 know, 10 people that are all fairly large individuals and they would put the plane
6 overweight, is that ever --

7 (Audio malfunction.)

8 BY MR. SUFFERN:

9 Q. -- potentially?

10 A. You broke up there for a second, but to answer your question, no, we do
11 not train overweight, we do not recommend it, you know, I mean that would be foolish.

12 Q. Yeah. No, I -- my question was directed at -- for the pilots to notice that
13 they would be -- like, you're giving them a scenario, if they add everything up, it's at
14 12,000 pounds, like okay, we can't do this flight, they recognize that and like okay, you
15 guys, you understood that --

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. -- and then okay, here's actually the real thing.

18 A. In the sim, I would say no, we don't train being overweight, ever, you
19 know, we train them to know their limits and again, that's kind of addressed more in
20 the ground school than it is in the sim portion.

21 Q. Okay. Thank you. I apologize for my internet connection and then my
22 meteorology background, I word things poorly when it comes to pilot-speak, so I
23 apologize. So as far as weather, you mentioned several scenarios already as far as
24 weather in the simulator, what kind of weather can the simulator do and do you train
25 on?

1 A. Well, we have different settings to address the severity of the icing
2 encounter based on time. Does that help, is that what you're looking for? I'm not sure
3 I understand the question.

4 Q. Sure. Yeah, no, I'm not just asking overall, you know, from the flight
5 simulator perspective, what kind of weather scenarios can you simulate? You know, it
6 sounds like you can simulate IMC conditions --

7 A. Oh, definitely.

8 Q. -- fog conditions, icing.

9 A. Yes, it is a Level D simulator --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- that we have here.

12 Q. Okay. And then I guess going specifically to what you were mentioning
13 there as far as icing, how do you simulate different severity levels?

14 A. I'm not sure I understand the question completely, the severity would be
15 generated by the sim based on three selectable positions, 50, 75 or a hundred percent
16 icing, as referencing by percentage, okay.

17 Q. Okay, that makes sense. So can the simulator simulate kinds of conditions
18 where you'd be flying, inadvertently flying into, like, freezing rain or SLD or things like
19 that or --

20 A. That would be a bad day for anybody, yeah. SLD. The Caravan is
21 certified for icing and I don't know really any airplane that could stand some SLD for a
22 while. If you encounter that in the Caravan, obviously climb, descend or 1-80 to get out
23 of it.

24 Q. Okay. And then -- and I may be speaking out of hand here since it sounds
25 like your background is the simulator --

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. -- but from a weather product point of view, are you discussing with the
3 pilots any kinds of weather graphics to look at in flight to avoid icing, weather charts,
4 whether they're through ForeFlight or --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- through the National Weather Service, can you speak to that?

7 A. I understand. Judging from my own experience, we train that in the
8 instrument certificate, you know, the instrument rating. Of course, with the advent of
9 iPads, more information is available to you, I guess, depending on where you are. I
10 can't speak to that situation where Chad was involved, but we do not teach them
11 -- I guess what I'm trying to say, we assume a certain experience level with recurrent
12 pilots, what they have available to them and what they use is really an individual choice.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Does that --

15 Q. Yeah, that makes sense, I understand what you're speaking of and so if,
16 for example, there was a new weather tool out there to help pilots --

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. -- that would fall probably more under the operator to teach the pilots
19 than as opposed to something that FlightSafety would --

20 A. Agree, agree.

21 Q. Okay. If you, as -- you, as Terry, and FlightSafety need some help with
22 meteorology or weather --

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. -- does FlightSafety have a meteorologist on staff or where do you get -- if
25 you have weather questions, where do you go to get your answers?

1 A. Well, mine would be more specifically related to how it applies to the
2 Caravan sim than real world. If I were going out to fly in icing conditions, yeah, as an
3 individual, I would make myself aware of all information possible, but that's trained in
4 basic instrument training, not -- not at FlightSafety, you know.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. There's a certain assumption of maybe a level of expertise once they're in
7 135 recurrent.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. What he chooses do as a pilot is strictly his choice, obviously, I wouldn't
10 have any knowledge or authority.

11 Q. Okay. As far as when you're in the simulator, does it ever touch on pilot
12 reports and weather, is that ever touched on in the simulator?

13 A. I have given a client pilot reports, you know, that might be pertinent to
14 that flight.

15 Q. But is it discussed as far as -- and I don't know as far as the simulator there,
16 a pretend air traffic person that --

17 A. Right.

18 Q. -- your client is flying along and like hey, let's practice giving a pilot report
19 at 5,000 feet, is that covered in it or is it, again, assuming some level of expertise that
20 they know how

21 to --

22 A. I think you're correct, assuming some level of expertise before they
23 actually get --

24 MR. SUFFERN: Okay. No, it makes sense. Okay, that's all I've got right
25 now, Terry. Thank you so much, that's helpful.

1 MR. HOLLOWAY: Okay, you bet. Yeah, I hope I can help.

2 BY MS. BLUM:

3 Q. Yeah. I don't have too many. Kaye was telling us that you guys have the
4 TKS and the low speed awareness set up.

5 A. Yes, uh-huh.

6 Q. What do you teach as far as air speeds in icing conditions?

7 A. They're 120 knots minimum.

8 Q. Is that for everything or --

9 A. That really is, yeah, en route, approach, you know.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. Yeah, you keep the air speed up. Of course, with this system you're
12 talking about, the pilot is going to get a low speed awareness warning after he turns on
13 the pitot-static, that's what actually triggers the low speed awareness warning.

14 Q. Do you mean it just activates the system, turns on the system by turning
15 on the pitot-static?

16 A. Yeah, exactly.

17 Q. Okay. So then what do they -- like, if I'm a new pilot and learning this low
18 air speed, we know it's 97.5, what does that number mean to me, like if I slow below
19 120? Do you see where I'm going, like what -- what does that 97.5 low speed
20 awareness trigger, what do you teach them that that should trigger in your mind?

21 A. That you already got too slow.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. You know, I'm not sure I understand your question. What -- how can I
24 help?

1 Q. I guess in icing conditions, in icing conditions, I'm trying to -- if I'm
2 learning the system, what does that tell me, like, why is that going to trigger and what
3 will happen when that system activates?

4 (Pause.)

5 MR. HOLLOWAY: Are you there?

6 MS. BLUM: Yeah, I am.

7 MR. HOLLOWAY: Okay, okay. The video jumped and I thought maybe
8 you asked a question and I missed it.

9 MR. SUFFERN: Well, she did, so --

10 MR. HOLLOWAY: Oh, okay, I'm sorry.

11 MR. SUFFERN: Starr, can you ask him again?

12 MS. BLUM: Sure, no problem.

13 BY MS. BLUM:

14 Q. I'm just saying, as a new pilot learning the system and let's say we're in
15 icing conditions, getting below 120, what is the system going to do and what -- how
16 would you teach me the system, I guess, let me make it -- go back and it make simple.

17 A. Well, I would teach them the low speed awareness system is tied to the
18 pitot-static switch. It's an arbitrary number, like you said, 90 -- I think it's 95 plus or
19 minus 2.5, something like that, so it's an arbitrary number brings on a warning any time
20 you're below -- get below that. You get above it, it goes out. Even if you get below it
21 and acknowledge it and then get above it and drop back again, you're going to get a
22 warning reset.

23 Q. Okay. Is there anything else that happens, whether it's annunciations or
24 what else happens when they get that, get to that threshold?

1 A. I don't know, I don't understand the question, I guess, or what you're
2 looking for, what's --

3 Q. Like is there a light --

4 A. Yes. Sure, there's a light associated with the aural warning and it's right --
5 you know, centered right above your instrument stack and they would come on and
6 you'll get an oral warning and the light any time you get below that threshold.

7 Q. Does the autopilot kick off?

8 A. I don't know, I'd have to check. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I believe -- well, it would be speculation, so --

11 Q. No problem. Yeah, I was just curious if you went through a demonstration
12 of the low speed awareness system in your training.

13 A. Definitely. But again, if you're in icing, it's not a great idea to be on the
14 autopilot in the first place.

15 Q. Sure.

16 A. So by that point, most of my clients are near the landing flare when it
17 comes on --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- because we train them to stay at 120 knots.

20 Q. Right. Okay, that makes sense. Let's see, what else do I got? When the
21 Bering Air pilots that you've worked with, have they ever communicated anything to
22 you about the company or whether -- or anything that comes to mind that they were
23 unhappy with?

24 A. No, ma'am.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I don't -- I'm not aware of anything like that.

2 Q. Okay. Great. And last question, you know, I know it's a little different with
3 single-pilot operations, but -- and then, sure, part of that's in ground school, but in the
4 sim, do you touch on like CRM for single-pilot operations?

5 A. Sure, SRM, CRM, yeah. Yeah, single-pilot resource. I've taught that, you
6 know, since I was teaching primary students in the '90s, you know --

7 (Crosstalk)

8 MR. HOLLOWAY: Go ahead.

9 BY MS. BLUM:

10 Q. Sorry. I'm sorry, I interrupted. I was going to say how do you apply that in
11 the sim.

12 A. By adherence to good practices and the checklists in all situations. Of
13 course, working for FlightSafety, you know, we're big on checklists.

14 MS. BLUM: Okay. Well, thank you. I'm going to pass it over to Paul.

15 BY MR. SUFFERN:

16 Q. Yeah, Terry, I just got one more question and then --

17 A. Sure.

18 Q. -- I guess just as you're -- in your role at FlightSafety and also being a pilot,
19 are there any weather tools that you wish that you had that were better, more coverage
20 across the United States, you know, a gee whiz weather tool you always thought but
21 nobody's ever put in or anything like that or anything --

22 A. You know --

23 Q. -- that you wish you had?

1 A. Sure. More information is better, you know, it's better for you as a pilot. I
2 think since the advent of the iPads and hopefully Wi-Fi or satellite based, again, I don't
3 know what they're using in Alaska, but more information is definitely better.

4 MR. SUFFERN: Okay. Thank you, that's all I got. I appreciate your time
5 today, Terry.

6 MR. HOLLOWAY: All right, thank you.

7 BY MS. BLUM:

8 Q. Yeah, Terry, it's been very helpful, we appreciate it. With regards to
9 helping us in the investigation, is there anything that we didn't ask that you wish we
10 would have?

11 A. No, ma'am. You know, I'm sorry for the loss of life, that's the tragic part of
12 all of this, but I do believe in the FlightSafety method. I've had -- as a pilot, I've had the
13 benefit of other Level D and lower simulators and then I truly feel like FlightSafety has a
14 superior product.

15 MS. BLUM: Okay, thank you, we appreciate it. And we'll stop the
16 recording at 1:05 Pacific Daylight Time.

17 (Whereupon, at 1:05 p.m., the interview concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL COMMUTER PLANE CRASH NEAR
NOME, ALASKA ON FEBRUARY 6, 2025
Interview of Ealon Terry Holloway, Jr.

ACCIDENT NO.: ANC25MA018

PLACE: via Zoom videoconference

DATE: March 18, 2025

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true
and accurate transcript which has been transcribed to the best of my skill and ability.

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of David A. Martini.

David A. Martini
Transcriber

ERRATA SHEET

Witness: Ealon Terry Holloway

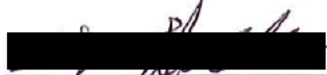
Case: ANC 25 MA01B

Date: 05/23/25

**PLEASE MAKE ANY CORRECTIONS/CHANGES BELOW
AND NOTE THE REASON FOR SAME**

[illegible]

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I, Ealon Terry Holloway, have read the foregoing deposition and hereby affix my signature that same is true and correct, except as noted above.


Date: 5/27/25

SWORN TO before me this 27 day of May, 2025.


Notary Public

