Factual Report – Attachment 1

Atlas Air Interview Transcripts

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

DCA19MA086

Table of Contents **.pdf page**

1. Shannon Ricks 3/733
   Atlas Air B-767 Captain
2. Art Nepute 39/733
   Atlas Air B-767 Captain
3. Pedro Garcia 67/733
   Atlas Air B-767 Captain
4. Wade Lewis 94/733
   Atlas Air B-767 First Officer
5. Jeff Bartlett 151/733
   Atlas Air B-767 First Officer
6. Richard Boothe 168/733
   Atlas Air Dispatcher
7. Ronald Knight 207/733
   StratAir Loadmaster
8. Andrew Hernandez 270/733
   StratAir Load Verifier
9. Tim Andrews 305/733
   Atlas Air B-767 First Officer
10. Lazaro Castellanos 320/733
    Atlas Air B-767 Captain
11. Parvin Belknap 328/733
    Atlas Air B-767 Check Airman
12. Robert Bluemel 359/733
    Atlas Air B-767 Check Airman
13. William Neal 399/733
    Atlas Air B-767 Check Airman
14. Mark Hoover 429/733
    Atlas Air B-767 Check Airman
15. Bill Peavley 476/733
    Atlas Air B-767 Check Airman
16. Denise Borrelli 534/733
    Atlas Air Director of Human Resources
17. Joseph Diedrich 596/733
    Atlas Air B-747/767 Fleet Captain
18. Joseph Kunkel 649/733
    Atlas Air B-767 Check Airman
19. Scott Anderson 683/733
    Atlas Air Director of Training

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*	
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ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*	
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	*	Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*	
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Interview of: SHANNON RICKS

Tuesday,
February 26, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

JENNIFER CHERNICHAW, Staff Vice President
Labor and Employment Counsel, Atlas Air
(On behalf of Mr. Ricks)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Shannon Ricks:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Mr. Bramble	19
By Mr. Runyon	25
By Mr. Theurer	26
By Mr. Lawrence	29
By Mr. Aaron	34

I N T E R V I E W

(8:00 a.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: And so, we'll just do the recording that if it's okay with you guys to record.

VOICES: Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. So, the process that we're here for is just for safety. We work at the NTSB under what's called a party system. And the party system means that we're just bringing in technical experts to help Bill and I and the NTSB during the process. So, that's why you see multiple people at the table. So, what I'll do is, we'll go around the table, have each person introduce themselves, if that's okay.

MR. RICKS: Yeah, that's fine.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB. I've been there about 20 years. And my job is to analyze human performance. And in the initial phase of investigation, document recent activities and so forth.

MR. LAWRENCE: And, of course, I'm David Lawrence. I'm an operations investigator with the NTSB, so I look at the pilot training background, procedures, things like that.

MR. THEURER: I'm Walt Theurer, and I'm an air crew program manager on the UPS certificate in Louisville, Boeing 75/76. I've been with the FAA for 22 years. Before that, I was a line pilot for a long time, Orion, Old Midway, New Midway, things like that. And I'm just here to assist this gentleman, I suppose.

MR. AARON: Bob Aaron, currently with Boeing. Prior to that, I flew with Northwest and Delta for 25 years. My problem is, I remember the airlines he's talking about.

(Laughter.)

We're here to assist as the manufacturer (indiscernible) for the NTSB.

MR. RUNYON: Good morning. Andrew Runyon, APD on the 767. I'm not sure if we worked together or not. I think we have a couple of times. So, good to see you again.

MR. HOWARD: And Tyson Howard, with the Teamsters. Been with Atlas for about 4 years, captain on the 76.

MR. LAWRENCE: And just to clarify, I want to make sure we're on the schedule. What's your name?

MR. RICKS: Shannon Ricks.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Just wanted to make sure. Okay, and let me clarify, too, Walt Theurer with the FAA, he's here. By federal statute, FAA is a party to all our investigations. Now, Walt's role here is no different than Bill's or mine or anybody else at the table. We're just safety related. He's just assisting us in trying to find out what happened so we can prevent it from happening again. Anything that's said or heard in this room or any part of the investigation cannot be used by the FAA for certificate action. So, I want you to feel comfortable in that role. His role is not certificate. His role is just safety here. Okay?

Any questions on the process?

MR. RICKS: No questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. If you have any questions, please, you know, stop me and ask. If there's a question anybody asks that you do not understand or want a little bit of clarification, please ask. We may ask a silly question that is silly to you and such, and if it is, it's probably something you want clarification, so don't guess, just, you know, ask us.

And I think I already asked you, do you have any questions about the process?

MR. RICKS: No questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. The summaries, by the way, when we're done with this, and the interview summaries that we do for all this will eventually go into the public docket, so you'll be able to see this along -- it just becomes part of the factual record, okay?

INTERVIEW OF SHANNON RICKS

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let me start off with the easy ones. Can I get your name, full name?

A. Shannon Lee Ricks.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What's your last name again?

MR. RICKS: Ricks, R-i-c-k-s.

Q. Shannon Lee Ricks. You like Shannon, is that how you go by?

A. That's fine.

Q. And how old are you, Shannon?
A. Forty-three.
Q. And what's your role here at Atlas?
A. I'm a 767 captain.
Q. When were you hired here?
A. April of 2014.
Q. And just generally what are your roles and responsibilities as a 76 captain.
A. My role as a 76 captain is to ensure the safe, on-time departure and the flight of anything that I'm assigned.
Q. Okay. And just a Cliff Notes version of your background that led you to Atlas.
A. Cliff Notes, up until 2008, about half of my experience was charter and corporate. Larger pistons to the King Air series. After that, I flew for Potomac Air in 2001, and then back to corporate. Then I went to Republic for 6 months in 2007. 2008, I was hired by World Airways where I was the first officer on the MD11. I was furloughed from there in 2012. I went to work for Dynamic Aviation there flying ISR in Afghanistan in the Dash 8.
Q. Okay, so after your furlough in 2012, then you did what?
A. I went to work for Dynamic Aviation flying ISR in Afghanistan.
Q. And again, Cliff Notes versions of your certificates and ratings.
A. Dash 8, King Air 300, ERJ 170 through the 195 series, MD-11,

747, 75, 76.
Q. ATP?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. I've just got to make sure. And total flight time, estimate.
A. About 12,800.
Q. And how much of that is 76 time?
A. About 600 hours.
Q. So, you're pretty recent onto the 76?
A. April will be 2 years ago that I was awarded a class state.
Q. I'm sorry?
A. April will be 2 years ago that I was awarded a class state for the 76.
Q. Great. Did you know the accident crew?
A. I knew the first officer, Conrad Aska.
Q. How did you know him?
A. I flew the last three legs of pairing with him.
Q. So, it was a pairing, but it was only three legs or how would that work?
A. My original first officer had called in sick, and so, he was the -- I'm trying to remember, either the second or third FO that I had had that trip. And he was the first officer I flew with to finish up my trip.
Q. So, I guess he was on reserve?
A. I don't know that.
Q. Tell me about him.

A. Nice guy. I met him in Houston. He was talking about -- apparently, him and his sister have a trucking company, and he had went to an auction and purchased a truck for a good deal. He was excited about that. His daughter goes to school in Tampa. His girlfriend was getting ready to move down from Newark.

Q. Move down from where?

A. Newark, New Jersey.

Q. I forgot to ask, and I just want to make sure that we capture this. So, you're allowed one person to participate in the investigation, then. Jen's who you want?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay, great. I just wanted to make sure I got that.

MR. LAWRENCE: And, Jen, you just want to introduce yourself?

MS. CHERNICHAW: Sure, Jennifer Chernichaw. I'm Staff Vice President, Labor and Employment Counsel at Atlas Air.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. I'm sorry about that. Got ahead of myself.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. So, he had a girlfriend that was --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- getting ready to move down to --

A. Well, she was getting ready to move down to Miami.

Q. She was.

A. Yeah. She was getting ready to sell her place, I think.

Q. Anything more he tell about his life?

A. Originally from Antigua. Had went to school in London. Was going to become a lawyer. Decided he wanted to become a pilot.
Q. Tell me about the flying that you did with him. You had three legs with him, correct?
A. I had three legs. I flew the first and third leg. He was the flying pilot for the second leg that was Baltimore-Tampa.
Q. So, he flew the Baltimore to Tampa leg?
A. He flew the Baltimore-Tampa leg.
Q. In general, tell me about his piloting.
A. It was standard. He operated via SOP, you know. I didn't see anything that made my eyebrows scrunch up.
Q. Anything challenging about that Baltimore-Tampa leg, do you recall?
A. It was a real nice day.
Q. Was it a day trip, nighttime?
A. We landed during the day, so -- yeah, we departed at 4:30 in the morning for the push, and we clocked in 0740 local.
Q. 0730?
A. 40.
Q. 0740, sorry. How was he as far -- I mean, you said he was, you know, operated by SOP. And so, tell me about his procedures and his interaction with you with -- mainly, like CRM is what I'm looking for.
A. Yeah, it was -- his CRM was SOP. It was standard, as to training. As far as somebody that's been here for less than 2

years, you know, I'd say, he's in -- he's definitely in the top half of the people I've flown with.

Q. Did you guys get a chance to talk about -- he talked to you a little bit about his career goals or -- I know he wanted to be a lawyer and such, but --

A. I'm sorry?

Q. I know you mentioned he wanted to be a lawyer, and then he --

A. Well, no, that was when he was younger. He had started through that, and then he didn't want to have anything else to do with it.

Q. Okay.

A. And he decided to become a pilot. But he actually liked it here. He didn't say he wanted to go anywhere else.

Q. Tell me about his assertiveness in the cockpit. And what I'm getting at is, do you think he had the personality speak up if he saw an error being done in the cockpit?

A. I do.

Q. What makes you say that?

A. He had a loud, deep voice. He was very -- there wasn't a lot of hesitation. So, that's what I'm going off of. I think if there was something wrong, I don't think he's one of the people that would sit back and just let the cards fall.

Q. Kind of expand on that a little bit. What do you mean he's not somebody that would sit back and let the cards fall? What makes you say that?

A. You mean, like me, I sound kind of meek, probably, don't talk very loud. But he just had that -- there was an air of confidence to him.
Q. When he was flying, was he operating the aircraft primarily on autopilot or manually?
A. It was primarily on autopilot. We flew the TERP 6 departure out of Baltimore, and per SOP, we're to engage the autopilot when on an RNAV departure. Then generally, as people will disconnect autopilot somewhere about 1,000-1,500 feet, which, if I remember, it was about in that neighborhood that he started to hand fly the aircraft.
Q. And then, how was it hand flying?
A. It was fine. It was a stable approach.
Q. Going back to the Baltimore to Tampa leg, he was flying for that leg. Who does the preflight on the aircraft when -- is there a designation of authority to do --
A. I have the first officer do the preflights.
Q. On all the flights?
A. Unless it's something, like if I get out to Cincinnati and I start a pairing and where schedules start and the van times run to get us to the airport, if I'm there really early and he's not there yet, every once in a blue moon, I'll do a walk-around, and then I inform the first officer that I took care of it.
Q. Do you recall on that one if you did the walk-around in Baltimore?

A. No, he did the walk-around.
Q. Okay. And generally, what's involved in the walk-around of the aircraft?
A. Walk-around is to go around and check the exterior of the aircraft for any defects.
Q. Is there any preflight responsibilities for pilots at Atlas to take a look at the cargo load?
A. No, sir. Not on the 76. You can't generally get back there through the cargo entrance door.
Q. You say on the 76. And I know that you had 74, so can you do the 74 as well?
A. A first officer or sometimes if you have a heavy crew working, the second captain, he or she may walk the -- they will walk the cargo on the main deck.
Q. So, the augmented captain on a 74 will go back and walk the deck.
A. Sometimes. I'm just saying that if he or she just happens to be sitting around doing nothing, and the first officer is -- if the second first officer is busy, then one of the two of the heavy crew will go walk the main deck.
Q. Okay.
A. And even if it's a two-man crew on the 74, then the first officer will generally go walk the deck.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that a requirement that they -- Sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, stop.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. So, on the 74, is that a requirement? I wanted to make sure. Is that a requirement, somebody could walk the deck?

A. You know, it's been 2 years since I've flown it. I do not know if it's in print. But I know it was something that we did.

Q. Okay. Are you trained to walk the deck?

A. When you -- when I did my OE, you were walked back through with the OE captain.

Q. With the check airman or --

A. The check airman, yes, sir.

Q. What were you looking for?

A. You were looking to make sure that the locks were secured. You were looking for defective netting. You were looking for hazmat not properly secured. And, you know, you kind of go around and you look for -- I would look for the ancillary stuff, like had a sidewall been punctured. Had -- on a 74, there's kind of a stepdown as you get towards the front of the aircraft. I would always check to see -- make sure nothing had banged against that.

Q. Okay.

A. And then, towards the front of the aircraft on the 74, you have ladder, some other mechanical equipment, making sure that's stowed and the bags are strapped down.

Q. But -- and I know we're talking about the 74. I'll get to the 76 in a second, but on the 74, specific to the actual cargo

load, what kind of training did you get to look at the cargo load?
A. I cannot -- to tell you in detail, I don't remember.
Q. Okay. So, taking that to the 767, what type of training have you got to take a look at in preflight, the cargo load?
A. On the 767, you can't -- once they put that first pallet into position, you can't access the cargo. And then, even if you could get into that position, there is not enough space between the wall and the cargo to get down through there.
Q. So, who is responsible for the cargo level on the 767?
A. That would be the -- your loadmaster. And all those verifications that the load is secured is you get on your weight and balance. Two of them are through electronic signatures now and then, I believe the final one is a loadmaster, and they physically sign it.
Q. So, they physically sign --
A. The weight and balance.
Q. Okay. And as a captain on the 76, what's that tell you?
A. It tells me that the load is secured and locked, and has been verified. The weights have been verified against what was actually loaded.
Q. Do you have any interaction other than them giving you the sheet to say it's secured? Do you have any interaction with the loadmasters?
A. I would say 80 percent of the time, no. They're usually off and about working with the -- Cincinnati, they're working multiple

flights.
Q. Do the loadmasters travel with you guys?
A. No, sir. Not on the 76. Well, not on DHL and Amazon 76s. On the AMC flights, you will -- I believe you will have a loadmaster. I've only done one trip for AMC on the 76 -- or two.
Q. What's AMC?
A. Air Mobility Command.
Q. Oh, okay. And you said -- for the Prime Air -- is there anything from a pilot's standpoint on the 76 for Atlas that is different procedural-wise when operating Prime Air flight?
A. The only procedural difference between -- are you saying between DHL and Amazon?
Q. Or anything. If you'd show up to the aircraft, a 767, you're rated to do any of these different types of various types of flying for Atlas. If you show up and you see Prime Air on the side of the airplane, is there anything that comes out to you that says, okay, this is going to be different?
A. In Cincinnati, they will do a weight verification, which is where they will go through and read the weights off of a separate sheet of paper. You verify them on the weight and balance that they're correct. That occurs in Cincinnati, which is common to both DHL and Prime. At an out station on Amazon, that does not occur, but that will still occur on a DHL flight. And then, the weight and balance for an AMC flight is different.
Q. I guess what I'm getting at is, do you fly the airplane any

different, procedurally?
A. Procedurally, I do not fly the airplane any different.
Q. Procedurally no different when you operate it, the steps you take on a Prime Air versus anything else. You're using the same procedures, the same checklists, same SOPs --
A. Same checklist. I load the box -- the FMC the same way, fly the aircraft the same way.
Q. Do you -- have you, during your time -- I know you haven't been here but a few years and such, but have you gotten to know any of these loadmasters? Do you get to know them or is your only interaction when you see them? I guess what I -- let me kind of clarify. I'm kind of looking to see, is there any training that's being done jointly with pilots and loadmasters or is this just a completely separate function of the operation?
A. The loadmasters do no training with us.
Q. How do you like flying for Atlas?
A. I love flying for 121 supplementals.
Q. Why?
A. There's the option to do whatever you want. I mean, there's a better way of phrasing that. There's a variety. And that variety increases with seniority. Right now, if I want to fly DHL, I can do that. If I want to fly Amazon, I can do that. As my seniority increases, if I want to go take a New York base and start flying more passenger, that becomes available. And with that, the variety of destinations tends to increase.

Q. How do you like the -- how do you characterize the training you get here at Atlas?
A. It's good. I mean, it's thorough. It's not easy. You're treated like a professional and professionalism is expected in the training environment here.
Q. And in general, how do you characterize the safety culture here at the airline?
A. You can call a halt to it if you see something. I never have any qualm about calling up the chain if I need to. The support is excellent.
Q. Going back to your interactions with the first officer, how would you rate him skill-wise with the other first officers you've had a chance to fly with here?
A. I can't really assign him a number.
Q. Right.
A. I can say --
Q. Just in general.
A. Normal. He was proficient. I mean, I didn't have to constantly wonder what he was doing.
Q. Anything else you could think of that you can offer us about your experience with that first officer, the accident first officer?
A. Not really. My time I spent with him was in the airplane. I tend to kind of just stay to myself on my overnights. So, I didn't spend any time with him away from the airplane.

Q. And I'm not sure I asked, but I apologize if I didn't. Was this your -- this last flight that you had flown with him, was that the only experience you had with him?
A. I believe it was. I don't think I'd flown with him before.
DR. BRAMBLE: My turn? Okay.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. We're trying to confirm some of the details with your HR and Family Assistance, but did Conrad say where he lived? Was it Miami?
A. Yeah, Miami.
Q. Do you know how long he lived there?
A. No, sir.
Q. And what was the dates of these flights you had with him?
A. In local time, it was the 13th and 15th and 16th of this month.
Q. There's going to be some pauses here as I skip around and try not to ask you the same questions. So, you had no meals together during the layovers?
A. No, sir.
Q. Did Conrad wear corrective lenses? Like glasses that you could see?
A. I don't remember that. I mean, I literally don't remember if he did or didn't. I knew he threw on sunglasses coming into Tampa that day, but other than that, I don't remember.
Q. Do you know anything about use of alcohol, tobacco, medications?

A. No, sir.
Q. I should have specified, about his use.
(Laughter.)
A. No, I don't.
Q. Know anything about his general health?
A. No. I think he was, what, 48? I think. I'm trying to remember. That might have been somebody else that was 48. But, yeah, he seemed to get around just fine.
Q. He mention anything about any recent illnesses?
A. No, sir.
Q. He mention any significant recent changes in his health, finances, or personal life?
A. No, sir.
Q. Do you know how long he'd been with his girlfriend?
A. No, sir.
Q. He mention anything about how he'd been sleeping?
A. No.
Q. Dave mentioned the safety culture at the company. If you had a safety-related concern, how would you report that information?
A. We have a couple of avenues. There is a safety committee here which you can report to. My primary avenue of reporting safety-related items is through our ASAP program or an FCR.
Q. Is that a flight crew report?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Have you ever done so?

A. I have.
Q. Did you feel the information was followed up on?
A. I typically don't hear anything, because it's never been anything over the top.
Q. Do you have confidence that the company is utilizing the information?
A. I'm sorry?
Q. Do you have confidence that the company is utilizing the information?
A. I believe they are. We have our publication that comes out monthly. It's called Direct To. That's primarily a function. That data is derived primarily from the ASAPs that are received.
Q. How often do you operate Prime flights?
A. I would say 95 percent of my flying is for Amazon.
Q. And some of that is out of Miami?
A. Some of it. The vast -- only a minority of that flying is out of Miami.
Q. Can you walk us through what happens when you show up in the morning in Miami for a flight?
A. See here, we get to the airplane. The first officer do the walk-around. I proceed up the steps. First thing I do is I start looking to see are there any red tags hanging from the airplane indicating maintenance is there, if maintenance isn't there to talk to me. Check the circuit breakers real quick, grab the log book, go through them, check the deferred maintenance items.

After that, then I know -- I have an idea now it's safe to power the airplane, if it's not powered, which it's never unpowered. Then I sit down and I go through my flows.

Q. And Dave was talking to you about some of the load information. How does that come into your preflight preparation process? When do you review that?

A. That comes up to you at basically the very last minute.

Q. And how do you do your preflight preparation with weather and all that sort of thing?

A. My preparation starts at the hotel. I wake up 30 minutes prior to my wake up. I check to see if there's a flight plan. If the flight plan's available, I go through that. And then, I will check -- I check the surface prog chart just to see the location of fronts and pressure systems. And then, when I get to the airplane, all I have to do is review that I have the current revision for the flight plan. And then, I go through and I annotate the flight plans with what I've already observed.

Q. Do you have radar on the 76?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. If you're arriving at terminal with weather you need to deviate around on the way in, how would you evaluate that?

A. I use the radar in conjunction with ATC and what other aircraft are doing.

Q. What controls do you have on the radar to -- how does it work?

A. We have a couple different models here. Basically, it combined all your functions. You have tilt, gain. You have a left and right RT. And some, you have an automatic tilt. You'll have selections for test mode, weather, weather plus turbulence, or terrain on it, on some of them. Some of them, you have ground clutter suppression.

Q. Do you have overlay of weather on top of a NAV display or --

A. You do.

Q. Anything challenging about using the weather radar to evaluate weather?

A. I don't know, really. I mean, just kind of standard.

Q. If you're arriving in a terminal area in the 767 and, let's say, you're at 10,000 feet, and asked to expedite down to 3,000 feet, what would be your preferred method for doing that?

A. My preferred method for expediting out of 10 to 3, confirm that I've slowed to below 250, select -- confirm that I've slowed below 250. Myself and the first officer will verify the altitude that's been given. That's something that's always done. We get an altitude change. The flying pilot inputs it as long as the autopilot's on, and then, the non-flying pilot puts his finger up there as well, and they say the altitude. But as far as automation, my preferred method is flight level change and then if it's really critical, then, you know, I can use spoilers speed brakes to get down.

Q. Are there any limitations of flight level change, like you'd

only use it within certain altitudes or anything like that?
A. Yeah, you don't want to use it -- basically, you're on the approach, you're not going to use flight level change, so I think it's 1,000 feet.
Q. Below 1,000?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. How would describe the morale of the pilot work force?
A. We're going through a long and lengthy contract negotiation.
Q. Has it been contentious?
A. For some people it is. For me, I don't really interject myself into that. If I was -- there's nothing I can do about it anyway. And I knew what the contract was when I was hired here, so no reason to get upset about it now.
Q. Have you noticed any impact of the company's growth on the quality of the pilots that you're flying with?
A. I think there is an impact on the industry.
Q. So, that would be yes, but you don't think it's unique to Atlas?
A. No.
Q. You agree with that statement?
A. I agree with that statement.
Q. Just so that we have it, the other two legs that you did besides Baltimore to Tampa with the FO, what were they?
A. Houston to Baltimore, Baltimore to Tampa, Tampa to Cincinnati.

Q. Have you flown with the captain, Blakely?
A. No, sir.
DR. BRAMBLE: All right, that's it for me for now. Thanks.
MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew, do you have anything?
MR. RUNYON: Yeah, I do.
BY MR. RUNYON:
Q. You said in the descent, when he asked you about the question from 10 to 3, that you would use flight level change. Would you mess with the auto throttles at all? Would you leave the auto throttles engaged? Or would they -- would you disconnect those?
A. I'd leave them engaged.
Q. That's their standard --
A. Yes.
Q. -- procedure is just to leave the auto throttles engaged?
A. Leave auto throttles engaged.
Q. And you mentioned about a, when we were talking with David about inspecting the cargo, you mentioned -- at one point you said, on your OE you went back there with your instructor.
A. Yes, sir.
Q. That was on the 76?
A. On the 74.
Q. On the 74. Did you do that on the 76?
A. I don't believe I did.
Q. Don't believe you did.
A. I don't believe I did.

MR. RUNYON: Good enough. That's all I have really, just those two, three.

MR. LAWRENCE: Bob?

MR. AARON: No questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Walt?

MR. THEURER: Yeah.

BY MR. THEURER:

Q. Do you fellows all have iPads?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Everybody has a company-issued iPad? So, you can go online with you iPad and pull up flight (indiscernible) and things like that?

A. As long as you are connected to Wi-Fi.

Q. Do you find in flying with crew members, that you're flying with one FO and the next FO and the next FO is like looking at the same actress doing the same movie? In other words, consistency in their procedures, that you don't find --

A. I don't find anything --

Q. -- pretty consistent in how they function.

A. I don't find anything, you know, too far out there.

Q. I know everybody's a little different.

A. Yeah, everybody's a little different, but I mean, for the most part, everybody's on the same page.

Q. On your ASAP program, do you get a -- like at UPS, they have a -- every month they come out with an iPad, you can go in there

and see all the ASAPs.
A. Yes, sir.
Q. All of them that were submitted and you don't know who it is. You just know the background of what it was and what occurred.
A. We have what I mentioned was -- it's called Direct To, and then I don't know if that is all ASAPs. I believe it's a curated selection of the ASAPs.
Q. It's a good one.
A. Yeah.
Q. Are there contractors who do the loading or are they different contractors or are they -- one company does all this different loading or different places have different contractors?
A. It's hodge-podge.
Q. When you have voids in the front, are they required to ensure that all -- do they put all the locks on the (indiscernible) --
A. Yes, sir. That's part of what -- when they sign the weight and balance, that's part of what they are indicating they have done. Every once in a while, you will have somebody step up and say, cargo's secure, lock's up.
Q. They sign off on that, the document?
A. Yeah, they sign off.
Q. All the locks are up. I'm going back to flight level changes. You just went to thrust forward, pulled back on thrust forward mode?
A. Yeah, in flight level change, it's --

Q. (Indiscernible).
A. Flight level change it's -- you know, if you're climbing, you're going to get your max power and descent you're going to get flight idle with the flight level change.
Q. You ever put the gear down so you can get down quicker? You ever drop the gears when you want to get down quicker?
A. It's an option. I haven't ever had to do that since flying in East Midlands, England.
Q. With regard to Conrad, do you know how long he's been flying, but chance? When did he start?
A. I'm not real --
Q. Do you have any idea when he decided, I want to become a pilot?
A. No. I mean, just a wild guess, I would say he was probably in his 20s, I would suppose.
Q. On his leg, did he perform in a way as to be directive in what he was doing and call for what he was asking for rather than being like --
A. Yeah, it was --
Q. -- (indiscernible), you know, I mean, like did he exercise command authority while he was flying the airplane?
A. He did. It was directive. It was kind of like a statement question.
Q. Do you think he'd have made a good captain?
A. Yeah, a -- yes.

Q. (Indiscernible).
A. Some more time in the operation, he -- I think he would have been a good captain one day.
Q. He had the personality part.
A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
MR. THEURER: I can't think of anything else, thank you.
BY MR. THEURER:
Q. One more. Do you guys often have -- how often do you operate with that deferred items? Is that pretty common or is it just so-so?
A. It's common.
Q. Out of 20 flights, how many would have items that would be deferred? I don't know if you can even answer that. Twenty legs, how many items do you expect to see deferred on the aircraft or legs with a deferral?
A. More than half, I would say.
MR. THEURER: Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson?
MR. HOWARD: Just one second.
Can't really think of anything.
MR. LAWRENCE: Just got a couple of follow-ups.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. On your Prime Air loads when you have cargo on those, do you ever see those loads bulked out or weighted out? I mean, what's your general perception of the amount of load that you have?

A. My general perception is they are usually under what is planned. There has been a handful of times where it has come out more than what is planned, but most of the time, it's like 4- or 5,000 pounds.

Q. 4- or 5,000 pounds total?

A. Over.

Q. Over.

A. Over what is planned. Like I say, that's just been a handful of times. They usually -- they're getting where they're more precise in their weight now. When they first started, it's, you know -- how long have we been doing that, Andrew, 2 years? Two and a half.

Q. Well, yeah, just (indiscernible) question.

MR. RUNYON: Yeah, it's his interview, though.

MR. RICKS: I was just trying to remember. I was thinking that I had come on here about 6 months or so after -- 6 or 8 months here, about after we started flying Amazon. And when they were first doing this, they were planning -- I think, pretty much every flight was load planned at 70,000. So, you had plenty of fuel. You had plenty of wiggle room.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. And you're saying the load weights are becoming more precise?

A. Yeah, the weights are becoming much more precise.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) planning.

MR. RICKS: Yes, and planning. Planning versus what you

actually receive.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Right. In your experience of doing these primary flights on the 767, where do you observe they usually put most of the load? Where is it located on the main deck?

A. On most every flight I have nowadays, they are -- it's bulked out, so just every spot's filled. When it's a partial load, seems like they kind of put it towards the wing, I believe. To be honest with you, I can't say with any real certainty.

Q. Okay.

A. It's something I haven't really stuck into the memory bank.

Q. Are most of these primary loads in ULDs containers or are they palletized freight?

A. Seems like a lot of it's palletized with netting.

Q. So, when they are using the palletized cargo loads, they've got cargo on a pallet. Is the pallet attached to the airplane somehow?

A. Via the locks.

Q. And you said they're securing the net using netting to secure the cargo to those pallets.

A. To the pallet.

Q. Okay, have you seen anything other than netting being used?

A. Every once in a while, I mean, you'll also see the typical cans, the metal cans. It just seems more like a higher ratio of palletized versus the cans.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Talking about ULDs, I take it.

MR. RICKS: Yeah.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. So, the cans you're talking about the ULDs.

A. Yeah, the ULDs.

Q. And a higher ratio of palletized.

A. Yes.

Q. I know we talked about sometime earlier about the cargo training you guys have. Is there any training you have to recognize deficiencies or anything with the netting onto the palletized?

A. I'm trying to remember. I know you can go into the -- I can't remember the name of the manual right now. You can go in there and you can see that if you have, you know, X number of diamonds, you know, that have been cut or missing, that's not acceptable, but you can take -- basically, it's a piece of nylon or whatever, that has hooks on either end and you can then, you know, connect those in. But you -- on the 76, you don't see the cargo, because you can't get back there. So, if you wouldn't really know about any of the netting anyway.

Q. And you mentioned something about a manual you could go see, but this is -- correct me if I'm wrong. This is not a manual you were trained on.

A. No. It's not a manual you're trained on.

Q. And just to clarify as well, if you see -- you said most of

the time the palletized cargo is around the wing area, right, centralized?
A. I didn't say that.
Q. Oh, I'm sorry.
A. I said when there's a partial load --
Q. Right.
A. -- it seems like it's typically around the wing area, because you would want a -- yeah, you want a, I think, this is my opinion, that when you have a partial load, you want to get your CG further back to improve your fuel efficiency. Now, I'm not saying that's what they planned to do. I don't know. But when I see that, it makes sense to me.
Q. So, for these partial loads, and you see pallets or cargo in the center --
A. Uh-huh.
Q. -- area, is there anything either forward, I know it's difficult to see aft obviously in that, but if you open the door, cockpit door, you could look back, is there anything in the forward stations toward the cockpit loaded?
A. I don't know. I mean, it's -- you get a little bit of everything as far as the load.
Q. Right. I get that, but if you have your load primarily in the center, the partial load.
A. Yeah, the partial load, they usually stick -- I think they usually try to stick something up front for the weight and balance

of the aircraft when they're loading it so that you don't possibly have the aircraft tip back on its tail when they're putting cargo in.

Q. Right. Would that be where the ballast for the aircraft would be placed? Would you consider that ballast or do you know anything about that?

A. No. We don't carry ballast.

Q. And are you familiar if the loaders are putting frangible cargo -- do you know what frangible cargo is? Are you familiar with that?

A. No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have anything follow-up?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nope.

MR. LAWRENCE: Let me go to Bob first, and then --

MR. AARON: Just a couple of follow-ups.

BY MR. AARON:

Q. Are those (indiscernible) items, any of those in your recollection, either in the locks or the spaces that have been deferred?

A. I believe so. They're typically on -- I think they're typically in the lower cargo holds. And, you know, it's just --

Q. Lower holds.

A. Yeah, the lower belly. And then, I believe in the DDG it just says, notify dispatch.

MR. AARON: Thank you.

MR. THEURER: No, I think we've talked about, when you were talking about ballast, the last container's going to go on. They take that container, usually it's heavier. They'll put that on first, to put it in that forward position. Then they load the aft. Then they take that --

MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have a question, Walt?

MR. THEURER: You seemed to have asked about ballast.

MR. LAWRENCE: Well, and I just --

THE WITNESS: I'm not sure about that. We do not carry ballast on the 767.

MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have any more?

MR. THEURER: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew?

MR. RUNYON: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Do you have any questions for us? Is there anything, like maybe that could help us that you were expecting us to ask you or something you want to make sure that you share with us --

THE WITNESS: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- considering this is a safety investigation?

THE WITNESS: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions about the process or anything?

THE WITNESS: No, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate it. Thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

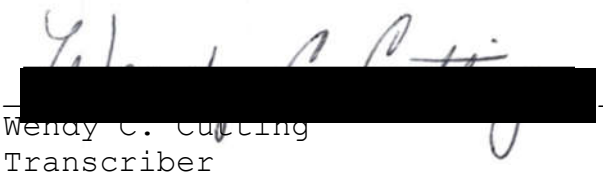
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Shannon Ricks
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	
DATE:	February 26, 2019

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.



Wendy C. Cutting
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*	
	*	
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*	
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	*	Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*	
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Interview of: ART NEPUTE

Tuesday,
February 26, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
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TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

BRENT DESSERICH, Steward
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Local 1224
(On behalf of Mr. Nepute)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Art Nepute:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	23
By Mr. Runyon	24
By Mr. Howard	25
By Mr. Lawrence	26

I N T E R V I E W

(1:15 p.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Good afternoon, Art.

MR. NEPUTE: Hi.

MR. LAWRENCE: Welcome. And let me start off by saying our condolences for you and your Atlas family and such for this tragedy. Obviously we're here to talk about your role in the investigation and what -- we always want to talk to the people that brought the aircraft in and just have an understanding if there were any issues. So this a very typical part of the process, very standard for us.

Let me first go around the room and let everybody introduce themselves so you know who's here and what their role is.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm an NTSB Human Performance Investigator.

MR. NEPUTE: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: And David Lawrence, NTSB Operations Investigator.

MR. THEURER: I'm Walt Theurer, I'm a Boeing 76-APM and UPS CMO.

MR. NEPUTE: Okay.

MR. AARON: Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot with the Boeing Company with 25 years with Northwest and Delta, principally on this model.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon, APD Atlas.

MR. NEPUTE: Yeah.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, Teamsters with Atlas.

MR. NEPUTE: Gotcha.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And you're afforded one representative to sit in with you, who have you chosen?

MR. NEPUTE: This is Brent Desserich.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. And that's who you want?

MR. NEPUTE: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: And let me also clarify Walt's role with the FAA here. The FAA's role in the accident investigation when they participate as party members on our investigations are -- their role is no different than ours, okay, we're -- their safety so we're just trying to find out what happened so that we can prevent it from happening again.

Walt and any FAA involvement in our investigations will not lead to any type of certificate action or anything like that. Whatever they learn here is for the investigative purposes only.

MR. NEPUTE: So true.

MR. LAWRENCE: I just want you to feel comfortable about his presence and why everybody's here -- reason for being here. The party system really helps us and that's why there's a lot of people here. They're the subject matter experts that assist us in the investigation.

One of the products that we're going to do -- we're all going to be typing notes as we go through, and I apologize since I have

a computer I type with my two fingers and so I may not be making eye contact with you and I apologize for that. Don't think anything of it; it's just me trying to catch up with my notes.

We'll all have a chance to ask some questions. Dr. Bramble and I will, you know, lead off and then everybody will have a chance to ask questions. If we ask anything or anybody asks anything you don't understand and you want clarity, please do so. If I don't understand an answer and you do talk slower I'll give you the same courtesy so --

And then the product that gets developed out of this is a summary this is not a deposition, this is just we'll create a summary of the information just to make sure we're accurate in what we -- be able to move forward with and eventually that summary will become part of the record from the accident -- the public record.

Do you have any questions, Art, about the process?

MR. NEPUTE: No, it's pretty straight forward.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. Appreciate it.

INTERVIEW OF ART NEPUTE

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Then I'll tell you what, let's start off with the really easy ones and if I can get your full name and age?

A. Excuse me, it Art or Arthur and the last name's, N-E-P-U-T-E, and I'm 56.

Q. Okay. And what's your title here at Atlas?

A. Captain 76.
Q. Okay. How long have you been here?
A. Since August of `99.
Q. And what's your total time estimated if you were to estimate?
A. My total time?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Is 17,000 and some change. I don't know.
Q. Okay.
A. Somewhere in there.
Q. How much of that is estimated on the 767?
A. Not much, about 300.
Q. All PIC?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So when did you transition to the -- or upgrade over to the 76?
A. I came off the 74 to the 76 in March.
Q. Of?
A. Of last year 2018.
Q. 2018?
A. Yeah.
Q. Yeah. When you came off the 747?
A. Right.
Q. Okay. Great, and just so we have a baseline line here, just cliff notes of your background that kind of led you here, just a general what led you to Atlas?

A. I was active duty air force for 10 years. I came out of C-5s before I came here.
Q. Speak up just a --
A. Sorry.
Q. No, that's okay.
A. No, I was a C-5 guy --
Q. Okay.
A. -- out of Dover. But at the time I wasn't doing reserve work so I ended up coming over to Atlas and was kind of waiting on other interviews as we came along. But then 2001 kind of put a kibosh on all of that and I ended up staying here, and it just kind of happened along as it went along, and just timing is what timing is. And I've pretty much been here so long that I just haven't left, so that's kind of it in a nutshell, I guess.
Q. Great. Let me start off by asking, did you know either of the crew members of the accident flight?
A. No. I met them for -- briefly 30 seconds before we handed off the airplane. That was just the only time I'd ever met them.
Q. So here in Miami when they -- you brought the aircraft in?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. And where did you bring the airplane from?
A. Ontario.
Q. And tell me about the flight from Ontario to Miami and I'm more interested in the aircraft itself, not just the flight but the aircraft.

A. Right. The aircraft was actually clean, we didn't have any significant write-ups on it. We did -- the only thing that even was out of the ordinary but this has been going with that particular airplane for a while now is a -- is just a migrating fuel leak, I guess, for lack of a better description. It was -- we kept getting fuel in the center tank, but that has been a repeat write-up on this aircraft for a while now. But other than that it was fairly uneventful.

We had to do a couple of transfers just to clean that tank out and we had a little bit of an imbalance at one point, but other than that nothing that even kind of falls along that. The flight itself was fairly uneventful. We had some turbulence through the Gulf as we came out from Louisville across, but nothing more than light, maybe occasional moderate in a couple of spots but other than that it was very routine.

Q. Going back to Ontario for the departure, who did the walk around?

A. The FO.

Q. Did he mention any issues?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Was there an opportunity for you or the first officer to do a walkthrough on the main deck?

A. No. We get the -- the way that thing is setup it just -- once they start putting boxes in there there's no place to move. It just all kind of gets pushed backed in. Unlike 740 you can't

access anything back there.
Q. Okay. Was that the case that -- you kind of made that as a general statement -- was that the case in -- for this flight that it was so full that you couldn't get back there? Do you recall what kind of load you had or --
A. No, I don't remember out of Ontario. I forget how much cargo we had. I want to say 57,000 so -- I don't know we got that plane from -- it came in late and we got it from another crew and they were unloading and on loading as, you know, as we were going. I kind of stayed out of the way but --
Q. Okay. Any maintenance issues or deferred items or anything related to the cargo security system?
A. Not that I recall. I don't believe so.
Q. Okay. Just in -- kind of curious about the -- if there was a write-up on like the bear claws or any of the security system or anything like that, would that write-up be in your log book that you would have responsibility for or is there a separate maintenance log for the cargo?
A. No, that actually shows up in there.
Q. In where?
A. Depending on where they're at they're in the log book.
Q. Okay.
A. You'll see them. Whether they're in UPS (ph.) or whether they're actual, you know, maintenance write-ups, it depends on where they are, but you'll see broken locks from time to time or

some issue here or there, but not on that particular aircraft I didn't have any.
Q. And who would be responsible for entering that information like broken locks or anything into the log book?
A. That stuff -- would I -- I'm assuming that's going to be the mechanics as they do their preflights or transit checks or whatever it happens to be. Because when I see them they're always written up as maintenance write-ups.
Q. So maintenance personnel are responsible for doing some type of review of the main cargo deck?
A. I'm not sure how it actually falls but, like I said, every time I've seen a write-up for a broken lock or a side rail, or whatever it happens to be, it's always been a maintenance write-up. I can't really speak to whether that is their purview or whether they just get it from the loaders or whether they actually physically go up there themselves and walk that or not. I'm not sure.
Q. Okay. You kind of alluded to going back to the flight over that there wasn't anything that was relatively routine, do you recall going through any kind of turbulence or --
A. Like I said, we had from Louisville --
Q. Beyond that, besides the Gulf --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- maybe over the mountains or anything like that?
A. No.

Q. Yeah. Any opportunity to have to -- that would have required deviation around any kind of weather?
A. None. We were at 39 so anything that was out there, if there was any, but there really wasn't it, was just mostly high cirrus type stuff but we weren't needing to do any diverting.
Q. Okay. Did you ever have to expedite a descent during that flight?
A. No. Well, like backup, I mean, they did change runways on us when we came into Miami and we had to pull out the boards and get down pretty quick, but other than that not for anything particular, just to catch up on the glide path a little bit.
Q. Okay. So when you say pop the boards that's extend the --
A. Speed brakes, sorry.
Q. -- speed brakes? Okay. That's fine.
A. I guess I need to get more technical.
Q. Who was flying?
A. My FO.
Q. Okay. Any issues when they extended the speed brakes to get --
A. No.
Q. In general, when the 76 extends the speed brakes is there any type of turbulence involved? Do you get some shaking on the wings and stuff?
A. Yeah, it's pretty normal, you know, you get vibrations and stuff and it doesn't pitch quite as significantly as the 740 used

to do, but you will if you pull them full out pretty rapidly, you will get a -- somewhat of a pitch.
Q. Okay. And which direction? You say a pitch but is the pitch up or down?
A. It's down, down.
Q. Okay. How much pitch down do you get?
A. It's not significant maybe a degree.
Q. A degree?
A. Yeah, I mean you'd feel but it's, I mean, below from a level horizon, I guess, for the lack of a better description. I've never really looked at exactly how much it is.
Q. And specific to that time coming into Miami when the first officer was flying, there were no issues you said, but I just want to see, did he bring them all the way out or did he partially extend them?
A. Oh, gosh. Now you're -- I have no idea. I think he pulled them all the way out but I'm not positive. At that particular time we had a runway change and I was over reprograming the box and pulling stuff up on my iPad to preposition us for that approach, so whether I was looking at him that closely I wasn't.
A. Okay. In general if you have -- if you get a clearance that you need to expedite and descend to a specific altitude, let's say you're at 6,000 you've got to expedite down to like 3,000 --
A. Right.
Q. -- walk me through the process, what would you do if you were

the pilot flying?
A. Well mostly -- well, if you have to do expedited that's almost always speed brakes. I mean, you can't -- it depends on how quickly they want it. I mean, sometimes if you really had to do a lot you might pull the gear and the flaps at the same time, but once you get past 20 you've got to pull the speed brakes back up otherwise you start having issues but -- I'm not even sure if that's a pitch issue but it is in the book, do not extend the speed brakes with the flaps past 20 so --
Q. Okay.
A. But, I mean, each situation is a little different. A lot of times -- Most of the time it's a speed brake issue if you've got to get down in a hurry.
Q. Would you be doing this on the automation or would you hand fly this down?
A. No. Leave the autopilot on, it would be fine.
Q. So what flight mode annunciation or what autopilot modes would you be using to get on an expedite?
A. If, well, in every -- there's, you could be using either one, the (inaudible) path or flight level change just depending on what your situation is. If you're below 10 then obviously it's probably more than likely going to be in flight level change.
So if you were -- like if I was given an altitude restriction that they wanted me to get down in a hurry and you had it in VNAV you would probably leave it in VNAV and just pull it down to catch

the glide path, but each incident is just a little different, it just all depends on where you are and what the clearance is.

Q. Okay. And if you were given the expedite clearance and you heard air traffic control say something like hustle down, what does that mean to you?

A. Usually when they tell you to expedite I've never heard to hustle down, but if they tell you expedite it means just, you know, get down sooner rather than later. But if they get -- it depends on whether they you give you a speed too.

Sometimes you can get that -- a lot of times they're pretty specific they need a minimum of 2,000 foot a minute or more or whatever it happens to be. It's, sometimes they give you a vague one that just says expedite and they won't give you specifics. But, like I said, I've had every different type of expedite that you can come up with in different phases of flight.

Q. Okay. And you got into Miami and then handed the airplane off to the accident captain and -- tell me about your interaction with him. I know you alluded to being brief but tell me a little bit more.

A. They were waiting in the warehouse. They were sitting up. There's a desk for all the -- I forget who the handler is there. I forget their names, but they have a bunch of girls that sit there that are operations folks and they were sitting there waiting for us, I guess, apparently to get in.

We were about an hour -- I want to say we were at least an

hour late because of -- we had some incoming cargo that came in from Denver to Ontario that they were waiting for.

(Knock at door.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Let's hold on a second.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Lunch is here. Do you want me to just hold it or --

MR. LAWRENCE: Just hold it for right now, if you wouldn't mind.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. Just call and let us know when you're ready.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you.

MR. NEPUTE: Thank you so much. Anyway.

MR. LAWRENCE: You're about an hour late.

MR. NEPUTE: Yeah, so we were both pretty tired. Obviously we had been up all night so we were definitely ready to head out to the hotel. But we saw them as we passed by. I didn't know any of them so it was just, hi, airplane's fine, you know. That was, that was about it.

I didn't have any really big debriefs other than the feel was migrating on us a little bit. But that whole thing took maybe -- like I said, if it took 30 seconds that was -- that's a lot. But they weren't really talking too much and I didn't know them so it was a very brief, brief conversation.

Q. Okay. Any impression on how they appeared?

A. My FO swears they were tired. I didn't really pay that much

attention to it, but he swore up and down they looked tired. I'm like, okay, maybe. But I don't know if that's -- you think about that stuff after the fact when somebody tells you they crashed an airplane and you start going -- thinking of all kind of stuff.

Q. Right.

A. But I don't know. Honestly, I didn't catch too much from them. I mean, the captain seemed cordial. He was a nice guy but the other two guys didn't say anything. They were pretty quiet.

Q. Okay. Now let me ask you a little bit -- just, you know, to finish up with the cargo. Tell me about your interaction with loadmasters here at Atlas. Are they loadmasters hired by Atlas or contract or I mean --

A. Some of them are. We have a mix. I've seen we have some that are Atlas, actual Atlas employees and some of them are contract. Kind of -- it seems to be a hodgepodge from what I've run into, but I'll qualify that by saying the last eight years I've been flying passenger flying out of Luanda, so we had specific station guides.

And so I've -- this has been my -- I've just been back online actually flying freight for the last eight months. So I see the PSRs that we have, the passenger service guys that are loadmasters that I believe are Atlas employees, but back in the day we definitely had a mix. So and I'm -- and that's kind of the impression I got now with the different stations. Some of the guys are contract some of the guys are Atlas.

Q. Now that you're back on the 76 and doing mostly the cargo side, tell me how many of these operations are the Prime Air ones or maybe DHL or --
A. I'd say 95 percent of mine are Amazon. I don't do DHL very much.
Q. Okay. Anything special from a pilot procedure aspect, how you fly the airplane if you're doing a --
A. No, no.
Q. And tell me about the loads that you're typically carrying, you're weighting out, bulking out, how is that working?
A. Neither right now. I was kind of surprised. Sometimes we get a few heavy but a lot of the stations that we're doing right now -- because I've been doing a lot of Honolulu, so that tends to be pretty light coming back because they just don't have anything.

Flights out of Rockford are a little heavier. It just -- it depends on the station, but honestly they try to block us for 80 and for a lot of the Amazon stuff and I'm seeing loads that tend to be 50 to 60 maybe, a lot but --
Q. So when you say block for 80, I'm sorry to interrupt but --
A. 80,000 pounds.
Q. 80,000 pounds and then --
A. Right, right.
Q. -- you're typically seeing?
A. Yeah, 50, 60, something like that and depending. Like, if you go to Hawaii it's heavier going out and then coming back it's

light because they just don't have any cargo coming that direction. And coming out of Miami it tends to be the same thing, they tend to be light a lot, because there's just not a lot of manufacturing in this area or anything that really comes out but -- so the loads out of here tend to be light a lot too.

Q. So if they're light loads do they do -- just loading the main deck partially so is there a gap in the --

A. Oh, yeah.

Q. -- main deck a lot of times?

A. And for the most part, from what I've seen, when they do that just for the CG purposes the cargo all goes to the back. It's all definitely in the aft of the airplane.

Q. Why is that?

A. Just for the CG. Just to keep it in normal range but --

Q. Okay. Are most of these container -- are these Amazon operations, are the cargos loaded in containers or ULDs --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- or are they a palletized?

A. Most of the stuff that I see from Amazon tends to be the cardboard cutout things that they have. It's a little unusual but they're precut cardboard boxes that basically sit on pallets and they're cut for whatever particular aircraft they happen to be on. I mean, there are some ULDs but mostly you see a lot of that. But, I mean, I guess when they're just all in boxes they're trying to jam all the little packages in there as much as they can but --

Q. All right. So most of the cargo is palletized in these large boxes that are --
A. Right.
Q. -- sitting on the pallet?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. How are the boxes secured to the pallet?
A. I think they're just with cargo nets. Honestly, I never really looked that closely at how they were -- they're put on there because most of the time I see them they're coming up from behind us and they throw them on, and we don't get to do the walk arounds like we used to do, where you went in and actually inspected the cargo.

So, I mean, on the 400 you actually had the ability to go back there and look at everything and go, oh, get rid of that, and that, or do this, or do that. But on the 76 it's not quite the same.
Q. Okay. So that answer actually alludes to my next question. Are you guys trained as pilots on any -- to, how to recognize the buildup, or how -- the proper buildup or the proper security?
A. We, we do get some. We've had -- we usually get that through recurrent where they -- they'll do that for a couple -- about bad pallets, bad nets, loading type issues and stuff. But you had more control over it when we were just a 74 operation and they tended to be more about it.

But when there's a 76 and you actually can't physically go

back there and inspect the cargo it kind of goes out the window, and you're relying on your ground people and your loaders to inspect it and do it correctly.

Q. I'm sorry, you said relying on your loaders?

A. Yeah.

Q. To load it and inspect it?

A. Yeah, yeah.

Q. So, no training on the cargo -- or you did that there was some training --

A. Right.

Q. -- on how to load some of that. Is that done in ground school --

A. Right.

Q. -- or is that a video kind of presentation V (ph.) file training or --

A. It's done in ground school mostly. We have a little bit of what they call distant learning training for it too which is, you know, you get the videos and stuff and we pull them down through our training software, but we've had those for years.

Since I've been here they've done it on a pretty regular basis where they talk about nets, and loading procedures, and cut nets and what you can expect, and can't expect, and what bad pallet looks like, and how it locks. But, like I said, on this aircraft you can't inspect the locks and stuff. You have to rely on the guys that are loading it to actually do their job.

Q. Well, who's ultimately responsible for the cargo loading?
A. Well, I mean, ultimately the captain's responsible for everything but --
Q. Do you know if the loadmasters are certified?
A. I believe so. I don't really know what their background is or what their training is.
Q. And I'll just finish up here with, let me ask you what percentage of reliance you have as a captain on the 76 with the loadmasters that they're conducting their job properly?
A. My confidence I have in them doing their job or reliance? I'm kind of --
Q. Your reliance not confidence --
A. Okay.
Q. -- what is your reliance as a captain on them doing their job correctly?
A. It's pretty high. I mean, obviously I can check their numbers and stuff to make sure they're good and you -- sometimes you go out and you can look at the loaders as they're bringing them up, and you can see the things coming by the cockpit for the most part.

But have I actually sat down and walked through each pallet as they've come up, no?

Q. No.
A. I mean, I see them from time to time as they're coming up, but it's not, it's not quite the same as what we used to do when

we did on the 74 and you actually had an extra guy, and you'd have somebody that would walk the cargo and stuff, like we used to do on that aircraft, but this one is definitely different.

Q. Ever have a load shift in flight on you?

A. Have I had a load shift?

Q. Yeah.

A. No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Bill?

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Did the -- did you guys have cause to use the weather radar -- onboard weather radar at all?

A. Well, we'd use it normally, routinely. I mean, there were lower thunderstorms, build-ups; they weren't really thunderstorms at that point crossing the Gulf and stuff. So, yeah, we were using the radar some, but none of it was really affecting us so it wasn't a big imperative.

Q. Did it seem to work normally?

A. It seemed like it. I didn't -- I mean, we didn't see a lot that was worth -- I mean, I got decent ground return as we pulled up because a lot of the stuff was really low and we have to filter it out. I mean, we had nothing at altitude to affect us. So, I mean, from what I got out of it it seemed like it was fine.

Q. All right. And when you pop the speed brakes do you feel -- is it a noticeable longitudinal deceleration?

A. Longitudinal deceleration. It's noticeable, yeah.

Q. Is it like braking at a stop sign in a car or --
A. Kind of but not. You don't get the forward so much as it seems like it's -- god, how would I describe it -- as, you know, the tail kind of pushes up a little bit and you're getting that extra drag obviously because as you build the boards up it tends to want to pitch it down a little bit, but you get that break in the lift too so --
MR. BRAMBLE: Okay. That's all I've got, thanks.
MR. LAWRENCE: All right. We'll go around the table. Walt.
MR. THEURER: I really don't have any questions at all. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Bob?
MR. AARON: No, sir.
MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew?
BY MR. RUNYON:
Q. What were the questions about your FO swears he thinks the crew looked tired or was tired?
A. Looked tired.
Q. Looked tired?
A. Yeah. But, like I said --
Q. And I understand.
A. -- after the fact --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- everybody goes, oh, you know and --
Q. Okay. He just -- he thought they looked tired?

A. -- your imagination kind of goes with you, you know, so I don't know.

MR. RUNYON: I have no questions.

MR. HOWARD: The only thing --

MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson?

MR. HOWARD: Sorry.

MR. HOWARD: During the flight did you notice any sounds or, you know, anything that would, you know, coming from behind you, you know, shifting around, anything like that?

MR. NEPUTE: Oh, that does remind me. This particular airplane has a -- I guess, when they -- sometimes when they reconfigure these things with the packs and stuff they -- depending on how they plum them, some of them are louder than others and this one is very loud.

So, I mean, and I don't remember if we particularly get to the point on this particular one where I'm turning the one pack off below 10,000 feet, just because it's so loud it makes it hard to hear ATC, but, I mean, that's -- no particular noises other than that, that I can think of. It's just -- it's a loud airplane or it was a loud airplane.

MR. HOWARD: That's all I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Anybody have follow-up? Bob? I'm sorry, Bill?

DR. BRAMBLE: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, sir.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Great. I don't have anything else. Is there anything, Art, that you maybe want to share with us that we didn't ask you?

A. No, I can't think of anything. Like I said, I just -- I feel like there isn't much I can really offer on this.

Q. Right.

A. But, I mean, I have my opinions on what might have happened but that's neither here nor there but --

Q. What in your opinion might have happened?

A. I'm concerned about an air witness directive that happened on this airplane back in 2000.

Q. Why don't tell us about that?

A. The way I understand it, if you lose -- two of those bolts shear out and you can have a pitch up problem.

Q. I'm sorry.

A. If you lose two of those bolts that shear out on the elevator you have a pitch problem. From what I understood out of it it would pitch up, but if you lost three of them it could be uncontrollable, and it wouldn't give you an elevator hard over. So, I don't know if it has anything to do with it, whether it's even ballpark, but I have, I have read that AD on it after that whole thing came up.

Q. And do you recall when this AD was published or what --

A. 2000, I believe.

Q. Great. Anything else you can think of?

A. No, not that I can think of right now.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Art, I appreciate it.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Art Nepute
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Houston, Texas
DATE:	February 26, 2019

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.

[redacted]
Wade Donovan
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*	
	*	
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*	
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	*	Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*	
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Interview of: PEDRO GARCIA

Tuesday,
February 26, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
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ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
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TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

BRENT DESSERICH, Steward
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Local 1224
(On behalf of Mr. Garcia)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Pedro Garcia:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	17
By Mr. Theurer	18
By Mr. Aaron	19
By Mr. Runyon	20
By Mr. Howard	21
By Mr. Lawrence	21
By Mr. Theurer	24
By Mr. Runyon	25
By Mr. Lawrence	25

I N T E R V I E W

(2:45 p.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Let's get started, Pedro. Thank you very much for coming in. On behalf of Bill and I and the NTSB, you know, our condolences for the loss of a crew.

Just, I mentioned it to you earlier, but I just kind of want to reiterate that our role here is a safety aspect. We're not trying to apportion blame or anything like that. We're just trying to find out what happened so we can prevent it from happening again.

In talking to the crew that comes -- that brings an accident airplane in, you know, is always helpful so we can have a better understanding of if there any issues with the aircraft or what you guys saw or heard or felt. So this is a normal part of our investigative process. I just wanted to make sure you understood that.

I know there's a table full of gentlemen here, and the reason why is the NTSB, Bill and I, can't be experts on everything, so we bring in experts to assist us and they provide technical assistance to the investigation. Their role is just like us, they're safety. They're trying to find out what happened.

So you're obviously allowed one representative of your own choice. This is who you've chosen and you are?

MR. DESSERICH: Brent Desserich with the IBT.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Thank you. Let's go around the room.

We'll introduce everybody so that you have an understanding who's here.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. LAWRENCE: David Lawrence, operations investigator with the NTSB.

MR. THEURER: Walt Theurer. I'm an AMP with the Boeing 76/75 at UPS.

MR. AARON: Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot with the Boeing Company and I've spent a lot of time on a 75/76.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon, APD, Atlas Air.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, IBT, Safety Committee.

MR. LAWRENCE: And let me expand on Walt's role here with the FAA. Just so you know and you're comfortable, Walt and the FAA, when they participate in all -- they always participate in our investigations. Their role is no different than ours, we're safety pilots and they're safety as well. So we're -- they're just trying to assist us in the investigation.

Anything they say or anything they hear rather or anything that's part of the investigation can't be used for certificate action against the carrier or yourself or anything like that, they're just safety. So, you know, feel free to feel comfortable about, you know, sharing and your answers.

So any questions of the process?

MR. GARCIA: No, just --

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I know I told you earlier that we were going to be taking notes. I apologize if I don't make eye contact with you. I used to type on the FMC like this. Copilots used to drive me -- you know, I drove them nuts but -- if I ask a question you don't understand, please stop and let me know.

If I need you to expand on an answer or something I'll be happy to do that. If I've got my head down and I'm not making eye contact I apologize but it's just me catching up with my notes, don't, you know, read anything into that.

And, of course, the transcription we do on the tape recording will become part of the public record down the road. It's just the notes that we'll have will be part of the record.

So, now, any questions --

MR. GARCIA: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- now that I explained that? Great, perfect.

INTERVIEW OF PEDRO GARCIA

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let me start with the easy ones. If I could get your full name and age, please?

A. All right. Full name's Pedro Andres Iraheta Garcia Prieto, and I'm 31.

Q. All right. You're going to have to spell it through for me and help me with this, please.

A. Yeah. Yep.

Q. Okay.

A. First one?
Q. Yes.
A. P-E-D-R-O.
Q. Okay.
A. Second one is A-N-D-R-E-S. Last name Iraheta, I-R-A-H-E-T-A, and Garcia Prieto is G-A-R-C-I-A and space P-R-I-E-T-O.
Q. Okay, great. And how old are you?
A. 31.
Q. Okay, great. And what's your title here at Atlas?
A. 767, First Officer.
Q. Okay. How long have you been here?
A. Since September 17.
Q. And just give me a cliff notes version of your background, what led you to -- just a condensed version of what led you to Atlas?
A. To come to Atlas?
Q. Yeah. Prior to Atlas where were you?
A. Yeah. I went to school at Embry-Riddle. After that, after graduation I went back. I'm from El Salvador. So I flew King Air on a Baron Citation with a family friend. And after that, in 2012, I went to Peru flying for a company called LC Peru, which is no longer in service I suppose. Flew Dash 8-200 for about 18-, 1900 hours, give or take, and the Q400 for about 200 hours.
After that in 2016 I came back to the U.S. and went into Trans States Airlines, flew Embraer 145 for about 8 months and

then I moved up to Atlas.
Q. Great. Thanks. And a guess of your total time, just an estimate?
A. 3,700 hours maybe.
Q. I'm sorry?
A. 3,700.
Q. 37?
A. Yeah, I think.
Q. And how much of that time is in the 76?
A. About 450 maybe.
Q. Four hundred and 50?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And what's your role and responsibility as first officer at Atlas on the 76?
A. Just to, you know, pretty much your responsibility is with the captain and just to conduct a safe flight.
Q. Before we get to talk about the actual airplane that you brought in, did you happen to know the accident crew?
A. I just saw them and I shared breakfast with the first officer one time in Ontario a couple weeks ago but I didn't personally know them.
Q. Can you tell me about that, your encounter with the first officer?
A. Pretty much just talked, you know, like small talk, I mean, nothing, nothing out of the ordinary, was a good guy and it was

brief, not much I can really elaborate out of it.
Q. And this is on a hotel overnight or --
A. Yeah. He was sitting reserve and I was in the hotel for -- to start a pattern.
Q. So when the guys are sitting reserve out in Ontario they're -- they stay at the hotel?
A. At the hotel.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. And you just happened to be on an overnight and --
A. I was starting -- no, I was starting my pattern so I had flown in the night before to start a flight on that date so I was just passing by.
Q. This is the company hotel that they use or --
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Which hotel was it, do you recall?
A. The Hilton Garden Inn.
Q. Okay. And you had a chance to encounter him during the airplane swap in Miami?
A. Briefly.
Q. Okay. Tell me about that.
A. We were delayed. We were waiting for an airplane with cargo that was coming in from Denver, so we were about 30 to an hour late. And usually we get off the airplane, the crew comes on, but since they've been there waiting, they were inside in the office.

All three of them were sitting down and pretty much I just told them, hey, guys, it's a good airplane, have a good flight, see you, and left.
Q. No other interactions or discussions?
A. Nothing, no, it was brief. They were sitting far so we just -- I don't know, I just kind of told them to have a good flight.
Q. How did they appear to you?
A. Tired.
Q. What do you mean?
A. They looked tired. They, I don't know, they were just -- I don't know what -- how long they'd been sitting there or whatnot but, but they looked tired.
Q. I'm just curious what gave -- what was it about them that looked tired?
A. Just their, their face, you know, their posture. They were just like, you know, like they looked like -- they just looked tired, man, I don't know, it's --
Q. Yeah.
A. Sometimes you can tell when people look tired or not.
Q. Did you -- did they look tired to a point where you had a concern?
A. No, but they did look tired.
Q. Let me go back to the aircraft now and let's talk a little bit about coming out of Ontario. You brought the airplane out of Ontario, correct?

A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Who was flying the leg?
A. I was.
Q. Okay. Do you recall who did the preflight of the aircraft?
A. I did.
Q. Okay. Anything unusual you see on the preflight?
A. Not at all.
Q. Any maintenance write-ups that you were aware of?
A. When we switched the airplane to incoming crew the captain told us that he had written up the parking brake, that there was some weird feeling to the parking brake. And when we went up to the airplane the mechanics had already taken the log book so we were just sitting there waiting for them to come back to the airplane. And after that they just came up, they lubed the brake.
Q. Who's they?
A. The mechanic.
Q. Okay.
A. Lubed the brake and set it and he said, it's good to go, ops check okay so -- that was the only thing with when we received the airplane.
Q. And that was written into the log book?
A. I don't recall but it was -- the captain said he wrote it up so I'm assuming, yes, it was there.
Q. Okay. Do you not see the log book?
A. Yeah, I just don't recall it.

Q. Oh, okay, okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. Did that -- the inbound captain mention what felt weird -- I think is the term you used --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- about the parking brake?
A. No, he just said that when he set it it just didn't feel right.
Q. And what was the -- how was the discrepancy resolved in the log book or do you recall what it may state?
A. I think they just -- ops check okay. And then they lubed and they set it up and released it a couple times and --
Q. Okay. Okay. So you're the flying pilot and you fly the airplane back from Ontario to Miami?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Okay. Tell me about that flight.
A. It was a non-event flight, pretty much straight forward, nothing out of the ordinary. One time there was a light chop, nothing, nothing bad and the speed wanted to get away from us, so it started accelerating, so I pulled the power back and got the speed back into control.

Then it started getting slow so, you know, pushed it also and it didn't -- it just didn't want to keep speed with the VNAV on, so we opened the speed intervene and that made the airplane maintain speed well.

Q. Okay.
A. And after like 10 minutes with having it with the speed intervene on we took that off and the airplane flew just fine, it didn't do it again.
Q. So you were originally in a VNAV?
A. We were in VNAV.
Q. Okay. And then you went to a selected speed?
A. Yeah, we just put the speed (indiscernible).
Q. Got it.
A. Yes.
Q. And then you -- did you ever go back to VNAV?
A. Yeah, yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. We closed the speed window again and continued the flight and it maintained the speed.
Q. Do you recall where you were when the speed control issue -- no, I don't want to say issue -- when the speed control --
A. Maybe around between Houston and New Orleans.
Q. Okay. Anything weather wise that was around there?
A. There was weather below us but nothing -- we were over it. If I'm not mistaken we were at 39,000 feet so everything was below us and nothing significant.
Q. All right. Okay. Tell me about the arrival into Miami.
A. It was -- the arrival was okay. We were planned -- setup for Runway -- what was it -- 12. We were setup for 12 and once we

checked in with approach we got switched over to Runway 9. So they gave us a descent and for the descent we had to get done a little bit quicker because we were expecting something else, so we used the speed brakes to come down and nothing continued, non-event (indiscernible) to Runway 9.

Q. So what did you do to get the airplane down a little quicker?

A. We set the speed brake down.

Q. Okay.

A. Pulled the speed brake down and then --

Q. Well, you set the speed brake?

A. Yeah, we brought the speed brake up.

Q. Okay. I thought you said something down and I was going, okay.

A. Yeah, we brought it up and --

Q. Yeah. Speed brake handle came out?

A. Yeah.

Q. Got it.

A. Came out and got to our altitude and continued our approach fine.

Q. Did you need to nose the airplane over when you did that to get down?

A. No, it was normal, just gave us a little bit, got us down a little bit quicker without getting fast.

Q. Okay.

A. Not very much.

Q. Auto thrust stay active when you did that?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Did you help it come back like pull the thrust levers back?
A. No.
Q. No.
A. They were -- we were in idle pretty much, it was in idle. It wasn't like accelerating or anything, we were coming down.
Q. Okay. In your experience when you use the speed brakes on like an expedited descent do you notice any pitch change in the aircraft?
A. Sometimes it pitches down, yes, and, of course, you feel the vibration but nothing.
Q. Do you recall how much it pitches down?
A. I don't. It depends how much you pull, how much speed brake you put but, yeah.
Q. Okay. In this case did you pull the handle all the way back or just pull it a little bit to get the boards up?
A. I don't remember if I pulled it all the way back but it was past the 50 percent mark.
Q. Okay. And how was the landing?
A. Fine, nothing, nothing bad.
Q. Your leg then, right?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay.

A. It was a good landing.
Q. Yeah, sure.
A. I want to go back to leaving Ontario.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. There was one thing that was -- it's been happening. I've been flying this airplane for quite a bit before the accident and it transferred fuel from the main tanks to the center tanks during our taxi. The airplane wasn't fueled with -- the center tanks weren't fueled so we were taxiing out and we got the fuel config light and looked up and the center tank had 1.4 on the, on the center tank so we turned on the center tank pumps and continued.
Q. (Indiscernible)?
A. During the climb, you know, we burned the fuel and we turned them back on -- back off, I'm sorry. And maybe we got the lights again on the flight. I don't recall in what part of the flight -- we were already level -- and we turned them back on and burned the fuel.

And then around New Orleans again I remember looking up and it had -- still had .2 on the center tanks, and that was written up when we landed. We wrote that up.
Q. Was that the only write up air put into the log book on arrival?
A. Yeah. I think, I think so.
Q. Okay. How do you like flying a 76?
A. I like it. It's a great airplane, you know. When I wanted

to be a pilot that was the plane I looked up to so, you know, I had never thought I was actually going to fly it or be involved in something like this but, you know. It's a good airplane, it's straight forward, you know, and that's that.

Q. Okay. How do you like flying for Atlas?

A. I like it. It's a great company, it's got great people. I've never really been involved with a group of people that are that close, so it's pretty impressive how together the group is leaving out all the other stuff going on with the union stuff and whatnot. But I enjoy my time here, I really do.

MR. LAWRENCE: Bill?

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Weather radar work okay?

A. Yeah. I don't remember there was much stuff to paint, so I've heard this airplane has had weather radar problems in the past, but I haven't -- I didn't see anything out of the ordinary from it, and there was not much weather to paint.

Q. Okay. Did you ever have Sean Archuleta on your jump seat?

A. No.

Q. When you said that the crew looked tired, do you mean all three people or --

A. Yeah, he looked tired too but he was the one that looked more tired, the jump seater. I believe he was jumping from (indiscernible) or something is where he lived, I don't know.

Q. Okay. Did you see any yawning?

A. No.
Q. Anybody say they were tired?
A. No, it -- like I said, it was brief, pretty much just said what I said and went on my way.
DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. That's all I have. Thanks.
MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Walt?
BY MR. THEURER:
Q. And the fuel migration was it from the left of the center or right (indiscernible) --
A. I don't know. It just -- we had -- after we burned the second time that it came on -- what did we -- there was a fuel imbalance once it did that, so -- I'm trying to remember. We were bringing just from the left tank, so I'm assuming it might have came from the right tank but I do not know. We did do a -- we did burn just from one tank for a while to get balance back.
Q. Now you had 1.4 taxiing out?
A. Yeah, it came to 1.4.
Q. Did you have the center pumps on for takeoff at 1.4 or did you wait till your (indiscernible)?
A. Yeah, they were, they were on.
Q. Okay. There's an AD about that, but you made -- never mind, don't worry about it. How many different captains do you fly with over a period of 3 months?
A. It really varies. I've been flying with Art for the past 2 months.

Q. Oh, okay, same one.
A. And I've only, I've only -- it's only happened twice here since I've been here and it's happening the next 2 months. I have the same captain for the next 2 months but that's --
Q. And do you find that you'll fly with one captain and another captain that they're pretty standard as far as procedures go?
A. Yeah.
Q. One or the other is about the same?
A. Yeah.
MR. THEURER: I really don't have anything else to ask him. Thank you very much.
MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Thanks. Bob?
BY MR. AARON:
Q. Just a quick question. Sorry, I'm losing my voice too, it sounds terrible. Have you ever been flying along when if you weren't full, let's say any -- the empty, (indiscernible) in the pack might have come lose and rattled around or are they pretty much locked down?
A. Yeah, they've been locked the whole time. I haven't, I haven't really experienced anything of that nature.
Q. And, I mean, when you do the walk arounds do you generally notice any trends of things that are missing or damaged, ground damaged, anything along those lines on the planes?
A. Not really. I do see a lot -- some of the -- like some fasteners on the engine cowling pop open sometimes but that's

about that.

MR. AARON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Andrew?

BY MR. RUNYON:

Q. Pedro, back when you talk about the air speed problem.

A. Yeah.

Q. I just want to clarify the terms that you used. I understand what you did but just for the -- you said that -- and I think it was repeated that you selected speed?

A. Yes.

Q. So you went to the FMC box --

A. No, no, no.

Q. -- and entered a select speed?

A. No.

Q. Okay.

A. We speed intervened.

Q. So you speed intervened?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. Not selected speed but speed intervened?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay.

A. Yes.

Q. Thank you. Also, the second time you had the fuel issue you said, I saw the lights plural come on. What lights?

A. With the, the center tank lights if I'm not --

Q. So (indiscernible) lights?
A. -- or, no, it was the fuel config, that's what it was.
Q. Oh, the fuel config light?
A. The fuel config. Yeah.
Q. Okay. So one light, fuel config?
A. Yeah, yes.
MR. RUNYON: Okay. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Tyson?
BY MR. HOWARD:
Q. I just wanted to clarify a couple things. You said you were hired in September, September of which year?
A. '17.
Q. Okay.
A. Yes.
Q. And during the flight did you notice any abnormal noises or anything, anything just out of the -- you know, ordinary?
A. I did -- no, but I did see that but that's just cosmetic. I mean, the plane was okay and like the doors on the galley in the back were losing like the top part of it but, yeah, that's about, about that.
MR. HOWARD: That's all I've got.
MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody have anything -- any follow-up?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nope.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, sir.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Just one quick follow-up. When you see loads in the back of your airplane, I understand you don't have a responsibility for the loads, but I'm curious of what you observe. Have you had partial loads where pallets or ULBs were in the back main deck with gaps of space between you and the cockpit?
A. Not likely. Mostly all the time they load the airplane sometimes I've -- I mean, I've flown an empty airplane but, but, no, not really. Just it's always been -- had cargo, you know, can't really see much.
Q. Okay. So is the cargo typically loaded on partial loads toward the back or the front?
A. Where was he going -- I think we we're leaving here to Houston and they put cargo in the back and empty cans in the front but it depends, you know. I haven't really paid much attention to that.
Q. All right.
A. Yeah.
Q. And I assume the loadmaster is the one responsible for the weight and balance as far as completing the weight and balance?
A. Yeah, they come up. Yeah, they come up, yeah.
Q. Okay. Do any of you -- do either of you, captain or first officer, in typical line operations take a look at the load sheet and see where the cargo is loaded or --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- are you just taking a look at what the weight and balance

calculations have been done by the loadmaster?
A. They give us both the papers. I have seen it. Sometimes I honestly haven't paid attention but we do get them and it is checked. DHL does a good job with giving you like -- telling you where -- what's where. Amazon, we don't have that. They don't do that. They don't.
Q. They don't tell you where the (indiscernible)?
A. They do like a cross check, so they tell us where -- you know, DHL does a pretty good job at that. And at Amazon they don't, they don't do that cross check, they just give you the paperwork and that's it.
Q. Let me make sure I'm kind of getting this right. When you say a cross check you mean that somebody else that's coming in and --
A. Like the loadmaster comes with a weight and balance --
Q. Right.
A. -- and he gives it to you, then you check it, get everything and once you're done doing your part, getting everything ready, they'll tell you, okay, this is -- so much weight is here, you know, and they check -- cross check what they have with what you have. That is correct, you know.
Q. Okay.
A. And Amazon, they don't do that, they just give you the paperwork, you're done. Thank you, see you.
Q. So if they didn't tell you that you wouldn't know necessarily

where the cargo was loaded on the main deck if they didn't tell you or if they're --

A. I mean, you can take a look at it but, but DHL does it so you're more aware of where it is.

Q. I get it. But when you say you could take a look at it, what is that --

A. I mean, you can look at the paperwork.

Q. Okay.

A. They don't cross check with what they have, you know.

Q. I got it, yeah.

A. It's just what they present to you.

Q. And is that paperwork that they present you with the cargo load where it's located in the main deck is that something that's done as part of the preplanning or is that actually physically where that load is located on the main deck?

A. When they come up it's where it's actually -- it's where they put it on the airplane.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Anybody else have anything else for Pedro? Yeah.

MR. THEURER: One more question.

BY MR. THEURER:

Q. What's your procedure for entering the weights into the FMC, the captain has the load manifest and he signs it and he does all that, give them a copy and he keeps a copy, how do you get the weights into the FMC for ZFW, does he read it and you do it or --

A. No.
Q. -- does he (indiscernible) --
A. I read it and the captain puts it into the --
Q. So you read it and he puts it into the FMC (indiscernible)?
A. Yes, yes.
Q. (Indiscernible)?
A. Yeah.
MR. THEURER: All right. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew?
BY MR. RUNYON:
Q. The DHL cross check that you're referring to, is there another term for that or --
A. I don't remember.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't remember.
Q. Just checking, thanks.
A. Yeah.
MR. LAWRENCE: (Indiscernible)?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have anything.
MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew, is there any questions or anything that maybe we -- you thought we were going to ask or anything you want to help add to the investigation?
MR. GARCIA: No. I mean, I have -- took a picture of the sunset on the airplane and you can see the parameters on the airplane if you want to see that. I mean, it's --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Please do.

MR. GARCIA: -- completely up to you. It's a normal thing.

MR. LAWRENCE: You okay with him sending that over? Yeah, great.

MR. DESSERICH: If he's comfortable with it.

MR. GARCIA: The sunset's on this.

MR. LAWRENCE: I'll tell you what, we'll go off this and that way we'll take care of that on the side. Anything else that maybe you would like to add to the investigation?

MR. GARCIA: I don't know. I'm assuming you guys have -- I write everything down, weights, stuff. So, I mean, I can show you what I have and if it's going to help you guys, by all means, you know.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great.

MR. GARCIA: Other than that, it's pretty much that.

MR. LAWRENCE: Got it. Thanks for coming in. I really appreciate it.

MR. GARCIA: No problem.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Pedro Garcia
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	
DATE:	February 26, 2019

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.



Wad[redacted]
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*	
	*	
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*	
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	*	Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*	
	*	

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Interview of: WADE LEWIS

Tuesday,
February 26, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

BRENT DESSERICH, Steward
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Local 1224
(On behalf of Mr. Lewis)

I N D E X

ITEM		PAGE
Interview of Wade Lewis:		
	By Mr. Lawrence	7
	By Dr. Bramble	28
	By Mr. Theurer	34
	By Mr. Aaron	42
	By Mr. Runyon	43
	By Mr. Howard	44
	By Mr. Lawrence	46
	By Dr. Bramble	51

I N T E R V I E W

DR. BRAMBLE: Do you want to do introductions?

MR. LAWRENCE: I want to do that in a -- yeah. Okay, so Wade, thanks for being here. Obviously, we're here for the accident that occurred, and our sympathies and condolences to you. Part of the process is to talk to subject matter experts such as yourself, so this is a normal part of the process.

I want you to feel comfortable that this is a safety investigation, and we're just trying to learn from you. We work in the party system, I'm going to go around the room and let everybody have an opportunity to introduce themselves to you.

If you would, go first.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. LAWRENCE: David Lawrence. I'm an operations investigator with the NTSB.

MR. THEURER: I'm Walt Theurer, I'm a Boeing 76 APM and UPS CMO, Louisville.

MR. AARON: Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot at Boeing Company formerly Northwest/Delta. Long time on 75/76.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon, APD for Atlas.

MR. LEWIS: Yeah, I know you.

MR. RUNYON: Yeah.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, 76 captain. I'm with Teamsters.

MR. LEWIS: Oh, okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. And you're allowed to have one representative of your choosing. Is this who you choose?

MR. LEWIS: Yeah.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Your name and title?

MR. DESSERICH: Brent Desserich, IBT steward.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. So what we're going to do is take some notes as we go through. I apologize if we're typing as we ask a question or something, I'm not making eye contact with you. It's just so that we're clear on this. We work out through your -- the legal counsel that we're going to use a tape recording, and we'll end up having a -- like, a transcription done of that, if that's okay with you.

MR. LEWIS: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: And eventually, what it is, is it'll be a summary of what we talk about, and it will be part of the factual record, so -- of this accident.

MR. LEWIS: Mm-hmm.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. If there is a question that you don't understand, please ask me for clarity. If I'm talking too fast or ask the question too fast, I'll be happy to slow down. I'll do the same courtesy to you if you're responding too quick. I'll just say, hang on, let me catch up with my notes.

MR. LEWIS: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: If there's something you don't understand, ask for the clarity. In other words, don't build the clock.

MR. LEWIS: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE: And if there is anything you can think of to help us in the end, you know, that you want to add, feel free to.

MR. LEWIS: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions about the process?

MR. LEWIS: No questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Then, let's start with the easy ones.

MR. THEURER: Hold on. Did you want to do the FAA role?

MR. LAWRENCE: Oh, yeah, thank you very much. FAA is here, okay? And I wanted to make sure that you understood what their role is, too. The FAA is here to assist us. They're in the exact same role as we are. We're just all safety professionals trying to find out what happened so we can make sure it doesn't recur. So anything that's said in these interviews or during the course of the investigation, this FAA cannot use that information for certificate action.

MR. LEWIS: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay? So I want you to feel free, and I appreciate it. Thank you, Tyson. I want you to feel free to just, you know, tell us what you know.

MR. LEWIS: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right? With no repercussions. That's their role.

MR. LEWIS: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: You know, the FAA's role.

MR. LEWIS: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay? Thank you, I appreciate that, Tyson.

INTERVIEW OF WADE LEWIS

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let's start with the easy ones. If I can get your name and age.

A. Wade Lewis, 30.

Q. Okay, what's your title here?

A. First Officer.

Q. Okay. FO, on what equipment?

A. 76.

Q. Okay, great. And how long have you been here for?

A. Two years.

Q. Were you hired onto the 76?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. If I can get just a cliff notes version of your background, first off.

A. Sure. Started off skydivers. Went on to fly oil survey Africa, and then I went and flew corporate on the Gulfstream. Flew a bit in -- for regional for a very short stint. Here I am.

Q. Great. And total flying time? Estimate. Just estimate.

A. 4,500.

Q. Okay. How much time of that is in the 76?

A. Approximately? Five, 600 maybe, something.

DR. BRAMBLE: Sorry, I coughed right over that. That was

4,500.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Total time, and then in the 767 you have --

A. Five or 600. I didn't bring my log book.

Q. Yeah, just an estimate.

A. Yeah.

Q. Just for us.

A. Yep.

Q. Okay. And just a synopsis of your certificates and ratings.

A. Gulfstream IV, Embraer 170, 175, 190 -- oh, no, not 190. That's actually a different -- you have to add-on for that. And then a Boeing 767.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. Is that a full type or SIC type? On the 76.

A. It's a -- I think it's the full type of this particular aircraft. Yeah.

Q. And generally, what are your roles and responsibilities here at Atlas as a first officer in the 767?

A. My role is to assist the PAC and make sure that the flight is safe, everything is, you know -- I just relieve him of workload and make sure he doesn't miss anything, and, you know, do my job.

Q. Yeah. I'll start with, did you happen to know the first officer?

A. You know, I've met him briefly. So I don't know him, but I

have seen him at the breakfast table --
Q. Right.
A. -- maybe once or twice.
Q. Okay. Speak up for --
A. Yeah. Sure.
Q. Okay.
DR. BRAMBLE: My computer is starting -- shutting down. Well, it's recorded, so you can --
MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.
DR. BRAMBLE: -- proceed while I try and sort this out.
MR. LAWRENCE: Sure.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Did you know the Captain?
A. Yeah, just from the trip I had with him. It was a 5-day trip, or maybe 4, I can't remember.
Q. Okay. The first trip, or the last trip?
A. This last trip I had with him was the only time I met him.
Q. And we talked maybe -- I apologize, a -- so this last trip, you knew, and it was what type of trip?
A. The last trip?
Q. Yeah.
A. I can't remember the specifics, but I mean, I'm sure it involved --
Q. Four or 5-day trip?
A. Four-day, I think. It was pretty short.

Q. Okay. And you answered my next question. This was the first and only time you had flown with him?
A. Yes.
MR. LAWRENCE: Do you want to just keep --
DR. BRAMBLE: Yeah, just keep going. It's just rebooting. I don't know what's going on.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. What type of a trip was it, in general, that you all flew?
A. I believe it was -- I can pretty much guess it involved Rockford or Baltimore.
Q. Okay.
A. It was just one of those Ontario lines where we -- it was trans-cons, usually, but I can't remember specifically every leg that we were on together, but --
Q. Right.
A. -- yeah.
Q. Okay. Tell me about the Captain, you know?
A. His personality?
Q. Everything, you know? Just kind of in general. Just tell me about him.
A. Sure. Well, he was a really nice guy. I really liked flying with him, more so than, I'd say, almost any other pilot in the base. He was a really, really nice guy. Everybody liked him, you know? So, he seemed to know the aircraft well, because he was an

FO prior.

He wasn't a 74 FO, he was a 76 FO, if I can remember correctly. And I believe he was on high mins, if I remember correctly, as well. I could be wrong about that, because sometimes I get people mixed up. I fly with so many people. I believe he was on high mins, though.

Yeah, I thought he was doing a really good job as a captain, and he seemed very comfortable in his position. He didn't seem to have any trouble at all, from my recollection.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. How was he as a captain with his flying?

A. His flying was perfectly fine. There was no problem whatsoever with his flying. Could make fun of his landing a little bit, but, you know, you could say that about all of us, you know? From one time or another, but, yeah, no, he was fine. He knew the automation well.

Q. Okay. What makes you say he knew the automation?

A. Well, some captains you fly with, you know, they don't seem to know their way around the FMS as well, or what happens more often is, you get people who were on the 747 transitioning into the 767, and those guys tend to struggle a little more with the automation.

He was very familiar with it, as -- because he was an FO on it for so long, you know? Especially some of the older pilots

tend to struggle a little bit sometimes with how the FMS works. Not all, of course.

Q. How was his command authority in the cockpit?

A. I thought it was excellent. He kept everything very light. He wasn't overly, you know, I don't want to say serious, because he was serious, but he didn't make you feel uncomfortable about speaking up in any way. He made it clear from the beginning that, you know, he wants you to speak up if you see anything. He didn't act like he was a superman or anything like that, you know? He worked as a team, so.

Q. For that 4-day trip -- for about 4-day that you guys had flown with him, did you guys alternate legs?

A. Yes. Yeah, we alternated legs. My landing was perfect.

MR. THEURER: Just want to get that out, right?

MR. LEWIS: Yes.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. How would you characterize his pilot monitoring skills?

A. His pilot monitoring skills were just as well as his pilot flying skills. I think he said he was an FO for 5 or 6 years, so he definitely had no struggle on the 76 as far as pilot monitoring skills go.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. During your 4-day trip, did you ever have an opportunity where something arose that required a transfer of control? Did he

feel the need to take over --
A. No.
Q. -- on one of your legs?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Would you say he was more inclined to use automation or hand flying?
A. I would say he was more inclined to hand flying, but that being said, we used automation most of the time, but he seemed to enjoy hand flying. He wasn't nervous with hand flying, I should say.
Q. During those 4 days, did you guys encounter anything unusual, like emergencies, weather diverts, anything that was out of the ordinary?
A. Yeah, every day at Atlas Air, something seems to happen, but you know, I can't specifically remember.
Q. Okay. Did he share with you any concerns he was having in his personal life?
A. Yeah. He had mentioned that he was getting divorced, which he seemed very happy about. He had mentioned that he was, you know, considering maybe moving to Barcelona, or -- you know, somewhere in Spain. I don't think it was Barcelona. Or he was also considering getting a houseboat and living near his daughter in North Carolina.

Other than that, the divorce, I think, was the main thing going on in his personal life. But from how he made it sound, it

sounded more of his choice, and he was -- actually seemed to be pretty optimistic about it, and happy.

Q. Okay. Any concerns he expressed financially?

A. Yes.

Q. Or health?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Tell me about that.

A. Financially, I know that he was saying that, you know, it was a little tough for him, because I don't think he was a captain for very long, and of course, he was working overtime as much as he could to make up for, you know, I think he only had a few years until mandatory retirement.

So he was trying to make as much money as he could, and -- so he could have a comfortable retirement. But yeah, he did mention that, you know, he was -- of course, a lot of guys have the same story as far as that's concerned.

Q. Did you observe anything that you considered affecting his performance, based on what he shared with you about his financial position?

A. No. No. He seemed unfazed by it, and honestly, I don't think that he was the kind of person to be that concerned with the financial aspect of his life. He seemed like he would be perfectly content, you know, going to Spain or, like I said, living on a houseboat near his daughter.

And he was really happy, and, you know, I thought he couldn't

-- he seemed kind of excited about retiring and being able to spend more time either with his daughter, or at least, you know, Spain's wonderful, so he seemed to really like the thought of that, as well. So, you know, we talked a lot, so, yeah.

Q. Was most of this talk just in the cockpit, or did you guys have a chance to interact during one of the overnights?

A. It was mostly in the cockpit on cruise. I mean, we were on some pretty long legs for 5, 6 hours trying to talk to each other to stay awake. I shouldn't say that. To keep ourselves entertained.

Q. I want to transition into a few questions about your roles and responsibilities, more specific to the cargo operations you have her at Atlas. So, when you show up at the airplane, what is it you do?

A. The first thing I do is I do a pre-flight. Usually, I walk into the flight deck after that, and, you know, I check the fire extinguishers, I check to make sure all our manuals are on board, we've got our DDGs, we've got all the passenger oxygens all working, toilet has water in it, flushes, oven's working, we have catering on board.

I do all this, and then I, you know, crash checks, life vests, all that stuff. And then after I do all of that, I sit down and I do my flow, and I get the ADIS and the weather, and sometimes I, you know, help set up the FMS a little bit and, you know, we just kind of brief, and, you know, weight and balance,

get all that done. This is all, you know, before the aircraft takes off, of course, but, yeah, just, you know, normal duties.

Q. Do you have any responsibilities for the cargo load?

A. For the cargo load? When the weight and balance comes forward, we check the cargo load, yes. Also, you know, I'm supposed to check and make sure that it's secure, even though you can't necessarily get back there when it's all loaded up and it's shut.

But we still try to check and -- before, and make sure there's no broken latches or -- the cans are all secure and everything like that when it gets in there, as much as we can. So, you know, they're pretty good about -- I've never had a can that wasn't attached or anything like that, but you never know. So, yeah, I am responsible, we all are.

Q. Okay. What training did you receive to inspect cargo?

A. Training --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- to inspect the cargo? We received online training. We received classroom training on cargo inspection, and it's, you know, hazmat, things of that nature. We have an actual hazmat guide on board the aircraft.

So we have that, and then, you know, we want to make sure, you know, it's loaded in the right area of the plane, and, you know, these are all considerations. So usually, that's all checked by the captain, but I do double check it with him.

Q. How is that checked by the captain? What's he checking?
A. He's checking the -- if there's hazmat on board and what kind of hazmat and where it is on the aircraft. That's primarily the big thing on that.
Q. I guess, specific to the actual load and how it's loaded into the main deck that you guys can see, and how it's secured, do you have any training on the proper way to secure the cargo load to the main deck of a 76?
A. Oh, like, physically --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- how to secure it?
Q. Mm-hmm.
A. No, we do not, as far as I know. It could've been in one of those computer-based trainings and maybe I didn't catch it, but we just -- I mean, the latches, I know the latches have to be shut, you know? I mean, I'm aware of that, I mean, but, yeah, no. We don't know how to shut them. I mean, I wasn't trained on, you know, how to do those responsibilities.
Q. Okay. Were you trained any way on how to recognize, I don't know, maybe an improperly secured load, or a broken --
A. A broken latch.
Q. -- latch, or something? Okay, how were you trained on that?
A. Yeah, computer-based. It was during initial, so I have to kind of think back, but, I mean, yeah, if the locks are up, then it's like, you can just look at it. But, you know, like I said,

you know, with the 76, it's so tight back there that, you know, it's tough.

You have to kind of look before everything gets loaded in as much as possible, and then it's -- you know, check all that, and -- I don't know if you've ever been in the back of a 76 when it's fully loaded with cargo, but there's not a heck of a lot of room back there.

Q. You've flown the Prime Air flights, right?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. Any difference on the Prime Air flights from a pilot's procedural standpoint on how those operate versus maybe some of the other flights Atlas flies on the 76?

A. I'd like to tell you, but I haven't done a DHL flight in so long that, you know -- I do almost entirely Prime Air flights at this point, and, you know -- I remember, I did the DHL stuff for a while when I first started the Cincinnati base a year and a half ago.

Procedurally, they're pretty similar, you know? I mean, a flight is a flight, but, you know, there's some differences in the aircraft. You know, different equipment on board the aircraft, different -- you know, GPS, non-GPS. It's pretty non-standard fleet. You know, every aircraft is different from one another.

Q. Okay. But there's a difference between the physical equipment that's on the aircraft and the procedures you use --

A. Right.

Q. -- that you're trained on, that's kind of what I'm getting at.
A. Yeah.
Q. I'm trying to find out, is there -- are there different procedures to fly the 767 if it's Prime Air paint on the outside, or Atlas, or DHL, contract.
A. Yeah, there's a DHL guide, and then it's in our -- I think it's in the FOM, but like I said, I haven't looked at it in a while, because I haven't been asked to do a DHL flight in so long. But I would definitely glance over DHL ops stuff before I would do that.

You know, procedurally, I want to say it's probably mostly a paperwork difference type of thing, and a little bit of, like, radio calls. I know going into Cincinnati, we do some different stuff, which I also don't go into Cincinnati very often anymore.

You know, but we're supposed to call ahead of time, you know, tell them what time -- when we land, we're supposed to check in, we're supposed to tell them when we're in the blocks, you know, call ramp, and things of that nature. Those kind of differences, they're more -- that's more Cincinnati-specific, though.
Q. Okay.
A. DHL specific.
Q. Since you said most of your -- the flying is on the Prime Air, let me ask you just a few questions on the loads that you typically observe on the Prime Air. Do these typically bulk out

or weight out on the aircraft?
A. No. We typically don't fly entirely full, but it does happen from time to time. It does bulk out more than it weights out. I mean, we don't weight out very often. But, you know, a lot of times, we have a lot of empty cans in there, just because they're moving cans around. But, yeah, no, it's -- I mean, I don't see a lot of fully loaded flights, if that's what you're asking.
Q. Right. Okay.
A. Usually, we have a few thousand extra pounds to play with, because a lot of guys put extra fuel on board, so, yeah.
Q. You may have mentioned something there about sometimes they're moving some of the empty cans. The cans you're referring to are the ULDs, right?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. But there's weight involved in that, so would you see weight associated with an empty ULD on your weight and balance manifest?
A. Yeah, no, it says zero, I think, with the empty -- well, maybe. Maybe, I'm not sure, actually.
Q. Okay.
A. That's a good question. Maybe 200-something, or -- yeah, because it's not enough to be -- I can't remember if it says zero or if it says, like, two-something. Yeah, I'm sorry, I don't know.
Q. That's okay. That's okay. I don't know is a perfectly

acceptable answer.
A. Yeah.
Q. Moving on. Have you ever flown where you looked in the back and there's just a partial load back there? So there's empty space in the main cabin?
A. Yeah. Yeah, there's definitely times where that happens, but, you know, a lot of times, those cans are -- there's just one can sitting there or something like that. You know, but, yeah, we have that, of course.
Q. Okay. On the partial loads, where, typically, are your loaders putting the load?
A. Usually towards the front of the aircraft.
Q. And why is that?
A. Well, because an FCG is known to be a bit dangerous and unstable, you know? I mean, if you have an FCG and you go into a stall, I guess it -- the stall characteristics are unfavorable.
Q. Okay. Have you ever seen a partial load where everything was in the back of the airplane?
A. Not that I can recall. No, not that I can recall.
Q. Okay.
A. But I'm sure that it could happen, as well, depending on how much fuel's on board. They could move it around, you know, because I know the fuel load also determines where they're going to put the weight onboard the aircraft. So, yeah, I mean, you could have can in the back, but generally, I -- when I see one

can, they just have it all the way up in the front, because -- I mean, the last time I saw only one can on board, which doesn't happen often, it was up in front, so.
Q. Yeah, but I was more referring to the actual load. If there is a load of cargo --
A. Right.
Q. -- where would they put that? And you said it's more toward the front sometimes?
A. Generally.
Q. Generally?
A. But it's not a rule, you know?
Q. Okay. Yeah. Who's responsible for the cargo load in the back of the airplane?
A. The pilot in command and myself. Also the loadmaster shares some responsibility, but at the end of the day, it's the pilot in command and myself.
Q. Okay. Does the loadmaster have some responsibility, or does he have equal responsibility? Where does he fall into this?
A. He definitely has a responsibility, because we can't weigh the cans, we can't, you know, fill out the manifest. He definitely has a fair amount of responsibility, and we -- unfortunately, we do have to trust the loadmaster quite a bit. We can't do everything ourselves.
Q. Okay. And why is that unfortunate?
A. Well, I guess it's not unfortunate as long as the loadmaster

is good, but I've heard horror stories of, you know, loadmasters overloading aircraft and, you know, especially, like, 74s barely getting off the ground because they're trying to make more money for companies. But generally, that kind of stuff I've heard happening in other countries, you know? But I have heard of that happening.

Q. Are you loadmasters Atlas employees, or are they contracted?

A. I believe that they're Atlas employees. Oh, no, they're Pegasus, a lot of them. I guess they change, they can be contract, and -- you know, I don't actually really know. They come up and they hand us the papers. I think they're wearing Atlas IDs.

Q. Okay. Do you have any responsibility as far as for any roles to walk the deck with the loadmaster during the pre-flight or prior to departure?

A. I usually walk the deck on my pre-flight myself, but I've never walked the deck with the loadmaster, no. I've actually never been asked to, either.

Q. What are you looking for when you walk the deck?

A. Unsecured cans, you know, things that look out of place. You know, hazmat, you know, just looking for general, you know, condition, you know, to make sure that stuff isn't loose, or, you know -- the last thing I want is a can, you know, moving around in flight. And that's the main thing that you're looking for.

I mean, when it's completely full, they can't really move

much, but if there's just one in there, like, half full, and one of those things slides in the back, you know, it could be a really dangerous situation. So, you know, that's especially when you want to make sure that everything's locked in place.

Q. Why would it be dangerous if it slid to the back?

A. If you had a couple thousand pounds that are moving around in the back of the aircraft? It could damage some things back there. It could also alter your center of gravity and get you into a stall, or a spin, or if you overcorrected, bouncing around back there. It could be all kinds of things that could happen.

Q. Have you guys ever done any training with the loadmasters? Any joint pilot-loadmaster training?

A. No, sir.

Q. Do you know if they have their own manual or guidance?

A. If they have a manual?

Q. Or any kind of guidance, you know, what guidance they would use in their job?

A. No.

Q. Okay. No, or you don't know?

A. I don't know.

Q. Okay, got it.

A. I don't know if they have any manual.

Q. Do you know if the loadmaster is certified?

A. Yeah, I think they are, actually. They have a loadmaster certification.

Q. I didn't ask this earlier, but I'm just kind of curious. How do you like flying the 76?
A. I really like it. You know, I was a little bit more spoiled on the Gulfstream, the automation was a lot easier, but I really like the 76 now that I've gotten used to it. The first few months on it were a bit of a bear. It's got a lot of clocks in it, but, yeah, now I've got it figured out, so, yeah.
Q. How do you like flying for Atlas?
A. I like flying for Atlas sometimes. Depends on my schedule.
Q. Can you explain that?
A. You know, I live in base, so I have a lot of coming in and out of base, and I get to spend more time at home than other folks do, but I was living out of base for a while, and I have no idea how they do that. You know, guys that commute and they're gone for 17, 21 days a month.

Yeah, that's terrible. But, you know, now that I've moved into base, I mean, I generally like working for Atlas, with the exception of -- there's some serious issues with the day-night swapping with the trans-con operations. It's totally fatiguing, and I mean, it's exhausting work, it really is, out of Ontario.

I've had more than one captain international coming from the seventh floor telling me that this is the most tiring stuff they've ever done. It doesn't sound like it until you do it. It's brutal out of Ontario, but it -- the day-night swaps definitely are terrible.

You know, then there's Atlas's -- they have a punitive sick call policy, which is unbelievable, that if you call in sick and you're on an 80-hour pay line, that they can knock you down to 62 hours because you call in sick, which I have no idea how they got that one passed.

So guys are out there flying sick and they're flying tired out of Ontario, and then they're flying overtime because they have to, because they can't afford not to.

Q. Guys flying sick and tired, is that what you said?

A. That's right.

Q. Okay. And you said it was a punitive sick --

A. That's right.

Q. -- policy?

A. Yes, it is.

Q. And it's financially punitive, essentially? Is that what --

A. Financially punitive, yes.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah. If you bid an 80-hour pay line, and you call sick, it will drop you down, because, you know, it pays in a different way. It's a very tricky way that they have it set up to where they can explain away how it doesn't cost us money, but the facts are, it does. You know, you ask any guy on the line at Atlas, and they'll tell you the same thing.

Q. I'm kind of curious, because the captain you had mentioned earlier that you had flown with had some concerns about his

finances, and he was trying to make up, and --
A. Yeah, he was working as much overtime as possible. You know, I'm sure he was doing those day-night trans-cons, and then working overtime on top of it. He was tired like everybody else is, and, you know, it's --
Q. Okay. So relating to what you had said earlier about that, and then what you just recently said about the punitive sick call, do you recall if the captain in this case had ever been a recipient of any punitive actions based on his sick call? Did he have any experience with that?
A. We all have.
Q. Related to --
A. We all have, yes.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah. He was fully well aware that if you're on an 80-hour, like, if you bid R2 and you're getting 80 hours, and then you call in sick, you're down to 62, you know? That's just a fact of life here.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah, you'll see a lot of guys coming into work sick, and it was a big problem. There was a cold season, and it was kind of January, I got a cold, but, like, everybody was getting colds. And then everybody on the flight deck was sneezing and coughing, say, well, I can't call in sick. I'll go down to 62 hours. Like, well, you know?

Q. Okay.
A. Like, great, wow, that's nice.
Q. Back to your experience with this captain, though.
A. Yeah.
Q. You said he was --
A. Right.
Q. -- he had the same experience as far as --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- being the punitive sick call.
A. And he wasn't sick, and that's actually a separate deal. I was mostly just, you know, saying that, you know, it's a little tough.
Q. Well, you just answered my potential next question --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- which was, was he sick on this flight or have any --
A. No.
Q. -- physical --
A. He wasn't sick. Not that I could see.
Q. Okay.
MR. LAWRENCE: Bill, would you like to --
DR. BRAMBLE: Sure.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. What were the dates of the flights you had together again?
A. Specifically, I'd have to look at my calendar, but -- I'm sorry, I can't answer that question.

Q. Okay.
A. I think my last leg with him was 6 or 7 days ago, and I think it was a 4-day trip. It might've been a 3-day trip. But, yeah, I mean, specific dates, I'd have to -- like, you'd have to actually -- I'm sure it wouldn't be hard to get a hold of. Yeah.
Q. But roughly 6 or 7 days ago from today, or before the accident?
A. From today.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. Did you tell us the route already? Sorry, I was distracted when my computer crashed.
A. The route?
Q. Yeah, which legs you flew, like, where did you go?
A. Oh, yeah. I'd have to pull up my whole schedule with him.
Q. Okay. I understand.
A. It'd be real easy to get them to send that to me, but, you know? Yeah, I'd have to make a phone call for that.
Q. Okay. Do you remember the Captain's general attitude toward flying?
A. Yeah. He really liked it. He really enjoyed it. I think, from what I gathered, he was working in construction prior to being a pilot, and he started his career flying a little later in life, if I remember what he was saying correctly.
And he was saying that, you know, unlike a lot of the guys

here at Atlas, that he really enjoys it, you know? So he wasn't so jaded yet as, you know, some of the other guys. And, yeah, he actually really liked flying. He had a good attitude towards coming to work. He was a pleasure to fly with.

Q. Okay. And people enjoyed flying with him, you said?

A. Yeah.

Q. How would you describe his general personality?

A. Very, you know, funny. You know, talkative, definitely talkative, but in a good way. You know, he mostly -- especially on the late night flights, sometimes conversation is the best cure, you know? It makes us all feel a little bit better, so, yeah.

No, he was a really nice, funny guy, and I was really sad to hear about it. He was actually such a nice guy, that I even made a point, I even called my wife. I was like, oh, yeah, this guy I'm flying with -- I said, I'm flying with this guy and he's awesome, and he's making the trip go by, and I don't usually do that.

You know, that should tell you something about, you know, I mean, he was -- I feel terrible that he was in that crash, because he was such a nice guy. Yeah.

Q. Did he mention anything about his health? General health?

A. No, no. He seemed relatively fit for our standards. You know, he was -- he seemed healthy. Like, he didn't mention anything about it. Not that I can remember.

Q. Okay. Did he mention whether he was taking any prescription meds?
A. No. No.
Q. And do you know anything about his use of alcohol or tobacco?
A. I don't think that he used tobacco. I never saw him smoking or anything like that. I never got to drink with him, because we kept doing, like, real late night all-nighters and stuff of that nature, and it was -- I wanted to have a beer or two with him, but we never really got the chance.

We were so tired doing those -- like I said, we were like, eh, screw it, let's just go to bed. So, yeah, we never really had a chance for that. So, no, I didn't -- I never saw him drink. He never said anything about it, either.

Q. Okay. And did he mention anything about recent illnesses?
A. No.
Q. So I usually ask if there are any recent changes in health, finances, or personal life. I think we've covered that pretty well. Health, we've just now talked about. Finances, I believe you stated that he was feeling a little behind the curve on the finances and trying to make up for it.
A. Yeah.
Q. Personal life, you said recent divorce. Had it happened, or was going to happen?
A. He just mentioned he was still living with his wife, and they're still best friends, but he didn't say if it had happened.

I believe he was saying it was going to happen, but, you know, I don't remember exactly --

Q. Okay.

A. -- if he said that it happened or if it was going to happen. Now that you mention it.

Q. Do you know if he was remarrying, or?

A. No. He wasn't even dating, actually. So, he just said that he had enough with women, in general, I think.

Q. Okay. Did he mention how much daily sleep he needed to feel rested?

A. No.

Q. Did he mention having any sleeping difficulties?

A. I mean, other than just pulling all-nighters, that's just a typical day in the life of, you know, any cargo carrier. Especially when you do these day-night swaps, you know? I mean, if you're going to do those all-nighters every night, it's real easy, you know, for us to get in the pattern.

Sleep during the day, fly at night. But when you start giving us, like, fly all night, and then fly during the day, and then fly at night again, it's like, I mean, try to find one guy who can say they don't have sleeping difficulties.

Q. All right. So as far as your activities during the layovers, did you have any meals together, or was it just hit the sack when you got to the hotel?

A. No. As I can recall, it was a pretty busy 4 days. So I

don't even think we had a meal together, but we spent plenty of time on the plane together, so, you know?

Q. Okay. Do you recall if he wore glasses?

A. I don't believe he did. I don't recall.

Q. Okay. How would you characterize the morale of the pilot workforce?

A. Terrible. All we can talk about is contract and how tired we are, and it's just -- people are really sick of it. Everybody's leaving as much as we can. Everybody's got their apps out. Some people are hanging on hoping there'll be a new contract, but, you know, it's -- yeah, it's terrible.

You can't sit down with a single person in the company for more than 5 minutes without them complaining about work. That's pretty much how it is. There's a good reason for that, you know?

Q. And has the growth of the company impacted the quality of the pilots you're flying with?

A. Absolutely. I've seen a couple of guys that -- especially in the initial training, that Atlas never would've hired just a few years ago. We're starting to get people who -- I don't want to be too mean about it, but there's a few people that lack kind of general flying knowledge that I've seen.

That could get through the checkride, but then, you know, I saw them -- I saw one guy in OE who didn't know how to talk on the radio. Didn't know. Didn't know how to read a STAR, didn't know how to read a SID. Just didn't know, and, you know, it's just,

like, standard -- you know, that's the kind of stuff you used to see on the regionals, you know?

Because that's more of a training from the ground up. We're definitely starting to get pilots who are coming from turboprops, so you're going from a turboprop now to a 76, where -- I mean, I've never seen that before.

There was a turboprop guy in my class 2 years ago, so it's been going on for a while now, and not that that's a bad thing, but anybody would be lying to you if they thought it's an easy transition, you know? You can't just sit down in a classroom and learn all this stuff in a couple months.

You have to do it on the line, you just have to, you know? Without being there and doing it, it's tough, which, you know, I've always been kind of an advocate for, like, maybe they can sit in the third seat for a while and watch how things are done instead of just throwing them to the fire.

But, yeah, some of these guys, I couldn't believe it when the guy couldn't talk on the radio. So, yeah, that's something. Yeah, I've seen employees slip quite a bit.

Q. I think that's all I have for right now. Thanks.

A. Okay. Sure.

MR. THEURER: We'll go around and take a walk again.

BY MR. THEURER:

Q. Okay. The ULDs versus pallets, percentage-wise on a nominal, everyday basis, are -- is it, what, like, 80 percent ULDs and two

pallets? Or --
A. Right.
Q. -- do you carry much pallet stuff, or is it --
A. We don't carry much pallet stuff. Actually, when I do see the pallet, it's usually when there's only one on board.
Q. All right. Thank you.
A. Sure.
Q. How about your processes for, like -- you show up somewhere where -- I'm just noting the GPS, but do you guys show up in a briefing room, or do you show up and go out to the aircraft?
A. We go immediately out to the aircraft.
Q. So you pick up your paperwork, and leave a signed copy of a release, and go out to the airplane?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. So that's where you do all your briefings and things like that?
A. Everything's on the aircraft, yeah.
Q. Is there a standard process for, let's say the CRM briefing, when you would expect to receive that?
A. Yeah, we start our briefing usually after we get our PDC.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. So you use a PDC. Are you using a --
A. Generally.
Q. -- CPDLC yet?

A. We've started using that as of about, I'd say 6 or 8 months ago, we've started using the CPDLC login in select airports that have it. When it works, because sometimes, it -- the signal gets blocked and it doesn't always work.

Q. Yeah, it's starting in the U.S.

A. Yeah.

Q. When you were talking about looking at the loads in the back, I know that there's not a lot of time for a 76 guy to look at the loads in there.

A. Right, yeah.

Q. But the cockpit duties you have, how much time would you have to go back and have a peek at what's going on in the airplane?

A. Assuming we get to the aircraft an hour prior, I have just enough time to do everything, because, you know, I'm a little bit more thorough than some guys, and I'm a little bit less thorough than others, maybe, but I'm pretty thorough, I feel, you know, compared to, you know, most of the guys.

But I use every bit of my time pretty much, my hour. If I have more than an hour, then I've got a lot of time to sit there, but I keep busy, and I like actually looking over the NOTAMs, not just trusting that the captain did it. You know, stuff like that, you know?

Q. If you flew with 10 different captains over a 2-month period, would it be like flying with the same guy, procedurally?

A. You know --

Q. I mean, would it be standard, that's what I'm saying. Like, you expect the same things, and --
A. Right. Yeah, most of the guys make a very strong effort to be standard. There are a few exceptions, of course. With any airline, you're going to get that, but there's a really good effort to standardize this fleet -- or, yeah, the way that we handle things. I don't see a problem with that whatsoever.
Q. Okay. I know you guys do all supplemental work, right? You don't do domestic, international under those rules, or is it all supplemental?
A. We do international, but I personally don't, because I'm Ontario-based, so --
Q. So the U.S. stuff is supplemental --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- operating?
A. Yeah.
Q. Do you use dispatchers, licensed dispatchers, or flight followers?
A. What do you --
Q. Well, in supplemental, they have flight followers, they're just the captain making out the flight plan and everything, and -- or you guys get a printed release with the flight briefs and all that, right?
A. Yeah, but we have a dispatcher.
Q. Okay, so you have licensed dispatchers.

A. Yeah.
Q. And the supervisors on the ramp, I don't know if you have much to do with -- I know the cargo guys who are loading the airplanes are contract people from some company --
A. Yeah. Yeah.
Q. -- that are trained to do your processes.
A. Sure, yeah.
Q. Are the supervisors who oversee all that, are they Atlas employees, or do you know?
A. I don't know. I should know that, I just assume that they're -- they are or they aren't, but yeah. The loadmasters are --
Q. Now, you were talking about fatigue, and I flew night freight years ago --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- and I know how tiring that gets.
A. Right, right.
Q. How do you guys manage that stuff? I mean, when you're tired and you're flying from Ontario to Miami or somewhere?
A. You know, that's an easy one. That's not a big deal, because we can sleep the day -- during the day, I can get, like, 4 -- even 4 hours of sleep in before a flight like that is enough to get me through the flight. What gets tough is when you start talking about, like, the sixth, or seventh, or eighth day when you've been doing all-nighters and then they switch you back to day.
Q. What do you do when you get in the middle of a flight and

you're --

A. Well, here's the problem, is because you can keep up with it for a while, but eventually, it'll catch you. Because, like, you switch to the day stuff, and then you start -- and a lot of guys are doing it. They'll start sleeping in increments of 4 hours, because you can't get a full 8 hours again, because they're so messed up.

So then, you start switching to 4, but then they give you, like, a 14-hour duty day at the end of that. Because, I mean, when you're able to sleep, like, 4 hours, you know, increments at a time, 4 or 5 hours, and, you know, you're swapping from day to night, it's okay on the short flights.

You know, you're doing 2½, 3 hours and you're doing them when you're totally fine, but when you start doing -- like, they'll throw, like, a two-leg day at the end of a pattern, a couple of them, or if it's, like, you know, 10, 12-hour days when you're already just wiped out -- and they know that you're going to do it, because it's your go home leg, you know?

Nobody misses go home leg, so, yeah, they'll do it right at the end, they'll put -- even my pattern next month is, like, that's when they start putting your worst days in. Those are the days where on the second leg, you start getting really tired.

You know, I've flown with captains before that have told me, like, I called fatigue two times on one line a couple months ago, because I just had enough of it, you know? There's like 9 all-

nighters and the rest were all days. It was total BS.

Actually, there was one captain, he was stuck on it, and he told me afterwards that he was so tired that his hands were shaking. His hand couldn't stop shaking he was so tired, and yeah. It's, like, stuff like that, you see it all the time. It's just terrible. Yeah.

Q. You were talking about guys who couldn't read a STAR or SID (indiscernible).

A. He was an OE, and in Atlas's defense, I'm sure they weren't going to check him off until he knew how to do that. But, yeah, it was a little hard to watch, because you would've expected him to know that stuff, but, you know?

Q. What's the rate of -- now, you may not know -- out of new hires that come on, what reserves percentage do you see that don't get through and end up going back looking for another job, or do you have a failure rate that's very high?

A. I think he would know the answer to that. Andrew? I heard it was --

MR. RUNYON: No, I don't have that.

BY MR. THEURER:

A. -- 90, 95 percent. Somewhere in there, yeah. That's what I heard, I don't know. I believe it was something like that. Of course, we get a lot of guys that have previously been airline pilots, so they know what they're doing, and it's -- now, it's just every once in a while, we'll get somebody who's not. You

know, but we have a lot of guys coming through that have 20, 30 years of experience. There's no way they're going to fail. But, yeah, we're starting to get a couple that, like --

Q. Well, did the captain you were -- I don't know the gentleman's name, but was he in a sense -- I don't even know the word -- but if you weren't following procedures, would he have been a captain that would say, wait a minute, that's not how we do it? Do you know what I mean? Would he correct you if you weren't --

A. He would do it in a very gentle way.

Q. I mean, tactfully.

A. Tactfully.

Q. Tactfully.

A. Yeah. Yeah. He would --

Q. But he would debrief you and say, let's do it -- make sure we're doing what we're supposed to be doing, that kind of stuff?

A. He would just mention it. He would just say, oh, you know you're supposed to do it that way. Yeah. Okay. He was very, very easy, you know? He could've been a little stricter, but he didn't have to be. So he just said the way it was supposed to be done, and we just did it, and there was no need to argue about it.

Q. Okay.

A. Or talk about it.

Q. Thank you.

A. Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Walt. Bob?

BY MR. AARON:

Q. A couple of quick questions. You had mentioned early on -- pardon me, I'm losing my voice -- that if a container or a pallet came loose, that could be very detrimental.

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever see that line operations -- has that ever happened?

A. One time, I had an empty can was unsecured, but it was also in the middle of the whole group of pallets -- or, not pallets, but the actual cans, I'm sorry. But, yeah, it was empty. We didn't know until afterwards, but when we were descending, we heard, clink, and, you know, I've had that happen before, and it scared us a little bit. But then we realized afterwards, like, oh, it was just an empty one, and, you know, it was in the middle of everything. It wasn't going anywhere. So, yeah, that's --

Q. It gets your attention, though, I'm sure.

A. It does, yeah. Yeah.

Q. The only question would be, on your notes, I was looking at it last night, to be honest about it. If you see zeroes, is that -- I think you answered this already, but forgive me, it was a long night, if you see a zero, would that indicate possibly either a, the position is empty, or b, there could be an empty ULD container? If it's an empty -- well, into that number on the corner.

A. Right. Yeah. I believe that's the position is empty. I want to say if there's an empty ULD container, it's, like, 237 or something on there, but, you know, that's me trying to think about something that I usually don't concern myself over very much.
Q. Fair enough.
A. I just kind of glance, but, you know, when I see stuff like that, I don't really read too much into it, and I don't make a mental note of it, you know?
Q. That's it for me, thank you.
A. Okay.
DR. BRAMBLE: Great. Andrew?
BY MR. RUNYON:
Q. Thinking back to when you actually flew the jet with Captain Blakely, do you ever -- can you remember, like, on approach, did he kick off the autopilot and hand fly?
A. I can't remember.
Q. Can't remember? You mentioned, I think earlier, someone asked you about the different operations. (indiscernible), there's DHL, there's AMC.
A. Right.
Q. Is there different procedures specifically how you would operate those? You mentioned that, yeah, there's weight and balance --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- and there's radio calls, but --

A. Right.
Q. -- for instance, rotate. Would you rotate the jet any different if you were at a Prime Air, or a DHL, or an Amazon flight?
A. Well, the rotate would all be the same.
Q. It's all the same?
A. Yeah, it's all the same.
Q. It's all the same?
A. It's essentially the same -- pasture (ph.) stuff's different -- but, you know, that's just different because you're making faster announcements and -- but, no, it's not operated --
Q. It's not unlike other jets?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. Logistically, it's --
Q. That's all I have. Thank you.
A. -- basically, it's the same, yeah.
DR. BRAMBLE: Okay, Tyson?
MR. HOWARD: Yeah, I have a couple.
BY MR. HOWARD:
Q. You had mentioned when you had a partial load, it was a lot of times just one can. Have you ever had partial loads that were, you know, like, the airplane's half full?
A. Yeah. Yeah.
Q. And when they do have those, are those loads tend to be

front, back, middle, do you know?
A. They tend to be front.
Q. Okay.
A. But that is not a hard rule, a fact, because, you know, they could have, like, a line where it's a single, and then have a couple. It depends on the weight and balance, and that's all based on fuel load. So, you know?
Q. And one other question. You mentioned that sick calls are punitive.
A. Yes.
Q. But you've also mentioned that everyone seems, you know, tired because of this scheduling and stuff.
A. Yeah.
Q. Do people feel that the fatigue calls are punitive? Or do you feel fatigue calls are punitive?
A. I do. I have a grievance right now about punitive action, fatigue calls, because I called in fatigue maybe three times, and I have a grievance, and an ASAP, and I'm already in the process of all that with -- so, yeah, I definitely have personal experience with punitive -- what I believe is punitive action towards fatigue calls. And I know that there's a couple of other guys that have had action against them, as well, including I think one very famous guy who has a -- who's in court right now. He was in the training department, right? Then they kicked him out of the training department or something. What was his name?

MR. RUNYON: I don't know if I'm allowed to say.

MR. LEWIS: Oh, okay, sorry. Yep.

BY MR. HOWARD:

A. Okay, well, yeah, so there's a few people that, you know, in their opinion, have been reprimanded in slighter, larger ways than fatigue calls. They're very underhanded about it. They're not very, you know, open about -- I don't know. My experience with it, but that's two times with me that I had an issue.

Q. That's all I have.

A. Sure.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Great, just a couple of follow-ups. Tyson just asked you about -- you said the loads tend to be up in the front on partial loads.

A. Yeah.

Q. But it depended on the weight and balance.

A. Right.

Q. Okay. Who's responsible for the weight and balance -- for completing the weight and balance?

A. Right, well completing it is the captain. The weight and balance is handed over to the captain, he does the load verification --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- and signs it, and hands it off.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.
Q. Who's responsible for determining of the weights of the cargo?
A. The weights of the cargo? Well, we can't weigh it, so I would assume that it would be the ground crew.
Q. Okay. And who's responsible for where on board the main deck or the lower compartment that cargo's going to be positioned?
A. The loadmaster. But final goes to the captain, at the end of the day.
Q. All right. And I apologize if I asked this earlier, but when you see a palletized piece of cargo, how is the cargo actually secured to the pallet?
A. Well, I've seen it before where you see a couple of cargo straps over the pallet holding it down, and then it's locked into place, and it was pretty well secured. And usually it's just one -- when they do it have it in there, it's usually just, like, one pallet, like, mail and stuff like that. You know, they use the cans for 90 percent -- 95 percent of the stuff. It's pretty rare to see just a -- I wouldn't say rare, but most of the time we just see the cans back there.
Q. Got you. And just to clarify, I believe you were asked about your supplemental option. You said you had supplemental and domestic?
A. What's that?
Q. The operations. You guys do some supplemental and domestic

operations, correct?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. So your domestic operations, correct me if I'm wrong, would require direct dispatchers, but supplementals would not.
A. Mm-hmm.
Q. But on your supplementals, the same dispatcher is doing the paperwork on the supplementals?
A. It doesn't make much of a difference towards us --
Q. Okay.
A. -- because it's the same thing.
Q. Okay.
A. Same thing.
Q. And you just mentioned, I want to clarify, when you were asked about the failure rate for new hires --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- and I want to make sure I got that right. You said there was a 90 to 95 percent failure rate for new hires?
A. No, no, no, 90 to 95 pass.
Q. Got it. Yeah, okay.
A. That'd be a pretty serious --
Q. That's why I wanted to clarify that.
A. Yeah.
Q. What I hear.
A. Yeah.
Q. Now, let me put you in a scenario that you're flying, if

you're flying in the right seat, and if you were asked to expedite a clearance on a descent --
A. Right.
Q. -- kind of go through as a 76 pilot, how would you expedite a descent on a 76?
A. Sure. I'd flight level change it to altitude, put my speed up, and speed brakes out, I'd expedite. So yeah, flight level change, you can bring the speed up, and then speed brakes. And you're not going to come down much faster than that. I mean, that's --
Q. Okay, so flight level change --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- that's going to get you an idle descent --
A. Right.
Q. -- okay, speed brakes up --
A. Well, no, then you increase the speed in the speed window, because now you're in flight level change, so you increase your --
Q. So you're going to follow the speed.
A. Yeah. So it'll pitch over to catch the speed, which will increase your rate of descent. And if you need further rate of descent on top of that, you can bring the speed brakes in, also.
Q. Thanks. When you do that flight level change, you run the speed up --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- the airplane's going to do a level flight, or will it

pitch over to get that speed?
A. It'll pitch over to catch the speed.
Q. All right.
A. And that's, like, if you really need to get down. But, yeah, you don't have to do it that way. There's other ways to do it that are less, you know, less fast. That's just the way I see a lot of guys doing it on the line.
Q. Okay. And so when you say pitch over, what are we talking about? Just a general pitch over? Is it aggressive? Is it really --
A. No, it's not.
Q. Okay.
A. It's not aggressive.
Q. How many degrees would you say? Just --
A. Ballpark? I mean, 7 or 8, maybe more. You got me on that one, I don't know this stuff. Yeah.
Q. Are you looking for a target vertical velocity down to get to when they say expedite, or is it just --
A. Just expedite, and that just means, you know, descend as fast as you can, basically. It doesn't have to be extreme, but, you know, we are flying cargo, so we don't have anybody complaining in the back, either. But, no, we're not, like, recklessly diving out of altitude, you know?
Q. Okay.
MR. LAWRENCE: Bill, do you have any follow-ups?

DR. BRAMBLE: Just a couple.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Did the captain mention anything about undergoing a performance monitoring program a few years ago?

A. No.

Q. And did you see any signs of lack of proficiency?

A. I did not.

Q. And what happened to you as a result of the fatigue -- the two fatigue calls that you mentioned?

A. I've got a whole thing that I wrote out on it, but on the first fatigue call, I was in Ontario, and I was supposed to be in San Francisco. Ontario, California, and I was supposed to be in San Francisco, California, to be clear.

So I called fatigue, my 10 hours were up. What they had me do -- what they were going to have me do was take an airline -- or, not take an airline, to jump seat on a company aircraft from Ontario all the way out to Cincinnati.

They were going to have me sit at the airport in Cincinnati for 6 hours, and then jump seat back from Cincinnati to San Francisco, even though I was a 40 minute flight away from San Francisco, not even, you know? That was their plan, and I basically had to refuse it, like, forget it, not doing it.

And they fought me on it for a while, and then, after that, they booked me a flight LAX to San Francisco, and I was right next to the Santa Ana airport, and LAX is a long way away from where I

was. So I said, hey, you know, why don't you book me a flight from Santa Ana to Oakland.

Oakland was a half hour closer to the hotel than San Francisco was, it was a shorter drive to the hotel. The flight was not even half the cost, they said nope, you're going out of L.A. It doesn't even make any sense.

You pay more, it inconveniences the crap out of me, and it's like, I've got the flight right here. No, they made me do it, and then they made my -- I had to get my wife to drive me out to LAX, because I couldn't even get transportation out there. So, yeah, they just -- they were just totally messing with me on that.

And the other time I did a fatigue call was in Norfolk, Virginia, and when we do a fatigue call -- we had a grievance going in where they're supposed to either put you back on the original line, or send you home and they can put you back on reserve.

But what happened on this one was, they just said, sit in Norfolk. And I said, well, you've got to put me back on my regular line first, and they said we can't get you back on that, it's out in Europe, we're not going to put you back on it, just sit in Norfolk.

I said, well, then send me home, put me on reserve. No. So they wanted me to just sit for 3 days in Norfolk for absolutely no reason. And I think I had seven phone calls to them, and finally I was getting on -- I had to get the stewards involved.

I was up, like, half the night just trying to get them to send me home, put me on reserve, like, what they're supposed to do. Finally, Kevin McCabe got them to send me home, and they booked me a flight, like, 4 hours later.

So, I was up all night after a fatigue call, like, even more tired than before, and I finally got home, and I was like, geez, this is really nice. Like, every time you call fatigue, it's like -- those are my two experiences.

And the main reason I did all that, documented it, was actually, you know, I -- people are like, dude, you need to document this stuff, because, you know, this kind of stuff happens, and people don't talk about it.

You know, because they're just like, oh, well, you know, blah, blah, blah, no big deal, but people don't talk about it. Nobody talks about it, but it happens to guys on the line, you know? I don't think it's coincidence. So, just my opinion.

Q. Okay. And I just today got a copy of some schedule information for the crew, and I was wondering if these entries might be the trip that you had with the captain. It looks like the last trip that he had was Ontario to RFD --

A. Yep.

Q. -- RFD to RIV, RIV to Ontario.

A. That's it, yep.

Q. That's it?

A. Yep.

Q. Okay. So that would've been 15 Feb through 16 or 17, somewhere in that range?
A. Yeah, somewhere in there, yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah, sorry if I can't remember exact dates.
Q. No, I just want to make sure I have the right person matched up with the right --
A. Yeah, that was it.
Q. Okay.
A. And if nobody's reached out to the van driver in Ontario, he seemed to be really good friends with -- there's this female van driver there, and I'm not sure if anybody's told her yet. White female van driver that picked her up -- picked him up in Riverside that day. Just in case nobody's talked to her yet.
Q. How good of friends?
A. They seemed to be very good friends. He sat up front and, you know, when he got in the van, he was talking to her the whole time, and they seemed to have spent some time talking to each other and whatnot. So, they seemed to be good friends, you know, just --
Q. Okay.
A. -- in case nobody's said anything to her, because sometimes -- I'm sure the van drivers might not get the same news or reel as us.
Q. Okay. I think that's it for me, Dave.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Anybody else have any follow-up questions?

MR. RUNYON: No, sir.

MR. HOWARD: Um-um.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Anything you want to add that maybe you expected us to ask about, or anything you want to add knowing this is a safety investigation that you would like to share with us?

MR. LEWIS: Sure. When I was notified of all this, I was sitting in Phoenix, and at first, you know, they said, okay, you know, this is what's happened. You're going to come down for the NTSB investigation. And my flight was in 12 hours from then. So I said, okay, and I called back a couple hours later, and I said, hey, you know, look guys, I've got a lot on my mind right now.

I'm going down for an investigation, this just happened, like, send me home. Let me get my -- let me at least get, like, a nice shirt and pants. Like, don't make me fly this flight tonight. And they got really upset with me. That's not really the point, though.

But, the other guys that I guess were supposed to fly the aircraft the day -- or they were on the flight before, and those guys were flying yesterday, I heard. And they were supposed to fly again, like, tomorrow or something. So these guys are just told that they dodged death by, like, a minute, and they're all out on the line flying.

And crew scheduling was, like, oh yeah, the guy you flew with, like, 5 days ago is dead. Wakeup call is in 10 hours, bud. You know, it was, like, hey, come on, man. You know? Like, at least wait -- I mean, I'm sure that this kind of thing doesn't happen very often, but maybe somebody could tell them, hey, you know, hey at least wait until they land, like, at their next destination before you drop a bomb on them like that, or something, you know?

MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

MR. LEWIS: At least to -- you know, it was a little bit distracting, because I was thinking, like, I could've done the flight, yeah, but I was, like, no, I'm not really thinking about flying an airplane today. You know, it was like, I've got my mind on everything but, which they weren't very -- they didn't do a very good job of talking -- or doing that, I didn't think.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anything more related toward maybe our investigation, and the accident, and something that you can think of that might help us?

MR. LEWIS: No, unfortunately I think we've pretty much covered everything I could tell you about the captain.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. All right, thanks.

MR. LEWIS: Sure.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

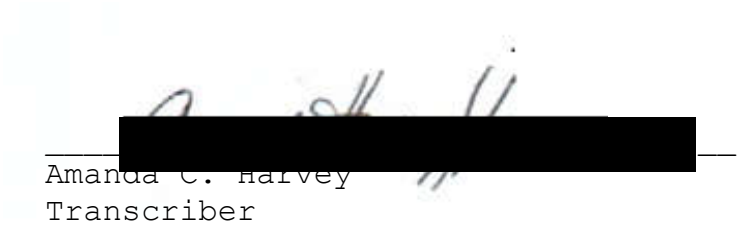
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Shannon Ricks
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	
DATE:	February 26, 2019

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.



Amanda C. Harvey
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*
	*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	* Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*
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Interview of: JEFF BARLETT

Wednesday,
February 27, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

JENNIFER CHERNICHAW, Staff Vice President
Labor and Employment Counsel, Atlas Air
(On behalf of Mr. Bartlett)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Jeff Barlett:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6

I N T E R V I E W

(12:45 p.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Good afternoon and welcome, Jeff. Thank you for being here. We really appreciate it. First off, on behalf of Bill and I and the whole NTSB, our condolences for your loss. We're sorry that we're here but I think I mentioned to you earlier our process is really just to find out what happened so we can make sure it doesn't happen again.

We've had an opportunity to talk to pilots that had any interaction either with the flight crew or, in your case, the jumpseater; there was some advance knowledge. It's just the normal part of our process so that's why we're here.

We work on the party system so that's why you see multiple people at the table. We'll go around the room right now, introduce everybody so you know who the players are.

DR. BRAMBLE: Bill Bramble. I'm an NTSB human performance investigator.

MR. LAWRENCE: David Lawrence. I'm an operations investigator for the NTSB.

MR. THEURER: Walt Theurer, FAA, APM UPS.

MR. AARON: Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot, Boeing Air. Twenty-five years on the 75/76, Northwest and Delta.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon, APB, Atlas Air.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard. I'm with the Teamsters, also Atlas Air, 76 captain.

MR. LAWRENCE: And couple things, first off, you're -- obviously we -- you're afforded one person of your choice to sit in with you. Is Jennifer who you would want?

MR. BARLETT: Yes. That's fine.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great and the other thing is let me explain the role for the FAA just so you understand. The FAA's role with our investigation is they're a party to all our investigations but they are no different than us as far as we're just on the safety side. Okay? So anything that the FAA hears or learns from the course of our investigations can't be used for a certificate action. So I wanted to put that on the table so you understand what his role is. It's feel free to talk about whatever you have that can help us in the investigation. Okay?

MR. BARLETT: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: One of the things we're going to do, obviously I talked to you about the tape so we're going to transcribe our notes and transcribe the tape and that will be put in the public docket down the road if you're okay with that.

MR. BARLETT: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: That's just kind of standard to have -- this information will be part of the factual record and public docket.

As we're going through the process you'll see -- we'll ask questions. All of us be a shot at a round of questions but I'll be typing on the computer and I kind of type with two fingers so sometimes I'll be looking down and not looking up so I apologize

if I'm not making eye contact constantly. If there's a pause while we're catching up on our notes don't think anything of it. It's just us catching up.

And if anybody asks you a question that you don't understand, ask him to repeat it or clarify it or something like that. If there's something you say and I'm not really sure then I'll ask you to do the same and clarify it. And everybody just speak up so that the recorder will get that.

Any questions about the whole process?

MR. BARLETT: No, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And it's David, not sir.

MR. BARLETT: Sounds good.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. David.

INTERVIEW OF JEFF BARLETT

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let's start off with easy ones, Jeff. It's Jeff, right?

A. Jeff's good, yes.

Q. Let's get your full name and age.

A. Jeffrey David Barlett, J-e-f-f-r-e-y, David, Barlett, B-a-r-l-e-t-t.

Q. Okay. And how old are you?

A. Forty-four, I believe. I try and forget that.

Q. These were the easy questions. Forty-four, and what's your title here?

A. First Officer.

Q. Okay. Great. On the?
A. 747, Miami Base.
Q. 747 in Miami Base.
A. Yes.
Q. And when were you hired here?
A. August 2011.
Q. Okay. Where do you live?
A. I live here in Miami.
Q. Here in Miami. And just a rough guess of your total time.
A. I think I just looked at it recently. Maybe 13,000 hours. Yeah.
Q. Do you have any time on the 767?
A. No, just I was in a simulator prep for an interview one time and made two hours in the sim but that's about it.
Q. Okay. So I understand you're familiar or had some information relative to the jumpseater on -- for the accident flight.
A. They're correct.
Q. Okay. So tell me about that.
A. The morning when we -- he met us in Bogotá. We had to pitch up all the jumpseaters, including him, but just an old jumpseat protocol. He came on board and presented his papers to us as we were in the cockpit and I see his name on there. He jumpseated on some flights of mine, Bogotá to Miami, previously. I remember running through CASS once or twice before. And actually my first

airline, four airlines ago, was Mesa so I been chitchatting him the last couple times I met the guy.

His last name actually was the same as the number one pilot at Mesa, Archuleta. So I'm like, you related to Sean Archuleta, number one guy? He goes, nah. And then we kind of chatted.

Of course, I asked him the same question a couple mornings ago, I'm like, wow. I ask you that every time. I'm getting old. I ask you the same question. Then, you know, he kind of smiled. He actually offered, he said, yeah, there's actually a third Archuleta. There's another somebody Craig. I don't know what the name was so he was kind of just -- he kind of offered some information and so it's -- he was basically the same as the last time I'd met him, the last one or two times.

So I didn't pick up any abnormalities, no, you know, nothing out of the ordinary. He came up to the cockpit and brought his papers and presented himself just as normal. Went back and he was probably hanging out just reading like everybody else that was onboard.

And yeah, we just had a little bit of chit-chat that morning. I talked with him before and kind of the same thing. Seems -- he seems same baseline as the other times I met him. So I didn't pick up anything at all out of the ordinary.

Q. I guess, what were the circumstances that had you there?

A. Just I was operating the flight.

Q. Okay. So was the 74 flight.

A. It was the 74 -- and there were two --
Q. Out of Bogotá?
A. Out of Bogotá to Miami. There were two operating crew and then there was him -- and another jumpseater was from Southern. We had a mechanic. I think that was about it. It might of even been -- but, yeah.
Q. Which jumpseat was he sitting in? Just curious.
A. He sat in one of the seats in the back. Nobody sat in the cockpit for anything.
Q. In the supernumerary behind --
A. Yeah, he sat in the four -- this particular plane had four seats in the upper deck behind the cockpit. So he wasn't up there at all. Only time he came up to the cockpit at all was to come up, bring his papers, showed it to the captain. The captain hadn't met him before so I said, "Yeah. I know this guy." He wanted to run his CASS again. But he told us his CASS was okay down below but I ran it again anyway. So he was good to go and he showed the papers, ran the CASS, I showed it approved and he went back to his seat and that was about it. Like I say, I said I talked to him about the name thing a little bit and he smiled. That was pretty much the extent of that morning.
Q. Okay.
A. I think was reading back there later on when I went back. Sleeping or reading. That's about it.
Q. Okay. Wasn't sure if he was sleeping or reading?

A. There was a point -- I think I went back to get coffee two or three times during the flight and I think that maybe the first time he was reading something and the second time I think they were -- he was, like everybody else it was lights are out and everybody was sleeping. So --
Q. Right.
A. This was at 5:00 a.m. departure so it was kind of (ph.) -- .
Q. I know you said there was limited interaction but curious what -- how he appeared physically? Was he in uniform? Did he look tired? Was he --
A. Yeah. No, not tired. He seemed totally normal. I think he was wearing street clothes, I think. He wasn't in uniform. He was dressed, you know, business casual, maybe.
Q. Yeah.
A. I think -- but I'm pretty sure he wasn't in a uniform but, no, there's, like I said, I didn't pick up anything abnormal from the limited one or two other times that I've seen him, talked to him before. I didn't pick up anything in the voice or anything. He didn't appear to be in any way -- anything out of the ordinary.
Q, Okay. Do you feel -- did he appear anxious or nervous or anything?
A. Nothing like that. Not that at all. No. He was totally laid back, going to work. Just like anybody else you would expect at 4 and 5 in the morning going to work.
Q. Okay. You said you'd seen him on the jumpseat before --

A. I had seen him riding on our plane -- the same flight because he commuted to work out of Bogotá, it seems, so he's probably been on our flights a bunch of times and he's -- on my particular flights he's probably been on once or twice before. And yeah, it's always been the same. I'm just chatting with him about the same things.
Q. That was what I was going to ask you. How did he appear this time compared to the previous times that you'd seen him?
A. I was going, yeah -- I mean, that's kind of important. Yeah. There's nothing -- there was nothing different. He was pretty much the same as every other time and, like I said, we discussed that name thing. He had -- I kind of offered up some more information about this other -- some other -- somebody else with the name and that was pretty much it. We kind of went our own way. Didn't seem anything -- didn't detect anything strange.
Q. So in Bogotá somebody's coming up to go jumpseat on one of your flights --
A. Uh-huh. [Affirmative]
Q. What's the process? Kind of walk me through the process of him getting from the -- onto your cockpit?
A. In Bogotá we -- it's different -- than a lot of other places. We meet on the outboard side the -- a little truck comes from customs and we clear customs before we even go into the secure area. So a remote man comes to the cargo area and it services all the cargo airlines on that side. So they come out and they run

all of our information.

So I think in this particular -- he might have been a little late, actually, this morning. I don't think he came in with the rest of us. The other jumpseater was there in the front. I think he showed up a little bit late which they do a lot of times because -- he showed up maybe ten minutes after we -- we went in by ourselves and I don't think he -- he came in a few minutes later.

So anyway, we cleared the customs out there and once we're cleared we -- our agent down there walks us through the security checks and all the normal stuff and then they transfer us about two or three times till we get out to the airplane and we're good to go. There's a lot of ID checking down in Bogotá for numerous reasons.

Q. Okay. Any problems have you ever seen security-wise?

A. In Bogotá?

Q. Yeah.

A. No. I think they're probably one of the tightest places in the world.

Q. How often do you guys get jumpseaters up there?

A. Well, Bogotá-Miami run we get -- sometimes we get a full plane. I've had in the last six months probably even times when we've had four or five guys jumpseating out of there. Most of the flights probably zero to one would be an average but there are flights when suddenly a bunch of guys show up.

There seems to be a bunch of Mesa guys that live down there. I've had -- I remember a flight six months ago there was some -- there were three Mesa guys on there at once. I don't think Sean was one of them but there was some other ones that live down there or were visiting down there.

Q. So you said that Sean, you believe, lived down there or had a home or residence --

A. Yeah. I'm pretty sure he -- I remember that he said he lived down there.

Q. So when he was jumpseating up, he was jumpseating up for work.

A. For work. It seems like, yeah.

Q. I'm curious if he always went to the same place. I know you come into Miami but did he always go to Houston because that was the Houston leg or would he go someplace else or do you know where he would go after he got into Miami?

A. No. I never -- I don't really recall any of that information before. No. He'd usually did our flight. Once he clears customs I actually just from here I just usually get an Uber or a car, ride directly home. They'll go -- he'll go back to the airplanes, then he'll usually get on another plane, unless he stayed in Miami. But nobody's going somewhere else so he'll be -- he'll go a different direction than I go.

Q. He ever tell you if he was going to commute and he was going to go into fly that day or is he going in a day early or --

A. No. I never heard anything like that, no.
Q. Nothing but that.
A. No.
Q. Like he was going to go to -- had another place someplace like in Houston or another residence someplace he would go to to get some rest or anything?
A. No. I mean, he might have said -- the last time maybe he had a crash pad or something in Houston. I'm not sure. --
Q. Okay.
A. But we didn't really go that far.
Q. So you're not sure if he said he had a crash pad in Houston?
A. No. No, I'm not sure. That's -- even I'm not a hundred percent sure about that. It may have come up a long time ago -- interaction --. We don't -- we more kind of just chit-chatted a little bit about the company in Mesa. Do you know this guy? Do you know that guy?
Q. Right.
A. All right. Have a nice day. See you later. You know, make yourself at home.
MR. LAWRENCE: All right. I don't have anything more. Do you? Bill?
MR. BARLETT: No.
MR. LAWRENCE: No, I meant for the tape?
DR. BRAMBLE: Yeah, I don't think I do.
MR. LAWRENCE: Walt?

MR. THEURER: Not really. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Bob?
MR. AARON: No, sir. Thank you.
MR. RUNYON: No, sir. Thank you.
MR. HOWARD: I don't have anything either. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions for us?
MR. BARLETT: No questions.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Anything you can think of that maybe you could offer more that we didn't ask about?
A. That's about it. Really, I'm sure you're looking at thousands of factors and I would in my -- personally I would look at -- I wouldn't really count him as one of the higher ones. I'd probably say he's kind of low --. Just didn't seem -- didn't seem anything out of the normal for anybody else or the last time I'd seen him before. Just seemed like a regular guy going to work and had a good life ahead of him and didn't seem like he had any reason to not continue on in his life and have a good future.
MR. LAWRENCE: Well, and I appreciate you coming in, Jeff, and telling us and also if sometime in the next day or two or whenever down the futures if you think of anything, sometimes, you know, you get a chance to metabolize some of this and sit and do the ceiling staring and go oh, wow, I just thought of something feel free to get a hold of us, okay?
MR. BARLETT: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any time -- come up with anything else that could help. Okay?

MR. BARLETT: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right, Jeff. Thanks so much.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

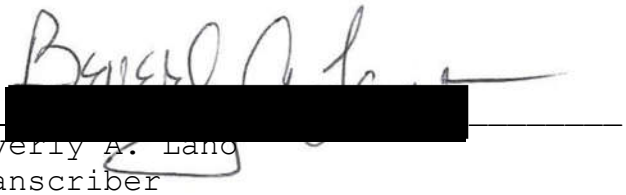
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Jeff Barlett
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Atlas Air MIA Offices
DATE:	February 27, 2019

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.



Beverly A. Lang
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *
*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) *
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS * Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019 *
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Interview of: RICHARD BOOTHE

Via Telephone

Wednesday,
February 27, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

JENNIFER CHERNICHAW, Staff Vice President
Labor and Employment Counsel, Atlas Air
(On behalf of Mr. Boothe)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Richard Boothe:	
By Mr. Lawrence	7
By Dr. Bramble	26
By Mr. Theurer	29
By Mr. Howard	32
By Dr. Bramble	33
By Mr. Lawrence	35

I N T E R V I E W

(1:22 p.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Good afternoon, Richard.

MR. BOOTHE: Good afternoon, David, how are you?

MR. LAWRENCE: I am fine. Thank you very much and thank you for joining us on the phone today.

By the way, as we go through this, if you can't hear somebody's question or if you can't hear somebody, please ask us to speak up because we can hear you fine, okay?

MR. BOOTHE: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Wonderful. My name is David Lawrence and I am an operations investigator for the NTSB and we are obviously here to do our investigative work for the accident that occurred several days ago in Houston, and on behalf of Dr. Bill Bramble and I, who are here in the Atlas Offices, our condolences for your loss.

This is a very normal part of our process is to talk to flight crews that interacted with the accident crew as well as the dispatcher because of your 121 responsibility for the flight, it's very common for us to go talk to the dispatcher, so I wanted to just thank you for taking the time.

And what I'm going to do is go around the room here so you know from a virtual standpoint who is sitting in the conference room with me, so it's myself and I'll hand it over to Dr. Bramble.

DR. BRAMBLE: Hi, Richard, this is Bill Bramble. I'm the

human performance investigator with the NTSB out of Washington, D.C.

MR. THEURER: Hi, I'm Walt Theurer. I'm the Boeing 767 APM with the UPS CMO in Louisville, Kentucky.

MR. AARON: It's Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot with the Boeing Company.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon, I'm --

MR. BOOTHE: You guys are breaking in and out so I'm not getting the full introductions.

MR. RUNYON: Okay, no worries. Andrew Runyon, APD with Atlas Air on the 767.

MR. HOWARD: And Tyson Howard, I'm also with Atlas on the 76. I'm representing the Teamsters, the pilots' union.

MR. LAWRENCE: And, Richard, we also allow on our NTSB interviews one representative of your choice. Is Jennifer who you would like to sit in on this interview with you? Richard? Richard, can you hear me?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's not on mute, is he?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Hello. We'll stop recording.

(Off the record.)

(On the record.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, Richard, where did we -- the call dropped off. Where did we stop?

MR. BOOTHE: Well, I got Brill Bramble, I think, and then

there was someone else that introduce themselves that I didn't hear and then Andrew Runyon, I think it said after that, and then it cut off when he said -- after he said his name.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. So do you want to go around the room again? Let's make sure you know who --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just for Walt, yeah.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- yeah.

MR. THEURER: Hi, it's Walt Theurer, I'm the Boeing 767 APM with the UPS CMO in Louisville, Kentucky.

MR. AARON: And it's Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot with the Boeing Company.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon, APE 767 Atlas.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, 767 Atlas, but I'm here for the Teamsters, the pilots' union.

MR. LAWRENCE: Did you hear all those people, Jeff -- Richard rather?

MR. BOOTHE: Yes, I did.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. They're all in the room. In addition, you are allowed one person to represent you for the interview, do you choose Jennifer? She's in the room with us, is that your choice?

MR. BOOTHE: Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Thank you. And one other administrative item, the FAA is party to all our investigations so they're here in the room with us, but I want you to be very

cognizant of the fact that their role here is not for any kind of certificate action or taking a look at anybody's violations or anything, they are here for safety and their role is identical to the NTSB's, and we're just trying to find out what happened so we can prevent it from happening again.

MR. BOOTHE: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Can you hear me okay?

MR. BOOTHE: Yes, I can.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. If I ask a question or anybody asks a question that you don't understand, please ask us to repeat or clarify it. And because of the phone connection we may drop off here and there and I may not understand an answer, so I may ask you to repeat it.

MR. BOOTHE: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions about the process?

MR. BOOTHE: Not really but go ahead.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great.

INTERVIEW OF RICHARD BOOTHE

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Well, let's start off with the easy ones, Richard; let me get your full name and age?

A. My name is Richard Boothe and I am 44 years of age.

Q. Is Boothe with just B-O-O-T-H or with an E?

A. With an E, with an E.

Q. Okay, great. And what is your title here at Atlas?

A. I'm an aircraft dispatcher.
Q. All right. And how long have you been employed by Atlas?
A. This will be my 17th year.
Q. 17th?
A. Yes, 1-7.
Q. 1-7, okay. Was all 17 years as an aircraft dispatcher?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. All right. And, Richard, if you could kind of give me a very condensed version of your background prior to being a dispatcher at Atlas?
A. Well, prior to being a dispatcher at Atlas I was at -- I graduated from the University of New Haven and I kind of started out just working as a ramp agent in the summertime and then load master and customer service pretty much and load master before I came to Atlas Air.
Q. And where did you work as a ramp agent, load master?
A. At New York, JFK.
Q. What for company?
A. It was for Triangle Aviation and I've been prior to that and then (indiscernible).
Q. Okay, great. And who do you report to here at Atlas?
A. Dennis Gerber, he's the manager of dispatch.
Q. Okay. And you are located -- where is your offices for dispatch located?
A. At 7310 Turfway Road in Florence, Kentucky.

Q. Okay. Are there any operational -- other operational functions that are located in Cincinnati other than dispatcher?
A. Maintenance and crew scheduling.
Q. Okay.
A. Well, actually 747 maintenance and crew scheduling and also Southern Air and Polar Air operate -- Polar Air Dispatch and Southern Air Dispatch.
Q. Okay. And, if you could tell me your roles and responsibility as a dispatcher?
A. It's, it's operation control over all the flights dispatched or released by Atlas Air.
Q. Do you have operational control over Polar flights as well?
A. No, I do not, just the Atlas Air flights or Atlas Air tails.
Q. So does Polar have their own dispatchers?
A. Polar has their own dispatchers, yes.
Q. Are you qualified or do you do dispatch for multiple fleet types for Atlas?
A. Yes, you do dispatch for 76 and 74s.
Q. For you personally which one do you primarily dispatch for the 76 or the 74?
A. We are -- we don't, we're not specific to any fleet type, we do (indiscernible).
Q. Okay. I understand but what do you end up doing most of your work with, 76 or 74s?
A. It depends, I mean, and it could be split. There's no --

Q. Yeah.
A. -- there's not. I can't say there's most of any one thing, one -- you know, there could be days when we'll be the 76s and there'll be days when we're doing, you know, flights with the 74s. We have some 76s mixed in. It's not necessarily specific to one day most or least.
Q. Okay. Are you licensed?
A. Yes, I am.
Q. Okay. And when did you get your dispatcher certification?
A. I believe I got that in -- if my memory serves me correct in 2001.
Q. Okay. And where did you receive your training?
A. At Flight Safety International, LaGuardia. And I'm not sure, let me correct that, it could be also -- I think it's probably more like 2002, the early part of 2002, that I got my license.
Q. Okay. All right. Do you have a pilot's license?
A. Private pilot's license.
Q. Private, a private pilot's license?
A. Yes, yes, sir.
Q. Okay, great. Do you ever get a chance to go out and fly much?
A. Not yet since I've moved here but it's in where I was working on that.
Q. Okay. All right. And let me ask you, Richard, do you have a copy of the release for the particular flight that we're talking

about; do you have a copy in front of you?
A. I do.
Q. Okay, great. What I'd like you to do is kind of walk me through the process of dispatching a flight at Atlas, what is the process of obtaining weather, weight and balance of the loads, that type of thing, and how do you get that information out to the crew, and then we'll kind of go in a little bit more detail in the actual release itself?

So, in general, tell me how you do your job and then we'll get down to the release that you did for the flight.
A. Okay. Well, generally we have AIMS, which is our aircraft monitoring and scheduling tool and all the information as far as the crew, who's going to be flying the airplane that day, tabled information usually is put in there as well if it's available, and any jump seaters or any other company related notifications that we may need or have or the company needs to give us.

For example, if there is, you know, let's say, for example, hazardous materials, things like that, that need special routing overflight those would in there too. So any notification that needs to be given to the dispatcher for that particular flight will be in there.

So basically what I do is I -- you know, we get our flights assigned to us by the deed (ph.) and we go normally by, you know, either by -- prioritized basically by departures. And I go under AIMS, I pull out the flight Navtech, first of all, which is our

flight planning tool, and go into AIMS.
Q. Can you -- I'm sorry, Richard, could you repeat what your flight planning tool is? Could you repeat that again?
A. It's Navtech.
Q. How do you spell that?
A. November-Alpha-Victor-Tango-Echo-Charlie-Hotel.
Q. Got it.
A. So we go into pretty much AIMS and just make sure to check the information as far as the crew names, make sure that that cross checks with our -- with what's in Navtech as far as the flight number, make sure that's correct, the aircraft registration, making sure that that is correct.

Date and flight time, of course, that's based on the day of departure and then just kind of run down through the list making sure that we have -- if there's a payload in there, any information, we transcribe that to Navtech and, you know, checking, of course, you know, any MELs -- that there's any open MELs in the airplane to go and, you know, check that as well.

And that we look in TRAX, which is a maintenance tracking software for the airplane. They put in -- the information in there so we go and check to see if there's anything on the airplane. And once you verify that, if there is any penalties associated, we generally look at it at that -- you know, at that time, see what penalties they are.

And then pretty much going into Navtech and what I sometimes

do I put in all that in -- once I put in all that information from there I, you know, calculate to make sure that information stays in the system, whatever I've taken out of AIMS. Then I go ahead and I look at my weather for my departure destination and my ERCOT and, you know, the ERCOT easily prepopulates and in ERCOT, anyway, it prepopulates in Navtech, so just making sure that those are in C70.

And once, once you've done that then, you know, go back to look at the weather NOTAMs and take any action necessary if there is any -- anything associated with those NOTAMs that could -- whether they preclude the use of the airport or runways or, you know, for any weather issues that might be at the airport at the time, take that into consideration.

Then I go to that and then do my performance, which we use Air Data for and, you know, put in any information -- all the information that you -- sometimes you can get prepopulated in Air Data as well, the winds and everything else, except for, you know, MELs. So if there's any, at that time, they'll put those in if it comes with any performance decrements that we may need to apply.

So we'll put those in and calculate those, and that will give us a performance -- either a performance -- a decremented performance as far as takeoff is concerned or it will be structured there is nothing associated with either MEL or runway limiting issues.

Once we've done that we, you know, calculate the flight plan.

When I say calculate I mean, just it computes on the -- in Navtech and that will calculate any -- you know, all the particulars that we need for that flight. The, at that time, the payload would be in the record because I already put that in. And then we look at the en route weather, is there is any, you know, weather en route or anything like that that needs to be -- you know, if I need to change the route because of the weather, I'll do that probably at that time again.

It, I mean, that also -- it depends. Sometimes I do it, you know, while I'm looking at the flight before or around that time. So if there's nothing en route then, you know, and the route's good based on any en route NOTAMs or anything like that, that may be applicable. Once I go through that there's -- there is no en route NOTAMs that are affecting the flight then -- and the route's good, then I'll release the flight basically on that route.

If there is any weather en route and I can't go around it I normally (indiscernible) fuel for that. If there is nothing significant out there then, you know, I'd -- you know, we don't necessarily have to put on any additional fuel for it, except for what's provided, you know, within the company, the minimums. And, you know, go over again and check through the flight plan, make sure that, you know, everything is as per, you know, what needs to be there, along with checking the checklist to make sure that we covered everything, any -- anything that we might miss, then let's go back to our checklist and let's make sure that everything is

there on our flight plan, everything is calculated correctly.

Once we've done that then we go ahead and file the flight plan with ATC and send it out to the station via email.

Q. Okay, great. Then what's your role during the en route portion of the flight?

A. During the en route portion of the flight we're generally flight watching, you know, as I said, providing the crew with anything that -- if there's any information out there, weather or anything like that, anything that could come up we provide the crew that information so they're aware of what's out there.

Q. Great.

A. Doing flight watching basically.

Q. Right. Now do you also do dispatching on supplemental operations?

A. Yes, we do. That has been delegated to us but also, yes, we do do flight watching for it.

Q. Great. And if you could pull up the release for the accident flight, the Miami to Houston for Aircraft 1217-Alpha, do you have that in front of you?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Great. This is the -- I guess, the GTI3591 and if you would it's got in the top left hand corner the cost index of 058 and that's the start page I want to, you know, kind of start going over, do you have that in front of you?

A. I do.

Q. Great. Just walk me through this, Richard, and tell me what I'm looking at on this dispatch release as you go down. You don't have to get into, you know, strict details or things but tell me what it is you did for the flight planning and the dispatch of this particular flight, if you would.

A. Well, the -- as far as looking at the front page there, the GTI3591, just I'm looking at that making sure that was the actual flight on the 23rd of February. The flight time was -- the flight was between Miami and Houston and it was -- the registration of the aircraft was N1217-Alpha.

The cost index, that again is the speed, you know, of the airplane basically and I think it's set up to do optimum cost index so wherever it thinks is the best speed based on the route flight, or it will plan also the minimum, I would say, time track if we need to and it gives us the best speed for that -- to that flight considering winds and everything else, so that came up to a cost index of 58.

It's a Boeing 767-300 and the CS-6 was the engine type. The aircraft is using pounds as its weight and (indiscernible) for our flight plan, and the -- that flight (indiscernible) factor. The -- I'm not sure, I'm not sure, (indiscernible) what the problem is but the (indiscernible) time there is -- that's valid until (indiscernible) on the 23rd. The original destination and primary (indiscernible), that you see there, that was the original destination and the alternate, and departure time was schedule to

be 1608, and that would jive with that's in AIMS.

And the arrival time based on the flight time would be about 1901, and the arrival time of the alternate would have been 1941 of the --

Q. Okay. That, that's a good summary of the first section. So I have a couple of questions on this page. We won't have to go through every single item but a couple of things I want to ask about.

A. Okay.

Q. The alternate filing of San Antonio, why -- what was that based on?

A. That is based on Amazon preferred so anytime we can accommodate the customer with their preferred alternates then we do that because that's where they would have more support for their operation.

Q. Was that a required filing it for that alternate?

A. It's not required but it's -- well, when you say required, like what do you mean?

Q. From an FAR standpoint, okay, for the weather that was in Houston --

A. No.

Q. -- was this -- was an alternate required?

A. An alternate was not required because the -- both airports are in C70 but on this particular flight because there was thunderstorms previously and weather, I gave them San Antonio as

an alternate just in case.
Q. Okay. There were thunderstorms in the Houston Area at scheduled arrival time?
A. No, not at the arrival time, it was just -- it was there prior to them getting in there. More than an hour prior to getting in there it just, it just (indiscernible) that for Amazon to just put the alternates on there, so I did put an alternate on the flight plan.
Q. Okay, I understand. And you mentioned weather. What is your weather source you use for dispatching?
A. Comes through Navtech.
Q. Okay. Is that NWS though data that they're using or what source data are they using for weather?
A. We have whatever -- it's in (indiscernible) 10 so I'd have to look it up to see exactly which ones but it's -- we use that. There's a couple of them that we can. This one comes from Navtech which is our weather -- one of our approved weather source.
Q. Got it. Were any -- with the paperwork that are listed there or you have in front of you, were any PIREPs provided to the crew?
A. No, no, there was not.
Q. Okay. How would you obtain PIREPs for the Houston Area that you could get to the crew?
A. That would have come through WSI, which is another one of our weather sources that we use or we get a graphical depiction basically. It's kind of like we have the weather overlay and

everything else that you can -- we use from them.
Q. Okay.
A. So PIREPs and SIGMETs and everything come up through there.
Q. So WSI would shoot out PIREPs. How would you get a PIREP that's issued to the crew en route?
A. Well, it would pop up on, on the screen and it would -- you would see it in, in WSI, and if you click on it it would show what depth (ph.). So you'd basically cut and paste that into OPS Center, which is our tool that we use to communicate with the crew via ACARS and airing (ph.) and also to find -- you know, we can find flight plans and those kind of things through that as well, if we need to. But we basically cut and paste it in there and send ACARS to the crew.
Q. Do you -- have you ever done that before?
A. I have, yes.
Q. Okay. Do you recall doing that for the accident flight?
A. You know, that was one thing that I -- I'd actually -- there was one thing that I actually typed up that day and I don't know what happened to it and, and in one situation. I assumed I sent it but I did not. It did not go out.
Q. Okay. Do you recall which PIREP it was that didn't get out?
A. It wasn't, it wasn't a PIREP it was a SIGMET and I don't recall the SIGMET number but it was I believe the one that was kind of based on the weather that was over New Orleans at that time. It was kind of in that area moving -- kind of -- it was a

long line of thunderstorms pretty much moving to the northeast.
Q. Do you recall where that line of thunderstorms were at the time when you were going to issue that weather notice?
A. What do you mean the weather, where it was?
Q. Yeah. There was a SIGMET that you said that you were going to send out or you tried to send out and it didn't get sent out. I'm curious what --
A. That was -- it was, at the time of when it came, when it came out the -- I mean, just let me understand what you're -- what you mean what at the time that it came out, it was over kind of, I would say, just east of -- just west of New Orleans a little bit, east of Texas and moving northeastwards.
Q. Okay. And how do you know that SIGMET didn't get out to the crew?
A. After going through the, the log in OPS Center looking at it, all the messages sent out, I did not see it.
Q. Okay. You're talking about the ACARS communications to the crew?
A. Yeah.
Q. Got it.
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Was there any SIGMET or any significant weather alerts for weather in the -- closer to the Houston Intercontinental Airport Area for a cold front coming through?
A. No, there was not.

Q. After the accident have you had a chance to review the weather that came through the Houston Area that day?
A. I looked back at the, at the AW (ph.) site and, again, I didn't see anything that was out there as far as any significant weather that was coming through there. I also had told my other colleagues who were looking at it too, didn't see anything that was out there that popped up on the SIGMET.
Q. Okay. Any unusual communications via ACARS or radio that you had with the crew while they were flying from Miami to Houston?
A. No, there weren't, no, there weren't any.
Q. Okay. Had you dispatched for this particular flight before?
A. Yes, I have.
Q. Okay. Do you recall ever communicating with this particular crew?
A. As far -- you mean, communicate with this particular -- well, I'm not sure if I follow you, understand you.
Q. Let me clarify. Have you ever talked to the captain or the first officer on this crew before by telephone? I'm not talking about ACARS but like phone? Did the captain ever call you up or did you ever feel a need to call the captain on any previous flights?
A. Do you mean on this particular flight, yes, I did speak to the captain.
Q. Okay. Tell me about that.
A. The captain called in after I had filed the flight plan and

he was concerned, he wanted to know who the jump seat rider was. And I told him. He just wanted to verify, you know, he was wondering if he was one of ours or it was another airline employee -- who exactly it was, you know. I told him based on the information, names, it was another airline employee.

And, you know, he needs to, you know, check his, check the guy's good in CAS and make sure you check credentials that he is who he is and he said, okay, he will do that and we hung up.

Q. Did the captain ask anything about the weather?

A. No, he did not.

Q. Okay. And were you aware of the SIGMET in the New Orleans Area prior to the flight at this time when you were speaking with the captain?

A. No, I -- no, because at that time it was -- it didn't come up as a SIGMET. There was a line of thunderstorms moving that way but based on the route of flight I had him on and when I did plot -- you can also plot the route of flight onto WSI to see where it was -- where it -- like where it is. And the flight was to the south of that area and at the time it didn't -- it wasn't really a factor.

Q. Okay. So he didn't ask about weather, correct?

A. No, he did not.

Q. Okay. Did you offer weather?

A. Did I offer him weather information?

Q. Yes.

A. No, I did not.
Q. Okay. Why not?
A. At the time I -- like I said, I didn't see if the weather in Houston was going to be (indiscernible). The weather as I saw it when I planned the flight, at that time was -- based on the route of flight and what I plotted it appeared that there wouldn't be a factor for his flight.
Q. Okay. I'm just curious if there wasn't any weather that you thought would be a factor that wouldn't have been good information to provide to the pilot, why didn't you just provide that to him when you had the opportunity to have him on the phone?
A. You know, like I said, it's -- I look at it as, you know, when I planned the flight where the flight's going and if -- you know, if he's not -- it didn't look at the time that it was -- that the weather was going to affect his route of flight based on -- you can also put the, the weather and loop it, see, so it moves along because you can see the line of thunderstorms where it's going.

And it didn't -- it wasn't going to be a factor and, you know, so I didn't -- at least I didn't think at the time it would have been a factor. Even the SIGMET, when it came out, if he was passing, you know, just clipping the box but not necessarily going where the weather was, but he wasn't like passing through the middle of it or anything like that.
Q. Okay.

A. It was just more of an awareness thing that I wanted to make him be aware of of where it is.
Q. Okay. Let me ask you a little bit about the fuel load. How do you plan the fuel load and how do you get that information?
A. The fuel load is calculated based on, you know, what Navtech says based on all the requirements of the trip fuel, the FAR reserves and then the company minimums, any fuel required to meet company minimums, that you need for a domestic flight anyway is -- basically brings up the minimums for that flight.
Then on top of that would be any additional fuel that you might think is necessary to put on the flight --
Q. Great.
A. -- or whether you end up (indiscernible).
Q. Great. And I also see that there was a payload or a little over 26,000 pounds that was included on this flight. How do you get that payload information?
A. That payload is sent to us by Amazon and they tell us what the payload is that they're going to be taking that day.
Q. Okay. So the 26,284 pounds, was that an estimated payload provided by Amazon?
A. I would say, yes, because it sends out -- then it sent out well in advance and I have yet to really see -- you know, sometimes it goes out, the payload descends and comes out to be a little less or a little bit more than what they sent out but it's usually -- it's what they think they're going to be carrying that

day.
Q. Got it. So what we're seeing here on this page for the dispatch release is a payload -- estimated payload provided by Amazon. How, do you know how the actual weights are provided to the crew?
A. The load master gives the crew the actual weights.
Q. Okay. Anything about this flight, Richard, that you -- that is unusual or out of the ordinary for the other flights that you've dispatched?
A. No, not at all.
Q. Okay. And curious if dispatchers have a chance to go out and ride on the jump seat in the Atlas System?
A. Yes.
Q. Have you done that?
A. I have.
Q. Okay. When was the last time you did that?
A. Last year. I'm coming up for this year's preliminary ride.
Q. Okay. That's what I was getting at, do you have a familiarity program for dispatchers to get out there and what are the requirements for that?
A. Once every year for our certificate.
Q. Okay. And have you ridden on a 76 before? Richard? Richard? Stop recording.
(Off the record.)
(On the record.)

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Hi, Richard, welcome back, sorry about that. We were talking about the jump seat and just to make sure that we stopped off at the same point and we get back on track, you have a once a year requirements to go out and jump seat.

And my last question was, if you had had the opportunity to jump seat on a 767?

A. I have the opportunity here to do it on a 74 or a 76. I don't recall if I've been on a 76 before.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. I appreciate that. I'm going to let -- see if Dr. Bramble has any questions for you. Thank you, Richard.

MR. BOOTHE: Sure, thank you.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Hi, Richard, it's Bill Bramble.

A. Hi there, how are you?

Q. Good, thanks. I was wondering if you could tell me based on your experience how full this airplane was for cargo weight, 26,000 pounds of cargo and a takeoff gross weight of 247,970 pounds, how full is that and roughly how close is that to max takeoff weight for a 76 or does it vary a ton?

A. Well, it's based on the weights below; it's not very full at all. I believe on that day they could have gone up to another -- it looks like they could have gone up another -- roughly another 100 tons based on the weight.

Q. Okay.
A. As far as weight's concerned and takeoff weight.
Q. Okay.
A. So it wasn't, it wasn't that full.
Q. So they could have gone up another 200,000 pounds?
A. No, no, no, no. No, about, about another 100 or so. They were at 247 and it looks like the landing max is 346.
Q. Okay. So when you're loading or when you're doing a flight plan and calculating manifests and all this -- or, I mean, this isn't a manifest -- when you're calculating this paperwork and you're just sort of short handing in your own head how full is this airplane, would you think of this airplane as like a quarter full or half full?
A. I've never -- I can't say I've ever looked at it that way. I just looked at it to make sure that the -- as far as the performance, can we take off with the weight that they give us and how far are we within, you know, our takeoff weight versus our landing weight and these kind of issues?

I never really thought of a finical fullness of the airplane. I mean, from what I have understood, you know, the plane could -- can be full but yet light because it could be bulk items that are light but fill the airplane up but, you know what I mean, but not as heavy.

Q. Yeah. Okay. And you don't have any control over the amount of cargo that's placed on the plane?

A. I, as long as it's within its performance capabilities, yes, I do. As long as, like I said if the aircraft is -- performance wise can carry the payload then we'll take it, if it cannot then we'll take it off or we'll tell -- we'll advise the loadmaster we can't carry it.

Q. So you'll tell the loadmaster that they can't carry all of it if it's going to exceed the performance limitations?

A. Yeah, we'll advise -- we'll basically -- we'll advise operations who will reach out to the customer and to loadmaster, so we in a sense advise the loadmaster and the customer through operations control.

Q. Okay. But if it's -- if you had room for another 100,000 pounds of freight you don't just say, hey, where else can we get freight to put on this airplane, you just --

A. No.

Q. -- you just check and see whether or not the amount you're given is going to work within the performance limits?

A. Right.

Q. Okay.

A. Whatever the customer gives us is what we plan on.

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay, sounds good. That's all I've got. Thanks a lot.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Walt, do you have any questions?

MR. THEURER: Yeah, a few. I'll just get up that way.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Here you go, here.

BY MR. THEURER:

Q. How many flights do you handle at a time as you're managing flights? How many -- what's your -- how many could you handle at any given time in a dispatching role?

A. That depends, that depends on the day and what you're doing.

Q. On --

A. There could be -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

Q. On average how many would you handle at any given time during the day?

A. Could be as much as if -- I mean, if you're counting the ones I'm planning as well as the ones that are in the air, it could be anywhere from -- well, if I'm planning say 15 flights by Amazon I usually have probably -- it could be anywhere from zero to 10 in the air, so I guess you could say between flight watching and planning probably 18 to 20.

Q. Okay. And --

A. That's for Amazon but for others -- like for the other flights it could be -- it would be less.

Q. As a matter of routine in developing a flight plan and a release and weather, I imagine you have a process that you follow just like pilots do a checklist, is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. A flight plan. So on a time like a flight -- on this particular flight how long would it take you to develop that

release and gather appropriate weather NOTAMs and other information and transmit it to the flight crew?

A. If the, if the information is readily available as in most Amazon flights, anywhere from between 15, 20 minutes, 25 minutes.

Q. All right.

A. It depends on the parameter that's going on, whether you need to route them around weather or -- you know, it depends on what's going on for that day. It could be 15 minutes if it's a clear, calm day and everything is just working for you or it could be a lot more, it depends on what you have to do, if there's any, you know, performance penalties and, you know, what reason is standing in your way at the time.

And also it depends on if you're having -- you know, a lot of times what ends up happening is we end up getting distracted sometimes with phone calls or flight watch that we need to do or, you know, sending out information to the planes that are in the air, so if it's -- if there's nothing else going on you could do it in probably 15 minutes.

If everything else is running and it's very busy, it could be anywhere from that 15 minutes up to 25, maybe even half an hour sometimes.

Q. I see.

A. And longer in some cases because some cases in the international arena, you know, it may take you a lot longer to get a flight -- you know, to get a workable route in your control, for

example. So it all depends on where the flight's going and, you know, what you're doing or what you're trying to accomplish for that flight to make it, you know, go safely, of course. So it all, it all depends.

Q. Okay. How many -- is there -- are you the only dispatcher or do you have more than yourself there? I imagine you have more than just you, is that correct?

A. Oh, yes, of course, there's more than, there's more than me.

Q. Okay. Is there generally two or three people working at the same time or --

A. Usually, usually about between three and four people at a time.

Q. Okay.

A. In some work cases five.

Q. All right. So if you guys are doing your dispatching roles and following and doing all that and you need to get up and go somewhere or get a sandwich or use a restroom, what do you just hand it off to another fellow to monitor while you're stepped away from your desk, is that normal for you?

A. Yeah. The lead is normally responsible. We just let him know we're going to be stepping away for a few minutes and he's normally monitoring most of the flights or all the flights anyway. So if I tell him I'm stepping off for a few minutes, between the lead and the other dispatchers that are there, they're usually pretty good in, you know, handling an incoming call if I step

away, for example.

So just let them know that I'm away, they usually pickup and handle whatever phone calls come in or if there's a flight. If there's something out there that pops up, they will usually take care of it while I'm away.

MR. THEURER: Well, thank you for your time. That's all the questions I have to ask. Appreciate it.

MR. BOOTHE: Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Next we'll have -- Bob, do you have any questions?

MR. AARON: No questions. Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew?

MR. RUNYON: Nope.

MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson?

MR. HOWARD: Just one. I know, let me see, Walt asked about the number of flights you'd be planning and I just want to clarify, did you say that for Amazon you'd be doing 18 -- potentially up to 18 to 20 but for other customers it would always be less? So are you doing more planning or more flights at a time for Amazon than other customers?

MR. BOOTHE: Yeah, Amazon. I mean, it depends on -- and, again, I should -- you know, I think that it -- I certain situations, yes. For Amazon you could do like -- you could be the one doing most of all the Amazon flights in that one day and that usually sometimes can be, you know, up to 13 or 14 releases for

the Amazon -- for Amazon.

MR. HOWARD: Okay. And then one other; is there anything that you do differently for Amazon flights versus other -- you know, other flights, other customers?

MR. BOOTHE: Basically, no. There's not -- as far as procedure no. As far as the customer requests it could vary so, yeah, we'll do things different for Amazon if we can accommodate, you know, what they are requesting, you know, we'll normally do it. But for other customers they may request something totally different than what Amazon wants. If you can accommodate the customer safely and everything else we will; they usually have different requests.

MR. HOWARD: Okay. That's all I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any follow-up?

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Yeah. Just one, Richard, this is Bill Bramble again. So I'm looking at the weather synopsis at the back of the packet like on page 35.

A. Yeah.

Q. And I'm just wondering if you could sort of tell us what you see there and what you interpret the situation to be in terms of weather?

A. Just from looking at that there was some -- if you look at the top (ph.) of the chart up to 18z, the second one, and the 12z one shows isolated thunderstorms passing through the Houston Area.

(Inaudible) detailed it over the Houston Area but it's just isolated thunderstorms.

Q. Okay. And is that pretty typical in that area for that time of year?

A. From what I've seen in -- during this month, yeah, there's usually some -- I wouldn't say typically but, yeah, there is times where they'll be thunderstorms going through.

Q. And how big a threat is that? How big a threat did you perceive that to be?

A. Well, if -- I mean, I don't just go by what's on the chart here because that kind of gives you a huge area of where it is, so we kind of compare that to the weather at the destination, the TATs (ph.), and we also look at WSI, which gives us a more accurate depiction of where the weather is and where it's going to be by a certain time.

So the 18z chart it's -- it shows that area pretty big but it could be anywhere --

Q. Okay.

A. -- anywhere near.

Q. And what do you make of the two front depictions just north of isolated, embedded CD Area, are those stationary or moving --

A. I'm sorry?

Q. -- fronts or what are those?

A. I'm, oh, I'm looking at -- I was looking at the other thing (indiscernible).

Q. So the 18z chart, I'm sorry, that's page 36.
A. The 18? Okay.
Q. There's two grey lines that sort of arch across the United States and they have altitudes, flight levels on them. Somebody's telling me here they're not fronts, what are they?
A. Oh, you're -- oh, talking about jet stream lines, you're talking about?
Q. Okay. Is that what it is?
A. Well, those are the jet stream, yeah.
Q. So does that tell you -- what do the numbers tell you with -- that start with FL?
A. They're between flight -- the jet stream between Flight Number 330 and 360.
DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. All right. Great. That's all I've got.
MR. BOOTHE: Is that it?
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Richard, it's David Lawrence. One --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- just a couple follow-ups. How many total dispatchers does Atlas have?
A. I am, I am not certain of the exact number of dispatchers, probably about 17 or so.
Q. Okay. Do you guys operate in shifts?
A. Yes, we do.
Q. What, typical shift work, what type?

A. From 6:00 a.m. to 2:30, 2:30 until 10:30, and -- I'm sorry, 2:30 until 10:00 or 10:30 rather, and from -- I think I'm getting this wrong. This, no, it's 6:00 until 2:00, 2:00 to 10:00, and then 10:00 to 6:00 with a half hour overlap in between.
Q. Okay. What shift were you operating on the day of the accident?
A. The 6:00 until 2:00 or to 2:30 really.
Q. The 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.?
A. Until 2:30, 6:00 a.m. until 2:30. There's a half hour overlap so 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 and there's a 2:00 until 10:30 and then a 10:00 until 6:00.
Q. Okay. And at the time of the accident how many flights were you responsible for?
A. All of the Amazon departures except one so I think -- I don't have the actual sheet with me but I can say it's all the Amazon that was flying that day except for one.
Q. And if you were to guess -- I know it's a guess and not exactly -- but can you estimate how many?
A. Let me, let me see -- let me look it up, let me see if I can find that day. (Pause.)
Q. Do you have it yet?
A. Yeah, I'm trying to count them up right now so 1,2,3,4,5,6. (Pause.) About 15 or 16. I'm kind of going through to try to count but it's kind of hard to do it. (Pause.)
Q. Richard, is 15 or 16 flights --

A. Thank you.
Q. I'm sorry.
A. I'm sorry.
Q. Go ahead again.
A. It's about 17. I did 17, 17 releases that day. I'm not sure if any of them are -- I don't think any of them are re-dos but 17, 17 releases I did.
Q. Is that a standard day for you?
A. No, it depends on whether you're doing the Amazon flights, if you have those or if you have, you know, other flights within the company. If you're the one that's releasing all the Amazon flights and you'll be -- you'll have those flights. If you're not then you can have the -- it depends on how many people are on shift as well and how many flights.

So it's typical. You can have on our shift, the other dispatchers, if they're not doing the Amazon you could have anywhere from eight or nine releases themselves, even 10, depends on how many airplanes you have out there flying.

Q. Okay.
A. It depends on (indiscernible).
Q. I understand that but what I'm to get at is, this is standard workload for you or is this a busier day or a lighter day?
A. It's a standard workload for the Amazon flights, yeah.
Q. Okay. And do the dispatchers at Atlas, are they represented by a union?

A. Yes.
Q. What union?
A. Teamsters.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Anybody else have any more questions for Richard?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Un-huh.
MR. LAWRENCE: Richard, do you have any questions for us?
MR. BOOTHE: No, I do not.
MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Well, if you can think of anything else that would help or anything else to provide to us, information wise to assist the investigation, would you do me a favor and please get ahold of us, we'd appreciate that information?
MR. BOOTHE: I will.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. Have a wonderful day. Thanks for your time, Richard.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Richard.
MR. BOOTHE: Thank you very much.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thanks (indiscernible).
MR. BOOTHE: Thank you.
(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Shannon Ricks
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Houston, Texas
DATE:	February 27, 2019

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.

[redacted]

Cheryl Farmer Donovan
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*
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ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	* Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*
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Interview of: RONALD KNIGHT

Wednesday,
February 27, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
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International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Ron Knight:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	32
By Mr. Theurer	53
By Mr. Runyon	55
By Mr. Howard	57
By Mr. Lawrence	58

I N T E R V I E W

(3:15 p.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. We're going to get started here. My name is David Lawrence with the NTSB. I'm an operations investigator, and obviously we're here for the accident that occurred a couple of days ago. And our condolences for anybody that you knew that was related to that accident.

And I just wanted you to know, Ron, that as I mentioned to you out in the hall a moment ago, this is very typical in the process of our investigations. I want you to just feel comfortable and understand that we're always going to want to take a look and talk to some of the people that had an opportunity to see the crew and the airplane on that last flight. This is very normal for us.

I'm going to go around the room because there's multiple people here. And I want you to understand that -- what their role is. We work on a party system. NTSB brings in parties to assist us and to provide technical expertise, and that's why you see a lot of people here. So obviously we've met.

I'll let Dr. Bramble --

DR. BRAMBLE: Yeah. I'm Bill Bramble again. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB out of Washington, and I've been there for 20 years now.

MR. THEURER: Hi. I'm Walt Theurer. I'm the Boeing 767 APM at UPS CMO in Louisville, Kentucky.

MR. AARON: Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot with the Boeing Company. Pilot time on the 75/76 at Northwest and Delta.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon. I'm an APD at Atlas Air on the 76.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard. I'm a 76 captain, but I'm here for the Teamsters, the pilots' union.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Two things. First off, I want to explain the FAA's role in this. FAA is a party to all our investigations; that's by federal statute. And their role is no different than our role here, is to find out what happened so we can prevent it from happening again. So it's a safety-related role. Anything that's said here or in the course of the investigation with the FAA, they can't be used for certificate action or anything like that.

So Walt's role here is just the same. We're just all trying to figure out and gather information and figure out what happened. So I'd just encourage you to speak freely and provide information without battering your mind.

The other thing is that you're obviously afforded one person to participate in the investigation. Is Gary who you would like --

MR. KNIGHT: Gary, yeah.

MR. LAWRENCE: Awesome. As we mentioned out in the hallway, we're going to be transcribing, taping and transcribing this. So this will go back to Washington, D.C. They'll do a transcription

of that. That will eventually become part of the factual record and will be open to the public at some point in time as part of the record of the accident. Do you understand?

MR. KNIGHT: I understand.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. Preliminaries, we're going to be taking some notes still even though we're recording. I type with two fingers sometimes, so as I'm typing, I may have a pause in our conversation, and I apologize if I'm not making eye contact.

MR. KNIGHT: That's all right.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. If there's a question I ask that you don't understand, please stop me and ask me to clarify. Conversely, I'll ask you to maybe clarify some of the terms that you use because the loadmaster position is very unique, and we're pilots and -- so you will help us as we go forward.

And obviously, if there's anything you can think of that will assist us, as well, even after we get done here asking questions, if there's additional information that we haven't asked that you think might help the investigation, feel free to let us know. Okay? Any questions?

MR. KNIGHT: Nope.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great.

INTERVIEW OF RON KNIGHT

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let's start off with the easiest one. Can I get your full

name and age?
A. Yes. It's Ronald Dale Knight, Jr., 47 years old.
Q. And what is your title?
A. I'm the daytime shift manager and loadmaster for StratAir on the Amazon.
Q. For StratAir. And you said something about Amazon?
A. Yeah, because I work the Amazon. I don't work for the other portion of the StratAir.
Q. Okay.
A. I just do the Amazon contract.
Q. So you concentrate --
A. Only on Amazon.
Q. Okay. You only work the Amazon --
A. Correct.
Q. -- flights. Okay. And how long have you been doing that?
A. I was hired mid-September of 2018.
Q. And that's with StratAir?
A. Correct.
Q. And if you could, Ron, give me a basic CliffsNotes version of your history leading up to StratAir, your work history.
A. Previously, I was in the military for 20 years as a logistics specialist and loadmaster for the Navy. Got out of the Navy, did some government sales for a little while. I was a director of operations for a medical distribution company. Got tired of that and decided to go back to aviation, so then I ended up back at

StratAir.
Q. So you were a loadmaster in the Navy?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. What were your certifications? What equipment?
A. Well, we were on multiple aircraft.
Q. Right.
A. I was certified through the Air Force loadmaster school. So the aircrafts we covered were C-5s, C-130s, C-141, KC-10, and the Globemaster C-17.
Q. Would you repeat that? C-5s?
A. C-5, C-130, KC-10, the C-141 and the Globemaster, the C-17.
Q. And when was the last time you worked as a loadmaster prior to becoming a loadmaster again at StratAir?
A. It's been 10 years.
Q. So there was a 10-year gap from the military --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- loadmaster position to when you started with StratAir?
A. Yeah.
Q. And who provided you training?
A. Atlas. Tim Frye was the instructor.
Q. So you were Atlas trained, but you are a StratAir employee?
A. That's correct.
Q. Okay. And tell me a little about the training you received at Atlas for loadmaster.
A. Well, I mean, it's a long training. We had a lot of

practical evaluations done. Tim basically covered everything from pallet positioning, how to build pallets, ELD certifications, how to identify bad ULDs, bad nets, check for certs on nets, those types of things. I mean, all typical curriculum.

Q. In general, how long is the footprint?

A. Footprint, I believe it was -- I want to say it was 4 days, 4 or 5 days. I think it was 5 days.

Q. Okay. The entire footprint training for loadmaster was 4 or --

A. Yeah, yeah, it was 5. It was a week. Yeah, it was a week long; 5 working days, I should say.

Q. Okay. I'm curious. Is that typical? If somebody were to come off the street and say I want to be a loadmaster for Atlas, would they get a 5-day program?

A. It's a 5-day -- it's just to do load planner, and then you have on-job when you go out into the field where they had people with us.

Q. Okay. And how long does that take?

A. They were with us for a month approximately, but they had station reps there every single flight. So they were always present.

Q. OJT for a month?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. And at the end of the training, do you receive a certification or anything?

A. Yes.
Q. What type of certification?
A. It's a load planner certification.
Q. Load planner?
A. Correct. I think that's the verbiage that's on the cert.
Q. Okay. Is that an FAA certification?
A. I would assume so. I mean, it just says Atlas Air on it.
Q. Okay. I mean, do you have a certificate or a license or anything that says load planner or loadmaster?
A. No. We get the certification. That gets kept with our training person over at StratAir. It's Duval Chalender (ph.). So they keep all that. And then just with our certification when we go for -- to get our badging at the airport, they give us our loadmaster badging.
Q. If you were ever to go to another cargo company, would you have to go through an entire training program again over there or --
A. It depends on if it was an Atlas trained one, I would assume probably not. But if it was like ATI or somebody like that, I would.
Q. Okay. And to just so I'm clear, because I think I asked you about the load planner is a certified position. Is the loadmaster position, loadmaster, is that a certified position?
A. It's the same. You get a load planner certification, and then once you go out and you, you know, they see that you do

everything correct and they don't have any objections, they just -- they allow you to stay on the aircraft. It doesn't come up as like loadmaster.

Q. Is your loadmaster position or load planner position, is it aircraft-specific or is that a general title that you have and you can cover all aircraft?

A. It's general, but ours was specific to the 767-300 because that was our Amazon contract. So we got trained specifically to that.

Q. Would you have to receive additional training or certification to get a 74?

A. I would assume such.

Q. Okay. And you're kind of in the unique position, too, Ron, because you had the military background leading up to this. Kind of characterize, if you would, what did you think of the training Atlas provided for loadmaster, load planning?

A. It was good. It was detailed, extensive, safety oriented, but definitely detailed.

Q. What guidance did they give you? And I'm looking at what manuals and things like that did they provide you in the training so you could do your job?

A. All they did for manuals, they're all located in GlobalNet. I can't remember the actual name of the manual right off the top. I'd have to go refer back to my, you know, to my desk to go ahead and look it up on Atlas, see if I can find it there. We have it

on the HAWK system and also on GlobalNet.
Q. Okay. So all the manuals are --
A. Online.
Q -- located on the GlobelNet, but what manuals are -- what are the titles of the manuals that you use to do your job?
A. Well, what we usually use is the Sable system, and that's our load planning system, and that's -- it's all automated.
Q. Sable?
A. Sable, S-A-B-L-E.
Q. Okay.
A. And that's our load system. And then we use HAWK to get our flight plans and information on coms, like who's going to be on the gen deck and who's going to be crew, things like that. That comes through another online entity.
Q. Great. Do you have a cargo operations manual?
A. It's all online.
Q. Okay. I don't mean physically, but do you have a -- you have access to a cargo operations manual?
A. Yes, we do.
Q. Is that what you use to do your job?
A. Not necessarily. I mean, everything is all in Sable, so it's just all self-predetermined weight and balance on that. So when we do the actual load plans -- we already learned it in class, so you don't actually grab a manual and go how do we load position 1 type of thing. It's just we already know.

Q. I got you. Do you use any checklists?
A. We do a crosscheck at the end. I mean, we have a procedural thing that -- basically, we have a whole sheet that comes onto the front of our flight plan to tell us what we're supposed to do in order.
Q. Did you have one for this accident?
A. Always. You have to have one for every flight. And to be clear, it's not like an actual like, you know, check A, cargo manifest, check B, do this. It's just on the front of our folder sheet just to make sure we know that we did everything we were supposed to do before the cargo went on the plane.
Q. Do you have standard operating procedures?
A. An SOP?
Q. Um-hum.
A. Not a printed SOP. I think it's just -- it's all online and what we're taught in class.
Q. All right. Let me let you walk me through the day of the accident and specifically this accident flight. You were on duty, so you were the loadmaster for the accident. Is that right?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. Tell me about it, when the airplane came in -- just walk me through your whole interaction.
A. Okay. So from start to finish, just from when the aircraft came in or from buildup and push-through?
Q. First time you saw that airplane.

A. Okay. First time I saw the airplane, you know, the aircraft arrives, we block in block time. This one was running delayed. I believe it was delayed like 40 minutes. So we had a shorter, you know, turnaround time to push that one out, but we had a light load, so I didn't foresee any problems so there was no need to hurry or anything like that.

So the aircraft comes in. We do our walkaround checks after they chalk them in. We check our forward, our aft doors, to make sure all seals are good, all -- everything -- locks are all up and nothing is askew. We move over to by the bulk side door to make sure that door is good to go as well. Walk the port side of the aircraft, and then move up into the cockpit, which then I get the information off of the logbook to send out the arrival message.

After that, we bring in all the cargo loading equipment into position so we can start offloading the aircraft, which is done by NAS, National Air Support. What's it? I don't know what their acronym stands for, but it --

Q. But it's N-A-S, right?

A. N-A-S, yeah. National Airport Services. Yeah, it just kind of fleeted my mind.

Q. That's okay.

A. So anyways, so those guys come up and they all know me, so when they come up they bring up all the gear. And then they just start asking if they can start offloading, you know, and then we just do it in sequence. You know, we start with the forward lower

and we do the main deck. Then we drop the -- I'm sorry. We start with the back, the aft. I'm sorry. It's weird with all these people around. But anyway, it is what it is. So usually we start in the bulk and then the aft, and then we offload that. Then we work up to the main deck, and we offload that. And then we go to the forward. And when we onload, we reverse that process.

Q. And you do that process, that sequence because why?

A. That's -- you know, you're leading back to what you asked about the SOP. That's a standard operating procedure to avoid tipping on the aircraft. You want to pull the weight off the back before you pull it off the front, so it doesn't do one of those little nose wheelies and hanging the bird backwards like that, so we do that.

So we offloaded the aircraft. Everything was clear. After we offloaded the aircraft, I had to do my security walk on main deck. My verifier does the security walk on lower deck. He checked everything there. We moved on to start to onload the aircraft. We loaded the front. We had USPS on there, which is United States Postal Service, DQS. They come to use from Cargo Force. We put those on there. On the main deck, we only had seven positions.

Q. And so for the tapes, just to make sure we understand, explain what a DQS is.

A. A DQS is a unit loading device.

Q. Right.

A. It fits in the lower. It's an LD-8 classification, so it fits the entire space of the lower deck, instead of like an LD-4, which only takes up half.
Q. Right.
A. So Amazon likes that because it takes up all the space. You're maximizing cargo.
But we filled the forward, went to the main deck, filled the main deck. We only had seven positions: two were stacks, a 12 and a 7; then we had four with cargo; and then one single sheet up on 2 left. Then we filled the aft, and then there was nothing in the bulk. So --
Q. Okay. And the bulk section is located?
A. It's the very, very, very back of the aircraft. And you can see that through the lower aft, and we actually -- when we do our check you have to look in to see the space to make sure there's nothing, like nobody threw something back there nefariously.
Q. Then what?
A. So after we do the onload, they were still fueling the aircraft, so aircraft was refueling when crew came out. I guess I kind of skipped where the crew left. The first crew departed. Then the second crew arrived, and then they had a jump seater with them as well. So crew came up, identified themselves. They got -- their IDs were checked by security. The jump seater was checked by security. We inspected his bags, and then they were allowed to go into the cockpit.

After that, I spoke with Atlas representatives to ask what the request was on fuel because block fuel was -- I think on this one is 37.2, and they usually typically ask for a little bit more. The pilots will ask for a little bit more, and I believe this one was at 39.1. So when we he called it back to me, he let me know what the fuel was. Then I went and finalized my load plan, came back, gave them the print time, offered the weight and balance to the captain. Captain Enefo (ph.) reviewed the weight and balance and put in their necessary information, and then signed the weight and balance and handed it to me and said they were ready to go.

And after that, I just departed the aircraft and watched them close the door. We pushed back the stairs, did final walkaround, and then just waited on the captain to release brakes and call for pushback.

Q. Okay. Let me go back and just ask a couple questions. That was a good synopsis, and I appreciate it, Ron.

You did a walkaround, you mentioned a security walkaround.

A. Right.

Q. Are you ground security coordinator --

A. I am.

Q. -- GSC?

A. I'm a GSC, yes.

Q. Okay. Did you go through the training at the Atlas for GSC?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay.

A. It's part of the load planner training.
Q. Okay. Great. So you mentioned something about the fuel, that they bump the fuel, because they had a dispatch release of 37.2 for their gas and you look at that if you need to.
A. Right.
Q. And then you said they bumped it up to 39.1?
A. Well, usually what happens is, when we go out to the aircraft we tell the pilot what the block fuel number is.
Q. Right.
A. And then they usually request, you know, like an additional taxi number because Miami is busy and they never want to go below their min takeoff fuel and have to turnaround and come back and refuel. So they usually bump up like 1400 pounds, like an extra taxi, just in case.
Q. Okay. I was curious about that. Let me ask about the load that you guys put on. You had one -- what was up in the forward section, because --
A. The forward section was two empties, DQS, and the rest was USPS.
Q. Okay. So as we're talking about this, let's go to the load planning page. And this is the one I want to take a look at --
A. Got you.
Q. -- because this is what the pilots would be looking at.
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. And it's the weight and balance and it shows the

diagram on the load layout on the main deck and the lower deck as well, right?

A. Right.

Q. Okay. So primarily on the main deck you see a 220 at the 2 position. What was that?

A. That was a sheet.

Q. One sheet?

A. Correct. Sheet with the net is 220 pounds.

Q. Right. Okay, with net. And it was secured there?

A. Correct.

Q. And then in the aft section, the first --

A. You talking about main deck?

Q. On main deck, all the way back, so the first --

A. Position 10 Right.

Q. -- next position would be at position 10R, which would have been the right side of the aircraft. Correct?

A. Yes.

Q. At 2,350 pounds. Correct?

A. Correct.

Q. All right. Were all of these other six ULDs that were located from 10 back to Alpha 13, were all of those pallets with netted material on it?

A. The 10 Right, 11 Right was cargo.

Q. Cargo.

A. 11 Left --

Q. So cargo, with a pallet on --
A. Yeah. Like so we had gaylords on there and then netted down.
Q. And a gaylord is a?
A. It's a cardboard box.
Q. There you go.
A. It's just a big cardboard box.
Q. And it's netted. Correct?
A. Yeah. We cover them in plastic because it rains here, and then we net them after, and lock it down to the pallet --
Q. Got it.
A. -- to meet the contour of the aircraft.
Q. So you've got the 2350 at --
A. 10 Right.
Q. 10 Right. And behind that?
A. Same thing. It's a cargo, and that one's for LAX-5.
Q. Okay.
A. Then on 11 Left we have a PAG, which is the same thing, gaylords on top of a PAG. 12 Left is the same thing, gaylords on top of a PAG. Now 12 Right is a pallet stack, so you have seven -- a seven-stack on there. So it's pallets, PAJs with pallets netted and with straps on that.
Q. So the 12 Right, 1740 was a pallet stack?
A. Correct.
Q. And then the --
A. A13's a stack of 12.

Q. And that was a stack of 12?
A. Correct.
Q. A stack of pallets, right?
A. Correct.
Q. And then at the 11R position, the 1440 was?
A. That's a -- it was cargo on a PAJ.
Q. Okay.
A. Gaylords on a PAJ.
Q. Cargo, pallet stacks. And the 11 Left and the 12 Left were both ---
A. Cargo.
Q. Cargo.]
A. On -- yes.
Q. Okay. And I understand that occasionally Amazon will transport some of the ULDs, some of the containers, and they'll move them around empty occasionally in the system.
A. Um-hum.
Q. Correct? Were any empty containers on board this aircraft?
A. The only empties wouldn't be considered -- are the DQS in the lowers. We have two empties in the forward. Those are the ones that are at 234 or 243, depends on what the system tells --
Q. And you've got one at station 31 through --
A. Correct.
Q. -- 34.
A. Correct. And then the following stations, 41, 42 and 43, are

cargo.
Q. Got it. Let's go back up in the main deck.
A. Okay.
Q. Okay? From position 3 back to position 9, and it says zero.
A. Um-hum. And 10 Left is zero as well.
Q. And 10 Left, but the first cargo's position in the aft was at 10R.
A. Correct.
Q. All of those zeros mean what?
A. Void. There's nothing in there.
Q. Okay. Zeroes mean no pallets, no --
A. Nothing. Void.
Q. -- inter --
A. Nothing.
Q. Okay. Great. Looking at this load, is this a -- first off, is this a typical load for Amazon as far as bulk and weight?
A. For this flight, yes. It's usually -- this is our lightest flight out, so the top is always pretty much -- we have between four and six PAJs that go on that aircraft.
Q. Okay.
A. This time we had four plus the stacks. Usually we have four to six plus the stacks, and that's it.
Q. And since you had a sheet stack or the pallet stack with nets at the 2 position, if the pilots wanted to access this cargo at the main deck, could they get back there?

A. Absolutely. A1 is wide open, and that's where the door is at.
Q. Okay. Good. So the pilots could have accessed the cargo?
A. Any time.
Q. Okay. And then the load location -- I asked you about the bulk and the weight, if this is typical, and you said yes. Correct?
A. Correct.
Q. Now the location of everything, these -- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 -- six positions that are filled, and they're all in the aft of the airplane, is that normal?
A. That is normal on this aircraft.
Q. Okay. How is that determined?
A. Well, this aircraft is really front heavy. So when you're on Sable, if you put the weight to the front, you'll get what's called a red bar, which means you're outside of operating limits. And the fact that we were going to have USPS, and I know that USPS or post office stuff weighs about 1500 to 1800 pounds, we were going to be putting that in the forward. So we'd already have weight to the forward, so I needed to offset that weight on the main deck to the back.
Q. Right.
A. So that's why we put weight there. And then we only had just like the three catch-alls to the aft of the aircraft. So on this flight plan or on this weight and balance, we were just forward of

the gold bar which is like, you know, hitting perfect CG. So we were just forward of it.

Q. Do you do this -- as far as that calculation you just did in your head, is there a program or something that, based on the preplans, Amazon weights that are going to be coming out to the aircraft to tell you or assist you on where you need to locate this?

A. Sable does it.

Q. Sable does it?

A. Yeah. It's all automated. So if I put something that's too heavy into a spot, it'll tell me and it'll red bar it right away, and I can't even print the load plan.

Q. Sable produced this document that we're looking at?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Great. And tell me about the locking system as far as these zero positions, these seven positions that were void in the main deck.

A. Well, there was actually -- 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15 -- 16 positions that are void and -- from 2 Right all the way down to 10 Left there are voids. They all have locking positions. We're required to put all locks up once we secure the cargo into the aft of the aircraft.

Q. You're required by who?

A. Atlas. That's what we're taught in load school.

Q. Okay. Is that an SOP? Is that a requirement? Is that just

-- is this just a --
A. Well, it's a safety requirement. Everybody walks around and checks them every single time to make sure you have them all the way up. So you have to have them all the way up.
Q. Okay. I'm just trying to find out if this is an Atlas, we think that all the locks should be up, and if I was to go to UPS and FedEx in a similar situation, would I see that, or is this an industry-wide or is this just something --
A. I got it qualified through Atlas. Atlas tells me to put them up, so I put them up.
Q. You ever heard other people put the locks up in the void positions on the main deck? Any other operators? Just curious.
A. I haven't dealt with anybody in the other --
Q. Okay. Fair enough. Good. So how do you know these locks -- before the door is closed, how do you know they're actually up?
A. I walk it.
Q. Okay.
A. And usually when I walk it, the Atlas rep walks it with me, too.
Q. Who's the Atlas rep?
A. The Atlas rep on that day was Julian. I believe his last name is Arango (ph.).
Q. Julian? And what is Julian's position?
A. He's station rep for the flights. They always have an Atlas person there because it's their aircraft.

Q. Right.
A. But we're the GSCs and stuff. So they just kind of still have to annotate all the timelines and things like that on their system, so they always have a station rep there as the aircraft arrives. And then they annotate everything that happens as it goes through. So they establish a timeline to go down.
Q. But you don't know what or do you know what Julian's position is at Atlas?
A. I mean, as a station rep, I know he's -- I -- you know, when I talk to him, he says he's a loadmaster. So I would assume he's had to do the same training I had to do.
Q. Okay. All right. And we learned that there's a position at StratAir called load verifier.
A. That's just a position for everybody. I don't think it's just at StratAir. Load verifiers are the ones that verify the loads as they go in for the loadmaster.
Q. What are they verifying?
A. They're verifying that each one of those positions -- whenever a piece of cargo or an empty goes up, they're going to check the placard to make sure it's, one, labeled properly, the weights are proper and correct, and then whatever position that I assign to it, that they put it into that position.
Q. Who is the load verifier for the accident flight?
A. That was Andrew Hernandez. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And we'll ask him when we get an opportunity to talk

to him. Is he at StratAir or at Atlas?
A. StratAir.
Q. All right.
A. And he's actually a qualified loadmaster as well.
Q. So when those pallets are back there and you bring up those end guides or what do you call them, the end stops?
A. Locks.
Q. Locks. Those are the red devices --
A. Correct.
Q. -- that come up there to secure. And they're guided in. There's some side --
A. So you got a center guide system that holds them from left to right. So when you're running them in, depending -- because you can -- there's different configurations. So this one has a center guide system to hold them between left and right, and then you have rail systems all the way on the outboards as well to hold those in. And then the locks will hold them into position once they go in there.
Q. Do you know how -- if there's a rating on those end rails, the red end rails?
A. On the red --
Q. Yeah, how much of the load they can take?
A. I don't know what each one is individually rated at. I know that if one of them is down, we have to report it because we get what's called a penalty weight. If one of them is inop or

missing, we have to go check with the mechanic to make sure it was deferred, one, and then if we're putting a load on it, we have to go to do the configuration. Usually I'll talk to the station rep and see, you know, if they prefer that I avoid that position and put it into a different position with full capability or if we put it in the position at a lower weight, taking that penalty weight.

Q. And then going back a little bit further in the process, who does the pallet buildup?

A. Pallet buildup is our warehouse. I mean, we have warehouse personnel that do that. We have a floor supervisor.

Q. When you say we?

A. StratAir.

Q. Okay. So StratAir does the buildup?

A. Correct.

Q. Which is essentially what?

A. So when we get the cargo, the cargo comes in via Amazon through one of their gateways. The truck comes to us in gaylords, and then the gaylords have identifiers on them. They get scanned in. We do our safety check, the 150-pound check, to make sure there's no stowaways within the gear. And then they go ahead and they tag them all up, and then they get moved to their designated areas for loading for buildup.

So like let's say if it was an Ontario LAX, it goes to a separate area. If we have CVG, it goes to a separate area. And then we have warehouse teams that know -- you know, they work a

certain section and then they just start building up that cargo.
Q. And so the buildup -- and I don't want to put words in your mouth, but just for my understanding, it's taking this material that comes in from Amazon and putting it on a pallet?
A. Pretty much, on a PAJ or PAG, and then we build it out.
Q. Which -- and a PAJ and PAG is --
A. On this one, on this flight it was a PAJ or PAG, which are those sheets.
Q. We call them cookie sheets.
A. Right. We call them baking sheets, same thing. So we build those up, you know, to meet contour, and then if there's any overflow we put those in a DQS. Those are those ones that LD-8 class that go in the lower --
Q. Right. Got it. You are the guys that are putting the net on, right?
A. The warehouse.
Q. Yeah, the warehouse. StratAir is putting that on.
A. Correct. Um-hum.
Q. Who checks that?
A. The loadmaster has to check it before it goes on the aircraft.
Q. Okay.
A. Load verifiers also do it as well.
Q. Okay. Who's checking the quality of the net and the pallet?
A. We have to do that.

Q. Okay. And whose pallet and net is it? Who owns those?
A. Amazon owns those. And they have a ULD control, so they have oversight on that. Whenever we have defective ones or anything like that, we report it to them, and push or pull them off of -- you know, take them out of service so we don't use them.
Q. Okay. Did you receive training on how to determine a defective pallet load?
A. In loadmaster school, yeah.
Q. Okay. And then if you see a defective net or you see a defective pallet, who do you notify and what happens to that?
A. Well, we just -- we sidebar it right away. We tape it up with, you know, damaged. You know, it's like a red tape. And then we annotate it and let them know. We report it -- for us, we report it to NCC because it's one of theirs, and then we ask them what they want us to do to it.
Q. Wait a minute. NCC?
A. Yeah, NCC is Amazon's like coordination headquarters, so they're the ones that deal with our ULDs.
Q. So they're responsible for the repair or the replacement or anything like that?
A. I'll assume, yeah. I just have to take it out of service so I don't put it onto a plane.
Q. Right. But they own it?
A. Right.
Q. That's theirs. Okay.

A. Yes, sir.
Q. Great. I'm not sure if I asked this of you, Ron, but do you know what the load limits for the netting, any kind of specs for the netting?
A. The netting, I believe it's -- I want to say it's 5,000 on that one or up to 7500. Again, I'd have to look at my manual on that one.
Q. Sure. But when you're guessing -- 5,000 pounds? I mean, what is that?
A. I think it's typically between 5,000 and 10,000 pounds, depending on the net.
Q. And it's StratAir people that are taking the net over the cargo and securing in the locks on the side of the pallets?
A. Correct.
Q. If you could, Ron, just kind of -- I know you talked about your interaction with the crew. Could you briefly -- well, not briefly. Go into a little more detail about what your interaction was with that crew? What do you remember talking about or saying to them?
A. Well, with that specific crew I didn't really know the pilot that much. I mean, like certain air crews you kind of get to build a little rapport when you see them. You know, at the stairs they're jovial. Hey, how's it going, you know? Like some are just, you know, as a matter of fact, let's just go fly this plane, so --

Like I'm not too familiar with the pilot or the FO, but the jump seater I knew because he had been jump seating with us from the beginning of the operation. So I seen him plenty of times, so we talk all the time. But other than that, I mean, everything was just normal. I mean, everybody just walked in. Good morning. Good morning. Everybody responded back. ID checks, FO did his walkaround. Pilot went out and took his flight plan, started going through his regular processes. Nothing different than any other day.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Do you have any questions?

Thanks, Ron.

MR. KNIGHT: No, no problem.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Sure. Just so I understand, the 12 pallets at A13, was that a stack of the wood pallets that go into the boxes?

A. No, no. When we call them pallets, they're -- pallet stacks are PAJs. Those are those cookie sheet -- I don't know if you went out with them when they did their --

Q. Oh, yeah. Okay.

A. It's the thing that looks like a baking sheet. But that's what we put cargo onto and then lock it down with nets. So, and the reason why we send pallet stacks is we're required to send a full set. We have to send 24 because there's 24 positions on the plane. So when it gets there, they have to be able to load positions, so if we have empties, we have to still sent the empty

sheets so if they get there and they have cargo to load, they can. So it actually goes with the -- you know.

Q. I see. So you had enough extra baking sheet type pallets stacked there so that if somebody wanted to load the plane full at the next destination, they'd have enough?

A. We're actually required to send it that way.

Q. Okay.

A. Amazon requires us to send it. If we short them, they give us a bad report card.

Q. Okay. And the 220 at station --

A. Two.

Q. -- 2, what was that again?

A. Just one sheet.

Q. Just an empty sheet?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. Did it have anything stacked on top of it?

A. No, and the only reason we sent that one sheet is because, if you do the math, we had already had a premade stack of 12 and already had a premade stack of 7. And this one came in late, so if we would've put -- if we had to break down that stack of 7 or stack of 12 to rebuild it all again, we would've been coming close to having a delay. So we just -- you know, what we typically do is just put a sheet on.

Q. I see.

A. And it's normal.

Q. Okay. So you had a total of?
A. Twenty-four.
Q. And how many -- so you had a total of 14 empties, right?
A. Correct. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Okay. Everything good?
A. Yeah.
Q. How did the late arrival of the airplane impact the loading operation?
A. It really didn't delay it. On that flight, every day we're like -- we're done with that one early because it's such a light load. On the bellies, we only end up filling half and on the top we only do like a third or a fourth of what the capability is, so it gets loaded really quickly. So we never -- so when they're like oh, it's 40 minutes late, I wasn't even worried about it. I mean, meeting time wise, we usually turn that around in like an hour and 10.
Q. Okay. How did the parking of the airplane at spot 15 impact the loading operation as opposed to parking it directly in front of the warehouse?
A. It's just further. I mean, so there's just some time limitations. But again, all the stuff that we already had was already there. We had everything already pre-staged in advance because the flight was already running behind, so we already had everything pre-staged over there for us. So it wasn't like -- it didn't slow down the process at all.

Q. How did the team, the loading team get back and forth between the warehouse and the airplane?
A. They used tugs and a dolly system to carry that equipment over to there.
Q. And how did you get there?
A. I walked.
Q. And who else walked?
A. Andrew.
Q. Everybody else rode tugs?
A. I think the crew walked, too, that day. I don't know if they brought them on. Sometimes they bring them in advance. Sometimes they don't, depends because I might be at the, you know, checking some spot out but they usually bring them in a van because that one's further away from our warehouse. But a lot of the pilots say ah, we'll just walk. They want to do that little morning walk, I guess, before they know they're going to be sitting down for a long time.
Q. Okay. Did that walk delay you guys at all?
A. Not at all.
Q. How long did it take to turn the airplane around?
A. I don't know the exact time limit. I'd have to look at my file and see when we started onloading and when we completed it. Offloads and onloads, I'd have to see. But I think it was right around an hour and 15 maybe, hour and 10.
Q. Did it seem comparable to past loadings with this flight?

A. Yeah. I knew we'd be close, but I have a good team, so I wasn't worried about it.
Q. So when it arrived 40 minutes late, how much time did you have to turn it around before it departed?
A. We still had -- I think the departure time on that one is the max time is 1224Z. I think we still had like an hour and 40, something like that, an hour and 30. It was pretty close to that.
Q. Okay.
A. We made it by about 13 minutes, I think, only 13 minutes, I believe. That's an approximation, of course.
Q. But you guys have records of in, out?
A. Well Atlas, like I said, Atlas station rep, he keeps the timeline of everything. So like as it's being loaded, if the four is being loaded, he puts it in. When the lab's done, he's puts it in. When the main's done, he puts it in. When they put fuel in, he puts it in. When it's pushback, he puts it in.
Q. Okay. So we do that. We do have a little section on our folder where we put in start of the offload, when it finished, start of the onboard and when it finished, but I don't have that in front of me, so I don't know what the --
A. Okay. Did you feel like you guys were in a hurry?
Q. I did not feel like we were in a hurry.
A. Okay.
Q. When did you first see the crew?
A. When they arrived by the aircraft.

Q. Do you know how they arrived? I guess you weren't sure.
A. Like I said, I think I was coming down from the cockpit and then they were already there, so I don't know if they brought them by van or if they walked. I can't remember.
Q. And how did they appear to you?
A. Normal. I mean everything was good morning. They answered back good morning. Everybody seemed -- just normal responses.
Q. Did they appear alert?
A. Yeah.
Q. Did you have any conversation with them beyond greeting and providing the weight and balance?
A. Just the jump seater. I talked to him pretty extensively. I guess I kind of built a rapport with him, but other than that no. Everything was just pretty much candid and short conversations.
Q. Okay. What did the jump seater talk about with you?
A. I just, I actually asked him because he's Colombian, I asked him if they had Colombian candy that he could bring me for my kids to try out. And he said no problem. Then he asked if I liked coffee. I said yes, of course. That's life. Everybody knows that. So he offered to bring me coffee, and I said that would be great. And that was pretty much it Chit chat, I guess you would call it.
Q. Okay. Were you present on the upper deck when the cargo was being loaded?
A. I was present.

Q. The whole time it was being loaded?
A. Yes.
Q. And who actually secured the pallets in place?
A. NAS does that. They secure it in place while the verifier verifies it, and I observed that being done.
Q. Okay. Were they all secured in the same fashion?
A. Yeah, there's only -- we have four locks in the back and four locks in the front of each one of those PAJs.
Q. Okay. And is that done -- how are the locks operated to secure each pallet?
A. So this aircraft we loaded 813 first, so it gets turned sideways, pushed all the way back to the aircraft, which it just reads it's a bump stop on the back and rail guides on the sides and the locks go up. So once those locks go up, then we start moving down each position as we're going to go down, so we started. On that day, we started on 12 Left. 12 Left went in to 12 Right, then 11 left, then 11 right.
Q. One sec.
A. Okay.
Q. So 12 Left, then 12 Right?
A. Right.
Q. And then what did you say after that?
A. And then 11 left, 11 right. And then we finished at 10 right. And then the last sheet was brought up. Actually, that sheet was brought up first, so that was up on 2 left.

Q. Okay. At 2?
A. 2 left.
Q. Okay. So we just had a brief observation of, you know, one loading and so this pallet at A13, that spans the whole width, is that right?
A. No, it spans just -- if you look at it, it spans just like that distance.
Q. A portion?
A. Correct.
Q. Is it wider than --
A. And it's actually set -- it's the actual dimension of what that PAJ's dimension is.
Q. Okay. So it's the same width as the other one?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. And so you just push that back and then to get the locks to secure it, they pop up by themselves or do you pull them?
A. No, we have to pull them in.
Q. Okay.
A. And if it's not all the way in or it's not all the way into the guides, it won't allow you to be in an uplock.
Q. Okay.
A. And then if it's not in uplock when we get to 12 Left and try to push down into place, we won't be able to lock that one into place because the other one's not in place. So it kind of like helps to create a system that all these locks have to be up in

order for it to work right.
Q. Okay. So if the first one goes in but it's not all the way in and locked, the next pallet cannot be locked?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay.
A. Makes it very difficult.
Q. Okay.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just a second, please.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. Okay. So when are the other locks raised in the empty positions? At what point does that occur?
A. As soon as we finish putting 10 left in and we verify that nothing else been ad-hoc, like if somebody decides at the last minute another truck showed up. We're going to try to add two more PAJs, which didn't happen. So at that point, I just let the NAS crew know to go ahead and start lifting all the locks.
So they go and they secure all the locks in the up position. I do my walkthrough to make sure all of them are in the up position. Then I have everybody vacate the aircraft at that point and start moving back the loaders. And we close the door and secure the plane for flight.
Q. Okay. So when you guys raise the -- when the red locks are raised in the empty positions, does that mean every single red lock you can see or only some of them?
A. No, we're required to raise every single red lock.

Q. And is that what happened?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. How long does that take to raise it in this circumstance where you have a dozen?
A. A few minutes, takes about 5 minutes or so.
Q. Okay. And how many people were actually raising them this time?
A. We had four people raising locks.
Q. Who were they?
A. I was one of them, Andrew Hernandez, and then there was two NAS guys. I know one of them's names. His name is Frank, and the other one I don't know his name, but we call him Cheeky. I don't know what his real name is.
Q. Okay. Did you see the crew come back out of the cargo deck at all?
A. No.
Q. Did you see them look at the cargo deck?
A. No, I didn't see them look at the cargo deck. They're always invited to look. Like for the captain if he wants to double check the locks, he's allowed. We ask them if he wants to sometimes.
Q. Did you ask this time?
A. I didn't ask this time, no.
Q. Okay.
A. I think for some captains, they just like to do it. Some captains are just like we're good and move along with everything.

Q. Okay. Did you do anything between raising the locks and closing the door?
A. I'm not sure what you mean by that.
Q. I'm just wondering if there are any other steps after the raising of all the locks and then securing the airplane and leaving.
A. Oh, once you raise the locks and you close the cargo door, you have to tell the NAS guys to back the loader away from the actual cargo doors so we can close it so it's clear to be closed. So I make sure that's all marshaled back, and then I close the door.
Q. Okay. And then you depart how?
A. Out the door right there.
Q. The stairs at the cockpit?
A. Right.
Q. Okay. Are you the last person off?
A. Me and the Atlas rep if they're up there when we do it. Usually, it's the loadmaster though.
Q. Who was last off this time?
A. It was me. I was the last off.
Q. Okay. And when did the Atlas rep leave?
A. He was just in front of me.
Q. Oh, I see.
A. Yeah, we're usually right there. We both sit there to see if they're going to do an early push or if there's any issues that we

need to address prior to pushback.
Q. Okay. When you guys do your check, your last check of the locks, how do you do that? What's your flow?
A. I start on the starboard side, forward starboard side and work my way back and then go back as far as I can to the port side, which is the left side, and work my way forward. So that way, I just make one long circle all the way up and all the way back.
Q. Okay. And what are you looking for?
A. Just to be sure all locks are fully in the uplock position and if anybody missed another lock because sometimes people can like go back in, like you said, and step on a lock or something. I just make sure right before we let the plane go to recheck them.
Q. And this particular time, did you notice anything like that?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Do you ever have locks that appear to be up but aren't actually secure?
A. It's a spring-loaded system, so I wouldn't think it would be able to be up, I mean be able to appear up and not actually be in the up position.
Q. You've never encountered that?
A. I've never encountered it.
Q. Okay. You ever see broken locks?
A. If we see a broken lock, we have to report it right away to the mechanics. This aircraft did not. I didn't see any broken

locks on this one.
Q. Okay. All right. How often do you see them?
A. It's very rare, but I would say 95 percent of the time if there's a broken lock or one that's inop, it's already deferred in the book, so they already know about it.
Q. How do they tend to break? Like what would you see if they were broken?
A. They're aluminum, so I would just hear like the riveting fastening. Like I said though, I haven't really seen a broken one before. Usually, it's just not there. If it's not there I just check to make sure it's deferred.
Q. Okay. All right. Have you ever had a pallet secured where you thought it was secured, and then it came loose before you were done with everything?
A. No, I've never encountered that.
Q. Okay. Anything unusual about this shift?
A. No, it was a typical day.
Q. All right. I'm just going to clear through a few more here and then should be done here pretty soon. Any other -- any particular challenges we haven't discussed related to this loading?
A. No. Weather was good. Visibility was good.
Q. There's a few basic questions I want to ask you about recent activities and health and that kind of stuff --
A. Sure.

Q. -- that we do with people in safety critical positions.
A. Okay.
Q. How is your general health?
A. It's good.
Q. Any chronic illnesses?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Any prescription meds?
A. No.
Q. How often do you use alcohol, if at all?
A. It's very rare.
Q. And tobacco?
A. Nope.
Q. Any recent illnesses?
A. Nope.
Q. Okay. Any recent significant changes in your health, finances or personal life?
A. Nope.
Q. How much daily sleep do you need to feel rested?
A. I'd say 6 to 8 hours.
Q. When off duty for an extended period of time without work requirements, how many hours of sleep do you typically get when you don't have to wake to an alarm clock?
A. Between 6 to 8 hours, the same.
Q. Okay.
A. I wake up the same way without the alarm clock it seems like.

Q. Somewhere in that range?
A. Right.
Q. Any sleeping difficulties?
A. No.
Q. All right. So this particular accident was February 23rd, and that was a Saturday.
A. Yep.
Q. Do you recall what time you woke up and went on shift that day?
A. Yeah, I always wake up at light 2:15 in the morning, takes about 15 minutes to brush my teeth and shave, and then I get on the road. I get to work at 3:00, and that's when I start my shift.
Q. You get to work at 3:00?
A. Correct.
Q. It's 0300?
A. In the morning, yeah.
Q. Okay. And then -- so this airplane arrived --
A. Yeah, this is the second flight for me.
Q. -- between 9:00 and 10:00. Okay, so second flight for you?
A. Yeah, I think the confirmed arrival was 9:41 or something like that according to the email I get, but it showed up pretty close to that time, 39 or 42, something like that.
Q. How did it go with the previous airplane? How did it go?
A. Same, like clockwork. I have a good team.

Q. Was it late arriving?
A. It was.
Q. Do you remember by how much?
A. Yeah, I believe that one's supposed to be in by right at 9:00. It was calculated being at like 9:41, I believe.
Q. Oh, the first airplane was?
A. No, this aircraft.
Q. Yeah, that's what I thought.
A. Yeah, it was late.
Q. But the airplane before that?
A. No, that one was on time.
Q. Okay.
A. I was like no we're no (indiscernible).
Q. All right.
A. No, my first flight was good to go, and we didn't have anything, and we had plenty of time between that one. Actually, we had like 2 hours to prep for the other one. When it becomes a late arrival, it kind of makes it easier for us because it gives us more time to prep our load plan and all of our scale weights. Everything is all set.
Q. So when did the first one arrive, and when do you think it got out of there?
A. First one arrived I don't -- I'd have to look at the paperwork.
Q. Okay.

A. Typically, that one is supposed to arrive at 0957Z time, and it's supposed to depart by 1224Z time.
Q. I see.
MR. LAWRENCE: I got you. You want to take a little rest break?
MR. HALBERT: We do. 90 minutes, I think we just need a stand-up break for 5 minutes, and then we'll come back in.
MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, sure.
MR. LAWRENCE: We'll stop tape.
(Off the record.)
(On the record.)
MR. LAWRENCE: And we're back.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. Okay. We talked about Saturday, the 23rd you said you woke up 2:15. You got to work at 3:00, and you worked a flight and the second flight was the flight that had the accident. And the day before, February 22nd, was a Friday. You recall what time you woke up, got up, arrived at work and finished work for the day and went to sleep?
A. Yeah, it's the same. I work the same shift, 3:00 to 11:30 is my shift, so I wake up at the same time for my shift, 2:15, arrive to work at 3:00 a.m. and get out 11:30, typically fall asleep around -- between 8:00. I usually fall asleep at 8:00. I feel old saying that, but yeah.
Q. Okay. So it's awake at 2:15, at work at 3:00, finish your

shift at 11:00 or 11:30.
A. 11:30. It's scheduled, but I'm the shift manager, too, so if something -- like if a late truck shows up or something's coming inbound I'll stay, you know, like a half an hour, hour later if I need to.
Q. Okay. Do you recall if you worked late that day?
A. No, I didn't work late that day.
Q. And do you specifically recall if you went to sleep at 8:00 that day?
A. I don't specifically recall. It's typically the same time.
Q. Okay. And if I asked you about February 21st, Thursday, and February 20th, Wednesday, would it be the same thing?
A. It would be the same. I work from Tuesday to Saturday. I'm off Sunday and Monday.
Q. Work Tuesday to Saturday, off Sunday and Monday.
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. Was your schedule this week any different than usual?
A. No.
Q. Any overtime?
A. No.
Q. Okay. How did the load verifier seem in terms of his alertness on the day of the loading of the accident of the plane?
A. He's good.
Q. Did he mention anything about feeling tired?
A. No.

Q. Did he mention anything about how much sleep he had the night before?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Enough about the personal stuff. Just a couple more here. In general, what hazards are you usually looking out for when you're loading aircraft?
A. Just doing the aircraft load in general?
Q. Yeah, like are there any particular hazards that you're especially mindful of?
A. It's mostly movement on the line out there. It's like the cargo handlers that move the tugs for the dollies, they're super heavy. So if you're not paying attention, you know, our rule of thumb is never be between the dollies because it'll kill you if they move it without you paying attention, like 5,000 pounds on you is not good. So other than that, no, I mean just be careful on the stairs, I guess.
Q. Okay. And anything in particular with respect to the aircraft, like hazards to the aircraft that you're particularly mindful about or concerned about?
A. Just whenever the loaders come up to the aircraft, we just have to make sure they don't approach them too quickly, that they're marshaled in to make sure there's no damage to the turbine (ph.) or the fuselage or anything like that. And everybody that day brought their loaders into correct limitations so.
Q. Okay. And I'm not sure if Dave asked you this or not, but

just basic, did the airplane look normal to you?
A. Yeah, everything looked normal.
Q. Do you get recurrent training on loadmaster/load planner?
A. I believe so. I haven't had to yet. I'm under a year at that position.
Q. Okay. All right. And how closely do you and your colleagues follow company SOPs?
A. Well, it's aviation, so you have to follow it to a tee. There's no deviation.
Q. Okay. The company itself, StratAir, how is the pay compared to other aircraft loading companies as far as you're aware?
A. I hear it's competitive.
Q. Okay. And has the company been growing or declining noticeably in size?
A. I've been with them a short period of time, so I really wouldn't be able to answer that question.
Q. Okay. And how would you characterize the workload in broad terms on you as an employee?
A. Manageable.
Q. And how would you characterize the morale of yourself and your colleagues?
A. Good.
Q. Have there been recent staffing increases or cuts?
A. I think we had a slight decrease in staff.
Q. When was that?

A. We just dropped one flight off, and it was a temporary staffing, so it was just not actual StratAir employees.
Q. Okay. Does the company have policies on duty time and rest periods for you or your colleagues?
A. I don't know. We have the -- typically you have an 8-hour shift. Nobody really works beyond that unless they request some overtime, but it's all manageable. We've never had anybody like get pushed to the limit that I know of.
Q. Okay. What's the most you've ever worked in a 24-hour period?
A. At this position?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Maybe 10 hours.
Q. Okay. So you're not pulling double shifts?
A. No. Uh-uh, never. That would be terrible.
Q. Okay. What would you do if you were too tired to work?
A. I'd let the supervisor know, try to get a replacement for me. We've had it where somebody's been sick before. They didn't feel well enough to do their duties, and they just called in and somebody jumped into the position for them.
Q. Was the company okay about it. Were they supportive?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. That's it for me. Thanks for being patient.
A. No problem.
MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Bill. Walt, do you have anything?

MR. THEURER: Not very much.

BY MR. THEURER:

Q. Do you generally work with the same group, you and Mr. Hernandez and the people you work with daily?

A. We have the same load verifiers. There's three of them that I work with. There's Joel, Sammy and Andrew. Typically, it's those guys.

Q. Same guys?

A. Correct.

Q. Once you guys start the loading process where you start doing what you're doing, you kind of just stick to business? You know what I mean?

A. I would say most of the time, yeah, unless we got pulled off for whatever reason, if there was something to stop us like if we initially got told the load is going to be this way but they were changing it midway, then we'd have to deviate but no.

Q. The load plan, somebody takes it up to the captain and says here, that's the load map. If you had any hazmat -- I know you don't but if you did, they'd walk up. Who does that?

A. I do.

Q. You take that paperwork up after the load is complete. You're done, right?

A. Correct.

Q. The door is closed, and everything is done. You've done what -- you guys go outside and verify that all the things are kosher?

A. Yep.
Q. And when that's done, you go up on the flight deck and say captain, here you go?
A. Correct.
Q. What does he do then? After you say here you go, Captain, what --
A. Once I hand it over to the captain, him and the FO usually go through the number. They talk about the different weights and things they have to push in for their computations. Once they print all that stuff out, they do their final numbers. They sign the manifest. They sign the load plan, and then they tell us they're ready to go. They hand us our station copies and then we go.
Q. Does the captain then close the -- you do the cargo door, right?
A. The cargo door is closed by us, but the door that goes to the stairwell, it's either the FO or the captain, whoever they designate.
Q. You guys didn't training on closing cargo doors, I assume.
A. Of course.
Q. How often do captains go back and look at the locks or do they? If you did 50, if you did 100 flights, how many guys go back and look at the lock do you think, in your opinion?
A. It's a low percentage.
Q. I really can't think of anything else. It sounds like you

guys have a process you use. I guess you use the same process every time, huh?
A. Every single time.
Q. Never changes?
A. Until they tell us to change it.
Q. Okay. Good deal. That's all I have. Thank you very much.
MR. LAWRENCE: Bob?
MR. AARON: I have no questions. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew?
MR. RUNYON: Yeah, Walter got my question.
BY MR. RUNYON:
Q. I wanted to know how many captains you've actually seen go back and look at the locks because you say you actually offer it to them.
A. Yeah.
Q. You say you want to go check the locks. But you did say when you -- my question is when you walk the upper deck, you said the Atlas rep walks with you.
A. Sometimes.
Q. But that's not required?
A. It's not required because I'm the GSC.
Q. Right.
A. He just -- he'll usually ask me as soon as I come down, did you walk the deck. I say of course.
Q. And you walk the deck for the locks, to look at the locks.

A. Right.
Q. But you don't sign off the locks. Andrew Hernandez signed that the locks are up.
A. That's on the verification sheet. Yeah, he just signs as all locks are up.
Q. Okay. So he's looking at it, too. Maybe he walked with you.
A. Well, we -- so typically what happens is the loadmaster isn't there during the actual load process. The verifier is.
Q. Got you.
A. So he's verifying it goes into position. I assign all the positions.
Q. Okay.
A. So that's how it goes down, but then when they're done, like on this flight there's a ton of open space to be able to walk the cargo --
Q. Right.
A. -- so you can. My first flight it's full all the way to the front, so there's no way to even get through the cargo door to be able to walk the area --
Q. I see.
A. -- because you're fully locked in. So on this one, I was able to walk through, and I always walk through starting on the right side forward, move down and then go to the left and then back up.
Q. I understand. Thank you.

A. Yep.

MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson?

BY MR. HOWARD:

Q. I just got a couple. I think you mentioned, and correct me if I'm wrong, but that when the crew showed up they did an ID check. And then I thought I heard you say something about the FO having his bags inspected.

A. Not the FO, the jump seater.

Q. The jump seater, and what does that consist of?

A. So he's not an Atlas Air employee, so we're required to search any other people that are not Atlas. So he's Mesa Air, so basically you have to open up their bags, go through their -- all their belongings and make sure there's nothing that shouldn't be there, there. He had a regular bag and one carry on, like a little hand bag. We went through both. And the security lady did it. We're both sitting there, and the Atlas rep was present during that.

Q. All right. You had mentioned the 150-pound check. What does that consist of?

A. That's just basically when the gaylords come in, you're supposed to check for like stowaways to make sure no person tries to hide out in some sort of box to get onto an aircraft to get a free ride, I guess, or if they're planning to do something, you know, messed up I guess on the plane. But that's a requirement that we have to do prior to items being loaded.

Q. So what is it, just looking in them?
A. Yeah. So the ones that we get here, they're like 45s, so they're 45 inches tall. They have to dig through the top just to kind of look in to see if there's anybody there.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean if there's a 150-pound person sitting in a box, you know, 45 x 45, it's going to be pretty noticeable.
Q. Right. And I think I have one more. Oh, when you were in the process of loading, whenever you were up in the cockpit area, did you overhear the crew discussing anything that they didn't like or, you know, weather, mechanical, anything?
A. I didn't hear anything that was off putting.
Q. That's all I have.
MR. LAWRENCE: Great. I've got just a couple follow up, questions, Ron.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. I want to clean up and do some clarification. You had several people ask you about captains going back and looking at the locks. Let me expand on that. Have you had any captains go back and inspect the load?
A. Inspect the load?
Q. The cargo load.
A. No, I've never had a captain inspect the cargo load. They usually just do a walkthrough if they do walkthrough.
Q. Okay. And you're the ground security coordinator, and you

were for the Saxon flight, too?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. I know we've asked about any mechanical difficulties and anything. Did you notice any security issues at this particular airport?
A. I didn't see any security issues.
Q. Okay. And you get on duty at about 3:00 in the morning, right?
A. Correct.
Q. Do you have any responsibility on the pallet buildup that occurs by StratAir at -- starting at I guess 3:00.
A. I supervise all that, so you know, I run that shift so all those employees are working for me, but I do have a floor supervisor that's, you know, trained on splitting those PAJs and putting the different, you know, items for different flights in their certain locations. So I lean heavily on them to do all that. It's --
Q. So is the pallet buildup being -- I'm sorry.
A. That's okay. I have oversight on that thought.
Q. Got it. So is the pallet buildup being held until you get there, or can it begin before 3:00, or is it that shift that the pallet buildup is starting?
A. It's ongoing all the time, so I don't have to be there before a pallet buildup. As a matter of fact, half of it is usually built up before I get there because it comes typically in, you

know, at 1:00 a.m. and our nightshift is building it for us for the flight out.

Q. Okay. If there is an issue with one of the end locks or the guide locks that you see, who do you notify?

A. The mechanics.

Q. Okay.

A. And then of course the station rep as well.

Q. Do you have any responsibility for the aircraft logbook?

A. No.

Q. Do you recall who the Atlas rep was on the accident flight?

A. Julian.

Q. Julian, okay. Okay. And just to clarify a response you gave to Dr. Bramble, but I want to make sure. I think I heard you responded at one point in time, and we're going to look at this page.

A. Okay.

Q. Just for clarification, I think you said the 10 left was the last one to go in, but I think you meant to say 10 right.

A. 10 right, yes.

Q. Okay. So 10 right position, that cargo was the last one loaded?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. Just wanted to clarify that. Okay. And then you mentioned something that you had a rapport with the jump seater. Was that because of his Colombian connection?

A. No, just seemed like a nice guy.
Q. Okay. And staying with the jump seater, when you brought the final paperwork up to the crew, were all the pilots and the jump seater sitting at the time?
A. Yes.
Q. Where was the jump seater?
A. He was on seat number 1 as you walk in, right there on the edge.
Q. On the back wall there?
A. Just behind the captain. So the captain's here. Here, I'm going to see if I can show you. They're already on the plane. I guess it doesn't really make -- anyway, so captain is here. FO is here. There's a center seat for observer.
Q. Right.
A. Then there's three of the jump seats. He was on that.
Q. The one closest to the --
A. Port side on the left side, yes.
Q. He was not in the observer's seat?
A. No.
Q. He was in one of the jump seats along the wall --
A. Correct.
Q. -- the three of those.
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. Perfect. That's what I wanted.
A. I mean that's where he was sitting. I don't know where he

got in once they started pulling back.

Q. Totally understand. That's why I wanted what you observed.

A. Right.

Q. Perfect.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else have any other follow up questions? Is there anything that we didn't ask or something that you wanted to make sure you wanted to let us know about your encounter with this crew or this aircraft that could help for the investigation?

MR. KNIGHT: No, I believe you covered everything.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Well, at any point in time after you go home or in the future if there's anything you can think of, you know, that could help us, please feel free to get a hold of us and offer that. Okay?

MR. KNIGHT: No problem.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Great. Thank you so much.

MR. KNIGHT: Yep.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Shannon Ricks
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	
DATE:	February 27, 2019

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.



William Jackson
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*
	*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	* Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*
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Interview of: ANDREW HERNANDEZ

Wednesday,
February 27, 2019

APPEARANCES:

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National Transportation Safety Board

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National Transportation Safety Board

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I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Andrew Hernandez:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	16
By Mr. Theurer	27
By Mr. Lawrence	31

I N T E R V I E W

(4:55 p.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Thank you for your patience. Good afternoon, Andrew. Welcome, and first off, our condolences, you know, for having to go through this, and just want you to know that our role here is to obviously try to find out what happened so it doesn't happen again to anybody else and nobody else will go through this. So that's our primary role.

I also want to make sure you understand that it's very normal for us to go and talk to the people who were last encountered with the crew and the aircraft, so this is a very normal part of the process for us.

We work on a party system so that's why we're all here right now and we have multiple people. These party members are providing us technical expertise to assist us in the safety role, and so what we'll do is we'll go around the room virtually so we -- you know who's sitting with you at the table here.

My name is David Lawrence. I'm an operations investigator for the NTSB.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. THEURER: I'm Walt Theurer. I'm the Boeing 767 APM for the UPS CMO in Louisville.

MR. AARON: Bob Aaron, senior safety pilot for Boeing. I've had crew leader with Northwest and Delta.

MR. RUNYON: Andrew Runyon, 767 pilot for Atlas.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, 76 pilot for Atlas, here for the Teamsters, the pilots' union.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And you are always afforded the right to have one person represent you. Is Gary -- who would you like to sit in with you?

MR. HERNANDEZ: Gary's fine.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Perfect. And then the other thing is, so you understand the FAA's role here, they're just like us, they're safety investigators trying to find out what happened and assist us in the investigation. They have no certificate action capability or they will not use any of the information here for any kind of certification action, so I want you to just feel comfortable knowing that we're all here for safety and whatever you can provide to us would be greatly helpful.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. A couple of things we are going to be -- as I mentioned outside earlier, we'll be taping this and then using this tape as a transcription. We will transcribe the tape and that will eventually go into our public docket and be part of the factual record for this accident.

We are going to be taking notes, and so I type with two fingers like this sometimes so I'm a little slow and I take my time. If I ask a question and I'm typing I apologize for not making eye contact.

MR. HERNANDEZ: That's okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: If I ask a question or anybody at the table asks a question that you don't understand or need clarity, please stop and just ask us, and we'll do the same for you if there's something you say that we don't quite understand. Any questions about the process?

MR. HERNANDEZ: No, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. And it's David, not sir.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I apologize.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks. Okay, I appreciate that.

INTERVIEW OF ANDREW HERNANDEZ

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let me start off with some of the easier questions. Can I get your full name?

A. Andrew Gregory Hernandez.

Q. And how old are you?

A. Twenty-three.

Q. Is it Andrew, Drew, Andy? How do you want me to --

A. Just Andrew.

Q. Andrew?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Okay, good. And what is your title?

A. I'm a warehouse handler/load verifier.

Q. Warehouse handler and load verifier, okay. How long have you been doing that?

A. Since September 2018.
Q. Okay. And who are you employed by?
A. StratAir.
Q. Okay. And let me get just a general employment background leading up to StratAir since you're relatively new to StratAir. What were you doing prior to?
A. Just customer service in the hotels and the restaurant business. Solely customer service.
Q. Any aviation experience?
A. No, sir.
Q. All right. Are you a loadmaster as well?
A. I have the certifications to do it. At the time I am not, due to slow season.
Q. Have you done it before?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. When was the last time you worked as a loadmaster?
A. My last date of operation as a loadmaster was the end of January.
Q. Okay. And you mentioned you have a certification. Who are you certified by?
A. Atlas Air.
Q. Okay. Do you have any certificate?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay.
A. I hold a weight and balance certificate and a safety

certificate through Atlas.
Q. Do you have any FAA certificate?
A. No.
Q. Okay. And I assume, since you're holding these certificates or you were certified through Atlas, you were trained by Atlas; is that correct?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. All right. Tell me about your training at Atlas. How long was it?
A. My training was 3 days long and it was held in a classroom at our StratAir Building 712.
Q. Who was the instructor, do you recall?
A. I do not remember.
Q. Okay. Was that an Atlas person or StratAir?
A. Atlas representative.
Q. Okay. Were you given an exam or any type of evaluation after the training?
A. Yes, sir. We went through a course or a test to get us through that.
Q. And after your course or test then you got the certificate?
A. Certificates. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay, great. But you don't have -- or correct me if I'm wrong, do you have something that you have in your wallet like a license or something that says "I am a loadmaster"?
A. Let me check. This, this yellow card, they gave it to me

when I became a loadmaster kind of describing if anything happened or anything, safety issues, I would have numbers to call or -- in that issue.

Q. Okay.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Okay, great. So tell me about your role for the accident flight.

A. I was a load verifier the day of the accident, and my job was to verify the cargo going on the plane as we built it on the ground.

Q. Verified the load going onto the airplane while it was on the ground?

A. Or verifying how it was built on the ground.

Q. Okay.

A. Yes, sir, we build load plans before putting it on the plane.

Q. Okay. So what responsibility did you have for the load -- prior to the aircraft getting there, did you do anything with that cargo load?

A. Just a warehouse handler getting that specific cargo into AEXs or DQS, like getting them safetied up to then put on the plane.

Q. What does safety up mean?

A. Putting the locks in the DQS or the PAJs, making sure the nets are properly -- stuff along that line.

Q. Okay. And who actually does the physical loading of the

cargo?
A. NAS.
Q. Okay. Do you train or did NAS employees train with StratAir?
A. No, sir.
Q. Okay. So walk me through again -- the accident airplane came in from Ontario and then what did you do?
A. As a plane arrives, I'm on the ground calling block time, and that's my first job there on the ground. And then we move to the aft belly, to where then procedure starts, operations start unloading aft to then unload the main, to unload the forward, to then just reverse that role: load the forward, load the main, to then load the aft belly.
Q. Okay.
A. And then I stand there during that procedure operation time and make sure that as I read it on the build plan on the floor and how it's read on the pallet tags, I'm putting in that proper position and weight onto my paper, on my load verification paper.
Q. Okay.
A. Would you like me to be more specific?
Q. Well, I just want to make sure we're clear that I'm asking about what you did for this accident flight not just in general what your role is.
A. Okay.
Q. So just walk me through everything you did with this particular accident flight.

A. Okay. Yes, sir. So called block time. I walked to the aft belly, opened the doors there, waited for the on -- or that load to get off the plane, as I stand there and watched that cargo come off the plane. Then I go and move to the forward belly to where that door is already opened by one of our loadmasters, and I go ahead and watch that offload as well.

At that time, when all the offload is being done on both bellies, then I go ahead and watch that load being done on the forward belly going in. And from there, I make my way to the forward belly, then to the main, to watch that unload process and make sure I'm verifying there on main, then going right back to the aft for that same process. So just jumping from main to belly while in that same process, watching it go in, verifying it go in.

Q. And this is all what you did for the accident flight?

A. Yes, sir. For the accident flight, yes, sir.

Q. Okay. Anything else you do for that?

A. No, sir. My job's pretty basic on operations. As a load verifier, there's not much required from us other than to load verify the load, and then go ahead and crosscheck at the end of the loads with our loadmaster on positions, weights, et cetera.

Q. Okay. When the load is up on the main deck, do you recall where the load was located on this particular flight?

A. Yeah. Yes, sir.

Q. Tell me about that.

A. Well, we had --

Q. And if you need the paperwork to take a look at --
A. If you have it --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- I would love to look at it. Yes, sir.
Q. Here you go. So tell me about this particular load.
A. Just a regular load going to Houston. You have the PAJ/PAGs on the main deck. We always make sure that we put our weight to the back of the plane, as it is a nose-heavy plane. So we go ahead and put the first one in A13, in that position, lock it up, and just go on from there, to 12R to 12 Left, 11R, 11 Left back to 10R.

And then we did throw a single sheet on this plane. Due to us having 24 positions on the plane, we need to fill every PAJ, PAG/PAJ so that we can hold all positions, if necessary, for the next operating site.

Q. Are you involved in having end locks verified up? Is that part of your job as a verifier?
A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir. It is part of my job.
Q. Okay. Tell me about what you did that day for that flight.
A. Yes, sir. So after the forward got loaded and all those locks -- so two DQS go in and then we put locks up, four locks. Same process, two more DQS go in and throw those locks. There's eight positions, so for every two DQS there should be four locks that go up.

And when we move to main, it's a little different. Every

position holds a lock, so we make sure that all four, sometimes maybe five, those locks are up for that position. Moving on right to the aft going back to the DQS, you have two positions, four locks; two positions, four locks. And those get verified by myself. Like I said, that is my responsibility and others as well.

Q. Who signs the paperwork verifying that all the locks are up?

A. Can you rephrase that question?

Q. Who has the ultimate responsibility that all the end locks are placed up on the main deck?

A. I wouldn't, I wouldn't hold that to one person. It's a team kind of effort, with it being NAS, then myself as a load verifier, then the loadmaster, which on site was Ron that day, then the Atlas representatives. So it goes through four people. You know, locks get checked through four, four levels.

Q. But you're a verifier of the loads --

A. Yes, sir.

Q. -- in general?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. I'm trying to find out if you're -- have a responsibility to verify that the locks are up?

A. Well, yes, sir. Well, due to me being -- watching the load go in and making sure they go in the right positions, I also have that responsibility of making sure those locks follow that position.

Q. Okay.
A. So, like I said before, you know, I'm not just one guy that, you know, checks those locks. It goes from those NAS guys that push in that cargo and they throw up the locks themselves, to me checking that lock, to then whatever follows after that, the loadmaster checking my check to then the Atlas representative checking those two checks, mine and Ron's check, at the time.
Q. Were you ever at any point up in the cockpit?
A. Cockpit being where the pilots are?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. No, sir, not that day.
Q. Did you have any interaction with any of the crew members?
A. No, sir.
Q. In your role as a verifier have you ever seen pilots go back on the main deck and check either the locks or the loads?
A. Yes, sir. I see quite a few of them do it. Not all of them do it, but the ones that take the extra mile in their job, they do do that, yes, sir.
Q. Okay. Is there -- are you aware of any requirement for the pilots to go on the main deck to check?
A. No, sir. I'm not sure if they're required to do so.
Q. Okay. So you just recently, within about a year or so, went through the training, correct, on this?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. Was there any training that was done with pilots in

the room or with any other --
A. No, sir.
Q. -- Atlas people other than the instructor?
A. No, sir.
Q. Okay.
A. We were all loadmasters or due to become loadmasters that were in the room.
Q. Okay. Do you have the ability to jump seat or ride on one of the Atlas flights?
A. Not that I'm aware of. No, sir.
Q. Your certification that you talked about earlier, is that a certification specific to the 767 or can you go do a loadmaster on the 747?
A. I don't know.
Q. Was your loadmaster training -- did it provide specific information about the 767 or was it just general loading?
A. No. Yes, sir, specific information about the aircraft we work with.
Q. Were you trained in any special cargo loading?
A. No, sir.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.
DR. BRAMBLE: My turn?
MR. LAWRENCE: Your turn. Bill.
DR. BRAMBLE: Okay, one second. Oops.
MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks. Appreciate it.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Okay. Did anyone do a final check of the pallets and end locks before closing the airplane door?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Who did that?

A. The Atlas representative is always the last one to do so. Especially that day of the flight, he did do so.

Q. Who is the Atlas rep?

A. First name Julian. I don't know his last name, but if maybe I had like a phonebook I could maybe get that to you guys.

Q. Okay. Who was the last person off the airplane before it departed?

A. Our loadmaster, as he receives the documents, his load plan back.

Q. Okay. And how long after you left the airplane did he leave the airplane?

A. I called pushback, so I watch him get off the plane and I'm there on the floor. So I was on the floor while he was coming off that airplane for the last time.

Q. What's the floor?

A. Being the strip or ground operating floor.

Q. Outside the airplane?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Okay.

A. On the ramp side.

Q. So how many minutes after you left the airplane did the loadmaster leave the airplane would you estimate?
A. Can you kind of rephrase that question for me?
Q. How many minutes would you say elapsed between the time you left the plane and the loadmaster left the plane?
A. I don't have an exact time for you.
Q. Okay. When you and -- when you left the plane, did he leave with you and then go back on?
A. After the aft gets done loading, and that's the last thing to get loaded, I meet him in his office to crosscheck what just went on the plane, the build plan. And then we both go out, back out there for documentation and pushback. So you could say that we left at the same time and we were together at the same time.
Q. Okay. So you finish loading the cargo. After you've loaded the last piece of cargo or after you observed the loading of the last piece of cargo, what did you do immediately after that?
A. I go ahead to the warehouse where we perform operations, and I then go ahead and crosscheck my load verification sheet with his build plan on that (indiscernible).
Q. Okay. Do you ever go, do you ever go around the airplane after loading all the cargo and check all the locks, or did you on this particular flight, after you loaded the cargo, go around the upper deck of the airplane and check to make sure all of the locks were up?
A. Yes, sir, I did.

Q. Is there a certain pattern that you use or flow that you use to do that?
A. I like using a kind of a row style, so going left to right, left to right, left to right.
Q. Okay. Was there anyone with you when you did that?
A. Yes, sir. Some NAS employees; also the loadmaster on site, Ronald Knight; and Atlas representative, Julian.
Q. Okay. And were they doing the same thing, checking all the locks?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. And who actually raised the locks at the empty spots after the cargo was loaded?
A. NAS.
Q. Anybody from StratAir help?
A. I threw up a lock or two, but most of the locks were done by NAS.
Q. How about the loadmaster, Ron?
A. Did he put up any locks?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Yes, sir, he did as well, maybe one or two.
Q. Who did most of them?
A. NAS.
Q. Who specifically at NAS?
A. I don't remember that day who was working that exact flight and especially up on the main deck.

Q. Do you remember how many of them there were?
A. Two. I apologize. Two to three, two to three.
Q. Okay. All right. Was there anything unusual about that work shift?
A. No, sir.
Q. Do you remember who worked the flight with you?
A. Ron Knight.
Q. Besides Ron?
A. Other than NAS employees and the Atlas representative, Julian, and also Aaron was there.
Q. Who's Aaron?
A. An Atlas representative.
Q. Okay. All right. Anything unusual about the loading of the airplane?
A. No, sir.
Q. Any particular challenges associated with the loading of the airplane?
A. No, sir.
Q. Was there any difficulty resulting from the positioning of the airplane down the ramp from the warehouse at spot 15?
A. No, sir.
Q. How did you get back and forth between the warehouse and the plane?
A. Walking.
Q. Okay. Anything unusual about the accident crew?

A. One more time?
Q. Was there anything unusual about the crew?
A. No, sir, not that I could see. Like I said before, I didn't come into interaction with any of the pilots so I couldn't -- you know, I observed from afar. So that observation was, you know, nonverbal, you know, everything was what I saw based off sight and vision.
Q. Okay. Let me just check through a few more things here.
Oh, okay. I'd like to ask you a few basic questions about sort of health and recent activities, which we -- is pretty standard for us with crew -- with people in safety-critical positions. How is your general health?
A. Good.
Q. Any chronic illnesses?
A. No, sir.
Q. Take prescription meds?
A. No, sir.
Q. Do you use alcohol?
A. Socially to --
Q. Okay.
A. -- for conversations, nothing more than that.
Q. When was your last use before the accident flight?
A. Maybe a month ago.
Q. Okay. Do you use tobacco?
A. Yes, sir, I do.

Q. How much?
A. One to two times a week.
Q. Okay. Cigarettes?
A. No, sir.
Q. What do you use?
A. Chewing tobacco.
Q. Okay. Were you using at the time on the shift?
A. No, sir, never during operations.
Q. Did you have any recent illnesses?
A. No, sir.
Q. Any significant recent changes in your health, finances, or personal life, like big life events?
A. No, sir.
Q. Okay. How much daily sleep do you need to feel fully rested like when you're off duty for days at a time and you don't have to wake to an alarm clock?
A. Four hours.
Q. You need 4 to feel --
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. Is that typically how much you sleep?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. Do you have any sleeping difficulties?
A. No, sir.
Q. Okay. So the accident was Feb 23, Saturday. Do you recall what time you woke up that morning and when you went on shift?

A. I got to Warehouse 712 at 3:20 in the morning.
Q. Okay.
A. Yes, sir. So I was about 20 minutes late to operations work.
Q. And what time did you wake up?
A. 2:50.
Q. Okay. And did you work an airplane prior to the accident airplane that morning?
A. Yes, sir. The first flight that comes to us comes from CBG, Cincinnati, KCBG. And that's the first flight we worked that day prior to the incident flight.
Q. Okay. And -- all right, so February 22nd, the day before the accident was a Friday. Do you recall what time you went to bed that night, or went to sleep? I should specify.
A. No, sir. I don't know -- I do not remember.
Q. Okay. What, and what time do you typically go to sleep on a work night?
A. 10:30, 10 o'clock.
Q. Okay. And do you recall if you were on shift, if you worked that February 22nd, Friday, the day before?
A. Yes, sir, I did work.
Q. Okay. Was it the usual -- was the same shift start time?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Is that 3 o'clock to 11:30?
A. Yes, sir, it is.
Q. Okay. And Thursday, February 21st, did you work that day?

A. Yes, sir, I did.
Q. Same shift?
A. Same shift.
Q. Do you recall what time you woke and got to work that day?
A. It was about the same times, 2:50 to 3:15.
Q. 2:50.
A. When I woke up, 2:50, and arrived at work about 3:15, 3:10.
Q. Okay. And then how about going to sleep that night, any recollection?
A. I do not recall.
Q. Okay. And then the last time, the last day I'm going to ask about is February 20th, the day before that. So this would be Wednesday. Did you work --
A. I did work, yes, sir.
Q. Okay. Worked -- same shift?
A. Same shift. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. And would you give me the same answers about your wake time and arrival time?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. And do you remember your going to sleep time that night?
A. No. I do not recall.
Q. Okay. All right. Are you -- what's your typical workdays and days off?
A. I take Sundays and Tuesdays off from StratAir.

Q. Do you have another job?
A. Yes, sir, I do.
Q. What's that?
A. Monday through Friday, I coach varsity baseball at a high school from 3 to 7.
Q. Three to 7 p.m., okay. I presume in the afternoon or evening?
A. Yeah, afternoon, evening. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. Okay. Did you feel alert during the shift when you were loading the accident airplane?
A. Yes, sir, I did.
Q. Okay. Are there any particular hazards that you are looking out for during the aircraft loading in terms of personal safety of the people involved and safety of the airplane from damage?
A. Can you break that down into one question for me, please?
Q. Okay. Are there particular hazards, are there particular dangers that you keep in mind -- and let's actually focus on the airplane itself. Like when you're involved in your job as a load verifier and there during the loading process, are there any potential dangers to the airplane that you're particularly keeping in mind as you are going through that process?
A. Yes, sir. Preload and afterload, I make sure that the inside walls of the airplane, whether they're on the belly or the main, are the same where we saw it, like I said, preload, afterload.
Q. Okay. All right. And are there any particular hazards to

you personally that you're keeping, being mindful about to make sure that you don't get injured?
A. Other than my footing on the plane, no.
Q. Okay. Did the delayed arrival of the airplane make the loading process more challenging?
A. No, sir. We didn't have to rush.
Q. Why not?
A. The Houston load isn't very large, so it took us not as long as it would on a Cincinnati flight to load the plane.
Q. Okay. How long would you say -- how much time did you have to spare before the airplane left?
A. I don't remember an exact time frame.
Q. Okay. How closely do you and your colleagues follow checklists or adhere to company SOPs at StratAir/Atlas?
A. We take the operation very seriously when it comes to procedures and guidelines and rules to follow. You know, we're not working with cars, we're working with an airplane and people's lives, so we take that operation and procedures and rules very, very seriously at StratAir/Atlas.
Q. Okay. How's the pay for your position compared to similar companies as far as you know?
A. I don't have any recollection of any pay from any other companies. My position, the only pay I know for my position would be from StratAir.
Q. Has the -- has StratAir been growing or getting smaller in

terms of the number of employee in recent months?
A. In recent months, yes, due to slow season.
Q. How big -- what -- has it been getting smaller?
A. Yes, sir, smaller.
Q. And how big is that change would you say?
A. Not big. Maybe 25 people, 20 people of temps.
Q. Have been not working?
A. Correct. Yes, sir. And when I say temps, I mean temporary workers that know they're going to be temporary before they come into the job.
Q. Okay. And how do you consider your -- how would you describe your workload for your position in terms of whether it's high, low, medium?
A. That all depends on, all depends on the plane we work and how much cargo we have that day.
Q. Do you feel like it's manageable for you?
A. Yes, sir, it is.
Q. How's the morale of your team? The people you work with most often, how is their morale; how do they feel about the job?
A. We like what we do at StratAir. I don't ever see, you know, a bad face or a bad body language around the warehouse. Everybody's pretty much upbeat and moving around.
Q. Okay. Do you work overtime for StratAir?
A. When they need me to, yes, sir.
Q. How often?

A. Not often.
Q. When was the last time you worked overtime?
A. I do not recall the last time I worked overtime.
Q. Was it longer than 2 weeks ago, say?
A. Just about 2 weeks, yes, sir.
Q. And when you do work overtime is it like a couple hours at a time or is it like a double shift or --
A. No, sir. Overtime would be maybe 30 minutes more than what the clock says. So noon, 12:30 at the most, nothing past 1:30.
Q. Okay. What would you do if you were too tired to work?
A. I don't know.
Q. Has that ever happened?
A. No, sir, it has not.
DR. BRAMBLE: Thanks for being patient. Appreciate your answers.
MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, sir.
MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Bill. Walt?
MR. THEURER: I've just got a couple questions, but I'm going to sit over there so I don't have to holler at you. It's getting late. I'll just sit in this chair. I can see you better.
BY MR. THEURER:
Q. When you're talking about your position, load verifier, let's see if I understand what you're doing. So you're on the ground initially, right?
A. Yes.

Q. A load plan is developed and you're where the dolly comes around and puts the container on the K loader and goes up?
A. Yes, sir. But I'm on the loader itself because I have to make sure those ULDs are going into the proper positions.
Q. Okay. So you're --
A. I can't do that on the ground.
Q. So you're up on the -- when it comes off, you make sure that whatever pallet that is goes to where it says on the load plan?
A. Correct. Yes, sir.
Q. And then the loadmaster, whereas he's up back at the back or where is he?
A. He's usually reviewing the whole operations, you know, walking around the plane making sure everything's done --
Q. So he's outside making sure --
A. -- to a T.
Q. He's making sure the right container's getting on the K loader to come up to you?
A. Correct. Yes, sir.
Q. And then you're making sure they go back to where they go?
A. Correct. Yes, sir.
Q. If you have -- let's say you have a full load going on. As they go back, do you go back with them?
A. Yes, sir, I do.
Q. And then you're checking what when you got back there?
A. Right when I put it in the position that I see as on the

pallet tag. And once it's in position, then I go ahead and transcribe that weight to my load verification paper.
Q. Do you check the locks at that point that they go up? When it gets in position, that's secured?
A. Correct. Yes, sir, I am responsible for that.
Q. And then when it's all done, you guys do your walk around and check all the positions?
A. Correct. Yes, sir.
Q. And then you go back to your office room and compare your documents with the --
A. Yes, sir. We crosscheck.
Q. -- Ronald, Ron at that point, right?
A. Yeah, we crosscheck that information --
Q. To make sure it's all --
A. -- to what he has on his preplan.
Q. That you all agree that everything's where it is and supposed to be and all locks are up?
A. Absolutely.
Q. Does Ron sign anything? Do you guys sign any of those documents that say I did that?
A. Yes, sir. I do sign some documents that I have in front of myself.
Q. Okay. Okay, good.
Q. And then you go back out for the block-out time?
A. Correct. Yes, sir.

Q. Is that when Ron takes the paper -- load manifest and goes up to the cockpit and says here?
A. Correct. Yes, sir.
Q. He does that and he leaves?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Do you have any system there that as you work on the ramp and do what you do, if you see something that you think is any kind -- does StratAir and Atlas have some kind of a program that says if you see something wrong tell so-and-so? You know what I mean, like if you see something you don't like or you think is unsafe, do they have a program for you to report that?
A. Not a program, but I go report it to my loadmaster on site, and at the time was Ron, if anything did occur to that.
Q. Okay. Do you like what you do?
A. Yes, sir, I do.
Q. And you never get tired because you're 23, right?
A. I just try to stay motivated.
MR. THEURER: Well, don't worry, when you get older you will get tired. Thank you.
MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, sir.
MR. THEURER: Appreciate it.
MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Bob, do you have anything?
MR. AARON: I have nothing. Thank you very much.
MR. LAWRENCE: Andrew, do you have anything?

MR. RUNYON: I really don't. I think you guys have covered it very well.

MR. HOWARD: I do not have anything.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. I just have one question and I want to follow up on a question that I had asked and then Bill alluded to -- Dr. Bramble had alluded to. For the locks, the responsibility with the locks being up, the final authority and -- rather, the final responsibility to ensure all those locks are up before the cargo door is closed, whose responsibility is that?

A. Atlas representative.

Q. Okay. Let me ask you to open your paperwork to that page. You -- I'm going to hold this. The paperwork that you have right in front of you there, okay. All right. Whose signature is this?

A. That is mine.

Q. Okay. And what does it say right above your signature here?

A. All locks up, belly nets fitted.

Q. Okay. So why are you signing this?

A. That's my verification on the load plan. I was there physically watching it happen.

Q. Okay. But my question was who has final authority that those locks are up? And you're saying it's the Atlas representative?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. But you signed paperwork that say all locks up and belly's fitted, but you're not the final one?

A. Correct.
Q. Okay. Is any of the paperwork that you've seen signed by an Atlas representative verifying that the locks are up?
A. No, sir. Not on mine.
Q. Okay. So yours is the only signature that's saying that the locks are up and the belly's fitted?
A. That's right.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I just wanted to verify that. Thank you. Anybody else have any other questions?
MR. HOWARD: No, sir.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could I ask for a break real quick?
MR. LAWRENCE: Sure. Oh, stop --
(Off the record.)
(On the record.)
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Okay. Let me ask you a little bit more, Andrew, about this ramp load verification sheet for the 767. Can you just look at this sheet, and you have it in front of you, and tell me about this?
A. It looks like a normal build plan to Houston. That's what it looks like to me, with there being minimum cargo on the top of the main. And always on the bellies we're always filling every position with DQS there.
Q. And it looks like a typical one?
A. Yes, sir, typical.

Q. All right. Do you recognize this particular one?
A. Absolutely, I do.
Q. Which one is this?
A. This is the accident cargo flight.
Q. Okay. All right. So what are all these -- what are you doing here with all these entries?
A. The first entry on the prefix label is whether it's a PAJ, PAG or a DQS.
Q. Okay.
A. So that label's the ULD. Right after that is the number, so that'll hold its kind of position value to where we can find those. Then the owner, AM, being Amazon. Right after that is the weight and right after that is the location. And if it doesn't have a location -- for example, on A13 it says stack, so then it's a stack of PAJs, PAGs.
Q. Okay. It's a verification. What are you comparing it to?
A. Can you rephrase that for me?
Q. Sure. You're verifying something, you're verifying that these pallets are in here, but you have to -- you're verifying that they're either physically in a position or that somebody else has this information on another sheet of paper that's correct?
A. Correct. That someone else has this information on another piece of paper.
Q. Okay, good. And this is your responsibility and this is what you're doing, you're completing this load verification form?

A. Yes, sir. I'm live loading that, yes, sir.
Q. Okay. Is this the only form that you have that you're completing?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. But we just talked about that other form that you signed for the locks up?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. And you have that in your possession as you're going through?
A. No, sir. That last paper that we are discussing right now is something that I sign when it gets printed, and we already go through the crosschecking and I sign to make sure that I, myself, show that everything looks the way it was before and after the load.
Q. Got it. So that is your verification that you saw all the locks up?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. But the final say and authority is the --
A. Is an Atlas representative, yes, sir.
MR. LAWRENCE: Good. I just wanted to make sure we were clear on that. All right, great. Any other questions at this time?
Thanks, Andrew. We really appreciate your time.
MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, sir.
(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Andrew Hernandez
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Houston, Texas
DATE:	February 27, 2019

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.



Wa[redacted]
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*
	*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	* Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*
	*

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Interview of: TIM ANDREWS

Via Telephone

Thursday,
February 28, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Tim Andrews:	
By Mr. Lawrence	4
By Dr. Bramble	7
By Mr. Theurer	9
By Mr. Aaron	10
By Mr. Howard	10
By Mr. Runyon	11
By Mr. Theurer	11
By Dr. Bramble	12
By Mr. Theurer	13
By Mr. Lawrence	13

I N T E R V I E W

(11:25 a.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Are you comfortable with just talking to us with us on the phone right now?

MR. ANDREWS: Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great.

MR. ANDREWS: Yeah, I'm comfortable.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. And I'm just -- just so we know and for accuracy I'm just going to record this so we, you know, this is really quick information. I want to make sure we get this accurately, if that's okay with you?

MR. ANDREWS: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Awesome.

INTERVIEW OF TIM ANDREWS

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. So tell me -- first off, you're a First Officer on the 76 for Atlas.

A. Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Oh, by the way, FAA is in the room here. They're a representative on our group but they're not here for certificate action or anything. It's just like a safety -- this is just a safety investigation, okay. Just to let you know.

MR. ANDREWS: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Cool.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. So you're a First Officer on the 76 for Atlas, right?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Tell me what it is you want to share with us. You had some information about the accident airplane.
A. Well, I don't know if it does. The -- I had an incident coming out of Stockton on -- and I'm not actually sure that it was that date. I think I believe it is. It very well could be --
Q. What date are you talking about?
A. 11/2 of '18.
Q. Got it.
A. And I had a incident coming out of Stockton on one of our aircraft. It was -- we departed there in the middle of the night it was 0730Z VFR and normal departure. It was heading off departure with a climb -- a left climbing turn to 7,000 feet and when we went through 1,000 we engaged the center autopilot and somewhere before 2,000 we got a Flight Director command full down, nose down. And the airplane tried to start leveling off and I disengaged the autopilot, hand flew it, we reset the autopilot in the climb out and it was all systems were normal after that.

And we did not do an FTR on it. We just took it as a anomaly of the autopilot and it reset and we just continued on.

And I can't say if Laz, the guy I was flying with, remembers the incident, you know, if we could verify that that was one hundred percent it but when I was looking through my logbook I was like, "Oh, that's -- that tail number was on that flight." So it

just kind of concerned me.
Q. Okay. So when it nosed over did you happen to notice what the flight motor enunciator was telling you at the time?
A. I do not.
Q. Okay. And was it a hard over or was it just trying to level off and kind of go to a normal reduced pitch?
A. No, it felt like it was pushing over and I'm sure that the command bars being all the way as far down as they could go.
Q. Okay. And when you reengaged --
A. I wouldn't say it was so abrupt -- it wasn't so abrupt like it was trying to push us out of our seats or anything but it was definitely heading into a pretty good dive. But -- and, you know, we kicked the autopilot off, we kept flying the airplane and, you know, corrected it but it was, you know, very noticed, very pronounced.
Q. Okay. When you reengaged the autopilot do you reengage that second or the center autopilot?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay.
A. We reengaged the center autopilot.
Q. And anything happen after that?
A. No. It was Flight Director was all normal, everything was normal. It flew all the way to CVG with no problems.
Q. Okay. Was this written up in the logbook?
A. I do not recall.

Q. Okay. Any irregularity reports or anything like that filed in conjunction with this event?
A. No.
Q. Okay. And how certain are you that this was 1217 Alpha?
A. I would say really only talking about 80 percent. If Laz cannot verify that he was on that and that was the -- then I would have to look elsewhere but it was -- I'm about 80 percent sure that that's what it was.
Q. Okay. You said earlier it was pushing over toward a dive. It never got into a dive or did it actually start to descend?
A. It started to descend. We went -- it -- level come off immediately and it started to descend down and we probably got a little bit vertical descent and immediately kicked off and reinitiated the climb.
Q. Yeah. I'm trying to visualize this so you turned the autopilot on during the climb then it started to level off and then it continued past the level off into a descent before you disconnected the autopilot. Did I get that right?
A. Yes.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. Let me ask Bill if he's got anything.
DR. BRAMBLE: Yeah.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. Hi, Tim. I just wanted to check and see how you're 80 percent sure. So you had this in a personal logbook, the tail

number or where did you get the information?
A. I got the information off of AIMS.
Q. Okay. So it was off of your company scheduling program?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And so you're going off like you think that was -- you remember the event and you went back into AIMS and you thought you knew approximately when it was and you found that entry in AIMS.
A. Yeah. I was looking through my book and I was like, yeah.
Q. Okay. Do you remember what mode you were in when this occurred?
A. It would have been heading mode in VNAV.
Q. You notice any mode changes when it happened?
A. No. I don't remember any of them after -- I remember looking down trying to see if we had something in the FMC log. But, you know, I was the pilot flying so my attention was more towards getting the nose pointed up.
Q. Okay. And so when that happened, you guys basically reset modes and started over with the autopilot, right?
A. Yeah. We kept climbing and we had climbed up to 5,000 feet or so, and then we climbed to 7,000 and somewhat there in that climb we reset it and re-pitched.
Q. Okay. When you turned it off, did you just disconnect the autopilot or did you also disconnect the auto throttles?
A. Just the autopilot.
Q. Okay. And did you manually manipulate the thrust levers?

A. No.
Q. Okay. So thrust --
A. The thrust --
Q. Sorry. Say again. You broke up there.
A. The thrust wasn't -- it was remaining in climb power.
Q. It remained in climb power.
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Did you do any trim adjustments? I mean, was there -- did you notice any problems with the trim?
A. No.
Q. You didn't do any trim adjustments or notice any problems with the trim?
A. No.
DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. That's it for me. Thanks.
MR. LAWRENCE: We'll go around the room see if anybody else has some questions for you. Do you have any questions?
MR. THEURER: Just one.
BY MR. THEURER:
Q. Tim, it's Walt Theurer. I'm the APM on Boeing 76 at the UPS Certificate Office. When you disconnected the autopilot did the switch on the yoke function normally or did you use it on remote control panel, the bar?
A. The switch on the yoke --
Q. Okay.
A. -- functioned normally.

MR. THEURER: Okay. Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Bob?

BY MR. AARON:

Q. Hi, Tim. It's Bob Aaron from Boeing. Can you hear me okay?

A. Yeah. Yeah.

Q. When you guys encountered this was -- were you guys in any sort of turbulence or any possibility of atmospheric upset, I guess is the best way to put it?

A. No. It was clear and VFR.

Q. Okay. And clear and VFR, he answered my next question. And do you recall did you ever see anything when you checked the logbooks, and this is going out on a limb because I realize it's four months ago, anything jump out at you in terms of anything else mechanically on the aircraft?

A. Not --

Q. Okay. That's it for me. Thank you. Thank you very much.

A. Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson?

MR. HOWARD: Just one.

MR. LAWRENCE: Introduce yourself.

MR. HOWARD: I'm Tyson. I'm IBT 1224.

BY MR. HOWARD:

Q. When you -- I just want to clarify, so after you had the autopilot off you're in climb. When you went to reset did you actually change anything on the MCP other than reengaging the

autopilot? Did you have to reset VNAV, that type of thing?
A. You know, the non-flying pilot was doing that and I really don't remember what he did. I think that I want to say that he reset it but I really don't know what he did. But we got the Flight Director back and then I really can't recall exactly what he did to do that.
MR. HOWARD: Okay. That's all I have.
MR. RUNYON: Andrew, 767 Atlas APM -- Excuse me, APD.
BY MR. RUNYON:
Q. Just to clarify, when the leveling off and the nose down event started occurring you were in a bank, a left turn?
A. Negative. We had not initiated the turn yet.
Q. You had not.
A. We just started to make -- we were just about to make the turn when all this happened so we held off on the turn and then once I got it hand flying then I made the turn.
Q. Okay. So you were climbing straight ahead when the event occurred.
A. Yes.
MR. RUNYON: Okay. Thank you. That's all I have. That's Andrew.
MR. LAWRENCE: Walt, do you have one more?
MR. THEURER: Yeah.
BY MR. THEURER:
Q. Tim, it's Walt Theurer. I have one more question. When you

disconnected the autopilot and took over by hand did your Flight Director remain in a full mode down or did it go back to a normal indication? Or do you remember?

A. It stayed down until whatever Laz did to correct it.

Q. Okay. So he did something on the mode control panel and put it back in normal operation.

A. Yeah.

MR. THEURER: Well, Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anything else? It's Dave Lawrence from the NTSB. Tim, anything else that you can think of that would be helpful?

MR. ANDREWS: That's all I can think of.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Bill Bramble has one more.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Hi, Tim. It's me again. Yeah, so I just wonder if you recall anything about the speed. Do you know what speed you were at and did you notice any speed changes when this event occurred?

A. No, I don't. I don't. Nothing out of -- nothing excessive in any way. No.

Q. You don't recall details. It didn't seem unusual. Is that accurate?

A. Nothing seemed unusual, the speed and the auto throttles were doing what they were supposed to be doing in relation to the speed and I don't -- there was nothing that rings a bell to me there.

DR. BRAMBLE: Sounds good.

MR. LAWRENCE: Walt has one more question.

BY MR. THEURER:

Q. I'm sorry, Tim. I did come up with questions. When this occurred you were at 1,000 feet and gone to VNAV and had you cleaned up the aircraft or were you still in the process of retracting flaps and slats?

A. We were in the process.

Q. Okay. So you were somewhere between -- five and zero.

A. Yeah.

MR. THEURER: Okay. Thank you.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Can I get your full name, too, and your age, too, just so we have that?

A. Timothy Michael Andrews. I'm 54 years old.

Q. And how long have you been flying the 76 for Atlas?

A. Just under a year.

Q. And how long -- when was your date of hire with Atlas?

A. April 1st.

Q. Of?

A. Of 2018.

Q. Got it. Good. Great. Well, I'll tell you what. I really appreciate it Tim. If you got anything else that you can remember or want to relayed to us relate it to us please get a hold of us through the Safety Department at Atlas. Okay?

A. Okay. All right.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right, pal. I really appreciate you coming forward and letting us know. Thank you so much.

MR. ANDREWS: All right. Thanks a lot.

MR. LAWRENCE: Bye.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

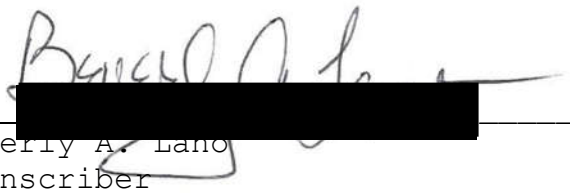
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Tim Andrews
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Via Telephone
DATE:	February 28, 2019

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.



Beverly A. Lano
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*	
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ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*	
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	*	Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*	
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Interview of: LAZARO CASTELLANOS

Thursday,
February 28, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WALTER THEURER, Aircrew Program Manager B-757
Federal Aviation Administration

ANDREW RUNYON, B-767 Instructor
Atlas Air

ROBERT AARON, Senior Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Lazaro Castellanos:	
By Mr. Lawrence	5

I N T E R V I E W

(11:45 a.m.)

MR. WOODS: This is Bobby Woods, again, from the Safety Department.

MR. CASTELLANOS: Yes, sir.

MR. WOODS: I've got you on a conference call here. I'm about to turn it over to the NTSB, Investigator David Lawrence.

MR. CASTELLANOS: Okay.

MR. WOODS: I just wanted to remind you of the option you have of one person or anything else you have that you want in this before we get started. I'll let David elaborate.

MR. CASTELLANOS: Okay. Yeah. I mean, like I say, I don't know how much I -- I really don't have anything to say but anyway, yeah.

MR. LAWRENCE: Hey, Laz. It's David Lawrence with the NTSB. How are you doing?

MR. CASTELLANOS: I'm doing good, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Hey, good. Can you hear me okay?

MR. CASTELLANOS: Yeah, I can hear okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great because I hear a lot of background noise in there and such and I want to make sure we're not on a speakerphone.

MR. CASTELLANOS: Yeah, let me -- I'm at the store here. Let me go outside. Is it better now?

MR. LAWRENCE: That's much better. I appreciate it. Hey,

it's David Lawrence and Bill Bramble from the NTSB. We're a part of the operations human performance group and we're here --

MR. CASTELLANOS: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- in Miami right now. I've got group members here from the FAA, Boeing, IBT and Atlas. FAA's role here is just a safety role and they're just trying -- we're just trying to figure out what happened.

I N T E R V I E W

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. I understand that you and Tim had some information about the accident airplane. Before I ask you about that can I just get the spelling of your name so I've got this correctly?

A. First name is Lazaro, L-a-z-a-r-o.

Q. Okay.

A. Last name is C-a-s, as in Sam, t-e-l-l-a-n-o-s.

Q. Great and you're a Captain on the 76 for Atlas?

A. That is correct.

Q. Great. How long you been a captain on the 76?

A. It was in -- class was in March of '16.

Q. All right. 2016.

A. So I'll be coming up on 3 years.

Q. Yeah, just standard stuff. What was your date of hire at Atlas?

A. March of 2013.

Q. Okay. Great. And what do you remember about this event?

A. To be honest with you I don't really remember -- I can't really recall anything in particular. You know, it's my understanding that something went on about it but I don't -- I can't remember anything in particular about what transpired. That's back in November. I don't -- you know.
Q. Okay. Do you recall any aircraft that you had a problem with that may have had a pitch problem or hard over or nose over?
A. No. That's a shift I would remember if I had something like that happen. Nothing, no. Nothing at all.
Q. Okay. And do you recall flying with Tim Andrews?
A. I would have to look at his picture. I could probably remember that way but the name doesn't ring a bell but if I see his picture I could probably remember him.
Q. Okay. And do at any time remember flying this particular airplane, 1217 Alpha?
A. I know I've flown it before. I think I've flown most of the fleet. There might be a couple -- but most of it, I've flown.
Q. Okay. Any specific recollection about this particular airplane?
A. No. Nope.
MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody have any questions? Looking around the room. Laz, thank you very much for, you know, taking the time to talk to us. I appreciate it.
MR. CASTELLANOS: Okay. Thank you very much. I -- if I can't think of anything else.

MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, hey, if you do remember anything or something comes to you, please feel free to contact Atlas Safety Department so they can get a hold of us and you can provide that information to them. Okay?

MR. CASTELLANOS: Will do, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Laz.

MR. CASTELLANOS: Thank you for your time.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. You, too. Bye.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

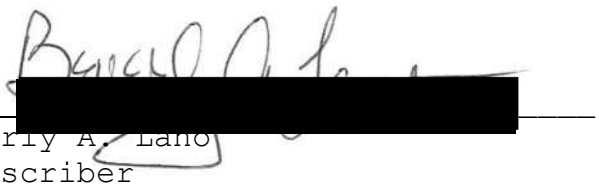
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IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Lazaro Castellanos
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Atlas Air MIA Offices (via phone)
DATE:	February 28, 2019

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Beverly A. Lano
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:	*
	*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	* Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*
	*

* *

Interview of: PARVIN BELKNAP
B767 Check Airman

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami, Florida

Monday,
June 3, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WARREN ABRAMS, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LARRY WARD, Aviation Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration

RICHARD LEE, Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD, Safety Committee
International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 1224

JOHN BLAKELY
Atlas Air

LISA HELLER, Esq.
Condon & Forsyth
(On behalf of Ms. Belknap)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Parvin Belknap:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Mr. Abrams	23
By Mr. Ward	25
By Mr. Lawrence	26
By Mr. Abrams	29

I N T E R V I E W

(7:55 a.m. EDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: Good morning. My name is David Lawrence. I'm with the NTSB. We met earlier. And on behalf of the Board, I want to just say our condolences for the loss of your two crew members. Obviously, we're here to do the investigation; that's why we're here for that Atlas accident that happened a few months back.

Part of the reason why we're here, obviously, we don't -- we're not looking for any kind of blame. We're trying to find out what happened. And the primary reason is so that we can prevent it from happening again. Part of the process of the investigation, as you're probably aware, is that we run with a party system. So that's why there's multiple people here in the room at this time, and they're all experts to assist us in the investigation. So I'll just go around the room and make sure everybody -- you're comfortable knowing who's here at the table.

MS. BELKNAP: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Obviously, I'm the operations investigator here.

MS. BELKNAP: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Warren?

MR. ABRAMS: I'm Warren Abrams. I'm an air safety investigator with the NTSB. Thank you for coming today.

MS. BELKNAP: All right.

MR. WARD: I'm Larry Ward. I'm an operations inspector with Flight Standards for the FAA. And I want to make sure you know I'm attached to the NTSB investigation, so I have no, absolutely no enforcement --

MS. BELKNAP: Okay.

MR. WARD: -- or certificate, or anything like that. So this is completely with the NTSB today.

MR. LEE: Rich Lee, Boeing safety pilot. I'm here for the technical aspects of the airplane.

MS. BELKNAP: Okay.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, Teamsters 1224, safety committee.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. And anytime anybody gets the chance to talk to the NTSB, they're welcome to have anybody they want sit in with them, and you've chosen Lisa Heller.

I've got that H-e-l-l-e-r, right?

MS. HELLER: Correct. Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Is that who you choose to be with you?

MS. BELKNAP: That is correct, yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: So the process that we're doing right now in talking to some of the instructors that had some type of contact with an accident crew is very typical, okay? This is a very standard process. And so, we wanted to get your impressions and, you know, just to ask you some questions about your role in the training and your impressions of the crew and such. Like I said, that's why we're here.

MS. BELKNAP: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions about the process or anything?

MS. BELKNAP: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I'm going to be taking notes on the computer and stuff. Obviously, we're doing a transcription, but I'll just take notes just to back me up. I apologize if I ask a question and I'm not making eye contact with you.

MS. BELKNAP: That's okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: I'm not trying to be rude. I'm former airline, too, and I used to type in the FMC with two fingers, drive the copilots nuts. But, so, I'll try and catch up. If there's a question that I ask that you don't know the answer to, I don't know is perfectly acceptable.

MS. BELKNAP: All right.

MR. LAWRENCE: So, you know, don't build the clock type of thing. If you need clarification, if I ask it in a way that you don't really understand, just ask me to restate it or anything like that.

MS. BELKNAP: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay?

MS. BELKNAP: Yep.

INTERVIEW OF PARVIN BELKNAP

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Well, let's start with the easy ones. Let me get your full name and age, please.

A. Full name Parvin, P-a-r-v-i-n, Belknap, B-e-l-k-n-a-p. I'm 58.
Q. And what is your title or position here at Atlas?
A. I'm a captain on the Boeing 767 and I'm a line check airman.
Q. Okay. And when were you hired here?
A. In April 2005.
Q. Okay. On the 7-6?
A. 74-400.
Q. Okay.
A. At Polar, on the Polar side.
Q. And as a captain on the 7-6 and a line check airman, just kind of generally, what are your roles and responsibilities?
A. Well, as a captain, to mentor first officers, to safely get the aircraft from A to B. That's primary. And then mentor first officers. As a line check airman, I take pilots that come out of the simulator and build on what they've learned in the sim and apply it to flying on the line.
Q. Do you do any instruction in the sim or is it just line instruction?
A. Just line instructing.
Q. Very good. And if you were to just estimate your total flight time?
A. About 14,500.
Q. Okay. And how much of that as pilot in command, you would estimate?

A. Maybe 3,000, something in there.
Q. And time and type. In other words, 7-6.
A. I think 2600, maybe.
Q. Okay. It's just an estimate.
A. Right.
Q. And if you could give me kind of, Parvin, the CliffsNotes of your background, what got you to be a check airman at Atlas?
A. Well, I guess --
Q. Your aviation background.
A. My aviation background.
Q. Right.
A. I started flying in the mid '80s. My first job besides flight instructing, primary instruction, I went to Business Express for approximately a year as a 1900 first officer. In July of 1989, I was hired by US Air. I was actually hired by Piedmont right at merger time, but went to US Air, and I flew multiple airplanes at US Air from 1989 to 2003, and then --
Q. 1999 to --
A. 1989.
Q. 1989.
A. I told you I'm 58. In 2003, I was furloughed. There was a flow-back. I flew left seat in a regional jet at PSA Airlines for 1 year, and then in spring of 2005, I came to Polar. I didn't go back to US Air on recall. I took a retirement from US Air and stayed here.

Q. I knew that I knew your name from somewhere. Because I was with US Airways, too.
A. Okay.
Q. Okay. Great. Nice condensed version. I like that. Did you know the captain or the first officer?
A. On 3591? Yeah, I knew --
Q. Yeah, on the accident.
A. I knew the captain. I flew with him. Yes.
Q. Okay.
A. I didn't know him well, but I knew him.
Q. Okay. What about the first officer?
A. I did not know him.
Q. Had you flown with the Captain, Rick, outside of line flying -- or line instruction? I'm sorry.
A. He flew as a third support pilot on OE that I conducted in 2016 for a new-hire first officer.
Q. Okay.
A. I think we flew four legs together when I looked at my logbook.
Q. Okay. Great. I appreciate that. You had a chance to take a look at the training records for Rick just as a review. I have them on here, so -- on my iPad, so if you need to refer to them or anything like that, I've got them.
A. Okay. I have a copy in my bag, as well.
Q. Okay. Great. Perfect. And you're welcome to --

A. Okay.
Q. -- take a look at any of this. But we were looking at it and saw that you had, first off, you had done his most recent line check back in October of 2018. Do you recall that?
A. (No audible response.)
Q. Okay.
A. Right.
Q. We saw it as October 11th. And then you had conducted IOE prior to that, on the 10th and the 11th, leading up to that line check with Rick?
A. Well, I think the line check was coincidental with that.
Q. Right. Okay.
A. So it was -- those two flights were the only two flights that I flew with him.
Q. Okay. I think I saw a form that said that there was an IOE on the 10th, and then a line check on the 11th, but --
A. Well, one was a pilot-monitoring line check. We have two line checks.
Q. Okay.
A. It was a pilot-monitoring line check. The first one was actually the pilot-flying line check, and then the second was the pilot-monitoring line check.
Q. Great.
A. And coincidental with those flights, we reviewed and completed the international operations and ETOPS portion of his

training although he had already been trained on that before as a 7-6 first officer.

Q. Got it. So kind of in general, if you could, tell me about his performance on those two days.

A. Well, my recollection is not detailed with that.

Q. Right.

A. So I have broad recollection of him being prepared, of him being receptive to instruction and discussion, of him doing a good job in the flying. And that's really the extent of it. On both legs, it was the same. I had, again, just very broad recollection of those two flights.

Q. Okay. Do you recall anything about his performance?

A. He did well.

Q. Okay.

A. He passed his line checks, and that, you know, to me, means satisfactory performance.

Q. All right. Any challenges you recall during those two days?

A. No. No.

Q. Can you just briefly describe his CRM skills that you observed?

A. I think they were adequate. I mean, he was being instructed to some degree -- or not really instructed, but we were reviewing material. So I think he deferred to me to some degree. I saw him for the airplane, obviously. But as far as just general interaction, I think he did an acceptable job, well within what I

would consider good CRM.
Q. Okay. Do you know if Rick had come to you with any type of remedial training in his previous --
A. Not that I'm aware of, no.
Q. Have you ever heard any other Atlas pilots or check airmen voicing any concerns about Rick's performance at CRM?
A. No, not at all.
Q. And you said you had not flown with Rick during any line operations other than that one third seat?
A. Where he was in the third seat, yes, that's it.
Q. Okay. And this would be just subjective in your opinion, but as a check airman, it's valid. Can you maybe speak about Rick's command authority and his presence as a captain in the cockpit? I know you were in a training environment, but you were going to be releasing him to the line with relatively new first officers, so --
A. Correct.
Q. I mean, I had -- again, because, one, I don't have strong recollection of that flight, but combine that with the fact that he passed the check ride, and I don't think I would ever pass anybody that didn't exhibit what I would consider, in my opinion, good command authority. And I think that, again, broad-stroke recollection is that he did an acceptable job in that way. More than just minimal acceptance, but actually a good job.
Q. Okay.

A. I remember feeling very comfortable with his overall performance, which included his command authority.
Q. Did Rick seem like somebody that would take control over -- take control from a first officer if he saw a safety deficiency or safety performance issue with a first officer?
A. I don't know if I could conclude that from our interaction.
Q. It's subject but, in your opinion, do you think he would take control of an aircraft at the --
A. I think he was somebody who considered his role as maintaining safety of the aircraft.
Q. And you said you hadn't flow with the copilot before, Conrad.
A. Correct.
Q. Had you heard anything about Conrad or Conrad's performance?
A. I have not, and I had not, no.
Q. And for the IOE, how are you evaluating? Because I guess you have to do an evaluation process, you know, for the captain. How do you evaluate his CRM in the cockpit? What are you looking for?
A. Well, I'm looking for, one, knowledge of procedures, where information is, where he can go to find information, what his resources are. And then as far as interacting, it's just, again, his confidence in his own ability, and then also how to deal with people, or first officers in particular. That would stem from his own confidence level in the airplane. That's how I look at CRM. I have confidence in my ability. I am going to demand that same confidence and ability in my first officers. And if for some

reason it's not there, I'm going to mentor them, is the way I look at, you know, CRM as far as he was concerned, or any captain is concerned.

Yeah, his demeanor was very deliberate, in my recollection. It was, you know -- I guess that's the only way I could really word it. He had a very quiet demeanor to him, but he also was deliberate in his -- the way he spoke, the way he conducted himself, so --

Q. What do you mean by deliberate?

A. In other words, he just didn't blurt out stuff, he didn't, you know, speak off the top of his head. I think he was very deliberate in how he conducted himself. So I really don't know how to expand on that.

Q. Okay. Did he feel comfortable with the automation of the aircraft or the --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- control of the aircraft?

A. I believe so, yes.

Q. I'll come back to that, but I want to ask you a couple of general -- since you're a 7-6 expert, I'm going to ask you some things just to get an understanding. Have you ever heard of or seen or in your experience on the 7-6 an inadvertent selection of a go-around switch? In other words, the go-around switch being pressed accidentally, not in relation to an actual go-around?

A. No.

Q. Have you ever heard of it happening?
A. On the 767? No.
Q. Um-hum. Okay. And I'm going to put you in a little bit of a situation with the copilot sitting in the right seat and you're having an expedited descent, and the copilot's flying and the speed brakes are out. Your procedures, or correct me if I'm wrong, but your process and your SOPs are for when the speed brake handle's being deployed that you leave the hand on it, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you see most pilots that are utilizing the speed brake have their hand on it?
A. Overwhelming majority if not almost everybody.
Q. Okay. Then the next question is, do you recall how they were manipulating the speed brakes during an expedited descent? Because the thrust levers would be back. Are they reaching over or reaching behind the thrust levers?
A. They're reaching over.
Q. Okay. You thought about that for a second.
A. From the right seat, I had to -- you know, I'd place my hand over the thrust levers and pull back from the right seat.
Q. Okay. So when you're holding the speed brake handle, because that's your SOPs, their hand is over the thrust levers while they're holding it?
A. Well, that's how they initially grab it.
Q. Got it.

A. And then they pull it back, so their hand would be -- the crux of their elbow would be behind the thrust lever at that point.
Q. Okay. So now I'm confused. Because you said first office [sic], they reach over.
A. Reach over. As you pull it back, your arm comes back.
Q. You're initially over.
A. Yes, and then pull it back.
Q. Okay. And now, while they're holding the speed brake, the thrust levers are all the way back, is their hand over -- arm over the thrust levers or is it holding back behind?
A. It would be behind it at that point. So initially over, and then --
Q. Okay. And I also noticed on your 7-6s you have a speed tape on the EABI, the altitude indicator on the left, but you also have the old round dial airspeed indicator that you use on the Boeing 7-6. What is the primary reference for speed during flight?
A. The speed tape.
Q. The speed tape? Okay. And that's during flight. What about -- but you're bugging the airspeed indicator, right? You have the little bugs?
A. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, on the round, yeah. I'm trying to get -- it's like I've drawn a blank here.
Q. I know, I know. No worries.
A. I have to see the airplane.

Q. So you've got the bugs on here, and you've got -- on one airspeed indicator, but you have the speed tape here. So --
A. The speed tape has all of the same bug information on it.
Q. Okay.
A. It has flap, you know, flap speeds. You know, F for flaps. Clean maneuver speeds, whatnot, on it.
Q. What about rev speed and (indiscernible) --
A. Well, not every airplane has that. Well, let me think about that. Yeah, it has rev speed. It has rev speeds that we put in there, yeah.
Q. Through the FMC?
A. Yeah, through the FMC. Yeah.
Q. I didn't want to make this a (indiscernible). I was just --
A. Oh, no.
Q. So when does a pilot transition to -- or does a pilot transition to using the round airspeed indicator?
A. I would assume it's their individual scan.
Q. Okay.
A. You have the same information presented two different ways.
Q. Okay. Do you have a speed tape trend arrow that will show that, I think it was a 10-second predictive?
A. Yes. Yes.
Q. Are pilots trained on how to respond to a trend arrow, or is it an awareness issue?
A. Say that again?

Q. When the trend arrow is moving around, are pilots to do anything with that trend arrow or --
A. I don't think in normal line operations other than just being cognizant of it and if, you know -- but no, generally you're not responding to that immediate movement in any way.
Q. Okay. And are you familiar with the EFI switch that -- I guess I'll put you in the left seat. So there are some switches over here to the left panel, forward panel, and it's an EFI switch. Can you tell me what that is?
A. The EFI switch on the left panel.
Q. Left forward panel.
A. The four switches over here in --
Q. Yeah. Yeah.
A. Okay.
Q. And there's one that's called electronic flight instrument switch. I think there's another one, air (indiscernible) switch.
A. Right.
Q. And stuff like that. Do you --
A. Is that -- changing the simple generator.
Q. Okay. How are 7-6 Atlas pilots trained to use that switch?
A. As part of a non-normal.
Q. So what does that mean?
A. In other words, you have some indication that causes you to pull out the QRH and you would -- well, I have to look in the -- do my "New York, New York, No," see if there is a checklist that

causes you to go to that.
Q. Okay.
A. We have a little acronym that we use. So I have to look at -- see exactly which switch that is.
Q. What's the acronym? What is that?
A. There's five switches -- New York, New York, No. Those would be no, yes, no, yes, no for QRH procedures that go along with that.
Q. Interesting. So that's for the four switches?
A. Yeah.
Q. No, yes, no, yes.
A. Yeah. So you have to decide whether you have a checklist that -- in other words, if you lost the simple generator on one -- on your screen, there may not be a checklist for that. I'd have to go and look exactly what position that switch is in. And if not, then you would switch the switch to an alternate position. And there may not be a checklist guiding you to that. You would just have to know that.
Q. So that would -- how would you know to do that? Are you trained? Are the pilots able to see that?
A. Yeah, we -- I'm sure they've seen that in the sim. It's not something we see on the line very frequently.
Q. Well, you led me into my next question. Have you ever seen the displays go out that you needed to use the EFI switch?
A. I have not, no.

Q. Have you see it in the sim, not just on board?
A. Yeah, I think in initial, we might have covered it.
Q. So what would guide you? What would be in front of you display-wise that would -- what would happen to guide you to go to that EFI switch to change the simple to directional?
A. Loss of the pretty picture, as we call it, all the things that the computer generates on the screens.
Q. And are you trained -- obviously, I'm going on the assumption this is a -- from the New York, New York, this is the no, and there's not a QRH or any kind of procedure --
A. That's correct.
Q. -- specific to the EFI switch. Do you recall in the training, or as a line check airman, if you saw that, would you train or teach your pilot to push the button once and leave it, or cycle the button?
A. I don't know if I've given that -- because some of them are not -- they're not all buttons. Some of them are knobs, you know, selector knobs.
Q. Okay. But what I'm getting at is, if you have a display problem, are you teaching or are pilots taught to press it, get the new simple generator, the center one to get your displays back, and then leave it alone, or are you taught to cycle that switch?
A. I don't know if I have a recollection of one way or the other. I would suggest just leaving it and not cycling it.

Q. Any guidance that you know of in the manuals that --
A. Not off the top of my head.
Q. -- specifically refer to the EFI switch and how to use that switch?
A. I'd have to look in the manual.
Q. Okay. I'm curious, in your experience, and you've got several thousand hours on the 7-6, have you ever -- or do you know if autopilot would disconnect if you tried to put additional force on the yoke at some time? Do you think the autopilot, or do you know if the autopilot would disconnect?
A. I don't know for a fact. I've never attempted to put it to test. I would imagine that it's probably designed not to disconnect without -- if it does at all, with considerable force, because I would imagine it's not designed to disconnect if you bump into it as you're getting in and out of your seat. So that's just a speculation on my part, but I don't know that for a fact, one way or the other.
Q. How are pilots trained to -- this is going to be a silly question, but how are pilots trained to disconnect an autopilot?
A. With the thumb wheel. The thumb switch, I should say. To push it.
Q. With the thumb switch?
A. On the yoke.
Q. Right. And are pilots trained to disconnect the thumb switch using the thumb switch regularly? I mean, is that something rare

or is this something that is common in pilot training in line operation?

A. That would be common.

Q. And I know you don't do this work, but I'm really curious where your pilots are shown and trained on stall recovery. Do you recall, is it only in the sim? Right?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay.

A. I mean, nothing on the line.

Q. I know these sound like silly questions, but --

A. No, I understand.

Q. But do you recall if it's just in initial? Do they do any sim training during the proficiency training as they come back into the sim?

A. We do, yes.

Q. Stalls?

A. Stalls, yes.

Q. So in initial and during recurring?

A. Yes.

Q. You guys are not APP, right?

A. No, we are not.

Q. Okay, so you're Appendix H, which would mean that your proficiency, during recurrent proficiency, they would only see typically one stall; is that correct?

A. I think it's, at a minimum, yes, but discretionary.

Sometimes they use different stalls to gain confidence in redoing the sim.

Q. Sure. And if you're at flaps 1 and gear up and have a stalled situation, high-angle impact, whatever, and you're going to do a stall recovery with the autopilot on, kind of talk me through, what would the recovery be? What would the process be?

A. At flaps 1, gear up, it would be autopilot off, autothrottles off, thrust adjust forward, full forward, and then regain airspeed. This is where you might follow the trend arrow. And then once the trend arrow indicates you're coming out of the stall, you would readjust thrust as appropriate and reconnect all the automation.

Q. The initial acts, what would be the initial acts for the recovery?

A. Auto pilot off, autothrottle off, and then advance thrust levers.

Q. Are Atlas pilots ever trained in any situation in a stall to recover with the automation still connected?

A. No.

Q. I'm going to have some follow up. I know you're probably tired of hearing me asking questions, so I'm going to see if Warren has anything.

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. I just have one or two clarifying questions. I don't have a laundry list by any stretch of the imagination. When you took the

captain out on his OE, do you recall where you went?
A. Yes. First leg was Narita to Sydney, and then the return was Sydney back to Narita.
Q. Okay. Since he's checking out as a captain, had he checked out as a captain previously, or do you know?
A. Not at Atlas.
Q. Not at Atlas.
A. But I believe in his previous career.
Q. This was his first --
A. Yes.
Q. -- captain check out at Atlas.
A. Yes.
Q. And you said you thought he would take control from an FO, take control of the airplane for the safety of the aircraft?
A. I believe he was committed to safety and I can only assume that he would. But, I mean, I don't know how -- I don't know that for a fact. I don't know how he would react. I couldn't tell that from the flight that we did.
Q. Do you recall what airplane he was coming off of?
A. He was a 7-6 first officer.
Q. So he just changes --
A. Transitioning to the left seat, yes.
Q. Okay. All right. And Narita to Singapore.
A. No, to Sydney.
Q. Sydney. Daytime, nighttime?

A. We took off in the morning, landed at night. He conducted the first flight as the pilot flying. And then we took off at night from Sydney and landed in the morning in Narita.
Q. That's a three-person crew?
A. That is correct, yes.
Q. Thank you.
MR. ABRAMS: That's all the questions I have.
MR. LAWRENCE: So J.B.?
MR. BLAKELY: I think I'm good, David. No questions. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Tyson?
MR. HOWARD: I do not have anything?
MR. LEE: Nothing.
MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Larry?
BY MR. WARD:
Q. Just one question. Back to the stall training, has Atlas implemented the EET portion of the training, extended envelope training?
A. I have not participated in that. I don't know what the status of the program is.
Q. Okay. Have you had any interaction as a check airman or with the group in developing the training?
A. No, not at all.
Q. Thank you.
MR. WARD: That's all I have.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Just a couple of follow-ups. Do you guys do any kind of captain upgrade training?

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. Remember at Airways they had cut training?

A. Yes. They do, yes.

Q. Explain that. What is that?

A. I'm not part of it. I only know what I went through, which involved 1 or 2 days of ground school. Some of it, you know, touched on CRM, some of it touched on things like logbook, FOM issues. Very general, basic stuff, like along those same lines. And then everything else was aircraft specific. I'm sure -- well, I shouldn't say that. I believe they have added to that program. I don't know if it's more than 1 or 2 days. I don't know how long the program is anymore. I did that in 2013, so I don't know if it's changed since then.

Q. In your opinion, do you think that that training that Atlas is providing to captains coming out of that is preparing them to be a captain? Not just from an administrative and having to do the logbook and stuff, but being a captain of a 767?

A. Well, I mean, I'm not familiar with the program. I am seeing that people that come out for upgrade are, in almost all cases, prepared. So they've been given a foundation upon which to build in that program, whatever it is that they're doing.

Q. And you feel -- or do you feel that Rick was prepared after

going through --
A. I do. My, again, broad-stroke recollection was that he was -- he came prepared. He came prepared to act as pilot in command. Because I emphasize that. I mean, I talk about, you know, command authority. That's one thing that I would be looking for in a line check. The fact that he passed, he demonstrated that, and I felt comfortable that he would demonstrate that going forward. So command authority is what I would -- is what I describe to them that is required as one component of passing the line check.
Q. And in regards to the copilots you're seeing coming in, are you seeing a level of proficiency and experience different than when you first started?
A. Different than I first started at Polar, like when I started, or when I started as a check airman?
Q. Well, let's go all the way back, when you first came to Polar and transitioned into Atlas. Are the copilots coming to Polar, or now Atlas, are you seeing different proficiency levels and experience levels of these copilots?
A. Compared to when I was hired in 2005?
Q. Um-hum.
A. Yes.
Q. Can you explain?
A. In 2005, they hired people like me, with a few thousand hours, coming from furloughed airlines. So, you know, they

were -- the requirements were considerably higher than they are today. It's related to supply and demand of jobs and crew members. But yeah, pilots that hired in 2005 or earlier were different than they are today in the sense that there's no more furloughed pilots with years of airline experience.

Q. And how is that challenging to you as a line check airman?

A. Well, it's -- sometimes you have to review things more, you have to discuss things more, you have to point them to the books more. And yeah, you just -- and then maybe they do require some more OE, not always. I've had some very, very capable students who didn't have much flight time in comparison to others and yet they did exceptionally well. So some of it is individual, but some of it is generic to the pool of people that are available. But the program is designed to get them up to speed and adequately trained, I believe, so --

Q. Who's them?

A. The students, new-hire first officers.

Q. Okay. Regardless of their experience level?

A. I think the program, if they need additional time, they're getting additional time. The program is designed to make sure nobody gets out on the line without appropriate checks and meeting the requirements.

Q. So is there a pilot shortage out there, Parvin?

A. I think finally there may be. After almost 30 years of hearing about a pilot shortage, there might be. And yet, we seem

to -- everybody seems to be filling classes and all the airlines seem to be finding people to hire.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody have any other --

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. I just have a generic question. What's the entry-level position? A new first officer comes to Atlas, where does he usually, he or she usually slot in?

A. It is not anything specific. It's a class opening. If it happens to be a 7-4 class, it'll be a -- and they are available on that date, it'll go to the 7-4. If they happen to be available for the 7-6 class -- so neither airplane is entry level one over the other.

Q. So you don't see all the new hires?

A. I don't see all the new hires, no. Many new hires go into the 7-4.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else?

(No response.)

Any questions for -- J.B.?

MR. BLAKELY: No, I'm good, David. Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

MS. BELKNAP: No questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions for us?

MS. BELKNAP: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anything else you can think of that might help

us in the investigation that you want to either add or provide?

MS. BELKNAP: No, I think the questions you've asked extracted from me what I would have offered.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you very much.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Parvin Belknap
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami, Florida
DATE:	June 3, 2019

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.

[redacted]
Lisa Fuerstenberg
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *
*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) *
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS * Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019 *
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Interview of: ROBERT BLUEMEL
B767 Check Airman

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami, Florida

Monday,
June 3, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WARREN ABRAMS, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LARRY WARD, Aviation Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration

RICHARD LEE, Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD, Safety Committee
International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 1224

JOHN BLAKELY
Atlas Air

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Vice President, Labor & Employment
Atlas Air
(On behalf of Mr. Bluemel)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Robert Bluemel:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	23
By Mr. Abrams	28
By Mr. Ward	31
By Mr. Lee	35
By Dr. Bramble	36
By Mr. Lawrence	37
By Mr. Abrams	38

I N T E R V I E W

(9:55 a.m. EDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: Good morning and, Robert, thanks for being here. We really do appreciate it. My name is David Lawrence. I'm the OPS investigator for the NTSB. So we're obviously here to do the investigation on the 76 accident from a couple of months ago and on behalf of the Board, our condolences for the loss of your two crew members.

Just so you know our role here is not to apportion any type of blame. We're trying to find out what happened primarily so that we can learn from it and make sure it doesn't happen again and nobody has to go through this again.

The NTSB, during these investigations, works on a party system. I'm sure you're well aware of that. We bring in experts and that's why you've got a table full of people right now to assist us in the investigation. We'll go around the room just so you understand who the players are. Again, I'm David Lawrence. I'm an OPS investigator with the NTSB.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. ABRAMS: Warren Abrams. I'm an air safety investigator with the NTSB.

MR. WARD: I'm Larry Ward. I'm an OPS inspector with the FAA. I want to make sure that you understand I'm here as part of the NTSB investigation and there's no enforcement or any type of

-- any like the FAA (indiscernible) done through this group in this session.

MR. BLUEMEL: Okay.

MR. LEE: Rich Lee, Boeing safety pilot for the technical aspects of the airplane.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard. I'm Local 1224 Safety Committee.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely, examiner 767.

MR. LAWRENCE: And any time you have the opportunity to talk to the NTSB you are afforded the opportunity to have a person of your choice represent you. Is Jennifer who you would like to have?

MR. BLUEMEL: Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. As you guys and we've already talked about we're going to be doing a recording with that will develop into a transcript that will be part of the record but what we -- one thing we do while we're talking to you is we do take notes just to make sure that we're capturing what -- the central information. I'll be typing. I apologize if I don't look up and I'm not making eye contact while I'm typing. I type slow so --

MR. BLUEMEL: (Indiscernible.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. So don't think anything of that. If I or anybody asks a question at any point in time you don't understand the question or what some clarity, please stop. Let's not build the clock type of thing. Ask me and I'll be happy to clarify the question. And conversely I might ask you, you know,

some, you know, clarifying response because you're the subject matter expert on the 76 so whatever we can do to get good information and help.

Any questions about the process?

MR. BLUEMEL: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: It's pretty straightforward.

MR. BLUEMEL: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF ROBERT BLUEMEL

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. If we could, let's start with the easy ones. If I can get your full name and your age.

A. Robert Andrew Bluemel. Blue, like the color, m-e-l.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. Sixty-six.

Q. Uh-huh. What's your title and position here at Atlas?

A. I'm a retired -- I retired a year and a half ago from Atlas and I'm under contract, actually three different contracts, for duty pilot. I maintain currency in the 76 for Part 91 functional checkpoints and I also help Captain Blakely with FCOM Volume 2, onboarding new airframes into the systems manual.

Q. Okay. So you retired a year and a half ago. When were you hired by Atlas?

A. In 2011, October 2011.

Q. Is that Atlas or Polar?

A. Atlas.

Q. Okay. And currently what is the -- your roles and responsibilities are? I know you briefly said it but what do you do here?
A. As a duty pilot I act as a liaison between real time operational issues, dispatch and maintenance control and flight ops management.
Q. Okay. Estimate of your total flying time, Rob.
A. I'm around 21,000 hours.
Q. And how much of that would you estimate is PFC?
A. Probably 8,000 or 9,000 thousand in turbo jets.
Q. And just an estimate of your 76 time?
A. I've been flying for 17 years --
Q. Just a guess.
A. Yeah, 4,000 or 5,000. I'm just guessing. It's all a blur after you retire.
Q. And just a Cliff Notes version of your aviation background.
A. I've been flying for 50 years. I started -- I came up through it, through a 135 operation that I owned and operated in Colorado, and then I went to the regionals, Pioneer Airlines and Horizon Air.
Q. I'm trying to catch up to you. Okay. Horizon and Pioneer.
A. It was Pioneer Airlines out of Denver, Colorado. And then I went to work for Airborne Express flying DC-8s and 767s. And then, as you know, they turned into ABX Air and then I flew for ATI before coming to Atlas.

Q. Uh-huh. All right. Did you know the captain or the first officer?
A. I did not.
Q. Had you flown previously with either of those --
A. I did not. Just, I think, just the one simulator. I'm sure that's what we already talked about --
Q. Right.
A. -- is the remedial that I did on the first officer.
Q. Yeah, and I was looking in there as far as the remedial training. That was back in September 25th, 2017.
A. Sounds --
Q. Have you had a chance to take a look at the -- review the training records?
A. I just looked at it last week for the first time.
Q. Okay. Good. And again, if you need references, I have it on my computer. I'll be happy to pull it up for you.
A. Okay. I can pull it up here, too, in case you decide you want me to (indiscernible) --
Q. Okay. Great. Let's talk about that, okay. Can you tell me about that session. What was it you were doing for Conrad at that time?
A. I enjoyed remedial, because it's pretty obvious that you have to reestablish the pilot's confidence. After failing an event and to come back into remedial the biggest issues I've seen have been the lack of confidence in the pilot, and once you can discover how

to rebuild that confidence, the rest of it falls into place. Another element is to figure out how the individual learns and how to make those light bulbs come on.

Q. That's in general. Let's talk about Conrad's training.

A. The -- in remedial with Conrad what I do recall is honestly, him feeling, as well, in failing -- to fail a check event and coming for remedial. So for the 2-hour pre-brief, and this is not specific to Conrad, my approach has always been is to get them to relax and assure them that it's something that they can work through if they just relax and figure out how to rebuild that confidence. And in the 2-hour pre-brief generally it's pretty easy to put them at ease because I don't think I'm very threatening in the simulator. And then we review maneuvers and, like I said, it's important to figure out what resonates with the individual as far as understanding the elements of a particular maneuver.

Q. So what did you do for Conrad?

A. We reviewed a normal profile and talked about every element that we were going to revisit.

Q. So let me -- so I understand the timing of all this, Conrad had a substandard on his check ride, his type ride for the 76, and was then going through remedial or was this prior to his check ride?

A. I'm not sure.

Q. Okay.

A. I'm not sure if it was a fail to be recommended for his check ride. I'd have to look that up and see. I'm not aware.
Q. Okay.
A. Of the -- that he had come off a failure for a type ride. I just knew I had him to revisit the elements of whatever he had an issue with.
Q. It should be in there, shouldn't it? Let me take a look. Just so we're clear where it is in the footprint you were training.
A. So it was the type, I guess, that he came off of.
Q. Okay.
A. So he failed his type rating.
Q. So he failed his type rating. He's going to get remedial training prior to being recommended again and that's when they sent him to you.
A. That's my understanding.
Q. Okay. Is that what the records reflect or is that --
A. Yes.
Q. -- what you see in the records?
A. Let's see, this is where I got the remedial training record. Yeah, so --
Q. Okay.
A. -- I did the remedial and he went on and I think he passed his next ride in flight.
Q. Great. So how -- you can keep the records out so you can

refer to them -- how much remedial training did he get?
A. He got the full 4 hours and I don't know who his support pilot was but we ran him through our normal procedures, maneuvers, non-normal procedures, non-precision approaches and reviewed engine failure B-1. It was a -- nothing different than he'd done before.
Q. Right. Well, was there anything specific that you were focusing on based on his substandard performance in the type or is this --
A. I guess the hardest part with him was he was coming up but failed the check ride and if I recall it was his lack of confidence and self-flagellation, I guess, that once you overcome that, when somebody can relax, he'd done these maneuvers before and satisfactorily but he -- my guess is, you know, had a bad check ride He locked up and, as we've all seen in our careers, you know, you get check ride-itis and instead of letting go of a mistake you bring that with you and all of a sudden the training falls and he just had a bad day.
Q. Uh-huh. Were you briefed on Conrad's substandard performance before he came to you for the remedial?
A. Just the training record and I think I had a brief discussion with the fleet captain over what he wanted.
Q. So you talked to the fleet captain.
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And you said what he wanted. What do you mean by

that?
A. Well, just to get an overview of -- I didn't know this individual prior and I think when there is remedial there's contact that occurs between the next instructor and the fleet captain. So we discussed it briefly. I don't recall the conversation but --
Q. Okay. Do you recall if there were any concerns expressed by the fleet captain about Conrad?
A. I don't recall.
Q. And when we're talking fleet captain, who is that?
A. It was Joe Diedrich.
Q. Okay. Did you have any concern about Conrad's performance, what you saw in the sim?
A. None. He had a great training session.
Q. Was your training session with him the only training session he had before he went back to retake the type?
A. I'm guessing I believe so. I don't see any other -- I think he went in for his check ride the following day.
Q. So was your training session a sign off, then?
A. No, no. It was just a recommend for the ride.
Q. Oh, okay. So you recommended him for the fleet test?
A. Right. After doing remedial, I was confident that he could pull into his check ride and perform better.
Q. Is that typical for remedial training to only get one 4-hour session for a student?

A. I think it depends, doesn't it JB? I mean, it all depends on the performance. If they need more work we're happy to give it to them.
Q. Okay. Do you recall of were you ever told that he was put into a pilot watch program, the WP --
A. I don't recall that.
Q. Okay. You heard any other Atlas pilot or check airman voice concerns about Conrad's performance or proficiency?
A. I think I retired a month later and in my interaction with instructors and the continuing growth of the pilot group I'd lost track of.
Q. You don't recall prior to you retiring if anybody voiced any concerns about Conrad?
A. I never knew the gentleman. My most vivid recollection is I gave him a ride to the hotel after a sim session because it was late at night and he was quite jovial, quite relaxed and told me about his life in the Caribbean. And that's all I remember about him.
Q. Do you recall if he had any explanation why he had a substandard on his type ride that required him to have a remedial training?
A. Yeah, we started the sim briefing with, you know, I said what happened and he goes I just locked up. I had a bad ride. I was confused and all the elements that most pilots that fail check rides have and that's part of that 2-hour brief in trying to

figure out how to get them to relax and feel like he wasn't in a threatening environment, that we were there to fix what he wasn't comfortable with.

Q. Was Conrad's performance typical of a new hire?

A. He met the standards. He was well -- there was no question at the end of the 4 hours that he could go pass a check ride and stay within the parameters.

Q. Okay. So you said that he'd get past the check ride and stay within parameters but I'm -- the question was more is his -- was his performance typical for some of the new hires --

A. Yes, it was.

Q. -- you have seen --

A. Yes, it was.

Q. Okay. Can you explain what you mean?

A. From my experience in the simulator he was a average, run-of-the-mill, non-spectacular, obviously, but he wasn't substandard as well either. His performance was satisfactory.

Q. Is that a trend that you're seeing or that you've seen over your time here at Atlas that the copilots experience levels may be changing over time?

A. I have been out of it for probably the last year and a half and I don't know what the trend is today. Back in the beginning we definitely had a pool of experienced pilots.

Q. Okay. So you had an experienced pool of pilots in the beginning. When you left, what did you notice about the pool of

pilots coming?
A. Well, the pool of pilots that we had access to had dried up and everyone's hiring. So we were finding more regional pilots than heavy amount -- heavy operators that have done laps around the world. Mainly it's domestic, regional pilots that we were getting.
Q. Atlas have to change the footprint or the training program to accommodate this --
A. No. Not that I'm aware of.
Q. Curious how many new hire applicants you've seen during your training here at Atlas that didn't make it through?
A. Percentage. Where -- I'm not sure if I understand the question.
Q. Well, have you had -- seen new hire pilots not even make it through the program, either failed the type ride and not make it through remedial or whatever, just wash out.
A. It's occurred.
Q. Okay. How often have you seen a --
A. Not very.
Q. Do you recall the last time that you saw that?
A. No, I don't.
Q. Would you say that's typical that they -- is it -- how often do you see that? I mean, is it just a rare occurrence to have somebody completely wash out of the program or --
A. At this level in aviation it is.

Q. Okay. Why do you say that?
A. In my opinion.
Q. Yeah, and why do you say that?
A. Generally, when you get to an operator that operates these types of airplanes they have a background that has vetted their experience and judgement and all the other elements that come into flying around the world.
Q. Uh-huh. So prior to your leaving, in your opinion, was there a pilot shortage here that was affecting Atlas?
A. I'm not aware. A year and a half ago I don't think there was an issue. I'm not sure but --
Q. Okay. Did you know Rick Blakely?
A. Only because with a shared name with his dad that we always teased him because -- anyway by virtue of the names --
Q. You're -- you point at JB, but my question is --
A. I only know him by virtue of his name.
Q. By virtue of his name. Had you ever met him or anything or --
A. I think that one day around the pool he might have surfaced and I recognized his face, but I was not intimate or friendly with him at all, or friends with him at all.
Q. Ever hear anybody, either other pilots or instructors, voice any kind of concerns about Rick Blakely?
A. I do not.
Q. Just a couple of questions since you're a sim guy and you

know the 76, I'm kind of curious if you had ever experienced or heard of an inadvertent selection of a go-around switch in flight?
A. Never. It would be difficult and, just my judgement, it would be difficult to do.
Q. Why?
A. Just by virtue of the location of the paddles.
Q. And by paddles you mean the go-around switches --
A. Correct.
Q. -- under the thrust levers?
A. Yeah, the go-around pads, yeah.
Q. Well, when you're flying captain or when you're teaching and if the first officer is flying in the right seat and exercising the speed brake handle, like for an expedited descent, first off, is it Atlas's procedure that whoever's manipulating the speed brake leave their hand on?
A. I believe it is and that's the way I train pilots.
Q. Okay. Is the first officer manipulating the speed brake handle from over the thrust levers or from behind them?
A. I've seen both techniques. Primarily over the thrust levers, I would guess, is a higher percentage than from behind. I train to go over the thrust levers because the speed brake's out the trust levers are at idle and it's much more difficult to come in behind them. And if I did see someone come behind the thrust levers throwing the speed brake I would -- we would talk about it.
Q. Okay. Why would you talk to the pilot about putting his hand

behind the thrust levers?
A. Well, for the simple reason that if you're pushing the speed brake with your arm behind the thrust levers it's not an optimum efficient way to stow the speed brake. Throughout my career, and I've spent many, many years in the right seat, it's easier to come over and stow the speed brake above the thrust levers without any interference.
Q. Interference with what?
A. The thrust levers.
Q. Would the copilot's hands or arm in close proximity to the go-around switches?
A. I'm not sure I understand.
Q. He's behind because you said it's more efficient to retract the speed brakes with it on top. You're --
A. With it on top, yeah.
Q. -- on top. Okay.
A. Better control of the speed brake.
Q. Right. If he had his hand behind the thrust levers holding the speed brake levers in a idle descent, is his arm close to the go-around switches?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And you've never seen anybody inadvertently hit those switches at any time?
A. I have not.
Q. Okay. Are you familiar with the EFI switch that's on the

left side and right side quarter panels?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Okay. What does that do?
A. It's the symbol generator.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah, if you have an issue with the symbol generator we can pick the alternate with the EFI switch.
Q. So it's a display.
A. It's a display, AMD and -- the HSI and ADI. If the symbol generator fails there's an alternate and it's selected.
Q. So it's an alternate source for the displays --
A. Correct.
Q. -- to get them to come back. How are pilots trained to utilize that switch?
A. If the displays go blank and if you have a pilot flying we train the pilot flying to transfer control and select the other symbol generator giving some thought before you start pushing buttons. I don't believe there's a QRH procedure for that particular failure.
Q. So where would pilots learn how to use that EFI switch?
A. We retrain them and it is a standard training element.
Q. Training element in the sim, ground school, where?
A. In the simulator.
Q. Okay. So they're actually seeing that --
A. Oh, sure. Sure.

Q. -- where they can exercise that button in the sim?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you recall where in the simulator, what portion of the sim? Is it early in, late?
A. No, I think it's later in full flights.
Q. And what -- I'm sorry -- what do you call that?
A. Full flight simulator.
Q. Okay. Full flight simulator. Are they trained ever to cycle the switch, push it in and push it back again? If you have a display problem, are they trained just to press the button once and get the alternate display generator or symbol generator, sorry, or had -- does anybody train them to cycle the switch on and off?
A. I'm not aware of any cycling the switch.
Q. Okay. Have you had that -- to do that in fight, use the EFI switch?
A. I never have. When we do functional check flights, of course, we -- that's one of the elements but in flight, in normal line operations, I've never had that issue.
Q. Question about the autopilot system. Do you know that if -- do you know if a pilot is capable of overpowering a -- the autopilot in the 767 and it'll disconnect? If you tried to override it manually, will the autopilot disconnect?
A. I think if a single autopilot can be disconnected by trying will disconnect it or the single autopilot -- I'm thinking back

now. It's been a couple of years but --
Q. Yeah and I'm just curious if pilots are aware or if the training is aware if the autopilot can be overridden manually and then the physical overriding --
A. Would disconnect it.
Q. -- eventually disconnect it.
A. I'm not aware of that. We never -- I never trained that or knew that it was part of our curriculum. Generally, we're as nice as the simulators as we can be because we want them to work 4 hours later.
Q. Sure. And as a pilot on the 76, what's the standard way to disconnect an autopilot?
A. Generally, it's on the yoke.
Q. The button on the yoke.
A. Yeah. Two clicks on the yoke, that's standard op.
Q. Just a couple more. I appreciate it. Where are pilots at Atlas Air trained on stall recovery? At what point? In ground school, the sim? Where?
A. Full flight simulators.
Q. Do they see that in an initial and recurrent?
A. I believe so.
Q. And what is the stall recovery procedures? Typically?
A. It's a gentle relaxing of the elevator. Generally, well, we train to recover at the stick shaker which is in a fully developed stall. It's more of a relaxing the back pressure and adding

thrust.
Q. So you're just flying along with the autopilot on auto-thrust on and you either perceive or get an indication of a stall, what is the recovery? What are the first actions?
A. Autopilot off, make sure the speed brake is stowed, add thrust, reduce the angle of attack. Some of those are simultaneous. Disconnecting the autopilot on the yoke, reducing the angle of attack, making sure the speed brake is stowed and adding appropriate thrust.
Q. Pilots ever trained to recover from a stall with the automation still engaged?
A. Yes.
Q. How?
A. Just as I just described.
Q. With the automation engaged.
A. I'm not sure --
Q. In other words, you use the automation to recover from the stall.
A. No. Not that I'm aware of.
Q. Do you have any new perspective on the training? You get to see it from different aspects? I'm just kind of curious your general impression on how you would characterize the training pilots receive at Atlas, overall?
A. In the 76 program I think it's been very well. The 76 program has a good reputation and from the very beginning it's the

enthusiasm I think in the initial cadre, and because it's a new airplane at Atlas, the freshness, I think, makes it a better -- made it a better program -- makes it a better program.

Q. Would you say that's the same at the 74 program or --

A. I have no --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- interaction with the 74 program other than, you know, it's been around long time. It's a mature --

Q. Okay.

A. -- environment.

Q. You're probably tired of hearing me asking questions.

A. I came all the way from Colorado to talk to you.

Q. And thank you for doing that.

MR. LAWRENCE: Dr. Bramble, do you have any?

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. I'm just taking a couple minutes to ask questions about -- from your form here. Almost ready. Okay. Okay.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. So based on the maneuvers that you have in the form that you guys performed and the notes that you have, I'm just curious how you assess some of these areas that were listed for the remedial training as issues for him. Like, so I've just made a list of the things that were on the required remedial training form. So there was the situation awareness was lacking. That's kind of a global thing.

A. Right.
Q. The procedures were incorrect. How would you assess that he could correctly execute the procedures?
A. I'm not sure I understand.
Q. So the previous instructor noted procedures were incorrect. How would you evaluate whether he was capable of utilizing the normal procedures, abnormal procedures in --
A. It was -- that was part of the pre-brief.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. And in the pre-brief we do every maneuver that we'll do when we get into the simulator so there wasn't -- nothing came out of left field that we hadn't discussed and, of course, we desk fly in the brief.
Q. Okay. And then did you have adequate opportunity to observe him performing the procedures during the actual flight simulator portion?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And limitations exceeded. Do you know what does that refer to? Do you know what they meant?
A. I have no idea.
Q. Okay.
A. That's pretty obscure.
Q. Okay. Judgement poor. Do you know from the notes you received what that was about?
A. That goes hand and hand with the situational awareness.

Q. Okay. All right. And the CRM threat and error management skills poor, how would you evaluate that during the remedial training? How did you evaluate it?
A. I've done quite a bit of work in CRM and have flown enough to know when CRM the level of CRMs -- I've flown with old school pilots and that are they're the captain, don't cross this line to being able to work with a fellow pilot and orchestrate a -- how do I say this -- interact well so that they're both assets for each other.
Q. During the remedial training, did you guys have any sort of abnormal events where he would have to demonstrate coordination under difficult circumstances?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you recall what those would have been?
A. No, I'd have to look at the training record and see what events I did. Those like wheel well fire.
Q. Okay. If you don't mind, that'd be great.
A. Sure. This all -- these non-normal events are wheel well fire, cargo door and GPWS -- not so much the GPWS but the cargo door and wheel well fires require coordination between the two crew members.
Q. Okay. And do you recall any specifics of that, how he handled that situation from that CRM perspective?
A. I do not.
Q. Okay.

A. All I know is when we finished it was satisfactory.
Q. Okay. All right. The previous instructor had also noted flap speeds exceeded. Do you remember paying any particular close attention to that or how did you evaluate whether his speeds were okay with respect to --
A. Well, they're all placarded, and we did discuss, I'm guessing in the pre-brief, is we went through maneuvers with that comment, you know, as to what the limitations were for the flaps, and he knew what they were. But I never saw him exceed during this particular training event.
Q. Okay. All right. Did you guys do steep turns?
A. We did.
Q. And I haven't had a chance to look at the rating but was it adequate, his performance in that area?
A. Yes. It was satisfactory.
Q. Okay. Any additional comments on his performance with the perspective of steep turns?
A. No.
Q. Okay. And the previous instructor had noted a totally unstable approach. Did you -- do you have any recollections of how he was able to perform the approaches that you did and which approaches did you do?
A. Generally, we were in Seattle and we did the RNAV approaches to 34, localized approaches. Those were the two non-precision approaches, I think, that he flew. His procedures obviously were

correct because they were satisfactory.
Q. Do you guys have a separate stable approach block that you check off or is it just integrated with everything else?
A. I don't recall.
Q. Okay. All right. And the tunnel vision, lack of confidence noted by the previous instructor, did you notice that in him during your remedial training session?
A. In the beginning, yeah. He was pretty locked up if I recall, during the pre-brief and it's to my point that's the biggest part of remedial is getting the pilot to relax and give him the confidence that they know how to do it.
Q. Did you get any sense of why he had a bad day that previous time?
A. I've seen it throughout my career. Some of the best pilots I've known go into check rides and have issues.
Q. All right. Anything else noteworthy about the training session?
A. I do not.
Q. Did you notice any issues with Mr. Aska having difficulty in stressful situations?
A. If you can clarify that because I'm not quite sure what you --
Q. Did you notice, during your training session, any instances where Mr. Aska seemed to panic or overreact to abnormal situations?

A. I did not.

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. That's it for me. Thanks.

MR. LAWRENCE: Warren?

MR. ABRAMS: I just have a few, not nearly the depth and magnitude that we've seen so far.

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. In your simulator session with him you obviously have a co-pilot that's a sim instructor, as well. What do you call that guy in this -- what would you call that pilot in this particular situation?

A. What, the support pilot?

Q. Support pilot?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Okay. I've had to call it a different thing at different airlines --

A. Sure.

Q. -- so your support pilot. Was your support pilot in the briefing, the 2-hour briefing at all or did you just -- did he just show up for the simulator portion of it?

A. I don't recall.

Q. Okay. And I think you said you did not recall his name. Do you -- does a support pilot usually show up for the brief to sit in in the briefing?

A. Sometimes. Not all the time.

Q. My reason I was -- didn't know if they needed some bonding or

anything like that to try to establish a --
A. I don't recall in this particular case. Generally, the support pilot is there for the briefing. It doesn't mean they sit there for the entire 2 hours but in case we can get into the simulator earlier he's available.
Q. Okay.
A. And also I don't remember the specifics of this case but generally he's got two instructors working with him and we focus on finding out how to make the light bulbs come on for this particular -- so we generally work together and I would say more often than not the support pilot's always in on the briefing.
Q. Okay.
A. And it's very helpful, as well.
Q. In the simulator with the support pilot, it doesn't matter which seat, but were you able to put him in the left since the other guy, the copilot (indiscernible). It's my experience that you can get some support pilots that can be overbearing and start flying the maneuvers and leading the candidate through the checklist and things like that.

Do you recall any specifics about this particular event where the support pilot may have been overbearing or leading the candidate in any way, shape or form?
A. No issue performing. We've have all been counseled on that as support pilots, what our duty and role is.
Q. I had a question that he had the full 4-hour session and if

he needed more you implied you would be happy to get him extra time. Is there a limit of how much extra time he is allotted or afforded?

A. We've -- to be clear on that. It wouldn't be like more time from that sim session like --

Q. No. No. He completes his 4 hours --

A. Right.

Q. But he is not recommended --

A. Right.

Q. -- at that time. Is there a formal process that he's allowed two more 4-hour sessions or --

A. That's a fleet captain question. I do not know.

Q. The plane that went down, it previously had just come out of a major overhaul and more than likely had an FCF. Do you recall if you flew this airplane?

A. I did.

Q. You did fly this airplane?

A. In Singapore.

Q. And during that FCF did you have a opportunity to cycle the EFI switches or do you recall?

A. We did.

Q. You did?

A. Yeah, but that was generally done in a in ground -- the day before we do a FCF we have a lengthy flight control check.

Q. Okay. When you recycled the EFI switches, did the symbols --

I realize we've changed to symbol generators -- did the AVI/HSI did it blank out or did it -- tell me what happened when you cycled the EFI switches.

A. They did the blank and then came back.

Q. And how long -- you said blank just momentary or --

A. Yeah, you could tell the transfer occurred.

Q. Okay. But 3 or 4 seconds?

A. No, I don't think that long.

Q. Okay. In 1 or 2 seconds?

A. Yeah, probably within one or 2 seconds it starts to come back.

Q. (Indiscernible?)

A. It's kind of -- no -- it's kind of a, well, you know, goes from one generator to the next so it blanks and then --

Q. Pilot picks it up.

A. -- not instant but it comes back fairly quickly.

Q. Yeah. Okay. I told you I didn't have any questions. That's all I have, Rob. Thank you very much.

MR. LAWRENCE: Jimmy?

MR. WARD: Just a couple.

BY MR. WARD:

Q. I recognize your name from --

MR. LAWRENCE: Larry, do you have any questions?

MR. WARD: Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thanks.

MR. BLUEMEL: Recognized my name from where?
MR. WARD: EBS.
MR. BLUEMEL: Oh, yes.
BY MR. WARD:
Q. Back to the this particular session, the remedial training, is it typical to go through remedials the full 4 hours? Does it usually take the full 4 hours when you do those --
A. Yeah, pretty much. We have the sim and --
Q. Okay.
A. -- it's important to utilize that time. I wouldn't say it's exactly 4 hours.
Q. Okay.
A. But it's the better part of and I don't remember this particular case but you can only go so far but I'm pretty sure we've gone -- we run it for 4 hours hence the ride to the hotel that night because it was late.
Q. Okay. Did this -- when you were reviewing the previous check airman's notes in the critique, did this seem like a lot to you based on your experience with other remedial trainings?
A. Yeah, there was some elements there that told me that he had a severe confidence problem. Maybe severe is not the right word but he had a confidence problem.
Q. Do you know if you were singled out because of your expertise and experience to handle this remedial?
A. That was probably one on the site.

Q. Okay. To be able to personally --
A. Just happened to be --
Q. Okay. Back to the support pilot. Did you and the support pilot have any type of conversation or briefing prior to your pre-briefing encounter?
A. No. On the post brief I can tell you that as pilots we have a discussion --
Q. Okay.
A. -- with the sim session.
Q. From that, I'll follow up, you two agreed that it we had a satisfactory remedial training and recommendation --
A. Absolutely. Yes.
Q. Just a general question, in your experience at Atlas is there generally a limit of repeat items on a PC or a type ride or a limit, you know, if you fail one --
A. During?
Q. Yeah, during --
A. During a PC?
Q. Yeah.
A. I believe you can kick the PC and put it on hold and --
Q. Right.
A. -- and then revisit a particular maneuver.
Q. Is that -- and I'm sure that's probably done on occasion. Do you know if it's done if it's one maneuver, two maneuvers, three maneuvers where there's just a -- where they'll just --

A. Usually the flight will get pulled before it gets to what I think your describing is multiple repeats.
Q. Okay. Is there -- do you know is there a threshold as far as the remedial training elements that would raise concerns with training management?
A. I'm not sure I understand that.
Q. So as I asked you it just seemed like a lot of critique on the pre PC check airman's. Is there a threshold to where fleet management or training management would look at this and maybe reevaluate the individual prior to going into remedial training?
A. I don't this so.
Q. Okay.
A. I think, you know, I don't -- I'm not sure and I don't know how many but there have been multiple remedials before someone is ready for --
Q. Okay.
A. -- to revisit.
Q. Okay. And this -- my last question is, does just about everybody have the option or have the opportunity to go through remedial training on a failure, especially with new hires, I guess?
A. Say that again.
Q. I'm sorry. Has it been your experience that all the new hires have the opportunity to go through remedial training on failure?

A. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean, there's not anything that I was involved with. I just do the instruction.
Q. Sure.
A. But it goes up the scale, and when someone's having quite a bit of issue, then that's someone else's decision. If Conrad had not done well for this 4, I felt no pressure at all to make something appear that it wasn't, and if he needed more time, that wasn't an issue. We could have provided him with another sim session, if necessary.

MR. WARD: Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

BY MR. LEE:

Q. I guess the one question I have as far as you said you enjoy doing remediation. What about your schedule, then? We're you doing a lot of training in the sim? Were you doing recurrence, we're you doing initial, we're you doing remediation --
A. All of the above.
Q. -- autopilot or --
A. All of the --
Q. All of it and so you -- was your schedule pretty full and you had to fit in the remedial training or is there open --
A. I'm just guessing I'm figuring I would have did his remedial because I was available at that particular time that the sim was available. That's my guess. That at the time we were training a

lot and I think that's how I ended up with his remedial. I was available. I was available.

MR. LEE: Okay. That's all I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson?

MR. HOWARD: I do not have anything.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any follow-ups?

DR. BRAMBLE: Just a couple of brief.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Yeah, so just in terms of your workload, do you happen to recall, like, how many remedial trainings you would have been doing per month, or --

A. Oh, I can probably count on one hand over the 7 years the remedials I did. It was not very -- what do I say? It wasn't very common. It happened on occasion.

Q. Over how many years?

A. Six, 7 years that I was in the training program.

Q. Okay.

A. Approximately.

Q. And how many check rides do you think you did in a month at the time, roughly?

A. Who, myself?

Q. Yeah.

A. I couldn't tell you. I really don't know.

Q. Okay. And these guys may have a better understanding but -- so your role is -- was it just as a check airman type airman or

also as just a general flight instructor?
A. I've been involved in courseware development from the early stages of the 76 program primarily with distant learning. I was a project lead to transition from (indiscernible) to CPAT for distant learning. I also was -- I developed the briefings for all the simulator events from the FCOMs.
Q. So you did some curriculum and some instructions and --
A. Right.
Q. -- some check rides.
A. Correct.
Q. And remedial training.
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. All right. That's all.
A. Yeah, I was behind the scenes a lot sitting in front of a computer, not a simulator so it's --
Q. Okay.
A. -- for much of --
Q. For much of that 6 or 7 years or --
A. Yeah, in the beginning for sure. Towards the end I was in the simulator more but my two areas of responsibility had to do with the distant learning and keeping up with the lesson guides and the simulator briefings.
DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. That's all I have. Thanks.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. I've just got a follow up and I'll make sure you answered

Bill's questions correctly. Your role to provide Conrad his remedial training, that was as an instructor and not as a check airman.

A. That's correct.

Q. Okay. And that you're sign off was just that he was -- you had evaluated his performance to go take a new check ride on the type ride.

A. That's correct.

Q. Is that how we clarified? Is that? Got it.

MR. LAWRENCE: Good. Anybody else have --

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. I'm still just getting my arms around this same line of questioning. From an FAA credential standpoint, you were -- you have a -- you were a PCP or an APD or what?

A. No, none of that.

Q. None of that. That --

A. I was a SIM check airman when I retired.

Q. SIM check air. Okay. Got it. Thanks.

A. And I wasn't one for very long.

Q. Okay.

A. Mainly instructor.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else? Any questions for us?

MR. BLUEMEL: None.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. If at any point in time or let me ask you this, is there anything that maybe that we've gone over or

talked about or something that we didn't talk about that you thought that we should have asked you about? Anything you want to offer that could help us in the investigation?

MR. BLUEMEL: I think you were pretty thorough. I don't have any questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. If at any point in time you do the ceiling stare and you have one of those moments of clarity and say, oh wow, just thought of something that can help in that --

MR. BLUEMEL: Yeah, I've been doing that for the last 6 weeks.

MR. LAWRENCE: I've been doing it for the last 37 years. So if there's anything at any point that you can think of anything that you wanted to add or clarify or something that you can think of that would help us in the investigation knowing that we're just trying to find out what happened.

MR. BLUEMEL: Right. I understand and I've done as much soul searching as I can to remember this individual and I have a very vague recollection.

MR. LAWRENCE: I realize. Okay. But I offer that to you so if you think of anything --

MR. BLUEMEL: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- please get a hold of us.

MR. BLUEMEL: Sure. Absolutely.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thanks so much.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

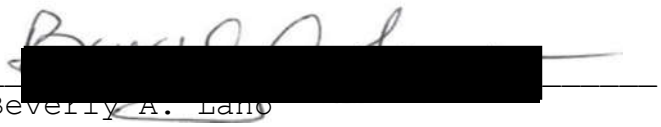
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Robert Bluemel
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami Florida
DATE:	June 3, 2019

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.



Beverly A. Land
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* *

Investigation of:	*
	*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	* Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*
	*

* *

Interview of: WILLIAM NEAL
B767 Check Airman

Via Telephone

Monday,
June 3, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WARREN ABRAMS, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LARRY WARD, Aviation Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration

RICHARD LEE, Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD, Safety Committee
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Vice President, Labor & Employment
Atlas Air
(On behalf of Mr. Neal)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of William Neal:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	21
By Mr. Abrams	25
By Mr. Howard	27
By Mr. Blakely	27

I N T E R V I E W

(11:30 a.m. EDT)

MR. NEAL: Bill Neal.

MR. LAWRENCE: Hey, Bill, can you hear me? It's David Lawrence.

MR. NEAL: Hey, David, how are you?

MR. LAWRENCE: I'm doing good. Thanks for joining us now. Is now a good -- I know Jen just talked to you. Is now a good time to maybe chat or do you need to pull over to the side of the road. Because considering I am the Safety Board, I'd rather you'd just pull over to the side of the road.

MR. NEAL: We've got my wife driving, so I think that's even safer than sitting on the side of the highway.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great.

MR. NEAL: We're good.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Super. Hey, thanks for joining us. We'll try and make this quick and brief, and appreciate you being here.

First off, on behalf of the Board, our condolences for the loss of the two crew members with Atlas. We're here just to try and find out what happened so that we can hopefully prevent it from happening again.

I'm the ops investigator for this accident investigation. I'm going to go around the room. We have several people, since we work on a party system, that are participating in this interview.

So let me go around the room real quick and let everybody introduce themselves.

Bill?

MR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm the human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. ABRAMS: I'm Warren Abrams. I'm --

MR. NEAL: Okay.

MR. ABRAMS: I'm Warren Abrams. I'm an air safety investigator with the NTSB.

MR. WARD: Larry Ward. I'm an ops inspector with the FAA.

MR. NEAL: Okay.

MR. LEE: Rich Lee, Boeing safety pilot.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, Teamsters 1224, Safety Committee.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely, Bill.

MR. NEAL: JB

MR. LAWRENCE: Everybody knows JB Hey, just so, for your education as well, the FAA's role in this particular investigation, they're no different than the rest of us. We're just investigators trying to find out, so the FAA has no certificate action or anything like that that they can do. They're just investigators like us. I just thought I'd explain that for you.

Also, you're welcome to have anybody attend and sit in as a representative. Is Jennifer who you've selected to sit in for you?

MR. NEAL: Yes, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Awesome. Great.

Hey, we'll be typing some notes, and so there might be a little bit of a pause on the telephone while we catch up. Don't think anything of that, and we'll try and keep this flowing quickly so that you don't -- aren't on the road too long while you're talking to us.

If I ask a question, Bill, and you don't understand, please ask me to clarify. And I tell you what, do you have any questions for us before we get started?

MR. NEAL: No, sir. I've been in the process before. While I was in the Air Force, I was a safety and accident investigator. I've been in this role in Southern California for this, so I'm aware of the process.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. So you have mishap investigation experience?

MR. NEAL: Yes, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great.

INTERVIEW OF WILLIAM NEAL

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let me just start off and get your full name and age, Bill.

A. William D. Neal, III, and I'm 65 years old.

Q. And I understand you're retired now, but what was your title here at Atlas?

A. When I hit 65 in January I was a 767 captain/instructor

designated examiner.
Q. Okay. Great. When were you hired at Atlas?
A. Hired in November of '99.
Q. And when you were an instructor and examiner at Atlas, what were your roles and responsibilities?
A. Okay. I started off as just a -- I was in the first class, the captain's class, for the 767 after 11 years on the 747 as a first officer. First captain class, after that flew the line just a little bit and then JB asked me to be an instructor to help train our new captains and first officers coming on board. And so I did that for a couple years flying with him down to the training center, again, another JB invitation, to be a sim instructor and help out with their training program.
Q. Great.
A. Then that progressed into a sim check airman and then, following that, DE or APD status.
Q. Great. And, Bill, just generally, a guesstimate on your total flight time?
A. 12,000 plus.
Q. Okay.
A. That's between the Air Force time and the Atlas time. I quite counting after 12,000 hours.
Q. Copy. Total pilot in command time, just a guesstimate?
A. 7,000, 8,000 hours.
Q. Okay. And total time in the 767?

A. About 1200 hours.
Q. Okay. And general CliffNotes [sic] version of your background prior to coming on with Atlas? Just a CliffNotes.
A. Air Force, commissioned. Went to pilot training about 2 years after I was commissioned, so I was a KC-135 and E3 AWACS pilot for my 18 years in the Air Force. And retired, early retirement out of that. Instructor with a defense contractor for a couple years and then I got on with Evergreen for 6 months, and then after 6 months with Evergreen, I interviewed at Atlas in November of '99 and got hired.
Q. Awesome. Perfect.
A. And started on the 74-400 and then the 767 when it started.
Q. Excellent CliffNotes. Did you know the captain or the first officer in the accident flight?
A. I knew the captain. I don't recall the first officer. I didn't have fingerprints on any of their training. My records tell me I did the type ride on the captain when he was the first officer. And then my records tell me I did an annual simulator check on the first officer last July.
Q. Okay. That's what I show, is a -- that you had done a recent -- the most recent proficiency check on the first officer, back in July 9, 2018. And that you had also done some remedial training for the first officer back in September of 2017. Do you recall that? Prior to his --
Q. No. No, I don't.

Q. Okay. Well, let's concentrate on -- let's talk about what you do recall as far as the most recent proficiency check in July of last year. Do you recall that session with Conrad?
A. No. No, I don't.
Q. Okay.
A. I counted up on my fingers just real roughly. I probably did over 500 sim sessions. So I have -- you know, you got 14 or 15 workdays every month over the course of 5 years, so I can't recall everybody.
Q. Yeah, and I understand that. I'm just wondering if there is anything you do recall about his training or anything about Conrad himself?
A. No, I don't. I don't remember what he looked like until I saw the picture. The only things I ever recall on sim sessions -- I do mostly check rides or preps for check rides. If they meet standards, they meet standards. The only thing I'll ever recall is if it's really bad or really good. And, of course, there's documentation to do if it's not a successful sim check, and that's kind of cements something in your memory. But I got nothing. So these guys passed; they met standards and passed.
Q. Okay. Were you aware if -- that Conrad, or would you have been aware that Conrad had previously been or gone through a remedial training program and had difficulties in a type ride in his past on the 76?
A. Nope. I --

Q. I know you don't recall, but would you have known it?
A. I wouldn't have known it unless it was in his training folder that I looked at right before the sim session. I really don't want to know what they've done before because everybody is, you know, clean when they walk in the sim, and it's just what they -- what I see that day. I have -- I try real hard not to have any preconceived notions when I'm doing an evaluation on a guy.
Q. Okay. Do you recall if you ever flew with Conrad during any of your line operations? Not just in training, but during regular flights?
A. No, I don't recall.
Q. Okay. And do you recall ever hearing anybody talk about Conrad's performance in the cockpit?
A. Nope. No, I don't.
Q. Okay. Just curious, since Conrad did have to go through some remedial training to get him through the type ride. Is that typical in your experience for first officers here at Atlas, to require remedial training to get through the training program?
A. No. No, it's not. I'm very proud of the training program that we all put together. And if a guy needs help, we usually identify it long before he gets to the pre-type flight evaluation. So, but the vast majority of our guys just progress through, very little remedial training done as far as I ever saw.
Q. Okay.
A. Occasionally you'll have a guy needs a little bit of help

here and there, slower learners or they just make a mistake. But by and large, by the time they got to me for a type ride, they were prepared.

Q. Okay. As an APD, in your experience are you seeing changes in the new hire proficiency and skill levels that are coming to Atlas?

A. Yeah, a little bit. But again, it's -- that's the challenge of the training center, and our remedial rates, I never saw a big change. We're not getting the experienced guys we used to, but the guys we get are all good. They're just younger with a little bit less time in the airplane. But it was rare when a guy had trouble in a type ride with me.

Q. Okay. Do you know how many new hires that you've had that you had to -- or that you've observed not make it through the training program, completely wash out?

A. Just a couple. You know, again, I don't see the guys when they're going through the normal academic phase and the fixed-base simulators and the early simulators. I didn't do very much of that. There would be discussions with JB or some of the other, you know, senior people in the program, but most of my work was in the sim for types, orals, recurrent training. So if they didn't make it to me, I would hear what happened to him, but that was rare when we sent a guy away.

Q. Okay. And you said you didn't know Rick Blakely, correct?

A. I knew who he was -- I had met him -- that he was a first

officer with us. I've seen him when I was out, when I was able to escape the training center and go fly a little bit. I'd see him on the line every now and then. But he's just another one of our pilots we're passing in a hotel bar or something like that.

Q. Right. Any comments from the troops out there about Rick Blakely, either positive or negative?

A. Nope. I never heard anything. You know, he's just a, like I said, experienced first office, then he upgraded to captain, and he was out there flying.

Q. Okay. Not aware of any training issues Rick had when he was at the training center?

A. None that I knew of. I know he did his type ride, I think it was his second attempt. But he -- with me that day, he met standards.

Q. Okay. You're saying that you had provided Rick a second type ride or a second attempt on a type ride?

A. I believe I was his recheck. Again, I don't have the training records, and we're talking 2015.

Q. Okay. Let me ask you a couple general questions about the aircraft, too. These are just -- based on your experience, have you ever heard or seen somebody inadvertently hit the go-around switch on the 76 and it enter a go-around inadvertently?

A. In the simulator, yeah. In the airplane, no.

Q. What was the circumstances in the sim?

A. The guy got flustered and hit the go-around switches. And we

train them, once you initiate a go-around, you go around. You don't, you know, abort the go-around and continue to try and land or whatever. So I had a couple guys who just, their fingers got nervous, as an inexperienced guy will do sometimes when he's sitting with a check airman watching. But I never saw it in the airplane and probably less than a dozen times in the simulator over the course of 500 sim sessions.

Q. Okay. But in the sim that you saw, was the guy actually pressing it just at a wrong time because he had a brain cramp, or was it that he brushed against it --

A. Yeah, mostly a brain cramp. No, he wasn't trying to initiate a go-around. It was just nervous fingers on the throttles and hit one of those switches that are, you know, behind the throttles on the 76, under the knobs. And just, you know, all of sudden, you get the go-around commands, and we train them to you go around.

Q. Okay.

A. And they executed that and were embarrassed, and we came back around and flew another approach and they did fine.

Q. Okay. In your experience, I'm curious -- and I'll stay with the go-around switches here. When the officer is flying and if he's expediting a descent, I understand your procedures, your SOPs are to hold the speed brake handle if you're going to extend the speed brakes and keep your hand on it, correct?

A. Yeah. That was a technique we used because we got no "speed brake extended" warnings like we would have in the 747400. So it

was just a technique to remind guys the boards are out. The speed brakes don't shake the airplane a whole lot, so it's easy to forget you've got those things out, because the engines have enough power to let the airplane fly just fine almost with the boards out.

Q. And there's no warning that the boards are out if the thrust lever is coming out?

A. Yeah, there's a light on the front panel, as I recall. But you don't get a whole lot of bells and whistles that the speed brake's extended in your -- and I'd have to go back and refresh my memory on the altitude, altitudes, they come on, if you start to get warnings in the cockpit for speed brakes extended.

Q. Okay. But in your experience, if a guy's in the right seat holding that, does he reach around the back side of the thrust levers to manipulate the speed brake handle or does he reach over the thrust levers to do that?

A. Everybody's different. Again, part of it's physical. You know, if he's got a good reach, he can reach around behind the throttles, which is the preferred. But if he's shorter or sits up closer to the yoke, they may just reach over the top of them. Not resting their arms on the throttles, but -- which should be back in idle if we've got the speed brakes coming out. But I've seen it both ways.

Q. Okay. And --

A. I've done it both ways when I'm sitting in the right seat.

Q. Okay. But I'm kind of curious because in passing you said they could reach around the back side, which is preferred. Is that preferred, to reach around the back?

A. No, it's preferred -- we never taught it preferred, we just -- we taught to keep your hands on the throttles. I mean, speed -- I'm sorry -- the speed brakes. You know, and the technique so you don't forget that you got the thing down. It's much easier to forget from the right seat than it is from the left. The left is easy to just rest your hand on it if you've got it extended.

So it's a little awkward from the right seat, but that's to remind you, you got your speed brakes extended.

Q. Okay. You are familiar with the EFI switch that's on both side of the forward panel? That electronic flight instrumentation switch?

A. Yeah. Yes, yes.

Q. Do you know if that's demonstrated in the simulator at all?

A. It's covered in their training (indiscernible) both of them.

Q. I'm sorry, Bill. I might have lost you for a second there in a gap in coverage in Louisiana someplace. But --

A. Yeah, it happens (indiscernible), you know, the transition to all glass, you still have a bunch of switches in the front of all types. But it's covered in training. I never had any trouble with guys not knowing where to look. If it's not on the iPad screen, then they -- the upper iPad screen, then they'll -- there's panel, start to look at some of the stuff, their lights

and (indiscernible) --

Q. Okay. Are they trained to just push the button to get to the simple generator or they trained to cycle the switch?

A. I'm not clear what you're asking.

Q. Do they just -- if you've got the displays that go out, are the pilots at Atlas trained to push an EFI switch, get the new displays and leave it alone, or are they taught to cycle the switch on and then off?

A. I don't -- I'd have to go -- I'm trying to remember. My memory doesn't -- I don't recall that.

Q. Okay. Have you ever had the displays go out on a 76 either in the sim or in line operations in your experience where you were required to use that EFI switch?

MR. LAWRENCE: We lost him.

DR. BRAMBLE: We have to wait till he calls us back. We may have to call --

(Off the record.)

(On the record.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Hi, Bill. Are you back? Can you hear me okay?

MR. NEAL: Yeah, I'm back. Yeah, we're in Louisiana. You know how those people are, so --

(Laughter)

MR. NEAL: We have decent coverage.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right.

MR. NEAL: Right. So back to your question. You're talking about the upright desk and a laundry list of items that show up on the upper left-hand corner of the upright desk?

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. No. Let me clarify, okay? Because it was -- you know, we're cutting out and such. I'm talking about the EFI switch on the side panel, the electronic flight instrumentation that does the simple generator, switches that.

A. Oh, those. Okay. Yeah.

Q. Yeah. I'm just making sure if you had ever had to use that, and I think you said you don't -- you didn't.

A. Okay. Now I know what you're talking about. No, I've never had a simple generator failure in all my time flying. Of course, we had to do it on the type ride. It's one of the required items.

Q. Wait a minute. The EFI switch is required to --

A. No.

Q. So Bill, let me clarify. The type ride, they're required to see the EFI switch be cycled or --

A. Well, we have to do a simple generator failure. And let them recognize it and switch over to the alternate. And then once we do that, we let them put the switch back to the normal position.

Q. Is that just a non-normal procedure that you're evaluating the guys on and you're using the EFI as that function?

A. Yeah. That's one of the type ride requirements. And JB can probably confirm that. He's our resident expert.

Q. All right. Great. So by deduction, I guess, Conrad and Rick both had seen the EFI switch at some point in time because they were both typed on the 76?
A. Yes.
Q. Cool. Thanks. Let me also ask you about this. Are you aware if the 76 autopilot will disconnect if you put enough force on it to try and override it?
A. You can override it, but I've never had it disconnect. I've had to help it in turbulence once or twice. But I've never felt it disconnect by force on the yoke.
Q. Can you imagine a scenario in your experience where somebody would want to override the autopilot without just disconnecting it?
A. No, I can't. We train them -- I train guys in the airplane or the simulator, so that if you don't like what the autopilot's doing, turn it off and fly the airplane.
Q. And what is the preferred method on the 767 to disconnect the automation on the autopilot?
A. The switch that's on the yoke.
Q. Okay.
A. And you get a warning when you've disconnected the autopilot, so you make sure everybody in the cockpit knows you're about to hand-fly, because it changes the duties of the non-flying pilot; autopilot on versus autopilot off.
Q. Okay. Where in the training footprint do pilots receive

stall training?
A. Long before I see them on a check ride, because I've never done it in the -- I know they've covered in the training up to the type ride. But I never did stall training in the simulator as a check airman. So they had to have -- they've had to have seen that before they got to me.
Q. They're not evaluated on stall recovery at your level, when they get to you?
A. Nope. Not when I was there. We didn't do stall training in the simulator.
Q. So I just want to be clear. Are you talking about being evaluated on stall, or you said they never did stall training in a sim. So where would they see stall training?
A. Well, no -- we never did it on an evaluation, but I'm assuming that you're asking me this leading question -- I'd have to go look at what the training syllabus is. They're aware of what the stick shaker does to them and when it comes on because they see that in training. But we didn't evaluate that in a sim check.
Q. Got it. All right. No, I wasn't trying to lead. I was just trying to clarify, you know. So they are trained in the sim, but you're just not -- you don't do an evaluation.
A. Yeah. There's a lot of their training that they -- initial training they do, and it's documented, we don't cover it. It's just documented in their training folder they've been exposed to

it and been trained to proficiency on it. And we just check in the sim the things that we're required to check, especially on a type ride.

Q. Okay. And what are the stall recovery procedures? If you're on autopilot with flaps on and gear up and you suspect or get a stall indication, what the first action items to recover?

A. Make sure your speed rev's down. Airspeed, whether you need to add power or reduce power, and reduce the pitch, reduce the bank, thrust as necessary. And again, the first thing we always stress to them is make sure the boards are set. Reduce your pitch, reduce your bank, thrust as necessary.

Q. Okay. Are pilots ever trained to recover the stall with the autopilot engaged?

A. Not to my knowledge.

Q. And overall, Bill, how would you characterize the training Atlas pilots get on the 76 program?

A. Very good. I'm very proud of the training program we put together. Tough but fair. I felt like the product we send out to the line, when we let them go, they were as well prepared to go start flying the line at Atlas in a 76 as you could make a guy. Again, the learning curve is still pretty steep for those guys, that's why we have OE. But I felt like when we pushed a guy out of the training center, he was ready to go the line to be a safe, productive pilot.

Q. One thought -- one last question I have and then I'll let

some other guys take a turn. If I was an instructor at Atlas and I wanted to go deeper into a pilot's background to take a look at where they came from and maybe their training history and employment history, is that available to Atlas instructors?

A. I don't know. I've never felt like I wanted to see -- once we got the guy, I concentrated on him when we had him.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Let me see if Dr. Bramble has any questions for you.

MR. NEAL: Okay.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. All right. Hi, Bill. How you doing?

A. Pretty good, sir. How are you today?

Q. Good. I just had a couple on the training form for the proficiency check that you did on July 9th, 2018. I know you don't have the form in front of you, but it sounds like it might have been kind of a common practice for just your notations. Under the "Non-Appendix F Maneuvers" there's an item that is "Unusual attitude/airplane upset recovery." Do you remember that item?

A. Yes.

Q. So you had circled "unusual attitude" but not "airplane upset recovery." What's that mean?

A. Let's see. I'm thinking. I'm trying to think through the check form and what we did.

Q. Yeah. Take your time. No problem.

A. Oh, yeah. It's -- and that was in recurrent training, as I recall. No, that's in a check ride form. Yeah, like we always did in sim, we had one guy close his eyes and the other guy was either making nose low or nose high. Unusual attitude, there's some pitch numbers to go with that from our net com. And then we'd say, okay, yeah, we'd repeat the other guy. So once he has it set up, he'd tell the other guy to recover. And so the guy would look up, do an analysis, and recover from the unusual attitude or, what we call the civilian world, an upset.

And it could be, just like you're talking, if it's a stall -- it might not be a stall. It may just be at minimum airspeed and the stick shaker's not working, going off. And then he just recovers the airplane.

Q. Okay. So you said it might not be a stall, it might be a irregular airspeed and the stick shaker not working? Can you elaborate on that?

A. Yeah. Well, if you -- you could have a nose high unusual attitude but with plenty of airspeed. So actually, instead of adding power if you're nose high, you may be in a position where you either leave it alone or pull off a little power. Or you may be nose low, and you should bring the nose up and you need to add some power to it, or get the engines to start to spool up.

Q. Um-hum. Okay. So it wasn't an issue of irregular airspeed indications. You're just talking about particular attitudes and energy states?

A. Yeah. Yeah, energy states and attitudes.
Q. Okay.
A. And so that's why you say -- we always tell them, take a few seconds and analyze the situation before you, you know, push the yoke or add power or whatever. Again, that's what we call pilot stuff.
Q. Okay. So the circle is just over the unusual attitude words and not over the airplane upset recovery. Is that -- do you have options of doing it different ways so you only do, I don't know, an unusual attitude without an upset recovery, or is that always kind of just part and parcel of the same thing?
A. I thought it was part and parcel to the same thing.
Q. Okay. So this might just be your note --
A. Now when I was in the Air Force, we called it unusual attitudes; more in the civilian world it was upset recovery.
Q. Okay. So the fact that you have just kind of like a little squiggly circle on that item, just on the first two words, probably just means you're just noting that you did that item or something?
A. Yeah, yeah, we just -- yeah, we just -- yeah, upset recovery/unusual attitude.
Q. Okay. All right. And then a "C" means it was completed? And you don't grade --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- that because it's not required?

A. Yeah. It's just you had completed it.
Q. Okay. All right. One other thing you asked was -- or that you were asked about was about the EFI switch. And you said that after they engage it to select the other system, they put it back in the normal position. Can you tell me how soon after they engage the EFI switch they would be expected to put it back in the normal position?
A. No. If it fails in the airplane, you have to stay in that mode. In the simulator, once we completed that evaluation, they have to go back to the normal position for that switch. So that would get a -- the other ADI would get a warning at the bottom of the ADI. The sim didn't like being in that position.
If you had it in a real airplane and you lost the left or right simple generator, you would have to stay in the alternate for the rest of that flight.
Q. Okay. So after you completed that maneuver in the sim, would you say, okay, now it's time to go back to the normal position on the EFI, will you reset that, please? Or did you prompt them to do that?
A. Yes. Yeah, I would prompt them to do that.
Q. Okay. But would you say, okay, we've completed that maneuver, now reset it? Or is that something where they might develop a habit of pressing it and then pressing it again?
A. Well, we only did that on a --
Q. Say again.

A. I'm sorry. We're in a little bit of traffic here. Okay. We only did it on a type ride. It was a one-time thing, and we would -- I would tell them that, okay, we've satisfied this maneuver, take it back to the normal position, and we'd go on to the next step.

Q. Okay. All right.

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. That's all I have. Thanks so much.

MR. NEAL: Yes, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Warren?

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. Bill, I'm Warren Abrams. I'm with the NTSB. I just have a question or two. You're an APD. How often did the FAA come in and observe you in a non -- you were not being evaluated. How often did the FAA just show up to sit in on one of your sims? And I realize it's intermittent, but approximately how often?

A. Probably, maybe twice in the 5 years I did it.

Q. Okay.

A. You know, our guy -- I did want to say, he gave me a pretty good workout once a year for my recertification.

Q. Certainly. But -- yeah, just -- I was just talking non-certification. Certainly, but --

A. Yeah. Well, I -- maybe once or twice.

Q. Okay.

A. Not very often.

Q. All right. Very good.

You were an APD for how many years?
A. Three or -- 3 or 4.
Q. Okay.
A. I've been a sim check airman for about a year and a half, and then finally we started to get own. I think I was -- JB was our first. I think I was the third, maybe.
Q. Certainly. And you did orals as well as rating rides, I presume?
A. Yes.
Q. How many rating rides did you do approximately? I mean, you got over 500 sims in there. How's the breakdown? Do you recall how many rating rides you did, or approximately? Half?
A. Probably close -- more than 100. Maybe 200. It depends. My 15, 16 days in Miami every month, if a class was getting to the oral type ride phase, I'd do a bunch of them.
Q. Okay.
A. And maybe that's all I'd do for those 14 days is type rides every day or (indiscernible) type evaluations. So it's workload dependent.
MR. ABRAMS: Got it. Bill, thank you. That's all I have. I just -- a little APD, a few questions there. Thank you very much.
MR. NEAL: You bet.
MR. LAWRENCE: Larry?
MR. WARD: I have no questions.
MR. LAWRENCE: Rich?

MR. LEE: Nothing.

BY MR. HOWARD:

Q. Hi. This is Tyson. Just one. Was there ever any pressure on any of the DEs to push somebody along, maybe, you know, to overlook anything on a proficiency check type ride, and of those kind of things by --

A. Never.

Q. -- anyone in the company?

A. Never was. Tremendous support from John Blakely, Mark Hoover, and Joe Diedrich. I never felt any pressure.

MR. HOWARD: That's all I have.

MR. NEAL: Okay.

MR. BLAKELY: Can I ask (indiscernible) --

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. JB's got one.

BY MR. BLAKELY:

Q. Hi, Bill. During proficiency checks or when you were giving a type rating or both of them concurrently, do you ever recall evaluating stalls?

A. No.

Q. Okay.

A. Stall training -- the stall training was starting to come in. We discussed it. They were reworking some of the software in the simulators. But I was finished before we got into the enhanced stall recovery training they're doing now.

Q. Okay. Thank you. Last question, Bill, is: As an aircrew

program designee, do you recall getting recurrent training -- was there any recurrent training annually?

A. For me?

Q. For all of us.

A. Oh, yeah, I have recurrent training. I have to complete an annual "I" check in the airplane and annual ground school and checks -- normal checks just like every other pilot. And then I had my annual FAA observation.

Q. Could you elaborate on the annual FAA observation as an APD?

A. In the sim, one of our tech guys would -- usually Alex, Alexander -- would come in and he'd, he would observe an oral. But you're asking about the sim. He would sit in the sim and watch me conduct a type ride.

Q. And this was every year?

A. Every year.

MR. BLAKELY: Thank you, Bill.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody have anything more?

Bill, I think that's all the questions we have. Is there anything that you'd like to add that maybe we didn't ask you about or that you want to help us out with the investigation?

MR. BLAKELY: No. No, I would -- I -- you know, this happened 3 weeks after I retired, and it just broke my heart.

MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

MR. BLAKELY: You know, I have a little bit of survivor guilt, which is normal. He was back in July. And I want to know

what happened, because, you know, this is -- I felt like that this is my program. I was one of the guys that helped start it with JB, and I'd like to know.

MR. LAWRENCE: Well, I understand and I appreciate that, Bill. We're going to work to the best of our ability to find out what happened, mainly so we can help it from happening again. And if at any point in time you can think of anything that could help us or something you just have a moment of clarity you want to add to what we talked about today, feel free to get a hold of us, okay?

MR. NEAL: I sure will. I got Bobby Woods' number and I will -- if something comes up, I will feed it to you guys.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Congratulations on your retirement, Bill. And please drive safely, okay?

MR. NEAL: Yes, sir. My wife's doing a great job. I'm enjoying this.

MR. LAWRENCE: You're a smart man. She can hear you, too.

All right. Take care.

MR. NEAL: Thanks, gentlemen, appreciate it.

MR. LAWRENCE: Bye-bye.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

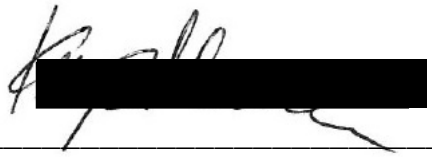
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of William Neal
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Via Telephone
DATE:	June 3, 2019

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.



Kay Maurer
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *
*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) *
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS * Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019 *
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Interview of: MARK HOOVER
B767 Check Airman

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami, Florida

Tuesday,
June 4, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WARREN ABRAMS, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LARRY WARD, Aviation Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration

RICHARD LEE, Safety Pilot
Boeing

TYSON HOWARD, Safety Committee
International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 1224

JOHN BLAKELY
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Vice President, Labor & Employment
Atlas Air
(On behalf of Mr. Hoover)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Mark Hoover:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	35
By Mr. Ward	37
By Mr. Howard	38
By Mr. Abrams	38
By Dr. Bramble	41
By Mr. Abrams	43
By Mr. Lawrence	43
By Dr. Bramble	45
By Mr. Lawrence	46

I N T E R V I E W

(8:00 a.m. EDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: Good morning, Mark. My name is David Lawrence. I'm with the NTSB. I'm an operations investigator.

And on behalf of the NTSB, I want to start off by saying our condolences for the loss of your crew members. I know it's been a tough time for you guys, and I want you to understand that our role here is to try and find out what happened and try and prevent it from happening again. So we're not trying to apportion any kind of blame, or anything like that. We're just trying to gather as much information.

It's very typical for us at this stage of the investigation to talk to people that had some type of interaction with the accident crew and the training environment most recently, and that's why you're here. So it's a very normal part of our process.

MR. HOOVER: I understand.

MR. LAWRENCE: We work on a party system, so there's a lot of guys at the table right here. We bring in subject-matter experts from the union, FAA, manufacturer, the airline, to assist us in the investigation. So what we'll do is we'll go around the room and make sure everybody introduces themselves so that you understand their role.

MR. HOOVER: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: You can go.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. ABRAMS: Mark, I'm Warren Abrams. I'm an air safety investigator with the NTSB, and thank you for coming today.

MR. HOOVER: Okay. Good morning.

MR. WARD: Larry Ward. I'm with the FAA. And I want to let you know that I'm here attached to the NTSB investigation, so there's absolutely no FAA enforcement or anything like that on the table, okay?

MR. HOOVER: I appreciate it.

MR. LEE: Rich Lee, Boeing safety pilot.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, 1224 Safety Committee.

MR. HOOVER: -- to see you, Tyson.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely, 767.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Anytime you have the opportunity to speak with the NTSB, you're welcome to have anybody sit in with you for the interview. Do you -- is Jen who you choose to be here?

MR. HOOVER: Yeah, Jen is here.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. So we're going to develop a transcript out of this and all the interviews that we do that will be part of the public record down the road. What we will be doing today also is taking notes. You know, it's not a deposition or anything. We're just taking notes to help us with, you know, maybe develop other questions down the road.

MR. HOOVER: I understand.

MR. LAWRENCE: So I'm typing and I'm not making eye contact with you, Mark, I apologize.

MR. HOOVER: No offense taken.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. Any questions on the process?

MR. HOOVER: No. No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. And if there is, or if you have a question or don't understand one of our questions, ask for clarifications.

MR. HOOVER: Will do.

MR. LAWRENCE: In other words, don't build the clock, you know, type of thing.

MR. HOOVER: Will do, yeah.

MR. LAWRENCE: And if you need a break anywhere, just let us know.

MR. HOOVER: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF MARK HOOVER

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. So why don't we get started with the really easy ones. If I can get your full name and age?

A. Mark Hoover, 55.

Q. And what's your title here at Atlas?

A. Captain, 767 and DE.

Q. Designated examiner?

A. Designated examiner, yeah.

Q. There you go.
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And what was your hire date here at Atlas?
A. I was hired at Polar October 18th of 2000.
Q. Okay. And what are your roles and responsibilities in general?
A. DE, simulator check airman, line check airman. We have an internal designation, a senior APD, which John Blakely and I share, so we have a 767 fleet office. The fleet captain, Joe Dietrich, he delegates duties to us, administrative duties, standards, oversight, instructor development. And certainly give check rides, and training.
Q. Estimate of your total flight time?
A. 14,000 hours.
Q. And how much of that PICS --
A. 6,000.
Q. And time and type, the 7-6, in this case.
A. In type --
MS. CHERNICHAW: Excuse me.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Bless you.
MS. CHERNICHAW: Thank you.
MR. HOOVER: Approximately 1500 hours.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Okay. And Mark, if you would, give me just a Cliff Notes version of your aviation background?

A. Sure. I was a general aviation flight instructor for about 5 years. I was in the commuters, Trans-States, was a line check airman there. Hired at Polar, the 747, 747 captain, then 767 captain, and the 767 has been my only exposure to the training department at Atlas Air.

Q. Perfect Cliff Notes summary. Appreciate it. Did you know the captain or the first officer of the accident?

A. I did, yeah.

Q. Both?

A. Both.

Q. Okay. I'll ask you a little bit in a few minutes about both of them, but let me start off with Rick, the captain. In review of the training records -- and by the way, have you had an opportunity to review the training records before you talked?

A. I have.

Q. Okay. I do have an iPad here. Bill has got his computer, as well. So we can pull up anything. You don't have to do it by memory. Oh, you got hardcopies.

A. Okay.

Q. Okay. Great.

A. Yeah.

Q. Reference anything you want, okay?

A. Okay.

Q. So you don't have to guess, you can take a look. But we notice that in the training records, you did a proficiency, his

most recent proficiency check for Rick back on August 25th of last year?

A. I did.

Q. Okay. Can you just kind of give me a brief overview of that and talk about that experience?

A. Sure. It was an upgrade proficiency check. He had gone through our upgrade training program. He'd been a prior first officer on the airplane. He had done -- it was an oral. It was a rather extensive oral, about an hour or so. He did well.

We went into the simulator. And as we typically do with captains, there were more than the normal Appendix F events. We have a new program called Flight Crew Deferral, so we went through that process. He was very familiar with it, had no issues. Deferred a generator. He seemed organized and in command.

We took off. I gave a fuel leak scenario, which necessitated shutting down an engine, and that would have been one of the items that I noted from a judgment standpoint in that he seemed very slow to me as a captain to realize that he was in a situation where he should be diverting. He seemed to be waiting for me in my role as dispatcher to give him that information. But as we talked it out, he arrived at the correct answer to the question.

And frankly, I think it was more of the theatrics of the sim environment that confused him a little bit in that. But I did note that as a judgment issue, and we debriefed that extensively to bring it home to him what his responsibilities were later on.

But that didn't raise any particular eyebrows. He diverted the airplane to the nearest suitable airport, which was appropriate.

He conducted -- he had one other item that was a re-train, and that was steep turns. He was off of his altitude on steep turns, and I have to re-train him. He did that to standards. And the rest of the ride was good. Actually came out with very favorable opinion of that event.

Q. You came out with one?

A. I did.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. Why?

A. He seemed -- well, I was familiar with him from his first officer training, and he had some issues going through training, and he seemed like someone who had really grown, actually, into the job. I don't know if surprised is the right word, but I was very favorably impressed with that.

Q. What were his issues in his first officer training you were familiar with?

A. He had -- really just in reviewing his file. I didn't do any of his training. I didn't check him, but he had some initial aircraft control issues, I believe, but that's a fuzzy memory. I think it was just transitioning to a heavier airplane issues.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about Rick's CRM and command performance?

A. Again, in this particular ride, it was at a pretty high level, actually. He briefed appropriately. I remember the flight deck being professional. And I think I commented that to him. In debriefing the dispatch issue, the coordination with dispatch, my point to him was that, as a captain, you can't delegate your responsibility to a dispatcher or anyone else. He embraced that rather well, and that led into a pretty extensive conversation, as I remember. But it was very, again, favorable.

Q. Okay. Going back to his performance as a first officer, I know you didn't do the training, but were you aware that he was placed under a PWP when he was an FO?

A. Yeah, I was, in review of the records, yes.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. Can you tell me -- kind of give me an idea of what a PWP is?

A. Well, it's a program administered by the fleet captain. When a crew member is identified to have training issues, performance issues, the flight crew member goes under an increased level of surveillance, basically. They get some more exposure to training, and the idea is not only just to verify that they've raised their standards or met -- increased their standards, but that they're more comfortable in that environment, as well, just to make sure that they meet the standards.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. Is it subjective or is there some type of template that they file; if you have this many busts or sub-standards, or something, you're automatically into PWP?
A. It's not that specific.
Q. Okay.
A. Not so many. That's up to -- there is some judgment that the fleet captain exercises in that.
Q. And based on what input? It comes from just the performance, what's documented, or does it come from instructors' input?
A. It would come from all input. He would probably seek it. He's pretty active, in this case, the fleet captain, Joe Dietrich, is very active in working through Captain Blakeley and myself with standards and seeking input, and identifying students that are having issues; or if people come back on recurrent and they're having issues, he wants to know that immediately. The instructors are always briefed on that.

Just last night in the e-mail, there were progress checks that arrive, and all the comments are noted. So it's all avenues of input to him. But in the end, it's his call.

Q. On your review of Rick's records, did you notice any performance deficiencies or difficulties in his upgrading portion of --
A. No.
Q. You didn't notice or you --
A. I didn't notice.

Q. Okay.
A. I didn't notice. Sorry.
Q. Ever heard of any Atlas pilots or check airmen, or other instructors have concerns about Rick's performance either in the sim or on the line?
A. No, other than in initial training, just input from instructors as he was going through that program. On the line, no.
Q. You ever flown with Rick on the line?
A. No.
Q. Was Rick's performance as -- Rick's command authority in the cockpit, in your opinion, typical of Atlas captains that you've seen?
A. Well, again, I had one check ride, and I clearly had some comments on judgment and his interaction as a captain. So I wouldn't call that typical. I don't typically check judgment as an issue. But I have one PC to judge that by, so --
Q. But you evaluate judgment when you conduct a proficiency check, correct?
A. I do.
Q. Okay.
A. And I did, yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. And that was a re-trained item, yeah.
Q. So his judgment was a re-train item?

A. That was the item that I checked --
Q. Re-train in proficiency, as you'd said?
A. Yeah. And of course, that's more counseling. I wanted to bring it home to him. That's the dispatch issue that I talked about.
Q. Based on your interaction with him and your observance of his proficiency check, any concerns with him as a captain in the cockpit with maybe another copilot that may not be -- let me -- how should I say -- strong as a copilot or pilot?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Why do you say that?
A. Concerns?
Q. Yeah.
A. Well, I think that kind of goes into in giving him a satisfactory on his upgrading PC --
Q. Okay.
A. If I had those concerns, I wouldn't have done that.
Q. Okay. Any interaction with Conrad Aska?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And talk to me about that.
A. I did a re-check of his type rating in his initial training. He had failed the type rating, then remediated. I did the re-check. And there isn't -- I was aware of Conrad's -- some training issues throughout. I was aware of his failed check ride.
Very specifically, the fleet captain told me to make sure

that he received a full type rating, that there were no items that were credited, and that's exactly what he got. The performance in that, I don't really recall anything significant.

Q. So you did the check ride, the second type ride, his re-check for his type?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. Was the FAA present for that type ride?

A. No. They were present in the first check ride. They were not present in the second.

Q. Do you know what it was he was sub-standard on in his first check ride? I know you had to do all the check ride, but --

A. I did a complete check ride, yeah. I can take a look.

Q. Sure.

A. Yeah. He was marked on a non-precision approach, an RNAV approach, steep turns, and CRM, TEM and judgment.

Q. So you had him for the re-check. I know you said that you did the entire check ride, but I'm curious how did you evaluate him in particular on his CRM, crew resource management, and TEM, threat and error management, and then you said judgment, as well? So talk to me about what it was you were evaluating?

A. Sure. I see these forms, so I would have known at that time what issues he had had. So I would be specifically looking at those.

And I don't remember on that day specifically what I did. But typically, what I'll do is put the airplane in an unfavorable

position that'll force him to make decisions and coordinate with the other crew member, timing of abnormals so that he's got to prioritize and coordinate items. I don't remember exactly how I evaluated it that day, but those are pretty typical items. Weather might be questionable, winds, and so forth.

Q. Would you say his performance in that type rating that you observed was typical of the first officers you see coming in through the training program?

A. Just the fact that I didn't even -- I didn't have any comments on his sheet, I would say it was probably typical for -- at a recheck. I'd say most of our crew members do that on the first go.

Q. In other words, they don't need to have a recheck on a type?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay.

A. Oh, yeah, absolutely.

Q. Did you know if Conrad was placed on a PWP program?

A. I'm aware he was not now, but typically, they're not. They wouldn't be put on the PWP until they went through operating experience, typically.

Q. So they wouldn't be -- typically, the first officers aren't placed on a PWP until they're in IOE?

A. No, a crew member, if there's -- it depends on the circumstance.

Q. Right.

A. Yeah, yeah. That's really a fleet captain call.
Q. Okay. I only ask about that because earlier you had mentioned that Rick had been placed on a PWP when he was in initial training and hadn't gotten into OE yet, but then --
A. I don't know when he was placed on OE. I associate the operating experience portion of that as part of his initial training, as well, not just a simulator. And the fleet captain can do it at any time.
Q. He can place a person on PWP at any point in time?
A. If he feels it warrants it, absolutely, based on circumstance. I don't think there's a set rule, but I could be mistaken, you know?
Q. And the fleet captain is more operational? He's ops and standards? Or what is your understanding of his role?
A. He's the oversight of the curriculum. Any curriculum items will go through him. We report to him on standards working company-wide. Standards can apply to all the fleets, so we interact with that. He has all that oversight. He's got all the management responsibility for dealing with the crew members. In the end, we just support that.
Q. So where does the director of training come in in this process?
A. He's neck-and-neck with the fleet captain. The fleet captain is working with him, as well.
Q. But it's the fleet captain that makes the decision on the

PWP, not the director of training?
A. That's my understanding.
Q. Okay.
A. That's correct. I think he has the responsibility.
Q. And we'll have an opportunity to talk to that --
A. Yeah.
Q. So we'll clarify.
A. Yeah.
Q. Have you ever flown with Conrad on the line?
A. No.
Q. Okay. You ever heard of any other Atlas pilots, check airmen, instructions, anybody else voicing concerns, or did anybody approach you about concerns about Conrad's proficiency or flying --
A. No.
Q. And as an APD and -- or actually, as a DE, and seeing all these new hires coming in, are you seeing any kind of trends as far as the quality of the experience of the first officers coming to Atlas?
A. We certainly do a lot more remedial and additional training than we used to, so, yeah, I would say that certainly the experience level, and that equates to quality, to some extent, is less than what it used to be.

But I'm tempted sometimes to paint it with a broad brush and say that the new guys aren't as good as the old guys, and then all

of the sudden, we get really surprised, and people with some pretty minimal experience come in, and they completely ace the program and do a great job. So there are -- it's pretty hard to put a broad comment on that.

Q. Sure. Do you have a training review board?

A. We do.

Q. What is that?

A. That's convened with -- the fleet captain is part of it. The director of training is part of it. There's a management pilot. I believe that role changes. I've seen Captain Scott Welty be part of those. I think some of the other management, chief pilots can be part of those, as well (indiscernible) before, but I'm not clear on that. And I'm not part of those.

Q. Okay. What is it? I mean, you told me who's on it. What is it?

A. Yeah, yeah. When a crew member reaches a certain point, in the policy, on qualifying events or difficulty in training, there are certain triggers that are -- that they operate by policy, and they will convene a training review board. And that can lead to counseling, that can lead to termination, that could -- there's a variety of outcomes -- continued training.

Q. What's the difference between a training review board and a PWP?

A. Well, proficiency watch program -- a training review board is a singular event. That's where management individuals come in and

evaluate a situation with a crew member's training records. But a PWP is an ongoing process. That's over a period of time. That's over a year. A year or 6 months? Can't remember now. But that's where it prompts increased surveillance, increased check rides, line checks. So that's an ongoing process of evaluation.

Q. I understand that's more of -- it's almost like -- correct me if I'm wrong -- I don't want to put words in your mouth -- but like an extended OE for somebody just -- because you're watching them and they're still within the training footprint with the PWP?

A. No.

Q. No?

A. It's not really OE. They are a fully functioning crew member. They're not under constant surveillance, but they will come in for PCs. They are subject to unannounced line checks. They have to pass a proficiency check and also a two-leg line check to be removed from the PWP program. But every flight that they conduct as a PWP crew member is not under surveillance. By being in that category, they also are not paired with other PWP crew members, so there's some restrictions on who they fly with.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. You said they have to pass a proficiency check. Is that anything above and beyond the Appendix F requirements that they have to pass anyway --

A. No.

Q. So there's not really anything in addition -- any additional checks they're doing in a PWP?
A. They will come in and typically have an additional proficiency check, but the content of that proficiency check is not different. It's an Appendix F check ride.
Q. So it's an additional one? So for a captain, they're coming in twice a year for PCs?
A. I don't remember the interval of that, but there's an additional -- they will come in for an additional PC above and beyond their annual.
Q. Okay. But the PC is a jeopardy event that you're bringing them in for?
A. Absolutely.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. And it's in addition to whatever the training program typically requires under Appendix H, right?
A. That's correct.
Q. Okay.
A. They still have to conduct all of their normal recurrent training events; these are additional.
Q. So I'm still a little confused. I think I got the PWP, but I'm still confused where the TRB and what is triggering a pilot to go into a training review board? What would trigger them to go to that versus a PWP? I mean, is it a higher level of deficiency in

their training?
A. Yeah, yeah. You could have a crew member put into PWP that did not have a training review board. That's entirely possible.
Q. Explain that.
A. Just based on their performance, the fleet captain could put them into the program. There's no consultation with other pilots. It's not -- that's at his prerogative. That's his authority to do that.

A training review board is policy-driven, and they would be -- I would defer to them on what trigger -- the policies that trigger that. But they're unqualifying events, what we call QEs. And someone that is demonstrating whatever level as they interpret it in their policy, the requirement for additional training, they then convene the board and review their records and their performance.

And if they need to seek -- I've been called before to expand on my follow-up to a student -- tell us more. We're convening a TRB.
Q. Sure.
A. They want more information.
Q. Would a busted type ride automatically qualify a pilot for a training review board?
A. No.
Q. Why not?
A. I don't know. I don't know. That's not the policy.

Q. Oh, okay.
A. I mean, it would trigger remedial training certainly. If they had busted prior events, it might trigger a training review board. But that on its own, no.
Q. Okay.
A. Not typically.
Q. To your knowledge, was Conrad subjected to or presented for a training review board, or TRB?
A. Not to my knowledge.
Q. Okay. And I should ask, to your knowledge, was Rick placed in a training review board?
A. Not to my knowledge.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't recall that.
Q. Few questions about the airplane, and I don't mean to make this a type rating, right? I'm just trying to get from your experience on the 767, trying to understand a couple of things.

In your experience, have you ever had or heard of an inadvertent selection of the go-around switch in flight?
A. Not on the 7-6, but I've actually seen it on another airplane myself.
Q. What airplane?
A. A 7-4, 747 400.
Q. What were the circumstances that triggered that inadvertent selection?

A. An abnormally large first officer with giant hands simply put his hands up in a position rather lazily and actually hit the TOGA switch, which is in a different position on top.
Q. Yeah. So it's different on the 7-6 -- or on the 7-4 where the TOGA, or go-around, switch is --
A. Yes, it is. Yeah.
Q. Where are they located on that?
A. They're below the thrust levers, the underside of the thrust levers.
Q. For the 747?
A. Yeah -- I'm sorry -- for the 767 --
Q. Yeah, they --
A. -- they are below.
Q. 767, they're below the thrust levers. But for the 747 that triggered that one event --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- that you saw, they were?
A. They are on top.
Q. Got it.
A. They were above. That's correct.
Q. This is another one that's subjective, but it's based on your experience. When you've had your copilots flying the aircraft, and they are in an expedited descent, and they're using the speed brakes, have you noticed if they go over top the thrust levers to manipulate the speed brake handle, or do they come around the

thrust levers?
A. No, over the top.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. You ever seen them come around the back side of the thrust levers and --
A. Don't recall that.
Q. Okay. Also, on the 767, I noticed, your particular aircraft, you have a speed tape, an electronic speed tape on the ADI, but you also have an airspeed indicator --
A. Yes, we do.
Q. -- that's bugged over there. What's the primary reference for airspeed for your pilots on the 7-6?
A. We don't dictate that.
Q. In your experience, which is your primary reference?
A. I absolutely love the analog.
Q. Why?
A. My personal preference. I just always enjoyed flying analog, old 747s, so forth. The speed tape on this particular airplane, to me, is very small, very condensed compared to a 747 400 and the regional jets that I flew. So just a matter of preference.
Q. Are pilots taught, based on the speed tape on the EADI, to respond or -- to the speed tape arrow? You know the arrow I'm talking about, the trend arrow?
A. Trend arrow.

Q. Right.
A. Yeah. Yes. To respond, to be aware --
Q. Okay.
A. -- would be how I would phrase it, and to use that information accordingly, so yeah.
Q. You're familiar with the EFI switch, the electronic flight instrument switch --
A. Right.
Q. On both sides of the floor panel --
A. Source select --
Q. Source, right, or the display generators, right?
A. Yes.
Q. Are those -- is that trained, that switch trained anywhere in the 7-6 profile?
A. Repeatedly, often, yeah.
Q. What do you mean repeatedly?
A. That's actually our -- our source issues that we concentrate on in our profiles and in training is definitely the EFI, because screen blanks have historically -- especially older airplanes -- they happen. It's something they need to be familiar with.

There's no checklist associated with it, so it's something that crew members need to know where to go to immediately to get their information back at their displays. And that and airspeed unreliable are the, I think, the more comment source select choices that we go to to make sure crew members are familiar.

Q. Where is it trained? Is it trained in the sim? Is it trained in, like, systems ground school? When you say it's trained often --
A. Well, it actually is highlighted in briefings prior to going into the simulator, and in each of those sessions, that's an item that is actually touched on.
Q. Yeah?
A. Yeah.
Q. How are they trained to use the EFI switch? Are they trained to press it once with a display problem, get the displays back and leave it, or are they trained to cycle the switch on and off?
A. I've never seen anyone cycle it. Just select it, and in both cases, selecting that switch would generally bring the displays back, because you're looking at the center symbol generator, and once they have their displays back, the event is over. Unless there is some other issue, I can't imagine cycling it.
Q. You ever had it actually happen to you in flight that you had to operate the EFI switch?
A. No. Not on a 767.
Q. Okay. Just a couple of questions about -- more questions. Then I'll let some other people -- probably getting tired of hearing them from me right now, Mark.
A. No, I love it.
Q. Eh, Larry will get your (indiscernible).
On the autopilot, do you know if the pilot is able to

overcome a force on the autopilot to disconnect the autopilot? You know what I'm saying? If the autopilot is engaged, can he push on the yoke to appoint where it'll disconnect the autopilot on this airplane?

A. That does not trigger a disconnect on this airplane, but it's very easy to overcome, actually. It's an increased force, but it's very doable.

Q. Okay. So when you say that it's easy to overcome, you mean a pilot can overcome the servos on the autopilot --

A. That's what I mean.

Q. Okay. You ever done that?

A. Yeah.

Q. Under what circumstances?

A. Just in the simulator, stab trim runaway scenarios, that sort of thing, airplane (indiscernible). The forces are not -- they're abnormal, but they're not extreme.

Q. Is it typical to do that? You see pilots overcome or try to fight the autopilot?

A. No. I wouldn't say that.

Q. Any situation in the training footprint that requires a pilot to manipulate the control yoke while the automation is still engaged?

A. No. And I should go back. I misunderstood what your question was. It wouldn't be a normal procedure to do what I described with the stab trim runaway. That's more of a demo; what

is the airplane going to do. You would always remove the automation.

Q. Right.

A. You would always disconnect the autopilot in that scenario. You wouldn't fight it.

Q. So you'd say pilots are trained to disconnect the autopilot if they're having a difficulty with it, would that be accurate?

A. Absolutely, yeah.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah, yeah, sorry. That was misleading.

Q. Is stall recovery trained in the simulator at Atlas?

A. Yes.

Q. And during what phase of the training?

A. Well, in all of our training, there's stall training other than the LOFT scenarios and the recurrent LOFT and the initial LOFT, but any of our initial upgrade/recurrent events will involve stall training and a proficiency check. There has to be at least one of the stalls trained, and typically, we'll do the takeoff/departure stall. And we'll incorporate automation with that, as well, and then a turn. And that's straight Appendix F guidance.

Q. What do you mean by you typically incorporate automation with that?

A. It's recommended by the advisory circulars that at least one stall incorporate automation with that, so we'll have the

autopilot on so that the crew member has to recognize that, disconnect it.

Q. And you led me to my next question. What are the first actions the pilots are taught for stall recovery?

A. Yeah, disconnect the autopilot, disconnect the autothrottles, retract the speed brake, reduce the angle of attack, and power as required.

Q. So you'll give them the one stall where you're waving the other two, but it's a departure stall, I would assume, in a turn?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay.

A. That's correct.

Q. And it's in a turn with the automation on, and how are you introducing the stall in training? What are you doing to induce that?

A. Typically, put the airplane in vertical speed so it continues its climb, disconnect the autothrottles, and reduce the power, and the speed bleeds off.

Q. And the recovery is at what point? Is it at first indication, the buffet, the what?

A. It's the first indication, as you say; it's the buffet or the stick shaker.

Q. Ever train the pilots to do a recovery from a stall that's been deeper into it, like, all the way to the buffet, where they're feeling the buffet beyond the shaker?

A. Ever? Yes, I have. That's not in the curriculum. to go beyond that at this point, but we're actually in the midst of adopting the extended envelope training, where we go much, much deeper beyond the buffet in the full stall.

Q. And where are you guys in the extended envelope training right now?

A. Well, we are under a waiver, an extension of that training requirement at this point, and that's a function of available simulators that are certified to do that. There's only one 767 simulator here in Miami that we can do it with. We just went up and evaluated a simulator in Canada to extend that. We have a brand-new simulator on the way that will be certified, and we're in the midst of certifying our own old simulator.

But it's a rather extensive process, actually, to get it up to standards and get it certified. So at this point, as crew members come through, they are at least given a briefing, an extensive briefing, on extended envelope training, which uses the FAA's presentation as a basis for that. And if the simulators are available, then they actually go and get the full training. We have, I believe, it's four instructors at this point that are certified to do that, and our APM is eagerly updated on that all the time.

Q. About how many pilots are exposed to the extended envelope training right now? I know it's limited, but --

A. Every time we touch a pilot on recurrent -- every class since

March 12th, when it initiated, every single pilot that's come through the schoolhouse has been briefed. There's a briefing going on right now, as a matter of fact.
Q. Okay. They're briefed, but I'm talking about the actual hands-on simulator.
A. Yeah. The actual, I don't have a number. That would be the initial training focus as they're going through. As that one simulator has a period available, literally, one crew out of an entire class might get trained.
Q. Okay. Are you aware if either Rick or Conrad had actually done extended envelope training --
A. They would definitely not have.
Q. Why not?
A. Yeah, the program was not even initiated at that point. We had no certified instructors. There was no briefing.
Q. Okay. Do you know if they were briefed, received a briefing?
A. They would not have. Well, I say that. I don't know exactly when their last event was. If nothing -- if anything occurred after March 12th, if we touched them, then they received the briefing, and I'm not aware that we did.
Q. Okay. So anything that was prior to March 12th, they wouldn't have seen it?
A. Would not have seen it?
Q. Right.
A. Correct.

Q. Okay.
A. That's correct. Yeah. And of course --
Q. Right.
A. -- the event occurred on February -- yeah.
Q. I think I got most of these. I may have some follow-ups. Oh, I do have -- I'm sorry -- just another question. Is there any situation where you would -- where a pilot at Atlas would be trained or expected to recover from a stall using the autopilot or auto thrust?
A. No.
Q. And then last kind of general one, overview, in your experience -- you've been in the industry for a while -- how would you characterize the training pilots receive here at Atlas?
A. Extensive. We've tried to adopt the training over time. That's something that we constantly evaluate. And both Captain Blakely and myself are involved with that, with our opposites on the 747 fleet, and with Joe and Scott, and --
Q. Can I stop you a second?
A. Yeah.
Q. Did you mean to say "adopt" or "adapt"?
A. Adapt.
Q. Thank you.
A. Sorry.
Q. All right.
A. Yeah.

Q. So explain the "adapt," because the "adopt" I wasn't really understanding.
A. Sure, sure.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah. Thank you. Yeah. The curriculum is -- for instance, the human factors element, that's become quite a change at Atlas Air. It's a rather extensive part of our curriculum. And that particular group of people interact with the fleets and come up with some scenario-driven and data-driven LOFT situations. That has been a significant change for us.

The curriculum itself, what we talk about, is more line-driven rather than just simply book-driven; what are our current events, what's happening out there? There's extensive feedback through a program called Clear Direct, which actually takes ASAP events and E-identifies those and brings them back to the crew members. So I think all of those are a function of how the training has changed over time.

We are still an Appendix F airline. So the checking events are pretty well dictated in what we do.
Q. Any plans on developing into an IPP program?
A. That seems to be everyone's wish at the top, but that's been a rather long process. So there are no specific plans that I know of.
Q. And you were mentioning LOFT, and the development of LOFT, and things. Do you guys have FOQA? Do you have a FOQA program?

A. We do, and that feeds into it. That's our human factors people take that data and feed it back in on a continuous basis. We actually have -- each fleet has representatives that get data and feed them back to us. We get briefings on those, what are the trends. A recent one was stabilized approach, which the last meeting that we had, actually, our fleet has shown some marked improvement in that. So that would be a good example of the feedback on it.

Q. Okay. I lied when I said I only had -- I had no more questions. I went further, but I know Dr. Bramble is over here itching to probably ask questions from this, so I'll give him an opportunity.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. I just have a few, Mark. So how often would Conrad and Rick have had LOFT training? How often do your crews see them, and how often that they have seen them?

A. As it is right now, it's every other event. So it's a yearly event. They would alternate LOFT with a PC event.

Q. And were you involved in any of those LOFT sessions?

A. I believe I had Conrad for a LOFT, and I don't recall it -- and I actually don't recall the event.

Q. All right. Have you had any opportunities to observe how Conrad performed under high workload or stressful situations?

A. Other than the stress of the check ride that I conducted within his second type rating ride, no.

Q. Any observations on his performance under stress?
A. No.
Q. Okay. With the stall training in the simulator that you mentioned that's conducted under Appendix F, do you guys always pre-brief the stall maneuver?
A. Before we initiate it? In other words, do they know it's coming? Yes, they --
Q. Right.
A. They know. Yeah.
Q. And with the pilot selection process, are you or the other instructors involved at all in activities, such as simulator evaluations?
A. Yes.
Q. Can you describe how that goes?
A. You mean of the device itself?
Q. Well, I guess, yeah, let me focus better. Describe for us how the instructors are involved in the new-pilot selection process from a high level.
A. Well, I'm not involved in it. I know there are selected pilots that do the review. I think typically they're management pilots. Often experienced, retired captains have been utilized for that process. I don't know who the current people are that do that, but in the past, I think there were some line pilots that were involved in that. I don't think that's the current practice.
Q. Are the new-hire candidates put through a simulator

evaluation?
A. No.
Q. Okay. And do instructors participate in rating or evaluating them before they're hired in any way?
A. No.
Q. Okay. That's all I have. Thanks.
A. Sure.
MR. LAWRENCE: Warren?
MR. ABRAMS: Mark, I just have a couple questions. I think we went down the road pretty good on how pilots get into the -- what are we calling this thing -- the pilot -- I had it in my notes here, the -- I'll get back, I'll come back the second round.
MR. LAWRENCE: Larry?
BY MR. WARD:
Q. I just wanted to clarify one thing you had said. Conrad's initial type ride that he failed, you said that was observed by the FAA?
A. Yes.
Q. Could you actually give me the date on that?
A. Sure.
Q. And who the APD was? It was not you, right? It was the --
A. No, it was not me. The date was 9/22 of '17. The DE was Bill Peavley. The FAA observer was Alex Alexander. Yeah.
MR. LAWRENCE: I'm sorry. What was his name?
MR. HOOVER: Alex Alexander.

BY MR. WARD:
Q. He's the 76 APM for Atlas?
A. That's correct.
MR. WARD: Thank you. That's all I have --
MR. LAWRENCE: Rich?
MR. LEE: I don't have any --
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Tyson?
BY MR. HOWARD:
Q. Just one. How are pilots typically trained to disconnect the autopilot?
A. With the yoke disconnect switch.
Q. And do you stress or mention any other methods? I mean, is that anything that's ever trained?
A. Not stressed. It's certainly mentioned that there's a disconnect bar on the MCP if they need to do it that way. You can do it with -- or you do it with a trim switch with the single autopilot on, but not stressed. The typically method would be with the disconnect trigger.
Q. All I got.
MR. LAWRENCE: Great. J.B.?
MR. BLAKELY: Good to go. Thank you, Dave.
MR. LAWRENCE: Warren?
BY MR. ABRAMS:
Q. Yeah, PWP, that's where I was --
A. Okay. All right.

Q. So we went down that road how we get into PWP. I'd like a little bit more information how to get out. We were talking -- Dave was asking you about the TRB versus the PWP, and you made a statement that the PWP is an ongoing process that lasts 6 months to a year. Is it arbitrary? How do pilots get out?
A. They simply perform. When they're evaluated over this period of time, if there are no issues, then they're removed from PWP.
Q. And --
A. And again, these are not my oversight items, so --
Q. I understand.
A. -- I'm not the expert on --
Q. We'll ask Joe Dietrich, as well. But your understanding --
A. Yeah.
Q. Can they stay -- say they perform satisfactory through 6 months to a year period. Is it just -- could arbitrarily the fleet captain keep the pilot in the PWP program?
A. No, I don't think that would be within policy, but if there is a case where he could just arbitrarily do that, I'm not aware of it.
Q. Okay.
A. That's my understanding of it.
Q. All right. We'll talk about Rick, the captain, for just a second. We were talking about judgmental issues in not diverting when you gave him the simple fuel leak scenario and he didn't shut down the engine, or he did shut down the engine, but he wasn't

diverting to the nearest suitable. Do you equate that to more a first-time captain not making decisions, or how do you --

A. That's exactly what I equated it to. And also, our emphasis internally at that time, and it's a problem today, captains that don't utilize their resources to come to the divert decision. And when I mentioned the theater of the simulator, there's often a compressed time period where in the end, as I remember that conversation, I think he was trying to let the scenario play out a little bit, whereas what I really wanted to hear as an evaluator is him assert that we need to divert.

Q. I realize -- I agree with your decision, or statement, that as captains, we cannot delegate our responsibility to someone else to make the decision to divert or not to divert. Is there any emphasis or program in place to call the dispatcher, call -- get a phone patch to maintenance, or things like that? Is this spelled out pretty frequently?

A. It really is. The captains go through something called captain leadership, and this communications training actually comes from the vice president of flight operations. It's quite a group of people that commit a day to our new captains and discuss their responsibilities, exactly what we're talking about here, what the methods are, typical items that happen on the line, and how you might interface with the company.

And we have a relatively new -- it's been about a year or so that we have a duty pilot, a designated duty pilot position. And

that's something that, typically, in the past at our airline, has been associated with get me a chief pilot or get me a DO on the line, and that has a whole different connotation to a lot of people.

So this has been an education process. That's a real focus for new captains, that you can contact a subject matter expert or a technical pilot when you need to talk about pilot stuff, not dispatch or maintenance, so yeah.

Q. Thank you. That's all the questions I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: J.B., I came to you, right? I asked you if you had any questions earlier?

MR. BLAKELY: You did, David, yeah.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

MR. BLAKELY: Thank you. Yes, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else have any follow-up?

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. I have just something brief, a couple of questions about CRM, threat and error management, and how that's evolved. I think we're going to talk to the people that run that program, but just briefly, what guidance is provided to the pilots for dealing with situations, for abnormal situations, competing priorities, and judgment decisionmaking are required?

A. Well, in their yearly recurrence, they have a 6-hour classroom session that talks about the events, the curriculum changes on a yearly basis. It's also updated, corrected. It's

kind of a dynamic curriculum. But that's, I would say, the primary focus. But certainly, as I mentioned, there's other venues for delivering that, the Clear Direct; human factors has been extensively involved in putting additional information into our FOM.

Talking about the divert decision, I always refer our new captains to chapters 10 and 11, one of the best spelled-out decisionmaking processes that I've seen. Whoever wrote it did a great job on it, and it really defines prioritization, I think, pretty clearly. So they have an impact on a number of things.

Human factors, we're rewriting some language right now, and human factors is central to that with the debate between the fleets. They're looking at the words that are being chosen for call-outs, so forth.

Q. If a crew loses a display and has to use the EFI switch, and they are able to successfully regain the display using that method, are they supposed to do anything else before they land if they're on arrival, for example, or is that just considered resolved, and we'll pick it up once we get on the ground, write it up, or something?

A. Yeah, I think it's resolved, yeah.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah, I can't think of anything else additional to do -- you would do.

Q. Have there been any major changes to the CRM, threat and

error management training program in the last year or so, either before or after the accident?

A. Not in the last year. And again, each year, the curriculum is changed, updated, reevaluated. Industry norms are incorporated into it, but that's a typical cycle.

Q. All right. I'm going to pass the baton.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else have follow-ups?

MR. ABRAMS: Just one more quick question.

MR. LAWRENCE: Sure. Warren?

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. LOFT, you have multiple LOFT scenarios or is there just one per the training cycle, or tell me how your LOFTs work?

A. Yeah. There is just one scenario at this point.

Q. Okay.

A. And if it's the initial LOFT, that's a fixed scenario. There's certain things we want them to see. Our LOFT itself is a fairly new program, and it's evolving. The goal would be to have multiples. But that's -- I hesitate to use the term "baby steps," but it's baby steps. Part of that has been getting the instructors onboard that didn't have prior experience being facilitators. Very different role, so it's a learning process.

Q. Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Okay. I just have a couple follow-ups. On the pilot hiring, when Dr. Bramble was talking to you, or asking you about the

hiring process and the pilot inputs, and you said that you had retired pilots that came in to assist?

A. We have had that in the past. Again, I don't know who is involved exactly right now.

Q. Sure.

A. But we have -- and when I say retired pilots, they're contractors. They're still part of the -- their program.

Q. I'm just trying to figure out where they're coming in because you don't do sim work with -- you don't do the sim evaluation of the applicants.

A. Right.

Q. Correct? So these guys would basically, in your limited knowledge, be just doing interviews?

A. Well, there's a technical aspect to the interview. I'm aware that they in the past have been involved in that, and I don't know exactly what they ask, but there is a technical element to the hiring process, and they have certainly been a part of that. And then they sit in whatever general room, and they certainly have an input.

Q. Okay. But they're not running a simulator to evaluate?

A. No, no.

Q. Got it. I just wanted to make sure that was -- you mentioned the leadership training program that you have for the pilots for new captains. They receive that, I'm assuming, at the very initial upgrade training cycle, when they're in there to get this

leadership training, is that correct?
A. That's right.
Q. How long is that training?
A. I believe it's a day, but I'm not sure. They just changed the format of that. They actually now take them to New York to headquarters. In the past, it's been a single-day event here, and now they take them up to headquarters. And I assume it's a singular day, but I don't know that. I don't know if they changed that.
Q. Okay. Is there any recurrent leadership training for captains?
A. Not specifically, no. That's an element certainly of our CRM 6-hour recurring classroom. There's always an element of captain role versus first officer role.
Q. And okay, I got that. And the last question is: Since you did the re-type, or the recheck, on Conrad, at any time prior to you conducting that recheck, were you ever approached by anybody or pressured in any way to ensure that he passed?
A. No.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Anybody else?
DR. BRAMBLE: I have just one quick thing.
MR. LAWRENCE: Bill?
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. I'll take a look at that chapter 10 and 11 in the FLM, but in the simulator, what do you expect to see in terms of watching the

captain and the first officer interact when they're in an abnormal situation with competing priorities?

A. Well, depending on the severity of the situation, I'd like them to make prudent choices, and I think that's been a topic with the fleets. For instance, not asking to alter the clearance if it's not necessary. Don't do intermediate level-offs, that's a big item for us, if it's not warranted. There could be terrain, other issues, so prioritizing.

When the situation is appropriate, manage the situation. Call for the appropriate immediate action items or checklists. Very clear guidance on who's operating the airplane, who's flying, who's actually conducting -- running through the non-normal checklist, who has the radio communications, so forth.

Once all the situation has been resolved to some degree or another, is there some interaction of a plan, what the impact on the airplane is. An initial thought process would be nice before they call dispatch. But we do want them to exercise that contact.

We typically do that with the passenger scenario onboard, so there is some interaction with the cabin, as well, when they resolve their situation. So some management level of prioritization is what we're looking for, and it varies, depending on the urgency of the event.

Q. All right. Thanks very much.

A. Sure.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Any questions for us, Mark?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Anything that maybe we didn't ask or something that you would like to add that would help us in the investigation?
A. I can't think of anything at this point.
Q. Okay. Well, if you think of anything, a lot of times, you know, when you detach from us and you go away, and then occasionally, you may have that moment of clarity that you said, oh, wow, I could have clarified this or added this, or I forgot to -- so feel free to get a hold of us and --
A. Will do.
Q. -- and add anything in addition, okay?
A. Okay. All right.
Q. Great. Thanks for your time.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Mark Hoover
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami, Florida
DATE:	June 4, 2019

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.



Danielle S. VanRiper
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019	Accident No.: DCA19MA086

Interview of: BILL PEAVLEY
B767 Check Airman

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami Florida

Tuesday,
June 4, 2019

APPEARANCES:

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I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Bill R. Peavley:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	35
By Mr. Abrams	40
By Mr. Ward	46
By Mr. Lee	49
By Mr. Lawrence	50
By Dr. Bramble	56

I N T E R V I E W

(9:45 a.m. EDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: Good morning, Bill. My name, just to introduce myself, is David Lawrence. I'm an operations investigator with the NTSB and we're down here for the accident investigation for the 7-6 over in Trinity Bay. And on behalf of the Board, I want to extend our condolences to you in the loss, and the whole Atlas team, for the loss of your crew members in this accident.

Just so you understand what our role is, we're trying to gather information as best we can to determine what happened and that we can help and hopefully prevent this from happening again. So that's our sole goal. We're not here to apportion any blame or anything like that. It's very typical for us to talk to pilots who had recent interaction with an accident crew within a training and checking and evaluation environment. So just so you know, this is a very normal process to talk to guys like you and the other people we're talking to while we're down here. So rest assured, there's nothing special about that, it's just normal for us.

As Board members and investigators, we don't have the expertise on Atlas 767 technically, so we work on what you probably are well aware of as a party system and that's why we bring in subject matter experts from the airline, the union, the manufacturer, and the FAA to assist us and that's why we have this

table full of people.

So I've introduced myself. We'll go around the room just so you know who everybody is at the table, and I'll let Bill introduce himself.

DR. BRAMBLE: Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator out of D.C. with the NTSB.

MR. LAWRENCE: Warren.

MR. ABRAMS: Bill, I'm Warren Abrams, an air safety investigator with the NTSB. Thank you for coming today.

MR. PEAVLEY: My pleasure.

MR. WARD: Larry Ward. I'm an ops inspector with the FAA. I want to let you know that I'm here attached to the NTSB investigation, so there's no, absolutely no FAA regulatory reports or anything that we're looking at. So this is all the NTSB, okay? Very good. Thank you.

MR. LEE: Richard Lee, a Boeing safety pilot.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, Teamsters safety committee.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely. I'm a 767 pilot.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any time somebody has an opportunity to talk to the NTSB, you're well aware that you're allowed to have somebody represent you. Is Jennifer who you selected to be -- sit in?

MR. PEAVLEY: Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. I am going to be typing, we all will be typing just to kind of have notes in case we want to do

some follow-up on the stuff that you say and I apologize if I don't make eye contact while I'm typing. Don't think anything of that, I'm just trying to catch up --

MR. PEAVLEY: No, no problem.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- with my notes. If any of us ask a question that you don't understand or want some clarity, please stop us and ask us. Also, this is not a memory test from -- a historical memory test of your training record stuff. The records are right there in front of you if you need reference or you want to pull those out and don't guess at the answer, just pull the records out and let's take a look at them and just to refresh your memory. So any other tools that you need, guidance material, we have access to all that on our laptops and computers, so we can provide that to you --

MR. PEAVLEY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- to this issue, okay?

MR. PEAVLEY: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have any questions on the process?

MR. PEAVLEY: No, it's very clear.

MR. LAWRENCE: Awesome.

INTERVIEW OF BILL R. PEAVLEY

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Well, let's start off with the easy ones. Let me get your full name and your age.

A. Middle name as well?

Q. Yes, full name.
A. Middle name, Ray Peavley. Age, I'm 61.
Q. Billy Ray?
A. Yes. Sixty-one.
Q. P-e-a-v-e-l-y?
A. P-e-a-v-l-e-y.
Q. Thank you. And 61?
A. Yes.
Q. Great. What's your current title, Billy?
A. 767 APD.
Q. Can I call you Billy?
A. Yes, or Bill.
Q. Okay.
A. Either one's fine.
Q. Okay. 767 APD?
A. Yes.
Q. Aircrew program designee. And you're Atlas, right, not --
A. Yes.
Q. And when were you hired here?
A. June of 1996.
Q. Great. And you're APD on the 767, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. What are your roles and responsibilities here?
A. Basically anything in training, I'm authorized to be a party to, from initial training all the way through type ratings. And

then line operations, as well, all categories of training.
Q. You're line qualified, so you fly the line as well?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you do line checks as well?
A. Yeah, IOE --
Q. You're all seats, all checks?
A. Everything.
Q. Got it. Bill, just estimate your flight time, total flight time.
A. Pilot time?
Q. Yeah.
A. It's over 10,000 hours.
Q. All right.
A. I don't keep records anymore.
Q. Got it. If you were to estimate your PIC time.
A. PIC time?
Q. Just an estimate.
A. Gosh, I was not ready for that question. Sorry. I pay so little attention to any of that stuff.
Q. Just guess.
A. I'd say 5,000 hours.
Q. There you go.
A. Yeah.
Q. And total time in the 767. Guess.
A. Gosh.

Q. Over 1,000?
A. Oh, yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. Let me put that.
A. It's just a weird thing, I know, to not know that, but I stopped paying attention long ago.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't even have --
Q. No, this is not -- I was not trying to trick you or anything, we're just trying to get a foundation of somebody in your experience level in the actual accident aircraft. This might be a little bit easier. Give me a Cliff Notes version of your aviation background.
A. Military --
Q. Okay.
A. -- flight engineer. I was at Evergreen for a short period of time and then American Trans Air for 10 years and then Atlas for the last 23.
Q. Did you know the captain?
A. I gave him an oral, an initial oral examination for his type rating. Other than that, I do not remember seeing him.
Q. Do you recall how he did?
A. He passed. And of course, it's in the records that he passed. I do recall that he had some difficulty that I had to

search a little bit to find the information, but I was able to find it, so it was a legitimate pass.

Q. Do you recall what he had the difficulty on?

A. I'm sorry?

Q. Do you recall what it was he had the difficulty on?

A. Sometimes it's maybe just the way I frame questions, so I have to ask it different ways before I can get to the right answer. I recall with him it was one of those where I had to reframe questions on a regular basis, but eventually we got there.

Q. And then did you know the copilot in the accident, Conrad Aska?

A. I had several training events with him, including his oral, some fixed base training, and then his type rating. Similar portion of the type rating.

Q. Right. So you conducted his oral exam for his 7-6 type?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So how did that go?

A. My recall is that it was a remedial, I believe he had failed at least once before on that and he was very nervous. I spent quite a bit of time early on just kind of getting him to realize I was not threatening, I wasn't there to fail him. Actually, I was actually on his side and he eventually calmed down and we just talked a long time, actually. Actually, I liked him quite a bit. We had talked about everything but aviation, honestly, and good conversation and then finally, we got to where it seemed like he

was okay, so then we commenced with the oral. He was another one that I had to reframe questions several times, but eventually he would get to the answer. A little more difficult than I remember with Blakely, but again, the end result was it was a legitimate pass.

Q. I'll get a little bit more -- I have more questions about the type ride and I'll get to that in a second, but I'm kind of curious about you had an opportunity to talk to him outside of aviation type of thing.

A. Um-hum.

Q. Tell me what it was he shared with you.

A. We talked about his upbringing, he grew up in the Caribbean. We talked about his daughter quite a bit, their relationship. Just tried to reach him on a more human level, if you will, rather than -- so he could -- you know, he was very, very, very tense and I believe under the circumstances he probably had reason to be, because he definitely needed to pass, you know. But I started to do my job, you know, but I wanted him to have the best chance to let me know, because he wouldn't have been recommended if he didn't have the capability to pass. So therefore I just had to get him to realize that and we were successful.

Q. What do you mean by he needed to pass?

A. In his own mind he needed to pass.

Q. Okay.

A. You know, to him it was everything. To me it was another

event and of course, I wanted him to pass, but you could see from where he was coming from he was very nervous about not passing since, you know, I'm guessing because it was a remedial one.

Q. The oral exam --

A. Yes.

Q. -- was remedial?

A. Yes.

Q. See, just in my mind, so he had taken an oral previous to you and had a substandard on that and failed, conducted remedial training and then took a second oral prior to him even going to his first -- his practical exam.

A. My understanding -- excuse me -- is that yeah, that was -- my recollection is that was a remedial oral.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah. So you have to pass the oral before they can go on to any further training.

Q. Okay.

A. There's a whole bunch of training after the oral, quite a bit.

Q. I don't want to put words in your mouth, Bill, but would you say that some of the pressure he was indicating to you was self-imposed?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Okay. Did he mention why he was putting that much pressure on himself? Did you ask?

A. No, I didn't ask him because that would've just directed his attention to it. But it's very common.
Q. It's common?
A. Yeah.
Q. For --
A. It's an official event in someone's career and they, generally speaking, are more tense than normal because they feel the pressure. Some more than others. In his case, since it was a redo, I imagine his pressure was more. It appeared to be more, but I never asked him.
Q. Did he share with you anything about his background prior to coming to Atlas?
A. I, generally speaking, do broach that subject with people, but I don't dig too much into it, I just ask them where they were before here is generally how it goes and leave it at that. I never remember what they say because I'm just trying to make conversation, you know, so I know I asked him but I don't have no recollection of what he said.
Q. Okay.
A. And it wasn't anything -- whatever he told me, I know it wasn't anything unusual than something I had heard before.
Q. Okay. Tell me about the type rating ride that you gave him on September 22nd, 2017, and if you need to pull out the training records, feel free to review because -- tell me about -- in general, give me the 30,000-foot view of his type rating, his

substandard.
A. He was discombobulated from the very beginning for his takeoff, things were going poorly. The FAA was observing and that may have had something to do with it. It's already a stressful situation for most airmen when they're going through these events due to the ramifications of a pass or a fail.
Q. Um-hum.
A. And then with the FAA observing, as well. I did not ask, I did not want to direct attention to that, but it may have contributed to his nervousness. There is no chance that he was not -- did not go through these maneuvers before the type rating and yet he seemed to not be able to do much of anything correctly. It was very much a surprise right from the very beginning.
Q. Okay. Was he substandard early on in the ride and you allowed it to continue or what was -- because in a type ride, once a substandard, a single event, it's essentially a down, but did you allow it to continue even though it was substandard all the way through?
A. Yes, I did.
Q. Why?
A. I represent the FAA in these things, but I'm also an Atlas employee. You know, I wanted to see exactly where he was. Because I was so surprised that it went off the rail so quickly, I wanted to see if it was just nerves or is there a real, is there a real issue here and it came to present itself that he actually did

have some issues. Just the first takeoff, I wasn't sure that I would actually have known that because the autopilot's on, he was having some issues with managing things. With the FAA observing, I just wasn't sure if it was just nerves and he was going to loosen up or if it was actually a problem with his skills and it became apparent after not too much longer that he did have some issues with his skills. He needed some more training.

Q. Is that typical for what you see of a new hire for first officers here, his performance?

A. No.

Q. You might want to pull out the records because I'm going to ask you a couple of questions on the type ride itself, you did the 9/22/2017 type.

A. All right.

Q. Okay, great. Before we look at that, real quick, I'm kind of curious because you went through --

A. I'm so sorry, that's the CAT II/CAT III. I'm sorry. I didn't even remember doing that.

Q. Oh.

A. Yeah, I have the type rating now.

Q. Okay, great. Before I ask about that, you had mentioned that you wanted to see and make sure if he had -- if it was just nerves or had issues with his skills and that's why you continued the entire type ride to the end. Did he ever improve at any point?

A. By the way, I didn't continue all the way, but yeah --

Q. Oh.
A. -- I stopped it way early.
Q. Okay, great. At what point did -- thanks for clarifying. What time did you stop the ride?
A. I don't know the exact time, but it was on the first non-precision approach. By that time it was just, it was just obvious. Now we're on the hand-flying part and we're actually doing the skills part and it was just going so poorly, it was obvious that we -- he needed more training. I don't know how else to put it. I mean --
Q. Yeah.
A. Yeah, I mean, it's not just nerves now, automation, it's not anything like that, it's I'm just not able to fly right today. Everybody can show up at any day, I don't care who they are and they can fall on their face and this was his day to fall on his face, right, and then told the captain that we had to regroup.
Q. So he was never improving at any point during that short time?
A. No, it was getting much, much worse, yeah.
Q. It was getting worse?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. So referencing the check ride form, type rating form, we'll start -- I think it's on the left side over there with the RNAV non-precision approach and you had cited him a B, I think it is, the code for that.

A. Yeah, for control tech or execution.
Q. Yeah, which one is it, was it control technique or execution that you gave a substandard for his RNAV?
A. His control was over-control, his execution was unsatisfactory. Actually, I had him just land from that and I stopped it right after the landing. They normally don't stop -- you don't have to land. I didn't want to stop in the air. I'd just had him go all the way through and do a landing out of it and then I called it at that point. It was blatantly obvious before we got too much into it.
Q. Okay. So you mentioned over-control. What was it that he over-controlled? What did you observe that constituted your analysis of an over-controlled situation?
A. We were getting thrown around quite a bit.
Q. And this was while he was hand-flying?
A. Yeah. The aircraft is extremely responsive, it's an over-powered, extremely responsive wide body and you just have to treat it nicely. If you yank it around, it yanks around, you know, and that's what we were doing.
Q. He was yanking it around?
A. Well, in other words, things weren't smooth.
Q. In the pitch, in the roll or in -- he was hand-flying at this time, correct? So he was actually physically moving the control in the pitch and the roll mode more than necessary?
A. He was just gripping like crazy. You know, again, I just

wasn't -- it just seemed like he was very, very nervous, very tense.

Q. And then I think it's on the same left column, you graded him unsatisfactory for CRM, crew resource management, and TEM, threat and error management, correct?

A. Um-hum.

Q. Can you talk about that?

A. I don't remember the specifics. I believe that would've been on the first takeoff, they were giving some -- I gave him some kind of malfunction or emergency, I don't remember what, and he didn't want to do the procedure; he overrode the support to do whatever he wanted to do. I mean, I don't remember the exact thing, but it was more about that he wasn't working with his partner well and bypassed doing an emergency check. I think I have it in my notes, don't I?

Q. Um-hum. I think you do. He bypassed --

A. Ignored other (indiscernible) attempts to address emergency. In other words, he was supposed to do some kind of a checklist and he chose to do something else. I'm sorry, I do not remember exactly what it was.

Q. That's fine, that's fine.

A. It was definitely incorrect.

Q. Okay. This may be self-explanatory, but also in there you graded him unsatisfactory in judgment. Can you talk about that?

A. I think that's probably part and parcel of the -- of the

decision, whatever decision tree he went through to decide where he was going to go after the problem happened. His judgment was faulty. If you elect to ignore a procedure, well, your judgment's already faulty by definition, I think.

Q. Okay. And you said this was not typical of the performance of a first officer, correct? Did I get that right?

A. Yes, that's correct.

Q. Okay.

A. So I wrote on here situational awareness very low, over-spent the flaps on departure, usually out of sequence procedure, leading to questionable decisions. Reading that, one of the things I do remember to the first officer is that he would be reacting quite often during training. In other words, all of a sudden he realized he had to do something and he wasn't -- so he was being reactive and so he would start punching things, you know, like pushing a button or whatever and it would be the wrong button. Do you know what I'm saying? It's just sometimes he wouldn't be thinking ahead because he lost his situational awareness, so therefore he knew he had to do something and many times he did the wrong thing.

Q. Um-hum.

A. So things would start snowballing and he made questionable decisions in that way, rather than just slowing down. So that also speaks to judgment.

Q. I appreciate that clarification. So like I was saying, you

would characterize this as not a typical performance by a first officer --

A. No.

Q. -- that you may have seen. And you had a first officer that was unsatisfactory for over-controlling. I'm just generalizing here.

A. Probably even more obvious on the steep turns, because that is a complete hand-flown maneuver in an unstable condition and that was also graded U, so that would've been a very clear case of over-control.

Q. So you had an applicant here who's a new hire and you cited him substandard for control technique and execution for CRM and TRM and judgment and witnessed a lot of over-controlling. I understand the nervousness of the check ride situation, but with all these things, is that trainable to get him to standards in a one-hour remedial training before he got the check ride, the second check ride?

A. I can't speak to that. I mean, I just -- I give my part of it and it's up to other people to decide what to do with it.

Q. Okay. So I'm going to tap into your experience --

A. Um-hum.

Q. -- on this and I understand it's subjective, but in your professional opinion as an APD or a designated examiner and somebody who gives a lot of check rides, is this the performance of somebody that can be trained to proficient standards on the

767?
A. Yes.
Q. Explain that.
A. They can be, because he wouldn't have been recommended if he hadn't already demonstrated that he could do it. He just showed up and had a terrible day. But that can be -- if it was there before, it can be found again, in most cases. Not all. Sometimes it doesn't work out, if a system is set up to weed out the ones that cannot be trained and if he had it before, usually we can find it again.
Q. And again, this is going to be subjective based on your experience, but I understand everybody can have a bad day. How do you know you're not dealing with somebody that just had a good day and got approved for the type rating?
A. I ask myself that all the time, but this system, it seems to work. As time goes on, those truth's always out somewhere along the way, and we catch it somewhere else. You know, anybody can show up and have a good day, anybody can show up and have a bad day on any given day because we're humans, but over time these things usually become clear. Either they get better or they don't.
Q. With that in mind, I'll ask you again. Since anybody can have a good day, anybody can have a bad day, was his performance of somebody that looked like they were going to be able to succeed long term in the cockpit of a 767, in your opinion? This is just

your opinion, but it's based on experience.
A. Yeah. I had my doubts.
Q. And it's fair for your to have your doubts, too. I mean, this is based on your experience. But I'd like you to explain that, you know, based on your experience, why you had doubts if this is somebody that likely would not succeed long term.
A. Honestly, he was just so poor that I just wasn't sure if he was going to be able to mentally recover from it, you know.
Q. Okay. I know you talk to any -- you don't recall some of that, the conversation of his prior, you know, coming to Atlas and his prior experience. Do you recall if he shared with you any -- anything going on at home, any concerns professionally or privately or with his family, anything that could help explain his performance deficiencies?
A. Not performance deficiencies. I know he had had some issues with -- he was divorced and being able to see his daughter, I knew he had some concerns there, but I did not think that that was impacting his performance. Just talking about the family, I was just talking about being able to see here and he talked about the issues that he'd had in that.
Q. Were those issues that he was sharing with you or were those -- did you interpret those as excuses?
A. No, they were -- I mean, he was sharing. No, I did not take them as excuses. I actually prompted him on the issue, he didn't bring it up on his own.

Q. Okay. Was Conrad's performance substandard because of -- let me rephrase this. Did you notice if Conrad would get startled easily in the cockpit?
A. No, I wouldn't put it that way. As I mentioned, sometimes he would lose his situational awareness and be reactive. Excuse me. So you could kind of maybe define that as startled, but I wouldn't have gone there --
Q. Okay.
A. -- with that. It was more just being a little behind and reacting rather than thinking.
Q. Would you characterize that as his actions were compulsive to the situation?
A. No more that I know I had to do something, I better do something now. Not so much compulsive but just the understanding that I have to do something and not being quite clear what that is and hoping that he did the right thing.
Q. Okay. He would not be -- let me do this term and see if you'd agree with it. Would he not be somebody that would pause and reflect and plan?
A. Not in my experience.
Q. Okay. I'm curious if you know if he would've been placed, if Conrad had been -- to your knowledge, was he placed in a PWP?
A. My understanding is no.
Q. Any reason why, to your knowledge, why he wouldn't have been placed in a PWP?

A. I didn't ask.
Q. Based on your experience with other first officers in your training environment, is this somebody -- is Conrad's performance -- would you have expected him to be put in a PWP?
A. I'm not really a hundred percent sure of how that whole thing works because I never have any input on it, I'm never asked about it, I never give suggestions on it. I know what it says in our manual about what the program is and my only exposure to it is when I get a notice that I'm giving a PWP check ride or whatever, whether it's on the airplane or a simulator, so I just check a box. As far as the administration of it, as far as who's in it, who's out of it, I have honestly no knowledge of that.
Q. You're not even asked for input? If you do a substandard type ride on a new hire for first officer, nobody comes to you and says -- asks for clarification about the ride or anything?
A. I'm always pretty clear about what happened, but as far as what they're going to do with them, that's above me. I actually don't care. I mean, it's not my job, you know, so I don't ask.
Q. Oh, I understand what your role is in it and I understand, you know, a down is a down.
A. Um-hum.
Q. You know, you don't have to explain that, but I'm just curious, nobody -- before somebody goes into a PWP, nobody's come to you to ask additional information about them, putting a pilot in this program? They don't come to you to seek clarification?

A. It's administrated on a higher level. Honestly, I -- I don't know how to say this without sounding -- I just don't understand why they would need my opinion. It's their program and they know who they want and not want to put in it. So my input, I don't think, would be really -- I mean, I put my input in writing and then --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- they can judge from there.

Q. Okay. Are you aware if Conrad was placed before a TRB, a training review board?

A. No.

Q. You're not aware or he didn't?

A. I'm not aware of it, no.

Q. Based on your experience and your dealing with first officers like this, new hires coming in with his performance, would you expect him to have gone before a training review board?

A. I'm not sure what the criteria is for that, to be perfectly honest. Again, it's administered above me. I do know they have such a thing. Every once in a while I know when someone's had it happen to them and I'm not exactly even sure why. I know that every once in a while, but it's not something that I'm normally part of or aware of.

Q. Okay, I get that you don't -- you're not part of the program and instructors aren't part of that administration stuff, but should you know about it? You're an instructor and these are

students that you're doing evaluations on and they're going away from you into either PWP or a training review board --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- based on some substandard performance that you were involved with as far as your evaluation. Shouldn't you know or shouldn't instructors have more knowledge about where these students are going in the footprint, training footprint?
A. I just never really looked at it that way. I figured if someone needs to know more, then they will contact me and I'll let them know. I'm not much of a -- and John Blakely can attest to this, I'm not much of a hang-around-the-office person, so I'm not much up on all that's going on with things.
Q. And when I say you, though, I'm not meaning Bill.
A. You mean in general.
Q. I mean instructors, people that are designated examiners or APDs and such, shouldn't they have some knowledge of the training program and where these pilots are going through?
A. If there's something unusual going on, then yeah, I should be contacted ahead of time to say you have to remedial this and that's what I do, get that, I do get that information that I'm doing a remedial, it's whatever -- for whatever reason. But as far as the decision-making process goes, I'm not involved in that at all.
Q. Okay.
A. Administrative matters I'm completely unaware of --

Q. Right.
A. -- like the review -- I can't even say it, review boards.
Q. Got it. Have you ever flown with Conrad? I think I might've asked you --
A. No.
Q. -- but I just want to make sure.
A. Never did.
Q. Okay. And I asked you also if you were aware of Conrad's history prior to coming here and you weren't --
A. Only what he told me, which was a standard. But from my remembrance, if it would have been a substandard or non-standard, I would've remembered that, but just a standard background.
Q. You had, as an instructor or an examiner, the ability to go back and take a look at pilots' background records?
A. I don't know. I might, but I've never thought of doing it.
Q. Why haven't you thought about doing that?
A. I figured someone else did. I try to stay in my lane.
Q. A couple of just general airplane questions. And let's see if Dr. Bramble -- I know he's got some questions for you, but for the -- as a captain and a designated examiner, check airman, lots of experience on the 7-6, have you ever heard the go-around switches ever inadvertently being selected in flight?
A. Oh, yeah, but not -- put it this way. We have the pilots coming from the 747 and 767. The autothrottle disconnect switches are in approximately the same place as the go-around switches on a

767. So the 747 pilots sometimes, when they're task saturated, will go to disconnect the autothrottles and inadvertently hit the go-around switches, incorrectly switching -- they're pushing a switch that they think is one switch and it's the wrong switch.

Q. Okay.

A. Actually just bumping into it, I've never heard of that.

Q. So you've seen this as a transitional problem from 7-5s coming to -- 7-4s coming down to the 7-6 --

A. Right.

Q. -- and just confusing the switch?

A. Yeah.

Q. But you've never seen that happen on flying operations or in the sim?

A. Not when someone didn't need to push a switch, no.

Q. Okay.

A. I've never seen anybody bump into it and activate it.

Q. Okay, great.

A. It would have to be a pretty hard bump. It does take some pushing.

Q. The go-around switch?

A. Yeah, it's not sensitive and you actually have to push it.

Q. Yeah, cognitive pushing of it and --

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. In your experience, when you see and observe first officers in the right seat and they're given an expedited descent

down and they were extending the speed brakes from the right seat and they're moving their arm over, do you see them put the arm over the thrust levers to manipulate the --

A. Typically, yeah.

Q. Do you ever see them move it behind the thrust levers and manipulate the speed brake from behind?

A. Sometimes I'll see them after they pull them out. Then when it's all the way out, they will reach under to hold -- they keep their hand there just to try to relax while they're waiting for them to go back down again. Then when it goes back down, then they usually just take the hand back over the top again to stow it. We train them to handle the speed brake because it's very easy to forget that they're out on this particular aircraft type.

Q. So your SOP is to hold the speed brake while it's extended?

A. Yes.

Q. For awareness?

A. Yes.

Q. No EICAS message or anything that tells you the speed brake's out if the thrust tries to come up or --

A. No, not until you get to a landing configuration.

Q. Okay. And at that point in time, if they're just holding their hand on the speed brake, you say, just to make sure I'm clear, their hand would be behind the thrust lever and --

A. I'm saying I've seen that before, but --

Q. Okay.

A. -- typically people, they have to reach over and pull it out, then they usually keep their hand basically on top of it. Some people will -- I shouldn't say that that's common, I'm just trying to think back, but if it is, if the hand's under, then they're relaxed, right? If they're not relaxed, they have it over the top.
Q. Okay. They're holding it for an extended period of time?
A. They might just relax a little bit, yeah.
Q. And then their arm would be behind the thrust lever?
A. Right, just to kind of take the tension out of it.
Q. Okay. Just a couple questions about the speed tape on the EADI. You have a speed tape right there, but you also have an airspeed indicator that's to the left of that and --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- it's the old analog type. So you have two airspeed indications. Which one's the primary that the pilots are using?
A. It's individual.
Q. Okay.
A. I have used them both. I don't even realize it until one's out and realize I'm using the other with no problem. So I can't speak to someone else, but I find myself that I'm looking at both of them all the time.
Q. Okay. Then just a couple questions about the EFI switch, the electronic flight instrument switch, one on the captain's side and one on the first officer's side. Are pilots trained here at Atlas

on that EFI switch?
A. Yes.
Q. Where do they see that training?
A. In initial training and typically something along those lines will happen during the type rating, as well.
Q. During the type rating?
A. Equipment malfunction and instrument malfunction is part of the type rating.
Q. Would that be the non-normal trigger or something for -- as to demonstrate reacting to a non-normal in the type rating?
A. Yeah, it's something like an EFI switch or any other instrument issue, is to demonstrate judgment that they have diminished stuff in -- instruments in front of them and they need the transitional, they need to see the control to some -- that's part of the judgment issue on the type rating, so we understand that if they need to become the PM, that they have that information in from of them, given to them, and it has good information in the working of the problem after that.
Q. Okay, so from the type ride to exercising their knowledge and reaction to a non-normal, what do you do, just fail the displays on one of the sides and then have them go to the EFI switch to --
A. If that's the problem that they get, yeah --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- that would be the corrective action.
Q. Okay.

A. But it's some kind of instrument issue to demonstrate the transfer of controls.
Q. Okay. Oh, I see, you're trying to trigger the transfer of controls so they handle the pilot monitoring --
A. That's the deal, exactly right.
Q. Got it. Is there a checklist associated with the EFI switch?
A. No.
Q. So in your opinion or in your words, but would that be a systems knowledge function for the EFI switch?
A. Yes.
Q. Since there's no QRH item or anything like that, so -- great. And just a couple more questions real quick. If I was a pilot on the 7-6 with the autopilot engaged, can I overpower the autopilot with the control yoke alone and disconnect the autopilot by just exercising the control yoke?
A. You can override it. I'm not sure if it would disconnect.
Q. What's the preferred and what's the trained and preferred method -- that may be two different things -- of disconnecting the autopilot on the 7-6?
A. You select the disengage switch twice and you announce that you disconnected the autopilot, verbally.
Q. Why are you announcing verbally disconnecting the autopilot?
A. Sometimes people do it quite well where the wailer does not actually annunciate and you want everybody on the flight deck to know that it's manual controls.

Q. Okay, so click, click, click real quick and you might not get the warning?
A. You can go click, click and there's no noise. If you go click and wait, it makes a lot of noise and so everybody knows, but it's more about the ones that actually do it smoothly and no one -- and they're flying well and it's just no one would know that they were actually under manual control.
Q. Okay.
A. The same thing with the autothrottles, always announced.
Q. Great. And stall recovery, stalls are trained here at Atlas, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Where are they trained and at what point in the training environment are stalls trained?
A. In the initial, all stalls are trained. In the recurrent environment, we do the departure stall on the PC roller phase of the simulator training for recurrent. If that's successful, then our procedure is to waive the other two stalls. If it's unsuccessful on the PC, then all three stalls have to be demonstrated.

And then on the recurrent flight training event, they're off 6 months from the PC, then we do all three in the training environment, all three training -- all three stalls training proficiency, and that being the takeoff, the landing and the full stall.

Q. Great. What are the first actions for a pilot when they encounter a stall, what are the first recovery actions?
A. It is to identify what's going on and to disconnect all automation and a recovery.
Q. Are the stalls trained to the first indication, like --
A. Yes.
Q. -- the shaker?
A. Yes. We are in the process of going to full stall training, but that's not actually active at this time for the 767.
Q. In training would they ever see the buffet, would they ever feel what the buffet's like in the sim or is the recovery always that the person --
A. That's part of the upset training. Yeah, we're not -- we're going to that, but right now it's the first indication.
Q. So they wouldn't have -- would you say, typically, they would not have felt a buffet in the sim?
A. That's correct. That's not been part of any -- I don't believe, before the upset training program, part of any 121 training.
Q. Two last questions, then I'll give it to Dr. Bramble. Sorry. At any point in time are Atlas pilots trained to recover from a stall using the autopilot and autothrust?
A. Negative. No, never. All automation off is mandatory.
Q. And then the last question, just in general your experience and history in aviation, how would you characterize the training

that Atlas pilots receive here?
A. The system works, that's all I can say. You know, we hear that the experience level is going down industry-wide and that there's going to be more and more problems. The experience type is going down, that's for sure, but we are typically getting the average pilot that we're getting that has very good flight skills, but they don't know how to fly around the world and that's what we teach them. The flying part is usually pretty good. They just have to learn a new aircraft.

The system is set up to guide them through in a growth process to get to the end and actually be competent. Every lesson builds on the last, every lesson is more difficult than the last and it just seems to work. And then when we have a couple of different gateways to go through, then if they have a problem we can actually stop it there and retrain them and that seems to work.

Q. Okay.
A. So in my opinion, it's working quite well.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. I appreciate it.

Dr. Bramble, do you have any follow-up?

DR. BRAMBLE: Yeah, sure. One second, let me just finish my note here.

MR. LAWRENCE: Um-hum. You need a break, water, coffee?

MR. PEAVLEY: No, thank you.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. All right. Actually, in Conrad's training record and I think it was the FTD and the fixed base sim, there were some comments. On August 1st, for example -- actually starting July 31st: "Needs to slow down and be methodical in procedures. All required areas completed satisfactory."

And then for 8/1, August 1: "Regression and confusion in almost all PM duties and normal callouts and procedures. PF duty satisfactory except FMS preflight. Difficulty on entering flight plan route, situational awareness areas could be decreasing, always reactive rather than proactive. Knowledge is there, but not always available."

August 3rd: "Much improved. Still gets ahead of himself trying to" --

A. Did I write that one, the much improved?

Q. No, you did not.

A. I didn't think so.

Q. Yep, thanks for the correction. So I guess you just had those two. From that experience, was that unusual or was that pretty typical for that stage of training?

A. I don't do a lot of those anymore, so I'm going to have to -- to the best I can remember, but my recollection is that that early on, that's not normal.

Q. Not normal?

A. No. I have had that before. No, typically, that's going to be further into the training where we start seeing that, where

things start getting more complicated. It's a whole different set of ways of doing things for some people and sometimes it's harder for them to actually make the transition and all of a sudden, a light bulb goes on and things start working better. It sounds like maybe that started working with him, when you said much improved. He might have been one of those. And maybe I made him nervous, I don't know.

Q. Okay. What was Conrad's explanation for his poor performance during the initial type ride?

A. He was not -- it sounds terrible to say, but he was shocked when I stopped the ride.

Q. Why was that?

A. I don't think he realized how poorly he was doing.

Q. Was he not aware of his own exceedances?

A. That's what surprised me and I was surprised that he was surprised.

Q. What did he say when you stopped it?

A. He just stared at me with his mouth hanging open and I tried to explain it to him and he just sat there and just was pretty stunned. Normally, when I have someone that has an unsatisfactory performance, they know it and in fact, I can't remember once where that didn't happen and this one wasn't one of them.

Q. After you debriefed, did he understand the nature of the deficiencies?

A. He was on good behavior with the FAA sitting there, you know,

but I don't know if it would've been any different if the FAA hadn't been sitting there. But he didn't say much, just other than he wanted to know what was going to happen next. I told him that the lead captain would be in touch and that the program is set up for this kind of event, this has happened before, he's not the first and he won't be the last, and he just -- just relax and let the system work.

Q. How many other type rides have you experienced that were as bad as that one? On the 767.

A. This is subjective. Through my -- I've stopped them at the same place several times. But they don't normally start off that poorly. That part was unusual.

Q. Was that the only one that's ever started off that poorly?

A. Gosh, there's been so many. That one stands out, I don't know how else to put it, but I can't say for sure that that's the only one.

Q. Okay. Did you coordinate with the remedial instructor about his subsequent remedial training?

A. No. The process is that I compose an e-mail to the fleet captain in the fleet office with what happened and my recommendations and then it's out of my hands after that.

Q. And did he ask for any clarification?

A. Conrad or me?

Q. No, the fleet captain.

A. No. We talked. I should probably mention this. When it was

an unsatisfactory event, I texted Joe Diedrich, from the simulator, to tell him that I have a fail and then as soon as we get the simulator down, I got to a quiet room and I call him, we talk about it and then he mentions about putting the e-mail together like we always do, but I talk to him before I compose the e-mail. So he does get a pretty good thorough debriefing at the moment of what exactly happened and then I just -- I just clarify it later on in writing so he has something to refer to.

Q. Did he say anything about the type ride or did he react in any way or say what his plan was or anything like that?

A. I just don't remember.

Q. Okay. Did you have any subsequent involvement in his training?

A. You know, I just found, in looking through the folder here, that I did his CAT II/CAT III qualification, which I did not remember. I also didn't remember the fixed base training, either. The things that stood out were the official events, the oral and the type rating. The other events I actually did not remember specifically.

Q. Did you have any involvement in determining whether his skill deficiencies had been resolved?

A. No. Once you fail someone, then you get taken out of the rotation.

Q. For that particular student?

A. That particular student. Now, as you saw, I came back to his

CAT II/CAT III training later, but he was -- he'd already passed his type rating by that time. Until he passes, I'm out of the picture.

Q. Looking at his training performance as a whole, do you think the source of his difficulties was a confidence issue or an aptitude issue or something else?

A. My understanding is that he improved quite a bit as his time with Atlas progressed. I never had any direct knowledge of that. He was one that I thought would probably have trouble and I was glad to hear that he had actually got better, but I would not have guessed it, no. I didn't really answer your question. I don't think confidence was a problem. I think his confidence was fine.

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. All right, that's all I have. Thanks.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Warren?

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. Bill, I know you have a training manager, but work me through the training leading up to the oral. I mean, do they get a thumb drive in the mail and say learn everything and they sit in the classroom for 2 weeks and have an instructor teach them? How do they learn the 767 prior to the oral?

A. My understanding is -- because I've never been through the Atlas 767 training program.

Q. Okay.

A. So I'm just going to tell you what I've heard.

Q. Okay.

A. I actually went through Boeing's because we didn't have a program when we started up with J.B. But my understanding is they receive the books. Now they have the -- we have the iPads, so everything's on the iPad. They have study materials on there. There's a lot of online stuff for people to refer to, all the lesson guides are in there for every phase of training and they also do have the ground portion as well, so they have an instructor in there going through different things with them and answering their questions as it progresses.

When they get to the end of that, they take a test and when that's over, then there is a set of -- a prep time. I'm not exactly sure if it's one day or 2 days, but there's an instructor or check airman that actually conducts a class with everybody in there and asks them questions and they just go through all the different systems and make sure that everybody's involved, that everybody has to answer stuff. So it's not just one smart person answering everything.

Q. Sure.

A. And then when they get a satisfactory amount of information from all these people and they have an SIT -- I'm not sure if that's before or after the oral prep, our system integration training, which any of the instructors can do, where you sit in a fixed base and you go through all the systems. It's not about flows and checklists and all of that, it's about systems. It's a system review and with all the buttons and everything in front of

you. There's the classroom portion and then whoever does the classroom portion has to signify that they're ready for an oral and riding.

Q. Okay. There were a lot of moving parts there. Let me try to go back and categorize it a little bit.

You said there's an instructor initially with them. How many days is that, approximately?

A. It's in the footprint in the flight -- the training manual, the FTM. I don't know. I'm going to guess for 2 days, maybe.

Q. That long, okay. All right.

A. Yeah, 2 weeks. I'm just guessing.

Q. Okay. And then we got 2 days of systems questions, a classroom for follow-up systems questions or people who are asking -- the instructor asking questions of the students for several days.

A. I think the 2 days portion -- let me make sure I'm with you on this -- the SIT portion where you sit in a device and go through all the systems, that's one day and then there's another day with sitting in the classroom with a check airman or an instructor going through all the systems and that person has to certify they're ready.

Q. Okay, all right.

A. I think, hopefully.

Q. We passed the oral and now we go to the -- and CBTs are in full flight or when you go to full flight after the oral?

A. No, we go to the fixed base portion.
Q. Okay.
A. The first one after the oral, the SIT is before the oral. The first one after the oral is where they have to go in there and demonstrate that they've been studying the flows and that they had -- they can get through the normal checklist. It's all it is, it's a checklist of flows on a day and they have to sign off on that that they actually have the clue, that they can move on from there. So someone certifies that and they go into the regular fixed base portion which consists of five events, five fixed bases, and they have to get recommended for the fixed base before they can go to full flight.
Q. Okay, we have five fixed bases. How many full flights do they have?
A. Seven prior to the type rating and then several after that.
Q. And is the sixth full flight considered a pre-rating ride event?
A. The seventh one. I'm sorry, I said -- there's eight prior to the type rating. My fault. Eight prior to type rating. The eighth one is the pre-check for the type rating.
Q. Okay. And that's just basically a full type rating scenario for the 2 hours or 4 hours?
A. Yeah, we have two students and we do two basic type rating practices.
Q. For the rating, does the candidate -- does the first officer

candidate sit in the left seat or is it all from the right seat?
A. Now they sit in the right seat. At the time of Conrad Aska going through, he was in the left seat.
Q. Okay. And I believe you said the CAT II/CAT III training was after the rating ride, the successful --
A. Yeah, there's several events after the rating ride and one of them being CAT II/CAT III because they had to get checked out by a check airman on that to start the recurrent qualifications at the time.
Q. Of the certification. What are a couple of the other events that take place, some other events that take place after the rating ride?
A. They -- excuse me -- come out to this building and they go through a 2-day line qualification training course, a ground school course, to get them used to plotting charts and things like that, things that a lot of the people haven't seen before. Then they go back to -- they go back to the simulator and they've been in some order, it's not always the same, there will be a landing simulator for -- specifically for the first officers, but both pilots are now doing it. It used to be for the first officers, specifically, because they were in the left seat until -- and now they're in the right seat so they wanted to give them a landing simulator to get used to flying in the right seat. Now they're doing correct seat training and so now it's for both pilots to do landings on this. And when Conrad Aska went through, he would've

-- it would have just been for him because he did the left seat portion. Then there's also the CAT II/CAT III and then there's a lot, a two-leg lot.

Q. Is the two-leg lot domestic or international?

A. One's domestic and one's international.

Q. When do they get their international training? In other words, I presume you guys do CPDLC and ADS?

A. Yes.

Q. When do they get that training? Is it incorporated along the way prior to their rating ride or is it specifically after the rating ride?

A. All the line stuff is after the rating ride. We don't do any of the CPDLC or ADS stuff, anything like that on a ground event. It's all going to be on the aircraft itself. They just get the introduction to it and the LPT portion and then when we do the LOFT -- we don't have the capabilities of simulators to actually replicate that, so we don't actually do that here.

When they go to the line, they can actually finish IOE without doing the Class 2 and the ETOPS portions, but they can't go on those flights until they actually do it with the check airman and get signed off. We typically will get that done as part of the normal IOE. And so that'll all be -- everything will be done by the time they get to their two-leg line check to get signed off IOE, they'll have everything done.

MR. ABRAMS: Thank you, Bill. That's all I have.

MR. PEAVLEY: Sure.

MR. LAWRENCE: Larry?

BY MR. WARD:

Q. Bill, I just have a couple questions. First of all, I don't want you to think I'm asking you to talk out of school or tattle on anyone. I'm curious. Alexander was -- observed the actual type ride. Did you have a debrief with Alex prior to debriefing Conrad?

A. Yes, we always do.

Q. Okay. And could you share with me Alex's thoughts, if you will, to the best of your recollection?

A. He just wanted to know why I waited so long to stop the ride.

Q. Okay. And that's really all he had?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. Do you know, did he participate in a debrief with you?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he have any comments for Conrad, at all, or did he just observe you in the debrief?

A. On the passes, he always has some comments. I do not remember any comments on the failures.

Q. Okay.

A. It was purely cut and dry.

Q. Okay. If you could, since you've got the training records in front of you, were there different -- were there different instructors, do you kind of go through different instructors?

Obviously, it sound like you did in the fixed base and the SIT, but were there a number of different instructors to the full flight?

A. There usually are, yeah.

Q. Okay. In your opinion, in your professional opinion, does Atlas address the continuity of training amongst the instructors or the varying different instructors? So for a perfect example, somebody having difficulties, is there any type of interfacing with the instructors as they change, because I mean that's pretty typical.

A. Yes.

Q. So are they --

A. What we preach and what we require the instructors to do is to document everything that they want the next instructor to know. That's the only way that we can actually make sure that, number one, the information is recorded so we don't have to rely on memory and, number two, that the next -- the next instructor has a chance, as a place to start from, so they know what they need to pay attention to and what they can move on from.

Q. Okay.

A. So that's our procedure. There is an unofficial, sometimes, contact between instructors --

Q. Okay.

A. -- to give -- you know, if something's extreme.

Q. Okay.

A. But generally speaking, it's going to be the riding --
Q. Okay.
A. -- and the training.
Q. So let's talk about this unofficial. Were you part of any unofficial contact --
A. No.
Q. -- related to Conrad?
A. No. And I go out of my way to not -- I don't want to be contacted about -- I don't want to be biased when I go into a type rating. I just want to evaluate at the moment.
Q. Okay. Let's shift to your conversations with the fleet captain prior to the -- or after the failure. You had a conversation. In your professional opinion, is a 4-hour review of a training session going to be sufficient --
A. Yes.
Q. -- for this individual?
A. Well, I would -- if he's going to be -- if he's going to make it, yes.
Q. Okay.
A. Now, he may not have been able to make it, but he was recommended once already.
Q. Right.
A. Therefore, he had the capability to do it again unless he -- unless there was -- unless he just had a lucky day on his recommended first time.

Q. Okay. So in your opinion or your experience with Atlas, the 4-hour remedial training session was kind of a make or break whether he was going to be able to continue at that point? Is that an accurate statement?
A. Yeah. Well, basically, you know, it constitutes failure to progress or not, you know, so it does have a patch, yeah.
Q. You said you saw him at the CAT II/CAT III training prior -- following. Were you surprised to see him at that point?
A. I was happy to see him, I liked the guy.
Q. Okay. But were you surprised?
A. Well, I'm sure I had already heard that he passed, so I was -- I was glad the system worked, but I -- from what I saw, I was -- before I didn't, I thought that he might struggle to actually progress, but I was glad that he did.
MR. WARD: That's all I have. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Rich?
BY MR. LEE:
Q. Just one question. As far as your schedule, you know, as far as training, how many students you have, do you feel like there's enough instructors to cover the students in your time? So when there's a class coming through and you're doing instructing, how is your workload, your workload of the instructors to get all the students through?
A. Yeah, that's -- I can only speak for myself because I don't really ask other people what their schedules are, you know? If

they tell me, that's one thing, but I never ask. But I, unless it's an emergency, do not do more than one a day, that's mine, because I feel diminished capabilities if I have to do more than that, you know, you get tired and I'm not going to be as good. And so I try to avoid that unless it's an emergency, someone gets sick at the last second, something like that, so not to delay the student. So I can do it for a day here and there, but as a matter of course, I just do one a day, at the most.

Q. And have you had to do 2 days often or how often are you asked?

A. I can count one in the last year, because I just did it not too long ago and it was -- I'd forgotten how much I hated it until I did it again.

MR. LEE: Okay, that's all the questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Rich. Tyson?

MR. HOWARD: I have nothing.

MR. LAWRENCE: J.B.?

MR. BLAKELY: No, thanks.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. I do have a couple follow-ups.

A. Okay.

Q. I just want some clarification on the right seat supporting that Conrad had. Do you recall, he did the types -- type ride in the right seat, correct?

A. I believe, because at the time he did the type ride in the

left seat. Timing-wise, I don't think we had correct seat training going at that time, so he would've been in the left seat and the support pilot would've been in the right seat.
Q. Do you recall who the support pilot was?
A. Yes.
Q. Who?
A. Joseph Braswell, B-r-a-s-w-e-l-l.
Q. B-r-a-s --
A. W-e-l-l. He was a first officer at the time, now he's a captain.
Q. So Joe was in the right seat?
A. Yes.
Q. And he was a first officer at the time?
A. He was a first officer and he was sitting in the first officer's seat.
Q. Why was Joe in the right seat and the student, who was going to be a first officer, in the left seat, doing the type ride in the left seat?
A. Those were the rules at the time. If it was a type rating, then therefore you had to be in the pilot command seat. That has subsequently been changed with the -- in conjunction with the FSDO.
Q. Okay. And that's because it's a PIC type, not an S-I-T type?
A. Yes.
Q. Got it. And then you said something here, Conrad was in the

left seat for his training and now they are all in the -- you're now doing correct seat training. Can you define what correct seat training is?

A. Your seat of qualification is the seat you train in.

Q. I'm sorry?

A. Your seat of qualification is the seat you train in.

Q. Got it.

A. We have two events that we do for the first officers to constitute -- in conjunction with the FSDO, the completion of the PIC ride and that is they have to do the reject --

Q. Um-hum.

A. -- for the left seat and they have to taxi from the left seat.

Q. Right. Got it, okay. Have you been involved in any 709 rides for first officers? Have you heard about there are 709s that have occurred for new hire first officers?

A. I have heard of them, yes.

Q. How often do you hear about them?

A. Very rarely.

Q. Okay. And we were talking about Conrad on this observation on the first type ride where the FAA was there, but the FAA was actually observing you, right?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you pass?

A. Yes.

Q. I just got to ask. And then I wanted to -- the last follow-up is a question that Dr. Bramble asked you and he asked you specifically if the source of Conrad's deficiencies in his type ride, in your opinion, was attributed to either confidence, aptitude or skill issue.
A. Or something else.
Q. Or something else. Thank you. And you said that -- you talked about him improving at Atlas and you don't think it was a confidence problem because his confidence was fine, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. But I don't think you really answered the whole question. I want to just go back to the --
A. Yeah, I thought it did not.
Q. I get it and I'm going to -- okay? Do you attribute it to confidence or -- you said his confidence wasn't the problem, so talk to me about his aptitude or skill.
A. My opinion?
Q. Yes, it's your opinion, but it's an expert opinion.
A. Yeah, I felt he was in the wrong career field.
Q. And that's fair, okay, that's your opinion, but it is an expert opinion, so I want you to expand a little bit why do you think he was in the wrong career.
A. He was not aviation smart. He was an intelligent person in my opinion, but he was intelligent aviation-wise. I felt that he would probably always struggle to keep up. From all reports, he

did keep up, which was good, but I would've guessed otherwise.
Q. Okay. Is there a mechanism for experts like you in the training department to provide that input to the decision makers within the training and the flight ops department?
A. The process has to be allowed to play out. You know, we do have a contract, union obligations and what have you and so therefore all things -- all procedures have to be followed legally. So my opinion is my opinion, but they still have to go through the process.
Q. Okay. You got any kind of type of ASAP process, irregularity reports or something like that, something similar? Do you know what de-identified voluntary --
A. I'm with you now.
Q. -- reporting is for instructors?
A. Yeah, I got you. I'm sure there is. I hate to say that I'm not aware of it because I probably just never thought of it. I'm pretty open when I have an issue, so I never thought about doing it anonymously, but I'm sure there's some way to do that either through the company or through the union or probably both.
Q. And one final question. I'm not sure I asked this to you, but I want to make sure. I know that you gave a substandard performance on his training. At any point in time during your exposure to Conrad, were you given any pressure to either pass or fail him at any point in time --
A. No.

Q. -- by anybody outside?
A. No. In my entire time with this company, that's never happened. There's usually more of a prompting to -- everybody wants everybody to pass, so if there's going to be any leaning, it's always towards we hope everybody makes it.
MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else have any follow-ups? Bill?
DR. BRAMBLE: Uh-uh.
MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have any?
DR. BRAMBLE: I'm good.
MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions for us?
MR. PEAVLEY: No, not at all.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Is there anything that we didn't ask or anything you would like to maybe offer either as an explanation to some of your answers or something maybe we didn't talk about that you want to help us with, you know, the investigation? Considering it's a safety investigation, we're trying to find out what happened. Anything you can help us with that maybe we didn't talk about?
MR. PEAVLEY: Nothing that would help you. I just think every once in a while there's just a one-off, they're just an anomaly, and I feel pretty sure that this is one of those. This is just a very unusually strange situation that doesn't fit the parameters I've seen before. It's just a (indiscernible).
MR. LAWRENCE: Well, if there's anything you can think of after we leave the building, because a lot of times guys have

moments of clarity and they think oh, I could've offered this or I could've clarified this or here's something I forgot to say that could've helped, please feel free to reach out to us and let us know.

MR. PEAVLEY: I will.

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, Bill.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Just one follow-up on that statement, which was the unusual strange situation that fit a situation you've seen before, that's the accident or that's the situation with the training?

A. No, the accident.

Q. Okay, thanks.

A. I'm sorry, I should've been more clear about that. Yeah, that specific accident, that's a -- that's a strange, strange situation all the way around.

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay, thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, sure. Okay, so anything else that you can offer, just feel free to get a hold of us, okay?

MR. PEAVLEY: Okay, very good. Thank you, I appreciate that.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. Thanks so much, I appreciate it.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Bill Peavley
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami, Florida
DATE:	June 4, 2019

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to the recording accomplished at the hearing.

[redacted]

David A. Martini
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019	Accident No.: DCA19MA086

Interview of: DENISE BORRELLI
Director of Human Resources
Atlas Air

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami Florida

Tuesday,
June 4, 2019

APPEARANCES:

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I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Denise Borrelli:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	42
By Mr. Abrams	43
By Mr. Ward	46
By Mr. Howard	49
By Mr. Lawrence	51
By Mr. Ward	56
By Dr. Bramble	57
By Mr. Lawrence	58

I N T E R V I E W

(1:00 p.m. EDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: So good afternoon. My name is David Lawrence, I'm an operations investigator with the NTSB and obviously, we're here about the 767 accident a few months ago. And on behalf of the Board and everybody on this group, our condolences for the loss of the two crew members. We understand what you're going through. But we want you to know that our whole process of being here and doing this investigation is not to apportion any kind of blame or anything like that. We're just trying to find out what happened so more importantly, we can help prevent it from happening again and people like -- people like you all don't have to go through this again.

So what we do as part of the investigative process is we have what's called a party system and we bring in subject matter experts from outside the Agency to assist us; unions, manufacturer, company, FAA. So that's why you see kind of a group of people here at the table. I'll have everybody introduce themselves so they have -- you have an understanding who are the role players here.

Bill, if you'll go first.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble, human performance investigator out of the NTSB's D.C. office.

MS. BORRELLI: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Warren.

MR. ABRAMS: Denise, I'm Warren Abrams. I'm an air safety investigator with the NTSB in Washington. Thank you for coming today.

MR. LAWRENCE: Larry.

MR. WARD: Hi, I'm Larry Ward. I'm an ops inspector with the FAA, and I want to make sure you understand, although you're not a pilot, there's no enforcement or legal action. I'm attached to the NTSB investigation and I'm here as an investigator.

MR. LEE: And I'm Rich Lee, Boeing safety pilot.

MR. HOWARD: I'm Tyson Howard and I'm with the pilot's union safety committee.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely, Atlas Air pilot.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Anybody that gets an opportunity to talk with the NTSB during the course of an investigation is allowed to have one person of their choice here. Is Jenn who you choose to be here?

MS. BORRELLI: Yes, it is.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. So I mentioned about the transcript and also, we'll be taking notes. A lot of times we take notes as we're talking to you, just so that we -- we may have something we want to ask as follow-up down the road. So if I'm not making eye contact with you, I apologize, I'm not trying to be rude, I'm just typing with two fingers and I'm trying to catch up. If there's a question that anybody asks you, please ask us for clarification if you don't understand. We'll do the same if we need to clarify

something that you say.

MS. BORRELLI: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: "I don't know" is a perfectly acceptable answer. You know, don't build the clock if you don't know the answer type of thing, okay?

MS. BORRELLI: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: And I've got both Conrad's and Rick's PRIA documentation that was provided to us, and their background information. So if we ask you some information about the background and you want to reference any of that, please let me know.

MS. BORRELLI: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: I'll pull it up on the computer. We don't have to -- don't try and make it up.

MS. BORRELLI: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: If it's in documents someplace that you can reference --

MS. BORRELLI: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- please feel free to do so.

MS. BORRELLI: No problem.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Any questions about the process?

MS. BORRELLI: No questions.

MR. LAWRENCE: Awesome.

INTERVIEW OF DENISE C. BORRELLI

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let's start off with the easy ones, then, and let's get your full name and age, please.
A. Um-hum. My name is Denise Catherine Borrelli.
Q. Okay.
A. And I am 43.
Q. Um-hum. And what's your title and position here at Atlas?
A. I'm the director of human resources/flight crew.
Q. When were you hired here?
A. July 3rd, 2000. I mean July 5th. Sorry, July 5th, 2000.
Q. You started right after the holiday, right?
A. Um-hum.
Q. Were you Polar or Atlas?
A. Atlas.
Q. Atlas, okay. And just briefly, what are your roles and responsibilities as the director of human resources/flight?
A. So my function involves basically anything human resources related to flight crew. Also, that includes the entire life cycle of a pilot, from hiring to employee relations issues, disciplinary issues, leaves of absences, terminations.
Q. Okay, I'm trying to type this --
A. Sorry.
Q. -- as fast as you tell me.
A. I'm from New York.
Q. I got you. I'll ask you to slow down if I need to. Right now just, yeah, so I can catch up.

A. Uh-huh. Employee relations, terminations. I'm also the drug and alcohol designated employee representative for the company. And I'm also the family assistance director.
Q. Is that part of the EAP program or is that separate?
A. It's separate, it's just a human resources role.
Q. Okay. Okay. And Larry said since you weren't a pilot, but let me ask the question just to make sure we have it clarified. Are you a pilot?
A. No.
Q. Okay. So I can skip that.
MR. WARD: An assumption on my part, I'm sorry.
MR. LAWRENCE: It was.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Just, Denise -- can I call you Denise?
A. Yes.
Q. Is that okay? Can you just give me a brief explanation or background that led you up to the position you're in right now, and your aviation background or corporate background?
A. I've only actually held one position prior to joining Atlas because I've been here almost 20 years, but I was a human resources coordinator at a medical group, dealing with hiring and termination and recruitment.
Q. And that was 23 years ago?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Since you're a director, tell me about your -- the

makeup of your division, how many people do you have working for you and assisting you.

A. Um-hum. So right now I have approximately six employees that directly report to me. And they serve all functions from recruitment to processing visas for a flight crew to assisting in employee relations, drug and alcohol program, and all -- the spectrum of all the functions.

Q. Okay. Did you go to college to have a degree in this --

A. Yes.

Q. -- field? What is your degree?

A. Um-hum. I have a bachelor of arts and psychology. And I studied most -- did most of my master's, but I did not complete it, so some graduate-level work.

Q. Any other education that prepared you for the human resources side related to pilot hiring and pilot recruitment and things like that? Any other training? Any specialized training like targeted selection or any kind of training as far as pilot hiring and recruitment and interviewing?

A. I've had conferences over the years, but no specific certifications or anything like that.

Q. Yeah, you were going to ask me -- you answered the next question, is there a certification or any kind of certification standard for HR and pilot hiring?

A. Not necessarily pilot hiring, but you could, of course, have the SPHR, which is the human resources certification, but it's not

directly related to pilot hiring.
Q. And do you have or any of your staff have that?
A. I do not have that. There might be a couple on my staff that have it, I don't know, I'd have to look.
Q. Okay. Did you happen to know Rick or Conrad?
A. I interviewed Mr. Aska and I have definitely interacted with both, but I don't have any specific recollections.
Q. And you interviewed Conrad?
A. Yes.
Q. We'll touch on that in a little bit when we get to that. Tell me about -- well, let's start at the 30,000-foot level and we'll go higher and then we'll get a little deeper dive into the specifics, but tell me about the hiring process at Atlas. Say I'm a pilot on the street and I throw an application at Atlas, what happens?
A. Um-hum. So generally, applications go through our -- what's called an ATS, applicant tracking system, but we get resumes through various ways such as recommendations, but all of them funnel through our applicant tracking system. Once received, generally, I will review them or someone on my staff will review them. The system itself, we do ask for qualifications, minimum qualifications. So generally, we're looking above the minimum qualification level at that point, because it already weeds out people who are below --
Q. Um-hum.

A. -- the general qualification level. So if you meet our minimum qualifications, you'll get passed through the system and one of my staff or myself will review the resume.

Q. Okay.

A. Once we review that resume, if we're interested in that resume I will assign a recruiter to do a phone screen and discuss that person's application. And they're looking for various things during that conversation. If that person passes through that level and we're interested in them for interview, they're invited for interview.

And then once at the interview level, we have a two-panel system in which you have what we call the HR panel, which is the personnel panel, which is generally an HR person and the chief pilot or a DO or director of standards and training, a flight ops management person and an HR person. And then there is a technical review panel and that is generally a retired captain.

And then, at the end of the day we -- those two get to -- you go through each panel and you get a score on each panel and our scores are a recommend, a highly recommend or a do not recommend. And at the end of the day we discuss the candidates, we all get together and we discuss the candidates from both perspectives, from the personnel perspective and from the technical perspective, and then we decide who to hire based on those recommendations.

Q. Good overview, I appreciate that. I'm interested about the technical panel and you said there was just one person on the

technical panel, usually a retired pilot?
A. Correct, yes.
Q. What are you doing with the technical side, technical review?
A. So it's generally a 30-minute technical review. I don't know the ins and outs, but generally, they are looking for general knowledge level. They show them an approach plate, they have them decode some weather, and they take them through various scenarios to determine if their knowledge level is appropriate.
Q. That's just a 30-minute review?
A. Thirty-minute review.
Q. Okay. And tell me about the two-panel HR and the pilot, management pilot or whoever that is.
A. Um-hum.
Q. And tell me about what is done there.
A. Um-hum. It's fairly standard. So generally, we have a conversation starting off with, of course, why you want to work here. We go through your employment history, kind of your career progression, the choices you've made in that career. We go through your employers. We'll talk a little bit of what we call CRM, how you -- you know, give us examples of how you've reacted to things in the past, give us scenarios.
Q. Tell me a time when?
A. More of a give me a specific example of a time you had a weather delay --
Q. Okay.

A. -- and how you handled it or -- so rather than a -- rather than a "what would you do," "what did you do?" We also have -- so we review that. Personnel panels can be 25 minutes or an hour. It depends on the conversations going. There's no time limit on them. And then, at the end of all that, we have our standard questions and our standard questions are repetitive of what's on the application and in the screening process, the phone screen, but they are do you have any accidents, incidents, or training failures? Have you ever been terminated or involuntarily terminated from any of your flying positions? Can you complete the TS -- did you pass the TSA background check, the fingerprint check?

Q. This is all the phone interview portion, right?

A. We do it twice. We do it on the phone --

Q. Got it.

A. -- and we do it again in interview. It's repetitive. There are times people have different things to say. So we have, have you -- can you pass the TSA fingerprint background check?

Q. Right.

A. As well as do you have any restrictions on international travel? At that point, we generally save training failures to the end of the conversation because it generally deflates the person during their interview a little bit. So at that point in the conversation that's when we're talking training failures and accidents and incidents and other things that could've happened in

their career that they might have to explain.
Q. Any simulator testing done?
A. No, we do not do simulator testing.
Q. Why not?
A. We discontinued simulator testing a very long time ago and it was two-pronged, one is simulator time availability and it took up a large portion of our day to do it. Sometimes the sim would break down and things like that. And then the last piece was that we didn't find it actually weeded out more candidates. We felt the technical review and their background was enough.
Q. It didn't weed out enough applicants?
A. It didn't increase the number of people that we were rejecting, we had the same outcome with the simulator and without the simulator. And I believe that was discontinued over 15 years ago.
Q. How many applicants do you get on average right now?
A. So in general, this year we received approximately 12 to 1400 applicants. It has been on a steady decline. At one point we had over 3,000 applicants, but this year we've had about 1400 applicants.
Q. What do you attribute that steady decline to?
A. Competition in the industry. Everyone's hiring.
Q. Okay. And how many pilot new hires do you hire a year?
A. In the past years we've hired over 300 every year since, I believe, 2015. And so there's always a -- sometimes there's a

delta between how many you want to hire and how many you do hire; however, it's been over 300 for every year since 2015.

Q. Okay. So tell me about how many do you want to hire and how many you're hiring.

A. So this year, combined between Atlas and Southern, they wanted us to hire about 700 and the breakdown was, I believe -- and this I might be remembering wrong, but I believe it's -- I think it was 250 to 300 on the Atlas side. It might have been a little over 300 on the Atlas side and a little over -- and about 300 on the Southern side, as well. So a little over 300 on each side, about 700.

Q. You said Southern. Do you mean Polar?

A. Southern Air Cargo.

Q. Southern Air Cargo, okay.

A. So the human resources department is shared between both companies.

Q. Between Atlas and Southern?

A. Between Atlas and Southern and Polar.

Q. And Polar, okay. Typically, when you're hiring for a class, how many pilots are you trying to fill in a class? I know you have a breakdown of 300 over the course of a year, you wanted about 700, but how many are you planning for a class? And then, on top of that, how many actually show up?

A. So on the 747 in 2019, it's 28 per class. And the 7-6 varies and usually I get 10 to 12 in a class that they're asking me for

the 7-6, so it's slated 10 to 12. That's the planned number. And on the 7-4 it's 28.

Q. How many are you actually filling in that?

A. I'm filling about 50 percent on the 7-4.

Q. And what about on the --

A. On the, I'm sorry, 7-6 I've almost filled some classes. The last two classes were filled, I believe. I would say 80 percent filled on the 7-6.

Q. Okay. Are you seeing a noticeable difficulty -- this may be subjective, but you're the HR person, so are you seeing a noticeable difficulty in getting these classes filled, and what do you attribute that to?

A. So yes, in the last 2 years, definitely, even 3 years, there's a noticeable difference. There's competition, there's a pilot shortage. We're in contract negotiations. So all of those things contribute to a very tough pilot market.

Q. When you say it was a tough pilot market, I'm kind of curious, do you have interaction with some of the others, the Kalitta, the National, some of the other airlines, cargo operators that are similar, similar in size and similar type of operations? Are you talking to them and are they seeing this, because you said industry.

A. Um-hum.

Q. So I'm assuming that you keep in touch with other people --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- and see what they're doing. Is this common?
A. Yes. So we belong to A4A. I go to the A4A pilot employment group every year. I was there in March. Kalitta and the other ACMI carriers are not at those meetings, they're generally -- you have to pay a lot of money to go into those carriers, but ABX was there as well as Delta, United, all the big carriers are always there. We're all talking pilot shortage, we're all talking competition. Of course, Delta doesn't have as much problem hiring as Atlas Air, but yes, everyone is feeling the pilot shortage and the competition.
Q. So what are you guys doing to help -- I don't want to say mitigate it, but how are you dealing with the hiring challenges since you're talking about pilot shortage, you're seeing it all around the industry, what is Atlas doing to address the pilot shortage?
A. We've created several pilot pathway programs, so we have one with GoJet and that's a guaranteed interview program. We have one with Ameriflight. And we --
Q. Sorry, who was that last one?
A. The first one was GoJet, the second one is Ameriflight.
Q. Okay. You said these are pathways. Gateway programs?
A. Yeah, they're pilot pathway programs. JetBlue calls them gateway programs.
Q. Right.
A. But everyone calls them -- everyone kind of calls them

something similar. We call them pilot pathway programs. So the GoJet one is a guaranteed interview. You stay at GoJet, which is a regional, for 24 months and then -- and if you become a captain, you have to stay an additional year and you get a guaranteed Atlas Air interview.

And then the Ameriflight one is rather similar, except where we're taking them from even lower down the -- basically, if you sign up and you're a new hire, you'll come to the Atlas Air ATP/CTP school when you're ready to operate and get your ATP, and we'll give you an interview at the end of that. If you pass all of that, you'll have a conditional job offer that will, 18 months later, get you a position with Atlas after you've completed your Ameriflight time there and you've gotten all your requirements, you meet the Atlas Air requirements, you've gotten your ATP, everything you need, because they're a 135, and then you'll join Atlas.

And we have one with a carrier upstairs called IBC, as well. It's the same exact footprint as the Ameriflight. And we're about to announce another one, which I can't announce yet, but we're about to announce another one.

Q. Another one of these?

A. Yeah.

Q. Good.

A. It's very similar.

Q. How many guys are you actually grabbing from these pathway

programs, the various pathway programs? How many actually successfully move in and accept classes and are actually Atlas pilots?

A. So the Ameriflight and the other ones, we've only gotten one or two pilots from, but the -- because they're early in their infancy. But GoJet, we've gotten -- I'd have to look, but I've gotten 12 to -- I'd say 10 to 12 to 15 or 18, something like that, from GoJet.

Q. Twelve to fifteen?

A. Yeah, 12 to 15 is what I have off the top of my head.

Q. Okay.

A. Um-hum. We're also, of course -- we're revamping all of our advertising, we weren't really out there advertising before. We're advertising. We, of course, go to all the trade events, we go to all the job fairs, we go to Women in Aviation, we go to OBAP, we go to FAPA events, we go to Military Officers of America, we go all over the place.

Q. Okay. How successful are those in obtaining applicants?

A. For us, it's actually rather successful and that's because some people don't know about us, so when they can actually talk to a recruiter in person, we tend to hook them.

Q. Um-hum.

A. So I know, for the majors, those aren't very successful anymore because they get the same applicants over and over. But for Atlas, we're educating people and we're getting them. We do

well with those.
Q. Okay. And I think you already touched on these, and I apologize if you did, if this is a repeat, but are you seeing like a lower level of experience in the applicants coming in?
A. You hadn't asked me that yet, but our overall total new hire number is hovering around 6500 hours, but that's the average. I would say we are seeing some applicants with less experience now.
Q. Okay.
A. Those outliers, yeah, 10,000, you know. So there could be a 10,000-hour person and a 3,000-hour person, you know.
Q. What are your minimums?
A. Our minimums are ATP level, so you have to have an unrestricted ATP, a first class medical, FCC radio, and we, of course, prefer if you have 121 experience and PIC time, but those are preferred.
Q. PIC time?
A. It's preferred, PIC time.
Q. And turbo jet?
A. Preferred.
Q. And so you reviewed these guys early on to make sure that after the application process, you make sure they meet the minimum qualifications, what you just gave me.
A. Um-hum, correct. Well, the applicant tracking system actually does that for you.
Q. Right.

A. There is a question, but we do it again --
Q. Got it.
A. -- because there's a questionnaire. Do you have an ATP? Do you have a first class medical? Do you have all of those things? So anyone below that level will get automatically what we call DNQ'd, do not qualify.
Q. Um-hum.
A. And anyone who answers those questions and says they do, they get passed through. We review it again.
Q. Got it. So the computer will do the minimum qualifications, but you just gave me a couple of areas of preferred. So now my next question is what are the competitive minimums that you're seeing to meet the applicant? Because that's not a computer, that is you guys looking at it.
A. Yeah.
Q. So what is that?
A. All right. So generally, we love to see people between 3- and 6,000 hours, and generally anything over 2500 we'll definitely always pursue.
Q. 24- --
A. 2500 of total time.
Q. 2500.
A. But of course, competitively, we're seeing them between 3- and 6,000 hours, generally, than at a regional for 3 to 5 years. You have a turbo jet type rating, you have a good work history, so

you're not jumping employers, and a good training history.
Q. I'm going to shift gears here a second and -- by the way, how are you doing? Water?
A. I'm good.
Q. You're doing okay? Good.
A. Um-hum.
Q. Talk to me about -- are you involved with the PRIA process?
A. Yes, I am.
Q. Give me, an uneducated person, an education about the PRIA process from an Atlas standpoint.
A. All right. So once you are an approved candidate and we like you and we offer you a position, we will collect your PRIA paperwork. So we, of course, use the regular PRIA documents. So the candidate will fill out all of the PRIA paperwork and we will place their background check in with our background check vendor and we, of course, check the last 5 years of training records for any 121, 125, 135, Part 91 carrier. We, of course, query the FAA using those forms, the NDR, National Drivers Registry, and all of the required PRIA checks.

So we also do other background checks besides the PRIA. So we, of course, have the training history and everything provided by PRIA. It goes in to the background check vendor. When it comes back, one of my staff and/or myself will review it and then if we have any concerns, any red flags, any -- anything that comes up that's a problem, then we will discuss with flight operations.

And generally we will bring the employee in to let them explain themselves. And then we make a no-go/go decision, basically, are we going to keep the person or are they not hired yet? What is the outcome of that background?

Q. When you talk about a background vendor you're talking about a designated agent and the PRIA. Who is your designated agent?

A. It's TrueView.

Q. True You?

A. TrueView.

Q. TrueView.

A. It used to be Summit Aviation Services. They've, in the last 2 years, changed their name.

Q. Okay. Just coming from 30,000 feet and coming down a little bit lower now so you can get a little bit more deeper into some of the aspects of -- related to the accident. You said you did talk -- you did the interview with Conrad.

A. I did.

Q. Tell me about that.

A. So I don't have much of a recollection.

Q. Um-hum.

A. When I reviewed his file, I -- let me back it up. I did know who he was when the accident occurred.

Q. Um-hum.

A. I don't have much of a recollection from his interview, other than he was a very charming, wonderful interview and we enjoyed

meeting him.
Q. Okay. Is there any cognitive -- I might have asked you this. Is there any cognitive testing of applicants before they come here?
A. No.
Q. Okay.
A. We do not do a cog screen.
Q. Why not?
A. We have never done a cog screen here. We're not really sure we're interested in doing the cog screen. From talking to other carriers, they do them but the actual people who use them don't have a lot of faith in them. We're not sure it's something that's right for us, but we are considering all options.
Q. So by extension, since you don't do it, there was no cognitive testing other than just the normal application process on Conrad when he came through --
A. Correct.
Q. -- when you did your interview. Okay. So you don't recall much about his interview, other than he was charming. And let me see, where did I leave off? Have you had a chance to review the PRIA records for Conrad before --
A. Yes, I have.
Q. -- we had a chance? Okay. Anything you note in those -- that review that's different than what you recall prior to reviewing this, about his background and --

A. No. I, of course, looked at them, you know, as soon as --
Q. Obviously.
A. After the accident. I did recall that Conrad worked from ASAP. I did recall that Conrad had a recommendation from an internal employee, and I did recall that Conrad worked for Trans States prior to reviewing them.
Q. Other than working for those companies, did you go into a deeper dive to take a look and see what the records were that were provided under PRIA from Trans States and Mesa?
A. Yes, I did.
Q. Did you notice anything in those?
A. Yes, I matched up the Trans States failure with my notes. The actual notes in the record are my notes, that's in my handwriting.
Q. Um-hum.
A. I interviewed him. He did thoroughly disclose his troubles at Trans States during his interview, but I do recollect -- I don't remember the specifics, but I know he did recollect those. He did reveal those to us. I did review the Mesa training failures. There were no training failures on that. I did review the Mesa file and the Charter Air Transport file, which I did not recollect prior to looking at the file.
Q. What did you say about -- what did Conrad say about his training failures at Trans States? What did he attribute that to?
A. So I don't remember word for word.

Q. Yeah.
Q. It was a very long time ago. But I do remember him saying that -- after I looked at the record --
Q. Um-hum.
A. -- I remembered. I didn't recollect it right away, that his mother was dying of cancer and he wasn't doing well at Trans States and he -- I don't remember if he -- I think he resigned from there --
Q. Okay.
A. -- because he wasn't -- he wasn't making it through training. He was having personal problems.
Q. Okay. Did anybody at Atlas contact Trans States to validate that information?
A. No, we did not.
Q. Okay. Even though he had training difficulties and those training difficulties coincided with the time that he decided to resign, nobody called them up to -- called Trans States to verify that he was having training difficulties or personal issues or --
A. We did not verify it; however, when I looked back at the folder, the training folder, there is -- the resignation letter matches what he told us on the interview notes. So he said that he was having personal problems.
Q. Can you hold on a second?
A. Yeah.
MR. LAWRENCE: What did I do to my PDF?

DR. BRAMBLE: It looks like you split the window.
MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.
DR. BRAMBLE: Window split. There we go.
MR. LAWRENCE: There you go, thank you.
DR. BRAMBLE: Um-hum. Just subtract 10 years of your life.
MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, exactly. That's why I have Dr. Bramble here to assist me. I just fly the airplanes.
(Laughter.)
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Okay, we were talking a little bit about his training failure at Trans States and what you recall about his reasoning and there was no follow-up with Trans States to verify that he was having -- the information he provided to Atlas about why he left Trans States.
A. Well, in my opinion, there's no need to because his resignation letter, I believe, to my recollection, is in there and matched what he said.
Q. Okay.
A. So his resignation letter said he was -- I believe and I don't -- I don't have it front in of me -- said that he was having personal problems. His mother passed away. I believe his mother passed away.
Q. Okay.
A. After, right after that.
Q. Right.

A. So it all matched up.
Q. What about his training difficulties at Mesa?
A. So the PRIA itself doesn't have any training failures from Mesa, so it reported no derogatory information was what we received back.
Q. Okay. You reviewed his training records, looking at his training records. If you want me to pull it up or anything, just let me know. But the information provided by Atlas Airlines, his training records indicate he failed his last attempt or his most recent attempt to upgrade on the E175 and this was 2 months before Atlas ended up hiring him and he was returned to the line as an FO. Were you made aware of that?
A. After the accident, we did review his training records. There is not a failure on there, so there was no red flag for us. And I don't have it in front of me, but I believe it says "see e-mail" and he goes back to FO, but it's not a training failure in there. So now that I've looked at it in hindsight, I can see that he was in upgrade training.
Q. Um-hum.
A. And he was returned to FO, but there was no training failure in there, so it didn't report as a training failure.
Q. Okay. How would Atlas classify a captain upgrade attempt being returned to the FO?
A. So if we -- if I had seen that, we probably would've asked him about it and then he would've explained what it was. It

could've been personal problems, it could've been -- it says "see e-mail" or I can't remember exactly what it says.
Q. Yeah.
A. But it says "see e-mail." So if there's an actual training failure, it reports out as a training failure. If they fail to complete upgrade, we would ask them about it and say what happened here? They could've said I was failed to recommend to go on to the next level. Whatever they would've said. But we would consider it a training difficulty, unless the employee told us something else.
Q. So you're aware of his going back to the line. It wasn't flagged as a failure of like a check ride or failure. You weren't aware that it was a failure to upgrade or an attempt that was not successful to upgrade, you all weren't aware of that?
A. I was not aware of it at the time.
Q. Okay.
A. No.
Q. And had that -- had you been knowledgeable of that, what would you have done?
A. So we would have done what we always do. So what we always do is any time something flags as what we call -- we call it a discrepancy, you gave us one piece of information, but we have another piece of information during the background check process. We look at the phone screen notes, we look at the interview notes, and we look at the application and if they told us about the issue

during the hiring process, that we -- that means we're okay with it and we move on. We've already said that's okay, we're okay with that issue.

Q. Okay.

A. If it's something we didn't know about, then our process always is to call the employee and let them -- or if they haven't started yet, let them tell us what the issue is and then we make a decision with flight operations. So if I have a red flag of some sort or something that pops up, I call, generally, Scott Anderson, I provide him with all the documents and we call the employee together. Or the candidate together, wherever they are in the process.

Q. Okay. And just for the Mesa side, that hadn't occurred because you didn't notice the failure to upgrade portion?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. And it wasn't a failure that was captured by the computer?

A. Correct.

Q. And you mentioned earlier that --

A. I do actually want to --

Q. Sure.

A. Not just by the computer.

Q. Right.

A. People look at these.

Q. Okay.

A. So it's not a computer issue. So the background check company reads the background check that comes back. You can call them the DA, I call them the background check company, but the DA, designated agency.

Q. Agent.

A. Agent -- well, actually reviews the records, reviews -- they get the application, they get the resume and they get all the information. They will flag anything to us in real time so we're not waiting for a background check to be complete. So we'll get an e-mail that says hey, you have a training failure here and we immediately pay attention to it. So one of my staff will read the background check, including all of the training records, everything, and if it's just me, I'm doing it, I do it. But then they'll bring it to my attention and that's when we'll review the entire package from phone screen notes to application, all the way down the line. And then if we're not satisfied with that information that was revealed during the hiring process and we're okay with it, then flight operations gets involved and we interview the employee together.

Q. But your designated agent is the first line of defense --

A. Yes.

Q. -- to notice whether there's -- and they would -- you're waiting on them to trigger the red flag and advise you so you can do further follow-up, is that correct?

A. Not really, it's just that there -- we don't want to wait

until the background check is completely done. So the person in my office will look at the background checks probably once a week.
Q. Okay.
A. PRIAs take a very long time to come in.
Q. Um-hum.
A. So generally, they notice it first because they're getting it reported to them and then they upload it. So before they even upload it, they'll e-mail us and say hey, you have something going on. But yes, our office is looking at them at the same time as the background check company.
Q. Good.
A. So we're not reliant upon them.
Q. Perfect, okay. Trans States, you mentioned that you had done a review of Trans States. Do you recall what his history was at Trans States?
A. Yes, he failed out of initial training and I believe he resigned. I don't remember right off the top of my head. I don't think they actually terminated him, but he resigned.
Q. Okay.
A. But we consider that a training failure.
Q. Okay. How was that considered in his evaluation as an applicant to Atlas?
A. We considered it. It was on everything, all of his documentation. He informed us all the way through the process. We considered it a personal issue and continued with the hiring

process.
Q. So this was the second personal issue he had that led to leaving a training program?
A. No, it's the same, it's all the same event, Trans States, it's all the same event in 2014.
Q. The second is I meant Mesa, because he gave you a personal reason for leaving Mesa.
A. No, no. Mesa is after, so he works -- I think he works at Charter Air Transport --
Q. Right.
A. -- Trans States, then he has regular employment, his mother dies and this is after the fact.
Q. Right.
A. This is me looking at the file after it happened.
Q. Okay.
A. Then he goes to Mesa and he was employed by Mesa when we hired him.
Q. Okay.
A. He was still employed by Mesa when we hired him.
Q. The last two 121 carriers --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- he operated with prior to Atlas --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- he left for personal reasons?
A. That's incorrect. Mesa, he was still employed with.

Q. Okay.
A. But he did not leave there, we hired him.
Q. Okay.
A. Yes, we hired him from there.
Q. Thanks, you're right.
A. And then he gets hired, he was hired -- he was at Trans States.
Q. Um-hum.
A. There's a gap of employment. I can't remember if there's another employer in there, off the top of my head. Then he goes to Mesa and then he's at Mesa for -- I can't remember off the top of my head, but he's still employed with Mesa when we hire him.
Q. Got it.
A. He was an FO operating on the line.
Q. But he failed to upgrade to first officer while he was at Mesa --
A. I know that now.
Q. -- while he was still employed.
A. Yes, yes.
Q. Okay. Got it. And you just touched on something, as well. He listed a 2-year gap of employment, 2011 and 2013. Were you aware of any kind of employment?
A. I don't know. I'd have to look at it. I don't remember that at all, yeah.
Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.
Q. Did he disclose or were you aware at any point in time that he had also been hired by two other Part 121 operators, CommuteAir and Air Wisconsin, and failed to complete training there?
A. I was not aware of that.
Q. Okay. Was that on his application?
A. No, it was not.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean, I'd have to double check, but I just looked at it before I came in and no, it was not.
Q. It was not?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Let me ask you about as far as the difficulties from a hiring perspective of an applicant, when you have to rely on their disclosure of their past history. Is that a challenge that you're finding or is that a problem?
A. It's always a problem if a candidate does not reveal things to you. You can't query carriers that you were unaware that they worked for.
Q. I know I asked you about Mesa, if anybody contacted Mesa. Did anybody contact Trans States? I might have, but I want to make sure I asked it.
A. You did ask me that. No, we did not.
Q. Nobody contacted Mesa or Trans States as follow-up for -- to explain some of the training difficulties he may have had there?

A. So at Trans States, we were aware of the training difficulties. We did not contact them.
Q. Okay.
A. We were satisfied with his response. Mesa, we were unaware of any training difficulties because, as his report is --
Q. Right.
A. He does not have any training failures. And the removal from captain upgrade, which I know now, says see e-mail. That could mean anything.
Q. Right.
A. It could mean his house was on fire and he had to go home.
Q. This is subjective, Denise, but I'm going to ask you as the expert on this. With the knowledge that he had two other 121 training programs he failed to complete, been a benefit to you from a hiring standpoint?
A. Yes, it would have.
Q. How?
A. We generally like to see a consistent work history.
Q. So looking at the PRIA records, you guys were aware, up to your gap in 2011 and 2013, that he had -- that he didn't have any employment.
A. Um-hum.
Q. Correct?
A. I don't recollect that, yeah, but --
Q. Okay. The gap was there and designated agent --

A. Yeah.
Q. -- showed it in the records and said that and that I believe they -- and I'm going to paraphrase -- the designated agent contacted Conrad and he said he was doing some freelance work or something in real estate, something about that in nature, but did not disclose the two carriers that he did go to and didn't complete the training program.
A. I'm not aware of that, yeah. There's a gap and he's -- any time there's a gap --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- they have to explain it and we were clearly satisfied with that explanation.
Q. At any point in time does -- in general, does Atlas or does your office ever go back to do any kind of verification or validation of gaps in employment, anything other than just contacting the applicant and say what did you do, I did something and then okay, that satisfies?
A. So generally, they'll ask for, sometimes, W-2s to prove -- you know, if you say worked somewhere or they'll ask for some personal reference to prove, to say you weren't working during that period of time, but generally W-2s, things like that.
Q. Okay. Any of that done for the 2-year gap in employment for Conrad?
A. I don't know, I don't recollect that, but I don't believe so.
Q. Okay. I guess you do audits or reviews of records to take a

look at the accuracy of the records and how you're doing and your people are doing as far as the PRIA backgrounds and such. Are you finding applicants now -- because earlier we talked about the experience levels going down and it's changing, the dynamics are changing in the industry. Are you finding applicants that are maybe embellishing their record to get hired with a 121?

A. I haven't seen people embellish their record. I've seen very old hits come up that people claim they don't remember. Twenty years ago they had a violation, some ramp check and encroach or something like that, but very old records that they're saying I'm so sorry, I didn't know that was still on there. And PRIA is only 5 years, so I believe the other one was 2011. That would've been outside the PRIA window, as well.

Q. Great, it leads me to another question. Are there any other avenues for Atlas to look at a pilot applicant's background beyond PRIA?

A. I believe there is a primary -- there's another report you can follow. We do not. I think there is. We do not do that. I think there's a primary training. I think there is.

Q. Okay.

A. I'm not familiar with it, but I believe there is.

Q. Are you familiar with FOIA?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Tell me your familiarity with FOIA. What does that afford you?

A. So I believe that is -- isn't FOIA tied to the accidents and incidents and they check the whole -- so FOIA is the Freedom of Information Act.
Q. Right.
A. So I have very limited knowledge of what you can do.
Q. Okay, okay.
A. I'm assuming you can make some sort of request and -- yeah.
Q. You may have just already answered this question, but at any point in time has Atlas ever conducted a FOIA search of a pilot applicant to validate information provided on the application beyond the 5 years of PRIA?
A. No. Not in my 19 years.
Q. And why would that be?
A. I don't know.
Q. Okay. Tell me about PRD, what do you know about that?
A. So that's the pilot records database. I know it's not up and running completely, obviously. It's supposed to be a solution to the PRIA requests issue, which is that you have to query individual carriers and then we get them to return the records in various formats that are hard to read and then -- and then -- but the PRD is supposed to be a solution to that, that you can go query one database so you don't have to go to each carrier.
Q. So to your knowledge of this information that it's going to be not just FAA management, it's going to be a database containing information from other carriers?

A. Correct, yes.
Q. Would that information extend beyond 5 years or just within 5 years?
A. There's a trick to that and I don't remember exactly. I think it's 5 years, but I think there's some sort of trick to it, it almost becomes 10 years of information, but I'm not the expert on PRD.
Q. Okay.
A. Yet.
Q. Do you know when it's supposed to be implemented or have you been given any guidance for your POI or --
A. There's that test database going on. I'm not following it a hundred percent, just because it's taken so long. When they finish it, I'll -- when they finish it, I'll become educated on it.
Q. Another subjective or an opinion, but you're an expert on this. What changes to PRIA or -- I shouldn't say PRD since you -- it's not working, but yeah, what changes in PRIA would you like to see from a human performance person to help you accurately attest to the backgrounds of the pilot applicants coming to Atlas?
A. Well, I do like the idea of a main database so that you're not missing a carrier, because if they don't divulge it, it's very hard to -- there's no way to get the information if you don't know they work there. I would like to see some sort of standard reporting so you're not looking for past fails and unsats and sats

that you can hardly read. And just a more standardized, easy-to-access format.

Q. When you say you'd like something more standard that's not looking at just past failures, are you talking about just past certificate failures or are you looking at other type of failures or what?

A. I would just -- I don't know exactly what they should look at, but it would be nice to be standard so everybody has -- your recurrents look the same, the PCs look the same. If you failed to recommend, it would look the same, so that you would see fail to recommend --

Q. Um-hum.

A. -- you know, as opposed to -- and if someone leaves a training program, you're not trying to decide why, even in new hire training, and you're not relying upon the employee to tell you, you know, their house was on fire so they had to leave.

Q. Right.

A. So the standard way of listing out all the different types of training issues, training failures, as well as a central database to look at those in.

MR. LAWRENCE: I think you're probably tired of hearing me talk. I might come back with a couple other questions, Denise, but are you doing fine, or water --

MS. BORRELLI: I'm good.

MR. LAWRENCE: -- or anything? Great. Let me see if Bill

has any questions for you.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Yeah, I just have a couple. You mentioned Atlas, Southern, and Polar and then you said HR handles both companies. Are you only hiring for two or --

A. So Polar doesn't actually have any pilots anymore, so Polar is a certificate, and we have DOs and the five wise men and it's got marketing people, but the pilots actually all work for Atlas Air. We merged the seniority list but not the certificates. I forget what year that was in. So in the background, I think Atlas actually leases pilots to Polar Cargo. So we only hire pilots into Atlas Air. And then, since we've purchased Southern, we, the HR department, is also responsible for recruiting for Southern, but that's a total separate track but similar people work on it.

Q. Okay. Have you changed your minimum qualifications for pilots over the last 5 years?

A. We have and we, I think -- I don't remember exactly what the date was, but I believe it was in 2019 we went to straight ATP unrestricted minimums on the 7-4, the 7-6, and the triple-7 on the Southern side. And then on the 737 we went to a restricted or unrestricted ATP and I believe that was in early 2019.

Q. Okay. And which restrictions might you see that would be possible?

A. So on the 737 you might have somebody who has a restricted ATP for -- I think it's age. They could have a restricted ATP for

time, so you have the 1,000 hours or the 1250. If you are a college student and you have gotten checked out at 1,000 hours or 1250 hours, so you could be hired onto the 737 below the 1500-hour level if you have 4 years of college and meet all the restricted ATP.

Q. And for Mr. Aska, do you recall how he was recruited, how his resume happened to come to the system?

A. I don't recollect, but I think we met him at Women in Aviation, but I don't recollect exactly. I think it might be in his file somewhere.

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. Okay, I'm going to pass to Warren.

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. I just have a couple of questions for you. You only hire from resumes? I mean, do you go through Airline Apps, Indeed, Glassdoor or anything like that or is it just the resumes and recommendations or how do you accumulate your resumes or applications?

A. So we're not on Airline Apps, but we are -- we have ads on Indeed. We have something called -- right now we have something called JobTarget, which pushes our job posting out to all of the different job boards. So, you know, Climbto350 and FindaPilot and all of those different websites.

Q. Um-hum.

A. But generally, people go in to take one of those ads and generally clicks through to what's called our ATS, our applicant

tracking system.
Q. Um-hum.
A. But we don't use Airline Apps, we don't use Pilot Credentials, so they're organic resumes that come to us, so we either meet you and recruit you and then you apply directly through our ATS or you apply on a job board, which then connects you to our ATS. We have ads, you know, we run advertisements.
Q. Perfect.
A. Um-hum.
Q. I don't want to go down the labor union track, which is the next question, so if I -- if it broaches that, I don't want to go there. If somebody applies to come to work for Atlas as a pilot and you need triple-7 pilots at Southern, do you say, you know, would you like to put in an application at Southern or can you say that this is -- this looks good, how about going to work for Southern?
A. Um-hum. Yeah, there's no issue with that. We recruit separately, generally, because in the candidate world, if you apply for Atlas, they don't really love it if you say hey, what about Southern?
Q. Um-hum.
A. So generally, if you apply for Atlas, you go to Atlas. If you apply to Southern, you go to Southern. If you apply for both, because it's one applicant tracking system --
Q. Okay.

A. -- the same people in the background, we'll say hey, you applied for both. Which one are you more -- we'll tell you about all of them.
Q. Sure, okay.
A. At any recruitment session we have, I always say, hey, if anyone's learning to fly a 737 or a triple-7, just tell your interview team; we'll be happy to talk to you about that, as well. But it's separate interviews.
Q. Okay, thanks. PRIA. A hypothetical, strictly a hypothetical. You have a first officer that fails his oral, has subsequent retraining and then passes his oral, goes to his simulator, flunks his -- is unsuccessful in his rating ride, has additional training and then successfully passes his rating ride. A hypothetical. Flies the line and then decides to leave to go somewhere else. Will his PRIA hypothetically show two training failures or will it show what he successfully completed and no training failures?
A. I lost track of how many you said there, but, however --
Q. Okay. So we did not pass the oral or we did not pass the rating ride on the first attempt, on both events, but subsequently passed. He completed the training program, but will you show any training failures along the way?
A. You'll see everything, you'll see the exact, the whole record. So you'll see it, you'll see every -- you'll see all of it. So I'm not counting one or two, it doesn't matter.

Q. Yeah.
A. You'll get the whole record, you'll see the extra sims, you'll see everything.
Q. All right.
A. Yeah.
MR. ABRAMS: Thank you. That's all I have. Appreciate it, thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Larry?
BY MR. WARD:
Q. Just a couple quick questions. A couple times you used the term flight operations and in the context of -- and I'm paraphrasing what you said, if there are any concerns or red flags, and we're talking about the PRIA, you discussed with flight operations. And you mentioned it again in a similar context and you mentioned Scott Anderson, but could I ask you to clearly identify who flight operations --
A. Yeah. No problem.
Q. -- is or are and --
A. So as the director of HR, I work hand in hand -- I have a partner, essentially, in flight operations, which is Scott Anderson, who is the senior director of training, standards, and a whole bunch of -- the training center, it's a long title. But we also, at all of our interviews -- so Scott Anderson is my counterpart, meaning -- not my counterpart, he's above me, but he's my partner in hiring. So he will make any go/no-go decisions

of people we hire, along with me and our input.

But we -- at all of our interviews, we have generally both chief pilots, so Ray DuFour and Scott Welty; we have both DOs, so Chris Agnini and Scott Ridgeway. The entire, what I -- when I say flight operations management, the entire team comes to almost every interview. So there are high-level flight operations people at all of our interviews, interviewing the candidates directly.

Q. Okay, so a follow-up. So when we're talking about the context of concerns and red flags for PRIA, Scott Anderson is the individual --

A. Yes.

Q. -- that would determine if, in fact, you see a red flag or a concern?

A. Yeah. Well, we bring it to him.

Q. Right.

A. So we bring it to him and I'll -- whatever it is, I'll call him and show him, send him the records and yes, he's the person I go to. Then we interview the employee together to hear their explanation.

Q. Okay.

A. Yes.

Q. I think you just answered my next question.

A. But yes, he is the person who reviews them with me.

Q. Okay. Have you actually hired any pilots less than 1500 hours?

A. No.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. Thank you. Just to follow up to one question. When you talk about putting up whole records, isn't that similar to what you got from Mesa in this case?
A. Correct.
Q. In Conrad's case. And you had a very difficult time discerning an upgrade for the candidate going back to the line, is that -- would that be an accurate statement?
A. My recollection of the records is it's -- there's no training failures and then when he's in captain upgrade, it says "see e-mail" several times over and over. So it doesn't look like there's a failure there, but he does --
Q. Sure.
A. -- return to FO.
Q. But Warren's scenario he just asked you about, it sounds like you would give another carrier a very similar record than what you had received from Mesa. Is that an accurate statement?
A. We would, but in Conrad's scenario there aren't failed sims and orals in there, as well. It appears as if there's progression until the very end.
MR. WARD: That's all I have. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Rich?
MR. LEE: I'm all right, thanks.

MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson.

BY MR. HOWARD:

Q. Just a couple. So I know you said that, over the last couple years, you know, with the shortage and the competition and everything else, that like the mins, the minimum qualifications have gone down. What about the standards as far as -- I understand subjective, but the number of, you know, training failures, incidents, stuff like that have -- has hiring become more lenient in the last couple years, you know, because of the shortage?

A. I wouldn't say the mins went down, first, as a correction. We clarified our mins. Our mins, basically, we looked at the other carriers and so, for example, UPS is at an ATP-only minimum, that's their minimum. They're obviously competitively hiring higher than that. Our minimums were a bit complicated and it was like 2,000 hours and you had this or that, it was a little complicated, so we do straight ATP. So I wouldn't call it a reduction in minimums, to me, first of all.

Second of all, anecdotally, I'm seeing more people with training failures; however, I don't consider us being more lenient at all. But I do see the demographics are changing a little bit. You'll see people with more hiccups in their career. Training, not necessarily training history, but we do see people jumping from regional to regional because of hiring bonuses. And 3 to 5 years ago you would never leave a regional because you're waiting

to get to your major spot, but now they jump because they can get 25 here, 25 here, 25 here and they could still go to Delta in 4 years, 5 years. And that's a different paradigm than it was before. So I wouldn't say we're more lenient.

Q. And just kind of a follow-up. Is there any pressure to be more lenient from anyone above you, without naming names or anything? You know, just is there any pressure to be more lenient and hire more people, you know?

A. I wouldn't say there's any pressure to be more lenient. There's definitely pressure to hire, we're hiring a lot of people and competition is really steep out there. There's reports of people leaving a Delta class to go to FedEx. It's tough. So there's pressure, but not to be more lenient, in my opinion.

MR. HOWARD: That's all I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Tyson. J.B.?

MR. BLAKELY: I'm good to go, David. Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody have any follow-up?

DR. BRAMBLE: I have three things.

MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, I've got a couple, too.

DR. BRAMBLE: Do you want to go first?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, I'll go first. If you don't mind, thanks.

DR. BRAMBLE: Um-hum.

MR. LAWRENCE: Because you're still packing.

DR. BRAMBLE: Sure.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. I want to understand something just to make sure I'm clear in my mind as far as what occurred with Conrad and the review by Atlas of his Mesa records and I don't want to put words in your mouth, so correct me if I'm wrong on this. But because it wasn't a training failure, just he didn't upgrade as the records you had were indicating, that was not considered a red flag because it was not considered a failure.

A. Um-hum. In my recollection, and I don't really recollect this, however, we did not -- we did not flag there being any issue with his Mesa record at all. There was no red flag based on how it looked. Therefore, we didn't dive deeper into the "see e-mail" and what happened there.

Q. Um-hum.

A. Just we didn't consider it a red flag at all.

Q. Okay. I get that it wasn't considered a red flag.

A. Yeah.

Q. At any point in the process and the review of his Mesa records, was the director of training or somebody from flight ops -- and I think you said Scott Anderson is the one you rely on to develop red flags on training history that you would go to, correct, to clarify?

A. Correct.

Q. Was he involved or anyone else involved, looking at those records, to determine whether or not that unsuccessful attempt to

upgrade was considered or should be considered a red flag?
A. No, because we bring it to Scott if there is a training failure that we would -- that was not disclosed to us prior. So if a training failure is disclosed to us during interview and we make a decision to hire, then we don't bring it to Scott or anyone else because that was disclosed. The Mesa record didn't disclose anything at the time that we thought, we didn't think we saw something that disclosed a problem that needed to be looked into.
Q. Now that you know about this, what has Atlas done to change or have they changed any process to take a look at those type of things and consider them red flags?
A. So if we get a record like that and we -- it was easier to read, and it wasn't easy to read because it was confusing, we would, of course, flag that and bring that to Scott. However, we have changed our process to now specifically ask have you ever removed yourself or been removed from captain upgrade training?
Q. At what point --
A. From any training program, by the way.
Q. Sorry to interrupt.
A. Yeah, sorry, this could be an issue.
Q. I was just thinking, at what point in time in the application process do you ask that question?
A. We ask it during phone screening and interview.
Q. So if you had been issued in the past in training where you were either asked to leave?

A. So the question exactly is have you ever been removed --
Q. Okay.
A. -- from upgrade training or any training program at all? Have you ever removed yourself and have you ever been involuntarily terminated from any flying position?
Q. Okay. I'm going to draw a hypothetical, then. In Conrad's case, he -- as far as the Trans States, he provided some information that said he left voluntarily for training purposes. These three questions you have right here, could he have -- could he say no, even though he left voluntarily?
A. Yeah, yeah.
Q. Well, let me caveat this in the very beginning because we all know how pilots --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- leave training programs --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- these days and I think you would agree that a lot of times they would have difficulties in training and rather than resign or be fired, they're allowed to leave voluntarily --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- rather than being terminated or something. That would, you know -- and it's operators that are trying to, you know, do the right thing as far as, you know -- and we see that and I'm sure you've seen it, correct?
A. Yes.

Q. Great. That's why I'm trying to find out where there's the trap we can and operators can find out if that's truly the case. So with the three questions you just -- or three questions you asked on the application and on the phone interview, if a pilot leaves voluntarily and says I'm just going to leave and I'm going to cite family purpose, you know, things, is the reality of why he left going to be captured in these three questions?
A. No, not necessarily and that's why the training records probably need to be trained to say -- changed to say something more specific, because if the training trail just ends --
Q. Right.
A. -- in a training record, then you're back in the same scenario where you're trying to decide why that person --
Q. Right.
A. Based on what they told you and based on what the record says.
Q. So you're going back to the actual construction of the training records and the standardization of the training records --
A. Yes.
Q. -- is what you're saying?
A. Um-hum.
Q. What do you want the training records to say?
A. Training discontinued for X, Y, and Z reason.
Q. Okay. And then let me ask you, on another subjective

question, how much reliance are you, as an HR person, making decisions on hiring, relying on the honesty of the applicant to ensure that they are disclosing on their application that which they actually did in their background?

A. Um-hum. I think you're relying on their honesty and there's gap reviews and things, but it's hard to catch someone who's deliberately trying to deceive you.

Q. And there are gap reviews and it was conducted in this case with Conrad, correct?

A. Correct.

Q. You had a 2-year gap in -- but again, the mitigation for that in the records is the designated agent calling the applicant who provided the gap in the first place.

A. Um-hum.

Q. Did you have a gap in, you know, what you did? And so you're still relying on the applicant's honesty to even explain that which the designated agent found as a gap in the employment, would you agree to that?

A. I do, and I believe the PRIA was outside the window of that gap, correct, because then the PRIA would match up.

Q. Right.

A. Or not match up.

Q. Right. But the designated agent still went out there and queried him about a gap in the employment.

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And he had to rely on his honesty?
A. Yes, you have to.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Anybody else have -- yes.
MR. WARD: I have one follow-up to the question.
MR. LAWRENCE: Larry.
BY MR. WARD:
Q. Your question, state again your question that you are asking on the phone interview.
A. So it's not just the phone interview, we ask the same questions on the phone as in the interview, because that's on purpose --
Q. Okay.
A. -- to see if they change their story, by the way.
Q. Sure. So what is it --
A. So it's have you ever been removed from captain upgrade or any other training program, voluntarily or involuntarily, or you removed yourself?
Q. Any other training?
A. Yes.
Q. So in this case we got a couple new hire failures that is in -- okay.
A. Yeah.
MR. WARD: I just wanted to clarify that. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else? Yeah. Sorry.
DR. BRAMBLE: I'm sorry.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. Do you have any involvement in deciding whether a training difficulty needs to result in a PWP or a TRB?

A. No.

Q. Do you have any involvement in the conduct of a TRB?

A. I don't have anything involving the -- in the TRB. However, at the end of the TRB, I am the person who executes a removal. Termination.

Q. Okay. Has Atlas performed any validation studies correlating your pilot candidate screening and selection data with training and job performance?

A. So say that again, I just want to make sure I understand.

Q. Yeah, has Atlas performed any validation studies to correlate pilot candidate screening and selection data with either their training performance or their job performance?

A. Not that I'm aware of.

Q. Okay. And you mentioned that you guys had decided that cognitive testing didn't seem to feel right for the company. I'm curious. What other reasons for that?

A. So we haven't looked very hard at it, but there's a variety of reasons. We're kind of -- the anecdotal data we get from other people is that this person's great; however, they can't pass our cog chain, you guys should hire him. You know, the test doesn't mean all that much. The aptitude tests, whether you're going to be a good fit here, is something we're not -- I think we're kind

of in the middle of the industry, so it may not be that relevant, but we're open to them. We just haven't looked that hard at them.
Q. So other carriers are telling you that they don't think they have much predictive validity or --
A. Anecdotally, you get a lot of that test doesn't really mean all that much.
Q. Okay, that's it. Oh, actually, one other thing. I guess I should ask about the other standardized tests that some carriers use, which is -- one of the others, which is the first (indiscernible), the inventories. Any feelings or feedback from other carriers about that?
A. The same exact, you know, the same feeling. A lot of people use them. We just haven't delved into them. We haven't made a decision if it's something that's right for us.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
DR. BRAMBLE: Thanks.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. I do have a follow-up and it's only just to be fair. We talked a lot about Conrad's background. Did you get a chance to look at the PRIA backgrounds for Rick?
A. Yes.
Q. Anything that you noticed as far as his background and issues?
A. No, nothing.

Q. Anything? Okay. And I'm going to ask this last question and it is very subjective. You can qualify your answer any way you that would like, okay? But with the knowledge that you have now, not just of Conrad's background that was disclosed, but also the substandard events that occurred outside of PRIA but within 121 -- other 121 environments and the knowledge of some of the information that may not have been disclosed on his application, would Conrad, with this knowledge and through the process that you have, would he have been hired by Atlas?

A. That's just very speculative. It's in hindsight --

Q. You can qualify that.

A. -- and it's hard to -- in hindsight, it's easy to make a decision. So with the information I had at the time, we thought he was a good fit.

Q. Okay.

A. And he would've been a good pilot, yeah.

Q. Would a pilot's failure to disclose information on his application be constituted as a deceptive application?

A. Yes.

Q. Would that constitute termination or no employment --

A. Yes.

Q. -- offer being made?

A. Yes, if we find a discrepancy on an application which someone didn't reveal an employer, we either don't hire them or they are terminated unless there's some -- we always ask them.

Q. Um-hum.
A. We give them a fair shot.
Q. Right.
A. But generally yes, it results in termination.
Q. Even if they're already qualified and on the line? If they lied --
A. If their probationary --
Q. -- on their application and --
A. If they lied on their application, if they're probationary it's easier, but yes, we would, we would move to termination. I don't know if there's a statute of limitations if it's 5 years later, I don't know.
Q. Yeah.
A. But we have to -- we would consider termination --
Q. Right.
A. -- even if it's later.
Q. Any review, any audits of pilots' applications and verifying whether or not the information they provided you, and after they're hired, is accurate?
A. No.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Anybody else?
(No response.)
MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions for us?
MS. BORRELLI: No.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Then, obviously, when you leave, a lot

of times people will think of things that, after they've talked with us for a while, then they have these moments of clarity down in the future and they say oh, wow, I could've explained this a little bit better or I could've added this, this, this.

MS. BORRELLI: Right.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anything in our -- or anything that we didn't ask that you can think of that will help us in the investigation, considering it's purely a safety investigation?

MS. BORRELLI: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Well, if you can think of anything and you want to, please, you know, feel free to get a hold of us, okay? And thank you for being here.

MS. BORRELLI: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Denise C. Borrelli
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami, Florida
DATE:	June 4, 2019

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to the recording accomplished at the hearing.



David Martini
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *
*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) *
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS * Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019 *
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Interview of: JOSEPH DIEDRICH
Boeing 747/767 Fleet Captain
Atlas Air

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami Florida

Tuesday,
June 4, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WARREN ABRAMS, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LARRY WARD, Aviation Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration

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I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Joe Diedrich:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	23
By Mr. Abrams	27
By Mr. Ward	29
By Mr. Lee	33
By Mr. Howard	33
By Unidentified Speaker	34
By Mr. Lawrence	35
By Unidentified Speaker	47
By Unidentified Speaker	48
By Mr. Ward	50

I N T E R V I E W

MR. LAWRENCE: Again, thanks for being here. My name's David Lawrence. I'm the operations investigator with the NTSB for this particular accident. And on behalf -- and I know we said this the last time we met you guys here a couple months ago, we were down here on behalf of the whole Board and whole group here, we extend our condolences for the loss of your crew members.

And as you well know, our role here is to try and find out what happened so we can help prevent it from happening again. We're not here to apportion blame or anything like that. We're on the safety side.

One of the things we do, as you're also aware of, is that we bring in a whole group of individuals to assist us. And so, we use that as the party system to help the investigation: the operator, we have the union, manufacturer, and we also have the FAA. He'll explain his role here as well.

So, with that, I'll go ahead and allow everybody else who's at the table to explain -- introduce themselves and explain their role.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. DIEDRICH: I've met you.

DR. BRAMBLE: Nice to see you again.

MR. ABRAMS: Joe, Warren Abrams, air safety investigator with NTSB. Thanks for coming in.

MR. WARD: I'm an ops inspector with the FAA, and I want to point out, for purposes of today, I'm attached to the NTSB investigation, so there's no legal or enforcement possibility as a result of this. So it's all through the NTSB here today.

MR. DIEDRICH: Okay.

MR. LEE: Richard Lee, Boeing safety pilot.

MR. DIEDRICH: How are you?

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, 1224, Safety Committee.

MR. DIEDRICH: Hi, Tyson.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely, 7675.

MR. LAWRENCE: Have you guys met?

MR. BLAKELY: Just try to get rid of me one time.

MR. LAWRENCE: So --

MR. DIEDRICH: And Jen, of course, who I know.

MR. LAWRENCE: That was -- that's my next question. Obviously, anybody that gets a chance to talk with us has the opportunity to have one person sit in the interviews with them. Do you choose Jennifer to be your representative?

MR. DIEDRICH: (No audible response.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes?

MR. DIEDRICH: That's a yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, good. I have to do this --

MR. DIEDRICH: I know, I'm sorry.

MR. LAWRENCE: Got it. And so, we're going to be taking some notes. I'll ask some questions, and each one will have a chance

to ask some questions. I'll be taking some notes just to help me stay apprised of our process and maybe it might trigger me to do a follow-up question. So, I apologize if I'm taking notes and not making eye contact during our conversation. Don't take anything by that.

MR. DIEDRICH: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: If I ask you a question, Joe, that you don't know the answer to, please don't bother -- don't try to make it up. The answer I don't know is a perfectly acceptable answer. If you need clarification for one of my questions, stop me and ask me, okay?

MR. DIEDRICH: Yes, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Any questions about the process?

MR. DIEDRICH: No, no questions.

INTERVIEW OF JOSEPH DIEDRICH

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let me start off with the easy questions. Let me get your full name and age.

A. Joseph Diedrich. Do you need my middle initial and all that?

Q. Middle initial is fine.

A. Joseph Diedrich. I'm 65.

Q. And what's your title and position here at Atlas?

A. Senior director of Boeing 747/767 fleet captain.

Q. And you're on the Atlas side, not the Fuller side, right?

A. Correct.

Q. The date you were hired here at Atlas?
A. September 29th, 2013, 29th or 30th, somewhere around there.
Q. Great. And as senior director Boeing 747/Boeing 767 fleet captain, briefly describe your roles and responsibilities.
A. Okay. I'm in charge of the training programs for both fleets. I interface with the FAA on all training issues. I have people that help me on both fleets with the training, individual training modules. I'm also on the A4A training committee. I work with maintenance and work with the people that write the MELs on the airplane. I interface with Scott Anderson on flight procedures. And I interrelate with all the students coming through both of those two training programs. That's basically it.
Q. Excellent, thanks. Guesstimate of your total flight time. Just a guesstimate.
A. 16,000 hours.
Q. And how much of that as PIC?
A. Wow.
Q. Guesstimate.
A. I don't know, maybe 12,000 hours.
Q. And how much of that in 767, in type?
A. 1,000 hours.
Q. And if you could, Joe, just give me the CliffNotes --
A. To --.
Q. Yeah.
A. Okay, just to clarify. That's 757/767.

Q. 76 -- same, yeah, common type.
A. Same type.
Q. Exactly And if you could give me just the CliffNotes version of your aviation background.
A. Sure. Let's see, I'll go back as far as Air Berlin. It was a U.S. company that started over in Germany, later became a German company after the Wall came down. I was the 707 first officer. Then I became a 737 captain. I then went to America West when it started up in the first class. I was a 737 captain. Then I went to Northwest in 1984, flew the 72, the 75, 74, 320, 330. I was the fleet captain on the 320 and the 330 at Northwest. And then later, when we merged with Delta, I was still the fleet captain of the 330. So, I have 25 years with Northwest and 5 with Delta.
Q. And then, here in 2013.
A. Yes. Coming up on 6 years.
Q. Excellent. Did you know the captain or first officer on the accident flight?
A. I knew them, but not very well, just from training.
Q. And we'll get into that. I'm just curious if they were intimately or --
A. No, I met them both, yeah.
Q. Have you had a chance to fly with the first officer?
A. No.
Q. So, I guess let me ask this, all right, before we get into some of this. You had a chance to review Rick and Conrad's

training records before we had a chance to talk here?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Okay. Their training records, what about their background records, like their PRIA records and things like that?
A. No, I don't see the PRIA records. That's not part of what I do here.
Q. That answers one of my questions that we'll have down the road, but good, so you haven't looked at the PRIAs, but you have looked at their training records.
A. The training records while they were here, yes.
Q. Right. And by the way, if I ask a question in regard to their training, feel free to open them up and take a look at their training records or reference them wherever you need to.
A. That's what I brought.
Q. Great. So, let me start off with Rick Blakely's training. How familiar are you with it other than just your obvious review of it?
A. Well, I prepared a summary for me for everything that he went through.
Q. Okay.
A. And I pretty much started with, you know, where he had to repeat lessons or type ratings and stuff like that. So, do you want me to go through that?
Q. Yeah, just to general -- we'll start at the 30,000-foot level and then we'll kind of get a little bit deeper into more details

later, but tell me your review of his record.
A. Okay. In October of 2015, he repeated full flight No. 2, and full flight No. 4. Thirty-first of October, he incompleted his type rating recommend period. He received remedial recommend on November 1st, which he completed. He had a type rating November 2nd of 2015 that was satisfactory.
Q. Sorry, the date again on that?
A. Type rating was November 2, 2015. I know the instructors, if you want that.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. That was with Bill Neal. November 6th, he completed his LOFT. November 7th, he completed his CAT II/CAT III. And on November 11th, I put him in the PWP program for repair of need for additional training. And the reasons for that was he repeated full flight 2 and 4. And then, he incompleted his recommend ride.
He received Enhance OE, and that's something that's an Atlas thing that we have. I don't know if you've heard about that.
Q. I don't believe --
A. Enhanced OE is we look at people's background, and then we decide. As you know, the FAA minimum is four legs in 25 hours. And we give people Enhanced OE if they haven't had ocean crossings, large aircraft type rating or something. And that's eight legs in 40 hours. And we did that for a reason. Students were getting all concerned when they were approaching, you know, 40 hours, and they're going, oh, I'm almost double the normal

footprint, and they're getting all worried. We said, okay, based on your experience, we know you're going to take more, so we just schedule them for that. If they do well and they don't need it, the line check airman either calls me or sends me an email and says, "This person's doing great, can I sign him off a little early?" And as long as they have the four legs in 25 hours, which are the minimum, I normally okay it, unless there's something I know in their background where I said, no, just give them the full amount.

Q. So, you can release them between the minimum of the 25 and the enhanced to 40, depending on their progress.

A. Right. So, he had Enhanced OE. On the 27th of January, his pilot monitoring initial line check was satisfactory. And on the 28th, his pilot flying initial line check was satisfactory. Recurrent training that he had, February 5th of 2016, his PWP/RFT was complete. On May 18th, he had a PC warmup. Nineteenth, he had a satisfactory PC. On September 4th, he had another PC warmup. And on the 5th, he had a satisfactory on the PC. And then, on the 22nd of February, his PWP two-leg line check was satisfactory.

Q. What year is this?

A. 22 February of 2017.

Q. So, he was released out of PWP program.

A. March 17th of 2017, he had an RFT, which was completed. August 11th of 2017, he had a PC warmup. August 12th of 2017, a

satisfactory PC. And March 4th of 2018, he completed an RFT.

He then went into upgrade training as a captain. 23rd of August, 2018, PC recommend; 25th of August, 2018, PC satisfactory. I also gave him Enhanced OE on that, even though he'd come off the airplane. He actually requested it. And so, he finished up with 53 hours.

And then, on the 10th of October of 2018, he completed his pilot monitoring line check. And on the 11th of October, he completed his pilot flying line check. And then February 9th of 2019, he completed an (indiscernible). So he had no problems at all during his upgrade and ensuing period as a captain.

Q. Thanks for that review.

A. Yeah.

Q. I want to talk a little bit about the pilot or the PWP that you were talking about that you had him in. Explain the PWP to me that you have at Atlas. And then, after that explanation, tell me why he was placed in it. And as you said it was those two areas, but I'm kind of getting at was it subjective? Is there any criteria? How do you determine --

A. Well, yeah, the PWP, the proficiency watch program, is -- it's mandated. But we make it a little more restrictive. And back when Ricky was put in the PWP program, it was different than the PWP program later on. And it was -- I mean, it didn't give you much room for -- if you repeated any training of an initial program, anything at all, you were a candidate for the PWP. And

that's pretty punitive. I mean, when people go through training, of course they're going to stumble a little bit through initial training.

Q. Just a training event that -- any training or any proficiency check --

A. Training event. A flight crew member who fails to complete a training event in any training category, initial, transition, upgrade, or recurrent. So, and he had to repeat two different training events, and then he didn't get recommended for his recommendation ride. So, that's why he was put in it. We subsequently, in 2016, amended the PWP program.

Q. In what regards? Did you make it less punitive?

A. Well, no, I wouldn't say that. It was -- we made it fit what we had more often. In other words, if somebody repeated something in initial training, that wouldn't automatically put them -- it was repetitive, and then it was -- I can read it to you here. It was -- you'd have to demonstrate a performance deficiency, and subsequently receive an unsatisfactory grade on a checking event. And then, it goes on further. I mean, we could put someone in PWP after they're out of the schoolhouse here and they're in say, OE. We've had to bring people back into the schoolhouse and stuff like that. And so, then -- and a lot of that is subjective by the fleet captain.

Q. I'm sorry, I missed that. When did you subsequently amend the PWP to where it wasn't the one single training?

A. I think it was April of 2016.
Q. Okay, April.
A. And just so you know, I didn't -- Joe doesn't get to say that. It goes before a committee and then the FAA has to approve it, because it's in our FOTM.
Q. Yeah, I was going to ask you. You said it was mandated, but it's mandated as an internal Atlas policy, right, or --
A. No, the Pilot Proficiency Watch Program is -- it's a regulation. When you get into AQT, it's called special tracking.
Q. But you're the ultimate arbitrator -- or arbiter of who determines -- who goes into PWP. I know you don't develop the program or the amended program, but --
A. No, but it --
Q. -- you do the --
A. Yes. I mean, some of it's black and white, but some of it is subjective.
Q. Why is it that the fleet captain, I know you have ownership of the training program, where's the director of training? Where's Scott in on the develop -- the determination if a pilot goes into a pilot watch program, since it typically occurs from information garnered during the training process?
A. Where's Scott -- well, Scott was part of developing the change in the PWP program, but ultimately, all the training stuff falls under me. But quite often, you know, I could seek his counsel or whatever and say, "What do you think?" But ultimately,

it's in the FOTM that I'm the one responsible for who goes into PWP. I'm the one that sends the letter out to the pilot that enters them into the program and the exit.

Q. So, when you placed -- back on November 11th in 2015, when you placed Ricky in, as a new hire FO into the PWP, that was under the old --

A. Correct.

Q. And I don't mean to make it sound like it's the more punitive, but you would agree it was just a single-failure process that triggered somebody into that PWP. So, Rick fell under that back in 2015.

A. Correct.

Q. You've had a chance to review Conrad's training records as well.

A. Uh-huh.

Q. We'll go through that in just a second, but he failed a type ride back on 2017, September 22nd. And under what remedial training before being recommended for a second attempt. He had also had substandard and normal on the ATP. So, I'm kind of curious. Why wasn't Conrad placed in a Pilot Watch Program with those substandard events since they were multiple?

A. Okay. Number one, the oral -- I mean, I don't look at that as that has nothing to do with how well a pilot can pilot an aircraft. So, I generally don't count that as one unless there is a bunch of other ones.

A couple other things with Conrad, one day his sim partner came into my office and said, "This isn't working." And I said, "What isn't working?" He said, "Well, my sim partner." And I said, "Okay, what's the problem?" And he said, "Well, I just don't get along with him, and he's holding me back." I get this quite often. And so, I talk it out. And this guy was, I mean, a whiz kid. And he said, you know, "I don't want to study with him. I don't want to do anything, and he's holding me back." I said, okay, so we -- I decided to split them up. And so, that means we need seat support for each one of them going through. And so, I continued his partner on. And we went and looked at, okay, what sim time and instructors do we have available? This happened to be right at the same time we have our big instructor meeting, check airman meeting. And all the instructors are scheduled at this meeting. We have, like 400 people there. And so, we had no instructors and really no -- just the instructors it took for the scheduled events. And so, we didn't have the sim time or the instructors. So, he had to sit. I was a little worried about that. As a matter of fact, I commented that I don't want him to sit for too long, because I'm the guy that gets every excuse there is under the book when somebody's not doing well. And I didn't want him to have that as an excuse. But it still took 10 days.

So, because of that, he was -- had completed full flight 1 and 2 with his partner. Because he sat for 10 days, I started him over on full flight 1. And then, around full flight 6, Hurricane

Irma decided to come into town. And Boeing shut down. We all shut down. We ran an evacuation flight to get everybody out of town. I don't know if you remember that, but we flew quite a few people out in an airplane that we brought here. And so, Conrad got to sit again for 10 or 12 days. He also had damage to his home, and he was caring for his father. And when we resumed, we were so far behind in everything, I didn't have the luxury of saying, okay, you've had another extended period. I'm going to go back some. We put him right in where he left off. He pressed on just fine. He got to his recommend ride and was recommended without any issues. He went in for his type rating with Bill Peavley. And our FAA guy was in town, so he -- no, I think Bill needed to get his observation done. I think that's what it was. And quite a number of pilots get very nervous when the FAA shows up. And he didn't do very well. So, I was a little surprised, considering he went through his recommend ride was fine. And he really didn't have any issues going through full flight.

So, what I always do, I have all the examiners send me a text whether they pass or fail. If they pass, I always call them up and congratulate them. It's just something I've been doing for years. They're always surprised by that, but I enjoy those phone calls. And, of course, if they fail, I want to talk about what happened. So, Bill gave me the scoop, and I was surprised how much stuff there was. So then, we set up another remedial period and he did okay, and he subsequently passed his type rating.

I think I got all that right. Yep. So then, he also went out for -- I'm sorry. He completed his CAT II/CAT III. He completed takeoff and landing sim period. That was something that we added to the program. And he completed his LOFT. And then we sent him out for OE. And he was on Enhanced OE, as well, because of his background, not because -- as I explained before how we determine that. He had small airplane experience, no Atlantic/Pacific crossings.

So he had no issues on OE. His pilot monitoring line check was satisfactory on the 21st of November. His pilot flying was satisfactory on the 22nd of November.

And on recurrence that he had, he had in R-LOFT. We instituted that program. You probably heard about that from other people. He completed that. And in July, he had a PC warmup. And on July 9th, he had a PC that was satisfactory. And then on the 7th of January, 2019, he had an R-LOFT that was completed. And that's his training history.

So, the original question was why was he not in PWP?

Q. Uh-huh.

A. I just looked at it and he really didn't have that many issues in training, particularly flying the airplane, except for when he -- I think he had nerves when the FAA showed up. And I took into account the two gaps in training that he had that most people don't get. And he had other things on his mind with the damage on his house and his dad, and that he did fine on his

remedial recommend and his subsequent rating. So then, as what I always do, is I say, well, let's see how they do on OE. And he had no problems. So, that's why I didn't put him in PWP. And in retrospect, he had no problems on any of his recurrent subsequent stuff, either.

Q. Appreciate that. At any point in time, Joe, did you have an instructor or check airman or somebody, a line pilot, anybody approach you and voice concerns about Conrad's proficiency and performance in the cockpit?

A. No.

Q. Do you guys have anything -- a voluntary reporting system for instructors to maybe provide the identified information --

A. For instructors?

Q. For instructors to -- I know that down the ASAP and things like that, do you have any means for instructors to maybe get information to you de-identified?

A. No, but I have a hard time believing that -- I mean, no instructor would mind coming and talking to me about any issues. And as far as -- well, the answer is no.

Q. Were you involved in the hiring process?

A. No.

Q. Is it just not part of one of your defined responsibilities or --

A. No, early on, I was involved in some of the interviews, but we do interviews all over the place. And it was, they either

wanted either Scott or I to be here. And since Scott was involved, I just didn't do interviews anymore.

Q. I know that we alluded to it at the very beginning, but let me ask you, do you have anything to do with the review of the PRIA pilot records --

A. No.

Q. -- or any background checks on any of the pilots interviewed?

A. No.

Q. And I think you said you have not seen Conrad's PRIA background check information.

A. No.

Q. Or his history.

A. No.

Q. Has anybody informed you of his background?

A. I knew from his résumé, because we put the résumés in the training jackets. You know, I can't even remember. I believe he came from Mesa.

Q. Any information about his performance at Mesa or why he left Mesa --

A. No.

Q. -- or anything that you know about?

A. No.

Q. Other than that.

A. No.

Q. Is that something the fleet captain would want to probably

know about one of the new hire pilots coming in?
A. No, not necessarily. I mean, I take what I'm given, and I'm assuming they went through other people. I don't see any need to second guess anybody. I pretty much care what they're like once I get them and --
Q. I'm going to ask you a couple of systems question. It's not a type rating at all or anything like that. This is just a general information.
A. Okay.
Q. I'm curious if you, as the fleet captain, have ever been made aware, either from line training or anything of an inadvertent selection of the go-around switch in flight?
A. I've not been aware of anybody who's done it, but, I mean, I know that it has been done and it's generally someone coming off of 747.
Q. And that would be because?
A. Well, because their auto-thrust disconnect is where our TO/GA switch is.
Q. Right. How often do you get on the (indiscernible) of the line, or do you?
A. Not anymore. Now I'm too old.
Q. Did you?
A. Yeah, I used to -- I tried to get out, you know, once a quarter. And I did go through the Atlas 76 training program for a bunch of -- I was already type rated, but I wanted -- one, to fly

the airplane, you have to, but, two, as the guy that was the head of the program, I wanted to see what our program was like.

Q. Yeah, your 76 was back in the Northwest/Delta days.

A. Yes, it's --.

Q. Okay. How did you like the training program?

A. I liked it. I was in a class of one. I was the first guy to go through, so I got all the attention.

Q. It's good to be king. (Laughter.)

Oh, I was going to ask you, since you did fly sometimes on the 76. I don't know if you remember this experience at all, but say, when the co-pilot's flying. He's in the right seat. He's doing the expedited descent. He's going to use the speed brakes. Did you ever notice if he went over the thrust levers or behind the thrust levers to extend the brakes?

A. I can't ever recall a time when somebody went under. I mean, it's always over, because that lever is quite tall, for one thing. I'm assuming it was designed that way for a reason. But you reach over on top and pull it back.

Q. Ever have a display issue, that it would go out in flight and you would have to use EFI switch to change the (indiscernible)?

A. I never had one, no.

Q. Okay.

A. But I'm familiar with it.

Q. Why are you familiar with it?

A. Because it's something that you can do in training or -- you

just flip it over to -- so, you know, you've got your display back.

Q. Right. Another question --

A. It's also part of the oral exam.

Q. Yeah, systems knowledge, right? Do you recall if there was a checklist for that or anything?

A. I don't believe there is, no.

Q. And then, have you ever tried to disconnect the autopilot by use of force on the control yoke. Or do you know if it would even disconnect?

A. No, I've never tried that, and, yes, I know it won't disconnect.

Q. How do you know it won't disconnect?

A. Because I was taught that. It's not one of the things that disconnects the autopilot.

MR. LAWRENCE: I've got a couple more, but I think I'm going to let somebody else ask the questions for a second, because you're probably tired of hearing from me.

Bill?

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. I just have a couple things. So, just so we have the timeline down, when did you stop being involved in pilot hiring interviews?

A. I'm sorry, I don't remember.

Q. Do you have a sense of like, was it 5 years ago?

A. Oh, no, no. It -- well, when I first got here, I wasn't involved in it. And then I became involved.
Q. Oh, you came in 2013.
A. Yes. And then, I haven't been involved for, I don't know, at least 3 years.
Q. And just to confirm, were you involved in Conrad or Rick's hiring interviews?
A. No. Not that I recall, no. So, just to clarify. Every once in a while, if they're doing interviews down here, we grabbed a few people that -- like, from what was that airline over from Scandinavia? We hired a few of their pilots. They're, like 787-qualified and stuff.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Norwegian?
MR. DIEDRICH: Norwegian, yeah.
A. We'd get a couple in and they asked me if I'd sit in on a couple of their interviews. I would do that, the personnel part of it. I'd say I might have done five interviews in the last 3 years.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. Did you review the instructor notes from Conrad's failed type, first type ride?
A. From Bill Peavley?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. I talked to him on the phone over it quite a bit, because I'm involved in all the remedial training when that gets written up.

Q. And how are you involved in that?
A. We take a look at the instructor notes, and if I have to, I'll call the instructor up again, because we need to tailor the remedial training for what they did not do well on their check ride. And then, it's written up, and sometimes someone else, like right now, maybe Kyle who works for me writes it up and then I have to approve it. And a lot of times, I'll add something or change something.
Q. So, this is before they would conduct the remedial training, you approve the -- for issues that will be addressed or --
A. Right, and there's a form that's filled out. And that instructor looks at that form, goes over it with the student in the briefing. This is what we're going to be doing. And any questions on any of it, stuff like that.
Q. In your assessment of the issues that Conrad had in that failed type were that they stemmed from what?
A. I'd have to go look at that. I mean, I can't remember that far back of everything, but I thought it was unusual, considering he had no issues on his recommend ride. And, you know, normally, it would just be one issue or two issues. As I recall, it was at least three or four.
DR. BRAMBLE: Do you happen to have that handy, the comments from that?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I do.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. If you wouldn't mind just reviewing that, can you give me your impressions of those difficulties and what your thoughts are in terms of the nature of --
A. Want me to read it off?
Q. If you like.
A. Sure. "Four-hour remedial period, area of emphasis and review, situational awareness was lacking."
Q. Is this the -- actually the previous one, the failed type ride? Is that --
A. No, this is the remedial training for the failed type ride.
Q. Would you have reviewed the previous one or not?
A. Yes.
Q. Oh, okay, let's look at the previous training for the failed type ride comments.
A. I got to find that.
Q. Okay, I had trouble finding it, too. That's it.
A. So, he failed on an RNAV non-precision approach, steep turns, CRMTEM. It says, "Non-precision approach, incorrect procedures, unstable approach, steep turns exceeded all PTS limits. CRMTEM during emergency, ignored TM attempts to address emergency. Judgment: Situational awareness very low. Oversped flaps on departure." And he was out of sequence procedurally, leading to questionable decisions, was the comment.
Q. And then, what was your take on -- or what would your take have been to the best of your recollection on the reasons for that

and the nature of that.
A. Okay, some of those was -- okay, steep turns, I mean, everybody knows if they screwed up on them and they get -- he got off, apparently on altitude and airspeed. Some pilots are able to put that behind and move on. Some are not. Some of them start tubing the rest of the ride, because they can't put the previous step behind them. Plus, the FAA was in there, which I'm sure made him nervous, and he made mistakes on his RNAV non-precisional approach. He had none of those issues on his recommend ride. So, I said, let's give him his remedial training, see how he does on that, and we'll go from there. He did fine on his remedial training and he did fine on his subsequent, as I recall, he had no issues on his ensuing check ride.
DR. BRAMBLE: I think that's all I have, thanks.
MR. DIEDRICH: Sure.
MR. LAWRENCE: Warren.
BY MR. ABRAMS:
Q. Sure, just a few. Your 76 -- how many 767s do you have, approximately?
A. Forty.
Q. Are they all ETOPS certified?
A. No.
Q. Approximately how many ETOPS certified 767s?
A. Maybe 25.
Q. When they go out on their Enhanced OE, is it all domestic?

A. No.
Q. Does it specify that some of it has to be international? Some of it has to be domestic? Or --
A. Yes, we work with the OE schedulers, and we have a lot of unique things, which is why a little more OE here is not unusual. They get Atlantic crossing. As you know that's a lot more difficult than the Pacific, is nothing. We make sure they get DHL flying, because that's totally different. And we try to get them some Amazon flying, but that's fairly similar to the DHL, but not really. So, we give them a mix of everything.
Q. What makes DHL flying different or significant?
A. Flying in and out of that hub, sitting through the sort and the whole weight and balance procedure at the very end, the last 4 minutes is fairly stressful as they're closing the door and pushing for on-time departure and you have to do a load verification and all that kind of stuff. It just goes zip, zip, zip, zip. And if they don't get that on OE, it's pretty tough.
Q. You said go through that hub. Where is that hub?
A. Cincinnati.
Q. With approximately 25 767s that are ETOPS certified, do you have an ETOPS --
A. It's probably a little less than that.
Q. Okay. Well, approximately. You have an ETOPS steering committee that gets final input?
A. Yes, we do.

Q. And how many people within flight ops are on the ETOPS steering committee?
A. We had flight ops. There's myself. JB's on there. Mark Hoover's on there.
Q. So, three, okay.
A. Yep.
Q. And do you hire the 767 instructors or is that something Scott Anderson does?
A. I do.
Q. And approximately how many 767 instructors do you have? Approximately.
A. Forty-five. I'm not -- that doesn't include the line checker.
Q. Yeah, but the -- so PCPs and APBs?
A. Yes.
Q. And sim instructors. We're different than Delta where we came from where we're all in the same boat.
MR. ABRAMS: Thank you, that's all I have.
MR. DIEDRICH: Sure.
MR. LAWRENCE: Larry?
BY MR. WARD:
Q. Joe, I just wanted to clarify something. You said you're both the 747 and 767 fleet captain.
A. Uh-huh.
Q. So there's just one fleet captain for both fleets?

A. Yes. We're a little unique. We have two fleet offices, though, guys that help me. They're all DEs. There's two on the 76, and they have an office near me, and two on the 74. And so, they -- you know, they handle a lot of technical calls, technical questions. They do a lot of managing, but it all comes through me.

Q. So, you are the sole fleet captain --

A. Yes.

Q. -- for the airline. I got to imagine that's a pretty comprehensive, extensive work load.

A. Yep, it's -- but it's doable. I'm still here.

(Laughter.)

Q. Okay, moving on to the PWP. You spoke to -- I think you made the context -- or made the statement that you seek counsel on the PWP from Scott and perhaps other controls. Could you kind of elaborate on that?

A. Well, you know, sometimes I'll go -- if I'm on the fence whether somebody really, you know, should be on it or not, which isn't very often, but I'll just happen to bring up, if I'm at a meeting with Scott or something, or sometimes Scott'll go, are you putting that pilot in PWP and then we'll talk about it.

Q. So, the PWP program was revised in 2016. Rick was placed in the PWP prior to that.

A. Correct.

Q. Would he have been placed in that under the new parameters?

A. I believe he would, yes, because he had repetitive in full flight training. Now, there was a difference back then, we would repeat individual lessons if somebody didn't do well. And then, when we redid all that, and we changed, we added stuff to the training program, footprint, and stuff like that, we looked at -- well, because the rules still haven't changed of after three additional training periods, your job starts to be in question.

Q. Okay, so with Rick, you were talking about full flight 2, full flight 4.

A. Right.

Q. And the recommendation rides.

A. Right.

Q. So, there was three.

A. So, we changed it to, we don't -- because it was unfair -- if he didn't do well on a couple of maneuvers in full flight 2, you're going to get those maneuvers again on full flight 3 and full flight 4 and maybe you're going to get signed off on it. So, we said, okay, we're going to make it. You're going to go all the way to the recommend ride. And when you don't get recommended, we're going to have a list of things that you need work on. And that's when we're going to remediate you. And you get up to three remedial sessions, if you hadn't had any in fixed base, for instance.

Q. So, let's shift to Conrad for a second. So, number one, you did not really consider the oral failure as a big deal, I think

you -- to paraphrase what you said.
A. Well, it's a big deal, but it's not indicative of how they're going to fly the airplane on the line.
Q. Captain Peavley mentioned that he had made some comments in the fixed base portion of Conrad's training?
A. Yes.
Q. So, my question to you then is would you have considered fixed base notes.
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And you -- so, I assume you did.
A. Yes.
Q. And you still would not have put Conrad into a PWP.
A. The answer is no, because I took other mitigating circumstances and what had happened to him in training.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean, that was not very -- I wouldn't want to go through a training program that was disjointed like that. It really wasn't anyone's fault, but --
Q. Sure. All right, shifting gears. You work routinely with your 76 APM, Alex?
A. Oh, yes.
Q. Did you have any conversations with Alex regarding the observed type rating failure? Do you recall?
A. I'm sure I did, but I don't recall what they were.
MR. WARD: Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

MR. LAWRENCE: Rich?

BY MR. LEE:

Q. Just a couple of things. You mentioned you have around 40 767s. The flight deck configurations do you have an idea of how many configurations you have from the flight deck?

A. Hundreds. I don't know if it's that many, but it's a lot.

Q. So, with that, is any of those differences covered in your training, initial training?

A. Okay, we have a couple of things. We have one airplane, 767-Mike-whiskey that has a separate just learning module differences. And then, all the other ones, we created a thing in Comply 365 that we have the pilots look at. They look at their tail number and it tells them everything on what's different on this airplane, what this airplane has and stuff like that.

MR. LEE: That's all I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: What'd you call that, the online access that shows the differences?

MR. DIEDRICH: Comply 365. And then look up their tail number. And there's a thing in there that says differences. There's a thing in which manuals apply to that

MR. LAWRENCE: Tyson?

BY MR. HOWARD:

Q. Just one. You mentioned that Captain Blakely requested advanced OE on his captain OE. Did he say why or was there an agreement between you guys on, you know, why he wanted that or,

you know, the reason for it?
A. He just -- he knew that he had problems when he went through in the beginning. And he just said any extra training I can get will be -- and I'm not one if a pilot wants extra training, I don't turn them down. Actually, I was quite happy. I actually think Mark Hoover suggested that he ask me for that.
MR. HOWARD: That's all I got.
MR. LAWRENCE: JB?
MR. BLAKELY: Nothing, David. Thank you.
MR. DIEDRICH: You can ask me questions.
(Laughter.)
MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else have any follow-ups?
BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
Q. I just wanted one more set of numbers, a rough hack at number of 747 and 76 pilots at the time of the accident just so we have that.
A. A rough number of pilots?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. 1,900 would be my guess.
Q. And do you know breakdown by those two fleets or -- I know we can get the official numbers, but --
A. I want to say 800 on the 76 and the rest would be 74.
Q. That's good. I just wanted a ballpark. I think I asked you about 2 months ago, but I didn't get it officially.
A. Probably gave you different answer. I don't keep track of

that really.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Just a few follow-up questions. Voluntary reports, I would some specific more to the instructors earlier, but does Atlas have an ASAP program for the pilots?

A. Yes.

Q. FOQA program?

A. Yes and no. We call it a faux FOQA program. It's not official. We do in the fact that -- but we don't have a gatekeeper and stuff like that like a real FOQA program has.

Q. You don't have an MOU with the union and the FAA as far as the access to the information or use of the information?

A. No.

Q. Do you incorporate the information that you get from these -- either access recorders or QARs or whatever you have on the aircraft?

A. Yes.

Q. How do you incorporate that information?

A. A lot of it would be in distance learning recurrent stuff. And we talk about it in recurrent ground school. The CRM folks really concentrate on that. We make videos of which our pilots really like, because they're in-house videos on Atlas issues. And, you know, pilots always, when they see something on Continental. They go, oh, that's Continental. We wouldn't do anything like that. But when it's your own airline, they sit up

and pay attention. So, we have those CRM videos that we show in recurrent ground school.
Q. Seems like you're giving a lot of information that the FOQA program would do. Why don't you have a formalized FOQA program?
A. We're in labor negotiations. I think we'll get it, because I think everybody realizes it's great. It's got to be something written into the contract, that's why.
Q. Do you have irregularity reports that pilots complete and provide to the company?
A. Yeah, they're called FCRs.
Q. FCRs.
A. Yes, FCRs, flight crew reports.
Q. Some companies call the FCIRs for irregular reports. Same thing. So, it's information that comes to the company from either pilot?
A. Yes.
Q. Where does that information go to?
A. Everybody. And eventually, I mean, the SRC Department looks at them, and then they let us know if we have --
Q. Safety recommendation or a safety and compliance, right?
A. Right. If we have to do a response to them or not. But, we all get them. And a lot of them don't apply to us, you know, they're crew mill things or hotel things, and then there's some that do apply.
Q. Has Atlas undergone a LOSA?

A. Do we have a LOSA program?
Q. Yeah, have you done a LOSA at any point in time?
A. No.
Q. Why not?
A. That, again, is something that's got to be written into the -- my understanding is, it's something that has to be written into the contract, because we use, you know, other pilots to ride on the jump seat.
Q. We learned a little bit and talked earlier with some other people about the Training Review Board. Do you have any input or participation in the Training Review Board?
A. I do.
Q. Talk to me about that.
A. Okay. I'm one of the members on the TRB. There's three of us, Scott Anderson, Scott Welty, and myself. Scott Welty's one of the chief pilots. There is protocol for when it's invoked, and it's after the third remedial session that didn't go with a recommend or a second check ride failure. We convene a TRB and we discuss what further actions will happen after that, if we're going to provide more training or if we're going to suspend training.
Q. Where's the -- per the Training Review Board, where are the guidance and criteria for inclusion in the Training Review Board to find, in what -- the FOM or the Flight Operations Training Manual?

A. No, it's not anywhere except the guidance that we have, because it's not in any -- it's not a required thing to do. It's just that there is a -- in the pilot contract, there's specific guidelines when you have to provide more training and stuff like that. And then, it just says at the end there the pilot's status will be determined by the company. And it will be in the next contract, I know that. But it currently is not in there. And so, we just decided, well, I can't make those decisions in a void. I'd want other people involved in it, because it generates a big discussion. And quite often we ask for more information, and then we'll decide whether -- I mean, if we have a pilot that is one more period is going to get him there, we're going to give it to him.

Q. What guidance do you and Scott and Scott use? I mean, you've got to have it someplace written. You said it was defined and so, there has to be something somewhere that says when that is. This is found --

A. Well, one is hanging up on my bulletin board. But it's not in a manual yet, because it's -- you're going to have Scott after me. He can probably describe it better than me. But this is just a training protocol guidance that we use, because we try to keep it the same for every pilot, so nobody can say favoritism. Why did you do this for this guy and not for that guy? And it's not in the FOTM, because the FOTM is FAA-approved. And it's not in the FOM, and we're not required to have a TRB. It's just

something that we do.
Q. If a pilot finds himself in the Training Review Board or in that process --
A. So, let me go back. The things that are in there, it's in the pilot contract about the number of remedial periods that you get and stuff like that.
Q. Yeah.
A. It's just -- there's no mention of the TRB.
Q. Got it. But if a pilot comes before you and Scott and Scott at a TRB, because he's triggered something that's going to go before the Training Review Board --
A. The pilot is generally not there.
Q. If the information, if he's going to be reviewed by the three of you pilots, you management pilots, is that a jeopardy review?
A. It is. Or it can be.
Q. Okay.
A. Okay, so prior to that is what I think you're alluding to. When the pilot gets to that point, prior to the third offense, we have a counseling session. I do with the pilot or a representative if I'm not here. And say, these are the issues you're having. Should the next remedial session not be successful, the TRB will be convened. And we explain to them the whole process, so they're not caught totally unaware.
Q. I believe, correct me if I'm wrong, but you said two substandard events could trigger --

A. A counseling session.
Q. Could trigger a counseling session.
A. Yes.
Q. Which is part of the TRB.
A. Well, it's telling them that should the next one not be successful --
Q. Okay.
A. -- the TRB will be convened. So, they're not surprised. And then -- because most of them don't even know what a TRB is, but they do after I talk to them.
Q. Would two FAA certificate actions or substandard events -- where would that place a pilot in jeopardy of the -- or going before the TRB or anything? To certificate, not proficiency checks or anything or training events, but two FAA-exposed --
A. You mean, like a type rating.
Q. Yes.
A. Okay, well we treat the type rating and the PC the same. And it depends on whether you're a new hire, probationary pilot or someone who's off probation, because as I explained the difference, in the contract, there's a training part and then there's a checking part. So, once you get to the checking part, that starts something all over again. So, you fail you first PC, and that's called -- or type rating. That's called the UQE, an unqualification event. So, the contract provides for you get a remedial training. If you don't get remediated recommended, you

get another remedial training period. If you get recommended and you pass everything's done. The UQE goes away. If you fail, that's your second UQE. You then get another remedial period. That remedial period, if you don't get recommended, that counts as a third UQE. If you get recommended and you subsequently don't pass, that's a third UQE. So, your third UQE, a TRB is convened. And your status in the company, as the contract says, is determined, and that normally does not go well.

You can, however, after the second TRB, when you get counseled -- I mean, UQE, you can elect to go back to your previous equipment. New hires don't have a previous equipment, so they don't get that. If you go back to your previous equipment, you carry the two UQEs with you. And you have to pass a PC on that equipment. If you pass, all the UQEs are wiped clean. But you would be in the PWP, obviously.

Q. This is information is basically part of the CBT.

A. Yes.

Q. CBA, I should say.

A. Right.

Q. Collective bargaining agreement.

A. It's all in there, in Section 11.

Q. Section 11 of the CBA?

A. Yes.

Q. So, I want to go back to Conrad's substandard events. Before his type rating, his initial. And I understand what you were

saying as far as his reviews, remedial training, because he had a substandard oral exam. And you said it was -- doesn't really indicate how he could fly an airplane. But that substandard generates a notice of disapproval that goes on his FAA certification record, correct?

A. That's correct.

Q. And brings in exposure in FAA, either the APM or somebody like that, would they have any kind of knowledge of his notice of disapproval at, let's say, for the first one, the oral.

A. Yes.

Q. How is that done? Is that part of the standard notification to the CMO?

A. Yes.

Q. So, was the CMO or the APM or POI, any of the -- POI or APM, were they ever notified of Conrad's substandard oral?

A. Yes.

Q. Any input provided by the FAA or anything done?

A. Not that I recall.

Q. What about his subsequent substandard practical test? It's the same thing?

A. Yes. They get notified of that.

Q. And obviously, they were notified, because he was sitting in the APM (indiscernible).

A. Right.

Q. What was the FAA's response to that after the FAA saw the

substandard ride? Did they come to you and speak to you about --
A. As I mentioned earlier, I don't recall that Alex and I spoke about it.
Q. Is that unusual?
A. No. Usually, after a second one, we speak about it. And they always have the option of coming back and sitting in on the second.
Q. Okay.
A. I also have to say, at that time, I was not in Miami. I mean, I was still on the phone and everything with everybody, but I wasn't in Miami when he failed that.
Q. You're still responsible for the program, though?
A. Yes, oh, yes.
Q. Oh, yeah. In your experience, in your time as the fleet captain, have you been part of or seen any 709 rides conducted by the FAA on a 76 new hire?
A. I'm trying to remember. I don't think -- did Angel have a 709 ride? I don't think so. But I was familiar with one on the 74.
Q. Was that a new hire?
A. No.
Q. Ask you about a few of these. Do you have any kind of formalized -- and maybe this is in the CBA, but a formalized three strikes and then you're out policy for new hires?
A. I'm not sure what you mean by that, but --

Q. Three failures and you're gone?
A. Like I mentioned before, three remedial training sessions, there's a very good chance that you're gone.
Q. Well, you go before a review. My questions more toward it's more of an absolute gate to their walls. Three for a new hire and you're no longer considered --
A. No, it's left up to the TRB.
Q. Okay, so the TRB would have an opportunity to review and keep somebody employed, even after three substandards.
A. By keeping them employed, it means we give them another remedial session. I've never heard of one that may have passed four, though. Like I said, if you are this close, in the opinion of the instructor that gave it, we're not going to throw all that effort away without giving them another chance.
Q. You have a lot of experience in the industry. You've kind of seen it from years of experience and kind of perspective. I'm kind of curious about the quality of the first officers Atlas is seeing coming in now, because they're going through the training program and then you get them for the operational side and the OE and out on the line. Can you comment on the quality and the experience you're seeing these days?
A. As compared to earlier times?
Q. Compared to wherever you want to start.
A. Well, I think we get a lot of quality people. I mean, we have a very high success rate of people getting through the

program. We had a period here, especially, I mean, prior to me getting here and right after I got here, that we were getting people from all these other carriers that were failing, cargo carriers and stuff, that had tons of wide-body time. I mean, they obviously, was pretty easy for them going through and stuff like that.

Q. When you say they were carriers that were failing, you mean the carriers were failing --

A. Yes.

Q. -- not the pilots.

A. The carriers were failing.

Q. I just wanted to make sure.

A. World is an example, you know, Centurion, stuff like that. So, we were getting people with thousands of hours of DC-10 time or 747 time. And we're now getting people from CRJs and stuff like that. Several of them whiz through the program and others -- almost all of them make it through the program. So, I'd say we're getting a lot of high quality people.

Q. Is that industrywide? I know you talk to other operators, 3A, 4A, and such. Is everybody seeing the same type of thing?

A. Right. And everybody's reacting by -- like we did, adding more training, changing the footprint, tailoring the training to the people you get.

Q. And since the accident, I know there's limited information that you have and such, but I'm curious if Atlas has implemented

any flight operations or training changes since the accident, whether for any reason or knowledge of the accident or not, just curious if since February, has any changes occurred?
A. Well, one big change that was actually in the works prior to the accident, but it took place pretty close to that, for years, we've been complaining to our FAA that you're forcing us to train our new hires in the left seat, because they're getting a type rating. And then we turn them loose for OE in the right seat. We want to train them in the right seat where they belong. And we were finally allowed to do that. And that was in January '19.
Q. Right-seat training.
A. Yes. We used to call it wrong-seat training here and now it's correct-seat training. And it took us quite a while to get that, but we did get it. And it, I think, has been a huge change. And one of the things we had to do was because of that, we added a landing simulator at the end of the program where we put them in the right seat, gave them multiple take-off and landings and everything from their correct seat. And we still kept that after we instituted the right-seat training.
Q. Any other changes you can think of?
A. We added a simulator period at the very beginning where they go in and they -- they were coming off of smaller airplanes so they get in a simulator when they've been in the fixed base, the wow factor, and so we said, okay, this simulator period, you're just going to fly the airplane around. We got the autopilot,

you're going to see what it feels like and everything. You're going to learn how to adjust the seats and do all that. So, on full flight 1, we can get down to business. That'd be a huge improvement. We also instituted the R-LOFT. That wasn't as a result of the accident, but that was to help us transition to AQP and also focus more on the CRM parts of running the cockpit.

Q. A little bit outside of your ballpark or lanes of responsibility, but just curious if you guys have a formal SMS program or have it --

A. Yes, we do.

Q. Formalized?

A. Yep.

Q. In your role as fleet captain, were you -- how do you interact with SMS program in safety?

A. Primarily, just when they call me in for it or -- and we also have a safety risk assessment that I get active in. When we want to make a change to something, we have to write up a safety risk assessment, primarily for everything we do now. That's part of it.

MR. LAWRENCE: We'll talk to the safety guys, too, to get the whole -- but I was just curious where you came in.

Anybody else have any other questions for Joe?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just have one.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. So you had mentioned that two UQEs would trigger a counseling

session.
A. Yes.
Q. Would a failed oral be a UQE or is it the whole type as a whole that would be one UQE?
A. No. The UQE is when you get to the check rides and the --
Q. Okay. That answers my question.
BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
Q. Joe, you've -- I understand that you, Scott, and Scott make up the TRB. Do you ever consult or talk with the IBT about your recommendations --
A. Constantly. I mean, the training committee chairman, I mean, we talk all the time. And their advised in the first onset if a student's having problems. And they talk to them as well and stuff. And they always know -- and on the counseling form, there's even a checkmark that says the IBT has been notified.
Q. Just one more thing. So, obviously, Conrad had some training difficulties, and Conrad was involved in an accident, how many Conrads do you see in a year or people with similar or greater magnitude training difficulties that you have to make a decision about?
A. Well, that's kind of a tough question. I need some clarification on that.
Q. Well, I guess what I'm getting at is, my impression of your account is that Conrad -- the decision that Conrad was sort of an in between case. He had difficulty, but he wasn't clearly

somebody that needed to be removed from the program. He was somebody that you needed to give some remedial and see how he did. You had to make a decision about whether or not to do that.

A. To remove him from the program? He wasn't anywhere near the point where we'd remove him from the program based on all the things. But the only thing I could say is, after he got out on the line, he had zero issues, except for this one.

Q. So, to refocus a little bit, I'm trying to get a sense of, in the universe of pilots that have some degree of training difficulty that you have to get involved with in some way, where does he fall in that universe? Is he just one of 50 people you're dealing with a year?

A. Yes.

Q. And were his -- how serious were his training difficulties compared to that universe of people you see in a year. What was your impression of his training difficulties?

A. I'd say, except for that one type rating failure that he had, that quite frankly was a surprise, based on his previous stuff, I would say he was not in the top at all. I mean, that's -- it didn't make much sense except we see that when the FAA shows up, people sometimes they crumble. They shouldn't, but they do. That's just a fact.

Q. And is 50 sort of a -- I mean, is that sort of roughly an appropriate order of magnitude of people with training difficulties that you might have to weigh in on?

A. Depends on the year, how many people we're hiring and stuff. We don't see a lot in recurrent training, although we get some. But that depends on how many pilots we're running through. And then, when I was only in charge of one fleet, I saw a lot less than I see now.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. That's all I have, thanks.

MR. LAWRENCE: Larry, you got one?

BY MR. WARD:

Q. One more question, Joe.

A. Sure.

Q. How many people do you currently have on PWP, roughly, ballpark?

A. I'd say 20 right now.

Q. In both fleets?

A. Yeah.

Q. Is that representative of an annual number over the -- since 2013?

A. No. Previously, with the old thing, we had more than we do now. And we've had more now since the accident.

Q. Why?

A. I think subconsciously, maybe people are doing tighter than they were before. I think you see that in every airline that has and accident. We used to see it at Northwest. And, you know, it's -- I think that's just a fact.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else got follow-ups?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have any questions for us?

MR. DIEDRICH: I don't think so.

MR. LAWRENCE: We'll stay here an hour and a half for you.

MR. DIEDRICH: I doubt that. (Laughter.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Well, I tell you what. You know, I really appreciate your time, and the information's been really helpful. If there's anything that -- I'm curious if there was anything we didn't ask you you were expecting us to ask, or something that you would like to offer considering we're doing the safety investigation and we're just trying to gather information. Anything that we should know or that could help the investigation you'd like to share?

MR. DIEDRICH: Not that I can think of, but I'm very curious to find out what the hell happened. And this makes no sense to me at all, none. I mean, most accidents I can say, okay, I can see that or I can -- this one makes no sense to me. But I don't have all the information. How long is it going to take before I do?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Probably sometime between February 2020 and probably August 2020.

MR. LAWRENCE: It does take -- it takes a little bit of time. And this being a major investigation, obviously, we want to do a comprehensive amount of work. There's a lot that goes into it, so it's going to take a little while.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I bet you by February of next year,

though -- should we shut the recorder off?

MR. LAWRENCE: We will.

Okay, anything else you wanted to add, by the way?

MR. DIEDRICH: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I appreciate your time.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Joe Diedrich
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami, Florida
DATE:	June 4, 2019

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.

[redacted]

Wendy C. Cutting
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* *

Investigation of:	*	
	*	
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A)	*	
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS	*	Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019	*	
	*	

* *

Interview of: JOSEPH KUNKEL
B767 Check Airman

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami, Florida

Wednesday,
June 5, 2019

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

WILLIAM BRAMBLE, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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National Transportation Safety Board

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Condon & Forsyth
(On behalf of Mr. Kunkel)

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Joseph Kunkel:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	23
By Mr. Abrams	26
By Mr. Lee	29
By Mr. Blakely	30
By Dr. Bramble	31
By Mr. Lawrence	31
By Mr. Abrams	32

I N T E R V I E W

(8:05 a.m.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Joe, Good morning. And again, my name is David Lawrence. I'm the operations investigator with the NTSB. We're down here, obviously, to talk about the Boeing accident in Trinity Bay a few months ago, the 7-6 accident for Atlas. And on behalf of myself, Warren, Bill, and the rest of the group, and the Board and such like that, our condolences for the loss of your crewmembers. I know this is a tough time you guys are going through.

But I wanted you to know that we're here just to investigate this accident and we're trying to find out what happened so we can help prevent it from happening again. We're not here place blame, anything like that. As I mentioned you earlier, this opportunity to talk to you is very standard for us. I know it's unusual for you, but it's normal for us in the course of an investigation to talk to the people who last touched an accident crew in training. So our discussion is just a very normal process of the investigation.

As you can see, there's a table full of people right now. So we work on a party system, because we can't be experts on every operator, manufacturer, the aircraft, you know, crew and all, so we bring in parties to assist us in investigations, okay? And these people are right here. And I'll just go around the room and let everybody introduce themselves so you know who's here.

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with NTSB.

MR. ABRAMS: Joe, I'm Warren Abrams. I'm an air safety investigator with NTSB. Thank you for coming today.

MR. KUNKEL: Thank you.

MR. LEE: I'm Rich Lee, Boeing safety pilot.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, Safety Committee, 1224.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely, Atlas Air 767 pilot.

MR. LAWRENCE: Have you all met?

MR. BLAKELY: Yep.

MR. KUNKEL: Once or twice.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Just to let you know, also --

And for you, too, Steve.

-- that FAA is party to the investigation by federal statute. Our FAA member is not here, okay? But the FAA will get copies of the transcript as part of being party to the investigation. But just so you know, since the FAA is part of our investigation, they cannot use any information that they gather from the investigation, like your, you know, your interview, for any type of certificate action or anything like that. They're just exactly like us. There role is just investigators to find out what happened and, hopefully, prevent it from happening again.

MR. KUNKEL: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: So if you see the FAA is, you know, embedded in our investigations, that's their role. Okay?

MR. KUNKEL: Understood.

MR. LAWRENCE: So as we go through this, and we'll just ask a few questions. This shouldn't take long. I type notes, as I was telling you earlier, and so I apologize if I don't make eye contact when we talk. I'm just catching up. I'm old school, I type with two fingers. If there's a question that you don't understand, please stop us and ask for clarification, okay?

MR. KUNKEL: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: And "I don't know" is a perfectly acceptable answer. If you don't know the answer, you know, just say I don't know, and don't build the clock, you know what I mean?

MR. KUNKEL: Yes, I do.

MR. LAWRENCE: Got it. Okay. Any questions on the process?

MR. KUNKEL: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great.

INTERVIEW OF JOSEPH KUNKEL

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Let's start with the easy ones, Joe. Let me get your full name and age?

A. Joseph A. Kunkel, 42.

Q. Great. What's your title here at Atlas?

A. Line check airman, 767 captain, PC check airman, or sim check airman.

Q. PC and sim?

A. Yes. The role is simulator check airman and line check

airman.
Q. Are you all seats, all checks?
A. Yes.
Q. Got it. The Employer is Atlas. When was your date of hire?
A. June 2004.
Q. All the time on the 7-6?
A. No.
Q. A little bit on 7-4?
A. Was hired on the 7-4 classic as a flight engineer. In 9 months, there about 9 months as a flight engineer on the classic, then upgraded to first officer on the 747 classic. And then a few years on that, and then moved to first officer on the 747 400. And a few years on that and then, I believe, about 5 years now on the 7-6. Upgraded to captain on the 7-6.
Q. And in your current position as a line check airman and PC and sim check airman, what are your roles and responsibilities, just briefly?
A. Well, my role as a line check airman is to conduct OE, initial operating experience, and perform line checks, recurring line checks and initial line checks. In the simulator environment, to conduct initial new-hire training, transition training and recurrent training, also conduct proficiency checks in the simulator.
Q. Estimate your total flight time.
A. Around 6,000 hours.

Q. And PIC time?
A. 1500.
Q. And your time and type on the 7-6?
A. Time and type would be around 115.
Q. About 1500 hours? Okay.
A. I think so.
Q. All right. If you could, Joe, give me a -- and by the way, can I call you Joe? Is that okay?
A. Sure.
Q. All right. Give me just a CliffsNotes version of your aviation background. You told me what you did here at Atlas, but prior to that.
A. Started in aviation as an A&P. From A&P, I became a flight engineer. I worked at Aero Air as a flight engineer, DC-8s. A flight engineer of 727, Planet Airways. Flight engineer at Centurion Air Cargo, DC-10. And then Atlas Air.
Q. Perfect summary. Did you know the captain, the accident captain and the first officer, Rick or Conrad?
A. Not personally.
Q. Okay. I know we're going to talk about the training here in a second, but did you have an opportunity to fly with either one of them?
A. No, I didn't.
Q. Okay. And just in review -- oh, by the way, if -- the records aren't here right now, but if I or somebody asks you a

question about the training or something like that and you want to refer or there's something you want to take a look at in the training records, let me know. We have it electronically. We can pull up everything and --

A. Okay.

Q. -- and show you, so, you know, if you --

A. But the file's not here today?

Q. I think J.B.'s going to go get the file right now.

A. Okay.

Q. Good. But in the meantime, while he's getting that, if you need something, we've got it electronically so you can reference it.

A. Okay.

Q. But looking at the training records, we noticed that -- I want to make sure that we have this correct: We saw that you had conducted Conrad's most recent LOFT, which is January 7th of this year. Does that ring a bell?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you had a chance before we talked to review the training records to take a look at that particular at that particular training session?

A. Yes.

Q. Great. Perfect. Thanks. So you had recommended him after his most recent LOFT training. Can you just talk about that training? What do you recall about it?

A. You just mentioned recommended?
Q. Well, I'm sorry. Not recommended. For the LOFT, you gave him the LOFT and he subsequently passed his LOFT?
A. Um-hum.
Q. Okay. So, but, what I'm just -- in general, I want to know about that training session. What do you remember about it? What do you remember about his performance?
MR. BLAKELY: My humble apologies on that. Here, Joe.
MR. KUNKEL: Thanks.
MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you, J.B.
MR. BLAKELY: My pleasure, Dave.
MR. KUNKEL: I do recall the session, but completely uneventful. Just a standard, normal recurrent flight training.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. So take me through it. When did you first see Conrad? Kind of walk me through the whole interaction.
A. It's called our RLOFT, Recurrent LOFT program. I saw them at our contracted simulator location here at Miami on 36th Street. Arrived. Arrived at the location 15 minutes early. They were there early, as well, him and his sim partner.
Q. Do you recall who that was?
A. No, I don't.
Q. Okay.
A. Had a brief chat of how things are going, a social chat, and then proceeded to start the briefing of the RLOFT program, which

involves a slide show on a computer, desktop, and then the outlines of what the event would be for the day.

Q. Okay. In general, what is the event?

A. It's just a regular line flight conducted from city pairings. At that time, our city pairing was San Francisco to Los Angeles. And then it was supposed to be Los Angeles to Vancouver, but we give them a problem on the second leg that they make a decision where they're going to divert to.

The RLOFT program is designed to be conducted in real time, with no interruptions from the instructor, and just like it would be on a normal flight. And it's mostly about CRM and threat and error management and decision making and choices that they made throughout the day.

Q. Was Conrad in the right seat or the left seat; do you recall?

A. He was in the right seat for the first leg, as pilot flying.

Q. And then he was in the -- so this was two copilots? These were two first officers?

A. Correct.

Q. Since they seat swapped. Okay.

A. And that's a part of the process. They choose on their own who will sit in what seat and who plays what role. And that's part of the process of how they choose to do just things on their own, so --

Q. Tell me about his performance. I know that you said it was just a very standard, normal flight, completely uneventful, but

tell me a little bit about what he was required to do and what you were required to evaluate during the course of his portion of the LOFT.

A. You know, I don't recall any specifics of that day with the individual. I can explain what the event is, the outline is for that event for anyone that would go through that process.

We present them the initial paperwork for their flight for the day, basically a briefing package, and then they come up with a choice of who's going to be the pilot flying and what role they'll play. And then we simulate like I'm a dispatcher or a transport person and I'll leave the room and go get a cup of coffee and just say call me when you're ready to go to the airplane, meaning go to the simulator.

And we head to the sim and they're given the paperwork. It does have a deferral in it of the autothrottles being inop in that scenario that we had designed for that year. And they take the flight from San Francisco to Los Angeles and make their decisions based on our procedures from having autothrottles deferred and how they can use CRM and TEM, threat and error management, to operate that aircraft in that, with the deferral. So the complexity of that, that might build into the busy short flight of the city pair.

And as we go throughout the flight, I'll get -- I gave them multiple ATC clearance changes and altitude crossing restrictions and give them an arrival in through Los Angeles area, and then

give them an option of either doing a ILS or a non-ILS RNAV approach. And I give them the weather and give them the option of their choice to select which approach they would do. And then go to a full stop.

And once the aircraft is stopped, our scenario for that year was that the APU would then be deferred. They would take a break at that point, and then the second leg would happen; switch seats and then operate -- the flight plan is supposed to operate from Los Angeles to Vancouver, but the autothrottles from the previous leg had been repaired. Now it's the APU, I think, was deferred, and that was the only deferral.

So then they operate up and halfway, about halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles you would fail a generator, and then they would do their checklist and make their decision on which airport they would divert to. And then once they make their decision, they were given the clearances in our script scenario of going into the terminal environment at either airport that they choose. And they chose to divert to San Francisco in concurrence with dispatch. And came in and landed and uneventful.

At the end of that, conducted landing currency. So they would leave the training sim time with three takeoffs and landings. So they'd be prepared for their 90-day requirement.

After that, there's a debrief. The debrief consists of human factors of why did you choose to be the pilot flying the first leg, did you use our supplemental procedure for the autothrottles

being deferred, what were some of the threats, did you need to file an ASAP for any of the things that you did today, and so on. Just a conversation of choices of the day and why did you make the decision and how did you do that. I guess the layers of CRM and threat and error management are the design of the RLOFT program, so --

Q. Great. Thanks. Do you recall if Conrad hand -- he flew the first leg?

A. Correct.

Q. So, with autothrottles deferred, did he primarily hand fly that leg?

A. No.

Q. Okay. He used the automation?

A. Well, per our requirement, on that first leg there's an RNAV departure. Per Atlas procedures, we are required to use the autopilot for an RNAV departure.

Q. Okay.

A. So, once they met the restriction when they could use the automation, he used the autopilot. And then I believe the autopilot was used all the way until base leg into the Los Angeles area. I believe it was the base leg intercept, something like that.

Q. Right. At any point in time -- and I'm talking about the leg that Conrad was flying, so it would have been the first leg -- was there anything in the script that is introduced suddenly that

would potentially startle somebody or something, or surprise somebody? Is it a surprise or do they know things are coming?
A. They don't know things are coming. From what I've seen in that script is that I would say the only thing that maybe would put him behind in their descent planning is an early base link, earlier than anticipated base link, where they have to have energy management and descent planning to start to conduct their approach.
Q. Conrad, was his performance typical of the first officers you're seeing coming through the LOFT?
A. Um-hum.
Q. How many do you see, first officers, come through for their LOFT, in general?
A. I think I've only conducted the recurrent LOFT maybe 15 times, at maximum. At the time, we're only approved to use one simulator in town for the RLOFT program because our paperwork is tailored just for that simulator.
Q. Right. But in your experience, you also, besides LOFTs, you see relatively new copilots in recurrent training or proficiency checks and that type of stuff. And just in general, can you comment about the experience level of the first officers that you're seeing in the time, over the course of time you've been --
A. From what I can recall, it was just average. Just not below average, not above average, it was just average. I don't recall much about the event.

Q. Let me clarify. Not just in particular for Conrad right now.
A. Oh, okay.
Q. I'm talking about first officers in general. The ones that you're seeing, in general, what level of experience have you seen? Have you seen any trainings where they're coming in with less experience, less skill set, more experience, more skill set? What are you seeing?
A. I really think it's a mixed use, with people from all backgrounds and all experience levels, really.
Q. And I know I asked you earlier for both crewmembers, I just want to make sure I got this: You did not know Rick Blakely?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Nor have you flown with him?
A. (No audible response.)
Q. You haven't flown with him?
A. No.
Q. Okay. I've just got to make sure I --
A. Yes.
Q. Yeah, I got it.
A. Understood.
Q. Let me ask you a couple of just kind of general questions on the 7-6. It's not a type rating, or I'm not delving into your knowledge of this, but I'm just kind of curious based on your experience. Have you ever heard of or ever seen an inadvertent selection of the go-around switch during flight?

A. The only thing I have seen was on approach in a landing configuration. When the pilot flying, and it was the captain, went to disconnect the autothrottles, hit the go-around button. But that person had come from the 747 and the location of the autothrottle disconnect on the 747, I believe, is the same as, if I can remember, is the same as our go-around switch, so --
Q. Do you recall what he did, how he reacted after that happened?
A. He annunciated the FMA change and we are in visual conditions, and I reset the flight directors and reselected the approach mode and continued the approach and landed. But that's once. I've seen that once.
Q. Okay. Then I'm going to stretch your memory a little bit further. In your experience when you're flying as captain, you're in the left seat, either as just a line captain or as a check airman in the training environment, and you have a first officer who's the pilot flying, and let's say he's doing an expedited descent down and he's using the speed brakes, all in autopilot, you know, you're coming down, so you're trying to get down to expedited altitude flight and the speed brakes are being utilized. I believe your SOPs say that the hand needs to remain on the speed brakes when they're being manipulated in flight, right?
A. It's -- as a good technique, I believe, that's what we do.
Q. Okay.
A. But I can't recall where it's stated that the hand must

remain on the speed brake, but --
Q. Okay. You don't know if there's guidance that says that, it's just --
A. I cannot recall where it does.
Q. Okay. But when the first officer is reaching for that handle to try and manipulate, extend the speed brakes, are they reaching over the thrust lever or are they reaching behind?
A. Over, from what I -- when I'm sitting in that seat, because the thrust -- if you want to expedite your descent, the thrust should be in idle anyways.
Q. Right.
A. So your hand would be in front of that.
Q. Okay.
A. So the thrust levers would be behind your arm.
Q. So you noticed them just with their hand -- the way I'm describing it is the hand up above, kind of curved up above the thrust levers like that?
A. Correct.
Q. And they'd be holding it that way?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. And then, also, on the 7-6s that Atlas have, I notice they have two speed-reference instruments. One's the speed tape on the EADI, right, on the left side there. So you have a speed tape. Then you have the old analog air speed indicator to the left that you actually do the bugs on for references and speeds

and stuff. Which is the primary air speed reference for your pilots?

A. Well, they're both supposed to be referenced in your scan. I mean, I just reference both. I don't think it gives us exact guidance that you must nor shall reference each one.

Q. Okay.

A. I reference both of them.

Q. Okay. In a stall situation when you have a high angle of tack, and maybe in the training you were doing the stall recovery, which speed reference are you primarily referencing during a stall situation?

A. The speed tape on the EADI is the most beneficial, I feel that it is.

Q. But again, this would be a preference by the pilot, right? There's no guidance that says you have to look at this or anything like that?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. And then are you familiar with the EFI switch, the electronic flight instruments switch?

A. Yes.

Q. Great. Are pilots trained at Atlas on the EFI switch, and if so, where?

A. They are trained. They are trained in their initial training, and sometimes during their recurrent. That is an item that we will fail for them to practice the failure of that.

Q. Okay. And when you fail that in the training environment, when you fail that, what are the pilots supposed to do? Is there a checklist or anything?
A. The first thing you're supposed to do, if they are the pilot flying, you're supposed to transfer controls, and then that switch can be selected, the EFI switch, simple generator, can be selected from memory to see if they can get their EADI in there, EHSI to display correctly.
Q. Okay. Have you ever seen that happen in any line operations that you've flown?
A. Never.
Q. Ever heard of it?
A. I've never heard a person tell me that that happened to them in line operations.
Q. So this will be my characterization, let me know if you agree: Without a checklist, this would be a systems knowledge type of thing for the pilot?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. One more kind of systems question. I'll really test your memory on this. With the autopilot engaged, can a pilot on a 7-6 overpower the autopilot servos manually and start manipulating the control yoke?
A. From what I recall, yes.
Q. Would that manipulation of the column disconnect the autopilot?

A. It should.
Q. Why should it?
A. I really don't recall. I think it's -- I just don't recall. It's not written, that I know of, that it will disconnect if the control column is displaced.
Q. Okay. Have you ever done it?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Is there any information provided to the pilots that overpowering the yoke would disconnect the autopilot?
A. Not that I'm aware of.
Q. Okay. What is trained -- or how are Atlas pilots trained to disconnect the autopilot?
A. Primarily, the autopilot disconnect switch is on the control yoke. They click the button once to disconnect the autopilot, you click it a second time to cancel the autopilot, to disconnect oral warning. That's the primary and common. Then there's the autopilot disconnect bar on the mode control panel that could be used to turn the autopilot off. And then if you trim on the control column using the thumb trim switches, that will disconnect you.
Q. And a couple of questions on training, and specifically stall training. Where do pilots at Atlas receive their stall training?
A. They receive their stall training in initial training, recurrent, and also in their upset training, training sim time.
Q. Right. Okay. Gotcha. You guys doing the enhanced envelope?

A. We are.
Q. You are. Okay. Where are you in that?
A. I am an instructor conducting those simulators, simulator events. I also teach the ground school for that.
Q. Are all the pilots now, have they gone through this training yet?
A. Not all of our pilots.
Q. Who has and who hasn't? I mean, you know, what's the criteria?
A. Well, right now, from what I'm aware of, there's only one simulator that we're utilizing that has the extended envelope training software installed and working. I've conducted a handful of simulator events, extended envelope training events in that simulator. But I'd say the larger percentage right now is conducting the ground school requirement portion of it due to simulator non-availability.
Q. Since you're an instructor, I guess I can ask this. You're going to, hopefully, know this: In the recovery sequence for -- that you guys are teaching in EET, what is the -- what are the first actions the first pilots are being taught to do with unusual attitudes?
A. First actions are recognize and confirm with other instruments, autopilot off, autothrottle off, announce intentions to the other pilot, and recover from the, I guess you would call it the unusual attitude.

Q. Okay. So getting the automation off is one of the first items, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Is that similar for stall recovery?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Are pilots at Atlas ever trained to execute a stall recovery while using the autopilot and auto thrust?
A. No.
Q. And the last question for me, just to see if anybody else has any questions then, just subjective based on your experience. I mean, you've got a lot of experience in the industry, so how would you characterize the training the pilots are getting here at Atlas?
A. Really good.
Q. Why do you say that?
A. I believe that our training, initial training syllabus is generous in the amount of simulator time, in simulator periods that are designed in the footprint. And I guess just the whole syllabus is very well-written. It covers all of our operation.
MR. LAWRENCE: And I have some follow-ups here, but you're probably tired of hearing from me, so I'll see if Dr. Bramble's got anything. Thanks.
BY DR. BRAMBLE:
Q. Yeah. So if you wouldn't mind just finding the record in his file there just so we can refer to that.

A. Which person?

MR. LAWRENCE: The LOFT?

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. The LOFT, yeah, in Conrad's file. So the date of that LOFT, what was that again?

A. January 7th, 2019.

Q. Okay. And tell me the extent to which you recall this session again, in terms of the individual pilots and so forth.

A. I don't recall much the depth of it. It was just very average.

Q. Okay. Do you specifically remember the accident pilot, like seeing the accident pilot?

A. I do because I had him for this recurrent sim and the accident wasn't too long after.

Q. Okay. Do you recall if he was prepared, seemed prepared for the lesson?

A. I do. He was well prepared.

Q. And how would you characterize his CRM skills?

A. Good. Him and the other student had a good CRM, TEM open dialog between the two.

Q. Can you give any examples? Do you recall any examples?

A. I can't really recall other than it was just a good tone on the flight deck.

Q. And how about Mr. Aska's technical flying skills, what did you observe about that?

A. They were fine.
Q. How about his performance, his pilot monitoring?
A. It was fine.
Q. How about his briefings?
A. They were just fine. They were just all standard.
Q. And do you recall if he had any difficulty with any maneuvers?
A. No.
Q. He didn't have any or you don't recall any?
A. Well, I don't recall any difficulties.
Q. Okay.
A. The only maneuvers that we did were -- other than the line flight, was takeoff and landings. Those were all uneventful.
Q. Do you remember enough about the events to sort of characterize his greatest strengths and weaknesses as an individual pilot?
A. No, I do not.
Q. Okay. Do you recall if he was receptive to your feedback after?
A. Yes, he was.
Q. And do you recall anything about his personality?
A. Just a happy, nice guy.
Q. Have you heard anyone complain about flying with him?
A. No.
Q. Do you have any recollections of his -- did he have the

opportunity to handle any stressful situation during the LOFT?
A. Yes. The profile is designed for a high-paced, rapidly changing environment.
Q. Do you recall any specifics of how he reacted to that?
A. No, I don't.
Q. Okay. Anything else you recall about that session that would be noteworthy?
A. No.
Q. All right. Just a few questions about your experience. So, how do you like working for Atlas?
A. It's good. It's very good.
Q. And do you feel, like, strong pressures from the company to pass pilots as an instructor?
A. No, I do not.
Q. And how would you characterize the morale of the pilot group?
A. Good.
Q. How's the pay compared to other operators?
A. As far as I know, it's a little bit less than other operators right now.
DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. All right, that's all I have. Thanks so much.
MR. KUNKEL: Okay.
MR. LAWRENCE: Let's go to Warren.
BY MR. ABRAMS:
Q. Joe, I've got a few questions about the LOFT. How is the

LOFT rated? Is it complete/incomplete or sat/unsat?
A. It's unsat or satisfactory.
Q. Okay. We got it. You used an "S" in there.
How often does the LOFT scenario change?
A. It's supposed to change every year.
Q. Every year.
A. Yeah. We have not been conducting it very long, so I believe, on the 7-6, that is the -- our first version of it.
Q. Does it change calendar year or approximately every calendar year? Or I mean when I say calendar year, January, is that kind of the time we look for a new LOFT every year, or do you know?
A. I do not know.
Q. With the LOFT lasting for a year and approximately 900 pilots going through this LOFT scenario, isn't it kind of likely that the trigger events are well-known by the end of the LOFT year?
A. Possibly.
Q. Yeah. You said you offered this crew a choice of an ILS approach, I believe it was into LAX, or a non-ILS RNAV approach. Why wouldn't everybody just take the ILS approach? That's a much easier approach than a non-precision RNAV approach. Tell me what the -- you probably got it beefed up enough to say that guys don't really want the ILS, so tell me what the criteria is you use to discourage the ILS approach from being selected.
A. I don't know if I'd use the word discourage, but we present them with the current ATIS for the arrival airport. They make

their choice based on that ATIS information; then they conduct their approach briefing. And then after that, in our script, we ask them where their parking location is. And our parking location for the DHL customer that -- the role we're playing that day, is on the south side of the airport.

Q. I don't want to put words in your mouth. So that would be a 2-4 right -- I'm sorry --

A. 2-5, I think.

Q. 2-5 south side, yes.

A. So the ATIS information is given that the ILS for 2-4 right is in operation. They set up for that, they brief for that, and then once they are asked where their parking location is, I believe in the script, then after their answer, they say that the -- your choice if you want the 2-5. I believe in the ATIS it gives you the RNAV and the ILS. And commonly, people choose the ILS.

Q. Um-hum. Yes.

A. And then once they ask the part, they say do you still want to do the ILS.

Q. Right. Yeah.

A. So it's just their choices.

Q. All right. And I think I know this answer but I'll ask anyway: The LOFT always follows the successful completion of a rating ride?

A. The normal Qualification LOFT does.

Q. The QLOFT, but this was an RLOFT?
A. This was Recurrent LOFT, correct.
Q. Yes. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. All right. Okay, that answers my question. Thank you very much, Joe. That's all I have.
A. Thank you.
MR. LAWRENCE: Rich?
MR. LEE: Yeah, I have just a couple questions.
BY MR. LEE:
Q. Is it typical that the LOFT is, you know, it's done with two FOs, and how does the scheduling on the pairing, do you know or understand how that works, or how is that done?
A. I do not. I'm not involved with the scheduling of it. I just know that it has to have a qualified crewmember in the seat in order to conduct a RLOFT.
Q. Okay. And then it's up to the crewmembers on which leg they fly. Do you feel like the first leg would be easier to fly on the scenario of the LOFT?
A. No, I mean, but I'm familiar with that routing, so it's -- I don't think either one is easier or harder.
Q. As far as the decision making throughout the LOFT period, when you have two FOs in there, do you give them a little bit more leeway because they're not captains as far as decision making or anything like that?

A. Well, I don't change what we do per the crewmember in any way, because we're trying to keep the realism of the flight. And so I'm not able to break, we call it the fourth wall, to interject during this profile. So you do see sometimes first officers struggling -- not struggling but they're just not used to being in the left seat. So, you know, where things are located or just maybe taxing aircraft, you know, they're just not used to it. So it's just a little bit different than a normal operation.

MR. LEE: Okay. Thanks. That's all I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks. Tyson?

MR. HOWARD: Oh, well, you said -- thanks.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks. Tyson.

MR. HOWARD: I have nothing.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. J.B.?

MR. BLAKELY: Two items, David.

BY MR. BLAKELY:

Q. Joe, is LOFT a training or a checking event?

A. Training.

Q. How would you -- with respect to grading, what would you grade a LOFT?

A. Unsatisfactory or satisfactory.

Q. Okay. Cool. When you observed Mr. Aska as the PF, was he being at times led by the PM or was he actually able to make his own decisions, and was he commanding?

A. From what I recall, he was able to make his own decisions.

Q. Okay.

MR. BLAKELY: That's it for me.

MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have anything more, Bill?

DR. BRAMBLE: Just one, yeah.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. So on the grading, what does it take to fail the LOFT?

A. I would say that to fail the LOFT, it would be egregious deviation from the standard operating procedures or unsafe operation of the aircraft.

Q. So is that like sort of left to instructor judgment or is it like if you have any item unsat or some number of items unsat or something?

A. Well, there's not specific items that -- it's not grading on items through that.

Q. I see.

A. Like I said before, that's a CRM and a threat and error management kind of training process. So if it were to become unsatisfactory, there would have to be a serious problem throughout the entire day, I would imagine, to deem that unsatisfactory.

Q. So it's one overall grade for the whole session?

A. Correct.

Q. I see.

DR. BRAMBLE: That's all I have. Thanks.

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. I want to follow up on one question J.B. had. You said LOFT is training, right? It's a training event. But you're evaluating, still, the pilots.
A. Correct.
Q. In LOFT, are you primarily evaluating their crewmember skills for CRM and threat and error management, or are you primarily evaluating their piloting skills? Do you understand the difference of what I'm asking?
DR. BRAMBLE: Technical skills.
MR. LAWRENCE: Right.
MR. KUNKEL: I believe so. It's primarily the first part you said, their decision making and their CRM and threat and error management.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. Would you unsat a pilot if you thought he had poor technical skills?
A. Yes.
Q. In a LOFT?
A. I would.
MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Anybody else?
BY MR. ABRAMS:
Q. Just a little clarification again here, Joe. If something -- it looks like this LOFT scenario is going to be unsat, can you stop the LOFT and repeat a portion of it, or -- I realize time is of the essence, but if -- I realize it's real time Point A to

Point B/C, but can you stop it and retrain -- or not retrain, can you repeat anything of it?

A. No, I don't believe so.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else?

(No response.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Joe, you got any questions for us?

MR. KUNKEL: No, I do not.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. So is there anything that maybe we talked about -- I know it's just a brief conversation and we went over a lot of stuff, but is there anything that maybe we didn't ask that you can think of that would help us in the investigation you want to offer, or anything you can think of that would help?

MR. KUNKEL: No, I don't think so.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. A lot of times when people leave, after a while they have, you know, this moment of clarity of saying, oh wow, I just thought of something that could help them, or some way I could have answered or something, so I offer you to feel free to get a hold of us and offer any additional information that you might have to help us, okay?

MR. KUNKEL: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Joseph Kunkel
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami, Florida
DATE:	June 5, 2019

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.

[redacted]
Lisa Fuerstenberg
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *
*
ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) *
ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS * Accident No.: DCA19MA086
FEBRUARY 23, 2019 *
*

* *

Interview of: SCOTT ANDERSON
Director of Training
Atlas Air

Atlas Air Training Center
Miami, Florida

Wednesday,
June 5, 2019

APPEARANCES:

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I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Scott Anderson:	
By Mr. Lawrence	6
By Dr. Bramble	43
By Mr. Abrams	46
By Mr. Lee	48

I N T E R V I E W

(9:30 a.m. EDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: Let's get started. My name's David Lawrence with the NTSB. I'm an operations investigator and Scott, again, thanks for having us down here and allowing us to get some work done and you've been very hospitable and helpful.

Obviously, we're here to talk about and do the investigation for the 767 accident and training and on behalf of Bill, Warren, myself and the rest of the group and the whole Board, you know, our sympathies and condolences for the loss of your crew members.

But as Dr. Bramble and I mentioned to you the last time we were down here we talked to you guys we wanted to make sure you understood that our role is not to apportion any kind of blame. We're trying to find out what it is that happened so to prevent it from happening again.

So talking to training department folks and check airmen and instructors who last touched the accident crew in the training environment and talking to heads of the training is a very standard approach and part of the investigation. So thanks for having us down, again.

We have a party system as we explained the last time. We have a lot of people and subject matter experts that assist us so that's why we have everybody right here. I'll go around the table and let everybody introduce themselves so you'll know the players. Bill?

DR. BRAMBLE: I'm Bill Bramble. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB from Washington.

MR. ABRAMS: Scott, I'm Warren Abrams, an air safety investigator from the NTSB. Thanks for coming in today.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you.

MR. LEE: Rich Lee, Boeing safety pilot.

MR. HOWARD: Tyson Howard, 1224 Safety Committee.

MR. BLAKELY: John Blakely, 76/75.

MR. ANDERSON: Nice to meet you.

MR. LAWRENCE: And as Jennifer probably mentioned to you, any time you get the chance to talk to the NTSB you're afforded an opportunity for somebody to sit in with you. Is Jen who you choose?

MR. ANDERSON: She's my new best friend.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Good. So the process here, we'll just ask some questions and go around the table. Hopefully, we won't take up too much of your time. I'm going to be typing some notes because -- and I type with two fingers so I apologize if I'm not making eye contact. Don't think anything of it. It's just me catching up with the computer. Also, if there's a question anybody asks and you don't understand and want clarity, please stop and ask. We're all for clarity, you know, (indiscernible) type of thing.

Also, the training records are right here if we ask and we will -- are going to ask some questions about was Conrad ever --

If you want to refer to the training records please do. So you're welcome to. If there's any other information that you need us to pull up on the computer and guidance material, whatever has been provided us, we'll get it for you.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay? Any questions on the process?

MR. ANDERSON: No, sir.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Let's start with the easy ones.

INTERVIEW OF SCOTT ANDERSON

BY MR. LAWRENCE:

Q. Going to get your full name and age.

A. Scott Pierce, P-i-e-r-c-e, Anderson, s-o-n.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. Sixty-six.

Q. Uh-huh. And what's your current title here at Atlas?

A. Senior director of flight procedures training and standards.

Q. That's on the Atlas side, not the Polar side, or both.

A. Both.

Q. Both. Okay.

A. There's no separation of (indiscernible) in training.

Q. When were you hired here at Atlas?

A. January 1st, 2015.

Q. That's a very busy New Year's Day, huh? And in your -- as your role in the senior director of flight procedures training and standards, what are your roles and responsibilities, in general?

A. It's pretty much a global perspective on all three of the primary words in my title, procedures, training and standards, a direct conduit with the DOs, both the Polar and the Atlas DOs and both the Polar and the Atlas system chief pilot. So basically long range training plans, the acceptance of a new aircraft, and then any changes that we make in our procedures or a training footprint so it's more long range rather than the day to day. And then obviously work with the fleet captains, directly.

Q. Since your role is a little bit more global, who handles the day to day, generally?

A. That would be the fleet captain.

Q. Okay. Just a estimate of your total flight time.

A. Well, close to 20,000 I would say.

Q. And these are standard questions, estimate of your PIC time.

A. That's a good question.

Q. This one always stumps everybody.

A. I would say PIC time, probably 14,000, something like that.

Q. And time and type and that's specific to 76.

A. 767 I would say 75 and the 76 combined, right around 10,000 or more hours.

Q. Okay. Those are --

A. Estimates.

Q. And that's fine. And speaking of estimates, if you could give me the Cliff Notes version of your background, aviation background (indiscernible) and you have to include that one --

A. That one (indiscernible). I was a naval aviator on active duty for ten years and then continued and retired as a reservist after 22 years. I was hired by Northwest Airlines in January of 1985. At Northwest, I flew the 727 as an OF, the 757 as an FO and a captain and was -- and flew the 747 as a FO and then I flew as a captain at Delta. Was a second officer APD on the 727 and then a line check airman APD on the 75/76 and then was -- before I left here I was being qualified as an APD on the 747-400 and retired almost four years early from Delta and came here four-and-a-half years ago and been the same title. Flew -- went through the entire checkout and flew the 747-400 so (indiscernible) captain fir -- until last March when I turned 65 and that brings us up to where we are now.

Q. Okay. You forgot one.

A. I know.

Q. That's okay. We'll leave it out.

Q. Did you know the captain -- the accident captain and first officer?

A. Yes.

Q. In what regards?

A. I interviewed Rick -- Ricky Blakely recently in 2015 and I -- one of my jobs is to -- is the presence in the training center and personal contact with the -- especially the new hires as they come through. So I knew Conrad as a new hire and then knew Ricky -- saw Rickey as a new hire and then actually handed Ricky his wings

when he was checked out as a captain so probably a much more personal, casual -- certainly as an acquaintance more than a friend but a casual -- but more of a personal relationship with Ricky than with Conrad.

Q. Did you have an opportunity prior to your retirement to fly with either of them?

A. No.

Q. Okay.

A. I did not fly the 767 here.

Q. Okay. We'll ask -- I'm going to ask you some questions about Ricky, or Rick and Conrad's training, but just first off, have you had a chance before we talk to the review of the training records and --

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So tell me a little bit about what you know of Rick Blakely's training.

A. As a first officer there was some remedial -- there was some remediation that occurred. He got an unsatisfactory on his type rating, was successfully remediated --

Q. You're talking about --

A. Ricky. We're talking as his first officer.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. He unsat on a type rating?

A. Ricky Blakely on his first, his first one, yes.

Q. Okay. So his training --
A. I'm going to look at his training record real quick.
DR. BRAMBLE: Yeah, take your time, Scott. And if you want to refresh him?
MR. LAWRENCE: No. No, I'm just making sure.
DR. BRAMBLE: Uh-huh.
BY MR. LAWRENCE:
Q. I guess so just to clarify for Captain Blakely's training can you just kind of go over general --
A. He was not recommended for his type rating the first time and then he was remediated, recommended and he had a satisfactory type rating. I was incorrect. (Indiscernible.)
Q. Great. So he was not recommended for his initial Boeing 767 type as first officer. This was back in 2015.
A. 2015, that was in November of 2015.
Q. And he received remedial training and then was subsequently --
A. Recommended and subsequently was satisfactorily graded on his type rating.
Q. Okay. And I noticed in his training record something about -- that's called a Proficiency Watch Program. Can you explain to me what is a PWP?
A. It is basically required by the FAA. It's the Proficiency Watch Program. The intent is to identify a pilot who has needed repetitive remediation and it's an assist to review with him and

bring him up to speed and it's more of an assistance rather than punitive measure. The -- it has been -- there's been a lot of iterations over the years. This particular PWP program, because he received remediation he was entered into PWP.

Q. Okay.

A. Ricky was.

Q. And whose decision is it to put somebody in a PWP?

A. The fleet captain administers the PWP program.

Q. And what's your role in it?

A. My role is if the fleet captain would like my counsel on it I -- he will come to me and ask me because many times I'm aware of -- I get a report of any individuals that are receiving remediation and, of course, I'm aware if somebody has an unsatisfactory event. But if the fleet captain choses to bring it to me, I can provide my counsel and give some assistance in deciding whether or not he should be placed in PWP.

Q. Does the pilot leave training and then go into a PWP or is he -- is the decision to put him in a PWP made while he's still within the training program?

A. He can be put into PWP while still in the training footprint or upon completion of OE. So if we see some need for remediation within the training footprint and it continues in OE then that would be a repetitive need for remediation and so he may be placed in PWP after completion of his OE.

Q. Okay. And how long is a pilot typically in a PWP?

A. Six months is when you exit.
Q. Okay.
A. Once you've completed all the requirements.
Q. So I'm curious if a pilot is - has the potential of being placed in the PWP while he's still within the training footprint, why is it the fleet captain who makes the decision? Why not you, as the --
A. In -- well, we've written the -- in the FOTM that has been the responsibility of the fleet captain to administer it. He still essentially in some companies the OE is owned by the chief pilot's office. Here they -- the trainee, and of course when he's an OE he's no longer a trainee but he is -- basically his part falls under the auspices of the fleet captain until he completes his initial line training.
Q. So for Ricky, Captain Blakely, he was placed in the PWP because of multiple substandard training events.
A. It was a PWP program that basically stated if you were unsuccessful in any training event so if, in his example, his -- he was not ready to move on to the next simulator period and during that time before I decided I needed to write a protocol --
Q. Okay.
A. -- (indiscernible) these guys, because he needed a remediation which basically he had not completed a training event, he automatically went into PWP.
Q. Okay. So it was a one-time event --

A. Yes.
Q. -- would trigger a PWP --
A. Yes.
Q. -- for that. Okay. So essentially every training session was a gate.
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And you mentioned that you got involved in changing that. Tell me --
A. Yes.
Q. -- about that.
A. Well, we took a look at it and we went from hiring a very small number of pilots over the years to hiring a larger number of pilots and we needed to make a lot of changes to address, you know, the number of pilots we were hiring and one of the issues that we identified was that the PWP program really wasn't doing what it should do. It was there to assist a pilot that needed additional training and it almost became punitive and so we took a look at it and we made some changes.

One of the changes we made was to give examples of when you would put somebody in PWP. We also added some pairing restrictions. This particular change included a consolidation, a pairing restriction with somebody in PWP. We also included something that we thought was more in the spirit of what the FAA intended with this program was we needed to do a lookback. So there was no lookback. So we do a two-year lookback so if you're

looking for a need for repetitive remediation we did a two-year lookback.

Q. To look for what?

A. For any -- you could look back at a previous training event, he needed remediation and we didn't put him in a PWP but now here we are again a year or two years later and we're seeing the same need for remediation we consider the two-year be -- have a need for repetitive remediation to be included in the two-year lookback.

Q. Okay. And the pairing limitations you're talking about was picking somebody from a PWP (indiscernible) paired with another PWP.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Okay.

A. We also added a low time crew member pairing restriction about two months after that.

Q. Beyond what pairing restrictions are in 121.

A. We -- yes, above 25. We used 100 hours.

Q. Okay. Thanks. And when did these changes take place, Scott?

A. We had -- the first senior standards crew considered the changes on February 3rd of 2016. The bullets went into the Flight Operations Training Manual, went into effect April 16th of 2016 and then in June of 2016 we added the low time flight crew member pairing restrictions, as well.

Q. Okay. So ask you a little bit about -- just a couple more

questions about Rick's training. Had you heard any or received any feedback since he completed his 76 event? Any feedback on Rick's performance or training or any deficiencies noted or any complaints from the instructors?

A. Nothing on Ricky Blakely ever came across my desk.

Q. Okay. Let me go to the -- talk about Conrad. How familiar are you with Conrad's training?

A. Well, I said last time I was very familiar with Ricky's so now we're talking about Conrad --

Q. And you can reference the training folders in front of you (indiscernible) --

A. I am. He had two remediations, one because he was not recommended for his oral so that was the pre-oral and so he was remediated and then subsequently was satisfactory on his FAA oral. His -- he was not recommended to move from fixed base training to full flight training. He was remediated and subsequently recommended. Had no noted difficulties and was recommended for his type rating and then failed his type rating and was subsequently remediated and recommended and was successful in his second type rating and no other note throughout the rest of his training and throughout his OE.

Q. Okay. Any other comments, notes, issues with his training after his IOE?

A. No.

Q. (Indiscernible.) Through proficiency checks, training log --

A. He did two RFTs or R-LOFTs and another full recurrent, nothing of note, and another one that never came across my desk.
Q. Nothing came across your desk after he left the training --
A. No.
Q. -- (indiscernible) initially.
A. After he came out. When he was flying the line I was not aware of any issues. Generally, if I don't hear about somebody then I would assume that everything's fine.
Q. Okay. So let me go back to his training just a second. The -- we talked a little bit about Rick's reasoning at the time of the older standards for him going into PWP. But you just went through at least three events that required remedial training for Conrad during his initial -- his pre-oral, his move to full flight simulator and then remedial training for -- previous to type.
A. Yes.
Q. And he subsequently failed his certification oral for the type, right? Correct?
A. No. He passed his oral.
Q. He passed his oral exam.
A. Yes. It was a type rating.
Q. Okay. And what about his type rating for the 76?
A. We're talking about Conrad.
Q. We're talking about Conrad.
A. Conrad failed his type rating.
Q. Okay.

A. That was the only failure that he experienced. He was not recommended for his oral but he passed his oral and he was not recommended. Those are gates so in an AQP world there would be a pre-oral that the gate would be like a PV, a procedures validation.
Q. Okay.
A. So the only failure he had was in his initial 767 type rating.
Q. And that was the practical test.
A. It was the type, the actual simulator type test.
Q. Okay. That would be the practical test.
A. That's (indiscernible).
Q. Okay. Can you check his records again as far as when he was -- his pre-oral if you look under Conrad's pre-oral?
A. So his rating oral recommended was incomplete. His oral remedial recommend was then complete after he was remediated. His oral was satisfactory. Then his FBS 5 which was his last fixed base he was not recommended to proceed to full flight training and he was remediated and recommended and that was complete. And then he was -- his type rating recommend was complete and his initial practical type rating was unsatisfactory. He was then remediated and recommended for another type rating which he was satisfactory.
Q. Regarding his -- these remedial trainings and his subsequent failure for practical exam for his type rating, why was he not placed in the PWP?

A. There were some mitigating -- I know this after the fact. There were some mitigating circumstances. We -- there were long periods of time where he was -- no simulator was available for him. I think there were two ten-day periods. It was during Hurricane Irma. He was concerned about some damage to his home. I think some of those things were considered in the overall picture for him.

And then I don't know that this is a mitigating or extenuating circumstance, but he did have the FAA observe his type rating and I think for a new hire that is somewhat intimidating and then he was successful both in his recommend, his remedial and recommend in his subsequent type rating and then no future difficulties within the training footprint and no difficulties noted to us during the OE at that time. That would be a normal amount of time and the decision was made by the fleet captain to not put him in PWP.

Q. Were you -- was that decision made with your counsel?

A. No.

Q. So it was the sole decision by Joe --

A. Yes.

Q. -- to put him in there. This is hindsight 20/20 subjective I understand but in a similar circumstance would Joe have given -- asked for your counsel on somebody with Conrad's situation?

A. You know, I can't speak to Joe. You know, occasionally he would. This particular time he didn't and it's, you know, it's

really hard to deal with that, you know, how would I have -- how -- I mean with 20/20 hindsight, which I choose not to use, I would have to, you know, I think there can be an argument made either way but I was, frankly, satisfied with, you know, after the fact, satisfied when I talked to Joe about why he didn't put him in PWP.

Q. And what was his decision?

A. Not to put him in PWP.

Q. I understand but what was his reasoning, I should say?

A. Pretty much the same things that he was -- there was a lot of, you know, it was right in the middle of a hurricane. There were large periods of time, ten days at a time, where he was sitting around waiting for training. I think he was concerned about his home, you know, pretty much all this happened, you know, during, you know, (indiscernible). His type rating wasn't during the hurricane but we basically closed the training center down for almost two weeks during the hurricane and then we brought him back and started him again, picked up where he left off.

And then I think having the FAA there probably we didn't see his best performance. I don't think that's a reason not to do that but I think -- all things considered, I think that Joe made the right decision. Once again, I -- it's hard for me to look back and say what I would have done at the time.

Q. And not specific to Conrad but I want to ask this a different way. A similar pilot or a pilot comes to you or Joe comes to you with a pilot with three remedial events, a substandard rating

ride, typically would that be a candidate? Just kind of the mitigating circumstances you talked about, would that typically be somebody with that many remedials and a failed certificate ride probably somebody in -- would be in a PWP?

A. I would say yes.

Q. Was there any program, since you didn't put him in a PWP, but was there any mechanism or training or flight standards was watching Conrad's progress beyond the training? I know he wasn't in a formal PWP but did you guys have an awareness that maybe you were letting people know, the line check airman who had a --

A. I can't speak whether or not Joe reviewed with the line check airman that had him on OE. We do have an OE meeting every Friday and we review all of the individuals that are in OE. We note any difficulties they're having. We track how much they're getting, where they are in the process and then, unlike some companies, especially those in AQP, we actually touch the pilot twice a year.

So he came out of an initial line check and within a very short period of time he received -- kind of, double check here. He had a recurrent that he was complete in February. He had an R-LOFT that was complete in 2019 so we did see him pretty much every six months. After that he was successful.

Q. Okay.

A. But did we specifically track him as an individual, the only way we could do that is in PWP.

Q. Okay. As your role in training management had anybody at any

point in time check airman, instructor, line pilot, anybody at Atlas approached you and voiced any kind of concerns about Conrad's proficiency, performance, technical expertise, any issues with Conrad?

A. Never.

Q. As senior management are you privy to ASAP information and any of the flight crew irregularity reports that are (indiscernible) --

A. I get all of the flight crew reports every day and I get a pack or two in the morning and I read them all and respond to the ones that I think that are something I should respond to. The ASAP reports, I get a summary of ASAP reports, the ERC if they note something. If they have an occurrence in an ASAP that they feel that should be addressed either with counseling or with some sort of non-punitive training they would notify us. And then we have a quarterly -- it's called clear direct. It's a quarterly ASAP newsletter that is put out in collaboration between flight operations which includes our human factors, the fleet captains and the senior instructors and the safety (indiscernible).

Q. And through none of those mechanisms that you gave me, nothing about Conrad was --

A. Nothing about --

Q. -- (indiscernible) to you. Okay. You mentioned briefly in your summary of your responsibilities, pilot hiring --

A. Yes.

Q. -- in your -- you have a role in that. Tell me about the pilot hiring process here at Atlas.

A. The protocol it's -- I have not done it recently but I did it in my early years at Northwest and our process begins with the application process which the application process, the phone screening, the triage, if you'd like, about -- with their resumes is completed by HR and the director of hiring for HR is Denise Borrelli. She is essentially my partner. I'm the flight operations rep. I don't get involved with who we invite for the initial screening process unless she reaches out to me and asks me for my opinion about a particular resume and if it's not my area of expertise I might talk to one of the other management pilots that has a similar background.

And then once they've decided to offer interviews, we have a group of individuals that are designated to participate on the personnel panel. We have a personnel panel and we have a technical panel. We include all of the management pilots so we're very unique -- I see this in A4A -- we're very unique in that we include all of our management pilots in the interview process. They sit on the personnel panel. So there is a personnel interview. We do a presentation, Denise and I do a presentation before we have it and then we review -- in the personnel panel the HR individual, once again, reviews the application which it's already been reviewed but they review it again and they share the information that's appropriate for the management pilot to see,

licenses, we all have a resume.

And so that interview process takes place and then it's followed by a technical panel that we have designated and most of our -- all of our designated technical pilots are retired Atlas captains, most of them were instructors and AP leads and they do a technical panel. And then in the afternoon we all get together and compare our results and make the decision whether or not to make a conditional offer to an individual.

The protocol is, you know, who has to be present which is very clear. We -- I would say that our interview protocol is pretty robust especially the fact that we do think it's important enough to have our management pilots there.

Q. And what's the evaluation process on determining if an applicant is -- if the decision to offer employment to an applicant is made, how do you evaluate this (indiscernible) --

A. We -- well, we're evaluating them as individuals. You know, one of the things we're looking at is when we look at the resume and we've -- they've -- HR has already compared the resume to the application. They don't share the information in the application with us as a rule because there is some information that we probably shouldn't see as pilots, backgrounds, stuff like that. But they will share any pertinent information like if they left a company, if there's a gap in employment and we compare it to the resume and then we compare it to their presentation of, you know, of their background when we ask them.

We ask them CRM questions. So we're doing a measurement of, you know, it's a subjective -- part of it's subjective because one of the things that I'm concerned about is I don't want to set somebody up for failure so would they be successful in the training program which I consider the most difficult in the industry. So we -- and then we also want to see are they going to fit in with the group. I mean, frankly do you want to sit next to this person for 12 hours?

The tech panel is mainly we know that most of these folks haven't flown international. That's just what the pilot pool has right now so they kind of get a letter that basically tells them the areas we're going to cover. So we get two things from the technical panel. One is, you know, we ask them some basic aviation questions that they should know, B1, BR, BMCG, and questions like that but you have some Jeppesen questions.

But one of the things that we measure is even though you haven't ever flown international, did you take the time to research it, at the very least? We ask some questions about the North Atlantic tracks. We don't expect an application who's never flown across the tracks to be able to give dissertations about how that happens but we told you we're going to talk about it so it says something about you personally if you show up and have no clue.

Q. Preparation.

A. Preparation. The grade that the applicants are graded on

three points -- on three -- you can get an HR, you know, an R, so highly recommend, a recommend or a do not recommend. Both the personnel panel and the tech panel has the ability to do that. So we have a discussion. The way it works in the afternoon is the HR rep reviews the resume, reviews the individual, gets some background information so the entire group can hear it and then we -- there's a debrief from the personnel panel. Everybody on the personnel panel does a debrief of what they thought of the applicant and then we go over to the tech and then we make a decision as to whether or not to offer the individual a temporary offer of employment.

Q. Through the course of this process, does Atlas view past performance and training difficulties when it evaluates an applicant?

A. In other words, how they performed in another --

Q. They're -- if they have training difficulties, substandard events --

A. Yes.

Q. -- failures in their background. How is that weighed in the evaluation of an applicant?

A. I think it's weighed heavily. There's circumstances that you consider. Some of the circumstances would be how did they recover from it? How they present it? One of the questions I ask after I ask them about a training failure or (indiscernible) is what was your takeaway? And I'm always very curious to see, you know, what

-- how they accept -- they take the ownership of the failure and what they learned from it and how they went forward and used it in their future as a professional.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. I also take a look at when did the failure occur when we look at the, you know, the early -- how long ago was it? Was it their first jet experience with a turbo jet and how did they recover from it and how was their performance after that? So once again I'm looking is there a repetitive need for remediation or for -- is there another failure after that. That's -- if I see a repeat and I see a pattern then that becomes a very important part of it.
Q. Okay. You had an opportunity to review Conrad Aska's PRIA records.
A. Yes.
Q. All right. We were looking at his PRIA records as well and Mesa Airlines was his previous carrier before coming here and his training records that was provided to Atlas indicated that on April 22nd, 2014 he failed a type rating oral on 145 and then he failed the 145 type rating certificate ride and on 2014 -- I'm sorry --
A. That's Trans States.
Q. -- that's Trans States. Mesa training records indicate he failed to upgrade on the 140, 175 to captain about two months prior to getting hired by Atlas Airlines. Were you aware of that?
A. Yes.

Q. When you were at --
A. Well, after the fact I was but not -- I -- after the accident I was aware of it.
Q. Okay. Was that indicated in the PRIA records, his --
A. It --
Q. -- failure to --
A. It is. It is and it's -- basically says that he returned to the first officer position per email and then was requalified as a first officer.
Q. Is that a failure, in your eyes?
A. I would've liked to ask about it because I don't know why he was removed. I don't know if he removed himself. I think the real question is would I have liked to have had that information? Yes, to consider.
Q. Why?
A. Because I think it would have given us a bigger picture of his ability to succeed. I -- once again, it's I don't know why he was removed from training because the PRIA really just says that it could have been that he removed himself for some reason. He obviously -- well, it's not obvious but apparently he was -- he never had a checking event. He never -- because there's no indication in the PRIA -- after I looked at it there's no red flag in that PRIA. You have to find the fact that he entered -- the only way you know he entered a captain upgrade is that it's his first completion of it. It might have been a hazardous

(indiscernible) or something but he completed it and I would have liked to have asked him why he returned to be a first officer and then I would have based my decision on what he shared.

Q. So the information was shared with human resource, the PRIA information with human resource. They saw that and didn't indicate that as a failure but they saw his not moving up to captain on -- once every five but you never -- that information was never shared with you --

A. No.

Q. -- as far as here was a training event, the letter says he'd been removed back at the -- so why is it that -- I'm trying to figure out why human resource didn't provide you that information if that was information you would have needed to do a more comprehensive, I guess, evaluation of his background?

A. I don't think there was a red flag. So the way the process works is they use TruView to VA so they're not just doing a background investigation, they also review the PRIA. And they -- if they see something when they look at the -- when they do the background because an outside contractor, they are looking for, obviously, background issues but they're also looking for inconsistencies in what the applicant shared during the interview process. Are there inconsistencies between their resume and the application itself and they also look at the PRIA and they compare what they shared in their -- in the interview and on their resume and their application with what's in the PRIA --

Q. Uh-huh.
A. -- and they did not flag it. And then it was reviewed again in HR and there was no red flag there and, frankly, the -- when I looked at it the first time, when I asked for the PRIA after the accident, I reviewed the PRIA the first time and there was no red flag for me.
Q. And when you're saying the red flag, you mean the records itself are not indicating anything substantial --
A. Right.
Q. But let me ask you this. Is a failure -- in your mind, in your experience, is a failure to upgrade to captain a red flag?
A. I would say yes.
Q. Okay. So is this something that your designated agent that's doing this review of PRIA records prior to it getting to you, is that something you believe they should identify as a red flag?
A. I think the way it was presented it did not present as a red flag.
Q. I get that now but I'm saying -- or then when they were doing the review, do you believe it's something, since you're relying on a designated agent to do these type of reviews to get you the information, do you believe the designated agent needs to be identifying that as a red flag because you just said it --
A. Yes.
Q. -- is a red flag?
A. Yes.

Q. Okay.
A. Absolutely.
Q. Yeah.
A. I would have liked to have had that information.
Q. So you believe the designated agent should be red flagging that even though it's not out in the record someplace.
A. Yes. Emphatically, yes.
Q. Are you guys doing anything? Is Atlas doing anything with the designated agent to alter their procedures to look at those --
A. I am not aware --
Q. -- type of events?
A. -- of that.
Q. Okay.
A. What we have done is we now -- we are including a pilot to review the PRIAs. I think part of it was if you look at the PRIA that was presented to us and from Mesa is, you know, the column that says S/U which is satisfactory -- there's nothing ever entered in there.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. There's nothing there so what we -- but the flag that they look for is an Unsat. I thought it was -- I thought that the information we had about the captain upgrade was vague, at best. I'll have to say that.
Q. Anything preventing Atlas from calling up Mesa Airlines and getting additional information on that?

A. I don't believe we can -- I -- legally, I can't answer that question.
Q. Okay.
A. Legally I can't answer that question. If we have a pathway program, an agreement, we could do that but I -- I'm not going to speak to that because that's not my area but --
Q. Okay. You mentioned this earlier when I was trying to mention in Trans States or Mesa but when we get to Trans States you're aware of his training difficulties at Trans States?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. His records provided to Atlas indicated that on April 22nd, 2014 he failed his type rating on 145 and subsequent rating ride on 145 back in May and then on 2015 -- under 2014 (indiscernible) 2014, in September 2014 he was graded unsatisfactory on multiple line checks. Were you aware of those specific training deficiencies in his background?
A. I -- because I was part of the interview process -- I don't recall but because I was part of the interview process I would assume I should have been aware. But I, frankly, when I reviewed his PRIA I did not remember that.
Q. Are those certificate failures at Trans States in his multiple line check Unsats at line check at Trans States --
A. That look like a multiple line check and I did not see that in the PRIA.
Q. Okay.

A. But, yeah.
Q. Would those have been important for you to have in your possession as far as making evaluations on his application?
A. The personnel panel had that information. It may have been brought up in the review but I don't recall.
Q. Okay. I asked you about Mesa. Did he -- to your knowledge did anybody contact Trans States to obtain further information about these training deficiencies in Conrad's past?
A. Not that I'm aware.
Q. Okay. And then on his application there was a two-year gap in employment that was noted by your designated agent between 2011 and 2013. Were you aware of any training performance deficiencies in his past between -- in that two-year gap?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Were you aware that he had been hired by both Air Wisconsin and CommutAir and subsequently failed both those training programs during that two-year gap period?
A. (No response heard.)
Q. Any idea why Atlas didn't know about that -- those training difficulties?
A. I don't know. I don't know.
Q. The records indicate the designated agent asked Conrad about that two-year gap period and was told that he was doing some real estate and some freelance work and things like that. And his resume and application never disclosed these subsequent training

failures from that gap. In other words, he never disclosed to Atlas that he had even been hired by these two so is that information that you would have liked to have had for the evaluation of his application at Atlas?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Why?

A. That would have been -- that would have shown a trend. That one I won't -- that one I will second guess myself. With that information, certainly. Certainly. Once again, I hate to be a Monday morning quarterback but with that information I can tell you right now if I had that information at the time we would not have offered him a position.

Q. If you had that information because you wouldn't have offered him employment because of his failures or the fact that he didn't disclose that in your app --

A. On his application.

Q. Okay. Is there any opportunity for Atlas to review pilots' applications and ensure that their background match what they're telling you for hiring purposes?

A. We look at their -- we do compare the application to the resume and to what they disclose in the interview and it's also reviewed in the phone screen. We do a phone screen on our applicants that is done by HR and the phone screen is basically a review of the application, a review of the resume and any questions about gaps or anything that comes to their attention

that they want a question answered. So generally when we get -- when we have phone screened an individual, most of those are -- have already been addressed.

Q. Okay. Any changes since the accident in the screening process for applications?

A. Although -- well, the only thing that we have done is to emphasize the importance of the phone screen and we added -- this is after the fact -- after we get the PRIA we've added a pilot, a retired captain, to review the PRIAs.

Q. At what point in the process are you reviewing the PRIAs?

A. When they receive them.

Q. When they're received.

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. This is before a job offer has been made.

A. No. We -- very seldom do we get a PRIA prior to an individual being in class.

Q. So they have a 30-day gap period and such so they're reviewing it once the PRIAs first come in. So the pilot could be on the property, in training --

A. Yes. In most cases he is.

Q. Okay. Have you ever seen -- have a case where Atlas reviewed the PRIA records while a pilot was in the training footprint waiting that 30-day period and then it was determined that you didn't want -- you rescinded the employment offer?

A. Yes.

Q. How often does that happen?
A. The one I -- I can recall one since I've been here. And I couldn't tell you who it is. But I do recall --
Q. (Indiscernible) ask.
A. Yeah.
Q. Are you familiar with FOIA?
A. No, not really. I know what it is but I'm not familiar with it. The information that provides it on your social security number.
Q. Okay. Do you know if Atlas has the ability to FOIA information on a pilot applicant beyond five years?
A. I don't know.
Q. Okay.
A. I think they do, but I don't know. That's not my area of expertise.
Q. Okay. I've asked about this a couple of times but I just wanted your general impression. Are there limitations -- do you see limitations in your role in the hiring process with PRIA and background checks and what are those limitations that you're seeing?
A. The process we use is if there's a red flag, HR brings it to me to -- and our process is we call the trainee into my office and we have an HR rep there and I will review the PRIA, their -- and what they disclosed in the interview and I will question them about the discrepancy or the red flag that we found.

And then many times -- and many times I'll ask them -- they'll be a date discrepancy when something happened and I'll ask for a letter from their employer to confirm what they said. But I think we've identified -- we just identified something I would have liked to have had and I don't know for that particular -- that Conrad's PRIA flagged what happened.

That's -- I frankly saw that when I -- I missed it the first time. And I've been doing this for a long time and I missed it the first time and I -- had there not been accident and I was reviewing that PRIA I wouldn't -- probably wouldn't have looked at it a second time.

Q. Well, I just want to make sure I had this characterization and this is kind of a general characterization of the process you guys have. You were talking about the red flags that you would like to have seen.

A. Yes.

Q. But, correct me if I'm wrong, the people who are identifying the red flags or trying to find red flags in pilots' backgrounds are HR people who are not pilots. They're not pilot people looking for that.

A. That's the designated agent, but yes.

Q. But the designated agent may not be one either and you're relying on their review of the PRIA records so it's a lot of people who are not pilots that are seeing these records and trying to identify red flags that you think are red flags but they aren't

identifying. Correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Would you consider that a limitation of the PRIA system that you guys are using?
A. I would say the presentation of the information could be better.
Q. Okay.
A. And our mitigation of that was to include, after the fact, was to include a pilot to review on that.
Q. Great. But that was not the process -- at the time --
A. No.
Q. -- Conrad was hired it was not.
A. As soon as I read his PRIA and I missed it the first time and I thought it was vague I recommended to Denise that we involve one of our captains who's involved in the interview process to regularly review all the PRIAs.
Q. Okay. Let me -- how are you doing by the way?
A. No. I'm good.
Q. Anything to --
A. One of the other things we added, I'm not supposed to answer this question but one of the things we added which I find of great value is we weren't doing log book reviews.
Q. Okay.
A. And I incorporated that, once again, after the fact. I incorporated log book reviews because I -- there's no doubt in my

mind after reviewing the log books over the years that the log book tells a story and it fills in gaps and I think it brings a lot of value -- added value, especially if you have a question about somebody's career. So I think that, along with the pilot reviewing the PRIAs, was how I addressed the mitigation of this happening again.

Q. Okay. We just asked you about your total hiring and such. How many pilots does Atlas hire each year?

A. We have averaged right around 335 pilots or so since I got here in January of 2015. And essentially with Atlas we're nearly 1,500 pilots since I've been here in 4½ years.

Q. Okay. How many pilots generally are planned for a new hire class specifically with 767?

A. We -- generally right around 14. It will go up and down depending on the needs of crew planning.

Q. Those spots typically getting filled.

A. In the past they have but right now we're filling, some we're not filling. We're not filling classes at the same rate we did last year for that.

Q. What do you attribute that to?

A. I think a number of things. I think we're experiencing a pilot shortage that we've been talking about a long time. So you have a dwindling pilot pool. We lost a whole generation of pilots in 911 and so we have seen the pool dwindle and we've seen all the airlines hiring and the competitive nature of the hiring you have

to include the CBA in it because you're competing with pilots that -- with companies that have better CBAs than ours.

Q. And pay.

A. Pay. Yeah. It's all about the money.

Q. Typically, how many new hire pilots fail out of training at Atlas each year?

A. I'm going to give you a percentage. We're at about 98.5 percent success rate and I would say six -- I don't have that number here.

Q. And in your view, globally, what are general reasons for a new hire failing out?

A. Some of it is -- well, I will say that we have the most challenging training program in the industry and I've been doing this for 35 -- almost 35 years and I actually went through our training program as a current qualified 747-400 captain and I found it extremely challenging. That's part of it. Part of it is that we see some individuals that don't have the advanced autopilot, advanced FMC systems. They struggle with that. We are unique in that we hire into the right seat of a wide body and as I tell our 747 guys the 767 is a wide body. So I think those challenges.

In OE the challenge is the breadth of the business and the places we fly. I think this is extremely challenging flying but really it's the shortage that I see more than anything else. There is definitely a shortage and because of where we are with

our compensation we're struggling a little more.

Q. Okay. You have a training review board.

A. Yes.

Q. What is that and what's your role in that?

A. Well, we didn't have one when I got here and where I came from we did and when we get an individual that is struggling and has gotten to a certain point where we think that we need to consider whether or not to continue his training, it can't be made in a vacuum.

So the first thing we did was we created a remedial protocol because the CBA really didn't apply well to hiring this number of pilots and so we created a policy -- I created a policy as a protocol policy so that we had gates in remediation where if you had two remediations and they -- they didn't go away just because you're successful the next stage.

So we would do a record review and then after the second remedial we would do a counseling session and they would basically know that if they got another remedial or they failed an event then we would convene a training review board and the training review board included myself, Joe as the fleet captain and a chief pilot, normally it was our power systems chief pilot, Scott Welty, that reviews -- review, actually there are times when we have four (indiscernible). And the decision is made at that point to -- whether to continue the training or to recommend that we discontinue training and then it moves onto to HR.

Q. For termination.
A. Yes.
Q. And just so we have it on record, was -- at any point in time was Conrad, during the course of his training, reviewed by a training review board?
A. No.
Q. And why not?
A. He did not meet the protocol for that to happen. Had he not been recommended for the second type rating we wouldn't (indiscernible).
Q. But his failure of the type did not trigger --
A. No.
Q. -- the TRB.
A. No, because it's a -- it was a number of things that had to happen.
Q. And that guidance for the TRB -- for your role in the TRB, where do you get that guidance?
A. It's a policy. It is not in the fight operations training.
Q. Okay. Is it policy that's defined for management here or do you refer to the CBA?
A. No, it is independent of the CBA.
Q. Okay. But it's a management -- it's Atlas policy.
A. It's Atlas policy.
Q. Not a flight operations or training policy but an Atlas policy. Got it.

A. Well, it is an Atlas policy that we developed internally --
Q. Internally.
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Good. And just one last question because I know you're tired of hearing from me and let Dr. Bramble have a chance. Enhanced envelope training, where are you guys in that right now?
A. We are doing it on the -- we're conducting it on the 747. Right now, the 767, we had a difficulty in that the one 1767 we own, the add on was not complete and so what we're doing is we're doing a ground school for the 767 pilots as they come through and for the new hires we're trying to use the Boeing. Tom, is that correct? And as soon as we get the mod -- modification done for our 767-300 simulator start doing the normal EET training and we have a new simulator coming on in September that will be fully EET capable. But not all the 76 pilots have cycled through any kind of (indiscernible) that has that.
Q. No.
A. The only requirement for the 76 guys is the ground school portion (indiscernible) --
Q. They're getting the ground school.
A. Now they do get upset training but not the EET upset training (indiscernible).
Q. Okay. I'm going to give you a break. By the way, do you need a break?
A. No. No. I'll take a drink of water.

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. So Bill will have anything.

DR. BRAMBLE: Sure, just a couple things.

BY DR. BRAMBLE:

Q. What percentage of type rating rides are graded incomplete? Do you have any sense of that?

A. Yeah. I actually went back to 2011 and generally we have averaged just over 93 percent success rate. That's combined over both fleets.

Q. Okay. So what's that come to? Seven percent for 300 is 21 so maybe you would have like 20-plus per year.

A. And we track all that. We track everything we do now so very AQP-like tracking system that I instituted in 2016. We track -- they were tracking before. They were doing a tracking of failures and some of the things they failed but we take it beyond that to a very AQP-like tracking system. It's obviously not done by the AQP module but it's done in-house by my air crew training manager for the 74/76.

Q. So for the FOs with at least one type ride failure, did Conrad look kind of typical for that group of 20 per year or --

A. I can't speak -- I wasn't in there so I don't -- but I do know that it was, you know, it was a failure and he repeated the entire type rating so it wasn't just one off -- one item. But I would say that in looking at it, it was not atypical and the fact that he -- the remediation was done and a recommend was made and then he was successful in his subsequent type rating.

Q. It was not atypical.
A. No, it was not atypical.
Q. Okay.
A. That's why (indiscernible).
Q. Uh-huh. How about LOFT sessions? Do you know what percentage of LOFT sessions are graded incomplete?
A. I would say on -- in qualification almost never. It's a really -- it's a non-jeopardy training proficiency and then we incorporated -- in 2016, we incorporated the current log in lieu of the RFT. We started it on the 747 in 2017. Very seldom do we see an incomplete there. We do, on occasion, but very seldom. And it's a two-way --
Q. How many would you see per year, on average, do you think?
A. Geez, I would say less than five, if -- maybe probably two. It is a very, very small number.
Q. Uh-huh. Okay. During the OE review meetings that we talked about where you review the progress of pilots' OE, would Conrad have been discussed as an individual?
A. If he was having difficulty or was requiring more legs or more hours than was typical, yes. He was discussed because our OE scheduler/manager goes through each fleet to review each fleet. Each fleet is represented by a fleet captain and the air crew training manager and we have SMEs for the 74/76 generally in attendance if they're available. And the manager, our manager for OE scheduling has a personal relationship with the line check

airman so she actually has regular contact with them and they also have regular contact with the fleet captain.

So if somebody is struggling or having difficulty or needs some more training it goes straight to the fleet captain. Fleet captain makes the decision whether or not to continue with the OE or how much OE is required before we conduct an initial line check.

Q. So you said he was discussed. Does that mean he was discussed (indiscernible) --

A. He was not notified about any problems. I'm just saying --

Q. Right.

A. -- he was -- he would have been part of the group of pilots that was considered so -- and somebody like him it would have been just the review. We have a report that comes up every day. There's like a consolidation report. There's an OE report and we review that every day so we know if somebody -- if we see time building, if we, you know, an inordinate amount of time, inordinate amount of legs, so we see that report every day. So I can put my fingers on exactly what's going on in OE or consolidation on any given day. We just do a -- we review it every week as a group and many times we -- our vice president of crew planning is on the call as well as Jeff Carlson, senior VP of flight ops. Many times he'll be on the call.

DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. That's all I have. Thanks.

MR. LAWRENCE: Warren?

MR. ABRAMS: (Indiscernible) but I don't have a good flow here but I have a scattering of questions all over.

BY MR. ABRAMS:

Q. You said early on that one of your duties and responsibilities is new airplanes and things like that, evaluation of -- I don't want to get into proprietary numbers or anything like that but since you (indiscernible) have you replaced that airplane yet?

A. Not yet.

Q. Are you looking to replace that airplane?

A. I don't know what their intentions are.

Q. Okay. Rick, our captain, he got hired -- you interviewed him in 2015, I believe.

A. Yeah.

Q. And he upgraded to captain in 2018, I believe.

A. Yes.

Q. A three-year upgrade. That's pretty fast. Is that the normal track you're seeing right now before you upgrade to captain?

A. The average -- while we were accepting the Amazon jets --

Q. Yes.

A. -- was two years and seven months for 767.

Q. One of the changes in 2016 to the PWP was the fact that you wanted to make it non-punitive. Is that correct?

A. That was not the reason for changing it but I saw that it was

-- there was one line in there that I thought was punitive and that was that any training event -- so if you were doing a full flight simulator and at the time we would actually stop training. We didn't feel like on a full flight four, for example, if we felt like the pilot was not making appropriate progress, we would stop the training and remediate him.

Q. Okay.

A. And when we did that -- well, you're at PWP.

Q. Yeah.

A. So we do two things. We change -- we also changed that to indicate (indiscernible) gatekeeping.

Q. I realize Conrad was not in PWP and we beat this around but would it -- with all the remediation and the one failed rating ride event, it looks like he would have been an excellent candidate to go into the PWP program but he was -- he didn't meet the definition but since it was not punitive, what would have been the harm in putting him in there?

A. I will not -- I think an argument can be made but, once again, I'm doing a lookback -- an argument can be made that he could have gone -- he could very well have gone into PWP.

Q. Okay. As I said I'm jumping around here. ASAP. How many ASAP reports do you get a year, approximately?

A. We average one ASAP per pilot.

Q. Is that --

A. We average one ASAP per pilot.

Q. What is that around --
A. If you include Southern and Atlas we're about 2,000 ASAPs a year.
Q. All right. Interviews, are they all conducted in New York? Are there any of them conducted here?
A. They're conducted -- we do large groups of interviews and we rotate between Miami and New York. Generally do them in New York and then on occasion we'll do one-offs or two-offs down here because we -- it's more convenient, sometimes, to have people here because we have local folks and then I'm here or some other management pilot is here to assist with the --
Q. I realize you're -- next question. I realize you're not filling all your 767 classes and -- but still, nonetheless, do you feel there's a need to look at maybe a (indiscernible) screen in the pre-employment process?
A. I don't know that I'd be a good judge of that. I think anything you add -- I guess it's a two-part question. Would it improve our process or it would be something nice to have? I would certainly accept anything that adds to the screening process. I'll answer that way.

MR. ABRAMS: Uh-huh. Okay. That's all I have. Thank you very much.

MR. LAWRENCE: Rich?

BY MR. LEE:

Q. Yeah, my only question is back to the interview process. You

mentioned that you hire many pilots and do these interviews in groups so the day that you interview, how many records are you going over and how many records does the panel go over and how much time are you allotted to look at each record?

A. We generally allow for 45 minutes for our personnel interview and 30 minutes for a tech interview. Average -- on average when we have a normal size group and the normal amount of pilots -- our management pilots that are interviewing, we average around six interviews a day. So we'll start at I'll say, you know, we started interviewing around 9:30 to 10:00 and we finish up at around 3:30 or 4:00 and then we spend the rest of the time -- so I would say we review the record before the applicant comes in and as much time or as little time as you want.

Once again, the record -- the application, everything has been reviewed already but we still review it -- we once again review the application, the resume and with the HR person on the panel, again, and then they review with the applicant.

Q. Do you feel like it's enough time for you to review?

A. I think it's as much time as you take on it. I feel comfortable with it. I think the key is is that we take time before the interviews to review them so you don't feel a sense of, you know, urgency to get through it so we do, we make every effort to review it prior to the -- I think that's what happens is if the applicant is in the room while you're reviewing it then you miss things so what we do is we do it prior to them entering the room.

And that particular HR rep has already seen that application.

MR. LEE: Okay. That's all I have.

MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Tyson?

MR. HOWARD: I don't have anything.

MR. LAWRENCE: JB?

MR. BLAKELY: (Indiscernible) shock.

MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody have any follow up questions? Bill?

DR. BRAMBLE: I don't think so.

MR. LAWRENCE: I don't have any. Anything, Scott, that maybe we didn't ask you about you were expecting or something that you could maybe offer to assist in the investigation considering this is a safety investigation?

MR. ANDERSON: No.

MR. LAWRENCE: Additional?

MR. ANDERSON: No, I'm very comfortable with our processes and obviously a sad, sad time and there's a lot of second guessing that goes on but I'm very, very comfortable and at peace with our process and I think we certainly did everything we could, you know, to do the right thing.

MR. LAWRENCE: We appreciate that. If there's anything after we leave and down the road either today, tomorrow, a week from now, that you think of and it's something that it's like, oh, I could have clarified this response or let me add this, it could help the investigation, feel free to reach out to us.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

MR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	ATLAS AIR BOEING 767-300 (N1217A) ACCIDENT, ANAHUAC, TEXAS FEBRUARY 23, 2019 Interview of Scott Anderson
ACCIDENT NO.:	DCA19MA086
PLACE:	Miami, Florida
DATE:	June 5, 2019

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.

[redacted]
Beverly A. Lano
Transcriber