

DCA24FA017

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

Group Chairman's Factual Report - Attachment 5

Interview Transcripts

September 22, 2025

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

*

HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA *

CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P. * Accident No.: DCA24FA0017

HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS *

ON OCTOBER 24, 2023 *

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Interview of: JONATHAN MEJIA, Local Controller (LC)

William P. Hobby Airport Traffic Control Tower

Houston, Texas

Friday,

October 27, 2023

FREE STATE REPORTING, INC.
Court Reporting Transcription
D.C. Area 301-261-1902
Balt. & Annap. 410-974-0947

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JASMINE SCOTT
(On behalf of Mr. Mejia)

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:42 a.m. CDT)

1
2
3 MR. SOPER: All right. Brian Soper, lead air traffic
4 investigator with the NTSB. And I have here with me today as part
5 of our group, Mike Vandini, who is with us out of Chicago
6 District, and he's representing the FAA as a subject matter expert
7 on our group; we have Katharine Wilson, who's with us from --
8 she's a senior human performance investigator back at the NTSB as
9 well, and she's here with human performance, assisting our group
10 today; we have Katharine -- Kristen McTee, I'm sorry, and she's
11 with us representing NATCA, she comes with us from Kansas City
12 Tower; and we Sarah Lewis, who is my colleague back at
13 headquarters, also an air traffic investigator.

14 And you have here with you today your representative you
15 chose, correct?

16 MR. MEJIA: Yes.

17 MR. SOPER: All right. And could you state your name for the
18 record, please?

19 MS. SCOTT: Jasmine Scott.

20 MR. SOPER: Thanks, Jasmine.

21 And could you state your name for the record?

22 MR. MEJIA: Jonathan Mejia.

23 MR. SOPER: Thanks. Do you go by Jon or Jonathan?

24 MR. MEJIA: Jon.

25 MR. SOPER: All right. Thanks, Jon.

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1 The -- sorry, this messed up there. Okay. So we're here
2 today to talk about the incident that occurred on October 24th of
3 this week, where we had a collision on the ground with -- between
4 November-5-1-0-Hotel-Mike and November-2-6-9-Alpha-Alpha. And I
5 believe you were the local controller that day; is that correct?

6 MR. MEJIA: Yes.

7 MR. SOPER: Awesome.

8 INTERVIEW OF JONATHAN MEJIA

9 BY MR. SOPER:

10 Q. All right. So, I -- just some background questions for you.
11 Can you tell me how old you were on the day of the event?

12 A. Thirty-eight.

13 Q. Thirty-eight. And what are your operating -- actually, let
14 me go back real quick. Can you spell your first name just to make
15 sure I got it right here?

16 A. J-o-n-a-t-h-a-n.

17 Q. And last name?

18 A. M-e-j-i-a.

19 Q. Thank you. Thirty-eight. And your operating initials?

20 A. Juliette-Mike.

21 Q. And you're a CPC here, correct?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Awesome. How long have you been certified local up here?

24 A. Since May, June of this year.

25 Q. Okay.

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1 A. I think May.

2 Q. Awesome.

3 A. Early June, maybe.

4 Q. Okay. Do you have any pre -- prior FAA air traffic control
5 experience: military, DoD, a contract? What do you got?

6 A. So I was -- before I transferred to Hobby in October 2022, I
7 was a controller at Corpus Christie TRACON for about 3 months.
8 Before that, I was a supervisor at Corpus Christie TRACON for
9 roughly 3 years, from 2019-2022, August, I was a was supervisor at
10 Corpus. Before that, I was in Lubbock. I was a supervisor of
11 their up-down facility from December 2017 to November 2019. And
12 prior to that, I was a CPC in Lincoln Tower, Nebraska, and I was a
13 CPC there from 2015. I got to the facility 2014, but CPC time,
14 2015 to 2017, that was my CPC time there. And before that, I was
15 in the Army. I was a controller in the Army 7 years. I was 7
16 years active duty, and then I was part of the Texas National Guard
17 for about 3 years. I was a warrant officer candidate there.

18 Q. Okay. Excellent. Thanks for your service. I'm also retired
19 Navy. So what years were you in the Army, from when to when, what
20 year?

21 A. 2006 to 2013.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I believe.

24 Q. All right. Do you hold any collateral duties here or have
25 you been on any recent details that have taken you out that may

1 have affected your currency or proficiency?

2 A. I am the legislative rep for the facility for NATCA, part of
3 the local safety council. I went to NATCA in Washington back in
4 May of this year. We've had some meetings, local safety council
5 meetings. That's about it.

6 Q. Okay. And how long you been on LSC here?

7 A. I think July timeframe, I guess, July, August. Once I got
8 CPC, shortly after that.

9 Q. Okay. So can you kind of just -- I know you went over some
10 of it already a little bit there as you went through this, but can
11 you just kind of give us your kind of 10,000 foot bio of your
12 aviation background? Like how did you get interested in aviation,
13 how did you start? You know, like I -- whatever, I was in high
14 school, I was always interested, I joined the Army. Just kind of
15 tell us your story a little bit, real briefly, to what brought you
16 to here today.

17 A. So, well, I didn't have an interest as far as air traffic,
18 but I did have an interest in aviation. You know, I did some
19 tours with the (indiscernible). Like they bring people from high
20 school to check out the planes, go in the cockpit and kind of see
21 what the -- you know, career choices type of thing before you -- I
22 was a junior, I believe, just trying to make a decision as far as
23 careers. I ended up trying to pursue law enforcement. I
24 eventually joined the Army and just picked aviation, you know,
25 just --

1 Q. Oh, okay.

2 A. -- you know, air traffic, it intrigued me. It looked like a
3 good job and the possibility of getting out and having a good
4 career. So that's how that happened.

5 So, joined the Army and went to school in Fort Rucker,
6 Alabama. From there, I got sent to -- I got stationed in Germany.
7 I was part of the tactical unit in Germany. I reported to the
8 Middle East. I got certified in the approach facility that we
9 had, became a shift leader, trainer, that kind of stuff. Got back
10 to Germany, got ready for another deployment. Deployed again to
11 the Middle East. Deployed to Afghanistan, came back to Germany,
12 and then I went to Fort Rucker, which is the aviation base for the
13 Army where they train the pilots. So we did a lot of the student
14 pilots' training. So I was at one of the facilities there. I was
15 a training supervisor, shift leader.

16 Then after that, I obviously got out of the Army, joined the
17 guard to, you know, keep doing aviation, kind of expand on my
18 knowledge. I applied for the FAA, so I was waiting -- in the
19 meantime I was waiting, I was also going to school pursuing my
20 aviation degree since, I would say since I joined the Army. I
21 think the year after that, I started going to school online. So
22 once I got out, continued to go to school. I would go to San
23 Antonio, back and forth, you know, trying to set up their
24 aviation, because they didn't have a warrant officer. It was a
25 new position and they wanted somebody with experience, active

1 duty, so try to get that going. They were getting ready for
2 deployment. So in a sense I was part of their SME when it came to
3 having having the experience and deployments, what it looked like
4 for standards and just having a proper training program, so I did
5 that with them.

6 In the process, I got picked up by the FAA, so I went to
7 Lincoln, certified, and -- I'm from Houston, so my goal was to go
8 back, so I continued to pursue that. In the meantime, because of
9 my background, I started being a supervisor and having that
10 experience. I said, you know what, this is an option and an
11 opportunity and I took it. So from there, I went to Lubbock. I
12 was there for 2 years roughly. I was one of the supes there.
13 There was two supervisors. Did that, then got to Corpus. Same
14 thing, I was a supervisor. And then I just sort of decided to
15 join -- go back to the bargaining unit and became a controller and
16 I transferred over here.

17 Q. Yeah. So that was different. You went from supe and came
18 back to the boards or came back to active controller. Just liked
19 controlling better, you think? I mean, or --

20 A. It was a lot of things. It was -- I've always liked
21 controlling and, you know, as a supervisor, you kind of -- you're
22 oversight, so -- but, you know, personal things related with my
23 family. Like I said, I'm from here, so I just wanted to get back
24 home and get my kids back home, be around my kids. So that was a
25 deciding factor. And I felt like at that time that was the best

1 situation for me and my family.

2 Q. That's awesome. Do you miss radar? You said -- because you
3 did up-down time, right, and stuff --

4 A. I do. So that was my first rating. It's my baby, I'll call
5 it.

6 Q. That's kind of what people are, right? They kind of attract
7 to one or the other. Even up-down, somebody usually has a
8 preference like where they started from. Just kind of curious.
9 I've been out to Corpus because there's -- the Navy's out there
10 obviously, but -- all right. Well, cool. That's awesome. I
11 appreciate that.

12 And so just some, like I said, basic background questions.
13 Have you ever been fired, terminated, suspended, or asked to
14 resign from an air traffic position --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- since you've been at the FAA? And how would you describe
17 your overall health in the terms of excellent, good, fair or poor?

18 A. Excellent.

19 Q. Okay. And did you have a current medical clearance on the
20 day of the event?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And do you have any restrictions, waivers, or limitations to
23 your medical clearance?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Do you have a requirement to wear corrective lenses?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Okay. And were you taking any maintenance, prescription or
3 nonprescription medications on the day of the event?

4 A. No.

5 Q. And was drug or alcohol screening performed as a result of
6 this event?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And do you remember how long after the event it occurred?

9 A. The next day.

10 Q. The next day? Do you -- was it --

11 A. The next day at -- by 12, maybe.

12 Q. Okay. So under 24 hours. All right. And any major changes
13 in your health over the last year? These are big things like you
14 had surgeries or pins or you were down for long periods of time
15 for something, anything like that over the last year?

16 A. (No audible response.)

17 Q. And how about, a similar question, any major changes in your
18 personal life over the last year: got divorced, had a child, got
19 married, adopted a child --

20 A. No.

21 Q. -- big things that are life changers? And last question, but
22 similar, major changes in your financial situation over the last
23 year; won the lotto, filed bankruptcy --

24 A. No.

25 Q. -- big stuff? All right. And I normally would go over some

1 72-hour history stuff here, but our human performance investigator
2 is with us. She's definitely got some questions in that arena for
3 you. She'll do that a little bit later, so --

4 Did you file an ATSAP as the result of this event?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Excellent. Did you get a result -- or a confirmation back
7 from the ERC that they received it?

8 A. I haven't checked, but I haven't seen anything yet.

9 Q. No worries. And have you been interviewed about this event
10 prior to now other than your pre-brief that you had today with
11 legal and the FAA?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. Have you had an opportunity to review a replay of this
14 event?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Was that like a Falcon audio and video?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. And how long ago was that? When's the last time you
19 were able to review that?

20 A. I did it this morning.

21 Q. Oh, okay. Good. So you don't need to watch it or anything
22 again before we talk today. And on the day of the event, do you
23 recall, was a relief briefing conducted when you took the
24 position?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Was it recorded?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And did you use a checklist that day?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Do you know, the checklist for you guys, is that like in your
6 NIDS or IDS or I-D-S or whatever it is that you guys have, or is
7 it a paper copy that you guys use?

8 A. It's in the NIDS.

9 Q. It's in the NIDS? Okay. And on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being
10 the heaviest, how would you rate the traffic volume at the time of
11 the event, just the volume?

12 A. I'll say 3, 4 maybe.

13 Q. Okay. And is -- would you consider that normal for that time
14 of day and that day of the week type of thing, what you would
15 expect to see on a shift like that?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. And similar question, on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being
18 the most complex, how would you rate the traffic complexity at the
19 time?

20 A. I'll say a 4 or 5.

21 Q. Okay. And do you feel that was normal for that time of day
22 the day of the event or is that more than -- above average or
23 below average?

24 A. I think it was -- it was a little bit above average because
25 we were prepping up for an emergency inbound, so it was kind of

1 abnormal.

2 Q. Okay. And were there any other distractions occurring at or
3 leading up to the time of the event that you can recall? These
4 can be anything that may have been a distraction, for instance,
5 like you guys were having equipment problems or there was an
6 aircraft that lost comm or you had -- somebody was -- you were
7 trying to get a turnover done with somebody, anything that would
8 have been -- may have been a distraction right around the time of
9 the event that you can recall?

10 A. No.

11 Q. And do you recall the general weather conditions on that day?
12 Do you remember like -- and I'm not looking for you to spit out
13 the METAR, but I'm -- like was it was generally VFR? Did you have
14 any weather advisories out? Was there any precip in the area or
15 anything like that?

16 A. It was VFR. I know it was windy. It was gusty.

17 Q. And did you receive a pre-duty weather briefing that day?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And was there anything that stood out to you in the briefing
20 at all as far as weather for that day or was it just, you know, a
21 pretty average day?

22 A. It was a pretty average day.

23 Q. Kind of a separate question but in that lane, how do you --
24 how would you classify the usefulness or the value of the pre-duty
25 weather briefing for you guys here, for you here, in preparing you

1 for the weather that's going to be on a watch in its current
2 state? What I mean by that is, do you feel that it -- just in the
3 terms of it's highly valuable, it's somewhat valuable, or it's not
4 very valuable at all?

5 A. It's highly valuable.

6 Q. Okay. What -- is there anything that you can -- that you
7 identify with it, you're like, I wish they did have this in there
8 though, this would be really helpful for us here at Houston tower?
9 Or is it covering what you need?

10 A. It's covered.

11 Q. All right. And did you have a cell phone or PED on you at
12 the time of the event?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay. And had you requested a relief or assistance leading
15 up to the time of the event or were you in your normal rotation?

16 A. I was in my normal rotation.

17 Q. Okay. And you did not have a local assist, right?

18 A. No.

19 Q. No. Do you guys ever open local assist here?

20 A. I've never seen it open while I've been here.

21 Q. Okay. Out of curiosity, has there ever been a time where you
22 felt like it'd be good to have a local assist open here? I mean,
23 is this a staffing driven thing or do you guys just never reach
24 that point where you need it?

25 A. I don't -- me personally, I've never seen it to that level, I

1 guess. I've never seen what it looks like what it would do for me
2 as far as being on local.

3 Q. Fair enough. Okay. And did you -- when did you first become
4 aware that an event occurred? Can you just kind of tell me how --
5 as a matter of fact, you know what, right here is a good point.
6 Why don't we just ask you if you could just tell us the story and
7 take us from the time -- how long had you been on watch, do you
8 think, before the event occurred? So it happened around 1520 or
9 3:20 in the afternoon. Had you been on very long or --

10 A. I believe maybe I got on at 2 o'clock or somewhere around
11 there. I'm not quite sure.

12 Q. So if you could just tell us the story from the time that you
13 recall -- we can go ahead and start with the Southwest because we
14 know we had a Southwest emergency, right, that was beforehand and
15 you were kind of setting things up. So, and then just step us
16 through the whole event as you can recall it, where you had the
17 emergency inbound and then, of course, you know, the Hawker calls
18 and you give him a line up and wait, and the Mustang comes in for
19 landing. And when you do this, if you could just kind of explain
20 to us your thought process of how you were -- your decision tree,
21 how you were making the decisions to do and prioritize what you
22 were doing, you know, and kind of just tell us that story, all the
23 way through to the point where you guys are just now doing upward
24 reporting and trying to cover the event.

25 A. So I'm setting up for the emergency, trying to figure out

1 what's happening, getting all the information of what's going on
2 with the Southwest. Ground is trying to set up the vehicles in
3 the proper positions and just figuring out, okay, we got somebody
4 coming in, it's going to be an emergency, just prepping up, be
5 ready. In the meantime, I'm working the position. You know, I
6 got inbounds, outbounds, helicopters taking off in the medical
7 center and -- so just the normal operations at that point. Nine-
8 Alpha-Alpha calls and I issued him the -- well, I cleared the
9 other guy. I don't remember the call sign.

10 Q. 5-1-0-Hotel-Mike?

11 A. Yeah. Yeah. Clear to land, and then I clear -- I think I
12 clear another guy to land, if not -- but I'm doing just the local
13 normal things that I'm doing.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. So he calls me, I give him a line up and wait. I listened to
16 the tapes, like I said, the Falcons. I did not tell him about the
17 guy landing. He read back line up and wait. I'm scanning. I'm
18 looking at the wind. I'm thinking, you know, making sure that
19 this guy's touching down. I'm following him. At that point the
20 flight data position controller says -- he said something along
21 the lines, is this guy rolling or do you have somebody rolling?
22 And I'm -- like I say, I'm in the process of looking at the
23 touchdown. I immediately go to this guy and I reach out to him
24 and no response.

25 So I'm doing that and I'm looking at this guy to see what

1 he's doing or if there's something that I can do as far as, you
2 know, with him. And, I mean, it was fast, and by that point
3 they're -- they clipped. He takes -- he lifts off, he takes off,
4 and in the background people are doing stuff, you know. Things
5 are happening now because obviously we see that they hit each
6 other. I saw that they hit each other. I'm not sure how much
7 damage or what happened, but I know there was an incident.

8 So I issued him the go-around procedures. You know, I put
9 him on a heading and an altitude to stay with me so I can, you
10 know, clean this up, so I can bring him back. People are calling
11 me. There's these lines. There's noise, you know. He says what
12 he said, like I'm not able to do that or whatever it is. So I'm
13 having, you know, trouble trying to figure out what he's saying,
14 was calling him back, and what's going on with this. So I put him
15 on another heading, I believe I told him 3-1-0, if I'm not
16 mistaken, just so I can get him closer based on what he said, so I
17 can try to get him in as soon as possible.

18 I'm telling the supe, hey, tell the TRACON this guy's going
19 to be on this heading, I'm just going to try to pull him off, make
20 sure they're separated and bring him back to them. I'm telling
21 ground, hey, make sure that we get a truck to the approach, to the
22 approach end, and he's coming right back.

23 I issue the clearance for him to land. I'm telling these
24 guys to go around. I see that he's heading towards the other
25 Southwest, so I'm trying to reach out to this guy. I misspoke the

1 call sign. I didn't realize that at the time. I listened to the
2 tapes. But then eventually I got it right and I told him -- I saw
3 that he started climbing before he responded to me, so I was okay,
4 good. I'm looking at both. Put him back in, made sure that the
5 guy knew he was clear to land. Follow him, issued the wind, you
6 know, he landed. They follow him and they did that. And then I
7 just try to sequence the other guys back out to the approach.

8 Q. Okay. About how long do you think you were on position after
9 the event occurred? Were you able to get relieved quick or did
10 you have to stay on there a bit?

11 A. I have no idea how long I was on there.

12 Q. Yeah. Okay.

13 A. I couldn't tell you exact time.

14 Q. Not a problem. Do you remember when the -- do you even
15 recall when the supe first engaged in this? Or was it when you
16 told him or did somebody else tell him or did he just hear it once
17 you were telling him to stop? Or was it the, I mean --

18 A. So I think at the time that the flight data told me, at that
19 point he already was engaged, knowing what was going on.

20 Q. Gotcha.

21 A. We were all, you know, looking at this and I'm, you know,
22 trying to talk to him, whatever, the pilot. And so --

23 Q. Okay. Do you remember if you were sitting or standing that
24 day?

25 A. Standing.

1 Q. Is that pretty normal for you when you're busy? I mean,
2 like --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. -- just for you. I mean, everybody's different, so --

5 A. Yeah, I normally stand, and the fact that I had an emergency
6 coming in, I was perked up, trying to make sure that I was alert.

7 Q. Gotcha. Out of curiosity, when the flight data controller
8 mentioned to you do you have a guy rolling or something, did
9 you -- do you remember if you looked out the window or if you
10 looked at the ASDE or --

11 A. No, I looked at the aircraft.

12 Q. And you could see it?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You could see it rolling? Okay. All right. And the ASDE,
15 had it alerted prior to you giving them or was that after?

16 A. No, that was after.

17 Q. Okay. All right. Good.

18 MR. SOPER: That's all the questions I have for right now. I
19 am going to have some more I'm sure, but I want to go ahead and
20 pass it along for now.

21 Sarah?

22 BY MS. LEWIS:

23 Q. Thank you for coming to talk to us. We do appreciate it very
24 much. I wanted to talk to you about your composure on the
25 recovery. I wanted to give you some kudos. I thought your

1 composure was really great. I thought you did a great job
2 recognizing the potential conflict with that second or however
3 many back there conflict with Southwest, because sometimes we see
4 that one event will lead to another event and another event.

5 So what -- do you -- so is there another position that could
6 potentially be open called helicopter? Do you know?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Have you seen that one open before?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. Probably the same kind of question that Brian had
11 already kind of asked you about the other position, would
12 something -- if staffing was not a problem and it was like a
13 miracle, would having that position potentially help alleviate
14 some of the complexity from local control?

15 A. It's -- for me it's hard to say because I've never worked it.
16 I've never seen it open, so I don't know what that looks like as
17 far as integrating now another controller and more coordination,
18 more call-ins. I don't know what that looks like, so I couldn't
19 quite tell you what that would look like for us, so --

20 Q. No, that's completely fair. Yeah. Thank you.

21 Tell me about how you guys overall work as a team here.
22 How's your crew resource management?

23 A. So the people that are on positions, you know, they're
24 actually my trainers. So we -- there's a lot of even signs that
25 you can communicate, looks, like not context. So we work pretty

1 good, especially the two guys that were with me. I can turn and
2 look and we can, like I said, we can communicate very well, so --

3 MR. SOPER: Like ground and CD, you're talking about or --

4 MR. MEJIA: Ground and flight data, yeah.

5 MR. SOPER: -- those two guys that were working?

6 MR. MEJIA: Those two guys were my trainers, so -- they know
7 how I operate. They know what -- how I move, if I'm -- you know,
8 overloaded or how we look out for each other. That's something
9 that we all do, so --

10 MS. LEWIS: Thank you.

11 Kristen?

12 MR. SOPER: Kristen?

13 BY MS. McTEE:

14 Q. So I'll echo what Sarah said. Sarah said your composure and
15 professionalism was admirable, and also your response time and
16 trust in your flight data clearance delivery controllers. When he
17 said it, you acted. It was very impressive.

18 So the Southwest emergency was behind the Mustang; is that
19 correct?

20 A. The Southwest emergency, from what I recall, was not in the
21 sequence yet.

22 Q. Not in the sequence yet?

23 A. I think he was close to the airport as far as, you know,
24 maybe 15, 20 miles to the south/southeast, but he was still higher
25 with approach.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. He was not a part of the sequence.

3 Q. There was a -- I'm not positive on which Southwest it was
4 then, but I do recall you were concerned -- it sounded like you
5 were concerned about an overtake situation with the aircraft
6 behind the Mustang?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And was that an object that you were -- was that the closure
9 that you were focusing on, would you say?

10 A. Yes. I'm not -- I don't recall the exact speed difference,
11 but I knew, you know, it was Southwest following a slow guy, a
12 slow Citation, so definitely I wanted to make sure that wasn't
13 going to be a thing, because, you know, we have -- it's a long
14 runway, so I don't know, I mean -- yeah, I just wanted to make
15 sure that he's going to land, get off, and he's not going to be an
16 issue for the Southwest behind him.

17 Q. Kind of a different line of questioning, here the emergency
18 notification that you received, do you feel like you received that
19 in -- because they -- it sounds like they knew about for a while.
20 They blew the tire pretty far away. Do you feel like you were
21 notified that it was happening in an appropriate amount of time or
22 do you feel like it was kind of a -- you're finding out about it
23 and it's super rushed and now you're trying to get everything
24 ready as a tower team?

25 A. So me specifically, I heard a couple of conversations that

1 were happening behind me, including the ground control, we're
2 having emergency, emergency. But as far as me specifically being
3 told directly, I don't recall that happening.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Once the flight data position came up and once I got some
6 time to actually inquire more about it, then that's when I was
7 made aware of, okay, it's a blown tire, it's this and that, and
8 he's this far, this far. The initial, hey, we're having an
9 emergency and all that, I'm more working the traffic, so I'm
10 listening to what's going on but I'm not part of that
11 conversation, if that makes sense?

12 Q. Okay. So I kind of want to draw on some of your previous
13 experience at different airports, so this is kind of just more of
14 a general question. In terms of relationship between the air
15 traffic control facility and your airport operations, do you feel
16 like Hobby has a normal relationship from what you've seen at your
17 previous facilities in terms of like taxiway closures or airport
18 closures? Do you feel like that's similar to what you've seen at
19 your other facilities?

20 A. No.

21 Q. No? Could you tell me maybe some differences or --

22 A. I feel like there's, again, in my opinion, sometimes there's
23 I'll say disconnect when it comes to understanding how the taxiway
24 closures affect our operations.

25 Q. Do you feel like there's an open-minded communication between

1 air traffic control and ops on how it affects you in the tower?

2 A. I do not know.

3 Q. Okay. Do you feel like the taxiway closures add complexity
4 to your operation?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Do you feel like it's too much complexity in its current
7 form?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Pivoting a little bit again, what's your normal
10 schedule like? What kind of schedule are you on?

11 A. Two closures, which is -- or two evenings, normally the
12 closure shift, 2:30 to 10:30, 1:15 to 9:15; and then 7:15 to -- or
13 7 to 3, 7 to 3; and sometimes 5:30 to 1:30 or 7 to 3.

14 Q. So you're normal schedule is like a classic 2:2:1?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Do you work a lot of overtime?

17 A. Recently I've worked some overtime, not every weekend. There
18 has been sometimes every weekend, but I do work overtime.

19 Q. Are you held over very often?

20 A. No.

21 Q. No? Would you say in your facility that overtime is common?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Do you feel like your -- the shifts that you typically work,
24 do you feel like they're appropriately staffed?

25 A. Sometimes.

1 Q. Okay. Do you think that your schedule -- do you find the
2 overtime in your schedule and all of that, do you find any of that
3 fatiguing?

4 A. Yes.

5 MS. McTEE: Okay. I think I'm going to yield.

6 MR. SOPER: Great time to pass it.

7 MS. McTEE: I know. I --

8 MR. SOPER: Set me up for it.

9 MS. McTEE: Yeah.

10 MR. SOPER: Kat?

11 MS. McTEE: My bad, the "F" word.

12 BY DR. WILSON:

13 Q. I'm not a controller, so if you could help me -- I have some
14 questions that may seem obvious to you, but if you could just help
15 me understand. The Hawker, giving him the line up and wait, you
16 mentioned that you didn't give him the traffic advisory as well.
17 Is that -- are you supposed to do that? Is that common to do
18 that?

19 A. You're supposed to do that.

20 Q. Okay. Do you normally do that or is that pretty common that
21 that's not given?

22 A. I normally do it.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And the reason for line up and wait or to hold short, what

1 was your thinking in terms of having him get into position?

2 A. I had another guy inbound to land. I did not have enough
3 time for him to depart prior to this guy landing, but as soon as
4 this guy lands, I will be able to depart him.

5 Q. Okay. Were you trying to get him in before, the Southwest
6 came in and --

7 A. If I had the gap there, then yeah. But if not, then he would
8 be ready as soon as I could let him go.

9 Q. Okay. And so you said that you saw the collision. What's
10 sort of the process that being concerned about FOD on the runway
11 when you have a collision like that? Like what's your thought
12 process that goes through your head? Maybe that's not something
13 that's like immediately in the forefront of your mind, but like
14 help me understand as the controller what are you thinking about
15 that?

16 A. When they collided?

17 Q. Yeah. And then, you know, so they're going to be coming back
18 to land and landing on a runway where there was a collision.

19 A. Yeah. So that did cross my mind and that was a concern. But
20 at that point I just wanted to get him back on the ground. I
21 didn't see anything, any chunks, you know, any big pieces that I
22 can recall. I really didn't know exactly what all happened, what
23 was going on as far as the location of it. But I was more
24 concerned with getting this guy back to the airport --

25 Q. Makes sense.

1 A. -- and I was like -- you know, I didn't know what he could
2 do. I thought from what I saw and the way he came on the
3 frequency in the conversation, I wasn't completely sure that he
4 had total control of the aircraft. So I was thinking try and
5 avoid the worst, you know, that maybe he'll crash or whatever the
6 case. So that's how my thought process was.

7 Q. Thanks. The construction on the airport that Kristen was
8 asking you about, did you feel on that day that that -- on the day
9 of the event, did that add complexity to the -- to your workload
10 that day or was it -- how was it in terms of your workload on that
11 day?

12 A. For me, as local, it's -- it doesn't necessarily add too much
13 for me. It's more of a ground or it's something now abnormal as
14 far as what we normally do. So you kind of got to make sure
15 that -- just make sure that that's happening, right? But I don't,
16 you know, I don't think it added much to me specifically as far as
17 being on local.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Because I'm not the one taxiing people up and stuff, so --

20 Q. This airport has intersecting runways. How does that impact
21 the complexity of your job as well? Or does it not?

22 A. I mean, it's -- it is -- it makes it a little bit more
23 complex, but at the same time it's how the operation is done and
24 it's -- I understand why it's done like that. It's easier than
25 having to take off from the same runway. So it is complex, but we

1 have the procedures to make it work and, you know, that's how I'm
2 used to doing it, so --

3 Q. Okay. Thanks. So going back to the fatigue, I can ask
4 about -- thanks for sharing your schedule. If you could walk me
5 through -- I want to talk about your activities in the 3 days
6 leading up to the event. So I'm going to tax your brain because a
7 lot of us don't always remember when we wake up and go to bed, but
8 it's the best that you can do. So starting Saturday night, if you
9 can go back, you know, walk me through kind of your activities,
10 whether you worked or not, when you went to bed, when you think
11 you got up?

12 A. So I did not work the weekend. And I'm really not recall --
13 I know Sunday for sure, I know that I watched the football games.
14 You know, it was just a chill, relaxed day. Saturday, I'm not
15 recalling what happened on Saturday. But again, like I said,
16 Sunday, the Astros were playing, I think it was Sunday. It was
17 football --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

19 MR. MEJIA: Excuse me?

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You on call?

21 MR. MEJIA: Yeah.

22 So just the games and just a chill day for the most part.

23 BY DR. WILSON:

24 Q. Do you happen to recall when you woke up? Let's start on
25 Sunday -- or Saturday. I'm sorry. Do you recall what time maybe

1 you went to bed?

2 A. No, I do not.

3 Q. Okay. How about Sunday morning? Do you recall when you got
4 up?

5 A. No, I do not.

6 Q. Do you set an alarm on the weekends when you're not working?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. How about Sunday night? Did you -- do you recall when
9 you went to bed?

10 A. I have a timer, so I will say probably 10:30 maybe.

11 Q. Okay. And then Monday morning, do you recall what time you
12 would have woken up?

13 A. I do not, I do not recall.

14 Q. Did you work on Monday?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. What was your schedule that day?

17 A. 2:30 to 10:30.

18 Q. Did you set an alarm or would you have woken up on your own?

19 A. I normally wake up on my own. In the mornings, 8:30, 9 is
20 kind of the natural wake-up time.

21 Q. Monday night, do you recall what time you went to bed?

22 A. No. It takes me -- no, I don't recall the exact time. By
23 the time I get to my house, about 45 minutes, it was soon after
24 that.

25 Q. When you get home, do you watch TV? Do you like do some

1 activities before getting into bed?

2 A. Yeah. I watch TV for a couple of minutes, get ready for bed,
3 you know, just relax a little bit, play some chess and then I go
4 to sleep.

5 Q. Okay. Any problem falling asleep or staying asleep?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Tuesday morning, do you recall what time you woke up?

8 A. No. Probably the same time, 8:30, 9 o'clock.

9 Q. With no alarm?

10 A. No alarm.

11 Q. And how did you feel when you woke up?

12 A. I was fine.

13 Q. Felt rested?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. How about when you went on -- and you went on shift, you
16 said, 2-ish, you thought you got there?

17 A. No, that's when I got on position. My shift on Tuesday, it
18 was a 1:15 on Tuesday.

19 Q. Okay. Okay. And did you get any breaks from going on at
20 1:15 -- so you got there at 1:15, you got on at 2, and you were on
21 continuous until the 3:20-ish when the event occurred?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. About how long do you work before you take a break?

24 A. Like normally?

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. It depends, depends on the staffing, training. It could be
2 an hour and a half, it could be an hour and 45, it could be an
3 hour and 55, it could be an hour. It just depends on what the
4 duty day looks like.

5 Q. Is it like when it gets to a lull, is that usually when you
6 would switch or how is that determined?

7 A. The rotation?

8 Q. Yeah. Like so how do you, you know, take your breaks?

9 A. That's the supervisor's -- I mean, it's just whatever. Yeah.

10 Q. Have you ever talked to a doctor about any sleep concerns or
11 been diagnosed with a sleep disorder?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Do you take any medication to help you sleep --

14 A. No.

15 Q. -- or stay asleep? Vitamins? Supplements?

16 A. No.

17 DR. WILSON: Thanks. I think that's all I have for now.

18 MR. SOPER: Thanks, Kat.

19 Mike?

20 BY MR. VANDINI:

21 Q. Hey, Jon. I just want to get a couple things. The emergency
22 with Southwest, how were you notified that day? Did the supe
23 notify you that the Southwest was coming in with a possible
24 emergency? Was that part of your pre-duty briefing, it's coming
25 in for -- do you remember? And if they did give you anything, did

1 they give you the nature of the emergency?

2 A. So I know he was talking to ground and the guys -- he was
3 talking to ground trying to figure out what they were going to do.
4 So I heard them mention some stuff, what was going on. Then there
5 was a switch on flight data positions and that person came up and
6 they were talking about the emergency.

7 Q. And you're hearing this?

8 A. I'm hearing this stuff, but I wasn't personally approached
9 like, hey, you have an emergency, this, this, and that; this,
10 this, and that was happening. I was like, so what's going on?
11 What's the emergency and what's the call sign? So I got that
12 information and I wrote it down.

13 Q. Did they tell you what it was? Did they --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. All right. Because I looked and I didn't find no MOR on it.
16 Did that emergency happen in your airspace or was it --

17 A. It was, I think it was -- he was going to a different airport
18 and then --

19 Q. Diverted?

20 A. -- divert to here. So he was out.

21 Q. I'm just trying to lead up to, you know, what -- obviously a
22 lot of stuff going on at this point, so --

23 MS. SCOTT: Do you need a break?

24 MR. MEJIA: No.

25 MS. SCOTT: You're good?

1 BY MR. VANDINI:

2 Q. Scanning, your 1-3 right 2-2 operation. Your position up
3 there, is there anything blocking your view as to see 2-2 and 13?

4 A. No.

5 Q. So when you LUAW, what is your technique on 2-2?

6 A. So I issue the instructions. I look at the aircraft, see
7 where he's at. I look at my ASDE. And then I go from looking at
8 the final, see what they're doing; figure out the spacing, if I'm
9 going to have the spacing for this guy. And then once I'm
10 concerned -- once I'm assured that that's going to happen, I watch
11 my final touchdown, make sure that it's going to be through, and
12 then I go to for my clearance, issue the clearance and
13 instructions or whatever else I need to do.

14 Q. Is your scanning technique -- I mean, you told -- you said,
15 you mentioned that both your trainers were up there. Is that what
16 you got from your trainers? Is that what everybody pretty much
17 does in the facility?

18 A. I don't know as far as everybody, but that's kind of like
19 what I got from them, and just based on my experience how I've
20 done the -- how I do my scanning.

21 Q. No, and I like what you mentioned about the tower team
22 concept up there with the -- you know, you're feeling good with
23 the people around you. The other thing is -- I know Kat mentioned
24 it, the exchange of traffic and you said you normally do it. Do
25 you think the exchange of traffic, it would have prevented this

1 thing from happening?

2 A. I'm not sure. I couldn't answer 100 percent confident on
3 that.

4 Q. And the last thing I got, nice job on the recovery.

5 A. Thank you.

6 Q. Because I know it had to shake you up and -- but I'm thinking
7 about it because I've been in those situations. Like you cleared
8 your mind pretty quick and he mentioned it, hey, I got to back,
9 you made it happen. Nice job.

10 A. Thank you.

11 MR. VANDINI: That's all I got.

12 MR. SOPER: Cool. Thanks, Mike.

13 BY MR. SOPER:

14 Q. Shift gears just a little bit, talk about training here just
15 in general at the facility. So do you guys have a simulator here?

16 A. Not at this facility.

17 Q. Not at this one? Do you guys go anywhere to utilize a
18 simulator?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And is it strictly in the developmental training phase or do
21 you guys also go there to do any proficiency or recurrent or
22 anything like that?

23 A. There's a proficiency to do training, too, in the simulators.

24 Q. Where do you guys go?

25 A. IAH.

1 Q. Okay. Do they have a full TSS, like an --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- actual? Okay. Do you recall anytime in your training do
4 you guys have any refresher, recurrent, that talks about LUAW
5 operations and intersection departures, things like that here?
6 Intersection operations?

7 A. It's part of the training. It's covered in the training.

8 Q. It is? And do you remember the last one you would have
9 received? I mean, is it -- and when I say that, I'm not looking
10 for you to pull out a date, but I'm saying we've had it in the
11 last few months, we've had it in the last year, anything that you
12 can recall.

13 A. I don't recall, but, I mean, I got certified this year, so --

14 Q. Yeah, that is true. Yeah, there's a lot of a training. I
15 mean, I get that.

16 So I do want to shift now just a little bit to construction.
17 So you -- we touched the construction stuff out here on the
18 airfield. Do you feel like -- and this is, you know, again -- I
19 know we're looking for stuff that's kind of your feel or your
20 thoughts on it, but you have experience at other airfields so it's
21 really important to grasp that. Do you feel like the -- and I
22 think you kind of alluded this and I'm trying not to put words in
23 your mouth but I'm also trying to understand it. Do you feel like
24 that lack of communication is causing essentially undue
25 complications to you guys in air traffic control because of the

1 fact of what you said, they can't -- they're not considering how
2 this impacts moving air traffic?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. So do you feel like there would be a benefit to some sort of
5 collaborative work environment where air traffic could be
6 represented at meetings with them when they get ready to conduct
7 these major construction operations so that they can talk about
8 traffic flow and movement and efficiency of operations, so that
9 you have to break that up to certain things, it would be a
10 benefit? I mean, do you feel like that would work here? Have
11 you -- I know that, you know, maybe as a CPC, I don't know -- you
12 are part of the local safety council though. Do you guys ever --
13 have you ever tried to approach that of like, can we get on some
14 meetings with them or can we get representation there, or do you
15 even --

16 A. I haven't personally tried to approach that. I believe we
17 might have as of, you know, previously to me being on the local
18 safety council.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So, like I said, me personally, I haven't approached that.
21 We have expressed our concerns with the current closures and
22 stuff.

23 Q. So as the LSC have you guys met or had discussions about this
24 particular situation with all the construction here?

25 A. Not yet.

1 Q. Not yet? Okay. And how long were you here before being
2 certified? Because I know you've only been certified local since
3 like the summer, but how long were you here again before that,
4 like at the facility working?

5 A. October of last year. October of --

6 Q. October?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. You've been here -- so has construction been essentially
9 going on since you've been here pretty much or has it picked up
10 lately or in the past, you know, recent times?

11 A. There's always some kind of construction going on, but here
12 lately it has extremely picked up.

13 Q. Okay. And I don't know, I may be duplicating a little bit of
14 a question that was asked earlier, but I -- and I apologize if I
15 didn't capture this, but the relationship with air -- or with
16 airport management. So how is air traffic's overall relationship
17 with airport management from an operational standpoint? So you
18 guys are up there. Are you -- do you have challenges with either
19 airport operations personnel that operate on the field, you know,
20 or with coordinating things with them, whether it be getting
21 NOTAMs done or runway closures? Are they good about communicating
22 with you when there's closure things or is it rough? Just from
23 your experience. And if you don't know, you don't know. I just
24 want to know your thoughts on that.

25 A. Sometimes it can be rough. For the most part, it's decent.

1 But there's times where there's some rough times.

2 Q. And as Sarah mentioned earlier trying to compare back because
3 you have experience at other places. Did you ever -- were you
4 ever working at a place where your experience was positive with
5 regard to collaborating with airport management?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And like give me an example of that. Like just kind of how
8 you felt like it -- how you felt it was good somewhere else
9 because you guys were able to do what?

10 A. So in Lincoln, when I was at Lincoln, I personally was part
11 of the RSAT meetings from my facility. And that's eye opening to
12 a lot of people. We had a lot of misalignments for the runways,
13 and just seeing what the pilots were seeing, talking about what
14 we're seeing and what can be done. You know, it was a whole
15 meeting. So that was very productive.

16 I felt like the communication was -- as far as like, hey,
17 we -- you know, from ops, we're trying to close this taxiway. If
18 we express a concern, it was like, okay, well, let's just hold off
19 on that or this is going to affect it like that, they would take
20 that into account. It was -- in my opinion, there was more of a
21 I'm listening to you guys, I'm listening to how it's affecting
22 your operations.

23 Q. Actually collaboration, like for real there, you know, there
24 was some interaction. That's good.

25 So shifting again -- we'll get away from the construction for

1 a minute. I know I'm bouncing around a little bit now, but I'm
2 trying to do some clean-up questions here. So if you had to
3 identify with anything here at this facility since you've been
4 here -- and again, I know you haven't been here a real long time,
5 but actually you have such other experience that this is a really
6 good question to ask you. What do you feel -- what do you find to
7 be the biggest challenge here at this facility that the facility
8 is having? And when I say that, is it equipment, is it staffing,
9 is it tower location, is it the operator? I mean, what is the
10 biggest challenge for you in the operation here or do you think
11 the facility has as a whole here?

12 A. I'd say we have a few, couple of challenges that we
13 experience, you know, staffing, communication with ops,
14 communication with oversight. The equipment, not lately, but we
15 have problems with the AC.

16 Q. I've seen that. That's not good in Texas.

17 A. That was a big deal during the summertime.

18 Q. So if you could fix one of those things, if you -- if they
19 gave you, you know, like, hey, look, you can pick one and we're
20 going to throw resources at you to fix it, what one would you
21 pick? What would you choose? Be selfish. Just your thoughts.

22 A. That'll be tough. I'll say staffing, maybe.

23 Q. Staffing? So along those lines, thinking of staffing and the
24 supe specifically, how often do you guys think you're in a CIC
25 configuration here? And if you could throw a percentage at it,

1 like what you experience up in the operation, how often are you
2 CIC, how often are you OS?

3 A. I couldn't give you a number really.

4 Q. Okay. Not a problem. Do you think it's -- would you say
5 that CICs are used routinely here or is it really hit and miss?

6 A. I'd say routinely.

7 Q. Okay. All right. And do you feel like when CICs are acting
8 in that capacity that you still have a good cohesive tower team
9 environment there, that CRM still works? People listen to the
10 CICs when they offer direction or offer corrective, you know, on-
11 spot corrections or anything like that, it's still good?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. All right.

14 MR. SOPER: That's all I have for right now.

15 Sarah?

16 BY MS. LEWIS:

17 Q. I'm going to circle back to a couple more construction
18 questions because I think it's important to capture this
19 information to try to get some data to help you guys out. Can you
20 tell me about -- have you been here long enough -- you said the
21 construction has picked up very recently. When you were here, can
22 you tell me of a time that -- relating to runway crossings, when
23 you don't have the amount of construction you have right now, how
24 did that operation work? Do you hold on to aircraft to do your
25 own crossings as local or do you switch them to ground when the --

1 before and during? How does -- is there a shift in that
2 procedure?

3 A. So most of the time I do not hold on to aircraft unless it's
4 beneficial for the operation. I do have the ability to kind of
5 hold on to them for the parallels. Like if I had a guy landed and
6 he's turning off at Kilo and I look at my ground or I ask, hey,
7 can I keep him, whatever the case might be, I could cross him over
8 to left and then hand him over to him. That's something that we,
9 you know, that we do. Besides that, everything else is just
10 handled by ground on the crossings based on the flows. You know,
11 Southwest, you know, whatever flow we're on, we'll have crossings
12 for that --

13 Q. So speaking of parallel, I understand, and please correct me
14 if I'm not understanding correctly, that because of this current
15 construction, that you're not able or you're not normally using
16 runway 1-3 Left because they're using it as a taxiway to get
17 around some of the ramp or taxiway closures that you would
18 normally use?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. How did that affect your operation? Meaning, is it reliever
21 runway? How does it -- talk to me about that.

22 A. I mean, it's an extra outside risk, per se. It's something
23 to be aware of because it is abnormal and I feel like as a local
24 controller now I have to be cautious of that, making sure that
25 nobody's aligning for the left, making sure that that guy on the

1 runway is not going past Kilo or whatever the case might be. So
2 it's just some extra thing to pay attention to and be aware of and
3 just -- yeah.

4 Q. Right. Right. Do you have any memory aids that help you as
5 local controller when you're doing your job up there?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What kind of memory aids do you have?

8 A. We have crossing strips. We also use the strip itself,
9 different positions for whatever we're doing.

10 Q. So for runway crossings you have a strip. Do you just put it
11 in front of you? Do you hold it? How does that work usually?

12 A. Place it in front of you.

13 Q. Okay. And do you use strips?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. So when you put it in front of you, is it kind of like
16 almost like, blocking some of your strips or how does that work?

17 A. So depending on the actual crossing, if I have a crossing
18 happening and I have an aircraft that's going to be departing from
19 that runway, then we use that strip to indicate the crossing. If
20 it's another runway that I'm not using, but it is active, then
21 we'll have -- use the runway crossing strip. And that's the
22 one we -- yeah. So --

23 Q. Thank you. Do you have a memory aid for line up and wait?

24 A. We use the strip for the memory aid. So whatever aircraft or
25 runway, we use the actual strip. We push it to the side to

1 indicate the line up and wait.

2 Q. Do you remember doing that on the day of the accident?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Great.

5 MS. LEWIS: I don't have any more questions.

6 MR. SOPER: Thanks.

7 Kristen?

8 BY MS. McTEE:

9 Q. I'm so sorry. We are going to keep harping on this
10 construction. Do you think the construction has decreased your
11 operational rate in any capacity like, decreased arrival rate,
12 decreased departure rate? Has it affected your ability to accept
13 aircraft in any way?

14 A. I'm not quite sure.

15 Q. Okay. That's fair. I know you were working local this day,
16 but I kind of want you to put your ground control hat on. When
17 you're talking to pilots, do they find the taxi instructions
18 confusing in the current configuration?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Do you think it's a -- do you have any pilot experience?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Do you think for pilots it's confusing or distracting for
23 them, the current configuration of the airport?

24 A. I would assume so.

25 Q. Okay. I have a general question, and it's okay if you don't

1 have an answer. Is there anything we haven't asked you that you
2 wish we had, or information that you want us to know that we
3 haven't asked you about that you feel is pertinent to our
4 understanding of your operation as a whole or this incident?
5 Anything that you would like to share that you feel like I wish
6 they would ask me this, why aren't they asking me this?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. That's fair.

9 MS. McTEE: Kat?

10 BY DR. WILSON:

11 Q. The training that you've received -- you have a lot of
12 experience, so, you know, the training, your recurrent training
13 might not be -- it's refresher, right, but is there anything else
14 that you wish that you had training on or more training on to help
15 you with your job?

16 A. No.

17 Q. No? Do you -- so you feel like the training that you've
18 received is adequate?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Going back to the crew resource management, or the CRM, did
21 you actually receive training on that?

22 A. I don't recall.

23 Q. Would that be helpful?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Yeah? What do you think is like the biggest challenge in

1 terms of, you know, coordinating with the team?

2 A. With?

3 Q. Just with your team. Like is it communication, is it a
4 leadership issue, you don't have a shared mental model? Like what
5 is -- what do you think is a challenge in terms of like crew
6 resource management?

7 A. I mean, the team that I have, like I said, I get along with
8 them pretty good and so I don't have a problem with communication.

9 Q. Just in general, but -- I mean, like not necessarily that
10 specific team. Did you ever feel that there is a challenge
11 working with people or you see other people having challenges?

12 A. Sometimes it is a challenge working with our supervisor.

13 Q. Is it a personality or do you think that like they don't
14 communicate well? Or what's the challenge, I guess?

15 A. Lack of communication.

16 DR. WILSON: Okay. Thanks.

17 MR. SOPER: All right. Mike?

18 BY MR. VANDINI:

19 Q. I'm going to hit right off of that. So during the incident
20 do you feel that you got the assistance from your supe or whoever
21 up there to help you get the recovery back in? I mean, whose
22 decision was it to send the aircraft around, because obviously
23 they had knew there was debris prior to Alpha-Alpha coming back
24 in?

25 A. Mine.

1 Q. So were you getting the assistance from anybody up there or
2 was this --

3 A. Not as far as what I was doing or saying.

4 Q. Would you have appreciated more assistance?

5 A. Yes.

6 MR. VANDINI: Okay. Thanks.

7 BY MR. SOPER:

8 Q. Okay. I just want -- I just got one other area I want to
9 touch on, take you back to the LSC. So you've been on the LSC now
10 since maybe summer. Do you guys -- are you guys able to meet
11 regularly right now?

12 A. We haven't, we haven't -- there's been a lot of change with
13 people coming in and out --

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. -- so we haven't been meeting yet regularly.

16 Q. Okay. And are you -- yeah, and I know you just got a new
17 ATM, obviously, this week, so the management lead is brand new and
18 the -- and you guys recently had a changeover in fac reps, too,
19 right? So the fac rep lead is new as well. So has there been
20 meetings put on the horizon? Have they talked about it? Have you
21 guys talked about it as a team, like, okay, we're going to start
22 meeting and we're trying to make a plan for -- do you know where
23 that sits?

24 A. Yes. We've had the conversations.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. We just don't have dates yet.

2 Q. Do you guys have kind of a topic of discussion already kind
3 of in the hopper or things you know that, hey, we're going to be
4 getting together to talk about these things because we've been
5 waiting to do that? Or is it just you're going to get together
6 and we'll see what's up?

7 A. I think we're still trying to collect the things that we're
8 going to be talking about.

9 Q. All right, good. Have you been at a place where there was an
10 active LSC, where they did a lot?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And you find value in them, I assume, since you're on this
13 one?

14 A. Yes. I was part of that one, too.

15 Q. So you're looking forward to that?

16 A. Very much.

17 Q. Awesome. Good. I'm glad to hear that. Because I can tell
18 you that can change things dramatically, so --

19 MR. SOPER: All right. I don't have anything additional.
20 Does anybody have any "oh, by the ways" before I ask the final
21 question? Go ahead.

22 MS. McTEE: Yeah. I have two.

23 BY MS. McTEE:

24 Q. Local safety council meetings, do you feel like your current
25 staffing situation is a hindrance to your being able to have those

1 meetings?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. And then the last one, just kind of just circling back
4 to the construction and training. When you have a taxiway closure
5 or a major taxiway closure as you guys have now, do you receive
6 any training on how that changes your operation?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Does your facility provide any training on taxiway closures,
9 like big, like operation changing taxiway closures? Or are you
10 just told, hey, Mike is closed?

11 A. A lot of times that happens where it's ops telling me, hey,
12 we've closed this taxiway. But there are times where there's a
13 brief, per se, hey, they're closing this taxiway or they're
14 closing this runway, whatever the case might be.

15 Q. Are those briefs face to face or are they cedar briefings or
16 team briefings?

17 A. Both.

18 Q. Both. Okay.

19 MS. McTEE: All right. Thank you. That was it for me.

20 MR. SOPER: All right. Any others?

21 BY MS. LEWIS:

22 Q. To piggyback on that, do you -- do they ever give you any --
23 does management give you any guidance on how you might -- or
24 suggestions on how you could mitigate some of the taxiway closure
25 issues?

1 A. Not very often.

2 MS. LEWIS: Okay. Thanks.

3 MR. SOPER: Any other "oh, by the ways"?

4 BY MR. SOPER:

5 Q. Okay. I just have one last question for you. So just kind
6 of in retrospect now, hindsight 20/20 goggles on or whatever,
7 successes, failures, and lessons learned. Okay. So out of this
8 event, you've had some time to think about this obviously the last
9 few days and look at things and see the replay and how things
10 played out, and do you identify where there were any successes in
11 there? And this can be in any aspect of it. It doesn't mean
12 necessarily you or your success or somebody else's, just anything
13 that you've seen as a success here, that this worked well;
14 anything that was a failure, like this got missed; and have you --
15 is there any lessons learned from this that are -- that you are
16 taking away from this like, you know, I'm going to change the way
17 I, you know, look at this or approach this while I'm on? If you
18 could just kind of elaborate on those three things for me?

19 A. I think the way that the ground crew responded, responded to
20 the event, was pretty rapid, was on point. The assistance that I
21 received from, like I said, from my team once things started
22 happening, that was good. There was a lot of calls and --

23 Q. Yeah, gets crazy.

24 A. -- you know, and they were like we got this, just act normal.
25 I hate -- to use me, but I think as far as like just trying to

1 bring the guy back, I think I did okay when it came to that. What
2 was the other part?

3 Q. Anything that was a failure throughout this event sequence?

4 A. I can't really tell you.

5 Q. That's okay. I don't want you to force something, you know.

6 And then have you taken anything away from this? Meaning, is
7 there anything that you kind of -- that's altered your thought
8 process with how you approach things and -- have you been on
9 position since the event?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Not yet?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Do you feel like you're ready to go back on position?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And so as you do, are you thinking of anything differently or
16 do you think this was just one of those situations that it
17 occurred that day, it's, you know, it's complex?

18 A. I'm thinking now I will have to make sure every single time,
19 make sure, ensure and extra make sure that those guys are not
20 moving; issue the traffic calls when I need to, make sure that I'm
21 doing it every single time no matter what else I got going on. I
22 will somehow try to make sure my supervisor's engaged, you know,
23 just having a support team, resources available. Besides that, I
24 mean, I think it was one of those things that happened and it
25 happened, you know what I mean?

1 Q. I understand. Okay. Do you have any questions for us?

2 A. No.

3 MR. SOPER: Okay. I'm going to go ahead and stop the
4 recording as along as we're still good here, so --

5 MS. SCOTT: I have a question. When you asked about the
6 construction and the taxiways and his complexity, I want you to
7 understand that per our SOP here at Hobby, we have -- local has
8 control of certain taxiways and ground has control of certain
9 taxiways, and due to this closure, there is no control. And Jon
10 is in a situation where he hasn't even seen that.

11 Through the parallels when local -- local's supposed to keep
12 him through the parallels across 2-2, across 1-3 Left at Delta.
13 They cannot do that. On -- when we're landing 4, Charlie's ground
14 control, we cannot do that. Like so there are multiple
15 situations, especially when we're talking Echo closure, Golf
16 closure, Zulu closure. Charlie and Mike closure is -- that is --
17 I can't even understand how they could legally do that and justify
18 this for weeks. They are tying their hands in every single way,
19 and I don't even know if he's been in a situation to see enough
20 taxiway open where the local and ground can actually do their job
21 per our SOP.

22 MR. SOPER: Yeah, this is -- I'm not going to lie, the
23 construction is a major area of concern for us and how that
24 relates.

25 I'm going to go ahead and stop the recording. I show the

1 time at 0953.

2 (Whereupon, at 9:53 a.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA
 CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P.
 HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS
 ON OCTOBER 24, 2023
 Interview of Jonathan Mejia

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA0017

PLACE: Houston, Texas

DATE: October 27, 2023

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

* * * * *

Investigation of:

HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA

CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P.

HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

ON OCTOBER 24, 2023

* * * * *

Accident No.: DCA24FA0017

Interview of: COREY WOODGETT, Clearance Delivery (CD) Controller
Federal Aviation Administration

Houston, Texas

Thursday,
October 26, 2023

APPEARANCES:

BRIAN SOPER, Senior Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SARAH LEWIS, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL VANDINI, Subject Matter Expert/Air Traffic
Control
Federal Aviation Administration

KRISTEN McTEE, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

JASMINE SCOTT
Representative for Mr. Woodgett

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:40 p.m. CT)

MR. SOPER: Okay, my name is Brian Soper, I'm a lead air traffic investigator at the NTSB and we are here investigating the ground collision that occurred between November 5-1-0 Hotel Mike and November 2-6-9 Alpha Alpha on October 24th here at Houston ATCT, Houston Hobby. I have with me today, with the air traffic control group, Mr. Mike Vandini, out of Chicago District or ORD. You're from --

MR. VANDINI: Chicago District.

MR. SOPER: Chicago District, a quality control manager up there and he's here with representing the FAA in our group. Ms. Kristen McTee out of Kansas City Tower, correct, representing NATCA on our group today, she's a NATCA ASI there. And my colleague and cohort over here, Sarah Lewis, Air Traffic Investigator at the NTSB.

And for you, this is your representative you chose, correct?

MR. WOODGETT: Correct.

MR. SOPER: Great. And could you state your name for the record for me?

MS. SCOTT: Jasmine Scott.

MR. SOPER: Thank you. And could you spell your first name for me so we have it right?

MS. SCOTT: J-a-s-m-i-n-e.

MR. SOPER: Thank you very much.

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1 And your name for the record, please.

2 MR. WOODGETT: Corey Woodgett.

3 MR. SOPER: And is that C-o-r-e-y?

4 MR. WOODGETT: Correct.

5 MR. SOPER: Awesome. And last name spelling.

6 MR. WOODGETT: W-o-o-d-g-e-t-t.

7 MR. SOPER: All right. Okay, as I mentioned to you earlier,
8 the NTSB is an independent federal agency, we're non-regulatory,
9 we don't make rules, we don't enforce rules, and we're not here to
10 cast blame or find somebody who's at fault, that's not our thing.
11 Our mission is all safety related and reconstructing this accident
12 that took place and understanding what took place that allowed the
13 holes in that Swiss cheese to line up and hopefully, we can
14 develop a probable cause from that and hopefully develop safety
15 recommendations to prevent reoccurrence either here or anywhere
16 else, for that matter. So that's what we're here for.

17 When we ask you questions, we just ask you to be honest and
18 forthright. If you don't know something, it's okay to say you
19 don't know. If you don't recall something, it's okay to say you
20 don't recall. We're not here to test your knowledge and we don't
21 have any "oh, aha" moments in an NTSB investigation. We don't ask
22 you trick questions or anything. Is there anybody in this room
23 that you do not want to be here besides you and me?

24 MR. WOODGETT: No.

25 MR. SOPER: Okay. Okay with everybody here, all right. The

1 party group members here, just so you're aware, they've all signed
2 certificate of party representative so they understand the context
3 of being a part of this group, they cannot and will not go out and
4 discuss this with their cohorts that they work for or work with in
5 other places and they understand that. We work with them
6 regularly and they understand the process, so they're very good
7 and have high integrity for that, so you don't have to worry about
8 that.

9 As we go through stuff, I had mentioned we'll do this kind of
10 in a round robin fashion, we'll go around the room until
11 everybody's asked all the questions they need to. You're welcome
12 to ask questions of us at any time and we'll try to get you out of
13 here as quick as possible. Do you have any other questions for us
14 before we get started?

15 MR. WOODGETT: No questions at this time.

16 MR. SOPER: Okay, great.

17 INTERVIEW OF COREY WOODGETT

18 BY MR. SOPER:

19 Q. I'm going to go ahead and kick off with some of just general
20 questions and -- or general in nature. So what was your age on
21 Tuesday, on the day of the event, how old were you?

22 A. Forty-three.

23 Q. All right. And your operating initials here?

24 A. Charlie Whisky, CW.

25 Q. Awesome. Do you, and I know you do because you answered

1 earlier, so you have -- you do have prior military and do you have
2 any -- did you say you went to contract, also?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. So step me through that, what years were you in the military
5 from?

6 A. I was in the United States Air Force between the years of
7 2001 and 2006.

8 Q. And as an air traffic controller, correct?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. And where were you stationed, again?

11 A. Yokota Air Base, Japan.

12 Q. And -- oh, wow, 2001. We were there at the same time. I was
13 at Okinawa from '97 to 2002, maybe, or something like that.
14 That's crazy. I think we had overlapping service out there,
15 maybe, so -- all right. And how about -- from there you said you
16 left the service and you took a contract job, is that right?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. And that was with RVA?

19 A. It was with Robinson Venger (ph.) Aviation, but it was
20 subcontracted with a company called Computer Intelligence Squared
21 out of Gwinnett County and it was Gwinnett County Airport in
22 Lawrenceville, Georgia and LZU is the identifier or Briscoe Field.

23 Q. Okay. And how long did you stay with that --

24 A. Approximately -- I want to say approximately six months.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. And I say that because I got out of the military in 2006 and
2 I drew my unemployment for approximately five months before I got
3 picked up with them and then I worked there for approximately six
4 months because I got picked up by the Agency in 2007.

5 Q. Excellent. And when you got picked up in 2007 from the FAA,
6 did you go to the academy or were you a direct hire, VRA type
7 or --

8 A. Direct hire, VRA.

9 Q. Okay. And where did you go?

10 A. I went to Atlanta Hartsfield Tower, Hartsfield/Jackson Tower.

11 Q. Okay. And how long did you stay there?

12 A. Let's see. Approximately one year.

13 Q. About one year. And where did you go from there?

14 A. To St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

15 Q. Oh, yeah. Paradise. Been there a number of times in the
16 Navy. And how long did you stay at St. Thomas?

17 A. Approximately three years.

18 Q. And then where from there?

19 A. Houston Hobby.

20 Q. And you've been here ever since?

21 A. From 2011 to 2015 I was at Houston Hobby and then I
22 transferred to Houston Center, ARTCC --

23 Q. That's right.

24 A. -- from 2015 to 2017. And then I returned to Hobby from 2017
25 until present.

1 Q. I think I missed something in there because you were at
2 Houston, you were at Houston Hobby 2011 to '13 --

3 A. Two thousand eleven to two thousand and fifteen.

4 Q. Oh, okay, to '15. That's where I had a missing spot, okay, I
5 just didn't get that. All right, very good. And any other
6 non-FAA air traffic work experience did you do during those times
7 outside of the Air Force and the contract work that you did?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. Do you hold any collateral duties here or have you
10 been on any recent details that have taken you out or would've
11 affected currency?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. And could you give me -- if you gave me just a 10,000-
14 foot bio, kind of your aviation background, your air traffic
15 aviation background, what I mean by this is like, you know, I -- I
16 was always interested in aviation, graduated high school, went
17 into the Air Force, blah, blah, blah, until what led you here
18 today, just kind of step us through that.

19 A. So the initial point of my aviation career?

20 Q. Well, like kind of what got you going down the aviation road,
21 you know, what made you get interested and take us through what
22 you did.

23 A. Okay. After high school, I graduated in 1998, I then moved
24 to Washington, D.C. and I was living out there for approximately
25 three years and then I came to a point where I needed to make a

1 decision, like a lot of us do, join the military, make a decision
2 with their lives and --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. -- I talked to an Army sergeant, one of my coworkers, at the
5 time I was a manager, a shift manager, at Lowes, and one of my
6 employees, her husband was a 20-year Army sergeant with five kids
7 and the conversation, he said if I had -- if any of my kids had
8 joined the military, I would tell them to join the Air Force. So
9 when it came time for me to think about enlisting, I went to him
10 and he called a recruiter and I went through that whole process,
11 the ASVAB and all that stuff, and he sat down with me and he
12 showed me a list of jobs to look out for whenever I went to the
13 MEPS and lo and behold, when I sat down at the MEPS to choose
14 jobs, air traffic was one of them, and after a long consideration,
15 I told them I wanted to come in the Air Force as air traffic
16 controller.

17 They put me under delayed entry program, so I went back home
18 to Illinois for approximately three months and then I enlisted in
19 the Air Force in November of 2001. That started my journey. At
20 the particular time, the Air Force, I was maybe the second class
21 in the Air Force, I did split tracks --

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. -- so I was straight tower and consider myself to be a tower
24 controller even up to now. I don't have any approach control
25 experience, I have limited enroute experience --

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. -- but a great understanding of how enroute works because of
3 my time at the enroute facility, which I am grateful for, and just
4 love my experiences at the few towers that I've been certified at.

5 Q. Excellent, cool. Do you have any other aviation
6 certifications, are you a pilot, a dispatcher or anything like
7 that or just been air traffic --

8 A. I do aviation on the side, I do have two IT certifications.

9 Q. Oh, nice.

10 A. I have a CompTIA Security+ certification, I have a -- at this
11 time I've got a blank right now. A Cisco --

12 Q. Oh.

13 A. -- Cisco certification.

14 Q. Excellent.

15 A. A Cisco Certified Network Associate certification that I
16 obtained during the pandemic when we were down, so while I had the
17 downtime I went to -- back to school to --

18 Q. Nice.

19 A. -- obtain those certificates.

20 Q. That's awesome. All right. And have you ever been fired,
21 terminated, or suspended or asked to resign from any air traffic
22 position since you've been with the FAA?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. And how would you -- how would you describe your
25 overall health in the terms of excellent, good, fair, poor?

1 A. Good.

2 Q. Okay. And do you -- are you currently taking any regular
3 medications, what I mean by that, any prescription medications
4 that you're on as a maintenance med type of thing?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I do take a biologic, Skyrizi --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- and for psoriasis, that is reported through the --

10 Q. Yeah, everything's in your -- everything's in your record.
11 And you were taking that as prescribed on the day of the event,
12 correct?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And it's just a three-month -- every three month, one shot
16 every three months, so --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- it's a biologic.

19 Q. Were you taking any other non-prescription, over-the-counter
20 or any other type of medications on the day of the event?

21 A. Just a multivitamin.

22 Q. Okay. And you had a current medical clearance certificate on
23 the day of the event?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. And do you remember when your last ATC physical was?

1 A. December 10th of last year.

2 Q. Okay. And do you have any waivers or restrictions to your
3 medical clearance?

4 A. No.

5 Q. All right. And do you have -- you wear corrective lenses as
6 part of yours?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. And was drug or alcohol screening performed as a
9 result of this event?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Any major changes in your health over the last year, these
12 are big things, good, bad, or indifferent, major surgeries,
13 anything like that?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay. Similar question. Any major changes in your personal
16 life over the last year, got divorced, got married, had a child,
17 adopted a child, any big things like that?

18 A. No.

19 Q. And final question but still similar, any major changes in
20 your financial situation over the last year, won the lotto, filed
21 bankruptcy, you know, just big things that were a big change for
22 you.

23 A. My wife probably wouldn't want me to say this, but she just
24 was promoted to general counsel, she's an attorney, and she works
25 for UTMB out in Galveston, so she is the general counsel of the

1 legal department. Over the whole organization.

2 Q. That's awesome. Excellent. That's good stuff. All right.

3 And -- yeah.

4 MS. LEWIS: That's good. Congratulations.

5 MR. WOODGETT: Yes, thanks.

6 MS. LEWIS: Yeah.

7 BY MR. SOPER:

8 Q. All right. And so 72-hour history, this is a little bit more
9 difficult, but this is one where the event just happened, so what
10 I want you to do here is really try to think back, so we're going
11 to start from the day of the event and what we're going to try to
12 do is capture your 72 hours leading up to the time of that event,
13 right?

14 A. Um-hum.

15 MR. SOPER: So on the -- did you need paper, additional
16 paper, do you want us to give you some?

17 MS. SCOTT: I'm fine, thank you.

18 MR. SOPER: I'm sorry.

19 MS. SCOTT: Don't worry about it.

20 BY MR. SOPER:

21 Q. And we're going to try to step you back to account for that
22 72 hours leading up to the time of the event, right?

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. So on the day of the event, this occurred at around 15:20, I
25 believe, was the time of the event in the afternoon, so you were

1 there, what shift were you there working, was that a day shift, a
2 swing shift, an eve shift, what were you working on that day?

3 A. It was an evening shift, a 2:30 to 10:30 shift.

4 Q. Okay. And was that your normal shift, like, you -- that was
5 a normally scheduled one or was it an overtime shift or were you
6 taking the shift for anybody else or --

7 A. It was my normal shift and my first day back.

8 Q. All right. And on that day -- so what time do you think you
9 got in to work that day?

10 A. Two-thirty.

11 Q. You got in at 2:30.

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. And prior to that, do you remember what time you woke up that
14 morning, probably, roughly?

15 A. Yes, approximately 6:30. Or what's the -- yeah, 6:30.

16 Q. Okay. And do you remember what you did that day before going
17 to work, meaning did you have activities you were involved in, did
18 you just -- was it a normal daily routine, hung around the house,
19 did things there, I mean, you know, what was your -- what was your
20 activities on that day, probably, before you headed in there?

21 A. So once again, my wife is an attorney, so she's very punctual
22 and she leaves out the house at 6:15 in the morning, so --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- she wakes up at 5 o'clock in the morning and she prepares
25 for work and she leaves out the house at 6:15 every morning.

1 Around 6:30, our two -- I'm sorry, our three-year-old daughter --

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. -- she's upstairs, she has a monitoring camera all set up in
4 her room, she wakes up yelling, "Daddy" or "Mommy," so I hear it
5 on my phone because the phone, it monitors to my phone, so -- and
6 I go and get her ready for school, so that's probably about an
7 hour process, so I get her dressed, I feed her breakfast, and then
8 I drive her approximately 20, 25 minutes down the road to go to a
9 Christian school.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And so after I drop her off, I typically get breakfast, maybe
12 drop off dry cleaning, come back home around 9 o'clock, 9:30, make
13 some phone calls, do some NATCA work, since I'm the FacRep, and a
14 lot of times I try to maybe lay down, you know, anywhere between
15 10 and 11 o'clock and then lay down for like an hour or two --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- before my shift, that's common, and that's more than
18 likely what I did on that Tuesday shift.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I took a nap, probably, approximately from 11:00 to 1:00.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. After I woke up from the nap at 1:00, I prepared for work and
23 then --

24 Q. Awesome.

25 A. -- I came in to work.

1 Q. All right. So going back to -- so that was a Tuesday, so
2 going back to Monday, what time do you think you went to bed that
3 night?

4 A. I think the Astros game was on, maybe some football,
5 approximately 11 o'clock.

6 Q. Okay. And so you probably got roughly, then, whatever, seven
7 hours of sleep. How many hours of sleep do you need to get to
8 feel rested, for you, just personally?

9 A. Between six and eight hours.

10 Q. Okay. And so that night was typical for you, that's what you
11 would've done any other Monday. So staying with Monday, then, you
12 say you went to bed about 11:00, did you work on -- you didn't
13 work on Monday, correct?

14 A. No.

15 Q. You said that was a -- so that was a normal RDO for you?

16 A. It was a normal RDO.

17 Q. What kind of activities did you do that day, do you remember?
18 In general.

19 A. I just relaxed, the same thing, took my daughter to school --

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. -- at 7:30, up at 6:15, 6:30, took her to school
22 approximately 7:30, she has to be to school by 8:00, so we -- the
23 window is between 7:30 and 8:00, so I'm dropping her off around 8
24 o'clock and then I come back home and since it's my RDO, I just
25 make phone calls. My mother's been having some health issues

1 lately, so --

2 Q. I'm sorry.

3 A. And she lives in Illinois, so I've been coordinating a lot
4 with her doctors and insurances and stuff like that, you know.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And so just hanging out and enjoying my daily naps around
7 noon.

8 Q. All right.

9 A. So that's probably what I did.

10 Q. All right. And so you were up early again that morning, so
11 then Sunday night -- did you work on Sunday?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay, so on Sunday, also a regular RDO for you, RDO or
14 regular day off.

15 A. Sunday and Monday is my regular day off, however, those two
16 days were protected from overtime because the prior week was my
17 prime-time leave week.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And then my wife and I were celebrating our fifth
20 anniversary.

21 Q. Congrats.

22 A. Thank you. On the 18th.

23 Q. Okay. All right, so on -- so on Sunday, then -- I'm sorry,
24 did I -- am I on the right day here? Yeah.

25 MS. LEWIS: Yeah.

1 BY MR. SOPER:

2 Q. Monday. So on Sunday, also your RDO, do you remember what
3 time you got up that morning, since it was a weekend?

4 A. Sunday.

5 Q. And what time you went to bed, kind of, I didn't capture
6 that, so probably what time you were up and went to bed on Sunday.

7 A. On Sunday, what time I woke up on Sunday?

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. I would say approximately 10:00 a.m.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And then I got dressed and then I met with a coworker to have
12 brunch at 1:00 p.m.

13 Q. Okay, all right, good deal. And you went to bed that night
14 at about what time, probably?

15 A. Approximately 11 o'clock.

16 Q. Okay. So over those three days or those 72 hours, nothing
17 comes to your recollection as things that would've been a wrench
18 in the spokes of life, so to speak, you know, you didn't have any,
19 you know, trips to the hospital, car accidents or family members
20 being sick and keeping you up late or any of that kind of stuff,
21 it was generally normal, daily routine, family life, what you do
22 every -- you know, any given week in a normal week?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. All right. Did you file an ATSAP as a result of this
25 event?

1 A. I have initiated the ATSAP process.

2 Q. Good. And so you haven't got a confirmation back from the
3 ERC that they got it?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. I'm glad you're doing one. Have you been interviewed
6 about this event prior to now? Not counting your -- I know you
7 had an in-brief over there with them, with the FAA, and -- but did
8 you get interviewed about this event by anybody else for any
9 reason?

10 A. Interviewed, not questioned, not questioning?

11 Q. Yeah. Well, any type, any --

12 A. I mean, just in the tower cab during the event, it was a lot
13 of phone calls, I did discuss the events in particular with the --
14 with JSEN --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- with Myrna, she was calling while we --

17 Q. Who is Myrna?

18 A. Myrna is the ATM who is on a temporary detail at IAH right
19 now, she's on a temporary six-month --

20 Q. Oh, okay.

21 A. -- detail and therefore, Brandy came from IAH as a support
22 manager and she's doing a temporary detail here for six months.

23 Q. I'm with you, okay. So Myrna's still the official ATM on
24 record, right?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Or no.

2 A. Uh-uh. Brandy is -- well, she's assigned by -- Myrna's
3 assigned to the facility, but she's on a temporary detail with
4 IAH.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. Brandy is a support manager at IAH and she's on a temporary
7 detail here.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. You guys confuse me with all those details, man, I am not
11 going to lie.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. All right. Okay, I think I got that down now. So no really
14 -- I mean, that stuff was all -- those weren't interviews, those
15 were, you know, collection of data --

16 A. Correct, correct.

17 Q. -- and information surrounding the event, normal notification
18 and --

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. -- operative reporting.

21 A. Just a lot of questions, no formal interviews.

22 Q. Awesome. And have you had an opportunity to review a replay
23 of this event?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Well, you did because I know you were in here with me.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. So I know you got to see it and that was a video or a video
3 and audio. And was it -- on the day of the event, you were
4 working flight data/clearance delivery combined, is that right?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. And do you remember if a relief briefing was conducted when
7 you took the position that day?

8 A. Yes, it was.

9 Q. Okay. And was that recorded?

10 A. Yes, it was.

11 Q. And do you guys utilize a checklist there in yours?

12 A. Yes, we do.

13 Q. Is it electronic or is it something on the --

14 A. It's electronic and it's posted.

15 Q. Okay. Do you know what one you used, by chance?

16 A. The posted one.

17 Q. Posted? Okay, cool. So on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the
18 heaviest, how would you rate the traffic volume at the time of the
19 incident?

20 A. At the time of the incident?

21 Q. At the time of the accident, when the accident occurred,
22 right around that time, how would you rate the traffic volume for
23 your tower at that time? This is your opinion, your thought,
24 based on your experience.

25 A. A 2.

1 Q. Two. And do you feel like that is -- that volume is normal
2 for that time of day or, you know, volume of -- or that time of
3 day or traffic complexity stuff? Or is it above average, below
4 average?

5 A. I'm trying to think because -- for that time of day?

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. So the thing about Hobby, Hobby doesn't have set times for
8 pushes, for arrival pushes --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- or departure pushes, unlike some major airports or --

11 Q. Right.

12 A. -- airports with heavier traffic and with schedules, so it's
13 just the ebb and flow throughout the day, you know.

14 Q. I got you.

15 A. You can get, you know, a lull in traffic and then it can be
16 an influx in traffic, so I mean, at that particular time why I'd
17 say a 2 is because at the time of the incident, there was an
18 arrival, there was a -- and I could probably bump it up to 3
19 because it was -- the arrival and the departure off of 2-2 Left,
20 there was a string of planes on final and as through the replay,
21 you saw he had the same two, maybe three planes around --

22 Q. Yeah, yeah.

23 A. -- and they were -- so we would be what you would consider an
24 arrival push --

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. -- because they were coming down final and they had to
2 redirect all those other aircraft that were coming down final, so
3 I would probably bump it up to a 3 --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- as far as complexity and volume, and --

6 MS SCOTT: Out of 10?

7 MR. WOODGETT: One out of five?

8 MS SCOTT: (Indiscernible).

9 MR. SOPER: What's that?

10 MS SCOTT: Two or three out of 10 or what?

11 MR. WOODGETT: No, it's just one out of five.

12 MR. SOPER: No, it's one out of five, 1 to 5, 5 --

13 MR. WOODGETT: Yeah.

14 MR. SOPER: -- being the heaviest. And so that was just a
15 volume question, so -- and I do understand what you're saying
16 about there's really no way to probably put an average on there
17 because it changes for you regularly.

18 MR. WOODGETT: Absolutely.

19 MR. SOPER: Yeah.

20 MR. WOODGETT: But there are clear arrival and departure
21 pushes that you can differentiate from each other --

22 MR. SOPER: Yeah.

23 MR. WOODGETT: -- here at Hobby, so the departures weren't
24 heavy at the time of the incident.

25 MR. SOPER: Okay, okay.

1 MR. WOODGETT: The departures.

2 BY MR. SOPER:

3 Q. All right. And so a similar question, on a scale of 1 to 5,
4 5 being the most complex, how would you rate the traffic
5 complexity at the time?

6 A. The traffic complexity?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. As a whole?

9 Q. Yeah. So these, you take everything into consideration,
10 right --

11 (Crosstalk)

12 BY MR. SOPER:

13 Q. -- progress, communication problems --

14 A. A 5.

15 Q. Okay, 5. And --

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. And that was based mainly on what?

18 A. The 5 on the complexity is based on the airport
19 configuration --

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. -- the taxiway closures, and the emergency coordination that
22 was being conducted at the time.

23 Q. Okay. That's good, we're going to talk about that stuff in a
24 little bit. So to the best of your recollection, was there any
25 distractions occurring at or leading up to the time of the event?

1 And this, I want you to think about everything like yeah, there
2 was communication problems we were -- or equipment problems we
3 were trying to get fixed or tech ops was up there messing with
4 something or we had an emergency in progress and we were trying to
5 capture data or we were coordinating with somebody, so anything,
6 anything you can think of that could've been a distraction to the
7 operation for anybody while you were up there.

8 A. Yes, there was -- there were several distractions, yes.

9 Q. And like what?

10 A. I mean, if I want to be thorough about this, the first
11 distraction was, from my position on clearance delivery/flight
12 data, is to -- my job is to help the operation out, so listening
13 to -- about everything that's going on. The training that was
14 happening on ground control, my ear was turned towards that, first
15 and foremost, and I did have a couple brief discussions with the
16 trainer on what the trainee was saying in a couple different
17 instances.

18 And it was just a light conversation between me and the
19 trainer, the trainee didn't even probably hear what we were
20 talking about, but it was about discussing whether he was
21 providing correct information on taxi routes. Because the trainee
22 (sic) was correcting him on some taxi route issues and I heard him
23 say something, I said hey, I said hey, did he say the right taxi
24 route back, and he was like oh, no, that was a different aircraft,
25 but yeah. He was struggling a little bit on taxi routes, so I was

1 trying to assist the ground controller.

2 Q. Got you.

3 A. At the time, the local controller -- now, keep in mind, I got
4 up there at 3 o'clock, the incident happened --

5 Q. Oh, yeah.

6 A. -- at 3:20.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So in that whole amount of time the local controller never
9 turned around and looked at me and we're a very, very cordial
10 facility and we come up and we all greet each other when we can,
11 if we don't greet each other we know that they're busy, so I took
12 that into consideration when I took local, took the briefing -- I
13 mean, took flight data, took the briefing, and I spoke to the
14 trainer on ground, didn't speak to the trainee because their eyes
15 are out the window. The local controller, you know, we have an
16 awesome rapport and he never turned around once because he was
17 working traffic, I'm quite sure he heard me in the background.

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. And then a discussion ensued probably before that, right when
20 I took the position, the supervisor informed that there was an
21 emergency inbound.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. So that's when I start questioning and one of my first
24 questions was because of the -- what I perceived to be the
25 severity of the inbound emergency, I said, "Was Brandy informed?"

1 and I didn't really receive an answer, like, I said, "Hey, does
2 Brandy know about this?" And so I think that it was a slight
3 distraction for me, also, to keep an ear on the phone calls and
4 the line ringing and approach calling, to kind of hear what was
5 going on with the coordination with the supervisor.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. Typically, we do stuff like that, listen to the local
8 controller the majority of the time, if you do choose to monitor
9 somebody --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- so I typically listen to the local controller to provide
12 assistance, as well.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. And so I was listening to the local controller and then also
15 trying to assist him on making sure he's saying the right
16 phraseology verbiage and keeping the planes separated. So flight
17 data/clearance can be very complex here at this airport because we
18 are tasked to kind of help the whole operation and, you know,
19 disseminate the accurate information through the NIDS, through the
20 FIDO, through the ATIS, you know. And so I'm just all around just
21 listening to what's going on, but there were several distractions
22 going on and the airfield has tons of construction going on right
23 now. So the taxi route, one of the major issues right now is that
24 due to the closures, when we're on landing Runway 1-3 Right --

25 Q. Um-hum.

1 A. -- for the Southwest to get to the terminal, they have to
2 turn left on Mike 3, left on Charlie, left on Papa, holding short
3 of Runway 1-3 Left and they're using an active runway, the short
4 Runway 1-3 Left to get those planes back to the terminal. So
5 that's an extra added distraction because everybody -- that's a
6 hot spot, everybody's looking at that runway and the 2-2
7 departures and it's just constant, even upstairs right now, that's
8 a very -- a point where, you know, heightened awareness is needed.

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. So all that stuff was going on, you know, so there are
11 significant amounts of distractions going on at the time. I don't
12 know if that paints a good picture --

13 Q. It does, it paints a really good picture, actually, and it's
14 very helpful and it kind of leads me into just a little bit here,
15 I want to kind of stick with this while you're thinking in that
16 range, but when it comes to the construction here, how long has
17 that been kind of going on here, that it's been an impact like
18 this? I know they can drag on for long periods of time.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. How about yours here?

21 A. So we did get a briefing, maybe two months ago -- can I ask?
22 They talked about that Mike construction before you left or that
23 was after you left?

24 MS. SCOTT: That was after I left.

25 MR. WOODGETT: Okay, you left August, August 1st --

1 MS. SCOTT: Yeah.

2 MR. WOODGETT: -- or August 8th.

3 MS. SCOTT: Eighth.

4 MR. WOODGETT: So shortly after that, towards the middle to
5 the end of August, airfield operations and FAA and NATCA came
6 together and discussed this Mike taxiway closure that was going to
7 be for a prolonged period of time, so that's been closed for a
8 couple months now. There was a closure on Taxiway Golf that
9 opened just this past weekend, that restricted aircraft from going
10 from the west ramp all the way to 1-3 Right, so they had to kind
11 of go up to 2-2 or maneuver somehow to get to 1-3 Right.

12 If they wanted to, on certain FLOW configurations, there's a
13 portion of Taxiway Zulu between Taxiway Charlie and Taxiway Bravo
14 that's closed, so when aircraft push back off the terminal on a
15 certain gate, it could block people from going to 2-2, so --

16 MS. SCOTT: That's still closed.

17 MR. WOODGETT: It's still closed. And so it's a -- it's a
18 distraction, like --

19 MR. SOPER: Yeah.

20 MR. WOODGETT: -- you have to pay very close attention to
21 that. So typically we would take people from Yankee to 2-2 but
22 now it's Zulu to 2-2 because we have planes pushed back off the
23 terminal, they block Yankee, so Zulu, then once you get to
24 Charlie, transition to Yankee because of the Zulu closure, so this
25 is a lot of extra verbiage, extra phraseology.

1 MR. SOPER: Yeah.

2 MR. WOODGETT: And so the one that made the -- one of the --
3 it's two taxiway closures that's making the operations difficult
4 and complex, the Echo taxiway closure, so when we're landing 1-3
5 Right, typically we use 2-2 and 1-3 Left for departures on landing
6 1-3 Right, but since Echo's closed and Delta doesn't go all the
7 way through to Runway 1-3 Right, Echo's closed, we can't send
8 anybody from the terminal to Echo.

9 MR. SOPER: Okay.

10 MS. SCOTT: Yeah, do you want me to show you on this map
11 right here?

12 MR. SOPER: Yeah, that would be great.

13 MS. SCOTT: Okay.

14 BY MR. SOPER:

15 Q. And for the sake of the recording, we're looking at a map of
16 the airfield and the representative is going to bring it over.
17 Jasmine, you can bring it over?

18 MS. SCOTT: Yeah, I can bring it over.

19 (Crosstalk)

20 MR. SOPER: Oh, okay. Fine.

21 MR. WOODGETT: Okay, so -- so this is Mike taxiway --

22 MR. SOPER: Okay.

23 MR. WOODGETT: -- so when planes are landing 1-3 Right,
24 Southwest, typically -- or this is called the triangle or the East
25 Complex. Planes going here typically exit at Mike-3 take Charlie

1 all the way back to the terminal. Charlie to this complex,
2 Charlie to this complex, Kilo, things like that. But this whole
3 Mike taxiway is closed, Lima's closed, so when they land, they
4 have to take Charlie now and back to the terminal. The last --
5 the taxiway closure that I haven't talked about is just, maybe two
6 weeks ago they closed Charlie between the entrance of the
7 Signature Ramp and Lima. So now when the Southwest land or
8 anybody going over here or over here, they have to go here and
9 turn on -- and hold short of Runway 1-3 Left.

10 What they've been saying is turn right on 1-3 Left, hold
11 short of Taxiway Kilo, so that's all day long, we have 2-2
12 departures. So that's why we're paying so much attention to that
13 area because there are no defined markings on the runway for them
14 to hold short of Kilo and that's very --

15 MR. SOPER: Oh, yeah.

16 MR. WOODGETT: -- safety intense. Echo's closed right here
17 and that's the main -- see? This is an old map and since they
18 broke up 1-7 right here, they cut this part off to get to Runway
19 1-3 Right, so this is no longer here, it's just --

20 MR. SOPER: I got you. It just ends.

21 MR. WOODGETT: -- right here. So Echo's closed, we can't
22 take anybody from the terminal to Echo so everybody has to go to
23 2-2 for departures.

24 MS. SCOTT: And then you were saying the Zulu closure up
25 here --

1 (Crosstalk)

2 MR. WOODGETT: And this is the Zulu closure right here, so if
3 they push back right here, it's -- particularly for them to block
4 people going into 2-2.

5 MR. SOPER: Man. Okay, yeah, that's painting a picture, it's
6 not a pretty picture, but you draw the picture --

7 MR. WOODGETT: Golf was closed, this is Millionaire, Golf was
8 closed right here, so nobody could leave Millionaire and go to 1-3
9 Right, they would have to leave Millionaire and go this way up to
10 2-2 because some people, if there's no traffic, they back-taxi
11 people right there, but that's even trying to --

12 BY MR. SOPER:

13 Q. So how is that being communicated and coordinated with the
14 air traffic folks here, and what I mean by that is so all of this
15 coordination, I know that's airport's, are they briefing the ATM
16 or is the FacRep involved, do you guys have any -- you know, who's
17 the entities that work together or do they just notify you and you
18 just have to deal with it?

19 A. The only collaborative major closure that I have done since
20 I've been FacRep, since August 1st, is the Mike taxiway closure.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. This Echo closure is due to a concrete breakout that was only
23 supposed to be 10 days, it's well over 10 days now, probably going
24 on 20. We don't have a timeline on Zulu, we don't have a timeline
25 on this Charlie closure --

1 MS. SCOTT: Or for the breakouts, right?

2 MR. WOODGETT: Yeah, breakouts.

3 MS. SCOTT: That's been well over the summer, all of those.

4 MR. SOPER: Okay.

5 MR. WOODGETT: There's no timeline.

6 MR. SOPER: All right.

7 MR. WOODGETT: And of course, there's probably money
8 constraints because of the budget, also, so --

9 MR. SOPER: Sure, I get it. Okay. Thank you for that.
10 That's helpful. You can leave it right there because who knows,
11 we might be back to it in a minute, so -- yeah, that's great.
12 Okay, so -- all right. And then, you know, the position of flight
13 data, it sounds more like a cab coordinator, you know, like it
14 almost --

15 MR. WOODGETT: Correct.

16 MR. SOPER: -- you know, got quite a bit of dynamics to it.

17 BY MR. SOPER:

18 Q. All right, so back to the day of the event, do you recall the
19 general weather conditions that day, was it VFR, IFR, was there
20 any precip in the area, advisories?

21 A. There was no precipitation, it was a nice day and --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- maybe low 80s.

24 Q. Okay. And did you receive pre-duty weather briefing on that
25 day?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And let me ask you this, and be honest, be perfectly honest,
3 how valuable, in its current state, is the pre-duty weather
4 briefing for you here at Houston Hobby, the one that you're
5 required to watch, is it highly valuable, somewhat valuable, or --
6 highly valuable, valuable, somewhat valuable, or not really
7 valuable?

8 A. I would say somewhat valuable.

9 Q. Okay. If there was anything that you could change, add to it
10 or ask for there to be covered, what is it that would help here at
11 Houston for anything that you may have, because I know everybody's
12 weather situation is different, I mean, what -- what you need here
13 at Houston can be very different from what they need at Oak City,
14 can be very different from what somebody would need in Portland,
15 Maine, right, you know, I mean, they deal with different weather
16 stuff.

17 So for you here at Houston, what would actually -- if
18 anything, if you can even think of anything that you feel like
19 this would be valuable information for us to know, from a weather
20 standpoint, to help us come on board and understand what was
21 happening to take the watch, is there anything like that that
22 stands out to you or do you feel like most of our weather we get
23 from just observing and getting pilot reports and --

24 A. So I think the weather here is so closely in line with your
25 typical weather on your phone, you know, if you look at the 10-day

1 forecast, which I often do on my phone --

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. -- it's very similar. I think, as a controller in a control
4 tower, when you leave for work for the day you can tell whether
5 it's going to be, you know, scattered showers or if it's murky,
6 overcast, you can tell what the weather conditions are, so --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- at those times the weather brief isn't going to be that
9 useful because you already seen what the weather conditions are,
10 you know.

11 Q. Right.

12 A. Just like when you all were up there today, I don't know who
13 was watching when I went up there to start working, but the
14 weather just started building, you know, and it just started
15 rolling in and it just started moving northbound off the departure
16 and over the east complex of the aerodrome and so it's useful,
17 that's why I say somewhat useful because maybe you can get a
18 better depiction on what the weather is going to be down the
19 line --

20 Q. Got you.

21 A. -- in the approach airspace and in the center airspace, and
22 that's what actually we -- the information we need because that
23 would give us the indicator if we're going to have a lot of
24 reroutes and stuff, you know, so that tells us how complex and
25 difficult our day is going to be in the tower, if we're going to

1 encounter any delays, you know, switching, closing of the
2 departure corridors and gates and stuff like that, you know, so --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But if they're just isolated thunderstorms in the Houston
5 area and it's not further down the line, it's just very simple,
6 easy traffic, we'll just move traffic around the clouds and get
7 them out to the enroute and the approach level, no problem. But
8 when the weather's in approach or down in Florida or, you know, up
9 towards Dallas and stuff, it definitely is useful to see that type
10 of weather far out from us.

11 Q. Okay. Good. Do you remember on that day, did you have a
12 cellular phone or PED on you at the time of the event?

13 A. I did, yes.

14 Q. Okay. Do you remember if it was on or --

15 A. It was in the off position.

16 Q. Off, okay. And had you requested a relief or assistance
17 leading up to the time of the event or were you in your normal
18 rotation like you expected to be? And, I mean, you said you
19 hadn't been on very long, like 20 minutes or something, right,
20 so --

21 A. Yeah, I was up there, I was -- it was information overload
22 for me coming back off of prime-time leave --

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. -- my first shift back, doing the weather brief downstairs,
25 coming up and getting pre-briefed when I get upstairs, looking at

1 all the information that's being displayed, the ITWS, the NIDS,
2 the stickers or placards that are on the STARS monitor at the
3 local position because that's where we see all our FLOWs and
4 stuff, but also on the NIDS, you know, and even just talking to
5 the supervisor who briefed me when we decombined the flight
6 data/clearance delivery position and he took the standalone
7 supervisor's position in the back.

8 Q. Oh, okay. All right. How did you become aware of the event,
9 did you visually see -- did you visually see the aircraft rolling
10 when they shouldn't've been, did somebody else bring it to your
11 attention, was it the ASDE alarm, what was it that brought it to
12 your attention?

13 A. I saw the event happening and I brought attention to the
14 local controller and let him know that something was occurring.

15 Q. You were the first one to see it, then?

16 A. I was the first one to see it.

17 Q. Okay. And so when you see it, physically out the window or
18 did you notice on the ASDE or --

19 A. We were all standing up because we had got the word that the
20 Southwest was inbound. I didn't hear how close he was, but we got
21 the inbound call from approach or the supervisor did.

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. He said -- and therefore, he went and rang the crash phone.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So he rang the crash phone, so we knew, we all kind of stood

1 up, you know. Once again, I talked to the trainer, I said hey,
2 does he have 20.2 pulled up, he's like yeah, he got 20.2 pulled
3 up, so he had 20.2 pulled up, John and I were, you know, kind of
4 in light conversation and he was still working and stuff, you
5 know, and the supe went back there and I guess was doing some
6 other coordination, and closer to the event happening, everybody
7 was kind of like kind of standing up, you know, just kind of
8 awaiting, you know, the situation that happened and John was
9 turned around and as you can hear on the thing, he gave a wind
10 call, you know, and I --

11 Q. Is that the local controller?

12 A. Local controller, yes. He gave a wind call, just a blanket
13 wind call, it's typical for military controllers to just give, you
14 know, a short final, just give them the wind one more time, so
15 that lets you know he was looking out the window because I
16 visually saw him looking out the window on final. But from the
17 flight data/clearance delivery position, my -- from my vantage
18 point, he has an ASDE that I look to a lot --

19 Q. Um-hum.

20 A. -- and the ASDE on ground control was kind of angulated where
21 I can't see it, you know. So the supe has an ASDE but from
22 clearance delivery/flight data, your two ASDEs that you look to
23 the most is the one on the helicopter position and the one on
24 local position, so I scan that all the time, all day, every day
25 from the clearance delivery/flight data position. So as he was

1 looking back at the plane on final, I glimpsed and I saw an
2 aircraft rolling, just initial roll on 2-2 and what -- what I
3 thought, I said -- in my mind, I said is he -- is he taxiing down
4 the runway, because he was going slow, I was like is he taxiing on
5 the runway?

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. I don't recall the exact words, but I said hey, what's he
8 doing and John turned around and immediately was just like stop.

9 Q. Okay, all right. And so that was before -- and so the ASDE
10 alert was after that.

11 A. The ASDE hadn't alerted at that time.

12 MR. SOPER: Yeah, okay. All right, good. Well, normally
13 this is where I would ask you to kind of step me through the
14 event, but you kind of just did. I feel pretty good about that
15 right now about how this event kind of played out. I'm going to
16 go ahead and pass it along for now, I'm probably going to have
17 some more questions for you, but you know, we talked a lot about
18 all that stuff, so I'm going to go ahead and pass it along to
19 Sarah.

20 MS. SCOTT: Do you need a break?

21 MR. WOODGETT: No, do you need a break?

22 MS. SCOTT: No.

23 BY MS. LEWIS:

24 Q. Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. I know
25 that sometimes it's like not an option, but it is really important

1 for us to be able to capture this information and take this back
2 and use this to help, you know, prevent something like this from
3 happening again. You talked a lot about the ASDE-X.

4 (Paging unit alarm.)

5 MS. LEWIS: We'll just wait a second. Whoops.

6 BY MS. LEWIS:

7 Q. You talked a lot about the ASDE-X, so tell me about how you
8 feel that tool is useful to you and just in general, and then I
9 might have a couple of like specific questions about that.

10 A. It's useful to me or the facility as a whole?

11 Q. As a tower team member.

12 A. Um-hum. Well, it's kind of funny because as a trainer here
13 at the facility for many years, a lot of controllers who come
14 here, it's their first time having an ASDE, so we have to be very
15 aware and cognizant of how they utilize this tool in training and
16 it's funny, because some people come here and they overuse it and
17 then some people come here and they don't use it at all initially
18 in their training, so we have them correct that initially because
19 once they -- you know, they'll look out the window and they're
20 just like -- we're like use the ASDE and then they're like oh, I
21 forgot we have ASDE, you know, and then other people are just
22 using ASDE all day, we're like hey, look out the window, man, like
23 -- you know, it's a comfortable balance, you know.

24 So it's a very useful tool here in our facility, you know,
25 and it's -- when it goes down for maintenance, you know, or

1 something like that, you know, we definitely say man, when is the
2 ASDE coming back up and I'm like -- because we're, you know, very
3 aware, there's a heightened awareness of what's going on, on the
4 airfield, when the ASDE is out, so it's very useful in a facility
5 like this, especially with the runway configuration that we have
6 and the number of taxiway crossing points we have, also.

7 Q. That's great, thanks. How do you feel it works, do you feel
8 like it alarms quickly?

9 A. So I don't want to get long-winded on this, but --

10 Q. We got the time --

11 A. We used to have a tech --

12 (Crosstalk)

13 MR. WOODGETT: We used to have a tech here, she has since
14 moved on to the center, to the SOC, and I think she's on a detail
15 right now, but when it was her piece of equipment, maybe seven,
16 ten years ago, she knew the ASDE up and down and she calibrated
17 it, she knew what was wrong, she -- it was -- it was, how would
18 you say it, just finely tuned.

19 MS. LEWIS: Um-hum.

20 MR. WOODGETT: In the recent past, I want to say maybe the
21 past three or four years, it's -- there's a lot of stuff that is
22 going on with it, you know, ghost targets, nuisance alerts, just a
23 lot of things that an average person would perceive it as being
24 slightly unreliable.

25 They did implement another system onto it that gives us an

1 alert for taxiways, as you all know the big thing nationally,
2 planes were landing on taxiways, so --

3 MS. LEWIS: Yeah.

4 MR. WOODGETT: -- they just initiated that, I think, last --
5 was it last year? And so we've had a couple of nuisance alerts
6 with the taxiway alerts, you know. But probably in the last 12
7 months or so there has been some instances where we were surprised
8 that the ASDE didn't alert or we were surprised that the ASDE
9 alerted when it shouldn't have alerted, you know. So one time in
10 particular was just maybe three weeks ago, we were landing Runway
11 2-2 and we had -- on that configuration we landed/departed 2-2, so
12 we were landing 2-2 and it's -- there were maybe two or three
13 Southwest jets holding short of 2-2 and there was a plane, I want
14 to say it might've been a Southwest and it may be inside of a mile
15 final and the target of the holding short, Southwest jumped onto
16 the runway and alerted the ASDE and then jumped back and the
17 controller had to send the plane around.

18 But that's just like how -- I've never seen that happen. So
19 it doesn't seem to be calibrated properly at times and that's a
20 perfect example, right? That plane was holding short perfectly
21 fine and the target just jumped on the runway and alerted and we
22 had to send the plane around. And then jumped back onto the
23 plane, yeah, so --

24 MS. LEWIS: Yeah, that sounds -- that sounds -- that can
25 cause a lot of trouble --

1 MR. WOODGETT: Um-hum.

2 MS. LEWIS: -- for you guys.

3 MR. WOODGETT: There's been a lot of reports of -- nuisance
4 reports and things like that about things that are going on with
5 the ASDE within the past six to twelve months.

6 BY MS. LEWIS:

7 Q. So that's probably a dislike, you know, that part of it. Any
8 other dislikes about it?

9 A. So on a configuration aspect of it, a couple of the ASDEs up
10 there, like, don't function properly. The ASDE at the ground
11 control position, the scroll ball, like the cursor jumps, you
12 know, like -- and so therefore when there's some type of
13 configuration change that needs to be done, people have to go to
14 other -- other ASDEs to make these changes.

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. There was a recent upgrade in the system, I think there was
17 like maybe an upgrade and the software sort of erased all the
18 presets, you know, so even if you go up there right now, like
19 there are no presets in there. So if you -- if there was a power
20 outage or something bumped it and it had to reboot, you can't go
21 to a preset, that's been in there for years because -- with the
22 recent adaptation of the new software.

23 So you got to kind of take time to, you know, make your
24 windows, zoom out, zoom in, you know, put the right configuration,
25 so you have to kind of do all this stuff; before there were just

1 presets, like boom, boom, boom, and nobody has taken time to go in
2 there and to put all the presets back in there again, you know,
3 so --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. I guess, you know, that's kind of a dislike of what's going
6 on right now, too. The equipment fails a lot, too, you know, the
7 video feeds, the -- sometimes its frozen. You can probably look
8 at the logs, the TechOps logs, and see that they've been working
9 on those things a lot over the past 12 to 18 months or so.

10 Q. If you were to try to go in there and reconfigure it to the
11 way you wanted it to be after one of those -- what you were
12 describing, would you have to do that on your own time or do you
13 do it during duty time, how does that work?

14 A. So in the past, it's --

15 MS. SCOTT: I'm sorry. Yeah, can we take a break real quick?

16 MR. SOPER: Yeah, absolutely.

17 MS. SCOTT: We'll come back in a few minutes.

18 MR. SOPER: I'm going to go ahead and stop the recording and
19 we're going to take a quick break.

20 (Off the record at 1:17 p.m.)

21 (On the record at 1:32 p.m.)

22 MR. SOPER: Starting the recording and what time do you have?

23 MS. LEWIS: I have 1:32.

24 MR. SOPER: One thirty-two, all right. And Sarah, you can
25 pick back up where you left off.

1 BY MS. LEWIS:

2 Q. Okay, so we were talking about the ASDE-X and how you either
3 liked or disliked certain things. When something alerts on the
4 ASDE-X, tell me about how you feel, does it alert fast enough,
5 does it alert, like -- I guess my question is do you feel that --
6 like the ASDE-X was helpful in times that it alerts in a prompt
7 amount of time, like a time that would be helpful to you or would
8 you rather it alarm earlier, how do you feel about something like
9 that?

10 A. Well, that's kind of hard to say because a lot of times, as
11 controllers, we're correcting the issue before it even alerts, you
12 know. So the majority of the time we are correcting the issue
13 when it alerts, you know, and of course, when it does alert, we
14 have to act, you know, as per our directive, you know, so there
15 has been very few times where -- like I said, where it -- where it
16 was too close, like oh, you know, like how come it alerted there.
17 There have been plenty of go arounds, it's like hey, go around and
18 planes lift up, go around, you know, and it's just like -- and
19 then like 10 minutes later it will go off and it's like why did it
20 go off again, you know.

21 Q. Again, yeah.

22 A. So I do think it alerts in a timely fashion, but corrective
23 actions are taking -- corrective actions are being taken in a
24 timely manner before, a lot of times before the ASDE does alert,
25 so --

1 Q. Sure. Okay, great. When you guys identify an equipment,
2 like you were talking about the ASDE-X slew ball, I believe you
3 were talking about, was it a slew ball that was sticking --

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. -- on one of the positions? If you were to bring that
6 concern to -- who would you bring that concern to?

7 A. OCC.

8 Q. Okay. And do you feel that they address your concerns
9 properly? Or how long does it take to -- like, if you said today
10 that's broken, how long do you think they would respond?

11 A. If there is a tech available, it's pretty quick, within a few
12 minutes to -- within that day, within that shift --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- if there's a tech available.

15 MS. LEWIS: Okay, great. I'm going to pass to Kristen.
16 Thank you.

17 BY MR. SOPER:

18 Q. Real quick before Kristen picks up, I did have a question on
19 the ASDE while we were in that lane about the alarming.

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. In this event in particular, because you did note seeing him
22 on ASDE like, whoa, is that a plane going down the -- is he
23 taxiing because it seemed kind of slow, were you surprised that it
24 hadn't alerted there or was that normal for you, I mean, like from
25 your experience here.

1 A. Once again, I think in this particular situation, corrective
2 action was being done --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. -- and then it went off and it's hard for me to think about
5 how the system was calculating.

6 Q. Yeah, no worries, no worries --

7 A. And if -- yeah, I'm under the impression that the reason it
8 didn't go off, because it's -- it was calculating the speeds at
9 that particular time.

10 Q. I got you.

11 A. And it probably was saying oh, this is going to work, you
12 know, and then it didn't.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. You know, so --

15 Q. No worries with that.

16 A. -- it might get some speed adjustments and then the system's
17 like okay, this isn't going to work anymore, you know, and it just
18 alerted, you know, so --

19 MR. SOPER: I just wanted to be sure. I wasn't sure if that
20 was something that stood out to you, like you were talking about
21 the other one like man, why -- how come it hadn't alerted, so
22 yeah, that's good. That's exactly what I was wondering.

23 Okay, Kristen, sorry.

24 MS. McTEE: No problem.

25 BY MS. McTEE:

1 Q. So let me introduce myself, I'm the NATCA SME and I do want
2 to reiterate, this is for safety purposes only, we are not coming
3 after you, your coworkers, your facility, we do not have that
4 authority, we do not have that ability, and we don't have that
5 desire, so we are here only to help figure out the facts so that
6 the NTSB can put out safety recommendations. I just want to
7 reiterate, nothing to do with punitive action whatsoever. So I'd
8 like to focus a little bit on runway configuration and I want to
9 talk about and separate it out between no construction and then
10 where you guys are now with construction. So let's talk
11 construction's not happening, everything's open, let's say we're
12 landing 1-3 Right, taking off 2-2, is that a normal configuration
13 with no construction?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Would you say that the amount of times that you're using 2-2
16 for departure is the same if you're no construction versus where
17 we are with construction or has that changed, the amount that you
18 use 2-2 for departures?

19 A. I think the amount of time that we use 2-2 is not determined
20 upon the construction or the current taxiway outages or
21 construction, the major determining factor that a lot of people go
22 by when determining whether they want to use 2-2 is, in
23 particular, on the terminal is which runway is the Southwest
24 closest to.

25 Of course, we take wind into consideration, also, because

1 sometimes when we use 2-2 there can be a tailwind component once
2 they can't use 2-2. So 2-2 is usually determined on where the
3 aircraft is positioned, also from pilot request, and also based
4 upon controller comfortability and I say that by saying some
5 controllers don't mind landing/departing 1-3 Right, you know, and
6 -- but some controllers are like we're landing 1-3, send everybody
7 to 2-2, you know. I'm particularly one of the controllers who's
8 like disseminating runways, you know, if he's starting on final,
9 I'll make it work, you know, some speed reductions or, you know,
10 I'll call approach and say can you make something, you know. But
11 typically, 2-2 departures are determined on those things that I
12 just mentioned.

13 Q. So not so much the construction, but the factors that you
14 spoke about?

15 A. Right.

16 Q. Okay. The parallel, 1-3 Left, how often do you use it if
17 there's no construction?

18 A. If there's no construction, we use it to the best of our
19 ability. If we have small props, twin props, even some jets, you
20 know, if they see that they might encounter a delay and they can
21 take the 5,148 feet, they'll take it. We do have some arrivals,
22 but arrival, you know, it's a fix that's to the north of this, we
23 have an over-fix to the east of this and the aircraft comes in at
24 an altitude, to descend-to-pattern altitude for a left base, left
25 downwind, left base for Runway 1-3 Left.

1 So that's used quite often with the approach control, you
2 know, if they just check to see if it's open and then they'll just
3 flash them to us and we take it and we get the plane down on the
4 left side, so we do utilize 1-3 Left, you know, to the best of our
5 ability.

6 Q. Okay. And then with the construction, do you think the use
7 of 1-3 Left has decreased?

8 A. One hundred percent.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Just want to get this right, have the same impression.
12 Sarah, did you have more?

13 A. Meaning with the current configuration right now, right,
14 because we're using that as a taxi lane, so --

15 MS. McTEE: Okay, right.

16 Sarah, did you have more configuration questions that you
17 wanted to ask him?

18 BY MS. LEWIS:

19 Q. That was one of the questions I was going to say was -- or
20 ask, was, just to clarify, you're not really using the 1-3 Left
21 right now because of immediate potential safety concern on the
22 construction routing?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay. Is this normal for this many construction projects to
25 be going on at the same time?

1 A. Once again, I've been here since 2011, there's maybe been two
2 or three other times in which -- and the two or three other times
3 were because they were getting -- preparing for an inspection.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. You know, like a major inspection, they'll do multiple, you
6 know, closures, nothing ever this significant, like this is the
7 worst I've seen it since I've been here.

8 Q. Do you know, and -- do you know if there's been any ATSAPs
9 filed on the construction concerns that you guys have right now?

10 A. Yes, I think so.

11 Q. Do you know if the facility has been able to address any of
12 these with the airport operations personnel?

13 A. I don't know about that. As you know, we just had a recent
14 switch in ATMs, you know, and --

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. -- unfortunately, this is Brandy's first week on the job, you
17 know, so I'm not privy to the discussions that have been taking
18 place over the past couple of weeks, so --

19 Q. Do you know how long the previous ATM was here?

20 A. Myrna was here, I think she mentioned four years.

21 Q. Okay. And is it -- do you know --

22 MR. WOODGETT: Huh?

23 MS. SCOTT: She got here during COVID.

24 MR. WOODGETT: Um-hum.

25 MS. SCOTT: What is that, three? I mean, four, I would say

1 four.

2 MS. LEWIS: Okay.

3 MR. WOODGETT: Oh, she was at three, going on four.

4 MS. SCOTT: Two? Three.

5 MR. WOODGETT: Three, three.

6 BY MS. LEWIS:

7 Q. Okay, so several years.

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. Do you know if the intention is for her to come back after
10 the detail?

11 A. I don't know of that.

12 MS. LEWIS: Okay. Okay, thank you.

13 Kristen, go ahead.

14 BY MS. McTEE:

15 Q. Do you guys have more than one local control frequency?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. To your knowledge, were the -- both aircraft involved on the
18 same frequency?

19 A. Yes, they were, 118.7.

20 Q. Okay. And -- thank you. With this configuration, landing
21 1-3 Right and departing Runway 2-2, how often, in a normal
22 session, would you use line up and wait? Like with that level of
23 traffic -- so let me make it specific, so landing 1-3 Right,
24 departing Runway 2-2 in an hour, about that normal volume of
25 traffic, is that a very common occurrence?

1 A. Not all, almost all the departures on 2-2 will be lined up
2 and put in position.

3 Q. Okay, that's what I was looking for, thank you. Do you guys
4 have a simulator on site?

5 A. A sim?

6 Q. A training simulator?

7 A. No.

8 Q. No.

9 A. We use the one at Intercontinental.

10 Q. How often do you think that you go to Intercontinental for
11 sim training?

12 A. When we have trainings, they have to go up there for ground
13 and local, and the district has done the best they can to get all
14 the Houston facilities there once a year to do refresher
15 scenarios.

16 Q. When you're doing those refresher trainings, do they use
17 complex scenarios where you're using intersecting runways for
18 arrivals and departures?

19 A. Yes, they use -- they go through all the runway
20 configurations that we have.

21 MS. McTEE: All, okay. Great. And I think I'm good for now.

22 Mike --

23 MR. SOPER: Okay.

24 MS. McTEE: -- want to take it away --

25 (Crosstalk)

1 MR. SOPER: Yeah, Mike.

2 BY MR. VANDINI:

3 Q. Yeah, just a couple things, Corey. When you came in that
4 day, your first position was clearance delivery?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. And how long were you on before the incident happened?

7 A. If the incident was at 3:20, I was on that for 20 minutes.

8 Q. Twenty minutes. And then did you stay on that position
9 afterwards?

10 A. I did.

11 Q. I'm trying to figure out the logs here because I see that you
12 logged out at 20:08 and at 21:22, and then at 21:23 you're logged
13 out again until 22:03.

14 A. So unlike other facilities, some facilities have the ability
15 to sign in through the STARS keyboard.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. We're not one of those facilities, so all those sign-in times
18 are strictly done by the supervisor in the back, so I would not be
19 able to say accurately --

20 (Crosstalk)

21 BY MR. VANDINI:

22 Q. No, I'm just -- no, I'm not looking for accuracy, so you were
23 like almost two hours on that position?

24 A. Yes, um-hum.

25 Q. Okay, now can you -- your position there, is that -- can you

1 be a CIC in that position, too?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. You can be, okay. Now that's the other thing, your eight-
4 hour period, and not even on this date, but your normal shift, how
5 often are CICs used?

6 A. What time period are you asking for?

7 Q. Any of your shifts, like a 3:00 to 11:00 or a 2:00 to 10:00.

8 A. Like for the past couple months or the past year, like, for
9 the --

10 Q. Yes. What are you guys using now?

11 A. Okay, so the best way I can answer that question is that we
12 are allotted four supervisors.

13 Q. That's correct.

14 A. And we've been down to two a lot of the times, we just had a
15 temporary supe, who went back to the boards, she did a six-month
16 detail, and then we had -- it was pretty much two supes with a
17 supe in training, you know, so the best I can answer that question
18 is that we utilize a CIC position a lot.

19 Q. Okay. Daily, then?

20 A. Daily.

21 Q. And how is the facility -- the other controllers accept the
22 CIC? Say if you're a CIC, are they listening to you? Are you
23 giving, you know, corrections if something -- in this case right
24 here, you seen the guy rolling, you know what I mean, it's like
25 hey, is he rolling, something not regularly on a normal day, if

1 you see something, are they taking what you're telling them?

2 A. Absolutely. I can't really speak for others, but --

3 Q. No, I'm talking about you.

4 A. Yes, when I'm -- when I am the controller in charge, I am
5 aware of what's going on in the operation. I pride myself to be
6 able to -- what the agency sometimes say there's no multitasking,
7 but I pride myself on being able to multitask and also disseminate
8 information in a timely manner, you know, whether it be a runway
9 change, emergencies inbound, wind shifts or, you know, anything
10 like that, I yell out information a lot. You know, if Southwest
11 calls to remove a strip, I don't just go pull the strip, I yell it
12 out, hey, remove Southwest -- while I'm on the phone, so there's
13 no miscommunication, you know, so yes, I'm very aware of the
14 operation when I'm on CIC, absolutely.

15 Q. Will you throw out on-the-spot corrections if you had to?

16 A. Absolutely.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And I think -- for me, personally, I think people take my
19 correction and advice, because I tell them please say -- if you
20 see me doing something wrong, please tell me, like there's no
21 argument or no pride in it, like if you see me or hear me say
22 something, please, tell me, you know, so -- and you know how
23 controllers are sometimes, they don't want to be told, you know
24 what I'm saying?

25 (Laughter.)

1 BY MR. VANDINI:

2 Q. And then you stayed on for -- after the incident, then you
3 just stayed on clearance delivery until obviously getting relieved
4 for the next time --

5 A. So it's the operation, to the best of my ability, yes.

6 Q. And it would be after (indiscernible).

7 A. It was, yes.

8 MR. VANDINI: And I know about answering the phone calls,
9 yes. That's all I got, Corey, thanks.

10 BY MR. SOPER:

11 Q. Great. Okay, shifting gears just a tad, do you guys have an
12 LSC here?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And is it active? Would you consider the LSC active?

15 A. It's diminished with the changeover of FacReps.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Jasmine, she went to Intercontinental and I took over
18 August 1st and there's been some significant staffing issues --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- and therefore there have been a couple SSRs and we have
21 done the best to have the monthly meeting hall, so --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- it's still in place but there's a lot of changing parts
24 that's going on right now, people who have left the LSC and joined
25 the LSC, you know, and so even with Brandy here now, you know, we

1 have to update the scoping document and things like that, you
2 know, so --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. -- it's a work in progress.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. It's a lot based upon staffing, you know.

7 Q. Okay. Are you the bargaining unit lead on that one?

8 A. Correct.

9 MR. SOPER: Okay. In here, is that historically true,
10 Jasmine? You can answer that, too. Does the FacRep normally fill
11 that role for here?

12 MS. SCOTT: The lead?

13 MR. SOPER: As the -- yeah, as the bargaining unit lead for
14 the LSC or is it, it just depends?

15 MS. SCOTT: I mean, it's required, the ATM and the FacRep
16 would be over it.

17 MR. SOPER: Okay. Really?

18 MS. SCOTT: Yeah. Normally, they designate as the actual
19 lead in the meetings and things like that, they can designate
20 somebody else, but it's required for the scoping document policy.

21 MR. SOPER: Okay, all right. Very good.

22 BY MR. SOPER:

23 Q. So when you think about this event, you know, now like, you
24 know, a hindsight type of thing where we're looking at this and
25 seeing the replay and replaying what occurred there and obviously,

1 you were present for it, does anything stand out to you? Have you
2 identified anything, you're like this would've been helpful or
3 this would've -- or this was a problem or I wish we would've done
4 this or I feel like if this -- is there anything that comes to
5 mind like that for you in any way?

6 A. Are you saying things that led up to the incident or the
7 incident itself?

8 Q. Either, either. Like literally, you know, like -- you know
9 what I mean, it's just -- like I said, it's always easier doing
10 the hindsight thing, right, I mean, that's -- when you're in the
11 operation, it's a completely different situation, you know, than
12 it is being able to okay, now you're looking outside in for a
13 minute and you can slow everything down and just think about the
14 way it played out, is there anything like, man, that right there?

15 A. Are you talking about things that I could have done?

16 Q. Anybody.

17 A. The whole operation.

18 Q. No, anything, the whole operation, you can even speak to the
19 aircraft or the pilots or what you wish they would've done or done
20 differently or not done or anything.

21 A. Okay, so of course, you know, everybody's perspective, they
22 could look at a situation and say what they think could've been
23 done better, you know, what might be the best thing or not, you
24 know.

25 Q. A hundred percent.

1 A. I have that time to think about, you know, what I would have
2 done if I was in a different position, you know. One of the
3 things that kind of stands out to me, and this is coming from
4 being CIC, CIC/supe position, for me, I'm a stickler with
5 disseminating emergency information as soon as possible, so when I
6 get it, I tell everybody in the entire cab we got a Southwest a
7 hundred miles out, 300 miles out, coming in, whatever it may be,
8 medical, tire, whatever --

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. -- and a lot of times, depending on the severity of the
11 emergency and how far they are out, I won't ring the crash phone,
12 but I'll call the fire department on the recorded line and give
13 them a heads up, hey, this is what we got going on, we're getting
14 the information, you know, and things of that sort. So in this
15 particular situation I think that the initial coordination for
16 that emergency imbalance should have been done immediately. As
17 you heard me say, the crash phone was ringing, we got the inbound
18 call, but we knew about the emergency when I got up there.

19 Before I got up there, they knew about the emergency. I
20 brought a change to that when I got up there at 3 o'clock, hey,
21 does Brandy know about this, who knows about this, and I don't
22 even think the -- the information was just not disseminated all
23 around, you know, so that's one thing that I would've done is --
24 and that would've -- that would have freed up time to work the
25 emergency at hand, the two coming together, the airfield, instead

1 of thinking about, you know, getting the trucks out there and all
2 that other stuff, you know, so --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. I think that's pretty much the only aspect that I kind of --
5 you know, I'm a stickler for that, you know, when I get emergency
6 information I pass it to everybody, you know. If I get a phone
7 call, I call approach and say hey, did you all get a phone call
8 about this medical -- oh, yeah. Okay, fire department, hey -- oh,
9 yeah, we got people over there already, okay, cool, I just wanted
10 to make sure everybody's on the same page, you know, but when I
11 got up there, that hadn't been done and it was just kind of like,
12 you know, I wanted to bring awareness of the situation.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Other than that, I mean, as a controller, I mean, we were
15 doing our jobs, we were alert, standing up, watching, scanning,
16 and it shows, you know, the scan was active, you know, but --

17 Q. It does, I agree with you a hundred percent. As a matter of
18 fact, that was a very good catch, I mean, you know, that's what we
19 -- too often we see the opposite, right, eyes weren't out the
20 windows and -- or on the operation in here, they clearly were, and
21 it shows, so that's good. I mean, definitely have to commend you
22 on that, there's absolutely no doubt, so that was good.

23 And I wasn't trying to say like, you know, anything different
24 there, I just -- I like to -- I like to get a feel because again,
25 it's your house, right, so this is your operation every day, so

1 naturally, after it occurs you're going to think through things
2 like man, okay, how did this play out, you know, and things
3 sometimes just come to mind, you know, because you know what
4 happens here, so that's why I asked that question. How's the work
5 relationship overall as the -- as the facility team here, you guys
6 all -- you know, it's a good group, it's -- you guys all work well
7 together for the most part, I mean, it's a cohesive unit here?

8 A. I think so, I think everybody, you know, adheres to the
9 directives and procedures and just like any facility, you know,
10 you have one side and the other side, you know.

11 Q. Of course.

12 A. And then, you know, sometimes we go to the other side and
13 like "hmm," you know. But other than that, everybody's -- the
14 work relation is pretty good here.

15 Q. So right now, based on your experience level here, what do
16 you think is the biggest challenge that you guys have to doing
17 your job up there, do you have an equipment deficiency, a staffing
18 deficiency, if anything? If you guys are fine, you're fine. I
19 don't want to say you have a problem at all.

20 So just, if you were, though, to pick out like yeah, this is
21 something that's been a problem for a while, we've been trying to
22 get it fixed or addressed or taken care of and it is -- it's
23 constantly a difficulty for us, so is there anything that stands
24 out, like that, for you?

25 A. I mean, nothing that everyone else doesn't know, I mean,

1 we're currently in a -- you know, an organizational staffing
2 shortage, you know. When I first got here to Hobby in 2011 there
3 were maybe 28 controllers and right now there's 21, 22
4 controllers, but that's not an accurate depiction of what the
5 staffing really looks like because we have some medical -- you
6 know, people who are medically down and retirements looming, you
7 know, and stuff like that, you know, so --

8 Q. Sure.

9 A. -- trainees, you know, so it's not an accurate depiction on
10 what the staffing really looks like in this facility, you know, so
11 that's a major issue.

12 Q. Do you know how your traffic count has been here, has it --
13 has it been on an increase, has it been generally flat, you know,
14 I mean, the same?

15 A. Since the pandemic it's been on an increase, a slight
16 increase every year.

17 Q. Okay. All right.

18 MS. SCOTT: Would you say anything else, different things
19 that we try to talk with the TechOps, things like that,
20 construction, equipment outages --

21 MR. WOODGETT: Well --

22 (Crosstalk)

23 MS. SCOTT: -- responses, things like that? I'm not trying
24 to put words in your mouth, I was just -- I know they were big
25 deals before.

1 BY MR. SOPER:

2 Q. Yeah, it can be anything, yeah, that's exactly right, I mean,
3 anything that stands out to you is things like that, that are --

4 A. So that's not out of my -- my answer, I think you should be
5 able to gather that, you know, we do have some equipment issues,
6 we clearly have some communication issues between FAA agency, and
7 airport operations, you know --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. -- that's been an issue for years, you know, and I think on
10 lines of the equipment issues, we've had some major failures of
11 communication between us and TechOps, you know, over the past
12 couple years, you know, and that, I think, came along with, you
13 know, the change of command, you know, change of managers, you
14 know, whether it be our ATM or their manager at the TechOps,
15 manager also, you know, but we've had a lot of discussions about
16 equipment. Once again, that's nationwide, you know, I
17 mean --

18 Q. Sure.

19 A. It's a battle that the agency is fighting in -- you know,
20 NATCA, we're fighting all the time to get our equipment up and
21 operational in a timely manner, but it's been a focal point here
22 over the past couple years.

23 MR. SOPER: Well, I mean, you know, I'll just be frank with
24 you, just because it's something that's happening across the
25 agency doesn't mean it's any less significant for you, you know

1 what I mean, that's -- you know, a shared problem is still a
2 problem and so I can understand that. I do identify a concern
3 with the -- and this is -- you're right, this is another thing
4 that's not uncommon, is the -- what I see as a perception of
5 airports and air traffic control, that collaborative piece doesn't
6 seem to be in place, meaning it's very much we're just at the
7 mercy -- they just -- essentially, we get a memo saying this is
8 happening, we're taking these down and we just got to work around
9 it. So from your awareness, and Jasmine, I mean, feel free to
10 respond to this because you were here, and I know you just took
11 over since August, but in the past is -- I am explaining that
12 correctly or do you have any regular meetings that facility,
13 management, and bargaining unit can sit with airports to discuss
14 their plans so that you can mitigate? Is there any of that? For
15 either of you, this question is just open for this -- from this
16 facility, from your experience.

17 MS. SCOTT: Okay, you want me to go first?

18 MR. WOODGETT: Sure.

19 MS. SCOTT: Do you want to go?

20 MR. WOODGETT: No, you can go, I just -- she can better
21 answer this, she --

22 MR. SOPER: That's why I said, I didn't know --

23 (Crosstalk)

24 MR. WOODGETT: -- she's fought that battle for the time she
25 was FacRep and she can better answer this. I want to speak on the

1 time that -- things that have happened --

2 MR. SOPER: Yeah.

3 MR. WOODGETT: -- since I've been FacRep --

4 (Crosstalk)

5 MR. WOODGETT: I'll go second, but she can probably better
6 articulate the atmosphere of what's going on right now.

7 MS. SCOTT: Specifically with the airport, correct?

8 MR. SOPER: Yes.

9 MS. SCOTT: Our communication with the airport is awful.

10 MR. SOPER: Yeah.

11 MS. SCOTT: About two years ago, a line was drawn. At one
12 time we had a good relationship and we could say hey, can we just
13 do this closure later, this is really not -- we can't do -- take
14 this runway, like, and that was -- that was understood. There was
15 a situation with a supervisor that's no longer here in the airport
16 and after that, it was an absolute no-go. On the LSC, we have
17 reworked -- and Corey would be happy to give you an update on that
18 LOA with airport ops, we've had issues with the equipment not
19 being equipped with transponders, you see those closures, we need
20 to know where you're at. No, we don't use transponders since
21 COVID.

22 (Crosstalk)

23 MS. SCOTT: It's not required because it's not in our LOA.
24 We reworked it and we went back and forth on wording and things
25 like that and as of the time I left in August we were at a

1 standstill, not moving forward. And no budge in sight, either.
2 And because of this, NOTAMs were not getting disseminated, they
3 were -- so let me backtrack a little bit. A year and a half ago,
4 I was -- I asked my ATM to ask the airport ops to be included on
5 their briefings, they do one on Thursday and they do one on
6 Wednesday. The Wednesday one is a district one, the Thursday one
7 is strictly here, I was on every single Thursday one just so I
8 could be notified of planned closures ahead of time, like there
9 was no dissemination of information. And so because of those
10 calls, I would be made aware they planned to take this runway out
11 for the next month or this equipment out and maintenance for the
12 next 60 days, I mean, this is multiple conversations I had with
13 Myrna, what in the heck is going on, that had been put up to
14 district, even, because nobody knows and they're not issuing
15 NOTAMs until that day-of.

16 I know for a fact, and it's recorded in those minutes, you
17 knew for six months, why are we just finding out and why is TRACON
18 sending out scrambling trying to adjust our air traffic when we're
19 all supposed to be for the safety of the NAS. It is a continuous
20 problem. I, obviously, no longer sit on those calls --

21 MR. SOPER: Um-hum.

22 MS. SCOTT: -- and I do want to make it clear, too, because
23 there was an issue right before I left --

24 MR. SOPER: Sure.

25 MS. SCOTT: -- if I had designated roles or rights to

1 intervene in the conversations and put my input, and I 100 percent
2 do not, it was for informational purposes only.

3 MR. SOPER: Okay.

4 MS. SCOTT: My counterpart, however, had operational rights
5 to that and could speak up and say those things, but they also
6 have a district managers call at the same time, so she rarely was
7 on it.

8 MR. SOPER: I got you.

9 MR. LEWIS: Oh.

10 MR. SOPER: Okay. All right. And your view, just since
11 you've been here, you said you wanted to kind of give your
12 perspective of --

13 MR. WOODGETT: Right. So mine was kind of on the -- kind of
14 not really with the airport, but just significant events that have
15 happened since I've been FacRep. We've been ATC zero probably
16 four or five times, ATC alert four or five times, whether it's
17 dealing with the heating and air conditioning, loss of power. We
18 don't have an up-to-date contingency plan on evacuating the tower
19 and stuff like that, so it's -- it's been a real hassle, you know.

20 I feel bad for Brandy, this -- on her second day on the job
21 this happened, but on my second day of FacRep, we went ATC zero,
22 you know, so -- and it's just been -- this facility has been
23 plagued with alert and zeros since I've been in this seat.

24 MR. SOPER: Is that the same entity, so is airport
25 responsible for this building, I mean, is it the same entity that

1 owns, essentially, the airport and facilities and this building is
2 included for things like that or is that a separate --

3 MR. WOODGETT: My understanding is airways facilities is
4 responsible for this facility and it's very limited on what the
5 airport authority has over --

6 MR. SOPER: Okay.

7 MR. WOODGETT: I don't think they have anything --

8 MR. SOPER: Okay.

9 MR. WOODGETT: -- to do with over here, right?

10 MS. SCOTT: No, not so much have to do with over here,
11 however, in the -- since like when we're trying to find our
12 alternate tower used like 20 years ago, it's no longer inhabitable
13 and so there was supposed to be -- there was conversations and it
14 was in a contract at one time, different places on the airport
15 which ques them in and now -- because now we need a place for our
16 temporary tower.

17 It was agreed upon prior to me being FacRep, I was briefed
18 and handed it down, that at the crash station we were supposed --
19 there was an addition being built and we were to set up in there
20 and it was going to be equipped for us and then it came down with
21 the airport, that never was talked about, that was never agreed
22 upon and it is not in the final bid.

23 MR. SOPER: Okay.

24 MS. SCOTT: So again, that's where we have left off.

25 MR. SOPER: I understand. Okay. All right, I'm going to go

1 ahead and pass it along again to Sarah, do you have additional
2 stuff right now?

3 BY MS. LEWIS:

4 Q. Just a statement that it appears -- well, a question, then.
5 Multiple closures -- and we kind of discussed this a tiny bit
6 before, so -- but the multiple closures of -- it almost feels like
7 they're all individual nonrelated construction all put in at the
8 same time, increases your complexity and workload significantly.
9 I think that's just -- I just want to put that kind of statement,
10 I think. Question being -- as a path forward, what do you think
11 what tools would be helpful to you in helping open a dialogue with
12 entities needed to -- to prevent this from happening?

13 A. We didn't really touch base on the fact that we haven't had
14 an active support specialist for a long -- for a couple years now.
15 I think, I strongly believe that if we did have a support
16 specialist, the support specialist would be able to bring a lot of
17 this together and with the scheduling, with the meetings, the
18 conference calls and things like that, you know, but we haven't
19 had one, the district hasn't provided one and we definitely are
20 hurt because of that.

21 As Jasmine was saying, you know, the weekly telecons and
22 things like that, like it's a must, you know, like we have to be a
23 part of that and as -- as I've been in this seat, I've only been
24 -- been a part of a handful of these scheduling events, you know,
25 and that's far too few, you know.

1 Like Jasmine said, it should be on a weekly basis, that we're
2 on the phone, on the conference with airport ops, with tech ops,
3 you know, that's been a struggle, you know, with the OSH-cons
4 (ph.), you know. Like, we should have all the information put out
5 on the table for us, you know. The support specialist position,
6 because we don't have someone in that position, we don't --
7 information's not disseminated in a timely manner or if at all,
8 you know. Through the Team system or before it was Team, through
9 CEDAR. Like, when we did have active support specialists, we got
10 information and it was disseminated and briefed, you know, but
11 it's been -- it's crippled us severely by not having a support
12 specialist in the facility.

13 MS. LEWIS: Okay, great. Thank you very much.

14 Do you have a question about that?

15 MR. SOPER: No, no.

16 BY MS. LEWIS:

17 Q. Going back, I just had a quick question about after the
18 event, how quickly were the controllers in the cab relieved? I
19 know that you said that you stayed on for two, for almost two
20 hours, how about the other guys or ladies?

21 A. So once the situation kind of subsided a little bit, probably
22 minutes after, the supervisor called a controller that he and I
23 were closing, so -- and he was on some leave, as well, he was
24 coming back from some leave, a couple weeks of leave, and it was
25 both of our shifts back at the same time, 2:30.

1 I went up at 3:00, he stayed downstairs to do team briefings
2 and to like, you know, do a facility pre-brief. And so after the
3 situation kind of subsided, which was, like I said, minutes later,
4 the supervisor called him up, you know, and he knew how he was
5 called up, it was kind of like come up here, come up now or
6 they're like come up now, come up now, you know, so he knew it was
7 like something going on. So when he came up, we did get the local
8 controller off of position and we got him downstairs and we
9 terminated -- of course, the -- they terminated the training
10 session so that the trainee could go downstairs with the
11 controller and be with him, you know, so --

12 Q. With which controller?

13 A. With the local controller.

14 Q. Okay, um-hum.

15 A. So thereafter, we were kind of up there still working, you
16 know, phone calls coming in, you know, if the supervisor was on
17 the phone and the phone would ring I would get it or if I'm on the
18 phone or we're both on the phone, ground control will pick up on
19 the -- you know, the hot lines and stuff and we were all working,
20 you know.

21 And then when there was a lull, we discussed, you know -- and
22 it was approaching two hours, you know, and I said hey, you know,
23 the airport stopped, local's just talking to helicopters right
24 now, in and out, you know, there's nothing that we -- we have to
25 -- we have to shut this whole thing down, you know, and "Supe, you

1 need to" like -- we got this, "Supe, go downstairs and take care
2 of what you need to take care of, we'll combine local and ground
3 together and then I'll be the standalone CIC/clearance delivery
4 person," you know, so -- and that's just how we did it and then we
5 started kind of a normal rotation after that, you know, until the
6 airport opened up.

7 Q. Um-hum. How many other controllers were available to help
8 you out? Were there ones that were already on break or anything?

9 A. Right, with the removal of the local controller, you know --

10 Q. Um-hum, right.

11 A. -- that we knew he wasn't coming back up, it was just three
12 of us, three controllers and a supe.

13 Q. Okay. Was there any discussion about possibly calling in
14 somebody?

15 A. I think that that was exhausted -- I don't think there was
16 anybody available to call in and that's how it's been here for the
17 majority of the year, if not the past couple years, like overtime,
18 at least there's one person, maybe, if any, you know, maybe one or
19 two people and of course, you know, if they don't answer the phone
20 then there's nothing we can do, you know, so --

21 Q. Right. This is kind of an unrelated question to the event,
22 but you have a piece of equipment called an ITWS, do you use that
23 often here when weather comes through?

24 A. Absolutely.

25 Q. How critical is that piece of equipment to your operation

1 here?

2 A. For me, I think it's very critical and useful. Once again, I
3 don't know if you all were up there when I took the position, but
4 there was a small weather cell that was building about six miles
5 south of the field and I just -- in two or three minutes time I
6 saw it like ticking up northbound and I was like hey, so I went
7 over to ITWS and I saw, you know, the direction and speed that
8 that weather cell was moving, you know, to give me more accurate
9 information on how it was moving. I saw that the -- I read the
10 weather, the ceilings, you know, were low, we weren't getting the
11 aircraft in sight at the final approach fix, so I requested a
12 PIREP, it was at 1600, which is below the altitude of the final
13 approach fix, so I called final and I told them I couldn't provide
14 visual separation and -- you know. But yeah, all that system,
15 like we use that for weather rolling in all the time, we see the
16 gust fronts, we see, you know, the wind shear and the microbursts
17 and all that stuff and so we look back there quite often
18 throughout the shift.

19 Q. What about the location, tell me about the location of it, is
20 it helpful where it's located in your tower?

21 A. It's right next to the supervisor's position, but days like
22 today, if you go up there right now, because it's raining pretty
23 hard out there, like, it's lit up, it's got all types of stuff,
24 you know, on there, directions and lines and stuff, and you can
25 kind of see it from local control, but you do have to take a

1 couple steps back, you know, to see the numbers and stuff like
2 that, but the CIC and the supe can see it, you know, because it's
3 readily available in their position, so --

4 Q. What about the amount of ITWSs in your tower, like the
5 display screens?

6 A. It's just one.

7 Q. So would it be helpful if you had -- if you had more or is
8 the one enough for your facility here?

9 A. I think one is enough is for now, I think that when we talk
10 about getting more equipment in the tower, if there's going to be
11 a discussion like okay, what do we really want up here and where
12 do we want to put it, what do we take away, you know, so I think
13 that piece of equipment is sufficient and it's a useful tool, you
14 know, I don't know if having two up there would be more efficient.

15 MS. SCOTT: The ITWS feeds the NIDS.

16 MS. LEWIS: Um-hum.

17 MS. SCOTT: And the NIDS is at every position. So to have
18 another piece of that bulky equipment and the same information
19 already readily available at each position, just like for the
20 picture, it does feed to the NIDS.

21 MS. LEWIS: Um-hum, okay. That's great information, I
22 appreciate that. And then I had one more question about that,
23 give me a moment.

24 (Pause.)

25 BY MS. LEWIS:

1 Q. Did you ever -- do you remember, in the history of your
2 career with the FAA, ever getting training on the ITWS and how to
3 use it?

4 A. Yeah, so when we -- I want to say when we got it here, there
5 was a formal training on it. It was just once, it wasn't like
6 annual or nothing like that or -- and I don't even know if it's in
7 part of the training plan, it's just you -- when you went through
8 training here did they train on ITWS?

9 MS. SCOTT: Yes, it's an eLMS or a CBI. It's a computer
10 base.

11 BY MS. LEWIS:

12 Q. Yeah. So you guys are aware that there is -- do you know if
13 that -- is that part of your training, do you know if it's part of
14 your training program here?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I was just trained on it because when we got it, we got
18 training on it, you know, but it's not a yearly thing or nothing
19 like that, you know, I think it's just trained to the people who
20 come here, who initially come here, they get trained on the ITWS.

21 MS. LEWIS: Thanks, I really appreciate that information, I
22 really do. Thanks.

23 BY MS. McTEE:

24 Q. I want to talk about staffing a little bit, and I appreciate
25 that you know that it's a nationwide thing, but I want you to be

1 selfish with these questions, if you don't mind. Think about
2 Hobby, right. So you said there's a staffing shortage here, what
3 is it, for your evening shift that you were on, so before the
4 local controller left you, was that four CPCs on duty and then a
5 supe and then a trainee, is that correct?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. Okay. Do you feel like that, during the week, that shift, is
8 that pretty normal or is that --

9 A. I mean, to us it feels like the norm but no, it's not normal.

10 Q. So ideally, there would be more.

11 A. Correct.

12 MS. SCOTT: Ma'am, I'm sorry, just for my notes. You said
13 four CPCs and one supe.

14 MS. McTEE: And a trainee, is that right?

15 MS. SCOTT: A trainee.

16 MS. McTEE: Is that correct? Okay.

17 BY MS. McTEE:

18 Q. Time on position-wise, what is the norm for that shift, like
19 how long are you on position for each session before you're given
20 a break, would you say?

21 A. So you're getting down to some -- some good questions, ma'am.

22 Q. I want you to be selfish, be selfish about Hobby.

23 A. I don't want to direct this towards management or
24 supervisors, but it's been typical, over the past couple years, to
25 stay on position for close to two hours before given a break.

1 Q. And that's very normal, you would say?

2 A. Yes, it's normal.

3 Q. Are you guys on a 2-2-1 schedule?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Do you feel -- how long are your typical breaks when you're
6 on position for, let's say, close to two hours, obviously you get
7 your 30-minute meal break at some point, I would hope, otherwise
8 that's a whole other issue, but how long were your other breaks,
9 typically?

10 A. Between 30 and 45 minutes.

11 Q. Okay. Is overtime, scheduled overtime normal?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. So six-day work weeks is fairly common here?

14 A. Um-hum, yes.

15 Q. Holdover overtime, is that pretty common?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. Do you feel like that schedule, for you, personally,
18 is fatiguing in any way?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. So thank you. Staffing is important to me. Kind of changing
21 this -- again, I want you to be selfish, the whole, the whole NAS
22 has issues, but Hobby-wise -- if you -- coming out of this, what
23 do you -- what would you like fixed, what would you hope would be
24 fixed or changed or what resources do you wish you could have?

25 Like, if you could just -- money notwithstanding, every other

1 facility notwithstanding, what would you like, what would be
2 "Hobby needs and wants this," what would you say would be -- give
3 me one or two, like --

4 A. The staffing, you know. I just recently saw the worksheet on
5 the staffing throughout the NAS and I just focus on Level 8's and
6 it was strange to see the variation of staffing between Level 8's,
7 tower only, I'm like -- some people have less, some people have
8 more, I'm just like -- I know there's more complexities to that,
9 you know. But once again, being selfish, I came here during a
10 time where there was 28 controllers here, you know, and every
11 line, you know, had four people, you know, and it was just a lot
12 of options, you know, there was never an issue with training or,
13 you know, current training or spot leave or -- people actually
14 wanted to be at work, you know, so -- so staffing would be
15 definitely an issue.

16 I don't know how to say this, but I think a lot of our issues
17 stem from not having the proper amount of supervisors, supervisors
18 are causing more CIC situations, which is taking away from, you
19 know, the bargaining unit, you know. So I talk closely with
20 Dallas Love, you know, and they seem like they're, you know,
21 staffed with supervisors, they don't have a lot of issues that we
22 have, you know.

23 So we need increased staffing, we need our supervisor slots
24 to be staffed, and we need the agency to recognize that -- and to
25 stop telling us that time on position is -- staffing is determined

1 on time on position and that's not true at all, but they tell us
2 that all the time, TOP, TOP, and because of that, they abuse us to
3 take us up to the two hours all the time --

4 (PA announcement.)

5 MR. WOODGETT: -- you know, and that's -- just listen to
6 that, "come up as soon as possible," because we're so short
7 staffed, you know, so -- but yeah, we need -- we need to have some
8 type of buffer, you know. We have a very stressful job, you know,
9 and the morale can easily be disrupted when you have things like
10 that, that happen, no spot leave available, overtime, six-day work
11 weeks, holdover on the back, on the front and then on position for
12 -- up to one hour 55 minutes every time you're on just so they
13 don't break the two-hour, you know, contractual agreement, that's
14 not good, and we pay attention to that, so that brings the
15 facility morale down, you know.

16 BY MS. McTEE:

17 Q. Thank you. And kind of redirecting it a little bit, I just
18 want to talk about training with your construction. When you have
19 a major taxiway closed, or multiple, in your guys' case, what is
20 the training like for that, is it a face-to-face, is it something
21 to do in CEDAR, is it -- like, what kind of training do you have
22 for -- do you just walk in and there's a note that says hey, Mike
23 is closed, what does that look like?

24 A. Once again, I'll base that on the support specialist's
25 office, you know, and while I don't know all the duties that

1 entails being a support specialist, it seemed like when we had one
2 the information was disseminated, as a whole, you know, and you
3 know, whether it was in CEDAR or face-to-face briefings, which we
4 go in the office all the time to get face-to-face briefings on
5 closures, a lot of times we get that information through the
6 NOTAMs or just coming in to work, you know. If you look at Team
7 right now, there might be one or two briefings in there, but you
8 know, I think that the support specialist's office used to get the
9 information out quickly, especially the closures, you know, so --

10 Q. So if you're on prime time and you come back from prime time
11 on your first shift, do you not find out "that taxiway is closed"
12 until you're doing your relief briefing in the tower?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Okay, thank you. And then an open-ended question and it's
15 okay if you don't have an answer. Is there anything we haven't
16 asked that you feel like we should have asked or information that
17 you feel like we should have that we haven't gotten from any of
18 our other questions that you would like us to know about, this
19 incident or the culture at Hobby or just Hobby in general, like
20 something you think we should know that we haven't covered?

21 A. I mean, kind of -- I don't know if you all are aware, but I
22 think this is the first setting in which it had been brought to
23 everybody's attention that I'm the one who brought attention to
24 this situation because that's not the information that's being
25 disseminated through the district, you know, so I'm glad I had the

1 opportunity to say hey, I'm the one that said hey, what's that guy
2 doing, you know.

3 Q. What is being disseminated?

4 A. That everybody was aware of the situation.

5 MS. McTEE: Okay. All right. I'm good.

6 MR. SOPER: That is precisely what I heard.

7 MS. McTEE: Yeah, we heard everybody found out at the exact
8 same time.

9 MR. WOODGETT: Yeah.

10 MR. SOPER: Which you find very amazing, right, really,
11 everybody just like --

12 MR. WOODGETT: Everybody turned --

13 (Laughter.)

14 MS. McTEE: I think I'm good. Mike, do you have anything?

15 MR. VANDINI: Yeah, one more thing.

16 BY MR. VANDINI:

17 Q. Going through your SOP, I notice you guys have additional
18 positions, and I understand the staffing issue here. When was the
19 last time you seen local assist open? And I'll give you some
20 background, I was here in 2016 and it wasn't open for the whole
21 year and I also see you guys got the HC position, helo, helo
22 position, when was the last time you seen that open?

23 A. So I can -- for helo, what brings -- what appears in my mind
24 is when Andre, Andre Harris, he was our ATM here --

25 Q. That's correct.

1 A. -- prior and he was a stickler for opening up helo at certain
2 times and how many years ago was that, like six years ago, five
3 years ago?

4 MS. SCOTT: He was just before Myrna.

5 MR. WOODGETT: Oh. So his time here, he was the one who was
6 kind of pushing for helo to be open when staffing permitted. If
7 we had staffing, he was like open helo. We were like, open helo?
8 Okay, and we'd just go sit there and talk to one helicopter, you
9 know. As far as local assist, it had to be -- I got here in 2011,
10 the last time I've seen it happen was probably -- so I went to the
11 center in 2015, maybe 2014, but of course, back then traffic
12 volume was a lot here at Hobby, I would say it was double, you
13 know, so there were times where you needed someone next to the
14 local controller to point things out and to assist, you know,
15 so --

16 BY MR. VANDINI:

17 Q. So where you're at now, where you're at now, today, do you
18 feel it's the local controller's task, saturated with doing the
19 helos, doing crossing runway operations?

20 A. So I can speak for myself and once again, I can speak on
21 working here at a time when the volume was double and the
22 complexity was more and we had 1-7, also, that contributed to the
23 complexity. For me, now, a seasoned controller, somebody who's
24 been here, it's not that complex, but newer controllers, they can
25 find themselves in a situation where they look at it as a complex

1 situation and what looks like it is that they just slow down, they
2 might ignore some departure holes, you know, to work out some of
3 aircraft, some helicopters at the medical center or some pipelines
4 from the -- they might slow down the traffic at the airport to put
5 out little small fires where somebody who's a more seasoned
6 controller is still launching and landing, launching and landing
7 and doing it all at the same time, you know.

8 Q. So these newer controllers, the unseasoned controllers, or
9 however you want to put it? Are they getting direction from the
10 CIC or the supe on when they get task sectoring, when they're
11 having multiple helos, a crossing runway operation, and an
12 emergency being in place at the same time coming in?

13 A. You said are they getting --

14 Q. Yeah, are they getting help, are they getting assistance from
15 the supe, you know?

16 A. See, that's just hard to say because we work with so few
17 supervisors, you know, like me, in particular, I work with one
18 supervisor the majority of the time and to be honest, like, most
19 of the controllers have more experience than that person, you
20 know, so -- you know, there's times up there where we're running
21 the show and the supe is just there to kind of observe.

22 MS. SCOTT: I'd like to answer your question because I am one
23 of the newer controllers that he's considering and I am now at
24 Bush and I find Houston Hobby 100 times, hands down, I'll argue
25 all-day more complex than Bush Intercontinental and the busiest

1 hour that Bush has, 100 percent.

2 There's a lot of talking, it is standardized, it is staffed,
3 it is structured, it is procedure based, this is 100 percent we
4 need a local assist, we need a helo controller, it is a shit show,
5 excuse my language, at Houston Hobby in our busy hour; it is dumb
6 and it is not safe. And 1-7/3-5, I'm glad it was demolished
7 because that was -- that was -- I don't understand how more people
8 didn't die on that runway.

9 MS. McTEE: But with four controllers and a supe --

10 MS. SCOTT: Forget about it.

11 MS. McTEE: -- how do you open those positions?

12 MS. SCOTT: You don't.

13 MR. WOODGETT: You don't.

14 MS. SCOTT: You get on and wait for your break in two hours.

15 MR. WOODGETT: Um-hum.

16 MR. SOPER: Can you tell us how you really feel about that?

17 (Laughter.)

18 MR. SOPER: I'm just teasing. No, that's very useful
19 information. I can actually see the passion behind it when you
20 were speaking, so --

21 MS. SCOTT: It's crazy.

22 MR. SOPER: And that's what -- those are the things that we
23 need to know, too, those are things that are important to
24 understand and -- and I agree. You know what, I mean, I've talked
25 to people about that stuff all day, I've seen a lot of facilities

1 now, you know, I like to hear Atlanta talk about how they're the
2 busiest airport there is, the easiest freaking tower controller
3 ever, clear for takeoff, clear for takeoff, cross, clear for
4 takeoff, clear for takeoff, cross, we're done, man. Just do that
5 for an hour and it's crazy.

6 (Crosstalk)

7 MR. VANDINI: You guys, what you do here is harder than
8 O'Hare.

9 MR. SOPER: Yeah, it's hard, it's hard. I mean, there's a
10 lot to it.

11 MR. VANDINI: And you -- working over at the other Houston
12 now, you see it, because like he says, you're cleared to land,
13 turn left, cleared to land, turn left, local controller, super
14 easy; this is complex.

15 MR. SOPER: You do your own crossings, I mean, it's like --

16 MR. VANDINI: This is complex.

17 MR. SOPER: So -- all right. Do you guys have some "oh, by
18 the ways" here? Do you guys got any additional stuff right now?
19 Anything?

20 MS. McTEE: I don't, I'm done.

21 MR. SOPER: Do you?

22 MS. LEWIS: No, I just really appreciate you being open --

23 MR. SOPER: You're good, Mike?

24 MR. LEWIS: -- and the candor.

25 MS. McTEE: Yeah, very open and good stuff.

1 BY MR. SOPER:

2 Q. One last question, so just a quick -- successes, failures,
3 and lessons learned, okay. If you can identify with any right
4 now, what, in this situation, was a success, if you can give me an
5 example, throughout this evolution, what do you see as there was a
6 failure, and it can be any failure, I'm not -- you know. And then
7 is there any lessons learned, for you, are you going to walk away
8 from this with a different perspective on any part of it in your
9 operation?

10 A. One hundred percent success for this, one hundred percent is
11 the local controller, because when I brought that to his
12 attention, he did not hesitate to key up and talk. Like I said, I
13 said something very basic like hey, what is he doing, he turned
14 and looked and saw it and addressed it immediately, you know. Any
15 other controller would be like huh, what you talking about, you
16 know, but --

17 MS. McTEE: Who, what?

18 MR. WOODGETT: Yeah. And it's just like when I said what's
19 he doing, he turned and saw it and acted immediately, that's the
20 success. The failure is the airport, the airport situation right
21 now, you know, the -- the complexity of the taxi routes and all
22 the attention that we have to pay to, you know, taxiing aircraft,
23 you know, outside of what the norm is, you know.

24 It's a maze, it's -- when they talk about video games, you
25 know, this is a video game right now at Hobby because you --

1 everybody does everything differently, like you -- you're playing
2 the video game by yourself and how you would play it because
3 there's no standardization to what's going on right now on the
4 ground at Hobby. And there was one other point.

5 BY MR. SOPER:

6 Q. Lessons learned for you, do you take anything away from this
7 that, you know, either makes you think different or do something
8 different or just make a consideration?

9 A. Jasmine, she can probably attest to this, you know, I'm
10 pretty vocal in the tower cab, you know, I consider myself a
11 leader, a senior controller here, you know, like you were at
12 Oklahoma City and, you know, I speak up a lot but there are times
13 where I don't want to overstep my boundaries as far as, you know,
14 if there's a supe up there or even another CIC up there, you know,
15 let them take care of the operation, you know, but what I would
16 take away is sometimes you definitely have to be -- say something
17 and speak up and be more assertive like, you know, this needs to
18 happen now, like we need to call this person, like just be more
19 directive from any position up there, you know, other than CIC and
20 supervisor, so --

21 Q. And that's good CRM, you know, CRM's a real thing and that
22 definitely goes into that, that length. Well, that's excellent.
23 Do you have any questions for us?

24 A. None at this time.

25 MR. SOPER: Okay. I'm going to go ahead and stop the

1 recording now, I show the time at 14:31, is that right? Fourteen
2 thirty-one Central?

3 MS. LEWIS: Yes.

4 (Whereupon, at 2:31 p.m., the interview concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA
 CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P.
 HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS
 ON OCTOBER 24, 2023
 Interview of Corey Woodgett

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA0017

PLACE: Houston, Texas

DATE: October 26, 2023

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



Karen D. Martini
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA *

CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P. * Accident No.: DCA24FA0017

HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS *

ON OCTOBER 24, 2023 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: MICHAEL BROZGAL, Ground Controller
Federal Aviation Administration

Houston, Texas

Saturday,
October 28, 2023

FREE STATE REPORTING, INC.
Court Reporting Transcription
D.C. Area 301-261-1902
Balt. & Annap. 410-974-0947

APPEARANCES:

BRIAN SOPER, Senior Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SARAH LEWIS, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL VANDINI, Air Traffic Controller
Federal Aviation Administration

KRISTEN McTEE, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA)

JASMINE SCOTT
(On behalf of Mr. Brozgal)

I N D E X

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:38 p.m. CDT)

MR. SOPER: All right, my name is Brian Soper, Lead Air Traffic Investigator with the NTSB out of our headquarters in D.C. We're here to investigate the accident that occurred on October 24th here at Houston Hobby A-T -- or Houston Hobby Airport. The aircraft involved were November 5-1-0 Hotel Mike and November 2-6-9 Alpha Alpha, and they were involved in a ground collision approximately mid-field here.

I have with me today Mr. Mike Vandini out of our Chicago district, he's our FMA -- or our FAA S-M-E on the event here today with my group. And we have Kristen McTee representing NATCA out of Kansas City Tower. And we have Sarah Lewis, my colleague from back at headquarters, also an air traffic investigator and the co-chair on this group.

And could you state your name for the record, please?

MS. SCOTT: Jasmine Scott.

MR. SOPER: And that is the rep that you chose to represent you today?

MR. BROZGAL: It is.

MR. SOPER: All right, great. And could you state your name for the record?

MR. BROZGAL: Michael Brozgal.

MR. SOPER: And could you spell your last name for me?

MR. BROZGAL: B-r-o-z-g-a-l.

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1 MR. SOPER: Awesome. As I mentioned earlier, the NTSB is a
2 non-regulatory agency, we don't make rules, we don't enforce
3 rules, we're interested in safety and safety only, we don't care
4 about blame, that's not what we're here to do. So as we ask
5 questions, we just would like you to answer accurately, to the
6 best of your ability, if you don't know something it's okay to say
7 you don't know, if you don't recall it's okay to say you don't
8 recall.

9 The process of our investigations are long, it will be about
10 a year to maybe a little bit more before the final report comes
11 out, we do encourage you to go back and take a look at that. Do
12 you have any questions of us before we begin here today?

13 MR. BROZGAL: I do not.

14 MR. SOPER: Awesome, all right.

15 INTERVIEW OF MICHAEL BROZGAL

16 BY MR. SOPER:

17 Q. So I'm going to start you out with some background questions
18 and -- I apologize, it closed up on me when we were talking.
19 Okay. So I got your -- what did you say, your first name again,
20 Michael?

21 A. Michael.

22 Q. And how old were you on the day of the event?

23 A. Forty-five.

24 Q. And what are your operating initials here?

25 A. Echo Juliet.

1 Q. And you are a CPC, correct?

2 A. I am.

3 Q. All right. And how long have you been a CPC here at Houston?

4 A. Eighteen years I have.

5 Q. Okay. Been here for a minute.

6 A. Oh, sorry, hold on. Back that up, not eighteen years. When
7 did I get here? It's been a long time, about eighteen years,
8 though, that's how old my daughter is. Thirteen years here am I.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. All right. And do you have any prior pre-FAA air traffic
12 work experience, military, DoD, contract tower?

13 A. Military, contract.

14 Q. Okay. What military, when were you in the military?

15 A. I was in the Navy from '97 to 2003.

16 Q. Rock on brother, hold on a minute. Navy from when, '97 to
17 what?

18 A. Two thousand three.

19 Q. Thank you for your service. I was in with you, bro, I was in
20 -- I was Navy for 24 years.

21 A. Nice.

22 Q. And we had totally overlapping service, where were you at?

23 A. Eisenhower for three years and then Navy Corpus for three
24 years.

25 Q. All right. And then you said you did contract tower after

1 that?

2 A. I did. I did a year down in Brownsville, Texas, South Padre
3 Island International.

4 Q. Ick.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Sorry, if you liked it and it was like ugh, I've been down
7 there, I was like wow.

8 A. Yeah, that's the reason why it was only a year.

9 (Laughter.)

10 BY MR. SOPER:

11 Q. Okay. And who was that with, was that RVA, is it Midwest?

12 A. RVA.

13 Q. That's RVA, right. Okay. Anything else prior to coming in?

14 A. Two years at Miami Center as a remote pilot operator --

15 Q. Oh.

16 A. -- for Washington Consulting Group.

17 Q. Okay. Anything else?

18 A. No.

19 Q. All right. So do you hold any collateral duties here or have
20 you been on any recent details that have taken you outside the
21 facility that may have affected like currency, proficiency, that
22 type of thing?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. And so what I'd like from you now is just if you could
25 give me your -- kind of your aviation bio in a real condensed

1 form, you know, just kind of that 10,000-foot view, like I was
2 always interested in aviation, I graduated high school and decided
3 to join the Navy, you know, be an air traffic controller, whatever
4 it was, got my pilot's license, and just kind of step us through
5 until you're here today.

6 A. Okay. Yes, I graduated high school, I joined the Navy six
7 days after graduation, went to boot camp, undesignated. While I
8 was there, I got re-classed into air traffic control.

9 Q. Oh, good.

10 A. Yeah, so I didn't have to go to the fleet, I just went
11 straight into air traffic. Went to a school in Pensacola, left
12 there, went to Eisenhower Norfolk for three years, left there,
13 went to Navy Corpus for three years, got out, then I went to work
14 down at Brownsville for a year.

15 I left there, went back home to Tennessee for a year, then
16 went down to Miami Center, worked for WCG for two years and then I
17 left there and went back home to Tennessee again for a year while
18 I waited to get to the agency, got picked up in the agency in 2006
19 and been here ever since. Well, I went to Miami -- Houston Center
20 first for two years, washed-out, went to -- where's that?
21 Beaumont?

22 Q. Ehh.

23 A. Went over to Beaumont, yeah.

24 Q. Are they punishing you, bro?

25 (Crosstalk)

1 MR. BROZGAL: Went over to Beaumont, yeah, wiped that from my
2 memory. Went over there for two and a half years and then I came
3 over here.

4 BY MR. SOPER:

5 Q. All right. What's Beaumont, BPT?

6 A. It is.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 MS. LEWIS: That's a tower only?

9 MR. BROZGAL: It is.

10 BY MR. SOPER:

11 Q. We thought we were staying in the hood. All right, have you
12 ever been fired, terminated, suspended or asked to resign from an
13 air traffic position --

14 A. I was not.

15 Q. -- from the FAA? Okay, good. And how would you describe
16 your health in the terms of excellent, good, fair, poor?

17 A. Good.

18 Q. And did you have a medical clearance on the day of the event?

19 A. I did.

20 Q. And do you have any waivers, restrictions or limitations to
21 your medical clearance?

22 A. I do.

23 Q. And are they documented in your medical record?

24 A. They are.

25 Q. Were you in compliance with any limitations in accordance

1 with your medical record?

2 A. I am.

3 Q. Okay, good. And do you -- were you taking any prescription
4 or non-prescription medications on the day of the event?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Maintenance or -- prescription or nonprescription?

7 A. Prescription.

8 Q. Okay. And those are documented in your medical record?

9 A. They are.

10 Q. Taking as prescribed?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Great. And was drug or alcohol screening performed with you
13 as a result of this event?

14 A. It was not.

15 Q. Okay. And have there been any major changes in your health
16 over the past year, good, bad, or indifferent, you know, like lost
17 50 pounds, gained 50 pounds --

18 A. Lost 30 pounds.

19 Q. How much?

20 A. Thirty.

21 Q. That's what I'm talking about. I got to get back to that.
22 Excellent, congrats.

23 A. Thanks.

24 Q. That's good. Feeling better?

25 A. Oh, of course.

1 Q. Um-hum. I can't wait. All right. And any changes in your
2 personal life in the last year, good, bad, or indifferent, got
3 married, got divorced, had a child, anything like that?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Any changes in your financial situation in the last year,
6 good, bad, or indifferent?

7 A. None.

8 Q. Won the lotto, filed bankruptcy.

9 A. I wish, yeah.

10 Q. You could retire to Beaumont.

11 (Laughter.)

12 BY MR. SOPER:

13 Q. So this one's a little bit different and this is a little
14 harder because I know it's been a few day since the event, but I
15 just kind of want to get a feel, I'm not going to go in-depth here
16 because you really weren't working the airplanes or anything,
17 obviously, but I would like you to recall the 72 hours leading up
18 to the time of the event, during those three days, so from like
19 Saturday to Tuesday, in that time frame, was there anything that
20 occurred in your life that you can recall that was kind of a
21 wrench in the spokes of life, and what I mean by that is yeah, my
22 -- you know, I had a child that was sick and keeping me up two
23 nights in a row or somebody in my family got in a car accident and
24 I was helping them or we had -- you know, our basement flooded,
25 whatever, I mean, anything that was -- that was a wrench in the

1 spokes of life or was it pretty much normal daily routine like you
2 have any other week of your rotation with that?

3 A. It was normal daily routine, yeah.

4 Q. Okay. And to include normal sleep and eating and that type
5 of thing?

6 (No audible response.)

7 BY MR. SOPER:

8 Q. Okay, good. Did you file an ATSAP as a result to this event?

9 A. I did.

10 Q. Good. And have you received anything back on that yet,
11 confirmation that they got it?

12 A. I got the number where I sent it in, but I haven't received
13 anything back yet.

14 Q. Good, okay. And have you been interviewed about this event
15 prior to now, not counting your pre-brief with the FAA?

16 (No audible response.)

17 BY MR. SOPER:

18 Q. Okay. Have you had an opportunity to review a replay of this
19 event?

20 A. I have.

21 Q. Okay. When was that?

22 A. Thirty minutes ago.

23 Q. Oh, okay, good. So you got it now. All right. And that was
24 audio and video?

25 A. Yeah, it was.

1 Q. Excellent. And was a relief briefing conducted when you took
2 the position that day of the event?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Do you remember when you took ground? Okay. And was that
5 recorded?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And do you utilize a checklist here, did you utilize one that
8 day?

9 A. Yes, we do.

10 Q. And did you use the one that's in NIDS or was it one that you
11 guys, like --

12 A. It is.

13 Q. Okay. So on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the heaviest, how
14 would you rate the traffic volume on the day of the event?

15 A. I'd give it a 4.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Pretty busy that day.

18 Q. Do you feel like that was average or above average, like
19 heavier than normal, lighter than normal or pretty much average
20 for that day of the week, time of the day?

21 A. I mean, it's a pretty normal busy push.

22 Q. Okay. And similar question, on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being
23 the most complex, how would you rate the traffic complexity on
24 that day?

25 A. I would give it probably a 4, as well.

1 Q. Okay. And do you feel like that was, again, above -- more
2 complex, less complex, about the -- normal?

3 A. It's more complex recently due to circumstances.

4 Q. Okay. Circumstances such as?

5 A. Such as the use of runways for taxiways and not having all
6 the tools we need.

7 Q. Yeah, we're going to talk about that.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay. And were there -- do you recall, at the time that the
10 event was going down or leading up to the time, was there any
11 distractions that you can recall in the operation? It can be
12 anything, equipment problems, lost COMM, emergencies.

13 A. When that incident happened, we had another emergency
14 aircraft inbound --

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. -- Southwest 1073 was coming in with a blown left landing
17 tire, landing gear, I guess --

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. -- and we were working on that issue, getting emergency
20 vehicles out and dealing with that.

21 Q. And do you recall the general weather conditions around the
22 time of the event, like VFR, IFR --

23 A. Just precip.

24 Q. -- precip in the area?

25 A. Precip.

1 Q. And weather advisories?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Did you receive the pre-duty weather briefing on that day?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And did anything stand out to you as problematic or
6 concerning that you can recall?

7 A. Just weather up to the northwest.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Nothing that really affects us.

10 Q. This is more of an opinion question, but in your view, what
11 is the value of the pre-duty weather briefing in its current state
12 the way you guys receive it to you here at Houston? What I mean
13 by that -- and you can just me give me classification as highly
14 valuable, valuable, not very valuable.

15 A. I would say here, in the tower -- how to answer the question
16 -- medium value.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. If there was something in there that you could have in there
20 like you know, this would be helpful to us here at Houston tower,
21 if I can -- if you ask me, I could have -- I could have something
22 in there or I could have them address something in the pre-duty
23 weather briefing that would be valuable to us preparing for the
24 watch here, is there anything like that, that stands out to you,
25 that would be useful to you?

1 A. No, I mean, it's in there, the information that we need is in
2 there because it pretty much covers everything, I mean, obviously
3 when it's more important is when we have real weather in the area,
4 you know.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. So I guess it's all in there.

7 Q. Okay. And did you have a cellular phone or PED on you at the
8 time of the event?

9 A. I did not have one with me, no.

10 Q. Okay. And had you requested a relief or assistance leading
11 up to the time of the event and what I mean by that, in -- were
12 you in your regular rotation or were you -- had you, like, been
13 like hey, man, I'm on a relief or I need a relief or --

14 A. Oh, no. We were normal rotation.

15 Q. Normal rotation, okay. And this is a good time, I guess, to
16 shift and understand, if you could just tell us the story, so I
17 want you to go back to -- from the time -- let's say the time you
18 learned about the emergency that was coming in, Southwest 1073.

19 Pick me up from there and tell us the story, just kind of
20 walk us through everything you can remember about things playing
21 out all the way through anything you may have been aware of or not
22 aware of, the two incident airplanes, if you taxied them -- well,
23 the one not until afterwards, obviously, because it was an
24 arrival, but the other one, I know you taxied it for departure,
25 I'm assuming, so anything you can remember all the way through to

1 the point that you guys were just now doing coordination, post --
2 you know, post-accident coordination.

3 A. Yeah, so -- so we became aware of a Southwest 1073 inbound
4 with his emergency. We were told what the nature of the emergency
5 was, we were like okay, that's concerning having a 737 landing
6 with a -- you know, with a blown out tire. So the supe, he
7 initiated the crash phone when the Southwest was about 30 miles
8 out, I think it was maybe 30, 40 miles away, he rang the crash
9 phone, of course, we picked up the -- that frequency, 120.2, we
10 keyed that up because that's what the emergency vehicles come out
11 on, they come out, we stage them at Taxiway Kilo and 1-3 Right,
12 and then the A-R-2-7 went down to the approach at 3-1 Left and
13 November, November holding bay. They were standing by for the
14 Southwest 1073.

15 As we were taking those vehicles out, I was tagging the
16 vehicles on the ASDE-X because their vehicle tags don't come up
17 anymore, so I was having to manually tag the vehicles, that way my
18 trainee would be able to look down at the ground where they are
19 and see who the vehicles were so we could keep up with it easier.
20 As I was down typing the call signs in, that's where I heard our
21 clearance delivery controller say, "Hey, is that guy moving?"
22 When he said that, the local controller noticed that Alpha Alpha
23 had started rolling and reached out to him and told him, of
24 course, to stop or cancel takeoff -- I forget exactly how he
25 worded it, but basically he gave instructions to stop. Then he

1 told them to stop again, of course. We're sitting there kind of
2 watching what's happening without the ability to do anything from
3 the ground control side and of course, two aircraft impacted each
4 other. The Citation turned off on Taxiway Lima, he -- he never
5 did switch over to ground control or 20.2. He taxied straight in
6 on his own with Local into what looked like the Wilson overflow
7 ramp at the corner of Juliet and Lima, and then they brought the
8 Hawker back around to land at 1-3 Right.

9 While they were bringing the Hawker back around to 1-3 Right,
10 I had the crash crew vehicles that were standing by for the 737, I
11 had them go to the Wilson ramp to provide service or assistance to
12 the Citation, whatever he needed. After they went over there, I
13 called again to have one of them come back to Kilo because we saw
14 that the Hawker was coming back, so I had one of the vehicles come
15 back over to 1-3 Right at Kilo to be ready to assist the Hawker in
16 any way that he needed.

17 The Hawker landed, went down to Taxiway Quebec, turned off,
18 stopped there for a fire safe inspection. After it was deemed
19 that he could move, he started taxiing in, but then ops called
20 again to have him just hold his position, they didn't want him
21 moving anymore until the investigators showed up or whatever, so
22 he was stopped there, and that was pretty much it for us.

23 Q. Okay. All right, good deal. So I want to go back to -- do
24 you remember taxiing the guy out, the Hawker?

25 A. I didn't -- I did not give him the taxi instructions as my

1 trainee still working at that time, but he came out the Signature
2 ramp and went to Runway 2-2 via Kilo.

3 Q. On that taxi route, is the current construction stuff that
4 you got going on in the field, did it impact that taxi route or
5 was that normal?

6 A. That's not -- yeah, that's normal.

7 Q. So that one was normal, all right. So let's talk a little
8 bit about -- do you remember anything when you were taxiing him,
9 did you guys note or do you recall anything or even your trainee
10 saying anything, did the guy sound weird, did he sound like he was
11 preoccupied or having any issues or did he report anything --

12 A. I did not notice anything --

13 Q. -- that wasn't normal?

14 A. No, I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary with him.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. They were taxiing pretty standard.

17 Q. And so the actual report, you said the CD controller brought
18 it to the attention of hey, is that guy moving --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- and that was the first person to notice and local
21 controller immediately then took action to try to stop the guy.
22 Was that before or after the ASDE alerted?

23 A. Before.

24 Q. Okay. So I have a question, were you able to see the ASDE
25 replay or did you look at the ASDE when the event was going on, by

1 chance, when -- like when the alert went off or anything?

2 A. When -- no, I don't recall.

3 Q. I was just curious and from your view, because you work here
4 all the time, if you felt like that -- that alert was late, like
5 later than you would've expected for --

6 A. So --

7 Q. -- that. I mean, I can show you --

8 A. -- the fact that he had time to already -- like hey, you need
9 to stop, you need to do that --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. -- and the alarm hadn't went off yet --

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. -- that makes me feel like it was probably a little delayed,
14 but --

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. -- I can't say for sure.

17 Q. Right. No, I don't want you to speak to the technical --

18 A. Right.

19 Q. -- stuff of it, I'm just --

20 A. It did seem like it took --

21 Q. -- was curious that as a controller --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- you thought he's --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- taxiing like he got -- I mean, I just -- I didn't know

1 here and I understand, you know, there's algorithms that take into
2 effect speed and everything on that one, but when I watch I just
3 looked at it and it seemed like it was a little lagging, but --

4 A. I would agree.

5 Q. All right, so very good. I'm going to ask just a little bit
6 about this and then I'm going to pass it along because I know they
7 got some more on you in this area, but I'm just asking an overall
8 question first and then I'm going to let Kristen dig in on you on
9 this one, but the construction, like I said, I'm going to keep it
10 overall, how big of an impact is that having on the ability to
11 move traffic safely and efficiently here for you, as ground
12 control?

13 A. A huge amount.

14 Q. Or at the tower even.

15 A. Yeah, it's a big impediment.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And -- I'm sorry, I'm going to ask one more question on that.
19 Have you noted a difference in the amount or whatever, because
20 you've been here a long time, has it gotten worse, recent, in the
21 last six months, year, whatever, or has this always been kind of a
22 problem for a long time or is it just completely hit and miss,
23 it's here and there?

24 A. It is -- I would say it's hit and miss, there's been times
25 where it's better than others getting issues resolved, it seems

1 like that recently, it seems -- it's like -- it's been terrible,
2 we've had -- we have multiple issues across the airfield that just
3 aren't being worked on that we've seen.

4 Q. Do you have any communication with the airfield manager
5 yourself in any capacity?

6 A. No, we do not.

7 MR. SOPER: Okay. All right, I'm going to pass it along to
8 Sarah.

9 BY MS. LEWIS:

10 Q. Okay. And that's exactly what I want to ask you about, the
11 construction and the --

12 (Noise interference.)

13 Q. -- relationship with Ops.

14 When we ask these questions, you can, you know, answer them
15 like together or separate, whatever. Do you know if like -- so
16 when you're working ground, you can recognize voices, do you know,
17 specifically, was -- in your opinion only, obviously, but did you
18 recognize the Ops 1-1?

19 A. Yeah, it was Sara Amehdar.

20 Q. Okay. Is she someone who's been here a while?

21 A. Probably about two years now, maybe. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay, okay. So I want to kind of -- Kristen's probably going
23 to ask you a whole bunch of stuff on the construction part. I
24 want to think -- I think I want to hone in on this relationship
25 with ops, okay. When you were trying to coordinate all of the

1 search and rescue portion of it, I understand that you have your
2 ground frequency and I understand that you have your DEF
3 frequency.

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. How often does that separation help you and how often does it
6 kind of hinder you, can you explain to me how that works for me?

7 A. So as far as having two frequencies, right, because the DEF
8 frequency, when we have it, it would come out over a loudspeaker.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So when you have a lot going on still on ground control and
11 then you have the other people using the DEF frequency coming out
12 on speaker, it can be detrimental a little, you know, because it's
13 hard to hear everything that's going on because you still have to
14 stay engaged with what's happening on 120.2, but you also have to
15 continue working your live traffic on 121.9, so that can be a
16 hindrance.

17 Q. Okay. In this situation here, as I was listening to the
18 audio, I could hear you trying to switch people back and forth so
19 that everybody was on the same page, is that a common practice?

20 A. Yeah, you want everybody involved in the incident to be on
21 120.2. When ops comes down initially, they're on tower frequency.
22 When they come behind it, whatever, it's on the runway, right,
23 because they're doing a runway sweep, they come down on 118.7,
24 then they come off and sometimes they'll come over to ground
25 immediately, sometimes they'll go over to 120.2, it's -- I don't

1 know if they -- it's consistent, yeah.

2 Q. And they do that on their own type of thing?

3 A. Yeah, they'll definitely switch over to one, we'll try to put
4 them where everybody else is.

5 Q. Okay. Tell me about the -- so I understand that originally
6 this was an Alert 2 emergency for the Southwest.

7 A. Right.

8 Q. Tell me about the situation and what you experienced during
9 this situation where they were expecting Alert 2 and then
10 something else happened, so tell me about that.

11 A. Yeah, so they said they -- they were expecting a Boeing 737,
12 right, so when the Citation's turning off the runway like that and
13 need you guys to go to them, they're like was that the emergency
14 aircraft, they're thinking they're looking for a 737, so it's like
15 yeah, that one was just involved in an incident, we need you guys
16 to go take a look at that and they're like okay, so they went over
17 there.

18 Then when we had the Hawker land, it's kind of the same
19 thing, they're like well, where's the Southwest jet, they're like
20 he's not coming here anymore, he's been diverted. But they were
21 -- they thought maybe there were three aircraft involved, they
22 asked is there a third aircraft involved in this, like no, that
23 was a separate thing but that's done, he diverted to IAH, we're
24 just dealing with these two aircraft, so there was some confusion
25 on that.

1 Q. Okay. And then if you could change anything about that
2 relationship and the coordination during the event with all of the
3 moving parts of the vehicles and whatnot, what could you -- what
4 do you think might help you have less confusion next time, if
5 anything?

6 A. I would say if there was a separate person working that
7 altogether, I mean, if there -- if there is an emergency inbound,
8 especially where it's Alert 2 or Alert 3, something like that
9 really coming on, if that position can be swapped off altogether,
10 you know, you said different position to work that, that would
11 help. Outside of that, when you're working both yourself, there's
12 not a lot you can do.

13 Q. Right. Earlier you were asked about the construction
14 impacting, you know, or things that impacted the situation and you
15 had mentioned construction, obviously, but then you mentioned
16 something about not having tools needed, you know, you said the
17 use of the runways for the taxiways was an impact and then not
18 having tools.

19 A. Yeah, I guess in for tools, I mean, the actual runways
20 themselves, so if local has two runways he can use, you're not
21 having to worry about doing squeeze plays off of 1-3 Right, you're
22 not trying to shoot gaps and stuff as much, you have all your
23 runways you can use to move traffic or land traffic on. Yeah,
24 that was one thing about that.

25 Q. What are some of the concerns for you being forced to use an

1 inactive runway as a taxiway?

2 A. There are a lack of hold short requirements. You can't --
3 you know, we're having to tell these guys okay, stop short of Kilo
4 because at least if they miss Kilo, we have time to react and try
5 to stop them before they get to the runway, right, and another
6 thing when aircraft see someone moving on another runway, instead
7 of a taxiway, that's how it works, I mean, they're like hey,
8 there's aircraft back taxiing down 1-3 Left, that way, especially
9 at night, if they see lights coming toward them they know okay,
10 this guy is not -- he's being controlled, he's doing something.
11 Landing aircraft, you know, worried about seeing headlights coming
12 towards them, it's a lot of stuff if you got to take into account
13 some of us have adopted a practice as do not put the guy back
14 taxiing down 1-3 Left --

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. -- until the guy on 2-2 starts rolling. Once he starts
17 rolling, then bring them that way, it's less of a chance of him
18 seeing him or him seeing the lights, something like that,
19 especially at night, just to avoid concern.

20 Q. So you're kind of -- you're kind of forced, if you will, to
21 make these contingency plans because of the situation with --

22 A. Yeah. Yeah, you're --

23 Q. -- the multiple construction projects.

24 A. Correct, we're completely operating out of the norm and
25 everybody's doing that a little different.

1 Q. Okay. And then does that cause you to have to pay more
2 attention to certain new hot spots that --

3 A. Of course.

4 Q. -- pilots may or may not even know are hot spots at this
5 point?

6 A. Yeah, absolutely.

7 Q. Okay, thanks.

8 A. You're welcome.

9 MR. SOPER: Kristen.

10 BY MS. McTEE:

11 Q. Okay. Hi.

12 A. Hi.

13 Q. So we have construction across the U.S., I know that, and I
14 know that construction's not abnormal, would you say this is an
15 abnormal level of construction for Hobby?

16 A. It is abnormal, yes.

17 Q. Are you CIC qualified?

18 A. I am.

19 Q. When you're working CIC and the airport wants to close a
20 taxiway, do they -- is it the CIC that they call or --

21 A. They do.

22 Q. Okay. And how does that conversation occur, is it a "Hi,
23 we're closing Mike" or is it "We'd like to close Mike, how does
24 that," -- do you feel like you have the ability --

25 A. It's 50/50. I mean, if it's something they have to close for

1 like Taxiway Charlie has a hole in it or something, we have to
2 close this taxiway, right, but if it's something they're doing for
3 mowing or maintenance, they will call and they'll have a
4 conversation like hey, we need, can we do this, can we do that,
5 and we'll have a conversation, like if we do this it's going to
6 cut our legs here, it's going to do this, so there is some back
7 and forth sometimes.

8 Q. Sometimes.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. You said you've been here 13 years, is that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Do you feel like that relationship has degraded over time?

13 A. There's been people that were a lot more communicative before
14 and we have less, a little less communication now than we used to,
15 so yeah, I guess it's somewhat.

16 Q. And it's okay if you don't know this, do you have -- is there
17 anything you -- you can remember that a moment in time where you
18 feel like that relationship changed?

19 A. No, not really.

20 Q. Okay. I'm going to shift gears just a little bit, we might
21 come back to construction. How do you feel like your relationship
22 is, like controllers with management, do --

23 A. In house?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. It's good.

1 Q. It's good?

2 A. Yeah, we have a good working relationship. Of course, our
3 new manager, we barely know her, unfortunately, but yeah.

4 (Laughter.)

5 MR. SOPER: Welcome aboard, we have --

6 (Crosstalk)

7 BY MS. McTEE:

8 Q. Okay. And then I'm going to shift gears again. What's your
9 schedule like, are you on a classic 2-2-1?

10 A. I don't know what that means.

11 Q. Two nights, two days --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- and then -- how much overtime do you work?

14 A. Weekly.

15 Q. Weekly. So six-day work weeks?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Do you get holdover a lot?

18 A. Not too much holdover.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. You mentioned that during this emergency, having an extra
22 position split out for that to deal with that emergency would be
23 -- would be positive. Leading back to Tuesday, the staffing you
24 had that day, did you have the staffing to help open that
25 position?

1 A. There's one, there's only one other person in the building
2 that could've opened the position and he was brought up to relieve
3 our local controller, so the answer is no, I guess, yeah.

4 Q. All right, thank you, that's what I wanted to know. So from
5 my recollection, you had four CPCs, your developmental and an OS
6 on position.

7 A. Yeah. Three controllers, a trainee and the supe.

8 Q. And then the fourth CPC was on break, correct?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. That's all you had for the day. So if you wanted to open
11 another position, you would have to take your one person that's on
12 break and obviously, that doesn't work.

13 A. Right.

14 Q. Time on position wise, generally, on your shift, about how
15 long would you say that you are on position before you're offered
16 a break?

17 A. I mean --

18 Q. And it's okay if it varies.

19 A. Yeah. It definitely varies, yeah, I mean, it depends on how
20 many people we have, if we have a 45-minute break or like an hour
21 and a half, you get like a 40, 45-minute break, maybe, sometimes
22 you're up to two hours depending on the number of bodies we have
23 here, an hour and 45, hour and 50 minutes before we get a break.

24 Q. Working up to close to two hours, is that normal or would you
25 say that's fairly abnormal?

1 A. It's abnormal, I guess, yeah.

2 MS. McTEE: And let's see, I think I'm going to pass to Mike.
3 Thank you.

4 MR. SOPER: Okay, Mike.

5 BY MR. VANDINI:

6 Q. I've got a couple questions and Sarah asked a good one here.
7 So you're designated emergency frequency is 120.2, I know what you
8 guys are going through. Is there or have you guys ever thought of
9 splitting positions, is there a way that clearance delivery flight
10 data could've worked that position?

11 A. I mean, I'm trying --

12 (Crosstalk)

13 BY MR. VANDINI:

14 Q. Did the facility ever split it off before?

15 A. I think it's been done once or twice --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- over the time that I've been here, it is something that
18 has happened, right.

19 Q. Do you think that it would be beneficial in the future with
20 these --

21 A. I mean, I feel like, of course --

22 Q. I mean, if you're --

23 A. -- if you have a standalone person handling the emergency, of
24 course.

25 Q. So I'm not putting any words in your mouth here, but if you

1 got this coming out of the speaker and then you got -- how are you
2 -- how are you getting all of this information?

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Okay. You answered my question. Did you let the crash crew
5 know that you guys went from Alert 2 to Alert 3?

6 A. I don't --

7 Q. Because you had three guys --

8 A. I don't believe I -- I think when the supe re-rang the crash
9 phone, I believe he said it.

10 Q. So if you were ever in that situation, I don't know if you
11 ever had two emergencies going at the same time, but the crash two
12 -- or Alert 2 is called out, if you have to call something out at
13 the same time, are the firehouses empty?

14 A. Yeah, nobody was responding to them, right.

15 Q. And so who gets that message to the fire department, is it
16 ground control or is it ops, who gets that to them, do you know?

17 A. I'm not sure.

18 Q. Okay. Do you remember what the supe was doing just prior to
19 the incident?

20 A. No, I do not. Like I said, I was face down, facing the other
21 direction, I don't know what he was doing behind me.

22 Q. Do you feel, like, that he was engaged after the incident and
23 providing --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And you mentioned that he was giving you all the information

1 with Southwest 1073 inbound on the first emergency, that all your
2 information that was -- for the Alert 2 was given all to you guys
3 on ground control?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. And last question, are you familiar with the RSAs out
6 at the airport, your runway safety areas, do you know where they
7 are, you know, because you mentioned about construction and stuff
8 like that, there's no markings, but do you know what your RSAs are
9 like for 2-2?

10 A. We have charts up there, that when we need to look at them,
11 we can pull them up.

12 Q. I know. When you guys are saying you're taxiing on a runway
13 that doesn't have any markings, but I know the RSA has depictions
14 on where you should be, I don't know if you guys ever look at them
15 or --

16 A. No.

17 MR. VANDINI: Okay. Appreciate it, thanks.

18 BY MR. SOPER:

19 Q. Okay. I just got a couple of odd questions, I might bounce
20 around here a little bit, so when it comes to -- because you're
21 CIC qualled, when you work CIC from the tower or in the tower,
22 where are you usually work it from?

23 A. You work it from the desk in the back.

24 Q. From the one over in the back corner?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Okay. I noticed in your tower diagram that they like, that's
2 out of your SOP or whatever, that there's actually a position they
3 call CIC, right on the front of the horseshoe for CD/flight data,
4 where there's a COMM panel there, right on the --

5 A. Okay, yeah.

6 Q. -- on the controller side, not on the -- not on the CD side,
7 but on the other side, right?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Does anybody ever work it from there when they're supe-ing?

10 A. I have never seen someone work it from there.

11 Q. Okay. Do you feel you're able to -- you're able to -- do you
12 feel that's the right position over there on the corner side for a
13 supe in the tower and you guys' configuration, because you worked
14 this a long time.

15 A. On a south flow, sure, it's great because you're right there,
16 you know, you seeing the arrivals, you're seeing everyone come in
17 to you, you know, you're watching the landers and everything,
18 that's fine, you have an ASDE display, you have, you know, your
19 weather, you have your COMM panel and everything right there in
20 front of you, you have all the tools you need centrally located --

21 Q. Uh-huh.

22 A. -- where if you try to do that from somewhere else, you
23 wouldn't have all the tools you need available to you.

24 Q. Okay. I guess that would be my next question, is that if you
25 could -- if the tools -- if that wasn't a factor, meaning they

1 said we'll put the tools wherever you want, we can reconfigure
2 your tower however you want it, do you feel that there's anything
3 that would be more -- any configuration difference that would be
4 more valuable than where you're at right now or do you feel like
5 it is optimized for what you guys have pretty much?

6 A. I mean, I feel like if the supe can be anywhere, right,
7 without anything else taken into account --

8 Q. Yeah, yeah.

9 A. -- put them in the horseshoe where they're in the middle of
10 the operation, right, I think that would be good, but the only
11 thing is, like you said, if you can bring in other equipment,
12 yeah, if you can bring another ASDE display right there or
13 something so they can have that available --

14 Q. Uh-huh.

15 A. -- because they do have a STARS display there --

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. -- that can be good. But then I don't know where you would
18 put clearance delivery so that they can do their job more
19 efficiently because you have to communicate so much back and
20 stuff, back and forth, with ground and everything else, so it's
21 almost like robbing from one to give to the other.

22 Q. Yeah, I guess -- I guess, you know, when I look at this and
23 this is more commentary, but I thought it was odd to see where the
24 supe's watch desk was, like I would've -- when I walked up in the
25 tower, I thought for sure that horseshoe was going to be the

1 supe's desk --

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. -- like, I just thought that in my head. But then second
4 from that is I looked at things and you actually got a pretty
5 decent tower, like, I mean, space-wise and stuff, it's not bad --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- and I thought, you know, this helicopter position, as I
8 understand, have you ever used it?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Oh, you have.

11 A. Yeah. I been here a long time, we use it.

12 Q. Okay, so you --

13 A. We staff it, yeah.

14 Q. All right.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. How long has it been, do you think, since you have staffed
17 that?

18 A. Geez. Pre-COVID.

19 Q. See, I just feel like, to me, that's the perfect place for CD
20 and, you know, where that helicopter position is, it seems like
21 the perfect place to have CD because they have to, you know,
22 communicate with ground all the time, so they're right there, they
23 can hit ground up, put the supe back in the horseshoe, put that
24 local controller over there, but I don't know your operation that
25 well, so that would be unfair for me to make that determination,

1 it's just when I look at it, that's what seems logical to me. But
2 yes, then the equipment would have to change, I mean, I -- you --
3 I don't want the supe going anywhere and not having access to an
4 ASDE, so --

5 A. Right.

6 Q. -- I mean, like -- you know, and that type of thing. So I
7 was just curious on that. So all right, as far as talking about
8 supervision here, so how often are you guys utilizing CICs for
9 supervision here? If you could throw a percentage at it, like,
10 you know, we're probably 40 percent OS, 60 percent CIC.

11 A. I mean, we use CICs daily, how much of the watch do we use
12 it? Our supes normally work from 7:00 to 9:00, so we do it in the
13 morning, we do it afternoon, if they have to go down and do any
14 kind of break or restroom or anything like that, then we cover it
15 so, I mean, as far as percentage-wise, I'm not too sure.

16 Q. Being a CIC, do you get good responsiveness from the
17 workforce here as a CIC, they listen to you well?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. You're able to provide on-the-spot correction without --

20 A. Yeah, we can have a conversation about stuff like that.

21 MR. SOPER: Good, okay. That's all I have right now.

22 Sarah.

23 BY MS. LEWIS:

24 Q. I want to ask you about having to put the call signs for the
25 vehicles in the ASDE-X.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. Is that something that's new or you always had to do that?

3 A. We used to always have to do it.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. We had some mitigation come in a long time ago, I think when
6 we were having a lot of hot spots issued, hot spot issues and
7 stuff years ago, they was like hey, we need to put transponders in
8 all the vehicles.

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. They put transponders in the vehicles and it was great for a
11 while, any time somebody came out of the mask (ph.) areas, boom,
12 it popped up and you were able to track everybody, but it seems
13 like that's fallen off. The ops vehicles have transponders, but
14 as far as all the other vehicles that are operating on the
15 airfield, they do not. We have a couple FAA vehicles, I think we
16 may have one and there's a -- grounds people may have one, but
17 then fire response crews do not.

18 Q. Would you feel it would be advantageous to have as many
19 vehicles as possible to have those?

20 A. Of course.

21 Q. How much time does it take to have to put the call signs in
22 to the ASDE-X for all these vehicles?

23 A. I mean, it doesn't take a lot of time, you just have to find
24 an ASDE-X that's working properly so you can type on it without it
25 missing its target, you know, you go there, type it in and tag it,

1 so it's not long, a couple seconds, maybe.

2 Q. Is it difficult for you to be the heads-down when you're
3 training?

4 A. Yeah, I don't like to put my eyes down and not see exactly
5 what my trainee is doing, of course.

6 Q. Yeah. Okay, thank you. I thought that was interesting.
7 When you were talking about the airport vehicles, were those more
8 of like the maintenance guys or like airway facility, airport, or
9 is it FAA or --

10 A. I mean, it's airport ops, so yeah.

11 Q. Airport ops, okay. And then what about something like a
12 mower, do they have a transponder?

13 A. They do not, no.

14 Q. Okay. And then are there any other concerns that you have,
15 you know, at the facility or whatever that you feel are important
16 to address that you don't have addressed?

17 A. I mean, not really, and we already -- I've already talked
18 about that.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 MS. LEWIS: Thanks.

22 MS. SCOTT: Sarah, I just wanted to clarify as far as the
23 operations vehicles, there was, at some point as FacRep, quite a
24 few issues that we were having with operation vehicles not being
25 transpondered. They switched over during COVID, vehicles, they

1 bought the transponders, however, COVID happened, finances stopped
2 and they did not equip the new vehicles, so they have them sitting
3 somewhere.

4 MS. LEWIS: Okay.

5 MS. SCOTT: But for budgeting purposes, they won't replace
6 them in the new vehicles and that was through the ERC that we got
7 that response and that was a budgeting thing, why they won't --
8 equipped them now. They have the old vehicles, though, still
9 somewhere, they have the transponders somewhere, that on the
10 budget to have somebody put them in.

11 MS. LEWIS: Okay, thank you. I appreciate you bringing that
12 up.

13 BY MS. McTEE:

14 Q. Do you have access to a wireless headset when you're working
15 CIC or when your OS is up there?

16 A. There used to be one up there years ago, it went away.

17 Q. Do you think that would be helpful, as a CIC, to have --

18 A. It gives you mobility to get around the tower cab, yeah,
19 sure.

20 Q. Okay. I'm kind of pivoting a little bit to training. We
21 noticed you guys don't have a staff support specialist right now
22 and that's been for a little bit. Have you noticed a difference
23 in training, briefings, ever since you lost your staff support
24 specialist?

25 A. Of course.

1 Q. When there is a taxiway closure, and let's say it's a planned
2 one, how are you notified about that, typically?

3 A. They'll either put something in, it's not called CEDAR
4 anymore, it's called Team.

5 Q. Teams?

6 A. Yeah, so they'll put something in Team or when we get
7 upstairs, you know, if we -- if it wasn't in Team yet so it didn't
8 get put in, they'll tell us hey, we're going to be closing this
9 later.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Our supe would.

12 Q. I know you don't have a sim on site, it's up at
13 Intercontinental, right?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And your sim, that's at the IAH, right?

16 A. I don't know what that is.

17 MS. SCOTT: The sim.

18 MR. SOPER: Oh, tower simulator.

19 MS. McTEE: Simulator. Sorry.

20 MR. BROZGAL: Oh, sim. Yeah, yeah. We got the right --
21 (Crosstalk)

22 BY MS. McTEE:

23 Q. Yeah, your tower sim, so when you're doing training, new
24 training here, you have to go up to IAH and I know that you've
25 been here for a while, so I'm going to pick on you a little bit

1 with your knowledge here, how often did you say refresher training
2 was, you've been up there to use that simulator?

3 A. Zero.

4 Q. Zero times?

5 A. Yes.

6 MS. McTEE: Okay. Cool, that's what I wanted to know, thank
7 you.

8 BY MR. VANDINI:

9 Q. I got one more. You said when you're CIC, is the supe
10 getting currency time while you're on CIC?

11 A. Sometimes.

12 MR. VANDINI: Okay, thanks.

13 BY MR. SOPER:

14 Q. If you had to put a label on the most challenging thing for
15 you guys to be able to do your job in the best way possible here
16 at this facility, what is it?

17 A. Staffing.

18 Q. Yeah?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And is it staffing specific to the workforce side of
21 staffing, the supe side of staffing, both, administrative support
22 staffing?

23 A. I would say all across the board.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. We need more controllers to do their job, we need supes to do

1 their jobs, we need people to handle the downstairs stuff.

2 Q. Okay. And do you guys have training contractors here?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. Go back to the simulator real quick. Do you feel that
5 there would be value if, if you guys actually have the staffing to
6 be able to do either proficiency training or training on, you
7 know, special -- you know, operations or anything periodically
8 through the year, where you could send, you know, a few people out
9 quarterly or semi-annually to go do some sim time and run through
10 some scenarios and stuff?

11 A. Yeah, I think it would be beneficial, I've actually been up
12 there with a trainee and see IAH run some of their controllers
13 through, like hey, we're going to talk about this, they run
14 through the sim to look at something specific that's going on like
15 oh, that's nice to have, to be able -- it's in-house for them,
16 right, so they're sending people straight downstairs. For us,
17 it's a lot more difficult. Yeah, if we had staffing and stuff to
18 do it --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- hugely beneficial.

21 Q. Yeah, I mean, I can see where your challenge is now, I mean,
22 you know -- I mean, how are you ever going to get anybody out,
23 yeah, with everybody working and one person on break, there's
24 nothing --

25 A. Right.

1 Q. -- there's no leeway for anything, I would say. I get it.
2 And do you recall a time, since you have been here for a long
3 period of time, if you can recall even close, and you can give me
4 a roundabout time frame, that staffing was at a good level,
5 meaning you guys were able to work normal shifts, have normal --
6 take advantage of your normal days off, not have to constantly be
7 able to conduct training, can you recall a time or --

8 A. Yeah, I mean, up to about, you know, 10 years ago it was
9 good, my first four or five years here, staffing was great, you
10 know, we had full crews of people, there was plenty of training
11 opportunities, there was a lot of room for -- if you wanted to go,
12 be involved with NATCA stuff or if you wanted to go be involved in
13 work groups, something like that, you could do that, you had
14 plenty of people here if you wanted leave or time off to write
15 training forms, you know, there was time for people to be able to
16 do stuff like, properly debriefings, team briefings, stuff like
17 that, that we don't do any of anymore.

18 Yeah, I mean, up until COVID, you know, from about 10 years
19 to the COVID time, you know, it kind of started slacking off,
20 post-COVID, of course, everything's still, so --

21 Q. How's your traffic been post-COVID since prior to COVID, did
22 you increase or are you just back to the same norm or --

23 A. No, we're increasing, we are definitely busier than we were
24 before COVID.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yeah.

2 MR. SOPER: All right. Sarah, nothing else?

3 (No audible response.)

4 MR. SOPER: Kristen?

5 MS. McTEE: Just a statement. The tower team worked very
6 well together and -- great.

7 MR. BROZGAL: Thank you.

8 MS. McTEE: (Indiscernible).

9 MR. BROZGAL: Yeah, it's a good team. Appreciate it.

10 MR. SOPER: Mike, nothing else?

11 MR. VANDINI: No, thank you.

12 BY MR. SOPER:

13 Q. So I do have one last question, I kind of sum them up with
14 these anytime I'm here and that is if you -- failure, successes,
15 and lessons learned, so just out of this event, retrospective,
16 you're looking at it from the outside in and again, like I said,
17 you're not directly related to the incident itself, but you're
18 obviously part of the team there, is there anything that you
19 identified here that was a failure, from any standpoint, what do
20 you see was a failure, what do you see was a success, and have you
21 taken away any lessons from this that might alter the way you
22 approach a position when you go up there, whether it's working
23 local, CIC, things you would do any differently?

24 A. Yeah, let's start with successes. Successful on this
25 incident is the quickness at which someone who was working

1 clearance delivery recognized the situation, spoke up, and then
2 the local controller immediately responded to what was told him
3 without "what are you talking about" or any kind of thing, I think
4 that team concept hit, you know what I mean, they were right on
5 top of it. Without that team concept and the way they work
6 together, who knows, you know, what would've happened.

7 Q. Um-hum.

8 A. Moving from that into -- I don't know if you'd call it a
9 failure or, like I say, I wish we could do things better in a
10 situation given the number of bodies we had, there was really
11 nothing, I mean, everybody did what they could do at the time.
12 Would it have been nice to have an extra person up there to be
13 able to take some of the workload off of ground or to help, you
14 know, the local controller, you know, coordinate with the
15 departure when they were trying to get headings for all these guys
16 who were having to go around last second, I mean, there was I90,
17 they helped out a lot, you know, the controllers at I90. As soon
18 as we call, like hey, let's stop these arrivals, they stopped and
19 they had a lot of workload to do immediately because they had a
20 lot of arrivals inbound, so even the outside facility worked that
21 day, they jumped in to help us out a lot, they did great over
22 there, too.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. How about lessons learned, anything you would change,

1 anything that you look at differently as you approach the watch
2 now or do you just --

3 A. I mean, you're always heightened awareness, right, after
4 something happened, every single thing that you hear you're
5 double-guessing it, you know, if you have a target on the ASDE,
6 you jump a little bit because sometimes they'll be sitting still
7 and all of a sudden --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. -- you'll go from zero to one, you're like is that guy
10 moving --

11 Q. Did that guy move?

12 A. Okay, everybody -- no, everybody's good, okay, yes. Yeah,
13 there's heightened awareness.

14 MR. SOPER: Okay, good. All right. Do you have any
15 questions for us?

16 MR. BROZGAL: No, not really.

17 MR. SOPER: Okay.

18 MR. BROZGAL: Should I ask any questions?

19 (Laughter.)

20 MR. SOPER: I'm going to go ahead and stop the recording. I
21 show the time at 15:24?

22 MS. LEWIS: Correct.

23 (Whereupon, at 3:24 p.m., the interview concluded.)
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA
 CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P.
 HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS
 ON OCTOBER 24, 2023
 Interview of Michael Brozgal

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA0017

PLACE: Houston, Texas

DATE: October 28, 2023

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



Karen D. Martini
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA

CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P.

HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

ON OCTOBER 24, 2023

Accident No.: DCA24FA0017

* * * * *

Interview of: JEFFREY MURRMANN, Operations Supervisor (OS)
William P. Hobby Airport Traffic Control Tower

Houston, Texas

Friday,
October 27, 2023

FREE STATE REPORTING, INC.
Court Reporting Transcription
D.C. Area 301-261-1902
Balt. & Annap. 410-974-0947

APPEARANCES:

BRIAN SOPER, Senior Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SARAH LEWIS, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KATHARINE WILSON, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance
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National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL VANDINI, Air Traffic Controller
Federal Aviation Administration

KRISTEN McTEE, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA)

REBECCA LIPE, Attorney
Federal Aviation Administration
(On behalf of Mr. Murrmann)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:41 a.m. CDT)

1
2
3 MR. SOPER: My name is Brian Soper, lead air traffic
4 investigator with the NTSB. And I have here with me today as part
5 of the air traffic control group, Mr. Mike Vandini, who is with us
6 out of Chicago District, and he is here as a subject matter expert
7 for the FAA in our group; I have Katharine Wilson, senior human
8 performance investigator from our headquarters back in D.C.
9 assisting our group; and Kristen McTee from NATCA, representing
10 NATCA in our group, she's with us out of Kansas City Tower; and
11 Sarah Lewis, my colleague from back at headquarters, also an air
12 traffic investigator with the NTSB.

13 So, and you have here with you today your representative
14 you've chosen. Could you state your name for the record?

15 MS. LIPE: Rebecca Lipe, FAA, Office of Chief Counsel.

16 MR. SOPER: Thank you, Rebecca.

17 And could you state your name for the record for me?

18 MR. MURRMANN: Jeffrey Murrmann.

19 MR. SOPER: All right. And could you spell your last name
20 for me there?

21 MR. MURRMANN: M-u-r-r-m-a-n-n.

22 MR. SOPER: Thank you very much. Double "R," double "N."

23 Okay. So, as I mentioned earlier, just a little background,
24 the NTSB is an independent federal agency charged with the
25 investigation of civil aviation accidents of a serious nature,

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1 finding the probable cause, and hopefully developing safety
2 recommendations to industry or some segment of industry to help
3 prevent reoccurrence. We're not regulatory. We don't make rules.
4 We don't enforce rules. And our job is safety in nature all the
5 way down the pike.

6 So please just answer the questions to the best of your
7 ability. We don't ask trick questions, so if you don't know
8 something, it's okay to say you don't know; if you don't recall,
9 it's okay to say you don't recall. If you have any questions for
10 us along the way, please don't hesitate to ask. If you need to
11 take a break at any time, just let us know; we'll stop the
12 recording so you can step out.

13 Do you have any questions of us before we begin?

14 MR. MURRMANN: Not at this time.

15 MR. SOPER: Awesome.

16 INTERVIEW OF JEFFREY MURRMANN

17 BY MR. SOPER:

18 Q. Okay. So if you could for me, your first name again was?

19 A. Jeffrey, J-e-f-f-r-e-y.

20 Q. And double "R," double "N" for the last name.

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Okay. And how old were you on the day of the incident?

23 A. Forty-two.

24 Q. And your operating initials here?

25 A. XM.

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- 1 Q. And you are an OS here, correct?
- 2 A. Correct.
- 3 Q. And how long have you been an OS here?
- 4 A. Since December of 2019.
- 5 Q. Oh, you're a supe, welcome to Covid. That was a bummer, huh?
- 6 A. Um-hum.
- 7 Q. So -- timing's everything. Do you have any prior FAA air
- 8 traffic control experience, military, DoD, contract tower?
- 9 A. I've got military and prior FAA.
- 10 Q. Okay. When were you in the military and what branch?
- 11 A. Navy, March 2003 to March of 2008.
- 12 Q. Thanks for your service. I'm retired Navy controller myself.
- 13 Were you a controller in the Navy?
- 14 A. I was.
- 15 Q. Where were you at?
- 16 A. I started at China Lake and then went to a TACON out of
- 17 Coronado.
- 18 Q. When did you leave China Lake?
- 19 A. I believe 2005.
- 20 Q. Oh, okay. Man, I went in there right after you left
- 21 probably, to do the -- their safety survey, you know, because I
- 22 was at the safety center in the Navy and -- but I think you were
- 23 already gone by then.
- 24 A. Okay.
- 25 Q. Interesting overlapping in service. That's cool. All right.

1 And then you said after the military you did what?

2 A. After the military, in between the military and the FAA, I
3 was a assistant superintendent at the Houston Metropolitan Transit
4 Authority.

5 Q. What was your -- what were you doing there? What was your
6 role? Like what did you --

7 A. I worked in a -- if you're familiar, it's called TranStar,
8 and I was in charge of the bus controllers. They monitored bus
9 routes and figured out ways to restore service that they -- if a
10 bus broke down or if a bus was running behind, they would add
11 buses to a line. They would dispatch tow trucks, they would
12 dispatch medical services or supervisors as needed, that kind of
13 thing.

14 Q. Yeah. They actually sought people with air traffic
15 experience for that job, right?

16 A. I think they picked me up specifically, yes.

17 Q. I mean, they kind of -- I remember when I was looking for a
18 jobs after I retired from the Navy, I kind of remember a bus one
19 like that or a transit authority one. I don't think it was Texas.
20 But I also remember trains the same way. There was this train
21 dispatch thing that they were looking for people that had air
22 traffic experience --

23 A. Right.

24 Q. -- to fill that role, you know. I was like -- I thought it
25 was interesting, so -- that's cool. So then you came to the FAA

1 when?

2 A. In -- it was in 2011. I believe it was October 2011.

3 Q. Okay. And so were you a direct hire, like a VRA? Did you go
4 to the academy or did they just --

5 A. I went to the academy. I got -- I came in on an off the
6 street bid.

7 Q. Oh, okay. Good. And so I know you kind of touched on it a
8 little bit here, but if you could just give me your -- kind of
9 that 10,000 foot view, kind of a miniature aviation bio, like
10 where do you -- how did you get interested in aviation and what
11 led you to where you got here today; like I was always interested
12 in it, I graduated high school, I went into the Navy, I did this,
13 whatever it is for you.

14 A. Okay. Well, as a child I traveled a lot, so we were around
15 airports and we drove past a bunch of air traffic control towers.
16 That kind of always piqued my interest. I never really knew it
17 was a job that anybody, just anybody -- well, not just anybody,
18 but a job that was obtainable by somebody like me.

19 Q. I know what you're saying. Yeah.

20 A. So, anyways, that's what piqued my interest. Anyways, my
21 brother joined the Navy. He joined as a nuclear technician and I
22 was going to do the same thing. I had a -- I believe it was a "C"
23 in some science class in high school. Anyways, I had to write
24 some statement that the Navy wanted to explain why I was going to
25 be successful in the nuclear training program. And they liked it

1 at first. They had a change of command for the recruiting
2 district for the nuclear program, and they decided that -- the new
3 admiral or captain or whoever it was decided that he didn't like
4 my statement and he wasn't going to let me into the program. So I
5 had 3 weeks before I -- my MEPS time expired. You can stay in
6 MEPS for 12 months. And so, yeah, they told me, they're like,
7 well, you've got an option, you can drop out of MEPS or we've got
8 these three options. And one of them was like, you know, just
9 an --

10 Q. Undesignated?

11 A. Undesignated seaman.

12 Q. Um-hum. Yeah, you chose nicely.

13 A. And then the other ones -- the other one was -- I think it
14 was damage control, and the other one was air traffic. And so I
15 didn't even know that was an option for the Navy, and so I jumped
16 on that right away.

17 Anyways, I joined the Navy, loved air traffic control, loved
18 everything about it. I didn't care for the Navy portion of it,
19 moving around and the chain of command, that kind of thing, so I
20 got out after my first enlistment. And applied immediately -- in
21 fact, I applied before I think I even got my discharge papers.
22 But they were in a hiring freeze at the time and it took, I think,
23 probably 2 years in between when I got out of the Navy and when I
24 got picked up for the FAA.

25 Q. Very cool. Do you have any other aeronautical

1 certifications? Are you a pilot or dispatcher, anything?

2 A. I've got 12 hours in a Cessna.

3 Q. Nice.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. I think every controller should have to get 10 hours in an
6 airplane. I just feel like that would be a great part of it.
7 Like, seriously, they should give you at least a glimpse into what
8 that's about.

9 So have you ever been fired, terminated, suspended, or asked
10 to resign from a job, an air traffic job, since you've been with
11 the FAA?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. And how would you describe your overall health in the
14 terms of excellent, good, fair, poor?

15 A. Excellent to good. Good to excellent.

16 Q. Okay. And do you have any waivers, restrictions, or
17 limitations to your medical clearance?

18 A. I have a restriction to wear glasses, corrective lenses when
19 required or when --

20 Q. When controlling, when actively working or --

21 A. No. It says -- I don't recall the exact wording on it, but
22 it -- the way they explained it to me was when I needed them, I
23 was to wear glasses. And to me, that translated in like if I had
24 to read something that I was having trouble reading.

25 Q. Yep. I know exactly what that is. Yeah. So, and on that

1 day, do you know if you were wearing your corrective lenses?

2 A. I was not.

3 Q. And you didn't have a need to?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. And so you did have a medical clearance on that day,
6 then?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Okay. And do you remember when your last ATC physical was?

9 A. July of this year.

10 Q. Okay. And were you taking any maintenance or prescription or
11 nonprescription medications on the day of the event?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. Was drug or alcohol screening performed as a result of
14 this event?

15 A. Not for me.

16 Q. Okay. And were there any major changes in your health over
17 the last year, like had major surgeries, pin put in your shoulder,
18 anything that you might have been down for a long period of time
19 and affected currency, that type of thing?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. Similar question, any major changes in your personal
22 life over the last year that could have affected -- that was a
23 wrench in the spokes of life, so to speak? You know, got
24 divorced, adopted a child, had a child, big things?

25 A. My daughter left for college.

1 Q. Oh. Well, I know what that's like, so -- all right. And --
2 what college did she choose?

3 A. Texas State.

4 Q. Oh. Are you from Texas?

5 A. I am.

6 Q. Oh, okay. So this was home for you, you wanted to be back
7 here anyway. Awesome. And so any major changes in your financial
8 situation over the last year, good, bad, or indifferent? You
9 know, won the lottery, filed bankruptcy?

10 A. No. We, I mean, we do -- we have taken on some debt, but
11 nothing unsurmountable.

12 Q. Great. And I normally would get into a 72-hour history here,
13 but we have our human performance person here and that's her
14 specialty. We're going to make sure we leave that for her.

15 And did you file an ATSAP as a result of this event?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. And have you been interviewed about this event prior
18 to now besides your pre-briefing that you had?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay. And have you had an opportunity to review a replay of
21 the event?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Like a Falcon, you know, video and audio?

24 A. Yes. It was the day of the event or the night of the event.
25 So it's -- and I'm not positive that it was the full replay. It

1 was up until the actual collision.

2 Q. Okay. Was a relief briefing conducted when you took the OS
3 position up there? Did you relieve another OS or a CIC or -- do
4 you remember?

5 A. I don't recall.

6 Q. Okay. And so, on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the heaviest,
7 how would you have classified the traffic volume at the time of
8 the event in the tower here?

9 A. Four.

10 Q. And similar question -- or, well, actually first, before I do
11 that. Do you feel that traffic volume was normal for that time of
12 day and day of the week or was it above normal a little bit, below
13 normal a little bit?

14 A. It was slightly above normal.

15 Q. Okay. And on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the most complex,
16 how would you rate the traffic complexity at the time of the
17 event?

18 A. Probably a 3.

19 Q. Okay. And do you feel that was average or less or more than
20 you would expect during that period of time?

21 A. Slightly more complex.

22 Q. Okay. And were there any distractions that you're aware of
23 that were occurring at or leading up to the time of the incident
24 that you can recall?

25 A. We had another emergency inbound, a Southwest 737. I don't

1 recall the call sign. I90 had called us and let us know that they
2 were inbound with a left main number 1 gear that had either blown
3 or something -- there were some kind of issue with the left main
4 gear. And so, I was busy preparing for that at the time.

5 Q. Okay. And do you recall the general weather conditions
6 around that time? And I'm not looking for the METAR but like was
7 it VMC, IMC? Was there precip? Do you remember any weather
8 advisories being out?

9 A. VMC, no weather advisories that I recall. The -- no
10 precipitation.

11 Q. Okay. And did you receive a pre-duty weather briefing on
12 that day?

13 A. I did.

14 Q. And did anything stand out to you as problematic or something
15 that stood out from that briefing?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. And just your viewpoint of the usefulness or the value
18 of the pre-duty weather briefing in its current state to you here,
19 to Houston, specifically to your operation. Do you feel it's
20 highly valuable, somewhat valuable, or not very valuable?

21 A. It's somewhat valuable.

22 Q. Somewhat valuable. Okay. Is there anything specifically
23 that you wish was covered in there or that you feel if they
24 included that or that was in there, that it would help your
25 situation here or your facility be able to better prep for

1 weather?

2 A. The only thing I would say is that they -- I know that they
3 do the weather briefings for all the facilities in the Houston
4 area so a lot of that information is not pertinent to us.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. So there's a lot of just fluff that we go through and it's --
7 you have to dissect what is important and what's not. If they
8 made one that was specific to towers and maybe one that was
9 specific to TRACONS and one that's -- I know it's probably a lot
10 of extra work and I don't know if that's feasible.

11 Q. Right.

12 A. But if they made one that was, you know, something separate,
13 that was more pertinent to what we actually deal with here.

14 Q. Cool. And did you have a cellular phone or PED on you at the
15 time of the event?

16 A. No.

17 Q. And had you requested a relief or assistance leading up to
18 that time of the event or were you in your normal rotation as a
19 supe that day?

20 A. Just the normal rotation.

21 Q. And how did you -- well, actually, this is a good point to
22 actually shift right to stepping me through the story of the event
23 and picking up, in your own words, in your recollection -- again,
24 be as detailed as you can recall without, you know, fabricating
25 anything, obviously. But pick us up from the time you got

1 notified of Southwest, you know, the Southwest that he was
2 emergency, and then just take me through the whole scenario until
3 the point that the accident has occurred and you've just shifted
4 to upward reporting and coordination.

5 Q. Okay. So I90 called. They said that the Southwest was
6 inbound with that emergency. I knew it was quite a ways out. I
7 knew that they were holding, they were burning some fuel before
8 they came in, so I knew we had some time. But to kind of give the
9 fire department a heads up, I gave them a call, not on the ECN but
10 on the regular phone. I called over there, I said, hey, just a
11 heads up, we've got an Alert 2 coming in; I'm not ringing the
12 phone yet because they're quite a ways out and I don't know how
13 long it's going to be.

14 And so, after I got done with that, I kind of zoomed out on
15 the radar, kind of figured out where that Southwest was, and then
16 went back to monitoring the operation until I90 called back and
17 kind of told us that they -- the Southwest was inbound. At that
18 time I rang the ECN to get the equipment, the emergency equipment
19 out on the field.

20 Q. What is that word? You said the ECN, you rang the ECN.
21 What's that mean?

22 A. The crash phone.

23 Q. Oh, okay.

24 A. The emergency communication network.

25 Q. I got you. Okay.

1 A. So at that point, the city knew, fire knew, and they were
2 dispatched to go out to their locations. After that, I know that
3 I had called my ATM and left a voicemail letting her know that
4 there was an emergency inbound and to expect a MOR. And then that
5 is the last thing I recall before the incident. I know after I
6 had gotten off the phone, I started to take notes, timelines, for
7 the MOR, and then that's when the incident occurred.

8 Q. Okay. How did you become aware of the incident itself? Did
9 somebody in the tower notice it and say something? Did you see it
10 on the ASDE?

11 A. Somebody -- so I recall I was looking at something in the
12 back of the tower and I recall somebody saying, what is that dude
13 doing or what is this guy doing, or something along those lines.
14 I'm paraphrasing.

15 Q. Yeah. Yeah.

16 A. And so I picked my head up and I looked out -- I can't recall
17 if I looked at the ASDE first or out the window first, but I
18 looked somewhere and I saw the two converging aircraft. And I
19 don't recall, I don't recall if I said anything. I think I was
20 about to say stop that guy or stop that dude. But as I was about
21 to say something or as I started to say something, he was on the
22 radio saying, Nine-Alpha-Alpha, stop, hold your position; stop,
23 hold your position. And so at that point I was like, he's doing
24 what he needs to do. And after that it was, you know, just kind
25 of a waiting game.

1 Q. Okay. Do you recall hearing him put the Hawker in to line up
2 and wait or were you working on the emergency stuff?

3 A. I was -- I believe I was on the phone at the time.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So I -- no, I do not recall.

6 Q. All right. Do you recall if you were monitoring the
7 frequency with a headset or were you off headset at that time?

8 A. I had a headset on and it was in my ear.

9 Q. And you were monitoring local?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Is that standard for you? I mean, is that usually what
12 you're monitoring up there?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. I had a quick question. It's kind of off -- away from
15 the event itself. I noticed up there in your tower configuration
16 you have the supe workstation over where you're talking about you
17 were working at that day. And then there's a CIC workstation,
18 they call it, is what they title it on your actual diagram that's
19 in your SOP, but it's essentially the comm panel that's in front
20 of the clearance delivery and flight data horseshoe, right?

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. Do you ever work from there as a supe or do you always work
23 from the other -- from the position over there?

24 A. The only time I work in the horseshoe is if the positions are
25 combined, if I'm working clearance delivery/flight data and the

1 supervisor position.

2 Q. Okay. But what about outside the horseshoe that's like --
3 it's on the forward part of the horseshoe. There's like a comm
4 panel.

5 A. Oh. I --

6 Q. Is that -- does that ever get used?

7 A. No, no. We generally use that for -- after a relief briefing
8 has been done, the controller will unplug and then plug in there
9 for their --

10 Q. Overlap.

11 A. -- their 2-minute overlap.

12 Q. Okay. All right. Very good. Interesting. All right.

13 MR. SOPER: All right. That's all I have for right now. I'm
14 definitely going to have more questions, I'm sure, but I want to
15 go ahead and pass it along and allow some other people. And I'll
16 go right to Sarah.

17 BY MS. LEWIS:

18 Q. Thank you for meeting with us today and speaking with us.
19 After you went to the academy, where did you go after that?

20 A. The FAA academy?

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. I went to Hooks Airport.

23 Q. David Wayne Hooks?

24 A. David Wayne Hooks here in Houston -- or at Tomball.

25 Q. Did you go there as a controller or a supe?

1 A. A controller.

2 Q. Okay. How long were you there?

3 A. I don't recall.

4 Q. Okay. And then after that, what did you do?

5 A. I took a controller position at Houston Center.

6 Q. Okay. How long were you there?

7 A. I don't recall.

8 Q. Okay. And then after that?

9 A. Went back to Hooks as a controller.

10 Q. Okay. And then?

11 A. Then I got promoted as a supervisor at Hooks, and then I came

12 here.

13 Q. Okay. And just to refresh, David Wayne Hooks, is that in the

14 Houston area?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. So you have a lot of experience for this particular

17 area?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Awesome. Thanks. Let's talk about your headset. Is

20 it -- do you have the ability to use a cordless headset up in the

21 tower?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Do you -- so because of that, are you kind of -- do

24 you ever -- so do you ever move around in the tower or do you stay

25 in one --

1 A. Oh, no. I move, I move around.

2 Q. Okay. So is your tethered headset long enough or do you go
3 and plug in at other places?

4 A. It's long enough for me to pretty much reach anywhere in the
5 tower.

6 Q. Okay. With your experience up there in trying to assist
7 other controllers, would it be helpful to have a cordless headset?

8 A. Sure. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay. So you've been here for a few years. You said '19 you
10 got here as a supe?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. Talk to me a little bit about construction and how the
13 construction projects have gone over the years. Has there been a
14 lot of construction?

15 A. There's -- it's ongoing. Right now is especially -- I mean,
16 I'm sure you've seen the maps, but it is especially bad right now.
17 But there's always something under construction at any given time.
18 They're not generally long term like they are right now, which
19 seems to be the problem. It seems like, you know, they would
20 start one project, finish it, and then they would move onto the
21 next. This particular, right now, they started a bunch of
22 projects and they're only knocking one at a time out and it
23 just -- it's creating a hinder -- I don't even know how to -- it's
24 making things very difficult upstairs for the controllers and to
25 find good taxi routes to get aircraft where they need to go in an

1 efficient manner.

2 Q. What are the methods of communicating the difficulties to
3 either your supervisor, your management, or the airport itself?

4 A. I generally go straight to the ATM. I have communicated
5 frustration with the ops personnel themselves and they say that
6 they're going to report it up. Whether that happens or not, I
7 don't know. And what happens after I tell my ATM, I don't know
8 that either. She -- so we have had a change of command here very
9 recently. So I would tell Myrna, our previous ATM, you know,
10 about the concerns, and then she would go to construction meetings
11 and, I'm assuming, relay our concerns to them.

12 Q. Okay. Do you think that -- do you think or do you have any
13 ideas of how maybe you could -- how the facility in general could
14 open up more lines of communication? Do you have any ideas?

15 A. It could possibly involve the city and, you know, have
16 briefings here in the facility where controllers could join in and
17 maybe voice our concerns personally. I don't know -- again, I
18 don't know how feasible that is, but that would be -- or even a
19 town hall, per se. Or even get the NATCA rep involved in the
20 construction projects.

21 Q. Yeah, and maybe with your town hall you could even have the
22 ops people come upstairs and see exactly what, you know -- that's
23 interesting to think about.

24 MS. LEWIS: Kristen, would you --

25 BY MS. McTEE:

1 Q. Yeah. Do you know are there any management attendance that
2 you know of at these airport meetings where they talk about
3 taxiway closures?

4 A. The ATM goes.

5 Q. The ATM goes. Thank you. Kind of changing tracks here a
6 little bit. What's your OS staffing like?

7 A. We're slotted for four and we have two.

8 Q. Do you work a lot of overtime as an OS?

9 A. I work a lot of credit as an OS.

10 Q. The other OS, do you know if they work a lot of overtime or
11 credit?

12 A. They work more overtime than I do. I don't know about their
13 credit hours.

14 Q. Okay. About how much time do you think that the OS position
15 is staffed by a CIC versus an OS? Is it pretty regular?

16 A. If there's an OS in the building, the OS is staffing the OS
17 position. If there is no OS, then obviously it would go to the
18 CIC. I would if say an OS is in the building, less than 10 --
19 less than 10 to 15 percent of the time is CIC.

20 Q. Okay. And how does the emergency notification work with the
21 tower team? Like when you were notified that that emergency is
22 inbound, that Southwest, like how do you personally as an OS
23 notify the other tower team members of the inbound emergency?

24 A. I take the call and then I just -- I just bark it out from
25 the back, hey, we got emergency inbound, and I tell them the

1 pertinent details.

2 Q. You obviously maintain currency in the tower. Do you do that
3 at a normal time? Like do you do it on your Monday from certain
4 hours or is it -- could be like whenever they need it, you plug in
5 for currency?

6 A. I get my hours when -- I have no problem getting currency
7 because I am -- I work staffing a lot. So it's whenever they need
8 somebody to fill a slot.

9 Q. And would you say that you work your currency at every level
10 of traffic, low level traffic to high level traffic?

11 A. Every level.

12 Q. Okay. Thank you. And kind of at Hooks, and since you were a
13 supe there as well, do you feel like your communication with the
14 airport ops at Hooks was different as a facility than it is here
15 between air traffic control --

16 A. 100 percent different.

17 Q. Do you feel it was more positive?

18 A. No. I think here is probably more positive than Hooks.

19 Q. Okay. So when you guys are notified that a taxiway is
20 closed, how does that get passed down to the controllers?

21 A. Well, first, generally the ops, whoever is on duty over at
22 ops will call the tower phone. They'll let us know, hey, we're
23 about to close this taxiway. And, you know, we'll tell them,
24 okay, you know, roger. They'll hang up and then they'll call on
25 frequency to let them know. That's how we know it's officially

1 closed is when they call on frequency.

2 Q. Do you feel like there's a culture here where a controller
3 could say we need that taxiway, that's not -- that will affect our
4 operation? Or do you feel like that you're just told it's closed
5 and that's it, it's closed?

6 A. So generally if there's -- we have a limited amount of say.
7 I would say we have a very limited amount of say. If something is
8 going to like absolutely shut the airport down, like I can -- I
9 could probably convince them, or if there's going to be a safety
10 issue, I can generally convince them. Sometimes they're like, no,
11 there's nothing we can do, it has to -- if it's -- you know,
12 there's a big hole in the taxiway, we have to close it. So it
13 just depends on the situation.

14 Q. Are you guys allotted a staff support specialist position?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. How long has it been since you've had one?

17 A. July 4th.

18 Q. Okay. Has that lack of been a detriment to the operation?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. Do you know are they putting out -- is there an
21 opening for a vacancy announcement?

22 A. We're supposed to have one right now. It's a -- we pulled a
23 controller, and she's supposed to have started, but my
24 understanding she has not received the paperwork.

25 Q. Okay. Do you feel like the controller staffing is sufficient

1 to operate the needs here?

2 A. No.

3 Q. The number of positions you had open that day, do you feel
4 like that was appropriate for the amount of traffic and the
5 complexity?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. Correct me if I'm wrong. I think you guys had four
8 CPCs, yourself, and a developmental on that shift; is that
9 correct?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And you only had one CPC on break?

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. If you had needed to open another position, it would've
14 left --

15 A. Nobody on break.

16 Q. -- nobody on break?

17 A. Correct.

18 MS. McTEE: Okay. I think I'm good for now.

19 MR. SOPER: Thanks.

20 Kat?

21 BY DR. WILSON:

22 Q. I want to go back to the day of the event and get a little
23 bit more clarification on some of the things that you said. You
24 mentioned that when you got the call for the inbound you said you
25 were busy preparing for it. So what exactly are you doing? You

1 said you were filling out paperwork and --

2 A. Taking notes, preparing to -- so when there's an emergency,
3 we fill out an incident report or an occurrence report. And they
4 like to have details, timelines, that kind of thing, and so I
5 write down the specifics of the emergency. Notifying leadership
6 that this emergency was coming in, just, you know, not -- you
7 know, not to blindside them with that MOR when it came through on
8 the phone. Just prepping everybody, letting everybody know that
9 the emergency was inbound, and then ringing the ECN or activating
10 the ECN and getting emergency crews out there, making sure that
11 the DEF frequency was up, that they were prepared for that. And
12 then just kind of monitoring where that emergency was so that, you
13 know, we knew exactly how much time we had.

14 Q. How much time do you think all of that took?

15 A. I don't recall.

16 Q. So when there's not an inbound emergency, as the ops
17 supervisor -- I'm not a controller, so if you could just help me
18 understand like what are you doing? What are you looking for?
19 What -- you know, I have the paper like, you know, what your
20 duties and responsibilities are --

21 A. Sure.

22 Q. -- but how do you put that into action?

23 A. So, so I generally, I -- my workstation's in the back of the
24 tower. I've got an ASDE. I've got a radar display. I monitor
25 the operation. I make sure readbacks are correct. I make sure

1 that planes are going where they're supposed to -- if they take a
2 wrong heading, I alert the controller. Basically a second set of
3 eyes for the local controller. If I hear something going on, on
4 ground control, I'll -- you know, if something sounds like it's
5 weird over on ground, I'll switch over frequencies. I run the
6 rotation. I make sure that breaks are being administered
7 correctly. I make sure that training's being administered
8 correctly. I fill out occurrence reports. You're talking about
9 on a daily basis?

10 Q. Um-hum.

11 A. Okay. That's the gist of it.

12 Q. Okay. So is there -- and again, not a controller. So, you
13 know, you're now dealing with this inbound. How does that affect
14 operations? Because like you said, you're that second set of eyes
15 and monitoring everything that's going on, so how do you balance
16 those responsibilities with also handling the inbound?

17 A. I'm not sure how to answer that. You just do. So you try --
18 I mean, I don't know, everybody out there is trained so well,
19 it's -- you know, that team is -- you almost don't have to -- I
20 mean, everybody knows what to do when an emergency is inbound, you
21 almost don't have to tell people. But you kind of -- you just
22 check and make sure that everybody's doing what they need to do,
23 making sure the DEF frequency's up. We did have training on
24 ground, so, you know, for instance, making sure that he had that
25 keyed up, you know, he's making sure that he is transmitting when

1 he needed to transmit, was not transmitting when he needed to stop
2 transmitting. I'm not sure how to answer that other than that.

3 Q. Okay. Do you think you were, do you think you were able to
4 do both duties simultaneously?

5 A. Monitor what was going on in the operation and the emergency?

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. No. I mean, it's -- I mean, you're switching back and forth.
8 You're prioritizing the emergency and then you're going back to
9 the operation when you can and then you're going back to the
10 emergency. So it's kind of a back and forth.

11 Q. Okay. You mentioned rotating the controllers when they go on
12 break?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. How do you handle that? How do you determine when
15 it's time for a controller to take a break?

16 A. So it depends on how many people we have. The staffing
17 levels that we generally have here, the way it works is the
18 controllers will go on about a 35-minute break and they'll come up
19 and they'll work an hour and 45 minutes. And that kind of -- that
20 makes it equitable and it gives them enough of a break to get some
21 kind of a -- what's the word I'm looking for -- restorative mental
22 capacity. So I try to keep the breaks minimum 30 minutes if I
23 can. Occasionally I'm not able to, but that's how the rotation
24 runs. If we're short on people, the breaks obviously are shorter.
25 If we have more people, obviously the breaks are longer.

1 Q. What if a controller said, I need a break?

2 A. You try to accommodate them as best you can. If I'm able to,
3 I'll switch positions around. For example, if somebody's working
4 local control and they say they need a break and I'm not able to
5 accommodate that, I would switch them out with a clearance
6 delivery controller potentially if that controller had the
7 certifications to go up there. Or if I really need to, I just cut
8 somebody's short break -- break short and it is what it is.

9 Q. Now the event has occurred, the collision, and you said after
10 that it was just a waiting game. But tell me what were your
11 duties, what were your responsibilities or actions after the event
12 occurred.

13 A. So immediately after it happened, it was -- you know, I think
14 everybody was kind of in shock and I know the first thing I said
15 was, they clipped -- did they clip? Did they clip? And I know, I
16 think it was the ground -- the trainer at ground, he's like, yeah,
17 they clipped. So I ran to the ECN, activated it again, this time
18 an Alert 3, for the two that had impacted at the intersection.
19 And that took a while to get that information out because I was
20 kind of -- I was in a state of shock. I'm not sure that that ECN
21 is recorded here. I'm sure it's recorded somewhere. It goes out
22 to a bunch of different people. And I'm sure I sound terrible on
23 that, but --

24 I knew it took a long time to get that information out. Once
25 I did that, I started coordinating with approach control because

1 they had called us previously to let us know that they were going
2 to slam us with arrivals to get those arrivals in before the
3 emergency, because they knew that the runway was going to be FOD'd
4 out. So we were inundated with arrivals. Called to let them know
5 that we weren't going to be able to take any arrivals, but the
6 clearance delivery controller had already called them while I was
7 on the ECN and he let me know that he had done that. So I called
8 over to the satellite controller that was going to receive all the
9 go-arounds that we had to send around, telling -- just to let him
10 know, hey, you're going to get about four or five aircraft right
11 in a row.

12 After that, I -- it's kind of a blur. I don't really recall.
13 I know we were watching the aircraft come around for his right
14 base and we were -- you know, Jon was trying to pull that
15 Southwest up to expedite his climb. We were kind of --
16 everybody's watching that out the window. And that's -- after
17 that, once they got on the ground, I know I just started making
18 notifications at that point.

19 Q. One more question related to that. So, you know, obviously
20 the local controller, Jon, he -- Jeff, I'm sorry, right? No,
21 you're Jeff?

22 A. I'm Jeff.

23 Q. He's Jon?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. J's, my mind is getting them confused. Okay. So, you know,

1 he's got a lot to handle, too, right? He just had this event that
2 occurred. So how do you like manage him to make sure that he's
3 doing what he needs to do and, you know, and how can some of his
4 work load be offloaded? Is there --

5 A. So that's why I was coordinating with I90 approach to let
6 them know, number one, so that he could concentrate on what he
7 needed to concentrate on. I -- it's hard to balance the two,
8 between making sure that he's doing what he needs to do -- I know,
9 you know, after he, after he had -- you know, after he watched
10 those planes come together, I know that he was probably
11 traumatized just as much as -- probably more than anybody else in
12 the tower, and I -- I'm not sure how to manage both. I know that
13 the clearance delivery controller was helping me out with
14 coordinating with I90. I don't know.

15 Q. Do you guys have training for that? Is there any like -- do
16 you run scenarios of something like this happening and how do you
17 work through all of that?

18 A. No. I don't believe so. I believe it's just -- it's
19 experience. You get small, minor emergencies. You run through
20 them a few times and that's just kind of -- it's instinct after
21 that, I think, just how -- I mean, that's why I rang the ECN after
22 these planes came down. I mean, the emergency crews are already
23 out on the field, but I ran to the ECN. I think it was just
24 instinct. So I -- no, we don't do training, at least here we
25 don't.

1 DR. WILSON: Okay. Thank you, Jeff.

2 MR. SOPER: Thanks.

3 Mike?

4 BY MR. VANDINI:

5 Q. Hey, Jeff, a couple things. Did you -- were you doing the --
6 did you do the post-event checklist?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. And I'm just going to read out a thing here. It says,
9 what was the OS who was providing operational oversight doing at
10 the time of the event? And on the checklist here it says, OS was
11 observing operation and monitoring frequencies. But you're
12 telling me that you were on a phone call talking to your ATM.

13 A. Are you talking about the SRT or --

14 Q. The event, the collision.

15 A. The 80-20?

16 Q. It's the post-event checklist afterwards, you know what I
17 mean, they ask you to do it. And then they do the SRT after --
18 off that post-event checklist.

19 A. I'm not sure that we're talking about the same form.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I filled out an 80-20, which is an accident --

22 Q. No. It's (indiscernible).

23 A. Oh, okay. No, I did not fill that form.

24 Q. Okay. Because on here it says if you were, you know -- then
25 this is not -- what you're saying is that you were talking to the

1 ATM about Southwest coming in, you know, that you were going to do
2 a properly, you know, give a -- put a MOR on the --

3 A. Right.

4 Q. -- inbound that was happening. And then are you on the phone
5 with her when they collided?

6 A. No. I had -- I believe I had just hung up leaving a
7 voicemail, letting her know that there was an emergency inbound.

8 Q. Seconds? Minutes?

9 A. Seconds.

10 Q. Okay. Then that explains it, so -- my question was what were
11 you doing at the time of the incident?

12 So providing guidance, now you got the Southwest emergency
13 coming in, and I think we asked this already, I mean, you're
14 yelling it out and say, hey, this is Southwest call sign. What
15 was it? I mean, was it a flat tire? What was it? A nose gear
16 issue? What --

17 A. It was the left -- number 1 left main gear had some sort of
18 issue. And I think the way they described it, I believe was a
19 flat tire. I -- let me strike that. I'm not 100 percent sure.
20 It was a left -- number 1 left main gear issue.

21 Q. And the reason I'm asking, because I couldn't find the MOR,
22 did you put an MOR on it?

23 A. No, because they didn't land here.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. We didn't actually handle the emergency.

1 Q. Okay. So when you called in you got Alert 2 already, so
2 they're already out there for the Alert 2 for Southwest coming in?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. So in the communication for the Alert 3, how easy was that to
5 say, hey, you know, I got the Alert 3? But they're already in
6 position, aren't they?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. So that was an easy transition for you to go from Alert 2 to
9 Alert 3?

10 A. Well, everybody in the fire station had already left.

11 Q. Okay. So --

12 A. So nobody -- so I'm on the ECN. Nobody at fire even knew
13 that this was happening. Ops, I believe ops answered me. I'm not
14 100 percent sure on that. I believe somebody from air side
15 answered and said that they received the information. Fire did
16 not know.

17 Q. Okay. So they didn't even know Alert 3 was called?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. And you don't know who transmitted to them if there was an
20 Alert 3?

21 A. Correct. And my understanding is that they did not know
22 there even was an Alert 3.

23 Q. So basically when the firehouse is out, there's nobody to
24 take the call?

25 A. That's correct.

1 Q. Okay. Providing -- I'm sorry. Time on position. When
2 you're providing operational oversight up in the tower cab, how
3 much time are you up in that cab?

4 A. A long time.

5 Q. What is your -- what do you think it is in a day? On a daily
6 basis, what do you think your hours are?

7 A. Seven hours.

8 Q. I appreciate that. All right. The biggest thing I have now
9 is the LUAW. When you come in and preview your duty of your day,
10 whether it's afternoon, who decides LUAW is in effect? Who makes
11 that decision?

12 A. It's always in effect.

13 Q. It's always in effect?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. Except when you combine positions?

16 A. Correct. Correct. Yes, I -- yes.

17 Q. Like if you're not up there or whatever it's got to be a CIC
18 or a standalone, right?

19 A. Standalone CIC, correct. Or no, no, no -- I'm sorry -- not
20 standalone CIC. The control positions ground and local cannot be
21 combined. CIC can be combined with clearance delivery and still
22 have line up and wait.

23 Q. CIC can be combined with clearance delivery and still LUAW?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. All right. So you're saying that you're monitoring up there

1 and you're looking for phraseology. So when you're in a LUAW what
2 are listening for?

3 A. Mostly readbacks. That's the big thing, is --

4 Q. You're sitting -- you're plugged in listening to local?

5 A. Correct. I mean, during the incident or just --

6 Q. Normal time, just normal --

7 A. Right. Yeah. The big thing is the readback. A big thing is
8 the readback, making sure that they're actually complying with the
9 instructions.

10 Q. How about traffic?

11 A. I mean, we're monitoring traffic too.

12 Q. No, no, LUAW 2.2 traffic is.

13 A. So it is an expectation that traffic is supposed to be
14 exchanged. Do I harp on it? No. And in retrospect, I mean, in
15 light of this incident, you know, probably maybe we should more.
16 But it's -- the big thing is the readback and compliance.

17 Q. And I know you haven't heard -- you haven't listened to the
18 tape or you haven't seen the Falcon since the day, right? My next
19 question is, you don't -- did you hear what the local's
20 transmission was?

21 A. I have heard it, yes.

22 Q. Okay. Do you think if he would've given traffic in might
23 have --

24 A. My personal opinion?

25 Q. Yes.

1 MR. MURRMANN: Should I speculate?

2 MS. LIPE: I wouldn't speculate.

3 MR. MURRMANN: I would like to not answer that question.

4 BY MR. VANDINI:

5 Q. So but you also say you do on-the-spot corrections?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So in this case, do you think that warrants an on-the-spot
8 correction? It's line up and wait, traffic is needed to be
9 exchanged?

10 A. I -- yes.

11 Q. Is the phone call -- is the phone line recorded upstairs?

12 A. Yes.

13 MR. VANDINI: That's all I have. Thanks. I appreciate it.

14 BY MR. SOPER:

15 Q. I'm going to shift you back a little bit to the OS staffing
16 again. So how long have you been at two of four?

17 A. So we -- so it was just me for a while. Then we picked up a
18 controller off an SOI, and she was on a 6-month detail.

19 Q. What is an SOI, just for --

20 A. A solicitation of interest.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. She was on a 6-month detail which ended this past Sunday.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So there were two of us and then we had another supervisor
25 come in from a different facility who was training. I believe he

1 checked out roughly a month and a half ago. So we had three for a
2 short amount of time and now we're back down to two.

3 Q. Okay. How long were you by yourself before that other SOI
4 came in?

5 A. I don't recall.

6 Q. More than 6 months?

7 A. No. I would -- if I had to guess, it was between 3 and 6
8 months.

9 Q. And then prior to that you had just one other one with you,
10 was that the deal for a while?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. And are you able to conduct appropriate performance
13 management in this configuration with your current staffing?

14 A. No.

15 Q. What is your -- how much responsibility do you have in
16 conducting OSAs and that type of thing? Responsibility wise and
17 how much are you able to actually --

18 A. So I was informed recently -- the ATM was performing the
19 OSAs. I was informed recently that the district wanted the
20 supervisors to do the OSAs because they thought that the
21 performance of the controllers was different when the ATM was
22 upstairs. And so I took on the OSA responsibility about a month
23 ago and I've been able to perform one OSA since.

24 Q. One?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. Okay, back a little bit. I'm going to bounce around a
2 little bit probably because I have a little bit of different
3 things. So back to the construction evolution here. I'm trying
4 to find a way to quantify the impact this has to your operation.
5 I don't know what terminology to use and I don't if maybe you
6 could help me just because you've been living it and you're trying
7 to mitigate it as well. And that is, I mean, so the -- it's a
8 little bit crazy to me, not -- I mean, not completely insane, but
9 it is a little bit crazy to me that it sounds like from everybody
10 we've talked to so far, that at least of late there's very little
11 collaborative decision making going on with regard to closures and
12 construction. It's more of a notification process: They're
13 telling us, hey, we're taking these out and you guys are just,
14 dealing with it, trying to mitigate that.

15 A. I would agree with that.

16 Q. Okay. And how -- I guess maybe just tell me in your own
17 words what do you believe is the true impact to the operation
18 since they've done this more like this and you're getting very
19 little or appear to be getting very little say-so in it. How is
20 that impacting your ability to efficiently and safely move traffic
21 up there as a watch team as a whole? You know, I guess just in
22 your own words, what is the impact to you?

23 A. It's significant. I -- we have to find weird taxi routes
24 that pilots aren't used to. We have to utilize runways as
25 taxiways. We have to take aircraft the long way around sometimes

1 and it's, you know, a delay to the customer. And a lot more
2 runway crossings if we do go the long way, a lot more
3 coordination, just a lot more work.

4 Q. Okay. Out of curiosity, is it -- do you currently leave it
5 mostly up to the controller to determine what they need to do to
6 accommodate the construction or do you brief the controllers or is
7 there something put out by the facility that, okay, these are the
8 closures today, these are our routes that we're using, I need
9 everybody -- how does that work?

10 A. So it was my -- so I was instructing controllers on which
11 routes to use and there was a -- a controller did not agree with
12 that, went to my ATM, complained about it, filed an ATSAP about
13 the taxi routes that I was instructing them to use. And so after
14 that, I let them determine which taxiways.

15 Q. I'm assuming that was the previous ATM, right, because this
16 one's only been here a few days?

17 A. It was last week.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Yeah. So actually both my new ATM and the old ATM were in
20 the office when she went in there and complained about it.

21 Q. Okay. All right. Very well. Have you noted a lot of
22 concern from the workforce in general about this situation? You
23 know, do they voice it to you at all or --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- are you just hearing general -- they do?

1 A. Yeah. Yeah. Lots of, lots of concern.

2 Q. Okay. Do you have any regular meetings with the air traffic
3 manager here? Like I know you just had a changeover so there
4 might not be anything in place with her yet because she's been
5 drinking from a fire hose a bit the last few days. But prior to
6 that, did you have regular management meetings or supervisory
7 meetings where you met with the ATM at a certain periodicity or
8 have anything?

9 A. We were supposed to meet on a weekly basis. That did not
10 occur. We -- at best it was monthly, where all the supervisors
11 got together and met with the ATM. And the last few, the NATCA
12 rep was in the meeting at the very beginning.

13 Q. Okay. Were they productive? The ones that you did have, did
14 you feel like they were productive or did you feel like they, you
15 know, were addressing things or that you would -- you were talking
16 about?

17 A. They were productive in the sense that it was information
18 that was being either passed down from the district or from the
19 construction meetings, expectations from the ATM for supervisors
20 and us, for us to pass along to the controllers.

21 Q. Okay. Just -- this is a little bit of a retrospective
22 question, but considering what occurred here, and somebody asked
23 you earlier, do you guys train any type of scenario-based training
24 regarding these type of emergencies or maybe construction on
25 the field -- operations with construction?

1 A. We're supposed to refresher training, which I believe is
2 supposed to cover events such as emergencies, but not so much
3 construction, taxiway closures, but more unusual situations.

4 Q. Okay. As far as utilizing a simulator -- so I understand you
5 guys have a simulator -- no, wait, you guys don't have one. There
6 is a simulator at IAH that has scenarios for this airport. You
7 can go over there, you could go over there and utilize that?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. Right now, I don't even know how you could do it, but --
10 because you don't have staffing, I don't think, that would allow
11 for it hardly, I mean, to be able to send maybe one. But, I mean,
12 that being said, do you think there would be value if you had
13 appropriate staffing to be able to more regularly use that
14 simulator to potentially do things like, you know, maybe have some
15 sort of proficiency training or something like that that --

16 A. Yes. Absolutely, to deal with unusual situations.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. All right. Good.

20 MR. SOPER: All right. That's all I have for right now. I'm
21 going to go ahead and pass it along to Sarah.

22 BY MS. LEWIS:

23 Q. I have a couple of things to kind of tidy up a little bit.
24 You were talking about a DEF frequency. Is that an acronym for
25 something? Can you tell me about that?

1 A. It is an acronym. I don't know what it stands for.

2 Q. Okay. What is it exactly?

3 A. It's our emergency frequency. It's 120.2. We use it
4 generally for emergencies for the emergency crews to talk to
5 pilots off of the main frequency so that there's not radio
6 congestion and we're still able to move traffic while they're
7 dealing with the emergency.

8 Q. Okay. Awesome. Do you remember where the emergency
9 Southwest was in this sequence?

10 A. They -- I don't -- I'm not sure they had a sequence yet.

11 Q. Okay. So, okay, very good. I wanted to talk a little bit
12 about some of the situations you have to incur as being basically
13 either the only supervisor or one of a skeleton crew supervisor.
14 Is it difficult to get your administrative activities done?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. How do you manage to get some of those things done?

17 A. Credit, credit hours. I stay in the operation until pretty
18 much the end of my shift, and then I come downstairs and I work
19 credit to get admin, if my brain will allow me to do it. Recently
20 I've been burnt out. I've gone far behind on admin, so --

21 Q. How does that affect you in your life here at work or at
22 home?

23 A. It's frustrating. I'm -- I don't like coming to work
24 anymore. My -- I try to compartmentalize it when I go home.
25 Luckily I've got a long commute and so I get to kind of relax a

1 little bit. I know that's weird in Houston traffic, but I do, I
2 relax a little bit on my way home so I'm a little less frustrated
3 when I get home. But it does, it affects it as well. I stay late
4 and my wife is not happy about me working as many hours as I'm
5 working. And just, it's inconsistent. I think if she knew that I
6 was going to work extra hours, she'd be more okay with it. But
7 it's -- you know, sometimes things just get piled on right at the
8 last minute. It's like, well, I've got to -- I have to handle
9 this right now, and I don't get home until 3 hours later than I'm
10 supposed to. So --

11 Q. It sounds like it could bring extra stressors from outside
12 into your situation here, too.

13 A. Again, I try to compartmentalize. It's -- I think it's
14 impossible to, but I do try to compartmentalize. I do not --
15 again, I don't like coming into work as much as I used to.

16 Q. I totally get the long commute. I do 2 hours into D.C.

17 A. Oh, wow.

18 Q. So I get it. And it's actually a pretty nice mental health
19 break --

20 A. Right.

21 Q. -- doing something for yourself on that time. So that's kind
22 of a good thing and making a good thing out of a not-so-good
23 situation maybe.

24 Are you tasked with -- and you kind of touched on this a
25 little bit, but are you tasked with other duties that are not

1 normally done by a supervisor because of the situation with the
2 staffing here?

3 A. I probably have taken on a little bit of the staff support in
4 some sense, but I can't give you any specific examples right off
5 the top of my head. I know -- I mean, this is a very small thing,
6 but I know that the staff support used to do the pre-duty weather
7 briefs. He used to print those out at the beginning of the month,
8 now I do that. I can't -- I know that I do, I just can't, I can't
9 think of anything right now.

10 Q. That's totally fine. Are you able to go to some of your
11 supervisor classes for the training that you need to do, just even
12 routine, you know, normal stuff that supervisors are sent to, in
13 this situation that you guys are in?

14 A. I haven't been to any training in quite a ways back, but I'm
15 not sure -- the only training I've gone to, and it's not
16 specifically supervisor training, is recurrent cadre training. So
17 I teach recurrent training and I've gone to that. As far as like
18 OSW or any of that stuff, I have not been since I've been here.

19 Q. With a new supervisor coming in, it appears that eventually
20 once -- is that new supervisor checked out yet or are they in
21 training status?

22 A. No, he's checked out. He checked out, I think, about a month
23 and a half ago.

24 Q. Oh, good. That's right, you did say that. I apologize. Are
25 you able to offload some of your duties to him, like even

1 something like the cadre training, because you have so much going
2 on yourself? I mean, even that one you can't do until maybe next
3 time.

4 A. Well, he essentially took over the supervisor's -- the
5 supervisor that was on the SOI, he essentially took over her
6 duties.

7 Q. Okay. Let's see. Oh, I wanted to go back around to the
8 OSAs. Just for our clarification, what does OSA mean?

9 A. I don't recall what the acronym --

10 Q. That's completely fine. Do you know -- you said you were
11 able to do, you know, once a month because of, you know, the
12 staffing constraints you've got here. Is there a requirement to
13 have a certain amount a month; do you know?

14 A. There is. I don't recall what the number is. I just know
15 that I have not gotten to them.

16 Q. Right. And obviously because of the staffing issues for
17 that?

18 A. Yes.

19 MS. LEWIS: Okay. I think I'm good. That was it.

20 MR. SOPER: Great.

21 Kristen?

22 BY MS. McTEE:

23 Q. Are you on the local safety council?

24 A. I am not.

25 Q. So is it -- as far as you know, is the ATM and management

1 part of the local safety council then?

2 A. The previous ATM was, and I'm not sure how that's --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. No, you know what? I'm sorry. I think the other OS, the
5 other OS is on LSC, I believe.

6 Q. Okay. That's okay. I was just curious. How quickly, if you
7 remember, was the local controller that was involved in this
8 incident given a break post-incident?

9 A. How long had he been on position?

10 Q. Well, I mean, after the incident happened, how quickly did
11 you get him off position --

12 A. Oh. I --

13 Q. -- a traumatized controller?

14 A. I -- after I rang the ECN and coordinated with I90, that was
15 the first thing I did, was call the controller up for a break. So
16 5 minutes?

17 Q. Okay. Great. How would you say the management-controller
18 relationship is here?

19 A. Generally good. I think there is some individuals that don't
20 care for management and I think they're very loud, but I would say
21 I think like 75 percent of the union members are okay with
22 management.

23 Q. Would you say there is a comfortable environment for a
24 controller to speak to a manager about a concern? Would you say
25 that most controllers here seem comfortable talking to management

1 about an operational concern or an issue they're having with the
2 facility? Would you say that kind of communication happening?

3 A. I believe so. From my perspective, I don't have a problem
4 with controllers coming to me with concerns. I do have a problem
5 with controllers telling me what I need to do, which has happened.
6 And there may be, you know, controllers that are apprehensive now
7 to come to me because they've addressed it the incorrect way. But
8 I think generally speaking, I think most people are okay coming
9 with concerns to management.

10 MS. McTEE: And I think that's all I have.

11 MR. SOPER: Thanks.

12 Kat?

13 BY DR. WILSON:

14 Q. Following on with that, how is your relationship with Jon?

15 A. Generally good. I'm not sure that I'm -- I'm not -- I don't
16 know how Jon feels about me. He's kind of an enigma to me. He
17 was a supervisor previously. I do feel -- I'm not sure that he
18 always thinks that I'm doing a good job, if that makes sense.
19 I -- just from his mannerisms and tone sometimes occasionally, I'm
20 like, okay, well, he -- yeah. But I don't have a problem with Jon
21 at all. I think that he's a solid controller. He's a pretty
22 solid guy, you know, just personally. So that's the relationship.
23 Q. Okay. Brian had mentioned that I would ask questions about
24 the 72-hour history, so it might tax your brain a little bit
25 having to remember sleep and wake times. But let's go back to

1 Saturday, which -- let's see what date -- that date would have
2 been the 21st of October. If you've got a calendar, you're
3 welcome to pull it out, too. I follow my calendar for everything.

4 A. Okay. It would help.

5 Q. Do you recall what time you might have woken up on Saturday?

6 A. I don't recall.

7 Q. Okay. What your activities might have been?

8 A. Saturday -- no. But tell you what, if I can go look in my
9 phone and maybe look for some text messages and kind of see what,
10 you know, what my conversations were, I could probably give you a
11 better idea of what we were doing.

12 Q. Okay. I mean, I don't need to know details. But were you
13 working?

14 A. I was. Yes. I had overtime. Thank you. Yeah, I was on
15 overtime.

16 Q. All right. Do you recall what times you worked?

17 A. I know originally I was supposed to be the 1 o'clock shift,
18 but I -- for some reason, I'm feeling like I may have moved to the
19 morning shift. I don't recall.

20 Q. Okay. Any idea of when you might have gone to bed on
21 Saturday night?

22 A. Probably between 10 and midnight.

23 Q. Okay. How about on Sunday morning, what time do you think
24 you woke up?

25 A. 9:30.

- 1 Q. Do you wake up to an alarm or do you usually wake up --
- 2 A. Not if I'm not working.
- 3 Q. Okay. Were you working on Sunday?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. Did you have any problems falling asleep or staying asleep
- 6 during that night?
- 7 A. Not that I recall.
- 8 Q. Okay. And then, so you had Sunday off?
- 9 A. Um-hum.
- 10 Q. Anything unusual about your activities that day?
- 11 A. We had -- my wife and I had just found out that a tenant had
- 12 abandoned a property that we own and so we were dealing with the
- 13 fallout with that.
- 14 Q. Okay. What time do you think you went to bed on Sunday?
- 15 A. Probably around 9:30 to 10.
- 16 Q. Okay. Any problems that you recall falling asleep or staying
- 17 asleep?
- 18 A. Not that I recall.
- 19 Q. Okay. Monday, when you think you woke up?
- 20 A. Around 7:30.
- 21 Q. By an alarm or on your own?
- 22 A. My wife works 9 to 5, so she leaves about that time and
- 23 that's when I wake up.
- 24 Q. Did you work on Monday?
- 25 A. I did.

- 1 Q. Do you recall what time your shift was?
- 2 A. The 1 to 9 shift.
- 3 Q. Do you nap if you wake up at 7:30 before you go on shift
- 4 or --
- 5 A. Not generally, no.
- 6 Q. Did you nap that day, by any chance?
- 7 A. No.
- 8 Q. No. Okay. And then, so -- and you said you have a long
- 9 commute, so what time do you -- or how long is your commute,
- 10 rather?
- 11 A. About an hour.
- 12 Q. Okay. You work till 9, home 10ish, on Monday night?
- 13 A. Correct.
- 14 Q. What time do you think you went to bed?
- 15 A. Probably about 11.
- 16 Q. Any problems falling asleep or staying asleep that you
- 17 recall?
- 18 A. Not that I recall.
- 19 Q. So Tuesday morning, day of the event, what time do you think
- 20 you woke up?
- 21 A. Seven o'clock.
- 22 Q. By an alarm?
- 23 A. No.
- 24 Q. Okay. Same with your wife?
- 25 A. Correct.

- 1 Q. Okay. How did you feel that morning?
- 2 A. Good.
- 3 Q. Yeah.
- 4 A. Yep.
- 5 Q. And what time did you come on shift?
- 6 A. 1:15.
- 7 Q. Do you drink caffeine?
- 8 A. I do.
- 9 Q. Yeah. Did you -- I mean, do you have coffee in the morning?
- 10 Do you do it before your shift --
- 11 A. It's generally an energy drink, and I generally either bring
- 12 one from home or I pick one up at the gas station across the
- 13 street right before the shift, and I generally sip on it
- 14 throughout the shift. I almost never finish it. It's usually,
- 15 usually about a half a can by the time I get home. And I cannot
- 16 recall if I had one that day. I believe, I believe that I did
- 17 though.
- 18 Q. Anything unusual, you know, either in the morning before you
- 19 came on shift or in the, you know, hour or two before the incident
- 20 occurred?
- 21 A. Not that I recall.
- 22 Q. Okay. And how did you feel once you were on shift in terms
- 23 of did you feel rested?
- 24 A. I felt rested, yes.
- 25 Q. Great. Anything else that you can think of? I know you

1 mentioned feeling a little burnt out, so was that impacting you at
2 all that day? How did you feel?

3 A. I mean, that's just a general everyday -- yeah, I'm -- yes,
4 it was affecting me that day.

5 Q. Do you think that that -- I mean, how do you think that's
6 impacting your work?

7 A. So the first 2 hours that I'm upstairs, I'm generally good,
8 I'm focused 100 percent either on the operation or operational
9 duties. After that second hour, it starts to slide. I would say
10 my focus between hours 2 and 3 is probably closer to 90 percent.
11 After that, it's a downhill slide. After that, it's probably --
12 I'm probably working at about a 70 percent capacity. That is if
13 everything's routine. Now if something is happening, like an
14 emergency, obviously, you know, I start to function on all
15 cylinders again, so to speak. But it does -- it is very hard for
16 me to stay engaged after about 2½, 3 hours, to really maintain the
17 focus that the supervisor position requires, I think.

18 Q. Do you have a -- what is your schedule like just in general,
19 your work schedule?

20 A. Generally Monday -- so I have Saturday, Sunday off. And the
21 first 2 days back, Monday, Tuesday, I generally work 1 to 9, and
22 then Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, I work 7 to 3.

23 Q. And do you like that schedule?

24 A. For the most part, yeah. It works. I think I prefer a
25 regular 9 to 5 office hours, but, I mean, for shift work, it's not

1 bad. I mean, it's better than the controllers have, for sure.

2 Q. Do you find on the weekends that you sleep later? You know,
3 so maybe during when your work -- let me back up. I'm asking too
4 many questions at once. When you're working, about how many hours
5 of sleep do you think you get at night?

6 A. Monday -- so for work Monday, I'm coming to work on about
7 probably 8, 8 or 9 hours of sleep; Tuesday 7 hours; Wednesday not
8 nearly as many, probably 5 to 6; and then Thursday and Friday
9 probably between 7 and 8.

10 Q. So, and then on the weekends do you find yourself sleeping
11 longer?

12 A. No. Well, maybe. Maybe a little bit, but I tend to stay up
13 a little bit later, too, so that's hard to say. I -- it's hard to
14 say. It's not consistent at all.

15 Q. Okay. It's not uncommon for people who do shift work to, you
16 know, kind of make up for that sleep that they're not getting
17 during the week when they're working. That's just for people in
18 general, doesn't even have to be shift work. We all like crunch
19 our sleep during the workweek, right, and then on the weekends we
20 sleep in till 10 or 11 to kind of catch up on that. So thanks for
21 your candidness.

22 DR. WILSON: That's all I have right now. Thanks.

23 MR. SOPER: Thanks, Kat.

24 Mike?

25 MR. VANDINI: I have nothing else.

1 MR. SOPER: Awesome. I actually don't have anything else
2 right now. I do have one more question that I'll wrap up with,
3 but I want to check with these guys to see if they have anything.

4 (No response.)

5 BY MR. SOPER:

6 Q. All right. So I do have one last one. So in retrospect now
7 looking back on the event, you've seen the replays, had some time
8 to think about it, you know what was going on up there at the
9 time, if you could just kind of point out to me any successes,
10 failures, and lessons learned? So what do you think was successes
11 in here, what do you think may have been failures or you identify
12 as failures, and is there any lessons learned from this that
13 changes the way either that you approach the watch team moving
14 forward?

15 A. So obviously the big one is the traffic calls. Moving
16 forward, I mean, that's going to be a big emphasis item in this
17 facility. I don't think anybody is going to have a problem with
18 that, especially considering the events that occurred.

19 Q. Sure.

20 A. The -- and let me just put this out here. The team that I
21 had up there, the crew, I think they did a fantastic job overall.

22 Q. I agree with you. Just so you know, I mean, I -- we identify
23 that there's --

24 A. I'm glad Jon was on position when this happened. He is a
25 solid controller. I'm not happy that happened to him, but I am

1 glad that he was the one that was working because of the recovery.
2 I think he did a fantastic job. I think he did as good a job as
3 anybody could have done up there. So -- sorry.

4 Q. That's okay. Take a break?

5 A. Okay. Yes.

6 MR. SOPER: Yeah. Step out for a sec. I'm going to go ahead
7 and stop the recording and let you step out.

8 (Off the record.)

9 (On the record at 12:58 p.m.)

10 MR. SOPER: All right. So we're back again. I show the time
11 at 12:58.

12 BY MR. SOPER:

13 Q. So -- all right. So you were kind of explaining to us, you
14 know you were glad Jon was up in the operation at the time because
15 of the controllers you have, you thought he handled it very well.
16 And go ahead and carry on from there. What else --

17 A. I think the team worked well. I think everybody knew exactly
18 what they needed to do at the time. Everybody's worked together
19 for a substantial amount of time so everybody knows how everybody
20 else works. They work well together. And where -- you know, if
21 Corey saw that I needed help with something, he stepped in and did
22 it; where EJ knew that I needed help doing something; Michael
23 Brozgal knew that I needed help or -- you know, he knew what his
24 role in the emergency was, dealing with the emergency vehicles and
25 the aircraft as they came off the runway. So I think the

1 successes there were the tower team concept. I think we did very
2 well there. Obviously the traffic call, we talked about that,
3 could have been better.

4 And then lessons learned, I'm not -- you know, other than the
5 traffic call, I'm not sure that there are. I'm not sure what else
6 we could have done in that situation to prevent the planes from
7 coming together.

8 Q. That's fine. Okay. So just real quick about the supe
9 situation. So are you guys, have you had bids open long term that
10 you're just not able to fill or are they not even able to get to
11 that point hardly?

12 A. I know that we had one bid and I know that we have somebody
13 coming in December from Kansas City downtown, I believe. But the
14 SOI was really just to put a band aid on, you know --

15 Q. I understand.

16 A. -- on it just being me, which did help a little bit. But I
17 don't know that there's another bid out for a supervisor.

18 Q. Okay.

19 MS. McTEE: Can you clarify, SOI, that's in-house, correct?

20 MR. MURRMANN: It can. It can be in-house or it can be -- it
21 depends on -- I'm not sure how they work exactly, but this -- I'm
22 not sure how they work exactly.

23 MS. McTEE: I'm more just -- and that one specifically, was
24 it in-house or was it external?

25 MR. MURRMANN: I don't recall. The person that we picked up

1 was in-house, but I don't know if the SOI was specifically for
2 somebody in-house. I believe it probably was because we needed
3 somebody immediately.

4 BY MR. SOPER:

5 Q. Yeah, I was kind of curious because you had said earlier when
6 you were talking about you -- there was an offer out. Is that
7 the -- or there was one they were waiting on the paperwork. Is
8 that the one you're talking about coming from Kansas City?

9 A. Um-hum. No. No, the controller that was on the solicitation
10 of interest that was in-house that was a controller, took the
11 solicitation of interest for a 6-month detail.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. The detail expired and she got picked up as a support
14 specialist, but apparently has not received the paperwork.

15 Q. That's the one. It was the support specialist. But that
16 support specialist is coming from in-house then?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. If it's that one.

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. So you lose another there.

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. All right. Interesting.

23 MR. SOPER: Yes?

24 MS. McTEE: Do you think it's appropriate to be taking from
25 an already short pool of people to add to another short pool of

1 people?

2 MR. MURRMANN: I -- I'm not going to speculate on that.

3 MS. McTEE: Okay.

4 BY DR. WILSON:

5 Q. I just have a question, if you don't mind.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. It's changing the topic, but the line up and wait call -- so
8 help educate me, again, non-controller here. So when you give
9 someone that, you know, line up and wait, the expectation is,
10 right, they read it back and they're just going to do that?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. Is there time to look, you know, and confirm that they're
13 waiting or is that just -- you just leave it at the expectation
14 because, you know, now you're making sure that landing traffic is
15 coming in, like --

16 A. Well, the expectation is that they do it, but we're supposed
17 to -- that we tell them and that they do what they read back, that
18 they're going to -- that they say they're going to do, but the
19 expectation is also to verify compliance. So, yes, there is time
20 to look and we should be looking.

21 Q. Thanks. I appreciate that.

22 MR. SOPER: Any "oh, by the ways"?

23 Let's get you out of the hotbox here. It's hot in here. So
24 do you have any questions for us before we break?

25 MR. MURRMANN: I don't.

1 MR. SOPER: Okay. I show the time at 1302; is that right?

2 Thank you.

3 (Whereupon, at 1:02 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

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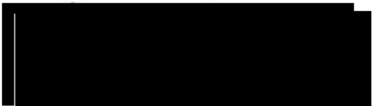
IN THE MATTER OF: HAWKER 800 COLLIDES WITH CESSNA
 CITATION MUSTANG AT THE WILLIAM P.
 HOBBY AIRPORT IN HOUSTON, TEXAS
 ON OCTOBER 24, 2023
 Interview of Jeffrey Murrmann

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA0017

PLACE: Houston, Texas

DATE: October 27, 2023

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