

DCA24FA143

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

Group Chairman's Factual Report - Attachment 6

Interview Transcripts

May 29, 2025

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: DOUGLAS VACCARELLA, STMC

Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville ATC Tower
Jacksonville, Florida

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D.C. Area 301-261-1902
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(On behalf of Mr. Vaccarella)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:07 a.m.)

MS. KOSCHIG: It is 11:07 Eastern Daylight Time -- Standard Time. So, again, good morning. My name is Betty Koschig, and I'm a senior investigator at the NTSB. Could you please state your name?

MR. VACCARELLA: Douglas Vaccarella.

MS. KOSCHIG: Could you spell your last name?

MR. VACCARELLA: V as in victor, A-C-C-A-R-E-L-L-A.

MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Great. So, again, thanks for being here, but before we get started on anything, I just wanted to make sure that you're aware that this interview is being recorded. And were you briefed on that?

MR. VACCARELLA: Yes, I was.

MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. So you don't have any problem with that?

MR. VACCARELLA: No problem.

MS. KOSCHIG: Good, good. We will have a transcription of the audio made, and that transcription will become part of our factual report. The audio will not. It will not come into public docket. It will go nowhere. It stays with us. And we're still trying to go through the process of getting them deleted, but until then, it will go nowhere.

MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

MS. KOSCHIG: Except for the transcriptionist. And a transcriptionist, we have a non -- we have a company that cannot

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1 disclose anything, and they destroy the audio after that. So what
2 we can do is give you a copy of the transcript. Would you like
3 one?

4 MR. VACCARELLA: Would I like a copy of the transcript? No,
5 I'm okay.

6 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Good.

7 MR. VACCARELLA: Thank you.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: But if you do change your mind, just let the
9 rep know and we can definitely send you a copy of the
10 transcription with, you know --

11 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

12 MS. KOSCHIG: -- give (indiscernible).

13 MR. VACCARELLA: Will do. I appreciate that.

14 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah.

15 MR. VACCARELLA: Thank you.

16 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah. So I see today that you have a
17 representative virtually.

18 MR. VACCARELLA: I do.

19 MS. KOSCHIG: And is this your chosen representative?

20 MR. VACCARELLA: Yes.

21 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. And, Ben, can you please state your
22 name?

23 MR. WADE: I can. Ben Wade, FAA Office of the Chief Counsel.

24 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Thank you. So during the interview, all
25 the questions are for you. If your representative needs to

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1 interject, he definitely will.

2 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: He may make some clarifications on questions,
4 so. And he definitely can do that. But anything we're asking,
5 if, you know, it's all for you.

6 MR. VACCARELLA: Sure.

7 MS. KOSCHIG: So, normally, we would say that when somebody's
8 sitting beside you. It seems a little odd to say that with him
9 being on there. But if you did want to confer with him, we could
10 work something out where you could -- we would stop the interview.
11 You could talk to him, and then we could resume it. But I really
12 don't think it'll come down to that, so.

13 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

14 MS. KOSCHIG: But that option's always out there, I just
15 don't want you to feel like you can't talk to him at any time.

16 MR. VACCARELLA: Understood.

17 MS. KOSCHIG: Let's see. So as part of the process, you can
18 see we have quite a few people in here. We do invite parties to
19 participate in the investigation, and we do this for their
20 technical expertise. So we have quite a few subject matter
21 experts here. As the NTSB investigators, we -- like I've been
22 doing this job for 15 years, I know how to do the reports. I am
23 pretty much up on all of the publications, the rules, but I have
24 not been actually working the floor or out in the tower in a very
25 long time.

1 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

2 MS. KOSCHIG: So that's the reason we have our expertise, and
3 we depend on them very heavily. So the people today in this
4 group -- and I will let them introduce themselves so that we get
5 who everyone is before we start getting more into the meat of
6 this. We'll go around the room first. I introduced myself. I'll
7 let Ruth.

8 MS. RUPNIK: Hey, Ruth Rupnik, I'm based out of headquarters
9 for the NTSB, an ATC investigator.

10 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, meteorologist with the NTSB.

11 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter, QC manager at Washington Center.

12 MR. VACCARELLA: Hey.

13 MR. DAVIS: Cory Davis, NATCA ASI, New York Center.

14 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati (ph.), NACTA ASI at Oakland Center.

15 MR. RIOS: Mark Rios, I'm a senior ATC program manager,
16 systems program manager for Southwest Airlines.

17 MS. KOSCHIG: All right. And in this study, we are the NTSB
18 group.

19 MR. VACCARELLA: Understood.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: And we will be ones working on all the
21 interviews, getting the notes. And then it will come to us, as
22 the NTSB people, you know, us specialists, we will get a factual
23 report out. But the group, still, approves everything. We do not
24 work on our own. We don't say this is what the NTSB says without
25 bringing the group into it.

1 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

2 MS. KOSCHIG: Just so you know that. So a little bit about
3 who we are. The NTSB is an independent agency. We don't work for
4 the DOT, the FAA, anybody. We are our own. There's about 400 of
5 us total, and that means like pipeline, rail, all of that, so very
6 small agency. And our goal and our -- well, I guess our mission
7 is to determine the probable cause of any accident. And in this
8 case, it is an accident. And we also do incidents as well. But,
9 again, like I said, we don't work alone. There's other groups
10 that -- I don't know exactly which groups are working this, if
11 it's ops, if it's structures, but it could be various groups at
12 the NTSB that is gathering information, and we compile it and we
13 put it all together to find out what the probable cause was. But
14 our main thing, as the NTSB, we want to find out, like I said,
15 what the probable cause was, but to see if there's anything that
16 we can recommend. That's our only superpower, to say, is
17 recommendations. We have no regulatory power at all. There's
18 nothing we can do as an agency except recommendations and things
19 like that. So there's nothing that I could -- or anybody else at
20 the NTSB could do to you. But we do want you to give us as much
21 information so that we can take this and learn from it because
22 this is not -- things that are going on just doesn't happen in a
23 vacuum at one place. If it's happening at one place, it's
24 probably happening at another place. I mean there is -- it seems
25 like things kind of -- and as you work in one place, you just see

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1 it here. We see it in a lot of different places, and we want to
2 find out what is part of the -- what's a common denominator.
3 What's going on. As somebody that works is you know what goes on,
4 and you can help us to understand if there's a solution to the
5 safety issue. So, of course, again, appreciate that. So we're
6 here just to get the facts. So today, what's going to be
7 happening is we're going to start asking a bunch of questions.
8 First, I will ask a bunch of admin questions just get to know you
9 a little bit better professionally, and then we'll start digging
10 into what happened during the event, what you know about it,
11 anything else that was going on that you could tell us. So we
12 might dig down into other different areas. But --

13 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

14 MS. KOSCHIG: -- just, you know, it's all just about the
15 facility and what you know about the incident or accident in this
16 case. It's going to take about an hour generally, hour and a half
17 max probably, so just as a timeline so you know where to get --

18 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

19 MS. KOSCHIG: -- breaks. But if you do have any questions,
20 since we're going to be asking you a lot of questions, if you do
21 have any questions, please feel free to ask. If we don't -- if
22 you don't hear the entire question, ask us to repeat it. If we
23 are not saying it in a way that makes sense, which sometimes we
24 can do, we're thinking and talking at the same time, ask us to
25 clarify something because we want you to make sure that you're

1 comfortable with your answers. If you don't know something, I
2 don't know. Perfect answer. If you don't recall it, you don't
3 recall it. We're not asking you to just come up with an answer
4 because I know when somebody asks a question, you want to give
5 them an answer. We want the honest answer. If you want to give
6 your opinion about something, you are more than welcome to do so
7 based off your experience here. So that's the basic structure of
8 the interview. You can take a break at any time, just let us
9 know. And if we needed to take a break, we'd let you know, but I
10 don't think that's going to happen on our end. What else? Oh,
11 notes. You might see some of us jotting down notes, or I might
12 even been typing. I tend to like to type. I'm taking notes so
13 that if you've said something, I can go back and ask you, you
14 know, so I can get clarification because once you're talking, I
15 don't want to interrupt you. So that's what I do. But those
16 notes will be destroyed. So anybody that's taking notes, they
17 will be destroyed. They'll be used for nothing. Once we get out
18 of this investigation this week, they will be gone. So just to
19 let you know.

20 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

21 MS. KOSCHIG: Those notes, you're not going to find them on
22 the news -- in the newspapers. So I think that's it for now. Are
23 you ready to get started --

24 MR. VACCARELLA: Sure.

25 MS. KOSCHIG: -- in the questioning?

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1 MR. VACCARELLA: Yes.

2 INTERVIEW OF DOUGLAS VACCARELLA

3 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

4 Q. Okay. So what are your operating initials?

5 A. Victor alpha.

6 Q. Okay. How old are you?

7 A. 47.

8 Q. Okay. When did you start working for the FAA?

9 A. 2006, April.

10 Q. April.

11 A. April 6th, 2006.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. I went to --

14 Q. Were you working.

15 A. -- the academy. Excuse me?

16 Q. At the academy?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And where'd you go from there?

19 A. Here to Jacksonville Center in June. And I was here in
20 Jacksonville Center from June 2006 until end of December of 2009,
21 I believe. And I went then to Traverse City air traffic control
22 tower where I was a controller there for approximately just under
23 four years. I came back to Jacks Center in -- I think it was
24 September 2012, and at which time I was a controller in the
25 central area. Got fully certified. I did two years in TMU,

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1 traffic management unit, as a TMC, a traffic management
2 coordinator. Went back to the floor as a controller for
3 approximately three years. And then became a supervisor in 2018.
4 I moved from the central area where I was a controller to the East
5 Area. I got radar certified in two sectors there. I was a
6 supervisor in the East for about a year and a half. And then I
7 went to the South area in Jacks Center, certified in two more
8 radars there. Was a supervisor there for a year and a half. And
9 put in for a job at TMU as an STMC. And that's what my current
10 position is.

11 Q. Oh, wow. Great. Great.

12 A. That's my background.

13 Q. Yeah. You got a lot of experience.

14 A. FAA, yeah.

15 Q. All right. So do you have any military service?

16 A. I do. I was Marine Corps from 1994 to 1998, active duty. I
17 was not a controller.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And then when I got out, I went to school. Studied finance.
20 And then transferred to Beaver Falls where I did air traffic
21 control. Got my pilots license, have a private pilot's license.
22 Took meteorology classes there. And then waited two years to get
23 hired into 06, so.

24 Q. Oh, wow.

25 A. That was the timeline for that.

1 Q. Wow. You got a very varied experience. That's great. I'm
2 sure our meteorologist will want to pick your brain a little bit.

3 MR. RICHARDS: Oh, yeah. Maybe.

4 MR. VACCARELLA: Very basic meteorology class.

5 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

6 Q. So you got a -- but you got a degree?

7 A. I do, yes.

8 Q. Okay. Bachelor's?

9 A. Nope. I have three associate degrees, I believe.

10 Q. Wow.

11 A. Yeah. A general one, finance, and then the aeronautical
12 science from Beaver Falls.

13 Q. Wow.

14 A. I want to say something like 160 college credits, I just
15 don't have a bachelor's --

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. -- to combine it all together, but.

18 Q. Yeah. It's definitely over the bachelor limit.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Isn't it?

21 A. It is over the limit, yes, so.

22 Q. That's great. So you said you had a pilot license. Are you
23 current?

24 A. I am not current. Nope, I haven't flown since my daughter
25 was born in 2000 and -- I'm trying to think, '14. So since 2014 I

1 have not flown. I did fly for the Civil Air Patrol for about a
2 year and a half in Fernandina, the senior squadron, basic
3 assessment 172s, all VFR conditions. I've taken IFR classes, I
4 just don't have my IFR completion, so.

5 Q. Wow. You stay busy.

6 A. That's why I put that to the side. So, yes, no more flying.

7 Q. No?

8 A. For now.

9 Q. Okay. So, let's see, what other kind of questions? Do you
10 have a medical -- or do you have current medical?

11 A. I do.

12 Q. Okay. Any restrictions?

13 A. No, ma'am.

14 Q. Okay. So who's your supervisor?

15 A. Scott Alvers.

16 Q. Alvers?

17 A. Correct. Yeah. A-L-V-E-R-S.

18 Q. All right. And you gave me all your qualifications there.
19 Do you work overtime much?

20 A. Okay. I would say one a pay period average. So one every
21 two weeks.

22 Q. Okay. Can we --

23 A. Occasionally I'll go without overtime, but then I'll do, you
24 know, several weeks in a row with overtime.

25 Q. Okay. So what's your normal schedule?

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1 A. My normal schedule, I start off my -- I'm currently Saturday,
2 Sundays off. Mondays I start work at about 10:00 a.m., and then I
3 finish off Tuesday through Friday on the 6:30 shift. So I work
4 06:30 to 14:30. All day shifts. I don't work any night shifts.
5 Occasionally on Saturday for overtime, but, yeah. Or if
6 somebody's on leave, occasionally I may have a night shift. My
7 night shifts comprise of 2:00 p.m. till 10:00 p.m., so.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Never working past 10:00 p.m. unless there's an occasional
10 severe weather day or, you know, real heavy volume after the
11 holiday type of deal where I may stay until 11:00 or 12:00, but
12 that's unusual.

13 Q. Okay. That's a nice schedule.

14 A. It is. It's very comfortable. Yes. Better than I've had in
15 the past.

16 Q. Yep.

17 A. So.

18 Q. And that was the schedule that you worked the week of the
19 incident?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. Or the accident?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. To the best of my knowledge, it is.

25 Q. And it's normal shift that day?

- 1 A. Normal shift, yep. The day -- yes. The day of the incident?
- 2 Q. Yes.
- 3 A. We knew it was going to be a weather day because it was
- 4 coming from the west, that line. So the day before they decided
- 5 to do a regional planning telecon. I think they called it
- 6 Southeast regional planning telecon. So they asked that we come
- 7 in a little early. That was scheduled for 10:00 a.m. -- 10:00
- 8 Zulu. So I came in at 5:30 that morning. I came in an hour in
- 9 the front to get a weather briefing from our National Weather
- 10 Service, and just prepare, look at the trends, see what volume was
- 11 doing, where the traffic was, and be prepared for the 6:00 o'clock
- 12 call telecon.
- 13 Q. Okay. Great. Let's see. Before we start getting into some
- 14 other issues. So how was -- on a scale of one to five, how would
- 15 you rate the complexity that day in that sector?
- 16 A. Five being most complex?
- 17 Q. Yes.
- 18 A. It was a four.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. Three and a half, four.
- 21 Q. All right. And the traffic volume?
- 22 A. Four.
- 23 Q. Okay. All right. And was that normal for that time of day?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Not normal.

2 Q. And that's due to --

3 A. Due to the line of weather that was across the airspace. The
4 majority of aircraft that would normally come overland were not
5 coming overland. They were kind of circumnavigating it. So
6 aircraft that normally would be coming over our west coast that
7 came from O'Hare and Cleveland were actually deviating as far east
8 into the Atlantic Ocean, or they were averting through Memphis and
9 coming around through Houston and through the Ys and Qs. So the
10 whole center of our airspace was pretty much blocked off with
11 severe weather, so they were kind of getting around the whole
12 thing.

13 Q. Okay. Great. Yeah, if I ask you some what may seem like
14 dumb questions --

15 A. Yeah. No, that's fine.

16 Q. It's because I don't want to put any words in your mouth.
17 So, you know?

18 A. Understood.

19 Q. Yeah. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. So because I thought, well, you're probably thinking, well,
22 you know why.

23 A. No, that's all right. Yeah. No, it's --

24 Q. But did you get to see the replay at all?

25 A. I got to see the Falcon replay without weather briefly.

1 That's all I saw.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I watched it for about 10, 15 minutes, Sector 30, and that
4 was just one aircraft checking on and checking off, and, yeah,
5 that was it.

6 Q. Okay. Great. Yeah, they got the ERAM (ph.) one. Do you
7 plan on watching that?

8 A. If I have the opportunity to, I would.

9 Q. Yeah. It's pretty neat, so.

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. Yeah. So a little bit about -- this happened quite a bit
12 ago, so I'm not going to -- it happened on the 3rd, so I'm not
13 going to go into asking what, you know, what your 72 hours, what
14 you ate and all that stuff that week. But do you recall, were you
15 rested that day? Do you recall anything that was going on that
16 day with you? Like was there any distractions in your life that
17 day?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. Nothing unusual, nothing out of the ordinary.

21 Q. Yeah. No big changes? Just --

22 A. Yeah. No big changes. Pretty regular sleep schedule.

23 Q. Yep.

24 A. Eating schedule, exercise. Yeah, no, nothing unusual.

25 Q. Great. No big parties that week?

1 A. No, ma'am. No. My life is probably pretty boring.

2 Q. So I totally understand that.

3 MS. RUPNIK: Nothing wrong with that.

4 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

5 Q. So was there anything in the facility -- this is switching a
6 little gears. Was there anything distracting going in the
7 facility that you can recall that had everybody --

8 A. No. Not at all.

9 Q. No?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Business as normal?

12 A. Business as normal. The only unusual thing that day was the
13 planning telecon earlier to start off the day, which we normally
14 don't do until 7:15, but because of the severe weather, we did it
15 at 6:00 a.m.

16 Q. Right. And talking about severe weather, is it common to get
17 severe weather?

18 A. It is. We deal with it quite often here.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah. More than I care to.

21 Q. Yeah. And I'm sure we'll ask you more questions about this
22 later, so. So, now, I think that's enough of the basic questions.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. Now we want to get into talking about the accident and what
25 you recall that day what you were, you know, what led -- at any

1 point where you wanted to start that day on your shift. I mean
2 you could start as early as when you came in on how everything
3 built up, and anything that you recall, if there's anything that
4 you were seeing, feeling, thinking that would help us to
5 understand the, you know, what was happening at the time. So if
6 you could just walk us through your day that day, and just let us
7 know what you were --

8 A. All right.

9 Q. -- doing and --

10 A. Yeah. So, as I mentioned, I started at 05:30 local time that
11 day. I came in, sign in, get my weather briefing from the
12 National Weather Service. We do that via a video, and then also I
13 get to speak with a weather gentleman every morning. I got that
14 synopsis and that briefing. Looked at the volume, try to kind of
15 see how we were looking. We had tools that show us where the
16 volume is, whether it's on the east coast or the west coast, or
17 the center of the state, and if it's above our rate. We have a
18 rate of 204 per hour is what Jacks Center is set at, and that's
19 with all routes open, no weather impacts, no closures. And I
20 don't recall what the rate was that morning, but with all the
21 weather, it would have to be significantly lower for us to manage
22 volume the way we want to and to provide the service that we do.
23 So at 6:00 a.m., the planning telecon started off. They started
24 with Jacks Center. We lead it off. I did ask that day who my
25 audience was only because we've done this about three times prior,

1 which, coincidentally, was on Wednesdays leading up to this week,
2 and lessons learned from previous weeks. So I just wanted to know
3 who was on and --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- United, American, Delta, Southwest, they all chimed in and
6 roll call, and the facilities. And then basically I just
7 explained -- I try to paint them a picture of what the weather was
8 doing, where the aircraft were. And that we would need an AFP,
9 which is tool that we use to slow the flow or the rate down
10 through the facility because we had maybe 30 percent of available
11 airspace due to the severe weather. So we spoke about which AFP
12 we wanted. We did a segmented AFP that day, one that captures the
13 ARs and then one lone one that captures all the inland routes and
14 the Ys and Qs. The Ys and Qs is what comes across the Gulf of
15 Mexico where this particular aircraft happened to be that day.
16 Everybody agreed to it. It was very blatant and evident that it
17 was needed.

18 So they got -- from there, the Command Center then works out
19 details on when they're going to start it. So that was 6:00 a.m..
20 Staffing, everyone starts coming in for their shifts. We already
21 saw overages in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. Mark
22 called me, I remember, from ZDC and was concerned that he was
23 seeing aircraft that were coming from the Midwest that were now
24 transitioning out east of Wilmington. And he was like I don't
25 like how this is setting up is what he told me, that we had this

1 many aircraft out there, which I agreed to. I communicated that
2 with Command Center. And we told them we needed the AFP as soon
3 as possible basically because we're working a lot of aircraft that
4 normally aren't in that place. We did get an AFP. And so now
5 rolling into the 11:00 hour, overages again started showing up in
6 Sector 30, and we began to mitigate that through TMIs. I had a
7 good TMC working that day, and he ended up putting out departure
8 stops out of Orlando, Tampa, a few southeast Florida airports like
9 Miami, Fort Laud, or Palm Beach. We don't stop them all. We try
10 to see, you know, we try to see what's going to give us the most
11 bang for the buck and not penalize everybody, and just do what's
12 needed to keep the NAS flowing efficiently.

13 So we did stop numerous departures to head out to the Gulf of
14 Mexico. We can control departures and west bound stuff easier
15 than we can control stuff coming from Houston. So we did what we
16 could to mitigate those numbers. You know, we use NAS Monitor as
17 one of the tools which shows 15-minute increments for what the
18 numbers are going to be. And green is ideal. Yellow is
19 cautionary. And red means there's an overage. It's not a perfect
20 tool. A lot of times we find that there is aircraft captured in
21 that that are well outside the airspace, or have already descended
22 or are going to descend into, say, Tampa and they'll never be in
23 that sector but they still show up. So we use it as a, you know,
24 a general guideline. We don't live and die by it, but we -- and
25 so, yep, we mitigated things accordingly. We began doing that,

1 and approximately 11:22 Zulu that day is when we put our stops
2 out. We even, that day, went a little above and beyond and
3 stopped aircraft departing Jacksonville International heading that
4 way, which we normally never do. We just do Tampa, and Orlando,
5 and a couple of southwest Florida airports. But that day, we
6 needed more because of the unusual amount of aircraft that were
7 out there to get around the weather.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And then, yeah, the day went on as usual. My Houston Center
10 eventually could not take the deviations into non-radar airspace
11 with the non-ADS-B aircraft and Cuban airspace down there, so they
12 ended up sending a stop message and stopping the Ys and Qs at or
13 below flight level 380. So we only worked aircraft that were
14 39 -- from a flight level 390 and above east and west out there
15 because they just couldn't get over the tops, and, yeah, without
16 deviating.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah. Do you want me to go on to --

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. All right. So --

21 Q. please.

22 A. -- this is through the 11:00 o'clock hour. We continued to
23 battle east coast. And then I had another TMC working on the
24 east -- I'm sorry, that was the west coast mitigations. And then
25 we had the east coast mitigations as well. The AR, is the

1 Atlantic routes, were overloaded as well. The AFP, you know, they
2 try to -- we don't get to set the number on it. We recommend a
3 number to be set, and then Command Center decides on what it's
4 actually going to be. They have a few more tools and people up
5 there that can dig into the data to show what's necessary. So we
6 stopped -- we put miles-in-trail out of south Florida to control
7 our ARs. We will also do rolling departure stops, and we'll stop
8 Miami departures for 30 minutes, and then let them go. Stop Fort
9 Lauderdale's for 30 minutes, then let them go. Stop departures
10 out of Orlando, which I believe was done that day as well. That
11 would be the Mizulo (ph.) departure gate. And at one point that
12 was stopped as well. I see even closer to 12:00 o'clock, we
13 stopped F-11 departures at the Gulf. I'm just looking at the log
14 that day.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. And that goes into day. That was pretty much it. I don't
17 want to say it was business as usual, but we had weather, we were
18 mitigating it as we normally do. I don't recall any phone calls
19 from any supervisors on the floor saying that there was anything
20 adverse occurring in any of their sectors, which does happen at
21 time to time. We see, you know, from a TMU standpoint, with the
22 Gulf of Mexico, we have to be at minimum 45 minutes or so ahead of
23 when the volume's going to hit because of the flight time it takes
24 to get out there. And so we have to look out an hour ahead.
25 We're looking out an hour ahead, but in that time period, aircraft

1 that are normally coming overland will see those, you know, it's
2 one thing, I guess, when they get their weather briefings in the
3 morning, but when a pilot sees bad weather, and the tops, and the
4 towering cumulonimbuses, and blow off, and everything else, they,
5 at the last minute, will deviate and take another route. So what
6 we thought or sometimes expect doesn't occur because of the amount
7 of offloads. We call them offloads. And that then show up where
8 they weren't expected or we didn't want it to be. And that's
9 handled either by holding aircraft, or the controllers will just
10 work through it, get a tracker in there and prepare, and get extra
11 staffing.

12 We then saw some chatter occurring at the OM desk. Just a
13 few more OMs than normal. I saw quality control OM at the desk.
14 I saw a few other people beginning to gather probably around 13:00
15 Zulu that day. And then I can remember my OM came down at one
16 point, was like, what's everything going on over there? I was
17 like, I'm not sure. I thought new training. I mean it wasn't,
18 you know, it was organized, but it was -- and then word came out
19 probably about two hours later that there had been an incident
20 where an aircraft hit turbulence and there was an injury. I was
21 never made aware of it. That day, I was also filling out PIREPs
22 that were given to me for severe turbulence. I entered four or
23 five PIREPs that day. I don't recall ever filling one out, and I
24 was never given one for the area of airspace where that incident
25 occurred. Our OM overhead it on the DEN that there was a severe

1 turbulence with injuries. And when they heard where it happened,
2 it was kind of like -- yeah, so that's all hearsay and I was never
3 briefed on that. I just observed ,and it was just kind of like
4 that was the rumblings we heard. Again, it was a busy day, so I
5 was just doing my job and keeping our unit working. And I was
6 never made aware like directly, like, hey, this is what happened
7 at this time. It was never mentioned to me.

8 Q. Okay. And then you just went home later that day?

9 A. Yes. Yeah. So I don't know that particular day if we had a
10 third STMC. We sometimes try to on days like that so one of can
11 walk the floor. But at 2:00 o'clock, my relief would come in, and
12 we overlap for about 30 minutes. I'd have to look to see if -- I
13 think I did an hour of overtime on the end of that shift as well.
14 Yeah, I don't recall exactly on that particular day. But, yeah,
15 my overlap would come in. We'll brief them. They'll get -- the
16 National Weather Service comes over around 2:00 o'clock again and
17 briefs us on the afternoon weather, or briefs them. I'll fill out
18 my shift summary for the day, and that's at 18:00 Zulu that entry
19 goes in. And then, yeah, I go home at that point.

20 Q. Okay. Cool. All right. Well, I got a lot of questions.
21 First of all, I want to start out with explain what the Ys and the
22 Qs are all about.

23 A. All right. So airways, you can have victor airways, jet
24 airways, those happen to be Y and Q routes. Y280 and Y290, and
25 Q100 and Q102 are the four routes that go across the Gulf of

1 Mexico that connect Miami Center to Houston Center. We're the in
2 between, and that's the Ys and Qs because a lot of times people
3 will say what waters routes or Atlantic or -- yeah, ocean routes,
4 they'll say. And so that we know what we're talking about and
5 there's no confusion, we'll say Ys and Qs and ARs. AR is for the
6 Atlantic routes, and Ys and Qs, the Gulf routes.

7 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Great. I still have a lot of questions,
8 but I am not going to ask them all. I'm going to go around so
9 everybody else can have a chance.

10 MR. VACCARELLA: Sure.

11 MS. KOSCHIG: Ruth.

12 BY MS. RUPNIK:

13 Q. So, basically, I'm kind of curious to know if somebody is
14 assigned the weather coordinator position, what is their
15 typical -- what are their typical duties throughout their shift,
16 or --

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. -- throughout their day?

19 A. In my time of being here at Jacks, including my two years as
20 a TMC back in '14 and '15, I never worked weather coordinator
21 position on its own as a what are you working right now? I'm
22 weather coordinator. We don't open it. We never, to my
23 recollection, ever have opened it and had one person working it.
24 It's a job that -- I'm in constant contact with the National
25 Weather Service in our building, and he'll come to me and be like,

1 hey, that line of weather is about to hit Orlando, you've probably
2 got 30 more minutes before it's closed down at which point if he
3 gives me information like that, I'll then head to the floor or
4 convey it to the OM like, hey, we're probably going to be holding
5 Orlando's in about 30 minutes. And I'll go talk to the floor via
6 either a phone call or walk down there and speak to the
7 supervisors and tell them what's going on, like, hey, you know,
8 just spoke to Weather Service, that line is -- or if there was
9 gaps, they're closing, or the weather's about to hit the field so
10 you guys may want to start -- maybe choose an aircraft that's
11 going to be the last one and then pre-stage them on the west side,
12 and we try to come up with a plan.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. That's what I do for my weather coordinator position. Also,
15 when there's severe turbulence reports, they will come and hand me
16 a PIREP sheet ,and I'll get the PIREP sheet and get that entered
17 into the NTML. A lot of what is written -- I mean, you know, we
18 have new TMCs come in, we train them, and whenever something comes
19 up about weather coordinator position, a lot of it has just been
20 that -- most of it's automated now. Controllers at the sector
21 have ERIDs, and they are able to enter a PIREP when they get, you
22 know, an adverse report, they will enter a PIREP right on the
23 sector. That will go out to those folks that disseminate it
24 further. Whether that's our flight data I know was involved with,
25 you know, getting things upward reported. Any time there's a

1 severe turbulence report, it's always was there injuries and
2 damage to the aircraft. That's always asked only because if I get
3 a PIREP sheet handed to me and that's not on there, I will have to
4 ask whether there was injuries or PIREPs. So I enter that into
5 the NTML as a UUA, which is a urgent PIREP, and that goes out.
6 That's the end of what I do as far as -- but, right now, we are
7 combining weather coordinator on the STMCs, only that we're the
8 ones that are in constant contact with the national -- with the
9 Weather Service people in our building.

10 And I mean, I have Co Spa on my laptop or my computer. I
11 have National Weather Service where I don't even know the
12 technical name of it, but I have six different models that I can
13 look at, and I'll look at what the weather's actually doing and
14 which model matches it best. And then I'll use that one to kind
15 of see how, as I move the timeline across to get an idea of -- I
16 said we're always thinking from TMU hours out. If I'm going to --
17 an issue coming from New York, I've got to be two and a half hour
18 minimum in order to control. If I want to route structure out, I
19 have to be two and a half hours ahead to get these aircraft, you
20 know, onto a west coast route or an Atlantic route, and, you know,
21 we have to disseminate that aircraft that early so the aircraft
22 can fuel up accordingly and handle the extra mileage and distance
23 that may occur.

24 Q. Okay. That was a great explanation. Thank you. Also, too,
25 with the telecons with the Command Center and everybody, do you

1 feel like you usually get what you need as far as programs and
2 stuff? Is there any sort of (indiscernible)?

3 A. I mean I have -- so I've been STMC for maybe two years now.
4 I have had to work on my communication skills at some point, you
5 know, whether I'm not conveying things correctly or painting the
6 proper picture, they don't have all the data we have here. So
7 I've had to learn what it is that they -- we're not looking at the
8 same stuff. I'm looking at actual scopes and real time traffic.
9 When I do my briefings, and I've learned over time, you know,
10 United, Southwest, all the users are on there and issues on the --
11 I will actually quick look a sector and say I'm looking at the
12 sector right now. I don't see anybody deviating currently.

13 So I'm giving a real time, you know, where they may think the
14 weather's high and everyone's -- well, you know, off course and
15 deviating and -- so, do I feel that they -- at times. I mean,
16 yeah, I think -- I haven't had much -- I get what I need I think
17 most of the time. If I'm not getting, you know, I will only ask
18 so much when everybody's on, and we'll say -- I'll talk to you,
19 I'll speak to you offline. That way I'm not roping everybody into
20 my real push for it. And I'll just call them back, hey, you know,
21 maybe I didn't explain it correctly. Like this is what I'm
22 dealing with. This is what I've already done. It does not appear
23 to be working. My sector is still showing big numbers, or, you
24 know?

25 And so I'll ask what else is that you want me to, you know,

1 I'll ask for suggestions for them. I'll say if you guys have a
2 better suggestion, give me a call back. This is what we've done
3 so far. I do know just from, I guess, past practice and lessons
4 learned that, you know, they maybe have come down on us in the
5 past for departure stopping aircraft airports for too long. So I
6 may say, hey, I just did a 30-minute departure stop. I'll do
7 roaming departure stops. What do you want me to do? A lot of
8 times they'll say, no, you're doing exactly what we want. We'll
9 continue to monitor the situation, which I monitor more than they
10 do. I mean just because I'm the one here in the facility on the
11 floor seeing their controllers, speaking to the supervisors where
12 other entities are more removed from the facility, so. But, yeah,
13 I think I get what we need. If I don't, you know, I just explain
14 that I need an alternative way to work aircraft through the
15 facility. So, yeah, communication I think is paramount and super
16 important, and I continue to work on it just to build
17 relationships with these folks. I don't cry wolf, and they know
18 that. I just kind of -- when things are bad, I really try to tell
19 them, like, you know? Yeah. No, I think we get what we want.

20 MS. RUPNICK: All right. That's actually all I have for now.
21 I'll pass it on to Mike here.

22 BY MR. RICHARDS:

23 Q. Now we can talk about your first love.

24 A. Yeah. Yes.

25 Q. So you're going to have to forgive me, I'm not a controller,

1 so I might ask some seemingly silly questions. You work in the
2 TMU, correct?

3 A. Correct. Yes.

4 Q. And that area just over the wall from the CWSU.

5 A. Correct. Yep.

6 Q. We visited that today. All right. So could you step me
7 through -- to begin, could you step me through the different
8 weather sources that you use to avail yourself of weather
9 information --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- on a daily basis? Or --

12 A. So I have the scope. I have the actual scope that has a
13 weather refeed on that.

14 Q. So is that a ERAM, you mean?

15 A. Yes. ERAM.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Correct. Yep. ERAM. And then, gosh, I don't know the name
18 of it, National Weather Service has a feed over to TMU of a map
19 that shows live weather and it's in a loop. I don't mess with
20 that.

21 Q. They control, National Weather Service --

22 A. Yes, National Weather Service --

23 Q. -- controls it?

24 A. -- controls it. If it ever gets locked up, I'll walk over to
25 them and have them open it or reopen it with their password. So I

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1 am looking at that, which is to the left of me. I look at ERAM to
2 the right of me. I will pull up the four hour and eight hour TAF
3 on the TSD. I'll look at that as well. And then if I minimize
4 this, I don't know if I have my pages on my on my laptop or my
5 desktop, but NOAA, I pull up the NOAA page, and I use the Storm
6 Prediction Center, this.

7 Q. Yeah, yeah. (Indiscernible).

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. That's where I get those six or eight models, and I just kind
11 of look at what the National Weather Service is feeding me
12 compared to the models because this one I'm able to move out
13 several hours to get an idea.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And Co Spa, very rarely. I use this NOAA page percent of the
16 time --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- for planning purposes.

19 Q. So we were over there today, and I saw ITWS display. Do you
20 use ITWS?

21 A. Yes. I do use the ITWS.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. As weather approaches the field for terminal reasons, I will
24 use the ITWS at length, especially for Orlando and Tampa. I think
25 those are the only two we show.

1 Q. So let's talk about Co Spa really quickly. What do you
2 use -- talk about your usage of Co Spa. How often do you use it?
3 Why do you use it? What do you use within it because it's a
4 variety of tools?

5 A. Not much. I don't use it often. I have it on my computer,
6 but I do not use it too often. I'm more on the NOAA and the
7 National Weather Service. And then if you've seen from TMU, I'm
8 looking across at the OM desk, the National Weather Service here.
9 There's a, I don't know, 70-, 80-inch monitor up there with a loop
10 on it, so I see that constantly, and that gives me kind of the big
11 picture of Jacks Center. And then I can glance over at the ITWS,
12 like you mentioned, when things are getting close to the terminal
13 with the rings, and I like using that just to get a timeframe,
14 and --

15 Q. For terminal?

16 A. Yeah, for terminal, and the direction, and the speed. That's
17 helpful for me.

18 Q. Has the TMU here been trained on the use of Co Spa?

19 A. Yes. Where are they out of? MIT? Is it MIT? I think Co
20 Spa (indiscernible).

21 Q. I don't want to answer for you, but --

22 A. Okay. Yes.

23 Q. -- you're on the right track.

24 A. Yeah. They've come to the facility, shown us a couple of the
25 tools.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Yes, we have been trained on it.

3 Q. When was that? Do you recall? The most recent.

4 A. Yeah. 2021, if I had to guess, two years.

5 Q. Okay. One more tool I wanted to ask about. Are you familiar
6 or heard of the ocean prediction capability, acronym is OPC?

7 A. I'm not familiar with that.

8 Q. Okay. So here's one of those possibly silly questions. If
9 it's severe clear out there one day and all of a sudden over the
10 Ys and Qs within Jacksonville airspace, suddenly you see -- the
11 TMU sees a bunch of thunderstorms start popping up right along
12 those routes. No one's been talking about it, but you see it in
13 your data. What happens?

14 A. What --

15 Q. What you guys with the other managers --

16 A. Yep.

17 Q. -- what's the -- yeah, what happens?

18 A. I would call -- I would call the West Area in that instance.
19 I would call the sup down there and say, hey, are they deviating
20 through that weather that's showing up in the Ys and Qs, and to
21 which they may say, no, it's low. It's low altitude, it's not
22 impacting us at all. Or, yeah, they just starting to deviate.
23 And that's pretty much the -- and that's it.

24 Q. Is there ever a time when you advised them of weather that
25 they weren't aware of?

1 A. No.

2 Q. By weather, I mean convection.

3 A. No. The only thing I would ever advise them on is if Weather
4 Service came to me and said, hey, this is increasing, the tops are
5 building. It was in the mid-30s earlier and now we're above 40.
6 I would be like, okay, thank you. And then I may go to the, you
7 know, say for instance, the ARs, the ARs are a workhorse for Jacks
8 Center, a lot of aircraft, a lot of volume. They're designed just
9 north/south. And I would go to the north area and be like, hey,
10 I've heard that stuff is building. You know, we have a lot of
11 military airspace out there as well, so. But that's the only time
12 I would relay that. If I get something from the Weather Service
13 that tells me something specifically, I will disseminate that to
14 those that I think would need to know or are impacted by it.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. More of a tactical kind of scenario --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- (indiscernible). Okay. I have, well, actually one more
20 right now. You used the acronym November tango mike lima.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What is that?

23 A. That's a tool we use to communicate between facilities and
24 the Command Center. Any restriction, if we're getting busy and we
25 need to space the Orlando departures out, via the NTML, we will

1 send a message to Orlando or F-11 saying request 15 miles-in-trail
2 on sign fell (ph.) departures. And they will then accept it or
3 conference it if they want to discuss it.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Yeah, those are pretty much the two options. They accept it,
6 then Command Center has to accept it. And then it goes on to the
7 boards, and we'll post it and send it to the areas --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- so that they can see, oh, we're getting 15 miles-in-trail
10 from F-11 out, so it's going to slow down. If they were concerned
11 with their sector being busy and now they see they got in-trail,
12 so we communicate that via NTML, and then that goes onto the
13 boards, the status information areas in each area throughout the
14 facility.

15 MR. RICHARDS: Okay. Thank you. Betty, I'll have some more
16 questions, but I'll do that in the next round.

17 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Before we go further, Ben, are you still
18 there?

19 MR. WADE: I am still here. Appreciate it.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Sorry. Yeah. Just wanted to make sure.
21 All right. Go ahead.

22 MR. WADE: (Indiscernible).

23 BY MR. WINTER:

24 Q. I guess (indiscernible)-- well, maybe couple questions I had
25 was about the planning telecon.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. You kind of said in the morning, you know, you got on at 6:00
3 in the morning. You got off. It seemed like everybody was kind
4 of agreed what was going to have to happen as far as an AFP goes?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. I guess what came -- how is what came out different than what
7 you thought was going to come out? Was it --

8 A. All right. In the past, and the reason I mentioned I asked
9 who's my audience.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. Because we did this two weeks -- we don't do these often.
12 Kind of a new tool. I believe Scott Alvers was the one. He was
13 like on these big, major weather days, we can't have the
14 conversations -- 7:15 is the first telecon of the day normally,
15 and then it's every two hours after that. On the morning -- on
16 the 7:15 telecon, the west coast airports are not on there as far
17 as like L.A. and Denver. But 7:15 is normally the first telecon
18 of the day where we make our plan. That is too late for us to
19 control the 12:00, 13:00, 14:00 push. 14:00 Zulu right now is our
20 busiest time of the day at Jacks Center. And then Daylight
21 savings time is on or off. Sometimes it becomes 15:00. But right
22 now, 14:00 is our busiest time. If we get on that first 7:15
23 planning telecon, it doesn't allow us enough time if we have to
24 slow things down coming to Jacks Center. I mean it's just the
25 nature of the beast. And the way we're built with the peninsula

1 and the waters, we get a lot of convective activity down here, so
2 we've got to do either route structure or -- I mean we try to do
3 route structure right off -- that's the best and least impactful
4 to the users opposed to an AFP. That's the last resort is an AFP.
5 But, yeah, so the two weeks prior to that we were having the
6 conversation of, hey, this is what we see. This is what's going
7 on. We're going to need, you know, again, if we can do route
8 structure, we will. But if we can't, an AFP is the answer to slow
9 it down. They'll say, okay, we agree, and then that's the end of
10 it.

11 And then we'll get a proposal for an AFP that will come out.
12 And it will say, all right, the Jacks Center has a proposed, you
13 know, a JX1, and it's at this rate. We're left out of the actual
14 what rate we need, the number of aircraft. So that happened two
15 weeks in row. And then on this one, specifically I haven't pulled
16 the tapes on that day, but I believe I was like we are requesting
17 to be involved in the discussion of what the rate will be. It's
18 one thing to decide what kind of AFP we're going to have, and the
19 users have a lot of -- a lot of asks or input on this as well.
20 They will chime in and say we don't agree with a one -- they tend
21 to not like segmented AFPs where it's broken up. They like to
22 have just one large AFP across the entire airspace. Then no
23 matter where anybody's coming from, they're going to get captured
24 and get the same, you know, EDT time which is estimated departure
25 or clearance time. They'll get an EDT based on an AFP. So I'm

1 just trying to think exactly. So, yeah, the discussion happens.
2 Yeah. And then after everyone agrees there has to be an AFP,
3 there will be a follow-up call with just Command Center and
4 usually us, and sometimes we'll have to say, hey, we want to bring
5 Miami and Atlanta up on this so they can be involved as well.
6 Sometimes when three or four facilities all agree, it helps more
7 than just one facility saying we need this because it's going to
8 be impactful to everybody.

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. Yeah. I think your earlier ones were working better, just
11 gives us that extra hour and 15 minutes of prep time.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Because it takes about a half hour minimum that I've ever
14 seen an AFP get pumped, you know, (indiscernible).

15 Q. To work it out?

16 A. Yeah. To work it out. Yeah. Absolutely.

17 Q. When did it actually come out?

18 A. That day?

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. 12:00 Zulu.

21 Q. 12 Zulu.

22 A. Yep. 12za is when the AFP I believe started. And that's
23 when we get our morning push. Again, that's at 12:00 crossing
24 time. I mean really, that particular day, I've -- and we
25 discussed it the day before. They knew it was going to be a major

1 weather day. You know, the AFP should have been out earlier in my
2 personal opinion. I don't know what time Command Center gets
3 their employees in there to be able to get that situated. But
4 that getting from the get go to capture aircraft that departed at
5 09:00 or 10:00 Zulu I think would, you know?

6 Q. Yeah. I mean 12:00 is far too late to (indiscernible).

7 A. Yeah, because the weather's here.

8 Q. (Indiscernible).

9 A. That weather, we walked in at 6:00 a.m. for that thing and it
10 was there. I mean normally it takes it, you know, a few hours.
11 But that particular day, it was severe right off the bat.

12 MR. WINTER: Okay. That's it for me.

13 BY MR. DAVIS:

14 Q. A couple of operational questions for you. So you said you
15 have like a pretty good relationship with the Command Center, now
16 you're working on your communications.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. I've learned that that's definitely something good when
19 dealing with the Command Center, communicating directly with them.
20 How did your conversations those days go -- or that day go
21 because --

22 A. It --

23 Q. -- I'm assuming -- and, again, this is just me assuming just
24 from working the floor.

25 A. Sure.

1 Q. I'm assuming it was a little chaotic back and forth between
2 the area, you, Command Center, and everything. So how did the
3 conversations go that day?

4 A. That day was fine. I said it was our third regional planning
5 telecon in a week -- in a row, I'm sorry. So, yeah, no, the
6 communication was fine that morning. It was very -- it was
7 evident -- it was blatant what was in front of us that day. I
8 feel everybody agreed that there was going to have to be a
9 slowdown of traffic, which is the AFP. Route structure was not an
10 answer. We all agreed to that as well. And route structure, we
11 have play books that are set. We can modify them. You could
12 either have a northeast to Florida jet 483 partial, which means we
13 just select a few airports, not every airport out of the
14 northeast. That's a partial. Or we do a mod, modification where
15 we'll modify the actual route of the playbook. That day it was --
16 because of how long that weather was at 200 miles, or whatever,
17 300 miles long, there was no routing out of it for anything. So
18 that day was we have to slow it down because the aircraft are
19 going to come to through the weather, that tends to be the only
20 way to get through Jacks Center. We have -- the east coast is all
21 the Sealord's airspace. On a Monday through Friday surface to
22 flight level 500 is common. And in the west coast is the Gulf
23 of -- the warning areas, surface to unlimited Monday through
24 Friday. So there's no getting over the top of those. So
25 everybody's coming through the peninsula of Florida or they're out

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1 in the ARs, or they're out in the Ys and Qs. Those are the three
2 main thoroughfares if you want to call it that. But, no,
3 communication with the Command Center was fine that morning. I
4 did not have to fight for the AFP. Everything went fine. And
5 then, yeah, it got published. The only thing is there was a lot
6 of airborne inventory already, and there is -- once they're
7 airborne, there's no --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. You know? So that's where we try to be proactive. And a lot
10 of times you're trying to -- and that's where we get into
11 communication is that they're like we're looking at it right now,
12 it's fine. I'm like, we know that right now it's fine. But in
13 three hours, it's -- all forecasts, our Weather Service, everybody
14 is saying and the TAF -- that's when Command Center has a use of
15 the TSD -- the TCF I guess it is, the two, four, and six hour,
16 it'll show medium coverage across the entire peninsula. So we
17 know it's, you know, based on their tools, their models, it's
18 going to happen. So, yeah, no, I didn't get any push back that
19 day. It was just that, you know, had it started sooner, it would
20 have been --

21 Q. Yeah. I think that was the big thing was the -- it was
22 started a little too late because all those planes were already in
23 the air, right?

24 A. Yep.

25 Q. How about when -- during the accident, at the time of the

1 accident, was there a lot of back and forth between the area and
2 you guys as far as miles of trail, should be shut off, anything
3 like that?

4 A. None.

5 Q. None.

6 A. No. That day, like I said, I never even heard from the West
7 Area that day as to like, hey, we really need -- sometimes they'll
8 call them back, hey, we're overloaded, or, hey, what are we doing
9 about this number coming up because 15-minute increments on that
10 NAS monitor, once we start putting TMIs out and slowing down
11 departures, what we call rolls. So the numbers will never hit.
12 We tell them pay attention to the first two 15-minute increments.
13 Anything 30 minutes out is not accurate because they'll be 40s and
14 50s and 60s, and on the floor they see a, you know, 55 aircraft
15 coming, they're like what are we -- I'm like that's never going to
16 happen. Those are -- and, you know, we have bar charts that are
17 color coordinated where it's red, they're actually airborne.
18 Yellow are proposals. And I'll just say, hey, if you will, right
19 click on that block, look at how many proposals, they're on the
20 ground still. They're not going to get airborne. But, yeah,
21 communication was fine that day. It was not a very chaotic day.
22 Like I said, we had AFPs in place relatively early on. The only
23 thing we kept dealing with was aircraft routing or, you know,
24 routing around and -- to get around that weather. They were
25 getting creative on their own, which they do at times, and we'll

1 communicate, I have communicated -- we have lines of communication
2 with the industry. Or we'll call Command Center and be like, hey,
3 you know, we see this particular airline is filing this route and
4 that is not -- it's going right through our warning areas.
5 They'll then speak to their counterparts at the Command Center and
6 rectify that. But, yeah, communication was fine that day. It was
7 a relatively calm day on the floor. I don't recall -- I said, no
8 sups were calling, no angry controllers. Everything was -- we
9 didn't even know it occurred. I didn't even know that that
10 incident or accident occurred --

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. -- in 30, so.

13 Q. And then last question, just for --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Just a clarifying question. So Houston ended up shutting off
16 the Ys and Qs?

17 A. They did.

18 Q. Is that because guys were deviating into non-radar airspace?
19 Is that --

20 A. It is.

21 Q. -- primarily (indiscernible).

22 A. It's very rare that -- the only time we'll have to shut the
23 Ys and Qs off is if the military airspace just north of it is hot,
24 surface unlimited, and aircraft are deviating north into it. We
25 really never mind aircraft deviating south. That becomes a

1 concern for Houston, something about -- yeah, I don't know.

2 Sector overload perhaps. But --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. Yeah. They shut it off. At 12:00 they sent a stop message
5 at or below flight level 380. So they stopped them, which is very
6 inconvenient for us because once the Ys and Qs shut off, that
7 means everybody's going inland now.

8 Q. Yeah. Someone is getting busy.

9 A. Correct. Yeah, someone else is going to get busy.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. And ways to mitigate that is departures. Basically you have
12 airborne inventory, we stop departures. That way we're not adding
13 anymore fuel to the fire or anymore aircraft going through it.
14 And now you got to think everyone heading east towards south
15 Florida, the Ys and Qs are shut, so now they're coming over
16 inland. So now all these aircraft are coming inland, all the
17 departures going inland, those sectors become a choke point and it
18 becomes an undesirable situation for the controller.

19 Q. Yeah. Awesome. Thank you.

20 A. Yeah. You're very welcome.

21 BY MR. ROSATI:

22 Q. All right. So how many TMCs were in the area that day, and
23 how many were on position around the time of the incident?

24 A. Yeah. I would say there was two -- to my recollection, two
25 TMCs on. It could have been three possibly. We normally staff

1 four, one, and four. We have four in the morning, one midday that
2 comes at 10:00 a.m., and then four evening that begin at 13:00 on.
3 So with four TMCs and myself is the staffing that day, I will go
4 to -- I'll easily be at two. And occasionally -- I don't recall
5 whether or not we had three that day. If we did, it would have
6 been one on -- ECNC is a combined position. ECNC, ACDC, and then
7 Missions. So on that day we would have -- Missions is busy every
8 morning. 7:00 a.m. all the different entities call up the
9 airspace. And then ACDC handles arrivals and departures, people
10 calling for release times. And the ECNC position handles all
11 requests coming in through the NTML, and also coming in and going
12 out. And I will be in communication with them nonstop, like, you
13 know, I have all the tools that they have in front of me, so I'm
14 looking at volume and asking, hey, are you working on six, you
15 know, you working on 67 or 76 numbers? And somebody else will
16 say, no, I'm doing that. I'm like, what have you done so far?
17 And they'll tell me just so I have the flick (ph.). If I need
18 help, I'll call. If they're like, hey, we asked for 20 miles-in-
19 trail at south Florida, you know, I may -- if I see things are
20 building, I may call my counterpart in Miami Center, the STMC
21 there, and be like, hey, we really need that 20 if you guys
22 will -- don't fudge on that or have your controllers really get it
23 for us, we can't handle more. Or, hey, where do you -- are you
24 getting delays? You know, that's a concern of ours as well. Are
25 you getting delays in any particular airport? Do you want us to

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1 stop Miami instead of Fort Lauderdale?

2 Again, lessons learned, we'll try to communicate that from
3 them. We've learned not to really slow down Palm Beach. Palm
4 Beach is a one runway, so they can't overload us. They're one in,
5 one out kind of operation between landing and departures. So
6 we've learned not to really put too many restrictions on Palm
7 Beach. But, yeah, so I would say a minimum of two were in there
8 at that time. One of them, I know Kenny Deramus (ph.), he was my
9 one mitigating 30s because we saw 30 was getting busy. And like I
10 said, we have our knowledge or the data that we show what aircraft
11 are going there changed constantly because of the route around --
12 everyone not wanting to go through those tops. And the tops I
13 think were, you know, mid-40s, 50s that day. It was severe
14 weather, so they were trying to get creative to get out of that.
15 Q. So, normally, who's watching all the monitor alerts. Does
16 that fall to the STMC or is that a certain TMC who's doing that,
17 or --

18 A. ACDC position.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And myself. I would say ACDC, and myself, that's who
21 monitoring.

22 Q. And do you recall if at the time anybody was doing any
23 mitigating factors for Sector 30?

24 A. They were. Yes.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Mitigating factors for Sector 30 began that morning at
2 approximately -- let's see, 11:22 Zulu. That's when we started
3 getting alerts. That particular was for the ARs, which are the
4 Atlantic routes on our east coast, and it was alerted red. So to
5 mitigate that, we did 30 miles-in-trail which is pretty severe out
6 of south Florida regardless of altitude. We actually did that
7 from New York Center on Y493. So when we negotiate these AFPs,
8 it's an actual line drawn on the TSD that captures aircraft that
9 are going to cross that line. When they have an AFP, they like to
10 offer the users and the industry a route-out option and they'll
11 call the waters route. Well, five years ago, ten years ago, when
12 they opened up the waters route, it didn't really impact us too
13 much.

14 But it seems now the capability of aircraft and perhaps -- I
15 don't know what requirements are, but when they have a waters
16 route recommended, a lot more aircraft go out that way. So when
17 we used to not be concerned about the line ending here opposed to
18 stretching and drawing all the way across to capture the wide
19 route, it used to be fine. Now so many aircraft route around it
20 that it becomes an issue. And because of that issue, we've had to
21 put miles-in-trail like we did that day, 30 miles-in-trail on
22 Y493. And that then causes backups into New York. And the week
23 prior, industry voiced their concern and displeasure with getting
24 a longer delay of routing out had they just taken an EDT and flown
25 through the AFP. So not that they're trying to get creative, but

1 they try to figure out where that line ends, and if they can route
2 around it, they will. And we try to mitigate that, you know, it's
3 not non-compliance because, technically, they are doing what, you
4 know, they're going around the AFP. But we -- yeah, so that day,
5 493 we put on that one, back to mitigation. And then at 11:22
6 Zulu to control Sector 30 where that particular southwest aircraft
7 was, it was alerted red. We did 30 miles-in-trail departure stops
8 out of -- 30 mile-in-trail -- 30 miles departure stop for Tampa
9 and Orlando.

10 We called Jacks and had them stop their departures. We also
11 called ZMA, Miami Center, and they advised us they had nobody
12 taxing out. We put this in our notes that morning. And they had
13 nobody taxing out, so stopping them was not going to help it. We
14 called both Houston and Miami to solicit the southern routes. So
15 there is routes that they can go around and come around through
16 snowman. But only limited aircraft can handle that far off shore
17 capable. So we did solicit that. So basically, we're looking for
18 as much help as we could. Aircraft that were normally going to
19 come over Seminole and overland decided to go out to that route,
20 so.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. It's a tough one to --

23 Q. So you were kind of doing mostly just departure restrictions.
24 Was there any --

25 A. Yep.

1 Q. -- restrictions on the Miami Center controllers for in-trail
2 coming into that sector during that time to slow it down, or --

3 A. Yeah. At 11:31 we did Miami and Fort Lauderdale in route via
4 the gulf 20 miles-in-trail.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So 20 miles-in-trail off of Miami and Fort Lauderdale. Tampa
7 departures, we actually stopped that ended in Bayfo (ph.) for a
8 little while, and then they went to 15 in-trail single stream.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Opposed to two streams coming out there, we just limited it
11 to one. And did 15 miles-in-trail. These were all times between
12 11:22 and 11:31. So in that eight minutes, those are the
13 mitigating factors. And I entered a PIREP, a severe turbulence
14 PIREP. It was at the Savannah 270 at 30, so it wasn't even out in
15 the Gulf of Mexico --

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Over land at flight level 380 an Airbus was getting severe
18 turbulence, so it was a -- yeah. That weather was everywhere.

19 Q. Okay. How accurate overall are your map numbers?

20 A. I would say they are ballpark. They give you a good idea of
21 what's happening. I mean it's very rare that they're green and
22 they're actually -- well, I shouldn't say that because point outs,
23 sectors that -- aircraft that are deviating and not put on a route
24 through the sector will not show up on a map number. So when we
25 get situations where there's a large area of weather here and

1 there's a sector here, and they're deviating around and they're
2 going through this sector, we will not know. And that's something
3 we communicate with the floor, but they're, yeah, relatively
4 accurate. They're I would say within five to seven to ten
5 aircraft. I think the sector numbers are 23 for a 30, that's
6 their map number, 23 aircraft per 15-minute block. So if it's
7 showing red, it may show a 24 or 26, and we can actually -- we can
8 look at individual aircraft and move specific aircraft. And we
9 will -- or stop departures and that's how we mitigate that.

10 Q. If the CIC or supervisor, I'm not sure who was working in
11 that West Area or not, if they had called you and let you know
12 that everyone was deviating into that airspace and into Houston's
13 non-radar airspace, would you have done anything differently?

14 A. No. The only thing I -- no, I don't believe so. I would
15 call Houston. If somebody in our facility tells me something that
16 there -- a major concern, I may call the surrounding facility and
17 say to them like -- I mean because the last thing you want to
18 happen is someone shut the door on you.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. Quote/unquote. So --

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. Yeah. If I'm finding out like, hey, these guys are good over
23 there? And he's like, yeah, they're staying within 30 of the non-
24 radar, you know, I don't know their non-radar airspace or ADS-B
25 capabilities out there, so, yeah, if they're wondering, I may call

1 directly to the source and find out if they're good and when they
2 think it's going to be a problem for my own learning knowledge.

3 Q. Okay. Earlier you had kind of mentioned that sometimes
4 there'll be two STMCs in the building --

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. -- at the same time. Is that pretty normal? You typically
7 try and have two in the building at any given time --

8 A. Half --

9 Q. -- at least during like the middle of the day?

10 A. Exactly.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Overlap during the middle of the day, yes.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. We'll have -- we don't have that many STMCs, but we'll
15 have --

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Yeah. One of us will open. And then we'll try to have a
18 10:00 o'clocker come in, and then the 2:00 o'clocker, that way
19 there's overlap.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So you get about four hours of overlap. Correct.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And weather days -- on known weather days, we will try to get
24 that staffed accordingly.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And so during the overlap time, is that typically when you
3 would be more walking around and chitchatting with, you know, the
4 other areas and seeing how they're doing?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. Walking around the floor?

7 A. Yep.

8 Q. Called a floor walker? Okay.

9 A. And -- yeah.

10 Q. So the warning areas, how is that processed to activate those
11 warning areas at the facility? Is that done through the area, or
12 is that through the Missions coordinator?

13 A. It's both.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. The majority of it is through the Missions coordinator.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Beginning at 7:00 a.m., it's real time. So they'll -- we'll
18 start getting calls from Eglin Missions and JATOC. That's who
19 controls the Gulf of Mexico's airspace, which is whiskey 151,
20 whiskey 155, and whiskey 470. There's three areas out there.
21 Some of them are Eglin and some of them are JATOC, and they will
22 call 7:00 o'clock and make a request, hey, we're going to activate
23 whiskey 470 beginning at 14:00 Zulu to 22:00 Zulu, surface to
24 flight level 660. We'll then put that in ERAM, schedule it, that
25 way it'll -- and we'll put it in the log, and that shows up on the

1 ESIS board, which is the status information board, and we also
2 enter it in ERAM.

3 And then I don't know if it's 15 or 20 minutes prior to that,
4 it'll turn yellow on the scopes and the controllers know, oh, this
5 is about to go active, let me get any aircraft clear of it. And
6 then it turns red when it actually goes. So, yeah, that's real,
7 so that'll happen for the Gulf of Mexico. And then Sealord will
8 call us up as well, and they'll do it piecemeal. They'll call,
9 hey, we're requesting, you know, through a 39 row or whiskey 140
10 row, or 138 row, or just alpha and bravo, surface to -- and
11 surface to flight level 400.

12 And then if weather develops, we'll get in touch with them as
13 the weather coordinator. That's where I kind of reading what
14 weather coordinator position does is I will then call -- if they
15 have the airspace up to flight level 300 on the east coast, that's
16 going to significantly impact our arrivals into Orlando. I will
17 call Sealord back or have them, hey, call Sealord, see if they can
18 get that reduced to, you know, flight level 220 or even below if
19 they can. Or a lot of times squadrons will reserve the airspace,
20 Sealord calls it up. The squadron never actually came out or
21 delayed, so we're trying to build up a more to real time situation
22 with that. Hey, if they're not there yet, let us have it, we'll
23 give it to you, you know, 30 minutes prior once you know that the
24 squadron is coming. That's a work in progress trying to work on
25 Sealord because it's a major impact to our operation, especially

1 on weather days. But --

2 Q. And do you recall who made the call to only allow the warning
3 area up to flight level 300 on that particular day? Was that
4 something done --

5 A. I don't know.

6 Q. -- by the area, or --

7 A. I don't recall whether or not they capped the airspace --

8 Q. We were showing --

9 A. -- that sort of thing.

10 Q. -- the ERAM replay that, it was captive for a level 300.

11 A. Okay. So that would have been -- yeah, if aircraft were
12 deviating north, that would have simply -- two ways that could
13 work is either the West Area calls up Missions and says, hey, can
14 you try to get the airspace capped so these aircraft can deviate
15 north into it. So that's one way it would happen. Or they would
16 call me and say, hey, have you guys tried capping the airspace?
17 To which I would then speak to the Missions person and say, hey,
18 can you make a request, or find out what time their mission's
19 going to end. So I do not know who got the call that day. They
20 definitely would have got their missions, they're the only ones
21 that would make an entry (indiscernible) that would cap that
22 particular airspace.

23 Q. Okay. One more question for now. You had mentioned putting
24 in PIREPs. Is Flight Data putting PIREPs into the AISR? Or is
25 that a TMU that's doing that here at this facility, or --

1 A. Flight Data. The only --

2 Q. Flight Data.

3 A. The only PIREPs we enter are the UUAs, the severe turbulence.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I've never entered any other type of PIREP in TMU.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Back in the day, we did other PIREPs, but that is all Flight
8 Data job now.

9 MR. ROSATI: Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

10 BY MR. RIOS:

11 Q. In reference to the briefing that you gave the airlines in
12 the morning on what to expect, can you provide us a little bit
13 more information on what you briefed them on in reference to the
14 what to expect reference weather (indiscernible)?

15 A. Sure. I would -- on that day, again, I would look at the
16 actual sector and advise them that I don't see anything coming
17 inland. that everybody's over the water routes. There's a few
18 holes. On that specific day, we just discussed the impact of that
19 line of weather, the tops. That many aircraft were getting
20 through it, and we need to just slow the rate down. I would not
21 tell the users specifically where to route or how to get through
22 it. We get weather here so often in Jacks Center that they just
23 deviate around it. It's constantly changing and constantly
24 moving, so what I would tell them now would not be accurate in a
25 half hour and an hour from then. I would say expect deviations.

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1 Expect deviations. I don't see anybody on course at altitude.
2 Weather that day -- I would just probably say expect deviations.
3 Yeah.

4 MR. WADE: Hey, Doug?

5 MR. VACCARELLA: Yes.

6 MR. WADE: Just real quick, just wanted to note, we're over
7 an hour, and didn't know if you needed a break or wanted to take
8 five, or anybody else --

9 MR. VACCARELLA: Okay.

10 MR. WADE: -- in the room also. Just wanted to throw that
11 out there.

12 MR. VACCARELLA: Thank you. I appreciate it. I'm doing
13 okay. Thanks, Ben.

14 MS. KOSCHIG: Yep.

15 MR. WADE: Yep. Not a problem.

16 MS. KOSCHIG: We're good. Thank you, Ben.

17 MR. WADE: Yep. Not a problem.

18 BY MR. RIOS:

19 Q. And so my next question in reference to the AFP, what was the
20 AFP rate set at? But my other question is the recommendation that
21 you made, or Jacksonville Center made, what it should be. Those
22 recommendations that went to the Command Center, was it
23 implemented as recommended, or was there any differences?

24 A. That's a great question. I do not know. I don't know if it
25 was the same as we recommended. Eighty percent of the time, it's

1 higher than I ask for by 10 or 15. Not significant. Not major,
2 but I will say I need a 160 rate, and they'll come back and give
3 us a 170 or 175. At that point -- and not that you learn, but
4 some people ask for lower than they need.

5 Again, I'm not in that -- I don't practice that. I tell them
6 exactly what I think we need and why. I see that the rate that
7 day, we had -- so that particular day, they did a GX1, which is a
8 modified, not a normal one, but that basically covered -- again,
9 we had segmented AFPs that we would have for the ARs, inland, and
10 the Ys and Qs. That day they built it where they did a segmented
11 for the ARs out here so that aircraft that wanted to be out there
12 could be out there. And then they did one long one that covered
13 inland and the Ys and Qs together. They called it a GX1, and it
14 looks like that rate was set at 90. A 90 rate opposed to 185
15 looks like what they determined that to be. At full rate, no AFP
16 would have been a 185. So it looks like about 50 percent.

17 I don't recall what I asked for that morning. I would be
18 interested to know. But, yeah, 90 is what it was set at. For the
19 inland route, and the ARs were -- if I recall correctly, that day
20 was set a little bit higher, and then they had to revise it down.
21 But, yeah, for the one that impacted that Southwest aircraft, it
22 was set at a 90 rate. There was no step down. A lot of times
23 we'll start at a 90, and then know that impacts are going to
24 become greater, and they'll step it down and then back up. But it
25 looked like it was at a 90 rate all day until way later on, then

1 it went up to a 140 and then 185.

2 Q. How do you manage that when they give you the higher rate?

3 A. That's a great question.

4 Q. And (indiscernible) recommended?

5 A. Departure stops. That's the only thing I could really
6 control. Air board inventory, at the most severe level, you have
7 other facilities hold. And my experience, I will ask for a
8 certain rate. If we don't get that rate, I will discuss, all
9 right, well, if we don't get this type of rate, this is what you
10 can expect, departure stops. Gridlock is a major concern. Nobody
11 wants to get into a gridlock situation at a field, so we will
12 delicately try to get it to departure stop. So I'll stop
13 departures beginning at 30-minute intervals. If I can come out of
14 that sooner, we will. Numerous things we do to mitigate volume.
15 Cap and tunnel. I did put a cap and tunnel advisory out that
16 morning as well. That's another tool that we're able to use to
17 use all our -- like, you know, different stratify -- what is it
18 called? I'm sorry. But 35 and above, 24 to 35.

19 So we'll request all aircraft landing Atlanta, Charlotte, and
20 Raleigh Durham enter ZJX at or below flight level 330 from Miami,
21 that way it gets them out of -- then the highest most sectors and
22 puts it -- so we'll try to use all our sectors and be more
23 efficient than everybody flying or recommend, you know? For fuel
24 purposes, they all want to be, say, at flight level 350 and above.
25 That sector can only handle so much aircraft, so we'll put a cap

1 and tunnel advisory out. Let them put extra fuel on, and tell
2 them if you're going from point A to point B, expect to be capped
3 at or below 33. So we did have a cap and tunnel advisory out that
4 day. So that's one tool we would use.

5 We would use departure stops, miles-in-trail. And a last
6 ditch effort would be holding. And we did do, you know, when we
7 do the AFP that goes through the ARs, the JY3 I believe, if we
8 don't get a low enough rate and they do the waters route on Y493,
9 we'll put miles-in-trail out in order -- because those aircraft
10 are going to through the same sector that they're trying to
11 protect with the AFP, but it's kind of a work around where they
12 get to go into the southern portion, which they're still going
13 through the same sector. People have learned this. Even the
14 industry chimed up themselves and now say like why don't we just
15 include that in the AFP. But I'm not sure what -- that's above my
16 -- why they don't do things.

17 Q. In reference to the PIREPs that the --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- (indiscernible) mentioned about four to five PIREPs on
20 severe turbulence were entered. In relation to the affected
21 sector, where were those other severe --

22 A. So --

23 Q. -- severe turbulence reports coming from?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And when you get a severe turbulence report, is it

1 highlighted in any other way than entering it into the system?

2 A. All right. So those other PIREPs entered that day, at 11:25
3 Zulu, I entered one for the Savannah 270 at 30 at flight level
4 380. At 16:08 Zulu, I entered one at the AMG, which is alpha,
5 mike, gulf, 240 at 25. That was at flight level 350. This one
6 may be the closest to where we're looking. At 16:28 Zulu, I
7 entered one for the tango lima hotel Tallahassee 137 at 095,
8 flight level 30. And that's by a Piaggio. I enter each type of
9 aircraft as well. And then at 17:41, I entered an urgent PIREP
10 for severe turbulence, moderate to severe at the Wilmington 180 at
11 50. So four hours later, I entered one sort of south of
12 Tallahassee, which I guess would be out in that range. But the Ys
13 and Qs are closed at that point at or below 38, and this aircraft
14 was at 38, so it was probably over land. So those are the PIREPs
15 I entered that day, so none of them were reported in that specific
16 area.

17 As far as what indications that we had that there was an
18 urgent PIREP, I believe on National Weather Service's scope, a box
19 will show up or dots show up where PIREPs are entered. But I'm
20 not aware of knowing where a severe is located. And when severes
21 are -- we report them and that's the extent of it. Routes aren't
22 shut down for it. In my experience, I've never seen that. Yeah.
23 So just -- it gets to certain altitude, all the users and everyone
24 following the flight plans is aware of what's out there. But I'm
25 not -- I don't do anything different other than as a controller,

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1 if you had severe turbulence at flight level 380 at this location
2 and another aircraft checks on at flight level 380, you would
3 advise them for X amount of time that, be advised, there was a
4 severe PIREP, you know, severe turbulence reported 50 miles ahead
5 at your altitude. Either they want to get off of course from that
6 or change altitudes.

7 Q. Okay. And you mentioned that the weather coordinator is
8 normally combined with the STMC position?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. On a weather day like this, on day of the event, what is the
11 workload of that being combined?

12 A. It falls within what I consider my normal duties when I work.
13 It's not much extra. Other than the occasional severe PIREP
14 getting dropped on my desk, that's it. I mean I am in
15 communication with the National Weather Service I mean throughout
16 my shift on a weather day dozens of times. I mean dozens of
17 times. They'll come over and talk to me. But that's kind of what
18 I'm doing anyway. That's part of my job as the STMC is I'm just
19 monitoring the area. I'm checking the volume out. I'm looking
20 for sector saturation. I'm speaking to the TMCs on what we're
21 doing to mitigate that. And I'm mitigating it based on where my
22 airspace is clean or no weather. So sometimes the National
23 Weather Service will approach me just to fill in a tidbit of
24 information. Other times I go to them. A lot of times I go to
25 them when they're approaching our terminals to just ask them how

1 much longer do you have? How fast is that system moving? You
2 know, that way -- because when we go into -- once it hits the
3 field, and Tampa will call us and say stop arrivals, we go into a
4 holding situation, we right away ground stop. That way more
5 aircraft aren't departing into the airspace. So I will go to
6 Weather and be like, ooh, you know, hey, how long until this is
7 clear of the field, and they'll give me a pretty precise time.
8 And then that way I know when to come out of the ground stop, when
9 the holding stats are going to empty. So it doesn't increase my
10 workload significantly on a major weather day. Yeah, it just
11 doesn't.

12 Q. And then my last question is, I think you mentioned there was
13 the AFP should or could have been implemented earlier, much --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- earlier. Was there any discussion about implementing it
16 earlier that was discussed, and what was the result of that?

17 A. Yeah. So you would have to look at the day prior on the
18 PERTI. The PERTI occurs every day at 14:30 Zulu. I'm sorry,
19 14:30 local time. And that's a plan for the next day. We
20 discussed things. We recommend things on those PERTIs. And you
21 would have to check the day prior whether or not we were asked to
22 have an AFP in place. I don't know. I get out of here, again, my
23 shift ends at 14:30, so the evening STMC is on the PERTI each day.
24 And there are days -- it says for tomorrow, there is a Southwest
25 regional planning discussion scheduled for 10:00 Zulu. Terminal

1 initiatives in the plan for Boston. I'm just seeing Atlantic and
2 Gulf route closures are probable. There will be -- let's see,
3 terminal initiatives for the plan due to -- because of
4 thunderstorms expected. That's all they wrote on that one. It
5 didn't speak exact.

6 And give me one second, I'll just see. This is the day of
7 where they actually issued the AFPs. So, yeah, you would have to
8 look at that day prior and see what they requested. We do try to
9 get routes put out overnight on major weather days. And when we
10 know that the ARs are going to be impacted, that's a major work
11 horse again, we will the day before ask for a northeast to Florida
12 jet 43 or 2 being implemented to shift the aircraft because
13 whatever is not going the ARs is going to get moved to the east
14 coast, and then what we have to do is move the normal aircraft
15 that would be on the east coast a little further west, and then
16 just shift everything over because our east coast is overloaded
17 just about every day. From 14:00 to 18:00 Zulu, we are mitigating
18 the east coast on any given day. Probably happen today as well.
19 TMIs would normally be miles-in-trail on departures, we can go and
20 mitigate it with that.

21 But on an average day, we are tactically rerouting dozens of
22 aircraft to the west coast and the center of the state to get them
23 off the east coast. Once the Sealord goes hot, which they do
24 every morning, that sector goes from being about 100 miles wide to
25 35 miles wide, all aircraft are going through that small area, and

1 that's just the way the east coast works. So we try to mitigate
2 east coast any day (indiscernible). Yeah, to answer your
3 question, you're going to have to look at the PERTI from the day
4 before and see if it was requested to be implemented over night.

5 MR. RIOS: All right. Thank you.

6 MR. VACCARELLA: You're welcome.

7 MS. KOSCHIG: But how --

8 MR. VACCARELLA: Can we --

9 MS. KOSCHIG: -- does the controller get the information --
10 oh, go ahead.

11 MR. VACCARELLA: Is it okay if we take a quick break?

12 MS. KOSCHIG: Yes. Go ahead. Yes.

13 MR. VACCARELLA: Yeah, a quick break?

14 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. We are going to stop the interview for a
15 break. Time now is 12:31.

16 (Off the record at 12:31 p.m.)

17 (On the record at 12:38 p.m.)

18 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Time now is 12:38 and we'll restart the
19 interview. Part two. So the question that I had was -- so
20 working the STMC and as the weather coordinator combined --

21 MR. VACCARELLA: Yes.

22 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

23 Q. -- just to say, how does the controller get the information
24 from you? I mean what do you provide the controllers that will
25 help them?

1 A. Little to none.

2 Q. Okay. So --

3 A. Every morning we get a -- before we sign on to position, or
4 once you sign in on PRUART (ph.) you start your shift. You then
5 open up Teams and you get a -- you get a weather briefing. The
6 weather briefing is mandatory. It used to -- it's changed
7 numerous times over the years, but it's always been harped on, and
8 you sign on and it actually shows that you've accomplished it.
9 And the managers make sure that you did your weather that day.
10 Basically that's how -- did you do your weather, did you check
11 your weather? Weather here at Jacks has progressed from just the
12 weather briefing to now every area has a monitor that shows the
13 same feed that I have up by me where when you come back from
14 break, you're glancing up there. You're speaking to your
15 supervisor. The supervisors actually tell them what's changed
16 weather-wise.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And then when they get to the position, they, you know,
19 whoever's up for break, they're going to go get. And during their
20 briefing, they're telling them what the weather's doing, what the
21 tops are, what the impacts are, who's deviating where. And so
22 it's a multi-prong I mean. But from the morning they get there,
23 they check their weather, and that's a video. And the National
24 Weather Service, I think our guys are great. They do -- only
25 because they know the area and we deal with weather. I mean

1 during the summer, it's every single day at some point convective
2 activity develops. So we are well versed on weather here as far
3 as -- yeah. But me, personally as a weather coordinator, the only
4 thing I would ever do is speak to the supervisors. I'm not going
5 to --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- disrupt or interrupt the controller who's working traffic,
8 and chime in behind him or be like, did you read that SIGMET, or
9 no.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. There's -- I say that --

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. I would tell the supervisor, hey, the weather's developing,
14 or, hey, I'm told, you know, it moves -- the majority of the time
15 here, it comes from the west and moves east, except during the
16 summer, we get the sea breeze where the I-95 corridor blows up.
17 But the only thing I'll communicate with sups is, hey, this is
18 dissipating. What you see coming your way, apparently is going to
19 just not impact you by the time it gets in. So just so they can
20 plan accordingly. But that's it. Nothing to the actual
21 controller.

22 Q. Right. Okay. It's always good --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- for me to ask that.

25 A. Absolutely.

1 Q. So there was something else. Hang on. Oh, God, I just had
2 it. Ruth, go ahead while I'm thinking of it. I just lost my
3 thought. Oh, actually, I just thought about it again. So you got
4 the flow coming in from like Houston, that area. So they got
5 ultra highs on that side?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Yeah. I'm questioning. And do they have ultra highs on the
8 Miami side?

9 A. They split. They did a north/south split on the Miami side.
10 So they decided instead of going high/ultra high, or super high,
11 they went surface to unlimited north and south. So they have a
12 line dividing it. And that's as of recent, so.

13 Q. Right. And so what does Jacks have for that area?

14 A. We have nothing currently. Things are in the works, and
15 we've requested it numerous times. So up until last year, I would
16 say it wasn't as much of an issue. But there was one sector in
17 Houston feeding us, and there was one sector in Miami Center
18 feeding our one sector. Halfway through last year, Houston split
19 and created a new high/ultra high out there which is the Voodoo
20 Sector. They created the VUDU Sector which is I think flight
21 level 350 and above. So now you have two sectors in Houston
22 feeding our one Sector 30. And then Miami Center in November I
23 believe of 2023, they used to just have CIGAR, and now they have
24 CIGAR and Frosty (ph.) feeding our one Sector 30. So that's been
25 a major problem for us. We've have to mitigate overages for

1 Sector 30 more than I ever had to. I never had to mitigate that
2 sector in 2014/'15 when I started here only because southwest
3 Florida, especially since COVID, has become more popular, and
4 population's grown, and the amount of flights going in there, we
5 occasionally had a little bit of a spike throughout the day, but
6 now it's becoming a regular occurrence where we are trying to
7 mitigate volume going to Sector 30. I'm told the funds are there,
8 we're just -- they've named the sector. I think it's going to be
9 Fort George. It even has a number. But we've just not gotten the
10 frequencies and radar set up for it.

11 Q. Do you feel if that had been already active and in place,
12 that it would have helped in this situation? Would help the
13 controllers be --

14 A. Yeah. Yes. Yeah. I mean it would be -- one controller
15 would not have been working all those aircraft.

16 Q. It would have --

17 A. Had --

18 Q. -- been split?

19 A. Yeah. Not half, but because most aircraft do fly high, but
20 there would have been a good portion. And that's how we split
21 sectors all the time even if it's going to take three or four
22 airplanes out of your sector. You know, again, when we mitigate
23 red sectors, one of the first things we do is check are they
24 split. If they're not split, then -- not that we don't worry
25 about it, but we'll find out, like, hey, are you splitting it?

1 Are you able to split it? Is there something that's preventing
2 you from splitting it? And if they, you know, if they don't have
3 enough controllers and a staffing situation, or if there's an
4 equipment outage and the frequencies don't work, then we know,
5 okay, listen, they can't split that and we need to mitigate it.
6 But if they're just hadn't split it yet. But, no, if we had to
7 two sectors out there that would -- we put a lot of energy into
8 keeping them green throughout the day. And that term-- by energy
9 I mean we then delay the system and put aircraft on the ground
10 longer and miles-in-trail, and reroute aircraft longer ways
11 around. So, yeah, we need that sector.

12 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Thanks for that.

13 MS. RUPNIK: YEAH.

14 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah, that's helpful.

15 BY MS. RUPNIK:

16 Q. That's really good information. Thank you. Kind of changing
17 gears here a little bit as far as if you as the STMC or any of
18 your TMCs see anything safety-wise that concerns you, like you're
19 not getting what you need, do you guys work through ATSAP, same
20 as -- I mean I know you are (indiscernible).

21 A. We do. Yeah. We have ATSAP. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. And did you file an ATSAP report, or do you know if
23 that --

24 A. I did not.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I was not even aware that incident occurred.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. So to me --

4 Q. Yeah, that's right.

5 A. -- it was a -- yeah. I mean obviously the sector got busy.

6 Yeah. No, I didn't have (indiscernible) sector that day.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But we do have the capability to do that.

9 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. That actually is all I have right now.
10 I'll pass it on.

11 MR. RICHARDS: Yeah. Just a couple -- four, actually,
12 questions I have.

13 MS. RUPNIK: Okay.

14 BY MR. RICHARDS:

15 Q. So I think I've heard you identify three different ways,
16 three different places PIREPs can be entered into the NAS
17 Jacksonville Center. You mentioned the at the position.

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. You guys, and in TMU and Flight Data. Can you clarify
20 what -- first of all, is there a formal process for handling
21 PIREPs at this center?

22 A. To my knowledge, you enter it at the sector. If you're too
23 busy to enter it at the sector, you ask your supervisor, hey, I
24 have a PIREP I need filled out. And they'll fill out in a paper
25 form, and then just go to a different ERIDs and enter it. But

1 it's all handled electronically in the area.

2 Q. And you get the UAs, and Flight Data gets the UAs?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. From the PIREPs that have been passed off, right?

5 A. Like a severe?

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. I'm sorry.

8 Q. So --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- no, I'm just trying to clarify.

11 A. I know.

12 Q. So I guess this is a correct me if I'm wrong thing here. A
13 controller gets a report on frequency. They either enter it at
14 the position or they pass it off. What happens to the PIREPs that
15 get passed off?

16 A. They get entered -- if it's a normal PIREP, it's just going
17 to get entered into a different ERIDs. Every position has a ERIDs
18 in the facility. Every sector, I should say, has one. So if the
19 controller's too busy to enter a PIREP, he, you know, first of
20 all, (indiscernible) d-side, an associate who would probably be
21 entering it, unless you were by yourself, then you'll just pull it
22 down and at your leisure, or, you know, not your leisure, but
23 you'll get it entered. If you're too busy and you can just tell
24 your supervisor I have a PIREP that needs to be entered. And I've
25 done that dozens of times for my controllers. You know, give it.

1 And then we've encouraged PIREPs here at Jacks Center. weather is
2 not a new situation for us. We've been through numerous weather
3 action plans. And it's always weather related, and we call
4 weather 95 percent, 99 percent of the time. I mean in certain
5 days, a 100 percent of the time. It's just -- but, you know, so,
6 yeah, if you're too busy, you just tell somebody else I need help
7 if you can't enter a PIREP.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. What Flight Data does, I do not know.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I don't know if systems are entering it in. I'm not aware.

12 Q. No problem. Thank you. So bouncing around here a little
13 bit. How does the TMU handle convective SIGMETs? So if a
14 convective SIGMET is issued for part of Jacksonville airspace,
15 what do you guys do with it?

16 A. Nothing. I don't do anything with it, a convective SIGMET.
17 The Weather Service gentleman may come up and be like, hey, I've
18 just entered -- I just entered or I just put out a convective
19 SIGMET to the red box or green box, blue box. I know there's a
20 lot of different things up there. And he'll say, you know, yeah,
21 we just put that out. And to me, they'll even tell me a lot of
22 stuff about icing, and they'll tell me stuff about chop, and, you
23 know, it's going to be bumpy rides, and, you know? But we don't
24 do anything -- it is not really anything we're doing from our
25 standpoint. We are not routing around a convective SIGMET. It's

1 just -- yeah, nothing.

2 Q. It's good information for you. So, again, bouncing around, I
3 know you said you had limited use of Co Spa.

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. But of the times that you have used Co Spa, have you ever
6 used, utilized, or looked at the lighting data?

7 A. I was just going to say that's the only thing that I felt
8 came away from my --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- training on it was the lighting. I like the lighting
11 strikes, it just shows the severity of what's going on out there.

12 Q. Okay. So do you have anything else you could say about why
13 you like lighting data? I'm curious.

14 A. Yeah. I mean convective activity, we get rain showers a lot,
15 we get some of that, and I mean it's rain. I think aircraft can
16 fly through rain most of the time. To me, I mean I'm a layman,
17 but when there's major lighting strikes, and I mean you see all
18 the Xs and the dots all over, to me that just indicates that's a
19 major weather situation. If it's approaching a terminal, I know
20 that the ground crews at the airport are probably heading inside,
21 and there's going to be a departure stop or a ground stop.
22 They're not going to be able to operate on the field anymore. So
23 for me, yeah, it just shows to me a severity of the storm.

24 Q. Yeah. I mean interested because we issued a recommendation
25 like ten years ago --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- to the FAA to start utilizing lighting data and
3 (indiscernible). Do you know any other positions or -- yeah,
4 positions within this facility that looks at lighting data?

5 A. I do not.

6 Q. Do you look at echo tops?

7 A. Yes. I look at that, and I like that.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I look at that on the -- I usually use it on the TSD on
10 the -- what is that called? On the TAF. Or, yeah, just my
11 weather on the --

12 Q. The display?

13 A. Yeah. The weather on the TSD. I'll go to options and tops
14 and pull that up. Yeah. I look at that a lot.

15 Q. How about hail? One more.

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. Last question for you. So we had a discussion, a
18 brief discussion earlier about weather radar in the Sector 30 and
19 how someone was describing to us how the ground-based weather
20 radar that you would see on the ERAM, they start to lose coverage
21 as you get closer to the southern border of Sector 30.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. My question for you is because you said you looked at ERAMs,
24 one of your normal weather sources, the weather radar that's on
25 ERAM, do you ever see weather radar convection anything outside

1 of -- within the airspace that's not painting on ERAM?

2 A. Yes. I don't have it on my laptop. I was just checking to
3 see if I did. But on my desktop in the control room where I work,
4 I have a DuPage college --

5 Q. Sure.

6 A. -- has a weather function. And I occasionally will look at
7 that because my understanding is that's satellite based. They
8 have a satellite image where I can look in the ARs. Not so much
9 the Ys the Qs in the Gulf of Mexico, but out in the ARs. I will
10 use it for that because just, historically and traditionally, like
11 that seems to be more of an impact for me. Ys and Qs, again, only
12 if they're deviating north into the military area is usually my
13 main concern. If they're deviating south, Jacks Center is usually
14 never the one to complain about that. It'd be Houston stopping
15 it. So southern deviations, that just doesn't -- I shouldn't say
16 it doesn't impact me as much, but the ARs, I use it for the ARs,
17 the DuPage weather one.

18 Q. Okay. Thank you.

19 A. You're welcome. And I only know that because our National
20 Weather Service guy had it up on his page. I was like what is
21 that? And he's like I'll send you the link. So I have it on my
22 desktop.

23 MR. RICHARDS: All right. Thank you very much.

24 MR. VACCARELLA: Sure.

25 BY MR. WINTER:

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1 Q. I'm going to back to PIREPs one more time just for --

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. So controller get a PIREP, puts it in ERIDs or asks the sup,
4 and that sup's got to put it in ERIDs. Then it goes to Flight
5 Data. They're going to put it in the (indiscernible) system
6 except for the urgent ones, right? Or do they all put the urgent
7 (indiscernible) --

8 A. I think they also put the urgent ones in as well.

9 Q. So now my question is, from that point, when you get an
10 urgent one, how does it get back to the controllers within the
11 (indiscernible)?

12 A. That's a good question. I don't know.

13 MR. WINTER: Okay. That's all I got.

14 BY MR. DAVIS:

15 Q. This may be a question for above you, but when you get severe
16 weather -- or I'm sorry, severe turbulence reports, is it not
17 practice to shut that airway off? I mean at that point, does it
18 become the user's choice of, hey, letting you know there's signs
19 of turbulence out here, you know, we're not shutting it off, but
20 it's out there. Is that more on the user or --

21 A. Yes. It's not on us. We've never in my recollection shut an
22 airway down or shut anything down for severe turbulence. We have
23 not. I know it's come up in the past. I've heard ZDC one time
24 did something and they stopped the door. But this is different
25 because everyone's transitioning over to Wilmington on the ARs,

1 and there was numerous reports in the vicinity of Wilmington and
2 they shut the ARs off. And I remember Command Center even saying
3 like, we don't stop routes -- we don't stop airways for severe
4 turbulence.

5 Q. (Indiscernible).

6 A. We never have. I said we deal with weather all the time, and
7 aircraft, you'll have test cases that will go through weather. Or
8 you'll have, you know, I mean because, you know, no one's -- we're
9 going into Orlando on the west side, everyone's on the left side,
10 at some point you get a test case to see if are you able to make
11 it in there. And then at some point, they'll say no, and they'll
12 turn around and go back around. But, no, we do not shut airways
13 down or sectors down for severe turbulence. Never in my
14 experience.

15 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

16 MR. ROSATI: I actually don't have anything.

17 MR. RIOS: Either do I.

18 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

19 Q. The last question I have is based off, you know, all we got
20 is hindsight right now. Was there anything that you feel that you
21 could have seen that you didn't see at that time? I mean I
22 realize you didn't even realize it happened until later. But
23 looking in that -- were you looking at that airspace at all at the
24 traffic and the flow? I know you got a lot going on different
25 airspaces, so -- but were --

1 A. I noticed that day that aircraft were deviating way south of
2 their airspace. I recall that aircraft were deviating far south,
3 and I saw that. But, again, when that happens, that's -- we let
4 it keep -- we like to keep all our routes open if we can, so, you
5 know, I just -- and then I noticed aircraft deviating. Some were
6 deviating left and some were deviating right, which is not an
7 unusual practice. I guess he's hung up and calling back in.
8 Yeah. So, no. Yeah. Like I said, I was working east coast and
9 west coast, nobody was -- and I shouldn't say nobody, but very few
10 aircraft were actually inland. Aircraft in the 40s, you know, a
11 lot of the private jets and GA aircraft that were flying flight
12 level 400 and above were inland. But everybody else, I was just
13 putting out, you know, mitigating factors for east coast -- I'm
14 sorry, the ARs and the Ys and Qs until Houston closed the Ys and
15 Qs.

16 But, no, I mean I recall it being red earlier. We mitigated
17 that. As far as I know, he was at or below map numbers the whole
18 time. Another factor over there is frequencies. That's on their
19 list, and you talk about ATSAPs. And they have filed dozens of
20 ATSAPs for their frequencies over there, having to repeat
21 transmissions. You know, 23 is the negotiated number for that
22 sector in an ideal condition and circumstances. If their
23 frequencies aren't working properly and they have done this on
24 occasion where they'll say, hey, we need to lower the map numbers
25 and we will lower their map numbers by three. That's all

1 allowed -- that's all I'm allowed to lower them by. So we can go
2 from 23 to 20 and make 20 the new map number and try to -- and
3 keep them at 20. But, yeah. No. Unless their supervisor
4 communicates to me that there's an issue going on over there, I am
5 not really just --

6 Q. Right. And like you were talking about, the frequencies, and
7 we did notice that, you know, there seemed to be some, you know,
8 calls going on, the pilots are hearing or, you know, some issues
9 there. So has that been addressed? I mean I know you just said
10 there was a bunch of ATSAPs, but what's the -- you know what
11 management's doing --

12 A. I do.

13 Q. -- to that?

14 A. So I know that they are documenting every incident that
15 occurs out there of the location, altitude, and direction of the
16 aircraft. And they have -- hold on a second, it was just on the
17 tip of my tongue. I forgot. It's a tech ops term where they --
18 it's the same people that come into look at -- so they're looking
19 for the --

20 MS. RUPNIK: Spectrum.

21 MR. VACCARELLA: Spectrum analysis. Yeah. Spectrum analysis
22 is the -- they are ATSAPing it and they are documenting it. I
23 believe they're coming into the building next week or the
24 following week to get that paperwork and find out exactly, and
25 they're going to either adjust -- my understanding is that

1 frequency is on an 18-wheeler, and it's a 50-foot pole, and that's
2 what's going out that direction. And they have numerously tried
3 to get additional -- and part of the -- when they split and create
4 the St. George Sector -- or Fort George, they need additional
5 frequencies and radar out there. There was a fire in one of the
6 radar buildings over there that's under construction to rebuild.
7 And that's at Eglin because we put an outage out every day on
8 the -- about the Eglin outage for radar. So they're rebuilding it
9 and they're trying to get permanent new. So spectrum analysis,
10 we're working on that. That's what I'm aware of.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And every day it's stand up, they say don't forget to get
13 your reports when you have any frequency issue so that when they
14 come here, we don't just say, well, it's here and there. Like
15 they want specifics.

16 Q. And in that same vein, do you know if the controller reported
17 any outages that night?

18 A. Not that I'm aware of.

19 Q. Okay. And what's the word put out to the controllers? How
20 do they make these reports? Just tell the supervisor, or
21 (indiscernible).

22 A. Yeah. In the West Area, I believe it's a known thing that
23 when they're working that sector, that sometimes they have to
24 repeat transmissions.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. So it's just a known thing in your area that you kind of
2 know.

3 Q. That sounds -- yeah, that sounds like an issue there.

4 A. It is.

5 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. That's all for me.

6 MS. RUPNIK: I'm good.

7 MR. RICHARDS: Good.

8 BY MR. WINTER:

9 Q. How long has that frequency been out again?

10 A. It's not a question of out. It's just -- well, so means
11 (ph.) and standbys. I don't want to say -- maybe they don't have
12 a BUEC right now so they're kind of in an alert status because
13 they only have means and standbys.

14 Q. (Indiscernible)?

15 A. Yeah. A West Area controller or a supervisor can speak
16 better on that than I can.

17 MR. WINTER: Okay. (Indiscernible).

18 MR. VACCARELLA: Yep.

19 BY MR. DAVIS:

20 Q. I have a couple quick things. One, do you know if a TMR was
21 done for this incident by chance?

22 A. It was.

23 Q. It was?

24 A. And I think from what I'm -- my recollection is it was an
25 SSR. How that differs, I'm not sure. But, YES.

1 Q. Okay. And do you know if there's been any talks about
2 temporarily lowering the map number at Sector 30 because of this
3 frequency issue at all?

4 A. Not permanently, but I heard that whenever there's convective
5 activity now, and when -- I guess when they do due to atmospheric
6 conditions, when they're feeling that it's spotty or that they
7 will let us know and we'll lower the map numbers accordingly. We
8 can only lower them by three, although I've been instructed that
9 even if they need it to be 16, it will -- we can only lower it on
10 the NAS monitor to 20, but we will hold at 16 if need be if for
11 whatever reason things occur out there.

12 Q. So if you needed to lower it any lower than three, then at
13 that point, you would have to get with Command Center?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. (Indiscernible).

16 A. Yeah. I would advise Command Center that we need --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- that the numbers are going to be drastically reduced out
19 there.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And that TMIs will be in place.

22 Q. And are you aware of any talks with Command Center to maybe
23 lowering that number at all?

24 A. I have not.

25 MR. DAVIS: That's all I have. Thank you.

1 MS. KOSCHIG: Anything? Any oh, by the ways? Any questions
2 for us?

3 MR. VACCARELLA: I don't believe so. Not that I can think of
4 at this time.

5 MS. KOSCHIG: No?

6 MR. VACCARELLA: Yeah. I hope I answered all your questions.

7 MS. KOSCHIG: Oh, definitely did.

8 MS. RUPNIK: Great information.

9 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

10 Q. So I do have one last one. So if you could find a fix to
11 this to prevent this from happening again, what are some of the
12 things that you would on this magic list, would do?

13 A. Create new sectors. I think we need ultra highs. One over
14 30, which is in the talks, and they have a name and a number for
15 that already. And then our -- yeah, I mean we have more aircraft
16 going to south Florida than we ever had prior to this. So they
17 have already talked about creating an ultra high over 30. They're
18 in discussion, and I think they already have an ultra high in the
19 works to be built over Sector 33 and 34, which is Seminole and
20 Geneva. That's going to be a super high or an ultra high. ZDC
21 has created theirs already. Houston's now created theirs.
22 Miami's done it. We are the only ones that have not yet had
23 approval for it, and we regularly are putting traffic management
24 initiatives out slowing down the NAS because we just --
25 controllers can only work so many aircraft through a sector even

1 with what we have now, the type and talk.

2 MR. DAVIS: CBDLC.

3 MR. VACCARELLA: CBDLC.

4 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. Yeah. I mean even with that, I mean I know only not even 50
7 percent of aircraft have it, but, yeah, I mean frequency
8 congestion is a major issue. So getting additional -- we need
9 more sectors, we need more sectors. We're second or third busiest
10 airspace in the country regularly. I think Atlanta's number one,
11 and us and Miami go back and forth to number two every single day.
12 So, yeah, we just need additional sectors on the -- which they're
13 working on for 30, we're just waiting -- I heard funding has been
14 put in already. They're just waiting on the equipment and
15 spectrum analysis to do their job. But, yeah, that's going to
16 make life easier. Additional sectors.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. A little bit of a redesign.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. And that's even, you know, including the east coast. Every
21 day we mitigate that. If we can get a super high above that, you
22 know, that would really -- without reducing the amount of aircraft
23 that are coming through, we just need to increase the amount of
24 sectors, controllers, and yeah, that would be the fix in my
25 approximation. And I deal with it every day, so.

1 Q. Well, sounds good. Yeah. It just seems a little odd that
2 that hasn't been approved here.

3 A. Yeah. I know it's a major roadblock, and I mean every day
4 I'm called on. On every planning telecon, Jacks, what do you
5 have. Jacks, good morning, what do you have? Yeah. I mean I
6 don't hear any of -- I mean Denver, New York, TRACON speaks on it,
7 Miami, (indiscernible). Like, yeah, we are a main focal point of
8 what's going on these days.

9 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. All right, last chance. Okay. So we
10 are going to end the interview at 13:04.

11 (Whereupon, at 1:04 p.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: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
 LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
 TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
 MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
 Interview of Douglas Vaccarella

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Jacksonville, Florida

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.



Jami McNear
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: LUKE ALCORN, Air Traffic Controller
Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville Air Route
Traffic Control Center
Hilliard, Florida

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Court Reporting Transcription
D.C. Area 301-261-1902
Balt. & Annap. 410-974-0947

APPEARANCES:

RUTH RUPNIK, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MIKE RICHARDS, Meteorologist
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK WINTER, Washington Center Quality Control
Federal Aviation Administration

CORY DAVIDS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

CHRIS ROSATI, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

MARK RIOS, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
Southwest Airlines

ANTHONY WEST, Representative/Vice President
National Air Traffic Controllers Association
(On behalf of Mr. Alcorn)

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:18 a.m.)

MS. RUPNIK: All right. So, the time is 1018 local, which we are officially on the record. All right. So as I just -- and my name's Ruth Rupnik. I'm an air traffic control investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. And can I get your name for the record please?

MR. ALCORN: Yes. Luke Alcorn.

MS. RUPNIK: And how do you spell your last name?

MR. ALCORN: A-L-C-O-R-N.

MS. RUPNIK: Excellent. Thank you. And thank you for being here today. Very important stuff. And before we get started, I'd just like to make sure that you are aware that we are being recorded. Okay. We will have the transcript available as discussed. Would you like a copy of the transcript when it is complete?

MR. ALCORN: Yes.

MS. RUPNIK: All right. Excellent. We'll get your email after we're done. All right. So I see you have a representative here today. Is this the person you have chosen for your representative?

MR. ALCORN: Yes.

MS. RUPNIK: Excellent. And what is your name and title?

MR. WEST: Anthony West, NATCA Vice President.

MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Just going to get that down. Okay. Now

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1 as we go along with the questions obviously are going to be for
2 you. But any time you need to confer either discuss something in
3 here. We can go off the record. You can step outside the room.
4 Just let us know. But any of the questions that we ask, we're
5 going to ask you to answer.

6 So, the NTSB, obviously as you see there's a lot of people in
7 this room. We have a party system, and we have subject matter
8 experts from the FAA, NATCA ASIs and a representative from
9 Southwest Airlines in addition to our NTSB group. Here, even
10 though we represent multiple agencies we are part of the NTSB
11 group.

12 We at the NTSB, we don't do anything on our own. We get
13 concurrence from everybody in the group, make sure we are all on
14 the same page before the final product comes out. So, at this
15 time I'm going to have everybody, go around the room and introduce
16 themselves.

17 MS. KOSCHIG: Hi, I'm Betty Koschig, NTSB Air Traffic
18 Investigator.

19 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB, meteorology.

20 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter, Quality Control Manager, Washington
21 Center.

22 MR. DAVIDS: Cory Davids, NATCA ASI, New York Center.

23 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati, NATCA ASI from Oakland Center.

24 MR. RIOS: And Mark Rios. I'm a senior ATC Systems Program
25 Manager for Southwest.

1 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Thank you everyone. All right. So the
2 NTSB itself, just a quick background, we're a really small agency,
3 about 400 people across all modes of transportation. So, aviation
4 is obviously the most visible, but we also have our highway, rail,
5 pipeline, HAZMAT -- all modes of aviation.

6 We're an independent organization. We're not associated with
7 the FAA or DOT in any way. We report directly to Congress. Our
8 responsibility we're looking for the facts. We're looking to
9 figure out what happened, why it happened, and hopefully come
10 together as a group and potentially make recommendations to
11 prevent incidents of a similar nature from happening again in the
12 future.

13 We're not here to point fingers. We're not here to assign
14 blame. We just -- we want facts. We want to see how can we be
15 stop, or prevent this from happening again. So, as we go, I just
16 ask obviously you're here as the local safety council
17 representative. Were you in the operation at the time of the
18 incident?

19 MR. ALCORN: Yeah.

20 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. So, just based on your knowledge of the
21 event we just ask that you answer questions as thoroughly as you
22 can. Don't add anything. Don't tell us what you think we want to
23 hear. I don't know. I don't recall. All perfect answers. Feel
24 free at any time to ask us for clarification, to repeat questions.

25 We want to make sure you are comfortable with the information

1 you're giving us. Now we're going to go ahead and get started.
2 I'm going to go ahead and ask some administrative questions.
3 First to get to know you a little bit professionally and then
4 we'll move into the event itself.

5 BY MS. RUPNIK:

6 Q. All right. So, what are your operating initials?

7 A. L-X.

8 Q. How old are you?

9 A. Forty-three.

10 Q. And when did you start working for the FAA?

11 A. 2003.

12 Q. 2003. So, you've been at it awhile. And what facilities
13 have you worked in?

14 A. Just JAX Center.

15 Q. JAX Center. And what areas or certifications have you held
16 throughout this?

17 A. Just the West area.

18 Q. West area. All right. So very, very familiar with the
19 operation there. That's good. Now when you started in the FAA
20 did you go to the academy?

21 A. CTI school first and then the academy.

22 Q. CTI. Where did you go to school?

23 A. Embry-Riddle.

24 Q. Okay. And what was your degree?

25 A. Aeronautical science.

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1 Q. Aeronautical science. Do you have any pre-FAA experience,
2 military, contractor?

3 A. For ATC, no.

4 Q. Okay. Any military experience at all?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. Excellent. Do you have any other aeronautical
7 certificates? Are you a pilot or --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You are a pilot? A private pilot?

10 A. ATP.

11 Q. ATP?

12 A. I am a flight instructor, too.

13 Q. Oh, excellent. And you're current?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. So, you've been on both sides of the mic.

16 A. Mm-hmm.

17 Q. Excellent. And let's see. Do you have a current medical
18 clearance?

19 A. Yep.

20 Q. You're currently operational?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Yes. Do you have any restrictions to your medical clearance?

23 A. No. No restrictions.

24 Q. And you are currently certified in the West area?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. All right, excellent. How much overtime do you typically
2 work?

3 A. For this year it's been about one overtime shift every month.

4 Q. And you're on the, you're on the call list?

5 A. No.

6 Q. No, you're not on the call list?

7 A. Not for scheduling.

8 Q. Okay. So, you said you weren't in the operation the day of
9 the incident. Were you in the facility?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. So, you were in the facility. When did you become
12 aware of the event?

13 A. I think the next day.

14 Q. All right. So we're going to skip some of this stuff. Now
15 you've had an opportunity to review a replay of the event,
16 correct?

17 A. Yes. As a safety rep, I also did the SSR review on it and
18 the safety committee did.

19 Q. Excellent. We're definitely going to have some questions
20 about that. All right. So these are kind of the admin type
21 questions that I have for now. Obviously, you weren't in the
22 operation. You say you didn't become aware of the event the next
23 day -- until the next day. Can you just kind of paint the picture
24 for us starting from when you were first notified about the event,
25 just how you became aware and anything relevant.

1 A. I basically became aware through just our internal reporting
2 and emails of we had this event, and I get the emails on our MORs
3 and, you know, incidents that happen. And then we had to schedule
4 the SSR and obviously we had a services rendered telecon that we
5 were advised of that they were having one. I forget what night it
6 was the SRT but --

7 Q. Okay. Were you a part of the SRT?

8 A. No. I was not able to be on that one.

9 Q. And for the SSR, obviously on the LSC, you were part of the
10 SSR. How was it decided who will be a part of the SSRs?

11 A. So, typically the safety rep, myself and the QC manager are
12 the start of it. And then we have a -- they get the delegated
13 management official supervisor or front line manager. They can
14 choose depending on what area they're from, it may be a different
15 area.

16 Then we'll pull in if we think there's traffic management
17 issues, we'll get the TME specialists. And then if we wanted to
18 interview controllers, we make a list of that, too. We kind of
19 decide (indiscernible) who are our starts and who we're going to
20 interview after we review the event.

21 Q. Okay. Excellent. All right. Well that's all I have for
22 now. I'm going to go ahead -- obviously, I have more questions.
23 But I'm going to go ahead and pass around the room. And okay.

24 MR. DAVIDS: Do you want me to go?

25 MR. RICHARDS: I've got some.

1 MR. WINTER: Okay. I've got it. Yeah.

2 MS. RUPNIK: Yeah. Let's go with Mark.

3 MR. WINTER: Yeah, I can go first.

4 MS. RUPNIK: And we'll start there.

5 BY MR. WINTER:

6 Q. Hey. How much time off before you get to do your LCC duties?

7 A. LCC, we get two days a month.

8 Q. Two days a month?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. All right. Did you interview R30 for SSR?

11 A. The controller?

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. No, no, no.

14 Q. It looked like -- I did -- I would've had it up if I knew we

15 were going to talk about it first. Was anything marked systemic

16 in the SSR?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Which one?

19 A. I can't remember which. There were a bunch of SYSIRs that

20 week. I think on that one we did it for the efficiencies.

21 Q. Efficiency.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And you said the QC manager's in on the SSR as kind of your

24 counterpart?

25 A. Oh yes. We start with the QC manager to determine who the

1 management counterpart is going to be. Typically, you know,
2 they're not actually part of the review team.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. We have a front-line manager that's typically part of the
5 review team.

6 Q. Got you.

7 A. And we have QC specialists and they're running the SSR for
8 getting us data, pulling everything and doing the playbacks.

9 Q. On the LSC itself who's your management counterpart?

10 A. Right now the QC manager.

11 Q. Okay. And if I guess those of some of those, so SYSIRs are
12 going to be a thing. If corrective action comes out in this SSR,
13 who creates it?

14 A. We actually did recommend corrective action out of this. And
15 we, Kim and I, the QC manager already started a discussion after
16 the SSR. And then we had a meeting last week. I brought in the
17 XO, NATCA VP, TMU, OMs. We had a whole group meeting last week
18 for about two and a half hours to start the CAP. And we
19 brainstormed and put a lot of things down and still kind of
20 bouncing around with QCG and some things we are finalizing, but --

21 Q. Oh no. I know it takes a long time to develop a CAP like
22 this --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Quite a list.

25 A. It's quite extensive.

1 Q. But for the most part it's you and Kim working on it. Just
2 you're branching out to the whole facility to get things?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. Are you guys -- or was a TMR requested for this?

5 A. No. They didn't request a TMR for this one.

6 Q. Okay. And are you guys going to do one for it?

7 A. I don't know. Technically I think they usually go through
8 the BOM or the QC manager to request TMRs, not from me as a safety
9 rep.

10 MR. WINTER: That's really all I have at the moment. That's
11 all I've got.

12 BY MR. DAVIDS:

13 Q. All right. So, you're the safety rep. You're also the LSC
14 lead?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And they give two days to do all that?

17 A. So, they give me two days to do LSC duties.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. As far as safety rep, I'm off the floor about an extra day
20 every week. And then I get another day a week off for airspace.
21 So I'm off the floor for about three days a week.

22 Q. Okay. So, you're doing airspace and safety rep?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. LSC. And you get --

25 A. Three days a week.

1 Q. Three days a week?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. But you get two, you get two days of the weeks, right?

4 A. Yes. For our same our LSC members. They only get two days a
5 month off the floor. We try to get them more time whenever the
6 areas can release them but.

7 Q. Yes. So, your LSC meets -- the whole LSC meets once a month?

8 A. Twice a month.

9 Q. Twice a month?

10 A. The first Wednesday, today. We just actually met this
11 morning and then they're still meeting. And then it's the first
12 and third Wednesday of the month.

13 Q. Okay. And then as far as the leads, you and Kim meet once a
14 week?

15 A. Yes

16 Q. Okay. How would you describe the safety culture here, just
17 in general as far as --

18 A. Reactive.

19 Q. Okay. Do you feel you are bringing up issues that are just
20 not being received? Do you feel like there should be a -- if
21 they're on the list that will eventually get taken care of or?

22 A. Yes. We bring up lots of issues that just have tons of
23 roadblocks or not much support behind them. And supports always
24 been a problem with the LSC at this facility. Just resources,
25 people, time.

1 Q. Okay. As far as the meeting for CAP, you said it was like
2 two and a half hours. Is that -- do you guys normally meet for
3 SSRs and CAPs and then take --

4 A. No. I actually had to -- I was pulled off the floor to work
5 with Kim to create the CAP because they wanted it done by Friday
6 before everyone showed up. And then I went to the watch desk and
7 pulled the XO, pulled him, pulled as many people as I could in the
8 room and said, now, we're doing this collaboratively.

9 Q. So, you instigated that, right?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Do you think a TMR will be done on this?

12 A. I don't know.

13 Q. Have you suggested a TMR or no? Not really?

14 A. Not really on this because we have other events we've been
15 tracking, and we did an SSR on another severe turbulence with
16 injuries I think two weeks prior to this. And we have tons of
17 these reports and just reviews we've done that it was -- at this
18 point was systemic.

19 We know what the issues are. A TMR, you know, they -- we
20 already went through a lot of the data from TMU because luckily
21 our QC specialist is also a former TMU for many years. So, she's
22 very good at pulling all the TMU data and looking at it and what
23 they did, and what advisories were held in the AFP. So, they did
24 a lot of work for this.

25 So we didn't -- we marked it as systemic on the

1 ineffectiveness, but it wasn't on the part of the TMU being
2 ineffective. It was a part of the restrictions and the
3 constraints they have of just being ineffective for that airspace.

4 Q. Okay. And on the SSR you said, efficiency?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. That's what you guys identified? What, can you explain that?

7 A. Well in the review we went through again I'd say almost we're
8 doing a TMR. But we -- because we have the -- we also our other
9 regional, enroute, safety person is a TMU as well. And we review
10 all that data with the SSR, and found, you know, that we had an
11 AFP out.

12 We had restrictions. We had, you know, they were trying
13 to -- they reduced the map number by three. They were doing
14 everything they could to to try and slow the sector down, but it
15 just obviously wasn't effective for the volume and the complexity
16 of the sector.

17 Q. Yeah. Do you guys do safe briefings?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. The LSC, does the LSC brief it out or?

20 A. Yes. The LSC does it. We do it starting -- I can't
21 remember -- Sunday, the third week of the month. After the -- we
22 meet on the first Wednesday of the month and we build the safe
23 discussion, get everyone on board, add new ideas to it. And then
24 we start to discussing it. Or maybe the second week, I can't
25 remember exactly when we started.

1 Q. You guys did that?

2 A. We do it for a full week and we do four discussions a day.

3 Q. Is that collaboratively or --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. All right. How many managers do you have on the LSC?

6 A. Well including the QC manager, three, so the QC manager and
7 two front lines.

8 Q. And they're at all the meetings I'm assuming?

9 A. No, they're not there when they can be. Yeah, they try to
10 be.

11 Q. Staffing?

12 A. Yeah.

13 MR. DAVIDS: That's all I've got for now.

14 BY MR. ROSATI:

15 Q. You guys have a scoping document for the LSC, when was the
16 last time that was updated?

17 A. A year ago.

18 Q. A year ago. All right. Anything in that scoping document
19 that you guys don't typically follow, or is everything followed
20 pretty --

21 A. Yeah, it's followed --

22 Q. -- consistently?

23 A. -- pretty consistent. I'd say (indiscernible) was sometimes
24 we don't sign our recommendations from everyone if this is
25 something we want do. Yeah, it's a consensus thing but.

1 Q. And that might be something for us to get to, to take a look
2 at that. How long are your meetings typically?

3 A. We schedule all day.

4 Q. All day?

5 A. And so the meeting's not all day. We typically meet at 9:00.
6 People have some different rotating shifts. So, start around 9:00
7 when they get here and that's what we just did this morning,
8 (indiscernible) kind of go over the SAFE discussion and all of our
9 items for about an hour.

10 And then task people for working, Reviewing MORs, data, all
11 that stuff. And then, you know, the little, different projects
12 they're working depending on the group. And then we usually
13 follow up after lunch, kind of another group get together and
14 heads up.

15 Q. That's pretty good. And do you have like a separate office
16 where you can kind of get your work being the LSC rep/safety rep?

17 A. I have a cubicle upstairs.

18 Q. Okay. Do you go through and review the PROCs or does some --

19 A. My access was revoked from that over a year ago. I can't get
20 it back yet.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. But yes, I did for ten years.

23 Q. Is there someone that's reviewing those that's on the LSC?

24 A. There -- none of us are allowed access to it.

25 Q. (Indiscernible). Kind of go -- and you're in the West area,

1 correct?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So, you're (indiscernible) there? So the frequency issues
4 that you've been having since the fire at the radio site, were any
5 of those being documented before the incident happened with
6 Southwest?

7 A. As far as you saying radio issues before the fire?

8 Q. No. Sorry. After the fire but before the incident with the
9 severe turbulence with Southwest?

10 A. Yes. Yes, it's been documented. We've been working
11 with -- as the airspace rep, too, I've been working with all of
12 our tech ops people. We had meetings every two weeks on the
13 status of the RCAG site. They know it's an issue. They know
14 (indiscernible) it's just the equipment we have to work with. So,
15 they are working diligently to fix it. It's just government
16 contracts.

17 Q. Is the facility doing anything about the frequency issue,
18 i.e., slowing down traffic, putting out ATC alerts or NOTAMs,
19 letters to airmen, anything?

20 A. After the incident, after we've kind of gotten highlight on
21 it we were able to force them to put out ATC alerts. And I don't
22 know if traffic is really being slowed down. They've reduced the
23 map number by three but one of the issues, that sector has always
24 been is, they can reduce the map number to five. It doesn't
25 matter because it's a sandwich sector between two facilities

1 feeding us. To slow it down is just not easy.

2 Q. Okay. And has there been any talks about finding ways to be
3 able to slow that down at all or --

4 A. Yeah. We've talked about it. We meet with the TMO and we've
5 discussed it and we know the issues and a lot of it's just
6 constraints on the system, push back kind of. About the only way
7 they can slow that sector down is ground stop South Florida.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And we know from the airline side we do AFP southbound
10 because if we ground stop South Florida everything gridlocks and
11 the airports can't move. So, that's their -- what they fight with
12 from the command center side of, you know, they're tactically
13 doing in trail out departure gates. And kind of try to move
14 airplanes inland, and get Houston to move some to the north. But
15 I mean overall that sector for many years has just had an overall
16 volume problem.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And no route structure built for it to help.

19 Q. Tracker position. Does your facility utilize the tracker
20 position at all?

21 A. Not very much.

22 Q. Not very much. So, as the LSC, do you guys recommend
23 specific things be done during the refresher training that's done
24 every year --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- in the lab?

2 A. Yeah. I actually submitted that recommendation a month ago.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. And they're working on it with our training rep and getting
5 other things added in to our -- we take our data, we analyze for
6 the year of our issues and things we've highlighted and we've
7 submitted to the training department. And then work with them on
8 the problems to build.

9 Q. And how many years have you been the LSC rep now?

10 A. I was a safety rep for about 15 years.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. So, we actually created an LSC before there was an LSC. So,
13 since then.

14 Q. Awesome. So, over the years has your refresher training been
15 fairly similar or are you finding new issues every year?

16 A. Refresher training it's pretty similar. We try to -- we find
17 new issues to submit to them but resources, allocation time to get
18 the problems built. There is a long history of issues with the
19 lab getting us (indiscernible) and problems updated and just
20 backlogs on all the training stuff. So, getting customized,
21 really focused training material has been difficult.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. I'm hoping this year is actually probably one of the first
24 years we'll get it because the training rep we have currently and
25 we just had time and finally getting some people to work on it.

1 Q. Awesome. So, your experience as a safety LSC rep and also
2 being a controller in that area during the event, what would you
3 say the volume in that sector and the complexity was like?

4 A. The volume was high for the complexity of that sector
5 when -- and the reason we talk about why the frequency hasn't
6 really become an issue until now is because when there's no ride
7 complaints, no deviations, that sector does move a lot of
8 airplanes.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. They're all on two airways, and it's kind of hello and
11 goodbye. As soon as you add deviations in there or ride
12 complaints with the frequency issues the complexity goes through
13 the roof.

14 Q. And have you guys talked about reducing the map number even
15 further than just the three?

16 A. We've talked about it. But we've had pushback that if we
17 can't go -- if we go more than three, we have to get the command
18 center to buy off on it and they won't.

19 Q. I would suggest giving that a whirl.

20 A. Oh, we're trying. We also - -

21 Q. Especially since your ATC alert for the radio issues. That'd
22 be something to try.

23 A. We're trying.

24 Q. And then we've heard through other interviews about the
25 potential for splitting R-30. Do you know if there are still

1 talks of that? Is that still ongoing? Is that dead in the water?

2 A. No. That's got -- actually we created the scope for it about
3 three years ago. Well (indiscernible) actually ran that and split
4 that sector and the one to the north with Brewton. We're actually
5 probably getting pushed up because of the frequency issue.

6 So I actually had to work around tech ops to get -- using the
7 emergency funding to rebuild the RCAG site. So, they're going to
8 put our extra radio in there to give us the sector because before
9 that they told us 2027.

10 Q. Wow. And so, what are they saying now?

11 A. We're hoping if everything goes well with the RCAG site,
12 they're looking to get the frequency in by September.

13 Q. Wow. Okay.

14 A. That's it.

15 Q. Do you recall what specifically is in the new CAP that you
16 guys created after this event and went through the SSR?

17 A. There's about 10 or 11 things in there. We did a lot of it
18 reviewing on the volume and the complexity of the sectors,
19 having -- I'm trying to remember. I just went blank on a lot of
20 recommendations on it, actually. But instead of just, you know,
21 normal QC OSAs, we actually went down to communication and
22 reducing map numbers.

23 We're tasking -- we're kind of putting it in the CAP as well,
24 the process, our yearly review for the map numbers, we haven't
25 done in years because Mitre doesn't have the contract for it

1 anymore. So, we don't have anyone to provide the data to give us
2 the analysis of the sectors.

3 So, we're trying to get someone in the program office to do
4 that analysis so we can, you know, get at least the yearly map
5 number review down. And then probably reduce them from that.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. What I was trying to remember to get there. I'd have to look
8 again for it. But there's quite a few good things in there.

9 MR. ROSATI: That's all I have for now. Thank you.

10 BY MR. RIOS:

11 Q. I'm probably ask some of the questions the same but in a
12 different way. And that is as the safety representative and the
13 LSC, you know, representative, in reference to sector 30, what are
14 the safety issues that have been identified prior to this event?
15 What are those recommendations and the status of those
16 recommendations?

17 A. So, the main recommendation was to build an alternate high
18 and split the volume. We have other recommendations to
19 build -- we were supposed to have a -- I think it's an ARM process
20 come down to review the whole building, but also just route
21 structure and to add more routes out there and just kind of build
22 a structure like we have on the East Coast because right now it's
23 just two old airways.

24 If, you know, interim, so just reducing volume to try to
25 help. But that sector has so much through put through it that

1 it's a struggle by getting the volume reduced.

2 Q. And was there a specific recommendation or an identified
3 issue in reference to the frequency issue? And specific
4 recommendations made to alleviate that sooner than the date that
5 you presented us?

6 A. Yes. We created a SYSIR on a frequency on the equipment side
7 of it. We talked with -- I mean we have this talks with TMU and
8 we've been trying to reduce the volume, and they offloaded a ton
9 of airplanes out of sector to try and slow it down. And it's just
10 they have to balance their constraints of how much they can slow
11 it down without gridlocking the Southeast.

12 Q. And then going back to the frequency issue in reference to
13 the RCAG site. Has there been any additional push to speed up
14 that process?

15 A. Every week. And we're on the calls with the actual manager
16 of the RCAG sites and I mean tech ops and headquarters and
17 everyone and they're doing everything they can. It's -- I think
18 the main delay was it took them four months to get the contractor
19 to strip the building down to bare walls. And then they've got to
20 build it back up from scratch. The contractor put the studs in.
21 And someone -- they've got to get FTI and put the racks in it's
22 just their whole process.

23 Q. And do you know the process -- how are pilots aware that
24 you're having this frequency process? Is there any additional
25 efforts done there in taking --

1 A. No. There hasn't. I don't really know of anyway to do that.
2 If anyone has any recommendations let me know.

3 MR. ROSATI: NOTAMs, letters to airmen?

4 A. Yep. Yeah, I guess letter to airmen would be a good one.

5 MR. RUPNIK: Betty?

6 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

7 Q. Ready. Gosh, you stole my question there. So, you talked
8 about you were revoked from seeing the PROCs?

9 A. Mm-hmm.

10 Q. Why was that?

11 A. Probably because -- I don't know the exact answer. I was
12 never told. But in a previous ATM pulled it from all of us and I
13 asked to have it back and said the reasons why, and was never
14 given an answer.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Since you stole my question, I don't
16 have anything right now.

17 BY MR. RICHARDS:

18 Q. Are there ground-based weather radar coverage issues in
19 Jacksonville airspace?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Can you discuss where those are, what they look like or don't
22 look like?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Tell us a little more about those?

25 A. Most of it is simply because the offshore airspace and so

1 when you get, you know, I can't remember the exact range of the
2 NEXRADs, but when you push out about 150 to 200 miles they start
3 tapering off in fidelity.

4 So, we'll still see some precipitation out there, but we know
5 most of the time it's getting -- it's not correct, or accurate, or
6 I know the Atlantic routes the same thing when they go East off
7 the ocean and then start losing it. We also have interference
8 issues.

9 We have -- we've been working for many years on a couple
10 different NEXRADs of retuning them because if we get basically big
11 lines of interference between them and the ASR radar site. The
12 one off Eglin right now we're still fighting with it. The last
13 they told us it takes like two years to grow a new crystal to
14 change the frequency or something.

15 Q. Oh wow. Where do you see, where do you visibly see the
16 interference from the product?

17 A. I mean, on the NEXRAD, on the SMG work product, on the scope.

18 Q. Are there specifically, are there areas where you have zero
19 weather radar coverage in the airspace?

20 A. In our airspace, no. Once you cross the boundary south into
21 Houston or up in the New York, yes. It's pretty much zero
22 coverage out there.

23 Q. So, are there -- how does, how does a controller mitigate
24 those issues, those coverage issues when -- or where does what the
25 weather radar can provide is it hidden?

1 A. About the only mitigation that the average controller would
2 do is looking up on the work monitors over the supervisor's desk
3 and looking at the satellite picture just to see how far the lines
4 are where they extend out into the Gulf.

5 On the TSDs, we'll -- in the convective season we'll put up
6 the cloud -- or the not cloud -- the Echo Top reports. And -- but
7 it gets a lot of clutter so sometimes they turn it off. But
8 sometimes you can see the building or the Echo Top from the TSD
9 monitor.

10 Q. Do the Echo -- does the Echo Top product provide coverage
11 across the questionable NEXRAD area?

12 A. No.

13 Q. I'm trying to figure out what's it's -- okay. But when you
14 talk about if the colors up on the board, they're up on the board
15 just like you're talking about controllers. This is the question
16 you're talking about the controllers looking at satellite data and
17 trying to --

18 A. Interpolate.

19 Q. Interpret it.

20 A. That's correct.

21 Q. But compare that to what they're looking at in the --

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. Are you familiar with the offshore prediction capability or
24 the (indiscernible)?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. What's your familiarity with that product? What does that
2 product provide?

3 A. I'm familiar with it. We were trained on it last year when
4 MIT came down and they explained to us how to use the Miami Center
5 and taking the satellite data, and lightning and whatever other
6 products it tries to put together a pseudo radar picture out of
7 those areas of limited coverage.

8 Q. So, you guys were -- MIT came down last year and trained.
9 What who was trained on that? Do you know?

10 A. I can't remember everybody that was in the room. But the
11 very -- former ATM was there, and some managers and quite a few
12 NATCA reps.

13 Q. Was the TMU part of that? Do you recall?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You know anybody -- do people within this facility use the
16 OPC product that you're --

17 A. No. I'm probably the only one.

18 Q. You're the only one?

19 A. Probably. I've tried to train people on it, and I bring it
20 up and show them what the tool is and they just kind of forget
21 about it. And then we -- we also don't have equipment to put it
22 on. It's by itself. So that always shared with an admin computer
23 desktop and then they're closing windows, opening windows.

24 Q. In your opinion would that product be valuable in mitigating
25 the radar coverage issues?

1 A. It's helpful definitely for also seeing like with Houston
2 Center when we deviate too far South, I guess that sector can't
3 take much traffic because of its size. So, we know it's a small
4 deviation when they're going a little bit South. You can deal
5 with it if it's extending 100 miles South into their airspace.
6 It's definitely, you know, helpful to know, okay, we need to make
7 a different plan.

8 Q. Okay. One other area I wanted to ask just about the
9 mitigation here. Do you -- are you familiar with CoSPA?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Do you use CoSPA?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Are you familiar with -- do they have -- do you look at
14 lightning data within CoSPA?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Do you think lightning data is a useful process for --

17 A. Sometimes it is. When I've been using it kind of usually
18 coincides with what we're seeing with convection in Florida. So,
19 the radar returns. We really don't get the lightning out of it
20 until the tops are already above about 35,000 feet. So, by that
21 point we're already seeing the NEXRAD return and they're already
22 deviating for it.

23 A lot of the issues we've had has been the fast-building
24 storms catching pilots. And they're trying to top them and
25 they're climbing at 3,000 feet a minute and they run to the tops.

1 And so, the lightning I've seen hasn't really corresponded with
2 the build ups that we -- they get caught in.

3 It's more of build ups that are -- we can't see fast enough
4 from the satellites. They're not really fast enough to know. It
5 will pop with a little tiny block on the monitor on our scope and
6 then the next hit is full on the screen. They just build that
7 fast.

8 MR. RICHARDS: I might have some more but for now that's it.

9 BY MS. RUPNIK:

10 Q. All right. So I want to talk a little bit about safety
11 culture. How do I want to word this? Not asking any specific
12 questions about things in the portal or anything. But do you
13 think overall -- obviously, you have access to the portal. You
14 receive the ATSAPs that come in.

15 Do you feel overall like the controllers take advantage of
16 that resource, do controllers feel that they can report these
17 safety concerns either via ATSAPs, or via management. Or is the
18 attitude more just like well nothing's going to get done anyway
19 so.

20 A. It's shifted a lot towards that. Controllers still report a
21 lot, and we encourage it from the LSC. We do read everyone that
22 we can have access to. Unfortunately, we don't have much of
23 reciprocity from the management side, or even just support from
24 like funding and stuff like that to get anything done with them.
25 We use -- well we do analyze the data and use it a lot, it

1 just -- the reporting averages have been pretty standard, ones
2 that have tapered off.

3 Q. And do you feel like you get good response from the ERCs for
4 those?

5 A. How do I gently say this? We do have good response from the
6 ERC. When we ask for corrective actions, though they take a very
7 long time, if at all. So we actually have quite a few requests
8 out there as far as -- and it's like the frequencies we talked
9 about.

10 We have probably ten open ATSAPs for over years of just
11 frequency issues. And I mean we got the spectrum analysis down.
12 We've worked with them. We've identified the issues and funding.
13 They need to cut down trees, they need to put up antennas. They
14 need to put buildings in front of the way a lot of RCAG sites
15 where everything just moved. Because before they were in a field
16 and now, they're surrounded by buildings and hospitals.

17 And they're trying to reach 200 miles offshore with these,
18 you know, interferences. And it's just the overall infrastructure
19 is issue.

20 MS. RUPNIK: All right. I know I have more on this. Chris
21 is really good at reading my mind on these. So I'm just going to
22 go ahead and send it back around the room because I know he's
23 going to ask all the questions I have anyway.

24 BY MR. WINTER:

25 Q. On the frequency things you were talked about, do you guys

1 get the (indiscernible)?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Have you ever talk (indiscernible)?

4 A. I have. I can fortunately, yeah, as far as elevating outside

5 of the building, I don't know what that process is. I've asked it

6 to be elevated.

7 Q. I was, I was talking (indiscernible).

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. That will -- and I'm telling you, we had an issue with our

10 WARP. And the guy at QCD, Shawn Bigby (ph.), he's our

11 (indiscernible).

12 A. He's one of them. Yeah. I think Patrice (ph.)

13 Q. They have a lot of contacts that can make things happen. I

14 don't even know if you're aware about it. Best thing to do is

15 talk with them.

16 A. Yeah. He's -- Shawn knows Chubby's aware of them. But

17 (indiscernible).

18 Q. Yeah. Talk with the QC manager. Talk about elevating

19 everything. I think it would be a good time for that. The only

20 other question I have is a procedural thing. PIREPs. You're a

21 controller in the sector?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. You get a severe turbulence report?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What do you do next?

1 A. Tell the manager or the supervisor CIC in charge. And then
2 as far as the controller side of it, then you'll re-broadcast on
3 the frequency, frame what's going around that area at least up to
4 30 minutes until you get other reports that say otherwise. And
5 they can -- I can tell you what the process is from the management
6 side of how they do it as well, but that's the controller side of
7 it.

8 Q. After -- so if you put it in ERIDs or a supervisor put it in
9 the ERIDs, so this, this is more of an LSC, kind of safety
10 recommendation?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Once it gets into the ERIDs, the PIREP, it goes to
13 flight data and puts it in AISR?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. What happens to it after that?

16 A. As far as electronically (indiscernible) side that's it. The
17 supervisor, they notify them. They fill out two -- two or three,
18 I can't remember the exact number paper PIREP forms and they
19 deliver one to the OM, one to the TWMC. They put it in the NTML
20 log. And then they would disseminate the information that's in
21 there.

22 Q. How does it get disseminated to other controllers at Jax
23 center?

24 A. Oh so, every PIREP we put in the system is GI'd to every
25 sector in the building and approach control underneath us.

1 Q. So, it's GI?

2 A. Yes, it's GI. That's our redistribution. We don't
3 redistribute through ERIDs. We redistribute through GIs.

4 Q. It looks like -- but every -- and that's all PIREPs? Not
5 even --

6 A. All PIREPs.

7 Q. Not even the urgent PIREPs?

8 A. All PIREPs.

9 MR. WINTER: Got you. I think that's it.

10 MS. RUPNIK: Cory?

11 BY MR. DAVIDS:

12 Q. Just to -- I just want to clarify. So, if there's a PIREP in
13 the I think it's the (indiscernible) Brunswick, it goes to every
14 area?

15 A. Yeah. Every TRACON and tower in our building and underneath
16 us.

17 Q. Okay. That's a lot of GIs. Yes.

18 A. That came about from a previous weather CAP where they were
19 being noncollaborative and that's what they came up with and
20 that's the way it stuck.

21 MR. WINTER: We actually, at Wash center, got nailed for not
22 doing that.

23 MR. ALCORN: Yeah.

24 ME. WINTER: It comes out via the ERIDs and obviously
25 nobody's going to look at that little blue number in the ERIDs.

1 So it's --

2 MR. ALCORN: Yeah.

3 MR. WINTER: Yeah.

4 MR. ALCORN: The TRACONS hate us for the amount of paper we
5 burn through.

6 BY MR. DAVIDS:

7 Q. ATSAPs, how often are you guys reviewing ATSAPs?

8 A. I'll usually look at them once a week or the LSC, that's part
9 of their tasking on their days is they go through the portal and
10 review the ATSAPs.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. The one's that are dumped in the portal and then, you know,
13 through the as the LS -- so the safety lead, I get sent them from
14 the ERC from once they're shared with the facility. So and we
15 have another management counterpart that's not on the LSC that him
16 and I work on the ATSAP responses for the ERC but we'll, you
17 know, send it to LSC or whomever the departments we need.

18 Q. So, who? You and who?

19 A. Matt Bennet, the other -- my counterpart for the ATSAP
20 responses.

21 Q. Okay. So it's not QC?

22 A. No. And we did it intentionally that way.

23 Q. Okay. So, I've kind of been asking a lot of questions about
24 this restricting this airspace. And maybe it's my New York
25 mentality here, but it seems like you guys don't use the airborne

1 restrictions?

2 A. No, we do.

3 Q. Well from what I've read. You know way better than anyone
4 because you actually work it. I'm hearing a lot of like we can
5 only restrict the departures out of Miami, and not have a 15 miles
6 of trail on Q, whatever it is, 102 or the Q route that goes across
7 that airspace.

8 A. Yes. They've tried that a few times. And it actually
9 started with the Houston Center tried that with us. It's almost
10 impossible to do it by the airways. So when they do put a trail
11 out, they do it by airport pair. And supposedly -- I'm not, I'm
12 not a TMC, so I can't answer what their restrictions are or how to
13 do it. But when they put out a per airport pair, the problem with
14 the NEPTA sector is is they're going everywhere.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. I don't have a stream of LaGuardia's or LAX's or whatever.
17 They're going to every airport West of JAX Center. So, we do with
18 actually we probably put more in trail restrictions on Houston
19 Center because we are feeding more Miami's, Lauderdale's. We can
20 get the in trail on those set up.

21 But as far as just a straight up volume on the airways, yes,
22 I mean it's -- we've tried that before, and I mean there's just no
23 way for that one controller to line 40 airplanes up 30 miles in
24 trail on an airway. They would just be putting them in holding
25 patterns and spinning out there --

1 Q. From Miami, you saying?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. That feed too?

4 A. Yes. We've asked. But so, they do a lot of in trail
5 departure, in trail restrictions out of all the terminals trying
6 to just get more space and building for Miami without trying to
7 ground stop them.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. But there's only one sector technically. So everything from
10 the Westcoast of Florida into NEPTA. There's one sector before it
11 hits us. And they come straight out of those TRACONS through
12 there, the CIGAR sector next to us is just -- you know, and they
13 split it now.

14 But as far as they own surface to 60, and they're a huge
15 sector, too. But if they get a lot of crossing traffic and more,
16 even more descending traffic than we have because they're just not
17 the Orlando's, Tampa's, Lee counties, Naples, everything going to
18 the Westcoast of Florida.

19 Q. Got you. How often does the NATCA safety reps -- do you get
20 a chance to talk to the ATM?

21 A. Never.

22 Q. Never comes to you and asks you, hey man, you're on the
23 floor. What's up?

24 A. I mean I would say we informally have a conversation. As the
25 safety rep? No, we don't. We don't really have an official

1 meeting with the ATM.

2 Q. XO?

3 A. No. They've kind of kept me out.

4 Q. So, I mean do they meet with the QC manager?

5 A. All the time.

6 Q. All the time? Never together to -- (indiscernible).

7 MR. WINTER: I have a question.

8 BY MR. WINTER:

9 Q. So the fac rep has delegated the safety duties to you?

10 A. Yes.

11 MR. WINTER: Okay. That's all I got.

12 MR. DAVIDS: That's an issue.

13 MR. ALCORN: Yes.

14 MR. DAVIDS: That's a safety issue.

15 MR. ALCORN: Yes, it is.

16 MR. WINTER: While it could be, I would say this is more of a
17 collaboration issue.

18 MR. DAVIDS: Yeah. But I think it's both.

19 BY MR. DAVIDS:

20 Q. As -- now just jumping to a whole other topic. PROCs, right.
21 I know, I know you can't see them anymore.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And as a controller, here -- so not so much as a safety rep
24 but as a controller here how often are PROCs given out?

25 A. They're completely event driven. So, they're only, they're

1 only done when a MOR is filed.

2 Q. Okay. Mostly negative?

3 A. Yes. And I know that, obviously, I can't see them. But
4 historically that's the way it's been done. And also what
5 people -- controllers. I was the area rep, too, for the last two
6 years in the West area before January 1st. So, they would just
7 have to just bring me PROCs they were given and what's this?

8 Q. Yes. How many controllers do PROCs here?

9 A. Event driven, completely worthless. I mean I've been
10 fighting since performance management started as a safety rep. I
11 know it's absolutely part of the process that needs to be done.

12 And it's -- I've created the baseline PROCs for sups to do
13 ten years ago to start the process and trained everyone offsite,
14 and for a whole day, and tried to get it rolling, and they just
15 don't want to adopt the process. They just won't do anything.

16 Q. The control is you then as inherently disciplined?

17 A. Well not disciplined -- that's an --

18 Q. Not -- no, not disciplinary.

19 A. That's an insult. Yeah.

20 Q. But it's all good.

21 A. Yeah.

22 MR. DAVIDS: It's all good. That's good. All right. That's
23 all I have, yeah.

24 BY MR. ROSATI:

25 Q. So, kind of jumping back to LSC. You said you have four

1 managers on the LSC right now?

2 A. Three.

3 Q. Three? And which ones are those? You have a QC manager?

4 A. QC manager and two front lines.

5 Q. Two front lines. So, the XO and the ATM are not involved in
6 any way in the LSC?

7 A. No.

8 Q. When you guys come up with any recommendations or something
9 like that is that something that you go to present to the XO?

10 A. Yes. We will present them to -- well typically to the facrep
11 and the ATM since they're the --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- joint sponsors in the group.

14 Q. Okay. But in general the XO and ATM are not involved in the
15 LSC for the most part?

16 A. No, not really.

17 Q. Okay. This is probably not the best question for you
18 particularly, but you'll probably know. How many sups do you have
19 in each area right now?

20 A. I couldn't tell you. I mean I could guess -- I know the West
21 area now we've -- I think we're up to four. But I couldn't really
22 tell you the other areas what they're at.

23 MR. ROSATI: That's pretty much it. That's all I have for
24 now.

25 BY MR. RIOS:

1 Q. I have one question. It's a little bit long here. That is,
2 you know, what is the culture on all the reports given to issuing
3 the weather information and soliciting PIREPs by controllers? And
4 has there been any type of refresher training given on those
5 topics? And when's the last time that you recall that occurring?

6 A. So, I mean this facility, it's very important. We work a ton
7 of weather. The controllers are calling weather constantly. And
8 I mean as far as PIREPs go, and our training and the importance of
9 it because in the winter -- we kind of have two seasons.

10 We have the thunderstorm season, and then we have turbulence
11 season, because the jet stream goes South in our airspace in the
12 winter. So in the wintertime's it's focused on moderate
13 turbulence or greater. And then the summertime is just all the
14 convective activity and just deviating all over the sky.

15 So, I mean as far as I've seen from all of our data over the
16 years, the controllers consistently doing a very good job at it
17 and a very important one. They have to get the airplanes through
18 the weather, and we have so many constraints that I mean it's what
19 we have to do to get just to get them safely to where they're
20 going. We can't just shut down sectors and say routing around the
21 weather. We have to get through it somehow.

22 So, they're very good and very diligent about that. I think
23 as far as a refresher training is terminology wise the FAA has a
24 refresher and recurrent and all kinds of different things. So,
25 refresher training is the one they're doing in the summertime that

1 they actually go into the lab and deal with things. So, that's
2 the one we talked earlier they're working on the problems for that
3 this summer.

4 We do through the LSC, we do our SAFE discussions monthly.
5 We probably talked about weather every other month, or we do
6 especially coming in to convective season. We'll focus on that.
7 And in the wintertime, we're focused on the jet stream and
8 turbulence reports and finding altitudes and ways to, you know,
9 basically balance out the traffic because we'll give -- everyone
10 files down below 30,000 feet to get the jet stream. And then that
11 impacts the sector volume and (indiscernible) systems.

12 MR. RIOS: All right. Thank you.

13 MS. KOSCHIG: No, thank you.

14 MR. RICHARD: So I'm the weather guy. So I'm still thinking
15 about the --

16 MS. RUPNIK: Do you need a minute because may have a couple.

17 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah. I could stop you.

18 BY MR. RICHARD:

19 Q. Well I'm thinking about all of the computers. So, going
20 back to the, I guess this is just a general question. Going back
21 to the -- so, I understand this accident occurred in an area that
22 clearly had weather-radar coverage at least a high altitude but
23 not too much farther south we're entering kind of this gray area,
24 so that was --

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. -- kind of a problem, which I think could potentially
2 be -- it could create issues. So, let me ask you this, have you
3 seen issues or events that have occurred that you would attribute
4 directly or indirectly to not having great weather radar coverage?

5 A. I wouldn't say directly to not having the coverage. Again,
6 most of the severe turbulence injuries I've seen have been
7 involved with either jet stream or flying into the tops of
8 building thunderstorms.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. As far as these lines go, we have a lot of issues of people
11 trying to punch through the middle of the line. And the fidelity
12 we see is, you know, we know we tell them that we can see but
13 unfortunately, we're not the one in the cockpit.

14 In this instance I know you did see in the Southern end when
15 everyone's focused on the Southwest going through the little line
16 of moderate and heavy. But everyone deviating to the South
17 because the controller put them to a fix. But then they were all
18 still asking to deviate, and we couldn't see anything down there.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. So, that adds complexity of workload to sector that we kind
21 of try to make a plan to route them around the weather. And then
22 we still don't know what we're getting into. And then one wants
23 to go left, one wants to go right, one wants to go here. And now
24 you're trying to coordinate through, you know, three different
25 centers and their workload just goes to the roof.

1 Q. I think you put that well. I mean I saw this stuff. It's
2 not a nonissue.

3 A. Yeah, that's correct.

4 Q. And so let me, let me just ask you this generally, do you
5 have any recommendations that are directly for this center or us
6 to recommend or go forward with on ways to mitigate or help
7 mitigate those issues, or raise awareness, et cetera? Or is it
8 not even a control thing? I don't know any thoughts you have?
9 No, is fine.

10 A. Yeah. There's no way --

11 Q. I'm trying to give you a chance to --

12 A. (indiscernible) recommendations. We've been trying to get
13 like a very useful PIREP tool. There's one, they were brought
14 down and implemented on us was not useful, wasn't accurate. And
15 we are working on that now with the new PIT program but there's
16 still bugs in that.

17 I know as far as PIREPs go we've asked, in fact from our old
18 weather rep from a decade ago to have it integrated in ERAM. So,
19 instead of having to take your eyes off the scope and type up here
20 and all this, I can load it, click on a data block, and send the
21 PIREP. And it should be just distributed to the world. You know,
22 turbulence products could always be better.

23 I know as a pilot, I have a way more turbulence products on
24 an aircraft with my XM radio or ADSB then I have as controller.
25 So, there's obviously just a lot of lack of funding for equipment.

1 I mean it's taken me three years just to get a little desktop PC
2 in the areas to put the PIREP monitor on by itself, so it's not
3 shared with something else. And we're still waiting for funding
4 for monitors.

5 Q. Specifically with the weather radar coverage issue, in short
6 of building an offshore antenna that's a --

7 A. Yeah. They're building a new radar site. And I don't really
8 know --

9 Q. Yeah, that's kind of tough.

10 Q. -- yeah, what else to do as far as that goes. But the OPC
11 tool, we've talked about that on getting equipment in here so we
12 can see the OPC product close to the sector and have a better idea
13 of what it is. Not just one rotating slide up on the wall.

14 Q. That seems like some low hanging fruit.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. I mean that shouldn't seem too hard to implement. I guess we
17 (indiscernible), right, to change a display?

18 A. It took me three years to get a PC.

19 MR. RICHARDS: That's quick. Okay. I appreciate your candid
20 candor. Thank you. Nothing else.

21 BY MS. RUPNIK:

22 Q. All right. Back to the collaboration aspect of the facility.
23 Have you ever had any sort of external, like right from the start,
24 collaborative health assessment, any of those products come into
25 the facility?

1 A. We done collaborative skills training a couple of times but I
2 know we've asked for collaborative skills or collaborative health
3 assessment, and we have not gotten one that I'm aware of.

4 Q. How do you request that?

5 A. When I was -- I know when I was VP of the union, actually we
6 requested it through the collaboration facilitators. And there
7 was, I think at the time we asked it, there was -- it was during
8 COVID and there were scheduling issues and stuff like that. But I
9 can't say what's been done since then.

10 Q. Okay. Okay. I want to word this right. It's April 2nd,
11 2024. You are king for a day. You have a magic wand that'll cast
12 one spell. You can make one change that would have prevented this
13 incident from happening.

14 A. I don't know as far as from the ATC side, I could have done
15 anything to prevent the incident from happening. There's things
16 that could have mitigated it. But I don't know if we could have
17 actually prevented it.

18 Q. If you were to make a recommendation, I know Mike sort of
19 touched on this, moving forward if there was one thing whether it
20 be -- and I know there's a lot of issues here. But the
21 frequencies, splitting the sector. Obviously, we know Florida is
22 Florida as far as that. I worked in South Florida for half my
23 career so. So as someone certified on that sector, when you're in
24 the weeds, what is it you feel like you need the most, the one
25 most useful tool that could help?

1 A. The most useful tool that could help that. I mean when we
2 have scenarios like that with a cold front's coming across the
3 Gulf, to me the one useful tool is to shut down the Gulf. Well I
4 mean I've seen too many times we've run aircraft through severe
5 lines of thunderstorms constantly and it keeps the pressure on the
6 system until someone gets hurt.

7 Q. Now I'm actually glad you brought that up because they did
8 shut -- they said they did shut down the Gulf. But obviously
9 airborne in airborne.

10 A. Airborne is airborne. Now that line was in the middle of the
11 sector well long before --

12 Q. Right. Okay. Okay. So, better planning, better --

13 A. Absolutely. Communication and planning is one of the biggest
14 problems. We're very reactive. We wait till someone balks or
15 spins and says they won't do it before we actually shut it down.

16 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. That's a great answer actually. So,
17 we've been around the room twice. Anybody else think of anything?

18 MR. WINTER: Yeah.

19 MS. RUPNIK: Got two here. Ok yes, we'll start with Mark.

20 BY MR. WINTER:

21 Q. I forgot about it earlier. The FAA sent us that -- they sent
22 us the CAPs, not what's in them, just that they're there. We know
23 that they're a corrective action for relaying precip.

24 A. Say again?

25 Q. So under corrective action for relaying --

1 A. Displayed precipitation?

2 Q. Yeah. You -- that exactly right now?

3 A. No, not right now. We were for the -- I think it was the

4 summertime we pointed up closing that one out.

5 Q. Last summer?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So where are we at right now?

8 A. We are currently under one for the dissemination of -- when

9 we disseminate SIGMETs, we weren't saying the type of weather

10 phenomenon.

11 Q. As were we.

12 A. Yes. So we're -- well actually we fixed that pretty quickly

13 but because of averages we've got to wait until it gets to 85

14 percent and then we can close that one out. But we're --

15 Q. We're in the same boat.

16 A. We're doing well on that one.

17 Q. Okay. The PIT stuff how deep into are you with that PIREP

18 displays?

19 A. One's been asking for it for years. We built the adaptation

20 set up. I've been looking at it every day of the last week. We

21 finally got access to it, the web link and evaluating. Found some

22 adaptations, some issues with it, but --

23 Q. So, you got the web link. You got the (indiscernible)?

24 A. Yeah. We had the group here last week doing a site survey

25 for monitor placement and hardware ordering and all that stuff.

1 Q. Well if you need help talk to our LSC.

2 A. Yep.

3 Q. Because we ordered monitors and they're not very good.

4 A. Oh, okay.

5 Q. Yeah, the (indiscernible) knows about it now.

6 A. Thank you.

7 MR. WINTER: They had a very poor sign and (indiscernible).

8 But that's it.

9 MS. RUPNIK: Cory, do you have one?

10 MR. DAVIDS: Yeah, I just have two, relatively quickly ones.

11 BY MR. DAVIDS:

12 Q. The severe turbulence, so when get a severe turbulence report
13 you report it up and everything, what as a controller are you
14 expecting to be done?

15 A. Historically, not much. We have the discussions and fights
16 over, you know, you can't close the route for severe turbulence.
17 And we ask for it. We do disseminate it usually to the sectors
18 around us to let them know to start routing aircraft away from it.
19 But as far as higher up, I don't expect much to be done because
20 we're just constrained on the airspace.

21 There's nowhere else to go other than spinning everyone at
22 the boundary that's landing in Washington. There's, you know,
23 their airborne inventory as they say is, we try to route them
24 around the areas we find. Again, with the thunderstorms they
25 change so rapidly, it's extremely difficult to pinpoint it. And

1 usually when they've got into it it is from flying to the tops or
2 trying to punch through a line of severe or heavy extreme
3 precipitation.

4 And the jet stream stuff we do. In the wintertime we have
5 the severe turbulences we will get kind of a little bit more
6 action there. But we fix that with altitude. So, the severe, you
7 know, the rotating cores at 35, 37. Someone hits the top of it,
8 gets the shearing and then okay, we know now. Everyone goes to
9 30, 31. And then everyone's dive bombing out of those altitudes.
10 So, we'll coordinate that with sectors outside of us, especially
11 in the Gulf with Miami.

12 We'll get the bad rads, even just the moderates. So I mean
13 we start getting up in this altitude. And we tell Miami, and they
14 just send everyone down to 28 to stay out of it. And then Houston
15 will have different problems because of jet stream turns and then
16 they go to climbing back up to 37 or something, you know. So they
17 go up and down through the Gulf like that all the time.

18 Q. And then lastly following up on the collaboration question.
19 How, overall how do you think the collaborative environment is
20 here when bringing up issues, with, you know, --

21 A. Bringing up issues as far --

22 Q. -- particularly if it's a safety --

23 A. -- as the workforce goes? I think they feel free to do it as
24 far as collaboratively getting things fixed, it's poor.

25 MS. RUPNIK: Have anything? Yes? Okay.

1 BY MR. RIOS:

2 Q. Okay. So much of what was asked but in a different way. How
3 would you describe and classify the overall relationship between
4 NATCA and management as it relates to adjusting or resolving those
5 safety issues?

6 A. The overall relationship I mean as far as the LSC and the QC
7 side goes, we're pretty good. We work together, you know, weekly.
8 Overall, from above that I personally again we don't meet with the
9 ATM or the XOs, the district or anything like that. And then so I
10 don't really see much happening there. I don't. I guess
11 recommendations or whatever would kind of just kind of go by the
12 wayside. We get a lot of mandates.

13 MR. RIOS: That's it.

14 MS. RUPNIK: Okay.

15 MR. WINTER: I have another question just for the heck of it.
16 In your scoping doc does it ever schedule for you to meet with the
17 ATM?

18 MR. ALCORN: No.

19 MS. RUPNIK: All right, before we shut everything down here,
20 do you have anything for us, Anything extra for us, Any questions?

21 MR. ALCORN: No, I think you covered a lot of it.

22 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Excellent. Well, I show the time as
23 1108 local and we are off the record.

24 (Whereupon, at 11:08 a.m., the interview was concluded.)

25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
 LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
 TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
 MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
 Interview of Luke Alcorn

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Hilliard, Florida

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.



Romona Phillips
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: DANIEL DEREMER, Operations Manager
Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville Air Traffic
Control Center
Hilliard, Florida

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Court Reporting Transcription
D.C. Area 301-261-1902
Balt. & Annap. 410-974-0947

APPEARANCES:

RUTH RUPNIK, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK WINTER, Washington Center Quality Control
Federal Aviation Administration

CORY DAVIDS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

CHRIS ROSATI, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

MARK RIOS, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
Southwest Airlines

BENJAMIN WADE, Representative
FAA Office of the Chief Counsel
(On behalf of Mr. Deremer)

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I N T E R V I E W

(9:01 a.m.)

MS. RUPNIK: All right, time now is 9:01 Eastern Daylight Time, and it will show as officially on the record.

All right. So, good morning. So, my name is Ruth Rupnik. I'm an Air Traffic Control Investigator with the NTSB.

And can you please state for us your first and last name?

MR. DEREMER: Daniel Deremer.

MS. RUPNIK: Daniel Deremer. And how do you spell your last name?

MR. DEREMER: D-E-R-E-M-E-R.

MS. RUPNIK: Perfect. Okay, thank you. And you're the operations manager.

MR. DEREMER: That's correct.

MS. RUPNIK: All right. Thank you for being here today. We really appreciate your time. We know you're really busy, so.

So, before we get started as we just discussed, you know the interview is being recorded. We will have the transcription.

MR. DEREMER: Okay.

MS. RUPNIK: Would you like a copy of the transcript once the -- once that's finished?

MR. DEREMER: Sure.

MS. RUPNIK: All right. So, we'll get your email after the interview.

MR. DEREMER: Okay.

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1 MS. RUPNIK: So, we'll be able to send that out to you. The
2 audio we talked about, that will not be made public. However, the
3 transcript will become part of the public record.

4 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

5 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. So, I see you have a representative with
6 you today.

7 Ben, would you state your name and job title for the record?

8 MR. WADE: Of course. Benjamin Wade, Attorney-Advisor, FAA
9 Office of the Chief Counsel.

10 MS. RUPNIK: Excellent, thank you. All right, so during this
11 interview all questions are going to be for, for you, Daniel.

12 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

13 MS. RUPNIK: And if at any time you'd like to confer with
14 your representative, we can stop the meeting, or you can confer.
15 We just ask that your representative not answer any questions for
16 you.

17 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

18 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. All right, so here at the NTSB we have --
19 it's, it's a party system.

20 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

21 MS. RUPNIK: So, we have the two of us from the NTSB. And
22 I'm going to have everyone go around the room and introduce
23 themselves, but we have FAA, we have NATCA ASI, and we also have a
24 representative for Southwest Airlines.

25 MR. DEREMER: All right.

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1 MS. RUPNIK: Everybody in this room has an air traffic
2 background.

3 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

4 MS. RUPNIK: So, we -- I'll go ahead and pass it off for
5 everyone to introduce themselves.

6 MS. KOSCHIG: All right. I'm Betty Koschig, NTSB Air Traffic
7 Specialist.

8 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

9 MS. KOSCHIG: Great, thank you.

10 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter, Washington Center Quality Control
11 Manager.

12 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

13 MR. DAVIDS: Cory Davids --

14 MR. DEREMER: I'm sorry.

15 MR. DAVIDS: Cory Davids, NATCA ASI, New York Center.

16 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati, NATCA ASI from Oakland Center.

17 MR. DEREMER: All right.

18 MR. RIOS: And Mark Rios. I'm the Senior ATC Systems Program
19 Manager for Southwest Airlines.

20 MR. DEREMER: It's a pleasure.

21 MS. RUPNIK: All right. So, as you can see we've got a lot
22 of different groups and agencies represented here. One thing
23 that's important to note here as, as this investigation, we are
24 all the NTSB air traffic group.

25 MR. DEREMER: All right.

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1 MS. RUPNIK: So, we don't do anything on our own. Everything
2 here goes through the group. We all -- we all work together --

3 MR. DEREMER: Right.

4 MS. RUPNIK: -- to produce the final product.

5 All right. So, just a little bit of background about the
6 NTSB. We are a very small agency; we're only about 400 people
7 throughout the entire agency. It covers all modes of
8 transportation: highway, rail, pipeline, hazmat, aviation.

9 Our goal is safety. We, we do not make rules. We do not
10 enforce rules. Our goal is to figure out what happened, we want
11 to figure out why it happened, and hopefully come up with some
12 recommendations to prevent similar incidents from happening in the
13 future.

14 This is event that -- is not specific to Jax Center.

15 MR. DEREMER: Right

16 MS. RUPNIK: Severe turbulence events are happening across
17 the NAS, and we're trying to figure out why that is happening and
18 what recommendations we can put forward to reduce and mitigate
19 that issue.

20 We're here because we're -- you're the expert here. We don't
21 -- none of us worked at Jax Center. We don't -- you're the expert
22 here.

23 MR. DEREMER: Right

24 MS. RUPNIK: This is your house. So, we're looking for
25 facts. We're looking for everything as thoroughly as you can

1 remember it.

2 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

3 MS. RUPNIK: Don't add things, don't tell us what you think
4 we want to hear.

5 MR. DEREMER: Right.

6 MS. RUPNIK: We're just the facts.

7 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

8 MS. RUPNIK: If you don't know the question, answer to a
9 question, I don't know, I don't recall. Feel free to ask us to
10 clarify, ask the question again.

11 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

12 MS. RUPNIK: This is a -- this is a dialogue.

13 MR. DEREMER: Yeah.

14 MS. RUPNIK: All right. So, as far as what to expect during
15 the process. We're going to start off with some administrative
16 questions, just want to get to know you better -- a little bit
17 better professionally. And then, we'll move onto the event
18 itself, and then I'll pass around the room so that everybody can
19 ask, ask questions based on their area of expertise.

20 MR. DEREMER: Okay.

21 MS. RUPNIK: And one last thing too, you're going to see a
22 lot of us -- we're going to be writing notes, typing.

23 MR. DEREMER: Yep.

24 MS. RUPNIK: We're just jotting things down so we can refer
25 back to them. And then, before we leave the facility, any notes

1 that were taken in this room will be destroyed.

2 MR. DEREMER: All right.

3 MS. RUPNIK: It'll probably last about an hour. If you need
4 a break, don't hesitate to ask. If anyone of us needs a break
5 we'll speak up, go off record, and reconvene.

6 MR. DEREMER: All right.

7 MS. RUPNIK: Don't be shy. All right. Let's see here. Do
8 you have any questions before we get started?

9 MR. DEREMER: No.

10 MS. RUPNIK: All right.

11 INTERVIEW OF DANIEL DREMER

12 BY MS. RUPNIK:

13 Q. What are your operating initials?

14 A. D-V.

15 Q. D-V, okay. And how old are you?

16 A. 41.

17 Q. Okay, and when did you start working for the FAA?

18 A. FAA, 2010. May 14, 2010.

19 Q. Okay, and you went to the academy or --

20 A. I went to the academy, yes.

21 Q. Okay. Was this your -- what was your first facility?

22 A. This is my first FAA facility.

23 Q. Okay, and did you work anywhere else in between, or have you
24 been here the whole time?

25 A. I've been here the whole time since 2010.

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1 Q. Excellent. So, you know a lot about the facility.

2 What are some of the -- what is your history within the
3 facility? Have you worked in various areas?

4 A. History within the facility, I started off as a controller in
5 the West Area. So, I, I was certified as a CPC on R30 in all the
6 other sectors.

7 From there I went to TMU. I was in TMU from 2014 to 2015, as
8 a TMC. I got picked up as an OS after that. I was supervisor in
9 the Central Area, then a supervisor in the West Area.

10 2017, I was back up in TMU as a STMC. I did that until
11 January of '22 when I became an OM.

12 Q. How many OMs do you have in, in the --

13 A. How many OMs or MSS3s?

14 Q. OMs.

15 A. OMs, we currently have four, I believe.

16 Q. Okay, and that -- is that what you guys are allotted, or?

17 A. I think we're allotted five.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Yeah, five or six.

20 Q. Okay. So, you really are the expert here. All right. So,
21 we're going to --

22 And do you have any prior air traffic experience prior to the
23 event?

24 A. I was a controller in the Air Force from '05 to '09.

25 Q. Thank you for your service.

1 A. You're welcome.

2 Q. '05 to '09. All right, and you just answered the next two
3 questions as well.

4 Where were you stationed during your time in the military?

5 A. Abilene, Texas. I was a DIOS, and then I did six months,
6 Balad, Iraq, in 2008.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So, shortly after I did that, I ended up getting out in '09
9 and I was hired on in 2010.

10 Q. Okay. All right, excellent. And you never worked at a
11 contract tower or anything prior?

12 A. No.

13 Q. All right. Did you attend college or, or was your experience
14 in the Air Force?

15 A. Some college.

16 Q. Some college?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay, and what, what was your -- did -- so, you didn't get a
19 degree.

20 A. No, no.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. No degree.

23 Q. And what did you study in college?

24 A. Just general education at that point.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yeah, it ended up not, not really working out. That's why I
2 enlisted.

3 Q. Okay. All right, excellent. Yeah, we have a lot of former
4 service people in this room, so I always like to hear people's
5 backgrounds. It's very interesting.

6 Are -- do you own any other aeronautical certificates? Like,
7 are you a private pilot or --

8 A. (No verbal response).

9 Q. No? All right. And as an OM, are you required to have a
10 medical clearance?

11 A. No.

12 Q. No? Okay. All right, moving on. And who is your direct
13 supervisor?

14 A. Ryan Sisneros.

15 Q. Oh, I'm going to have you spell that.

16 A. Yes. S-I-S-N-E-R-O-S.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. He's the executive officer here.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. I always have to ask just because -- understand that the --
22 So, you report to the XO, and the XO reports to the ATM?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Let's see here. We talked about all of this. Now, as an OM,
2 do you -- are you required to work overtime?

3 A. To work overtime?

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. We're not required to. We do, but we don't get time and a
6 half.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. We just get paid at the regular rate.

9 Q. Okay. All right, what's your -- what's your typical work
10 schedule during the week?

11 A. Saturday night, Sunday night, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday day
12 shift.

13 Q. Okay, and so that's -- how long have you -- you've been on
14 that schedule for a while?

15 A. I switched to Thursday, Friday in January. So, just a few
16 months.

17 Q. Okay, and you were actively on the OM position at the time of
18 the incident?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Were you actively -- I know standup happened around --
23 sometime around there, correct?

24 A. Yes. Standup in the morning is at 8:15.

25 Q. Okay, and so were you actively monitoring any positions or

1 more involved in the standup at that point?

2 A. During when the incident occurred, I was at standup.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I kind of conduct the standup with all the managers in the
5 building, and -- yeah.

6 Q. Okay. All right, good info. And how long had you been in
7 the operation when the event occurred?

8 A. I got there at 6:30.

9 Q. Perfect, okay. Now, based on your recollection of the event,
10 obviously you had a lot going on.

11 For that area and that sector, if you recall, how would you
12 rate the traffic volume.

13 A. It's busy.

14 Q. Busy.

15 A. Absolutely, it is.

16 Q. Like around one to five?

17 A. One being slow, five being busy?

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. Four.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And complexity?

23 A. That's tough to say.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Yeah, that's tough to say. Three, four.

1 Q. Okay, and let's see here. All right. So, those are pretty
2 much all the admin-type questions.

3 So now, have you had a chance to review the -- have you
4 watched a replay?

5 A. I watched a replay over there with the ERT, yes.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. There was no voice with it.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. But I had heard it before after the event occurred.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. So, you had reviewed it after the event occurred. All right,
13 awesome.

14 So, now kind of what I want you to do, I want you to take us
15 through your day leading up to the event --

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. -- and then through the event as you recall it.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. So, when you got in -- details matter.

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. So, even things that might seem insignificant. Like, I
22 remembered this happened because this alarm went off over here,
23 this person walked in or whatever. Those details can kind of be
24 significant --

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. -- even though they don't seem like they might be. But yeah,
2 if you could just walk us through.

3 A. Okay. That day was already projected to be a severe weather
4 day; it had come out on the PERTI Plan which you would get from
5 the command center saying these are the possible initiatives
6 because we're going to have thunderstorms from the Gulf of Mexico
7 all the way to the east coast of Florida.

8 I came in at 6:30. The facility's already fairly busy.
9 People are coming in for their shift. There's already issues in
10 the areas with volume because all the New York departures depart;
11 we get these early morning pushes.

12 Like I said, people are coming in so I'm trying to split
13 sectors and make sure there's OS coverage in the areas; we still
14 have some CICs in the areas as well kind of running around.

15 I was in TMU with Doug Vaccarella; I don't know what time.
16 It was before standup and we were on call with severe, and Houston
17 was closing the Qs and Ys because of the weather, because
18 everybody was deviating south up to non-radar.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. After that happened, we did standup; the event occurred
21 during standup. Right after standup, I went to the West Area,
22 told the CIC in charge to put on a headset because there was
23 severe weather, and the operation we had just talked about that
24 standup.

25 Came back to the desk. The CWSU, I believe it was Aaron,

1 walked over and said, hey, are you aware of a turbulence report
2 out in the Gulf of Mexico?

3 I looked around the desk, like, I'm not aware of it. I went
4 over to the STMC and talked to Doug; see if he had heard anything
5 about it.

6 A few seconds later, I heard a facility reporting to the DEN,
7 hey, there's a severe turbulence with injuries; it happened in
8 Jacksonville Center's air space.

9 I let them finish talking. I called the DEN from the 1537
10 line just to make sure it was Miami Center; he confirmed it was.
11 Called Miami, asked for the details.

12 There was another manager at the desk with me. I told her to
13 text out to the group, there's a severe turbulence with injuries
14 and that I'm gathering more information.

15 And what seemed a very short time later, there was support
16 managers, and the ATM and the XO were all at the OM desk trying to
17 figure out what happened.

18 Q. Okay. I'm actually going to have to come back to the part
19 about the, the PIREPs and the dissemination because I know these
20 guys are going to ask too.

21 A. All right.

22 Q. And do you happen -- I know -- again, you had a lot going on,
23 but do happen to recall around what time they -- that Houston shut
24 off the Gulf?

25 A. I don't recall.

1 Q. You don't recall. Okay.

2 A. I can't give -- I can give you an approximate. I know it was
3 shortly before standup, so somewhere between 8:00 and 8:10
4 approximately.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Because Doug was still working that issue when standup was
7 occurring. So, at standup I started to brief a little bit of
8 TMU's things because the STMC was busy.

9 And then, after he was done he came over and finished the
10 briefing. So, it was right before standup.

11 Q. Okay. All right. Well, thank you for that. Lots of good
12 information already. I'm going to go ahead and pass it around the
13 room.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. And we'll probably go around twice. And then, just if
16 anybody has any, oh by the way's, or whatever then.

17 A. Sure.

18 MS. RUPNIK: Mark, go ahead.

19 MR. WINTER: Am I first?

20 MS. RUPNIK: Go ahead.

21 BY MR. WINTER:

22 Q. Okay. And you do the standup at 8:15, correct?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. How long does it normally last?

25 A. Anywhere between five and fifteen minutes. It's a -- it, it

1 kind of depends on what's going on that day. If TMU has a lot of
2 stuff to brief, if the XO has a lot of things to go over, if the
3 different support offices have things they need to discuss, it can
4 -- it can last a little bit longer just depending on that.

5 Q. Oh, totally understand.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Do you bring -- we, we have a -- at least I haven't gone out
8 there and observed your standup yet.

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. I know we're eventually going to make it down there. Do all
11 the areas come up at once, or you can break it in half, or how
12 does that work?

13 A. All the supervisors from the areas go up there at once.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. CICs too?

17 A. No.

18 Q. CICs do not.

19 A. Typically, CICs do not go to standup.

20 Q. Oh.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. CICs -- okay. So, I'm assuming -- no, I'll let you answer.
23 That's not the normal way you hear about severe turbulence with
24 injury PIREPs.

25 A. That is correct.

- 1 Q. What's the normal expectation for that?
- 2 A. The normal expectation would be pilot reports it to the
3 controller, controller reports it to the supervisor, they put the
4 PIREP in ERIDs, they fill out the PIREP sheet, I'm immediately
5 notified, TMU is immediately notified, and CWSU is immediately
6 notified.
- 7 Q. Okay, and you were not told by the operation at all?
- 8 A. That's correct.
- 9 Q. Okay. One more question about the PIREP process.
- 10 A. About what process?
- 11 Q. PIREP process.
- 12 A. Okay.
- 13 Q. I guess the urgents go to the STMC, and he enters the severe
14 turbulence reports.
- 15 A. Right.
- 16 Q. Which then gets entered in the AISR flight data.
- 17 A. Correct.
- 18 Q. How does it get sent back out to the rest of the facility?
19 Like, is it a GI or just the PIREPs, or how does that work, work
20 here?
- 21 A. I believe it's a GI. I could be mistaken.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. It's a GI.
- 24 Q. I think that's all I have for now.
- 25 A. All right.

1 BY MR. DAVIDS:

2 Q. I've got a couple of questions that -- it's probably stuff
3 that you didn't implement; it's probably cultural questions.

4 A. Okay, sure.

5 Q. Yeah. So, I'm not asking you as, like, why did you do this,
6 you know? Why did you do this?

7 So -- and I'm sorry if you answered this before. What area
8 of the OM40 is it? Is each OM assigned to that area?

9 A. Each OM is over an area; I have two areas. I have the South
10 Area, and I have the East Area.

11 Q. Okay, cool. Why do you think it is that you guys do the
12 standup at 8:15 as opposed to earlier, right?

13 Because I feel like core shifts, at least at New York Center
14 -- and that's obviously where I'm working from, maybe you know
15 better here, how it works here, I feel like most people come in
16 probably 7:00ish, right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. 7:30 is probably a core shift. So, why is it that we do
19 standup here like an hour and fifteen minutes later?

20 A. I can't answer that specifically --

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. -- Because it's been that way since I got to the facility.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. I've said it needed to be earlier, but TMU also has a bunch
25 of telecons they have to do the hour before 7:15, 7:45. So, that

1 might have something to do with that.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And it's not always 8:15 on the dot. If there's things going
4 on, a lot of times I push it later and I'll push the evening
5 standup later as well. If I don't have enough supe coverage, if
6 there's a lot of weather happening, you know, all that stuff I
7 will absolutely push it later.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. And why -- again, more of a cultural question. Why
11 don't the CICs go up there for the standup?

12 If they're -- if they're the acting manager, right, then how
13 come they're not going to standup?

14 A. We have brought that up in the past and I think NATCA has
15 fought us on it.

16 Q. Okay. Kind of jumping to other things. So, Houston was
17 talking about, I guess, about the 7:30, 7:15, whenever that
18 telecon is, about shutting off the Qs and Ys.

19 A. The 7:15 command center telecon that they do?

20 Q. Okay. I, I thought that's what you said. I thought you said
21 that they were talking like right around 7:15, 7:30.

22 A. So, around 8:00, our STMC was having a separate conversation
23 with command center, and Houston was on there as well.

24 Q. Got you.

25 A. And we were talking about closing the Qs and Ys.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I don't know if that was brought up on the 7:15 national
3 telecon I told you.

4 Q. Got you.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay, sorry about that. So, that happened 8:00, 8:10. And I
7 understand, planes are airborne and everything like that.

8 When a center that you're feeding shuts you off, is it kind
9 of like you just let the planes that are in the air go? You know,
10 we'll take what's in the air; just don't give us anymore, or.

11 A. That's how it should work.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. That's not often how it works.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. It depends on what facility you're dealing with.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Some facilities will absolutely shut you off completely,
18 airbornes included, and we'll have to figure out where to route
19 these guys.

20 Some of them continue to work the airbornes, and we'll just
21 go into a departure stop.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And then, something that we really haven't talked about yet
25 but have come up in other discussions. Airborne restrictions.

1 So, planes that are already in the air, not -- I'm not talking
2 about like, you know, departure gates off the landing or
3 taxiing --

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. -- Or anything like that. But airborne restrictions are the
6 sector feeding another sector, right? He was busy. Do -- is that
7 -- do we do that here as far as putting a hey on Q, whatever it
8 is, 100, or whatever it is. You know, we need 50 miles-in-trail
9 on Q or whatever from Miami to Jacksonville.

10 Is that a thing that really happens here or not so much?

11 A. As far as getting departure mile-in-trail off south Florida
12 airports that feed the Qs and Ys, yes.

13 Q. Yeah, just, just airway restrictions.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Like, for the airborne aircraft.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. All right, thank you.

18 A. Yeah. Usually for, for NEPTA that would just be Miami Center
19 putting 20-mile-in-trail on all their west gates that, that feed
20 the Gulf of Mexico.

21 Q. Is -- primarily those aircraft on that airway, are those
22 primarily Miami departures?

23 A. I couldn't be for sure, but a lot of them are, yes.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. Yeah, you get a lot of, I'm sure, Caribbean and all that

1 stuff too.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. But Miami is really the only one that we can control that
4 way.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Can't control anything else.

7 MR. DAVIDS: Yeah. Awesome, thank you.

8 MR. DEREMER: Yep.

9 BY MR. ROSATI:

10 Q. So, to kind of piggyback on what Cory was saying, especially
11 since you were a controller in the area before.

12 About how long does it take once they turn off the Qs and Ys
13 for all the aircraft that are airborne to kind of filter through
14 and, and get out of there?

15 A. And be done completely?

16 Q. Done completely, yeah.

17 A. It depends on the volume.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I'd probably say at least an hour before you see it really
20 just die down.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. But that just depends on what volume is in the air, what time
23 of day it is, that kind of stuff.

24 Q. Do you remember if TMU had any in-trail restrictions on those
25 routes that morning?

1 A. I believe they did; I believe they had mile-in-trail. And I
2 also think there was a, a departure stop off of South Florida. If
3 not South Florida, at least Orlanda and Tampa feeding the Qs and
4 Ys as well that morning.

5 Q. Okay. Jumping back a little bit, you had talked about when
6 you came in, in the morning, that you were splitting sectors, is
7 that a normal function for the OM to go around and have the area
8 split up their sectors, or is that --

9 A. So, to clarify, I'm looking for CICs or OSs to be able to
10 split sectors.

11 Q. Got it.

12 A. If there's a sector that's, that's alerted and it's going to
13 be -- it's going to need to be split in 15, 20 minutes. I'm
14 making sure that that's going to happen.

15 Q. Okay. So, you're making a quick phone call, like hey --

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. -- We're splitting that, right?

18 A. Right.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I'm talking to the CIC, I'm talking to the OS, I'm looking at
21 who's coming back, I'm looking at who's going to be walking in to
22 start their shift and kind of coming up with a plan.

23 Q. Okay. You've been in this facility for a while. How, how
24 often do you use the tracker position?

25 A. The tracker position, we use it -- we use it more than, than

1 we ever have, but we couldn't -- personally speaking, I think we
2 could use it more.

3 Q. Is it specific areas that are using it, or is it pretty much
4 facility-wide they're using it on a regular basis?

5 A. Pretty much using it facility-wide.

6 Q. Okay. Would you probably -- or would you have the staffing
7 available to staff trackers when needed on most days?

8 A. Most days, yes.

9 Q. Okay. Overall, how accurate are the map numbers,
10 specifically for R30 in this case, but overall, in general in the
11 facility as well?

12 A. Overall, fairly accurate.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. It kind of depends on what Traffic Management Initiatives we
15 have out because a lot of times those can skew the numbers because
16 a NAS monitor is not aware of delays in the system.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. It's going off of P times.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. And if there's 30 in-trail off of an airport and an aircraft
21 is being delayed 20 minutes, he might end up in a different block,
22 but the NAS monitor still thinks he's going to be in that spot.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So, you'll see those numbers grow and roll as the Traffic
25 Management Initiatives get into effect.

1 Q. Okay. Do you recall whether or not TMU had adjusted any of
2 the monitor alerts on that day?

3 A. I don't recall, no.

4 Q. Okay, and do you recall whether or not there was any
5 convective SIGMETs out for that area on that morning?

6 A. I don't recall, but I would imagine that there was.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Yes.

9 MR. ROSATI: I think that's all I have for now.

10 BY MR. RIOS:

11 Q. A follow up on, on the tracker question, was there a
12 consideration that particular day for Sector 30 of -- that you're
13 aware of, of whether or not reconsideration for using the tracker
14 that day for that sector?

15 A. If there was, I wasn't aware of it. I know we had a CIC in
16 charge. I know the sector was busy. There were other areas in the
17 building that were also busy.

18 So, my attention is kind of between six different places,
19 plus TMU. But I don't -- I don't know if it was discussed or
20 thought about within the area or not.

21 Q. Okay, and you mentioned that the CWSU advised you of the
22 severe weather event, and you talked to traffic management and
23 others.

24 Was -- did you also talk to the CIC in that area?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And so, going back to the standup, if the CIC is not at the
2 standup how is the information -- key information at the standup
3 being shared with the CIC?

4 A. Key information after standup, we would go down. I would
5 typically bring the STMC with me, and we'd go down and we'd brief
6 the CIC.

7 Q. Okay, and was that done that day?

8 A. That was, yes. After standup, I went to the area. I went to
9 the West Area, spoke to the CIC, told him he should have a headset
10 on because there's severe weather in the area.

11 Q. Okay, and in reference to the Sector Eight, the frequency
12 issues with this RAG site --

13 A. Right.

14 Q. -- that was on fire, there is -- the frequency challenges
15 that, that we heard, you know, on there with the clipping and the
16 attempts to communicate with aircraft, how was that track and what
17 consideration was taken into, into planning for the sector
18 depending on that impact?

19 How do you know what the level of the impact is every day,
20 and is that logged anywhere on a daily basis?

21 A. It has not been logged anywhere prior to this event as far as
22 the actual issues. I know controllers have filled out ATSAPs on
23 it, but I think that's, that's the extent of what we've done.

24 It -- it's been discussed fixing the frequency, but there was
25 really no action taken to really get to the bottom of it until

1 this event occurred.

2 MR. WINTER: Okay, that's the one question I had.

3 MS. RUPNIK: Back to me?

4 BY MS. RUPNIK:

5 Q. So, for stand up, do you keep any record? Like, does
6 somebody take notes at standup?

7 A. Take notes? No.

8 Q. No? Okay, and I assume that's not recorded or anything.

9 A. It's not recorded. Now, we do -- each OS has a standup
10 briefing sheet that they use to write down notes from CWSU, and
11 they do take that to the areas -- the controllers.

12 So, yes, I stand corrected.

13 Q. Okay. I thought so.

14 A. They do take notes.

15 Q. Okay, perfect. So, it seemed like there was a lot of sector
16 saturation there; there was a lot going on.

17 Has there been any discussion about potentially splitting
18 that sector?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

21 A. Yes. We have been talking about it for a long time, and
22 nothing has been done. That sector's needed to be split for a
23 handful of years.

24 Q. Okay. I know you said that there were some ATSAPs filed
25 about the frequency.

1 Are you aware of any ATSAPs that were filed -- have been
2 filed saying that this sector needed to be split, or --

3 A. No.

4 Q. No? Okay, and I understand that there was a little bit of a
5 -- obviously you worked this sector so you, you know what you're
6 getting.

7 I -- my understanding is that both Houston Center and Miami
8 Center had airspace redesigns and at their that feed this
9 facility.

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. Was there any involvement either with local safety council or
12 anything to amend the LOA or come up with a new LOA and when that
13 happened?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Are there any -- were there any restrictions put in place
18 with the two feeder sectors feeding from each direction?

19 A. I believe so. I know LOA discussions were taking place with
20 our airspace department; Houston referenced their split and Miami
21 referenced their split. I know there was a concern about now
22 you're going to have four sectors feeding one.

23 There was a concern about TMIs that Miami was going to need
24 to place on NEPTA because they split. But as far as any other
25 details, I'm, I'm not aware of the specifics. You can tell it was

1 definitely an issue for Jacksonville Center.

2 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Actually Betty, I kind of skipped over
3 you there.

4 MS. KOSCHIG: Oh, no. No.

5 MS. RUPNIK: So, there you go, Betty.

6 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

7 Q. Did you notify the ATM about the --

8 A. The severe turbulence?

9 Q. Yes?

10 A. That's correct, yes.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And when did you do that?

14 A. Immediately after I talked to Miami Center and confirmed that
15 it was a severe turbulence with injuries that happened in our
16 airspace.

17 Q. Okay, great.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. The other question is kind of going on the -- back to the
20 frequency issues.

21 So, with that, do you -- do you guys keep count of how many
22 times there's missed transmissions or -- how, how is that working
23 that you note the frequency or the magnitude of this, this issue?

24 A. I wish I had more details, reference of frequency, given that
25 I'm not over that area anymore.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. I'm kind of out of that loop. I deal with it on an
3 operational business in an operational way because every time I'm
4 there I have all the areas, right?

5 Q. Right.

6 A. But as far as the details of the frequency, to my
7 understanding it didn't get really bad until we lost the Tyndall
8 Site. There was a big fire.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Yeah, and do you know what the progress is on getting that
12 repaired?

13 A. I don't. Like I said, I know there's been an uptick in
14 conversations about it after this event.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yes. Personally speaking, I have been very vocal about
17 getting the frequency fixed, getting NEPTA split, doing other
18 things in our airspace that just seem to sit.

19 Q. Hopefully, this incident will bring attention to that.

20 A. And it's unfortunate that it had to happen for something to
21 get fixed.

22 Q. Right, and, and had -- and just so I don't want to ever
23 assume anything, but had the airspace been able to be split would
24 that have -- would that have an impact on what was going on in the
25 facility with the traffic load and discipline?

1 A. Specifically, for 30?

2 Q. Uh-huh.

3 A. Maybe. I believe the controller was not calling the weather,
4 so that also had an impact on it as well.

5 Q. Right. Was, was that possibly -- or what reason would he not
6 be? Due to volume, complexity?

7 A. I would be speculating.

8 MS. KOSHIG: Just --

9 MR. WADE: Yeah, not saying you can -- if you can rephrase
10 that, Betty, potentially.

11 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

12 Q. Okay, let's see. Yeah, I don't want you to speculate So, let
13 me think how to rephrase that.

14 So, so, you said he wasn't calling weather. I can't -- I
15 can't make you speculate, so I, I think I'll drop that question
16 because otherwise it's going to be pure speculation.

17 MR. WADE: Correct.

18 MS. KOSCHIG: So, I'll drop it. Thanks. Thanks, Ben.

19 MR. WADE: No, thank you.

20 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

21 Q. Yeah, and I do have -- here's a question about the frequency
22 issue.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. How do the pilots get informed that there may be
25 intermittent, or missed transmissions, sporadic issues with the

1 frequency? Do you know?

2 A. I do not.

3 Q. Okay. All right.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And let's see, SRT. Were you involved with the SRT?

6 A. I was not.

7 Q. All right. Did you write up the MOR?

8 A. I did.

9 Q. Okay. Was there anything else that you were -- when was --
10 well, I'll ask this. What else -- when you have something like
11 this, what are -- what are your requirements here?

12 A. As far as severe turbulence?

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. I report it up, I pull the tapes, make sure we called
15 weather, verify there was -- whether or not there was
16 precipitation on the scope, get all the details, and go from
17 there, and do an MOR.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Yeah.

20 MS. RUPNIK: I just want to piggyback on that real quick.

21 MS. KOSCHIG: Yes, I'm finished with this.

22 MS. RUPNIK: And I'll pass it back around again.

23 BY MS. RUPNIK:

24 Q. Was there -- did Jax Center file an accident report on the
25 event?

1 A. I don't recall.

2 MS. RUPNIK: You don't recall? Okay. All right. Mark?

3 BY MR. WINTER:

4 Q. So, the night before, the PERTI plan recommended -- well,
5 they were talking about an AFP for you guys for the next one.

6 Were you aware of Doug's coordination on that from the AFP?

7 A. I knew he coordinated it because I, I believe he got in
8 earlier that morning.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. He was there when I got in. So -- but as far as the
11 specifics, I don't know what he coordinated.

12 Q. Okay. How involved -- well, put it this way, have you ever
13 had to talk to the NOM?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Which is the National Operations Manager?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And intercede on behalf of your STMC.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay, jumping around here. So -- and I may have missed this
20 when you said earlier, you don't have this area, right? You --
21 your area is a different one.

22 A. Correct. I have the East and South Area.

23 Q. Got you. You also said something about wireless headsets
24 because there's severe weather in the area.

25 Is that procedure here? Is that written?

1 A. That is. I don't recall if it's written anywhere, but it is
2 standard operating procedure, yes.

3 Q. And when they're on the wireless headsets, what are they
4 monitoring?

5 A. Different sectors.

6 Q. Okay. So, it's, it's not to talk amongst the supes or the
7 OMs.

8 A. Not at all.

9 Q. Just to monitor sectors.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. Do you guys have a weather -- I'm sorry, a written
12 weather briefing sheet to hand out to bring back -- like, I know
13 you have the standup sheets the supes get.

14 Do you have something with weather on it for the standup?

15 A. Whatever the OS has drawn on that standup sheet, that's it.
16 They also get a pre-duty weather briefing in the morning.

17 Q. Okay. At your average day -- let's bring up this morning.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. What percentage of CICs versus supes do you have on your
20 operation?

21 A. This morning, or the morning of the event?

22 Q. The morning of the event.

23 A. On an average, one CIC on an average morning shift. That's
24 tough to pin down.

25 Q. So, you -- like that, that morning is it's pretty much you

1 get one CIC, and the rest you just --

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 MR. WINTER: Okay. That's all I've got, yeah.

4 BY MR. DAVIDS:

5 Q. Reporting. So, reporting from the area to you guys, how is
6 that usually done? Is that usually they walk up to you guys, tell
7 you guys, or do they call you guys?

8 A. They can walk up, they can call us, whatever is the most
9 efficient for them --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. -- During that time.

12 Q. Okay. How do you -- just overall, like, how do you view the
13 safety culture. Do you feel like when there's an issue you -- do
14 you feel comfortable being able to bring it up?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. In general.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And how is the relationship with the local safety council?
19 Is -- are they constantly involved?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. I'm still -- I'm still hung up on this the CICs not going to
22 standup. It's -- I get it. It's not something you did.

23 A. Yeah.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Well, and just since --

25 MR. DEREMER: I mean, often -- not off the record, but if

1 CICs didn't go to standup, who would be in the area?

2 MR. DAVIDS: I, I understand.

3 MR. DEREMER: What oversight would you have?

4 MR. DAVIDS: I just -- it's the -- for me it's like the, the
5 delay of information getting there, you know.

6 BY MR. DAVIDS:

7 Q. Now, when, when supes come to the standup, do you guys put a
8 CIC in the area?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. Yeah. Okay. How often to you guys do PROCs here?

11 A. How often do we do PROCs here?

12 Q. How often do you do -- I might just tailor to, how often do
13 you do PROCs?

14 A. Was that how often do I write PROCs?

15 Q. Just in general.

16 A. Or versus --

17 Q. Is it -- is it a common thing here to do, PROC?

18 A. Could be done more.

19 Q. Good, bad, indifferent, whatever. What's that?

20 A. It could be done more.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. Yeah.

23 MR. DAVIDS: All right. Thank you.

24 BY MR. ROSATI:

25 Q. Do you -- are you aware of whether or not there was a TMR

1 done for this event?

2 A. I'm not aware.

3 Q. Okay. In general, do you notice that whenever there are
4 TMIs, specifically going to the Qs and Ys coming from Miami
5 Center, for instance this case I think there were 15 in-trail or
6 something like that that was put on that.

7 How often is Miami Center actually complying with those TMIs?

8 A. I don't know if -- how often they're complying. I know it is
9 very difficult to control the volume in that sector.

10 Q. And who -- and whenever those TMIs get kind of put in, do you
11 -- do you know if the STMC or the TMC who is working that airspace
12 is monitoring whether or not there is compliance there, or is it
13 kind of put on the board and just left there for the controllers?

14 A. Typically, TMU is not monitoring for compliance.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. We rely on the supervisors, or the CICs to try to police
17 those TMIs. And if they aren't getting something that's on their
18 board, then they let TMU know.

19 Q. Okay, and so the CICs and supes are pretty good about coming
20 back to TMU the same?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Hey, we're not getting something.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. Is the facility putting out, like, ATC alert information,
25 reference the frequency issue in R30?

- 1 A. I haven't seen any.
- 2 Q. Okay. Do you know if there's, like, a NOTAM out there?
- 3 A. I mean, probably in ATC alert for --
- 4 Q. Yeah, like is there a facility in ATC alert?
- 5 A. We are currently in ATC alert for that frequency.
- 6 Q. Okay, and were we on the day of?
- 7 A. I do not believe.
- 8 Q. Okay. Has the facility done that before the event on other
- 9 days --
- 10 A. I don't recall.
- 11 Q. -- they knew it was becoming -- okay. Do you know if there's
- 12 a NOTAM, or maybe a letter to airmen out there.
- 13 A. I'm not aware of any.
- 14 MR. ROSATI: Okay. For now, that's all I have.
- 15 BY MR. RIOS:
- 16 Q. And following up our -- how many sectors is the CIC
- 17 responsible for that day in that area?
- 18 A. The West Area, I don't recall how many sectors were open at
- 19 that time, but the, the area has nine separate positions. Nine
- 20 separate -- nine separate sectors.
- 21 Q. And, and there at that time of day are they normally open?
- 22 All nine sectors, or how many sectors are normally open?
- 23 A. At that time of day, West Area, either on maximum three
- 24 scopes.
- 25 Q. Thank you.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Going back to the, the frequency issue. So, the -- from the
3 question I was asked earlier, you said the frequency issue, I
4 would say is normally you would have an ATC alert regarding the
5 frequency issue. But on that date verified we weren't on an ATC
6 alert regarding the frequency issue.

7 A. That's correct.

8 Q. So, knowing the frequency issue has been going on for a
9 while, what kind of additional measures -- TMIs, or additional
10 measures that are taken to help address the workload of the
11 controller with that frequency issue?

12 Is that something that's taken on a normal basis, or is it
13 actually taken into consideration when determining what the TMIs
14 or additional assistance to the controller as needed?

15 A. When I am there, I make sure there is a D-side at NEPTA at
16 R30 to, to help kind of hear the, the hear back, hear back, hear
17 something that the R-side might have missed. That's, that's the
18 mitigation that I've been taking.

19 MR. RIOS: Thank you.

20 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Those, those are great questions.
21 Guys, you asked all my questions.

22 So, does anybody have any, oh by the ways?

23 MS. KOSCHIG: I, I got one, oh by the way.

24 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

25 Q. After you got off the phone with the -- excuse me, with

1 Miami, did you have any further conversations with them later
2 about anything concerning this?

3 A. I don't recall. I'm sure I called them back for specifics --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- as far as emergency status, non-emergency status, was he
6 diverting somewhere else, what were the extent of the injuries?
7 Things like that.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay.

9 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Chris?

10 BY MR. ROSATI:

11 Q. Yeah, we're looking through PROCs and noticed that the R30
12 controller was issued a PROC on that day.

13 Who -- so, there was -- was there a supe in for the area on
14 that day, or was it a CIC full shift?

15 A. I don't recall.

16 MR. ROSATI: Okay. That's all I have.

17 MS. RUPNIK: Anybody else? You look like your wheels are
18 turning.

19 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

20 Q. Is there anything that you could -- you would suggest to
21 prevent some type of reoccurrence of -- that's similar to this? I
22 mean, it's --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Give it to us.

25 A. We deal with a lot of weather. We deal with a lot of volume.

1 We're currently number two, number three in the country as far as
2 volume, and we have been for a number of years. We get these
3 early-morning pushes with the airlines before plans are actually
4 implemented.

5 I don't know when the, the start time of that AFP was that
6 day. But you know, things, things need to be in place earlier and
7 that's, that's part of the problem.

8 We come in, we're dealing with real issues on top of trying
9 to figure out the plan going forward for the day, so we're, we're
10 constantly playing catch up for the first couple of hours.

11 Q. And how you -- do you propose that would happen? Who would
12 need to get involved to make this type of change?

13 A. Command center, yeah.

14 Q. Has it been -- do you know if it's been suggested to them?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Yes, okay. What -- what's been their response?

17 A. I don't know their exact response, but I haven't seen any
18 changes yet.

19 Q. Yeah. It's a good suggestion.

20 A. We are 24 hours. We have the tools and the resources to be
21 able to, to predict certain things. Why are we behind the power
22 curve when it comes to slowing things down?

23 MS. KOSCHIG: Right.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Perfect question.

25 MR. DAVIDS: So, building off of that. Sorry, we were almost

1 done.

2 MR. DEREMER: I understand.

3 MR. DAVIDS: You opened yourself up.

4 MR. DEREMER: I know.

5 MS. KOSCHIG: No, that's great.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Don't be mad, Ben.

7 BY MR. DAVIDS:

8 Q. So, what time -- what time does TMU usually come in here?

9 A. There is a TMC that arrives at 5:00 a.m.

10 Q. Okay. So, I think that that's three and a half hours from
11 before this happened.

12 When they come in, I mean, is it pretty much the STMC who
13 ends up going through the plan and figuring it out, or is it --
14 can the TMC -- can a TMC act on his own and put in restrictions of
15 something that he sees happening, or is it more -- is it more
16 driven off that planning telecon?

17 A. It's more drive off the planning telecon.

18 Q. Right. Okay, and what time does that put you? Is that
19 usually 8:00 every morning for you guys, around, around then?

20 A. I don't know the exact time departures depart out of New York
21 and those busier airports. But yeah, we usually see it between
22 7:00 and 8:00.

23 Q. Yeah, I can tell you, it's like between 6:00 and 6:30. I see
24 every day.

25 A. An hour and a half, two hour flying time to Florida.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. Yeah.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah.

4 BY MR. DAVIDS:

5 Q. Do, do TMCs have the power to put restrictions in without
6 consulting with an STMC or an OM or a supervisor, or anyone like
7 that, here I'm saying. Not -- I'm not asking you, you know -- and
8 the order doesn't say that you --

9 A. Can they?

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. Yes, they can. Yes.

12 MR. DAVIDS: Okay. I don't have anything else.

13 MR. RIOS: Just one follow up to that.

14 BY MR. RIOS:

15 Q. But who, who has the final authority in making a decision to
16 put it in these programs or those restrictions?

17 A. Which restrictions are you referring to?

18 Q. You know, from the TMC perspective. Whether it's in-trail or
19 any internal restrictions coming from Miami, or, or Houston --

20 A. Mile-in-trail can be done by the STMC or TMCs. If you're
21 talking about systemic things, like AFPs, things of that nature,
22 those need to be negotiated with the command center.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. 12Z is when it came out.

25 Q. Okay. 8:00

1 A. 8:00 local.

2 BY MR. DAVIDS:

3 Q. Do you feel like it's a negotiation with the command center,
4 or do you guys -- do you feel, like, if an area needs something
5 and you call the command center, do you feel like you can get it?

6 A. If I explain my need well enough and the reasoning why, then
7 yes.

8 Q. Is there pushback?

9 A. If I explain the reason why, typically no.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. Coming from me as an OM, there's usually not.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. No.

14 Q. Do you --

15 A. There are conversations surrounding it.

16 Q. Yeah, that's fine.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Do you feel like the STMCs or -- do the TMCs ever call up to
19 the command center.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Do you ever feel like they get pushback?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And it ends up having to go to you.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And why, why do you think that? Do you think as the OM you

1 can explain it better for them?

2 A. You have to be able to paint a picture to the command center.

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. They don't have any scopes. They're looking at TSDs, and
5 they're relying on the expert in the facility. And if that
6 picture is not painted in a way that's justifiable, then we're
7 going to get pushback because there are -- you know, with any sort
8 of TMIs, you're talking about delays, you know.

9 You're talking about impacting other facilities so that's not
10 something we do quickly. We have to look at it and analyze it,
11 and make sure that it is the right tool to use.

12 BY MS. RUPNIK:

13 Q. Okay. All right. Well, real quick. This is -- this is
14 great information. I really appreciate your transparency.

15 Is there anything that we didn't ask relevant to this
16 situation or the contributing factors that you wish we would have
17 asked? Any additional information that you would like to share?

18 I know you shared a lot of information with us.

19 A. Not that I can think of, no.

20 Q. No? Okay. Do you have any questions for us?

21 A. I don't.

22 Q. All right.

23 A. I appreciate the questions.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Yeah, well we definitely appreciate your time.

25 So, the time now is 9:53 local, and I'll show off the record.

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

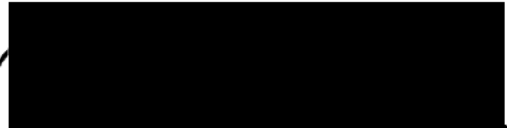
This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
 LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
 TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
 MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
 Interview of Daniel Deremer

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Hilliard, Florida

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.


Denise Woodman
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

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* * * * *

Interview of: SHANE A. HARVEY, Acting Air Traffic Control Manager
Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville Air Route
Traffic Control Center
Hilliard, Florida

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APPEARANCES:

RUTH RUPNIK, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MIKE RICHARDS, Meteorologist
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK WINTER, Washington Center Quality Control
Federal Aviation Administration

CORY DAVIDS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

CHRIS ROSATI, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

MARK RIOS, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
Southwest Airlines

BENJAMIN WADE, Representative
FAA Office of the Chief Counsel
(On behalf of Mr. Harvey)

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:09 p.m.)

MS. RUPNIK: All right, I show the time as 1209 local. We are on the record. So, good morning -- good afternoon now.

MR. HARVEY: Yes.

MS. RUPNIK: Again, as you know, my name is Ruth Rupnik. I'm an air traffic control investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. And can you please state your first and last name for the record?

MR. HARVEY: First name Shane, last name Harvey. Middle initial A, because there's a Shane C. Harvey that works for the agency.

MS. RUPNIK: Oh, oh, okay.

MR. HARVEY: And that's been a problem a couple times.

MS. RUPNIK: I can definitely see that. And you are the Air Traffic Manager here?

MR. HARVEY: Yes ma'am, acting Air Traffic Manager.

MS. RUPNIK: Acting air traffic manager, okay. Thank you so much for -- I know you guys have been really busy. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us.

MR. HARVEY: Of course.

MS. RUPNIK: We really appreciate it. And so before we get started, you are aware that this interview is being recorded, correct?

MR. HARVEY: Correct, yes ma'am.

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1 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. We'll have a transcription of the audio
2 made. Once that transcription's been reviewed, the recording will
3 be destroyed. Would you like a copy of the transcript once it's
4 complete?

5 MR. HARVEY: Yes, please.

6 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. We'll get your email address after, after
7 the interview. So yeah, we can definitely make that available to
8 you.

9 MR. HARVEY: Okay.

10 MS. RUPNIK: And I see you do have a representative here
11 today. Is this the person you've chosen to be a representative?

12 MR. HARVEY: Yes ma'am, it is.

13 MS. RUPNIK: Yes. Hello Ben.

14 MR. WADE: Hello, again.

15 MS. RUPNIK: Can I get your name and title one more time
16 please?

17 MR. WADE: Of course, Benjamin Wade, Attorney-Adviser, FAA
18 Office of the Chief Counsel.

19 MS. RUPNIK: Excellent. Thank you. And of course, we're
20 interviewing you. But if at any time you need to confer with Ben,
21 either here, outside, we can step away, whatever's going to be
22 easiest. Please feel free. But we want you to answer -- the
23 questions are meant for you.

24 MR. HARVEY: Yes, understood.

25 MS. RUPNIK: All right, so with the NTSB, we operate in a

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1 party system. On this side of the table, we are all actually NTSB
2 employees. And then we have other entities represented. We have
3 the FAA, NATCA ASIs, Southwest Airlines, and I usually like to go
4 around and have everybody introduce themselves at this point.

5 MS. KOSCHIG: Sure. Hello again, I'm Betty Koschig, NTSB Air
6 Traffic Investigator.

7 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB Meteorologist.

8 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter, Washington Center Quality Control
9 Manager.

10 MR. DAVIDS: Cory Davids, NATCA ASI, New York Center.

11 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati, NATCA Air Safety Investigator from
12 Oakland Center.

13 MR. RIOS: Mark Rios from the Senior ATC Systems Program
14 Manager for Southwest Airlines.

15 MR. HARVEY: It's good to see you all again.

16 MS. RUPNIK: All right. So lots of different groups
17 represented here. For the purposes of this investigation, this is
18 our NTSB Air Traffic Control Group, different subject matter
19 experts from different aspects of ATC. So we as the NTSB, we
20 don't do anything unilaterally. Everything that we produce from
21 this investigation will be in concurrence with the group. So the
22 NTSB, we're an independent federal agency. We don't report to the
23 FAA, the DOT, anything like that. We report directly to Congress.
24 We are a small agency, only about 400 people covering all forms of
25 transportation. That's marine, rail, pipeline, hazmat, highway.

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1 Got them all that time. Obviously, aviation being the most
2 visible. And we -- anytime there's an accident or an incident of
3 a serious nature, we want to figure out what happened, why it
4 happened, and hopefully come up with some recommendations as a
5 group to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.
6 So our goal is safety. We're not pointing fingers. We're not
7 here to assign blame. We just -- We want the facts, just the
8 facts to make things safer. So we definitely look forward to
9 hearing from you. Sounds like you've been at the facility for a
10 while. So you're definitely the expert, and that's why we're
11 here. This isn't a Jax Center issue. This is a NAS issue. But
12 you're the expert here, and that's why we are talking to you.

13 INTERVIEW OF SHANE A. HARVEY

14 BY MS. RUPNIK:

15 Q. So as far as what to expect during the interview, we're going
16 to start asking some admin-type questions. We just want to get to
17 know your professional background a little bit. And then we'll go
18 into the event a little bit more. You were not in the operation
19 at the time of the event?

20 A. Correct, I was not.

21 Q. Were you here at the facility?

22 A. I was at the facility.

23 Q. You were at the facility. Okay, so our line of questioning
24 is going to be -- go ahead.

25 A. Technically, I think I was at stand-up at the time the event

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1 actually took place.

2 Q. Okay, so in the operation, but --

3 A. At the watch desk where we further up, yes.

4 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. So our line of questioning is going to be
5 a little bit different, say, from a supervisor or a controller
6 that was in the operation, but definitely looking to get some good
7 information. If we ask a question that you don't understand, you
8 need us to repeat, clarify a word differently, let us know. If at
9 any point you want to confer with Ben about that, that's fine.
10 Don't try to fill in any gaps. You know what you know. I don't
11 know. I don't recall those are perfectly acceptable answers. We
12 want to make sure you're confident in the information you're
13 giving us. And we're going to go around the room a couple times.
14 Everybody's going to have a chance to ask questions. And you're
15 going to see probably all of us taking notes at some point, either
16 writing things down, typing, don't you think we're over here
17 responding to our e-mails or anything. We're paying attention.

18 MR. HARVEY: No, I wouldn't do that. Ordering dinner for
19 later on.

20 MS. RUPNIK: Right, dinner reservation.

21 MR. HARVEY: I got you.

22 MS. RUPNIK: In those notes, they don't leave the facility
23 with us. They're for us to reference back during the interview.
24 Once we're done, they get destroyed before we even leave the
25 facility today. So those are just for us. All right. Well, I

1 was going to ask you if you need any water or anything, but I see
2 you're covered there.

3 MR. HARVEY: I'm covered with water.

4 MS. RUPNIK: All right. If you need a break at any time for
5 any reason, don't be shy. You got something you got to take, just
6 let us know, and we'll accommodate that to the best of our
7 ability. All right. Probably going to last about an hour, so
8 we'll go ahead and get started.

9 MR. HARVEY: All right.

10 MS. RUPNIK: Does anybody have any questions, thoughts before
11 we get started? What about you?

12 MR. HARVEY: Nope. Here we go.

13 MS. RUPNIK: All right.

14 MR. HARVEY: I'm ready.

15 MS. RUPNIK: Here we go. All right.

16 Q. So what are your operating initials?

17 A. Mike Juliet, MJ.

18 Q. MJ. All right. Let's see. When did you start working for
19 the FAA?

20 A. February 15, 2007.

21 Q. It's funny how many people remember their exact. I remember
22 my exact, EOD. That sticks with you.

23 A. It was a career that I sought after, so when I was hired and
24 had a start date, I was very excited.

25 Q. And put it up on the calendar.

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1 A. Yeah, put it on the calendar.

2 Q. And when you started, did you report to the academy?

3 A. Yes, ma'am.

4 Q. Okay. And you've been at Jacksonville Center your whole
5 career, correct?

6 A. That is correct.

7 Q. All right. So you are the expert here. Now can you give me
8 your progression from when you reported to the facility, any areas
9 that you worked in, certifications, positions that you worked?

10 A. Sure. So upon arrival to the facility, go to the training
11 department for training. I was assigned to the north area, the
12 north operational area. I began training on the floor, I believe,
13 sometime in August of 2007. Certified as a CPC in June of 2010.
14 There was a small break in there because my first son was born, so
15 I took some time off. So from 2010 until, I believe, 2014 or 15,
16 I was strictly a controller in the north area. I was an OJTI and
17 a CIC as well. I believe it was 2015, and I'd have to check the
18 paper that I filled out with you guys but --

19 Q. Yeah, we have that information.

20 A. -- that has the actual dates on it, so I'm struggling right
21 now. But one of those years, I went to TMU, to Traffic Management
22 Unit, as a traffic management specialist. And I was there for
23 dates, whatever that paper says. Went back to the north area as a
24 supervisor, having been a traffic management specialist. I was a
25 supervisor in the north area where I came from, and I was a

1 supervisor there for a couple of years. And then I went back to
2 TMU as a STMC. I did that for a couple of years, and then I
3 started as an operations manager in January of 2020. But while I
4 was a supervisor, I did have to do the cross-isle option, which
5 did force me to learn proficiently at the time anyway, some of the
6 west area operations. So I served as a supervisor in both the
7 north and the west area, as needed.

8 Q. Now as an OM, you guys have specific areas you're responsible
9 for, correct?

10 A. We do, and they do change. So I believe when I first
11 started, I was the operations manager of the central area. I
12 don't remember the order anymore, but I've been the operations
13 manager of the central area, of the east area, of the west area,
14 and of the north area. So the only two areas I've not had -- I'm
15 not an OM or a supervisor, were the gulf or the south area.

16 Q. Okay. You are the expert.

17 A. I've hit everything else.

18 Q. Do you have any military service?

19 A. No, ma'am, I do not.

20 Q. Okay. Any other ATC experience prior to the FAA?

21 A. So prior to the FAA, I worked for ARINC, Aeronautical Radio
22 Incorporated out of Annapolis, Maryland, and there I was a general
23 aviation flight dispatcher, if you will. So I did that from 2005
24 until the agency asked if I was still interested in being a
25 controller in 2006. I left there in 2007 to do this. So I was

1 there from 2005 until February of 2007. And I also did RVSM
2 certifications with them as well and some international flight
3 planning, and ICAO and that type of thing.

4 Q. So quite a broad knowledge.

5 A. Yeah. Jack of all trades, master of none.

6 Q. Did you attend college?

7 A. Yes, ma'am. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

8 Q. And what was your degree in?

9 A. My degree is in aerospace studies with five minors of
10 concentration.

11 Q. Five?

12 A. Yes. I changed my major from aeronautical science to
13 aviation to aerospace studies after 9-11. I was initially on the
14 professional pilot track. But after 9-11, the world changed in
15 terms of hiring and things such as that, so I needed a backup plan
16 for employment. So the minors that I did while in college were
17 humanities, human factors, aviation safety, business
18 administration, and air traffic control.

19 Q. Okay. There we go. Okay, good. Wow. So, yeah, definitely
20 seems like you're interested in a lot. I'm the same way. Yeah, I
21 like to learn everything I can about different parts of the job.
22 All right, so you have a degree, and since you say you are on the
23 professional pilot pipeline, I assume you have flight experience?

24 A. I do. I just have a private pilot's rating. I have not
25 flown in years, though, but I acquired that back in --

1 Q. Doesn't really matter.

2 A. -- early 2000s.

3 Q. So you're not current then?

4 A. I am not current now. It's been a while. It's an expensive
5 hobby.

6 Q. Oh, so I have heard.

7 A. Oh, yeah.

8 Q. All right. So who is your direct supervisor?

9 A. So I currently think I have two. So Jack Warren was when I
10 began my detail in December. Jack Warren was my direct report.
11 They brought Louis Hancock in as a second assistant general
12 manager, so I technically report to both of them equally, I
13 suppose.

14 Q. Okay. And your detail, was it a six-month detail?

15 A. Yes, ma'am, a six-month detail.

16 Q. Six months. All right. You know what the next step is?

17 A. I would assume.

18 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Let's see here. You said you were an
19 OJTI. Okay, I think we can skip a lot of this since you're not
20 actively controlling. So these are the admin-type questions I
21 have, all the admin-type questions I have. So now I want you to
22 take us back to that day, to when you became aware of the event
23 and the progression through to today, I guess.

24 MR. HARVEY: Okay. So that morning, if memory serves me
25 correctly, that was the morning of April 3rd. I don't remember

1 the day of the week it was. But I do remember we had not had
2 convective weather in the facility, I believe, for a few days. So
3 knowing that we had that line of weather, we knew it was on the
4 way. So we were at stand-up, and the conversation at stand-up was
5 that we had, hey, we have convective weather in the building
6 today. It's been a little while. We might be a little bit rusty.
7 Make sure that we are soliciting PIREPs, disseminating weather
8 information, supervisors are wearing their headsets like we're
9 supposed to be doing, engaged in the operation. If you're not
10 actively working on a task behind the desk, I want you behind the
11 scopes listening, watching somebody. It's kind of like my normal
12 stand-up speech. I say it all day. I say it at all of them.

13 In this morning in particular, I remember specifically I
14 asked if there were -- if we had supervisors in all the areas, and
15 they said the west area was without a supervisor. So I asked the
16 operations manager to make sure that the CIC in the west area had
17 expectations to wear a headset and to monitor, because that is not
18 currently a mandate according to any of our SOPs or procedures.
19 It's kind of an ad hoc thing. We can give direction. So I
20 remember I told the OM to ensure that the west area CIC knew that
21 the direction was to wear a headset for the day because of the
22 weather, in particular in the west area and the way it was
23 situated through the west area and then into the central. I did
24 not hear about the event at stand-up. Left stand-up. I believe I
25 was back in my office.

1 MS. RUPNIK: I know it's been a little bit.

2 MR. HARVEY: It's been a while. So I'll be honest. I don't
3 remember exactly how I found out about the event, but I remember
4 walking back up to the watch desk. And when I went back to the
5 watch desk, they were talking about the weather, and Danny was
6 explaining to me that he didn't know anything about it. He
7 accidentally overheard it on the den, and that's how he found out
8 about it. So then my first question was, okay, do we have an ERAM
9 playback saved? Because that's going to capture what the weather
10 actually looked like as opposed to Falcon. He said, yes, they
11 were working on it. So I went back to my office again to make
12 sure I reported the event up with regards to the turbulence and
13 possible injuries. I found out that that was already done.

14 And then the next thing I did was I went to the TTL lab where
15 NATCA and QC, and they already had the event playback either up or
16 they were pulling it up. And so we all waited until it came up.
17 We watched it together. I took some video and some pictures of
18 it, saved that, set that up to the district. And then they
19 informed me that I would probably have to prepare. Common post-
20 event questions, I had to make sure that got filled out. QC was
21 working on that with the operations managers. And then at that
22 point, it was just answering questions from the district and then
23 trying to ascertain whether or not or when the services rendered
24 telecon would take place. And then they informed me at whatever
25 time it was. I don't remember. That we would, in fact, have one

1 that evening, and I would have to make sure that I was prepared
2 for it. So we went through all the information and prepared
3 myself for the SRT. The SRT was conducted that evening. We went
4 through the scripts. Then we did the -- that's about it. I think
5 the SRT was maybe about 5 or 6 o'clock that evening. From what I
6 recall, the event happened about 8:30 that morning. So that was a
7 long day.

8 So after the SRT concluded, there were -- I know the SSR was
9 worked on by QC and NATCA, things such as that. There were
10 conversations with us in the district with regards to what
11 happened and why. There were some beliefs, you know, the sector
12 was overloaded. There were conversations about the frequencies
13 and the fact that that's the sector that we've been trying to have
14 split for quite some time, that and other sectors in the building.
15 So they just sparked a whole lot of conversation about kind of how
16 did we get there and what do we think we need to do to not have
17 something like that happen again until today. So it's kind of
18 been a lot of the same thing, to be honest with you.

19 MS. RUPNIK: They spent a lot of time preparing for today.

20 MR. HARVEY: Well, I mean, yes and no, but preparing for
21 today is also preparing for the floor and the operation. While,
22 you know, the NTSB recommendation is great, 18 months is a long
23 time. So we have to take action now as a facility to make sure
24 we're closing the gap as soon as possible, as quickly as possible,
25 to not have something like that happen again. So while you guys

1 are doing your thing and the ERT is doing theirs, I have an
2 obligation to make sure the building is taking corrective
3 measures, like right now, to make sure we don't have something
4 like this happen again, and find out what happened and how do we
5 fix it.

6 MS. RUPNIK: Yeah, I like to see that proactive approach. So
7 kudos for that.

8 MR. HARVEY: So I guess I will say on that note, just some of
9 the things that we have done is even before the district came down
10 and said that they want certain things done or before a CAP was
11 put in place, there were things that we as the management team
12 along with NATCA said, these are good practices and things that
13 we're going to do regardless. Again, it was things such as
14 reminder and emphasizing the headsets for the supervisors. There
15 were conversations with regards to the CICs wearing headsets,
16 because, again, there's no mandate or requirement at this point in
17 time, but with the conversations with NATCA, I understand their
18 concerns, but I felt it more important to allow the manager of the
19 shift to make a determination as to whether or not he felt the
20 headset on the CIC would be useful or not. And if they deem it
21 useful, then they order the CIC to wear a headset. If he doesn't
22 think it would help, then the CICs don't have to necessarily wear
23 a headset. It depends on what's going on with weather complexity,
24 things such as that.

25 Performance management is something that we've talked about

1 and we've talked about for a long time. So we have things in
2 place to ensure that supervisors are monitoring, making on-the-
3 spot corrections, and addressing little issues before they become
4 big issues sort of thing. So avoiding drift.

5 OMs, the operations managers, are monitoring the operation.
6 And we all typically do anyway, but we made clear expectations for
7 every shift, you're going to do this, it's not really up for, no
8 conversation is really needed.

9 The support managers, you have met Kim Sullivan and some of
10 the other ones, so they were, again, before this event, they were
11 also required to come down to the operation, monitor and help out
12 and see if they could pick up on anything. So that was just
13 something that we doubled down on and we just increased the time
14 from a couple hours a week to at least an hour a day, maybe two,
15 depending on if the operational manager needs more assistance. A
16 lot of what the direction we're trying to go towards is, on the
17 management side of things, it would be monitoring and corrections,
18 if you will, performance management-wise, on-the-spot corrections,
19 and then between TMU and the CWSU is making sure the information
20 that somebody has is shared quickly and accurately from the person
21 that has it to the controllers that need it, and from the
22 controllers that have it to the users that need it. So that sort
23 of stuff.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. You actually answered a couple of my
25 questions there, so that's great. I'm actually going to go ahead

1 and pass it off. You want to go first? I'll pass it off to
2 Betty.

3 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

4 Q. I'm going to end up passing it off in a minute, but one of
5 the questions I have, we talk about the headsets, it seems like
6 it's optional, or the CICs, right? So what's the big disagreement
7 there? Are the controllers, I mean, if you look at it from an
8 outsider, requiring controllers to wear a headset, I mean, it
9 sounds a little odd. I mean, so if they're not wearing the
10 headset, how are they keeping in communication with what's going
11 on in the room?

12 A. So there are two different schools of thought, and I kind of
13 agree with both of them. So we'll go with wearing a headset
14 first. So if you're a CIC and you generally, as you know, wearing
15 a headset, you're listening to one sector at a time. If you have
16 a multitude of sectors, which most of them do, if you have weather
17 in your area, there's typically weather in multiple sectors. So
18 then the question becomes, well, which sector do I listen to? How
19 do you choose which sector?

20 Because we have had situations where the supervisor or CIC is
21 monitoring this one because that was the busier one with the less
22 experienced controller, but an event happens over here and you
23 still get asked a lot of questions, well, why weren't you
24 listening to that one? Well, nobody would have been listening.
25 You had four airplanes. So the first part is how do you determine

1 and what is the right answer? There's no clear guidance in terms
2 of how do you determine which sector is the appropriate sector to
3 listen to when you're a CIC. That's not their professional job as
4 an operations supervisor. They're controllers that are taking the
5 place of a manager in their absence. So it's a stopgap. It's
6 supposed to be intended for that. So that's -- the first part is
7 how do they determine which one? And even if they pick the right
8 one, the question still is going to come up, well, why this one
9 versus that? That's the first part. A blanket mandate of
10 something like that, because that's not what we've done in the
11 past.

12 On the management NATCA side, that would be considered a
13 change in working conditions. So because it's a change in working
14 conditions, that has to be collaborated on. So the union has a
15 right to say they have a right to have a conversation with regards
16 to the impact and implementation. And their fear with the
17 implementation would be you're opening up the CICs for potential
18 disciplinary action. If something were to take place and they
19 were found to not have been doing their job, now you have an
20 employee that can be, and I'm paraphrasing, you'd have to ask the
21 union this. I believe their fear is that now you have an employee
22 that's susceptible to performance management or discipline while
23 they were doing the agency a favor by filling this role to begin
24 with.

25 The other side of that same coin is not wearing a headset

1 allows you to listen to multiple sectors at the same time. And I
2 will speak from personal experience as a CIC and a supervisor and
3 an STMC, right? I didn't plug in and listen to any one sector.
4 When you walk through, you can hear if people are issuing weather.
5 You can hear the deviations. You can get a really good idea in
6 terms of what's happening kind of in the whole area as opposed to
7 focusing on one sector at a time. The only thing you don't get is
8 what the pilots are actually saying. So that's the drawback to
9 not wearing headsets. So just how do we jive those two? That's
10 where management and NATCA is at this point in time. It was
11 implemented in a CAP back in 2018 where the CICs had to wear a
12 headset. It's going to be part of this one when the operations
13 manager deems it necessary that the CICs will wear a headset. So
14 we're trying to get to a place where there's meaningful change
15 that's actually going to make a difference. A CIC wearing a
16 headset on a VFR day with nothing going on, I mean, that's good to
17 fix phraseology, but that doesn't help in these types of
18 situations.

19 Q. So when we say wearing a headset, do we also mean is it
20 around their neck? Is it readily available? Where's the headset
21 if they're not wearing a headset?

22 A. So my expectation, and I've said this out to everybody, is
23 when you're wearing a headset, if you're not actively working on a
24 task for the operations supervisors, if you're not working on a
25 task behind the desk, you are to be not behind the desk monitoring

1 and with it and listening to somebody. There are times where you
2 have to have conversations, you have to do this at an X. Again,
3 I'm not going to tell you it's not going to be in your ear for 8.5
4 to 10 hours a day. That's not realistic. So I expect them to be
5 the highly paid professionals that they are and pick and choose
6 how long, how often, give your ear a break, give your brain a
7 break, but you're still to not be lax. You're still watching and
8 listening, but perhaps not with it plugged in and stuck in your
9 ear for a couple hours out of the day. Hopefully that answers
10 your question.

11 Q. Yeah, it does. And is that recorded? If they hear anything
12 in their headset, is that recorded?

13 A. So they're listening to the frequency, so that frequency is
14 recorded. So if they hear something, yes, they can go back and
15 pull that tape. But they don't have access to key up or engage
16 the frequencies at all. I don't know if that answers your
17 question.

18 Q. But when they plug in -- I'll just leave that question alone.
19 I'm just trying to, well, yeah. But they're hooked up to a
20 position, as to say, where if I wanted to know what that CIC heard
21 over the headset, could I pull a position audio on that?

22 A. So the CIC is hearing the exchange between the pilots and the
23 controllers. So if you want to hear what the CIC heard, you would
24 pull the tape from that sector that they were monitoring for that
25 period of time.

1 MR. WINTER: I may be able to explain this better. I think I
2 know what she's talking about. So the wireless headset, the jack
3 it's plugged into, is that position recorded?

4 MR. HARVEY: It is, but it's only recorded for the purposes
5 of phone calls coming in, to the supervisor or the CIC, or a
6 position relief briefing. It's not recorded in its own entity of
7 them monitoring that sector.

8 MR. DAVIDS: There's no way to track which -- that's what
9 you're asking.

10 MR. HARVEY: Okay, okay, okay.

11 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah, I'm sorry.

12 MR. HARVEY: No, so no, I don't have a capability that I'm
13 aware of right now to go to the floor and pull whatever report
14 that says, this manager was listening to this sector at this time.
15 There's not a way to do that, that I'm aware of. My little
16 caveat.

17 MR. WINTER: I know we talked about how we do it. That's a
18 whole different ballgame a little bit. They're hot on a bridge,
19 which is recordable. This is a little different.

20 Q. Yeah, thank you so much for clarifying that. Actually, I do
21 have another question before I pass this around. At the time of
22 the SRT, do you know if the controller at R30, or even at the D
23 side, had been talked to? Had somebody informally asked them what
24 happened?

25 A. Yes. At the time of the SRT, NATCA had already spoken to the

1 individual, and management had spoken to the individual as well.
2 So at the time that the SRT took place, both NATCA and management
3 had asked him questions regarding his whatever in this particular
4 event.

5 Q. And they talked to the CIC as well?

6 A. My understanding is yes, the CIC was spoken to as well. I
7 believe the operations manager spoke to the CIC. That's based on
8 the information that I received.

9 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. I still have questions, but I am going
10 to pass it around because I know everybody else needs it.

11 MR. RICHARDS: I may have some questions, but I'll let these
12 guys go first.

13 MR. ROSATI: I was almost ready. Do you want to go?

14 MR. DAVIDS: I have five more.

15 MR. RICHARDS: Go for it. Go ahead.

16 BY MR. DAVIDS:

17 Q. I guess my question is -- I guess you kind of answered it. I
18 just don't know if I understood it. What do you feel the
19 advantage of a CIC listening to a sector has for you?

20 A. So I'll explain. So take the CIC out. Somebody monitoring
21 the sector is, to me, it's a good thing. And I'll give you an
22 example that happened to me. As an OM at the watch desk, I'm
23 monitoring an area in the gulf, a sector in the gulf area. And I
24 hear the controller give a pilot flight level 220. The pilot
25 reads back flight level 230. And I was like, maybe I heard it

1 wrong. I called down to the supervisor and said, hey, check 14.
2 I believe this Delta, I won't use Southwest because you're here.
3 I believe this Delta said, I believe they said flight level 230,
4 have them double check the altitude, please. He said, okay, so
5 I'm listening to the sector, and I see the controller, I see the
6 slewball. Hey, Delta, blah, blah, blah, just verify your
7 altitude. Oh, flight level 230. Negative, maintain flight level
8 220. Okay, so to me, that is a perfect example of -- if a CIC is
9 wearing a headset, monitoring, listening, behind somebody
10 watching, slow or not, you're able to catch things such as that.
11 That's human factors that happen. So closing the human factors
12 gap is a way that we improve safety in the NAS, in my opinion.
13 Q. Yeah, I just think if a sector is that busy, it's got to be a
14 D-side that's going to be with you monitoring that stuff, not
15 really a CIC. I mean, a CIC isn't in charge of your memory bank.
16 I mean, you got lucky that you were monitoring that. You caught
17 that.
18 A. So I would say that my belief is that anybody involved in the
19 operation has an obligation to prevent a loss of separation or
20 something from happening. And if a CIC has an ability to do so, I
21 would expect that they would do so on the floor. Just like if I'm
22 in another area and I see two flashing, I call up, hey, did you
23 see that? That is our fundamental job in the NAS, in my opinion.
24 Q. So there were four supervisors in that area. Do you know why
25 there was a CIC on that shift? Did you schedule it?

1 A. I'll be honest with you. I did not dig back and look to see
2 what happened. I would be speculating, but I don't have an answer
3 as to why there was a CIC. But that is an easy answer to find.
4 There's only a few. If somebody banged out, then that's probably
5 your answer, but I don't have it definitively.

6 Q. Okay. So you said when you were looking at the playback, you
7 took a video and you sent it to the district. Is that normally
8 what you send a video to?

9 A. I do. And the reason for that is, phrase this delicately, I
10 suppose. Not everybody in the district has our level of air
11 traffic experience. And so when you watch a Falcon replay, it
12 shows one thing with regards to what the Falcon records. You guys
13 know this. It doesn't show what the controller was actually
14 looking at. The ERAM replay paints a very realistic picture, or
15 the actual picture minus the audio of what the controller was
16 looking at. So I've learned to do that. That's just something
17 that I do because I've seen a great disparity at times between the
18 weather on Falcon when they pull it up, but then I show the
19 weather on the ERAM and everybody on the SRT is, oh, okay, well,
20 that looks way different than what the Falcon looks like. It
21 paints a better picture. Again, not everybody has recent
22 operational experience.

23 Q. A hundred percent. I understand. In a typical event like
24 this, what questions are you getting from the district? Because
25 you said you get them. You send it to them because they're going

1 to have a lot of questions. Typically, what questions are you
2 getting in relation to events that occur?

3 A. So a lot of times they would want to know -- just not
4 specific questions, but they want to know what happened. So your
5 basic questions, not necessarily a name of the controller, but
6 what were the circumstances surrounding the event? Was there
7 weather? Was it not weather? Was it busy? Was it not busy? A
8 lot of those questions are questions that are on the CPEC, the
9 post-event questions. At times it's, you know, what were the
10 resources like? It's more paint me a picture of what happened
11 than it is really specific questions, so it's hard to answer that
12 question. But whatever questions they feel they need to have a
13 good understanding of what led up to that event, what happened
14 there, and kind of what we're doing after. They may ask, yeah, I
15 don't know.

16 Q. Is IPM a part of that?

17 A. Not at the time of the event, no. At the time of the event,
18 we're just trying to figure out what happened and who else needs
19 to be notified of it. IPM doesn't come up until typically after
20 the fact. But, again, they would a lot of times ask, has the
21 supervisor had a conversation with them? And at that point, the
22 answer is usually yes.

23 Q. So IPM, you guys did IPM for this event?

24 A. Yes, the supervisor had a record of conversation with them
25 regarding performance, yes.

1 Q. How do you think the controller did?

2 A. My personal opinion?

3 Q. I don't even know if it's your personal opinion, more as
4 really the position you're in. I mean, you're the boss, you're
5 the ATM.

6 A. I think the controller had -- so most things in air traffic
7 are subjective, right? There are very few things that are hard
8 lined one way or the other. Even our CBA is sometimes subjective
9 even though it's written in black and white, right? I think that
10 the controller faced -- I think he had some complexities and I
11 think he had some difficulties at the sector. It would be my hope
12 for the NAS as a whole that what he was working, we would have
13 been able to absorb that and still do our due diligence with
14 regards to issuing of the weather. That would have been the best
15 case scenario. That would have been my hope for this situation as
16 well.

17 Q. Besides issuing the weather, how do you think the controller?

18 A. You have to, in regards to --

19 Q. Separation.

20 A. He didn't have separation issues that I could tell. There
21 were things that I would have done differently, but that's
22 technique. So it's -- I try to not make it a point from my
23 position to sit back and cherry pick every little decision that a
24 controller, I sat in that seat for a very long time. So I really
25 don't like doing it. I don't think it's fair to be honest with

1 you, because I can sit back and pick that session apart. And I
2 can find every November he dropped, every time he didn't say tree,
3 five or fewer, and then call it an issue. So do I think the
4 controller had things he was working through? Absolutely. Do I
5 have controllers in the NAS that would have done a better job in
6 every aspect? Yes. There are also controllers that would have
7 made it much worse than that. So I think he did the best that he
8 can do at the time, in my opinion. I wish that he would have
9 issued some weather, would that have changed the result? I don't
10 know, but that would have fulfilled the FAA's obligation,
11 according to our .65.

12 Q. And then as far as PROC, PROCs, I think here you go, PROCs is
13 called PROCs as well. How do you guys go about doing the PROCs as
14 far as determining when to give one?

15 A. When to get one?

16 Q. When to give one, when to get one. Are some good, some bad?

17 A. So the expectation is that the supervisors know their
18 employees, there are some that have areas of weakness that need to
19 be improved upon, so we expect the supervisors to help them within
20 that area. Some people, I don't know, they're expected to be,
21 whatever it is, if you're watching and observing and monitoring
22 and you see something that's good, then they should be putting
23 them in for good. PROCs, I'll use your terminology. If they find
24 something that they didn't do a great job and they whiffed to it,
25 it was close, or they had a TCAS resolution, whatever it is,

1 they're supposed to be addressing any and all -- I'm sorry, I
2 thought that was silenced, my fault. They should be addressing
3 any and all performance, right? It should be good, it should be
4 bad, it should be indifferent, but it should be consistent. So
5 that's kind of the expectation. There are times where obviously
6 MOR events, well, not events, but there are some situations where
7 the supervisors will initiate and other times maybe the OM would
8 initiate, but I think the conversation with regards to performance
9 is left up to the supervisors.

10 MS. RUPNIK: All right, moving on to Chris.

11 BY MR. ROSATI:

12 Q. I may have missed it, and if I did, I apologize. How long
13 have you been the acting ATM here now?

14 A. On paper, since December 10th, 2023. Yeah, they shoved me in
15 a little early, but we won't talk about that, okay? Because they
16 got a free month out of me.

17 Q. So I'll probably move around a lot, and I apologize. But
18 some of the things that you were talking about as far as your
19 mitigation plans, they seem more along the lines of being in
20 compliance. What, if any, have you as a facility done to mitigate
21 the issues with Sector 30 from a standpoint of safety or volume?

22 A. So Sector 30 has been along with a couple others in the
23 building, they have been hot topic items for quite some time. So
24 I don't have the full back story on things that happened up until
25 a few months ago because I wasn't really involved in that process.

1 My job was something completely different. So as the air traffic
2 manager, at this point, my biggest concern is trying to ring as
3 many bells and alarms as I possibly can with regards to the fact
4 that it is my belief that Sector 30 needs an ultra-high as per the
5 recommendation of the CWG that that's what they came up with, and
6 I believe that to be factual. So I support that recommendation
7 100 percent. I believe that the frequencies out there are
8 inadequate. Again, that's a known issue. So from a safety
9 standpoint, my job at this point is to get in touch with whoever I
10 can to have them open up the pocketbooks of whoever has the money
11 to help us fix these issues.

12 With regards to mitigation and volume, that's a traffic
13 management function. I can set expectations. Again, I don't mind
14 the operation running busy, but I do not want it unsafe. So we
15 are, as you guys, I'm sure you're aware at this point, that Sector
16 30 is sandwiched between two sectors on this side and two sectors
17 on that side, Miami and Houston, and a lot of times that is a
18 major highway in and out of Florida from the west. So having an
19 ultra-high and to not have four sectors dump into one is a big
20 part of the issues that we have.

21 As an STMC, there are many days where you can put out 30
22 miles of trail coming from South Florida for all the airports, and
23 it's still too busy. Some TMIs only work when you have common
24 departure points and common destinations or common entry points.
25 A lot of times in the gulf that doesn't happen, especially with

1 Sector 30, because it goes so far north. They don't always just
2 enter in on the Ys and Qs. Sometimes they're coming in from up
3 near Seminole and Leeville, and then they cut down. So the things
4 that we can mitigate with regards to safety in this building,
5 unfortunately we're having to, for the most part, the big changes,
6 the big effective changes, they're going to have to come from
7 outside the building, the frequencies and the scopes, the
8 additional resources, the additional supervisors for monitoring
9 and oversight.

10 Q. As we've heard, the MAP number has been lowered for R30 since
11 the incident. Do you know the specifics of that?

12 A. I don't know if that's the case, to be honest with you. That
13 MAP number, I believe it's been 23, and that's a negotiated number
14 from some years ago, or last year, whenever the last time they
15 renegotiated.

16 Q. Okay. So have you had any talks about potentially lowering
17 that MAP number even further due to the current radio issues that
18 the sector is having?

19 A. Okay, I see what you're saying. So all of the MAP numbers in
20 the building, they're designed -- and I'm in support of this, the
21 MAP numbers are to be adjusted dynamically based on complexity.
22 So we have an ability to raise and lower the MAP number by three,
23 just the supervisor, TMC and STMC, and OM having a conversation.
24 So we do find that they are doing so. But again, having worked in
25 TMU as a TMC and STMC, unfortunately, I think lowering the MAP

1 numbers, it's somewhat of a superficial fix.

2 Q. I see.

3 A. That's my personal belief. So now instead of it being red at
4 23, it's red at 20. Okay, what does that actually mean? Okay,
5 are you really going to be able to pull three airplanes out per
6 bucket? You can increase your mile and trail, but again, there
7 are so many things that go into TMIs and compliance that I think
8 that adjusting the MAP numbers, to be honest with you, I think at
9 times it's a superficial fix for people that don't understand how
10 that system works and what actually garnishes change and real
11 results.

12 Q. So let me sort of rephrase that a little bit. Your facility
13 is also now on ATC alert due to the radio frequency, correct?

14 A. I don't know about this moment, but yes, they have gone ATC
15 alert for the frequency, yes.

16 Q. Got it. So if your facility is in an ATC alert status for
17 potential frequency issues, would you say that maybe not
18 necessarily lowering the MAP number, but just reducing the amount
19 of airplanes that you could possibly let in that sector at any
20 given time due to the potential of having multiple aircraft not
21 being able to talk to ATC, would that be a good excuse to do some
22 maybe not just local in-house traffic management initiatives, but
23 working with command center to really reduce the volume that's
24 going in and out of that sector?

25 A. If the STMC and TMCs and operations managers feel that that's

1 what needs to happen, then they're well within their right to do
2 so, and they would be supported. They would have to get that
3 support from the command center as well, and that's a whole other
4 entity.

5 Q. That is a whole other entity. Speaking of command center, do
6 you know why on most days the planning telecon happens, I think
7 it's 7:30 in the morning. Is that correct?

8 A. 7:15.

9 Q. 7:15. Do you know why that's not done earlier in the morning
10 before everybody starts departing from up north?

11 A. I do not know.

12 Q. Okay. Do you think that since you were an STMC, do you think
13 it would be more beneficial to have the STMC in the building early
14 in the morning and talking with command center and all the
15 northern centers at 5:30 in the morning to figure out a better
16 plan for the traffic flow coming into Jacksonville Center?

17 A. Kind of -- so -- but I'll correct a little bit of your
18 statement. The STMCs are in by 6:00, 6:30. The planning telecon
19 just doesn't take place until 7:15. And our TMCs are in by 5:00
20 in the morning, and all of our TMCs are trained and capable of
21 speaking with the command center about issues and constraints that
22 we feel we have in the morning. In addition, there are telecons
23 that happen in the evening, the next day planning webinars, that
24 discuss the events of the next day. So the typical events that we
25 have going on in the building are not surprises to anybody. And

1 the issues that we have, like this morning, that was not a
2 surprise to catch anybody off guard. A lot of it is when it's
3 weather-related, it is unpredictable. They say sparse, but
4 there's lots of holes one day. They say sparse, and it's a solid
5 line the next day. So Mother Nature wins every time. We just
6 have to try to adjust to whatever she's going to do. I do feel, I
7 do believe that the command center -- I'm not going to speak for
8 them, but I believe that they do at times front load the volume in
9 an effort to get departures out to their destinations before we
10 hit our peak hours around 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning, 10 to
11 11, because that's when your TMIs and your constraints really come
12 in. So that might be part of the strategic planning on behalf of
13 the command center to front load that volume first thing in the
14 morning. But again, we mitigate that if need be, or a lot of
15 times with TMIs, and that's not a difficult thing to do, in my
16 opinion.

17 Q. Got it. Do you know why there was no TMR done for this
18 event?

19 A. So a TMR, according to whichever order it is, I can't
20 remember, can be requested by a variety of people. I don't know
21 why, but I'm going to speculate that with all of the information
22 -- yeah, I don't know. I don't have an answer to that question.
23 I don't know why.

24 Q. Do you think TMR would have been helpful in this situation to
25 get to the root cause of how the sector ended up being red for

1 around or more than an hour beforehand?

2 A. I think the data poll did not show the sector red for more
3 than an hour, but it depends on what you're looking for. So a TMR
4 is a traffic management review, meaning the traffic management did
5 something wrong. So that would also be a speculative answer. I
6 don't know because I don't know what answer it would have come up
7 with.

8 Q. If you had a similar event in the future, if you're still
9 here as the ATM and you see a similar event like that happen
10 again, would you request a TMR with the TMO?

11 A. If the information that I was provided led me to believe that
12 a TMR would help uncover more information that we didn't have,
13 then I think it would be appropriate. There's no opposition to a
14 TMR, maybe if that's your question.

15 Q. No, no, no, not at all.

16 A. Yeah. I would have no issue with requesting a TMR. Again,
17 either I can or NATCA can request it, the directors can, there's a
18 litany of people that can request a TMR. That's not just the air
19 traffic manager or people in the building. Anybody that's listed
20 there, I believe it's in the point-three -- I can't remember the
21 chapter. They can request a TMR.

22 Q. And completely forgive my ignorance here by asking this
23 question, because I'm from the West Coast. Is it typical to have
24 a sector, a high-altitude sector, running 30-plus airplanes with
25 30 of them deviating and consistently requesting deviations

1 multiple times throughout their time in the sector?

2 A. I think without the numbers being that high, I would say
3 Jacksonville Center having to work aircraft deviating is not
4 uncommon. Convective season, there's nowhere else to go. So when
5 the weather is there or appears, Jacksonville Center is unique in
6 the fact that it's almost like a funnel. It's bigger at the top,
7 smaller at the bottom. We have to feed Miami Center. So it is
8 not uncommon for every airplane in any sector to be deviating.
9 No, that's not uncommon.

10 MR. ROSATI: I will pass it off to Mark.

11 MR. RIOS: Thank you.

12 BY MR. RIOS:

13 Q. A follow-up on the TMR question. The trigger for the TMR can
14 be requested, as you mentioned before, by a list of people. But
15 who actually makes the decision, even if it's requested, that a
16 TMR will be done?

17 A. So you have to forgive me. I used to know it off the top of
18 my head, but there is a chapter in the order, on the QC order, and
19 it stipulates that when I believe it's the directors or whomever,
20 director level or above, when they ask for it, it shall be done
21 type thing. But then if others ask for it, then they can ask for
22 it, but it doesn't necessarily have to be done. I'm paraphrasing.
23 You'll have to forgive me. I don't remember what chapter in the
24 QC order it is. So give me your question one more time.

25 Q. No, you've answered my question. So say now it's going to be

1 done, and you said it was in the QC order. Is the QC manager
2 involved in that process?

3 A. It's typically the TMO. So the traffic management officer
4 and the NATCA rep get together, and they pull a lot of the data,
5 and they pull it together. So either the TMO was involved, he can
6 delegate his portions to other people, so it's a joint venture
7 between NATCA and management to pull a lot of the information,
8 which in this case happened anyway. It just wasn't necessarily
9 classified as a TMR.

10 Q. My next few questions are going to be from a previous ATM
11 perspective. You mentioned that you're acting since December of
12 '23.

13 A. December 10th, yes, about four months, four or five months.

14 Q. How many ATMs has Jacksonville Center had in the past two to
15 three years, and how many of them have been acting?

16 A. Let's see. Before me was -- she wasn't acting. She was on a
17 temporary, so there was a temporary bid before. It was two years.
18 Then there was a permanent before her. There wasn't, I think, an
19 acting before that. So I don't know the years, and I apologize,
20 but I don't want to guess, but that's easy information for you
21 guys to pull up if you really want to find it. But before myself
22 was Jennifer Ross. Before Jennifer Ross was a Robert Brown. And
23 if memory serves me correctly, before Robert Brown was an Al
24 Serrano. And I don't know the span of that. Jen, I believe, was
25 not here for two years. As of yet, maybe about a year and a half.

1 Same thing for Rob. So just a quick math. It would be Rob, Jen,
2 and then myself, and I'm the only one that's acting. Jen was on a
3 two-year temp, and Rob was permanent.

4 Q. As the ATM -- I don't want to use the word acting. Just as
5 the ATM, do you feel you have the autonomy to run your facility as
6 you deem fit and making the decisions that you need to improve or
7 address safety issues or other issues in the facility?

8 A. So, that's a -- within the limitations of both the CBA,
9 right, because I'm not a czar or a dictator, so you have to always
10 operate within the guidance of the CBA. And heard from all the
11 other policies we have to follow. So, I am allowed to operate
12 within the boundaries set by the CBA and expectations set by the
13 district and the people above me. So, in terms of constant input
14 from the district, if that made me -- I don't know if that's me
15 going, but I believe the answer is yes, but obviously there are
16 limitations to what I can and cannot do as an ATM. And you know
17 that, so.

18 Q. So, now you mentioned--let me use the term constant input from
19 the district. Is -- Are they basically directing you on a daily
20 basis of what they expect or what's that flexibility? What's that
21 contact look like? What things that you're able to decide versus
22 what's coming down from them to have you implement?

23 A. So, my relationship with the district is I use them as a
24 resource. Again, as having not been an ATM in a somewhat
25 temporary role, I ask questions, and the questions I ask for

1 guidance, and they provide me information. There are a lot of
2 things administrative-wise I was not tasked with doing before I
3 got here. And so they have resources to point me in the right
4 direction. But in terms of direction to run the operation, I
5 think they trust my knowledge and expertise to do what they feel
6 is -- that they know I do what I feel is in the best interest of
7 the operation and safety. So, I use them as -- I typically reach
8 out to them as a resource for help and guidance for me, more as
9 opposed to them sending stuff down, if that makes sense. I don't
10 know if that clears it up.

11 Q. Going back to this headset question -- remote headsets,
12 right? Wireless headsets? Actually, lets skip that, somebody
13 already answered that. We're going to the question of CICs and
14 CICs at stand-up. What's your perspective or policy on that
15 either happening or not happening? And if it doesn't happen, how
16 is that information communicated back to the area?

17 A. Okay, good. So CICs currently do not attend stand-up. And
18 the reason for that is there's not a way currently that I'm aware
19 of to have two CICs in charge at the same time in order to receive
20 their CIC pay. They receive a 10% differential when they're in
21 charge as a CIC. So I do not believe that there's a way for you
22 to put two CICs in charge, one in the area and one at stand-up, to
23 acquire their information. So what we do is, if there is a CIC
24 for that shift, they tend to stay in the operation. One of the
25 other supervisors or the operations manager will gather the

1 information for the shift, anything that's pertinent to that area,
2 and they go down and they brief the CIC on the information that
3 they received, including the PIREP page. They bring them any
4 papers and the PIREP information. They bring all that stuff down
5 to the CIC.

6 MR. ROSATI: Can I just interject?

7 MR. HARVEY: Yes.

8 MR. ROSATI: So there is a way in cru-art to put two CIC
9 positions in there. I think it just has to be programmed in
10 there.

11 MR. HARVEY: So we've had issues, and we've discussed that in
12 the past, and I don't have an answer for you, but we've tried it
13 here that I know that we have, and there's been complications with
14 it. I can't speak to exactly what it is because I'm not a cru-art
15 expert, but we've had issues.

16 BY MR. RIOS:

17 Q. What is the facility's policy and our trigger of staffing the
18 tracker position?

19 A. That is subjective. There's not a number in which the
20 tracker position is staffed. So it depends on complexity, it
21 depends on the controller working, it depends on volume. There
22 are a lot of variables, and we ask that the supervisor, CIC
23 controller, decide. Once that decision is made, then that
24 decision is supported and the tracker goes in. So there's not a
25 catch-all or a single decision or factor that goes into whether or

1 not somebody needs a tracker.

2 Q. And my following three questions are all related to the
3 frequency issue and the airspace sectorization plans for R-30. In
4 reference to the frequency, what's the priority being given to fix
5 that issue?

6 A. Locally, nationally?

7 Q. Locally and nationally.

8 A. So locally, that's been our top priority for quite some time.
9 I believe that it's quickly rising to a higher priority outside of
10 this facility at this point as well. But that's my belief.

11 Q. And how about the sector split? Priority given to that, yes.
12 At what levels?

13 A. Outside of the building. Not to sound bad, but I think
14 that's probably a question for the people outside the building. I
15 really don't know. But for us, it's a top priority for us at
16 Jacksonville Center.

17 Q. And how do you keep the controllers informed of what's going
18 on with the project for the sector split and the frequency issue?

19 A. Crew briefings. So either crew briefings, conversations, we
20 put things in teams. Joint memos, NATCA puts stuff out a lot of
21 times. So there's various avenues to disseminate information. It
22 just depends on the information and how often we update it.

23 Q. And the last question is also related to these two things.
24 Do you believe as the ATM that you're getting the right level of
25 support to fix these two issues?

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1 A. I would support. Nobody has opposed to what we need to fix.
2 I think that there are hurdles that are above my pay grade that
3 people are going through to try to get some stuff done. So I do
4 believe that people are supportive. I just don't know what the
5 limitations are and why it takes as long as it does. That's way
6 outside of my wheelhouse. So I don't have an answer for that.
7 I'm sorry.

8 MR. RIOS: Thank you.

9 BY MS. RUPNIK:

10 Q. You look perfectly into my question, actually. So that's
11 great. If you, as the ATM, you see there's a safety issue, let's
12 just say the frequency, because we all know that it is an issue.
13 The LSC is saying it's an issue. So you go through the proper
14 channels and the answer that you get back, that's just not
15 acceptable. We're not going to get this frequency for two years.
16 We're not going to get this frequency fixed for two years. What
17 is your, I want to say chain of command, that's not the right
18 term, but what's your next step? If the people that you report to
19 give you this answer and that's not good enough or that's not
20 safe, where do you go from there?

21 A. To be honest with you, a lot of times I go to NATCA. And I
22 ask, I explain to them what I've been told, the issues that I
23 have, the limitations that I feel like I, the wall that I feel
24 like I'm hitting. And I ask them to use their NATCA powers and
25 help me out, help us out. In this particular case, we did

1 encourage controllers to file ATSAPs. I think there are also UCRs
2 that have been done as well. So whatever we need to do to try to
3 bring attention to it is what we're trying to do. But if my chain
4 of command doesn't, if the FAA side doesn't seem to be sufficient,
5 then I utilize other channels at my disposal.

6 Q. Hopefully this event and this week will be a little bit of
7 traction to be able to address some of those issues.

8 A. I am hoping so as well.

9 Q. It sounds like you're really trying.

10 A. I'm hoping so as well.

11 Q. All right, Betty?

12 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

13 Q. And ping a little bit off of that, how do the pilots know
14 about the frequency issue?

15 A. I don't know. My assumption is when they talk to us and they
16 don't hear, I don't know.

17 Q. Right. I'm going down the line of, well, we've got the ATC
18 alert, right? You're still under that. Well, the operators may
19 know. It's easier to get to the operators. But let's just say
20 there's a Part 135 going through. They've got 70 passengers on
21 there. They're in an emergency status. They're getting clipped
22 transmissions. How would that pilot know that it could be not his
23 transmission's fault but the frequency itself's [sic] fault? And
24 then to know to keep trying. I guess I'm trying to -- is there
25 some way that the facility can put out something to the pilots? I

1 know the letter to airmen is not widely used now, but something to
2 protect the facility. I don't know if it's NOTAM-able. Something
3 that is out there to protect your facility, because if something
4 goes wrong, what is it that you can say, that you can back
5 yourself up and say, well, we've done this effort. We know it's
6 been a frequency issue. At this point, you know it's a frequency
7 issue, but what did you do to inform the flying public about it?
8 I think maybe it might be something to be looked into just so that
9 you're not caught off guard. That's out of my whole wheelhouse.
10 I can't recommend anything. But I would suggest, and I'm only
11 suggesting that you look into that so that you have a protection,
12 a layer somewhere.

13 A. No, that makes sense. I understand what you're saying.
14 Right.

15 MR. RIOS: If I can add to that, from an airline perspective,
16 if we know that kind of information, there's ways that we can
17 communicate with the pilots what to expect, and potential
18 inspecting that airspace regarding the radio frequency issue. And
19 then we also give the pilot the options. If this happens, here's
20 what you can do. Here's what you can communicate, another form of
21 communication, especially if you have a situation going on.

22 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

23 Q. And also, did Southwest, did those pilots call here or did --
24 was there any contact with Southwest about this accident?

25 A. Not that I'm aware of.

1 Q. Okay. Any other things? I'm doing all of our interviews,
2 and this is kind of a comment-yet question. Because we know all
3 the information is funneled up to you from your facility. Well,
4 we've been trying to put pieces of the puzzle together, and I
5 realize that you said during the briefing that the first time
6 anybody heard about this incident, or the severe turbulence was
7 when the OMs heard it over the Miami call on the DEN. Right.
8 Were you aware, and we were listening to the frequencies, because
9 I don't want to talk about any interviews. We were listening to
10 the frequencies, and on the position, Miami called the D3 position
11 and let them know that there had been a severe turbulence report.
12 It was about 10 minutes before it went OVER the DEN. Now, during
13 that time, it was a different CIC than we first interviewed, so we
14 interviewed with the other CIC that was on watch when that came
15 in. And that's just something for you to dig in, but there's
16 another side of the story of what the facility got before the OM
17 was a thought -- had heard it. Am I making sure I'm correct on
18 this?

19 A. So there's a process, and hopefully --

20 Q. Right, something in your process, and I don't know if you
21 were aware of it.

22 A. No, I was -- so if I'm gathering this correctly, you're
23 saying that prior to the OM hearing it over the DEN, Miami Center
24 called Jacksonville Center on the D side and said, Hey, this
25 Southwest experienced turbulence in your airspace.

1 Q. Possible injuries.

2 A. Possible injuries.

3 Q. Right, and --

4 MR. HARVEY: Are you sure?

5 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah.

6 MR. HARVEY: I'm looking at all the yeses, so --

7 MR. ROSATI: Can I --

8 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah, we have to be very careful. We don't
9 want to reveal what the interview said.

10 MR. ROSATI: Correct, and then immediately --

11 MS. KOSCHIG: All we want are the frequencies.

12 MR. ROSATI: -- afterwards on the frequency, the radar
13 controller started talking to all the pilots in the area and
14 letting them know about the severe turbulence.

15 MR. HARVEY: Well, that's good. I'm happy for that.

16 MR. ROSATI: Like immediately afterwards.

17 MS. RUPNIK: The timeframe based on -- we have a --

18 MR. ROSATI: It sounds (indiscernible).

19 MS. RUPNIK: -- replay software that interprets the time
20 channel, so based on the time channel and the recordings that we
21 have, the Miami call and the pilot reporting the turbulence, the
22 Miami call was roughly 10 minutes after the incident, 10 minutes
23 before the DEN call.

24 MR. HARVEY: Wow.

25 MS. RUPNIK: And that kind of puts things into --

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1 MS. KOSCHIG: I hate to catch you off guard --

2 MR. RUPNIK: No worries.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: -- like that.

4 MR. HARVEY: It's okay. No, it's fine. No, I was not aware
5 of that, which is unfortunate because there is a process, right?
6 So whenever there's a report -- and I'm sure you've heard this,
7 but I'll reiterate. Whenever there's a severe turbulence that's
8 reported, an urgent PIREP is to be entered. That urgent PIREP is
9 then -- so you get a strip with the call sign. They're also
10 supposed to fill out a paper form, and that paper form is supposed
11 to go to the watch desk. They make a copy, and then they give it
12 to TMU for them to forward it up to the NTML for the command
13 center for them to be aware of severe turbulence reports. And
14 then they also give a copy to CWSU, and it seems as though that
15 process possibly was not (indiscernible).

16 MS. KOSCHIG: But I'm going to throw a wrench into that
17 because Miami got -- received a report. So once they reported to
18 Jacksonville, that's where -- this is not -- this is for inside
19 the house.

20 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

21 Q. How would that -- how would you handle, the facility handle
22 then that report? Because that incident at that point, severe
23 turbulence, happened in your airspace, but it wasn't reported.
24 Now this is -- we can't deal with the pilot end of it in this
25 situation. Why don't the latency in reporting is out of our

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1 hands. And this doesn't happen often. No, obviously not. So --
2 but it's like then who files the urgent? So it's something that's
3 an in-house thing that --

4 A. Well, no, so that's already been addressed. So for
5 Jacksonville Center, it doesn't matter. If Miami comes and Miami
6 says, hey, this happened in your airspace via the DEN or there, we
7 still put the PIREP in. If it's in our airspace, then we put the
8 PIREP in.

9 Q. Even if they report it?

10 A. Even if they report it, correct. Because that information
11 needs to go. That's the expectation at Jacksonville.

12 Q. Do you know if they did file that PIREP in our airspace? In
13 Jacksonville airspace?

14 A. I don't know. I don't know.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay.

16 MR. RICHARDS: Okay. Can you issue an 0-10 for an airspace?
17 I'm asking you because you --

18 MS. KOSCHIG: Thank you.

19 MR. HARVEY: You're welcome. I don't know. I ask weather
20 stuff. Go ahead. I'll do my best.

21 MR. RICHARDS: I'm tapped out. All right, I'll ask, I have
22 one question. I think I know the answer to it. I'll ask anyway.
23 So I'm walking around the floor. I see all sorts of displays on
24 the walls in the area. Some are showing weather stuff. Some are
25 showing flight tracks. There's some situation boards and words.

1 Various things on various monitors. The controllers can see.
2 Supervisors can see.

3 BY MR. RICHARDS:

4 Q. My question is, who decides what goes on those monitors?

5 A. So some of those, the ones that are hanging from the ceiling
6 belongs to CWSU. They put their product up. But I believe the
7 answer to that question is that is collaborated on between NATCA
8 and management.

9 Q. Would that be a work condition situation?

10 A. Depends on the NATCA representative you ask.

11 Q. My follow-up to that is, how often do those -- so I guess two
12 questions, actually. The CWSU controls the CWSU monitors.

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. For the other monitors, how often does that information
15 change? Can it change? In other words --

16 A. It can. But, again, that's something that is collaborated on
17 in the building.

18 Q. So that's a NATCA management discussion.

19 A. Yes, sir. Yes.

20 MR. RICHARDS: Okay, thanks. Thank you.

21 MS. RUPNIK: Okay, Mark.

22 BY MR. WINTER:

23 Q. So you looked at the ERAM Replay first, right? You went
24 straight back to the TTL to look at the ERAM Replay when they told
25 you about the system?

1 A. Correct. That's the first thing I saw, yes.

2 Q. So you haven't looked at the Falcon yet?

3 A. I have, yes.

4 Q. What would you rate the volume of the complexity of that
5 system?

6 A. Again, keep in mind, this is subjective.

7 Q. Yeah, always is.

8 A. And I am an older controller with a certain regiment that I
9 follow with no wavering. Am I doing one to 10, one to five, high,
10 medium, low?

11 Q. Let's do one to five, five being the worst.

12 A. Five being the worst in terms of volume? I would say 3.5,
13 four.

14 Q. How about complexity? Same scale?

15 A. Three.

16 MR. WINTER: Three. Switching gears a little bit, how much
17 of an overlap did you have with your predecessor? I need to know.
18 Poor guy.

19 MS. RUPNIK: Congratulations.

20 MR. WINTER: I'm going back to the human factor now.

21 MR. HARVEY: Oh, boy. I'm trying to think, so give me a
22 second here. I'm not trying to -- I'm trying to process what
23 happened. I don't even remember when she left. I think -- there
24 was at least a few weeks, a couple to -- I don't -- two to three
25 weeks of overlap. Maybe closer to two, but there was some leave

1 in there and some schedule stuff in there because I was still an
2 operations manager. So, yeah, probably maybe about -- maybe a
3 couple of weeks.

4 BY MR. WINTER:

5 Q. So you went straight from operations manager to air traffic
6 manager?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. And you have not been like a support manager? Any of the
9 staff offices?

10 A. No, I didn't work in this, but no. One of my collateral
11 duties as an operations manager was the QC department, so kind of
12 the liaison between the floor and QC. And I like to learn things,
13 right? So I'm familiar with the QC order. I don't know
14 everything they do, so I'm not going to act like that's the case.
15 But no, never held an MSS3 position upstairs, to answer your
16 question sincerely.

17 Q. And the other question would be, did you feel prepared when
18 she was out the door when you were gone? When you had the office,
19 it was yours, you put your pictures up in there. How'd you feel?

20 A. I am probably one of the most confident people you'll come
21 across. So I felt like there are not many challenges that I could
22 not find a way to handle myself. I don't have to know all the
23 answers, I just need to know somebody. And there are a lot of
24 resources around me, so I think the people around me helped
25 prepare me and made sure that there was a relatively seamless

1 transition.

2 MR. WINTER: Everybody else kind of asked what I wanted to
3 ask already. Anybody else want to go?

4 BY MR. DAVIDS:

5 Q. How's your relationship with local safety council?

6 A. We have a working relationship. I mean, I would ask that you
7 would --

8 Q. Just in general, I'm talking about managers on there, NATCA.
9 Are you involved with local safety council?

10 A. Yes, we -- yes. So when they have their meetings, they send
11 me the minutes, we have conversations about it. So we have a
12 regular and routine dialogue with regards to upcoming issues, past
13 issues. You know, kind of what direction do we want to go, what
14 are we looking for, what do we think will work. I think I'm
15 scheduled to sit in the meeting they have coming up on the -- It's
16 in -- not this one, not this one. A week from this Wednesday
17 coming up, so I sit in on some of them. So I'm scheduled to sit
18 in on the next one that comes up. So I'm involved as much as I
19 can be while allowing them to do their work as a group without
20 hovering and being an influence or a distraction or whatever, you
21 know. But it's more to let them know, ask what they need of me as
22 the air traffic manager.

23 Q. Prior to the event, do you feel like you were very involved
24 with local safety council? Like, going off of my example, I
25 personally have a meeting where it's me, the ATM, and my safety

1 guy. And QC, and we go over safety issues. Is that something
2 that occurs? Because you're like, do you have a finger on the
3 pulse on exactly what's going on with safety guys?

4 A. Yes, but it may not fall in that format, but it's a little
5 more scattered, to be honest with you. Again, because of the
6 relatively short time that I was here trying to get meetings set
7 up in place. People were already in routines, and I was -- not
8 that I didn't want to come in and change routines, but what they
9 had going on, I kind of found a way to insert myself into what
10 other people had as to not mess up the processes that other people
11 had in place. So that more involves me meeting with the safety
12 rep, sometimes in the NATCA eBoard meetings. Sometimes he'll come
13 to the OM meetings. Sometimes it's me and him and the QC manager.
14 And again, sometimes I go to the local safety council meetings
15 myself, and we do it that way. So there's not a singular way in
16 which I gather information with regards to what's going on. It
17 just kind of depends on what the need is at the time. We try to
18 -- we're fluid at Jax center.

19 Q. And local safety council, do they have an office that they
20 can meet at here?

21 A. They typically meet up here. So they don't have a -- some of
22 the members of local safety council have their own working space,
23 but that's because they're maybe regional reps or, you know, a
24 local rep on one fourth or whatever duties however many days of
25 the week. But the others that are just members, they don't

1 typically have their own office, but they do -- we reserve this
2 conference room for them for the times in which they need to meet.
3 So they do meet up here.

4 BY MR. ROSATI:

5 Q. Kind of going back to the PROCs. So there was no supervisor
6 in the -- it's the Gulf area, right?

7 A. West. West area.

8 Q. Thank you. In the West area. So there wasn't a supervisor
9 that day. There was a CIC, right? So the PROC that was done with
10 Jud was dated on the day of the event. So we're trying to figure
11 out the day that the PROC was actually accomplished on Jud and who
12 directed the supervisor who gave that PROC to Jud to do that, or
13 was that just the supervisor did that on their own?

14 A. So the supervisor was Matthew Bennett. I believe is the supe
15 of record that conducted the PROC. I do not have details in terms
16 of when the conversation took place. Again, that's a supervisory
17 thing. I don't --

18 Q. So when you were an OM or when you were a supervisor, is it a
19 common practice to change the dates that a PROC is signed to the
20 date of the event, or do you normally sign it the date that you're
21 having the actual conversation?

22 A. So it depends because there -- So for the PROC, to me, there
23 are two different entities. There's when the conversation
24 happened and then when the write-up took place. Because of
25 sometimes the staffing situations here, we try to have the

1 conversation as soon as possible. That does not always mean
2 that's when the write-up is completed. So it depends on who wants
3 it to match and what it is. So I don't think that there shouldn't
4 be a floating PROC date. I don't know if that answers your
5 question, but it's typically either the date that the conversation
6 took place or the date in which the controller received it.
7 That's typically what happens.

8 Q. Okay. So my question would be then if you have the
9 conversation one day and then you actually get the paperwork all
10 together maybe another day, would you then suggest that if that
11 happens, that be annotated in the PROC saying, hey, this
12 conversation happened on April 3rd, or maybe the conversation
13 happened on April 5th, but the event was on April 3rd and that's
14 why we're backdating it then or whatever?

15 A. I don't think it would hurt to put that in there, but I don't
16 know that that's -- I've not had a conversation with anybody about
17 that, to be honest with you.

18 Q. Crew briefings. Does your facility hold regular crew
19 briefings with supervisors and the whole team?

20 A. So the operations managers hold -- we call it the sit-down
21 after stand-up. So whenever staffing and workload permit, the
22 operations managers are to take the supervisors after stand-up and
23 go over a line of things. A lot of that information comes from
24 what we discuss in our Wednesday meetings and kind of getting the
25 supervisors up to speed. The supervisors -- I'm sorry, the

1 operations managers set their expectations with regard to crew
2 briefings for their areas. I have set expectations, kind of
3 passed it down, that crew briefings are very important to me and
4 crew briefings need to happen. So the operations managers -- I
5 don't have a regimented time. They accomplish them as regularly
6 as possible, and they typically send their operations manager an
7 email with who is there.

8 Q. So you have a way to track which supervisors are actually
9 providing those crew briefings to?

10 A. If the supervisor sends the OMs an email, then yes, then the
11 OMs would have those emails. But if they don't, then a lot of
12 times it's, hey, did you guys do any crew briefings this week?
13 And they report that to me. So every Wednesday that's something
14 that I ask about. Where are we at on crew briefings? How are we
15 doing? How is the north, west? And they say, okay, this week we
16 did one, we did two, we did three. I say, okay, I've got all
17 these people and all these people. So it's a regular
18 conversation.

19 Q. I'm changing gears a little bit to SRTs. I know you've only
20 been doing this job for a few months, but I'm sure you've been
21 involved with probably multiple SRTs, right?

22 A. A couple.

23 Q. So overall, do you feel that your facility is ever given
24 enough time to prepare properly for an SRT before they happen?

25 A. Do I feel like we're ever given?

1 Q. Or we'll say most of the time are you given enough time to
2 prepare?

3 A. So I think the product that we put out in an SRT is accurate,
4 and I think that it's a good product. It would be nice if I
5 didn't have to do that in such a short period of time at times.
6 So again, that's a little aloof of an answer, I suppose but then.

7 Q. So spitballing here, maybe just an example. Obviously, if
8 there's an unfortunate, fatal accident or maybe an incident like
9 this where there's an injury or whatever, it seems prudent to
10 maybe get that information as quickly as possible, right? But
11 maybe sometimes there's no injuries involved, but something needs
12 to be done and there needs to be an SRT. So you think there maybe
13 should be a separate process for that?

14 A. Yeah, that would be great. Yes, I do think there should be a
15 separate process.

16 MR. WINTERS: And I know where he's going with that. I was
17 on one. We had a fatal accident at the Hot Springs Airport. And
18 it was a time that the DRAAS and the Falcon were down. That's
19 what I'm saying. And they asked me, because I'm on there, and I
20 had that sector, what do you think of this? And I was like, I
21 can't answer that question. I can't even. I need good audio. I
22 need time.

23 MR. HARVEY: Correct.

24 MR. WINTER: I wish they changed SRTs back to what the
25 original purpose of it was. That's kind of what I'm getting at a

1 little bit.

2 MR. HARVEY: I will not disagree with your statement. For
3 the record.

4 MR. ROSATI: I have one more question on that. We'll see if
5 it comes back. I'll pass for now.

6 MR. RIOS: Actually, I'll call it PROC for now. Thank you.
7 Yeah, they had the PROC, right? Thank you.

8 BY MR. RIOS:

9 Q. And going back to that, are they normally done as a result of
10 an event? Or what's the process to trigger for conducting PROCs?

11 A. When there's a performance that needs to have a conversation.
12 That's supposed to be what it is. That's typically what it is.

13 If there's performance observed by a manager that they feel a
14 conversation is required, then they have the conversation.

15 Q. So it's only done when something's identified as an issue?
16 Or is it done on a regular basis or a minimum amount that has to
17 be done?

18 A. So in terms of a PROC quota, that also is somewhat of a point
19 of contention with our union counterparts. So they have not much
20 of an appetite for a PROC quota in this particular facility, and
21 they have backing of the regional offices. So there's not a quota
22 as of right now with regards to how many PROCs a supervisor is
23 supposed to conduct. They are supposed to be observing, and
24 they're supposed to be correcting, good, bad, or indifferent. The
25 expectation is, if I'm watching you work a Charlotte push and you

1 kill it, the next day, if I see you, hey, we've got a couple
2 minutes, go outside, watch the Falcon, and you did a fantastic job
3 with this, and you write it out. Conversely, if I see you work a
4 Charlotte push, and you have some serious issues with vectoring,
5 and you've got, it's grossly inefficient, and people are down over
6 Charleston, supposed to be going to Charlotte, and there's really
7 no reason for it, and you're forgetting people on headings, then
8 we will also have a conversation about that. If, for example,
9 there was an aircraft that was Nordo, and it gets reported, hey,
10 he's Nordo, and did you try XYZ, and they tell me yes, and we go
11 back, we watch, we listen, and the controller did not take the
12 appropriate steps to try to reestablish communication, then I'd
13 probably have a performance conversation. I would ask, the
14 supervisor would probably have a performance conversation with
15 them about that as well.

16 Q. What would you say the percentage might be on PROCs in
17 reference to identifying deficiencies versus identifying positive
18 performance PROCs?

19 A. It would be a complete guess. I don't know. I don't know.

20 Q. My last question is related to the ATM position. You
21 mentioned over the past maybe two to three years the different
22 ATMs have been replaced, which some of the time periods seem like
23 short time periods. Do you believe that having some stability in
24 that ATM position would help?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Why do you think that is, that there's not more stability in
2 the position? Did you volunteer, or was it you were called and
3 asked?

4 A. I was called and asked, and I accepted. Why I think there's
5 not? That is so far beyond what I do for a living, my friend.
6 Again, that would be speculation. I can give you my story, but
7 that's what I think, and I prefer to not speculate on what the FAA
8 does with their personnel.

9 Q. Going back to my question regarding the continuity and
10 stability in the position, with these time periods that you
11 mentioned before, do you think there's enough time for somebody
12 like you to get in there and actually do some real change? Or
13 would you get caught short saying, okay, now you've got to move
14 on?

15 A. Can you repeat the first part of that again? I'm sorry.

16 Q. For the continuity of having a manager in the position for a
17 longer period of time. Somebody that's more permanent in the
18 position. Does that offer you the opportunity to actually, in
19 your opinion, to get something done, really get something done
20 or --

21 A. There are advantages. There are definitely advantages to
22 having someone in place long term. You can start a project or
23 whatever it is. You can monitor it, and you can see it all the
24 way through. You can set direction and see it all the way through
25 for the balance of your tenure. So there are absolutely

1 advantages, in my opinion, to having a permanent air traffic
2 manager in place. I think continuity is a big part of that.

3 MS. RUPNIK: Does anybody have any last minute -- oh, by the
4 way, it's Cory.

5 MR. DAVIDS: I wasn't going to, but I have to. You kind of
6 let yourself off on this. I'm sorry.

7 MR. HARVEY: It's all good.

8 MR. DAVIDS: So you said that out of the SRT and out of the
9 SSR, you came with CAPs, and you're working on CAPs and everything
10 like that. But you also said there are certain things that the
11 district wants done.

12 BY MR. DAVIDS:

13 Q. What are the things that the district wants done in order to
14 follow through on from the event?

15 A. The district, in my opinion, is already a step behind what
16 we're doing in the building. What they're asking me to do, we
17 established that even before this event took place. In terms of
18 the operations, the support managers monitoring on the floor, they
19 want them to monitor on the floor. They already do. Okay, we're
20 good. They wanted to make sure Ryan and I were on the floor, the
21 XO. We're already on the floor. Okay, we're good. Well, make
22 sure you guys are doing performance management. Make sure the
23 supes are doing regular performance management. Yeah, we already
24 do. Now, the CAP is a little bit different because that's
25 collaborative with NATCA and union, so that's a different piece.

1 But in terms of what the district wanted us to do, I kind of went
2 back to them and said, oh, sure. And I was kind of torn. I
3 wasn't going to tell them that we're already doing it to just kind
4 of make them feel like they did something. But I did go back
5 like, hey, just so you know, these are things that we're already
6 doing. So there was no impact with regards to what the district
7 was asking versus what. And, again, when I say what we were
8 doing, I'm not just talking about me as the ATM. These are
9 conversations that I have with the XO, NATCA vice president, NATCA
10 president. This is what we think is good for the building. These
11 are good practices regardless. So this is what we're putting out
12 to the membership and to the controllers and the managers. And
13 we're already moving in this direction anyway. It's a big boat.
14 Slow rudders turn slowly.

15 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Do you have any questions for us?
16 Anything you'd like to add?

17 MR. HARVEY: No, just hopefully you guys got all the
18 information you need.

19 MR. WINTER: I hope your food shows up.

20 MR. HARVEY: Yeah. So I'm not going to lie, I looked behind
21 me a couple times.

22 MS. KOSCHIG: I kept looking out the window to see if they
23 were going to come.

24 MR. HARVEY: They're not going to come in here. They're
25 scared of you.

1 MS. KOSCHIG: They're scared.

2 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Well, I'm going to go ahead and show us
3 off the record here. 1343 Local.

4 (Whereupon, at 1:43 p.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: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
 LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
 TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
 MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
 Interview of Shane A. Harvey

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Hilliard, Florida

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

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Kire Thomas.

Kire Thomas
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: JEFIN JACOB, Air Traffic Controller
Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville Air Route
Traffic Control Center
Hilliard, Florida

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APPEARANCES:

RUTH RUPNIK, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MIKE RICHARDS, Meteorologist
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK WINTER, Washington Center Quality Control
Federal Aviation Administration

CORY DAVIDS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

CHRIS ROSATI, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

MARK RIOS, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
Southwest Airlines

ANTHONY WEST, Representative/Vice President
National Air Traffic Controllers Association
(On behalf of Mr. Jacobs)

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:10 p.m.)

MS. RUPNIK: All right. The time is 14:10 local, and we are on the record. Good afternoon. Welcome. My name is Ruth Rupnik, and I'm an air traffic investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. And can you please state your first and last name for me?

MR. JACOB: My name is Jefin Jacob.

MS. RUPNIK: Jefin Jacob. And that was J-e-f-i-n?

MR. JACOB: Yes, and J-a-c-o-b.

MS. RUPNIK: Excellent. Thank you for being here today. I know you all are really busy, so I appreciate your time. And as we just discussed, I want to make sure you're aware that this interview is being recorded. And so this recording will not leave my possession except for to go to the transcriptionist. Transcriptionist draws up the transcript. We review it once we have group concurrence on it, the audio is destroyed. The transcript does become public, and we can provide a copy to you if you would like that. Would you like a copy of the transcript when it's finished?

MR. JACOB: Yes.

MS. RUPNIK: Okay. We'll get your email address before we leave, after the interview here. Okay. And I see you have a representative here today. And this is the representative you've chosen?

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1 MR. JACOB: Yes.

2 MS. RUPNIK: And I know we just got your name, but if you
3 could just state your name again for us.

4 MR. WEST: Anthony West, NATCA Vice President.

5 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. And he just went through this whole
6 thing. Any questions that we ask, we really want you to answer,
7 but if you need to confer with him for any reason, just let us
8 know. You guys can step outside the room or just talk here.
9 Let's see. All right.

10 So National Transportation Safety Board. We work on the
11 party system, so us three on this side of the table we're NTSB.
12 Everyone else in the room, we have FAA, NATCA, Southwest Airlines.
13 It's as good as the time as any for people to introduce
14 themselves. Betty, go on.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: Oh, hello, again. My name is Betty Koschig and
16 I am NTSB Air Traffic Investigator.

17 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB Meteorologist.

18 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter, ZDC, Quality Control Manager.

19 MR. DAVIDS: Cory Davids, NATCA ASI, New York Center.

20 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati, NATCA ASI, from Oakland Center.

21 MR. RIOS: I'm Mark Rios, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
22 from Southwest Airlines.

23 MS. RUPNIK: Okay, so we have a lot of experience in the
24 room, a lot of different entities represented. Just the one thing
25 for the purposes of this unit interview, we're all part of the ATC

1 group, the NTSB ATC group. We don't do anything unilaterally. We
2 get group concurrence on everything that we do today.

3 And yeah, so everybody will read the notes, and everybody
4 will get group concurrence. I think I've said that three times
5 now. Okay, let's see. National Transportation Safety Board. We
6 are a very small independent agency. We don't report to the FAA,
7 DOT, anything. We report directly to Congress and there's only
8 about 400 people in the agency and that covers all modes of
9 transportation.

10 So aviation is the most visible, but also highway, rail,
11 pipeline, HAZMAT. So lots of different areas. And our goal is
12 safety. Like we're not here trying to point the finger at
13 anybody, trying to point the blame, figure out who's at fault. We
14 want to know -- obviously, we know what happened.

15 Now we're trying to figure out why it happened so that we can
16 hopefully come up with recommendations to prevent similar events
17 from happening in the future. And this is not just a Jax Center
18 problem, this is a NAS problem. So definitely kind of want to
19 find out what's going on here and see what we can do to mitigate
20 that NAS wide.

21 As far as what to expect during your in interview, we're
22 going to start by asking you a few administrative questions. Just
23 want to get to know you a little bit better professionally. And
24 then we'll get into the day of the incident.

25 I'm going to go around the room twice, give everybody a

1 chance to ask questions. If at any time -- just give us the
2 facts, don't tell us what you think we want to know or want to
3 hear, or anything like that, just what you remember. Let us know
4 if you don't remember. I don't recall. I don't know perfectly
5 acceptable answers.

6 If you need us to repeat a question, clarify a question, just
7 ask. And if you need a break at any time, to get up, go to the
8 bathroom. This should take about an hour, give or take. So don't
9 be shy, just ask. Don't be afraid to ask for whatever you need.

10 The other thing you're going to notice, everybody's got
11 notepads, computers, we're going to be typing, taking notes while
12 you're talking. It's just so we can kind of reference back
13 throughout the course of the interview. Just for our own
14 reference.

15 These notes will be destroyed before we leave the facility.
16 These don't leave the facility with us. We just don't want you to
17 think we're all not paying attention to anything. I promise we're
18 paying attention. Let's see.

19 All right, so obviously it's been a little -- a few weeks
20 since the incident occurred, but just like I said, best of your
21 recollection and we'll be good to go. So any questions before we
22 get started?

23 MR. JACOB: Nope.

24 INTERVIEW OF JEFIN JACOB

25 BY MS. RUPNIK:

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- 1 Q. All right. And what are your operating initials?
- 2 A. Juliet Yankee.
- 3 Q. Juliet Yankee. And how old are you?
- 4 A. Twenty-seven.
- 5 Q. Twenty-seven. Okay. When did you start working for the FAA?
- 6 A. May 2nd, 2022.
- 7 Q. And did you go to the academy?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. And was this your first FAA facility?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And are you a CPC here? Are you in training?
- 12 A. No, I completed all my R-side training in September.
- 13 Q. Okay.
- 14 A. I'm training to be a -- correction, I completed all my D-side
- 15 training in September. I'm working on my R-side now. I started
- 16 training in February on the R-sides.
- 17 Q. Okay. And do you have any previous experience? Any military
- 18 service?
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. No contract experience or anything?
- 21 A. No.
- 22 Q. Do you hold any other aeronautical certificates? Are you a
- 23 pilot?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. No.

- 1 A. Nothing.
- 2 Q. College?
- 3 A. Yes. Bachelor's in engineering.
- 4 Q. Bachelor's in engineering. And where did you go?
- 5 A. The University of Houston.
- 6 MS. RUPNIK: Okay.
- 7 MS. KOSCHIG: Oh yeah.
- 8 MS. RUPNIK: We have another Houston person here.
- 9 MS. RUPNIK: I live in Conroe.
- 10 MR. JACOB: My cousin lives in Conroe.
- 11 MS. KOSCHIG: Oh, okay.
- 12 MS. RUPNIK: Small world.
- 13 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah.
- 14 BY MS. RUPNIK:
- 15 Q. Okay. Sorry about that. Just skipping over a few questions
- 16 that aren't particularly relevant here. Do you -- and you do have
- 17 a current medical?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Okay. Any restrictions? I see you wear glasses. Is that
- 20 your --
- 21 A. That's it.
- 22 Q. Okay, and you're required to have those on or just with you?
- 23 A. I need them to see.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. All right. And so, all the D-side positions that you're --
2 the D-side positions you're certified on your current, on all this
3 position?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. All right. I'm going to come back to some of these.
6 So right now, what I kind of want you to do is, just as you recall
7 the day from the time that you got in, took the position, were you
8 actually on position when the call came in from Miami Center?

9 A. About the turbulence? Yes.

10 MS. RUPNIK: Okay, perfect.

11 MS. KOSCHIG: Very Good.

12 BY MS. RUPNIK:

13 Q. We got that now. If it's -- yeah, hopefully you can fill in
14 some information here. So yeah, just like when you got in that
15 day, when you took the position, the sequence of events.

16 MR. JACOB: So it was on Wednesday, I think I came in around
17 8:00. I did my pre duty weather and then I think I asked the CIC
18 where I should go. NEPTA was busy and there was already a D-side
19 there, and I was told to go there. I went there and I got the
20 briefing, I got the briefing. And the military airspace was
21 active, so half the sector was military airspace.

22 There was some other right in the middle. And at that point
23 everybody was deviating, everybody was deviating south along our
24 boundary. And I think most of the traffic was going westbound.
25 And when I got the briefing, we were pointing them towards fixed

1 to the southwest of the sector. And there were a lot of
2 deviations, and the frequency was poor. I remember having to,
3 like -- we switched a few people to Houston, and we were not
4 getting a read back.

5 So I remember calling them a few times to make sure that
6 airplane went over to them. And I think that the Southwest flight
7 was one of the first few going eastbound. And pretty much
8 everybody kept well south of that area precipitation near the
9 middle of the sector.

10 But Southwest flight flew kind of close to that and exited
11 our sector. And then a few minutes after they exited the sector,
12 I got a call from Miami Center saying did this, did this aircraft
13 report turbulence? I said, no. And they told me like, some miles
14 east of the fix. It was the REMIS.

15 Then Southwest reported turbulence with -- severe turbulence
16 with injuries. So I gave that information to the R-side and the
17 CIC. The R-side was then provided that information to all the
18 planes that were, you know, going through the area behind them.
19 And yeah, that's what happened.

20 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. I know, I have questions here. All
21 right. I'm actually going to go ahead and pass this off because I
22 know I've got questions based on what you just said there. But
23 I'm going to pass along. Betty, do you want to go ahead?

24 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

25 Q. Yeah, I'll go ahead. (Indiscernible). So when you got the

1 report from Miami, do you remember what sector that was in Miami?

2 A. CIGAR.

3 Q. CIGAR. Okay. And do you recall what -- could you tell me
4 again what they told you?

5 A. I think he --

6 Q. I know you may not have the exact, but --

7 A. I think he, I think he just said, did the Southwest call --
8 Did the call sign report turbulence? I said negative, and then,
9 you know, he also was surprised.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. And then I think he said -- he gave me that information and
12 he said, just letting you know there were severe turbulence with
13 injuries. I think it was 50 miles west of REMIS. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. So did that -- so that kind of surprised you that that
15 came up?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Do you recall if Southwest said anything in the airspace?

18 A. Actually no.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. I might have been on a call with somebody else. I might have
21 missed it, but I don't remember hearing anything.

22 Q. Okay. All right. And do you have any recollection where
23 that turbulence may have happened if you don't --

24 A. No, not exactly.

25 Q. -- it's okay.

1 A. Around 50 miles west of REMIS is all I -- around what I
2 heard.

3 Q. Okay. Is what they were saying.

4 A. The mileage might not be exact, but something like that.

5 Q. Right. Okay, so and what did you tell the R-side?

6 A. The Miami Center said that Southwest reported severe
7 turbulence with injuries 50 miles west of REMIS.

8 Q. Okay. So do you recall what the R-side did? I mean, did he
9 start broadcasting it, letting other aircraft know?

10 A. He did -- there was, I think there was another Southwest at
11 that position, and he did let them know. I think they said they
12 already knew that or something like that.

13 Q. Okay. And so, you said you told the CIC?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And who was the CIC at the time?

16 A. At that time, it was Tyler Palm.

17 Q. Okay. And so, you told him the same thing that you told
18 the --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- the R-side. And do you recall what the CIC did, or did
21 you go back to your work? I mean, I know that's --

22 A. Yeah, I went back.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I think, yeah.

25 Q. All right. So do you recall anything else going on after

1 that? Anything reference to the, to the turbulence report? Did
2 you get any more calls or?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. Did you call any other airplanes hearing any
5 turbulence reports or?

6 A. No.

7 Q. That was it. How long were you on the position after that?

8 A. I don't remember.

9 Q. Okay. Do you remember how long you were on before that?

10 A. No.

11 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. All right. Enough for me right now.
12 I'm going to pass it.

13 MR. RICHARDS: Okay. I'm going to ask from different
14 subjects.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: Thank you.

16 BY MR. RICHARDS:

17 Q. We're going to probably bounce around to a lot of --

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. -- subjects randomly (indiscernible). So you said you were
20 in the academy two years ago?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Is this your first facility?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. All right. So you probably have interesting in different
25 perspective, at least.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. What do you think about the Pre-Duty Weather Briefings? You
3 can be totally honest.

4 A. Okay. So it kind of gives me a snapshot of what's going to
5 -- what I can expect during the day. And we work the low sector
6 to the west. So that means there's going to be a lot of
7 instrument approaches. There's going to be probably more
8 coordination needed because I'm going to have to get, you know,
9 the nearby airspace blocked, airspace blocked.

10 The workload is going to increase because we have to call the
11 weather to everybody because they like that. And I guess if
12 somebody asks me, I can, I can, sometimes I refer to turbulence
13 reports that are on the Pre-Duty Briefing that like, somebody
14 might ask me how are the rides in the high sector, so I can tell
15 them, forecasted, you know, moderate turbulence between the
16 altitudes.

17 Q. Are they helpful for your -- so they're helpful for your
18 situational awareness?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. We sometimes get a lot of negative feedback about
21 those products from controllers, so a lot of times they're 10 plus
22 years of experience. So you're two years out. I was interested.

23 A. Yeah. It's useful to me because, you know, when the day
24 starts, I can prepare myself and know what to expect, especially
25 since I'm in training.

1 Q. Did you learn about those at the academy or was that more --
2 you first learned about them when you showed up at the facility?
3 Did they train about that at the academy?

4 A. I mean, I didn't see them at the academy until I got to here,
5 but it might have been part of the position relief briefing or
6 something like that from the academy, but I don't recall.

7 Q. Okay. And you required to do those before every --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- every shift?

10 A. Yes.

11 MR. RICHARDS: Okay. I have some other questions but go
12 ahead.

13 BY MR. WINTER:

14 Q. Well, I don't have much. I think you did a good job here. I
15 think we're going to pick your brain because you're relatively
16 newer and younger.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. I've been around for 26 years. It's passed my prime by far.
19 To get somebody's perspective that's been around that long is
20 really, really useful. Did you feel well prepared when you jumped
21 in at the D-side? All things considered weather briefing, your
22 position relief briefing, any displays that are up on the wall for
23 weather-wise? Did you feel prepared?

24 A. Yes. Personally, the person before me he let me know that
25 during the briefing everybody was deviating to the south. He did

1 probably tell me about the rides. I don't remember what exactly
2 he told me, but probably did.

3 He told me which sectors are open, that's also useful
4 information, where they're deviating and just making sure that all
5 the point outs and handouts are going to the right sectors. Yeah,
6 I think nothing felt unusual. I mean, it was a high workload, but
7 that happens a lot in, a lot in NEPTA and I thought it would be
8 just a normal day.

9 Q. That's fine. How often do you get training on weather? And
10 we're talking about safe briefings.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. I don't know if you guys put out a safety sheet every once in
13 a while, the LSC?

14 A. Yeah, we -- I think we have that every month and you know,
15 like recently, like we make sure we get the base and tops reports
16 when it's needed, make sure we do the right -- follow the right
17 phraseology on the SIGMETs, calling the weather put in the PIREPs
18 when we are required to.

19 Actually, whenever we get a, we get a report we just put it
20 in and like -- I like to write that on the scope too, just so that
21 I can remember to tell the next person that, you know, this was
22 reported at this position at this time.

23 MR. WINTER: Perfect. I think that's all I got. I
24 appreciate it.

25 MS. RUPNIK: Cory?

1 MR. DAVIDS: You pretty much stole all my questions. You
2 probably going to have to come back to me.

3 MS. RUPNIK: All right, Chris.

4 MR. DAVIDS: Congratulations on getting trained on talking to
5 the NTSB before radar.

6 MR. JACOB: Yeah.

7 MS. RUPNIK: Right.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: And tomorrow's your anniversary, right?

9 MR. JACOB: Yes.

10 MS. KOSCHIG: Three years.

11 MS. RUPNIK: Oh wow. You're right.

12 BY MR. ROSATI:

13 Q. What would you say the volume was of the sector at that time?
14 Maybe out of one to 10, 10 being, you know, the most volume.

15 A. I would say nine. I've seen it really bad, but this was bad.
16 Because of all the deviations, you're not sure wherever it's going
17 to end up. And we have to watch, you know, all the data blocks
18 were flashing to the right sectors. All the point outs are done.
19 The weather makes it a lot more complex. I've seen it.

20 Q. That was my next question is, where do you think the
21 complexity was out of, you know --

22 A. Yeah, that makes it a lot more complex. Because you know,
23 you're not completely sure where they're going to be deviating to.
24 I've seen more tracks in NEPTA, but this was a different situation
25 because of all the deviations.

1 Q. Okay. So you would say the complexity was a nine or a 10?

2 A. Yes. And also the -- especially since everyone went to the
3 southwest of the sector, the frequency is bad and then it's
4 especially now that, you know, on the boundaries, so, you know, to
5 the east and the west.

6 Q. Okay. And have you had a chance to see the replay?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. And when did you see the replay?

9 A. Thirty minutes ago.

10 Q. Oh, okay. How comfortable are you working with the R-side
11 that was on position at the time? Did you guys work pretty well
12 together?

13 A. He's my trainer, so yeah.

14 Q. That's good. That's good. Okay. And you know, again,
15 because you have such a younger perspective, I think it's
16 important, you know, to ask from your experience and your
17 perspective, do you think that anything else could have been done?
18 Not necessarily from the R-side, right? But holistically, you
19 know, to manage that sector a little bit better. Is there
20 anything that you think could have been done to help you guys out
21 during that time?

22 A. The main thing is frequency. That would be one thing, like
23 one plus thing to worry about.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. Just getting easy read backs and not having parts of

1 transmissions being cut off. Another thing is big, it's a huge
2 sector, so getting a -- being -- having the option to split it
3 would help. I think those are two -- those two are the main
4 things.

5 Q. Okay. And do you recall there being or Jud having any issues
6 with CPDLC frequency changes at all during that time or were they
7 all working?

8 A. I don't, I don't recall.

9 Q. Okay. And do you help out on the D-side with those
10 sometimes?

11 A. Just frequency changes? Yeah. I was asking can I change it
12 and he's like, they would let me.

13 MR. ROSATI: Okay. I think that's all I have for now.

14 BY MR. RIOS:

15 Q. Okay. Thank you. I have a couple of questions that are
16 similar but worded in a different way. You know, with the weather
17 and frequency challenges deviations, the route closures, with all
18 that was going on, you know, from your perspective, did you think
19 the workload was manageable for you as the D-side and for the R-
20 side from a, from a safety perspective?

21 A. It was probably close to our limits. I've seen it worse, but
22 there was a lot of things to focus on at the same time and then
23 that makes you, you know, miss some things in there. As the D-
24 side I was to make sure handoffs are being taken at the same time,
25 at the right time, you know, within like two minutes before

1 they're too close to the boundaries and the routes are good.

2 I think we also had like in trail at that time, that was
3 another extra complexity, but just to make sure I remind the R-
4 side of the in trail, things like that. And yeah.

5 Q. My follow-up to that is, did it -- at any point did you or
6 the R-side feel you needed additional help? Did you ask for
7 additional help? And was the CIC aware of that immediate
8 situation?

9 A. I didn't ask for help. I was, you know, I'm still in
10 training. I was focused on what was happening in front of me
11 trying to help the R-side as much as I can. And then I would, I
12 would think doing -- shutting down the sector or some -- that's
13 somebody -- that's part of the CIC's responsibility. So, I didn't
14 think about that.

15 And as soon as the turbulence happened or as soon as I knew
16 about it, I told the R-side and CIC. And we also told all the
17 airplanes behind Southwest that information too. But like -- I
18 think -- I don't think anybody else went through there before
19 that. So we didn't really have any more information to be given.

20 MR. RIOS: Okay. Thank you.

21 BY MS. RUPNIK:

22 Q. Okay. So I'm actually going to shift gears a little bit.
23 And this -- I'm actually like you said, I'm really excited to have
24 somebody with fresh perspective in here. Because this is, this is
25 really good. So let's talk a little bit about safety culture.

1 You're aware of ATSAP, did you file an ATSAP for this?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. You did file an ATSAP. So you would be logged in and
4 everything. With incidents, safety issues, safety events as a
5 trainee, how comfortable do you feel with the ATSAP process or
6 with going to your trainer or the LSC or your supervisor if you
7 noticed something?

8 A. I think this was the first event I wrote an ATSAP because
9 things like these doesn't happen too often. And we have, we have
10 had the frequency issue for a long time actually. I haven't
11 reported anything about that, but I know my co-workers have been
12 reporting on that. I think before I started training on the ATSAP
13 cycle training on how to fill out, fill out ATSAPs.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And I had just gotten back on like a few days before and then
16 I filled it out. And at that point it was only -- I think I did
17 it within a day or two. So I thought at that point the
18 information was fresh. Probably have more details in there.
19 Yeah.

20 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Yeah, I believe you have 24 hours to
21 start it and then 48 hours to finish it, is that correct?

22 MR. DAVIDS: It's 24 hours from the start of the or from --

23 BY MS. RUPNIK:

24 Q. Right. From when you're made aware of the event. Correct.
25 So, all right. That's really great to hear. The Local Safety

1 Council, they brief the ATSAP and CISP with safe discussions. Are
2 you a part of those briefings every month?

3 A. Yes. Yeah, there's usually one or two -- two or three topics
4 that they focus on. And a lot of times this is based off
5 information from the ATSAPs, and they just tell us that we are
6 doing a good job and what we could improve on.

7 Q. Okay. And especially being in training, is that something
8 you feel is useful and helpful for you?

9 A. Yeah, I mean, I try to -- I like following rules. So like I
10 -- and I'm in training and my supervisor and my trainers make sure
11 I'm doing everything that is required. Everything that is -- and
12 even more about that to be as helpful as I can be.

13 Q. Okay. Going to the training side of things you said you are
14 training on R-sides now?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. How much -- how many hours of training do you get typically
17 in a week?

18 A. Around 20.

19 MS. RUPNIK: Wow. That's good. You'll be checked out in no
20 time. All right. I'm going to pass it along. That's good stuff.

21 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

22 Q. Okay. Speaking of getting about 20 hours a week, about how
23 many hours you get on R-side now?

24 A. Probably about 150.

25 Q. Oh, okay. Oh, how do you feel about it? Do you like it?

1 A. Yes. Still a work in progress, but --

2 Q. Oh yeah, It always will be. That's good. So with that have
3 you gotten any PROC since you've been here?

4 A. No.

5 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. What else? I can't think of anything
6 else right now.

7 MR. RICHARDS: I just have one other thing.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: Go ahead.

9 MR. RICHARDS: Me?

10 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah. Go for it.

11 BY MR. RICHARDS:

12 Q. So when you're on position, I guess let's say sector 30, what
13 different sources of weather information do you have to use to
14 look at? It's not a quiz. I'm not a controller.

15 A. Obviously the first thing is NEXRAD. And then the pilots
16 will provide us information, we can give that to other pilots.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. That also shows up in the PIREP system.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And that shows up in the GIs, the SIGMETs are also there.
21 And NEPTA doesn't have airports, but on sectors with the airports,
22 we can look at the -- we can bring up the airport information,
23 further information.

24 Q. What about, what about all displays? What can you see?

25 A. I don't know, we can see the precipitation pretty much.

1 That's it. And I think there's another TV with the flow of
2 aircraft going into the main airports. And then weather
3 specifically it's just the precipitation that's much of it.

4 MR. RICHARDS: Yeah. I'm trying to -- and maybe you guys can
5 help me frame the question. I'm trying to understand what the
6 names of the displays are. So there's (indiscernible).

7 MR. ROSATI: There's a lot of acronyms here.

8 MR. RICHARDS: Okay.

9 MS. KOSCHIG: ESIS.

10 MS. RUPNIK: Your TSD is going to be?

11 MR. ROSATI: Status Information Board.

12 BY MR. RICHARDS:

13 Q. Do any of these acronyms ring a bell to you?

14 A. Status Information Board. That's one acronym.

15 MR. RICHARDS: Okay. We'll move on. That's fine. I can
16 probably -- I can get that information outside of here, but I
17 thought since you're actively working here, you might have a quick
18 perspective on that, but that's fine. Yeah, I'm tapped out.

19 BY MR. WINTER:

20 Q. Okay. I got another one. You said GIS for pilots. Do you
21 remember that session you worked, how many GIS you got? And I
22 know you probably don't, but ballpark, do you remember any of
23 them?

24 A. No, it just pops and it's pretty much from the entire center.
25 So on a day like that, there's going to be a lot of them. So we

1 just have to go through and make sure it's relevant to our sector.

2 Q. How often does the little yellow number catch your eye when
3 it pops up on the EDST?

4 A. Well, when I'm working on the D-side, I notice it because
5 that's -- my job is to focus on the EDST and the colors light up
6 and then I notice it quickly, but it would probably take a little
7 bit longer on the R-side. But I make sure I go through them and
8 acknowledge them. So if a new one pops up, I can see there's new
9 ones there.

10 BY MR. DAVIDS:

11 Q. Okay. So what's the -- sorry. So what's the process behind?
12 So obviously in your scan, you know, you're looking at the radar
13 to see if you got to make to have stuff like that. Going back to
14 the EDST, you see the yellow, you pull up the GI you see it's
15 relevant to you, you just tell, you tell the R-man right away or
16 R-person right away?

17 A. No, usually unless there's something relevant to our sector.

18 Q. That's what I mean.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. If there's something relevant to your sector.

21 A. I mean -- yeah, if we notice that, you know, somebody is not
22 as specific to NEPTA, but if somebody's, you know, outside of our
23 airspace, maybe descending, maybe by that low way we had to
24 descend to an altitude and then the GI says there's icing at that
25 altitude, we might leave them up and just APREQ it with the next

1 sector. Like that kind of information.

2 Q. Is it pretty common -- you were assigned to D-side that
3 morning?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. The CIC told you to go sit over there?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Were you waiting for training beforehand? Is that right?
8 Were you waiting for Jud to get up in order to train with him?

9 A. Well, I have two trainers. I'm not sure who it was probably
10 the trainer that day, but yeah.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I mean, when I just go in, because we had to match up with
13 somebody, so.

14 Q. Yeah. That day you were -- I'm sure you were lining up --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- with Jud or someone. Okay. Were you on the floor the
17 whole day that day or?

18 A. So, I actually had to do some problems in the lab.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So after that I was in the lab.

21 Q. Right. So you went down with Jud, right? You went down with
22 him?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Yeah. The ATSAP training that you received, who'd you get
25 that from?

1 A. AT SAP training was with Luke.

2 Q. With Luke?

3 A. Luke Alcorn.

4 MR. DAVIDS: Okay.

5 BY MR. WINTER:

6 Q. I got a little follow-up if I could. You're training on the
7 R-side, you said about 150 hours?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Which sector?

10 A. Albany, Ashburn, Tallahassee.

11 Q. Okay. Now, when you are working the R-side, you don't have a
12 D-side. How often do you miss those GIs? How much of a -- I
13 guess how much of a priority is it you look at them?

14 Q. It will be low. I've had to -- main thing is, you know,
15 separating the aircraft is my primary responsibility. So if
16 there's a, like a -- if I have a few -- if there's a pause, I
17 would look over there and, you know, I look at the GIs, make sure
18 the SIGMETS are read, but primary focus would be on the radar of
19 course.

20 MR. WINTER: I understand. That's it.

21 MR. DAVIDS: I have another follow up. Just going to bounce
22 off each other.

23 MR. WINTER: No, we're done, we're done.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Chris, we'll get to you eventually.

25 MR. DAVIDS: Yeah. Chris, stand by sir. Give me a second.

1 BY MR. DAVIDS:

2 Q. When you -- so when you come into work right, and you know,
3 stand up isn't until 8:15.

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. Prior to that, how are you getting your information? Just
6 from the weather briefing and that's it? Or is there --

7 A. If there's something special, the supe or the CIC might tell
8 me there's capping and tunneling or something like that going on.
9 We, you know, expect that. Yeah.

10 Q. Prior to standup?

11 A. I'm not sure what a standup is, but I know what supes do,
12 they go to the --

13 Q. Prior to 8:15 do you?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Like I know supes have stand up, but I come in at 8:00
17 usually.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. On a, on a morning.

20 BY MR. ROSATI:

21 Q: Good. Do you recall after you got the PIREP from Houston and
22 then you told the CIC about it, whether or not yourself or the CIC
23 put that information into a GI format or into the ERIDs?

24 A. I don't.

25 Q. Okay. Have you ever seen the tracker position be used --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- in your area?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. How often would you say that that's used?

5 A. I've seen it -- while I was working, I've seen it two times.

6 Q. Two times. And ever at R30?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Yeah. Okay. And just for curiosity's sake, how is the
9 tracker position handled here? Is the tracker down doing the
10 typing in the R-side behind them talking? Or is that flipped or
11 how does that work here? I know a lot of facilities do it
12 differently.

13 A. When it happened, I was in the D-side, I was doing the
14 typing, but the tracker would tell me flash this to that sector
15 early.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And also -- I mean, that's an extra third pair of eyes on the
18 scope too. And then they would also make calls to the, to the
19 nearby sectors, usually the nearby centers.

20 Q. Okay. And I forgot to say it earlier, but I just want to say
21 like, you did a pretty good job through this whole event. I mean,
22 there was a lot going on. A lot of point outs to be done. A lot
23 of measures to take and then -- and you know, we're not, we're not
24 here because there was a loss of separation or airspace violation
25 or anything like that. So I just, you know, want to get that out

1 there that you obviously did a really good job during that whole
2 time. Have you had refresher training this year?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And that's where you go back in the lab and work on certain
5 stuff?

6 A. Maybe. No, not this year. I had it last year.

7 Q. Okay. But not this year yet?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. Do you remember that being helpful when you went
10 through it last year?

11 A. So I was -- at that time I was still a D-side trainee
12 actually. Yeah. It was -- so I thought refresher training was
13 for me just being on the D-side. So it's not as useful because I
14 think it was supposed to be for the R-side, but I did that at D-
15 side, so it was still useful, but --

16 Q. And since you're so new to this what is your opinion of
17 recurrent training? How well do you think recurrent training does
18 to give you information?

19 A. I've only seen it once and there were some things that are
20 not relevant to our sector, like aerial refueling and we don't
21 have any of that.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. So not everything was -- and it was done in different sector.
24 Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. And one more question. During the event time, was

1 there any distractions in the area? Was there any loud noises
2 conversations going on?

3 A. No.

4 Q. You know, paper airplanes flying around or anything going on
5 that could have been distracting?

6 A. I don't remember anything distracting.

7 MR. ROSATI: Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

8 BY MR. RIOS:

9 Q. In reference to the all the complexities that were going on
10 at the time, and you mentioned earlier that, you know, one of your
11 primary duties is to, you know, do all those duties as a D-side
12 look at the GIS. But on that particular day, did you feel -- with
13 all the events going on and all the follow-up calls that you
14 mentioned that you're having to do to make sure people switched
15 over and didn't switch, et cetera, do you feel you still had time
16 to take a look at those GIS that were coming in? Is that -- what
17 was that workload like? You mentioned that that was one of your
18 priorities, but of that particular day, how was that handled?

19 A. So the workload was different on the R-side and the D-side.
20 Like on a high sector workload on the D-side is not as much like
21 on the low. So you had to -- it's automated point out on the high
22 with the centers, but on the low side we had to call.

23 But for the R-side, they had to call the weather, they had to
24 make sure they got all the read backs. They had to make sure the
25 deviations are not, you know, getting too close. So that's a lot

1 for them to focus on. And then I think towards the end, we also
2 had in trail as well, that was an extra thing they had to focus on
3 making, you know, the next -- we help out the next sector. So
4 that was a, that was a lot going on at that time.

5 Q. And my last question would be from a developmental or person
6 in trainings perspective. Congratulations on the D-sides.

7 A. Thank you.

8 Q. What -- do you feel comfortable as someone in training or
9 others equivalent to you in training feel comfortable with
10 bringing up safety issues as a, as a trainee and believe that the
11 issues that are being brought up, are they being addressed in a
12 timely manner?

13 A. Personally, I'm just mostly focusing on my own training. And
14 I think they're, my co-workers around me, they -- I know they're
15 looking into safety issues. Like they all -- they're -- I know
16 they were, they were putting in the ATSAP for the frequency being
17 an issue. And I know they have (indiscernible) for the high
18 sector. But personally, I was, I'm just focusing on my training
19 and I try to be -- I try to do everything that I should be doing
20 for safety, but I don't think I have any new ideas.

21 BY MS. RUPNIK:

22 Q. Just real quick when you filed your ATSAP were you given duty
23 time to do that?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No. So you did that on your own time?

1 A. Yes.

2 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Did you have anything else?

3 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

4 Q. Oh yeah, actually I do. So what hours do you work every
5 week?

6 A. So on Monday and Tuesday I work 2:00 to 10:00. And then
7 Wednesday, Thursday, Friday I work 8:00 to 4:00.

8 Q. Do you like that schedule?

9 A. It's fine.

10 Q. It's loaded.

11 A. I get weekends off.

12 Q. Okay. So the other question I have actually is do you have a
13 lot of -- like how many -- from what you've observed, do you get a
14 lot of CICs working or do you get OSs? What do you see more OSs
15 or CICs or is it equivalent?

16 A. It is probably about 50/50, but we do have a lot of CICs.

17 Q. Okay. So what did the -- like on this day, do you remember
18 where the CIC was or what they were doing before you let them know
19 about that?

20 A. They were in the -- they were sitting, I guess, or standing
21 in the area where the supes are. Yeah.

22 Q. Is that, is that kind of normal thing or do they walk in the
23 room?

24 A. If there's something, you know, like if it's a busy sector
25 they would walk around.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Like it depends on person to person too.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah, exactly. All right. Yeah, that's all
4 I've got. Thank you.

5 BY MR. RICHARDS:

6 Q. Just one more thing or one more area. So we just want --
7 first of all, we just, we just wanted to confirm your R-side
8 training that's on Sector 30, right?

9 A. No different sectors in the same area.

10 Q. Different sectors. Okay. Same area?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. But the D-side on sector 30 are you, are you aware of NEXRAD
13 coverage issues in Sector 30?

14 A. No.

15 Q. That's okay.

16 A. What are the issues?

17 Q. So I'm asking about parts of the sector that do not get good
18 weather radar coverage on the ERAM. Have you ever come across
19 that? Has anyone ever mentioned something like that to you?

20 A. No.

21 MR. RICHARDS: I may have one other question.

22 BY MR. DAVIDS:

23 Q. Okay. Do you remember the CIC listening in during the event?

24 A. No. Like, I don't know how -- like how would you notice
25 that?

1 Q. I don't know. Like where -- we don't have the wireless
2 headset, so I was kind of --

3 A. Okay. Yeah, I --

4 Q. -- shocked with it.

5 A. I don't know if he's listening or not.

6 Q. Okay. Is it common practice for a CIC to listen to
7 frequencies when they get busy?

8 A. They would usually like come behind us.

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. Just watch.

11 Q. That's what I'm used to.

12 A. Yeah. I'm not sure about listening. Yeah.

13 MR. DAVIDS: Thank you.

14 MS. RUPNIK: Mike, did you come up with it yet?

15 MR. RICHARDS: I'm not sure how to follow up on that. If
16 anyone has anything to add on that, go ahead, but I'm not.

17 MS. KOSCHIG: What did that throw you on the side?

18 MR. RICHARDS: Yeah, I'm not sure how to follow up on that.

19 BY MR. DAVIDS:

20 Q. How well, how well are you --

21 A. D-side, you know.

22 Q. How well are you briefed when there are changes in the
23 airspace or in the areas by either management or NATCA? Like if
24 there's something going on or there's a problem in the area where,
25 like you said, partial NEXRAD or something like that, are you

1 getting briefed on any of that stuff? I mean, obviously you
2 weren't briefed on NEXRAD, but if there's a change to your area?

3 A. I mean, there's on Team, there's things we have to
4 acknowledge about you know, things happening on our airspace and
5 also on the day it's happening. If something's happening in the
6 supes or the CICs would just let us, you know, make sure that we
7 know something's going on, so we can put like reminders on the
8 scope. Or if we're about to see that as sector is about to go
9 red, they would -- usually, they'll try to do something to make
10 sure that there's a D-side there or --

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. -- or at least let the controller know that they have to
13 prepare for the, for the traffic coming.

14 Q. If there's something out of the ordinary though -- when
15 you're coming in, if there's something out of the ordinary, is
16 management or CIC or the supervisor, sorry, are they giving you
17 verbal briefings about it? Like where in Team you're actually
18 signing off that you received the verbal briefing?

19 A. Not like -- my supes like, sit me down and go through them.
20 Not every day, but I guess maybe they do sit me down and go
21 through the verbal briefing and make me acknowledge it. I put my
22 pen in. Yeah.

23 MR. DAVIDS: (Indiscernible).

24 MR. RIOS: If I can follow up on the question in a different
25 way.

1 MR. ROSATI: I'll go after you. Yeah.

2 BY MR. RIOS:

3 Q. The -- in reference to any radio communications radar
4 surveillance or weather, you know radar surveillance coverage
5 limitations are you briefed on that in your radar classroom
6 training and or simulation training of any limitations?

7 A. In training, I know that the NEXRAD doesn't depict, like it
8 auto depicts moderate and higher intensity. The radio
9 limitations. I know when I'm at the low sectors, I had to, I
10 don't know if this applies to NEPTA. When I work at the R-side I
11 have to make sure when the sectors are combined, I had to switch
12 them over to the next. You know, even if we are working one
13 sector, I had to make sure they switched over to the next sector's
14 frequency, otherwise, I will lose them on the radios. That kind
15 of thing does come up in training.

16 Q. So it sounds like you're -- that the information that you're
17 getting that from this by experience are not necessarily shown on
18 a, on a training map or what those limitations might be, is that -
19 -

20 A. It's hard to, you know, replicate what happens in real life
21 in the lab. Like personally, like all the radios just frequency
22 management, that's a big thing that I'd focus on when I'm
23 training. Because in the lab is only one person at a time. So
24 it's a lot of things like that are hard to replicate. Real life
25 is hard to replicate in the lab sometimes.

1 MR. RIOS: Okay. Thank you.

2 BY MR. ROSATI:

3 Q. So to kind of follow up on the, the NEXRAD weather thing. So
4 you had just watched the replay earlier, earlier today, probably
5 about an hour and 10 minutes now. So a lot of the aircraft in the
6 south were deviating, right?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And then kind of towards the end, before you guys were
9 getting ready to ship them to Houston, they were asking for
10 further deviations typically. And most of those deviations were
11 not going around whether that you guys had depicted on the scope,
12 right? And so, has anybody kind of explained why that may have
13 been to you? Like you know, like why are they deviating them
14 around with stuff that we're not seeing on the scope?

15 A. Like blow off. Yeah, my trainers have talked to me about
16 that.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah, what we see is not evident that there is. Like yeah, I
19 have thought about that kind of --

20 MR. ROSATI: Okay. Yeah, that was it. Thank you.

21 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Good teamwork. Anybody else have any, or
22 by the ways last minute. Do you have any questions for us?

23 MR. JACOB: No.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. And I show us off the record at 14:58
25 local.

1 (Whereupon, at 2:58 p.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: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
Interview of Jefin Jacob

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Hilliard, Florida

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.



Romona Phillips

Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: JOHN KENT, Air Traffic Control Specialist CIC
Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville Air Route
Traffic Control Center
Hilliard, Florida

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APPEARANCES:

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National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MIKE RICHARDS, Meteorologist
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK WINTER, Washington Center Quality Control
Federal Aviation Administration

CORY DAVIDS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

CHRIS ROSATI, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

MARK RIOS, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
Southwest Airlines

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:20 p.m.)

MS. RUPNIK: All right. I show the time as 1320 local. And we're officially on the record. As I just said, my name's Ruth Rupnik. I'm an air traffic investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. And what is your name?

MR. KENT: John Kent.

MS. RUPNIK: And is that spelled how I'd expect it to be spelled?

MR. KENT: Yes, ma'am.

MS. RUPNIK: All right. And thank you so much for your time today. I understand you are ready to go home. So, I'll try to make this as quick as possible.

MR. KENT: We always are.

MS. RUPNIK: As painless as possible. Before we get started, as we just discussed, the interview is recorded. I want to make sure you're aware of that fact. Again, the audio will be -- it doesn't leave our possession except for to go off to the transcriptionist. Wow. Once it's all been reviewed then we destroy the audio. We are able to provide you a copy of the transcripts once completed. Would you like that?

MR. KENT: Yes

MS. RUPNIK: Okay. We'll get your email after we're finished here. Okay. And so, I understand you chose not to have representation today?

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1 MR. KENT: Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. RUPNIK: And you are aware that that was available to
3 you?

4 MR. KENT: Yep.

5 MS. RUPNIK: Excellent. All right. So, the NTSB we operate
6 in a party system. So, the three of us on this side of the table,
7 we're NTSB. We also have the FAA represented, two NATCA ASIs, and
8 also Southwest Airlines. And -- actually if everybody could go
9 around real quick and introduce themselves.

10 MS. KOSCHIG: I'm Betty Koschig, NTSB Air Traffic
11 Investigator.

12 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB Meteorology.

13 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter, Washington Center, Quality Control.

14 MR. DAVIDS: Cory Davids, NATCA ASI, New York Center.

15 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati, NATCA ASI, from Oakland Center.

16 MR. RIOS: Mark Rios, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager for
17 Southwest Airlines.

18 MS. RUPNIK: So, you see we've got a lot of entities
19 represented time here. We don't do anything unilaterally as the
20 NTSB as far as putting this product together. Everything goes
21 concurrence through the group based on everybody's subject matter
22 expertise.

23 So, all of us in this room for the purpose of this
24 investigation we're considered a part of the NTSB group. Now, the
25 NTSB, we're a very small agency. We're an independent agency.

1 So, we do not report to the FAA, DOT. We report directly to
2 Congress. And there's only about 400 people in the entire NTSB.
3 Now, that covers all modes of transportation. Aviation being the
4 most visible. Also, highway, rail, pipeline, HAZMAT.

5 Our goal is safety. We're not here to point fingers, assign
6 blame, or anything. We want to figure out what happened, we want
7 to figure out why it happened, and hopefully come up with a couple
8 recommendations to prevent events like this of a similar nature in
9 the future. This isn't a problem specific to Jax Center. It's
10 happening all over the NAS. And our goal is to mitigate that to
11 the best of our abilities.

12 So, what to expect during the interview. Just so you know,
13 we're all going to be taking notes just so that as we go through
14 the interview, we can refer back to things that were said. These
15 notes will be destroyed before we leave the facility. They will
16 not leave the facility.

17 I'll start off by asking you a few administrative questions.
18 Just kind of want to get to know you a little bit better
19 professionally. And then we'll go into that day and the event.
20 It usually lasts about an hour, give or take. If you need a break
21 at any time, please let us know and don't be shy. Just -- yeah,
22 whatever you need. If at any point you have a question, ask.
23 Feel free to ask us to clarify a question, repeat a question,
24 whatever. We want to make sure you're 100 percent comfortable
25 with the information you're providing us. Likewise, just give us

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1 the facts. Don't tell us what you think we want to hear.

2 MR. KENT: All right.

3 MS. RUPNIK: Because, yeah, because we just want the facts.
4 You know what, I don't know, is a perfectly acceptable answer.
5 Because if you don't -- do you have any questions before we get
6 started?

7 MR. KENT: No, ma'am.

8 MS. RUPNIK: Excellent. All right.

9 INTERVIEW OF JOHN KENT

10 BY MS. RUPNIK:

11 Q. And what are your operating initials?

12 A. Kilo Tango, KT.

13 Q. All right. And I always feel weird asking this question.
14 How old were you on the day of the incident?

15 A. Forty-two.

16 Q. Forty-two. All right. And when did you start working for
17 the FAA?

18 A. May 2008.

19 Q. 2008. And did you go to the academy?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. What was your first facility?

22 A. Gulfport.

23 Q. Gulfport. I lived there for a while. Didn't work at the
24 airport, but I lived there for a while. So, Gulfport,
25 Mississippi. And that was in up down, right?

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- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Okay. And then, and then progression, where did you go to
3 there?
- 4 A. I came here in January of 2013.
- 5 Q. January of 2013. And all in the West Area? Have you worked
6 different areas?
- 7 A. All West.
- 8 Q. All West. Okay. And do you have any prior ATC experience,
9 military, contract?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 Q. No. All right. Any military service not ATC?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. Yes. What branch?
- 14 A. Coast Guard.
- 15 Q. Coast Guard. Interesting. Where were you stationed?
- 16 A. Charleston for two years, and then Tybee Island, Georgia.
- 17 Q. All right.
- 18 A. Yeah.
- 19 Q. And how'd you like it there?
- 20 A. Savannah?
- 21 Q. Yeah. Yeah.
- 22 A. Oh, I loved both places to live.
- 23 Q. Yeah. They both seem like really great. I love hearing
24 people's experiences because I wasn't in the service.
- 25 A. Charleston was weird. I was on a ship so two months out,

- 1 two months in.
- 2 Q. Oh, wow.
- 3 A. Savannah was nice though.
- 4 Q. Awesome. Well, thank you for your service.
- 5 A. Thank you.
- 6 Q. Let's see, did I already ask this? And any college?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Yeah.
- 9 A. Accounting, associates.
- 10 Q. Accounting. Okay. Where'd you go?
- 11 A. Oh, where did I go? I went to Columbus State first and then
- 12 Columbus Tech in Georgia, Columbus, Georgia.
- 13 Q. Okay. Any other aeronautical certificates, private piloting,
- 14 anything like that?
- 15 A. No, ma'am.
- 16 Q. No. Okay. And you have current medical clearance?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Excellent. Any restrictions to that?
- 19 A. Nope. Not at the moment.
- 20 Q. No glasses or anything?
- 21 A. No.
- 22 Q. Okay. Cool. Easy enough. Who is your direct supervisor?
- 23 A. Matt Bennett.
- 24 Q. And obviously, you're certified here as a CPC?
- 25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Obviously, you're CIC qualified. So, that answers that
2 question. How much overtime do you typically get per month?

3 A. Per month?

4 Q. Or just in general.

5 A. 20 a pay period.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. At least 80 hours a month.

8 Q. And I assume that you're on the call list then?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. What's your typical work schedule, days off, hours?

11 A. I'm off Friday, Saturday, 4:00 to 12:00 on Sunday, 2:00 to
12 10:00 Monday, 8:00 to 4:00, 8:00 to 4:00, 6:00 to 2:00 and then
13 overtime every Friday.

14 Q. And do you typically end up on the same overtime shift? Or
15 does it bounce around?

16 A. Typically, morning.

17 Q. Typically, mornings? Okay. All right. And then so, you've
18 probably been on that schedule since about January?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Or is this the same one you were on before?

21 A. I had the same last year too.

22 Q. Okay. So, we understand there was a little bit of rotation
23 through the area. What position -- were you actively on the D-
24 side position -- or I'm sorry -- the CIC position at the time of
25 the incident?

1 A. See this? I got out of CIC and came back from break, and I
2 was told about this.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Because I guess they reported way later.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So, I don't know. I don't even know exactly what time, how
7 long -- I don't know how long before I went on break or nothing.

8 Q. Okay. So, you weren't there when the call came through?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. Okay. And you were or were not there when the OM found out
11 and came to the sector? You were not there?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. All right. Well, what else? All right. We'll take a
14 look at some of these questions. That, that's definitely going to
15 change how I approach some of these questions. So, you say you
16 were on a break at the time of the incident?

17 A. Well, I think technically I was there.

18 Q. There --

19 A. But when they got it. But they didn't report it till they
20 got to Miami.

21 Q. Right. Right. Yeah. There was definitely a time lapse in
22 there.

23 A. But yeah, when it got reported, I was on break.

24 Q. Okay. Let's see here. How often throughout the day would
25 you say in that area that there's a CIC working instead of a, an

1 OS?

2 A. I guess it kind of depends on the day. But I don't know how
3 to answer that. Realistically, probably 50 to 60 percent on my
4 days on.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I guess.

7 Q. So, so it had gone on your days off. Okay. That's good to
8 know. Let's see. All right. So, obviously you weren't there
9 right when this was reported. But you were there in the time
10 leading up to it. Based on your recollection, what was the
11 traffic volume, from one to a five?

12 A. One to five? I'd say they were probably threes and fours to
13 me --

14 Q. Three to four, okay.

15 A. -- in that sector.

16 Q. What about complexity?

17 A. Five, frequency's horrible.

18 Q. All right. Well, we're definitely going to run that up a
19 little bit here. Let's see. All right. Did you file an ATSAP?
20 I mean you weren't in the operation.

21 A. No.

22 Q. So, okay. So, if you could kind of just take us through that
23 day, when you got in, what was kind of going on in the sector
24 before you went on break before the incident? Anything that you
25 observed. Don't try to fill in the gaps.

1 A. It was a Wednesday, right?

2 MS. RUPNIK: It's April 3rd. I think that was a Wednesday,
3 yes.

4 MR. RICHARDS: See if I can get my calendar up.

5 MR. KENT: I don't even know what time it was.

6 MS. RUPNIK: It was 8:30 in the morning.

7 MR. KEN: 8:30.

8 MR. RICHARDS: It was, it was a Wednesday.

9 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah. Wednesday.

10 MR. KENT So, it was my -- should have been my turn. I just
11 got here at 7:30.

12 MS. RUPNIK: Okay.

13 MR. KENT: It's typical to put it -- we have the D-1 side
14 over there because the frequency is so bad. So, I think there was
15 one before it at Jeffin and -- but I don't know, Jud was working,
16 Jeffin was on D-1 side. There was a line of weather near ROZZI,
17 North to South. That's really all I remember now. Normal 8:00 to
18 8:30 push traffic, a little --

19 BY MS. RUPNIK:

20 Q. Do you -- sorry. I didn't mean to cut you off there.

21 A. Oh, you're fine.

22 Q. Do you recall any airspace restrictions, miles in trail,
23 anything like that at the time?

24 A. I don't recall.

25 Q. Don't recall. Okay.

1 A. But not typical that early.

2 MS. RUPNIK: Right. Okay. You know, I'm actually going to
3 go ahead and pass it on. You're not ready?

4 MS. KOSCHIG: No.

5 MS. RUPNIK: Mike? We'll start with you. Mike's a
6 meteorologist.

7 BY MR. RICHARDS:

8 Q. Yeah. I may have some questions later down the line. These
9 guys will ask more points. All I've got -- I mean volume in that
10 sector that morning, was it abnormal due to the weather, or was
11 it -- is it always, like you said, about three to four volume?

12 A. I mean the weather, yeah, it definitely added to the
13 complexity, but I wouldn't say any more traffic that morning than
14 normal.

15 Q. If you noticed the TSD was unalerted.

16 A. I don't recall if it was yellow, red, or not.

17 MR. RICHARDS: That's all I got.

18 MR. KENT: But you can't -- I don't know if I should
19 elaborate on that. NEPTA, we can't split it off or nothing. All
20 we do (indiscernible).

21 MR. RICHARDS: Right. That's why, like, I said, did you
22 recall the TSD. It's just kind of --

23 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah, yeah.

24 MR. KENT: It doesn't really matter.

1 MR. RICHARDS: -- whether you saw it or not. I know
2 it's -- you're kind of stuck with what you got.

3 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Cory?

4 BY MR. DAVIDS:

5 Q. I don't have much because you weren't there when it was
6 reported. But when you have that morning push and you're a CIC
7 when you first get in is there anything you can do to help
8 mitigate that volume as far as calling up TMU, miles in trail,
9 anything, or is it pretty standard that you're just going to go
10 down the tubes at 7:30 every day or whatever?

11 A. It's kind of standard that we do until it gets red. And
12 if --

13 Q. So, --

14 A. -- TMU is usually the first one to act on it. They'll call
15 us. We put 20 in trail to Miami back to Houston.

16 Q. So, you guys, I guess, more of the practice here is that TMU
17 will reach out, put miles of trail in. Not so much that you guys
18 will call them and --

19 A. For the most part. I mean unless some controllers just feel
20 overwhelmed, they'll tell the CIC and we'll call them.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. Like I mean it's NEPTA -- there's not much we can do
23 other -- I mean yeah.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Chris?

25 BY MR. ROSATI:

1 Q. So, overall, what was the traffic situation like in the
2 entire area? Was that -- was R30 the only sector that was busy?
3 Or -- what was the rest of the area? What did the rest of the
4 area look like during that time?

5 A. If I recall that day, but typically it's slow everywhere
6 else.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. With that weather up, route Brewton might have had a little
9 more deviated to the North to the North sector. And we typically
10 don't split any. About 8:30 to 9:00 we start splitting stuff off.

11 Q. Do you remember what the staffing was like that day? How
12 many controllers you had? If you were short, if you were stacked?

13 A. I'd say normal at that time of the morning.

14 Q. Okay. And do you remember TMU calling and saying if they had
15 any sort of flow running going into the sector in the morning to
16 help you guys out? Did they call to as what it was like? If the
17 weather was affecting you guys or anything like that?

18 A. I don't remember for the time I was a CIC.

19 Q. Okay. And then we noticed in the replay that the warning
20 areas were capped at flight level 300. Was that something that
21 you as a CIC made as a call, or was that the sector?

22 A. Well they actually were already hot, yeah.

23 Q. Yeah. Well, they were, they were pending and then, they went
24 active --

25 A. Oh, okay.

1 Q. -- kind of like half-way through, you know. It was 30.

2 A. Capped at 30, that was probably just for the weather, just to
3 deviate North of it.

4 Q. And is that normally a call that the CIC or Sup is making?

5 A. Normally that will come straight from the sector. They'll
6 tell the CIC.

7 Q. From the sector. Okay. And then the sup or CIC will kind of
8 coordinate?

9 A. The CIC talks to you.

10 MR. ROSATI: That's all I have for now.

11 BY MR. RIOS:

12 Q. You mentioned that you made sure that the D-side -- or who
13 made the decision to open the D-side?

14 A. The D-side was already there when I took over the desk. But
15 typically, when there's weather or and as bad as the frequency's
16 been there's a D-side a lot more in that sector than normal.

17 Q. Okay. And a little bit more about that frequency. What has
18 been your experience with the frequency in that sector? And --

19 A. My experience? The biggest problem when we switch aircraft
20 mainly going to Houston, you'll give them the call sign and the
21 frequency and you'll just get a ring back of 17, which Houston
22 center is 132.17. You tell them -- you just hear 17. And you
23 just, okay, I guess that was the right one. That's the biggest
24 and then sometimes you've got to repeat yourself three or four

1 times before they hear you depending on altitude. It just depends
2 on where the aircraft are and what altitude, and everything else.

3 Q. Yeah. And how does that affect the ability to control the
4 situation workload-wise?

5 A. It definitely makes it a little tougher overall.

6 Q. So, did the sector 30 controller ask for any additional help
7 or assistance at the time?

8 A. Not while I was at the desk.

9 Q. So, we understand that the CIC does not normally go to the
10 stand-up. So, the information that's shared there or any
11 significant, how it -- did they brief you on information or who
12 briefed you and what did they brief you on?

13 A. Yeah. When they go to stand-up they have a sheet that they
14 fill out and they just set in on the desk of every area. So, it's
15 just sitting there in front of the computer for us to look at when
16 we're at the desk.

17 Q. So, do they brief you, or they only give you the sheet?

18 A. Sometimes they do. I don't recall about that morning, but I
19 know enough it's always there. I mean the CICs can look at it.
20 But typically, it's iffy if you get actual briefed on it.

21 Q. And when you returned from break you came in back into the
22 CIC position?

23 A. I don't recall. I don't, I don't think so. But I don't
24 recall.

25 Q. What was your actions after you found out about the event,

1 after you returned?

2 A. My actions? As of like -- I don't know exactly what you're
3 asking.

4 Q. Well, what -- did you take any -- with that information that
5 when you learned that the severe turbulence event occurred after
6 you returned from break, what did you do with that information?
7 Was there any other follow up that was required by you?

8 A. No. I just assumed that weather was called from the
9 controllers. So, I didn't think that much of it.

10 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. What do you have?

11 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

12 Q. Okay. Hi, again.

13 A. Hello.

14 Q. So, yeah. I'm kind of wanted -- I'm just trying -- we're
15 trying to put pieces of the puzzle here.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And I -- so you were working position, then you went on
18 break. And it happened right before you went on break?

19 A. Yeah, I guess.

20 Q. Yeah. You know, and then we -- you know, and you -- did you
21 see the replay, right?

22 A. I have not seen the replay.

23 Q. Oh, you haven't? Did you listen to audio, anything?

24 A. No, ma'am.

1 Q. Oh, you've got to do that sometime. Yeah. But they, you
2 know, what we're seeing is it looks like the Southwest went for a
3 while and went over to --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- Miami before they reported it. So, this was happening.
6 Of course you wouldn't know it. The same thing the way the
7 controller didn't know it at the time because they didn't report
8 it --

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. -- until later. So, yeah, I'm trying to figure out since you
11 left to go on break, you didn't know anything about it. You come
12 back and I'm trying to figure out where we're putting you into the
13 picture.

14 A. That's just because I was technically there.

15 Q. You were there technically at that time.

16 A. When he was at -- there after.

17 Q. So, who relieved -- so, you came back --

18 A. The CIC that was at the --

19 Q. Who relieved you?

20 A. -- there now told me about it.

21 Q. Oh, okay.

22 A. Tyler Palm.

23 Q. So, the CIC after you is the one that dealt with it all.

24 A. Mm-hmm.

25 Q. Who was that?

1 A. Tyler Palm.

2 Q. Okay. So, and you didn't talk with him at all, or about it?

3 You --

4 A. Not other than what was reported from Miami to us. And then,
5 like, we just assumed weather was called and went on about our
6 day.

7 Q. Yeah. So, -- yeah. Did you ask these guys how come you're
8 here?

9 A. Kind of. That's what I was told though, you were technically
10 in charge.

11 Q. Yeah. You were technically in charge. But yeah, I'm just
12 kind of trying to put the pieces together on this one. So, you
13 really didn't have to do anything with this. Do you know if Tyler
14 dealt with this at all, or -- no, you're not --

15 A. Not other than answering the -- taking the call and telling
16 the OM, I guess.

17 Q. Yeah. I think -- I'm just trying to figure this one out
18 here. That threw me for a loop. Yeah. Okay. I'm just going to
19 pass it on over.

20 MS. RUPNIK: That's all right.

21 BY MR. DAVIDS:

22 Q. Were you prompted by the OM to listen to the sector?

23 A. In the morning, was I prompted to? I don't recall being
24 prompted to that morning, but --

25 Q. Is it, is it a thing that --

1 A. -- it's common practice if there's weather in the area, to
2 have --

3 Q. I'm sorry. It is common practice?

4 A. -- have a headset on if there's weather and monitor any
5 sector in the area.

6 Q. Yeah. So, -- I'm sorry. It is common practice to do it?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. But that morning, you know, I mean, I know it was
9 three weeks ago, but --

10 A. Yeah. I don't recall if I did or not that morning.

11 BY MR. ROSATI:

12 Q. What's the overall, like, culture in your area, i.e.,
13 controllers get along with controllers/Sups, management, like,
14 overall, like, what's the -- is everyone happy, frustrated?

15 A. I'd say, yeah, for the most part we all get along well in the
16 West area. I'm sure everybody feels burnt out sometimes.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. But you don't, you don't hear, you don't hear it much about
19 the West area than some other areas in the building, I guess. But
20 that's probably any facility, every area I think, sir.

21 Q. Okay. And overall, you guys are okay with your Sups? The
22 relationship is good? You feel --

23 A. Yes, for the most part.

24 Q. -- like the management in the building is doing a good enough
25 job taking care of you guys, protecting the sectors, protecting --

1 A. I think I -- they're -- I'm trying to think of how to word
2 this. They definitely try.

3 Q. That's not nothing.

4 A. Yeah, I mean, there's -- everybody always has better ways of
5 doing things in their opinion, but they try.

6 Q. Okay. That's all I have.

7 A. And back to the monitoring the sectors. I don't even know if
8 that's, like, mandatory for us. It's just, kind of, passed along
9 to us. I don't recall having a --

10 MR. WINTER: I keep hearing common practice.

11 A. I don't have like -- I don't recall, like, a MOU or nothing
12 coming out that we had to.

13 MR. WINTER: But I hear common practice a lot.

14 A. Well, it's vague. Like, some people thought they we were
15 trained CIC. I mean supervisors have to when they're at the desk.
16 CIC's don't. And then some people say, if they tell you to, tell
17 them to show it to you in writing. And I don't know where it
18 would in writing. So, I don't know. I don't know if it's
19 mandatory, but it's common practice.

20 BY MR. DAVIDS:

21 Q. So, it's common practice for a CIC to see someone getting
22 busy and then listen to that sector?

23 A. Only if there's weather.

24 Q. Only if -- yeah.

1 A. That's the kind of general rule. But I don't know if it's
2 actually in writing.

3 BY MS. RUPNIK:

4 Q. So, when you're on the desk, urgent PIREP comes through.
5 Let's say you had been on the desk when this PIREP came through,
6 once you have that information what steps do you take from there
7 as CIC?

8 A. I'm just going to print out a strip, see if there was
9 injuries and take it to the OM. Just tell them as much as I know
10 about it.

11 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Did you have another?

12 MR. RICHARDS: No, no.

13 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Well, I understand you were on position
14 when it happened. I understand that's why we're talking with you,
15 talking to you but obviously you weren't made aware of the
16 incident until after the fact. But you did actually answer a few
17 of my questions about CIC duties as they relate to that. So, I'm
18 good. Does anybody have anything else?

19 MR. DAVIDS: I just have one more.

20 BY MR. DAVIDS:

21 Q. If as a CIC, do you feel comfortable enough talking to TMU
22 and getting things that you need?

23 A. Oh, yes, that was --

24 Q. -- miles in trail in shutting down an airway? If you go up
25 there and you say, hey, I need to shut down Q-102 --

1 A. Do I feel like they're going to give to me, or do I feel
2 comfortable doing it?

3 MS. KOSCHIG: We have the agent here.

4 MR. KENT: I feel comfortable that taking it on.

5 BY MR. DAVIDS:

6 Q. Do you have the power as CIC to say we need to shut --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- off Q-102 and it's going to happen?

9 A. Eventually. But I mean it depends. I don't know how long
10 it'd take.

11 MR. DAVIDS: Yeah.

12 MS. RUPNIK: Do you have any questions for us, any --

13 MR. KENT: No, ma'am.

14 MS. RUPNIK: Anything to add? Okay.

15 MR. KENT: Yeah, you all are cutting into my -- it's way too
16 early now.

17 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Well, I'm sure --

18 MR. DAVIDS: Do we need to slow down?

19 MR. KENT: I might have to go back work.

20 MS. RUPNIK: No.

21 MS. KOSCHIG: No, oh, by the ways?

22 MS. RUPNIK: No oh, by the ways from anybody? All right.

23 Well, I show the time as 1346 local and we are off the record.

24 (Whereupon, at 1:46 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
 LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
 TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
 MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
 Interview of John Kent

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Hilliard, Florida

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.



Romona Phillips
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: JUDSON OSBORNE, R30

Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville Air Route
Traffic Control Center
Hilliard, Florida

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Court Reporting Transcription
D.C. Area 301-261-1902
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Federal Aviation Administration

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National Air Traffic Controllers Association

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Southwest Airlines

LUKE ALCORN, Representative
Federal Aviation Administration
(On behalf of Mr. Osborne)

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I N T E R V I E W

(3:20 p.m.)

MS. KOSCHIG: The time now is 1520. Good afternoon. My name is Betty Koschig. I am a Senior Air Traffic Control Investigator at the NTSB. What is your name?

MR. OSBORNE: Judson Osborne.

MS. KOSCHIG: Let's see, I don't think I need to spell your name out on this one. So, before we get started, I just wanted to let you know that we are making a recording of this, an audio recording. She's recording it right there. It's the only one that we're recording. Nobody else is recording this in here. You might see us write some notes, but anything you see us write we're going to destroy. At the end of this, we will take the recording and have it transcribed. You can have a copy of the transcription if you'd like. Would you like that?

MR. OSBORNE: Sure.

MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah, it won't be the audio, just the transcription. So if you would like to give us your email address afterwards, that way we can send it to you. And I'm not asking you now because it would go on the recording. We could redact it, but I just want to make sure we do safeguard your email address. We'll ask it -- you'll have to remind me to make sure we get an email address.

Okay, so, and the transcription, just to let you know, will be the only thing that will become public. The audio will not.

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1 We protect those, so you won't ever hear this interview, audio,
2 anywhere. Just to assure you that.

3 I see you have a representative here today. Can you please
4 state your name?

5 MR. ALCORN: Yes, Luke Alcorn.

6 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Can you spell your last name please?

7 MR. ALCORN: A-L-C-O-R-N.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay, great. All right. So, during the
9 interview you are more than welcome to talk with -- I'm sorry,
10 with --

11 MR. OSBORNE: Jud.

12 MS. KOSCHIG: I apologize. Talk with Jud as much as you
13 would like, or step out of the room, but any question is totally
14 going to be for him. And you are welcome to talk to him. If you
15 say, oh, I need to go out here and ask him a question, we'll stop
16 the interview; you go out and discuss anything that you would
17 like. He's there for your support, and that's everything why we
18 would have it. So don't hesitate if you want to talk with him or
19 walk out and discuss. I mean you could sit here and talk with him
20 on, but it's going to be recorded.

21 So as part of the -- now getting into the introduction. So
22 as part of the NTSB, one of the things we do is we have parties.
23 In this investigation we have the FAA, well we've got us, the FAA,
24 NATCA, and Southwest that's part of our party, and we are the NTSB
25 Group, the ATC group. Even though they're from different

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1 agencies, or organizations, or companies, it is -- we are the ones
2 going to do the report. Nothing that we -- the NTSB doesn't
3 decide this is going to happen, it's the group that agrees on
4 everything and looks over the report. So we try to make sure that
5 we're always correct on what we do and that's the reason we get
6 outside help so that we can get all the subject matter experts to
7 give their input.

8 But a little bit more -- before I do that, how about I have
9 everybody introduce themselves. Like I said, I'm Betty Koschig
10 from NTSB, Air Traffic Investigator.

11 MS. RUPNIK: I'm Ruth Rupnik, NTSB Air Traffic Investigator.

12 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB Meteorology.

13 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter from the FAA at Washington Center QC
14 manager.

15 MR. DAVIDS: Cory Davids from New York Center, NACTA ASI.

16 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati from Oakland Center, also NACTA
17 ASI.

18 MR. RIOS: Mark Rios. I'm the Senior ATC Systems Program
19 Manager for Southwest Airlines.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: All right, that's us. A little bit about the
21 NTSB. We're an independent agency, Federal Agency. That means we
22 don't work for the FAA, DOD, anybody. We are independent. We
23 only have 400 people in the Agency all together, and that includes
24 railroad, pipeline, marine, you name it, there's only 400 of us so
25 we're a very small agency. And being a small agency not working

1 for anybody, we also don't have any regulatory authority either,
2 which means we cannot make anything happen. The only thing we can
3 do is write recommendations. Our job is to find the safety issues
4 and try to work with the users and everyone to make things safer.

5 Like in this instance, what we want to do is find out, you
6 know, you're the FAA. We're trying to find out what is it that we
7 can -- what are the facts? What's going on that maybe there's
8 something that we can help identify an issue that would tell us
9 what the probable cause of this incident or accident was. And
10 that's our whole mission is to get the probable cause.

11 Okay, so what you can expect here today, we already got some
12 of it going on, but we're going to ask you a bunch of questions.
13 First we'll start out with just getting some admin questions out
14 of the way, find out a little bit about you professionally. And
15 then we're going to start talking about the accident, what you
16 experienced, the buildup, everything. But it's pretty cut-and-
17 dried. We're just going to ask you a bunch of questions about the
18 facts.

19 If you don't know an answer, you don't know it, that's a
20 perfect answer. If you don't recall something, you don't recall
21 it. And if we ask a question that we're not being clear on, ask
22 us what do you mean, clarify, because we can ask questions in some
23 weird ways sometimes too; we're human.

24 Normally, it takes about an hour on the interviews, hour and
25 a half maybe. I'm hoping it's not going to take that long, but

1 that's generally how long it is, just so you can have a little
2 outlook on how long you'll be in here. At any point that you feel
3 that you need to take a break, you can take a break. Like I said,
4 we'll stop the interview. Even if we need to take a break, we'll
5 stop the interview to take a break. And that's about it.

6 Now I would really like to -- oh, I didn't tell you. If you
7 have a question for us, please ask. Do you have any questions
8 yet?

9 MR. OSBORNE: Not yet.

10 INTERVIEW OF JUDSON OSBORNE

11 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

12 Q. So, I would like to start out by asking you some questions
13 about yourself so we can get to know you a little bit better. So
14 what are your operating initials?

15 A. OJ.

16 Q. And how old are you?

17 A. 46.

18 Q. When did you start working for the FAA?

19 A. 2006.

20 Q. And was that the Academy?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. Where'd you go from there?

23 A. Here.

24 Q. Okay. Been here ever since?

25 A. Yes.

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- 1 Q. Okay, great. Do you have any military service?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. What service?
- 4 A. Air Force.
- 5 Q. And how many years?
- 6 A. Six years.
- 7 Q. What years were those?
- 8 A. Five years, 10 and a half months, but '99 to '05.
- 9 Q. Okay, and were you air traffic?
- 10 A. Yeah.
- 11 Q. Okay. Where were you stationed?
- 12 A. I was at Eglin and Langley.
- 13 Q. Oh okay, great. Have you worked in any contract towers?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Do you have a college degree?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. From where?
- 18 A. Embry Riddle.
- 19 Q. Oh, what subject?
- 20 A. Professional Aeronautics.
- 21 Q. Oh great. Bachelors or Masters?
- 22 A. I have a Bachelors.
- 23 Q. Oh, great. Pilot's license?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. Do you have current medical?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Okay. Any restrictions?
- 3 A. Glasses. I have glasses with me to see distance.
- 4 Q. For distance, do you need to wear them when you're on
- 5 position?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. Who's your supervisor?
- 8 A. Matthew Bennett.
- 9 Q. What's his last name?
- 10 A. Bennett.
- 11 Q. Minute?
- 12 A. Bennett.
- 13 Q. Bennett, okay. So you've been here a while. Do you have any
- 14 trainees?
- 15 A. I have had trainees. I did have trainees up until the
- 16 incident.
- 17 Q. Oh really?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Hmm. So what happened? I mean, why don't you have trainees
- 20 now?
- 21 A. I chose not to continue training.
- 22 Q. Okay, all right. All right. So, do you think you're going
- 23 to do it again though?
- 24 A. It's not looking good.
- 25 Q. Oh come on.

- 1 A. Probably not.
- 2 Q. Really. Okay, all right. Hopefully, you'll change your mind
- 3 after all this is over. I know you're going on break. I'm
- 4 hoping. So, but I'm going with this. So you're certified in what
- 5 area?
- 6 A. West area.
- 7 Q. On everything?
- 8 A. I'm not CIC rated.
- 9 Q. Not CIC, okay. Do you get overtime?
- 10 A. As little as I can, but yes.
- 11 Q. You're on the call list, though?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. You're on the no-call list?
- 14 A. Hard no list.
- 15 Q. Okay. What's your work schedule, or what was it the week
- 16 that you were working?
- 17 A. It was my third day, but Monday 2:15 to 11:15; Tuesday is
- 18 1:00 to 9:00; Wednesday is 8:00 to 4:00; and Thursday 7:30 to
- 19 2:30, and then back for the mid, 10:30 to 6:30.
- 20 Q. So you were working your normal schedule?
- 21 A. Normal schedule.
- 22 MS. KOSCHIG: Hang on just a second.
- 23 BY MS. KOSCHIG:
- 24 Q. So were you combined on these positions?
- 25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay. And how long had you been on position before the
2 incident occurred?

3 A. I'd have to guess. What time did it happen, 8:30? Probably
4 roughly 40 minutes. I'm guessing though.

5 Q. So if you had to, between 1 and 5, what was the complexity of
6 traffic at that point?

7 A. 4.

8 Q. And what was the volume of traffic, 1 to 5?

9 A. 5.

10 Q. So how long were you relieved after that?

11 A. It was, again, it feels like it was minutes after.

12 Q. But was it your normal relief or?

13 A. Yeah, I think I was just up in rotation, and I just happened
14 to get out.

15 Q. Okay. So we're going to ask more questions about all that
16 stuff in a little bit, but generally -- just a little bit more
17 about you health-wise. How's your health?

18 A. Pretty good.

19 Q. Okay. Was there anything big or changing going on in your
20 life around that time?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Anything significant? Do you recall if you felt rested? I
23 realize it's been a while.

24 A. Right. I suppose I was rested, I was at work. If I'm not
25 rested, I'm not shy about taking sick leave.

1 Q. Oh good. That's good. Do you recall if there was anything
2 distracting going on in that area at that time?

3 A. I don't recall.

4 Q. Did you file an ATSAP?

5 A. I did.

6 Q. Good. So those are the basic questions. I'll ask you one
7 more. Did you watch the replay?

8 A. I did.

9 Q. Okay. When did you do that?

10 A. Probably within the hour.

11 Q. Okay. So you haven't seen it since?

12 A. It was offered to me, but I don't think I've seen it since
13 the initial time I saw it.

14 Q. Okay. All right, so I mean it's good that you've seen it,
15 but I'm really -- when we're talking about this, I want you to
16 take us back to when you were actually working the position and
17 not seeing it as we saw it. We want anything that you can provide
18 us on what you were dealing with, what you were thinking, what you
19 were feeling, the traffic load, all of that. It's easy for us to
20 come and say, oh well, this is the way it looked on the scope.
21 But we want to know what you were going through at that point,
22 what was going through your mind. So it's hard to get that
23 perspective once you've seen it on video, but I hope you can go
24 back to that.

25 So speaking of that, let's get into the incident. Take us

1 back to when you, like when you first came on shift, what you did,
2 and step us through your day leading up to the incident and
3 afterward what, you know, what went on that whole day, what you
4 can recall.

5 A. Starting with signing into the computer?

6 Q. Yes, that will work.

7 A. Sign in the computer, check Team which included the weather
8 briefing in team. Went to the CIC for duty assignment because
9 there was no supervisor. CIC could see that I was taking that
10 sector, so he told me it was already red. Everyone was already
11 deviating. They've done everything they can do. There you go.
12 Took the sector. At that time of the morning, most everyone's
13 westbound.

14 So everyone was -- I think the previous controller had worked
15 out a good fix, so they were pointing everyone towards that was
16 missing the weather and keeping them from going in non-radar
17 space. So we continued using that to extent. I think at some
18 point we told Miami that's working, keep using that. And I think
19 about as soon as I plugged in they quit using it briefly, so we
20 had to remind them to stop letting them go straight towards the
21 weather. We were just dealing with all those. We had very few
22 east bounders.

23 I forget the exact call sign of the incident aircraft, but it
24 came as a pair, I'm thinking an Orlando and a Tampa. And they
25 were flipped. We're responsible to get the Tampa descended on the

1 other side, and they had the Tampa on top of the Orlando. I think
2 I had reached out, asked my D-side at the time to vector them off
3 to the east so I'd have some room to swap them out. After the
4 fact, I think there was confusion about who they -- I don't know
5 if it was the D-side or the D-side of Houston, I don't know what
6 happened. But when the aircraft -- I asked to be vectored came
7 over there on course, and then the aircraft that I didn't ask to
8 be vectored was on a vector out to the east, or on deviation to
9 the east. So I just focused on my work, I'll just worry about
10 that later, when able, to proceed on course.

11 That's about it, I mean basically. I mean there's of course
12 multiple missed calls in that whole stretch of people not hearing
13 me or not answering. There was a pair of 40s at some point.
14 Presumably, I would have seen it eventually, but my D-side pointed
15 it out to me who coincidentally was my trainee at the time. So I
16 fixed those. That was about it. Then the D-side gets the call
17 that they had severe turbulence and made some calls to everyone
18 behind them. That was it.

19 Q. So D-side got some calls about severe turbulence?

20 A. Well, it was reported to us, but it was reported to us they
21 got severe turbulence with injuries 50 miles west of REMIS so we
22 had to guess. That was probably a guess kind of where that was.
23 And so we made the broadcast of severe turbulence reported.

24 Q. Okay. And do you know who called the D-side to report this?

25 A. It was the Miami controller.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I don't know if it was their D or, I don't know. It was my
3 D-side that told me, so they got the call from someone.

4 Q. Oh, okay. So Southwest didn't report anything to you?

5 A. She didn't seem to deviate that much at all. Her altitude,
6 it was never observed leaving her assigned altitude.

7 Q. Do you know how long after, about how long that was that that
8 report came to you after Southwest left your airspace? I'll
9 rephrase it. Had Southwest already left your airspace?

10 A. She was probably real close. I think I probably switched her
11 with Datacom, and I think she probably switched over right near
12 the boundary.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Probably. I don't recall exactly where.

15 Q. And then after that you called severe turbulence to the other
16 aircraft?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Good. Okay. I still have a lot of questions but I don't
19 want to take them all up. I'm going to let other people ask some,
20 thank you.

21 MS. RUPNIK: Okay, well he actually just answered quite a few
22 of my questions there.

23 BY MS. RUPNIK:

24 Q. The one question I did have you kind of started to explain
25 the communication confusion between Houston Center and you with

1 those two aircraft. I just want to make sure I'm understanding it
2 correctly. So your Tampa arrival should have been on the bottom.

3 A. They have no requirement to do that.

4 Q. Okay. So just typical practice?

5 A. Right. I need to get the Tamps down on the other side, and
6 if they're deviating, like I'm going to be kind of stuck.

7 Q. Okay, because I was just curious about that coordination with
8 Houston Center. I know you said one was on a vector and the other
9 one wasn't, and obviously approaching weather. Just trying to
10 make sure I've got a good understanding of that. So I know the
11 one had -- you put the one on 070 heading or?

12 A. The only heading I assigned to either of those -- the pair --
13 was well east of the weather when I was finally getting ready to
14 descend the one.

15 Q. Okay. All right. I'll tell you what. Let me pass it on.
16 Reformulate.

17 BY MR. RICHARDS:

18 Q. In Sector 30, do you have issues with weather radar coverage
19 on the ERAM?

20 A. I know outside the sector boundaries I have to be real
21 cautious when I'm describing weather to people because it does cut
22 off in adjacent sectors sometimes. You have to look on the board
23 and be like I think there's more out there than what I'm seeing
24 sometimes, but that's like into Miami space. I think when the
25 sector boundaries are 30, I think it's as adequate there as it is

1 anywhere else.

2 Q. Did you get weather radar coverage all the way to the south
3 southern boundary of your sector?

4 A. As far as I know.

5 Q. Do you ever have aircraft reporting weather that you don't
6 see?

7 A. All the time.

8 Q. Regular occurrence? I mean as far as --

9 A. I mean -- a lot of times I think it comes down to company
10 preference of how wide a berth they're giving. A lot of times
11 they're deviating around clouds and not precip. I mean that's
12 going to happen all the time. So I can't really see what's there.
13 So to me it looks like they're deviating around nothing, but it
14 could be a big buildup or cloud or something. We would never show
15 that anyway.

16 Q. And going back to what you were saying about the boundaries
17 of the sector, so Houston, Miami -- can you say that again? If
18 someone's reporting stuff in their airspace that you don't see on
19 your scope?

20 A. I've observed before, like I think kind like in the CIGAR
21 sector, it's the Miami sector east of us. It's a pretty big
22 geographic sector. And I've seen like the NEXRAD like just kind
23 of cut off sometimes.

24 Q. Oh I see, okay.

25 A. But like sometimes it looks weird. It's like a line and then

1 it just kind of like hmmm.

2 Q. It doesn't look natural?

3 A. Right. And you look at the board and you're like I think
4 there's more out there, so that definitely happens sometimes.

5 Q. And when you say the board, what --

6 A. The big TVs they have pulled up with the weather.

7 Q. Okay, all right. I'll probably have more later.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay.

9 BY MR. WINTER:

10 Q. On kind of the same note, do you ever have precip out there
11 that you're calling that they're just like, there's nothing there
12 at all? (Indiscernible).

13 A. (Indiscernible). Most of our area is lows. There's always
14 AP and there's always -- I have to paint it and call it, it's at
15 6,000 feet, and the guys are at 20, I've got to call it over. So
16 the lack of the ceiling information is how we --

17 Q. And you've gotta display the whole thing.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. How overloaded did you feel on the second?

20 A. I mean barely four or five.

21 Q. That's all I got.

22 BY MR. DAVIDS:

23 Q. So when you checked in with the CIC, he said they're doing
24 everything they can do for us. Is that a typical response that
25 you get when it comes to --

1 A. That is very typical.

2 Q. Flow control? I mean what more can they do, especially at
3 that sector which I hear is a pretty busy sector, miles of trail?

4 A. I won't pretend to understand the big picture, but the story
5 that we hear, the story that we hear is we can't do anything;
6 they're already airborne. That's very typical. They've done
7 everything they can, but those guys are airborne so --

8 Q. Because there's no airborne miles in trail (indiscernible).
9 Have you guys, is it practice here to -- again, I come from New
10 York so it's a little different. Will you guys go sector to
11 sector, and put miles in trail on previous sectors to --

12 A. I mean that's, I would say unheard of.

13 Q. Yes, it's more relying on TMU to do. And then my last
14 question is this frequency issue. So you've been here since 2006
15 you said, same area, fulltime, how long as far back as you can
16 remember, and we don't need an exact date or anything, has there
17 been issues with the frequency there?

18 A. My memory on this is horrible because I have no sense of time
19 after working shiftwork for so long. But I mean it's when the
20 fire happened at Tyndall, is that like nine months ago?

21 MR. ALCORN: About six months ago.

22 A. Six months ago a fire took out a radar site and radio site,
23 and their backup is not ideal.

24 BY MR. ROSATI:

25 Q. So since you've been here for a long time, would you say that

1 when you come into work and you're ready to sit down in a position
2 like that that's already busy, is there more that the CIC could
3 have been doing to help you at the time? Is there -- and we're
4 not here to throw people under the bus, right -- we're just here
5 to try to figure out like is there more that could've been done?

6 A. I'm not CIC qualified.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And I haven't seen a SUP or a CIC do anything that would've
9 alleviated that.

10 Q. Okay. So in your experience, has TMU ever put trail
11 restrictions on for we'll say any sector in your area for aircraft
12 that are airborne? Is that something that you've seen before or
13 do you typically just see them delaying departures?

14 A. Occasionally, and within fairly recent time period, last
15 couple years maybe. We will occasionally see stuff out in NEPTA.
16 Very rarely Houston will have to give us the Tampas at 33. It
17 happens very rarely. Sometimes they will back up the in trail
18 that we're required to give Miami. Oh during that whole thing I
19 had in trail to Miami also I was worried about. A lot of times
20 they don't back it up to Houston at all. I think they have in the
21 past couple of years they have done a little more, but I mean
22 typically I've seen more than 40 aircraft on the frequency at
23 once. It needs to be split but you can't split it.

24 Q. Do you think having some sort of like, you know in trail
25 spacing coming from Miami at the time would have been helpful?

1 A. Absolutely.

2 Q. So you had a D-side at the time, right? How was the D-side
3 doing? You said it was your trainee at the time.

4 A. It was actually three different D-sides from my time there.
5 They were fine. I don't know what the cause of the confusion was
6 with the requested vector with Houston. I don't know what
7 happened. But so I can't even say it was at fault because I don't
8 know what happened. But, you know, the D-sides were fine. And my
9 trainee, he pointed out the 40s before I saw it, so he did fine.

10 Q. So overall, all the D-sides that were there, they were all
11 helping. They weren't being a hindrance or a distraction in any
12 way?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: Mind if I jump in?

16 MR. ROSATI: Sure.

17 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

18 Q. So why were there so many D-sides?

19 A. Let's see, first it was the two guys that were just working,
20 and then it was the R-sides time for break so I got him. I think
21 it was the D-sides, he was up next for break, so that's when he
22 got replaced. I don't know if -- I think he was training someone
23 so they got him out to start training his other trainee maybe.
24 I'm not 100 percent sure why that second D-side got relieved. I
25 imagine he was training someone, I don't know.

1 BY MR. ROSATI:

2 Q. So we'll stick with the D-sides. So you said the D-side is
3 the one that came back and called you or told you, say hey, so-
4 and-so from Southwest just got severe turbulence.

5 A. Exactly.

6 Q. That's it. Okay. Have you ever used a tracker position in
7 your area?

8 A. We don't use them frequently, but we have used trackers.

9 Q. In your opinion, again just opinion, if until you can somehow
10 split that sector, do you think a tracker position would be
11 helpful? Or -- and if so, are the controllers in the area
12 proficient enough in being trackers --

13 A. That's follow-up. So the first answer would be possibly.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. To the extent that we're used to working with one another in
16 that capacity.

17 Q. And do you think that your area will even have the staffing
18 to be able to provide?

19 A. Well, it's a bit of a zero sum game. At the time in the
20 morning, maybe, it might have been okay. But yeah, you're pulling
21 a body from somewhere else so something else stays combined.

22 Q. Overall, do you think that the surrounding sectors from
23 Houston and Miami, do you think they were doing anything to help
24 you at all that you're aware of?

25 A. I mean at that time in the morning it's all westbound, so

1 Houston is -- the deviations on Miami's side, I'm not a huge fan
2 of pointing them at the weather and just letting them deal with
3 deviations. That's horrible. I would much prefer finding a fix
4 somewhere and at least get them started. We had to coach Miami to
5 do that a little bit, and then one guy decided not to. That
6 wasn't particularly helpful. After the fact when I more closer to
7 the event, I was thinking about it, it would have been a lot more
8 helpful if Miami just put some headings in the fourth line and
9 just flashed these guys directly to Houston. You know, just cut
10 the corner, pick a third of them, just put them on a heading down
11 there, that would've been fine.

12 Q. And do you think that's something that like if you brought
13 that to the CIC as a controller and said, hey, can you just have
14 Miami give these guys this heading and get them over to Houston
15 because they're all deviating. Do you think that's something that
16 would be done at this facility?

17 A. I don't know how well that would be received.

18 Q. Okay. How's the relationship between Miami and your area,
19 for example?

20 A. We've had some recent issues. They recently split their
21 sector. Maybe they didn't follow procedures, I don't know what
22 the rules are, but it's caused some issues. They're known to hand
23 us pairs. Usually they hand us overtakes. But it's a tough
24 sector CIGAR is, well now it's two sectors, but it was a tough
25 sector, but we have some issues over there sometimes.

1 Q. We call it border wars in our facility. So the COMM issues
2 in the sector, it seemed to be an issue in this incident, are
3 there days that it's worse than others?

4 A. Strangely yes. It makes it hard to troubleshoot. I don't
5 know if it's atmospheric, but sometimes it definitely seems worse
6 than others.

7 Q. And so you haven't been able to figure out like, okay, it's
8 because there's weather in the area or a solar burst or something
9 like that or whatever?

10 A. Between it not presenting consistently, and between pilots --
11 they kind of tune out when they go up the water, so you don't know
12 are they hearing me or are they just zoned out because they're at
13 altitude, and they're a huge sector. So I think it's been hard to
14 troubleshoot, but sometimes it definitely seems worse than others.

15 Q. Have there been any talks in your area about when you're
16 having issues with the frequencies? Like if you're having a bad
17 frequency day, on trying to slow things down in the sector at all?

18 A. Not to my knowledge.

19 MR. ROSATI: I think that's all I have for now.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay, thank you.

21 BY MR. RIOS:

22 Q. In reference to the frequency issues before this fire at
23 Tyndall, you know, with their comm and radar, what was the
24 frequency issues before? How was that in the sector versus now?

25 A. I don't know that we really had a whole lot of issues with

1 the radio prior to the fire. Honestly, it's really been since the
2 fire. The temporary whatever they have out there is, you know,
3 it's not great.

4 Q. And on that particular day, the workload that was described,
5 the frequency issues, the cutting out and trying to track
6 airplanes, that combination with your ability to provide weather,
7 or whether you got PIREPs, whether you were provided that, what
8 was workload like from your perspective and being able to handle
9 all those duties?

10 A. I guess I don't really quite understand exactly what --

11 Q. So there was a lot going on from what you explained so far
12 with the radio challenges and trying to communicate with
13 airplanes. So those other duties, were you able to do the other
14 duties that you should be doing in reference to the passing
15 weather or if you got PIREP information passing that information
16 along, what was your biggest challenge that day in reference to
17 that?

18 A. With that many people on frequency, you can't spend a lot of
19 time talking about anything other than the handling business of
20 separating and frequency changes. There's too many people on
21 frequency so you really can't -- unless I mean moderate or
22 greater, you certainly have no time to talk about light chop. And
23 then for guys that are already deviating, you know, you've got to
24 trim the fat where you can to become more efficient with the
25 resources that you have.

1 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

2 Q. Do you recall how many airplanes you were talking to?

3 A. I don't know. I cannot recall.

4 Q. A lot of them. So when -- did you suspect at all that there
5 might be some turbulence in that area where Southwest was?

6 A. I mean it was a pretty big line of precip, but I have no top
7 information on it. So 37 and 39, was that the pair I think? I
8 had no idea.

9 Q. Neither one of them said anything either?

10 A. Right.

11 Q. Hey, you were pretty busy with listening to that replay. So
12 if you -- what can be changed? You just happen to be the person
13 in this situation. It could've been anybody else that got into
14 this situation, you just happened to be there. So what is it that
15 this facility can do to prevent this from recurring? It could be
16 you in that situation, anybody else.

17 A. Well, I don't know that anything would be different had I
18 called the weather. We didn't know about the turbulence. She
19 still would have got into the turbulence. I don't what else. I
20 mean I could've called the weather, but the controllers have
21 limited resources so just slow it down I guess if you want weather
22 to be called.

23 Q. Right. If you could've split, would that have --

24 A. I would imagine so. I mean they've been talking about it for
25 years. It would be nice to see it happen.

1 Q. It definitely would have lessened your load. I'm trying to
2 think of the other question I had. Oh, I hate it when I go
3 braindead. I'm going to have to pass. I've forgotten what I was
4 going to ask.

5 MS. RUPNIK: If you remember, just cut me off.

6 BY MS. RUPNIK:

7 Q. All right. I'll talk about this frequency thing again.
8 There just seems to be a lot of issues here. So you guys are,
9 anytime you have an issue with frequencies, you're reporting that,
10 correct, so that as far as -- so that the situation can be
11 rectified I guess?

12 A. At this point it's a bit of a known issue, so I don't know --
13 I guess it was six or eight months ago whenever it happened.

14 Q. So it's not like you have to say, hey, SUP, I just lost
15 somebody on frequency or?

16 A. I mean since this, they're trying to track it, but they're
17 going to have to put someone else there to do it while you're
18 working.

19 Q. That was going to be my next question. It's just the
20 workload added to that.

21 A. You don't know most of these cases if they're not paying
22 attention or they don't hear you.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. So it's exceptionally hard to troubleshoot.

25 Q. Now I want to say I read somewhere that the D-side may not

1 normally be split that time of day? But I didn't work center, I
2 haven't worked center, so what all is your D-side doing for you in
3 a situation like that?

4 A. Looking for pairs coming together like that one, probably
5 first and foremost. Taking any phone calls so I don't have to
6 answer the line, or making any phone calls so I don't have to do
7 that. That's the bulk of it. The big volume sectors like that,
8 they usually say it's an R-side problem and there's less to do at
9 a high altitude sector for a D-side. With the lows, there's a lot
10 more for the D-side to do. But you know, reminding me oh, there's
11 in trail or something, point out pairs, stuff like that.

12 Q. And just out of curiosity too, completely changing tracks,
13 back to the overtime question and you said you're on the no list.
14 How often would you say that you still get called for overtime or
15 scheduled?

16 A. There's been an improvement since last September. It's my
17 second or third one in a row this Saturday, but it took a
18 significant dip. Around last September it slowed down quite a
19 bit, maybe once a month or so.

20 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. I'm going to go ahead and pass it back to
21 Mike.

22 MR. RICHARDS: I don't have any more questions.

23 MR. DAVIDS:

24 Q. The D-sides, did they make point outs also or they're just --
25 they're the second set of eyes?

1 A. They make point-outs and we have automated point-outs now, so
2 there's a lot less for them to do, but if someone doesn't click,
3 pop it, they'll call them verbally.

4 Q. Will they -- they'll initiate the PVDs and everything?

5 A. Yeah, I mean if I don't.

6 Q. Yeah. So all those guys are deviating south towards Houston
7 Center which I think someone told us you go south, it's usually
8 not a factor, right? When they're making a point -- that's a non-
9 layover sector for Houston or ADS-B or anything?

10 A. If they go, a lot of times -- if they go far enough south it
11 comes on radar, and I don't really know where that is. So a lot
12 of times they start deviating like that, Houston will just shut it
13 down. It's more for them than us. But I don't know where exactly
14 that is. We also don't have ADS-B out in the gulf. It took out I
15 think with the fire too.

16 Q. So if you have a guy going south, and you have to hand them
17 off to that south sector, is it automated for that or do you have
18 to do it manually?

19 A. You don't, it's automation.

20 Q. Automation.

21 A. It comes on radar like on their (indiscernible) or something.

22 Q. And then, I think you said, I just want to clarify. So the
23 frequency issue you said has been going on for a long time. Is it
24 only since the incident that we've been doing that tracking now?
25 When I say we, it's been (indiscernible)?

1 A. I think I've seen that sheet at the sector before. The sheet
2 is not designed for that purpose.

3 Q. It's the bullseye sheet, right?

4 A. Which has a 40-mile range.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. It's 150 miles south of the sector. So it doesn't make sense
7 to even collect data on that sheet, and then also before this
8 incident, they haven't had a anyone sitting there to do it. They
9 asked the controller to do it while they're controlling. So they
10 half-hearted try to track it I guess.

11 Q. From personal experience, it's impossible to do the
12 (indiscernible) working the radar if (indiscernible).

13 A. Right.

14 Q. I'm curious to see the sheet if we could ask for it, because
15 on our sheets they're blank. It doesn't say -- so it has the
16 range rings?

17 A. It's, yeah, up to 40.

18 Q. So ours doesn't have any numbers. And I think they do that
19 purposely because --

20 A. So you can draw whatever range is appropriate.

21 Q. Yeah, so I'd be curious to see that sheet. I don't think I
22 have anything else.

23 BY MR. RIOS:

24 Q. Going back to the frequency issue, so it's been about eight
25 or nine months since that fire, and frequency has been challenged

1 because of its limitations and cutting in and out and not
2 communicating with airplanes. Is that becoming an acceptable, you
3 know, from your point of view, an acceptable problem? How is it
4 when you have more of a challenge on a particular weather day
5 where it's really affecting how you work, and not just you but
6 other controllers that work that sector? You know, I'm trying to
7 express myself in the sense of, it's just been accepted and it's
8 not reported on a consistent basis to say, I've got a problem, we
9 need more help now?

10 A. I mean my understanding is the proper fix, to build a proper
11 radio tower out there, it's already in the works; they can't make
12 it happen any faster. And the fact that it's an intermittent
13 problem, it might just be like one aircraft. But for some reason,
14 this guy just is not hearing me, or I can't hear this one guy.
15 It's very inconsistent. I would say no, it's probably not being
16 reported on a specific individual basis. I know in all the
17 position relief briefings we all tell each other, oh, the radios
18 are horrible today, or it's not too bad today.

19 Because even if it's working as intended, it's still on a
20 satellite relay so you're getting clipping where if the pilots
21 just key and start talking real quick, and you know how they often
22 REMIS us at 33, so they'll read it back, REMIS and then the call
23 sign at the end. We don't even get the altitudes because the
24 satellite relay takes a split second to fire up. And that's if
25 it's working good. At this point, yeah, we're all that's just how

1 it is and it's being fixed. So there's really nothing to be done
2 from a controller level that I know of.

3 Q. So you don't know if there's been any additional initiatives
4 to be able to manage the sector taking for that reason?

5 A. Not to my knowledge.

6 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

7 Q. So have you noticed any changes -- did they make any changes
8 since this incident occurred, management at all?

9 A. I'm not aware of any, but I'm pretty far outside the loop so
10 I don't know that I would be aware of it anyway.

11 Q. Have you been working?

12 A. Oh yeah.

13 Q. Okay, good. That's a good thing. So are there any tools
14 that you know of that would help you to do your job better? Maybe
15 like weather displays or anything else that would help?

16 A. I mean it would be just system-wide. Like if our NEXRAD was
17 a little bit better at determining the actual tops. I mean years
18 and years ago when they fixed the WARP or whatever, I don't know,
19 I've seen how things got worse since then. Because if you're at a
20 high sector, you're allowed to show just 24 and above, they would
21 deviate all the time around stuff that you don't even show. But
22 if you pull up surface to 60, there it is, it's underneath. So
23 that would be very helpful to know a little more accurately than
24 what we know now at the tops.

25 Q. All right. Now we get that a lot. We hear that the

1 meteorologist just needs to fix it.

2 MR. RICHARDS: It's in the works.

3 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

4 Q. The thing is we'd like you to know that, you know, this type
5 of incident, I mean it's not just happened here. It happens at
6 different places. And that's one of the reasons why we wanted to
7 come and talk to you, because we just came off of one from Boston.
8 So it's happened almost -- it's like it's almost the same. You
9 had a lot more traffic, but if the pilot's not reporting it after
10 it occurs, they go transfer over, and then you get the report back
11 you didn't even realize it happened. Meanwhile, there's other
12 aircraft coming right through that. So I'm glad that it did get
13 back to you while you were still on position. So that's some of
14 the reasons why we're here. We want to see what kind of -- what
15 is it -- not just here, but within the NAS that can change.

16 A. I don't know that we -- we had no indication of severe
17 turbulence, and I experienced that. That's just on the sector.
18 You get a severe turbulence call, national news, shut it down,
19 start moving people, that's how it is. We just didn't know there
20 was severe turbulence there.

21 Q. Right, same as in the other case. So it's that same, you
22 know, getting your input and your facts on this is really, it's
23 been super helpful. I want to go around the room one more time.

24 MS. RUPNIK: I'm good, I don't have anything.

25 BY MR. RICHARDS:

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1 Q. This is just out of curiosity, I'm the only not controller in
2 the room. So if you can't raise them on frequency, do you have
3 alternate means to communicate?

4 A. Go on guard, different frequency.

5 Q. It has a different frequency.

6 A. Which a disturbingly small percentage actually monitor.

7 Q. Okay. You said something about, I think in the beginning,
8 you communicated with the accident aircraft?

9 A. It's like text messaging for airplanes.

10 Q. You can always text message an airplane?

11 A. Some of them.

12 Q. Some of them.

13 A. They're not all equipped. And there are some dead zones on
14 that sector where you'll get failed messages.

15 Q. So it's conceivable there could be an aircraft in your sector
16 that you just literally can't talk to or communicate with?

17 A. Not for the entire sector. Usually right when you need to.

18 MR. RICHARDS: Thanks.

19 BY MR. WINTER:

20 Q. Before I go further with this, how much OJT were you doing,
21 roughly.

22 A. Did I receive?

23 Q. No, give. How much of your training?

24 A. I've been an on and an off trainer since '09, so.

25 Q. And like how much of your week probably before this training?

1 A. All the time.

2 Q. Every day?

3 A. I was actually scheduled to go into the labs that day. I was
4 just going to work one hour in the morning and then go into labs
5 with my trainee who was on SIT, one of those acronyms, I don't
6 know. That was the only reason I worked that day.

7 Q. Was it D-side or R-side training?

8 A. R-side training.

9 Q. Okay.

10 BY MR. DAVIDS:

11 Q. Here's a couple, just curiosity questions. When was the last
12 time you did recurrent, refresher, you know?

13 A. Recurrent, it seems fairly recent. I don't know, they all
14 blur together. What used to take eight hours, now they wrap up in
15 about two and a half, so I think I did that a week or two ago on
16 one of them.

17 Q. Do you feel like frequency congestion, besides the fact that
18 frequency doesn't work in parts of your sector, do you feel like
19 the frequency condition may have played a factor as to why maybe
20 they didn't report it then at that time?

21 A. I think -- I mean if you had that many people on frequency, a
22 lot of times when you give a brief to the next guy you're like I
23 don't know how the rides are because we haven't had time to talk
24 about it. You don't have time. You just don't have time. So I
25 mean I'm hoping they're not keeping moderate a secret. I'm

1 talking about light, keep it to yourself.

2 Q. And do you feel like if that airborne traffic was mitigated
3 with airborne restrictions and stuff like that, that probably
4 would warrant you time to get some kind of (indiscernible)?

5 A. I mean absolutely. With less workload, you can do better
6 work.

7 MR. DAVIDS: Thank you.

8 BY MR. ROSATI:

9 Q. So at R30, what do you have your NEXRAD setting set at?

10 A. Because it touches the ground, it's supposed to be zero to
11 60. Or touches the water I guess.

12 Q. Are the -- you mentioned the CPDLC dead zones. Are those
13 depicted in any way? Is it something that you were briefed on
14 like, hey we know this is a problem area --

15 A. They said it was kind of like, there was potential because I
16 think it's on the edge of the zones or whatever.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Usually, just like 30 or below. We don't get a lot of people
19 with CPDLC below 30, so the reds are up high and they're flying
20 lower, on the edges you might get a not sent or something like
21 that.

22 Q. Okay. And so would you say all the controllers in your area
23 are pretty aware of that as well?

24 A. I would expect so.

25 MR. ROSATI: That's all I have.

1 MS. KOSCHIG: Thank you.

2 BY MR. RIOS:

3 Q. This is my last follow-up too to the question that was just
4 asked. Is that published anywhere regarding the dead zones?

5 A. I mean I've seen a written thing. There's a graphical
6 picture I remember seeing I think somewhere. It's somewhere.

7 MR. RIOS: That's the last question I have.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: I don't have any more. Any by-the-ways?
9 Questions for us?

10 MR. OSBORNE: Nope.

11 BY MR. DAVIDS:

12 Q. That sector is pretty much straight and level, there's not a
13 lot of descending --

14 A. It's literally just Tampa's. Occasionally they'll still be
15 climbing from the other side, but the only one that we have
16 anything to do with altitude-wise is Tampa's.

17 Q. I know what I was going to say. This was part of that second
18 question that I asked before. If you had more time, I know you've
19 been a controller since 2006, you probably could have worked out
20 getting that Southwest up to 39, right?

21 A. Absolutely.

22 Q. With time with --

23 A. I think she asked twice, but seemed kind of meek like it
24 wasn't a big deal. If I thought it was a big deal, there was no
25 one behind her. I could have spun her and climbed her easy. But

1 it didn't seem like the request was that pertinent.

2 Q. Yeah. Well, I'm just sitting there as a controller and
3 looking at the replay, and you've got 30-some planes down here,
4 and these are two are just going -- these aren't your problem,
5 right now, until it becomes a problem, like weather.

6 BY MS. RUPNIK:

7 Q. Sorry, I did have one by-the-way for you. It goes back to
8 training real quick. You said you'd been in training a lot.
9 Obviously, there's a requirement for proficiency time. How close
10 do you think you are to that as far as, do you think you're
11 getting enough time actually in the position when it's busy, by
12 yourself, to work it or do you feel like you could use more?

13 A. Since I've stopped training, I'm very proficient now over the
14 past three weeks. And I worked the mids before, so I would always
15 work the busy sessions on the first part of the mid. I felt that
16 I was proficient before.

17 MS. RUPNIK: That answers my question.

18 MS. KOSCHIG: So let's go ahead and end the interview at
19 1618.

20 (Whereupon, at 4:18 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
Interview of Judson Osborne

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Hilliard, Florida

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.



Jennifer Allen
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: TYLER PALM, Controller-In-Charge
Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville Air Route
Traffic Control Center
Hilliard, Florida

APPEARANCES:

RUTH RUPNIK, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MIKE RICHARDS, Meteorologist
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK WINTER, Washington Center Quality Control
Federal Aviation Administration

CORY DAVIDS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

CHRIS ROSATI, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

MARK RIOS, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
Southwest Airlines

ANTHONY WEST, Representative/Vice President
National Air Traffic Controllers Association
(On behalf of Mr. Palm)

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1 The transcription becomes part of the public record.

2 We -- would you like a copy of the transcription once it's
3 completed?

4 MR. PALM: No.

5 MS. RUPNIK: No? Okay. All right, well if you change your
6 mind I'll give you my contact information and we'll make it
7 available to you.

8 All right. So, I see you have a representative here today.
9 Is this the representative you've chosen?

10 MR. PALM: Correct.

11 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. And once again, your name and title for
12 the record, please.

13 MR. WEST: Anthony West, NATCA ZJX VP.

14 MS. RUPNIK: Excellent, thank you. And the questions we're
15 going to ask are for you to answer. If you need to confer with
16 him either here, outside the door or whatever, please feel free to
17 do so. Just ask that he does not answer any questions on your
18 behalf.

19 So, with the National Transportation Safety Board, you can
20 see we've got a lot of people in this room, a lot of different
21 logos on shirts and stuff. We've got Southwest Airlines, and ATC
22 subject matter expert, NATCA ASIs, FAA. And then, on this side of
23 the table we're NTSB.

24 So, I'll have everybody go around the room real quick and
25 introduce themselves.

1 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Good morning again. My name is Betty
2 Koschig, NTSB Air Traffic Investigator.

3 MR. RICHARDS: NTSB, Mike Richards, Meteorologist.

4 MR. WINTER: FAA, Washington Center Quality Control, Mark
5 Winter. I didn't really want to go on there because nobody likes
6 Washington Center.

7 MR. DAVIDS: Don't worry, FAA. I'm not -- Corey Davids,
8 NATCA ASI, New York Center.

9 MR. ROSATI: Chris Rosati, NATCA ASI from Oakland Center.

10 MR. RIOS: And Mark Rios, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager,
11 sometimes that's hard to get out, for Southwest Airlines.

12 MS. RUPNIK: All right. There's going to be a test at the
13 end, so.

14 MR. PALM: Oh, no.

15 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. So, for the purposes of the
16 investigation, we are the NTSB air traffic group. Everything we
17 do is done with concurrence of the entire group; we do not do
18 anything unilaterally as far as the, the product that will come
19 out of this investigation.

20 All right, onto the National Transportation Safety Board. We
21 are a small, independent agency; we do not report to the FAA or
22 the DoD, or the DoT. We report directly to Congress.

23 And there's about 400 people in the agency and that covers
24 all modes of transportation, aviation being the most visible.
25 Also, covers rail, pipeline, hazmat, highway -- oh, and marine.

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1 MS. KOSCHIG: Yep.

2 MS. RUPNIK: I keep forgetting to say marine, okay?

3 MR. PALM: (No verbal response).

4 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Sounds like a fighter jet going
5 overhead.

6 Okay. Our goal is safety. We're not here to assign blame.
7 We don't make rules. We don't enforce rules.

8 MR. PALM: Okay.

9 MS. RUPNIK: We're interested in finding out what happened,
10 why it happened and hopefully coming up with some recommendations
11 to keep it from happening again. This is not a Jax Center
12 specific event. This is happening in multiple facilities across
13 the US.

14 But you are the expert here at Jax Center, so we're here to
15 learn from you; this is your house. We're going to ask you a lot
16 of questions. If you don't remember, you don't remember, you
17 don't recall, you don't know, perfectly acceptable answers.

18 If you need us to clarify a question, please feel free to ask
19 if you have any questions. And like I said, we're -- this is an
20 interview; it's not an interrogation. And -- I've lost my train
21 of thought there for a second.

22 I'll probably go around the room twice. I'm going to start
23 by asking some administrative questions. I just want to get to
24 know you a little bit more professionally, and then we'll actually
25 go into the event and the day of the event. And if you need a

1 break, don't be shy, just ask.

2 And you'll see us all taking some notes, writing them down,
3 typing just for us to reference back to throughout the interview.
4 These notes don't leave the facility with us; they'll be destroyed
5 before we leave the facility.

6 Does anybody have anything before we start? Any questions
7 before we start? Okay.

8 INTERVIEW OF TYLER PALM

9 BY MS. RUPNIK:

10 Q. All right, so we got your name. What are your operating
11 initials?

12 A. ZP.

13 Q. Okay. How old are you?

14 A. 39.

15 Q. That's an odd question, right? And when did you start
16 working for the FAA?

17 A. Almost 17 years ago.

18 Q. Almost 17 years ago. Do you happen to remember, like, month
19 and year, or year?

20 A. April.

21 Q. April.

22 A. '07.

23 Q. A lot of April's and May's in this facility I'm noticing.
24 So, that's a good time to start, especially here. So, April
25 of '07.

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1 Was this your first facility?

2 A. (No verbal response).

3 Q. Did you go -- you went to the Academy?

4 A. (No verbal response).

5 Q. Okay. Any prior ATC experience or anything?

6 A. Like college?

7 Q. College.

8 A. I got a CTO in college.

9 Q. Okay, you got a CTO. Where did you go?

10 A. Beaver, CCBC.

11 Q. I know a lot of people -- I used to work at Youngstown, so I

12 quite a few people who went to Beaver.

13 A. Oh, yeah.

14 Q. Always really sharp.

15 A. I did some flight following in Youngstown, yeah.

16 Q. Yep, yep. Really sharp. So, you got a degree at Beaver and

17 a CTO. What was your degree?

18 A. I think it's Air Traffic Science, or something along those

19 lines.

20 Q. Okay. Any military time?

21 A. (No verbal response).

22 Q. Okay, and moving on. All right, so this was your first --

23 this is your only facility.

24 Can you tell us have you been in the same area the whole

25 time?

1 A. Yep.

2 Q. So, you've been in the West Area since you started here.

3 A. (No verbal response).

4 Q. Okay. So, you know -- you are the expert on the area so

5 that's good. And you have a current medical.

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. Any restrictions, glasses, contacts?

8 A. No.

9 Q. You don't need to get into details.

10 A. Asthma.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah -- no.

13 Q. So, you, you do have a restriction.

14 A. Yeah, it's all reported and everything.

15 Q. It's all reported.

16 A. Yeah.

17 MS. RUPNIK: Everything's reported, okay. Excellent.

18 MS. KOSCHIG: You're in compliance.

19 MR. PALM: Yeah.

20 MS. RUPNIK: You're in compliance, okay. Thank you. That's

21 the word I was looking for.

22 MS. KOSCHIG: Sorry.

23 MS. RUPNIK: No, I appreciate it.

24 BY MS. RUPNIK:

25 Q. And who is your supervisor?

1 A. I believe it's Matt Bennett.

2 Q. Okay. And so, obviously you are CIC certified.

3 A. Mm-hm.

4 Q. And are you an OJTI?

5 A. (No verbal response).

6 Q. And how often -- how do I say this? How many -- how --
7 percentage of your time working is spent training versus pro time?

8 A. Well, I mean, it always differs, you know, from year to year.
9 But I would say currently three or four of the six days I work is
10 probably training.

11 Q. Perfect segue into my next question. How much overtime do
12 you work and are you on the call list?

13 A. Yes, and how much, oh man, every week I guess. A lot of ten-
14 hour days.

15 Q. Okay, I was just about to ask your -- it's like you're
16 reading my mind here. Next question. All right. Okay, so I got
17 the overtime.

18 And what is your typical work schedule throughout the week,
19 your RDOs?

20 A. Sunday 3:00-11:00, Monday 2:00-10:00. Do you need me to slow
21 down?

22 Q. Nope.

23 A. Okay. Tuesday 12:00-8:00, Wednesday 9:00-5:00, Thursday
24 6:00-2:00. And then, usually morning shift but sometimes night
25 shift on Friday overtime; off Saturday.

- 1 Q. Okay. So, you don't typically work mids?
- 2 A. No, not anymore.
- 3 Q. Okay, and you were on your normal scheduled shift that day?
- 4 That would have been a Wednesday.
- 5 A. I don't recall, but.
- 6 Q. Okay.
- 7 A. Something. When, when did the event take place? What time?
- 8 Q. It was 8:30 in the morning.
- 9 A. Yeah.
- 10 Q. Yeah, so it was like it happened a little bit before. So,
- 11 you have a flex time I would assume.
- 12 A. Right.
- 13 Q. Okay.
- 14 A. Yeah.
- 15 Q. All right, and you were on the -- okay, so at the time of the
- 16 incident, you were not on position. Is that correct? When the
- 17 incident actually occurred, not the call.
- 18 A. Not reporting.
- 19 Q. Yes, not reporting.
- 20 A. Actually happened?
- 21 Q. Actually happened.
- 22 A. No. Yeah, I was not there yet. No.
- 23 Q. Okay, and --
- 24 A. Not that I recall.
- 25 Q. Okay. So, when you took the CIC position, did you receive a,

1 a briefing on the position?

2 A. I believe so.

3 Q. Okay. Now, is that briefing -- is it electronic, like in one
4 of your displays? Is it under glass, paper?

5 A. Is what?

6 Q. The briefing. The briefing checklist.

7 A. Oh, checklist. Yeah, there's an actual checklist that you
8 follow.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Placard you can grab.

11 Q. Okay, perfect. I totally just blanked on how to spell
12 placard.

13 Okay, and you weren't combined with any other positions at
14 the time? You just had CIC?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Okay, and I'm just clarifying here because we jumped into the
17 CIC. Again, not at the time of the incident but when the incident
18 was reported.

19 So, when you were made aware of the incident, you hadn't been
20 on position very long I don't think.

21 A. I don't think so.

22 Q. Okay. Based on your knowledge and experience within that
23 sector, how would you describe the -- we're going to ask volume
24 and complexity.

25 Volume of the traffic on a scale of one to five.

1 A. What is the volume typically?

2 Q. No.

3 A. Or that day?

4 Q. That day, that session.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. What was happening right then?

7 A. What I can recall, it was red at the time, which is not

8 abnormal for NEPTA, a lot of volume. So, I would say 4.5.

9 Q. 4.5, okay. And that's not -- you said that's not abnormal?

10 A. No, four to five is pretty normal; there's pushes. It's a

11 high-altitude sector, you know, typical.

12 Q. Okay. Now, complexity, same question.

13 A. Well, any time that -- with a warning area, was the special

14 use airspace active at the time?

15 Q. Up to 3-0-0.

16 A. Okay. Well, that always adds complexity obviously, and I

17 can't recall exactly what was active at the time.

18 There's usually about three different warning areas there.

19 There are 155, 151, 478, sometimes 253 to the west. And the other

20 test areas, I don't think they were active at the time.

21 But -- and anytime you add that, obviously complexity goes

22 up. I believe -- obviously there was weather there, a line of

23 weather. Complexity also goes up with that.

24 So, NEPTA is a pretty straightforward sector but at the time

25 -- what was the original question?

1 Q. The complexity one through five.

2 A. Complexity.

3 Q. Compared to normal.

4 A. I'll go four.

5 Q. Okay, let's see. How long after you became aware of -- aware
6 of the incident were you even relieved from position, just a
7 normal rotation, or?

8 A. I can't recall.

9 Q. Okay, and let's see. How would you describe your overall
10 health? Good, fair, poor, excellent?

11 A. Good.

12 Q. Good. Perfect answer. And did you feel well-rested for your
13 shift?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. Did you file an ATSAP for the event?

16 A. No.

17 Q. No? No, ATSAP? Okay. And was there anything, I mean aside
18 from the obvious complexity of the situation, anything in the
19 environment, anything in the control area that day that day that
20 would've been a distraction?

21 Like, there was an alarm going off over here, it was really
22 cold that day, or there was a tour going on.

23 A. No.

24 Q. No, okay. All right, so that's the basic questions.

25 Could you just walk us through the event from the time that

1 you took the CIC position until -- sorry, until after all the
2 information passed on?

3 So, after the OM became aware of it just up to the point
4 where there's relevant information, I guess.

5 A. Sure. So, I believe it started with Jefin who was at D-side
6 at the time, getting my attention somehow and saying this guy's
7 got severe turbulence; handed me a strip on the aircraft.

8 And then, he explained to me that it was in our airspace, but
9 it wasn't reported in our airspace. Miami called him and told
10 him, I believe that's what it was.

11 So, I was -- that's weird because I've never had it ever
12 where a significant weather event or an urgent PIREP has happened.
13 And then, ten minutes later whatever the timeframe was, it wasn't
14 reported with us.

15 So, the main thing I just wanted to make sure it was reported
16 at Miami Center; they got it. And so, then they're entering the
17 urgent PIREP on their system. They're going off of the bells and
18 whistles and I wasn't sure if I was supposed to do something with
19 it at the time.

20 I don't know how many minutes had passed, maybe a couple.
21 And, and I went over and kind of talked to Jefin again and Jud,
22 and just tried to clarify, you know, where do we think it
23 happened, was it relative to weather.

24 And then, I went back. A couple of minutes had passed.
25 Danny Deremer came down; I believe he was the OM at the time if

1 I'm correct.

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. It was him? And then, he asked me, did you guys get a severe
4 turbulence? And I said, well, we didn't get it, Miami Center it
5 was reported to. And then, they told about it, but it was in our
6 airspace. And he said, okay. And I said, yeah, strange.

7 And I said, I verified it a couple of different times to make
8 sure that we didn't get it in our airspace or while we were
9 talking to the aircraft. And he said, no, I don't think that's
10 how -- yeah, I think that's how it happened also. And I said,
11 okay.

12 And then, I want to say that was the end of it from my side.

13 Q. Okay. Humor me here for a second. Let's say you're working
14 the CIC in that area and an urgent PIREP for severe turbulence
15 comes through. Immediately after it happens, you are notified it.

16 As a CIC, what are your responsibilities from that point?

17 A. Get the strip on the aircraft. I think when it's an urgent
18 PIREP we have to fill out the actual paper form, attach the strip
19 to the paper form, and instead of giving it to the weather unit
20 which we typically do, I believe the urgent PIREP has to go to the
21 OM at the time.

22 And then, he does whatever he or she does, whatever they do.
23 And then, they pass it off to the weather management unit, I
24 believe.

25 Q. Okay. So, there was some confusion because it wasn't

1 reported in -- on your frequency to your facility even though it
2 happened in, in your airspace.

3 A. Yeah.

4 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. I'm actually going to go ahead and pass
5 it on now just because I know these guys have some great questions
6 lined up.

7 Did you have any questions, Mike?

8 BY MR. RICHARDS:

9 Q. Quickly, just two. So, you -- D-side advised you -- so,
10 we're talking about the event and time. D-side advised you that
11 Miami took the PIREP report of severe turbulence from the aircraft
12 accident there.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Did you confirm that Miami put it into the system?

15 A. Did I confirm with who, the D-side?

16 Q. With Miami, with anybody.

17 A. I typically don't confirm with other air traffic controllers
18 if they've done their job correctly. So, the answer is no.

19 Q. Did you see that severe pilot report pop up anywhere within
20 Jacksonville Center following the event?

21 A. I, I wasn't looking for it. So, I -- obviously, I was aware
22 of it when they told me. I hadn't seen it before that if that's
23 what you're asking.

24 Q. Okay. So, she had asked you about urgent pilot reports.

25 When a -- when a controller receives a non-urgent pilot report, is

1 that something that you, the CIC, would get involved with, with
2 that process?

3 A. It's possible --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- that they can say, I'm too busy to put this in or I've got
6 other stuff going on. Can you come over and put it in? Put it in
7 meaning, there's an ERIDs where we have to walk over to the
8 sector --

9 Q. Got you.

10 A. -- relay the information, put in the ERIDs which I'd say
11 typically that's the only way where a normal PIREP would be
12 brought to the CIC's attention.

13 Q. Is the most -- is the most common procedure for the
14 controller to enter a non-urgent PIREP into the ERIDs?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. That's all right. The most common way that a non-urgent
17 PIREP will enter the system is by the controller entering it into
18 the ERIDs directly.

19 A. Yes.

20 MR. RICHARDS: Okay. I think we're clear on that.

21 MS. RUPNIK: All right.

22 MR. PALM: I concur.

23 MR. RICHARDS: Right, I think -- I think we got you. Go
24 ahead.

25 MR. WINTER: We'll stay -- we'll stay on -- well, actually

1 the PIREP plan thing.

2 BY MR. WINTER:

3 Q. Did Miami Center ever call you?

4 A. Did Miami Center OM call --

5 Q. Oh, no. I'm assuming --

6 A. -- or a supe call me?

7 Q. Area to Area. Miami Center to Jacksonville Center.

8 A. I don't recall. I don't think so, but I don't recall.

9 Q. No, I, I get it; it was a month ago.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And stuff started going on. Did you guys talk about Sector

12 30 with PRB when you got -- when you relieved the other CIC, did

13 you guys talk about it at all?

14 A. I don't recall.

15 Q. Which --

16 A. No, I don't recall.

17 Q. Yeah, and, and it's perfectly reasonable. I mean, it's been

18 like a month almost.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Okay. You also said Sector 30 is alerted a lot.

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. If another sector in your area was alerted, like 30, alerted

23 for a time period, what would you do typically as a CIC?

24 A. Well, if the sector needs split first option, D-side first

25 option. Then, sometimes go to Flow; ask if there's any

1 restrictions they can put out. That's about it.

2 Q. Did you talk to TMU about Sector 30 while you were at the
3 desk yourself that day?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Do you feel like you're desensitized to Sector 30 being
6 alerted, as in you're used to seeing it all the time where it's
7 kind of (indiscernible)?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. All right.

10 A. Probably.

11 MR. WINTER: That's all I've got. Thank you.

12 BY MR. DAVIDS:

13 Q. Going through your training for CIC. When, when you became a
14 CIC this was -- how long ago did you become a CIC?

15 A. Man, I don't remember a month ago. The CIC training I took
16 probably was, oh man, 12 years ago, 13 maybe. I can recall a
17 supervisor training me behind the desk.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. I don't know if I took any eLMS on it. That's pretty much
20 it.

21 Q. Do you do any CIC refresher ever?

22 A. I believe there's a CIC refresher, yeah.

23 Q. Okay. Do OSs kind of go over how to handle certain
24 situations during this refresher, or is it just the eLMS?

25 A. I believe it is just the eLMS.

1 Q. Yeah, okay. You kind of answered my questions on
2 restrictions.

3 Do you -- how -- okay, I'll ask this. As a CIC when you go
4 up to TMU and you say, listen man, this sector is getting
5 overloaded?

6 Do you feel like you're getting the help you need as far as
7 restrictions, flow management, whatever, whatever it is that you
8 need?

9 MR. PALM: Has anyone talked to you guys about Sector 30
10 previously before the map numbers were updated and correct? Has
11 anyone brought that up?

12 MR. WINTER: Did you say updated incorrectly?

13 MR. PALM: Updated and corrected.

14 MR. WINTER: Oh, and corrected.

15 MR. PALM: Yeah. If they didn't, I'll just shortly go into
16 it.

17 NEPTA is probably about this long of a sector, about like
18 this (indiscernible) the warning areas; sea breeze owns them. A
19 large portion I'd probably say about three-fourths, maybe you
20 know, even more than that.

21 But when it went active before, the only numbers that would
22 count would just be the ones that were on the airways below. When
23 the airspace went cold and there's still a ton of volume in it
24 where the warning errors would be, those didn't get mapped
25 correctly. It would show eight.

1 And this was -- this was probably changed the past three
2 years, we'll say, four years. I can't recall. But it used to say
3 eight and there would be 22 aircraft in it because the map numbers
4 were not depicting the correct -- because that airspace was
5 assigned to the approach control. They've since fixed that.

6 So, before a TMU honestly didn't really understand what NEPTA
7 was, how it got busy, why it got busy up until the last few years.

8 So, I'd say we're slowly getting it to the point where NEPTA
9 is getting more attention as it needs. A lot of more aircraft are
10 getting their over-water permits; more volume is coming into
11 NEPTA.

12 So, when I go up to TMU and talk to them about it before,
13 they didn't really have a ton of answers. I'd say they're better
14 now than they were.

15 So, it's a slow process obviously in the FAA of getting
16 things -- the, the norms changing to what is happening currently.
17 So, I would say we're getting there on TMU, you know. Kind of
18 have some ideas to help us out, departure, flow, rerouting
19 aircraft.

20 BY MR. DAVIDS:

21 Q. Okay. But as far as when you're CIC, and you're seeing
22 someone overloaded and you're like, help, do you feel like now
23 you're getting the help you need?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And then, I just want to clarify. So, OM Danny came down

1 while you were getting -- you were -- basically you found out
2 about it. You were getting all the information and that's when
3 Danny came down, right, kind of while you were -- while you were
4 still --

5 A. Yeah, I mean honestly I, I -- it was a couple of minutes
6 because I -- it was weird the way that it happened. I've never --
7 I've never had anything like that like I've previously stated.

8 So, I kind of confirmed a couple of times, is this what
9 happened, or are we sure this happened? Miami took it. I was
10 just kind of processing everything in my mind and I would say,
11 yeah, a few minutes after that Danny came down and talked to me
12 about it.

13 MR. DAVIDS: Cool. Thank you.

14 MS. RUPNIK: Chris?

15 BY MR. ROSATI:

16 Q. Have you seen the replay by chance?

17 A. No, I don't -- no, I don't think so.

18 Q. Okay. Were you issued a PROC or anything for this incident?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay. So, with the radio issues that are going on with
21 Sector 30, do you think that the facility has done enough to
22 mitigate all the factors that are happening with that radio issue?

23 Are they -- are they helping your area while you're dealing
24 with a temporary radio tower?

25 A. You know, I don't really know what their options are so I

1 can't in good faith say they're doing what they should be doing or
2 doing above and beyond what they could be doing.

3 What I will say is there was a day three months ago, four
4 months ago, five months ago where Houston Center, which Leeville
5 is right to the west -- that H24, they were having some problems
6 with their frequency.

7 It was still manageable, but they decided we're going to
8 reroute all the aircraft north of Leeville into Mobile and
9 Hattiesburg, or to the south for, I want to say eight hours. I
10 honestly don't remember how long it was, but it was a very long
11 timeframe.

12 I feel like we deal with a bad frequency over there every
13 single day. And it's, it's up and down, but we are so focused on
14 being right 100 percent of the time, issuing everything correctly,
15 doing our job correctly that when that frequency isn't 100 percent
16 and we know it when we're dealing with it, it's frustrating.

17 I think it adds unsafe conditions at times, but we just deal
18 with it because what else are you going to do?

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. I know people filed ATSAPs. It's now a bigger issue than it
21 was, which is good.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. More eyes are on it, so I think it's trending in, in the
24 right direction. But to say if they're doing the best they can, I
25 don't know.

1 Q. Okay. So, do you -- have you been made aware of whether or
2 not they've adjusted map numbers of anything since the incident?

3 A. Yeah, I know -- I don't -- and I don't know of if it was
4 since the incident, but I know they've taken map numbers. I
5 believe they were 24 before. I believe it's down to 20 now.

6 I don't know if that -- I don't know. I don't know when map
7 numbers reset so I don't know if they're continuously doing it or
8 if it's something they do every day or if it's going to be every
9 day here on out.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. But I know it's changed.

12 Q. Okay. I don't know how to word this. So, let's say on a
13 normal day there's no weather. There's no weather adding
14 complexity to the sector.

15 Is -- does the frequency hinder the controller's ability to
16 be able to manage that sector effectively?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay, and so on a bad weather day then that --

19 A. Oh, yeah.

20 Q. -- gets impacted. Okay, excellent. And do you think that
21 there's anything else that could be done to manage that sector a
22 little bit better?

23 A. I mean, obviously we're working on an ultra-high; that would
24 be great. Manage it. Currently, I mean, departure restrictions
25 out of South Florida; I know they use that sometimes rerouting

1 aircraft. It's, it's hard because they can't go south that much

2 --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. -- you know, into non-radar.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. And they can't -- well, not that they can't but rerouting the
7 north is lengthy, you know, especially for Texas, Arizona
8 arrivals.

9 You know, we all complain a lot about it, right?

10 Q. Yeah, yeah.

11 A. So, I don't know. I try to be a positive person most of the
12 time but, you know, I would say there probably are better ways to
13 handle NEPTA as is.

14 Obviously, moving forward I think through all this, the
15 frequency, hopefully we'll get there. I don't know what the
16 endpoint is, I don't know the answer is.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. But at least there's people talking about it now and figuring
19 it out.

20 Q. So, let's say you were back working -- or you were a CIC
21 again overseeing that sector. The CIC that you relieve says, hey,
22 R30's been red for an hour and a half already; there's deviations
23 everywhere. Keep an eye on that, and --

24 A. Was it red for an hour and a half, or are you -- are you
25 saying just --

1 Q. I'm throwing that out there.

2 A. Oh, okay. Got you.

3 Q. I don't know how long it was red off the top of my head. But
4 we'll just say that. You -- and you know that TMU's got your back
5 no matter what, right? I'm going to TMU, I'm going to ask for
6 this, they're going to give it to me.

7 What would you ask for in order to help manage that sector?

8 A. I think some things I just already talked about. Departures,
9 miles-in-trail, miles-in-trail, receiving.

10 Tampa's -- one thing they do a lot now is they'll try to get
11 Tampa -- we, we descend Tampa's down to 33 before they get to
12 Miami. Sometimes they'll have Houston getting down to 37, 35,
13 that type of thing.

14 I don't know, that's about it.

15 Q. What I --

16 A. When I go to TMU, I hope they have the answers sometimes, you
17 know.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. But that's what I would suggest.

20 Q. Historically, in that sector have you seen miles-in-trail
21 coming into that sector from Miami?

22 A. No. We'll do pass backs on -- if we have Dallas Fort Worth,
23 Intercontinental in-trail. That doesn't happen very often. The
24 in-trail typically is a lot of South Florida, so we'll pass it
25 back to Houston. Sometimes we will, sometimes we won't, you know.

1 But I would say in-trail specifically regarding the NEPTA
2 sector --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. -- it doesn't happen very often.

5 MR. ROSATI: Okay, And -- I just lost my train of thought.
6 Yep, it's gone.

7 MR. PALM: We can take a break if you need to.

8 MR. ROSATI: Yeah, thank you. Yeah.

9 MR. PALM: All right.

10 MR. ROSATI: I'll pass for now.

11 MS. RUPNIK: Mark?

12 BY MR. RIOS:

13 Q. You had mentioned when you came back as a CIC that the D-side
14 advised you of the event that had occurred? Who was at D-side
15 again?

16 A. Jefin.

17 Q. Okay, and is -- and the last name?

18 A. Jacobs.

19 Q. Jacobs, okay? Thank you. And when you received that
20 information, you mentioned that you were not quite sure what to do
21 with that information.

22 Could you expound upon that a little bit?

23 A. Well, when I said I wasn't quite sure what to do with that
24 information I didn't mean I'm unaware to do -- what to do in that
25 situation. What I meant was it's strange.

1 And I wouldn't say strange. It's never happened before where
2 an urgent PIREP has taken place, and then 10 to 12 minutes,
3 however long it was I don't recall, that's when it gets reported.

4 So, when something that strange happens, what I like to do is
5 kind of take a step back and think about, okay, what could've
6 happened where somebody made a mistake, said the wrong radiale,
7 said the wrong distance, said the wrong aircraft name, the CIDs
8 got mixed up.

9 You know, kind of figure out was there a mistake made in the
10 process as to where something that's never happened before in my
11 17 years has now happened. Let's clarify everything and then we
12 can move forward through that. That's what I meant.

13 Q. Thank you. Were you -- on that day or any other day, were
14 you requested to wear a cordless headset?

15 A. Previously, there have been days where I've been requested to
16 wear a cordless headset. That day, I do not believe that was
17 requested of me.

18 Q. Okay, and when the -- have you ever been requested to go to
19 standup? And if, if not, how do you receive that key information
20 that's discussed at standup if you're a CIC?

21 A. Have been I been requested to go to stand up in the past?
22 That's, that's what the question was?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. No, that I can recall.

25 Q. And so, how is that, that information that's discussed at

1 standup relayed back to you as CIC?

2 A. A lot of times if there's a supervisor in the North Area that
3 goes, they'll come back and kind of tell us some objects in it. A
4 lot of the information that we would get at standup is in the
5 weather briefing that we take pre-duty.

6 So, I would say that's how we get most of that information
7 before even taking a position. You know, we have to do the pre-
8 duty weather brief.

9 Q. Let's see if I've got another question. Oh, you mentioned
10 that when the example used when Houston Center had a frequency
11 problem that, you know, traffic was rerouted; some kind of
12 mitigation was taken.

13 Since this Sector 30 radio issue has, has been occurring for
14 the past, I believe it was eight, nine months, do you know of any
15 mitigations like that have been taken to address the radio
16 frequency problem in Sector 30?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Or were they operating --

19 A. Nothing like that has happened as to where they say, route
20 every single aircraft out of 30's airspace, no exceptions.
21 Nothing like that has happened.

22 Q. Let me phrase it in a way of is there any kind of mitigations
23 that were taken because of that radio issue coming into Sector 30?

24 A. Yeah, yeah there has been.

25 Q. What are they?

1 A. Lowering the map numbers; that's taken place. I know there's
2 been lots of times where we get sheets sent to sector at the SOC
3 Tech OPS if you know what that is.

4 I'll say, you know, write down any clipping that happens with
5 this frequency. A lot of times clipping is at the front or the
6 back of the message that's being cut off.

7 So, right now what happens here, a lot of times they'll say
8 where, where is the aircraft? What altitude, call sign? With
9 that what they do with that information I don't know, but we
10 filled out a lot of those sheets on sector for the frequency.

11 MR. RIOS: Okay, thank you.

12 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Thanks, Mark. Which do I -- where do I
13 want to go first?

14 BY MS. RUPNIK:

15 Q. You mentioned the pre-duty weather briefing. As a
16 controller, as a CIC, how, how useful is the pre-duty weather
17 briefing for you personally in preparing for your day?

18 A. It's very useful.

19 Q. Very useful?

20 A. Mm-hm.

21 Q. Okay. Was there anything about it that maybe you'd like to
22 see different? Do they do any sort of -- because I know that the
23 one goes out for the whole center.

24 Do they do anything specific with specific areas?

25 A. Yeah, I believe the, the forecasted -- you know, as, as

1 PIREPs are forecasted where you have to solicit PIREPs, you know,
2 to 5,000, five miles, volcanic ash, wind sheer, icing, turbulence
3 moderate degree or greater.

4 I think those are forecasted out. And it says each area,
5 west, central, north, and it has an X on if you're forecasted for
6 these conditions.

7 So, to that answer of if it's very specific?

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Yeah, that's, that's --

11 A. That portion.

12 Q. -- that portion, yeah.

13 A. They do. You know, obviously if the ceilings are low they'll
14 forecast that. I believe that there's a future radar that rolls
15 through which is pretty nice.

16 So, no I don't think I can have any other additions to it.

17 Q. Okay. CIC responsibilities. Are you as a CIC directed or
18 able to give on-the-spot corrections?

19 A. Able to, yes. Directed by, by management?

20 Q. By your training? Like, was it part of your training that
21 you need -- that you need to give on-the-spot corrections?

22 A. Again, 12, 13 years ago, don't fully recall.

23 Q. Understood.

24 A. So, I can't say I know the answer to it.

25 Q. I understand completely. All right, so you said that you,

1 you are an OJTI. Is R30 typically the last sector that people
2 train on? Is it somewhere in the middle?

3 A. I would say middle.

4 Q. Somewhere in the middle?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay. Where would you say it ranks as far as these sectors,
7 the normal sector split in that area and the training progression
8 as far as learning curve?

9 And I mean, I'm talking about all-encompassing. Like, when
10 it's normal, hi bye, versus a day like April 3rd.

11 A. What was the question again?

12 Q. Compared to the other sectors, what would you say the
13 learning curve is for NEPTA?

14 A. I think -- I think NETPA's pretty straightforward.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. It's got a lot of volume. On the normal day, pretty simple;
17 hi and bye like you said. On a weather day, especially with
18 active military space, it can be very complex, especially with bad
19 rides.

20 So, I don't -- I don't know if there's a good answer to cover
21 all what is the learning curve. I would say it has
22 characteristics that are challenging at times.

23 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. You actually answered my questions
24 perfectly, so good job. That's all the questions I have.

25 MS. KOSCHIG: All right, I'm going to ask you some dumb

1 questions, but I can't make any assumptions.

2 MR. PALM: I love those.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: Oh, no.

4 MR. PALM: Are we allowed to make fun of you, or is that like
5 HR stuff that --

6 MS. KOSCHIG: No, you can make --

7 MR. PALM: All right.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: You can make fun of me.

9 MR. PALM: Yeah.

10 MS. KOSCHIG: I can take it, man.

11 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

12 Q. But so, why do you call it NEPTA, the sectors?

13 A. Specifically, with NEPTA, I honestly don't know.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. It's usually if you're asking in general what the town is;
16 there's a town somewhere around there.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. And that's usually how it goes. NEPTA, I don't know.

19 Q. Yes. All right. Yeah, I was just curious about that. The
20 other thing, another dumb one. So -- and this is because I just
21 need to get you to, to say it instead of me assuming.

22 So, when would you expect a pilot to report severe
23 turbulence?

24 A. Well, you know, there's a lot of things going on in a cabin
25 when that happens, you know. Obviously, the pilot in control is

1 making sure, you now, the plane is not damaged. Obviously,
2 injuries on board, injuries to the pilot, aircraft characteristics
3 and what's going on there.

4 So, I would say a lot of stuff is happening.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. It's, it's a pretty quick thing. I hate turbulence, so I'm
7 trying to think about it when I'm on an aircraft.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. I would say one to two minutes as to where they advise ATC.

10 Q. Awesome.

11 A. And sometimes when there's loss of altitude or gain of
12 altitude, I would say quicker.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Because they want to make sure that nobody else is around
15 them at the time.

16 Q. Which is what made this really strange?

17 A. Strange, yeah.

18 Q. Yeah. Okay.

19 A. Uncommon.

20 Q. Yeah, and also do you think with the frequency issue that
21 management just kind of like, well, this was just something going
22 on?

23 Do you think that they're, they're still remaining -- they're
24 taking it serious at your -- I mean, are they just becoming, oh
25 well, it's just -- it's going on. We -- there's not a lot we can

1 do.

2 A. I don't know the process well enough as to where this person
3 has to be contacted, this person has to put in this, these sites
4 have to change over here, the funding for this has to happen.
5 Everyone's doing their job, you know, subsequently.

6 I'll say, I hope they are. I don't know if they are.

7 Q. Do you feel like they're -- do you -- I think you were asking
8 him to write things down. Are you they coming back -- do you know
9 if management is actually looking at it at times, or are there
10 just -- it's just something passed down on a log and that's --
11 you're just waiting for something?

12 A. I wish -- I don't know the answer to that question.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. But whatever is happening, I wish it would happen sooner, as
15 does every other air traffic controller in that area, right?

16 Q. Exactly, exactly.

17 A. It's taking so long, and it seems -- I, I think I heard a
18 date of January of 2025 as to when they're looking.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Which is disheartening at least.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. So --

23 Q. It doesn't help.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. What else? PROCs. How often does you --

1 MR. PALM: Does that -- I'm sorry. I just have to ask this
2 question.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: PROCs.

4 MS. RUPNIK: PROCs.

5 MR. PALM: That's what I want to -- we call them PROCs here,
6 but other facilities call them P-Rocks. I'm trying to figure out
7 what the delineation is.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: I'm trying to figure that one out. I kind of
9 thought it was --

10 MR. DAVIDS: She's been surrounded by me, and I say P-Rock.

11 MR. PALM: Okay. What do they say in Washington?

12 MR. DAVIDS: P-Rock.

13 MR. PALM: PROC. P-Rock.

14 MR. DAVIDS: P-Rock.

15 MR. PALM: P-Rock.

16 MS. RUPNIK: I was thinking about --

17 MS. KOSCHIG: It's kind of like P-ee-can and Pec-ah-n.

18 MR. PALM: Sure, yeah.

19 MS. KOSCHIG: I don't know which one it's called, but --

20 MR. DAVIDS: It's like bang in, bang out.

21 MR. PALM: Yeah.

22 MR. DAVIDS: All right, that's where we are.

23 MS. RUPNIK: Exactly.

24 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay.

25 MR. DAVIDS: Standup comedy.

1 MS. KOSCHIG: So, P-Rock/PROCs.

2 MR. PALM: Yeah.

3 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

4 Q. How often do you get -- how often are those given out roughly
5 as to say out -- offering one of those?

6 A. I, I really don't know. It's, it's a management aspect
7 typically. So, I really couldn't give you an answer as to when or
8 how often they are.

9 Q. Okay. As the CIC, would you have any input to a PROC?

10 A. I've never been asked my opinion or to regurgitate anything
11 for a PROC.

12 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay.

13 BY MS. RUPNIK:

14 Q. If you saw somebody do something exceptional, would you say
15 to the supe, hey, my guy over here did something great.

16 A. I have before.

17 Q. Have you ever considered it?

18 A. Yeah.

19 MS. RUPNIK: Okay.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. I think that's all I have. Thank you.

21 MR. PALM: Yep.

22 MS. KOSCHIG: Not too many dumb questions.

23 MR. PALM: You were great.

24 MR. RICHARDS: You guys actually asked all the questions I
25 was thinking about. So, thank you for that.

1 BY MR. RICHARDS:

2 Q. I guess just one question, and you may have already answered
3 this and I missed it so hopefully this isn't redundant.

4 But when, when the D-side advised you of the severe report he
5 got from Miami, did he relay that there were injuries onboard?

6 A. I can't recall. I know I was aware of the injuries -- of, of
7 an injury at some point in that. I don't know if it was
8 specifically the first interaction I had with Jefin that he
9 mentioned it.

10 He had -- he -- I'm going to say I really don't recall. But
11 either he did, or Jud did soon thereafter we learned -- you know,
12 it was told to me about it.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Yeah.

15 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you. That's it.

16 BY MR. WINTER:

17 Q. Just one quick follow up on the map. You might have said it
18 already too when they lowered it. When was that?

19 A. I think last week.

20 Q. Last week?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay, and that wasn't an end result of the warning area not
23 being counted? We had the same problem --

24 A. Oh, no. That thing's like four years old.

25 Q. -- once before.

1 A. Yeah, that's, that's been fixed and that's all straightened
2 out, but yeah.

3 Q. This is, they just lower the map --

4 A. I believe so.

5 MR. WINTER: Okay.

6 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Corey?

7 BY MR. DAVIDS:

8 Q. Continuing on the PROCs.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Are they a thing here? Is that a thing here, PROCs? Do you
11 -- do you -- do controllers get a lot of good PROCs, bad PROCs?

12 A. Are you asking me, like, how good to bad ratio?

13 Q. Just in general, are controllers getting good, bad,
14 indifferent?

15 A. I, I don't really know because it's not something I commonly
16 talk -- like people talk about, I guess.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. And I wouldn't know if they're getting the PROCs because I'm
19 not management per se.

20 Q. IPM in general, right?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. It's taught that management to controller, management to
23 management. Do you feel that IPM is -- do you know what IPM is?

24 A. Individual Performance Management?

25 Q. Yeah. Are the conversations about how you guys are doing,

1 how great you're doing, how bad you're doing, how great
2 management's doing, how bad management's doing?

3 A. Wow. How often do I complain about management? I'm telling
4 you I can't say anything because -- no.

5 Q. No.

6 A. Sorry, joking aside, it's -- it doesn't come up a lot. I
7 don't think Individual Performance Management comes up a lot
8 personally.

9 Q. You guys get at-a-boys?

10 A. No, not usually. Very few and far between.

11 Q. Slaps on the wrist?

12 A. No. You know, I mean, I -- from my perspective?

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. It doesn't happen a lot. I'm an extremely good air traffic
15 controller, so I can't say that I've had a ton of negative PROCs
16 in my career.

17 I mean, maybe. I honestly can't remember if I have had any
18 negative PROCs in my career. But in general, I've heard of it
19 happening but not very often.

20 Q. Okay, and as far as your interaction -- because you're not a
21 part of the local safety council, right?

22 A. Currently, no.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I was before.

25 Q. You were before?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. So, maybe this may be different. But what's your interaction
3 with the local safety council? If there's something that you feel
4 is unsafe, something that this frequency issue?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Or the sectors. Are you guys -- do you feel like you have an
7 avenue to take through a local safety council to try and get
8 something done?

9 A. I don't know that many people would report it to local safety
10 council.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I would say the avenue is ATSAP --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. -- that they typically use from what I've heard. But I think
15 we do have that thing. I know we do have local safety council
16 meetings monthly. That just started three or four months ago if
17 I'm spit balling

18 It used to happen a lot, then COVID hit; things changed so we
19 got away from it for a while, and now we're starting back up.

20 Q. And then, as far as issues in general in the building, going
21 to your area rep, going to the supervisor, do you feel like issues
22 are being answered when brought to the appropriate person?

23 A. It -- just in general, or are we speaking about just NEPTA?

24 Q. In general.

25 A. Okay. Things take longer than they should. I don't know if

1 that's just a government thing, a Jax Center thing.

2 But I wish the problems that we bring up would have at least
3 an answer at some point, and a sooner answer that it'll help
4 solve.

5
6 Because it's, it's one thing to say, here's my problem and a
7 person says, okay I understand and then nothing ever happens. So,
8 then you say, hey, what about my problem? And then, oh I've got
9 it. I've got it. And then, nothing ever happens.

10 It would be really nice if this is my problem. Okay, got it,
11 and then a follow up happens as to where I don't have to keep
12 going to management or area reps and saying, hey, what is this?
13 What are we doing about this? How is this happening?

14 Union side's great, but I would say management could be
15 better at follow up, fixes in general.

16 MR. DAVIDS: Okay.

17 BY MR. WINTER:

18 Q. Okay, question. LSC, do they have an office here, or do they
19 meet?

20 A. They have an office that I think we used to meet weekly.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I don't know if they do anymore. Years ago, we would meet
23 weekly in an office that is used by a lot of different people.

24 Q. Yep.

25 A. I don't think they have their own specific office as your

1 answer.

2 Q. And because you said earlier that people don't normally go to
3 the LSC room to report things.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Why do you think that is?

6 A. Well, why do I think that is? Like you said, if you want to
7 go to an OM, you know who the OM is. If you want to go to Tony, I
8 know where Tony is. They have offices, they have dedicated
9 spaces; LSC doesn't.

10 So, if you even know the people that are currently on it then
11 it's, hey Mark, hey Sally Jo, talk to me real quick in passing,
12 you know.

13 Q. So, there's nobody you report it to.

14 A. It's not.

15 Q. It's not nobody -- well, I'll say at Washington Center --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- they're there every Monday, Wednesday -- Monday, Tuesday,
18 Wednesday they're in office.

19 A. Oh, yeah. I have -- no one knows when they meet.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. At least, I don't know. I wouldn't say it was general
22 knowledge that when they meet we know.

23 MR. WINTER: Right. Okay. Good enough, thanks.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Chris?

25 BY MR. ROSATI:

1 Q. How -- how's the feed from Miami Center to NEPTA on a regular
2 basis? Do you feel like they're giving you stacks, overtakes?

3 A. Overtakes, stacks, yeah.

4 Q. If you feel you're supposed to be getting miles-in-trail.

5 A. Overtakes, yes, for sure.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. That sector just split months ago. So, it was a very busy
8 sector. I know some people who worked down there, and it was a
9 very challenging sector. It's split now as Leeville did
10 obviously; they also split.

11 But overtakes, yeah. I'd say that happens a lot more with
12 them than others.

13 MR. ROSATI: Okay, that's all I have.

14 MS. RUPNIK: Mark?

15 BY MR. RIOS:

16 Q. Follow up question on the map numbers. You mentioned the map
17 numbers were lowered for R30 about a week ago.

18 A. I believe so.

19 Q. Do you know if that was a permanent lowering of the map
20 number, or was that just plus, minus three, that the traffic
21 management can do without coordination?

22 A. I don't know if it's permanent. I don't know.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. That I just don't have the answer.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I don't -- I don't know when a map number is reset if they
2 reset, if it's something that they have to manually put in every
3 day. I don't know.

4 Q. Okay, in reference to the frequency update and the challenge,
5 or the work that's being done to try to restore that, are
6 controllers kept up to date on the status of that on a consistent
7 basis? And when was the last time that controllers were updated
8 on that issue being resolved?

9 A. No. And to the second part, I don't recall if there was an
10 update at all.

11 MR. RIOS: Okay, that's it. Thank you.

12 BY MS. RUPNIK:

13 Q. I'm just going to ask one more question here. Just going
14 back to, like, IPM stuff, management.

15 You've been here a while, so you've probably had a handful of
16 supervisors I'd imagine, yeah.

17 A. A lot.

18 Q. Yeah. So, you've had a lot of supervisors. How -- typically
19 are you given an opportunity to provide upward feedback? You seem
20 like a pretty confident guy.

21 Are you able to go to your supervisor and say, hey man, we
22 really need this or, you know, I could really use this?

23 A. Is there an opportunity for that?

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Always, I think so.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Because the supervisors there, I -- I've never had a time
3 where I've tried to talk to the supervisor, or the CIC and they
4 didn't listen.

5 Q. So, kind of like an open door sort of thing --

6 A. I believe so.

7 Q. -- if you have a concern? Okay.

8 MS. RUPNIK: That's actually all I have.

9 So, Betty I think we only had you go once. So, do you have
10 anything else?

11 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

12 Q. Yeah, I think I have one more. And I, I hope you didn't
13 already tell this since we've started.

14 But when the OM came down and he told you, oh, he's got this
15 -- what did he say? What did he tell you? He's got a report, or
16 what, what did he tell you?

17 A. Oh, what did he say? I don't recall specifically what he
18 said, but it was along the lines of he asked me, did we have a
19 severe turbulence. And that's when I told him, well, we didn't,
20 but Miami did and just told us about it a few minutes ago.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I don't -- I don't know how he, he heard about it.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I, I can't recall what he said was his initiation in it.

25 Q. All right. So, you did let him know that you already knew

1 about it from Miami.

2 A. Yeah.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Yep, that's all.

4 MS. RUPNIK: All right. I'm going to -- Mike did you have
5 anything else?

6 MR. RICHARDS: No. Thanks for your time.

7 MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Anybody else? Any, oh by the ways.
8 Corey?

9 MR. DAVIDS: I just have one more.

10 BY MR. DAVIDS:

11 Q. When you're CIC and there's something you have to report to
12 OM, how do you report?

13 A. I walk up there and verbally tell him.

14 BY MR. ROSATI:

15 Q. Okay. Do you guys do team briefings?

16 A. No.

17 Q. No? Okay.

18 A. We did a long time ago when we had a lot of staff.

19 Obviously, staffing's short everywhere now. But, no, we don't.

20 Q. Do you -- when you had the team briefings, do you recall
21 whether or not they were helpful, or were they just more of a
22 boondoggle?

23 A. I think they were helpful in a lot of different facets.

24 Bonding, talking about different situations that we've seen. How
25 did we handle this? What's the actual .65 rulings on certain

1 things? Different processes of it. Management's there,
2 supervisors are there that talks, engages.

3 I thought they were helpful, but they could be boondoggles if
4 you wanted to make it that. But in the sense of, if you wanted to
5 make it worthwhile, then you could.

6 Q. And do you think the facility would benefit from having
7 regular team briefings with the crews?

8 A. Yes, and no. It'd be great if we could have a weekly team
9 brief, but to pull five or six controllers --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. -- in an area that's already at their minimum staffing --

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. -- they probably usually below for half an hour, 45 minutes,
14 that's, that's -- isn't feasible at this point in my opinion.

15 MR. ROSATI: Got it. That's all I have.

16 MS. RUPNIK: Anybody else?

17 MR. WINTER: I have one. I actually have one more question.

18 BY MR. WINTER:

19 Q. You normally say when you've got to report something, you
20 have to walk up there. Do you have guys have cordless phones you
21 can use if I can ask?

22 A. We do.

23 Q. You do?

24 A. Those are new -- yeah.

25 MR. WINTER: Okay. I was just making sure. Okay, that's it.

1 MS. RUPNIK: All right, everybody good? All right, I will
2 show us off the record at 11:04 local.

3 (Whereupon, at 11:04 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: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
Interview of Tyler Palm

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Hilliard, Florida

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.



Denise Woodman
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY *

LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING *

Accident No.: DCA24FA143

TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF *

MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: KIMBERLY SULLIVAN, Quality Control Manager
Federal Aviation Administration

Jacksonville ATC Tower
Jacksonville, Florida

APPEARANCES:

RUTH RUPNIK, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Bureau

MIKE RICHARDS, Meteorologist
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK WINTER, Washington Center Quality Control
Federal Aviation Administration

CORY DAVIS, Aviation Safety Inspector
National Airports Corporation

CHRIS ROSATI, Aviation Safety Inspector
National Airports Corporation

MARK RIOS, Senior ATC Systems Program Manager
Southwest Airlines

BEN FINLEY, Representative
FAA Office of the Chief Counsel
(On behalf of Ms. Sullivan)

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:36 a.m.)

MS. RUPNIK: All right, I show the time is 0836 local, and we are on the record. Again, my name is Ruth Rupnik. I'm an Air Traffic Control Investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board, and can you please state your first and last name?

MS. SULLIVAN: Kimberly Sullivan.

MS. RUPNIK: Okay, and that's spelled how you think it would be spelled?

MS. SULLIVAN: Yes.

MS. RUPNIK: Okay. Thanks so much. I know you're super busy this week. We really appreciate you being here with us. So before we get started, I just want to make sure you're aware that the interviews are being recorded, is that correct?

MS. SULLIVAN: Yes.

MS. RUPNIK: We will have a transcription of the audio made. It will be sent off. Besides that, it does not leave our possession. It goes to the transcriptionist, comes back to us, we review the transcript, and then the audio will be destroyed. The transcript becomes part of the public record. The audio never becomes public. Would you like a copy of the transcript?

MS. SULLIVAN: Yes.

MS. RUPNIK: We'll get your email address before we leave after the interview. And I see you have a representative with you today, good morning Ben.

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1 MR. FINLEY: Good morning.

2 MS. RUPNIK: And once again please, can you state your name
3 and title?

4 MR. FINLEY: Ben Finley, Attorney Advisor, FAA Office of the
5 Chief Counsel.

6 MS. RUPNIK: Thank you. And just to be clear, this is the
7 representative you've chosen to be here with you today, right?
8 Okay. Any questions that we're asking obviously we want you to
9 answer. If you need to confer with Ben, feel free to do so. If
10 Ben needs to jump in and confer with you, just obviously we want
11 you to answer the questions. And if you need to confer privately,
12 we can either -- it's probably easier for us to step out since you
13 have the computer there, but we'll definitely work it out.

14 All right. So with the NTSB, we work in a party system. So
15 on this side of the table we're all actually NTSB, and this is all
16 the NTSB Air Traffic Group, however we have representatives,
17 subject matter experts from the FAA, NATCA, ASIs and Southwest
18 Airlines. And I think this is a great time for everybody to
19 introduce themselves.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: Good morning again. I'm Betty Koschig, NTSB
21 Air Traffic Control Investigator.

22 MR. RICHARDS: Mike Richards, NTSB Meteorology.

23 MR. WINTER: Mark Winter, QC Manager at Wash Center.

24 MR. DAVIS: Cory Davis, NATCA ASI, New York Center.

25 MR. ROSATI: Good morning, Christian Rosati from Oakland

1 Center, NATCA ASI.

2 MR. RIOS: And Mark Rios, Senior ATC Assistant Program
3 Manager for Southwest Airlines.

4 MS. RUPNIK: All right. I'm going to get that one right by
5 the end of the week. All right. So, as you can see, lots of
6 experts in the room, lots of experience, lots of entities
7 represented. However, for the purposes of this investigation, we
8 are all the NTSB Air Traffic Group. We at the NTSB don't do
9 anything unilaterally. We get concurrence from the group for
10 everything that we produce.

11 So the NTSB itself, we are a very small agency. We're an
12 independent agency. We don't report to the DOT or the FAA. We
13 report directly to Congress and our main goal is safety. We're
14 not here to assign blame or find fault, we're here to get the
15 facts. And we're here because you're the experts here. This is
16 your (indiscernible) and you know the ins and outs of us, so
17 you're here to educate us. It's an interview, it's not an
18 interrogation. We want to figure out what happened, why it
19 happened, and hopefully come up with some recommendations to
20 prevent things like this from happening in the future. And this
21 is not a Jackson Center isolated event. This is happening in
22 several facilities across the NAS, and so hopefully we can come up
23 with some ideas and mitigate the risk.

24 As far as what to expect during the interview, we're going to
25 go through some admin questions first. I just want to get to know

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1 you a little bit better professionally. And then -- so you were
2 not in the operation at the time of the event, is that correct?

3 MS. SULLIVAN: Right, correct.

4 MS. RUPNIK: Okay, so you're the Quality Control Manager, and
5 so we're questioning -- our line of questioning is going to be a
6 little bit different than if you were in the room, however we are
7 going to ask you, kind of, for an understanding of the event, et
8 cetera. Typically the interview lasts about an hour. If you need
9 to speak with Ben there, you need to go take a break, get a sip of
10 water, don't be shy, ask, and we'll take a break.

11 If at any point you have any questions for any of us, you
12 need us to rephrase the question or clarify, please ask. Tell us
13 what you know. Don't try to add in anything. Don't try to
14 speculate on anything. I don't know is a perfectly acceptable
15 answer. I don't recall is a perfectly acceptable answer. But for
16 sure, if you need clarification please ask us for that.

17 So we got over the basic structures, we've all introduced
18 ourselves. Do you have any questions for us before we get
19 started?

20 MS. SULLIVAN: No.

21 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Anybody else have anything before we
22 start? Okay. You will see we're all going to be kind of taking
23 notes while this is going on, either writing down or typing. I
24 didn't want you to think we're just in our computer and not paying
25 attention to you. We like to get the notes, and especially as we

1 go around the room to reference back. These notes get destroyed
2 before we leave the facility. They don't leave with us, so just
3 wanted to give you a heads up on that.

4 MS. SULLIVAN: All right. Thank you.

5 INTERVIEW OF KIMBERLY SULLIVAN

6 BY MS. RUPNIK:

7 Q. And what are your operating initials?

8 A. KM, kilo, mike.

9 Q. When did you start working with the FAA?

10 A. May 19th, 2002.

11 Q. And you came in as a controller?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. And did you go to the academy?

14 A. No, I went to the Marks School.

15 Q. Okay. Is that, I'm not familiar with that, is that a --

16 A. Minnesota, it's like a technical school. I don't know if
17 they still have it, but the Marks School --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's for enroute patrollers. I don't
19 think they do it anymore. But when I came in too, a lot of guys
20 (indiscernible).

21 MS. RUPNIK: Interesting, so it's not like a CTI or?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Kind of a different, and everyone who
23 came out of there was sharp.

24 MS. RUPNIK: Okay, awesome.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: At least everyone I've met from there,

1 sharp.

2 MS. RUPNIK: All right, cool. I learned something today.

3 BY MS. RUPNIK:

4 Q. So where all have you have you worked besides Jacksonville?

5 A. Just Jacksonville.

6 Q. Just Jacksonville? All right. And can you give us a little
7 snapshot, a professional history here, Jacksonville, what areas
8 you've been certified in, positions you've worked?

9 A. I was in the central area probably for about 10 years, and
10 then I'd get on supervisor and they moved me over to the Gulf
11 area. So I was there until two years ago, and then I got QC
12 Manager.

13 Q. Probably a little bit different being off the floor, huh?

14 A. Yeah, it's weird, but yeah, different.

15 Q. You still get some time to go down there, walk around, talk
16 to people?

17 A. Yes, I go down there every day.

18 Q. Okay, cool. Do you have any military service?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay. Any other ATC experience outside of the FAA or NAS
21 School?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Did you attend college?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay, where'd you go?

- 1 A. I went to Kennesaw State in Georgia, and I went to UNF.
- 2 Q. Okay. And what did you -- did you get a degree, and if so --
- 3 A. Two degrees in Marketing and Management.
- 4 Q. Awesome, okay. Do you have any other aeronautical licenses,
- 5 like are you a pilot or anything?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. Okay. And you're not required to have a medical for your
- 8 position, correct?
- 9 A. Not anymore, no.
- 10 Q. Okay. Who is your supervisor?
- 11 A. The AT (indiscernible) Harvey.
- 12 Q. Okay. All right, I'm going to hold onto that one. With your
- 13 position, are you required to work any overtime like if there's an
- 14 incident or something where you get called in?
- 15 A. I get comp time. I bring my computer home every day, so when
- 16 we do SRTs at night I can do it from home.
- 17 Q. Okay. And you work a typical administrator's schedule Monday
- 18 through Friday?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. And for your support group, obviously as a Quality Control
- 21 Manager, the support team, how many support managers do you have
- 22 and QC specialists?
- 23 A. Well, there's four support managers here. I have three
- 24 support specialists in QC, and then a MPA in QC.
- 25 Q. Oh, that's helpful.

1 A. Yeah, she does a lot of reports.

2 Q. Okay, those are all the admin questions I have. What I'd
3 like you to do now is just walk us through from the time you
4 became aware of the event, where you were, how you became aware of
5 it, and if you could -- you were a part of the SRT?

6 A. Oh, I mean I do the post-event checklist and then the ATM
7 reads it, and I'm just there to kind of --

8 Q. Okay. If you could walk us through the time you became aware
9 of the event until that point.

10 A. Okay. So we have a text stream or streamer we call it here
11 with all the OMs, me, the ATM, so when something happens they text
12 it out. So I saw that it got texted out to everyone
13 (indiscernible) RON said that potentially significant. He
14 reviewed it. Weather was called so I already know that we're
15 probably going to have SRT. So I start posting a checklist, I
16 gather all the information, talk to the OMs because they have to
17 see what the SUP is doing or the CIC is doing, all that kind of
18 stuff. So I fill that out, talk to the AG and the GMs to see if
19 we're having SRT because I'm going to be a little more thorough,
20 you know, trying to go through more stuff if we are, so they say
21 yes.

22 And I work with Shane to go through the post-event checklist
23 and see what kind of follow-up actions he wants because of this.
24 And I was in the office with him when he did the SRT, and he did
25 it all, but I'm just over there to the side in case they ask

1 questions and I can easily find it (indiscernible). So we did the
2 SRT and that was about it. And, you know, then we kind of move on
3 to the next situation.

4 Q. Okay. Comprehensive, I like it. I actually am going to pass
5 it on now to our FAA subject matter expert, Mark Winter. Mark?

6 BY MR. WINTER:

7 Q. One of the questions I was going to ask is about the SRT, and
8 I'll get into that too a little bit. I'm assuming we're probably
9 set up the same as your district. Are you also the District QC
10 Manager?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay, about how much of your time of your day, on an average
13 normal day, Monday through Friday, do you spend on district stuff?

14 A. Probably half my day. Other than Jacksonville Center, I do
15 all of the -- half of the day.

16 Q. So there's another District QC Manager?

17 A. Well, we just gone one last week, so I'm trying to train him,
18 but I haven't really -- I can't -- yes.

19 Q. So you were the District QC Manager?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. (Indiscernible)

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. So 50 percent of your day probably. I was going to ask you
24 how are you going to split the district facility-wise once he gets
25 trained up?

1 A. He's out of F-11, out of Orlando, so I'm hoping to give him
2 all the Orlando airports and Daytona, because Daytona's a lot of
3 work. So I'll give him those and I'll keep Jacksonville Center
4 and Lake Charles and Columbia. We've got Tallahassee. I think
5 we're just going to kind of split it and share what happens.

6 Q. Try to even it up a little bit?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Do you (indiscernible). Corrective action for weather here
9 in the past. They gave us a spreadsheet that was like past stuff
10 that has been closed out. Besides the one that's running now for
11 calling precip, have you had any other corrective action for that
12 here?

13 A. Like prior --

14 Q. Prior time stuff, the stuff that's been closed out earlier.

15 A. We closed out for PIREP-1. I'm categorizing this one as
16 PIREP because we still have the weather one, weather chats versus
17 open, so I can't have two of the same thing open in the CBA tool,
18 so I kind of had to pick PIREP for this new one that we're doing.
19 But we closed that one out I think in January, in December or
20 January --

21 Q. It was recently.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And what you have running for -- I'll read it to you if you
24 want, I know you don't have a computer in front of you. This was
25 for -- I'll get to the top -- controllers are not consistently

1 issuing pertinent information on observed weather; basically
2 calling the weather.

3 A. Right.

4 Q. There was a follow due towards the end of this month. Have
5 you pulled the monitoring data for that yet?

6 A. For the hazardous weather part? Yes, we just had our meeting
7 with QCG maybe two weeks ago on that. So we have it every 30
8 days. So the issue on that one is, this is called the phenomenon
9 which I feel like a lot of people have that issue lately because
10 I've seen a lot. So that's the only thing left on that, and we
11 started at -- some areas started at -- we do five random audits,
12 so they're like zero percent. Essentially it was at zero percent
13 for three weeks. And we were briefing them, you've got to see the
14 phenomenon and all that stuff, so that zero percent, it's like --
15 what is it, law of averages or whatever -- they've been 100
16 percent since January but those two months of zero percent is
17 dragging us down, so we're slowly creeping up. So hopefully by
18 the end of this month, the average will get up to 85 at least.
19 But that's the problem is the first two months, it was like that
20 zero percent was dragging us down.

21 Q. Yeah, no. We've been under corrective action for the same
22 thing for a year and see the same. It's hard to deal with. I
23 totally get it. Do you have any -- based on this recent event,
24 are you talking, are you guys planning on any extra corrective
25 action for weather?

1 A. Yes. I have a draft CAP in there which after this I have to
2 have a meeting with Shane, the ATM, to do the final okay. I have
3 met with QCG, Union (indiscernible), our Union Safety Rep, you
4 know, have been talking back and forth. So we have, I think, 10
5 mitigations and maybe like 11 monitoring plane items that I put in
6 there. There's one that's iffy that I had to let the FACREP and
7 them work out, kind of like, they're kind of arguing about it.
8 But the wording, we're working on the wording on one of them. So
9 once that's done, we'll have that started.

10 Q. So you (indiscernible) the loop first on the CAPs and then
11 they go up to Shane?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. How's your relationship with him?

14 A. Good.

15 Q. He kind of gets what he wants, you get what you want, that
16 kind of thing? Happy medium?

17 A. Yes, he's very -- he's been doing this a long time. I mean
18 I've been here two years, but he's very good at collecting data.
19 So like he comes with me with all that stuff because he knows I'm
20 busy doing the district on it, so he can focus on Jacksonville
21 Center so he's got more good stuff for me. That's good, I
22 appreciate that.

23 Q. So with all the district stuff you've had, you are the only
24 District QC Manager?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You deal with (indiscernible) center?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you think you have enough time to deal with the billing
4 itself?

5 A. Sometimes.

6 Q. Sometimes.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. The new QC Manager will help?

9 A. I hope so. He keeps saying he's going to retire, and I'm
10 like no, but yes.

11 Q. Okay. So kind of -- we're going to switch the LFCs for
12 (indiscernible). Who's the LFC lead for the management
13 (indiscernible)?

14 A. Me.

15 Q. Kind of describe like -- actually how often do you meet?

16 A. We meet twice a month. We do the first and third Wednesday,
17 and then we do the discussions with the workforce on the second
18 week. We might change it this month because the 1st was the first
19 Wednesday, so they kind of wanted more time to gather stuff up.

20 Q. And do you participate in those discussions with the
21 workforce statement?

22 A. Sometimes we do twice a day. Sometimes they'll come like the
23 first day, like one of them, you know, just to kind of like get in
24 here to see what they're doing, but I don't make it to all of
25 them.

1 Q. You're busy, I understand. So as far as the PIREPs go, you
2 closed out a CAP on that earlier. Have you reviewed the
3 dissemination process here recently?

4 A. Well we do a PIREP audit every week, so I send that up to the
5 District of all the facilities and us. Ours is a little different
6 than everybody else. Ours is different. We're supposed to get
7 one every two hours is what we decided on. We were going one per
8 hour, like the terminal, you know how they do one per hour of that
9 stuff, but we weren't doing that great with numbers because people
10 were getting it at like 1:59 thinking it counted at the 2 o'clock
11 hour. So they were getting two in this hour, and then one. So
12 then we kind of changed it to one every two hours to make it a
13 little more accurate. So we've been 80, usually all of our areas
14 are 85 percent and above every week for getting PIREPs. The
15 dissemination is hard. You know, we listen sometimes to the like
16 tapes and do little audits and stuff and see if they're telling
17 them about, you know, like hey, we've got -- it just depends who
18 you get, you know, when you audit it.

19 Q. It does.

20 A. Some people are really good at it. Some people, you know,
21 they're busy, they don't have time, some people don't. So it's
22 kind of --

23 Q. The new PID system, the PIREP (indiscernible), do you know
24 how that operates?

25 A. Well, I took a -- they did a Zoom call on what it is, so

1 that's all I've done so far. But I was hoping to go to either
2 Atlanta or Miami to look at it or something to figure out --

3 Q. We have it up. We're not using it yet, but I will tell you
4 it operates on an hourly basis.

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. I know you guys were going to do every two hours.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. The PID -- I mean there's no requirement, but it does
9 operate, it will go for, stay up for an hour, so that's what it's
10 going to do.

11 A. I hear it's easier --

12 Q. And I have the link to that if you want it. I'll give it to
13 you later.

14 A. Yeah.

15 MS. RUPNIK: I'm sorry, Mark, can you just say again what
16 that is, what that acronym stands for?

17 MR. WINTER: PIREP Information Display.

18 MS. RUPNIK: Excellent, thank you.

19 MR. WINTER: It graphically shows every sector, every area,
20 and if conditions warrant soliciting PIREP, it will show the box
21 as red.

22 MS. RUPNIK: It's a big TV on your wall and then you just say
23 oh --

24 MR. WINTER: You can even -- there's a link. You can have a
25 news desk, you can have a watch desk. We bought a bunch of

1 monitors and they're all hanging in the areas. So the controllers
2 now can look up and see if their sector is current. But it's
3 based on an hour because that's how they (indiscernible).

4 MS. RUPNIK: Thank you.

5 MR. WINTER: Yeah.

6 BY MR. WINTER:

7 Q. Do you know if a GI was put out for this event as far as --
8 the PIREP was reported to Miami Center. They put the PIREP in.
9 Do you know if a GI was put in for this event?

10 A. I don't know.

11 Q. So when you do your monitoring for the relayed precip CAP,
12 how do you get the data?

13 A. You mean like for the audits that we're doing?

14 Q. Yeah, the audits that you're doing.

15 A. We listen to -- we see when the hazardous weather went out,
16 like the time, so then she randomly picks -- one of my QC
17 specialists picks the sector like okay this went out about this
18 time. And we have a program to see when you click it on the thing
19 that you did it, so she looks at that time. And then she's like,
20 oh I see they just clicked it or if they read it. And did they
21 read it and did they see the phenomenon. So we have a little
22 spreadsheet there.

23 Q. Did they look at like a replay or (indiscernible)?

24 A. No, they'd run the program to see when it came out, and then
25 they look to see when -- there's another program to see when they

1 clicked it on the EDST, you know the little yellow box. So they
2 click it and it tells you the time, so then they go listen to
3 Falcon to see if they did it right.

4 Q. That's the weather phenomenon thing?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. I guess I probably said it wrong. Like relaying precip, like
7 calling the weather to the aircraft, how do you monitor that? How
8 do you get that data?

9 A. Well -- what do you mean? Like --

10 Q. Like -- well, let me read this real quick. This is not
11 issuing pertinent information. I've observed reported weather in
12 chat area. That's like calling the weather.

13 A. Right.

14 Q. And I guess you do five random weather sessions per week?

15 A. That's what we were just talking about.

16 Q. Oh, okay.

17 A. And the OMs do monitoring. They have -- 15 minutes every day
18 they have to like -- if there's weather, if weather conditions
19 exist -- they have to monitor a sector and then they write an
20 initial summary and they send it to me every day so I can see, you
21 know. And if they're not flying weather, they have to say
22 (indiscernible) and like I went down there, did the on spot
23 correction, told them to pull the weather, so --

24 Q. What's you guys' compliance on that?

25 A. They were doing one, and now with this new CAP we're doing

1 two again. We were two, and then we went to one when the CAP
2 closed, now we're back to two. But it was above 90 percent when
3 we closed out.

4 Q. Do you normally go down to the standup briefing?

5 A. I send -- sometimes no, because I try to get all my QCG stuff
6 and all that stuff done in the morning. So I'll go sometimes, but
7 the QC specialist will go. They have their days to go and report
8 what we're doing.

9 Q. Do you think the message gets across to the operation good as
10 far as calling the weather, PIREPS, all that kind of stuff in the
11 standup briefing? The ones you go do?

12 A. Yes. They say it at every standup meeting, like you know,
13 call the weather. I feel like the ATM (indiscernible).

14 Q. You said that you guys, here at Jacks you guys said the SUPs
15 up there and CIC stay back in that area. Is that how that works?

16 A. Sometimes the CIC will come up there, but usually they don't
17 because then they've got to put another CIC in charge and it's --

18 Q. So the SUPs went to the air and they put a CIC in charge and
19 then they go up? What if there's no SUP at all?

20 A. Then the CIC usually doesn't come for standup. They just
21 stay in the area.

22 Q. They stay in the area.

23 A. And then another SUP, they kind of have their little sister
24 areas. Like Central will go, so if there's a SUP in the Gulf
25 area, they'll put a CIC in charge, go up, CIC will hear, they'll

1 go back and then brief the two areas, and be like hey. They tell
2 both CICs what's going on.

3 Q. Okay. So you did an SSR on this event?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Did you interview any of the controllers or OM, supervisors,
6 or anybody for that?

7 A. They did an interview with the SSR. They didn't come in and
8 interview, but I was telling them about. But I had talked to
9 FACREP Bacarilla and Dany Derimer (ph.) beforehand so then I kind
10 of tell all them, which I guess we should just bring them in and
11 everybody get the same information at the same time is what I've
12 learned. But I kind of always go to like the manager people to
13 see what happened. I talked to Luke. I talked to Judson. You
14 know the union usually goes and talks to them about what happened,
15 tells about SSR, but I don't know if that happened. I think Luke
16 talked to them, but I know I talked to the manager of people in
17 the CIC just because we're friends and we talk.

18 Q. In the normal case, you normally interview these guys?

19 A. Sometimes, yeah. They'll call and get together as a group in
20 the SSR team and say hey do you want to interview, who should we
21 interview, so we (indiscernible) like coming in the SSR room, but
22 this one we didn't.

23 Q. So you thought that the LSC talked to Jud already?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Did anybody ever talk to him? I know you thought that you

1 did.

2 A. After the event, I think he, you know, he knew about the SRT
3 and they talked to him the next day. Because on the CPEC it says
4 has the controller been interviewed, and it was like, yeah, he's
5 going to be interviewed, so I figured they kind of talked to him
6 about it. I know he had a PROC so I know someone talked to him
7 about it.

8 Q. Yeah. On the SSR, you didn't know any notable performance in
9 that box you checked. So you guys didn't find anything notable
10 performance-wise during the review?

11 A. Well to me, I knew that he got the PROC because I talked to
12 his supervisor or whatever like that, so I don't know. I probably
13 should have told the group, you know the SSR team, because I
14 wasn't in there at the time they did it. I had another management
15 person go in there. So I guess I didn't really realize that they
16 didn't check that box, but he did get performance.

17 Q. So now going back to the day this happened, you fill out the
18 CPEC. I know how time consuming that can be. So you did the
19 initial review. Did you do with the ATM or just you, yourself?

20 A. Yeah, I do it with Shane with ATM. I fill it out and then I
21 go say read this, because you're the one that's going to say it.
22 Then we get with everybody and they can go over it all.

23 Q. That's exactly what I do too. How tight was the deadline?

24 A. That one I think was, SRT was, I think it was that day, that
25 night at 5:30. I've done so many, I'm trying to think. I don't

1 recall. I think it was the same day that we did the SRT.

2 Q. I guess what I'm asking is do you find yourself -- did you
3 have enough time to do a good review of it before you had to send
4 the CPEC off to the District?

5 A. On that one, I think probably we need a little bit. I think
6 we did pretty good because I have, you know, like support
7 specialists, they watch it. And I'm like, do every little thing
8 that happens, we put every little detail in there. So they write
9 the summary which really helps. I'm like go over that. And I
10 watched it, but they wrote. I feel like I had time on that one.
11 On this particular one we had time.

12 Q. Was there any talk about TMR in this?

13 A. I haven't heard any. I mean I haven't heard any. I don't
14 know if they're doing one.

15 Q. And I don't -- and like I said, each district or facility is
16 different. If we wanted a TMR, I would go tell the TMR to go do
17 one. I don't know if that's how you guys do it here or not.
18 What's kind of the process of getting a TMR done?

19 A. Well the CICs request them sometimes, and then some events
20 like this, he just goes and does it. Sometimes the management,
21 the GM and all them request one from him and he'll do it.

22 Q. This time there wasn't much time for that?

23 A. I haven't heard anything about it, no. Sometimes they do
24 TMRs, sometimes they do not the full-on TMR, but just like a, it's
25 called like a bottom-line of like what happened of events thing.

1 It's not a full-on TMR, but they have to report like a summary of
2 stuff.

3 Q. They love -- is the bottom-line a (indiscernible)?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. How much communication did you have with the District in
6 between this event and the SRT?

7 A. I have with the AGMs, I had some because I always tell them,
8 so when I do the post-event checklist, they can't see it until I
9 send it to them. So what we do in this district is I click the
10 SRT checklist when we're almost done so they can review it and
11 they have their questions for the SRT. So I click that, email it
12 to all of them and be like this is what we have so far so they
13 know what's going on so I don't get 5,000 questions and so they
14 know where we're at. You know, I sent them that and they said to
15 be a little more thorough with the staff. So they look at it real
16 fast, be a little more thorough with the staffing, what was
17 everyone doing, when did they go home, and stuff like that.
18 Otherwise, they're texting you like 50 questions, what's this,
19 what's that. I'm like if you just look at the checklist, that's
20 all we have, that's all I know right now. So that's our new way
21 of doing stuff.

22 Q. Well, we're both in the same boat here.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Now in our district, they have it set up. Even if I draft
25 one, they get it. But they still call me.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Do you think a TMR would have been useful for this one?

3 A. Probably, yes.

4 Q. Did you see any -- if you were the SCOC, and I'm not sure of
5 your background, so I don't know. I probably shouldn't even ask
6 this, but -- I scratched it.

7 A. I scratched it.

8 Q. (Indiscernible)

9 A. I have no TMU --

10 Q. This is because when I was on the other end of this, someone
11 asked me a similar question. (Indiscernible). You also have a
12 SYSIR running for this frequency problem?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. That was back in January, I forgot, January 10th I think was
15 the date. What's the process for a SYSIR in your district before
16 I go down this road?

17 A. We do the SYSIRs and then it comes to me, so I talk to QCG,
18 Chubby or Dano, the QCG people, and I'll concur -- at that one I
19 can't do anything about the frequency, so I concurred and elevate
20 that because I know that they've been trying to get one because
21 there was a fire at the Ragside, all this kind of stuff that Luke
22 always talks about, so I know it's a problem. So I concurred and
23 elevate it. I'm not sure where it goes like after I elevate it.

24 Q. I will tell you that the one that we got wasn't elevated I
25 don't think?

1 A. Well I got locked out. So there's one in January that we
2 elevated, and then this one is the same issue. That's why we're
3 keeping track now. But it won't let me see the change, and I'm
4 trying to get my rights back the past two weeks. So I had the
5 training manager go in and elevate it, Sherry Lois, because I
6 couldn't do it.

7 Q. So this SYSIR from January on the main standby frequencies
8 has been elevated already?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. I was going to ask you why it wasn't because obviously we
11 can't -- you guys can't fix that frequency problem here, but it's
12 been elevated, so that goes --

13 A. Yes. I think they're waiting on money or something --

14 Q. So much for my question. No, it's the same thing. We
15 elevated a bunch of stuff and it's a money thing. That's it for
16 now. I may have stuff later, but I mean, if anybody has follow-up
17 to what I was asking, go ahead and go for it.

18 MS. RUPNIK: And I apologize. I know Cory's over here
19 champing at the bit, but I actually want to work backwards here
20 and have Mike jump in.

21 MR. RICHARDS: I don't have any questions.

22 MS. RUPNIK: You don't have any questions so far? All right,
23 Cory.

24 MR. DAVIS: I would've bounced all over the place because you
25 guys do the same thing. I'm going to bounce around.

1 BY MR. DAVIS:

2 Q. So like when an event occurs at the facility, I know you said
3 you get the checklist, like walk me through like what happens
4 after an event. Like what do you have to do? What does your
5 office have to do the second you get that text message that says
6 something occurred?

7 A. I usually get with them, one of my specialists, and I'm like,
8 you know, what's this, (indiscernible) write down every little
9 thing that happened so I can at least have that because the
10 district management wants the Falcon to know what's going to
11 happen because they've got to answer questions too. So we do that
12 first, and then I start going down the checklist answering all the
13 questions that are on there, you know, and I've got to find out,
14 you know, the staffing is usually where I go to next because
15 that's the next question they're going to ask, what was the
16 staffing (indiscernible). So I do that, and then I go try to see
17 if there were distractions, you know, look at their common
18 position.

19 I just answer all the questions, get with everybody, go to
20 the desk if I'm here, if it happens when I'm here, see what the
21 SUP or CIC was doing, get someone to talk with them because I have
22 to write that in there. Basically, just go down the list of
23 stuff. And then go talk to the ATM next, go over everything,
24 submit this to the district so then everybody can see it. Do the
25 SOT checklist to find out (indiscernible) the SRT. Send that out

1 to everybody. Sometimes I'll talk to QCG because they want to
2 know what's going on too because they're going to be on the SRT.
3 Then we do the SRT. If it's during the day when I'm here, then
4 I'm in the office with them.

5 Q. So the district gets the checklist before the SRT?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. I'm thinking about how to word this. Has there been
8 times where you've been doing the SRT checklist and they comment
9 on certain things on the SRT checklist?

10 A. Like before we actually do the --

11 Q. As you're doing the checklist, have there been comments prior
12 to the SRT that whoever's looking at it says, you know, I need
13 more information on this or, you know, this can't be right or
14 anything like that?

15 A. Yeah, it's usually like the staffing stuff because they want
16 it thorough. Because if it's like seven people on break, but
17 they're like anybody going home within five minutes because it
18 shows in query, because I can see them. Four people are going
19 home within 10 minutes, so it's kind of like they're, you know, so
20 we write that in there, these people are going home, you know,
21 just to make it a little more -- painting the picture a little
22 better. So they usually have questions about the staffing stuff.

23 Q. Cool. When an event occurs, how -- I don't want to
24 collaborative is the process -- but when, like if something
25 occurs, you get that message, do you reach out to Luke pretty

1 quickly? Or is it more you're kind of handling the admin side of
2 things?

3 A. Yeah, I just kind of handle it. Luke, if he's here, because
4 he does a lot, so he's always in other meetings and all over on
5 the floor, so I kind of just do it. He knows if there's an SRT.
6 I think he's on some of them. And then after the fact, he posts
7 the safety -- what do they call it now -- the safety thing, safety
8 report, if Jacksonville Center is on (indiscernible) activity.
9 It's not really collaborative with Luke on filling that out. I
10 mean I might need him to be like if it was a CIC, like what were
11 they doing, where were they going? But I usually don't see him
12 when I do that.

13 Q. How's your relationship with NAC in general? Not so much
14 Luke, because you guys work together all the time. Just in
15 general. Like if there's something that, you know, that you may
16 need, the FACREPs help, do you feel comfortable going to the
17 FACREP having a conversation with him? Do you feel like you have
18 to go through the ATM to get that done?

19 A. No, I mean I feel fine with my FACREP. I usually go to the
20 VP because I feel like the FACREP guy is probably busy doing all
21 this other stuff, but Tony is the VP, I see him more I feel like.

22 Q. Yeah. You answered most of my questions. You're good. This
23 frequency issue and other issues that are systemic issues, once
24 you elevate them, are you getting responses or is it more like,
25 you know, I concur, boom, boom to either --

1 A. I concur a little bit. I talk to Luke. Luke knows, Luke is
2 the one that, you know, that's his area. He knows about the
3 issues and he's been trying to get that fixed for a while, so he
4 tells me about that. He was in there when I concurred and
5 elevated. He was in my office, and you know, he saw me because I
6 got locked out, and then it was like all this stuff. So we
7 thought, me and Luke thought that it went to tick-offs (ph.) but
8 it actually went to the 510 manager on one of them. Because we
9 were like is that tick-offs or is it, you know, 510? But I guess
10 she got it now. I'm not sure what they do after it gets above me.

11 Q. That's what I'm getting at. Like are you getting responses
12 from things, or is it more like --

13 A. No.

14 Q. -- you're concurring, you know, you and Luke, you guys are
15 saying this is an issue. It goes up, and then --

16 A. We kind of follow-up like, you know, I know Luke follows-up
17 all the time, you know, whatever. He kind of tells you what's
18 going on, but I don't think he's heard anything on this. It's
19 supposed to be fixed like in January or something he said,
20 December or something like far. He's hoping they'll move it up.
21 But all this weather --

22 Q. This will probably help.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. I'm going to give my opinion on something. I think a TMR
25 would have helped on this. Like, I mean, would you consider that

1 as a pretty busy session, right?

2 A. I thought it was busy. Other people did not.

3 Q. How involved are you when it comes to post-event PROCs? Does
4 it come from QC a lot, hey, we've got to do something, you have to
5 have a conversation with this guy?

6 A. What -- QC is not supposed to match up with PROCs. We do a,
7 QC does a PROC report every month to the ATM and OMs how many
8 there are. You know, they wanted to know are we doing PROCs, you
9 know, so we count them. And the MPA will count them and send a
10 report every month of like how many supervisors did a PROC, and
11 how many people got a PROC. So there's a different rule tabbed to
12 the bottom, you know, so they can see like, oh this SUP hasn't
13 given a PROC in the last year. Like it's quarterly. He sends it
14 out every month but it's like quarterly how many they've done.
15 It's divided up in different sections.

16 Q. And I'm asking more out of curiosity, does it separate good,
17 bad?

18 A. No, we don't do that.

19 Q. It's just the PROC just --

20 A. It's actually how much performance management is going on,
21 so.

22 Q. Yeah. Lastly, you know, I'm just going to save my question.
23 I've got to figure out how to word it. Thank you.

24 BY MR. WINTER:

25 Q. I've got a couple follow-ups just real quick.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. You said a lot of people have a lot of questions about
3 staffing when you're generating the CPEC.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. How much of your time is dedicated to answering those
6 questions?

7 A. A lot because there's so many people, so many transfers, you
8 know, like there's areas like the -- I was in the back of the
9 room, and you know, the front is like a whole new world. Like the
10 north area, I only know anybody, I only know like three people, so
11 I don't know who's a trainee, I don't know how many hours they
12 have, who's checked out, who's a (indiscernible), all that stuff,
13 I don't know. So I need help in breaking that down. That takes a
14 while.

15 Q. They're asking you to break down, body by body, who's a
16 trainee, who's (indiscernible).

17 A. Yes. Who's a trainee, and if it's a trainee, how many hours
18 do they have on a position, and what (indiscernible) do they have
19 checked out on, so that takes a while. Sometimes when we're on a
20 time crunch, it's like trainees. That's all I know.

21 Q. You said the session looked busy to you?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. It looked busy to me too. I guess who said it wasn't busy?

24 A. TMU.

25 MS. KOSCHIG: Can I follow-up on that?

1 MR. WINTER: Yes.

2 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

3 Q. And what was that based on?

4 A. Well, in the SSR we said it was overloaded, and they did not
5 agree that it was an overloaded sector. Two people, I'm not
6 saying everybody. So I talked to three people at TMU. Two were
7 on the local safety council, two people from TMU, and then the TMO
8 said it was not overloaded. But to me, overloaded doesn't just
9 mean volume. Because if you're on those two routes, fine. Like
10 the ocean sectors were crazy but his (indiscernible) or whatever.
11 But overloaded to me is adding the complexity, adding the
12 frequency, everything all together, not just volume.

13 BY MR. WINTER:

14 Q. And these were the people on the SSR that said it?

15 A. One was in with the SSR. Luke thought it was overloaded. I
16 thought it was overloaded with the complexity and everything. The
17 eastern NATCA title rep, Stefania is in TMU, she -- I talked to
18 her and she said, I don't think it was overloaded but I didn't
19 want everyone to get mad at me in the SSR.

20 Q. And that was the TMU rep?

21 A. That was the TMU, she's the eastern safety rep of NATCA,
22 Stefania Graciano, she's under --

23 Q. We like Sadie Fomer (ph.) which I thought was the eastern
24 service area, but maybe -- I can't keep track.

25 A. I don't know her official title, but she has the whole --

1 Q. But she's not in this facility?

2 A. She's here in TMU.

3 Q. Was she from that area originally?

4 A. No, she was from the east area.

5 Q. So she was from a different area in TMU?

6 A. She was from the east area. She bid on TMU a couple years
7 ago, so she's there now and now she got NATCA Eastern -- I don't
8 know her full title. She does the district and she wants to know
9 when she's on all our SRTs for the district. She -- I talked to
10 her because she's on LC, and she's like it wasn't forwarded. And
11 I'm like why didn't you say anything during SSR, and she's like, I
12 didn't want to go against whatever you were saying. And I was
13 like --

14 MR. WINTER: Okay, I don't have anything. That's it.

15 MS. RUPNIK: Okay, Chris, you're up.

16 BY MR. ROSATI:

17 Q. Do you mind -- if you don't recall something, it's okay, but
18 do you mind going over what mitigations you have ready for this
19 next CAP that you're about to finish up?

20 A. Okay, so we are -- I don't remember all of them -- one of
21 them is looking at the map, where we're at with map numbers
22 because we can up or down three. We put in a request a long time
23 ago to have everybody review it. I think according to Luke and
24 the TMO, it's been a long time, haven't heard anything. So in our
25 mitigation it's like where are we at with this, has it been

1 approved, and if it hasn't been, we need to resubmit it, kind of
2 like, because it just went -- it's in lala land.

3 We're adding -- on our refresher training we only have to do
4 weather stuff. On the training order it says every two years, so
5 it's every two years. And so we had it last year. We're going to
6 add it again this year, so we're going to do yearly this time
7 instead of every-other-year just to add that back in our refresher
8 training. We are -- the one in question is they want, the one
9 that they're trying to word, this is not the regular wording, but
10 the one they're trying to word is when you're too busy to call
11 weather, let the CIC or SUP know and they're going to log it in
12 the DASH-4, so I guess that could be subjective. So we're trying
13 to word it. The GCG said, I talked to Chubby over there and he
14 was like, just the wording's weird, so that's the one we're
15 working on.

16 We're doing the, LSC is looking at the through foot (ph.) --
17 no LSC is doing something different. So we're looking at the
18 through foot in the sector how many times they go red, how many
19 times they're overloaded. Luke has a website on how to do that
20 because I don't know how to look at the through foot but he knows
21 how, so he's teaching us how to do it. Doing that. LSC is
22 looking at like all the MORs (indiscernible). In our MORs, if
23 that one's due, I've asked them to put like, when there's weather,
24 you know, if weather was called, if it was picked up on the scope
25 so you can kind of easily see that. Because sometimes if it's

1 severe turbulence, but there's no (indiscernible), it's like
2 nothing, and everybody's like, oh my gosh, and there's nothing on
3 the scope. Stuff like that.

4 I can't recall the rest right now. I mean I have it in an
5 email if I could like bring it up, but --

6 Q. So kind of, while we're on that topic, so reference the map
7 numbers, so you're looking maybe wholistically at the whole
8 centers, the map numbers, not necessarily just for R30 in this
9 case?

10 A. Right. It's supposed to be reviewed every year so, and then
11 I guess MITR (ph.) has something to do with it, so where we
12 request something from MITR and we've heard nothing, so, and I
13 feel like the TMO is busy. I don't know if he's checked on it or
14 who's supposed to check on it. So in our CAP, somebody needs to
15 check on it and see where we're at. And it's gone out. We need
16 to resubmit yet again.

17 Q. So do you think, now specifically with R30, that since we
18 have a known frequency issue in that sector, do you think that the
19 map numbers should be reduced further than three on that position?
20 Especially since you were SUP in the area for a couple of years?

21 A. I was a SUP in the Gulf area. I've never been in the west.

22 Q. Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you said (indiscernible), I
23 apologize.

24 A. That sector, the map numbers were broken for a long time.
25 Like it didn't say -- like it would say like 12 on the board but

1 there would be like 30 tracks. So they finally got it fixed I
2 believe last year, but and I know that they did the up and down by
3 three, and the SUP has to call TMU and they figure that out. I
4 haven't worked that sector, I mean it looks busy to me, but I
5 haven't really --

6 Q. Okay. All right, I'm going to completely change topics here
7 on you. Going back to the safe briefings, you said you're not
8 able to get them the majority of the time. When those are
9 happening, is there at least a manager in there with the other LSC
10 reps that are giving those briefings?

11 A. Most the time on the weekends our two management on there
12 are, I think one is Saturday-Sunday off, and then the other one is
13 lost to medical, so she's Saturday-Sunday off too. But usually
14 the weekend one is Stefania and she said she's comfortable with
15 doing it without a manager in person. So sometimes it's two NATCA
16 people in here, but during the week most of the times we try to
17 put the manager person we have since just a SUP off the floor in
18 with the LSC people. But the LSC members don't like that for
19 knowing what's going on in the (indiscernible) anyway, but most of
20 the time there's one each.

21 Q. Okay. So back to the event in question, how -- I know you
22 said you weren't sure whether or not a GI was put in for the
23 severe turbulence. How does your office audit whether or not GIs
24 are being put in for PIREPs? Are you going and just pulling
25 strips and looking for GIs, or are you looking through the ERAM

1 data, or is there no way to know?

2 A. Are you talking about putting in a PIREP in ASR, or just like
3 sending out a GI?

4 Q. We were told that a part of your process here, and correct me
5 if I'm wrong, is that the PIREPs will be put into a GI format, if
6 it's an urgent PIREP, sorry. So how does your office know that
7 that's being done?

8 A. Well I think the OMs check that. We don't check that. The
9 OMs have the check. They have like a little PIREP thing at the
10 watch desk and they check it and it goes in there.

11 Q. Okay. So there's no way to go back and verify and find out
12 if an urgent PIREP GI was put into ERAM on the day of the
13 incident?

14 A. I know that a PIREP went out. Like ASR thing, I saw that. I
15 don't know. I think that the weather coordinator person puts a
16 GI. I'm not sure how that process is.

17 Q. Okay. And your general PIREP process is for the controller
18 to put it into ERIDs, correct?

19 A. Well they put it in the ERIDs, but if it's severe, they have
20 to write it on a piece of paper, bring it to the weather. The OM
21 gives it to the TMU and they log it in that in TMO.

22 Q. And are you aware at all whether or not any of that happened
23 after the controller was made aware of the severe turbulence?

24 A. I asked the S-TEAM which was Doug Ambrela (ph.) I don't think
25 I ever talked to him, but he said he had so many that day. He was

1 like, I don't remember if I put that one in because there were a
2 few severe that day. That one was just weird because
3 (indiscernible) reported it, and they thought we did it, and we
4 thought they did it type of thing.

5 Q. And so we don't know whether or not the CIC brought that
6 information up to the OMIC or the STMC?

7 A. I was told by the OM that he walked to the area because he
8 heard it on the DEN. He didn't know it happened, and he heard
9 Miami talking on the DEN, and he was like walked down to the area
10 and was like, hit severe turbulence, and I was like I don't know
11 until that call to the D-side.

12 Q. Who told you?

13 A. The OM told me that's what happened.

14 Q. So you were a SUP for a while. How does the information that
15 is given at standup relay to the controllers in the area for the
16 day? So say you go to standup -- well let's say there's a CIC in
17 an area, they don't go to standup, right? You're a SUP in another
18 area and you go to standup, get all this great weather briefing
19 from the, and other information that's going on in the center, or
20 maybe QC is saying, hey, we're looking at this. You're saying,
21 hey, we're really looking at (indiscernible) right now. How does
22 that information get to the controllers?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry, I just want to clarify that
24 you're not a SUP. How long has it been since you were in that
25 position?

1 MS. SULLIVAN: Two years.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. I just wanted to make sure in
3 case things have changed since you were in that position itself,
4 but okay.

5 A. When I was in that position this is what we did. So we had a
6 paper, like when we go to standup, which I'm trying to get now
7 after this. I think they requested it. There's like a, every
8 area has like a standup sheet. So we have like a little map of
9 the center and, you know, you draw like what the weather guy says
10 and all that kind of stuff, you know, you draw on it.

11 So I would go back to the area as a SUP and tell the CIC what
12 my CIC unit what happened, and I would tell the essential area,
13 like the other area, CIC this is what, you know, blah, blah, blah.
14 And it has like weather, it has like restrictions, just random
15 stuff on there. And then so we would put it on the, like the
16 sign-in, like where the (indiscernible) is, we put it over there,
17 and it would tell each person as they came back and they keep
18 track of telling everybody on that sheet. But I would tell
19 somebody that was there and I would put the sheet -- most people
20 would put in on the copier station so people would kind of like
21 look at it.

22 Q. So essentially, it's at that point individually up to whether
23 or not the CIC's going to relay that to the controllers or the
24 SUP, and then maybe an assumption that they'll glance at that when
25 they're at the copier?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. So, changing gears to the SRTs. You obviously do a
3 lot of them. How do you feel or how is the process to you for an
4 SRT, i.e., do they give you enough time to prepare for an SRT? Do
5 you think that maybe there would be some benefit to having maybe a
6 separate process for maybe something with injuries versus
7 something else as far as getting the information out there?

8 A. The process, sometimes we have enough time. I never know.
9 Like I don't get invited to the -- I don't get, you know, I have
10 to rely on someone to forward me the invitation to the SIT because
11 it doesn't come to me, so I'm like begging people for that so I
12 can be on it. But sometimes like I'll help -- I do the federal
13 contract hours too, like I review people, and they're never all in
14 there so I try to help them. And I know we've had two fatals St.
15 Augustine, and we did the SRT at Tampa at night. Trying to get
16 all that information, trying to work with them, they don't do it a
17 lot as much as I guess main facilities do. So I try to get all
18 their stuff and they have to go into the facility, and so I've got
19 to wait. And when you have two hours to do this SRT, that
20 person's driving in because they don't have Falcon audio and they
21 have to match it up in Delaware or whatever they have to do and
22 try to get information. So those, like one minute beforehand this
23 is what we have, this is what we've got to do because we run out
24 of time.

25 Q. I see. Since you're QC, how often does Falcon work well for

1 you?

2 A. 50 percent of the time maybe?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And last month it's probably been
4 less.

5 MS. SULLIVAN: It's very frustrating because everybody's
6 asking for stuff and I can't -- I don't know.

7 BY MR. ROSATI:

8 Q. And have you had any difficulty since the facility got CPDLC
9 as far as finding out whether or not somebody was or was not
10 actually, you know, shipped properly or given a reroute or
11 whatever? Can you see that?

12 A. But we didn't get training. I asked Luke for training, so
13 he's going to give us a little. Because when we go look at the
14 replay back, you know, the QC people may not know what they're
15 looking at. I mean I know some of the stuff, because I originally
16 took it, but then it went away and it came back. So, we're not
17 familiar with all of those little, whatever happened. So Luke is
18 going to give us a little one-on-one training to kind of tell us
19 that, because we're the ones looking at playback and trying to
20 like do all that stuff, and what it means.

21 Q. And one last question. Do you remember when the SSR was
22 completed for this event?

23 A. We try to get them done within two weeks. I think it was
24 maybe two weeks out because I have to coordinate. QCG was on this
25 one, so I had to coordinate with everybody, and Luke does a lot of

1 stuff and coordinate with (indiscernible). Most of ours are
2 within two weeks. I think this one was within two weeks.

3 MR. ROSATI: Thank you for your time.

4 BY MR. WINTER:

5 Q. QCG was on it, like they were with the --

6 A. We TEAMS them on the S cards, and then they sit there and
7 they give us, you know, they sit there like he's sitting here,
8 whatever, and then we talk about stuff with QCG during our SSRs.

9 Q. By the way, now this is a good question, I couldn't resist.
10 DEN account, do any of your specialists have Skydata Sentry
11 access? SDS?

12 A. I don't. We have one specialist like (indiscernible), she
13 might but I'm not quite sure.

14 Q. You can pull all the CPDLC, more data than you could ever
15 want from Skydata, SDS. Somebody here has access, I guarantee it.
16 You can pull all the stuff ---

17 A. I feel like it was fair to talk about that but --

18 Q. Yep. Minute-by-minute, second-by-second. Good for QC to
19 have.

20 A. Okay.

21 BY MR. RIOS:

22 Q. You said that you were first notified of the event via text.
23 Who sends out that text and who's on that text?

24 A. Whoever's at the watch desk, the office manager. So there's
25 five Operations Managers on it, I'm on it, all the managers like

1 support managers are on it, the XO and the ATM were on it. So all
2 the management in this building are on it, so we all know what's
3 going on.

4 Q. Okay, thank you. And then you mentioned after that
5 notification that you met with the ATM manager and then the
6 manager advises what they want done. Is that --

7 A. Like on the post-event checklist that says like facility
8 follow-up action. It's like all these questions that say what do
9 you want as a result of this incident? So most of the time, if
10 it's not injuries but something that's just like we're going to
11 give it to local safety counsel to look at. We're going to do SSR
12 on it. There's an SRT button, a CAP button, like a corrective
13 action plan. So he wanted a corrective action plan. And it's up
14 to the ATM's choice. And since I do the whole district, I don't
15 want to just assume that this is what we're doing for our facility
16 because there's a manager. So I kind of talk to him, like what do
17 you want to do because of the survey. Do you want to just do
18 briefings for everybody? Do you want to -- and the easier ones,
19 it's just like a briefing and Local Safety Council looks at it and
20 we might brief it out to the facility. This one he picked,
21 corrective action plan, which is what we're doing with CAP. SSR
22 which we did a briefing, which we did two other briefings. And
23 then SRT, because we had SRT.

24 Q. Okay, thank you. In reference to the weather and the PIPREP
25 CAPs, what are the methods that are used to monitor compliance of

1 that and who are the responsible parties to do that?

2 A. To measure the compliance calling (indiscernible)

3 Q. Yeah, you mentioned earlier that you do audits, so in the CAP
4 you said you have certain actions, you do monitor that compliance,
5 you know. What are the methods to do that and who does it?

6 A. We, QC specialists, does some of it. Like on this CAP, QC is
7 doing some. I have a training, the NATCA training reps keeping
8 track of like another mitigation that we're doing in there.
9 Sometimes the Operations Managers are cast to do certain things
10 and let me know about it, and then we do a spreadsheet and kind of
11 attach it to the CAP. Does that answer your question?

12 Q. Yes. And are supervisors assigned to do any follow-up
13 actions regarding the CAP?

14 A. Well they're supposed to -- they have to wear a headset,
15 okay, and the supervisors have to wear headsets and listen to a
16 sector when there's weather. Like they're fulltime wearing a
17 headset. You go six sectors, you pick a sector that's like with
18 weather you're supposed to monitor in case they need something.
19 In case the pilot is like, hey, we're getting moderate turbulence.
20 See if you can walk over and put in like a PIREP and stuff. And
21 the CAP CICs will wear a headset if directed by the OM, because
22 they were having, they were butting heads about that. So the
23 supervisors always have to wear a headset, but the controllers in
24 charge only when they're told to. When there's weather, I think
25 the OMs are going to go down and say put your headset on and

1 listen to the weather center.

2 Q. Going back to the TMR subject, who makes the decision to
3 conduct a TMR and what's the trigger?

4 A. Well the TMO -- I think the trigger is like something doesn't
5 work well with the tracking engine of that sector. We had one
6 with Orlando, so I think Orlando -- there's two areas that feed
7 Orlando -- and we were holding, nobody knew why, and there's just
8 mass chaos, so they did a TMR to see what happened, like a deep
9 dive into it. TMO usually -- I don't really know if he gets -- I
10 know he gets told to do some by district management. I know that
11 you can request one. So for a while he was getting requests, but
12 he doesn't have to do them. I guess if you request it, that's
13 what we found out, because I guess the CIC read a thing saying
14 they can request a bunch of TMRs. So like every day they were
15 requesting TMRs, and it was like over-crazy.

16 So I'm not really involved in the TMRs but I think he gets
17 with the ATM and they decide, like which ones they're going to
18 choose to do.

19 Q. And just to clarify that, you stated that so it's the TMO who
20 decides whether or not a TMR is done or somebody can recommend it.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. I understand that. And if one was requested, who would be
23 involved in that TMR?

24 A. He does the TMO, he picks some people, the TMU FACREP will be
25 involved in it. And sometimes he'll get people outside the

1 building. I know he's had Miami Center -- because something
2 happened with Miami -- some of the people from Miami Center on
3 some of the TMRs. We haven't been in the QC department, but I'm
4 not sure who he picks to be in there. But it's always like the
5 TMU FACREP, and him, and maybe a supervisor in TMU.

6 Q. Is it normal for somebody from QC to not be involved in the
7 TMR process?

8 A. I think so. I mean since my two years, I haven't been asked
9 to be on a TMR or none of my specialists. Since I've been here,
10 I've never been involved. I thought it was a TMU, they just did
11 their own thing.

12 Q. In reference to the radio frequency problem that was
13 identified, well it's been going on for a while now, do you know
14 if there's any level of safety or severity level rating unit --
15 you stated it's been elevated -- but is there any level of rating
16 assigned to that whether -- as it impacts the severity or the
17 safety of, you know, high, medium, low, is there any way that
18 that's classified?

19 A. I don't know. If it is, I don't know.

20 Q. My final question is, do you believe you have all the
21 necessary resources as a QC manager and staff to conduct your
22 duties in a timely manner?

23 A. I have enough resources to do Jacksonville, yes, Jacksonville
24 Center stuff like with me. We do good here. Sometimes I feel
25 like it's overloaded in the district because not all of the

1 facilities have support specialists, and the ATMs are busy so they
2 ask me to help them do stuff. But here, I'm involved with
3 Jacksonville Center stuff and I have three specialists. We have
4 enough. I have an NPA too that does all the reports for us and
5 sends them out.

6 MR. RIOS: Thank you.

7 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

8 Q. Hello again. Who puts in NOTAMs and things like that here at
9 the facility?

10 A. I don't know.

11 Q. Okay. If there was -- and I'm sorry to go back to the
12 frequency issue -- do you now if anything has been put out, you
13 know, publicly about the frequency issue?

14 A. I don't know.

15 Q. It's okay. Is it possible to pull GI data in a spreadsheet
16 out of the system? List of the GIs that went out in that sector
17 or area?

18 A. I would think so. I don't know how to do it, but I would
19 think there's got to be a way.

20 Q. Yeah, okay, thanks. And also, the standup sheet, are those
21 preserved or are those just trashed after that?

22 A No, they put them in the ATM package at night. So we put it
23 all together and then Shane, or the ATM, will get it every day. I
24 think we keep it for six months or like a year upstairs in our --
25 we have an office up there so we keep all the packages that the

1 ATMs get of like TMU, the weather sheets, and all that kind of
2 stuff.

3 Q. Oh, okay great. I think that's it, thank you.

4 MS. RUPNIK: You guys are killing it so I'm just going to
5 keep passing it around. Go ahead.

6 BY MR. WINTER:

7 Q. I just have a question about the (indiscernible). So we went
8 down and walked through the operation a couple times. Everyone
9 had to look at the pretty lights. We have them too. I went
10 through you guys' SOP and I know that the SOP is not your
11 document. There's nothing in it about wearing those headsets that
12 I could find. I was wondering why suits have to wear them and
13 CICs don't unless somebody tells them to? Help me out with that
14 one.

15 A. That's between the FACREP and Shane. The union, they don't
16 want the CICs to wear it because in our meetings they say it's not
17 up to CIC to do like on-the-spot corrections, so that you know
18 their peers stuff. But the ATMs were like at that point, they're
19 kind of not your peers because you're in charge. So it was kind
20 back-and-forth with them. So we came up with the wording that
21 SUPs always do it, CICs when you're directed to, you have to
22 follow, you know, whatever that's called, so that's why we worded
23 it like that for them to do it. So there's weather. The OM would
24 have to go down and be like leave your headset on.

25 Q. And for the most part, they have to be told?

1 A. Yes. I got some pushback for that, I guess, so we worded it
2 like that basically.

3 BY MR. DAVIS:

4 Q. Okay, I've got a couple more. The LSC. So how often do you
5 meet with the ATM to brief them on things that are going on with
6 the LSC?

7 A. They get the ship fronts that we do when we do our meetings.
8 We do the minutes, the meeting minutes, and so we send those to
9 Shane. And then I have a meeting with Shane every Monday, with
10 all of the management, so sometimes, not every Wednesday, but
11 sometimes the agency, you know, we're going to do this by LSC. He
12 sees the minutes. He gets the minutes twice a month about what we
13 talk about, what we're doing. Our recommendation letters he gets.

14 Q. Do you and Luke ever meet with ATM and FACREP together to
15 talk about, just kind of updates on -- I know you said that you
16 hand him notes and outlines of what's going on, but do you guys
17 talk, meet?

18 A. Yeah, they come in our meetings. The union comes in our
19 meetings, our Wednesday meetings sometimes, and we kind of like,
20 sometimes Luke will be there. It's usually just FACREP and the
21 VP. Maybe, it doesn't happen a lot but it's happened a couple
22 times about LSC stuff. Like we have Shane do the OPC meetings and
23 then he has to go to the briefing sessions.

24 Q. Will the ATM come to the LSC meeting?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Good.

2 A. We have a sign-up sheet. They all have to come to it.

3 MS. RUPNIK: You mean the discussions of the meetings?

4 MR. DAVIS: I mean the LSC meetings.

5 A. I think he went to one. I don't think it was last month, it
6 might have been the month before. He'll stop by. He doesn't go
7 to the whole thing, but he'll stop by and, you know, talk to
8 everybody.

9 Q. The standup start time. Has that ever been an issue for you
10 guys as far as starting the meeting?

11 A. They've changed it a few times. Now it's 8:15 and 3:30. So
12 8:15 for me sometimes doesn't work. Like I said the QC specialist
13 every day will go down, one of them will go down and kind of brief
14 on -- they kind of have their own little specialties. There's
15 three. The one, Karen, does all the PIREP stuff, so she'll talk
16 about PIREPs. And then the other guy does all the OSA validations
17 and the, you know, random things, so they kind of talk about the
18 stuff that they're kind of focusing on.

19 Q. Yeah, more so, not so much for your office I'm saying, as far
20 as core start time is usually around 7 o'clock for most
21 facilities.

22 A. We do 8:15.

23 Q. No, 7 o'clock I'm saying that's when most people are coming
24 in for their shift and starting their shift and everything.

25 Standups happening at 8:15, it's an hour and 15 minutes or

1 whatever into really the core of the shift where the information
2 is now going out to the areas. Has that ever been an issue where
3 something hasn't gotten out early enough for that day?

4 A. I don't think so. Maybe some kind of mission thing or the
5 rocket launches could be something, but they usually come down
6 with something like that until the area -- I think they made it
7 8:15 because a bunch of people come in at 8:00. You know, that
8 puts the CIC in charge and get up there, so that's when stuff
9 starts happening so.

10 Q. So because you do district QC also, the district has a lot of
11 access to you. How often is the district coming to you in
12 reference to Jacksonville Center, to talk to you about
13 Jacksonville Center?

14 A. Well we have a meeting set up again, it stopped for a while,
15 but we have all new AGMs and everybody switches around so much.
16 We did have a meeting every Tuesday with our old GM, the support
17 managers, so we talk about everything that's going on just with
18 the district people. Now I think it's -- we had to cancel the
19 last one. I think it's every two weeks with the AGMs we've kind
20 of talked about stuff. Not just Jacksonville, I mean I mention
21 Jacksonville. We talk about all the other CAPs also.

22 Q. So the support managers are meeting with the AGMs?

23 A. We've had one so far, yeah, with this new batch. We just got
24 the new group of the AGM, so we've had one meeting with them.

25 Q. Is that district support then, or particularly are you doing

1 district support also or is that Jacksonville Center support
2 meeting with the AGMs?

3 A. It's the district support management. Well, all of us here
4 are the district, all four of us kind of do the training, so we
5 just kind of tell them everything that's going on.

6 Q. Who will look at the map values, because you said that map
7 values need to be reviewed.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Who will look at the map values?

10 A. I think they -- it's the OM or they designate a supervisor
11 and they get with that area rep, so they kind of go together and
12 figure it out.

13 Q. Okay, good. And I think lastly, so your office never
14 received training with Datacom as far as replays go and?

15 A. A little bit from Luke. I mean I took --

16 Q. I'm not talking about --

17 A. I did the (indiscernible)

18 Q. Yeah, besides that.

19 A. It's just -- but no, you know how all the controllers had to
20 go through all that training. We didn't -- I went through the
21 first round because I was on the floor, like a long time ago, then
22 it went away, and now it's back. So I didn't go through the
23 second round. I didn't want -- I was trying to put us in a class
24 but we were trying to hurry up, you know, with the workforce, so I
25 talked to Luke and I'm like, when everybody's done, can you show

1 us some stuff. And he sent us like a power point so far, you
2 know, like all the little symbols and all that kind of --

3 Q. But the FAA never trained your office on Datacom?

4 A. No.

5 MS. RUPNIK: Chris?

6 BY MR. ROSATI:

7 Q. One question to follow-up on the cordless headsets. You had
8 mentioned that the cordless headsets were used for, to monitor
9 weather when there was weather in the area, to be used by
10 supervisors. And then the question came up regarding CICs, and
11 the pushback related to doing on-the-spot corrections. My
12 question is, what is the primary purpose of the cordless headsets?

13 A. I think, well for me, obviously if I had to wear them, and
14 when there's weather it does help the PIREPS. Because when you're
15 working a sector by yourself and you have like a machine up here,
16 the ERIDs, and you're taking your eyes off the scope to put the
17 PIREPs in, you know, it's kind of busy. It's not fun to do that.
18 So I would have the headset on listening, like say he's really
19 busy, and listening to him and he's asking people, you know, for
20 PIREPs, and I would stand there (indiscernible) and have to do
21 that. Or if there's an emergency, which the other day I was on
22 the floor and there was an emergency landing, so I was listening
23 to it so I didn't have to say anything, go back-and-forth, I just
24 heard it. So I told the watch desk -- I don't have to ask while
25 (indiscernible) because I heard it and I know what's going on. So

1 I coordinated it with OM.

2 Q. So that leads me to, I'm not sure if it was a follow-up
3 question or a statement, then there might be a misinterpretation
4 for the use of the headsets, it's not just for making on-the-spot
5 corrections?

6 A. You can use it for both. You know, like I know if there is a
7 CIC there and the controller is not calling weather, and the OM is
8 doing his weather monitor that they have to do, they're listening
9 from the front and they're like they're not calling the weather,
10 they'll go down. The CIC will walk over and say, hey, you need to
11 start calling the weather. I mean it helps for stuff like that.
12 I don't really know why there's so much pushback other than on-
13 the-spot corrections. I don't know if I'm answering your
14 question, but did that answer your question?

15 Q. Yes, thank you.

16 BY MS. RUPNIK:

17 Q. Putting on your LSC hat, and you guys are going to have to
18 help me out because it's been a minute, when you're getting ready
19 to make a change, split a sector out of position, et cetera, it's
20 the SRM is the process, correct? The SRM panel or whatever? The
21 process you go through to justify the need to identify potential
22 risks?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The SRM.

24 BY MS. RUPNIK:

25 Q. So the SRM. Do you know if that was done? I know there was

1 some discussion about the position being split, do you know if
2 that was done?

3 A. Mm-hmm, they have two areas, essential and the west area that
4 want like to have ultra-high over, like NEPTA is the one where
5 this happened because their surface is all the way up. So,
6 there's -- I don't know who is on it, but they've had workgroups,
7 or certain panels, whatever it's called.

8 Q. And you aren't a part of those then?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. And hindsight 20/20, you're queen for a day, you get a
11 magic wand that casts one spell, what would you do to increase the
12 safety of that position?

13 A. Put it up somehow ultra-high. I know that the other centers
14 around it split it like this way, but we wanted to split it this
15 way. Split it somehow. Take some off the top or take some off
16 the side. I guess top would make more sense.

17 MS. RUPNIK: All been through twice? Anybody have any more
18 questions?

19 MS. KOSCHIG: I don't.

20 MS. RUPNIK: All right. Great information. Thank you so
21 much for your time. I'm going to show us off the record at 0954
22 local.

23 (Whereupon, at 9:54 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
24
25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: BOEING 737-7CT MAKES EMERGENCY
 LANDING AFTER EXPERIENCING
 TURBULENCE OVER THE GULF OF
 MEXICO ON APRIL 3, 2024
 Interview of Kimberly Sullivan

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24FA143

PLACE: Jacksonville, Florida

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.



Jennifer Allen
Transcriber