

DCA24LA034

OPERATIONAL FACTORS/HUMAN PERFORMANCE

Attachment 2

Maui Ground Personnel Interview Transcripts

April 5, 2024

CONTENTS

INTERVIEW OF: SANOE MONTILLANO KEKAHUNA	3
INTERVIEW OF: DAVID ANDRIN	81
INTERVIEW OF: PENITITO "PENNY" FAAVEA.....	134

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*

*

MINOR DAMAGE TO BOEING 717-200

*

AT THE KAHULUI AIRPORT IN MAUI,

*

Accident No.: DCA24LA034

HAWAII ON NOVEMBER 30, 2023

*

*

* * * * *

INTERVIEW OF: SANOE MONTILLANO KEKAHUNA, Ramp Agent
Hawaiian Airlines

Kahului Airport
Maui, Hawaii

Tuesday,
February 20, 2024

APPEARANCES:

SHAWN ETCHER, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

DR. BILL BRAMBLE, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ROCKY STONE, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

EDWIN "EDDIE" MILLER,
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

RYAN T. IWASAKI, Pilot
BOEING

STACEY WILLIAMS, Vice President
Hawaii IAM 141
(On Behalf of Ms. Kekahuna)

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Sanoë Montillano Kekahuna:	
By Mr. Etcher	10
By Dr. Bramble	41
By Mr. Stone	50
By Mr. Miller	55
By Mr. Etcher	61
By Dr. Bramble	71
By Mr. Stone	75
By Mr. Miller	76
By Mr. Etcher	77

I N T E R V I E W

(10:05 a.m.)

MR. ETCHER: All right. Well, good morning. My name is Shawn Etcher. I'm an operational factors investigator. The time is 10:05 local on February 20th.

We're here at -- interviewing you or having you educate me more than anything about the events that occurred back in November right here on the ramp in Maui. So I greatly appreciate you being here, and in a little bit, I'll have you introduce and talk to me about you and everything, kind of get going through.

As I told you before, our job here is really to learn everything we can about this event so we kind of make some change so nobody else goes through what you've been going through, trying to keep everybody as safe as we can that way. So we're going to ask you lots of questions.

We're going to do two rounds, but thankfully I don't have to know everything. I've brought a lot of subject matter experts that are a lot smarter than I will ever be. So I'm grateful for that. I'm going to have them introduce themselves to you as well, and I'll start with Bill.

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

MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Bill. Rocky.

MR. STONE: I'm Rocky Stone. I'm an operational factors investigator just like Shawn with the NTSB.

1 MR. ETCHER: Eddie.

2 MR. MILLER: I'm Eddie Miller. I'm from Washington, D.C.
3 I'm one of the senior accident investigators for the FAA. I came
4 out here right after the incident happened, and I used to be a tug
5 driver myself. So it was one of the best jobs I ever had in my
6 life. So I became a pilot. Here's my card.

7 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Eddie. Ryan.

8 MR. IWASAKI: Good morning. I'm Ryan Iwasaki. I'm from
9 Boeing. I'm a pilot with the Flight Technical and Safety
10 Division. I'm also a former Aloha Airlines pilot way back in the
11 day. So it's always nice to come back home.

12 MR. ETCHER: So don't hold that against him. But that's
13 everybody that's going to be talking and asking you questions
14 today. Is there anybody you don't want in here? You can always
15 say, hey, and then I'll just go sit in the sun.

16 MS. KEKAHUNA: No, I'm okay.

17 MR. ETCHER: All righty. Well, any time anybody talks with
18 us, they have the right to have a representative present. Do you
19 have a representative that you'd like here with you?

20 MS. KEKAHUNA: Yes. I do. Stacey.

21 MR. ETCHER: And, Stacey, would you be so kind as to state
22 your name and your role?

23 MS. WILLIAMS: Sure. My name is Stacey Williams. I'm a
24 Hawaiian employee, but I'm sitting here as her Local Committee
25 chair for the IAM.

1 MR. ETCHER: IAM is?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: The International Association of Machinists
3 Union.

4 MR. ETCHER: Thank you.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Um-hum.

6 MR. ETCHER: All right. So that's everybody that's in here.
7 Nobody should be coming in disrupting us. We're just going to sit
8 here and have a conversation.

9 Now, as part of our protocol, we always record everything,
10 every interview, every time we talk with people. We have that
11 transcribed. We'll take this recording, probably tonight and sent
12 it off to our transcriptionist to get started. They'll send it
13 back to us. We might have to make some corrections for any typos
14 or anything, but we don't change anything you say. We just
15 correct the spelling of words. But we certify it, and then we
16 will send it to your representative, and that way you can have a
17 chance to look at it. That's usually 2 to 3 weeks from now, maybe
18 a little longer. It just kind of depends. That way you can
19 reread your transcript if you wish. If you need to make a change,
20 need to make an amended statement, that's fine. We'll attach that
21 statement. We can't change the transcript, but we can attach that
22 statement to that transcript as well. Are you okay with us
23 recording and having it transcribed?

24 MS. KEKAHUNA: Yes.

25 MR. ETCHER: Okay. Now having said that, I should have also

1 told you that this transcript will become public as well when this
2 case gets closer to closure and completion. So, you know, it will
3 become a public record. The recording will not, just the
4 transcript. So you don't have to worry about hearing your voice
5 on the 10 o'clock news. All right.

6 MS. KEKAHUNA: Okay.

7 MR. ETCHER: So now let me ask you, are you okay with us
8 recording the transcript.

9 MS. KEKAHUNA: Yes, that's fine.

10 MR. ETCHER: All righty. I always have just a few rules. I
11 always say when we start, if you don't know an answer, I don't
12 know works great. So don't think you have to come up with an
13 answer. It's not a test. There's no right or wrong. You're here
14 teaching us.

15 MS. KEKAHUNA: Okay.

16 MR. ETCHER: So, you know, we like facts, of course, but
17 sometimes you have an opinion about something and that's okay.
18 Just let us know it's an opinion. And then sometimes I'll even
19 ask, hey, your opinion, what is your opinion, and I just want to
20 make sure that when I read this transcript a month from now or
21 whenever I need to read it, that I can separate the difference
22 between facts and opinions.

23 MS. KEKAHUNA: Okay.

24 MR. ETCHER: Is that all right with you?

25 MS. KEKAHUNA: Yes.

1 MR. ETCHER: All righty. Most importantly, if you need a
2 break, just say so. We'll take -- we'll pause. We'll take breaks
3 all we need to. So don't think you have to sit here and can't
4 take a break. We'll happy to accommodate you, all righty?

5 MS. KEKAHUNA: Okay.

6 MR. ETCHER: I'll ask you throughout if you need a break.

7 MS. KEKAHUNA: Okay.

8 MR. ETCHER: If you don't, that's okay, but if you do, and
9 some of us, we're like, okay, good. Now, we can go to the
10 restroom as well. So, all righty?

11 MS. KEKAHUNA: As far as recording, should I state who I am?

12 MR. ETCHER: I'm going to have you do that here in just a
13 moment.

14 MS. KEKAHUNA: My bad.

15 MR. ETCHER: No, no, you're good. You're starting my
16 questions already, and you're getting ahead of me. But before we
17 start, any questions?

18 MS. KEKAHUNA: No.

19 MR. ETCHER: All righty. Is everybody ready? We're good.

20 INTERVIEW OF SANOE MONTILLANO KEKAHUNA

21 BY MR. ETCHER:

22 Q. All right. So we'll start -- I always start with the
23 toughest questions first. Well, for pilots, it's always the
24 toughest. Can you please state your name and spell your last?

25 A. So my name is Sanoe Montillano Kekahuna. Kekahuna is spelled

1 K-e-k-a-h-u-n-a. Yeah.

2 Q. Perfect.

3 A. They want to move forward.

4 Q. Thank you for spelling that. And what is your job title?

5 A. I am the ramp agent for Hawaiian Airlines.

6 Q. All right. And how long have you been a ramp agent for
7 Hawaiian?

8 A. 11 1/2 years.

9 Q. All based here at Maui or --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. All here in Maui.

13 Q. All right. Perfect. Now, forgive me. I'll show you my
14 ignorance right off the bat. What does a ramp agent do? What
15 does that mean to me? What's kind of like a day in the life? If
16 I was a fly on your shoulder, what would I see you doing all day
17 long or how's that look?

18 A. Multiple things. So we offload luggage from the aircraft.
19 We load luggage into the aircraft, configure freight, having to
20 drive the tug that pulls the cart from -- with the luggage to and
21 from the aircraft, to the carousel, dropping them off to
22 passengers, bag room, taking the bags off of the belt, loading
23 them onto the correct cart. Now, we push back the aircrafts.
24 They used to be line service prior to that. They did that
25 specifically, but now ramp agents do that. That's about it.

1 Q. Okay. So you said now ramp agents push back the aircraft.
2 How long has that been in place?

3 A. Like maybe a year and a year, a year, year and a half.

4 Q. So have you been pushing back aircraft that whole time or is
5 this something new to you?

6 A. I have. I have. I would say maybe a month or so within the
7 time that ramp agents were certified to do it. I started to get
8 certified myself, classes, online courses or videos and then
9 outside, actually going out there and pushing back the 717s and
10 then the Neos and then AB3s.

11 Q. So kind of walk me through -- if I come to you and say I want
12 to learn how to push back and airplane. What would you tell me to
13 expect and what's your training like? How did you -- how do they
14 teach to do it? Kind of walk me through what would be expected.

15 A. Oh, well, me being the -- I should say not so much a senior
16 ramp agent, but someone who's worked here long enough, one of the
17 first things I would ask them is are you comfortable with being
18 able to push back an aircraft in front of you because if you're
19 not, which is totally fine, then I would just simply say, it's
20 okay. You don't have to do it. You know, it's one of those
21 things here on the ramp that we want them to be comfortable and
22 safe at the same time that we're doing our job. So if they're not
23 comfortable with pushing that or any aircraft, like I said, it's
24 totally fine.

25 But, as to what to expect, I think -- I believe about 2 days,

1 2 1/2 days of computer classes with one of the trainers. After
2 that, we start to go out on the ramp and at first, it's more
3 learning how to disconnect the towbar from the aircraft after the
4 aircraft has been pushed back. Once they start to get comfortable
5 with that, then we start to be a passenger as one of the trainers
6 push the aircraft back, more of kind to start to get used to a
7 sense of being in a tractor itself, being used to seeing an
8 aircraft big as it is or small as it is, the visual, just getting
9 used to and comfortable with that situation. And then the trainer
10 would ask, are you -- would you like to try, you know? And if
11 they're comfortable, then we would continue to have the employee
12 be the driver and take it in as slow as possible, and sometimes
13 you'll notice as a passenger who's training and who's not
14 depending on how slow or how quick the pushback was.

15 After the employee gets real comfortable, then they'll start
16 to do it on their own, pushing back the aircraft by themselves
17 rather than having just the trainer there. And the next thing you
18 start to move over into the next bigger aircraft which is the
19 A321, the neos. And then usually we'll do the same thing as we
20 did with inter island planes. We'll have the employee do the
21 passenger and then the trainer be the one driving, and then start
22 to get used to another bigger plane, the bigger aircraft, pushing
23 that back and when they feel comfortable, then they've vice versa.
24 They'll have the employee drive. The trainer will be in the
25 passenger's seat, you know, kind of talking them through it all.

1 And then once they start to get comfortable again, then they'll do
2 -- the employee will be a driver without the trainer and so on and
3 so forth, especially with the A330 as well.

4 So it's kind of a process. Like I said, it's a process that
5 will move forward with each step until the employee is
6 comfortable. So, yeah.

7 Q. That helps a lot. So I appreciate it. How long -- I know
8 it's been a while now for you, but how long was it until you felt
9 comfortable pushing back a 717 or an Airbus or --

10 A. For the inter island, it was about a good 3 days, 2, 3 days.
11 The neos felt the same. So about another 3, 3 days for A321s.
12 The biggest one for me was the A330s. For obvious reasons,
13 they're the bigger aircraft. They push out further because at
14 Maui Station, our -- the airport itself is farther out. So having
15 to push that aircraft a little further out than what we usually
16 would on an inter island aircraft, 717 or the A321 neo. So just
17 getting comfortable with that. That one took about a good week.
18 Just like I said, just being comfortable with the whole situation
19 was a bit, yeah.

20 Q. Okay. So as a senior, not senior, but somebody's who's been
21 doing this a while, I assume that makes you a good trainer or
22 somebody that gives training.

23 A. Well, I've never trained before, but I mean the knowledge
24 behind it all --

25 Q. Um-hum.

1 A. -- the importance of the knowledge that I pass on from one
2 employee to another, yes, definitely important.

3 Q. All right. So for a moment, let's say Hawaiian got crazy and
4 they hired me to work on the ramp. And, they said, yeah, we're
5 going to teach you how to drive a tractor. Again, that would be
6 their mistake wanting me to drive one of their pushback tugs. But
7 how would you -- kind of walk me through. Teach me what to look
8 for, and we're sitting at the gate, getting ready to push an
9 aircraft back. Kind of walk me through, also I'm going to shut up
10 as I absorb everything that I can, kind of from start to finish,
11 you know. What's required? Do you have a headset? Is it all
12 hand signals? You know, is it different day versus night? Just
13 kind of walk me through so I can kind of be that fly on your
14 shoulder as I learn how to push back.

15 A. Yeah. So there is a big difference when it comes pushing
16 aircrafts during the daytime or nighttime or early morning, my
17 morning shift. The difference obviously being a little bit safer.
18 At nighttime because it's a bit harder to see, I'm not saying that
19 daytime is a little bit safer, but it's easier to see things when,
20 it's obvious, during the daytime.

21 But a few things we do before we even step into the tractor,
22 such as doing our circle check which is considered to make sure
23 the aircraft is completely closed. All the pits or the doors to
24 the aircraft where we load the luggage are all closed, making sure
25 there's no flaps to the doors. So like the fuel gauge door is

1 completely closed and locked. Each one of those have buttons to
2 make sure that they're securely in place. They have the AC unit
3 in the back part of the tail. There is the air start, and like I
4 said, there's all -- these are all doors on the aircraft that
5 needs to be -- make sure that they're secured and locked, right.

6 So one of those -- a couple of other things as far as circle
7 check is making sure that there's no chocks, the rubber -- how
8 should I say, rubber stoppers. That's what we call it, chocks.
9 They're in the tire of the aircraft. So without that, it's going
10 to be very difficult to push. So making sure that we take those
11 out from tires. Making sure there's no FOD on the ground
12 especially like buttons, zippers, rubbish, just to -- anything
13 that's on the ground that impede in doing our jobs as safe as
14 possible. We don't want to have to run over like a needle or
15 something and a tire pops for some reason or another because we
16 didn't do our job as safe as possible.

17 What else? Making sure the headset is completely into the
18 aircraft itself. That way we can communicate verbally with the
19 pilot, making sure the tow bar is connected to the aircraft tires
20 completely as well as the pushback tractor, making sure the locks
21 are in, the tow bar pin is in correctly. What else? It's been a
22 while. I'm trying to run it through my mind. Yeah, I think
23 anything that impedes the aircraft being able to fly safely from
24 one destination to another, that's our last -- that's our job as
25 ramp agents, to make sure that it goes out safely.

1 The last thing we do before we actually jump in, you know, we
2 get the clearance from the jet bridge driver which is a customer
3 service agent, so they can clear off. That way we can make sure
4 that the door where passengers pass in and out are safely closed
5 good. We don't see anything sticking out, no locks, no doorknobs,
6 no -- anything like that. So as soon as that -- everything on the
7 aircraft, that circle check that I talked about is cleared, then
8 we start to actually sit down in our tractor and start to
9 communicate with the pilot himself, down to making sure that if
10 he's ready, then we're ready to go, just let him know, hey, chocks
11 out circle check is complete. Circle check is complete. We're
12 ready to go when you're ready.

13 When that is complete, then we actually get the thumbs up or
14 -- for us, the communication like I stated before is very
15 important. So we honk our horn on the tractor to signify that
16 both wing walkers are there in place and ready to let them know
17 that, hey, stop traffic if there is coming from behind the
18 aircraft, I'm ready to go.

19 Yeah, after we push back, after we push back past or before
20 Alpha which is the solid yellow line on the ramp itself, we
21 continue to communicate with the pilot, if he wants the wing or
22 the tail to be facing towards north which is towards Kahului (ph.)
23 side or south which is toward the Kihei (ph.) side. After we push
24 back out, we come to a complete stop, let the captain know, all
25 right, captain, pushback is complete, separate. When I get the

1 confirmation from the captain, all right, we have set the brakes,
2 we are clear, disconnect the tow bar which is our job, my job as
3 the driver, and my partner's job to -- for me to give him the
4 thumbs up. I tell the captain, all right, we're going to
5 disconnect the tow bar. He will lift up the tow bar pin that's
6 connected to the tractor and the tow bar itself to give way for
7 the plane itself.

8 Once that is done, I will literally reverse out of the way so
9 my partner can disconnect the tow bar from the tires of the
10 aircraft. When that is done, I will let the captain know, all
11 right, the tow bar is disconnected, waiting for the okay for the
12 thumbs up on the tow bar pin. At that time, he's doing all his
13 checks, all his clearance through them, that I never get to hear
14 but, you know, he'll always say, okay, standby. I've got to do my
15 checks. So I know that he's doing his checks.

16 After I get the thumbs -- I give the thumbs up to my partner
17 because I get the clearance from the captain. After I give my
18 thumbs up to my partner to clear the tow bar from the aircraft
19 itself, my partner will then grab the tow bar and drag it around
20 to the end of my tractor, which there's another part where they
21 connect it, so when I do drive off, the tow bar and the tractor
22 will just go one time.

23 After that, I will pull closely towards -- or not closely, I
24 will pull next to the pilot's side, giving way that we can
25 communicate with them, and I yank the headset out as much as

1 possible for us to still communicate with the pilot itself. At
2 that point, we wait about a good -- I shouldn't say longer, 5
3 minutes, 3 to 5 minutes depending on how long the captain takes
4 for his checks. Then I will get the clearance. My partner's
5 waiting next to the headset. Then I will get the clearance from
6 the captain saying, all right, all the checks are good, engines
7 start are good. You are clear to disconnect the pin. You're
8 clear to disconnect the pin and headset. You guys have a good
9 day. And some captains will say something different, you know,
10 all right, you guys are good to go. You can disconnect. You guys
11 have a good day and mahalo, have a good morning or whatnot.

12 At that point, me as the driver, I will give the clearance or
13 a thumbs up clearance to my partner who's there waiting for me to
14 take out the tow pin bar from the tires, to also take out the
15 headset from the aircraft. He then closes the door, checks all
16 the locks, runs his hand through just to make sure that nothing
17 sticks out, so the door is safely closed. Then my partner will
18 walk around towards the passenger side, just to put the headset,
19 collect it, put it on the chair.

20 The last communication that we get from the pilot to the
21 captain is where my partner holds up the tow pin bar or tow pin to
22 the captain as a sign, hey, this is the last thing that we
23 disconnected from the aircraft. This is all we got to go. We're
24 letting you know -- as the captain, we're letting you know that
25 you are cleared and everything's good.

1 Once we show the captain the pin, usually we get the thumbs
2 up, the shaka, the salute, to visually communicate with them that
3 we're good, you're good, all right, we're good to go. After that,
4 my partner usually just jumps in the passenger's seat and then we
5 drive off to the next gate to where there's an aircraft. If not,
6 we try to set that up for the next aircraft coming up to a certain
7 gate, and we do it all over again.

8 Q. Okay. That was a lot of detail. I'm sitting here thinking,
9 man, I almost feel like I could be a push back and tug. I'm not
10 ready to drive yet. You don't have to stress on that. But --

11 A. Like I stated before, it's our job as ramp agents to do the
12 safest thing possible, and it's not just because we want to be
13 able to go home as workers and coworkers, but we want to be able
14 to have our passengers be safe, our pilots be safe, because at any
15 point in time, our families are on there. Our friends are on
16 there. People we know fly for Hawaiian. So we want to make sure
17 that not just ourselves as agents are safe, but the passengers are
18 safe as well. So, yes, taking the extra step to walk around
19 aircraft, even if we're delayed. Sorry, passengers, but we will
20 do our job safe so we can make sure you're safe. Taking that
21 extra time.

22 Q. Well, you actually got one of questions because I was going
23 to say, you know, does this change if you're late, you know.
24 Flights do run late every once in a while, and I was going to ask,
25 but it doesn't sound like you change --

1 A. No.

2 Q. -- anything you do.

3 A. No. Like I said before, we're sorry that it's delayed, first
4 of all. We're trying to do our job as safe as possible, and if it
5 means taking an extra 10 minutes to load the bags in the correct
6 location, the correct pit, because we don't want to have imbalance
7 or making sure that we do our circle check and check the aircraft
8 for anything sticking out, any rubbish on the ground or the tire
9 are out, we will.

10 Q. Okay. Now, if you can, let's just go back a little bit. I
11 know you've talked about how you, you know, normally do a walk
12 around, make sure everything's good, you do the circle check I
13 think you called it.

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. So I'm learning all these new terms. So I apologize if I get
16 them wrong. But do you guys always use headsets or is there times
17 that you can't use the headsets and you have to use some kind of
18 hand signals.

19 A. 98 percent of the time we do use headsets. We do have -- we
20 used to have a headset that didn't work quite well. Then we -- at
21 the time, it actually happened to me once. I actually called the
22 trainer over to come and do hand signals for the pilots. It is
23 possible, but it's very rare, and I want to say that we fixed that
24 problem and just threw that headset away. I just decided to
25 borrow headsets from each aircraft which sometimes would lead to

1 aircrafts being late, on delays and pushbacks and stuff like that.
2 So just a lack of equipment or proper equipment but like I stated,
3 we do our job as safe as possible. So even if we have to share
4 headsets and wait for an aircraft to push back, we wait for that
5 driver to come back with the headset. All right, can I borrow?
6 We do our job, yeah.

7 Q. Okay. Do you have -- how do you communicate with your other
8 two -- is there always three that pushes back the 17s?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Two?

11 A. One.

12 Q. Just one. How do you communicate with that person because I
13 assume, and please, correct me if I'm wrong. I'm assuming they're
14 on one wing then?

15 A. Okay. So I have one pushback driver, and then I have two
16 wing walkers which is out by the wing tip. The cone is there. So
17 they have ones that they hold. How do I communicate to let them
18 know if I'm pushing back? The honking of the horn to signify that
19 I'm ready to go and I'm letting them know to stop traffic in
20 between the -- on the roadway or rampway. So they can help me out
21 because there are some times where other aircrafts are nearby and
22 I can't see past the aircraft on the road or equipment is nearby.
23 So that's why we use our wing walkers. So communication of the
24 honking of the horn to signify that I'm ready to push back. If I
25 get the all clear, I -- they -- you hold the wand stating that

1 it's all clear. If there's an "X" on the wand, then it's telling
2 me someone's coming or there's another aircraft nearby or hold on,
3 let me go get that rubbish out there, kind of things that I need.
4 If it's not an "X", it's an all clear. Yeah, that's pretty much
5 how we communicate.

6 Q. So, forgive me, I'm trying to visualize them out there with
7 an "X", but if it's night time or dark conditions, how easy is it
8 to see that "X" or are they lit?

9 A. They are lighted.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. They are lighted. We do have lighted ones.

12 Q. So both wing walkers each have one?

13 A. Yes, yes. During the nighttime, early morning shift, it's
14 usually like the first two planes, we have lighted ones out there.
15 Our leads or our chiefs on the ramp will go put lighted ones out
16 there. So for the rest of the day, it's just regular ones that
17 are -- how would you say? Colored orange, like a safety orange.
18 So all of the wands are out there. Nighttime, they'll switch back
19 to the lighted ones from I would say about 6 o'clock, the sun goes
20 down, to 6, 6:15. So any time when it is dark, regardless if it's
21 early morning or night shift, they do use lighted wands.

22 Q. So you visualize everything going back, pushing back. You're
23 sitting there driving. You're teaching me how to drive. We stop.
24 You disconnect the tow bar. So far so good, right? Did I
25 remember what you said correctly?

1 A. Yes. With the communication, yeah.

2 Q. So the guy -- the person up front disconnects the tow bar
3 from the tractor, and then you just back the tractor up. Do you
4 pull the tractor forward? Kind of help me -- where would I -- if
5 you were training me, where would you tell me to park that tractor
6 while he's --

7 A. So I do reverse a bit just to give him some space. After I
8 reverse, I do pull to the side wand which is the pilot's side in
9 line with the pilot for view. Yeah, just to the side of it. That
10 way when my partner does disconnect the tow bar from the aircraft,
11 it's closer for him to walk around to the end of the tractor to
12 disconnect it, and that way I'm not pulling the headset too far of
13 a stretch from the aircraft.

14 Q. A ballpark, again you're teaching me here how to drive this
15 tractor and park it where I need to. How far away would I park
16 from the aircraft when I pull up to the captain's side? Would I
17 be kind of close?

18 A. I want a good 10 feet, yeah. We don't -- safety is a big
19 thing for us, and I don't want them to get too close to the point
20 where it scratches the aircraft or it impedes or even comes close
21 to the aircraft itself, you know. I wouldn't say -- I would tell
22 my like -- if I'm teaching, I would tell him that, you know, try
23 to pull it at a distance where you think it's safe but yet not too
24 far and not too close where you would impede, do aircraft damage
25 or too far where equipment would get damaged such as the headset,

1 yeah.

2 Q. And just for the record, the pushback tractors, are they
3 opened air? Are they cabbed? Do they have a cab on them?

4 A. The ones here in Maui, our inter island are open, and I say
5 open, just the driver and passenger side opens. So there's a
6 window and then a roof over our head. There's one here in Maui or
7 actually two. Two here in Maui that we use for the A330s and the
8 321s and neos that we use for Trans-PAK we call it that are
9 actually enclosed. They have full doors, both passenger side door
10 and driver door closes, but we use the open driver door and
11 passenger door more for inter island rather than bigger aircraft,
12 Trans-PAK.

13 Q. When you pull up to the pilot's side, is it easy to see the
14 crew up there or maybe just one? Is it, you know, from your
15 cabin, from --

16 A. It's easier to see the pilot. I, you know, for the years --
17 well, not years, but the -- yeah, the years that we -- I've been
18 working here at Hawaiian Airlines, it's actually a difficult
19 period to see the cockpit from the ground, and it's a bit harder
20 to see unless the pilot comes actually forward towards the window
21 itself to see him. I mean we can kind of see head motions, like
22 shadows. During the daytime, it's a lot easier, but it's very
23 difficult, and I've been too the cockpit a few times passing out
24 paperwork if needed to. So I kind of see the differences of how
25 snug that area is. And so having to visually see them, it's not

1 very -- it's not quite easy, but it is possible to see, yeah.

2 Q. All right. So, you've walked me how to pushback, and like I
3 said, I felt like I was a fly on your shoulder as you were walking
4 me through. I felt like you were teaching me quite well. Let's
5 turn to the day of the event. As I said, I don't like you to have
6 to relive this any more than you have to. Just kind of -- I want
7 to know how if there was anything different that day versus other
8 days. We've got to figure this out so we can prevent this. So
9 that morning of the event, you were the pushback driver, correct?

10 A. Um-hum.

11 Q. Any issues with the headsets that day?

12 A. No.

13 Q. They worked fine, easy to communicate with the crew?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. All righty. So we're sitting at the gate or you're sitting
16 at the gate. You're not teaching me now. It's the day of the
17 event. You're sitting at the gate. I understand everything was
18 running just a little late, not much. Do you remember why things
19 were late that day?

20 A. I do. A bunch of factors actually. Short staffed, early
21 morning flight, raining, a bunch of bags, a bunch. When I say a
22 bunch, because that's a nice way of saying it, because the entire
23 back pit, the entire second pit was full. I also remember having
24 Army bags, those big more than 70 pound bags, yeah. Like I said,
25 a bunch of factors, but it was a day that we needed to do our job

1 even that much more safe, raining, first flight of the day, short
2 staffed, having the same people who stocked the back pit stack the
3 front pit. We didn't have enough people. So we took our time
4 loading the bags in the back, and like I said, those bags are
5 pretty heavy. After loading the back, we closed the back pit, the
6 door, everything up. We moved to the front and continued to load
7 the rest.

8 One of the biggest things in the morning shift, which can get
9 really tough, is that we get Filipino boxes. If you don't know
10 what that is, these are boxes that are going internationally to
11 the Philippines and they can weigh anywhere from 50 to 70 pounds,
12 each box. And, they can get quite difficult to stack in the
13 aircraft being in the type of shape the pit of the aircraft hold.
14 So having to stack them in a sense where we can fit everything in
15 the compartment is -- can be challenging. But, we -- as I said
16 before, we do our job as safe as possible even if it means we have
17 to delay the flight because we're trying to stack the bags in the
18 compartment the best we can so that we can fit as much as
19 possible.

20 Q. So you were running a little late that day.

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. If you're running delayed, and let's say you guys were short
23 staffed, stacking all that -- it sounds like a whole lot of cargo
24 and bags, does that -- I don't want to use the word punitive. I
25 don't like that word. But does that come down to, I mean that

1 flight left late because you guys couldn't load it fast enough?

2 A. We get emails about that, but I'll be honest, I -- because we
3 do our job as safe as possible and how we do it, how we do it, us
4 as a ramp, we're not thinking about having that flight delayed.
5 We want to be able to push that plane out as safe as possible and
6 in the right balance. That way, that way that aircraft doesn't
7 have any kind of problems, regardless if it's in the air or when
8 it lands or when it takes off, you know. So to answer your
9 question, it's possible but that's not our biggest concern.

10 Q. That helps. So that day you were getting ready to push, a
11 little late maybe but maybe not too much. It doesn't look like
12 it's that delayed. You're in the tractor. Kind of walk me
13 through again. Let me be that fly on your shoulder. I want to
14 see, hear everything you can. Kind of walk me through the
15 pushback, you know, how are your wing walkers, any issues with
16 them, all that. Just kind of let me be that fly on your shoulder.

17 A. So after we got done loading the plane, the compartments, the
18 back compartment and the front compartment, I actually -- so when
19 we were in the front compartment loading the plane, I had one of
20 our chiefs, our lead worker, ramp agents, continue to load the
21 bags because it was starting to get -- the cart that held the bags
22 was starting to get less and less bags as we were putting them
23 into the compartments. Once I started to see that bags were
24 getting stacked into the compartment itself, I then asked my
25 coworkers, I said, Penny, hey, you're good. Can you finish the

1 rest of this, all of five bags left, and he's like, yeah, I've got
2 it.

3 So that's when I -- well, I knew already from the beginning
4 that I was going to push back the aircraft. When I did, I
5 proceeded to go to the front of the aircraft and do my circle
6 check. I went to check the tow bar that was connected correctly
7 to the tractor. And then I made sure that the tow bar was
8 connected correctly to the tires itself on the aircraft. Then I
9 went to check the tow bar pin or the tow pin on the aircraft to
10 make sure it was secured. I noticed that my headset wasn't
11 connected. So I went to go connect the headset. Grabbed the
12 headset, connected it to the aircraft, made sure that the light
13 was on, everything was good. Checked, gave the thumbs up to the
14 bridge driver at the time. So he moved back from the aircraft
15 itself. When I looked up at the door where the passengers enter,
16 I looked and there was no -- nothing sticking out. So that was
17 clear. Then I proceeded to walk towards the first side or the
18 captain's side of the aircraft, looking at the aircraft, making
19 sure there's nothing impeding, sticking out, no dents, no anything
20 that would be an alarm to us.

21 At the same time, yes, it's super raining, super dark, but
22 I'll tell you this. It makes a lot easier to see rubbish on the
23 ground as things go when the rain is there. So, you know, I'm
24 keeping my eye on the ground, checking the wings, making sure that
25 the chock wasn't in, which it wasn't. Then checking the wing tip,

1 walking out towards the wing tip, coming around looking at the
2 wing, making sure there's nothing in there or anything sticking
3 out, coming back towards the aircraft, looking at the engine,
4 making sure there's nothing sticking out. Right underneath the
5 engine, there are three compartment doors -- two actually. Two
6 compartment doors, one for the AC if we ever need to move that up,
7 and then one for the air start if we need to hook that up.

8 There's another one. We don't ever use that. I think it's
9 for the loo, the bathroom, lavatory, yeah. Thank you. The
10 lavatory, but making sure that all of the locks are in, the
11 buttons are pushed in and literally running our hands -- running
12 our hand over it. It's nice and smooth and we know that all the
13 locks are perfectly in. Checking the door, coming around to the
14 copilot's side, checking the back compartment, running our hand
15 over again the lock that closes the door itself, checking the
16 tires, checking the wing on the copilot's side. I usually start
17 from the -- close to the aircraft, walk around towards the end of
18 the wing and coming around and stopping at where the fuelers would
19 actually put in fuel for the aircraft. At that point, I opened
20 the fuel button itself, and the door pops down. We actually are
21 looking for the cover and making sure the cover is completely on
22 the cap where the fuel would be and having a tethered metal chain
23 connected to it. Once all of that is good, we close it up, lock
24 all four pins, run the hand over it again to make sure that all
25 the locks are in.

1 After that, we start -- I start making my way towards the
2 front part of the aircraft. By the time I get to that part of my
3 circle trip, by the time I get to that part, the front
4 compartment's done loading. All of the ramp agents are done, the
5 door's closed, the belt loader's pulled back. No one's around
6 that front pit area.

7 Then I notice the door's closed. I run my hand over the
8 front compartment doors, just to make sure that it's locked, still
9 checking for fallout on the ground, making sure everything's good.
10 And then making my towards the front of the aircraft by the nose,
11 make sure there's no dents or anything like that. After that,
12 then I start to make sure -- actually double check again my
13 headset is in completely. If when it is completely in, then I
14 jump into the driver's seat.

15 From the driver's seat, I put my headset on. Actually,
16 there's a button that we communicate with the captain just to
17 speak so that it isn't -- it's not on the entire time. So I speak
18 in, just press the button a couple times. We hear static in our
19 headset, just to make sure that it's actually working and
20 connected. If we don't hear that static, then something along --
21 either it's not corrected into the aircraft or the headset is
22 incorrect. Then we've got to go check, but for me that day, it
23 was good.

24 After I put the headset on, I tell the pilot, hey, pilot,
25 circle check -- or actually ground crew to flight deck. It's me,

1 the ground crew, get their attention to contact the pilot. When I
2 get the, hey, ground crew, we're ready to go when you're ready. I
3 said, oh, yeah. Just for your concern, circle check is complete.
4 We are ready to push back. Let me know when you're good. I get
5 the word back from the pilot, from the captain, we're good to go.
6 Let me know when you're ready to start.

7 At that point, I honked my horn. There's a button on the
8 side. I honked my horn. It's super loud. So it's one of those
9 that you don't hold it the whole time so the entire island I feel
10 like could hear it, you know what I mean. So it's one of those
11 beep, beep, you know, you try to get it to not honk so loud but
12 loud enough to where my wing walkers know that I'm coming. So I
13 just honk it a couple of times, and then I get the all clear with
14 the lighted wands ones from both wing walkers out there stating
15 that, okay, I'm good to go.

16 Then I let the captain know that, hey, captain, we're ready
17 to push back, short of Alpha going now. And so I do. I actually
18 asked him, do you want me to push back tail south or tail north,
19 which is as I stated before. If he wants the tail to be faced
20 towards Kahului side or towards Kihei side. He said, oh, no, tail
21 south is good. So then I proceed to push. After I proceed to
22 push, getting out to a certain point, I'm making my turn after
23 getting out of gate 17, coming to a complete stop, letting him
24 know, all right, captain, pushback is complete. Separate. Then
25 I'll get the word from the captain saying, all right, brakes are

1 set and he didn't say -- he didn't say, I could clear. So I
2 asked, am I clear to disconnect tow bar. Oh, yes, you are clear
3 to disconnect tow bar. And this is something that we haven't
4 faced before but, you know, just communication very important for
5 us.

6 So I asked the pilot, am I clear to disconnect the tow bar?
7 He says, yes, you're clear to disconnect the tow bar. So I give
8 my thumbs up to my partner who is standing right outside, after I
9 get done -- she's standing right outside waiting for me to thumbs
10 up. That thumbs up clears him from me or from him disconnecting
11 the tow bar from the pushback tractor. After I get to a certain
12 point where the tractor is cleared from the tow bar, my partner
13 will then put the tow bar -- the pin, actually, the lock for the
14 tractor back on top. I will reverse and then move in the
15 direction to the side of the captain's side, a distance where it's
16 safe.

17 From then, the captain, I asked the captain, hey, are we
18 clear to disconnect the tow bar from the aircraft? He said, oh,
19 yes, disconnect tow bar and standby for pin. So I give the thumbs
20 up again to the -- to my coworker to disconnect the tow bar from
21 the aircraft. He takes it off, drives -- or walks it around to
22 the opposite end of the tractor which is behind me, and then we
23 sit and wait. We sat and wait for a little while, but it's
24 raining. It feels like forever. After, after we wait for the
25 captain's clearance, the captain states to me on the headset, he

1 said, hey, you are clear. Everything's -- engines are clear to
2 start. You guys have a good day. See you guys later on.

3 So I said, all right, cap. Clear to disconnect the headset,
4 you guys have a good day as well. And sorry. Clear to disconnect
5 headset and you guys have a good day as well. That's it. Then I
6 get the thumbs up, the final thumbs up from my partner who is
7 waiting by the aircraft. Thumbs up, gives him to clearance to
8 disconnect the tow pin from the aircraft, and the headset from the
9 aircraft as well. Takes the tow pin out. Takes the headset out.
10 Close the door, make sure all the locks are in, runs his hand
11 across to make sure nothing's sticking out. He then walks round
12 to the passenger side of the tractor, puts the headset or the end
13 of the headset on the chair itself, the seat. Then he's standing
14 on the side with the tow pin up as for clearance from the captain.
15 In that sense, I notice as a driver, because it takes -- it
16 shouldn't take longer than 30 seconds, 30, 45 seconds for them to
17 get the clearance from the captain. I notice that it's taking a
18 little bit longer than 2 minutes. So I'm sitting there in the
19 tractor waiting for my partner to put the pin in the seat and he
20 can sit down and we can go. But he's still standing there with
21 the pin. So I know for a fact that if my partner is still
22 standing there with the pin, he didn't get the last okay salute,
23 shaka, thumbs up from the captain stating that my partner has the
24 last pin, last thing connected to the aircraft that he is rightly
25 to disconnect and the captain didn't give the okay.

1 So we wait. I wait. I look at the captain. I look at my
2 partner. I look at the captain. I look at my partner. And my
3 partner goes, he's not looking. So I honked my horn, beep, beep,
4 but the sense we're out there. loud noise, and I sends off the
5 beep, beep small, can't hear anything. I notice he didn't hear
6 anything. So I held it down. Beep, beep. Still nothing.

7 So then I realized that I needed to get his attention. I put
8 the tractor in neutral, put the park brake on. I stood up on to
9 of the -- there's a little step stool next to the driver's seat.
10 I stood up waving, waving my hand trying to get the pilot's
11 attention. As I stated before, a bunch of factors that could have
12 mean that he didn't see me, you know what I mean. First thought
13 of the day. Those two factors not very helpful in that situation.
14 So stood up. I waved. I waved. I waved. Still no attention. I
15 literally -- because I wear gloves every day. I literally grabbed
16 my glove, took it off my hand and threw up in the air thinking
17 that he could see me. He didn't. Threw it up about three or four
18 times. Still nothing.

19 A moment after that is what got my heart pumping. I saw the
20 cockpit light shut off. I know. I've been in this company long
21 enough. I know he's ready to go. But we didn't get our last
22 communication. He is ready to move. When I saw that, I looked at
23 my partner. I sat down and I looked at my partner. I said,
24 please forgive my French. We need to get the fuck out of here.
25 I'm sorry, I didn't mean to say that, but we need to get out of

1 here now. I don't remember exactly what my partner did after that
2 because I'm trying to get this tractor out of the way as quick as
3 possible to not just have me safe, but these passengers safe.

4 There's a -- after I put it into -- took the parking brake
5 off, there's a part where the gear needs to sit in forward
6 position for a split second before actually the tractor actually
7 goes into forward position. That split second seems like an
8 eternity when that plane and that wing is coming for your head.
9 That's one of the scariest moments ever. I played with it in
10 forward. I realized that it's not hitting, it's not kicking into
11 position. I wait, put it in gear and wait at the same time I can
12 see this wing coming directly at me. Once I know on the screen of
13 the tractor, it says forward. F2 means forward in the 2 position,
14 I literally step on the gas and yank the whole entire wheel to the
15 right side. My concern or my plan at the time was to get the end
16 part of the wing rather than the bigger part of the wing, not just
17 for my safety but less damage of the aircraft, less passengers
18 getting hurt. I did as best as I could. I yanked and stomped on
19 the gas, I yanked the whole thing. As soon as I was yanking, the
20 wing was already coming into the aircraft itself. It literally
21 hit the frame, the roof and the frame of the front or the window.
22 All I literally could do was just hold on and luck as much as
23 possible. It took the entire window, entire roof. It scoot -- it
24 hit the top of the roof and smashed the back of the chair and
25 lifted me up and smashed me right into the steering wheel. It

1 bounced. It yanked me or it felt like it turned me, and literally
2 from being parallel with the aircraft, after hitting me, it
3 literally yanked me so I was perpendicular by the time I finished
4 with the aircraft. I could literally see the aircraft on the
5 right side of me after I got hit. I could see and hear the
6 aircraft slow down the engine after it hit me.

7 About that same time, I heard a loud pop, and I have this
8 headset on still. I heard a loud pop. I realized that it was the
9 plane tires because it ran over the tow bar that was connected to
10 the back part of my tractor.

11 After that happened, the adrenaline pumping, the adrenaline
12 going through every part of my brain, my mind, my body, and just
13 having to sit there with this steering wheel stuck to me, stuck in
14 my -- I literally was hanging outside of the window, hanging
15 there, just waiting, waiting, waiting for anyone, everyone to
16 come, for them to lift me and turn me. As long as 5 minutes of my
17 life before someone, what I think was 5 minutes, before someone
18 actually came. After that, I remember every little incident. I
19 remember the smell that happened, how I felt, the tingling in my
20 legs because I couldn't feel them because I was stuck to the
21 steering wheel, the fact that it's still raining and just waiting,
22 waiting for anyone and everyone to come.

23 After that, anyone and everyone came. Anyone and everyone
24 came even if I didn't want them there. But it was that day, that
25 incident, it -- I will never forget it. November 30th, 2023, at

1 6:13 in the morning, one of the worst days in my life.

2 Q. Well, I appreciate you giving us all that detail. You even
3 taught me French. So thank you for that.

4 A. Oh, I'm sorry.

5 Q. No, no, no. That sums it up better than a lot of stuff. So
6 it's all good. I appreciate it. I just have a few questions but
7 do you need a moment or two before we continue?

8 A. I'm okay.

9 Q. You sure?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. I don't want to go back into too much detail if we
12 don't have to. We'll kind of move from there. You mentioned
13 something early on in your recollection, that that day they were
14 short staffed. Is that -- I don't want to say normal because
15 that's all opinion, right, but is that -- are you guys short
16 staffed a lot?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. In your -- I'll ask for your opinion because that's important
19 to me. How short staffed are you? Are you down one? Are you
20 down like half a crew?

21 A. Every day we are put into teams. To properly and safely run
22 an aircraft, or a team to run an aircraft, it needs to be at least
23 a minimum of five which includes the chief or the lead ramp agent,
24 and we were only at three. It's not to say that we are not doing
25 our job as safe as possible, but because we are short staffed, the

1 delays make a big factor, and we -- and I said we, the ramp
2 agents, we're all we got. So we see when we get three people
3 loading that plane, offloading that plane. It would help because
4 we've been there before. They've been in that situation before.
5 And, to -- it's just hard to say. We're just short staffed, yeah.

6 Q. So in a perfect world for a moment, if you had every day you
7 came to work, what number would you say is best? In a perfect
8 world, if you were queen for the day and said, you know, whatever
9 you want you get, what kind of staffing would you ask for?

10 A. At least 60.

11 Q. At least how many?

12 A. Sixty a day.

13 Q. A day.

14 A. Now, remember, we've got about 32, 35.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. That's a perfect world though.

17 Q. We all live in a perfect world, don't we?

18 A. What's a perfect world? Yeah, we get the list every day of
19 how much people are here and worked today. The numbers are
20 usually the same, 32, 35, when we're getting really short, 31, 30,
21 but that's a perfect world. I'll take that 60. I take that
22 double amount.

23 Q. I wish I could make a perfect world for you.

24 A. Thanks for trying.

25 Q. Yeah, A for effort, right. On that day, you were in the cab,

1 you had your wing walkers on each side. Is one of your wing
2 walkers also the one that disconnects the tow bar?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Okay. Is it a specific, the right wing, the left wing
5 walker? Does it matter?

6 A. Yes, there is. So the one side, so side 1, pilot side, they
7 also wing walk as well as disconnect. So after this, or not after
8 this, but after they wing walk, and they walk out with us, they'll
9 just walk out to the aircraft where I stop to disconnect.

10 Q. And, kind of think back to that day, do you recall if either
11 or both of your wing walkers had lighted wands?

12 A. Yes, they did.

13 Q. And the last question I have, and then we're going to take a
14 break and I'll pass it to Bill because he always has the smart
15 questions. When your partner held up the pin, how -- is it --
16 does he use a light to hold it up so the pilots can see it or do
17 they just -- do you know? I mean it's dark out, right, and rainy.
18 So that reduces visibility maybe a little bit.

19 A. Right. It does. No, no lights -- oh, no, sorry. Not the
20 tractor lights. The wand lights. So they'll hold the wand in one
21 or in both hands, but then he'll hold the pin because it's thin,
22 like a flag almost. So in line with the wand itself. That's
23 about as light as we get.

24 Q. Okay. And just for my knowledge and for the record as well,
25 they did that? Your partner did that that morning?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. All right. Perfect. Now, I told you that was the last
3 question I had. I'll hold true this one round only, but you've
4 been talking to me for almost an hour. So you've got to be sick
5 and tired of talking to me, but I appreciate you've given so far.
6 Before I turn it over to Bill, are you sure you don't want a
7 break? Are you doing all right?

8 A. I'm okay.

9 Q. You're sure.

10 A. Thank you.

11 Q. All right.

12 MR. ETCHER: Bill.

13 BY DR. BRAMBLE:

14 Q. All right. Good morning. So just to make sure I have it
15 right, in terms of what you guys were talking about, a team of
16 people, so you had a total of three people moving, yourself
17 included, moving the aircraft back?

18 A. One moving the aircraft, two was wing walkers. So, three,
19 yes.

20 Q. Okay. And just so we're using the correct terminology, both
21 of those people are called wing walkers and you're called the --

22 A. Pushback tractor. Pushback, pushback actually.

23 Q. Pushback.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. That's -- just pushback.

1 A. Pushback person.

2 Q. Okay. Fine. I want to make sure we use the right
3 terminology.

4 A. Pushback agent.

5 Q. There you go. There you go.

6 MR. MILLER: They're called ramp agents.

7 MS. KEKAHUNA: Well, we are called ramp agents, but the
8 driver who actually sits in the tractor itself is the pushback
9 driver I should say.

10 BY DR. BRAMBLE:

11 Q. Pushback driver.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. All right. So you mentioned that for 2 minutes the --
14 your partner, the pilot side wing walker, was holding the pin
15 above their head for the pilot to see?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Two straight minutes?

18 A. Well, it seemed longer than what it should have taken.

19 Q. Okay. And I think you were describing that the pin was being
20 held in parallel with the wand. Is that correct?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Was the wand a lighted wand?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. And then can you describe for me where exactly
25 relative to the airplane and the tractor that your partner was

1 standing?

2 A. So the aircraft sits in one area. In between my partner is
3 the -- partner and the aircraft is the pushback tractor -- I'm
4 sorry, the aircraft and then the pushback tractor and then my
5 partner.

6 Q. I see.

7 A. I don't know if this can see visuals, but --

8 Q. So your partner was standing on the opposite side of the
9 tractor from the aircraft?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Were they adjacent to the passenger side door or were they
12 like in front of the tractor?

13 A. More the passenger tractor door.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. So they were holding it sort of above the tractor.

17 A. Above their head. Well, standing on the ground. So he's not
18 necessarily standing on the tractor itself. So standing on the
19 ground holding the wand and the pin above their head and -- for
20 the pilot to see.

21 Q. Okay. While that was happening, could you see the captain's
22 head?

23 A. A little.

24 Q. Okay. Do you think you could see sort of the part of his
25 head where his eyes were or was that kind of obscured by aircraft

1 structure?

2 A. I want to say -- I mean I do -- I did remember seeing like
3 from here.

4 Q. Above his eyes.

5 A. Yeah, so above his eyes.

6 Q. Okay. So you might not have been able to see his eyes?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. But you're a little bit closer to the airplane and
9 you're sitting in the tractor, right?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Okay. How did you know that he was not seeing the -- your
12 partner with the pin? How did -- how did both of you realize that
13 he was not seeing him do that, your partner do that?

14 A. Well, I realized as the pushback driver that when my partner
15 didn't get me back the pin, I realized that he didn't get the last
16 confirmation from the captain stating that we got the pin, you see
17 us have the pin, you're good to go.

18 Q. Okay. So normally your partner would put the pin and give it
19 to you or put it inside the tractor?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So I noticed that when that didn't happen, he didn't get his
23 last clearance, last communication with the pilot so that he would
24 literally stay there until we get the last confirmation.

25 Q. Okay. All right. So he was standing there for a couple of

1 minutes you estimate and then --

2 A. About.

3 Q. -- the next thing that happened was that you got out, trying
4 to get the pilot's attention?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. Did he continue standing there with the pin?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. Then you said you stood on what part of the tractor?

9 A. There's a step that you take before you actually get into the
10 driver's seat of the pushback tractor. It's a bit lowered. It's
11 more of a helpful lift before you actually get into the tractor
12 itself because it's a bit high.

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. So it's just a -- yeah, it's lowered step --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- that I stepped down onto to get his attention.

17 Q. And it makes you a little higher --

18 A. It does.

19 Q. -- than standing on the ground?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Did you have access to an additional lighted wand if
22 you wanted one like in the tractor itself?

23 A. Not that I know of. I didn't look for it.

24 Q. And then when you were throwing your gloves, were you
25 throwing them like up near the captain's window?

1 A. No. So I threw it up in my direction, up in the sky to where
2 it would be visible for the captain to see. I didn't want to
3 throw it on the aircraft --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- because then I'd have go get it.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. So I threw it up in the air in line with me that if I threw
8 it up I would be able to catch it again.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So just throw it up in the air, catching it again, throwing
11 it up in the air and catching it. So I didn't throw it at the
12 window.

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. But just in the view of the captain or the copilot. Someone.

15 Q. And you mentioned that you were normally parked about 10 feet
16 from the aircraft. Is that the case this time?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. And so you would have been throwing this glove up so
19 it would be about 10 feet away from the window up to about the
20 height of the captain's window?

21 A. About there.

22 Q. Okay. What color were your gloves?

23 A. They are red seamed with white. It's more leather than
24 anything. They might be difficult to see but motion is what I was
25 going for.

1 Q. Something that would attract his attention.

2 A. Motion, something.

3 Q. Yeah, yeah. All right. Were you familiar with this
4 particular flight crew?

5 A. No. I never am. The voices may sound familiar but that's
6 about it.

7 Q. Okay. Did you interact with them before they boarded the
8 plane?

9 A. No.

10 Q. And how did they sound on the intercom compared to what you
11 usually hear?

12 A. Nothing different. The communication that we both had on the
13 headset or intercom was the same.

14 Q. When the tug was sitting there and you were waiting for the
15 confirmation from the crew that the pin was being displayed, what
16 lights were on on the tug?

17 A. On the pushback tractor, we had the front headlights, yeah.
18 Front headlight.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. That's the only lights. Oh, there's a --

21 Q. A revolving yellow light.

22 A. That's the one.

23 Q. And was that on?

24 A. Yes. That goes on every time the tractor actually is in
25 motion.

1 Q. Does it go on automatically?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And then when the tractor stops, does it stop?

4 A. No, when the tractor shuts off.

5 Q. Oh.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. So it was still on and revolving while you were waiting?

8 A. I believe so.

9 Q. Okay. Has there ever been issue with that not working like
10 it's supposed to?

11 A. No.

12 Q. All right. And the aircraft lighting was -- that was on, was
13 it normal or did anything appear out of the ordinary with how the
14 aircraft was illuminated?

15 A. The aircraft lights during pushback is off because it makes
16 it hard for us as drivers to see with the bright light shining in
17 my face. Once we disconnect the aircraft and once it decides to
18 move forward, that's when the light actually comes back on. But
19 there are side lights on the aircraft itself that makes it
20 somewhat easier to see especially when we do circle checks and
21 stuff like that, but those are on I want to say 24/7.

22 Q. Okay. So were there lights from the aircraft illuminating
23 you and the tug at all or not really?

24 A. Not necessarily.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. It makes it harder, first light of day, raining as well. It
2 just makes it difficult.

3 Q. Did the captain tell you on the headset that the flight crew
4 was doing or was going to do a manual start on the number 1 engine
5 and it would take longer than usual?

6 A. No, we no longer communicate that any more. We have a new
7 procedure as far as the communication with headsets. So prior to
8 say last summer or so, we no longer state that, okay, captain, you
9 are free to start engine 1. He'll let me know when he starts
10 engine 1 and then he'll say, okay, good start engine 1. Do you
11 want to start engine 2? Yes. Engine 2 is good to start. We no
12 longer do that. So he'll do that on his own. He'll let us know
13 at the end that, all right, engines good to go, disconnect, you
14 guys have a good day.

15 Q. Okay. Was there a time where only your partner can hear them
16 and you can't any more?

17 A. No.

18 Q. You can hear them the whole time until you disconnect the
19 headset?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. Okay. And your partner doesn't wear a headset?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Did the flight crew flash the taxi light at any time
24 before they turned it on and started driving?

25 A. I don't know what that is.

1 Q. Okay. So, apparently there is a SOP that the crew can
2 acknowledge things by flashing their taxi light. Have you ever
3 seen that? Have they ever communicated with the ground crew by
4 flashing their taxi light?

5 A. It is like a cockpit light or light --

6 Q. The light in front down near the gear that flexes forward?
7 So like -- it's kind of like their light headlights. They don't
8 communicate with ground crew by like flipping on their headlights?

9 A. Oh, no.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. No.

12 Q. I'm skipping through questions you've already answered that I
13 don't need to ask you. Okay. I think that's it for me for right
14 now. Thanks so much.

15 A. Thank you.

16 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Bill. Are you still okay?

17 MS. KEKAHUNA: Can I have a break?

18 MR. ETCHER: Absolutely. We can.

19 MR. MILLER: We appreciate that.

20 (Off the record.)

21 (On the record at 11:27 a.m.)

22 MR. ETCHER: All righty. Back on the record at 11:27 local.

23 And, Rocky, do you have any questions?

24 MR. STONE: Yes, I have just a couple.

25 BY MR. STONE:

1 Q. I'm going to go back to Shawn's educational part at the very
2 beginning. When you do a pushback, is there a spot? The spot
3 you're pushing to, is it marked on the pavement? I mean how do
4 you know where to go?

5 A. There is no marked spot. There is a marked line that gives
6 us -- that tells us that we can't pass.

7 Q. You can't pass that line. Do you try to get close to it
8 or --

9 A. No, so the wing cannot go over it. So we try to get as far
10 out from the roadway, the designated driveway or roadway as much
11 as possible so there is space from the roadway onto the ramp
12 before that line that we are able to keep track.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. There's no "X" marks the spot, this is where it's got to be
15 kind of thing.

16 Q. Let me walk you back through some of that. So when you push
17 back, you said separates and then you get a reply that says
18 parking brake set or something like that.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. And then once you get that -- once he says parking brake set,
21 you said that's your cue to signal your partner to remove the --
22 you remove it from the tow truck first?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So I give the thumbs up to my partner. He disconnects the

1 lock that unhooks the tow bar from the tractor itself.

2 Q. Okay. And then you just move a couple feet away and he gets
3 the bar the rest of the way off the airplane. And next you're
4 still, you're still on the headset.

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. So that's why you can't go far away.

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. I mean -- but is there a reason why once that bar -- once
9 that's done, is there a reason you have reposition out in front or
10 could you at that point say -- I mean I'm asking you a procedural
11 question, and I know it's not the way you do it today, but from
12 what you know, and you know a lot more about it than we do, is
13 there a reason why you couldn't just at that point say, okay, tow
14 bar's disconnected, are we cleared off or, you know, I don't know
15 what terminology you use for that but I mean is there a reason why
16 you have to reposition to do that?

17 A. Yeah. The reason why we reposition is because we need to
18 wait for the final clearance from the captain to disconnect the
19 headset --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- from the aircraft itself.

22 Q. And you want to be in a position where he can actually see
23 you when that comes?

24 A. See us or make sure that we don't stretch the --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- cord too far where it just yanks out kind of thing.

2 Q. So that's the final verbal cue, but it's not the final final.
3 Final final is, you know, after you hold the --

4 A. Visual communication.

5 Q. Yeah, the visual and he gives you the --

6 A. Shaka, salute.

7 Q. Yeah. Okay.

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. So when you went through training --

10 A. Um-hum.

11 Q. -- did they, did they teach you all these steps? I mean did
12 they talk about them or -- in detail or --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. We actually -- as I stated before, we do a day or 2 in the
16 room, classroom, and going through the procedures on paper, on TV.
17 It's take it to a certain extent because none of that is on-the-
18 job training kind of thing, you know. We don't actually get to
19 even know what all of the computer work is talking about until we
20 actually go out there and do it. So, yeah, they just break it
21 down for us, you know, the procedures of how we do things, which
22 side you've got to push to, which side to disconnect, which side
23 is the headset, but you don't really actually get to get a better
24 sense of what we're doing on the computer --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- rather than -- until we go out there.

2 Q. Right. But I mean do they go through the details of like,
3 hey, you know, when you move the tractor, you have to be within 10
4 feet so that you don't pull the cord out. I mean do they get to
5 that level of detail in the training or --

6 A. No.

7 Q. That's --

8 A. They tell us to come to a distance where it's safe. It
9 doesn't state where it has to be 10 feet or more type of thing.
10 So it's a safe distance. We have to put the tractor to a safe
11 distance of the aircraft to where nothing is damaged or anyone
12 gets hurt or nothing gets -- like the cord gets yanked out.

13 Q. Yeah. Okay. How would you characterize that training? I
14 mean was it -- I mean obviously it wasn't enough. You really --
15 the sense I'm getting from you, it was some knowledge but you
16 really had to come here for the on the job, to really do it to
17 really learn it. Is that kind of -- I don't want to put words in
18 your mouth though.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. I mean -- so I mean would you say that the training was good
21 enough as far as, you know, the classroom and the, you know,
22 computer based training or --

23 A. I think the training -- I'm sorry. The on-the-job training
24 is a little bit more detailed --

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. -- than what we do here in the classroom.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. Like I stated before, we learned all the technical sides on
4 the computer, in the class, but until we actually go out there and
5 actually do it out there, it gives us a better sense of why we do
6 it and what's got to be done.

7 Q. Okay.

8 MR. STONE: I think that's all I have, Shawn.

9 MR. ETCHER: All right. Thank you, Rocky.

10 MR. STONE: Thank you. You've been very helpful.

11 MS. KEKAHUNA: Thank you.

12 MR. ETCHER: Eddie.

13 BY MR. MILLER:

14 Q. All right. Sanoe, like I said before, I'm from the FAA.

15 And, I came out here the day after everything happened and got to
16 see what went on, but I'm glad that I -- because I'm always
17 asking, you know, every day I was here, how are you doing? So
18 it's --

19 A. I appreciate that.

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. I appreciate that.

22 Q. One -- some of the questions that I have are mostly about
23 like how many, how many times a day, you know, do you, say like in
24 your shift, how many planes do you push back?

25 A. Anywhere about 10 to 12.

1 Q. Okay. And like how long is your shift? Is it an 8 hour
2 shift?

3 A. 8 hour shift from 5:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

4 Q. So you said 10 to 12?

5 A. About there.

6 Q. All right. Wow. That's -- are they mostly the 717s or --

7 A. In the morning, until about 9 o'clock it is --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- just the 717s inter island.

10 Q. All right.

11 A. And then A330s and A321s start to come in. So if we are
12 assigned to it, even more so, we push those back.

13 Q. All right.

14 A. Because we're not limited, but we only have 8 or 10 Trans-
15 PAC, A330s and A321s. It's rare that we get to do a whole lot of
16 the -- or at least our shift, our morning shift, gets to do any
17 Trans-PACs because it's later in the day.

18 Q. All right. How many, how many days in a row had you been
19 working before the event happened? Can you tell me like what was
20 going on before? Like how many days had you been -- did you work
21 any days before or was like day 1 of a workweek?

22 A. So that was day 2 of my workweek.

23 Q. Okay. All right.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I'm off Monday, Tuesdays. Wednesdays is in the bag room and
2 Thursday is my day 2 of the workweek.

3 Q. Did you feel, did you feel rested when you came in that
4 morning?

5 A. I did.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Yeah, I did.

8 Q. And what time do you normally come in in the morning?

9 A. About 4:30, 4:35.

10 Q. Wow.

11 A. I've got to eat breakfast.

12 Q. I'm right there with you on that.

13 A. I have to eat breakfast.

14 Q. If I'm going to be late to work it's because I'm eating
15 breakfast. That's the way I feel about it. The -- do you -- I
16 know that it might have been asked before, but do you feel that
17 the training that you had here was adequate for the, you know,
18 what you're doing for your job as a pushback?

19 A. I do believe so.

20 Q. Okay. Is there room for improvement?

21 A. Of course.

22 Q. All right. If you were, if you were the queen for the day
23 and you could change the training, what would you inject into your
24 training manual that you could train other folks and make it
25 better for them?

1 A. I honestly believe because we teach or we preach I should say
2 how safety is important to us and how the procedures to become
3 safe is important for us as ramp agents. I know the one thing we
4 need to do is to have better procedures that will make our people,
5 our ramp agents feel safer such as having the extra person out
6 there or having another two or three people holding the wands even
7 if it's on the inter island. I think -- I believe that just
8 having them understand the process to make them feel comfortable,
9 feel safe. I think that's the first step. That's definitely a
10 first step because as I stated before, that's the first thing I
11 asked when -- oh, I want to push back. Are you comfortable with
12 it? Do you feel comfortable? Because if you are, hey, let's get
13 going. If you're not, I don't want to rush you. That's fine.
14 Just continue to work. But if it's something that they're not
15 comfortable with, I don't want them to be discouraged because of
16 it and especially after what happened to me. I don't want them to
17 feel unsafe in doing their jobs because it's their jobs. That's
18 what we do every day, and if we can't get them to feel
19 comfortable, feel safe in doing their jobs, something needs
20 changed.

21 Q. Okay. I think you said like the crews that were dedicated
22 for just push back, pushback crews, they're fully dedicated.
23 That's all they did. That -- you said that changed, that changed
24 to -- it changed about a year ago?

25 A. I want to say February was the official time.

1 Q. So this time last year. So that would have been 10 months,
2 like around your event. December -- that's 9 months after it.

3 A. I know it was quite a while. I can't really state. I don't
4 know the exact day or month but it was last year.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Looking at that change from that time in February, did you
8 feel that -- were things then, when they were running with those
9 dedicated crews, was it better or worse than it is now? Was it,
10 was it -- did things seem more organized and safety was a higher
11 concern or people were able to flow and do their jobs?

12 A. Yes. Yes, it was safer when we had a crew that specifically
13 just pushed back, didn't have to worry about planes being loaded
14 with bags, didn't have to worry about planes being offloaded with
15 bags and just adding another task to what we do as ramp agents.
16 It's not the end of the world but it does make a big difference
17 when it comes to our job and being safe.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. Being able to focus on one thing rather than two things makes
20 our jobs that much safer. Being able to do our jobs, just safe in
21 general, you know, and not having to worry about too many things.
22 And like I stated, it's not the end of the world. We have been
23 doing it. We have been pushing back and we -- I say we, as the
24 ramp agents, but it's just one more task that we need to even more
25 so be cautious, be safe, to just do our job. It was, it was -- I

1 believe it flowed -- the day flowed a little bit better than it
2 does not that we as ramp agents have to do one more task.

3 Q. Okay. All right. That's very good clarification on that.

4 Do you see -- is there any -- like, you know, you have high
5 confidence on pushing back a plane, you know, and your other
6 colleagues that were out there that day, they have a high
7 confidence in pushing back the plane. What would you say about
8 the new employees that come in, about their confidence and skill
9 levels of driving these vehicles out here on the ramp?

10 A. I tell them the same thing as I stated before.

11 Q. My question is --

12 A. I'm sorry.

13 Q. -- do you feel -- you guys have a -- you're up here. The new
14 people that come in off the street that are the new workers --

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. -- how are -- how's their confidence level compared to like
17 when you started, you know, if you could -- is there a difference?

18 A. I believe so. And I say that only because times have
19 changed. Things have happened, and I'm not even talking about
20 just my incident itself, but I think just the work, the ethics
21 that are required for us as workers now, when we came in or when I
22 came in, they're expected to do more. So the confidence, not
23 quite I should say as intense from them now rather than from us.

24 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you for that.

25 A. I hope that makes sense.

1 Q. I understand what you're saying. So thank you for answer my
2 questions and, you know, I don't have anything else.

3 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Eddie. Mr. Ryan, sir, any questions.

4 MR. IWASAKI: All my questions were answered. I appreciate
5 your candidness. So I have no questions at this time.

6 MS. KEKAHUNA: Okay.

7 MR. ETCHER: I told her there's two rounds. That's round
8 one. Round 2 is always quicker, but do you need a break before we
9 start?

10 MS. KEKAHUNA: I do actually because I've got to call
11 someone.

12 MR. ETCHER: Absolutely. Let's take a break at 11:43 local.

13 (Off the record at 11:43 a.m.)

14 (On the record at 11:51 a.m.)

15 MR. ETCHER: All righty. And back on the record at 11:51
16 local.

17 BY MR. ETCHER:

18 Q. We've finished round one. A sigh of relief. Round 2 is
19 always less. I think you've answered most of my questions. I
20 think I only have like 14 pages of questions left. I'm just
21 kidding on that. No, you really have answered a lot of our
22 questions. I have just very few to be honest, just to help me,
23 you know, fill in those blank areas, just so I have a better
24 understanding of it. But I do appreciate it a lot, everything
25 you've given us so far, and I'm so sorry you had to relive through

1 that, but I appreciate it. It's opened my eyes. So thank you
2 very much.

3 I want to go back. I don't remember who was asking, but when
4 they changed policy, whenever that was, 2022, 2023, about who
5 pushes back, how were you notified that there was this change
6 coming? Did the company send out a memo to everybody, saying here
7 are our changes, here's new policies? Just kind of help me
8 understand how you were told?

9 A. As far as, we don't any longer have any line service and now
10 the ramp has to push back. Is that what you're asking?

11 Q. Right.

12 A. I want to say it was through an email at first. Actually,
13 no. I want to say it was through word of mouth at first from
14 members of our line service crew, and an official came out in an
15 email. That's pretty much how we know things nowadays --

16 Q. So they --

17 A. -- word of mouth.

18 Q. They pushed it word of mouth.

19 A. Word of mouth. It's not literally official until we actually
20 seen the email, but the rumors I should say were word of mouth.
21 You just talk about it a whole lot and put all our opinions and
22 comments and questions. Until we got the email and we're like,
23 oh, there it is.

24 Q. Let's go back to when you push back an airplane, you stop and
25 get ready to disconnect the tow bar and all that. First of all,

1 just for my pea size brain to understand, about how long is your
2 headset cord? An estimate. You don't have to --

3 A. Stretched or not stretched?

4 Q. Okay. Either way. Both.

5 A. Not stretched, about a good 6 feet, about there. Stretched 8
6 1/2.

7 Q. All right.

8 A. I'm not any -- I never measured it.

9 Q. I just, you know, I wasn't sure if it was like my mom's old
10 telephone cord --

11 A. No.

12 Q. -- back in the day when it was like, you know, 30 feet long
13 so you could walk around the house with it.

14 A. No, not quite.

15 Q. Okay. All right. Perfect. So if you push back a crew, they
16 set their brakes. You disconnect the tow bar. Is there anything
17 that's prohibiting you from just backing straight up a little bit
18 so you can see both crewmembers?

19 A. No.

20 Q. So the headset could -- would be long enough to allow that?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Okay. Is there a reason that you don't? Maybe nobody does.
23 Just back straight up. You know, I'm trying to understand backing
24 up and then going to the left side.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. What?

2 A. We were actually told by our trainers that we no longer can
3 reverse into -- after disconnecting everything from the aircraft,
4 the headset and all. We can no longer reverse into the rest of
5 the ramp area, but where we usually park, by the gates and
6 everything up there. We were told not to do that any more because
7 it impedes in sight for some people who are challenged by height.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. So instead of making it a personal thing per driver, it was
10 told by all drivers no longer to reverse backwards into the next
11 waiting area for the aircraft or by the bridge or where we park it
12 and continue to do the rest of the day.

13 Q. This is what your opinion is here. In your opinion, would
14 you have any visibility issues backing the tug up?

15 A. No.

16 Q. All right. How about when you back up from the airplane, you
17 know, you say you back up a little bit so he can disconnect the
18 tow bar.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. Can you just back up a little bit more and stop and then hook
21 up the tow bar? Is there anything prohibiting you from doing
22 that?

23 A. Besides what I just stated, as far as the -- being able to
24 reverse it out, no, I don't -- I'm not prohibited as far as
25 spacewise for them to disconnect if I pull out a little further,

1 if they took it around and everything like that. But I think, to
2 be honest, just thinking about it, I think the aircraft, the nose
3 of the aircraft would be a bit difficult to clear once I turn and
4 get out on that space and area, without impeding of the headset
5 being stretched too far, without impeding of safety. Yeah.

6 Q. So let's go back to the morning of the event, real quick.
7 You said something when we were talking before how you guys, and I
8 think you stated, sat and waited, to try and get the crew's
9 attention. I just want to clarify. By sat you mean you just --
10 were you both seated in the tractor or was somebody still standing
11 outside?

12 A. I was sitting in the tractor and my partner was standing
13 outside.

14 Q. I just want to make sure you both didn't just hop in the
15 tractor and was sitting there. So --

16 A. Right.

17 Q. -- I just need it, so when I read this a month from now, I'll
18 be like, oh, yeah, I remember that now. You also talked about,
19 and I know adrenaline gets pumping when things are happening, but
20 it felt like it took forever for the tractor to start moving after
21 you put it in forward. And you tried it a few times or whatever
22 you had done. Do you have issues with the gearing, the tractor
23 shifting into forward often, ever?

24 A. Often. It's not -- it's more of a safety to where once we
25 put the gear into forward or reverse, the reason for it sitting is

1 so that it doesn't just continue to roll. I believe it just takes
2 a second or two to go into gear. My opinion, safety. That's the
3 best answer I can give you.

4 Q. And once you got it into forward, I assume the tug does not
5 accelerate like your Bugatti (ph.) or something, right. I assume
6 it's kind of slow acceleration.

7 A. It does. It does. So even just putting all the pressure on
8 the gas pedal didn't quite get it to where I needed it to be to
9 fully get out of the way as a regular tug or a regular vehicle
10 would in that sense.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. So it does take a split second to get it going.

13 Q. I appreciate the understanding. I only have just a couple
14 more questions. And, I know you had said -- I think Bill asked
15 it. A while ago they made the change that the crew, you know, you
16 don't tell the crews you're clear to start 1 now. Do you know why
17 the change?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Do you think that change was a good change, not the best
20 change, could be improved? Kind of help me understand, you know,
21 from you as one of the end users that would communicate that. Is
22 that something that would be helpful for you to say you're clear
23 to start 1 or start 2?

24 A. I would say the more communication that is stated, regardless
25 whether it's just more words or not, gives us a better sense or

1 better idea of being safe with the captain, the pilot, and so on.
2 So I don't know why they made the change. I honestly, in my
3 opinion, it's less for us to say on the headset which doesn't make
4 it quite safe or not. It's just communication is key. I believe
5 that -- yeah, I don't know why they changed it.

6 Q. It's okay, if you know. I was just kind of curious because
7 sometimes people know. Well, they did it because.

8 A. Yeah, it's one of those things like you get a new email -- we
9 get an email stating with a new update or new procedure that was
10 just given to us and laminated paper that shows us the
11 communication both between captain and pushback tractor or
12 pushback driver, as a sense of guide for us especially with the
13 new policies, you know.

14 Q. I know I mentioned earlier about just backing the tug up
15 right in front of the airplane in your opinion. Again, I
16 appreciate your opinion here. Would it be better for you as the
17 tug driver or for one of your partners who's holding the pin, to
18 show the pin out in front versus on the left side so you guys can
19 see both the members?

20 A. Yes. I do believe that if -- in that sense, if we're able to
21 pull back directly straight behind some kind of angle so that when
22 we do drive off, we don't hit or damage the aircraft, I do believe
23 that both captain and copilot will be able to see both and
24 anything and everything of the tractor, me as a driver, my partner
25 as the one holding the pin. I do believe that would be a better,

1 safer way in general regardless if it's the first flight of the
2 day, it's raining, it's pouring, lightning, thunder, hot, sunny,
3 snowing which we'll never get, but I do believe it's -- it will be
4 a safer start to a better procedure.

5 Q. Now, for me, in a 717, about how far would you have to be to
6 see both crewmembers from the nose?

7 A. Anywhere from 5 to 10 feet.

8 Q. Now, the Airbus, both the neo and the 330 --

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. -- they sit up a little bit higher.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Just a ballpark, how far would you have to be in front of the
13 nose before you could see the crew?

14 A. A good 20 feet. The A330 is about a good 30 -- it just sits
15 higher.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. And you've got to get a different -- so, 20 to 25 for the 321
18 and neo. And about 30 to 40 with the A330 to see both captain and
19 copilot, yeah. It's further out.

20 Q. Perfect. My last question or at least my last set of
21 questions. It may be one. It may be more. You talked about
22 doing the circle check before you push back. And, you know,
23 pilots have to preflight airplanes every time before they fly,
24 right. You've seen them walk around I'm sure.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Do you guys ever -- I'll call it preflight, do you guys ever
2 preflight your tug to make sure the light works, everything's in
3 place, the headset's on board the tug, the tug's good to go.
4 There's nothing wrong with it.

5 A. The tractor?

6 Q. Yeah, sorry.

7 A. Yeah. It is actually required by one of -- each shift to
8 check the tug, belt loaders, tractors, the FMC. Any ground crew
9 equipment, it's required by us to check it and we sign off on it,
10 a small signature type of thing, yeah.

11 Q. Do you ever have to check it or does somebody else check it?

12 A. It depends on -- I do check it. But it depends on who is
13 driving it at the first time. So in the -- I'll give you an
14 example. In the morning, nothing is set up on the ramp.
15 Everything is put away. All the tractors are put in a certain
16 area. The belt loaders are put in a certain area. The tugs are
17 put in a certain area. So in order for us to get the day ready or
18 get the ramp ready for the day, all our flights coming in, Trans-
19 PACs and so on and so forth, we have to drive those tractors to a
20 location. We have to drive those belt loaders to a location, and
21 it's predominantly in front of a gate where we would set up for a
22 plan to come in.

23 Q. So the morning of the event, did you -- again, I'll use the
24 term preflight because I'm a pilot. And so I've got to keep
25 things simple in my brain. Do you -- did you check the tractor?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Do you ever -- I know the first person that use it for the
3 day checks it, but throughout the day, do you ever look at it and
4 go, oh, yeah, the light's blinking or the tractor's on but the
5 light's not on.

6 A. Yes, especially unlit they're noticeable. If that brake --
7 the parking brake doesn't stick or if the gears are stuck or if
8 the tractor jumps every time you push the brake, yeah, those
9 things are very noticeable and very common for us, especially me
10 to write it down, right.

11 Q. This is my last question. I promise, maybe. I've said that
12 how many times now?

13 A. Five.

14 Q. I'm going for six. Where is the -- I'm going to call it the
15 lollipop, the little yellow light that's on top the pushback tug.
16 Where is that located on it?

17 A. On the -- most of it actually is on the roof further back
18 than the actual seat itself. Somewhere actually on the top, top
19 of the roof or somewhere actually behind on the roof itself. It
20 depends on which one we've got.

21 Q. So is it in the middle of the top, top? Is it --

22 A. Yes, sorry. In the middle, yeah. Located in the middle of
23 the tractor on top of the room but it's like right behind me.

24 Q. All right. So I told you I was going for six, but that was
25 my last question.

1 MR. ETCHER: So I will pass it over to Bill. Bill, you have
2 any questions?

3 MR. BRAMBLE: Yeah, I do.

4 BY DR. BRAMBLE:

5 Q. Eddie reminded me about some schedule things and so forth.
6 Was your schedule in the week or so leading up to the accident,
7 were you typically, were you typically -- were you on like 5 days
8 out of the week and off 2 or something like that?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. And what was your shift start and stop time?

11 A. 5 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

12 Q. Okay. So that was the case the day of the accident and the
13 day before, that was your schedule?

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. And then you have two days off before that?

16 A. Right.

17 Q. Is it hard to get enough sleep with that early wake time?
18 What time do you have to get up to make it to work?

19 A. 4.

20 Q. So then the night before the accident, do you remember how
21 much sleep you had or you think you might have had?

22 A. My bedtime usually stays around 8:30, 9 o'clock.

23 Q. So typically you're able to get around 7, 7 1/2?

24 A. That's fair.

25 Q. All right. So on the captain and communicating, I know I

1 asked you about whether he said anything after the manual start,
2 this is going to take longer. After you finished pushing back,
3 can you just tell me exactly what you recall him saying to you,
4 like all the things he said to you over there, just so I can make
5 sure I know and understand what he actually said?

6 A. I do remember not quite the details as far as the stating.

7 Q. I know you guys have the standard sort of back and forth --

8 A. Correct, right.

9 Q. -- callouts that you give each other.

10 A. Right. But as far as what he said specifically, like if he
11 had another comment to say, state what they were, how's your day
12 kind of thing.

13 Q. Let me rephrase this. Can you just tell me the last, the
14 last thing he said to you over the headset?

15 A. All right. Engines are good to go. You can disconnect the
16 headset. You guys have a good day, mahalo or thank you actually
17 in that sense.

18 Q. Okay. And under normal circumstances, what would then happen
19 is that your partner would disconnect the headset, take the pin
20 out, show him the pin, he would salute?

21 A. Correct. So shaka, thumbs up.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. The last communication.

24 Q. And then you would drive away?

25 A. Both of us.

1 Q. Okay. But you just never got any notice or response from the
2 captain to your partner?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Well, my partner didn't get the notice or response from the
6 captain, and when I realized that my partner was still standing
7 there, waiting for the last communication, I tried to help him to
8 get that last communication.

9 Q. Okay. The time that it took between the captain clearing
10 your partner -- clearing your crew to remove the pin and
11 disconnect the headset, and your partner displaying the pin, did
12 that take longer than usual?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Why is that?

15 A. Because my partner was waiting for the clearance from the
16 captain.

17 Q. But I guess what I'm asking is between the time that the
18 captain said clear to disconnect, and the time that your partner
19 first displayed the --

20 A. Oh, no.

21 Q. Did that take longer than usual?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Last thing I have to ask is, is there any procedure
24 change that's already come out that you're aware of that is going
25 to change how you guys do the pushbacks?

1 A. Not that I'm aware of.

2 Q. Not that you're aware of.

3 A. There was an email about having an additional person on the,
4 on the disconnection time from when the pushback tractor and the
5 disconnect person communicates to each other about disconnecting
6 the tow bar. From what I understand, they had an additional
7 person outside of that communication with the tractor and the
8 partner for disconnect holding the "X", a distance about I'd about
9 25 feet, maybe even more, for clearance. I remember seeing that
10 email. Because I haven't been at work, I don't know what has been
11 implemented or continued since that email has come out.

12 Q. Okay. But you said an additional person standing 25 or more
13 feet away with an "X". What do you mean by the "X"?

14 A. So with the wand, the lighted wands early in the morning or
15 day wands with the orange -- safety orange color, they would be a
16 distance far away for the -- a wing walker would be able to see
17 both captain and copilot holding the "X" sign with their wands
18 signifying that, you know, brakes are on, don't go anywhere. My
19 crew right now is working on disconnecting the tow bar, the tow
20 pin and making sure everything is safe for that time. So if that
21 person would literally visually tell the captain don't go anywhere
22 kind of thing.

23 Q. All right. That's all I have. Thanks so much.

24 A. Sure.

25 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Bill. Rocky.

1 BY MR. STONE:

2 Q. Hopefully I think I only have two. Before the airplane
3 moved, did the taxi light come on or did the airplane start moving
4 without the taxi light on?

5 A. So my position as a tractor --

6 Q. Right.

7 A. -- the taxi light is past or further -- a bit further behind
8 me rather than being in front of me where I'd be able to see it.

9 Q. So you don't know whether it was on or not?

10 A. No.

11 Q. My last question, okay, I'm going to put you in the queen for
12 a day position again. And, blank sheet of paper, what would you
13 change procedurally in everything that you do in your job so that
14 this never happens again to anybody else?

15 A. Should I start from the beginning? Or just the incident
16 part?

17 Q. Well, I mean is there anything -- I mean you talked about,
18 you know, staffing and things like that, but I guess what I'm
19 asking more is procedurally is what would you change, you know?
20 Okay. Let's assume that we don't change the staffing which I hate
21 to say things like this but frankly, you know, Hawaiian Airlines
22 is cheap like my former employers and they don't want to hire
23 anybody else and so you've only got the 32 instead of the 60.
24 And, what are you going to -- you're in charge. What would you
25 change so that this never happens again?

1 A. To be honest, I cannot -- I don't know what would be the best
2 solution to --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- where the entire ramp agent would be completely safe from
5 top to bottom, but I would be able to make some additions such as
6 having an additional -- having that additional wing walker to hold
7 that "X" both, or actually all three inter island, Class 717s, the
8 A321s and the neos and the A330s. It is because it's -- they are
9 bigger aircraft, the Trans-PACs or the neos and the A330, because
10 they're bigger aircrafts, we are required to have that extra
11 person on the side holding the "X". It is not required for us to
12 do the same thing for inter island being that it's smaller, not as
13 I should say intimidating but it's an aircraft, right. So to
14 start, scrap full complete paper, queen for the day, I would have
15 the same procedures that we do as far as disconnecting on the
16 Trans-PAC side and the inter island side.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. It's a start. Like I said, I don't know what is right or
19 wrong. I don't know what will help us get better, but I do
20 believe that will be a start.

21 Q. Okay. That's a good answer. Thank you.

22 A. Yeah, that's the honest one. Sorry.

23 Q. Yeah, that's good. That's all I have. Thank you.

24 MR. ETCHER: Eddie.

25 BY MR. MILLER:

1 Q. When you pulled up with the -- when you were pushing the
2 aircraft back and you got it onto the service road --

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. -- was the dome light inside the airplane on?

5 A. Dome light -- the cockpit light?

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. It was on.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. And when did you see that go off?

11 A. Right after I threw up my glove a couple times trying to get
12 his attention. When I threw it up the last time, like I said,
13 three or four times and caught it, and I saw the light shut off --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- that's when I realized he's coming.

16 Q. Gotcha.

17 A. He's ready to go.

18 Q. All right. That's all my questions.

19 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Eddie. Ryan.

20 MR. IWASAKI: No questions.

21 BY MR. ETCHER:

22 Q. You made it through. But I have one question I always like
23 to ask -- we asked what seemed like thousands of questions I'm
24 sure. But I'm always so afraid we're going to not ask one
25 question, and it's like if they just asked about this, it might

1 help. Is there anything you can think of that might even shed
2 more light on it for us? I mean you've given me so much, my brain
3 hurts and is trying to absorb all you've given me. But I'm always
4 afraid I'm going to miss that one question. Can you think of
5 anything like that?

6 A. And this is just from me. I really want to know why there
7 wasn't a last communication between us as ground crew and the
8 pilot. I want to know if he had a call on another cell phone or
9 if he was doing another checklist that he forgot to do it and
10 wanted to do it before the flight. I want to know if he was
11 talking to the copilot. I want to know what happened that we
12 couldn't do our job, and I say our. They're part of us. The
13 pilot is a part of us. They're part of Hawaiian Airlines.
14 They're Hawaiian Airlines pilots. Why couldn't we do our job
15 safe? I don't think at this point there's no -- yeah, I just
16 don't know.

17 Q. And we do, too. You know, that's one thing we're looking at
18 is, you know, obviously there was some kind of communication --
19 I'll use breakdown for lack of a better phrase. We want to know
20 because we want to prevent this, and if there was a communication
21 issue, to fix this so it doesn't happen to someone else. Sadly,
22 our whole process takes a bit of time because we've got to get all
23 the facts. You know, we want to do -- we want to make appropriate
24 change, not just change for safety change.

25 A. Right.

1 Q. So it all takes time, and we're hoping, just like you, to get
2 answers to those kind of questions as well. And hopefully as we
3 get near the end or towards the end of the investigation, we'll
4 have some better clarity on that, and that would help you as well
5 so you can kind of see the whole like that we have to, changes or
6 suggestions. So it's part of our process. Sadly, it's not like
7 the TV shows. It's not over in an hour. It takes a long time.
8 So, hopefully you'll have patience with us as we figure this out.

9 A. Oh, yes, no doubt.

10 MR. ETCHER: All right. Then if there's nothing else, then
11 we will call this concluded at 12:19 local. Thank you again for
12 all your help. We appreciate it. I can speak for myself, I truly
13 appreciate it and thank you.

14 (Whereupon, at 12:19 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: MINOR DAMAGE TO BOEING 717-200
 AT THE KAHULUI AIRPORT IN MAUI,
 HAWAII ON NOVEMBER 30, 2023
 Interview of Sanoë Montillano Kekahuna

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA034

PLACE: Maui, Hawaii

DATE: February 20, 2024

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.



Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*

*

MINOR DAMAGE TO BOEING 717-200

*

AT THE KAHULUI AIRPORT IN MAUI,

*

Accident No.: DCA24LA034

HAWAII ON NOVEMBER 30, 2023

*

*

* * * * *

INTERVIEW OF: DAVID ANDRIN, Ramp Agent
Hawaiian Airlines

Kahului Airport
Maui, Hawaii

Tuesday,
February 20, 2024

APPEARANCES:

SHAWN ETCHER, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

DR. BILL BRAMBLE, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ROCKY STONE, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

EDWIN "EDDIE" MILLER,
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

RYAN T. IWASAKI, Pilot
BOEING

STACEY WILLIAMS, Vice President
Hawaii IAM 141
(On Behalf of Mr. Andrin)

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of David Andrin:	
By Mr. Stone	85
By Dr. Bramble	41
By Mr. Etcher	107
By Mr. Iwasaki	123
By Dr. Bramble	124
By Mr. Etcher	127
By Mr. Miller	129
By Dr. Bramble	130

I N T E R V I E W

(2:10 p.m.)

MR. STONE: It's 2:10 p.m. in the afternoon on February 20th, 2024. We're interviewing David -- and your --

MR. ANDRIN: Andrin, A-n-d-r-i-n.

MR. STONE: -- Andrin. Okay. And this is regarding the pushback incident on November 30th of 2023.

And we've got a team here from the NTSB. My name is Rocky Stone. I'm the operational factors investigator for the NTSB which only means I work from the cockpit door forward, but that includes coordination with the ground crew. So that's why we're here and why we're talking to you. So I've got a bunch of colleagues here who are, you know, subject matter experts who will ask questions, too.

And again, our goal is just to find out what happened --

MR. ANDRIN: Okay.

MR. STONE: -- and how we can change it. So with that, I'm going to go around the room just to let everyone introduce themselves. Shawn.

MR. ETCHER: Good afternoon, sir. My name is Shawn Etcher with the NTSB. I'm an operational factors investigator also. Thank you for coming in.

MR. STONE: And, Bill.

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

1 MR. STONE: Thank you, Bill. Eddie.

2 MR. MILLER: Eddie Miller, senior aviation accident
3 investigator for the FAA.

4 MR. STONE: Okay.

5 MR. IWASAKI: Ryan Iwasaki, a pilot with the Boeing Company.

6 MR. STONE: Okay. Great. We'll go ahead and get started,
7 and you do have a representative here. And can I get you to state
8 your name for the recording?

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. My name is Stacey Williams with Hawaiian
10 Airline, and I'm here on behalf of the International Association
11 of Machinists Union.

12 MR. STONE: Okay. Thank you, Stacey.

13 INTERVIEW OF DAVID ANDRIN

14 BY MR. STONE:

15 Q. Let's go ahead and start with the hard questions. Can you
16 give us your name and spell your last name?

17 A. Okay. My name is David Andrin, A-n-d-r-i-n.

18 Q. Okay. Great. Thank you, David. And you work as a ramp
19 agent?

20 A. Ramp agent.

21 Q. For Hawaiian Airlines?

22 A. For Hawaiian Airlines.

23 Q. Okay. And you were working that day, November 30th. What
24 was your shift?

25 A. 5:30 to 1:30.

1 Q. 5:30 to 1:30. Okay. Why don't we -- let's start at the
2 beginning of that day, when you arrived that day --

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. -- can you just kind of walk us through what you were doing
5 and how you ended up being by the incident airplane?

6 A. Okay. Yeah. Normally, when we first start, you know, we
7 have a briefing, fairly involved, and we, you know, we set up
8 everything for the flights for the day. And, that flight that we
9 worked on was the first flight of the day. It was actually like a
10 half flight because it stays overnight, you know. And so we
11 loaded up the plane and, you know, just about to -- it's very
12 repetitious, you know, when we push back.

13 So somebody was the operator of the pushback tractor, and I
14 was like the guide or her assistant. And my job is just to kind
15 of follow her when she push back, and then she communicates with
16 the pilot and, you know, she asks, you know, she asks the pilot if
17 it's okay to disconnect the tow bar and they go through the
18 procedures of, you know, locking the brakes. So when she gives me
19 the okay to disconnect the tow bar, I just disconnect it, and from
20 the tractor, hooked to the plane, and I disconnect the tow bar on
21 the plane side, from the front wheel. Then she comes forward --
22 she turns and she comes forward and then I hook the tow bar in the
23 back of the tow truck -- the tractor.

24 Then I, you know, I go and I take out the bypass pin. That
25 is to the wheels, and I standby and I wait for her, after she

1 communicates with the pilot, to disconnect the communication line.
2 I guess she tells the pilot, you know, they start the engines or
3 whatever.

4 So she told, you know, she tells me it's okay to disconnect
5 the communication line. I take it off, and then I, you know, I go
6 to the side of the plane, and the bypass pin and it has a
7 streamer, a red streamer, and I show it to the pilot. And
8 normally the pilot will salute me. That was how we were taught,
9 you know, from years ago. I don't know what's the -- they told me
10 it's different now.

11 So, you know, that's what happened. You know, that day was
12 -- earlier it was raining, and we had some little sprinkles, too,
13 and the window and the windshield, you know, I couldn't make the
14 pilot out of it but, you know, I couldn't see his hands or
15 anything or even the time if he saluted me. So I told Sanoe that,
16 you know, I didn't see the pilot salute me, you know, I'm not
17 sure. So, you know, we had to wait. I had to have the captain
18 confirmation from the pilot, but he was, you know, I could see him
19 moving around, you know, but he was doing he checks. And then,
20 you know, we thought, you know, we thought, you know, he would
21 look, you know, look at us or open his window, you know, just to
22 communicate with us. Sometimes they do it. Sometimes they don't,
23 you know.

24 And then later on, you know, I was thinking, you know, maybe,
25 you know, maybe he thought that I saw him, you know, but, you

1 know, I didn't, I didn't see him salute me. So, you know, that's
2 why we stood by.

3 And so Sanoe, you know, I -- she stepped on the -- on top of
4 the tractor, the siderail, and kind of waved to the pilot and I
5 was kind of like trying to get his attention. But, I think he was
6 just too busy because I see movement. I cannot clearly see what
7 he doing, you know. He's working down in the front, looked like
8 on the front panel, working on things on the front.

9 So we're just waiting and waiting. And then all of a sudden,
10 you know, we see he dimmed the light or turned off the light in
11 the cockpit. And I looked at her and she looked at me, and said,
12 oh, man, I think he's going to go. So right then and there we
13 decide to just, you know, get away from the aircraft as soon as
14 possible. And what I did was, you know, I turned around, and I
15 went to the right to get away from her. About a year ago, you
16 know, I got into an accident and I didn't want to get into another
17 accident, get runned over, because I don't think I would survive
18 getting run by this tractor.

19 So while I was going, you know, I was walking very fast, you
20 know. I couldn't run. Then I noticed, hey, I didn't see her pass
21 me. So that's when I turned around and I looked, and I saw her,
22 you know, she was coming like -- she was just leaving the side of
23 the aircraft, but kind of slow. Then I realized, oh, no, that
24 pushback tractor, it doesn't respond quickly, you know. It takes
25 a while to wind up because the thing's so heavy and the gearing is

1 so low, you know.

2 And then all of a sudden, we just heard, you know, the sound
3 that we never like to hear, the pilot, he gassed the engine, and I
4 said there's no way she's going to make it. And I was just
5 stunned because I didn't know what was going to happen, you know,
6 the thinking part. And all of a sudden she disappeared because
7 she went under the wing and just glass, things start flying
8 around. I was kind of like -- I was kind of worried that, you
9 know, then maybe I see too much movies that, you know, I was
10 thinking since that plane get a lot of fuel, I thought it was
11 going to blow up, you know, with my coworker and all the
12 passengers in the plane.

13 But it was, it was just kind of weird that, you know, she
14 came through, she came through the back side of the wing. She
15 went forward just a little, and I was thinking, why doesn't she,
16 you know, keep on going forward because, you know, the engine is
17 cranking. But then I think the pilot, you know, I don't know if
18 he braked or if the thing just came to a stop.

19 Because the question was, you know, how come, you know, the
20 tractor was way in the back and the plane was way in the front,
21 because the plane was going forward already. So the plane did
22 move from the original, you know, from the stopped position.

23 So Sanoe went through the, you know, came from the other side
24 of the wing, she came forward, and turned because she was, you
25 know, I guess the wheel was turned to the right. So she went

1 forward a little and then she stopped. I never, you know, really
2 see where, you know, where she was until, you know, I got to go
3 and, you know, try to push her -- push that tractor away from the
4 plane because the engine was still screaming. Then I realized,
5 oh, she was, she was outside of the tractor, you know, she was
6 like through the windshield. The windshield was gone already. It
7 was -- the thing just disintegrate.

8 Q. So you were on the -- so the airplane is sitting -- so the
9 pushback tail is south. So you're on the wing that's closer to
10 the terminal. Is that correct?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And you come from that wing walker position and have to --

13 A. Sort of like an angle.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. I would say almost a 45 degree angle, but not too far out,
16 you know.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But far enough, you know, where I can see the pilot and he
19 can see me.

20 Q. But you're -- when do you move from the wing walker position
21 out, back towards the nose here to deal with -- help disconnect
22 the tractor? Is that after the airplane stops or are you starting
23 to move that way halfway through the pushback or --

24 A. I -- when a pushback starts to slow down, you know, come to a
25 stop, the plane, then I approach the --

1 Q. That's when you started walking.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Because I go towards the tractor first because I unhook the
5 hitch --

6 Q. Right.

7 A. -- the tow bar and tow tractor, yeah.

8 Q. Okay. Do you do pushbacks also or do you just --

9 A. I used to do it many years ago, but then I didn't train to do
10 it today.

11 Q. Okay. So you're just going to be --

12 A. Just a guide person, yeah.

13 Q. Yeah. And so are you -- you said you had a briefing at the
14 beginning of the day, but that was more of a --

15 A. More for the plane.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. If anything came up, you know.

18 Q. So when you're actually out at the airplane, getting ready to
19 push back, who decides like you're going to go to --

20 A. Yeah, we --

21 Q. -- which wing and who --

22 A. -- we have our phone to tell us what to do.

23 Q. Oh.

24 A. We have this program on our phone that they give us. It's
25 called RealTime. So it gives us the task.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. Yeah. It tells us where we're going to be, you know, what
3 we're doing.

4 Q. And is it detailed enough to tell you to be a wing walker
5 or --

6 A. Everybody's supposed to wing walk. So whoever's available.

7 Q. And that's close.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Closest to, okay. So it's really whoever is closest gets
10 that assignment.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Okay. Wow.

13 A. You know, the thing that get me is that, you know, we do
14 this, you know, many times --

15 Q. Right.

16 A. -- in rain, dark and everything, but it was kind of weird
17 that one particular morning was like, I don't know, maybe it was
18 the lights, you know, in the cockpits and the lights from the
19 terminal, you know, just -- I couldn't see real clear. So I don't
20 know what the pilot saw, you know.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. I just had a hard time, you know, seeing him.

23 Q. But normally once you get the nose steering pin out and you
24 display it, it's just matter of a few seconds. Is that --

25 A. No, because we got to wait for the pilot gives the clearance

1 for, you know, whatever he checks.

2 Q. Disconnect.

3 A. Yeah, disconnect.

4 Q. Okay. So it's after that --

5 A. Disconnect the communication line, you know.

6 Q. Okay. So then you disconnect the communication line, and
7 then that's when you pull the pin, the nose gear pin?

8 A. After I disconnect the tow bar from the plane itself because
9 I disconnect the tow bar from the tractor first.

10 Q. First, right.

11 A. Yeah. So they move away a little bit so I can take off that
12 tow pin but then, you know, I have to go to the plane first and,
13 you know, disconnect the pins, the connection from the nose gear,
14 pull the tow bar and then get the tow bar and rehook the tow bar
15 to the back of the tractor.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So what they do is like here's the front of the plane. So,
18 you know, they're like this. So when I disconnect the tow bar,
19 they go back a bit so I can get the tow bar off of the plane.
20 Then they're going to slightly turn and then go forward, and that
21 way I can just connect the tow bar, you know, on the back side.

22 Q. Okay. But the tow tractor driver is still talking to the
23 pilot at that point.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And then she has to give you a signal to --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- disconnect the --

3 A. Disconnect the wire.

4 Q. -- wire. And that's when you pull the nose gear steering
5 pin?

6 A. No, I've pulled it right after -- I'm sorry.

7 Q. Oh.

8 A. Yeah, I pull it right after I disconnect the tow bar --

9 Q. Oh, okay.

10 A. -- from the plane.

11 Q. Thank you. That's an important clarification. Okay. So
12 that gets pulled earlier and then when it's time to end the
13 communications, you -- then you pull the cords, close the door and
14 make sure it's all latched and --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And then at that point, that's when you walk -- you've
17 already had the pin for a while then.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And you're just walking around to display it at that point.

20 A. um

21 Q. That makes sense. And did you have a lighted wand that
22 morning?

23 A. Yeah, about -- most of the time, you know, I just put it in
24 my back pocket because I've got to use my hands to disconnect
25 things, you know.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. But, you know, I was thinking, you know, what does the pilot
3 really see. Maybe he just see the shadows.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. But then it's -- if we use the wand, you know, I don't know
6 what to call it. You'll see the streamer, yeah.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. Because the pin is small.

9 Q. Right. Yeah. Normally is, yeah.

10 A. And, you know, the wand is very (indiscernible).

11 Q. But you use the one for doing the wing walking primarily,
12 right.

13 A. Yeah. Uh-huh.

14 Q. And then are there any issues -- I mean are the wands bright
15 enough that you can see them?

16 A. Yeah, uh-huh.

17 Q. And are they turned on all the time or do you just turn them
18 on like when you're actually --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. When do you turn them on and off?

21 A. When we bringing in the plane, wing walking.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Bringing it in and dispatching.

24 Q. Okay. Penny was telling us about a function that you don't
25 use on the 717 but on the neo and the A330, he called it the "X"

1 man chop --

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. -- where you -- do you ever do that or --

4 A. The first couple days after that incident, you know, we were
5 doing that, but then because it's not in our procedure, you
6 know --

7 Q. Right.

8 A. -- they said don't do it. And the reason why we were doing
9 that on the bigger planes was because when it's higher --

10 Q. Right, you can't see.

11 A. -- you cannot see, whereas the 717 you can see. Some place,
12 you know, it's kind of like to many people out there, you know,
13 because we, you know, we're going to show the pilot the tow bar,
14 the tractor and then we get the "X" guy and we get the guy whose
15 got the pin.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. So.

18 Q. Right. After the -- after you've disconnected the headset --

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. -- and you're walking around the outside of the tractor, so
21 the tractor's between you and the airplane to show the pin, is
22 there a reason why the tractor -- I mean why doesn't the tractor
23 move away at that point? Is it -- are they waiting --

24 A. It's for the communication line.

25 Q. Well, right. But then I -- but I mean you've already --

1 you've already -- you've pulled this -- after you've pulled it,
2 and you're walking out to display it --

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. -- there's -- and the tractor's still there. Is there --
5 does it need to be there or could it have -- could it move on?

6 A. Normally what we do is, you know, we just send it back, the
7 pin and the streamer, you know.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. And then -- and normally, you know, the pilots still can see
10 us --

11 Q. Right.

12 A. -- because we, you know, the plane -- the 717 is going off.

13 Q. But I guess --

14 A. But now, you know, we do things differently. So.

15 Q. But my question is why is the tow tractor still there after
16 she's been disconnected? The only, the only step left is the
17 acknowledgement that you're showing the pin and the streamer.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Now, she doesn't need to be there any more, does she? Or --

20 A. Actually the plane is supposed to move already, you know.

21 Q. They are.

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. She is -- they are supposed to move. Okay.

24 A. So that -- I don't know if she was waiting for me to give her
25 the pin because usually there's enough time. I'll just show

1 the --

2 Q. And you give it to her, right.

3 A. And then just give it to her and then she goes.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. But because, you know, I didn't see, you know, I held her up
6 really that morning

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But I didn't have that confirmation.

9 Q. I think --

10 A. I didn't see that confirmation.

11 Q. Okay. Well, given me -- you've answered a lot of my
12 questions. I think I'm going to turn it over to Bill. And
13 normally we do two rounds of questions.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. The second go around goes a lot faster. So.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. But I'm going to turn it over to Bill to see if he has any
18 questions.

19 A. Okay.

20 DR. BRAMBLE: Okay. Sure.

21 BY MR. BRAMBLE:

22 Q. Yeah, David. So how long have you been a ramp agent for
23 Hawaiian?

24 A. Oh, July was 50 years, but actually this month, I'm up to 26.
25 Full time, it will be 49 years. I know time just fly.

1 Q. And you mentioned an accident. Was that an accident that you
2 suffered at work or was it --

3 A. Yeah. October 28, 29, 2023.

4 Q. Oh, 2023. What happened?

5 A. I got run over by a belt loader.

6 Q. What -- wow. Okay. So how did that happen?

7 A. Me and my chief agent were going to set up the 717 to be
8 loaded, and I took the belt loader and I was, you know, supposed
9 to put it in front of the plane, the compartment, and we have
10 scanners that, you know, we've got to scan the bags. So I put it
11 on my belt. I'm sorry. I put it on my belt and then somebody --
12 it's one of the older belts. So it has like a lever for on and
13 off. They left it on on. So when I started the loader, the belt
14 started going and my scanner start moving and at the same time,
15 you know, I was going forward already and I thought I could grab
16 my scanner and, you know, so the thing wouldn't fall down. And
17 then I had to reach a little bit further. So my leg was sticking
18 out back side, and on the belt loader, the tires is right behind,
19 right behind the driver, and apparently the thing, you know, it
20 caught my foot. So it caught my foot, it threw me on the ground
21 and run over my right leg, and the next thing I know, I was
22 underneath the belt loader and I was like, you know, my thighs are
23 against my chest. I thought my back was going to break at that
24 time, but it slowly rolled me over and my chief agent, Steven Wong
25 (ph.), he pulled me out of the belt, and at the same time,

1 somebody else turned off the engine from the belt loader.

2 What happened was it just shattered my left foot, broke my
3 right leg and broke my scapula on my left shoulder. So a short
4 vacation. I had to, you know, because where I live, you know, my
5 house, you know, I have stairs, and I had to be on wheelchair. So
6 I had to stay at a rehab place for about a month and a half or so,
7 maybe 2 months and a half. I was getting spoiled over there. The
8 only bad thing is that, you know, it's a retirement home, too, you
9 know. It's a long term. People there is like -- I don't look
10 forward to getting old, you know. But, it was just an unfortunate
11 thing, you know. I never, you know, I don't know why I didn't see
12 the front wheel turn all the way to the left. So when I stick out
13 my foot, that thing was just right there already.

14 But, the bright thing is, you know, I survived because when I
15 was underneath that belt, you know, I could see the back tire
16 coming straight for my head, and I was thinking, oh, shit, this is
17 it, David, and then that's when Steven pulled me out. So when he
18 came the first time, it was like, oh, I couldn't, you know, I was
19 kind of like getting over things from the year before, kind of
20 like brought back things, you know.

21 Q. Did you feel like the company looked at the accident and
22 tried to do anything to improve safety?

23 A. Yeah, we changed our procedures. And, you know, too many --
24 I don't know. Too many accidents been happening which is kind of
25 funny, you know, like all these years, you know, we've -- I guess

1 maybe, you know, we're strong man and we kind of rushing doing
2 things, you know, and that's, you know, it's like everywhere. So,
3 you know, we think safety but then, you know, when we start
4 working, you just trying to get the job done, you know, as soon as
5 -- as fast as possible.

6 Q. Do you think the staffing has got anything to do with that?

7 A. No, no, because that was like first thing in the morning.

8 For that accident, and like even my accident, good thing it
9 happened in the morning because if it happened during the day, I
10 don't think there would have been anybody close by to save me.
11 That was just a freak accident.

12 Q. Okay. It was the front tire that caught your leg or the back
13 tire?

14 A. The belt -- it was the front tire.

15 Q. Okay. Front.

16 A. Because it's right behind the seat of my --

17 Q. Oh, it's behind you.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. I see. Okay. You had mentioned when Rocky was asking you
20 something about communicating with the captain, you said the
21 captain would open his window, and I think you said not this time,
22 but I just wanted to clarify. This particular accident airplane,
23 did the captain open his window to talk to you before the
24 accident?

25 A. No, no.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. You know, if he didn't, you know, it's raining, you know. So
3 he doesn't want to the rain to go, you know, inside.

4 Q. Yeah. Okay. And, when you were cleared to disconnect the
5 communication cable and remove the pin and display it to the
6 captain --

7 A. Um-hum.

8 Q. -- did that take longer than usual?

9 A. No, no.

10 Q. Okay. And, when you displayed the pin the captain, can you
11 describe for us how you were holding it?

12 A. Just like this. I had the pin in this hand, and then I
13 pulled the streamer, you know, so he can see.

14 Q. So you're holding -- for the transcription, you're holding
15 your two arms straight up above your head --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- and you have the pin in one hand and the streamer is in
18 the other hand.

19 A. Extended so he can see.

20 Q. Okay. And, where were you standing when you were displaying
21 them to him like that?

22 A. Just about a 45 degree angle so, you know, like --

23 Q. Like relative to the tug and the airplane -- or the tractor
24 and the airplane, where do you think you were located?

25 A. So if you look where the pilot's window is --

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. -- so I was like slight in front so he could see me and I
3 could see him and the tractor is right in front of us, between me
4 and the plane. They normally wait, you know, for -- to give us
5 enough time to clear the area. So I assume that, you know, he --
6 I would assume that he thought that I saw him acknowledge that he
7 saw the pin. And that's why he never saw us out there. He
8 probably thought we were gone already because, you know, they
9 don't leave, you know, right after they see the pin. It takes
10 time, too. They have to do their checks and all that type of
11 thing.

12 Q. But just to clarify, while you were displaying the pin, you
13 could see his face?

14 A. I cannot see his face. I can just see his silhouette
15 actually.

16 Q. Okay. And, if he had looked at you, would you have been able
17 to tell or --

18 A. I can tell maybe because, you know, how the head -- the shape
19 of the head, you know, it turned, but then, you know, I don't know
20 where his eyes are, you know.

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. I know, you know, he might turn towards me but, you know, I
23 don't know if he is looking at me. I kind of question myself,
24 too, was it a, was it a man or a woman pilot, you know, because I
25 just saw a silhouette, you know.

1 Q. Okay. And I think you had stated you never did see him issue
2 a salute or a shaka?

3 A. Uh-uh, not clear, you know, because it would be hard to see.
4 It would be hard to see if he go this way. It's like he turned
5 already. You know, maybe he was in a rush or something. He just
6 saw me one time. So every time I looked up, you know, because I
7 go up this way and then I look up. It's not something that you
8 got to look up and going up the street.

9 Q. All right. Just for the transcription, can you describe
10 again what you didn't see? You didn't see him lift his hand up to
11 his temple?

12 A. Yeah. Sometimes they salute. Sometimes they give a shaka.
13 Sometimes they give a thumbs up.

14 Q. Do you think you would have seen him do any of those three
15 things or was it too hard to tell?

16 A. I would -- like if -- I would have been guessing if I -- if
17 he did, you know, but then by the time I -- when I looked up, you
18 know, I don't think he was facing me.

19 Q. Okay. I'm guessing that because you stayed there and
20 continued displaying the pin --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- that you didn't think he had saluted you?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. But it sounds like in retrospect you're not sure or
25 are you confident he did not?

1 A. Yeah, I'm more confident that I did not see him.

2 Q. See him.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay. How far away from the airplane would you say that the
5 tractor was parked?

6 A. It was right up to 5 feet, maybe even 4 feet or so.

7 Q. And how long would you say that you held the pin up over your
8 head?

9 A. A good 10 seconds, you know, until -- I put it down when I
10 know he wasn't paying attention because he was just busy moving
11 around in the cockpit doing his checks I guess. When I think he
12 was looking towards me, then I would raise up and at the same
13 time, Sanoe was, you know, she was kind of like waving at him,
14 too. I guess he was just focused on what he was doing.

15 Q. Okay. And then how far were you from the tug would you say?

16 A. I was just about 3 feet, yeah, on the opposite side, yeah, of
17 the tractor.

18 Q. How far were you from the passenger's side door of the
19 tractor?

20 A. About, yeah, about 3 feet.

21 Q. Okay. So you were standing next to that door?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay. Have you ever seen a crew neglect to acknowledge the
24 pin with a salute before?

25 A. No.

1 Q. And how long have you been using that procedure?

2 A. As long as we were pushing back, pushing back the plane from
3 the ramp. I don't know the year.

4 Q. Do you mean as long as the ramp agents have been pushing back
5 the plane or do you mean as long as you --

6 A. We used to -- when we worked the pushback before, we used to
7 assist the line service. It's been a while.

8 Q. Okay. Were you in the vicinity? Were you near by often
9 times when the line service was pushing back the airplanes in the
10 past?

11 A. I tried not to be but again I get caught.

12 Q. Okay. Did you ever -- so in your 49 years --

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. -- as a ramp agent for Hawaiian, have you ever seen a
15 situation like that where the pin is being displayed, and it seems
16 like the crew is not acknowledging and there's a lengthy delay
17 waiting for a crew to salute?

18 A. No, I haven't.

19 Q. You have not?

20 A. I have not. I'm sorry.

21 Q. Okay. Did you speak with the crew after the accident?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Did you see anyone else speak with them through their window?

24 A. No. There's so many people out there, you know, we still
25 have things to turn over. So.

1 Q. Did you call for emergency services or did someone else do
2 that?

3 A. Somebody else. I think somebody who was working the other
4 plane that they -- who saw, you know, after the -- what was
5 happening after the accident.

6 Q. Okay. I think that's all I have. Thanks, David.

7 A. You're welcome.

8 MR. STONE: Next we have Shawn.

9 MR. ETCHER: Thanks.

10 BY MR. ETCHER:

11 Q. Are you doing okay? Do you need a break?

12 A. No, no, I'm good.

13 Q. All right. Thank you so much for all the info so farm.
14 Sorry, my questions might be a little hodgepodge because I wrote
15 them down asking.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. So forgive me on that. I just want to make sure, you've
18 worked your entire career here at Hawaiian or other carriers?

19 A. For airlines, yeah, only Hawaiian, yeah. I worked other
20 jobs.

21 Q. Okay. And you used to do pushback?

22 A. Yeah, about -- it was so simple before. All we do is
23 straight back, and -- yeah, not too far. It was so, you know, the
24 commands was so simple, but now because it's so many traffic out
25 there, we have to -- it comes in different kind of

1 (indiscernible). I said, ah, I'll leave it to the young guys now.

2 Q. So, considering you used to do it, you know, it was simple
3 back then, is there anything that you can change to -- I don't
4 want to say get back to simple --

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. -- but to prevent this? You've got experience at it. Kind
7 of help me understand what could be done different?

8 A. I think what we -- the kind we do now, you know, it's pretty
9 much taken care of that, but as far as the kind of site, you know,
10 that's kind of tricky. I don't know. On the humorous side, don't
11 know, maybe just Rain-X the windshield on the planes, you know.
12 So, you know, we get better directing. I was even thinking, you
13 know, maybe we can have radios but, you know, it's, you know, cost
14 and it's not worth it just to, you know, just to communicate with
15 the pilot, you know. You know, it's not raining all the time, but
16 then, you know, we really did improve, you know, our way of the
17 kind of dispatching the planes. And, you know, we get along with
18 the pilots. You know, they understand, you know, and we
19 understand their point, too, you know. I feel much better, you
20 know. We don't have to worry, you know, about any more accidents.
21 Whereas before we just rushing doing things, you know and, you
22 know, we've been getting a way to -- getting away with things, you
23 know, not being unsafe but, you know, just become so automatic,
24 you know. Maybe the unsafe thing that we do is just going too
25 fast. We told management, we don't like the phone.

1 Q. I don't like my phone either. So I understand.

2 A. Now, they're not too bad. Before it's like, oh, you do one
3 task. It's like next task is up. It's like, oh, give me time for
4 breathe like, you know. So that was kind of rough before because
5 they're kind of like trying to figure things out until they got
6 some feedback from us.

7 Q. So when you did the very simple pushback, I have a couple of
8 questions about that. Did you, did you have to show the pin to
9 the crew then, too?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Where did you show that from? The front, so you could see
12 both pilots, from one side or the other?

13 A. On the side.

14 Q. On the side?

15 A. Yeah. Because once we -- because tractor just goes forward
16 and then we disconnect and we do the same thing. I was
17 disconnecting, then back up a little bit to hook up the tow bar
18 and the guide guy or whoever assist the pushback tractor operator,
19 he goes on the side closest to the pilot, and by then, you know,
20 the tractor is gone is already because it's real short distance.
21 It just go right back to where we park the -- where the tractor
22 was parked.

23 Q. Okay. All right. So let me go back to -- Rocky had asked
24 you a question about your start time and stuff.

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. And I wrote down, again if I heard it wrong, please correct.
2 You start at 5:30.

3 A. 5 o'clock.

4 Q. 5. See, I knew I -- because I was going to ask how do you
5 get everything done, load the airplane and everything for a 5:30
6 departure.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. So I just wanted to make sure I had that correct.

9 A. Our briefing is very short, yeah.

10 Q. It takes a while to load an airplane I assume.

11 A. We -- because the flight leaves like at 6 o'clock. So we got
12 a lot of time because, you know, while we're setting up for other
13 flights, you know, like we set up for inter island and Trans-PAC.
14 So -- and we have enough guys to, you know, set up carts, belt
15 loaders. So, you know, normally the first flight, we don't really
16 have too much bags. Mostly commuters there.

17 Q. Okay. So when you get in at 5 o'clock in the morning. You
18 get your briefing.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. Do you go out and get the tugs put in the right place? Do
21 you put the pushback tractors in where they need to be?

22 A. Yeah. So usually my job is only to take the belt loaders,
23 the carts sometimes, the blankets. Then the guys who do the
24 pushbacks, they handle the tow bars and the pushback tractors.

25 Q. When you do the belt loader --

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. -- do you do any kind of a morning safety check, morning
3 preflight, whatever you want to call it.

4 A. Yeah, we're supposed to, yeah, because we have a checklist
5 there, a safety checklist that whoever jumps on the vehicle first
6 got to do the safety check and just sign off on the vehicle.

7 Q. So let's go to the morning of the event. I assume you're
8 helping load the bags.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. You don't fuel, right? You guys don't fuel the airplane or
11 do you?

12 A. No, no, we don't.

13 Q. Just load the bags and --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- push back and all that. Okay. So you load the bags. Was
16 it a heavy bag day, a light bag day? Do you remember? I know
17 it's been a while. So apologies.

18 A. I don't think so, but I don't even know what was my job that
19 day, if I was a driver because we've got specific, you know, if
20 you work in the back or front compartment and I don't quite
21 remember like the load that day.

22 Q. And I know it's been a while. So it's okay. I don't know is
23 perfectly fine.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. There's no right or wrong answers. I was just kind of trying

1 to get myself as that fly on your shoulder if you want. I like to
2 see what you're seeing. So you get the airplane loaded. The belt
3 loader's moved back. You also shut the cargo doors, right?

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. Put the jet bridge back? You guys don't do the jet bridge,
6 right?

7 A. Yeah, the customer service agent do that.

8 Q. All right. So it comes back and do you remember what wing
9 you walked out on? Was it the captain's side wing or first
10 officer's?

11 A. Captain's side. We have trade -- yeah. We have trade winds.
12 That's the direction that the plane tail will turn. So if we have
13 like Kona winds. Whoever is on the pilot -- the first officer's
14 side, they do the disconnecting.

15 Q. Okay. So it all depends on which direction the tails gets
16 pushed back?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Okay. So you're at the gate. Do you remember did it leave
19 on time or was it a little late?

20 A. I think it was late.

21 Q. So let's say it's late. Does that -- I'm kind of asking for
22 your take, your opinion if you will. Does that make you kind of,
23 oh, I've got to get this going a little faster?

24 A. You know, I actually I heard that it was late. I never
25 really pay attention.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. So I guess I wasn't driving that day. That's the only time I
3 would know that if the plane was running late or not.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Then I would be driving like on psycho, you know, trying to
6 get the bags out to the plane. Sorry.

7 Q. All right. So you're out there on the left, the pilot's
8 wing.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. How easy can you see the tug, the tug operator, the pushback
11 driver?

12 A. Pretty easy because normally, you know, like I'm ahead of it
13 at first because I'm at the tip of the wing or a little bit closer
14 to the tail. And while the tractor is pushing the plane, you
15 know, he slowly catches me up and then we just meet where I think
16 he's going to stop.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And what determines that is, you know, what -- if there's
19 other thing on the ramp. So normally he, you know, the guy will
20 just turn a bit and maybe go 20 yards or so down, maybe even less.

21 Q. But -- I know it was raining that day. But you could easily
22 see the tractor itself --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- and -- okay.

25 A. So it's like on and off. So, you know, like when -- we do

1 our disconnecting, you know, maybe it was just a drizzle or so.
2 It wasn't that bad. It just -- everything was all wet. The
3 windshield, the windows, you know.

4 Q. Okay. So, you're doing -- getting ready to push back. You
5 see the tug. Do you see the yellow light on top?

6 A. No, I too close. Yeah, I'm too close to the -- plus, I'm not
7 really paying attention because I'm doing my task of, you know,
8 disconnecting, taking off the pin.

9 Q. Before push back?

10 A. Oh, before push back.

11 Q. You're sitting at the gate, you're looking at your tug
12 driver. Do you see the yellow light on top of the tug blinking?

13 A. Yeah, uh-huh.

14 Q. Do you always look?

15 A. No.

16 Q. No.

17 A. No.

18 Q. Do you think you saw it that morning? I just want to --

19 A. Yeah, I don't really remember.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. If it's working.

22 Q. Are they not usually?

23 A. Supposed to. I just tunnel vision, you know.

24 Q. All right. Have you ever seen them not working?

25 A. Before -- way back before, yeah. But ever since, you know,

1 we doing our safety checking and stuff, it's pretty much okay, you
2 know.

3 Q. So you're getting ready to push back. Does the tug driver --
4 do they know that you're pushing?

5 A. Yeah, usually she blows her horn.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Turn on a signal, blows the horn and then she start moving.

8 Q. Turns on the signal?

9 A. You know, that's --

10 Q. She turns on the yellow light?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Oh, okay. It's not automatic. It's -- they have to turn it
13 on to tell you they're ready to push?

14 A. Yeah. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Okay. All right. So --

16 A. I might be wrong at that because, you know, it's like --
17 that's how it used to be. So I assume, you know, it's still like
18 that. But then I wonder why they're blowing the horn, you know.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So I just don't remember what (indiscernible), they just
21 start blowing the horn. I would, you know, I would assume that,
22 you know, once they start up that tractor, that light is supposed
23 to be going already, you know.

24 Q. So that they just don't have the tractor on sitting there at
25 the gate. They start it once they get clearance to push?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Because that, you know, that plane, it stays overnight there.
4 So we actually got -- we got to hook up that, we've got to hook up
5 that plane to the tow bar and the tractor, because the night
6 shift, they leave it that way, just in case we need the tractor
7 for something else. And then we turn everything off, you know,
8 we've got to turn it off. They don't want anything running --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- near the plane.

11 Q. So you're at the wing. When do you -- I'm asking for what
12 you do. When do you turn on your red wands? Do you turn them on
13 as you're walking out? Do you turn them on when you're out there?

14 A. Yeah, when we get to the cones, that's lined up with the
15 wing, you know, where we're going to wing walk, pick up the wands,
16 we turn it on and everything. But lately, you know, somebody been
17 putting them on. They leave the lights on -- or the wands on and
18 they just stick it in the hole. So we just go there and just pick
19 it up.

20 Q. Okay. So when they turn the light on -- I'm an idiot. So
21 I'll start with that. How do you turn those on? Is it like a
22 light --

23 A. It's like a flashlight.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. But there's different modes like there's a flashing one. At

1 the tip, there's like a clear lens, things like that. Flashlight,
2 it comes out a steady stream of light.

3 Q. So because there's several settings, do you guys have a
4 requirement like you must use the steady one or the flashing one?

5 A. Yeah, we just -- yeah, we've just got to use the steady one
6 actually.

7 Q. So you don't ever use the flashing?

8 A. Yeah, it's like -- they spend, they spend too much money on
9 that one, yeah. We don't need the extra.

10 Q. Okay. All righty. So, take me back to that morning. I know
11 that it's been a few months ago. So I apologize. When you walked
12 out to the cone, do you remember seeing the lit wand, grabbing the
13 lit wand or is it too far back?

14 A. Yeah, it's too far back.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Because sometimes they're one and sometimes they're not. But
17 normally, you know, when we get to the wands, we automatically
18 turn it on. So if they're not -- the pilot not ready or, you
19 know, the gates not ready, since we're out there, we just stand
20 with wands on. We don't turn it off until, you know, we
21 (indiscernible) the plane. And when we're done with it that day,
22 then we turn it off.

23 Q. Are you required to use those lit wands?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Any time -- are you always required to use lit wands or is

1 there times you're not required? Do you know?

2 A. Before it was like more when it's dark, you know, and they
3 wanted to use those wands but, you know, during the day, you know,
4 we can turn it off. They say that, you know, since we're going to
5 use those wands, just get the litted (ph.) ones. We told them
6 they're too fragile. During the day, we have solid plastic wands
7 but, you know, they fade.

8 Q. Have you ever, have you ever at any point went out to the
9 cones and the lit ones aren't there at night?

10 A. Yeah. So then, you know, we stop everything. Before, you
11 know, like had the regular wands, you know. But now it's like the
12 chiefs, you know, they're responsible. So it's their
13 responsibility. So they're kind of like on top of it. If
14 anything happens, then it's their responsibility.

15 Q. You used the phrase before.

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. You used to. How long ago was before? Was that prior to the
18 accident? Was that years ago?

19 A. No, no, that was years ago.

20 Q. Okay. When you work in the morning, is it normally with the
21 same folks?

22 A. No.

23 Q. No.

24 A. Because the phone again. They kind of like want to mix us
25 up, you know, and days off, you know, everybody got different days

1 off, but they kind of want to mix the team up a bit.

2 Q. Do you like that?

3 A. It depends what kind of worker they are.

4 Q. Generally speaking, do you like working with different or
5 would you rather work with kind of the same crew --

6 A. Sometimes you get your clique, you know, just like you're in
7 sync, you know. You don't have to tell guys. They just know what
8 to do. The others like, oh, man, I worked with you 20 years, and
9 you still don't really like me.

10 Q. All righty.

11 A. I know a good (indiscernible). I guess I doing okay because
12 they're not giving me stink eye or anything.

13 Q. You've been here long enough. They shouldn't give you any,
14 right.

15 A. Yeah, they got to respect their uncle. We've got this guy,
16 Herbert Eto (ph.), he doesn't -- he's not -- he has ramp agent
17 with seniority but he's a customer service. He's got 56 years I
18 think.

19 Q. Wow. Longevity is a good thing.

20 A. So we tell him, why don't you retire? He said, I just want
21 to stay here and give the bosses bad time. That was a joke thing.
22 He's funny.

23 Q. Back to the pushback.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. You guys did pushback, and you've got to hold the pin up for

1 the captain to see, right?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And it's a streamer on the end of the pin?

4 A. Yeah. Because the pin is small, yeah.

5 Q. Right. The streamer, does it have any reflective mechanisms
6 to it?

7 A. It's just orange or green ribbon, you know.

8 Q. Versus like -- just like your clothes, like cloth?

9 A. Actually it's like cloth but there's like a plastic coating
10 like.

11 Q. But it doesn't reflect at all?

12 A. Yeah, it's like this reflection thing. They chip off fast.

13 Q. I was just making sure.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. All right. Perfect.

16 A. It would be nice, you know. That way, you know, we have that
17 kind for the pilot but then, you know, you would have to have a
18 source of light to sign on us so he can see. Just put headlights
19 on the plane, side lights on a plane where they can be reflective.
20 But, you know, if it rains, we can't (indiscernible).

21 Q. All right. So when you show the pin to the crew, and they
22 give you the thumbs up, the salute or whatever the term is these
23 days.

24 A. Shaka.

25 Q. Shaka. There you go. You're familiar with the terms. So I

1 appreciate you guys teaching me these. What does you showing the
2 pin to the crew mean to you? Are you just saying, I got the pin?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Or does it say I've got the pin, everything's clear, all the
5 equipment's away?

6 A. Yeah. It tells me -- I'm telling the pilot that, you know,
7 he has control of the front area and -- because if we don't pull
8 that pin, then he cannot steer that thing. It's kind of like
9 freewheeling. It's kind of hard really because that's the only
10 way you can turn the thing with the tow bar in.

11 Q. Does it have anything to do with making sure that you're
12 saying no equipment around the airplane --

13 A. Yeah, no.

14 Q. -- and everything's clear? It doesn't mean that to you guys?

15 A. It doesn't, no.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. You actually got to show him, you know, everything and it
18 was, it was requested to do that, you know. They wanted -- they
19 want to see the equipment and the tow bar and the pin which is
20 reasonable.

21 Q. From your perspective --

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. -- who's in control of a pushback? Is it the tug driver? Is
24 it you as one of the wing walkers? Who orchestrates that whole
25 thing on the ground? Who's in charge?

1 A. Details like, you know, we push you back and we're looking at
2 the wing walker, you know, they see another plane or tractor, you
3 know, that's going across then they get control, but we've got to
4 see them show us the stop sign, the emergency stop. So that
5 point, you know, they have the control. Then normally it's the
6 driver of the pushback tractor.

7 Q. Now, I know you said the pushback driver taps the horn saying
8 they're ready to go and turns the light or they used to turn the
9 light on. Is it easy to hear that horn?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. It is.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Let's say you were out there, you held up the pin. And you
14 know, I think I saw the crew salute me.

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. You weren't sure, but you thought they did. Is it okay to
17 walk away or do you just stand there and make sure, confirm?

18 A. It depends on the pilot. It's the pilot. You know, if it
19 irritates him, you know, he'll probably turn us in. That's his
20 right, you know, because he got to know, you know, what's going
21 out there. So, you know, we don't want (indiscernible). We just
22 want to operate smoothly.

23 Q. I'm looking back through my list here, and you have answered
24 a ton of my questions.

25 A. Okay. Thank you.

1 Q. I appreciate it. I might have one or two more on the second
2 round, but thank you so much for all that.

3 A. No problem.

4 MR. ETCHER: I'll turn it back to Rocky.

5 MR. STONE: Thank you. Eddie.

6 MR. MILLER: I don't have any questions, David.

7 MR. ANDRIN: Okay. I mean I've asked you before and I'm
8 basically hearing the story again and with you telling everything,
9 I think, you know, it's more solidified, you know. So thank you
10 again for coming in here and doing this for us.

11 MR. ANDRIN: No problem.

12 MR. STONE: Ryan.

13 BY MR. IWASAKI:

14 Q. I have one question. I haven't spoken to you in a little
15 while. So you just mentioned that there's way pilots can turn you
16 in if you don't --

17 A. Yeah, if we don't follow procedures, you know.

18 Q. Is there a way for the ground crew or ramp agents to turn a
19 pilot in for not following procedures? (Indiscernible) feedback
20 get to?

21 A. The only incident that I ever heard of getting angry at the
22 pilot was and I think it was the copilot or something, the ramp
23 agent who was doing the pushback, and he just went to management,
24 you know, and complained.

25 Q. So there's no official procedure for that --

1 A. We just go to management.

2 Q. You're not sure if anything comes --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. (Indiscernible).

5 A. Because like for the pilots, you know, for us it's not really
6 -- it's more for the pilots, you know, to get what they need to
7 know.

8 Q. When it's on the ground and it's shared responsibility --

9 A. Yeah.

10 (Crosstalk)

11 A. Yeah, it's something. I don't how the pilot, you know, do it
12 but if they don't show me the pin and I'm the pilot, I would be
13 pissed off, too. What I'm going to do, you know?

14 Q. Talk to management?

15 A. Yeah.

16 MR. IWASAKI: I'll turn it back to Rocky.

17 MR. STONE: Thanks, Ryan.

18 MR. STONE: And we're going to go around one more time.

19 Every question I had has been answered. So, thank you, David.
20 Bill.

21 BY DR. BRAMBLE:

22 Q. Just three. If you had a safety concern, how would you
23 report it to the company?

24 A. We've got ways, and I cannot remember how we do it now. So
25 since I don't remember, I would just go to management and tell,

1 you know, bring it up or during the briefing. That's all we do.

2 Q. The beginning of the day briefing?

3 A. Yeah. Or, you know, if it's really bad, you know, that they
4 should know right away, we'll just go to management.

5 Q. Okay. Have you ever had to do that before, report a safety
6 concern in some way?

7 A. No, never. It's been good so far or we've been lucky.

8 Q. How long ago did the procedure change from pulling the
9 tractor straight back to pulling it off to the side instead?

10 A. I can't remember when we did that. When we had more airlines
11 coming in and more planes. Let me see. Because we still power it
12 out when we had the 717 and I can't remember what year was that.
13 Only when we're getting the larger planes then we were pushing
14 back, you know, to the side. Then eventually we start pushing
15 back the 717s, too.

16 Q. The same way?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. So first you started doing that with the large planes and
19 then you started doing it with the 717s also?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay. If you --

22 A. No, actually I think we doing with the 717 our parking
23 configuration would change because we didn't, you know, we slowly
24 transitioned into the calling now, jet bridges. So we back at
25 angle where we could power out beforehand.

1 Q. Okay. So you used to park at an angle, and did you use air
2 stairs to disembark passengers?

3 A. Air stairs, yeah, before.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So that's when we had mostly the DC-9s.

6 Q. So this transition to --

7 A. It must be when we had the 717s. That's right, because we
8 don't have 717s. So that's when we started to have the jet
9 bridges.

10 Q. So you think it was around the time that the 717s was
11 introduced that you started to pull the tug off to the side?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. Do you have any idea when that started?

14 A. That was still straight, you know. In the beginning, we were
15 just going -- we still back straight out and straight back. I
16 think when we started getting more airlines and more traffic out
17 there.

18 Q. Are we talking like last year or 2 or years ago?

19 A. Years ago. I can't even judge by, you know, the timeframe
20 nowadays.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Honestly I would say like maybe 15, 20 years ago.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Because I still cannot believe like it's 49 years.

25 Q. Larger than the bread box. Okay. Thanks. And when did you

1 turn off the wand after you did the wing walk back?

2 A. Normally when I approach the tractor to disconnect the, yeah,
3 to disconnect the tow bar, because I got to -- I turn it off and
4 then I put it in my back pocket.

5 Q. And on this particular -- on the night of the accident, did
6 you do that?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. Great. Thanks. That's it for me.

9 A. Okay.

10 MR. STONE: Thanks, Bill. Shawn.

11 BY MR. ETCHER:

12 Q. Thank you. Let's go back, and this will be really quick
13 hopefully, right back to when you pushed back, trying to show the
14 pin, and I think you said your tug driver was like, oh, they're
15 getting ready to move or whatever she said, I don't remember her
16 words. Did you try and get the crew's attention as well?

17 A. Oh, no. You know, because we were trying, you know, all the
18 time to, you know, get the attention. So we felt, you know, and
19 then we figure we just got to get out of the way already, and like
20 we're just going to like get caught, you know, right there. You
21 know, we was hoping not, that he wasn't going to move, and it was
22 fine until, you know, we started to move away, and then I was away
23 and I turned back and that's when I cannot tell how many seconds,
24 you know, after I left the plane it took before, you know, the
25 pilot gunned the engines. It might have been just 10, 15 seconds

1 or so.

2 Q. So take me back to that moment. Knowing what you know now,
3 is there anything that you've thought of that, hey, maybe I could
4 have done this to get their attention? Is there anything like
5 that? Like, I wanted to shine that clear wand into their, you
6 know, the cockpit or tap on the side of the airplane. Is there
7 anything like that that you would do different?

8 A. That's -- the wand is junk flashlight, you know. It's like
9 -- I don't know why they even put the things that you can hardly
10 see anything, because they have like those LED little lights. I
11 don't know if we could have hit the fuselage, you know, but, you
12 know, we're thinking that, you know, they was going to turn, you
13 know, few seconds towards us but then, you know, we gave them
14 chance, you know, and then when we saw that light turn off, it was
15 honestly too late to really -- we don't want to irritate the pilot
16 especially on the first flight but, you know, it's like we assumed
17 that he was going to look and he thought we saw him, you know, and
18 that we would be gone. But he didn't look. That's only my guess.
19 I don't know.

20 Q. In my opinion, I'd rather irritate the pilot rather than have
21 him hit me I guess, but if I did think he did see me, I want to
22 get his attention but I understand what you're saying.

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Because we used to do that before like, you know, when we're

1 ready to dispatch the plane, we want to disconnect. We what to
2 take off the chocks from the plane. So, you know, we tell the
3 pilot brake set, chocks off, and they're busy doing something
4 else. So we start calling the plane. And they got pissed off.
5 Then after that, it was like, more fun now.

6 Q. Okay. David, I think you've answered all of my questions.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. And I appreciate the time you've given us. Thank you so very
9 much.

10 A. You're welcome.

11 MR. ETCHER: Rocky.

12 MR. STONE: Thanks. And Eddie.

13 BY MR. MILLER:

14 Q. Just a go back kind of question and an opinion from you. So
15 for the A330 and the A321, it's mandatory that you have the third
16 signalman out there. Is that correct?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. But it's -- is it optional or is it not required from the
19 717?

20 A. Yeah, the 717, the whole reason they told us was because they
21 cannot -- the pilots cannot see us because it's higher on the 220
22 and 230, whereas the 717, they can see us. You know, when we was
23 doing it for about a week, you know, we talked we was going to
24 keep on doing it. I don't know if it's because they got to put it
25 in procedures, they've got to rewrite the rule for safety, you

1 know. So I don't know if they're going to change it or what, but
2 I can see where, you know, the way we have things now on the 717,
3 it's pretty good because, you know, we got to go, we got to go
4 out. We got to line up with the wing tip, 45 degree angle,
5 towards the front of the aircraft also, you know, they get a clear
6 shot of us, and then we don't show the pin and the streamer until
7 we see the tractor and tow bar clear, clear the whole area.
8 Everything is all clear, then we show it. So, you know, we should
9 have done that, you know, before but nothing really happened until
10 that day.

11 Q. Okay. Thank you for that. That's another enlightening
12 moment. I don't have any other questions.

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. Again thanks, David.

15 A. You're welcome.

16 MR. STONE: Ryan.

17 MR. IWASAKI: None for me.

18 MR. STONE: Well, David, thanks. I think -- Bill, one more
19 follow up.

20 BY DR. BRAMBLE:

21 Q. Yeah, just one more.

22 A. Sure.

23 Q. So just to clarify there. So what you guys were talking
24 about is that currently everything has to clear the airplane
25 before you show the pin --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- including the tractor?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So, yeah, so what we do even, you know, all the aircrafts
6 now, so we -- what we do on the big planes is like what we do on
7 the smaller plane now.

8 Q. Okay. Including the accident.

9 A. Except that, yeah.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Until they tell us. I don't -- maybe, you know, they don't
12 want that extra person there because, you know, since the pilots
13 can see us, you know, they can use that other person to do another
14 job.

15 Q. Yeah, okay. And then --

16 A. It would be nice though, you know.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. We can take a longer break.

19 Q. Back when you used to pull straight back, was the
20 communication cable longer?

21 A. Yeah -- or no. They're the same size but the kind, what you
22 call it, it doesn't get stretched as much because they don't have
23 to turn on an angle today. So, you know, there's no problem
24 because it coils so.

25 Q. Okay. All right. That's it. Thanks.

1 MR. STONE: Okay. David, thanks. Thanks so much.

2 MR. ANDRIN: You're welcome.

3 MR. STONE: Your answers and everyone's answers has helped us
4 to understand it better and, you know, that will lead us to where
5 we can make some recommendations so it doesn't happen again. So I
6 appreciate that. Thank you.

7 MR. ANDRIN: Yeah, anything to, you know, for safety. That
8 was a nightmare especially for Sanoe.

9 MR. STONE: Okay. Thanks.

10 MR. ANDRIN: Yeah.

11 MR. STONE: We can turn the recorder off at 3:26 p.m. on
12 February 20th.

13 (Whereupon, at 3:26 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: MINOR DAMAGE TO BOEING 717-200
 AT THE KAHULUI AIRPORT IN MAUI,
 HAWAII ON NOVEMBER 30, 2023
 Interview of David Andrin

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA034

PLACE: Maui, Hawaii

DATE: February 20, 2024

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.



Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*

*

MINOR DAMAGE TO BOEING 717-200

*

AT THE KAHULUI AIRPORT IN MAUI,

*

Accident No.: DCA24LA034

HAWAII ON NOVEMBER 30, 2023

*

*

* * * * *

INTERVIEW OF: PENITITO "PENNY" FAAVEA, Ramp Agent
Hawaiian Airlines

Kahului Airport
Maui, Hawaii

Tuesday,
February 20, 2024

APPEARANCES:

SHAWN ETCHER, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

DR. BILL BRAMBLE, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ROCKY STONE, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

EDWIN "EDDIE" MILLER,
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

RYAN T. IWASAKI, Pilot
BOEING

STACEY WILLIAMS, Vice President
Hawaii IAM 141
(On Behalf of Mr. Faavea)

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Penitito "Penny" Faavea:	
By Mr. Etcher	10
By Dr. Bramble	41
By Mr. Stone	50
By Mr. Miller	55
By Mr. Etcher	61
By Dr. Bramble	71
By Mr. Stone	75

I N T E R V I E W

(12:51 p.m.)

MR. ETCHER: All right. Good afternoon. It is February 20th at 12:51 local time. My name is Shawn Etcher. I'm an operational factors investigator with the NTSB. So that means I look at everything forward of the cockpit door and how it interacts with the crew. So part of what interacts with the crew is always the ramp and ground movements and things. So that's why you're in here, to educate me on how this all works, this choreograph masterpiece you guys do every pushback. So I'm hoping you can educate me if you will.

Thankfully, I don't have to know everything. I have a lot of great people who are a lot smarter than I am here to help as well, and I'm going to have them introduce themselves to you as well. We'll start with Bill.

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

MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Bill.

MR. STONE: And I'm Rocky Stone. I'm a operational factors investigator with the NTSB.

MR. MILLER: I'm Eddie Miller. I'm the senior aviation accident investigator for the FAA in Washington, D.C. and I was out here right after the incident happened.

MR. IWASAKI: I'm Ryan Iwasaki, from Boeing, a pilot from the technical and safety division.

1 MR. ETCHER: So those are the smart people in my group. So,
2 you know, hopefully --

3 MR. FAAVEA: Too smart.

4 MR. ETCHER: We'll see how smart they are when they ask
5 questions. But is there anybody here you don't want to be in here
6 right now?

7 MR. FAAVEA: No, not really.

8 MR. ETCHER: I thought you were going to say --

9 MR. FAAVEA: Unless you guys want to -- don't want to be
10 here.

11 MR. ETCHER: No, it's all good. Thank you very much for
12 that. But, as I said before we started the recording, anybody
13 that talks with us is always entitled to have a representative of
14 their choice. Do you have a representative that you would like to
15 be here with you?

16 MR. FAAVEA: Well, Stacey. So.

17 MR. ETCHER: And, Stacey, for the record, would you be so
18 kind as to explain your role.

19 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Stacey Williams. I'm a Hawaiian
20 Airlines employee, and I'm representing Penny for the
21 International Association of Machinists Union.

22 MR. ETCHER: Thank you very much. Now, as I said for the
23 recording, this interview is being recorded. It'll be
24 transcribed. The transcript itself, when we get it back, will
25 become part of the public docket later on. The recording will

1 not. When we get the transcript back, we always go through just
2 to verify there's no misspelled words or anything like that. We
3 won't change what you say, just correct misspelled words. Once we
4 verify that everything is correct, we'll send it to your
5 representative. That way you can have an opportunity to look at
6 it, read it and if you want to make any changes, you can make and
7 amendment to it, and we'll attach it right to the transcript. We
8 can't change the actual transcript, but we can add it to it to
9 reflect the clarification or whatever. Are you okay with us
10 recording the transcript?

11 MR. FAAVEA: Yeah, I'm okay.

12 MR. ETCHER: Perfect. I always have just a very few rules
13 when we do interview and educational points if you will. I ask a
14 question, if you have no idea what I'm saying, it happens a lot.
15 So it's okay. Just ask me to reclarify it because when in my
16 brain it sounded awesome, but when my mouth connected, it may not
17 have come out in the right way.

18 MR. FAAVEA: Yeah.

19 MR. ETCHER: If you don't know something, I don't know works
20 great. This is not a test, nothing like that. You're just
21 educating us. We love facts. We also like opinions sometimes,
22 and if you have an opinion, just let us know it's your opinion.
23 So when I read through this later, I don't think, what's that fact
24 you're making. It's easy for me to separate the two. All righty.

25 MR. FAAVEA: Okay.

1 MR. ETCHER: If you need a break at all, just say so. We'll
2 take a pause. We'll take a break and reconvene. All righty.

3 MR. FAAVEA: Okay.

4 INTERVIEW OF PENITITO "PENNY" FAAVEA

5 BY MR. ETCHER:

6 Q. I always start off with the toughest questions first, get the
7 hardest ones out of the way, of course. For the record, would you
8 state your name and spell your last?

9 A. My name is Penitito Faavea. Last name is Faavea, F-a-a-v-e-
10 a.

11 Q. Excellent. And what is your job title?

12 A. Ramp chief in the AM shift.

13 Q. And who is your employer?

14 A. Hawaiian Airline.

15 Q. All righty. So, as I told you already, you're here to
16 educate me. So kind of help me understand what a ramp chief's
17 position does? Kind of in a nutshell, if you will, what is your
18 job?

19 A. We are in charge of manpower in our shift, and we are also in
20 charge of loadmaster, making sure that every flight that we touch,
21 we have full knowledge that it's -- we are loading the flight
22 accordingly to the plan. And everybody that's working around the
23 plane is doing their job as safely as it be. And also we are
24 coordinated with the ramp control, anything that needs to go on
25 and come off the aircraft, also arrivals and the departure. We

1 can also help out with the pushback and wing walking, marshaling
2 and all.

3 Q. It sounds like a lot of hats you're wearing as a ramp chief.

4 A. It goes on that profile, yeah, as you work you're going --
5 you kind of simplify everything to, you know, a minimum. So, yes.

6 Q. All right. So you say you also push back aircraft as well?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And just a ballpark, how many pushbacks do you do in a day or
9 a week, you yourself?

10 A. In a day, I'll be lucky to push two, only if somebody that --
11 in my team, not certify to push, then I jump in to push. Other
12 than that, I just let the guy that are already certified in my
13 team to take that responsibility and most of them that are already
14 certified, they're already kind of mentally know that they're
15 pushing.

16 Q. So you're the morning shift, the AM ramp chief?

17 A. Yes, the morning shift.

18 Q. I'm trying to get the right hat. What are your hours? My
19 apologies.

20 A. 5 o'clock to 1:30.

21 Q. 5 o'clock to 1:30. Okay. So, were you the ramp chief the
22 morning of the event back in November?

23 A. Yes, I was.

24 Q. Okay. As a ramp chief, are you inside looking out on the
25 ramp or are you outside on the ramp? Where's your job normally

1 place?

2 A. I'm involved in the operation planeside, and I'm also, if
3 there's anything -- anybody that need help inside the plane,
4 inside the bulk (ph.), I'll also jump in. Basically we are part
5 of the operation part of that team. We're just there as a job
6 title but we're part of the team, departure and inbound flight.

7 Q. So the morning of the event, talk about that if you will.
8 Where were you during that pushback and all that? Where were you
9 physically located?

10 A. I was first officer side wing walker.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And I was also the loadmaster for that flight.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And according to that morning, after I closed the flight and
15 Sanoe was already doing her circle check. So I knew already she
16 was there -- that was her intention was to be the pushback driver.
17 So I just automatic the next position that nobody's taking which
18 is -- was the first officer's side of wing walker. So I took that
19 position. At the same time, our second inbound was landing at the
20 same time which occupied the same gate that we was about to push
21 out. And while we was pushing pushback, and that plane was
22 already standing by to come into the same gate. And usually we
23 determine which side of the aircraft -- I mean which side to
24 pushback according to the wind, where the wind's at. So that
25 morning, the wind was blowing from the north. So we was pushing

1 tail south. And as we were pushing tail south, the plane was on
2 the north side, the inbound plane was coming from the north side,
3 which is -- which we don't need an "X" man. I don't know what
4 they call it in the real world but we call "X" man in our
5 operation to hold for those small plane which is 717.

6 So, I just stay on my side wing walking the inbound plane
7 since the outbound one was already out and as I wing walking the
8 inbound flight, I kind of noticing the push out aircraft was all
9 right and still there. And Sanoe and Dave Andrin was still by the
10 planeside. So I kind of worried because it was kind of there for
11 a while now. So I abandoned my wing walking, and I start walking
12 because I don't know what's going on with their communication.
13 And all I see was Dave Andrin waving his hand up to the window,
14 the cockpit window, and it was kind of dark, too, at the time.
15 And nobody respond from the window, which is the pilot, the
16 captain. And as I still walking because I start hearing the
17 engine start revving up, both sides. So I kind of knew something
18 was about the happen. And then at the same time, Sanoe came out
19 of the pushback and trying to wave up to the window. At the same
20 time, while Dave's still trying to wave, but there was no
21 response. So as she jumped back in to the pushback, and that's
22 when I heard the engines start, you know, the engine when you know
23 it's about to move. So I stopped walking over there -- I mean
24 running over towards the aircraft trying to wave, trying to make
25 it stop, but they wasn't even looking.

1 So once the tow bar -- the main gear in the front, I don't
2 know, that landing gear in the front, I knew already it was too
3 late while Sanoe was trying to get out of the way from that left
4 wing but it was too late though. It was already -- the wing was
5 already hitting the pushback at the time. Only because I think
6 the pilot was already making the turn at that time, which is
7 faster than I assumed before, and at that time, I wasn't even -- I
8 wasn't trying to worry about the operation and everything. Sanoe
9 was -- I was trying to get to her because the way the explosion, I
10 literally thought she was -- she died at the time.

11 The pushback lift up the wing which I think when it smashed
12 the front of the pushback, where the driver was at, it caused the
13 explosion on those tires to explode, and I don't know how she got
14 away with that, but I knew it was somebody that was praying for
15 her that morning.

16 Other than that, I don't have anything trying to answer to,
17 unless you guys have any questions for me.

18 Q. I appreciate the detail, and we'll just go back. I've just
19 got a few little questions in my head --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- I want to address, trying to be a little fly on your
22 shoulder if you will. You were on the FO's side as a wing walker,
23 correct?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Do you -- did you have any kind of a wand or anything --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- lighted, unlit?

3 A. I have a lighted wand at that time, and that didn't help. We
4 also have -- the lighted wand was attached with a blow horn. So
5 that morning I was blowing that horn. It caused for all that gas
6 to come out because there was nothing left in that bottle. But
7 there was nothing -- no response from the cockpit that morning.
8 The only thing I think they stopped was because of that explosion
9 and that drop, and after that whole drop, I hear the engines start
10 trying to go back. It looks like -- sounded like the captain was
11 trying to leave again, trying to rev up the engine again which it
12 got more scary than already was, but we both have, Andrin, Dave
13 Andrin and I both had lighted wands that morning. He also had
14 that lighted wand with him while trying to show the bypass pin.

15 Q. So he had the lighted wand trying to show the pin? And you
16 had noticed that they were out there for more period of time than
17 normal?

18 A. Normal, yes.

19 Q. Okay. Could you see the lighted wand from where you were and
20 the pin?

21 A. What do you mean?

22 Q. So you were looking out at him because you noticed that they
23 were taking a while.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And you saw I think you said one of them waving and maybe

1 both of them were waving at the crew or something?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Did you see any lighted wands with the pin being held up at
4 all?

5 A. I see Dave Andrin with the bypass pin, holding it with both
6 hands with string but did not see the lighted wand at the time.

7 Q. So just help me understand. I'm just trying to get a nice
8 picture if you will. So if it happened early shift, 6 a.m.-ish?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. 6 a.m. timeframe.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. It's still dark on the ramp.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Can you see the pin even on the dark ramp? Was it pretty
15 easy if he's holding it up over head?

16 A. In my eyes that morning, I can still see it. I don't know
17 about the view from up there. I'm only see it from my own eye
18 level with -- because I'm directly looking at him doing the
19 signal. So I knew already that was the string. I can see the red
20 from my -- where I was standing at that time. But, I don't know.
21 I can't speak for what the pilot can see or not.

22 Q. Okay. And I understand that. I just wanted to make sure I
23 understood what you were seeing. Is the pin -- does it have any
24 reflective tape on it or anything to help it stand out or is it
25 just like a -- I'm going to call it like a red cloth pin type

1 thing?

2 A. Yeah, it's just a red ribbon I might say, but there was no
3 reflector on those -- that string, nothing. It was just that red
4 color.

5 Q. All right. And so you're walking out toward them because you
6 see a wand and you have a air horn that you're blowing?

7 A. Yes. I only blow that air horn, trying to stop because I
8 already see movement while Sanoe with the pushback and Dave Andrin
9 was still on the side of the aircraft. I might say like 5 feet
10 away from the aircraft. So it wasn't -- it was not like they have
11 a lot of room to get away from the aircraft. It was literally
12 slim chance of them trying to get away. And I know later on,
13 after the incident, we -- our safety department came down and then
14 we iterate how the disconnection and how we supposed to position
15 after the -- pull the pin and trying to wait for the pilot. That
16 was later on.

17 But like I said, I don't think it's been a year since we
18 transitioned from having line service and giving us their job
19 because pushback was one of our newest addition that time because
20 we wasn't in charge of pushback and bringing in plane before. It
21 was strictly on a different department at the time, and then when
22 they transitioned to us, that's when -- I think it was not even a
23 year since we took over from line service, and this whole thing
24 happened. So I don't -- we're not sure. It's a lot of people
25 that used to do that job, left the company. Nobody -- it was like

1 90 percent left, and only 10 percent stayed back with us. So --
2 and before that, stayed back was more for trainers than hands on
3 people.

4 And I'm not saying that our guys are doing, you know,
5 terrible job. I'm saying, you know, when the time of the
6 transitioning and from the time of the incident, everybody was
7 willing to take over that job function because it was given to us
8 even though there was a lot of going back and forth of losing jobs
9 and all that, but it's not like we had a say in it, as you know.
10 I see a lot of the guys that raised their hand to try and train to
11 get certified for this function. They were all willing to put in
12 the work for pushback transition.

13 Q. So when this transition happened, prior to it, the line --

14 A. Line service.

15 Q. -- line service --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- did it. Were you part of the line service? Did you do
18 pushbacks before that point?

19 A. No. Pushback was when they start the talking about
20 transitioning. So they brought the leadership first to Maui
21 trying to certify us, so if anything were, you know, started from
22 the leadership and then going down to the agents. And I was one
23 of the second class to go for that training.

24 Q. All right. Let's go back to the day of the event again real
25 quick. When you were going out and you're hitting the air horn

1 that you were carrying, did you hear -- you heard the engines
2 spool up. Did you hear any other noise like the tug horn or
3 anything like that?

4 A. No. Now that I think of, it was before. It was before they
5 rev up the engine, Sanoe was beeping the horn like three times,
6 and that's how -- it wasn't no more. That's how I knew something
7 was going on after that horn. Sorry about it.

8 Q. No, no. I just -- I'm just trying to be, like I said, a fly
9 on your shoulder.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. I'm just trying to fill in some blanks I have. Okay. So
12 back to the pushback. That whole timeframe. You had a lighted
13 wand. Did you cohort on the captain's side, did he have a lighted
14 wand, too?

15 A. Yes. Dave Andrin.

16 Q. That's right. Now, when you had your pushing back crew, and
17 you're on the right wing and the other guy was on the left wing,
18 can you guys see each other during that pushback time or are you
19 just focused on, you know, looking at the tug driver?

20 A. We actually see each other before plus they make us go far
21 away from the aircraft, more towards the taxiway area, so that we
22 can see each other and we can see the pushback. But for this
23 small plane, we can even see the pushback so easy wherever we
24 stand but we got to see each other because the plane kind of low.
25 So I can't see directly to the person on the other side. So we

1 have to go more towards the taxiway ramp outside.

2 Q. So on that morning, during pushback, did you happen to look
3 up at the cockpit at all?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I did see the captain or the first officer do the circle
7 check in the morning while we're loading the aircraft that
8 morning.

9 Q. All right. Perfect. So you saw the FO doing a preflight on
10 the airplane. Do you have to preflight the pushback tractor at
11 all? Like look at it to make sure that the lights work, brakes
12 work. Do you guys do any checks on --

13 A. Before we bring out the equipment in the morning, we do the
14 safety check in the morning before we use all the equipment. So I
15 wasn't the one that did the circle check for that equipment, but
16 I'm pretty sure somebody did that check.

17 Q. So educate me if you will. What is a -- if I was working for
18 you, you were teaching me like you're doing right now, and you
19 told me go do a check -- a safety check on the pushback tug for
20 the 717, what would you tell me to be looking for?

21 A. Main thing, all the light works, the brakes light work and
22 the horn and you make sure that there's no, there's no warnings on
23 the screen and that's about it. Just what the mechanics -- so we
24 just follow what the checklist is telling us.

25 Q. So when you say you make sure the light works, what light or

1 lights are you talking about?

2 A. Headlights.

3 Q. Headlights.

4 A. And siren -- like the signal light on the top.

5 Q. The yellow -- I call them a lollipop.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So that one we always got to make sure that that light is on
9 because if there's no light, then we have to take it out of
10 service, and I seen a couple of our agent took out that pushback,
11 not the exact pushback but I seen them took out that pushback in
12 broad daylight because of that reason, that beacon light on the
13 top was working.

14 Q. That beacon light, does it just sit there blinking?

15 A. Some automatic and then some pushback, you got to turn it on.
16 So I'm not sure which one they thought it was, but that was the
17 reason for take off, because I asked that day, what happened? The
18 light wasn't working.

19 Q. And on that day that you just mentioned when the light wasn't
20 working, was that the accident tug or was that a different --

21 A. It was a different location, yeah.

22 Q. I just wanted to make sure. All right. So during the
23 pushback, you're out there on the right wing, on the FO's side of
24 the plane.

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. Do you remember seeing that, I call it the lollipop, the
2 little blinking light on top. Do you remember seeing it going
3 around blinking?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. You do.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Okay. I know it's been a while. So it's easy to forget
8 things.

9 A. That's true. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. Have you ever seen that light not on, not illuminated?

11 A. Yes, it was one time. On a separate -- not that morning.

12 Q. Okay. All right. Perfect. All right. That helps. I'll
13 let my mind chew on that for just a little bit if you don't mind.
14 One more question, and then I'm going to hand it over to Bill.
15 You said as part of your duties is staffing, to make sure you're
16 staffed.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What is adequate staffing for your morning shift?

19 A. For a dual flight, we try our best to request at least four
20 manpower, four including the chief. When we have, when we have
21 some people -- some of the corporate office sends somebody to
22 evaluate our operation, and try and report back to corporate about
23 the manpower. We always trying -- we know five is impossible most
24 of the time. So we always appreciate a four man team because the
25 reason where one can drive, the loadmaster can help which is the

1 chief, and two people in the cockpit -- I'm sorry, in the pit
2 offloading and one person driving away to offload, the loadmaster
3 became the person bringing up the bags and you still have two
4 people inside loading in the pit.

5 And so far we been having four man team even at the time of
6 the incident, we had enough manpower at the time. Yeah,
7 realistically we like to have five, but sometime we, you know, we
8 can't always get what we want. So we always get a four man team
9 which is still, you know, better than three man team.

10 Q. So on the morning of the event, for the pushback itself, was
11 that a three or four man team at that time?

12 A. It was -- to be honest, it was more than that only because
13 that was our only plane on the ground. And everybody -- we
14 usually take out the equipment, set up the whole ramp, and then
15 everybody come back. They all help take up -- send out that first
16 flight in the morning. So it was more than just four man team
17 even though it was assigned on the phone, that was four people,
18 but people still help out on that first flight which is normal
19 every morning.

20 Q. So it was a four man team but it was more than a four man
21 team.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Sorry. How many were there? I know you have folks in the
24 pit, folks loading the back, front loader and all that. Can you
25 give me an idea of how many were actually there that morning?

1 A. Don't quote me on this, but I'm pretty sure there was six, at
2 least six people planeside that time.

3 Q. That was when it was at the gate, right?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. At the gate.

6 A. At the gate.

7 Q. When it was pushing back, how many were planeside as it was
8 pushing back? Was it just you and the left wing walker and the
9 tug driver? Was there a fourth person out there?

10 A. No, there was the same people that was still planeside only
11 because we knew the plane was coming, the second one that just
12 land was coming. So everybody usually just stayed there because
13 they occupy the same gate and while they pushback, the two people
14 and then the rest -- the other person will replace the captain
15 side wing walker and usually the loadmaster of that flight coming
16 in, usually the marshal. And I wasn't the loadmaster for that
17 second flight. So I just have to stand over there on the first
18 officer's side and wing walk to help bringing in the plane.

19 Q. So I'm just trying to -- my brain's got multiple scenarios
20 going on. So I'm just trying to narrow it down. When that
21 airplane was pushing back, the pushback -- the accident airplane
22 was pushing back, were there three pushing back, two wing walkers
23 and the tug driver? Was there a fourth one out there? Was
24 everybody else kind of at the gate waiting for the inbound?

25 A. Sorry. What exactly do you mean?

1 Q. So when the aircraft -- the accident aircraft was pushing
2 back, there was two wing walkers and a tug driver.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Was there a fourth one on that pushback going out with you
5 guys or was the other two to three individuals over there helping
6 at the gate getting ready to marshal in the inbound?

7 A. There was only three of us at that pushback for that first
8 one, and the two left, and then I was the only one staying behind
9 with the rest that was planeside, but there was no fourth person
10 on that pushback.

11 Q. All right. I just wanted to make sure I had it clear in my
12 head. So thank you for that. I know I told you that was my last
13 question, but I have one more. You mentioned it earlier. You
14 were an "X" man that day. I assume you don't mean a Marvel
15 character. So can you -- what is a "X" man? Just kind of -- in
16 your terms, what is an "X" man?

17 A. Well, "X" man, like I mentioned before, we usually have the
18 "X" man but only for a big plane which is a new Airbus 321 and the
19 Airbus 330. And those are the only aircraft that require us to
20 have "X" man. And that's the only reason why I stayed back on the
21 first officer's side because the small plane, the 717 doesn't need
22 a "X" man. It was not until after the incident, it was -- I
23 brought it up to my management that same morning that we need to
24 have a "X" man that morning just to get by that morning because of
25 what happened. And, they agreed to -- just to have the extra

1 safety to make sure that, you know, whoever's disconnecting that
2 morning wasn't, you know, feeling unsafe. If I can't disconnect
3 the aircraft, not knowing that somebody's behind me make it stop,
4 because I have to be honest, there was a couple episode that
5 morning that, you know, it kind of make me -- it was a mix up on
6 my own personal feeling, you know, emotional that morning. So I
7 -- in order for to get through that morning, I wanted somebody to
8 be behind me, the aircraft.

9 And I don't know if you guys want to talk about emotional,
10 but at the time, I wanted to quit. I wanted to just leave because
11 of the whole thing went down. I witness it all. We talk about
12 all -- me and my brother talk about all this war stuff back in the
13 military but I never felt anything, only he felt, but this is more
14 like, you know, it's too close to me because at that moment, it
15 was -- it was either her or me and she decided to, you know, make
16 sure that I'm not pushing the plane. Instead of me pushing that
17 plane, she already started that circle check. And, at that time,
18 it was, you know, I kind of blame myself that, you know, I should
19 have been the one to push that plane because if it wasn't, you
20 know, maybe it would be a different outcome that morning. I don't
21 know what I'm getting at right now.

22 Q. It's okay. It's good to talk about it. Thank you for
23 sharing that with us. I appreciate it. I'll tell you what.
24 You've answered most of my questions right now. Let me let chew
25 on my brain a little bit. I'll probably have a few more in round

1 two.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. But I appreciate everything you've given me so far.

4 A. Yeah, to get back to your "X" man, yeah. I didn't need to be
5 "X" man that morning, but the "X" man is the person standing
6 sideway of -- on the side of the aircraft holding it with the "X"
7 making sure the captain can see you and your job is to hold that
8 "X" until they finish disconnecting the tow bar and the headset
9 and then when they come on the side, the person with the bypass
10 pin can come out and then show that bypass pin, through the salute
11 and everything, and you're the last one to give that okay for the
12 aircraft to move further in from the holding area.

13 Q. That helps explain it. It's not a Marvel character. So I
14 appreciate that explanation.

15 A. Sorry.

16 Q. It's drawn in my brain. No, that's okay. I appreciate it.
17 I'm going to let Bill ask a few questions, but before I pass it to
18 him, do you need a break? Are you doing okay?

19 A. Yeah.

20 MR. ETCHER: So, Bill.

21 BY DR. BRAMBLE:

22 Q. Thanks for everything so far, Penny. I appreciate it. So on
23 the "X" man discussion, where does the "X" man typically stand
24 when they have the lighted wands crossed?

25 A. In the beginning, we stood in front, directly in front of the

1 -- as long as we can see the pilot and the first officer, that's
2 where we stood. And after the incident, it was more on the side
3 of the -- towards the wing. They say it was supposed to be -- I
4 forgot the degree. They told us to be. I just told the guys that
5 as long as you have enough area for you to escape, that's where
6 you're going to stand, and make sure that you're away from that
7 left wing. So we basically, I would say 70 degrees from the
8 pilot's side.

9 Q. 70 degrees, away from the front?

10 A. Yeah, away from the front.

11 Q. Okay. All right. You mentioned that you had observed a
12 tractor with a yellow siren light that wasn't working. When was
13 the last time you observed that before the accident?

14 A. One at the time, it was after the incident.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Maybe a week later --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- I seen that.

19 Q. Do you know if it was just a bulb burned out or --

20 A. We're not sure because we try to turn them on, the switch.
21 It wasn't working. So we pulled them out from operation and took
22 them down to our mechanics.

23 Q. And before the accident, when was the last time before that
24 you saw one of the yellow lights not working?

25 A. It was -- I'm not sure, but it was a while before, but it was

1 parking light. I was kind of mad, the reason why they took it out
2 of service part, you know. After that whole incident, I kind of
3 understand why but it was a parking light, they took it away from
4 our operation.

5 Q. It wasn't like shortly before the accident?

6 A. No, it was a while.

7 Q. Okay. And I think you told Shawn, you did see the yellow
8 revolving light in operation on the tractor that was pushing back
9 the accident aircraft that night?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. You mentioned that the air horn on your wand seemed
12 like it was out of air. How much were you able to use it before
13 it was out of air?

14 A. I think it was like five to six pressing, and there was a
15 leak coming out of the horn. I think it was -- I used it all that
16 morning.

17 Q. Okay. So you were able to blow it five or six times?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And then did you hear Dave blow his horn as well?

20 A. No. It was pushback. If I'm not mistaken, it was like three
21 separate times that Sanoe beeped the horn.

22 Q. Okay. The tractor, you call it the pushback?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. That one, you heard that one three or four times?

25 A. Yes, I heard. It was softly though, but I heard it three

1 separate times or two separate times.

2 Q. Okay. And I think you said when Dave displayed the pin, that
3 he just displayed the pin. He didn't have like the pin and light
4 wand together.

5 A. No.

6 Q. Is that correct?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Just the pin.

9 A. Yeah, it was only the pin.

10 Q. Okay. Is that typical? Do you usually just hold the pin at
11 night or do you usually hold the pin and the lighted wand
12 together?

13 A. It was only the pin.

14 Q. That's sort of the normal thing to do?

15 A. Yes, on my shift. I'm not sure about our nightshift.

16 Q. So, did Dave -- I think you said Dave had the lighted wand
17 when you were walking the aircraft back. Is that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So then at some point, he turned the wand light off?

20 A. Yeah, we -- I don't know. It's normal for us. We just turn
21 them off when the plane pass us. It's either you put it back or
22 you just walk with you and you just walk with you --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- and you just place it by the pushback tug, and when you
25 finish, you just grab it after.

1 Q. Okay. Can you just briefly tell us how the ground crew is
2 supposed to communicate with the pilots from the time the pushback
3 stops until the ground crew drives away? Like who -- how are they
4 supposed to communicate and how is the flight crew supposed to
5 communicate with them?

6 A. I'm sorry. Are you talking of only the pushback?

7 Q. Yeah. So for the -- so the pushback pushes the plane back --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- and then when they stop, from that point forward, just
10 walk us through the standard procedure for how the tug driver --
11 the pushback driver and the person who pulls the pin, how they're
12 supposed to -- the two of them are supposed to communicate with
13 the captain or flight crew?

14 A. When they push back, when the pushback is complete, the
15 pushback driver will say, pushback complete and set your brakes.
16 And then you just wait for the response from the pilot when they
17 say the brakes set, you just wait for an okay from them, they're
18 going to set -- they're going to tell you after that, okay to
19 disconnect the tow bar. And then you just respond, disconnecting
20 tow bar. And while you disconnect the bar, and then if they're --
21 they have a good to start, then they'll tell you good to start and
22 you're clear to disconnect the headset, and you just kind of
23 repeat back what they said, good to start, clear to disconnect
24 headset, have a good one, have a safe flight, and you just
25 disconnect the headset and see you on the other side with the pin

1 and salute. And then disconnect. You give the okay to the person
2 disconnecting the headset and they pull the plug, come around to
3 your driver's side, put the pin in -- sorry, the wire back into
4 the pushback and then slightly walk behind and show the pin to the
5 pilot. Then they give you the salute or the shaka, and that's
6 when you walk away and drive away.

7 Q. Have you ever seen a situation before where a crew might not
8 give the salute or the shaka after the pin is displayed?

9 A. Flight crew or the --

10 Q. A flight crew where they don't acknowledge the person showing
11 the pin.

12 A. To my knowledge, that morning was the only time that they
13 never acknowledge, the pilot or anybody on the ground that
14 morning.

15 Q. That's the only time you can recall that happening?

16 A. Yes. There was never a time that I worked that the pilot
17 never -- what you call -- ignored the bypass pin.

18 Q. Okay. Were you aware of anything different about the engine
19 start process for that airplane on that morning compared to how
20 they usually start their engines?

21 A. No, not there. Everything was pretty normal until I seen --
22 after we plugged in the incoming aircraft, and I was trying to put
23 away my wand, and I looked back to the pushback plane. It was
24 still there. So I knew already something was wrong because I
25 still see Dave Andrin holding up the bypass pin and Sanoe honking

1 that horn and if I recall, Sanoë even stepped out of the pushback
2 and stand on the side of the pushback and then trying to wave up
3 to the window. And then when she got back to the pushback,
4 shortly after that, then I hear the engine revving up. But at the
5 time, both engines was already on that time, was already -- you
6 can know two to start. But the revving up, you kind of know, the
7 plane was about to move. That was when I knew I was rushed, start
8 running towards, trying to make it stop, but it was too late.

9 Q. Okay. Were you at all acquainted with the flight crew?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Did you interact with them at all before they boarded the
12 airplane?

13 A. No, we don't. Some of them they say, hi. Some of them, they
14 just do their job.

15 Q. Do you ever see the -- do you ever see crews flash the taxi
16 light on and off to acknowledge the ground crew that they have
17 either seen the pin or that they are acknowledging something like
18 that?

19 A. No, we did not see it.

20 Q. So the crews flashing the taxi light is not something that
21 you've seen them do to communicate with ground crews?

22 A. Some of them, especially the Airbus, neo and rarely on our
23 Airbus 330, they always give the shaka or the salute, but on neos,
24 they -- some pilots, they like to flash during day time. But
25 never on the 717.

1 Q. All right. Where was the -- where was Dave standing relative
2 to the pushback when he was showing the pin?

3 A. On the side of -- on passenger side door of the pushback and
4 the pushback if I'm not mistaken was like 4 to 5 feet away from
5 the aircraft. It was always our thing where we disconnect the tow
6 bar and we kind of pull close to the wire that connect to the, to
7 the plane. Sometime it pull when we pull too far away and it
8 pulled that cord. So someone -- that morning was about that
9 distance away from the aircraft.

10 Q. All right. I think that's all I have. Thanks.

11 MR. ETCHER: Rocky.

12 MR. STONE: Thanks.

13 BY MR. STONE:

14 Q. So you said you had a lighted wand. Does that mean you
15 really had two lighted wands or is it one lighted and one not
16 lighted?

17 A. I have two lighted wands.

18 Q. Two lighted wands?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. How bright are they? I mean if you're in a really dark room
21 and you turn them on, are you going to be dim or will they light
22 up the whole room or --

23 A. It was good enough to reflect because those were the new ones
24 that time because I think before the incident, the incident, we
25 just had those wands for like 2 weeks because of the whole blow

1 horn, because we requested -- I know we requested this year. We
2 kind of request so many times that if we can put -- for two, for
3 the pushback team for have those two wireless --

4 Q. Oh, headsets.

5 A. -- so that we can talk.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. But I think the safety came up with the horn.

8 Q. Now, is the horn heard in the cockpit or is that for
9 communication --

10 A. I think it was more for communication on the ground --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- between us to the pushback and between us to the --
13 whoever's incoming vehicle at the time to stop, to make them stop
14 before we push. But at that time, I was trying to use whatever I
15 could find that time, trying to --

16 Q. And I guess I imagine it's pretty noisy out there with you
17 and the engines running.

18 A. Oh, yes.

19 Q. Can you hear the horn? I mean obviously you heard when
20 you're blasting it right beside it --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- but how -- like do you know if your push crew that was
23 standing out there, could they have heard your horn? Do you think
24 they heard your horn?

25 A. I think the -- I believe the horn from the pushback had more

1 chance than my horn --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- because where I was standing from it was farther than
4 where the plane was.

5 Q. That's my last question.

6 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Rocky.

7 MR. STONE: Thanks, Penny.

8 MR. FAAVEA: Yeah, you're welcome.

9 MR. ETCHER: Eddie.

10 BY MR. MILLER:

11 Q. I'm Eddie Miller from the FAA. And, I'm trying to just get a
12 grasp of what -- so you were the wing walker on the first
13 officer's side of the plane, right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You were walking back. So as you're pushing back the jet
16 from the gate, and you pushed it like this, what did you do when
17 you -- when the plane got into this position here?

18 A. When the plane passed me, I was on that side.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Come all the way down. I was still on that side.

21 Q. And did you go back to this gate here to receive that other
22 jet that was coming in?

23 A. Yes, I went back.

24 Q. Okay. So there was another jet that was coming down the
25 taxi.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And it was going to pull into this same gate --

3 A. Yean.

4 Q. -- that this one just pushed out of?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. All right. Okay. That makes that a little bit more
7 clear.

8 A. When that aircraft came in, it fully stopped, chocking and
9 everything, and the engines spooling down and everything. I --
10 that's how I knew something was wrong because --

11 Q. So if this is the nose of the jet that just came in, and I'm
12 at the gate, were you on the nose of it or were you on the pilot's
13 side or -- when you -- how did you have a line of sight from here
14 to the jet that's sitting out here on the service road? Were you
15 on the pilot's side or the pilot's wing? Or, were you on the
16 nose? How did you, how did you see that?

17 A. I can actually -- I have a clear visual of the captain --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- from where I was standing --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- at that time. When we push out, it was from gate 17 and
22 the next gate over is gate 15. So they literally parked right in
23 front of gate 15, and then I have a clear visual --

24 Q. Correct.

25 A. -- like I say our aircraft is small, 717s.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. Everything was close by us.

3 Q. The other question I had is, you know, you're the ramp
4 supervisor. What did you do like a year before? What were you
5 doing more than a year ago? What was, what was your -- what were
6 your duties because you said you weren't pushing back jets at that
7 time.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What were you doing before?

10 A. Before ramp chief, it was ramp lead. I was ramp lead, and
11 we're only in charge of everything except pushing back --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- and bringing in planes.

14 Q. So you would load the jet. You would fuel the jet.

15 A. We don't fuel --

16 Q. Oh.

17 A. -- because that's a function of the line service.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. We don't do lav because that's a function of our cleaners.

20 Q. Gotcha.

21 A. So we only specifically handle luggage --

22 Q. All right.

23 A. -- and loadmaster.

24 Q. Gotcha. Okay. That makes it a little bit more clear what
25 your roles were before. So, thank you very much. That's all the

1 questions I have.

2 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Eddie. Ryan.

3 MR. IWASAKI: I have no questions. I had some about the air
4 horn, but he got to them. Thank you.

5 MR. ETCHER: Round 1's over. Round 2 is always quicker. And
6 we know you're running low on time. So we'll keep it moving
7 quick. If that's all right, we'll go on through. Or do you need
8 a break?

9 MR. FAAVEA: Yeah.

10 BY MR. ETCHER:

11 Q. I really don't have that many questions but you've given me a
12 lot. I've chewed on some. So I have a few little follow-up
13 questions if you will. I know after the event, now they give you
14 a "X" man to kind of --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. So before the event, let's -- I'll break it down into two
17 questions. Before the event, if you had an "X" man, where would
18 they locate him? In front of the airplane, to one side or the
19 other?

20 A. We would locate in front of the airplane. Like I say, it was
21 a normal for us to be exactly in front of the aircraft, in front
22 of the nose, but after the incident, they suggest that we -- they
23 say it was the policy, the procedure was to be on the side which
24 is on our, you know, our end for not recognizing that, but it was
25 they first bring the "X" man, it was always directly in front of

1 the nose. But if I have, if I have a "X" man that morning, which
2 is -- was me, I would be right there in front of the nose, not
3 directly close but it was enough outside so that I can actually
4 see the whole thing from my -- where I stand.

5 Q. So when you're a "X" man and I'll use, in front of, are you
6 in a position that you can see both pilots?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. So approximate, ballpark, whatever you want to call
9 it, how far in front of the airplane do you have to be to see the
10 pilots for the 717?

11 A. 717, it's not really that far out, to know where, you know,
12 to actually see them because they're close down and it's a small
13 aircraft. So I would say 10 yards away from the nose.

14 Q. So I'm assuming, and usually assuming is bad on my part. So
15 when you do it for a neo, a 321 or for the other Airbus --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- are you further out in front of the nose?

18 A. Yes, we are further out from the nose. I say 10 for the 717
19 and we're about 30 to 40 yards from the -- for the neo.

20 Q. Okay. So, I want to ask for your opinion. Being out front
21 or to one side, in your opinion, which would be better?

22 A. In my opinion, I rather to be in front only because you can
23 actually see the whole thing, not just one engine, but you can see
24 the other engine. Before this whole thing, we used to have a
25 different verbiage where the captain ask you for two engine, if

1 they're spinning the right way. But after that, they took away
2 that verbiage and now we're only doing disconnecting, giving us
3 the okay to disconnect headset, but before for 717 alone, they
4 gave us if the fuel on one, and we just give them the okay,
5 positive rotation, fuel on one. And they ask for a second engine,
6 we just -- if the thing is rotating counterclockwise twice, then
7 we give the okay.

8 Q. Do you know why they had you guys stop that? Just out of
9 curiosity.

10 A. I have no idea.

11 Q. Okay. I don't know works fine. So I appreciate that. The
12 last question I have, and then I'll pass it back to see if they
13 have any others. I know you said you saw the pushback tug driver
14 waving. You saw the other wing walker waving, trying to get the
15 crew's attention.

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. Have you guys ever had to tap the side of the airplane to get
18 the crew's attention?

19 A. Yes, we tap on the side to get their attention for disconnect
20 the ground power, disconnect the AC or the air start, and that
21 morning, I don't think they actually tapped on the side of the
22 aircraft.

23 Q. Do you find when you tap on it, that you get their attention
24 pretty quick or is that -- sometimes you get their attention and
25 sometimes you have to tap a couple of times?

1 A. Sometimes it gets their attention. Sometimes they're on
2 their checklists or whatever. They don't even recognize anything
3 but outside I never try.

4 Q. Okay. I appreciate that. I told you that was my last one.
5 So I'll keep to that, but I appreciate everything you've given me
6 so far.

7 A. Okay.

8 MR. ETCHER: Bill, do you have any questions?

9 DR. BRAMBLE: Yeah, just a couple things.

10 BY DR. BRAMBLE:

11 Q. So, I just wanted to make sure to very that when the tow
12 bar's removed from the airplane, it's also removed from the front
13 of the pushback and attached to the rear of the pushback. Is that
14 correct?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. You said that you could see the captain's face while
17 they were trying to show him the pin?

18 A. Yes. I could see him. I don't know what he was doing except
19 looking out. He was looking down like this. That's all he was
20 doing. But I could see from where I was standing.

21 Q. Okay. So if he had looked out towards Dave, do you think you
22 could have seen that he was doing that?

23 A. Yes, I would know that he was looking out.

24 Q. Okay. How long would you say you were watching him when he
25 was looking down?

1 A. It was the time they were -- when I seen Sanoe stepping out
2 of the driver's side and go on the side of the pushback and wave.
3 I don't know if Sanoe mentioned but I also saw Sanoe took her
4 glove and throw it to the window, but that's the whole action that
5 she did for him not to look.

6 Q. Okay. And -- so then were you watching the captain after
7 that until the airplane moved forward or --

8 A. Yes. When they actually moved, he was still looking this
9 way, away from where we was looking, but I think he was already
10 looking where he was about to turn.

11 Q. Okay. So, just for the transcription, he was still looking
12 in which direction?

13 A. Left side. Right side. Right side.

14 Q. And the captain, you pointed straight ahead. So was the
15 captain looking straight ahead.

16 A. When he was moving?

17 Q. When it started to move? Well, tell me where you saw the
18 captain look from the time that you -- Sanoe climbed out of the
19 pushback and you saw that he was looking down until you saw the
20 airplane moving forward?

21 A. Like I say, he was looking away from our direction. It was
22 more towards his first officer side, and it was towards the first
23 officer and then I saw him looking more down, he was looking to
24 his -- I don't know, but it was not looking towards our side which
25 is captain's side.

1 Q. And were watching him just before the airplane started to
2 move forward or were you running toward the airplane?

3 A. I -- once I seen then tire would move, I was trying to wave,
4 and then blow the horn, but at the time, he was already looking
5 ahead of him where they were about to turn.

6 Q. Once you saw that the tires were moving, is that what you
7 said?

8 A. Yes, yes.

9 Q. Once the airplane started to move forward --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- then you were

12 A. I was running towards --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- trying to stop.

15 Q. And you were looking at the captain the whole time?

16 A. Yes, that's where I was trying to signal --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- at that time --

19 Q. And so --

20 A. -- to get his attention.

21 Q. So during that whole time, he was looking in which direction?

22 A. Exactly towards the front a little bit.

23 Q. Okay. Did you speak with the crew after the accident when
24 the airplane stopped?

25 A. No, I wish I had.

1 Q. Did you go over there to speak with them through their
2 window?

3 A. No. Like I said, that time I wasn't worried about anything
4 else or the aircraft. I was trying to make sure that my coworker
5 was okay.

6 Q. Okay. And who called fire rescue and when did that happen?

7 A. I radioed right away to our ramp control requesting fire
8 rescue and everybody. The way I said it on the radio that time,
9 it was -- I was trying to make sure that, you know, it's not going
10 to be -- it's not what they think it was. I wanted to make sure
11 that they know it was an emergency that I want everything that
12 comes, fire rescue and ambulance and everyone to the area.

13 Q. Okay. So who was it that you spoke to on the other end of
14 the line or the other end of the radio? Who were you
15 communicating with?

16 A. I can't recall. I'm not really sure who was on the end, but
17 I have a feeling it was Linda Castro, between her and the other
18 one. What's her name?

19 Q. It was somebody in your ramp control office?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. And then did you separately call any like any other
22 fire rescue or you assumed that they contacted fire rescue?

23 A. Yes, I was on that radio the whole time making sure that they
24 call and making sure that they're on their way.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. And they gave me the okay, that the fire rescue is on their
2 way. So at the time I was still planeside trying to get Sanoe out
3 of the pushback.

4 Q. Okay. And do you know how long it took for fire rescue to
5 show up?

6 A. It's between 5 minutes to 7 minutes for them to come over.

7 Q. And how long did it take to get her out?

8 A. It was -- I think it was like almost an hour.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Because after that, it was like 3 more planes and she still
11 wasn't out of the pushback.

12 Q. Okay. All right. That's all I have. Thanks, Penny.

13 A. Yeah.

14 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Bill. Rocky.

15 BY MR. STONE:

16 Q. Okay. I'm going to go real fast because I know you're in a
17 hurry. So when airplanes are taxiing, they're supposed to have
18 their taxi light on. Do you remember seeing the taxi light come
19 on before the airplane moved or --

20 A. The taxi light. You mean the main headlight in the front?

21 Q. In the front, yeah.

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you see a lot of airplanes moving around without the taxi
24 lights on?

25 A. Not for the 717, they usually turn it on when they start

1 turning.

2 Q. Yeah. Okay. If you could change anything procedurally, so
3 that this wouldn't happen again, what would it be?

4 A. To have a "X" man on the small plane.

5 Q. Thank you. Thanks, Penny.

6 A. You're welcome.

7 MR. ETCHER: Eddie?

8 MR. MILLER: I don't have any further questions. Thanks you
9 so much.

10 MR. FAAVEA: You're welcome.

11 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Eddie. Ryan?

12 MR. IWASAKI: I don't have anything further. Thank you.

13 MR. ETCHER: Well, I guess you went through round 2. You got
14 lucky. And it's almost 1400. So I want to thank you so much for
15 coming in and talking to us. It helped bring some more -- filled
16 in a lot of pieces in my head. So I appreciate that.

17 MR. FAAVEA: Thank you.

18 MR. ETCHER: With that, we will call this interview concluded
19 at 1359 local time.

20 (Whereupon, at 1:59 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: MINOR DAMAGE TO BOEING 717-200
 AT THE KAHULUI AIRPORT IN MAUI,
 HAWAII ON NOVEMBER 30, 2023
 Interview of Penitito "Penny" Faavea

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA034

PLACE: Maui, Hawaii

DATE: February 20, 2024

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 covers the signature of the transcriber. A handwritten mark, possibly a stylized 'J' or 'L', is visible to the right of the box.

Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber