

DCA24LA097

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

Group Chairman's Factual Report - Attachment 3

Controller Interviews

September 30, 2025

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *

KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *

Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *

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Interview of: JENNIFER CACCIATORE, Weather Coordinator (WC)

Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Tuesday,
March 5, 2024

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D.C. Area 301-261-1902
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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

SETH MYERS, Representative
(On behalf of Ms. Cacciatore)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:00 a.m.)

MR. BROWN: Test one, two. Okay, I want to put this right here. So the time is 11 o'clock straight up. Good afternoon, now. My name is Mike Brown. I'm the Lead Investigator on the Air Traffic Control Group with the National Transportation Safety Board. We'll go around the room in a minute and everybody can introduce themselves. For the record, though, can you state your full name?

MS. CACCIATORE: Jennifer Cacciatore.

MR. BROWN: All right Jen, and thanks for being here today. I'm going to go around the room now. We'll start with Paul. He'll tell you who he is and what he does.

MR. SUFFERN: Yes, so I'm Paul SUFFERN. I'm a meteorologist investigator with the NTSB. And I've been here about 11 or 12 years now.

MS. KOSCHIG: I'm Betty Koschig. I'm an Aircraft Control Investigator and I've been with the NTSB about 15 years.

MS. MARINAS: Karena Marinas, NATCA air safety investigator. I'm a controller at L.A. Center, and for about 19 years now.

MR. COON: I'm Kevin Coon, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies. I'm a retired FAA, at various facilities.

MR. HURLING: Ryan Hurling, Senior Flight Safety Investigator at United Airlines. And I'm the Lead Investigator for this event from the company side at United.

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1 MR. ALLISTON: And I'm Jason Alliston on the FAA side. I'm
2 the Air Traffic Manager at Atlanta Center.

3 MR. BROWN: Okay, so the reason why we bring in this, this
4 big group is I've never, I'm air traffic control background, never
5 worked at a center. So FAA subject matter, expert, right. The
6 airlines, they provide us data, and their safety side. ASI, NATCA
7 side gets to sit in a party system.

8 We work a parallel investigation with the FAA. So, it's our
9 own investigation. They do their thing, and we do our thing. The
10 ultimate goal in our investigation is to establish probable cause
11 of the event. We're not compliance driven. We don't, we're not
12 going to tell you, you guys have to do this, you need to do that.

13 We gather factual data, compile it in a report. And the
14 power of our report is a safety recommendation. That there's
15 something that we can say that, hey, have you guys thought about
16 doing this? And present that back out to the FAA.

17 So, we just talked about the recording. What we'll do is
18 once we have the recording from the interviews done, we send them
19 to what's called Free State transcription. They'll transcribe the
20 tapes. We'll review it. The only people that will have physical
21 control of the audio recording is me and Betty. Nobody else in
22 this room gets it.

23 That is not shared with anybody, so you don't have to worry
24 about watching the news and hearing excerpts of it. None of that
25 goes out. However, the transcripts, once they are done, we're

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1 going to review and make sure that the continuity is correct.

2 We'll send them back to the party. So, in this case, we'll
3 send you a copy for you to review just to make sure it's, yes,
4 that's what I said. You can send it back to us. You can email us
5 back and say, you know, even if you want a copy of it, and say,
6 okay, it's good to go.

7 That will go in the public docket, though. So, when all of
8 this information is compiled, and we released the docket in a
9 year, just to be fair, right? It takes a while to get those,
10 that'll be in there.

11 The transcript portion, though, shouldn't be more than a
12 month. As far as getting that back to you guys, if everybody's
13 doing what they're supposed to be doing. Do you, would you like
14 to get an email of the transcript though?

15 MS. CACCIATORE: (No audible response.)

16 MR. BROWN: I'll get it now. Do you want me to email it to
17 you?

18 MS. CACCIATORE: Please.

19 MR. BROWN: That'd be the best way. What's a good email
20 address for you, Jen?

21 MS. CACCIATORE: The FAA, my FAA email. FAA email?

22 MR. MEYERS: Yes.

23 MS. CACCIATORE: [REDACTED]

24 MR. BROWN: And spell your last name for me please?

25 MS. CACCIATORE: C-A-C-C-I-A-T-O-R-E.

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1 MR. BROWN: Perfect. So, representation? You have Seth, who
2 we work for. As Karena is here, today, but Seth does this on
3 other groups with us as well. And he's your chosen rep?

4 MS. CACCIATORE: Yes.

5 MR. BROWN: Okay. Seth, state your name for the official
6 transcript.

7 MR. MYERS: Seth Meyers.

8 MR. BROWN: Okay. And just so you know, during the
9 interview, as we ask questions that are directed to you, Jen.
10 We're not going to ask Seth any questions. However, if you need
11 to stop, you need to confer, by all means just say hey, I need to
12 talk. And if you want to step outside by all means. That's,
13 that's more than appropriate. Do you have any questions before we
14 begin?

15 MS. CACCIATORE: No.

16 MR. BROWN: Okay, so we did our introductions. So who is the
17 NTSB, though, and what do we do? So we investigate all civil
18 aviation accidents, which is why we're here. This was determined
19 to be an accident, to determine a probable cause.

20 And then we try to develop recommendations to prevent that
21 from happening again. It's that, that cut and dry, that simple.
22 We don't assault fault, or I'm sorry, we don't assign fault,
23 blame, or liability, okay?

24 What to expect from us? A lot of us take notes as we type,
25 as we go through the interview. So, if we're not making direct

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1 eye contact, it's nothing personal, okay? We're just trying to
2 keep up with where we're at. We're going go through some basic
3 questions first, just to kind of get a background on you, who you
4 are. And if you're ready to start everybody, good to go?

5 (No audible response.)

6 MR. BROWN: Okay, so the, it's 11:00 we started.

7 INTERVIEW OF JENNIFER CACCIATORE

8 BY MR. BROWN:

9 Q. Prior to well, first of all, how old were you at the time of
10 the event, so February 10th.

11 A. I'm sorry?

12 Q. How old were you at the date of the event, February 10th?

13 A. I'm 44.

14 Q. No birthday? Okay. Your operating initials?

15 A. Juliet Bravo.

16 Q. JB, good initials. And at the time you were the weather
17 coordinator, correct?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Correct, okay. Do you have any military experience prior to
20 the FAA? Like military? So, or just your FAA time?

21 A. (No audible response.)

22 Q. Okay. Do you hold any collateral duties, or have you been on
23 any recent details?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. Do you, have you taken any extended periods of leave

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1 in the last six months?

2 A. (No audible response.)

3 Q. Okay. So, if you would just kind of briefly what's your
4 aviation ATC background? How did you get interested in it? Was
5 it something you always wanted to do kind of thing?

6 A. Through family, Orlando tower supervisor.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And got interested through that.

9 Q. That was somebody in your family was?

10 A. Mother's boss' husband.

11 Q. Mother's boss' husband. Okay, so that's how you grew up down
12 there and you really got interested in air traffic control or did
13 you want to be a pilot?

14 A. Just air traffic.

15 Q. Just air traffic? That's a good call. Don't tell them that,
16 though. Okay, sorry, I'm typing. Have you ever been fired,
17 terminated, suspended, or asked to resign from an ATC position?

18 A. (No audible response.)

19 Q. Okay. How would you describe your overall health? What I
20 mean by that is on a scale of, of excellent to poor, your overall
21 health? And you don't have to go into specifics, but like, I rate
22 myself good maybe fair, but.

23 A. I'd say pretty fair.

24 Q. Okay. You held a, you hold a medical second class with no
25 limitations? Or with limitations? So, your flight physical that

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- 1 you get?
- 2 A. What would a limitation be?
- 3 Q. Glasses, a waiver for medication, stuff like that.
- 4 A. Waiver for medication.
- 5 Q. Okay. We don't need to know what the med is. Okay. Do you
- 6 wear glasses?
- 7 A. Not on my medical, no.
- 8 Q. Okay. Were you drug or alcohol tested following this event?
- 9 A. No.
- 10 Q. Is there any changes in your health for the last year? What I
- 11 mean by that is any surgeries, childbirth, you were diagnosed with
- 12 something that can affect you mentally, anything like that?
- 13 A. No.
- 14 Q. Okay. Any changes in your personal life in the last year?
- 15 So, got married, got divorced, had kids, bought a new house?
- 16 Anything like that?
- 17 A. None of those.
- 18 Q. Okay. See Jen, you're doing great. Any changes in your
- 19 financial situation during the last year? Good, bad, or
- 20 indifferent. So, won the lottery, put in paperwork to retire --
- 21 A. No.
- 22 Q. -- hit the stock market? Okay. So, 72 hour, I'm not going
- 23 to do. Did you file an ATSAP regarding this event?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. Have you been interviewed about this event before now? And I

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1 don't mean next door. If you did the SSR that's -- is that, were
2 you part of the SSR?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. So you were just, for the SSR portion they asked you?
5 Okay.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Have you had an opportunity to review the replay of the
8 event?

9 A. No.

10 Q. And do you want to?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. Kind of weather coordinator, what do you? So,
13 looking at, not this, not the R24 sector but the weather
14 coordinator sector that day, okay? On a scale of one to five, how
15 would you classify how busy you were as the weather coordinator?
16 With one being the lowest to five being really busy.

17 A. Three.

18 Q. A three? Okay. Was that normal for that shift? Was it a
19 pretty standard weather coordinator shift? Or was it busier than
20 the normal, slower than normal?

21 A. Standard for that.

22 Q. Standard for that shift?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. Now the same line of questioning, but the complexity
25 at the time of the event, on a scale of one to five, how would

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1 you, how would you classify the complexity? One being a low
2 complexity five being complex during the time of the event?

3 A. During the time of the event?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. Four.

6 Q. So pretty complex, more complex than normal? Okay. And how
7 was that, was that complexity normal for that time? Was it?

8 A. For that, yes.

9 Q. So, normally it's that busy when you work weather coordinator
10 during that time? Or it's, kind of what I'm trying to --

11 A. During that time I'm --

12 Q. Right, during that time.

13 A. During that kind of event?

14 Q. During that day when you were working weather coordinator.

15 So it's a Saturday, early afternoon. Is that, was that how it
16 normally is complexity-wise there?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay, so it was more complex than normal?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. Were there any distractions occurring during the event
21 leading up to the, or leading up to the event for you?

22 A. In the area, no.

23 Q. Do you recall the weather conditions and current advisories
24 leading up to and during the time of the event?

25 A. I do not recall.

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1 Q. You don't recall. And that's okay. If you don't know it's
2 better not to guess and assume. Okay? Yes, that's fine. Did you
3 receive a pre-duty weather briefing that day?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Do you know when you remember, if you remember, was there
6 anything that stood out about that weather briefing that day?

7 A. I don't remember.

8 Q. That's okay. Another question we like to ask, there's no
9 wrong answer and this is completely your opinion. How much value
10 do you get from the pre-duty weather briefing?

11 A. If it's the one to five scale, I'd say like 3.5.

12 Q. A 3.5? Usually when we ask controllers are like zero, okay?
13 It depends, it varies by facility, so. But I mean, that's one of
14 the things so we're, we're -- we do a broad investigation. If
15 there's any recommendations, we can make.

16 You might say, hey, that weather brief was the best thing
17 since sliced bread, right? Somebody else might say no, I wish it
18 had this. Well, we can make that recommendation to the FAA,
19 right? And say, hey, why aren't you guys looking at this and then
20 okay.

21 And that's all. I mean, it's no, like I said, it's your
22 opinion. Did you have a cellular phone or a PED on, with you at
23 the time of the event?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No? Okay. Had you requested a relief or assistance at/or

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1 leading up to the time of the event?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Do you know? I'm going to ask this kind of in a two-part
4 question. Because we haven't figured out how, because the United,
5 or 1890 did report on the frequency to Boston Center that they had
6 a turbulence event. It was with N90 later. Okay? Do you recall
7 how that, and you may or may not know, how you were notified of
8 the event?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Someone came up and said there is a PIREP coming with
12 injuries.

13 Q. You don't remember who told you that though?

14 A. No, I do not.

15 Q. No, that's fine. So, you sat, because we just did our tour
16 where you sit, kind of in that corner across from the OM desk. Do
17 you know if it was on a shout line? Did somebody walk by and just
18 tell you guys?

19 A. Someone walked by.

20 Q. Okay. Now pertaining to the event itself, to the best of
21 your ability, just kind of step us through the history of that
22 event, as it happened. Weather coordinator, it's kind of weird
23 because you're not watching the traffic move through the sectors.

24 But just an overall snapshot of that, that shift that you
25 were working. Like what time did you come into work that day?

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1 Was that your first hit of the day, was it your third hit? Do you
2 work, because you're a TMU, so you're working TMU, as well, right?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. So, did you start at the -- so just walk me through that
5 shift essentially until we get to the event. And if you don't
6 remember Jen, you don't remember.

7 A. I do not remember the very start.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. The first, there was a severe turbulence --

10 Q. Yes?

11 A. -- from a TBM during stand up. I was alone in the area. I
12 do not remember the in between. But I remember from the point
13 when someone said somebody, you can expect the PIREP, the severe
14 PIREP.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. In between that, I had staffed the weather coordinator
17 position, so that I could be on the oversight position. And there
18 was a CIC. Person came around and said expect the severe PIREP.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And all three of us were, were able to focus on that event.
21 Get it --

22 Q. So you, the CIC, and then a TMU controller, were the three in
23 that area?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. Okay. I'm not a center person, so it's trying to -- how you

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1 guys staff that. So, you were weather coordinator. You had a CIC
2 and then one TMU person, correct, in the area?

3 A. Because the other person was not checked out on any other
4 position at the time, I made them the weather coordinator.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Because they were checked out on that.

7 Q. So, then you took TMU side?

8 A. I took the, the TMU side. The weather coordinator is
9 considered TMU in this --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- in this case.

12 Q. Ah, because okay, I got you, I got you. Okay, that makes
13 sense. And real quick before I pass it on to Paul, we do your
14 background, right, as far as like when you got certified on what
15 date and stuff.

16 I apologize, I'm going to pull yours back up. So you were a
17 CPC you got here in 2005, November 2005? Because it says from
18 November of 2005, to 2014, you're a CPC?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. But it also says you're TMU from 2005 until present. But you
21 guys don't -- do you work in area and TMU? Or do you bid and just
22 work in TMU?

23 A. Until recently, you, you could do both.

24 Q. And that's what you did, right?

25 A. Until --

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1 Q. Just to make sure.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. But you officially started, you've been doing TMU and
4 CPC in the area until 2014?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Make sense now. See that's why we ask, so. That's all I
7 have. I'm going to pass it to Paul here. Our weather --

8 BY MR. SUFFERN:

9 Q. Well, thank you. And thanks for your time. Appreciate you
10 answering these questions. It's really, really helpful. Just
11 kind of because it can vary from facility to facility, what does
12 the weather coordinator do here at Boston Center?

13 A. I would say, most commonly disseminate PIREPs.

14 Q. So, disseminate within the TMU? Disseminate -- so you, say
15 you get a PIREP from, I'll just pick a place. A CWSU comes over,
16 flight data comes over with a PIREP. Do you pass that out to the
17 rest of the facility? Or the different sectors where it's
18 pertinent or anything?

19 A. Generally it comes from the sector.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Populates on our screen. We type it out. It goes to flight
22 data. They enter into AISR.

23 Q. So, okay, okay. Okay, so someone, maybe -- I will probably
24 mess up the air traffic control language. But are you typing it
25 into ERIDS? Into the --

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1 A. (No audible response.)

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. And then as far as disseminating, say a PIREP comes
5 into sector alpha, but it may apply to some of the other sectors,
6 how is that disseminated at the facility here?

7 A. We direct it to the pertinent areas.

8 Q. As far as, as training, I think I was looking through the
9 weather coordinator background, and things. Looks like it's
10 within the last year or two you've become at the weather
11 coordinator position, here the facility?

12 A. Since the weather coordinator has been birthed. Is the way
13 they --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Could you recall what kind of training did you receive from
17 the facility as far as whether coordinator training and such?

18 A. I don't recall 100 percent of the process.

19 Q. Okay. As you're, throughout your shifts, so I'm not talking
20 about the event specifically, but just trying to learn, you know,
21 what the weather coordinator does here. What kind of weather
22 tools do you use during your shift to stay updated on the weather?

23 A. I can't recall the acronyms of each of them, but there are
24 screens that show the PIREPs that pop up --

25 Q. Okay.

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1 A. -- around.

2 Q. Are there any other displays with maybe things like weather
3 radar or a situation displays or around the weather coordinator
4 here? Or is it mainly just PIREPs as they pop up?

5 A. It's the list of PIREPs and there is weather depicted on a
6 screen --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- on a map.

9 Q. Okay. I've seen that the CWSU here puts out weather briefing
10 sheets. Do those make it over to the weather coordinator?

11 A. Yes, directly.

12 Q. Okay. Are they valuable to you all to help?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. So, you were mentioning about the event, and you had
15 mentioned that there was a severe PIREP that came in from the TBM
16 I think during the standup brief. Is there anything else about
17 the weather that day that really stood out to you?

18 A. (No audible response.)

19 Q. No?

20 A. I don't recall, no.

21 Q. Okay. Since you've been at Boston Center for a while, and
22 just speaking on this time of year, so I will classify this as
23 wintertime of year, even though it's a little warmer out today,
24 even though it's raining. How often do you recall having
25 thunderstorm activity in Boston's airspace during the wintertime

1 frame, in your experience?

2 A. Not often, no.

3 Q. Okay, not often. I imagine up here you're seeing more snow,
4 and more, more things like that this time of year, so. And then
5 is there anything specific that's provided in training for you as
6 far as encountering thunderstorms during the wintertime, and how
7 they may be different than thunderstorms in the summertime, or how
8 to deal with that?

9 A. I don't remember that kind.

10 Q. Okay. Have you, I don't know all the positions. And so,
11 I'll probably will, will mess this up as far as areas of
12 responsibility. But, if a sector was getting too full because of
13 weather, or something like that, that's not something you would
14 coordinate as far as traffic flow or anything like that?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. As a weather coordinator position?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Okay. And then, just two more, two more questions. I think
19 you described the -- so how would the process of a PIREP getting
20 entered into the NAS work here at Boston Center? I know you
21 receive them via screen but how would that process work from your,
22 from your perspective?

23 A. For a non-urgent PIREP, we take it from the screen and GI it
24 to the appropriate sectors. The flight data gets that, and they
25 input it into the, their AISR system.

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1 Q. And so, so that's a routine one. How would an urgent PIREP
2 at work then?

3 A. Come in through the ERIDS. We GI it to everybody. We log it
4 in a dash 34. We log it in the NTNO, which can go to the command
5 center. And we take the GI strip to the weather unit. They
6 usually, it pops up on their screen too.

7 Q. And as far as the beginning of that process, is it your
8 understanding that all the controllers they're entering in that to
9 send it to you? Nobody does -- what I'm getting at is, does
10 anybody do, still do the paper forms here? Or is everything all
11 electronic?

12 A. No more paper forms.

13 Q. Okay, okay. And then the, I noticed, I was reading through
14 the 7110 here, and there was just a change in January as far as
15 the language change from, a controller must for all PIREPs to,
16 they changed it to, operationally pertinent or significant PIREPs.
17 What does an operationally pertinent PIREP mean to you?

18 A. Turbulence of moderate or greater, and any type of icing.

19 MR. SUFFERN: That is all the questions I had for right now.
20 Thank you, Jen.

21 MR. BROWN: Karena?

22 MS. MARINAS: Just one second. Okay, thank you.

23 BY MS. MARINAS:

24 Q. What kind of PIREPs were you getting from that sector that
25 day, in general?

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1 A. I don't remember which PIREPs came from which sector. That
2 TBM was the first severe that day.

3 Q. Okay. And then, let's see. So, if you didn't know where,
4 which sectors they were coming from, I'm guessing then there
5 weren't any particular sectors that were kind of like on your
6 radar to watch for, or anything? Or were there?

7 A. Can you ask that again, please?

8 Q. Sure. So did you have any -- based on the briefing that you
9 had that day and the PIREPS that were coming in, were there any
10 sectors that were kind of, you know, in your scan, so to speak, or
11 that you were kind of like looking at, or that were being talked
12 about in TMU, or any of that? Do you remember anything kind of
13 sticking out?

14 A. I don't remember what was on -- the weather briefing sheet
15 will tell us which ones to look at. I don't remember which, which
16 ones it said.

17 Q. Okay. Do you have, do you have any role here in, as the
18 weather coordinator, in like reroutes and swap routes? Any of
19 that stuff?

20 A. No.

21 Q. No? Okay.

22 A. It --

23 Q. You kind of generally are just out of that conversation?

24 A. Conversation, yes. We don't physically do the reroutes.

25 Q. Right. Okay, so you are kind of involved in the

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1 conversation. How does that go?

2 A. Usually departure gate forecasts when creating the oceanic
3 eastbound tracks. We'll look at the weather and see if those
4 departure gates will be impacted. And then we can make
5 suggestions on which tracks to use.

6 Q. Okay. So, when I saw the weather briefing that comes from
7 CWSU, that all the controllers get at the start of their shift, I
8 noticed toward the end there, there's a slide on PIREPs, and then
9 there was a slide on, for the TAF Board. And they kind of flashed
10 through them pretty quickly. Is that the only place you guys get
11 that information? Are there other places that you get that
12 information?

13 A. On the weather briefing sheet --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- that's passed out as well.

16 Q. So, do you tend to rely more on that then?

17 A. Because it comes out every few hours, yes.

18 Q. Okay. And so were the PIREPs that day, can you recall, did
19 you feel like they were matching up to what you had seen in the
20 forecast and on that sheet?

21 A. I don't remember.

22 Q. Okay. I know, I'm kind of asking the same things over and
23 over, but it's a little different. What are the facility CAPs
24 that -- are there any facility CAPs that are affecting weather
25 coordinator position that you're aware of?

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1 A. I'm not aware of active CAPs about weather coordinator.

2 Q. Okay. When you enter in the PIREPS, do those also get forced
3 to the OM and OS positions? Do they see those, do you know?

4 A. I don't honestly don't know, because we, if there's an urgent
5 PIREP we hand the strip to them. I do not know if they have a
6 printer at that desk.

7 Q. For the OMs?

8 A. For the OMs.

9 Q. Okay. And that's it for my questions. Thanks.

10 MR. BROWN: Kevin?

11 BY MR. COON:

12 Q. Hi. You mentioned that there was an -- when you heard about
13 it, you were dividing, were you working more than just the weather
14 coordinator position at one time?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And you mentioned an oversight position, what is the?

17 A. It's the NAS coordinator. It's kind of the D side to the
18 supervisor.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I'd put it that way.

21 Q. Now, when you get the, you said as the weather coordinator,
22 you get the PIREP reports from the sector, and then you enter them
23 in. Do those display on a kind of a map, at any, or do you have
24 to decipher from the LAT longs or the radial where actually that
25 PIREP report is?

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1 A. I honestly do not know if our entry populates on the CWSU map
2 or if flight data's entry does that. I believe it might be flight
3 data's entry that populates it on the map. I don't believe our
4 entry does.

5 Q. As the weather coordinator, it sounds like you get your
6 briefing from CWSU. Now, when you're working the weather
7 coordinator, do you monitor other things to see if things are
8 developing more rapidly than forecasted, or the movement of the
9 weather is different than forecasted?

10 A. Yes, the CWSU display shows other centers' PIREPs. So, we
11 can see, we can see those.

12 Q. Okay, that's all I have.

13 MR. BROWN: Ryan?

14 BY MR. HURLING:

15 Q. Yes, thank you, again, for being here. I know, this is not
16 an easy, easy process. And so, I know you don't wake up saying, I
17 hope to be interviewed by the NTSB. So, sincerely, thank you.
18 This is for safety purposes only.

19 So we appreciate you. Just, just two questions for
20 clarification. One, what was your shift that day? What were you
21 working? Do you remember, just in general? Like was it an
22 afternoon shift or morning?

23 A. Was it a Sunday?

24 Q. It was a Saturday.

25 A. It was a Saturday? Probably --

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1 MR. MYERS: I can tell you.

2 MS. CACCIATORE: 2:30 to --

3 BY MR. HURLING:

4 Q. Okay, so it was an afternoon shift?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So, this event probably occurred like in the beginning
7 somewhat of the beginning of your shift or kind of mid portion, if
8 you recall? Flight 1890 was, or was it towards the end? Like, my
9 overall question is, this was obviously turned into a PIREP, so
10 forth for what they encountered. Do you know if the remainder of
11 the day was that active with PIREPs that were coming in for
12 turbulence, and so forth? If it kind of stayed active for the,
13 for the rest of the afternoon?

14 A. I believe it did.

15 MR. HURLING: Okay, Michael that's all I have. Just thank
16 you. Thank you again.

17 MR. BROWN: Jason?

18 BY MR. ALLISTON:

19 Q. All right, a few extra questions on the weather coordinator
20 position just for clarification because the way you guys do it
21 here is a little unique. So, as far as the dissemination
22 requirements, so in your, you said you sent it out to the
23 applicable sectors. What does that mean? So, if you get a PIREP
24 up in, who are you going to send it back out to?

25 A. To the sectors within 150 miles of it, depending on the

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1 altitude.

2 Q. Okay. And how do you typically tell that? Do you just do it
3 based on the, the adjacent area? So if it's, Area C puts it out,
4 and then A&D are around? It's that kind of a --

5 A. There's, there's a sheet that tells us.

6 Q. Perfect, okay. And then as far as adjacent facilities, do
7 you have notification requirements to notify adjacent facilities
8 for either routine or urgent PIREPs?

9 A. I do not know officially, but for urgent we do call adjacent.

10 Q. Okay. And what does that look like? Is it -- do you call
11 the underlying terminals? Do you call the adjacent centers? Or
12 does it vary?

13 A. It varies, who's affected.

14 Q. Okay, do you just use kind of the same 150-mile ring to
15 determine that?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Perfect, okay. And then as far as the disposition of duty,
18 so the weather coordinator's a specific position, but can be
19 combined with multiple other positions? What's it? Does it? How
20 often does it stand alone? Let's start with that.

21 A. I don't think I can give a quantifier.

22 Q. I don't know is good.

23 A. I don't know.

24 Q. Okay, so the duties that are assigned to the weather
25 coordinator, there was, I'm not sure which documents specified it,

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1 but it said that some of the duties of the weather coordinator is
2 assigned were split with the OMIC. How is that determination
3 made? What portions of the weather coordinator position do they
4 take?

5 A. As far as for the OMIC, that happens at night, after TMU is
6 not staffed.

7 Q. Okay. So, this one was specific for, for like during the
8 day. And I'm not sure what, whether it was specifying but the
9 OMIC was, was taking some of those WC duties in some way. Do you
10 know how that works? Or is that just a discussion with the OMIC
11 that I need assistance with this?

12 A. I don't --

13 MR. MYERS: No, no, just be honest.

14 MS. CACCIATORE: Yes, I don't know what the OMIC does during
15 the day for that.

16 BY MR. ALLISTON:

17 Q. Okay. And then, do you ever have to backup flight data on
18 the AISR entries?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. And do you guys get AISR training on how to input
21 those PIREPs into the system?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Do you feel comfortable with AISR inputs?

24 A. Somewhat, yes.

25 Q. Somewhat, yes.

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1 A. It doesn't happen often.

2 Q. Doesn't happen often? Okay, could you give a percentage of
3 how often it does happen?

4 A. Of the total time that weather coordinator has been a thing,
5 one percent.

6 Q. Very infrequently, got it. Does the, so the weather
7 coordinator position, does it have a currency requirement?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. And then does it also require a, since it has a
10 currency requirement, it would require medical as well?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. And then the weather coordinator position is
13 physically located in TMU?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. All right. And it has a standalone position assigned with
16 equipment?

17 A. Yes.

18 MR. ALLSION: I'll just check my notes because it's all over
19 the place. I think that's all. I think that's all I have.

20 Thanks.

21 MR. BROWN: Betty?

22 MS. KOSCHIG: Yes.

23 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

24 Q. Okay. So, thanks, again for being here. You're really
25 helping us out a lot on this. So, you mentioned that you know,

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1 about the coordinator, you had certain things to do since the
2 weather coordinate coordinators been here. How long has that
3 been? Do you recall?

4 A. I don't remember the date.

5 Q. A year?

6 A. I don't remember.

7 Q. Okay. No, no worries.

8 A. Pre-COVID.

9 Q. Pre-COVID, okay. All right. So, yes, all right. So also,
10 where did you work before here?

11 A. I've always been in this building.

12 Q. Oh --

13 A. This has been it for 18 years.

14 Q. -- oh, okay, great. Do you have any degrees? Any college
15 degrees or anything?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Where from?

18 A. From Flagler in Florida. And Miami Dade and I have few
19 degrees.

20 Q. Okay. What kind?

21 A. Elementary and deaf education. I was a teacher. And then I
22 went to Miami Dade for, for airport management and then ATC
23 school.

24 Q. Okay, great, great. And back to the, back to when the, when
25 you guys started, when there's three of you working, you said

1 after this event happened. So, you said you were focused in on
2 it? What were some of the things you were doing? What? What did
3 what was going on in the room at that point?

4 A. From the moment that the announcement that the severe was
5 coming with injuries --

6 Q. Yes?

7 A. -- from what I remember, the person working weather
8 coordinator who was staffed at, in that seat, disseminated the
9 PIREP. The CIC helped with notifying adjacent facilities, and I
10 called adjacent airports for either reroutes, or told them to,
11 they might want to think twice about departing at this time on
12 that route. And we did some reroutes around that area.

13 Q. Do you recall anything else that was going on around that
14 time?

15 A. I don't recall.

16 Q. Yes, I know you were face down in the situation. So, how
17 long were you, how long were you in the position after that? Were
18 you there for a while?

19 A. I don't remember.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Yes, no problem. I think everybody else
21 answered a lot of my questions. So I don't have any more.

22 MR. BROWN: I don't have any more as far as pertaining to
23 that. Does anyone have any more questions?

24 MR. SUFFERN: I have a couple.

25 MR. BROWN: Paul?

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1 BY MR. SUFFERN:

2 Q. For, so not, again, not this specific scenario. But at the
3 weather coordinator position, have you ever asked for direct
4 Center Weather Service Unit support? Like you're looking at a
5 certain weather scenario, or something like that, and asked them
6 to come over and give you advice on certain things?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And what does that look like here at Boston Center?

9 A. Either we walk over to their unit so they can show us on
10 their equipment, or we call them to come over and discuss with us.

11 Q. Okay. And generally here, I'm thinking, since you've been
12 here for a while, is that generally a thunderstorm scenario moving
13 through in July, you know, moving from west New York all the way
14 through the center? Or is that a snow type of event? Or it can
15 vary?

16 A. Varies.

17 Q. Okay. And then my favorite question for all air traffic
18 controllers, if I put you in charge, and you could have any amount
19 of money and the FAA provided it to you, if there was a weather
20 tool out there that you wish you to help you do your job better,
21 what would that be?

22 A. I wish I knew what all the tools were to pick that. I don't
23 know. Just, just whatever computer is, will load and is fast.

24 MR. SUFFERN: Okay. Thank you, that's all I have.

25 MR. BROWN: Now, anyone else?

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1 BY MR. BROWN:

2 Q. So my final question is the same for every interview is,
3 looking back now, we're a couple of weeks past the event, is there
4 anything, kind of like he said, you wished you had, but doesn't
5 have to be weather specific equipment.

6 Anything you wish you had or any procedure or changes that
7 you wish, kind of looking back, that you would have done
8 different, or that you wish you had? Things you would have done
9 different, or things you wish you had?

10 A. I feel like I would need like a good amount of time to
11 really --

12 Q. Flush that one out?

13 A. Yes. But --

14 Q. Anything off the top of your head?

15 A. I can't think of anything off the top of my head.

16 MR. BROWN: Okay. Last chance, anyone else? Okay, I'm going
17 stop the recording. It's 11:44.

18 (Whereupon, at 11:44 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Jennifer Cacciatore

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 5, 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.


Margaret C. Boardman
Official Reporter

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *

KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *

Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *

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Interview of: Adam Currier, Executive Officer (XO)

Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Friday,
March 8, 2024

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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFREN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

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

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:12 a.m.)

MR. BROWN: I'm starting the recording. The time is 8:12 a.m. So once again, good morning. My name is Mike Brown. I'm an Air Traffic Investigator with the NTSB. For the record, can you state your name?

MR. CURRIER: My name is Adam Currier.

MR. BROWN: Thank you. So we talked a little bit about the recording. How it works, the audio portion does not get added to the docket. When we're done with the factual part, the transcripts will be added to the public docket -- just so you're aware of that. You've chosen to have a representative here today? And for the record, can you state your name?

MR. WADE: Benjamin Wade, FAA Office of General Counsel.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Ben. During this interview if at any time you'd like to confer with your representative, if you need to go out for a break, get a glass of water, use the restroom, by all means -- we're not going to keep you. The door is not locked. You're not strapped to the chair. So have you ever been part of an NTSB interview?

MR. CURRIER: No.

MR. BROWN: Okay. So a little bit about what we are and what we do here, so there's a lot of people in the room you see. So the NTSB, we're an independent Government agency. We don't fall under the DOT. We report to Congress and we investigate all civil

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1 aviation accidents and then other modes of transportation with
2 other groups. We're not here to assign liability, fault, blame.
3 We're here to gather factual information and then a probable cause
4 on what happened with the event. And the power that we have is we
5 make recommendations to prevent that type of event from ever
6 happening again. That's our sole purpose in life in these cases.

7 I'm going to go around the room now, since you see all these
8 people in here -- and let everybody introduce themselves and who
9 they are.

10 MR. SUFFERN: I'm Paul Suffern. I'm a Meteorologist
11 investigator with the NTSB.

12 MS. KOSCHIG: Betty Koschig. I am an Air Traffic
13 Investigator with the NTSB. Good morning, sir.

14 MS. MARINAS: Karena Marinas. NATCA Air Safety Investigator
15 controller at L.A. Center.

16 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, United Airlines, Air Traffic
17 Strategies and I'm retired FAA.

18 MR. HURLING: Ryan Hurling, Senior Flight Safety
19 Investigator, United Airlines, I'm a Lead Investigator for the
20 company, for United Air, for this event.

21 MR. ALISTON: And I'm Jason Alliston, FAA, the Air Traffic
22 Manager at Atlanta Center.

23 MR. BROWN: So we have this big group because I've never
24 worked at a center. Betty's never worked at a center. You know
25 obviously we brought weather with us, but it's part of our group,

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1 you know. If we have questions, we can go to them.

2 MR. CURRIER: Sure.

3 MR. BROWN: So what to expect today. This is your building,
4 well formerly your building since the promotion.

5 MR. CURRIER: Yes.

6 MR. BROWN: Congratulations, maybe.

7 MR. CURRIER: I think so.

8 MR. BROWN: So right, so if we have questions we can always
9 go back to them. This interview, full disclosure, your guys' SRT
10 was awesome. The In brief that we received on Tuesday morning was
11 excellent. Usually a lot of the things that we need to ask was
12 already covered just in that brief alone, right. So probably not
13 a whole lot. I don't foresee this going longer than 45 minutes to
14 an hour.

15 The same thing, though, any time you want to get up, take a
16 break, confer with counsel, by all means just ask. For the rest
17 of us, though, so we keep our cell phones off. We might not have
18 full eye contact with you because we're taking notes --

19 MR. CURRIER: Sure.

20 MR. BROWN: -- and that's just part of that, part of the
21 thing. Do you have any questions before we begin?

22 MR. CURRIER: I do not.

23 MR. BROWN: Okay.

24 INTERVIEW OF ADAM CURRIER

25 BY MR. BROWN:

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1 Q. So the first part I'll start, I'll kick it off. It's just
2 formal background kind of information. So well, I guess we'll
3 start with this, since you're no longer a part of ZBW, on what day
4 did your AGM promotion become effective?

5 A. Technically it became effective on February 25th.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. However --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- because of this NTSB launch, I stayed the week of the 25th
10 in my capacity as Executive Officer while the ATM, Ms. Park, was
11 on annual leave.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. The last week. So I was in Boston Center still acting as
14 Executive Officer, for the week of the 25th and then I finally
15 transitioned out of that role this past Sunday, March 3rd.

16 Q. Okay. And that's AGM for --

17 A. New York District.

18 Q. New York, okay. So you won't be -- this won't be one of the
19 facilities under your umbrella?

20 A. It will not.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. At least for the next six months. I'm on a 180-day detail.

23 Q. Ah, the test drive.

24 A. Hopefully coming back.

25 Q. Got you. Okay. So February 10th, the date of the accident,

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1 how old were you?

2 A. I was 38.

3 Q. And what are your operating initials?

4 A. November, Delta.

5 Q. Prior to your employment with the FAA, did you have prior ATC
6 experience?

7 A. No. I was a graduate of CTI school.

8 Q. Was it North Dakota?

9 A. Yes. You picked it by the initials.

10 Q. How did I guess?

11 A. AC was taken so I had to revert to those.

12 Q. Got you. Got you. So this is going to be outside of, a
13 question for outside of your day-to-day duties as an XO, but did
14 you hold any collateral duties or were you on any details that
15 took you out of the facility in the last six months?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. So this question is your ATC or aviation background,
18 did you have a pilot's license? Why did you want to go to North
19 Dakota? What was your interest in aviation, I guess.

20 A. Yes. So I earned my pilot's certificate when I was in high
21 school. I graduated high school in 2003. And then from there
22 pursued a career in aviation. My intention was to be a pilot.
23 However, when I graduated in 2003 that was two years after 9/11 so
24 there were no hiring of pilots. So I decided to switch gears and
25 see what else I could do and air traffic looked like a pretty

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1 exciting opportunity. So from there, looked at CTI schools and
2 that route.

3 Q. Got you. You went the right way.

4 A. Get to be home every night. Sorry.

5 Q. So have you ever been fired, terminated, suspended or asked
6 to resign from any ATC position?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. You don't need to carry a Class II. You don't
9 maintain currency on any positions do you, correct?

10 A. Right.

11 Q. So we can skip most of this. Did you file an ATSAP regarding
12 the event?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Prior to -- this is going to be a weird question, as
15 Executive Officer, prior to today, not including this interview
16 and the FAA's interview, were you interviewed about the event?

17 A. I was -- well, I mean, I was on the SRT. That's the extent
18 of any interviews.

19 Q. Okay. Were you the highest management official from the
20 facility on the SRT?

21 A. No. The ATM, Tarah Park.

22 Q. Okay. Do you know when the first time you saw the replay of
23 the event?

24 A. About 5:30 p.m. that evening on February 10th.

25 Q. Audio and video?

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. So later that, so two hours after the event basically?

3 A. Roughly.

4 Q. And for the record, you were not in the building at the time?

5 A. Not at the time.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I arrived at the building again about 5:30 that evening.

8 Q. Okay. Yeah, it was a Saturday.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Yeah, that makes sense. So reference the event itself, can
11 you walk me through how you were notified and then the actions
12 that you took --

13 A. Sure.

14 Q. -- just as, in the XO capacity --

15 A. Sure.

16 Q. -- that evening?

17 A. So as you stated, it was a Saturday, so it was my day off. I
18 was notified by the OM, the OMIC at the time of the event, Tim
19 Karavas. He had called me at approximately, it was like ten past
20 four, 4:15 p.m. roughly, about 30 minutes after the event had
21 happened.

22 Our standard of upward reporting in Boston Center is any
23 events that need to get elevated, it would come through the XO and
24 then on to the ATM into the District. So that process was
25 followed precisely. Once I was notified, I then notified the

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1 District, the AGM Ed Angel, as well as the ATM, Tarah Park, very
2 shortly after.

3 And then from there the initial information I had made me
4 realize that this had a very high likelihood of becoming SRT. So
5 then I had another phone conversation with Ms. Park and we both
6 made a decision to come to the facility to start gathering data
7 for that process.

8 Q. Do you know about what time you made it back to the facility
9 that day?

10 A. Shortly before 5:30 p.m.

11 Q. Okay. So you notified, just for clarification.

12 A. Sure.

13 Q. The OM notifies you.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And then you notify the ATM? And the District

16 A. The ATM and the AGM. So typically --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- in Boston Center, and every district is kind of different,
19 for reporting, but for Boston Center and I -- I've been the XO for
20 two years now. Prior to that we did not have an XO, but with the
21 current XO position, the XO is notified and then the XO notifies
22 the District and includes the ATM on all the communications, so I
23 notified the ATM and the AGM the same time.

1 Q. Perfect. Thank you. So like I said earlier, with the, with
2 the SRT that was completed and then the pre-brief, I don't have a
3 whole lot of questions as far as you.

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. A lot of it was answered. Once again, thanks for that SRT.
6 Thanks for that briefing Monday morning. I'm actually going to
7 pass it now to Jason, if he has any questions.

8 BY MR. ALLISTON:

9 Q. I don't have a whole lot for you, really. The main question
10 I have is as far as your sector staffing and sectorization.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What changes have you seen or implemented as a result of the
13 event?

14 A. So I appreciate the question. After the event, again it was
15 a Saturday, so through the weekend, I knew that there was going to
16 be action required, just from reviewing the Falcon replay when I
17 first got back to the facility, hearing the audio, seeing the
18 replay of what actually occurred.

19 And I had a conversation with the NATCA PFR that evening,
20 Kevin Coeyman, who also came in to the facility as well, prior to
21 the SRT which was around 9:00 p.m. He and I had had just a
22 conversation and again just expressing an opinion to him, I told
23 him that, hey my own personal opinion is that after hearing the
24 tapes, seeing the replay, there's going to be changes needed.

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1 And there's going to be changes driven by outside entities.
2 Line of business. There's going to be some fall out. And there
3 was obviously. You all are here. So once February 10th occurred
4 and through the weekend, I had thought about what kind of actions,
5 you know, how I would address our team on Monday when I come back
6 to work, about what would need to do differently.

7 From there I put together some ideas of expectations that I
8 would have liked to see in my capacity as Executive Officer. I
9 discussed those with the ATM. From there, the ATM and myself, on
10 February 13th, so that following Tuesday, the ATM and myself met
11 with NATCA, the PFR Kevin Coeyman, and the Vice President, Dustin
12 Frost and we developed a collaborative document that was sent out
13 as mandatory briefing item, titled "Weather Dissemination and
14 Resource Management."

15 From there, we outlined expectations. And then once that was
16 dropped in the facility for all personnel, we then had our OM
17 team, the Operation Management team, give a face-to-face verbal
18 briefings to every CIC and supervisor regarding these new
19 expectations. These new expectations basically outline the quote,
20 staffing to safety initiative, that has been given to us from the
21 Director's office.

22 That has been mentioned a few times in service area calls
23 what that actually is. It's not actually defined, so we
24 collaboratively, with NATCA, developed this briefing to give some,

1 some basic guidance to our controllers in charge and supervisors,
2 how we expect you to run the operation.

3 Basic things such as utilizing the TSDs, the Traffic
4 Situational Displays in the areas. To those with center
5 experience, you understand what those are. Basically it shows our
6 sectors and they're color-coded. Green means generally the
7 workload should be handled for what is the current staffing.
8 Yellow means that there is additional proposals of flights where,
9 if those proposals become active, the sector could get overloaded.
10 And red means now we've exceeded the number of airplanes that
11 we've collaboratively determined are acceptable for that sector.

12 It's a very basic tool. There's more to it than that. But
13 on a basic level, our initiative said, make the red go away. If
14 you are running your aisle and your sectors are showing red, I
15 want that gone. I want them green. That means you need more
16 people in the aisle. Second you split if they're combined.

17 When resources aren't available to split for the sectors,
18 consult the OMIC. In such cases where resource management
19 expectations are not being met, performance feedback will be
20 provided, the OSIC and CIC which is the supervisor in charge or
21 the controller in charge. From there we also have language in the
22 SOP which has been the current in SOP for quite some time, that
23 again, does not provide specifics about how many numbers of
24 positions need to be open at different times of day. But it does

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1 have language that says we need to maximalize resources to provide
2 safety to the NAS.

3 And from there, once we initiated that new set of
4 expectations, we've seen a start to a change in the culture of how
5 our areas were staffed. We have more personnel on position. More
6 often sectors are split out. More often we have our radar search
7 positions or D-Sides I referred to staffed. D-Sides are a great
8 tool to support. We don't have them in the terminal environment
9 but in the Center environment, we do, where it's another
10 controller that's certified, that can sit at that sector to assist
11 the controller working radar talking to planes. They are there to
12 put in a PIREPS into our ERIDS system. Actually at the Center
13 there, they are there to assist with reroutes or with our flight
14 phone issues or to coordinate with other sectors with management
15 with TMU. They're an extra set of eyes to make sure that sector's
16 safe. So we're doing more of that again to have more resources in
17 the area to provide that safe NAS.

18 Q. All right. That's a very thorough answer.

19 A. Thank you.

20 Q. Have you had any additional conversations reference, so
21 specifically the TSD? You know getting rid of those red sectors
22 is a great first step. But as far as the additional complexity
23 factors that can be present in a green sector --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- and what the staffing needs are to running that?

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1 A. Yes. So we've, prior to this event, last summer we had done
2 a lot of work internally, working with the operational areas and
3 the traffic management units regarding reducing our MAP values, so
4 our Monitor Alert Parameters.

5 So again, those are those values that the TSD uses to
6 determine whether a sector is green, yellow or red. Now we can
7 dynamically adjust those. We have a process for that. Boston
8 Center last year, prior to the summer starting, we really started
9 leaning in on that tool and utilizing it more and more where in
10 the past we really hadn't. So what that does is we have, again,
11 collaboratively discussed with NATCA, of how we can have a process
12 that identifies when and if we need we need to lower our MAP
13 values, which will change those values shown it to us on our TSDs.

14 We also acknowledged that now as part of our briefing to the
15 workforce was that on a basic level, you know, and I'm just, you
16 know, as the XO trying to brief the entire workforce of how we
17 need to improve. You know, step one, this is like kindergarten
18 level stuff, make the red go away. Like something that's easy,
19 it's tangible and you can very easily latch onto that. Hey,
20 that's a red sector. No more. Let's split it.

21 But again, there's so much more to that of, you know, we can
22 have green sectors that are overloaded. The night of February
23 10th, all our sectors were green. But as I briefed on the SRT to
24 the Director's office to the Senior Advisor, Dave Leslie, when he
25 asked me the question, told him that those three sectors, in my

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1 opinion, should have been split. You should have split 22 from 23
2 and 24. We should have had a D-Side. We had deviations in sector
3 22. We had severe turbulence in sector 24. We should have split
4 to have a safer environment with more resources in there.

5 But again, those were green sectors. So there's more
6 conversations that need to occur with the areas and that's what
7 we've been focusing on for the last year of having areas engage
8 with the traffic management units and the OMIC. It's a three-way
9 conversation of identifying when sectors need help and making sure
10 that our MAP values are adjusted that can show, hey, this sector
11 needs attention.

12 Q. How is the reception throughout the workforce?

13 A. From the management team? Good. From the bargaining unit?
14 Questionable. I have an email that was provided to me from the
15 NATCA PFR, sent on February 29th, a little over two weeks after
16 the event occurred, where basically, the PFR of the facility is
17 emailing the workforce regarding the quote, so-called staffing to
18 safety campaign.

19 That email details information where a NATCA PFR has given
20 instructions to the CICs that if you are a CIC, and ordered by the
21 OMIC to open a position but you believe it's not needed to ensure
22 the safety of the NAS, follow the order and note on the recorded
23 line that you were being ordered to do so and any objection you
24 may have and why. We know this can be frustrating but we will
25 prevail. We will continue to challenge the Agency to staff as

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1 needed to support our controllers, not to staff to make the Agency
2 look good. So that's concerning.

3 I have had many conversations with NATCA leadership in Boston
4 Center these last two weeks. There were many, many occurrences
5 where I would discuss with the NATCA VP, Dustin Frost, who was
6 covering for Mr. Coeyman last week while I was covering for Ms.
7 Park. And many of those conversations led to literally walking up
8 to a CRUART station and saying, okay, let's look at our CRUART
9 right now. Example, Area E, that's where I came from as a
10 supervisor. That's where Mr. Frost is currently a controller.
11 You know, some examples were Area E had 12 CPCs on duty that day.
12 No one wants to take leave. It's the middle of February. I get
13 it. They're all here. But at certain points we would have -- it
14 was like six and seven personnel on break, like five or six
15 personnel on position. And my response to Dustin was what I was
16 seeing here is a change from what we've been doing before. We are
17 following these expectations and we are now meeting them.

18 I am not asking you to staff every available controller on
19 position. I am not asking you to run two hours on position and
20 reduce breaks to three minutes. I am absolutely not asking you to
21 do that. And it's clear here we are not doing that. But we are
22 providing resources that are appropriate to maximize safety for
23 the NAS in accordance with the SOP.

24 So there's that fine line there of can what we were doing
25 without providing hard line expectations of that shalt do this. I

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1 think we're getting there but even it's the frustration the
2 management team has is the pushback that we're getting. But we're
3 getting there.

4 Q. Do you see facility staffing as a contributory factor to this
5 being a difficult conversation?

6 A. So facility staffing nationwide is certainly an issue.
7 Boston Center is one of the best staffed centers in the country or
8 so I'm told over and over again, by those above me every time we
9 ask for more supervisors and more personnel. In the bargaining
10 units eyes, yes, that is certainly an issue for them, from the top
11 down. From the leadership, from Mr. Santa all the way down to
12 facilities. I had a conversation with a manager last week at our
13 morning standup.

14 And during that conversation the Area A CIC at the time, an
15 uninvolved employee, came up to alert the OMIC that they've just
16 taken a sick leave, another sick leave from the night shift. And
17 on her own she announced to all the managers and Controllers in
18 Charge that the area is fatigued. Okay? What does that mean when
19 you have three personnel on position and six personnel on break?
20 Does that mean you're fatigued from working overtime? My personal
21 -- it certainly can't be because you're fatigued from working your
22 daily shifts because your time on position is less than four
23 hours. So that's an interesting conversation to have.

24 And not everyone shares that same opinion for sure, but I've
25 had many very productive conversations with members of leadership

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1 at the NATCA facility but it's an interesting take when you hear
2 that from controllers in charge.

3 Q. All right. And we know, because this event occurred in
4 February, you guys have some pretty significant seasonality with
5 respect to leave. But also with traffic.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So we see what the staffing was for this specific event, but
8 can you give me just kind of a ballpark of what the contrasts
9 would be during the summer season?

10 A. Sure. So in a typical summer evening shift, the evenings
11 always for us busier. Boston Center is in a unique position,
12 being the neighbor to New York Center. So you compound severe
13 weather as it moves through and also what other challenges the New
14 York District has had. Boston Center area A is one of those
15 areas. We have what's called SWAP, so Severe Weather Avoidance
16 Programs. When those are in effect, when New York is in a SWAP,
17 then we will take the majority of their traffic up through Boston
18 Center to head out west into Cleveland Center, to get out to the
19 rest of the country. Just because of the geographic location
20 where we are, we're stuck in that northeast corner.

21 So if the weather is impacting New York, the only way out of
22 town is to come to the Boston Center up and over and get out.
23 When those events are occurring, Area A is taking a significant
24 increase in traffic, both traffic departures coming out of New
25 York, arrivals coming into New York. We'll do those offloads

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1 quite often. United is a huge part of those offloads that we get.
2 When that's in effect, we will typically have in Area A at least
3 four radars open. Typically at least one D-Side, sometimes more.
4 So I would say during a typical weather evening in the summer,
5 Area A would have five to six positions open, compared to the
6 three that we had back on February 10th.

7 MR. ALLISTON: All right. Mike, I think that's all I've got.

8 MR. BROWN: Ryan.

9 MR. HURLING: I've got no questions and I'm going to defer to
10 Kevin to speak.

11 MR. BROWN: Okay. Kevin?

12 MR. COON: Honestly, the document you provided the first day,
13 the questions you answered from Jason, I don't have anything to
14 add.

15 MR. BROWN: Karena.

16 MS. MARINAS: Sure. Thank you.

17 BY MS. MARINAS:

18 Q. So you were talking a little bit earlier about the SOP
19 language from managing resources and how you've started to see a
20 culture change in how the sectors are staffed?

21 A. Sure.

22 Q. Do you think that that's the CICs in conjunction with the
23 FLMs or are you talking or OSs -- sorry. Are you talking just OSs
24 there? What do you think? Do you think it's kind of across the
25 board?

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1 A. I would say it's across the board. When we had, so that when
2 the NBI went out, we then had follow face-to-face briefings where
3 the OMICs were, were conducting all those briefings. I was
4 present for not all of them, for sure, but quite a few of them.
5 So actually my role was to make sure that the message coming from
6 the OMICS to our CICs and supervisors was the same message that I
7 was discussing with NATCA leadership, which is always so important
8 to make sure that things discussed here, you know, filter down
9 appropriately and that same message is being given.

10 I would say overwhelmingly the vast majority of CICs and
11 supervisors understand what we're trying to do. And again, that
12 that's shown in the shift that we've seen these last two weeks. I
13 think the majority of the workforce gets it. They understand why
14 we're here. They understand what we're doing.

15 But again that goes back to it's so important that the
16 messaging of, you know, not management just that's saying, you
17 shall do this but again, a collaborative effort, the agency and
18 NATCA together, pushing forward the message to the workforces
19 saying, hey, these are some good things that we should be doing.
20 And if we have the resources available, let's make sure they're
21 right there where they should be.

22 Q. Okay. So when you went home that weekend and brainstormed
23 ideas and came back with your ideas about the resource management
24 piece --

25 A. Sure.

1 Q. -- did you talk to the controllers involved in this situation
2 and or the SUP at all, you know, in helping develop that plan?

3 Or --

4 A. Not to develop the plan. The only conversations I had with
5 the involved personnel was the night of the SRT, in a pure fact-
6 finding position. I was the one that created the CPEC, which
7 generated the SRT checklist. So my role at that time was only to
8 speak to them, to hey, you know, what did you see? What did you
9 do? Only to provide information. I did not have any
10 conversations with them at that level regarding what they thought.

11 Q. And was, who did you have conversations with?

12 A. So Kevin Coeyman, the NATCA PFR for ZBW and Dustin Frost, the
13 NATCA VP.

14 Q. Okay. So nobody actually in the area that had worked?

15 A. MR. WADE: Sorry, just to clarify, are you talking about in
16 developing the recommendations?

17 Q. And, well, I kind of wanted to know from the SRT who you've
18 talked to and -- but I'm, you've kind of answered that. But more
19 in that question I was looking for in developing the plan --

20 A. MR. WADE: Okay.

21 Q. -- to fix the problem by yourself.

22 A. Yes. So in my role as Executive Officer, I do not engage
23 with a BUE of the area or an OS back, kind of get into formal
24 discussions where my level would be appropriate to what I did,

1 which was to talk with the PFR and the VP and from there, we
2 developed these expectations together.

3 Q. Okay. And so your expectations were developed based on what,
4 then?

5 A. On our discussions.

6 Q. What were your discussions? Specifically like what, I guess,
7 what led you to decide that the resource management piece was the
8 problem?

9 A. So the initial step of that was when the SRT told us it is a
10 problem. They color-coded us as yellow with district and QCG
11 follow-up. And they annotated that the reason why was because
12 resource management was an issue. From there, as to what the SRT
13 and SSR was done, it was also identified resource management as an
14 issue. So having those two things, we then moved forward. We
15 also agreed that resource management is an issue. How can we
16 address this?

17 Q. And so that, so based on what you saw from the recording and
18 what the SRT told you, is that why you thought 22, 23, 24 should
19 have been split?

20 A. Yes. So for that specific event, after I was able to view
21 the recording, yes.

22 MS. MARINAS: Okay. That's it for me for now.

23 MR. BROWN: Okay. Betty?

24 MS. KOSCHIG: I only have one question but I know you're
25 going to ask it so I'll pass.

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1 MR. BROWN: Okay. Paul.

2 MR. SUFFERN: Yes.

3 BY MR. SUFFERN:

4 Q. So just a couple of questions. And again, appreciate your,
5 your time.

6 A. Sure.

7 Q. The first one is just related to the PIREPS in the SOP that
8 changed for ZBW. I saw that it went from -- the SOP changed from
9 a controller must forward all PIREPS to controller must relay all
10 operationally pertinent or significant PIREPS.

11 A. Sure.

12 Q. For you as XO, what is an operationally pertinent PIREP?

13 A. So there are requirements where personnel need to forward
14 PIREPS to be disseminated. Controllers have their SIAs or Status
15 Information Areas where they would keep a log of PIREPS that are
16 coming in. For this particular event, I would have expected that
17 the moderate turbulence by Air Canada 548 and the severely
18 moderate turbulence reported by United 1890 would have been
19 disseminated.

20 Q. But just in general, not specific to this event, but in
21 general, what would you count as an operationally pertinent PIREP?

22 A. Anything that's affecting, you know, the aircraft's ability,
23 you know, in flight through a sector. If there's anything causing
24 deviations, significant impact. Anything of that nature should
25 be, I would expect to be forwarded.

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1 Q. Okay. And then in your position as XO, are there any
2 weather-related tools that you have seen that could have, that
3 could help the workforce or the workforce must come to you and
4 request that I wish that we had that weather, that weather tool in
5 the area or in the facility or anything like that?

6 A. No requests have come to me requesting additional equipment.
7 I don't believe there's any other tool that we don't already use
8 on a daily basis that would have provided more assistance.

9 MR. SUFFERN: That's all the questions I have. Thank you.

10 MR. BROWN: Any follow-ups? Karena?

11 BY MS. MARINAS:

12 Q. So you said a little bit ago you're providing, that you guys
13 are now providing staffing according to the SOP? What -- I didn't
14 see in the SOP what it said about staffing. Can you tell what it
15 says there or what your expectations are according to the SOP?

16 A. Yes. So again the SOP does not give concrete numbers of, you
17 know, between these hours we will staff this. There's language
18 that says that we'll maximize resources to the extent as possible.

19 Q. Okay. When you were a controller, I'm assuming you were a
20 controller in this facility?

21 A. I was not. I came as a supervisor.

22 Q. Oh, where were you a controller before?

23 A. Manchester Tower.

24 Q. Okay. So not in a -- not in a center?

25 A. I was never a BUE at Boston Center, no.

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1 Q. Okay. All right. So I've never worked tower. So you can
2 tell me if this happens. If you're working in the tower and
3 things get a little bit, you know, traffic's kind of normal,
4 manageable, whatever, things get a little bit extra complex.
5 Maybe you have a couple of extra duties, a couple more people call
6 for, for something in a short amount of time. Do you ever have
7 an, did you ever have an occasion to like ask for an assist for a
8 short period? Or just grab somebody and say, hey, do this for me
9 real quick?

10 A. Sure.

11 Q. And then, and then kind of, you know, you're good now.
12 You've got things cleaned up and then they go on their way?

13 A. Yes. There are certainly times where if I needed help I
14 would ask someone else who was there at the time to assist me.

15 Q. Yes. Do you think that's a good practice for controllers to
16 be able to do without having to go to the supervisor first, ask,
17 and then, you know, get the help or whatever, if they can just
18 grab somebody real quick that's available?

19 A. Yes. And so I appreciate the fact that the initial R-24
20 controller asked for help, absolutely. As I said on the SRT, on
21 the 10th, you know, I also have a significant concern about the
22 oversight that was maintained by the supervisor at the time. The
23 supervisor or controller in charge, whoever had oversight at the
24 time, should have, to the best extent practical, an awareness of
25 what's going on.

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1 If there's oversight present, and as we always do in Boston
2 Center, I would expect that the controller would ask the
3 supervisor or controller in charge for assistance. You get that
4 all the time. You know, hey, can I get a D-Side or hey, can you
5 sit down with me real quick?. I respect that. I don't know the
6 actual circumstances at that time as to why the controller didn't
7 just ask the supervisor and instead, just asked the other CPC to
8 sit down at the radar associate position.

9 I'm not aware why that dynamic occurred the way it did. But
10 I always applaud anyone that can recognize that I need help and
11 any resources that can help them. I appreciate their efforts.
12 I'd rather that than them trying to work through it on their own,
13 causing an unsafe situation.

14 Q. And do you, as the XO, are you involved in the SSR at all?
15 Are you able to ask questions of, you know, in interviews, any of
16 that stuff to get any of that information?

17 A. No. So the SSR was briefed to me and Mr. Coeyman, that was
18 briefed last week. But I was not involved in the SSR process.

19 Q. Okay. If you're briefed in the SSR are you able to ask
20 questions like that so you get a better understanding of the
21 situation?

22 A. Yes.

23 MS. MARINAS: Okay. I have no more questions. Thank you.

24 MR. BROWN: Follow-ups anyone? Just a couple.

25 BY MR. BROWN:

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1 Q. What's a NATCA PFR?

2 A. Principal facility representative.

3 Q. Is that a center thing? Why have I never heard that?

4 MS. MARINAS: That's the real name for the FACREP.

5 MR. BROWN: The official title, okay.

6 BY MR. BROWN:

7 Q. So obviously you're, you're moving facilities. However,
8 hypothetical opinion-based.

9 A. Sure.

10 Q. If you were still going to be the XO in this building, is
11 there any, it could be resources, it could be equipment. Is there
12 anything strictly from an XO point of view, that you wish you had,
13 that you wish you knew -- I'm not saying -- it could even be a
14 real thing. Anything to make, help your job be easier?

15 A. Nothing that I don't think we're already doing. Again, an
16 initiative that we collaboratively developed three days after the
17 event, is I think, it's helping. I think we're getting resources
18 balancing the needs of, you know, of supporting the NAS and
19 supporting our people at the same time.

20 That's important where we're not, you know, putting out
21 mandates for staffing expectations but, you know, we're having
22 discussions knowing that the agency and NATCA need to work
23 together to find solutions to move facilities forward, to prevent
24 these events from occurring again. I think we are on our way of
25 doing that, especially in these last two weeks since the event,

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1 while I was still in the capacity of Boston Center. But I am
2 hopeful that's going to continue but I think we're starting to
3 move that needle in the right direction.

4 MR. BROWN. Okay. Anyone else? All right. It is 8:53. I'm
5 shutting off the recording.

6 (Whereupon, at 8:53 a.m., the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

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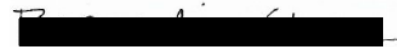
UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Andrew Currier

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 8, 2024

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
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Rosemarie Clune
Transcriber

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UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *

KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *

Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *

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Interview of: KEVIN CURTISS, Relieving R24 Controller
Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Wednesday,
March 6, 2024

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

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

SETH MEYERS, Representative
(On behalf of Mr. Curtiss)

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:03 p.m.)

MR. BROWN: All right. It's 12:03 p.m. I started the recorder. So good afternoon again. My name is Mike Brown, air traffic control investigator with the NTSB. Can you please state your name?

MR. CURTISS: Kevin Anthony Curtiss.

MR. BROWN: All right. Thank you, Kevin. Thanks for coming in today. Really appreciate that. So with the recording, just background on that. The only person that will physically hold the audio recording is myself and Betty. It doesn't leave our possession.

How it works is when we're done with all the interviews here, we send it to Free State. It's a court transcription agency. They'll transcribe the tapes for us on a Word document. We'll get them back. We'll proofread them. Any changes we need grammatically, we use a lot of acronyms. We'll change those. We send them out to the group, and the group reviews them. Says they're good to go.

If you would like a copy when we're done with that, we can send you -- email you a copy if you'd like one. Would you like one?

MR. CURTISS: Yes, please.

MR. BROWN: Can I get your email address real quick?

MR. CURTISS: Yes, [REDACTED]

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1 MR. BROWN: Yep.

2 MR. CURTISS: [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

4 MR. BROWN: [REDACTED]. Okay. That'll take one to two months
5 tops.

6 MR. CURTISS: Okay.

7 MR. BROWN: You should see it, and when you do receive it,
8 you feel free to make any changes, anything you want and email it
9 back to me. If I don't hear back from you, and I'll put it in the
10 body of the email, if I don't hear back from you, then I'm
11 assuming it's good. Okay.

12 MR. CURTISS: Yes.

13 MR. BROWN: That will -- so the audio recording is transitory
14 evidence that will not be released to any -- like you won't hear
15 yourself on the news.

16 MR. CURTISS: Okay.

17 MR. BROWN: However, the transcript, when that gets put into
18 the official document, that is public.

19 MR. CURTISS: Right.

20 MR. BROWN: So that will be put into the into the final
21 report. Just so that you're aware that. I see that you have a
22 representative today and this is Seth, who we know.

23 MR. CURTISS: Mm-hm.

24 MR. BROWN: And you've chosen to have your representative
25 today. During the time of the interview, at any time, you need to

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1 confer with Seth, if you need to take a break for any reason, to
2 step outside. Just let us know. It's not a -- you're not being
3 interrogated, so it's more of a conversation. Right.

4 He can't answer questions for you, obviously. So if we ask a
5 question, if you need clarification, ask us. If you're not sure
6 of the question, ask us, we can repeat it, we can rephrase it.
7 There is no set script that we have to ask you certain things. Do
8 you have any questions so far on any of this?

9 MR. CURTISS: No.

10 MR. BROWN: Okay. So I'm going to go around the room now and
11 have everybody in the group say who they are and where they're
12 from, so Paul.

13 MR. SUFFERN: Sure. So I'm Paul Suffern. I'm a
14 meteorologist investigator with the NTSB.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: Hi. I'm Betty Koschig, and I'm an air traffic
16 control specialist investigator at the NTSB.

17 MS. MARINAS: You know me, Karena Marinas. Today I'm here as
18 the air safety investigator for NATCA.

19 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, United Airlines, Air Traffic
20 Strategies, Western Region, and I'm a retired FAA at various
21 facilities.

22 MR. HURLING: Ryan Hurling, senior flight safety investigator
23 at United Airlines. I'm the party coordinator and lead
24 investigator from the company side at United.

25 MR. ALLISTON: And I'm Jason Alliston. I'm the FAA SME. I'm

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1 the air traffic manager at Atlanta Center.

2 MR. BROWN: Seth.

3 MR. MYERS: Seth Myers, Rep for Kevin.

4 MR. BROWN: Okay. So the reason why this group is so big is
5 because I've never worked in a center, Betty has never worked in a
6 center. Weather specialist and then we have a party system with
7 the FAA, with NATCA, and with the airlines. Just to get the full
8 spectrum of everything we're -- we need to look at for the event.

9 Who are we and what do we do? So I'm assuming you never had
10 an NTSB interview before.

11 MR. CURTISS: I have not.

12 MR. BROWN: Okay. So we are an independent federal agency.
13 We don't fall under the DOT. We report directly to Congress, and
14 we investigate all general aviation accidents. Okay. The purpose
15 of the investigation, we don't assign fault. We don't assign
16 blame. We gather information and put it into a factual document
17 and the power that we have is to make safety recommendations to
18 prevent that from ever happening again.

19 So that's our whole purpose in life for these investigations.
20 So with that being said, just answer truthfully. Answer honestly.
21 If you don't know, if you can't recall, it's Okay to say I don't
22 know or I don't recall. Factual information is more important
23 than you guessing, like, well, I think this happened or I probably
24 did this. If you don't know, it's okay to say you don't know.

25 How we work our interviews is I'll start with just some basic

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1 admin, and then walk through the event. And then we do a round
2 robin, one person at a time around the room to ask you if they
3 have any follow up questions. Anything that we, we put into the
4 docket though, it is public. Just want to make sure that you are
5 aware of that.

6 It should take an hour to an hour and 15 minutes total. Like
7 I said, if you need a break, you talk to Seth, by all means let us
8 know. With that being said, any questions before we start?

9 MR. CURTISS: No.

10 MR. BROWN: Okay.

11 INTERVIEW OF KEVIN CURTISS

12 BY MR. BROWN:

13 Q. So the first part is just general questions I'm going to ask
14 you. Pretty basic in nature. Prior to, I'm sorry on -- so the
15 event happened February 10th. How old were you on February 10th?

16 A. 44 years old.

17 Q. 44, okay. Sometimes you have a birthday in between or
18 whatever. Operating initials?

19 A. Hotel Kilo.

20 Q. H-K. And you are a certified CPC at Boston Center. Correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. Prior to your FAA experience, do you have any ATC
23 part? Where you DoD, military?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And what you have before you were in the FAA?

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1 A. I had four years of active duty Air Force.

2 Q. Nice.

3 A. I did 11 months for Midwest ATC.

4 Q. So four years --

5 A. And --

6 Q. -- Air Force. And then when you got out, Midwest?

7 A. My terminal leave began, you're asking me to go 20 years
8 back, my terminal -- yeah. My terminal leave began in the summer
9 of 2006. I took on a contract with Midwest ATC in the summer of
10 2006. That contract ended in the summer of 2007. I -- and again
11 20 years, there's a tentative firm offer situation waiting for
12 Oklahoma City in that time. I enlisted in the New Hampshire Air
13 National Guard as a what the military refers to as a 1C151.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Air traffic control. I never uttered a clearance for the New
16 Hampshire Air National Guard. It's kind of a funny system that
17 they got going on there. And then the rest of the time, I mean,
18 obviously since September of 2007, been with the FAA.

19 Q. Okay. You said you worked for Midwest. What facility was
20 that?

21 A. Bagram, Afghanistan.

22 Q. I was there a few years before that, same story though got
23 out of the Navy, got picked up in '07 and waited 18 months. So I
24 get why you went to Midwest. Do you hold any collateral duties,
25 or do you have -- or have you been on any recent details that

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1 would take you out of the operation in the last year?

2 A. Not that I recall. Or is that --

3 MR. MYERS: The last year, he's going over the last year.

4 MR. CURTISS: Okay. So from October of 2020 until December
5 31st, 2023, I was Boston Centers area A NATCA representative.

6 BY MR. BROWN:

7 Q. What were the days again? I'm sorry.

8 A. October 2020. Can't recall what specific date.

9 Q. The month is fine.

10 A. Until, yeah, December 31st of last year.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. October 2020, December 31st, 2023.

13 MR. MYERS: And then your other collateral duty is?

14 MR. CURTISS: Yeah, sorry. And I am the current New England
15 OWCP rep.

16 BY MR. BROWN:

17 Q. And just for the record, what's OWCP stand for?

18 A. Office of Workmen's Compensation Program.

19 Q. Okay. So you said you were Air Force. We're trying to get
20 into your ATC and aviation background, so what made you get into
21 ATC?

22 A. High ASVAB score.

23 Q. Really. But no interest part? You didn't join the Air Force
24 specifically to -- because that's what you wanted to do or --

25 A. I joined the Air Force for a opportunity and a career. I

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1 remember scoring high enough on the ASVAB, having conversations
2 with people that were close to me, and the Air Force at the time
3 offered you a chance to go in open general, which did not seem
4 like a good idea to me. Or, or a selected career path, and again
5 through conversations with loved ones and friends at the time, I
6 was like, okay.

7 Q. So that's why you selected ATC. That was just talking to --

8 A. It as a --

9 Q. -- when you got out --

10 A. It was something that would be, if you really want to know
11 the story, my recruiter begged me to be an aerial refueler.

12 Right. And I was like, you know, I don't think so, man. You
13 know, like, I went into the military thinking this could be a
14 career, but I need to obtain a skill that I can do on the outside.

15 Q. Absolutely. Okay. Good. Have you ever been fired,
16 terminated, suspended, or asked to resign from any ATC position?

17 A. Not that I recall.

18 Q. Okay. Now we're getting into more -- so this is your medical
19 personal information. Right.

20 A. Mm-hm.

21 Q. So how would you describe your overall health, and that would
22 be from fair, good, excellent, poor.

23 A. Good.

24 Q. Good, okay. On February 10th, did you have a current Class 2
25 physical?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Okay. Do you have -- are there any waivers, eyeglasses,
3 contacts, anything like that?
- 4 A. I take [REDACTED].
- 5 Q. So just the medication then.
- 6 A. Yeah.
- 7 Q. Okay. Alright. No glasses. Right?
- 8 A. No glasses.
- 9 Q. Thank you. Was drug or alcohol screening performed following
10 this event?
- 11 A. Sunday morning. So you said Saturday, this event was
12 Saturday.
- 13 Q. Yep.
- 14 A. So February 10th.
- 15 Q. Yep.
- 16 A. Sunday, February 11th.
- 17 Q. And it was alcohol or drug, or both?
- 18 A. It could have only been drug. It was urinalysis.
- 19 Q. Okay. So it was the next day then.
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. Okay. Any changes in your health during the last year? Gain
22 weight, lost weight, had surgery. Anything -- you don't go into
23 specifics, anything like that?
- 24 A. No significant changes.
- 25 Q. Okay. Following those lines, so any changes in your personal

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1 life during the last year? Got married, got divorced, bought a
2 house, moved.

3 A. Lost my father in November.

4 Q. I'm sorry to hear that. Financial situations during the last
5 year? Good, bad, or indifferent, bankruptcy, won the lottery.
6 Anything -- any changes in your financial situation?

7 A. Indifferent. Normal.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Yeah, no, that's fine.

11 A. Okay.

12 Q. I get that. This next one's kind of rough, because what
13 we'll do is we want to get a snapshot of 72 hours up to the event
14 of what you did.

15 A. Mm-hm.

16 Q. So it was February 10th.

17 A. Mm-hm.

18 Q. We're going to go back to Wednesday, February 7th. So
19 there's a couple different ways we can do this. Whatever is
20 easier for you. We can start on the 10th and go back, or we can
21 start Wednesday the 7th and go up to the date of the event. But
22 I'm looking for like what time you got up, what time you went to
23 bed.

24 A. Right.

25 Q. Did you work, what your shifts were. That kind of thing. So

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1 do you want to try to go from Wednesday to Saturday?

2 A. Sure.

3 Q. Okay. So the 7th, the Wednesday, do you remember if you

4 worked that day?

5 A. I did not work that day.

6 Q. Was it an RDO or leave, do you know?

7 A. Leave.

8 Q. Okay. Annual leave then?

9 A. Sick leave.

10 Q. Sick leave, okay. Do you remember what your normal scheduled

11 shift would have been?

12 A. 1100.

13 Q. Perfect. Do you remember what time you got up that day?

14 A. I do not recall.

15 Q. Okay. And you don't have to get into specifics because it

16 was sick leave, but was it sick leave because you were under the

17 weather or was it family related, or an appointment, or --

18 A. I don't recall.

19 Q. Okay. Do you know what time you went to bed that night?

20 A. I don't recall.

21 Q. Okay. So now Thursday, do you remember what time you got up

22 that morning?

23 A. I don't recall.

24 Q. Okay. Did you work that day?

25 A. I believe I did.

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1 Q. Do you remember about what time, or what shift you would have
2 had?

3 A. I think I switched to a 1300 shift.

4 Q. What would you normally have had? That's an eve shift here,
5 so --

6 A. 1100.

7 Q Okay. So from a swing basically to a 13, that's kind of what
8 you would work.

9 A. An 11 -- an 1100 to a 1300.

10 Q. Okay. That morning, you don't, you don't recall what time
11 you got up. did anything significant happen before you came to
12 work that day. You had kids you have take school, do you take --
13 is it a normal day? Anything out of the ordinary happen in that
14 morning before you came to work?

15 A. Nothing out of the ordinary that I can recall.

16 Q. Okay. So you come to work, you work at 13. Is there --
17 what's your commute like? I should have asked you that before,
18 but do you live close, is it an hour commute?

19 A. No, I live less than five miles away.

20 Q. Everybody says that here. So short commute. So you get off
21 work Thursday night. Do you go home? Do you hang out at the
22 facility, go to the gym?

23 A. I do not hang out at the facility.

24 Q. Okay. When you leave.

25 A. When I leave, I go home, let out my dog.

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1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Be at home.

3 Q. And what time do you normally go to sleep following that

4 shift? What time do you think you went to bed that night?

5 Thursday night.

6 A. Between 10:00 and 11:00, to the best that I could recall.

7 Q. Okay. So now Friday morning, I'm assuming you worked that

8 day. So same thing.

9 A. I didn't work Friday morning.

10 Q. You didn't work Friday. You didn't work Friday at all?

11 A. No. I worked Friday, but I didn't work Friday morning.

12 Q. So what time do you think you got up Friday?

13 A. I don't recall.

14 Q. And do you remember what shift you had?

15 A. I believe a 1200.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. But can't recall for --

18 Q. Nothing out of the ordinary that morning, prior to coming

19 into work.

20 A. As far as out of the ordinary, like just what do you mean by

21 out of the ordinary?

22 Q. Did you get a speeding ticket?

23 A. Oh.

24 Q. Did you get in car accident? You have to watch, you know,

25 kids sick. I don't know your family life. I don't know --

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- 1 A. Oh, okay.
- 2 Q. Just try to paint a broad picture of what your work your day-
- 3 to-day.
- 4 A. Right. Okay. Attended NATCA training prior to work.
- 5 Q. Okay. Do you know what time you went in for that?
- 6 A. 8:00 or 9 o'clock, somewhere maybe.
- 7 Q. Okay. And is that -- that wasn't at the facility, was it?
- 8 A. It was not.
- 9 Q. Okay. So like Zoom or something in the house?
- 10 A. Nope, that was in Manchester, New Hampshire.
- 11 Q. So you finished that up and you came from there to --
- 12 A. To work.
- 13 Q. To work. Okay. So then you worked at noon, so full shift
- 14 that day.
- 15 A. To the best of my recollection, worked the full shift.
- 16 Q. Okay. And then same thing Friday night you went home. Do
- 17 you know what time you went to bed?
- 18 A. I went home, to the best of my recollection, I don't recall
- 19 what time I went to bed.
- 20 Q. Okay. So now we're at Saturday.
- 21 A. Mm-hm.
- 22 Q. February 10th. Do you remember what shift you worked that
- 23 day?
- 24 A. Yes, because I switched from an opener.
- 25 Q. Open.

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1 A. Yeah. I was supposed to be at 0600 and I switched to an
2 1100.

3 Q. To an 11. Okay. Do you remember what time you got up that
4 day?

5 A. I don't recall.

6 Q. Once again, anything out of the ordinary between when you
7 woke up and when you got to work?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Do you know if you worked prior to this day? You said you
10 worked normal shifts, or you swapped. Did you get held over, are
11 any of those overtime? Did you -- were they normal eight hour
12 shifts that you can recall?

13 A. To the best of my recollection, they were all eight hour
14 shifts.

15 Q. Okay. Do you remember if you filed an ATSAP for the event?

16 A. I did.

17 Q. Okay. Do you know if any action was taken by the ERC?

18 A. By the --

19 Q. ERC.

20 A. I do not.

21 Q. Okay. You probably just got the -- we received it. Thanks
22 for --

23 A. I did.

24 Q. -- participating. Okay, so that was it. Okay. Have you
25 been interviewed about this event before now, excluding us and the

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1 FAA folks down the hall?

2 A. That would be -- yes, SSR.

3 Q. Just for the SSR. Okay.

4 MR. MYERS: And your OM or the SUP did. That would be
5 another.

6 MR. CURTISS: A performance discussion, and then the night
7 of.

8 MR. MYERS: Yes.

9 MR. CURTISS: So the day of the incident, conversation with
10 primary facility representative, executive officer, and the OM.

11 BY MR. BROWN:

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Then the SSR with Seth and Brian Howard from QC.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Then a performance discussion with my immediate supervisor,
16 Michael Jacobson, and NATCA representative, Jeff Tamiko.

17 Q. Was that performance discussion the same day as the SSR?

18 A. It was not.

19 Q. I'm just trying to get -- so you did -- that night you talked
20 -- so your rep, XO, and OM was that night you said.

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. And then what did you -- the SSR was the following Saturday?

23 A. Saturday?

24 MR. MYERS: It was performed the following week.

25 MR. BROWN: Following --

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1 MR. MYERS: Yeah, I think Wednesday.

2 MR. BROWN: Oh, okay.

3 MR. CURTISS: It was, it was a weekday.

4 BY MR. BROWN:

5 Q. Okay?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. So you think it was Wednesday that you did the SSR. It
8 doesn't matter. I mean, just trying to timeline it out.

9 MR. MEYERS: We did it all week. So I don't remember when he
10 was in there. You got to catch everybody on their schedules.

11 MR. BROWN: Exactly, right. I get that.

12 BY MR. BROWN:

13 Q. And then performance discussion was before or after the SSR
14 review?

15 A. After the SSR.

16 Q. Okay. Okay. Have you had an opportunity to replay the
17 event?

18 A. Personally or throughout these circumstances?

19 Q. Before today.

20 A. I have seen the event.

21 Q. Okay. Do you remember when it was?

22 A. When I saw it?

23 Q. When you saw the replay?

24 A. During the SSR.

25 Q. Okay.

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1 A. And part of it during the performance discussion.

2 Q. Okay. When you went into the R24 sector that day, so you got
3 out Andre.

4 A. I did.

5 Q. Do you recall if a position relief briefing was conducted?

6 A. It was.

7 Q. Okay. Do you know if -- I know here in the center, your
8 checklists are on the scope. Do you recall if that was utilized?

9 A. I do not recall.

10 Q. Okay. So these are -- there's going to be three separate
11 questions. Just so you know, so you don't overthink it, but just
12 think about the traffic volume at the time of the event, okay. On
13 a scale of one to five, with one being easy and five being the
14 hardest or high volume, what would you rate the traffic during the
15 time of the event?

16 A. One.

17 Q. Okay. And was that normal for that time?

18 A. When you say that time for a Saturday in February, yes.

19 Q. Okay. Same type of question but now with the complexity.
20 How would you classify the complexity on a scale of one to five?

21 A. At the time that I got the position relief briefing, can I
22 use a scale like a little bit of a slide to answer that?

23 Q. Yeah, absolutely.

24 A. I would say that it's, it's like a fluctuating of -- as I'm
25 taking the position --

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1 Q. Mm-hm.

2 A. -- the complexity is, it's like a, it's like a one to three.
3 But I don't know yet.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. It's the best way that I can answer that if you want me to.
6 And it's because of just during the briefing and looking and
7 observing at the radar scope, it was like, what could be going on
8 here?

9 Q. I get it. No, that's completely --

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. -- it's your answer, right?

12 A. I mean I --

13 Q. We're just trying to --

14 A. -- need -- I didn't know if I needed to pick a number.

15 Q. No.

16 A. So I can be verbose.

17 Q. No. We're just try to give you a range. So no, that's fine.
18 And then once again was that, was that complexity normal for that
19 time?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. Why wasn't it?

22 A. I was briefed that an aircraft had had a 90 degree deviation.

23 Q. Okay. Now you're, you're in the sector. You're working a
24 position. Do you recall if there any distractions during your
25 session leading up to the event?

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1 A. I do not recall.

2 Q. Okay. Do you recall the weather conditions leading up to and
3 during the time of the event?

4 A. During that day, I can recall that in the high side, there
5 seemed to be more aircraft that wanted to change altitudes due to
6 rides. Not really aware of how the low sector was going, there
7 was weather depicted, but based on the briefing it -- there were
8 not deviations around, I should say around the weather depicted in
9 the 24 position.

10 Q. Mm-hm.

11 A. But there was in the Albany part of the position that was
12 combined.

13 Q. Okay. That day, do you recall if you had to -- did you do
14 your pre-duty weather briefing?

15 A. I did.

16 Q. Okay. Completely, opinion, response. What -- do you get
17 value out of the preview -- do you get a value out of the pre-duty
18 weather briefing.

19 A. I do not.

20 Q. No value. That's answered a lot. Okay. Based on that
21 though, if you, if you could change it, what would you like? Once
22 again, opinion based, no right or wrong answer.

23 A. Sure. I'm a big fan of the way that the Air Force did
24 things. You had to show up 15 minutes prior to your shift and you
25 got a briefing about what was going on, as opposed to coming in in

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1 the morning for an opener shift at 5:30 and hearing a weather
2 briefing that was recorded at 8:45 p.m. the following day -- the
3 prior, the prior day. And that, when I say that that brief
4 weather was part of it, I mean this is -- I came from a facility
5 where the pre-work briefing was like sacred. You didn't miss it,
6 and you didn't even make a peep during it.

7 Q. Okay. That's good feedback. So you get your weather brief.
8 During the time of the event or in the area, did you have a cell
9 phone or PED on your person?

10 A. I do not recall. Hold on a second. Like I, I always leave
11 my phone in the office, but it's like it's one of those things
12 where, like, did I forget it. But I do not recall having a cell
13 phone. My normal practice is to leave my cell phone in the NATCA
14 office.

15 Q. Okay. Well, the next question is, were you using it during
16 the event?

17 A. No. No.

18 Q. Yeah, yeah. No, you don't need to overthink those.

19 A. Okay. I mean I like because as a NATCA rep and how you
20 engage with members, you're like look, if you're five minutes late
21 to work, I can have a conversation with the manager. If you have
22 a cell phone in the operation, I cannot.

23 Q. Correct. No, I get it. So now back to a little bit more
24 about the event. So you sit down, at any point during the time
25 leading up to or at the time of the event, did you request any

1 assistance or relief? So did you request a D-side, a sector
2 split?

3 A. I did not.

4 Q. Okay. Did you notify the OS about the event?

5 A. About the United having encountering --

6 Q. Correct.

7 A. I --

8 Q. I'm sorry, yeah, United 1890s turbulence.

9 A. I was advised of the event.

10 Q. Okay. And we'll get to that as we talk about the event.

11 A. Mm-hm.

12 Q. So now, Kevin, what I'd like to do is, so you worked that day
13 shift. Well --

14 A. I came in --

15 Q. It wasn't your first hit so now we're talking about the event
16 specifically.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. If you could just walk me through from the time you come in
19 the door.

20 A. Mm-hm.

21 Q. If you remember, what you can remember.

22 A. Mm-hm.

23 Q. The more detail the better. Okay.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. So you come in the building to get your weather brief, and

1 then just start me throughout your day all the way through the
2 event.

3 A. Right. So the best of my recollection --

4 Q. Yep.

5 A. I get to work at 10:30.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Actually it was 10:33. I flexed. I did all of the required,
8 we call them pre-duty items and things of that nature, which are
9 check your Teams, check your weather briefing, log your weather
10 briefing, and then I proceeded to have what I would consider to be
11 a rather mundane shift. At this point, are you guys familiar with
12 how Area A runs their break bay?

13 Q. You can tell us.

14 A. Okay. You get to the area and, you know, flight progress
15 strips are, you know, basically obsolete. We have our name on
16 there and that's how I started my day. You go to the bottom.
17 Hey, man, you want a break, yep. And it was like that rocking and
18 rolling all day long. We had light traffic. I would consider it
19 more than adequate staffing. And it was a, it was just a slow day
20 where -- but there was absolutely a known of just like there's bad
21 rides today, but that's very common in the winter. So --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. But a mundane, I mean, work a little bit, take a break. Work
24 a little bit, take a break.

25 Q. Okay. So now do you remember -- did you work Delancey

1 earlier that day or Sector R24, I should say.

2 A. I remember predominantly thinking about the day that I worked
3 more of the high side, which would have been eight, nine, ten
4 combined up, than I did the low side.

5 Q. Okay. Do you think that was your first hit on R24 that day?

6 A. To the best that I can recall, I think that was the first
7 time I sat down there.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Again, when it -- you don't remember the mundane. Like the,
10 the monotony, right.

11 Q. Correct.

12 A. So --

13 Q. So you get Andre out.

14 A. I do.

15 Q. So walk me through coming into the area. So you're coming
16 off break, I assume. You're coming into the area.

17 A. Yep. I'm coming into the area, there is, again, this is to
18 the best of my recollection. There is a radar controller at
19 eight, nine, and ten, obviously, you got to staff the position. I
20 think there was training going on in the D-side. Again, best of
21 my recollection, Kevin Gillem, an operational supervisor, is in
22 that vicinity.

23 Andre is at R24. John Fitzgerald is about to get a
24 briefing. I run the list. There's not that many people in the
25 aisle. It doesn't take that long. I go Fitz, are you getting

1 Andre? He goes yes. Do you want out? He goes yes. I'm like,
2 okay. Put my name in, grab my headset, walk over to R24.

3 Q. Okay. So you walk over. Do you normally -- walk me through
4 how you normally get a controller out, and especially that day, do
5 you stand beside him? Do you kind of get the flick before you get
6 in? Do you just plug in and say start briefing? What, what is,
7 what does Kevin do when he walks into the -- into that area?

8 A. Grab the headset, throw it on. I don't -- I try to, I try to
9 have that thing on with my -- the end of my cord in my hand.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Look up at our status information areas, see what we have as
12 far as in-trails, or if there's any kind of outages that like, you
13 know, stand out. I get that. Take a look at the scope, and I
14 plug in, and you know normally just wait for that person to say,
15 you know, there's -- I don't know how many controllers are in
16 left, right, but there's 13,000 different ways that we do the
17 briefing. It's just -- so we have this guy that will just
18 continue to work traffic for five minutes, and you're like Dan,
19 I'm here, brief.

20 And then there's other guys that are like, I can't wait to
21 get out of here, right. So you just -- you plug it in and you're
22 waiting for this guy to hit the position relief button, and then
23 go. So that's how I approach relieving controllers.

24 Q. And how was it on that one? Did you have to prompt them to
25 brief or --

1 A. To the best of my recollection --

2 Q. He said give me a minute or --

3 A. To the best of my recollection, I go Fitz, do you want, do
4 you want to work, or do you want to break? And he's like, I'll
5 take the break. So he's on his way out of there. I grab my
6 headset, put it on, get the cord, I plug in, and Andre seems to be
7 kind of, I would say the best that what I can describe it is just
8 maybe kind of finishing up some things or whatever, as, as I'm
9 listening and watching, and then he starts the briefing. Does
10 that answer?

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. So you get Andre out. You sit down. Do you recall was he --
14 did he wait there? Did he leave?

15 A. He did wait there a little bit because I -- so after -- the
16 time that I've spent in this career field, there is a way that you
17 see a sector when you're standing behind someone, and then there's
18 the way you see a sector when you sit down, put in your settings
19 specifically for us.

20 So he went and put his headset and then he came and stood
21 behind me. And then I asked him a little bit more about the
22 deviations that he had briefed me that were going on in the
23 Albany, which is the R-22 portion of the combined sector.

24 Q. Mm-hm.

25 A. And he's like yeah. And I think to the best of my

1 recollection, there was an aircraft that was still airborne, I
2 think I'm remembering him pointing at it. He was like it was this
3 guy or whatever might have whatever the aircraft call sign was,
4 that he's like that guy went, you know, he cranked due north. So
5 I mean --

6 Q. Was that the 90 degree that you referenced earlier?

7 A. Yeah, that was part of the briefing, and I was just like,
8 because when you -- you're like. All right, so hold on. You
9 briefed me that, now I'm sitting down now I want to, for the lack
10 of any way that I can describe it, now I want to see it while I'm
11 sitting down, you know. So yeah.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A So there was a brief overlap where he was behind me and there
14 was some back-and-forth.

15 Q. Okay. Did you know when he left the area? So now you're
16 sitting at the scope. Does he say bye? Does he say you got it,
17 or do you say I'm good? Any of that?

18 A. I don't, I don't recall when he left or any other --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- conversation that we had after that.

21 Q. Okay. So now you're down, you're working that area. Do you
22 remember what you had going on when you first sat down?

23 Obviously, we talked about the, the deviated 90 degrees.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. But do you remember the sequence of the aircraft coming

1 through the airspace?

2 A. So like I said, you forget the normal, it just comes and
3 goes, and it doesn't make any sort of impact. But then this event
4 is brought to your attention and then you rewatch it. So -- and
5 you remember it pretty well at that point. And that is that I'm
6 sitting down and I'm thinking that the Hancock Delancey portion of
7 this combined airspace, the weather has been called based on what
8 he has said, and that there are no deviations, and that, you know,
9 pertinent information has been disseminated.

10 There could be a problem with 22. And shortly after I take
11 position, an aircraft in 22's airspace, I ship. And what he does
12 is, as I call it, he mic drops a lengthy PIREP, and in frustration
13 I tell him I wasn't ready for that, contact Boston Center on
14 134.3, I believe, advise them you have a PIREP. Because it's --
15 Area Echo is to the south of that. They want to talk to that guy
16 because they have restrictions for N90.

17 I'm shipping him pretty close to the boundary, so it's like,
18 let them know. They're going to have you a little bit more. You
19 know, I need to get rid of you. And you know, again, I know I
20 snapped at the pilot and I shouldn't have, but it was out of
21 frustration of just like you just kind of hit me with a lengthy
22 PIREP on the way out of here, you know, like I just gave you a
23 frequency transfer.

24 I'm expecting to hear contact Boston Center 34.3, not
25 whatever weather dissemination that he decided to kind of spit out

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1 right there. So that, that was something that happened. Now I
2 believe I'm still kind of looking at that plane that was deviating
3 and kind of just looking at other parts of, you know, it's not my
4 airspace that I'm controlling, but you can pull up data blocks and
5 seeing things of that nature.

6 And then I focus back on, because I do have aircraft in 23
7 and 24, and I start working those aircraft. And guys are -- the
8 altimeters, I believe, were still good. I still think we're
9 looking at -- I still think 18 was lowest usable, but you know
10 Hancock and Delancey are two of the VOR's that get a lot of quote,
11 unquote, action in that sector.

12 Guys are making their cross restriction, and again they're
13 mic dropping. We're getting, you know, moderate, we're getting
14 light as they switch over. And continue to work what I think is a
15 pretty slow and kind of routine. And then the United leaves, a
16 Westchester arrival, and at that point I start to say to myself,
17 there's, there's bad rides that need to get disseminated more.

18 Anybody that comes onto the frequency, I need to start, you
19 know, that's when, you know, for me, when I sit down, I think that
20 23 and 24 has been taken care of. There's really not this
21 concern. But now these guys are, you know, so --

22 Q. Okay. So let me back it up just a little bit.

23 A. Sorry.

24 Q. So -- no, it's, it's fine. So there was a Canada, Air Canada
25 584.

1 A. Mm-hm.

2 Q. It was 23 miles in front of the United.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. Do you recall if the Canada gave a PIREP when you shipped
5 him?

6 A. I don't recall, and I remember going over the Falcon and
7 audio with Tim Karavas, and I said that guy said there was
8 moderate, and he said, yeah. And I said I, I don't recall hearing
9 it.

10 Q. Okay. Well, that answers my next question then, because if
11 you didn't hear it, how would you give it to the United. So now
12 post event, walk me through how you were notified.

13 A. I was notified while I was still in position.

14 Q. Okay. By who?

15 A. Tim, Tim Karavas walked to the Area A.

16 MR. MYERS: Yeah, so -- sorry.

17 MR. CURTISS: What?

18 MR. MYERS: Keep going.

19 MR. CURTISS: Okay. Tim Karavas walked over to the Area A,
20 you know, our, our area and said something to the effect of a
21 United had severe turbulence, possible injuries, or something to
22 that effect. And I heard it a little bit out of the 30, I don't
23 know if you're familiar with what that phrase is. And then I
24 turned to the supe, and I said was it the United, and Tim said
25 yes. And then he walked off.

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1 And so, again, I continued to be like, all right, this sector
2 has changed, you know, and now, you know, and I said -- and I
3 wanted confirmation, I was like that was severe, and he said yes.

4 BY MR. BROWN:

5 Q. Just to clarify though, the OM wasn't talking to you, he was
6 talking to the OS.

7 A. Talking to the OS.

8 (Crosstalk)

9 A. Talking to the OS. I'm hearing something about severe
10 turbulence.

11 Q. Got you.

12 A. I turn around because severe turbulence is a -- it is a neck
13 jerking phrase in our profession.

14 Q. Okay. So you overhear that. Did the supe come over and talk
15 to you about it right then?

16 A. I don't recall. I think I had some aircraft on my frequency,
17 I believe to the best of my recollection, I disseminated, you
18 know, turbulence information. And then I think I called over a
19 supe because shortly thereafter, there was an aircraft on the
20 Bradley arrival that might have encountered something to that
21 effect. Like it's, you know, so -- I just remember, I remember
22 just kind of being like, you know, like you're a little bit busier
23 now, like this is, you know, this is not the slow Saturday.

24 Q. So they didn't ask you to put the PIREP in your ERIDS, right,
25 for that event?

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1 A. The -- did they ask me.

2 Q. The severe turbulence.

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. So you overhear it. Did they get you out of position?
7 Are you there? Did they say, hey, we need to talk?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Someone came back. I think I skipped a break, which again,
11 that's -- going to remember, I'm going to remember that because I
12 like my breaks. I skipped a break, worked a little bit. Nick
13 Brady, I believe, sat down on my D-side, starts putting in some
14 PIREPS, and then I, I ended up taking a break a little bit after
15 that.

16 Q. Okay. So you said you skipped a break.

17 A. I --

18 Q. This is the same sit that the turbulence, if that happens,
19 you skip a break.

20 A. Same, same sit you said?

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. To the best of my recollection, I skipped a break, sat for a
25 little bit while, and then took it to a later one that was

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1 offered.

2 Q. Okay. And then is that when the supe formally told you about
3 the event?

4 A. Negative.

5 Q. Or were still, still haven't been formally told.

6 A. Still have not been formally told.

7 Q. Okay. So when do you, when do you recall that you were, that
8 you were working that position when the event happened? Is it
9 just what you overheard? Or did they say later, you got to come
10 in on this day for an SSR? How did that come about?

11 A. No. So, so someone gets me out. To the best of my
12 recollection, I give them a pretty good briefing on what is going
13 on in terms of the rides of 24. I go take a break. I don't know
14 what time during the day this is, I don't know if I came back, had
15 another sit, then had another break. But I just know that my last
16 sit of the day. So we try to respect one another and not really
17 take a break to end our day longer than 40 minutes. Right?

18 So I am -- during my last sit, I'm timing that up, like
19 someone may come back with like an hour and ten minutes left of my
20 shift. Nope, got to pass. And again, someone that loves his
21 breaks. I'm only going to do that out of respect for a coworker.
22 He'll speak to it. It's a culture here. It's like you take, it's
23 called the terminal break. So I'm timing it up, so I'm, I'm
24 passing a lot because we've got actually adequate staffing.

25 Several times, at least three, I believe Lisa Hagen is the,

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1 is the frontline supervisor. There's chatter with her and other
2 people going on about severe turbulence. Something going on,
3 Tarah Park is Tarah, right? She's there having a conversation.
4 I'm on position. I'm allowed to skip, and then finally, I get
5 into what's considered what is our window, where you're like, you
6 know, it's respectful. I take a break. I get off position. She
7 goes, you need to go talk to the -- you can just stop at the OM
8 desk.

9 Q. Okay. So you go to the OM desk, what happens?

10 A. Tim Karavas is there. He's, I believe, assigned to the OMIC
11 desk. Adam Currier is the XO. He's there in civilian clothes.
12 Kevin Coeyman, facility representative is there. He's
13 -- it's off duty for him. And they -- there's a -- there's not
14 audio. But there is Falcon to the best, to the best that I can
15 recall.

16 Q. So they showed you the Falcon replay.

17 A. They showed the Air Canada, because I remember questioning
18 Tim about the Air Canada, and then he says, did you hear the
19 United say he had severe turbulence. And I was like, no. I was
20 like my -- I remember my answer something to the effect of like we
21 hear severe, we turn around and we tell whoever's got the desk,
22 whether it be a CIC or supe.

23 I was like I did not hear severe, I said I heard, you know
24 moderate, and that in the Westchester afterwards, and like start
25 disseminating.

1 Q. So you bring up a good point. Opinion based, if a pilot
2 reports to you severely moderate, what does that mean to you?

3 A. It doesn't -- it depends on when he wants to report that, you
4 know. Like if he's, if he's level in flight on the high side, is
5 it severe or is it moderate? What -- do you want to change
6 altitudes, you know. Like we are, I would say, bombarded with
7 ride reports in the winter, and what could be this to one pilot is
8 this to another one.

9 And I've heard it with, with Seth. And during the
10 performance discussion. I didn't hear severely moderate. I
11 heard, again when you mic drop a PIREP, right, I'm expecting to
12 hear Boston 34.3. I'm not really expecting a PIREP. I hear
13 moderate. Had I heard severe, I mean, every controller in Boston
14 Center snaps into it. So --

15 Q. So you're saying though, if you hear the word severely
16 moderate?

17 A. You're going to --

18 Q. You, you assume that that means just severe.

19 A. No. You're going to -- if I, if -- all right. I'll be
20 frank. If a pilot said I'm getting severely moderate, we're going
21 to have a little bit more of a dialogue. What are you getting?
22 Is it severe? Is it moderate? Do you need to change altitudes?

23 MR. MYERS: But in that instance that he's asking about the
24 United 1890, you didn't have a dialogue --

25 MR. CURTISS: I didn't --

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1 MR. MYERS: -- because you didn't --

2 MR. CURTISS: I didn't have a dialogue because I did not hear
3 severely moderate, I heard moderate.

4 MR. BROWN: Okay. That's all I have at this time.

5 MR. CURTISS: Okay.

6 MR. BROWN: I'm going to pass it to Paul, our weather guy.

7 BY MR. SUFFERN:

8 Q. Thanks Kevin for coming in.

9 A. Yep.

10 Q. And just your responses so far have been really helpful to
11 understand all the, the background and everything going on in the
12 room because we weren't there and we don't have your expertise and
13 your knowledge, so it's been good. Just touching on a few things
14 on the weather side. Do you -- is this kind of weather unusual
15 for New York for this time of year, that you can recall?

16 A. Severe turbulence is unusual.

17 Q. Okay. And as far as there being -- I know on the scope, you
18 just see precipitation, you just see heavy, you have no idea
19 whether it's convective, you know, snow, depending on altitudes,
20 all those kinds of things there. But would thunderstorm activity
21 be unusual for the wintertime here?

22 A. Very unusual.

23 Q. Okay. Have you received any type of training on how to deal
24 with out of season weather scenarios? For example, thunderstorms
25 here in the wintertime, or snow in July, you know, things like

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1 that. Have you --

2 A. I don't recall.

3 Q. If weather is rapidly changing in your sector, and you're
4 viewing things, and more weather is going to come impact your
5 area, is there an expectation that your supe would come in and
6 say, hey, you know, there's a line of thunderstorms coming in from
7 Western New York, it's going to impact your area in 30 minutes, so
8 be prepared for that. Anything like that?

9 A. Is there, you said, is there an expectation?

10 Q. Yeah. Your supe to --

11 A. So what you're saying is as a controller, would I expect a
12 supe to come and -- I can't definitively say that I would expect
13 them always, you know, it -- no.

14 Q. As your -- just not on the day of the event, but just your
15 experience working here, has your sector or the area you work in
16 ever been over saturated due to weather, and you've had to ask for
17 support or change --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What type of scenarios does that happen in for you?

20 MR. MYERS: The list.

21 MR. CURTISS: On June 26th of last year, I worked a sector
22 that was so overloaded that it was the first time in my career
23 that I was terrified.

24 BY MR. SUFFERN:

25 Q. And what was, what was the weather that day?

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1 A. Everywhere, convective weather everywhere, planes being put
2 into it.

3 Q. And during that scenario, were planes -- I'm going to mess up
4 all the air traffic terms.

5 A. That's fine.

6 Q. But we're planes keeping -- they kept on, for lack of a
7 better term, shoving planes in your sector --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- and you don't know where to put them?

10 BY MR. MYERS:

11 Q. And just to help, where were those coming from on that day?
12 Like what --

13 A. Fucking everywhere. Sorry.

14 Q. Yeah. What, what kind of offloads were you taking? Were you
15 taking offloads, or reroutes, or what were 00 what was going on
16 that day? I think that's what he's asking.

17 A. Say it again the way you were saying it.

18 BY MR. SUFFERN:

19 Q. Yeah. So just where we're, where were the planes coming
20 from? Was it coming from, I mean, I don't know from --

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. -- from New York or --

23 A. Yeah. So we work upstate New York.

24 Q. Mm-hm.

25 A. They were coming from the east. They were, I would say,

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1 Manchester, Providence, Bradley, Logan departures to the best of,
2 the best that I can recall from something that was, you know, last
3 summer.

4 Q. So just with your experience here and working in the Boston
5 Center, are different weather scenarios are convective or
6 thunderstorm events, or weather in your area is more challenging
7 to work from a weather side? Or is there another weather scenario
8 that's more challenging?

9 A. Oh, convective weather. Summer weather is the most
10 challenging.

11 Q. Okay. Could you describe how the PIREP process works for you
12 here at Boston Center?

13 A. How we input them, we use the ERIDS.

14 Q. So you hear a PIREP from a plane, an aircraft coming in, and
15 could you describe how you -- you just enter that into ERIDS.

16 A. I -- that's how, that's how Boston Center prefers them. I've
17 asked during local safety councils and things of that nature, I'm
18 like, why can't we have the paper PIREPS? I can put them in
19 faster and my eyes are off the scope for a less amount of time.

20 Q. So that, that routine seemed to work better for you when it's
21 --

22 A. Yeah. But I'm crusty.

23 Q. As far as reviewing the 7110 and, and things like that, and
24 talked about entering and passing along operationally pertinent
25 PIREPS, what is operationally pertinent to you?

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1 A. Operationally pertinent would be when it's affecting the way
2 that you can work your traffic.

3 MR. SUFFERN: That's all the questions I have for right now.

4 MR. CURTISS: Okay.

5 MR. SUFFERN: Thank you.

6 MR. CURTISS: Yep.

7 MR. BROWN: Jason.

8 BY MR. ALLISTON:

9 Q. I'm going to go into some questions about just kind of
10 facility status, and how some programs and processes work. Are
11 you aware of what, in the quality control realm, ICV and ECV's
12 are?

13 A. I am aware. I'm not overly knowledgeable.

14 Q. Okay. So as far as your ICV, that's your internal compliance
15 verifications. Those are done on a quarterly basis. Do you guys
16 receive any kind of briefings as far as what the results are for
17 compliance versus noncompliance?

18 A. We have, I believe, that we've received briefings.

19 Q. Okay. And are those typically verbal or do you receive an
20 MBI?

21 MR. MYERS: He didn't like that question?

22 MR. CURTISS: I want to say that we've received both, both
23 types of briefings, to the best of my recollection.

24 BY MR. ALLISTON:

25 Q. Okay. And do you think those are, are effective at kind of

1 showing you what the facility needs to work on?

2 A. I believe so.

3 Q. And as far as them being in a live in person perspective, are
4 you -- is there typically decent feedback in those briefings?

5 A. From the controllers to whoever's briefing it out?

6 Q. Right.

7 A. Is there a decent feedback?

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. I'm trying to recall some of them. I'm someone that will
10 give more feedback than others. Right. And I can dominate a --
11 if there's a briefing and there's a lot -- do you need to get
12 that?

13 MR. ALLISTON: It's the regional office. I can't turn it
14 off.

15 MR. CURTISS: You can't turn your phone off. And again, this
16 is just -- I'm trying to answer the best, you know, I've --
17 whether it be from our winter weather briefing or maybe be
18 something else, like I, you know, there could be 11 people in the
19 audience, but if it's me, then I might be the only person talking.
20 Right? Because I'm going to give feedback.

21 But then there could be something that it just doesn't -- so
22 I think that I can't always say that there's feedback. There are
23 sometimes where it's just the person briefs something out at
24 Boston Center. The number of people in the audience hear it, and
25 they say, are we done and that's it, you know, talking about

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1 people. So --

2 MR. ALLISTON: Okay.

3 MR. CURTISS: Sorry.

4 MR. ALLISTON: No, no, no. That, that definitely answers it
5 because it does vary.

6 MR. CURTISS: Yeah.

7 BY MR. ALLISTON:

8 Q. Do you know what the correct -- the current corrective action
9 plans are in the facility?

10 A. I know that Boston Center has corrective action plans. I am
11 not familiar with all of them.

12 Q. Okay. Do you -- do any of them stand out to you?

13 A. Position relief briefing.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And I believe low altitude alerts.

16 Q. Safety alerts?

17 A. Safety alerts. Yep.

18 Q. And are the caps for those briefed out to you guys?

19 A. I believe they are, to the best of my recollection.

20 Q. All right. And then in an operational environment, the
21 supervisor is placing the emphasis on those open corrective action
22 plans to kind of draw your attention to them as you're working.

23 A. As we're working. I don't recall them really ever -- I don't
24 recall a frontline supe, while in the operation, covering those.

25 Q. Okay. And do you guys do team trainings?

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1 A. Do we do what?

2 Q. Team trainings like breakouts for your, your team, et cetera.

3 A. When you say team.

4 MR. MYERS: Crew break -- crew breakouts.

5 BY MR. ALLISTON:

6 Q. Crew breakout, yeah.

7 A. No. We do -- they -- it's, it's an ebb and flow. I think
8 like I cannot recall the last time I had one, that's just the best
9 way I can answer.

10 Q. Okay. And when you do have those, do you find them valuable?

11 A. It varies.

12 Q. It varies by?

13 A. Depending on what we're talking about.

14 Q. Got you. All right. Is there any other method in the
15 facility that's used to highlight like emphasis items?

16 A. I mean, there's probably -- they probably used Teams. They
17 probably use Teams is, is the way that I would answer that
18 question.

19 Q. Okay. How would you rate the supervisory engagement in the
20 area?

21 A. That's very broad. Like supervisor engagement. How would I
22 rate it? I don't know.

23 MS. MARINAS: You're scaring people.

24 MR. BROWN: Can you shut it off? Just power it down.

25 MS. MARINAS: I think we're about to have a drill.

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1 MR. MYERS: The best part is, is there's fire alarm testing
2 that's been going on for like months in this building. So
3 everybody thinks that's that.

4 MS. MARINAS: Oh, because you guys are getting the FDAS
5 change.

6 MR. MYERS: Yeah.

7 MS. MARINAS: Right.

8 MR. CURTISS: Can you restate the question again, please?

9 BY MR. ALLISTON:

10 Q. All right. Supervisory engagement in the area, like how
11 would you rate that?

12 A. I'm going back and forth between words and a scale of one to
13 ten. Could always be better.

14 Q. In what way?

15 A. Sure. You can have an -- you can have attentive supervisors
16 at the desk, and you can have supervisors where you're like where
17 is so-and-so. That's, that has been my experience.

18 Q. Okay. And as far as, you know, like your expectation of how
19 to see that being better, would you like to see them just present
20 at the, desk or present in the area being familiar with what's
21 going on at the sectors?

22 A. I would like to see supervisors present at the desk that have
23 had experience in the area, and hired after a lengthy time of
24 service so that they can be subject matter experts the way they
25 were in 2007, '08, '09, '10, before the quality of frontline

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1 supervisors plummeted.

2 Q. All right.

3 MR. MYERS: Succinct.

4 MR. CURTISS: That what I want to see. Put people there that
5 know what they're doing. That care.

6 MR. ALLISTON: All right.

7 BY MR. ALLISTON:

8 Q. That answered my next question, so perfect. So as far as
9 when you return from break, do controllers ask the supervisor for
10 a duty assignment when they return?

11 A. Like should I run the list, or should I go to a CBI?

12 Q. Basically that, yes.

13 A. Not normally. Normally you get back and you -- when you're
14 approaching Area A, you're usually of the mindset I'm going to run
15 the list, and if that is not going to be the case, then the
16 supervisor or CIC will kind of like for lack of a better word,
17 intercept you, and be like, hey, you got to go, go to the briefing
18 or whatever. And then come back and run the list or something
19 like that. So Normally it is a -- you don't ask, you're kind of
20 instructed before you run the list.

21 Q. Okay. And if you get in the area and you see that somebody
22 is potentially getting overloaded or something like that, what
23 would you do?

24 A. Oh yeah. I'd be like, yeah, we want a -- I completely forego
25 any sort of who's next on break. I don't care what supe is there.

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1 If you get like a general -- I mean, so yellows and reds are
2 pertinent, right. You look up, if I can see a yellow, then I can
3 zoom in on the on the scope. And I can see if there's one person
4 there or whatever else, and be like, hey, you want it split or do
5 you want to do it.

6 I don't care what the supe has to say. If I -- I'm going to
7 first ask the person that's working that, do you need help?
8 Because that's all that matters.

9 Q. All right. Excellent. So during weather events, do
10 supervisors prompt you to solicit PIREPS?

11 A. I would say that that has increased.

12 Q. Increased, all right. How often? Just do you have a gauge
13 of it?

14 A. I can't say with certainty the frequency.

15 Q. Okay. How often do you see the OM come down the aisle?

16 A. That, we have five. Do we have five?

17 MR. MYERS: Yes.

18 MR. CURTISS: That varies amongst who it is, you know.

19 BY MR. ALLISTON:

20 Q. And so those, the -- I, I guess I'll just ask on your set of
21 RDO's. Do you see it rather regularly, or not so much?

22 A. Not so much.

23 Q. Okay. And then this has kind of been asked, but did, did you
24 preview the sector, and if so, for how long?

25 A. I did. I can't recall how long. Just I think that I would

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1 probably say that, you know, after a lengthy time in the career
2 field, you preview the sector, and then, like I said, when I've
3 got that plug in my, my hand, when I've said okay, I've previewed
4 it. I'm not going to stand here like a bump on a log any longer.

5 That's when I'm good to go, and there's not a, there's not
6 determined amount of time. I mean, you know, how long I preview a
7 sector on a Saturday in February is not going to be as long as a
8 Saturday or a Thursday night in July. Right?

9 Q. Right. On the position relief briefing, so specifically when
10 there's a weather event, do you brief like which aircraft have
11 been issued the depicted weather?

12 A. I can't say with certainty every time whether I indicate each
13 aircraft, or if I say something to the effect of like weather has
14 been called.

15 Q. Okay.

16 MR. ALLISTON: I think that's all I've got for now.

17 MR. CURTISS: Okay.

18 MR. BROWN: Ryan.

19 BY MR. HURLING:

20 Q. Yeah. Thanks again --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- for being here. Really appreciate it. You're the eyes
23 and ears and helping us kind of looking at events like this. So
24 your feedback today is exceptional. So thank you very much.

25 A. Okay.

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1 Q. So you've been a controller how long, how many years?

2 A. We're coming up on 22.

3 Q. Okay. So a lot of experience, a lot of SME within you. What
4 are the challenge -- how have the challenges of a controller local
5 here changed, maybe in the last five years or so? You obviously
6 had different challenges pre COVID --

7 A. Mm-hm.

8 Q. -- ten years ago with 9/11, and so forth.

9 A. Yea.

10 Q. What are the number two challenges? If you were to talk to a
11 controller saying, hey, I'm thinking about getting in this
12 business, I'm thinking about becoming a controller, what are the
13 two things you'd be like here's the good of it, here's two things
14 that are great. And here's two challenges that you're like, just
15 be wary of this. Just --

16 A. This hurts.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Everything I have is for air traffic or is because of it.
19 I've said that to people, and so it hurts me to say this. I
20 wouldn't tell anybody I love to get in this job.

21 Q. And if you don't mind me asking, why is that?

22 A. Staffing, quality of life, the way we're treated. We don't
23 have anybody in our corner. We don't have subject matter experts.
24 We are run into the ground. And we're not compensated fairly. I
25 know against the average American, we make a great living, and we

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1 do compared to that.

2 But for what we sacrifice, no, I wouldn't tell anybody I love
3 to get into this job. And everything I have, I've helped out my
4 family because of air traffic. I love this job. I fight for it.
5 I would not.

6 Q. Understood. Understood. Do you think the new controllers
7 that are coming in, do you think getting the training they need?
8 And if, and if not, what, I guess, what are I guess one of the one
9 or two things you'd be like, they need more of this, or I would
10 add this.

11 A. It's never fair to young people because throughout history,
12 man has said we're screwed. But we end up going up on the other
13 side of it, right. Guys that served in World War II thought the
14 guys over there were in Vietnam were wimps, and they're not.

15 Q. Understood.

16 A. You just know that the knowledge and the sense of urgency is
17 drifting. What I would -- how do you bring back -- it's like, I'm
18 having a hard time. Like, what do they need, like, like, how do
19 you, how do you bring back 2003 to 2012. Like I'm not saying that
20 getting cracked in the head with a clipboard was the best thing in
21 the Air Force, but it made you say I have to know this. I, you
22 know, like I can't answer that. I don't, I don't know and I hope
23 it's not anything that's way more horrible than what happened.

24 Q. Understood. And just, you know, done a lot of these
25 investigations along with the folks sitting across from me, with

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1 the NTSB, from United. We thank you for being here. Thank you
2 for what you do.

3 A. Mm-hm.

4 Q. And I appreciate you.

5 MR. HURLING: So I'll leave it there.

6 MR. BROWN: Kevin, yeah.

7 MR. COON: All right.

8 BY MR. COON:

9 Q. You know, I appreciate what you said and I -- when do you
10 think it changed, where you wouldn't recommend it? You had
11 mentioned the supervision the, the knowledge and stuff like that.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Is that when you saw the change or --

14 A. Yeah, so we got hired at the same time, right? I mean, I got
15 hired in '07, right. And I got here, and we had seven supes.
16 They've been in Area A forever. They knew it like the back of
17 their hand. They were going to grill you during your skills
18 checks or things like that. Like you didn't want, you didn't want
19 it to be slow because you're like, oh, they're going to get the
20 book out, right.

21 The staffing has just been decimated. Right? That just
22 means that if, if we barely got enough people to staff, then we
23 can't send people upstairs to be the subject matter experts in all
24 these departments. And so there's not that knowledge up there,
25 right. But I definitely think, and I can't pinpoint it to where,

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1 but at some point in time the requirements to be a frontline
2 supervisor became 52 weeks of experience. And they, they threw
3 this financial incentive, and also this seniority quagmire that
4 almost said to the guys that have been as long as me.

5 Right now it's -- it would, it would make no sense in my
6 quality of life or monetarily for me to take my 22 years of air
7 traffic experience and become a frontline supervisor. All of the
8 incentive is on someone that's still wet behind the ears. So when
9 they changed that practice is, yeah, I mean, it, it also coincides
10 with, you know, they were fired in '81. Let's do some math.
11 People are getting hired and they're leaving, right.

12 So right around that time, you know, you're having an exodus
13 of, of experienced controllers and experienced supervisors that
14 were knowledgeable, you know, and I feel like, and I, yeah, I
15 can't pinpoint where, but that hiring practice changed because
16 they're like, oh, well, we got get supes. How are we going to get
17 these people? Well, let's throw money at them and let's give them
18 more seniority than the average person. And let's not even
19 require it, which is a little bit of a, you know, that's where it
20 started to. Somewhere, you know -- yep.

21 Q. I think you answered that question. You said that when you,
22 you sat down, you finished the relief briefing, and you decided,
23 well, it looks like there's a problem here in 22.

24 A. Mm-hm.

25 Q. And then you asked for a little more clarity, this guys

1 deviating. Would -- was it ever mentioned that turbulence was an
2 issue where this guy's just deviating because of the, the
3 precipitation or whatever?

4 MR. MYERS: So 20, he's asking about 22.

5 MR. COON: I --

6 MR. MYERS: Yeah, 22 is -- explain to him the setup.

7 MR. CURTISS: Yes, sure.

8 MR. MYERS: I'm such a whiteboard guy.

9 BY MR. COON:

10 Q. I know they were coming over Hancock. Is Hancock --

11 A. Yep.

12 Q. -- the 22 area or is Hancock --

13 A. No, it is not.

14 Q. Or the northern area where the --

15 MR. MYERS: He hasn't drawn a map in 22 years, but look how
16 good he is.

17 MR. CURTISS: So --

18 MR. MYERS: It's okay. Mike, can you take a picture of this.
19 This could be on the docket.

20 MR. BROWN: Okay.

21 MR. CURTISS: This is 23 and 24.

22 MR. COON: Okay.

23 MR. CURTISS: There's some precip that's kind of depicted
24 around here. This is 22, Albany. So during the briefing because
25 I do remember. And he's talking about -- and so normally in the

1 summertime, this is split out, right. This is -- you're not
2 working this, you know, as it is. But I'm going slow, and there's
3 only nine aircraft projected through these radar sectors in the
4 course of 15 minutes. It's combined up.

5 So he had said that there was deviations in the Albany sector
6 right around here. And he said that the aircraft had gone 90
7 degrees. I'm telling you that when I heard that, for better, for
8 worse, like you just kind of like tune out a little bit here
9 because you're like for the most part, I think everything is okay
10 in here, but somebody could be at 90 degrees on a Saturday in
11 February. So what that, you know, and I think a little bit more
12 of my attention span and my, in terms of lack of a better word,
13 your intake is just like, you know.

14 And again you sit down. I see it differently once I'm in
15 front of the scope, I've got my settings and it's just like, hold
16 on a second, before you go, you know, because it's 90 off. So
17 right around here, I think to the best of my recollection, like
18 precipitation around here as well, like -- but it was like this
19 low stuff before that had been there.

20 Like all pesky all day. But it was like earlier in the day,
21 you're like, maybe get tops report, and I was like I don't see it,
22 you know, so and then all of a sudden, like boom, coming back
23 back to the low side, I think is the first level and then a 90
24 degree deviation. . So deviations are hell That's --.

25 BY MR. COON:

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1 Q. That's what -- that is exactly what I was --

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. Yeah, was drawn to a different area than --

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. When you were listening to Andre or even during the briefing,
6 did he say what the ride reports were and who he'd given --

7 A. He had said, he goes, there's -- I believe, he said there's
8 some moderate and I've called the weather to everybody in 23 and
9 24. There's no deviations. That's what I recall.

10 Q. I like the way you said if you hear severe, that's head jerk.

11 A. It is.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. Yep.

14 MR. COON: I don't have any other questions, I think you've
15 been very, very clear in your answers.

16 MR. CURTISS: Okay.

17 MR. BROWN: Karena.

18 MS. MARINAS: Thank you.

19 BY MS. MARINAS:

20 Q. Hi.

21 A. Hi.

22 Q. So I have a bunch of questions here about do you want to
23 decide how you set up your sector as you sit down, but as I've
24 been listening to you and all the other questions that you've
25 answered, my, I guess, I want you to tell me if this -- if I'm, if

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1 I've kind of interpreted this right. The way that I've
2 interpreted what you said is, you know, once you got that position
3 relief briefing, and you're sitting down and you know, you kind of
4 have an idea that your, that your focus really now is on what's
5 going over -- going on over Albany.

6 But then you start to hear a couple of PIREPS given to you,
7 and that starts to get your brain flowing in like, oh, okay,
8 there's actually some ride issues here.

9 A. Mm-hm.

10 Q. Is that kind of -- am I kind of --

11 A. Yep.

12 Q. -- developing that the way that it happened?

13 A. Yep.

14 Q. Okay. That's what I was understanding. So that kind of
15 helps with some of my questions that I had already. All right.

16 Okay. Something that came that I think was put into the SSR, and
17 also the ERT brief that originally went out after this, both said
18 something about the position was combined, meaning the D-side left
19 which didn't meet the, the SOP expectations. And so we kind of
20 came into this thinking that there was a D-side put into that
21 position, and that you came in and said, you know, I don't need
22 you. That was kind of like the way that it led everybody here.

23 A. Mm-hm.

24 Q. And that is not correct, right?

25 A. Correct, that is not correct.

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1 Q. So there was a person sitting -- I just think that that needs
2 to be clarified because it does say it in several different places
3 and it, it confuses the issue.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. There was somebody coming in to, to take that position
6 originally. The way the break rotation fell out, the length of
7 time that they had been sitting there, they were already up for a
8 break again, as they were just reviewing that position before they
9 even took it. Right.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So then you go in, and you offer them both a break and they,
12 they take a break and then you actually assume the position.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. The D-side wasn't actually open.

15 A. The D-side was not open.

16 Q. Okay. Did you have to, like, did you -- did anything need to
17 be forwarded over? Was the D-side -- did the D-side have the, the
18 communications on the VSCS?

19 A. Any, any -- I mean we, we are prone to forget, but if a D-
20 side is not open, then it can be assumed that those calls have
21 been forwarded. Frequencies are turned off.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. All right. Okay.

25 MS. MARINAS: I don't have any other questions. Thanks.

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1 MR. BROWN: Betty.

2 MS. KOSCHIG: Thank you.

3 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

4 Q. Hi. A couple of questions. You told us earlier, you were in
5 the Air Force. You got that weather briefing. All the briefing
6 before you went to work, you know, it was -- I'm, I'm ex-military.
7 I'm retired Navy. So I totally get, we always got a very in depth
8 brief before we went into work. And how you would like the, the
9 face to face. Is it possible here to do something like that? Or
10 is it because of the schedules, that type of weather briefing?

11 A. Oh yeah. You -- the FAA addresses staffing and they are
12 capable of, I mean, we've all worked for the government, right.
13 We know that the government is capable when it wants to be. So if
14 that is something that they want to implement and consider a
15 bigger priority, and give it some formality, yeah, they could do
16 it.

17 Q. That would be interesting, interesting to see if it could
18 work somewhere in your local safety council.

19 A. I mean it, it -- I don't think it would be easy.

20 Q. Right.

21 A. And just if you want more context on it, we worked 6:00 to
22 2:00 or 2:00 to 10:00 in the Air Force.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. And if you worked a 6:00 to 2:00, you got there at 5:45.

25 Someone got there at 5:30.

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1 Q. Right.

2 A. You know, and if you worked at 2:00 you got there at 1:45,
3 and you were there at 1:45, and it was weather, runway conditions.
4 How many flights were Fighter Squadron, things of that nature.
5 NOTAMs, this was back before any sort of like automated NOTAMs.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. We were called three levels in the Air Force. The three
8 level got there. Printed out the NOTAMs. All these sorts of
9 things, like you basically 15 minutes prior to your shift
10 starting, you were given the best picture possible outside of the
11 radar room that, you know --

12 Q. Absolutely, yeah.

13 A. And I don't think standing at the CRUART and what we do now
14 is remotely close.

15 Q. Right. And that, that's -- I, I really wish somebody would
16 experiment with that to see if it could, if it could work because
17 the same. I had that same training and I found it 1000 percent as
18 Paul would say, usable.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. And I like that like that, and I, I do get especially your
21 comments about how it had no value on the, on the weather
22 briefing. And I think something needs to change to get, to get
23 value, but experiments have to happen to see what's going to work.
24 But to go on with that, do you ever stop by the CWSU and talk with
25 the weather folks ever and -- or what, what goes on there?

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1 A. To be fair, more when it's like local stuff.

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. Are we going to get -- because, like, we don't get enough
4 snow anymore. So it's like, are we going to, you know, stuff like
5 that. But I am of the -- because we don't have anything that's
6 real time right before, I'm kind of the let me get down there and
7 see what's going on in Area A. So I don't normally stop in there.

8 Q. Okay. And my last question, I think it's my last one. And
9 it's something that I recall used to happen is the mic drop type
10 of PIREP.

11 A. Yep.

12 Q. I didn't like that either. Is there something that you could
13 think of that would, I mean, is there some kind of procedure or is
14 there some kind of phraseology, something that could be added on
15 the other end of the, of the line, like with the aircraft.

16 A. Mm-hm.

17 Q. You know with the pilots that would help you?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And what, what do you think that would be?

20 A. Boston Center, I have a PIREP advise when ready to copy?

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Same thing that we offer them when we've got a route
23 amendment that's going to take them to all these different T
24 routes and fixes, and things like that.

25 Q. Okay.

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1 A. I have a PIREP advise when ready to copy? You're telling me,
2 hey, some information is coming.

3 Q. So a change, a change in having that, that procedure put in
4 there,

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- that phraseology.

7 A. Mm-hm.

8 Q. Okay. I just wanted to get your take on it before I start
9 making up things.

10 A. Yeah.

11 MS. KOSCHIG: Thank you very much. That's all I have and
12 thank you for your time.

13 MR. BROWN: Paul, I know you do, but does anybody else have
14 any follow-ups? Jason?

15 MR. ALLISTON: Nope.

16 MR. BROWN: Paul.

17 MR. SUFFERN: Just two.

18 BY MR. SUFFERN:

19 Q. One's a fun one, and one's a little bit along the lines of
20 what Betty asked. You know, throughout your, your career here,
21 have you ever asked for a direct CWSU support in any weather
22 scenarios like that are very difficult, you know, you have VFR on
23 top, kind of, you know, or IFR and icing, how to get them out of
24 icing. Have you ever requested that?

25 A. Have I requested that weather -- of requests through weather?

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1 Q. Requested weather support, like tactically ask them to come
2 down to your sector and hey, you know this icing area that you're
3 working this aircraft, it's actually better to the South or --

4 A. Oh.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. Okay. So I'm trying to envision a scenario. So what you're
7 saying is I've been working and something's going on in this
8 sector, and I say to the supe, hey, can you get weather down here
9 and let me -- I have not.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. No. I wouldn't even think to do that.

12 Q. And then my last question is always a fun one, if I could put
13 you in charge of, of weather and make the best weather tool out
14 there, you had a bunch of money you could direct the FAA in
15 whichever way you directed, what kind of weather tools or things
16 like that would help you do your job better?

17 A. What kind of weather tools would help me do my job better? I
18 guess like, like it's such an information extraction, right.
19 Precipitation is depicted. It may not. The whole scope could be
20 painted, right. It's not -- it's low, it's not -- nobody cares
21 about it. Just a foggy day in Utica, New York, right. The rides
22 like, you know, I know that our weather radar shows more than
23 what, you know, especially like with GA and things like that. But
24 the rides, like I, you know, from what I've read and gathered
25 throughout the course of my career is that the airlines kind of

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1 have a better idea.

2 I mean, I -- if, if you're talking about like, use one of
3 your three wishes, right, just, you just want to know what's out
4 there. You just -- but will we ever, right. You know, are we
5 ever going to have, are we ever going to have a little digital
6 screen that says flight 380 has moderate turbulence, and that
7 there is extreme precipitation for a 20 mile diameter over -- I
8 mean, I'll take that.

9 You know, real time, always accurate. And that way I can
10 tell them, you know, when they check on, you know, if this guy's
11 going to Logan at 37, I don't have to tell this guy anything, but
12 if this guy's landing, you know, Albany, I'm like, alright, you
13 know. So I would like one of those please.

14 Q. Okay. We'll start working on that.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. So my last question for you, Kevin, once again thanks for
17 coming in. It's kind of along the same lines, but it's, it's just
18 as an overview of the event. Did you learn anything, and if you
19 could go back in time and do something different, what would you
20 do?

21 A. Yeah. I'm sure that I've approached things differently
22 already, but it's tough to like notice why. Every time you walk
23 up to that scope, it's different, right. Twenty-two years, I
24 don't know how many shifts that is, it's different every single
25 time. But we are really working on position relief briefings at

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1 Boston Center, and we have, I believe, even in the time, we have
2 updated how we're going to do it.

3 I have absolutely changed how I give briefings, for one, you
4 know. And look, it's just, you know, I had the unfortunate
5 situation where I've lost separation, and you know any controller
6 that's gone through that, you know, you shit your pants. And then
7 the first shift that you come back, whenever it may be, you look
8 at things differently for a little while.

9 It's the same thing right here, like an aircraft hit severe
10 turbulence, I was involved. People were hurt. So there's a,
11 there's, there's a -- an attention to detail that's changed. In
12 what capacity, I don't know, but it's there.

13 Q. Would you change anything about that day if you could rewind
14 the clock?

15 A. I switched from a 6:00 to 2:00 to an 11:00 to 7:00. So I
16 think you know the answer.

17 Q. Stay on your original shift.

18 A. Yeah, you know, like -- I like -- so it's, it's, and again,
19 well, you know, you asked me like, what time I wake up. I wake up
20 early. I just don't want to wake up with an alarm clock, so I
21 don't know when I wake up, I just know that I can wake up without
22 an alarm clock. I can walk my dog for an hour and still make it
23 to work on time. I love elevens. People out there hate them.
24 I'm like these are great. I also don't have kids. Right.

25 I mean, it's a polarizing shift. I'm like, you know, I can

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1 still make dinner, even though usually I don't because I'm like
2 it's 6:30, I'm not making dinner. But like, you know, so yeah, I
3 would -- I'd be like just suck it up, dude. Have the alarm clock.

4 Q. I got you.

5 A. This isn't a matinee.

6 MR. BROWN: Anyone have anything else? So I'm just going to
7 stop recording.

8 MR. CURTISS: Okay. Yeah.

9 MR. BROWN: It's 1:28. I'm stopping the recording.

10 (Whereupon, at 1:28 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
11
12
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25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Kevin Curtiss

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 6, 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.



Sandra Hirsch
Transcriber

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

1 * * * * *
2 Investigation of: *
3 *
4 UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *
5 KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *
6 Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *
7 *
8 * * * * *

Interview of: JOHN FITZGERALD, Initial Relieving R24 Controller
Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Tuesday,
March 5, 2024

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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

SETH MEYERS, Representative
(On behalf of Mr. Fitzgerald)

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:09 p.m.)

MR. BROWN: All right, it's 2:09 p.m. We're starting the interview. Good afternoon, my name is Mike Brown. I'm an Air Traffic Control Investigator with the NTSB. Can you state your name?

MR. FITZGERALD: My name is John Fitzgerald.

MR. BROWN: Okay. Thanks for being here today, John. We talked briefly about the recording, but I'll go in the ins and outs of that. So, you're aware that it's being recorded. What will happen is the only person that will physically have access to the voice recording will be myself and Betty, okay?

MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

MR. BROWN: What we'll do is probably next week, when we get back, we'll send these out to our Court transcriptionist. They put them, anything in audio, they'll put in writing, and they'll send it back. And then I'll review all of them. I'll send them out to our group members, we'll review it, any changes that need to be made. And it isn't testimony changes, say there was a typo here or somebody said something that it didn't pick up. That's done. If you want, I can send a copy to you to review.

MR. FITZGERALD: Yes, please.

MR. BROWN: Would you like that? Okay, so email to you?

MR. FITZGERALD: Yes, please.

MR. BROWN: Okay, what's a good email address?

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1 MR. FITZGERALD: [REDACTED].

2 MR. BROWN: [REDACTED]?

3 MR. FITZGERALD: [REDACTED].

4 MR. BROWN: [REDACTED]. So
5 look for that in a couple of weeks. And when I send it to you,
6 I'll say hey, you have 14 days to review it. If you don't respond
7 to me, it means you had no changes. Okay?

8 MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

9 MR. BROWN: What I'll do now is I'm going to have everybody
10 in the group introduce themselves and their, their position here
11 and go from there. So Paul?

12 MR. SUFFERN: Yes, so I'm Paul SUFFERN. I'm a meteorologist
13 investigator with the NTSB.

14 MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: Betty Koschig, I'm an Air Traffic Control
16 Investigator at the NTSB.

17 MS. MARINAS: Hello, Karena Marinas. NATCA Air Safety
18 Investigator like Seth and a controller at L.A. Center.

19 MR. FITZGERALD: Nice.

20 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, the United Airlines Regional Manager,
21 Air Traffic Strategies. And I'm retired FAA.

22 MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

23 MR. HURLING: Ryan Hurling, Senior Flight Safety Investigator
24 United Airlines, and I'm the Lead Investigator from the company
25 side for United for this event.

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1 MR. FITZGERALD: Roger that.

2 MR. BROWN: Okay, and I see you have a representative with
3 you. Who is?

4 MR. MYERS: Seth Myers.

5 MR. BROWN: I'm sorry, Jason. I skipped you. Go ahead.

6 MR. ALLISTON: Jason Allison, I'm the FAA SME. I'm the Air
7 Traffic Manager at Atlanta Center.

8 MR. FITZGERALD: Nice.

9 MR. BROWN: And then you have Seth. For the record Seth?

10 MR. MYERS: Seth Meyers.

11 MR. BROWN: Okay. And that's your chosen representative for
12 this investigation?

13 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes.

14 MR. BROWN: Okay. So, you can see we're a big group. So a
15 little bit about why we're here what we're doing. So we're
16 charged by Congress, the NTSB, to investigate all civil accidents,
17 which is what this one is classified as. Our power, we're not
18 compliance driven. We're not, you did follow the 7110, so we
19 don't, we just want factual information.

20 MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

21 MR. BRWON: To produce probable cause for the event, and then
22 to make safety recommendations to prevent it from ever happening
23 again. That's in a nutshell why we are here today. Okay? So any
24 truth, truthful answer to questions, honesty.

25 If you don't know an answer, it's better to say I don't know,

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1 than guess. The questioning we want you to base on what happened
2 that day, not what you would have done, but what actually happened
3 that day.

4 MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

5 MR. BROWN: So we do it round-robin style. Where I'll kick
6 off the interview. And then we'll go around the room. During
7 that time, if you ever need to, if you need to talk to Seth, you
8 can talk.

9 If you need to take a break, use the restroom, get a drink,
10 whatever, by all means, just say so. We're not, like you said,
11 there's no light bulbs swinging over your head. It's more of a
12 conversation, right?

13 So, all of this data we're going to collect. It's going to
14 go into what's called a docket. All right? Of field notes. And
15 that will be released to the public. And that takes up to a year.
16 Just because you can see all the people.

17 This is just the air traffic control side. There's an Ops
18 side and everything else too. So all that gets put into a docket
19 before it's released. Probably look at being in here for maybe an
20 hour, maybe a little bit longer.

21 MR. FITZGERALD: Sure.

22 MR. BROWN: Just so you know. And once again, if you ever
23 have questions for your rep, even if you're like, hey, can I step
24 outside, by all means just let us know.

25 MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

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1 MR. BROWN: That's basically the structure we're running now.
2 So are you all set to begin?

3 MR. FITZGERALD: I'm ready.

4 MR. BROWN: Okay. So, the first part of the questions are
5 pretty basic. They're just who are you and getting to know you a
6 little bit better. So, one other thing, too, so you're going see
7 us typing a lot. And even though it's recorded, we'll try to make
8 eye contact when we can. But we got to keep up with our notes
9 too. So you are represented by Seth.

10 INTERVIEW OF JOHN FITZGERALD

11 BY MR. BROWN:

12 Q. And the date of the event February 10th, how old were you,
13 John?

14 A. Forty years old.

15 Q. Forty. Welcome to the club.

16 A. I had just turned.

17 Q. You didn't turn 40, you turned 40 before the 10th, correct?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. January 31st.

21 Q. All right. And your operator initials?

22 A. Foxtrot India.

23 Q. And you are a certified professional Controller, correct?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Do you have any previous FAA ATC experience? Military, DOD,

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1 contract?

2 A. No.

3 Q. No prior, okay. Do you have any collateral duties? Or have
4 you been on any details recently that would take you out of the
5 operation?

6 A. Define recently.

7 Q. Within the last six months.

8 A. No.

9 Q. This question is just give me your, your ATC or aviation
10 background. How did you get into ATC? Aviation interest?

11 A. Well, I was born at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City
12 while my father was in the FAA Academy. I moved to Nashua, New
13 Hampshire when I was three days old from Oklahoma City. And my
14 dad was a Controller here for 32 years, I believe.

15 My mother still works in this building as a Traffic
16 Management Analyst. And I carry the same name as my father, I'm
17 the fifth. And I wanted to follow in his footsteps, so here we
18 are 15 years later.

19 Q. Got you. And you've been here your entire career, correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Yes, that's a, that's actually a really good story.
22 Have you ever been fired, terminated, suspended, or asked to
23 resign from any ATC position?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Now it's more about your health, so how would you describe

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1 your overall health from poor to excellent?

2 A. Good.

3 Q. Okay. You had an FAA Class 2 physical the date of the event,
4 correct?

5 A. I don't recall.

6 Q. Okay. Do you wear contacts or glasses?

7 A. Neither.

8 Q. Did you want to say something else?

9 A. Did you ask if I had my physical actually on that day?

10 Q. No, it was it was current during the day of the event,
11 correct?

12 A. Yes, it was current.

13 Q. Okay. Do you take any maintenance prescription, or non-
14 prescription medications?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And that as part of your physical? Everything's reported?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. I don't need to know what it is.

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. Was drug or alcohol screening performed following this event?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Any changes in your health during the last year? And we're
23 looking at for like major surgeries, had any medical episodes?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Any changes in your personal life in the last year? So did

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1 get married, get divorced?

2 A. I got married.

3 Q. Congratulations.

4 A. Sorry, yes.

5 Q. Kids?

6 A. I have two children, or I have two children of my own and
7 then a stepdaughter.

8 Q. Okay. Any changes in your financial situation during the
9 last year? So, an example had to pay alimony, you won the
10 lottery, you sold a house and made a bunch of money. Anything
11 like that in the last year?

12 A. I sold a house and made a lot of money and put it into
13 another house.

14 Q. Okay, so you moved though?

15 A. I moved, yes.

16 Q. Got you, got you. Okay, this question, it's a 72-hour
17 history.

18 A. Okay.

19 So we're going to go from Saturday, the 10th --

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. -- all the way back to, we'll go through Thursday.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. Okay. So, if you don't know, you don't know. Don't tell me
24 when I normally get up, so whatever. So, going back to -- which
25 way is easier for you, to start on Saturday and go back in time?

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1 Or we can start on Thursday, talk about Thursday, Friday, then
2 Saturday?

3 A. Can I pull my phone up?

4 Q. Yes, absolutely.

5 A. That was February, just because my schedule changes week to
6 week.

7 Q. Yes, so the event happened the February 10th, a Saturday.

8 A. Okay. It doesn't matter. You can --

9 Q. Okay, we'll start Thursday then to stay chronological. So
10 Thursday, do you know about, did you work Thursday? We'll start
11 from there.

12 A. No, I did not.

13 Q. So RDO or leave?

14 A. RDO.

15 Q. Okay, do you know what time you woke up?

16 A. Thursday, I woke up at 6:30.

17 Q. And I'm assuming a.m.?

18 A. A.m., yes.

19 Q. So, it's your day off. Anything? Do you, you know, you run
20 the kids to school? Do you have doctor's appointments?

21 A. I ran the kids to school.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And I went and got a new driver's license.

24 Q. How was that up here?

25 A. I made an appointment so --

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- 1 Q. Not that painful?
- 2 A. Not, it was at 9:20.
- 3 Q. Okay, so Thursday night, so no issues, no car accidents,
- 4 nothing crazy that day --
- 5 A. No.
- 6 Q. -- other than getting your license?
- 7 A. No.
- 8 Q. Do you know what time you went to bed?
- 9 A. I don't know.
- 10 Q. Give or take?
- 11 A. I don't recall.
- 12 Q. That's fine. Okay, so now we're on Friday.
- 13 A. Yes, I'm just --
- 14 Q. Okay.
- 15 A. I'm going to look up, I'm looking on Web Scheduler if I
- 16 worked that day.
- 17 Q. And I know I said 72, but we're just going to do 36. Just so
- 18 you know.
- 19 A. Of course, it's slow.
- 20 Q. We feel it too in here. This center and internet do not
- 21 cooperate.
- 22 A. Here we go. All right, I have my records now.
- 23 Q. Okay. Go ahead, sure.
- 24 A. I was on annual leave on Friday the 9th as well.
- 25 Q. Annual leave, okay. Scheduled? Spot leave?

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- 1 A. It was scheduled or prime time.
- 2 Q. Prime time. Just the one day, right?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Or were you coming off a week of leave?
- 5 A. No, it was just one day.
- 6 Q. Same questions for that day though. Did you wake up at about
- 7 what time?
- 8 A. I would probably, 7:00, 7:15.
- 9 Q. 7:00 or 7:15, okay.
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Did you clean out the garage?
- 12 A. I don't, I don't recall on that day.
- 13 Q. Okay. Not a big deal. Do you recall what time about you
- 14 would have went to bed?
- 15 A. 10:30 p.m.
- 16 Q. So now the 10th, the Saturday, the date of the event. Do you
- 17 remember what, what shift you had that day?
- 18 A. A 1300.
- 19 Q. Okay, so you worked in eve. What time do you think you got
- 20 up that day?
- 21 A. 7:00, 7:30.
- 22 Q. Okay, walk me through your day as far as, okay, you get up at
- 23 7:30. Do you run the kids to school then when you're working? Do
- 24 you hang out at the house? Go to the gym?
- 25 A. That I -- on a normal Saturday, I would wake up at around

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1 that time and then go, go to my son's basketball game before work.
2 Q. Do you know if that -- did you do that on that day do you
3 think?
4 A. Like I say --
5 Q. If you don't recall, you don't recall.
6 A. I have the schedule.
7 Q. All right.
8 A. No, I did not that day. So I just laid around the -- did
9 housework.
10 Q. Okay. How was your commute to get here?
11 A. 1.5 miles.
12 Q. So, so you left at 12:50?
13 A. I don't recall if it flexed in.
14 Q. Okay.
15 A. Because we can, we have the half-hour window. Between 1300,
16 1230 and 1300 is our window to arrive.
17 Q. Okay.
18 A. So I probably left at 1225. I don't recall if I flexed that
19 day.
20 Q. Okay.
21 A. Usually, five minutes before my arrival to the facility.
22 Q. All right, did you file an ATSAP report for the accident?
23 A. I did not.
24 Q. Okay. Have you been interviewed about this event before?
25 Not including the FAA, ERT?

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. So, like you said that was for just during the SSR,
3 right?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Have you had an opportunity to review the replay of the
6 event?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Do you know when that was? And that was audio and
9 video, correct?

10 A. Yes. Yes, it was with the SSR.

11 Q. Okay. So, I'll just say this, it's kind of weird how you
12 were sitting there.

13 A. During the event or currently?

14 Q. So, so during the event. No, you're fine, man.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. So, so because the dash tens

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- and were you just helping out?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. So, because this is the question, this is the next question.
21 Was a relief briefing conducted when you took the position?

22 A. No.

23 Q. So, but you're at D side? Okay, so no. Okay. Because you
24 were -- why wasn't a relief briefing completed?

25 A. Because I was going to be the relieving Radar Controller.

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1 And he just wanted to clean up whatever moves he was doing at the
2 time. And he had just asked me to, just to sit with him, and be
3 an extra set of eyes --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- for like, a couple of minutes. And then my, the intent
6 was to just slide over when he felt comfortable giving it to me,
7 and I felt comfortable taking it over, that I would go from the
8 extra set of eyes to the Radar Controller and one position for
9 that sector.

10 Q. I understand, okay. So, you were kind of doing a pre-brief,
11 but he was like, hey, just give me a few minutes?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Got you. Okay. So, that, from that kind of on position, on
14 a scale of one to five, with five being the heaviest, how would
15 you classify the traffic volume at the time of the event?

16 A. Three.

17 Q. And was that normal for that time of day?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Same, same line of questioning on a scale of one to five with
20 five being the most complex, would you classify the traffic
21 complexity, how would you classify the traffic complexity at the
22 time of the event?

23 A. I wasn't there at the time of the event.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So --

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1 Q. Leading up to the event then? I know what you're saying
2 though.

3 A. Yes. I don't, I don't want to say normal because of the bad
4 rides and weather.

5 Q. It's one through five, though.

6 A. It wasn't abnormal, yes, I know. Yes, no, I just I guess I'm
7 thinking out loud.

8 Q. No, it's fine, so.

9 A. I'd call it a 3.5.

10 Q. We can do that. And was that normal for that time?

11 A. Slightly abnormal just because of the weather and being the
12 wintertime, and --

13 Q. Okay, were there any distractions occurring at/or leading up
14 to the time of the event?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Okay. Do you recall the weather conditions or current
17 advisories leading up to the time of the event?

18 A. Repeat it, please?

19 Q. Do you recall the weather conditions or current advisories
20 at/and leading up to the time of the event?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Can you elaborate on what you remember?

23 A. That there was minor deviations with the precipitation on the
24 scope? And there was light and moderate chop.

25 Q. Okay.

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- 1 A. Numerous reports.
- 2 Q. Okay. Did you receive your pre-duty weather briefing that
3 day?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Do you recall if there's anything that stood out?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. Okay. Follow up on that question. How valuable do you think
8 the pre-duty weather briefing is? It's not a trick question.
9 It's completely your opinion.
- 10 A. If it's on a scale of one to five, it's a one in value.
- 11 Q. Okay. If you could flip a switch and make a change today,
12 how would you want it?
- 13 A. We get meteorological weather sheets every four hours, I
14 believe, or six hours delivered to the areas, which is much more,
15 I don't know. It seems more valuable real time. And maybe an
16 emphasis on reviewing those because it just goes to the
17 Supervisor, the OS, or the CIC, and they just put it on display.
- 18 Q. Okay.
- 19 A. But to for it to be like a requirement to review that in lieu
20 of the pre-duty weather briefing, could be more beneficial, I
21 guess.
- 22 Q. Okay. Did you have a cell phone or cellular PED with you at
23 the time of the event?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. And was it on, off, audio off? Do you remember?

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1 A. On silent mode.

2 Q. Okay. Were you using it during the time of the event or
3 leading up to the event?

4 A. No.

5 Q. So, now we're down to the to the event itself.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. So what I want to, I want you to, because I know you said you
8 saw the replay.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. But take me back, so we don't armchair quarterback it, to the
11 day you're sitting there. Well, walk me back through when you
12 came into the area from there. And as much, the more description
13 the better for us.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. So, you walk into area, walk over to R24?

16 A. Yes, I walk into the area, run down the list of who needs a
17 break or wants a break. Grab my headset when I see that it's
18 Andre Tetterton's break.

19 And I think he said something to the effect, hey, man, just
20 sit next to me for a couple minutes while I finish this up. So, I
21 just sat down, plugged in, could see what was on the scope as it
22 wasn't too, the volume wasn't super high. I could understand
23 effective immediately what was going on.

24 Q. Okay. So, you're sitting next to him, and he's up for a
25 break?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And then another Controller comes in?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Do you remember about what time you got up? Let me back that
5 up.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Another Controller comes in. How does that play out?

8 A. I believe I was beginning the preparations. And we were,
9 Andre and myself were in discussions of taking, myself taking the
10 sector over.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. When the -- when Controller C came in.

13 Q. We're interviewing them. You can use their name. It's okay.

14 A. When Kevin came in, it had somehow got back to me on the
15 break rotation. And since I was already getting Andre out, we
16 called it a two for one. Where, because, because I hadn't
17 officially taken over the radar side, and I was still on the D
18 side, we said, we all concurred a two for one.

19 And since Kevin was going to get a briefing from Andre as to
20 exactly what was going on the scope, I just unplugged, and took my
21 break. And subsequently forgot, forgot to sign out of the D side
22 computer.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Because it's actually not very common.

25 Q. So, you, do you remember when you left? Was it during their

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1 briefing? Was it after they had briefed?

2 A. It was before or during their briefing.

3 Q. Okay. So, you left the area, though, you didn't go to a
4 different sector?

5 A. Correct, I left the area.

6 Q. Okay. Do you remember if you were ever notified of a
7 turbulence event?

8 A. Define turbulence event.

9 Q. For this event, that an accident had happened with United.

10 A. I was notified of an event in our area when I saw Tarah Park
11 in the building. And I said, hey, Chief, what are you doing here
12 on a weekend?

13 And she said, there was an accident. And I said, oh, no,
14 what area? And she goes, yours. So, that's how I found out that
15 there was an event in the area. And I still wasn't, she still
16 didn't, or I still didn't know that I was loosely involved with
17 the event.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. All I had to do was sign out.

20 MR. BROWN: That's it for me. I'm going pass it on to Paul,
21 our meteorologist.

22 MR. SUFFERN: That sounds like an important title, Mike.

23 MR. BROWN: It is.

24 MR. SUFFERN: I don't know.

25 BY MR. SUFFERN:

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1 Q. Thank you for being here, again, and for shedding light on,
2 on the questions that we have is helpful to just put the pieces
3 together. I'm sure it's really helpful. And since you've spent
4 quite a bit of time here, it's helpful to gather your background
5 just as an Air Traffic Controller working here.

6 Just you know, working here, how often do you have
7 thunderstorms in the wintertime? And I'll couch wintertime from
8 say, November to March timeframe. How often do you guys have them
9 up here?

10 A. I would say less than a handful, less than five. It's not
11 very common.

12 Q. So, less, less than five throughout a winter season?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Or less than five since you've been here?

15 A. Yes, less than five a winter season.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. They do come around every so often.

18 Q. Okay. And then I'll just call it out of season events, like
19 thunderstorms here in the wintertime. Have you been trained or
20 provided a briefing on how to handle those situations since it's
21 not summertime thunderstorms, and you've had a refresher training
22 in like April, or something?

23 A. We get refresher training every year on winter. We get our
24 winter weather briefing and our summer briefing. And to my
25 understanding, convective activity in the wintertime, at least

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1 from my experience, has been treated much like summertime
2 convective activity, where we call the weather and if they would
3 like to deviate, advise.

4 If they want to deviate, you know, they can, they're more
5 than allowed to with, you know with concurrence. But it's treated
6 much like summer convective activity. So, I don't recall if
7 there's actual convective winter briefings per se, or if it's
8 included in the winter weather briefing. It's usually supercooled
9 water droplets.

10 Q. Yes. So, regarding that, and then your time here, and your
11 experience, again, not on the day of the accident, but just in
12 your experience, has your sector ever gotten, and I'll use a,
13 probably the wrong air traffic control term, but overfull, due
14 weather and you've had, you know, request help, or less flow
15 through your sector?

16 A. In the wintertime, or just in general?

17 Q. In general, yes.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you, if you can recall that experience, could you relate
20 that?

21 A. It happens quite frequently in the summertime.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. With how the weather builds and tends to stay over New York
24 City, New York, is swift to, "shut the door". So we have to move
25 traffic north through Cleveland Center's airspace and coming

1 through Boston Center's airspace.

2 So, it could happen 10 or 12 days in a row where we are
3 completely saturated in certain sectors, where you need the D side
4 or you need a tracker, when you've already split the sector out.
5 It can, it can happen once in a week, and it can happen 10 or 12
6 days in a row.

7 Where, where sectors will be completely saturated. Again,
8 we're not swift to slow down traffic on, I guess on the ground.
9 We'll put in a spacing requirement through Cleveland. That's the
10 extent that we really, typically, go for a traffic management
11 initiative into our own area.

12 Q. Okay. And as far as, just because of my lack of knowledge
13 and protocol, is that set up by, you know, your Sup? Is that set
14 up by TMU? Or do you request, hey, we're getting saturated here,
15 I need to, I need help.

16 A. That is generally set up from the Controller who, who
17 feels -- I take it back. When the Boston Center TMU gets notice
18 that we will be taking additional aircraft, and I'm using this
19 because this is general most of the time how it works.

20 That we'll be taking additional aircraft. They'll call down
21 to the area and say, hey, you're going take all the LaGuardias.
22 And we'll say okay, we need 20 miles in trail. And then, if
23 they'll call back and say, now you're taking all the Newarks as
24 well, we'll say, okay, we need 20 miles and trail on them
25 separately.

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1 And if it gets too much, sometimes we'll, the initiative will
2 be set up by the Traffic Management. And if it needs something on
3 the fly that usually comes from the Controller to Supervisor back
4 to Traffic Management to initiate that backflow through to
5 Cleveland.

6 Q. Thank you, that's really helpful. Shifting the discussion, a
7 little bit.

8 A. Yes?

9 Q. Could you describe how the PIREP process works from your side
10 here in Boston Center?

11 A. Just typically we'll get, either we will canvass for the
12 PIREPs, or a pilot will give us a PIREP. And generally, for chop
13 and turbulence, there's not much information needed on our part,
14 just moderate or greater. We already have the location because
15 it's on the scope.

16 And you just put in the geographic location with a fixed
17 radial distance. The time is generally always now. Altitude,
18 type aircraft, type in intensity of the of the chop. If it's
19 icing, you know, we have to get the outside air temperature and
20 that type of stuff. And there is a remark section if there's
21 additional information that can be provided on the weather report
22 from the airport.

23 Q. I was reading through the 7110. And here, for Boston, I
24 noticed in January there was a change from a Controller must
25 forward all PIREPs to relaying now just operationally pertinent

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1 PIREPs. What is operationally pertinent mean to you?

2 A. Can you read that again?

3 Q. So, the 7110 changed here locally. And it went from a
4 Controller must forward all PIREPs to now Controllers must relay
5 operationally pertinent PIREPs. What does operationally pertinent
6 mean to you?

7 A. In regard to, pertinent PIREPs would be turbulence or chop
8 moderate or greater, typically as, as stated. A thousand and
9 three at the small airports where we control to the ground, or you
10 know, bases for those air, for those airports, port areas. And
11 then anything, any icing light or greater.

12 With the addition, with the knowledge knowing that if
13 something isn't, not generally with like trace icing and stuff,
14 but maybe a light or a negative turbulence PIREP, which isn't
15 something that's required. But it isn't required by FAA
16 standards, but that's something that we will put in, in addition
17 sometimes. So, I guess those would be my examples of an
18 operational pertinent PIREP.

19 MR. SUFFERN: Okay, thank you. That's all I got for right
20 now. Thank you, that's very helpful.

21 MR. FITZGERALD: Thank you, yes.

22 MR. BROWN: Karena?

23 BY MS. MARINAS:

24 Q. What kind of PIREPs had you been getting for this sector or
25 area that day up until that point?

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1 A. So I believe that was my first session of the day. And
2 honestly, I had only been sitting there for I would say five
3 minutes, plus or minus a couple minutes. But I had only been
4 sitting on the Delta side position for five minutes.

5 So I was only there for, I don't even know if I was there for
6 PIREPs coming from the pilots as much as listening to Andre issue,
7 you know, the pertinent PIREP, previous PIREP information for
8 weather and for the rides.

9 Q. Did you notice if any PIREPs were stored at the sector, or
10 any information about the weather were stored at the sector?

11 A. I don't, I don't recall.

12 Q. Was the, was turbulence something you were expecting at that
13 sector based on the weather briefing? Or any anything else? Did
14 the supervisor tell you anything?

15 A. No more than a typical day in the wintertime with strong
16 winds. Usually, Boston Center winter is bad rides, summer is
17 thunderstorms, and potential --

18 Q. Yes, so really like nothing that you can recall significant
19 had been relayed to you?

20 A. Nothing, yes. Nothing that would have, was to suggest there
21 was going to be any type of event.

22 Q. Who's typically responsible for entering and disseminating
23 the PIREPs when you have an R Side/D Side configuration in your
24 area?

25 A. So, obviously the radar team receives the PIREP from the

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1 aircraft. If there is a radar associate, they will put that into
2 the ERID system that gets sent to Traffic Management. And Traffic
3 Management will then input into the GIs of the, I don't even know
4 what, what's the D Side?

5 MR. MEYERS: EDST.

6 MR. FITZGERALD: EDST. And sent to pertinent areas or to the
7 whole building to be put into the general information notices for
8 the sectors.

9 BY MS. MARINAS:

10 Q. Do you as a controller in the area ever have any input or get
11 any input in terms of reroutes? Actually, you kind of said this a
12 little bit earlier.

13 A. Yes?

14 Q. Reroutes in the sector based on weather?

15 A. In the summertime, it's -- I got, give me a second.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And can you repeat the question actually?

18 Q. Yes, I'll -- some form of it.

19 A. Yes, yes, yes.

20 Q. Because I kind of muddled through it.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So, do you get any input as a Controller in the area in terms
23 of reroutes for weather or swap routes or anything like that?

24 Implementing any reroutes for weather?

25 A. There is some collaboration between Traffic Management, OS,

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1 Controller. Really -- do you want me to go I guess kind of into
2 the details of it?

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. So Traffic Management will call and say, hey, we're going to
5 try to reroute these guys over here. And the Controller will
6 either say, I can handle it, or we can, Boston Center can handle
7 it, or we can't.

8 And usually, we do take it. And then, we'll just, the
9 Controller and the OS will collaborate as to what type of spacing
10 requirement we will pass back. Depending on how many aircraft.
11 Sometimes it's a fixed amount.

12 Sometimes it's just an open door. Sometimes it's one
13 airport. And sometimes it's New York Metro or -- so, it's all
14 dependent, but I would say there's a little bit of collaboration
15 that goes into it prior to making the final decision back at TMU.

16 Q. How? So then, if that's the case, how does TMU -- do you
17 have any idea what generally prompts that for TMU?

18 A. Yes. New York Center, New York approach, and Command Center.

19 Q. Okay. That makes sense.

20 A. And because we're the furthest west area, we're kind of the,
21 just by geography, the area that kind of takes a lot of that New
22 York Metro stuff inbound. We are the dumping ground in the
23 summertime for the New York Metro stuff.

24 Q. Okay. I've heard that before, so. So, in the weather
25 briefing slides that we got to review --

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- I noticed that there's two, it's generally I thought
3 pretty informative in the beginning. At the end, there's two
4 slides. One for PIREP solicitation, and one they call the TAF
5 Board.

6 But they're kind of shown very quickly and not much
7 information, you know, synthesized with that, or, or offered in
8 conjunction to those two sites. Do you, can you, do you feel like
9 you have time to read those when you're looking at that? Does it
10 make any sense? Do you use that information?

11 A. Honestly, a lot of that stuff is just rote or mundane. You
12 know, you come in every day, you check it. You come in every day,
13 you check it. And it's always going to say there's potential for
14 light to moderate turbulence, or there's potential for, you know,
15 thunderstorm activity.

16 Meteorologists are like baseball players. If they get it
17 right 33 percent of the time, they're all stars. No offense.
18 But, but a lot of it has become, I'm just checking the box. I'm
19 checking the box. And then as the CIC I go to stand up, you know,
20 from time to time and they're like solicit PIREPs, solicit PIREPs,
21 solicit PIREPs. And it's, it falls on deaf ears because it's,
22 it's, it's coming out the same way every day, every day.

23 Q. I appreciate that you said that, actually. Because when I
24 was listening to it, too, the tone of voice of the person who
25 being recorded --

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- was, it seemed like it was very average. Like --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- so I was kind of curious about that. That's how I picked
5 up on it. It seemed very like --

6 A. Yes, imagine that --

7 Q. -- this is just it --

8 A. -- you know --

9 Q. -- all the time.

10 A. -- the time 250th day of this year for the, since we've been
11 doing those for, you know, maybe 10 years. I mean, that's
12 arguably the 5000th weather briefing I've heard before going into
13 work.

14 And we have continuous radars, you know, and the systems in
15 the area are much more important than the pre-weather briefing.
16 When a PIREP gets input, we see it on the scope where it was
17 input, and what altitudes it was at.

18 We see the weather, you know, on a continuous loop where it's
19 moving. And as a CIC, or if, if it's slow enough where someone
20 can look, we can pull up different functions of that radar to find
21 out winds, to find out echo tops, to find out, you know,
22 intensities.

23 And that, that information in real time is far more helpful
24 than a stupid pre-weather briefing, to be frank. And I guess to
25 go back to your question, maybe even an OS, pre-verbal,

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1 pre-briefing, walking into the area would be much more helpful
2 than the recorded one.

3 MR. BROWN: I will put that up there.

4 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes. All right, thank you.

5 BY MS. MARINAS:

6 Q. So I mean, you were only there for a few minutes.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. From what you saw, as far as the PIREPs that Andre, right?

9 A. Andre was the controller, yes.

10 Q. Was disseminating, did that seem like it was matching up with
11 what you knew? So, you know --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- at that point with the forecast and stuff?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay, switching a little bit here. So, the facility has a
16 number of caps out for, from ICV, ECV stuff?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Are you familiar with those and can you tell me about any of
19 it?

20 A. I think there's, is there what 18 caps in the vicinity?

21 Q. There probably is.

22 A. So I can't speak to -- I mean, there's, that's a lot. And I
23 think you've -- what did we start with? Like 26, 28? So, I don't
24 know how many. I can't, I can't speak to. Or are you, do you
25 mean any more specifically?

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1 Q. Well, just you know, what you, what familiarity you have with
2 the CAPs and how they're being worked and any of that? You can't
3 answer this wrong.

4 A. Yes, no.

5 Q. It's just an understanding of, you know, what they are.

6 A. We get the monthly, monthly CAP Team briefing with the safe,
7 Local Safety Action Council briefing. So that's as far as, that's
8 as much as I know, specifically.

9 Q. That's pretty good. Okay, so, with the PIREPs that were
10 received that day, are you aware if the OS kind of knew what those
11 PIREPs were? Is, or in general, in your area, if you're getting
12 PIREPs, does the OS know about them pretty quickly or at all?

13 A. The Supervisor that was in there that day is an active
14 Supervisor and generally knows what's going on with PIREPs in the
15 area.

16 Q. How do you get notified of adjacent facility, like, urgent
17 PIREPs?

18 A. I don't know if we get urgent PIREPs from -- do we get urgent
19 PIREPs from Cleveland in New York? I don't recall. I don't
20 recall. The only urgent PIREPs I really recall getting are with
21 towers and low-level wind shear. I guess, yes, I don't know if we
22 get urgent specific PIREPs from Cleveland and New York. Now,
23 that's got me thinking. And if we don't, that's a terrible,
24 that's not safe. Sorry.

25 Q. Okay. So, three of the CAPs that I saw had to deal with

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1 hazardous weather broadcasts procedures and phraseology --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- weather familiarization, and PIREP dissemination and
4 classification. Just off the top of your head, can you think,
5 remember, have you had any training on any of those other than the
6 LSC safety discussions?

7 A. I believe so in the recurrent. I can't recall how long ago,
8 but I believe there was recurrent training on those type of
9 things.

10 Q. Okay. And so, the new Controller, when that person came
11 in -- I'm sorry, were you were you sitting there, or were you gone
12 already by the time they sat down to take the position?

13 A. I believe I was already unplugged.

14 Q. You were already unplugged?

15 A. Yes.

16 MS. MARINAS: Okay. I think that's all the questions.

17 Thanks.

18 MR. BROWN: Kevin?

19 BY MR. COON:

20 Q. When you said the pre-brief and you said for the value of it,
21 you said, one. Is that the pre-brief you said that's mundane?

22 A. Yes, it's just --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- very mundane, yes.

25 Q. Now, also, I think you said it was your first position. You

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1 were going to be taken for the day when you sat down?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So, were you, while you were sitting there, were you
4 pre-briefing yourself by just listening on the PIREP report?

5 A. Yes. And we have big boards with spacing.

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. The general number of aircraft in a 15-minute increment that
8 would be in the, each sector.

9 Q. The map numbers?

10 A. Yes, the map numbers. You know, listening to Andre, with my
11 pre-weather briefing. And again, it was, it was nothing out of
12 the ordinary that would prompt any further investigation for
13 myself prior to taking a position.

14 Q. And you said it's not very common? And was that signing out
15 of the -- signing on, or signing out of the D Side? Did you --

16 A. Yes. So, even when working a radar position, you sign into
17 it, and you're automatically logged off when the next person signs
18 into it. So, you don't have to actually sign out. So, it's not
19 common practice to actually physically -- and it's like a
20 secondary, you got to like shift control, shift A/B. So, like,
21 half the people don't even know how to do it.

22 Q. I get it now. I just when you said --

23 A. It's just, it's not common.

24 Q. Okay. You said an OS pre-briefing would be much more
25 helpful.

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Can you explain what would see that as?

3 A. I think some of the Supervisors that I respect more, on a
4 professional level do kind of do that now. You know? If they
5 know that there's going to be continuous moderate turbulence
6 throughout the airspace, they'll generally give you a quick little
7 quip of what they know.

8 But I think formalizing that to be a pre, prior to work,
9 prior to entry into the area briefing would be much more
10 beneficial than, you know, the other one. So, I don't know if I
11 answered your question.

12 Q. No, you did. And, you know, I really appreciate your honesty
13 and your candor.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Very much so. You know? Shutting the door on things like
16 that, it's --

17 A. Yes, I definitely, I'm not currently in the union. I had
18 been a union member for 14 years. I've been an active participant
19 in recurrent training, VOR decommissioning. I was a union
20 representative. If I was --

21 I've been Article 17, which is training details. And I do,
22 as corny as it sounds, I'm using this as an opportunity to
23 hopefully make a difference. Because that's what I want to do big
24 picture in the FAA. I've told every --

25 And this is, this will be my soapbox section. Every trainee

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1 that, that I've ever worked with, I may look like I'm screwing
2 around, or whatever, but I take this job very seriously. I'm
3 second generation in this building.

4 I've worked with my dad. My mother is still in this
5 building. My former father-in-law who I've known for 40 years is
6 retired from this building. My godfather retired from this
7 building. So I take air traffic control very seriously. And, and
8 I feel like there's a lot of ways that we can make it safer.

9 So, I do my best with the options I have to try to make this
10 a better place to be. I'm very proud to be an Air Traffic
11 Controller. I'm very proud to be in the aviation industry. I'm
12 very proud to continue to be a Controller. So, you know, any, any
13 difference I can make, I really strive to do that.

14 MR. COON: I have no other questions.

15 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes.

16 MR. COON: And thank you. It's, it's really refreshing to
17 hear that.

18 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes. And I may look like, like, my hands
19 are tattooed. I look like a punk. Like, I don't usually wear
20 collared shirts. Usually, it's just some sort of like V-neck,
21 T-shirt.

22 MR. BROWN: So, you dressed up for us?

23 MR. FITZGERALD: I did dress up for you guys. And I almost
24 like that, because then it makes my story a little more
25 interesting, where people learn and pay attention more. Because

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1 it's something you're not expecting from the visual that you get
2 from me. So, I don't know.

3 MR. COON: That's great. I understand. I appreciate your
4 honesty.

5 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes.

6 MR. COON: And your candor.

7 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes, thank you.

8 MR. BROWN: Ryan?

9 BY MR. HURLING:

10 Q. Yes, so since, and when you first came in the room, you kind
11 of gave me, gave us a brief history of -- how long you've been
12 here as a Controller in this center?

13 A. Fifteen and a half years.

14 Q. Okay, great. So, I think you would have a pulse on the
15 leadership, so. And leadership when I was prior Southwest. I was
16 there 25 years. I got a lot of time on ground ops. And I always
17 thought that the best leaders were visible leaders, out there, and
18 getting a pulse on, a pulse on the operation. You've been here a
19 long time and so forth. So I take your observation as a whole
20 valid.

21 A. Sure.

22 Q. On a scale of one to ten the pulse of leadership currently
23 here in place on what's going on day-to-day operation, what would
24 you say it's at?

25 A. I guess, are you meaning, excuse me, frontline management or

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1 like?

2 Q. Frontline, on the ground, in there with you in the dirt.

3 A. I would say in Area A we have some pretty good Supervisors,
4 when it comes to the pulse.

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. There's one who definitely does not have the pulse. There's
7 one that has the pulse, kind of. And then, two that are very
8 active to the point of annoyance to some Controllers. But I
9 appreciate because they're, they're moving. They're not just
10 parked up at the desk, you know, checking their whatever. You
11 know, reading emails.

12 Q. Sure, understood.

13 A. So --

14 Q. Overall, let's just say the last two years --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- the new, the new Controllers that are coming in, and you
17 know, you've been, you're kind guiding them --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- there at times, right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Are the new Controllers getting the training, do you
22 think that they should be at this time? Or has it changed over
23 the years? Or do you think they're getting everything they should
24 to become new Controllers? From a training aspect? And if not,
25 what --

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- do you think that they would need to add?

3 A. In the current environment, I actually do think they're
4 getting most that they should. Because the only, the only thing
5 that's really going to get them better is time.

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. It's tough because of Boston Center being so seasonal. That
8 if you come through at the right time for a trainee, but the wrong
9 time thinking big picture, Controller, it's tough. And you,
10 you're going to learn over the next five years. No, the next five
11 summers, kind of what to do. I don't know if there's anything
12 else you can do.

13 Q. Okay. And that's fine.

14 A. I think it's, yes. It's just exposure. I'm a little bit
15 more of the old salty trainer. My last, they call me Tech
16 Sergeant Fitzgerald. So, I guess, because I was, that's how I was
17 raised. And I take it serious. And this isn't, I'm not going to
18 rub your back.

19 And I preach techniques and efficiencies. I really try to be
20 efficient with what I do, to a detriment of leading my life. And
21 why I make every single decision has come from air traffic
22 control, and the reasons.

23 So, I always try to have a reason. I always tried to have an
24 efficiency. And that's how I train my trainees and put them under
25 a hot -- I guess this is what I, what I do, and why I do it.

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1 Because there's less traffic, I try to stress my trainees out.

2 Because when they're in a high stress environment in the
3 summer with airplanes and stuff, they have to know what to do.
4 And you have to kind of put that stress away and work your
5 airplanes.

6 So, I'm either down their throat or asking them a million
7 questions. Not being derogatory, but I'm trying to stress them
8 out when it's slower, so they can learn how to compartmentalize
9 their blood pressure, or their temperature, and still focus on
10 getting the job done the right way. And I tell all of them that
11 too. I say, I'm going to try to stress you out.

12 Q. Understood.

13 A. So you know, DYSIM doesn't work for me. I'm not a huge
14 proponent of recurrent training in the DYSIM. Just because it's,
15 it's unrealistic.

16 Q. So, you'd say more real time?

17 A. More real time.

18 Q. On the clock?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Working, working real flights?

21 A. One hundred percent.

22 Q. Is the best training they can get?

23 A. Yes, yes.

24 Q. Which leads to my last question. You know, you were talking
25 about downtime and so forth. On Saturdays here and I know my time

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1 in ground ops --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- and being in the operation, and so forth, Saturdays was
4 always the less flight load.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is Saturday's here less air traffic load per Controller in
7 your opinion?

8 A. Generally speaking, yes.

9 Q. It is?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And is it easy for some Controllers with that, with that
12 being lower, to get complacent? I don't have this, I don't have
13 this large load today. Do you see that occurring at all? I know
14 it's subjective, but just can I get your opinion on it?

15 A. Minimally, if at all. You know, I know when I'm coming in on
16 a Saturday night --

17 Q. So that's --

18 A. -- I know it's generally going to be slow. Although last
19 summer, we got our butts kicked every Saturday night. It was
20 awful.

21 Q. I can tell you this as an Investigator of Flight Safety,
22 Saturday is the worst day --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Typically, historically.

25 A. Oh, really?

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1 MR. HURLING: It is, yes, but anyways. That's all my
2 questions.

3 MR. FITZGERALD: Thank you.

4 MR. HURLING: So Michael, I'll turn back to you, sir.

5 MR. BROWN: Okay, all right.

6 MR. HURLING: Thank you, again.

7 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes.

8 MR. ALLISON: Batting clean-up again. All right, you guys
9 have hit most of the things.

10 BY MR. ALLISTON:

11 Q. So PIREP solicitation, how do you know what you're supposed
12 to be soliciting for at any given time?

13 A. It's the rules.

14 Q. So, it is a rule. But do you have any, any cues or do you
15 have anything that tells you when you know visibility is low or
16 ceilings are below a thousand, or do you have turbulence in the
17 airspace other than the previous weather briefings?

18 A. We do have weather reporting stations at most of the small
19 airports we work that just, you know, update hourly or if there's
20 a speci. Oh, my mom's calling, she's here. So, we do try to
21 monitor those continuously.

22 And then, either, you know, some people remember to solicit
23 for them when you do get aircraft into and out of those airports,
24 for like, any of those reports. As for turbulence and icing, it's
25 just what the pilots tell us.

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1 Or you know if something is forecast, usually they know too.
2 I don't know how often you guys get reports while you're flying,
3 but it seems like you guys know, oh, there was forecast turbulence
4 over upstate New York. And you'll canvass us for ride reports to
5 get ahead of it, I guess.

6 Q. To get it via ACARS?

7 A. Yes, so, so we get most of those reports, real time from the
8 pilots.

9 Q. Okay. And do the Supervisors ever cue you to solicit?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And then, as far as the OMIC, do you ever see them having any
12 involvement in that piece?

13 A. In the PIREP part of it?

14 Q. Yes.

15 A. No. I take it back. Other than at stand up at 3:45 and
16 8:00 a.m. when they tell their OSs, make sure everyone solicits
17 for PIREPs, and did everyone do their pre-duty weather. That's
18 their, that's the entirety of their involvement.

19 Q. Okay. That leads me to the next question. How often do you
20 see the OMIC coming up and down the aisle?

21 A. Honestly, it depends on, I can't, I can't generalize that.
22 It's usually based on traffic. Like, if it's, if it's busy,
23 they're back and forth because they're, you know, they're, they're
24 working with their OSs, I guess, a little bit more. On a general
25 sense, not very often. On a regular day, not very often. Once,

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1 once a shift, maybe twice a shift. And I'll avoid getting on a
2 soapbox because I got one for that too.

3 Q. Right. So as far as your OS awareness, you know, you
4 mentioned that when you come back from break, having kind of
5 returned to duty briefing from the Supervisor would be beneficial.
6 Do you feel like your Supervisors are involved enough --

7 A. So I --

8 Q. -- in the operation enough to be able to give that to you?

9 A. -- I think in lieu of the pre-duty weather, an OS would be
10 more beneficial to do it, prior to work. Not, not after coming
11 back from a break, because generally, that Controller has been,
12 excuse me, in the operation has kind of, the flick -- has seen the
13 radar on loop for a while. Has seen where the reports are, if
14 any. So I just think an OS pre-brief, weather pre-brief would be
15 beneficial, not necessarily every time you come back from break.

16 Q. Okay. All right, yes, I can see that. And then -- I
17 completely lost my train of thought. Disregard. Was there a
18 Supervisor in the area during the time that you were plugged in?

19 A. Physically in the area? No, he was at his, I believe he was,
20 I believe he was at the Sup.'s desk, which is, you know, over,
21 there's, I don't know, a four-foot wall.

22 Q. Okay. And what was his guidance as far as, was it just when
23 you came back into the area, was it just to run the list thing?
24 Or did he have any kind of instruction on --

25 A. So, like, this was my first shift back from, I guess, a

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1 three-day weekend. I don't, I kind of, I believe, I just went
2 right in and started running the list. There was no guidance,
3 there was no input from him as to where I should go, or -- I just
4 kind of did what the normal thing to do is. You just come in and
5 you see where you're going to sit.

6 Q. Okay. And that's the typical thing?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is you just come in and run the list unless you get --

9 A. Yes. Unless they flag down --

10 Q. -- an alternative?

11 A. -- prior. And he's the Supervisor that would have. He's a
12 very active Supervisor. Like I said, to the point of annoyance,
13 with some people with his activity level of getting up from the
14 desk into the operation, coming back, asking questions. You know?
15 He has a keen ear to, oh, I heard something. What is, what's
16 going on? So he's, he's a very active Supervisor.

17 Q. So, and with that, if you came in and just ran the list --

18 A. Yes?

19 Q. -- but you noticed that maybe somebody was busier than they
20 needed to be --

21 A. Yes?

22 Q. -- do you guys just split the sectors on your own? Or --

23 A. If there isn't a D Side there, we'll generally just sit in as
24 a D side because it's the least invasive. Sometimes, we'll split
25 out a sector without prior, or prior approval from them, I guess

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1 would be the right way to put it. But the Controller knows
2 what's, knows their limits, knows what's going on. And knows
3 what's best, more so than I think an Operational Supervisor. I
4 guess a long-winded answer is, you know, yes, we do take that, we
5 do, if we see it, if necessary.

6 Q. If you need to, you'll --

7 A. Yes, absolutely, absolutely.

8 MR. ALLISON: I think that's really all I've got. You guys
9 covered everything else.

10 MR. BROWN: Betty?

11 MS. KOSCHIG: Last but not least.

12 MR. FITZGERALD: Boy, really, this one?

13 MS. KOSCHIG: I know right.

14 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

15 Q. Again, welcome to the interview.

16 A. Yes, it's great to be here.

17 Q. No, really do appreciate you, in all seriousness.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. I just want to fill in some blanks.

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. First of all, you're CIC --

22 A. Yes?

23 Q. -- how often do you really get to work CIC?

24 A. I think I averaged like four hours a week.

25 Q. Okay.

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- 1 A. I'm sorry, four hours of pay period. If, if I recall, like
2 my pay stubs, I don't look at them very often.
- 3 Q. Okay. You know, that's good.
- 4 A. Either I'm broke for two weeks, or I'm broke for two weeks.
5 It doesn't matter.
- 6 Q. Yes. Do you -- you talked about training.
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. You've got, you're OJTI?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Do you have any trainees right now?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. But I don't --
- 14 Q. Yes?
- 15 A. -- that's, that's probably its own separate issue.
- 16 Q. Okay. Was that shift your normal shift that day?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Okay. Do you work overtime?
- 19 A. When it's assigned, yes.
- 20 Q. Okay.
- 21 A. I don't, I try not to work as many overtimes as I can.
22 Just --
- 23 Q. Are you on the call list at this point?
- 24 A. I took myself off it, I believe this last year.
- 25 Q. Okay, all right. So, when you sat down there, just kind of

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1 curious of what was, you know, going on. So, there was no D side
2 at the time, at the timeframe?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Did you feel like they could use a D side? Your opinion only
5 because you weren't working.

6 A. Is this thing still recording?

7 MR. BROWN: Yes.

8 MR. FITZGERALD: The Controller was a CPC through COVID. But
9 yes, he could use, he could have used a D side at the time.

10 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay.

11 MR. FITZGERALD: But big props to him that he had asked me
12 just at that time. And like I said, it was a five-minute period
13 where he really needed it. Where he felt like he really needed
14 it. And I'm not wanting to be like, no, I got it, or whatever.
15 You know when he, it's when he feels comfortable giving it up.

16 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

17 Q. Do you guys feel comfortable telling a SUP that you want
18 somebody?

19 A. That culture has changed, and yes.

20 Q. Good.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. That's great, great. And later, did you happen to get on a
23 position?

24 A. I don't recall, but I would assume just based on working.

25 Q. All right, so you don't recall? You probably don't -- or do

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1 you recall what the weather was like?

2 A. No, I don't. Nothing sticks out that day afterwards --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- when it comes to weather and rides. Other than it was
5 moderate.

6 Q. All right. And do you go to the CWSU much? Talk to those
7 guys? Pick their brains?

8 A. No, not really. I'm friends with the CWSU guys on a more
9 personal level. Because just, because my mom is in here. And
10 she's always worried about how much snow we're getting. So,
11 then --

12 Q. Okay. All right, right.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. The last one, you didn't put in an ATSAP. Can you tell me
15 why? If you don't mind?

16 A. I, I didn't, I didn't know about the event until later that
17 day. And I didn't know I was signed on until I think a couple of
18 days later.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. And I'm going to check my calendar again because I then went
21 on vacation and took a couple days of spot leave. So, that
22 happened on the 10th. So, I don't even know if I knew that I was
23 still signed on to the position until maybe the week prior to my
24 vacation. And then I took, I believe I took two days off spot
25 leave the week prior. And then I was gone for seven workdays. So

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1 it just kind of got away from me.

2 Q. Yes, just, I was just curious --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- if there was any specific reason.

5 A. No.

6 Q. Oh, DYSIM. So, is there something that can be done to
7 improve that to make it feel more --

8 A. Which part? I'm sorry.

9 Q. You called it the DYSIMs. You know, you said that --

10 A. The DYSIMs.

11 Q. DYSIMs, I'm sorry, DYSIM.

12 A. Yes, they changed the acronym. No, honestly, I was -- and
13 prior to being a Controller I was a RPO. It's really hard. And
14 even that whole training department has been revamped. The
15 problem complexities have been revamped. So it's tough.

16 I think we're still just playing catch up to a lot of things.
17 And I think the staffing shortage, inability to pull people out to
18 get there, backfilling with overtime. Many -- I can feel a mini
19 soapbox growing under my feet. Employee fatigue, with like --

20 This is big picture. I don't care about the money anymore.
21 I'd rather have the time off. You know, I'm burnt out.

22 Mr. Curtis, you know, whatever is going on in his personal life,
23 plus over time, plus, he was the union rep.

24 And even though it's a few months after the summer, it's,
25 we're all still pretty burnt out and tired, right? So, getting

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1 back to DYSIM, yes, I think there needs to be much more work done
2 with ASCAT. And, yes, I don't, I don't even know, I don't, above
3 my paygrade to try and fix that whole thing.

4 But like, the training department and that contract money.
5 wherever it goes, and, and all that stuff. But look, I mean, I
6 have an interest in all of it. I'd like to fix all of it, if I
7 could, you know.

8 Like I truly enjoy -- I have a degree in management prior to
9 being a Controller, prior to my degree in air traffic control. So
10 like, I do enjoy these types of conversations. I wish it wasn't
11 around an event. But you know --

12 Q. Good. Do you have a pilot's license?

13 A. I do not.

14 Q. Okay. I was just curious.

15 A. No. I'm not like super big into airplanes, per se. I'm not
16 like an airplane nerd or whatever you want to call them. I'm a
17 monster truck guy. So like, I have my niche. I've owned monster
18 trucks. I go to monster truck shows all across the country. Like
19 that's my thing.

20 Q. Yes.

21 A. I won't tell you what my monster truck's name was.

22 Q. Come on.

23 A. Turbulence. Because it was, it was shaped like a, like a
24 P51. It had the shark mouth and the rivets. And so, it's cool.
25 And it was my way to advocate for air traffic controllers, too,

1 and spread the word.

2 Q. That is pretty cool.

3 A. But you know, my beef with the union was through my wife
4 who's actually away at OS training right now. But I've enjoyed
5 being part of the union, too. And I was very active. So, if I
6 get back, I'll try to be on more committees. Because I do like
7 this work. Like, like Seth, he's, he's unbelievable.

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. Put that in recording, so.

10 MS. KOSCHIG: All right, thank you.

11 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes, you're welcome.

12 MR. BROWN: Kevin, did you have something else?

13 MR. COON: I had a follow on, but it's been answered.

14 MR. BROWN: Anyone else?

15 MR. SUFFERN: I got one.

16 MR. BROWN: Paul?

17 BY MR. SUFFERN:

18 Q. If you had all the money in the world but had to apply it to
19 air traffic things here.

20 A. Yes?

21 Q. If you could make or give yourself any weather tool out
22 there, what, what would you, what would be helpful for you to do
23 your job, or a CIC, or anything?

24 A. That's a good question. I guess if there was better tools
25 for forecasting. I guess even, you know, what's it called?

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1 Thunderstorm activity, why am I drawing a blank here?

2 MR. MYERS: Convective.

3 MR. FITZGERALD: Convective activity. You know, I constantly
4 am on my Weather Channel app. And if you look hours ahead, you
5 know, it just gets blurry and bigger. You know? Convective
6 stuff, for us, because we deal with it all the time, I think would
7 be beneficial.

8 But I don't know if there's much more we can -- like, of
9 course, we could always push, push an envelope. But I feel like
10 we're almost at the peak of weather. It's the pilots who are
11 flying are the ones, kind of -- there's, I don't know, if there's
12 another way to really get it better. Maybe if they had better,
13 further weather radar? I don't is it 80 miles or something like
14 that?

15 MR. SUFFERNCOON: I'm not sure how far it looks out.

16 MR. FITZGERALD: The weather radar when they tip it up and
17 stuff. But yes, I don't really know. Because then it gets too
18 broad. And even now with the pre-weather briefings they're so
19 broad that again, it just it doesn't carry weight. The --

20 You know, the ambiguity of it? Yes, every day, there's light
21 to severe turbulence, potentially, or there's going to be rain
22 and/or thunderstorm activity in New York. You know? It's just
23 and you guys, the meteorologists, you can't know. You go through
24 all your models or whatever you do, and, but I think you guys do a
25 really good job too. So, I don't know if there is anything, at

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1 least that I can answer.

2 MR. BROWN: Okay. Anyone else? No? So my last question --

3 MR. FITZGERALD: Okay.

4 BY MR. BROWN:

5 Q. So, along the same lines, but it's not weather related.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. So, if you could change, having to go back to that day
8 again --

9 A. Yes?

10 Q. -- if you could make a change that day, what would it be?
11 Anything you would do different? Anything you would --

12 A. Do you want my tongue in cheek answer?

13 Q. I want your honest opinion.

14 A. I would sign out of the D side.

15 MS. MARINAS: I knew he was going to say that.

16 MR. FITZGERALD: Air traffic control related, absolutely not.
17 No, I don't, I think everyone handled themselves appropriately. I
18 guess with the exception of Kevin coming in and not calling -- I
19 believe he missed the call to one aircraft, and it was the United
20 or something like that.

21 Because he checked in during the briefing. But I honestly,
22 after listening to it and, and everyone having their own opinions,
23 I think Kevin actually didn't do a very poor job when it comes to
24 that type of stuff.

25 Even with his, with the long diatribe of a PIREP that he got,

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1 and he just sluffed off to the next Controller. Did you guys all
2 hear that, when -- mini soapbox again. When we give, when we give
3 a reroute to an aircraft, even if it's one fix, we stop them, and
4 we say, advise, ready to copy.

5 Even if it's a little three letter Albany. Clear direct,
6 Alpha Lima Bravo, direct your next fix. And that pilot, on, in
7 the other sector, whatever he -- you know, I don't remember. But
8 it was this, and it was this, and it was this. And it was minus
9 nine, and it was this.

10 And it's like he goes -- you can't just rattle that off. I'm
11 thinking about 20 other airplanes over here. So, I feel like it's
12 almost a double standard, where, you know, we're kind of required
13 to remember the most of it and then come back to it, but.

14 So, I actually think he handled it well for the most -- you
15 know. So, I don't know if there was anything, you know. Putting
16 me on the D side for five minutes. Maybe I could have stayed
17 longer. But again, we all --

18 MR. BROWN: Get through with your answer.

19 MR. FITZGERALD: -- we all felt comfortable.

20 MR. BROWN: Okay. And that's all I have. So, I'm going to
21 stop this. It is 3:34 p.m.

22 (Whereupon, at 3:34 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
23
24
25

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of John Fitzgerald

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 5, 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.



Margaret C. Boardman
Transcriber

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *
Investigation of: *
*
UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *
KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *
Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *
*
* * * * *

Interview of: KEVIN GILLEM, Operations Supervisor (OS)
Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Wednesday,
March 7, 2024

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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

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

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:27 p.m.)

MR. BROWN: Okay, it's, 2:27 p.m. I've started the recording. Good afternoon again. My name is Mike Brown. I'm an air traffic investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. For the record, can you state your name?

MR. GILLEM: My name is Kevin Gillem.

MR. BROWN: Thanks, Kevin. Thanks for coming in today. We briefly talked about it, but you're aware that this is being recorded?

MR. GILLEM: Yes.

MR. BROWN: We'll have the transcription made, become part of the factual report. The audio itself, that will not be in the factual report. And you requested a copy of the transcription. Today you have a representative with you, correct?

MR. GILLEM: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Okay. And if you would, state your name?

MR. WADE: Benjamin Wade, FAA, Office of General Counsel.

MR. BROWN: Thank you. At any time during the interview, if you need to take a break, you need to use the restroom, you need to talk to Benjamin, feel free to stop. It's not a big deal. If you need to confer with anything during the interview, if you need to get a question clarified -- hey, can you rephrase that, can you ask that a different way, I didn't hear you -- it's not a big deal.

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1 This isn't an interrogation. We're not going to -- it's more
2 of a conversation we'd like to have. Part of what you see here in
3 this big room, there's three of us from the NTSB, and then we have
4 different individuals as subject matter experts that we -- help us
5 on the group. I've never worked at a center. Betty's never
6 worked at a center. So, we bring them in. And I'll go around the
7 room now, have them introduce themselves.

8 MR. SUFFERN: Yeah, so briefly on that, I'm Paul Suffern.
9 I'm a meteorologist investigator with the NTSB.

10 MS. KOSCHIG: Hi. Good afternoon. I'm Betty Koschig, and
11 I'm an air traffic control investigator with the NTSB.

12 MS. MARINAS: You know me, Karena Marinas, L.A. Center
13 controller and, air safety investigator for NATCA. Sorry, I'm
14 going to try not to cough. That's why I've got this thing in
15 mouth.

16 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, United Airlines Air Traffic
17 Strategies, and I am a retired controller at FAA.

18 MR. HURLING: Ryan Hurling, senior flight safety investigator
19 at United Airlines. And I am the lead investigator for this
20 particular event.

21 MR. ALLISTON: Jason Alliston. I'm the FAA SME, and I'm the
22 air traffic manager, Atlanta Center.

23 MR. GILLEM: Okay.

24 MR. BROWN: So that's our group. So obviously ATM Center,
25 NATCA ASI, weather for the United Airlines all make up the group.

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1 So, we run a parallel investigation with the FAA. So, they're --
2 it's a separate investigation. They do what they do down there.
3 And then this is the NTSB side. A little bit about -- have you
4 ever been a part of an NTSB investigation?

5 MR. GILLEM: No.

6 MR. BROWN: Okay. So, what we do is we're an independent
7 federal agency. We don't fall under the Department of
8 Transportation. We're independent. We report to Congress, and
9 that's by design.

10 We don't -- we investigate all aviation accidents, but we're
11 not here to assign fault, assign blame or liability. It's a fact
12 finding to determine a probable cause for accidents. And our
13 power resides in our safety recommendations.

14 So what can we do? What did we learn from the event? What
15 recommendations can we make to prevent it from ever happening
16 again? That's the sole purpose of our investigation.

17 What to expect? So, I use a round robin style interview
18 system. So, I'll start basic information about you, about your
19 time here at the center, and then we'll go into the event and then
20 we'll work around the room one at a time. If they have any
21 questions, they'll ask you questions.

22 Once again at any time, if you have any questions, feel free
23 to ask. Because it is recorded, we just ask that you make all
24 your responses audibly because we can't see your head shake or not
25 or whatever.

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1 Any information that we gather here, it's compiled into a
2 factual document. And I'd like to say in a year that will be
3 released, but that's pretty much how long they're taking right
4 now, one to two years.

5 MR. GILLEM: Okay.

6 MR. BROWN: There's multiple parts of that. That's why, I
7 mean, there's an operations dealing with the pilot side. We're
8 just a small piece of this puzzle. We're just doing the air
9 traffic part. So, there's more than what's going on in this
10 building as part of these investigations. Compiling all that
11 information is why it takes so long.

12 Time for the interview, expect an hour to an hour and a half
13 are typical of these things. And that's just pretty standard.
14 That's pretty much it. I'm going to go ahead and start the
15 interview. Or do you need to use the restroom or anything before
16 we start or --

17 MR. GILLEM: No, I'm good for now. Thank you.

18 MR. BROWN: Okay.

19 INTERVIEW OF KEVIN GILLEM

20 BY MR. BROWN:

21 Q. All right, Kevin. How old were you on February 10th?

22 A. Forty-one.

23 Q. Some people have birthdays between what we get here and the
24 actual event, so --

25 A. I did.

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1 Q. -- we just want to make sure -- oh, so you did? You turned
2 41 in-between?

3 A. No, I turned 42.

4 Q. Ah, but you were 41 --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- on February 10th? Well, happy belated birthday.

7 A. Thank you.

8 Q. What's your initials, Kevin?

9 A. My operating initials are --

10 Q. Operating initials.

11 A. -- KK.

12 Q. KK. And what is your official title here?

13 A. Operations Supervisor.

14 Q. Before you entered into the FAA, did you have any pre FAA --

15 or I'm sorry, F -- I'm saying it again -- Pre ATC experience?

16 Were you military? Did you work in a contract tower before you
17 got into the FAA?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. Do you hold any collateral duties or have you been on
20 any recent details -- by recent, within the last year -- that
21 would have taken you out of the operation for an extended period
22 of time?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. Can you please briefly describe how you got into air
25 traffic?

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1 A. I applied to the FAA for one of their public openings, and
2 then I took a test that they call AT-SAT, I believe.

3 Q. I remember those.

4 A. And then I went through the interview process, and they hired
5 me and sent me to the Academy in Oklahoma City.

6 Q. Did -- what prompted your interest in air traffic? Just
7 always had an interest in aviation? Were you -- are you a pilot
8 by chance?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. No.

12 Q. Just wanted to try air traffic?

13 A. Yeah. Sounded like a good idea.

14 Q. Okay. Have you ever been fired, terminated, suspended or
15 asked to resign from any ATC position?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. The next question is just about -- it's more medical,
18 personal information about yourself. If at any time you don't
19 want to answer, you don't have to. But how would you describe
20 your overall health on a scale of excellent, good, fair or poor?

21 A. Good.

22 Q. Okay. Do you -- on the date of the accident, February 10th,
23 did you hold a Class 2 medical?

24 A. I don't know what a Class 2 medical exactly is.

25 Q. Did you hold a medical -- did you have your flight physical?

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- 1 A. My medical has not lapsed since I came to work for the FAA.
- 2 Q. So, to your knowledge, you had your medical? It was current?
- 3 A. Yes. I just don't know what class that is.
- 4 Q. It's Class 2.
- 5 A. Okay.
- 6 Q. That's what it is. For your medical, do you have any waivers
- 7 pertaining to eyeglasses or any prescription medication?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. Okay. Was drug or alcohol screening performed following this
- 10 event for you?
- 11 A. Yes, I had a drug test.
- 12 Q. Okay, so urinalysis?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Okay. Do you know when -- how long after the event that was?
- 15 A. Less than 24 hours.
- 16 Q. Okay, so on Sunday it would have been?
- 17 A. Yes, when I came into work Sunday.
- 18 Q. Okay.
- 19 A. Well, I shouldn't say -- it wasn't exactly when I came into
- 20 work. I think it was after 8:00 a.m.
- 21 Q. Okay. Any changes in your health last year -- good, bad or
- 22 different? So, we're talking about surgeries, weight gain, weight
- 23 loss, started going to the gym -- anything like that?
- 24 A. Nothing appreciable.
- 25 Q. Okay. Any changes in your personal life during the last year

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1 -- good, bad or indifferent, meaning got married, got divorced,
2 had kids, moved, bought a house, sold a house -- anything like
3 that?

4 A. Yeah. I moved from California to New Hampshire.

5 Q. Okay. Any changes in your financial situation during the
6 last year? So, examples would be declared bankruptcy, win the
7 lottery, came into an inheritance.

8 A. No.

9 Q. Anything like that? Okay. So, this one is kind of -- it's a
10 72-hour history leading up to the event. So, the event was
11 Saturday, February 10th, so, we go back to February 7th, on
12 Wednesday. And we're trying to see what you're -- not what you
13 normally do, but what actually happened.

14 And what I mean is we're looking for what time you woke up,
15 what time you went to bed, anything out of the ordinary happened
16 on those days. Sometimes it's easier to go from Wednesday to
17 Saturday, but if you need to, we can go in reverse.

18 Okay, Saturday I did this, I worked this, I went to bed,
19 whatever -- in whatever way it would be easier for you. And I'll
20 walk you through the days. Do you have a preference? If now we
21 can start Wednesday.

22 A. You can start whenever you would like.

23 Q. Okay. So, Wednesday, February 7th, what time do you think
24 you got up that day?

25 A. Did I work a shift on that day? Do you have records of my

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1 shifts?

2 Q. I will -- I do.

3 A. So, did I work a shift on that day?

4 Q. I will tell you in one moment.

5 MR. BROWN: Oh, Paul, yeah, if you don't mind leaving that

6 up, I'll just cheat of yours, the screen, so I don't have to --

7 BY MR. BROWN:

8 Q. So, on Wednesday, you were off, RDO

9 A. Oh.

10 Q. Does that sound right?

11 A. Yeah. That sounds -- I mean, that's one of my RDOs.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. But I do work overtime, so.

14 Q. I gotcha.

15 A. Yeah, I don't -- I mean, I could give you an estimate as to

16 when I probably woke up, but --

17 Q. That's fine.

18 A. I would have probably woken up around 10 a.m.

19 Q. Okay. Okay, so you're off that day. Anything out of the

20 ordinary happen? Had to take -- I don't know your family

21 situation, but a kid got kind, ended up taking them to the ER,

22 family issues, anything like. That?

23 A. Not that I recall.

24 Q. Okay. Same day. What time do you think you went to sleep

25 that night?

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- 1 A. Probably midnight.
- 2 Q. Okay, so now February 8th, it would have been -- I'll tell
3 you when you worked -- so, Thursday a 1435 to 2315 Eve shift.
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 Q. Okay. So same questions. What time do you think you got up
6 that day?
- 7 A. Probably 10 a.m.
- 8 Q. Okay. And then, same kind of thing, before you came into
9 work, anything out of the ordinary would have happened that day?
- 10 A. Not that I recall.
- 11 Q. Okay. So you come to work. You work your Eve shift. Do you
12 live close? Do you have a commute? How does it --
- 13 A. Can I look at my calendar?
- 14 Q. Yeah, if you've got one.
- 15 A. I got a calendar.
- 16 Q. Absolutely.
- 17 A. I mean, this is just in case I have something noted.
- 18 Q. Okay.
- 19 A. Oh, okay. Okay, sorry to interrupt. Go ahead.
- 20 Q. No, no, no. That's fine. So, nothing out of the ordinary.
21 You worked the Eve shift, what was a 1435 to 2315. Is your
22 commute close? Do you have a pretty short commute?
- 23 A. Fifteen to 20 minutes.
- 24 Q. Okay, so you get off your shift here. Do you go home? Do
25 you go to the gym? Do you hang out somewhere?

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1 A. I go home.

2 Q. Okay. And what time do you think you went to bed on that
3 Thursday night?

4 A. Probably 1:00 a.m. or earlier.

5 Q. Okay. So, now Friday you worked another Eve shift, 1450 to
6 2315. So, but before then, Friday morning, what time do you think
7 you went to bed?

8 A. Probably 10 a.m.

9 Q. So same thing, you wake up. You're -- anything out of the
10 ordinary occur between the time you woke up and you came into the
11 center here?

12 A. Not that I recall.

13 Q. And then the same thing, so you've worked your shift. You
14 got off that night, went to the house?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Same thing. What time do you think you went to bed Friday
17 night?

18 A. Probably 1:00 a.m. or earlier.

19 Q. Okay, so now February 10th, Saturday, the date of the
20 accident, do you remember what shift you had that day?

21 A. If I recall correctly, I had an 8:30 shift.

22 Q. Okay. Yeah, that was it, right. So, you had a day shift
23 that day. So obviously you didn't wake up at 10 o'clock that day.
24 So, do you know what time you would have gotten up?

25 A. I typically wake up 45 minutes before I arrive here. What

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1 time does it say that I arrived?

2 Q. Oh, , 8:20.

3 A. So, I probably woke up around 7:30.

4 Q. And then obviously you came into work. And that's all I need

5 on that part right now. You probably did not -- t's not a big

6 deal, but did you file an ATSAP as a result of the event?

7 A. Yes, I did.

8 Q. Oh, you did? Do you know, did you get any feedback from the

9 ERC on it? Or did you just --

10 A. They accepted the ATSAP report.

11 Q. Yeah. Okay. All right, well, then you're one of the few

12 SUPs I know who have done that.

13 A. Oh, thank you.

14 Q. Prior to our investigation and the FAA's investigation, were

15 you interviewed about the event before today? And I don't --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. It doesn't have to be a formal -- so, I know a lot of the

18 times it's kind of a trick question or some are looking -- but if

19 you were called for the SRT, correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. So, that would have been -- any times before that?

22 A. Not before that.

23 Q. Okay. Do you remember what day you did your SRT portion?

24 Because I know it was strung out between --

25 A. February --

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1 Q. -- different --
2 A. Oh, the --
3 Q. For the SRT. You sat on the SRT. Correct?
4 A. I sat on the SRT?
5 Q. Were you in on the SRT when they conducted it, or no?
6 A. No.
7 Q. Oh, okay. I'm sorry.
8 MRS. KOSCHIG: The SSR.
9 MR. BROWN: I'm sorry, no, the SRR. You're right. Sorry,
10 the SSR, thank you.
11 MR. GILLEM: Okay.
12 BY MR. BROWN:
13 Q. Not the SRT. The SSR.
14 A. The SSR --
15 Q. Yeah, my apologies.
16 A. -- is the local QC interview? Is that right? Yeah, they
17 called me in and had me interviewed for that.
18 Q. Okay. And was that the first time that you were interviewed?
19 A. Well --
20 Q. I know you guys did the SRT that night. And I'm --
21 A. Yeah.
22 Q. -- sorry I confused you.
23 A. That's okay.
24 Q. I confused myself on that. But, yeah, for the SSR was the
25 first time that they --

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1 A. They had questioned me, prior to the SRT, on the phone.

2 Q. Okay. That was with?

3 A. Well, Adam Currier I talked to. Matt Laventure I talked to.
4 They just asked me a couple quick questions. It wasn't very
5 inclusive.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. The SSR was a little bit more formal.

8 Q. I gotcha.

9 A. But --

10 Q. And that was?

11 A. That was -- I don't remember what day it was.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Well, maybe it's in my calendar. Let's look. That was
14 February 13th.

15 Q. Okay. Thank you. For you, it's going to be a little bit
16 different because you were the OS. But have you had an
17 opportunity to review the replay of the event?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Did you review it that night?

20 A. No.

21 Q. When did you review the event?

22 A. I don't recall the date. It was after -- it was days later.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I can't --

25 Q. It's not a big deal if you don't know the date. But it was

1 audio and video review?

2 A. Falcon.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. With audio.

5 Q. Gotcha. Do you know how long you were in position prior to
6 the event happening? I don't think you have to --

7 A. Probably over an hour.

8 Q. Over an hour? Did you relieve another OS or did you --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- you relieve a CIC?

11 A. I believe I -- I don't know who it was. I believe I relieved
12 a CIC because I don't think there was another OS on duty with me
13 that day.

14 Q. Okay. During that relief briefing, do you recall if a
15 position relief briefing checklist was used?

16 A. No, I don't recall.

17 Q. Okay. Do you have -- when you guys do your SUP relief
18 briefings, I know a lot of the controllers have their relief
19 briefings on the scope. Did you guys have, like, a paper copy
20 hanging on the desk? Is it under plexiglass?

21 A. Yes. We have a checklist under the plexiglass at the desk.

22 Q. Okay. We're talking out -- now about the actual traffic
23 during the event. So, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the
24 heaviest, how would you classify the traffic volume at the time of
25 the event?

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1 Before you answer that, the next question is going to be the
2 same thing, but it's going to be complexity. So don't just -- I
3 don't want you to say, well, it was pretty busy because we had
4 this.

5 A. Well, if 5 --

6 Q. So --

7 A. -- is the busiest is a 1-zero traffic?

8 Q. It can be what you want it to be.

9 MS. KOSCHIG: Less than 1?

10 BY MR. BROWN:

11 Q. Yeah, less than 1?

12 A. I'm sorry. I just want to make sure I understand the scale.

13 Q. So, I'll read it again. So, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5
14 being the heaviest, how would you classify the traffic volume at
15 the time of the event?

16 A. 2.

17 Q. Okay. And was that volume normal for that time of day?

18 A. Probably.

19 Q. Okay. And then this is the second part. So same thing,
20 scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most complex, how would you
21 classify the traffic complexity at the time of the event?

22 A. 2.

23 Q. Okay. And was that normal for that time of day?

24 A. Probably.

25 Q. For this question, this is just for you as an OS, not the

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1 area controllers, were there any distractions occurring at or
2 leading up to the time of the event -- for you as a supervisor?

3 A. Do -- well, how are you defining distraction? Does it
4 include work that I am performing as a supervisor, or is it just
5 something extraneous to my supervisory duties?

6 Q. It can be, however you want to explain it to me.

7 A. Yes. There was a severe turbulence report across the room at
8 approximately the same time that I was monitoring and responding
9 to -- that would be the biggest distraction at the time, because
10 that took my attention away from --

11 Q. When you say across the room, in the area at a different
12 sector?

13 A. Yes, at Sector 9.

14 Q. Okay. If I'm standing, because I can't exactly remember the
15 layout of your areas, but I know when you walk in Sector 24 is
16 directly to the left, the first scope to the left?

17 A. That's correct. Well --

18 Q. Where were --

19 A. -- the second scope to the left.

20 Q. Okay. Second scope. Where would Sector 9 be if the first --

21 A. Sector 9 would be the second scope on the right.

22 Q. Okay. Gotcha now. Okay. This question is going to be,
23 though, for -- no, this can be for the entire sector. Do you
24 recall the weather conditions in the area at the time of the event
25 and leading -- or leading up to and at the time of the event?

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1 A. Well, I think I vaguely do. Would you like me to describe
2 them?

3 Q. Yeah. What can you remember about that day?

4 A. There was some low convective activity or precip displayed on
5 the scope in the southeast corner of Sector 24, stretching up
6 into, probably the southwestern section of 22, which was combined
7 with 24.

8 There was light to moderate chop, maybe turbulence in the
9 descent coming through Sectors 24, southeast bound. And then
10 there had been what I believe they had had a couple of small
11 aircraft deviate, from what they had told me. But northwest of
12 that line it was pretty clear, as I recall. Nothing widespread,
13 if I -- nothing widespread.

14 Q. Did you receive your pre-duty weather briefing that day?

15 A. As far as I remember, yes. I do that every day when I come
16 in.

17 Q. Okay. Do you remember if anything stood out on that
18 briefing?

19 A. No. It seemed pretty run of the mill.

20 Q. Okay. Completely opinion-based question.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. Do you -- how much value do you find in the pre-duty weather
23 brief?

24 A. In the one that is recorded when I come in?

25 Q. Yes.

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1 A. Very little. Can I expand a little --

2 Q. Yeah, if you'd like.

3 A. -- if you'd like me to? I would --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- because --

6 Q. If you want to expand at any time, go ahead.

7 A. I don't, you know, as far as the forecast there at the
8 beginning, I feel like once I get to the area, I have a new
9 forecast sheet already. So, it's kind of like I'm watching this
10 thing that might just be negated here in a few minutes.

11 And then you go to the -- in this particular day, I didn't go
12 to the 8 o'clock because I was here past 8:00 from my beginning of
13 my shift, but normally I would go to the 8 o'clock, which would
14 have another briefing. And it's -- all of it gets kind of hard
15 to, you know, separate from what's relevant and what's not
16 relevant. And so that forecast sheet is more real time.

17 Q. I understand, and that's --

18 A. But what's even more important is what the controllers are
19 telling me from the sector or what I can observe happening at the
20 sector.

21 Q. There's a consensus across the FAA that we're seeing, is the
22 pre-duty weather brief, they like the update, what's going on in
23 my area or in the TRACON or the tower.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. Do you recall if you had your cellular phone or a PED

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1 on you at the time of the event?

2 A. I would have had my phone turned off, in my pocket.

3 Q. Okay. So, if it was off, you weren't using it at the time of
4 the event?

5 A. No, I don't use my phone in the operation.

6 Q. Okay. Kind of a weird question for an OS, but had you
7 requested relief or assistance at or leading up to the time of the
8 event?

9 MR. WADE: Just for his position, right?

10 BY MR. BROWN:

11 Q. For the OS position, correct -- for you, not the sector
12 controllers -- for you yourself.

13 A. Like, had I requested it like I wanted to get out?

14 Q. Yes.

15 A. No.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I was expecting to get out because I was being relieved
18 within a few minutes.

19 Q. Okay, I know what you're saying. We'll get to that.

20 A. Okay.

21 MR. WADE: But it wasn't requested.

22 MR. GILLEM: I did not, no.

23 BY MR. BROWN:

24 Q. You didn't request with the OM that you --

25 A. No, I wasn't having any issues or anything that made me

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1 request to get out.

2 Q. So, for the event, how were you notified that a severe
3 turbulence with United 1890 had occurred? Do you remember?

4 A. Has it -- I -- can I ask a clarifying --

5 Q. Absolutely.

6 A. -- question?

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. I assume that at some point in time it was determined that it
9 was a severe turbulence report because the Falcon that I reviewed
10 said it was severely moderate. But then, since then, I've seen
11 paperwork where people are writing down severe. So, I'm assuming
12 at some point in time it was further classified as being severe.

13 Q. I don't have the answer to that yet either.

14 A. Okay, well then I still don't know, for sure, that there was
15 a severe turbulence event.

16 Q. Okay, so let me rephrase it. So, how were you notified there
17 was a turbulence related event with United 1890?

18 A. They called me at home. Matt Laventure had called and left
19 me messages at home. And when I noticed I got the messages, I
20 checked to see what it was. He had been asking me to call him
21 back at work. I called back and they told me that there had been
22 this event.

23 Q. I'm not familiar with Matt. Can you spell his last name?

24 A. L-a-v-e-n-t-u-r-e, I think.

25 Q. And is he an OM?

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1 A. He's an OS but he was working the watch desk, the OM watch
2 desk and calling me from there.

3 Q. Okay, that makes sense then.

4 A. I got subsequent calls from Adam Currier because he was
5 preparing for the SRT, I think.

6 Q. T, okay. So, what I want you to do now is -- I know you
7 watched the replay, but try to put yourself back into that area
8 the day of the event --

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. -- and detail what do you remember specifically? I don't
11 need that entire hour-long hit that you worked. But maybe if you
12 can go back 10 or 15 minutes prior to the event, what did you see?
13 What did you hear? What do you recall?

14 A. Okay. So, I had an R-side training team at Sector 8, 9 and
15 10 combined at Sector 9. I had a D-side, if I recall correctly, a
16 CPCD-side at Sector 9. At some point in there, during this 15, 20
17 minutes, I think that that D-side changed out with different
18 people.

19 Q. The Sector 9 D-side?

20 A. Yes, the Sector 9 D-side. So that was when you, as you
21 asked, when you walk into the control area, it's the one on the
22 right.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. At Sector 24, I had a controller who had requested to stay
25 for credit, and so he was passing on breaks, sitting at Sectors

1 22, 23 and 24 combined. But he had not been on there for an
2 extended period of time, as I recall. It wasn't too long.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I was in the area and I observed him calling weather,
5 soliciting ride reports. I had asked him if he had deviations or
6 he volunteered -- I can't remember how it came about -- that just
7 a couple small aircraft had deviated.

8 I further observed him inputting PIREPs. And I think I
9 offered to help him put one in, but he had two ERIDS screens
10 because he wanted one -- he was putting in one turbulence report,
11 but while he had received that turbulence report, he had been
12 waiting to get a -- the remainder of an icing report because they
13 told him they had received icing and he was just waiting to put
14 the altitude that they quit getting it in.

15 So, it was already pre-filled in one ERIDS, and he had the
16 other areas where he put in the turbulence report. So, I went and
17 typed him a PROC for doing a good job soliciting PIREPs and
18 disseminating weather.

19 I was working on that for a few minutes, so I suppose -- he
20 did, after that time period. He got a few calls at once and
21 started to seem a little bit busier, although the sector was still
22 green. And so, when John Fitzgerald came in the area, he asked
23 John Fitzgerald -- this is -- the controller, I don't think I
24 mentioned his name, was Andre Tetterton.

25 Q. We interviewed him.

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1 A. Okay. He's a good employee and a good controller. And he
2 communicates well too. So, he would have told me, or as he did,
3 he asked John Fitzgerald to sit down on his D-side. I observed
4 that and approved of it, even though they didn't specifically ask
5 me. I liked the fact that that happened, because I could hear
6 that his -- he was getting calls.

7 So, John sat down on his D-side. They worked through what
8 was just a few-minute moderate push of traffic. Kevin Curtiss
9 came back to the area and asked John Fitzgerald if he wanted a
10 break. John Fitzgerald said no. He was going to get Andre out in
11 a minute.

12 I didn't have an issue with that because I could see that the
13 traffic was declining, and it looked manageable to me. But then
14 Kevin Curtiss plugged in with Andre to get a briefing from Andre.
15 And I can't -- the timeline of events I might not have perfectly.

16 Q. That's fine.

17 A. But at some point in time, while Kevin Curtiss was getting
18 the briefing, I think, John Fitzgerald closed the D-side and left.
19 Once again, I didn't have a problem with that because I heard his
20 plan of closing the D-side to get Andre out, and I didn't have a
21 problem with that. So, it wouldn't make a difference to me
22 whether it was Andre or Kevin Curtiss there.

23 Andre got out of the R-side after giving a briefing to Kevin
24 Curtiss, but he slid over to the D-side seat, presumably to tie up
25 loose ends, make sure that everything was okay before he left.

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1 Before he left, I heard him say it, am I good to go? I don't know
2 if he was asking Kevin Curtiss or me, but I did say yes.

3 During that time period or just after that, I heard this
4 situation going on at Sector 9 with the severe turbulence report.
5 But I think it was after that. I think this was like, you know,
6 within -- it was close to the same time, I think, within a couple
7 of minutes of the same time.

8 A severe turbulence report from a TBM at Flight Level 240
9 near Utica. I went to monitor that sector, because I wanted to
10 see if there were any injuries or airframe damage to that
11 aircraft. While they were gathering that information, I observed
12 that they had, if I recall, a Burlington lander that was 3,000
13 feet above that aircraft, crossing with it.

14 And I was happy to see that they didn't descend that aircraft
15 right away because it would be in the area where they would be
16 descending it. But I was happy to see they didn't descend it
17 right away because of the severe turbulence the TBM had gotten
18 with like a plus or minus 300 feet per minute altitude variation.
19 So, I was glad to see them give extra room to that aircraft.

20 So, subsequently I did type up a PROC for that trainee as
21 well. I gathered the information from the severe turbulence on
22 the TBM and returned to the supervisor's desk so that I could call
23 the watch desk in the front and inform them of the severe
24 turbulence event for the TBM.

25 When I looked up there they were in the middle of the 1545

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1 standup, and so I just waited until that broke up to call them
2 with the severe turbulence report of the TBM, because it was only
3 going to be two minutes until they were done with the 3:45.

4 I saw my relief OS walking down the aisle within a minute or
5 so, and immediately called the front desk with the severe
6 turbulence from the TBM. The OS that went to the 1545 got to the
7 area while I was still on the phone. Once I hung up, I gave her a
8 briefing and told her what I knew was going on, and I went home.

9 Q. Well, okay.

10 A. Well, I didn't go home until the end of my shift, but I left
11 the -- I was relieved, so I left the area.

12 Q. You left the area.

13 A. And I think I had another 20 minutes or so that I was just in
14 the back waiting to go home.

15 Q. Okay. So just to make sure I, I wrote down the notes
16 correct, so you're standing there. Andre's working the sector.
17 Fitzgerald comes in. You hear that, John, hey, just work my D-
18 side. And we talked. And this is verbatim, what you said too.

19 Just, we're not trying to trick anybody here. But, so we're
20 just -- it's all put the pieces together. So, they're there.
21 Kevin Curtiss then comes in, says, hey and asks who -- if they
22 want to know, did he ask Fitzgerald or did he ask Andre? Do you
23 remember?

24 A. I don't know who he asked prior to asking John Fitzgerald. I
25 remember him asking John Fitzgerald if he wanted a break, because

1 I remember John Fitzgerald's response that he was going to be
2 getting Andre out in a minute. So other -- he may have asked
3 other people or he may have asked Andre. I couldn't tell you who
4 else he asked, but I did observe him asking --

5 Q. Okay,

6 A. -- John Fitzgerald.

7 Q. And then so but you're standing -- you're not even facing
8 that sector because you were standing over Sector 9.

9 A. I don't -- you know, the minute by minute, I couldn't tell
10 you.

11 Q. No, I get that.

12 A. At that point in time, I could have been sitting at the desk.
13 I could have been standing over by the crew or at the computer in
14 the aisle. I could have been standing by Sector 9. I can't tell
15 you where I was when that happened. I just remember that chain of
16 events.

17 Q. Okay. And then we go to -- you get the phone call that night
18 that a turbulence event had had happened?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. That's pretty much how the day went for you.

21 MR. BROWN: Okay, I'm going to take a break from asking.

22 MR. GILLEM: Okay.

23 MR. BROWN: Paul?

24 MR. SUFFERN: Yeah, sure, I'll start off. Thanks again,
25 Kevin, for that great description. That was very helpful. And

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1 like Mike said, it's helpful to put this factual information
2 together, because we weren't there and so it's really, really
3 helpful. So, thank you.

4 BY MR. SUFFERN:

5 Q. My weather-related questions are probably going to be a
6 little bit more background. But, for you, as a SUP, what weather
7 information do you avail yourself of while you're on shift there?
8 You know, whether you're walking around in the sector or at the
9 SUP desk, what weather tools use to stay updated on things?

10 A. Well, I have a screen with all the GIs on it, and
11 occasionally I go through the GIs, update them, try to get rid of
12 old PIREPs, try to get rid of PIREPs that aren't pertinent to my
13 area, in my estimation.

14 I do have the weather forecast sheet. I do have the pre
15 briefing that we get. I do have the 8 o'clock briefings and the
16 3:45 briefings where we get weather. I have controllers that come
17 in and out of the area that will tell me what's going on. If I
18 see something and nobody has told me, I will ask them, which I
19 gather from walking in the area and seeing or just hearing more
20 chatter coming from a controller and then going to see what's
21 going on in that sector.

22 I also have WARP available to me on my desktop. And there's
23 also a WARP screen in the area. If you're in the area, you can
24 look. And then I have traffic management or traffic -- I don't
25 even know what it's called -- TDM -- yeah, TDMS, T-whatever it is

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1 that has the sectors displayed. It will have precip that I like
2 to -- for my settings, I like to have that displayed on that
3 screen. That -- so I have a screen up above, like the regular
4 computer screen.

5 I'd have to switch back and forth on the regular computer
6 screen to get to those other screens and change things, but I have
7 one that's constantly displayed at the top that's a traffic
8 management display that has weather depicted on it -- precip --
9 precipitation. It doesn't depict turbulence, but --

10 Q. MR. WADE: Okay. I just want to clarify TDMS?

11 MR. GILLEM: TFMS.

12 MR. WADE: Okay, TDMS?

13 MR. WADE: Oh, no. That was a question.

14 MR. GILLEM: TFMS.

15 MR. WADE: TFMS, okay. I saw you write it and I just wanted
16 to make sure you had the acronym.

17 MR. GILLEM: Yeah, sorry, I couldn't remember the exact
18 acronym, yes.

19 MR. BROWN: But it's t what T what?

20 MR. ALLISTON: TFMS.

21 MR. BROWN: This is the transcribing thing we're talking
22 about. When I get back and I --

23 MR. GILLEM: Yeah.

24 MR. GILLEM: There's a lot of acronyms.

25 MR. BROWN: Don't know which one that one's going to be, but

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1 that's what I write, as you say, acronyms.

2 MR. GILLEM: Yeah, I probably should have a list of those
3 given to me as well.

4 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

5 MR. WADE: Yeah.

6 MR. SUFFERN: Thank you. Yeah, that's real helpful.

7 BY MR. SUFFERN:

8 Q. As far as when you -- so just say you're at the SUP desk
9 right now and you're seeing either, you know, you're looking
10 through your GIs and a new PIREP comes across from something else
11 that may be pertinent, or you're seeing precipitation change or
12 something like that.

13 Walk me through the process of how you alert, you know,
14 controllers in your area that, hey, you know, things are on the
15 scope or this right now, but in, you know, ten minutes, they could
16 be this or something like that.

17 A. When I get a new forecast sheet, if I notice an appreciable
18 change, then I will tell the controllers at whatever sector,
19 seemingly, is going to be affected. For instance, if the changes
20 at or below 16000, I'm not going to notify Sector 10 because they
21 only work Flight Level 280 and above.

22 But I would notify the other sectors that do have those
23 altitudes in their stratus. As far as notifying the sectors of
24 anticipated changes based on displays that I have, I can't say
25 that I really have done that. There's a display in there that

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1 they can see as well, the same display that I have. And I do see
2 them looking at that and updating themselves on the current
3 conditions.

4 I still would find more value in what's actually happening at
5 the sector than even those tools. Even though they're good tools
6 to have, they're not the most important. But if I see something
7 in the GIs, like a PIREP that comes across that is close to our
8 airspace, that has something significant -- and I can't say that
9 I, you know, if I don't notice it, obviously I wouldn't tell them,
10 anybody because I wouldn't know.

11 But anything that I notice that I think is important, like a
12 moderate or greater icing in, like just in -- outside of our area,
13 but it hasn't happened inside of our area, then I would tell them,
14 hey, so-and-so next to us got this report.

15 That would typically come from the GIs for me, although I am
16 trying to become more accustomed to using WARP because I like the
17 display, visual representation of the PIREPs.

18 Q. I like pictures too.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. I know it's, been only since last year that you've been here
21 in Boston Center, but -- so I guess, you know, this is, I guess,
22 your first real full winter here in the northeast?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Yeah. How often, I guess, this past winter -- so we'll just
25 start from probably October up here until now -- have you had a

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1 day with convective activity in your airspace?

2 A. It's rarer than pre-October, but I still don't feel like it's
3 abnormal, so.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I don't know, maybe 15% of the days, 10% of the days. I
6 don't know. That's just a guess.

7 Q. Okay. But it's something you had seen before. Since
8 October, you know, you've seen thunderstorm or convective
9 activity?

10 A. I think so.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I'm not keeping track.

13 Q. Yeah. Probably only a meteorologist would be.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. So, along those lines, would you treat convective activity
16 differently in the wintertime as opposed to you would, you know,
17 it's all throughout the area in July or something like that?

18 A. I don't know if it's the right answer, but I would view
19 convective activity in the wintertime as being less impactful than
20 convective activity in the summertime because my experience has
21 been that in the summertime, with the warmer air, it builds bigger
22 and faster and becomes more of a problem.

23 Q. Has your -- so, not just an individual sector -- again, I'm
24 going to mess up all these air traffic things. But your area, has
25 that ever become overfull due to all the weather that's been in

1 the area? And if so, have you had to do things to mitigate that?

2 A. Yes. It has become overly impacted with weather and it
3 becomes overly impacted with traffic at the same time. And I try
4 to do things to mitigate it. But New York gives us a ton of
5 offloads and it just doesn't stop.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And that's during the summer times. And, I have only been
8 through it one time. Doesn't look good.

9 Q. What, from your perspective as a SUP or OS, what do you do to
10 mitigate that? Do you call TMU and say, we're getting overfull
11 here or what's the process here for you?

12 A. Yes. I'll call TMU, request miles and trail on certain --
13 really, I think they should be doing it themselves. But I try to
14 find things that I think can help with my limited experience in
15 this facility and area and give them ideas as to what can help and
16 try to give them miles and trail for certain airports, either
17 arrivals or departures.

18 Try to tell them that we can't take additional offloads. Try
19 to tell them that we need to lower our MAP numbers so that the
20 sector doesn't look like it can support all of the traffic that it
21 typically can, because with the deviations, it does increase
22 complexity.

23 You run out of altitudes. You run out of space, lateral
24 space. Your frequencies get inundated with aircrafts looking for
25 good rides or telling you about bad rides or asking for deviations

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1 or getting back on course and coordination from surrounding
2 sectors. So yeah, there's significant impact and I try to
3 minimize it, but I can only do so much without the cooperation of
4 surrounding facilities.

5 Q. And I noticed, just looking through the 7110 here locally
6 that they recently had a change from controllers must forward all
7 PIREPs to relaying just operationally pertinent PIREPs. What is
8 operationally pertinent PIREP to you as an OS?

9 A. To me, there isn't a type of PIREP that would be
10 operationally insignificant or impertinent. However, if you were
11 getting 15 light chop reports at the same altitude in the same
12 spot, I don't feel like it's pertinent to put all of them in.

13 So, even though each one of those, by itself, would be
14 pertinent, I don't think it's pertinent to have 15 of the
15 identical PIREP in there. There's a lot of people who think that
16 a smooth ride report or a negative icing report is not pertinent.
17 I disagree, I think it is pertinent, but I don't think you need 20
18 of them in, in the same general location at the same altitudes.

19 So, the only impertinent PIREPs that -- or things that I
20 would consider impertinent are multiple duplicates.

21 MR. SUFFERN: Thank you, Kevin. That's all the questions I
22 have for right now. Thank you.

23 MR. GILLEM: I wish I knew more about meteorology.

24 MR. BROWN: Careful what you wish for.

25 MR. GILLEM: Yeah.

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1 MR. BROWN: Karena, do you want to --

2 MS. MARINAS: Okay.

3 MR. BROWN: Or I can go this way if you're not ready.

4 MS. MARINAS: I'm always ready.

5 MR. BROWN: Okay.

6 MS. MARINAS: Just a minute. I'm just going to -- I'm not
7 coughing right now, so it's a good time.

8 BY MS. MARINAS:

9 Q. Have you -- do you ever -- actually, you said you were going
10 to try to go input some PIREPs at one point for Andre, but you saw
11 that he -- you thought he had it covered.

12 A. I probably even asked him. I constantly ask them if they
13 want me to put PIREPs in for them.

14 Q. Okay. And do you have paper copies for them to input PIREPs
15 if they need them or want them?

16 A. I do. I've had conversations with -- in fact, I had a
17 conversation with Kevin Curtiss during a crew break out for
18 weather dissemination, and he came up with the idea that paper
19 copies should be in use in the areas because he doesn't like the
20 ERIDS.

21 And so, I told him that I would keep copies in the area and
22 then if they ever were so inundated with PIREP reports that they
23 could ask me and I could give them to -- paper copies. So, I do
24 have a couple paper copies.

25 I don't have pads or I don't have multiple pads because I

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1 just can't find them. So, I keep them in a drawer so that I could
2 make photocopies for them if they need them, at which case they
3 can hand them to me, and I'd put in the PIREPs.

4 Q. Okay. So, they have to ask for them? Okay.

5 A. Yeah, because I only have a couple and I don't want them --

6 Q. How about, what's the usage like of the -- on the PIREP board
7 that's located at the sectors, generally, in the area?

8 A. They don't use it as often. I think they're supposed to be
9 using it. But they don't use it as often as they do. I see some
10 people marking things down on there, but generally, if they have
11 something that they want to remember, I'll see them type it on the
12 scope.

13 They do that as well. So, I see people scribble on that
14 PIREP thing. I see people type it up on the scope. But it's not
15 used consistently.

16 Q. Okay. And so, if they're using different methods to remember
17 and share the information, do you feel like it's -- like it's kind
18 of working for everybody? Information, PIREPs are getting shared.
19 General information about the weather is getting shared from one
20 controller to the next?

21 A. I feel like they share the information well, yeah. The
22 forecast sheet stays there at the entrance to the area as well.
23 So anytime somebody had a question about something that may not
24 have been marked down, they are free to review that forecast
25 sheet. That's constantly there.

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1 Q. And do they?

2 A. I've seen people come in and pick it up. I don't see them
3 come in and pick it up all the time. But I've -- I see some
4 people do it, so they have that option.

5 Q. So, you mentioned about the -- so you were aware, you were
6 engaged in the area and you were aware when Fitzgerald came in
7 that Andre asked him to sit on the D-side for a bit.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Right? And then you were aware that Curtiss took the
10 position. They both went on break, and you said you were good
11 with all of that.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. In the -- now I'm confused. In the SRT --

14 A. Sorry.

15 Q. Yeah, the SRT this time. It stated that that wasn't -- that
16 that == the controllers relieving each other was not with -- not
17 in the -- not within the facility's expectations. What do you --
18 how would you interpret that? Would you and could you interpret
19 that?

20 A. Well, I think that they are speaking from a technical
21 standpoint, that it is the supervisor that decides whether a
22 position is open and closed. But from a practical standpoint, and
23 the way that I have been working for 15 years, if a controller
24 needs help, there's absolutely zero problem with asking somebody
25 to sit on their D-side.

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1 And once that push is over with, it's 50/50 whether you ask a
2 supervisor as to whether you can close back up or not. If the
3 push has moved through, it's fine. So yes, I understand from a --
4 I've -- yes, I've been counseled as well.

5 And so, from a technical standpoint, it doesn't match the
6 book definition of how a position should be opened or closed. But
7 I observed it, and I didn't have a problem with it.

8 Q. Yeah, I'm with you. Operationally, the controllers know what
9 they need for short periods of time and that they should feel free
10 to ask for it and --

11 A. I agree. I don't think they should be dissuaded from asking
12 somebody for help.

13 Q. Have -- so the facility has conducted annual swap training
14 and severe weather training for winter weather and summer weather.
15 Have you participated in that? Do you also get that training?

16 A. Yes. Yeah, I went to a briefing at the -- they call it the
17 (indiscernible) here. I went to a briefing there about SWAP.

18 Q. With the controllers?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. And what's the direction from the OM on those, on
21 those subjects for you generally? Let's just start with, like,
22 severe weather. What kinds of -- well, let me just rephrase this.
23 What kind of direction do you get on a daily basis or a somewhat
24 regular basis from the OMs in terms of severe weather -- if
25 anything?

1 A. Well, at this, at stand up, they'll tell us to make sure that
2 we have all the help that we need and to let them know if we need
3 overtime or something like that. That's pretty much the extent of
4 it really, is just tell us to let them know if we need help.

5 Q. Mm-hmm. Okay. And then how about with soliciting PIREPs?

6 A That -- there's differences on the OMs. Some of them will
7 call down and say, hey, we need to solicit PIREPs for --just every
8 once in a while, they'll call down and say that.

9 If I get something significant, I call the OM in addition to
10 TMU. And if it's -- sometimes I call the weather desk. If I feel
11 like it's -- like, if it's severe or greater, I'll call the
12 weather desk and just tell them so they can update the forecast.

13 But as far as the OM, they'll call and disseminate. They'll
14 call sometimes and tell us that there's a new SIGMET out. They'll
15 call and tell us if they got a severe report from another area.
16 That's about it, really.

17 Q. So, it sounds like engagement going both ways pretty
18 regularly?

19 A. Yeah, I think so. They're not in the area, so it's not
20 constant, but it's regular.

21 Q. Yeah. Right.

22 MS. MARINAS: Okay. I don't have any other questions. I did
23 just want to say thank you for giving the controllers positive
24 PROCs and being, like, being on top of that and adamant about it.
25 They -- I was -- I already had written that down to try to remind

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1 myself to say that, because one of the controllers mentioned that
2 you had done it.

3 MR. GILLEM: Thank you.

4 MS. MARINAS: And, you know, unfortunately, I almost never
5 hear of that. So, I think it's really important and it needs to
6 be done. And I'm really glad you did.

7 MR. GILLEM: Thank you.

8 MR. COON: I'll just --

9 MR. BROWN: Kevin?

10 MR. COON: -- follow right on what she said. It's nice that
11 you were engaged and you made those comments. A lot of times all
12 you hear, sometimes, is when it's bad, not when it's good. So, I
13 think it's nice that you were engaged and made those and to
14 acknowledge that.

15 MR. GILLEM: Thank you.

16 BY MR. COON:

17 Q. Now, as an OS, operational supervisor, in the area, are you
18 current on any of the sectors in the area?

19 A. I keep currency at Sectors 8 and 9.

20 Q. Okay. Now, it sounds like you observe, and if they're doing
21 it, you don't make suggestions. When weather is changing or
22 somebody first coming into the area, like, I think Kevin or
23 somebody said it was their first time they were sitting down at
24 the sector.

25 Do you sometimes offer information to them? Hey, this is

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1 going on in the area today. You know, do you, like pre-brief them
2 before they get the brief from the sector?

3 A. It's not uncommon for me to do that. I wouldn't say that I
4 do it every time though.

5 Q. What kind of interaction, if you ask a controller or say,
6 hey, can you focus on this -- what kind of feedback you get from
7 them when you're doing that?

8 A. Can you be more specific?

9 Q. In other words, do they listen to your suggestion or do they
10 give you pushback?

11 A. No, there's definite pushback.

12 MR. COON: Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

13 MR. BROWN: Ryan?

14 MR. HURLING: Yeah. I just have two questions, and they're
15 more from a general overview of this particular center.

16 BY MR. HURLING:

17 Q. And overall and generally, you've done this 15 years. Is
18 that correct?

19 A. Close.

20 Q. Close to 15 years?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Challenges when you first started, I would imagine are
23 probably -- or I'm thinking and you can correct me if I'm wrong --
24 a little bit different than they were 15 years ago as the position
25 has evolved -- or because it's always evolving.

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1 If I'm an individual looking to get into air traffic
2 controller business and the position itself, what's two things you
3 would tell me that you'd be like, be wary of this, these are the
4 two major challenges you're going to face? And then, two, that
5 you're like, this is the best part of this job in today's modern
6 -- in today's condition?

7 A. Well, I would say that the schedule is probably one of the
8 two things that people need to be wary of. It's not for
9 everybody. Don't become a supervisor.

10 Q. Can you --

11 A. Good things?

12 Q. Sorry, but --

13 A. Obviously, it's consistent and steady. And it's -- it can be
14 fun and engaging to, you know, to make time go by quickly while
15 you're at work. So exciting, I guess.

16 Q. Expand on -- you just mentioned advice, don't become a
17 supervisor.

18 A. Yeah, it's not the best position in the agency. I mean, you
19 have, of course, everybody that wants you to do things one way
20 coming from the top, but then you have the pushback that -- from
21 the employees and you're stuck in the middle trying to work with
22 the human factors and get things done, but still comply with the
23 bureaucratic, governmental red tape that makes things difficult to
24 move. So, it's definitely, you know, it's hard to affect any
25 change.

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1 Q. Understood. Scale 1 to 10, and I understand this is an
2 opinion that I'm asking for from you. The pulse of the leadership
3 at this location overall, what would you rate it? And what I mean
4 by that, integrated into the day-to-day operations and the
5 knowledge of what you all are experiencing and challenges on a
6 daily basis.

7 A. Just so I understand, from the perspective of what they know
8 or what -- how they react to it?

9 Q. I'll rephrase it. So, I'm retired Southwest Airlines, and I
10 always felt when I was in Ground-Ops and any other leader position
11 that I held there at the company in different departments, I
12 always felt that the leaders that were the most effective were the
13 visible ones and had a pulse on the operation of what the
14 challenges were.

15 So, looking at it from that standpoint, on a scale of 1 to 5,
16 how much do you believe that they're -- understand -- and that's
17 the key word -- understand what the challenges are that you face
18 on a daily basis?

19 A. It's going to be hard for me to quantify it with a number
20 because there's variables. I do think that they know what's going
21 on. I don't necessarily think that they're as visible as they
22 could be in that I do hear chatter from controllers and stuff
23 about not seeing upper management. But I still think that they
24 are aware of the issues.

25 However, I feel like their responses are somewhat limited by

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1 the power that we have as supervisors, and the talking points that
2 they like to use. So even though they're aware, it doesn't
3 necessarily translate into effectiveness. So, that's why I'm
4 finding it hard to just pick one number because there's so many
5 different --

6 Q. No, I appreciate the elaboration on that. So that answers my
7 question.

8 MR. HURLING: Mike, that's all I have, sir.

9 MR. BROWN: Jason?

10 MR. HURLING: Thank you.

11 BY MR. ALLISTON:

12 Q. All right. So, I guess staying on that same kind of line of
13 questions, what's the facility's expectations as far as position
14 staffing?

15 A. Well, do you want the answer that they've given me since this
16 situation? Or do you want what I would have assumed their
17 expectations were prior?

18 Q. Give both.

19 A. So, I was -- I came from L.A. Center. We were busy year-
20 round. And we were always short-staffed and the area that I was
21 in. So, it was difficult to keep enough people in the area even
22 to keep airplanes moving.

23 In the summertime, when I first got here, it was more akin to
24 that. They have more weather here, to deal with. However, the
25 staffing levels and the amount of workload that there was was more

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1 akin to what I was used to. But I was told that it was going to
2 become, you know, a ghost town in the wintertime.

3 I was surprised at how low the traffic levels got, and how
4 the areas, how often people are on break, compared to actually
5 working. But all winter long, that's how it's been. They seem to
6 run -- you know, they run their break list and they run their
7 breaks and there's just a couple of positions open.

8 That seemingly is how most of the facility's operating most
9 of the time and what I've observed in my area, even though I don't
10 overlap with many SUPs, so it's hard for me to tell, 100% how
11 they're running it when I'm not there.

12 But it seems to be pretty normal. They told me that it
13 wasn't staffed to their expectations when this event occurred.
14 However, since then, I've seen it, you know, obviously a push to
15 have more help in the area, but I still feel like the expectation
16 must have been what was happening, otherwise I wouldn't have seen
17 it go on for that long.

18 Even since then, I came in on another Saturday that had a
19 little bit of convective activity, and I was told that the area
20 had been running on 2 to 3 sectors all day, just like I had been
21 doing, and they were seemingly okay with that. So, I think that
22 as long as the controllers feel like their workload is not too
23 high, that that would be the expectation. I don't know.

24 Q. So, is the push now to have help available in the area? And
25 what does that look like?

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1 A. Yeah, there is a push right now for that. And I don't
2 dislike that idea, but it does lead to push back from the
3 controllers and distractions from them, unhappy because they're in
4 there when they don't feel like they should have to be in there.

5 And, from my own personal perspective, it -- even though it
6 might -- might prevent a short term issue at some point in time,
7 long term, it creates its own set of issues, and the trainees now
8 don't get to see the levels of traffic that I want them to see in
9 order to be certified.

10 Controllers that have to work higher levels of traffic in the
11 summertime will be working such low levels of traffic that they
12 essentially won't be getting the currency that they should be
13 getting. That's a Catch-22 as well because if -- even if you
14 combine the sectors and then it is busy enough that they're
15 actually getting some activity to stay current, they're not there
16 long enough at each session to be getting what I consider to be
17 good currency either. So, I just don't have an answer for how
18 that could be improved.

19 Q. I guess that begs the question, how long are their sessions
20 when you're saying that they're rotating out too quickly?

21 A. They're -- I see -- yeah. I mean, there's -- I've seen them
22 on for several, you know, just several minutes, not even ten
23 minutes I've seen them on sometimes.

24 When they're setting themselves up for a Termi at the end of
25 the day, then they'll be on there for longer because they're

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1 waiting for their Termini. And if you, you know, don't give them
2 their Termini, then they get mad and, they're not going to be
3 focused on the work. So, there's this human factor where, on one
4 hand, I want to -- I want things to happen one way.

5 But on the other hand, if everybody's mad and fighting, then
6 you don't get the help from the people that you need, and you
7 don't have them doing the best job that they can. So, it's been a
8 challenge for me to adapt, to try to, you know, be respected, but
9 also be helpful, also be effective and also be sensitive to their
10 cultural set up here.

11 Q. Can you define Termini?

12 A. A Termini would be their break prior to the end of their shift.
13 Terminal break, I think, is what it's short for. I don't know. I
14 don't even know how to spell it. It's the break leading up to the
15 end of their shift.

16 Q. All right. So, you know, based on the answers you've given,
17 it seems like you're pretty well engaged in the area, especially
18 with respect to performance management, how you've given those
19 PROCs and everything, which is exactly what we want to see. I
20 have a question about wireless headsets. Do you know that you
21 have them and do you use them?

22 A. I do know that I have it. I've used it in the past more at
23 L.A. Center than here. But no, I don't -- I haven't used it here.

24 Q. Okay. Is there any facility expectation to use it, maybe in
25 conjunction with a weather event?

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1 A. No, I don't think so.

2 Q. All right. How often do you see the OMIC come down the
3 aisle?

4 A. Multiple times a day. I wouldn't know how long in between.

5 Q. Okay. And is that typically just to kind of see what's going
6 on? Is it to pass down PIREP information or question you on your
7 configuration of the area?

8 A. I would say it's a mix of relaying some bit of information or
9 checking just to see what's going on, making rounds, a mix of
10 those things.

11 Q. Do you get phone calls or physical visits from the weather
12 coordinator during weather events if there's something that's
13 significant that comes up?

14 A. I don't recall getting a visit from them. I'll get phone
15 calls when new SIGMETs are out, and those may or may not be
16 pertinent to our area. They just have decided to blanket call
17 everybody when there's this new SIGMET out.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Or low-level windshear. We'll get calls on low-level
20 windshear at airports, too.

21 Q. All right, next, next question is, involving some of the QC
22 processes in the facility. Do you know how many corrective action
23 plans you guys have open at current?

24 A. Not exactly.

25 Q. But a lot?

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. All right. And there's -- how does that information get
3 conveyed to you as a supervisor?

4 A. As to how many CAP items there are or --

5 Q. Or just the CAP information itself. So, what CAPs we have
6 open, what we're doing to mitigate them, those types of things.

7 A. There's been a -- it's been a mix of responses to the CAP
8 items. I mentioned earlier to Karena that I had talked to with
9 one of the controllers during crew breakouts.

10 Crew breakouts have been one way that we've been addressing
11 the CAP items, which I have the briefing at that point. So, I
12 brief myself on the CAP item. I taught IST and at the end of it,
13 I was giving the briefing to people about a couple of the ICV
14 items, which are -- run concurrent with our CAP items. So, I got
15 the briefing because I briefed myself.

16 They have Teams briefings on Team. We'll have briefings that
17 way. We've gotten briefings, verbal briefings that we get from
18 the OMs, and then we pass along to the controllers as well on some
19 of the items. I think that's -- I think those are the -- I think
20 those are all the ways.

21 Q. Okay. And so, you have a lot of briefings.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And what's the interaction like on those briefings? Do you
24 get into the why behind, specifically like PIREPs and weather
25 services -- why do we do the things we do?

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1 A. During my crew breakouts, when I'm providing the briefing, I
2 try to give them background information or extra information as to
3 why I feel that it's important. For example, when we were talking
4 about PIREP dissemination earlier, somebody asked me if they could
5 -- was it you asked me about what I feel like our pertinent
6 PIREPs.

7 I've told the, my controllers, when I have a crew breakout,
8 that I want them putting in smooth PIREPs even -- because I feel
9 like it's just as important. Maybe not just as important. It's
10 also important for pilots to know where the smooth rides are in
11 addition to the bad rides. So, I tell them I want them putting in
12 smooth PIERPs, even though a lot of them in the past don't think
13 it's a PIREP-able event.

14 Q. Excellent.

15 MR. ALLISTON: And that's all I've got.

16 MR. BROWN: Any go-backs?

17 MR. COON: Betty.

18 MR. BROWN: Oh, I'm sorry, Betty. I didn't mean to skip you.

19 MS. KOSSHIG: All the questions have asked.

20 MR. BROWN: And you don't --

21 MS. KOSCHIG: I didn't have any questions, so --

22 MR. BROWN: You didn't?

23 MS. KOSCHIG: Thank you. They've all been asked.

24 MR. GILLEM: Thank you.

25 MR. BROWN: Kevin?

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1 MR. COON: I did have a follow-up question.

2 BY MR. COON:

3 Q. Kind of following on when you said, don't become a
4 supervisor, can you elaborate more on why you feel that way? Is
5 it because you don't get support from above or --

6 A. Yeah. I don't think you get support from anybody. You know,
7 as a controller, I only had to worry about myself and doing a good
8 job for myself. Now I have to try to get people that are
9 resistant to supervisor input and just want to go on break.

10 Now I have to try to get them to actually work. And so, then
11 you have all these mandates or people up above saying, we'll say
12 this and say that, which doesn't work. And then if, you know,
13 there's any kind of conduct issues, we really just don't get the
14 support either, because of our union. It's very strong -- which I
15 appreciate it. I appreciate it.

16 I appreciate the union because I think it's important for
17 people to have representation against, you know, against and for
18 themselves, but it still makes it difficult to operate sometimes.

19 Q. And you said, you feel it's hard to affect change?

20 A. I do.

21 Q. I think by you acknowledging good performance and when
22 they're doing a good job, that's a really good way to effect
23 change. So, I compliment you on that.

24 Do you feel if your leadership, you bring up a suggestion
25 that maybe can affect change, as you said, the human factors

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1 between the controllers and stuff, do you feel you're supported
2 when you bring that up to your leadership? Hey, you know, maybe
3 we should try this or --

4 A. I --

5 Q. You don't have to answer if you're uncomfortable answering.
6 I just --

7 A. No, I'm just trying to. I'm just trying to -- I haven't
8 really thought about that. There's not that many things that I
9 think that upper management can do for the changes that I would
10 like to see agency wide.

11 I still think the controllers are the most important aspect
12 of the job, and I think that their attitude and outlook and their
13 willingness to be effective is the most important part of the
14 agency.

15 And so, without getting into too much detail, I want the
16 controllers that are good controllers -- I want them to get the
17 support that they want and need. But there's an element in the
18 agency of bad attitudes and pushback and unwillingness to
19 cooperate that I simultaneously understand from them, but also, I
20 think that should be corrected.

21 And it's kind of a one bad apple spoils the whole bunch type
22 thing where, you know, people get away with stuff and then they
23 are emboldened by the fact that they got away with it. And the
24 people around them see they're getting away with it and they don't
25 want to be the bag holders, per se in not getting the benefits

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1 that they think they should get.

2 And so, I like I said, I respect the union and I like the
3 union and I was in the union and -- but there comes a point where
4 individuals should be held accountable. And without that
5 happening, you can't get the entire workforce in the position --
6 in, you know, where they should be. That's what I think.

7 And so, is it an unwillingness to have support from the top?
8 Or is it an inability for them to support you in that? I can't
9 tell you. I'm not that deep into it to know exactly what's going
10 on. But I do know there's a lot of people that are getting away
11 with a lot of stuff that they really just shouldn't.

12 MR. COON: Thank you very much. Thank you.

13 MS. MARINAS: Can I --

14 MR. BROWN: Karena?

15 MS. MARINAS: -- follow up on that?

16 BY MS. MARINAS:

17 Q. Do you -- have you used PROSTANDARDS at all?

18 A. I have.

19 Q. You have?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And, how's the PROSTANDARDS program here?

22 A. I have not used PROSTANDARDS here. I talked to --

23 Q. Oh.

24 A. I used to PROSTANDARDS at L.A. I know a couple of the people
25 in PROSTANDARDS here. It does not seem to be used as much as it

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1 was used in L.A., so.

2 Q. Do you feel like you can't use it here?

3 A. I'll be honest with you. Even when I used it in L.A., I
4 don't think that it was very effective. The people become kind of
5 mad that you sent them there. And so, then you just have to deal
6 with their attitudes after the fact too.

7 So, I think it's a great plan. And I think the people that
8 are involved in it are great. I think the people -- I think it's
9 a great idea in practice. The problem just really is that, as far
10 as, you know, contact is concerned, the agency seems kind of
11 toothless.

12 I don't like saying that because I feel like our profession
13 is important, and I feel like most people are doing a great job
14 and everybody cares about safety. But I just feel like there
15 becomes drift. And when you can't hold people accountable, it
16 makes it difficult to get the job done well.

17 MS. MARINAS: Okay.

18 MR. BROWN: You're done? Paul?

19 BY MR. SUFFERN:

20 Q. Yeah, just two -- couple a couple more weather questions.
21 Have you, here at Boston Center -- have you ever directly
22 requested Center Weather Service Unit direct support in a
23 difficult weather scenario? For example, VFR on top and trying to
24 get down. And have you requested CW -- so you walk down to
25 your --

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1 A. I don't have the exact details. But I had an emergency
2 aircraft that was trying to land, and we didn't have the weather
3 for the airport that we were trying to get them to land at. And
4 so, I called the weather unit to try to get that weather, but they
5 couldn't provide it to me.

6 Q. Okay. When a controller takes over, does a position relief
7 briefing and provides, you know, weather -- passed out weather
8 information, what weather information -- let me start over. It's
9 a hard one to phrase.

10 But when a controller doing a pass-down weather briefing, you
11 know, what is your expectation as far as the weather that has
12 already been provided to the flights that they were controlling?
13 Do you expect them to have provided, you know, the weather or the
14 PIREPs to all the flights that they're talking with and then you,
15 as a controller, come on and should issue the weather to each one
16 of those flights that you're talking to, or you would assume that
17 the weather has already been provided?

18 A. If I were taking over a position, is what you're saying?
19 Well, I personally try not to assume anything. So, if an aircraft
20 were already in the weather, I would assume that had been issued
21 because it's already in the weather. What am I going to do at
22 that point?

23 If I'm talking to the aircraft prior to it actually entering
24 the weather area, unless somebody has expressly told me that that
25 aircraft has received the weather, I would not assume that it had

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1 received the weather.

2 Q. And then my last and favorite question there was -- I put you
3 in charge of the FAA. Change would happen, and you had unfettered
4 money. What weather tool would you like to have that can help you
5 do your job better?

6 A. Do I have to just be in charge of the FAA, or can I be in
7 charge of the whole world?

8 Q. So, the weather tools of the whole world. How about that?

9 A. I would like for the aircraft, the airlines, to have onboard
10 weather observation equipment that they shared with other
11 airlines. And as a freely available tool to, to the GAs as well,
12 because I feel like if the pilots just had access to all the
13 information right there, then we would eliminate one of the
14 potential humans in the equation that could be missing the
15 dissemination.

16 So, you know, automatic weather information delivery, that
17 way, because it can be a mistake, or it can just be laziness or it
18 can be -- whatever it is, it can be admitted at some point in
19 time. So, if you can eliminate the idea of it being omitted,
20 that'd be great.

21 MR. SUFFERN: That's all I've got. Thank you, Kevin.

22 MR. GILLEM: Thank you.

23 MR. BROWN: Just a couple quick ones.

24 MR. GILLEM: Okay.

25 BY MR. BROWN:

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1 Q. More --it's more OS related. I'm assuming you went to SYFY?
2 A. Via Zoom.
3 Q. NMC?
4 A. Via Zoom.
5 Q. NMC 2?
6 A. I don't think I've been to NMC 2.
7 Q. Okay, LMR?
8 A. No, I was trying to go to that April 8th, and they just
9 rejected my request.
10 Q. Okay. Any other supervisor specific training via FAA Fly or
11 courses you took?
12 A. No, I don't think so.
13 Q. So, based on those courses you did take, do you feel that
14 that was enough to prepare you to be an effective operational
15 manager, the training you received from the FAA?
16 A. No, but I don't necessarily know that anything could prepare
17 you until you're actually doing it. Yeah, on the job, training is
18 the only thing. It's just like being a controller. You can take
19 courses as much as you want to.
20 Q. That's fair.
21 A. Until you're actually doing it, it's --
22 Q. Have you been to an OSW?
23 A. No.
24 Q. Okay, so then to follow up, but not weather related -- SUP-
25 related.

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1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. Snap your fingers and have anything you wanted to help you do
3 your job better, what would you like? And no, I don't have a
4 Santa bag. It's not going to come flying out.

5 I'm just saying, for you, what do you wish you had? To help
6 you do your job better, whether it be equipment, procedures,
7 policies. I don't care. When you come to work, what would you
8 love to see?

9 A. I mean, obviously more people always helps. If I can get
10 more, more supervisors to work with me and more controllers to
11 staff positions when it's absolutely necessary that's -- more
12 people is --

13 MR. BROWN: Anyone else? Stopping the recording. The time
14 is 3:56 p.m.

15 (Whereupon, at 3:56 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
16
17
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Kevin Gillem

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 7, 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.



Kimberlee S. Kondrat
Transcriber

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *

KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *

Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: TIM KARAVAS, Operational Manager (OM)

Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Thursday,
March 7, 2024

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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

BENJAMIN WADE, Representative
FAA, Office of General Counsel
(On behalf of Mr. Karavas)

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I N T E R V I E W

(07:34 a.m.)

MR. BROWN: Okay, I've started the recording. It is 7:34 a.m. Good morning again. My name is Michael Brown. I'm an air traffic investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. For the record, can you state your first and last name?

MR. KARAVAS: Yep. Tim Karavas.

MR. BROWN: Thanks, Tim. Thanks for coming in this morning. So before we get started, just to reiterate, you know you're being recorded. You have a rep with you today. For the record, can you state your name?

MR. WADE: Yes. Rep's name is Benjamin Wade, FAA Legal Counsel.

MR. BROWN: Awesome. Thanks, Ben. I appreciate that. During the time -- during the interview, if you need to step out, if you need to use the restroom, if you need to confer with him, if you want to step out, just let us know. It's not a lightbulb hanging above your head kind of deal. We're just going to ask you some questions. Anytime you need a break, you can take a break.

The reason why you see so many people in here as part of the group, we work our party system with the FAA. Well for -- have you ever been part of an NTSB investigation before?

MR. KARAVAS: Two.

MR. BROWN: Two. Okay, so nothing new for you. So you know we work party system with the FAA. It's a parallel investigation,

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1 so we don't --

2 MR. KARAVAS: Yep.

3 MR. BROWN: -- work with them, and they don't necessarily
4 work with us. But we're both here at the same time. We have a
5 big group just because I've never worked at a center, Betty's
6 never worked at a center. So we have -- we'll go around the room
7 and everybody can introduce themselves. So Paul?

8 MR. SUFFERN: Yeah. So my name's Paul Suffern. I'm a
9 meteorologist investigator with the NTSB.

10 MS. KOSCHIG: I'm Betty Koschig. I'm an aircraft control
11 specialist investigator at the NTSB.

12 MS. MARINAS: Good morning. Karena Marinas, NATCA Air Safety
13 Investigator. I'm a controller out of LA Center.

14 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, United Airlines Air Traffic
15 Strategies, and I'm a retired FAA.

16 MR. HURLING: And Ryan Hurling, Senior Flight Safety
17 Investigator, United Airlines. I'm the primary and lead
18 investigator for this event from the company, United's, side.

19 MR. ALLISTON: And I'm Jason Alliston. I'm the FAA SME. I'm
20 the air traffic manager at Atlanta Center.

21 MR. KARAVAS: Okay.

22 MR. BROWN: Okay. So a little bit about what we do, which
23 you may already know, but the NTSB, we're a separate federal
24 agency. We don't fall under the DOT. We report to congress, and
25 that's by design. We're not here to assign fault, blame, or

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1 liability. We're here to gather factual information and come up
2 with the probable cause of the event.

3 So what to expect today, we'll go around -- I use a round
4 robin. I'll start out the interview, basic questions, and then
5 we'll go around the room. Because it's recorded, just make sure
6 it's audible. You can't shake your head. You can't, you know,
7 yes or no. If a question is asked that you need repeated, ask to
8 have it repeated or restated, and we'll work it like that. But
9 I'll physically say who's going to talk next for the tapes. Any
10 questions before we get started? Nothing?

11 MR. KARAVAS: No questions.

12 MR. BROWN: Okay, good. So I'll start first.

13 INTERVIEW OF TIM KARAVAS

14 BY MR. BROWN:

15 Q. How old were you on February 10th of this year, the date of
16 the event?

17 A. How old?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. I believe 55, 56. Let me see, '68 -- because I never keep
20 track of my age. Dead serious -- '24 -- 56.

21 Q. Fifty-six, okay. Some people have a birthday between, and
22 they're like oh no, actually I was -- whatever. But okay,
23 operator initials?

24 A. Tango Alpha.

25 Q. Tango Alpha. And your official title position at Boston

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1 Center?

2 A. Operations manager.

3 Q. Before you came into the FAA, did you have any military
4 experience, contract tower, any prior ATC experience?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. Do you hold any collateral duties here in the facility
7 and/or have you been on any recent details that took you out of
8 the facility? And by recent, the last year.

9 A. So as far as collateral duties go for the OMT, I would be the
10 OM liaison for IPM and QC, which also puts me on the CAP
11 mitigation development team.

12 Q. Okay. So IPM stands for --

13 A. Let's see here. Performance management --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- individual performance management.

16 Q. Okay. QC is obviously quality control, and CAP is corrective
17 action plan.

18 A. Yeah. Do you want me to spell those out? I wasn't sure.

19 Q. No, I just --

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. -- it's easier for -- I'll make a list of the acronyms when
22 we submit the tape. So it's just easier if we do it while it's
23 being recorded. If you would, can you just briefly describe your
24 ATC and aviation background, how did you get into air traffic, are
25 you a pilot as well, just a broad overview of that?

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1 A. Yep. My father was a controller here at Boston Center. I
2 got hired off the street, and got hired in January of 1987, so a
3 couple years, here, ago, I think 37, about.

4 Q. Did you ever work with your dad? Did you overlap with him?

5 A. We had worked the same shift. We had commuted. But he was
6 never, like, the supervisor in my area.

7 Q. I've got you.

8 A. He was in another area, I was in another area. I was a
9 controller for 24 and a half years, TMU for one year, supervisor
10 for about two, operations manager, quality control manager.

11 Last --

12 Q. Are you talking about your father or you?

13 A. Me.

14 Q. I was going to say, because that was -- that sounds exactly
15 like your background.

16 A. I'm sorry.

17 Q. So -- no, that's fine. It's fine.

18 A. And operations manager last.

19 Q. So -- and all here.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Have you ever been fired, terminated, suspended, or asked to
22 resign from any ATC position?

23 A. Negative.

24 Q. Kind of personal information about yourself, how would you
25 describe your overall health, from excellent, good, fair, or poor,

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1 or you can decline to answer?

2 A. Good to excellent.

3 Q. Okay. Do you carry a class 2 as an OM?

4 A. What's that?

5 Q. A medical clearance.

6 A. Negative.

7 Q. Okay. Do you know if a drug and alcohol screening was
8 performed following this event?

9 A. Yes, I do know it was done.

10 Q. Okay. You were not tested, or you were?

11 A. I was not.

12 Q. Okay. Any changes in your health during the last year, good,
13 bad, or indifferent; surgeries, weight gain, weight loss?

14 A. Going to the gym.

15 Q. Well that's good, right?

16 A. New Year's resolution.

17 Q. So that's new, the start of this year?

18 A. Yeah. My daughter kind of got me going on it.

19 Q. Got you.

20 A. I wanted to anyways.

21 Q. Yeah. Any changes in your personal life during the last
22 year, good, bad, or indifferent; loss in the family, divorced,
23 married, do you have any kids?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No, okay. Any changes in your financial situation during the

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1 last year; bankruptcy, bought a house, sold a house, won the
2 lottery?

3 A. Nope.

4 Q. Okay. Probably not, but did you personally file an ATSAP for
5 the event?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Okay. Prior to today, excluding this group and the SIRG
8 group, were you interviewed about the event?

9 A. Yes, I was.

10 Q. Okay. And do you recall when that was?

11 A. Not really. I think it would have been the following week
12 for the SSR from the QC office.

13 Q. Okay. Was that the first time that you watched the replay,
14 too?

15 A. No, I reviewed it that night, getting ready for the SRT.

16 Q. Perfect, okay. Let me update this with that. And the replay
17 was audio and video, correct?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Was the SRT done that night? I can't remember.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. And you sat on the SRT?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. So this is kind of -- the next question is just about
24 the complexity and the traffic volume at the time of the event.

25 So obviously, it's a one size fits all form, so you know, the

1 controller's work's easy. But I want you to look at it from an OM
2 point of view, not this specific sector. So from an OM point of
3 view, on a scale of one to five, with five being the heaviest for
4 the -- I guess for your position, for the facility, how busy was
5 the traffic that evening -- or that afternoon, I should say?

6 A. Compared to, like, most SWAP nights that I see in the
7 summertime?

8 Q. Compared to that -- a February Saturday afternoon. Was it
9 heavier than you expected, was it lighter than you expected, was
10 it normal?

11 A. It was definitely heavier. I'd say three to a four, probably
12 more towards the three.

13 Q. Okay. And the follow-up question to that, is that normal for
14 that time of day --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- or year? It's not normal, okay. So no -- it was heavier
17 than normal, correct?

18 A. It was heavier than normal and there was convective activity
19 in February --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- which you do get, but not very often.

22 Q. We have found that out since we got this case. It's kind of
23 the same line of question, but now it's one to five on complexity;
24 five being really complex as a facility, one being not complex,
25 how would you rate it?

1 A. Two to three.

2 Q. Okay. And was that normal for the time of day and the year
3 -- time of year?

4 A. No, it's a little bit of both now.

5 Q. A little bit of both. Okay. Once again for you, not the
6 sector, did you have any distractions occurring during the time of
7 the event that you can recall?

8 A. Well, this is kind of -- it was distracting to walk in and
9 see that there were zero PIREPs on WARP, if that makes sense. And
10 I don't think that's necessarily the distraction you're looking
11 for.

12 Q. It's your question and your answer. So we're just looking
13 for -- I mean, if --

14 A. External distractions, no.

15 Q. Okay. But it was -- but when you walked in and saw that the
16 WARP was lacking PIREPs, I guess, it kind of made your mind wonder
17 hey, what's going on with that, I would assume.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Do you recall the weather conditions or the current
20 advisories at the time of the event?

21 A. Convective SIGMET 29 Echo. Is that what you're asking about?

22 Q. I would say that yes, you do. Yeah.

23 A. I think it was 28 and below for convective activity, or 28
24 and below for severe turbulence. I can't remember exactly. And
25 then we had a CWSU verbal update on 37 and below in the southern

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1 part of the airspace for possible severe turbulence also. And
2 that was just coming off the press, if those words make sense.

3 Q. You come in as an OM, do you do the pre-duty weather
4 briefing?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Did you do it that day?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Can you kind of walk me through, you come in as the
9 OM, CWSU is right there. I'm assuming you see those folks, too.

10 A. Some nights I actually go to them for specific information.
11 After I have all of my pre-duty work done, I usually go to the
12 watch desk and start getting briefed on who's on position -- or
13 who do I have on for the night, who's on right now, what kind of
14 traffic, special activities, weather, and the weather's just in
15 there. And depending on the actual events of the night, one of
16 those goes to the front of the line and one of them doesn't.

17 Q. Okay. An opinion-based question.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. How beneficial do you think the pre-duty weather briefing is
20 for the controllers oncoming of a shift?

21 A. Give me that question one more time.

22 Q. How beneficial do you think the pre-duty weather brief is for
23 the controllers coming in to -- they're coming on to the shift,
24 they put their stuff away, they get the pre-duty weather brief?

25 A. So I think the idea is that I think a lot of our products

1 stink.

2 Q. That is what the common consensus is. It's a good idea with
3 a poor execution.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. That often breaks, and just blows my mind how it can be so
7 important, and yet -- I don't -- I mean, it was just not working
8 the other day when I walked in. So I went to the CWSU, and I
9 brought it up to her, and she said I was able to -- I think she
10 said I deleted the previous one, but I didn't actually upload the
11 next one. Excuse me. I'm like okay, thanks. And I'm like oh
12 boy.

13 Q. What do you do at that point, right? Pull everybody off the
14 sector and go get it? So no, I get it. It's a work in progress
15 definitely. I understand that. Do you -- when you work OMIC, do
16 you have a cellphone on you?

17 A. Yep.

18 Q. Okay. Do you -- and I don't know what the rules are, so
19 you'll have to tell me. Is that the standard practice? Is that
20 supposed to happen? Is that -- because obviously --

21 A. So --

22 Q. -- you're an OMIC, so you've got to be available 24/7 here,
23 right?

24 A. Yeah. So the line for no cellphones is beyond where I sit.

25 Q. Okay.

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1 A. I have a cellphone. I use it hardly ever --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- because even though I suppose I could, I do not think that
4 sets a very good example. But I do keep it, because, like, that
5 night, while I'm running around doing things, I'm texting the XO,
6 hey, we just had an incident.

7 Q. Okay. Kind of a weird question, but when the event happens,
8 you're the only OMIC in the building at that time, correct?
9 There's not two of you here at that time.

10 A. Yeah, I was alone.

11 Q. Okay. So obviously, you're not going to get relieved to
12 handle the SRT -- compile the data.

13 A. I pulled a supervisor in to help me out.

14 Q. Got you, okay. So now we're to the actual event, then. So
15 in as much detail as possible, can you walk me through, prior to
16 the event, obviously, once again, not from the sector point of
17 view; from your point of view as the OM, from the event when it
18 occurred until when you were notified --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- go from there.

21 A. I actually typed this up the next day at home.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. It's my timeline, from when I came on shift to the event, of
24 everything that I did, ATC related, which was pretty much all that
25 I was doing. And this is a combination of what's on the DASH 4

1 and the notes that I had on my --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- not my clipboard, but my pad of paper. So would you like
4 a copy?

5 Q. I will go through that, but yeah --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- we'll get a copy.

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. But yeah, we'll go through Alex for that.

10 A. I don't plan on reading this verbatim, but -- so sign on at 2
11 o'clock. 2:25, 2:30, I see -- so I'm getting briefed from the OM
12 previous to me, he's training an STMC, and taking in the normal
13 stuff. Where -- who are my supervisors, how many bodies do I
14 have on for the night, are there any special missions, what's the
15 weather? And I get told oh, yeah, we've actually had some
16 convective activity. I'm like, okay. He goes but it's been doing
17 great. We've been monitoring sectors, we're calling weather, and
18 we're getting PIREPs all day. I'm like, all right.

19 And that's about the time I look up and I see there are zero
20 PIREPs, and we've got a big, huge convective SIGMET. And I'm,
21 like, thinking to myself, we just took our foot off the gas pedal.
22 And that's when I just kind of went all right, I think we need to
23 engage. And I started soliciting for PIREPs for convective SIGMET
24 29 Echo. I believe I drew an FEA, that's a flight evaluation area
25 on the TSD. And I drew it to -- then pulled up the sectors to

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1 determine the actual sectors that I need PIREPs from. And then I
2 wrote down the list, I went down to the areas, and I told the
3 supervisors I need PIREPs from sectors X, Y, and Z; from altitudes
4 such and such and below, for tops and turbulence.

5 I made it very specific so that it's very easy to get a PIREP
6 back. And I'm also, at this point, doing the weather
7 coordinator's duty, because obviously, it's not being done, and
8 I'm not going to wait. So --

9 Q. Can you say that one more time? I was typing. You were
10 doing whose duty?

11 A. The weather coordinator's duty --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- because it wasn't being done. And I'm not going to wait
14 to go over and tell them that I need stuff when I need it right
15 now. So I was just -- or just -- I'm just going to get this going
16 ASAP. That's why I did it.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. After I solicited for PIREPs from the appropriate areas, I
19 then went back to the see all feature on the scope, and I started
20 monitoring sectors for calling depicted weather compliance. I
21 happened to look at sectors 23, 24, and I guess 22, because it's
22 combined up. And it's at 19:45 Zulu, so 2:45 local, I'm actually
23 monitoring that sector and the controller is doing an outstanding
24 job of calling all the weather. She's hitting the mark.

25 And now I hear position leave briefing. So I'm like, I'll

1 continue to monitor, then I'll see what the next controller's
2 doing. I hear him call the weather. I'm like, okay. So I moved
3 on from that one. I can't remember -- and we normally log these
4 on our DASH 4. We started doing this last spring. And we send
5 feedback to the supervisors of record for people that are doing a
6 good job, and also for people that need improvement. And so these
7 did not make it onto the DASH 4 because of the events of the
8 night. But they were still in my notes. That's why I know I did
9 that one.

10 So I happened to look at sector 24. That's the only one I
11 have written down. I think it's because that's where a majority
12 of the weather was. It wasn't really anywhere else. And then I'm
13 like all right, now we need PIREPs for the CWSU's new forecast of
14 possible severe of 37 and below in the southern part of the
15 airspace.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And then I start determining the sectors -- the areas and the
18 sectors that I need those PIREPs from, and I coordinate that with
19 the areas, because that wasn't getting done. Convective SIGMET,
20 that's a duplicate. And yeah, we're right at the standup. Why
21 didn't everyone -- okay. So at the standup I remind everyone
22 we're getting PIREPs for convective SIGMET 29 Echo and the CWSU
23 forecast for 37 and above, so I'm asking for 35 and above, because
24 I always build a buffer and ask for more.

25 I remind everyone to make sure that we're calling depicted

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1 weather. My two audits show we're doing a good job. I make sure
2 the sector's able to pass all weather-related information, split
3 -- and the staff D-Sides, as necessary. I make the specific
4 request for PIREPs from C, D, and E for the CWSU forecast because
5 I wanted to get an update on that. And then the standup's over
6 and I get a phone call from N90. That's pretty much --

7 Q. And that phone call was the --

8 A. Informing me of United 1890 having a turbulence event with
9 some injuries.

10 Q. Is that a shout line call or a physical phone call?

11 A. That's a dial, outside line.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. So now I have a severe turbulence report, it appears, and I
14 go down to the area and I tell -- I make them aware, because the
15 first thing that we need to do is make that sector aware of the
16 situation. So that's the first thing to do. I go down to area A,
17 advise the supervisor of the PIREP. One of the controllers in the
18 area turns around and hears it, and he says do you want me to put
19 that PIREP in? I'm like yes, thank you. And then I go back to
20 the watch desk, and I call up New York Center, and I advise them
21 of the severere PIREP on our boundary, because it's literally
22 three miles from their airspace.

23 And of course, through listening to all of the chatter going
24 on, I know TMU is aware, I know that the weather service unit's
25 aware, and I think that's pretty much it to that point, unless you

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1 have any questions.

2 Q. No. I really appreciate you taking the time and making sure
3 we got all that. Like I said, the factual data that we can get,
4 you know, our job is to prevent this from happening again.

5 A. Mm-hm.

6 Q. Coming from your point of view, that's really good. So that
7 night, then, obviously you do the SRT that night. Do you know,
8 was the OS on that with you as well, or was it just -- how does
9 that work in the building when you guys do those SRTs?

10 A. So shortly after making sure everyone's aware of the PIREP,
11 I'm texting the XO we have an incident --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And I'm, you know, just kind of really, you know, digesting,
14 you know, what's really going to go on here. And then it doesn't
15 take long to -- for me to determine that we're going to be
16 probably in an SRT because we have this type of event. So I have
17 the supervisor that's helping me from area D, because there's two
18 supervisors in area D at that time. Because I would not want to
19 take a supervisor ordinarily if I didn't have to.

20 Somewhere in the texting with the XO, he advises me that the
21 ATM is on the way in, he's going to be on the way in. And while
22 they're coming in, I'm already reviewing the event, getting the
23 timeline ready because they use my timeline for the SRT, because
24 I've done this a couple times. Did that answer your question?

25 MR. BROWN: Yes, sir. I'm going to pass it, now, to Paul.

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1 MR. SUFFERN: Yeah. Thanks, Tim, and thanks for that
2 timeline. That's great to see things from your perspective, and
3 really, really helpful. I'm just going to ask probably just a
4 little bit more background weather-related questions and things
5 like that, since you provided some great information on the event
6 itself.

7 BY MR. SUFFERN:

8 Q. How often -- since you've worked here quite a while, how
9 often do you guys have thunderstorm activity in Boston Center's
10 airspace during what I'll call the wintertime so, you know,
11 November through March timeframe?

12 A. It seems like it's happening a little bit more --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- but it's not, like, an everyday thing. The weather that
15 we're having right now, for the last three days, is actually not
16 really very normal.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. It's pretty persistent, and there's some -- you can see
19 buildups on the WARP with yellows and reds here and there, and
20 you're just looking at it, you know, like, this is the beginning
21 of March. Did that answer your question?

22 Q. Yeah, that was perfect. Yeah. Have you been -- I know
23 you've worked here quite a while and have a lot of experience here
24 in Boston Center. Have you been provided guidance or training on
25 how to deal with, I guess, more out of season weather scenarios?

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1 For example, snow in the middle of July or thunderstorms in the
2 beginning of February.

3 A. We have our regular, here's your winter weather briefing for
4 the year, here's your summer weather briefing. I mean, I don't
5 know how to answer that question. I mean, I know what to do for
6 convective activity. I know what to do, and it just doesn't
7 matter if it happens in February or July. It's either convective
8 or it's not. It's either turbulence due to the jet or it's not,
9 you know? I don't know if that answers your question.

10 Q. That's perfect. Yeah, no. So to rephrase the question, I
11 guess, so you would handle convective activity you would see in
12 February the same way you would handle the convective activity you
13 see in July?

14 A. Yeah, there's no difference --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- in my mind.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I mean, you actually see quite large snowstorms coming in the
19 winter, and that's still precipitation that needs to be called,
20 you know?

21 Q. You described a little bit, during your discussion there, of
22 -- if you're provided weather information like you were on the day
23 of the event, talking about the convective SIGMET and then the
24 CWSU, talking about the severe turbulence in the southern part of
25 your airspace, I think you said you walked physically down and

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1 then told the supervisors of those areas the expectations of the
2 weather and such. Is that a normal practice you would have
3 with --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- any weather-related thing?

6 A. Yes, it is.

7 Q. Okay. And then what would be your expectation of those supes
8 as far as passing that information along?

9 A. They give me PIREPs. That's why I do it. So what happens is
10 if I don't do that, we're not going to get PIREPs. Okay, so now
11 what am I doing, enabling the weather coordinator? Well, I know
12 we have a CAP for it, and I know I'm not going to be doing this
13 forever, and I know from the previous investigations that
14 ultimately, the -- getting PIREPs will just ultimately land in my
15 lap, and I've got to make sure it happens. I think I do it, and I
16 don't think I should have to. I should be providing oversight to
17 it, not actually doing it. I don't know. I think I went off
18 topic for you, but --

19 Q. No, that's very helpful. No, your perspective on how things
20 are, especially with your experience here at Boston Center, is
21 really valuable. So this is my lack of knowledge on air traffic
22 things, but can you -- and I'll mess everything up, I'm sure --
23 but can you initiate a SWAP from -- so let's say there's
24 convective activity moving into your airspace. Can you, as the OM
25 here, initiate a SWAP, or does that come from the command center,

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1 or come from -- how does that work?

2 A. We do it all the time.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. It was two summers ago. I was so proud of the whole
5 building. Complete European push coming in, severe turbulence
6 forecasted, a whole eastern boundary of ZBW. I worked with the
7 TMC. God, who was it that day? Chad Brewbaker. And we moved
8 almost every single plane for the west into our airspace. And the
9 ones that we left on the route, we descended below the areas, and
10 we worked with the areas. And I even texted my XO saying if you
11 get a call about someone complaining that they burned more fuel,
12 this is why. We do this all the time.

13 Q. Okay. So it's not unusual for you or Boston Center to
14 initiate some kind of a SWAP?

15 A. Yeah, and they're all -- they're quite unique. It's not
16 like, you know, oh, I got one turbulence report, I'm doing a stop.
17 But, I mean, I have stopped departures off of N90 when we get a
18 severe turbulence off of Betty or Hefe, one of our departure
19 fixes. And, you know, but it's not like we just do it every time.
20 You know, it's like -- it's kind of unique. It's a very, very
21 dynamic situation.

22 And I -- if I shut off the flow every time we had a
23 turbulence report, you know, that would be pretty bad. So it's
24 kind of like, you know, this is something that we weren't really
25 counting on, and the airlines might not know about it, then yes, I

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1 will shut it off until I think everyone has enough time to know
2 that it's there. But if it's something that's been forecasted and
3 has been ongoing, then, you know, I'm not necessarily so quick to
4 shut it off. So that's not necessarily a SWAP, that would be a
5 stop.

6 Q. Okay. How much, just in your experience, how much convective
7 activity in Boston Center does it take to have some kind of a SWAP
8 or some kind of change in flow or things like that?

9 A. It just happens all the time.

10 Q. Okay. Okay. Since you were discussing the PIREPs and
11 things, from your perspective as OM, how does the PIREP process
12 work here at Boston Center?

13 A. What part of it? I mean, it's a big question.

14 Q. Yeah. How does it initiate, I guess either from the pilot or
15 air traffic control, and then go through Boston Center? And how
16 do you become aware of PIREPs? How does that work, from your
17 perspective?

18 A. All right. So it sounds to me like you're asking now about
19 how am I aware of when we should solicit, but how am I aware of
20 the PIREPs we're receiving and how the PIREP process works.

21 Q. Correct.

22 A. And so that's what I'll explain, and you can tell me if you
23 want something different. So when the controller receives a
24 PIREP, if they decide to log it, I'll call it log it or putting it
25 into the system, they put it into ERIDS. And then from there, it

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1 gets pushed to the weather coordinator position. The weather
2 coordinator position will then GI the PIREP. The GI goes to the
3 sectors, which gives the other control positions the knowledge of
4 the weather phenomenon. The GI also goes to flight data. Flight
5 data inserts that PIREP into the AISR. The AISR feeds it to
6 WMSCR, WMSCR feeds it to WARP, and then within three minutes, four
7 minutes, I'll see an icon on the wall.

8 Q. Okay. So unless -- I would assume unless the weather
9 coordinator comes over and tells you, the PIREPs you see are when
10 they back feed through -- or --

11 A. No, I usually see them when they get GI'd.

12 Q. Oh, when they get GI'd, okay.

13 A. I save the last hour's worth of GI PIREPs on my AT
14 workstation all the time --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- until an hour's worth exceeds the front page, and then I
17 just delete them because I can't see them.

18 Q. Mm-hm.

19 A. And so I always keep a page or an hour's worth, whichever is
20 less or more, I can't -- I don't know how to figure that one out.
21 But that's what I always keep. So I use that as well as the WARP
22 symbols because, you know, that's a quick and easy on the WARP.

23 Q. And is that your common practice? Is that a practice of all
24 the OMs, or just what you've come --

25 A. It's --

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1 Q. -- to use?

2 A. -- pretty common amongst us all, because I kind of trained us

3 all.

4 Q. Okay. So you --

5 A. It's just a practice --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- a best practice. It's not a procedure.

8 Q. Okay. I was reading through the local 7110, and I saw that

9 it had changed this January, going from a controller must hoard

10 all PIREPs to controller must relay all operationally pertinent

11 PIREPs. Do you know about that change, and --

12 A. Yep.

13 Q. Yeah. And what --

14 A. Do you want to know --

15 Q. -- does that mean to you?

16 A. -- about it?

17 Q. What?

18 A. It came up from the CAP mitigation development team, because

19 it was a noncompliant item for us.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. We realized that when we rewrote the weather coordinator

22 portion of the SOP, I'm guessing 10, 15 years ago, that we over

23 restricted ourselves. We can't enter all PIREPs. So if I have a

24 moderate forecast of, you know, moderate, and I'm getting light

25 chop, you know, I don't have to enter a light chop. But that SOP

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1 part that was in there before would have required those to be in
2 there. So now we're noncompliant with an over restrictive
3 requirement.

4 Q. Okay. What does -- I guess what does operationally pertinent
5 PIREP mean to you, then? What would that --

6 A. So anything that you need to be aware of. I mean, those are
7 words that we took right out of the 7110, and we tried to not
8 reinvent this thing. You know, if you've got a moderate
9 turbulence report where you have none before, that's pretty
10 pertinent. And of course a severe would be. If you have a light
11 icing report where there was none before, that's pretty pertinent.
12 If you've got severe forecasted and you get a smooth ride report
13 or a light rain, that's pretty pertinent. So does that answer
14 your question?

15 MR. SUFFERN: Yeah. That's very helpful. That's been very
16 helpful, Tim. That's all the questions I have for right now.

17 MR. KARAVAS: Okay.

18 MR. BROWN: Jason.

19 MR. ALLISTON: All right. I'm going to go down some
20 questions of the operation first, just kind of what you typically
21 do.

22 BY MR. ALLISTON:

23 Q. As an OM, do you have oversight over a specific area that's
24 assigned to you?

25 A. Area Charlie.

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1 Q. Okay. And how often do you do supervisory meetings --

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. -- just you and the supervisors, and how often do you do
4 those?

5 A. We actually did one, I believe, in December, because prior to
6 the SRT and the Wednesday AJT national telecom prior to February
7 10th, our latest guidance was staff to the traffic. This is COVID
8 staffing. I want as few bodies in the operation as possible. We
9 of course had to come out of the COVID schedule because traffic
10 was increasing, and we had to collaborate our way out of this,
11 which was very difficult.

12 It ended up being a national, basically, order, you will be
13 on a regular schedule at a certain date, which was great to have,
14 finally. And while we're doing that, we're slowly coming back to
15 staffing positions the way we did prior to the COVID schedule. So
16 you're going to have to repeat your question, because I know I'm
17 getting to it.

18 Q. You were actually going directly where I was going next. So
19 what -- you know, when you're looking at the operation, what
20 informs staffing and workload from your perspective?

21 A. Staffing and workload for the positions?

22 Q. Correct. Specific areas or positions; however you want to go
23 with it.

24 A. Well, to get back to the original question, because I really
25 wanted to finish that, so in December, we actually had crew

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1 breakouts with our supervisors. Each OM was going to have that
2 with their supervisors, because we could see in the ATO safety
3 reports, we could see the attention that's being put into resource
4 management. We could read the tea leaves. We know we've got to
5 do something more than what we're doing.

6 So we attempted, in December, to bring this around without
7 using command and control, which I'll have to if I need to, but I
8 -- it's not the preferred method. And I was like, we need to do
9 something different about opening up sectors sooner and staffing D
10 sooner. I need to know from you guys, what can we do? Because
11 I'm not going to tell you what to do if you're not going to do it.
12 I need you guys to give me what we're going to do, and then we're
13 going to make sure it happens.

14 So we started trying to look at resource management back in
15 December, and we were doing it through the crew breakouts with the
16 supervisors. I feel so much better I finished that first question
17 off. So hit my up with the second one, please.

18 Q. MR. BROWN: Just real quick, I'm sorry, December of '23, so
19 that's

20 this --

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. MR. BROWN:-- last December, correct?

23 A. Yep.

24 Q. Perfect. Thank you. So when you're looking at specific
25 sector staffing --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Is your main information regarding staffing and workload
3 going to be the MAP values?

4 A. No. So staffing and workload, all right. So there's several
5 different things going on. You can have a green sector actually
6 be red because there's VFRs and parachute activity and glider
7 activity. The MAP values are a gee whiz, quick look. Maybe, you
8 know, oh, jeez, I was heads down for half an hour, you know, I'm
9 going to look at that yellow one. Or -- I don't follow the MAP
10 values like I -- like some people would follow a GPS off a cliff.
11 I don't think I finished your -- but I think you were focusing on
12 MAP values, so that's where I went.

13 Q. Yeah. So that --

14 A. So do you --

15 Q. No, that's great, because that's kind of where I was going.
16 Because they can be misleading, right?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. A green sector a lot of times hey, we see additional
19 complexity there, you may want to split that.

20 A. Yep.

21 Q. What is the response if you were to give that kind of
22 guidance?

23 A. I get quite a bit of pushback, actually. So that night, I
24 had actually reviewed sector 22, 23, 24 at 19:45, I think it was,
25 19:50. And they're calling all the weather. And now I'm sitting

1 here kicking myself that I didn't ask them to split it, because of
2 course that's where the accident happens later. So that's Monday
3 morning quarterbacking, but obviously something happened, so I own
4 it.

5 And it's a lot different now. We get so much pushback. I
6 actually have an email from the PFR to the workforce that I'll
7 give you guys a copy of, if you want, telling them that if call
8 down and ask them to split it, please make sure that it's an order
9 on a recorded line. So yeah, we're getting quite a bit of
10 pushback. I actually got pushback yesterday from splitting the
11 same sector in the same configuration.

12 And I take the time -- I always take the time to explain to
13 people hey, we've got weather in sectors 22, 23, 24, and we're
14 calling the weather, and I want to make sure we continue to call
15 the weather because we've got enough people to split out 22 and
16 keep doing a good job.

17 Q. And so defining good job, what does that entail?

18 A. Providing every duty that we are required to provide. The
19 7110 is a minimum, and we don't even meet that.

20 Q. And being able to absorb those other things as they may
21 happen, whether it be an emergency, weather services, et cetera,
22 that's kind of where you're going with that?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. So as far as -- you kind of answered a lot of this
25 stuff already, as far as what your typical day looks like. How

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1 often would you say that you're up and down the aisle discussing
2 sector configurations or weather dissemination with the supes?

3 A. If it's a weather night, basically I get to take a night off
4 from email. I love it, but I know I've got to get back to it the
5 next day. So I'm engaged as much as I need to be. I try not to
6 -- I know -- I won't even say I try not to. I do not just take
7 over people's areas. I am always looking and observing. I'm
8 walking. I'm looking to see how does that controller look, he
9 looks like he's perfectly relaxed there, you know, no one's
10 flipping out.

11 You know, I'm just -- and then of course on other nights,
12 there's more engagement. I'm actually walking into the areas, I'm
13 watching them and seeing how far their planes are deviating, I'm
14 walking into the TMU unit to make sure that the discussions that
15 they're having match what I would expect for what's happening on
16 the floor. So just depending on the night and the complexity, the
17 engagement level goes up and down.

18 Q. Okay. And when you engage an area based on -- whether it be
19 a sector split or a PIREP solicitation, do you get the same type
20 of response from the supervisor as you would with CIC?

21 A. Exactly? No. I -- you know, I'm pretty lucky. I usually
22 get quite good responses from everybody.

23 Q. Good.

24 A. I sometimes have to explain myself more to one person or
25 another. And it usually doesn't mean it was a supe or a CIC. But

1 that's just the general trend. I have other problem child's.

2 That, of course, would be a different story.

3 Q. Right. So generally, it's just, you know, depending on who
4 you're talking to, it's adjusting that lens a little bit to get
5 the point across --

6 A. Mm-hm.

7 Q. -- but nothing major.

8 A. I ask everyone very, very nicely to do something for me, and
9 it almost always gets done.

10 Q. Excellent. So you mentioned on the weather coordinator side
11 that those duties were not being accomplished.

12 A. In my opinion, they were not.

13 Q. Can you expound on that a little bit?

14 A. Yeah. So the WARP with the PIREPs, the settings, of course,
15 can be changed. So they can either be expiring off of that screen
16 in two hours or one hour. I don't actually know what that setting
17 was. But on a night like that, when I see weather like that, even
18 though there are not hourly requirements -- the only hourly
19 requirements are five in five for airports that you provide
20 approach control services to.

21 But you also have as requested. So guess what? I am going
22 to make as requested an hourly, at least. And usually on a severe
23 weather night, every time a new product comes up, I get a fresh
24 round of PIREPs. That will never get done by the weather
25 coordinator.

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1 Q. And --

2 A. A -- I actually got a -- I got a GI message this morning
3 requesting PIREPs. This is ridiculous. You need to walk down and
4 talk to people and look them in the eye and tell them what you
5 need.

6 Q. So basically, we just need more engagement out of that
7 position.

8 A. Yep.

9 Q. Now, do you have any tools in the facility that kind of show
10 you at a glance on what type of solicitations are required for any
11 specific area?

12 A. Yeah, we have the CWSU weather sheet that comes out, I think,
13 every four to six hours, I can't remember, or as, you know,
14 needed. And that has each area, and the different weather
15 phenomenon, and if there's an X in the box, we need it; if there
16 isn't, we don't. And yeah, we have that.

17 Q. And --

18 A. As well as the pre-duty weather briefing item. That would
19 also be telling us. And of course, our WARP displays. That would
20 be telling us wow, I just got a convective SIGMET that popped up
21 on my scope. The controller should be getting the PIREP without
22 me asking. The supe should be getting it from that controller
23 without me asking them.

24 If they have red or -- you know, if they have red or yellow
25 pop up on their WARP, and they see a moderate to heavy

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1 precipitation on the scope, they should be getting PIREPs without
2 me asking. No one does it. I think there's a very, very serious
3 lack in training. And of course, it's -- the people who are
4 already here, it's not training, it's IPM. But that starts with
5 training.

6 I think the terminal environments and the military people
7 have a very much better understanding of PIREPs solicitation. My
8 -- all right, now I'm rambling. So when I was a controller
9 getting checked out on the radars, I was at sector 10 in the old
10 control room, and I got my first PIREP while I'm training on the
11 radar. And I turned to my instructor, I'm like, what was that?
12 He goes that's a PIREP. I go what's that? He goes oh, you get
13 those every now and then. And that was my training on PIREPs.
14 And of course, that was a long time ago. But sorry to ramble.
15 Q. That's still not excellent, right? So -- all right, so you
16 also mentioned that, you know, you'll use the see all function and
17 monitor the positions when we have weather present, and you'll
18 send feedback to the supervisors on services provided.

19 A. Yep.

20 Q. If you see that an individual is not calling weather, do you
21 address that on the spot, or is it via email that you still send
22 that feedback that way? How does that work?

23 A. So I was doing it yesterday. Actually, it was the day you
24 all walked through. I was actually doing it that morning. I had
25 a sector that was not calling depicted weather, and in my opinion,

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1 they were supposed to be. When Tarah walked the second group
2 through, and I don't remember if you guys were the first or the
3 second group, she saw the look on my face, and she came over and
4 asked me what was going on.

5 And I explained to her real quick, I've got a controller
6 right here that CWS list tells me the tops are 22, 23. This
7 sector owns 21 or above, so its altitude filter limit set for the
8 weather are for the ground to 60. He doesn't want to watch that
9 weather, because he only owns 21 or above. And if he can just
10 select 24 and above, all his weather disappears. But he can't.
11 He's got to keep that up there.

12 But he's not calling weather to people climbing out of
13 Bradley, climbing out of New York. I've got people checking on
14 frequency out of 11, 17, 19, and he's not calling the weather. So
15 the first one I see, I call the supe, and I said hey, he's not
16 calling weather and I don't have a tops report. The next two
17 planes, and I give him the call signs, you've got an Asiana
18 descending into Kennedy going down to 20, we've got another guy
19 climbing out of Bradley. These two call signs, I go I want him to
20 call weather or give me a tops report. He does neither.

21 And so I go all right, maybe the timing was off. And so I
22 call down again, and I said you've got another guy coming out. I
23 want you to call the weather or give me a tops report or you
24 remove that controller from the position. And so he does not call
25 the weather, the plane gives him a tops report on his own. Now we

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1 know the tops are at 23. We have now not called the weather to
2 four aircraft in a row. And then he happens to call the weather
3 to the next guy.

4 Hey, you know that depicted weather you already got? It's
5 still there. I'm like okay, this is great. Now he's calling the
6 weather. And then the next one, I think the plane steps on it,
7 and he goes oh yeah, sorry, I was getting reprimanded by my
8 supervisor. I wish he had finished that sentence, because it
9 would have been I was reprimanded by my supervisor for not calling
10 depicted weather.

11 He goes on break, I tell my ATM. She's like, what is he
12 doing? I'm like, he's on break. She's like -- I'm like, he was
13 calling weather at the end, so we left him on position. We're
14 going to talk to him when he comes back. Called out sick the rest
15 of the day, called out sick, came in this morning, and it kind of
16 started almost where it left off.

17 But I did provide the supervisor with a performance record --
18 just confirmation that this -- we gave him a PROC. I'm like,
19 Brian, I can't be catching this sector not calling the weather;
20 you need to be catching it. So did I answer your question?

21 Q. You did. So on the supervisor side in monitoring, so when
22 you have depicted weather in the airspace, do you have any kind of
23 expectation for your supes to use the wireless headsets? Well A,
24 do you have wireless headsets, and B, do you have an expectation
25 of the supes to use those during weather events?

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1 A. So there is no requirement to do it. I have two supervisors
2 in my area that actually do it on their own. I actually think
3 it's a very good idea, and after I had the performance discussion
4 with the supervisor last night about the controller not calling
5 depicted weather the other day, I was like -- because I asked him,
6 I mean, I'm like, we're going to have a talk about this, you know?
7 So Brian, you know, I'm like -- sorry to use the name. He's like,
8 I've got all these sectors. I'm like -- and he's talking, and I'm
9 like man, if he had that cordless headset on it'd be so much
10 easier for him to know about it. So I think it's a very good
11 idea.

12 Q. Are they available for --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- the supes to use?

15 A. For the ones that are -- use them regularly, they've pulled
16 them out, they've so called dusted them off, and they're there and
17 they're available. For the people that don't normally, I'm not
18 even sure if they'd know where they are. But they are available.

19 Q. Okay. So you also mentioned that the CWSU gave you a verbal
20 that you had severe turbulence possible in the airspace. Was that
21 only to you, or does that also go to the weather coordinator
22 position?

23 A. Yeah, so she actually gave it to the people I was relieving.
24 She did, because I remember seeing her walking around, the normal
25 operating procedure for her, at least, she is great. She would

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1 be, like, stop by here, go into TMU, tell them, or if I'm busy she
2 would go there and then tell me on the way back. Just normal
3 operating procedures.

4 Q. And does the CWSU ever get down the aisle? So say that
5 you're tied up, you're on the phones or something like that. Will
6 they go down the aisle and interact with the supervisors that hey,
7 they're busy, but we've got this going on?

8 A. So it was yesterday morning, I believe. I came in, saw that
9 we have a SIGMET from New York Oceanic, I think. It was either
10 yesterday or the day before. No, it would have to be yesterday,
11 because the day before was the day you guys were walking through
12 and I had that controller not calling weather. I walk in in the
13 morning, and I see this SIGMET, and there's no PIREPs. There's
14 one PIREP at 20,000 feet, outside of it. But I'm like, this does
15 not -- these things do not match.

16 So I went down, and I requested PIREPs from everyone, sent
17 off a nastygram for the OM group saying weather coordinator not
18 doing their job again, and of course I get feedback from someone
19 that goes -- actually, the weather unit had actually walked down
20 the area themselves and requested PIREPs just before you. I'm
21 like, great, sorry.

22 Q. All right. We're going to pivot a little bit and jump into
23 QC functions. You said you were a QC manager for a while.

24 A. Mm-hm.

25 Q. How long were you a QC manager?

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1 A. About two to three years. I actually was part of the work
2 group that briefed out the -- what do they call it? Shared
3 services --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- district QC.

6 Q. All right. The -- I will say that, you know, the SSRs and
7 everything that I've seen, the CAPs, they're very robust. So I
8 think the facility is doing an excellent job as far as quality
9 control in general, and you mentioned you're on the CAP mitigation
10 team, so you're part of developing all of those. I'll ask, now
11 that we've got ICV that now has to be entered as a CAP, and CEDAR
12 as well, do you think there's a benefit or drawback to that?

13 A. To what?

14 Q. Having all of your CAPs now in CEDAR versus actually holding
15 some mitigations in CV tool for ICV.

16 A. So I've actually had very, very conflicting information on
17 these topics, and when I was the QC manager, I would talk to the
18 CW -- or the QCG. And I'd be like all right, so I've got this,
19 and I've got to do -- oh, no, no. For something like that, you
20 can just put in a ICV item and your mitigation in there. I'm like
21 okay, so I don't have to do a CAP for everything? No. And then
22 of course you talk to someone else, and they say there needs to be
23 a CAP for everything.

24 And so it's -- to me, it seems like it's all over the road.
25 It's not very clear. It's also not very clear on what is a

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1 passing grade and what's not. So --

2 Q. So -- and you guys have a lot of open CAPs right now.

3 A. Yes, we do.

4 Q. So what is the method for kind of keeping those as focus
5 items in the facility?

6 A. So when we -- so we got, like, 22 at once. Hadn't had one in
7 a couple years, and then all of a sudden hey, great, here we've
8 got a bunch. And so then we basically took them, broke them up,
9 okay, these are admin; these are ops-related. This is, of course,
10 in our opinion, the CAP mitigation and development team, which is
11 two controllers, a supervisor, and myself. And we take the
12 operational ones, and we say okay, what's going to move the
13 needle?

14 Because another MBI is just another killed tree. It's
15 nothing. You need conversations, you need discussions. And so
16 then what we had to do was try to break this up into crew
17 breakouts and LSC discussions, and try not to bury one group over
18 the other, and try to find where this is naturally going to be a
19 very good LSC discussion, this is naturally going to be a much
20 better crew breakout discussions and yeah, we could probably do
21 this one with an MBI.

22 And so we tried to break them up like that, and while we did
23 that, we created posters, and we put them up throughout the
24 building, and left them up for two months when they were first up.
25 Yeah, like you're seeing right there. That one actually didn't

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1 get taken down. But we had that on the control room floor,
2 outside there. And that one might be there still. So we tried to
3 create an ad campaign, we tried to create a very, very high
4 awareness of that. Did that answer your question?

5 Q. It did. And how would you rate the engagement from the
6 workforce?

7 A. They were actually talking about it in the areas.

8 Q. Excellent.

9 A. Yeah. Just like when I was a new controller and we would
10 have a question about the 7110, let me open that up, let's discuss
11 that. And, you know, it's like, great, we're having the right
12 kind of conversation in the area.

13 MR. ALLISTON: Yeah, first step is dialogue. So I think I'm
14 going to hand it off, because I've been going for a while.

15 MR. BROWN: Okay. Ryan.

16 MR. HURLING: Yeah. Thank you again for --

17 MR. KARAVAS: Mm-hm.

18 MR. HURLING: -- being here. This is great feedback. You're
19 really helping the investigation, in my point of view.

20 BY MR. HURLING:

21 Q. The weather coordinators and some of the items that you
22 stated about not being kind of present, or kind of doing their
23 jobs at times, and being engaged and so forth, and putting out the
24 PIREPs and so forth, do we know who does the hiring of the weather
25 coordinators and how that process works?

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1 A. So the hiring of the weather coordinator --

2 Q. The weather coordinators, are they coming in internally or

3 are they being hired externally, do we know?

4 A. So I think -- I'm going to try to rephrase this, and --

5 Q. Sure.

6 A. -- correct me if -- really, what you're talking about is

7 who's in charge of hiring the TMCs, which are the traffic

8 management, you know, people. Because the weather coordinator is

9 a position in the traffic management unit.

10 Q. Yep. That is affirmative, yes.

11 A. Right. So it'd be the TMO, which is in charge of hiring --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- the TMCs, which would then staff the --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- weather coordinator, if that answers --

16 Q. Yeah, it does.

17 A. -- your question.

18 Q. Yes. Thank you. And have the challenges with the weather

19 coordinators been recent or has this been going on for quite some

20 time?

21 A. It's been going on ever since we tried to rebuild that

22 position, which happened, like, I said, I can't remember how many

23 years ago it was. I was actually in QC at the time, and we did

24 our first district SSR on PIREP dissemination between facilities

25 when we found out that jeez, you know, we could actually have a

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1 severe turbulence report from a terminal facility if they don't
2 actually call us like they're supposed to, and if we don't happen
3 to notice it on the WARP, we're never going to know about it. So
4 we had created our own AISR, which actually brought in a feed for
5 terminal PIREPs. And we instituted a procedure that we GI
6 terminal PIREPs with a splat T, that when flight data sees it they
7 don't enter a new PIREP into the AISR, they just know that it's a
8 GI to the floor for general information.

9 Ever since that time, we've had pushback from just about
10 everybody in that unit. Because the first thing I hear is oh my
11 God, I'm going to be responsible for this. Well, you already are,
12 you just don't know it. And it's just been phenomenal.
13 Absolutely -- and that's not a phenomenal in a good way.

14 Q. Understood. On a scale of one to 10, and I get it that this
15 is just your opinion, looking --

16 A. I'm sorry, can I --

17 Q. No, sure, yeah.

18 A. And there are some really --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- great people that do that job.

21 Q. And that was my next question, is that it doesn't sound like
22 it's everyone. It sounds like there are some good resources
23 within that group. It's just certain pockets.

24 A. The majority.

25 Q. So that would be yes, then.

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1 A. The majority is not in the right buckets.

2 Q. Fair. On a scale of one to 10, and I know this is -- I'm
3 asking for your opinion on this. Scale of one to 10, what would
4 you consider the pulse of the leadership on the day to day
5 operations, currently, right now, overall on the challenges and
6 their interactiveness of what the challenges are on the floor on
7 any given day --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- what would you say the pulse of the leadership overall is,
10 their engagement, I guess, their level of engagement overall?

11 A. Overall, it's very, very high, especially when you have
12 weather.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And especially when you have the OMs constantly calling down
15 to make suggestions on improving their resource management, and
16 especially when you have the ability to do it.

17 Q. Understood. And my last question is, before I pass it on
18 here, as you talked about some of the training is possibly not
19 getting done, or not being trained properly, some of these
20 positions, where do you think that stems from? And if not, what
21 are your suggestions as to how they could be trained more
22 proficiently?

23 A. So I've never been the training manager, so I do not know
24 what the SIAC trains to people in D school, I can't remember which
25 stage it is, stage four, stage five. What gets trained in D

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1 school, what gets trained in our school? Do they not cover PIREPs
2 in our school because they already covered them in D school? I
3 don't know. But guess what? They're going to be much more
4 important for the person when they go through our school

5 And so when do they get that training? And, you know, what
6 quality is it? That's the big thing. You can read from the book,
7 but, you know, where are they going to understand that if I'm
8 sitting there in the middle of a day that's perfectly clear and
9 blue, and all of a sudden I've got a moderate turbulence report, I
10 should be getting more PIREP solicitations out because of it? No
11 one knows that.

12 Q. Are you solicited for feedback? Some of these are great
13 suggestions. Does your feedback -- is it accepted, or what's the
14 response once you -- if you do provide the feedback, what's the
15 feedback on your suggestions, I guess, if that makes sense? Like
16 the training, you're like -- you've got some great suggestions
17 about stuff that's possibly not happening with the training of the
18 -- of these folks.

19 A. These are just -- I'm sorry. I didn't mean to --

20 Q. No, nope.

21 A. These are discussions that have come up over the years, and
22 they come up, and we think the right people are in the room, and
23 it's all bandwidth after that. We're constantly putting 10 pounds
24 into a five pound bag. I'm not going to be able to follow up on
25 everything.

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1 MR. HURLING: Understood. Once again, on behalf of United,
2 our flight safety team, this is great feedback. Thank you for
3 your time today. Thanks.

4 MR. BROWN: Kevin.

5 MR. COON: Hi.

6 BY MR. COON:

7 Q. Okay, I'm going to kind of follow a little onto what Ryan
8 asked. The weather coordinator, do you think it's a definition or
9 SOP of their duties, defining their duties, or do you think it's
10 more of a performance issue?

11 A. I think once it's very clear to them what their duties are
12 that it is a performance issue after that. I don't think it's
13 very clear right now what they actually should be doing. If you
14 look at what the local SOP shows and then what the national
15 requirements are, I've already done that. The national
16 requirements fit on one page, and the SOP -- the local SOP is not
17 that.

18 I know there was also a change to that position in the
19 national documents after the work group that we had, that we --
20 you know, that worked -- that stemmed from the district PIREP SSR
21 that we did, I know that work group that put together what is in
22 the current SOP, local SOP, came from the national orders then,
23 which have changed. So the national orders have changed since we
24 first did that big revamp a couple years ago, if that all makes
25 sense.

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1 MR. COON: Those were the only questions I have. Thank you.

2 MR. BROWN: Karena.

3 MS. MARINAS: Thank you. Okay. Give me one second to go
4 back here.

5 BY MS. MARINAS:

6 Q. Do the controllers and/or do you use supervisors to input
7 PIREPs, to help input PIREPs --

8 A. Mm-hm.

9 Q. -- when needed?

10 A. Yes, we do.

11 Q. And what kind of usually sparks that?

12 A. It's a dynamic thing going on in the area. Usually we say if
13 you've got a weather night and we know we're getting PIREPs, it's
14 like hey, staff the D side so that the controller doesn't have to
15 do it. And sometimes in between the two, or going into it or
16 going out of it, the supervisor's there, help, hey, I just paged
17 someone back, but let me put that one in for you. So it's a
18 dynamic thing.

19 Q. Mm-hm. How does -- what kind of engagement do you generally
20 get from the specific supervisor that was working during that
21 event?

22 A. The engagement is very good.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. He was actually engaged in a severe turbulence report across
25 the room for where the event with United 1890 happened at the

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1 time. He's over there making sure, you know -- I'm sure he's
2 going through his mind, okay, we've moved some planes, what can we
3 do? You know, are we going to get some under that, are we going
4 to go around it? You know, do we have any other reports? You
5 know, he's -- he was very engaged, just on the wrong side. Well,
6 he was on the right side of the room, he just wasn't on the side
7 of the room where the event happened.

8 Q. Mm-hm. Okay. Do you have -- do the OMs in general have any
9 involvement in training of the weather coordinators or any input
10 on training of the weather coordinators?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. I told my ATM yesterday, I go, I think we need to take me off
14 position for 30 days and teach everybody how to get PIREPs. And
15 I'm not really going to enjoy it, because I just can't stand some
16 of their attitudes.

17 Q. Some of whose attitudes?

18 A. The people in the unit, the weather coordinators.

19 Q. Okay. And have you addressed that with the TMO?

20 A. I have sent feedback.

21 Q. And what -- how was that received?

22 A. Never well. That's probably unfair. He's a very difficult
23 person to communicate with.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. He takes my feedback, and I usually get, in return, what I

1 expect, which is -- I'm just going to stop, unless you want to ask
2 me another question about that.

3 Q. Sort of. Well, mostly because I just want to try to
4 understand -- well, what -- you know, so specifically with weather
5 coordinators and your view of them being deficient, how has the
6 TMO responded about that?

7 A. So I have an example. There was an email I sent, I think,
8 about a week ago. I said -- and I'm going off of memory for about
9 a week ago, so I think my accuracy is 70, 80 percent on this.

10 Q. Mm-hm.

11 A. I go, we have no PIREPs in this area, and I requested PIREPs.
12 And STMC said well, we already asked for them. Okay, how'd you
13 ask? It was a GI. All right, well you need to go down and ask
14 them in person or pick up the phone and call them, specifically.
15 And then the response I got from the TMO was given the scenario, I
16 would say that the responsibility now lies with the OM, because
17 the people that were asked for PIREPs didn't give them and you
18 should be following up with them.

19 And so I'm thinking to myself, a person sends a GI saying hi,
20 can I have PIREPs to the whole floor, and he doesn't get what
21 they're asking for, and then that -- and that's -- I think there
22 is a major disconnection, if that makes sense.

23 Q. Okay. Okay, I'm going to switch questioning a little bit.
24 So in terms of splitting sectors and/or getting D sides into an
25 area, so you're -- you say you oversee Charlie.

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1 A. Mm-hm.

2 Q. What is your expectation in Charlie with the supervisors and
3 how they should be either adding D sides or removing D sides,
4 splitting sectors? What do you usually communicate to them?

5 A. So we had an event about -- I don't know, a dropped data
6 block. Plane flew about 100 miles. Remember the SRT, resource
7 management was an issue. We all want to make a change right after
8 that. One of the OMs went out there, and I guess he used the
9 wrong word, said we're going to have a new policy, we're going to
10 have a floating D side. And that backfired on us all --

11 Q. Mm-hm.

12 A. -- because you can't have a policy. So we had to back off.
13 And in the meantime, the messaging, for me, has always been clear,
14 but I think I found the best words most recently. We're going to
15 be using our resources to provide the best services possible at
16 all time. So we're always staffed for safety. And as additional
17 resources come in, and we can split out extra positions, we will
18 do so if it will provide a better service.

19 Q. Mm-hm.

20 A. And -- so that would be opening up, but same thing closing
21 down.

22 Q. Mm-hm.

23 A. And these are as resources are available. We're not going to
24 just plug everybody in and have one person on break and have
25 everybody sit two hours. I don't want burned out controllers.

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1 Q. Mm-hm.

2 A. But what I want is enough people to provide the best service
3 available with the resources we have at the time. That's -- that
4 has been my message. But like I said, I think I just found the
5 really -- the right words most recently for it. Does that answer
6 your question?

7 Q. Mm-hm. So what would be -- what do you think the services
8 include?

9 A. Being able to call every single bit of weather to every
10 plane, getting PIREPs for everybody, calling NOTAMS for people
11 that we have to provide approach control services to, being there
12 in case someone has an emergency, being able to absorb all that.
13 I mean, I listened to the tape, I don't know how many times, and
14 the first controller that was working there, when I heard that
15 aircraft get stepped on and United didn't get the weather on the
16 first call, I'm like, we needed that split. So in that example,
17 services were not being provided --

18 Q. Mm-hm.

19 A. -- because of that one instance. And it led to the weather
20 never getting called, because I don't -- haven't ever talked to
21 the person myself, but I know for a fact, being a controller, you
22 have a routine, a guy checks on, I give him the weather, boom. He
23 thinks that guy has the weather. He doesn't. Does that answer
24 your question?

25 Q. Yes. And it also leads into my next questions, but I want to

1 stick with that one for a second. So how are those service
2 expectations communicated to the controllers?

3 A. So especially, like, last summer, when we were like hey,
4 we're coming into brand new -- you know, every time we come into
5 the summer, so it's the spring, it's like there's heightened
6 awareness. And we have, you know, talks with the supes, CICs,
7 standup talks.

8 And it's like it's the same message all the time. You need
9 to be able to provide every weather product to every aircraft that
10 needs it, and if you don't, you need to let me know, because if
11 you can't, we're going to split it if we can. And if that still
12 doesn't help, then we're going to staff a D side. And if that
13 still doesn't help, we're going to lower the MAP values. And if
14 that still doesn't help, come and see me. I'll do something about
15 it. And it's -- the message has never changed. That's always
16 been our message, for years now.

17 Q. But that's the message to the supervisors and CICs. How does
18 that get to controllers?

19 A. It's kind of like we have discussions all the time. People
20 walk up, we have talks, you know --

21 Q. At the desk?

22 A. Yeah, sometimes --

23 Q. OM desk?

24 A. -- in the hallway, sometimes -- you know, this is actually
25 going to be a topic that they're going to discuss at, I think,

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1 next month's -- or is it this month's? I think it's this month's
2 local safety council safety discussion. Because we were going to
3 do it again, either through crew breakouts, because it was crew --
4 it was crew breakouts last spring --

5 Q. Mm-hm.

6 A. -- OMs to the supes, supes to the controllers. This spring
7 it's going to be the local safety council discussions. It's going
8 to be a slightly different message, but the same content; call the
9 weather, give everyone everything they need, if you can't, let us
10 know, we'll split a sector, we'll get you a D side, we'll get you
11 a tracker, we'll lower the MAP value. Still need help? I'll get
12 you help.

13 Q. Okay. In the -- so now going on to what I wanted to talk
14 about next, so in the SRT, there was a statement that the radar
15 associate position was -- without the knowledge of the OS, was
16 combined with the R24 position, and that was not the facility's
17 expectations. And you said you're involved in the SRT, so what
18 did -- where did that come out of?

19 A. I'm still kind of confused about what happened there. But
20 from what I recall, FI comes in to relieve AT, hey, just sit in my
21 D for a little while, FI sits in the D, does or doesn't sign in, I
22 don't know. Because for me, right now it's not pertinent, and
23 it's not my area to follow up with IPM. And then the next
24 controller, HK, comes in, and he's going to get AT out, and then
25 at some point, FI leaves with the controller and the radar or --

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1 I have no idea. But from what I understand, FI offered to sit in
2 the D, and since he wasn't assigned there, he offered to relieve
3 himself. Does that answer your question?

4 Q. Yeah. So do what do you think the facility's expectation
5 would be in that situation?

6 A. Expectation of there is a controller sitting down on his own?

7 Q. Mm-hm.

8 A. Onto a D side?

9 Q. Mm-hm.

10 A. I think once you staff a position, I think if you're going to
11 un-staff it, you would probably run it by the supe.

12 Q. Why?

13 A. Because I think if I'm going to staff a D side without anyone
14 asking me, I would think that the supervisor at some point would
15 have a scan of the area and go oh, I've got a D side. And in his
16 -- the back of his mind, he's like, I've got a D side there, and
17 now all of a sudden the D side leaves. But you're asking me
18 questions, like, my opinion.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. So am I answering your --

21 Q. Yeah. Okay. So that -- okay. That's good. Have you ever
22 worked in area A?

23 A. That's where I worked for 24 and a half years, and then
24 another year of currency while I was in TMU.

25 Q. So you're pretty -- so you saying that that's not typical, or

1 the weather there is not typical during this time of year is based
2 on a pretty good amount of experience.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Yeah. So the year -- the annual training that you guys get
5 for weather, I guess that'd be kind of biannual, because you get
6 two for weather, for summer and winter, right, and things like
7 swap route trainings, do the OMs go through those trainings? Or
8 how do -- do you guys have any -- do you get firsthand training
9 like the controllers and the supervisors?

10 A. Usually.

11 Q. I'm assuming the supervisors do. I hope they do.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. So you go through the training as well?

14 A. Usually, yeah.

15 Q. And how -- do you do it with the controllers, or is it, like,
16 separate?

17 A. Yeah, sometimes. It all depends on the application, right?
18 I mean, we may get a briefing at one of our leadership meetings on
19 Wednesdays, hey, this is what we're going to be briefing out, and
20 we get the briefing there. Or sometimes we're actually sitting in
21 the cellphone lot with the controllers and the supes. So it's a
22 mix.

23 Q. Okay. That's good, because I've been to quite a few
24 facilities where the managers don't get the same training, or
25 don't go through any training that the controllers do. And we --

1 A. We're usually putting it together, actually.

2 Q. The OMs are usually putting --

3 A. Yeah, they were like -- we're always providing input. You
4 know, it's -- we're engaged with what's being put out there --

5 Q. Mm-hm.

6 A. -- usually.

7 Q. When's the last time that you guys had crew briefings
8 assigned to supervisors to do with their crews?

9 A. So we had CAP briefings -- well, we had CAP items that were
10 going to be briefed out through crew breakouts, and they happened
11 for the months of December, January, February, and March.

12 MR. BROWN: The most recent year's?

13 BY MS. MARINAS:

14 Q. This December, January, February, March?

15 A. Yes.

16 MS. MARINAS: Okay. And we talked about CAPs a little bit.
17 That's it for me for now.

18 MR. BROWN: Betty.

19 MS. KOSCHIG: Hi. I'm last, so you're getting close to the
20 end.

21 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

22 Q. The only question -- actually, I don't have a lot of
23 questions since everybody answered them -- I guess it's just kind
24 of your idea on this. Would it be possible, as far as -- I'm
25 going to the weather, the pre-duty weather briefings. I think

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1 there's a consensus that it's a good idea, but it's just not
2 executed in a way that gives the -- enough information that would
3 help the controllers at times, right? So -- go ahead.

4 A. So, you know, it's like every kind of, like, checklist or
5 briefing item I make. If I can't fit it on one page --

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. -- it's not good --

8 Q. Right.

9 A. -- right, unless we're going to go sit for a couple hours.
10 So, you know, I think that the pre-duty weather briefings need to
11 be shorter and more concise.

12 Q. Mm-hm.

13 A. That's what I see on a consistent --

14 Q. I --

15 A. -- I mean, I look at it, and I go to the scroll bar, and I'm
16 like oh my God, four minutes long. I'm like, I'm going to forget
17 what was said at the beginning --

18 Q. Right.

19 A. -- you know?

20 Q. And --

21 A. And I think I may have been interrupting, so you let me, so I
22 don't --

23 Q. No, that's really -- you absolutely are hitting my point on
24 that.

25 A. Right.

1 Q. It does. And one of your colleagues had mentioned that being
2 ex-military, they're used to going in, and as soon as they -- they
3 could not relieve the position, and it was like a group, where
4 they got in, they got the weather briefing, they got -- you know
5 what I'm saying? We need to get -- do this, do that. Is it
6 possible that something here -- I know that the shifts lap --

7 A. Mm-hm, mm-hm.

8 Q. -- over each other. But is it possible that there could be
9 some type of daily, where people could come in, you give them this
10 briefing -- I mean, they have to get the pre-duty weather. But
11 say look, this is what's going on here right now. Let's all get
12 PIREPs, let's try to get as much as we can. That one on one, face
13 to face.

14 A. Yeah, so, you know, it happens. Like yesterday --

15 Q. Mm-hm.

16 A. -- I had two supes come in at 1 o'clock, I think it was. And
17 I grabbed them both, I said come up here, and I'm like -- not it
18 wasn't yesterday. The day before. I'm like, this is what's going
19 on. This is what's been happening with pushback on resource
20 management. This is what I've been doing for sectors. This is
21 why. This is the weather. Someone wasn't calling weather here.
22 They're calling weather everywhere else. We've got PIREPs here.
23 I go -- and, you know, so we do that, but it's a dynamic thing --

24 Q. Mm-hm.

25 A. -- as needed. I -- if I did it all the time, it would be

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1 meaningless. And so I try to do it when it's pertinent.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. But -- and you're talking about something above and beyond
4 the --

5 Q. Right, make it, like, a -- excuse me -- to make it a normal
6 event that, you know, you're going to go in --

7 A. So for everybody that comes on duty that stops at the watch
8 desk --

9 Q. Mm-hm.

10 A. -- I give them a briefing of everything I know. And then on
11 those nights when someone hasn't stopped and there's something I
12 think they really should know --

13 Q. Mm-hm.

14 A. -- I bring them back up and I tell them about it. So it's
15 not like I'm just letting them --

16 Q. Right.

17 A. -- fall through the cracks all the time. I'm --

18 Q. Right. Yeah. I was just, you know, curious of thinking
19 outside the box on anything else that could be done to get them to
20 know that you -- this is what we need to do today in order to
21 provide the best services.

22 A. Mm-hm.

23 Q. Because like you said, even though most cantankerous people
24 that, you know, want to fight against doing things, they may feel
25 like okay, they've hit me one on one or in this group and said

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1 this is what we need to do. I didn't know if that kind of stuff
2 would make a difference, you know --

3 A. Actually, we --

4 Q. -- I was just --

5 A. -- talked about it in the CAP mitigation development team.

6 Q. Mm-hm.

7 A. And it's actually a really, really good group --

8 Q. Mm-hm.

9 A. -- and you probably all know Seth Myers. He's on it.

10 Q. Oh, yeah.

11 A. And so, you know, we were talking about -- you know, we're
12 constantly talking about, you know, how are we going to move the
13 needle on this, you know?

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. How are we going to make some improvement, you know? Let's
16 not just sit here and waste everyone's time and check off a box.
17 And one of the ideas was, you know, on one of those days where you
18 have weather, you know, the OM is going to be standing out in that
19 area and telling every controller and every supe that walks in the
20 area, hey, you've got weather here, blah, blah, blah, you know,
21 pep talk, whatever.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. It's impractical unless you've got two OMs --

24 Q. Right.

25 A. -- because I've got other duties. But yeah, I mean, as

1 needed and required, I go out and do what I think, like, will make
2 a difference.

3 Q. Okay. Well, good. I don't have any more questions. Thank
4 you.

5 MR. BROWN: I know you do, Paul. Does anyone else have a
6 follow-up?

7 MR. ALLISTON: I do have a couple follow-ups --

8 MR. BROWN: Okay.

9 MR. ALLISTON: -- but I'll make them snappy.

10 MR. BROWN: Go ahead, Jason.

11 BY MR. ALLISTON:

12 Q. A question on A side utilization. Do you have A sides that
13 are, like, awaiting stage classes, and do you use those guys on
14 the floor in any way?

15 A. We have very, very few of them.

16 Q. Okay. We have a bunch, so that's why I asked --

17 A. Are you in LA?

18 Q. -- the question. Atlanta.

19 A. Atlanta.

20 Q. Yeah. We've got a bunch of them. So, you know, as far as
21 the -- how the break board works in the individual area, so it was
22 described that essentially, when a controller returns from break,
23 they don't necessarily stop by the supervisor and ask the
24 supervisor for an assignment. They're just going to run the break
25 board.

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1 A. Yep.

2 Q. So it is a passive position assignment type situation. So --
3 but we're trying to -- do you feel like that's something that
4 needs to change?

5 A. So, I mean, I just had this conversation with someone the
6 other day. It's so funny. He goes I wish we could get rid of
7 those break boards. Well, we can. That'll be a change in working
8 conditions. We've been using them since I've been here. I go,
9 but why do people worry about them? If you need somebody to do
10 something, just assign the work. As they walk out, say I need you
11 back in 50 minutes, I need you back in 20 minutes. Once they come
12 in, hey, I need you to go here, hey, I need you to go there. I
13 need you to go back out to get this person. It's a hurdle that
14 people make bigger than what it really is. You can manage around
15 it. Does that answer your question?

16 Q. I think so. And then the last one I have is at the
17 supervisor's desks, do they have any kind of a daily spreader,
18 checklist, memory aid that they -- is standard for the facility as
19 far as how they manage their duties for the day?

20 A. I don't think so.

21 MR. ALLISTON: That's all I've got.

22 MR. BROWN: Paul.

23 MR. SUFFERN: I think --

24 MR. BROWN: Oh, I'm sorry. Kevin, did you have one?

25 BY MR. COON:

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1 Q. I just -- you had mentioned that the weather coordinators a
2 lot of times send requests for pilot reports via GI. Do they ever
3 get an acknowledgement that they received the GI in the area, do
4 you know?

5 MR. WADE: If you're aware.

6 BY MR. COON:

7 Q. If you're aware of it. I guess what I -- you made the
8 comment you feel they should get up and tell the person hey, I'm
9 just curious if the weather coordinators think the GI is the
10 proper way to coordinate that.

11 A. What was that last question?

12 Q. Is a GI the proper way to coordinate that important
13 information --

14 A. Negative.

15 Q. -- if you don't get a response?

16 A. It's absolutely the worst way to coordinate, and it should
17 never be a request via GI, because it's like that email that goes
18 to the group, hey, can someone please do this? No one's going to
19 own it, you know? It's like, just the other day, I mean, I'm
20 there, I'm like hey, we don't have PIREPs here. We need them, for
21 whatever reason. And the weather coordinator says to me, I GI'd
22 it. And I said, don't. Go down and talk to people or call them.
23 And then we get the PIREPs after that happens.

24 Q. You said that you communicate to the controllers, if you need
25 help, ask for help, we'll get you help. How is a controller, when

1 they ask for help, how is that met -- how do you feel it's met
2 with the other controllers and the OS in the area if somebody says
3 hey, I need help here.

4 A. Oh, for the most part, if someone says, I need help -- who
5 doesn't want to help someone that needs help? And we've got a
6 bunch of people that just -- did that answer your question?

7 Q. Yeah, it did.

8 MS. MARINAS: Can I ask a couple more?

9 MR. BROWN: Yeah, Karena.

10 BY MS. MARINAS:

11 Q. So in your -- I think it's your local 7110, I think it was,
12 that the -- for the PIREP process, you can -- a controller can
13 either enter it into ERIDS or use paper. Is the paper form still
14 available to your knowledge? Do they get used anywhere?

15 A. I know for a fact if ERIDS is down we pull them out. But as
16 far as are they handy, I don't know. But I --

17 Q. Do you ever -- so do you see them when -- just when ERIDS is
18 down?

19 A. Say that again?

20 Q. You see them just when ERIDS is down, then?

21 A. I make sure they're available when ERIDS are down, yeah.

22 Q. But they can be used and should be available any other time.

23 A. Paper?

24 Q. Mm-hm.

25 A. As far as I know, they are available if someone wants to use

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1 them.

2 Q. But they have to -- how do they get them?

3 A. I don't know. I don't know if they're available at the
4 sector or not.

5 Q. Okay. And then I just really want to go back again to the
6 position with the D side and, you know having a D side slide in
7 and then slide out. So the way that we got the story was the
8 controller being relieved had FI come in, and they -- and AT says
9 hey, can you sit on my D side while I clean this up. Or, you
10 know, he felt like he wanted to clean it up. And that's -- and so
11 the other controller was supposed to be relieving him, but just
12 sat there so that he can catch things up and make sure he handed
13 over a clean sector.

14 And then in doing that, the next controller comes in, and to
15 get him out, and it effectively looks as though the sector's
16 cleaned up to him, he's good with that, so offers them both to go.
17 Is that a -- as a controller, have you ever been in that
18 situation? Have you ever done that --

19 A. All the time.

20 Q. -- yourself? What's that?

21 A. All the time.

22 Q. Right. Okay, so then with that information, would you think
23 that that would be an appropriate way for the controllers to
24 handle the sector, or do you still expect them to consult with the
25 supervisor?

1 MR. WADE: Just keep in mind, just how she's described it.
2 That she's kind of laid out that description. I know you said
3 earlier you weren't for sure on the exact --

4 MR. KARAVAS: Yeah, so, I mean --

5 MR. WADE: -- kind of events --

6 MR. KARAVAS: -- if I was in that position, coming in and
7 sitting down, offering to help, at some point I would make sure
8 the supervisor knew that I engaged in this operation. Does that
9 answer your question?

10 BY MS. MARINAS:

11 Q. Mm-hm. You -- so you would think that the supervisor
12 wouldn't have been aware that that was happening, and you would
13 need to tell them? Is that what you're saying?

14 A. If I sat down on my own, and they were busy with another
15 sector, they didn't know, I would try to make sure that they knew
16 as a courtesy. I would want --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- I don't know who wouldn't.

19 Q. Why -- okay. What informs you to do that?

20 A. I think it's just common courtesy, and I think it's also good
21 -- just like, I don't know. If I'm engaging in the supervisor's
22 operation, I think I should let him know.

23 MS. MARINAS: Okay. That's it for my questions.

24 MR. BROWN: That's it? Anyone else? Paul?

25 BY MR. SUFFERN:

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1 Q. I just have one more question. It's my favorite one to
2 always ask. But just thinking, you know, since you're an OM, you
3 have a lot of experience here. There's a weather tool out there
4 that could help you do your job better, what would you like to
5 have?

6 A. So I actually would rather have a tool that would help the
7 controllers more. I actually came up with an idea, and we're
8 actually going to be submitting an ER, which is an enhancement
9 request, for ERAM through an AIMS ticket. We're talking to our
10 local POFUM, and I have no idea what that acronym stands for, but
11 it's the guy that doesn't answer to air traffic or tech ops, so
12 he's, like, in Lala Land, in between. But he's, like, the guy
13 that's in charge of the computer and the automation. And we
14 talked to him, and we talked to the facility, I believe it's ETR,
15 enroute tech rep. Yes, that is what it is, ETR.

16 There is an ability to enter a PIREP with as few as five
17 keystrokes from a control position without taking your eyes off
18 the scope. And I talked to the POFUM about it and the ETR, and
19 there is either a surveillance processor or a conflict processor,
20 which always shows where every aircraft is at all times in
21 relationship to a sort box so now in relationship to a VOR,
22 through the 3-letter identifier, Glenn's Falls, Albany, Cambridge,
23 whatever.

24 Right now, when I hit reroute, and I go to a fix, and I enter
25 CID, enter, a strip pops up. We can make that pop up a PIREP,

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1 which would automatically go to the flight data position, to
2 automatically go into AISR, automatically go to the weather
3 coordinator, and a controller could get a PIREP into the system in
4 as few as five keystrokes if we can get this enhancement request
5 accepted by the NUT, which is the National User Team, which is
6 made up of ETRs from across the country.

7 And of course, this request would go in the queue, and based
8 on the importance of it and how much it costs, it depends on where
9 it gets put into the queue. And yeah, I mean, you could hit
10 TB350, slew ball enter, boom, you're done. That's five
11 keystrokes. Because the strip would pop up with the type of
12 aircraft, because it would go into that field and pull out the
13 fields that we requested from it; the type of aircraft, the time,
14 the location with the radio-fixed DME, the altitude, because you
15 entered it. It would be slightly different for an aircraft that
16 was climbing.

17 But that is -- I think that would be huge. We actually are
18 -- we still have to get another work group together to determine
19 who's going to be on the team that actually writes up the AIMS
20 ticket. But we're going to do that with the assistance of the
21 POFUM and the ETR. And I don't know, hopefully make something
22 easier for the controllers.

23 Because it was really us sitting there in the CAP mitigation
24 development team room one day talking about the PIREP CAP, and how
25 can we make this easy for the controllers, you know? And it just

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1 came to me. I'm like, my God, I think we can. I just need people
2 to buy off on it. So I don't know if I answered your question.

3 MR. SUFFERN: You certainly did. Thank you, Tim.

4 MR. KARAVAS: Yep.

5 MR. BROWN: Anyone else? I am all set as well. I'm going to
6 stop the recording. It is 9:09 a.m.

7 (Whereupon, at 9:09 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Tim Karavas

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 7, 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.



Andrew Hirsch
Transcriber

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *

KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *

Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *

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Interview of: DANIEL OBERT, Support Manager (SM)

Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Thursday,
March 7, 2024

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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

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

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:48 a.m.)

MR. BROWN: Test 1-2. Okay. I've turned the recorder on. We'll start. It's 11:48 a.m. Well, good afternoon. Again, my name is Michael Brown. I'm an air traffic control investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board. For the record, can you state your name?

MR. OBERT: Sure. Daniel Obert.

MR. BROWN: Thanks, Dan. Before we get started, just to reemphasize it again, you understand that this is being recorded.

MR. OBERT: I do.

MR. BROWN: Okay. Once it's made, we'll, we'll put the transcript, so like I said earlier, the audio portion is not in. However, the transcript will be part of the docket once the actual report is finalized.

I see you have a representative here today.

MR. OBERT: I do.

MR. BROWN: And for the record, can you state your name?

MR. WADE: Benjamin Wade, FAA Office of General Counsel.

MR. BROWN: Thank you. If at any time you need to take a break if you need to discuss something with, with Ben and you need to step out, you need to take care of something, the facility, just let us know. It's not a huge deal.

MR. OBERT: Okay.

MR. BROWN: You're not stuck in here with us until, you know,

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1 until we let you go.

2 MR. OBERT: I might find this pleasant.

3 MR. BROWN: It's more, but it's more of a conversation.

4 There's no light swinging above your head. We're not
5 interrogating you. Part of what we do, our background at the
6 NTSB, have you ever been part of an NTSB investigation?

7 MR. OBERT: Unfortunately, yes.

8 MR. BROWN: Okay, so you kind of know what we do. I'll, I'll
9 just -- the high points. We're an independent federal agency. We
10 don't fall under the DOT, we report directly to Congress. So
11 we're here to gather factual information about the event. And
12 then that will become part of the docket.

13 And the power that we have is we make safety recommendations
14 to prevent that type of event from ever happening again. So the
15 fact that you're here participating, you'll be helping us
16 accomplish that goal.

17 You see a lot of people in here. We work as a group, so we
18 work with a party system with the FAA, and then part of our
19 parallel investigation is the NTSB side. So myself, Paul, and
20 Betty, and I'll go around the room and everybody will introduce
21 themselves. But we're the NTSB -- officially with the NTSB and
22 then we have subject matter experts.

23 So I'll go around now, Paul, if you want to start, introduce
24 yourself.

25 MR. SUFFERN: Paul Suffern with the NTSB. I'm a

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1 meteorologist investigator.

2 MR. BROWN: Okay.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: And good morning. I'm Betty Koschig at NTSB.
4 I'm an air traffic control investigator.

5 MR. OBERT: Thank you.

6 MS. MARINAS: Karena Marinas. NATCA Air safety investigator
7 and a controller at the LA Center.

8 MR. OBERT: Okay.

9 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, United Airlines Air Traffic
10 Strategies, and I'm retired FAA.

11 MR. OBERT: Okay.

12 MR. HURLING: Brian Hurling, senior flight safety
13 investigator at United, and I'm the lead investigator for this
14 event from the company side for United.

15 MR. ALLISTON: And Jason Alliston, I'm the FAA SME, I'm the
16 air traffic manager, Atlanta Center.

17 MR. BROWN: Okay. So that's our team, because obviously I've
18 never worked at a center, and he's never worked at a center, so we
19 have people come in to assist us in the investigation. Expected
20 time for the interview, usually we say an hour to an hour and a
21 half. I don't know if yours will go that long. I highly doubt it
22 will go that long being you're not directly involved in the event.

23 Once again, anytime you take a break, you need to talk to
24 somebody, just let us know, we can stop. I know earlier they said
25 they were doing fire alarm testing. If that happens, if it

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1 happens, I'll stop the recording. We'll wait.

2 MR. OBERT: Okay.

3 MR. BROWN: And then I'll say, okay, it's done. We're
4 starting again. Any questions before we start?

5 MR. OBERT: Nope.

6 MR. BROWN: Okay. Nice and easy.

7 INTERVIEW OF DANIEL OBERT

8 BY MR. BROWN:

9 Q. So just basic questions we ask everybody, part of the
10 interview. What was your age the day of the event so February
11 10th?

12 A. 58.

13 Q. And your operating initials.

14 A. A-O.

15 Q. A-O. And your official title.

16 A. Support manager, quality control.

17 Q. And one more thing too. So we type, we take notes, everybody
18 does, just when we're not looking directly at you, that's what
19 we're doing. How long have you been QC manager here.

20 A. A little more than three years.

21 Q. Okay. Prior to your FAA ATC, I know we talked earlier. You
22 were Army. No ATC experience before the FAA though.

23 A. No.

24 Q. Or did you work contract?

25 A. No.

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1 Q. Okay. So that was your first ATC. Kind of a weird question
2 for a QC manager, but do you hold any collateral duties, or have
3 you been on any recent details? We'll say in the last year that
4 took you out of the facility.

5 A. I have not.

6 Q. And if you don't mind, explain how you got into air traffic
7 control, and if you're a pilot and, and all that.

8 A. So in 1983, the -- I was trying to join the Army to be an air
9 traffic controller. Enlisted and did all my stuff. And
10 apparently two-thirds of the people who were joining the Army that
11 year also had the same idea I did. Join the Army. Learn to be an
12 air traffic controller, and then get a job with the FAA.

13 I was told I'd have to wait for a year to go to school,
14 wouldn't count towards my enlistment. So I went off and did other
15 things in the Army. I was an intelligence analyst and Morse
16 Interceptor.

17 When my enlistment was up, they -- I told them I would stay
18 if I could be an air traffic controller, and they said your skills
19 are too important to us as a intelligence analyst, and I went
20 okay. And I got out and went to Daniel Webster College and
21 learned air traffic control on the co-op program there.

22 I worked here in 1988 as a strip ripper when we were still on
23 the other side of the building and Manchester approach was here.
24 It was a very interesting time.

25 Q. Oh, yeah.

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1 A. So that's how I became an air traffic controller. I don't --
2 did you want the whole story or

3 Q. Just the general interest in air traffic control.

4 A. Just the general.

5 Q. How did you, how did you pick that career field?

6 A. I was a little kid living in Chicago, well, just outside of
7 Chicago, Illinois. And there was a 30 foot telephone pole that
8 was in the back of our -- the local school, and I was the only kid
9 who was brave enough to climb to the top of it. And I mean, we
10 weren't supposed to. But I did.

11 And from there you could see O'Hare Tower. And that was when
12 I said I'm going to work in a big building like that. And from
13 that time on, that was why I always said I was going to be an air
14 traffic control.

15 Q. Here you are in a Center with no windows.

16 A. Here I am -- right. Thirty years ago, so 30 years later, I'm
17 in a place with -- well, I have a window in my office. Just one.
18 But I do have a window. Yes. And I sit with my back to it. So
19 that's strange.

20 Q. So born and raised in Chicago.

21 A. I was not.

22 Q. Oh?

23 A. I was -- most of my childhood I was in just north of
24 Allentown, Pennsylvania.

25 Q. Mm-hm.

1 A. My father went to chiropractic college.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And so for four years while he was in chiropractic school, we
4 lived in in Phillip Park, Illinois.

5 Q. Got you, got you. So interesting story. Thank you. Have
6 you ever been fired, terminated, suspended, or asked to resign
7 from any ATC position?

8 A. I have not.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. How would you describe your overall health? So
10 we're looking for excellent, good, fair, poor.

11 A. I'm going to go with good.

12 Q. You don't hold a medical.

13 A. I do not.

14 Q. Not applicable. So a lot of these I can skip.

15 A. Mm-hm.

16 Q. So that's why I didn't think it would go. I don't need to
17 ask you if you filed an ATSAP. So I guess we can get down to the,
18 the day of the event, February 10th. It's a Saturday. I'm
19 assuming you don't work Saturday. Correct?

20 A. I was not here.

21 Q. Not here. Do you recall how you were notified of the event?

22 A. I was actually on leave for the Friday and the Monday, so the
23 weekend as well, and I was called by the ATM sometime in the
24 afternoon to ask if I could get a hold of one of my specialists to
25 come in and help work the, the event.

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1 Q. So the afternoon of the 10th.

2 A. Yeah. Sometime, sometime after 3 o'clock.

3 Q. I see. Okay. The day of the event.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Yeah. So do you know, you were on leave, came back to work
6 that following Tuesday then?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Was that the first time you watched the replay?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. So breakdown I guess your role. You watch the replay.
11 What, what are we doing with that information at that point from
12 -- just from the QC side?

13 A. So we were going to produce a system service review, an SSR
14 for the event. So obviously we watched the, the replay from
15 United's check in until handed off to New York.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And then formulated a plan for who to interview, what
18 information we would need to look at and how we would evaluate
19 what was -- what we saw.

20 Q. So along the same lines, you're, you're prepping for the SSR,
21 you have a lot of caps, and I'm going to let another member of the
22 group ask about those but do you -- I don't know how I want to ask
23 this. Did you feel like this was something that an existing cap
24 would fall under the purview of? Were you like we probably need
25 to make a new cap.

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1 A. You mean the --

2 Q. You're like, this is an isolated event.

3 A. The event.

4 Q. The event, this event itself.

5 A. So at the -- when we start the SSR process --

6 Q. Mm-hm.

7 A. -- we don't pay any attention to what we're going to -- we

8 look at what occurred.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. And let that information decide where, where we should go.

11 Once we get -- if we get to the point where we find that that such

12 and such a thing was wrong --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And we listed as it being systemic, then we'll look at it

15 from that point and go do we have a corrective action plan already

16 in place for this. If we do, we may or may not list it as a

17 systemic event -- or as a, as a requiring corrective action. I

18 apologize. And if we don't, then we would list it as requiring

19 corrective action.

20 Q. Okay. So the SSR dictated it.

21 A. The -- yeah, the information that we see was -- would dictate

22 where we went with that. I mean, you can't -- never mind. I'm

23 sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt.

24 Q. One of the best SSR's I've ever seen.

25 A. Thank you.

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1 Q. It was a good SSR.

2 A. I take, I take very little credit for that.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I have -- I had three special -- well two specialists and,
5 and a controller who's working for me part time. They conducted
6 this and they get all the credit.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So --

9 Q. Well, we'll make sure it gets out.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. But still your team, right.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Is fantastic, yes.

14 A. Appreciate it. And we super appreciate you hearing that.

15 Q. You would be shocked on some of them.

16 A. I --

17 Q. I'm sure you've seen them.

18 A. I am aware.

19 Q. Okay. So no, fantastic. If that was an example the FAA
20 could use, it should be one. So walk me through your -- you
21 complete the SSR. It's done. The QC side, what's your next step?

22 A. So we --

23 Q. What's your next step?

24 A. So we, we finished, we finish with the SSR. We brief it out
25 to the facility manager and principal facility representative. In

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1 this case, and I'm sorry, now I'm blanking. I don't believe we
2 identified any new corrective action needed through the SSR. So
3 we'll, once they are -- once we give them that information, we
4 wait for them to tell us we want to, we want to provide, you know,
5 corrective action here or there. And then we would institute the
6 corrective action process after the fact.

7 Q. If one was finished.

8 A. If one was going to, to be covered.

9 Q. Okay.

10 MR. BROWN: I'm going to pass it on to Paul at this time.

11 MR. SUFFERN: Or Jason.

12 MR. BROWN: Okay. Yeah, Jason.

13 BY MR. ALLISTON:

14 Q. Yeah, you touched on a lot of those items already. So,
15 again, the SSR and really your CAPs are very robust. So it's
16 really good to see that because it's not consistent through the
17 agency. So looking at your caps though, you have one that was
18 open since 2015.

19 A. Safety alerts.

20 Q. Safety alerts, and the last time that it was -- that it had
21 any edits was 2021, as far as mitigations.

22 A. Off the -- so I'm -- not having it in front of me, I can't
23 say that for sure. I thought we just had a mitigation that ended
24 for it.

25 Q. Yeah, I misspoke.

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1 A. Okay, good. It made me very worried.

2 Q. There's a page break, so there's -- yeah. I'm sorry. There
3 was a page break and I thought that was the end. But yes, we have
4 -- because you have 15 total mitigations there. So can you kind
5 of walk me through like what the, you know, being in a CAP for so
6 long, is a, is a tough place to be. Right. I guess kind of walk
7 me through that process.

8 A. Sure.

9 Q. And what you're trying to do to move out of that.

10 A. So what I'll tell you is, is that when, when I first came
11 here in 2017, I came as -- to do the QC. But I had been put into
12 a couple other roles. It was the changeover to the general
13 managers concept. There was some issues with the training
14 department and some of the relationships that were going on in
15 that at the time. And I moved into there for a little bit, and
16 then I went back to training -- or back to the QC. The QC program
17 at that time was -- it was broken here.

18 MR. BROWN: Can you hang on one second?

19 MR. OBERT: Sure.

20 MR. BROWN: I'm going to stop this for a second. I'm sorry.

21 (Off the record.)

22 (On the record at 12:04 p.m.)

23 MR. BROWN: Okay, I restarted the recording at 12:04 p.m.

24 BY MR. ALISON:

25 A. So it was also new to me. I came out of smaller facilities.

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1 Bedford took 18 controllers at the most. Savannah was 24 or 25.
2 Manchester before that is 11 to 17, somewhere in that range.
3 Correcting problems was one-on-one discussions with -- between the
4 manager and the FACREP. And usually that could -- you could get
5 things correct that way.

6 Here, it doesn't work that way. It doesn't work that way in
7 the enroute environment at all. And so my feet were definitely --
8 I was in over my head initially. And then COVID happens. So then
9 we all run away briefly. When we came back, we had just started
10 to try and get a grip on what was going on when the ECV team came
11 in and reviewed everything.

12 So it create -- I mean they, they lit a fire under us. We've
13 since rewritten the order to include a corrective action plan or
14 corrective action process. We've identified a corrective action
15 mitigation development team. It's a standard team, sits all the
16 time.

17 We fixed those things and made it so that items could be
18 addressed quicker. Move on to the 2015, there's a 2015 and
19 there's 1 from 2022. So there are two relatively older items.
20 Initially, when I -- when we first started to look at them again,
21 we set it into the ICV process, and tried to address it while we
22 were working through the ICV process. And it wasn't, it wasn't
23 working.

24 I think if I recall correctly for that one, I think we've had
25 two mitigations. We developed presentations to go over the

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1 briefings with the workforce, that actually ended December 31st or
2 January 31st, I don't remember which one. I have -- we're
3 monitoring 17 CAPs, there's ten others right now that have -- that
4 are in the mitigation process. Sometimes they -- they'll mesh
5 together. I apologize.

6 But so the goal -- so you know, yes, that's old. We're
7 starting the monitoring process for that. If we are not seeing
8 the results that we expect, then we will go back and figure out
9 another mitigation and that CAP will stay open.

10 I'm hopeful that the last round of briefings, it was done by
11 the LSC, which tends to work out better here. Our LSC is very
12 engaged in the operation, and, and they're very engaged in, you
13 know, providing people with the, the information that they need to
14 do their job correctly.

15 So at least for that 2015 CAP, I'm hopeful that we'll get
16 there for this, this first period. Monitoring for that I think
17 ends April 30th. Safety alerts is the most difficult one, in my
18 opinion, to monitor, because the only time you hear about it is
19 when something bad has occurred.

20 If I give a safety alert and, and the and the planes keep
21 separated because of my safety alert, there's no MOR. My supe may
22 or may not have heard it. I might be the only person in the
23 building that knows it, and people don't usually stand up and go,
24 hey, look what I did. Because that's not what we do.

25 So that -- it, it's a tough one in that you're always

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1 presented the bad information. So if we have a, if we have a loss
2 of separation and then when we're looking at the loss of
3 separation. Well then, you get to evaluate well, should a safety
4 alert have occurred or shouldn't a safety alert have occurred.
5 But on the everyday good one, it's very difficult to find the
6 everyday good ones.

7 Did I answer your question at all?

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. Okay, good.

10 Q. That was excellent.

11 A. I was going to say --

12 Q. You answered like three or four questions.

13 A. Okay, cool. I apologize. I even got -- I know I'm trying to
14 -- supposed to be narrow focused, but --

15 Q. No, no, that's --

16 A. This one's important because that one, that one always
17 bothers me. Every time I see that 2015, I'm like everyone looks
18 at that and goes, yeah, really, 2015.

19 Q. No, I commiserate.

20 A. We're getting there. Yeah.

21 Q. Because it is a tough one to crack.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Because of the enroute environment, we have a limited number
24 of reps where we can do it.

25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. Whether good or bad, and then yes, the ones we see are
2 typically the bad ones, so monitoring out of that is, is very
3 difficult for an enroute facility.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So we're in the same boat.

6 A. Cool.

7 Q. As far as your cap mitigation team, can you kind of explain
8 the makeup of that, who's on it and how it works?

9 A. Sure. There's a -- the support manager -- or a support
10 manager, the operations manager for QC is one of the members.
11 There's two people off the LSC, and the safety rep are identified
12 by position as being part of the corrective action plan mitigation
13 team. That's in the, in the appendix of the order.

14 Q. Okay. Excellent. And that's been working as far as to kind
15 of streamline the process a little bit.

16 A. It's -- they are very effective at getting us mitigations.
17 You know, I told you we're monitoring 17 plans, because they are
18 very effective at getting the mitigations, we've, we've actually
19 accomplished a lot of mitigating, and we're in that process of
20 trying to figure out now whether or not it's taking hold, and the
21 culture is changing.

22 But yes, they're very adept at getting us what we need and
23 when we need it, and they're -- I'm happy with what they -- the
24 products that they provide us.

25 Q. So that leads me into my next question, which is pacing and

1 workload for the QC shop. With, with having that many active caps
2 that are either in a mitigation phase or a monitoring phase, how
3 is that working with managing the workload with the specialists
4 you have?

5 A. We -- so I actually spent this morning going over those 17
6 CAPs and we're trying -- because we have, I want to say six that
7 are all due -- that the monitoring period is now through April
8 30th. So we're in that three month timeframe for -- two of them
9 are a second set of monitoring. We had two where we didn't meet
10 the goal -- the, the target goals the first time. Neither of them
11 are, are big operations ones. It was GENOT and GENOT handling
12 which had to do with getting them out, published on time.

13 And overdue aircraft, and that was the lack of lat/longs, so
14 it's not -- it wasn't stuff that had to do with the floor but we
15 -- so we, we add it, you know, because we didn't make our goals,
16 we added five to the five we had. We sat down today and looked at
17 where we're getting the information from, where we can double up
18 when you're reviewing. I want to say a lot of their emphasis
19 items, a lot of facility emphasis items are what we use to, to
20 monitor the, the items in OSA data.

21 So if you're, if you're going to go review OSA data for, for
22 PIREPs, I'll use that as the example. Well, you can pull out, you
23 can pull out safety alerts or, or HIWAS broadcast, or something --
24 other items out of that and HIWAS was a bad example. That's a
25 very long and lengthy process to review. So --

1 Q. So as far as your OSA's, who completes the OSA's for the
2 facility?

3 A. So each, so each area has a QC OSA liaison, that's a
4 supervisor.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A Each of them has, has a required number per quarter. Each
7 member of the LSC, management and, and bargaining unit, has a
8 required number of OSA's to conduct. The STMC's monitor the TMU
9 force. It's, it's a -- an environment that, you know, unless you
10 work in there, you don't know what you're looking at half the
11 time. So they're their primary source of monitoring that.

12 Each of the OM's has a required number to -- of direct
13 observations on supervisory positions. And the TMO has the same
14 obligation for STMC's. All told, everyone else provides where
15 our, our minimum requirement for a quarter is 150. And we get
16 about 72 to 80 out of other, other groups within the facility, and
17 the remainder are conducted by the QC office.

18 I luck out in that I have a couple of -- an individual who's,
19 who's medically DQ'd for the moment and is working for us on
20 Article 45 duties, and I have a Article 17 that comes off the
21 floor, maintains currency in Area C and comes off the floor.
22 We're well ahead of our requirements for this quarter. They're
23 very good at it.

24 Q. All right, again, you answered a lot of my follow up
25 questions.

1 A. Sorry.

2 Q. No, no, that's great. Because you, you identified the whole
3 process very well. I really like that you do have that good mix
4 of different people that have expertise in their different areas
5 with those OS's, LSC, et cetera. So you're getting a good round
6 view of the facility. How many emphasis items do you currently
7 have in your list?

8 A. Nine national and 11 local. I apologize if I'm wrong there.
9 It might be, it might be 12 or 13. I think it's 11 though.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. It's under 20. I mean the total is around 20 emphasis items
12 between the -- there's the -- between the nine national ones that
13 are out there for IFR/VFR. And I forgot what they were, sorry.

14 Q. Okay.

15 MR. ALLISTON: I think that's all I have.

16 MR. BROWN: Okay. Ryan.

17 BY MR. HURLING:

18 Q. Yeah, I only have two questions and I'm going to leave most
19 of them to our SME, Kevin. So at United, our risk management
20 program or our SMS program, we call them hazard identifications
21 and then they're put into what CAP up, which is similar to the
22 CAPs, what you all have going on. When those are entered into the
23 system, is there an expiration date, or an end by date, or
24 completion date, or targeted date? And my follow-up question to
25 that is if that date is not met, who extends it, or how is it

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1 extended, if needed?

2 A. So they're each, each individual mitigation will have a
3 target date to be completed. The -- and then monitoring plans
4 have target dates for completion. If we're, if we're not going to
5 meet something because of a -- an internal cause, we're -- we
6 didn't do it or anything like that, that normally would go -- I
7 would go to the facility manager who is the actual CAP holder to
8 ask for that.

9 When it's the briefing, you know, where we -- the LSC was
10 going to do something -- let me start over again, I'm rambling on
11 and that's going to sound great there. We had a couple of CAPs
12 where the original thought was for training team meetings and crew
13 briefings to present the information to the controller workforce.

14 As we were working through things, we decided that the LSC,
15 and during safety discussions, was a better vehicle for that,
16 which caused some push here and there. Those changes I made
17 myself, I can input them. They're listed in the CAP. It
18 identifies that the date was changed. And, and there's a few of
19 them, there's, there's quite a few where we've changed the dates
20 to try and match things up.

21 We took weather, we took the hazardous weather event and
22 originally it was planned to be done in March and April, in
23 preparation, well, you heard Tarah talk about it, in preparation
24 for what was normally our severe weather season. It's now moved
25 back to March to cut you know, because we're getting that weather

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1 sooner and there's a few others where we've adjusted some of the
2 time periods.

3 In general, though, it's, I mean, most of it is me, just
4 maneuvering it to make it match what the operation can support, so
5 monitoring is slightly different.

6 Q. Sure.

7 A. That's really the monitoring plans we look at when the, when
8 -- we did this in a vacuum in August with, at the time 29 plans at
9 once.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. So when you went to time to implement, well, because we
12 schedule things, monitoring plans look like they were going to
13 say, well, we would be monitoring before we actually got the
14 mitigation done. So the monitoring plans, those dates just are
15 adjusted to match what the mitigation has provided. So where we
16 finish the mitigations early or later than what we thought we
17 would finish, we would adjust the monitoring plan to meet that
18 target timeline of three months.

19 Everything, everything's in there, looking at three months of
20 data. And then to meet the whatever the targeted effectiveness
21 is.

22 Q. Okay. The CAPs. How are they disseminated? Is it whoever
23 has a less workload? Is it evened out, or is it by kind of SME of
24 who should handle it? Or how is it disseminated once they're
25 created?

1 A. MR. WADE: Disseminated to the specialist or --

2 Q. Yes.

3 A. Oh, to the workforce.

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. So for giving the workforce their briefings, or whatever
6 processes. So we have primarily three methods for presenting the
7 information to the controller workforce. There would be a crew
8 and team briefings. The LSC briefings. And then through the
9 normal everyday teams, with teams pre-duty briefing. I don't know
10 if they how much you guys have gotten into this. Teams is the
11 program that everyone has to review first thing in the morning.
12 It carries all the, you know, the, the overtime assignments and
13 changes to orders, things like that. All the briefing materials.

14 Some are pre-duty, some are same day, some are -- well
15 actually we covered that with teams. Some are pre-duty, and some
16 are informational that you have to sign off on. So those three
17 methods could provide -- and depending upon the information we --
18 it may be suggested to go from to one or the other.

19 I mentioned earlier, we had items that we had thought we
20 would originally addressing in team, in team and crew briefings,
21 and thought better that it would be better in, in the larger
22 setting where you get more questions and people can interact with
23 their -- the instructors instead of trying to pull supe off the
24 area. He talks to three people. If you have three seasoned, 25
25 year controllers, they may not have any questions. And then you

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1 get three other, you know, people who've just been certified in
2 that, in that crew briefing, and they may not, you know, they may
3 have 100, but they only get that -- then they're only going to get
4 the supes view, or the OS's view of what's going on.

5 Not that that's a bad thing, but if you've got, if you got
6 people with 25 years of experience, they're going to provide other
7 information that, that OS may not have or provide. And it's just
8 it's the crew, that larger briefing seems to me to be a better way
9 to present information and get more input into it, and more
10 questions and answers.

11 Q. Understand. Thank you.

12 A. And then that last one is just here you go, read it and --

13 Q. I just have one clarification, because in my world, I'm not
14 as sped up or however you want to word that on the ATC terminology
15 side. So just quickly what is an STMC?

16 A. Supervisory traffic management coordinator. So it's a, it's
17 an operational supervisor that works in the, in the team, in the
18 TMU.

19 Q. And an LSC?

20 A. Local Safety Council.

21 Q. Thank you.

22 MR. HURLING: That's all I have, sir.

23 MR. BROWN: Okay. Kevin.

24 MR. COON: Actually, in your role, everything's been
25 answered. Any questions have been answered.

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1 MR. BROWN: Okay. Karena.

2 MS. MARINAS: Thank you.

3 BY MS. MARINAS:

4 Q. What kind of -- so how does your QC program evaluate PIREPs
5 and dissemination?

6 A. We actually just worked on that because that monitoring plan
7 began in February.

8 Q. Mm-hm.

9 A. So what they're doing is, is we're looking at -- we're taking
10 the center weather units' weather sheets, we're looking for the
11 convective activity, where is five and five PIREPs needed, and all
12 of that. And then we're looking -- then we go and find those
13 timeframes that aircraft are in the areas that center weather
14 advisory or center weather unit has predicted.

15 We'll take a two hour sample. And we'll review that two hour
16 sample where we'll listen to each aircraft, and then evaluate
17 should have, you know, should a PIREP have been issued to the
18 pilot, did a PIREP. Did -- if they give us a PIREP, did it get
19 entered in the EDST. If it, if it got entered in the EDST, did it
20 get put out in AISR.

21 The spreadsheet is probably 60 lines wide, and we'll track
22 each of those, each of those items individually. And then come up
23 with our compliance at the end of it. When your reality is as it
24 should be, if you've gotten a PIREP from -- and assuming that it's
25 a valid, you know a good PIREP to be issued. If you get the

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1 PIREP, it should -- you should see it be entered into EDST, sent
2 or entered into AISR. And provide -- and then provided to other
3 aircraft as it went through. Did I answer your question?

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. Okay. We've done two so far. I can't -- I don't know what
6 the -- where we sit in that actual percentages at this point in
7 time, though.

8 Q. Two evaluations.

9 A. I think two periods so far.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Since the -- this round started.

12 Q. Okay. And what -- Do you guys have any involvement in QC
13 with evaluating training at all?

14 A. So not the actual classroom. Not, not what items are being
15 put out. Are they meeting the required guidelines of the point
16 four, or local training order, yes. So we're, I'm trying to think
17 of a good example, forms, dash 25's. We find that instead of just
18 getting the all check marks or completely blank, or those are the
19 -- so we look at that on a quarterly basis and we provide feedback
20 to the workforce, or to the OJTIs as to how well they're doing at
21 filling out a dash 25.

22 Same thing with performance assessments and certification
23 skill checks for OS's. We review the forms that they done. And
24 when I say review, not -- there are OJTD -- OJT documentation
25 validations that are a required part of our QC order. Those are

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1 we get the set, we listen to the sessions, we actually evaluate
2 what we see based on -- and then look at what's on the, on the
3 form and make a determination as to whether or not the form
4 reflected the actual session.

5 Same thing with certification skill checks and performance
6 assessments. A lot of that is more -- is are they -- are the
7 forms being filled out correctly, and then the assumption is that
8 if they're filling the form out correctly, the appropriate
9 information is getting -- given to the developmental, so that they
10 can improve their skills.

11 The refresher training, we'll look at -- this year, we'll
12 look at -- they -- the memos, there's a memo out that says here's
13 our refresher training we'll look at did we accomplish the items
14 that were on that memo. We're going to look at it in September
15 towards the end of the ICV process. Our CAP that we have open for
16 it will be -- closes at the end of the year. So we'll look at the
17 full calendar year because refresher training for some reason
18 falls a calendar year versus a fiscal year, which makes no sense
19 to me.

20 But we'll look at all that and determine whether or not did
21 we meet -- did we do the things we said we were going to do. And
22 then on top of that, we'll look at if there is something that's
23 supposed to be, say, they're supposed to do two hours of refresher
24 training on -- or simulation training. Two hours of simulation
25 training as part of the refresher training. We'll look to make

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1 sure that we did the appropriate amount of time as well and that
2 we weren't -- we didn't do 15 minutes, we did, we did the hour or
3 whatever that individual requirement is.

4 Q. Thank you. That was going to be my next question.

5 A. Oh, okay.

6 Q. I'm glad to hear that. So do you, as the QC manager and any
7 of the other managers, like your airspace manager training
8 manager, do you guys participate in training too?

9 A. I don't understand.

10 Q. So any kind of training like the one I've been asking about,
11 like your severe weather training, and swap route training, any of
12 the operational training, do you guys participate in any of it or
13 do you just evaluate it?

14 A. So I can't, I can't speak for whether or not the airspace
15 manager or the other managers are. I'm not, I'm not sure. I
16 don't evaluate whether or not the -- anyone outside of the
17 operations has received the training, or I don't look at the
18 rosters for that.

19 Q. Mm-hm.

20 A. Personally for local safety council briefings, I tried to get
21 to the first one each, each month. It, it's not a requirement
22 that I participate in the, in the local safety council, but it is
23 something I try to do.

24 Same thing when, like I don't -- I get all of the, the MBI's
25 that come out, all the mandatory briefings items that come out. I

1 review them. I can't tell -- I'm not going to sit here and say I
2 have actually gone and sat and learned what, you know, the swap
3 briefing, and you know, it's not -- it really isn't my function,
4 but I try to be aware of everything that goes out.

5 Q. So it's -- but it's more of a personal.

6 A. It's my --

7 Q. -- things that you do rather than a requirement.

8 A. It is not a requirement of mine. I'm not required to do it.

9 Q. Okay. Thank you.

10 A. Yep.

11 Q. And when, when was the last time crew brief, crew briefings
12 were done in the facility?

13 A. Crew briefings?

14 Q. Mm-hm.

15 A. They're probably yesterday. They're -- I know that I have
16 rosters for February -- January and February -- December, January
17 and February because there were items for the corrective action
18 plans that were part of that.

19 Q. Mm-hm.

20 A. But I don't know what the schedules for the individual areas
21 are or how they're, they're managing that time on a, on a daily
22 basis.

23 Q. Do the crews sign in for those?

24 A. What do you mean sign?

25 Q. Like you said rosters. Is it just a schedule or --

1 A. Oh, it's -- so there isn't, there -- I don't, I don't believe
2 that there's a set -- there's nothing in like crew support, or not
3 crew support, in CRUART or anything that says crew briefing today.
4 I don't, from the operational standpoint, I don't know how they're
5 dividing up the time to decide where they're getting those things
6 done. I'm, I'm concerned with did they get it done, and that's
7 what, like I said, is I get a roster or a report at the end of the
8 month that says these crew briefings are done they, you know, and
9 what date they were finished.

10 In some cases I just happen to have seen the area A1, and
11 they have a spreadsheet that has all of the individuals and what
12 date they got it on there, but I don't, I don't have that access
13 to that in on a daily basis.

14 Q. Okay. So if I'm understanding. Does that mean that you just
15 see that, that supervisors are doing it, but you don't necessarily
16 keep track of the individuals who've been part of the crew
17 briefing? Is that right?

18 A. I don't keep track, no.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. The operate -- right, the area manager -- or the area
21 operations managers are reporting to me that crew briefings for
22 their area have been completed at this date or that date.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Cool.

25 MR. BROWN: Betty.

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1 MS. KOSCHIG: Hello.

2 MR. OBERT: Hi.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: Everybody's asked all the questions.

4 MR. OBERT: Well, hopefully I answered them all correct, you
5 know.

6 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah, yeah.

7 MR. OBERT: Good.

8 MS. KOSCHIG: So I, I don't have any questions. Thank you
9 very much.

10 MR. OBERT: Great. Sure.

11 MR. BROWN: Paul.

12 MR. SUFFERN: Yeah, I got just two questions.

13 BY MR. SUFFERN:

14 Q. One to follow up on one of Karena's questions, there. You
15 talked about, I believe the cap for PIREP dissemination and how
16 you would go through that process. I noticed that the 7110
17 changed recently in January here locally to instead of relaying
18 all PIREP's, to relaying operationally pertinent PIREP's. As part
19 of evaluating the CAP, how do you, you know, score whether the
20 controller did something correctly or not, for a pertinent PIREP.

21 A. So almost -- in -- when we're reviewing them in the
22 background, we are -- there are limitations to how we can review
23 things in the first place. We're using Falcon replays. You saw
24 the weather that was displayed the other day on the Falcon replay.

25 That is not what the controller was looking for or looking

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1 at. We're -- so what we're doing is, is we're simply looking at
2 what we see. We're listening for base and tops reports for if
3 we're looking for thunderstorms, should people -- are people in
4 that weather. And then, and then using our best judgment as we go
5 through it.

6 I think we're probably more conservative than -- so we're
7 probably marking people wrong for what they consider to be not
8 operationally significant. It's a good question though, because I
9 hadn't really thought that part through. The reason that was
10 removed was it originally said every PIREP. And because it said
11 every PIREP, if you missed one, you failed.

12 And not every PIREP is significant to the system. And when
13 you get, you know, light, or you know, light turbulence or
14 moderate turbulence, moderate turbulence, moderate turbulence,
15 moderate turbulence, in exactly, you know, in the exact same place
16 over and over and over again. Well, that's a lot of work to do,
17 to be putting them in there and that's -- but our SOP required it.

18 I'll have to think more about that. I don't necessarily have
19 a well thought out answer for you at this point in time.

20 Q. Okay. Thank you. And then my last question is always a fun
21 one. From your position and since you work in various CAPs and
22 some of them are weather related, are there any weather tools that
23 you wish you had, or the workforce has expressed they wish they
24 had to you to help them do their job better?

25 A. So there's -- I can't say that there's anything the workforce

1 has asked me for. In this, in the enroute environment, so for a
2 terminal guy, when I look at what the products that are available
3 to the enroute people, I am like, oh my God, this is the greatest
4 thing ever, because it is significantly better than what I had
5 when I was an operational controller or supervisor.

6 I was -- it was -- it's better. From a review standpoint, it
7 would be, it would be incredible if you could actually see those
8 -- what the controller was looking at, at any given time. We can.
9 It requires a tremendous amount of work by tech ops, by us. We
10 have to go downstairs to a, to a single workstation that's in the
11 back of the, in the back of the building to be able to replay it
12 on the, on the controller workstation.

13 Because even if we play the ERAM workstation playback file on
14 a large monitor, it's still not the same. It's not exact, it's a
15 close representation, but the monitors can't display the colors
16 and everything in exactly the same way that the, the scope does.
17 So if I was -- if you gave me that choice and you said, what could
18 you have, it would be have the ability for -- to sit in the QC
19 office and review the, review the playback file as if it was at a
20 controller workstation.

21 Q. Great. Thank you.

22 A. Sure.

23 Q. I really appreciate that.

24 MR. SUFFERN: That's all I have.

25 MR. BROWN: Jason, you had a follow up?

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1 MR. ALLISTON: Yeah. Just a couple of quick ones.

2 BY MR. ALLISTON:

3 Q. On your validations, you know, you've got a good spread of
4 folks that are doing OSA's. How do your validations typically
5 look?

6 A. So the OJT -- so part of the LSC charter had, they have --
7 well, I don't know if it's part of the charter, but the LSC has
8 very -- has specific assignments for individuals within it. There
9 are two individuals that are on the validation team, a supervisor
10 and a, and a controller.

11 So between them, myself, and members of my staff, we'll -- or
12 the people who provide the validations, I'm going to say that it's
13 probably 50/50, the supe and the LSC members, are probably doing
14 about half of the OJT reviews and certification skill check
15 reviews or should be.

16 I can't -- I don't know that it's exactly half. And then the
17 remainder are done by members of my staff or myself. So I try --
18 we're getting there now. So I look at the end of the month, I go,
19 I look at where we stand on OJT or on OSA validations, and I'll
20 look to see if -- and if there's more needed, then I'll sit down
21 and I'll do a bunch of OSA validations or extra OSA validations.

22 But primarily it's that -- it's the two people from the LSC.
23 The two assigns -- the two assigned specialist to my office. If
24 we -- usually when we have Article 17 people come up or Article 45
25 people come up, we -- while we let them do validations, we

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1 validate their work, we don't have them validate.

2 I actually have one Article 17 person who's 30, how many,
3 what did I say, I'm 36 years, so he's 30. We went to college
4 together, we joined, we started the same day. He's got 36 years
5 of experience. He's a very competent person. He evaluates anyone
6 other than the people in his area, and we let him -- I let him
7 look at validations for that. So --

8 Q. And on those validations, how many -- do you see many needs
9 improvements?

10 A. Yes. I would say OJT -- so OJTD validations are probably 60
11 percent show some sort of required or needs improvement.
12 Something in there needs improvement. Primarily it's the use of
13 NA and NO. And then there's a few where we're also seeing where
14 we're seeing comments for items that didn't occur, or you're the
15 biggest -- the easiest one to find is is they'll be working in
16 high sector, and they'll have a check mark in the IFR VFR
17 separation.

18 And the moment you see that, you already know that they just
19 checked them. There's a, there's a -- for those of you don't know
20 in Team, or in -- yeah, it's Team. There's a button you can check
21 and it puts check marks in the entire column. And you know that
22 they just pushed that, and they didn't, you know, that because
23 it's not an applicable thing, there's no IFR -- there's no VFR
24 aircraft up there.

25 NA and NO, we're trying to correct the problem. Is that the

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1 world's greatest workforce problem when someone writes NO or not
2 observed versus not applicable, no one's going to fail their
3 training because someone wrote NA versus NO, but it's not correct.
4 So we're trying to, trying to make people, you know, focus on
5 what's required out of the form. It's not -- we're not -- I don't
6 think that they're asking for too much. But those are the primary
7 ones that we see that needs improvements.

8 We -- our supervisors, our certification skill checks and
9 performance assessments were the same. NA's and NO's. I think
10 we've corrected that problem because I went to all managers
11 training and had some discussions.

12 Q. All right, that gets into my last questions. As far as
13 management team meetings, do you have team meetings with yourself
14 and other support managers, and the ATM's, and/or the OM's? Are
15 they involved in those?

16 A. So every Monday, we have a district support managers meeting,
17 so it will include the support managers at A90 and Boston Tower as
18 well. That's primarily with the AGM. We do have obviously the,
19 the general manager concept. We, you know, we're responsible for
20 assisting the lower level facilities underneath us, so that's
21 where we'll primarily talk about items that have -- that deal with
22 outside of Boston Center.

23 Not that we don't talk about the things that are going on
24 here too because -- or at A90 or Boston Tower because those are
25 the -- they account for the majority of the traffic in the

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1 district.

2 Tuesdays we -- all the support managers meet with the ATM and
3 XO, primarily that's to discuss items that we need to accomplish
4 within the facility. Every Wednesday there is a leadership team
5 meeting. That includes all of the -- all facility managers are
6 can obviously attend, but primarily it's the support managers, the
7 operations managers. XO, ATM and there's a few supervisors who
8 have -- who aren't doing some sort of special project. There's,
9 there's a, you know, the LSC lead, the -- there's some -- there's
10 a supe that works -- who works in training and is doing a few
11 extra things for training.

12 But so all of those people will meet on Wednesdays. And then
13 all manager training. We do that once a month. It's spread out
14 over three days. It's catch -- it's designed to catch for the OS
15 schedules so that every OS can get into that. So it would be like
16 a crew briefing for, for OS' and, and it's primarily run by the
17 XO.

18 Q. All right. And I guess the, the question that follows up
19 with that, because you have so many CAPs going on right now, how
20 has it been in those meetings trying to get the facility aligned
21 to focus on those items for correction?

22 A. It's not -- I'm going to say, we have a lot of buy in, I get
23 a lot of buy in from the individuals who are here. The Airspace
24 Department has been tremendous at finding the information and
25 providing us the data that we need. I mean, when I say us, the

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1 CAP mitigation development team is in, you know, they're driving
2 the mitigate -- the development of the mitigations.

3 When they, when they provide it, provide that information, I
4 haven't had any pushback, any delay in getting anything from them.
5 I'm not throwing any of my teammates under the bus deliberately,
6 but if, if anything, it's having to go look for completions, would
7 be the hardest part of -- that I found in here, is that completion
8 reports aren't necessarily getting delivered on time -- in a
9 timely manner.

10 Not that, you know, I'm -- again, I'm lucky in that I've been
11 around a long time. I know where to look, so it's, it -- I don't
12 find that there's any, any roadblocks in any of those meetings in
13 trying to get things accomplished or, get things moved in the
14 right way.

15 In fact, that's primarily where that, that Wednesday meeting
16 is where a lot of -- where we figured out that the team, the OS
17 team might not be the appropriate place to present this
18 information, it should be the LSC. I do go over CAPs and what,
19 you know, where the, you know, what's due in the short term at
20 that LT meeting. So I don't know if I -- hopefully I've answered
21 the question. I rambled again at the end.

22 Q. Yeah, I think so. And then do you attend the daily standups?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Both, or just --

25 A. In general, I'm here for both. I mean, I normally get here

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1 about 7 o'clock, so I'll leave -- I'll do the final stand up of
2 the day, and then go home afterwards.

3 Q. Okay. And at the stand up, do you kind of, I guess, brief to
4 the supe. Like you know, if there's weather in the aerospace
5 focus items, we still have these specific CAPs open, anything like
6 that?

7 A. So no, we're not -- I'm not, I'm not providing that
8 particular information at that point in time. If, you know, the
9 reality is it's a very set structure that they follow. I think my
10 -- the majority of my input is looking for, is looking for -- to
11 reinforce the PIREP requirements, to reinforce the need for
12 PIREP's.

13 I try and remind them that there is more than just base and
14 tops reports. That, you know, especially the five and fives.
15 Yeah. So it's I, I'm. I'm not in. I'm not bringing up CAP unless.
16 Unless it's -- I'm not, I'm not bring up CAPs, unless of course
17 something is specifically due. I haven't brought up caps on, like
18 on a daily basis.

19 Q. Okay. One last question. Do you have anything sitting in CV
20 Tool as a mitigation that's not a formal cap and CEDAR currently?

21 A. Do I have any -- I'm sorry. Do I have anything in the CV
22 tool.

23 Q. That is being mitigated.

24 A. In the CV tool.

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. Not in the CAP.

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. No. Every, everything that's in the CV tool, is in CEDAR,
4 and in fact all of the items should say if you went down our CV
5 tool and found something in the mitigation plan, it should say
6 it's this CAP.

7 Q. CAP number.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I think I've gotten them all. So I -- but they are,
11 everything that's there, anything that was in the CV --
12 originally, we had tried to mitigate things, some in the CV tool,
13 some in the -- in CEDAR and at some point in time, apparently the
14 director decided that they wanted everything CEDAR and that that
15 anything moving forward was going to go into CEDAR. Our local
16 direction was everything that was in -- or in the CV tool needed
17 to get into CEDAR. So we put it all in CEDAR.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Significantly easier to track all in CEDAR, for me at least.

20 Q. I would concur with that.

21 MR. ALLISTON: That's all I got.

22 MR. BROWN: Anymore follow-ups?

23 BY MR. BROWN:

24 Q. My last question is completely opinion based on you, and it
25 kind of follows Paul's question. So but instead of whether, and

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1 instead of having a playback tool in your office, which would be
2 fantastic at every facility across the FAA, right.

3 Is there anything you wish you had, need, whether it be
4 staffing, equipment, some easier way to do things to make your
5 job, because QC is probably the unspoken, hardest job next to
6 moving airplanes.

7 A. Yeah. It'll be interesting, it'll be interesting to see what
8 happens to me after this comes out. Support specialists. When I,
9 when I first came to Boston Center in 1988, I'll bet you there
10 were six QC specialists. There were probably eight people in the
11 airspace department. There were probably four or five in the
12 training department.

13 There's 11 total positions here for support specialists. And
14 if it was up -- if I could have a, have three or four support
15 specialists, we could, we could obviously cover more things,
16 probably more thoroughly.

17 And that's not -- and I don't mean to take -- I'm not taking
18 away from the training. I don't want a training person. I don't
19 want -- I don't want one of those spots. I want more.

20 And the other thing that I would love to see the agency do
21 that I just don't ever see happening, would be a dedicated
22 management and program analyst, to each of the support offices.
23 Right now we share -- we have a single MPA here.

24 She sits here in the training department because that's
25 primarily where the majority of the work comes from them. But to

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1 have one for airspace to use, to have one for the QC office to
2 use, that would be tremendously helpful.

3 Because, you know, again, I was an air traffic controller. I
4 mean I was in a soldier and an air traffic controller, so two
5 things I can do. I wasn't -- I'm not a statistician. I'm not,
6 you know, then -- and sometimes just trying to track 27 CAPs, they
7 go holy crap, this one's due tomorrow. And you know, it's right
8 there in front of me all the time. But you -- there's so much to
9 keep track of.

10 You know then -- and then, and then do the QC bulletins, and
11 then reviews, and all the things that go along with it, to have
12 someone whose actual job is to manage that kind of stuff, to track
13 that kind of stuff.

14 And not just for me, every single center, every, you know,
15 there shouldn't be a center in the country who's only got one, one
16 management program analyst or, you know, even the assistant. I
17 mean, not picking on the assistants, because they're still
18 valuable tools who can do it. That would be it.

19 MR. BROWN: Okay, thank you. Anyone else? Okay. It is
20 12:47. I'm stopping the recording.

21 (Whereupon, at 12:47 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Daniel Obert

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 7, 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.



Sandra Hirsch
Transcriber

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

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UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *

KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *

Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *

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Interview of: TARAH PARK, Air Traffic Manager (ATM)

Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Friday,
March 8, 2024

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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFREN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

BENJAMIN WADE, Representative
FAA, Office of the Chief Counsel
(On behalf of Ms. Park)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:39 a.m.)

MR. BROWN: I've started the recording. It is 11:39 a.m. See, we're even early. Good afternoon again. I'm Mike Brown. I'm an air traffic investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board.

Can you state your name?

MS. PARK: Tarah Park.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, and thanks for coming in today. Thank you for the hospitality of having us come into your facility. I really appreciate that.

You know, we just briefly talked before we started the recording. You are aware that this is being recorded. You have a representative with you today.

Can you state your name for the record?

MR. WADE: Benjamin Wade, FAA, Office of the Chief Counsel.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, sir.

At any time during the meeting if you'd like to stop, if you'd like to step outside, take a break, or if you'd like to discuss things with your representative, by all means. It's more than allowed.

Have you been part of an NTSB investigation before?

MS. PARK: I have.

MR. BROWN: You have. Okay. A quick background on the group while we're here and what we do in the role. The NTSB, we're not

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1 part of the DOT. We're an independent federal agency. We report
2 directly to Congress. We investigate all civil aviation
3 accidents. So this is the air traffic control group that's part
4 of a broader investigation for this event. So I've never worked
5 in a center, Betty's never worked in a center, so we have guys
6 like Jason and Karena, two subject matter experts to help us with
7 the investigation. But I'll let each person go around and
8 introduce themselves.

9 MR. SUFFERN: I'm Paul Suffern. I'm a meteorologist
10 investigator with the NTSB.

11 MS. KOSCHIG: I'm Betty Koschig, an air traffic investigator
12 at the NTSB.

13 MS. MARINAS: Karena Marinas, NATCA air safety investigator,
14 controller at LA Center.

15 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, United Airlines air traffic
16 strategies, and I'm retired FAA.

17 MR. ALLISTON: Jason Alliston. I'm the FAA SME, and the
18 Atlanta Center air traffic manager.

19 MR. BROWN: So that's it. So the whole purpose of this
20 investigation, we're not here to assign blame, fault. We collect
21 factual data, and we'll take that data and put it into a factual
22 report. Probably in a year it will be done, knock on wood. But
23 the sole power and why we're here is to make safety
24 recommendations to prevent events like this from ever occurring
25 again.

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1 What to expect in the interview today, I use a round robin
2 style of interview. So I'll start with some brief, brief
3 questions, and then we'll work around the room. At any time, once
4 again, if you need to take a break, you need to step out, just let
5 us know.

6 INTERVIEW OF TARAH PARK

7 BY MR. BROWN:

8 Q. With that being said, on February 10th, the date of the
9 accident, how old were you?

10 A. Forty-six.

11 Q. And what are your operating initials?

12 A. Papa Mike.

13 Q. When was the last time you used your -- no, I'm just kidding.
14 For the record, just what's your official title here?

15 A. Air traffic manager.

16 Q. I did get your revised background sheet, so thank you, with
17 the dates on that. Prior to coming into the FAA though, did you
18 have any military ATC, contract tower experience, any kind of ATC
19 experience before the FAA?

20 A. I did not.

21 Q. Okay. Kind of a weird question as an air traffic manager,
22 but do you hold any collateral duties or any details that would
23 have taken you out of the facility in the last six months?

24 A. There may have been one week that I was out on a detail.

25 MR. WADE: A week's not a --

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1 MS. PARK: Okay.

2 BY MR. BROWN:

3 Q. A week. Not the week of the event?

4 A. No.

5 Q. If you would briefly describe your ATC or aviation
6 background. Did you have a pilot's license, why did you want to
7 become a controller, did you go to college for it? Like that,
8 brief history.

9 A. I did go to college for air traffic control.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. My dad was an air traffic controller, and that's how I became
12 aware that the field even existed. I do have a degree in aviation
13 and air traffic management and air traffic control from Daniel
14 Webster College.

15 Did I answer all the components of your question?

16 Q. Yes, ma'am.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. Have you ever been fired, terminated, suspended, or asked to
19 resign from any ATC position?

20 A. No.

21 Q. I don't need to ask you these. Probably no, but did you file
22 an ATSAP for the event?

23 A. No.

24 Q. So this question, it's have you ever been interviewed about
25 this event before now. So excluding this part of the

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1 investigation with the NTSB or the FAA, were you ever interviewed
2 about the event?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Have you had a chance to view the replay?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And that was audio and visual?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Do you know when that was?

9 A. That was on the date of the event, within a few hours of the
10 event.

11 Q. Okay. Walk it down now to the actual date of the event, the
12 notification process here. How were you notified that an event
13 had taken place?

14 A. I don't recall if it was a phone call or a text.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I received one or the other from the executive officer or the
17 watch desk notifying me that we had had a potentially significant
18 event.

19 Q. And can you walk me through, from the time that you received
20 that notification, what were your steps?

21 A. I drove into the facility. I started to collect data out at
22 the watch desk with the operations manager in charge and another
23 supervisor who was providing support. The XO also arrived within
24 a couple of hours of the incident and helped review data as well.

25 Q. The SRT was that evening?

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1 A. That's correct.

2 Q. And you sat on that as well?

3 A. I conducted the services rendered telephone.

4 MR. BROWN: For me, for now that's all I have. Jason?

5 BY MR. ALLISTON:

6 Q. Yeah, so I guess we'll start with the resource management
7 piece. And at the time of the event, there were two sectors open
8 and one D-side position open as well, and there was training in
9 progress. Can you kind of go into what's changed since the time
10 of the event as far as staffing expectations?

11 A. Yes. So after reviewing the staffing of the event and
12 determining that we were not in compliance with my expectations, I
13 met with the union. We had collaborative discussions about how we
14 wanted to address the issues. We ultimately drafted a bulletin in
15 the form of a memo that went out to the operational workforce,
16 both in paper form and a verbal discussion at the watch desk, to
17 ensure everybody had full understanding of the expectations,
18 specifically related to our SOP requirements to maximize our
19 available resources to ensure we're providing the best service to
20 our users.

21 Q. And what was the -- I guess, the response from the workforce
22 on that?

23 A. There's been a varied response from the workforce. We've had
24 some issues with compliance that we are addressing individually.

25 Q. And reference your Monitor Alert parameters. You guys adjust

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1 dynamically for additional complexity; is that correct?

2 A. That is correct.

3 Q. And specifically in that memo that was put out, you know, one
4 of the specifications was to eliminate the red where possible?

5 A. That's correct.

6 Q. And if not possible, to deal with the OMIC. Have you guys
7 gone into the verbal briefing piece of the additional complexity
8 that can be present in a green sector?

9 A. We have.

10 Q. So what has been the LSC's role kind of, and their response
11 to the additional push for resource management?

12 A. The local safety council has not had direct involvement in
13 that.

14 MR. ALLISTON: I don't think I have anything else for the
15 moment.

16 MR. BROWN: Okay. Kevin?

17 MR. COON: From the wonderful review that you put together
18 that you showed us the first day and everything, I really don't
19 have any questions.

20 MR. BROWN: Okay. Karena?

21 MS. MARINAS: Yes.

22 BY MS. MARINAS:

23 Q. So who briefed out to the managers -- well, actually make
24 sure I have this even in the right order. The document that you
25 guys created after the event to -- for training for resource

1 management, what are the steps that -- like, who was trained on
2 that and by whom? Is that clear enough?

3 A. Yes. So the executive officer, myself, and the principal
4 facility rep, all three of us met with the operations management
5 team, the OM Team specifically, and briefed them on the
6 expectations, and the why behind the memo and what our
7 expectations were about them following up at the watch desk to
8 make sure we were compliant with the expectations. That memo then
9 went into teams as a briefing to the entire operational workforce,
10 and then every supervisor or CIC was required to come up to the
11 watch desk, engage in a discussion with the OMIC to confirm that
12 they had understanding of the expectations when they're providing
13 operational oversight of resource management.

14 Q. So every supervisor and CIC on like, a specific day or just
15 everyone who has --

16 A. All of them in the facility.

17 Q. -- throughout the week or something or however long it took?

18 A. Um-hum.

19 Q. Okay. And so it was the OMICs that talked to each of them
20 individually, and then they -- and that was -- so, but the general
21 workforce just got it through team?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. So the face-to-face happened with you guys to the OMICs, the
24 OMICs to the supervisors and CICs, and then everyone through team?

25 A. Correct.

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1 Q. Thank you for being patient with me through that.

2 How does training with your OMICs generally work in your
3 facility? Like do -- if there's any needed training for your
4 OMICs, how do they get that? Is it directly from you or do they
5 go through training with controllers? Is there any training for
6 them in general, just operationally?

7 A. So there's a lot of training for OMICs. I'm going to attempt
8 to understand your question and --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- answer it in the way I think you're looking for.

11 So the OMs have operational training requirements. They have
12 administrative training requirements. They have bi-annual OMLDP
13 requirements. As far as briefings from the ATM when it comes to
14 expectations, we have all manager training on a monthly basis
15 where all managers are briefed on expectations. Sometimes it's
16 required training, sometimes it's training that we do at the
17 facility to address issues that we're seeing.

18 Q. Um-hum. Okay. Yeah, that's really helpful. Thank you.

19 MS. MARINAS: I don't have any other questions.

20 MR. BROWN: Betty?

21 MS. KOSCHIG: Hi again. You put out a lot of, you know,
22 you've got a lot of CAPs and you've addressed the issue. Are
23 there any other initiatives that you plan or do you feel that the
24 initiatives that you've taken so far is going to help put this
25 situation, with this type of --

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1 MS. PARK: I think that the mitigations that we've put in
2 place to address systemic issues will address the systemic issues
3 we've found. I do believe more work is needed in the arena of
4 individual performance management, which we are working to
5 address.

6 MS. KOSCHIG: Okay. Good. I thought I had another one, but
7 I can't think of it right now so I'm going to pass to you.

8 MR. BROWN: Okay. Paul?

9 BY MR. SUFFERN:

10 Q. Yep, I've just got two weather questions, or weather-related
11 questions. I noticed reading through the 7110 SOP that it
12 recently changed in January, and as it relates to PIREPs, it went
13 from controller must forward all PIREPs to just changing it to
14 operationally pertinent PIREPs. As an ATM, what is an
15 operationally pertinent PIREP to you?

16 A. To me, an operationally pertinent PIREP would be something
17 that is related to the operation, and I will get into that a
18 little bit more. So specifically, we've had issues where
19 controllers will receive a volume of similar PIREPs in the same
20 area within a short period of time with the same information. If
21 they determine that that volume exceeds a certain level and that
22 it's no longer relevant to the operational need, then they may not
23 pass that PIREP along.

24 Q. And then as ATM, are there any weather-related tools that you
25 wish that your facility had, or someone within the workforce here

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1 has come to you and say I wish we had this weather-related
2 equipment or this weather-related imagery or things like that?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. What would those be?

5 A. So I have heard that there are other enroute facilities that
6 have some sort of monitors or displays where you can see what
7 PIREPs are required based on forecasted conditions and then
8 whether or not those PIREPs have been received and processed to
9 meet the hourly requirements, and it gives a nice visual for the
10 controllers to be able to see what is needed. And that's
11 something that I would love to have here.

12 MR. SUFFERN: Thank you. That's all the questions I have.

13 MR. BROWN: I was typing as you said that, I apologize.
14 Monitors or displays, do they show the current PIREPs?

15 MS. PARK: The -- what PIREPs are needed based on forecasting
16 conditions.

17 MR. BROWN: Like Atlanta has essentially, right? It's kind
18 of the same thing. Okay.

19 MS. PARK: I heard a rumor.

20 MS. KOSCHIG: Yep.

21 BY MR. BROWN:

22 Q. So we've talked a lot about your mitigation plans as ATM
23 specifically for you. How are you guys monitoring in-house
24 compliance with your plans?

25 A. Through the quality control group here at the facility.

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1 Q. Sorry, my back just spasmed pretty bad. That's all right.

2 So your QCG, just elaborate a little bit more on that. Like
3 audio, I mean, this is kind of a -- how do you view this as far as
4 a resource management? I try to think in my head how would you
5 track that if the sector is green, but it was complex and you
6 thought you needed additional controllers, either splitting
7 sectors or on D-sides, how would QCG ensure compliance?

8 A. So I may not have answered the question that I thought I was
9 answering. So specifically related to our corrective action
10 plans, those are monitored through data collection by our QC
11 office. If you're talking about our resource management
12 initiative, that is not related to an official corrective action
13 plan.

14 Q. Okay. But as a mitigation plan, are you -- I know it's not a
15 CAP, but how are you -- is it relayed to the OMICs to ensure that
16 the plan is being followed? I don't want to say plan. The memo,
17 the MBI, is being adhered to?

18 A. Sure. I'm just going to read -- I did read this on the first
19 day, but I'm going to reiterate for the record.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So to ensure that the actions that we have taken with
22 resource management are in fact occurring, the operation manager
23 in charge will conduct a review of the CRUART for each operational
24 area at a minimum of twice per shift between the hours of 6:30 and
25 22:30 local. If a performance deficiency is identified, they will

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1 take on-the-spot action to address the improper resource
2 management. They will provide an ART snapshot and any other
3 relevant resource management information, such as noting instances
4 where on-the-spot correction was taken to the OM Team, the
5 supervisor of record, the air traffic manager, and the executive
6 officer for performance follow-up. After four weeks of engaging
7 in this review process, an analysis of the data gathered will be
8 conducted to determine if a systemic issue exists with resource
9 management at ZBW.

10 If the data indicates that there is not a systemic issue,
11 another analysis of the review data will be conducted 30 days
12 after the last data point included in the first review. If the
13 data indicates that there is a systemic issue, a corrective action
14 plan will be initiated in accordance with the national and local
15 QC orders.

16 Q. Perfect. Thank you. I just have one last question for you.
17 It's kind of how Paul asked his question. So you're an ATM. It's
18 a busy job. If you could have -- and it's completely hypothetical
19 and it's your opinion. If there was something you could have,
20 whether it exists or not, whether it be -- you tell me. Is there
21 something you wish you had to help you do your duties, accomplish
22 your duties as an ATM?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Can you elaborate on that?

25 A. I would like a full compliment of operation supervisors, and

1 I would like them monitoring equipment available for PIREP
2 solicitation.

3 MR. BROWN: Any other follow-ups?

4 MR. ALLISTON: I just have one. So what do you think -- so
5 in light of the event and all of the data that's been gathered and
6 things that have been identified, what do you think your biggest
7 challenge is coming out of this, this part, of where you need to
8 move the needle?

9 MS. PARK: Performance management.

10 MR. BROWN: All right. Is that it?

11 MR. ALLISTON: That's it.

12 MS. KOSCHIG: Just a comment. I hope you're able to relay to
13 -- at the next interview of your wish list so -- of things that
14 you would like. That's all.

15 MR. BROWN: Absolutely. Okay. We're all set. It is 11:59
16 a.m. I'm stopping the recording.

17 (Whereupon, at 11:59 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
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:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Tarah Park

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 8, 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.



Terri Trauth
Transcriber

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT, *

KELSEY, NY. FEBRUARY 10, 2024 *

Accident No.: DCA24LA097 *

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Interview of: ANDRE TETTERTON, R24 Controller

Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZBW ARTCC)

Boston, Massachusetts

Wednesday,
March 6, 2024

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APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL BROWN, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

PAUL SUFFERN, Meteorologist Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

BETTY KOSCHIG, Air Traffic Control Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KARENA MARINAS, Air Safety Investigator
National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Los
Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center

RYAN HURLING, United Airlines Safety
United Airlines

KEVIN COON, United Airlines Air Traffic Strategies
United Airlines

JASON ALLISTON, FAA ATC Subject Matter Expert
FAA - Atlanta Center

SETH MYERS, Representative
(On behalf of Mr. Tetterton)

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:05 a.m.)

MR. BROWN: Okay, I started the recording. It's 8:05 a.m. I appreciate you coming in a little bit early for us. So good morning. Once again, I'm Michael Brown of the National Transportation Safety Board. I'm an air traffic safety investigator. And can you state your name?

MR. TETTERTON: Andre Tetterton.

MR. BROWN: Okay. Thanks, Andre. Thanks for coming in today. So, a reminder, so it is recorded, and you're aware that it's being recorded.

How this works is when we're done with the recording, with the interviews here, only me and Betty will have the physical access to the recording, okay, so you don't have to worry about it going up on the nightly news or anything, okay? It's just us.

What we'll do is we take the recording, when we're done, and we submit it to our court transcriptionist. They put it into a PDF document or a Word document. They'll send them back to me. I'll go through, proofread them, make sure that everything is what was said and what had happened. When we're done with that, we'll send them out to the group, get their concurrence. Yep, everybody does.

And if you would like, we can send you a copy as well. It'll be in about a month, month to two months after the interviews are done for them to get back. Would you like a copy?

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1 MR. TETTERTON: Yeah, sure.

2 MR. BROWN: Okay. Do you want them emailed to you?

3 MR. TETTERTON: Yeah.

4 MR. BROWN: Okay.

5 MR. TETTERTON: That's fine.

6 MR. BROWN: Let me get your email address, real quick.

7 MR. TETTERTON: Yeah, do you want me to just write it down

8 for you or --

9 MR. BROWN: Yeah, if you like.

10 MR. TETTERTON: Probably faster and easier.

11 MR. BROWN: Okay.

12 MR. TETTERTON: Thanks.

13 MR. BROWN: It's probably like mine where it's complicated.

14 MR. TETTERTON: Here's my personal email.

15 MS. MARINAS: How do you have a complicated email as Mike

16 Brown?

17 MR. BROWN: Well, that's exactly why. Try to get an email

18 address with Mike Brown.

19 MR. TETTERTON: So my personal -- that works fine, right?

20 MR. BROWN: Yeah, that's fine.

21 MR. BROWN: Well, I blame my parents.

22 MR. MYERS: You should send it to your personal one.

23 MR. TETTERTON: My personal one?

24 MR. MYERS: Yes.

25 MR. TETTERTON: Okay, sure.

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1 MS. MARINAS: It's not your youral@gmail.com, Y-o-u-r-m-a-l.

2 MR. MYERS: Just put that one up.

3 MR. TETTERTON: Okay, thanks.

4 MR. BROWN: Thanks, Andre, appreciate that.

5 MR. TETTERTON: Yeah.

6 MR. BROWN: So, and just to, kind of some admin stuff. So,
7 because we are recording, make sure you say audibly, like it won't
8 see you shake your head yes or no or, you know, that kind of
9 thing.

10 MR. TETTERTON: Okay.

11 MR. BROWN: So, with the recording and the transcript,
12 though, so once we send those out and get them back, those will go
13 in the public docket. So, it'll be part of the factual report we
14 present. But the audio is never released. They consider that
15 transitory evidence, so it's not something somebody can FOIA.
16 It's the NTSB's some and Betty's. I see you have a representative
17 here with you today?

18 MR. TETTERTON: Yep, I do.

19 MR. BROWN: And you chose Seth?

20 MR. TETTERTON: I did.

21 MR. BROWN: Seth, can you state your name?

22 MR. MYERS: Seth Myers.

23 MR. BROWN: Thank you. During the interview, if we have
24 something that you need to confer with Seth, if you want to go
25 outside, just let us know. It's not a big deal. If you need to

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1 take a break, get another water, use the restroom, not a big deal.
2 Try and make you comfortable as we can. We know it's
3 intimidating.

4 It's a big room. We'll go around. We'll have everybody
5 introduce themselves while we're here and go from there. Do you
6 have any questions so far, why we're here, what we're looking to
7 do?

8 MR. TETTERTON: I do.

9 MR. BROWN: Okay.

10 MR. TETTERTON: Thank you.

11 MR. BROWN: Well, we'll cover it. So, I'll go around the
12 room now, I'm going to start with Paul.

13 MR. SUFFERN: So, I'm Paul Suffern. I'm a meteorologist
14 investigator with the NTSB.

15 MS. KOSCHIG: And I'm Betty Koschig. I'm an air traffic
16 control investigator with the NTSB.

17 MS. MARINAS: Hi. Karena Marinas, NATCA air safety
18 investigator. I'm a controller at L.A. Center.

19 MR. COON: Kevin Coon, United Airlines Air Traffic
20 Strategies, and I'm retired at FAA.

21 MR. HURLING: Ryan Hurling, senior flight safety
22 investigator, United Airlines, and I'm the lead investigator from
23 the United Company side.

24 MR. BROWN: Okay, so --

25 MR. MYERS: And I --

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1 MR. BROWN: Oh, I'm sorry, Seth. Go ahead.

2 MR. MYERS: Seth Myers, just here with Andre.

3 MR. BROWN: And Jason?

4 MR. ALLISTON: And Jason Alliston. I'm the FAA SME. I'm the
5 air traffic manager at Atlanta Center.

6 MR. BROWN: So, the reason why we have a group of this size
7 is I've never worked in a Center. Betty's never worked in a
8 center. So, we get experts from Centers, and then the party
9 coordinated with United Airlines, right. So, it isn't because
10 there's a lot of people in here. It's just I don't know
11 everything that you guys do day in and day out, right.

12 So, the FAA, we partner with them. We run a parallel
13 investigation. So, the search group that you were with earlier,
14 I'm sure that they asked you a bunch of questions and prepped you
15 for this. You're going to come in here, we're going to interview
16 you and then you're going to go back to them. So, it's just
17 generally the way it works now.

18 So, what we do, at the NTSB, we're an independent federal
19 agency. We don't fall under the DOT. We report directly to
20 Congress, right. So, we determine all aviation accidents. And
21 this one was classified as an accident, so that's why we're here.
22 We don't -- we're not here to assign blame, liability.

23 We just want to know what happened, why it happened, and then
24 what recommendations we can make to prevent it from ever happening
25 again. So, we're just looking for honest feedback and try to put

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1 the pieces together, as they will, and make a good safety
2 recommendation to prevent it from happening again. That's our
3 sole purpose, why we're here.

4 So, you're probably wondering what's going to happen with
5 this group. We'll start out. I'll ask some basic admin questions
6 before we get to the event itself. If you don't know the answer,
7 say, I don't know or I don't recall. That's fine.

8 When you give an answer, though, I want you to try to really
9 concentrate on that day, not what you would normally do, but what
10 actually happened that day. Does that make sense, okay?

11 MR. TETTERTON: Yes.

12 MR. BROWN: We're going to be typing. We're going to be
13 taking notes. We'll try to give you our full, undivided attention
14 as we go. We do it round robin style. So, one person will start
15 out, so you're not going to have 20 people asking you questions at
16 once, right? Like I said, if you don't know, I don't recall or I
17 don't remember. It's completely fine.

18 This should take probably -- it's 8:11 -- probably about an
19 hour, an hour and 15 total for the interview. It's kind of a long
20 time. Like I said, if you need a break, take a break. Just
21 answer truthfully to the best of your recollection, and we'll go
22 ahead. With that being said, do you have any questions before we
23 start? Whenever you want to go ahead and get started.

24 MR. TETTERTON: No, I'm ready to get started.

25 MR. BROWN: Okay. My mouse isn't -- there we go.

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1 INTERVIEW OF ANDRE TETTERTON

2 BY MR. BROWN:

3 Q. All right, so the admin part first, like I said. What are
4 your -- what was your age on February 10th?

5 A. Thirty-two years old.

6 Q. Thirty-two years old, okay. And your operative initials?

7 A. Alpha Tango.

8 Q. AT. Prior to the FAA, did you have any air traffic control
9 experience -- DoD, military contract?

10 A. Negative.

11 Q. Okay. Do you hold any collateral duties, or have you been on
12 any recent details that would have taken you out of the operation?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay. If you would, briefly just describe your ATC
15 background -- why did you get into ATC? Do you hold a pilot's
16 license? Just a general overview.17 A. Just, I was a street hire. And, I don't know, I just
18 applied. I heard about the bid through a friend, and there --
19 it's just where -- really, just a, here I am.

20 Q. So, what year? What year did you get hired?

21 A. September 2017 is when I went to Oklahoma. I arrived here
22 January or February of 2018.23 Q. Okay. So, you went to the Academy and went through -- you
24 knew you were coming to Boston Center. They sent you up to the
25 Academy first?

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1 A. Yes, but I didn't know I was coming to Boston Center
2 initially when I went out there.

3 Q. You just knew you were going to Center School, right?

4 A. For -- yeah.

5 Q. When do you guys pick now, because I don't remember how it
6 works now. So, is it --

7 A. When do we pick?

8 Q. -- towards the end, they tell you you're coming here?

9 A. The final day. Yeah.

10 Q. Wow. All right. Have you ever been fired, terminated,
11 suspended or asked to resign from any ATC position?

12 A. No.

13 Q. How would you describe your overall health? And what we're
14 looking for is poor, fair, good or excellent.

15 A. Good, I think.

16 Q. Good? It's kind of a weird question, but I get it. Do you
17 know if you held your medical -- you were seeing a flight surgeon,
18 had a medical -- it's a second class, is what it's called.

19 A. Do I know?

20 MR. MYERS: On that day.

21 BY MR. BROWN:

22 Q. At that day of the event?

23 A. Oh.

24 Q. You had your medical?

25 A. Yeah.

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1 Q. Okay. Do you have any limitations? I see you're wearing
2 glasses. Is that on there? Or are they readers, or do you --

3 A. Yeah, it should be on there.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I needed them to do the eye exam, so, yes.

6 Q. Okay. And during the leading up to the event, did you have
7 your glasses on or contacts in?

8 A. Yeah, of course.

9 Q. Okay. Do you take any medications over the counter or --

10 A. No.

11 Q. -- prescribed? Okay. Was drug or alcohol screening
12 performed following the event?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Any changes in your health during the last year -- good, bad
15 or indifferent? So, we're looking for any surgeries, weight gain,
16 weight loss, anything like that in the last year.

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay. Any changes in your personal life during the last year
19 -- good, bad or indifferent? Did you get married? Have a kid?
20 Move? Buy a house, sell a house? No?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. Any changes in your financial situation during the
23 last year -- good, bad or indifferent? Hit the lottery, file
24 bankruptcy, anything like that?

25 A. No.

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1 Q. Okay. This question, so we're going to do a 72-hour history,
2 okay. So, the event was Saturday, February 10th. So, we're going
3 to go back to Wednesday, February 7th. We can do whatever's
4 easier for you. If it's easier to start the day, the event the
5 10th and work backwards or start on Wednesday the 7th.

6 And we're looking for what time did you get up? Did anything
7 strange happen during the day, anything like that. So, do you
8 have a preference on how you want to do that, or do you want to
9 start on Wednesday and work up to the 10th?

10 A. It's not super clear, but, I mean, I'm -- I'll -- let's start
11 from Wednesday, I suppose.

12 Q. Okay, so Wednesday, February 7th. Okay.

13 A. Either way, I think it's going to be pretty similar, so.

14 Q. So, on the 7th, did you -- were you off that day? Did you
15 work?

16 A. I very likely worked, either 3:00 to 11:00 or 4:00 to
17 midnight.

18 Q. Do you remember what time you woke up that morning?

19 A. I don't recall.

20 Q. Okay. Did anything happen during the day when you -- before
21 you came into work? Car accident, you got a speeding ticket --
22 anything like that? Normal day?

23 A. Not that I recall. Yeah, fairly normal. I don't do too much
24 before work, honestly.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Night shifts.

2 Q. So, do you know -- so you would have worked the eve shift.

3 Is your commute close? Is it long? Is it --

4 A. Short, yeah.

5 Q. It's short, like time wise?

6 A. Five, 7 minutes, depends on the day.

7 Q. Oh, you guys all live close, up here.

8 A. Try to.

9 Q. That is nice. So, you got -- if you worked on the eve shift,

10 you know what time, about, you would have went to bed that

11 Wednesday night?

12 A. Well, if I worked like a -- I mean, probably 1:00 a.m.,

13 probably, like --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- because -- yeah.

16 Q. So, then that's Wednesday. So now Thursday, the 8th?

17 A. Thursday I would have likely worked -- sorry. What's the

18 question?

19 Q. Same thing. What --

20 A. Sorry.

21 Q. -- time did you wake up? What time did you go to work? Did

22 anything happen during the day? We're just trying to get a

23 history of three days prior to the --

24 A. Yeah, I probably, you know, I can't say for certain, but I

25 probably woke up at somewhere between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. And I

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1 usually work a 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Thursday nights.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Usually.

4 Q. And then nothing that you can recall happened during the day
5 priority to your shift?

6 A. Nothing significant, no.

7 Q. Okay. So, you worked, you figure, probably till 2000 that
8 night. Same thing. You drove -- went home right after work. And
9 then what time do you think you went to bed that night?

10 A. Maybe 11:00, midnight. You know, an hour after my shift or
11 so.

12 Q. Okay. So, then Friday, the 9th, do you remember what -- same
13 question -- what time you got up, what time do you think you
14 worked that day?

15 A. It's usually 8:00 a.m., but I can't say for certain.

16 Q. Do you remember what shift you worked that day?

17 A. Oh, like, usually I work the 8:00 a.m. on Friday mornings.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. If that's what you were asking.

20 Q. Yeah. So -- well, obviously you didn't wake up at 8:00 if
21 you had to be here.

22 A. Right.

23 Q. Do you remember what time?

24 A. 7:15, maybe.

25 Q. Okay. You have the short commute, right, so it's not like

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1 you have to get up crazy early to get here. So, you worked the
2 day shift that day. Do you recall anything after you got home?
3 Anything out of the ordinary?

4 A. So --

5 Q. It's Friday night.

6 A. I usually take a nap, you know, catch up on sleep, but
7 nothing --

8 Q. So, if you work 8:00 to 4:00, what time do you usually nap
9 at?

10 A. Not too long after I get home, so.

11 Q. Okay, and then what time do you normally wake up at?

12 A. Just an hour or two --

13 Q. Okay. So, you think like to 5:00 or 6-ish?

14 A. -- in the middle of the day, really. Yeah, it's like -- I
15 don't -- like, I don't have a specific schedule. I don't have
16 kids. I don't have a family or anything. So, it's not like I
17 have --

18 Q. Gotcha.

19 A. -- a need to, yeah, go pick them up from --

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. -- the bus or anything.

22 Q. Yeah. And then, so you take your nap Friday. And what time
23 do you think you went back to bed that night? I know it's hard to
24 recall.

25 A. Maybe, probably be 10:00, 11:00.

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1 Q. Okay. So, now we're to Saturday the 10th, same question.

2 What time did you get up? What time did you come in?

3 A. I probably worked 7:00 a.m. shift.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Probably woke up around 6:00, 6:15.

6 Q. And then straight to work, right?

7 A. Yeah. I get up, I shower, brush my teeth. Go to work.

8 Q. Okay. That's good for that part. Do you remember if you
9 filed an ATSAP for the event?

10 A. I don't know if I ever finished it, to be honest. So, I --

11 Q. So, you started it, but you just never submitted it?

12 A. Yeah, I -- yeah, I don't think I did, so.

13 Q. Okay. Have you been interviewed about this event before now?
14 And I don't mean with them. Did you -- did anybody interview you
15 about the event prior to the ERT and us showing up?

16 A. Like, did -- I mean, I discussed it with --

17 MR. MYERS: The SSR?

18 MR. TETTERTON: -- the Q -- with -- yeah, for the SSR. I
19 discussed it with QC and I --

20 MR. BROWN: Okay.

21 MR. TETTERTON: -- discussed it with --

22 BY MR. BROWN:

23 Q. For the SSR?

24 A. For the SSR, yes. And I discussed it with my supervisor.

25 Q. Do you know when that was, the SUP?

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1 A. I don't remember that date.

2 Q. It wasn't that day?

3 A. It was the day after, that we discussed -- was it the day of

4 the event?

5 Q. Right.

6 A. No, I was home already.

7 Q. Okay, so it was probably Sunday, do you think, when the SUP

8 -- you and the SUP talked about it?

9 A. I don't think so. No, I think it was later. Is was the day

10 after we discussed the -- or the day after we did -- with the QC

11 and with the SSR. So, whatever --

12 Q. Do you know about when that was, like a week later, a couple

13 days later?

14 A. It was probably the following week. So, I think it was maybe

15 a Saturday, I don't know, about a week later.

16 Q. Okay. And that was with the OS, specifically, or just part

17 of the SSR?

18 A. No, that was just to let me know of the SSR. And then I had

19 a conversation with the supervisor of --

20 Q. Oh, I see what you're -- so you did the SSR first --

21 A. It was separate.

22 Q. -- and then you --

23 A. Separate situation, yeah, separate events.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. But, yeah, my supervisor for my area.

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1 Q. Okay. Have you had an opportunity to replay the event?

2 A. Yeah, yeah.

3 Q. Okay. Audio and video?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Do you know, was that today, or was that for the SSR?

6 A. Both for the SSR and, like -- and the -- with my supervisor.

7 Q. Okay. So, that would have been that Saturday, then, a week
8 after, right?

9 A. Yeah. Around there.

10 Q. Okay. So, now we're talking about when you initially came in
11 before the event. Was a relief briefing conducted when you took
12 the position?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. With your -- how do you guys run your relief briefings
15 for your checklist? Is it on the scope? Is it off to the side?

16 A. I display mine on my scope.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. We have the checklist, but --

19 Q. Do you remember when you took the position, did the
20 controller you relieved, did they have it on their scope, or did
21 they use a separate checklist?

22 A. I don't recall.

23 Q. So, this one is just basically, it's kind of your opinion,
24 but, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the heaviest, how would
25 you classify the traffic volume at the time of the event? So,

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1 leading up to the event, because you were relieved four minutes
2 before it officially happened, but that period leading up to the
3 event, your traffic volume at the time?

4 A. So, yeah, I mean, it's to my knowledge that I -- yeah, are
5 you saying before, right before it happened?

6 Q. Correct.

7 A. I would say maybe like 20 minutes prior, like a 3 maybe. And
8 when I gave up the position, it was not particularly busy, maybe
9 a 2.

10 Q. Okay. And was that volume normal for that time?

11 A. Saturday afternoon? Yeah, probably.

12 Q. Okay, same premise of the question, but on a scale of 1 to 5,
13 with 5 being the most complex, how would you classify the traffic
14 complexity at the time of the event?

15 A. Oh, well, so, very similarly. I guess the first one I kind
16 of answered the complexity, I think.

17 Q. Right. Okay.

18 A. And I think it's --

19 Q. Do you still want to stay at a 3?

20 A. I think they're fairly interchangeable. But, you know, there
21 was -- there were -- there was a couple of deviations and some
22 vectoring and lots of weather to be called. So, it's still
23 probably a 3, yeah. Well, you know, 20 minutes prior and when I
24 gave up the sector, a 2. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. And was that complexity normal for that time?

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1 A. This time of year? No. But you don't see a lot of
2 precipitation normally, but.

3 Q. So, would you say it was more complex than normal? Or less
4 than?

5 A. A little bit, for sure. Like --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- just because, yeah, it's usually not raining in February
8 up here. Usually it's --

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. -- snowing or, I think --

11 Q. Were there any distractions occurring at or leading up to the
12 time of the event?

13 A. I can't think of anything specific. No, I was putting in
14 PIREPs, but I --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. It's not like I wasn't focused on the scope or anything.

17 Q. Okay. Do you recall the weather conditions leading up to the
18 time of the event?

19 A. Yeah. I mean, from -- yeah, from watching it back, I believe
20 you'll hear me call the precipitation and the turbulence and et
21 cetera.

22 Q. Okay, so try to separate yourself from what you watched it on
23 the playback. I know it's hard to put yourself there at that
24 place and time while you're sitting there, but do you recall, you
25 know, what was on your mind? What were your concerns with the

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1 weather or the precip while you were sitting there? And if you
2 don't remember, you don't remember.

3 A. I don't -- I'm not sure I can separate from what I watched in
4 the replay and when I was sitting there, you know what I mean?
5 I --

6 Q. I do. It's tough. It's tough.

7 A. I don't think -- I don't. I don't recall.

8 Q. I mean, you kind of said it was odd. It was strange to have
9 that kind of precip at this time of year, so --

10 A. Yeah, it was surprising.

11 Q. I mean, you were thinking that obviously, right? Okay.

12 A. Mm-hmm.

13 Q. Did you, that day, get your pre-duty weather briefing?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. Is there anything in the weather briefing that stood
16 out to you that day?

17 A. I don't think anything specific, no.

18 Q. Once again, kind of an opinion-based question. To you,
19 what's your value for you as a controller of the pre-duty whether
20 brief?

21 A. I think it's good to have a heads-up of what you're getting
22 into. You know, obviously our -- when we get the position and
23 relief briefing, I think that is generally the most accurate
24 picture of what we're going to be getting ourselves into. But,
25 yeah, I think it's important.

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1 Q. Okay. So, you just look at it as, hey, this is what I can
2 expect for the day. But when you actually get to the sector --

3 A. Look at the forecast weather, yeah.

4 Q. Okay. Do you remember, did you have a cell phone or a PED
5 with you at the time of the event?

6 A. Very unlikely.

7 Q. Okay. This is kind of a weird question because you were
8 getting relieved, but had you requested a relief or a D-side at or
9 leading up to the time of the event?

10 A. I asked. I did ask for D-side, yeah. I -- somebody came
11 back to the area and --

12 Q. You asked the -- did you ask the SUP? Or did you ask another
13 controller? Do you remember who you asked for that?

14 A. I didn't ask the supervisor, no. I just -- somebody came
15 back to the area, and I said, can you sit on my D-side?

16 Q. Was that John -- is that when you were --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Or was it somebody before that?

19 A. It was John, yes.

20 Q. Okay. Obviously, you didn't know about the event that day,
21 correct? That's the --

22 A. I was told that night.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I think I was home already for probably four or five hours.

25 Q. Somebody called you at the house, I would assume, or called

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1 your cell, right?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Was it someone -- was it the supervisor, by chance, or do you

4 remember how you were notified?

5 A. It was my union rep.

6 Q. Okay. So, to the best of your ability, that was -- was that

7 your last shift of the day, basically. Right?

8 A. Well, like my last sit of the day? My last --

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. -- session?

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. So, once you got relieved, you didn't have any more

14 control. You were basically out the door, right?

15 A. I was -- yeah, that was my last sit of the day.

16 Q. So, can you walk me through because we're just -- go ahead.

17 MR. MYERS: Do you remember you stayed for one hour of credit

18 on the night shift?

19 MR. TETTERTON: That's when it happened?

20 MR. MEYERS: Yeah.

21 MR. TETTERTON: Mm-hmm.

22 BY MR. BROWN:

23 Q. So, you were on credit when it happened?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. That's good to know. Okay.

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1 A. Okay. But it was my last session, yes.

2 Q. I got you. So, walk me -- we're to the event now or, in your
3 case, just leading up to the event. So, if you could recall to
4 your best ability 30 minutes prior to and then leading up to when
5 you were relieved in as much detail as you can provide of what you
6 saw, what you heard, what was going on in the area, and just go
7 from there. You can't give too much detail, so --

8 A. Okay. Yeah. I couldn't tell you what time exactly I sat
9 down or anything but received a position relief briefing. I
10 recall the -- I recall being surprised by the amount that -- one
11 plane deviated, like, 90 degrees around some precipitation. Like,
12 okay, like that stuff's real, right? That stuff is rather -- it's
13 accurate.

14 So, I recall putting in multiple PIREPs. I had both ERIDS
15 computers up, putting in one icing PIREP and one turbulence PIREP.
16 I had one aircraft that I had to -- multiple times, I had to reach
17 out to see if -- to get him on frequency, to then descend him.
18 And then it took me three times to then ship him to the next
19 frequency.

20 So, I think that was like -- it started to increase the
21 complexity a little bit. You know, it started to -- you start to
22 feel a little behind when you have to give multiple clearances and
23 to the same aircraft. Or calling the precipitation. There was
24 precipitation over Hancock and light to moderate chop to
25 turbulence in the vicinity there. And -- like, what else would

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1 you like to know exactly? I can't, like --

2 Q. So okay, so there was an Air -- just previously to the event
3 an Air Canada's coming down the arrival. You did have a couple
4 planes calling. You were talking a lot, which was fine.
5 Soliciting PIREPs, giving PIREPs. Do you remember when United
6 checked in, specifically?

7 A. Well the United that had the event, that one?

8 Q. Yes. Yep.

9 A. I remember listening to the replay, of course, but I recall
10 missing their check-in because I was -- I don't know if I was
11 online coordinating, but, I know that once they entered my
12 airspace and, you know, instead of saying, hey, are you here, he
13 was in confliction with somebody coming from New York.

14 So, I just descended him, right. It's like if he's here,
15 he's going to take the descent. So that's what I did, just to
16 consult, to resolve the traffic confliction. But I missed his
17 check-in.

18 Q. No. That's fine. It's -- you had some stuff going on. So,
19 United 1890 checks in. You descend him to Flight Level 240. For
20 you, specifically, how do you -- I mean, I'm sure you don't have
21 memory aids for it, but as these planes are checking in on your
22 frequency, do you do anything as far as a reminder to, oh, I got
23 to give him PIREPs still or I have to give that flight a reroute
24 or --

25 A. Usually, it's on the initial contact.

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1 Q. Usually on initial contact?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But, yeah, often I'll go back and make sure I did it if I,
5 you know.

6 Q. So, you descend him to the 240. I'm trying to think how to
7 ask this. So, he's passed now his -- that was kind of like, well,
8 if he's on, like you said, I descend him. He read it back. He's
9 -- okay, I got him. Is there any cues that you had where you were
10 going to give a PIREP to that United 1890?

11 Or was it something else happened? And I'm just trying to
12 build the puzzle on, because you were doing awesome -- PIREPS
13 disseminating, and then United checks in, descend to Flight Level
14 240. Never went back and gave them the PIREP. And that's what
15 we're trying to piece together, is how that got through the
16 cracks, as it will.

17 A. Umm --

18 Q. There's no wrong answer since it's your explanation.

19 A. I'd like to think that if I was giving the descent to the
20 altitude that the turbulence, that I would have then, like, oh,
21 moderate turbulence here. But, of course, I wasn't sitting there
22 anymore, so --

23 Q. Right.

24 A. I didn't have a memory aid, no, that told me that you didn't
25 give him the PIREP.

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1 Q. Okay. So, the oncoming controller comes in -- not John.
2 We're to the point where John's sitting and he's just monitoring
3 because you're -- in your mind, though, you were going to -- well,
4 walk me through that, I guess. I'll let you put it in your own
5 words. John comes in. And what happens?

6 A. I don't know how long he was sitting there, but John comes
7 in and I just said, can you sit on my D-side and just because, you
8 know, it's one extra set of eyes. The deviations and the --

9 MR. MYERS: Prior to sitting, did he ask you for a break? Or
10 did you just ask him for a D side?

11 MR. TETTERTON: I mean, I think he probably asked me for a
12 break. I don't -- I just -- I know I saw him and I was just, can
13 you sit on my D-side? I don't remember exactly what was said
14 there but, hey, can you sit on my D-side.

15 I mean, that's just because, yeah, I felt like I could use
16 the extra set of eyes. And -- yeah, he -- if you listen to the
17 briefing, this is Sierra Tango that wants to deviate. And I go to
18 16,000 with him, and he's like, oh, you should probably go to
19 14,000 because you got the Newark coming behind him. So, you
20 know, he was useful to have around, definitely.

21 MR. BROWN: Okay.

22 MR. TETTERTON: And yeah, I mean, it was just -- I think it
23 was just a couple of minutes but helped out.

24 BY MR. BROWN:

25 Q. So, it was a couple minutes. You're sitting there, working

1 the sector. John's sitting next to you as your D-side. And then
2 another controller comes into the area. Correct?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. And explain to me what transpired with that.

5 A. So, John was on the D-side at, I think, maybe five planes on
6 the scope now, so pretty reasonable. And then Kevin asked me if I
7 want to break, and I said, yes, and I gave him the position relief
8 briefing. He takes over the sector. I move over to the D-side
9 for a few minutes, clear out the GIs.

10 I let him know -- excuse me. I let him know about the
11 turbulence in the briefing. And then I -- you see -- at least,
12 and obviously, in the recording, you can see all keystrokes,
13 everything. But I put the PIREPS up on the EDST. It's like, hey,
14 just -- this is accurate PIREPs that I put in here. Heads-up.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Then I always -- I always say, like, are you all set before I
17 leave?

18 Q. Do you know how long you sat there for, roughly?

19 A. A few minutes. I don't know.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I can't tell you how long.

22 Q. Does the facility have a requirement for you to stay a two-
23 minute overlap, five-minute overlap? Do you guys have that?

24 A. You do have to stay. I don't know exactly how long, but I
25 mean, you -- I usually stick around for at least a minute or two.

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1 Q. Okay. So, Kevin gets you out. You sit there on D-side a
2 couple minutes, clean up the GIs, like you said, and you leave the
3 area at that point, correct?

4 A. Yeah, look at the scope. I ask him if he's -- if -- are you
5 all set? Do you have questions? And, yeah, then I left the area.

6 MR. MYERS: And what happened when you left the area?

7 MR. TETTERTON: Oh, Kevin, our supervisor, gave -- he give me
8 a positive PROC, I guess you want to call it. Because I had --
9 when I had the two ERIDS up for putting up the -- for putting in
10 multiple PIREPs, you know, at the same time. He was like, I
11 thought that was really going above and beyond, so he thought that
12 was a good job, I guess. I don't know exactly what he said, but.

13 MR. BROWN: Okay. That's all I have for you for now. I'm
14 going to pass it on now to Paul.

15 MR. SUFFERN: Okay. Thanks again, Andre. Your answers to
16 the questions are really helpful and appreciate you coming in and
17 just shedding light on how things went for you that day.

18 BY MR. SUFFERN:

19 Q. Just going back to one of the things you answered earlier,
20 you talked about the plane making those 90-degree deviations there
21 or -- and then you said, oh, that precip is real, kind of was your
22 words there. How often is -- you're seeing precip on your scope
23 when it's, you know, to use your words, not real?

24 A. Yeah, sorry. That was probably a bad -- it's probably not
25 the best way to describe it. But, our -- we have three different

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1 altitude filters on our NEXRAD weather system. And first is
2 surface at 240. It's 240 to 330 and then 330 and above, I
3 believe.

4 And there are a lot of times that it -- we can't tell exactly
5 where it is. A lot of times it is really low and, you're not
6 necessarily going to effect to a point -- you know, it might be
7 10,000 and below, right. And that's, of course, where you get
8 TOPS reports. But how often does that happen? Is that what you
9 said?

10 Q. Yeah, yeah.

11 A. Probably fairly often.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Yeah, fairly often.

14 Q. What -- if you recall, do you recall which of those altitude
15 filters you had selected that day?

16 A. It should be at that -- it's saved on my settings, but it
17 should be the -- this -- I either have surface to 600 or above.
18 Of course --

19 Q. MR. MYERS: 600 or 60,000?

20 A. Sorry, surface to 60,000 or surface to -- flight level 330,
21 one of those two because the Delancey Sectors flight level 270 and
22 below.

23 Q. Okay. Now this is me speaking as a meteorologist and I don't
24 know all the settings and all that on your scope. Is there a
25 setting for brightness, for your -- for the precip that shows up

1 on the scope? And --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- where is that in the filter? I don't know if it's, you
4 know, zero to 10 and you have a 7 or if that's a different
5 something.

6 A. Well, I couldn't tell you what I have --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- for my brightness, but it is -- that it is an option, yes.
9 You can adjust the brightness --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- of the precipitation.

12 Q. Is there a specific requirement to have a certain brightness
13 setting for precipitation? Or is it just whatever each controller
14 prefers?

15 A. I don't recall if there is a specific.

16 Q. Okay. No, that's fine. This is me speaking from a
17 meteorology side, not understanding all that y'all doing. So,
18 going back to, also, I think, like you spoke earlier, you talked
19 about the weather being kind of unusual for this time of year.

20 You know, how often do you guys, since I believe you've been
21 here for a number of years and a number of winters. How often do
22 you have thunderstorm activity through New York in the wintertime?
23 And I'll classify wintertime as November to April.

24 A. Not often, to my knowledge. Yeah. I mean, not very often.

25 Q. Okay. Since it's a little -- not often, is there any

1 guidance or training provided as far as how to handle, I guess,
2 out of season type of weather events? You know, obviously maybe
3 snow in August would be a little different and out of season and
4 then thunderstorms in January or February would be a little. But
5 is there any guidance or training on that?

6 A. Well, the facility usually, when we change seasons, like at
7 least summer and winter, there usually is at least one briefing
8 about, you know, we have a winter weather briefing every fall, I
9 guess, maybe. And, then you have like a summer end swap briefing
10 before the summer hits. So, I mean, we do have things like that.
11 Yes, we have refresher training or recurrent training and stuff.

12 Q. And are those in person and in class or are they mainly
13 computer based or how do y'all do it here in Boston?

14 A. We have -- we do have in person briefings, yes. Refresher
15 and recurrent training is in the lab. And we do also get, like
16 written briefing or written briefings as well. The Teams, they
17 call it now. Used to be CEDAR. So yeah, all of those things.

18 Q. And weather would come across as any one of those? Or is
19 weather typically a briefing sheet or computer-based or in person
20 or just depends on the year?

21 A. Probably all of the above.

22 Q. Okay. Which one do you find most valuable for you, or --

23 A. I think -- I mean, I think probably in an in-person briefing,
24 you know, beginning of the year. Really just, like you have
25 opportunity for feedback -- well, instant feedback. Yeah. I

1 think, you know, an in person briefing.

2 Q. Okay. Shifting back a little bit more towards the day of the
3 accident. I know you have -- you can see precipitation on your
4 scope. How do you know if it's a thunderstorm or not in your
5 area?

6 A. Well, we -- PIREPs and we get convective SIGMETs as well.

7 Q. So do you -- if you, you know, over -- if you receive a
8 convective SIGMET, do you assume the precipitation then on your
9 display is thunderstorm related?

10 A. That it could be? Yes.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. But I don't know if I'd say assume but yeah, it's a --
13 there's a chance, for sure, that it is.

14 MR. MYERS: Just so -- but you don't depict it on your scope?

15 MR. TETTERTON: I don't. I don't -- no, we don't depict the
16 convective activity, just the precipitation. Yes.

17 BY MR. SUFFERN:

18 Q. So, if it went from, say, non-convective, not thunderstorms,
19 but maybe a rain shower up to 20,000 feet and all of a sudden,
20 now, there's lightning in it, is there any way that that
21 information, lightning information, or something changing about
22 the thunderstorms gets passed on to you while you're sitting there
23 on the scope?

24 For example, you know, a SUP comes down and say, hey, there's
25 now lightning in there, or I don't know if your displays show

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1 lightning on there, or maybe the CWSU -- if it changes in any way.

2 A. I think the weather unit -- I think, like, yeah, we get the
3 convective SIGMETs that come out and -- but I --

4 MR. MYERS: How do you get those?

5 MR. TETTERTON: Oh, we get those through the general
6 information on our ERIDS computer, they call it.

7 MR. MYERS: EDST.

8 MR. TETTERTON: EDST. Apologies, EDST.

9 MR. MYERS: In text, right?

10 MR. TETTERTON: In text form. Yeah.

11 BY MR. SUFFERN:

12 Q. Okay. I guess it's kind of variable on the person as far as
13 what you would consider rapidly changing weather. But if it's
14 rapidly changing, I guess for you, from your perspective, maybe
15 that precipitation is going from moderate and now it's a bunch --
16 it's a huge line of extreme, something like that.

17 Do you ever get, information, provided to you on why it's
18 changing from your SUP or from anybody else, you know, as far as,
19 it's really going to change in the next 15 minutes, so these three
20 aircraft, you know, coming through the sector, it's going to be
21 wildly different than it is on your scope now. Do you ever get
22 any of that information from anyone?

23 A. Not really. I mean, we get forecast information, but --
24 maybe occasionally something. I can recall SUPs coming down and
25 saying like, this is what's going to be forecast in the next,

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1 however long. But the -- yeah.

2 Q. Okay. In your experience here working as a controller, have
3 you ever been working and it's just been -- I'm going to use the
4 incorrect ATC terms, but like, your sector's oversaturated with
5 aircraft because of weather. And how -- has that ever happened,
6 number one, and if so, how do you mitigate that? You say, SUP,
7 you know, it's too busy here. I need to slow flow in my area or
8 things -- has that ever happened?

9 A. Usually, whoever is running the, eye on operations is --
10 they're usually pretty good about looking at the projected traffic
11 and making the necessary solutions. I don't know, making the
12 necessary moves to mitigate that.

13 You know, we can split sectors. We can staff a D-side, you
14 know. Have -- what was the question? Have I experienced that
15 personally?

16 Q. Have -- yeah, exactly.

17 A. Like where I have been oversaturated?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Because of weather?

20 Q. Mm-hmm.

21 A. Maybe. Like I said, usually, they'll -- they see that, a red
22 block coming, we call it, which is the numbers over the period
23 that the -- the traffic number is more than the sector is, I don't
24 know, designed for, I guess. And then you'll split out a sector
25 or something or staff a D-side. Because of weather specifically?

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1 I can't think of a specific example.

2 Q. Okay. Just got a couple more. Could you please describe how
3 the PIREP process works from your perspective here at Boston
4 Center?

5 A. Yeah. Like, the process of disseminating it and inputting
6 it?

7 Q. Yeah, inputting it, disseminating it. And then if you know
8 that it goes anywhere, you know, how does that work from your
9 point of view?

10 A. Okay. Yeah, of course, I ask the aircraft and the ERIDS
11 system, it's called, we input it. There's a page in there to
12 input it which has time, location, altitude, aircraft type, and
13 then, you know, icing, temperature, turbulence, et cetera.

14 And I just input it there, to the best of my ability to --
15 accurately. And I hit send and that's what I do.

16 Q. Okay. And then I was reading through the 7110 here for
17 Boston Center, and I noticed that there was a change -- and this
18 January, so just about a month before the accident, or so.

19 It said, you know, instead of controller must forward all
20 PIREPs to just relaying operationally pertinent PIREPs. What does
21 operationally pertinent PIREP mean to you?

22 A. Well, if it takes place within our area of jurisdiction and
23 then if it, I guess if you believe that it could affect the
24 aircraft that are within your area of jurisdiction.

25 MR. SUFFERN: Okay, that's all the questions I have right

1 now. You've been very helpful. Thank you.

2 MR. TETTERTON: Okay.

3 MR. BROWN: Jason?

4 MR. ALLISTON: All right, so I'm going to start off with some
5 questions about just kind of the facility, procedures, and kind of
6 what you know about them -- and specifically from a quality
7 control point of view.

8 BY MR. ALLISTON:

9 Q. Do you know what ICV and ECV are?

10 A. Not off the top of my head. No.

11 Q. Okay, so those are the internal and external compliance
12 verifications. So locally your QC will do those. The external is
13 QCG coming in from the regional office to essentially do the same
14 thing. Same checklist. And they do rate them quarterly.

15 Do you guys get briefed in any way on what the results of the
16 quarterly ICVs are, as far as what things you're compliant or non-
17 compliant in and as a facility?

18 A. Yes, I believe we do.

19 Q. Okay. And do you think that those briefings are effective to
20 provide you kind of, you know, the focus items for the facility?

21 A. Yeah, I think so. I might not remember everything on that
22 list, but yeah.

23 Q. Okay. And so typically if something's rated non-compliant,
24 it ends up as a corrective action plan. Do you know what CAPs are
25 active in the facility right now?

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1 A. I couldn't tell you every one, but I think it was like, maybe
2 like operating initials was maybe one of them. And I think
3 precipitation call, but otherwise I'm not sure of all of them.

4 Q. There's a lot of them, so.

5 A. Okay.

6 MR. MYERS: There's a cheat sheet right there.

7 MR. TETTERTON: Good luck finding it.

8 BY MR. ALLISTON:

9 Q. So, how are those briefed to you? Is it an in-person
10 briefing or an MBI?

11 A. We definitely get a briefing in the cell phone lot we call
12 it, but -- and I think we have a CAP team briefing every month,
13 maybe, month or two.

14 Q. Okay. And you mentioned feedback's beneficial for the in-
15 person briefings. Do you -- is there typically some give and take
16 and some feedback in those briefings, to your recollection?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. All right, good. So, in the area -- so when you're working
19 in the operation, do the supervisors in your area place emphasis
20 on those items via reminders or, hey, this is what we're focusing
21 on, things like that?

22 A. Yeah. Yeah, some supervisors definitely do. Yeah.

23 Q. And this is just some more than others or --

24 A. I don't have, like any specific examples. But I do know that
25 they're, you know, some supervisors are more involved than others.

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1 But like, yes, some do, like say, hey, remember to be doing this,
2 remember to be doing that or --

3 Q. Okay. Excellent. Is there any other method that the
4 facility uses to highlight those emphasis items and just kind of
5 keep it in the front of your mind?

6 A. I don't recall. I'm not sure.

7 Q. Okay. How would you rate the supervisory engagement in the
8 area?

9 A. Generally good, for the most part.

10 Q. All right. And what does that engagement look like to you?
11 Can you kind of walk me through, like what you see out of your
12 supervisor as far as oversight goes?

13 A. Determining when we should open the sectors, you know, making
14 sure people are coming back from their breaks. Making sure PIREPs
15 are getting put in. And just having a good idea of what's going
16 on as far as rides and precipitation, et cetera.

17 Q. Okay. Have you ever, when you come back from break, say that
18 there was an urgent PIREP of some sort that was solicited in the
19 area, when you come back from break, will the supervisor kind of
20 advise you of that prior to taking a new position?

21 A. Sometimes.

22 Q. Just -- it would be relatively rare. So, if there's
23 impactful phenomena, this is kind of what I'm getting at is, is
24 would they make you aware of that?

25 A. Usually get it in the position and relief briefing.

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1 Q. Okay. Do controllers ask for a duty assignment when they
2 return from break or when they're coming on shift?

3 A. Usually, they'll just -- they'll ask. Well, sometimes a
4 supervisor will stop you and say, can you open this up? But
5 usually it's you look at the break bay and you ask the person at
6 the bottom of it if they want a break.

7 Q. Okay. But you don't necessarily just engage the supervisor,
8 you just kind of run the break board as you come back?

9 A. Generally.

10 Q. Okay. And then will you make the -- how often, as a
11 controller, do you make the determination to just open a D-side or
12 even notice that there's potentially, you know, a saturated sector
13 that needs to be split and make that supervisor aware?

14 A. How often?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. I've definitely come back before and said like, hey, I'm
17 going to sit on this D-side, right, they look like they're going
18 to get busy. Or I've also been assigned it. But generally, I
19 don't just open a sector myself, but -- well, I guess open a radar
20 sector, but a D-side, though, it's like, oh, it's busy. I'm just
21 going to sit here for a second or for however long it takes.

22 Q. Right. Okay. I had another line of questioning, but do the
23 supervisors get up from the desk and spend a decent amount of time
24 in the area? Do they prompt you to solicit PIREPs, things like
25 that?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And how do -- absent that, how do you know whether or not to
3 solicit PIREPs in your area?

4 A. Well, we have a list of phenomena that, it's PIREP-able
5 weather. So, anything like that, you know, moderate or greater
6 turbulence, light or greater icing, et cetera. So -- and then of
7 course, we'll use anything. We'll solicit anything that we think
8 will impact the sector as well.

9 Q. Okay. And is it -- so, in just speaking for you, so is it
10 your habit because, if those phenomena are present, we're supposed
11 to solicit every hour, would you say that it's a habit, upon
12 sitting down, if we have something like that present in the
13 airspace, that that's just kind of part of your normal routine, is
14 to solicit a PIREP and get it into the system?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. How often do you see the OMIIC in and out of the areas
17 or down the aisle?

18 A. Occasionally they're like -- it's like pretty rare, but I
19 don't know. I see them walk down sometimes, like.

20 Q. Okay, so, and you may or may not -- are you CIC qualified?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. And are you OJTI qualified?

23 A. Yes.

24 MR. ALLISTON: Okay. I think that's all I have for now on
25 that.

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1 MR. BROWN: Okay, Ryan?

2 MR. HURLING: Jason stole all my questions, so --

3 MR. BROWN: No questions?

4 MR. HURLING: No. No, he hit a lot of the ones with the
5 engagement and supervisory level and so forth. So, I just wanted
6 say thank you. Thank you for being here. Thank you for what you
7 do. You are helping us make aviation safer and so forth. So,
8 your input has been extremely valuable today, and so thank you for
9 being here.

10 MR. TETTERTON: Thanks.

11 MR. BROWN: Okay, Kevin?

12 BY MR. COON:

13 Q. Going back, you said that you -- a buddy told you about the
14 job, and you just applied for it. Did you go to any of the, what
15 do they call them, CIT, to College Initiative Training or any of
16 those type of schools or --

17 A. No, I did not.

18 Q. So, you just --

19 A. CTI.

20 Q. You had the CTI. You just thought, oh, this is a cool job?

21 A. He went to school for it. And so --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Yeah. And he said, I think you guys can definitely do this,
24 and -- yeah.

25 Q. So, are you happy you did it? Is it a cool job?

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1 A. Yeah, I love my job.

2 Q. Very good. Okay, and then when John came in, you said, hey,
3 can you sit on my D-side? Did you -- just a lot going on. You
4 weren't ready to give him a briefing, or you were looking for him
5 to give you a break or --

6 A. Yeah, I try not to give up a sector that has really anything
7 abnormal going on. I like to just like, have it be nice and
8 clean. Really, nobody on deviations. Not super busy. So yeah, I
9 was like, can you just sit on my D-side?

10 Like I said, I had that aircraft that, excuse me, that I had
11 to, you know, reach out for a couple -- multiple times, to get
12 them on my frequency to send them and ship them and had some
13 deviations going on.

14 So, I was like, yeah, can you just sit here? I feel like I'm
15 getting a little busy. So, I didn't want to disengage by giving a
16 briefing. You know, I want to just keep working, right. You can
17 maybe get the picture from the D-side, keep going.

18 Q. Do you -- it was with the D-side and then another coming -- I
19 guess they call it twofer and they were -- John had been sitting
20 there a while so, when Kevin came, did you start the briefing over
21 again with Kevin or --

22 A. I don't -- I gave Kevin a briefing, but I didn't, like -- I
23 didn't have to start over or anything because Kevin came and he
24 got a briefing from me.

25 Q. Did Kevin listen for a while before he --

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1 A. I'm sure he previewed the position from behind me. Yeah.
2 But, like, I don't know, like, how long he was there or anything.

3 Q. And you said -- and I'm trying to -- you said, well, that
4 precipitation's real. Was that just, you were thinking of that
5 when they got 90-degree deviation? Or was that part of your
6 briefing, that, hey, this weather's real?

7 A. I don't think I actually said that. I mean, maybe I did, I
8 don't know. I don't remember what I said in the moment, but, just
9 the goals to draw emphasis to, like, this guy, like, turn 90
10 degrees, right?

11 Like he didn't -- he got close to it and then said, no, I'm
12 not going that way. Yeah, so it's not that it's not real or real
13 in some instances. It's just -- it -- that definitely affected
14 that plane, is what I think I was trying to convey.

15 Q. So, you got the forecast, and the forecast did develop, so
16 the forecast -- okay. Now you -- I know you -- you were -- did a
17 couple pilot reports. The supervisor actually recognized you for
18 that. Were you more concerned about the pilot report for the
19 precipitation or for the turbulence? Because I know there were
20 both things going on there.

21 MR. MYERS: You mean the icing or the turbulence. There --
22 it was an icing and a turbulence when we put in.

23 MR. COON: Yeah.

24 MR. TETTERTON: I think both very important. I don't know if
25 I was more concerned with one or the other. I started the icing

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1 one, and I was just waiting until that aircraft got out of the
2 icing. That's why I didn't finish it and I went over to the other
3 one and put the turbulence associated with the precipitation. I
4 don't think it was a lack of concern for either, just I was doing
5 both at the same time.

6 BY MR. COON:

7 Q. I know you were concerned with both because you entered it,
8 so I think that was great. Compliment you for doing that.

9 A. Thank you.

10 Q. Now, did -- Kevin took the position over. Did you sit and
11 listen to Kevin a little while before?

12 A. Yeah. Yeah, I sat right next to him, like on the D-side
13 there.

14 Q. Did you hear Kevin give any pilot reports or ask for any
15 pilot reports before you left?

16 A. Maybe. I'm not sure.

17 Q. You said that some of the supervisors do a good job
18 projecting when it's going to get busy and make the correct moves.
19 Do you know if your MAP numbers -- you have to -- do you have MAP
20 numbers just for the sheer numbers, or do you have MAP numbers
21 that are adjusted for weather and complexity?

22 A. They can be adjusted for weather and complexity, yes.

23 Q. Okay.

24 MR. COON: Thanks. That's all I have. That's it.

25 MR. BROWN: Karena?

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1 MS. MARINAS: Thank you. One second. So, first of all, you
2 know, I think it's great that you manage your sector, and really
3 think about that when you turn it over to the next controller.
4 I'm glad you shared that with us. And that helps me better
5 understand, you know, what was going on there and having the D-
6 side -- or having somebody sit in on the D-side.

7 I think that's a really great practice. So, I just want to
8 say that because I want to encourage you to continue to do that.

9 MR. TETTERTON: Thanks.

10 BY MS. MARINAS:

11 Q. Are you taking into account, when you're sitting there
12 working, the number of airplanes as your workload and complexity?
13 Or are there other things that are also playing into that when
14 you're sitting at a sector?

15 A. Am I -- like when I'm going to give it up? Is that what
16 you're saying?

17 Q. Just in general, just even if you're just working there, you
18 know, when you're starting to think -- like, are you ever thinking
19 ahead in terms of maybe you're going to need to ask for a D-side.
20 What does that generally look like for you?

21 A. Yeah. Yeah, of course you have volume. Volume is a big
22 deal. And, if I'm -- I enjoy working traffic, so, like, if I'm
23 going to a busy, I'm like, I'll skip brakes, but, yeah, I'll
24 totally ask for a D-Side if I see that it's going to get busy.
25 You know, not afraid.

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1 Q. Mm-hmm. But, so more like traffic volume is kind of a bigger
2 indicator for you on that?

3 A. As far as --

4 Q. Is that what you're saying?

5 A. As far as when I --

6 Q. Like you're busy --

7 A. -- ask for a D-side?

8 Q. -- and this is how you're going to be busy? Yeah.

9 A. Oh, volume and --

10 Q. And ask them for a D-side.

11 A. -- I mean, of course, deviations are high workload as well.
12 And bad rides, they increase your workload as well. And the
13 frequency congestion, it gets big there, so those are all
14 indicators of getting busy.

15 Q. So, during your position relief briefing, you mentioned that
16 there were reports of light to moderate turbulence. Was that --
17 do you recall that was kind of falling in line with the CWSU brief
18 and/or any weather sheet briefings that you had that day, you felt
19 like that was the forecast that you were expecting?

20 A. I don't recall what the -- like what the, the forecast was
21 that day. So, I don't know if it was abnormal or not.

22 Q. Okay. So, I saw in your facility SOP, that you guys have a
23 PIREP worksheet that you use as a memory aid, maybe. Does that
24 sound familiar to you?

25 A. I think -- yeah. I think you're referring to right up next

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1 to the VSCS we have a little sheet that we can mark. It's covered
2 by, like plexiglass, I guess you'd call it, that we can -- yeah,
3 we can mark it.

4 Q. How is that used? Or is it used generally?

5 A. We will -- some supervisors will occasional -- will like, you
6 know, mark what is forecast on that sheet. And then we can write
7 our reports to say -- I mean, we of course we can put it into
8 ERIDS, but we could also -- some people write down what -- you
9 know, significant weather phenomenon on it as well, like the
10 PIREPs that they've received. So, there's a little forecast
11 column and there's a PIREP column.

12 Q. Do you tend to use that?

13 A. I write -- yeah, I occasionally, I tend to write if it's --
14 like if it's moderate or if it's icing, what the good altitudes
15 are. That's what I write a lot of.

16 Q. Okay. Can you -- well, we talked a little bit about this,
17 actually.

18 MS. MARINAS: I think I'm good. Thank you.

19 MR. BROWN: You all set? Betty?

20 MS. KOSCHIG: I don't -- everybody's taken all my questions,
21 so just a few for follow up.

22 BY MS. KOSCHIG:

23 Q. Do you work overtime much?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. You -- how many hours a week or a month do you work?

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1 A. Not a lot lately, but, last year I worked a lot, like a week,
2 like 12, 12 to 14 hours a week, probably, last year.

3 Q. Oh, okay. Was that due to staffing or what -- like when do
4 you know what it's due to?

5 A. Yeah, a lot of it's due to staffing. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And I like to too, so.

8 Q. Oh, you like working overtime? Good. So, on the day that
9 you were working, was that your normal shift?

10 A. Yeah. Outside of the extra hour at the end. But --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- it was normal, yes.

13 Q. Okay. That was the credit, right?

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Okay. And let's see. So, you're not CIC. But what are you
16 qualified on in the area?

17 A. Certified in all the positions, of course, but -- well, not
18 CIC -- and then, in OJTI, on the job training instructor as well.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. If that's -- yeah, if that's what you're looking for.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. And you're OJTI, so how -- do you have any trainees right
24 now?

25 A. I'm not on any training teams, no.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. But I train occasionally.

3 Q. Oh, okay.

4 MS. KOSCHIG: All right. I don't have any more questions.

5 MR. HURLING: Michael, may I ask just one question to follow
6 up on Betty?

7 MR. BROWN: Yeah, Ryan, please.

8 MR. HURLING: Is that okay?

9 MR. BROWN: Yeah.

10 BY MR. HURLING:

11 Q. So, the time that Betty was talking about the overtime and
12 that you actually enjoy when it's available and so forth. So,
13 locally here, currently right now, what's the overtime? Like, Is
14 it daily that's usually available?

15 And my follow up to that is, do most people like the
16 voluntary overtime? Or is there any scenario where mandatory, you
17 know -- I guess my final question is mandatory overtime, how
18 prevalent is it? And is it daily usually, and from a staffing
19 position?

20 A. I can't speak for every, like schedule.

21 Q. Sure.

22 A. Some schedules get it more than others.

23 Q. Of course.

24 A. But --

25 Q. Yeah. I guess, how prevalent is it --

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1 A. -- when they --

2 Q. -- at the Center here?

3 A. The mandatory, this time of year, maybe not as much, but,
4 like closer to the summer, there's a lot of mandatory overtime.
5 Yeah. You know, like, prevalent enough --

6 Q. Sure.

7 A. -- for sure.

8 Q. When you say mandatory overtime, what's the maximum amount
9 that they can extend somebody for overtime? I mean, I guess if
10 there's a day off -- mandatory for a shift, but like, are we
11 talking extensions, like normally, your normal hours are what,
12 eight hours, right?

13 A Yeah.

14 Q. What's the max mandatory overtime for a controller?

15 A. The max is 10 -- 10 hours.

16 Q. Ten plus your shift? Or just 10 total?

17 A. Oh, two hours at the end.

18 Q. Two hours?

19 A. Or at the beginning, I guess. But 10 total for a shift. And
20 it's nine hours in between shifts that you need, minimum.

21 Q. Okay. And is mandatory overtime given out by seniority, I
22 would imagine -- junior, most junior or no?

23 A. It's based on the list. We have -- if you've worked overtime
24 or, like, your mandatory hours are compiled in a list, and whoever
25 gets asked or gets assigned it first is usually they have the

1 fewest mandatory hours.

2 Q. Okay.

3 MR. HURLING: Thank you very much.

4 BY MR. BROWN:

5 Q. And so why were you working credit?

6 A. Why was I?

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. I just didn't have anything to do after, so I stayed a little

9 later.

10 Q. So, you volunteered to stay on credit?

11 A. Mm-hmm.

12 Q. Because you said you liked OT. And I'm like --

13 A. It wasn't offered.

14 Q. -- hey, SUP, it's getting a little bit dicey. Okay.

15 MR. BROWN: Any follow ups?

16 MR. SUFFERN: I've got a couple.

17 MR. BROWN: Paul?

18 MR. SUFFERN: The weather guy always commenting.

19 MR. TETTERTON: It's all right.

20 BY MR. SUFFERN:

21 Q. Yeah. Have you ever requested, you know, since you've been

22 working here, have you ever requested direct CWSU support for any

23 kind of, you know, flight trouble, any kind of tactical help,

24 anything like that?

25 A. Maybe not when I was working. I do recall years ago that we

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1 had an aircraft that was in something. It was maybe icing or,
2 maybe VFR encountering clouds or something like that. So you did
3 see the weather unit did come down and, you know, tell us what the
4 forecast was, et cetera.

5 I think I was maybe, you know, I was maybe on the other side
6 of the room. I wasn't working the sector, but I recall it
7 happening once. Not when I was working though -- or not when I
8 was working that position.

9 Q. Okay. And so, you know that option is available to you if
10 and when a situation rises to that, that it's available to you?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Just two more. Last one's always the fun one. But
13 the one before that is, when you take over, say you were relieving
14 someone like you did on the day of the accident, how long do you
15 plug in and monitor before you expect, like a relief briefing and
16 then to take over that position? Do you take a minute, two
17 minutes, five minutes?

18 A. A minute or two. Yeah, I like to know what I'm sitting down
19 to, you know?

20 Q. And so, would -- your expectation would be for someone
21 relieving you, for them to also do something similar, to plug in
22 for a minute or two or is it just going to vary on the individual?

23 A. Yeah, like I -- yeah, I would expect them to preview the
24 position. Yeah.

25 Q. Last one -- I said it would be a fun question -- if I put you

1 in charge and you had lots of money and you're in charge and you
2 had any weather tool that you could think of to help you do your
3 job better, what would that look like, to help you?

4 A. Oh, Goodness. I don't know. It's pretty broad. I'm not
5 overly familiar with all the tools you guys have at your disposal,
6 but I guess just -- is this -- you have to -- it has to be a real
7 thing? Could it be something made up?

8 Q. I can be something made up, absolutely. What, as a
9 controller --

10 A. Shoot. Something to just --

11 Q. -- you know, something that --

12 A. -- makes the skies smooth and smooth all the time. That
13 would be great.

14 MR. MYERS: It's a button you push, you know, from that --

15 MR. HURLING: Right.

16 MR. TETTERTON: Yeah, the easy button. Yeah. No, I mean, I
17 appreciate what you guys -- what you weather guys do for us, of
18 course. And I don't know if that answers the question. Maybe
19 just --

20 MR. SUFFERN: If you don't know something or can't think of
21 anything right now, because this is the coolest question you've
22 ever been asked and you don't know how to answer it, then that's
23 fine.

24 MR. MYERS: Everybody remembers it the next day. They come
25 up with a great thing.

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1 MR. SUFFERN: Well, that's fine.

2 MR. MYERS: We should come back to you, right.

3 MS. KOSCHIG: Yeah.

4 MR. SUFFERN: So, but --

5 MR. MYERS: I'm going to email you a bunch.

6 MR. TETTERTON: No, I don't know if I can think of anything
7 specific like that. Sorry.

8 MR. SUFFERN: No, that's totally fine.

9 MR. BROWN: All good.

10 MR. HURLING: Thank you, Andre.

11 MR. BROWN: Anyone else?

12 MR. ALLISTON: I've got a couple.

13 MR. BROWN: You've got a couple?

14 MR. ALLISTON: Yeah.

15 MR. BROWN: Jason?

16 BY MR. ALLISTON:

17 Q. So, in the position relief briefing, when you were briefing
18 Kevin and he was taking over the position, you specified that, you
19 know, this weather's there's real, there's deviations here, et
20 cetera.

21 Are you ever in the habit of specifying that, you know, the
22 depicted weather's been issued to this aircraft or this aircraft
23 or that PIREP's been disseminated to that specific aircraft?

24 A. Well, clearly it doesn't happen every time. But, I don't
25 know. Yeah, I guess not -- or not always, you know,

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1 unfortunately.

2 Q. Okay. And then after you got Kevin out, you specified that
3 you stuck around for a little bit to make sure everything was
4 cleaned up, handling the ERIDS and all that. Did you actually
5 plug in on the D-side so that you were listening? Or were you
6 just kind of sitting there and handling the computers?

7 A. I don't recall if I was plugged in or not. monitoring, but,
8 yeah, I'm not sure if I plugged in or not.

9 Q. Okay. And because of that, you may or may not recall this
10 piece too, but did you hear when Kevin said that he was too busy
11 to take a PIREP?

12 A. I think I heard him say that as I was like -- yeah, as I was
13 walking away.

14 Q. Okay. So like, as you were already kind of leaving the
15 position? All right, and as far as just -- and this is probably
16 more specific to your area in general, but do you feel like you
17 guys have a culture of providing help to each other when
18 necessary, whether --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- there's supervisor intervention or not?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. I believe I've got one more. So again, you did a fantastic
23 job of calling the weather. You were getting PIREPs sent. So, I
24 mean, you were really doing all of those required duties very
25 well. But specifically, when you're having to input multiple

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1 PIREPs at a time, you know, is -- when you have to physically
2 remove yourself from the scope to put in PIREPs, you know, does
3 that increase your mental load? Is that a cueing item that you
4 would need a D-side?

5 A. Yeah. If -- yeah, if I was -- if I felt very busy, then
6 absolutely, I'm going to ask somebody else to put that in for me.
7 It does take my eyes off the scope for a few seconds. So, yeah,
8 it would be a cue to me getting busier.

9 Q. Okay. And when you're thinking about mental load and being
10 busy, do you frame it in terms of providing all of the specific
11 services? Or as far as, more from a volume perspective, of I can
12 handle it?

13 A. Well, yeah, of course. My busyness is determined by the duty
14 priorities and stuff, so. The former, the first. The first
15 option.

16 MR. ALLISTON: All right. All I got, Mike.

17 MR. BROWN: Anyone else?

18 BY MS. MARINAS:

19 Q. Just kind of going off of that. So, do you ever have
20 occasion where you have asked, or do you feel like you can ask the
21 supervisor to enter in PIREPs for you --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- you just like, just need to get a couple in because it's
24 not -- you don't feel like maybe you need a whole -- a D-side
25 there, or you don't have a D-side, but like, can you just give the

1 supervisor a couple?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And do you do that?

4 A. Yeah, I've probably done it before. I can't think of
5 anything specific, but I can think of multiple times where a
6 supervisor has come into the isle and to put in PIREPs for me.
7 And usually, a lot of times after they ask for a dissemination,
8 right, then they're going to go say, this is forecast, make sure
9 we get these, they'll put it in for us.

10 MS. MARINAS: Okay, that's it.

11 MR. ALLISTON: Now I have one more.

12 MR. BROWN: Jason?

13 BY MR. ALLISTON:

14 Q. Do you guys staff A-sides on the floor at all?

15 A. Not generally, no. Sometimes there are partially certified
16 controllers in there that will be on the A-side, but we generally
17 don't go out of our way to staff it.

18 Q. Okay. And if you have one available, right, waiting on a
19 class or what have you, do you use those folks to put in PIREPs
20 for you?

21 A. Yeah.

22 MR. ALLISTON: Okay. Now I'm really done.

23 MR. BROWN: Famous last words, Jason. Anyone else? So, I
24 just got one. It's kind of broad. It's kind of a two-parter.

25 BY MR. BROWN:

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1 Q. I want to know if you learned anything from the event and if
2 you would have done anything different, looking back now, because
3 hindsight is always 2020, right? So, did you learn anything?
4 Would you have done anything different?

5 A. Yeah. I mean, of course, you know, I -- at my briefings now,
6 I always ensure I say, like, this person has the precipitation
7 calls or there's no precipitation depicted. Don't worry about it.
8 No deviations. And, yeah, I just try to -- I just try to always
9 be, like, even more thorough now, right, like --

10 Q. When you say more thorough, do you mean on your relief
11 briefings?

12 A. Yeah. And, I mean, just more meticulous in everything. It's
13 not that I wasn't before, but just try to just -- yeah.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Just try to get better every day.

16 Q. And then would you have done anything different if we could
17 rewind the clock?

18 A. Yeah, I would have ensured a double-check, called -- make
19 sure I called precipitation to everybody and make sure I -- maybe
20 a few broad transmissions on, in the sector, like to monitor
21 turbulence Hancock area.

22 MR. BROWN: Okay. That's all I have, sir. Anyone else?
23 Okay, I'm going to stop the recording. The time is 9:32.

24 (Whereupon, at 9:32 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:

UAL1890 TURBULENCE ACCIDENT
ON FEBRUARY 10, 2024
Interview of Andre Tetterton

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24LA097

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: March 6, 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.



Kimberlee S. Kondrat
Transcriber

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