

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
Investigative Hearing

Alaska Airlines Flight 1282

Boeing 737-9, N704AL

Left Mid Exit Door Plug Separation in Portland, OR

January 5, 2024

Docket No.	SA-543
EXHIBIT	
2B	

**Operational Factors Group
Chairman's Factual Report -
Attachment 1- Crew Interviews and
Statement**
(83 Pages)

DCA24MA063

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

Attachment 1

Crew Interview Transcripts and Statement

February 27, 2024

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:

ALASKA AIRLINES BOEING 737-9
MAX IN-FLIGHT STRUCTURE
FAILURE NEAR PORTLAND, OREGON
ON JANUARY 5, 2024

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Accident No.: DCA24MA063

Interview of: [REDACTED] Captain
Alaska Airlines

Portland, Oregon

Sunday,
January 7, 2024

APPEARANCES:

STARR BLUM, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MARVIN FRANTZ, Senior Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

GARY PITCHFORD, Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

MARK DIAZ, Safety Pilot
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DENNIS VORPAHL
Air Line Pilots Association

JP WILSON, Chief Pilot
Alaska Airlines

BRETT ECKELBERG, Senior Labor Relations Counsel
Air Line Pilots Association
(On behalf of [REDACTED])

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INTERVIEW

(12:33 p.m.)

MS. BLUM: Okay. It's January 7th, 2024; 12:33 in Portland, Oregon. So good afternoon. Thank you for being here with us.

My name is Starr Blum. I'm an investigator with the NTSB. I'm the chairman of the operational factors group. Our job is to look at everything forward of the cockpit door essentially, especially relating to the pilot. I really appreciate you being here after the ordeal you just went through. I flew for Horizon for many years so I'm familiar with the air group and I just -- I really appreciate that you're here.

As part of our process we invite party members, and they're here to provide technical expertise for us and for the 737, for instance. And so in this group we have ALPA, we've got Alaska, the FAA, who's always a party to our investigations, and also Boeing.

██████████ Hello.

MS. BLUM: And I'll have them introduce themselves here in a moment.

This is -- we like to think of this as an education to get to know what your perspective was, and a conversation about, you know, what went well, if there's things that you could change what would that be, and just really fully understand what you went through. The purpose of this is for safety only. There is no -- we have no enforcement, no blame, no liability, and we're an independent agency. We are completely separate from DOT, completely separate from the FAA. Our -- what we're charged with in Congress is to find the probable cause of accidents.

We will be recording this interview for transcription purposes. Are you okay with that?

██████████ I agree. Yeah.

1 MS. BLUM: Okay. And also, you can have one representative with you,
2 and it looks like you have one.

3 Can you please state your name?

4 MR. ECKELBERG: Yes. My name is Brett Eckelberg. I'm a senior labor
5 relations counsel for the Air Line Pilots Association, and my name is spelled B-r-e-t-t;
6 last name

7 E-c-k-e-l-b-e-r-g.

8 MS. BLUM: Thank you. So, [REDACTED], if you guys need to consult or take a
9 moment to confer alone, you're welcome to at any time. The only thing that we ask is
10 he can't answer questions for you.

11 [REDACTED] Okay.

12 MS. BLUM: The way our interviews work is each of us will have -- there's
13 two rounds of questions. We'll go one at a time. Usually round two is pretty short. It's
14 just maybe one or two question follow-ups. And if you need a break at any time,
15 please just let us know. We ask that you just answer to the best of you recollection and
16 if you don't know the answer, I don't know is a perfectly fine answer.

17 [REDACTED] Okay.

18 MS. BLUM: So with that, let's get started with the introductions. Marvin.

19 MR. FRANTZ: Hi, I'm Marvin Frantz. I'm NTSB, operational factors, same
20 office as Starr. We hired Starr, got very lucky to hire her into our office from the
21 regional NTSB office a little while ago, so this is her first -- she's been on other launches
22 before. This is her first launch as a group chairman of an ops group, so our policy and
23 procedure requires that a senior investigator accompany her or sit with her in
24 interviews and things like that. So that's the primary reason I'm here.

25 I said at the last interview I didn't think I'd have any questions because I'm

1 informally not -- formally not part of the process, but I did have a couple questions last
2 time, so I won't tell you that I won't, but they'll be probably limited. I think everybody
3 else will do a pretty a good job covering all the information.

4 But anyway, I've been with the NTSB for 8 years. I have a history before
5 that of a regional airline training department, flight standards, and then I have 135 and
6 flight instructing and corporate experience before that, but no 737, no big Boeing time
7 at all on my card. But luckily, that's why we have all these guys with us. Okay. Thanks.

8 MR. VORPAHL: Hi. I'm Dennis Vorpahl. I'm an ALPA rep. I'm ALPA
9 safety. I was the ASAP rep for 12 years; I just stepped down a little bit earlier this year.
10 I was a line -- I've been a line check airman for the last 3 years. I got hired at Alaska
11 Airlines in '99. I flew the 200 in Anchorage for 3 years, just -- I lived up there and I also -
12 - here at the time. But been on the NG and the MAX now, I guess, since 2003. Yeah.

13 MR. DIAZ: Hi. Good afternoon. Mark Diaz, safety pilot with Flight
14 Technical & Safety at Boeing Company. My background's all civilian, Embry-Riddle,
15 flew regionals out of Memphis, Tennessee, which were turboprops. I upgraded, career
16 upgrade to United Airlines, flew 121 with them out on the West Coast. And then 15
17 years -- after September 11th, furloughed for 15 years with the manufacturer in France
18 supporting safety and training centralization for the Americas. And started with Boeing
19 in 2019 and I've been with the safety pilot group the whole time. Thank you.

20 MR. PITCHFORD: Hey, Gary Pitchford, [REDACTED] I'm with the FAA, and
21 we are here to support the NTSB in anything they need. As you know, you filed an
22 ASAP report. There's no -- this is not about enforcement. This is about getting the
23 facts, finding out what happened so we can better, make things a little bit better. So
24 appreciate you being here.

25 I was formerly Alaska pilot and went to work for the FAA in '20, and now

1 the aircrew program manager on the 737, so -- and probably be seeing you in the
2 simulator one of these days.

3 MR. WILSON: [REDACTED] JP Wilson. It's good to see you. Thanks for
4 coming out. I appreciate that. You know a lot of us. I'll just say that I've been in
5 aircrew 20 years now, 16 in Alaska for Horizon, in a B200, the baby Dash. And during
6 my time I've done a lot of recruitment, base chief here now for 6 years. I also run our
7 fatigue program as well and do a lot of hiring. That's kind of our main duty. I've been a
8 captain on a 73 since 2007.

9 **INTERVIEW OF [REDACTED]**

10 BY MS. BLUM:

11 Q. Okay. So I'll start out with some of the easy stuff. Could you state your
12 name and spell it, please?

13 A. [REDACTED] That's [REDACTED]

14 Q. How old are you, [REDACTED]

15 A. I'm 48.

16 Q. And what is your job title?

17 A. I'm a captain with Alaska Airlines.

18 Q. How long have you been with Alaska?

19 A. Since August of 2007.

20 Q. And don't mind me typing throughout, just taking notes. What is --
21 approximately what's your total flight time?

22 A. 12,700 hours.

23 Q. In type?

24 A. 6500 hours.

25 Q. And if you could just give me a Cliff Notes of your career history?

1 A. I instructed for Embry-Riddle Daytona Beach for about 8 months. After
2 that, I instructed for All Nippon Airways, International Flight Training Academy down in
3 Bakersfield, California for a year. Got hired on by SkyWest in 2000. I was there for 7
4 years, and then got hired on with Alaska. And prior to that, I got my associate's in
5 aviation at a small college in Kansas and my 4-year degree in a college in Oregon.

6 Q. Okay. On your medical, do you have any limitations?

7 A. No.

8 Q. I'd like to get an idea of your 72 hours prior to the incident. Can you walk
9 us through?

10 A. So 2 days prior would be -- I had a good night's sleep, I guess, going into
11 the 2 days prior and then I went for a long
12 3-hour bike ride. I do a lot of biking. Messed around with the kids, took the kids
13 to school, brought them back -- I brought my one son to school and back. The day
14 prior -- or the day of, I should say, I went for an hour bike ride and took my son to
15 school. I slept well both nights. And that was about -- I did one errand. A couple
16 hours before the flight I went and picked up my uniform pants at the dry cleaners. That
17 was pretty much about it.

18 Q. Were you -- so you had the 3 days off before this trip?

19 A. Yes. Yes.

20 Q. And in the incident flight, were you the pilot flying or the pilot
21 monitoring?

22 A. I was the pilot flying.

23 Q. So what we'd really like to do is -- just pick up wherever you recollect,
24 whether it's when you got to the aircraft, and just walk us through to the best of you
25 recollection, you know, through the whole process from, you know, the preflight, the

1 taxi, up to the event, and then to landing.

2 Q. Okay. Of course. I arrived at the aircraft. [REDACTED] greeted me. He's the "A"
3 flight attendant. We did a brief at that time. I talked about the time enroute, you know,
4 the ride quality. It's an early set airport, we talked about that. There was one MEL for a
5 latch in the forward galley; we discussed that. I think that was about it.

6 I went and did my preflight then. The only thing I noted during that was
7 that the logbook, there was a couple write-ups for an auto fail light, at least two, there
8 might've three, but I can verify there was at least two.

9 And then, I had flown with [REDACTED] before and so she just finished her
10 walkaround and came in and introduced herself. And she did her preflight, and then
11 we just talked about the threats in the briefing then and we talked about the auto fail
12 light. We also had an inop boost pump we talked about. We were carrying some extra
13 fuel for that, we discussed.

14 She had mentioned there was some ice on the wing so we asked for an
15 ice check and we did indeed need to get two deiced, so we discussed that. I discussed
16 that with the flight attendants, made a PA about that and the trip to Ontario. And then
17 we pushed -- everything after that was uneventful; the pushback, takeoff, our
18 departure was all uneventful.

19 Climbed to roughly 16,000 feet. Loud bang, ears popping, my head got
20 pushed up into the HUD and my headset got pushed, not off my head, but up almost
21 off my head. And I immediately went for my oxygen mask, as did [REDACTED] And I said that
22 the flight deck door slammed open, and I didn't know at that time, but one of our flight
23 attendants, the "C" flight attendant, was up and she got thrown to the floor. She closed
24 the flight deck door.

25 I asked [REDACTED] to get lower and [REDACTED] declared emergency and got us

1 lower. I disconnected the autopilot/autothrottles, started leveling us off and going
2 down to the altitude that ATC gave us, which was 10,000 feet. They also somewhere in
3 there gave us just to maintain the current heading that we were on. Asked [REDACTED] for the
4 rapid depressurization QRC. During this time with the oxygen masks and it just
5 seemed to be noisy, communications were rough. They weren't very clear between
6 [REDACTED] and I and just hearing ATC. When I asked for the QRC for the rapid
7 depressurization, [REDACTED] indicated that it wasn't there and it wasn't. I handed her the
8 QRH and she began to go off the emergency pages for the QRC of the QRH.

9 Somewhere in that time period, this time period, I'm hearing over the
10 cabin air phone that the flight attendants are talking about a hole and it was either right
11 then, maybe a little bit later on as the flight progressed, but it was somewhere in here I
12 hear this. I tried to communicate with them but they didn't respond. I don't know if
13 they didn't hear me or what. I tried a couple times.

14 Shortly thereafter -- we're still not down to,(indiscernible) at 10,000 feet, I
15 engaged autopilot, autothrottles, reengaged them. We were given a turn to heading
16 of 3-4-0. [REDACTED] lets ATC know probably going to be about 10 minutes or so with
17 checklists. And make the turn. She's pretty much done with the checklist or almost
18 done, and as we roll out -- shortly after we roll out, I can see the airport. It's visual
19 between us and the airport. She's finished up on the checklist and I'm still hearing the
20 flight attendants talking about the hole in the cabin and I pretty much -- I decided I
21 want to get the plane on the ground now.

22 She's finished up with the rapid depressurization checklist and we had the
23 -- she got the emergency set. We were either at 10,000 or very close to 10,000, and I
24 told her to hold off and let's just prepare for the approach.

25 We both have flown into Portland hundreds and hundreds of times. We

1 had the localizer already set up. We had the frequencies already in there. We had
2 actually briefed it before we took off, if we had a problem we'd come back to 2-8-Left.
3 So we were pretty primed for it. I didn't see it being risky that we were getting set up
4 so -- fairly so close to the airport.

5 So she requested approach and got the box, the FMC set up for the
6 approach and got us lower. And in -- somewhere in this time, just before this -- like I
7 said, communications weren't the greatest and so we went back to our headsets, which
8 wasn't any better. It was a squeal coming from the oxygen mike, which we hadn't
9 closed the doors to the oxygen masks and so that was producing a squeal. That didn't
10 cross my mind at the time. So we went back to the oxygen masks.

11 Continued in, and like I said, we got cleared to 6- or 7,000 feet.
12 Somewhere in there she had called ops and got us a gate. And then I hadn't heard -- I
13 missed it, but I hadn't heard the clearance, that we got cleared for the approach and
14 we're still at 6- or 7,000 feet. We're starting to get a little high and I asked for lower,
15 and I think I might've asked -- I don't know for sure if I asked had we gotten cleared for
16 the approach, but we were getting high and so under my emergency authority I
17 disengaged the autopilot. So I was going to start down to get back on path.

18 Went -- we already had flaps. Went at that time, went flaps 5, gear down.
19 I used the speed brake briefly and we got back down on the path pretty quick. Around
20 2- to 3,000 feet we continued to configure for the landing. And then, a little gusty
21 winds out of the south and we ended up adding some to the bug speed, we added
22 some extra speed on the approach speed.

23 The landing rollout was uneventful. Taxiing was uneventful. Parked, shut
24 down, and we saw that the airport firefighter crash rescue was there, but I didn't see
25 them in the jetway. So I called ops just to make sure that there was medics ready to

1 board in the jetway, and they said there was. Opened the door. We talked to the flight
2 attendants briefly, if there was any injuries. I think four injuries at the time. I made a PA
3 to have the passengers stay seated while the medics treated the passengers, and then
4 once they -- and then I appointed one of the flight attendants to do a passenger count.
5 I'm hearing now -- we heard a hole, but now I'm hearing, you know, row 26 and it's
6 basically a door -- it's a door, and we're getting a better picture about what it actually
7 was from what we had in flight.

8 And then the passengers have been treated, the injured ones, and so I
9 made one more PA that the passengers could deplane and if they had any questions
10 talk to customer service. And that was pretty much it. We debriefed the crew and that
11 was it.

12 Q. Okay. Thank you for recounting that. So I'm going to step back. Talking
13 about the MEL, you talked about the auto fail when you were briefing, the threats.
14 What was going on in your mind with those write-ups with the pressurization system?

15 A. To me it's not a big deal because it's just one control. We've got another
16 one that's just going to pick it up if it falls off, and then we've got manual if we have to,
17 to the QRH item. So just taking awareness of it. And then it happened, like I said, two -
18 - you guys probably know -- it might have been three times that I saw it written up. So it
19 had been happening quite a bit, so it was something I mentioned.

20 Q. So about 16,000 feet when it happened. Did you have any idea that it was
21 such an extensive hole? What was --

22 A. No.

23 Q. -- going through your mind?

24 A. It was just an explosive experience. Really the only thing that was going
25 through my mind was to get my oxygen mask on. That was it. After I did that, try and

1 establish communications with [REDACTED] and get lower. I mean, that was really it. You
2 know, when it happened, I had no idea that it was going to be -- I had no idea.

3 Q. Yeah. So were you able to establish communications with the flight
4 attendants? Were you able to speak to them?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. Did you make a PA?

7 A. So, no, and that's one of things I'd do differently. I wasn't able to, and
8 there was definitely time in there where I could have made a PA. I would definitely do
9 it, I would definitely make a PA. Having said that, the PA system isn't the greatest and
10 even in the quietest conditions you're lucky to hear half of what they say, and so I don't
11 know if it made a difference, but I would definitely, would do it differently. I would
12 definitely make a PA if I did it again, so --

13 Q. Yeah. Got -- Monday night quarterbacking you were (indiscernible)
14 sounds like absolutely chaos. I asked [REDACTED] the same question. She said that, you
15 know, based -- you could hear better with the oxygen masks on. Do you think in the
16 checklist if it had been on that card to close the door that would be helpful in that
17 situation at that time?

18 A. Yeah. Yeah -- I mean, definitely if we would've closed the door, we
19 wouldn't have that squeal in our mikes there, so yeah.

20 Q. So you said you ran checklists. What was the first checklist you ran?

21 A. It was the rapid depressurization checklist.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. QRC.

24 Q. And then after that?

25 A. It leads you into the emergency descent, but we were already either at

1 10,000 or very close to it. I didn't think it was necessary.

2 MS. BLUM: I think that is going to be my questions for the first round.

3 Marvin, do you have any?

4 MR. FRANTZ: Let me go last.

5 MS. BLUM: Okay.

6 Mark?

7 MR. DIAZ: Give me just a second. I was typing away.

8 BY MR. DIAZ:

9 Q. So auto flight was disconnected for the maneuver?

10 A. It was, yes. Yes, and then we started descent. And then when we were
11 stabilized, maybe 15, 20, 30 seconds later, maybe 40 seconds later, I reengaged the
12 autopilot --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- and autothrust.

15 MR. DIAZ: Okay. I've got a thorough picture. Thank you. Thank you very
16 much.

17 BY MR. PITCHFORD:

18 Q. [REDACTED] I was trying to picture. You said you got thrown forward?

19 A. Yeah. I don't know if it was my reaction to the -- I think the loud bang --
20 I'm speculating, but I think the loud bang was the door hitting the lav door. It's like that
21 noise possibly I jerked forward or I was thrown forward. I don't know what -- I don't
22 know which. But my headset was definitely not on my ears. It was like up here just
23 about ready to fall off, and that wasn't from me moving forward, I don't think.

24 Q. Okay. Thank you. There's definitely, there's a problem with
25 communication. So did you just go back to your training, immediately get the airplane

1 down since you are the pilot flying, and you let [REDACTED] go ahead and do the checklist?

2 A. Well, and generally -- I don't want to speak for Alaska Airlines' training,
3 but it seems like the QRC is the pilot not flying is going to be the QRC. And then when
4 we get to the QRH, then that's the -- the captain's going to take over and do the QRH
5 stuff. I don't know, that's the way, how I do it. And so, yeah.

6 Q. But she did the whole QRH and --

7 A. No, but -- well, she was really doing the QRC because she -- she had the
8 QRH, but we didn't have the QRH [sic] card.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. She was doing the QRC portion off the QRH. So yeah.

11 Q. Thanks. Okay. Cool. Thanks.

12 BY MR. WILSON:

13 Q. I just have just a few. So departure, [REDACTED] I mean, you went through
14 10, just the normal checks, right?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You know, the ding and check -- that all was good, right?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And then, say, about 16.5, that's when the event happened. And I think
19 you -- did you turn off the autopilot or did you keep the autopilot on?

20 A. No, I disconnected it.

21 Q. Okay. Okay. And then kind of assessed from there?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay. The -- your headset -- this is kind of an odd question, but is it one
24 that is --

25 A. It's a Telex 850. So it's ones that just go not around your ears but over

1 your ears with the cord --

2 Q. Okay. One that's got (indiscernible) -- okay.

3 A. It didn't come all the way off, but it was like just barely on.

4 Q. Okay. Okay. Cool. Kind of fast forward to when you got to the gate and
5 stopped the airplane, did the parking brake. When you open the flight deck door,
6 what was the situation in the cabin? What did it initially look like?

7 A. They're calm. Everyone was pretty calm. The flight -- I mean, the
8 passengers, they seemed calm. The flight attendants -- I guess I can't describe. The
9 flight attendants I wouldn't say were calm, but I wouldn't say they were excitable or
10 anything like that, but -- I don't know how to describe the flight attendants.

11 Q. It wasn't like chaotic or anything?

12 A. No, no. No, I didn't think it was chaotic, no.

13 Q. Okay. Good.

14 A. Other than the rubber jungle with all the masks down. But the passengers
15 were calm.

16 Q. Was -- also when you're coming back to Portland, do you feel that ATC --
17 communication was tough, right, between you and [REDACTED] and ATC. Was air traffic
18 control helpful? When you guys are coming back to Portland --

19 A. I think so. I mean, I mean, I think -- I absolutely -- I mean, it was -- when
20 they gave us 340, we were just right on a base leg and, I mean, the airport wasn't that
21 far away. I thought it was great heading. I think I was down to like 6- or 7,000 feet.
22 Yeah, I think that they did a good -- it seemed like they asked -- so [REDACTED] declared the --
23 and I haven't gone over and listened to any ATC tapes, but it seemed like they asked --
24 we declared emergency, but then it seemed like [REDACTED] had to declare that or was
25 questioned about that later on, too. And so I don't know why that was, but I think they

1 were very helpful.

2 Q. Excellent. Okay. That's all I have for right now.

3 MS. BLUM: Okay.

4 BY MR. VORPAHL:

5 Q. I asked [REDACTED] just -- you know, I tried -- they should tell the story. And as
6 [REDACTED] told the story and, you know, me being a pilot, I'm putting myself in your seat
7 flying the airplane like you describe it. And my curiosity, part of it is like how loud was
8 the noise on the flight deck and did you notice any noise difference with the door
9 open/door closed or --

10 A. Boy, it happened so fast with the door open/door closed. It seemed loud
11 to me, but I don't know what the difference was when they closed it because it just
12 happened so fast.

13 Q. But it was pretty loud?

14 A. But it seemed loud. It did, yeah.

15 Q. Yeah, because I was just, I was just thinking the hole's way back there.
16 You've gotten depressurized, the door closed, but it's still loud in the airplane. I'm just
17 trying to, you know, what am I -- if I have to go through this, what am I going to
18 experience, is kind of what I'm -- the angle I'm --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- kind of that story. So it was pretty loud and hard to communicate with
21 all the noise, and the mask has a different microphone than what the NG does, you
22 have to flip the switch.

23 A. I know. Well, and I was questioning myself a couple times. I'm like, is this
24 not set up right and I might -- yeah, I'm very familiar with -- I've maybe 100, 150 hours
25 in the MAX and I was wondering if I didn't have something set right a couple different

1 times.

2 Q. Yeah, and there was probable with the squealing. Have you looked at
3 your headset? Does it look, appear to be in good shape or --

4 A. It does. I haven't used it. I haven't flown since then, so --

5 Q. Right. Of course. (Laughter) Yeah, please take all the time you need. I
6 told [REDACTED] May -- JP set [REDACTED] up for May, being (indiscernible), right? You know --
7 (Crosstalk)

8 Q. Right. Yeah, I was just kind of curious because, you know, [REDACTED] said her
9 headset was not on her head, didn't know how it got off, and I was thinking maybe the
10 cables got torn or frayed or something as it got tossed around the flight deck banging
11 off of, you know, stuff, that maybe it was damaged and contributed to the squeal that
12 you heard on the -- but your headset is in good shape and -- it appears visually to be in
13 good shape?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Yeah. Okay. I think that's -- and you talked at 10,000 all the indications
16 looked normal?

17 A. They did, yeah. Yeah.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. And I'm pretty sure I made the, made depressurization call, although you
20 guys probably know that if you've listened to -- I think I did. So yeah.

21 Q. Yeah. Yeah. Nothing unusual that you --

22 A. No.

23 Q. No. All right. That's all I got.

24 MS. BLUM: Okay. Marvin?

25 BY MR. FRANTZ:

1 Q. Cabin altitude warning came on coincident with the loud noise and the
2 door flying open, and any other -- do you recall for the rest of the flight any other
3 cautions or warnings come on for the airplane?

4 A. No. There was a master caution related to that, but other than that no.

5 Q. What was the master caution?

6 A. I don't remember. I remember seeing a master caution and -- I don't
7 remember.

8 Q. Okay.

9 MR. VORPAHL: Cabin altitude warning, isn't that a red --

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's red, but --

11 MR. VORPAHL: -- but it's in the field of view -- it should be in the field of
12 view when the cabin --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. WILSON: It would like be from a --

14 MR. VORPAHL: It should come on at 10.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. WILSON: -- probably had come from an off-
16 scheduled descent at some point. You know, because they never made it
17 (indiscernible).

18 MR. VORPAHL: Oh, yeah, the master caution when an off-scheduled
19 descent, yeah.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR> WILSON: So at some point that would
21 come on.

22 MR. VORPAHL: Yeah.

23 BY MR. FRANTZ:

24 Q. Any -- so you don't recall if there were any pressurization caution, system
25 cautions or -- that came up?

1 A. No.

2 Q. So they may have, you just have no recollection?

3 A. I don't have a recollection.

4 Q. The autopilot, you put -- did you turn that off and the autothrottles within
5 what kind timeframe of the event and your decision to, well, we got to descend?

6 A. I don't know, 3, 4, 5, 6 seconds, 7. I mean, it take a while to get the
7 oxygen mask on, and then after that I -- I don't know.

8 Q. That's fine. And then you put it back on when you leveled at 10?

9 A. No. No. I -- when we got stabilized in descent, then I put it back on and
10 just used auto change. And when we're at heading -- roughly around that time they
11 gave us our current heading, so I went to headings (indiscernible).

12 Q. And then when did the autopilot come off again?

13 A. When we were getting high and I -- we descended in to 6- or 7,000 feet.

14 Q. And then did you leave it off for the remainder of the approach--

15 A. Yeah.

16 (Crosstalk)

17 Q. -- at that time?

18 A. Yeah. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. To the best of your recollection was the door closed and secured
20 properly before takeoff?

21 A. Yes. Yes.

22 Q. And do you recollect the door being re-closed after it blew open?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. By -- was a flight attendant?

25 A. Yeah, I talked to her afterwards. I didn't see her do it. It got closed, and

1 then afterwards, it was the "C" flight attendant, [REDACTED], who had fallen, and she was
2 the one who closed it.

3 Q. Did she close it just by pushing it closed and it latched and did you or the
4 FO, to your recollection, do anything upfront to secure the door or lock it again once it
5 -- it stayed closed --

6 A. It stayed closed.

7 Q. -- at that point?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay. The auto fail write-ups, part of your review of the logbook was you
10 noticed these write-ups from previous flights. Do you recall what, if any, maintenance
11 action had cleared the write-ups?

12 A. I don't. I remember one was on the ground and one was at flight level 3-
13 3-0. And I don't remember what the maintenance actions were that cleared those two
14 write-ups.

15 Q. Okay. No MELs related to pressurization system at all when you took the
16 airplane were in effect?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay. Rapid de-pressure, what are the memory items for that?

19 A. Just oxygen mask on and communication established.

20 Q. Okay. And then roughly how long did it take [REDACTED] to run down rapid
21 decompression and get to emergency descent?

22 A. Well, we were -- I don't know timewise. We had turned -- we were still --
23 we completed our turn to 3-4-0 and it was somewhere in there that I now decided I'm
24 doing the approach and she's pretty much done. I could see she just finished up and
25 done. And that, I'm sorry, I don't know timewise.

1 Q. That's fine. Okay. Does emergency descent have any memory items
2 once you decide -- once you reach that point are there --

3 A. No.

4 Q. There's no memory items for that, it's all on the checklist --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. -- or the QRH, QRC? Okay.

7 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Thanks. That's all I have right now.

8 MS. BLUM: Okay --

9 MR. DIAZ: Starr, I don't know if it's appropriate, but just the HUD
10 utilization, I just got a question there, if I could just bring it back up?

11 MS. BLUM: Sure.

12 MR. DIAZ: When did you start using HUD guidance in the -- through the
13 period that (indiscernible).

14 [REDACTED] So when my -- typically with the HUD, when I engage the
15 autopilot, my shoulder harnesses come off and the HUD goes up. So I flew up to about
16 12- to 13,000 feet and that's when I engaged the autopilot, and so -- but my shoulder
17 harness came off, but I didn't put the HUD up, and I don't know why I didn't do that.
18 Typically, 99 percent of the same time I do that. And so it was down. But then after
19 that, I put it up and then I forgot until about maybe 2,000 feet or so on final, it was still
20 up and I just left it up. I wasn't going to put it back down because it was little gusty and
21 messing around with -- take my hands off the controls to do that, so --

22 MR. VORPAHL: And just follow-up questions, I guess?

23 MS. BLUM: Well, we'll start round two, I think. Is that okay?

24 MR. VORPAHL: I'm sorry?

25 MS. BLUM: We'll start round two.

1 MR. VORPAHL: Oh, okay.

2 MS. BLUM: I -- we always offer a break between --

3 [REDACTED] I'm okay.

4 MS. BLUM: Okay.

5 BY MS. BLUM:

6 Q. I'm really curious about the blow-out panel in the door. Did you happen
7 to get a look at that when you were --

8 A. It was still intact. Both -- I mean, I think there's two, yeah, one on the
9 bottom and top, and they were both still intact.

10 Q. And you said that, you know, looking back, you know, would've made a
11 PA. What else -- looking back now, was there anything else that you would change?

12 A. I could have slowed down a little bit earlier, I think. We were doing
13 around 280, 290 coming back around on that base, and I started slowing down
14 sometime in there, but I could have given us a little bit more time to slow down earlier.
15 I knew I wanted to land and get on the ground as soon as possible. I didn't need to
16 rush it or anything like that.

17 The PA, just cranking the volume more on the comm line and on the
18 intercom both for myself and for the first officer just to make sure that was up.

19 What else? I think there was, I think there was something else, but I can't
20 remember right now.

21 MS. BLUM: I think that's going to do it for me.

22 Mark, do you have any more follow-up questions?

23 MR. DIAZ: I do not. Thank you.

24 MS. BLUM: Okay. Gary?

25 MR. PITCHFORD: I'm good.

1 MS. BLUM: JP?

2 MR. WILSON: Is this like round 2?

3 MS. BLUM: Yeah.

4 MR. WILSON: Oh, okay. I just had more of a comment, if that's okay?

5 MS. BLUM: Absolutely.

6 MR. WILSON: [REDACTED] I just want you to know that I was able to talk to
7 the flight crew -- or, I'm sorry, the in-flight crew afterwards, and they noted that your
8 calm demeanor and command really helped them deal with a very difficult situation
9 and had to -- was able -- they were able to really do their duties and take care of our
10 guests. So I just wanted to give you that because they probably didn't tell you that, but
11 you did a great job with landing and making sure that you stayed calm and just made it
12 a very successful outcome, so --

13 BY MR. VORPAHL:

14 Q. All right. I'm curious about, you said your head went forward. Did you
15 hit it hard enough that the HUD went forward, it didn't break away?

16 A. No. And --

17 Q. It didn't leave a mark.

18 A. No. No, it --

19 Q. I don't see a, I don't see a mark.

20 A. And I also typically sit closer than most people to the HUD, too, so I wasn't
21 very far away from the HUD when I hit it. Or not -- I was closer than most people.

22 Q. Yeah. And then the only other question, and I just -- I know this is kind of
23 a heat of the battle kind of thing, but did you notice the red cabin warning light on the
24 flight deck, on the instrument panel right in front of us that they added, you know, post-
25 build? I was just kind of curious how, you know, heat of the battle, how -- we all knew

1 the cabin -- I mean, you knew that the cabin was depressurized. That was obvious.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. But, yeah, I was just wondering how effective that red light in this instance
4 even though --

5 A. Maybe if it wasn't so explosive, it might be more of a
6 (indiscernible)effective for me, yeah.

7 Q. Maybe if it was more insidious. I guess, this was a little bit of a rapid --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. WILSON: Well, did you hear the horn?

9 Because --

10 [REDACTED] So [REDACTED] was pretty quick on --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. WILSON: Yeah.

12 [REDACTED] -- cutting it out. So, honestly, I can't say that I did. I just
13 remember going for my mask and that was it, and by the time I had it on, I'm pretty
14 sure she had it off.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. WILSON: Okay. Yeah, it's good to know,
16 Dennis, because you know the visual, but then audio, those two things, and which one -
17 - in the heat of the battle, which one is more effective, right?

18 Which one do you think? I'm curious in your mind --

19 [REDACTED] I think the horn.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. WILSON: The horn? Okay. I gotcha.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. VORPAHL: Probably the big bang and the
22 rush of air.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERMR. WILSON: Well, that, yeah (indiscernible).

24 (Laughter)

25 MR. PITCHFORD: May I ask a -- when you finish up, may I ask one more

1 question?

2 MS. BLUM: Sure.

3 BY MR. PITCHFORD:

4 Q. Did you hear a bang?

5 A. I heard a bang and what, I heard a bang and what I -- my speculation is, it
6 was the door, when the door slammed open.

7 Q. It all happened at once.

8 A. That's what I -- but I don't know for a fact that that was what the bang was
9 that I heard. But I heard a loud noise. I would say it was a bang.

10 Q. Okay. Thanks.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm good.

12 MS. BLUM: Okay. Marvin?

13 MR. FRANTZ: No. Nothing else.

14 MS. BLUM: Okay. Is there anything we didn't ask that you would like us
15 to elaborate on or you'd like to elaborate on? We really appreciate you coming in and
16 sharing your experience. You have my contact card. If you think of anything that you
17 would like to share with us, please feel free to contact me anytime. Whether it's a week
18 from now or a month from now, please feel free to do so. And as we stated, once the
19 recording is transcribed, you will get a chance to read that and we can make
20 corrections. With that, we appreciate it and this concludes the interview at 1:11 p.m.

21 (Whereupon, at 1:11 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: ALASKA AIRLINES BOEING 737-9 MAX
IN-FLIGHT STRUCTURE FAILURE
NEAR PORTLAND, OREGON
ON JANUARY 5, 2024
Interview of [REDACTED]

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24MA063

PLACE: Portland, Oregon

DATE: January 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.

[REDACTED]
Kay Maurer
Transcriber

Addendum to the NTSB Interview of [REDACTED]

Re the Alaska Airlines Boeing 737-9 Max
In-Flight Structure Failure on January 5, 2024
near Portland, Oregon

Through this Addendum, [REDACTED] adds to and amends the transcript of his NTSB interview on January 7, 2024.

The transcript is amended as follows:

1. - Page 11, Line 8: "C" flight attendant should be "D" flight attendant
2. - Page 11, Line 23: "the cabin air phone" should be "the cabin interphone"
3. - Page 12, Line 15: "and we had the - - she got the emergency set" should be "and we had the emergency descent checklist left"
4. - Page 18, Line 1: "but we didn't have the QRH (sic) card" should be "but we didn't have the QRC card"
5. - Page 23, Line 21: "and just used auto change" should be "and just used level change"
6. - Page 24, Line 16: "C" flight attendant should be "D" flight attendant

CAPTAIN FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

After the flight crew interviews, for supplemental questions were composed for the captain. The questions and the answers from the captain are listed below.

Q. When the Flight Attendants attempted to contact the Flight Deck, did they use the call chime and/or speak through the interphone?

A. I don't remember hearing the call chime. However, I heard the Flight Attendants over the cabin interphone on the Audio Control Panel.

Q. What methods did you use to communicate with the Flight Attendants? O2 Mask Microphone, speaker, headset, PA, PA Handset Mic and/or hand mic/speaker?

A. O2 mask mic through the cabin interphone ("Cabin") selection on the Audio Control Panel.

Q. Was communication established? If so, what barriers prevented efficient communication?

A. No. Decompression of the airplane, very noisy environment, use of O2 masks, made communication more difficult.

Q. Please describe your Autopilot/Autothrottle usage during the flight. When did you engage, disengage, reengage, etc.?

A. After takeoff from PDX on Flight 1282, I engaged the autopilot at 12,000-13,000 feet. Approximately 1-2 minutes later, after the rapid depressurization, I disengaged the autopilot and autothrottle, and began a descent to 10,000 feet. Approximately 30-40 seconds later, after the descent was stabilized, I engaged the autopilot and autothrottle. While on approach to PDX 28L, at 6000-7000 feet, I disengaged the autopilot and autothrottle for the remainder of the flight.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ALASKA AIRLINES BOEING 737-9

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MAX IN-FLIGHT STRUCTURE

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Accident No.: DCA24MA063

FAILURE NEAR PORTLAND, OREGON

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ON JANUARY 5, 2024

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Interview of: [REDACTED] First Officer
Alaska Airlines

Portland, Oregon

Sunday,
January 7, 2024

APPEARANCES:

STARR BLUM, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MARVIN FRANTZ, Senior Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

GARY PITCHFORD, Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

MARK DIAZ, Safety Pilot
Flight Technical & Safety
Boeing

DENNIS VORPAHL, Representative
Air Line Pilots Association

JP WILSON, Chief Pilot
Alaska Airlines

BRETT ECKELBERG, Senior Labor Relations Counsel
Air Line Pilot on
(On behalf of [REDACTED])

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:10 a.m.)

MS. BLUM: Okay. Good morning. It is 10:10 Pacific Standard Time in Portland, Oregon, and we're here on the interview with

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Yes.

MS. BLUM: My name is Starr Blum. I'm an investigator with the NTSB. I'm the chairman of the operational factors group. Our job essentially is to look at everything forward of the cockpit door in an accident. Years ago I was a pilot for Horizon for many years, so --

[REDACTED] Wow.

MS. BLUM: Yeah, I'm familiar with the air group and JP here. As part of our process we invite party members, who I'll have them introduce themselves and give their affiliation. They're here to -- as technical expertise to help us understand like 737, other things. And so in our group we have the NTSB, the FAA, ALPA, and Alaska.

We really appreciate you being here. This is more a conversation and an opportunity for you to education us from your perspective what happened on this flight. That way we can figure out, you know, what went well, with the things that went wrong how can we improve that. We'll ask you, you know, at the end if there's anything you'd like to add to that.

The purpose of the NTSB is for safety. We are a independent

1 federal agency. We don't have anything to do with the Department
2 of Transportation or the FAA. We don't have any enforcement
3 actions. We're not here to assign fault, blame, or liability.
4 We're charged with by Congress to find the probable cause of the
5 accident.

6 I talked about the transcription.

7 You may have one representative of your choice. I see you
8 have someone here.

9 Can you state your name and spell it, please?

10 MR. ECKELBERG: Yes. Brett Eckelberg. I'm a senior labor
11 relations counsel with Air Line Pilots Association, and my name is
12 spelled B-r-e-t-t; last name, E-c-k-e-l-b-e-r-g.

13 MS. BLUM: Thank you. And as your representative, the only
14 thing we ask, he can't answer questions for you, but at any time
15 if you guys need to consult or step out of the room, that's
16 absolutely fine; just say the word and --

17 [REDACTED] Okay.

18 MS. BLUM: The way that we conduct the interviews is we'll
19 each go one at a time answer -- asking our questions, and there's
20 two rounds. Usually the second round is very short.

21 [REDACTED] Okay.

22 MS. BLUM: And we just ask that you answer the questions to
23 the best of your recollection, and if you don't know the answer,
24 that's a perfectly acceptable answer.

25 [REDACTED] Okay.

1 MS. BLUM: With that, I'm going to have -- Marvin, introduce
2 yourself.

3 MR. FRANTZ: Hi. I'm Marvin Frantz. I'm at the NTSB with
4 Starr. We're both in AS-30, operational factors, and this is our
5 bailiwick, so to speak, crew, airline procedures, things like
6 that. So, but I've been at the NTSB for 8 years. I am now lucky
7 to be in a position of supervisor at AS-30, so Starr's one of my
8 recent new hires. And she is really a star. We're so happy to
9 get her on.

10 [REDACTED] Wonderful.

11 MR. FRANTZ: I (indiscernible) and -- anyway, this is her
12 first time as a group chairman of an operations group on an
13 investigation. So our policy and procedures says that when
14 somebody's out for the first time on their own, a supervisor or
15 senior investigator has to be with them just to -- I'll provide
16 any support needed. So that's kind of what I'm here for. I don't
17 even anticipate having questions. I'm just kind of here to make
18 sure that everything flows well under Starr's guidance.

19 [REDACTED] Okay. Wonderful. Nice to meet you.

20 MR. FRANTZ: Thank you. ALPA?

21 MR. VORPAHL: I'm Dennis Vorpahl. I'm with ALPA safety, 737
22 captain up in Seattle for the last -- well, I've been with Alaska
23 for 24 years. I was Portland based for 2 years. One of my first,
24 yeah, first opportunity to upgrade in 2012, so I was doing the
25 drive from Gig Harbor to pilot there. You know, 2 hours and 20

1 minutes to the parking lot, a short call --

2 [REDACTED] Right.

3 MR. VORPAHL: And, yeah, JP and I have flown together, you
4 know, way back when. And up until recently I was the ALPA safety
5 or, I mean, I was the ASAP guy --

6 [REDACTED] Okay.

7 MR. VORPAHL: -- for Alaska Airlines (indiscernible) for ALPA
8 I was rep the last 12 years doing ASAP stuff, so --

9 I got to ask, do you have the Quizlet study cards for the 737
10 systems?

11 [REDACTED] I do. I do. That's you. That's you.

12 MR. VORPAHL: I'm the guy.

13 [REDACTED] Thank you. Thank you very much.

14 MR. VORPAHL: I've been trying to help out pilots as much as
15 I can, every opportunity --

16 [REDACTED] Wonderful.

17 MR. VORPAHL: -- I get. So I'm here, you know, for the ALPA
18 side perspective and to provide, you know, 737 input and, you
19 know, (indiscernible) questions, so --

20 [REDACTED] Wonderful. Thank you.

21 MR. VORPAHL: And then I'm sure, Brett, if you have any
22 questions, if it's (indiscernible) this is appropriate, you know,
23 you can feel free to call.

24 MS. BLUM: Mark?

25 MR. DIAZ: Hi. Good morning.

1 [REDACTED] Good morning.

2 MR. DIAZ: Thank you for this opportunity to be here. I'm a
3 safety pilot with Boeing, and I've been in the industry over 30
4 years, which includes 121 flying with United Airlines and working
5 with a different manufacturer in France, not Airbus, but worked in
6 France for 15 years. I've been with Boeing and basically here for
7 the manufacture of the aircraft side of the pilot operation, and
8 familiar with (indiscernible). Thank you for the opportunity.

9 [REDACTED] Yeah.

10 MR. DIAZ: And we're just here, not just Boeing, the name
11 Boeing, but the complete company, people that will help NTSB and
12 support them and paint the picture of what occurred. And all
13 aspects are towards safety. Thank you.

14 MR. PITCHFORD: Hi, [REDACTED] Gary Pitchford. Again, thanks
15 for coming. It's got to be a little bit tough, so please just
16 take it easy. There is -- I want to put your mind at ease. We
17 support the NTSB for whatever they need and that's what our job
18 is, not for enforcement action. Okay. You filed an ASAP, that's
19 under the ASAP umbrella. That's not what I'm here for. We need
20 to -- if there's things wrong, we need to correct them and figure
21 it out procedurally if there's anything wrong, and what went
22 right. And number one, you got the airplane on the ground safely.
23 It had to be tough, and I want to thank you for that. You did a
24 nice job.

25 [REDACTED] You're welcome.

1 MR. PITCHFORD: And before that, I'll just say that I was
2 formerly a pilot with Alaska Airlines for a few years. I'm not
3 sure I flew with you over there, but I retired January '20 and
4 I've been working with the Cascade (indiscernible) CMO for 4 years
5 and the aircrew program and the 737 for about a year. So don't
6 think I'm here for anything more than to find the facts and to
7 help these two individuals.

8 [REDACTED] Okay.

9 MR. WILSON: Yeah, (indiscernible), I was going to say,
10 but -- so I'm JP Wilson, Portland base chief pilot. Thank you,
11 [REDACTED] for coming. I know it's been a lot, a lot in the last few
12 days, so it is good to see you.

13 [REDACTED] Yeah.

14 MR. WILSON: Thanks for coming out, so -- and you know most
15 of my background I think, but I've been with the air group for 20
16 years now, 4 years at Horizon with Starr, I was with her. So it
17 was a reunion when I first got here, so --

18 [REDACTED] Oh, wonderful.

19 MR. WILSON: Yeah, yeah. So --

20 [REDACTED] That's always nice.

21 MR. WILSON: It is nice. You're a Q2 driver,
22 Q4 (indiscernible) driver, so -- and then I've been with Alaska for
23 16 years now, so -- the base chief coming on 6 years. I also run
24 our fatigue program as well, and then all that comes with the base
25 chief pilot. So I was lucky enough to fly with you, I think.

1 [REDACTED] Yeah.

2 MR. WILSON: How long ago was that?

3 [REDACTED] It was during one -- a unique snowstorm in
4 Seattle.

5 MR. WILSON: Yes. Okay. Right. A big -- yeah, I remember,
6 yeah.

7 [REDACTED] It wasn't a big one, but it was an unforecasted
8 little snow event.

9 MR. WILSON: Yes, which recreated a whole big deal.

10 [REDACTED] Yes.

11 MR. WILSON: Yeah. I remember that very well. It was really
12 fun flying with you and I appreciate you taking the time to come
13 out today. It really assists us. As Starr said, this is a
14 conversation, were interested in safety here (indiscernible)

15 [REDACTED] Perfect.

16 MS. BLUM: Okay. Thank you.

17 Again, as we start, if you don't understand a question,
18 please, we can re-explain it. Or if you feel like you misstated
19 something and you want to correct that, feel free to do so. And
20 at the end, we'll ask if there's anything else you'd like to add,
21 get on the record.

22 **INTERVIEW OF** [REDACTED]

23 BY MS. BLUM:

24 Q. So we'll start out with just the simple stuff. Can you state
25 and spell your legal name, please?

- 1 A. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 2 Q. Okay. And how old are you?
- 3 A. I am -- well, you ask a hard question.
- 4 (Laughter)
- 5 Thirty-six.
- 6 Q. And your job title?
- 7 A. First officer in Portland with Alaska Airlines.
- 8 Q. And how many years have you been with Alaska?
- 9 A. I was hired in August of 2017 initially through Virgin
- 10 America.
- 11 Q. I was at Virgin, too, for a little bit.
- 12 A. Wonderful.
- 13 Q. What would you -- give me an approximation, what would you
- 14 say your total flight time is?
- 15 A. Roughly 8300.
- 16 Q. Okay. And in type, the 737?
- 17 A. Roughly 1500.
- 18 Q. Your medical, do you have any limitations?
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. And were you the pilot flying or the pilot monitoring?
- 21 A. Pilot monitoring.
- 22 Q. Have you and the captain flown together before?
- 23 A. Yes. Yes. We -- yes, we have.
- 24 Q. And the trips, how have they been together?
- 25 A. Honestly, I don't remember. I -- yeah.

1 Q. Don't mind us typing, we're just taking notes.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. If you could, I'd like to start on, you know, Friday, the day
4 of the event, and I'd like for you just to walk through to the
5 best of your recollection, wherever you'd like to start, whether
6 it's getting to the airplane, you know, walk us through the
7 preflight, the taxi out, the takeoff off to the event and to the
8 landing.

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. And we'll just be taking notes and then from there we can
11 start with our questions --

12 A. Perfect. Perfect. So Friday, January 5th, I left for work
13 about 2 o'clock, giving myself plenty of time. I didn't know what
14 traffic was going to be like. I got to the airplane at 3:40. And
15 I walked on board the airplane, I noticed [REDACTED] sitting in
16 first class eating and I introduced myself to him, said hello, and
17 then I turned a corner and I went into the flight deck.

18 I started with my preflight checks and I went through, made
19 sure the battery master was on and the airplane wasn't
20 pressurized. I went around and the airplane was in the right
21 configuration, radar was off, and the parking brake was set. Then
22 I took a seat. I sat down and I grabbed the logbook and I started
23 flipping through it. At this time I actually hadn't looked at the
24 release yet. I just -- because I got to the airplane so early and
25 it was there, I just hopped on the airplane.

1 I looked at the logbook. I noticed three write-ups, and I
2 looked and made sure there was a clean white page, and then I
3 flipped forward through the logbook just to kind of get a general
4 picture of the recent write-ups on the airplane. And I remember
5 seeing a auto fail write-up, and I -- I saw the auto fail and I
6 looked and I made sure that there was a signature and there was a
7 description. And I, at that point, closed the logbook, went to my
8 release, and I started looking up the current MELs on the
9 aircraft. And one that -- two -- one sparked my attention, which
10 was a fuel pump. And then I went to our actual MEL and I read
11 through that.

12 At that point I configured the airplane, I turned on the
13 lights, and I left the airplane to go do a walkaround, external
14 walkaround. And I walked around the airplane, I noticed -- I got
15 to the right wing of the airplane, I noticed quite a bit of ice.
16 I continued my walkaround. I noticed that it was a pretty clean
17 airplane. It was really clean. It wasn't very dirty. And I
18 continued my walkaround. I noticed ice underneath the wing on the
19 other -- the left wing. Nothing else -- I noticed everything else
20 was good. I walked back into the airplane.

21 (Interruption at the door.)

22 [REDACTED] I walked back in the airplane. There was more
23 flight attendants on board the airplane at that time. They
24 appeared to be doing their brief and so I kind of excused myself
25 in between them, they were sitting in first class, and I went and

1 I looked at the top of the wings and I was -- there was ice. And
2 I was like, okay, well -- I looked at my clock and I was -- just
3 kind of went through my head and I was like, well, we might need
4 to get deiced. That's what went through my head.

5 I got back in the flight deck. I continued my preflight for
6 the airplane. Everything went very smoothly. I loaded the box.
7 My captain showed up. We said hi, we made a little bit of small
8 talk. It was honestly pretty quiet because we -- I don't -- I
9 honestly couldn't remember at that time if I had flown with him or
10 not. There was nothing that sparked my memory in order for that
11 at that time.

12 And then I -- during the preflight we talked -- I told him, I
13 was like, you know what, I found ice on the airplane so I'm going
14 to go out and do an ice check prior to closing up. And he -- we
15 had plenty of time so there was quite a little bit of silence for
16 a while that we were sitting there. I mean, we were very well
17 prepared for the flight. I had gone through the full release. I
18 had looked up what approach we were probably going to do in
19 Ontario. And he mentioned something that we should probably see
20 if there's still ice or -- I don't remember exactly what he said,
21 but I ended up going out again. And I looked at the airplane and
22 I was like, I cannot tell. And I was like, I'm just going to call
23 for an ice check.

24 So I got back in the airplane. I called iceman and I called
25 for an ice check. They responded that there was ice found on the

1 airplane, so we -- we're like okay. At that point I brought up
2 the deice checklist and we -- the flight closed. We started our
3 briefing, and he -- he had set himself up as the pilot flying, and
4 so I started the briefing by saying, you know, honestly, I have no
5 threats. I'm not going to make up something that I don't foresee.
6 And he -- his response was that he said, you know, there's a
7 couple write-ups about pressurization previously, and this one
8 included, you know, light coming on -- this is per my
9 recollection -- the light coming on while taxiing in, so if we get
10 that, that's what it is. And that was the end of the conversation
11 and we continued on with our briefing.

12 I -- we did our load closeout and before start checklist. I
13 then went to the deice checklist. I configured the aircraft for
14 deice and I called iceman and said that the brakes were set, the
15 airplane's configured for deicing.

16 I do want to take a step back and I do want to say that while
17 we were sitting there I did -- [REDACTED] one of the flight attendants
18 in the back of the airplane came up, introduced himself to us. I
19 shook his hand and I did meet him. I also had small talk with the
20 D flight attendant in the forward about just kind of -- just a
21 little small talk. I just wanted to add that in there.

22 And the deice, the pushback, the engine start, the takeoff,
23 the climb-out, everything went smoothly. Everything was smooth.
24 My captain and I made a little bit of small talk. Something that
25 I said sparked him saying, oh, I do remember, we have flown

1 together because I remember -- he remembered my kids going to a
2 special school. And so that confirmed that we had flown together.
3 It was pretty quiet, to be honest. We were both -- it was pretty
4 quiet.

5 And then I remember checking on with Seattle center. We got
6 a clearance up to flight level 2-3-0. We were headed
7 (indiscernible)CHISM, I think, at the intersection. And the first
8 thing I -- my ears popped. And it was all simultaneously, the
9 flight deck door flew open, the cabin altitude warning horn went
10 on, and all at the same time I reached for my oxygen mask and I
11 donned my oxygen mask. And out of my peripheral view, I saw my
12 captain doing the same. And also out of my peripheral view I saw
13 the door open. I saw the cabin tubes hanging from the ceiling.
14 And at that point my focus was forward and I yelled, get down, get
15 down. And I didn't hear much. It was very loud.

16 I then tried to talk to ATC. I could not hear them
17 initially. And then I pushed the speaker button and I turned it
18 all the way on. I did not have my headset on. I don't know where
19 my headset was. And I heard my captain declare emergency 10,000,
20 but I feel like I was already declaring emergency with Seattle
21 center and requesting 10,000. I heard heading and 10,000, and at
22 that point I was grabbing for the QRC and my -- I remember my
23 captain's hand up there as well, and it was gone. And then I
24 remember him -- the QRH ended up -- he grabbed the QRH and put it
25 on the dash and he -- I heard run checklist. And I opened up the

1 checklist and --

2 I'm going to take a step back. When -- and just -- the
3 initial putting my oxygen mask on, it all happened so quick and so
4 simultaneously. I did reach up and I pushed the altitude warning
5 cutoff and I pushed that so the beeping went away. That was
6 before I went to the checklist. And I started checklist and I
7 started reading through it and I was reading it out loud.

8 And I -- there was a point in the checklist that it asked to
9 look at the pressurization panel to verify the cabin pressure.
10 And I looked up and it said 14.5. And I kept on going. There's
11 multiple things in the checklist and I did them, and all while I
12 was also communicating with ATC. I told them the -- I think, I
13 feel like I declared an emergency a couple times. I kept on -- I
14 feel like I told them the souls on board a few times and the fuel.
15 And I feel like while I was doing the checklist that they asked me
16 what the nature of the emergency and I said unpressurized,
17 depressurized a couple times. I don't remember exactly.

18 I -- as we were descending, I verified the airplane was
19 descending but I was in the checklist. And I remember finishing
20 the checklist, I looked up -- and it was done, and it said go to
21 emergency descent. And I looked up and I was like, well, we're
22 at -- and we were at 10,000 and we're at 290 knots at that time.
23 And the communication between my captain, I mean, it was -- I
24 don't remember if it was prior to getting that point, but he had
25 asked me to get a turnback towards Portland. And so I asked for a

1 turnback to Portland and we got a 3-4-0 heading back towards
2 Portland.

3 And -- but at the 10,000 point when the checklist was done, I
4 remember the ding, the ding from the flight attendantss. And I
5 did not try to make communication with them. I saw my captain
6 trying to and I chose not to try because he was doing that. And
7 at that point I asked for a lower altitude and we got a descent
8 down to 7,000 feet.

9 I -- we also, at 10,000, I heard my captain say let's try to
10 put the headset back on to establish better communication. We
11 took the oxygen mask off and -- as we were descending down from
12 10,000 at this point, and we tried to put our headset back on and
13 there was an extremely loud white noise that made it -- made
14 communication with ATC and my captain, it was inaudible. And so
15 at that point we put our oxygen masks back on and continued on.

16 He also said to set me up for the approach. Before we had
17 taken off we both had the ILS 2-8 Left frequencies set up in the
18 airplane. We had the course already set up because it the course
19 that we departed on. And I simply built the box with a leg to
20 Hannah because we were on a heading at that point. I did a U-turn
21 and we were all on the correct frequencies and -- I mean, what I
22 mean by I looked at the course, I looked at our frequencies, I
23 looked at his frequency and his course. And I told ATC that we
24 wanted to do the approach.

25 And he -- we got a turn onto final. We -- and ATC -- and my

1 captain said, let's just do the approach and land. And so I asked
2 for a clearance for the approach. And I remember ATC querying me
3 about us being high and if we needed vectors. And I looked at our
4 current position of where we were -- we were already on the
5 localizer, and we were high but it was -- we could do it. And at
6 that point my captain called for flaps 1, flaps 5, and he -- I
7 started bugging some speeds and he called for gear down.

8 At that point I switched my standby -- Portland ops was in my
9 standby frequency and I switched it over to active on comm 2. I
10 talked to Portland ops. I said that we were an emergency aircraft
11 returning, we are landing in 8 minutes, and they responded to me.
12 I went back to talk to -- I switched my comm back ATC-1. And we
13 continued configuration, configure the airplane.

14 I saw the -- we saw -- I saw the runway. We were fully
15 configured and I bugged my captain's final speed. I did the
16 before landing checklist. And then our goggles were -- my goggle,
17 my mask goggle was pretty foggy at this point but we could see the
18 runway. It was gusty. The autopilot came -- my captain kicked
19 the autopilot off and he told me to bug a couple extra knots for
20 the wind. And about 400 feet I heard ops in comm 2 say Charlie 5,
21 and I responded, okay. And that was about 400 feet. We landed
22 the airplane.

23 I also saw emergency personnel on the runway. I saw the
24 fire, a CFR waiting. And we landed the airplane, he turned off
25 the runway and kept on rolling, and we kept on taxiing at a normal

1 speed and parked at Charlie 5. At that point I did my after
2 landing flow. We pulled into the gate. He set the parking brake.
3 I turned the PACKs off and I stepped up and I opened the flight
4 deck door.

5 And I looked at my two flight attendants and I asked them are
6 they okay? And at that point I heard, hole, floor, empty seats,
7 injuries. And then the jet bridge was -- at that point the main
8 cabin door was open and EMTs came on the airplane. And my captain
9 stood up as well and he asked for a count of people, because I --
10 all through this I kept on saying to ATC 177 souls on board and
11 fuel 8-2-9. I just kept on saying that. And then it wasn't very
12 long after that, that we had a headcount of 171 passengers and 6
13 crew members.

14 And then the initial -- when I had stepped out of the flight
15 deck, I looked back at the cabin and I remember everybody just
16 sitting there quiet, honestly, looking back at me. And it was
17 just -- it was quiet and everybody was just waiting for, you know,
18 honestly, our command, what to do next. I don't -- yeah.

19 And then, yeah, and EMTs came on board. They -- there was
20 talks about a boy, his mother on the floor, and she couldn't find
21 him and then he just appeared. We don't know which seat he was
22 in, and he lost his shirt. And then when EMTs were done with
23 assessing the passengers, a few people started coming off. And it
24 was the -- and the boy and the mom, he stepped off the airplane
25 and I just remember the mom, and she just gave me a hug. And then

1 shortly thereafter, all the EMTs and all the injured people or the
2 people being assessed were off the airplane and everybody else
3 started getting off the airplane.

4 I still had no idea at this point where -- I knew -- I had
5 heard 25, I didn't know what side of the airplane, and I heard
6 hole. I didn't know -- that's all I heard. And I greeted every
7 passenger, I said thank you to everybody as they walked off the
8 airplane. I was actually standing right outside the main cabin
9 door on the left and just helping everybody off because there
10 was -- my captain was in the front on the phone. He was busy and
11 there wasn't enough room, so I just was already outside in the jet
12 bridge.

13 And I came on a few times just to see how many people were
14 coming off the airplane. And then when I -- I noticed that there
15 was still one person in -- there was two people in the bulkhead
16 seats between first class and main cabin, and they needed an aisle
17 chair. And I talked to them and I said thank you to them, and I
18 said, we're getting you an aisle chair. And at that point I --
19 there were a load of UMs that were sitting in first class, and I
20 walked back to the back of the airplane and I asked my flight
21 attendants if they were okay. And then there was a 5-year-old UM
22 that did -- that was sitting very close, I want to say row 26.
23 And I held his hand and walked him to the front of the airplane.
24 There was about -- there was a lot of UMs on board and I made sure
25 that he was there and then he was escorted off the airplane.

1 Yeah. And that's -- I mean, I don't know what else -- yeah.

2 BY MS. BLUM:

3 Q. Wow. I got the chills just thinking about looking at the
4 passengers and the quiet.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Thanks for reliving that with us.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. So at that time when you landed, did you have -- you had no
9 idea that there was --

10 A. I, I never -- I knew that there was something, I knew that
11 there was something wrong.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. I knew that there was a -- there was air being brought into
14 the airplane where there shouldn't be, but I had no idea if it was
15 a hole, if it was a window, if it was a main cabin door. I had no
16 idea. I had no idea. I never heard anything from the flight
17 attendants.

18 Q. Okay. Thanks for that.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. So just a few questions for my first round. I'm going to
21 kind of start from the beginning.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. You talked about the auto fail write-ups.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What were you anticipating when you and the captain were

1 speaking about if this light comes on? What did that mean to you
2 with the write-up in the logbook?

3 A. Honestly what it meant to me was that if we get it on taxi
4 in, that's what the yellow caution light is going to mean in front
5 of you, your face. That's what it meant to me.

6 Q. Would there be a checklist to follow up with that light?

7 A. I'm sure.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. Yes, there is a checklist to follow up with that. (Laughter)
10 Yeah.

11 Q. So the QRC, is that just a single laminated sheet?

12 A. Yes. That's the -- it has our emergency, our immediate
13 action items on it and some emergency items on it, as well as our
14 checklist and our briefing card.

15 Q. And that apparently got sucked out?

16 A. Yeah. And that's -- the immediate actions are oxygen mask
17 on, don 100 percent, and crew communications established. But --
18 yes. Yeah.

19 Q. So when you said you were running the checklist, what were
20 you running that from?

21 A. I was running that from the QRH.

22 Q. Okay. And that's paper?

23 A. It is. It's a spiral bound with a plastic clip and -- yes.

24 Q. And what was the first checklist you started with?

25 A. The cabin altitude rapid --

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Depressurization.

2 [REDACTED] Depressurization. It's bottom, and I went right
3 to tab 5, and it's the first sheet right there.

4 BY MS. BLUM:

5 Q. And then, I realize you were at 10,000 feet and descending.
6 Did you run any more checklists out of the --

7 A. The QRH? No.

8 Q. Okay. You stated that you saw the cabin tubes. What were
9 you referring to?

10 A. I'm referring to -- and as I -- my peripheral view, it was
11 like I turned my head this much, and I saw the door open and I saw
12 what we call the rubber jungle.

13 Q. Okay. The oxygen masks?

14 A. Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

15 Q. And actually backing up a bit, I wanted to ask, you know, on
16 the preflight with that plug, is there anything in your preflight
17 procedures -- what are you looking at as you're doing your
18 walkaround, whether it's outside, inside?

19 A. Yeah. So that is towards the tail of the airplane and what
20 I'm looking at is smooth; smooth, no -- yeah, no fold -- yeah, I'm
21 looking that it's flush.

22 Q. Which it was? You didn't notice anything?

23 A. I didn't notice anything.

24 Q. As far as the door opening, how do you know that door is
25 locked?

1 A. So we know -- the flight attendants close the door. And you
2 know it's locked by -- up here, and then also down here on our
3 panel that you would be able to see that the -- if the door was
4 locked.

5 Q. Was it locked? Did you verify that?

6 A. Yes. In our checklist it calls for doors and windows closed
7 and locked, and everything was closed and locked.

8 Q. What altitude did you first notice the depressurization?

9 A. I had saw 15.6 and it was after that. I don't know.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I -- it was chaos. And I just, I remember pointing down.

12 Q. So you saw the captain trying to attempt communication with
13 the flight attendants. Do you know, did you hear if he did
14 communicate with them?

15 A. I mean, since I've talked to him since this has happened, he
16 did and he heard -- yeah, I'm not going to speak for him.

17 Q. Okay. And you said you -- the white noise when you put the
18 headset on. Was it actually better with the O2 mask back on for
19 hearing and communicating?

20 A. It was completely inaudible with the headset on. It was
21 better with having nothing on my ears and the speaker.

22 MS. BLUM: Okay. I think that's going to conclude my
23 questions for this first round. So I'm going to pass it off to
24 Mark.

25 MR. DIAZ: Thank you. That was an unbelievable amount of

1 work going on in a very tight time span, just to sit here and see
2 the execution for that. Let me just go over just some things
3 and --

4 BY MR. DIAZ:

5 Q. I do not have any question on this first round. I think it's
6 quite (indiscernible) what your resources were. The only resource
7 I'm not sure about, did you execute any communications via ACARS?

8 MS. BLUM: Mark, do you think I could have you speak up
9 just --

10 MS. DIAZ: Yeah.

11 MS. BLUM: Thank you.

12 BY MR. DIAZ:

13 Q. Were there any communications via ACARS? Was that all VHF?

14 A. It was all VHF. There was no time.

15 Q. Yeah. And for considerations for landing performance and
16 those numbers, what resource did you have available for you at
17 that time?

18 A. So in our preflight we go over our takeoff weight and the
19 fuel. And I had said multiple times what our fuel was and ATC had
20 actually asked me if we wanted to land overweight or burn off
21 fuel -- I don't remember exactly how they phrased it -- or just
22 land. And given the circumstances, I chose that we were landing
23 and my captain was very much on board with that. Yeah, and so, if
24 we did an overweight landing -- I have done them before. I've
25 done it before and I knew that -- I just compared the -- you know,

1 I did go through that momentarily in my head and I was like that's
2 small potatoes compared to the situation that I have, that I'm
3 dealing with right now.

4 Q. In the initial process, you saw -- did you observe the
5 captain doing the similar memory items for the procedure?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. What was the first communications? Was it a hand gesture or
8 were you able to communicate with him at that point?

9 A. He -- it was hand gesture initially down. And I heard him,
10 but it was mostly yelling. I heard him and -- but honestly, my
11 instincts kicked in and we knew exactly what we were doing
12 initially.

13 Q. Thank you.

14 A. Yeah.

15 MR. DIAZ: Thank you, Starr.

16 MS. BLUM: Okay. Gary?

17 BY MR. PITCHFORD:

18 Q. So, [REDACTED] nice job.

19 A. Thanks.

20 Q. Very (indiscernible)good, take a deep breath.

21 A. Thank you.

22 Q. I'll say one thing. You remained -- well, I'll ask this
23 question. You remained the pilot monitoring, correct?

24 A. Yes. Yes.

25 Q. He assumed his normal duties, he was flying, he's going to

1 stay flying?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And you dove right into the checklist and went right on down?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And you said most communications were by hand. Did you hear
6 the speaker at all or was it hard to hear?

7 A. I heard ATC through the speaker and I heard him through the
8 speaker.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. He didn't have a hot mike though? He didn't have his headset
12 on, right?

13 A. He did not -- no. He didn't -- neither of us had our
14 headsets on.

15 Q. You had your masks on when you were --

16 A. We had our masks on. And he was able to communicate with me
17 through pushing the intercom button on his panel and that's how I
18 heard him through the speaker. I -- with my communications with
19 ATC, I never pushed the intercom button, so I don't -- he never
20 heard my voice through the speaker.

21 Q. Okay. Mostly done through the masks?

22 A. Through the mask.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah, and just -- I mean, when I was talking to him I was
25 talking very loud.

1 Q. And you just assumed that responsibility of continuing on
2 with the checklist till it was complete?

3 A. Yes. Yes.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 MR. WILSON: I almost teared up when you talked about that 5-
6 year-old. The level of care that you provided was, I guess I
7 could say, amazing. Thank you for taking care of our guests.

8 [REDACTED] Yes.

9 MR. WILSON: I mean that. Especially after an event like
10 that, like it's just -- as a base chief, I'm very proud of you.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you.

12 MR. WILSON: Good job.

13 BY MR. WILSON:

14 Q. Just -- I just have a few questions. So when you guys
15 departed out of Portland I think everything was going right --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- everything was normal. When you went to 10,000 feet the
18 normal --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- procedure is --

21 A. Yeah, ding dong, we verified pressurization.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And I verified 10-4, yeah.

24 Q. Okay. Good. And then I think you said -- what was the
25 altitude said like the event you think happened?

1 A. I don't know the event, at the altitude that the event
2 happened.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I remember seeing 15.6, but we had also made a little bit of
5 small talk. You know, I had taken some drinks of water. I mean,
6 I was in my normal relaxed pilot state.

7 Q. Yeah. Yeah.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay. And then when it happened was the airplane on
10 autopilot?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. And you guys immediately leveled off; is that correct?

13 A. I don't know.

14 Q. Okay. When did you guys start to turn back toward the
15 airport? Just the --

16 A. So yeah, so the initial -- so I -- he had the radar on and I
17 had noticed that he had put the radar on in the climb-out. I had
18 kept my VSD on and I had the terrain on my page. So the initial
19 contact with ATC was they gave us maintain present heading and
20 10,000. I remember that. And somewhere during my checklist he
21 asked for a turn back to the airport. And I -- and also I could
22 see -- I mean, I knew where we were and I was like, well, I know,
23 I mean, the Cascades are coming up, you know. So, yeah, let's
24 turn and remain in the valley. So that was that 3-4-0 heading.
25 It was sometime during my checklist.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I don't know where. And I -- at that time I paused the
3 checklist, I answered ATC, resumed the checklist.

4 Q. Perfect. Along those lines, how far -- you said you used the
5 QRH to do the quick action stuff, right?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So you used -- how far did you make it in the QRC portion or
8 how far did you get through the checklist entirely? Were you able
9 to complete the whole thing or how --

10 A. Yeah. I was able to complete the entire thing, and then it
11 has the four boxes, and then it goes to emergency descent. And at
12 that point I looked up, I was like, well, we're already at 10,000
13 feet, no need for emergency descent. We just did it. We're
14 there.

15 Q. Excellent. So then that -- the time period when that was
16 done, too, when you were landing, I presume that's pretty
17 compressed, right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And how was -- was ATC helpful in you guys getting
20 to -- you know, after the event, because communication was tough,
21 right?

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. How did that go with communication with air traffic control?

24 A. I -- overall, I felt like my communication with air traffic
25 control was clear, concise. I felt like I told them what I

1 needed. I felt like I had to repeat myself a couple times. And
2 I -- yeah, I'm going to stop with that.

3 Q. Yeah. Yeah, that's good. So the last question I have, just
4 curious, is when the event happened, I mean, it startled
5 everybody, right?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And the door, the flight deck door swung open.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. I think one of the flight attendants was able to close the
10 door, right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. The communication between the flight deck and back, how was
13 that, I mean, in all this? I mean, you kind of talked about it.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. I'm just curious how that played out just in the event and
16 even landing and -- did you -- what did you know and -- I know
17 that's a long question, but just --

18 A. When I saw the flight deck door open and I saw -- I knew I
19 had a female and a male, [REDACTED], in the forward. And I saw a hand
20 like in the lower portion close the door, and that's all I saw.
21 Or I saw the -- yeah, I saw a hand and the door close, and there
22 was a loud slam to that. And then when -- as we were descending
23 down, prior to 10,000 feet, when I really realized like we were at
24 10,000 feet going 290 knots, I could hear them calling. I was in
25 the checklist and that was my responsibility and communicating

1 with ATC. And I saw my captain trying to communicate and I did
2 not pursue communicating with them. I couldn't hear them. I
3 never heard anything.

4 Q. Excellent.

5 A. Yeah. And so that -- yeah.

6 Q. Aviate, navigate, communicate, right?

7 A. Yeah. Yeah.

8 Q. Awesome. Thank you for -- that was my questions. But thank
9 you so much for (indiscernible)

10 MS. BLUM: Marvin?

11 BY MR. FRANTZ:

12 Q. Thanks, [REDACTED] Great recap. Great recap(indiscernible)

13 A. Thank you.

14 Q. I wasn't going to ask questions, but just a couple bullet
15 points. You were wearing -- both wearing headsets before the
16 event?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And then they both came off when you both donned masks?

19 A. I -- when I went to don my mask, my headset was not on my
20 head. I do not know how it came off, if it came off with the
21 wind. There was --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- there was movement of air in the flight deck.

24 Q. Okay. Where does the QRH live on the flight deck?

25 A. It lives at my captain's right shin.

- 1 Q. Center pedestal?
- 2 A. Center pedestal.
- 3 Q. In a little slot?
- 4 A. Yeah, in that pocket.
- 5 Q. Yeah.
- 6 A. Yeah.
- 7 Q. Okay. And it was -- and he -- you said he, at some point he
- 8 removed it from there and put it up on the --
- 9 A. The dash. And I grabbed it from the dash.
- 10 Q. Okay. But the QRC, that's in a slot, is it --
- 11 A. On the overhead panel.
- 12 Q. And that was not there?
- 13 A. That was gone.
- 14 Q. Do you have any recollection of seeing that shoot by you when
- 15 the door opened or anything?
- 16 A. We -- I remember -- I mean, we both knew it was gone. Well,
- 17 like I remember it was a shuffle. Like it was chaos.
- 18 Q. Did you notice that go by you? When the door immediately
- 19 opened, that loose items fly by, do you recollect or --
- 20 A. We didn't -- not that I recollect.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. I mean -- yeah, not that I recollect anyway.
- 23 Q. Okay. But the QRH was still there?
- 24 A. The QRH was still there.
- 25 Q. Okay. Was it -- what part of the flight was -- was it VMC

1 for the approach?

2 A. I remember seeing the airport straight in front of me, but on
3 climb-out I remember we -- it was -- we went IMC multiple times on
4 climb-out, and it was also turning to dusk, too, so we went back
5 through clouds, but I remember seeing the airport. There's the
6 runway, let's land.

7 Q. And you did an -- did you do an ILS?

8 A. We did. We did the ILS to 2-8-Left.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. Thanks. That's all I got.

10 BY MR. VORPAHL:

11 Q. So when you say your departure -- and great job.

12 A. Thank you.

13 Q. Oh, my gosh, nobody wants to be where you were and you did a
14 great job.

15 A. I hope no one else has to be.

16 Q. There you go. So, yeah, and, you know, taking care of the
17 passengers like JP said, that's phenomenal. Yeah, and so when you
18 said -- and I'm just -- I think because there was a slang and I
19 just want to clear it up. You said going through 10,000 feet you
20 did the pressurization check and you said 10-4?

21 A. Yeah. Yeah.

22 Q. Right?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. So what's the 10-4? And I'm not putting you on the spot. I
25 just -- so what did you mean by 10-4?

- 1 A. No, it's -- yeah, it's a good question.
- 2 Q. I don't -- I'm not looking, I'm not looking for specific
3 numbers or whatever it is, but -- because I know we look at the
4 needles.
- 5 A. Yeah. We look at the needles and the needles are in a kind
6 of clock -- in a 4 o'clock position going through 10,000 feet.
- 7 Q. Yeah. That tells you the airplane's pressurized normally and
8 that's where --
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. -- that's where you expect -- the 10-4 means that's where you
11 expect to see them when --
- 12 A. Yeah.
- 13 Q. -- at that point, pressurizing the airplane?
- 14 A. When you're -- when you depart from a relatively sea level
15 airport, yes, that's where you expect to see them.
- 16 Q. Yeah.
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Okay. So, yeah, everything appeared to be normal --
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. -- pressurized at 10,000 feet?
- 21 A. Yes. Yes.
- 22 Q. There was nothing unusual and everything --
- 23 A. No. There was no -- I mean, there was no like pressure
24 movement. I mean, you can feel that in your ears. There was
25 none.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. There was nothing. There was just one massive ear pressure
3 change.

4 Q. Yeah. I guess -- so I'm kind of curious just being a pilot
5 sitting there and thinking -- I'm trying to live this as you
6 describe it. So the ears pop, the bang. What was the rush of air
7 and the volume of noise like? I mean, was it -- did you -- you've
8 got shoulder-length hair. Did you even -- and probably in the
9 heat of the battle you didn't notice, but, I mean, was there a big
10 push against you with the air coming back? Do you recall? I
11 mean --

12 A. Initially. It was -- yeah, it was like initially. Like the
13 only other time I can describe it is I had a door pop open on me
14 in a small twin.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. And like my dad was sitting next to me and his headset flew
17 off and his hat was flying around the cabin. And it was like that
18 initial like --

19 Q. Whoosh or something?

20 A. Yeah. It's that initial like -- and, I mean, you go like
21 this and then it's just like action after that.

22 Q. Right. Okay.

23 A. So that's -- it was -- my hair was not blowing around in the
24 wind after that. (Laughter) No, and my hair was (indiscernible).

25 Q. I mean, I've got short hair, it's not going to blow. I'm

1 just trying to visualize how forceful that air might have been
2 because, I mean, it pulled the QRC out.

3 A. Yeah. And it --

4 Q. That seems to be fairly forceful.

5 A. We found that the flight deck door made the lavatory door
6 inoperative to open. So it hit that hard.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. Because we tried -- I tried to go in the lav and I was like,
9 oh --

10 Q. Nope.

11 A. Nope. Not this one.

12 Q. Once they got the flight deck door closed, did you notice a
13 difference in the noise level? Or when you were slowing down, was
14 the noise ever --

15 A. No, the noise was so, so loud.

16 Q. -- did it ever get --

17 A. No.

18 Q. It never got -- even with airspeed changes and --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- slowing down, it was -- all of the noise level was just --

21 A. No. I think it was just -- it was so loud, but I think it
22 was just we had -- we were just dealing with it.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. We were just dealing above it, if that makes sense.

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. Like it was there, it was a nuisance, but we were doing what
2 we needed to do.

3 Q. Have you looked at your headset? Was it damaged? Were the
4 wires broken? I mean, you said there was a loud squeal and you
5 couldn't communicate, so my thought process was maybe with the
6 headset coming off your head it yanked on the wires and shorted
7 something out and maybe -- or maybe not yours, but it might be
8 another --

9 A. Yeah. I -- my headset appears to be in working condition
10 and -- I don't know. I think what it sounded like, it sounded
11 like once you choose to use the oxygen mask.

12 Q. Oh, yeah, that squeal comes over the headset or --

13 A. Well, once you choose -- it sounded like I was still talking
14 through the oxygen mask. Like I couldn't talk through my headset,
15 I could only talk through the oxygen mask.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And that was -- I put that down there and I was like -- and
18 then we made -- can you hear? I can't hear, you know. And then,
19 and then it was just like, switch, and we were both on. And do
20 you hear me? I hear -- do you -- I hear you, and then just
21 continue. And I don't remember if I did mention, I do remember as
22 we were getting lower in altitude, my goggles were fogging up. I
23 don't remember if I said that or not prior. But I could still see
24 the runway the entire time.

25 Q. I'm sorry, I just -- so you guys were in the MAX, right?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. I'm thinking this through here a little bit.
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. So the MAX, when you remove the head -- the full face mask,
5 you know, oxygen mask out, it automatically switches to the
6 microphone.
- 7 A. To a mike. Exactly. And that's the whole thing is we --
- 8 Q. Yeah. So that's --
- 9 A. -- the door has to close for it to switch back and we didn't
10 get to that point.
- 11 Q. Right. And sitting --
- 12 A. I didn't have time to stow --
- 13 Q. -- sitting here at the speed of zero, that's probably why --
14 I can imagine that's probably why you guys didn't get the normal
15 communications back because you didn't get the door closed on the
16 MAX.
- 17 A. Um-hum.
- 18 Q. As for the NG, it's a switch on the instrument panel, I want
19 to talk on my headset or I want to talk on the --
- 20 A. Mask.
- 21 Q. -- mask.
- 22 A. And so it's, and so -- and we tried and we -- literally, we
23 tried.
- 24 Q. Oh yeah.
- 25 A. And then it was just -- what was working was working for us.

1 And so --

2 Q. Right, and so you go back to that.

3 A. -- we went back to that.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. Because it was working.

6 Q. There was no time to troubleshoot, yeah.

7 A. Yeah.

8 MR. WILSON: That's all I have.

9 MS. BLUM: Okay. So before we start the second round, we'd
10 like to offer you a break if you'd like one?

11 MR. PITCHFORD: I'd like one.

12 MS. BLUM: Okay. Concluding the interview (indiscernible)
13 for now.

14 (Off the record.)

15 (On the record at 11:30 a.m.)

16 MS. BLUM: Okay. Recording starting at 11:30 a.m.

17 BY MS. BLUM:

18 Q. Okay. So starting off with round two. I don't really have a
19 lot of questions. I'm more curious as to looking back, having
20 lived this, what did you learn from it? Would you have any
21 suggestions on how things could differently? What do you think
22 went well? Do you have any opinions or thoughts?

23 A. Yeah. I think that all my training that I've had up to this
24 event that happened adequately prepared me for the situation and I
25 am thankful for all the training that I had. I -- you can always

1 go back and you can Monday morning quarterback. That's what we do
2 as pilots: What could we have done better? What would've made
3 the situation end up better? And honestly, I'm so thankful for
4 all my training, the memory items that I have, the recall I have
5 in order to efficiently do my job, and I wouldn't change anything
6 at this current time.

7 MS. BLUM: Thank you. Round two, Mark, do you have any
8 follow-ups?

9 MR. DIAZ: Yeah.

10 BY MR. DIAZ:

11 Q. To ask another question, just in a different way.
12 Representing the manufacturer and flight crews, is there anything
13 that would have made it easier for you, anything beyond behaviors
14 of the crew (indiscernible) environment?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. What did you need that you had to -- what was cumbersome?
17 What would've worked (indiscernible) obviously there's the mask
18 and the white noise.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Other (indiscernible) little frustration while you're trying
21 to achieve the goal to safely get the aircraft completion on the
22 ground?

23 A. The communication, the -- was the only thing that was more
24 difficult, but we rose above it. And the fact that the checklist
25 was gone, it was just so automatic for us to go right to the QRH.

1 And so, it -- like that happened, and I don't recall any words
2 being spoke about it. It was just like gone and then he brought
3 it to there, I grabbed it and opened it up. So it just happened
4 probably faster than that.

5 Q. Have you had to reach for it without the assistance of
6 putting it into the mid-range position?

7 A. From my -- not with a captain being there. Not with someone
8 sitting in that seat. I have definitely reached for it when
9 there's no one sitting there, but not with someone sitting there.

10 Q. Okay. Thank you.

11 MS. BLUM: Okay.

12 MR. PITCHFORD: I don't have any questions.

13 MR. WILSON: I do.

14 BY MR. WILSON:

15 Q. In your opinion, the differences in systems from the MAX and
16 the NG, especially with that switch, the --

17 A. The mask.

18 Q. -- (indiscernible) switch. Would it be -- would it have been
19 easier if you were to -- I don't ever want you to relive this
20 situation, but if you were to put the system in a NG with that
21 configuration, would that have been easier to communicate or do
22 you think, hey, it wouldn't have mattered? If that switch from
23 the mask to -- because the only reason I'm thinking that is
24 because I know for me, the NG, with that switch, it's very easy to
25 (indiscernible).

- 1 A. Yeah. And honestly, I went for the switch.
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 A. I went for the switch.
- 4 Q. Yeah.
- 5 A. And it -- I was like, wait, no that's not the right one. And
6 then I was like, oh, I just talk.
- 7 Q. Yeah. Okay.
- 8 A. So I went there.
- 9 Q. Yeah. That's --
- 10 A. And then I just -- that was all in the trying to establish
11 communication. I just -- I went there, I realized that -- I mean,
12 we weren't able to communicate very easily, and so -- and then I
13 just went to speaker and I -- then I was able to get responses
14 back from ATC, and that's -- that was good enough for me. I was
15 able to hear my captain and get responses back from ATC.
- 16 Q. Awesome. Awesome. The last one is just the checklist in
17 itself. Did you find that easy to work with, especially in a high
18 pressure situation? Do you think there's anything that could have
19 been better, how it was organized or anything like that?
- 20 A. I flipped the cover over. I went exactly -- I just like I
21 skimmed it, I saw, and I just -- I opened it and it was right
22 there. I mean, and that's how fast it was. I don't -- I didn't
23 have any glitches and there was no doubt in my mind that I was not
24 on the correct checklist.
- 25 Q. Awesome. Okay.

1 BY MR. VORPAHL:

2 Q. Yeah. You covered the last questions I had, but -- you know,
3 the MAX is new to the fleet.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. You know, in the last 2 years I think or something like that
6 we've been getting -- we're getting more and more MAXs. How often
7 do you think you fly a MAX? I mean it's --

8 A. Pretty often. Yeah, especially out of Portland. I feel like
9 I see it more. Yeah, I do see it quite often. I mean, at least a
10 handful of times a month.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah.

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

14 MS. BLUM: Sorry, Marvin, I skipped over you. Do you have
15 any?

16 MR. FRANTZ: That's okay.

17 BY MR. FRANTZ:

18 Q. There's a lot of interest outside the group here about the
19 door, how did the door come open, isn't it supposed to be a
20 secured door. You said to the best of your knowledge
21 everything -- the door was closed and locked per your normal
22 procedures, right?

23 A. Per our checklist.

24 Q. And then you recall somebody re-closing the door, one of the
25 flight attendants re-closing it.

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. From that point did it stay closed --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- and secured until you -- after you stopped and you were
5 ready to go back in the cabin? It was fine up --

6 A. Yes. It stayed closed and I remember when I -- we set the
7 parking brake and I stepped up and I opened the door and I flipped
8 the covered switch like I normally do.

9 Q. So it appeared to operate completely normally as you were
10 leaving the flight deck after you landed?

11 A. Yes. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. So when you -- did it surprise you that the door --

13 A. Yes. Yes.

14 Q. -- flew open because it's supposed to be a special secured --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. That was a shock (indiscernible) initially, and then you
17 started dealing with the important things.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you recall the captain say anything about the door when it
20 flew open? Did he make any comments that you recall?

21 A. Not that I recall.

22 MR. FRANTZ: That's all I got. Thank you.

23 BY MS. BLUM:

24 Q. Back to the checklist and the mask. So from what I'm
25 understanding, if you would've closed the door you might have been

1 able to establish communication --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- through the headset; is that correct?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Do you think, based on the time, the pressure you're under,
6 would it have helped you on that checklist if there was a note to
7 reestablish, close the door? Would that have helped you in that
8 scenario?

9 A. I don't know.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I don't know. Because communication is, how I felt in the
12 scenario, was secondary to navigating the airplane and to get the
13 airplane on the ground. And so the fact that -- I mean, we made
14 do. We tried and that's -- I felt like I put forth effort and
15 then it was -- that's all I could do. And it didn't work and so
16 we went back.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Now, I guess that's the one thing I wish I would've recalled
21 in my memory, but I still don't think I would've taken the time to
22 fold the oxygen mask up and put it in there and close the door. I
23 think I would've just kept the oxygen mask on the entire time.

24 Q. Do you have to actually stow the mask for that or is it just
25 the door? Could the mask be out and close the door?

1 A. I don't know.

2 Q. Yeah. So lastly, is there anything that we didn't ask that
3 you would like us to or is there anything you'd like to add?

4 A. I'm very thankful that everybody is okay and safe on the
5 ground. And I'm very, very, very, very thankful for all the
6 training that I've gotten to this point that ended on a good
7 note(indiscernible)

8 Q. Yeah. You guys did a great job and thank you for sharing
9 your experience. You have my card.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. If you think of anything I the next week, 2 weeks, please --
12 that you'd like to add, please feel free to contact me anytime to
13 share anything.

14 A. Okay.

15 MS. BLUM: With that we'll --

16 MR. ECKELBERG: You've got a direct line to me, too, as
17 well --

18 [REDACTED] Yeah.

19 MR. ECKELBERG: -- being your counsel.

20 MS. BLUM: Absolutely. Okay. That concludes our interview
21 at 11:48.

22 (Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
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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: ALASKA AIRLINES BOEING 737-9 MAX
IN-FLIGHT STRUCTURE FAILURE
NEAR PORTLAND, OREGON
ON JANUARY 5, 2024
Interview of [REDACTED]

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA24MA063

PLACE: Portland, Oregon

DATE: January 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.

[REDACTED]

Kay Maurer
Transcriber

Addendum to the NTSB Interview of [REDACTED]

Re the Alaska Airlines Boeing 737-9 Max
In-Flight Structure Failure on January 5, 2024
near Portland, Oregon

Through this Addendum, [REDACTED] adds to and amends the transcript of her NTSB interview on January 7, 2024.

The transcript is amended as follows:

1. P.8 Lines 5 & 6 read: "Frantz" Amend to "France"
2. P.16 Line 21 reads: "I heard heading" Amend to "I heard present heading"
3. P.20 Line 11 reads: "fuel 8-2-9" Amend to "fuel 18 point 9"
4. P.36 Line 6 reads: "kind of clock - - in a 4 o'clock" Amend to "10 o'clock and in a 4 o'clock"
5. P.40 Line 16 reads: "MAX" Amend to "Mask"