

DCA25LA163

OPERATIONAL FACTORS/HUMAN PERFORMANCE

Attachment 1

Flight Crew Interview Transcripts, Written Statements, and Erratum

May 23, 2025

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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INCIDENT AT THE ORLANDO *

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN ORLANDO, *

FLORIDA ON MARCH 20, 2025 *

*

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Accident No.: DCA25LA163

Interview of: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Captain

Southwest Airlines

Tuesday,
April 22, 2025

APPEARANCES:

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National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:37 a.m.)

DR. WILSON: And we are on the record at 10:37 a.m. My name is Katherine Wilson, I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB. I'll have my colleagues introduce themselves for the record.

MR. ETCHER: Hi, good morning, Captain. My name is Shawn Etcher, I'm an operational factors investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KEMNER: I'm Heidi Kemner, I'm an investigator with the FAA. I'm not an inspector, so nothing you say in this investigation can be used for enforcement against you, so just here like you, purely for safety.

MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

MR. RUMMEL: Good morning, John Rummel, flight ops, one of the captains, and working with the investigations team today, for this event.

MR. SHAVER: And Chris Shaver, I'm a safety investigator with the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association.

DR. WILSON: And for the record, if you could state your name and also spell your last name.

MR. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] a captain here at Southwest Airlines.

DR. WILSON: And you are entitled to have a representative with you, is there somebody that you would like to have with you today during this interview?

1 MR. [REDACTED] Chris.

2 DR. WILSON: All right, Chris, and if you could please state
3 your name for the record.

4 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Sure, it's Chris Christensen from the law
5 firm of Condon & Forsyth in New York and I'm here to represent the
6 captain.

7 DR. WILSON: Great. Is it okay if I call you [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
8 what --

9 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] fine.

10 DR. WILSON: [REDACTED]

11 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

12 DR. WILSON: Okay. As I mentioned, we're here strictly from
13 the safety side, so we just want to learn from you, as you've got
14 that firsthand knowledge of what happened on the day of the event.
15 We'll likely do two rounds of questions, the first one will be a
16 little bit longer than the second, but it's just because we'll
17 have some follow-ups and we're each going to take a turn asking
18 questions and we don't want to interrupt each other, so we'll all
19 probably have some follow-ups. If you need to take a break at any
20 time or talk to Chris, just let us and we can certainly pause the
21 recording.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

23 DR. WILSON: Is there anybody in this room that you don't
24 want to have here?

25 MR. [REDACTED] Uh-uh.

1 DR. WILSON: Shawn was hoping you were going to say him.

2 MR. ETCHER: Some day.

3 MR. [REDACTED] You could've gotten out if I did.

4 MR. ETCHER: It was this close.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Going home early.

6 (Laughter.)

7 MR. ETCHER: Put the barbeque on.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, right.

9 DR. WILSON: As I mentioned, we are going to record the
10 interview and have it transcribed and you'll have an opportunity
11 to review that, if you'd like to --

12 MR. [REDACTED] Excellent.

13 DR. WILSON: -- to make any clarifying statements to that.
14 Before we get started, do you have any questions for anybody?

15 MR. [REDACTED] I don't think so.

16 DR. WILSON: Okay.

17 INTERVIEW OF [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

18 BY DR. WILSON:

19 Q. All right. We asked you the hard question already, stating
20 your name and you gave us your title, so you're checking questions
21 off my list, it's quite perfect. What certificates and ratings do
22 you hold?

23 A. ATP, commercial, Beech 1900 type rating and 717 type rating,
24 7-3 type rating, CFI and CF double I.

25 Q. Okay. And about how much total time do you have?

1 A. About 20,000.

2 Q. All right. And how much of that is in the 737?

3 A. Looking at about 6300.

4 Q. All right. Are you a check airman?

5 A. No.

6 Q. No. Ever been a check airman?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. CliffsNotes version of your aviation background and
9 how you got to Southwest.

10 A. All right. Well, I was in high school and I was -- I needed
11 to take some electives, so my actual high school had a course
12 catalog, it was like this thick, of classes, so I took
13 woodworking, automotive, electrical, and sheet rock and all kinds
14 of stuff and they actually had a flying class, so I flew a Link
15 simulator, full motion, in high school, so we'd go in there and
16 we'd just practice straight and level, turns and climbs and
17 descents and stuff like that.

18 And at that point, it was definitely the most exercised my
19 mind had ever been, is just keeping the simulator, you know,
20 straight and level and all that. I felt exhilarated when I left
21 the simulator and really challenged, and it was my favorite class.
22 So eventually, we actually went flying in a Cessna 172 from
23 Republic on Long Island to Bridgeport, Connecticut over Long
24 Island Sound, switched pilots and then flew back and then at that
25 point I knew I wanted to be, you know, into flying. So he was the

1 father of two military pilots and he said all pilots are engineers
2 first, so I went to engineering school first and in my time at a
3 community college studying engineering, I found out about
4 Embry-Riddle and "you don't need a degree in engineering to become
5 a pilot" and so I transferred from there to Embry-Riddle Prescott
6 and started Embry-Riddle Prescott at age 22 and finished up there
7 and then went back home, taught at American Flyers, flew freight
8 for a while in the 310 at night and then went to CommutAir, did
9 that for three years and then in '02, February 4th of '02, I was
10 hired at AirTran and then three years later, April of 2005,
11 upgraded to captain at AirTran and then came over to Southwest on
12 November of 2014 and flew right seat for a year and a few months
13 and was -- started out in Baltimore as an FO and got back to
14 Atlanta as an FO and then held captain first in Oakland, which was
15 my choice, though, it wasn't like I was forced to be a captain in
16 Oakland, that was in January of 2016 and basically kind of went
17 around the system, Oakland, Houston, Dallas, Chicago, got back to
18 Atlanta, finally, and did a small stint out in LA and came back to
19 Atlanta, I can't believe I got back into Atlanta, in March of this
20 year, so I've been in Atlanta since.

21 Q. Awesome. So you got to -- date of hire, you said November of
22 2014?

23 A. That's when I switched over. The date of hire that Southwest
24 considers is actually February 4th of '02.

25 Q. Oh, okay.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Ever have any unsatisfactory check rides in the 737?

3 A. No.

4 Q. All right. So let's get to March 20th. If you pick a time
5 that works for you and just walk us through the events as you
6 recall them and up until when you exited the taxiway.

7 A. Okay. Exited the taxiway to go --

8 Q. At Hotel. So after the event.

9 A. Okay, all right. Well, the morning started out in Atlanta
10 and I got up at 3:30 that morning and got to the airport probably
11 at like 4:30, 5:00, somewhere in that area, reported to work usual
12 way, on the app, and basically just -- you know, I didn't know
13 that [REDACTED] was going to be my first officer, but when I saw him,
14 I'm like oh, this is great, I like [REDACTED] we'd flown together
15 years prior, but I remembered him as being a good first officer.

16 And so we just did the usual preflight stuff in Atlanta, it
17 was dark and, you know, we went through the normal briefings, you
18 know, and we took off, I guess it was a little bit early, you
19 know, we left the gate a little bit early and somewhere in the
20 flight we had the sunrise and it turned into daylight. But there
21 was some brief talking below 10, I'll have to say, on that flight
22 and coming into Orlando we noticed that they were launching 1-7
23 Right at Hotel 2, which wasn't on the ATIS and we kind of thought
24 that was odd and -- so anyway, we were like listen, let's be ready
25 for this on the way out, you know, this is probably what's going

1 to happen and the approach, the landing, it was [REDACTED] leg, he
2 was the pilot flying, I mean, really wasn't much to that, I mean,
3 it was pretty standard, we landed Runway 1-8 Right and instead of
4 coming north of the terminal and the airside, we ended up going
5 south and coming back up Golf we noticed they were launching
6 takeoffs from 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, so we were kind of ready for
7 that.

8 And we noticed all the construction, we knew the construction
9 beforehand, you know, they were NOTAM'd and there were men and
10 equipment working right there on the ramp and north of Hotel 1,
11 and so we got to the gate and really, there wasn't much, you know,
12 going on at that point, you know, we basically went inside, did
13 our walk-around, you know, [REDACTED] did the walk-around and came back
14 to the airplane and now -- I'm pilot flying and we did the usual
15 briefings, we briefed all of the closures and that we were going
16 to most likely be ending up taking off 1-7 Right/Hotel 2.

17 And the SID engine op procedures and the conditions were day
18 VFR, with light winds out of the southwest and we completed the
19 checklists, completed the briefings on the airside at that point,
20 it's a courtesy call with ground, they can't really see you and
21 ground was actually one frequency working both sides of the
22 airport and that was -- it happens, you know how it is, and so we
23 -- we gave them the courtesy call and we pushed back from the
24 gate, we knew it was going to be a short taxi and we started both
25 engines, I wanted to make sure that we had the necessary warm-up.

1 And so we got the engines started, completed the before taxi
2 checklist, ground gave us a clearance to taxi to the runway via
3 the ramp and Hotel 2 and coming around the airside from Gate 103,
4 we -- we were kind of thinking that we were number one for takeoff
5 and -- or if not number one, but close to it and it was a short
6 taxi, so we had completed the before taxi, all of the briefings,
7 and also the before takeoff flow items and we were running the
8 before takeoff checklist and we noticed that an airplane pushed
9 from Gate 120, ground had not mentioned that to us and that area
10 is not controlled by ground, so we let the ground know that the
11 airplane was pushed out in front of us and we're not going to be
12 able to get around it and there's too many -- you know, it was
13 just not doable, not safe.

14 So we stayed there, we waited there until both engines were
15 started on the other airplane, which was a Max, I'm going to say
16 it was five minutes, and we got switched from ground to tower at
17 that point and when they finished starting the engines, when they
18 called for taxi, we didn't hear anything because we were already
19 on tower, so they went in a direction -- so if we're facing south,
20 they're like this, they get a clearance, they come around this way
21 and we don't know if they came in behind us or went over Juliet to
22 land -- or take off on the western side of the airport at 1-8
23 Left. So we then contact tower and -- well, we were on tower and
24 we're like okay, we're ready to taxi and we -- at this point, we
25 had already completed the before takeoff checklist and all of the,

1 you know, flows and like setting up the airplane for LNAV, VNAV,
2 autothrottles on, you know, with both flight directors on and
3 stuff like that, all that stuff was done. And we then were
4 cleared for takeoff, and so we're facing south on the ramp and I
5 believe the clearance was, you know, Southwest 32, you know,
6 whatever, you're cleared for takeoff Runway 1-7 Right/Hotel 2,
7 RNAV to -- I think it was, you know, SCAPE (ph.) or something like
8 that. And we were both really surprised at that point, that we
9 were cleared for takeoff on the ramp.

10 And so both engines are started, we -- we definitely had the
11 warm-up period complete and I'm now taxiing south and then I turn
12 onto Hotel 2 and now it's make sure the final's clear, so I looked
13 out, there was an airplane landing 1-7 Left and we could tell that
14 it was landing 1-7 Left, so I said final's clear and I was looking
15 straight ahead at that point, 1-7 Right is verified, I was looking
16 at the red sign.

17 And so we taxied, we're continuing on and I said, "[REDACTED] did
18 we complete that before takeoff checklist?" and in his mind he
19 thought that he did, but he looked up and said, you know, he
20 wanted to check the packs, he wanted to check to see if there's
21 any kind of lights, he remembered selecting the recall button, but
22 that would be a certain amount of time, so I just asked him, you
23 know, did we complete the before takeoff checklist, he said yes
24 after that. And after I said final is clear, he also noted on his
25 TCAS the altitude of the other airplane, I believe it was like 200

1 feet, and we both confirmed that he was landing Runway 1-7 Left
2 and he looked off, he cleared Golf and he said, like, Taxiway Golf
3 is clear, we continue on and at this point I mistakenly turned
4 onto Taxiway Hotel, thinking that I was turning onto Runway 1-7
5 Right and the engines were approximately around -- anywhere from
6 30 to 40 percent N1.

7 And kind of all of this was happening around the same time
8 where, you know, [REDACTED] looked outside, I was clearing final and
9 then we turn onto the -- I turn onto the taxiway, this is where
10 the mistake occurred, this is -- this is the main reason that
11 we're here is I made this mistake and I am -- I just want to say
12 that this incident, 95 percent of it is my fault because of the
13 fact that I was looking at Runway 1-7 Right, the sign, and then I
14 turned, after we passed Golf, I thought we were turning onto the
15 runway and it was Hotel.

16 As we were -- as I was turning the aircraft onto Hotel, I
17 said the airplane is -- engines are spooled and set takeoff thrust
18 of -- I can't remember what it was, 90 point something, and I hit
19 TOGA and the airplane was almost exactly lined up, but not
20 precisely on the centerline, so it gave us like a jolt and I -- at
21 that point, I was -- focused a hundred percent of my attention
22 outside and maintaining centerline, which was a taxiway and I -- I
23 was -- for me, the most important thing at this point in time was
24 maintaining centerline and like a second later or maybe two
25 seconds, something like that, it's hard to tell, ATC said, you

1 know, "Southwest, you're on a taxiway," [REDACTED] like what the heck
2 is going on here, you know, you're on a taxiway, reject, and we
3 bring -- I brought the power back and at that point, I was like
4 wow, we are not on 1-7 Right, you know, and it was very quickly
5 after we started the takeoff roll I brought the airplane to a stop
6 straight ahead on the centerline and it's hard to say exactly at
7 what speed that happened, but it was -- I'm going to say less than
8 80 knots, let's just say.

9 So we stopped straight ahead and at that point, we turned
10 right onto Hotel 3 and ATC was like, do you guys want to get
11 taxied back to the runway for takeoff, we were like what, like, I
12 can't even believe you're asking that question, we just rejected a
13 takeoff on a taxiway, you know, we're definitely not going back to
14 runway -- to the runway for takeoff. I'm like, you know, we're
15 both really freaked out at this point and I knew we had to take
16 care of so many things still, yet, to make sure that we safely get
17 back to the gate.

18 And so we told them that we needed to taxi to a location
19 where we could run a brake cooling and at that point, we -- we
20 taxied straight ahead on Golf and stopped before Hotel, so we were
21 pretty much between Hotel 3 and Hotel 2 and about the middle area
22 of Golf, on that -- on that taxiway, we stopped and we were just
23 like what just happened, like, you know, wow, and we were both
24 like I cannot believe that this just happened to us. I can't
25 believe we've both been in this industry for quite a few years and

1 had a clean record and now suddenly, we just -- I -- I want to say
2 that it was my fault, I tried to -- I turned onto a taxiway
3 thinking it was a runway and at that point, we're -- I was just
4 like well, we got to still get back to the gate, you know, there's
5 still stuff that we got to take care of and at that point, we ran
6 the brake cooling and I said, [REDACTED] are you good to, you know,
7 run that and he said yes and I said, like, well, what speed do you
8 think we should put down for the brake cooling, we just kind of
9 agreed on 75 when we really didn't know exactly what it was, but
10 it turns out that we ended up doing -- I think it just -- it ended
11 up being the default, V1, and I don't think 75 ever got entered.

12 And so at that point it said wait 30 minutes and I'm --
13 dispatch is contacting us, give me a call, I got to call -- I got
14 to say something to the flight attendants, I have to say something
15 to the passengers, I have to call company dispatch and finish this
16 brake cooling, so there was a lot going on at this point. So
17 after we ran the brake cooling, we let -- I don't even know if
18 this is the right order of events, but we had contacted
19 maintenance, contacted operations, we sent dispatch an ACARS
20 message, like, we'll call you back when we get to the gate, we're
21 going to be out here for X number of minutes at that point,
22 because now it was under the 30 minutes, but -- so we sent them a
23 message on ACARS and we -- I spoke to the flight attendants and
24 the passengers and I just said to them we had an indication in the
25 cockpit that required us to reject and we're going to have to have

1 the airplane's brakes looked at, but we can't go back to the gate
2 and -- for X number of minutes. And so at the completion of that
3 30-minute wait time, we already had a gate, we had already
4 notified maintenance, we notified dispatch through ACARS and they
5 wanted me to call them, I told them I'd call them when I got to
6 the gate and so we taxied back to -- I believe it was around the
7 back to 108, I think is what we ended up going back to, we had to
8 make sure that the backside is cleared out, somebody's trying to
9 come out at the same time and so we did that.

10 Somewhere along the way I shut the engine down, but it was
11 definitely not after like the, you know, three-minute cool-down,
12 it was quite a bit after that, but I eventually ended up shutting
13 Number 2 down, taxiing back to the gate, single engine and then we
14 got to the gate, we were marshaled in, safety zone was clear and
15 we -- yeah, I shut the other engine down, the APU was already
16 running at this point and now the floodgates open, you know,
17 there's so many tasks that I have to do and complete at this point
18 and everything's kind of happening at once.

19 So maintenance steps on the airplane first and they're like
20 okay, what was, you know, the weight, the barometric pressure, the
21 temperature outside, you know, all of these things, what speed,
22 and [REDACTED] I think, at this point was -- he was talking to the
23 union and dispatch was also calling me on the phone at this point,
24 so there was a lot going on and I was talking to the maintenance
25 guy, I wrote everything up and meanwhile I'm on the phone with

1 dispatch and I'm like, I need to speak to the chief pilot of NOC,
2 you know, and let's get him in on this conversation, he's like
3 well, he's not available right now and can you do the maintenance
4 three-way call for the write-up on the brakes and I'm like, I have
5 maintenance right here, you know, let's take care of that phone
6 call later and I will -- I will call you back. I did that and
7 somewhere in there -- and I think it happened before I was talking
8 to dispatch, but I let the passengers and the flight attendants
9 know that okay, right now maintenance is on the airplane, they're
10 inspecting the brakes, we're going to let you know what they find
11 and what the outcome is of this.

12 And at that point the write-up was done, the maintenance guy
13 had other guys working with him and he's like, the message on the
14 ACARS that you guys got, did it say, you know, 30 million foot
15 pounds was exceeded and I said we didn't see that message. So he
16 went out there with a laser, since we estimated the speed, he
17 measured the temperature of the brakes with the laser and he did
18 his own calculation on the foot pounds, he came up with like 16.8
19 million foot pounds.

20 But anyway, [REDACTED] got off the phone with our union, if I
21 remember correctly, I don't think he was talking on the phone when
22 he left the cockpit, he was like, we're going to get off the
23 airplane, we're going to go to operations and we'll call you back.
24 So James Roach, he's the chief pilot in Orlando, a great guy,
25 super amazing, he was at the airplane, he met us at the airplane

1 and he was like, guys, listen, I understand, you guys have just
2 been through a lot, but we were like -- I immediately was like, I
3 cannot believe I tried to take off on at taxiway. He's like,
4 listen, come on down to operations and we're like, we need a room
5 to ourselves, we need to be able to talk this out and discuss
6 everything with the union.

7 So he was incredibly helpful, we went down to operations in
8 Orlando and we basically jumped in a room, you know, actually it
9 was -- like a chief pilot's office, so there was the desk, the
10 chair and then maybe two chairs in front, [REDACTED] and I were just
11 like oh, my gosh, what happened, you know, like still recovering,
12 like, our adrenaline's at the peak where, you know, we've already
13 been through the incident and we just kind of tried to unwind and
14 tried to -- like, listen, let's remember what happened and let's
15 just try to get this down while it's still in our mind, exactly
16 what happened in a way that just is honest and just a hundred
17 percent exactly what happened.

18 We worked on that for a while and both wrote it out
19 separately and you guys got the narrative, I mean, that narrative
20 was complete by the time we left Orlando. And, I mean, that's --
21 that's pretty much about it, we stayed there for a while, I mean,
22 James was very much assisting, very much helpful. I did finally
23 call dispatch, I had that three-way, but it was like a five-way,
24 the chief pilot was there, SOD was there, maintenance, dispatch,
25 and myself and, you know, that's our procedure with any kind of

1 maintenance write-up, it's always going to have to be at least
2 three, maintenance, dispatch, and myself, but that was five. That
3 was done and we stayed there until about 3:00 and then headed back
4 to Atlanta on a deadhead, you know, all shaken up, like, I cannot
5 believe that this just happened to us, you know, and we were met
6 with Dan Mong, our chief pilot in Atlanta -- I'm sorry, Dan Mix,
7 the chief pilot, Dan Mong and Brian Barefield. Dan Mong and Brian
8 Barefield are both in the union and we went, basically told him
9 exactly what happened, I mean, pretty much exactly like this
10 conversation we had with them, with those two guys. Here we are,
11 you know, and it has been an unbelievable experience for me,
12 personally.

13 Q. Thank you for that, that was very detailed and really
14 helpful, so -- you doing okay, do you need to take a break or
15 anything?

16 A. No, I don't think so.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. All right. I do have some follow-up questions, I'll probably
20 jump around a little bit, just to help fill in some of the gaps
21 that I've got.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. So you mentioned, as you were approaching the runway, you
24 verified with the red sign, do you just use one verification, do
25 you look at anything else for verifying --

1 A. There's like multiple --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- ways to verify --

4 Q. Um-hum.

5 A. -- that we're on the runway.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. You know, the runway itself, the numbers, we're not going to
8 be able to see the numbers on a Hotel 2 intersection departure.
9 The magnetic course of the runway itself and, you know, like I was
10 saying, runway markings, the lighting that we should see as
11 opposed to the lighting that we do see, and the colors of the
12 markings, we use all available resources that we have, really.

13 Q. Okay, good. And do you recall doing that on that day?

14 A. I do recall looking at that sign --

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. -- and saying that, you know, we're taxiing onto Runway 1-7
17 Right --

18 Q. Right.

19 A. -- and I knew that I wasn't going to see the numbers --

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. -- and when I made that final turn, I did not verify that,
22 the magnetic course, at that point.

23 Q. And is it just the responsibility of the pilot flying or does
24 the pilot monitoring also verify the runway?

25 A. He does, but he doesn't verbally say Runway 1-7 Right is

1 verified.

2 Q. Um-hum. And do you have a moving map up or anything?

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. Yeah. Do you recall referencing that during the taxi?

5 A. On the taxi out, yes, but on the runway section, no.

6 Q. You mentioned that you wouldn't see the numbers because it
7 was an intersection takeoff, do you do anything different when
8 it's an intersection takeoff?

9 A. Well, you want to make sure that you're on the runway, you
10 know, and you're going to use all available resources that you
11 have and one of them being the magnetic course, but it's easy to
12 use a magnetic course that corresponds to a taxiway would've been
13 the same thing.

14 Q. Was there any pressure to depart, were you running late or
15 anything that you can recall?

16 A. No, we weren't in a rush, no, there was no pressure to take
17 off, you know, they weren't like immediate or anything like that.

18 Q. You mentioned being around 30 to 40 percent N1, was that as
19 you were making the turn, was that when you were on the runway? I
20 just want to clarify where you were when you recall that.

21 A. I'm going to say when we were taxiing up to the runway --

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. -- and making the turn onto the taxiway --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- about then.

1 Q. Is that pretty normal as you're making a turn, as you're
2 taking a runway?

3 A. It's, you know, in our book, it's -- you know, a rolling
4 takeoff is preferred and it doesn't -- you don't always do that,
5 you know, there are some times when you are taxiing onto the
6 runway when you've been cleared for takeoff, that taxi power is
7 approximately 40 percent N1.

8 Q. The construction, did that hinder the view, at all, or any --
9 your ability to see any of the signage or the -- any of the
10 pavement markings?

11 A. It did block us from seeing the actual numbers, they were
12 farther down, but it didn't -- they must have moved the sign or
13 maybe that Runway 1-7 Right runway sign was always at Hotel 2, but
14 that was clearly visible at that point. But yeah, there was --
15 there was a lot going on with, you know, men and equipment sitting
16 there, the airplane in front of us that moved and then being
17 cleared for takeoff on the ramp, that was something that I had
18 never experienced and -- flying in and out of Orlando, that's
19 never happened.

20 Q. It sounds like there were several things going on, you had
21 the aircraft, that it pushed back from the gate, you had some
22 construction, any other distractions in the cockpit that you
23 recall?

24 A. Not really.

25 Q. Okay. You mentioned sterile cockpit and that maybe there was

1 a little bit of lack of adherence under 10,000, I'm assuming that
2 was flying into Orlando?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay. Is there a policy about sterile cockpit on the ground
5 when you're taxiing, as well?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Oh, yeah.

9 Q. How about on the taxi, while on the ramp and to 1-7 Right,
10 did you all adhere to sterile cockpit during that time, do you
11 recall?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. How often have you flown in and out of Orlando?

14 A. I've flown in and out of Orlando, I guess, this year, that
15 was the first time this year.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. First time since they did the construction on the ramp area,
18 but I'm quite familiar with the area and typically, they do use
19 two frequencies for tower and ground.

20 Q. Okay. When would you normally expect to be switched to the
21 tower frequency?

22 A. Coming off the ramp is normally when they'd switch you over
23 to tower.

24 Q. Um-hum. How did [REDACTED] seem that day?

25 A. He seemed fine.

1 Q. Yeah, okay.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Any issues on the flight down?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. How was your CRM with him?

6 A. I would say good, yeah, good communication, good rapport,
7 good briefings, definitely thorough about the construction and the
8 approaches.

9 Q. Had [REDACTED] been -- or we can talk about when you were in
10 Atlanta, so [REDACTED] being the pilot flying, how does that transition
11 work, when are you transferring controls in the process of, you
12 know, the taxi and then on the runway, when do you transfer
13 controls to the pilot flying?

14 A. Lined up on the runway centerline --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- and at that point, it could be line up and wait and -- or
17 it could be, you know, clear for takeoff --

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. -- and normally, it goes -- you have the aircraft and he
20 turns back to me and says yes, I have the aircraft, my controls
21 and, you know, then we make the transfer at that point.

22 Q. Okay. And are you normally stopped when that happens?

23 A. Usually, yeah.

24 DR. WILSON: Um-hum, okay. I do have some additional
25 questions, but I'm going to pass it along to Shawn and then I'll

1 save the remainder of my questions for round two.

2 MR. ETCHER: Thank you. Before we start, do you need a break
3 or anything, you doing all right?

4 MR. [REDACTED] No.

5 MR. ETCHER: We've been going about an hour-ish.

6 MR. [REDACTED] I think I'm good to go, yeah.

7 MR. ETCHER: Just wanted to make sure.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

9 MR. ETCHER: I didn't want you to think oh, man, I really
10 need to take a break, so --

11 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you, Shawn.

12 MR. ETCHER: No, no worries.

13 BY MR. ETCHER:

14 Q. As always, Kat always asks really good questions and she
15 usually takes a bunch of them, so I'm just going to -- my
16 questions are going to be all over the map, so forgive me for --

17 A. That's fine.

18 Q. -- not feeling like there's any logic to them. Earlier when
19 you were talking to her, you said you had 6700 hours in the Boeing
20 737, give or take?

21 A. Yean, about that, yeah.

22 Q. Plus or minus a thousand, right? How much of that is as PIC?

23 A. Most of it is PIC, yeah.

24 Q. Okay. All right, perfect. Are you an a.m. guy or a p.m.
25 guy?

1 A. A.m.

2 Q. A.m.?

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. You typically like to fly the mornings versus the evenings?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay. All righty. You had said earlier with Kat that you
7 had transferred back to Atlanta in March of this year --

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. -- '25, like a month ago or do you mean March of 2024, like
10 13 months ago?

11 A. No, a month ago.

12 Q. Okay. Wow, that is soon, then, huh?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Yeah, nice. That's got to be nice not to commute, huh?

15 A. Surprised to get back in.

16 Q. Yeah, I bet you are. I know Kat asked you if had any unsat,
17 like, sim rides or anything like that, have you ever had any
18 issues on line checks?

19 A. No.

20 Q. No unsats on line checks or anything?

21 A. Uh-uh.

22 Q. Perfect. I always just like to make sure. Captains are the
23 only ones that get lucky line checks every year, so --

24 A. No lucky line checks.

25 Q. -- I just wanted to make sure. Kind of walk me through, if

1 you will, let's go back to Atlanta that morning.

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. You guys are taxiing out, it's [REDACTED] leg --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- to Orlando, okay. So you're taxiing out and you're coming
6 up on the runways and I know, Atlanta can be Atlanta, it can be
7 busy, maybe not that early in the morning, but it can still be
8 kind of busy. Walk me through, I'm a brand new FO, I'm flying
9 with you, let's say, sorry for your luck, but what should I expect
10 as we get closer to the runway, what are you looking for, how are
11 you verifying, do you verbalize, kind of walk me through the time
12 you get line up and wait or clear for takeoff and as you're
13 pulling on the runway, kind of help me understand, through your
14 eyes, what you're looking for, what you're seeing.

15 A. Okay. When we get close to the runway, it's my
16 responsibility to, first of all, check to make sure that the min
17 fuel for takeoff, the fuel on board is greater than that and as I
18 approach the runway, I'm also going to do a flow in my own mind,
19 check, make sure that we have the trim set for takeoff, the speed
20 brakes are down and locked in the detent -- not locked, but in the
21 detent position and we have the flaps set for takeoff, correct
22 setting and that's also seated in the detent. Coming up into the
23 FCP, I then go through is this an LNAV departure, LNAV's verified
24 if it is, VNAV, autothrottles will be switched on at this point
25 and I make sure that both flight directors on and then I go ahead

1 and push the button for the flight attendants and, you know,
2 listen for their briefing, it's real short, it's just, you know,
3 we are clear for takeoff, make sure that your seatbelts are
4 fastened. And then I call for the before takeoff checklist and we
5 complete the before takeoff checklist and now we're getting closer
6 to the actual turn to get onto the runway, that's typically --
7 that typically happens parallel to the runway, as we're taxiing
8 down to the runway, we're making this turn, everything's complete
9 at this point, okay, we verify the runway at that point and I'm
10 also verifying final.

11 So I look out, as I'm making this turn here, I'm looking
12 straight ahead, any aircraft on final, okay, and when I complete
13 the turn, I then verify Runway 1-7 Right or in Atlanta it would be
14 2-7 Right/Lima Charlie that morning, make sure that we have all of
15 that in and that it's the correct runway, we get onto -- now
16 you're taxiing onto the runway, double verification, check the
17 numbers, check your magnetic course and make sure that you're on
18 Runway 2-7 Right/Lima Charlie and at that point transfer the
19 controls over to [REDACTED] because it's his leg. And yeah, that's --
20 that's about what we do.

21 Q. Okay. So fast forward a few hours, we're in Orlando, we're
22 taxiing out, again, you're still flying with me, I'm new, we're
23 not going down a parallel taxiway parallel to the runway, we're
24 kind of coming perpendicular to the runway --

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- so there's a few changes, is there any changes that you
2 do, as the captain, to verify on the runway because, correct me if
3 I'm wrong, on this event, taken at Hotel 2, you didn't have runway
4 numbers painted, you didn't have that parallel taxiway so you
5 could have a chance to look on final --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- as you're turning, kind of walk me through, did you verify
8 magnetic heading, kind of just help me understand how this
9 situation changes compared to what you had that morning in
10 Atlanta.

11 A. In this particular case, it's likely fast forward to -- we're
12 already at the point where we're about to enter the runway, so
13 we're going through the same procedures that we would after the
14 parallel taxi is complete, so I'm now going through those same
15 procedures in my mind as I do that.

16 Q. Okay. So help me understand, I want to see through your
17 eyes, how do you verify the runway? Because at Hotel 2, like I
18 said, there's no runway paint, how do you verify the runway?

19 A. Well, if I didn't taxi onto a taxiway, I make sure that,
20 first of all, the letters or the runway markings are white --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- and if I can, as I taxi onto an intersection departure, I
23 look back to see if I can actually see the numbers and in many
24 cases you can see the numbers at that point, so I look back and
25 see, okay, that is 1-7 Right and here I am at Hotel 2, you know,

1 and then when you turn onto the runway, you're looking down,
2 you're checking to see is this magnetic course the same, you know,
3 I'm not supposed to be taking off Runway 2-4, I'm on the magnetic
4 course of 1-7. That's what we normally do.

5 Q. All right. So on the morning of the event, did you -- as you
6 were taking the -- I'll put it in quotes -- "the runway," did you
7 look back to your left to see if you could see, as like a
8 reflective habit?

9 A. You know, I do remember when I cleared the final, that I was
10 looking back at the number 1-7 Right and at that point, yes, I
11 did.

12 Q. All right. Is Taxiway Hotel similar width as Runway 1-7
13 Left?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay, I just --

16 A. No, it's not.

17 Q. Okay, I just wanted to make sure, your bird's eye view, you
18 had a good understanding --

19 A. Yeah, no, it's definitely not.

20 Q. Okay. And I know you say you look, when you're on the
21 runway, for the white, the white markings and everything.

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. What caused you -- and I'm asking for maybe an opinion, maybe
24 some logic, help me to understand what caused you not to recognize
25 the yellow centerline stripe versus the white dashed runway lines?

1 A. You know, I've been asking myself that question a lot and I
2 think that part of it was being cleared for takeoff on the ramp,
3 part of it meaning, like, my mind has a certain amount of time
4 built into it that you'd be taking the runway after you get that
5 takeoff clearance and it seemed to me, at that point, that was the
6 logical place to make the turn, we had already cleared one
7 taxiway, that's typically how it usually is, we clear a taxiway
8 and then we're -- the next is the runway, so we cleared the
9 taxiway and I mistakenly turned onto the next taxiway.

10 Q. I think with -- Kat had asked a question or while you were
11 kind of walking us through you had said as you guys were coming
12 out of the ramp, the FO had looked right and said clear right on
13 Golf?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Is that something you expect from your FOs or is that kind of
16 a -- maybe just a [REDACTED]ism, if you will?

17 A. You know, it doesn't happen all the time with FOs, it's not
18 necessarily our procedures to clear each time we cross a taxiway,
19 it's not our -- but, you know, he's just being diligent, he's
20 looking down the taxiway to make sure that there's nothing there.

21 Q. Okay. Kind of think back just a little bit before you guys
22 got off the ramp, I know you were waiting on company aircraft to
23 move, can you recall -- I want to say exactly, but I know you
24 recall to that inch, but kind of generally where you guys were
25 when you flipped over to tower, were you prior to Hotel 1, were

1 you prior to -- you know, were you still halfway around the ramp?
2 Just kind of help me understand, I'm just trying to figure out how
3 close you guys were, in my brain.

4 A. It was before Hotel 1.

5 Q. Okay. All right. Would it help if you had a map, would that
6 maybe help you a little bit? If it doesn't, it's okay.

7 A. Okay.

8 MR. ETCHER: And Chris, just for the record, we're showing
9 the 10-9 chart for Orlando.

10 MR. [REDACTED] I'm going to say it was right -- actually, right
11 in here, so it would be right around Hotel 1.

12 MR. ETCHER: Okay.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

14 BY MR. ETCHER:

15 Q. All right, excellent. Thank you much. It just helps me kind
16 of piece it all together in my pea-sized brain, so I appreciate
17 you helping me with that. I know you said you have the AMM and
18 you have it up when you taxi. Does it mark taxiway closures on it
19 for you, considering the NOTAMs, or is that something you guys
20 have to manually go in --

21 A. We'll put in, like -- typically, we go ahead and mark it with
22 red, the taxiway closures. Yeah.

23 Q. Is that something -- I know you said we, is that something
24 you do or is that something that's kind of a procedure, is that --

25 A. That's something I do.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. All right. How does that work for you?

4 A. It works pretty well.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. You know, I mean, a lot of these, we're in an environment
7 where there's taxiway closures everywhere and sometimes getting
8 back to the gate is like a labyrinth of closures that you have to
9 meander your way through. It's very helpful to have it marked in
10 red, what's closed.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. So you'll spend time doing that before you even get to the
13 runway or before you get to the airport, typically, you're doing
14 that at cruise and that's when it was done --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- for both of us.

17 Q. All right. Have you ever had any issues with the AMM not
18 being accurate? That you can recall.

19 A. You know, there are times when the actual perspective of the
20 way it's displayed is not exactly how it would be displayed. So
21 like, you're thinking of your -- of two runways, one's long and
22 one's short, well, the way it's displayed, one might be like a
23 tiny, little postage stamp when it's actually a lot bigger than
24 that.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So there are times when it's not exact.

2 Q. Okay. You haven't had any issues with a taxi that's like --
3 it says you're on Golf and you're on Hotel or something --

4 A. I -- no.

5 Q. -- that you recall?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Okay. Perfect. Was it the same plane you brought in from
8 Atlanta? Did you guys have a plane swap or --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- you kept it?

11 A. The same plane.

12 Q. Oh, that's always nice --

13 A. Yeah, it is.

14 Q. The construction markings, themselves, you're right there at
15 the ramp getting ready to go on Hotel 2 and the construction's all
16 the way off your left, was the barricades, was it lit up, kind of
17 help me understand, was it well defined or were you just kind of
18 like I think that's construction, I don't know?

19 A. You could definitely tell that it was construction because of
20 the actual men and equipment on the taxiway. As far as it being,
21 like, barricaded off in front of the construction area, no.

22 Q. Okay, all right. Is that something you would expect to see,
23 for it to be barricaded off or do you see it kind of both ways?

24 A. You see it both ways.

25 Q. Okay. Did you have any issues with the airplane at all, you

1 know, I mean any mechanicals, any MELs, CDLs?

2 A. You know, I don't think so.

3 Q. And you kept an airplane and it was a clean plane?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. It must've been your lucky day, huh?

6 A. I wish.

7 Q. I believe the last question or maybe paraphrase, maybe two
8 questions. Sometimes Southwest crews are known to taxi at a very,
9 very, very brisk walk. How would you classify your taxi, is it a
10 stroll, a brisk walk, half a jog, a sprint?

11 A. No.

12 Q. V1?

13 A. Right. Definitely not V1. No, I would say mine's actually
14 -- depending on where we are, like this -- we -- it was a slow,
15 slow taxi on this particular day, on this particular incident.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. You know, you land at Denver, you have two miles to taxi to
18 the gate, it's not going to be that slow, I'm not going to be
19 inching along at a slow walk, it will be -- it will be a brisk
20 walk at that point.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. So just for my understanding, at Orlando that morning, it was
24 not a -- I'll use your term, a brisk walk like Denver, it was
25 more --

1 A. No, it was like inching along, extremely slow, much slower
2 than normal.

3 Q. Why?

4 A. Because of -- I mean, first of all, you're on a ramp, second
5 of all, there's construction and third, there's -- you know, a lot
6 of these areas that we operate in, they're tight, you know, and
7 there's like constant, how shall we say, threats, potential
8 threats of men and equipment, driving tugs, most of them see you,
9 some of them don't, you know, they're locked into what they're
10 doing. Airplanes pushing, airplanes taxiing. So no, it was
11 definitely one of those, you know, you're moving at a crawl space
12 just because of the tight quarters and the construction.

13 MR. ETCHER: Okay. I told you that was probably going to be
14 my last question or two for this round, so I'm going to let my
15 brain percolate on that a little bit.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

17 MR. ETCHER: I appreciate you helping fill in some of my gray
18 areas --

19 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

20 MR. ETCHER: -- so I appreciate it. Kat.

21 DR. WILSON: How about now, do you need a break?

22 MR. [REDACTED] You guys good?

23 DR. WILSON: Yeah, we'll go as long as you --

24 MR. [REDACTED] All right.

25 DR. WILSON: -- you're ready to go. All right.

1 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah. No, we can keep going.

2 DR. WILSON: Heidi.

3 BY MS. KEMNER:

4 Q. I just have one question. Great overview and explanation.
5 You mentioned rolling takeoffs, does Southwest have a policy that
6 allows for rolling takeoffs?

7 A. It does.

8 Q. Okay. And then when you plan for a rolling takeoff, is there
9 a different way you brief the departure or the takeoff?

10 A. Typically, you would brief if you're going to do that and
11 sometimes you're taxiing onto the runway and you're being cleared
12 for takeoff and if you know ahead of time, you plan on doing a
13 rolling takeoff, you definitely brief it.

14 MS. KEMNER: Okay. Awesome, thank you. That's all I had.

15 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

16 BY MR. RUMMEL:

17 Q. [REDACTED] thank you very much, very informed so far. I just
18 have a couple questions around distractions, you mentioned -- I
19 think you might've mentioned, just to clarify, that you didn't
20 have a lot of distractions, can we revisit that just for a second?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Maybe thinking that through again, is there any other -- can
23 you think of anything at all that might've been a distraction for
24 you, you know, getting to the runway that day? Out of the normal,
25 you know --

1 A. I mean --

2 Q. -- distractions that we get.

3 A. Oh, yeah, there's -- I mean, as far as the takeoff clearance,
4 that was definitely a distraction.

5 Q. Okay, okay, yeah.

6 A. Oh, definitely. As far as, like, the men and equipment,
7 definitely a distraction because there's always construction at
8 these airports, but it's not always at the departure end of the
9 runway where we're about to take off, you know, it's at various
10 taxiways or certain runways are closed, but yeah, definitely
11 distracted with that and when [REDACTED] cleared the taxiway, it was a
12 bit of a distraction, okay, not much.

13 Q. Right, sure.

14 A. When we were taxiing out and I said, you know, final's
15 clear --

16 Q. Um-hum.

17 A. -- and then he gave me the altitude readout of the airplane,
18 a little bit of a distraction.

19 Q. Um-hum, yeah. Would you categorize the time lapse from
20 performing the before takeoff checklist, holding for the Max to
21 start engines, to the occasion when you had queried [REDACTED] about
22 hey, did we perform it, would that be also in that bucket of
23 distraction, maybe or --

24 A. Yeah, I would say so.

25 Q. Okay. Talking about taxi for moment, with the -- you talked

1 about taxi speed and the -- some of the challenges of probably an
2 extended ramp taxi due to the closing of Golf, would that be a
3 fair statement?

4 A. Absolutely.

5 Q. Where would you -- if Golf wasn't closed, would that have
6 impacted this event at all, do you think? Like, for example,
7 would you have exited from Gate 103, the ramp area --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- sooner --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- than later?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And you mentioned, you know, in your mind's eye, kind of
14 having to cross maybe one taxiway to get to a runway.

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. Thinking this through a little bit on Golf, if you were on
17 Golf the whole way -- because Golf was closed, correct?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Did that impact -- have any impact, do you think, on the
20 event?

21 A. I would say yes. Yeah.

22 MR. RUMMEL: Okay. Let's see, what else? I think that's all
23 I have. Thank you very much.

24 DR. WILSON: All right. Chris.

25 BY MR. SHAVER:

1 Q. Yeah, thanks, [REDACTED] Just a couple quick ones. So you
2 guys are taking out, you said final's clear and 1-7 Right,
3 verified Hotel 2 or whatever, do you recall or is there a policy
4 or do you have a personal policy, does anyone ever -- do you ever
5 clear the runway surface, you know, or is just clear in the final?
6 Like, does someone say runway's clear as you're taxiing onto a
7 runway?

8 A. There definitely is a -- we always clear the path --

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. -- that we're about to take on, so yes, there's definitely --
11 we always clear that.

12 Q. And you verbalize it, like you verbalize -- do you verbalize
13 it or do you just do it?

14 A. It's one of those where you do it and you say 1-7 Right's
15 verified.

16 Q. Um-hum. Do you clear the traffic, do you clear the runway as
17 well?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. Definitely.

21 Q. And then just one clarification for me, too. So as you're
22 making the turn onto Hotel, about how far through the turn do you
23 think it was when you -- when you pressed the TOGA button?

24 A. It was almost at the very end of the turn, completion of the
25 turn where we were almost lined up.

1 Q. Okay. Is there any kind of a policy on that --

2 A. No, you want to be lined up, specifically, on the centerline.

3 MR. SHAVER: Okay. That's all I have.

4 DR. WILSON: Great. Well, that completes round one.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

6 DR. WILSON: Round two is usually much quicker, it's just
7 follow-ups that we have, so if you're ready to keep going,
8 we'll --

9 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Do you mind if we take a break?

10 DR. WILSON: No.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

12 DR. WILSON: Sure, of course. We'll pause the recording at
13 11:39.

14 (Off the record at 11:39 a.m.)

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

16 DR. WILSON: All right, we're back on the record at 11:51
17 a.m.

18 BY DR. WILSON:

19 Q. Okay, round two usually quicker, like I said. Again, I'll
20 jump around a little bit just because just trying to fill in some
21 of those gaps. We were talking about when you pressed the TOGA
22 switch, I think, right as we finished up round two (sic) and I
23 just want to clarify, when would you normally push the TOGA
24 switch?

25 A. Lined up on the centerline.

1 Q. Okay, thank you. We've talked about rolling takeoffs and
2 because we have -- people read our interviews who may not be
3 familiar with those terms, could you just describe what a rolling
4 takeoff is?

5 A. You're taxiing onto a runway with approximately 40 percent
6 N1, it's usually 30 to 40, and you're then lined up on the runway
7 centerline, you've been cleared for takeoff. At that point you
8 would not bring the power back to idle and then go forward to N1
9 again and let the engine stabilize, you -- the engine is
10 stabilized, you check that, you check the runway and then you hit
11 TOGA.

12 Q. Okay, thank you. And I believe you said that if you're
13 planning to do a rolling takeoff, that would be something that's
14 briefed?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Would you have considered -- was this a rolling takeoff?

17 A. This was something that we -- we weren't -- I was not
18 planning a rolling takeoff, definitely not.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I figured I would be taxiing out to the runway, onto the
21 runway, bring it up to N1, let the engines stabilize for a brief
22 second and then hitting TOGA.

23 Q. Okay. So this wasn't briefed, just to be clear.

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. How would you characterize the workload on the taxi

1 out?

2 A. In this particular event?

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. There was a lot of work.

5 Q. Okay. If we were to give you like a scale of 1 to 10, where
6 do you think that would kind of fall? Ten being the highest
7 workload.

8 A. I'm going to say 8.

9 Q. Okay. What would a normal taxi out be like, where do you
10 think your workload would be?

11 A. Probably 3 to 5.

12 Q. All right, that's helpful. Thank you. After the event, were
13 you -- I don't believe you were drug and alcohol screened.

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay. Did you file an ASAP report?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. There's a signs and symptoms document that we
18 received, is that something that you complete or does somebody
19 complete that for you after an event?

20 A. Signs and symptoms?

21 Q. All right. Well, you don't know, you didn't know what it
22 was, either, okay.

23 A. I don't know what that is, honestly.

24 Q. Okay. Well, I learned for the first time on this event,
25 also, so all right. So it's not something that you completed.

1 A. No.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I mean, that's not a question on an ASAP.

4 Q. No, no, no.

5 A. So, no.

6 Q. Okay, all right. I want to walk through activities in the
7 three days prior to the event, so if you have a calendar or
8 anything that you need to pull up, you can certainly do that --

9 A. All right.

10 Q. -- if it's helpful.

11 A. Yeah, I'll pull up the trip that I was on. Yeah. Got it.

12 Q. Okay. Starting on Monday, March 17th, so I'll ask you about
13 times you woke up, times you went to bed, your activities, things
14 like that, just to give you an overview of what I'm -- what I'm
15 going to be looking for, but -- so Monday, March 17th, do you know
16 or do you recall the time you woke up that morning?

17 A. I was in Detroit and -- wait a second, I'm sorry, I'm looking
18 at the actual -- where I started. I was in Pensacola on the 17th,
19 Monday the 17th. I got up around 9:00 a.m.

20 Q. Local time?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. All right. And what were your activities that day,
23 you were working?

24 A. Yeah. I was at the hotel and it was a Hyatt Place, I
25 believe, I stayed at the hotel and had breakfast, worked out and

1 my report time was at 12:50, so I think we had like a 12:20 van or
2 something like that, so I didn't really do anything, I just stayed
3 at the hotel.

4 Q. Okay. How many legs did you fly that day?

5 A. On the 17th, three.

6 Q. Okay. And where did you end up that night?

7 A. Pensacola.

8 Q. Oh, back to Pensacola, okay. And what --

9 A. Wait a minute. I want to make sure that we're on the same
10 page. That's where I overnighted, in Pensacola on the 17th.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. So the next -- when I woke up in Pensacola, that day I did
13 three legs. Is that the day you're talking about?

14 Q. March 17th.

15 A. March 17th, before, I did three, yeah.

16 Q. Okay. You started in Pensacola on March 17th and ended in
17 Pensacola?

18 A. No, no, no, no, I'm sorry.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I misunderstood you there. I started in Detroit.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. All right. And flew three legs and ended in Pensacola.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And was that the day that you woke up at 9:00 and had a 12:50

1 report, was that in Detroit?

2 A. No, my report time in Detroit was at 5:05 in the afternoon,
3 in the evening.

4 Q. Okay. So on the morning of March 17th in Detroit, do you
5 recall what time you woke up?

6 A. It was early, I'll just say. I don't remember exactly what
7 time, but it was not like 12:00 in the afternoon, it was early.

8 Q. Okay. And what were your activities that day? Prior to your
9 5:05 report time.

10 A. Yes, later on that day. I did have breakfast at a restaurant
11 that was not at the hotel, I did work out and spent some time
12 reading and writing, as well, and -- yeah, that's about it.

13 Q. Okay. So you had a 5:05 report time, how many legs did you
14 fly that night?

15 A. So, went from Detroit to Baltimore and I ended up in
16 Baltimore at 7:22, then I deadheaded from Baltimore to Nashville
17 at 7:50, arrived in Nashville at 8:53 and then Nashville to
18 Pensacola, we left at 21:25 or 9:25 and then we got in there at
19 10:40.

20 Q. Okay. All right. And what time do you think you went to bed
21 in Pensacola that night?

22 A. I got in at 10:40, probably got to the hotel after 11:00,
23 about midnight.

24 Q. Okay. Do you recall any problems falling asleep or staying
25 asleep?

1 A. No.

2 Q. All right. So Tuesday, March 18th, perhaps we covered this,
3 is this when you woke up in Pensacola at 9:00 a.m. --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- local time --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- you had breakfast, you exercised, 12:50 report, 12:20 van?

8 A. Yeah, that was where I didn't leave the hotel.

9 Q. Right, Hyatt Place.

10 A. I just stayed there.

11 Q. Okay. And you had three legs that day.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And where did you end up on March 18th in the evening?

14 A. March 18th, I ended up in Atlanta at 10:20.

15 Q. Okay. And then you went home that night?

16 A. Yeah, drove home, got home, it would be probably around
17 midnight and that night, my daughter and her husband were staying
18 at the house and they were about to leave for a cruise the next
19 morning and I'm going to say I went to sleep around probably
20 12:30.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. They were already asleep, but I did want to see them off in
23 the morning, so I woke up early, saw them off, hung out for a bit
24 and then went and took a nap, not a very long nap, but enough to
25 get me through the rest of the day and then I started going to

1 sleep, the 18th, March 18th, at 8 o'clock.

2 Q. March 19th?

3 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Nineteenth.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Oh, yes, thank you. Yeah, there we go. The 19th,
5 yes.

6 BY DR. WILSON:

7 Q. Okay. All right, so just really quickly going back to
8 March 18th, sleep around 12:30 in the morning, you thought. When
9 you get into bed, do you read or do you watch TV or do you just go
10 to sleep?

11 A. Depends on if -- if I'm by myself, I'll either read, watch a
12 little TV and go to sleep.

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. And in this particular case, my wife was sitting or sleeping
15 next to me, I just went to sleep.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So yeah, I didn't watch TV or read or anything like that.

18 Q. Okay. Any problems that you recall falling asleep or staying
19 asleep?

20 A. You know, I was -- I didn't go to sleep immediately, but I
21 would say I was asleep within like 30 minutes.

22 Q. Okay, all right.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And on March 19th, when you say you woke up early, what time
25 do you think that was?

1 A. I got up at like -- I'll say 6:30.

2 Q. Okay. And then your nap time, you said you didn't nap too
3 long, but about what time and for the length do you think the nap
4 was?

5 A. I'm going to say 11:00 to 12:00.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. It might've even been earlier than that.

8 Q. Okay. So about an hour, though, you rested.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. All right. And then going to bed at 8:00 p.m., did you fall
11 asleep quickly or did you, you know, maybe do some reading?

12 A. I did reading and, you know, watching TV, so that helps me
13 fall asleep.

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. So that I started before then.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. So you think you were asleep by 8:00 p.m.?

19 A. A little bit past 8:00, yeah.

20 Q. All right. And any problems falling asleep or staying asleep
21 that you recall?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. So Thursday, March 20th, the day of the event, what
24 time do you think you woke up?

25 A. Three thirty.

1 Q. Okay. And did you set an alarm for that?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And what were your activities in the morning?

4 A. Wake up, like, all my clothes are just laid out already and
5 everything's already packed and I get up, get dressed and before I
6 even go into the kitchen, I'm already fully dressed, already
7 brushed my teeth and I walk into the kitchen, coffee was already
8 being made at that point and I grab a cup of coffee and believe it
9 or not, my wife does wake up that early and she'll throw the food
10 that I'm going to be taking with me on a trip, into a bag. I take
11 the coffee, the bag with me and head downstairs, jump in the car
12 and I have a checklist I go through every morning --

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. -- and it's like a numbered checklist, so I reach over with
15 my left hand, I make sure I got my pen, my glasses, my sunglasses,
16 my ID, and make sure I have my headset and my iPad and I think
17 that's an eight-item checklist and -- no, wallet and cell phone
18 and that -- I do those six first and then the last two are headset
19 and iPad and once I go through that and I've actually confirmed
20 that, then I head downstairs.

21 Q. Gotcha. You made me think of something by mentioning
22 glasses, do you have a first class medical?

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. What is the date of that, if you recall?

25 A. November, I believe, 11th, I think.

1 Q. Okay. Any limitations?

2 A. Got to keep these with me.

3 Q. Okay. Do you have to wear them for flying, wear them for
4 reading, what's the limitation?

5 A. For both, distances.

6 Q. Okay. Were you wearing them the day of the event?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. All right. Do you ever wear contacts or --

9 A. No.

10 Q. No, just glasses. All right. How did you feel on the
11 morning of the 20th?

12 A. You know, for me, it really doesn't matter how much sleep I
13 get. Initially, when I first wake up, I don't spring out of bed,
14 you know, I -- the alarm goes off, I never hit snooze.

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. You know, I'm just not that kind of person, for whatever
17 reason, it's like this is it, man, don't prolong it anymore, you
18 know, and face the day and -- so I felt fine --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- you know, I did my usual routine, went and had coffee and
21 then on the drive down, you know, yeah. No, it's -- it's pretty
22 easy in the morning like that, you know, getting to Atlanta.

23 Q. Um-hum. All right. Do you take any medications?

24 A. For high blood pressure, yeah.

25 Q. Okay. And it's listed on your medical?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay. Do you take any nonprescription medication or
3 vitamins, supplements, anything?

4 A. Vitamin C, B complex, vitamin E. Lecithin, I think, and --
5 that's about it, yeah.

6 Q. All right. In the three days prior to the event, did you
7 take any medications, either prescription or nonprescription, that
8 might've affected your performance?

9 A. No. No, just -- I take the high blood pressure medication
10 every morning, so yeah. I'm pretty sure I took it that morning.

11 Q. All right. Do you use any tobacco products?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. Do you drink alcohol?

14 A. I wasn't drinking that weekend and --

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. -- or the night before. I drink, you know, but I was not
17 that --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. -- before the trip.

20 Q. Okay. So we know you wear glasses, how's your hearing, any
21 issues?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Any issues with color vision?

24 A. Uh-uh.

25 Q. All right. I can't recall if I asked you this, I apologize,

1 how did [REDACTED] seem that day? Did I ask you that already?

2 A. You did, but he seemed fine.

3 DR. WILSON: Okay. Great. I think that's maybe all I have.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. [REDACTED] You're welcome.

6 DR. WILSON: Shawn.

7 MR. ETCHER: Sure, thanks.

8 BY MR. ETCHER:

9 Q. I just have a few questions, you've definitely helped a lot,
10 so I appreciate that. Just a little bit ago we were talking about
11 glasses, your medical, you have to wear them, but you'd also --
12 part of your pre-departure of the house check is to make sure you
13 have your glasses --

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. -- and your sunglasses, are your sunglasses prescription?

16 A. Uh-uh.

17 Q. Were you wearing the sunglasses the morning of the event or
18 your prescription sunglasses?

19 A. Prescription glasses. These aren't tinted, they don't change
20 color when I get out there.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay. So you just suffer through with the bright sky?

24 A. You know, when I have to, yeah.

25 Q. Okay. All right, perfect. I know when Kat was going through

1 your 72 hours prior, it seemed like a lot of your trips were later
2 in the day, I mean, maybe they're not classified as p.m. trips,
3 but I think you said you're an a.m. guy?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. So was that trip kind of an oddity for you, to have late
6 nights like that?

7 A. It is. And I typically don't do p.m.'s.

8 Q. Okay. It was one of those things when you were telling me
9 the time that I was like wait, that's -- that's early a.m. but
10 that's really early a.m., so okay.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. All right, I just wanted to make sure that I didn't have that
13 incorrect, that you are an a.m. guy, perfect. Was your airplane
14 equipped with a HUD?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Do you ever use the HUD for takeoff?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Were you that morning?

19 A. No.

20 Q. If you were -- and I'm just trying to understand what the HUD
21 would show you, would it have shown you on a taxiway or a runway
22 or would it indicate anything different?

23 A. It would've shown on the runway.

24 Q. Okay. No matter that you were on a taxiway or not, it would
25 make it look like it was on a runway? It's not a -- it's not a

1 quiz, I'm just trying to understand it.

2 A. Yeah, no, I'm trying to think, you know, since we've never
3 really used it on a taxiway in terms of lining up and such, I
4 would say it shows you on the runway.

5 Q. Okay. No, it was just -- it was more of my curiosity because
6 I wasn't sure what it would show or, you know, if you guys ever
7 taxied with them down.

8 A. No, we don't use it -- use it for taxiing.

9 Q. All right, okay, I just wasn't sure if you have had them down
10 before and you're like oh, I'm on a taxiway and oh, that's what it
11 looks like, all right, and then you flip them up or something.

12 A. Uh-uh.

13 Q. All right, perfect. I know you had said, and we've probably
14 beat this too hard, but to do a rolling takeoff, you would brief
15 it. This one you did as a rolling takeoff, but you didn't brief
16 it, why? Why the difference?

17 A. Because this one we had the -- approximately, you know, 40
18 percent N1, so like I was saying, we wouldn't necessarily bring
19 the power back to idle at that point and then reestablish N1, and
20 if we know we're going to be doing a rolling takeoff, we'll go
21 ahead and brief it. But in this particular case, it was -- we
22 already had taxi power approximately at N1, so --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. All right, perfect. And just educate me, if you would, it's

1 hard, I know, my apologies, but we're flying again, how would you
2 brief me that you're doing a rolling takeoff? Kind of walk me
3 through, I'm new to the company and just off IOE, ink's still not
4 even dry on my certificate and you got stuck with me right after
5 IOE --

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. -- so kind of walk me through how would you brief a rolling
8 takeoff to somebody like me? Or to anybody.

9 A. Yeah, so I would just say that on this particular runway, the
10 power is going to be up because we're going up a hill or we're a
11 heavy airplane. I'm expecting that we're going to be doing a
12 rolling takeoff, okay, so we're going to have the engines already
13 spooled as we approach the runway and line up on the centerline,
14 so make sure that I have 40 percent N1, or very close to it before
15 I select TOGA, make sure that we are on the runway centerline of
16 the correct runway, you know, and that's how I would brief it to
17 another FO.

18 Q. Okay. All right. If we were flying again and I saw
19 something I didn't like as we were taking off, can I call abort or
20 reject? Is that my job or is that -- as an FO or is that your job
21 as a captain or pilot flying versus monitoring? Help me
22 understand who makes that decision to reject.

23 A. The captain makes the decision to reject.

24 Q. Okay. Always?

25 A. The FO can call reject, but it's not in the procedure, it's

1 the procedure for the captain to reject.

2 Q. Okay. I want your opinion, if you will, you flew with [REDACTED]
3 and you've flown with other FOs --

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. -- how would he compare to others? I know, as crews, we have
6 those really, really good FOs, you remember those really, really
7 -- we'll just say not as good FOs --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- that you remember, the middles ones kind of gray out, if
10 you will.

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. How was [REDACTED]

13 A. I would say above average.

14 Q. Okay. Why would you say that?

15 A. He sticks to the procedures and he's diligent about, I guess,
16 all of our procedures and he has good communication skills, he
17 flies the airplane well, he's very detail oriented.

18 Q. Okay. My last little batch of questions and then phew,
19 you're all done with me. After you guys rejected your takeoff and
20 you turned right onto Hotel 3 and you needed time to let the
21 brakes cool and all that, if the brakes cooled and everything was
22 met just fine, could you have taken off, gone back and lined up
23 and launched?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Why not?

1 A. First of all, it's an incident --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- and that has to be addressed, you know, you can't just go
4 take off now.

5 Q. Okay. So you were -- you had to go back to the gate?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. All right. So you get back to the gate, maintenance checks
8 out the airplane, wheels are good, everything's good, all the
9 parameters are made, the airplane's clean and ready to go again,
10 ready for you to go to Albany, would you have done it?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Why?

13 A. Because we just went through a major incident and -- no,
14 definitely not.

15 Q. Okay. Who makes that call, is it you, as the captain, is it
16 each individual pilot assesses it?

17 A. I'm not going to speak for [REDACTED]

18 Q. In your opinion, how's that?

19 A. I will speak for myself --

20 Q. Yes, please.

21 A. -- and I would just let him know and let the company know
22 there's no way I'm fit to fly the airplane up to Albany after that
23 incident.

24 Q. Did you have to make that call?

25 A. No, I didn't.

1 Q. Who made it for you?

2 A. I would say the company.

3 Q. Um-hum. Have you ever had to make that kind of a call, like
4 yeah, no, not going, sorry?

5 A. With Southwest?

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. There's been plenty of times where we've delayed because of
8 weather --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- or downed an airplane because something was broken and
11 we're not going anywhere, so that stuff happens.

12 Q. Okay. But have you ever said no, I -- airplane's good,
13 weather's whatever, but you're just like no, not doing them, I'm
14 tired, I'm stressed, I'm -- pick whatever you wish.

15 A. Okay, so --

16 Q. Have you ever had to do that?

17 A. Have I ever had to call in, like, fatigue or just sick on
18 duty?

19 Q. Sure.

20 A. I've called in sick on duty, yes.

21 Q. Okay. Is that met with any -- I hate the word repercussions,
22 but for lack of a better phrase, any -- any outcome from that,
23 doing so at Southwest or is that kind of like okay, thanks for the
24 call?

25 A. They back you up a hundred percent at this company.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And that's another thing about this company that's amazing,
3 is that they're not asking you to fly, first of all, an airplane
4 that's not good, if you're not good and the weather's not good,
5 any one of those things, the company's like no, good, you know,
6 we'll get somebody who's good to go, it doesn't matter how long
7 they have to wait, of course, it's an inconvenience for everybody,
8 but they never put that first.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 MR. ETCHER: That's always good to hear. I think you've
12 answered all my questions, again, thank you so much for
13 enlightening me and educating me, I appreciate it.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you, Shawn.

15 MR. ETCHER: You definitely brought a level to it that I
16 needed to understand, so thank you.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

18 DR. WILSON: Thanks, Shawn.

19 Heidi.

20 MS. KEMNER: No, everything is great. Thank you again for
21 talking with us about this, I don't have any more questions.

22 DR. WILSON: Thank you.

23 John.

24 MR. RUMMEL: [REDACTED] the same here, thank you very much for
25 enlightening us in that. I don't have any further questions.

1 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

2 DR. WILSON: Chris.

3 BY MR. SHAVER:

4 Q. Two things. It don't know if it was, I guess, unfortunate or
5 not, but shortly after this event happened, Southwest activated
6 the runway awareness and alerting --

7 A. Um-hum.

8 Q. -- system on the airplanes.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. Have you had an opportunity to fly with the RAAS activated?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What do you think of it? Do you think it would've helped --

13 A. It would've definitely helped, yeah, it would've definitely
14 helped and no, it's a great system. Anything else that can help
15 us in that time frame that we're task-loaded to begin with, with a
16 lot of things happening at the end, it's a great, you know, piece
17 of, you know, equipment for us.

18 Q. Okay. And then we've asked tons of questions about rolling
19 takeoffs, I just wanted to know, take away "line up and wait"
20 scenarios, but just you're cleared for takeoff, whether it's on
21 the taxi -- you know, coming up to a runway you're cleared for
22 takeoff, what percentage of the time do you think you would --
23 that you guys do rolling takeoffs?

24 A. It's not very often, yeah, it's very infrequent.

25 MR. SHAVER: That's all I got.

1 DR. WILSON: Awesome.

2 BY DR. WILSON:

3 Q. [REDACTED] -- I didn't forget about the statement. [REDACTED]
4 we've asked you a lot of questions, is there anything we didn't
5 ask you about that you thought we should've asked you about?

6 A. You know, I think you guys were pretty thorough and I think
7 we covered this pretty well.

8 Q. Okay, good. Anything else that you want to add to the
9 interview, anything that you want us to know, you want to get on
10 the record?

11 A. I think that, you know, it would be helpful for us, as a
12 company and as a pilot group, to reduce that task-loading towards
13 the departure end of a runway so that we complete these tasks
14 earlier on the taxi out. A lot of times we have a long wait in
15 front of us, where we can complete a lot of these items rather
16 than waiting until the end, and that's what we do anyway, right,
17 we always complete this stuff as best, you know, time.

18 But in the book we should have it written so that this stuff
19 is done earlier on. And the other thing, the rolling takeoff part
20 that says a rolling takeoff is preferred, should be clearly
21 defined as after the airplane is on the runway centerline, okay,
22 and that's my only real recommendation, you know, that we get
23 task-loaded towards the end and there's a lot going on, not to
24 mention night, low visibility or raining conditions, which are
25 additive conditions, let's have this stuff finished, let's get

1 this stuff taken care of and even though all the pilots, the
2 minute we get an opportunity on the taxi out, we try to take care
3 of these things, we don't wait until the end. That's about it.

4 Q. Thank you. Thank you so much for that. As Shawn said, yeah,
5 it was really, really helpful for us to better understand. It did
6 feel like I was there on your shoulder in the airplane. So we do
7 want you to read the statement that we received, that we said came
8 from you, it doesn't have a name attached to it, so do you just
9 want to verify that it is your statement, because we will be
10 attaching it to the end of the transcript, as well.

11 A. Yeah, that's what I wrote.

12 DR. WILSON: Okay, great. Thank you. Well, if you don't
13 have any more questions for us, we will stop the recording at
14 12:22 p.m. local.

15 (Whereupon, at 12:22 p.m., the interview concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: INCIDENT AT THE ORLANDO INTERNATIONAL
 AIRPORT IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA
 ON MARCH 30,
 Interview of [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA25LA163

DATE: April 22, 2025

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]

David A. Martini
Transcriber

The following was the incident flight captain's written statement provided through Southwest Airlines.

Captain Written Statement

I was the Captain on SWA Flight 3278 (MCO-ALB) on March 20, 2025. The event flight was leg two on the first day of a 4- day pairing with the First Officer (FO). Our first leg was ATL-MCO where the FO was pilot flying (PF) and I was the pilot monitoring (PM). The flight to MCO was uneventful. The FO and I had flown together before and we had good rapport.

The event flight started with standard company briefings. Since I was the PF, I briefed the SID, engine out procedure and planned taxi route, and noted the partial closure of taxiway Golf and H1, that was indicated on the NOTAM as closed. The FO informed me that we would most likely get H2 as an intersection departure and we ran the numbers in our Performance Weight and Balance (PWB) via ACARS for the intersection departure. The passengers and Flight Attendants (FA's) were briefed and we completed the Before Start and the Before Push checklists for an on-time departure. Although I do not recall the specifics of the ATIS in detail, it was day VFR.

Before taxiing out, I had ownship displayed on the JeppPro App with AMM selected on my EFB. The FO notified ground control with an advisory call and we pushed from Gate 103 and started both engines. Taxiing out from Gate 103, we were given instructions to taxi to runway 17R, H2 via the ramp and at H2 to contact the Tower. When we were abeam of Gate 120 we encountered an aircraft that had pushed back from the gate and was starting its engines. There wasn't enough room for us to comfortably taxi around that aircraft, so we held short and notified Tower of our position. The ramp portion of taxiways G and H1 were closed due to construction. Men and equipment were present and working on taxiway H1 and a portion of taxiway G. We completed the Before Takeoff checklist while we waited for the aircraft that was blocking our taxi out. After the aircraft taxied, we were then given instructions to taxi to Runway 17R via H2. The Tower then cleared us for takeoff while we were still on the ramp. I checked final and said to the FO "final is clear 17R verified." I was looking at the 17R red runway sign when I said 17R is verified, but we had not yet taxied onto the runway. As we were approaching the runway, I asked the FO to confirm we had completed the Before Takeoff checklist. The FO looked up on the overheard panel for any lights, didn't see any and confirmed the checklist was complete.

After taxiing past taxiway G, I mistakenly turned right onto taxiway H, thinking that it was the runway. With the engine spooled from taxi power and before I finished the right turn, I announced that I was setting takeoff thrust and selected TOGA, while advancing the thrust levers. The aircraft wasn't centered on the runway and I applied rudder to maintain the centerline. Maintaining the centerline required my full attention and I didn't notice we were on a taxiway until the Tower and my FO both directed me to reject the takeoff because we were on a taxiway. I stopped the aircraft straight ahead, using normal manual braking, maintaining centerline and disconnecting the

auto-throttle. We exited the taxiway at H3. After turning right off taxiway H we brought the aircraft to a stop. We asked ground control for a place to run a brake cooling check and ground told us to hold short of G1 on the Golf taxiway. We held short and ran the brake cooling check, using 75 knots as the abort speed, and 153,000 lbs. The PWB directed us to wait 30 minutes before returning to the gate, and noted that maintenance was required, no limitations exceeded. I notified the passengers that we had rejected the take-off due to an indication in the cockpit, that we would have to return to the gate to have the brakes inspected, and that we would have to wait until the brakes cooled before returning to the gate. At the completion of the brake cooling module, the FO started the timer. I believe there were 18 minutes left when I told the passengers how long we would be waiting for the brakes to cool. We notified dispatch via ACARS, and contacted maintenance and operations. I notified the FA's that we were heading back to the gate.

After the 30 minutes elapsed, we taxied back to the gate. We completed the shutdown checklist. Maintenance met us there. I wrote up the rejected take off in the maintenance logbook and answered maintenance questions, regarding speed, weight, temperature and pressure altitude. I called dispatch and asked to be connected to the NOC Chief Pilot. He was on another call, so the dispatcher asked if I could do a three way conference call with maintenance. Since maintenance was already there and I was trying to coordinate with the ops agent, passengers and FA's, I said I would call back. After speaking with maintenance, I notified the passengers and FA's that maintenance had to inspect the brakes and we would let them know what was going to happen next once we had an update. The Chief Pilot met us on the jet bridge to see if we needed assistance. At that point, the FO and I both left the aircraft, with ground air and power hooked up, APU off and IRS's off. We were provided with an office inside the terminal from which I contacted dispatch and the NOC Chief Pilot.

Errata Statement from the Captain on SWA Flight 3278

The following Errata statement was provided from the captain of the incident flight via their legal counsel. The page numbers referenced in the errata were based on a standalone document. The title page and table of contents add two (2) pages to the beginning of the document and therefore all page number listed below will need two (2) pages added to it (e.g., pg. 10 should now be pg. 12).

INTERVIEW OF: CAPTAIN, Southwest Flight 3278

NTSB ACCIDENT NO.: DCA25LA163

DATE OF INTERVIEW: April 22, 2025

<u>PAGE NO.</u>	<u>LINE NO.</u>	<u>CORRECTION</u>	<u>REASON FOR CORRECTION</u>
10	17	Replace "SID engine op" with "SID engine out"	Clarification/factual accuracy
36	11	Replace "you're moving at a crawl space" with "you're moving at a crawl"	Clarification/factual accuracy
12	7	Replace "SCAPE (ph.)" with "KAAPE"	Factual accuracy
13	18	Replace "90 point" with "90 percent"	Clarification

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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INCIDENT AT THE ORLANDO

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INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN ORLANDO,

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FLORIDA ON MARCH 20, 2025

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Accident No.: DCA25LA163

Interview of: [REDACTED] " [REDACTED] [REDACTED] First Officer

Southwest Airlines

Tuesday,
April 22, 2025

APPEARANCES:

SHAWN ETCHER, Operational Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KATHERINE A. WILSON, Ph.D., Human Performance
Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

HEIDI KEMNER, Accident Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

JOHN RUMMEL, Check Pilot
Southwest Airlines

CHRIS SHAVER, Safety Investigator
Southwest Airlines Pilots Association (SWAPA)

CHRIS CHRISTENSEN, Esq.
Condon & Forsyth,
Representing Mr. [REDACTED]

I N D E X

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:10 a.m.)

MR. ETCHER: Good morning, it is April 22nd, it's 8:10 in the morning. My name is Shawn Etcher, I'm an operational factors investigator with the NTSB, so all that means is I look at everything kind of forward of the cockpit door, how it interacts with the crew. We're here to try and understand the events that took place in Orlando and we're hoping that you will be kind of enough to educate me, let me be that fly on your shoulder and help me understand everything you saw for everything, we want to learn everything we can.

Thankfully, I'm not the smartest tool here, so but thankfully, I have a lot of really smart folks with me, I'm going to have them go around the room and introduce themselves, as well, and we're going to start with Katherine.

DR. WILSON: Katherine Wilson, I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB, I essentially do human factors.

MR. ETCHER: Heidi.

MS. KEMNER: I'm Heidi Kemner and I am accident investigator with the FAA and I know a lot of people -- FAA, I'm here to help, right? I can't use anything -- I'm an investigator, I'm not an inspector, so very different jobs. Anything in this interview cannot be used for enforcement and that's what I enjoy, I enjoy safety, it's my passion, so like Shawn said, I'm here to help work on what can we fix and as a team, we all try and do that, so nice

1 to meet you.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

3 MR. RUMMEL: [REDACTED] John Rummel, I introduce myself as a
4 check pilot, but that's not my role today, it's (indiscernible) to
5 the investigation group to do exactly what they just said, is to
6 hopefully get to the bottom of what we can do to prevent this from
7 happening again, the unfortunate situation you went through, and
8 what we can learn from it and from a procedures or a training
9 standpoint or whatever we need to do, so that's my role here
10 today.

11 MR. SHAVER: I am Chris Shaver with the Southwest Airlines
12 Pilots Association. Same thing, [REDACTED] you know, we're all here
13 to just learn from you, so --

14 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you.

15 MR. ETCHER: That's everybody that'll be asking questions
16 today.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Sure.

18 MR. ETCHER: Just so you know, as we ask questions, you're
19 going to start with me, you're going to get really sick and tired
20 of looking at me for a while and then I'll pass it on to everybody
21 else. We typically do two rounds of questions. First round, it
22 seems like it takes a lot longer, second round's usually a lot
23 quicker, so don't think oh, golly, after three hours of interview
24 you're only through round one, it's going to be another three
25 hours. I'm kidding on the time, but first round's always a lot

1 longer --

2 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

3 MR. ETCHER: -- so don't hesitate. But now that you know
4 everybody that's going to be talking with you today, is there
5 anybody you don't want here? No? Are you okay with everybody in
6 here?

7 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah.

8 MR. ETCHER: All right, perfect. As part of our regulations,
9 you're entitled to have a legal representation, if you wish, or
10 anybody in here with you, do you wish to have somebody here with
11 you?

12 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

13 MR. ETCHER: And I assume Chris?

14 MR. [REDACTED] Chris is, yes.

15 MR. ETCHER: Chris, for the record, could you introduce
16 yourself and your affiliation?

17 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Sure. Thanks, Shawn. Chris Christensen
18 from the law firm of Condon & Forsyth in New York and I'm here to
19 represent the first officer.

20 MR. ETCHER: Thank you very much.

21 As you can see, we do have a recording going, we record our
22 interviews and we send those recordings off to be transcribed.
23 About two weeks, give or take, we'll get them back, I go through
24 it with the audio recording just to make sure that there's no
25 misspelled words, we never change what you say because it's a

1 verbatim transcript, but we will correct any mistyped words,
2 acronyms, things like that. It does happen but, you know, we just
3 want to make sure it's as correct as we can. The rest of the
4 group here will also review them to make sure we captured every
5 misspelled word we could. We'll get it recertified. Once that
6 comes back, we'll send it to your legal counsel, they will provide
7 it to you, as well, you can review it, you get about two weeks to
8 review it. If there's something that you're reading, "oh, that's
9 not what I meant," it's okay, please, write up a clarifying
10 statement, we can't change the transcript, but we can attach that
11 clarifying statement right to the end of the transcript so that
12 way we all know exactly what you meant.

13 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

14 MR. ETCHER: The more detail we get, the more accurate we
15 get, the better off we're going to be to try and help mitigate
16 this from ever happening again. All righty?

17 MR. [REDACTED] Wonderful.

18 MR. ETCHER: All righty. Typically, you're dealing with the
19 government, so there's always rules, right, there's a few rules,
20 if you will, on this. During this time that you're going to
21 educate us, if there's a question you don't understand, it's okay,
22 ask for clarification. Sometimes it sounds really good in my
23 brain, but it doesn't connect to mouth, so don't hesitate because
24 you give me an answer or any of us an answer that we don't
25 understand, we're going to ask for a little clarification, as

1 well, so it's perfectly fine. If during you're talking and you
2 realize "oh, I misstated something," it's okay, just correct it,
3 we want to make sure we get everything as correct as we can.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Sure.

5 MR. ETCHER: Typically, we love to deal with facts, sometimes
6 I'll ask for an opinion, sometimes you want to give an opinion,
7 just let us know that it's your opinion so when I'm reading
8 through this later, I don't think ooh, that's what he -- that's a
9 fact when it was, in turn, really an opinion. All righty?

10 If you need a break for any reason, just say so, I'll hit
11 pause, we'll take as long of a break as we need and we'll come
12 back and start right back up again, just as if nothing happened,
13 all righty? Most important thing, you don't know an answer, "I
14 don't know" works perfect so, I mean, if you have an idea,
15 opinion, that's fine, but if you don't know, just say "I don't
16 know," all righty?

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

18 MR. ETCHER: Any questions?

19 MR. [REDACTED] None.

20 MR. ETCHER: All righty.

21 INTERVIEW OF [REDACTED] "[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

22 BY MR. ETCHER:

23 Q. Well, I always start the interviews off with the toughest
24 questions first, can you please state your name, your full name
25 and spell your last?

1 A. Yeah, my name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] last name is spelled,

2 [REDACTED]

3 Q. All righty, perfect. And what is your job title?

4 A. First officer/pilot.

5 Q. At --

6 A. At Southwest Airlines.

7 Q. All right, thank you. And what was your date of hire at
8 Southwest?

9 A. January 16, 2018.

10 Q. All righty, perfect. See, I tell you, these are the toughest
11 questions, they do get easier. Do you remember the event flight
12 that we're talking about back in Orlando, back about a month ago,
13 do you kind of remember that a little bit?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Do you remember if you were going to be the pilot flying or
16 the pilot monitoring?

17 A. It was the second leg of that day, so I was the -- I had
18 flown in the first leg, so we alternate, so the captain was going
19 be the pilot flying, I was going to be the pilot monitoring.

20 Q. All right, perfect. Since you're a first officer, I assume
21 you have a few airman certificates and ratings.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. What are those?

24 A. ATP, multi-engine, 737, Embraer 120, CRJ, I flew the 200,
25 700, 900, so -- and I don't remember the exact single engine and

1 all of that, that's listed on the back of that.

2 Q. All right, no worries, no. No, I appreciate what you could
3 recall. Have you ever been a check airman --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- with all of those ratings?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Where at?

8 A. At Atlantic Southeast Airlines.

9 Q. Okay, perfect. We'll get into your history here in just a
10 little bit, but the next few questions are probably the toughest
11 questions.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. Just a ballpark, what's your total flight time?

14 A. A little less than 12,000 hours.

15 Q. All right. And of that little less than 12,000, how much of
16 that will be in the 7-3?

17 A. About a little over 4,000.

18 Q. Okay, perfect. See, these are the toughest questions, now
19 they do get easier. Current medical?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. What class?

22 A. First class.

23 Q. Any limitations?

24 A. No.

25 Q. All right, nice. I wish I had that luck. Do you remember

1 when it was issued?

2 A. October -- October of last year.

3 Q. Twenty twenty-four?

4 A. Twenty twenty-four.

5 Q. All right, perfect. Ever had an unsuccessful checking event
6 in the 737?

7 A. Never.

8 Q. All right, perfect. Can you kind of give us just a nice,
9 broad CliffsNotes version, if you will, of your aviation history,
10 when you got some ratings, you got some time, so you obviously
11 have a history.

12 A. Yeah. Yeah, at ASA, I joined as a new hire, first officer
13 and then became a captain and then they selected me to be an
14 instructor on the Embraer, then they made me a check airman on the
15 Embraer, and then I transitioned to the RJ and they subsequently
16 made me an instructor on the RJ and then a check airman on the RJ.
17 And when I came -- that was my last role there at ASA before I
18 came to Southwest as a check airman.

19 Q. Okay. How long were you at ASA?

20 A. Twenty-one years.

21 Q. Okay. So definitely had some time there.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. A lot of that in the Brasilia, flying the Brasilia?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. And also on the RJ, a number of years on the RJ, was longer.

2 Q. Oh, okay.

3 A. Yeah, so --

4 Q. All right, perfect. Let's just kind of get right into the
5 event that occurred down in Orlando. Wherever it's easiest for
6 you, I want you to just kind of start, whether it's that day you
7 got out of bed or on the flight or wherever is easy just start,
8 kind of walk us through the events --

9 A. Sure.

10 Q. -- as best as you can, then we'll probably go back and kind
11 of segment those out and talk about them in detail.

12 A. Yeah. After we dutied in, I met the captain at the gate in
13 Atlanta for our first leg, he introduced himself, I did not
14 remember him, having flown with him before and, as always, on the
15 -- even if I do meet the captain, I'm the first one who goes into
16 the aircraft, you know, because I've got a lot of preflight duties
17 to do.

18 So I walked in, checked all the documents and then I went
19 through my preflight procedure with the cockpit that I'm supposed
20 to do. I set up the FMC and then I went out and did my
21 walk-around and then I come back, get the ATIS and everything like
22 that and set up the ACARS and send for PWB data and all of that
23 stuff, which is -- it goes through a variation of sequences on how
24 to get the details and all of that, there's so many things for us
25 to look at, and checking with our dispatch release and weather and

1 all of that, I looked at Orlando, as well, the -- the weather
2 there, to make sure that, you know, we didn't need an alternate or
3 anything like that and it wasn't listed on there, it was a clear
4 day. And I also take a quick glance at the current airport
5 weather and the NOTAMs, just to ensure that the runway that we are
6 planning to land on does not have any issues, so -- but -- and
7 that's when I noticed that Orlando ATIS was listing quite a few
8 taxiways on the east side of Airside 2 as being closed with men
9 and equipment near it, and at that moment I looked at it and I
10 just went to my AMM, I just had an idea of where things were.

11 At that juncture, I did not need to pursue that any further
12 airborne, we would get the most current data and see if they will
13 continue to be closed. And then the rest of the -- that leg, I --
14 captain asked me if I wanted to fly the first leg, I said
15 absolutely and I -- as we came in, in cruise flight, I got the
16 ATIS, I looked at the ATIS on my iPad and it was listing those
17 taxiway closures on the east side of Airside 2.

18 And so, as is my habit, I tend to mark those in red, the
19 taxiway closures, and I did all of that stuff and I discussed it
20 in my briefing for the arrival, I discussed that, and the captain
21 and I discussed a possible taxi path to the gate that we were
22 going to because of the closures, if they brought us in on the
23 north side versus south side, did all of that. We were expecting
24 to land on the east side of the airport because of where we park.
25 The air traffic controllers changed it to the west side, so we did

1 what we're supposed to do per the procedures, we re-briefed it,
2 made sure we had landing data, all of that stuff and then we
3 looked at, okay, if they bring us in from the north side after we
4 exit, how do we get in to the ramp; if they bring us in the south
5 side, how do we get in to the ramp, and it was a very thorough
6 briefing, landed and they tell us to proceed to the south side for
7 Taxiway Echo, they told us to hold short of Echo, there were other
8 airplanes coming out of the international terminal, so we were
9 going to follow, you know, them, so we paused and then they gave
10 us clearance to taxi via Echo.

11 As we were coming around the south side on Echo 2, I believe,
12 Golf is what we took to come in to park, before -- we had switched
13 -- we were with ground control. Before I contacted ground
14 control, I heard ground control tell the JetBlue flight that was
15 in front of us, expect 1-7 Right/Hotel 2 for takeoff and then I
16 checked in with them and they gave us clearance to taxi in to the
17 gate via Golf.

18 And then I heard again ground control saying to another
19 flight, I believe it was an American flight, said expect 1-7
20 Right/Hotel 2 for departure and that somewhat piqued my curiosity
21 because in the ATIS it did not state that, ATIS made it look like
22 you could expect 1-7 Right full length. So after I heard that, I
23 told the captain, you know, they're saying Hotel 2, it doesn't
24 reflect it on the ATIS, so we're going to go -- next leg is to
25 Albany so they're probably going to give us 1-7 Right, what do you

1 think about I'll just put in Hotel 2 also for departure and he
2 said yeah, that's fine. Came in, we parked, and captain said hey,
3 I'm going to go inside, walk for a little bit and I said yeah,
4 that's fine. After we finished our checklist and everything like
5 that, I get restarted on the -- on the preflight duties for the
6 next flight, I did those and then the initial one, like I always
7 do, resetting the IRS and then doing the FMC and then I go, did my
8 walk-around, came back and I got the ATIS and the ATIS was still
9 showing 1-7 Right full length, it wasn't showing Hotel 2 for
10 departure, but because the captain and I had discussed this, I --
11 on the PWB data, I -- the first line I put in was 1-7 Right/Hotel
12 2 and then I put in 1-7 Right and then in case we get the west
13 side, I put in the other runway, 1-8 Right, and I sent for all of
14 that stuff.

15 And then we received the clearance and the -- you know, it
16 comes through CPDLC, so I looked at it and it said if the airport
17 (sic) is departing to the south, expect 1-7 Right. It didn't say
18 1-7 Right/Hotel 2. So again, it's like okay, those taxiways are
19 still closed and so I still put in 1-7 Right/Hotel 2. Captain
20 came and we discussed it and I said hey, the ATIS is not showing
21 this, but they -- you know, they cleared those guys for takeoff
22 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, I think we're going to get that, he agreed with
23 it, we went through our procedure of briefing everything, like the
24 standard taxi routes, closures, and then going through the
25 verification of the legs on the FMC, did all of that, engine

1 failure, and then we ran the checklist. The best I can recollect,
2 we left the gate a few minutes early, pushback, I started --
3 started the Number 2 engine, captain said let's go ahead and start
4 the Number 1 because it's going to be a quick taxi for takeoff.
5 After that, we ran the checklist and prior to taxi, like I
6 normally do, I looked to the right, clear right, clear left, and I
7 called the ground and ground said taxi to Runway 1-7 Right/Hotel 2
8 via the ramp and Hotel 2.

9 So that was -- we had expected that, but it wasn't in the
10 ATIS, but -- so we both agreed, we both agreed we would -- looked
11 at our AMM, okay, we're going to come around to the east side,
12 there's Hotel 2, we identified it and we're going to go to 1-7
13 Right/Hotel 2. As we taxied around to the north end of Airside 2,
14 coming to the east side, because the ATIS also mentioned that
15 ground control was combined on a single frequency, I had a doubt
16 if tower was or not because they are different frequencies, so I
17 asked the ground controller is tower on 1845 and he said yes, go
18 ahead and switch to that.

19 So I switched to it and as we came around to the east side,
20 the taxiway before Hotel 2, on the ramp itself, we noticed that
21 there was company Max aircraft that had pushed back and it was
22 horizontally parked to our position and at that moment I told the
23 captain I do not believe that there's enough clearance for us to
24 taxi past this and I am not comfortable taxiing any further, so
25 captain agreed, he said we're going to stop right here. He

1 stopped the aircraft with the parking brake on and by the time we
2 had come around Airside 2, because we were expecting a -- them to
3 pretty much clear us for takeoff, as we taxied out, captain had
4 already called for the before takeoff checklist and we had -- we
5 had run the before takeoff checklist and then we came to a stop
6 and notified ground that -- or notified tower that we cannot taxi
7 any further because company's there. So we were on tower
8 frequency and the Max, of course, since they pushed back, they
9 would have been on ground frequency. So we sat there and we just
10 waited until the Max jet moved and they moved, I do not remember
11 the time, exactly how much time it took, but it was a little bit
12 of a delay than what we would normally expect.

13 And so then finally they moved and they came around the right
14 so we had enough clearance, I called tower and I said we're ready
15 to taxi and what I heard from tower, we're on the ramp holding
16 short of Taxiway Hotel 2, I hear tower say Southwest 3278, RNAV to
17 KAKY cleared -- cleared for takeoff, Runway 1-7 Right/Hotel 2.
18 And that took me back a little bit because we were still on the
19 ramp and that is not a clearance that we normally receive, we do
20 not receive clearances for takeoff while still holding short of a
21 taxiway on a ramp. And so I responded back, but with a little bit
22 of a pause, I responded back cleared for takeoff, 1-7 Right/Hotel
23 2, RNAV to KAKY and as I said that, I ensured that -- on our
24 flight mode annunciator it showed LNAV and I verified on the FMC
25 that KAKY was in magenta. After I responded to that, I told the

1 captain, captain, we've been cleared for takeoff and I see LNAV
2 and I see KAKY on there, this is before we started to move, so he
3 agreed with that. And then we started to -- we got onto Taxiway
4 Hotel 2 and there's Golf here, Hotel here, then 1-7 Right/Hotel 2.
5 As we taxied on Hotel 2, I looked straight ahead and we were still
6 proceeding straight ahead and the captain said final's clear, 1-7
7 Right/Hotel 2 verified.

8 And at that moment we were still a little bit up, I believe
9 we were almost at the intersection of Golf, we still had Hotel to
10 go to before we got to 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, the intersection for the
11 runway, and when he said final's clear, I also looked, but I
12 didn't have the most clear view of the final there, like the
13 captain would from the left seat, so I had the TCAS on the lowest
14 range and I looked on the TCAS, I looked outside, then I looked on
15 the TCAS and I saw plus 0-2.

16 I paused for a second and I looked up and I noticed that
17 company was landing on 1-7 Left, on the other runway, and I still
18 noticed that we were taxiing straight ahead. At that moment the
19 captain asked a question, he said hey, did we run the before
20 takeoff checklist and at that moment, to the best of my -- best of
21 my knowledge, I remembered having pushed the recall button on the
22 glare shield panel, which is the last item on the before takeoff
23 checklist, and I had also heard the flight attendant, a flight
24 attendant make a P announcement, stating that we had been cleared
25 for takeoff. So I said yes, we did finish the checklist, but at

1 that moment, being in the cockpit, when captain asked hey, did we
2 do that, momentarily I was like okay, let me just ensure that we
3 didn't miss any -- anything. So we were still headed straight
4 towards 1-7 Right/Hotel 2 intersection. I momentarily looked up
5 to make sure that the bleed switches, the packs, were in the
6 proper position because we had had flights that had unfortunately
7 taken off with the packs off, unpressurized issue, so that is
8 something that I just made sure, I looked to make sure they were
9 on the correct position and then I just looked over on the left
10 side, also, at the overhead panel and it was 7-3, it comes back a
11 little bit, so as I looked -- as I looked towards the left and I
12 was about to come and look -- my expectation was the intersection
13 of 1-7 Right/Hotel 2.

14 As I came down to look in front of me, I heard the captain
15 say, "[REDACTED] I am spooled up," and usually what that means is 40
16 percent N1 engines are stabilized. And I heard "[REDACTED] I'm
17 spooled up" and then I heard a click, which is the TOGA button
18 being pushed and I felt a jolt to the left like this and I felt a
19 turn moment and immediately my head went towards the thrust levers
20 and I heard the captain subsequently -- as he hit the TOGA, I
21 heard him also say set takeoff thrust and I feel the sensation of
22 turning and my head goes towards the thrust levers and I knew
23 immediately that this is not something that is normal, something
24 is not right, something is out of the standard procedure that we
25 follow. I did not do anything with the thrust lever, I did not

1 call out the numbers or anything like that, my head went straight
2 outside and at that moment, to the shock of my life, I notice we
3 are not on the runway. And the words got stuck in my throat for a
4 moment, I wanted to scream out Taxiway Hotel, reject, reject,
5 reject, but it got momentarily stuck. Thankfully, on my headsets,
6 just as I was about to push the words out, I heard the tower
7 controller say Southwest 3228 -- 3278, you're on Taxiway Hotel,
8 and as I heard that on the intercom, I just screamed out we're on
9 Taxiway Hotel, reject, reject, reject. And we rejected, he just
10 pulled the thrust back, he rejected the takeoff.

11 I responded to ATC, I was utterly shocked, stunned actually,
12 as to how we had been on that. I responded and then even though I
13 was in a stunned state, to his credit, the captain brought me back
14 into the green by saying, "[REDACTED] just tell them we're going to
15 exit Hotel 3, we need to pull over and stop." And when he said
16 that, I kind of came back in from that stunned moment and I
17 responded from what the captain requested, I complied with that,
18 ATC, we need to exit at Hotel 3 and we need to stop.

19 We pulled over, they told us, tower told us to switch to
20 ground. Ground -- ground's expectation was that we would return
21 back for takeoff because I heard them -- after I checked in, I
22 told them we need to stop somewhere, run a checklist, but I heard
23 them tell another aircraft that was taxiing on Golf, I believe,
24 that hey -- you know, they instructed them to hold their position
25 so that we could get in front of them and they would follow us for

1 takeoff, I heard that and I told them unable, we're going to have
2 to return back to the gate, I said stand by, we got some
3 checklists to run. Captain said let's run the brake cooling, I
4 ran -- I found it, I ran the numbers, to the best of my knowledge
5 at that time, and then captain talked to the flight attendants,
6 passengers. The brake cooling, based on what we received back at
7 that time, said that we had to be off the gate without the parking
8 brake engaged for 30 minutes. So at that moment, after we read
9 that, captain said, "Okay, [REDACTED] we're going to have to hold the
10 brakes, I'm going to hold the brakes here" and then I said okay,
11 when -- after a while I said okay, I can hold the brakes now, and
12 we held the brakes.

13 We told ground that we're going to have to stay here for
14 whatever the remaining time was from the 30 minutes and then we
15 debriefed each other on the sequence of what had happened and both
16 recognized that the best thing to do is we need to get back to the
17 gate, step off the airplane and then take it after that. So after
18 30 minutes we taxied back to the gate and we got there, we set the
19 parking brake, ran the checklist after we shut everything down and
20 then we deplaned the aircraft. Captain and I got off the
21 airplane. That's it, that's all.

22 Q. Okay. No, that was -- I appreciate the detail, I felt kind
23 of like I was right there with you, so I appreciate it. If you
24 can, let's go back a little bit, let's go back to when you were in
25 Atlanta.

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. I assume you kept the same plane, correct?

3 A. Yes, yes.

4 Q. You kind of made it sound like that.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. All right. Was there any issues with the airplane back in
7 Atlanta, that you're aware of?

8 A. Negative, none whatsoever.

9 Q. Okay. Nice, clean airplane?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. All righty. Now, I noticed you said you noticed on the
12 NOTAMs that there was construction in Orlando, was there any
13 guidance by your company of there being construction, any guidance
14 for you guys?

15 A. On the ATIS, we received the NOTAMs and if you look on the
16 entire package that we received for the dispatch release, it lists
17 -- like, you look at the departure and then it says destination
18 and when you look at that stuff, it lists taxiway after taxiway
19 and it's easier to just look at the airport diagram, you can sort
20 of do a split screen on your -- on the iPad, so just pulling it up
21 next to each to get the most current taxiway closures and just to
22 mark which ones are closed, so that's what I do normally.

23 Q. All right. Do you have a way on your iPad to mark the
24 runways that are -- or the taxiways that are closed?

25 A. Yes, we have colors available, pencil colors, so I just use

1 the red color to mark all the taxiway closures.

2 Q. Okay. Does that work well for you? Just curious.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay, great. All righty. So you looked at the NOTAMs in
5 your dispatch release. Now, I've seen some flights for the
6 dispatch releases, lots and lots of pages, lots and lots of
7 NOTAMs, how hard is that to get through that in an efficient
8 manner while you're trying to get the plane ready for the
9 departure?

10 A. So there are FDC NOTAMs, those are more than 14 days and some
11 of them have been there for a long period of time, those are
12 usually reflected with an approach that's not available. So on
13 the ATIS, it says the ILS is out or the glide slope is out, that
14 is reflected on FDC NOTAM, so we already know that, looking at the
15 ATIS with the destination airport, that these things are already
16 out of service.

17 The current NOTAMs, we have multiple ways and on -- when you
18 pick up the ATIS, on our AMM, at the bottom, there is a button
19 that says NOTAMs, you can read the current NOTAMs and you push the
20 NOTAM button and it pops up and you can just scroll to it and look
21 at, based on your taxi route, what to expect and that's what we
22 do.

23 Q. Okay. So it makes it -- and please, don't ever let me put
24 words in your in mouth, but does it make it easier to do it that
25 way than just going through a whole list of NOTAMs? In your mind,

1 I want your opinion.

2 A. Individually, yes, looking at the current NOTAMS makes it a
3 lot easier. I cannot speak for the captain or other pilots, how
4 they prefer it.

5 Q. I just want your --

6 A. Yeah, individually, it's easier to look at because of --
7 they're the most current NOTAMS and they affect the immediate
8 flight and what you're expected to do.

9 Q. All right. Now, I know you talked about your AMM and how you
10 look at it that way, does it have the ability to put the NOTAM on
11 the taxiway for you, that says this taxiway's closed or this
12 runway's closed?

13 A. Yes, as a matter of fact, I -- though I do not know the time
14 frame, we have noticed, when it's long-term construction and there
15 are taxiways that are closed, you will see a red marking on the
16 AMM with kind of like these hash marks that, here at Dallas Love,
17 they were around Taxiway Delta or something like that, you would
18 always see that. Kansas City, when they were building the new
19 terminal and all that, they had these long-term closures and it
20 was already depicted.

21 Q. Okay. How did that work? I want your opinion, how does that
22 work for you, is that even better?

23 A. Oh, absolutely.

24 Q. Okay. Why?

25 A. Because if, in the sequence of reading NOTAMS, marking it, if

1 you happen to miss something, but if that thing is there, when
2 you're taxiing and you get a taxi clearance and you look at the
3 chart and you can say wait a minute, that part is closed, perhaps
4 you may have -- yeah, as a human being, you could've missed
5 something, but those markings are excellent.

6 Q. All right, perfect. You guys depart out of Atlanta
7 uneventfully, I'm going to assume, all the way to Orlando, land,
8 no problems, taxiing in to the gate, other than what you
9 described, just waiting for traffic. When you were going down
10 Taxiway Golf to your gate, after you landed, and you got closer to
11 Airside 2, did the -- what you looked at out of your window, did
12 that resemble what the NOTAMs said to expect with all the
13 closures? That you can recall.

14 A. The fact that there were men and equipment or -- I'm sorry,
15 equipment sitting there, we noticed it, we saw it and yeah, we
16 agreed that obviously those were the closed areas.

17 Q. Okay. So then what you guys saw kind of resembled or
18 resembled exactly what your NOTAMs, you were expecting?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay, okay. You get in the gate, you shut down, you get a
21 new dispatch release for your flight to Albany and did you go
22 through it like you did in Atlanta, did you go through the
23 dispatch release again --

24 A. Yes, I do.

25 Q. -- for that flight?

1 A. I do.

2 Q. Okay. Is that -- is that a Southwest procedure or is that a
3 [REDACTED] procedure? Or both?

4 A. It's both because we are required to look at our dispatch
5 release and verify that the information given is accurate, that
6 there's no other issues with the weather, a destination or
7 departure or something like that.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah, so I always look at it.

10 Q. Okay. Did you look at the NOTAMs again, too?

11 A. Yes, as a matter of fact, I do the FMC, the flight management
12 computer setup, and then I did a walk-around and then I came back,
13 reread the NOTAM, I waited for that before I -- I put the
14 information for our performance, weight and balance, to see if
15 they would still depict it because if the weather changed or the
16 ATIS changes on the hour, sometimes they change it before that, if
17 that taxiway closure has been removed, so I waited until I came
18 back and then I looked at the NOTAMs again and it was showing the
19 same thing.

20 Q. Okay, all righty. You get everybody on board, you get all
21 your paperwork done, you get your weight and balance, your
22 performance, did your performance have -- for your performance off
23 of 1-7 Right at Hotel 2 or --

24 A. Yes, because I had sent for it, that was the first line
25 select key on there where we can put in the runway, I had put in

1 1-7 Right/Hotel 2 and that is what we received. On the FMC,
2 there's a takeoff page where I had put in Hotel 2/1-7 Right, that
3 is the -- that's the method of placing it in there so that the
4 information reflects the PWB data, and that's exactly what I did.

5 Q. Okay. So you get your performance numbers, was there any
6 restrictions because of the runway being --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- a little bit shorter?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. So you get your numbers, doors close, you guys push
11 back and you started Number 2 first and then -- but the captain
12 said let's go ahead and start both of them, did I get that right?
13 Both engines, I'm sorry.

14 A. That is correct. I started Number 2 and I asked the captain,
15 do you want me to start Number 1 and he said yes, go ahead, start
16 Number 1 and that's what I did.

17 Q. All right. You get your clearance to taxi. Forgive me, were
18 you parked on the north side?

19 A. No, we were parked on the -- it's on the west side, I think
20 Gate 1-0-3.

21 Q. There's a picture of it, if that helps you at all, just kind
22 of -- just generally, were you on the -- kind of on the backside
23 then?

24 A. We were here.

25 Q. Oh, okay, kind of a little bit on the --

1 A. Yeah, going to -- yeah.

2 Q. -- backside there.

3 A. Yeah, yeah.

4 Q. All right, perfect. And then you taxied north, kind of
5 clockwise around the terminal?

6 A. That is affirmative.

7 Q. Okay, all righty. So as you're taxiing, do you have
8 checklists to run while you taxi or do you do them all while you
9 guys are stopped?

10 A. We ran the checklist while taxiing.

11 Q. Okay, all right. Is that normal procedure?

12 A. The before takeoff is, the before takeoff checklist is the
13 only one that we do when we are moving.

14 Q. Okay. And then you come around the building and you said
15 there was one of your company aircraft had pushed back --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- and was kind of impeding your way just a little bit.

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. All righty. I know you said you had a little bit of a delay
20 waiting for them, can you ballpark it, how long of a delay, are
21 you talking like two minutes, are you talking like 20 minutes?

22 A. Though I don't remember the exact time, based on what the Max
23 engine start time is, it would have been at least three to five
24 minutes by the time we got onto Taxiway Hotel 2.

25 Q. Okay. So they get started, they get moved out of your way,

1 you guys are going to taxi and at this point -- and I just want to
2 make sure I have it clear in my head, at this point, before you
3 start taxiing, you're on with tower.

4 A. That is correct.

5 Q. Okay. And you said that's -- was that different than normal
6 for you guys?

7 A. That is correct, it is not a standard procedure. I do not
8 know the ATC protocol, we follow what they say in terms of
9 frequencies and when I was curious about the tower frequency and I
10 asked them, they said switch over and that's what I did.

11 Q. Okay. And then he gives you clearance to -- to taxi?

12 A. No.

13 Q. He gave you --

14 A. He gave us a clearance to takeoff while we were holding short
15 of Hotel 2 on the ramp.

16 Q. Okay. Okay. So you get clearance for takeoff, you guys
17 start taxiing out towards 1-7 Right at Hotel 2, and I think you
18 said you're busy finishing up a few things, you're doing
19 something, you're doing kind of -- you were doing some kind of
20 a --

21 A. Yeah, so -- so after the captain had verified final's clear
22 and he stated 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, he had asked me the question "did
23 we do the before takeoff checklist," and though at that juncture I
24 remembered pushing the recall button, which is the last item on
25 that checklist, because the captain asked that question,

1 momentarily, though I remembered it, I just happened to scan the
2 overhead panel to make sure the pressurization, the switches, the
3 bleed, the packs, and ensured that there weren't any other lights,
4 in case I had missed it, even though I did recall pushing that
5 button, I just wanted to just make sure that there weren't
6 anything and the captain was taxiing, so I just happened to look
7 up.

8 Q. Is there any procedure or policy with Southwest that if one
9 of you questions if the checklist was done, do you have to redo it
10 all, do you just -- how is that dealt with?

11 A. The only -- allow me to collect my thoughts for a second.

12 Q. Take your time.

13 A. If a checklist is interrupted, then it is stated that we
14 should restart the checklist. In the process of running a
15 checklist, if it is interrupted, then it says to restart it. To
16 the best of my knowledge, our FOM does not state anything about if
17 there's a doubt, either way, the call of the checklist has to be
18 done by the captain, the captain initiates checklist challenges.
19 Or calling for the checklist is what I mean, not actual item
20 checklist challenges, then I would read the checklist challenge
21 and they would respond.

22 Q. Okay, all right. So you're just rescanning to make sure?

23 A. That was it.

24 Q. Okay. On a normal takeoff, let's just say when you were back
25 in Atlanta, when you got cleared for takeoff, is there a procedure

1 Southwest has for you, as the FO, and the captain to confirm the
2 runway and that you're lined up on it?

3 A. So the captain, it states in there for takeoff that the
4 captain will verify the runway and then there is a sequence of
5 items listed that these are the possibilities of how to identify
6 the runway, so the captain would be the one stating 1-7
7 Right/Hotel 2. And then when we get on the runway, what I do is I
8 -- I look for the sign and if it's obviously full length, I look
9 as we're aligning to make sure I see the numbering on the runway
10 and then I verify that he decides the headings, I look over to the
11 captain's side and my side because that is actually listed in
12 there and that is what I do. Yeah, that's the procedure.

13 Q. Okay. I just want to make sure I have it correct, though,
14 it's the captain that verifies that you're on the runway, there's
15 no response -- that's the worst word, there's no requirement for
16 you, as the FO, to verify that you're on the runway?

17 A. No, sir, there is no requirement for the FO to state the
18 runway.

19 Q. Okay, all righty. Now, in Orlando, you're coming out on
20 Hotel 2, getting ready to go to -- you know, been cleared for
21 takeoff 1-7 Right, you're doing your flow, did you have an
22 opportunity to look down at your EHSI or to verify anything?

23 A. No, the sequence of events that transpired were so sudden
24 that immediately, in my mind, I knew something was not standard,
25 something was out of the ordinary because of how the sensation of

1 the moment, a turn, I'm spooled, "[REDACTED] I'm spooled up," click,
2 thrust lever moving, my body moving towards the left in somewhat
3 of a rotating fashion and I'm leaning over like this and I see the
4 thrust lever moving and I feel this pull and I realized this is
5 not standard, something is not standard here. None of those
6 verifications, there was no chance of doing any of that.

7 Q. Okay. So as you, I'm going to say paused, you were -- quick
8 look at everything to make sure everything was set and I think --
9 again, never let me put words in your mouth, but I believe you
10 said you looked out and saw that you were on a taxiway and you
11 were trying to get that out.

12 A. Yes, I did not -- when the captain said set takeoff thrust
13 and all that, after having felt all the sensation and realizing
14 something is not right, I looked out because when the airplane,
15 with that rotational force, if you -- let me correct, not
16 rotational force, but the turning and the sensation was such that
17 my head went towards the thrust lever moving up in a turn and that
18 is not -- I have never experienced that on a 737 before. And I
19 looked out and I just -- it was a stunned moment where it wasn't
20 like calling out airspeed or glide slope or anything like that, it
21 was something that was completely abnormal.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And so it took a few seconds for me to just -- because I'm
24 trying to say on a taxiway, reject and the words were just stuck
25 momentarily there.

1 Q. Okay. For a moment, educate me, how did you quickly assess
2 that you're on a taxiway? Because it seems like that happened
3 pretty quick.

4 A. Yeah, it did. The fact that that sensation that I felt and
5 the amount of that force to keep the centerline, it triggered
6 something in my mind that said this cannot be the runway,
7 something is abnormal, this -- you do not feel that much of an
8 effort to maintain centerline on a runway. And that's when I just
9 looked out and --

10 Q. So when you looked out, what did you see that -- or did you
11 know before you looked out that you were on a taxiway?

12 A. No, no. While the turning and all that, I literally could
13 not because of how I was positioned, I couldn't, I -- when
14 something like that happens, you -- the normal human reaction
15 would be to look at why is this thrust lever moving up, why did I
16 just hear the click, these are not standard things, so that's when
17 my mind just -- my head went to the thrust levers and then I
18 transitioned outside and I realized oh, and as I'm trying to get
19 the word out is when I heard and that helped me just push the
20 words out.

21 Q. So did you -- I just -- I'm just trying to -- I know it
22 sounds like I'm getting into a little microscopic details, so I
23 apologize, I'm just trying to get a nice, clear picture here.
24 When you looked out, what did you see? Just kind of just draw me
25 a picture.

1 A. What looked like a taxiway.

2 Q. Why did it look like a taxiway to you?

3 A. The yellow centerline.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. The edges don't have the white markings.

6 Q. Okay. Now, did you recognize you were on a taxiway when you
7 looked out and saw that or when the -- when you heard ATC saying
8 that or was it kind of all smushed together, for lack of a
9 better --

10 A. It all just came together at the same time.

11 Q. Okay, all right. Just a few more questions, I know you got
12 to be tired of me because you've almost been going an hour already
13 with me, so you got to be sick and tired of talking to me. Just a
14 few questions, if you will. As an FO you fly with lots of
15 different captains --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- I assume weekly, monthly, however --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- you guys bid your lines.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Is this captain one you would say is a -- we'll say a faster
22 taxier than others, about the same, slower, just kind of help me,
23 from your opinion.

24 A. I did not sense any form of rushing from the captain
25 throughout the previous leg or to that point, I did not see or

1 hear from him that would indicate anything like that, that he was
2 abnormally taxiing or anything.

3 Q. Okay. Last question from me and then I'll let everybody else
4 ask better questions. Before we started this, I gave you my iPad
5 and had you read a statement on there that I was told was a
6 written statement produced by you and I just want to confirm, is
7 that written statement -- was that correct, was that your written
8 statement that you --

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 MR. ETCHER: Okay. I will attach that to the end of this
11 transcript just so it's -- that way we know it's attributed to you
12 and we want to give you the credit, so I appreciate that. You've
13 helped me, my brain's got to percolate a little bit here for a
14 little bit because you've given me a lot of great information, I
15 appreciate it. Before I pass you on, do you need a break?

16 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, please.

17 MR. ETCHER: All right, let's go off record at 9:04 local.

18 (Off the record at 9:04 a.m.)

19 (On the record at 9:10 a.m.)

20 MR. ETCHER: And back on the record at 9:10 local time.

21 Again, you've really helped me, you've drawn a lot of great
22 pictures for me, so I just -- let my brain percolate on that for a
23 little bit, but I can almost guarantee you everybody else here has
24 much better questions, so it'll probably even help fill in some of
25 that, as well, but I'm going to turn it over to Kat and let her

1 ask you her fantastic questions.

2 BY DR. WILSON:

3 Q. Thanks so much for everything you've already shared, it's
4 been very enlightening. So like Shawn said, I'm probably going to
5 jump around a little bit just because I have some gaps that I want
6 to fill in, excuse me. So you said there -- I just want to
7 confirm, there's no -- that you're aware of, no procedure for the
8 captain and the first officer to crosscheck the runway that
9 they're --

10 A. Stating 1 -- like 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, the captain makes that
11 callout.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. But yeah, obviously, I am to look also to --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- ensure that the callout is correct.

16 Q. Gotcha, okay. And so do you recall doing that when he
17 verified?

18 A. Yes. As a matter of fact, when captain said final clear, 1-7
19 Right/Hotel 2, because that was the last thing that was said, my
20 head looking straight ahead, I could see the sign 1-7 Right/Hotel
21 2 and then I went and I looked on final, and then I looked on TCAS
22 and that's when I saw the 0-2, plus 0-2, and I looked up and
23 verified that the company was landing on the 1-7 Left, I saw that.

24 Q. Okay, thank you for clarifying that. And about where was the
25 aircraft, do you recall, when all of that occurred?

1 A. Though I do not know the exact position, if I were to guess,
2 we were most likely crossing Taxiway Golf on Hotel 2.

3 Q. And did that seem unusual, the distance from 1-7 Right, when
4 it was being verified?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Pavement markings and signage, anything unusual about
7 what you saw in that area?

8 A. I do not recall any abnormal signage based on our taxi at
9 that time.

10 Q. And the construction that was going on, did that hinder
11 visibility of any of the signage?

12 A. When we're on the ramp, because of the construction, you
13 cannot see past the construction, you know, towards the east side,
14 you would have to get on Taxiway Hotel 2, taxi, then you can see,
15 you can see the construction on your left side, but where we --
16 where you're sitting, from my seat I cannot see past the
17 construction equipment and everything sitting over there.

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. So I can only -- when we were straight, I can see straight
20 ahead, that's it.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. But from your perspective, did the construction, did it block
24 any of the signage, did that make it difficult at all to
25 determine, you know, the taxiway signs or the runway markings?

1 A. It did not make it difficult to identify Hotel 2, which was
2 in front --

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. -- but because I couldn't see anything else past Hotel 2 on
5 the ramp, I couldn't tell you, like, if there were other things
6 from that position, if it was -- because I couldn't see past the
7 construction.

8 Q. Okay, all right. Did you recall seeing the sign for Golf,
9 like as you were on Hotel 2 and taxiing towards the runway, can
10 you see that from your seat?

11 A. Yes, yes.

12 Q. Okay, so you were able to see that.

13 A. It was on the right side, so yeah.

14 Q. Okay, all right. And how about do you recall seeing the sign
15 for Hotel, as well?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. As a matter of fact, I believe because of the intersection of
19 Golf on Hotel 2, I did say clear right because I looked to make
20 sure nobody's there, there's no equipment or anything like that
21 and my expectation was to make the same callout for Taxiway Hotel.

22 Q. Okay. And when you're taxiing, you've got the moving map up?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Are you -- who is referencing that or who should be
25 referencing that?

1 A. Both pilots can and upon our devices, we have -- because of
2 the moving map, we have an airplane or the arrow, magenta arrow,
3 which tells us where we're taxiing.

4 Q. Um-hum.

5 A. So yeah, before we move, I look at it also to verify, I
6 expand it to cover what we are about to taxi on.

7 Q. Were there any distractions -- I know that as you were
8 taxiing out, you had the company aircraft that was blocking your
9 way, were there any other distractions in the cockpit at the time?

10 A. There were not.

11 Q. Okay. How familiar are you with flying in and out of
12 Orlando?

13 A. I am fairly familiar because I was based there for about 14
14 months when I was a new hire here at Southwest and I've flown in
15 and out of Orlando many times.

16 Q. Okay. You mentioned that you got the takeoff clearance when
17 you were still on the ramp.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Based on your experience flying in and out of Orlando, was
20 the switch -- let's assume that you didn't have an aircraft that
21 would've been in your way and you would've just been able to
22 continue the taxi, were you switched to the tower frequency sooner
23 than normal?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. Where does that normally occur?

1 A. When you are on the taxiway going towards the runway of
2 intended takeoff, that is where they switch us.

3 Q. So you would've expected it once you were on Hotel 2?

4 A. That is correct.

5 Q. When you were in Atlanta, when -- Shawn asked you about the
6 taxiing, which seemed normal, there was no, like, excessive speed
7 or anything. What is the procedure for the handoff from the
8 captain to the first officer, you being the pilot flying?

9 A. So the captain, after verification, we've been cleared either
10 for position and hold or clear for takeoff, they align the
11 airplane with the centerline and they hand over and say you have
12 the aircraft and I say I have the aircraft, you have the radios,
13 and then based on the next clearance is what we do, whether
14 takeoff or hold position.

15 Q. Um-hum. And as the pilot flying, you control the thrust?

16 A. That is correct.

17 Q. When would you normally expect the thrust levers to move?
18 You mentioned that, you know, kind of as you were making that
19 turn --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- you felt a moment that wasn't quite normal, when would you
22 normally expect to feel that?

23 A. You align with the runway, it's spooled up 40 percent, we
24 check the engine parameters and then the TOGA button is clicked,
25 then the thrust lever moves up, so it's a forward acceleration

1 that you experience.

2 Q. And tower didn't give you any instruction, like no delay or
3 was there any rush from the tower to --

4 A. Other than the clearance for takeoff at the ramp, there
5 wasn't any.

6 Q. Okay. They weren't trying to push you because another
7 aircraft was coming in to land or that you recall?

8 A. No, I do not.

9 Q. Okay. Sterile cockpit policy at Southwest, what is that?

10 A. Below 10,000 feet --

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. -- unless -- during normal taxi and all that, that which is
13 required to be spoken, cleared, repeating clearances, verifying
14 pertaining to the flight and the operation on the taxiway, that is
15 only what we are supposed to speak of.

16 Q. Okay. And did that happen during the taxi?

17 A. To the best of my recollection, yes, during the taxi we had a
18 very good sterile cockpit.

19 Q. Okay. How would you characterize the CRM with the captain?

20 A. Good CRM.

21 Q. Okay. And you mentioned you didn't recall flying with him
22 before, but had you flown with him before, did he recall that
23 or --

24 A. I do not remember.

25 Q. Okay. Did he think you had?

1 A. I don't remember.

2 Q. Oh, okay, I must have misunderstood what you had said before.
3 Were there any issues on the previous flight with adherence to
4 sterile cockpit procedures?

5 A. May I talk to my counsel for a second?

6 DR. WILSON: Sure.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Yeah, please.

8 MR. ETCHER: Let me go off the record, then, at 9:22.

9 (Off the record at 9:22 a.m.)

10 (On the record at 9:22 a.m.)

11 MR. ETCHER: And back on the record at 9:22.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Could you repeat that question one more time,
13 please?

14 BY DR. WILSON:

15 Q. Sure. My question was, on the previous leg, if there was any
16 -- if sterile cockpit procedures were adhered to during that
17 flight.

18 A. To be -- procedure that is listed in our book, as to how to
19 adhere to sterile cockpit, on the first leg, it was not.

20 Q. Okay. Anything that you felt like posed a safety risk?

21 A. There wasn't anything that was stated. Because of what it
22 says in our book and through years of experience of having taught
23 the importance of sterile cockpit when I was a check airman and a
24 captain, I do not respond to conversation in sterile cockpit. I
25 may nod, but the focus is on taxi, so I did not speak anything

1 outside of the taxi instructions from the gate to Runway 2-6 Left
2 in Atlanta; however, the captain did mention a few things in the
3 terminal area, tugs crossing, and he just happened to mention an
4 experience, a prior experience, but my focus was always clear
5 left, I would look to the right, to the left, look ahead because
6 the -- early morning, the tugs are flying, to put it lightly.

7 As we taxied out, the ground controllers in Atlanta gave us
8 -- rather than saying hold short of this intersection, they gave
9 ramp, hold short of Ramp 5, so I had to look on my map to verify
10 the -- a company taxiway to the ramp where we're supposed to hold
11 short of. Captain mentioned something about the A350 that was
12 being towed, but there wasn't any untoward conversation, anything
13 that he stated that would make me uncomfortable --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- for the flight.

16 DR. WILSON: Shawn was very thorough with his questioning and
17 took most of mine. I do have some questions for round two that
18 I'll wait so that everyone can ask questions more related to the
19 event before I get into those, so thank you, [REDACTED]

20 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you, ma'am.

21 MR. ETCHER: Heidi.

22 BY MS. KEMNER:

23 Q. Let's see. I know this has been asked quite a bit already
24 about when you confirmed going on the runway, you confirmed Runway
25 1-7 Right/Hotel 2 to the captain?

1 A. The captain stated --

2 Q. Right.

3 A. -- 1-7 Right/Hotel 2 --

4 Q. Correct, okay.

5 A. -- and I saw the sign.

6 Q. Okay. When he was speaking, was he confirming -- was he
7 asking you, was that the proper sequence or was he -- do you think
8 he was confirming the runway?

9 A. To the best of my knowledge, he was confirming the runway,
10 because it's an intersection, he was confirming 1-7 Right/Hotel 2.

11 Q. Okay. Do you normally -- when you're taking off on the
12 runway, is it Southwest procedures to verify the runway before the
13 TOGA button is pressed?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. Not related to the event at all, how many more legs of
16 flights did you have that day?

17 A. That was our second leg, we were going to an overnight in
18 Albany, New York.

19 Q. Okay, so just one more.

20 A. Yes.

21 MS. KEMNER: Okay, that's -- again, their questions are
22 thorough, that's all I had, thank you.

23 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you, ma'am.

24 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Heidi.

25 John.

1 BY MR. RUMMEL:

2 Q. Very good. [REDACTED] thank you for all the details and
3 heartfelt descriptions of things so far, I really appreciate that.
4 I have just a couple, maybe related to distractions. Would you
5 categorize the whole intersection and construction as a
6 distraction?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. What about the unusual -- you mentioned an unusual -- for the
9 handoff from ground to tower a little bit, much sooner than what
10 you normally do, you felt that was a little unusual, but would you
11 also categorize that as a distraction?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Throwing off your cadence --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- and whatnot?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. The company aircraft that was pushed off, it was blocking
18 access, I believe you mentioned it was a Max.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Did the captain express any, for lack of a better word,
21 frustration or was there any -- did you get any sense that that
22 was just something he accepted or was it bothersome at all, it was
23 delaying, delaying your taxi out?

24 A. No, we just -- as I said, I was the first one to respond to
25 it by saying we won't be -- I believe what I stated was I cannot

1 guarantee clearance from the company aircraft if we're trying to
2 getting onto Hotel 2 and I'm uncomfortable with that, I believe
3 when he heard that, he also mentioned I agree, we're going to stop
4 right here.

5 Q. Sure, sure. And just to clarify, prior to that, the before
6 takeoff checklist was performed?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Okay. So several minutes went by when the captain inquired,
9 just a "have we ran the before takeoff checklist"?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. So would that be something you would categorize as a
12 distraction?

13 A. Yeah, when he asked that question, even though I remembered
14 pushing the recall button, we have been trained that if a question
15 pertaining to a clearance or a checklist is stated, you know,
16 you're supposed to -- if there's any doubt, re-question it. So
17 because I had remembered pushing the button, I did not think we
18 were going to be in that situation, and just to be a good first
19 officer and just make sure that we did everything, that's why --

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. -- I glanced up at that time.

22 Q. And some of the things that took your attention that you were
23 reviewing due to that inquiry from the captain, were they items
24 that were typically found on the before takeoff checklist? You
25 mentioned packs and bleeds or --

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. -- things like that --

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. -- so you were just kind of reviewing some --

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. -- things you know --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. -- is that correct?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. Okay. This turn onto the -- what we -- what you all mentally
11 (ph.) discovered was the Taxiway Hotel, you mentioned -- not to
12 put words in your mouth, but kind of the energy state in which
13 that turn occurred, a little bit distracting, too, as well, or
14 unusual, you mentioned, is that correct?

15 A. Very much so, sir.

16 Q. Okay. Do you think that the narrowness of the taxiway as
17 opposed to a runway would've provided a tighter turn, if you will,
18 versus a maybe more sweeping entry to a runway where it can be
19 wider and more of a 45-degree angle, if you will, versus a
20 90-degree turn?

21 A. Absolutely.

22 Q. So that might've been something you felt --

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. -- contributed? After the clearing the runway, I believe you
25 mentioned that -- you had stated, if I had this correct, that we

1 should -- you were recommending that we should go back to the gate
2 and then subsequently ran the brake cooling. So would you say it
3 was initially your idea to go back to the gate or --

4 A. When I -- because I was still basically in shock --

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. -- I realized that I needed to stop and I needed to, for lack
7 of a better word, get off the airplane, I could not continue
8 because if an error like this had -- what I considered at that
9 time was an error happened and I do not know how it happened, I am
10 not safe to fly at that moment to continue on.

11 MR. RUMMEL: Okay. Thank you very much, [REDACTED] I think
12 that's all I have at this time.

13 MR. ETCHER: Chris.

14 BY MR. SHAVER:

15 Q. Thank you again, very good questions all the way around and
16 really good painting the picture for us. A couple things, just --
17 first off, just go back to, like a -- let's talk about a normal
18 takeoff. As an FO, what's your normal sequence of procedures, you
19 know, as we're cleared for -- cleared for takeoff --

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. -- what are you doing normally?

22 A. So captain aligns the airplane the best they can onto the
23 centerline and I look outside, make sure that they are aligning
24 and verify the runway. If it's an intersection, I would've
25 already seen it, the intersection, because when you take up on an

1 intersection, it does not have the runway number and you cannot
2 see it, so normally, you would take the runway, I would look
3 outside to make sure it was the runway, I look at the sign and
4 then I come in and look inside at the EHSIs for the headings to
5 make sure that they match and I also recognize, when I quickly
6 glance at it, that if it's off a couple of degrees, it matches the
7 fact that the airplane may not be exactly on centerline, it may be
8 just tilted a little bit to the left or to the right and so that
9 when I apply the thrust, looking outside I can adjust the rudder
10 as needed to align with the centerline. That's my normal
11 sequence.

12 Q. And do you have any, like, specific procedures, as an FO,
13 that you perform entering the runway? Any other lights, anything
14 like that?

15 A. I mean unless ATC tells you cleared for immediate takeoff and
16 you were in the middle of a -- the before takeoff checklist,
17 pushing the recall button, that's about it. Otherwise, there is
18 nothing but verifying the correct runway, the EHSIs, before we
19 take off.

20 Q. That's kind of like -- is it your role to, like, aircraft
21 exterior lighting, things like that?

22 A. Yes, I'm sorry. Yes, that is correct. Those would be turned
23 on, the strobes and the wing inspection light, those would be
24 turned on prior to entering the runway, when you're cleared for
25 takeoff or line up and wait.

1 Q. Do you recall doing any of that --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- on this takeoff?

4 A. No.

5 Q. You mentioned that the captain verified the runway and said
6 final's clear.

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Is there any policy with Southwest to clear the runway, also?

9 A. No, there is not a written policy that states that if --
10 whosever side the runway is aligned on, that they state clear
11 right but as a practice, I always look prior to entering the
12 runway, particularly, it doesn't matter if I'm -- the runway's a
13 left or right, I always lean forward and look to make sure it's
14 clear because sometimes you can hear tower say -- give clearance
15 to another aircraft to cross down field, and so in that moment,
16 yeah, but unfortunately, there's nothing that states that you will
17 state, specifically, the verbiage.

18 Q. And the same question to that, on this particular flight, do
19 you recall having time to look out --

20 A. No.

21 Q. And you think that was just from the distraction of him
22 asking about the before takeoff checklist?

23 A. That's a possibility that it was from asking if we had done
24 it and secondly, my expectation was that we were still not yet
25 past Taxiway Hotel and all those lights and everything would only

1 happen when we got to the runway, I would look to the right and
2 say clear right, I would look at the TCAS momentarily and make
3 sure nobody was, you know, coming onto our runway and I would look
4 to the right, make sure it was clear because we were already
5 cleared for takeoff and then I would throw the lights on.

6 Q. Would you consider it, like, is it normal for captains or
7 whoever, to do rolling takeoffs or like, you know, accelerating
8 while turning onto the runway, is that a normal thing you would
9 see?

10 A. No, no. I have -- I have not.

11 Q. And then one last one, you mentioned after you guys had
12 rejected and you were taxiing off the runway, you mentioned that
13 the captain brought you back into the green.

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Would you mind just explaining a little bit what you mean by
16 that?

17 A. Right, so our risk resource management, it states that if a
18 pilot is outside of the normal operating procedures, which we call
19 green, it's in color sequence, green, yellow, and red, and the
20 other pilot, if they're aware of what is going on, they can state
21 something that would help make the pilot who was outside of the
22 green, to recognize and come back into the -- to that green so
23 that the communication is understood. And at that moment when the
24 shock of recognizing we're not on the runway, I was not -- I knew
25 the airplane was on the centerline, I could see it up the taxiway,

1 but I was completely stunned and taken out of the green of what I
2 expected to be happening at that moment and I was so stunned, I
3 think I said how did we end up on this taxiway or to some effect
4 like that and I think the captain realized at that moment that
5 okay, I got to bring him back in and he said [REDACTED] call the --
6 tell the tower guy we need to exit on Hotel 3 and that's when that
7 statement brought me back and I started to just do the sequence of
8 things that needed to be done.

9 MR. SHAVER: Thank you.

10 MR. [REDACTED] Sure.

11 MR. SHAVER: That's all I have.

12 MR. ETCHER: Okay, thanks.

13 Phew, made it through round one, round two's always quicker,
14 but before we start, do you need a break, you doing all right?

15 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Would you like a break?

16 MR. [REDACTED] I'm good.

17 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Let's go.

18 BY MR. ETCHER:

19 Q. All right. You really have helped me a lot to draw a
20 picture, I still have some -- I'll call them gray areas, so I need
21 you to fill those in a little bit for me, if you could, but kind
22 of dovetailing on what Chris was talking about, you weren't in the
23 green and he helped bring you back into the green. If you guys
24 rejected and you're out of the green like you were, but you didn't
25 have to go back to the gate, you know, brake cooling time was

1 whatever and you could take off, would you have?

2 A. No, I would not.

3 Q. Even once you got back into the green?

4 A. That is correct, sir.

5 Q. Why?

6 A. The reason being if something like this happened, there is a
7 distinct possibility that the captain also did not recognize what
8 was happening, therefore, trying to continue the flight would
9 jeopardize CRM in the cockpit, RRM, and we would not be able to
10 employ the -- the various tools that are available to us to come
11 back into the green because, as human beings, we would be thinking
12 about what just happened.

13 So I realized for myself and I also realized that the captain
14 obviously did not recognize what was going on and we were both in
15 the red at that juncture, therefore, it would not be safe for us
16 to continue to operate that flight. And I told him that, I said I
17 need to get off the airplane, I can't continue. He didn't say can
18 we go or anything like that, I just stated it because of the shock
19 that I was in.

20 Q. Okay. If you guys weren't going back to the gate and you
21 said I can't continue, what would you expect to happen, would they
22 just take you off the line, would they -- have you ever had to do
23 that before? Let me ask that.

24 A. Never.

25 Q. Never, okay.

1 A. So I do not know what the sequence would be.

2 Q. Okay. "I don't know" is a good answer, so I wasn't sure.

3 Have you ever heard of anybody doing that before?

4 A. I have never spoken to anyone who has experienced --

5 Q. No?

6 A. -- this before.

7 Q. Okay, perfect. Sorry, my questions are probably going to be
8 a little hodge-podge here, just as my brain was percolating a
9 little bit, it had some, as well. I know this was a morning
10 flight, it seems like it happened kind of midmorning.

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. But that means you guys probably had to report pretty early
13 in Atlanta.

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Are you normally an a.m. or a p.m. guy?

16 A. I am solely an a.m. person.

17 Q. Okay. You like a.m.'s better, huh?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. All righty, perfect. When you're taxiing, don't think about
20 this event, just any time you're taxiing and you're going down the
21 taxiway and you're coming upon a crossing taxiway --

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. -- do you always look right, clear right, clear left, do you
24 guys announce that, is that --

25 A. I do, sir.

1 Q. You do, okay. So let's go back to this event just a little
2 bit, you came out of the ramp --

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. -- and Golf would be here left and right on you.

5 A. Yeah, the left side was men and equipment, so they were all
6 closed.

7 Q. So everything was over here on your right.

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. Did you verbalize clear right?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. All right. Did you ever verbalize clear right when you come
12 up to Hotel?

13 A. We never got to that point of me being able to recognize that
14 position and state as such.

15 Q. Okay. So I just want to -- just so I understand your timing,
16 when you would normally say clear right, when is that, normally?

17 A. As we approach the intersecting taxiway.

18 Q. Okay. All right, perfect. And you do that also when you
19 take a runway, clear left, clear right?

20 A. Yes, sir, I do.

21 Q. Do you verbalize that? I know you said you did, but --

22 A. I verbalize clear right.

23 Q. Okay. All right, perfect. I know you said one of the
24 crosschecks you do is you look outside when you're on the
25 centerline of a runway and you look at your EHSI. In this event,

1 if you would've not recognized that it was a taxiway and you had
2 time to look out and look at your EHSI, would you have expected it
3 to be the same, since it's a parallel taxiway as the runway?

4 A. No, if I looked outside, I would've seen the yellow line, the
5 width of the taxiway, they didn't have any of the signage at the
6 runway, so I would've said we're on a taxiway.

7 Q. Okay, all right. So I just want to understand, what's the
8 purpose of looking at your EHSI, then?

9 A. It is stated in our procedure that that is one of the methods
10 of verifying the runway and having been at that regional airline,
11 particularly after the Comair accident, that we did intense study
12 on all of the stuff at ASA, as check airmen, we went through the
13 development of the procedure on how to verify runways and so those
14 habits did stay with me and it paralleled what is written in our
15 book of hey, the heading's being verified to ensure the markings,
16 settings, all of those things, the environment, verifying it.

17 Q. Okay. You bring up ASA and being a line check airman and
18 being a line check airman's a big responsibility, you get a lot of
19 great opportunities to sit in the left seat and watch new hire --

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. -- FOs, you get a lot of great opportunities to sit in the
22 right seat watching new upgrade captains, at any time during your
23 line check airman time when you were seated in the right seat
24 performing line check duties on a captain, a new upgrade captain,
25 was there any time when you had a captain attempt to turn right,

1 turn on the wrong taxiway, turn on the runway or, you know, kind
2 of get confused? And I don't mean this was a confusion, I'm just
3 trying to --

4 A. Since it was such a long time ago, I do not remember.

5 Q. Okay. All right, no worries. This being an intersection
6 takeoff --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. -- at the event, is there anything different for you guys to
9 do for an intersection departure versus a full length? As a crew,
10 or you as a pilot, as a first officer.

11 A. In terms of the procedures, those procedures are actually
12 verified that it is an intersection on your PWB data and then on
13 your takeoff page on your FMC, it states that intersection is
14 there, therefore the data matches, the flap setting, thrust,
15 engine failure, all of those things, but those are all done prior
16 to pushback and then when we come to the runway, because there's
17 -- you won't be able to see the runway sign, the runway numbering,
18 because it's an intersection, you have to look at the sign and
19 state that. Other than that, 1-7 Right/Hotel 2 being --
20 everything else is still the same.

21 Q. Okay. One thing you mentioned earlier, it took my brain a
22 little while to percolate on it, when you guys were taxiing around
23 the ramp and you had to stop for the company that was in front of
24 you and you had said I don't think we have enough room -- I am
25 paraphrasing what you said -- and your captain said I agree, is

1 that -- and that's important, I'm glad he said that --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- and I'm glad you guys were in agreement on that, but is
4 there -- help me understand, is there a reason that you can think
5 of that you guys don't verbalize agreement on a runway?

6 A. The only thing that I can -- that I know of as a fact, that
7 in our procedure, it only says the captain will state, it doesn't
8 say that the FO will also state after the captain has verified the
9 runway or the runway intersection. That's the only reason why the
10 captain states it and I am not required by our operating manual to
11 state as such.

12 Q. Okay. I want your opinion here.

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. Would that have been helpful to have that where you have to
15 agree that you're on the runway and the right runway or is that
16 just one more thing that you have to do on prior to taking off?

17 A. It would have helped, absolutely, 100 percent, if both pilots
18 can state the runway after looking at the signage.

19 Q. So in your opinion, why would that help?

20 A. Because both pilots recognize, both pilots are together in
21 the green, CRM is being utilized, and the safety of the aircraft
22 is assured by both pilots stating that's what it is, the runway.

23 Q. Okay. I have one more question and I told you, you've really
24 helped me a lot, I --

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. -- should call you an artist because you've painted a nice
2 picture, so I appreciate that. Think back to your departure out
3 of Atlanta --

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. -- and I know Atlanta is Atlanta, it can be a little bit
6 busy, a little bit chaotic sometimes, feels like, it's controlled
7 chaos, but do you remember what kind of a takeoff you did there?
8 Did you guys -- because it was your takeoff, right?

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. When you guys got on the runway, did you stop or was it --
11 did you continue to roll?

12 A. We stopped because we have to transfer controls.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I have to take possession of the controls of the aircraft, so
15 we did stop.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Oh, and I think there was another aircraft that had taken off
18 in front of us, so it was line up and wait and not cleared for
19 takeoff.

20 Q. Okay. I lied, I guess I have one more follow-up to that, so
21 apologies.

22 A. No problem.

23 Q. Is that a requirement when you -- when the captain transfers
24 control to you when it's your turn to fly --

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. -- do you have to stop on the runway, is that a requirement
2 or is that a request of you? Kind of help me to understand.

3 A. Because I have not been trained as a captain, I do not know
4 the exact procedure for captains in terms of that. However, to be
5 able to transfer control of the aircraft at that juncture for what
6 we are about to commence, it is a good idea and it is practiced by
7 our crew members to stop, transfer controls, that I have
8 experienced.

9 MR. ETCHER: I told you that was going to be my last
10 question, so I appreciate you clarifying that a little --

11 MR. [REDACTED] Sure.

12 MR. ETCHER: -- bit for me. So let me turn it over to Kat.

13 BY DR. WILSON:

14 Q. Thanks. I want to clarify something, so Heidi had asked you
15 about verifying the runway and I apologize if I'm harping on this,
16 but it's just a little bit confusing, in my head, what the
17 procedure is for verifying the runway. I guess, maybe I'll just
18 ask from the broader sense of like okay, so you're approaching the
19 runway --

20 A. Yes, ma'am.

21 Q. -- let's say you're on H-2 and everything was going -- Hotel
22 2, everything's going as expected, when -- at what point is the --
23 should the runway be verified?

24 A. So you have the hold short line --

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. -- right, so prior to approaching the -- prior to crossing
2 the hold short line, you look -- in this situation, it was 1-7
3 Right/Hotel 2 intersection, because we do not have markings on the
4 runway that says Hotel 2, we would recognize the signage and state
5 1-7 Right, the captain would --

6 Q. Um-hum.

7 A. -- 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, prior to crossing the hold short line,
8 that's when it would be done.

9 Q. Okay. And then Heidi asked a question about if the runway
10 should be verified prior to pushing the TOGA switch.

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. So is there -- so is there a second verification expected,
13 then, when you're on the runway?

14 A. Yes, yes. So if I may take this situation of Hotel 2 --

15 Q. Sure.

16 A. -- prior to crossing the hold short line, captain would state
17 as such and what I normally do is I see the signage and I either
18 say affirmative or I would've said 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, as a matter
19 of fact, that's what my expectation was that I would say in this
20 situation, 1-7 Right/Hotel 2, clear on the right, then when we
21 take the -- when we align with the centerline, transferring of
22 control or since it was the captain, as he aligned it, I would
23 look at -- and we're both supposed to look at the EHSIs. On my
24 part, I would definitely look at it one more time to make sure it
25 was within the magnetic course of the runway and I would look

1 outside, if it was just a little bit off centerline, a little
2 left, a little right, I know it will be off by two or three
3 degrees, that said, and that's the procedure we're supposed to do.

4 Q. Okay. And is there any verbal exchange when that happens
5 before the TOGA switch is hit?

6 A. In our policy, it does not state that we would state anything
7 other than we've verified the runway already.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. There's no additional statements being made.

10 Q. Okay, thank you. I don't believe you did drug and alcohol
11 testing after --

12 A. No, I did not.

13 Q. Okay. There was a signs and symptoms form completed?

14 A. I do not remember.

15 Q. Okay. After you -- when you were sitting there while the
16 brakes were cooling, did the captain say anything to you about
17 what he thought went wrong?

18 A. The only thing that I recollect was the captain apologized to
19 me, he did not state anything in terms of I just saw -- I think he
20 said I saw the sign 1-7 Right/Hotel 2 and then he said, "[REDACTED]
21 I'm so sorry." He said that a couple times.

22 Q. Prior to, obviously, the takeoff roll as you were -- how was
23 the captain's briefing, standard or any issues?

24 A. On all the checklists that we --

25 Q. Um-hum. Yeah, so I mean you guys have a pre-departure

1 briefing, right?

2 A. Yeah, yes, yeah.

3 Q. Yeah. How was that?

4 A. All of that is per the checklist.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Everything was covered that was on the departure briefing --

7 Q. Um-hum.

8 A. -- pertinent to the flight.

9 Q. Okay, good. And how did he seem? Just in general, what was
10 his overall demeanor?

11 A. Normal.

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. Pleasant.

14 Q. Okay. I want to go back and one of the things that we
15 collect is a 72-hour history --

16 A. Yes, ma'am.

17 Q. -- so we get recent activities, so I'd like to go back to
18 Monday, March 17th.

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. If you have a calendar that you want to pull up, that's okay,
21 but whatever, whatever makes it easy for you.

22 A. I turned my phone off, but go ahead, let me see if I can
23 recollect.

24 Q. Okay. So going back to Monday, March 17th, do you recall
25 what time you woke up?

1 A. I believe I was on the third day of a three-day trip on the
2 17th and I believe I was in the West Coast, I think I had two legs
3 to Atlanta. Somewhere on West Coast time is what I remember. So
4 the way I set up my wakeup call and all that, for example, if the
5 van leaves at 5:00 a.m. local time, I plan to wake up two hours
6 prior and then I look back to give myself eight hours of sleep and
7 then about an hour before or so, I wrap up everything and I make
8 sure I'm already in bed so that I can get eight hours of rest. So
9 West Coast, based on East Coast time, I probably woke up -- my
10 body acclimation on East Coast time, I would say it would be
11 something like 5:00 to 7:00 a.m., between 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.
12 Eastern time, so it would be like 3:00 to 4:00 a.m. California
13 time, most likely.

14 Q. Okay. And then you had the two legs that day?

15 A. Yes, ma'am.

16 Q. All right. Anything unusual about that day?

17 A. No, nothing at all.

18 Q. And what time do you think you went to bed that night?

19 A. That flight, that third day, I got in a little bit later on
20 in the evening, not nighttime, but a little later on in the
21 evening, so I think by the time I got home, it may have been
22 between 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. Eastern time and as is our routine at
23 home, I just -- because it is that late, my normal sequence of
24 sleep, usually based on my duty times, generally, I'm usually in
25 bed by 7:00 p.m. or asleep by 7:00 p.m. So I think at 6:00 p.m. I

1 came, changed, I immediately ate dinner and I was out, sleeping.
2 I was sleeping and -- yeah, somewhere, 7:00, 8:00 p.m. I was out,
3 sleeping.

4 Q. Okay. Any problems falling asleep or staying asleep?

5 A. Oh, no.

6 Q. Tuesday, March 18th --

7 A. Yes, ma'am.

8 Q. -- do you recall what time you woke up?

9 A. Yeah, most likely would have been around 5:00 a.m. Yeah,
10 around that time period.

11 Q. Do you wake up on your own or do you use an alarm?

12 A. I use an alarm.

13 Q. Okay. And what were your activities on March 18th?

14 A. So that day we had -- so I wake up and after I wake up,
15 within about 10 minutes I immediately start an exercise regimen
16 that, at home, the exercise regimen takes about one hour and then
17 I have a cup of tea, do things around the house and then an hour
18 later I have another cup of tea and then I went for a two-hour
19 walk, came back, we were -- we had to go apartment hunting for my
20 grown kids, to find a newer apartment for them, so we went with
21 them, looked at the apartments, stopped by puppy dog place and
22 then we had dinner with our children and then we came back home
23 and then I just went up to sleep.

24 Q. Okay. What time do you think you went to sleep?

25 A. It may have been around 9:00-ish.

1 Q. Okay. And that's when you would've been asleep, not when you
2 get in bed?

3 A. Yeah, yeah, I -- yeah, yeah.

4 Q. Any problems that you recall falling asleep or staying
5 asleep?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Wednesday, March 19th.

8 A. So everything that I do -- that was the day before this trip
9 started on the 20th, it's always a -- I set my schedule based on a
10 look-back on when the duty-in is, I leave about an hour and 10
11 minutes before that and I try to wake up two hours before that so
12 I can go through my exercise regimen and have my cup of Earl Grey
13 tea, it's all that. So I think it was a 6:00 a.m., 6:05 a.m.
14 duty-in is what I remember, so 4:55 I wanted to leave the house,
15 so 3:00 a.m. I set the alarm, eight hours, 7:00 p.m. I wanted to
16 be in la-la land, basically, so I would be in bed by 6:30.

17 Two hours prior to that I would've finished eating, so
18 normally I give myself about a two, two-and-a-half-hour window and
19 then I was okay if I want to eat at this time, I need to stop
20 working out at that time, so that day I woke up, you know, 4:00,
21 4:00 a.m. or whatever, I went through the same sequence, I get up
22 and I do my exercise, cup of tea, an hour later another cup of
23 tea, I went for a two-hour walk, came back, ironed my uniform,
24 packed everything, started eating my meal or that time period I
25 eat meals like that, in a two- to three-hour window and took a

1 shower, laid down in bed by 6:30.

2 Q. Okay. What time do you think you fell asleep?

3 A. Probably by 7:00. Yeah, I just -- within half an hour I'm --

4 Q. Um-hum. Any problems that you recall falling asleep or
5 staying asleep?

6 A. No, I just -- I just fall asleep, I may have gotten up to use
7 the restroom in the middle of the night once and then I just roll
8 back and go back to sleep until I hear the alarm call.

9 Q. Okay. All right, so Thursday, March 20th, that's the day of
10 the event, you kind of alluded that you needed to leave the house
11 at 4:55, but walk me through what time you woke up that day.

12 A. Three a.m.

13 Q. Okay. And you left the house at 4:55-ish, you believe?

14 A. Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

15 Q. Okay, all right. Do you have breakfast before you leave the
16 house?

17 A. No, I do not.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I have my two cups of tea and that's it.

20 Q. Okay. Did you eat breakfast that day or eat any meals?

21 A. Yeah, I actually -- I actually -- I cook breakfast --

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. -- and I take it with me and throughout the morning I eat a
24 little bit at a time.

25 Q. Um-hum, okay. The tea you have, is it decaf or caffeinated?

1 A. Caffeinated.

2 Q. Okay. Do you drink any other caffeinated beverages?

3 A. None whatsoever.

4 Q. Okay. How did you feel that day when you woke up?

5 A. Refreshed, ready to go, yeah.

6 Q. Good, okay. All right. Do you use any tobacco products?

7 A. No, I do not.

8 Q. Do you drink alcohol?

9 A. Yes, but only on my off days, with adequate rest and all of
10 that sequence, then.

11 Q. Okay. Do you recall the last time you had an alcoholic
12 beverage prior to March 20th?

13 A. I do not.

14 Q. Okay. Do you take any prescription medications?

15 A. Yeah, I take blood pressure medication, cholesterol --

16 Q. Um-hum.

17 A. -- and another one for -- I think for uric acid, yeah.

18 Q. Okay. And those are listed on your medical?

19 A. Yeah, yeah, they're reported on the medical --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- and my AME is the one who -- he's my regular doctor, he's
22 the one who prescribes it.

23 Q. Great. Do you take any nonprescription medication or
24 vitamins?

25 A. No, I do not.

1 Q. Okay. In the 72 hours prior to the event, did you take any
2 medications, either prescription or nonprescription, that affects
3 your performance in any way?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. How do you like working for Southwest?

6 A. Absolutely love it.

7 Q. Okay, good. Have you heard, you know, either before or since
8 the event, anything -- any concerns that anybody had about flying
9 with this captain?

10 A. No, I have not spoken to anyone.

11 Q. Um-hum. Okay.

12 A. So I -- none, whatsoever.

13 Q. Um-hum, yeah. Does Southwest allow you to have -- is there
14 like a no-bid list or a no-fly if you didn't want to fly with a
15 particular captain?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. Have you ever utilized that?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And usually if you ask to not fly with a captain, you
20 don't -- you're not paired with that person?

21 A. No, I am not.

22 Q. Okay. You had mentioned that on the earlier leg from Atlanta
23 that there were just some issues with a sterile cockpit on the
24 part of the captain, did you not responding to that, did that
25 affect in any way how you got along with the captain or did you

1 feel that that affected CRM at all?

2 A. No, I do not believe it affected CRM at all.

3 Q. Okay, good. Were there any, like, pressures that you recall
4 on that day that might've, you know, made the -- you or the
5 captain feel like there was a time pressure to depart Orlando?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Okay. And I apologize, I think Shawn asked you, but you had
8 -- was there another leg that day or you said you were
9 overnighting in Albany?

10 A. Yeah, we had two legs, this was the second leg.

11 Q. Okay, all right. And you removed yourself from the rest of
12 the trip after the event?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Did the captain remove himself also, do you recall?

15 A. We were actually -- after we returned back to the gate,
16 because we had a call swap, I know the sequence just goes where we
17 are removed from the whole trip right away by the company.

18 Q. Okay, um-hum.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. All right. Just one last question, workload, so how would
21 you characterize the workload during the taxi to the runway?

22 A. Normal.

23 DR. WILSON: Okay. All right, thank you so much, [REDACTED]

24 MR. [REDACTED] Sure.

25 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Kat.

1 Heidi?

2 MS. KEMNER: I don't have any more questions, thank you.

3 MR. ETCHER: John?

4 BY MR. RUMMEL:

5 Q. Let me ask you about factors increasing risk, decreasing
6 performance, we talk about that in the RRM, those terms we use are
7 provided, additive condition, right, or --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- task-loading --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- crew factors. Of those three, that day, leaving the gate
12 in Orlando, would there be anything that would be categorized as
13 an additive condition?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Can you describe it?

16 A. Yeah. The construction, the fact that the intersection for
17 departure is not mentioned because there have been situations
18 where if it's not mentioned, you plan for it and then they give
19 you full length, so now even though I sent for the data, we have
20 to stop now, we have to run a departure checklist, verifying all
21 of those items and then do the before takeoff checklist when the
22 captain calls for it. So that was there, the construction that --
23 and the biggest additive condition, I would say, would've been the
24 clearance for takeoff while holding short, waiting for an aircraft
25 to move on the ramp, just that -- yeah, those three would be.

1 MR. RUMMEL: Okay, yeah. I think that's all I have, [REDACTED]
2 thank you very much. Appreciate it.

3 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, John.

4 Chris?

5 BY MR. SHAVER:

6 Q. Southwest recently added some systems to the airplane, runway
7 awareness and advisory systems, RAAS, was that active for you
8 guys' plane?

9 A. No, no, it was not.

10 Q. Okay. Have you had an opportunity to utilize that system
11 since then?

12 A. Yes, yes, I have.

13 Q. Do you feel like that would've made a difference in this, in
14 this flight?

15 A. Absolutely.

16 Q. Any issues with that system that you've had since then or --

17 A. Now that it's been clarified that if you have an intersecting
18 runway that is, you know, before 40 knots, you -- as you
19 accelerate, it will say approaching the other runway while you're
20 on the takeoff roll and because the memo was put out that this
21 will happen and we were sent an educational memo, after I read
22 that, there's no -- no issues.

23 Q. And then I just (indiscernible), how do you -- do you feel
24 like Southwest's policies and procedures for taxi, taxiing on the
25 runways for takeoffs, do you feel like they're all sufficient, do

1 you --

2 A. The only -- I wish both pilots, captain and FO, would
3 verbalize the runway and not just the captain and, you know,
4 stating -- the captain says final's clear, the FO also being able
5 to state, you know, the runway's clear on my side or right side,
6 so if those things -- particularly the verification of the runway,
7 if both pilots could just verbalize that, that would be a huge
8 positive.

9 MR. SHAVER: That's all I've got.

10 MR. ETCHER: Thanks, Chris.

11 BY MR. ETCHER:

12 Q. [REDACTED] you educated us a lot today, I appreciate it.

13 A. Thank you, sir.

14 Q. I know you were coming in knowing that we were going to ask
15 lots of questions, so you probably had in your brain some ideas
16 that we would be asking, but I'm always fearful, we can ask you a
17 ton of them, but there may be one question we didn't know to ask
18 or we just didn't ask that would shed even more light, is there
19 any questions like that that you thought we would ask that we
20 didn't?

21 A. None whatsoever.

22 Q. Okay. If you were king for the day, is there anything --
23 after going through all this or anything within the airspace
24 itself, is there anything you see, as a pilot using it, that needs
25 to be improved or changed? You can't change pilot pay, I don't

1 have that control, sorry, so you can't say that.

2 A. The clearances from towers for takeoff, you -- this situation
3 that we encountered was so abnormal, but there have been other
4 situations and I actually utilized our system of ASAP for general
5 inquiry. In Phoenix, they would always ask do you have the
6 previous aircraft in sight and as the other airplane was taking
7 off, they would ask us do you have the departing aircraft in sight
8 and we would say yes, I have the aircraft in sight and they would
9 say line up and wait and as soon as we did that, immediately
10 you're cleared for takeoff and they'd clear you for takeoff and
11 the airplane would be still on the runway so, of course, we
12 wouldn't do the takeoff until we saw the airplane lift off, so
13 that piqued my curiosity as to the safety, what if that airplane
14 rejected takeoff and we received a clearance and with the
15 expectation that that airplane had rotated but they're on the
16 runway, now we do the takeoff.

17 So I filled out an ASAP asking clarification and our ATC ASAP
18 person got back, we actually spoke on the phone and he explained
19 that apparently ATC, when they see a particular distance that the
20 airplane has reached regardless of whether they're going to
21 rotate, the expectation is that they would rotate and depart and
22 therefore, they can clear you for takeoff, which I thought was
23 still -- they used to do that in Atlanta a long time ago, but they
24 don't do that in Atlanta anymore, but in Phoenix they did and the
25 same thing, it wasn't an incident but a situation happened in

1 Houston a couple of years ago, I was with a check airman, we were
2 positioned in a hold on Runway 2-2 and I saw there's a taxiway, I
3 think it was Hotel or something that crosses, or Charlie crosses
4 Runway 2-2, I saw an airplane sitting there and I told the captain
5 that the aircraft, you know, whatever it was that I recognized,
6 that they were about to cross the runway, even though they hadn't
7 cleared us, the aircraft starts to cross the runway, the aircraft
8 has not cleared the hold short line on the taxiway and before that
9 happened, they cleared us for takeoff and I told the captain and
10 he recognized also the aircraft is not clear, we denied the
11 clearance and again, we filled out an ASAP report and the result
12 was that, from the tower, was that the expectation is that this
13 airplane will cross the taxiway, be clear -- cross the runway and
14 be clear on the other side of the hold short line, based on that,
15 you're being cleared for takeoff.

16 That didn't happen, we didn't accept the clearance, we said
17 no and the tower person was a little perturbed about it, so we
18 filled out an ASAP and that's the answer we got. DCA, cleared for
19 immediate takeoff, those kind of things with ATC is -- it is
20 increasing and if I could humbly request that those things be
21 taken into consideration so that in the future we don't have any
22 issues like that.

23 Q. No, I appreciate you bringing that up, we do listen to what
24 people ask, you know, things like that and we have a group of ATC
25 folks here and I'll pass that along to them, as well, just to make

1 sure that they're not trying to push too much --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- through the one -- the little eye of the needle.

4 A. Right.

5 Q. All righty. Anything else you can think of?

6 A. No, sir, that's it.

7 MR. ETCHER: All right, perfect. Well, with that, let's call
8 the interview concluded at 10:17 local.

9 (Whereupon, at 10:17 a.m., the interview concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: INCIDENT AT THE ORLANDO INTERNATIONAL
 AIRPORT IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA
 ON MARCH 30,
 Interview of [REDACTED] "[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

ACCIDENT NO.: DCA25LA163

DATE: April 22, 2025

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]

David A. Martini
Transcriber

The following was the incident flight first officer's written statement provided through Southwest Airlines.

First Officer's Written Statement

I was the First Officer on SWA Flight 3278 (MCO-ALB) on March 20, 2025. This was the second leg of the first day of a 4-day trip.

On the previous leg (ATL-MCO), as the pilot flying (PF), during cruise, I read the ATIS and noticed multiple taxiway closures at MCO. I marked those in red on my AMM and during my pre-approach briefing, I noted the closures to the Captain and we discussed taxi-in possibilities: If ground brought us in on Juliet from the west, we could expect J3. If from the south, we needed to be aware of Golf being closed north of H2 to J5, as well as H1. We also briefed the possibility of using G1 or H2 all the way around AIRSIDE 2 to park at gate 103.

During our taxi in at MCO, we heard ground control tell two flights to expect Runway 17R-H2. Captain and I both agreed this could be a possibility for our departure to Albany.

At the gate, I received the ATIS for the MCO-ALB flight and realized that it did not state 17R- H2 intersection for departure. Weather was VFR. I put 17R-H2 in as the 1st option on our PWB request, followed by full length 17R and 18L. I told the Captain how I had set it up. Upon receipt of CPDLC, it showed us to expect 17R if departing south, without mention of intersection H2. Since Captain was the pilot flying, he briefed the required items, including the closed taxiways, on AMM, and we agreed that H2 was the best possibility. We received our PWB data, accomplished the Before Pushback checklist, and were ready to leave the gate a few minutes before the scheduled departure time.

I called ground for pushback, and, as cleared on our discretion, we began the pushback. I started both engines, and after we finished the Before Taxi checklist, I noted clear right and called for a taxi clearance.

Ground control told us to expect 17R H2 for takeoff, and cleared us to taxi via the ramp to H2. On taxi out, I verified the tower frequency with ground and switched over as cleared. As we taxied on the ramp, Captain gave the flight attendant the single chime signal and called for the Before Takeoff checklist. I heard the "A" flight attendant announcement, turned off the volume switch and proceeded to run the Before Takeoff checklist. As we approached H2, still on the ramp, we noticed a SWA MAX8 had pushed back and was perpendicular to our position. I told the Captain that it didn't look like we had room to taxi past it. He agreed, and I notified Tower. They advised us to state when we would be able to taxi. At this point, our expectation was that we would be cleared to taxi onto H2 after the SWA MAX8 moved. Since we were on tower frequency, we could not hear the MAX8 communications with ground. The SWA MAX made a right turn away from us and I advised the Captain that we were clear. He asked me to call Tower, which I did. While holding short of H2 on the ramp, Tower cleared us for takeoff on 17R-H2, RNAV to KAAPE. I acknowledged the

clearance, although I thought it was a bit premature to receive the clearance since we were still on the ramp. As I responded to the clearance, I looked on the FMC to verify KAAPE and looked at the FMA to verify LNAV. I then advised the Captain that we were cleared for takeoff 17RH2, RNAV to KAAPE, and that FMA showed LNAV.

We then began taxiing. The Captain turned onto H2, and as we were crossing the Golf taxiway he stated that the final approach was clear and that 17R-H2 was verified. I saw the 17R-H2 sign and saw that we were taxiing toward 17R. I looked to the left to ensure that there were no aircraft on short final to runway 17R, and then looked at the TCAS. I noticed a "+02" on the TCAS. To make sure we were clear, I looked outside again and saw a SWA aircraft landing on runway 17L. The Captain then asked me if we had completed the Before Takeoff checklist. I took a moment to recall that I had heard the flight attendant PA and that I had pushed the recall button. I told the Captain that we had completed the checklist. However, to be certain that we had completed the checklist, I scanned the overhead panel. At this point, the aircraft was still on H2, approaching Hotel, headed for runway 17R. As I was finishing my scan of the panel, I felt the aircraft turning. The captain stated that we were "spooled up" (meaning 40% N1), he pushed the TOGA switches, and he then said "set takeoff thrust". I felt the aircraft turn to the right and heard the engines spool up. I momentarily looked down, saw the thrust levers moving up, but I didn't wait to verify the thrust. I looked outside the aircraft and realized that we were on a taxiway. I was startled when I saw this and it took a few seconds for me to vocalize "we are on the taxiway-reject." At about the same time, the Tower called and said, Southwest 3278, you are on a taxiway, reject takeoff. At this point, I reiterated that we were on a taxiway and to reject the takeoff. Subsequently, I acknowledged the Tower instruction. The Captain responded by rejecting the takeoff and applying the brakes.

The Captain slowed the aircraft and turned off onto the taxiway at H3. I do not remember the maximum aircraft speed, but since Captain rejected quickly, I assume we had not exceeded 80 kts. The Captain made a PA asking the passengers to stay seated and advised the flight attendants of the rejected takeoff. The Captain asked me to run the brake cooling PWB data. It stated that we had to wait 30 minutes before returning to the gate. Tower wanted to know if we were returning for takeoff, as they advised an aircraft to wait to follow us. We stated that we would head back to the gate after our brake cooling time. After we waited for the brakes to cool, we taxied back to the terminal. We secured the aircraft and completed the shutdown checklist. The Captain then notified dispatch, spoke to maintenance and made an aircraft logbook entry about the rejected take-off. The MCO chief pilot met us in the jet bridge, offered his assistance to us and we both left the aircraft and followed the notification process outlined in Chapter 22 of the Flight Operations Manual (FOM).

Errata Statement from the First Officer on SWA Flight 3278

The following Errata statement was provided from the first officer of the incident flight via their legal counsel. The page numbers referenced in the errata were based on a standalone document. The title page, table of contents, captain's transcript, captain's written statement, and captain's errata added 69 pages to the beginning of the document and therefore all page numbers listed below will need 69 pages added to it (e.g., pg. 31 should now be pg. 100).

INTERVIEW OF: FIRST OFFICER, Southwest Flight 3278

NTSB ACCIDENT NO.: DCA25LA163

DATE OF INTERVIEW: April 22, 2025

<u>PAGE NO.</u>	<u>LINE NO.</u>	<u>CORRECTION</u>	<u>REASON FOR CORRECTION</u>
31	10	Replace "I verify that he decides the headings" with "I verify the headings"	Clarification/factual accuracy
70	16	Replace "because we had a call swap" with "because we had to call SWAPA"	Clarification/factual accuracy