UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	

Interview of: DANIEL RUSSELL HICKEN

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

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I N T E R V I E W

(9:20 a.m.)

MS. WILSON: We would like to record the interview, and the purpose of that is that we will have the interview transcribed; is that something that you're okay with?

MR. HICKEN: Sure.

MS. WILSON: And then what will happen as a part of this process, is the interview transcript will be a part of our public docket and a part of our record from this investigation.

You are welcome to have one person represent you. Who would you like that to be during this interview? It is your choosing. That would be?

MR. HICKEN: We'll go with Thomas Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Okay. All right. And for the record, we'll go around the room and introduce everybody. I'm Katherine Wilson, I'm an NTSB human performance investigator.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher, I'm doing the operations side of this investigation.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, director of safety, Airbus Helicopters.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety, Papillon.

MR. TOBIN: And I'm Tom Tobin. I'm a partner with the Wilson Elser law firm in New York.

MS. WILSON: Great. As a part of our investigation, we're looking at the safety aspect of it, we're not looking to place

blame on anybody. We just want to prevent this from happening again.

We'll go around the room and each person will have an opportunity to ask questions. If you don't understand a question, please stop us, ask us to clarify. If -- if your answer is "I don't know," that's okay, too.

MR. HICKEN: Okay.

MS. WILSON: Don't feel like you need to make up an answer.

MR. HICKEN: Sure.

MS. WILSON: Before we get started, do you have any questions?

MR. HICKEN: I don't believe so.

MS. WILSON: All right.

INTERVIEW OF DANIEL RUSSELL HICKEN

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. Could you state your full name, please?

A. Yeah, it's Daniel Russel Hicken.

Q. And your position at Papillon?

A. I'm a lead pilot.

Q. And how long have you been in that position?

A. Almost four years.

Q. And a as lead pilot, what are your duties and responsibilities?

A. So, majority of the duties and responsibilities, we do a lot of the flight instruction and training, ground and flight. We

build the schedules and assign pilots where they're going to fly for their day.

Q. And who do you report to?

A. The chief pilot.

Q. And a very brief synopsis of your aviation background.

A. Sure. So, I did all my training privately up in Utah. And once I finished, worked as an instructor. And eventually started doing some other pilot and patrol type work. Did that. And then -- for about a year and a half, then I came out here to Papillon. I've been out here for just over five years now.

Q. And you're based at the Boulder City base?

A. That's correct.

Q. Okay. Do you also fly the line?

A. Not very often. I usually have one day a week where I go out and work a GCW and do the up and downs and --

Q. Okay. Is there a minimum requirement that you have to fly?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Have you flown in and out of the Quartermaster?

A. I have.

Q. Okay. Any -- tell me about it. What's it like flying in and out of -- in and out of there?

A. So, Quartermaster's usually pretty straight forward. It's nice, wide open, not too difficult to make approaches into. Every now and then you'll get some differences with the wind and it will change on you a little bit. I've come in before and had a

windsock showing that I have a headwind -- or sorry, showing me I have a tailwind, and as I go through the notch and come around the line downriver, it's now showing that I'm coming in with a tailwind again. And so, you have to adapt and -- and change, but I mean, that's no different than really flying anywhere else. So.

Q. Ever felt like flying into there that you didn't have control of the helicopter because of the winds?

A. No. I don't.

Q. Ever hear of other pilots have [sic] concerns flying in and out of Quartermaster?

A. Not necessarily with the specific location. During the summer when it gets hot and temperatures and things like that, as far as that's concerned, yes. But not as far as making approached to that location.

Q. Okay. How do you pilots get trained for flying in and out of Quartermaster?

A. Sure. So, once they've done their week of ground school, they go and do their week of flight training, and then typically we can get check rides done after that. Once they pass their check ride, they have to go and qualified in the SRA. And each pilot is going to undergo route training, typically with another pilot. And whoever's doing the instruction will take them in and show them the round in the Grand Four. They'll take them down to Quartermaster. They usually shut down and walk around down there and show them all the different pads that we use. And then each

of the pilots is going to end up making multiple approaches into Quartermaster and flying the -- the Grand Four to get checked on that route. And prior to doing this, they've also seen it multiple times where they've ride alongs with other pilots on tours and been able to observe the operation down there, as well.

Q. How do pilots deal with passengers? Passenger interruptions, for instance, during departures and landings?

A. So, before I ever go I always brief my passengers what's going on. And make sure that I understand that I do need to be listening to the radios, and it's kind of a busy area here. Once we can get out and I'm able to talk to you, I will. If we have passengers that are -- you'll get passengers that still want to talk to each other and point things out, and I'll either just turn the pilot ISO on so that I'm isolated from them and make sure I'm getting all the calls that I need to get. I think each pilot does pretty much the same procedure as far as that goes.

Q. Um-hum.

A. Fairly common. So.

Q. Is there anything like a sterile cockpit briefing that you need to give passengers?

A. So, when we are flying out of McCarran for sure, we absolutely do. And we tell them the same thing when we're coming in and out of Boulder City. And then they've -- I'm trying to remember how recent it was. In the canyon, from the bat towers on, they also implement a sterile cockpit, as well. And we have

narrations that we play so people are to be able to listen into the narrations during that time rather than asking questions and trying to do stuff, as well.

Q. You said that you do some training; correct?

A. Um-hum.

Q. What training do you do?

A. So, I'm an instructor in the EC130 and the AS350. I'm also a check airman in the AS350.

Q. And if -- I believe I saw in the training records that you did Scott Booth's recurrent training in December of last year?

A. Yeah. Right before Christmas sometime there. yeah.

Q. Did you have a chance to review his training records before you came in to do this interview?

A. No, I have not.

Q. Do you remember the training event?

A. I sure do.

Q. Okay. Tell us about it.

A. So, I think I flew, it was probably at 1.7, I think, with Scott on that day. He had been out of town and came in and I think he picked up a couple of days on the line and we did his training flight, and while he was here they were going to do his check ride, as well.

The day that we flew, it was very windy. And it was over 30 knots. Gusting over 30 knots through some points during the flying, so it was a windy day. The majority of the flight went

pretty well.

The training flight, we ended up marking as unsatisfactory. I've only ever marked two pilots as unsatisfactory on that training form since I've been here. Typically, during the training flight you'll have something that's unsatisfactory. It's not uncommon. But by the end of the flight we'll have that squared away and taken care of, and so I can mark it as yes, we ended satisfactorily. With Scott's flight, we marked it as unsatisfactory because of the autorotations that we ran at the end of the flight, particularly with the 180s. With as strong as the wind was and getting the set up in he was having a really difficult time getting the thing turned around back into the wind in a timely manner to make it so we weren't losing too much altitude as we were coming back over the runway. And it's just something that we never got to the point where I would be able to sign him off and say, yes, that was a satisfactory maneuver that you just did. And so, for those reasons we ended up marking that one as an unsatisfactory performance.

Q. Did you feel that the winds were exceeding the capability of the helicopter? Or was it a pilot performance issue?

A. It was a pilot performance. The aircraft will do it very well. I think for the most part, trying to judge how far in you need to be to be able to get the turn, lots of pilots like to go a little bit too wide, and you just make it so you roll out low enough that it's no longer safe to continue the maneuver.

Q. Um-hum.
A. So, there's a few things you can tweak to bring the thing in a little bit tighter and work autorotation to get turned around just fine. I did multiple of them for him, to give him the chance to see it, and to work on it. Had to give him pointers on how to do it. But we were continuing to run into similar issues, and there comes a point during the flight where it's just no longer worth training any longer. They've kind of reached their limit, and it's just not going to improve. And so, I told him, I said, let's stop the training flight here. We typically do a two-hour training flight. Sometimes it's in one block, sometimes it's in multiple blocks. I said, let's just stop and the next time, tomorrow, the winds are going to be a little less. I'll let you get a break for a minute and regroup, and we'll do -- knockout another training flight.

I don't remember what day that was; I don't think I was going to be there, so when I came back I debriefed with Simon, because I sat here and filled out his paperwork. Let Simon know how the flight went. And then I believe Tyler was in his office, and Mike Tomlinson and there's another lead, I don't remember which lead was in there. I just spoke with them and said, look, this is how the training flight went. This is what he needs to work on. This is what needs to be done for his check ride. So.
Q. And so, then the process after a pilot fails a training flight would be an additional training flight? Or is there --

A. See, I mean after --
Q. -- an additional practice flight?
A. So, they're going to get their two hours. If they need more than two hours they're absolutely going to get it. So, typically yeah, we'll go out and clean up whatever needed to be cleaned up before we send him to a check ride.
Q. Okay.
A. So.
Q. And when you say you had a 1.7 with Scott, that was the time block --
A. That was how long we flew on the Hobbs.
Q. Okay.
A. So.
Q. Did you feel confident after that flight, though, that he -- he would get the maneuver to a satisfactory performance during the next training flight?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah. Like I said, I think the biggest thing that he was having issues with was just the wind and rolling out too low. He needed to get the turns in sooner to make that autorotation work.
Q. Any other concerns flying with him?
A. No. Those were the two that stand out for me from the training flight that I did with Scott.
Q. Ever hear of any other pilots have concerns about him as a

pilot?
A. About Scott as a pilot? Not of the top of my head that I can think about. No.
Q. How do pilots make PIREPs?
A. So, typically they'll call us and just give us an update over the FM radio -- you probably -- office over there, you probably heard them talking on the FM radio -- and they'll just call and give us an update on what they're currently experiencing or saying.
Q. And then what's done with that information?
A. So, we'll talk with the chief pilot and let him know just what the other pilots are saying and try to use that information as far as making decisions on whether or not we're going to continue to send rounds or if we're going to bring people back or what we're going to do. So.
Q. And then are the pirate -- PIREPs shared with the pilots? So, you may not decide not to bring them back but --
A Sure. And if anybody out's flying that they're going to hear that PIREP, and if we're getting ready to launch a round, we'll call the back gate and say, hey look, the weather looks like we can send it on this round, it should be just fine. This is what the pilots are currently saying that are out there. And so, we will update the pilots, let them know what's going on with it. So.
Q. But they'll only hear it if they're -- monitoring the FM?

A. If they're monitoring the FM, or then like I said, we'll call them on the phone and talk to them before they lift, as well, and try to get them updated.

We do the morning brief, which you don't have any PIREPs for. In the afternoon brief though we can, as well, just update them on what the pilots are currently saying.

Q. So, tell me about the morning brief.

A. The morning brief? Do it every morning. And basically, the lead pilot, whoever opens, is going to go through and pull the weather for the day, the current weather and what the TAFs are. As far as our METs -- SIGMETs, winds and temps aloft, performance calculations for the day based on temperature. Who has operation control. Any NOTAMs or TFRs that they need to be aware of. And then we'll sit down with all the pilots together as a group that's on that first shift, and go through it with them, and make sure that they're all on the same page as far as what to expect for the day as far as weather concerns and any special flying activities that might have; if it's going to be flight training or whatever the case may be.

Q. Okay. And if the weather updates from the morning brief, how do pilots get updated weather?

A. So, we do the second brief in the afternoon and we'll update it then, as well, and give them all the new information in the second brief.

Q. Would there have been two briefings in February timeframe

when this accident occurred?
A. There might not have been in February.
Q. Okay.
A. Typically, it's done when we have a specific split shift where somebody is -- has the first three flights and somebody has the last three flights. So, in February, we probably weren't flying to that point.
Q. So, if there was no second briefing, how would -- how do pilots get updated weather?
A. So, they'll come and pull it. And you still have the TAF on there, which covers the entire time that we're going to be flying. And they can come and pull it up on a computer with us if they want. They can pull it up themselves, as well. Each pilot, that's part of their check ride, is learning how to get the approved weather -- in the GOM on what's acceptable, what's not. So. Nice thing about Nevada is it's pretty consistent. And when they tell you it's going to be windy all day it's pretty windy all day. We don't have much clouds usually very -- very frequently, I guess, to worry about. But any time there is a significant change we will do our best to update the pilots and let them know.
Q. When are pilots required to fill out an irregularity report?
A So, they're told that they can fill out an irregularity report any time that they want. Basically, any time the flight didn't go according to plan they are asked to fill out an irregularity report, that way we can -- we'll look at it and

evaluate it and try to see what needs to be changed or what needs to be done differently.

Q. So, it's not required that they fill it out, just that they're asked to fill it out?

A. The GOM tells you that any time a flight doesn't go according as you had planned that you're supposed to fill out an irregularity report. So, if somebody has a maintenance delay and it makes them late then they should be filling one out. If they had something out there in the canyon that happens they should be filling one out.

Q. Is here a benefit to filling it out from the pilot's perspective?

A. I think if there's a concern that the pilot has something specific about, then absolutely yes. That way, he can voice that concern and to make sure that it gets addressed. I mean, and as far whatever you've experienced, making sure that it doesn't happen to somebody else, that's a huge benefit, as well.

Q. Um-hum.

A. So.

Q. Has a pilot ever not filled an irregularity report and then been questioned about not doing so?

A. Yes. On multiple occasions. People -- I don't know if they feel like just didn't need to fill one out, but they'll say something happened and then the chief pilot's in there asking us, where's the pilot? He didn't fill out his irregularity report.

Q. Do you know what happens after an irregularity report is filed?
A. So, after an irregularity report is filed, it goes to our safety director, Burl, and he's the one that's in charge of sitting down and going through all those. And responsible for following up on what's been done with them.
Q. And then are -- if there's trends that are found in the irregularity reports are they shared back with the pilots or the lead pilots?
A. Yeah. We -- I guess the ones that stand out to me are the different bird strikes and stuff that we've had. That's been shared with us as far as the irregularity reports are concerned.
Q. Do pilots ever come directly to you to report a safety concern?
A. I have on multiple occasions had people come and I always tell them to -- I mean, they're always more than welcome to come and talk to me. I'm happy to listen. And I always tell them they need to fill out a -- either an irregularity report or an unsafe condition report if it's a safety issue. If they're concerned about their identity being known then I sit down and explain to them how to log in and make it so that it can be filed anonymously so that it just shows up and there's a generic administrative one that was created they could use.
Q. How is an unsafe condition report different from an irregularity report?

A. So, the irregularity reports, I think, are more used as something out of the ordinary occurred. If you have a passenger that gets, I don't know, trips at Quartermaster and skins their knee, and then you give him first aide or whatever, that way the company's got a record of it, as well, so when this passenger calls back and is upset about it or whatever, they have something in writing about what happened.

And the unsafe condition reports are going to be anybody in the company that feels that there is something being done that is unsafe, is able to sit down and explain it and submit it, and those as well go to Burl to review and evaluate and follow-up on.

Q. Have you ever told a pilot to modify their irregularity report?

A. I haven't, no. Any time -- I don't know, I tell them to be as honest as they can, to speak their mind, that way they're able to fully share what it is that they -- they concern is. But I mean, as far as that goes, anything that they're going to share, it's the way that they are feeling and it's important to make sure that that is carried over and expressed.

Q. Um-hum.

A. So.

Q. Have you heard that anybody's been told to change something on their irregularity report?

A. I -- I'm trying to think. I think Burl can send the reports back to you and maybe switch from like an irregularity report to

an unsafe condition report or something. Or maybe give suggestions on how something could be worded or whatever if they felt it was necessary. But I can't think of a time where somebody's been specifically asked to change an irregularity report to something else.

Q. Okay.

A. Or to make it sound differently than it -- what they did.

Q. Are pilots required to fill out or conduct a risk assessment before flights?

A. So, we do a risk assessment. As far as the tourists go, it's pretty standard because it's a -- same type of flight each day. The things that change are the weather. If they're going to be doing something out of the ordinary, if they have a charter and they're going to St. George or something like that, then yes. So, if they have to go and do a functional check flight because their radio wasn't working and maintenance replaced their radio, then they would be expected to fill out a risk assessment prior to conducting the flight.

Q. For -- but for a tour, to clarify there's --

A. So, for the tour they've got on that's been built, and as far as the criteria on it goes there's not a lot that changes on it.

Q. Okay.

A. So.

Q. And so, talk to me about the go/no-go decisions for pilots deciding to depart on a -- on an air tour. Who --

A. Sure.
Q. -- makes that decision?
A. So, we'll look at the weather. I always come and ask Simon -- or the chief pilot -- what he wants to do. I'll present him with the information, he's technically the one that's in charge, and ask him what he wants. If the decision is made to go, the pilots are all aware that they are more than welcome to say I'm not comfortable with this flight and I'm not going to accept the flight. That's happened on multiple occasions. They typically will look at the GOM, the criteria that it gives us in there as far as our weathering minimums and everything else goes, wind limitations, and if everything is within those parameters, then there's usually not a reason not to send the round. And if somebody's uncomfortable with it, then they'll let us know and we'll make different arrangements.
Q. So, if a pilot made a decision to not go because of weather, an individual decision not something that's made at the lead pilot or chief pilot's level, does that require and irregularity report?
A. That's a good question. I wouldn't -- I wouldn't particularly think so because they never accepted the flight. But it could be that the pilot -- the chief pilot wants one filled out anyways. So.
Q. So, your understanding would be that once the flight has been accepted and then there's a change, that -- then that would be when the irregularity report --

A. That's usually when we do irregularity reports, is when something with the flight didn't go according to plan. So.
Q. Do you know why that is that the -- the lead pilot and/or the chief pilot make the go/no-go decision?
A. So, they make the decision as far as the round's concerned, everything appears to be in order to send their round, but again, the pilot in command, he's the only the one that's -- who has that final say as to whether or not he's going to go. And if they're not comfortable with it, then we're not going to question that, and they're the ones that are going to make that choice. So, we're just saying that the weather is acceptable and it can be accomplished safely.
Q. Do you have any concerns about pilot turnover?
A. Yeah. I think it's an issue. I think not just pilot turnover, I think turnover -- the rate of turnover we have in the company in general is a concern. As far as maintenance goes, as well.
Q. So, on the pilot side, what are your base concerns related to that?
A. Sure. You end up with -- I guess when you have pilots leave, you're having somebody with a fair amount of experience that has been out there and done this, and they end up leaving and you have now -- so, I guess there's multiple concerns.
The amount of training that's required to get somebody back to that point, it's a lot of work. And so, trying to get people

trained up and qualified to fly everything takes a lot of time and effort. And we spend a lot of our time accomplishing that task.

I guess the other concern is when we have as many pilots get hired starting in January like we typically do, right, you end up with a lot of pilots that are only qualified in one aircraft. They can only do so much. And that makes it so they get stuck on specific tours. And I'll look at the board some days and I'll see that on my last round I have six landings going out, right, and all of them are pilots that have been here for less than three months. And it's just because that is what they're qualified for. And any time I see it, I sit down and try to figure out how can I adjust this? Let's put this Astar guy down here so that we have somebody that's been here a year or two, that's down here, and you have all these brand-new pilots down here on their own trying to make these different decisions, you know. And so that's one of the areas that is a concern for me; is just seeing that many new pilots on those specific tours without somebody there with a little bit more experience to kind of help and say, have you seen this before? And this is kind of what you should do. But yeah, just trying to qualify everybody, it's a lot of work.

Q. Were you working the day of the accident?

A. No, it was on a Friday, so that was a regularly scheduled day off for me.

Q. How accurate is the weather that's presented in the -- the morning safety briefing? Or the weather that you're able to pull

up before a flight? How -- how arcuate is that to the weather that's actually at Quartermaster?
A. At Quartermaster? I would say it's fairly accurate. We just pull up what the METARs are in the tabs; there's a tab for Las Vegas. And then the METARs, they are currently reported for GCW, as well as Boulder City and Las Vegas. And it's usually fairly accurate. Lots of times you end up with the wind a lot stronger up on top than what it is on the bottom. That kind of depends on the direction it's going. But I would say it's pretty accurate.
Q. And if somebody misses the morning briefing, what is expected of them?
A. So, when they show up for their regularly scheduled duty time, they would go and get that briefing sheet, which is the same thing that we sat down and read to all the pilots in the morning brief, then they will review it themselves. Then they also initial next to their name on the sheet indicating that they have received their weather brief.
MS. WILSON: I think I'm going to let somebody ask -- else ask questions --
MR. HICKEN: Okay.
MS. WILSON: -- for a few minutes. Zoe?
MS. KELIHER:
Q. All right, so you've been here five years --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- but lead pilot for four.

A. Almost four.
Q. So --
A. I think it's coming up in -- I guess it's probably -- when was it? It must have probably been September, so we're a few months off.
Q. So, how many months were you flying the line before you became lead?
A. Before I became a lead pilot? Probably -- I got hired in April, so 14 months, 15 months.
Q. What made you decide to apply for it?
A. It was something that we had talked about for a while. I really enjoy the flight training aspect of things. That's a lot of fun for me. And being able to go through and -- and help pilots to learn is rewarding. So --
Q. Before you were doing power line, though, right?
A. I did fly instruction, and then he had contracts that we did, as well, for him with the power line stuff, so same company but we did fly instruction when there was fly instruction and other stuff when he had it. And --
Q. What -- what were you flying in?
A. It was an R44.
Q. Yeah. What do you think the difference is of instructing on the 44 versus the 130 Airbus?
A. Versus the 130? The 130 is a little bit different to get used to. After you've flown it for a little bit and you get a

little bit of time in on it, you know, instructing in it really isn't that -- that different. The aircraft flies very well. It's an amazing machine. It's a little bit longer and you get guys, especially your new hires that you get in, they've been flying R22s and R44s, and so for them to jump into it, it's a little bit different. It takes them a second to figure it out. But it's been really good to instruct in it. So.

Q. Do you ever do the turning transition (ph) in the B3s? In the Astars?

A. So -- no. Everybody goes into a B4 initially. They used to do it in a Astar; that was years and years ago before I got hired. But I think that was probably before they had very many B4s.

Q. So --

A. Now everybody goes in the B4.

Q. You said you were planning on -- you've been -- were you all told of -- that you should be going into the -- to lead pilot? Or what was -- how was that pathway -- how were you primed for it?

A. They had asked me when I had been here about three months if I was interested in being lead pilot. I told them no, I wasn't. It's not that I wasn't necessarily interested, but it's just not enough time to be able to see the operation and to learn, I guess, what you need to be doing and how everything works to be able to jump into that position and be able to start making changes and assigning people here and there and -- when I haven't even been qualified to fly to Vegas or in the Astar or anything else, you

know. And so, it didn't make any sense to me to do it at that point. I was still enjoying just flying, you know. And they continued to ask and ask and ask, and then -- I'm trying to think. There were some changes that were made that made the job more appealing to me. And once the changes were made, I told them that I -- it was something that I would be willing to consider now at this point, you know. But there were certain things that I just wasn't interested in and some things that needed to be changed, first. And they made the changes.

Q. Detail. What changes?

A. So, they were working a 7-and-7 schedule, which I what -- the same thing that I had. And it was all right. I wasn't -- I was more interested in a 4-and-3 schedule, which that wasn't a huge deal to me. Seeing what the lead pilots were doing at the time, it was just kind of crazy because they had had multiple lead pilots quit, and so they're short staffed. And the lead pilot's doing all the scheduling, he's covering the morning briefs, he's doing all these different things. On top of that, he's doing maintenance test flights, you know, and all these other things. And there were just so many different responsibilities and there was just not really a good way to cover every one of the tasks that needed to be done. And so I would sit back and look at it and say, I want to do that job; it was like no, I don't want to do that job.

They ended up having the accident in January of '14, and

after that is when some changes started to happen. Lead pilots no longer -- well, we can -- we're still qualified to go to test flights, but they recognized the need to have full-time test pilots.

Q. Um-hum.

A. So, they took one function of what the lead pilots and created full-time positions out of it. And there's multiple other changes. Similar -- they just kind of took some of these things away, and I was like this is a job that is reasonable to actually do now, and I had flown long enough and I had got the time doing all the stuff in the company where it was like, okay, I feel like I could actually come in here and do this job and be knowledgeable enough about it to be able to say this is what need to do, these are changes that would be beneficial to have and different things like that. So.

Q. Don't be humble, but why did they -- why do think at three months they -- they were looking at you?

A. I don't know. I think that with a lot of the different things that I've -- I've done, we've been able to be pretty successful with it. I think going through the training here, we did well with the training, as well. I'm motivated. I like to see things change and improve and get better. And I -- I don't know, I guess I just like being a part of that. But I think all of our flight training went well and the ground went well and people that are easy to get along with and work well with others,

just kind of naturally --
Q. Do you have a good rapport with Simon?
A. Um-hum. I do. I mean, he's -- he's been really good to work for. So.
Q. Yeah. With -- I guess, given the turnover but there still seems to be a lot of senior pilots here, is there any animosity of younger people now being the lead?
A. You know, I don't -- I don't think so. Like, when I became -- are you asking when I became the lead or like right now?
Q. Probably when you became a lead.
A. When I became the lead, no. I had a lot of people telling me you should go apply for this job and do it, you know. And so, there were people that were supportive of it before it happened. And it puts you in some different scenarios occasionally when you have to go and get after somebody for doing something that's been here longer than you.
Q. Yeah.
A. And you feel like I shouldn't be having to tell you this but I am, you know. Things like that. But no, it's -- it was really good transitioning into that position and working with everybody. So.
Q. What's your approximate total time in the 130?
A. Oh, 950.
Q. And in general?
A. I've got 2750ish.

Q. I'm going to kind of jump all over here because I wrote a whole bunch of --
A. Sure.
Q. -- different things down. Training and doing the reoccurent [sic] training with the senior guys that have a lot more total time than you, is that uncomfortable?
A. My -- one of my very first flights was with Burl right here. I had to do his transition training into the Astar, and I was a new lead pilot at the time, and I didn't have very much time in the Astar and Burl's been flying the thing forever.
Q. Yeah.
A. And so, looking at the scenario, yeah, it's a little bit -- it's a little bit different. And uncomfortable sometimes. But I guess going forward with that you've just go to understand that you're the instructor, you're the one that's responsible for this, you know.

I remember doing some autorotations with Burl and I don't remember what it was, there was airplane coming or something and he said, well, let's just do an auto to the run up right here, you know, and I told him, I'm not comfortable doing that, let's do the run up right here for this, going this direction with it, and everything. And he said, oh, that's okay, you know. So, it can be a little bit different, but I think most of the pilots understand the way the flight instruction works. And I don't know, for me I'm just not going to let somebody put me in an

uncomfortable spot. I'm the one that's responsible for it and I'm the one that's going to answer for it. So.

Q. Umm.

A. But yeah, it can be a little bit different sometimes.

Q. I didn't see the "unsat" in Scott's files.

A. Tyler was asking me about that the other day.

Q. What -- what year was that?

A. With Scott? It would have been December of '17.

Q. Oh, so that was his most recent one?

A. That was his most recent --

Q. Okay.

A. -- training flight. And I asked him, because Tyler said, hey, I don't see the "unsat" that you said you put in there. And I asked him if it was typed in or if it was a handwritten copy that they have in his binder and he said it's typed in. So, when we come in and I gather those records, I sit down and I fill it out by hand. Typically, I don't know who it is, Gina, but she'll go through and Tyler sometimes will go through and then they will take those records and they will update and type it in, and then they'll print it out and put the new one in. And so, that's the only thing I can think of, is to why that would show an "S" instead of a "U."

Like I said, I have marked that two times since I've instructed here. It is very uncommon to put a "U" on somebody's training record. And so, I don't know if it was used to marking

that as a "S" and it just got put in that way or not. But like I said, there's only two people I've ever marked that on. So.

Q. And that was the 1.7.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was probably the other guy --

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. When you -- when you do mark -- in the two times you have, do you have, do you do a U/S?

A. So, no, I've done a U/S once, as well, with one. I can remember who the pilot is. And again, that's because the initial flight and multiple maneuvers that we had were kind of questionable to me.

Q. Yeah.

A. But we did work on them and we got them back to where, yeah, the maneuver will pass a check ride as safe. It's satisfactory/standard. And so, I marked it just as "U" and then an "S" so that whoever was going to do his check ride could look at it and say, okay, there was some issues on this, just so that they're -- they can be aware of it. Like I said, I've marked that only one time ever, as well, U/S on a training record. Usually they all come out as satisfactory. They'll have small little issues but nothing concerning.

Q. Do you recall reviewing Scott's records of if he had other unsatisfactory check rides?

A. Like before I did his --

Q. Like the year prior.

A. -- training flight?
Q. Things like that, do you go through them?
A. No. Scott and I interviewed on the same day, and we worked together for a long time, so --
Q. Oh, really?
A. -- I am aware of some of the other stuff that's occurred with him since he's been here as far as check rides go. But -- but no, I did not look through any of his records before going out to do his training flight.
Q. What -- what other issues?
A. I think that Scott had an issue with his Astar check ride, in which he didn't pass the check ride, and they chose not to requalify him in it, and so he had to go and pass his check ride again in an EC130 to get back onto the 135 certificate. So, he's one of our pilots that just never ended up getting qualified. I don't know what the issues were, I wasn't an instructor then, but I know that he didn't get qualified in the Astar, which is kind of unusual for us, as well.
Q. Yeah.
A. So.
Q. Were the only issues that you can recall the 180 autos?
A. The 180s. And then trying to doing some of the rings (ph), as well. Just some of the control throughout. So.
Q. Do -- did you (indiscernible)?
A. No, we did not. We just (indiscernible).

Q. What -- what do you think his main -- I mean, you're doing these all day with people, what do you think is main issue was?
A. So, the first ones were just too wide on it, and just makes it so by the time you do get the aircraft turned around, we were just so low and I don't know, you guys from the NTSB, that's like the number one screw up, right, is rolling out low in 180 autos and people crash them all the time. And so, with Scott, the way that wind was definitely made it a little bit more tricky.

The runway is -- that we were using is 1-5, and I think our winds were probably sitting 1-7-0, 1-8-0-ish. And so, as you're coming in it, you got a little bit of a core drain (ph) right to the wind, and so to try to get that thing turned around and you're having to turn around just a little bit past runway heading and bring the thing back into it. And so, I've seen other pilots struggle with it in that same exact wind scenario, so it is a little bit more tricky going that way versus if we had done it to the left and come into the runway. But honestly, with what we were doing, Scott -- like I said, I've done multiple of them and we got them in just fine -- if he would -- we were trying to get the thing brought in tighter and then get that turn out of the way, and it was more of the coordination between trying to get the turn out of the way, how -- how much -- how aggressive he's being with the turn and trying to catch the RPMs and the airspeed, things are dying off and we're rolling out and we don't have acceptable airspeed now, and just of chasing everything.

So, we did get it brought in tighter and got that portion of it ironed out. Like I said, he -- by the time you've don't it a handful of times and you're not being successful with it, and people start getting frustrated with it, there comes a point where it's just -- you've got to say let's stop doing this and we'll take a break and you can do more on another day and let you wrap your mind around what's going on because you're just so frustrated with everything that's happening that you're never going to get this to where it's satisfactory, you know.

Q. Did he give you excuses or say anything?

A. I don't remember any specifics as far as what he would have said. He was not happy with himself.

Q. Yeah.

A. And he was pretty frustrated with himself as far as the outcome of it. So, which is understandable as a pilot.

Q. And then did you talk to who was going to be doing the -- the check ride the next day?

A. So, like I said I don't -- I don't remember what day of the week that was, all I knew is I wasn't doing the training flight. What day was it? It was the 21st? The 20th?

Q. Let me look at it.

A. I think I was actually getting ready to leave and go up to Utah, that's why I debriefed with the other leads that were there, because they were the ones that would have been doing his next training flight, and just let them know what issues we did have on

the flight and what they needed to make sure was ironed out.
Q. Let me look quick. Wednesday.
A. A Wednesday. So, Thursday's my Friday and I don't remember, like I said, I think that was just right before Christmas, 20 through 21st.
Q. Yeah.
A. And I don't remember if I worked that Thursday or if we had gone up to Utah already. So.
Q. Yeah. When you said -- you kept saying "when we make the decision," when -- you were saying of what the weather's going to be --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- whether you're going to send them, does that mean "we" as in lead pilots?
A. So, typically I will look at the weather and I will come to Simon and let him make the decision --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- because he's the one that, I guess, technically has the operational control -- him and John Becker -- and I'll give him the recommendations. But if Simon I here, I'm always going to come in here and ask him. You can ask him about it; he probably gets tired of me coming in here and bothering him. But I mean, if there's a decision to be made, he's the one that is responsible for that, and so I will always come in here and ask his opinion, first. And if he's not available, then I'm going to do whatever I

feel best if I can't get a hold of anybody else.
Q. Do you talk to the senior pilots ever of -- just gone out and asked them kind of about different things?
A. Absolutely. And when they come back I'll say, hey, how was the weather out there, you know? I know it's getting windy, is it getting bumpy? You know, and they'll say, yeah, it's getting bumpy in this spot but it's -- it's perfectly doable, you know, or --
Q. Do you find that it varies of -- if the pilot is newer?
A. Absolutely. We had a pilot who this year flew a first round, and the winds were forecast to kind of pick up and get a little bit stronger and I told him before we -- before he left, the winds are going to get strong throughout the day, okay. I said, we're going to leave this pad open for you so that you can make your approach, you're going to land with the headwind and you're not going to have to turn it sideways or with a tailwind or anything. You can just make your approach right to the -- down here to this pad and we'll give you the best possible setup we can give you to let you get a little more comfortable with the --
Q. Um-hum.
A. And the winds weren't crazy, but I was just trying to make sure he was comfortable with it. And when he got back, he said it was good. Everything is great. He said, I'm not sure I want to do the next flight. And so, we talked with him a little bit, and I'm not trying to convince him to take the flight, just talking

through things, you know, and said, yeah, that's good. That makes sense. I agree. Then he says, I still don't think I want to do that. I said that's fine. Great. Don't do it. Just grab your stuff out and head on in. And we had a pilot who was unsold, the pilot's been here over 10 years, and so I walked in and I told him, said, hey this pilot's not comfortable taking the flight, are you willing to do it? And said, yeah, absolutely. You know, the wind's -- where the wind was, was nothing for him and what his experience level in the aircraft was.

Q. Um-hum.

A. And nobody else on the round was uncomfortable with it, either. But when you have a new guy that's only been here a week or two, his comfort level and his experience level is going to be such that having a lower minimum, even than what the office manual is saying we can fly the aircraft in, that's very understandable and very reasonable. So.

Q. Are there any repercussions at all, senior pilot, new pilot, anything?

A. No. They don't get docked on their pay. We don't give them unfavorable schedules. I mean, we don't do -- do any of --

Q. Has that ever happened?

A. Not that I'm aware of.

Q. There's never been any policies that have changed of -- like on the scheduling?

A. No. Like, if somebody calls out sick, if they show up at

work and they fly a flight and they call out sick, I think there might be something there with how they get paid. I'm not exactly sure what it is. But no, if somebody just says I'm not comfortable flying in this, then great. It is what it is and I've never seen -- anybody get in -- in trouble for turning down a flight. So.

Q. Anyone ever have PRIA threats? Anything like that?

A. Not for turning down a flight, no. I can think of times like in the morning brief where they're not threatening anybody with their PRIA but telling them, look, these are the issues we're having and we've got it squared away, and you guys need to make sure you're not repeating these mistakes, you know. And discussions of PRIA and things can go on. PRIA has been brought up but nobody's ever been threatened with this is going to go on your PRIA.

Q. So, what kind of discussion's happening here?

A. I'm trying to think of what it was specifically. I think on the -- what was it? I know we've had pilots that have quit and said things and done things that probably just shouldn't have been done, you know, and so I'm look, you guys need to be aware that this type of stuff does go on your PRIA, and it can go on your PRIA. And so, just use your judgment and think about things before you do them, you know. If somebody gets written up and it goes in their, then it's probably going on their PRIA. And so, it's more I would say making pilots aware of what's going on,

rather than threatening somebody with if you do this we're going to put it on your PRIA, or if you don't do this then you're going to get this on your PRIA. So.

Q. Have you ever heard Simon question people on their weather decisions?

A. I would think -- I know there's been times where pilots, I think, have maybe complained about it after the fact. For whatever reason they -- the decision was made to go and they went, and then weren't really happy about it, you know, and for whatever reason they didn't say, I don't like it, I'm not going to go. But, I mean, that's really the only thing that kind of comes to mind.

Q. So, when you said "for whatever reason," what do you think that reason is?

A. I think that once they got airborne, the -- maybe they weren't as comfortable with the visibility. Or it was maybe -- looked like less visibility to them than what was being reported. I mean, in that scenario if they're uncomfortable with it, then they should make that decision and turn around and come back rather than continue on a flight.

Any time a decision's made to go, the pilots are aware of that, as well, that -- I mean, everybody in here is a pilot. They can all look at the weather the same as I can, right? And sometimes you look at the weather and you're going to be 100 percent right or you're going to be 100 percent wrong; it can go

either way really easy. And so, you sit down and look at it and say I'm not seeing any reason why we shouldn't send this round, and the pilots know that and they're aware of it, and if they see something out there that makes them change their mind from the decision that was made then absolutely they can turn around and come back. And there's no issue with that.

Q. So, you're the first line of looking at the weather --

A. Um-hum.

Q. -- and saying should this round go or not? And then you take it to Simon. What is your trigger where you'll take it to Simon?

A. So, if people are starting to report that it's getting really turbulent or bumpy, or we're starting to approach levels of wind strength that's, I guess, pushing what the limits of the GOM have been given to us, then I would go in there and talk to Simon about it.

If at other times where the winds are forecasted to be well above what the GOM tells us our limits are, and as I'm looking at trends and I'm seeing it coming up, and I'm telling him I don't think we should launch the 11:30 round because the winds are right on and it's projected to be this by the time that they get back and spoke with him multiple times on things like that. So.

Q. Where are you taking the projection from?

A. Lots of times we'll pull it up on the NOAA website. You can go on the aviation weather, as well, and pull up the hourly forecast, as far as what the -- the trends are. We'll use some of

that, as well, in addition to the approved weather just to kind of help you make a better decision, as well. So.

Q. I heard you mention looking at the briefing sheet of when you're doing the copy/pasting from all the websites in the morning.

A. Um-hum.

Q. What do you think is the most important [sic] that you're looking at?

A. On there?

Q. Yeah.

A. I would say --

Q. I know you keep mentioning the TAFs and the METARs, so I'm wondering if --

A. Yeah. I mean, the TAFs are important. And like I said, your -- your day in Nevada is usually VFR. There's some -- it's rare when you come to work and the weather's such that you can't go fly a helicopter. The big things that will get us are wind and visibility.

Q. Um-hum.

A. And so, using the TAF out of Vegas, as far as trying to figure out what is the wind forecasted for on the days important, the other thing, especially this time of year that's really important on that briefing sheet is the performance calculations. What is the max temp for the day? What is the performance of this aircraft going to be? And making sure that the pilots are aware

that they do not have out of ground effect performance today, or their in ground effect performance is limited at GCW, and they need to make sure that they are aware of that.

We got the no-go times on there that are equally as important, and we put those in place to make sure that somebody who lifts on a flight is going to be able to make it home before it gets too dark. And if they don't make the no-go time, then that's it. So, we're -- then of course who has operational control.

Q. As --

A. You get -- sorry; go ahead.

Q. As far as the -- the passenger warning, the form they fill out that it might be cancelled or --

A. Um-hum.

Q. -- how do -- do you talk to customer service? How does that work?

A. Yeah, usually the call us and ask if we should start weather briefing.

Q. And how do they know?

A. They usually are in the morning brief with us. And they listen to the weather and kind of what's going on throughout the day, and so they, usually in the brief they'll ask us, do we need to weather advise? And we'll tell them from 11:30 on, yes, you need to weather advise. They also work with scenic over there, as well, in the same terminal, and so they'll get -- they'll call us

and say, hey scenic's going to start weather advising, should we do the same?
Q. What -- what triggers you to -- to say?
A. Usually what the pilots are telling us as far as how bumpy it is or how windy it is. Let the passengers know that it could be a little turbulent on the flight. That, and if you start getting like rain or whatever, and it looks like you're going to make it to the canyon, everything says you are, but there's a chance that that rain's going to turn into a thunderstorm and we're not going to be able to make it, and you're going to have to turn around and come back. And so, we weather advise for that, as well, just so they're aware that they might not get their full tour.
Q. I guess in the morning briefing you said that that would tip you off to notify them --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- if they didn't come in. What -- what would you have to see in the forecast to --
A. To?
Q. Like, what would stand out?
A. So, any time that it's going to start getting windy with gusts we'll let them know.
Q. And what type of -- what -- what's your usual threshold of gusts?
A. So, the GOM tells us 30 to 35 knots with a 50-knot gust wind. And so, any time you start breaking 20 knots you'll get passengers

that start -- some passengers get concerned about it, you know, and so it's not a bad idea to start weather briefing with them. But there's no set like criteria as far as this is what it is, let's weather brief them. It's more of what the pilots are saying, it's getting bumping out here and it wouldn't be a bad idea to do it. Or if that wind does pick up and start getting really strong. So.

Q. How does that communication go? It seems -- it was kind of hard to see if you guys are constantly running out there and doing things.

A. I know, huh.

Q. How does that -- how does that work?

A. So, there's usually almost always a lead pilot there at the desk.

Q. Um-hum.

A. We will step out briefly, and when we do the training director's usually in the desk next to us, and is there as well, can answer the radio. And then Burl sits on the other side from that, and he's jumped up multiple times and answered the phones for us or answered the radio and tower. If they can't get a hold of us, then they'll call the lead pilot's cell phone. And I've the cell phone on me, so even if I'm out on the ramp and they say, hey the pilot just called and they reported this, and they'll just update us as it needs.

Q. In some of the irregularity reports I would see that they say

"Flight ops called us back." Is that -- whose making that decision of when you call a group back?
A. Oh, so like if somebody's recalled?
Q. Yeah.
A. So, in a scenario like that, like I said, if -- if we're going to recall the entire group it's because we're looking at the weather and something's changed. And I'll come in, again I'll grab Simon and say look at this. I think we need to bring everybody back. And he'll say, yeah, I agree. And so, then I'll call on the radio, I'll say -- tell everybody that's heading out there to the canyon that they need to turn around and come back in, that we're going to cancel that round. It's typically the way it works when we recall somebody.
Q. And then how does it work of them, if they choose when they're going out, they see something?
A. So, typically they will call us and say, hey I'm just coming up on Benelli Bay and the visibility up there, I don't like it, and I'm turning around and coming back. I'll call them back and say you're right. And then I'll call customer service and say, hey 31's coming back. These are his passengers, and they can let customer service know so that they're not caught off guard.
Q. And then there are sometimes where I see -- well, in I would say a majority of all the irregularity reports that I've see of just this flight from Boulder to Quartermaster and back, they -- they always have "Papillon" or "Maverick's turning back to," or

"Two people ahead of me were turning back." They always provide a reasoning.

A. A reason for it?

Q. Yeah. Why do you think that is?

A. I don't know. Maybe so they feel a little more justified with it.

Q. Yeah.

A. I don't know. For me, when -- anytime I'm out there flying, I'm going to make my own decision on what I feel, you know, and if I don't like it, great. I'm going to turn around and come back. We've had other days where -- we had one morning I launched out to Las Vegas and I was the only flight out of Vegas first thing in the morning, and I make it to the Dam and flight ops calls me and says, he we cancelled this round out of -- or out of Boulder City. I said, you can do whatever you want. And everything looked great to me. I was comfortable with everything. Everything's legal. Visibility was fine. And so, we got into rain, but I mean, I flew the whole flight and came back and did the whole flight, you know. No issues. And they say, great, thanks for doing it. They didn't say you should have gone back or whatever, you know. They let you make your own decisions. And every pilot is taught the same exact thing; that if they're uncomfortable with something, then absolutely turn around.

Lots of times when I start to see one or more pilots start turning around, then I will come in here and say, look, let's just

recall everybody when you get a couple people doing it. And usually, they will just do it on their own. They'll -- somebody turns around and then somebody else will, and then they're talking back and forth on the other radio and everybody makes the decision to come back, you know. Which is great. Yeah.

Q. Going back to becoming a lead pilot, what -- what's the change in pay? What's the -- what's the difference?

A. I don't remember what it is anymore. I think -- I think that, is it 45 a day more initially? It maybe goes up to 65 a day more. I'm not positive.

Q. Okay. Are you just paid base salary? Is there any bonuses? Anything else?

A. Everybody in the company gets some sort of Christmas bonus.

Q. But as a lead pilot, is it different?

A. Uh-uh. No, I mean, they used to have it once you got certified to teach the ground and signed off to teach ground you got a pay raise. And then once you got checked out in an aircraft as instructor you got a pay raise. They've done away with it, and I think it's just now once you become a lead pilot you get a pay raise. And then once you're up as an instructor. It doesn't matter if you're in multiple shifts, or in one, then you get the raise to the lead, I think it how it works. So.

And that was done there for me, too. I mean, money is not necessarily everything. But we kept track of everything and it wasn't a pay raise to become the lead pilot. Not when you're

flying tours and people are giving you tips once in a while, you know, and you sit down and do the math and it's like, well, it doesn't really make a lot of sense. I can fly more and I can make more money. Or do I do this? So, I don't know.

Q. We heard the fueler was recently fired just prior to the accident. Do you know anything about that?

A. I think I know which fueler it was, but no, I don't know any details about why he was let go or anything else.

Q. So, you're not really involved in any of that decision of --

A. Not as far as the fuelers go. They work for Ryan, I think. He's in charge of the tower and all that stuff, so he works with all the rampers and does all the hiring and what not. But it still comes down to the same process; if somebody saw him doing something unsafe and they were concerned about it, then either another ramper can write an irregularity report, or pilots can file irregularity report, or a mechanic, and Burl's going to end up with that same thing. And then whatever he does with it, he goes and talks to Ryan and says, hey, this was found.

Like I said, I don't know the circumstances of what was going on with it, but --

Q. When there is irregularity reports filed, are there any -- does it ever come back to you, if anything?

A. After it's been followed up on and closed, I believe it's supposed to.

Q. But does it?

A. I'm trying to think on the ones that I've written. I don't know. Now, whether that's on me and I need to log back on and see if it's been closed and something done with it, I don't know. Or if it's supposed to be sent to me. I'm not sure.
Q. It seems like it, from just looking at things of like when there's cancellation of flights and different things of -- it's sporadic of when people choose to do the irregularity report. Is there -- is there a method to that?
A. It should be any time something's out of the ordinary. So, if you turn around for weather, absolutely. If you have to deviate from a tour route, then you should be filling one out. If somebody falls down and has to go up top and get EMS, then they should be filing an irregularity report.
Q. I guess we'll see that they say, three of us turned back, and then I only see one filed.
A. Yeah, I know that that's happened before, and I -- I think that's one of the times I remember Simon getting after people, was you all need to fill one out. I think they filled one out with like Copter 43, 23, 54 or whatever, it was like the same thing. I was like, well, it is the same thing. But I think the way that they track it is they're wanting to see how many occurrences, and so they want to see different irregularity reports for each aircraft so they can say this is how many times people turn around for weather and --
Q. Yeah.

A. -- whatever. So.
Q. And then you went to INDOC with Scott? You --
A. So, Scott actually -- I'm trying to remember. I don't know that Scott got hired the same day we interviewed. I think he got -- I think he came back and got hired on after the fact, actually. So, he was actually in a later INDOC then what I was. I was in March, and I think Scott was maybe in June. So.
Q. Did you guys hang out?
A. No. I mean, we worked together and stuff here, but outside of work, no.
Q. Anything that you can enlighten us with of different things that you've heard about him? Passengers? Anything?
A. I think all the passengers seemed to like him just fine. I mean, he's super friendly. Easy to get along with. Great personality. So. But no, there's nothing that stands out to me.
Q. Talking about -- going back to Quartermaster, you said you never had problems. Have you ever run out of pedal trying to go in there with wind?
A. No. I haven't.
Q. Have you ever had an overspeed?
A. No.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She jinxed you.
THE WITNESS: Yeah, right. I'm going to do a training flight after this.
BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Well, then when you're building up the schedule, I -- I noticed you were saying you were trying to mix it with the newer pilots.
A. Um-hum.
Q. How -- how do you do that?
A. So, building the schedule is still a little bit tricky because you have pilots that are qualified in -- some are only qualified in the B4 and the T2, some are only qualified in the B4, and the B2, and some are qualified in all four of the airframes. And so, when you sit down to build the schedule, there's certain tours that are in certain airframes, and so initially you've got to staff the harder things to staff, which are typically Astars. So, you're going to staff all your Astars first. And then you have people that are on morning shift, and people that are on afternoon shifts, and you can't put them back on mornings because of duty time so they have to be in the afternoons, and so you that you've got a bunch of criteria you've got to try to meet to build the schedule, and so it's pretty complicated. People will look at it and say, hey I want this schedule. It's like, well, I can't. You know, there's a reason you're where you're at. And so --
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Excuse me. Do you mind if -- if I change just a little bit? The -- David Oest is scheduled up next. We have a meeting. He's going into the training position and Geoff and I want to talk to him and have Jim McCourt come in next? And then follow -- you -- are you okay with that?

MS. KELIHER: That would be great.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay, that's what we can do.

MR. TOBIN: We have been going a little -- almost an hour and a half. Do you --

MS. KELIHER: I just have a few more questions. Do you need a break?

MR. HICKEN: I'm fine. Whatever you want.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. And then I heard like (Indiscernible) that says she only does T2s, and I see everybody has their preferences of what they like. How -- how does that work?

A. So, people have preferences, and we'll try to do it. But like when you're building a schedule, yeah, you -- you're kind of limited on what you can do.

Q. Yeah.

A. And so, you end up with, typically when you're done building the hard things, you're left with B4 tours, which are canyon landings, and you only have the new guys that can fly them, plus whatever Astar guys you were leftover with. And so, you go through and build it all out, and like I said, I try to put people so that you have experienced people in the morning, experienced people in the afternoon so it's not all new guys here and new guys there. And then people with preferences, as far as aircraft goes, I don't usually honor any preferences.

Now, if somebody just finished a B2 check ride, absolutely.

I'm going to put them in the B2 for multiple days and try to get them some time in the aircraft. But if somebody just says, hey I want a B3 today, well, that's not much of a priority for me. If -- if the company says put them in a B3, absolutely I'm going to do it, but I'm trying to get everything built and what works best for the company.

And if people have preferences as far as I prefer to be on a morning shift or whatever, we'll do everything we can to accommodate it. I have a dentist appointment, this is what I would like. They also understand that on their scheduled days that it's not necessarily going to be, I'm a morning person, I'm an afternoon person; you're going to get put kind of where you need you [sic], and we have multiple people that requests [sic], well, we can't always honor them every single time, you know. So.

Q. Got it. Last question, with area forecasts, how do you -- how do you use them?

A. So, the area forecasts, we'll pull it up and we do put it on the briefing and we just update them on what's going on.

Q. What -- what part do you put on?

A. So, the area forecasts, they've actually gotten rid of on there. We use -- we do pull up another area forecast that we pull up on there, and area forecasts are just awfully generic as far weather it could bring. It's a big area. They're just kind of telling you what to expect in that area for the day. They usually tell you it's going to be breezy and -- but there is a spot for it

on the brief and we'll read it to them. So --
Q. What --
A. -- I've never found them super beneficial.
Q. Really? So, what do you parse out of -- of taking them?
A. So, I just copy the synopsis section of it and paste it in there.
Q. What's the synopsis section?
A. So, the -- if you try to get into the area forecast on the program, it doesn't have it in there anymore. You can't even get in. And so, I'll got to Las Vegas and pull up the weather, and then they give you a big breakout, the forecast discussion, as far as what to expect for the entire region, and I'll pull out the abbreviated version, the synopsis of that and put that in there for them.
Q. So, is it called a synopsis? I know it is on your form --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- but what is the --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- the difference of the description of --
A. It's just an abbreviated [sic]. The full one gives you in-depth and it is very lengthy and wordy, and the synopsis just kind of breaks it down, consolidates it into a few sentences as far with respect to the day.
Q. Got it.
A. So.

Q. And the only -- the last question is, the EC130, have you -- you've got quite a bit of hours in it; have you found that you're getting the performance that it has in the -- the RFM?
A. Yeah. I've never had an issue with it. I think it does very well. Any helicopter when it is hot and you load it to capacity, it's going to require mostly everything that it can produce for you. But I mean, that goes down to anybody. And if you're mindful of your performance on that aircraft, and you fly it the way you're supposed to, the aircraft's going to do just fine.

I came out of Las Vegas on one day, on way on fuel, and it took everything almost that aircraft had to get out of Las Vegas, and as you're flying out you're thinking, I'm one way on fuel, I've got to land at 5,000 feet and refuel, and try to get back out of there now, you know. Aircraft did it just fine. No issues with it. So --
Q. Do you fuel it up during training for weight?
A. We usually the first round at 100 percent fuel. And then the next one we won't refuel because the fuelers are so busy try to fuel tours, so we usually get two training flights and then we'll top it off again and go back out and keep going.

MS. KELIHER: All right, that's it for me.

MS. WILSON: Manny?

BY MR. FIGLIA:
Q. Following up on those questions from Zoe on performance, when you specifically do training in classroom and go out to the

aircraft and demonstrate performance, do you use those same figures? In other words, the charts, and say, hey, here's our out of ground effect hover? Here's the in ground effect cover? Do you match those numbers as far as performance in training?

A. So, during training, yes, we'll go through and we'll -- we'll show them all the charts and how to compute their charts, which all the pilots are already pretty familiar with doing. Pretty similar charts to anything else they've flown. And so, they will -- they will go through and do their performance planning and we'll look at them, and during the check ride they'll be asked performance questions on it, as well.

As far as going out and flying, we have that red new sheet that you guys have seen probably, and we have the max temps on there for the day. And then weights of -- for each in ground effect/out of ground effect; each location is written down on there, as well, so the pilots can just look at the sheet and say, oh for today this is what my limitations are. And then again, if you exceed these temperatures today, for whatever reason if they are exceeded, now you're going to have to get new numbers for that aircraft.

Q. Okay. Very simply, do you demonstrate that out when you're doing the training?

A. So, it's done in the classroom. It's not in the aircraft.

Q. Okay. Confined area landings, briefly can you tell me how you train for -- train a pilot to do confined area landings?

A. Sure. I mean, we do it the same as anybody else trains it. We'll go out and fined a confined and we'll ask them to set up the approach and just observe the way that they do it. We typically start with a high recon. We get that out of the way. Figuring out what your wind direction is and everything like that. Then, once they've got that squared away, you're looking for our obstacles, what turbulence you're experiencing, what the best path in and out is.

Q. And do you do that specifically in the zones that you use like Quartermaster?

A. So, we'll go out and anything that we do on the confined is going to be a lot more confined that the Quartermaster is.

Q. Okay. How many landing sites are at the Quartermaster?

A. We're told the Hualapai have given us 10 landing sites.

Q. Okay. And you know where they're all at?

A. So, this is something that I have brought up with them on multiple occasions and -- and tried to discuss because we've ended up where we went up with more than aircraft down there, and it's an issue. And going back to the yield manager (ph), he's responsible for selling flights and needs to be checking making sure he's not scheduling more than 10 down there. But no, the last time I brought that up was asking about -- since I started flying at Papillon, that whole place has kind of morphed and changed in -- down there and it was very specific when I got trained down there where we were, and that's kind of slid a little

bit, and so I even pulled up the Google Maps and I said, why don't we just print this out and you show me which landing spots are approved, and we'll use these 10 landing sites. And if they're not available, then guess what, you can't land there, you know. And I ended up getting pushback with it, just them -- being told that if we have specific landing spots you have to have, now we're kind of fencing ourselves in as far as this is where you were supposed to go. I don't really see it that way. We've got 21 pads on our ramp; put 21 helicopters on the ramp, and there's a pad for each one of them. But yeah, there's supposed to be 10.

Q. Okay. Do you have to sometimes move aircraft down there to accommodate other landing aircraft?

A. You should never have to.

Q. And why is that?

A. If each person lands where they're supposed to, each of the aircraft will fit in there just fine.

Q. Okay. How about other aircraft, do you make compensation for moving aircraft to allow other aircraft to land in there?

A. To land? I have never once been there where we had to fire up an aircraft and move it so that somebody else could get in.

Q. Okay. Do you train for LTE?

A. So, we do train for LTE. That's one of the -- I guess LTE's probably not -- it's not really discussed in depth with the Eurocopter product as it is with other product that we have come from. When we go out there and train, though, I like it when we

get a windy day when you're blowing at 30 knots to go out there because the fenestron on that aircraft, it does a good job. But at the same time, you just to be on top of it and make sure it doesn't get away from you.

Q. Do you train that specifically in your training flights?

A. So, when I go out and train with somebody, I will go through and we will do pedal turns in the wind and we will let them experience all the different areas and how to maintain control of that aircraft and what areas to avoid, yes.

Q. How about power settling?

A. So, power -- settling with power has always been discussed in the classroom setting. We also discuss it in the flight setting. It has not been a maneuver who -- that has ever been flown since I've been at Papillon until, I don't know, a couple training classes ago, though they said we could -- well, not demonstrate, we'll let them do it. You're not put into a full-blown settling with power; you're recognizing the onset of settling with power and then the second you recognize that, you're getting yourself out of it.

Q. Okay.

A. So.

Q. Have you or any other IPs got any courses specific for mountain flying?

A. The flight school I went to.

Q. I mean, for Papillon.

A. For Papillon, no.
Q. Okay. Couple more real quickly. You talked about the risk assessment and you mentioned there's not a lot of changes because the tour flights are pretty coined.
A. Yeah.
Q. They're pretty set. And you also gave the example where a pilot were uncomfortable going up based on winds, and you mentioned that different arrangements would be made. In this case, obviously another -- another pilot took that. You said there's not a lot of changes, but do you think the risk assessment should be changed based on pilot's experience vice the current conditions [sic]? Or in other words, on a very gusty day when the -- when the winds are pretty close your GOM limits, you probably should send a more senior pilot in there? Or that should go on the risk in the risk assessment?
A. Yeah, it wouldn't be a bad idea. Most of the pilots that come here, I mean, they come in with 1,000 hours and they've flown in strong wind. They know it. And it's more a matter of getting a good feel for the aircraft, and they develop that pretty quick.
The pilots that I've flown with on windy days, they've done a good job. And like I said, we'll go out there and we'll specifically hover and let them experience that aircraft and doing a 360-degree turn and feeling that wind from every possible direction and try to get them as comfortable with that aircraft as they can.

And some pilots will come as soon as they're done with training and they say, yeah, absolutely, we're good to fly. And some pilots will be a little bit more reserved, which, yeah that's perfectly fine. Each pilot knows where they stand and I'm not sure how you -- I guess you could try to tailor a risk assessment towards that. I guess I would view it as they're saying that for them, in the current conditions, that them saying no, I guess, would be them amending their risk assessment.

Q. Okay.

MR. FIGLIA: Go ahead.

MS. WILSON: Burl?

MR. BOYD: (No audible response.)

MS. WILSON: No questions. I have a few follow-ups.

MR. HICKEN: Sure.

BY MS. WILSON

Q. Manny had asked you about the settling with power and you said, you know, you expect them to recognize it and get out of it. What would you expect to see from a pilot? How would they get out of settling with power?

A. Sure. There's multiple techniques, I guess, on how to do it. The only way that we've -- I've ever done it is the way it was taught to me in school. But when we're flying setting with power, we're up -- typically, we'll be about 2,000 AGL, plenty of room to recover the thing if we need to, and we'll let them settle the aircraft down, maintaining altitude until they get the aircraft

less than ETL. And once they've achieved that, get that descent rate of around 300 feet per minute, and you can feel the onset of that settling with power, that shutter (ph) that comes in, and the second they feel that, should be taking out the power and getting the air -- or the nose down to get some airspeed. And the second your airspeed is indicating anything you can pull up, power back in, and recover from that maneuver.

Q. Okay. So, Scott was a part-time pilot.

A. Um-hum.

Q. Are there any concerns about him being a part-time pilot and being either current or qualified when flying? Making sure that he's up to speed if he hasn't maybe flown in a month or so?

A. I guess I never -- I've never been involved with -- with the part-time stuff or in the decision to keep somebody part-time or what the concerns with it are. We've had multiple part-time pilots over the year [sic]. I don't know how much flying Scott was doing elsewhere, besides Papillon. Most of the other guys that we had were working other jobs and they would come back here on their week off or whatever and still do a few days. I'm not sure exactly what Scott's setup was. So.

Q. Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I just clarify something? He was a part-time pilot in the time but he started off as a full-time pilot and later became a part-time pilot.

MS. WILSON: Yeah, right.

BY MS. WILSON
Q. Zoe had asked about the advising passengers about weather. Is there any sort of form that they would possibly sign, as well?
A. Customer service has something that they're supposed to brief them on.
Q. Okay.
A. Prior to those flights going out, that way they make sure that they are fully aware they may not receive the full tour that they were planning on.
Q. But you don't know if that's something that they sign or not?
A. Um-hum. I don't.
Q. Okay. Have you ever filed an irregularity report?
A. Yeah.
Q. Yeah. What were the reasons -- reason or reasons?
A. I've had weather turnarounds before. It's happened on multiple occasions. End up with a bird strike. Things of that nature.
Q. With the weather turnaround, was that a pilot decision to make -- to do a turnaround? Or was it something where you were called back?
A. No, it was a pilot decision. And this was once we were in the canyon. Quartermaster basically was getting some pretty heavy rain and reduced visibility over the top of it, and so we converted it into an air tour and turned around early and came home.

Q. Ever done a weather turnaround because of winds?
A. Hmm. I know we've quit flying because of wind. Like a -- I'm trying to think the times where I've experienced it. Specifically, would be a GCW, running up and downs, and it starts getting turbulent and bumpy and windy, and then we've cancelled it for the day so we're not taking more passengers down it.
Q. So, you've been here almost five years.
A. Yeah, just over five years.
Q. Yeah.
A. It's crazy.
Q. What's -- what's keeping you here? Why do you -- why do you want to continue to work with Papillon?
A. So, Papillon has been a really good place to work. I have really enjoyed being here. It works good for my family as far as the schedule and the family life. The schedule's one of the main things.

I think Geoff and the owners, everybody, have done a really good job of working on the different problems that they've had and it's nice to be able to see that when something does come up, that they're motivated to work on it and fix it. It's nice.

And I don't know, it's a good environment. It's nice when you can come to work and you're not worried if you're going to lose your job when you say I'm not going to go fly today or whatever else, you know. So, I've worked for other people and you can definitely get that pressure to -- to go and fly. And

Papillon's always been really good about that. So.

Q. And what changes have you seen since the accident, in terms of flight operations?

A. Since Scott's accident?

Q. Yeah.

A. I guess introduction to settling with power into the training; actually, running the maneuver rather than just an oral discussion about it.

I think pilots here are a little bit more aware, you know. I think that's one of the other things, too that's kind of a problem with the turnover that we have. Is you get a lot of pilots that come through here and they don't know anything about some of the issues that we've had, and they just kind of look at it as life's good, everything's great, you know. Nothing bad ever happens. And then you get something like this that happens and it's kind of a wakeup call for everybody, you know.

And I think that's something that you definitely do a better job with, is sharing information, different experiences that we've had and putting that into our training program so that people are aware up front that look, bad things do happen, you know. Because I mean, you can tell people that all day long, right, and but until somebody sometimes either sees it or experiences it, it doesn't always drive it home. So, being able to have that where you can say, look, this is a list of things that we've experienced that you need to be aware of, and help them to understand a little

bit better.
Q. Great. Thank you.
MS. WILSON: We'll go one more time around the room. Zoe?
MS. KELIHER: Yeah.
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. When I'm looking at the -- the pilot schedules, of the --
A. Oh, the monthly schedule.
Q. Yeah. When I see "FT" that's flight training?
A. Um-hum.
Q. So, how do I know I'm looking at then who the lead pilot is and who's doing the flight training?
A. There wouldn't be a way to look at that and see whose doing it.
Q. Okay.
A. So, typically it will be -- it depends on the day, too. Sometimes we schedule the training flight in the afternoon, so it's going to be the closing lead that does it. Or sometimes then I get scheduled in the morning, because we need him in the afternoon for something. Sometimes leads aren't qualified yet. We've got a couple leads right now that aren't qualified as instructors, so it's got to be put what whatever shifts the lead that can do the instructions on. But yeah, there's not a way to look on there and see.
Q. Okay. And then I can see that it's scheduled as flight training, and then so it looks like the day that you did the

unsatisfactory it was scheduled as flight training.
A. Um-hum.
Q. But even though that's still a check it's -- it's not the actual check ride?
A. So, that wasn't a check ride. It was just a training flight. So, they get two hours of training prior to their check ride. At least two hours of training. So, that was just one of the training flights that we did with him.
Q. And then the check ride was the day after, okay. Is there -- I guess, the distinction, would they know where their check ride's scheduled and they know when their flight --
A. Um-hum. Yeah.
Q. So, that's for the -- they're provided this?
A. They can look at it and say, okay, I'm getting training flights on this day and I get my check ride on this date.
Q. But there's not a way that the trainer speaks with the person that's giving the check ride of what they experienced?
A. No, not necessarily unless we specifically sit down with them and -- and debrief. So, I had no idea who was going to be doing his check ride. And the pilots that were in there when I debriefed with them would have been on those pilots that was doing the check ride or the training flight. So, that's why I debriefed with those guys.
MS. WILSON: All right, that's all I have. Thank you.
MR. HICKEN: Okay.

MS. WILSON: Manny, any follow-up?
MR. FIGLIA: No thank you.
MS. WILSON: Burl?
MR. BOYD: (No audible response.).
MS. WILSON: Great.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. Anything else that you think we should have asked you that we didn't? Or anything other information that you think might help us with the investigation?
A. Let's see, not that I can think of.
Q. Okay.
A. I think we've gone through most of it, so.
Q. All right. Well, if you think of anything don't hesitate to reach out to Burl or --
A. Okay.
Q. -- Don, who can get in contact with us.
A. Okay.
Q. We really appreciate you taking the time to talk with us, Daniel.
A. Absolutely.
MS. WILSON: Okay.
MR. HICKEN: Thank you.
(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018 Interview of Daniel Russell Hicken
ACCIDENT NO.:	WPR18MA087
PLACE:	Boulder City, Nevada
DATE:	June 19, 2108

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.



Elaine M. LaRosee
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA. FEBRUARY 10, 2018	Accident No. WPR18MA087

Interview of: JAMES McCOURT

Tuesday
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
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RICH RAMIREZ
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I N T E R V I E W

(10:55 a.m.)

MS. KELIHER: -- everyone around, but first, I was hoping that you would agree to have this conversation recorded.

MR. McCOURT: Sure.

MS. KELIHER: We might have it transcribed, but a lot of it's just to keep notes if we don't.

MR. McCOURT: Sure.

MS. KELIHER: Excellent. So then I'll go around introduce all of us.

MR. McCOURT: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: You also -- the information that you're going to be providing will likely go into our public docket with all of the other interviews that we're doing --

MR. McCOURT: Mm-mm.

MS. KELIHER: -- and be available for the purpose of trying to prevent an accident --

MR. McCOURT: Right.

MS. KELIHER: -- like this from happening again. And as part of the NTSB process, you have right to representation.

MR. McCOURT: Mm-mm.

MS. KELIHER: And you can choose whoever you want whether it would be your mom, your personal lawyer, or this gentleman right here.

MR. McCOURT: Yeah, there's one right here. Okay, I guess

I'll take him.

MR. TOBIN: It's not a coincidence.

MR. McCOURT: Good deal.

MS. WILSON: Can you just state who you're going to have as your represent?

MS. McCOURT: Tom Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Great.

MS. KELIHER: And, then, we can just go around the room and this, is as I've said, Katherine;, myself, Zoe.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety with Airbus.

MR. McCOURT: Okay.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety at Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FA Las Vegas.

MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FA Las Vegas.

MR. TOBIN: And Tom Tobin with Wilson Elser, New York.

MS. KELIHER: So why we chose you, out of every pilot, is because you were here on the day of the accident.

MR. McCOURT: No, I wasn't. Nope.

MR. TOBIN: So you're done.

MR. McCOURT: See you later guys. Fantastic.

MS. KELIHER: So we have you as coming in on that day.

MR. McCOURT: That day I was sick.

MS. KELIHER: You must have just been scheduled.

MR. McCOURT: I usually -- yeah, so that's probably what you saw. I was wondering why, you know --

MS. KELIHER: Well, we still have lots of questions for you.

MR. McCOURT: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF JAMES McCOURT

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. How long have you been employed here?

A. Since '07.

Q. So you're one of the senior pilots. And what's your approximate total time?

A. Around 7,000.

Q. Anytime in EC130s?

A. I'd have to look it up. It's actually on the computer. But I -- a quarter of that or -- I'd have to look it up. I really don't keep track of that, that much.

Q. So can you tell me about flying for Papillon?

A. Yeah, well, I've been here a long time, so obviously I like it here and it's a tour operation, so it's very redundant but, yeah, other than that it's a good company.

Q. So over 11 years?

A. Mm-mm.

Q. You must see a lot of people in and out of here?

A. Yeah, unbelievable. Yeah, a lot of people.

Q. How do you think that effects the operation?

A. Well, there's a lot of training going on continuously because there are a lot of people that come and then they leave. And, but, I mean, it's pretty much the way it is, you know, everywhere.

It's pretty much the same thing. So, but, yeah, they have to retrain new people all the time, so.

Q. What's it like flying as a senior pilot in February versus at the end of summer, in August? What's it like at Quartermaster of the difference of flow and communication and --

A. From February compared to August? Well, typically August would be busier because that's the big busy time of the year. It's hotter, so you have to be a little more cautious. But then, in regards to, like, communication or whatever, there's really not a big difference. If you're speaking of like new pilots --

Q. Mm-mm.

A. -- compared to old pilots, they're pretty much trained on the typical verbiage, so it's not like you're going to hear that much difference except for maybe somebody new that's just picking it up.

Q. How do you treat pilots differently when you're flying with them if you know they're new versus not?

A. I answer a lot of questions to the new guys. And how do I treat them differently? I don't really treat them differently. Like I said, they may have a lot more questions when they're new.

Q. What kind of questions do they have?

A. Can you, like, let's say we're flying out of Vegas, can you go over the north flow opposed to a south flow departure procedure, you know, just go over it with them because, you know, they've been trained but they haven't done it a lot, so something

like that.
Q. What about questions specific to Quartermaster?
A. Typically, it's more questions, like, can we stay here a little longer because of this or that. But, in regards to flying, they're pretty well trained up. I mean, you would think they'd ask, like, can we land -- they're certain spots we don't land at typically. And I would think that somebody new -- if I was new, can we -- could I just come, land here? I don't even hear that too much, so there's not -- I got to -- I'd have to think to get a specific, but I'm sure, you know, there's new guy questions, but I can't think of a specific one.
Q. It seems like some of the lead pilots that we talked to are -- they're pretty low hours when they become lead pilots. Has that always been the case?
A. I've been here a long time. So when I got here there were some older ones, but then it was -- when I got to Boulder it just started this, you know, when I got -- they just started flying, so these guys were ex -- they were older because it was really mellow, so there wasn't a lot of work going on and it was a lot smaller operation, you know, so they were older, a few of them.
And, then, as it shuffles through, you know, they get younger. Just, you know, and then, a lot of the older guys, a lot of ex-military guys, they don't want to deal with this many people. That's really what it's about.
Q. So do you find the lead pilots come to you asking questions?

A. No. I mean, specific -- once in a while, what did -- did you ever -- did we do, you know, something different in the past maybe, you know. Was there always this many helicopters over here versus there or, you know, I've seen things we've done differently over the years, so.
Q. I didn't see, in the package I got, of any irregularity reports that you filed. Do you file them ever?
A. Yeah, I have. If -- I don't know, about five of them. Transponder went out in Vegas. I had to deviate due to a sand storm or a dust storm one year where we were flying way higher than normal to get above it. What else? I don't know, yeah, I have filed a few.
Q. It seems that some of them that I've seen, when they're reporting weather and they're out and they deviate because of weather, they always have some qualification of -- well, two other Papillon pilots went back or some Maverick go back or, do you think -- do you have any idea of why people would have to justify?
A. No, I don't.
Q. Have you ever seen Simon, so I guess, the not Chief Pilot, but have you ever seen him question anybody's decision?
A. No, but, you know, I'm not around when -- if he ever had a question.
Q. Do you ever hear anything on the radio?
A. No. No, I don't think so.
Q. It's been hard to determine of the day of the accident where

some people say that they'll call in what they experience when they were landing Quartermaster for the guys behind him.
A. Mm-mm.
Q. Do you ever do that?
A. Oh, yeah. You mean, like, what the weather is when you're entering the canyon?
Q. Yeah.
A. Sure.
Q. Or when you're landing Quartermaster, so of the -- right as you have done your approach?
A. In the years of being here, sure I have. We -- they're so many now that it'll be an established approach typically because they already know. But in the old days, yeah, you would go, hey, calls for a downriver landing or an upriver landing, but there's now it's -- there's a lot, so that's not needed typically. Plus, we have a windsock there, but yeah.
Q. Is the windsock pretty indicative of what you're going to experience coming in?
A. Well, for me, I use a windsock at a different base way earlier than I get there. I don't know what other people do, but that's what I do, so I have a pretty good idea of what -- and I'm going to do what I'm going to do pretty much, so.
Q. So if you got a plan going in there -- and I've been trying to figure this out, what if all the pads that you were going to -- in the direction that you were going to go, if you were going to

go to the notch and all the east pads are full, what do you if the pads are all full of the direction that you were planning on landing?

A. If they were absolutely ridiculously full, I've -- I have never done that, but I have seen somebody just not even go and he went to the airport up top, but typically over the years, and we're talking years, I've even directed someone into a spot that didn't know that they could go there, but that's pretty full if it's like that, you know what I mean, so.

I've always been lucky where I'm at some point where it's really not an issue. Plus, you know, there are -- there's even pads that we never use. It's a very far walk that you can always pretty much get to depending on the wind speed.

Q. What's your Go/No-Go decision where you've made a decision that you're not going to land there?

A. I have -- it's not a Go/No-Go decision, I have done an alternate pattern to it where the winds -- it's a turbulent day and the sock is actually doing a circle and I will follow it. This has happened when I'm alone, but, yeah. So, but, I've never gone, okay, I'm not -- let's see, I have -- typically you haven't made your descent if you do a No-Go. I have exited the canyon because it's just too turbulent, but I've never really been down there going, okay, now I'm going to leave. It's usually made before, you know what I mean, but.

Q. Did you know Scott?

A. Yeah.
Q. Do -- did you guys hang out?
A. Yes. Friend of mine, he lives with a friend of mine, yeah. Rob.
Q. Rob.
A. So, yeah.
Q. Have you ever flown with him?
A. I might have. Maybe he's flown with me. I've never flown with him, you know, but.
Q. Have you heard anything about him of his piloting, anything that we should be aware of?
A. No.
Q. You haven't heard any complaints about him?
A. No.
Q. Anything different about having a part-time pilot coming in and out, do you see any difference?
A. No. I mean, most part-time pilots -- I don't know you guys don't do this, but we've done this so much in their primary time. They don't go part-time until they've been here. They won't even really -- or at least typically they won't even allow you to go until you've been here for quite some time, so, you know, yeah, I don't -- yeah, no, I don't really see a problem with that.
Q. Have you seen pilots feel any repercussions on choices they've made, like, scheduling and have you heard about just pilots sitting around bitching to each other of having to take

sick days or leave days?
A. Oh, lead --
Q. Not being on the schedule or getting a bum schedule, anything like that?
A. Just that they have to do five and two. You'll hear that, bitching on to get -- cover their vacation. They all complain about that.
Q. But nothing from repercussions and decisions they've made, actions they've done?
A. No. No, they don't -- it's, yeah, they -- that doesn't happen.
Q. I kind of -- I'll let Airbus kind of go over more of the other flying questions that we're going to have, but how many pads are there at Quartermaster?
A. Gosh. There's really about 12 that you can use, and then we typically, we'd keep it at eight. Eight is what you want and, yeah, that's a good number. It's pretty --
Q. Why have you decided to not be a lead pilot or move elsewhere?
A. Because I get a seven on seven. When I was hired it was seven on, seven off, and I had some other income coming in. So for me, it's a way better job because I can travel and, you know, less headaches.
Actually, I'd consider it if I worked in Vegas. I have but I didn't want that particular sigh -- you know, seven. I'd have to

switch to the other seven off. In any event, this is just -- there's just a lot of miles to deal with, so, yeah.
Q. So from all the changes of Chief Pilots, Lead Pilots, do you think that it's -- the culture has changed?
A. No. Well, naturally it'll change through -- you have -- yeah, I mean, but, yeah, I can't -- I mean, it just varies when you have this many people coming in. You'll have a time when certain people are coming from one school and then another time -- yeah, I don't know. You know what I mean, it's just different.
Q. If you're coming in on approach and you've already crossed over the river to Quartermaster and you see someone's blades still turning, what would you do?
A. Well, if there's an open spot that's way far away from that, leads to an up -- you know, into the wind landing then there wouldn't be a problem for me. However, if I have to or the only spot would be -- you'd only -- you'd just have to go around it until they stop. Maybe communicate with them if they're still on radio, which they probably wouldn't be, but --
Q. So you've done just a circle, just orbit around?
A. I have, not for that particular problem. I can typically find another spot that is well far enough where it's not going to affect the rotor blade that's slow, you know, but if I -- if that -- well, I mean, maybe it has happened. I can't remember, but that's what I would do. I would just stall. It's not, you know, you have plenty of fuel you just go around a couple of times and

come back.
Q. If you were to experience -- because you've flown the AStars too, right?
A. Mm-mm.
Q. If you were to experience something like server transparency or something like that, would you report that?
A. Oh, yeah.
Q. How would you report it?
A. I'd report that, well, to the -- to our little tower first initially, of course, and I'd -- to every -- to a lead, to maintenance, something like that, sure.
Q. But you don't -- do you write it in anywhere? Is there any reporting method? I didn't see any irregularity report, so that's why I was just wondering. I guess, that's the flight that didn't deviate, but I was wondering if there was any method of --
A. If you had a servo issue, is that what you're speaking --
Q. No, just if you experienced Jackstall.
A. Yeah, you would write a report because that would be a major -- I -- are you talking about just a small tap? Yeah, I've never, never really had that, but other people have and I'm sure they've written a report, but I've -- if you had a major, you know, servo issue or something, like, you're feeling it bumping a bunch, yeah, you'd definitely report it. And, yeah, you'd write a report. A written one.
Q. Have you ever run out of pedal of going into Quartermaster?

A. I've gotten where it's low, but like I said, I'm really cognant (sic) of getting that thing into the wind, so I'll do things a little differently than other -- I will get -- make sure that's into the wind, so I've gotten away from having that problem. And I really haven't -- I've had it close. I've had seven because we've had mechanical turbulence coming through there really strong. And I've had it where you almost have to keep it moving pretty quick to get it down. But in Quartermaster, not me really, you know, so.

Q. Have you ever, I guess, of course, those been times, can you remember real time where you felt uncomfortable flying?

A. Yeah, I was doing an air tour and it was so turbulent that I actually turned towards -- I -- instead of going our normal route back, I tried to make it as short as possible by going by GSW kind of like we do a fuel run. And, yeah, because it was just too turbulent, so, yeah, I didn't feel comfortable. And, then, yeah, and whenever, yeah, or if you do up and downs we'll cut the day off because it's starting to get -- you trying to get it -- it usually keeps getting worse, so you cut it as early as you can. But that particular time, yeah, it did -- I didn't like that. That was pretty bad.

Q. And because you have so much experience in the 130, do you find that the performance is actually what it says in the RFM?

A. Yeah, I'd say so. I mean, I've had it gross weight before and it's, you know, it's, at that day, at that time, it -- it'll

be good and in ground effect hover it's done it. I've done it, you know, got, you know, from the fuel stop. We have to get fuel. It's hot up there. It's 5,000 feet at GSW, so, yeah, I'd say so, you know, it does have a tendency to weathervane because it's got a big tail, but performance wise, yeah, it's pretty much from what I've felt, yeah.

Q. Have you ever gotten an unsatisfactory on any of your check rides?

A. Might have had to redo a 180 auto once, so, yeah. But I don't know if that was -- I didn't go, you know, yeah, so. You'll have to go to on my records.

Q. That's all the questions I have, Captain.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. When you're flying into Quarter Master --

A. Mm-mm.

Q. -- there's two approaches that typically you would take?

A. Yeah, there's the two-typical approaches.

Q. Mm-mm.

A. Mm-mm.

Q. Can you walk me through the differences between the two?

A. Yeah, well, like I said, but see, where they're basically just determined on where the winds coming from. So, one would be from the river, let's saying that the wind is coming down, it's coming down river, so it favors an upriver approach, so you would go call from the river pretty much straight in or it could be

varied where you would turn a little bit into it and then you would pick one of the spots for this, so you have the other people coming in. And, then, the reverse would be going through the notch, which is the wind coming upriver, which favor it downriver. I mean, those are the two.

Q. Mm-mm. What if the winds favored a canyon approach, but the pads didn't, where you'd have to fly the notch. How do you manipulate that or how do you work that as you're coming in?

A. Well, if it, like, where is the wind coming -- what are you saying?

Q. Well, you're saying the notch would be, if you were doing an up -- the upriver approach?

A. The notch would be like you were going to fly downriver.

Q. Okay, downriver. --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- approach. So --

A. So you go through it and come, yeah.

Q. Okay. So what if you -- what if the winds favored an upriver approach, but the pads available didn't favor that type of approach?

A. There's a couple options. One, there -- typically, we have a wedding spot that's not used, and you'd find out typically no on the schedule.

Q. Mm-mm.

A. A lot of people won't use that, so you could just go to that

spot and people leave it open. Another way you could do it, it would be to, let's come around downriver and then you would just pass the, let's just say there was one open at -- further -- somebody didn't go all the way. You can do that, and then you could just clear your tail and come over sideways while you're still in the wind. You could, yeah, so there are ways to do it, but it, preferably it'd be everyone moves to the furthest, so everyone comes in behind.

Q. Right. Do you have a particular approach that you prefer to fly?

A. The less turbulent approach would be a down -- as if you were flying downriver, it would be less turbulent. Typically, not always. Like I said, I vary mine.

Q. And that's flying over the canyon or is that through the notch, which is the downriver?

A. The -- if you're going to flow -- land like you're going with the river down, you would go through the notch, like, you're coming back towards Vegas, and the winds, well, I mean, obviously You have wind.

Q. Okay.

A. But I like my -- yeah, I like the discretion for the pilot to do whatever works best, so --

Q. Okay.

A. -- I don't like the regidity of many things, so.

Q. How do you receive PIREPS when you're out flying?

A. Typically, you'll hear someone -- if you're at this base or the other base, the one base goes first, maybe if you're lucky, and you'll -- you can listen to the FM and you'll hear them, and they'll call it in. And they'll say what they see. Where there's a storm out 20 miles that way, you know, whatever. And, then, the base can look at what they see on the radar, but, yeah, I'll usually hear it. If you're in the area, you'll hear it from someone ahead of you or if you're on the ground, you can listen to the FM, either ways.

Q. And you're talking -- you've mentioned storms, weather --

A. Mm-mm.

Q. -- weather-related thunderstorms, rain. What about winds? Would pilots also be reporting that over the radio?

A. Yeah, they would report. If it's really bad and then we'll probably say no more as if somebody uses the term moderate turbulence. And that means you're coming out of your seat. It's bumpy.

Q. Have you ever made a call over the radio for the turbulence?

A. Mm-mm.

Q. Yeah?

A. Yeah, like that one specific one and other times, yeah, well, yeah. I mean, I'll call the base.

Q. Okay. So that's considered -- so when you're making the call, you're calling base to say you're coming back, you're not necessarily making a call to other pilots --

A. Yeah, what happens is --
Q. -- to let them know that's it turbulent?
A. -- everyone is on the freq -- base or you'll initiate it if it's bad enough or base might go, can you give us PIREP and then you'll try to give them everything you know from where you are on that route, you know. So, yeah.
Q. Okay. You've been here for a while with Papillon. How do you -- is there any coordination that happens between Sundance and Maverick that you're aware of? Any sharing of information?
A. Just between those two and not us? Or --
Q. Oh, yeah, the three of you. Do you all get together and share information at all?
A. Over the years, sometimes we'd call Sundance to see if they're going to maybe cancel a flight and vice versa. And I was doing up and downs the other day and they were coordinating with us because it was getting windy and we were going to call it, which we did, but we were also helping them get their rafters out, so, yeah, there's coordination not so much with Maverick, but may be higher up than me. If there is, I don't know.
Q. Okay.
MS. KELIHER: Manny, are you going to ask questions about the different training that they do?
MR. FIGLIA: Mm-mm.
MS. KELIHER: Okay. I have a follow-up after that. So, I think that's my last question for now. Thanks.

BY MR. FIGLIA:
Q. Okay. Do you have a flight instructor rating?
A. Yeah, I do.
Q. How often do you receive training here at Papillon? Is it yearly, six months?
A. It's bi-annual or, I mean, it's yearly. Sorry.
Q. Okay. So would that include a ground school flight?
A. Yeah, well, we have to do a APSTAR, that's the computer based, and then, we'll do an oral kind of a ground school --
Q. Okay.
A. -- you know, before the -- then we'll go and do a check ride.
Q. Do you cover performance planning?
A. Yeah, they'll give you a spot to go to and then you'll -- they give you a little flight plan to do and --
Q. Now that performance planning, do you use the actual performance of the aircraft? In other words, you're at 5,000 pounds gross weight and you threw out your in-ground effect, out of ground effect, do you actually check and see -- utilize those numbers based on what the performance calculations were?
A. Yeah, when we do the check ride, we do and then, you know, everyday we -- they actually do the performance, so in real life it's done for you and you check it, like, each aircraft is different with, like, an in or out of ground effect hover, so yeah, we --
Q. Do you actually check those numbers in the aircraft? In

other words, during your training flight or your check ride?
A. No, it's more of a scenario-based thing. So he'll say we're going to go here. It's this height, it's this temp, and then, we have this many people, but do we -- yeah, it's usually an oral type thing.
Q. Okay. How about confined to your landings. Do you spend about how your -- do your annual training and check ride in confined to your operations?
A. Yeah, well, the flight portion we'll find a small, maybe a ravine or something small and then they'll check you on, would you do it, how would you do it. Then you would do a recon and then you -- if you decide to do it, then you would do it and it's somewhat pretty confined, yeah.
Q. Obviously, you do emergency procedures in your training, do you perform settling with power as part of training in --
A. Performant? Performant?
Q. Yes.
A. Yeah, we do.
Q. How about loss of tail rotor effectiveness?
A. We talk about it. We wouldn't perform that. I mean, you get a tailwind every day here, you'd kind of have to train with that.
Q. Okay. You mentioned going into Quartermaster. The first aircraft that get there obviously use the forward part of the zone. So in other words --
A. They should, yes.

Q. Okay. And what's the purpose of that?
A. If you have a strong wind and you're landing into it, you want everyone else to be able to land without having to go around that person or maybe alter their approach. So that is the purpose of it, so you can -- first guy in, everyone gives up the spaces behind him.
Q. Okay. And, again, you mentioned going to Quartermaster, you've gotten away with landing, I don't know the exact term, but you said, quick to get it down. In other words, down into -- I'm not saying, but talking about the ground effect, was that what you're referring to?
A. Wait.
Q. You had mentioned going to Quartermaster and again, you talked about -- there was something about wind direction and you said you got away with landing toward, you know, you said quick to get it down.
A. And, I didn't mean quick. What I was referring to is I was just, I think, you're talking about where I would keep it -- they were asking about the different ways we land.
Q. Right.
A. And, I was saying that if you have a day where it's wind shear, where in the sock is turning, I would follow it around. I'm never quick to get it down. I said follow it around. I think that's what you were referring --
Q. Okay. And, again, obviously transitioning from flight to a

confined area. You might get transitional lift --
A. Mm-mm.
Q. -- from the ground effect.
A. Mm-mm.
Q. Sometimes going to the Quartermaster is that sometimes an issue? You may not get into ground effect and you're out of ground effect, but your speed is low based on not having that room to maneuver, does that happen on occasion? Based on how many aircraft are parked out there?
A. I mean, it could be conceivably, sure. If somebody, let's just say there -- yeah, it conceivably if you were going to take a spot where, let's say you had to go over everyone, which would be ridiculous, but, yeah, you could slow it down and, yeah, but if you're planning, you wouldn't really have to do that, you know. But it does get mechanically turbulent down there sometimes.
Q. And landing into Quartermaster, you can't use any of the 360 -- 360-degree, as when they get in there, because you have some of crevices and some high terrain around there, so you can't come in from any direction you want, so it's kind of --
A. Kind of, but there are ways of doing it. If you have a wind, let's say, coming from where our wedding spot is, and it's shooting up, so it's not downriver, it's not upriver, it's basically -- it's a side river. You can come in, which I'll do kind of along the slope and you're still into the wind and to your spot, so it's a little different because the wind isn't exactly

like it's planned for the -- yeah.
Q. Okay. You mentioned that there are 12 spots in landing zones or 12 pads in Quartermaster.
A. Mm-mm.
Q. Okay. And you said eight are generally used?
A. Yeah. That's what it should be, or at least --
Q. Okay. So there's no real set standard on how many -- they're not marked, they're just spots and some people may not even know about this spot, but that's conceivably where you can land --
A. Mm-mm.
Q. -- an aircraft?
A. Yeah, yeah.
Q. Okay. All right. With your experience, you -- have you happened to take in a flight, which let's say, someone else had turned down. In other words, let's say junior pilot couldn't fly or didn't feel comfortable in certain conditions, yet it was still within the confines of what the GOM said. Have you taken any of those flights?
A. Like, somebody where they -- it passed to me because somebody didn't want to do it for some reason?
Q. Yeah, and, again, it may have been they just didn't feel comfortable, yet it still was in the requirements within the GOM. And based on your experience, did you --
A. Yeah, I can't really remember. The only thing close to that would be leaving Las Vegas because I'll fly out of there where we

only have four aircraft, and it's a little different, what they're going through. And so I -- I've made the determination that it's all right. And it's because the report is more of a Boulder-based report, it's very -- really windy here, and it isn't really there. We don't even -- we come back on the other side of the lake, but as if -- I haven't really taken someone's flight that -- I don't like the idea of somebody says no and then I go, you know, that's stupid.

Q. Okay.

A. In fact, I like it when, if someone says it's a weather problem, if no one goes after that, so.

Q. Okay. Which -- are you called qualified on all four of the air frames?

A. Yeah. I mean, four -- you mean the, like --

Q. You have B2s, you have B3Es, you have H130s. You have--

A. Yeah, I --

Q. -- H32s.

A. Yeah, Yeah.

Q. You're qualified on all of them?

A. Yeah, yeah. I thought you meant over at -- I did the South Rim, too.

MR. FIGLIA: Okay. That's all I have for now.

MS. WILSON: Burl? John?

MS. KELIHER: I do have a follow-up question.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Assuming that you were to be there the day of the accident where you would have gone at 9:30, how do you get the weather?
A. Well, it depends on -- you got your standard briefing and then we can call either one of the leads or our tower to get, like, if it's a rain type thing, you know, to look at the radar. And, you can also check GCW, has the winds as they are right now. And that's what I would do if I was on the ground before I go, just check that. Or you can call, which I have called, actually, GCW and asked them for an update, and just real-life stuff, like, even though it's -- you got a wind, like, it -- has it been picking or up or going down, you know, it vary. And you can get different ways.
Q. Do you find that the windsock at Ramada is in indicative of what's at Quartermaster?
A. Not always. Not always. But it does help a lot to prepare for what you got because if you -- and I don't know if everyone does what I do, okay, but it'll give you -- if you have that wind, which is pretty -- if it's strong, it's pretty good indicator, and then you can see what spots are open. So you can start getting this all down without waiting to -- I mean, if you're waiting just to see that windsock, it can be a little tricky, which I don't do. I totally look at the Ramada windsock first.
Q. How far after, and maybe you see it at Ramada, can you start accessing what spots are open?
A. Ramada, you got to -- you could tell there's a couple

helicopters. Maybe you'll see two red dots there further. You kind of know that they're in a, you know, the downriver area where you might see. But you don't know, but you can kind of go, you already know that the wind's blowing, let's say, downriver, so you're going to go straight into it. That -- and then you'd start looking for what's available there.

Q. You said that you'll take the wedding spot if it wasn't there -- written in there, do you choose spots, ever, based on thinking that somebody behind you is newer?

A. Mm-mm, yeah.

Q. By leaving them an easier spot?

A. Mm-mm, yeah, for easier --

Q. And what would the easier spots be?

A. The easiest spot would be next to the Ramada or next to where we have shade, that would be the easiest -- open. And then the ones passed it, if you were going to upriver would be the next easiest and then the one next to the river, it's got that little cliff, that's actually a very easy spot because you can just shoot right from the river to it. You could -- if the -- you don't have to go, you know, you can vary it without even going, so some of them you can hit from the right. That one you can go straight into. So and then the worst would be, I would assume, would be maybe the what we call the handicap spot, which is a very -- it's a little sloped, which new people don't know it's overly sloped, you know, so that would be the only problem with that is it

creates a lot wind on everyone.
Q. And how do you know who's behind you? Do you recognize people's voices?
A. Oh, one more thing that the toughest would be the wedding spot. Sorry. Just saying. What's that? What was the question?
Q. How do you know who's behind you? Do you recognize their voice?
A. Yeah, but if you don't recognize their voice, you go by their number, you know. So let's say it's someone new in 27 or whatever 30, but, yeah, I'll recognize the voice, but you'll know the numbers. Typically, I'll remember, at least, two behind me where they are, how far they are. So I know if I could possibly shut the blade down or not when I get down there and yeah, so.
Q. And you know they're new because you're listening to them take off or you see them when you're -- how -- I guess, how do you know who is in 35, 55?
A. Just because I don't recognize their voice probably, you know --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- or I saw them when we were loading up or, you know, or --
Q. Did you ever apply for a lead position?
A. No. I considered the Las Vegas, but, like I said, it wasn't posted on-line, and it was on the opposite shift that I'm off, you know, so I would have to change some stuff. But that I would have considered, yeah.

Q. But it wasn't posted so how did they choose the people?
A. No, they posted it over here. It just wasn't posted -- I see -- I'm sorry. I was working in Vegas constantly that particular year or whatever, I was over there a lot. Like, my seven-on I'd be there pretty much, so it was posted over here, and then, I got the word kind of late. And, then, I -- I'd just -- then I would have had to change some stuff to, so, I never did it. But, yeah, I considered that. That, you know, I like the amount of, yeah.
Q. So Simon has stated his goal is to get people to stay here longer and not to have much attrition, which apparently has worked for you. How do you think that Papillon could retain people? What could they do to keep people here?
A. I think if they paid more they could for sure. If they, I don't know had a -- I think if they brought back at least where if you worked here a year, you could go to four and three. Where you don't -- that way you wouldn't have to live in Las Vegas and then maybe after that bring back the seven and seven.

You used to have a lot of people that were military pilots here, that would work here because if you had the seven and seven they'd have other income coming in from their pensions and they'd stay here for quite a while. They stay here maybe three years, maybe five. We had a guy -- so. But that's a lot of people.

The EMS job for that pays more and they have more time off and they don't live here, so why would they not go there, you know what I mean, so, yeah. I think it's going quicker. The door's

spinning faster now, the way it is just, just with five and two schedule.

MS. WILSON: I do have a follow-up.

BY MR. WILSON:

Q. The training that's offered typically regarding settling with power, do you think it's adequate starting with when it was just discussed in ground school?

A. Well, you couldn't really simulate it in a helicopter, unless you went up to, like, 10,000 feet and put weight in the thing and did some drastic crazy stuff. So, yeah, you know, there's probably -- we go over it. I mean, and, you know --

Q. Right. Have you had a training cycle since the accident?

A. No. I already -- I just had mine in January or December -- or February, right in that -- I did both, so I guess, maybe I did after. I don't know, but I have mine at the normal time.

Q. So there was no -- in the training that you had, you didn't have any practicing even approaching settling with power?

A. Yeah. We haven't practiced that one.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah, only when I was in -- when I was teaching with the little helicopter we could get it to do it without doing something crazy.

Q. And you said that there is no training for LTE?

A. I think we go through that on -- in the oral and then it's definitely on our APSTAR on the computer, but --

Q. And do you think that's adequate?
A. You can always go more over that with an EC130, you know, you get a tail -- it can get weathervaned pretty easy, so, but, it's yeah, I don't know. It wouldn't hurt to go over that more, but I think they go over it, it's just --
Q. They talk about the weathervaning?
A. Oh, yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. But it's -- it does it and if you're new you have to experience it and I don't know, you can always go over more of that.
Q. Okay. Thank you.
MS. WILSON: All right.
MR. WAUGH: Actually, I do have some now.
BY MR. WAUGH:
Q. Since you've been here, you were talking about mechanical turbulence and, that we're talking about Quartermaster now, is there -- if you were to kind of draw it out mentally, what part of the Quartermaster landing area would you say that, that you would anticipate if it's windy that you've experienced with mechanical turbulence?
A. Let's say if you made a turn right at the notch, you have the wind coming downriver and it's not a day that it's strong wind, it's a day that it's that, like, I was saying when the -- when you see the sock spinning, that's the time you're going to get a real

bumpy ride. It'll start to try to fall out from under you, you'll come up, and that's -- that -- you'll get that the most from the notch. However, you do use that direction when it's not like, you know --

Q. And that's downriver with -- or you got a strong wind going upriver?

A. Going up? Okay. It's really not that bad going upriver because you're getting away from most -- if you're doing it -- you're coming -- you're going for the notch, you can widen it out where the terrain is flat and pretty good. And you don't get that. The notch area you'll get it where it I think it's -- it just starts to swirl because you have the ground that's going down below you and you can get a lot more, but you don't get that as much. We used to land at the, we call the waterfall site, and there was definitely -- if you could aim in the way you're talking about downriver there you'd definitely get that, you know, when we landed, we don't land there anymore, but if we were coming downriver, but Quartermaster because the way the terrain is you don't -- it's a much smoother ride.

Q. Okay. Would you consider Quartermaster a confined area?

A. No, not really.

Q. Okay. And with that you get, like, 12 spaces that you can -- parking areas. How many -- is that something that you would shoot an approach to your landing pad? You're going to land at or do you shoot your approach to something else?

A. What do you mean?
Q. If you're coming up to land and there's -- it doesn't matter how many aircraft are there, but you're going to go to a landing pad, whichever one you want to pick, do you do your approach right to the pad?
A. No, I wouldn't. I -- it -- well, if it's open pad, I will approach. It depends on the wind, I'll come into the wind and then to the pad, so hopefully it -- you can do it if the wind is coming so you're aiming at the pad, you know, so, yeah, I would go to the pad. I'd approach to it, but I wouldn't end it way before the pad. You know, you come through ETL and then you try to just, like, you always, you know, transition to the ground effect at the the pad. If it's open. Now, if it wasn't, you could go to the right of it and then just ease over.
Q. Okay. I'm sure you've had time to think about this whole -- everything that had happened. In your mind, with your experience -- and do you have any ideas what might have happened?
A. You know, I wasn't there, so I don't know. I -- either -- I don't know, but, yeah, I --
MR. WAUGH: All right. That's it. Thanks.
MS. WILSON: That's it.
MR. McCOURT: Okay.
MS. WILSON: Thank you so much.
MR. McCOURT: Yeah, No problem.
(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA.
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of John Becker

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2018

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]
Kimberlee Kondrat
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018	Accident No. WPR18MA087

Interview of: DAVID OEST

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
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Papillon Airways

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Federal Aviation Administration
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I N T E R V I E W

MS. WILSON: Welcome.

MR. OEST: Hello.

MS. WILSON: Thank you for joining us today. We are conducting this interview as a part of the investigation into the accident on February 10th. This is a routine interview that we do. There is nothing out of the ordinary for us to talk to various pilots that worked the day of the accident or who might have interacted with the pilot things like that. So, there is nothing to read into this interview as being different than any other investigation that we do.

MR. OEST: Sure.

MS. WILSON: We will take a moment to go around the room and introduce everybody who is here so that you know who's participating in the interview.

I'm Katherine Wilson, I am a Human Performance Investigator with the NTSB.

MR. OEST: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: And I am Zoe Keliher, I'm being the operations of the NTSB.

MR. OEST: Very good.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety with Airbus.

MR. OEST: Okay.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Safety Director of Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA, Las Vegas.

MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one person represent you during the interview. It can be anybody that you choose.

MR. OEST: Um-hum.

MS. WILSON: Would you like to have somebody represent you today?

MR. OEST: Sure. Mr. Tom Tobin please.

MS. WILSON: All right. Thank you. And what we would like to do is we would like to record the interview. This will allow us to either type in a summary of our notes or produce a transcript that will then be a part of our public docket. This is a part of our fact-finding phase --

MR. OEST: Sure.

MS. WILSON: -- of the investigation.

MR. OEST: Absolutely.

MS. WILSON: Great. And just so that you know our role is strictly from the safety side. We are not here to assign blame to the accident. We just want to prevent this from happening again.

MR. OEST: Absolutely.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you want him to introduce himself?

MS. WILSON: We will, yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

MS. WILSON: Thank you. Do you have any questions before we get started?

MR. OEST: No, ma'am.

MS. WILSON: Okay. And Zoe is going to start off the questioning.

MS. KELIHER: This is Rich Ramirez, also from the FAA. So, we see that you were the --

MS. WILSON: Could you just state your name for the record?

MR. OEST: David Michael Oest.

MR. OEST: Thank you.

INTERVIEW OF DAVID OEST

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. We specifically want to talk to you because we saw that you were working on the day of the accident.

A. Correct.

Q. Can you tell me when you started with Papillon?

A. I started May 9th of 2016.

Q. And what's your approximate total time?

A. 2900 hours.

Q. And how much of that is in the AC130?

A. 550.

Q. Great. And then when did you transition to the lead pilot?

A. Seven months after I got hired, which was December '16.

Q. Can you tell me what you do as lead pilot?

A. I do a lot of things. I'm responsible for either opening, closing, flying the dub or GCW operations, scheduling and flight training is kind of the basic gist of it.

Q. What's different about being a line pilot as opposed to a

lead pilot?
A. A lead pilot you -- you know, you don't fly the tours every day. So, my responsibility, let's say I'm an open lead. I come in in the morning. I generate the morning briefing. I brief that to the pilots and then I deal with any pilot issues and/or maintenance issues. Try and coordinate with different departments, ticking, tower, maintenance department, to make sure that we are on track and that things are handled in the way they are supposed to be handled.
Q. Where were you flying before you came here?
A. I was flying at a flight school in Prescot, Arizona, called Universal Helicopters. I was one of the flight instructors there.
Q. And so, seven months, that's pretty quick (indiscernible) on the lead.
A. Yeah. That is pretty quick.
Q. When did you start thinking you wanted to do that?
A. Day one. So, I guess I came here with a little bit more hours than the average bear. I came here with around 2,000 hours. A lot of people come here with, you know, 1,000, 1,500 range. So, I like flight instruction. That's part of the gig here being a lead pilot. So, I wanted to get back into that.
Q. Did you apply right off the bat? Did you have any conversations before you got hired with Simon?
A. As far as being a lead pilot?
Q. Um-hum.

A. No. Nope.
Q. How was the job posted?
A. The lead pilot job?
Q. Um-hum.
A. It was posted on the Baltimore out there and several other pilots to apply as well.
Q. Was there any discussion of the other pilots of why you got chosen?
A. Well, I'm sure there was with me being here seven months and some of the pilots been here two and three years. I'm sure there was some kind of discussion. But as far as my knowledge that's all. I'd be guessing as far as what they would say.
Q. So, you never talked to people about it?
A. Not really. I mean I talked to them about my specific interview but I didn't really ask those other guys what they had thought about it.
Q. How is your rapport with Simon?
A. Pretty good. I have a good working relationship with him and we are on the same page a lot of times. And I ask him and he's a good mentor towards me.
Q. Great. So, were you the morning or the afternoons shift?
A. On the day of the event?
Q. (Non-verbal response.)
A. Yeah, I was the morning lead, the opening lead.
Q. Okay. Can you remember anything about you filling out the

morning briefing sheet or during the briefing?
A. I remember I did the morning briefing sheet. I can't remember any specifics on that. I'm sure you guys have it.
Q. Um-hum.
A. I was the one who did generate that and briefed the pilots that morning, yes.
Q. How do you usually get the weather information?
A. Oh, we have a website. We have login 1-800 WX brief online there. We have an on Papillon lead pilot account and that's where we generate the weather from.
Q. So, how -- when I think of the step of what you think is the most important, how do you pull it off?
A. I look at a lot of things. I look at current conditions, forecasted conditions, maximum temperatures, area forecasts, when in temple loft, PIREPs, AIRMETs, SIGMETs, convective SIGMETs, anything adverse weather and then current conditions as well. Max performance, temperatures, max temperatures for Boulder and GCW for performance for four different airframes. There's a lot of different stuff that goes into consideration. I'm pulling weather I look at NOTAMS closures, any NOTAMS looking for TFRs things of the such. Anything that would affect our, if you will, normal operation.
Q. So, I'm looking at the sheet and I see that the me tars are in there, which were pulled it looks like early in the morning
A. Right. Whenever I generate it, you know, 5:00 to 5:15 a.m.

Q. And then you get the TAFs from?
A. The TAF that's on there is the Los Vegas TAF, which is from 1-800 WX Brief.
Q. And I see you have got some check marks from it.
A. That very well could be. It could be me trying to remember times to convert them in my head, ZULU time. I'm trying to read that so I can tell the pilots so they don't have to do the work for them. So, in my briefing I say it's going to be X time local. That could be. I have been known to do that in the past. I don't know.
Q. And then I see you have got an area forecast synopsis it says.
A. Um-hum.
Q. Where do you get that from?
A. Well, it's recently changed because they stopped offering the area forecast. So, we started going to 1-800 -- excuse me -- faaweather.gov. I type in Bolder City and then there's the forecast discussion, which is what they use to make the area forecast anyway. So, now I put in the forecast discussion. I find where it says aviation McCarran and I put that in there.
Q. So, what's the difference between the aviation versus the discussion?
A. Basically, it's the old area forecasts were not in plain language, if you will. Now, these new ones are in plain language. Just like someone types it out it's going to be dire winds. They

are going to come out of the south. We expect to be for conditions or whatever it says. It's not in a code, like a me tar almost so that more plain language. But it still accomplishes the same thing.

Q. Trying to give weather briefings and pulling the weather did you have any different training for the weather?

A. I don't understand that question.

Q. Did you have any special training with Papillon of knowing whether --

A. Something we review in the interview process for new pilot hiring and then we do Avstar media as well, which helps us learn, you know, basic weather theory on up from there.

Q. And I recall I remember somebody saying that you were married to Bennett (ph.)?

A. She is my fiancée.

Q. Fiancée?

A. Yes.

Q. So, she was another part time pilot as well?

A. Correct. Yes. So, she works for a different company now.

Q. Did she ever discuss with you what it's like being a part time pilot versus being a full time?

A. It was very brief for her. She did enjoy it because she moved on to the flight safety team at Allegiant. She just finished up her Master's in aviation human factors and all that stuff. So, she's kind of on that side of the house now. So, she

enjoyed flying part time just because it wasn't every day. So, but that's all she really told me about it.
Q. As a new pilot --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- did you see any difference of having Scott or whoever the part time pilot was versus a full time?
A. Besides the fact that I didn't see them more than normal, no.
Q. Do you do training as well?
A. I do. I'm one of the company check pilots and instructor pilots here.
Q. And that was at the time of the accident too?
A. So, at the time of the -- let me think.
Q. Because all I see is Tomlinson and --
A. You talking about their records?
Q. Yeah.
A. So, I -- yes, I was a company check pilot at that time but I had never flow with Scott. I never did any training flight with him or any review flight or a check ride with him.
Q. Got it. Can you describe to me of -- when you said you schedule pilots of how you mix the newer pilots with the senior pilots?
A. Yeah. So, say it's day one on the line for a new pilot. We would assign them, you know, what we call it a big brother or a big sister to help them throughout the day. That can be their mentor for that particular day. Now, they have already done the

tours. They have already flown. They've already done their 135-checkride and been found competent and all that. But it's nice to have someone who can -- who has been there and done that before on your day-to-day and your first in line you are a little bit nervous. You got the unknown there to help them out.

So, we assign those and the knowledge that they are going to have questions and we pick pilots that are willing to help those new pilots on the line. So, you know, we schedule that and we talk to them after every flight and say how was it. How was it at the end of the day, how was your day. And then we do that for as long as they want. As long as they want that big brother.

Q. Did you think Scott was one of those big brother pilots?

A. I know when I first started here he wasn't my big brother like assigned to me, but I asked him several questions. He had worked here much longer than I had and I remember asking him in the canyon one day like: how is my parking job? Should I have been over here, over there or whatever? It's a lot going on on your first couple of days. But he did mentor me on certain aspects when I was a new pilot here at Papillon.

Q. What do you find some of the most common questions are about Quartermaster from the new pilots?

A. Parking is a big one down there. And then a lot of it it's not even aviation-related per se. It's, you know, how do you get your passengers, you know, back in the helicopter? What time do you start loading them back up? How do you set up your meals?

You know, and it's all personal preference on that stuff, but it may not even be aviation related but there's a lot of questions as far as that stuff is concerned.

Q. So, after you do your briefing --

A. Um-hum.

Q. -- so, it would be the morning of the accident, when people start trickling in --

A. Correct.

Q. -- how do you -- how does that work of them --

A. So, the have different -- each pilot is assigned a show time. And we expect them to be here at their assigned show time. They call the night before and that's already posted for them.

Now, in the wintertime and we are still under the winter operations at this point, if you come in say for a midday shift or a later shift, you're supposed to self-brief.

Now, right now during the summertime we have a 12:45 briefing as well which whoever the lead is doing it will get updated weather information and read that out to the people who are attending the meeting.

Q. Can you just take me through of what you can remember of the day of the accident of how --

A. I remember opening. And I remember Mr. Johnson relieved me. He was the closing lead. So, he'll come in. I give him a quick debrief of what's going on for the day. And then I kind of depart and do my own thing for the rest of the day.

I remember I was with Shelby. We were about walking out the door to go to Costco and then I guess the phone call saying that we had an accident.
Q. What time were you relieved?
A. Sometime -- I don't remember. It would be pure speculation at this point. I can't remember.
Q. But do you remember like what your normal schedule was?
A. Yeah. For that time, it would have probably have been anywhere between 10:00 a.m., I'm assuming.
Q. So, that's just a quick --
A. Yeah. In the wintertime the leads if you're opening be just because the amount of daylight we don't fly at night. You don't have to work terribly long day. So --
Q. Do you remember anything about what you briefed Mr. Johnson?
A. I don't.
Q. Okay. Did anything stand out with you about a briefing that morning?
A. No, ma'am, did not.
Q. How do you -- the passenger weather warning that you give how does that --
A. Weather advising.
Q. Yeah.
A. So, it can be any time throughout the day whether I -- when I decide or another lead pilot, the chief pilot, training director decides that we need to weather advise it could be for any number

of things. It could be for wind, rain, anything like that, temperature. So, I would call the ticket counter, speak to someone there and say, hey, can we weather advise from this timeframe on until further notice? And then when they check in over there they weather advise the passengers.

Q. What triggers you to give a weather advisory?

A. Any time I think we could be possibly turning around for thunderstorms, rain, any kind of in climate weather, whether it be wind, temperature, precipitation, anything like that.

Q. So, what wind would have to trigger that?

A. There is no specific number for that.

Q. But for you?

A. Anything -- my personal limit once we start approach gust spreads of say 15 knots and sustain runs maybe over 30.

Q. So, wind over 30 gusting spreads --

A. Gust spreads over 15.

Q. Any idea of why you just wouldn't always have them sign a weather advisory?

A. For the passengers?

Q. Um-hum.

A. That's not my job. I wouldn't know why they would need it every time. It's more of a courtesy to the passengers. Saying hey it might be windy or rainy. The pilot might decide if going into Quartermaster is not a good idea he might not get a landing tour. It could just be turned into air tour. And then once they

got back here we would, you know, praise the pilots for making a good decision, we move on.

Q. Have you ever seen there be repercussions of pilots deciding not to?

A. No.

Q. Any type of scheduling repercussions that they get?

A. No. You are specifically told when you are a lead pilot the schedule is not to be used for punitive action. So, I can't schedule somebody for a bad schedule or a less desirable schedule just because they made a mistake on the paperwork or they showed up late or whatever the case may be. You are specifically told you cannot do that.

Q. And has that always been the case since you have been here?

A. Since I've been here, yes.

Q. All right. Going into Quartermaster --

A. Um-hum.

Q. -- how do you determine what pad you're going to land on?

A. Well, it depends on several factors. Main factor being the wind, of course, always want to land into the wind, you want to land downwind. As I'm coming in to the canyon I should have already listened to the weather information at UCW do I have an idea of what the winds are at top. At the bottom they are always the same. So, I'm kind of painting my options in my head as I come inbound. I try to view the wind socks at Ramada and the beach sometimes it can be hard too. And then I have the wind

socks at Quartermaster itself. And so, based on where the passengers are at Quartermaster, where the helicopters are and where the wind is is where I -- is how I decide how I'm getting in and out of Quartermaster.

Q. What if the spot that you had planned mapped out based on the conditions that you just said were taken?

A. Well, if there are no other spots available then you go around and you come back home if there's no suitable spot. Now, if there's something where -- I've been on approach before and then a passenger decides to run to the spot I was going to, then go around, come back and land again. If there's no where to go then, obviously, you can't land.

Q. So, I've looked at the irregularity reports --

A. Um-hum.

Q. -- and that's never happened so --

A. Well, it's pretty rare that -- to end the day where you could not land the helicopter down there if the weather and everything was not a factor.

Q. So, how many helicopters have you seen landed at Quartermaster?

A. I've seen ten.

Q. Never more?

A. I'm not going to say never, but it wasn't memorable in my mind.

Q. But you would always be able to find a spot?

A. Yes. I've never been to Quartermaster and not been able to find a spot due to other helicopters being in the way.
Q. Can you tell me about irregularity reports?
A. Sure. What would you like to know?
Q. Anything.
A. Okay.
Q. Everything.
A. Irregularity report is anything that I would fill out in the instance that your normal tour whether it be an air tour or drop return or whatever the case may be didn't go as planned or as scheduled or as trained. So, you go on to flight duty. You can fill it out. You want to keep it as factual and to the point as possible. You are not writing a novel. But that's the way -- the avenue to fill that irregularity report.
Q. Explain more about that.
A. So, if I turned around for weather I'd write an irregularity report. I over sped a helicopter on a training flight I would write an irregular report.
Q. Well, explain the novel part of --
A. Oh, I'm saying when you're filling out the reports they don't need to be -- they should be kept to a factual basis and that's it.
Q. Why is that?
A. Because that's all that needed to be in there.
Q. So, then what's the point of it I guess?

A. To let management know that I was going to do this and this and something else happened that was irregular.
Q. So, it says pilot recommendations to prevent reoccurrence?
A. Sure. That's in there as well.
Q. But a recommendation by nature I guess isn't factual?
A. Right. But in the main body of the -- while you're writing the irregular report should be factual information. Nothing more. Nothing less.
Q. I guess I'm wondering what the -- if there's -- I guess what happens with the irregularity reports then?
A. What gets happened -- what happens to them after the pilot or whoever submits them it goes out to the proper people who have access to that. I assume Burl, Simon, Tyler, Brenda, Geoff, John, I guess all those people. The DO will have that as well. So, I don't have access to irregular reports.
Q. Oh. The pilot submits it to the lead pilot, correct?
A. No. It gets submitted through flight and duty.
Q. So, if a pilot comes back --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- do you tell them to submit an irregularity report or is it they just do it?
A. It can be both.
Q. Okay.
A. So, if I find something that I decide you should submit an irregularity report on that then they do. Or they can self-do it,

they can self-disclose that information.
Q. So, I mean like they are turning back for the weather?
A. Um-hum. They all know that they should fill one out but I would remind them as well. Say, hey, guys, don't forget to fill out your irregularity reports.
Q. Do you look at the report?
A. Me personally, no.
Q. So, you have never looked at a pilot's irregularity report?
A. No.
Q. Okay. But you have seen them when they write novels?
A. No. I have heard in our morning briefings that they were and they are supposed to keep it factual.
Q. Okay. Have you heard anything about them being submitted that would make you -- lead you to believe that anything is being done with them?
A. Well, we have morning meetings and we have daily specific topics. So, if there's a certain area where we are getting more than one irregularity report then we would bring that up to the pilot pool. If it was an isolated incident then I'm sure management talks to those pilots about that particular event and kind of does a corrective action with the individual pilot.
I assume if it's something like bird strikes then that information would be disbursed to us and say, we might change our route a little bit to avoid that high area or that high concentration of bird strikes because we have so many irregularity

reports for that specific area. So, if it's something the rest of us need to know about we get briefed at the -- our briefing notes on the briefing sheet, the daily topics, if you will.
Q. So, you have never had any because you said management goes over it, but management meaning Simon?
A. Simon, Tyler, Burl.
Q. Okay. But that's not relayed to you what was in --
A. I don't read the specific reports, no.
Q. Or have no access --
A. I don't have access to them.
Q. So, I'm looking like specifically a day when you were a lead pilot --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- January 20th, where there were lots of people that had to turn back for weather or were grounded --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- and I would only see like one or two, even though I know other people came back --
A. Sure.
Q. -- and I see -- that was just an example.
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- but a lot of that was triggered like that?
A. Sure.
Q. Where only one person, although it was reported that three people came back, so how do you know who's submitting them or not?

A. Well, there was an old -- I don't know how the rumor got started and this has since been changed. But there was a rumor that if, let's say, five helicopters launched. Five helicopters turn around because of weather that only one pilot out of the group had to fill that irregular report out kind of for the group, if you will. And that has since been changed. That might be an example of why multiple helicopters turn around and need to have less irregularity reports.
Q. Most of the reports that I see where they turn around for the weather, it's always with a disclaimer that Maverick turned around too or two Papillon pilots ahead of me turned around.
A. Um-hum.
Q. So, they are always giving like a justification.
A. Well, they may be. I've never seen the report.
Q. But why would you think that they would need a justification?
A. They don't need a justification to turn around for weather.
Q. Do you have any ideas of why they put that in?
A. I couldn't tell you. It would be pure speculation.
Q. Well, what do you speculate?
A. I don't have a speculation on that. I'm not the one writing the report so I couldn't tell you.
Q. Have you ever written a report?
A. I have.
Q. And what were they for?
A. I had a passenger at Ramada fall and scrape up their leg

quite a bit. So, I had to take them, that passenger, they got care at the bottom to the EMS pad up top near Alpha 8 on transient up there. So, it's something irregular. Had to deal with EMS and all that and so I filled out an irregular report for that.

Q. Got it.

A. And there might be more than that but that's the one that comes to my head.

Q. How is your pay different from a line pilot?

A. Once you get hired on as a lead pilot it is $60 added to your base pay. And then once you get checked out in the aircraft to become a flight instructor in those aircraft then it's another $80 on top of your base pay. So, whatever your base pay is it's based off that.

Q. So, then any other bonuses or different things that go into it?

A. No. I mean we still get incentive pay. If I go fly a GCW I'm still in the pilot pool pay for the up/downs. And if I come in and I pick up a day for a line pilot and I'm flying the line three flights I still get my incentive pay.

MS. KELIHER: I'm going to let Manny go more into the training questions since you are a trainer.

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. Not to beat up on the irregularity but as a lead pilot you have an aircraft turn around, let's say weather --

A. Sure.

Q. -- you don't see that irregularity report?
A. I do not, sir.
Q. Okay. What aircraft do you instruct in and which ones are you check airman in?
A. I'm a check airman in the EC130B4 and T2. I can instruct in the EC130B4, T2, AS350B2 and AS350B3.
Q. Okay. Do you participate in ground training as well, ground score?
A. Yes, sir. I do.
Q. Tell me a little bit about how you use the (indiscernible) portion of the ground training, let's say performance in ground score and apply that to a training flight or a check flight?
A. So, what was your question one more time for me? I'm sorry.
Q. If you have -- if you're doing ground score or either a briefing and you are using performance planning how do you use that information and relay it to a check ride or to a training flight?
A. I'll give a scenario.
Q. Sure.
A. So, there's several factors that we have to think about when we are talking about performance. Fuel load, weight and time of flight, temperature, IGE, OGE, HV diagram, all those things go into play there. So, it can be a very lengthy process as far as that is concerned.
Q. Do you actually demonstrate those performance parameters in

the aircraft? In other words, if you're in ground -- or at a ground effect performance is 7,000 do you demonstrate that?
A. Sure. We'd talk about it for sure because, obviously, when we do training we only do it in a specific area.
Q. You said you talk, do you do it in the aircraft?
A. Yes. We talk about it in the aircraft. And I show them at a certain point when we land and we have say, out of ground effect cover performance how that helicopter is acting differently, performing differently versus a smooth hard flat surface here at the airport. So, it's something that we talk about, yes.
Q. Briefly tell me how you either train or check on (indiscernible) check ride fund area operations, what are some of the basic things you're looking for?
A. Looking for a high recognizance, first and foremost looking for size, slope, suitability, surface surroundings, wind, obstructions, path-in/path-out and power available to do that. So, there's -- you're kind of accomplishing all those in your high recon. There's several different methods as far as your low approach or a low recognizance to do that kind of depends on the terrain to that specific area. And as you're inbound, you know, constantly checking and cross checking everything on your low approach or your low recon and confirming everything that you know from the air and never being afraid to do a go-round if you need be.
Q. Okay. Do you use some of your operational landing sites like

Quartermaster for training and check rides?
A. Absolutely, yes.
Q. How many landing sites are available for Quartermaster?
A. Like I said before I've seen ten helicopters down there. So, ten plus.
Q. But there's no specific number?
A. No, sir.
Q. With the same approach whether it's up river or down river (indiscernible) it's the quartermaster, do you find some of the approaches different based on the power valve on the aircraft? In other words, being able to utilize transitional lift and power gavel or some parts are different, in other words, were you cannot use transitional lift, in other words you have to come straight vertical to one of the paths there?
A. I've never had to do a straight vertical approach or take off at Quartermaster.
Q. Okay. Would you say that every approach may be different into Quartermaster based on how many aircraft (indiscernible)?
A. I think every approach into every spot is different no matter if I'm doing 100 approaches in one day to the same helipad, every approach is different.
Q. Do you train or whether it's training or quality check ride loss of (Indiscernible)?
A. It's something that we orally talk about, yes, sir.
Q. You don't demonstrate the aircraft?

A. No.
Q. How about power settling?
A. Settling to power, yes, sir. We do oral and a practical on that.
Q. During the training and let's say differences training between (indiscernible), do you talk about or demonstrate the differences between the (indiscernible) trust and let's say wind direction or wind effect based on a finished (indiscernible)?
A. Sure. It's pretty apparent because when we start people here they start in the AC130B4 and a T2. When they make that transition to the Astar B2, B3E, it's very apparent for that pilot early on because they're hydraulically boosted and the response based upon that being hydraulically boosted for me, in my opinion, is much crisper, if you will in the Astar versus the AC130. And so, if it were my choice to fly a helicopter in the wind I would choose the Astar.
Q. Okay. And that's based on hydraulics?
A. Based on the feel and the feedback I get from the pedals when I'm flying that aircraft. That's just my personal opinion or something that we talk about.
Q. You mentioned like a self-brief. Is that when there is not a formal briefing? In other words --
A. Correct. So, like in the wintertime operation when there's shorter days we don't have a 12:45 afternoon briefing. So, the pilot is responsible to check the weather on that sheet then

initial it saying that they did check that.

MR. FIGLIA: That's all I have for that.

MS. KELIHER: I'll let you go Katherine.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. All right. You mentioned the settling to power that there's an oral and a practical.

A. Um-hum.

Q. Is it practical since the accident or is that something that was done prior to?

A. It was done since the accident, correct. The practical portion only.

Q. The practical?

A. Yes, yes. Sorry, I just want to make sure I'm on the same page as you are.

Q. Have you ever felt pressured to fly when you didn't feel comfortable flying?

A. No.

Q. Any pilots ever complain about that?

A. Not to me. If they did otherwise I wouldn't know about it.

Q. Ever heard of pilots making the decision not to fly and that decision being challenged by even another lead pilot or Simon?

A. No, ma'am.

Q. So, if a pilot didn't want to fly would they come to you or do they go to Simon?

A. On the day-to-day operation they would typically follow the

chain of command and come to me.
Q. Okay. And then do you go to Simon with that or then do you say you should talk to Simon?
A. Depends on the scenario. Typically, no, because I wouldn't force any pilot to fly. I never -- I always tell the guys, I never force you to fly. So, I might talk to Simon about that decision what we had spoken about if he feels like there needs to be, you know, further training or just sit down and talk with the pilot and say, what was your, you know, what was your mindset, your thought process here but it would never be a punitive action.
Q. Do pilots ever use like weather apps on their phone or anything to get weather? I know I've heard mentioned the computers that are here --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- let's say they are out, you know, they are at Quartermaster and they want an updated weather. Is that something -- can you get weather apps on the phone or --?
A. They might. It would be pure speculation as far as me. I've never done it before. You have really bad service down there to begin with. So, I've never seen that no.
Q. Okay. When there's a 12:45 briefing --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- is that weather sheet in the room updated?
A. So that sheet stays the same. The one they initial on.
Q. Okay.

A. So, if I'm the lead pilot doing that briefing I will pull an updated current TAF and ME TAR for all the locations and give them that as well.
Q. So, the folks that come in at 12:45 do they sign the 5:45 briefing?
A. They sign the same one, but they get an updated weather briefing quarterly. Yes.
Q. All right. Do you have any recent examples, is there any risks that's been identified that the company has mitigating through via change in flight operations?
A. Yeah, we've limited the number of helicopters going to Quartermaster. We've recently required the waterfall site to allow more breathing room, if you will at Quartermaster. They've sent myself and several other pilots here to more of like a combat trauma training with a separate company to help either ourselves or passengers if this ever does happen again where we have loss of life anything like that, yeah.
Q. Okay. The weather advisory given to passengers, is there also something that they have to sign that they received that weather advisory?
A. The passengers that check in?
Q. Um-hum.
A. Not to my knowledge. There might. I couldn't tell you yes or no.
Q. Okay.

A. It would be speculation on my part.
Q. Do you know if on the day of the accident if the weather advisory was given?
A. I could not tell you.
Q. You didn't issue one?
A. Not -- I can't remember.
Q. Okay.
A. It's been a while. I'm sorry. I can't remember.
Q. If flights are cancelled --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- the weather let's say the day before; is there any pressure to fly on the next day so that you can get passenger --
A. A lot of times on our notes it will say reschedule packs or something like that. But operationally for me I'll cancel ten days in a row if I have to. Then I'll tell the pilots that too. If it's not safe then turn around. So, operationally, if as far as canceling flights and trying to, you know, make up for it the next day doesn't happen.
Q. I apologize if these questions are redundant because things start to blur together from earlier in the day.
A. Sure. No worries.
Q. But any concerns about Scott being a part time pilot?
A. On my opinion?
Q. Um-hum.
A. No.

Q. That you heard of?
A. No.
Q. So, how do you ensure that a part time pilot is ready to fly? Perhaps they haven't flown in a month --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- and now they are coming back; is there any concern that, you know, it's been a while since they have flow?
A. Well, I mean if they still pass their 1135 check ride they are still current as far as that is concerned. If someone takes an extended period of time off, we would give them a recurrent training flight --
Q. Um-hum.
A. -- or a refresher flight if you will. We've had pilots get sick, take extended period of leave. I broke my ankle falling off a helicopter. I came back and did a quick flight if I remember correctly, just to make sure I was still comfortable in the aircraft.

Part time pilots fly as much as the EMS pilots in my opinion. So, I don't think there's any more or less risk in that point.
Q. Did you ever hear anybody state that Scott had a history of noncompliance either with things in the GOM or checklist or anything like that?
A. I've never heard anything like that. And, like I said, I never flew with him personally. So, I never witnessed anything like that first hand or heard anything like that second hand.

Q. Would you hear something like that? If there was some concern about a pilot would that be circled back to the lead pilots or is that --
A. Maybe.
Q. -- with the chief pilot?
A. Yeah, if I had any -- if anybody brought a concern to me with that aspect, I would consult the chief pilot before addressing that with the particular pilot.
Q. But if somebody went directly to the chief pilot would that information typically trickle down to the lead pilots?
A. It probably would if it was a -- if the chief pilot found it was a just finding, if you will, or had cause behind it --
Q. Um-hum.
A. -- I'm sure it would.
Q. Thanks.
A. Um-hum.
Q. Have you ever heard anyone getting threatened with something going on by Pierre?
A. No.
Q. I'm looking at the briefing sheet that you did --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- and I'm sure you can't remember exactly how you pulled the weather.
A. I can't.
Q. But at least you know of where in that time area you would

have pulled that weather from.
A. Um-hum.
Q. Specifically, I was looking at the area forecast and the aviation section that was in there wasn't what was under the synopsis. So, I'm just wondering where you got that?
A. I can't remember when that change happened because the area forecast stopped being offered on aviation -- 1800WXBrief, that website. So, I can't remember when we transitioned over from using that to using FAA.gov that forecast discussion McCarran portion of that forecast discussion. I can't remember.
Q. Do you know I don't -- I saw that it was from a lead pilot, but I didn't know which one it was, who scheduled Scott for that.
A. That would not have been me. I don't know who it was. It's typically the job of the closing lead pilot to schedule the next day's schedule. So, I would assume it was whoever closed the night prior put him on that particular flight.
Q. I think it was just days before because he was the fill in.
A. I'm not sure what you're saying there.
Q. Because he's a part time pilot --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- it would normally be where he would call in because you knew --
A. Sure, sure, but still if a part time pilot says I want to work on Monday and this Wednesday and he wants to work on the next Monday, the pilot on Sunday still schedules him for Monday.

Q. But who makes that decision? Because I saw it was days and days before and they said somebody was sick or wanted to just swap or something like that. So how --
A. Okay. To put it on the master schedule; is that what you're asking?
Q. No. How that works. Obviously, it wasn't you that did the screen shot of your text going back and forth with him I guess is what I'm asking?
A. No. No.
Q. And then in the briefing sheet it's -- one of the spots that are checked is wind 18 gusting to 28.
A. Um-hum.
Q. And wind 14 gusting to 22.
A. Um-hum.
Q. On the TAF.
A. On the TAF. Yeah, because I probably was reminding myself to say from this time to this time, guys, say from noon to 3:00 it's forecasted to be that and to emphasize that in the morning briefing.
Q. So, would 18 gusting to 28 wouldn't a passenger advisory wasn't --
A. I couldn't tell you if it happened or did not happen.
Q. It didn't happen but --
A. Okay.
Q. -- I'm wondering if that would trigger you now of just

thinking of if you saw 18 gusting to 28 would that normally trigger you?
A. If I didn't do a weather advising then, no, typically, no.
Q. Okay. And this is just my last question before I open it up to them behind you.
A. Sure.
Q. If you had your (indiscernible) of the day and you can make any changes with the FAA or with Papillon or anything of how you think this could have been prevented and making it safer, what would you do if you could change regulations, change the aircraft, change anything?
A. That's a loaded question.
Q. What do you see that --
A. I know that there's been speculation of possible settling power in this instance. I would like to see the FAA start implementing and backing the different recovery from settling power personally. There's kind of couple different names for it but do the Bouchard maneuver, if you will. I've never done it here at Papillon. I've done it at flight school. And that can be another effective way of getting out of settling power. So, I'd like to see personally some backing, get it in the PTS as an alternate way of recovery for that unplanned maneuver.
Q. Do you teach that ever?
A. The Bouchard maneuver?
Q. Yes.

A. I've never taught the Bouchard maneuver. I've had it demonstrated to me at flight school and I did it myself at flight school with my chief pilot there.
Q. Anything with Papillon that you think could back up pilots, or make it feel more safe or make them --
A. Not off the top of my head, no. I've got nothing for you.
Q. Anything about Grand Canyon operations that if you had the world --
A. No, ma'am.
Q. -- according to you?
A. No, ma'am. I think we do not only us, but the, you know, the Mavericks, and the Sundances and all the other people who do thousands of flights there a year and, obviously, something isn't working. Obviously, something didn't work this day I get that and that's why we are here. But as a whole I don't think doing any knee jerk reactions is going to fix anything.
Q. Well, aside from knee jerk reactions --
A. Sure.
Q. -- what about non-knee jerk reactions?
A. I have nothing else. No. No, ma'am.
MS. WILSON: All right, Burl.
BY MR. BOYD:
Q. On your daily briefing those notes at the bottom there --
A. Yes, sir. They used to be on the bottom. Now, they are on the reverse side. Yeah.

Q. Where do those come from?
A. Those come from any number of things. They could come from you. They could come from Tyler. They could come from Simon. Or it could come from any of the lead pilots or anything that a line pilot brings to my attention that we need to change and/or do better.
Q. How long do they stay on there?
A. It varies. But they are on there for I'd say at least two weeks at a time.
Q. And why is that?
A. To make sure that everyone who cycles through, i.e., a part time pilot or someone who is taking time off has a chance to read those and ask questions if they have any.
Q. Any of those pass down notes to the pilots think they would come from irregularity reports?
A. Yes.
MR. BOYD: Thank you.
MS. WILSON: John?
BY MR. WAUGH:
Q. How many -- other than Quartermaster how many sites have you landed at in the Canyon?
A. I've landed at the waterfall site, Quartermaster, and the Ramada.
Q. Okay. Have you experienced any kind of wind shear?
A. Yes.

Q. And is there any of the sites that because of wind, any condition where it's more prone or you might expect it, the possibility of a wind shear?
A. Well, I was expecting in any one of those three, any of those three points. Yes, sir.
Q. Is there anything within Quartermaster that, anything that is ever as far as the wind being in a certain configuration that where it's more worse than or better?
A. Well, obviously, a calm wind day is going to be easier to get in and out versus a 30-knot wind day.
Q. Okay.
A. It would just mean for me in my head I have to watch the wind and look for any wind sheer based off of aircraft performance, pilots going ahead of me reporting certain things and/or wind socks at Quartermaster.
Q. Okay. And have you specifically experienced any kind of wind sheer at work when you are landing Quartermaster?
A. Me personally, yes, I have.
Q. What kind of -- what was the circumstances?
A. It was pretty dusty and I was trying to do a Blooper (ph.) landing. I got a wind shear from the right. So, I went around and by the time I got back around it had calmed down, calmer I should say, and I landed the helicopter.
Q. Okay. And you have flown both platforms as far as --
A. Sure, the (indiscernible) --

Q. -- AS-350 or EC-130.
A. Sure, right, correct, sir.
Q. Have you noticed any difference in any of those aircraft when it comes to that?
A. As far as feeling it? I feel like the Astar is a little bit more nimble as far as that's concerned. Like we mentioned before the boosted pedals I feel more comfortable in the Astar flying it than a EC. But as far as performance and getting in and out I have never had a problem with either aircraft.
Q. Have you ever noticed any difference in the -- of the aircraft response as far as when it comes to loss of tail rotor or Fenstron effectiveness or --
A. No, sir.
Q. -- or weather vanning with the wind conditions at Quartermaster?
A. No, sir.
Q. Okay. And then you said that as far as you mentioned the Bouchard maneuver. So, what -- in your mind what does that entail?
A. So, it entails actually going against everything a traditional helicopter pilot has been taught since day one following the PTS and FAA standards based upon that. instead of the down and forward, if you will, getting out of it you have to do full power on the lateral cycle can have proper pedal and can go out of it the vortices laterally versus down can be very

effective in my opinion in a low altitude situation.
Q. Okay. And with this situation you have already been -- you have to play king for a day and do the grandiose change, what about just without really putting anything specific, have you got anything in your mind of what might have possibly happened in this --
A. It would be pure speculation. I wasn't there. I didn't see it happen.
Q. Even with that, your gut feeling, everything else, you have flown in and out of there --
A. Um-hum.
Q. -- is there anything that you can think of that might have --
A. Possible settling power is in there, yeah. Besides that, that's all I have, sir.
Q. Okay. That's it, thanks.
A. Whose next? Oh, here we go.
BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
Q. You said since the accident you limited the number of aircraft on to the Quartermaster.
A. Correct, sir. They scaled it back.
Q. Whose decision was that?
A. Mr. Becker's.
Q. And why do you think that was made, that decision was made?
A. I couldn't speak to his decision making, sir.
Q. That's all I have.

A. Okay.

MS. WILSON: All right. Thank you.

MR. OEST: We all done?

MS. WILSON: Yep.

MR. OEST: All done.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
February 19th, 2018
Interview of David Oest

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2108

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]
Letha J. Wheeler
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	

Interview of: ALEXANDRE FREIRE

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

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Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
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BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

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(Representative for Alexandre Freire)

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:24 p.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Okay. Thank you for being here today. These interviews are just a part of our routine investigation. We're obviously investigating the accident that occurred on February 10 earlier this year.

I am Katherine Wilson. I am a human performance investigator with the NTSB. We'll go around the room and introduce everybody else.

MS. KELIHER: Hi, I'm Zoe with the NTSB as well. I'm doing operations.

MR. FREIRE: Okay.

MR. FIGLIA: I'm Manny Figlia, director of safety for Airbus helicopters.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety for Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. FREIRE: Okay.

MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one person represent you during this interview. It can be anybody. It can be a colleague, a friend or anybody of your choosing. Is there someone that you would like to have?

MR. FREIRE: Yeah, I have Tobin here.

MS. WILSON: Okay. And what we'd like to do is we'd like to record the interview, and that way we can do a transcription of

the interview that will then be included in our public docket as a part of this investigation. Is that okay?

MR. FREIRE: Yeah, absolutely.

MS. WILSON: Okay, great. And just so that you know, we're here strictly from the safety side. We're not looking at blame or enforcement action. We simply just want to understand what happened and hopefully prevent this from happening again.

If we ask you a question you don't understand, please ask us to clarify. If you don't know an answer, saying, I don't know is okay too. We don't want to force you into any specific answer.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

MR. FREIRE: No.

MS. WILSON: Okay, great. For the record, can you state your full name, please?

MR. FREIRE: Full name is Alexandre. And last name is Pedrosa Freire, F-R-E-I-R-E.

MS. WILSON: F-R-E-I-R-E?

MR. FREIRE: Right.

MS. WILSON: Great. Okay. And I'm going to turn it over to Zoe, who's going to start questioning.

MS. KELIHER: All right. We have two pilots that have very similar names.

MR. FREIRE: Oh really?

MS. KELIHER: Freredore (ph.)?

MR. FREIRE: That's weird. That's wrong here.

MS. KELIHER: That's a --

MR. FREIRE: It's F-R-E-I-R-E. Yeah.

MS. KELIHER: Yeah. F-R-E-I -- all right, there we go. Thanks for speaking with us.

MR. FREIRE: No problem.

INTERVIEW OF ALEXANDRE FREIRE

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. So I'm just going to ask you some basic questions. How long have you worked at Papillon?

A. I got hired in January class -- beginning of January, so almost six months now.

Q. And how many hours total time do you have?

A. Does that have to be precise? Around 1500.

Q. And what about on the EC-130?

A. About 250. These numbers might --

Q. Very busy.

A. -- vary a little bit, so --

Q. Yeah, of course. So you were in the John Davis (ph.) class and the --

A. That's correct, yeah.

Q. Got it. So I see that on here, and why we wanted to speak with you, is you were flying on the day of the accident?

A. I had one flight on that day, yes.

Q. Because you were scheduled for the 7:45 time?

A. I have to go look back. I'm not -- I think it was in the

afternoon, but I think my flights were unsold, the last flights. So I'm pretty sure. I have to look at it again. I'm not 100% sure.

Q. How does the schedule normally go, like, that far?

A. Either you have the morning shift, which is early. At that time of the year, I think it was 5:30 showtime, yeah. Or you get the afternoon, 12:30. Yeah.

Q. So I see it broken down where it says 5:30, 7:45, 8:15 --

A. Yeah, there's --

Q. -- 9:30 --

A. -- a few schedules in between, but generally speaking, you get either the morning or the afternoon, yeah. There's only couple pilots that will come at -- you know, in between. So 7:45 or the 9 o'clock, or the over-dam pilot, which is 8:45.

Q. All right, can you remember of what it was like flying on the day of the accident?

A. Yeah. It was, it was a windy day, like normal. A normal windy day here. That's what I remember. Yeah. As far as flying-wise.

Q. So just take me through the -- what it's like of arriving here, what you do. Kind of walk me through all the steps of --

A. So if you get here in the morning, the very, the very first shift of the day, you go preflight your helicopter. And then after that, we come here for a, for a briefing, morning briefing. And then at that time of the year, we do the runup as well on the

helicopters in the morning. And then if you're sold, you go in the terminal and get your passengers, and ready to go. If everything's good, of course.

Q. So if you arrived at 7:45, how would that work?

A. Was that the time I arrived?

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, I don't, I don't remember exactly the schedule that I had. I have to go look at it. Probably had a 7:45. Probably had a 9 o'clock flight or 8:45 flight, something like that. That's kind of weird time, to be honest. I don't remember exactly why I came here at 7:45. Yeah.

Q. But how would that work of -- if you (indiscernible) --

A. Okay, yeah. If you have a 7:45, they always -- you're always required to be at least one hour before. So that's how the schedule works, so you have enough time to preflight a helicopter or brief yourself as far as the weather. Like I say, in the morning, they do have all the pilots meeting for the briefing. But if you are in these shifts that they already had the briefing, you go and do your briefing yourself, sign the sheet. And that means -- yeah, you're getting the weather for that day.

Q. And how do you do that?

A. Well you'll use the briefing that we have. Everything they say on the briefing, it's written on the paper. So not a big difference. It's watching the lead pilot telling you the briefing and set up your reading, which is an official briefing to --

weather briefing, so -- and that's basically it.
Q. So describe walking in there. What do you do? If I'm going to, if I'm going to shoot a documentary of you coming in and what you normally do, what would the script be?
A. Okay, so from parking car, all right, you walk in the building. So you go inside here. That's the very first place. You log in, of course. You clock in and get your briefing, read the briefing, see how the winds are going. Then you go, after that, you go look in the weather. And then you look in the aircraft. If your aircraft is good for the day, if it has been preflighted from a different pilot. If not -- but you're still responsible for preflighting again. That's basically it. So making sure your aircraft is good to go, and then the weather, already got it. So it's your decision anyway to fly or not. That's pretty much it.
Q. When you go get your passengers, do you know who you're getting? How does the transition of the manifest and collecting passengers -- how does that work?
A. Yeah, you go inside the terminal, and you got the computer with the names on the, on the computer, on the program. And when it comes out, when it's finalized, it's -- they've been weighed and everything, you got fuel in the helicopter, the weight and balance is good, maybe we'll print your manifest. And then -- and you call your passengers. You make sure that you have the right passengers. And is that, is that your question? Yeah.

Q. And then -- so when you get your passengers, what do you do with them?
A. You greet them. You asked if they watched the safety briefing. Ninety-nine percent of the time, they watched the safety briefing. I would say -- I don't think I've ever had a passenger that came to me without watching the safety briefing. But we still, you know, like to touch a few things here and there with the passengers as far as safety, especially the ramp here and seatbelts. Anything that you think it's important to add it up to the safety briefing, you can do as a pilot as well.
Q. Do you remember anything specific about that flight?
A. No. About my flight? No, no.
Q. Do you remember if it was an air or did you land?
A. I don't remember. Yeah. I should have looked at it since I knew I was coming here. I didn't even know what was my shift on that day, but yeah. I wasn't here on that time of the accident. I was actually shopping with my wife, and then I got an email from the lead just saying we've had an incident, so -- but I wasn't here. So that's why I was little surprised that you guys wanted to talk to me.
Q. I guess we just wanted to see, in the morning when you come, of what that was like. Because it looks like Scott got here shortly after you.
A. Yes, it was actually -- yeah. I met him on that day, actually. And we didn't talk to each other much on that day. But

I believe he had the same -- maybe similar schedule than I did. I'm not sure, so --

Q. Do you remember anything that was exchanged, or anything about him?

A. No.

Q. Can you describe to me of -- with your indoctrination training and coming in here, of how was it described to you of landing at Quartermaster? How did you, kind of, learn about everything that goes into that?

A. As far as, I mean, training?

Q. Um-hum.

A. We do a lot of training here off-airport, in different mountains. Kind of similar places that we land in Quartermaster. On Quartermaster, I think we do a couple trainings there as well, and there's nothing too special about that spot. It's a, it's a normal -- for a, for a helicopter pilot, it's a normal landing spot. And then we go over the ifs. Whether the winds are coming this way, that way. So what's the best approach you could do and stuff like that. But nothing too special.

Q. Did you ever feel uncomfortable flying into Quartermaster?

A. I mean, if it's a windy day and stuff like that, and then if you don't feel safe, that's -- they always mention here at Papillon. If we don't feel -- you shouldn't land, just don't land. You know, just do the air tour instead of the landing tour. So I've never had a day that I felt that way, so --

Q. So I saw that you flew January 20, which was the day that a whole bunch of things happened, and there was lots of irregularity reports because people got stuck over there and there was lots of wind.
A. I flew on that day, yeah.
Q. Do you remember anything about that? It was -- it's kind of eventful. A lot of people didn't come back.
A. Yeah, I remember -- I think I flew the morning that day. I'm not sure. Again, you -- to be honest, it's a long time ago. But I wasn't here to know what was going on, so I'm assuming I was in the morning, maybe, shift. Yeah, but I heard that people got stuck there because of the weather, as far as weather. So I'm really not aware of that day, to be honest with you, and --
Q. When you got into Quartermaster, have you ever felt like you ran out of pedal?
A. No, no.
Q. Have you ever felt like you wanted a pad that was taken?
A. If I wanted to land in one specific pad that was taken?
Q. Yeah, or a side, if you wanted to --
A. Right, right.
Q. -- make an upriver versus downriver approach.
A. No.
Q. How do you decide what pad to land on?
A. So the way we do, if the winds are coming -- favoring, for example, upwind, depends who is -- I mean, that's what we try to

do, or we are told to do. The first, the first helicopter started to land further so it would be easier approach for whoever's coming behind you. So pretty much it. So you -- let's say you're the last one, there's going to be probably two or three pads left for you to choose from. That's pretty much it. It's not like -- nothing too hard.

Q. Yeah. What about if your blades are still turning? Do you have -- how do you communicate that, of where somebody's going to land? How does that all work?

A. Yeah, if the blades still turning, we use the frequency that the company uses to talk to the other pilots. That's pretty common. We just say, I'm still spinning, or keep it spinning. Let's say I'm coming to land and there's people landing right now. I just say, hey, are you still down there? Just keep it spinning; I'll be coming behind you. Stuff like that. No major problem, yeah. Yeah. I mean, if anything, if you see they already shut down their engine, you can do a couple go-arounds. But I haven't had to do that yet.

Q. Do you feel that the communication is pretty open with the more senior pilots here?

A. Yeah. Yeah.

Q. Have you ever reported different conditions of going into Quartermaster to the person behind you?

A. No, not me. We had one flight one day that we did -- we turned into an air tour. The other pilot in front of me, a little

more senior, just said hey, I was coming in; the winds were a little bumpy. We just turned it into an air. It was good. Might just -- did the same, and no problems, nothing asked from the company. It's all -- from the day one, they always told us that, if you, if you're flying or if you even don't want to fly, it's your decision. They don't ask you pretty much. They're pretty open as far as that, so --

Q. Did you file an irregularity report?

A. I don't think so. No.

Q. Have you, have you ever -- do you know what those are?

A. Yeah, yeah. I know what these are.

Q. Have you filed one at all?

A. I filed one, but it wasn't anything specific as far as flying. It was more kind of stuff from the Quartermaster, the ground of the Quartermaster, so --

Q. Like what?

A. We did the tents, so I felt a couple nails on the ground. So I just reported that, but --

Q. And that was in an irregularity report that you did that?

A. I think it was an irregularity report. No, I think it was a hazards report. I'm sorry. I think it was a hazards report. Yeah.

Q. What's the difference between those?

A. Anything that can be a hazard. So I was just concerned about passenger maybe step on a nail or stuff like that, but yeah.

Q. If you make a weather decision, do you have to do anything? Like when you went back, do you have to report to the lead pilot or anything like that?
A. No, no. I was very surprised there, because as a student -- I think I was a student. I don't know the dates. If you ask me the day on that flight, I don't know, and probably it's going to be very hard to find it as well because it was no big deal. Because like I said, they didn't ask me anything. No questions asked. What's safer is safer. So I told the passengers, hey, we're going to try to land; if it's, if it's unsafe, we just do an air tour. And then they were very nice about it too, so --
Q. Do you know when the passengers fill out a weather advisory, or they're warned that it might turn into a different tour?
A. If I know if they're aware?
Q. Yeah.
A. Yeah, our CSRs, they usually tell the passenger. If it's a windy day, they let them know up front what it can be, make sure they are okay with that as well, so --
Q. Have you -- do you know when they've gotten that, though? Of when they've signed it and when they haven't?
A. No.
Q. Okay. They don't make you aware of it.
A. No.
Q. When you were training of going in here, how many approaches --

A. Actually I think they -- sometimes they do. I'm going to rephrase that. A lot, a lot -- sometimes they do say they signed the waiver. Yeah, yeah. Sometimes they do.
Q. When you first started flying into Quartermaster, about how many approaches did you do before you started taking passengers?
A. As far as me flying, I think about two or three. I would say two or three, yeah. Yeah.
Q. And with the approaches, you -- how would that go? Would you do the actual full tour, or would you just do an approach and then take off, and then do another approach?
A. I do approach and then leave, and then do another approach. Yeah. But not like circling. Yes. You just cannot go there. Yeah. It's just more like on the route training you get to do that, and then --
Q. When you bring passengers to the helicopter, do you usually have to help them with their seatbelts and things like that?
A. Yeah. I sit on seatbelts, I explain how to put them on. And I always ask them. I don't, I don't do it. I just say, how do you guys take your seatbelts off? And then most of the time they know. You know, spin the wheel. Every now and then you got to push the button, you know, and then it's not tough. That's me personally. I always like to go over the seatbelts. Yeah, so that's the first -- one of the main concerns, because they need to know how to take the seatbelts off, so -- and I think most of the pilots here, if you go on the ramp right now, that's --

everybody's very specific about the seatbelts. Because you know they are watching the safety briefing, but sometimes they're not 100% paying attention on that. So yeah. I show them, and I, and I ask questions about seatbelts.

MS. KELIHER: All right, I'm going to have Manny ask the flight training questions part of it.

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. Which aircraft are you assigned to or check out here?

A. The EC-130, and then originally the B2, the A-Star.

Q. B2. Okay. And you hired on six months ago?

A. Yeah, I hired on a January 8 class.

Q. Okay. And so you had training, and then the check ride soon after?

A. Yeah, it was in between that week right there, from 18, 22 -- probably the 22nd, 23rd might be close.

Q. Okay. And that's the only training that you've had thus far, because you've only been here six months and that was the initial --

A. Right. That was the initial -- yeah.

Q. What was the training like? Was it online or was it ground school? Was it a combination of both?

A. Yeah, we do the, we do the online training, which I forgot the name of it right now. It's very common.

Q. Aft Star (ph.) or something?

A. Aft Star. Exactly. Aft Star. We do the Aft Star. And then

we do a lot of ground training here at the company. I think the first week is just ground training. Then the second week is a combined fly and ground, yeah.

Q. You refer to that as indoctrination training?

A. Say that again?

Q. Is that -- that's basically referred to as indoctrination?

A. Right, right.

Q. And how long did that last?

A. About two and a half weeks. Yeah.

Q. All right. And what do, what do you think of the training?

A. As far as --

Q. Quality.

A. -- flying or ground? It was --

Q. All of it.

A. -- it was a good training, yeah. I felt good. I felt really good as far as the training.

Q. Okay, and where did you get your prior experience from?

A. I started in LA, a flight school in Los Angeles. Star Helicopters. That's where I did my OO (ph.) training and then became a flight instructor there.

Q. And what kind of aircraft were you on?

A. R22 and R44. Robinsons. Yeah.

Q. Specifically to the training here, how much performance training based on the DH-130 (ph.) and the, and the -- you said B2?

A. Yeah, the B2 was very recently, so maybe more specific about the EC-130, right?
Q. Yeah. Are they specific on performance as far as aircraft weight and balance, height had a ground effect on those type parameters within the aircraft?
A. I would say it's a good training. They're pretty thorough on the training.
Q. Okay. Specifically on -- and you talked a little bit about it. You did some training at Quartermaster on confined area operations. Did you do that type training elsewhere?
A. Yeah, so we -- during the training, we do a lot of off-airport operations. And it's about 10, 15 miles south of here. We got a lot of -- I wouldn't say similar, but very confined spots and -- yeah. Pinnacles, all that stuff.
Q. Okay. And as far as emergency procedures, did you -- were you trained on loss of tail-rotor effectiveness and settling with power?
A. I'm not really sure. Not really sure if we did the settling with power training. I don't want to say no, but I'm not 100% positive on that one.
Q. Okay. And did you cover that in ground school?
A. Yeah, a lot. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Explain what the company does for risk assessment. How do they assess risk, and how do they mitigate risk within -- in your opinion, your point of view.

A. I believe for them, risk -- how do they -- that's a, kind of, pretty open question. Could you be a little more specific in --
Q. Sure. There's risk associated with flying. And here, I would say, a predominant risk factor is winds, wind conditions and aircraft performance. How does the company mitigate that? How do they mitigate the risk that you may face in your everyday job?
A. Well the company -- well from the beginning they -- from the day one on the training, they -- very open as far as your own limits, your personal limits as far as the pilot.

So first of all, they are not hiring brand new pilots. So the first requirement is a little experienced pilot. I know it's not super experienced, but minimum 1000 hours they consider here. So you're pretty much -- every pilot that's here, they've been flying for a while at least, so -- and they're very open as far as the flights. So let's say you have a very windy day. It's your decision. If it's super windy, they will, they will start canceling, so -- but you can take that decision and just say, no, that's my limit; I'm not flying this day.

And it's pretty much it, yeah. So far as far mitigating the risk, it's more like you as a pilot to take the decision for each flight, you know. And if you feel like you should do it, and it's your decision. The good thing is they don't ask any questions. You just say, I don't want to fly this flight because of this and that. It's, like, okay.
Q. Specifically, going into Quartermaster landing zone. So how

many available spots are there in that, in that area where you can physically land?
A. Counting really quick from the top of my head, about 11. Eleven, twelve spots. Eleven spots with a decent distance from each helicopter. And 11, 12, that's pretty much it.
Q. The approaches into the Quartermaster, are they sometimes more challenging than others based on how many aircraft are already in there?
A. It can be. It can be, depending on where the other pilots land and -- or the winds are, you know, shifting or not. So it can be. It definitely can be, but -- yeah.
Q. And you generally don't overfly other aircraft when you're going into Quartermaster?
A. I mean, right on top? No. But there's ways you can still make -- let's say that your one aircraft is here; you have to land it here. There are ways you can still do it without physically flying around on top of the other one. But it definitely makes it a little challenging. If you're flying -- especially upwind and you have a spot here, so now you don't want to fly the aircraft; you don't want to fly the tents where the passengers are. So that's -- I say, it's -- everybody tries to land upwind so whoever's coming behind have these spots behind you available, so --
Q. And if there's a quartering wind, how do you, how do you negotiate that?

A. Yeah. So I mean, we try to leave -- if you have any wind, if you cannot make a headwind, at least get a slightly right crosswind. It's better. But yeah. Try to, try to land into the wind most of the time.
Q. So you're saying a right crosswind is better.
A. Yeah, I mean, quarter.
Q. And were you taught that here, or was that from your previous --
A. I was taught here. Yeah.
MR. FIGLIA: All right. That's all I have for that.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. Why is the right quartering tailwind better, as you understand it?
A. The right crosswind. I mean, that's the way I was taught here from training. Yeah.
Q. I mean, are we comparing this to, like, a left quartering tailwind? What would happen with the left quartering tailwind? Does the helicopter respond differently or --
A. No. I don't know how to answer that question, yeah. Aerodynamics, breezes, maybe, on the EC-130. Yeah.
Q. Okay.
MR. TOBIN: Just as a quick clarification, you asked about a quartering tailwind --
MR. FREIRE: No, no. Not tailwind. Quartering headwind.
MS. WILSON: We're talking about -- okay.

MR. FREIRE: Yeah. No, you don't want to land with the tailwind. Yeah. Thank you.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. I don't think -- I didn't mean just in landing. In general. So we're talking about just a crosswind and a headwind, right?

A. Yeah, we try to come with the headwind, of course, always. But if there's no way you can get a headwind, at least you can get a slightly right crosswind. Not completely a right crosswind. A kind of quartering head crosswind, not tailwind. Yeah. Then if you have a tailwind, you shouldn't do that. You should come from the other direction.

Q. Right. Okay. So is a, is a right quartering headwind different than a left quartering headwind?

A. Yeah. I mean, the way I was taught here, yeah. It's -- you should favor more the right crosswind. Yeah.

Q. You mentioned the time when you turned the tour into an air tour because that pilot in front of you had mentioned that it was bumpy. Did you actually attempt to land during that, or you just took his PIREP and decided --

A. I took his -- yeah. Took his PIREP and then just made it into an air one.

Q. When Manny was asking you about whether you had training for LTE and settling with power, you said that it was covered in ground school. But I didn't know whether you were referring to both or just one of those being covered in ground school.

A. For both. Yeah.
Q. Both of them?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Anything from the training that you wish you had more training on?
A. No. I think -- I wish I had -- I mean, the training that I felt that I needed more training was off-airport, and they trained me a lot on that, so yeah. I was the last one in my class to get a check ride because of that. So it was a thing that I wanted to train more and then they just kept training me on that off-airport, so --
Q. You said you saw Scott that morning. That was the first time you had met him, the morning of the accident?
A. Yeah.
Q. Anything seem unusual about him, or did he seem like every other pilot that you've met?
A. I mean, I was still new. It was February 10, right?
Q. Um-hum.
A. So it was probably my second week in line. So if -- everybody was still new to me. A lot of pilots was meeting the -- on the -- you know, as I was going. So a lot of pilots here, even nowadays, you don't see for two, three weeks. So on that first two weeks, everybody was new, so I didn't know about Scott or anything. So I met him on that day. Nothing seemed weird, because there's nothing I could compare with it.

Q. Okay. How would you describe the culture, the safety culture, at Papillon?
A. Safety culture. We had a, we had a couple questions about that. I mean, we're always doing quizzes, monthly quizzes. We had one that was about that. What would you like to know exactly?
Q. Well I mean, do you, do you feel like safety is a priority here?
A. Yeah, definitely. Yeah, yeah, yeah. From the day one, they -- and they always mention, and it's -- and you think it's, they're just saying that because they're just saying that, you know? After all, it's all money, right? But no, they're really safe. About, I think, two weeks ago, we had a windy day, and then the end of the day, it was dying down. And then three pilots were in Vegas. I was one of them. Just say, no, we're not going to fly; it's still windy. They didn't say anything. The lead pilot even congratulated me on -- congratulated us on the next day. Good, smart decision. Yeah. If you don't feel like you're flying, that's it. So as far as safety, for them it's priority. They seem not to care much if they're losing flights as far as safety.
Q. Do you feel that that's the same from the lead pilots versus the chief pilots (indiscernible)?
A. Yeah, I felt the same way. Yeah.
Q. Ever take a flight that you wish you hadn't after you lifted off?

A. No. I mean, you have windy days and -- but not really, like, regret taking the flight. It's still safe to fly. If you take a flight and then you come back, if you're not safe, you just -- hey, I'm not going anymore. You know, that's -- even getting the pilot reports in the air, and they start canceling the next round. So that's how it works. Yeah.

Q. Any issues, particularly wind, getting into Quartermaster? Sharing information on the radio, either -- just talking on the radio? Is it pretty busy, or do you feel like you can get, you know, your radio call in?

A. No, I feel like it's okay. Usually we get training to isolate the passengers, and we get bat towers, what we call it, start our descent. So you're not hearing passengers anymore. You're just -- it's pretty easy to focus on the radio at that point.

Q. Do you ever notice people stepping on each other on the radio?

A. Yeah, but that's not just there. Anywhere. So it depends on the pilot, though. But it's -- overall, it's decent. Yeah.

Q. I heard that a second windsock has been added to Quartermaster since the accident. What do you think about that?

A. It helps a little. Yeah, but -- and when you get there, you already have an idea where the winds are coming from just from descent. So that helps. That windsock helps. The other one helps as well. That one helps a little more because sometimes you

have helicopters down there, and then the windsock becomes unreliable because now it's being moved by the propeller. So that one doesn't -- take that wind from the helicopter. So it helps. Yeah.

Q. Okay. And what has been shared with pilots since the accident? Any information about things to look out for, different considerations when you're flying in and out of Quartermaster?

A. Well yeah, the same kind of training that we went. Just keep an eye on the wind and basically make a good judgement. If you feel not -- the winds are crazy, because the winds change down there very fast. So go around. Don't land, don't land if you feel you shouldn't land. Just go around, try again if it's not safe. Just go.

Q. Have you done that, where you've tried to land and had to go around?

A. I have not. No.

Q. You've seen pilots do that?

A. I have seen, yeah.

Q. And do they usually come back around and land, or do they --

A. I've seen two, three attempts and they land. Sometimes they don't land. I've seen both, yeah.

Q. All right. Thanks, Alex.

A. No problem.

MS. KELIHER: I'll open it up for the rest, but before -- were you just recently told that you were going to come and talk

to us?

MR. FREIRE: Yeah. It was very recent. Yeah.

MS. KELIHER: Did they tell you anything about what to say and what not to?

MR. FREIRE: No, I mean -- yeah, just what we're going to -- I mean, I was asking, what can they possibly ask me? But no. No, general -- I wish they had told me. I would have looked at my schedule that day.

MR. TOBIN: I'm going to object to anything further based on attorney/client privilege. I don't have anything to hide, actually, but --

MS. KELIHER: Does he --

MR. TOBIN: To inquire --

MS. KELIHER: (Indiscernible) --

MR. TOBIN: -- what his attorney had talked to him about prior to speaking is an awkward area.

MS. KELIHER: I didn't realize that --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Didn't he say --

MS. WILSON: (Indiscernible) --

MR. TOBIN: I'm representing him for the purpose of the interview.

MS. WILSON: But I thought he said he hadn't met you before this.

MR. FREIRE: No, no, we talked. We had a telephone call.

MR. TOBIN: We had a telephone call this morning.

MR. FREIRE: Yeah, but not in person.
MS. WILSON: A phone call?
MR. FREIRE: Yeah, yeah. Not in person, yeah. But we talked over the phone.
MS. KELIHER: Okay, I'm going to open it up for the rest of -- everybody else.
MR. FIGLIA: I'm good. Thank you.
MR. BOYD: I'm fine.
MR. WAUGH: No, thanks.
MS. KELIHER: All right. Thanks so much.
MR. FREIRE: We good?
MS. WILSON: Anything else to share? Anything that we didn't ask you that you were hoping we would?
MR. FREIRE: No. I mean, no.
MS. WILSON: All right.
MR. FREIRE: All the pilots, we want to know what happened exactly. And then that's all.
MS. WILSON: Thanks, Alex.
MR. FREIRE: All right. You're very welcome.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Alex.
(Whereupon, at 1:58 p.m. PDT, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of Alexandre Freire

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2018

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]

Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*	
	*	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	*	
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	*	Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	*	
	*	

Interview of: TYLER CARVER

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
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MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
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BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
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(Observing)

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I N T E R V I E W

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here. This interview is just a part of our routine investigation. There's nothing clandestine about it. It's just again part of our fact-finding phase. We want to talk to people who are management positions here and also who might have known the pilot.

We are strictly here from the safety side. We are not here for blame or enforcement actions. We are asking if you would mind if we record the interview because we would like to do a transcript of the interview that would then be a part of our public docket. Is that okay?

MR. CARVER: Standard procedure I would imagine?

MS. WILSON: Yes. We will go around the room and introduce everybody. I am Katherine Wilson. I am a Human Performance Investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher, Operations with NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety for Airbus.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety for Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. RAMIREZ: Richard Ramirez, FAA Las Vegas.

MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one person represent you in an interview. Is there someone that you would like to have represent you?

MR. CARVER: I've got Thomas Tobin here.

MS. WILSON: Great. And before we get started, do you have

any questions for us?

MR. CARVER: No. Not right now.

MS. WILSON: If we ask you a question you don't understand please ask us to clarify. If you don't know the answer saying I don't know is also okay.

MR. CARVER: Very good.

INTERVIEW OF TYLER CARVER

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. For the record, can you state your full name?

A. Tyler Troy Carver.

Q. And what is your position?

A. Current position is training director transitioning into chief pilot.

Q. And how long have you been the training director?

A. October 2014, I believe.

Q. What was your date of hire?

A. 2013, sorry, October 2013. Date of hire was May 21st, 2012.

Q. And what other positions have you held at Papillon?

A. Lead pilot and line pilot.

Q. Total time?

A. Just under 3500, about 3500.

Q. And time in the EC130, guestimate?

A. Guestimate about 1,000 hours I would say.

Q. Do you still fly the line?

A. Occasionally when needed.

Q. But there's no requirement as a part of your position?
A. No requirement as part, no.
Q. Okay. What did you do before coming to Papillon?
A. I was a flight instructor for Universal Helicopters.
Q. And as the director of training or training director, what were your duties and responsibilities?
A. To assist with the managing the training program. To assist with the records. To assist with keeping track of people's -- the pilot's currencies and to assist with any type of general record duties and things like that. And the actual training and check rides.
Q. Did you actually perform any check rides?
A. Uh-huh. Yes.
Q. As a lead pilot or --
A. As a lead pilot I was a check airman and then I was training director of check airmen.
Q. How many lead pilots do you oversee?
A. (No response.)
Q. Let me backup. Do all lead pilots report to you?
A. Not to the training director.
Q. Okay. What about in terms of it being during the check rides; they still report to?
A. Simon -- specifically or the chief pilot specifically they will report to. But the training director also has a lot of input as far as scheduling who's available for check rides and who isn't

because it's dynamic as you can imagine.
Q. Do you have anybody that reports to you?
A. No.
Q. When will the transition to chief pilot be fully complete?
A. Once all the letters get to the FAA and most of the documents have already been drawn already. So, it's just whenever we submit it. So, I think we are getting this first out of the way for this week and then probably next week.
Q. And what made you want to change from training director to chief pilot?
A. It's career ambition. I mean for anybody who enjoys management and enjoys challenges and tasks that's kind of a likely step. So --
Q. Okay. Do you teach any ground school or --
A. Uh-huh. That is correct.
Q. What aspect of ground school do you teach?
A. All types of aspects as far as from the aircraft realm, aircraft -- any type of all the ground -- all our ground classes I will teach and can teach. So, aircraft realm, the tops the SRGON, all of our general subjects.
Q. Okay. How do you determine that training is working?
A. Usually from the outcome, success of the outcome. It's kind of a, you know, outcome based granted, right?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. So, that's some of the aspects. Also, you know, we will get

feedback from the pilots. At the end of every new hire there is an end of course critique that we have them fill out and we use that to assist us to make sure that we can improve because there's always room for improvement.

Q. Is that critique anonymous or do they put their name on that?

A. They put their name on it. I don't think it's anonymous. It does have their name so it's not anonymous, per se, but --

Q. Do they have the option to submit it anonymously?

A. Never really thought about that.

Q. Okay.

A. If it is any consolation. After the training, check rides, everything is complete, do they fill that out. So, there's no -- hopefully no reason for them to not fill that out.

Q. What changes have been made to training based on feedback that you have received from pilots?

A. One of the things is the room sometimes can be quite distracting pilots having to enter that training room. So, typically we've created signs. We've created ways to notify other pilots that a training class is going on when available we have a more secluded room we'll use. But right now, rampo (ph.) is in there. So, that's kind of displaced us for a moment. Those are kind of the things. And standardization with the pilots. As best as we can, we try to be standard. So, we have quarterly standardization meetings so that we can make sure we're trying to be on the same page. So, that's some of the aspects that we've

come up with.
Q. Are you aware of how it was determined which parts of training will be via Avstar and which parts will be included in ground training? Are you involved in that decision --
A. Right.
Q. -- because pilots get online training --
A. Right.
Q. -- and then they've got ground training?
A. Right. We always assign them, all of the online training. That's regardless. They are going to have that even if we double it up on the ground. So, we have a basic induct ground class that we do for new hires. And then they will still do the Avstar as well even if it doubles up. And then for recurrent the Avstars are recurrent.
Q. Okay. How were you notified about the accident?
A. FAA.
Q. Okay. Did you have any involvement in the investigative process; since the accident have you done anything on the company side?
A. Nothing other than I flew Zoe and Steven to the site the day after.
Q. Okay.
A. Right? Day after? Yeah.
Q. Thinking back to when you were a line pilot any issues flying in and out of Quartermaster?

A. Not really. I mean nothing -- nothing that I felt like I needed to come talk to anybody about.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. So, not really.
Q. Okay. We saw that on some PowerPoint presentations that there's information on routes exiting the Quartermaster --
A. Uh-huh.
Q. -- there's preferred routes for getting in and out of Boulder City, but we didn't see anything on specific routes into Quartermaster. Do you know why that is?
A. Into Quartermaster the specific route to our -- well, it's all in the LOA. So, there is actually -- the LOA is what dictates where we go in and out. There is one option in as far as exiting the Green 4 Quartermaster. So, there's not options. Whereas getting out of Quartermaster you have options. You can either go to the backside of the Quartermaster. You can go to GCW or you can potentially rejoin the Green 4. So, that's why you would probably see an option as opposed to really not getting in the Quartermaster.
Q. So, I'm thinking that we heard pilots refer to either the canyon approach or the Notch approach. So, that's not something that you would consider to be different approaches into the Quartermaster?
A. Straight into Quartermaster? Sure. You know or the Notch I guess that would be a -- I thought you were -- sorry. I thought

you were referring to exiting from the Green 4 Quartermaster as far as that goes.
Q. Well, just landing. So, we --
A. Right.
Q. I'm familiar with the Green 4 --
A. Right.
Q. But in terms of how the pilot actually gets to the pad in Quartermaster there's no suggested routes; it's just the pilots determine how they are going to get to the pad?
A. Based on wind.
Q. Okay. So, there are more than two ways?
A. No. There's only -- you can either go down river or up river.
Q. Okay. And there's no -- how are pilots trained on that? How do they know that those are the two ways to get in and out of there?
A. Based on the route training they will receive and they will also receive a Google Earth Training. So, we'll sit them down and fly Google Earth.
Q. Sit them down and fly Google Earth?
A. Yeah, like in front of a computer --
Q. Okay.
A. -- and we do the whole this is how you get in, here is straight in based on the wind conditions here or here's going through the Notch.

Q. Okay. So, straight in is potentially what we've heard as the Canyon approach?
A. I guess.
Q. The Canyon is new to you, huh?
A. Yeah. I've not heard the Canyon approach.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't know if that's a common term because nobody makes that radio call at the bottom of the Canyon saying Canyon approach to Quartermaster.
Q. And what do they say, straight in?
A. River Quartermaster.
Q. River Quartermaster. And then if they are going over the Notch what is it?
A. It is River Notch.
Q. Okay. That's the first I've heard that that's helpful.
A. Well, that's probably because I'm quoting the LOA to you.
Q. Okay. Are you involved in the LOA process at all?
A. No. Other than whenever we get a new LOA --
Q. Uh-huh.
A. -- then it's published to us. The person who is in charge of the LOA is Matt Benner for 5 Star.
Q. Okay.
A. But I do know he's looking to try to give up that role. And I'm not raising my hand no. No. I've got enough on my plate. No.
Q. Okay. So, what's the process if there is a change to

training that you want to make? What's the process for making changes?

A. Well, it would go through updating the training manual and submitting that to our POI and then upon approval then we can go ahead and do that as far as that goes. If it changes from the training manual.

Q. Uh-huh. Any changes to training since the accident?

A. Nothing training as far as the manual is concerned. I don't know what or to say because what if, you know, contributing factors are there. It's always been because as pilots coming here they've got 1,000 hours of experience. They are commercial pilots so they have received some basic training so that's implied. In the past we've always just orally covered the settling with power. But just to, you know, why not if we can help, whatever, during the flight training portion now we will just do the recognition of settling with power and recovery. Not get fully into settling with power and we've implemented that. Still it's an oral eval on the check ride.

Q. Uh-huh. But there is a practical portion?

A. Yeah. Yep.

Q. Okay. In training do you cover irregularity reports?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Okay. What specifically is covered?

A. On how to do -- how to like find the irregularity report. What's the medium. And then how to fill one out.

Q. Okay.
A. So, corrected irregularity reports can be quite, I don't know, encompassing in ranges of styles, you know, what it is. So, it's kind of hard to give an example of every single one.
Q. And do you cover when pilots should fill out an irregularity report?
A. Yes. Yes.
Q. Is deviating for weather one of those?
A. If you deviate for weather you would fill out an air irregularity report.
Q. Do you get copies of those?
A. I do.
Q. Okay. And then what do you do with them once you get one?
A. If -- well, I do see them, but if it's been assigned to me to investigate, to go further, then I will investigate that and then once I've finished my investigation I will put a conclusion and then I will turn it back in.
Q. Otherwise it's just informational?
A. Yes. Otherwise it's just informational.
Q. Is there any meeting that management where you get together and you discussed irregularity report looking for trends?
A. Yes. We do safety seminars. We just had one just the other day. I wasn't able to attend that one. Unfortunately, I had to -- I was called away for a flight but, yeah.
Q. Who typically attends those?

A. All the management in a lot of aspects, you know, of the company, not just the flight persons.
Q. What's a recent topic of discussion that's come up where they did the flight ops?
A. Well, let's see. Our putting in a windsock down at Quartermaster. That was an interesting topic.
Q. Any feedback from pilots on how that's working out?
A. They like it. Yeah, more information is great.
Q. Okay. Did you know Scott?
A. I did. Not very well, professionally.
Q. Okay. Ever fly with him?
A. Yes.
Q. Yeah?
A. Yes.
Q. What was he like as a pilot?
A. He was just like -- I mean that's kind of cliché to say, but he was like just about like any other pilot, you know.
Q. No concerns?
A. No real concerns, no. I would be lying if I ever said I didn't have any concerns because I'm -- it's in my nature to be critical. Right? So, I'm always going to be critical, but if I felt concerned then I would have said something, done something.
Q. We heard earlier today that he, Scott during his last recurrent training had an unsat on his training ride.
A. Okay.

Q. Would that be something that you see? If a pilot was to get an unsat?
A. Yes. I would see that.
Q. Do you recall?
A. I don't recall that.
Q. Okay.
A. And I would see that.
Q. What would typically be the process if you had seen that?
A. The reality is the only unsat that I know of really was after the fact somebody else. And when the unsat and the lead came to me I was like, this is not -- he's not ready. You know because we always do or try to always do at least the two hours. Even if they are ready in one hour we try to always do the two hours. Sometimes that's just can't happen or it doesn't happen for a reason or another. But this person had received their two hours and the person is like not ready for a check ride. Great. No check ride tomorrow. We are going to do another training event. So, we did another training event, and then after that training event was able to figure out what he was sticking on. And then in this case it was just one simple, you know, maneuver aspect of it and he was able to work that out. And then went to his check ride and things went well.
Q. Just to clarify, that was not Scott?
A. Not Scott.
Q. Okay. I hate when things just disappear out of my head. As

a director of training, you are the director of training for all bases?
A. No. Just Boulder City.
Q. Just Boulder City. Okay. And how many lead pilots/check airmen are at Boulder City?
A. There are six lead pilots and there -- right now we only have two of the lead pilots as check airmen.
Q. Okay. So, becoming a lead pilot does not mean that you will be a check airman?
A. Does not mean it.
Q. Can you be a check airman without being a lead pilot?
A. Probably. Not here. I mean no, because you're going to put IP time in the aircraft. So, --
MS. WILSON: I think I'm going to open up the questioning to Zoe.
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. All right. So, I just came from LA Helicopters as a CFI with 1200 hours.
A. Congratulations.
Q. I start January of this year, what have I gone through?
A. You started January or you start?
Q. I started.
A. What have you gone through?
Q. Yeah. It's been six months.
A. You've gone through the ground training. You've gone through

the flight training. You have gone through the route training. And you are on the line and maybe by this time, maybe you're in the ACE350.

Q. So, can you break it down of how much flight time is usually given?

A. I can give you a basic ballpark, but there's not a -- there's only a minimum. There's not a maximum. Most people -- I'm guestimating here just because I don't have to look at the numbers, which is nice and numbers are not. You never said, hey, you spent too many hours this training class. That never even mention that. But I would say most people between five and eight hours for their initial.

Q. What's the minimum?

A. Four.

Q. And I have written down way in my past notes and I don't believe it's so, I'm going to ask you. Do you do full downs?

A. No.

Q. Can they do the turbine transition, do they go anywhere to get (indiscernible)?

A. No.

Q. Okay. All right. And do describe more of the route training; how would you do that when I sit down and what do you tell me?

A. So, first off, they will have performed at least three of the ride alongs while they are in their, you know, before they pass

their (indiscernible) ready for a check ride. So, I've done at least three ride alongs as that minimum. They may do one more or two, whatever if we can fit it in. But minimum three ride alongs and then they will get a flight from here to their -- to see the canyon with a lead or somebody where they get to hear all the radio calls and ask questions and all that stuff. And then come the SFRA training day they will have at minimum two training routes and then a third one for eval.

Q. And before they are taking passengers, about how many landings would you estimate a pilot does at Quartermaster?

A. At Quartermaster? I estimate about four to seven. Just varies on.

Q. But a minimum of four?

A. Yeah.

Q. And then what do you teach about irregularity reports?

A. How to access it when you are supposed to fill it out and how to submit it.

Q. So, that's what I said but what you teach, what do you say? I'm 1200 hour --

A. I teach them how to access it so they'll go through flight and duty. That's part of their indoc, so that's how they know how to clock in, clock out and they know how to get paid. They know how to get all their documents, everything that -- so, they'll use that website to fill that irregularity report out. And then they'll see how to complete it. So, in there it's kind of self-

explanatory. So, as you read some of the embodiment, you know, it asks the questions for you. and then allows the pilot to give the factual content and then allows them to give their opinion aided content of what they could do to hopefully make it better. I mean that's the whole point.

Q. That was going to be my next question; what is the point?

A. To track irregularities. To hopefully find a trend whenever there is a trend and reverse that trend if we can.

Q. So, how does that?

A. Burl Boyd per the safety management system.

Q. So, in looking through the irregularity reports I see that sometimes there will be a group of three people that head back but only on irregularity report is filed.

A. Okay.

Q. Why does that happen?

A. I don't know.

Q. Okay. You're not the person that looks at the irregularity reports ever?

A. I have access to seeing them. But I'm not the one who specifically oversees them to make sure that, you know, it's done.

Q. So, if somebody submits one --

A. Uh-huh.

Q. -- are you pretty much going to for sure see it?

A. Pretty much going to -- pretty much for sure.

Q. Like does it ping your mailbox?

A. It just goes into my mailbox and I try to read every one I can.
Q. So, they are disseminated into --
A. Yes.
Q. Who else gets those?
A. Not exactly sure.
Q. Okay. It doesn't have a too line on it?
A. No. It won't have a to line on it.
Q. Okay. Have you talked to people about what they've written in their irregularity reports?
A. I have
Q. Okay. Where wee ==
A. I can't remember. I mean I talked to them, some of them where they may have voiced opinions in the actual embodiment where they missed certain facts that would have been useful. And it's really just to clarify the facts to make sure that we are understanding it correctly. You know, and if that's the case then we have them add more information.
Q. What's the differentiation that you see of why to keep it factual as opposed to their viewpoint?
A. Oh, no. They are welcome to their -- it's going to be their viewpoint of the facts, right. I mean it's written by them not by us. We don't -- we don't fill it out. It's written by them. But oftentimes there might not be enough information. So, we will follow-up and say, hey, you know, what's this, you know, why are

you doing this or what's going on here. And, of course, they are definitely welcome to their opinion in the what would the pilots do, you know, portion. What could we do to make it better. If, of course, that's got enough applicability to it.

Q. So --

A. But that's just I mean it sounds like that you're saying that that happens a lot. That's definitely the exception. Most pilots do a very good job of filling out an irregularity report.

Q. So, what would be your idea of a complete reason to fill it out completely?

A. If they deviate for weather maybe they didn't include where they were at when they deviated for weather. They just said, I was doing a canyon landing and I deviated for weather. Okay. Great. Where was this at? Oh, yeah, Pierce Ferry is where I turned around. Perfect. Would you include that please?

Q. Is there any repercussions for irregularity reports?

A. Absolutely not. I would hope not ever.

Q. Has there ever been scheduling differences that people get punished for or changes in?

A. No punitive damages. That's actually one of the questions that we ask when we interview a new potential lead. Make sure that they is -- the schedule is not used for punitive because then you use your credibility.

Q. Have you ever heard anyone direct a pilot of what to write in their irregularity report?

A. Can you be more specific? Like, are you asking in management or just a fellow line pilot or just anyone in general?
Q. Somebody in management, including yourself.
A. I've directed somebody to include where they were at and things like that. So, if they are missing information I've directed them to include more information.
Q. So, just the location would be --
A. That was an example.
Q. Okay. I'm reading one of your irregularity reports --
A. Okay.
Q. -- and it just said turn around Joker Mine due to lightning and thunderstorms?
A. Perfect. Location, reason and we didn't complete the tour.
Q. So, that's what you're looking for --
A. Yes. Because that way we can track. That's got what happened, where I was at and what the outcome was.
Q. So, yours compared to other peoples' what we have seen as a trend is when people turn around from weather they include and two other people turned around too, and I saw --
A. I might have been solo that day. I mean I don't even -- without knowing what that is I could have been the only one flying, you know, on that round. I don't even -- what, when was that?
Q. August 2017.
A. Okay. Yeah, so I really, honestly couldn't tell you if I was

in line with five people or one person --
Q. So, what my example is is do you know why other people would have to or feel that they would need to justify it?
A. Oh. I have no clue.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't know. Maybe I don't know why somebody would want to justify it or need to -- feel like they need to justify it.
Q. Do you hear Simon recommend people for decisions they make?
A. (No response.)
Q. Question their decision of turning back?
A. I don't hear Simon question people for the reasons why they turn back because it's not very common. You may -- what do you mean by that because if somebody said, hey, I turned back. I'm going to say, why did you turn back? Well, the weather was bad. Well, what was the weather like? It was this. Oh, okay, great. Guess what, we are not launching the next round. You know, something like that, sure. That would be expected I would hope.
Q. So, if somebody turns back what's the process of who they speak to and what they go through?
A. When they come back they'll (A) notify tower. You know, say, hey, we are turning around because flight following they will want to notify tower. And then that way tower can give CXRs an update. You know, hey, these guys are going to come back so probably going to have to deal with that. And tower generally will want to know, did they make it into the canyon because, you know, it affects the

people differently and so, -- and when they come in leads will be like, okay. Don't forget to fill out an irregularity report. And that's it. No body's -- not that I've ever seen anybody again be punitively damaged for that decision and oftentimes it's a good decision. Thank you.

Q. Have you ever heard anyone being threaten by things going on their PRIA report?

A. No. No. I've never heard anybody ever before me or before Simon, you know, or otherwise threatened with PRIA action.

Q. Do you know if Simon has ever filed a PRIA report on anybody?

A. We have to file a PRIA report, that's required. Any time anybody asks they submit a form 8060-10 or 8060-11 or 12 we have to file that.

Q. Of an action to submit of something happening, something occurring --

A. No, the PRIA is the training record of somebody, right? So, we have to support and send the information for the PRIA.

Q. So, if someone makes a mistake or does a piloting mishap?

A. You know what, I'm not exactly sure what -- I'm not sure what you're asking because the PRIA is the Pilot Records Information Act.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. So, it's required for 135, for the past five years to submit to all previous employers the request for that, right, and so we have to. We are obligated to submit a PRIA if requested.

Q. Yeah, but to add an action to somebody's PRIA file -- that's okay.
A. Are you -- okay. Are you asking like a disciplinary action or something?
Q. Correct.
A. In somebody's records? Okay. That's -- I thought you said a PRIA on somebody. Of course, we have to do PRIAs. It's required. Disciplinary action if it's poor pilot performance that's part of their record. if it's not performance then we wouldn't want to sent that. We generally don't send that. We wouldn't send that. I don't know because I don't send them. So, I'm just guessing as far as that goes.
Q. Have you talked to Simon about that are you guys in discussion about --
A. Yeah. Absolutely.
Q. So, what kind of things --
A. No, not right now, but we will be in discussion when I start having to send the PRIA records. I'll definitely, you know, go through a training program of what, you know, how he wants it done, how it's handled and everything like that. At this point I haven't submitted anybody's PRIA records to anybody to include any type of disciplinary action.
Q. And then I'm looking through the irregularity reports I see that in the same flight, because I can tell from the date and the time --

A. Right.
Q. -- there will be two people that say they return for weather and one person will say that they had to set down because the door popped open. Is there a reason why somebody wouldn't necessarily say that they had to return for weather and they would have used another excuse?
A. No. That sounds odd. I don't -- I don't get that. That sounds really weird because maybe that person did have a door open. I don't know.
Q. I was just curious of why somebody would, if there's any other type of things that we're missing of a repercussion of turning around for weather?
A. There's never -- I've never ever even know anybody getting in trouble whatsoever of turning around due to weather. So, I've never even, literally I've never seen anybody in trouble for turning around for weather.
Q. So, when people say that they don't necessarily want to go out because their passengers have gotten sick, turbulence or something like that, what is usually the stance that's taken?
A. When you say people are you talking about --
Q. Passengers.
A. Passengers?
Q. A line pilot --
A. I've never get to talk with the passengers. So, I don't --
Q. No, so the line pilot goes in and says the passengers were

getting sick because of turbulence.
A. Okay.
Q. What would the response be from the lead pilot or from yourself?
A. I don't know what the lead pilot would say. But myself would be all right is it turbulence induced? Like what kind of -- first off. What kind of turbulence were you experiencing? You know, is it -- what are the weather days? Is it somebody -- is it just -- only this group of passengers? Was it this particular group of passengers that maybe imbibed too much the evening before and could you tell that they were still maybe suffering maybe from the effects of the evening before? But everything -- that's a case by case type of scenario. But if somebody was to experience because of it's bad weather turbulent weather like approaching a moderate turbulence or moderate turbulence by definition of the FARS then by all means don't fly. Come back. We can do it another day.
Q. What if it's the weather if within the GOM?
A. The PSE has always got the -- here's the thing. The GOM as far as the weather minimums, that's a guideline because the PIC at the end of the day per the GOM has the final authority. So, if it's inside -- if it's inside the GOM weather minimums but outside of the PIC's minimum then please don't fly. Better to not fly.
Q. Okay. And then you said you were notified by the FAA --
A. Uh-huh.
Q. -- of the accident. Who from the FAA called you?

A. Paul Alacontis (ph.).
Q. The POI? And so, are you the main contact?
A. No, no. So, I don't know why it went there. I can give you a guess of what I think. That when that happened I'm not going to be the first person they contact, you know, I wouldn't be the first person. And it's not in the protocol for them to contact me. So, those guys were busy making the phone calls that they had to do and deal with the situation they had to deal with. Paul got a phone call but got no information. So, he tried to call the routes that we typically call but couldn't get through. So, he called me hoping to get through and that's how I found out. It was within I know minutes of them finding out, anybody finding out, you know. So, that's how I found out.
Q. How often does Paul come here?
A. More than -- I don't know. It's a couple to several times a month, just depends.
Q. What does his visits usually entail?
A. anything from ram checks to dropping off some signed documents that we need for updates on the manuals to doing check rides to, you know, just always official type FAA business.
Q. How would you describe the rapport between the FAA and Papillon?
A. I would like to think we are on pretty good terms. I have good relationship with them, with everybody that I've ever dealt with.

Q. Have you wanted things to happen that you find resistance or bureaucracy or --
A. I find more bureaucracy than resistance. I don't find resistance. I don't think -- I've never found somebody who didn't want to help. I have a smaller scope of how I deal with them and it's generally just trying to get them to be able to give us a check ride and they are not always able to because they are not always current for a reason or another and it's usually well, and it's May. So, in August I'll be current and then we can do the check ride. Okay. Again, not for the lack -- I think they -- I think they truly want to help.
Q. We were noticing that a lot of the lead pilots seem to have less experience and less seniority than other pilots here.
A. That may be the case, some of them. It's kind of a merit-based pilot responsibility.
Q. How are they chosen?
A. Interview and what -- their history, you know, and performance based, you know, how well did they do on their check rides. How well did they -- you know, what was their previous experience like? How much -- because as a lead pilot, instructor pilot is one of the duties of a lead pilot. And so, we want somebody who's got instruction background.
Q. So, of having lower time pilots that have less hours do you think it creates an awkward situation of them doing the check rides for the more senior pilots?

A. Well, usually the lead pilots that are doing the check rides are guys who have had a little bit more instructing pilots. So, that generally doesn't become the case, probably less than a handful of guys that may have more hours than them. But let me tell you at that point they don't even care.

MS. KELIHER: I know we've transitioned where you can start asking a lot of the flight training stuff.

MS. WILSON: Manny.

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. Training meetings what are you covering (indiscernible) quarterly training meetings?

A. All the instructor pilots. And we cover just the basic training maneuvers so whatever training deficiencies that we may have seen, especially during check rides if we see any type of I don't know -- I don't want to say -- just any reoccurring deficiency, you know, where we can try to be better at it.

Q. Do you discuss new pilots as well, status of where they are at and where --

A. Not in the quarterly, but we do that more on just during the progress of training.

Q. Who from management is t leads?

A. Chief training director and all the instructor pilots.

Q. All right. You did walk through the pilot hire. Generally, how many flights, how many hours -- that's a loaded question, for someone coming through --

A. Their proficient. It's till they are proficient.
Q. Okay. Your training syllabus, do you have a spelled-out training syllabus for each individual aircraft?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. For your four specific --
A. All of our airframes.
Q. Okay. How is your GOM formulated? How do you make changes, is it the original formation of it how can you come to support that document?
A. A little bit more specific.
Q. General operating manual, how do you make changes, how did the original inception come, how is that based?
A. I couldn't really speak free on the original inception because I wasn't here when it was, you know, when it was created. But that is a document generated by Papillon submitted to the for approval. And then upon that approval then it becomes a working document. Any time we decide to make changes it has to go through that same process. You have to submit it, any revisional changes and then that gets reviewed, vetted and then approved.
Q. Have you seen any of those changes since you have been here?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Can you give me an example?
A. Yeah. We've changed our appendix E. We had to change -- we've gone through chief pilot changes. So, we've had to amend that.

Q. For your training do you use scenario-based training?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Give me an example of a new hire what scenarios you may use to make his training?
A. A good example of scenario-based training would be somebody coming to land off airport, what kind of conditions that we'd encounter, ranging from brown out to, you know, sloped trains, things like that. Also, submitting a flight plan for even their check ride. Their check ride will be a scenario-based training using, you know, the mission of -- you know, the put forth through the check riding. So, --
Q. Specific on differences training, when you have a new hire coming in and doing H130, that's generally the first --
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Okay. For differences training, how do you (indiscernible) do you start them back off the ground zero or do you have them in a circle do established point first and then do the differences training?
A. We do first a ground zero, establish a point and then the differences.
Q. So, in other words, from a H130 to a B2 to start?
A. That's a whole -- that's a lot of differences with the transition. So, it wouldn't be differences. Differences would be a B4 to a T2 where the AS350 would be a transition. So, that's a whole ground of --

Q. Have any of your pilots or yourself been to the FAA to check our main course?
A. No.
Q. For designated towers?
A. A check airman course put on by the FAA?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's not a normal hoping to put in DPs.
BY MR. WAUGH.
Q. In other words, do you have any present who was DP at one time or --
A. 141 check out but I'm not a DB.
Q. I'm going to get big on the FAA. Mountain flying, have any of your pilots been to a formal mountain flying post?
A. I'm some have attended the HAI course as far as that goes. As far as one where they went and did (indiscernible) I couldn't tell you. They haven't brought that to my attention.
Q. Is that something you think you company be able to do?
A. I don't know. I wouldn't be able to speak for them.
Q. Your POI, you said he comes here about three to four times a month.
A. Some months maybe no. I don't know. I don't know keep track of it because he can come in here and take care of business while I'm out flying. So, that's something I'd be speculating.
Q. Have you seen or are you aware of him specifically looking at various operations whether it's going into Quartermaster or

whether it's a flight line check?
A. Sure. Yeah. He come and looked.
Q. He's actually seen the operation I'm talking about?
A. Yeah, he's -- well, I don't know. But I know he's been out there to look at our flight operations.
Q. You said there's basically about three ride alongs --
A. Uh-huh.
Q. -- over (indiscernible) Canyon; is that --
A. He's with another pilot and their passenger. So, they get to see the routes and things.
Q. And this is after they are training?
A. This I during their training.
Q. So, ride along counts as part of their training for --
A. Sure. Yeah, but it doesn't count as the two required at minimum flights and then the third evaluation flight does not count as that.
MR. FIGLIA: That's all I have.
MS. WILSON: Great. Burl?
MR. BOYD: Yes, I do.
BY MR. BOYD:
Q. Have you ever had any training or any of the other lead pilots had any training outside of Papillon or is it all Papillon especially?
A. We all received copious amounts training to get there.
Q. Was it by any outside source?

A. As in?
Q. Somebody that's not Papillon?
A. I mean just to get our ratings and stuff like that.
Q. Have you not flown with anybody from Airbus?
A. Oh, I see what you're saying. Yes, all the -- well, I shouldn't say all the lead pilots but most of the lead pilots and we try and it just whenever we can we schedule factory training where we get to do the pulldowns. That's the only time we get to do pulldowns.

MR. BOYD: That's all I have.

MS. WILSON: John?

MR. WAUGH: No.

MS. KELIHER: I've got some too.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. Notice any change in the quality of new hires that --
A. Not really actually. I would have thought I would have because the numbers are getting less. It's just -- it's happening the shortage; pilot shortage is happening. We still -- there's still enough resumes where we are able to fill what we need. But I thought -- I was worried -- really, I was worried about that and so far, it has not manifested itself. So, two people just passed their check rides yesterday and they did a fantastic job. You know, as far as their knowledge as a whole. They did a good job.
Q. is there any -- you mentioned some Airbus training for lead pilots.

A. Uh-huh.
Q. Is that that was?
A. Yeah. Lead pilots and maintenance test pilots, so when we can we try to get the lead pilots to where they can do the emergency procedures training. And so, we get to go out there and do all the tuff stuff as they say and then go through the maintenance test pilot program too.
Q. Any other training for the lead pilots, when somebody get --
A. What's in -- well, other than what the training manual dictates.
Q. What is in that?
A. Yeah. For a lead pilot you have got to have an hour of instruction and then typically we give more than that. So, we give instruction for -- well, they have to have the left seat or right seat depending on which aircraft you're in time, in order to instruct in that. And then so they'll fly all the maneuvers. We'll make them fly all the maneuvers first and then we will play the dumb pilot and go out there and do everything wrong and make sure that they can save the day. And then they get checked out.
Q. Okay. In addition to yourself and then there's two other check airmen --
A. And Simon.
Q. And Simon.
A. So, right now there's four check -- I'm sorry. You just asked how many leads work --

Q. I know and that's why I'm clarifying now.
A. Yeah. So, Simon is a check airman -- this side Simon is a check airman, I'm a check airman and then two lead pilots.
Q. And then are there additional ground school instructors or do the four of you --
A. No. the IPS can also become -- they'll become ground school instructors and things like that. it's just they most likely won't become check airmen.
Q. Okay. And so then how many instructor pilots do you have?
A. Six. So, all the leads will become an instructor pilot.
Q. They will become --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- but they are not necessarily --
A. Check airmen.
Q. Okay. All the lead pilots are instructor pilots. But only two of them are check rides?
A. Are check rides, yes. Yes. Two different hats.
Q. Got it. Yes, all right. Thank you.
MS. WILSON: Zoe.
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. So, I see that the whatever (indiscernible) PowerPoint for training --
A. Uh-huh.
Q. -- that a lot of them are based off of Michael, I'm assuming the chief pilot before?

A. Mark?
Q. Mark.
A. Slofe (ph.)?
Q. Yes. So, I'm wondering of what the process is of updating the training materials. I see that a lot of them have been modified since by you.
A. Right.
Q. So, is that normally what can happen it's based off of --
A. It's based off actually Airbus training manual.
Q. I guess things specific like the routes and the SFAR and --
A. Right. Yeah, as the -- it's based off the LOA. So, as LOA gets updated we will update what we need to do.
Q. And I noticed that some of them are recently modified after the accident --
A. Oh, that changed.
Q. Yeah, so what was the things that --
A. A lot of verbiage. Sometimes the route as you exit the -- certain things just change. You know, so, as they change you got to update.
Q. Okay. And I didn't feel like I quite got what you were saying of the unsat with Scott. Did you know about that?
A. No.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah, I truly don't know of the unsat. I just warned of this. So, I truly don't. And I guess that's going to --

Q. And then I saw in his training file there had been other unsats that had happened.
A. right. nobody unless you're chop gator is going walk in this door and do every maneuver satisfactory. So, there's training involved so you got to take them through it and they are going to become sat.
Q. So, when they first have that initial training flight --
A. Right.
Q. -- if they get an unsat, how is that usually handed off or told?
A. Recorded on the TR7.
Q. Okay. And then how is that relayed to the person who is going to do the check ride if at all?
A. Everybody looks at the TR7. So, you could look at what maneuver was unsat.
Q. And then you said you recently heard of it, meaning in this interview?
A. No. I just yesterday I think it was for something, because somebody was asking me about that. I really don't -- truly don't know, you know.
Q. But then I guess I'm a little confused of how training happens and what the steps are of how it gets reported to the chief pilot to the training director, to the other instructors?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Is that -- how does that information get shared?

A. So, --
Q. Is that on your --
A. No, no. I would be in the TR8 form, which is just the recurrent training and it's just -- it's not -- there's not a whole bunch of breakdown on the maneuvers. It's just training was performed. And so that's where I heard U was.
Q. Okay. So, as I understand it correctly if somebody fails their training a maneuver is not satisfactory, that is not necessarily disseminated to the chief pilot and the lead pilots; there's no procedure set up of how that information is shared?
A. Right. The only time that somebody has ever failed that I know of, right, was the other day, different pilot. And when that person was the instructor pilot came and said, hey, not satisfactory. Not ready for the check ride. Perfect. Okay. We will change the scheduled check ride to a training flight again. We will get them satisfactory and then based on that we will schedule the check ride.
Q. So, since October 2013 when you started as a training director you have never had someone unsat except until recently?
A. Before -- yeah. Yeah. Before -- within the two hours, everybody has been able -- two, two-and-a-half hours, whatever. Before they have gone to their check ride they have been able to get all the maneuvers that they need to -- commercials has standards to move on.
Q. Okay. I'm still not sure I quite get it but I can send you a

follow-up e-mail --
A. Right.
Q. -- laying that out because I need to see how that works. Because I guess I'm confused because you said that you -- of course, everyone can't be perfect.
A. right.
Q. A lot of people get unsats, then you said there was only one unsat.
A. Yeah. I think I know what your confusion. The TR7 is where -- is the initial -- I'm not going to use our terms. I'm just going -- the initial training record is where you have the breakdown of all the maneuvers, right, so all the types of maneuvers, their recurrent training is just a record of recurrent training and not a breakdown of all the maneuvers. So, the recurrent training is always a sat before they go to their check ride. And so that's why I've never had this issue. So, it's the recurrent training it's just put -- it's a single line entry and so it's not, you know, a full-blown entry of all the maneuvers that were done, you know, it's just was this portion done to satisfactory or not. You know, so it might have had some unsat situations and then finished satisfactory or not, you know. And so, that's how that works and we always allot for two hours minimum. And based on that they -- once they have received their required flight time then we submit them to check rides.
Q. For their initial?

A. No. For their recurrent. This is where the U was the recurrent check ride, not the initial.
Q. Because from when I'm looking at the schedule and I'm sorry to --
A. No worries.
Q. -- anybody else --
A. Well, no, it's tough the look at somebody else's records and totally make sense of it.
Q. So, what I'm saying is I have you scheduled as a FT, which was an in AVSTAR training.
A. AVSTAR training.
Q. And then there's a day in between and then I see a CK.
A. Check ride. Schedule for a check ride.
Q. So, the FT --
A. Uh-huh.
Q. -- was the unsatisfactory.
A. So, I have been told. I don't know -- I still haven't seen that. I didn't see a U. I don't know if that U was there. I didn't see it. I wasn't made aware of any U. had I known I wouldn't want him to go to a check ride. However, I will say he did go to a check ride. So, I can't say whether or not there was a U or not. I'm not going to say whether or not there was a U or not because I don't know for sure, but I can tell you this for sure, he went through a check ride and he passed all the maneuvers sat on the first try, first go of it.

Q. So, now, I'm confused when you said there's a minimum of two hours. Is that the FT combined with the CK?
A. No. Two hours -- we try to give everybody two hours. On this case he went the check ride in lieu of training. So, that would tell me more precisely that he actually did the maneuvers satisfactory. Else he wouldn't have gone to a check ride. But I don't know.
Q. Because usually there's two FTs?
A. Not -- doesn't need to be two FTs. You can get your two hours in one day.
Q. Okay. Okay.
A. And when is say two hours it could be 2.8 hours or 2.1 or whatever.
Q. Well, we saw that the FT was 1.7.
A. Yep.
Q. And then I'm wondering if the check also is counting as the -- toward the two hours?
A. No. Because his 8410 showed the check ride slip says check ride in lieu of flight training.
Q. What slip says that?
A. His 8410, his check ride.
Q. So, the actual FLA --
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Got it. Okay. I'll probably need clarification just to make sure.

A. Trust me I get how it could sound pretty confusing. So --
MS. KELIHER: (Indiscernible).
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I do.
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. You said we've never had anybody -- have you ever have anybody failed a check ride; is that correct? have we ever had anybody wash out of training?
A. No. Not failed the check ride, no. it was just the training portion. Somebody said there was a U. I didn't know there was a U. That's all I'm saying. For just the training event before the check ride.
Q. But have we had failures in check rides?
A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, we've had failures in check rides and that's documented and remedial training was given and submitted to another check ride and whether they pass or not, you know, and we've had people wash out of the training program before too.
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. And then when I'm looking at the schedule of looking at the lead pilots, in the sheet from the training at the top --
A. Okay.
Q. What is the -- what are these?
A. Administrative duties.
Q. And then BO?
A. Boulder lead, and VO would be Vegas lead.
Q. Got it. And the person giving the check ride is the one with

the check, so I just match that up and I can see who gave a check ride to anybody?
A. Maybe.
Q. So, like right here there's a check for Davis, so I know that Davis gave the check ride to --
A. No. He didn't give the check ride. He probably received a check ride that day.
Q. Oh.
A. So, they have to go through check rides as well.
Q. So, how do you see --
A. Who gave the check ride? Who is scheduled to give the --
Q. It's not on here?
A. It's not on there, no, it won't be on there.
Q. Okay.
MS. WILSON: Do you have more questions about that?
MS. KELIHER: (Non-verbal response.)
MS. WILSON: I do have one question.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. All right. So, I'm looking at the training records and this may be sort of splitting hairs --
A. Right.
Q. -- but I just want to make sure that trying to figure out which is accurate information.
A. Uh-huh.
Q. So, on his schedule as Zoe pointed out the 20th he's got FT.

A. Uh-huh.
Q. The 22nd, CK, check ride.
A. Okay.
Q. Now, on his training records he's got the 20th, the recurrent flight training which has an S.
A. Uh-huh.
Q. -- potentially a U.
A. Right. Yes. And that would be -- that's the one.
Q. Yes.
A. That would be the one.
Q. And then there's the check ride listed on the 21st, not the 223nd, which is what the schedule says. So, --
A. I don't know like maybe they are planning on doing the check ride on the 22nd and then they changed the date. The lead maybe forgot to populate that date or if the date on the check rife whoever was the check airman put on the wrong date on the 8410. I don't -- without looking at it -- I'd have to do some investigative --
Q. Okay. So, the best way then for us to understand really what his actual schedule was would be the duty --
A. Flying duty.
Q. -- flight and duty tracker to make sure that --
A. That's what I would look at and because it takes two independent, you know, inputs there and, you know.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Might be in the log book too.

MR. CARVER: Yeah.

MS. WILSON:

Q. So, if --

A. And a lot of times it just for that flight schedule that might be what we intend but it may not exactly happen the way we intended as far as that schedule with the CK and the FTE and all that stuff.

Q. Okay. Now, if he had gotten a U --

A. Uh-huh.

Q. -- let's just say on the 20th and then he did an additional flight training ride --

A. Uh-huh.

Q. -- would that be a separate line or would it replace the U?

A. No, it would have been a separate line. So, it would have been another training event right underneath that.

Q. Okay.

A. So, it would have been another line. If it was on another date.

Q. It would if it was the same date?

A. Same date it --

Q. Or would that not happen?

A. No. I wouldn't say it wouldn't happen but if it's all on the same date it bears the same -- I would have still made two entries even if it was the same date just because it would have been two separate events.

Q. And it wouldn't -- I guess my thought is it would not have overridden the Usat?
A. No. No. it would have been two entries.
Q. Okay.
MS. WILSON: Last time around the room. Zoe.
MS. KELIHER: No, thank you for that. That was a good question.
MS. WILSON: Burl, John?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Tyler.
MR. CARVER: Sorry, about the -- and I get it. Sounds like you're catching on though what I was putting down.
MS. WILSON: Anything else that we didn't ask you that you were hoping we would ask you or --
MR. CARVER: Yes, and more than.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's the end of the day she's tired.
MR. CARVER: It's a tough job that you guys have because, you know, how to come in and kind of be the bear and that may not be who you are, you know, and it doesn't always -- you probably don't get that enough. So, definitely appreciate whatever you guys do and whatever we can learn that's good.
MS. WILSON: Thank you. And is there anything else that you can think of that you want to share though that you think might help with our investigation?
MR. CARVER: Nothing that I can think of. However, I'm sure I will have a way of being able to e-mail you, contact you or

anything like that if I think anything could definitely assist.

MS. WILSON: Absolutely.

MR. CARVER: Or you might think would help.

MS. WILSON: Yep, please do that. Thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of Tyler Carver

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2108

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]

Letha J. Wheeler
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	

Interview of: PIERRE FUNKA

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

(3:30 p.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here today.

MR. FUNKA: Yes.

MS. WILSON: Appreciate you taking the time to talk to us. This interview is a routine interview that we do as a part of any investigation talking to other pilots at an operator that was involved in an accident so that we can better understand the operation, your training, your procedures, those type of things. So I don't want you to think that this is anything out of the normal that we're talking to you today.

MR. FUNKA: Okay.

MS. WILSON: We are here strictly from the safety side of the investigation. We don't do anything with placing blame. We don't do any enforcement actions; strictly just wanting to understand what happened hoping to prevent something like this from happening again.

MR. FUNKA: Okay, sounds good.

MS. WILSON: We would like to record the interview as a part of our fact-finding phase. We do these interviews. We create either interview summaries or transcripts that then become a part of our public docket. Would that be okay if we recorded this?

MR. FUNKA: Yeah.

MS. WILSON: Great. And you are entitled to have one representative with you during an interview. It can be a friend,

a colleague, a lawyer. Is there somebody that you would like to have representing you today?

MR. FUNKA: This gentleman here, Thomas Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Great. And we will now go around the room and introduce ourselves. I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher. I'm in operations with the NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety for Airbus.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety for Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. FUNKA: Pierre, Papillon line pilot.

MS. WILSON: Great. We'll each take a turn asking questions. If we ask you a question and you don't understand please ask us to clarify. Also if you don't know the answer to a question it's okay to say "I don't know."

MR. FUNKA: Okay.

MS. WILSON: We know your name's Pierre, but can you please estate your full name?

MR. FUNKA: Pierre Funka, sorry.

MS. WILSON: Thank you. And that's spelled, the last name?

MR. FUNKA: F-U-N-K-A.

MS. WILSON: Thank you. Zoe's going to start questioning.

BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. All right, so when did you start at Papillon?
A. February 6, 2017.
Q. And what's your approximate total time there?
A. Two thousand one hundred and fourteen-ish.
Q. And how much of that time is in the EC130?
A. I'd say about 755 maybe.
Q. Great. What's it like working at Papillon?
A. It's very fine. Yeah, it's a bit routine, same thing on the daily, but it's a lot of good people and then, yeah, it's enjoyable.
Q. Of landing at Quartermaster, of the routineness and in and out, in and out, how much did that change with different conditions that you encounter?
A. Well, at Quartermaster landing down at Quartermaster base it just depends on the weather really. It's typically pretty standard, straightforward. The first person lands and then everybody else lands behind that person to fill the remaining spots.
Q. So if you're the last one in is it very obvious of which the last spot is?
A. I might have to have a look around. I wouldn't say, like, very obvious especially if you're far out, but once you get, you know, get an eye on the spot you can definitely tell what is available and what isn't.

Q. How many spots are there?
A. Oh, gee, is there -- 12, 13?
Q. Do you ever see and feel the weather situation that you're seeing on the ground is different than what you experience in the air coming into Quartermaster?
A. Are you asking if conditions change from in flight to surface conditions, is there a difference?
Q. Yeah.
A. Yeah. There's --
Q. In what way?
A. Sometimes things on the surface affect your winds and can change -- slightly change your approach path depending on what the obstruction is.
Q. Have you ever run out of pedal coming in?
A. Never.
Q. Have you ever over torqued?
A. No.
Q. I've seen, I'm looking through people's irregularity reports that you reported one. Can you describe of -- has there been more than one, first of all?
A. I would -- yeah, I mean, definitely I've filled out one irregularity report.
Q. What kind of things do you fill them out for?
A. Anything that's not the normal flight, so anything that deviates from what the routine flight would be, so it could be a

number of different things really. So if you didn't complete the flight as planned and you decided to change something then you'd write that up.

Q. If you saw something unsafe how would you report that?

A. The director of safety usually you can contact him email or if the irregularity report doesn't seem like something that would really fall in that category. I would just talk to him personally.

Q. So who do you normally talk to?

A. That would be Burl Boyd, yeah.

Q. Have you ever been asked to change an irregularity report?

A. No.

Q. Or been questioned about any of your reports?

A. No.

Q. Okay. We see that you were scheduled to fly on the day of the accident.

A. Yeah.

Q. Do you remember coming in that day?

A. I did come in that day. That was so long ago it's I don't remember it now. Actually I don't remember walking in the door or any of that, to be honest with you.

Q. Do you remember if you were here during the accident?

A. I remember after the accident. I came in the door. I flew the Hoover Dam that day, and I just closed out my paperwork and was walking upstairs to turn the can to records and I was leaving.

And as I was leaving somebody approached me and told me that there had been an accident.

Q. Do you remember anything about that flight to the Hoover Dam?

A. It was just a standard short ferry flight from here to there. It was just normal procedure. I took off from Boulder City, climbed up to 3,000 feet, made an approach and landing at the dam. I don't really remember how many tours I flew that day. It was the same thing, just came back when I was done.

Q. It shows that you arrived here after the 5:30 morning briefing. How would you have gotten weather?

A. The briefing sheet or clipboard is hung from the wall above the computers there, so it's there, you just -- on the bottom half of it. The top half you sign in, sign your name after you've read the bottom half, which is basically the forecast weather for that day and some other notes and things of that nature as well.

Q. Do you recall seeing Scott that day?

A. Didn't see him. I don't remember. I don't think I saw him.

Q. Do you know him?

A. Yeah, I know Scott Booth (ph.), yeah.

Q. Did you guys ever hang out?

A. I had pizza with Scott once, yeah.

Q. Do you remember talking about flying at all, about anything?

A. No, we didn't really talk about flying a whole lot. He does a bunch of other things aside from flying so it wasn't really aviation-related too much.

Q. Hmm. I'm going to pass it over to you, Katherine.

MS. WILSON: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: I'm just going to think of what I saw in one of your irregularity reports, because I only saw one.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. You said that you had never run out of pedal coming into Quartermaster or flying the EC130, but have you ever heard of anybody running out of pedal authority?

A. Well, I did -- I haven't run out of pedal on an approach, but there has been conditions where I had to fly in reverse with a tailwind and that was I didn't run out of pedal, but it was less authority than usual, standard conditions --

Q. Mm-hmm.

A. -- which makes sense when you do it.

Q. Did you ever feel unsafe because of that or you felt like you still had control of the helicopter?

A. Definitely I controlled the helicopter, yeah.

Q. Okay. Ever heard anybody talking about feeling like they didn't have adequate pedal authority coming into Quartermaster?

A. No.

Q. You mentioned that at Quartermaster you thought that there were 12 to 13 spots?

A. I think so.

Q. I'm not trying to give you a pop quiz or anything. We had heard, I believe, that you all just reacquired a couple of spots

by a waterfall, the waterfall landing spots? Does that sound familiar?
A. I don't know anything about a waterfall.
Q. Okay. So the 12 to 13 spots are just the way they've been for the last two years? You haven't --
A. Yes.
Q. -- recently expanded the landing area down there?
A. Not that I know of.
Q. Okay, so the 12 to 13 spots are just the normal.
A. Pretty sure.
Q. Okay. They've recently added a second windsock down in Quartermaster?
A. That I have seen.
Q. Beneficial having that?
A. Yeah, of course, I mean, any other indications of wind are definitely useful.
Q. Mm-hmm. Does it change how you fly your approach?
A. Change? I don't think it really changes how I fly. You know, it gives me better awareness but doesn't change how I fly.
Q. Okay. After you've landed in the Quartermaster do you ever get on the radio and report to the guys coming in behind you, or gals, you know, that it was bumpy coming in, winds were swirly, anything like that?
A. It depends really on the intensity of what I felt. Like, if it's -- I've never done that personally, but I've heard people

mention some things. Usually birds, some sort of flying obstruction, like, hey, there's birds on the approach then you know, like, there's something bad. But it's not a usual thing.
Q. Okay. Do you -- just to clarify because I don't want to put words in your mouth -- so primarily birds. Have you ever heard somebody report turbulence or winds when you've been flying in?
A. I don't remember honestly.
Q. Okay. Have there been times when you've flown in and you thought I wish I had known what these conditions were going to be like before landing?
A. No.
Q. Okay.
A. I do now.
Q. What's the radio chatter like? Is it pretty frequent or do you feel. like, let's say, you wanted to make a pie (ph.) rep, did you feel like you have time to get on the radio and make one?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Any pressure to ever take a flight that you didn't want to take?
A. Never.
Q. No?
A. Nope.
Q. Ever turn back because of weather?
A. Yeah.
Q. Yeah? Winds or thunderstorms, rain, visibility issues?

A. I think most of those things.
Q. Oh.
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And then when you get back?
A. Just fill out an irregularity report.
Q. Okay. And you said you had never been questioned about them.
A. No.
Q. Okay. What happens after you submit an irregularity report? Do you get any feedback?
A. I guess it depends on what the irregularity report is about. Sometimes you'll get feedback depending on what you wrote up and the dynamic of that situation, so yeah.
Q. Have you ever added in a recommendation on how you think that situation could be mitigated?
A. I have not done that personally.
Q. Okay. Do you feel though, like, when you submit a report that it's taken seriously by management and if something needed to be followed up on it is followed up on?
A. Yes.
Q. Has there ever been a time when that hasn't happened?
A. No.
Q. Do you feel like you have adequate time between flights? So you come in with a load of passengers, enough time to pick up your next set of passengers before leaving?
A. Yes.

Q. Okay. What is about the timeframe between your flights?
A. It depends on the day really.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah, so it just depends what's on the schedule that day.
Q. Okay, so there's not, like, set times where you would, you know, you've got a departure at 1:30, 3:30, 5:30?
A. There is.
Q. Oh.
A. There is, but you can -- things change so, I mean, it could change.
Q. You mean they change like if you're running behind or --
A. Sometimes you need to --
Q. -- one flight's taking a little bit longer?
A. -- switch out an aircraft or somebody's --
Q. Okay.
A. -- running late so it's not really, like, concrete but there's definitely a schedule.
Q. Okay. You don't feel rushed --
A No.
Q. -- getting off? Okay. Have you ever not accepted a flight because of weather?
A. Yeah.
Q. And then what happens in that case? Do you report to the pilot? Do you tell the chief pilot? Who do you tell if you don't want to accept a flight?

A. The lead.
Q. Yeah. And then does he just say okay or is there any questioning about why you're not accepting the flight?
A. No, it's just okay.
Q. Mm-hmm. And has that been for weather-related you said?
A. Yeah, for weather.
Q. Okay, winds or, again, thunderstorms?
A. I have -- I have for winds and thunderstorms as well, I think, yeah.
Q. Okay. Is that common to, you know, for an individual pilot to say I'm not going to go flying versus them shutting down all operations for all pilots?
A. I don't know about common. I've done it once, maybe twice. I'm not sure I remember.
Q. Have you ever reported a safety concern?
A. No, I haven't personally reported a safety concern.
Q. Okay, but you'd feel comfortable doing that, though?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And is that also done through an irregularity report or do you have another means to be able to do that?
A. There's different ways to go about it. It's an open-door policy so you can write it up in a report or just talk to Burl personally.
Q. And if you -- what if you didn't want your name associated with it? What if you wanted to file something anonymously, how

would you do that?
A. I don't know. Sorry.
Q. Have you ever been flying in to Quartermaster and, you know, realized the winds or the turbulence exceeded your comfort level so you just aborted the landing and turned it into an air tour?
A. I've never done that.
Q. Okay. Would that require an irregularity report if you did?
A. Yes.
MS. WILSON: Mm-hmm. All right. Thanks, Pierre. I don't have anything else.
MS. KELIHER: Manny, do you (indiscernible) --
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.
MS. KELIHER: -- any questions?
BY MR. FIGLIA:
Q. Yeah. Tell me a little bit about your background, where you started to fly and how you built some of your hours to get hired?
A. I flew as a flight instructor at El Monte Airport in Los Angeles for two and a half years. Logged about 1,100 hours in an R22 and then got hired here.
Q. Okay. And which aircrafts are you certified?
A. Both the EC130 and the AS350B2 and B3E.
Q. Okay. Specifically in your training what -- overall what's your general impression about training within the company? You've obviously taken recurrent training. You've obviously done initial and recurrent (indiscernible) rides.

A. Right.
Q. Give me your impression of what the quality of that training is?
A. It's good. It's detailed, that's for sure. The training is -- it's definitely good.
Q. All right. With that training can you give me specifics on confined area operations, both in ground school and practical?
A. Sorry, what was your question?
Q. Can you describe the quality of training when it deals specifically with confined area operations, both classroom and practical?
A. The quality of training is -- it's good. You'll go out and you'll talk about -- you'll talk about it first, all the factors involved with an off-airport landing. And then you'll go and you'll fly and actually do the approaches to confined areas, pinnacles in training as well.
Q. Part of your training were you exposed to landings in the Quartermaster itself?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Describe the route's ingress and egress out of Quartermaster.
A. What do you mean by ingress and egress?
Q. In other words when you're flying the route and your plan is to land at the Quartermaster and eventually take off, can you describe what it's like, what the ingress, in other words the

approach into the Quartermaster and your departure out of the quartermaster back to the route?
A. So you're going to depart the Green 4 at the (indiscernible), 5,000 feet and then you're going to make a descent into the canyon, which then terminates and you're going to cross the river at about 2,000 feet. And then you're going to determine whether you're going to go direct to Quartermaster base or if you're going to go through the notch and then shoot in and approach the opposite direction downriver to Quartermaster base.
Q. Okay, and what predicates which approach you're going to use?
A. The wind.
Q. Okay. If the winds are -- are the winds always a headwind or are they sometimes quartering in nature?
A. I wouldn't say the wind's always a headwind now. There's just definitely variable winds down there for sure.
Q. Okay. And based on where the wind direction is, were you specifically trained on which approach you would use based on what the wind conditions were?
A. We use headwind for landing, takeoff and landing, so basically we land into the wind.
Q. Okay. Is is always practical to land into the wind at the Quartermaster?
A. What do you mean by practical?
Q. In other words, you want to streak (ph.) your approach into the wind, right?

A. Mm-hmm.
Q. But it's not always that you're able to go into the wind, so how do you negotiate a wind that's not off the nose of the aircraft?
A. It should be -- you should be able to get it relatively close to a headwind, I'd say, in most situations, so you can just adjust your approach path.
Q. Okay. And by adjusting that approach path do you have to take in regard where other aircraft are as far as being in the Quartermaster itself?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And you don't -- do you overfly other aircraft that are in Quartermaster or do you avoid overflying them?
A. I avoid overflying over other aircraft.
Q. Okay. Downriver, up river approach, does that sound familiar?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Get back to the irregularity reports, you said you do receive feedback from writing an irregularity report?
A. Not always, but sometimes certain issues are addressed.
Q. Okay. Who addresses those issues?
A. They usually come up in the briefings.
Q. And that's the morning briefings that --
A. Right.
Q. -- or the afternoon briefings?

A. Right.
Q. Okay. Your training portion, did you under emergency procedures do any settling with power?
A. None in flight, no.
Q. Were they covered in ground school?
A. Can't remember.
Q. How about loss of tail rotor effectiveness?
A. I can't remember. It was a long time ago.
Q. When was your last check ride?
A. It was February.
Q. February of this year?
A. Yeah.
Q. And do you recall doing EPs or learning confined area landings or loss of tail rotor effectiveness?
A. I didn't do any loss of tail rotor effectiveness. I did do a confined landing.
Q. Okay. When you do an autorotations and you obviously do a power recovery --
A. Mm-hmm.
Q. -- your last training event, which aircraft did you do those autorotations in?
A. I believe it was 59, our training aircraft.
Q. And what type of aircraft?
A. An EC130.
Q. A 130?

A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Between flying the EC130 and the B2, how often do you switch off and do a check ride in each one of these? Do you annually take a check ride in one type or do you take them on multiple?
A. You'll do -- the annual I did was in the B4 --
Q. Okay.
A. -- and then I'll have an upcoming A-star check ride. They won't be the same check ride.
Q. Okay. And what's the time period between those two?
A. It depends on when you were trained for that aircraft.
Q. Okay, so it's based on when you last trained --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- for something?
A. Correct.
MR. FIGLIA: All right, thank you. That's all I have.
MR. BOYD: When you talk about loss of tail rotor authority, are you talking about anti-torque system? Because we do stuck pedal on all of our -- every check ride, stuck pedals, whether it's a left or right. That's when you don't have authority to the air -- to the tail rotor. Any other way how would you train that other than a stuck pedal?
MS. KELIHER: We can talk about -- this is just about the interview of questions to him.
MR. BOYD: Okay. I'm just asking him on what he's asking

him.

MR. FIGLIA: I asked about LT, loss in tail rotor effectiveness.

MR. BOYD: Okay.

BY MR. WAUGH:

Q. Where do you do your confined area training at?

A. South, probably about eight miles south there's a --

Q. That's -- I've been to that spot. So how would you compare that spot to Quartermaster?

A. Well, there's several spots down south, so I'm not exactly sure which spot you're talking about, just I've landed several different places down south.

Q. Okay.

A. I would say they're more challenging to land. Our training spots are more challenging than Quartermaster, by far.

Q. Okay. When you do confined area training are any of them easier than Quartermaster when it's a confined area approach?

A. No.

Q. Okay.

A. I've never done one easier.

Q. Right. How -- and you -- with your different of the spots that you could land in the canyon how does the Quartermaster compare to the other spots?

A. I've only landed at Quartermaster base.

Q. Okay.

A. Well, actually, sorry. I take that back. I have landed at Ramada (ph.), but it's the same. It's an NLZ (ph.).

MR. WAUGH: Okay. That's it.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Do you think it would ever work for everyone to have an assigned spot when they're flying in Quartermaster so you know what pad you're supposed to be landing on?

A. I don't know. I'd have to really think about that.

Q. It's just hard for me to wrap my head around the unpredictability of you don't know how many people are ahead or behind or where the wind's going to be or how it's -- or you don't know your spot.

A. Well, you do know your spot, but it's not assigned. It's there's like a landing, a flow of traffic is what it's -- basically what it's called. So it's like you're not going to just randomly pick a spot and then, like, expect for the best spot. It's one person, then the following person, then the following. So it's like, you know, a circuit. Everybody just brings it to the most forward spot favorable to the winds.

Q. So if you're arriving there and you have some noses pointed one way, other noses pointed the other way in patchwork, which it was at the accident time --

A. Right.

Q. -- I'm trying to figure out how you would know which one you're going to take and how you figure it out? But it sounds

like from your perspective that's a pretty rare situation?
A. Well, I've landed there a lot of times and I've never really had an issue, like, I've never had to, like, really change my approach, my flight profile to get into a spot. Like, it's pretty standard. You can approach from different directions, but the spots are configured where, like, you shouldn't have to overfly an aircraft in front of you. That aircraft should already be positioned in the most forward spot, if you get what I'm saying.

MS. KELIHER: Got it. That's all I've got.

MS. WILSON: All right. Anything, last minute thoughts, things we didn't ask you that we were hoping you would -- we would ask you?

MR. FUNKA: No.

MS. WILSON: Okay. Well, thank you. If you think of anything that you think might be helpful to our investigation, don't hesitate to reach out to John Becker and he can get ahold of us.

MR. FUNKA: Okay.

MS. WILSON: Thanks, Pierre.

MR. FUNKA: Thanks.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of Pierre Funka

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: JUNE 19, 2018

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.



Teresa Holevas
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	

Interview of: DAVID GUTIERREZ

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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Papillon Airways

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Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
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THOMAS TOBIN
Wilson Elser Law Firm
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I N T E R V I E W

(4:30 p.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for joining us. This interview is a part of our routine investigative process, the part of our fact finding phase. It's common for us to talk to pilots and operators. We know that you were at Quartermaster the day of the accident, so it's not unusual for us to want to talk to people that were nearby at the time of the accident, or just other pilots who can let us -- inform us about your procedures, your training, things like that.

We're here strictly from the safety side. We don't have -- we're not here to place blame. We don't have any enforcement authority. So it's strictly just to understand what happened, hopefully prevent something like this from happening again.

We would like to record the interview. That will allow us to create a transcript of this interview that will then go into our public docket. Is that okay, if we record this?

MR. GUTIERREZ: Yes.

MS. WILSON: Great. And you are also entitled to have one person represent you during the interview. It could be a colleague, a friend, a lawyer. It's anybody of your choosing. Is there somebody that you would like to have represent you?

MR. GUTIERREZ: Yes. It's Tom.

MS. WILSON: Tom?

MR. GUTIERREZ: Thomas. Yes.

MS. WILSON: Tom Tobin, correct?
MR. GUTIERREZ: Tom Tobin, yes.
MS. WILSON: Great.
And we will now go around the room, and introduce yourselves. I am Katherine Wilson. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB.
MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher with the NTSB doing operations.
MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, director of safety with Airbus.
MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety for Papillon.
MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA Las Vegas.
MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FAA Las Vegas.
MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Nice to meet you guys.
MS. WILSON: Great.
MR. TOBIN: And Tom Tobin, a partner with Wilson Elser in New York.
MS. WILSON: So we'll each take a turn asking you questions. If you don't understand a question, please stop us, ask us to clarify. If you don't know the answer to a question, it's okay to say I don't know also. Do you have any questions before we get started.
MR. GUTIERREZ: No, ma'am.
MS. WILSON: Okay. Can you please state your full name?
MR. GUTIERREZ: David Omar (ph.) Gutierrez.
MS. WILSON: All right. And with that, I will turn it over

to Zoe, who is going to start questioning.

MS. KELIHER: All right, I've been wanting to talk to you for a while. We talked to everyone that was at the landing site except you, so I really appreciate this and I'm sorry we're late on this.

MR. GUTIERREZ: No, don't worry.

MS. KELIHER: We did read your statement though, and I just refreshed everyone on the statement that you had had before. But we just wanted to ask you some more questions.

INTERVIEW OF DAVID GUTIERREZ

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. And first, I'd really like if you can go back into your memory bank, and I'd love to hear from the start of the flight that day, of the day of the accident, of you entering into the canyon all the way to the time of the accident. And when I'm going to ask you to recall, I would like you to try to give it in details. And I'm going to give you an example of what I'm looking for.

So as I -- I'm going to tell you about me driving here from my hotel this morning. So as I approached my car -- it's a white rental car. It's a Jeep Cherokee. I've never rented a car like that. I had the keys in my pocket, which I could feel in my right pocket hip that were bulging out, and when I went to click it, it snapped back in a forward motion. And as I opened it up, I rotated my body toward the leather seat, which I only knew was

leather because it was hot to touch, but I don't know if it was actual leather or not. I swung my feet over --

So you can get that type of detail that I'm looking for, of taking us from entering into the canyon and going around to land.

A. Okay. Okay.

Q. And feel free to close your eyes. Take as long as you need. We've got time.

A. Okay. So on that, on that day, I was actually stationed or based out of Las Vegas, so it was me and two other pilots. It was Derek Mohica (ph.) and Venita Hayes (ph.) that was actually coming out from that -- from Las Vegas area. And they both had a wedding. So normally our routine that we have here, when we have weddings coming out, for example, from Vegas, we have a point where we call Wedding Point, where they have priority to land there because of the whole wedding and the location. And then we have a secondary one that is also on -- I guess you could kind of say, as we land downriver, it is closer to the riverbank there, just so that you can actually see the river and everything when that happens.

So I believe I was flying. I don't really recall which aircraft it was now, but I want to say it was 39 that I was flying at. So it was -- I was actually -- I know I wasn't the first one out, but I was -- I don't remember if I was the second or the last one that -- to leave. So normally, whoever leaves actually lands there first. But I do remember, we actually did have to go

downriver.

So as we entered the canyon, it was a little bumpy. Usually on our normal common spots that we have a little bumpiness, so we know exactly where that's at. And as we actually began to descend, all three of us went out to Quartermaster, because procedure is Quartermaster is Wedding Point. There has to be at least two helicopters to land at our other location, which is going to be the Ramada (ph.). But since I was the only one that didn't have the wedding, I would have to go with them, so we all landed at Quartermaster.

So Venita went around. As she took her approach, she went downriver and landed at Wedding Point, what we call Wedding Point. And I don't remember if it was me or Derek that came in second, but he landed on that other spot that we have -- that's another Wedding Point -- that's another area for Wedding Point. And then I landed also. We all landed, came downriver. And I landed the middle pad that is pretty much facing in front of the little picnic area, as you can kind of imagine.

So we did actually take off a little late, because I do remember Pollyanna (ph.) that was in a B3 that landed right behind me. So as I landed, I remember I was waiting for her to shut down she can land, because of all the turbulence and the downwash that they actually create. So as she -- she came around and landed downriver as well. She landed behind me. Actually after she landed and everything, we shut down. Winds were actually coming

out from, I guess, the north, you want to say. So if you land downriver, they were pretty much facing -- kind of coming in at an angle. But they were favored to downwind.

So I got out. Our normal procedure is we get out. We always talk to our -- explain to our passengers that there's going to be other aircraft and everything landing there, so tell them to just keep in mind it's going to be a lot of aircraft coming in. As they're actually going around taking pictures and everything, that's when we set up the picnics. So the way -- when I -- I chose a picnic area that wasn't able to see the whole crash site, so if you can kind of picture it -- I could draw it out right here. The picnic area -- so here is, I guess, Wedding Point. And then here's our notch as we come around here. Here's what we call the notch here. So this is where Derek landed. Venita. I landed right here in the middle, and then Polly landed down here.

So there's two actual -- here's our picnic area, and of course there's some benches and everything inside. And then out here on the open, we have two little green picnics areas. So I chose this one right here. This is the one that I was -- that I chose. So normally what I do, I always put out the food baskets and everything, but I don't -- I wait to pour the champagne just because it was windy, so they won't be blown off or whatever. And of course, all the other aircraft.

So as my actual -- as my packs actually finally came to the little picnic area that I had the lunches at, that's when I began

to start serving the drinks. So by then, that's when all these other helicopters began to land. So I really don't remember who landed who. I do remember that 50, the gold helicopter, was the first one that landed what we call upriver, but what she did was -- so this was pretty much where the crash site was actually at. So as she came in, she kind of came in a little bit in and kind of turned around so she could face landing into the, into the wind. And that's what everybody else did. So she was the first one, and she landed in this area right there.

And as everybody was coming in, I do remember there was two other guys that kind of came in and landed upriver, so they pretty much kind of landed with a little tailwind here, with the tailwind. There was two guys here. After that, this kind of -- this is just like a blur to me. So I do remember they were here because -- I do remember that they landed upriver, just because I did have to -- I did wait for them to land so I could pour the champagne.

But after they finished landing here, all -- there was some more helicopters landing in this direction here. I'm not sure how many. But as I was pouring the champagne to one of the passengers, they were asking me questions, typical questions. How long have I been here, and everything. And that's when I heard Venita down here at Wedding Point started yelling, like, somebody go get help, somebody get help. And as I turn around, I wasn't able to see anything, just because the picnic area was behind me.

So I had no idea what was going on, but I saw everybody running in that direction towards the crash site. And of course I put everything down and I ran as well, and then that's when I just saw a bunch of smoke come up.

Q. So can you take me through when you were right here, and walk me through in as much detail as you can remember to right there?

A. As far as when I was landing?

Q. Um-hum.

A. So yeah. So we all coordinate. What I do personally is, as I begin my descent -- so we're coming in in here, and as I begin my descent, there's a little area out here right before which is the Ramada, and I always look at that windsock to kind of help me judge it. And as I start slowing down, that's when I look at my airspeed and my groundspeed to see how the wind is. So we all -- it was strong enough winds that we knew, all knew we were going to come down -- we're going to go downwind. So I mean, as I was coming in, we pretty much just go through the notch, and as we go through the notch, we kind of come around. We kind of come around the notch and then we land downriver kind of deal.

As far as specific details, that it was bumpy, as far as the controls or inputs that I put in, I really don't recall what I did or anything. All I knew was it was obviously a little bumpy, just because we get a little bit of turbulence from this notch right here. But as far as how much it was, it wasn't -- I can't really recall. Even if I kind of take a minute or close my eyes, I

wouldn't be able to remember.
Q. Did anything seem abnormal?
A. From, like, other times? Not abnormal. I mean, the winds were strong. As long as you land into the wind -- there weren't, there weren't crazy winds. Of course, we did get some good gusts there that would all of a sudden just come at us. But nothing, like, crazy. So what I -- probably would I double-guess it? I mean, yeah, if the winds -- because they were actually a little bit -- the windsock, the windsock that was at this actual picnic area sometimes kind of starts moving, you know. So I mean, you could tell that the wind does change. It doesn't come straight at one angle, so it would kind of change and stuff, but -- and I really don't recall much.
Q. If you were to come in and all of these pads were full, how would you do the approach?
A. They always tell us if these were actually full -- like, because normally what we do, even before the crash, I shouldn't -- like, if -- these are all downriver. These are all river pads, so obviously we land here, and the first one goes up to the first pad and everything till they fill up. And then these guys start coming upriver, but they always tell us, like, just be PIC, you know? Be PIC. Always land into the wind, make the right choice and stuff like that.
Q. So how, in that situation, do you land into the wind? Just doing it like Polly or -- I guess explain to me of how it would be

--

A. Landing downriver. We always land downriver.

Q. So the pads that were open and the wind that you saw, how would you have had to come in if you were in Scott's position and he was -- had already landed there? How would you have done your approach?

A. You mean if I was in Scott's spot and he was in my spot?

Q. Um-hum.

A. Well I mean, the winds were strong enough where I personally would -- probably wouldn't land upriver. If anything, what I would do is I would probably even -- because the biggest thing also we have to keep in mind is actually just blowing all the passengers and everything as far as the meals and everything. I would actually go around the notch and probably even come in, and if anything, probably -- what I -- usually what I will do if they will tell me is, like, kind of come in and I would hog this wall over here and kind of make my approach landing downriver in these areas down here.

Q. Do passengers wander up?

A. Occasionally, but we tell them to stay close by. But that's why we always give them a briefing. I always give them a briefing before we get out of the aircraft that there's going to be other helicopters. If you see one coming your way, move off to the side. Don't take a picture in front of where -- if there's one coming your way. So I always tell them right before they --

because as soon as you open the door, they start going off and taking pictures, and they have no idea what's going on. So as I'm shutting down the aircraft, I tell them, hey, we have so much time down here. See a helicopter, obviously don't -- move off to the side and everything.

I mean, they're always really good. All the other pilots are actually really good as far as, if there's one coming in, they'll tell the passengers to come over, move off to the side.

Q. Have you flown in conditions that were as windy as the day of the accident?

A. There has been times that we actually have flown, you know. But like I said, there'll be -- we all talk up there. Like, let's say if I'm just getting out of Boulder and there's another guy that's closer to, like, Quartermaster or something like that. Hey, it's too windy. I'll probably just call back base. Hey, how are the winds looking? I don't feel comfortable. And right away, he's like, all right. Turn around, come back or something.

Q. How long have you been with Papillon?

A. A year and a half.

Q. And what's your approximate total time?

A. Of flight time?

Q. Yeah.

A. Last time I checked, it was like 2520? Two thousand, five hundred and twenty hours.

Q. And how much of that is in the EC-130s?

A. I want to say about, like, 800 hours. So somewhere around there.
Q. I saw that you had filed irregularity reports over the last couple of years. But I've seen that you have done it for weather conditions, where you had weather cancellations. Can you tell me what the process is to file an irregularity report?
A. Like just in general --
Q. Um-hum.
A. -- what we do? So we file irregularity reports if we, for example, go off our route, feeling sick, we have to take a different course of action or something like that. For example, like in my, in my situation, my example, I have actually had to write some reports because we get out to the canyon and it -- all of a sudden, it got -- visibility went low. There's clouds in the canyon and stuff. So obviously we're not going to fly into that. I'm going to have to alter my course, either go back or do something. And then of course, then when I come back, that's when I write the report saying, you know, I was off the green four (ph.) for this reason, because there was clouds in my, in my route, or something happened.
Q. Are you instructed to do that?
A. Yeah. They tell us that -- to write reports.
Q. When you get back?
A. Yes, we have about 24 hours to write a report.
Q. And who tells you?

A. It's either, for example, like the lead pilots, our lead pilots and stuff like that, so --
Q. Do they ever instruct you what to put on the report?
A. No, we write it in.
Q. And have they ever asked you to change what you've written?
A. No.
Q. Have you ever felt any ramifications or been -- felt chastised or punished or --
A. As far as, what, for writing the report?
Q. Yeah.
A. No.
Q. Or any decisions that you've made?
A. Um-um.
Q. Been questioned at all?
A. Um-um.
Q. With being here a year, I'm sure you've now seen other people cycle in. What is the difference of flying with pilots that were just hired versus after you guys have done a summer together, if any, when you're landing at Quartermaster?
A. Just talking about, like, the new pilots compared to the pilots that -- when I came in?
Q. Um-hum.
A. The biggest thing that I've seen after this whole crash thing is, let's say, the first pilot -- so usually, like I was saying, as we come in, if we had to land downriver, like in our situation

right here, the first pilot will land where either I would be at, where Derek takes closer to the river, or Wedding Point if there's no weddings there. So those are, those are the ones that you fill up first, and then of course, all of them go back down.

But now, I guess what we're doing is, if we have to land downriver, the first aircraft that comes in actually comes all the way in to pretty much this corner and starts filling up the spaces, you know? So everybody else could actually go behind them, so --

Q. How did that change?

A. You know, I really don't know how it changed or why, but they would actually -- we would talk and that's -- it just, it just happened and now it's pretty much like a routine.

Q. But was there guidance given before of fill up only to the half point as opposed to, you know, fill up, I guess, to those?

A. Well yeah, because -- well I mean, there's only so many spots that are in this area and there's only so many spots in this area. So obviously when you fill these up, then you go to these spots.

Q. But how are you trained of taking these first as opposed to now, being trained --

A. When I first came in --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- is what you're talking about? They would just tell us these are the spots you fill in first. Because if you're the first one to land there, you're going to be the first one to

leave. So obviously, when you take off, if you land behind here and you have another guy, you don't want to fly over this aircraft, you don't want to fly over these passengers and stuff. You want to have a safe, clean takeoff clear of any, of any obstacles and anything.

Q. So now what happens with taking off and filling it all the way forward?

A. Well for example, like, if this guy, if this guy lands first, he'll be down here first 30 minutes and then -- because that's how much time we have down here. And then after he's on, he'll be the first one out and there's nobody in front of him. And then of course the second guy goes, and the third and the fourth.

Q. I guess I'm trying to figure out what the change was, of who said, okay, now we're going to be doing it this way.

A. Well because we all pretty much just started talking. I mean, from what I see, it's from the crash that happened. So because of the crash. Because before the crash, we were still coming up, landing upriver in a tailwind. So they were landing in a tailwind upriver. So after the crash, we all just started talking. And we all pilots get together and everything, and we just started landing that way.

Q. What else has been talked about, of different things that could change, or different things that you can think that would have prevented this accident?

A. Prevented the accident? I mean, from what actually comes to

my mind, the bladders -- so we recently just started giving fuel bladders in the aircraft. I know that takes time and you just can't buy that from one day to the next. But I have seen that we are starting to install fuel bladders in our systems.

Q. If you were -- if this was your fiefdom and you were the king of the day and you could change anything with the FAA or Papillon or the way Airbus flies and the -- what do you think you would change that would make it safer to keep flying to Quartermaster?

A. Well, make it safer? Well I mean obviously that little notch where that area happened was -- it's pretty much a really -- a little swirl, little area you don't really want to get into. What did help is they did install a windsock out there, and that actually really helped us out as well.

Q. Do you find that the windsocks are indicative of what you're going to find on the ground?

A. As far as what they both -- they both mean the same --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- thing? Yeah. Yes, for the most part, they do.

Q. So when you're flying over, you find the wind and the conditions in air are the same as what the windsocks are indicating on the ground?

A. For the most part, yeah. I mean, of course there's always going to be different times when you -- it's a little bumpy up there and when you land it feels clear as day. But for the most part, those windsocks are facing the same direction.

Q. Have you ever run out of pedal when you're flying into Quartermaster?
A. No.
Q. Have you ever had any overspeeds?
A. No.
Q. Did you know Scott?
A. Yes.
Q. Did you guys hang out?
A. We didn't really hang out too much outside of work, just because he had so much other stuff. But here in workwise, yeah. I mean, I would see him. He wasn't, like, a fulltime employee where I would see him every day. He was a part-timer, so he would come in when we needed help and stuff like that. But there has been times I did work with him.
Q. Did he ever talk to you about flying or Quartermaster or anything that you can think of that would help us out?
A. Nothing.
MS. KELIHER: I'm going to give it to Katherine.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. So would you consider Scott, like, a seasoned pilot, that if you had a question you would go to him to ask for his advice or --
A. Oh yeah. Yeah.
Q. Yeah?
A. Yeah, I would ask him questions.
Q. Do you think other pilots thought of him that same way?

A. Yeah. Yeah, we all -- he got along with everybody, and he would give us advice and stuff like that.
Q. Okay. You mentioned that, with the decision to -- or this new, sort of, landing procedure that you have, you said the pilots get together and talk. Is that -- are you talking about, like, just here in the crew room --
A. No, I mean like on our --
Q. -- or do you mean, like, outside of work you talk about --
A. Yeah, outside of work. Yeah, we'll go hang out and stuff like that, so --
Q. And then, in order to make a change like that, is that something that needs to be cleared with lead pilots or the chief pilot, or is this just, if the pilots all agree that this is how we're going to land there, that's fine?
A. We all talk. Like I said, we all talk in the air. Hey, how's the winds down there? Does it look pretty good? You know what? The windsock's showing this but it's dead; it's calm, man. But at the end of the day, it's PIC decision. If I don't feel right coming in, even if this guy landed upriver, if I don't feel right, I'm not obviously going to do that, you know. I'm going to do a different approach.
I have actually had some times where I would be coming in where I thought -- I would look at the windsock at the Ramada. Okay, it's an upriver pad, so I'm just going to go from the river straight in. But as I get closer, it does look like it's a lot

more -- it's a tailwind, so I go -- I've pulled power and gone through the notch. Hey, it's Papillon, whatever, is going -- landing downriver. Ultimately it's a PIC decision.

Q. Okay. You said that you had 24 hours to fill out an irregularity report. Have you ever been called out for not filing one within 24 hours?

A. No.

Q. No?

A. Um-um.

Q. How do you know when somebody's coming in behind you after you've landed in Quartermaster?

A. Well this is -- I mean, if you're going to land in Quartermaster, you pretty much know from the beginning, from when we take off from Boulder, you know. There's different ways, from seeing the schedule when we're here picking up our passengers to when they start up here. Even throughout the whole tour here, I mean, you're going to hear their radio calls, you know. Hey, we're all going the same way. As we get to what we call bat towers in the canyon -- that's a little spot there -- that's where we begin our descent. If you're going to be doing a landing, you're going to begin your descent at bat towers coming down, or you're going to continue one what we call the route, the green four, and continue on as an air tour. So obviously if I hear, I'm calling, hey, bat towers, I'm descending, landing at Quartermaster base, I know he's right behind me.

Q. What is the amount of time, about, from passing bat towers until you're touching down?
A. I would say, I would say about a song and a half. So I go off by songs, like, as far as the passengers and stuff like -- it gets awkward when they don't sing -- hear anything. But I would say about four, five minutes, so --
Q. And so that's adequate time. If you've touched down and you hear somebody saying, I've just passed bat towers, that's enough time for you to shut down --
A. Yeah. Definitely yeah. And then of course -- I mean, since I've been here a year, you pick up little things, like, okay, how far it's going to be at. And of course, every time I cross the river to land here, I always have to see how close the other guy behind me is. I could see his pulse lights, how far he is, stuff like that. And that kind of gives me a good judge. So he won't be right behind me if I have to slow it down, if I have to do a go-around or whatever, you know?
Q. And are you, are you making calls saying, don't shut down; I'm right behind you?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. And then, so if you're coming in, are those calls always made? You know, the don't shut down; I'm right behind you, or --
A. If he -- if you have any doubt that he's going to be close to you while you're shutting down. You know, I always call the other

guy. Hey, how long? I'm about to shut down. And he'll tell me, I'll slow it down, or just wait till I get there, or stuff like that.

Q. Okay. So let's say you've had that communication. Are you still watching his blades as you're coming in, or are you trusting that he's -- okay.

A. Yeah. Oh yeah, definitely. Yeah.

Q. So you're not, you're not necessarily just relying on his word that he (indiscernible).

A. No, no, no. Yeah, you're -- I'm always watching.

Q. So what would happen if you were coming in and then you noticed that, you know, the aircraft was starting to shut down right near the pad that you were going to land? What would you do?

A. What I've done a couple times is, if I have -- let's say if I'm coming in through the river, I know I'm going to land there and he's still going to be shutting down, I'll pick another spot, probably even do a go-around or something, you know, so --

Q. Okay. Would you try to slow down, or is that --

A. If I have enough time. If I'm, like, on the other side of the river, yeah, I'll slow down.

Q. Okay. And do you feel like there's adequate time to make -- have those communications on the radio, or is it too, you know, I don't know how frequent (indiscernible)?

A. There are, sort of, spots that I don't, I don't touch the

radios. Even if you guys will call me, if I'm coming short on final, obviously my hands are on the controls and stuff. But if I have plenty of time, let's say, if I'm on the other side of the river -- I'm not sure if you've been down there, but if I'm on the other side of the river, I have plenty of time to switch over. Hey, I'm coming in, or whatever. Go back to the regular canyon frequency.

Q. Okay, so you're on the canyon frequency. You'd switch over to the Papillon frequency and --

A. Yes, there's an EC -- so we have three different radios. There's one for us, only us Papillon up there. There's the canyon frequency that we talk to everybody in the canyon. And then of course we have our base frequency that I communicate back here in Boulder.

Q. So how is the -- explain to me -- this is probably written somewhere that I could look it up, but I'd appreciate it if you explain. So there's a base frequency; so you're talking to the tower. And then there's another just pilot-to-pilot frequency?

A. So we have three radios in there. One, like you were saying, we call the EC freq, the EC-130 freq. And that's the one that we talk to. We communicate with everybody up in the air. Only Papillons. So only Papillon's frequency. And that's when I talk to, hey, slow blades or whatever, I'm coming in too fast, or I'm going around, or how's the winds looking?

There's the second radio that is going to be the Grand Canyon

West frequency. Or if we're in Lake Mead, that's going to be our open frequency. And that's the one giving my position reports, what altitude on that, where I'm going. Talking to the other companies; for example, Maverick, Sundance, stuff like that.

And then our third radio is going to be our FM radio or our frequency that we communicate with base back here. So either with tower or with our lead pilots or whatever, so --

Q. Okay. And so you have three radios. You could have all of those frequencies dialed in, like, tuned in, and then you just switch.

A. Yes. Yeah, there's options where we can actually have all three listening at one time. So I could be on one frequency -- for example, on the Grand Canyon frequency -- and I could hear the other guys talking to me on the EC, on the EC frequencies, so --

Q. Okay. Or you can just isolate and listen to one --

A. Correct.

Q. -- frequency. And so you're only on the Canyon West frequency from that time that you're in the canyon, and then after that it's just the two frequencies?

A. No, no, no. I'm sorry. Well we actually -- so the one that we're in the canyon, and that's the one our -- frequency to talk to everybody else, I can't really -- I can't find the words. But when we're in the canyon, we talk to the frequency inside the Grand Canyon. When we're out in the open -- for example, in Lake Mead frequency -- we talk to the aircraft out there. And then of

course, if you're in Vegas, we're on the Vegas frequency.
Q. Okay. And so when do you -- when you say "in the canyon," is that the canyon west frequency, or is that something different?
A. Yes. In the canyon. Yeah. As we're coming in, we kind of have a little spot we call Pearce Ferry right before the canyon. That's when I give both my calls. I give the Lake Mead frequency saying, hey, I'm at this point. Everybody knows, or should know, that I'm going to be changing over, but I give my last call. Hey, I'm here; I'm going to be heading east to the canyon. And then I switch over to the Grand Canyon frequency and I tell them, hey, I'm here and I'm continuing to the canyon. So both sides --
Q. And then you monitor that. You're on that frequency --
A. Yes.
Q. -- the whole time that you're in the canyon.
A. And then when I get out of the canyon, which -- we have another spot where we exit the canyon. Once again, I make my last canyon call that I'm at the canyon; I'm going to -- about to leave. And then I switch over to the Lake Mead frequency. And I'm here in the canyon but I'm leaving, heading eastbound, or I'm heading west. Whatever.
Q. Got it. Thank you for explaining that.
A. Yeah, no problem. I still don't get it. Sounds like -- yeah, that's -- we have our routes and procedures.
MS. WILSON: Great. That's all the questions I have.
BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. David, tell your background. Where did you get the majority of your flight training?
A. I started flight training in Phoenix, Arizona. It is the school, flight school -- it's called UH. Universal Helicopters. Out in Scottsdale -- they have about six, seven locations. One location is the one in Scottsdale where I trained at. I was there -- started in January 2014 and finished my training the end of 2015. And then I worked there as flight instructor.
Q. And is it from 22, 44 --
A. That's correct.
Q. What other aircraft are you checked out in here at Papillon?
A. Here in Papillon, I have -- I'm checked out on the EC-130 B4, the T2, the AS-350 B2 and the B3.
Q. Okay. Overall, what do you -- what's your impression of the overall training program here at, here at Papillon? Mainly for a new hire, when you came on back in -- was it 2017?
A. Yes, correct.
Q. How would you characterize the training, the quality of training?
A. Good, good. Good training.
Q. In your training, were you exposed to what they call scenario-based training?
A. Here in, here in Papillon?
Q. Yeah.

A. As far as scenarios, yeah. They would actually give us scenario-based training.
Q. Could you give me an example of what scenario --
A. For example, when we were learning our emergency procedures, and they said, hey, you have an amber governor light come on and you're at Benelli (ph.) Bay, one of our reporting stations that we have out there. What do you do? Do you continue on to the canyon? Do you just ignore it? Do you call base? What would you do, you know? And that's -- those are the situations they would actually tell us.
Q. And in the training, how did you do performance-type training and put that to practical use? In other words, whether it's weight, whether it's different aircraft configurations, how did you, how did you go about that?
A. As far as, like, the scenario questions that they would give me when I was in training? Like, did I fly that?
A. Yeah, so -- right. Exactly.
Q. I think I did pretty -- I think I do pretty well. I mean, obviously when you're a first -- when you first start out, there's a lot of questions that you ask. And you're always, you're always kind of like, should I do this, or this and that? But since I've been here for a while, I am a lot more comfortable, where if I don't feel comfortable flying with this governor light or there's something in the aircraft that I feel -- the EP (ph.) says to continue flight or something and I feel something that doesn't

feel right, I'm going to land, you know. Or just little things like that.

Q. Did you do confined area training when you, when you first hired on, and as well as recurrent training?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. Okay, and did you use the Quartermaster for some of that training?

A. Not for training landing at confined areas. We would practice our confined areas just south of Boulder City out here. So out in the open.

Q. Okay, but part of the route check you did --

A. Oh yes. Correct. Yeah. Yeah, we did actually train as far as our route training out there.

Q. Okay. What other type emergency procedures besides autorotations did you -- were you exposed to, either in ground school or in flight training?

A. And we're just talking about Papillon here, correct? We're not --

Q. Yes, yes.

A. So they would tell me, for example, that we'll be flying, and all of a sudden, for example, like, the instructor says, hey, you know, we hit a bird. And all of a sudden, he does a scenario where maybe I lost my tail rudder. You know, what do you do in that situation? Okay. And then I would explain it, and if he wanted me to do the procedure or something, I would, I would go

ahead and do it. Or all of a sudden, it's like, hey, your oil pressure looks low. What would you do, you know? All right, well, I'm going to look at my engine pressure light and, you know, so forth.

Q. Okay. Did you -- were you specifically trained, whether it's ground school or flight training, loss of tail-rotor effectiveness and settling with power?

A. So yes. They did train us. They did, they did explain it to us. So we didn't teach it in the air, but we did go over it as far as scenarios, EPs, what it is on the ground.

Q. Okay. On that diagram, can you point out which way the wind were coming -- were out of when the accident happened?

A. So the winds was -- like I said, the windsock is here, so the wind was coming in in this direction, so -- and like I said, the winds would kind of shift. So like in this direction. So the windsock, you would sometimes see it being in this direction, and then look at it again and it'll be in this direction. But in this general area is where --

Q. So in other words, as it pointed -- coming toward me.

A. Yes, correct.

Q. Okay. And where was the accident aircraft?

A. The accident would be, like, in this area right here.

Q. Okay. And which direction -- I mean, you didn't see it, but which direction do you believe that aircraft was moving?

A. As far as --

Q. Which direction was that aircraft intending to land?
A. Intending to land? So he was actually trying to land upriver, but for what I pictured, I believe he was actually trying to go inside the canyon, this little notch or whatever, and turn around and land into the wind, or at least have crosswind as he came in landing.
MR. FIGLIA: All right, that's all I have.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Burl?
MR. BOYD: I have nothing.
BY MR. WAUGH:
Q. Have you experienced wind shear in a helicopter?
A. There's been a couple of times when, I mean, you could feel a little bit of turbulence and stuff like that.
Q. Okay. Have you ever experienced it at Quartermaster?
A. The common place where I could, where I could -- where I felt it is as we climb the wall of Quartermaster to get out of the canyon. So that's when --
Q. That is Quartermaster canyon itself?
A. Um-hum. That's when you would feel -- that's when I would feel a couple of -- bumpiness there.
Q. All right. And is there anything peculiar about landing at Quartermaster if the wind is upriver or if it's blowing downriver that has to be done different than -- as far as technique or procedure or anything like that?
A. No. I mean, for the most part, for the most part, if the

wind is coming -- because that's like a little -- it's like a little, it's like a little wind tunnel for the wind, you know? There's not too many places the wind could go. It's either going to come in this direction where there's a huge hole, or it's going to come in in this direction, kind of deal. So I mean, there's either land this direction or land that direction. There's not too much where it's kind of just, like, an open area.

MR. WAUGH: That's it.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Okay. I'm going to have you, if I could -- if you can draw by moving these dots and show me where all the pads are actually located.

A. So just put the circles on where the pads are?

Q. Um-hum.

A. Okay, so --

Q. So of the east ones and then of the west ones.

A. I see. Okay. So here's one right here.

Q. Do you need more of those? Is there (indiscernible).

A. No, I mean, like, we land all on top here.

Q. And then for the accident area, with that, where would you think that the pads that were open were? I can give you a different view too. So if that's you --

A. Yeah, this is -- and this is the part where it kind of gets a little blurry. Because like I said, I only remember these two helicopters here: the gold one, and then Venita here. I really

don't remember --
Q. But if you were flying in, where would you think the open pads were?
A. So I would actually be like -- the open pads would be, like, in these -- out here. And then of course, if you have enough room where this aircraft scoots up a little bit, you could also put one right there.
Q. So are there any back here?
A. Yeah, I mean, you could also land back here.
Q. You can't -- do you guys go that far back?
A. We can. But I mean, that's if we have, like, 12 helicopters, something like that so --
Q. At the most, how much does it fill up?
A. At the most? I mean --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- I would say about, like, 12 has been the most that I've ever seen it down there. So there might be more, but -- and then of course it all depends. For example, like, these helicopters in front, if they have -- if one lands in one area and then all of a sudden another helicopter lands but lands way shorter a little longer, leaves a huge gap in there, obviously there's a lot less room for the aircraft right behind them.
Q. Got it.
MS. KELIHER: All right, I don't have anything.
MR. GUTIERREZ: Is that the day of the accident?

MS. KELIHER: This is from -- as best as I can tell, of how I've labeled all of you guys by canyon time and where you were all located. And then I got pictures and video from all of the people that I could get a hold of that were on your helicopters, and piecing it all together. And I didn't know if there was any pads back there--

MR. GUTIERREZ: There is one back here. So this is where I landed. Pollyanna. And then there's one back here that -- it's really not too hard to see -- yeah, sorry, I kind of touched it, but there's really one that's really hard to see, but there is one back there.

MS. KELIHER: Okay. And so from here, would there be a spot possibly next to --

MR. GUTIERREZ: Yeah.

MS. KELIHER: Okay. All right, I don't have any other questions.

MS. WILSON: Anyone else?

Anything that we didn't ask you that you were hoping we would ask you, or anything you think would be helpful to our investigation?

MR. GUTIERREZ: Not really. I feel like I didn't really -- I was down there, and of course I was kind of helping bring waters and stuff. But as far as seeing the accident, I didn't see anything until it was on the ground. Yeah. There's really not too much.

MS. WILSON: Well if you think of anything, don't hesitate to get a hold of John Becker, and he can contact Zoe and I.

MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay.

MS. WILSON: Thanks so much.

MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Appreciate it.

(Whereupon, at 5:12 p.m. PDT, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

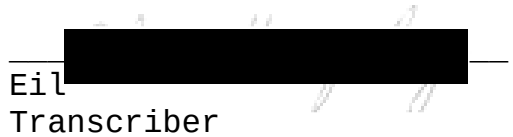
IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of David Gutierrez

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2018

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.



Eil
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*
	*
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	*
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	* Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	*
	*

Interview of: JOHN BECKER

Boulder City Airport
Boulder City, Nevada

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOË KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration
(Observing)

THOMAS TOBIN, Attorney
Wilson Elser
(On behalf of John Becker)
New York, New York

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:20 a.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Thank you, everyone, for being here again today.

This interview is part of our fact-finding phase of the investigation of the February 10th accident.

I am Katherine Wilson. I am the Human Perform Investigator on this investigation. We'll go around the room and allow everybody to introduce themselves. We'll start with Zoë.

MS. KELIHER: I'm Zoë Keliher with the NTSB for operations.

MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FAA, Las Vegas.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety, Airbus.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA, Las Vegas.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety, Papillon.

MS. WILSON: Great. And as a part of this interview, you're entitled to have one person represent you. Is there someone you would like to have?

MR. BECKER: Yes, Thomas Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Great. And what we'd like to do is we'd like to record this interview so that we have -- we are able to create a transcript of this interview that will then become a part of our public docket. It that okay?

MR. TOBIN: Yes.

MS. WILSON: Great. So our role here is strictly from the safety side. We don't do any enforcement action or place blame. So we strictly want to understand what happened as a part of this

investigation to prevent it from happening again.

Is there any questions that you have for us before we get started?

MR. BECKER: Not yet.

MS. WILSON: If you don't understand a question, please ask us to clarify. If you don't understand or if you don't know the answer to a question, I don't know if perfectly fine.

MR. BECKER: Okay.

MS. WILSON: For the record, can you please state your full name?

MR. BECKER: John Edwin Becker.

MS. WILSON: Great. And Zoë will start the questioning.

INTERVIEW OF JOHN BECKER

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Good morning, John.

A. Good morning, Zoë.

Q. Can you tell me how long you've been at Papillon in your role here and job description?

A. I started working at Papillon in July of 1994. So that puts me, this is my, I believe, 25th season with the company. And my current role is as the chief operating officer for Papillon, as well as the director of operations.

Q. And if you were to advertise for this position for somebody to take over for you, in your upcoming retirement, what would you describe as what you do to them and what they're going to be

signed up for, as your role?
A. What is my role in the company?
Q. Um-hum.
A. I oversee operations for the company. I oversee our manuals. I oversee numerous employees in their duties.
Q. So the person that's going to be replacing you, what are they going to be -- what is all the things that when you say manuals and overseeing, how would you describe to them what your day in and day out is? What should they be expecting?
A. It's a very complex position, that covers many bases. I want to make sure that we operate this company safely first and foremost. I want to make sure that we comply with all FAA regulations. I want to make sure that we maintain our fleet professionally and that we oversee our operations on all our duties that we perform. It's a very complex position.
Q. And who do you directly report to?
A. I report to Geoff Edlund, the president of the company, and follow on to the chief executive officer, Brenda Halvorson.
Q. How much are you in communications with them?
A. Constant.
Q. And what areas are you discussing with them?
A. I'm not sure what you're asking.
Q. What are you talking about all the time? You're in constant communication with them.
A. We talk about the operations of this company as a whole. I

mean it differs from day-to-day.
Q. So from your GOM, I took an org chart and it has CEO and then the next line over is the director of safety, director of operations and then the president.
A. Um-hum. The current -- I'm not sure that you have a current organizational chart.
Q. Okay.
A. Okay. Geoff Edlund has been promoted to the president of the company, and I answer to both him and Brenda Halvorson.
Q. Okay. And so then the director of maintenance now reports to Geoff as well?
A. Yes.
Q. So no reporting to you or there's no --
A. There's no direct report between me and Luis Garcia, the director of maintenance. We communicate obviously on a day-to-day basis.
Q. And how does Burl fit into that?
A. Burl answers directly to the chief executive officer of the company, Brenda Halvorson.
Q. Okay. So you are all separate prongs?
A. Yes.
Q. Luis, yourself --
A. Burl does not answer to me.
Q. Luis, yourself and Burl.
A. Um-hum.

Q. How much interaction do you have with the FAA, your POI?
A. I have him on speed dial. I communicate with Paul all the time.
Q. And does he have an assistant that you communicate with as well?
A. No, all my communication for the most part is with Paul.
Q. And I know that you don't live in the area, but how often are you actually at (indiscernible)?
A. I'm here weekly. My week differs based on what I've got going on in my day-to-day schedule. I could be here on Monday and then on Wednesday, I go back home and spend the night and go up to the South Rim of the Canyon and spend two days there. It could be that I spend a week at the South Rim and then the following week, I may spend a week here but it depends on the needs of the company and where I need to be.
Q. And who dictates where you need to be?
A. Both me and Brenda. If I feel I need to be somewhere, I talk to my boss, and I say, I think I need to be at the South Rim. So I'll be there this week, and she's fine with that. She might say that, well, I do need you here for a meeting on Wednesday. It could be an insurance renewal. It could be one of many different things that she wants my support on, and I'll be over here for that.
Q. So are you the highest -- does she go to you for more of the helicopter operations?

A. I am only on the helicopter certificate.
Q. And is -- I guess what I'm trying to see is, how -- why she's always having to contact you because obviously there's many different parts of this company, but every time she has anything helicopter related, it's basically from your desk?
A. Me or my team.
Q. Yeah, but you're the first in line and then you delegate?
A. Well, it's the president of the company which is Geoff and then me on operations.
Q. So does Geoff have a lot to do with the helicopter operations as well?
A. Yes, he's the president of the company.
Q. Okay. So how is his familiarity with helicopter operations and such?
A. How did Geoff come into the company?
Q. Well, how is his familiarity? I know you've been here 25 years and have a lot --
A. Geoff's been here for seven years. He grew up with the Halvorson family around helicopters his whole life. He worked for the company years, years ago when he was going to college. Nothing's given to anything in the Halvorson family. If you know them, they've got to prove themselves.
When he graduated college, he would have liked nothing more than to come work for the company, and the company told him to go out and prove himself. He went out into the real estate business

and was extremely successful in the real estate business.

And when we started doing succession planning for the company, it was time to bring in the third generation. She offered him a position in the company which he accepted, and he went through an 18-month training program that I helped develop where he worked in every single department of this company. He worked in customer service, transportation, did the job. It was very beneficial to him because he got a chance not only to learn how the company was, but learn how a decision in one department affects another department.

It also had the ability to get him face-to-face time with all the employees to get to know him. So when he was elevated 18 months, 2 years later, into the general manager's position, everybody system-wide knew who he was and he knew what their jobs were and how that related in the company.

So it was a two year program for him to train to be the general manager and follow on several years later to become the president. I will say that he's a very good student, and he's extremely motivated. And he's very intelligent, and he's very good at what he does.

Q. How has your job changed since him coming in?

A. Well, it helps to relieve some of the pressures I guess here. He's a very approachable person. We have an open door policy. So he has a lot of employees who come in and talk to him on a regular basis, but I think that he adds another level of management to the

company to help manage it as the company grows. So it's been a positive impact on me.

Q. Speaking of growth, can you kind of walk me through the last 25 years of how it started and what it's become?

A. Yeah. Papillon -- when I joined the company, Papillon, I believe we had 12 helicopters. We were operating off of the strip at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. At that particular point, we were only flying the Bell 206 copters. We had Jet Rangers, and we had Long Rangers, both the L1 and the L3. Some of them had a C28 engine in them. Some of them had a C30 engine in them.

And I watched that grow into our fleet of helicopters now which is 56 helicopters. We're flying the AS350 B3e, the AS350 B2, EC130 B4 and T2 and the Bell 206. We do have one MD-900 on contract. So the growth of the fleet was large. The growth of the bases that we operate were far. At that point, when I joined the company, Papillon helicopters also operated on all the Islands down in Hawaii. The family tells me that it got difficult for them to travel back and forth to Hawaii all the time. So they sold that operation in '93-'94 timeframe to Crescent Airways who liquidated the company.

And we had an opportunity to look locally, when I say locally, on the mainland, we looked into New York for expansion and we decided that wasn't a good idea. And then we looked at Las Vegas, and Las Vegas kind of fit our model.

Okay. At the same time that was going on, I was taking

helicopters, working in the utility world as well as the tourism world of Papillon. And we grew the utility division.

We had had the National Park Service contract several times over the years, 1965, and we were able to get that contract back. I was operating a helicopter at the time down in Tucson, and I was procuring contracts for the company. So there was Tucson Electric Power which is a power line company down there where we do power line patrols with them.

Southwest Helicopters who was operating out of Tucson at the time had a contract with Arizona Game and Fish which was a lucrative contract. They flew about 1,000 hours a year with four Bell 206 helicopters doing animal surveys, animal capture, development, long line work. So we were able to get into that market.

And it just kind of spring loaded from there with contracts with U.S. Forest Service, contracts with Department of the Interior, contracts with Bureau of Land Management, and other agencies, the Bar 10 Ranch, pulling people off the river. We were doing (indiscernible) at the time. Call when needed, DOI on call. So back then it was aircraft rental agreement, ARA contracts with the Government. And then after about three years of doing that, Brenda said that she wanted me to manage that portion of the company.

Q. What year was that? Around.

A. It was in the late '90s. So I hired on in '94. I would say

'97, '98 timeframe. I was in the lead pilot position/utility operations/contract pilot. I was flying the MD-900 when we got that contract in the National Park Service, doing everything up through short haul on that. I was a game capture pilot. I was one of the few pilots in the United States that could capture endangered species. So they have a subspecies in the Cabeza Prieta down in Southern Arizona called the Sonoran Pronghorn. So we did capture work on them and capture work on big horn sheep and stuff like that. So it was a multiple of things that we did.

It was good for me, because it prepared me for this job because there's not very many jobs that we do in the tourism business or in the utility business that I haven't done myself. So I know pitfalls along the way, and I can guide people on what they should do and what areas to avoid, that kind of thing.

Q. Were you just on a 133 certificate?

A. No, we had a 135 certificate, a 137 certificate, and a 133 certificate to do that because it was required by contract. Also that is the timeframe that we started to come into the Las Vegas market as well, and I was one of the first pilots to start up this operation with, who the director of operations at that point was, Rick Carrick.

Q. And how many people were at this base during this time?

A. I can't remember. We started it with two Bell 206 helicopters early on.

Q. Right here?

A. No, it wasn't here in Boulder City. It was in Las Vegas McCarran.
Q. And that was the late '90s?
A. That was the late '90s, yes.
Q. So now focusing just on the tours, so late '90s, it was two Bell 206s out of McCarran?
A. Yeah, it was a strange time. The concierges on the strip pretty much controlled the business. They didn't like people sitting aft facing, going from Las Vegas in on hot days. So they more were Optisell (ph.), a forward facing seat in an AS350 or EC130 at the time. So the Bells didn't work out very well here. So the Bells went back to the South Rim, and we started to get into the Eurocopter business.
Q. When you say the concierges, I keep hearing this kind of -- some people -- businesses are concierges and some businesses are not.
A. Yeah.
Q. What does that mean?
A. There's several ways that customers come to us. Customers come to us on the internet. We're very strong internet based. We've got a salesman marketing team that's very robust. They speak seven languages between the two of them, and they go worldwide talking to bus companies and airlines and stuff, for people that are traveling into the United States. A large portion of our business is international travel. So they bring them in.

So you can book on the internet or there's hotels that have concierges in them, right, bell captains and such as that, and they also at that time, because it's not a strong part of our business right now. I think if you look around the industry, and you talk to the other operators, they've got a grip on a certain part of the industry's clients, right, that they cater to. Maverick is a high end client. So they're looking for the high rollers and they sell that product high end and they're very active with the hotels and the bell desks. Our business is more internet based and consumer direct.

Q. So obviously in the late '90s, it wasn't (ph.) internet based. How did that come to be?

A. You know, I really wasn't -- I really wasn't in senior management at that point. The person that was running this base was the director of operations at the time, Rick Carrick.

Q. And so how -- take us through the '90s and how you decided? Was it just because of the front facing seats of how the fleet kind of built and how --

A. No. Well, quiet technology was a big thing. Noise issues were very big in the Grand Canyon. There is very few helicopters available. I will tell you that Papillon was forward facing and they were pushing quiet technology in the industry to the point where the owner of the company developed his own quiet technology helicopter, the S55QT. And that particular helicopter is -- there's three of them that are in service today still. I don't

know exactly what they're doing because I'm not associated with that part of the business, but I'll tell you that Elling developed the quietest helicopter in the world that was tested by NASA that pushed the industry into quiet technology, and I think that when he was getting with Blue Hawaiian and Sundance and Papillon, they approached all the companies at the time, and Eurocopter was the only one other than MD, McDonnell Douglas at the time, who were looking to quiet technology.

So MD had the NOTAR system which is what we fly in the Grand Canyon for the Grand Canyon National Park, the MD-900, and Eurocopter at the time, was dealing with the Fenestron tail rotor and the EC130 before. And that is quiet, and those are the airframes that -- and when we were there also, we told them what we needed on a tour ship. We needed visibility outside. We needed forward facing seating. We needed theater style seating where passengers in the back seat had a view and Eurocopter at the time was very active in developing a helicopter that would fit our needs and that works great. And if you look around the industry now, at the Blue Hawaiians and Mavericks and Papillons of the world, it's a very popular tourism ship.

Q. At what point was it decided that it would be better to have more people on a ship than doing R22 tours back and forth --

A. We never flew R22 but I don't know when the decisions were made. That was management before me.

Q. And so when you got into management, how much were you

dealing with the financial decisions of purchasing and acquiring more and more helicopters?

A. I still to this day am not involved in purchasing decisions for this company. The ownership decides what they want. They might come to me and ask me questions about a particular aircraft or what I think about it, but they -- I am not involved in the financial decisions of buying and selling the aircraft.

Q. Well, I'm assuming, which might be wrong, correct me, when they're making decisions about purchasing aircraft, it's what do you see the demand is, how do you see the industry going, which I assume that they're going to do that.

A. I can give you an example of when I had involvement in purchasing of an aircraft. We needed an aircraft that was going to be able to work out of Grand Canyon West doing our elevator flights from the top to the bottom. I insisted that that aircraft has to be left-hand drive. I thought it was a safety concern or there was some risk that maybe we wouldn't want to take. If we were going to purchase new aircraft, we needed them built for our needs. So I decided that a left-hand drive helicopter would be number one, keep controls away from the passengers, right. So that was a good thing. That was a safety plus for us. It was a lot more expensive I believe at the time. It was a 60, $70,000 change out for the aircraft when you're purchasing it to have the aircraft outfitted to be a left-hand drive rather than a right-hand drive. But if you look at a B3e left-hand drive front seat,

you have two full seats in the front for passengers to sit. If you look at a right-hand drive B3e or B2, it's kind of a seat and a half because your controls are in the middle of the helicopter and the collective and throttle is available for manipulation by a passenger possibly inadvertently.

Okay. We also -- so you had the safety aspect of the left-hand drive, keeping the controls isolated to the pilot. You had the comfort of having two full seats for passengers sitting in the front seat, and you also had commonality in the fleet because standardization was big with me. I learned reading articles about Southwest Airlines, how they went through the 737, and they standardized every cockpit. It was my goal to get as absolutely standardized as we could. So having a left-hand drive B3e as well as an EC130, it made sense. So that was the fleet mix.

Moving forward, we made a decision that the EC130 and the AS350 would be the fleet moving forward, one manufacturer. There's cost savings there. But it takes time when you've got 50 some helicopters to retrofit.

Also, we have quiet technology issues that we were dealing with, and we needed to be able to have an aircraft that met the needs of the Grand Canyon National Park for all the flights to be quiet by the year 2027 which is a requirement under the SFAR.

The other thing I would say is that a lot of people told me that it was a bad idea to outfit the aircraft left-hand drive because a B3e was also a very popular aircraft in the industry for

utility work, right. So when you're doing long line work, it's a little bit easier to long line out of the aircraft on the right-hand side than it is the left-hand side because of the way the aircraft sits, and it's easier to see a line beneath the helicopter at 50 foot, 100 foot, 150 foot, but we found out that it was a training issue, and we were able to train our pilots all the way up through short haul in the AS350 B3e. It wasn't as big a problem as they were making it out to be. We do it all the time now. We've got several pilots that are short haul pilots that do live short haul missions for the National Park and Forest Service.

Q. So why the decision of not just sticking with all Astars and even adding the EC130s?

A. Well, the EC130 is a requirement for the Grand Canyon National Park. Remember, we are a tour company. It's a wider aircraft. It's a more comfortable aircraft. So that aircraft made sense plus the Grand Canyon National Park requires quiet aircraft technology by the year 2027. So anybody flying the Grand Canyon in the year 2027, has to be flying what is a quiet technology aircraft and the Grand Canyon National Park has designated the EC130 as quiet technology in an aircraft that meets that requirement. And that's by law.

Q. And the Astar doesn't qualify?

A. The Astar does not qualify.

Q. So what are you going to plan on doing --

A. Okay. So the utility side of the house would also be using

Astars because the EC130 is not a good utility aircraft. It's not a popular aircraft with the industry. The Bell 206 is being phased out because it doesn't have the performance of the AS350 and when we're doing up and downs for the boat product out of Grand Canyon West, the AS350 is a better ship for that.

Q. How is that going to change in 2027?

A. The west end of the Grand Canyon is not regulated on the Hualapai Reservation because it doesn't enter the SFAR. If you look at a map --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- the Grand Canyon and follow the boundary --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- there's a notch at the end of the Grand Canyon that is uncontrolled airspace and that's not -- you don't have to have quiet technology operating at the west end of the Grand Canyon.

Q. Were you part of organizing with the Hualapai Tribe of getting Quartermaster and how that negotiation goes?

A. I was not involved in negotiations but I was one of the first pilots to operate. I've got thousands of hours of operating out of the Quartermaster Helo Base with the Bell 206 helicopter because in '97, '98, '99 timeframe. Back in those days, we would go out there and we'd service the west end of the Grand Canyon for up and downs, from the South Rim, and we'd fly four to six helicopters out there daily. We'd haul 4 to 600 passengers a day. We didn't do the river product initially. We were just up top.

We had some (indiscernible) client that we were working with and we would bring six people down to the bottom. We had loaders down at the bottom. They would get out of the helicopter and walk around the landing site. We'd go back up top, get six more. You bring them six back, load the other six back up and it was just kind of an elevator flight back and forth, but we've operated out of there since 1997 if my dates are correct.

Q. And then when did you start operating out of Boulder City?

A. I'm not sure of the date we started. I'm not sure when we actually started operating on the Boulder City Airport. I can get that date for you.

Q. Like approximate year?

A. 2000 -- I'm not going to give you a date because I can't give you the exact date.

Q. And when you did start, was it this building? What facilities here?

A. No. It was I believe Lake Mead Air is who we bought this -- the lease from and operated over at the pilot side of the house where you were doing interviews yesterday.

Q. And how many helicopters started at this base?

A. I don't remember.

Q. And when you started over here, what was your position, when Boulder City started?

A. I never was officially based out of Boulder City. When I became the director of operations, it became my responsibility as

well, and I started coming over here to oversee this operation as well.

Q. So just for clarity, can you walk me through the different titles that you've had since being here?

A. I was initially a seasonal pilot from July until about November of 1994. I was asked by the company at that time, because I lived in Tucson, to take a helicopter and see if there was business opportunities for that helicopter in Tucson over the winter because there's a large population of people that visit in the wintertime. It's a very popular, they call them snowbirds down there.

So the initial plan was to go down there and do air tours of the Tucson area. We had two different tours. We had a 30 minute tour and a 1 hour tour that kind of fit with our business plan here.

The short tour went over old Tucson Studios and the Tucson Mountains and kind of circled the city, over the bone yard which is a very -- it's where the military puts all their aircraft, and it came back into Spirit Aviation on the international airport. It was a FBO, and that's where we landed.

The long tour did all that plus went out to the Biosphere in Oro Valley and showed people the Biosphere, came over the top of Mount Lemon, showed the ski resort and then we came back down through town and landed. That was an hour tour.

It was clear that there was business for that, but there

wasn't -- it wasn't a good business plan that was going to be able to supply the needs that we needed. So I started looking towards the utility market, and that's when I started picking up contracts with Tucson Electric Power. I wasn't --

Q. What was your job title during --

A. Pilot.

Q. Okay.

A. Pilot. The business, I wasn't writing contracts. I was calling Rick Carrick and sending him papers saying here's a business opportunity, right, and I would send it to him and the company would bid the contract, and we were very successful at it. Just about everything we put our hands on was good. We would get the contract for it. And then as that grew, I would go back to the South Rim in the summertime and do tours. And then in the wintertime, we moved the helicopter down to the Tucson area, I think it was a three year period that we would do that.

When I was back at the South Rim, they finally promoted me to lead pilot. So I was running day-to-day operations on the South Rim. And that fall, Brenda asked me if I would manage the utility division because it grew to a size that needed its own manager. So I managed that and flew then contracts for the company for some years.

Q. Right. What was the title?

A. Utility division.

Q. Manager?

A. Utility division manager.
Q. And then after that?
A. After that, I went to the director of operations position, and then I was made the chief operations officer after that. The actual years that that happened, I'd have to look at my history to figure out what those actual years are.
Q. What's the difference of when you were added on as having the title of COO? What other things were added to that as opposed to just director of operations? Responsibilities, what other duties?
A. It was -- the base had grown to several different bases. So even though director of operations is responsible for all of that, I started doing that. I started helping with budgets with the company, right, for all the different departments, and I started taking on other departments as well. So the flight line answered to me. For a while, the customer service counter answered to me, and as the company grew even more, then some of the departments were farmed out to other managers.
Q. How do you make budgets for --
A. I oversee -- I've got a very competent staff, okay, and they were taught how to do a budget. All right. So they know how many pilots -- we tell them how many craft we want on line a day. And then we determine what the staffing needs are going to be for them aircraft, and then they provide me with a budget for their payroll of what it's going to be so we can budget the year. The final approval of that and the ones who do that budget are Brenda and

Geoff.

Q. And when you're saying how many aircraft you need, that's all done with the skeleton quarter office check?

A. It changes every year. Some years we might decide that we're going to change it up a little bit where we're going to take some tours off and add tours. At one point, we discontinued doing a long tour in the Bell products, right. So we'd get more quiet technology aircraft in the Zuni Corridor, to get natural quiet back into the Zuni Corridor. So different aircraft, different requirements, different training.

Q. And are you making that decision?

A. No, the final decision is made by the president and CEO of the company.

Q. Are you presenting that to them?

A. Yes, they're asking me to do work that I complete and I give back to them.

Q. I guess I'm trying to figure out how you determine what tours you want to do.

A. It's a very moving target, very dynamic, depending on the needs of the industry, what the passenger is wanting to do and sales and marketing and those types of meetings are high end meetings by Brenda, and she tells me this is how many -- this is what I want the schedule to look like and that's what I do.

Q. Got it. And when you're hiring these competent people, how do you determine to hire I guess -- well, first of all, let's

start with who directly is under you?
A. Okay. The chief pilot answers to me, and I've got two chief pilots. I've got a chief pilot for the 119 certificate which is Simon, and I've got Mark Diamond who is the chief pilot for the South Rim Operation. Jeff Bubier who is the general manager for South Rim Operations. He's also the drug and alcohol coordinator for the company, and he also manages my fuel funds for me. Peggy Sterns is a customer service manager for South Rim. Ilse Harvey (ph.), human resources for South Rim. And you can look down the company org chart and you can see the people that answer to me there. The utility division manager answers to me for utility operations.
Q. All I have under here is flight line manager, chief pilot 119 and chief pilot South Rim and director of utility.
A. You're going to have to show me that.
Q. And so here, without any South Rim, who directly reports to you?
A. Simon Whiteley reports directly to me.
Q. Yeah.
A. He's the chief pilot.
Q. And no one else?
A. Simon Whitely reports to me from this side, yes.
Q. That's the only person.
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. And then how did you choose on hiring Simon?

A. At the time we had some turnover in the flight department. I'll tell you that the normal progression with Papillon, if you look to the company, are employees that do very well in the company and have shown themselves to be quality employees, are very good at their job. Okay. And so we try to promote from within.

Okay. At the time, I didn't -- my assistant chief pilot here, Joe Hernley (ph.) was the chief pilot and he was South Rim based, and I had an assistant chief pilot on this side, Mark Schlaefi.

Okay. Mark Schlaefi was offered a position away from the company with Sundance Helicopters as their chief pilot which followed on for him to be the director of operations for that company.

So I was looking to replace him. I didn't feel I had a suitable candidate at the time. So we went external and looked for somebody and Simon had very good qualifications. He was the assistant chief pilot for Air Methods. He was flying the EC130 and the AS350. He was a FAA designated check airman in those aircraft. He was -- he interviewed extremely well. His resume was very well. We liked his resume. We interviewed him two times before we pulled him back and offered him the position.

Q. And do you have any decision of who becomes lead pilot? Are you part of that --

A. Yes. I trust in my staff, Simon especially, right, and Mark

to interview good candidates, and when they have finalized who they would like, it's my final decision whether it's a good fit or not. And if they bring it to me and they sign off on him, unless there's something out of the ordinary that I don't agree with, that we will talk about, they pretty much decide who's going to be that person but I have buy in on who they choose.

Q. How has things changed on the front line since Mark left the company and Simon's come in?

A. Since Mark?

Q. Left, Mark Schlaefi.

A. Mark Schlaefi.

Q. Schlaefi.

A. Right. Well, the company's moving all the time. I'd have to sit down and think about all the changes. You're asking me on the spot to tell you what all the changes were. I'd have to sit down and get back to you on that, but there's been a lot of changes in this company. Since the accident, there's been a lot of changes in this company. When we make changes, we try to be forward moving. We try to think ahead. I think if you look at our industry and what our reputation is, I feel it's a very good reputation. I think it's a company that's always looking on enhancement of safety.

One of the things that we've done since that was moving the (indiscernible) over to the close proximity to the Delta taxiway and the possibility of something happening, and we moved the

(indiscernible) to the other side. But I don't know that I can pinpoint the actual changes. I can get back to you on it.

Q. All right. How many total helicopters does Papillon own?

A. Fifty-six.

Q. And how many are out of Boulder?

A. It's about a 50/50 mix between Boulder City aircraft and South Rim aircraft. Those are the two bases.

Q. So about 20?

A. Twenty-six, twenty-seven on each side.

Q. And how many total pilots?

A. I think we hire -- I think we gear up to 120 pilots between the two bases.

Q. And how many are out of Boulder?

A. I think again there's probably 70 at this side, and the remainder on the South Rim side.

Q. And how many passengers total per year?

A. System-wide --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is this confidential?

MR. BECKER: It very well could be.

MR. TOBIN: Could we agree that this would be marked confidential in the record, and it would not be part of your public disclosure if, in fact, it is confidential.

MS. KELIHER: I believe it's on their website. So I can put what's on the website, but what I'll do is have everything submitted before we put it open, and then it's -- you can say then

we can't release this information.

MR. BECKER: It's a hard number to come out with because, you know, on the utility division, we haul a lot of people, too, right, and we're not really tracking those numbers because it's a Government contract, but I would believe we're flying 350, 400,000 people a year. I don't know what that exact number is.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. And then how many are you flying under tours?

A. You're asking for a number. I'll have to get back to you with the exact number because I don't want to give you an incorrect number.

Q. Okay. Because basically it's standard for every operation to have a paragraph that goes something like this. Papillon has this many helicopters. This many are based out of Boulder City which haul this many passengers and this many do the tour that's exactly similar to --

A. Sales and marketing would be a good place for you to go to get those numbers. They track the numbers.

Q. Okay.

A. I track operations. I can tell you we fly over 50,000 hours a year.

Q. 50,000.

A. Helicopter flight hours annually.

Q. And how many of those are from Boulder?

A. I believe again the operation is about a 50/50 split.

Q. Okay. Do you know an estimate of how many of those are landings, that land in Boulder City?
A. It can vary depending on the needs of the client, what they want to do. So we have a yield manager that manages the yield. So if he sees a higher demand for landing tours, he'll change the schedule moving forward to open up availability for that particular product. If we have a higher demand for the Sky Walk product, right, which lines us up top, not at the bottom, he'll shift and he'll change the product line to that. If we have a higher demand for air tours without landings, we'll change the product and that's a moving target as well that he changes all the time.
Q. So something to note which we're going to be asked during the Board meeting and what we need to know, the question the public's going to ask is, well, how many times has this happened? How many landings has this happened prior to the accident? So.
A. We've never, since 1997, this was the first incident that we've had at the Quartermaster Landing Site.
Q. So they're going to say but how many landings was that? How many passengers? How many? So that's why I wanted to quantify --
A. Nobody's ever asked me how many landings were out there. We track flight hours, all right. So I'm sure that we can get into AL-Pro somehow and pull reports since we started.
Q. And we don't need an exact number, just to show this has been done 400,000 times before having an incident. It gives you more

of a Delta.
A. And what's the period of time you want me to research?
Q. Well, since operations. So how many passengers has Papillon taken to Quartermaster during the same type of flight as the accident flight? And how many passengers does that equate to?
A. Um-hum.
Q. If the company can advise how many passengers --
A. It's a large number. It's a very large number.
Q. So as far as choosing Quartermaster versus the other sides that the other companies have chosen, do you know how that decision was come to?
A. No. I was not involved in the operations of picking. I was a line pilot back in them days at South Rim. Rick Carrick was the one that did that, and figured out the contracts back then. That wasn't me. I have no clue.
Q. How much interaction do you and Burl have?
A. Burl and I talk all the time.
Q. And what type of discussions are between you? The operations side or the safety side.
A. Safety. Burl's got a responsibility to audit the company quarterly. Burl manages all of the external audits that the company, TOPS, IS-BAO, clients who come in that want to audit us, bus companies that want to come in and audit us. So we talk about those audits all the time, when they're scheduling them, how those things are going on. We converse on things that he might have

found within the company that need fixing, and we come up with a plan to get them fixed. He's very forward looking. So he's always looking for stuff that is a potential problem. So we're talking about that stuff all the time.

We talk about any irregularity reports, and he might have a irregularity report that requires my attention or a irregularity report that he hasn't gotten closed out and he needs my assistance in getting it closed out. So we talk about that stuff.

It's non-stop. If I need anything, I call Burl and we get it done. He also helps me post manuals. I take posting manuals very seriously. So I try to post manuals myself. There's so many manuals that I can't and because of my location, not being here five days a week, Burl handles the posting of all manuals here, to make sure the manuals are correct, and that we get everything posted.

Q. And what was your experience before starting with Papillon?

A. I was 20 years in the United States military. I was an enlisted solider for nine years. I was a staff sergeant when I went to flight school. When I went to flight school, I came out of there as a warrant officer, and was a line pilot, was an instructor pilot, was a senior instructor pilot, was a maintenance test pilot and maintenance officer, production control manager, and retired in 1994 and came to work for Papillon. And I'm very proud of the fact that I've had two jobs in my adult life.

Q. How do you see the company changing in the next 10 years?

A. I don't know what the growth is going to be. I don't know that the growth -- I don't know that we're interested in growth opportunities out of our local area. We always look for the possibility of growing the company. I see the company moving to a full Airbus fleet of EC130s and AS350 aircraft. Standardization would be very nice where you have less training, and less maintenance on different airframes. So that standardizing the company, moving forward, we're actively trying to do that as time permits.

We just added more management. So Simon is going to be elevated to the assistant director of operations position. Tyler Carver is going to be moved into the chief pilot's position, and we're interviewing right now.

I had an interview with David Oest who is an extremely competent young man, and we're looking at moving him into training director's position. So back to earlier, how we try to groom people from inside the company, move them, elevate them to management positions, because they know the company so well. They know the operations so well. It just is a good fit, and it's better than bring someone from the outside who doesn't know the company or the operations at all. So I see that happening.

I see some day that Simon will be the director of operations, and I will be in my elderly years, maybe a compliance officer for the company, to make sure that the bases are operating. There's some talk about splitting the certificate between two

certificates, having the South Rim on a separate certificate and this certificate. We do have a certificate with Air Grand Canyon that we could change to a helicopter 135 and have that up and running. So there will be some work to split that certificate and get our manuals together but we would want them to be as standardized as they possibly could be. So there would be a director of operations on the South Rim, a director of operations on the Boulder City side.

And then I would be the compliance officer to make sure those certificates and there's a lot of tribal knowledge that I've learned over the years I call it, and there's no pun intended there. But it's that there's a lot of knowledge within the company that I have that I need to pass on. So we are looking right now very actively at transitioning the company for when some of the senior people of the company start to depart, so we leave a very vibrant, safe company behind.

So I'm working very hard with Simon right now to pass a lot of that knowledge onto him and to Mark on the South Rim side, and to my utility on the South Rim side because I've held that position as well, to get them guys up and running, so that when my time comes to retire, I can step away from the company knowing that I left a strong company behind.

So everybody that works for Papillon should have somebody that they're mentoring to take their position when they either move up in the company or move out of the company. So on the

South Rim, I've got a young man named Rusty, and he's very -- he comes from Hillsboro (ph.) that has a very strong safety culture in their company and SMS program. And he's a natural fit and I'm already sending him to school to be able to replace Burl when Burl departs the company, and he's excited that he might have that opportunity moving forward.

I have like I said, Tyler, to take Simon's position, have Simon to take my position.

MR. TOBIN: I'm sorry to interrupt. Is this confidential?

MR. BECKER: Well, I don't want the public knowing that we're getting ready to split certificates.

MR. TOBIN: That's why I asked.

MS. KELIHER: So the things that we will have can be redacted out and labeled -- blacked out and labeled.

MR. TOBIN: (Indiscernible) okay with that.

MS. KELIHER: Before it ever comes to the public, it's given to every respective -- and I'm assuming you'll be going through everything with a fine tooth comb.

MR. TOBIN: I'm sorry to interrupt. It just made me nervous. Go ahead.

MR. BECKER: Okay.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Okay.

A. You asked about the changes.

Q. I guess now we're --

A. You asked me -- I was about to say it anyway, right. So we very well possibly might do that. We're looking at that internally. So it would be a change to the company.

We're looking at outfitting the EC130, AS350 fleet. Other than that, those are the changes that I see moving forward.

Q. Do you see there ever being a change down the future, this could be many, many years, of a different landing spot or different type of tour or different (indiscernible) going to a different part of the Grand Canyon?

A. You're asking me to speculate, and I don't know.

Q. Let me -- because you've been flying here for so long, are there other areas, are there different things that you've had ideas, of why do we keep doing the same thing, just because we've been doing it --

A. That would be confidential information because if that did come public, then all my competitors would say, that's a great idea. Why don't we do this? I'm not looking right now, nor do I know of the Halvorson family looking at a new venue to be going to.

Q. I guess from our side, what we're looking at and, of course, everyone's major reaction is, suddenly we're going to say this is an unsafe operation and --

A. Whoa, whoa.

Q. -- the risk assessment makes this --

A. What makes you think this is an unsafe operation?

Q. Because we had an accident. That's why we're looking at it, right?
A. It doesn't mean we're unsafe. We had an accident.
Q. So what we're looking at is are there safer ways to operate? And I'm asking you, because you've been doing this for so long, you know the area so well, and you know the operation and how it goes, and you're kind of the person to ask. Are there other areas and safer ways --
A. We're always looking -- we're always looking for a safe operation, okay. We always look to learn from things that happened. Nobody wants to know what happened on the 10th of February more than I want to know because trust me, I don't like sitting here with you explaining this either, right. So we want to find what happened just like you do. So I would ask you the same question of do you have any ideas to operate safely because that's why we're a party to this investigation. We've made several changes already to the way we do operations at Grand Canyon West, and I've given Steve a list of things that we've done. And we continue to move forward doing things a little bit different at the sit.

I'll go back and say that we've operated out of that Quartermaster Landing Site since 1997 with thousands and thousands and thousands of landings down there, and thousands and thousands and thousands of departures every single year, and have had not one incident up until this point. Right. So I would like to know

what type of -- was it meteorological? Was it pilot error? I would love to know what caused that accident. We've made those approaches in and out of there day after day after day in the same kind of weather conditions. And why all of a sudden, on this date, did that happen? I would like to know that. And I'm sure you do, too. And the public deserves to know that. So help me help you.

We're trying. Well, I'm not going to wait for a result from the NTSB. I'm trying to make change now to make sure it doesn't happen again. We've put the additional windsocks out there. We put the additional equipment out there. So help me help you. You know, you tell me what you're thinking.

Q. Yeah, so that's why what I say is, I don't have the knowledge. I don't have 25 years of doing this. So I'm trying to get your ideas of -- I mean -- that's why --

A. I would say that you've really got to be careful because change can also have consequence, right. So a knee jerk reaction to something and you put change in, could cause something else to happen. So you've got to really be careful when you're making changes that you're not moving to a point where you're reinventing the wheel or now you expose yourself to other risks that you didn't anticipate.

Q. Of course, which is why changes have discussions. So we discuss --

A. Yes.

Q. -- and then I say, oh, well, what about this? And you say, well, that couldn't work because of this. Oh, okay. I've never thought of that because I haven't been operating for this long, but that's why I was asking you, do you see anything that -- of different areas of the Canyon or different ways to operate that you have -- I know you've been doing it this long, but that's usually not a good answer, right.

A. Um-hum.

Q. That's -- okay. Well, now technology has changed and things have changed differently. Are there other ways that you've seen that the SFRA could be different or the landing sites could be different or part of the tour can be different. I mean what if they just put an airport out there instead.

A. There is an airport out there.

Q. Well, down in the Canyon I mean. There's all these different things of what --

A. I don't know how you'd put an airport in the bottom of the Canyon.

Q. So --

A. You've seen the terrain down there.

Q. I don't know what it's like further up, and there's just things that I'm wondering that of all your hours of flying and sitting in the cockpit --

A. I have not, I have not found another place that we can go or another area or we would have been there already.

Q. Okay.
A. And I'm not saying -- I want to make it clear that you insinuated that this is an unsafe landing area because we had an accident, and I will challenge you to say that I don't feel that is an unsafe landing area or we wouldn't be doing it.
Q. That was not my insinuation. It was --
A. That's what you said.
Q. -- something unsafe happened, an accident.
A. Right.
Q. So.
A. Well, you actually said we were unsafe.
Q. Well, that flight was unsafe.
A. That flight had an accident, right. We don't know what caused the accident. To say that flight was unsafe is an incorrect statement.
Q. All right. It might just be semantics but what I'm trying to get your knowledge and your viewpoint of having all this experience of if there's ideas that you think of this specific tour that could be changed or --
A. I think we've answered that already.
Q. I was just clarifying what I was going to say.
MS. KELIHER: I'm done, Katherine.
MS. WILSON: Okay. We've been going at this almost an hour. Are you feeling okay?
MR. BECKER: I'm fine.

MS. WILSON: Ready to move on. All right.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. I have a few follow ups to some of the questions that Zoë asked. You said you weren't part of the decision making for the Quartermaster, and you I think said Rick somebody?

A. Rick Carrick who's passed by now by the way.

Q. Is there anybody still at Papillon that was involved in that decision making?

A. Brenda, the ownership, the ownership of the company.

Q. Okay. Do you know if any pilots were involved in that decision making process?

A. Again I wasn't at the operation over here when the decision was made. That was a part of the growth, too, of Boulder City. At that point, I was a pilot. I'll tell you that I was checked out on the route going back and forth to Grand Canyon West, but I didn't operate out of this base. I was out of the other base. I was helping with photo shoots and stuff like that as a pilot, but I wasn't.

Q. Okay. When you said that --

A. By the way, Rick Carrick was a pilot as the director of operations, and he still was actively flying, and he had a chief pilot and he had other people that were working with him, that were helping him make the decisions I'm sure.

Q. Okay. Great. You mentioned posting manuals, that you take that very seriously.

A. Um-hum.
Q. And I think you said you work with Burl to make sure that they get posted. When you say that, where are they being posted?
A. Okay. So our general operations manual, we have to have accessible inside the facilities. We have 86 manuals I think between the whole company. They're split 50/50 between Boulder City side and the South Rim side. Each aircraft has its own manual in it. So when it comes to posting manuals, you have to have a process that if you have an ops spec change, or you have a change to a portion of your GOM. We're at change 30 in our GOM. A GOM is a living document. Okay. So periodically you change things. We just consolidated and updated Appendix E on change 30.

Okay. So that means every single one of them manuals needs to get that change in them, and it needs to be done correctly. And I've found in my military career, when you depend on the average employee to post that manual, they do not get it posted correctly. They might forget to take the old change out. There's a lot of things that can go wrong. So by having one or two people assigned to making that change, you're less likely to make the mistake of not posting it correctly.

So I have a sheet with all of our manuals on it, and I sit down and I take the change and I remove the old documents. I put the new documents in, and I sign on the deal (ph.) that the manual's been updated and I sign the sheet that this manual's been done, right. So we can chronologically go through and make sure

that every single manual has been posted correctly.

So when I say I take it serious, that's what I mean because I want to make sure that they're correct and the pilots have the most current information available to them in the manual.

Q. Okay. So we're talking about updating physical manuals versus posting online or -- is there an electronic manual that pilots can access?

A. We do not have an -- we try and post all our manuals and all of our training materials on the flight and duty tracker website. So when someone is coming up for -- due for a checkride, they have all the materials available to them to be successful in their training and their flight. So we do make that stuff available to them on the site. It is -- the official manuals for the company are the manuals that we have hard copies of. We do not have electronic manuals yet.

Q. Okay.

A. We do not have electronic logbooks so to speak.

Q. And you mentioned recent audits that have been or audits that are done at the company by various outside organizations. Have there been any recent audits done at the company?

A. There have been. I had the 2018 TOPS audit completed which came out very well, and I had IBAC come out. IS-BAO did an audit on us, and we were just elevated or we were recommended, we're waiting to hear back from IBAC, but the recommendation from the auditor who was with the FAA for 29 years that does his own thing

now, to move the company to Stage 3 which means that we've a very strong SMS. I don't know any other tour operator that has reached level 3 with their SMS yet. By the way, SMS is not required for 135. It's something that we voluntarily have been doing over the years. So we're 10 years into our SMS, and we've -- now we're able to reach Stage 3. I don't know. Are you familiar with SMS?

Q. Yes.

A. I'm very proud of that. I think that shows that we're forward looking and we're actually trying to get ahead of issues at all times, and make sure that we're a safe company.

Q. As a result of any of those audits, anything -- any concerns come out about flight operations?

A. No, I'll be happy to share the audit with you if you want.

Q. Great. We talked about lead pilots and that you have the final say in who gets selected. What are the qualifications that you're looking for?

A. I'm looking for someone that has good decision making processes. I'm looking for someone that's very competent. I'm looking for someone that knows his aircraft and knows our operation very well. Some people pick up on that very quickly. Some people are a little bit slower than others. So I trust that -- that's what I'm looking for in an individual.

We have an interview process. We post the job posting within the company. We have several people that apply for it. We sit down and interview them, no different than if we were interviewing

someone new. Yesterday for the training director's position, for instance, Simon came to me and said that David Oest is a good candidate for training director. I interviewed him. I liked him. I'm thinking about putting him in the training director's position.

So Geoff Edlund and I sat down with David Oest for about an hour, hour and a half yesterday and talked to him about that position and what the expectations of that position would be, what his plans were for his future, where does he see himself within the company moving forward. And we proposed some challenges that he might have to that, and things of that nature, and I think that he'd be a very good candidate for that position. So he'll probably get the position. So that's how it goes.

Q. Is there any minimum time with the company or minimum flight hours that you would expect a lead to have?

A. I think that time with the company is important, but some people could be here for seven months and be a phenomenal candidate because of their background. Keep in mind, that we're not -- we're hiring into this company people that have been -- I think 80 percent of our pilots or more, are flight instructors and they've been flight instructing in a flight school somewhere. So they're very competent with the machine. These are people that are potential people to do training flights and become FAA check airmen.

In fact, the majority of our lead pilots eventually move on

to be designated check airmen with the FAA. So they can give checkrides within the company.

So I'm looking for a guy that's forward thinking. He's got a maturity about him, in many cases beyond their years, and that are very well at handling the limited operational control decisions that I give them for the tours going back and forth, and they're familiar. I don't have a time lock in how long they have to be with the company because some people mature within the company differently than others.

I mean I had the opportunity after 90, 100 days with the company, to take an aircraft down to Tucson, Arizona, and build the utility division that I was able to build. So was I the wrong guy for that position? I don't think I was. But I was only with the company for three months, four months, when they did that, you know. And so I think that you've got to look at the individual maturity and their decision making process and their ability to fly the helicopter and, and how they've handled issues in the past and make your decision based on that.

Q. Do you still fly the line at all?

A. I do not fly the line. I do not. I've flown just about every airframe that we've owned over the years with the exception of the AS350 series but I was rated in the EC130, the MD-900, Bell 206, 407, Sikorsky S55QT, 250 hours in that thing. I've got 7,000 hours of flight time, with success.

Q. Great. How do you think the culture, the safety culture has

changed here over your 25 years?

A. Oh, it's immense. I think that every year the company's gotten stronger and stronger and better and better. Anybody that knows the ownership of this company knows the safety culture. I think it's a very strong safety culture, and I think it continues to improve.

I will tell you that a lot of companies talk about safety. This family opens up their checkbook to safety each and every day. A good example, in the last working group, I think I shared this with you with child seats, okay. You can put a child on board any helicopter without a restraint under two years old. It's legal in the regulations. It doesn't make sense. I don't think it makes sense personally. I went to the ownership, and said, look, I want to buy car seats and I want to put these kids in FAA approved car seats under the age of two, right. And it's going to cost us a seat, but I think it's the right thing to do. I didn't get any pushback at all. It's like, well, that's great, John. We think it's a great idea. Why don't you go ahead and do that, and then we'll push the TOPS organization to kind of adopt that. So that's the safety culture of the company. They don't want to see accidents either.

So SMS. SMS is not a requirement. I don't know if every company out there has SMSes, but we were in front of the industry, our SMS. Ten years ago, SMS was just a term that they were using, right. It wasn't -- 121 operators were doing it, but 135

operators certainly weren't. But we developed that SMS. It cost a lot of money to have that safety management system in place, but it doesn't matter. It's the right thing to do. The ownership realizes that, and they gave me free rein to initiate that program and move forward with that. I've never had a pushback ever from this company.

Q. Great. I know that you weren't a part of the original decision to fly in and out of Quartermaster but is that landing site --

A. Whoa, say that again.

Q. That you weren't a part of the decision --

A. Okay. Yes.

Q. -- to fly in and out of Quartermaster. Is that landing site, however, evaluated or assessed on some kind of regular basis for additional new risks or --

A. Yeah, it's part of Burl's quarterly safety audit.

Q. Okay.

A. So he goes to the outlying bases as well as the main bases and audits them periodically to make sure that things are correct down there. We have our lead pilots, our chief pilots, our training directors, flying in and out of there on a regular basis as well. So they know the operations.

Q. Is an actual risk assessment performed?

A. There has not been an additional risk assessment performed on that helo base other than the things that we're looking at right

now, and a long-term risk assessment on how we want to continue with operations in light of what happened.

Q. So there was an initial risk assessment performed?

A. I wasn't part of the risk assessment in 1997, whenever it was. I don't know what was done --

Q. Okay.

A. -- at the base back then. You're asking me to speculate, and I don't know how that went down.

Q. Since the accident, has the company gone back and looked at either irregularity reports or any sort of other flight performance data to understand if similar incidents like this have happened or near misses?

A. We continually trend our incident reports to try and get in front of them and see if there's something we can be doing. That's what SMS is all about, taking everything full circle and bringing it back to the pilot pool to change operations and run that. And then making sure that any changes that we put in place are reevaluated later on to make sure that the change is actually working. So we do that whole process within our SMS. So we're -- yes, we do do that.

Q. But specifically since the accident, have irregularity reports or any other data been targeted specifically to landings at Quartermaster, high wind conditions, anything like that?

A. Burl is receiving irregularity reports, and he's trending them for me, and he brings any trends that he sees that needs my

attention, he brings to my attention.
Q. But specifically, because of this accident, has somebody gone back in the data to look to see if there -- at what the incident reports flying into Quartermaster are?
A. Absolutely. That's why there's another windsock out there because we're seeing that wind could have been a factor in this particular accident, we think, right. We don't know what the winds were doing. You guys are hiring experts to go back there and pull meteorological data. You did a drone flight over the aircraft. We went down there with the NTSB to do the drone flights down there to map the accident scene and look at that type of stuff. Absolutely.

We've got 10 pads out there at that helo base, and we very slowly came back. We went to four aircraft to six aircraft to eight aircraft. We held it at eight aircraft. We went back to the Hualapai and got an additional landing site to move two aircraft to an additional landing site.

Before we opened up that landing site, we were training pilots going in and out of there. We had to put a windsock in at that landing site as well. It's in close proximity to the Quartermaster Landing Site. There's now three windsocks out there so we can evaluate what the wind conditions are doing. So, yes, we do this all the time. This is an ongoing culture of the company.

You say did I specific go back and say, give me all the

incident reports that we've had, right. Burl went down and looked at all the incident reports and looked for trends. We didn't see any trends that were alarming that we needed to re-look at.

Q. Okay. With those two additional landing sites that you got, how --

A. Two additional landing pads. One actual landing site. I misspoke.

Q. -- how was that communicated to pilots? Was it something that needed to be communicated to pilots? And if so, how was that communicated?

A. When -- I'm trying to understand. When we had the approval to land at that other landing site?

Q. Yes.

A. When we had the approval to land at that other landing site, the first thing that happened was the safety director, the training director and the chief pilot went down to evaluate the landing site that the other company was landing. Keep in mind, this was a landing site that we had previously. So we were pretty familiar with the landing site any way. Okay. We noticed that there was some things that needed to be changed there. The biggest one, that they didn't have a windsock there. So we had to put the windsock there. So there was no operations conducted until we got the windsock up.

Okay. Now the pilots are aware that we've got the landing site, but they're not allowed to land at that landing site until

they get in an aircraft with one of my instructor pilots to go down there and land at that site and show them what their options are to land at that site.

Q. And was a risk assessment done of that --

A. Yes --

Q. -- additional landing site?

A. -- there was a risk assessment of the landing site.

Q. Okay.

A. Actually I did a management of change, and that's still in progress.

Q. Does the FAA need to be involved in that new --

A. No.

Q. -- the decision to have another landing site or landing -- yeah, one landing site?

A. No, the FAA wouldn't be involved if you're landing anywhere else in the world. They don't ask their approval every time you have to land a helicopter.

Q. What communications do you have with other operators in and out of the Canyon, Sundance, Maverick?

A. We are a very close knit group. We talk all the time. We identified years ago Papillon and John Sullivan from Sundance, evaluated the route structure going out, back and forth to the Grand Canyon, and we identified areas of concern that different operators were doing. So we went to the FAA and asked the FAA to host meetings between the operators so we could develop a

(indiscernible) agreement so everybody knew what everybody else was doing. The goal of that was to have one training document coming out of that to where everybody was training to the same agreement. And so we were training that. This is where Maverick is. This is where Sundance is. This is where 5 Star is. And everybody's a signature to that training agreement and that's how that was developed.

So the air tour industry here in Las Vegas maybe doesn't have the same challenge that operators might have in Hawaii or Alaska or other places in the world. We all get along. I think the unwritten motto is that the sales and marketing team can figure out how that whole thing goes, but when it comes to operations, we're all going to operate safely. If I see a Sundance helicopter or a Maverick helicopter or another operator going out there doing something that I feel is unsafe, I have a direct line to the director of operations and chief pilot. They're very receptive of it. We share reports back and forth between each other. If they see something that one of my pilots is doing that is unsafe, they will send that to me, so I can take action and investigate on it as well.

Q. And the LOA, is that updated regularly?

A. It's updated all the time. We just did an update recently for -- I forget what the update was. It was a couple of months ago, but we're updating that all the time.

Q. Okay. And the FAA is a part of that process?

A. No, it's an agreement between the operators. The FAA is aware. The POIs are aware of when changes are going to happen.
Q. Okay.
A. But I don't think they're signature to the document.
Q. Were you a part of the decision that said the lead pilots will make the go/no go decisions?
A. I give the lead pilots the ability to -- the lead pilots advise me when -- or they advise Simon when something's out of the ordinary, right. Everybody in this company has the ability to say no with no punitive action. That's what a just culture is, right. So nobody is ever penalized for anything. Everybody, to include a loader, a fueler, a customer service, has the ability to say, stop operations, because we see something in conflict here, where we can review that.

So if a lead pilot decides that the winds are too high or the temperatures are too high or the weather doesn't look right or they just don't feel comfortable, they have the ability to throw up the red flag and stop at any given time. No punitive action.
Q. Are you involved in development of training or when there are changes to training?
A. Most of the time, I leave that to the chief pilots. I am involved when there is huge changes. Minor changes, no.
Q. I understand that you, with Burl, are looking at trends and irregularity reports and things like that. Are there any other data that's being looked at, like a FOQA program or something to

ensure --
A. I'm not familiar with that program.
Q. Okay. Something where you're looking at data to understand adherence to procedures by pilot standardization? Are you looking at Spidertracks data, for instance, to make sure that pilots are flying routes that they're supposed to be flying, aren't deviating?
A. Yes. I am in AL-Pro on my days off. I pull up Spidertracks on my phone all the time, right, to see where people are going. We institute programs for the emergency, for SOS's. So I'm involved in all those items. So I don't know what you're asking me specifically. But I'm very active. I want to know where my aircraft are at all times. If there's an aircraft in the air, I want them positively flight followed in some which way or shape or form.
Spidertracks, I want to caution, that is a secondary flight following. That is for me, right, to where if I have a reported issue, I can identify where they are at any given time. There are rare occasions where I do use it for flight following when an aircraft is departing early in the morning on a contract or something like that, so I know where they are. But I'm addicted to making sure that I know where my aircraft are at all times to a fault. And I say that in that, but I get neurotic about it. If an aircraft is due at a certain time, and he hasn't checked in, I'm the guy that's spring-loaded to the worst case scenario right

away, and I depend on my staff to calm me down because I go to the point where I might even launch aircraft to figure out where they are and that type of deal. So I'm on it all the time. I'm very conscious of it.

Q. And you feel that with the tracking that you're doing, that you have a good handle on whether pilots are adhering to SOPs?

A. Yes. One good thing about the tour industry, there's normally someone in front of them. There's normally someone in back of them. We're following the conga line so to speak, going out to the Canyon and back. I've got a relationship with the other operators. They have a relationship with me, that if something is going wrong, they will tell me or we will tell them. I think an accident in aviation affects all operators, not one operator. So I think we all watch each other's back as well. So I feel that I have a good solid control on what's going on in this company safety-wise.

There's senior pilots out there in the Canyon all the time. There is lead pilots, training director, chief pilot. You do have to pull people back to center at times, and we get that. So you start to see some mission creep on what people are doing, and you've got to get out there and you've got to pull that back to center, right. Tribal knowledge I call it. You know, that people kind of drift, and you have to pull. I don't think that's any different with this company than any other company.

Q. Have you ever let a pilot go for safety violations?

A. Absolutely.
Q. And what is your involvement in the SMS program? Does that fall under Burl? Do you play a part in it or does it fall under you?
A. I'm still mentoring Burl with the SMS. I stay involved with SMS because I think it's an industry must so to speak. Now I'm working with the TOPS organization. I'm trying to institute a SMS program as a requirement for all TOPS operators. So this year, as I'm on the audit committee, I'm actually the chair of the audit committee as well as on the board of directors for TOPS. So what our goal is this year, during the audit, was a gap analysis of where all the TOPS operators are with their SMS or if they even have a SMS, and then how we're going to implement SMS based on Part 5 guidance from the FAA and have everybody have a SMS.

So SMS is big with me. I wasn't a big believer in SMS when it first started coming out, but once you get into SMS, and you start realizing the benefits you get from it, it's addictive. And I find myself going to Burl and saying, Burl, this is a management change deal. We need to start on a management of change document, how we're going to move forward at Hoover Dam or how we're going to move forward in other aspects of the operation, new aircraft coming on line or it could be a variety of things but we're always looking to get ahead of it and make sure we're documenting it.
Q. Irregularity reports, are they required under Part 135?
A. No.

Q. So the program that you have in place, is that a part of SMS?
A. It is a part of my SMS.
Q. Okay. Since you implemented SMS, do you feel like there has been a positive increase in reporting of safety concerns?
A. Absolutely to a fault. I don't want to say to a fault because you want as many reports coming in as you can. I've got to say when the NTSB wanted all of my irregularity reports, it was a huge concern, and I actually marked them confidential for a reason because the average individual needs to be comfortable writing that report, and the report doesn't push disciplinary action. I've had people write a report on something they did.

I gave the example of forgetting a logbook in the aircraft one day because he flew in one aircraft and went to another aircraft, forgot, and didn't realize that the logbook wasn't in there, but he came back and he wrote an irregularity report on himself saying that, hey, I took off without my logbook in the aircraft, you know, and this is how it happened. So as a management team, we put a procedure in place or evaluate if that was a one time deal or -- so your wanting all that, and when the NTSB is asking for the irregularity reports, I was worried that people were going to say, whoa, if these things are going to be public knowledge, then I'm not going to write another irregularity report, you know, for the company. You can require them to do that, but they would be hesitant to write it and maybe they wouldn’t give you the documentation that you need in the

irregularity report to actually make the change.

So I've got to tell you, to this date, it still scares me that you ask for those reports because I don't want to stop my employees from giving me their reports because that ties my hands to make the changes that we might need for the company. I don't care that you see what's in there. I have nothing to hide, but on the individual level, they might see it that way.

Q. Spidertracks data, you said that that's not the primary means of flight following?

A. No, it's a backup for us. Our primary means is through AL-Pro.

Q. Okay. And there's various times that you can receive pings from Spidertracks?

A. I have the ability to go in. In fact, we're working with Spidertracks right now on a permanent two minute or one minute ping on our aircraft.

Q. Okay. And what is it now?

A. It depends on what the mission is. So I determine based on a mission profile, if an aircraft is on a specified route from Point A to Point B, and I know they're going to be somewhere right along that route, right, then there's no reason to ping that aircraft every two minutes, okay. So I had an eight minute ping. Then I move to 15 minute ping, felt that was ineffective, and I brought it back to an 8 minute ping. I think most of the operators you'll find are probably doing the same thing. They're probably pinging

their aircraft about every eight minutes.

Spidertracks is actually coming with a proposal to me for a flat rate two minute ping, from your flat rate one minute ping. So we've been active with them to try and get that worked out but if they're on a specified route, to and from the Grand Canyon, where I know where they're going to be at any specific time based on the amount that he's been gone. The sole purpose is where do I start looking for this guy if he doesn't show up.

Okay. Now if I've got an aircraft that's going out to do game capture, he's get a two minute ping. If I've got someone going away from the local air tour route doing something different on a charter, then I'm going to ping him every two minutes. So I have the ability to go into Spidertracks and change the ping rate at any given time and it's immediate, right. Change copter 2 to a two minute ping. Change it back -- 2 back from a two minute ping to an eight minute ping because this is a mission he's been doing. And Jeff Bubier and Burl oversee that and change them pings for me all the time. And then I talked earlier about having the ability to self-monitor on a two minute ping for training or whatever.

Q. And at the time of the accident, the accident helicopter was on a 15 minute ping?

A. He was on a 15 minute ping.

Q. How do you think the pay -- how does the pay at Papillon compare to other operators?

A. I think we're higher than other operators in some areas, and

we're below some of the operators in other areas. The culture of the company is that we don't want to be the highest paying. We don't want to be the lowest paying. We want to be in the mid spot somewhere, right, with the industry. My utility pilots do very well in fire season, and the tour pilots, first year pilots are at the lower end of the pay scale, but I've got pilots that are making six figures, and I've got pilots that are six figures (sic).

Q. Did you know Scott Booth?

A. I knew Scott Booth. I met Scott Booth. I didn't hang out with Scott Booth. I've got 120 pilots on this side, and I also have some interaction, very minimal, only on a social basis, with the pilots on the airline side. So we have 120 pilots, and they have probably 70 or 80 pilots. So walking up to somebody and remembering their name. I knew who Scott was, all right. I visited Scott. I met Scott at the salmon bake. He came up to me. He was a very nice employee, very complimentary to the company. So I'm a fan of Scott's.

But I try during in brief to go down and talk to the new hire pilots to let them know that we have a lot of pilots. I want them to know what my safety culture is at this company. I want them to know that I have an open door policy and they can talk to me. I actually give them my business card that's got my cell phone on it. If they have any problems, they can call me, and I want to develop that just culture where they feel comfortable going back

and forth. But I also tell them that we have 120 pilots, and it's a family run operation, but it's a big family run operation. So please come up to me when you're on the flight line and talk to me, and if I don't remember your name, please don't get upset with me. Please don't get hurt, right, because I've got a lot of people's names, and then you start looking at customer service and everything else. There's a lot of people that work for this company.

Q. Since the accident, have you -- did you go back to Scott's personnel file, training file, review his records?

A. I personally did not. The accident happened. I told Scott -- I told Simon that he needed to seal the records, right, which he did. And when Zoë asked for them, we gave her the current records that he had. I understand that there's the "Smith" file and we'll get you all that stuff, too, but those records have been sealed, of course, since the accident. And what you have on Scott's records is how Scott's records appeared in his file on the 10th of February.

Q. So how were you informed about the accident?

A. I was informed right away. Chris, the dispatcher, and the supervisor at Grand Canyon West, called me right then. It was early on.

Q. And then what did you do?

A. I activated the emergency response plan. I was actually on my way out the door to go to dinner, and I set up a table in my

house and I started -- I had my phone with me on my kitchen counter, and my wife left, and I was there alone, and I just started going through the emergency response and doing anything I could to facilitate that.

Q. And you mentioned earlier there have been some changes since the accident.

A. Yeah, I've got a list. Steve Stein asked me for a list of things that we're doing. The emergency response, there were some equipment issues, communications issues that we had because of the location of the accident and the time of day that it was going on. So we put new satellite phones down at the helo bases. Those new satellite phones have an SOS capability to them, so that once you press SOS, even if the satellite ain't right where it needs to be when it is, it will send the SOS.

We test them phones all the time now. The phones come back here at the end of the day. They're put on a charge. They go back out in the morning with two additional batteries on them. I've got six radios set aside for communication.

So the Hualapai couldn't communicate down to their landing site and into the investigation, they realized that we had the ability to talk to Quartermaster Base. All right. So they were kind of relaying information. So their information was coming out spotted. So we've got those radio down there now. We've got that satellite phone down there right now. The emergency response equipment that the Hualapai had out there was unsatisfactory in

our opinion. So at all the landing sites down there, we have trauma kits. We have evacuation equipment down there with skid hoes and we send people to a trauma course and they're bringing that trauma course back here to teach our individual pilots on that trauma course. There's AEDs down at the bottom. They were there, and they weren't operational. So we did that.

We weren't sure. I kept hearing from investigations on this about shifting winds, reports from the pilots talking about shifting winds and depth of the canyon and that type of thing. So we collectively decide to put another windsock down there in a position where the pilots had good recognition of it, and they compared that windsock with the windsock at the Ramada to see if the winds were shifting down there. So we did that.

There was a slow start up there. So we started with four aircraft, six aircraft. We limited that site to eight aircraft because I'm hearing that there might be congestion problems down there. So on landing aircraft, I don't allow no more than eight aircraft to land down there. There were 10 that was landing there previously, and then we've negotiated these other two landing spots that are a little bit of a distance away, that we had in the past, to get them back.

We are now looking into the training program on settling (sic) with power and we're demonstrating on the initial qualification, settling with power in the aircraft. So we're trying to put the aircraft into a settling with power training

condition to demonstrated what that would feel like so they would know which is not a requirement to do in the aircraft but we're doing that just on this side now. We are -- there's a lot of more changes than that. But we're just trying to be looking forward to make sure that this doesn't happen again. We're actively looking at things we need to change, and I don't know if they're in line with what caused the accident because we don't know yet. I would rather be proactive than non-proactive.

Q. Thanks, John.

MS. WILSON: That's all the questions I have for now.

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. Hi, John. Tyler Carver, who does he report to?

A. Tyler Carver reports to the chief pilot who is Simon Whiteley.

Q. And Simon reports to?

A. Me.

Q. Okay. Do you have regularly scheduled like safety meetings or safety council?

A. We do.

Q. Okay. Who attends the safety council meetings and are minutes kept?

A. All our safety focal point managers. So Burl has a list that he can give you of all the people who attended last one.

Q. Okay. And do they keep minutes?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the CEO there?
A. The CEO is not there.
Q. Okay.
A. The president is invited and is often there.
Q. Okay. Who chairs the meeting?
A. Safety director.
Q. Are hazard reports and irregularity reports brought up at these meetings?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And are the hazard and irregularity reports distributed amongst --
A. Let me step back. We do not bring all irregularity reports to that safety meeting. If there's a trend or an issue that we see, that issue would be brought up.
Q. Okay. Distributing the irregularity reports and the hazards, how is that done?
A. Through management. Any time an irregularity report is filed, I automatically get that report on my iPhone. It comes to me by e-mail. The safety director, the chief pilots, there's a management chain of command, the ownership, also sees every single irregularity report that is filed. In case it's a safety of flight, we can put a stop right away. So my phone will ring when an irregularity report, any time one's filed.
Q. Okay. And how is that information filtered down to line pilots?

A. Okay. The process would be that the director of safety gets the irregularity report. He determines the seriousness of that report, and who is responsible to take action on that report. Once the action has been taken, if it's an issue that the line pilots need to be aware of, then that information should go into the daily safety briefing in the morning, and we have notes in the safety briefing that "X" amount -- we've noticed this in it. You need to be aware that this happened.

Q. And who makes that decision?

A. Director of safety.

Q. Okay. If the submitter of the --

A. Let me step back. The director of safety is responsible for making the decision. I often say, Burl, this is something that we really need to get back to the line pilots on. So just make sure we get this in the safety briefing for the next 14 days so all the shifts get it.

Q. Okay. Along those lines, if an originator is on the irregularity or the hazard report, does he get the response to his filing or making of that report?

A. You need to talk to Burl on he handles that. I would assume that he would.

Q. Okay. Obviously you're on the mishap response plan. Okay. On the audits that are done quarterly --

A. Internal audits?

Q. Yes.

A. Yes.
Q. -- and safety improvements that are brought to management, is there anything that's been said, well, no, we --
A. I have never had the ownership of this company come to me and tell me that I couldn't do something that I felt would make it a safer company.
Q. And that's based on audits as well?
A. That's based on anything.
Q. Okay. Level 3 SMS, if I'm not mistaken, I believe a Level 3 SMS has to incorporate a flight data monitoring program.
A. I'm not familiar.
Q. Okay. So you're not familiar with flight data monitoring, capturing flight data information for your SMS program?
A. You need to talk to Burl.
Q. Okay.
A. It's very in depth. I mean our audit is that thick literally on the items that are required within the SMS, and we've met all the gates for that SMS for IS-BAO.
Q. Okay. But you -- do you have a flight data monitoring program?
A. Explain what data you want me to capture.
Q. They capture within an aircraft, there's several methods. One is telemetrics which can be recorded and then downloaded. On those telemetrics, you can have triggers. You can have triggers that you want to set. In other words, if the aircraft exceeds 60

degrees angle on bank, you get a notification.
A. No, I think it's -- I think what we're talking about is the depth of what data we're capturing. We try to have monitoring on all our aircraft in some way, shape or form, whether it's capturing the deck (indiscernible) or whether it's an older aircraft like a Bell 206 where we've got tattletale gauges. Or my torque exceedances that we might have in a Bell 206 or my TOT exceedance we have. We have gauges that tell us any time the exceedance has happened and the pilot doesn't have the ability. So we have the ability through our technology to be able to capture certain data. I don't know how in depth you're trying -- you're requesting that I go. I don't have the ability to see if an aircraft exceeds an angle of bank of 60 degrees on all aircraft because I just don't have the equipment available.
Q. And I would venture to say you wouldn't have anything that would say a high vertical descent would be able to be captured.
A. No. Spidertracks could give me from one ping to another what the descent would be, because it reports altitude, but I don't have anything in like the Bell 206 that would say it exceeds 1500 foot (indiscernible) right in the center.
Q. Okay. The POI, has he looked at operations outside of here at Boulder for --
A. My POI is in this company a lot. He's at the South Rim. He's in Page (ph.). He's here. He has very close oversight. We have a very good working relationship with the local FSDO and

always have.
Q. Okay. And he has observed the operation at the Quartermaster?
A. Yes.
Q. And how often does he do that?
A. Sometimes he does it without telling me. So he's out there full time.
Q. Okay. In coordination between Maverick and Sundance, obviously you have a good working relationship in the work here locally. And obviously you work with TOPS as well.
A. Um-hum.
Q. If there's an irregularity let's say on the weather, if let's say Maverick decided not to launch aircraft or Sundance based on visibility or weather, are you informed of that information?
A. I would believe that we would -- no, not all the time. I can only see what's going on, on this heliport or at the South Rim what's going on at that heliport. I'll tell you what I get mostly is why are you shut down while the other operator's working? Right. I'll be shut down here and I'll watch one of the other operators that chooses whatever their limits for operation are, are still operating. There's times that at Grand Canyon West that we'll shut down because our temperature gauge is reading a degree or so different than the Sundance gauge. It doesn't mean they're being unsafe. They're a very professional operator, right, but we make our decision when to shut down based on what our tolerances

are, and it doesn't necessarily bound with the other.

But I have been approached by the Hualapai before. We were flying Bell 206s out of Grand Canyon West. The other companies are flying AS350 doing up and downs Grand Canyon West. We were shutting down the Bell product with the rotor system we have on that and turbulence earlier than the other operators were shutting down. So there was a question to the company, why are you shut down? We've met the limits of our capabilities. So we're not going to fly no more, but the other operator's still flying. Too bad, that's just the way it is. So we're shut down.

Q. So there's no central dispatch like EMS operators have, if one EMS operator turns down a flight and you accept, your weather minimums are higher than the original --

A. No, I don't know that our weather minimums compared to the other companies are any different. I don't know what their weather minimums are, but I'll tell you, normally the way I see it, we're shutting down before someone else is. I do coordinate out of Grand Canyon West with Sundance that, hey, look, we're going to shut down, and I'll tell you, 99 times out of 100, they'll agree with that decision and they'll shut down as well. Or if they decide to shut down, we shut down, too.

MR. FIGLIA: Okay. That's all I have.

BY MR. WAUGH:

Q. I have a few questions. Many of the people that don't have the knowledge that you do of the Canyon and the operations. How

many different landing sites are there in the west end of the Canyon?

A. Several. You've got -- Maverick has a landing site. Sundance has a landing site. Papillon has two landing sites, now three that we've opened up the site. I take that back. Maverick has two landing sites. They also have a swamp area that they land at. 5 Star has a landing site out there. And Sundance has two landing sites. So there's several landing sites out there.

Q. Okay. If you were to grade them, I'm sure they're not all the same level as far as hazards and such, but the ones that you guys operate right now, on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the worst, 1 being the best, where do you think that your sites individual, the three, where do each of those fall into that?

A. I think we're in a good location. I would put them in the top 2, 3.

Q. And where is the first site that you guys go up to?

A. So we've got the Ramada site for the up and down. We've got the Quartermaster site and then the site right next to the Quartermaster site is the Waterfall site if you're familiar with that.

Q. Okay.

A. So we just opened up the Waterfall site to Papillon. The company out of Hawaii --

MR. BOYD: Sunshine.

MR. BECKER: -- Sunshine Helicopters were operating. So they

gave that site back to us.

BY MR. WAUGH:

Q. And you -- because you had aircraft operating out of Vegas. Are there any flights any more coming from the South Rim?

A. To Grand Canyon West?

Q. Yeah, shuttle flights.

A. No, we do -- since we're the utility part of the company, boat fuel's got to go to the bottom. So we'll launch a South Rim aircraft to go do the long line work and boat fuel but it's -- we do not operate Grand Canyon West from South Rim. I have pilots that are trained to operate out there and from time to time, I do have a pilot if they're short. I could send an aircraft out there and we have in the past sent an aircraft out there to do up and downs during the day, but they've been through the training program and they've operated out there before, and they're familiar with the letter of agreement and operations out there.

Q. So would you say that the landing site at the bottom of the Canyon is the only hazards that your flights going from here and coming from Las Vegas --

A. I don't know that I would consider that that's a hazard to go to that landing site.

Q. Okay. But I mean a potential hazard. If an aircraft, any aircraft was to leave a hangar and goes to any landing site, that's a potential hazard, right?

A. Um-hum.

Q. And if it's in a hangar, it could be struck by lightning and that's --
A. I don't consider it a hazard to go to a landing site.
Q. A hazard is bad word. How about an area of concern for --
A. An area of maybe high risk --
Q. Okay.
A. -- because it's an offsite landing rather than pavement.
Q. So what I'm saying is, just the landing site where they're going, is that basically the only area of risk would you say between here and there for say Boulder City?
A. I'm not quite sure what --
Q. Are there any other things in your day that would draw your attention as far as the (indiscernible) of areas?
A. Okay. We've got an aircraft that's up at Hoover Dam Lodge. It's not at an airport. It's up there. It's isolated. We put senior pilots out there to fly that operation, right. So that would be something that was different.

Night strip tours. We chose to get out of the night strip tour business 8, 10 years ago, right, because there's a level of risk there that we're not willing to accept. All right. If you look at the night strip tour, over the years, because there were concerns about the number of operators that were on there, and the altitudes they were flying, we initially raised the altitude because the ground lights and the aircraft at night, dark nights, you can lose that aircraft in the ground lights of Las Vegas. So

we raised the altitude initially. The second thing we did was said, well, okay. So if you lose them, how can we light the aircraft up? So we outfitted strobes on the aircraft. We did that, and it come to a point where Part 91 operators out of North Las Vegas were entering the role, too, with younger pilots in there, all right.

So we just decided that it was a level of risk that we didn't want to take, right. So we walked away from all that night strip tour business, right. Our sales and marketing team had a huge issue with it, right, because what we didn't know, we stepped away from the night tour business, that there's operators out there that run a one stop shop, right. So they want to have clients that are going to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, but they've got another client that they're working with in the same group that wants a lower end product that maybe it's only $70 to fly the strip tour, and they want to do that, too. So they said, well, if you don't do a night strip tour, then you're going to lose the rest of this business, and we said, too bad, so sad. This was the decision we made.

We compromised that we do a sunset or a twilight strip tour when the other operators aren't on the trip, and there's still the glow from the setting sun, but the lights are starting to come up in Las Vegas. So we do one round of strip tours before the aircraft are out there. We did try to go to two rounds, but we were bumping up to the other guys. I've got no go times. If that

aircraft isn't in the air by this time, the flight doesn't go, right, because I want them on the ground before the end of the (indiscernible). So that was an area of concern that we took action on it.

Q. But going back as far as the Rim, like I'll just kind of ask this. Like the area of Hacienda. Well, first going out of Boulder City Airport with the operation of multiple aircraft, is that an area of risk?

A. Say that again now.

Q. Is that an area of risk, the aircraft, multiple aircraft --

A. Sure, it is.

Q. Going around the area of Hacienda --

A. Yeah, it's murky traffic there.

Q. Okay.

A. That was actually one of the choke points that we identified in the letter of agreement with the other operators.

Q. S turns at the dam?

A. Yes.

Q. Why is that? Why would that be an area of risk?

A. Because as you're going into the S turn and another operator emerging from the Hacienda coming in there, two aircraft in close proximity while you're making your turns, somebody could be in a right-hand drive helicopter, somebody could be in a left-hand drive helicopter, you're looking across each other's cockpit. All right. So you want to maintain visual separation there.

Q. Okay. How about Indian Pass? You have S turns at Indian Pass. What about that?
A. I don't know. I don't know that it's a higher level of concern, but it's an en route sector -- section.
Q. All right. (Indiscernible) well, actually, we can talk in depth on some of the other operators crossing the lake but let's go, let me go to climbing at the entrance to the SFRA, is there -- do you know if that is a risk factor?
A. Area of concern, I'll tell you that I think what you're getting at, we put procedures in place on all these areas of concerns and have radio calls set up en route where there are area of concerns because you know emerging traffic in particular locations and you want to advise the other operators that we're there. So each one of them areas, there's a radio call required at them areas that we've identified as choke points so everybody would know where everybody else was on that frequency, I think is what you're asking.
Q. Well, the granddaddy of them all is what about flying in the SFRA?
A. Yes. Okay. So there's -- it's a congested area of operation. I mean not congested. It's a high volume of traffic in that area. You've got operators that are going to different landing sites. We're very active with FAA and with the other operators in safe operations. So you've got operations going up and down that are going to the -- boat dock landing pads, and over

the course of our risk analysis type deal, we've decided that, well, let's move this traffic to the north side of the river. We've moving down to this altitude, make a radio call here. All right. So the operation I don't think is unsafe out there. I think that we've addressed those issues as an industry, not as an operator, to put checkpoints and check and balances in place where we're flying.

So from an outside guide that's never seen that before, they might go in there and say, holy cow, what a bee's nest, but I don't think they realize how far we have went to make that safe and how it's just like this en route agreement and the Grand Canyon West agreement on how we're going to do operations out there, and how we've structured that airspace industry to make it safe, and an exportable training package, so we're all trained off the same document. I don't know that there's any other operations that I know of.

Hawaii has got the Hawaiian operator's guide that they go by, but we have as an industry here in Vegas, I think led the charge on how different operators can get along for operations and safety. We talk to each other all the time, and if someone sees something that's unsafe, they're calling somebody about it. We're talking to each other about it, and we know what's going on out there. Very active.

Q. Okay. Can you remember meeting with several -- any of the different operators over the years on some of the points we've

just talked about?
A. Absolutely.
Q. The different locations.
A. Absolutely. And FAA's hosted those meetings a lot of times, but --
Q. Also to paint a picture because again not everybody's had the luxury of the experience you have. We've got all these multiple companies, with all these multiple aircrafts and you've got 107 pilots. But if we were to sit on a bench at the Bat Towers at Guano Point, right, today. How many hundreds of aircraft would we see coming down the Canyon, coming off the SFRA going into the Canyon?
A. I don't know that at any given time that we'd have hundreds of aircraft in there, right. Periodically you'd see somebody coming in on the green 4 route. Periodically you'd see someone in the Descent Canyon going down, but it's not like there's 100 aircraft right now, right there, at one time.
Q. So I'm not saying -- I guess that picture -- when I say you look at the numbers, the sheer numbers, you have all these aircraft. What does that relate to when we see it out there? What does that actually relate to?
A. It's no different than the operations that come in and out of this airport. All right. You've got 5 Star and Serenity and Papillon are on the same schedule with departing here, and doing it safely on departures. There was a photograph in -- what

magazine? *National Geographic Magazine*, a time lapse photo, of operations at the Grand Canyon West which is bizarre. It's photo shopped obviously, all right. I will tell you that I have an aircraft landing at my Ramada Landing Site about every three, five minutes. So I've got four to five aircraft out there doing up and downs and that aircraft -- each one of them aircraft can take off three to four times in an hour. So you've got 5 aircraft that are going through 20 operations in an hour to that one landing site. Okay. We're launching 10 aircraft 6 times a day to go out to Quartermaster to land at the Quartermaster Landing Site, and not all of them -- it's not 10 aircraft every flight that goes out here. So on a maximum day, in the busy heat of the summer, I've got 60 aircraft total landing at that landing site maximum.

So it's not as congested, as busy as you think it would be. It appears that it's busy but in reality, 10 aircraft every 2 to 3 hours at that landing site, one landing, one departure. And I'm assuming that the other operators are similar. We're able to do six turns out of here where the operators that come out of Las Vegas can only do five turns because of the duration of the day. So if they had 10 aircraft going out and they've got 50 aircraft maximum per day going to their landing site, and it might be overlapping my time of day that I'm going. So it's not like there's 100 aircraft every hour landing in the Grand Canyon. It's more sporadic than that.

Q. When you talk SMS, has the company considered or are you

considering ASAP or MSAP programs?
A. Yes.
Q. What is -- does that look like it's going to happen or not going to happen?
A. It's going to be part of our Ramco. All right. So we're looking at doing Ramco right now. We've got Ramco had been here three or four months, collecting data to move to Ramco. We'd like to go to electronic logbook. So we're looking at those programs right now and getting them implemented. It's not going to be something that's implemented over the summer because it's busy. We propose to do it at the slow time of the year during wintertime. So I think the Ramco will be a swap over this winter, where we have to make sure that it's operating and we're catching all the pitfalls before the implementation but, yes.
Q. In your irregularity reports, you brought up the subject as far as if there was something that was regulatory brought up by self, you know, by a pilot. So how does the company handle that if it's regulatory?
A. If it's regulatory, self-disclosure.
Q. Okay. And the other thing is, you alluded to, is there a briefing log that the pilots go through?
A. Say that again.
Q. Is there like a briefing book or something that the pilots go through with safety information?
A. Yes. All of our materials are upon the flight and duty

tracker website. All of the pilots have access to that and are required to access that. Their schedule is on that as well as e-mail to them on a daily basis. All that information is available to them on our website.

Q. And so for pilots who go on days off, how far back do they have to review? Do they have to review every item that's posted on there?

A. They have to review any new items that are posted on the document. You have to sign on and off. There's a timestamp on that, but they're responsible for reading that.

Q. Okay. So if you have a pilot, part-time pilots, what's the standard time that they can possibly not --

A. We're not doing part-time pilots any more.

Q. Okay.

A. We've just decided not to do that. Scott was our last part-time pilot. He worked very well at the company. He flew a lot of hours with us. He was the oddity. He might have been listed as part time, but he was flying a lot of flight hours for us, picking up a lot of days, but it just didn't make sense. We don't have that now.

Q. Okay. That's it.

MS. KELIHER: I've got some follow-up questions.

MR. TOBIN: Before we do that, can we do a five minute break?

MS. WILSON: Let's give Burl his chance to ask first.

MR. TOBIN: If we could just do a five minute bathroom break.

MS. WILSON: Okay.
(Off the record.)
(On the record.)
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. Earlier on, you said incident reports. Is that the same as an irregularity report?
A. I'm sorry. I misspoke. An irregularity -- we used to call it an incident report, until I realized that incident was an FAA term.
Q. Yes.
A. Right. That required FAA notification. So, yes, thank you for clarifying it. It is an irregularity report. We had it misnamed years ago. So pardon my tribal knowledge.
Q. I just wanted to make sure. And then because you and Burl are in the same room, just for me to clarify, there's hazard reports, too.
A. Yes.
Q. And that's (indiscernible) trips.
A. Yeah, it's a ground. So a passenger might -- the aircraft is shut down. The flight is over. They might be exiting the aircraft. They miss the step on the aircraft and skin their knee. A hazard report would go for that.
MR. BOYD: In fact, we call that an unsafe condition or hazard report.
MS. KELIHER: Okay. And then what -- are there any other?

MR. BOYD: Yes, we do have an incident report but it has nothing to do with the aviation portion. That would be somebody that -- a passenger or somebody got injured, something like that, but we have changed. We have added a new one so that it goes straight to our customer relations people.

MR. BECKER: If there's a problem with a customer because they're being unruly or something like that.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. So those are the only type of pilot reports.

A. Yes.

Q. So if a pilot is flying and they have an experience with jack stall, if they have an incident, an event that happens, is there any way that they report that?

A. That's the irregularity report.

MR. BOYD: Any time it has to do with a flight, it's an irregularity report.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. So from what I understood, talking to Burl yesterday, irregularity report is only if you deviate from the flight?

A. That would be if he has an event in the flight would be an event in the flight, yes, that would be an irregularity report.

MR. BOYD: Over torque, a caution light, a door that comes open, a jack stall, anything that has to do with the flight, if it's not a standard, routine, every day flight, they have something go differently, then they do an irregularity report.

BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. Okay. And then were pilots ever unionized here?
A. No. Don't say that.
Q. And I've been trying to think how I'm going to frame this without evoking some type of emotion here, without doing a leading question, but just for my own rationale, how I'm thinking of it. If there is passengers that are planning on going on a tour and there possibly could be weather out there, and the pilot decides to take off and then gets to the entrance of the Canyon and then comes back, is that at least, in your opinion, is that more or less desirable than the pilot just staying here on the ground?
A. The pilot has the opportunity to make the decision. I mean you can't --
Q. I know it's a decision, but on a company basis, is it more about paying or cost or something?
A. It doesn't matter.
Q. So there's no preference either way?
A. There's no preference. I mean, no. I mean the object is to operate safely. If we -- trust me. We're not going to launch an aircraft if we think he's going to encounter weather along the way. We have now made the decision that this flight can be conducted safely in VFR conditions from here to the Grand Canyon and back during the timeframe that we're going to launch that, all right. Now Mother Nature being like she is, a storm might be to the south. It starts to move. A storm might develop or the winds

might pick up, and the pilot gets out there, and based on his decision making, he decides that he wants to turn around and come back. He can do that. That's fine.

Q. I guess what my thinking is, and I'm challenging myself, and I'm curious if this was correct, is if a higher up says, well, take these passengers and go look and see, and then they look and see and it's worse, and they come back, and it would be more of a pain for you guys, paperwork and the passengers and --

A. It's a challenge because you reimburse money and stuff like that and you're dealing with customers that really would have liked to have landed at the bottom of the Canyon. I'm sure they're disappointed when they come back, but it is what it is. I mean you're trying to operate safely. You do everything you can to do that. But there's not a push to go when you shouldn't go.

Q. I just kind of guessed challenging, I would think there would be a push not to go because it's like, well, we don't want to deal with you guys coming back. I was wondering whether it's --

A. Well, we sent you a report that shows the number of flights that we've canceled prior to departure.

Q. And that's what I was kind of looking at that versus the irregularity of people turning back. It seems like from comparing those numbers, you're erring any more on the side of let's just cancel it because we don't want to --

A. Yeah, we've canceled the whole day at the beginning of the day. Now does that mean we have pilots sitting around here

waiting for the weather to clear? It depends on the area forecast and the time of the day. But if the flights -- if we feel that the weather is not going to be conducive to completing that flight safely, then the flight doesn't go.

Q. Well, I guess I'm not even thinking that. I'm just more asking from your perspective of the business side of the amount of work.

A. It's more challenging for the customer service. If a flight leaves and goes to the Grand Canyon and comes back, there's no interaction with customer service. If the flight goes out and comes back and doesn't get to land and that's what they want, then customer service has to refund money. So be it. I mean it's the nature of the business.

Q. But is there any repercussion where it comes back and customer services says why didn't launch these guys. Now we have to deal with all this.

A. I haven't heard -- I don't know about other members of the company, but I haven't heard that. I'm sure that -- I mean you've been -- heard that before with Delta Airlines or American, where your flights get canceled. That ticket counter becomes a zoo when they're trying to reschedule people and stuff like that. It's something that's part of the business. It's something we do on a regular basis. It's part of their job. If that particular event happens, they're trained to deal with it accordingly.

I'm sure if you ask Delta Airlines, they don't like refunding

money, not money, but rescheduling people on their tickets and stuff like that. I imagine it's difficult for them people to do that.

Q. I guess it's just a difference of whether it's utility or flight trainers and then everything's like, we'll just go walk and check it out over there. But with passengers, it's bigger.

A. We have lead pilots and chief pilots and training directors to be watching out on a daily basis of what's going on. That's why we put (indiscernible) times in there. That's why we do a lot of things we do.

Q. And because you're both there, and we're already getting down to the -- Manny was kind of touching about this, because you do have some of the helicopters that have Appareo systems, those are never randomly looked at.

MR. BOYD: Yeah, they're checked. Maintenance checks those every time they come back in.

MS. KELIHER: Luis goes over all the --

MR. BOYD: No, Luis doesn't --

MR. BECKER: When they come in for the major inspection.

MR. BOYD: Everything is operational. We don't go through every one of the Appareo. I think we'd be better off with a GoPro ph. It would give you better video than Appareo --

MR. BECKER: Might I remind you, that this is my interview.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. I was figuring that if I asked you, the Appareo I'm not sure

if you would say that's a Burl issue and Burl would say that's --
A. Any information you can get from the aircraft is valuable information, right. So I welcome the Appareo. I think that the Appareo system could have been a lot better system. I'm frustrated because when you pull a card and you look at the data that comes off of that camera, and you want to zoom in for instance and find out what power settings a pilot was at to see where he was just because you might be checking up on something through SMS and say, hey, you know what? Let's pull the card from John Becker. His last approach in here might have been a little bit quick. Let's see what he's doing. So you pull the card to check that. We have the ability to do that.

If you zoom in on the dashboard of that, I don't know if you've had the opportunity to do that, it is like a 1950s television in snowy conditions. You know, you can't really focus and really get a good visual which is very frustrating because the technology was already out there. My iPhone has better clarity than an aircraft --
Q. I wasn't talking about the recording, but the actual data recorder I suppose.
A. Okay.
Q. Following the tracks on Google Earth and plotting them out and seeing what they're actually doing.
A. Yes.
Q. Looking at the -- is that ever looked at?

A. Only if we have reason to go in and look at it.
Q. That's it.
A. I was talking earlier about different items that we have for safety, and I missed the most important one. Obviously in this accident, the fuel cell rupture was a big deal. Fuel cells were not available on the EC130 before or AS350 for retrofit. StandardAero come out in December of last year with a fuel cell and I just wanted to let you know that part of this accident also led us to retrofit all of our aircraft with crashworthy fuel cells. So we now have two fuel cells that have been delivered and installed on our aircraft, one B2 and one B4. We're the first EC130 B4 to have the retrofit fuel cell in it. We've got another fuel cell coming this month and we have two scheduled for the following month for retrofit. We're trying to get our aircraft totally retrofit with crashworthy fuel cells in the next two years. That's the agreement that we signed with StandardAero.

We also reached out to Airbus because they have a fuel cell that's available for the B3, B2 retrofit. We're not as successful getting them fuel cells in as we have been with getting fuel cells from StandardAero. They're tooling up to get us the cells as quick as we possibly can. The delivery date for the fuel cells for Airbus aren't coming until July of 2019. So there was not -- even though they have a retrofit, we're not able to get any. And we put purchase orders in for I think 8 or 10 fuel cells because we wanted to get them coming from as many agencies that can

provide that fuel cell for us so we can get them put into the aircraft.

So I think the biggest thing, and the biggest change we've made because it's such a big part of this accident, because there were thermal injuries involved, was how to retrofit this fleet with crash resistant fuel cells. I've been part of the rotorcraft occupant protection working group for the past two and a half years, on how the industry's going to move forward with that. So we've been forward thinking about this, and have them cells come available to (indiscernible) and stuff like that. So we are retrofitting our fleet with crashworthy fuel cells.

Q. And then one more question. I also remember reading somewhere in my notes of people that we've talked to, that there used to be medical equipment on each helicopter and that was removed?

A. No, we had survival equipment on that fuel cell -- on the aircraft going back and forth, and we've never ever had even close to an incident where we had an aircraft in the position where we couldn't get to them within an hour or so. So it didn't make sense to have the equipment there. It made sense to have the equipment at Grand Canyon West where that could potentially happen. So we removed some of that equipment, not all of it, some of it. We still carry emergency water when it's hot out and things of that nature but as far as 10 days of food, at a certain calorie, survival kits, things like that, we took that out of the

aircraft.
Q. When was that?
A. Years ago.
Q. What was the equipment that was on the --
A. I forget what was in there. There was some food rations in there, and there was some emergency water in there, and I can't remember what else. It wasn't like it was this big survival kit. They called it a survival kit because it had things like that in there. There wasn't blankets. There wasn't tents or nothing like that in there because we are 30 minutes from our product which is the Grand Canyon West. So those survival kits that they called them, which had emergency rations and emergency water in it, were taken out and we put emergency water in there. We've got coolers in there as well that have refreshments for the -- and sandwiches and stuff for the people in a normal day anyway. So it just didn't make sense that we needed that.
Q. But that cooler -- so let me just make sure. The cooler and the water that you have are for the land, not the air tours. They don't have --
A. Every flight that lands at the bottom, we advertise that they're going to get a meal at the bottom. It has a sandwich in there. It has a cookie in there, maybe a bag of chips. Maybe a breakfast bar or --
Q. For the air tours, no water or anything?
A. And when the temperatures get above 80 degrees, I believe is

the temperature, I have to recheck, we put what we call emergency water. There's two jugs of water on there in addition to a cooler full of sodas and waters that are brought to the landing site to supplement their lunch or their meal that they're eating at the bottom.

Q. For the air tours?

A. For the air tours, they have the water on board. They have emergency water that stays on board that aircraft during the hot months in case they have to do a precautionary landing out in the desert somewhere. It could be an hour, could be 45 minutes to an hour before we could get an aircraft out to them. So we have that water on there to last that long.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. Anything else? You've shared a lot with us.

A. You've asked a lot of me.

Q. Anything else that you think would help in this investigation?

A. No, I think that I've been forthcoming. I'm passionate about this company. I think it's a very safe company. It's unfortunate that we had that happen, what happened to us, and we don't ever want it to happen again, and anything we can do to help you, and I would challenge you to coordinate with us if you have ideas, even maybe before the report comes out, that we could do things differently to help us be a safe company. I look this as an opportunity to make us better and to avoid things like this

happening in the future.

MS. WILSON: All right. Thanks, John.

MR. BECKER: Um-hum.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

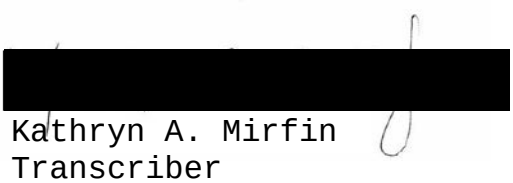
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018 Interview of John Becker
ACCIDENT NO.:	WPR18MA087
PLACE:	Boulder City, Nevada
DATE:	June 20, 2108

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed to the best of my skill and ability.



Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018	Accident No. WPR18MA087

Interview of: ANDRIA ELLETT

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

THOMAS TOBIN
Wilson Elser Law Firm
(Representative for Andria Ellett)

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:40 a.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being with us today. Conducting these interviews is just a routine part of our factfinding mission. We want to talk to different parts of an operation to understand what the processes, the procedures are so that it helps us better understand the accident. We have the ultimate goal of wanting to prevent something like this from happening again. We're from the safety side, not from enforcement or trying to place blame on anybody.

We would like to record this interview. That will allow us to create a transcript that will then become a part of our public docket. Is that something you're okay with?

MS. ELLETT: Um-hum.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could I please put my computer away real quick? (Indiscernible) are you okay with me putting the computer --

MS. WILSON: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Everybody else is okay with that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible). He was so happy to get out of here.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You bet your butt.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're very nice people.

MS. WILSON: So as a part of this interview process, you are entitled to have a representative sit in with you. It can be a

colleague, a friend; it can be a lawyer. Is there somebody that you would like to have as your representative? Can you state his name, please?

MS. ELLETT: Thomas W. Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Thank you. I'm Katherine Wilson. I am a human performance investigator for the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher, operations, with the NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, director of safety for Airbus Helicopters.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety for Papillon.

MS. WILSON: So we'll each take turns asking you questions. If you don't understand a question, please ask us to clarify. If you don't know the answer to the question, that's okay too. Just say --

MS. ELLETT: Okay.

MS. WILSON: -- that you don't know. And I will allow Zoe to start the questioning.

MS. ELLETT: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF ANDRIA ELLETT

BY MS. KELIHER:

MS. KELIHER: How long have you been with Papillon?

MS. WILSON: I'm sorry. Can we state the full name?

MS. ELLETT: Andria Ellett.

MS. WILSON: Okay.

MS. ELLETT: I have been with this company 11 years.

BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. And where were you before this?
A. I was with Scenic Airlines before Grand Canyon Airlines bought -- or Grand Canyon Airlines bought Scenic, so I've been doing it for 22 years.
Q. Wow. And how many people do you oversee here?
A. On my customer service staff, I have 16 agents. I also oversee the airplane ramp, which has eight agents on there.
Q. And we have you listed as the customer service manager for Boulder City.
A. Um-hum.
Q. Okay. And what -- were you an agent before? What was your prior position?
A. With Papillon, I've always been a manager.
Q. And can you just tell me what your daily operation -- what you do every day?
A. Okay. Lots of different things. My counter -- we're a little different than some of the other counters because we do have airplane and helicopter passengers checking in at our counter. So what we're doing is getting the weights for the passengers and entering those into the computer. Depending on the different tours that they're doing, we'll give out some stickers that are color coded so that we are able to separate those for boarding. If they're doing a helicopter, they'll go directly into the safety briefing, or if it's already playing, we'll make

announcements for that since there's not -- it's not a huge room where everyone can go at one time.

And then we collect any money that is due. We do some upgrades for front seats, window seats, different tours. So we'll collect that at the counter. And then we will assist with the boarding for the airplane side. The helicopter pilots board their own passengers, so -- but for the airplanes, we get them ready and they get boarding cards for that. And then any customer service stuff that comes up.

Q. So when a passenger arrives, what's the process that an agent (indiscernible)?

A. So they come in from the bus. And then when we call them up, first thing we ask them is where they're from so that we can have that information in their reservation, and that also goes on the manifest for the narration that gets played. We weigh them in, make sure that we have their names. We'll also enter any children's ages so that that can be entered. It shows on the manifest. And then once they've weighed in and they've got either their sticker or that, then they just wait in the terminal until they're called.

Q. So when you say they come in and they're called, does that mean you're expecting them? When you say you call them, what is --

A. When they, when they check in, when we get their weights, we either give them the sticker, or if they're on a helicopter, we

tell them to listen for their name. So then they just wait in the terminal until we either call their sticker color or the pilot calls their name.

Q. The actual name of the passenger.

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So if they drive here by car and they walk in, they just go up to the counter.

A. They come up to the check-in counter up here.

Q. Okay. And the screen that you're entering this information, what -- how do you -- first do you ask them their name and that's what pops up?

A. We ask them their name because we have a lot of languages. We ask for their IDs. That helps us find their names as well. If they speak English, it's easier to find their names because they're all listed by departure time. We do have groups that, you know, they might not -- they might try to check in separately where they're under one name for a group booking, so we have to -- if we can't find their name, obviously we have to look through some of the other reservations just to see if their names -- because the front name of the reservation is what shows on our screen.

Q. Is that sometimes the person that booked it, like the travel agent or the --

A. Not usually. Usually it's the passenger name. I mean, every once in a while a tour guide will put it under their name, but the

tour guide is with them, usually, when they do that. So he gives his name.

Q. And then what that screen comes up, besides weight and age, are there other --

A. So we have a, we have a screen that we use for the check-in which has every passenger's first and last name, where they're from, their -- a place to enter their weight. And then we have a box where we check in after we've entered their weight that makes it go through the system to show that they are checked in. So if everyone's checked in on that aircraft, the tower could manifest the aircraft.

We also enter the seating notes. Seating notes are based on each agent's first and last initial, and just a 1-1 just so that they know who needs to be seated together or -- because sometimes you have maybe a group of eight people and it's two different families, so you want to try to seat the mom and dad with the kids or something like that. So we do enter seating notes to help the tower manifest do that.

Q. And there's just different codes for that?

A. We just use -- the way that the agents do it is their first and last name -- or first and last initials. So I use A.E. And the first reservation I would check in for that departure, I might do A.E. 1-1 for the two people on this reservation. So when the tower is going through the names and stuff, they can see that these two are traveling together, because they may not be able to

-- they can't see that in the manifest screen without the seating notes. Just helps them to know that they are traveling together.
Q. Is there any place to enter contact information for them, like a phone number?
A. The front of the reservation has a phone number and an email, a place for a phone number and an email. That's not usually something we do at the check-in counter; that's done through reservations or when they book online. There's a place for them to enter that information.
Q. But when you click to check them in in that screen that pops up, is that information there?
A. No. There's three different screens in our reservation. The general screen, which has the first name, the agency, phone number, email. There's a notes section so that -- it's open notes. You can write anything into that. The pricing for what tour they're doing is there. And then the next screen is where we enter to make sure that the names and weights are entered in there.
Q. So for that first screen that you were just talking about, can the agent change anything on that?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And then the weights, are most of the time they in there already, a guess --
A. They give us an estimated weight most of the time. Not always, but most of the time. And that will -- you can put --

enter it in in kilos, stones or pounds. And then our agents are required to make sure it's in pounds.

Q. Got it. Is there always a senior or lead or a manager --

A. Yes.

Q. -- that's available? So how many agents are usually working?

A. It can be anywhere from four to eight at a time.

Q. With one management --

A. Um-hum.

Q. Who is the person that's (indiscernible) --

A. I have -- I'm the manager, and I have -- two, three -- four supervisors.

Q. So is it -- so you are a supervisor or is there a supervisor and --

A. It can be just me as the supervisor, or there's a supervisor for morning and afternoon that's going to help me schedule it.

Q. In February --

A. But there's always one.

Q. In February, would it have been the same?

A. Yes. Although in February, because our days are a lot shorter, we don't have, like, a double shift. So we have, we have like a -- because we don't -- in the summer we're here till, like, 9 o'clock sometimes, so we obviously can't do 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. So in the winter our last departure is at 3:00, 3:15 to 4 o'clock, just depending on what time of the year it is. So the supervisor is the same all day.

Q. Okay. And plus, potentially, you? So the supervisor and you?
A. There's potentially the -- there could be two supervisors working that day. Because we're at very minimum -- more minimal staff than we have during the summer.
Q. When you start in the morning, what's the first duties that you do before passengers start coming?
A. I'll look through the check-in screen, looking for groups, any special bookings through maybe sales and marketing. Just look through the screen, look at, look at the aircraft so that I can see if we have overbookings or anything like that. I'll just go through the screen -- the aircraft screen and the passenger screen.
Q. And then just wait for passengers to come in?
A. The person who closes at night kind of sets some stuff up for the next day. So for -- especially for the airplane sides when we have the stickers. So we'll make sure that that first flight, with whatever groups we have, we have them set up by -- with all their stickers. Or we do have passengers with bags who are going to the river, so we have to set up all that as well. So it's mostly just making -- getting the stickers that are then prepared on what computer they're going to be checking in at.
Q. Does anyone go to the briefing, the pilots' briefings?
A. If we can't go to the safety briefing, we call the lead pilot in the mornings. Because the safety briefing is at 5:45, and

that's when I have about 300 people standing at the counter checking in. We kind of saw that yesterday, I know. So normally, if we know -- if we have five or more aircraft going out on just the plane side, we call the leads before the meeting.

Q. And what do they brief you on?

A. We ask about the weather, if there's anything that we need to be weather advising for that day, anything that maybe we need to know about, any charters that they have set up or their -- they have -- taking people different places on different aircraft or -- you know, that we may not see on our screen, so --

Q. What's the weather advisory?

A. A weather advisory is something that we give to the passengers when we have not perfect weather. So if it's getting windy, then we'll advise them that there could be some turbulence on the flight. Usually the leads, in the mornings, will say, we need to start briefing at this time of day, or we need to brief all day. Like for tomorrow, we're going to have some heat temperatures at the bottom of the canyon, so we'll be advising the passengers, you know, if it reaches a certain temperature at the bottom of the canyon, that we're not able to do the landing portion of that. And if they're not able to do the landing portion, then we'll be refunding that portion once they return back here.

Q. So how does that go when they check in? How do you -- you have to brief (indiscernible).

A. We have to brief every passenger. We have the weather advisory form that we go through, and we mark what we're advising for. And then they initial each section. They mark yes, that they still want to continue. We give them the option to continue with the tour by signing the weather advisory. If they would like to reschedule for a different day, they have that option, or if they'd like to cancel with a full refund, they have that option.

Q. And if that's advised in the morning of a certain time, where is that kept or where is that noted? Or do you just remember it?

A. Our forms are at the counter, and we'll just let all the agents know this is what time we're going to be starting weather advisories, or we're starting right now. So the weather advisory, soon as we know when we're going to do it, we put the weather advisories on the counter by their computers.

Q. Do the agents, the four to eight, do they all arrive at the same time?

A. No.

Q. What's the stagger, usually? In February, what would the stagger be?

A. In February, we have at the most five agents in a day. So usually four of them are going to arrive, and then a closing person will arrive a little later.

Q. What's the arrival time?

A. It just depends. It could be anywhere between 6:00 and 9 o'clock. A.M.

Q. But they'll be staggered like that. So two could arrive at 6:00 and --
A. No, usually the four are going to be in first, because that's when we have the majority of the flights going out. And then the closing person will be the last person during the winter to come in.
Q. And so for that last 3:15 flight, there would be the closing person. And then other agents (indiscernible) --
A. A supervisor and possibly one other agent, or possibly two. We do have agents that are scheduled from, like, 5:00 to 1:00. But if it's a particularly bigger round -- we have a group or, you know, it's just a busy round -- then we'll have the 1 o'clock agent stay for the last round.
Q. And the stickers. So just talking the airplane or the helicopter side, when somebody comes in to check in, they're advised to --
A. Go to the safety briefing room or listen for the announcement for the safety briefing. And then once they watch the safety briefing, that's the only sticker that they get.
Q. So it's (indiscernible) --
A. Not color coded or -- CSRs or -- I have a redcoat (ph.) that -- he's not tied to the counter, so he tries to keep up with that as well.
Q. So it could be the person checking in.
A. Um-hum.

Q. Okay. And then from your information that's entered and after everyone's checked in, it goes up the tower. Are you involved at all anymore, or they're just waiting and --

A. We could be involved if we have to split passengers traveling together. They may call and say that we can't make weights with this six passengers, so we're going to need to split -- maybe a family of six, we need to split them four and two or, you know, maybe we have to split them three and three. That's -- after they've checked in, that's probably the most interaction we would have. Or if a passenger goes out to the helicopter and says, oh, I paid for the front seat, when they -- it's not on the manifest or -- you know, so the pilot will bring them back in; the tower will give us a head's up with that. But as far as, like, actually preparing the manifesting, you know, just, if something comes up that needs to be -- we need to talk to the passenger about is when they would call us.

Q. When the pilot comes in, if they can't find the passengers or people are in the bathroom or (indiscernible) --

A. They'll come and help -- have us help them locate them. And the passengers, they'll -- they worry that, I won't hear my name because -- you could see it is very loud in there sometimes. So the pilots are very good at -- you know, we can't find this person or -- and to verify their names, so we always tell them they're not going to leave you, so just wait patiently. If you can't hear it, we'll come and find you.

Q. We talked to a passenger that was on the flight before the accident flight, and they were saying that the pilots were calling them out by the country they were from. Do they usually do --
A. When we ask -- at check-in, we ask them where they're from, mostly to -- so that they have the right narration for the pilot to play. And they do use that as -- you're from United Kingdom. It kind of helps them to -- I'm from United Kingdom; are they going to call my name, type of a thing. So yeah, the pilots will use that.
Q. And do you have a -- or is it just the tower that are assigning different passengers together? Like if they're not -- like, how do you decide who goes in what helicopter?
A. If they're not traveling together?
Q. Yeah.
A. That's just based on the weights. The tower does all of that.
Q. And when the pilot is getting their manifest and their people, do they get that from you?
A. No, they get it at the back counter. It prints over there for them.
Q. Do pilots come in -- we saw that it was staggered. How do they come in to get their group? Do you know, like, the time?
A. If it's the first flight of the day, as soon as their helicopter -- they've done their preflight, their -- all the stuff that they need to do and they have fuel and they're ready to go,

they'll usually come and wait at the back gate there where the manifest prints. Throughout the day, it gets a little bit more staggered because they're not all coming and going at the exact same time. So they're usually -- once they get here, they walk their passengers in, clean the windows, get the aircraft ready for the next departure. And then once they have fuel and they're ready to go, they come back in.

Q. Do you have interaction with the pilots at all?

A. Some.

Q. Did you know Scott?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you ever had any complaints about him?

A. No.

Q. Can you tell me anything about --

A. I mean, I know who he is. I'm not -- I talked to him. Like, he was looking for passengers, maybe. I mean, that's not a lot of interaction with him. I just know who he is because he's been here for a while and I've been here for a while. So we don't have a huge -- we have probably more interaction with the airplane side of it because we are boarding and we see them every single time we're boarding, whereas the helicopters -- we do see them, and if they have any problems with a customer or anything, they'll come over. But they board their own passengers so we don't --

Q. But if passenger complaints -- do those come to you too?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you ever had any complaints about Scott?
A. No.
MS. KELIHER: I think that's the only question I have for now. Katherine?
MS. WILSON: Yeah. Thanks.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. So the forms that you have the passengers sign for the weather advisory --
A. The weather advisory.
Q. -- do you keep those?
A. At the end of the day, we -- they're all together and they go to guest relations.
Q. Okay. Do you --
A. I'm not sure how long she keeps them. But she's the one who gets those.
Q. You said guest relations?
A. Guest relations.
Q. Were you working the day of the accident?
A. No.
Q. No? Do you know, by chance, whether they were doing any weather advising on that day?
A. I don't think they were. We did ask guest relations if she had those and she did not, so I don't think they were.
Q. The safety video briefing that you direct passengers to, is it -- so what happens? They go into the room, and then what?

A. After the video, they get the sticker. So they get the -- they only get the sticker after the video, or when they went in the video and we've locked up the room with that retractable rope.
Q. And does somebody stand outside of the briefing room?
A. Not all the time. The person who was at the computers at the very end of the counter, they will be the ones watching that unless I have my redcoat, and then he will watch that.
Q. Okay. So what if the safety video's playing and somebody checks in. How does that work?
A. The safety -- it plays all the time. So there's always people checking in, a lot of the times when the safety briefing -- once we start the video and pull the string, then if you're not in there, you have to wait until the next one.
Q. Okay. So somebody can't enter once the --
A. They could enter. I mean, there is that possibility because it's not a -- you could crawl in there. But the CSR right there could see if someone does that and they'll be like, you need to watch the next video.
Q. Okay. So there is a possibility that somebody could potentially only watch a portion of the video, but there is a customer service person nearby to hopefully catch that.
A. Yes.
Q. And do customer service agents ever give the safety briefing, or is it only via video?
A. No, not at my counter. I know they do that at a different

counter. At other counters, they have given them. I'm not sure that that's still the case. But we don't do it here.

Q. You mean like at other bases?

A. Yeah.

Q. Yeah. Are you given any training on giving a safety briefing?

A. No.

Q. What if somebody doesn't want to be weighed? Do you use their guessed weight or do they have to be weighed once they come?

A. We weigh them. We tell them we have to have the weight for the weight and balance of the aircraft.

Q. Okay. And I may have misunderstood. Did you say that you also oversee agents on the ramp?

A. On the airplane ramp.

Q. Airplane ramp.

A. Not the helicopter ramp.

Q. Okay.

MS. WILSON: That's all the questions I have. Thanks.

Do you have any questions, Manny?

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. Have you been on any flights? I mean, in 11 years I'm sure you've --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- taken a flight. Okay. You enjoyed it?

A. Of course. I've been in the canyon lots of times.

Q. Do you do annual TSA training?
A. TSA training?
Q. Yes.
A. No.
Q. The Transportation Safety Administration doesn't come here and talk about any type of --
A. No.
Q. You weren't here the day of the accident. But are you aware of what's in, let's say, the mishap response plan that the company has? And you're familiar with that?
A. I did come in as soon as they called me.
Q. Okay. And would you say your manifest information on the passengers are accurate?
A. Um-hum.
Q. Okay. And there's enough information there for, let's say, if an aircraft did have an incident --
A. Yes.
Q. -- you would respond. Okay.
MR. FIGLIA: That's all I have.
MS. WILSON: Burl?
MR. BOYD: I have nothing.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. One follow-up. Do customers ever approach you or the customer service agents about safety concerns about flying in helicopters?

A. I would say that, of course, there's always somebody that's like, is this safe? Or as they're checking in, are we going to be safe? And that's probably increased a little bit more since February. But we're always, you know, the -- we're not going to take any chances. I don't feel like we are pushing, like, okay, we have to do this or -- you know, that's why in the weather advisory we do give them the options to cancel. And people do go out to the aircraft and be like, okay, I don't want to go. So you know, we do have -- we always have people who are asking stuff like that.

Q. Do you have guidance to follow of what to say to passengers?

A. As far as --

Q. Like if they, if they had a safety concern. Like you said, you know, we're not going to take any chances, those type of thing. Is that something that the company has advised you to say, or that's just something that you feel is the appropriate thing to say?

A. That's just something we feel is appropriate.

MS. KELIHER: I've got a few.

MS. WILSON: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: I'll give you some time.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Do you find it's more difficult for them to fill out a weather advisory? Does it take -- I mean, that takes more time?

A. Yes, it takes more time. As we've done weather advisories

over the years, we've learned that you have to be very specific and very thorough on what you're telling them and what the weather is going to be like. So if they're -- say it's a windy day. And it's pretty windy, but you know, but we're still within the limits of being safe. We'll tell them it's bumpy. And it does take a lot longer. And there is a lot of passengers who don't speak English, so we do have to have Google Translate up to help us with that. So yeah, it takes a lot longer to check in and get through the process when we have weather.

Q. Do you think there would be an easier way of doing it?

A. I mean, we have thought about, because of the majority of our passengers are -- book online, about -- you know, we do have one thing on there, on there that says, you know, weather conditions can cause changes or cancellations for flights. But because the weather -- I mean, every day is just so different, I feel like we have to tell them every day. I mean, because here, you can see it's a perfect day. But at the canyon, it might be snowing, so you just -- I don't know how we would communicate that to every passenger without doing it as they check in.

Q. And then in the morning when they call over if you don't go to the brief, when they say weather -- so say if they say it's windy. Do they tell -- how do they quantify it? Just say it's going to be bumpy, it's going to be windy? Do they tell you the knots?

A. They just tell we're going to -- say we're going to have

winds today, so you'll need to start weather advising right now, or with the first flight. Or sometimes they'll say, you might want to call us back at 9:00 or 9:30 and say, check on the weather. Obviously there's times where weather isn't forecast and it happens. So there is times where passengers don't get the weather advisory just because we were not able to -- the weather -- monsoon season. A thunderstorm came up quicker than we could foresee or something like that. So there's times where they don't get the weather advisory, but the pilots -- the lead pilot tells us, you know, it's going to be stormy or we have low clouds or windy, whatever that's going to be. And that's what we brief, according to their tour.

Q. And then will they call you back later in the day to make sure they're confirmed?

A. They could call us back and say, we're canceling the rest of the day because the winds are getting stronger, or they will call us back and say -- because maybe we started with the first flight and it's through now 11:30 and now it's not cloudy anymore or it's not windy anymore. So they will call us back and say, you don't need to weather advise anymore. Sometimes that happens.

Q. And then if someone gets sick on the flight or airsick or something like that, is that reported to you when they get back?

A. Not usually. That'd be -- some days, that would be a lot of -- I mean, they have the sick sacks. I mean, the only time we would normally get a call about a sick passenger is if we need to

go to the aircraft and help them once they're off the aircraft to get them inside, or if we have to call paramedics for them. That's usually the only time we know about airsickness or a sick passenger.

Q. And then are people that are regular fliers, like photographers or the people who marry people, the passengers, are they in your system already in your normal --

A. We don't do a lot of weddings at this -- we actually don't normally -- I mean, once in a while, we'll see someone who's been married, but they don't -- we don't have weddings from here. They're mostly out of Las Vegas. I don't even know that we've had a wedding in eight or nine years out here. They're always out of Las Vegas. But as far as their photographers and our regular people, I don't know about that.

Q. And then do you think it would be difficult -- I know given the (indiscernible) best person to answer this question -- to get an email address or a phone number for each person as they're getting weighed?

A. It would be very time-consuming. Because summer, I mean, you have reservations from 1 person up to 80 people. And if you had -- I mean, I -- you could, you could print something out maybe and have -- give it to the tour guide and have them fill it out, but as far as if you had to type in every phone number and email for each passenger, it would get very time-consuming.

Q. So even if it was as they're stepping on the scale and you're

confirming it's this person, this weight, if there was another box and you said, okay, and what's your phone number --

A. With the language barrier, it would cause issues. Because I mean, that group of 80 may be French or they -- I mean, I have -- I do have some people who speak other languages, but not every language, so --

Q. Okay.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. The customer service agents, do they check in for Grand Canyon Airways and Papillon?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Is the safety briefing offered in other languages? The video?

A. No.

Q. Do you have any training in weather?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Do you think that would be helpful, or is the information that the pilots give you fully --

A. The information they give us is pretty good. I mean, I can look at the weather on the internet or, you know, the pilots give me some sites that I can look at the radar and I can look at the forecast and stuff, so I can kind of plan that. But as far as, like, reading the weather and -- there's an airline weather whatever, I can't read that.

Q. Okay. And that's not something that you think you would

need.
A. No. I feel like the pilots give us information. And I mean, they can -- they'll also talk to me about, you know, we're still within the limits to go, but what's the customer service experience going to be? If I -- I don't want to send them out there. Yeah, we can, we can get there, but the canyon is covered in clouds. I don't want to send them out there so that I have to give all the refunds when they get back, so --
Q. If a landing tour turns into an air tour, you -- do you only refund the landing portion? Do they still pay for the air tour itself?
A. They would be charged the difference from a landing to an air only, and that can vary depending on how they booked their reservation, if they booked through an agency, if they booked online. So that amount can vary depending on how they booked.
Q. Is there ever a time when they would, they would get a full refund?
A. If they took off and the weather got worse or changed and had to come back, then we would give them a full refund.
Q. Like if they didn't even make it to the canyon?
A. Right.
Q. When passengers have to be rescheduled, are they usually rescheduled for the next day, or does it --
A. Whenever is convenient for them. During the summer or busier months, it's probably not going to be for the next day because

we're already sold out. Sometimes we have to offer them alternate tours than the one that they had because we're sold out. So it just depends on what's going to work for them.

Q. Do you notice, is there any pressure -- so let's say that the day before there was a lot of cancellations because of weather. Now it's the next day. Do you feel like there's any pressure for flights to go --

A. no.

Q. -- that you can see? Okay. I know you said you don't really have passengers coming in and saying that they got sick or something like that, but would there ever be a case where you would call the lead pilot and say, you know, I've had some passengers complaining of turbulence or something, and you know, what's the weather doing?

A. Throughout the day -- because passengers will ask how turbulent is it. So throughout the day, there are several times we call to see, you know, is it really bumpy? Is it just slightly bumpy? So that we can tell the pilot -- or the passengers that.

Q. All right. Thanks.

MS. KELIHER: And when they come back in, if they complain and say, the pilot was swearing the whole time and -- is that recorded anywhere?

MS. ELLETT: No.

MR. FIGLIA: They can, they can put that in our --

MS. ELLETT: Well you mean, like --

MR. FIGLIA: -- guest (indiscernible).

MS. ELLETT: We can put what they said in the notes. I can -- I mean, if that's what -- how you're asking it. But it's not like -- we don't have video or recordings of that. Is that what you mean?

MS. KELIHER: No.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Is there any way to make a note of it?

A. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. Sorry, I misunderstood that. Yeah, we would enter notes and we would queue that to the guest relations queue.

Q. Where do you enter the notes into the --

A. In the reservation, there's a note field that's freeform notes.

Q. So you would say, what's your name?

A. What's their name, pull up their reservation and they'll -- that reservation. Depending on, you know, what the issue is, sometimes their headset didn't work or -- you know, sometimes that's something that we can just resolve at the counter. But if the -- I really haven't had anyone come and complain to me about the pilot like that. But if I did get something like that, then I would report it to the chief pilot or the lead pilot.

Q. What are the main things that you hear that are the complaints? Make sure you put everything in (indiscernible).

A. I wanted the front seat; I didn't get the front seat. I paid

for the front seat -- which they always think they paid for it, but they -- no one can pay for it until we have the weight and balance and we know for sure you're going to get it. That's when we collect for the front seats. I didn't hear my language. Don't really get a lot of complaints.

Q. (Indiscernible).

A. I mean, obviously some people don't come to the counter to complain. They'll go to -- they'll wait till they get back and maybe send an email to guest relations. Or you know, maybe we had to split four or six passengers, and one aircraft was 15 minutes behind the other one. So they may be -- they may complain that they weren't together at the bottom of the canyon that whole time because of the staggering of the helicopters.

Q. Food.

A. Maybe the food. Once in a while, someone will say, well, I wanted a veggie meal, but you know -- we can do that, but we have to know in advance because we have a caterer. So they may complain. Or maybe they were short a meal at the bottom of the canyon, and there were seven people and we only had six meals that got put into the -- so that, something like that has happened.

Q. How much leeway are you given to give refunds of certain things?

A. I can, I can refund components of, like, a meal or no narration or something like that. As far as, like, delays on the helicopter, I go up to $50 at the counter for a two-hour delay, if

it got to a two-hour delay. And then beyond that, we work with guest relations. And sometimes it's -- they go further, sometimes we don't. But ultimately, I work with guest relations on that, or the supervisor.

Q. All right.

MR. FIGLIA: I have one more question. What if you have a safety issue? How would you, how would you report that?

MS. ELLETT: On Flight & Duty Tracker. We have that for both sides, so whatever side it's on, we have -- we can go log in there, put in an incident. If it's a -- there's different things we can do. Safety. We see a safety hazard and we want to report that, we can do it on Flight & Duty Tracker. Or any time we have a passenger illness or a passenger hurts themselves getting in and out of the helicopter, all of that we fill out an incident on Flight & Duty Tracker.

MS. KELIHER: Do you ever hear any of the passengers complain about seatbelts? Anything about it?

MS. ELLETT: No.

MS. KELIHER: All right.

MR. FIGLIA: Okay, just one -- do you attend safety meetings on a regular basis, like quarterly or --

MS. ELLETT: Yeah. I'm on the safety committee, so --

MR. FIGLIA: Okay. Great.

MS. KELIHER: That's good.

MS. WILSON: Great. Thank you so much.

MS. ELLETT: Okay. Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 11:22 a.m. PDT, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of Andria Ellett

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 20, 2018

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.



Ei
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*	
	*	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	*	
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	*	Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	*	
	*	

Interview of: BURL BOYD

Wednesday
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

THOMAS TOBIN, Attorney
Wilson Elser
(Observing)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:32 a.m.)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here with us today. This interview is part of a routine fact-finding phase of the investigation on February 10th. We would like to record the interview so that we can create a transcript of this and put this in our public docket. Is that okay with you?

MR. BOYD: That's fine.

MS. WILSON: You are also entitled to have one person represent you. It can be a friend or a colleague or a lawyer.

MR. BOYD: Tom Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Tom Tobin. Great. And I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoë Keliher, Operations with the NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety, Airbus.

MR. BOYD: My name is Burl Gene Boyd. I'm the director of safety for Papillon Helicopters.

MS. WILSON: Great. So, what we'll do is each person will have an opportunity to ask questions. If you don't understand the questions, please don't hesitate to ask us to clarify, or if you don't know the answer, saying I don't know is okay. You're obviously the expert in this area, so we want to get as much information from you as possible.

INTERVIEW OF BURL BOYD

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. How long have you been with Papillon?
A. Just over 4 years.
MS. KELIHER: Before we go, I don't think we got it on record if it's okay that we record it.
MR. BOYD: Yes, she did.
MS. KELIHER: Oh, okay.
MS. WILSON: Thank you for clarifying, though.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. Four years?
A. I started here February the 3rd of 2014.
Q. Okay. Great. And what did you do, brief synopsis of your aviation career leading you up to Papillon?
A. Okay. I joined the military in 1974, went to flight school with the military, with the United States Army in 1976. And I spent 20 years in the army, retired in October of 1994. I went to work for a small operator in western Colorado, thought I'd be able to go back to my home state and call that home. And I worked for him for about 3 years. He told me one day that he was making payroll with his credit card and I might want to look around.
So we took a vacation, the first one we had in 3 years, and came to Las Vegas. I dropped a résumé off at Sundance Helicopters, and before I could get out of the door, I was asked if I could interview, and then a flight. And I started working for Sundance Helicopters on May the 5th, 1997. Then I was with Sundance for over 16 years. Sundance sold out to Air Methods, all

the management got let go, and I'm here now.
Q. What positions did you hold at Sundance?
A. I started off as a utility pilot, line pilot, and later I became the chief pilot. And I was the chief pilot for a while, and then I became the assistant director of operations for about a year just to see if that was a function that we wanted to do. We decided to not do that. And the chief pilot that had replaced me, he left and went to Florida, to the Seminole Indians.
I went back to being the chief pilot and continued at that vocation till such time as Air Methods bought the company out, fired the director of operations. I became the interim director of operations for about 4 or 5 months, I guess, and then they hired a new director of operations. I went back to being the chief pilot. And then July the 26th, 2013, I was released.
Q. And what position were you hired on for at Papillon?
A. Line pilot.
Q. How long were you a line pilot?
A. For about 3 months, I think.
Q. And then what other positions have you held?
A. Just the director of safety.
Q. Okay. So that I'm understanding, line pilot with Papillon for about 3 months, and then you became the director of safety. And is it director of safety or safety director?
A. Director of safety.
Q. Okay. What helicopter were you flying here?

A. I flew the EC130.
Q. Okay.
A. And the AS350B2.
Q. About how much total time do you have?
A. Over 10,000. I have no idea.
Q. Any idea how much you have in the EC130?
A. I don't have a lot on the EC 130.
Q. Yeah.
A. Most of my ASTAR time is in the B2 and the BA.
Q. Do you still fly ever?
A. No.
Q. No?
A. No.
Q. As the director of safety, what are your duties and responsibilities?
A. My duty is to just monitor the safety aspects of the company. I report to Brenda Halvorson, work directly for her, work in conjunction with the director of operations, and I work in conjunction with the director of maintenance. I do company audits and I manage outside audits when they come in. I'm the point of contact for all of that. Anytime we have a vendor that wants to do an audit, I'm the one who performs those audits for the vendors, also.
Q. What internal company audits do you do?
A. I do a quarterly audit for Boulder City and for the South

Rim. I do 6-month audits. They are semiannual audits for Grand Canyon West, Las Vegas -- well, all of our satellite operations.

Q. Do you have any direct-reports to you?

A. Do I have what?

Q. Any people that report directly to you?

A. Oh, no. No, I'm a loner.

Q. What would you say your typical workload is like? Is it high, low, medium?

A. Well, it just depends on what's going on.

Q. Okay.

A. During this year, it's been extremely high because we not only had our accident, we also had our IS-BAO audit, which was in April, we had our TOPS audit, which was in May, and because of the accident, we've had a lot of outside vendors wanting audits done. So I've been extremely busy.

Q. And when you're doing these internal audits, what specifically are you looking at?

A. I go through to check, I'll check the number of pilots to see if we've got a pilot shortage, or if the pilot, chief pilot believes that we've got a large turnover rate or not, or whether we -- and we do the same thing with maintenance, see if the mechanics, is there a high turnover rate. And that kind of fluctuates, you know, with the time of year. And then I'll check pilot records, maintenance records. A lot of just observations, just to go out and look and see if I can identify things that are

problems.
Q. In terms of the observations, are you going out and flying with the pilots?
A. I ride along with the pilots. I go to different bases with the pilots and I go to our landing sites.
Q. So Quartermaster would be included?
A. Oh, yes. And I've flown that canyon so many times. I've made a lot of landings down there.
Q. Any risks that you identify flying in and out of there that you've recently mitigated or had to mitigate?
A. One that I saw just recently was when we opened up our -- well, we haven't opened it up totally, but the Waterfall landing site. I have never landed at that location. But we went out there, Simon and I rode along with Tyler Carver, and we went to the Waterfall site and we were going to check to see the conditions, see what we needed to do out there.
And as we were coming in, we came through the notch, we saw both our two windsocks at our location, which is Quartermaster Helibase. We went through the notch, getting ready to shoot an approach with the same wind conditions that we saw at our site. When we made that turn towards the Waterfall site, we could see Maverick's windsock, which was totally different. So we made a couple of orbits around and our site, at the Waterfall site was very similar to the wind condition that Maverick had.
So I wouldn't have realized it, just the distance, the

elevation and the location could have changed the wind that much. But it was not the same wind condition at our Waterfall site that it was at our main base, main helipad.

Q. So, was there some mitigating --

A. Well, we put a windsock up there.

Q. Okay.

A. There was no windsock there. That's what we were going down there to check on. So the following Monday -- I think that was on a Friday. I think the following Monday Simon took one of our maintenance people out there and he put up a set up for the windsock, got that in place. We got some umbrellas set up for the tables. Just getting it ready to go. Now we're in the process of doing training.

Like I said, I've been here for 4 years and I had never landed at the Waterfall site. So I know that there's a whole lot of people here that haven't landed there. So in order for us to do that, and that's part of my managing of the change on that, is that we have to do the training for the pilots.

Q. And is there some risk assessment being done for that?

A. That's part of my management change is a risk assessment on that.

Q. Okay.

A. And notice the winds and the windsock being put in place.

Q. Okay. Since the accident, have you done any risk assessment of the original Quartermaster landing site?

A. What we did on that one -- and I've heard several people say that there's this many landing sites there and there's this many landing sites there. What John did was, when this all happened, he reduced the number of landings at that location. Not necessarily the pilots all knew that this is what happens, but through Jerry San Nicholas, who's our -- he manages a number of aircraft that do these kind of landings, and he restricted it to X number of landings. And then he increased it up to -- now it's at eight landings, plus the two we'll have over at the other location.

I would expect that after every -- a lot of it was not because it was a safety issue. I think a lot of it, to begin with, John put it that way so that the pilots had a comfort level. But I would assume that in the fairly near future we'll probably go back to around 10 landings there. There's decent landings at that location.

And I would say as far as the spot goes, it is absolutely not a confined area. Best case would be maybe a pinnacle. But it's very open. You know, you've got access in different directions. You know, there's a lot worse sites out there that there are people landing on than our two. I would say probably the three best landing sites are Sundance up on the Quartermaster Bluff, ours at Quartermaster Helibase, and the Ramada.

Sundance was the first operator out there, so they picked Quartermaster Bluff. It's a pretty nice area, pretty big and

open. And the good part about that is it's sunny in the mornings when it's cold. In the summertime, because it's hot during the summer regardless of where you are, but in the winters you're getting the first sun there. So it's a nice place. Sundance got a good spot. And Heli USA was using the Ramada. And so, in my opinion, Papillon has the best third spot out there. I mean, they're all similar, but that's, I'm sure that's the reason that Papillon picked the way they did.

Q. So given the -- I think you said your workload's been pretty high because of the different audits and the accident. Do you feel like you were able to adequately still do your job?

A. Yes, ma'am, I do.

Q. Okay. What's your interaction with the FAA?

A. I have a very good rapport with the FAA. Do I use them as part of my job, no, but I do have a good rapport. And I've been here for so many years that I know most everybody at the FAA, and they know me, so it's a good rapport.

Q. Coming from Sundance over to Papillon, how do you think the safety culture compares?

A. I think that Sundance's SMS program was behind Papillon's. And I'm just going to go by the SMS program, safety program, because I think that most everything else was very similar. Well, I used to work very closely with the chief pilot here, and our director of operations. I've known John for a long time, long before I started working here. And so, we interacted a lot.

Probably Sundance and Papillon interacted more together than any other operators in the valley.

There was times where we were working on an SMS at Sundance and they were working on an SMS here, and there was a lot of interchange in information. Same with hazmat, non-carry and carry hazmat issues. So the DO of Papillon and the DO at Sundance worked hand in hand on getting those two items set up. So it was a good rapport. Which I'm really glad it was because I'm pretty sure that's the reason I'm here.

Q. Why do you -- do you think the interaction with Sundance was because you were both working on -- between Sundance and Papillon was because you were both working on the SMS program?

A. No, it's also that it was primarily Sundance and Papillon that started identifying the chokeholds or the problem areas in the routes to and from the Grand Canyon and we wanted to get it where everybody was doing the same thing, or at least everybody knew what the other operators were doing.

And Sundance and Papillon are the ones that pushed the FAA to see if they would host this group. And it has changed from just being Heli USA, which is out of business now, but it was Heli USA, Sundance, Maverick, Papillon, and I think that was about it, in the beginning. And then we've added Serenity and Five Star. But no, I think it's been a good relationship for a lot of years.

Q. Why do you think that is? Why do you think Sundance and Papillon have worked so well together?

A. I think a lot of it was because the owners of Sundance were also on a friendly basis with the Halvorsons. There was a lot of relationship back in those days with Elling Halvorson and the way he did business. But Sundance was in this valley before Papillon was. I remember when Papillon first started flying down to their location.

Q. Oh wow. Describe for me the different safety programs that are in place at Papillon.

A. Well, it's our SMS program, and SMS is -- I am just kind of the custodian for it. It's Brenda's SMS program, and all of the managers are involved with it or it wouldn't be called a management system. The way I see it is our SMS program, it has to have the foundation of management. Just like building a building, if you don't have a foundation, you don't have much to build on. And above that, we have a, basically a floor of being a just culture, because if you don't have a just culture, you don't have a program at all. And then the safety aspects of that make up our SMS program.

But it's a growing or it's a living program. So, when you see something that needs to be done, you have to deal with it. You need to make changes to your SMS manual, you need to maybe train something differently. I think one of our shortcomings to start with was we had a fatigue management program in place, but we didn't have any way to measure it. And we had an IS-BAO come in and ask about, you know, how do you measure your SMS program.

And when I pulled out a ruler, they didn't think that was too funny.

So we've got a process now so that if somebody has an issue, whether it's fatigue or anything else, we have an adjustment to duty. They fill that out and say why they're going home early. It might be a family issue, it might be a family emergency, it might be an illness, or it might be fatigue. But whenever those come in, somebody in management, so most of the time it's the lead pilot, will sign it, the person that fills it out will sign it. And then I will sign it, date it, and I scan it into my emails so I've got a file. That's all it is.

Now, I didn't have to have anything to illness. I didn't have to have anything for emergency departures, or anything else. But it's kind of like when you have an SFAR deviation, you're supposed to keep those for 90 days. But if you -- I'm telling you now, if the FAA comes in and says, let me see your deviations for the SFAR for the last 90 days and you open a file and there's nothing in it and say, well, I just purge it every time I get to 90 days, they'll say, well, we're not sure you've got one. But I had SFAR deviations when I was the chief pilot over there from back in 1994, before I ever started, because you couldn't tell me that I didn't have a deviation program.

It's the same thing with our fatigue management. I've got to have something there. I think I've got one person to put in there that he was leaving because he was fatigued. They do a really

good job of managing the schedule so that people -- especially in the summertime when it's hot, it is a time where you can get fatigued. They do two separate schedules. So I think that the fatigue management program is good. Maintenance has got the same program for their fatigue management as what the government has for our OAS and government contracts. So there is something in place for fatigue management and time limitations.

Q. Who do you report directly to?

A. Brenda.

Q. Okay. If I'm a pilot and I call in fatigued or I fill out the form and I say that I'm fatigued, I need to leave early, what happens then? Do I get -- do I have some sort of sick leave, or do I get my pay cut?

A. It might be PTO. And I don't have any idea how that works. I am not involved in that. I could care less how that works. All I want to know is if you're fatigued, you're not on a flight line. And there's never anybody that says, no, you've got another flight, dude. It doesn't happen.

Q. Okay.

A. If you fill out that form and say I need to leave, then you're gone. But pay-wise, I have nothing to do with pay, I have nothing to do with management.

Q. If I had a safety concern as a pilot, what are my means of reporting those safety concerns?

A. You could do it in an irregularity report if it was a flight-

related issue. You could do an unsafe condition or hazard report if that's what it was. Or it could be an incident report if it was something to do with a slip or fall. You know, like oh he said he fell off the helicopter and broke his wrist. You know, that was an incident report.

Q. And what if I wanted to report something anonymously?

A. You can go to Flight Data Tracker and go to -- for the pilots, they go to flight, and then they put in Papillon with a capital P, and it comes up with the forms, and then you click on the form that you want it to be, and the one that's anonymous is an unsafe condition or hazard report. You can put your name on there and click anonymous or you can leave your name off of there and click anonymous.

Because the only person that gets unsafe condition or hazard reports are me. And I told everybody during our initial training, if you tell me you want to be anonymous, no one in our management's going to ask me who it was. Because if I ever give that, if I ever breach that trust in me, then no one's going to do any reports. So rarely. I think I've had a couple anonymous reports, but rarely do I get that. They put their name on it because they are not having any issues with -- hey, this is a problem, we need to get it fixed. And sometimes it's almost like a prideful thing that, hey, this is a safety issue and I want my name attached to it because I'm the one that saw it.

Q. On the irregularity reports there's the section where a pilot

can put in a recommendation of maybe how to mitigate it. What's done with those?

A. They're all on file, and they're all closed. But do I look at what they say can be done?

Q. Yes.

A. Yeah. Most of the time, what they put down there is just not too reasonable. Sometimes you get a good idea, and if you've got a good idea, you use it or promote it. But, you know, a lot of the times it's -- sometimes the pilots get a little frustrated when something happens and they'll put something in there that just wouldn't fly. Now, I don't have to, or management doesn't have to address what they wanted done. They have to address what the cause was.

And if it's an issue where a pilot had -- well, just say it's an over torque. We get those quite a bit on the Bells. And we've got the Diamond J gauges over there, so it tells right away. So they write up this thing. And when those come in, I don't normally have to even say anything, but most of the -- if I do, I'll just send something to their chief pilot over. Normally, he's already on top of it. He gets hold of the pilot and they discuss it, you know, what was the deal here, you know. And then he fills his portion out. And when he's done, he lets me know and I'll close it.

If it's something that everybody needs to know, maybe it's the pilot pool here that needs to know it but it wouldn't affect

anybody at the South Rim, then we put it in our morning briefing for a minimum of 14 days. That way, regardless of what schedule you're on, eventually you're going to be here when that item comes up. If it only applies to the South Rim, then the same would occur over there. If it's company wide, then we put it in both locations. But everybody will work at one of those locations in a 14-day period.

Q. So, how do you close the loop on the irregularity reports that come in? Are pilots alerted when a report is closed, or do they see the comments that you put in?

A. They would see the comments on the flight duty -- or on the morning briefings, yeah.

Q. Okay. But there's no -- they don't get, let's say, an email to say your irregularity report's been closed?

A. No. I do not do that, no.

Q. Has Papillon considered starting an ASAP program?

A. Yes, we have. We've talked with -- I've talked with our POI about that. I would like that. I would like to see that happen. I would also like to see, even though we are IS-BAO SMS, I would like us to be Part 5 of the FAA's SMS program. Because I think if we can meet the requirements of one, we can meet the requirements of the other.

If there's a little additional stuff that we need to do, I don't think there would ever be a thing that, well, we have to stop doing this to meet their requirement. I think if there was

something in Part 5 that required something more, which I don't think there is, then we could meet that requirement, too. And then if the FAA ever does say, okay, Burl, you are required now to have a 135 SMS Program Part 5, we're in place already. We don't have to worry about it. ASAP would be great, also.

I've got a question about ASAP. If we were ASAP and we had an incident or accident, would the ASAP reports be released to you guys?

Q. I don't believe we get ASAP reports.

MS. KELIHER: We do subpoena, but that all came from, well, the accident report.

MR. BOYD: Well, I'll tell you, I have had a big problem with turning over my irregularity reports. I don't want my pilots and my other people to think, well, jeez, what is supposed to be something that we trust in you to be released to other people. And I've had a problem with this and I just want to be upfront about it.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. Yeah, let's talk about that after.

A. Okay.

Q. Because I understand your concern. Is there any sort of safety newsletter that goes out to pilots?

A. No. And I have looked at different ways to do that. I'm not a real sharp computer guy. I wish I was, because I would like to put out a news bulletin, maybe on a quarterly or semiannual basis.

But no, I do not have one. I'm not ruling that out by any means. I've been looking at trying to figure out how to make that work.

Q. So, how are safety issues shared with the pilot group?

A. Well, I don't consider that it's just the pilot group. I think the whole company is involved, and so we have our quarterly safety meetings and we address different topics. And those managers go back to whoever they're managers of if there's issues that they want to put out, they can put that out in their meetings with their employees.

Q. Are there ever any meetings, though, where pilots could attend, the pilot group could attend if they wanted?

A. A representative, yes.

Q. Okay. Has any information been shared regarding this accident?

A. Not that we can put out, because we don't know the cause of it. We've certainly put out information about what we have done to try to mitigate the problems. We've gone through doing training, an outside source coming in and doing training with us on emergency equipment and how to utilize that. We've done classes. Those people trained have given classes, also. We've talked them about, well, the windsock that's out there. We've been pushing a lot about Papillon being on the leading edge of trying to get crash-worthy fuel systems that could possibly take a survivable accident and not make it an inferno. So we're talking about that a lot, also.

So I think that we put the information out there, only with what we can. Do I speculate with the pilots what my thoughts are on the accident or any -- I don't. But until we have the NTSB final -- and even at that, you guys are going to do us a best guess. I don't know whether you can say that this is definitely the reason.

Q. I guess I'm thinking not maybe necessarily specific to the cause of the accident but a reminder to pilots to adhere to SOPs or to make (indiscernible).

A. Oh, yeah.

Q. Have those things been reinforced with pilots?

A. I don't even think that we need to do that, but we do. But we have never had any issues with the number of reports that we get in here. And that has grown over the last 4 years quite a bit. So we get lots of irregularity reports. I had what, 360 irregularity reports last year. I think that just slightly under that for 2016, or maybe just slightly over that. But I've had a lot of reports.

People are not only willing, I think a lot of times they're anxious to get their information out there and say this is what happened to me and I would like to not have that happen to somebody else.

Q. So I'm sorry, just to clarify, you -- there hasn't been anything specific to this accident, any reminders about following procedures? You're saying that you do that sort of in general,

but there's been nothing since the accident?
A. I don't put that kind of stuff out there. For the pilots, it would be the lead pilots and the training director and the chief pilot who would give information on making sure that you follow the SOP. Our SOP has been redone and everybody has gone through that. We get a monthly exam that's written out by someone, either -- normally, it's either the chief pilot, the director of training, or myself.

We've had, since the accident, one that was just on SMS. So it was their monthly quiz. We've had a monthly quiz on the contents of Appendix E, which is SOP. It used to be an SOP. The FAA said, guys, we don't mind you having an SOP, but we want to have a copy of it that's always current. So if we make any change to our SOP, we have to -- because it's in our GOM, it has to go to the FAA, not for approval or acceptance but just because they get a copy of it. And at that point, we will put it in our GOM.
Q. Tell me more about these monthly quizzes that you do.
A. I just did one, I think, maybe April or something like that, maybe May. But Simon will write up a, you know, 10-question quiz on any subject, it doesn't make any difference. And Tyler's got all of those. If you want to take a look at the monthly quizzes, you're sure welcome to see that.

But that way, the pilots can also keep these monthly quizzes, and when it gets time for their check ride, they go through and review that. Because a lot of the stuff that's on there might be

in an oral or during a check ride. But it's a monthly thing. I think, without fail, over the last 2 or 3 years, maybe, something like that, ever since Tyler became the director of training. He is phenomenal.

Q. And then what's done with -- is there -- do people get graded? Do the pilots get graded?

A. They get graded. They get graded. And there have been times where he's -- well, one of the things that Tyler also started was we have a pilot of the quarter. That pilot of the quarter isn't elected, or isn't picked by Simon or Tyler or one of the lead pilots, it's an election by their peers. So who's out there helping, you know, turning aircraft, getting things ready to go, a very good mentor, all these kind of things. And that pilot of quarter gets one of these $200-a-year parking spots for a quarter. So that is a real good morale builder. But my hat's off a lot to Tyler Carter. I think he's an excellent person.

Q. Have you seen any increase in irregularity reports since the accident?

A. I don't think so, no.

Q. Have you gone back to the irregularity reports to identify whether there have been issues with landing in the Quartermaster?

A. So, you know what? I don't recall seeing any of those. To actually go back through the years and do just a search on that, it would be difficult because it doesn't have a particular -- it might have -- I've got a bunch of different parameters that I can

query. You know, I can query door openings. I can query bird strikes, chipped lights, electrical issues. I can query all that, but I don't have one that says Quartermaster Helibase. And so, I would have to go back and read all of them. I could rule some of them out and not have to read everything, but I can't do just that. And I could probably put it in there, give a block to -- just for landings. We've got one for unscheduled landings, but that one --

Q. As the director of safety, do you oversee all the bases?

A. Mm-hmm.

Q. Okay. Are you involved at all with the LOA between the operators?

A. I get a copy of it emailed just to look at it, but that's Simon and Tyler that go through that and decide what they need to do. I was very instrumental in getting it started, but I don't much anymore.

Q. Okay. And do pilots get trained on SMS?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Is that something that you developed or was --

A. It was developed before I got here. But we do SMS training for all of the pilots as they come through. I do the SMS training.

Q. Okay. You actually administer it?

A. I do the SMS training for the new pilots here. And Rusty Knudsen (ph), who's kind of the -- he's kind of being groomed to

take my place. He's not being groomed by me, but he's doing a lot of the stuff on that side, and we communicate a lot. But most of our communications is by telephone. He's been on the fires and things, so I haven't seen him personally in several months now. But we do talk a lot. So he does the safety portion at the South Rim. The guy who used to do it before Rusty is Ken Stevens (ph), who works for Airbus now. He's one of their instructor pilots.

Q. Going back to the irregularity reports, are those required under Part 135?

A. No, not at all.

Q. Okay. So that's a part of -- but it's a part of your SMS program?

A. It is.

Q. And how would pilots know when they're supposed to fill out an irregularity report?

A. They'd be just told that anytime you have an issue, please fill one out.

Q. Is there something --

A. There's nothing in this.

Q. Is there something in the GOM that says these are the times when you should fill one out?

A. I don't think so. I don't believe there's anything in the GOM about -- it might be in -- I'll have to look in Appendix E. I think it's mostly they understand that if something is not a standard flight, regardless of what it is, that they fill out an

irregularity report so we can -- we know what's going on. If it's a maintenance issue, then we find out what Maintenance did about that. And the way those are closed is we find out what was written up in the log can (ph) and what maintenance did to correct the action.

Now, sometimes it's written up in the log can and they've done something and then it happened -- something, you know, similar happens again. So it might not be that you close it right away till you have no more issues with that on a couple dates, and then at that point you can close it because, evidently, whatever the case may be, it's been resolved.

Q. All right. I think that's all the questions that I have for now, Burl.

A. Okay. Thank you.

Q. Thanks.

MS. WILSON: Zoë?

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Yeah. I missed a few things. You said July 2006 [sic] and I missed the year.

A. July 2000 --

Q. I mean, July 26.

A. Oh, oh, when I got let go from --

Q. Yeah.

A. That was 2013.

Q. 2013. And then you were hired here --

A. On February the 3rd. I had a 6-month non-compete from Sundance because they were re-branding theirselves. They changed their logo and the paint jobs on the aircraft, and I knew all these things, and so they said non-compete, you can't talk to anybody about anything. So they paid me well for it. I mean, I didn't work for 6 months.

I realized then that I didn't want to be retired. I was 60 years old when that all happened and I'm thinking who in the world is going to hire me at this age? You know, it's kind of scary. But regardless, I came to work right at 6 months to here. I mean, it was a few days because of the class date, but, I mean, it was right at 6 months that I was working here.

And I was called by John Becker shortly after all this happened and he was just asking some questions about a pilot that we both knew. And I couldn't ask for a job and I couldn't say anything about that, which I did not, and John didn't offer me a job. But the last thing he said to me on that conversation, he says, oh, by the way, Burl, when your time's up, you have a home. That's all he said. You know, you can read into that whatever you want, but I read into it that -- phew. And that's how that went.

Q. What was your relation with Becker before?

A. We worked together quite a bit. During meetings, you know, during these meetings about getting our routes structured on paper so that everybody had an idea of what every other person is doing, when you hear a radio call from Maverick at such-and-such

location, we've trained on that here so that we ought to know where Maverick is at that point in time. Because not all of our routes are exactly the same, but if we know that they're at this location, they're not a factor to us. But if they call this other location, now they would be a factor to us.

So we've worked quite a bit on that. We had a lot of meetings, and John was at these meetings, and I was at these meetings. We had meetings with Clark County Aviation Department. It used to be about -- god, it seemed like there for a while about every month, but we've done these for so many years now that we're now down to every 6 months we'll have a meeting with the users at Clark County Aviation. And those meetings talk about our route structure within Class B airspace, and they've given us certain gates and they've tracked us, I mean right down to the nose, whether we make these gates. And we're well into the 98 to 99 percent of the time all the companies are making those gates.

There was a lot of noise-sensitive areas up around the Las Vegas -- on the Las Vegas Strip, up by the Stratosphere because there was some congressperson that lived up there and complained, so there was a gate put up there. And, you know, it's just I knew John through that.

Q. When your 6 months was up, was it you and John that were discussing that you would eventually -- that they needed a director of safety?

A. No, what happened was I came in here and, oddly enough, when

I was sitting there being interviewed by Brenda and John, Brenda got a phone call and she said, can I call you back, I'm interviewing a potential chief pilot. And so, right after that was over, I said, John, I don't want to be your chief pilot, I want to be responsible for Burl and only Burl. And so, that was let go. I didn't even realize that that was a thought.

But right after I started here, the director of safety, David Bales (ph), he left to go fly EMS. He was working here part time. But he left, I think it was in that February timeframe that he left the position, and John asked me if I wanted it. And I said, John, I really -- I've had enough of taking care of other people, watching over other people, I said, I just maybe want to do my final days as a pilot, just flying.

Q. So your relocation was to be a line pilot?

A. Be his line pilot, yes, it was. And then it seems to me, like, it was, like, April, maybe May, I don't remember exactly when it was, but I had just landed with my passengers, took them into the building and went back out to my aircraft, and I was done for my -- that flight. I didn't have another flight. And I saw John walking across from the pilot's area, back over to this building, and I walked over to him and I said, John, did you get somebody to fill that position? He says, no, you got somebody that wants to put their name in the hat? And I said, I kinda thought maybe I'd do that. And he said, I'm glad you said that. And the next day, I was interviewing with him and Brenda again,

and there I was.

Now, I'll tell you, during that interview something that -- I made a comment that I got shut down on pretty quickly, and I'll never forget it. I made a comment that I understand that everyone says that, you know, safety first and you always have to -- that's our goal, safety first. But I also understand that you can't be in business if you're not making a profit, so I understand that profit and safety run hand in hand.

And Brenda shut me down right then and I felt like I just lost this job. She said, safety is first, and if you can't do -- if you can't operate with safety as the primary objective to your business, then you don't need to be in business anyway. Profits will come if you maintain safety. I was all, wow, because I had never heard anybody say that to me before. I've always heard, you know, it's a safety and profit kind of deal. But I was totally impressed.

Q. So it's been 5 years, about, that you've been in this position?

A. No, four, just a little over four. I started here in 2014, February 2014. I left Sundance on the 26th of 2000 --

Q. '13.

A. July 26th of 2013.

Q. Okay. You said the SMS program is Brenda's program?

A. It is Brenda's program. She's the CEO and if you don't have the backing and the -- if it's not the CEO and top management's

program, then it'll never work. It has to be that they are all on board. I don't mean that they -- she doesn't go out and do the safety ops. She doesn't do those, she's got me to do that. But a safety management system, if it wasn't management taking care of that and being on board with just culture, being on board with putting money where it needs to be put to make things safer, then you wouldn't have a safety program. You can't have a safety program from the bottom up. It's got to be from the top down.

Now, reporting and everything else that goes along with it, it absolutely comes from the bottom. But you've got to -- all of the people that make these reports and have input in it have to understand that we've got the blessing from the people who make the rules and who enforce the rules and who have paid the bills.

So, yeah, I totally believe that it's like a house. This is management. This is your foundation. And this is just culture. And then you've got all the other four elements of that, that make up the structure of it, and then you put on the roof on it, call it an SMS program, but yet, you're going to make changes to it. You know, you might have to do an addition to something just like you would a building, you know. Or you might have to do renovations or upkeep on it. So SMS, to me, is a living, breathing animal.

Q. What does just culture mean to you?

A. Just culture means that if somebody does something that was not intentional, wasn't malicious, wasn't deliberate, and wasn't

meant to be a problem, they can report that. It's just like an ASAP program. So I made a mistake, I did something wrong. You report it, and when that report comes in, you say, okay, well, let's talk about that. I'll give you an example of how this works.

We had a pilot who picked up an aircraft, it was an EC, and out at the Grand Canyon West there is a concrete pad back behind the pad that you actually land on, and it's just raised just a little bit. Now, this is on a whole bunch of them. Well, the pilots were landing on this pad and the stinger on the EC130s was -- when you pick up, it goes down, and sometimes the stinger will bump the ground.

I mean, that's what it for. It lets you know you're in a tail load attitude. You can still be within CG, but when you're a single pilot in that aircraft getting ready to go back down and pick up passengers, so if you were to pick up and move backwards at all, you could bump that stinger on the end of it, which puts pressure on the vertical fin, which tin-cans it and you've got damage to the aircraft.

So this happened, and so we pulled the pilot in to Simon's office to discuss this whole thing. And John said, so give me a good reason why we should keep this guy. And I went over and I got my little sheet of paper that's got our just culture on it and I said, what he was doing, was it deliberate? Yes, he was deliberately out there flying the helicopter. Was he following

the rules? Yes, he was following the rules. Okay. And then was it intentional? No, it wasn't intentional. So you go to the next leg and it says substitution test. Substitution test is could it happen to somebody else. It had happened to somebody else. So, yeah, it could have happened.

So the pilot was kept, no disciplinary action. And that pilot became one of our lead pilots later on down the line because we have a just culture here. Just culture means just what it says. You shouldn't have pressure put on you because of unintentional issues.

Now, it could be that you'd get some sort of disciplinary action depending on what the deal was, but it's not that just because this happened, you get fired. There should be no retribution on honest mistakes. We should learn from them. We should make sure that everybody else understands that this is what the case may be.

And after that happened, I went out there to the landing site and where that landing site was, I put a red line across that pad and I said when you land that helicopter, you put your butt right there on that red line. That way, your stinger won't be lined up so that that can happen. Your stinger will be over that concrete pad. And if you do touch, it's perfectly fine because that's what that stinger is designed for.

Q. You said there shouldn't be retribution on honest mistakes. What about just mistakes of a pilot screwing up?

A. If it's malicious, absolutely. But if you're going out there -- we had a pilot that -- we have zero tolerance on things, how you fly. We fly by top standards. And we had something happen where one of our pilots got videoed doing maneuvers that were not close to standards, and that pilot was gone as soon as we found out. No question asked. There is no just culture in doing things maliciously.

Q. What if it's just a stupid mistake like --

A. Stupid mistakes happen. There we go to the substitution test. Could it have happened to somebody else? You can go back in history and find where, yeah, it probably happened to somebody else, probably in this company. And if that's the case, then, you know, maybe we have to go do some more training, maybe we have to limit that person from doing that particular flight until they get to a different level of abilities. But no, just because you made a mistake doesn't mean that you should be fired. It doesn't mean that you should lose, you know, 2 weeks of pay. It just shouldn't.

Q. So, when you said that you should go back and look to see what's happened to other people, what would you look through?

A. Well, you could look through, possibly, irregularity reports, but you can also look through -- I've been in this business a long time and I've seen a lot of different things, and I remember a lot of different things that happened to pilots that worked for me. So I say, well, you know what, this happened to old George, the

same thing, flying the same kind of helicopter, flying in the same environment, yes, I have seen this happen before.
Q. So just anecdotally?
A. Yes.
Q. Because before you said you can't look through all the irregularity reports.
A. It probably wouldn't be where I'd go right to the irregularity reports. I could possibly recall seeing something that was similar and try to go back and see at that point if we had something like that. And it might have been that it had a tag on it where I could actually -- or if I remembered the pilot, I can go through by pilot. If I remember about the timeframe that I saw something like that happen, I can go back by time.
Q. Okay. I guess I don't understand how you're not using the irregularities or you can't go through them.
A. You know, I guess I don't need to, to -- I can go through all of these irregularity reports, and there's a whole bunch of little blocks on there that says engine malfunction, chip light, weather, bird strike, door, whatever the case may be. There's a whole bunch of those on there. And I can go back through whenever they tag something like that. Let me just pull one up.
Q. Well, I know -- so I was provided --
A. Okay. Well, right here. All these little checkmarks, if they put the checkmark on there, I can go back and I can see flight altered for weather, and I can pull up every aircraft,

every flight for a period of time or from the time we started this program of flights deviating for weather, or any of the other locations. However, if you go on there, you won't find one that says landing at Quartermaster Helibase.

Q. Yeah, because you look at -- you know, you just affirmed. Well, A, I read all of them.

A. Okay.

Q. But I didn't take -- I mean, there's only a sentence, so it didn't take me that long, but then you can just search, right? Search Quartermaster? I guess that's what I wasn't understanding of when something happens that you can be like, oh, Quartermaster.

A. What I was talking about is when you go through and you pull up everything that has that on the bottom, where it has the checkmark on it?

Q. Yeah.

A. Where it says altered for weather?

Q. Yeah, I noticed that some of them don't even check it even though it --

A. Well, is that one altered for weather?

Q. Well, this is --

A. That one's door (indiscernible) so --

Q. But some say weather even though the person got sick, and so that was like --

A. Well, they can put on there anything that affected it. It might have been that the weather was bad, rough, and a passenger

got sick and they returned because it was too rough to fly. So he returned because of weather, but you also had a passenger that got ill. And the door might have come open while you were on your way back, and you hit a bird. So all those little marks, you can click on any one of those, and then I can go back and I can just search whatever I'm looking for in there. I can put a word in there and hit find and just find that word, I guess, but that's not normally how I go about doing that.

Q. Okay. But I mean, even -- I only got 242 of them. I was trying to get all of the ones from the last 2 years.

A. You know, I sent every single irregularity report and, evidently, it didn't go through to you. I sent them to John. John said he's going to give you a thumb drive?

Q. Yeah. So, what --

A. Well, that's a lot of stamping confidential on each one of those, too. It took a long time to do that, also. I was not a happy person. I will let you know, I was not a happy person.

Q. I had to read all those. What is the difference between an incident report and an unsafe hazard report?

A. Unsafe condition or hazard report, that would be like there's electrical cords across the walkway in the hangar and a mechanic can say, jeez, that's a hazard right there. He can go and -- a mechanic can fill out one of these, anybody from the tour coordinators or over here in our admin, anybody in this company has a way to get into the Flight and Duty Tracker and do an unsafe

condition or hazard report. It's not pilots and mechanics, it's everybody in this company can do that, whether it's here or at the South Rim or Grand Canyon West, they all have access to this.

And one of the first things that we do when they come in to work here, we show them how to get into that, what the thing, what the password is for it. They can do it anonymously or they can put their name in there. But we have them fill one out as a test, and we'll date. And I've got copies of those. It's just so that somebody like Funka tells you that he doesn't know how to do a report anonymously, I will go back and show Mr. Funka that he has one in my folder that has his name on it. And I'll go back and review with him how to do that.

Q. Well, have you ever done it? Because if it's him, it's probably other people as well.

A. Possibly. But I get plenty of them. It's not like -- and it could be that he felt stressed because he was sitting in here with you guys asking him questions, too. You know, some people do that.

Q. The unsafe hazard --

A. But I will go back --

Q. The unsafe hazard report is what you're talking about?

A. Unsafe condition or hazard report.

Q. So that is in the program that they have to log into?

A. Mm-hmm.

Q. So if they log into it, it's not anonymous.

A. Oh, yes, it is. Go to Flight and Duty Tracker.
Q. Well, we can finish up the interview and then (indiscernible).
A. Okay. So what you do is you log in Flight Duty on the Google or whatever you use as a search engine. And then when it says log in, you log in. For pilots, you put in Flight for the user's name, and then you put in Papillon with a capital P, and that will give you access as somebody in the flight department. It doesn't come up to me as being somebody from the flight department. It's just their access. If it's maintenance, they just put in Maintenance Papillon. And then there's this block where you can put your name in it or you can click anonymous, or you can put your name on there and click anonymous. Either way, it's going to be anonymous because I am the only person that gets those reports.
Q. So, where is that trained?
A. Every person coming into this company gets trained that when they start here. And each manager has a copy of the ability to get into it. So if you go down here and ask Andria can one of her people get into and file a report, I'll guarantee they can.
Q. I guess I'm asking for the pilots, when do they learn that login and when is that --
A. They're trained during their -- when they first start here.
Q. In the indoc?
A. They're taught during initial training. And I train that myself with the pilots. Rusty trains it himself at the South Rim.

Q. So, when looking at your PowerPoints that describe all of the forms, I don't see anything in there. Is that during that module that you would be doing it?
A. When you -- my PowerPoint for what?
Q. I just was provided where it talks about irregularity reports and --
A. Okay, do you have all of our --
Q. I mean, I asked for everything was done for --
A. Do you have one for safety?
Q. Mm-hmm.
A. Open that one. No, that's not -- go to -- there. Introduction to Safety.
Q. So I don't see, like, an example of this is the --
A. Is there -- do one of these have A Flight and Duty Tracker on it?
Q. That's why I didn't --
A. Well, open it up so I can just go through each one so I can read it, because I can't read those little bitty things.
Q. Well, we can go over it, but you think there is a PowerPoint that has that module information?
A. Yeah, I know there is.
Q. I guess I'll just ask for them again.
A. It's on there. It's on there. I'll just show you when we get done with this. If you can just open this up right here so I can see it. Is this the one that --

Q. So this is what I was talking about.
A. Keep going, keep going.
(Pause.)
Okay, open one of the others because that one's --
Q. I did a keyword search so it's not --
A. Okay. I'll show you on my computer because that's the one I use.
Q. Okay.
A. But it's on -- what it is, all it is, is a -- I click on it and it opens up Flight and Duty Tracker and then I go through and explain how to do this, and then I have everybody go through and do it.
Q. Okay. So it's just a hotlink to show --
A. It's a hotlink to Flight and Duty Tracker, that's all it is.
Q. And who is Borden Miller?
A. Borden Miller used to -- you know, if they've got Borden Miller on there, it's an old one. Borden Miller was, he was our safety representative or coordinator, whatever, for the South Rim. He was also the charter manager. He was with a company about 27 years. He just retired maybe a year and a half ago, something like that. And he used to also be our DER for our drug program. But Borden is no longer here.
Q. Okay.
A. And that's why Rusty is kind of mentoring me now.
Q. And so, the difference between the unsafe and the incident,

because I still don't get the difference between those.
A. Unsafe and incident. Incident would be somebody that got hurt on a flight, like fell off of the helicopter while they're pre-flighting, a mechanic that slipped off of a ladder. A lot of those also come into HR because that might be something that we need for workmen's comp. Incident has nothing to do with helicopter operations because of the connection with incident and the FAA issue. That's why incident was taken off of the irregularity report. We actually started that at Sundance, because we had the same program at Sundance with Flight and Duty Tracker, and we had irregularity reports versus incident reports.
Q. So, what is the main tool that you use to get a snapshot of what's happening?
A. Observation. I don't think that you can have a better one than just observation. If I come over here and sit up here in this break room and just watch what's going on with the ramp and they're making sure that the passengers are being care for properly as they're walking out to the aircraft. It might be that I'm at the South Rim and I see that the loaders aren't paying attention as people are getting out of the aircraft and helping. So it's just -- I think management, by walking around -- though I'm not a manager, I believe in walking around and seeing what's going on. You can't sit in an office and know what's going on around you.
Q. Is there any type of risk assessment?

A. Yes. We have a risk assessment for every flight that is unusual to our regular canned scenario flights to the Grand Canyon. So every charter flight that goes out, every firefighting flight that goes out, every ops check flight that goes out, with the exception of the three ops check flight pilots. That's their regular routine, so they don't do an irregular -- or a risk assessment for each one of those flights. However, if it's one of our line pilots or lead pilots, then we do have a risk assessment that they have to go through and evaluate. And so, all of our charter stuff, they've got a big, thick file folder of risk assessments.

And management of change is also a risk assessment. If you go out here -- when we started to open up our location over here at the Hoover Dam, went through to find out what are the issues, what are the risks in doing this and do we want to do this. John and I also went and did a management of change when they -- marketing was trying to get us to do the Strip tours again. And we went out there at different locations and watched what was going on and did our risk assessment.

We took two helicopters, one that was flying front, John was in one, I was in the other one, and one would go down and you could lose it in the lights, and then come back up and you could see just fine. And then other aircraft, and if people weren't on the exact route, you know, you could lose them off to the side if they weren't flying at speed. So we did the risk assessment on

that through our management of change and we deemed that that wasn't something we wanted to do. I mean, we deemed it that we still didn't do it. Because we haven't done that since 2009, I believe.

Q. What does Papillon do to help alleviate pilot pressure of performing the tour to what was advertised, what the passengers expect?

A. I have no clue what you mean.

Q. Is there anything that is done to help alleviate what would naturally would be a pilot pressure to complete the tour as the passengers expect?

A. I would believe that would be training. We train everybody. They go on ride-alongs to see what the other pilots do, how they deal with the passengers. So it's not like you just say, okay, you passed the 135 check ride and you passed your SFRA check ride, jump out there and go do this. They get to go on at least three ride-alongs. They can go on as many as the want until they feel comfortable with it.

There is not a pilot out here that their first flight they don't have a little apprehension. Not a problem about flying the aircraft or knowing where they're going or what they're going to do when they get there, but it's their first flight with passengers, yeah, there might be some apprehension, initially. But I don't have people coming in to me saying, gosh, I just can't deal with these passengers. This is tough. If I was just driving

a helicopter, I wouldn't be having all these problems. I don't see this as an issue.

Q. How would they even get that information to you?

A. Come talk to me. You saw my cubicle's got an open door. And they do come and talk to me. It's not something that people hesitate. If they've got an issue, they come and talk to me about it. And that was a joke, by the way, my cubicle with an open door. Sorry.

Q. I know that -- and I don't mean to belabor this, but because we're going to have it laid out in report format, I want to make sure that I'm capture it correctly. The anonymous reporting is the unsafe hazard report that they go into Flight and Duty Tracker?

A. Mm-hmm.

Q. If anything happens in flight, then it's supposed to be an irregularity?

A. If they want to remain anonymous, they're going to do an irregularity report if there was an issue. If they have a problem where they don't want somebody to know that, then they need to do an unsafe condition or hazard report, because I'm the only one who gets those. If it goes to Flight and Duty Tracker on irregularity report, you saw how many people get those reports. Brenda gets it, Geoff gets it, John gets it, all the chief pilots and training directors get it.

Q. I guess what we heard from the lead pilots, and maybe this is

where I'm not understanding, is that the irregularity is if there is a deviation in the flight.

A. Yes.

Q. But if there's not a deviation, if it was just --

A. So, what are you calling a deviation?

Q. Well, so, what we heard, and even when somebody did actually deviate, but when they said if you deviate from your normal route, then you have to --

A. No, that's not what -- an irregularity report is if anything is irregular to a normal, everyday, standard, no-issue flight, then you put an irregularity report. That's why it's called irregularity, because it's not a standard flight. We had a chip light that came on, we had an engine malfunction, we had a door open, we had a bird strike, we had a sick passenger. Anything that's not standard. If it went out there smooth and came back smooth, no issues, no report. If they go out there and they had a battery (indiscernible) even though it wouldn't be --

Q. I see that with maintenance, and I saw those things, but there wasn't like as we heard somebody say, I got so much turbulence that I was like whoa, or somebody said that the passenger -- the bags fell.

A. Did they come back because of the weather?

Q. No, they can just continue on.

A. And it was on a report?

Q. No, that's what I'm asking. Where would those things be

reported? The flight continued on track but something --
A. Then they must have not felt that it was an issue that they needed to report. I don't know. They should have -- if there was any reason they thought that they should report it, then they report it. Who was this somebody? I don't want to ask who, but was one of the pilots said that they had a problem --
Q. Well, you were there when we were doing the interviews.
A. Who was the --
Q. Well, so, what I'm getting at is, when we've talked to pilots, they have -- things will come up. Somebody's water bottle flew out, or somebody -- so it seems like an irregularity report. I don't get just like --
A. So somebody dropped a water bottle and it made a noise and it kind of scared them or something like that?
Q. And they had to pull it out and do -- you know, something like that. They get a jack stall, it's like a normal thing, something --
A. No, a jack stall is not a normal thing.
Q. But it didn't make them deviate is what I'm saying.
A. Okay. Then that was their choice whether they did an irregularity report or not.
Q. Okay, which I hear you say, but then I look through 2 years of irregularity reports and I don't see anyone had reported that. So everyone's choosing not to.
A. 300-and-something reports and you think that everybody's

choosing not to report? I thought our reporting was pretty damn good here.

Q. Well, I guess what I'm asking is I didn't see any benign things like that.

A. All right.

Q. So then I'm asking

A. I'll work on that, Zoë.

Q. But I'm saying what other things --

A. I don't have any idea. I can't answer your question. I don't know. I just don't know.

Q. And because I haven't seen the unsafe hazards, I guess what I'm getting at is maybe they're reported in a different manner. And I'm not asking the right question.

A. I don't get any unsafe hazard reports for that kind of issues.

Q. Okay.

A. Normally, it's something that's a safety issue. I don't know. I don't know where to go with this, Zoë.

Q. I'm just making sure that I'm not missing a question where you would just say, oh, of course, they would do the fill-in-the-blank, and I'm like, oh, I wouldn't have thought to ask that.

A. If it's not on there, they decided it wasn't necessary to report it. Because they're all told please give us all the reports that you can. And nobody gets any kind of reprimand for it, so, normally, it's a thing that they want to do. And I'm

sorry, if I missed somebody saying that they had an issue and didn't report it.

Q. And then I know that I've been asking, since you're my group member, of where I was asking for all Scott's records of anything in the company. And I keep feeling like there's other things. Is there anything else that we're missing where we can get some type of idea.

A. Simon would have the records for him, for flight, his flight. And Dawn Nicole gave you the records for his personnel records. I do not have any records on anybody other than what might be a flight duty -- or an irregularity report.

Q. Okay. And then, also, from possible customer service.

A. Yeah, but she said she never saw anything, any issues with --

Q. I guess what I'm looking at, too, because there wasn't sorting, is you were at Sundance and part of the Kamikaze. I'm looking -- was there something of people --

A. Ooh. Ooh. I didn't like that at all.

Q. Well, just that type of report, somebody saying like, whoa, that was a really bump ride and then we can look and say, oh, that was --

A. That's not what you said that I didn't like.

Q. The type of reports like the Kamikaze reports, the emails that you found.

A. Yeah. Thanks. Are we about done?

Q. Yeah. I didn't mean to -- that wasn't supposed to be

offensive. I'm just trying to see if --
A. Oh, it was.
Q. Oh, it wasn't meant to be offensive at all and I'm so sorry if you took it that way. But I'm just trying to see if there's any other things that we might be able to -- that we're missing that --
A. Well, I don't have anything that you're missing. So if you've got something missing, it's either Simon, Tyler or Dawn Nicole.
Q. Okay.
A. Whether they've got anything else, you might find something on Yelp or something like that. But we go through that kind of stuff, also. We've got people that go through our website locations of complaints about flights or whatever and we address those.
Q. Do they report that to you?
A. No.
Q. Is that to the chief pilot?
A. I don't know where that would go. It doesn't come to me.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't get customer complaints unless it's a safety issue.
Q. So if someone says like, in a complaint -- you don't get any, you said. So if someone says, I almost ran into a tail boom or I -- that wouldn't go to --
A. If one of the pilots (indiscernible)?

Q. No, if it was like a Yelp or a -- when you said --
A. A passenger?
Q. Yeah.
A. Almost ran into -- I would have heard that from the pilot or another pilot that would have been out there to see. I mean, why would we have a passenger almost hit. We have had people move towards the tail rotor at the South Rim where we hot load, and we've had loaders that have grabbed a hold of the passenger and kept them from going down there. And I would probably be able to go back and find something from the South Rim on issues about passengers being close to the tail rotor. I could probably find something like that. I'd have to go search for it, but I probably could find something like that.
Q. I guess I'm just looking at if things are reported that they see online, of the different sources that people say, does that ever go to --
A. You know, we report more than just about any other operator in the country and you're asking me for more stuff? I don't know what else to give you.
Q. I'm actually just asking because I'm thinking I might not be -- it's not an attack, it's because I think I might be missing something.
A. It feels like that you're trying to use our SMS program as something that's not good, and I think it's tremendous.
Q. Oh, really, that's not it at all. I'm just making sure that

because you have such an infrastructure of it, we have questions to then go off and look. And so I want to make sure it's all captured and we -- you've obviously put a lot of work into it and I want to make sure that when we present it to the public that they see that.

A. I don't think that's how they're going to see it, and that's what I'm afraid of.

Q. We very much intend to capture all of the work that has been put in and the different things that you've done which we know are not required by the FAA.

A. I don't know what else to tell you.

Q. All right. Well, then Ill end it there.

MS. WILSON: Manny, do you have any questions?

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. Roughly, during your career, which is a long career, where did you receive safety training?

A. My first safety training was at HAI years ago. I wasn't even in a safety position but I was able to go to HAI's safety course, which was, like, a day long. So, I don't really count that as too much. I wasn't safety personnel at all till I got here and I started doing some courses here. I went to the NTSB crash investigation course. I've gone to two of the workshops for IS-BAO. NBAA, I have two different certificates from that. Let's see, what else? I've got it all in my office as to things that I've gone through.

Q. In your safety meetings, there are minutes that are kept?
A. Yes.
Q. And you're the chairman of that meeting?
A. Yes. And I've got those minutes.
Q. Is Brenda generally there at meetings?
A. No.
Q. Is there anyone else from management at the meetings?
A. Normally, Geoff is. There's been a time or two where Geoff has not been able to be here. But John is -- co-chairs, or a representative. The last time we had one, John was in Washington, D.C. Is that correct? I think he was working on a work group about the crash-worthy fuel systems, okay? And so Simon sat in for the director of operations on that one. We have almost all of management from here and the South Rim, we do a conference call, and so it's a large number of people. It's not just a small group.
Q. Okay. Are the pilots represented there, as well?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Do you have an assigned flight safety officer? Do you have anyone else assigned to (indiscernible)?
A. I'm the director of safety.
Q. You're the director of safety but you don't have a flight safety officer, per se?
A. No. No.
Q. The mishap plan, how often do you update the mishap plan?

A. My mishap plan?
Q. Your aircraft mishap plan, what you refer to after an accident, how often do you update that?
A. I'm not following. A file?
Q. Do you have an aircraft mishap plan? Emergency response plan?
A. Oh, yeah, absolutely.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah, we've got an emergency response manual.
Q. Okay.
A. You bet.
Q. Okay.
A. And it's -- right now, we are in the process of redoing our family assistance program. In fact, we had a meeting on Monday. There's three of us who are working on that, the safety director from the airline and our vice president for operations -- or what's his -- Mark Slack (ph.) and myself. And come October, the three of us are going to the NTSB training facility for family assistance. Hopefully, we get trained by Max Green, who is phenomenal, absolutely phenomenal. I really was impressed with that man.
Q. Like on the hazard report, you're the person who sorts and determines which gets distributed (indiscernible)?
A. Yeah, I'm the custodian of that, yes.
Q. Okay. And you'll reply to anyone who's submitted one? In

other words, if I submitted a hazard report and I say there's some deviation on the flight line --
A. I might not respond directly to that person. If that was something that everybody needs to know, it will be in the briefing. And the pilot that put in that report should know that, yes, okay, that's mine.
Q. Okay.
A. But I don't want to -- I want it to get to everybody that needs to have it.
Q. Okay.
A. But I don't want the person that -- that particular person to have to go tell everybody. So they'll know when it's been responded to. I did ask one. I had an irregularity report, and I can't remember what it was about, but I went to the pilot and I said I think this is really important that everybody sees this irregularity report, do you have a problem with me sending it to the pilot pool on the email? Because I've got the email address -- I'm on the pilots' email address though, you know, management is not. And he -- he or she, I don't even remember that -- said, no, please do. So I copied it and, with my response, and I sent it out to everybody so they could read it. And they all appreciated that. I can't remember what it was about. I don't --
Q. Let's say the South Rim filed an incident or a hazard report and you reviewed it, is it kept regionally or is it as a company

looked at?
A. I've got the company's -- everything's here.
Q. When you do receive a hazard report on your SMS, is there a risk matrix that you use for probability of what the ramifications may be of that hazard?
A. It's in our SMS manual.
Q. Okay. Do you use that risk matrix?
A. I do use it, yeah.
Q. Okay.
A. I use it more on an individual flight basis, but when I'm doing a management of change, I try to look at, okay, what's the probabilities and --
Q. Okay. I'm not a computer person, either. Do you -- does the Company subscribe to safety publications and --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- put them out available to (indiscernible)?
A. Yeah, I've got several of them that I get on a -- I've got one that I get on a daily basis, I think (indiscernible) in Portland.
Q. When you were evaluating the waterfall pad for a landing, how was that information disseminated to anyone involved as far as utilizing that?
A. Well, the way it's going to be, they're going to get that information because every pilot is going to have to be trained at that location. And I was there, along with the director of

training and the chief pilot. So all three of us were there evaluating it at the same time and deciding what we needed to do. And we've decided that, you know, even though it's very close and probably everybody's flown right over it, it does have different risks. So we want to train it.

Q. And again, hypothetical: It's obvious that management is very pro safety and you're out in front of it. If you were to recommend, let's say, that every one of your lead pilots was to receive some kind of safety training, whether it was from the NTSB, FAA, TSI, University of Southern California, at Embry-Riddle, would they view that as a positive? Would they --

A. Oh, if our pilots could do that? Absolutely. Absolutely. I think that everyone here -- I get talked to quite often by the pilots saying, man, I want your job when I grow up, you know. You don't have to grow up to be as old as I am to have the job. So, yeah, I'd like to see a lot of people go into the safety industry. I think it's where we need a lot of good people.

Q. I see on our schedule at Airbus that our maintenance technicians come out to do maintenance training. Does everyone in your maintenance department take advantage of OEM training?

A. All of our people go through, all of our technicians go through factory training. And even our training pilots will sit in on those classes if they can. We learn quite a bit. And Andy that used to come out here and fly with our maintenance pilots was very, very good. Matt Evans is extremely good at teaching, and he

came out, I think, the last time and did the maintenance with the maintenance guys and touchdown with our lead pilots. Yeah, you've got some really talented pilots there.

Q. Do you know if maintenance does FOD walks and does generally the Company --

A. Yeah. They carry a FOD bag on them when they're out there working. So anything, they got FOD, they stick it in the bag. You'll see it on their hip. Do we still find FOD on the ramp? Yes, sir, we do.

Q. There's so much wind out here, it's inevitable. Again, getting back to the risk assessment, you had mentioned what you do as risk on the (indiscernible) that there's a set assessment there. How do you assess risk with the dynamics of flying and so many changes, whether it's weather? Obviously, wind is a big factor here. Even higher gross weights is a consideration. Is there a plan in mind to kind of look at risks and kind of work dynamically to see what each flight risk may be?

A. I think over the number of years that we've been operating out of here, since '97, we have tried to identify every risk that's out there. And we constantly are looking at different ways to do things. I think you come to a point where something like what we just had happen is to say, well, maybe we need to do this in conjunction with whatever else we've done.

But you're talking about a landing site that might be a pinnacle. It's not a confined area by any means. And, you know,

the winds are the winds no matter where you're flying. Whether you're flying in Kentucky or you're flying in Alabama or Nebraska or here, winds play havoc on different things, especially when you've got mechanical turbulence. It is something that you learn as a pilot to deal with.

Q. Now I'm talking outside the accident. As an example, today, where the max temperature is 108, do you --

A. Okay, we, if it's required, we'll download the aircraft so that we're not -- we can't fly with as much weight on the aircraft.

Q. Is that done for every individual flight or is that done as a general risk assessment?

A. They will do it as the worst condition aircraft. Like, we'll just say at Grand Canyon West Airport. They take the aircraft that comes up with the least amount of weight that it can carry for the day and they downgrade every other aircraft so that there's nobody loaded onto that aircraft, on any aircraft that would exceed the least capable aircraft.

That way, when you go down to the bottom, you don't know who you're picking up. You might be picking up another load. So if you're taking down a heavy load with an aircraft that will carry it and now you're going to go down there with a B2 and try to pick them up, sorry about that. So everything is done by the weakest link.

Q. Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

BY MS. WILSON:
Q. I've got a question about the risk assessment. Is the risk assessment form, is that in the GOM or somewhere?
A. No, it's in the SMS manual.
Q. In the SMS manual? Okay. And is that the same risk assessment that you're using for, like, the Waterfall landing site?
A. Our daily risk assessment that we use for flight, no, it's not the same.
Q. Okay.
A. They're different.
Q. And is that process, the risk assessment, being documented?
A. It's done through my management of change.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't have a -- I use the chart, but I don't write it down as, you know, this is what this is. I just do it in my management of change information.
Q. Okay. And what is management of change specifically?
A. Management of change is anything that you're going to do that you haven't been doing in the past. And you go through -- well, right out here on this helipad, FADO-4 (ph), we went through a management of change. Some of the things that we looked at was, okay, is this going to affect general aviation, good or bad. Well, it actually affected them in a good way, and it's affected our airline company in a good way. Is it going to increase the

wait time on a ramp and give us a larger chance of an encroaching aircraft merging together so it doesn't.

It relieved that a lot. Because our aircraft coming in, they hold for the aircraft going out. So our aircraft on our ramp go out here, go to the FADO, turn, and off they go after they've made their clearing turn. And that's a disused runway or an unused runway, so our other aircraft coming in, they can land one behind the other and be all ready to come in. And so once our ramp is empty -- and there's only one time a day that really affects, is a big effect.

But then once all those guys come in, then the first one goes to the FADO and then into the ramp, and the next one, the next one. We don't have the tie-up of people doing 360 orbits trying to wait their turn and general aviation trying to avoid people because they don't know that we're going to orbit south of the runway. It has helped out a great deal.

But it was our management of change that not only did we do that with Papillon, we did it in conjunction with Grand Canyon Airlines to come up with the best of everything before we ever did it. And it has worked out. It's been a big plus.

Q. So is management of change just a process or is it a manual? Is it an online system?

A. It's part of our SMS program.

Q. Okay.

A. It's in our SMS manual.

Q. Okay.
A. Management of change is.
Q. And how were you notified about the accident?
A. John Becker called me.
Q. And then what was your role after?
A. I was in here as -- on my way as soon as it happened. And then, you know, honestly, everything is such a blur to me now because we were, you know, talking on the telephone and meeting and trying to discuss things. We were trying to get information from the site to here, and John was getting information, and some of it didn't gel too well. So it was a long night. We didn't get out of here till, I would imagine, around midnight or so.

And at that point, even then we didn't realize, we thought we still had some emergency people on the ground, but we didn't realize we still had passengers. The way I remember it, didn't know that we had passengers still on the ground because John had told them to get everybody out, and that's what he thought had happened. Well, you know, it's kind of like *Cool Hand Luke*, you know, sometimes there's a failure to communicate.

And we have tried to fix all of those issues so that it never happens again. And, you know, like you were talking to John earlier about how many flights have we had go in there and then this one is an accident. Well, I hope that we never have another one, ever, ever, but -- and I'm not talking about just Papillon, I'm talking about any helicopter operator, but you know that's not

going to be the case. You know there's going to be another helicopter crash someplace, with somebody operating it, and they're going to have to go through all of this, too. And I hope that they learn something from us in the process of going through this. But more than that, I hope that they learn something so it never does happen to them. You know, I wouldn't wish this on anybody.

Q. Does the emergency response manual, does that fall under you or is that under Operations?

A. I make the changes to it.

Q. Okay.

A. It's basically part of our SMS program.

Q. Okay.

A. Though it's a standalone manual. And so, if there's any updates -- so if John says, hey, you know, I think we need to do this here, and Geoff agrees with him, then they'll come say, okay, Burl, what do you think on this right here; we probably need to do this.

Well, for an example, our family assistance program. You know, we had a lot of stuff in there, but it wasn't organized well, not well at all. Until you start to use that, you don't realize that, hey, this is not good. But it's been rewritten. It's going up for review with Brenda and Geoff the end of this month. If it's all the way they want it, then we will place that into our SMS manual and put it out. It'll probably be a complete

revision.

Q. Okay. Great.

MS. WILSON: Anyone else? Zoë or Manny, some more questions?

(No audible response.)

Thank you so much, Burl. We really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us. Any last thoughts, anything that you want to share?

MR. BOYD: I just have a question, and this is a question for you, Manny. Is this okay?

MS. WILSON: Do you want it on the record for being transcribed or is it something that you would like to do after the fact?

MR. BOYD: I'd just as soon be on here.

MS. WILSON: Okay.

MR. BOYD: I would like to know why all the questions about loss of tail rotor effectiveness.

MR. FIGLIA: It's a question based on how you conduct training, and it's a picture of what you conduct while you're doing training.

MR. BOYD: Okay. Well, my question is, we do training for loss of tail rotor effectiveness in the Bell 206s because it's in the POH. It tells you where the critical wind azimuth is. But it's not in the Airbus manuals on any of the aircraft, so I'm just not understanding. How do we train that if we don't have something in the POH that guides us that way?

MR. FIGLIA: The POH is not a complete document as far as training. As an example, the POH does not explain how to do it when you fly the airplanes. But yet, you are doing you're doing it in flying the airplane as an operator. So my question was based on --

MR. BOYD: Oh, okay.

MR. FIGLIA: -- what type of training and where are you doing the training.

MR. BOYD: Yeah.

MR. FIGLIA: You know, is it in the aircraft, is it in the ground school. And I'm not saying I'm looking for a particular answer.

MR. BOYD: Okay.

MR. FIGLIA: It's just do you do the training, getting a picture of it.

MR. BOYD: It is in place for the 206 because we've got documentation telling us basically what we're looking for in that. And if you go to the FAA AC 90-95, even though it's old, it's still, I guess, in place, it talks about this much about European and Soviet aircraft. But everything else is rotor blade turning counterclockwise. And it tells about the critical azimuths and it says when you get low air speed in a right-hand turn with power applied, that the aircraft could possibly start turning to the right.

And as we were -- this aircraft was coming in, turning to the

left, reducing air speed and pulling in power for approach, and it started spinning to the left. And I just -- that has been on my mind a lot as to where does this role play.

MR. FIGLIA: Okay.

MR. BOYD: And we probably -- we need to look at this pretty hard about training for this. That's all I have.

MS. WILSON: Thanks, Burl.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

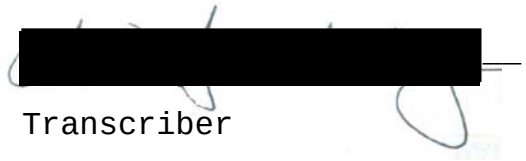
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018 Interview of Burl Boyd
ACCIDENT NO.:	WPR18MA087
PLACE:	Las Vegas
DATE:	June 20, 2018

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.



Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018	Accident No. WPR18MA087

Interview of: KYLE COUTTS

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
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I N T E R V I E W

(2:15 p.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: All right. Thank you, Kyle, for being here with us today. This interview is just a routine part of our investigation of the February 10 accident. We want to always talk to people that are involved in the operations so we can better understand it. And ultimately, our goal is to prevent an accident from happening again. We don't have any enforcement authority. We don't assess blame. Strictly from the safety side.

We would like to record the interview. That will allow us to create an interview transcript that then becomes a part of our public docket. Is that something that you're okay with?

MR. COUTTS: That's fine. Yeah.

MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one representative with you during an interview. Is there somebody that you would like to have?

MR. COUTTS: Mr. Thomas over here.

MS. WILSON: Great. We'll go around the room and introduce ourselves, and then give you a chance to ask any questions. I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher. I am operations with NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, director of safety here at Airbus.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety from Papillon.

MS. WILSON: And before we get started, do you have any questions for us?

MR. COUTTS: No. No questions.

MS. WILSON: Okay. If we ask you a question and you don't understand, just ask us to clarify.

MR. COUTTS: Okay.

MS. WILSON: If you don't know the answer, saying I don't know --

MR. COUTTS: Okay.

MS. WILSON: -- is also --

MR. COUTTS: Sounds good.

MS. WILSON: Okay. Great.

MR. COUTTS: Yeah. Understandable.

MS. WILSON: For the record, could you state your full name, please?

MR. COUTTS: My name is Kyle Raymond (ph.) Coutts.

MS. WILSON: Great. And I will turn it over to Zoe, who will start questioning.

INTERVIEW OF KYLE COUTTS

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Can you tell me how long you've been at Papillon?

A. A little over two years.

Q. What were you doing before this?

A. I've actually worked for various aviation companies. I worked for Atlantic. I also worked with Sundance with Burl. Did

that for about four years before. I just came back from Washington before that. I was working in the food industry. But yeah, I've been doing aviation for about eight years.

Q. Can you tell me what your job title is here?

A. I used to be a ramper. At the time I was a ramper. And then now I'm up in the tower. So I'm a flight follower. And I did that -- I started a couple months ago.

Q. So what does that job position entail, being a ramper?

A. We're supposed -- as a ramper, we're supposed to fuel and then take care of meals and ballast, would be weight. So that's our job. We're responsible for when we get fuel loads from the tower, make sure they go roundtrip, one-way. And then when we get meals, we make sure that they go in the right compartments, weight goes in the aft, and then we got (indiscernible) compartments for the meals. That's our responsibility. And if we got to hot turn or, you know, hot load people off, we do that from time to time. Not normally out of here, but it does happen sometimes. So that's the responsibility of the ramper. Make sure the security of the ramp also. So anyone that's around the area looks suspicious, we'll call it in.

Q. Do you have any interaction with the passengers?

A. No, unless we're going to be hot fueling them or hot loading them off, yeah. That's the only time. Or if there needs to be a seat change, but it's very, very rarely that we do that on a normal basis.

Q. Were you working the day of the accident?
A. I was working that day. I was training a guy that works currently right now on fuel. Did not -- I did speak to Scott that day. Yeah, I know he did go roundtrip that day, but I didn't really talk to him too much because I was training a new employee, so -- at the time. And we had our whole round going out, so --
Q. Did you fuel the accident helicopter?
A. Yeah. Or well, Tyler (ph.) did. I was, I was shadowing him at the time. Yeah.
Q. Did he say anything?
A. Scott?
Q. Um-hum.
A. Just wondering how I was doing. You know, that's how he was. Scott's always, you know, asking how I was. I have a couple kids and I have a wife. So asking how the kids were doing. But other than that, yeah, I didn't have much time because we have, like -- the other thing we do on fuel, we have time limits pretty much, we -- for performance-wise. So we need to, you know, get it done by a certain time or it holds back everything. So we pretty much just go onto the next aircraft. So we're just not chitchatting or anything like that. Yeah.
Q. Can you recall as much as you can of (indiscernible)?
A. I mean other than -- honestly, quick turning in, which would be getting the life preservers and getting the seatbelts and making sure that the fuel was done correctly, I mean, and talking

to him just about my family because I haven't seen him for a while, other than that, I didn't really -- nothing really stood out to me. Yeah.

Q. Was there any mentioning of another fueler?

A. Another fueler?

Q. Yeah. Was he talking about anything like that? We had reports that somebody had told him that a fueler was just fired?

A. Would have been Craig (ph.). Yeah. Craig was terminated a little bit before that, yeah.

Q. Who was -- how did that go? Who was Craig?

A. Craig was just a ramper before. That's what Tyler took over for. So he was just, you know -- if he was asking about that, then I wasn't aware of that. He must have been asking Tyler or someone, that he was trying to ask why did -- why is Tyler here and not Craig? That could have been a possibility.

Q. What happened with Craig?

A. Craig was -- he over-fueled aircraft.

Q. What did -- (indiscernible) --

A. That's why he got fired, was because he over-fueled aircraft.

Q. How does that happen with this --

A. It just -- they're either not paying attention to the actual meter or getting -- you know, writing down the wrong pieces of paper, or for fuel loads. Just over-fueling aircraft. Yeah, so he had performance issues.

Q. What happens when you over-fuel?

A. It can put us in a bind. We might not be able to get it to pounds so that -- they're not supposed to lift if it's overweight. If you can't make it go into CG, then we're not supposed to lift with it. So if you put too many over, we can't move things around and then the round doesn't go out. Or we have to, you know, move other aircraft. Sometimes we don't have that, so yeah. Pretty important things, yeah.

Q. I'm sure you see all the time of the photographers coming out, taking pictures of the pilots.

A. Right.

Q. We heard sometimes pilots take pictures and sometimes they don't. What do, what do you see?

A. I mean, they're not supposed to take photos with the pilots. You know, they're not supposed to just take individual ones. Supposed to be the photographer takes pictures for the actual -- you know, the group. So I don't really see that. We're not supposed to -- you know, the photographers are supposed to know, if they see anything like that, for that not to happen. So I mean, if it was in that particular day, I wouldn't have, wouldn't have seen that, yeah.

Q. But with the pilot in the picture that the photographer is taking.

A. Yeah, they do that. That's a normal -- what they sell at the store?

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, that's a -- that's what they do. Yeah. They try to sell them their picture if they want it, yeah.
Q. We see that sometimes it looks like the pilot goes in the picture and sometimes they don't.
A. It's just if what -- if the group wants it or not. Sometimes the pilots come into it. I mean, I don't know if, you know, that's their own belief. I couldn't tell you if that was -- like, they don't do it. I don't really pay attention to that. I mean, it's not a wall up there, but I don't ever see that stuff, so yeah.
Q. Do you ever hear the passengers complain?
A. I mean other than, like, in the summer. It's, you know, the heat and all that. Or sometimes we do get one-wayed, you know, and they do have to go get refueled out of GCW. So we do have to let them know about that, that they are going to be getting, you know, hot loaded off. Sometimes when they know that, they're like, okay, this kind of sucks. But that's just really part of how the industry is. I mean, sometimes these guys lie about their weights and we have to just do the best we can to make it work. But yeah. I mean, we don't ever send it lower than one-way, so something that, you know, we don't do, so --
Q. How long was your training to become a flight follower?
A. I did it for a month. Yeah. Before I was left on my own. Yeah.
Q. And in the tower, what do you do of when you get here in the

morning? What's you process?
A. I mean, make sure that these guys or the rampers are here, so I can actually give them fuel loads and give them weight and meal counts. Then I see what's on the board on AllPro, see if people are checked around, if I got to move weights around. Sometimes this doesn't -- sometimes it works, you know, easily; you don't really have to move things around. Most of the time I do. But that's when I make sure that the rounds can go out with -- our goal is always to have them go roundtrip and that's, you know -- we have all kinds of different working parts around here, so our -- the efficiency and on-time would be trying to get these guys to go roundtrip. So that's usually our goal. So we -- I have to move things around. That's not weight and needles or pilots sometimes, you know. Or if we have broken aircraft, we got to move other aircraft to other people.
Q. And will you describe the flight following process at Papillon?
A. I mean, once these guys are calling up, we -- you know, we'll get a radio call. They'll tell us how many people they have in their aircraft, what number it is and how much fuel they have, and then we write it down on a piece of paper. We also look at, you know, if there's any inbound or outbound, or anything that's around the area. Usually we got Scenic that comes by, which is the plane side. So we're always making sure that, you know, there's -- they have ample time. And if there are slow blades,

anything like that, we're just making sure that they are safe to lift.

And then after that, we launch them on AllPro, and we've got them on paper always. And then we're making sure that they have -- the times are right. When they get to the canyon, they're supposed to be there within 30 minutes. If we don't get anything, then we're letting -- there are certain people that we need to know. The leads know. If we can't get -- if we can't reach them, we try to have GCW call them, because they might have radio issues. And then they have time limits. When they do landings, it's 50 minutes. Make sure that they're lifting. You know, sometimes, like today for instance, we have people that are new, so they take a little bit longer. So you know, we make note to that. So if there's certain things like that, or they got one-wayed, the GCW takes a little bit longer because, you know, they have their whole -- I got inbound/outbound out there, things like that.

So the situation's a little bit different, but yeah, for the most part, that's -- we're making sure everything is, you know, on time, and making sure if there's anybody that's running, you know, low on time, that they're supposed to be calling us, things like that.

Q. Is there any type of warning that you get?

A. Yeah, we have -- when those -- they're all set at certain times. Like, landings will be -- I think it's 110 minutes. And

then, like, the airs will be a little bit shorter. So we'll get -- you know, little indications will go off on AllPro when they're not supposed to be -- you know, they should have been calling us. But usually they go off, and we have gotten five-minute calls, so we, you know, just extend the time by five minutes. If they're right there and we can have visual contact or visual eye contact, then we don't do anything. We just wait for them to land.

Q. So by the time that they're entering in the canyon, what is the time that usually takes for where you expect to hear back from them?

A. Fifty minutes if it's a landing. It's 15 minutes once they enter the canyon for an air. So they should be calling off the watch within 15 minutes, unless they got one-way fuel, you know. So landings are 50; we're supposed to hear something back by then. And then 15 minutes for an air. Supposed to do their little turn on the canyon.

Q. When you are lifting people, how do you decide of who gets --

A. Depending on if it's -- like for instance, today we got a big brother and big sister. So they -- if someone that's the big brother is calling up and we have someone that's not -- you know, that's brand new, we wait for those guys. They'll start spinning, but we'll hold them to make sure that they're with their big brother and sister. So we'll put those guys kind of out of priority because we're usually not as quick as the veteran pilots. So we'll let the veteran pilots, if they call up, we'll make them

go first. And if someone's gotten one weight, we usually have them go first, because the more they spin, the more fuel they waste. So we also do it based off that too.

Q. How do you know which pilot is which?

A. I mean, I know. If someone just came in and -- I mean, they would have to get used to who's a veteran. But since I know pretty much everyone here --

Q. Is it by voice, or could you see it on the --

A. Yeah. I see it on the AllPro, so I know who they are. Yeah. I know who can spin up and call up within a, you know, reasonable amount of time.

Q. So the accident flight, Scott was one of the last people, even though he was a more veteran pilot. Do you know why that would have --

A. Yeah, see, I don't -- I mean, I didn't -- I wasn't doing -- I wasn't flight following then, so I have no idea. I mean, could have got held back. Could have had a -- could have been photo, could have had someone do a request of something. I have no idea, yeah. Unfortunately on that last round, I -- we have the landings that go first and then we have the airs. So then we have to take care of the airs too, so that day was particularly busy. I do remember that. And then between that, taking care of the airs, making sure that my new hire was taking care of his job -- yeah. I mean, I wouldn't have been able to see if someone, somebody was held up. Normally it is photo, or there are last-minute requests.

Maybe they had to go to the bathroom, things like that. Yeah.
Q. Being on the FM, can you hear that as a ramper?
A. On a ramper, no. We just have a one -- like a direct one-to-one talk. So whatever we hear is -- can't change, like, the radio coms or anything like that, the actual frequencies. We're just talking directly to the tower.
Q. Okay. So you wouldn't hear things that the pilots are saying --
A. No. No, we don't have any way of being able to do that.
Q. But now as a flight follower you can.
A. I can hear if, like, for instance, say if Scott did say something, I'd be able to -- if he was requesting something and said, hey, I'm going to be a little late. If he was talking to us in the aircraft, I'd be able to listen to what he's saying if he's calling up base, but that's about it.
Q. What if he was calling flight ops and calling to a lead pilot?
A. I can hear that, yeah.
Q. Did you -- so you can hear that as a ramper.
A. No, no, no. I meant just --
Q. Just as a follower.
A. -- as a flight follower. Yeah. Yeah. I can hear if he's calling on the FM. Yeah.
Q. Have you ever heard pilots talk about how they don't want to fly?

A. No, I can't -- I don't, I don't hear any of that stuff.
Q. As a, as the lead follower?
A. I don't hear any -- no. I can't hear.
Q. Like, hey, man, I can't believe I got to go out right now, or --
A. No.
Q. -- it's so hot, or anything like that?
A. Not as a -- I mean, they know if they get one-wayed, it's, like I said, it's kind of like the passengers that -- it sucks. But I mean, it's -- that's part of the, part of the business, so yeah. It's going to happen. Unfortunately we just don't -- in a perfect world, we can't make them all go roundtrip because we just -- we go based off weight and balances, and half the time, the passengers don't -- we go from kilos to, you know -- they go from stones to all that. And just a flick of the wrist, they could -- someone could have entered it wrong and it changes everything. And we have to go with that, so it's -- never works out the way we want it to. It seems like it's -- unfortunately someone said, hey, I didn't, I didn't go to the buffet the other day and now I weigh ten pounds more. And then -- yeah. Everything changes, so --
Q. Do you remember of Scott loading people into helicopters versus anybody else?
A. No. I mean, not any different than -- yeah, unfortunately, like I said, like, for the ramp, I mean, we don't -- other than if

we were helping them with a door or something like that, I mean, we're off doing, you know, fueling, taking care of weight, things like that. So I mean, we're not just watching how they are. Yeah.

Q. I was just wondering --

A. Usually once we have --

Q. -- if he put seatbelts on people, if he doesn't, if he --

A. No, I -- yeah, I can't --

Q. Briefings.

A. No. I mean, we can -- like specifically now, I mean, that I'm in the tower, I can see if they're taking a little bit longer, you know, than normal. Or I could probably see them a little bit better, but as far as when I was doing the ramp, I mean, I wouldn't see how they do their briefing and say, hey, this is -- you know, we're going to be over a body of water, things like that. I just, I didn't -- you know. We're not really supposed to be in front of the passengers while we're -- we're supposed to have all our stuff done so they can walk out and do their whole thing. We're not really supposed to be there, you know. Unless they have, like, a cane, or someone needed help for, like, you know, a wheelchair or whatnot. That's the only time we'd really be with the actual packs. Yeah.

MS. KELIHER: I don't have any other questions.

MS. WILSON: Okay. Thanks.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. You mentioned that you're checking time, so you know, they're supposed to make a call in 15 minutes. Are you only checking times, or do you ever track pilots on Spidertracks?
A. Yeah, we're -- I mean, that's -- we're supposed to do it -- we're not -- that's not what we're relying on, is Spidertracks, but we have Spidertracks on, you know.
Q. And how many people are normally in the tower?
A. Three.
Q. Three?
A. Yeah.
Q. And what are, what are the job (indiscernible) --
A. Well we usually have -- Ryan's (ph.) there except on the weekend, which is my -- the manager for the tower. And then it's -- me and Jordan (ph.) would be the other two. And then on the weekends, we have a supervisor and then we have another tower person. And that's on the weekends only.
Q. Okay. And then you and Jordan divide up your duties?
A. Yeah. Like one day we'll do -- one person just does radios, which would be flight following. The other one is manifesting. We take turns.
Q. Do you switch off throughout the day, or it's for the whole day?
A. It's usually only for the day, yeah. We don't -- unless, like, today, or something weird comes up, then we got to switch off like she's kind of doing -- yeah.

Q. Like you have to come do an interview?
A. Yeah. But normally we just -- yeah, we keep it --
Q. Sorry to mess up the routine.
A. It's okay. We got to, we got to do something.
Q. When you were a ramper, were you a supervisor on the ramp?
A. We don't, we don't -- a supervisor is just -- strictly does the tower and they oversee the rampers. There is no, like, lead or anything.
Q. So Ryan also oversaw the rampers?
A. And Brian (ph.), yeah.
Q. And Brian?
A. Yeah.
Q. Different than Ryan?
A. Different than Ryan. Yeah. He's --
Q. So Ryan is the manager, Brian is the supervisor?
A. For the weekend, yeah. Yeah.
Q. Are you ever able to go out and do observation flights? Just, like, ride-alongs?
A. I mean, we don't do that anymore. If we had anything that was -- like, we had maintenance. We used to be able to do that, but we don't do that anymore. We haven't done it in a long time.
Q. How about when you got hired? Was that something --
A. I mean, I used to go out to the GCW when I used to work at Sundance, so I kind of already had enough. I used to do that every day, so I mean, particularly for me, I had no reason to do

it. But for the new hires, I mean, we don't, but I know a lot of the people that need to know the tours and stuff like that, we try to get them on there.

Q. Who would be people that need to know the tours?

A. Well you know, sales or ticket counter. If we can get them on there -- it's kind of hard in the summertime, but in the wintertime, if we have time, we do put them on there.

Q. So do most people get hired first through GCW to come onto that base and then get transferred here?

A. No. I mean, it just -- like, you know, there's job fairs, things like that. Or just in the newspaper, people hear. I mean, it just depends on what's open, to be honest with you.

Q. I guess what I'm, what I'm trying to ask is, you're a flight follower; is it beneficial to have ridden along on some of these flights so that you have an understanding of the operation before you become a follower?

A. Yeah, I mean, if -- yeah, it would be nice, but -- I mean, yeah.

Q. But it's nothing that's required that you know of?

A. No, not that I'm --

Q. Okay. You said that you had a month of training to become a flight follower.

A. Right.

Q. What did that include?

A. Just we -- you know, we go over our handbooks, what -- you

know, we have things that we need to. A test to make sure that we get the basic knowledge of it, things like that. I mean, mine was a little bit different because I already knew the ramp, things like that, the general operations of the area and what we do. But I mean, most people that just come through there, it's a little bit different. We make sure that they have a little bit more training.

So I mean, like, we have a person right now. She's been here about -- I'd say about six weeks, almost. And it's a little bit different. She's never done aviation before. So just make sure that, you know, she's picking up on everything, she's good with radios and manifesting, things like that, before we let her go and do her own thing.

Q. Right. So was it -- the training, was there like a ground school? Like, you sat and listened to some -- watched PowerPoint presentations?

A. No, we're just going over -- I mean, we do videos. We have a little bit of --

Q. Okay. Videos.

A. Yeah, to make sure that -- it's the same thing, kind of, like, when we do the ramp. We have a ramp test, make sure that we have basic knowledge of what's going on around here. You know, what the aircrafts are, what kind that we have, you know, things like that. The operations that, when the air -- the helicopter's coming in, where they're coming from and whatnot, you know.

Q. And do you do on-the-job trainings where -- are you shadowing somebody and then somebody shadows you?
A. Yeah. You know, that's what we normally do. Yeah. They go over. We just kind of -- you know, show us how to do AllPro, and then if we were doing ramp, just have -- like, I was usually the guy that would teach the guys what -- you know, how to do ramp. So that's what I kind of did before, yeah.
Q. So if you had to divide up that month of training, would you say it was a 50/50 split of watching videos and tests (indiscernible) --
A. No, I would say about a week's worth of actual, okay, I don't know how to do some of these things. And then the rest is just, like, practical, just learning, okay, you don't do this, Kyle. Don't do that. Say this, you know, on the radio. Look out for that.
Q. And as a flight follower -- we can sort of infer from things that you've said, but if you had to say what your duties and responsibilities were as a flight follower and also doing manifests --
A. Well I mean --
Q. Like, what are your duties and responsibilities?
A. I'm just --
Q. So you radio calls, things like that.
A. Making sure that, yeah, the radios are good, that -- most importantly, that the aircraft, you know, the CGs, that they can

actually lift. That, you know, we're not over-fueling aircraft. If it's -- something is -- versus different on the manifest that we give the pilots, that they're actually being, you know, safe out there, that they're not, you know, damaging other aircraft. That there's not any kind of suspicious activity around here. I mean, we're talking to, you know, sales, we're talking to ticket counter. I mean, yeah. We're talking to the crew down below, the ramp crew. I mean -- yeah. A lot, a lot of moving parts. Talking to the leads constantly, making sure that we don't -- if we do have broken aircraft, that we're getting it swapped to an aircraft that can run. Yeah.

Q. I know you were part of the morning safety briefing yesterday. Is that common to attend that?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. Is there --

A. The tower does, yeah.

Q. The tower. Is there ever a time when the tower wouldn't attend?

A. If someone's running -- someone's late and we have to, most importantly, get up to the tower, is the first and foremost. So if we don't get there at a certain time, then -- we're getting constant calls up there. So if someone's running late. But for the most part, we're down there.

Q. If you wanted to report a safety concern, how would you do that?

A. I mean, anytime I have a problem, like if there's something that we're noticing, then I let the leads know. I'll put it in the notes. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Can you file a report online?
A. Yeah. I can, I can do one, yeah. Or do one anonymously if I want to. Yeah.
Q. All right. Is that through the Flight & Duty Tracker or something else?
A. Um-hum. No, I've done it before.
Q. Okay. Has it, has it been really just to a pilot's -- an observation that you had with the pilots (indiscernible)?
A. No, it's actually something that happened on the premises, but yeah. But I can do multiple things if I wanted to, report-wise.
Q. Have you ever had to --
A. Yeah. I had --
MR. BOYD: Is it the battery?
MR. COUTTS: Yeah. Yeah, we had a, we had a battery smell at one point, and we didn't know where it was at. And pretty much thought that we were going to have a safety hazard, you know, fire-wise. So I had to let Burl know that we had a problem, and so I had to do a report. Yeah.
MS. WILSON: Okay.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. Have you ever had a safety concern, or concern about a pilot,

that you've talked to the lead pilot or someone else about?
A. I mean, if I do see -- usually most of the time, like, specifically I would say now in the tower more than ever, because we do talk to the pilots more than I would the ramp, other than in pass-through. If there's anyone that says, hey, I'm tired, or I'm just not going to do a flight, then 99% of the time, we just shift it over to someone else. So it just goes to another pilot. Not, we've got to cancel packs. If there's something we can't do, we're just moving it over. So 99 -- like I said, 99% of the time, it's -- they're just not going to fly it, so yeah.
Q. And are the pilots reporting that to you because they want to have the flight changed, or is it sort of in passing and then you say --
A. Yeah, we need to know, because the longer it takes -- like, if we just get a phone call from the lead, that's usually the last, and then everything's not running efficiently.
Q. Like you just --
A. So we just kind of get it from the get-go, then yeah.
Q. That makes sense.
A. Makes things a little bit easier.
Q. But you haven't observed a pilot do something that you felt was unsafe and then reported that --
A. No.
Q. -- to the pilot?
A. No.

Q. When you're doing the manifest, you know, the weights come in. How do you determine which passengers go on which helicopter?
A. I mean, it all goes through, like, the -- you got aircraft that have different weights. So like, for example, of 30, it's usually about our best weight, gross weight-wise, versus like 40, which is like 100 pounds less. And then it depends on the pilot. So the pilot in that weight, you factor that in, so you're shifting -- you know, you're just kind of, like, doing a little, okay, match here, match there, get one on one side, get one on the other, get one in the front. And then we're just waiting to see if it goes green. So once we get everyone checked in, then that's when we are making sure that they can go one way or go roundtrip.
Q. So you're doing that manipulating. It's not AllPro doing that.
A. No, AllPro lists -- no, like, we can't launch something that's red. So if it looks like it's good and then it's off by, like, a couple pounds, then it's going to be, like, it's going to be top-heavy. So we have to throw weight, and there's only -- sometimes you can only throw so much weight, because we have limits for the aircraft. So we can only throw 175 pounds in the aft. We might have like -- it might tell you you have 300 available, but there's only so much you can throw up there. So we just have to, you know, toss that idea out, shift some more people, make it work.
Q. When you're assigning passengers, is there ever, like, you

know, you like a guy better so you're more likely to give him a roundtrip versus a one-way?

A. No, the only time we ever -- like, so -- like we just had today. If we have, like, a handicapped person, that goes roundtrip. We have to make sure they're not getting in and out of the aircraft other than doing their tour. And so we have to make sure that they're good. So sometimes we just got to focus that or manipulate, you know, who's going to go here. So someone might have to go one way, but it depends on what we have. Or if there's, like, a certain condition that they have, or they're scared of it. So we might say, hey, you got to -- you can't be next to the window. Children are not supposed to be next to the window. Lap children are not supposed to be next to the window.

So I mean, things like that, we have to -- but not like, hey -- unless it's like a family member. We're not -- you know, if -- we do sell front seat upgrades. So if they have people that can request a front seat, then that will be something that we -- okay, we either can do it because it works for weight-wise, or it doesn't. We have to let the ticket counter know.

Q. Okay. I guess what I'm asking is, you know, you've never gotten a call from the lead pilot that says, like, hey, this guy is, you know, being a jerk; give him a --

A. Yeah, I mean, if you have --

Q. -- give him a crummy ride?

A. I mean, if there's someone that says, hey -- I mean, I've

kicked people off, if that's what you're saying. But not hey, I don't want this guy in the front. Other than in --

Q. I'm talking about from the pilot's perspective.

A. No, I mean, other than -- I've had, I've had to kick someone because they're intoxicated or -- but no, not as, like, hey, you have to have this person there. We're not supposed to do, like, any last-minute changes unless there was a situation where, like, that person said they had their -- they were supposed to get the front seat and they said they paid for it. And they just might have not have put it in the notes, and we can, we can change it last minute. But not, hey, Kyle, I need you to, you know, swap all this stuff out. Because we just don't have time for that anyways. Once it's manifested, it's pretty much ready to go. Yeah.

MS. WILSON: Thanks. I have nothing else. Manny?

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. What's a stone? What's the conversion, weight-wise, for a stone?

A. I don't do -- I don't deal with that. The ticket counter does that. So any of the weights that come in there, they might have it -- they have it in pounds. But that doesn't get to us. It just might have been when they had it preset in there. They gave it in stones, and then they put it in the computer, yeah. So I couldn't really tell you.

Q. Thank you. It's about 14 pounds, I think, per stone, I think

is about right. Okay. All right. You were talking about suspicious activity that you may be looking for. Is that company-generated, or do you do TSA training or is that all (indiscernible) --

A. I mean, I did, I did that with Atlantic. That was part of our training, just because it's an FBO. You know, we have plans and everything, so that's just me. But I mean, we're supposed to -- you know, we're supposed to make sure, like, the gate is closed, things like that. That is, that is our --

Q. When you did the ramp training or doing ramp duty, what specific training did you have as far as safety? In other words, refueling an aircraft --

A. Yeah, we're always -- I mean, every day, like, first thing if you're on field, you're doing a field sample from the truck. Making the truck -- you know, making sure the fluids are good with the truck and inspecting the truck. So when you're on field, that's your first thing. It's inspecting the truck, making sure it has good clean fuel. And then, you know --

Q. Okay. And if you're -- are you trained in case there's a fire or something after refueling or before refueling or anything (indiscernible)?

A. Yeah, we -- I've been fire extinguisher training.

Q. Okay. Does everyone in the company do that training?

A. Yeah, we do training. Yeah.

Q. Up in the tower, movement of aircraft. Are you responsible

for clearing them to lift?
A. Yes. When you're doing flight following, you are. Yeah.
Q. And what criteria do you use for an aircraft that -- be backing up in order to make its departure?
A. Well if there's any slow blades, we don't lift them until they're actually done spinning up. If there's any kind of packs moving around that, you know -- we have a vision up to a certain area, but once they're passed there, we can see if there's packs moving to the back. Pilot has their packs, so we're doing that. If there's any fog or anything like that, we're making sure --
Q. Do the fuel trucks have radios in that you can --
A. No, we have -- they're just sight. You know, just walkie-talkies.
Q. Okay. Can you communicate with them from the tower?
A. From the walkie-talkie, yeah, but there's nothing in the truck, no. There's not, like, listening to the outbound/inbound, anything like that.
Q. And you're required to carry those walkie-talkies?
A. Yes. Yeah.
MR. FIGLIA: Okay, that's all I have.
MS. WILSON: Burl?
MR. BOYD: I think I have one -- see if I can clarify your question to him.
MS. WILSON: Okay.
MR. BOYD: I think what she wanted to know, has ever a lead

or a chief pilot or a training director contacted you as the tower and said, hey, I want that guy to have a one-way fuel (indiscernible) --

MR. COUTTS: Yeah, the only way time we would have one-way fuel --

MR. BOYD: -- because he's been --

MR. TOBIN: Wait for the question.

MR. COUTTS: I'm sorry.

MR. BOYD: -- because he's been a pain in the butt, or something like that.

MR. COUTTS: No, never. No. I didn't -- yeah, I didn't know what you were --

MR. BOYD: Yeah. Is that what you were looking for?

MS. WILSON: It was. I figured I was going to let it go.

MR. COUTTS: Yeah, sorry. I thought you meant something else. But yeah, no.

MS. WILSON: Thanks, Burl.

MR. BOYD: You're welcome. That's all I have.

MS. WILSON: Anything else?

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. Anything else that you think would be helpful to us?

A. I mean, helpful? I mean -- trying to think. I mean, there could always be more room for training for anything, but that's normal. I mean --

Q. Like what?

A. I mean, anything. I mean, if there was someone that maybe, you know -- every couple months, we redo something, make sure that someone's not complacent at something. I mean, that's in any of our fields. I mean, that could -- that always helps out. And we're trying to prevent things from happening, so -- but I mean, more standard things like that, you know. And if there is something that anyone does see suspicious, you know, maybe, you know, do say something.

But other than that, I mean, I've been doing this a long time. I mean, unfortunately, I've been in -- with Sundance, when they had something happen, I was there. It sucks. I mean, we don't want any of this stuff to happen, so I mean, yeah. As long as I feel like it'd be -- maybe in some annual training. Could always help.

Q. So you don't have any recurrent training once you --

A. Yeah, we do, we do yearly training. I just meant maybe a little bit sooner, you know, if someone has any questions, you know. Sometimes we do go a little bit quick, at least as far as, you know, when we're down people. Sometimes we do need a little bit more training. But we don't always get people that have experience, so -- but as far as pilots go, I mean, they always have ample training, I feel like. Yeah.

Q. Do you feel like rampers and tower personnel, do you feel like they feel comfortable speaking up or reporting any concerns that they have?

A. I mean, we have great bosses. I'm like -- I've known the leads for a long time. I mean, I feel like we can go to them for anything if we have a problem. But yeah.

Q. Great.

MS. KELIHER: Quick question too. When you're entering the information in when you first get it, is that you entering, like, a passenger name?

MR. COUTTS: No. No, like, same thing with the weight. So they're, like, pre-generated from a phone call, the names and the weights. Until they actually check in, like, there's not a lot of notes, you know. Like, I'm with this group, I'm with -- other than a reservation. So once they check in, then things start changing. We'll see, oh, they were split. Okay, yeah, they didn't check in at 200 pounds; they checked in, you know, more. Then we'll get -- like, once they all check in, then we see that information. Yeah.

MS. KELIHER: All right.

MR. COUTTS: (Indiscernible).

MS. KELIHER: Okay.

MS. WILSON: Thank you, Kyle.

MR. COUTTS: No problem.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of Kyle Coutts

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 20, 2018

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]
Eileen Gonzalez
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*	
	*	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	*	
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	*	Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	*	
	*	

Interview of: ROBERT DOWNEY

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

Tom Tobin, Esquire
Wilson Elser

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I N T E R V I E W

(14:50)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here with us today. This interview is just a routine part of our investigation into the February 10th accident. We always -- we want to talk pilots in an operation to understand the operation and your procedures. But we also understand that you shared or, I'm sorry, Mr. Booth (ph.) had rented a room from you --

MR. DOWNEY: Correct.

MS. WILSON: -- I believe. So that was another reason that we wanted to speak with you. We would like to get your permission to record the interview. That way we can create a transcript of this, and it will be a part of our public docket. Is that okay?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes.

MS. WILSON: And then, as a part of the interview, you are entitled to have a representative with you. It can be anybody of your choosing.

MR. DOWNEY: That's okay.

MS. WILSON: You could state who --

MR. DOWNEY: No, no. I'd like to have Tom Tobin be --

MS. WILSON: Great. And we will go around the room and introduce everybody. I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a Human Performance investigator with the NTSB.

MR. DOWNEY: I know.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher. I'm Operations with

NTSB.

MR. DOWNEY: Nice to meet you.

MR. FIGLIA: I'm Manny Figlia, Director of Safety with Airbus.

MR. DOWNEY: Oh, nice to meet you, Manny.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety for Papillon.

MR. DOWNEY: Hi, Burl. Nice to meet you.

MR. BOYD: Thank you.

MR. TOBIN: And I'm Tom Tobin with Wilson Elser.

MR. DOWNEY: Thanks, Tom. Oh, Robert Downey --

MR. TOBIN: Thank --

MR. DOWNEY: -- pilot, Papillon.

MS. WILSON: If we ask you a question and you don't understand it, please don't hesitate to ask us to clarify. If you don't know an answer, I don't know is a perfectly fine answer as well.

MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

MS. WILSON: Do you have any questions before we get started?

MR. DOWNEY: No. Why would I need representation?

MS. WILSON: You don't.

MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

MS. WILSON: It's just an option that you have.

MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

MS. WILSON: And not everybody takes it, so you are -- you

actually could ask --

MR. DOWNEY: Am I going to go it alone?

MS. WILSON: -- him to leave.

MR. TOBIN: No, you're not. It's all right.

MS. WILSON: What Tom can do, Tom can be here to advise you to not answer a question. He cannot answer any questions for you or --

MR. DOWNEY: Okay, that's fine.

MS. WILSON: Or if you need to confer about something, that's something that can be done. But you have to be the one to answer the questions that we have.

MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

MS. WILSON: All right, with that I will turn it over to Zoe to start questioning.

INTERVIEW OF ROBERT DOWNEY

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Robert, how long have you been at Papillon for?

A. July, it'll be nine years, and the ninth full year -- 2009, July of 2009 I started.

Q. What's the approximate total time?

A. 5,000. I'm away with 5,000.

Q. How much of that is in the EC-130?

A. 2,200-2,300 -- around there. I can get it off the computer, exact, but it's over 2,000.

Q. That's an estimate, yes. What were you doing before coming

to Papillon?
A. I worked on Los Angeles for a company. I did instruction. I did ferry helicopters, did a lot of Ferry flights down in Brazil. I did all kinds of stuff at -- instruction, proper -- whatever. I did appraisals for a mortgage company. So I flew all around the basin for years, for appraisal fraud. So I'd take pictures of houses and that had junk in the backyard that they'd say wasn't, so --
Q. Pre-drones?
A. Yes. Exactly.
Q. How has Papillon changed in nine years of being there?
A. Well, I've been here over nine years, so I do like the company. If anything, I'd say it's gotten better. I think there's always a learning curve. As you go, other things change, but, you know, I'd say it's gotten better, definitely on the -- I commented on this to Tyler (ph.) on the media training, the AStar that we have access to from when I started to the last two years have been way better.
Way better understanding of how the engine works. I'll tell you, it's definitely improved. I mean, it's -- yeah. I don't know how much more to elaborate on that, but it's definitely improved.
Q. Are you qualified both on the AStar and the EC-130?
A. Correct, yeah.
Q. What do you enjoy flying more?

A. The EC, just purely for comfort. It kills my leg, the AStar. I complain a lot. Just been flying an hour. I'm ready to go home.

Q. So sit here.

A. Seven days. No, I'm just teasing.

Q. Are you on the seven day on/seven day off?

A. Yeah, they grandfathered us in.

Q. Oh.

A. So there are three of us, I believe, that are still on it.

Q. Is -- that seemed to be preferred among pilots?

A. You know, the new guys say they would like it. But, you know, I think it's a harder schedule for the company to maintain because I think you have to have more staff, from what I understood. You got to staff more people, more pilots. I prefer -- I wouldn't -- you know, I was married, so I used to commute from Seattle for five years, using -- the company's got great travel benefits. So that was a huge plus for me.

I would definitely, you know, I'd go to a company that does five and two, for me. I know it's my age, but it's hot out there. You're tired after -- I'm tired after seven and, you know, we've been slow. But normal seven is you're flying three hours a day, but four hours is a push for me in this heat.

Q. Do you live here now full time?

A. Yeah, yeah, I got a house in Vegas. It's sort of -- it's kind of a pilot house. I rent to two other pilots that are old

friends of mine -- well, one was Scott.
Q. Yeah.
A. But the other one is another friend of mine.
Q. Who is the other pilot?
A. It's Ben Lewis (ph.). Am I allowed to say that? He's the chief pilot at --
Q. I talked to him, yeah.
A. Yeah, yeah, he's a good friend of mine.
Q. He didn't mention us, huh?
A. Oh, he did?
Q. No, I said he didn't mention us.
A. Oh.
Q. Cause he --
A. Oh, no. Yeah, yeah, no, he did.
Q. -- yeah, he told --
A. He told me. But he didn't specify what. He just said you're going to get smacked (ph.), bro.
Q. Some friend he is.
A. Yeah, throws me right under the boat.
Q. So often would you see Scott?
A. Whenever he came into fly or he had conventions. He'd -- he was a -- he's a smart guy. He had -- he had a lot of business. His main income wasn't from helicopters but he, when he'd come into town, I don't know. He'd definitely -- he always made an effort to fly at least every two weeks. That was his goal,

because, I mean, apart from being cheap, like me, he wanted to justify his rent, number one, here in Vegas. And he wanted to stay current, so --

Q. Did you guys talk often?

A. Yeah. The guy was a good friend of mine.

Q. Yeah.

A. I flew with him -- I don't know if I would -- yeah, I flew for, with him for a long time.

Q. Have you ever flown with him or just since --

A. Yeah, I've flown with him. I've delivered my helicopter to Brazil with him. He was a student. He paid --

Q. Oh, so you were flying out of Long Beach too?

A. Yeah, yeah.

Q. And you guys both started Papillon. Who came first?

A. I'd been here for quite a few years, and then I've got him maybe two-year, yeah.

Q. Did he have any comments about flying here? Or did he talk about it recently?

A. He loved it. Oh, recently?

Q. Yeah.

A. No, he was -- me and him kind of think the same, you know, hard work pays off. And he's a hard-working guy. He's successful. And you would laugh because a lot of the young guys would complain about stuff, but they'd never been in another job before. Until you've had other jobs, you realize it's actually,

it's not too bad. You know, everyone thinks -- but, no, he's a hard-working guy. What was about him? Sorry to --

Q. Yeah, just kind of describe Scott to us.

A. Oh.

Q. I haven't met him yet, so.

A. Oh, yeah? Oh. He's hungry, you know, he was always working, always hustling it, always had something going. And he enjoyed traveling. You know, I've traveled, me and him are big into World War II, so we'd arrange trips. And I've done many trips -- well, not many, but, I mean, I've -- Vietnam, Bastogne, the Normandy Coast. I didn't do it with him, but he went first and like I'm going to do Bastogne now, planning on it today, but. So I just want to go cause of the World War II -- my -- both my granduncles fought in it, so.

But, yeah, so Scott -- we had so many interests. He's just a good dude, you know. He was a hard-working guy and liked traveling. He's got his own -- have you met his daughter? He's got a fantastic daughter. Got her head screwed on. She's at US San Diego. Yeah.

Q. Anything that had happened in the recent year prior to the accident that he would talk to you about -- of flying and different performance factors of the helicopters? Anything flying-related that you can think of?

A. No. You know, if -- if I worked -- if I was working on the same week that he was there -- a lot of times he wouldn't be there

because he did start off as a full-time seven on and seven off. You know, we'd talk about passengers, you know, the usual moaning about passengers.

But -- or if you had a good passenger, that we had a good tour, you know. But there was never anything -- there was never any big scares or, you know, maybe just grumbling, you know, just peewees -- not peewee. What do you call it? No, cause we never sat down and discussed how each flight went -- I had a good day or I had a bad day or, you know, but.

Q. Or like my passenger got sick today or anything?

A. Oh, yeah, stuff like that. That's what I mean about squeamish passengers or somebody will ask the same dumb question 50 times and you want to -- you're really sucking deep and -- sorry. Am I aloud?

MR. TOBIN: Yeah.

MR. DOWNEY: Am I going to get fired after this?

MALE 1: Not yet.

MR. DOWNEY: Yeah, it's that kind of frustration. I don't know what -- you know, you probably like hearing me say, oh, god, that idiot from South Africa, he lost -- wants to say -- so it's whatever irritates you, frustrates you about a job. You're an attorney. You probably, you know, have things that irritate you.

MR. TOBIN: Clients.

MR. DOWNEY: Exactly. So --

MS. KELIHER: Yes.

MR. DOWNEY: You know, so, no, it was that kind of stuff. It was never -- it was never -- it was, because there were no -- we never had any major, you know, scares, you know or moments. I can tell you, on the ferry to Brazil, me and him landed in, at night, in Jennings (ph.), Alabama because it was dark with -- and the cloud was coming in. It's in the Gulf, on the tall wind and, you know, it's stuff like that that made the right call and, pat ourselves on the back that we did. But I think we were also a little bit stupid back then. We shouldn't even been flying at night -- we shouldn't -- you could have, but it was just stupid to push it, but, anyway.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Had anything that you know, of personal life, been going on with him prior to the accident?

A. No. He had a girlfriend. He just really liked her. It was the first girlfriend that he actually, you know, showed that he was -- and he had -- because he had quite a few girlfriends, but this girlfriend he really liked because he was buying her expensive bags. I just remember that. I was teasing about it, bought himself an expensive -- I don't know how, but it was pretty expensive. So I was like, man, so you like this girl.

Q. We saw on a text message, before the accident, that he had sent something about he was having some family problems. Do you know what that would have been?

A. No, I don't know anything about it. Was it about his dad,

maybe? No, I don't know. His dad is an older guy.
Q. Would he usually tell you beforehand of when he was going to be getting into town?
A. Yeah. He -- just courtesy. I'd tell him if I was coming back from Seattle. Say, hi, I'm going to be back. The only reason why I live with those two guys, because I know them and I'm too old for roommates, but it's just they like -- it's a pilot house. It's quiet. There's no partying. There's nothing. You know, it's just -- it's air-conditioned. And it's set up nicely. There's no adjoining wall. It's a new house. And I built -- I had it -- it's, you know, it's a track home. But it works really well if you've got -- and I just did it because they pay my mortgage.
Q. Yeah.
A. So, you know, that's how it's just set up. Sorry, what was the question again? I'm tired.
Q. Yeah.
A. I'm sure.
Q. I'm going to ask you to look in your phone and can you tell me of when Scott let you know that he was coming into town before the accident?
A. I don't think I'd have a record.
Q. He wouldn't have sent a text? Did he call?
A. No, usually he called.
Q. Okay.

A. But I don't -- I don't ever recall -- he might have, but I don't -- I delete them, you know. I -- message, I pull them up. But, I mean, it's been a while, February, so prior to that, no, I don't think I've got a text. He'd either call -- and if he did text, I mean, I can look, but I don't think I have, you know --

Q. Do you have just anything that would have jogged your memory of when he was made aware that he was going to come?

A. I think I remember -- I don't think I've got any saved texts from him. These are the only ones that I have, you know, in and outbound, just from friends of mine. So I don't have a -- can you -- is there a way to pull up old texts?

MALE 1: Not if you deleted them.

MR. DOWNEY: No, I've deleted them.

MS. KELIHER: Oh, okay.

MR. DOWNEY: It's all I've got, I just -- in and out texts. Yeah, and these ones I'm keeping just because they've got information that I need.

MALE 1: If you had a -- if you have an illegal server on your Facebook, you can get that.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. So anything that you can think of that had happened -- did he come in the night before?

A. Yeah. I -- we spoke.

Q. Do you remember about what time he came in?

A. Yeah. It was about 5:00 because he kept a car here. I think it was about 5:00, but I know -- I had an early show, so I wanted to go to bed. And 8 o'clock I said, I'm hitting the sack, you know, we were just -- I hadn't seen him for a while, couple of weeks, I think. And I said, I'm hitting the sack early. And we spoke a little bit, and I actually remember what we spoke about because me and him always talk about stocks and stuff. And, you know, he'd -- he's -- he manages his money really well.

And we -- he was telling me how he'd set up a trust for Kelly (ph.), and it's through LegalZoom. So I don't -- but I don't want to -- I don't want to throw him under the bus, telling you stuff that, you know, that's -- you know what I mean, that you're going to get -- tell, yeah, that's what we spoke about. I don't want him to get into trouble with people suing him and --

Q. No.

A. You know, like, oh, he's got a trust, you know?

Q. No, no. I mean, basically we're just trying to get any information --

A. Oh, okay.

Q. -- and see what happened over the last 24 hours prior --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- and 48 hours prior.

A. Yeah, so we spoke about that. That I remember because I wanted to -- my little brother in South Africa, we got a trust for him, me and my older brother. We manage a trust for him. My

parents set it up. So we take care of him. He was born with, a little bit slow, but.

So I remember Scott saying he'd set it up because we were talking about Kelly and getting to -- he was really proud that she got into San Diego. I mean, he actually teared up because he's like, wow, I got my daughter into San Diego -- and on full scholarship. So, and he's paid, you know. It was a big achievement for him. So that, we did speak about that. But that's the only thing I really recall.

And then I did speak to him right before he took off. We were -- he came up to me -- I was on the ramp. I was going home. And, you know, we chatted. And I said, I'll see you later. And that was it. And then, you know, the whole thing happened. And later that night, you know, it was chaos.

Q. So before that, he gets in at 5:00 p.m. on Friday night.

A. Yeah, it was about 5:00. I think it was about 5:00. I mean, I could be wrong. But I know it wasn't in the morning.

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah.

Q. And then any idea of what time he went to bed?

A. Shortly -- when I did. You know, I think he had some emails he said he had to work on. So it wasn't -- he was also, I think, you know, we had a later schedule. And I don't know if you -- you must be able to pull when he came in.

Q. Yeah.

A. I can't remember.
Q. 10:30.
A. Was it 10:30? Yes, I think I -- I want to -- I can't remember if I had the early shift or the -- because I usually prefer afternoons and so did he. So, but I do -- I know we overlapped here. So, but it wasn't late, you know. Nobody got -- and I -- everyone goes to sleep early in our house.
Q. I see.
A. We're all old.
Q. You showed up at noon.
A. Yeah.
Q. Do you remember coming at noon the day of the accident?
A. Does it say I showed up at noon?
Q. Mm-hmm.
A. Yeah, it must have been. I don't know why I was there, but I usually go to bed early anyway. But usually, if I've got an early show, then I'll go to -- you know, I prefer to go to bed early or try anyhow. I can't go to sleep at 8:00, but I just go to my room.
Q. So when you come in at noon, what do you usually -- what's the first thing you do -- when you have a showtime at noon?
A. At 12:00?
Q. Yeah.
A. You come in, sign in, check the briefing sheet, see if there's any new notes, check the weather, check your aircraft to

see if -- check the schedule because it changes a lot. I always prepare my lunch the night before and then I, you know, I have it together. And I plan my meals around what I've got during the day just because I've got to have in the tank and, you know, so that's how -- I cut everything up and everything's ready the day before.

And then, you know, then I wait for the helicopter to come back. And then when it does, you know, you walk out, help the pilot turn it and just get ready for the flight. Do a preflight -- you know, check the log book, make sure the times are right and make sure that the previous pilot signed it, opened it, you know, did everything legally. And then I mentally prepare for the flight. That's what I always do. I have to do that.

So, if you don't, I feel like I've forgotten something. It's like when I walk around, do a walk-around. I've got to touch something that I haven't touched. I've got to do it again. It's just a weird, you know, thing.

Q. Do you remember anything about flying that day?

A. Not really. It was just a normal -- can't even remember if I had a landing or an air tour. I don't remember. I know that my last tour didn't sell. That's why I left. But nothing out of the ordinary stood out.

Q. What do you mean, your last tour didn't sell?

A. It didn't -- I didn't have a flight tour, scheduled flight. It left -- there were no passengers on it.

Q. When that happens, do you still get paid the same amount?

A. Well, I've got a different thing to the other guys because I -- so does Jim (ph.). I think he interviewed -- you interviewed him?
Q. Yeah.
A. So we've just got the daily rate. They -- when they changed everything, they offered us to have it with the three -- the, you know, as you go, base and then your three flight pay or four, five. But up till now we've been -- one of the guys did a spreadsheet because in the winter it slows down. So you're not going to get four flights a lot of times.
Q. Yeah.
A. So it just made no sense, money-wise, to switch over.
Q. Yeah.
A. So that's -- we kept.
Q. And then do you -- the flight that you thought you would have would be that last flight?
A. Yeah. And it wasn't sold.
Q. So when did you -- can you imagine what time it would be of when you would talk to and had a trans -- talked to Scott prior to him --
A. Prior to him taking off?
Q. Mm-hmm.
A. I was at the desk waiting because you wait at the -- you know, I wait there to make sure -- things break. They might move. They might be too heavy for -- to get everyone on one flight and

they might have to open another aircraft. So you just wait till the flight goes and then -- us -- I was talking -- I can't remember what we were talking about, usual B.S., you know. We always, you know, rub each other. But I can't remember exactly what it was. And I just -- and then his flight, he got his passengers, and he left. And I waited, and it was, you know, nothing going to go of mine. And then I left. I came here and logged out, talked up and did what I had to do -- went home.

Q. So when he -- when you're sitting there, he -- how does he get assigned? How is it notified where he gets his manifest?

A. It prints from the tower. They print it out. Their printer, you guys, I think you guys were there.

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, it prints out there. You get your manifest, check the altimeter settings. Just make sure it looks right. It won't print if it's out of CG, so everyone looks at the CG, but it won't print if it's out of CG, from what I understand. So, yeah, you just go over your manifest to try and -- a lot of guys will look and see where their passengers are from, see if they're going to get a tip.

Q. Yeah.

A. But, I don't know. I've never done it. I just load them up, you know.

Q. So I've been hearing a lot of this, that there's certain countries that you think you'll get tipped versus not tipped.

A. There's certain countries that have not only tipping traits. They've got stupidity traits as well. Russians will open doors. Japanese will walk with a selfie stick. It's not racially, it's just funny.
Q. Yeah.
A. It's always the same thing. Every door that's popped open that I've known, on me and on other guys, usually are Russian. They're just -- it's weird. Where are you from? All right. You tell them, don't pull that red U -- as you left. Ah, the door. So it does -- it's really funny traits of people.
And you learn to pick them out. I'd always worked -- more vigilant walking on a ramp if I've got a lot of Japanese -- well, wait -- it's -- you can tell them 20 times, don't use your phone. Do you understand English? Yes. Do you want to -- yes. And they'll still walk out and someone's snapping pictures. And then Simon, you know, he gets pissed off and writes you an email. And so I don't know. Short of tackling them on the ramp and saying, you cannot take photos, I don't know what to do anymore. That's my pet peeve. I'm frustrated with that.
Q. So what's the stereotype of English passengers?
A. British?
Q. Yeah.
A. Or --
Q. UK.
A. Well, my grandfather's British and Scot -- and my

grandmother's side's Scottish. I love the Brits. They've got a great sense of humor. And they -- you'll get -- it's a crap shoot. If they -- a lot of them will think, oh, you're a pilot. You're earning megabucks. And then a lot of them will tip because they've -- you know, Londoners will tip. If the guy's got bad teeth, he generally won't tip.

So it's -- trust me, human psych -- I've learned a lot flying tours. But the Brits are great. I had a -- they always ask the funniest -- like when you fly back to Vegas, you go over, you know, Sunrise Mountain there, where you go over the -- where the Waste Management company fixed --

Q. Right.

A. Waste Management had this landfill that they never fixed. They had a flash flood and all the garbage went into the springs and they had a big lawsuit. But I had a old British lady. She goes, well, where's the garbage dump? And we happened to be going over it, and I said, right there. See that mass of beautiful shit? Oh. But, you know, but where's the -- it was, where's the garbage dump?

And I -- I always hear, where -- do you have bus service at Lake Mead? It's weird, huh? Do you have buses and trains? I mean, Meadview, sorry. Meadview. You know, there's a little town in the high desert. Sir, do you have a bus service? Catch me if -- I get the British humor, so. I mean, and they, for the most part, really -- you know the Brits are very, very nice passengers. I've

never -- it's easy to identify when you have a common language and a common heritage. I lived in London for a year and a half. I worked in a -- I worked in a sandwich shop and I always talk to them about that because it's a really famous sandwich shop now. It was bought out by Pepsi for hundreds of millions of dollars. And there were only three when I started there so. But, yeah, they're nice.

Q. Do you normally talk to passengers when you're --

A. Yeah, I mean, I'm a little bit jaded because I've been doing it a long time. I get a vibe. And a lot of passengers don't want you to yack away. You get a feel. A lot of passengers want the narration if it's in their language. The narration's outdated. And it's old and the Koreans always laugh at it and, you know, then you get a tap on the shoulder. They say -- some of the information is not 100 percent up to date. I believe, I don't understand what they say in those languages, but that's what I've been told. No, so you get a feel, you know.

Q. Do you offer the narration?

A. I do if the -- when I get the passenger and I see who I've got, then I say I have this available. But a lot of -- what they don't get is that they think their language is going to be isolated in their headset specifically for them. But everyone hears French. Everyone hears Dutch.

So you get four -- and you do -- you get sometimes four different languages and you're toggling the swish, playing it and

you get to tap on the shoulder. And I hate that. I say, don't touch me. Don't ever touch me. You can -- it's just rude, you know? And you're flying. You're concentrating, and people do the dumbest thing. They think it's a Go-cart. It's a -- it's a sensitive machine and it's and -- yeah, so I brief them. I try and be as thorough and as polite as possible. I've got to check myself sometimes because I am a bit jaded, because you get to -- I get -- I find my tolerance has been reduced quite a bit.

Phil, you don't need to talk. But, you know, you're always polite. They are coming to see a tour. They're coming to see, you know, one of the seven wonders of the world. And you've got to make the experience. That's what Papillon pays me to do. So, yeah. But it's human nature, you know?

Q. So would it be typical that passengers from the UK would be listening to narration?

A. No, because there is no English narration. I do the narration.

Q. Yeah?

A. I am the narration of the English.

Q. So, of course, I'm sure you're so sick of saying it over and over again --

A. Please don't tell me to do the tour.

Q. So that's exactly it.

A. I will start crying. Seven days on.

Q. I'm sure you wake up saying it. But do you start doing --

where you're just not --
A. I've got my spiel down. And I can -- I kind of gauge it. And I know where to say what. And when the guide -- you're trying to make money as well because tipping's about -- it can be 10,000 bucks a year --
Q. Oh, my.
A. -- if you add it all up. But I just got different points. You know, you have different guys with different styles and then obviously they partnered it up with -- now they've thought of -- we've don't talk over the wall, you know, in the sterile cockpit from their bed towers. And, but I've just got my little spiel. I did, in the beginning -- you know, and I think a lot of guys will just yack away and people don't want to hear your voice just droning on. So I kind of -- I've got good at gauging what to say when and -- when -- and I do have like important bits of information that the company wants you to tell and they're not -- and it's stuff that I've looked up and has interested me about Hoover Dam. And any, you know, if you get a bunch of people that are -- you know, if they're the older guys, you're probably talk about the engineering a bit. The young kids, maybe it's wrong to assume that, but they probably want to -- they're not as interested in how many cubic feet of concrete were poured in it, you know?
Q. Yeah.
A. And how many liters or gallons the lake holds when it's full.

And that's all stuff I've got off the national -- just out of my own interest.

Q. Do you tell people usually of -- we're at -- that tower's like we can't talk now?

A. Yeah.

Q. Or no put them on ISO or what do you --

A. Yeah. No, I tell them. I go, we've got a sterile cockpit. I'll talk to you and relay -- I'll give them a little bit of a brief before -- how long are we going to be on the ground for. I generally do it once we go -- I may make a radio call going into the canyon, west end of the Green 4,000-5,000 eastbound.

But then I'll say -- because you go -- it's -- passengers are like managing people. You've got to corral them. You've got to tell them this is where certain nationalities just don't give a crap about the time. You've got to tell them, you've got a half an hour, so 25 minutes on the ground; five minutes to shut down and fire up. And then 10 -- 20 -- you don't want to seem like you're rushing them, eating their sandwich, but I just to say to them, you got 20 minutes and I'm going to start cleaning up.

So I'm polite, but then they know. And that just saves you a lot of headache afterwards. But every once in a while, somebody will go rogue and they don't care, and then you shout, and I whistle. And at that point, the gloves are off. I still get tipped.

Yeah, it's the first 5 minutes, the last 5 minutes. The rest

is -- you got to open the sale and then close it here, if you were. I hope I'm not saying too much, yeah?
Q. Anything else that you can remember about the conversation that you were having with Scott?
A. When?
Q. The different -- right before he was loading up his passengers and going out?
A. No. It was short. We were -- he was ready to get it -- get going, and I was ready to go home. And I said, I'll see you. We'll talk when we get home, you know. That was it, yeah. It wasn't much. He was getting his passengers together.
Q. We saw that he was one of the last ones out.
A. Yeah.
Q. Do you know -- any idea why that was?
A. No. I don't know why. You know, it's -- sometimes -- I don't know if you followed it long. It can get that -- they're balancing aircraft. They're trying to -- you know, you might have problems with families being split up or passengers not with their friends. So wouldn't -- there are a bunch of reasons. I don't know what -- why he was last out.
Q. Do you normally take pictures with the passengers, with the photographer?
A. If they want. And I -- yeah, I have a fake smile. No, it's just Paulette (ph.) told me that I wasn't smiling in Vegas a few years ago. So one of the previous chiefs said, can you please

smile in the photo? I go -- and it was -- and then 12 men. It was my third flight. I was trying to smile, okay. You just -- you can't smile. Follow along and see if you smile. Come and do four flights with me and then see if you can smile on the last one. No, it -- so I ask them.

Q. Were you guys discussing that weather at the time at all? Did he mention anything about that?

A. No.

Q. Is there anything that you would have been concerned about?

A. No because I think I did air tours that day, if I remember it correctly. Now it's coming -- kind of coming back to me. No. We didn't talk about the weather at all, down at the bottom there, you know, down at the count.

Q. Yeah.

A. It was just short, you know. You know, he'd done his thing and I've done my thing and -- to get ready. I know I'm flying because you -- he came up to me, in my helicopter, on his way to get his passengers. You know, he was just, see you later and -- if -- he spoke about the -- I forget what it was, some trip for -- it was something. You know, he was BS'ing. I can't remember exactly what it was.

Q. Shifting gears, when your interaction with the lead pilots -- how does that work -- of you talking to them on the ramp and them interacting with you the whole day -- how does that work?

A. Well like, if you're in the afternoon, they'll give a

briefing at 12:45, if you have an afternoon in the summer, where they split the schedule.

Q. What about like in February?

A. Oh, in February? You mean, on that specific day?

Q. If you don't remember, just what it would be like in February, of how that interaction would go.

A. It would -- there wouldn't be a whole lot of interaction. They're generally doing -- you know, you're just taking care of your flights, getting your helicopter ready. I mean, you know your job -- unless there's an issue where you have to get hold of them and, obviously, they'd get involved.

But for the most part, during the day, I just try to avoid -- you know, you try to solve the problems that -- if there is a -- minor problems can be fixed without anything like dragging him away and at least deal with it. Yesterday, this thing that I sorted out and I radioed in and told them what I was going on. And they sent out a guy, and we looked at it and solved it and picked it up, set it down, and we did the flight. So, you know, that's kind of the interaction is -- for me. I don't know about the other guys. Some guys will maybe call for lesser, you know.

Just -- and a lot of it's because I'm used to, over the years, of knowing what certain things do on those helicopters -- of governors and if you're if getting MO flashing Gov Light, you know, you shut it down. Some guy -- we had one guy had the light on. And he said I've got a light on. And he came back. It was

was actually you just had the light on and it said Light.

So he did, you know, do -- he was a ex-military pilot. He said, I've got a light on. Turned around and came back. Said, yeah, your light's on because it was a new -- this was a (indiscernible) and it said Light, in green. Light on -- yeah, you've got the light on, you know, so.

Q. Have you ever applied to be a lead pilot?

A. I don't think so because they -- they would have taken the seven and seven away, so I wouldn't -- you know, I was trying to work out my marriage for five years, so, no. I might have sent a resume at the time, like thinking about it, when they had seven and sevens. But I don't -- I was never serious about it. Just as I said, it's not for -- I like working and being done. These guys have all that other stuff to deal with. That's just not my cup of tea.

Q. What -- so when you're coming in the afternoon you don't have any interaction with them?

A. Yeah, I was -- you know, I agree -- well, if we do the briefing, you know, if you --

Q. But if you're in the afternoon, in February.

A. Oh, in February? Oh, you know, it was -- well, sometimes, and, you know, it's a split schedule. It's not broken up exactly mornings and afternoons because of the time. Sometimes you'll get a barrel -- you know, you're either the first of the last -- first one, last two -- first to -- maybe one in the afternoon or one big

day. So then you'd be either in the morning and do the morning briefing at 5:45.

Or if you come around a little bit later, it's your responsibility. He's not going to brief you every passenger. You got to look at the notes and the briefing sheet and, you know, greet them. And it depends how the personalities are. Maybe clash, buck score -- no, I'm kidding.

Q. And what do you -- how do you check the weather?

A. I go off the briefing sheet.

Q. Yeah.

A. If it's -- if it looks like, you know, in my phone I look -- I always check -- I like the radar, the thunderstorms, not on the -- you know, and if it looks like it's going to be crappy day, I'll always look at home. I can just pull up the tab for Vegas and the area and the forecast. And, but usually here. I just get used to, you know, kind of what the weather's going to do a lot of the time, over the years.

A. How do you look at the wind?

Q. How do I -- I look at the briefing sheet, you know, what the -- what the forecast is, what the weather, the temps are at 6,000 because that's the highest we go. And then if it's windy, you know, I'll pull up, you know, I'll listen to the ADIS here before I takeoff. We've got five different windsocks, but it can be in different directions, so you got to pay attention.

Q. Do you know how Scott would look at the wind?

A. Probably the same way. He was diligent. He didn't take shortcuts. That's what I mean, he never took shortcuts. You know, he would -- he'd like laugh a lot. You know, he was a smart guy. He wasn't going to shirk on the wind or cut corners. It just doesn't work.

Q. When you're looking at the wind on the briefing sheet, what, specifically -- what area looking at?

A. You mean, area along the route or --

Q. No. When you come in and you said you sign off on the sheet, the briefing sheet.

A. It's all on the briefing sheet. It's the TAF, yeah.

Q. So that's the main thing that you look at, is the TAF?

A. Yeah, yeah. And then it gives you winds and temps and loft, that's on there as well. And the area forecast for the day, yeah.

Q. Going into Quartermaster, can you describe what you're -- as you're flying toward there, what you're looking for to gauge the wind?

A. So -- I was just trying to run through my -- so when I start at the back towers, the first thing I'll, you know, look at my descent rate. I'll look at my indicator airspeed and my ground speed to see if I'm getting a tailwind. You can feel it. Over the years, I've gotten -- I know a lot of times, when I leave here, I know what the winds are going to be kind of like.

If they've -- out of the Southwest, hard, I know where they're going to bump over the ridges and how it's going to affect

the -- I know -- I've tell -- I brief -- I prepare the passengers. I go, when we go through Wilson's Ridge, I said, as we go through, it's going to rock. And you get rocked. And, you know, when you do -- S-turn the dam, depending -- if the wind's out of the Southwest or the South you're going to get, you know, certain burrows out of the terrain that you wouldn't get from the north.

And then vice versa, when you go around fortification if the wind's out of the North, you're going to come over the top and you're to get bumped around, so you maybe you stay a little bit higher. But the back towers, and they're not -- you know, I'll look at the Ramada, which is a big -- it's a wind -- it's quite hard to see that windsock. But I'll look there.

I'll listen to aircraft ahead of me, what they're doing. If they are, if not. I can -- I've learned to tell with the one windsock that -- there's another one now, but I can tell which way it is from a distance, which way I'm going to set up my approach. And then I base it on that. And then, obviously, you know, where the -- prior to that. But I know where the wind's -- the big thing is you can feel it pushing you if it's -- if you've got a tailwind. So you know you're not going to land up=road here. I mean, probably down-road over there.

But usually when it comes out of the south and the west, comes down that canyon, it hits the notch and splits. And so over the years --

Q. Splits over the notch? Okay.

A. Well, I don't it that's what happens, but it's what it feels like, but.
Q. I've got a piece of paper. If you can draw it for me and --
A. I don't know. That's all right? So what do you mean? Like --
Q. You've got a pen?
A. Yeah, I've got a pen.
Q. So draw -- if we had a --
A. So here's -- okay, from a top view --
Q. So let's split it here. If we've got a windsock going this way, and you've got the windsock going this way.
A. Okay. So this would be, assuming the ruler's --
Q. The arrows, right.
A. Yeah. So this would be a down -- so the notch would be here somewhere. So, this is a -- yeah, so this one would be winds coming down from -- you'd come through the notch and land down river. This is kind of a quartering cross wind because, I mean, it's a little bit hard with exactly where -- you know, the Ramada -- the Notch is there. The Ramada's here. This one, you know, the old way I used to do it was go up that gulley, which I don't do anymore, and then turn to get more into the wind. But you can end with the cross-wind. You've just got to be aware, what, you know, can happened.
Q. SO you just describe your procedure --
A. So --

Q. -- if you went up the gulley?
A. If I went up the gulley?
Q. Mm-hmm.
A. So I'd go in and I'd keep my airspeed up. You've got to manage your power, you know, you got to watch -- if it's a hot day, you've got to make sure that you aren't descending too quickly, but you've also going to get down to get to the spot. On really hot days you don't have a whole lot of room for error. You know what I mean? It's just, you've got to be on your game.

And then I turn into the wind and just make sure my descent rates less than 30 feet per minute. And I've got some forward airspeeds I can get out of it. And then done so, get into settling and then set up my approach and just come and if it's a little bit shallower. I know I've done it so many times. That's how I've always done it.

Q. Yeah.
A. Yeah.
Q. So when you say, get down, you mean --
A. We'll get down -- so you're not higher -- when you've got no forward airspeed and you're suddenly be yanking in power and you just -- you know, it's just you want to be too high.
Q. Like near the ground and effect?
A. Yeah, exactly.
Q. So is --
A. So that's downriver. Because your wind's coming like this.

You got to go through the notch, land. And I would -- that the notch and the pads are here. I would usually land on the one pad that's over here. This is the one that's right by the river.

Q. Can you draw where the pads are? How many are there?

A. I think there are two. I -- okay, so this is the little Ramada here, yeah. The river's here. So this is the one -- the river's here. This is the one that's right alongside the river. Then you get another one up here. Then you get the ones behind it. It's obviously not to scale. There's a whole area here where you can put one, two, three -- and then it goes around the notches. There's a -- forget this is a notch.

There's another one another one and another one there. Then there's -- the winning point's down here. You put one on the winning point. And then you could put one here for the handicap and there's another one here, another there, I believe. And then, obviously, the the waterfall's down there. So downriver landing, I'll usually shoot for this pad here. That's what I always did. When I first started getting used to aircraft, that's the pad I'd always shoot for.

Q. Okay, but what if someone's there?

A. Then I'll take one of these two -- the new, this is we used to -- now it's, you know, you pull forward. It's, you know, you pull forward to -- that's what Simon wants or they want us to pull it to the furthest. And then everyone comes in behind you and vice versa if you're coming --

Q. But following that the situation of how you've done it for nine years.
A. Right.
Q. So you're in for his pad, but it's full, where -- where would you go?
A. If these were -- this is what I would usually -- because we didn't have to land like it was -- you know, in the past. So if these were open, then I would just land, yeah, you know, straight into the wind where the wind's coming, you know, down river.
Q. So if the wind's this way --
A. Yeah, this is down river.
Q. And that's full.
A. Then I'd be -- well, if there was somebody they had go around to that door and if it was open --
Q And if that's full?
A. Well, yeah, I'd take one of these here.
Q. And if those were full?
A. Down river.
Q. And if that was full?
A. What? You mean if they were all full? If every single pad was occupied?
Q. Over on this side.
A. On that side? As long as I'm into the wind, you know, I could choose one of these here. You know, the main thing is keeping your nose into the wind --

Q. So --
A. -- and not -- you know, it's quite -- it's rising terrain there. So you get to, depending on -- you got to your watch your power; you got to watch your blades aren't being too tight, you've got to watch for passengers. But, you know, I've never had it where I've had to land down river in one of these two -- in nine years of flight. Yeah, that's always been one of those tough ones that I've --

And if I did and you were uncomfortable landing with your skid down river, you know, because it's sloping -- it's sloping down to the right, towards the river, you could just turn it once you, you know, you got a hover.

Q. Outside?
A. You'd turn and then turn it back if the wind -- you know, but the wind could flip on you now there, as well. So it, you know, whatever it is, it might not be the same when you take off, and you would have to do a turn.
Q. So in nine years you've never had a wind coming from the west where the eastern pads are full? You've ever had this situation where these pads are full?
A. I've always -- I've never had a problem landing there. You know, there's always been one that I can get to. I don't know why. I can't think of -- offhand, I don't remember ever having to come downriver, on a downriver landing, and land at that handicap spot. I might have landed here. I've never landed -- I don't

recall landing all the way around towards the notch. You know, the -- did you -- have you been down there?
Q. Yeah.
A. Okay, so that one there, the furthest one if you're doing an upriver or this landing, with the wind this direction. I don't ever remember pulling forward with that. I've always done it like that. I'll be the -- always been in first or second or third. I don't know. I just -- I have been last but, I just don't remember it, pulling all the way forward. I always found a pad.
You know, a lot of times there, some guys might come in and do the approach with a crosswind --
Q. So that's like --
A. -- not with a tailwind, yes.
Q. -- Christina did for landing at the handicap. So she came in and did the --
A. Yeah. So, I mean, you've got to work it -- I wouldn't do it if there was a tail wind. If it's a blatant tailwind, you're not going to do that. But you can land with a crosswind. You're just got to be prepared, you know.
Q. Prepared for what?
A. Well, be on your game that, you know, you don't get into trouble.
Q. Do you take different paths according to who's behind you, like if it's a new guy or --
A. No, not really. I, you know -- well, now they want us to

pull forward, all the way.
Q. Yeah.
A. Or pull forward all -- they have to, you know, depending on which way it is, take the furtherest (sic) and then let people stack up behind you. Before, it was always if you were there first, just take the pad that's available with the correct one. And then it would fill in behind. You know, most of the time, it would be, if it's an upriver landing, most people land upriver.
And you can land upriver, yeah, or downriver. It's just as easy. This one, yeah.
Q. Is there any consideration of what's -- of the newer people and how you treat them?
A. Yeah, I think, you know, you want to be, you know, it's quite hairy, the flight, hours here as well and it can be hairy, you know, your first couple of landings, if you're not familiar with it. So, yeah. If -- I mean, you're not going to just -- you're not going to overtake and, you know. You've got to be courteous and, you know, polite.
You don't want to scare the guy. You let him -- if -- you're not going to try and overtake him just to get pole position on the pad. You're going to follow the rules.
Q. There was a new person flying behind Scott.
A. Was it?
Q. And I was just trying to think of what -- and they had been friendly with each other. He knew he was new.

A. Right.
Q. And I'm wondering if that would have changed anything, that you would think of if somebody was behind you that was new.
A. No, I don't think it would have. I think, you know, he, setting, he would have liked everyone to set your approach up based on the one guy behind you needs to keep his distance. The rule is you can't overtake once you're down there. You know, he'd set it up and concentrate on your approach and your landing.
I don't think he would have, you know, overshoot it and be trying to land somewhere else for this guy.
Q. When you're down on the ground, do you call if you've got a different type of wind coming in? Do you call on the radio and let somebody know?
A. Some people have. You know, I don't do it because it ties the radio up and the wind can -- I can make the call and 30 seconds later it'll be different. So it's the pilot who sets up the approach. He's got to look at that windsock and make the call to go around or to --
Q. So is the windsock pretty accurate as to what wind you're going to feel in the air --
A. Yeah. The one --
Q. -- coming up to it?
A. We didn't have this other one. You have, Tyler and Scott. We only had the windsock for years, and that's the one I always used.

Q. But, yeah, so that windsock, do you find it --
A. Yeah, it tells you, you know, what you -- it can flip you on a dime. I mean, I'm not -- it has -- I've had O cramps once or twice where it's whew. And often, as you know now, I think about, when I'm down there more, you know, since he crashed. And I remember counting five times, at the picnic, the winds shifting from a downriver to an upriver; downriver to an upriver. And then it'll -- you'll suddenly -- and it's easy to see. Your garbage blows away. And now suddenly you get this gust of wind that blows all the crap everywhere and you tell your passengers to, you know, put a -- hold their things down. But it -- it'll flip on you. It's -- it can be a tricky little landing spot.
Q. What about when you're in the gully? Is that different? Or going over the notch. You said wind splits. Does that present this --
A. Well, this is my opinion. I don't know if it's true, but if -- when the wind comes down it -- I think one of the reasons why it has that, it feeds, you know, it can transfer (indiscernible), because when the wind hits that, it comes over either side or it comes either over of the top and it changes the wind pattern there. You get a lot of eddies or something on either side or it comes right over the top in a gust and then it, you know, it comes down. So that's just my -- what I sort of it -- it could be completely wrong, but it would be flying it and feeling.
If it's a lot of -- if it's mild winds, I don't really -- I

don't think about it too much. But if it's windy when I take off here, set myself up, right. So when I get the back tower, I know now, okay, what I'm going to anticipate the crappy day wind and then I brace myself and prepare for it.

And those are the steps I take. I'll look at the windsock, you know, my speed, everything down around. I have had go-arounds--s not too many, but I have in the years that I've flown here. And then it's just, you know, managing the aircraft. It's --

Q. Have you ever run out of pedal?

A. No. Not yet. If anything close to it, on this right up here.

Q. Yeah?

A. No, but, no, I haven't.

Q. Have you ever decided not to land because of the wind?

A. I might have -- not me. The call might have been made and then it turned into an air trip. I mean, I have to look. I've done -- it doesn't stand out in my memory of bailing. I've thought of it maybe. Yu know, I thought, oh, it's getting pretty noisy down there, but I haven't.

I've done it and not because somebody else has already done it. But that doesn't affect my -- I'd do it anyway if somebody -- you know, because it's different. He might have had a nice calm approach. So, but I can't -- nothing stands out in my mind, having canceled or turned it into the air tour and bailed on an

approach.

Q. Would you feel that you would have to explain it?

A. No. I mean, you tell them why you did it. You're changing a tour and you write it up. But nobody's going to -- you tell them why and nobody's going to give you any trouble about it.

Q. Do you ever get questioned of different things that you do?

A. No, I really -- I haven't really -- I can't even think of the last time. I don't know if people are like me. I don't know. No, nobody's really -- I don't recall.

I've never being -- you know, I think, years ago, when Mark Chef (ph.) he was a chief, maybe -- Dave Sawyer (ph.) was a lead. He was a really bombastic lead and he butted heads with a lot of people. And he would question your approach and if -- why did you land with a tailwind?

And he's on the ground in an office and he can't see. I mean, to do that is just dumb anyway. So I know another guy he did it to and he might have asked me -- oh, he asked me why did I make a radio call to South -- I do remember that -- this was ten, eight years ago -- to South on an average fuel (ph.). Because each one of those drifts is one mile south. So, I mean, sorry, dude, it felt like two miles. I apologize -- 6,000 feet, you know?

So it was perspective and he's a mile behind me and it's an area of parallax. He doesn't know where I'm making my call. I mean, that's why I never harp or -- I mean, if you see somebody

make a -- miss a radio call right about a certain reporting point, you know, because you're over and he's over there and he's making the radio call and you know he's forgotten.

But most times, you look at a guy who's ahead of you and he makes the right call doesn't look like he's making the radio call where you think that position report should be. So I wanted to, you know --

Q. You don't feel that Simon or one of the leads has questioned or --

A. No, I've not -- I've never -- I've never had any of the leads ask me. They might have -- to other guys, but I've haven't been asked on some of the decisions I made.

Q. When you said that part of the duty is have to fill out something.

A. Yeah, a report. You do a, you know, if you change the tour, you do, I think it's an irregularity report.

Q. So what's that?

A. You fill out -- it gives you like, you know, the time of the aircraft, time on the aircraft and why you changed it -- if it was for weather or if it was for a passenger being sick. If you (indiscernible) the course, and then you fill it out you go to the people that need to see it.

And, you know, you explain it in a paragraph as best you can, record it and factually and then, yeah, I mean, people riding along wanted the stuff.

Q. Do you ever feel that they question you about them, the report?
A. No. You mean in a negative way or -- no.
Q. Or anything?
A. No, unless it's like something that might affect safety or where you can contribute something to why -- how can we make things better. But I've never -- most -- I've had silly things like I turned past -- I've never had any major. I think don't so. I've been -- I forget. I had a fuel -- not a fuel -- engine chip light a long time ago at Grand Canyon West, I think.

But, yeah, no, no they don't question you unless they need to. But if it's self-explanatory, then --

Q. And if you see something unsafe, would you put it in an irregularity report?
A. Yeah.
Q. Have you done that?
A. I don't know. Can't remember. You tell me. I might have. I know one time we put too many helicopters -- I don't know. I might have. I can't remember if wrote -- I thought of maybe writing one once when something happened once.

Or, I know the times I've told Burl and he'll say, not a lot but I think, I mean, I know -- he said put in an -- but it's something I just wanted to vent about or it wasn't like unsafe enough or where I needed to write something.

Q. Yeah.

A. But, yeah.
Q. Are there any other ways that you can report things? What if you saw like a pilot smoking pot in the back?
A. Oh, you walk in. It's a just culture, and so you walk in anonymously and say -- if you feel like, well, Hal (ph.) could care less. You could smoke pot here and the mechanic, you know, is smoking pot. Are you going to work on the machine that I'm going to get in? So, yeah, I'll just flat out, you know, address it with whoever needed to hear it.
Q. Is there any way to tell anyone of anonymously, though?
A. Yeah, through the Just -- I forget the name of the form that it is. You can write to -- I forget. We just did it, the safety -- the Just Culture, you know. I forget exactly. Sorry, I was addressed in that.
Q. So have you ever filled --
A. What? An anonymous one?
Q. Yeah.
A. No. I don't think so. No, I don't think.
Q. Do you find that you mentor the newer people, kind of telling them how things work?
A. If they ask.
Q. Yeah.
A. It's weird. Some people don't like being mentored. They know it all. And so I just -- somebody asks, yeah, sure. Or if they ask me to. I took a new guy on my helicopter the other day.

And, you know, you try but, you know -- but, you know, but I always find the same route boring. You know, I don't do a lot of -- I've seen guys hot dog in the past. And I just do -- it's a job. I need an income. I got a mortgage.

Q. Yeah.

A. I'm a boring -- you know, you got a passenger -- can you do a loop? No. Flat off.

Q. Do the lead pilots ask you questions? I know a lot of them are newer and they started as a lead. Do they ask the senior guys different things?

A. Yeah, they'll bounce -- we'll bounce stuff off each other, you know. They lay it -- on windy days, you know, like I've had, you know, with Curtis (ph.), you know, we -- wind comes down that Red Lake like a freight train and when you can see it and they got this dust cloud coming down. And then, you know, when it's windy I have made, you know, maybe you should consider this. And they usually appreciate it and take -- you know, they use all the tools they have.

Q. When you take your passengers out to the helicopter, what briefing do you give them?

A. I ask them if they watched the safety briefing and, if they have, it's covered me legally. If they haven't -- well, 99% of the time, they have. But if they haven't, then I'll do what's required and then -- but what I always do, just to -- I just know what I'm going to have to repeat or help with. So I cover that

again, even though it's been in the video.

It's stuff that's just going to make me mental if I have to -- I just, you know, I cover it. I put the microphone in your left ear. That's how you do the seatbelts, how you tighten the seatbelts. Don't open the --

Q. Do you usually have to do people's seatbelts and take them out of their seatbelts?

A. If I don't do my little spiel, then my -- a lot of times I will. But sometimes I'll do my spiel and they'll still jack it up even after -- but I understand that though. You never got into that machine before. You know, it's -- it's confusing. It's a funky seatbelt, you know, it's a three-harness. And I put it in the wrong hole and -- I tease them. I go, if you -- I always go, tighten it simultaneously so the buckle's at your belly.

And now one guy, it's down here. And I said, sir, check your neck. It's going to cut your neck, and you're going to sue me. And, you know, I just -- I said it's really for your own comfort. So I try and preempt to make my day smoother -- preempt stupidity. Well, not stupidity, but you know what I mean.

Q. Yeah. In the front, do -- what if people have stuff? Do they just leave it on the floor?

A. Well, you can't put it in the seat. I say either put it at your -- if it's a purse, put it at your feet, between your feet.

Q. Yeah.

A. I offer to put in the back if it's light and then, you know,

and it's below. But, yeah, they just keep it at their feet.
Q. Have things ever gone --
A. I've had water bottles fall down to the front before.
Q. Yeah.
A. I always tell them, you know, don't -- make sure that -- they'll put it there and think it'll balance and then with the vibration, eventually, it will fall down. And so I always catch it in time, once or twice. It's one of the things that I'll tell him when I see them put it -- I'll say -- phfft. I've learned, over the years, how to counter to the -- you can see it. It's going to happen, and you just preempt it. Preemptive strike. It's a war between me and my -- no. I'm kidding.
Q. Manny will ask you --
A. Sorry, no, please don't pass. I've got to work her a couple more months.
Q. He'll ask you about flight training, but, specifically, have you ever got an unsat on any of your check rides?
A. Maybe for one -- a maneuver. I don't remember. I think I have, yeah.
Q. What happens when --
A. Oh, we do it again and as long as you can get it to satisfactory, you know, but I -- I can't remember which. I mean, you'd have to look in the records, but I think I might have got an Unsat on -- I can't remember which maneuver. I might have overshot an auto rotation or -- I can't remember, but I've -- I

know I have. It hasn't been perfect, yeah.
Q. During training, have you? Usually we're doing --
A. During the check ride or during training?
Q. Well, that's -- so, usually do you do training before the check ride?
A. Yeah, you train and then you do the check ride.
Q. Are those usually on the same day?
A. No. Usually it's before. I might have had to do a little bit -- no, no. I don't think I've ever done the check ride the same day as my --
Q. And then have you -- do you get graded on your training?
A. Grade?
Q. Is that Sat or Unsat?
A. It's not a grade, but he'll tell you whether you're screwing it up or help you. It's a learning -- trainings also to refresh because it's a lot of stuff you don't use, you know, throughout the year. So, yeah, it's a refresher. And if you're messing it up, he will help you get it right, yeah.
Q. And then you take your check ride?
A. Yeah.
Q. A few days later?
A. Once you -- I think it's you've met the hourly requirement that you're supposed to have for the training for 135. And then, yeah, you do your check ride, usually, the next day. And then you, you know, depending if it's the long or the short one, the

for -- 135 check ride or just the aircraft specific. So like mine's usually in February and then my aircraft, EC, is in October.

Q. Do you know when Scott's is?

A. I don't.

Q. Do you guys ever talk about --

A. Yeah, he --

Q. -- doing that?

A. We've spoken about it at the house, like doing flight plans and stuff.

Q. What has he said about --

A. No, he just, you know, he said they give you a scenario where you got to fly from and to. And, you know, he'll just bounce it off. He'll do it and he was pretty -- he had good notes. He studied for his check rides. I'd say he studied more than I did. He -- it might be because I flew a lot more than he did.

You know, mine's full-time. But he differently, you know, he would -- he was -- he worked hard on his check ride. But he's got notes and stuff and he's -- because all his stuff's still at my house -- but a lot of it they got.

Q. Yeah. Have you talked to him?

A. Yeah, I visited him.

Q. Yeah?

A. I visit him all the time -- not all the time, but when I can.

Q. Has he talked to you about the accident?

A. Nothing. Not a word.
Q. Okay.
A. I've asked him, not about the accident. I've said to him, I know you've been through hell. If and when you want to talk to me about it, feel free. And I said, I just hope you're getting help, mentally. And he said he's getting -- yes, I think he might just want me to say. But other than that, we've -- you know, I try and -- you know, it's such a huge thing. You know, you talk -- it's hard to think about what to talk about because I don't want to, you know, bend him up, you know. But I think it's better for him, as an incentive, to get his -- you know, get new legs and to do trips that he wants to do again and --
Q. Yeah? Have you heard anyone that has talked to him about the accident?
A. No. I don't know. He doesn't talk to me much about it. I mean, I know a lot of people visit him, but he doesn't tell me who's there or who has, no.
MS. KELIHER: I don't have more questions. What about (indiscernible)?
MS. WILSON: All right, mine's going to be a little piecemeal and I'm going to have some follow up questions to what Zoe asked.
MR. DOWNEY: Okay.
BY MS. WILSON:
Q. The day of the accident, do you recall if passengers were being weather advised?

A. No, I don't recall.
Q. When you've --
A. They might have been. I can't remember what the weather conditions were.
Q. Okay.
A. I think it -- I think they were -- I don't know if it was -- it was windy. And I said to Mark, I don't know what the team encountered.
Q. How much time do you typically have between flights?
A. Usually, it's 40-what -- 7:00, 9:15, 11:30 -- depending on landings or airs, but I think it's half an hour. But if the aircraft runs late, it's, you know, you're turning that aircraft fast. And if you're doing air tours, you know, depending on if you've got -- depending -- it you can't be nothing. It can be five minutes. It can be load, fly, unpack, turn, suck down with some water and electrolyte or whatever and then go again.

It's hard. I'm at my breaking point. I'm kidding. But, no, it's hard. It can be. It can be testy.

Q. Do you recall, the day of the accident, if you saw Scott before you left the house? Did you see him that morning?
A. No, I don't recall. I don't think I did. You know, I do my thing. I get in my car and go. His door might have been shut or he might been in the shower. So I don't know.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't -- know, I don't remember seeing him the day before -

- I mean before the -- that morning.
Q. All right. You mentioned that Scott was full time before, but now he's part time. Do you know why he made the switch?
A. I think he wanted to focus more his business. It was a financial thing.
Q. I think we sort of danced around this. I don't know if we specifically asked. Did he ever have any complaints about the safety of the company, any safety concerns that he talked to you about? Zoe had asked if you talked about training and things like that with Scott, but did he ever mention if he got any Unsat -- unsatisfactory grades in training?
A. No, he didn't to me. You know, a lot of -- for many years, when he was here full-time, one of the reasons I rented him the room is he'd be on the opposite week to me. So we'd be, hey, what's up man? Boom. And then he'd go back to Long Beach.
And then I'd go -- and then my week off, I'd go straight up to Seattle. So it would just be, you know -- and it worked great because he -- you know, but it's -- yeah.
Q. I know you said that you guys would all go to bed kind of around the same time or at least go back to your rooms.
A. Yeah.
Q. Did he have a TV in his room?
A. Yeah.
Q. Any idea when he would typically wake up on a given day?
A. I know he sometimes worked at night. I know he worked -- I

mean, he was always on his laptop. I don't what time he was -- he was on the opposite side of the house. And if I was monitoring closely, I would feel weird, so.

Q. Okay. I wanted to have you walk through the passenger briefing that you give, but what you seem to not want to do that. So I will ask that the seatbelts -- do you get into the seat and put them on?

A. No, but I could should you how to do it. It's pretty, pretty clear how to -- you know, I make sure they understand it.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah.

Q. But you don't climb into the seat and put it on you?

A. No, some guys do -- I don't. No, if they've seen the video, they've seen the demonstration. I do it purely because I know that one of them's going to yank one side and it's going to chafe their neck. And I just do to put in the middle, put the buckle along and move this thing. That's the only reason why, but no.

And I -- you know, you demonstrate it and they get it. And they shake their head, yes, yes. And there's still people that stuff it up, so.

Q. Ever see anyone struggle with taking the seatbelt off?

A. No, not even -- the most common area is the one -- the buckle's attached to one of the belts permanently. It's part of the system. And I've seen people try to get it -- no, that's permanently attached. That's the only thing. No, most people get

it.
Q. So the brief time that you did see Scott, the day of the accident, did he seem normal? Did anything seem out of the ordinary?
A. No. In his usual good mood. He's a happy guy. Sorry. He was a happy guy. He loved life. I mean, he -- the guy went all around the time and he had his life arranged pretty sweet. We were -- we always had a race, and I've got 54 countries in my passport. He's got 57. So this is just kind of -- it's like, I've traveled my whole life, so I like traveling.
MS. WILSON: All I have, thanks.
MR. DOWNEY: Oh, you're welcome.
MS. WILSON: Manny?
BY MR. FIGLIA:
Q. How would you rate the training the company has offered? You've been here a while. What's your opinion about the quality of training your received?
A. It's good. I don't -- there was nothing that's glaring that stands out like I don't do enough. Or if you want to do more in a rotation, I've done them with Simon. I said, I want to do a few more because I don't get to practice it. Or when I trained with Simon a couple of years ago, we were out at (indiscernible) and we just did it.
You know, it's -- they'll let you do whatever you need to do. There's no -- you know if you want to fly more or practice what

you have to practice -- you know, a lot of people don't want to do it, but, I don't know, it's --
Q. Okay. And in the training, you really stressed performance, planning and performing, how the aircraft performs as far as weight.
A. The weight in back? Well I wouldn't say that -- obviously, you know, they -- it's not -- it's part of the training, yeah. But it's not, you know, anything that stands out more than the other -- it's part of the whole overall -- and it's in the briefing in the morning, the performance accounts.
Q. How about confined area operations? Do you -- do trainees act with you? Compare it from when you first hired on until --
A. Till now?
Q. Yeah.
A. I don't think it's changed a whole lot. You know, some -- somebody's -- I taught for years. I taught plenty of courses and all confined. Some guys have this spot they'll go to because of -- some guys will be more cautious because they don't want to, you know, it's training. You don't want to get into a real problem. And then some guys will get quite technical, confined area landings. It just depends on the -- who's doing the training.
Q. And do you receive training yearly or it's just a check ride?
A. No, it's training every year.
Q. Training every year?
A. Yeah.

Q. And there's a subsequent --
A. Yeah. You do your training and then the check ride.
Q. Okay. Besides our rotations, what other emergency procedures do you --
A. Hovering orders. You -- we go -- we descending with power. What else do we do? Some stuck pedal, depending on what area, you know. Run-on landings, you know, you might -- they don't want to drag the skids, but I don't use -- yeah.
Q. In the training, you discussed LTE?
A. Yeah.
Q. Which aircraft do you -- you're H130, T10 as well?
A. Yeah, all of them.
Q. And AStar B2?
A. B2, yeah.
Q. With your experience in this company, have you ever been asked to take a flight that, let say, a junior pilot didn't feel comfortable doing? As an example, let's say the winds are really -- they're still within limits. You're -- someone who hasn't been with the company or with your experience level wasn't comfortable doing it. Have you been offered such a flight?
A. I've been a weather bird. If that's, you know, when it's been real bad, it gets foggy, I believe, once in a while, when you get a big system and then you have some real guidance here what it looks like over the dam, and I've been a weather bird before, for a long time. Yeah, I've done it once or twice.

Q. Okay.
A. I didn't volunteer. I was asked. I was put on it.
Q. I'm told that -- and, again, as far as the company's concerned, have they ever utilized your expertise on doing, let's say, a briefing. Besides the elite products, I've seen that from, you know, obviously (indiscernible), you know, the chief operating officer or in the elite pods. Have they ever asked you to, say, hey, you've got pretty good knowledge here. Why don't you give us a brief on what you've seen or --
A. I've never been called out. I've offered it, like if we're having a talk about something involving whatever -- whatever it may be. But I -- am I -- well, this, in the past, Willis (ph.), that when he comes down there from Red Lake, you know, I've offered what I've experienced in the past.
Q. And do you think that they accepted it and --
A. Yeah, totally. People -- and even -- and 90 -- I mean, I think you've got to be pretty stupid if somebody comes up and says how about -- and offers you -- hey, I'm not trying to tell you how to do it, but this is what you can anticipate, what might happen. And most people are pretty receptive to it. I don't do it often. I just kind of mind my own business unless it's clearly --
Q. Have you been offered training outside the company, as an example, the track --
A. That pre-training? Not through Papillon, but in my (indiscernible) we (indiscernible).

Q. You used your company?
A. I've got my (indiscernible).
Q. With respect to, let's say if someone filed an irregularity or a hazard report, do you know what the information is regarding strictly what the hazard is? In other words, that information was shared within the company?
A. Right. Well, I don't understand the --
Q. In other words, if another pilot filed a hazard report or, let's say an irreg, let's say that there was a near miss --
A. Right, right.
Q. -- somewhere. Is that information filtered down to --
A. Yeah, absolutely.
Q. And where is that document?
A. It will come down in the briefing, you know, that the airport and its incidents. But it'll be in the briefing. Watch out for this; watch out for that. This is what happened.

MR. FIGLIA: That's all I have.

MR. BOYD: No questions. Can't understand him.

MR. DOWNEY: That's part of the plan.

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. When you're a weatherbird, do you have passengers with you?
A. No, usually it's you, lead or -- when I've done it, it's like if you're going to GCW, it's usually -- when I've done it it's been winter. So, no, you might have crew, but no paying, no really passengers.

Q. So would a lead say, hey, why don't you go check it out and see if it's --
A. No, it'll be like I've got to launch a helicopter to see if it's lifted, you know, if it's -- if you can do it. And then if it isn't, you just turn back. And that's what I've done -- or you get through.
Q. So given your nine years of experience and seeing all the pilots in and out here, right, what do you think Papillon or Airbus or the FAA could do to make it safer for you to fly?
A. I think the bases are pretty well covered. You know, for me personally, just getting older and the heat and my -- but I talk to them. And I never have a problem and I feel good. You know, if you're living in Vegas long enough, you -- sinuses are terrible here. Everyone has sinus issues and -- excuse me. My mouth's really running when I -- so.

Yeah, I have -- I can't think of anything that stands out. No. Is it -- how much has it (indiscernible)? It's been a while.
Q. Do you think that you see 130 gets the performance that you see in the RFM?
A. Yeah. You've got to manage it in summer. And R aircraft that are not as -- as ones that stand out that don't have it, it's more for hot, high DA days. And you just know. I flew one yesterday. It's a beast. But it's within, you know, it's legal. But you've got to fly it. You know, you got to -- in summer, you're managing power all the time, you know. You're right on the

yellow line, in and out, and they're doing now. And it's hard to have six pounds to spare. And it's -- you got to work, so.

Q. Yeah. Do you know if Scott would play music in the helicopter during the --

A. Play the radio?

Q. The loop?

A. Yeah, fantastic songs we have on there.

Q. Do you recall anything different about Helicopter 34?

A. No. I don't think I ever -- I've flown them all so many times.

Q. None of them stand out?

A. Well, sort of like I know which ones are, you know, just like a struggle with me, with my weight. Not struggle, but, you know, that that you've got to -- just don't have as much power and people are going to pass you. But that's just the helicopter, yeah.

Q. If you have this wind and you're landing on one of these pads, where are your eyes? Where are you looking as you're coming in crossing the river?

A. And I'm coming in? Oh, I'm scanning -- I'm continuously scanning, scanning my instruments. But now I -- look, I know how to fly where -- I mean, I used to, you know, always look at the parameters for settling with power. Now you can just feel. You know when you're going to slow or you don't have enough power, pulled it out a little too much.

I'm scanning mainly for other traffic. You're scanning windsock traffic. Everything. It's all, you know, and the passengers on the ground and then sitting and making a decision on how you're going to set up that approach. And your instruments as well. But, you know, at that point, eyes outside most of that approach, my eyes will be outside.

Q. If you're crossing over the river and you see someone's blade still turning where you're going to be parking next to, what do you do?

A. Go around if you have to. I mean, if he's far away enough, you could, you know, you just remember which way the wind's blowing. You could land -- just if the wind's blowing your rotor-wash into him you don't want to, you know, do that. It's -- if you -- if it's the other way around, then you, you know -- but as long as he's far enough away, it's common sense.

Q. How long does it usually take to get them slowed down enough?

A. Well, when you -- some rotor brakes are a little better than others. And, you know, that you -- we pull it at 100. Or I usually pull it at 100 just to save the rotor brake. And it's depends. You don't want to yank the thing till you're blue in the face. You just, you know, get it to slow down as far.

Sometimes -- some days you can pull it completely and lock it on and it's just going to take its own sweet time. Some of them are more receptive to the brake. So probably a little two -- kind of. That was the question, right? How long does it take before -

-

Q. Yeah, and just what you do to manage it, of going around or do you talk to them more?

A. You can. A lot of times, he might have turned his avionics off so he's not on the radio anymore. Yeah.

Q. Any other things that you look for in trying to assess what the wind's going to be?

A. Off the top of my head, what I haven't told you already?

Q. Yeah.

A. I generally try and -- I -- driving to work, you know, I've just -- just because I've been here a long time and I'm just familiar with it, so I kind of know, okay, this is what out day's going to be like. And, you know, I've looked at the forecast and a lot of times I look to see if we get canceled flights and I can go home. No, I'm kidding right now.

Q. So at the briefing sheet on the day of the accident, one of the TAFs was 14 gusting to 22 and then 18 gusting to 28. Does that seem significant to you?

A. No, that's pretty standard in the northern, the wind, yeah. Yeah, that's not excessive. We fly in that all the time, for years we've flying in that.

Q. Would that put you are on alert that it's probably going to be bumpy?

A. Yeah. You can -- I look, when I drive down the road, I look at the windsock, if it's standing all the way out. Yeah, I just -

- it's just -- it's -- probably a lot of it's subconscious. I just start setting it up, you know, in my brain. I'm like, okay, this is what we're going to anticipate. Even when -- and then when you pick it up, yeah, you're looking at different readings from different windsocks, but you got, you know, mechanical obstruction or, you know, the building and you got all kinds of things you consider, and which way are you going to take off, especially station today. Today I took off -- really, it was the other day, I did four air tours.

One flight I took off to the West. And then another flight I took off to the east. And it looked like it was favoring a little bit one way or the other each time. So that's why I made my decision. But all I'm trying to do is get as much lift as I can because I'm yellow line. You know, I've just got no power, very little power. And it's just hot like hell and it slowed it up. That's how I make my decision. In touch with it, hopefully it keeps working.

MS. KELIHER: Well I really appreciate it, Robert.

MR. DOWNEY: Oh, anything for you to help find out exactly what happened. You know, I still don't know anything about it. I just read the preliminary. Am I done?

MS. WILSON: Yeah.

MR. DOWNEY: Done?

MR. BOYD: Thanks, Robert.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of John Becker

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 27, 2108

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]

Kimberlee S. Kondrat
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018	Accident No. WPR18MA087

Interview of: RYAN NEWBURN

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

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Wilson Elser

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I N T E R V I E W

(4:20 p.m.)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here with us today.

MR. NEWBURN: Yeah, no worries.

MS. WILSON: This interview is just a routine interview that we do as a part of the fact-finding phase of our investigation. We're obviously investigating the accident that occurred on February 10th.

MR. NEWBURN: Yeah.

MS. WILSON: What we would like to do is we would like to record the interview. That allows us to create a transcript of the interview that will then be a part of our public docket. Is that something that you're okay with?

MR. NEWBURN: Yeah, that's fine.

MS. WILSON: Great. And as a part of the interview, you're entitled to have a representative sit with you. It can be anybody that you choose. You can choose not to have somebody. Is there something that you would like to have as your representative today?

MR. NEWBURN: Hey guys, this is my man right here.

MS. WILSON: Can you please say his name?

MR. NEWBURN: Thomas Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Great. Thanks.

MS. WILSON: And we'll go around the room and introduce ourselves, as well. I'm Katherine Wilson, I'm a human performance

investigator with the NTSB.

MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: Hi. I'm Zoe. I'm with the NTSB in operations.

MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, I'm the director of operations -- sorry, director of safety of Airbus Helicopters.

MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

MR. BOYD: And I'm Burl Boyd, director of safety for Papillon.

MR. TOBIN: And I'm Tom Tobin, a partner at Wilson Elser.

MS. WILSON: Thank you.

Could you state your full name and also your position?

MR. NEWBURN: Yes, I'm Ryan Newburn, I am the tower and the ramp manager for Papillon.

MS. WILSON: Great. And so, we'll each take a turn asking questions. If you don't understand a question please stop us and ask us -- ask us to clarify.

MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

MS. WILSON: If you don't know the answer to a question, say I don't know. It's also okay.

MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

MS. WILSON: There's no right or wrong answers; we're just trying to get the knowledge that you have to help us in our investigation. We're here strictly from the safety side. We don't have any enforcement authority. We don't place blame.

Strictly just trying to prevent this accident from happening again.

MR. NEWBURN: Yeah.

MS. WILSON: Any questions before we get started?

MR. NEWBURN: No.

MS. WILSON: Okay. With that, I will turn it over to Zoe.

INTERVIEW OF RYAN NEWBURN

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Ryan, how long have you been working at Papillon?

A. Since October 6th of 2008. No, 2007; sorry. 2007.

Q. Eleven years.

A. Yeah.

Q. And what have your positions been all that time?

A. I was hired back then as a CSR for customer service with -- with Andrea. And then about four years into that I transferred up to the tower. And then after two years of that I became the supervisor -- the weekend supervisor of the tower. And then management -- manager after -- a few years back.

Q. So, who do you manage?

A. I manage Jordan, Brian, Kyle, Dallon, then every -- all the guys on the ramp, which is Tyler, Bryce, and then the two new guys that I just hired, which are Jack and Quinten.

Q. And who do you report to?

A. I report to Jerry St. Nicholas.

Q. So, can you describe to me what your daily activities are?

A. Yeah. So, every day's a little bit different. First thing I do is I come in and I check in with both my departments, make sure everything's okay. Make sure nothing's -- nothing abnormal. And then after that I do all the -- I do all the ordering for -- like all the meals, the sodas, everything that goes into the helicopters. I do all the equipment ordering for all -- all of our staff. And then I do -- and then I just -- I manage them. Most my time I spend up in the tower. So, I do a lot of the -- I'm also there to help breakout those guys, you know, if anybody needs to go to the restroom, I step in. And any problems that happen, I -- I try to help out and solve all those. So, my day's spent kind of roaming all over the place and helping wherever it's needed, you know.

Q. Are you always in communication with radio?

A. No. I have my cell phone so -- so if anybody needs me and I'm not up in the tower -- that's pretty much where everyone calls me. They say the tower and if I'm not up there, they would call me on my cell phone if I'm in my office or something.

Q. About how much during the day do you spend up in the tower?

A. Quite a few hours. The majority of my day is up there, yeah.

Q. When you're up there you can hear the pilots on the FM talking amongst each other?

A. Yeah. Yeah, most the time.

Q. Do you ever hear and have you ever heard conversations between the lead and the pilots of them discussing different

issues of choices of going, not going?
A. Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, for sure.
Q. What kind of -- what kind of conversations do you hear?
A. Well, a lot of times in the tower we'll ask the pilots for PIREPs, and we'll -- we'll be on the phone with the lead, and the lead will get the PIREP and the leads just kind of -- like, if it's -- if it's getting windy, hey, you guys if it gets too choppy, your -- don't like it, you guys -- it's a PIC, come back. Or if there's rain or something like that, if you guys don't think you're going to make it just come on back. But usually it's -- that's how it goes.
Q. Do they ever say they don't want to go?
A. Like before they leave?
Q. Yeah.
A. Not that I've ever heard.
Q. You've never heard any of that?
A. Yeah.
Q. The conversations that -- that ensue of talking about it, are they usually started? Or is everyone just kind of waiting for some -- somebody to make a call?
A. For -- for like the -- like the PIREPs that we get?
Q. Yeah.
A. Well, usually the first person out there will ask, like hey, how's the weather looking? They'll give us the PIREP. And then they'll -- they'll all make their individual decisions from there.

Well, just like last week we had -- it got real windy and one of the pilots said it's too windy for me, I'm not going to go. And they -- all the pilots pretty much followed suit. So, the leads didn't cancel it; they all made their choice to cancel that one.
Q. Okay. I bet you've heard them do the cancellation of a whole group before?
A. Oh, yeah.
Q. Do you know the pilots' voices now where you can tell whose making these calls?
A. Oh, yeah. Yeah. That's how I know most these people. I don't see them a lot in their face, so I talk to them a lot more on the radio or the phone, so that's how I know most of them. Yeah.
Q. Do you find that there's always certain people that will make a call?
A. No one that -- like saying is there one that's -- makes the decision to cancel more? Not that -- not that I believe put together.
Q. Yeah.
A. Everyone seems to be on the same page. No one usually makes that call first. There's not a single pilot that I can think of, at least.
Q. It's not like oh, Manny, every time he goes out he --
A. Yeah, yeah, no. Not that I've noticed, at least.
Q. Or the senior guys versus the junior guys, do they --

A. A lot times when -- when we ask for PIREPs we try to ask someone that's been there a little bit longer --
Q. Right.
A. -- because they know, they've -- they've done it so many times, so we -- we do try to -- I try -- I personally try to ask them for the PIREPs, yeah.
Q. And so, you'll request from a certain helicopter?
A. Yeah. A lot of times, like the first one out there, or if there's a couple that went out at the same time, maybe if there's a couple of people that have only been here a month versus someone that's been here a year, I might ask the one that's been here for a year just because I've had more communication with them. And they kind of know more about what we're looking for, you know what I mean. So.
Q. Are you part of the training? Do you -- when their doing their INDOC and just starting out, do any of the tower people come and tell the new pilots what they're looking for? What they -- what the communications going to be like? Introduce yourselves?
A. Yeah, so every time we have a class, Simon brings them all up to the tower, and we -- we all introduce ourselves, whoever's up there, and the pilots do the same thing. And we -- Simon kind of just goes through what we do, and how we interact with them with all their calls and all that stuff. And pretty much that -- that's the -- that's what we get out of it.
Q. Will you describe how flight following works for a trip of a

pilot taking off?
A. Yeah. So, the whole steps is they get checked in at the counter. Then the person out there doing the manifesting will print off all the manifests once they get the puzzle put together. And then the pilots will get their manifests, calls their packs (ph) up and then load them up. And when it comes to flight following, we -- they call us up. They call up with however many packs they got, their fuel load, and what kind of tour they're doing. And then the tower will repeat that, make sure that it's -- we're all on the same page. Make sure we have the same amount of packs and fuel loads. And then after that, if their tail is clear, we -- we clear their tail. And if there's anybody inbound, anything else going on out there, we let them know about it. And then from there, they -- they take off and when they get into the canyon, they -- they call us in the canyon. Usually takes about 26, 27 minutes. And then depending on the tour, if it's a landing, they get 50 minutes in there. If it's an air only, it's 13 minutes. And then they call us off the wash, depending on what tour they're doing, and then they call us five minutes out, about 20 minutes later.
Q. Okay. How often do you refer to the Spidertracks?
A. Me personally? Not very often.
Q. Yeah.
A. I -- I look at it, you know, just to -- because it's -- it's kind of cool, but I -- I've -- I always use the radio. I've been

here so long and I've been doing it so long, we haven't had Spidertracks that long, so I kind of am set in my ways with it, you know what I mean? So, I don't use Spidertracks that often.
Q. Have you ever been like where did that guy go? Did he even land? What --
A. Yeah, I've never really done that. Now, if it's out doing like contract work I might look up and see where it's at, but we still -- we still stick to our radios up there pretty -- that's how we do it.
Q. With landing tours, are they always going out together, one after the other?
A. We try to, but we have days like today where we've had maintenance on helicopters and everything can kind of get stretched out a bit. So, there are tours, like the 12:30 that leaves an hour after the 11:30, which might only be one or two helicopters. So, if they're -- if it's a regular normal day and everything's running on time, yeah, everyone usually leaves at about the same time. But it's not always like that.
Q. And do you know when the Las Vegas people are being launched out, as well?
A. Yeah, they -- they call us, yeah. So, we do the manifest and the flight following for Vegas, also.
Q. So, how does that coincide with keeping track of Boulder City versus keeping track of Vegas?
A. Well, we have it all written down up there, so we write it

down and we just do a different sheet or a different section for Vegas. Their tours leave at different times than we do.

Q. All right. I think that's what I was looking at. So, do you separate them out when you're doing it? Is this -- is it separated out of Vegas would be on a different --

A. Yeah. So, is what you got going on here -- so these ones are going to be the Boulder City landings. So, if you slide down a little bit more, all right, so you're going to have your Boulder City landings, your air-onlys, and then there will be another section, if you go down a little bit more, that's going to be your Vegas -- your Vegas birds.

Q. So, you usually just have a -- a highlighted --

A. Yeah. Just kind of keep them separated. It makes it easier for us up there when we're looking, that way we know those guys are going to be -- it takes them a little bit longer to get to the canyon, it takes them a little bit longer to get home because they're going a little bit further, and that -- because if you start mixing things up it gets confusing.

Q. And then I noticed on -- sometimes they know that these numbers --

A. Air onlys --

Q. -- for like here's Boulder 8, 8 --

A. Thirty-one.

Q. -- 11, do you know what that is?

A. I have -- I don't know.

Q. I was assuming it was a pad of --
A. Oh, maybe they requested a special pad, yeah. That could be. That way, we put a little note over there, when they get back they want to go back to 8 or they want to go to 11. Whatever they prefer.
Q. Why would a pilot want a certain pad?
A. A lot of times it's -- the 8 and 11, those are the back pads. You can face any direction when you land. And if there's a higher tailwind they might want to face into it. If -- the pads 4, 5, 6, 7 you have to face towards the building, so they might -- like if they're new -- if that's a new pilot, automatically goes -- I mean, that was the first thing, were any of them 8, so if they want to park facing South or North, they can -- they can do what they're -- what they choose.
Q. So, that might not even be requested by them, it's the person making the --
A. Yeah, so sometimes if it's a new person the lead will call up, they're like hey, it's getting kind of windy. Let's give them pads 11 -- 8, 9, 10, 11, one of the back pads or something, you know. So, yeah.
Q. Got it. How often do you talk with Grand Canyon West to try to see what the weather is over --
A. On a weather day?
Q. Yeah.
A. Quite often. We'll -- we'll use them as one of our PIREPs

for sure. And the lead does the same thing; we call them, how's it looking before we send stuff out? If it's looking all right, it could be in the middle, but that's when we send out like a weather bird or something like that.

Q. When you send out a weather bird, do they ever have passengers on?

A. Sometimes it could be crew, you know what I mean? Weather scouts. Or say we have a 8:00 -- or a 9:00 air only leaving before the 9:15 round or something like that, we'll -- we'll use that as our weather scout. So.

Q. And who makes that decision?

A. The leads.

Q. Yeah.

A. The leads do.

Q. So, you're definitely in constant contact and communication with the leads?

A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, we talk to them quite a bit.

Q. Do you find -- do the leads have to pass things through Simon a lot?

A. Yeah. Yeah.

Q. So, is it a lot of you asking the questions and --

A. They go get the answers that we need, yeah.

Q. Yeah.

A. Because even if -- when it comes to like to maintenance or something like that, we go -- can call leads up and they can --

they're next door, they can just walk over there. Call you right back type of stuff. So, we -- we talk to the leads a lot. A lot.
Q. And how has that changed in 11 -- well, I guess you were a CSR for a while.
A. Yeah.
Q. Did they -- it used to have to be all the back and forth? Or did the leads used to be able to make more on demand decisions?
A. It's always been back and forth, you know. They've always been real helpful getting us the answers that we need when -- be we have to tell the CSRs and all the other departments of what's going on, so the leads go find us our answers a lot of the time, which is nice.
Q. If the weather starts getting bad and somebody decides to do a weather advisory, does that go through you?
A. A lot of times like, so the wind starts picking up, the -- we'll talk to the lead and hey, should we start weather advising? That's when we call the CSRs, yeah. Sometimes the leads do call straight to the CSRs and tell them themselves. Or the CSRs will call over and be like, hey it's starting to get windy, should we weather advise? But a lot of times it goes to the tower. Most -- most communication goes to the tower.
Q. I don't know if I asked you this; were you working on the day of the accident?
A. Yes, I was.
Q. And what -- do you know -- remember what your shift was?

A. Yeah, I was -- I was just getting ready to go home, I -- but I was sitting up in the tower and we got a call from GCW and they said that -- that there was an accident. They didn't know who it was; if it was one of our or someone else's. And then we called the leads and the leads had already talked to GCW. So, our first thing is -- to do is get a hold of the leads, get a hold of them so they can get a hold of Simon or Becker and just kind of go from there.

Q. Do you remember that day if there was any discussion about wind?

A. No. There was no discussion that I was aware of about it.

Q. Do you know if there was weather advisory [sic]?

A. If they handed out weather advisories that day? I'm not sure on --

Q. That you talked about at all? Do you remember hearing lead and pilots talking about weather at all?

A. (No audible response.)

Q. You don't remember or they weren't talking about it?

A. I -- not that I remember.

Q. Okay.

A. Not that I remember.

Q. It seems like, I'm just looking, there's a wide spread of -- even when they're going all together -- of sometimes somebody will dribble out later on, I'm assuming that's like a bathroom or --

A. Exactly, yes.

Q. -- or something like that.
A. Yeah, that happens.
Q. I was going to say how frequently does that happen, that everyone --
A. Quite often. Quite often. So -- when I say they all go together, they all go within 15 minutes, you know what I mean? But a lot of times I'll call up and you'll have a group or a family that all needs to go to the bathroom and all that, just delay that for about 5 or 10 minutes or -- so, that happens quite often.
Q. Do you know Scott?
A. Yeah. I do. We worked together for a long time.
Q. Did you chat with him? Hang out with him aside from work?
A. A few times, yeah. Yeah.
Q. Did he ever mention anything about flying for Papillon that you can remember?
A. We -- yeah, we've talked about work and stuff like that, but just normal stuff, because if he ever had questions or anything like about rampers or something he would always come to me and -- because I was the supervisor or manager back then. So, we talked quite often.
Q. What things would he discuss?
A. Oh, just like one time I had a ramper that -- that drove away from the fuel farm when he was still hooked up and ripped the hose off, and he was like hey, how's Anthony doing? You know, like it

was -- it was an accident. He was like he is all right? Is he -- is he going to get in trouble for that? And I was like it was an accident, you know, nothing big, but -- he was he was a very -- he was a very personable person, so he always liked to know. Like, hey, how's this guy doing or how's this person doing? And stuff like that.

Q. Did he seem to enjoy doing tours?

A. Yeah. Yeah. I think so. He always seemed to -- he was always in a good mood. That was -- he was a happy fellow. He was always in a good mood. So, he always seemed happy to me. He was always very helpful.

Q. As far as his seniority, compared to some of the other pilots, was he pretty senior would you estimate?

A. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Q. Would he be one of the people you would call for PIREPs and --

A. Oh, for sure. Yeah. Definitely. Yeah, he was -- he was definitely up there on -- on my list for pilots that I was comfortable with getting those kinds of things going on. So, yeah.

MS. KELIHER: I don't think I have any other questions right now. Katherine?

BY MS. WILSON:

Q. How often would you call pilots for PIREPs?

A. We do it round by round on weather days.

Q. Okay.
A. Yeah. So, if it -- if the wind got -- got high enough we would do it kind of as every round goes out we would ask them. Or days that it rains. Stuff like that.
Q. Um-hum. Do you recall if that happened on the day of the accident?
A. No.
Q. You don't recall it? Not it didn't?
A. I don't recall.
Q. It was a long time ago, I know.
A. Yeah.
Q. Do you recall if you saw him -- saw Scott or talked to him on the day of the accident?
A. I saw him but I didn't talk to him. I -- because where they set up, my office is right behind Departure Gate 2, so I was on my way and I -- and I saw Scott and I know him really well, but he was busy and I was on my way to do something, so it was just kind of like, oh, you know --
Q. Understand.
A. -- hey, how you doing?
Q. And a pilot being busy like that, is that normal? Or is that something unusual, higher workload that day than normal?
A. No, he was just -- when I walked by, he was just talking to his passengers, so I didn't want to interrupt, you know what I mean? So.

Q. That makes sense. You said that -- let me backup.

If a -- if a pilot decides that he wants to come back, he's -- goes into the canyon, realizes it's too windy, that gets relayed to you and then do you relay that to the lead pilots?

A. The leads and the CSRs, yes.

Q. Okay. Would they ever contact the leads directly? Or they would always go through the tower?

A. No, they -- there's a lot of times they'll -- they'll get on a radio with a lead, hey, it's too windy. I'm coming back. Okay.

Q. Okay. And so, then you would just overhear that?

A. Yeah.

Q. Would -- if the leads wanted to call back all the flights, would that go through the tower and then you would call? Or would the leads make that call?

A. It's -- we've done it both ways. Say, the lead's tying down a helicopter on 20, we could call him on the cell, hey, it's getting -- these two have turned around. They might just be like all right, if they're turning around let's have everyone come back. Something like that. We've said to them, hey, we're going to weather cancel, you guys come back.

Q. Um-hum.

A. Or a lot of times they'll -- they'll just get on the radio and say, hey, we're just all coming back.

Q. Have you ever had Spidertracks give you an alert for an overdue -- or how would you know if an aircraft was overdue?

Besides the timing, do you get an alert anywhere?
A. Yeah. Allpro (ph). Allpro. So, each tour or every flight that goes out, we build in a time for it. So, like a landing's automatically built in. Now, if it -- as soon as it's a minute late it will go red on the computer. At five minutes, it sends of a horn. So, it will make like (makes horn sound).
Q. So, because Scott's flight was in that 50-minute window for doing a landing, would that not have triggered -- there would have been nothing triggered?
A. Not for 50 minutes.
Q. Okay.
A. And even -- and it doesn't -- it's the tour duration, so it won't go off until he's not back here on the ground for five minutes. We're going to catch it on paper at 50 minutes when he hasn't called off the wash.
Q. Okay. So, Allpro isn't catching the 50 minutes, that's something --
A. That's something that we do as a flight follower.
Q. Does Spidertracks give you any indication if there's an accident? Is there an alert from that?
A. They do have a -- they do have a button that they can switch that can -- that can put off an alarm.
Q. What about ELT signals? Do you -- would you get that in the tower? Is there any way --
A. We -- I think that's something that these guys get. They get

it on like -- like a text message or an email that they get.
Q. Okay.
A. But we don't.
Q. So, until you got the call there would have been no way for you to have known that the accident had happened?
A. Not for 50 minutes.
Q. You said that if somebody has to step out of the tower you will -- you'll fill in for them?
A. Yeah.
Q. Is there a handoff that happens? Or how do you know what's going on and what you need to be monitoring?
A. So, like when Kyle was just down here, I was -- I was up in the tower helping out up there. So, Jordan knows what's going on. Or if say it was the end of the day and Kyle had gone home and it was Jordan up there, if she had to use the restroom, I would come up there, anything going on? We would just kind of -- we would talk to each other and make sure there's nothing -- if something was running late, hey, 50 -- 53's running late, something like that. But --
Q. Okay.
MS. WILSON: I think that's all the questions I have, thanks.
MR. NEWBURN: Welcome.
MS. WILSON: Manny?
BY MR. FIGLIA:
Q. You said you're responsible for about seven or eight

employees.
A. Yeah.
Q. Are you involved in their training, let's say on an annual basis?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. After you heard there -- there was an accident, did you kind of refer to Spidertracks to see maybe what information might be there because you obviously didn't know where or --
A. Yes.
Q. And do you kind of receive training on Spidertracks and how it works? Or is that pretty much --
A. Yeah. I've -- I've actually worked with -- I've been here for a while, so whenever Spidertracks people came in I --
Q. Okay.
A. -- I picked their brain quite a bit.
Q. Okay. On the PIREPs that you receive from pilots, is that just held within the company? Or is that shared anywhere else, let's say with the FAA or is that filed anywhere else? Or it's just within the company?
A. Just within the company.
Q. Overall, do you feel you're an integral part of the company's overall safety program?
A. Up in the tower? Us? Or me?
Q. Meaning your job function.
A. Oh, yeah, I do.

Q. Okay. And what -- what makes you say that? What has the company -- have done overtly or covertly to make you feel that way?
A. Well, safety wise, us in the tower are the people that are going to be the first responders to any sort of accident, if someone's missing, anything like that. And I train all the people up there to make sure that they're all trained properly to do that. Yeah.
Q. Great. Thank you.
A. Cool.
MR. BOYD: No questions.
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. See if I -- reiterate again; have you heard any arguments on the radio, either between pilots or between the lead and pilots?
A. Arguments? No.
Q. Yeah.
A. No.
Q. Or any contentious conversations?
A. No, I've never heard it. No.
Q. Okay.
MS. KELIHER: All right, that's it. Thanks.
MS. WILSON: Thanks so much.
MR. NEWBURN: No worries.
(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of Ryan Newburn

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 20, 2108

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]
Elaine M. LaRosee
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*
	*
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH	*
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA	* Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018	*
	*

Interview of: PAUL ALUKONIS
Principal Operations Inspector

Tuesday,
July 31, 2018

APPEARANCES:

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

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

PAT HEMPEN
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

MARK TOMICICH, General Counsel
Federal Aviation Administration
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Alukonis)

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:42 p.m.)

DR. WILSON: As I already said, thank you for being here with us today. This is a part of the Grand Canyon accident that occurred in February of this year involving Papillon Airways. We're here strictly from the safety side so what we'd like to do is record this interview so that we can create a transcript and then include that in our public docket. Is that something that you'd be okay with?

MR. ALUKONIS: And I'd like -- I have agreed to that also.

DR. WILSON: Thank you. And you are entitled to have one person represent you in this interview.

MR. ALUKONIS: I have Mark -- ah, I'm going to mess this us.

MR. TOMICICH: It's Tomicich.

DR. WILSON: Great. We'll go around the room and have everybody introduce themselves. That way you'll know who we are and then we'll obviously ask you questions about who you are.

IF you at any point don't understand any questions that we ask you or need clarification please don't hesitate to ask us to clarify that.

Zoe?

MS. KELIHER: I'm Zoe Keliher and I will be doing operations for the accident.

MR. ALUKONIS: Okay.

DR. WILSON: Katherine Wilson. I am a human performance

investigator with the NTSB.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Papillon Director of Safety.

DR. WILSON: Manny?

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Aviation -- I'm sorry, Director of Aviation Safety with Airbus.

MR. HEMPEN: And Pat Hempen, AD 100, FAA Headquarters.

MR. TOMICICH: And for the record, Mark Tomicich, Office of Chief Counsel. I will be representing Paul.

DR. WILSON: Great. And if you could state your full name for the record?

MR. ALUKONIS: Paul Alukonis, Principal Operations Inspector for Papillon Airways.

DR. WILSON: Great. Would you like to start the questioning?

MS. KELIHER: Yeah.

INTERVIEW OF PAUL ALUKONIS

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. So Paul, how long have you been with FAA?

A. Eight years.

Q. Can you tell me kind of about your career?

A. In the FAA?

Q. Um-hum.

A. I came into the FAA as an ASI like most and went through spring training. Early on, I'm trying to think, you want operators that I had oversight of, just general what the job is because you're basically starting with accidents, incidents,

occurrences, pilot deviations, on-demand work, certification work. I think early on that was about it.

As time progressed and I was given Papillon as my primary operations and having oversight of them, there have been other operatives that have come and gone depending on staffing of the office. But over, for the most part I'm thinking 5, 6 years of being principal for Papillon.

Q. And how long have you been with -- are you still WP19?

A. We are still WP19. Sorry. We are now called the Nevada FSDO, and this is the Las Vegas Office of the Nevada FSDO because we're one happy family of three.

Q. Oh.

A. Okay?

Q. And so the whole time has been, all 8 years have been --

A. Have been in this FSDO, yes.

Q. And then what was your -- what were your qualifications? What did you do before worked (indiscernible)?

A. Before I was with -- I'll just go backwards chronologically. Before the FAA I was the Director of Operations of Heli USA. Prior to that I was the Director of Operations for Westcor Aviation. I was their chief pilot for a time. I was a line pilot at a time. And prior to that I was a flight instructor.

Q. About how many hours do you have in helicopter?

A. About 9,200.

Q. And in 5 years of being the POI for Papillon have you ever

had an assistant?
A. Never.
Q. How many other operators do you have?
A. Currently? I have to other operations and two DBs. (ph.).
Q. Who are the other operators?
A. HighRoll and 5 Star. I think it's 5 Star Helicopter Tours, LLC, and the other one is HighRoll Air, Inc.
Q. So how many total helicopters are you overseeing?
A. As far as aircraft?
Q. Um-hum.
A. Well, you have the 56 for Papillon and High Roll has -- High Roll and Five Star combined have 5, so total, what, 61?
Q. Um-hum. Any 91 or Part 61 (indiscernible)?
A. No.
Q. How do you think your workload is?
A. Well, it comes and goes in wavs. Right now it's pretty light right now and that's because I've completed an awful lot of work right now.
Q. What is the staffing level now compared to last, what, 6 years?
A. You know, we were real short-handed some years back, but the staffing levels are a lot better than they have ever been. But what has really helped is the office has developed what they call a geo team and they're handling most of the complaints, accidents, pilot deviations, those kinds of things that has helped out the

principal inspectors enormously. So the only time I really receive a complaint or, say, a pilot deviation is -- if it's an operator of my own. But generally I never see one anywhere.
Q. I hadn't even heard that the FSDOs were doing that. What is that?
A. Well, what I think what they did is we had -- we were looking for ways to get more staffing in the office.
Q. Um-hum.
A. And that's something management decided to do because, you know, at that time the principal inspectors we were just buried in work. I mean, we could barely breathe. So that was a way of getting more staff in the office to alleviate workload on the inspectors.
Q. So they just created FTOs for it?
A. I don't know. I don't know what FTO is.
Q. The full-time position that they --
A. Full-time, yeah, they call it geographic. But they handle the 121 -- 129 operators. They take care of all the 91 operator, you know, 91 operators that have no complexity. And then basically a lot of the on-demand work.
Q. Do they ever help you with any of your operators?
A. Well, you had John Waugh who's on the, on the geo team help you with this investigation. They have done some inspections for Papillon for me.
Q. Sure.

A. But those were random inspections.
Q. How has it been working with the SAS system?
A. It took a lot of time to get used to it because we use -- with our items we used to go out and we had one single task.
Q. Yeah.
A. So we could go print out our guidance and we could run out and we could do the inspection. With SAS when we print it out the first thing I do is cross out everything that doesn't apply.
Q. Hmm.
A. Okay? But it's not one set of guidance that you're looking at. It's multiple sets. So the inspection takes place instead of in one day it takes place in this block of time because there's so much to do --
Q. Does it have --
A. -- for one.
Q. -- the R items?
A. No. The term R items refers to (indiscernible) now.
Q. Hmm.
A. And so SAS they call them DCTs. You know, we love our acronyms and we remember the acronyms but sometimes it's hard to remember what the acronym stands for. So anyhow, DCT is basically an inspection that is a surveillance inspection.
Q. So how many DCTs have you had with Papillon in say, like, 2 years? We'll probably ask for copies, well, I know I will, for copies of --

A. Yeah, I don't -- you know, I can give you an estimate, but we might be off one or two, but I'm going to -- so you said 2 years? I'm going to say --
Q. Yeah, since from --
A. -- ballpark about 16.
Q. And that would be 2 years back from the accident, so February 11?
A. Yeah, something like that. And then they are risk-based and they have time intervals for those. They do vary. There are some that are due in 2 years, you know, some in one year and I think others are end.
Q. How does it flag you now to let you know that it's upcoming or an interval is about to become due?
A. It doesn't really. It doesn't really flag you. So what you're doing is you're planning your year.
Q. Um-hum.
A. So that's up to the individual inspector. So if I look at things and let's say I have two operators and we have a DCT that's called, let's say, onboard operations, which I somewhat of a in route inspection. There's more to it than that, but what I would do is group the two operators with the same DCT because I can save a lot of work by bundling those, meaning that you're looking at the same sets of guidance.
Q. Hmm.
A. You're looking at the same regulations. And that way you're

not doing one thing over here and one thing over there and then have to redo it later in the year. So I try to bundle it in that manner if I can.

Q. So of the 16 activities that are recorded can you describe a year of what it's like of being a POI for Papillon?

A. If you can kind of elaborate a little bit so I understand a little more?

Q. Maybe just tell me, like, what you've been doing over the last year? How your relationship is, how the visits go, how much you're hearing from getting the calls and problems and anything?

A. Well, I try to visit as often as I can And if I'm, say, in the neighborhood doing an inspection on somebody else, even at a minimum I'm going to pop by and say hello at the minimum. And, you know, continue to take a look around, talk to people to get an idea how the company's functioning.

I might, you know, sit down with Burl here and ask him how things are going with him. Do we have anything outstanding, IOUs either way? I would pop in and see the chief pilot and, you know, oftentimes I'd pop upstairs to see the Director of Operations if he was in.

Relationship with Papillon has been absolutely excellent. They are very, very receptive to my suggestions. They're, I'm trying to see where I can go with all of this. If they have issues I assist in, you know, addressing those issues. If I have issues then they obviously address them as well. But we have had,

I mean, no real regulatory issues. They might have questions about things, of some of the things they might be planning in the future and ask my advice on that in terms of a regulatory manner. Or maybe they just need help navigating our various, you know, systems such as the guidance and so on and what policies are and how to proceed about, you know, developing some program that they might want to.

Q. Do you give the check airman check runs?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. How many check and run do they have?

A. Seven right now. It's typically about one.

Q. How do check rides work there? Do they do training before they give check rides for the 135?

A. So you're asking about check airman check rides or pilot check rides?

Q. Pilot check rides.

A. Pilot check rides pilots go through a very extensive training program and then at the end of the training program they're given a check ride by the check airman.

Q. But every year how does that work when they do the recurrent?

A. I don't --

Q. Do you know how they get -- do they have yearly training --

A. They do.

Q. -- at Papillon?

A. They do. They have recurrent training.

Q. And how does that work? Is it just a flight or a couple flights?
A. No, it's ground school and flight.
Q. Okay.
A. Several flights (indiscernible).
Q. Well, what accounting place?
A. I believe the recurrent training requires -- I'd almost have to look in their manual. I think it's 2 hours of flight training, but we have some specialties. They have to be current in the SFRA as well. So there might be additional flights for recurrency in the Canyon.
Q. And do you ever give the pilot check rides or just the check airman?
A. No, I don't give the pilot check rides. I'm more interested in the check airman.
Q. I know that you obviously inherited the S row, but have you seen any problems with Grand Canyon operations in how -- where they're supposed to fly and out --
A. You're talking about the SFRA specifically?
Q. Um-hum.
A. Okay. As far as air tour operators, no, there have been no problems in the SFRA with routes and so on. We have quarterly safety meetings that address any issues.
Q. What issues have you seen come up?
A. Typically the issues involve -- now, we're talking all

operators not Papillon --
Q. Um-hum.
A. -- so typically we might have issues of a pilot being off the route and one company addressing that with another company to say, look, this is what we saw your person doing. Please correct that.
Q. Do they loop you guys in?
A. Yes.
Q. How does that work?
A. We do that at the safety meetings. I become privy to it.
Q. So are they voluntary safety meetings?
A. Voluntary, yes.
Q. That all the companies --
A. And they all participate.
Q. Okay. What have you seen of that have been Papillon complaints?
A. For routes? On occasion they might have somebody that deviates from the route. Now, when we talk about deviating from the route we're not talking about miles. We're talking about very, very tight, tightly controlled procedures that the pilots are expected to follow. And, you know, we have, we have tourists talk about these routes being, you know, a half mile wide and so on. Those routes are followed much more tightly than that. And so, you know, you might have another aircraft that complains about somebody that's not right on the spot. So we try to keep all the operators controlling their people as tightly as possible to

ensure that everybody is exactly on that route.
Q. Have you heard complaints about Papillon?
A. As far as --
Q. Anything.
A. -- just route stuff? I've had noise complaints, but I haven't had any -- I'm trying to think. I'm sorry. I can't really think of any off the bat. I know that I had a few in Boulder City about I think it was runway crossings. Those issues were solved quite some time ago when you guys opened up helipad 4 on the closed runway. And that solved all those issues. That's really the only thing I can think about right now. There might have been a few other things, but --
Q. Wouldn't that be in the SPAS? Do you put that in?
A. No, not really because that -- in SPAS it doesn't leave you a whole -- so the way that that works in one of the elements you would have to find something negative. And if you put something negative you can leave a comment. But if you have something that's compliant then it becomes positive you can't put a, you know, a comment or anything.
Q. Okay.
A. In the old PTRS if you say satisfactory and you're going to put a comment you put information in the comments. It's kind of the same thing.
Q. Yeah, I know. Did you know Scott?
A. No. They have so many pilots. Maybe he said hi or I said hi

to him or something, but I did not know him, no.
Q. How many times have you been to Quartermaster in the last year?
A. All operators I'm going to say probably -- I'm going to say, think about twice.
Q. And what situations would that have been?
A. Those were in route inspections.
Q. Can you describe an in route inspection?
A. Sure. An in route inspection is to determine that if a pilot is following basically, you know, flight rules and not exceeding limitations on the aircraft and so on and general company procedures.
Q. Do they get any notification that they're going to get it?
A. I do not.
Q. How does that work with the passengers? You just have to find --
A. Well, if I want to do any in route with Papillon typically what I do is I just walk in the building and I schedule with what they call CSR, so the customer service reps. They'll weigh in and schedule me on an aircraft. I typically do not like the pilot to be notified that an FAA inspector is coming onboard with them because I want to see how they are doing things.
And so I get a real good look at how they actually operate. And thinking about something else. I did another in route but it was a night strip tour. So when I told you two I think maybe one

was with another operator and one was with Papillon and the other one was a night strip tour. So I might have been getting confused there, but I am going off of memory so I apologize.

I'm sorry. That was the previous question. What's this one?

Q. Oh, in your in route inspections you don't tell them that you're going to be going along?

A. I typically don't because I want to see how the manifest is printed out. I want to see what that looks like. Obviously at some point I have to tell the pilot because I have to gather credentials and so on. And, you know, I listen to the pilot's briefing and I hop onboard. I see how they're treating the passengers and there are certain times as pilot in command you have pause to operate the aircraft and how they're dealing with passengers versus it's time to operate the aircraft if something is safety sensitive, you know, beginning with starting the engine. They're not talking to the passengers while they're starting the aircraft. And once they get it started and everything is, you know, normalized at that point they, you know, would talk to the passengers a little bit, tell them what to expect and so on.

Q. When do you tell them that you're with the FAA?

A. I tell them after I check in that I'm going on their flight and I show them my credentials and I ask them for theirs.

Q. So they do know that you're on?

A. They do. Yeah, it's not a, you know, it's not a secret. I just don't tell them that I'm coming.

Q. Do you do any type of surveillance of just watching them operate at Quartermaster ever?
A. All the time.
Q. So how do you --
A. There's a couple, a few ways of doing that. So if I'm doing a check airman observation with another company I can still see Papillon's aircraft operating. Now, Papillon has no idea that I'm riding with another operator.
Q. Right.
A. And I can see what their aircraft are doing on the route. I can see what they're doing at the landing sites. If I land at an adjacent site I can see what they're doing, you know. For example, the neighboring landing site at Maverick, if we land there, then I can see Papillon aircraft landing at their site.
Q. Do you talk to other operators about Papillon?
A. In terms of what?
Q. Anything.
A. The only thing I can explain, we do talk about each other's companies as a industry, but if you are asking me do I talk about Papillon to other operators about proprietary stuff, the answer is no.
Q. If you're at the Swamp and you hear somebody saying, oh, you should look at Papillon. They're always landing like this or they -- would they tell you that? Would they tell you this is what I'm observing --

A. Yes.
Q. -- of Papillon?
A. And they do. They do. And my response to that is have you called Papillon yet? Because these companies work together.
Q. Um-hum.
A. And that's the idea is that their operations department work together and they solve industry problems together. Having somebody doing something inappropriate that makes another company nervous, they need to work with each other. And that's going to be with all the companies.
Q. Is that the same with the POIs? Do you talk to, like, Sundance's POI?
A. Yes. Um-hum.
Q. Do you feel like you get support from your superior of whatever surveillance you do?
A. I receive ultimate support from this office, from my managers and the officer manager.
Q. Have they questioned you on different activities of surveillance that you want to do and you're not able to because --
A. That I'm not able to?
Q. Yeah, where you've requested to do types of surveillance or have different interactions with Papillon that you don't feel supported in?
A. I've never felt unsupported with any surveillance. The office has always supported me in what that I needed -- whatever I

needed to do. If I ever needed funding to do travel with Papillon -- I don't -- but if I ever needed funding to travel they would fund it without a hitch. They would expect it to be planned somewhat, but they would have no problem funding it.

Q. Have you monitored the training?

A. Yes.

Q. How often does that happen?

A. About once a year.

Q. How do you think the quality of pilots that they're getting in has been over the last couple of years?

A. They're extremely selective in who they hire.

Q. Okay.

A. And that is actually been better over the years.

Yeah. And then it begins with a very extensive weeding out of resumes before the person even calls. And then, like you said, they're very selective on who they hire. I have sat through their interview process and I like the way it's done. You know, typically there's a, like, an interview board and then they might take them out for a pre-employment flight. And then the groups get together and make a determination whether or not they want to employ that person.

Q. How do you think their training is compared to other operators?

A. Well, when we're talking about all operators the only way I can describe it, we have three very large companies. And I find

that all three companies their training programs are excellent. It's when you get into the three smaller companies that it, you know, that you can tend to find issues. I can tell you that their training program is extensive. They expect a lot from their pilots. We haven't had this in a while, but, you know, if somebody's not progressing in training, you know, they wash them out of training. They don't take the risk.

Q. Have you been to the morning briefings?

A. Yes.

Q. How do they get weather throughout the day of the -- pilots, how do they obtain that?

A. How are they monitoring weather?

Q. Um-hum.

A. I believe it's called, I think it's called SkyVector that is up and the Chief Pilot monitors that throughout the day. So do the lead pilots. Oftentimes it's up on big screen TVs to where the line pilots can see it as well.

Q. It sounds like it's changed a little bit, and we have talked to some of the other operators, the way they're set up with their lead pilots, just having lead pilots and them not flying the line as much. How do you think that that setup works at Papillon?

A. In terms of lead pilots flying the line?

Q. Well, from what I gathered the structure is there's the Chief Pilot.

A. Um-hum.

Q. And then there's the lead pilots and there's the line pilots.
A. Right.
Q. How do you think that that structure works at Papillon?
A. I think it's excellent that you have numerous eyes on a situation.
Q. And then --
A. It's an excellent way to have operational control.
Q. And how does that work of the numerous eyes? When you say that what do you mean?
A. Well, if you have a single person monitoring something a single person can miss it simply because they're a human being. Or, you know, they can make an inappropriate decision. But if you have multiple people looking at it going, hey, what do you think about this, they can make a decision.
Q. How were you notified about the accident?
A. The Director of Operations called me.
Q. That night?
A. Yes. He called me at 4:00 -- I don't know what the time of the accident was. He called me about 4:00 something, 4:20 is kind of ringing a bell. Does that sound about right? We probably have a time different though between Arizona and here.
Q. Yeah. It's been confusing.
A. And he didn't have much information at the time, so --
Q. How much interaction do you have with the check airman?
A. You're talking about general interaction? Most of the time

the interaction would be in an observation setting, which would occur once per year unless they're in multiple aircraft, which Papillon tends to put most of them in two aircraft so I'm seeing them in 6-month intervals with, I'll call that a deep interaction.

Q. Have you been the POI of any of the other big operators?

A. Yes. I have been Sundance's POI. I have been Maverick's POI.

Q. So you can really compare them.

A. Um-hum.

Q. So how do you think that they do compare?

A. Like my daughter would say, they're the same but different.

(Laughter)

A. They all do very, very well. The procedures are similar. You know, the aircraft are similar. They all tend to have the same, you know, for the most part the same training programs. They're going to the same places. You know, their landing sites are a little different, but for the most part it's all the same.

Q. If you could change anything about Grand Canyon operations because you head whatever you want to go --

A. Head of the world?

Q. If your fiefdom, what would you change?

A. Right now I would be looking at the helipad at -- all the money in the world and my wish list, right? I would get rid of that slope at the airport. For the helipad facility I'd enlarge the fados (ph.). Route structure is excellent. That's really all

I can think of. I would leave it at that. The landing sites down at the bottom are natural, which is probably the way it should be for, you know, customer experience and the sacred land for the Indians. I think that's about it.
Q. And you said the slope at the airport do you mean --
A. Well, the western helipads --
Q. Hmm.
A. You've been out there from the parking areas upwards towards the fados. It climbs uphill and I can't figure out why they didn't level all of that off flat, which I think the hill itself is, you know, it would be better if there wasn't one.
Q. And comparing, and I know that you were the office that oversaw all the operations comparing the Swamp, Quartermaster --
A. There's a bunch of them. I can't remember their names.
Q. And I know I can't remember any of them all. The Bluff, oh, what do you think -- do you have any comparison of them?
A. They're all pretty much the same. You know, they've all been, you know, leveled as much as they can. They've brought gravel in in certain circumstances to level them out. They've cleared the area of bushes. And I think they're adequate for what they're used for.
Q. Do you think Quartermaster is any more dangerous or unsafe than any of the other ones?
A. No. No.
Q. And when you said that you think that the route is excellent,

I just keep looking at all the different possibilities that it could have been and obviously you inherited it. The route was made a long time ago. You don't think there is anything that could be done to make it safer?

A. Well, you know, anything we do can be improved, okay? But I would say this. I'm an FAA inspector and yes, I have pilot credentials. I don't consider myself a pilot anymore. I'm an FAA inspector now. The experts in this area are the operators, and that's why we have the safety meetings because they're the experts. They know what the issues are and they know how to solve them.

Q. Did you feel that way when you were at HeliUSA?

A. No. I felt like my hands were tied and just go fly the route.

Q. Okay.

(Laughter)

A. So --

Q. And you were in Hawaii?

A. I've been to Hawaii but no, I did not operate in Hawaii. That isn't -- you mean as a --

Q. When you were with HeliUSA.

A. No. No. My career HeliUSA was short-lived.

Q. Do you have 130 times (indiscernible)?

A. A little bit. Not enough to really count for anything. Maybe 10 hours? Maybe?

Q. Yeah.
A. And that was in a B-4. I never flew a T-2.
Q. When you're giving the check airman rides are you ever doing it in the T-2s?
A. Yes.
Q. The difference of working with an operator and now being a FSDO inspector do you feel that the structure of how they operate in the Grand Canyon is adequate for the amount of passengers that they have going in and out?
A. You're talking about volume of traffic?
Q. Yeah.
A. You know, obviously you have been down there and I'm not sure if you have flown the routes and see how organized they are. So if you understand how organized they are then it's not a problem as long as everybody does what they're supposed to do and they're all on the route. I don't think we've had any instances that I can think of to where anybody has been off-route. And like I said, they, those are very narrowly flown routes. You know, their listed as being a half a mile wide, but when you look at it for the most part the pilots are dead on where they need to be. And if they continue that there's no issues with that.
Q. It was interesting of me saying how the different operators go out in groups together where, like, Maverick starts up all at the same time and leave at the same time and lands at the same time and shuts off the engines at the same time. Do you think

there's an advantage or disadvantage of doing that?
A. Well, you know, the companies are in business to make money, so, you know, maybe a wish list that we stagger the flights from one operator to another the first complaint you're going to get is why do I have to give up my flight, you know, in the morning when you guys get to do yours? I don't ever see that happening. You know, they are in business to make money and they're trying to do it in the safest manner possible. So the advantage to launch them all at the same time is they all come back at the same time. Your busses arrive for the next passengers. So throughout the day you have delays and then it starts to get scattered towards the end of the day. And that's all operators, not just Papillon. I mean, heck, that happens to American Airlines.
Q. Right, of course.
A. Right? So --
Q. I guess there's going to be time and do we make that request through you of pulling all the surveillance records?
MR. BOYD: Yeah, (indiscernible).
MS. KELIHER: Well, that's all the questions I have right now.
DR. WILSON: Okay, and I apologize. I'm going to be jumping around a little bit.
MR. ALUKONIS: Okay.
DR. WILSON: -- filling in some of the holes in my understanding.

BY DR. WILSON:
Q. We talked about you mentioned that sometimes at Papillon there might be a pilot that would wash out of training. Are you notified if a pilot washes out of training?
A. Yes, they tell me.
Q. Okay.
A. And my first question is why?
Q. Hmm. Is there any sort of pattern that you see as to why pilots wash out of their training?
A. Well, the pattern in this is that they're not advancing in the training, so either they're not opening up the books and taking it serious or if it's a flight issue then they're, I don't know, just making something up. But let's say that they're teaching them a normal approach or something like that and in that aircraft the pilot's not getting it. And, you know, eventually they have to look at it and say if I keep training this pilot he may never get it. So I just don't want to, you know, pursue that.
Q. How often does that happen?
A. It's, it's I'm going to say once every couple of years.
Q. Okay.
A. This year there were none. And you can attribute that to the high hiring standards that they have.
Q. What if a pilot just gets an unsat in a training ride or a check ride? Would you be notified of that?
A. So I think we have to clarify this a little bit. So if you

have a check airman that is checking a event for a pilot and, you know, the pilot fails that event during the check ride but he fails it because it's something that the check airman believes he can fix, he could stop that evaluation and he can train the pilot and say, okay, it looks like you've got it now so let's continue with the evaluation.

In that circumstance, say, you're putting an unsat and then satisfactory basically on the record of the flight check, if a pilot could not pass the check ride, you know, like at all, which never happens, my first thing is what's wrong with the training program? Because how did he make it all the way to a check ride to fail him? That shouldn't happen. That's never happened with Papillon. I've never seen that.

Q. Since the accident have you heard of any training failures that -- or unsatisfactories that the accident pilot may have received?

A. No. I have -- I have not been privy to this investigation at all. I have not seen the pilot records at all.

Q. Okay. Zoe asked you if you monitored the training at Papillon, which you said you did. How do you do that specifically?

A. I do it over multiple visits. I don't do it in one sitting.

Q. Hmm.

A. I do it in pieces. So if I come over to visit for any reason one of the first things I do is pop around and go on into the

training room and see if anything's going on. I might sit down and listen. If they take a break I'll talk to their new hires.
Q. Um-hum.
A. I'll get to know them a little bit, tell them what I do, why I'm here and what I'm looking at. And I will ask the new hires about the training. You know, what did you do today? What do you think of that? What, you know, is there something you'd like more of? But it's done over a period of time. It's not -- I typically don't do it in one setting because one setting I might get aircraft systems, you know, but I'm not getting the whole broad range of the training program. So it's best to be done in pieces unannounced and I can see what's going on.
Q. Are you familiar with how Papillon trains either loss of tail rotor effectiveness or settling with power?
A. Yes.
Q. How do they do that?
A. Which one would you like first?
Q. You can pick.
A. Okay. Loss of tail rotor effectiveness is discussed in the ground, but the loss of tail rotor effectiveness applies to Bell helicopters. Airbus, I'm going to say slash Eurocopter, forgive me I if use the old term. It's kind of engrained in me. But they don't publish anything on loss of tail rotor effectiveness for the Airbus. And I don't even know if the aircraft's susceptible to that or not.

So I do know that they train in the ground setting and of course you're not training something like that in flight. So they're making the pilots aware of it, but, you know, the only time you're getting in-depth with that is when you're talking about Bell helicopters. And they do have the 206s at the South Rim.

Q. Okay. And what about settling with power?

A. Settling with power they train it in a ground setting. The last flight observation I did, are you talking about technique about how they train it?

Q. So I think just understanding what settling what power is and then how to respond, if they get into that situation?

A. So what it is, how you recognize it and how you recover is what they train on the ground.

Q. Okay.

A. Okay? And then it's expected in flight that, you know, the pilot experiences that and recovers from it.

Q. And is that a change since the accident or were they doing that training before the accident?

A. I have observed that I training I believe earlier this year.

Q. Okay.

A. And I've observed that in a check airman observation, which I believe was this year. I might be getting my quarters mixed up, but it was fairly recently. Now they have -- they had asked me about techniques because we have this -- it's becoming more

popular what they call the Vuichard method. And they would ask me which one do I prefer? I don't really have a preference over one or the other as long as they train one of them. But I'm kind of an old school guy so I liked the older method. But it's up to the operator which one they want to train.

Q. Is one air inspection a year pretty typical for -- at Papillon or?

A. No. So the way SAS works it's risk-based, right? So I look at things like, all right, if I jump onboard with somebody to do a flight and they know that there's an FAA inspector onboard, okay. While I'm looking at the training program I might ask the pilot about a few things procedurally. I get to see the weight and balance. I get, you know, but I think the best way to handle that is external (indiscernible) and re-inspection, you know, because if I'm going to look at risk then for me the highest risk is how are they interacting with the other companies in terms of routes? Okay? We have a high volume of aircraft going back to the Canyon that's primary.

Q. What would be the most inter-inspections you might do in a year with one operator?

A. Oh, I'm not sure, maybe three with one operator, maybe three.

Q. Have you ever observed or have you heard of other operators having concerns about Papillon making tailwind landings?

A. Yes.

Q. What did you do with that information?

A. I brought it to Burl here.
Q. Okay. And what was the --
A. And I said here's, here's the situation. Can you guys look at this and find out what's going on?
Q. Um-hum. And how --
A. Now, there's a couple things, okay? One, I was -- it was an impression. This was post-accident, and it was an impression that the other operator took an opportunity to throw rocks at Papillon because it depends on your frame of reference. But I asked the management staff to take a look at their operation and see if this is going on for now, and if it is you stop it and you correct it.
Q. And did you follow up with them?
A. I did.
Q. What was --
A. And they're finding it -- that it's nothing.
Q. Okay. And nothing like it's not happening or?
A. It's not happened.
Q. No.
A. It's (indiscernible).
Q. How did they come about knowing that?
A. Their own observations, interviews with their own personnel.
Q. Okay. So did they have a report or anything or was this just, like, a verbal exchange?
A. No, it was just a verbal exchange.
Q. Any random inspections that you mentioned, the go --

A. GOT.
Q. -- GOT. I want to say go team, like, at the port. What information do you get after a random inspection is completed? So you said John Wan helped you?
A. So in SAS what I ended up with is you will see that they had some negative comments about hover heights that came and went. And I went and took a look at that and said, hey, this is going on. You guys need to fix this. As an immediate result, Papillon installed a big screen TV in the chief pilot's office with cameras so they could watch.
Q. Any concerns that were mentioned about Quartermaster, landing in Quartermaster?
A. None really.
Q. No? None really or none?
A. No, I can't think of any.
Q. Okay. You've got several operators that you're the POI of. How do you divide the workload? Papillon's obviously much larger than the other two operators, but what's the percentage of your workload that goes to Papillon versus other DBs?
A. Well, I was just handed the other two operators just recently, so --
Q. Okay.
A. -- you know, I'm trying to think. I really haven't done anything for them yet. Well, no, that's not true. I -- we just made a check airman with one of the other operators. And I think

that's the extent of the work I've done. But like I told you, I try to bundle them together.

One of the things that happens here in this office, management staff works with us. When we had to divide up operators I chose those operators because they were at the same airport. That's more -- makes my time more efficient because it's one-stop shopping. Like I tell you, I try to bundle, align the inspections together so that doing the same inspection on each operator at the same time.

Q. Okay. You mentioned that you visit Papillon operations. Do you go to all the bases? Do you primarily go to one base?

A. Oh, I go to all the bases.

Q. Yeah. How often are you doing that?

A. It depends. It depends on time of year and so on. And to give you an example, if I went to McCarran in the middle of winter I might find one helicopter there. So there's really not a lot going on. If I go in the middle of summer, you know, there might be four aircraft and some passengers in the lobby and I can see what's going on at that base.

South Rim, unfortunately that one I typically have to announce that I'm coming because I have to ride on their sister company to get there. So they usually know that I'm coming when I'm looking at records and so on and that stuff.

Q. And when you visit bases are you just observing or are you talking with folks? What's your sort of procedure when you get

in?
A. All of the above. I talk to the regular line pilots, telling them how I'm, you know, hi, I'm your principal inspector, never mention the work, you know? I might watch those pilots, just observe take off and regular operations, take off landing, loading, unloading, you know, weighing procedures, manifesting procedures. I might go up to their, I like to call it a control tower. It's not really a control tower. It's where the flight calling is, but I'll go up to the tower to watch. Sometimes I'll watch other operators while I'm up there that I might watch just airport activities. I might talk to the flight callers over there and say, hey, that aircraft, I'm just curious, how's it footed? Where is it going? When is it coming back, just to see how much, you know --
Q. What has been -- what's your role as Papillon's fellow beamer SMS program? What interaction are you having with them regarding that?
A. They've had an SMS program for a very long time.
Q. Um-hum.
A. What they have done is enhanced it under IS-BAO, but as far as me being an inspector and our guidance for SMS there's really not a whole lot for me to do with it other than I would actually come by and talk to Burl for a little bit and, you know, we've had situations where we've talked about incident reports or how many of this and how many of that, how it's being recorded. And as

long as the company's aware of what's going on that gives them an opportunity to fix and address any risks or hazards that they might discover.

Q. After taking over as Papillon's POI, did you do any evaluation of Quartermaster as a suitable landing site?

A. Now, you're talking about personal evaluation?

Q. Well, either yes, yourself or were you given some sort of guidance to show you or documentation that their landing site is suitable?

A. No, I was never given any documentation of that nature. You know, that's way before my time. All I can tell you is my experience from my industry experience I've landed in a lot tighter places than that. When I look at the operation and the types of things that helicopters do and the things that -- and situations that helicopter pilots in general are put in, it just doesn't get any easier than this. And that site I find to be extremely adequate for what your typical helicopter pilot is going to have to face on a daily basis.

You know, you take a Medevac pilot and you're going to land him in an intersection he's never landed before and he's going to do it at night, we don't have that here. You're going to the same place. You're being trained to go in and out of there. And then, you know, even when they do their SFRA evaluations they're going in and out of the site as part of, you know, a test. So I, you know, if there was a concern with the site, you know, I would like

to know what that is. But, you know, I look at it and I go, okay, there's really no obstacles potentially. And it's a clear and smooth area.

Q. So if you did have a concern, I mean, do you have any guidance that you can rely on to determine its adequacy?

A. Well, I'm thinking what we would have at our guidance I can't think of anything that is in our guidance offhand that would drive me towards that. The one exception I would have is that airports division would have, I don't know here, I don't want to say that. We have an advisory circular for helipads that kind of addresses some of those issues. But as far as a, you know, a private landing area that's up to the operators if they want to improve it. I don't know if we could improve this much more anyway with it being, you know, Native American land.

Q. So Papillon wanted to -- let me back up. How many at the Quartermaster site do you know how many pads there are or how many aircraft Papillon can get there at Quartermaster?

A. I would have to Google Earth it and look.

Q. Okay. So if they wanted to, and I'm going to make this number up, let's say they basically land 10 helicopters there or they wanted to land two more. Is that something that they would need to get approved or authorized by you?

A. No.

Q. No? Okay. If they wanted to land at another site, nearby site, do you have, like, any approval or authority over that?

A. No. No. That's strictly property owner.
Q. Okay. So you then as their POI you don't have any say over that?
A. No.
Q. Okay.
A. I might make a suggestions if I thought something was hazardous. I would say, you know, I don't know about that, guys, what do you think about that? What are you thinking?
Q. Um-hum. Are there any rules that companies have to follow, you know, for a landing site that's, you know, graveled not, you know, maybe not, what's the word that I'm looking for?
A. You know --
Q. You know, not, you know, not a designated helipad. It's a sort of off-airport landing site.
A. No, the only thing --
Q. Right.
A. -- that they would have to do is have permission from the property owner. That's primary. You know, if it becomes there's some guidance for Medevac operations, say, going into a hospital it has to meet certain dimensions, et cetera. But as a private operation going to private lands, no.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean, there's suggested criteria in an advisory circular, but that's about it.
Q. The advisory circular that you mentioned --

A. Yes.
Q. -- previously for helipads?
A. Yes. And I can't quote the number, but it's a heliport, something heliports. I can't remember the name right offhand.
Q. Would that -- that would typically be like a paid heliport, though, versus the --
A. Not necessarily.
Q. No? Okay.
A. No.
Q. So when you took over as the POI, I know that it was before your time where Quartermaster was approved as, you know, the landing site for them. Was there any discussion about how it came to be? How they mitigated risks landing there?
A. No, not to my -- it was so -- that was so, you know, far back in the past I don't even know when all that was created.
Q. Is that something that you think needs to be evaluated on a regular basis or, I mean, approved 10 years ago, 20 years ago do we need to be looking at new risks that are maybe popped up there?
A. You're talking specifically about landing sites in the airport? Because the airport's inspected by the Air Force Division POI --
Q. Right. These off-airport --
A. -- but I don't, you know?
Q. -- sites, so Quartermaster.
A. As far as off-airport sites, you know, I don't -- I simply

don't know.
Q. Okay.
A. And, you know, I don't know who would do that. Is, you know, that the Hualapai that would do that? Is it the AFA that would do that? I don't know who it is.
Q. Do you have any involvement with the LOA between operators and the -- so from the routes standpoint you just sit in on the, say, quarterly safety meetings --
A. Right.
Q. -- but you don't --
A. But we have multiple LOAs so I need to know which one.
Q. Oh, boy.
A. We have the McCarran Tower LOA. We have the route structures agreement LOA --
Q. Yeah, that. Yes, the route structures.
A. Okay. Route structures, yes, I attend the quarterly safety -- we went quarterly on those I believe. I attend the quarterly safety meetings on those.
Q. Okay. But that LOA is -- is that strictly between the operators and you just sit in on the meetings or do you --
A. That's correct.
Q. -- input on that at all?
A. But that is the agreement before -- that is a gentleman's agreement between the operators --
Q. Okay.

A. -- of how they're going to do things. And those meetings are about deconflicting traffic.
Q. Ever hear any concerns from pilots about the winds flying in and out of Quartermaster?
A. Pilots never told me anything about the --
Q. No?
A. -- winds, no.
Q. Complaints about taking flights that they didn't feel comfortable with?
A. Yes. I had one pilot that was concerned some years back, but that had to do with maintenance activities.
Q. Okay.
A. And those were, just to let you know, those issues were resolved when Papillon put in their, what they're calling maintenance test pilots.
Q. How does Papillon ensure that their pilots are doing the right thing when flying those routes?
A. They're, if they're still doing this, I haven't seen this in a while, but typically when they put a pilot on the line they're being followed by a lead pilot or a check airman and they're observing them as they go forth. But they also have Spidertracks that they're tracking the aircraft with.
They implemented -- let me think of what this thing is called. All the operators bought a device called a Bad Elf and they were periodically putting it, they're basically sneaking it

in the aircraft without a pilot knowing and they're seeing and monitoring what that person is actually doing. Each company has their various ways of doing it. I don't know what Papillon's doing at the moment but it got -- I might be getting that blended with other companies. So --

Q. And the video safety briefing that the passengers lodge, is that considered the primary safety briefing? Or is that -- or is the pilot briefing that the pilot actually gives at the helicopter (indiscernible)?

A. There's two briefings. So the initial one is the video and then when the pilot walks the passengers out to the aircraft the pilot will actually ask the passengers if they had watched the video. The pilot will also go through a secondary briefing as well.

Q. Okay.

A. So there's a redundancy in the briefing.

Q. Is the video, is that, you know, approved by you?

A. It was approved by the prior --

Q. Okay.

A. -- Principal Inspector, but it meets all the requirements. It's been inspected.

Q. Have you watched it?

A. Yes.

Q. Any issues?

A. No.

Q. Ever observe any passengers having problems taking off the rotary seatbelts?
A. No, I don't -- I've never seen it.
MR. BOYD: Okay. When we get to a point could we take a break wherever it's convenient for you?
DR. WILSON: Sure. I think I just have about five or six more questions and then --
MR. BOYD: Sure.
DR. WILSON: Will that work?
MR. BOYD: Perfect.
DR. WILSON: Great.
BY DR. WILSON:
Q. If Papillon wanted to make a change to that video that would need to be approved?
A. Correct.
Q. Since the accident have you increased any inspections of Papillon or done anything different in your role as POI?
A. I've visited the operations a lot more just to see what's going on.
Q. Anything --
A. I've talked to some of the new hires. Post-accident the -- we all of a sudden had this concern about the wind, not just with Papillon but, you know, throughout the industry. You know, which I think is good because this is bringing light to that. But I'm not really seeing -- I'm not really seeing anything that's, like,

has fallen apart. I'm seeing, you know, a company doing what it's always done and producing, you know, a very good pilot at the end of the day.

Q. Is there an issue with the accuracy of weather so we get our weather report at the airport, now we get into the Canyon and we're relying on a windsock?

A. Yeah, that's always been an issue.

Q. Hmm.

A. And that has to do with the environment. Now, to go back in history a little bit, usually the only information you had was what was here at McCarran. There was a camera at Temple Bar that, you know, you could see a little bit of weather. But since then we now have an AWOS at the Grand Canyon Airport, which is excellent. You know, you obviously have the windsocks down at the bottom. You have two companies. I don't know if Maverick installed them, but Sundance, both Papillon and Sundance installed weather stations down at the bottom where they can get that real-time weather, which are excellent choices.

Q. You mentioned the Spidertracks. At the time of the accident Papillon was using 15-minute pings. Is that something that you would be made aware of when they made changes like that? Or is that just an operator decision that's being made?

A. No, I think the operator's just making those decisions. My responsibility is to ensure that they're following their flights. Unfortunately, I don't have control over, you know, how often are

we following every minute --
Q. Um-hum.
A. -- because there was a time where, you know, we didn't have GPS and all that fun stuff. You were following it, you know, with a launch. But now that we have Spidertracks at least we have an idea of where it's going. Spidertracks does have some features to it. And one of the things they do train so, you know, for example, their training outer rotations and then engine failure. One of the things they're expecting the pilots to do is hit the button so that immediately pings, you know, we've got an issue somewhere and we need to start looking for you. And that information gets disseminated among, you know, the management people so there's more than one person getting that message. Good stuff.
Aside from that, well, that's getting into route stuff again and we'll talk about Bad Elf, but all the aircraft, you know, have Spidertracks.
Q. Um-hum.
A. But that's up to them how often they want to ping it.
Q. Okay. One more question and then we'll take that break. I know we've got the structured routes going in and out of the Canyon, but when it comes to landing at Quartermaster there's nothing documented that says these are -- this is the type of approach that you should fly --
A. I've never --

Q. -- coming in there.
A. I would never do that.
Q. Okay. Why is that?
A. And so here's why, okay? I'm happy with them telling them how to get in the vicinity of the landing area, but you never, ever, ever take the pilot command out of that aircraft. They need to make the decision on what the safest approach is. So if I told them this is the way you're going into this spot every single time and they go, okay, well, you know, I had a tailwind when I went in and I crashed because Paul made me go this way, you know? We're not going to do that. We're not taking the pilot command out of the aircraft.

DR. WILSON: Okay. All right. Let's take a 5-minute break?

MR. BOYD: Yeah, that would be great. Thank you.

DR. WILSON: All right.

(Off the record.)

(On the record.)

DR. WILSON: Okay. We are back and we will start questioning with Manny.

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. How many public POIs around this office?
A. POIs, so you're talking like it's -- We're down -- other than me we're talking three, so a total of four. We just lost one to an air carrier. So what you're seeing back here, this is actually a different office, WP39. This we have some air carrier people

back here. That's why you see so many cubicles.
Q. Do they have oversight on Part 91 operators in the area as well?
A. Our other principals?
Q. Yes, for Part 91 operators.
A. So Part 91 operators there are a few 91 operators that carry complexity in a small amount, 10 point something like that because they have turbine jets. So some of those principals are carrying those 91s. The 91 operators that carry no complexity have been handed over to the geo team.
Q. On the inspections, you referred to them as DCTs?
A. They're called DCT, Data Collection Tools.
Q. Data Collection Tools.
A. Data Collection Tools.
Q. Okay. Can you walk me through -- you mentioned you did, like, 16 of them in the past --
A. Yeah, but that's just -- you know, that's kind of a rough estimate. That number could be off I guess once you get the printout to see how many there actually are. So I'm sorry to interrupt you, but go forward with your question.
Q. Yeah, and they're separated into different phases?
A. Yes.
Q. Can you give me an example of one phase? You mentioned like a route phase.
A. Oh, yeah. So one of them might be called operational

control, okay? So that DCT will take you through every piece of guidance and every regulation on operational control.

Q. When you visit Papillon or another one of your oversights, let's say 5 Star and you talk to the Director of Safety, Director of Operations, Chief Pilot and also some of the line pilots.

A. Um-hum.

Q. Is there anyone else you specifically talk to within your organization?

A. Well, are we talking inspections or are we talking what I would call an ancillary?

Q. Ancillary.

A. Ancillary, yes. So with Papillon oftentimes I will speak to their president and I will talk to a gentleman there named Alan Stevens. And when --

OPERATOR: Rich Ramirez to the front office, please? Rich Ramirez to the front office.

A. -- I speak to Alan Stevens I'm talking to him about Grand Canyon SFRA-specific stuff, okay? Or I might be talking to him about the Glen Canyon Recreational Area and things like that. He sits on a -- in an industry FAA board that works on voluntary agreements between operators, which was just recently signed in the Glen Canyon Area. And I will talk to him about issues of that because of his extensive knowledge about it.

But I don't discuss general Papillon, you know, inspections and items with him. That's not his job function at all.

Q. And on the DCTs, is there a specific one for any kind of site-specific operation like Quartermaster?
A. No. See -- no. Once you address a DCT there is a field in the program that allows you to put the location that you are examining. Okay? So if I want to do this DCT for, say, onboard operations it's up to me where I want to do it. I can do it in McCarran. I can do it in Boulder. I can do it in the South Rim. But once I'm complete, when I'm closing it out I would put the location that I conducted that inspection.
Q. Quarterly safety meetings with the operators in the area, who attends those meetings?
A. It depends on which ones you're talking about. So first type of meeting is I call them the Clark County Helicopter Users Meeting. In those meetings are all the operators, McCarran, ATC, Clark County Department of Aviation, the Metro Police Department, all of the 91 operators that supply strip tours and those are typically presented by a man named Jack Jabois (ph.) that works for Clark County Aviation, and they track the noise complaints, drone activity and compliance with the route structure over the strip and entrance and exit of the class Bravo on the way to the Canyon. And when we talk about compliance they want the pilots to fly through what they call gates and that is strictly noise abatement.
Q. Okay. Have you ever come across anything else at those meetings related to safety other than what you've mentioned?

A. Boy, that's kind of general.
Q. Specifically the operator operating in an unsafe manner. Is that brought up at that meeting?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. When you -- during an inspection let's say site-specific or let's say an onboard, have you been able to do that with multiple aircraft operating in a close proximity, like at Quartermaster where there's, like, 10 aircraft operating there at the same time? Have you ever been on a route check when that occurred?
A. With multiple aircraft leaving at the same time, yes. Uh-huh.
Q. How about multiple aircraft operating in the same area outside of the airport?
A. Well, I guess I'm -- I guess mentally I'm having a bit of a time following you. So for example, if I departed on a flight with Papillon on the way to the Grand Canyon I might have, you know, for other operators operating multiple aircraft all at the same time on the same route going to the Canyon and landing at different places or just doing air-only tours. So yeah, you're in the mix.
Q. And specifically have you ever been at Quartermaster when they were operating, let's say, more than eight aircraft at one time?
A. Yes. I don't know if it's eight, but multiple aircraft.

Q. Have you ever witnessed or done an inspection during the weekends when the volume is higher?
A. I don't know if the volume is higher on the weekends. Maybe. I can't remember if I have or not.
Q. You mentioned you sit in when somebody interviews for new hires?
A. Yes.
Q. Have you or do you have any influence to the company if they are going to hired or not? Are you --
A. No. I was invited to sit through the interview so that the company asked me to. I didn't ask to do that. They asked me to sit through the interview because they wanted to show me what their process is. And I'm very glad that I did. But when I sat through the interview I don't think the applicant was ever told I was an FAA inspector.
Q. Have you ever received any safety information from an organization called U.S. Helicopter Safety Team?
A. I've never heard of that organization.
Q. When you receive a complaint from another operator, mentioning, let's say, the other operator was executing a downwind landing, have you ever asked based on an SMS program to receive any flight data monitoring (indiscernible) that confirm or ascertain that that information wasn't true? In other words, have you used a company's SMS to gain further information?
A. I don't know when a specific circumstance of that nature, but

the accident or incident -- the internal company incident reporting process I have used for to understand what occurred because that's typically going to be a pilot statement or another employee aboard the aircraft that witnessed whatever had occurred. I have done that. But is that really a part of the -- that is a part of your SMS program I suppose.

Q. How about --

A. I've done that.

Q. -- imaging onboard the aircraft?

A. There no imaging to my knowledge.

Q. That you've used?

A. No.

Q. Okay. So there is imaging but you haven't used it?

A. I haven't used it, no.

Q. Okay.

A. The only time I've heard of that being used was one of their other accidents and it was tightly controlled by the NTSB.

Q. For the check airman when you're doing check rides are you examining all aircraft, the H125s, the B2s, H130s and the T2s?

A. It depends on what they're designating that check airman at at the time.

Q. But have you done check rides in all those type aircraft?

A. The T2s, the B4s, the B3s, the B2s, the MD-900, the Bell 206s and the Bell 407s when they had them years ago, yes.

Q. Okay. To what extent did your emergency procedures join the

check rides? Did they do auto-rotations?
A. Yes.
Q. They do power, settling of the power?
A. Yes.
Q. You mentioned limited time in the H130. How do you feel about doing an evaluation ride yet you mentioned you had about 10 hours (indiscernible)?
A. Well, we're talking about check airman observations, okay? So I am in the EC-130s. I'm sitting in the front right seat. I do not have controls in front of me. You have a pilot manipulating the controls. You have a check airman as a evaluator and safety pilot.
Q. A check evaluator?
A. He's -- he has the function -- the check airman has the function of an evaluator to evaluate the pilot flying. He also serves as a safety pilot in the event that the pilot flying is not performing a maneuver correctly.
Q. And where is he positioned in the aircraft?
A. He's in the middle with dual controls, but that's just the one specific aircraft.
Q. So basically that instructor pilot per se, you're evaluating the --
A. Check airman performance.
Q. -- performance while you're sitting in the extreme other seat, not the middle seat as with the instructor. You're

sitting --
A. Correct.
Q. Is the Vuichard maneuver in the flight operations manual?
A. No.
Q. But --
A. Neither is settling with power.
Q. But you still do that as part of your check ride evaluation?
A. That's correct.
Q. And you also do the Vuichard maneuver?
A. It doesn't have to be the Vuichard maneuver. Papillon doesn't use that maneuver. They don't do that. You know, that's and operator preference. Their Director of Operation made a decision that they were going to use, I'm going to call it, the standard recovery method for settling with power. I think that a average pilot would go right into recovery where the Vuichard method I don't think your average pilot would intuitively go into that type of recovery.
Q. Have you been offered training by any operator to train in their aircraft without that?
A. Yeah. They, well, I'm going to say this. They offer but I can't accept that. We have a flight program office where I have to receive my training and (indiscernible) of the flight program office. So I can't accept their offer to do that. Years ago prior to the flight program office being opened we were allowed to fly with other operators for currency. I did fly with Papillon

for currency and that's how, you know, I was able to fly some of their various aircraft.
Q. And how often are you afforded the training, to go to training?
A. Well, annually, they have a formal course which is about 2 weeks and they put quite a bit of time on us in a Schweizer and a Bell 206. And then quarterly we're going one day and they're flying us twice a day, you know, 2 hours VFR and basically -- I'm sorry, an hour and a half VFR and an hour and a half on instruments.
Q. On mentioning the improvement specifically with Quartermaster as far as the approving the operation there, do you feel that using a less number of available landing spots there is a improvement, not to use all --
A. Not necessarily. You know, they don't all depart at one time and they don't all land at the same time. You know, they're staggered so it doesn't matter if there's another aircraft there or not, for example, if they're departing.
Q. Specifically do you think it's more challenging to land in that LZ when there are multiple aircraft that you are not to overfly?
A. It's going to cause the pilot to make some decisions of how he's going to ingress or exit.
Q. But you would say that --
A. But I don't -- I don't look at that as being any kind of

hazard. I look at that as aeronautical decision-making. That's your job as a pilot.

Q. I'm saying specifically improvement.

A. Improvement.

Q. Or improvement, increasing your margin of safety using less aircraft and specifically in that zone?

A. I don't think it matters one way or the other in terms of safety.

Q. That's all I have.

DR. WILSON: All right. I've got some follow-up, too.

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. When did you get -- you said recently you got 5 Star and HighRoll. When did you get those?

A. About 2 weeks ago maybe?

Q. Okay. So at the time of the accident?

A. At the time of the accident I had an operator, a single pilot operator in Moab, Utah.

Q. That you were providing geographical (indiscernible) for?

A. No. Actually they were certificated here and they had a satellite operation in Moab and then they shut down the, I'll call it their main base here and then moved to Utah. That has now been transferred to Salt Lake City.

Q. Do you know any other operators that have part-time pilots?

A. Part-time? Yeah, I don't know.

Q. Did you have a --

A. Actually I've never asked that question.
Q. Did you know that Papillon had part-time pilots?
A. I knew that they had some pilots that were on varied schedules, but as far as I'm not sure if that makes them part-time or not. But that's about the extent of it. So part-time, what do you mean? Like, less than 40 hours a week type thing or?
Q. Yeah, like, doing a couple flights a month.
A. No. I was not aware of that.
Q. Do you know Mike Tomlinson?
A. I do.
Q. Check airman?
A. I do.
Q. Can you describe what he's, like, found?
A. Sure. He's an excellent pilot. He is very, very knowledgeable. I think he's (indiscernible).
Q. And how about Higgins?
A. Daniel Higgins. I guess you're getting at they're both lead pilots, both check airmen. You know, they're at a very high knowledge level and they have all the flight skills and that's, you know, why they were chosen for those positions. So, you know, you say, well, how is it to fly with somebody like that? You know, without elaborating on it I don't know what you're really asking me other than are you asking about their flight skills, their knowledge?
Q. All of it.

A. All of it? They're extremely knowledgeable. That's because they're company instructors. They've got their face in the books. They're into, you know, they're having to teach the courses which forces them to be knowledgeable. They're both the evaluating as check airmen. And just so you know, Mike Tomlinson no longer is employed with Papillon, if you did not know that. I found them both to be very good evaluators.

Q. How has the company changed since Simon became the Chief Pilot?

A. Simon is no longer the Chief Pilot. Simon has been moved up to an unrecognized position by the FAA called an Assistant Director of Operations. He is being trained to become a Director of Operations. They have moved Tyler Carver, who was the training manager into the position of Chief Pilot.

Q. So I guess at the time of the accident --

A. So --

Q. -- how was it when Simon came in? Did you -- because you were still the POI when there was the past?

A. Okay.

Q. So how did it change when Simon became the Chief Pilot?

A. I don't remember who the Chief Pilot was before Simon. Can I ask Burl bruise I can't remember.

MR. BOYD: Mark Schlaefli.

MR. ALUKONIS: Was that Mark Schlaefli? Mark Schlaefli. And Simon came in with a very extensive resume and a lot of experience

with a very, very positive attitude. I had talked to Simon about some interesting programs that I really liked that the FAA has, such as the ASAP program. And Simon was in favor for it, really not knowing how to go about it. And, you know, we've had multiple discussions about that. And really the ASAP program and what Papillon actually does in terms of safety committees, is really identical. The only difference is ASAP would put it in a formal format, which is what I was hoping. And then I would be a part of that and that way you get to see everything in moving forward with safety. So I'm hoping that when Simon does become the Director of Operations that he will continue and go forward with that and move into ASAP. It's one of my items on my wish list.

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. Do you have a personal relationship with anyone in the company?

A. No.

Q. You don't see anybody?

A. No.

Q. Okay. In your 8 years have you been a POI for an operator that has had an accident?

A. That's really difficult to say. And the reason it's difficult for me to determine that is I'm a rotorcraft specialist. I assist the POIs here with their operators. So I'm involved with all the other companies even though I'm not their principal. I have been other operators' principals here and there, but to say

that I was the principal at the time of an accident is difficult for me to recall. I believe we had, but I don't know if those are accidents.

Q. Well, I mean --

A. I simply don't know, but, you know, in my function I've, you know, I've -- trying to think of who has had accidents and I can't think any. I know we've had some incidents, but whether or not I was a POI I don't know.

Q. But at Papillon you've been the POI when there have been accidents?

A. I've been the POI, yes.

Q. And how have they responded to accidents?

A. They are usually very proactive to find out what the cause of that accident is. And you know, as in terms of being an investigator, you know, it might take you a year, year and a half to figure out what actually happened. But from the operator's standpoint and the FAA's standpoint we have to be proactive and we have to make some judgments about what occurred so we know what to fix.

And I have found Papillon to be very proactive in fixing something when they -- once they kind of understand what, you know, might have been the, you know, cause of the accident. So, you know, I can talk about specifics if you like, if you want to talk about one of the specific accidents that (indiscernible).

Q. Sure, like the collective interference? I remember you

worked on that, right?

A. The collective interference, so, you know, they looked at that and, you know, it was really indeterminable what was going on. So, you know, we had a, trying to think what the name of that stuff is, give me a sec. There's a bundle of wires with strength tubing that runs through a gear and that was cracked and peeling from heat and storing the wires in a curved motion around the dual collective that was removed. We thought that maybe those cracks and de-lamination of those wires may have gotten in the gears, between the gear and the rack that allows the throttle controls to talk.

We tried to duplicate it. It couldn't be duplicated. Airbus looked at it. Couldn't be duplicated. We looked at debris maybe getting down through the switchbox and down the collective tube and interfering with the gears. We couldn't duplicate any of that.

So at the end of the day we really didn't have anything to really kind of hang our hat on and say this was why this happened, but what I did, and it was more so than just Papillon, it was all the operators that operate the ECs, I asked their maintenance people not to store those collectives with those cords curled around the collective, to keep them straight. And I remember one operator they ended up with tool boxes with phones and you could put the collective there and hold the cord straight. That problem was resolved with the T2 with a plastic standoff that holds that

cord straight. The B cords don't have that standoff. So does that kind of answer your question?

Q. With this accident what have you seen change?

A. Well, I've seen an additional windsock. I've seen a lot more concern about weather and winds. The former Chief Pilot Simon approached me with how they are going to teach setting with power. He was concerned about techniques, whether or not you're going to start from a stationary hover or if you're going to make it similar to an approach. And then he was concerned about what kind of recovery do I like and so on.

None of that matters to me as long as the pilot can recognize it, understand it, get out of it, recover as practiced. Other than that, it's up to them what type of technique they use.

Q. So have they changed anything else?

A. I have not personally seen anything else other than additional awareness.

Q. And I think that's it. (Indiscernible)?

MS. KELIHER: I don't know, otherwise we just have Burl?

MR. BOYD: I don't have nothing.

DR. WILSON: Pat?

BY MR. HEMPEN:

Q. So let's go back to the old FSDO days versus today. So I think when we say the geo team we're talking about geographic inspection.

A. Correct.

Q. So it's like the days previously were basically in a FSDO office, and I'm just asking, say correct or not, FSDO, Flight Standards Office you have the principal inspectors and they're the ones looking after certificates and then the geographical were the ones, all the outliers, the extra work, all the people that wouldn't fall under certificate oversight. Is that still a reality?

A. Yeah. So just a bit of history on this, so we had the Allegiant Certificate in this office, the 121 certificate. And then we had your general aviation inspectors in this office. For whatever reason the FAA decided to start the CMOs. We had a split in the office. The 121 folks went to WP39 and these other people, the general aviation inspectors, stayed here under 19.

Q. Okay.

A. Okay? But now the office manager's faced with a problem. We still have oversight of the 129s that come in.

Q. Um-hum.

A. We've got all these 91s and all this stuff and all the assistants that are 121 inspectors we're providing the office, well, they've exited. They're no longer under the management of this office.

Q. Yeah.

A. So you still have to do those functions and one part of that was to develop the geo team to take care of those functions that were normally done by the 121s.

Q. So that three it sounds like it's we're sort of going back to the days of old --
A. With the GADOs --
Q. -- and that the geo team, which we call geographic, or sort of they're like -- they fill all the stopgaps, all the things that are under their geographic area of influence of that FSDO they take care of all of that, the Part 91s, the, like you say, the pilot deviation, spanner toes, air shows, those kinds of things. Is that correct?
A. Um-hum.
Q. Okay.
A. Well, not -- I mean, not air shows and I do that.
Q. Oh, you do --
A. Yeah, I do the air shows.
Q. -- so that's an additional duty then?
A. Yes. Yes.
Q. So that's good because that sort of segues, you know, your routine. I'm sure your in basket has a lot more than just Papillon.
A. It does.
Q. When you walk out (indiscernible).
A. So two times a year we have the Nellis Air Show and so I'm usually inspector in charge for that. I deal with all the Grand Canyon issues, the Grand Canyon manual, revising the Grand Canyon chart, on the work group for that.

Q. Um-hum.
A. I just got put on a work group for the 91 operators operating the strip tour.
Q. And you have to travel. You do check rides for other people other than Papillon. Is that not correct?
A. I do. I do travel, what we call FSO requests as needed.
Q. And you still have to go to Alliance Field --
A. For currency.
Q. -- in currency in what type of craft?
A. Schweizers -- Schweizer 300s and Bell 206s.
Q. So just to travel alone is time-consuming.
A. True.
Q. Or is that correct?
A. True.
Q. And then -- and so in the days of old I know you could, like, run out in the afternoon, do some currency flying and be home that night. Well, those days are over.
A. Right.
Q. Correct? So you, your time commitment is pretty enhanced, trying to make all that currency --
A. That's true.
Q. -- and everything. So I know the life of the FAA inspector, you know, you have, you have what you legally can require operators to do and a lot of what you do is advise and consent. When you look at the high volume in the Quartermaster is there a

time where you could just say you were not comfortable knowing that, you know, your legal regulatory oversight is limited, but just from the high volume? Or maybe make suggestions, like, maybe have a marshaler or something like that? Is that -- do you ever have any of those discussions?

A. We used to -- talked about having marshalers. I don't know if that's even feasible or not. I think we talked about that at one point in time, but -- and that was with a front line manager that we had. So when we're talking about Grand Canyon operations, you know, we have what I call our legacy companies that have been here a long time.

Q. Um-hum.

A. They've been operating a long time. In many ways they view it as, you know, their turf, their territory, but the reality is that, you know, if you have a newcomer come in and he signs a contract with, you know, the Hualapai Nation, all of a sudden that operator's in the mix. And so where the hazard becomes is getting this company to where they need to be and then having them attend these safety meetings, which is usually an absolute surprise to them that, oh, my gosh, all of these operators here help each other out, watch each other and look out for each other. You know, they let their marketing departments compete, but as far as operations all these companies are on top of it as an industry.

Q. Um-hum.

A. And, you know, one of the things that I've preached over and

over and over, I mean, when you -- you don't even have to have an accident in the Grand Canyon. But if your company name's attached to it it's national news.

Q. Yeah.

A. And you've got a lot to protect. So we have this very unique thing here where we have these companies protecting their industry, and taking a newcomer into this they, you know, they're like, oh, my gosh, I don't want to tell a competitor about all this, you know? But eventually they're either going to play game or they're going to be out.

Q. Yeah. So I hear what you're saying and sort of changing years a little bit, like, the medical helicopter they have to fly in an unapproved, unknown area versus a landing zone that's well-established and well-rehearsed. But when it's a high tempo operation is there any way where the companies providing the information to the operator, like, on the accident it was a high wind day, to the point where some of the aircraft decided not to land. Is there a way where the company can provide the information in the flight following? In other words, other than just following the aircraft are people having conversations with the crews, the pilots? Did you ever look at that kind of operation? Like, when you look at their operational control you walk into the tower, is the communication two ways? Are they able to convey information to crews that are in the -- operating out in the Canyon?

A. I've heard radio transmissions about conditions in the Canyon going back --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- to other aircraft. And where this gets to be really interesting is, you know, on a day like today, you know, it would be quite boring in terms of operational control. But when you start having weather issues that's when everything comes alive, and that is the best time to do an observation on operational control because you start seeing all the communications throughout the company and to the point where you can watch them and how they shut down.
Q. Um-hum.
A. Because most of their operations deal with passenger comfort and visibility. You're not going to take somebody to the Canyon in horrible conditions because the, you know, passengers aren't going to have any fun. They're going to write a bad review. So most of this stuff is it's we're not even getting close to regulatory stuff. We're getting, you know, it deals with, you know, the passengers and their ability to enjoy the Canyon.
Q. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. That's all I have, thank you.
DR. WILSON: You have anything else?
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. Yeah, I've got a couple of follow-ups. Do you review any irregularity reports at Papillon?
A. I do on occasion. So I come in and I usually talk to Burl

and then if Burl has something he wants to share or ask me about I'll look at it and see if that's something that the FAA needs to be interested.
Q. Is there anything recently that you can think of?
A. I haven't had anything. Well, no, I'm sorry. I take that -- I take that back. Yeah. So, I mean, I'm thinking, like, we've seen -- you know, we did have a recent incident that's under investigation at this point. And then we had another service difficulty report that I haven't even really taken a look at at this point.
Q. And so when something comes under investigation that means that the FAA's looking into it?
A. I'm looking into it, yes.
Q. Okay.
A. Yes.
Q. And then would you expect -- what's the interaction with Papillon? There would be some sort of course of action that Papillon may need to take as a result of that? How does that work? How is that documented --
A. Well --
Q. -- that process?
A. -- on the side of the FAA or on the side of Papillon?
Q. Oh, both.
A. Papillon would write up an incident report. And I might as well just talk about this. We had an aircraft that left Canyon

West. It departed and during a transition the aircraft descended. It hit the ground. They had -- and this was the last flight of the day with employees exiting, and they had a mechanic that exited, looked at the aircraft to make sure it was okay. They re-boarded the aircraft and departed to Boulder. And once they arrived in Boulder they noticed the aircraft was damaged. Okay.

So looking back at that the first thing that the company did is they had the pilot and the passengers, which were all employees, document that in an incident report. I gathered all those incident reports. I've also gathered, you know, weight and balance information for the aircraft and some standard information for the aircraft at this point. But it's -- right now it's under investigation so I don't know what the result's going to be. It does look like it's going to be an incident.

Q. Okay. And you've had this type of thing before where there's been some irregularity report that then you, the FAA has investigated?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And then what typically would come out of something like that? Would there be some action items for Papillon that would be (indiscernible)?

A. It depends. It depends. So there's a few things that I look at, okay, and did Papillon's system fail? That's one thing I'm looking at. If their system failed then we're looking for clarity in the system. Or is it a training issue that somebody didn't

know about a policy or procedure or something like that? Or did we have a little subculture develop where, you know, you start having people thinking this is okay because this is the way we always did it.

What the company has done to resolve those issues, and I really, really like it, is they have little tests monthly for the pilots which causes the pilots to look at the GOM and so on and get the face on the book and see what the company policies are and so on. And they do that on a monthly basis. And they might even do that on systems of aircraft or whatnot, just to keep the pilots involved with textbook knowledge-type, you know, stuff.

Now, the other, the other side of it if Papillon's system didn't fail then why did we have employees that went outside of the company policy? Did they not know? Is that training or did they just -- or were they in a hurry to go home?

Q. Okay. You mentioned the BAD ELF just before we took a break.

A. Yeah. The BAD ELF is a GPS device that you -- that's an inexpensive -- I think it's about $100, $150, something like that and it's a very small device, about the size of your tape recorder here that you can throw it in an aircraft --

Q. Um-hum.

A. -- and you can follow that aircraft very closely and see, you know, exactly what the flight profile was.

Q. Does Papillon use those?

A. They had. They bought a few of them. I'm trying to think

that when this came about. I'm going to say about a year ago in one of our safety meetings all the operators decided to buy those and periodically put them in the aircraft.

Q. Okay.

A. That's not something I followed up on recently, so I can't force them to do that, you know? So --

Q. Okay. How valuable are PIREPs when flying in and out of the Canyon?

A. I'm going to call it unofficial PIREPs, okay, because helicopters fly at lower altitudes. Most of the weather that is reported is reported for airplanes. Generally those kinds of weather reports are not very helpful to your helicopter pilot.

So the types of when I say unofficial PIREPs those are coming from other Canyon helicopter pilots that are reporting back to other aircraft over the Canyon frequency.

Q. So those unofficial PIREPs are those important? Are they critical to the operation?

A Yes. Yes.

Q. Okay.

A. I would say that they are.

Q. When you do your observations do you feel like pilots are making PIREPs?

A. They, they do. Yeah, you know, a pilot might leave and, you know, I mean, a lot of times, you know, this weather pops up very rapidly. But a lot of times, you know, they'll -- you're not

going to note something until you're literally on your way out and you'd say, you know what? I've got clouds blocking the Grand Wash Cliffs. I can't get to the Canyon. I have to turn around. So everybody behind me, you know, not just Papillon but all the other companies are going, well, yeah, it's blocked. And they radio back their companies to say we need to shut down.

Q. When you fill in, and specifically with Papillon but possibly with other operators, too, how busy are the radios particularly when coming into the landing sites? Is there a lot of chatter?

A. PICs in a -- you mean unofficial chatter or --

Q. Right. So, you know, coming in on a land tier (ph.), don't shut down I'm right behind you, is there that type of talk going on?

A. Well, don't forget you have Canyon frequency and then you have company frequencies.

Q. Right. So that's why I'm asking when you're doing your inspections --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- which would be the company frequencies?

A So they, you know, they might be talking about shutdowns and stuff like that on --

Q. Um-hum.

A. -- a company frequency, not the Canyon frequency because you don't need everybody in the world to know that.

Q. Right. Did -- I guess what I'm trying to understand is how

busy is the chatter? Is there time for pilots to make an unofficial PIREP, you know, if they just came in and the winds were really shifty? Is that something there would be enough time for --

A. There's time to do that.

Q. -- pilots to make --

A. There's time to do that, yeah.

Q. Okay. Since the accident have you made any suggestions of changes to the operation at Papillon?

A. Not at this point because, number one, I have to -- I have to have a really good feel for, number one, what happened, and I haven't been privy to the accident. I don't have all the data that you do. Kind of hoping that we have a little good idea of what happened and we can move forward from there.

You know, right now I'm kind of looking at employees, what are we doing with employees and procedures and having them understand not just aviation rules but the general company policies that are expected of them because it seems to me that we're getting into a -- we could get into a situation where we have one of these subcultures develop and we don't want to do that. We need the operator to, you know, audit themselves, which they typically do a really good job at. But about the time they're doing something great here, you know, something else pops up, and that's just life.

Q. When lead pilots are out flying, so Papillon lead pilots or

maybe even the chief pilot, are they doing observations of other pilots? Are they -- is there some kind of reporting method where they come back and, you know, are -- sorry. Take two. Are they doing observations of other line pilots who are flying at the same time and then coming back and making any sort of reports about that?

A. Okay. I haven't been privy -- I know what their policies are in doing that. I know with a new pilot they will follow that pilot and make sure that they're on route and they might even correct it over the radio.

Q. Hmm.

A. Say you need to be over there, aim for this. Or they might do some things like that. They don't just want to turn a new pilot loose. Existing pilots I can't imagine a lead pilot or a chief pilot following somebody that's doing something incorrect and he would not say something to that person, but to ask me if I actually know of that, yeah, I don't.

Q. Okay.

A. I don't actually know.

DR. WILSON: That's all that I have. Does anyone else have any follow-ups? Anything else that -- we've asked you a lot of questions.

MR. ALUKONIS: Well --

DR. WILSON: But anything else that you think we --

MR. ALUKONIS: -- you know, I guess I'd look at things, you

know, moving forward and I've known this company for a very long time. And I know the family that runs it. And what I can tell you is this company tends to do the right thing even if it costs them an awful lot of money. And so moving forward, you know, I see them putting in orders for fuel bladders so that we don't have a tragic accident like this again. I mean, if we do have an accident maybe, you know, the cost of human life won't be so high.

That's going to cost the company just an inordinate amount of money, but their willing to do it anyway because they think it's the right thing to do.

I do believe that they're looking at doing some things like possibly splitting their certificates and having two separate operations. Now, they're doing that for strategic reasons, but the end result would be smaller companies with more oversight. That might be a good thing if they actually go forward with it. But that's going to be a business decision.

DR. WILSON: Cool. How would they be splitting the operation?

MR. ALUKONIS: Well, they're looking at the South Rim and the West Rim operations, and that is one of the reasons that Simon was moved up to what they're calling the assistant director of operations until he can be trained. And then you'll have two chief pilots, two directors of operations, two separate certificates, two separate companies. So the end result of that might be beneficial for more oversight and more control.

You know, that's kind of the big thing that I'm seeing right now. That's something I'm kind of hoping for ASAP. I'm looking forward to working with Simon when he does become the Director of Operations and I do believe he is a big advocate of the ASAP program. I think that that would be extremely beneficial to the company.

You know, these things are really hard because you see a very high quality company with very good procedures, a very good training program and very good evaluations and a lot of smart people, you know, running the organization. And sometimes you just go, oh, my gosh, you know, why -- how does this happen to somebody that -- you know, I actually view it as somewhat low risk. But it's happening to a company that really has a lot of low risk. And it's, you know, it's really tragic, but, you know, everything, every organization can improve. It's just a matter of finding out where those areas are that they can improve it.

DR. WILSON: Well, thank you, and we really appreciate --

MR. ALUKONIS: Yeah.

DR. WILSON: -- you taking the time --

MR. ALUKONIS: You're very --

DR. WILSON: -- to talk to us today.

MR. ALUKONIS: -- you're very welcome.

DR. WILSON: If you think of anything, you know, after the fact we'll be doing this investigation for probably at least another 12 months. So you know how to reach us --

MS. KELIHER: So --

DR. WILSON: -- for (indiscernible).

MR. ALUKONIS: So given that I've already been interviewed is there anything you can share with me that would give me some real insight?

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
FEBRUARY 10, 2018
Interview of Paul Alukonis

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: July 31, 2018

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]

Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA You're just sitting there just going, oh, man. When are we going to get there? So, those are the things I remember.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *
*
PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH *
PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA * Accident No. WPR18MA087
FEBRUARY 10, 2018 *
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Interview of: SCOTT BOOTH
Pilot

Thursday,
August 2, 2018

APPEARANCES:

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

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

THOMAS TOBIN, Esq.
Wilson Elser Law Firm

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:50 a.m. PDT)

MS. KELIHER: -- listen. And then I'll ask you some direct questions. We'll all go around. But I'm hoping at the end, depending on how much you want to know, then I'll share with you what we've learned in this investigation and show you some pictures and things that I think you might be interested in.

MR. BOOTH: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: But I'll kind of give you more up-to-date -- usually I talk to a pilot so much sooner after an accident happens, so I've been anxiously awaiting to talk to you this morning. I'm glad you came here.

MR. BOOTH: Yeah, I know. I guess -- I mean, maybe we could've done it sooner, but I was in a lot of pain and I'm highly-medicated, so I could've given you -- I mean, my memory's clear enough now. I think before and when I was in Vegas it was tough, so.

MR. TOBIN: Are you on pain medication today, Scott?

MR. BOOTH: Of course.

MR. TOBIN: That's what I thought.

MR. BOOTH: No, just the --

MR. TOBIN: It's just your life, huh?

MR. BOOTH: Just the -- yeah. It's mostly nerve pain medicine because I -- like, the -- I can't explain it, but the neurons and stuff are still firing in my legs, so it's really --

like, it feels like little tingling or hot little matches periodically. So, they give you, like, a nerve medicine and just a -- they keep a really low baseline so that you're constantly -- I mean, there's pain, but you're just not in too much to where you're, you know, really uncomfortable and screaming and stuff. So, I'm not mentally affected in any way, if that's what you're asking.

MS. KELIHER: All right. Can you read?

MR. BOOTH: Yes.

MS. KELIHER: How are you passing the time?

MR. BOOTH: I watch TV shows. I have a lot of visitors because I'm local to my -- where I grew up. My friend brought me these trashy magazines yesterday, so I was going to -- these are my favorite, so --

DR. WILSON: Catching up on celebrity trash?

MR. BOOTH: Yeah.

MR. TOBIN: Oh, yeah.

MR. BOOTH: I like when they show them shopping in the grocery store and stuff.

MS. KELIHER: They're just like you.

MR. BOOTH: They're just like you, yeah. You know what I'm talking about?

DR. WILSON: All right. So, that's your time in the hospital --

MS. KELIHER: She's familiar with those magazines.

MR. BOOTH: They're great for the airplane rides to the East Coast because each one of them is good for about 45 minutes. So, if I don't fly JetBlue and I don't have my TV, then I'll get a couple of these and just all of the sudden we're there, you know?

DR. WILSON: I'm sure (indiscernible) --

MS. KELIHER: I don't even recognize who the people are anymore.

DR. WILSON: I know. I think the same thing.

MS. KELIHER: It's no Brad and Angie.

MR. BOOTH: How about who wore it best?

INTERVIEW OF SCOTT BOOTH

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. That's some good stuff. I'm sure everyone asks you visiting what happened.

A. No. Are you asking me?

Q. I'm sure everybody else has.

A. No, they don't most people don't. My friend, Tanya, came to visit me last night and she hasn't seen me in over a year. And we didn't talk about anything related to the accident. Most people don't. Sorry.

Q. Just give you some tissues. I can't even imagine what you've gone through and what you keep going through. And what you'll continue cycling through and --

A. Yeah. I'm just --

Q. -- the emotional toll.

A. Burns are -- what I learned is they're just not, like, day or week or month. It's literally, like, years. So, your skin will continue to -- like, this looks healed, but it's not. These are skin grafts. And this just -- blisters just open. You can't -- like, it is what -- you just have got to deal with it. There's no -- the doctor here told me that only a time machine can heal. Thought that was pretty funny.

Q. That's what they say with a broken heart and accidents and death of family members. Have you seen your daughter?

A. Oh, yeah. She's home for the summer from college, so she's been here, like, three of four times, at least, maybe more. And my mom comes a lot.

Q. You sound like you've got a lot of community out there.

A. Yeah. The physical therapist said that she's never seen so many guests, you know? And the pilots show up a lot in Vegas. Brad Anadeal (ph.) just texted me right now and said, "Good morning."

MR. TOBIN: Very good.

MR. BOOTH: Former pilot.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Yeah. It seems like a lot of people have been in and out who know you.

A. Yeah.

Q. We know a lot of the same people.

A. Cool. Pilots are good.

Q. Yep. The community is definitely supporting you and that's why we're here is to try to figure out what happened. And we understand that your recollection and what you went through might not be the answer that we're looking for, but that's why we're looking at everything and that's why we've got Eurocopter/Airbus here and we're looking at the certification process.

We just interviewed the FAA a few days ago in Vegas, FDSO. We're looking at everything because, as you know, we're pilots. We're all trying to protect each other and have this not happen again. So, any insight that you can give us, I think I just want to sort of -- if you can tell us what you do remember, starting at the day of the accident, and walk us through, would be probably the most helpful of anything that you can think of.

And when I say walk us through, I mean in a lot of detail. So, like, if you were going to describe -- if you asked me of, like, how I brushed my teeth this morning, this is kind of -- this is how I would give you the answer. I was at my dad's house. I decided to stay there and save the Government money and I noticed that he had Close-Up Toothpaste, which was in a red container, which I thought was odd.

So, I opened it up, and there was, like, a serrated top, which was covered in toothpaste and I started to turn it. And I was turning it and I realized that it had been sealed on. So, I put it down on the counter, which was, like, a blue linoleum and it stuck on there. And when I turned over the cap, I noticed that

it had been sealed shut.

So, I pulled out my -- my toothbrush was in my travel bag that was to the right of the sink, which was kind of, like, elongated silver. So, that's the kind of detail I'm looking for.

A. Wow, that thorough.

Q. Yeah. It's going to be hard. This is not going to be easy to go through, and I encourage you to close your eyes and give us as much as you possibly can, even if you think that it might not be pertinent. Anything can be helpful.

A. Don't remember the exact day of the week it was. Friday, perhaps?

MS. KELIHER: Saturday.

MR. BOOTH: It was a Saturday. I usually work -- when I pick up days for the company -- so, meaning instead of, like, a pilot sending an email out asking for, does anyone want to cover this day? I ask the lead pilots, do you guys need help these days? And they'll send me a list of the month of the days that they're short-handed or that they could use me. So, I -- it was one of the days that I picked up for the company.

So, I stayed at my -- well, I stayed at Rob's house, which I rent a room there just -- and Bill Orvis lives there, too. He's the chief pilot of Sundance. Yeah. We barely see Bill because he goes home to San Diego every Thursday after work. And I usually come into Las Vegas on Thursday afternoon and then do my Trader Joe's and my Whole Foods, get my shopping lined up for the week or

however long I'm going to be there.

And then I go home, watch TV and I use work afternoons. So, there's usually two shifts. It could be staggered more but, at Papillon, there's, like, a group of people, like, if they're at 5:30 and then a group that comes in, you know, 10:30 or, let's say, in the summertime it could be 12:30, like right now, because of the sun -- you know, because of the -- right? So, I --

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Do you want me to switch positions? Is it hard for you to look over this way?

A. No. I can talk this way, too. So, I prefer afternoons. It's not that I stay up late or anything, it's just physically and psychologically I like the heat of the desert sun and I like working afternoons. And I like flying the sunset tours back from the canyon. I find that pretty.

So, that day I believe I flew three flights. I had already done two flights that were canyon landings. One of them could have been an air tour. I don't know. Obviously, you guys know the difference between a landing and air tour, I would imagine, but I think I did two landings or it could've been landing air.

And the final flight of the day was a landing. And I remember going to the kiosk, if you will, where we get our flight manifests printed from. It has your aircraft number that you're going to fly in. It has your passenger's names, weight and balance, and everything on it so you're -- you know that you're in

good graces, if you will.

I called the passengers to -- it was a -- it was busy. All the pilots were grabbing their passengers. So, I waited until -- what I usually do is I wait until everyone's got their groups. It makes it a lot easier to find if you guys were my people. Now, the waiting room is less crowded, so now I can easily find people. So, I found them. I can't remember anyone's name. I know they were British. I'm almost certain everyone was British.

And went to the aircraft and did our safety briefing. And then the manifest tells where everyone is supposed to sit for weight and balance, so everyone sat where they were supposed to. And I did my walk around, got in, did -- went through my checklist and I was one of the last aircraft to take off. So, there was probably six to eight. I'd be guessing, but in front -- and I was one of the, probably, tail-end of a group that were all landing in the canyon.

So, departed on this flight. Departed Boulder City, like I always do, at the sub-station, which is right in Boulder City. I made my last radio call and switched over to the tour frequency. And then you follow -- you just get in line with everyone else. There's no deviating of altitude or direction. You just follow the chain.

Sundance, Maverick, 5 Star Sunny. So, everyone meets at the Hoover Dam and you just -- you know, it's either your decision to

slow down and let them come in or keep the speed up and keep it really tight. And then you just -- you talk to each other. So, it was uneventful. I don't -- I've done this over a thousand -- roughly a thousand times and it was just an ordinary flight to the canyon in an afternoon.

So, I was going east and across -- over Lake Meade and the bay, and it wasn't -- I don't recall it being any turbulence or being bad weather. I don't recall. I don't recall it being -- there was no rain or lightning or -- I don't recall it being bad visibility. It was just a par flight and I don't even recall it being extremely windy in the lake area or closer to Pierce Ferry.

Sometimes, there's a little dip in the hills where if the wind is really howling you'll feel it. The aircraft will hop up a little bit and I don't recall that happening. Usually when it gets that hop, you can tell you're in for a little bit of wind at the entrance of the canyon. And nothing the aircraft can't handle. It handles bad weather pretty good.

So, I went to the entrance of the canyon and from there it's about a couple minutes until you get to the Bat Towers, which is a reporting point to either stay on the air tour or leave. The name of the tour route is the Green 4. So, you leave the Green 4. So, you'd say, Papillon five-five at the Bat Towers, coming off the Green 4, landing quartermaster base. That's a very fair radio call. So, I'm sure I said that.

And started the descent down, so -- and you don't go down on the collective. You don't reduce your airspeed on your descent, you just do a little forward cycle, you know, which it pushes it forward and you keep your speed up because -- in case there's people behind you. You don't want to slow down and be overflown, especially by another company when you're not on -- you don't have the ability to talk to each other, unless it's on the main radio frequency.

So, I -- as I got closer to the -- I call it the quartermaster base, there's multiple landing spots for our company. Don't quote me or hold me to it, but it -- I want to say 10 to 12 aircraft can fit, and possibly more if you just keep extending them back or use the other areas. There's a lot of room.

So, there was a few aircraft already there and I spotted some nice open spaces on the -- straight inside. So, there's two decisions you can make -- and which a lot of the times I go what's called through the notch. When the wind is no factor, I like to go through the notch because it gives the passengers a view of the -- where we're going to land, and also they get a nice big left turn, and we get to come around and land downriver with the flow of the water.

This time -- that's called a straight-in, which is an upriver landing. That radio call is Papillon five-five at the river, straight-in, quartermaster base. Or you can say, going through

the notch and landing downriver. It's a good radio call because two of the competitions, specifically Maverick, when they land at the swamp, they're low, and you don't want to -- to make sure you're on the same page with them coming in to land at the swamp. And you coming around the notch, you want to keep eyes on each other.

So, when I got just prior to the river, I could see also the direction of some aircraft were pointed downriver. Some aircraft were pointed upriver, which generally means to me that the wind is not as much a factor because pilots are shooting the notch and upriver. So, it's -- right. But then I saw the windsock and it was -- it called for a straight-in landing. And I can't remember if the windsock was pegged straight, like a frozen rope out, which would mean, you know, some pretty significant wind, but I do recall seeing it waver a little bit, like, kind of waffle.

And I -- as I got closer to the landing spot, I was, you know, slowing down, I couldn't go straight-in. I just got hit with a violent gust of wind, like, similar to a microburst that would come down on you. It was like, I don't know, I want to say, like, when you experience low-level wind shear that they talk about sometimes that you experience in Vegas that the ATIS reports.

And what it did was, it just took the aircraft from me. It just spun it and I couldn't fly it. It just took it so quickly. And I just -- after that I remember being on the ground on about

50 feet from the aircraft up on a -- kind of a ledge and I remember my pants being on fire. And I remember sitting there, dusting my pants off.

I don't remember how I got out of the aircraft and I don't remember how much -- I know the pilots came over and one of them used their belt to -- I think it was a belt to do a tourniquet on my left leg because my left leg was really badly broken. And the couple -- the pilot stayed with me and eventually some flight medics came, some nurses, and I remember -- I just remember them putting jackets on me, like, covering me with, like, blankets and stuff.

And I really -- I don't remember the helicopter taking me out of there. And I think it was one or -- one and a half months later when I reopened my eyes at UMC. That's all I got.

Q. So, take us through a -- walk me through in the toothpaste-style example of when you first called out bat tower, what you can remember.

A. I don't remember because it's been something that I've done roughly over 1,000 times. So, it wasn't anything out of the ordinary until the aircraft got taken away from me. I mean, I could say at the bat towers, I gently nudged the cyclic forward to decrease our altitude but, I mean, that's such a common sense -- nothing was out of the ordinary. Nothing was out of training guidelines.

Everything I did was what I've done a thousand-plus times.

It was business as usual the whole way down until the gust of wind just picked up and just grabbed the aircraft. I don't think I can toothpaste it for you. I don't have any memory of anything out of the ordinary.

Q. Any feelings that you had? Pedals? Stick?

A. No. No, it was a normal -- it was a -- it was probably an aircraft -- if we go back and look, it's probably an aircraft I've flown maybe 100 times. They all have their -- for the most part, they're all the same. Some of them, like, maybe the seat doesn't go back as far as the one in the other aircraft, so you have to adjust your pedals, maybe, closer to you or farther away from you.

But I sit the same configuration in every aircraft: seat all the way back, pedals all the way forward. Even for my height, most people flip the pedals out to give them more room with their legs, but I like mine close because I like to be on the pedals and really feel -- especially when I'm leaving the airport base -- the airport and the -- you get a crosswind or a tailwind.

It's a lot easier for me to hover and keep low to the ground with my feet in that position. So, they were in that position on the day of the accident.

Q. If I was going to make a documentary movie and I'm setting up the film of how everything should be to recreate what it was like in the accident, what -- do you remember of any of the helicopters of which way they were pointing? Was anyone behind you? In front of you? Maverick? Sundance? Do you remember anything of --

A. I remember our quartermaster base had an aircraft pointing upriver, so straight-in landings, and had an aircraft pointing downriver, through the notch landings. I don't recall. I think there was one Papillon aircraft behind me. You guys would have to check and verify that. I don't recall. And as far as Maverick and Sundance, definitely don't recall. And they wouldn't be a factor for me on a straight-in landing anyway.

Q. Do you know which pads you were going to?

A. Yeah. I was going to park the aircraft behind the last ones that have already -- on a upriver landing, there's -- they can -- you can fit one, two, three, four, five where the picnic area is. You can -- so, if you're sitting at the picnic area facing upriver, you can put an aircraft right up in the picnic area out to the right and then you can just stack them behind.

So, there's always room. You can go -- it goes very far back towards the canyon wall. There's always room. So, I saw an area where I know I've landed before when there's been three or four, five aircraft already in front of me. So, that's where I was in my mind and I was setting up for that. So, I was slowing down, doing all the muscle memory maneuvers that you do to get your -- to shoot your approach. And -- yeah.

Q. When did you encounter the wind?

A. Excuse me. I'm not 100 percent sure, but it was when -- it wasn't when I was facing straight into the base. It's when -- so, let's say the -- all the landing spots are over here. As I came

this way and started, like, a left turn -- and then just got hit with it and started --

Q. How did it feel in your seat, do you remember? Up, down, high G, low G, right, left? Do you remember any of the sensations?

A. No. It was so fast. I don't remember.

Q. Do you remember feeling what it was like on your pedals?

A. No.

Q. So, you've done this so many times. Have you ever felt wind there before?

A. Not like this. Nothing even close. I've had -- I've landed before where I went through the notch and landed, and I felt a slight tailwind. But the windsock was indicating -- when I flew in, was indicating a downriver landing. So, it made -- it went -- that's why I went through the notch and landed downriver. But when I came in for the final, could feel a little wind and then the wind had shifted.

And it -- and then it was saying, oh, you should do a straight-in landing. So, those are ones where you can get all the way to the ground and then do a pedal turn and then put yourself into the wind and land, or you can just land because the aircraft can handle a little bit of a tailwind. It's not a big deal for most helicopters on the light turbine side. It can -- but, so -- yes, I've experienced wind down in the canyon before.

And I mean, I've been in there in thunderstorms in that

vicinity, but I've never experienced just -- it was like being blindsided by a wave, like an invisible wave, that just wanted to take the aircraft and run with it. So, that's all I remember.

Q. Do you remember hearing anything?

A. No. Oh, I remember hearing the passengers make some noise, like, whoa. Something like that. I do remember that. So, that was kind of eerie. And the -- I've thought about that before, you know, because I feel really connected to those people. It's just such a tragic accident. So, to remember that a couple of months after the accident is tough.

Q. Do you remember where people were seated as far as gender or what they're wearing or anything of where everyone's situated?

A. I believe there was a girl up front and then, to my right and in the back was a guy. I want to say back-right. But, no, I don't remember.

Q. Do you remember anything that they were talking about or saying during the ride?

A. They were -- I know they weren't quiet, but I don't remember. I mean, I -- we always -- I always play music and point out a few things, but I think I recall that they weren't too interested in facts about -- you have to learn about your passengers, you know? If you just talk the whole time, you can ruin the flight for them, so I think these are the -- I tend to point out some things and share some facts. And if they want to talk, I'll talk to them, but I don't recall these people want -- being chatty towards me,

for sure. Yeah.
Q. Do you remember what you were listening to?
A. I listen to the same stuff. It's the tour music tracks that we have in there. I just hit it on what's called a play all and it just plays all the way through, starting at -- with the first song, goes all the way through. So, I don't even remember what songs are on that list anymore. I think there's, like, some U2, Where the Streets Have No Name, which is always nice when you go into the canyon. It kind of makes a pretty soundtrack to the -- what you're seeing. And there's some Elvis for when you're flying out Vegas. It's fun to play some Elvis when you're flying down the strip.
Q. What about when you're landing? What do you hear (indiscernible)?
A. It's just whatever's on the -- like I said, if you hit play all, it just -- I don't recall what song would be on when you're coming in for landing. But it's not -- just to clarify, it's not blaring, it's really low and in the headsets. And with -- when there's any doubt of if I need to be extra vigilant, because it's busy, I just turn it off in my headset.
Q. I see.
A. Yeah.
Q. Do you get really chatty passengers?
A. Sometimes.
Q. I can imagine.

A. Sometimes. And sometimes you get groups of foreign people. Most of the guests are foreign. Sometimes you get groups from certain countries that they don't -- they just speak to each other whole time in the headset and they can't understand any English anyway, so they just chat nonstop. And that's fine by me. I can turn them off so I don't have to hear it and -- or, if I feel like it, I listen to them.

Q. What do you usually carry with you?

A. My headset bag and -- which is in my backpack, which has my water bottles and car keys. Sometimes I have my computer with me because, you know, some -- when I'm in the office, if my flight doesn't sell or there's maintenance on my aircraft for some reason, then I can get on my laptop and get some -- you know, it's just fun to have your laptop there so you can, I don't know, read the news or whatever you want to do.

Q. Do you remember how you got the weather that day?

A. It's on our briefing sheet. So, when I came in, I just look at the forecast that's on the sheet. And you have to initial in and sign in what time you got there. And then that's on one doc and then another doc is -- it's got, like, the takeoff and landing times. How you can't -- you know, don't take off to go to the canyon after this time and things like that.

So, you initial and then it has notes at the bottom that I can talk about. You know, don't park your aircraft this direction today because we're doing washing of the tarmac or whatever. So,

you have to read all those notes and then you initial.
Q. Do you remember anything about what the briefing sheet said?
A. No.
Q. And then in between flights, do you look at any other weather?
A. No, because you were just in the canyon. And I believe my flights were back-to-back-to-back. There wasn't, like, a -- wasn't an hour- or 2-hour break between each flight. It was pretty much land and take the passengers to the door. And then go wipe down the aircraft, and maybe go to the bathroom and drink some water, and get ready to go back out there. It's only a half-an-hour flight, so it's not like you're exuding a lot of energy. And it wasn't especially -- it wasn't hot that day.
Q. Do you remember if it was bumpy at all during the day?
A. I don't remember. But if it was, I would remember because it's not bumpy. Does that make sense? It would be an unusual occurrence because the flight is 90-percent-plus smooth all the way to the canyon. Except sometimes you'll get a very rare -- and it's been -- I can count on a couple of fingers where I've gotten a -- like, a 40-, 50-knot tailwind. So, you're just flying to the canyon. Like just -- and then when you come back, you're just -- you're, like, at 80 --
Q. Dog.
A. Yeah. You're just sitting there just going, oh, man. When are we going to get there? So, those are the things I remember.

Like, I can remember, again, on this same hand, passengers throughout the last 6 years that were not nice. But most of them are beautiful and perfect, so I don't remember them. I only remember a couple of people that were just nasty or really drunk and I had to, like, not just -- get people to help me, like, explain to them that they can't go flying. Stuff like that.

Q. Do you remember if the passengers had anything onboard with them?

A. Such as?

Q. Purses, anything?

A. No. I don't -- it was just another flight with just another group of people, so I wouldn't remember. Nothing out of the ordinary.

Q. When you said you were coming in and you felt that wind, how did you know it was wind?

A. I mean, it wasn't any -- there wasn't someone physically pushing the aircraft, it was just -- and you tell that it -- you could just feel it. It's just a feeling in the aircraft you can feel that when -- I've seen -- okay. So, see this? I've seen an aircraft parked on the ramp and then heavy wind came through the airport and actually spun the same aircraft 180 degrees while it was tied down on the ramp. Now, that was the effect of what happened to me -- us, except it went around a couple of times. I don't know how many.

Q. Do you know which direction?

A. I don't remember. But I'd be speculating. I think it was right, clockwise. I think.
Q. But you couldn't -- you don't remember feeling --
A. No.
Q. -- which way it was taking you?
A. I don't remember much about the accident except the aircraft just starting to spin. And then me being outside of the ship with my pants on fire.
Q. And going back, you don't know or have any recollection of which way you were ejected out?
A. No, I didn't even know -- I don't know how I got out. I don't think anyone pulled me out or else I would've heard that story. Unless someone doesn't want to come forward and share that.
Q. Do you remember what type of briefing that you gave the passengers?
A. I gave the standard briefing required by the company and the FAA. It wasn't -- I don't -- it wouldn't have been anything out of the ordinary. It would have been, here's your life belts, you know, life jacket belts. Here's how to put them on. Here's how to use them. Don't smoke. Don't open the doors in flight. Here's the location of the fire extinguisher. Here's how to use the seat belts and get out of them.
I always include how to use the radios because they'll string them all up, like, looked like a -- what do you call that? Puppet

show. Make it look crazy back there. They'll get out of the aircraft and the seatbelt will still be partially buckled, and that's just -- it's crazy. No, nothing out of the ordinary for the briefing, just the standard stuff.

Q. But they watch a video beforehand, anyway.

A. They do.

Q. Do they usually know how to use seat belts?

A. The five -- it's the harness. And I would say depending on what country you're from would dictate how you -- how good you are with the seat belts, but I don't think -- I don't recall these people having any problems, but I still demonstrate it.

Q. What about people from the U.K., usually?

A. They're usually fine.

Q. Oh.

A. I mean, it's India that struggles. And I think it's just because they don't wear seat belts there. There's quite a few countries that don't wear seat belts at all. There's probably more countries don't wear seat belts than do, if I had to guess.

Q. When you're trying to figure out what the weather's going to be like at quartermaster, what do you do look at? How do you determine if you have tail wind, head wind?

A. You can hear from the pilots that have already been down there. That's one. Direction will say, hey, the wind is -- a lot of -- they'll call in and say, hey, straight-in looks really good today. Or they'll say, hey, guys, it's going to be downriver.

That's one way because, like I said, I'm not the first one down there. So I can pick it up that direction or our pilot -- our lead pilots could tell us because they gathered some information.

So, it's just more info that we have. Or the -- you know, the windsock. I use the windsock and the other aircrafts that are already down there. So, like I said, if they're all pointing downriver and the windsock shows a downriver landing, then that's something you want to do. You just -- you can do the downriver landing, but you can still land at an upriver spot. You just point the other direction. There's nothing wrong with that. So, that's how.

Q. You said that somebody had come in just before you. Do you see them land?

A. I didn't see anybody land.

Q. Do you remember if anyone's blades were still turning.

A. No.

Q. You don't remember or they weren't turning?

A. I don't remember. I don't think so and I don't remember.

Q. What happens if you're setting up for landing and passengers are getting your pad that you were aiming for?

A. You can do a go-around or you can kind of slow down. If there's -- if the situation presents itself where you have enough power and you're into the wind and stuff, you can slow down a little bit more and give -- typically, what will happen is the other pilot of those passengers will grab them and get them out of

the way. But you can do a go-around. It's pretty common. Go-arounds are pretty common. I've done quite a few down there to -- if people are in the way or if the wind was doing something different than I thought it was. Yeah.

Q. When you chose the pad that you were going to, you said that you normally do the notch approach. Why did you not go through the notch? Do you remember what the decision was?

A. Yeah. I think because the windsock was showing at the time a straight-in landing was best and there was room for a straight-in landing. So, that was -- you see -- I mean, straight-in landing is -- it's no-brainer. There's always a pad or landing spot available towards the very back. It might not be ideal and we have to walk farther to get to the picnic area under the shaded -- I don't know what they call it. A ramada or something. But it's -- yeah.

Q. Do you remember anything about your flight in January?

A. January. What do you mean?

Q. Just anything about the last time that you had flown prior to the accident?

A. No. Again, it's like muscle memory. It's like -- it's just like we all drive our cars. It's like, even though I'm not there every day -- I used to be there 7 days straight, 7 days off. And even when I started working not in a full-time capacity, I was still -- oh, let me -- it'll go forever. Can you grab that? I'll tell them to stop. Hi. I'm going to call you back, okay? Thank

you. It's lunch.
Q. Ah.
A. But if you don't answer, it'll go, like, 20 -- it'll go 20 times. Sorry, what was I saying?
Q. Muscle memory --
A. Oh, no, no.
MS. KELIHER: You were talking about not -- when you started not working full-time.
MR. BOOTH: So, when I went to a part-time capacity, I still worked, I believe that month, 8 to 10 days. And I've consistently been in the 8-day level, except for, you know, vacations or -- one time in October of 2017, I went to Nepal. And I told everybody well -- like, months ahead of time -- like, 6 months ahead of time that I was doing this trek through the Himalayas and this is -- I'm not going to be available.
And they were slow anyway. They didn't -- you know, they said fine. But I don't -- first of all, I love flying and I love the company. So, I like to -- and I like Las Vegas. And I like my roommates. So, there's no reason not -- like, if I'm sitting around doing nothing, why not go to work? So, I like to go -- I like going there.
Q. And I saw that you didn't have that many AStar hours. Did you purposely choose to only do the (indiscernible) --
A. I wanted to fly out of Las Vegas. And I flew almost specifically out of Las Vegas for, like, a year, maybe more. I

was only -- every time I went to work, I was only flying out of Las Vegas and they don't fly the AStars out of there. And that was my -- I really enjoyed that.

But the reason why I don't have too many AStar hours is because I had a poor flight on my check ride with a gentleman and I thought he was a less-than-stellar pilot. And I don't -- I didn't like the way he was -- he'd tell me to do something, and I'd execute it, but the way -- and not the way he would've done it. He wasn't a very high-time AStar pilot at all, but it just turned out he was doing my check ride.

So, he said, let's -- when we went back to the airport, he said, let's just discontinue this and, you know, let's pick it up later. And I just didn't bring it up and they didn't bring it up. So, I basically stayed in the B4 and kept myself in Las Vegas, which I like flying out of anyway even though it's a longer day and longer flight. That's the reason why I don't have the AStar time is because I -- we didn't choose to do the check ride again.

Q. Did you like flying the AStar?

A. It wasn't as comfortable to me as the B4. I like -- it just -- the bigger bus feeling of the aircraft. A lot of the guys like flying the B3e by themselves and going up to the top. And they just yank it up and just shoot up like a rocket and all that stuff. But, I don't know, that's not me anyway. It's not my style of flying. I'm pretty methodical and slow and boring. I'm a boring pilot.

Q. Have you ever ran out of pedal in a B4?
A. In hovering at the airport, I've had the pedal pretty darn close to the limit, but I've never ran out. I always tell people, if you're going to run out, just set the aircraft down. Sorry, I'm itchy. Itchy.
Q. That's what happens with pain meds.
A. No, it's the -- my back is -- so, my right leg had a lot of skin grafts on it before I came to this -- from the other hospital. And before I came here, they took all the skin from my back to do that. And because they'd harvested my back so many times, this time it's not healing. So, they're trying, like, three different pain medication -- or, three different ointments to get it to work.

And until it heals, I can't go to rehab because it's a different hospital and they don't have -- they're not set up to do wound care the way this hospital is in a burn ICU. So, the doctor's actually going to look at my -- he called it a flank. They're going to take down all my dressings and look at it this afternoon at 3:00. And if he says that it's something that's healing good enough, then they're going to send me to Long Beach Memorial Acute Rehab early next week. So, that'll be my next step to recovery.
Q. Go back to Long Beach.
A. Yeah. Where I start -- you know what's really funny is that's the hospital I was born at.

Q. Wow. That's right. You went to Wilson, right?
A. I went to Lola Rogers, Wilson, Long Beach City, and Cal State Dominguez Hills.
Q. I was at Millikin.
A. So were my cousins. My cousin Greg and Mike both graduated from Millikin. It's a good school. The Rams. I buy my tennis shoes right by Millikin. They have a specialty tennis shoe shop for people with wide -- one foot's wider than the other. So, pay them a little bit more money, but you get a good shoe.
Q. I see.
A. I don't know how they do it, but they do it. I took them to Nepal with me and used them all -- used them more than my boots. You know, everyone's hiking in these huge fancy $200 boots, and I was just having fun in my New Balance. Walked the whole way down in my New Balance. All 3 days. The Sherpas laughed at me the whole time.
Q. Do you remember your last training and check ride?
A. It was in -- it's always in December. Yeah. I remember the -- I did a -- I know I did a training flight with Daniel Hicken and I'm almost -- don't hold me to it, but I think I did my check ride with Tyler Carver. Is that right?
Q. I don't remember if the check ride was with --
MS. KELIHER: Tomlinson.
MR. BOOTH: Oh, was it?
Q. Tomlinson.

A. Mike Tomlinson? Yeah, it was. Okay. Yeah. I remember that.

Q. Do you remember anything about them?

A. The check ride, I remember, was pretty straight-forward and we didn't have any issues on that. It's something I've done, like, six times, anyway. And the ground was fine. I think in the training we had encountered some pretty high-wind situations at the airport, where we couldn't hit our spot on the 180 autos.

It was just coming up short or -- it's like you made -- as you had a nice tail wind, and then soon as you entered the downwind and made the right turn, it was coming up short. But it had a little bit to do with Daniel, too, because he teaches -- the way he likes to do it is different than the way Celeste likes to do it, which is different than the way Tomlinson, and everyone one of those -- everyone teaches a quick stop different.

And that's the situation I ran into on the AStar with that particular instructor, is that they he -- they were adamant about one way, but -- no. But Daniel's a great pilot and very safe, very safety conscious, and a nice, just calm, nice person. All business. No joking around. But I remember that we -- the only issue on that training was the 180 autos and the high wind. And without the wind, those are no-brainers, you just -- and on the check ride, I nailed it, like, no problem. And the wind was nothing to what it was when we were out doing our training. And I don't recall if -- yeah. Sorry.

Q. Were those -- did you do those at Boulder City?
A. Boulder City. You do -- we do all our flight training out of Boulder City.
Q. Do you dread when it comes December and you have to redo everything?
A. You know what? Everybody, every pilot, dreads the re-currency stuff because it's the AvStar, which -- on the computer, which takes -- you know, if you do it right, it takes a while. You know, if you just click, click, click, click clicking, and you're okay with mediocre, like, an 80 percent or 70 percent, then you can get through it in a couple of days. But, you know, it's -- check rides are always a pressure until you're doing them.
And it's just super calming because it's the same maneuvers that you've done so many times, you know? But, yeah, I would say every December it's just like, oh, no. I got to do this again? And who am I going to get? Am I going to get -- which examiner am I going to get to -- what are they going to make me go through, you know? But --
MR. TOBIN: (Indiscernible).
MR. BOOTH: Oh, thanks bro. That's okay.
DR. WILSON: It's like you need a roll.
MR. TOBIN: Yeah. There (indiscernible) --
MR. BOOTH: That's good.
BY MS. KELIHER:
Q. So, I'm assuming you don't do any autos all year, and then in

December --

A. Right. Because you're flying with --

MR. BOYD: Can't see you from that side. Yeah. I got a better angle now.

MR. BOOTH: Thanks. Yeah. Because you can't do autos with passengers. It's illegal and you get fired. It's just no point in it. All those reasons, right? So, it's true, you only -- and I believe that's the case with, like, PHI and a bunch of other companies. You know, training is expensive, too. But you're supposed to be able to have those skills and carry them out throughout the year.

Q. When you did the training flight, how does it usually space out of -- then you do the check ride that day?

A. It can be that day, but mine were spaced out throughout a couple days. Maybe, like, a week. Did a flight with Daniel, did another flight with him, maybe one more, and then -- could have been two. It's usually two.

Q. Two training flights.

A. Two training flights, usually. Some people have -- I think they've knocked it out in one, but I believe -- you'd have to ask Burl and them, maybe. But I think it's -- I think I did two. And then the -- on the actual check ride was -- yeah. It's just two and then the check ride. I mean, it's plenty of time to get your -- to hone in your skills.

Q. When did you decide to go part time?

A. Well, I actually quit. And I believe it was December 2014 or '15. I don't know. Exact date, I don't know. But what happened was -- is I resigned to the chief and then he asked me -- and this was in, like, August. And he asked me when my currency ran out and I told him December. And then the lead pilot over in Las Vegas -- her name was Yoshi Macklow. She's just an angel, and probably one of my best friends. Sorry.

She wrote an email to Simon, who was the chief at the time, and -- like, a really nice email and asked if it would be a good idea to keep me around. And Simon said I could stay through December if I worked. And I ended up working, like I said, 8 days a month starting in August, September, October. I just worked. And in December, I think Tyler Carver came to me and said, I sent your passcode for the Avstar. And that meant they were going to give me another check ride. So, I'm like, this is the best. I'm going to get to keep this job.

Q. Do you use the flight benefits a lot?

A. You know what? Just to go back between Long Beach and Las Vegas. And I drive half the time. So, no one enjoys the benefits. And my dad's 94 years old and he's not going to get on a plane. He's been around the world a thousand times. My mom was a stewardess and she hates flying, so she's not -- she doesn't use them. And she would rather pay $500 than wait on standby in an empty plane. That's just her style.

She's like, I'm not going to be kicked off a plane and

embarrassed. And so -- but I don't jet off to Paris every weekend if you're -- you know, keeping the flight benefits was nothing to do with keeping flying at Papillon. It was the people. It's just --

Q. Isn't it constantly changing, the rotation?

A. Yeah. Constantly getting new friends.

Q. Yeah.

A. And keeping the old ones. I mean, I've -- probably have, like, 500 -- or, 300 pilots in my phone. They're all good people.

Q. Do you find anything challenging about not flying as much?

A. No.

Q. No?

A. What's Curtis' last name?

MR. TOBIN: Cornelius.

MR. BOOTH: Curtis Cornelius, he didn't fly for 10 years. And I asked him the same question and he said, not at all. He flew in Vietnam and flew EMS back before there was night vision and -- at night, he's an amazing pilot. I think he's taking this harder than I am.

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. Did you ever want to fly EMS? Did you have an end goal of --

A. That was my -- that's something I wanted to do in my 50s, but now I can't do it. But DeFuniak Springs, Florida, wanted to sit on the porch swing and wait for a call.

Q. So, you started flying here?

A. Long Beach.
Q. And then can you just go -- walk us through, you were flying here and then you went to Missouri thereafter?
A. Sure. I started at Rotor Aviation in Long Beach. I went and checked out Silver State and they wanted, like, a ridiculous amount of money. And I Googled them and just found out all these horror stories, so they were out right away. And I went over to LA Helicopters and they were -- there was, like, a couch that a dog had eaten through and, like, one helicopter and a bunch of foreign people, like, all British guys that were instructors and stuff and it didn't feel right.

And then I found Rotor Aviation, which only had -- it had a brand new R22, that was actually leased to them by a cardiovascular surgeon from this hospital, and had a 44 that was leased to them. And I went over there and you walk through this private -- it's an FBO to get to their office, so it's, like, cookies and iced tea and a big, huge aquarium. And then I was like, wow, this is nice. And then when I went in up to their office and it was, you know, typical flight school office with two desks for the lead pilots and a couch and a whiteboard and charts and things like that.

But it -- and then I took -- went and did a demo flight. And then I had some money coming to me from a company I worked for and it was about enough money to cover flight school, except they could -- they'd only pay you a certain amount each year, so I just

paid for the flight school on my credit card every time I flew out. I'd let them run the card and then I'd get the reimbursement money from my -- that company at the end of each year and I'd just reimburse myself.

But I started at Rotor and my instructor went to be -- went on to Papillon and his instructor before him went to Papillon. And Robert Downie, who I flew with, went to Papillon and then Nick Phong (ph.), who I flew with there at Rotor went to Papillon. And then Nick and Rob got me in the door. It was a hard door to get in, let me tell you, bro. They weren't in need. It was a -- they had a stacks of resumes like this much and I had to get mine in there.

Anyway, I would go back to the flight training. So, I got my -- I think I got my private in about 5 months, just pretty standard. And then after getting my -- I did all my check rides with Tim Tucker. So, after getting the private rating, I started working on the commercial and -- which you need to build a lot of hours and I -- cross country and stuff. So, these -- an opportunity came from Brazil where a guy that owned a Robinson dealership down there, clients were -- didn't want to buy new ones because they didn't want to pay -- the sales in Brazil, they have a high luxury tax. But if they're flown in, something can be done.

And so, they bought a couple 44s through the owner of the Rotor Aviation Company and then they wanted to -- they needed

pilots to fly them down there. And so, I was able to negotiate, I believe, for $100 an hour to fly one of the 44s from here to Brazil. So, it's to Florida, then through the Caribbean, and then Guyana, Suriname, French Ghana, and Macapá, Brazil, and then all the way -- you can take the coast or you can go interior and down to Sao Paulo area.

So, I think I got, like, 83 hours on top of the 60 that I already had put me almost to the commercial level. And then I -- and for -- it was, like, $8,500 I got, which would've -- 44 rental time is $400 to $500 an hour, so I got, like, a smoking deal and I got to fly the whole way as a brand-new pilot. I was -- I got to do all kinds of -- land at tons of different airports, and, you know, do the radios and do general declarations, and go up to the towers and file flight plans, and do flight followings.

It was way out of my comfort zone because my comfort zone was talking to Long Beach, talking to Torrance, going through Compton. Talking to El Monte, talking to Fullerton and going through LAX and going over to Van Nuys and -- I mean, which is really hard to do for people that don't fly in airspaces like they have in L.A. up north from San Jose to SFO.

And that -- there's Mountain View Airport, there's San Carlos Airport, there's so many to talk to. Similar to Florida when you're on the 95 going south, it just like, Charlie, Delta, Delta, Delta, Delta, Delta, Delta, Charlie, Delta, Delta, Orlando, Bravo. And

it's fun. And I find that stuff really fun. So, it was more of a challenge to do this huge international flight with the raft, you know, with the emergency supplies and the flares and the raft at your feet.

And you had to plan, you know, okay, if something happens, you're going to do the auto. And then when we get to the water, you know, we'll get the raft -- we'll throw the raft out. I said, well -- I said, why do we want -- should we throw the raft out? Does it even float? I was serious and we didn't know. You know, that was also something we laughed about. We all said we'd throw the raft out first and then swim to it. And I was like -- we'd laugh later. Does it even float? Or does it float only when it's removed out of its package, right? Because it's heavy.

So, I got the commercial then I started working on the instrument with Bill Orvis. And we did our instrument and I took the test -- the written test for instrument instructor at the same time because they're actually the same questions. And then I took the -- both of those tests with Tim. And I passed my flight instructor test on the first time.

I had a really good book that I built for teaching. And then I passed my instrument instructor test on the first time, too, which I was proud of because a lot of people have to redo the CFIs test. They get -- you know, they get beat up pretty bad in those. Yeah. So, yeah.

Q. And then built some hours before going over to Missouri.

A. I think I did another Brazil flight, though. A very famous race car driver in Brazil has bought a 44 and he sent his brother to pick it up, but his brother didn't have the right certificate to pick it up from the factory or to be able to fly in the United States legally. So, he needed -- they needed a pilot and no one was really available but me.

So, I actually got paid a couple grand to give him flight lessons here at the -- in Long Beach at the airport. And then go to Brazil. And he and I had a great time. We got along so well. And he was probably in his late '50s, early '60s. And it was great to have someone that spoke Portuguese when we got to Brazil. And so, that brought me over to, like, I want to say -- I can't remember, but I want to say 600 hours or so; 5-, 600.

And Nick, who worked at Rotor Aviation, had got a job from Ryan who worked at Rotor Aviation, so Ryan hooked up Nick. And this was at, like, the Ozarks and it's, like, 2-minute, 5-minute and 10-minute rides, in a 44 just down the -- around the lake. So, they -- Nick got me in the door there and I had an interview, and I flew out there and did a flight with the chief, who was working at PHI at the time or just quit because his wife was pregnant and she didn't want him to be out there doing that job anymore. Yeah. So, I did -- I think I started at, I want to say, Labor Day weekend. Is that in May?

Q. Yeah.

MS. KELIHER: September, October.

MR. TOBIN: Memorial --

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. Memorial Day.

A. Oh, it's -- okay. So, I did Memorial Day. I went out there and did Memorial Day weekend and then flew back, got the rest of my stuff and drove to Missouri with -- I brought one of my motorcycles with me and so I was towing it on the back of the car. And had a roof rack full of -- I basically had a ton of stuff and I drove out to the lake and it was a great job. It's the greatest minimum wage job I ever had.

It was, like, $8 an hour and I got to fly poker runs when the -- with these boats that were going, like, 120 miles an hour. And the camera guys would want to -- they'd want to be right there. So, I'd fly right over the top of the boat and then kind of give it a turn so the guy on the camera could shoot down onto the boat and stuff. It was really fun.

Q. So, how did you decide to go to Papillon as opposed to Maverick or Sundance or --

A. Well, I didn't have any turbine time, so I -- Maverick was out of the question. And then -- it's also the schedule that was offered was seven-and-seven at Papillon and that worked best for my -- for what I wanted in life. And so, I was the last seven-on, seven-off pilot hired out of the Boulder City Office by Papillon. And in my class was a guy that was hired to do five-and-two.

So, the schedule really made it appealing and I only applied

to Papillon. And in addition, I didn't know anyone at any other company, so it only made sense to follow Nick and Rob, Mischa, Richard, all the people that have -- and two of them were still there. Like, Nick and Rob were still there, so they could bug the training director and stuff about me.

Q. And then, the training that you received in your starting class, can you recall anything about it? How would you rate it?

A. It's overwhelming with regards to learning the systems of an aircraft, the engine and just things. They're really thorough. I think all the companies are really thorough and I know the training manuals that Papillon gives us that we work through are thick. And then it's all illustrated by PowerPoint slides, so every -- and then they do a good job of showing the slide, explaining it, following it up in the book, and then going out to the actual aircraft and putting your hands on it and understanding how things work.

And so -- but it was still a lot to take in, you know? You take it in class for half a day and then go home. And, you know, you could check out books from them and stuff, and go home and try to learn more about it. But I'd already had the Avstar. They want that completed before you go into the training. So, that -- thanks, bro. So, that helped a little bit to be prepared.

But, yeah -- and their flight training is good. I think you get 5 hours in the aircraft minimum. If you need more, they'll give you more. I think I needed a little bit more than the

initial five. Another guy in my class only needed five but he had a bunch of JetRanger time.

Q. Do you ever feel pressure to fly?

A. Never at any company, especially Papillon. They're really, really good about backing up the PIC, you know? If there's weather or wind -- I mean, we had -- for example, we had a person that, whenever there was lightening, they would say they're not going to fly, even though the lightening was 10 miles over here. They would say, it's visible, it's in the vicinity, I'm not going.

And that's not -- maybe that's not something I would've done because I know it's moving this way and it's over there, and if nothing's showing over here and it's clear. But, yeah, as far as high turbulence, if you want to turn around for any reason, it's -- any valid reason, you're 100 percent backed up. Never felt any pressure to do anything.

Q. Anything change with Simon becoming the chief pilot?

A. Got better. More regimented. Like, he's not your friend, he's your boss. And he's fair and he equally dishes it out, too. So, you could be -- no matter if you're 5 minutes late, you're late and you're going to hear about it. And, you know, if your uniform's sloppy or dirty, he'll let you know. If your shoes are not the right color. He was just -- he's good about not playing favorites.

He was a -- just a good boss and a pleasure to work for. And I like him personally, too. And I'm on the older side of the

pilots, too. Like, I'm in my 40s. A lot of the pilots are younger and it's their first job, so maybe they never experienced, you know, a strict boss before. And I had already had probably 25, 30 jobs since I was 12 years old. And I had crazy bosses, so Simon was, like, a pleasure. And he's a pleasure to talk to.

Q. How about the leads?

A. The leads are good, too. When I first started at Papillon, the leads were a little bit not approachable, but I was maybe a little intimidated by them because they were leads. But as I got more experience and a lot more time in the aircraft, and, you know, flew into turbulence, and flew in the thunderstorms, and flew -- just got a lot of experience in different situations, I felt that I could handle the aircraft just as good as someone that's a lead.

But I mean, they have -- some of them went to the factories and got training, and they did a lot of flight training, so they're going be -- going to have more muscle memory on some of the emergency procedures than I would. But the leads are very -- now at Papillon, very approachable, very kind, great to fly with, and accommodating for people that want to switch a schedule or switch a day, or something like that.

Q. You indicated -- when you were talking with one of the leads, you indicated that you were having some family problems. Is there anything going on in your life?

A. No, I wasn't -- I couldn't have been happier. Like,

everything's -- my life was perfect before the accident. Like, literally perfect. I had everything I wanted and all the little toys, like, my little boat and my motorcycles and -- no. I don't know why anyone would say that.

Q. Well, I just saw the text messages between you. You said something about family issues.

A. No. Let me see the text.

Q. They're buried in my computer.

MS. KELIHER: It said something like, oh, sorry it took me a while to get back to you. I was dealing with some family stuff, or something like that.

MR. BOOTH: Yeah. But nothing to -- I mean, I don't know -- I'd have to know the context. It could have been -- I mean, my dad's 94 and he calls me the name of my oldest brother. And I'll make him breakfast and he'll forget what -- he'll forget that it was what it was or he'll -- we'll go to the restaurant and he'll -- he won't know what he wants to order, so I'll have to order for him. It could have been something simple like that.

But he has a hell of a good life. He just turned 94 and had a birthday party with -- that Batman mask was actually from his birthday party. My mom brought decorations and masks and stuff. The people that are still alive from my dad's fraternity were there. But, no, I honestly do not have any family problems, not with my daughter, not with social life, not with friends, not with anyone at work. Before this accident my life was perfect.

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. Did you normally take three flights a day?

A. That's what you're given. They want everybody to fly at least two, but mostly it's three. Sometimes four. When we're short-handed, I've done four landings in a row. I did it for, like, two H's (ph.) straight, so two 7's straight -- 7 days straight of four landings. And then came back then a week after and did 7 days straight.

So, a lot of people like it because you get a lot of flight time and you get a lot of tips, you know? Sorry, that did irritate me, that family thing. I don't know why that would --

Q. It just seemed like a passing thing but I just wanted to check (indiscernible) --

A. It'd have to be -- I'd have to know the context of it. I usually respond to my text messages almost immediately because that's what they're for. They're for quick responses. Unless you guys get my mom's phone number, then you will get diatribes. You'll get essays. She talk-texts and everybody just -- it's so embarrassing, I can't even talk about it anymore, so.

Q. I saw that -- and we were talking with Robert Downey was flying with you that day.

A. I don't recall.

Q. He said that he didn't get the third flight, but you did.

A. Yeah.

Q. Is it just a luck of the draw? How does it work of --

A. He's one of the most, if not -- he's almost the most senior pilot out there. So, if he's already done two and there's brand new people that have literally only done two or one, then Rob most likely will not do the third one because he doesn't get paid any more money if -- he doesn't get another dollar for doing the third one. And he's been there for almost 10 years, so it's respect to let him go home early as opposed to making him do another one when the guy that just started a month ago is, you know, knocking off after coming in in the afternoon, doing one and going home.

For morale, for specifically to Rob -- and he knows I'll tell this to his face, so I'm not saying behind his back. For morale purposes, that drives him nuts and he can't let it go. He'll have to tell -- he'll have to vent it to somebody, and usually it's me and then it goes to the leads. So, I -- they make -- I make fun of him at the office. I speak in his Afrikaans accent and make fun of him. And so, all the pilots are always like -- they're like, do Rob. Do Rob. I'm like, the leads. The leads, they make me fly again.

Q. When I was talking with a lot of the Maverick pilots, they said that they all start up together, fly out together, shut down together once they get to the swamp, but Papillon seems to stagger, as does Sundance. Do you see any preference?

A. I prefer when the manifest is out and I have my passengers. I know what I'm doing. I know I go east. I know my altitudes, I know my radio calls, I want to get my passengers, and I want to

get going. I don't wait for three or four or five more people to get their groups, and then everybody starts up and then everyone does their pedal turn at the same time. Maverick is a different animal. They wear wranglers and cowboy boots. That's just their style over there. And, bro, didn't their owner used to work for Papillon?

MR. TOBIN: Yeah.

MR. BOOTH: Yeah. From what I understand --

MR. TOBIN: No, no. They worked for Sundance.

MR. BOOTH: Oh, Sundance? From what I understand, Maverick is, let's say, more militant. Let's say, it's like a military school and it's a little higher pressure. And I -- for your -- everyone has -- like you said, everyone had to do the same thing. Everyone has to do their pedal turn. I actually used to really like getting in the middle of them just for fun. I'd be in Vegas and they'll call up, and they'll say Vegas Tower, Maverick 2, the first of 11, ready to go.

And I'd already be spun up at the takeoff area ready to go. And I'm like, I'm not going to hover here for eleven Mavericks to take off. So, I'll -- I just get in on the radio really quick. And I'd get in and they'd hold them, so I'd be in between, like, the second and third one, and then I'd be in their little chain on the way out. And then when we get to the -- what's called Indian Pass, they go off to the right, the south more, and Papillon stays the most north.

So, everyone's got their -- so, it'd be Papillon and then -- I'll just do the big three. So, it'd be Papillon on the left, then Sundance on the right and Maverick on their right. And then everyone kind of keep their distance. You kind of meet again at the entrance to the canyon and you want to stay vigilant there because -- and then, also, certain times of the year, Sundance -- or, excuse me, Maverick will fly out to the -- fly to the canyon, but they'll make a left turn at Lake Las Vegas. And then they'll go out here and then they'll come up on your left.

So Papillon, thinking you're the most farthest left and no one can surprise you, you'll just look over and see a silver helicopter flying, you know, a mile off your left side, and then you want to -- it's something I always tell the new guys that -- to look for in certain -- I think they only run that tour in the summertime. I don't know what the name of it is, but that was something that bothered me a little bit that I'd periodically find them over there and I had to learn their radio calls to figure out where they were.

So, when you hear Iceberg Canyon, then you knew you had an aircraft on your left and you had to know how far -- if they were behind you or in front of you or you were paralleling them. So, that's all. But, no, Papillon is great for just the camaraderie and --

Q. When you have new people flying with you, do you -- like, when they're new hires, do you have to fly any differently?

A. No. But I'll help if they're a little off-course. I might tell them that -- something. And if they say -- if they come back and 90 percent of the time they'll say, oh, thanks, man. Or once in a while you'll get somebody that says, well, that's the way I was just trained. And you're like, okay. Because I'm not going to -- there's no time to -- they're still doing their job, it's just they could be off just a, you know, couple hundred yards over here.

Again, I was trained by someone who was trained by someone. Simon was trained by someone, everyone -- but it's all right there, just maybe one percent is couple yards off or something like that. But I like helping the -- giving the new pilots suggestions and -- which makes me feel so mad and upset about this accident is because I was looked at as someone that doesn't make mistakes or anything. And I don't. I'm so careful with the aircraft. So, I just -- you know? It's been really upsetting.

Q. Have you ever had an emergency?

A. I've had the low fuel light come on when I wasn't PIC and that made me pretty uncomfortable, but it was in the airport environment in a foreign country. But, no -- you know, nothing that said I got to auto this thing, get it on the ground right away, so I've been pretty fortunate.

Q. Do you usually take pictures with the passengers?

A. I take a initial picture with them that's required by the company. I get in that picture. If they don't want me in the

picture, then I won't be in it. But they always want the pilot and I put my -- if it's appropriate, like, I might put my arms on them, but it really depends. I think I do most -- yes. I take the pictures most of the time, unless they don't want me in it. And then they sell it to them when they leave. That's part of a package. And in the canyon I'll take pictures for them with their phones, but I'm not in those unless ask me -- unless they want me to be in them.

Q. Do they usually want you in them?

A. Do they usually want me in them? No.

Q. Do they usually have their phones out when they're --

A. Oh, yeah. They usually have their or cameras on their laps the whole time they're flying. Sometimes I have to remind them to take pictures because they're just going, ah, look at this beautiful canyon. And I say, don't forget to take pictures because we're going to go out the other side and it's not going to be as pretty as this. So, then they all take them out and start shooting pictures.

Q. When can you start hearing people when you're in the canyon on company frequency that are at quartermaster?

A. You mean on our -- what we call our EC freq?

Q. Yeah.

A. You can hear that probably from Pierce Ferry as you climb up to -- as you get that altitude till you're over the canyon. But I don't know. I don't know that answer.

Q. So, if someone was giving PIREPs on the ground, when do you think you'd be able to start hearing it?
A. I don't know.
Q. Okay. Just trying to determine that.
A. Yeah. That'd be -- I mean, usually it -- usually I hear them when I'm entering the canyon and I -- one of the ones I remember most was this -- one of the pilots came on the radio and said, it's going to be a straight-in landing, boys. That one I'll always remember. And I -- and when we came in, the windsock was -- indicated as straight-in landing.

So, it was nice to have already heard that, but you still want to be -- you know, want to watch out for wind direction shifts and that. But, I mean, most of the time it's perfect out there, you know? There's just no wind. It's just beautiful flying. And then a few days here and there, you just get some violent weather.
Q. And if they say straight-in, when can you see the windsock where you can start determining if it had changed or not?
A. When you're close to the river. There's also a windsock that you can see at Sundance's base. So, as -- if you fly a little lower as you come in, you can look down and you can see -- just prior to getting to our area, you can see the direction of Sundance's Aircraft Park and you can see their windsock.

It's a little harder are to see ours, the Papillon one, that's at the Ramada because we're higher altitude at that time.

There's one down there, just to see it really well -- you can obviously see the direction the aircraft's parked, but just not the sock. Yeah. But close to the river.

Q. When you're crossing the river, what altitude and air speed are you -- would you predictably be at?

A. I don't know the altitude. A couple hundred feet off the ground and, you know, you can be any -- depending if you're going through the notch or if you're going straight in, that's -- so, straight-in is you're setting up your approach well before the river. You don't -- we don't quick stop into the -- into our spots as other companies do.

But we set it up so the notch -- you know, you can keep -- easily keep 80-plus knots to go to the notch because, as soon as you make that left turn and slow it down, you're going to bleed from -- you'll bleed all that air speed off and set yourself up a really nice, smooth approach into the landing zones. But, yeah, straight-in, I start that at -- I start slowing down by the river, maybe a little before, sometimes a little after. It just kind of depends.

Q. A crossing?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. And how high, by the time you get over the river, do you think that the helicopter is?

A. I don't know. I mean, it's a feeling. You're not eye-level with your landing zone or above it, so you can still come in and

shoot at a nice approach, nothing steep, nothing shallow. But as far as the number, I don't know.

Q. And we were looking at the different approaches that people do of -- some people go -- when they're doing the straight-in, they'll go closer to the notch in that canyon to turn around. Some people will just kind of go -- or, if they get a winning point, they'll just go straight. How do you know how you determine of how far back in you go to that -- into that canyon?

A. I think it depends how fast you're going, how much air speed you need to bleed off, how much wind there is. That will help you determine, you know, how much space you need to bleed off the air speed. But, yeah, some people do go higher to the notch then come back around and land on an upriver landing.

I tend to do all -- set myself up for all that before -- well before getting up as high as the notch so that I slowed by the river and then just kind of -- maybe before I could do a gentle S-turn if I want or just come right around. And I -- so, I just come right around and make the left turn and set myself up for the approach. And like I said, there's always room for an aircraft there. The landing space goes far back.

Q. Yeah?

A. Yeah.

Q. And then what about when you're departing out? Do you ever have to overfly helicopters?

A. Well, we don't overfly helicopters, but everyone spins off

and they're really good about talking on the radios. So, if there's a row of aircraft, typically the one that's in front goes first. And you don't have one and -- like, if I was the fourth one, I wouldn't pick up and then disturb not only the people that are maybe still eating down here, but you're just going to blow the doors and dust and irritate the pilot behind you and in front of you. And it's dangerous. So, you just wait and they call you on the radio and we -- everyone coordinates that.

But it's pretty common that the person that gets there first parks farthest up. And if they're that far up, they're going to leave first unless they don't manage their passengers and let them just run everywhere and let them be late. But everyone's really good about watching the clock and getting everyone back to the aircraft on time.

Q. Do you recall if the people behind you were new or how many people they were?

A. The aircraft?

Q. Yeah.

A. I only know that there was someone behind me because that person came to visit me at hospital and he told me.

Q. Yeah.

A. And that they were -- they had been there almost maybe 2 years. But I didn't know that there was someone behind me until they told me. I mean, I thought there was maybe someone behind me from Papillon. I don't recall -- I don't remember Sundance or

Maverick or one of the other companies. But I thought I wasn't the last one. But that person came to the hospital and told me that they were behind me.

Q. Do you remember hearing anyone do radio calls?

A. No. Regarding the accident?

Q. No. Or radio calls of reporting any type of wind.

A. No. No, not reporting any type of wind. Any calls would've been the standard calls of bat towers and entering the Canyon, bat towers and at the river. So, I definitely heard those, but nothing special.

Q. Do you remember anyone saying if their blades were turning?

A. No.

Q. Nothing specially with it?

A. No.

Q. When you're going in, where are you usually looking? Where is your eyes?

A. I'm looking at everywhere. I mean, I got my whole total sight picture, so I'll go from the left where -- it depends, also, if I'm going straight in or if I'm going through the notch. If I'm going through the notch, then I'm looking -- all our -- I've already listened and everything to make sure that I'm going to be low enough so that any Sundance or Papillon that is climbing the wall going to the right, they're going to be typically 3,000 feet at the notch. And I'm going to be, like, you know, 1-5 or 1-7.

So, that's -- you just want to keep that in your mind if you

hear them departing the Ramada or upriver, then you've got to know there's going to be someone off your right side and high. So, going through the notch, I'll just look down at the whole landing area and where I want to land and keep that in mind. But there's so many options of where you can land that you know -- you already know you're going to be fine with space. But I typically have my spot picked out before I cross the river. And, you know, you -- I keep my head on a swivel, but through the notch I'll make sure that there's no Mavericks coming off the swamp.

But again, if everyone's doing their job, those are radio calls you would've heard and you guys can catch those, so you don't go too far out and they're coming up the middle. You keep that under control. Yeah. I'm looking straight and to my left, just -- I'm sitting left. It's left-side drive.

Q. Is there anything that you think, and now of course looking in retrospect, that you would have been able to predict that that wind would have been there?

A. No. It's completely just a freak gust of wind and shift in direction that caught the aircraft.

Q. Do you feel like you had enough power?

A. Yeah. I mean, the aircraft's strong. It's got plenty of power. It's just -- power wasn't an issue. It's just the issue of having the aircraft taken away from me and started to spin, which I couldn't recover from.

Q. And with the big tail out there, do you feel like you've had

it where you -- the wind has been an issue where you can't control it?

A. I've never had wind like this before. It's just something I've never experienced. I've had pretty -- like, 25 sustained wind at Boulder City Airport when I've come in and, you know, had to land in a crosswind and things like that. And I'm -- you know, you're getting close on pedal, but you still feel way in range and comfortable, and you're close to the ground. But I've never experienced a wind shift and power and velocity that I experienced at the accident.

Q. We're trying to go through and build a simulation and throw everything we can at the helicopter to see what wind we can get to make it do that. And the weather people and the performance engineer begged me to ask you of anything that you could remember of direction or how it felt, of up or down, or left and right that we can get an idea of --

A. I think it spun clockwise.

Q. But of your feeling of -- and if you don't remember, that's fine, but --

A. No. I wish I --

Q. They wanted to know the weight in the seat of how --

A. No. I can't answer that. I don't know.

Q. We're really looking at how the helicopter performs in wind and how you can be in the flight envelope and lose control. So, that's one of our things that we're looking at, all the

certification. Do you know when you started to feel that you were losing it?

A. It was on short approach to the base, but I don't remember exactly where. I believe I was past, I want to say I was past the river, which makes sense because the aircraft made it across the river, but I don't remember.

Q. And have you ever felt like you had a close call of landing in that direction?

A. No.

Q. Or quartermaster at all? Ever felt uncomfortable?

A. No.

Q. Even when you started?

A. When I first started, my very first day, there was nowhere to land. I landed on the handicapped spot, which is one of the sloping spots closest to the Ramada. And one of the new -- one of the senior pilots came over to me and said, hey, on your first week, you're not supposed to land there. And I was like, okay. But that was the only place -- that was -- I didn't know that I could go farther back on -- as far as -- as far back.

I found spots that were farther back that would have been less sloped. So, when, you know, I did, it was like this, my first -- that was my very first landing in the canyon. So, that one I always remember. I don't remember who came over to me, but I was, like, embarrassed at the same time.

Q. I'm going to pull out my computer after -- when everyone else

starts asking questions, but I'm going to ask you if you can put spots on the pad so we can see all the different pads that are at -- so I think that will help give everybody a better idea of --

MR. TOBIN: You've been going about an hour and 40. Do you want to take a break? Are you okay?

MR. BOOTH: I'm good.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Do you recall, you know, when you felt like the helicopter got away from you, what you did to try to recover?

A. I don't remember. It was so violent and quick that I don't know what I -- I don't know what I could have done. Even in hindsight, I -- but I don't -- it was so fast. I don't recall.

Q. Okay. And that's okay. I mean, it was a long time ago and, obviously, traumatic. Do you recall any warnings or horns, any lights?

A. No. I never heard any horns. That I can say for sure that I never -- no lights and no horns. But again, a light could have sprinkled somewhere and I missed it. But not during the flight or during the approach was anything out of the ordinary with the aircraft.

Q. Okay. Do you recall on the prior landing, you did a landing in the morning -- or, first, and then you did an air tour, according to the schedule.

A. Okay.

Q. Do you recall on the first flight what approach you did? Did

you do the straight-in or the notch?
A. I don't recall but, if you go with my history, I like to do the notch. I like it because it's fun for the passengers, too, because they get a nice turn and there's also lots of landing spots. So, I don't recall what I did. I would have done what the wind tells us to do. But if it was calm and -- or very light and variable, I would've -- I most likely would've done the notch.
Q. Okay. Do you recall if the winds had increased from the earlier flights to the later flights?
A. Well, they obviously did. But the flight in the morning, no, there was nothing on the morning. It was just another normal day at work.
Q. Okay. Until, you're talking about the -- that big --
A. Until the --
Q. -- wind gust.
A. Yeah. And I believe that it was really windy down there. I mean, people told me later that there was, like, high winds going through that area. Other pilots said that they had a lot -- like, when they were leaving, they had a lot more wind than when they came in, so I think that's just what happened to me is just a -- like, a -- I don't want to use the word microburst, but it just was a violent push.
Q. Do you think if a pilot had told you that it was windy on their approach, would you have done anything different?
A. I would have asked them what -- you know, what direction and

what they thought for a good landing would've been. I would've maybe kept my airspeed up so that I was in a good place to do a go around. I could even that it -- would've taken it as far as not even trying to land, just doing an overflight, looking at where everyone's positioned, looking at the direction of the windsock, and then just telling the passengers, you know it's -- whatever I want.

It's crowded down there or the wind won't allow us to land, and just gone back to Boulder City. And, you know, they would've got a -- maybe a slight refund --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- for not getting a landing tour.

Q. Have you ever flown in there expecting some kind of wind shear? Has that thought ever crossed your mind when you're flying (indiscernible) quartermaster?

A. It always crosses my mind. When I'm landing, when I'm taking -- everything. I'm always wind-conscious, but I've never experienced a violent wind shift like I did that day. But I've been down there when wind is -- you know, you looked at it -- like, I was planning a land downriver because the -- that was what the wind was showing. And then I did the downriver landing and then it was, oh, you should have done an upriver.

Well, by the time I went around it, it had shifted, but it wasn't a 20-knot -- I wasn't landing in a 20-knot tail wind where, you know, you could put yourself into a situation. This was very

light.
Q. Okay. As you're coming in to do your approach, do you let the passengers know, you know, to stop talking or that you're going to turn them on isolate or anything like that?
A. No. We do have a -- kind of a policy where we just -- at the bat towers, we just really concentrate on -- like, not -- I don't talk to the passengers anymore and plus it's so pretty. I just say, hey, guys. We're going to be starting our descent to land right now. You can go ahead and, you know, enjoy the ride. Listen to music, take some pictures and I'll speak with you when we're on the ground.

And that's what I like to say because then it takes the pressure off me having to tour guide them. And then, also, now I'm really free to listen to aircraft, other company freq and on the outside.
Q. If a pilot -- do pilots landing before you influence your decision at all? Like, oh, that guy can do it so, you know, I've got to be able to do it, too.
A. Let's just say this. If five pilots before me all land straight-in, there's a really good reason why five experienced pilots with over -- well over 1,000 hours to even apply for the job decided to go straight-in. So, I would most likely think that it's going to be a straight-in landing and plan accordingly.

Unless I get so close and the windsock just is flat, hanging down, and then I would make a decision to go through the notch.

But there's not competition. There's no, like, oh, wow. This guy landed at the wedding point in high wind so the next time I come down here I'm going to do it. But I'm going to do it down river and make it really memorable. Because, no, there's -- we don't have any pilots like that and I'm not one of them, anyway.

Q. During the safety briefing that you give the passengers before you leave, do you brief them on emergency evacuation from the helicopter?

A. I show them where the emergency exits are as far as how to pull those handles, and then I make a joke, like, but don't pull the handle unless I tell you. And then when we land, let me let you out of the aircraft. For many reasons, you don't want your passengers escaping with other aircraft landing down there. So, I'm always conscious about telling them be careful of other aircraft.

Q. And you said you brief the location of the fire extinguishers, also?

A. Mm-hm.

Q. Do you recall that day what the radio chatter was like? Did it seem unusually busy or (indiscernible) --

A. I don't recall.

Q. Okay. Have you ever challenged, prior to leaving Boulder City, a lead say, yeah, we're going today. And you don't think it's safe, so you tell him, I'm not flying.

A. I've never -- I don't know how to answer that. I've never

had a problem making a decision like that. My lead has never said, go fly or else. Or just, go fly because, by the time you get there, it should be okay. You know, because when you do make those decisions to go fly and not err on the side of caution, you end up stranding people out in the canyon area that have to take buses back, which has happened before. But I've never felt any pressure or -- is that what you're asking?

Q. Yes. So, you would feel comfortable saying, I'm not flying.

A. One hundred percent.

Q. Okay.

A. And they would have no problem with that.

Q. Do you recall how -- I know you said you didn't recall how you got out of the helicopter, but do you recall how quickly the fire started after --

A. I don't recall anything about the fire --

Q. Okay.

A. -- except that I was on fire --

Q. All right.

A. -- when I woke up.

Q. Any recollection of how other passengers might have gotten out of the helicopter?

A. No. I believe there was one girl that got out and she was walking around, so I knew she was okay. At least, you know, for the most part. I didn't know that she was burned. And she ended up being burned, I believe, most -- like, hands and -- but, yeah,

I don't -- I'm very -- I don't recall the -- how the fire started or where.

Q. Okay. Do you recall your interactions at all with the first responders when they got there?

A. I remember there was -- they were pretty strong ladies. And they came to visit me in the hospital, you know, a couple of months after, and that was nice. I didn't know a lot about what had happened, so anything I tell you now is what they told me.

Q. Okay.

A. You know, like, I asked them how they kept me alive and what drugs did they give me, and so they told me. And I asked them how I was reacting and, you know, they said I was pretty out of it.

Q. Did they tell you if you said anything about what you think had happened?

A. No.

Q. Do you recall them mentioning -- asking you if you could walk to the river for the evacuation?

A. No, I don't think they would ask that because -- I mean, if you looked at my body it was pretty -- my leg was so busted that it was -- there's no way I could've walked. And judging from what I remember, when they were putting the tourniquet on me, like, I would have -- walking down there, I would've bled out.

Q. Okay. Do you recall if you were hoisted out?

A. No idea. I believe a helicopter landed down closer to the

river and they were able to carry me --
Q. Okay.
A. -- down to this spot, and I was -- that's how I got out. I was -- I remember saying to one of the flight nurses -- I just remember saying, I don't want to die down here. And I knew it was serious when he said -- I don't recall what he -- exactly. He said something about, I'm going to try and not let that happen. And that's a lot different than someone saying, don't worry, that's not -- you know? It was, I'm going to try. And I was like, oh, my. This is really bad.
Q. Do you recall when you got into town, into Vegas?
A. No.
Q. No. The night before the accident?
A. Oh, no, because it's such a typical process for me.
Q. Would you typically come in the day before?
A. I always come in at least one or 2 days before in case my -- you know, the car breaks down or the flights are canceled, you have another way you can get to work.
Q. I know you said you don't typically stay up late, but do you recall when you might've gone to bed in the few days prior to the accident?
A. No. 10:00, 10:30-ish.
Q. Okay. That's your normal -- all right. At what time do you typically wake up?
A. I wake up about 7:00 and then make breakfast, take a shower

and kind of do some little exercises and stuff. And usually ready by 9:00 to do it -- start my day. But I don't think -- on this day, I don't know what time I would have got there. I'd have to look at the time of my first flight and then an hour before.

Q. Okay. So, if you had to be there at 10:30, what time would you leave from your house?

A. 10:10. It takes 15 -- it's 13 miles and it's all freeway, so it's -- and there's no traffic. So, it's -- but I like to do 20 minutes ahead of time. But even when you're 20 minutes ahead of time, you're still going to get -- you're still going to be well over an hour before your flight. So, you're -- you have time to look at notes, talk to the lead, sign in, and then look for your -- what aircraft you're flying and wait for it to come in.

Q. Okay. Recall any issues sleeping, staying asleep at night?

A. No.

Q. Do you recall if you felt rested when you woke up that morning?

A. I don't recall. I'm sure I did because I didn't go out or anything.

Q. Ever been diagnosed with a sleep disorder?

A. No.

Q. Now, you said prior to the accident, things were going really good. But any major changes in your health, or personal life, financial situation, anything in the 12 months --

A. No.

Q. -- prior to the accident?
A. No, everything's good.
Q. Okay.
A. Very fortunate.
Q. How would you have rated your health?
A. On a scale of what?
Q. Scale of 1 to 10, prior to the accident.
A. Ten out of 10.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean, I was in really good -- not bragging, I'm just saying I was -- I had just come back from Mount Everest base camp, so I was in pretty good shape and -- yeah. I eat really healthy most of the time.
Q. Any issues with your vision?
A. No.
Q. Hearing?
A. No.
Q. Did you take any prescription medication at the time?
A. No.
Q. Any over the counter --
A. No, I wasn't taking any medicine and I'm not -- I wasn't taking any over the counter either.
Q. Okay. Smoke tobacco, chew tobacco?
A. I don't smoke or I don't use any tobacco products.
Q. Okay. Drink alcohol?

A. What's that?
Q. Do you drink alcohol?
A. On occasion.
Q. Yeah? Do you recall the last time before February 10th?
A. No.
Q. Any use of illicit drugs?
A. No.
Q. Do you recall in the 72 hours before the accident whether you took any medications, prescription or non-prescription that might've affected performance?
A. Yeah, I can recall. I didn't.
Q. Okay. Any issues getting along with your passengers that day?
A. No issues. I do remember them not being super -- the guy, in particular, not being super attentive to the -- you know, what was going on. He was more, like, just kind of happy party guy. I kind of remember that. But, you know, most of the time people are excited, nervous. And he was way more like, whatever. Let's just go do this.
Q. Yeah? Receive any training for settling with power at the end?
A. No, that's not something you practice or train.
Q. Not in ground school either?
A. No. It's in your flight training and -- I mean, I've practiced it right out here over the -- about a couple thousand

feet up. I've done it with Robinson Factory Safety Course pilots. But, no.

Q. Any concerns that you have landing in quartermaster? Did you have any concerns landing there?

A. That day?

Q. Just in general.

A. No, it's -- there's tons of room downriver and upriver, and you always have the opportunity to go around. And you have the opportunity to convert into an air tour.

Q. Yeah.

A. And that's all backed up by the company, so no concerns.

Q. Okay. And specifically that day, any concerns?

A. No.

Q. Do you know if anybody's ever questioned why the landing zones are laid out the way they are or anything?

A. I mean, it just makes sense the way that -- I don't know. I mean, I'm not privy to those white-collar meeting discussions, but it seems to me it makes really sense because it's all cleared and it's not sloped. It just -- just, they fit like puzzle pieces, you know?

Q. Do you ever recall anybody ever being confused about where they were supposed to land going in there, like, where the paths were?

A. No, I mean I could tell you a funny story of being down in the Ramada and under the canopy, and being completely overflown by

a pilot on, like, his first day. And blew -- like, blew -- the champagne that people all had, blew it all over their face and all over their -- so, that -- I mean, he wasn't confused, he just -- he was just a little too low to the ground and I let him know. He actually texted me the other day and wrote me a message. And he said, I can't believe that that happened to you. And he said, out of all the pilots, he said, you're, like, the only one I would trust with my family and stuff. And so, that was that guy.

MS. KELIHER: I think that's all I have for now. Thanks.

Manny?

BY MR. FIGLIA:

Q. On the day of the accident, you got there later in the day, so you weren't at the early morning briefing.

A. The 5:30 briefing? No, I wasn't there.

Q. Okay. You mentioned you did a weight and balance on the aircraft.

A. No, it's on the sheet.

Q. Or you reviewed it.

A. Yeah. If it's out of balance, it won't print.

Q. Okay.

A. So, you know, if you're out of CG or anything, the manifest won't -- it won't -- the guys up in the tower, it won't run, it won't compute.

Q. Do you review the, let's say, in ground effect hover capability and out of ground effect based on the gross weight?

A. Those are on the briefing sheet that you review in the morning briefing. They put those into the sheets that's on the wall. So, when I come in, I could see -- you know, it says, max and max. It'll tell you based on the temperature that day, I believe, it was max at Bolder and max at GCW.
Q. When you were flying to quartermaster, did you realize there was another aircraft behind you? I think you mentioned you didn't know if anyone was behind you.
A. No, I'm saying I don't recall because it's so routine that there are aircraft behind you. So, when I was making my -- for example, when I'm making my radio call to go into the canyon, I can't tell you for certain that another aircraft behind me made the same call within a minute or 30 seconds. I don't -- I just don't recall.
Q. When you were going into the quartermaster zone, you said you saw aircraft facing one another, so therefore they made their approach some through the notch and some not through the notch.
A. Correct.
Q. There were aircraft that landed before you that basically did the straight-in.
A. I would assume so, yes.
Q. Okay. Did you see any of those aircraft land in front of you?
A. No.
Q. When you were shooting your approach, would you classify it

as a steep approach?
A. No. Normal. Normal sight picture.
Q. Normal angle?
A. Yep.
Q. Based on the landing spot you selected, was there room for someone to land behind you?
A. I would assume they could, yes.
Q. So, you're not -- you don't know for sure if you took the most rearward spot?
A. I would've been taking one of the farthest rear spots, but I don't know if there would've been additional room based on how I would've parked.
Q. When you mentioned the aircraft spun, do you know what air speed you might have been at?
A. No.
Q. Do you know what altitude you might've been at?
A. I don't recall.
Q. The aircrafts aren't equipped with the radar altimeters?
A. I believe every aircraft we have has a radar altimeter.
Q. When you mentioned training and different IPs have different ways of doing a maneuver, I'm gathering there might be some inconsistencies (indiscernible) --
A. No, there's no -- I'm only talking about quick stops. So, I want to clarify that. I'm not talking about -- well, some instructors might want to enter -- when they demonstrate their

auto rotation, they might enter -- depending on the wind, they might enter a little earlier than I would. And they do a different glide path to get there. But there's -- as long as you're safe and in control and you get there, that's what everyone's looking for. But I'm talking specifically in quick stops is every pilot -- there's some that do this and then balloon up, and then let it come down. There's some that turn into a long flare and balloon a little bit.

So, it's hard -- it would be hard to say -- and you could ask Burl, I guess. But it'd be hard to say that you could get every pilot that works at any of the companies to do -- to demonstrate that maneuver the exact same way. I don't think it's possible.

Q. You mentioned quick stops. You're referring to the flare at the end of the auto rotation.

A. No, no auto rotation. Basically, let's say I'm air taxiing down a taxiway and all of a sudden an aircraft pulls out in front of me, that's -- then I would initiate a quick stop where I flare and then balloon up a little bit and then settle it down. Yeah. I'm saying, that maneuver is demonstrated differently and performed differently throughout the companies, throughout the world. There's no way you're give it exactly the same --

Q. You've mentioned the AStar, which there was a -- was it training flight or check flight? I don't recall. Where there was some inconsistencies based on the IP's point of view on certain maneuvers.

A. Mm-hm.
Q. Okay. Is that -- am I accurate by saying that in other words, there's some inconsistencies on different IPs on how --
A. The exact -- there was two issues with that flight. One was that instructor asked me a limitation of the AStar, let's say torque, and I got it wrong in flight. I gave him the -- either I gave him the before number or I was off. That was something that -- that was an issue that he had. The second part was, he said, take me to Boulder City, and we were on the west side if McCarren Airport. Well, so, Boulder City's way over where you are, McCarren Airport's here, we were way over where the ladies are.

Now, I wasn't Las Vegas trained at the time, so the only -- so, I did -- I got back to Boulder City the way I would -- flew across country. I called the approach and told them where I was and what I wanted to do. They told me to contact the helicopter frequency, which I did. Then they gave me the Tropicana transition, which I told them I was unfamiliar with. And then they guided me on that and then they gave me the Boulder City highway transition, so they guided me on that. Then they released me -- frequency change, you know, good day. And then I got into Boulder City and made the radio calls and landed.

Now, that particular person was our chief pilot at the time. He didn't like any of that. So, it was a -- I'm not blaming anyone but myself. I had a bad flight. It was -- I wasn't --

personality-wise, we -- I don't think there was a connection and I could've flown better. I just had a bad flight and he -- you know, so that's where that -- but it worked out really good, anyway, because I'd been flying out of Las Vegas.

Q. Have you ever been shown those routes, the Tropicana transition?

A. Yeah. We covered our Vegas training.

Q. But you took a departure route that was based on someone who was unfamiliar with the area and then decided to basically do a (indiscernible) violating any airspace or --

A. No, I got permission to go and I stayed outside of McCarran space to the west -- and before I got permission to go through. And then they -- it was -- where I was, I was already west and right on Tropicana, so they just told me head -- keep that heading and then, you know, they cleared me across the approach end of one of the runways. And then, you know, kept the same -- kept the altitude till the time to turn right to Boulder City.

Q. What type of uniforms do you wear normally while you're flying?

A. We all wear white -- a white pilot shirt with the four-bar epaulets and our wings. And then we all have our badges, McCarran badge and crew badge. And then it's either black pants and black shorts. I've actually never worn shorts there, so I always do black pants and then it's black shoes.

Q. Does Papillon recommend wearing specific type garments,

whether they're full cotton or no necks or --
A. No. It's black pants, black shorts, black shoes and the white shirts are all the same with the -- and then in wintertime we have the polyester jacket that we wear.
Q. Last question. Do you recall making any statements right after the accident? To anyone who approached you regarding what had transpired?
A. I remember a lady praying over me, which kind of freaks me out. I don't remember -- I must've had some conversation with her, but I don't remember anything about it. I just remember being prayed over. I remember the pilots there to tourniquet my left leg. But I don't remember talking to them about anything. I might -- I could've said something, but I don't remember.
MR. FIGLIA: Scott, thank you very much.
MR. BOOTH: Okay. Thank you.
MR. TOBIN: I have no questions.
DR. WILSON: I've got some further questions.
BY DR. WILSON:
Q. Do you -- you said that -- sometimes that you do tailwind landings. How much wind can you -- have you landed in the tailwinds?
A. Well, I think what I said was the aircraft is capable of -- and I'm capable of tailwind landing in quartermaster, but not -- nothing significant. Like, I'm talking, like, 5 to 10 knots max is what I like to keep safe down there, which means the

wind sock is maybe showing a straight-in approach. But at the same time, it's so -- I don't want to use the word, limp. Is that fair?

Q. Yep.

A. It's nothing drastic that's going to affect the aircraft where I'm going to get into a -- you know, like, a settling issue or being -- having to do a go-around because I didn't have -- I didn't shoot at the right approach.

Q. You've had a while to examine your injuries. Do you -- is there anything that you can recognize of injuries that you have of where a seatbelt might've been, where buckles might've been --

A. No.

Q. -- where if the cyclic might've hit you, collective, anything that you can recognize?

A. No.

Q. Okay. And then my last question before showing you pictures is what do you think that Papillon could change now in hindsight of this accident? Helmets, gloves, flight suits, do you think any of that would be more appropriate?

A. I'm really not in a -- knowledgeable to answer that. I think --

Q. Okay.

A. I think that everything's fine.

Q. Okay. I'm going to show you -- set it up here (indiscernible) --

A. Do you want me to move this out of the way?
Q. Let me pick it up so that I can sit it on the -- and I'll give you a mouse for control. Lots of different things here. I'll take away your hot cup and pen there. All right. So, I've got a pen selected. Can you show me what the windsock was showing you, that you can remember, as you're going in?
A. What do you -- like, draw and arrow?
Q. Mm-hm. (Indiscernible) --
A. Is that little thing?
Q. (Indiscernible).
A. Well, it's --
Q. Oops, maybe I didn't select it. There you go.
A. Yeah. So, you can see all the landing spots. One, two, three.
Q. (Indiscernible) --
A. There's actually one later. Okay. So, this is -- trying to draw an arrow, but -- so, what I -- here, I'm flying in. I see the windsock showing a straight-in landing right into here.
Q. So, to draw a cone, it's pointing that way or it's pointing this way?
A. You'd have to draw it. It's better -- you're probably better at it than I am. But it's showing that the --
Q. Which way is this going? That way, that way? Can you remember?
A. This way, I believe.

Q. Like that?
A. Yeah. I think so.
Q. To the best of your memory?
A. Yeah.
Q. And then if it's showing that way, what would be your paths that you would take? Can you draw it?
A. Well, I wouldn't have -- I don't know how to say. I would've been -- I probably would've been over here.
Q. Yeah. This isn't normal site picture that you have.
A. No.
Q. It's too high up. I've got one that's lower.
A. Okay. I mean --
Q. Can you drag and show me where all the paths are? I have a collection of dots there. You can just move them.
A. There's one -- I think there's one right there. There's definitely three here. I can't -- it's hard to see here, but there's definitely --
MR. TOBIN: Want me to pull that down that way a little bit?
MR. BOOTH: Yeah. That's okay. It's okay. Oh, shit, I didn't do it right.
BY DR. WILSON:
Q. Oh, don't worry.
A. Are you sure?
Q. (Indiscernible).
A. Well, there's two -- you can fit two in that area. So, there

might be -- that one might be one, just not sure. I might have too many in this area taking up more space. Maybe this one's here. (Indiscernible). So, this is pretty realistic. There might be -- I want to say there's one here because you can do three in a row. This might not be one anymore. There used to be this cactus and you could fit it in between this one and this one. I think that -- I don't -- maybe that's one and that's one and that's one, maybe. I think that's -- I think this is a really good look at it.

Q. Do you remember which one you were going for?

A. I was going here.

Q. The green one?

A. Yeah, in the back. There was already some loaded here and I was going to be either this one or this one in the back, that way you have plenty of room.

Q. All right. We can go to the next one. I know it's pretty tedious, but if you can show me from this one.

A. No, it's be -- so, it'd be either here --

Q. Can you line them up again from this angle where they all are?

A. Do we have more?

Q. I can make more.

A. Okay. Anymore?

Q. Yeah.

A. I think it -- I think here. Here. I think it's fine. I

want to say you can get another one here if you need to. Yeah. I think this is good.

Q. So, do you know which one you would've been going for?

A. Yeah. Here. This area. My favorite one is this one.

Q. Why is that?

A. Because it's a table rock and you can come through the notch and fly just, like -- so, you go through the notch like this and you just come around. And you can just be like this the whole way through the notch right to the spot and be like this. Without even -- no hover landing, just -- that's my favorite one. Sometimes with these, you've got to hover a little bit more to get into the right spot and find the slope and --

MR. FIGLIA: (Indiscernible) maybe looking at this one here.

MR. BOOTH: Yeah. This area.

MR. FIGLIA: Okay. And you're referring to -- when I asked you about a spot behind you, it would've been maybe this one.

MR. BOOTH: Maybe this one, yeah.

MR. FIGLIA: Okay.

MR. BOOTH: I just know that there's -- from my experience in being down there, I just know that there's -- you can make room in this area. It's just not -- it's not as clean, as you can see here with all the -- the wind is blowing the rocks clean and the aircraft have landed on them so many times. But these are spots over here. There are people right there. (Indiscernible).

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. And then -- so, that's how the helicopters were at the time of the accident, which we got just based on everybody's pictures.
A. Really? Yeah. So, I was pretty right. They're in both directions. And then this is my -- this is where I was going.
Q. So, which one do you think that you would've aligned to?
A. I would've pulled up behind the farthest one up, so most likely I would've gone in here. I recall -- I thought there was more over here. Like, I thought there was this here, too. So, this is the area where I thought I was going. And you can see there are spaces behind it, here and here.
Q. So, with the windsock like that, how do you think you would've been coming around? Do you just go straight in?
A. No. The wind -- if the wind -- so, if the wind was like this, then it'd have been a downriver landing. And it wasn't -- the windsock, when I saw it, was not indicating a downriver landing. It was indicating straight-in. And you can see by these aircraft, how they park, that some of these pilots did the notch and some of them did straight-in, which is a variable wind day. And I chose straight-in because that's what the windsock was showing me.
Q. This is just -- I have no idea of why you guys don't go this way over the river and land. Why do you go through the notch and do that?
A. Well, Maverick's -- see here? Right here?
Q. So, just because of other traffic?

A. Well, Maverick's coming over here, going down to the swamp. So, it's -- where our -- we just come this way, go through the notch and then come around and land here. It's cleaner and it makes more sense than to go across the river, and then turn and then come this way. I mean, I guess it could be done, but seems to me like the notch is the right way -- the right thing to do.

MR. FIGLIA: Do you know when these other aircrafts arrived? Were they part of the group aircraft that took off from Boulder City?

MR. BOOTH: Most likely, they were from Boulder City. There could've been one from Las Vegas, which probably would've been this one because there was a wedding. And so, there would've been one here from Las Vegas and then everyone else is Boulder City.

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. Are there any other pads that are open here?

A. Yes. There's one right here. So, it's either this area or this area because you can fit three here. So, I'm not sure that helicopter's in the right place. It's here, then here, and then it could be --

Q. Right behind that?

A. -- another one. Yeah. But this goes back three deep --

Q. Got it.

A. -- here, here. So, I -- no. I think this one's wrong. Like, that one's wrong. I think that one should be here.

MR. FIGLIA: (Indiscernible)?

MR. BOOTH: Yeah.

BY DR. WILSON:

Q. And then, when you're going, how far deep do you go into the canyon?

A. It really depends. It depends on your airspeed. Sometimes you can just literally come off the river and go straight into the -- if the wind is valid, you can go straight into the spot or, you know, this -- as you can see, the windsock here is showing a downriver. You just can't tell how significant it is but, I mean, it must've been a pretty decent wind day to have that kind of -- that much wind. And then I heard -- like, again, I heard later from other -- the other pilots and rescue pilots how windy it actually was and much more than normal.

Q. But you don't remember seeing any of that?

A. I remember feeling it.

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah. I like to -- yeah. So, you can see the -- this is really good. You can see the parking spaces here, how these -- this is handicap and you can fit one behind it. And you can see (indiscernible) just park one after the other, after the other here. And then you can start using this side. And you can go all the way back into here. But, yeah, I would've come up the river and started the -- started to make the turn a little bit over here, this area. And, you know, low and getting ready to just come in and --

Q. (Indiscernible).
A. And shoot the approach.
Q. So, when you're going through that turn, what's your speed?
A. Sixty knots.
Q. And if you have wind from that direction, and all of the other paths are taken, where do you go?
A. This is -- again, it depends how -- it depends on the strength of the wind. It depends if it's variable, if it's moving. It's just hard -- it's hard to say if the -- you know, this kind of looks like a downriver landing to me. But you can come around like this. You can come around and make the approach and turn it into the wind a little. See? You can come around and put it -- then you can face a little bit that direction or you can go all the way to the ground, and then pedal turn it and get in a line, you know?
Q. Like a buttonhook?
A. Sure. That's what I did that day. I just came over here and made the -- as I made the turn, I reduced the air speed and got lined up. It's just -- that's when I just started to -- and I don't know how many times (indiscernible).
Q. And do you feel strange winds? I see that a lot is down there. But I see that the canyon has different levels. Do you feel that as you're flying over? Ever? The mechanical (indiscernible)?
A. Yeah. You can feel the wind coming down through the -- on

certain days. I mean, this -- every day's different down there, right? Ninety percent of days are -- it's calm and you don't think twice, so you just execute your -- what your training is and your maneuvers. When drive a bus, fly it like you know how to do it.

Q. Well, that's all the picture drawings. So, I do have some more PowerPoints of showing kind of what witnesses said and anything like that. Are you curious to see that?

A. Mm-hm.

Q. So, from looking at pictures, we see that the wind looked like it was going like this. We tried all the pictures of timestamping out of exactly when the accident happened and such. We're trying to do a wind study, but we might not get the approval for it, to look and see what type of wind is going through that canyon and how it changes with the turbulence and the different canyon over here.

A. Approval because it costs money?

Q. They want $150,000 for it, the wind study.

A. Okay.

Q. So, we're still looking at how we're going to do it. We did a whole mapping of the area. But what we really want to do with the simulator is need the different speeds. So, what we did was we took Appareo data, we had Simon fly the route, and we took the Appareo data. It's recording all of that and we're putting it in, with help from Airbus, of figuring out what we can do to throw at

it to see if we can get the helicopter to do what we think it did.
We don't have any video footage. The recorders didn't survive. So, we didn't know which pad you were really going for, but it looks like probably that far one.
A. Yeah. I would've lined myself up behind the last aircraft.
Q. We know that he wasn't on radio, the last aircraft.
A. Who's he?
Q. John Davis.
A. (Indiscernible).
Q. He was a new guy.
A. What does it mean he wasn't on radio?
Q. He was just shutting down the helicopter.
A. Oh, okay.
Q. So, he said he hit the rotor break and saw people starting to run.
A. Okay.
Q. So, I didn't know, of talking to all the different pilots, if you would've tried to land further away from him, if his blades were still turning or not.
A. No, because I didn't see any blades turning.
Q. Yeah.
A. And if they were slow blades, I would've slowed down and parked well off away that I wouldn't have had any chance of doing some damage to his aircraft.
Q. And so, we were just trying to determine -- and it seems like

everybody has a different route of how they go, of getting in. And of talking to him before --

A. Yeah. Some go a little higher up. It's just -- there's no exact you have to do this because, if you stick to exacts, it's not fair, it's not practical. It needs to be -- you need to have flex, like you said, in order -- if someone is shutting down, you need to be able to maybe do -- go up a little farther and bleed off some speed or -- so that you're not coming in too steep or things like that.

Q. In this turn, where do you think you felt the wind?

A. Around this area. I think it just -- either it came down this canyon or over this ridgeline and just caught the tail, and just -- that's what I think happened. But I think it happened over here, closer to this side, closer to this area.

Q. So, this is what the witnesses said. So, that's what the windsock looked like.

A. That day?

Q. Just before the accident. But again, we don't know how many minutes.

A. Fifteen to 25 knots. So, this is the one I like right here, that's my favorite one. See that? How they're up on that rock? It's a little sloped. That's the one I land on, usually, the most. Which would've been a nice -- for that wind, it'd have been nice. But I didn't see the wind like that. I saw it more straight, dictating the straight-in. And you can see from your

other photos that you got half --
Q. Yeah.
A. -- the aircraft were straight-in. And I wouldn't -- this is -- 15 knots at the airport environment, no -- I can handle that. But 25 knots out of the airport environment in a tailwind in the canyon, that's not advisable. But in the airport environment, you know, you've got to park on the pads, so that's more manageable off the concrete in typical crosswind numbers.
Q. With this wind, what approach do you think that you would've come in at? Like, seeing this sock, I guess that vantage point's kind of hard.
A. It looks like a downriver landing, I think. I mean, that's what I'm kind of seeing here. And you can see all the people just landed downriver. But what I'm saying is, at the time of -- when I approached, I didn't see the sock that direction. It was straight-in.
Q. So, reverse of that?
A. Yeah.
Q. So, this is what our best witness saw. Do you know why you would have been pitching up?
A. No.
Q. Have you ever felt that -- a reason why it would be -- you would be pitching up at all?
A. No. I don't remember it doing that.
Q. Well, would you have slowed down for anything?

A. Well, I would've slowed down to set up my approach, but never at an altitude like that. I mean, you would've -- if I was going to slow down for the landing, you wouldn't even have seen it pitch. That's, like, quick stop level. That's, like, flaring at auto level.
Q. Yeah.
A. We don't do that.
Q. So, then they saw you pointing toward it, but almost like the helicopter was moving back.
A. Is this witness a guest or a pilot?
Q. A Papillon pilot.
A. Okay.
Q. And we take witness statements with a grain of salt. Everyone saw something different.
A. Yeah. I mean, I'm a witness and I can't even give you the answers right from the cockpit.
Q. Which is predictable.
A. Really?
Q. Completely. We just wish we had video of it. I always say my job has changed so drastically in the last 15 years because now we usually have a camera somewhere. And people's memories, yeah, I saw things on fire. Going down. And then you look at the video and it's completely different than their memory. But I just wanted to share with you, kind of, what other people had seen because I'm sure you're confused. And then we've pretty much got

it where everyone saw --
A. Left turn and -- so, that's what I thought, two, three -- so, I was right. It went to the left. Okay?
Q. They said that you never really stopped turning, that it just was a left turn and just kept going.
A. Okay.
Q. Which is consistent with your wind pushing.
A. It's what I thought happened.
MR. FIGLIA: I thought you mentioned it was turned clockwise. This would be counterclockwise.
MR. TOBIN: Okay. You had said clockwise.
MR. BOOTH: Yeah. I recall saying clockwise. I definitely said it, but when I -- now that I see the rotations, that's -- I mean, that makes more -- that's bringing back my memory to how I moved, like, how I got pushed a little. But I definitely -- I know I said clockwise.
BY DR. WILSON:
Q. And I'm sure you've Googled pictures of it.
A. No. I didn't look at anything. That's not me. Yeah. So, you have two downriver and two upriver in the same area, and lots of open space to land. Can you reverse a couple because I want to see -- now I see this, it's making more sense to me on how it turned. But can you go back a couple more so I can --
MR. FIGLIA: I didn't mean to stick my head in your way.
BY DR. WILSON:

Q. Sorry. We have a very open space here.
A. Okay.
Q. Do you ever get blanking out of wind from that cliff right there when you go over the river?
A. I don't know. I don't think so.
Q. That was also the things that we wanted to see in the wind study, but we have our meteorologist that is working it, trying to figure out from pictures of smoke and such -- trying to determine. But again, the simulator, once we start putting wind in different directions at it to try to simulate what happened, the biggest thing that we're trying to figure out is what your altitude and air speeds would've been. That's kind of our missing pieces. But from looking at the way that Simon flew the approach and doing the bracket of plus minus 100 feet and 5 knots.
A. It's all going to be low. It's going to be -- yeah. We don't do anything steep and we don't do anything shallow. It's your normal approach to land. Yeah. I don't know why -- I mean, I'm kind of confused on why I said the clockwise direction because -- yeah. I don't know. My memory's so bad. I'm trying.
MS. KELIHER: Well, you've been actually extremely helpful.
DR. WILSON: We thought you wouldn't remember anything at all.
MS. KELIHER: Right. So, it's been really, really helpful.
MR. BOOTH: Okay. I wish I -- and certain things I'm glad I don't remember, such as the fire and things like that, because I

think that would make me way more sad and --

MS. KELIHER: Yeah.

MR. BOOTH: -- miserable. But other things I'm happy -- if I could help in any way and help, you know, you guys and everybody, so that it never happens again. That's a good thing.

DR. WILSON: Yeah. Is there anything else that you can think of that we didn't ask you about or you think would be relevant?

MR. BOOTH: No, ma'am.

MS. KELIHER: Okay.

DR. WILSON: If you think of anything, you know, you can reach out through Tom to us or to us directly. And, you know, typically, our investigations will take at least another 12 months, probably, until we get a final report out.

MR. BOOTH: Okay.

DR. WILSON: We really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us. It was, like I said, extremely helpful.

MR. BOOTH: Okay. Good.

MR. FIGLIA: I really can't imagine what you're going through. I know we're all, hearts just out.

MR. BOOTH: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

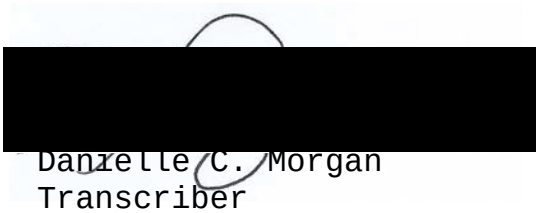
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA FEBRUARY 10, 2018 Interview of Scott Booth
ACCIDENT NO.:	WPR18MA087
PLACE:	
DATE:	August 2, 2018

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.



Danielle C. Morgan
Transcriber