

Factual Report - Attachment 1

Interview Transcripts

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

WPR21FA286

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: CONNER JADWIN, CEO and President,
Director of Business Development,
Aeolus Air Charter

Van Nuys, California

Tuesday,
August 31, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Investigator
FAA Accident Investigation Division

JOHN HANSON (Representative for Mr. Jadwin)
Worthe, Hanson & Worthe

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:00 p.m. PDT)

1
2
3 MR. LAWRENCE: My name is David Lawrence with the NTSB, and
4 we're here on the accident that happened up in Truckee,
5 California, a few weeks back. And on behalf of myself, the Team,
6 the Investigative Team, the whole NTSB, our condolences for your
7 loss. And we're sorry for your -- what you're having to go
8 through, but our -- and I know we've talked about this before, but
9 our sole purpose is trying to find out what happened so we can
10 prevent it from happening again. So this is a safety
11 investigation, and feel free to share whatever you can to help us
12 figure out what happened in that goal.

13 We do everything in our investigations by the party system.
14 The Federal Aviation Administration is party to our
15 investigations. I'll let Todd explain his role.

16 MR. GENTRY: So I'm Todd Gentry. I work for the FAA,
17 Accident Investigation Division. So we work hand-in-hand with the
18 NTSB on all fatal accidents, really. And our goal is to try to
19 look at whatever the FAA can do in our responsibilities to make
20 sure this doesn't happen again. So it's important that first of
21 all I tell you that I don't do any enforcement actions. There is
22 no -- I can't even do enforcement actions, even if I wanted to.
23 That's not part of my role. So anything you tell me is free and
24 open conversations. The only people I share it with is my partner
25 here. That's it.

1 MR. JADWIN: Okay.

2 MR. GENTRY: So I want you to feel free to speak openly.

3 MR. JADWIN: Yeah.

4 MR. GENTRY: Your certificates are not in any danger talking
5 to me. You can say anything you want. The only person I will
6 talk to would be Dave and any other NTSB people. That's it.

7 I think that's all, Dave. So, thank you.

8 MR. JADWIN: Understood. Thank you.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Great. And a couple of preflight things. I
10 mentioned earlier about the tape recording. We're going to tape
11 record this and we send it for transcription. It will become part
12 of the public docket. I'm not sure exactly when that happens.
13 It's down the road maybe a year or so before the factual record
14 comes out. Because we're very early in the investigation right
15 now. So if that's okay with you.

16 MR. JADWIN: Yeah.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And then John Hanson is here as your
18 representative, is that correct?

19 MR. JADWIN: Correct.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. Couple more preflight actions.
21 I'll be taping -- or even though we're taping, I'm going to be
22 typing some things up as we go through just to keep my mind ahead
23 of the game and upon questions. So if I'm not making eye contact
24 with you or I'm down here typing slow, such, I apologize. Don't
25 think anything -- don't read anything into that. If I ask you a

1 question that you just don't know the answer to, I don't know is a
2 perfectly acceptable answer. Or if you want me to clarify
3 anything in my questions, I'll be happy to. Okay?

4 Do you have any questions for us before we get started?

5 MR. JADWIN: Not yet.

6 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. I'll give you an opportunity at
7 the very end to --

8 MR. JADWIN: Okay.

9 MR. GENTRY: -- ask us any question you would like.

10 INTERVIEW OF CONNER JADWIN

11 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

12 Q. Let me start off with the easy ones. Let me get your name
13 and age, full name.

14 A. My name is Conner Jadwin. Age is 28.

15 Q. Great. And what is your title here with Aeolus?

16 A. Director of Business Development.

17 Q. Are you the CEO or the President as well?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I'm (indiscernible) so we kind of wear multiple hats outside
21 of the --

22 Q. I only ask, I only ask because that role -- those roles are
23 also defined in the GOM.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Functions as the CEO.

2 Q. So, in general, what are your overall roles and
3 responsibilities?

4 A. From a high level of functioning as a CEO, the Director of
5 Operations, Director of Maintenance, and Chief Pilot report to me.
6 At this stage, we're not built out vertically. So a lot of the
7 communication is lateral in nature. Outside of that, my day-to-
8 day focus is helping grow the company, get aircraft that we can
9 put on the certificate, and also work in charter sales in terms of
10 selling trips on the existing aircraft that we have.

11 Q. Okay. And I believe you said you were a pilot also, right?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And what kind of licenses do you have?

14 A. I have a Commercial Pilot's Certificate with single-engine,
15 multi-engine land privileges, and an instrument rating. I think
16 that's it; a couple endorsements, just normal stuff.

17 Q. That's okay. And if you could give me, Conner, your basic
18 Cliffs Notes version of your background. How did -- what led you
19 up to it?

20 A. Today?

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. I mean, it started like a lot of people in aviation just
23 being a kid, and loving airplanes. And then I went to business
24 school, got a job working in 135 for a startup. I was kind of
25 enamored by the industry and the fast pace of it. Unfortunately,

1 that company went bankrupt. I went back to business school to get
2 my MBA. While I was doing that, I undertook this project to start
3 the company. Recruited Dave in as a partner, and then eventually
4 Ryan as a partner as well for funding to help grow the fleet. And
5 that pretty much brings us to today from a Cliffs Notes version.

6 Q. I appreciate that. Perfect. Tell me about the company,
7 Aeolus.

8 A. Is there a more specific question or --

9 Q. What is it? Is it a charter company? Is it a -- what is it?

10 A. The vision for the company prior to the accident was we were
11 going to grow this thing to 10 airplanes, all on charter, and then
12 sell it ideally to a bigger charter company. Ryan would make a
13 return on the cash that he put in to help us grow the fleet, and I
14 could explore what it's like working in a bigger company as some
15 founders often do, and then decide from a career perspective for
16 me if I want to continue doing that or maybe go out and start
17 another charter company or whatever. Outside of that, the rest of
18 it was just typical compliance stuff, trying to get the
19 certificate, and wasn't much in terms of vision there because it's
20 just you got to do what you got to do.

21 Q. Briefly describe the corporate culture here. How is it
22 structured?

23 A. The corporate culture, and this is part of the reason why I
24 wanted to build Dave on, we wanted to build a 135 copying
25 Southwest culture, if that makes sense. So we wanted to

1 prioritize the people. We wanted to prioritize kind of --
2 Southwest is known for having a very positive culture where people
3 want to show up to work. They prioritize safety. They prioritize
4 having fun. It's a work hard, play hard environment, and that's
5 what we were going for.

6 Q. Do you have or did Aeolus have any type of SMS program in
7 place or was there plans to put on in place?

8 A. We didn't have one in place. We were actively working. We
9 did a couple demos with there's like five major ones. We kind of
10 zeroed in on three. We were looking at Polaris in the weeks
11 leading up to the accident to get that underway. The goal was to
12 get Argos Platinum, WYVERN Wingman and IS-BAO certification by the
13 time the company turned one. And as part of that process, we
14 actually undertook the IS-BAO thing prior to certification. And
15 they had this new program. I think it was called the Progressive
16 Stage One that we had signed up for -- we paid for. And we were
17 in the process of scheduling the first audit when this happened.
18 Just didn't get on the calendar because we were at bandwidth
19 trying to get the 605 certificate and everything else. So it was
20 let's get this on, and then we'll bring out Bernie to do the
21 audit.

22 Q. The audit hadn't occurred yet?

23 A. Hadn't occurred yet, correct.

24 Q. Any other audits on the company? I know it's only two,
25 couple, matter of weeks on the certificate.

1 A. Our hope was with Bernie doing the audit because he's worked
2 with all the safety rating agencies, and that could kind of
3 suffice for the original audit, and then when we turn one we do
4 another audit, which I think is required anyway to get the
5 Platinum certificate from Argos and the Wingman from WYVERN. So
6 that was the only one.

7 Q. Do you have a -- describe in general your safety culture.

8 A. To me I thought safety was at the forefront of everything we
9 did. We didn't cheap out on pilots. We didn't move at a pace
10 where we were frantic. We always thought haste makes waste. So
11 every time we made a decision we ran it by Joe. We ran it by Dave
12 because they each have their own perspective on things that I
13 think combined serve to create a safe environment.

14 Q. Who led your safety here at the operation?

15 A. Who led it?

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Dave was functioning as a safety manager.

18 Q. Safety manager?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Does Aeolus have a defined safety policy?

21 A. Nothing outside of the GOM.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Which we're actively working to change.

24 Q. What are you changing on it?

25 A. I actually talked with a WYVERN rep last week, and she was

1 going to send us kind of their cookie cutter safety manual, and
2 then we could tailor that to our op specs and how we wanted to do
3 business.

4 Q. Okay. I'm curious. You have the certificate and such. Why
5 wasn't some of this done prior to?

6 A. To getting the 135 certificate?

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. I actually wondered that myself. This is the way I learned
9 the Argos and WYVERN work is you can get up to a certain point,
10 but then you're basically at a standstill until you can just turn
11 over a double 01 to them, and then they'll let you move forward
12 with the process.

13 Q. Really?

14 A. Yeah. So we got as far as we could until they were asking
15 for a copy of our actual AFC, which we didn't have.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. So we were stuck.

18 Q. IS-BAO doesn't do that?

19 A. IS-BAO doesn't do that. We -- I mean, they offered it
20 differently than the other two, who are more like for-profit
21 businesses, and IS-BAO is -- IS-BAO is more let's get this going,
22 and they see the value on it.

23 Q. Okay. Interesting. Thanks. So how did you meet Dave
24 Ventrella, the Director of Operations?

25 A. I've known Dave for, gosh, at least five years, maybe even

1 ten. I initially wanted to be a pilot when I first got my
2 certificates. He was working at Southwest at the time. Family
3 friend set us up with the idea of him kind of grooming me in to
4 becoming an airline captain. As I grew up and, frankly, got in a
5 relationship, I realized that traveling as much as pilots travel
6 wasn't in the cards (indiscernible) to say who I was in a
7 relationship with at the time. So I started exploring other
8 aviation careers. Dave and I's (verbatim) past kind of realigned
9 when he was retiring from Southwest, and I had the idea to start
10 this, and we decided to form a business together.

11 Q. What about the Chief Pilot, Takeshi.

12 A. Takeshi?

13 Q. Um-hmm.

14 A. I -- well, Dave actually found him because we posted an ad.
15 And then when we were starting the certificate, and the Premiere
16 was the aircraft that we chose to go with, Dave decided to
17 interview Takeshi to be a chief pilot. Takeshi accepted. And so
18 my relationship with Takeshi only goes back maybe six months or a
19 year or so when we initially met. And that's pretty much all
20 there is to it.

21 Q. And what about the Director of Maintenance?

22 A. Joe I've known for a long time. He worked -- I met him when
23 I was working at Zetta Jet, which was the operator that I worked
24 prior to getting my MBA. He was the DOM there. He left for the
25 same reason I did, and we stayed in touch. He managed a couple

1 Part 91 accounts locally. So we just stayed in touch as friends.
2 We had common interests. And then we obviously needed a director
3 of maintenance. I reached out to him. He expressed interest.

4 Q. Have you had an opportunity to meet the FAA's two principals,
5 the Operations Inspector and the Maintenance Inspector?

6 A. Shawn Garrett (ph.)?

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. Not in person. We met over Zoom. Obviously, countless times
9 we'd spend hours on the phone. But our first scheduled meeting
10 was going to be when we went up there next time for
11 (indiscernible) August 4th, 5th.

12 Q. What was that for?

13 A. The conformity inspection.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. For 605 Tango --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Who is authorized to exercise operation control on your
19 flights here at Aeolus?

20 A. Dave, Takeshi and Joe.

21 Q. What about the Part 91 flights?

22 A. The PIC and, I mean, if -- I don't know the answer, to be
23 honest with you.

24 Q. Okay.

25 MR. GENTRY: Good answer.

1 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

2 Q. How did you learn about the accident, Conner?

3 A. Gosh. It was probably 30 minutes past their scheduled
4 arrival time. I was here at Van Nuys working. I realized that I
5 never got a flight (indiscernible) alert that they parted the FBO.
6 And so that was kind of the first red flag. I looked at their
7 FlightAware track. I saw what the whole world's seen now that the
8 line didn't end on the runway. I was hopeful that that was just a
9 computer thing.

10 The next thing I did was I looked on ForeFlight. The NOTAM
11 said airport closed six minutes after their arrival time. My
12 heart just sank. Obviously, pretty much to having confirmation to
13 what I had assumed. We called the airport. I mean, all this
14 happened, like, three minutes. I called the airport. I couldn't
15 get a hold of anyone at the FBO.

16 I asked our Director of Sales if she could start calling
17 around as well. And our first real confirmation of the crash was,
18 I think, it was the Humane Society up there, which is a business
19 nearby. No one else that we could get a hold of was saying
20 anything. They were just saying I don't know or let me go check
21 and call you back, leave a number. They said, oh, yeah, an
22 aircraft crashed. And this was just a -- business near the
23 airport. And that's when we pretty much implemented what I guess
24 you would call our ERP, and called the NTSB.

25 Q. So tell me about the passengers on the accident flight. Who

1 were they?

2 A. So Ryan Thomas and Christine Thomas. I knew Ryan very, very
3 well. Last summer we decided to take on this project together,
4 start the business. He would help find the funds we needed to
5 grow the fleet. I would focus on running the day-to-day and
6 growing -- because he didn't know much about (indiscernible) and
7 how many people you needed involved with starting certificate, and
8 the whole five stages of doing such. So he left that to me. And
9 I mean, we talked every day. He became more of a friend than
10 anything just because starting certificates an emotional process.
11 And we kind of just became like soldiers in the same foxhole.

12 I didn't know anything about John Dunn other than he was on
13 at least one flight that we had brokered for Ryan in the past when
14 the Premiere had broken. So we obviously needed the full manifest
15 to broker out a flight for 135. And John's name -- that was the
16 first time I had ever heard it. And I had never heard of Kevin
17 Kvarnlov until this happened.

18 Q. And so Ryan and Christine Thomas were they both -- are they
19 -- were partners to Aeolus or how was their business relationship
20 to --

21 A. So Ryan and I were partners. Christine maybe was a partner,
22 I guess, by marriage. I don't know --

23 Q. Yeah. Okay.

24 A. -- how those rules work but --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- Ryan was a partner. He was our funding partner starting
2 with the Premiere, and then it was a pretty dynamic environment
3 over the last years. Things changed rapidly. So what started as
4 just like us taking on a project turned into a formal business
5 relationship where Aeolus was incorporated. And then he had an
6 outside company called Hideaway Aviation. I don't know what that
7 was for other than when we initially signed the lease for the
8 Premiere he signed it through Hideaway. And then after everything
9 had kind of simplified out to just us being partners in Aeolus,
10 he's like let's sign all the leases in Aeolus going forward to
11 keep it clean. And we spent probably eight months looking for an
12 airplane until we identified the 605, and that deal obviously
13 happened, and shortly thereafter it brings us to here.

14 Q. So Hideaway was his business, his -- a real estate firm, I
15 think it was.

16 A. Yes. He was a builder by trade, which is --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- he always told me he was building these high end second
19 homes. His initial idea was, like, hey, we can offset the cost of
20 airplanes. I can fly my clients into their second homes, and we
21 can make some money. And he knew he needed a charter certificate
22 to do that. So that's kind of why our relationship started.
23 Hideaway, I don't know what the purpose of it was other than maybe
24 he didn't want to sign the aircraft lease in his personal name.
25 Because that was part of the deal. I told him, like, hey, I'm

1 going to bring some money for the certificate. I don't really
2 want to take on the risk of an aircraft least with an unknown
3 timeline. And he said, okay, I'll do it. Because he had more
4 means than I did. And that was the first time I saw Hideaway
5 Aviation.

6 Q. Okay. The flight itself was Part 91 and not Part 135?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Okay. Was there any compensation that was exchanged between
9 Ryan or Christine or the other two passengers to Aeolus?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. Did they cover costs?

12 A. No. We pay for everybody.

13 Q. You pay for everything. Okay. Who has operation control of
14 the actual accident flight?

15 A. My understanding it was the PIC had operational control.

16 Q. I said compensation, and I just want to make sure we're
17 talking about the same thing. I don't mean just monetarily or a
18 cost cover. Was there any other benefit provided to Aeolus with
19 Ryan and them being onboard the airplane or was this just personal
20 business?

21 A. It was personal business. I mean, there -- I didn't know
22 much about what he was doing in Boise other than he just said I'm
23 going to use the 605 since (indiscernible) certificate and let the
24 Premiere run revenue flights so that we as a company can make
25 money, and keep it -- go do whatever needed to do.

1 Q. You had no idea why he was going up there?

2 A. I have no idea other than presumably he was doing something
3 work related with building a house or on vacation. He didn't
4 share when he would call me. He just said I'm going to Coeur
5 d'Alene or I need to go to Reno or Truckee or -- wherever.

6 Q. Was the airplane, it came in from Bangor when it was
7 delivered, right? And did it go on any other flights prior to
8 this series of flights?

9 A. It went to Florida and back, and that was it.

10 Q. Okay. And what was that for?

11 A. That was just a personal flight and back, and we were waiting
12 for a conformity date. We finally got it.

13 Q. Was that (indiscernible)?

14 A. No. No. That was someone else.

15 Q. But that was the Part 91?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Company covered across on that one as well?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. Tell me a little bit about Alberto, and how he came
20 into the picture here?

21 A. Alberto, he applied online. He initially caught our
22 attention because he had a 605 type. And, I mean, we interviewed
23 him over Zoom. He seemed like he had a great personality so we
24 brought him out, after sending him to training for this flight and
25 it was, I mean, I got along with the guy as a friend. And it's

1 just like it's heart wrenching to me to see what happened. He's
2 -- I don't know much about him besides we interviewed him when I
3 was with Dave, and that was it.

4 Q. You said we. Zoom interview we. Who is we?

5 A. Dave and I.

6 Q. Okay. And you said you send him to training for this flight.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Well, we sent him to 605 school because he was going to be a
10 contractor for us on 135. So we sent him to Wilmington, Delaware.
11 He was done, I think, it was July 17th or so, and then he came out
12 here for this flight, and that was it. That was the first time I
13 had met him in person was prior to this flight.

14 Q. Just it caught me when you said we sent him to training for
15 this flight.

16 A. Oh, I mean, like, we sent him to school for 605, 135 stuff,
17 and then --

18 Q. With the intention of bringing him on as an employee?

19 A. Yes. So what happened, I guess, between that time was he
20 said he had a visa. We sent him employment paperwork like we
21 would anyone else that was in the States. This was my first time
22 dealing with international person. I think it was a day later he
23 called me. He goes, hey, my visa is held up. I'm trying to set
24 up this company in Florida with (indiscernible) this is all new to
25 me. So I said are we going to employ you as a contractor because

1 there's no way for me to add you to ADP unless you have a Social
2 Security Number. And the details were kind of loose just because
3 like this was all happening while he was away in Spokane, and then
4 he got back.

5 And, I mean, I guess we were going to employ him as a
6 contractor under 135 because we had trained him. We didn't want
7 to lose the investment of the training. But I was unclear, and I
8 was reaching out for advice on what we -- our options were.
9 Because I knew we couldn't pay him as a W-2 without a visa.

10 Q. But he could train in the United States without a visa.

11 A. That was my understanding. He said he needed to call Flight
12 Safety and do a TSA check before his training started. And so
13 that obviously happened, and I saw the results of that, that he
14 was good to go.

15 Q. I apologize for going back, Conner. I just thought of
16 something. The flight that went to Florida after the Bangor
17 flight here had arrived, and you said there was a turn to Florida
18 and back prior to this series of flights.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Who flew that?

21 A. That was a guy by the name of Jim Barbacoski (ph.) and Shawn
22 Henning (ph.). Shawn was actually going to fly this flight, and
23 he got stuck in somewhere, Costa Rica or something, and so he
24 called me, and that's how we found Brett Ebaugh.

25 Q. Okay. Jim flew for Jet Green?

1 A. Who is Jet Green?

2 Q. I think he flew for a company called Jet Green. But how did
3 you all find Jim Barbacoski?

4 A. He was a referral. We found him more than a half ago, I
5 think it was or, no, maybe more than that now. And then we looked
6 at hiring him full-time, but after meeting him, I kind of had a
7 weird feeling about him. So I was like, I don't know. And we
8 decided to keep looking, and that's when we found Alberto. And
9 then we were going to find a third pilot once the aircraft got on
10 certificate.

11 Q. I'm sorry to jump back like that.

12 A. That's fine.

13 Q. So the hiring process here for Alberto is that consistent
14 with what you do with other pilots? Did he go through the same
15 hiring process, understanding the visa hang-up and all that?

16 A. I think the only thing that was different about him was he
17 was in Mexico City so we didn't fly him out for an interview.
18 Whereas with Takeshi and Sherwin (ph.), who was local, and George
19 who (indiscernible) the Premiere, we met them face-to-face before
20 we made any hiring decisions.

21 Q. What background checks were conducted prior to his
22 employment?

23 A. For Alberto?

24 Q. Yes, Alberto.

25 A. We did the standard. I'm not too familiar with the details,

1 but the standard like NADA check, and I think a background check
2 as well. That's all I'm familiar with.

3 Q. You alluded to it, but Aeolus paid for his training in flight
4 safety as well, right?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Did you get a chance to look at his training records?

7 A. From flight safety?

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. He's -- I don't remember exactly. So I would say no.

10 Q. Did he go through an Indoc training here?

11 A. He was -- he did an online Indoc, and then the whole visa
12 thing kind of screwed up our process. We weren't sure what we
13 were going to do with Alberto. It was all in flux. So I wouldn't
14 -- not that I'm aware of, no.

15 Q. Okay. Have you seen the Indoc program or did you monitor it?
16 I think it was on Zoom, right?

17 A. I haven't done the Indoc program. It's a computer-based
18 training.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Dave's pretty familiar with it. I think it's called Training
21 Boom or something. And it's just like -- it's built off the GOM,
22 and then they do the company-specific stuff in person.

23 Q. Okay. Tell me about Brett Ebaugh. How did he come into the
24 picture?

25 A. Brett was a referral as well.

1 Q. From where?

2 A. From a group that was going to use him for IOE on their own
3 605, and they were in school at flight safety with our guys. They
4 said, hey, this guy is great. He's got a good personality. He's
5 given our two initial guys IOE when they get out of school. We
6 talked to him on the phone. He said he was available for the
7 trip. Sent over his records, and I mean I didn't know the guy
8 very well. I never met him in person.

9 Q. All right. Do you know the company he was going to be doing
10 IOE for and --

11 A. I don't know the name of the company. I could probably get
12 it though if you needed it. I mean, I know the name of the
13 pilots, but I don't know the name of their company because it was
14 Part 91.

15 Q. Who was the pilots?

16 A. His name was -- I only know the captain's name, Estevan Vega,
17 I think.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. He was at school with Alberto and Jason.

20 Q. Okay. Was there any kind of background check done on Brett?

21 A. No, not that I'm aware of.

22 Q. Other than the PRIA -- or there wasn't a PRIA on him?

23 A. No, not that I'm aware of.

24 Q. Okay. Why not?

25 A. I guess the only reason was we were assuming that we were

1 using him once as a contractor, and we typically don't PRIA checks
2 on 91 contractors.

3 Q. Not just PRIA. Is there any other check? Any kind of
4 background check?

5 A. Oh, oh. Well, he sent me over his Pilot's Certificate, and
6 what else did he send? Medical, I think, and his driver's
7 license, and maybe like a card, I think. I don't remember
8 exactly. Showing that his recent training was done in June,
9 whatever, 2021.

10 Q. Training at where?

11 A. CAE.

12 Q. Okay. Any verification of that? Did you contact CAE for any
13 kind of --

14 A. No. I mean, I wish I did in hindsight but --

15 Q. What about taking a look at the online FAA registry, pilot
16 registry information? That's all available.

17 A. Oh, like the airman thing?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah. I Googled his name just to make sure like this guy was
20 who he said he was, and I found a profile of his on some
21 contracting advertising board showing --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- couple thousand hours.

24 Q. Not the faa.gov website?

25 A. No. I typed in his thing. I said that he had the type

1 rating in CL-604, and that was as far as I --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. (Indiscernible).

4 Q. Yeah. And I don't know if you got involved with this, but
5 who was supposed to be PIC, and who was supposed to be SIC?

6 Pilot-in-Command and Second-in-Command for --

7 A. For the accident flight?

8 Q. For the actual whole series of flights.

9 A. Alberto was supposed to PIC the entire time as far as I
10 understood it.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I don't know if there was, like, a formal conversation
13 established who was PIC.

14 Q. That was my next question. Was that communicated to either
15 one of those pilots?

16 A. I'm not sure. So --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- not from me.

19 Q. Were there any concerns voiced by anybody here about pairing
20 both Alberto and Brett together?

21 A. Not before the flight.

22 Q. Okay. That leads me to hindsight.

23 A. Hindsight, yeah.

24 Q. Talk to me. And I understand this -- it's hindsight.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Totally get it.

2 A. We work with, I think he's listed as an agent for service on
3 our thing. So I'm pretty close to him just in terms of, like,
4 he's -- he knows the 135 world in and out, safety recommendations,
5 et cetera. So I had called him, obviously, and that was one of
6 his initial gut reactions was, oh, boy, like if these guys didn't
7 fly together -- me being a pilot myself, you know, if I'm in the
8 cockpit with someone I've never flown before, you're still trying
9 to feel them out and whatnot. So in hindsight, yeah, there was
10 some concern. Like, did these guys have the same CRN? Did they
11 -- any of this contribute. So that was my fear was like pairing
12 these guys maybe created not safe cockpit environment. So it was
13 all hindsight. Nothing before.

14 Q. Yeah. But this type of pairing in your opinion is this
15 unusual in this world?

16 A. Not at all.

17 Q. How is it the pilots are typically thrown together in a
18 cockpit in this environment like this? It's -- if they're not
19 employees, and they're all contracts, then you have multiple
20 pilots, who are from maybe separate backgrounds, different
21 training. There's all kind of training programs out there and
22 such. But this happens all the time, right?

23 A. My understanding is it happens all the time where contractors
24 are going from one serial number to the next, and they may never
25 fly those two serial numbers again because it's just like a

1 revolving door. They'll go from one airport to one gig or
2 whatever they call it to the next.

3 Q. So Brett, was he paid a flat fee and expenses?

4 A. Yeah. In fact, I haven't paid his estate anything. We
5 reached out after the fact to pay him what we had agreed to pay
6 him up front, which was 1500 bucks a day. And we didn't get a
7 return phone call. So we, obviously, are willing to pay him for
8 the work he did but --

9 Q. I'm sure she's busy.

10 A. Oh, yeah. No. I didn't expect a call back. It's just --

11 Q. Is it challenging? Because I've never gone out to a website
12 or looked and tried to find a Challenger pilot. Is there a
13 limited inventory of these guys or is there plenty? Is there a
14 market for the people being -- is it easy to get contract pilots
15 on a Challenger? I'm just trying to find out how many are really
16 out there.

17 A. Judging by my experience, I would say it's on the easier
18 side. We didn't have to go to, like, a third party to find a
19 contract pilot, which is probably the case in rare types.

20 Q. Do they typically list who they fly for, other companies that
21 they've flown for so that you can actually go out there, and maybe
22 pick up the phone say, he said this guy -- this guy said he flew
23 for you couple months ago, how was the experience? Is that
24 available? Do they tell you who their other contracts are?

25 A. When I've asked, I mean, they answer all the questions.

1 Like, here's a resume or here's what I normally ask. I don't
2 think it's hard, if that's your question. I'm not sure I
3 understand.

4 Q. Yeah. I'm just wondering how much sharing of information
5 there is between all the contract carriers or contract operators.
6 You're bringing in all these contract pilots. Are the operators
7 talking about certain pilots, and do certain pilots get
8 reputations?

9 A. To be honest, I don't -- I haven't been in the position to
10 use contractors for very long. So I don't know how much
11 information they -- information sharing there is.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. Most of the information sharing that I've looked into was
14 like what I just explained, they were calling for recommendations.
15 So the people we're calling usually give us the information that
16 made us feel comfortable using these pilots.

17 Q. Okay. Switching gears a little bit. Tell me about the
18 airplane.

19 A. The airplane was sitting for a long time. Obviously, we
20 picked it up with the intention of putting it on our certificate.
21 The idea was we would go back to the people that were leasing us
22 the airplane, and they would help us grow a fleet through their
23 ability to get airplanes.

24 Q. Targo?

25 A. Targo, yeah. In regards to the airplane itself, I mean, I

1 don't know much about the mechanical history. I like airplanes.
2 I research like the specs of it and how far it can fly and how
3 fast, all that stuff that is important to charter customers, but
4 this airplane it was just attractive to us because of its
5 availability for the terms that we were willing to agree to, and
6 there are things that we wish it had, like, fast Wi-Fi system and
7 stuff, but that was just outside from the airplane itself. More
8 interested in like making it marketable for charter and stuff. So
9 that's why we settled on the 605 was we felt like it was an
10 efficient platform to build a fleet of airplanes around, and this
11 one happened to be available, and that was about it. Do you have
12 any specific questions about it?

13 Q. No. That's -- trying to figure the history of it, and how
14 did we get here?

15 A. Oh, yeah. My involvement with it stretches back to probably
16 April, I would say, and then I saw it for the first time in June.
17 So I don't know much about it besides what Targo has told me about
18 the airplane's history in Europe and what not.

19 Q. So you kind of were scoping this out in April, and May 1st
20 you sign the lease with Targo on it.

21 A. Yeah. It was sometime around there.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. And then we were going to go up there and inspect it in
24 August to make sure that it was what they said it was, and then --

25 Q. In Bangor?

1 A. In Bangor, yeah.

2 Q. Okay. Did your director of maintenance go up there?

3 A. No. Just the maintenance technician that we contracted. And
4 I went up there, and that was it.

5 Q. Okay. As the CEO and President, and kind of like the head of
6 the organization, is it your expectation that the pilots that you
7 hire are going to fly your airplanes are going to fly per company
8 procedures and policy regardless of Part 91, 135, what operating
9 rules going to fly under? Do you understand what I'm asking?

10 A. Kind of. I would say my expectation was that we hire
11 professional and competent, safe pilots, but I think I leave a lot
12 of the, like the actual procedures to Dave, Joe and Takeshi
13 because as much as I want to say I know as much as they do, I just
14 don't. They have higher ratings than I do, more experience. Just
15 my expectation that these guys can get the job done basically.

16 Q. Okay. Then how do you know or how would Dave or the chief
17 pilot or anybody here know if the pilots are actually complying
18 with procedures and policies and regulations? When you hand them
19 the keys to the jet and they drive off, how do you know they're
20 complying with what they're supposed to be complying with?

21 A. From my perspective, I mean, there's a lot of trust involved,
22 obviously.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. On a 135 flight it's different because you're using crews
25 that have been through the training program that's been approved,

1 and we expect them to follow that to a T. Obviously exceed the
2 FARs to what our company procedures are. But on a 91 flight, I
3 think there's a lot of trust involved, and this goes to show that.

4 Q. But you just said that your expectation is the 91 and 135
5 flights would be essentially the same? They would operate it the
6 same?

7 A. I've never --

8 Q. Are you telling me --

9 A. I've never --

10 Q. -- different?

11 A. -- thought of it that way to where, like, do they
12 (indiscernible) similar.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I mean, I just, I kind of looked at it through the lens of
15 when we hire someone that's competent and qualified, they
16 obviously follow the FARs, and that's, I guess, to answer your
17 question what I assume that they were following the FARs on a 91
18 flight. And on a Part 135 flight they're following our GOM
19 procedures.

20 Q. Any concerns with pilots that you don't -- doing that and
21 you're hiring under contract?

22 A. In hindsight? Yeah. Easy to say now, I guess.

23 Q. Right. It's an honest answer. Is Aeolus a part of NBAA?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. We just have the regular membership.

2 Q. Oh, okay. Attend safety meetings or any type of industry
3 meetings? Maybe NBAA, Air Charter Safety Foundation, somebody
4 like that?

5 A. We did join the Air Charter Safety Foundation.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. We haven't attended anything. Although we plan on going to
8 the big conference out in Vegas in, I think, mid-October. And
9 during that, like, we'll attend all the stuff that we can,
10 schedule permitting with safety stuff and whatnot.

11 Q. Okay.

12 MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have any questions?

13 MR. GENTRY: Sure.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Go ahead.

15 BY MR. GENTRY:

16 Q. Bombardier Safety Standdown?

17 A. Do I want to attend that or --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah. I --

20 Q. Were you guys going to go to that?

21 A. I don't know many details, but, yeah. After this, I want to
22 attend every safety thing possible. Because -- not that I didn't
23 beforehand, but it's just --

24 MR. GENTRY: Can I continue?

25 MR. LAWRENCE: Yes.

1 BY MR. GENTRY:

2 Q. So couple of quick questions here. Talk about you're --
3 you're not the money guy, but you're the CEO, and you do budgets,
4 right? So was there a budget for the subscription service on the
5 airplane? Do you know?

6 A. There was a rough budget that we put together before we
7 bought the airplane.

8 Q. Was the airplane, did it have subscription service?

9 A. No, not yet.

10 Q. So what were the (indiscernible)?

11 A. Oh, oh, for on the FMS like MFD or?

12 Q. Yeah, MFD.

13 A. As far as I know, he was using an iPad with ForeFlight and
14 Jepp charts.

15 Q. Did you have a subscription service for the MFDs?

16 A. For? Yeah, yeah. We had ForeFlight and Jepp and those
17 subscriptions.

18 Q. No, not --

19 A. Oh, for the MFD. I'm sorry.

20 Q. For the avionics, yeah.

21 A. No. Not yet. We were in the process of signing up. So we
22 used a third party to update the NAV database.

23 Q. The NAV database?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. (Indiscernible.)

1 A. I can get his name. Joe has his number. He updated it.
2 It's like -- I want to say it was like a couple days before the
3 flight. I don't remember the exact day, but I remember going to
4 the airplane, and when they powered up the MFD it shows all those
5 subscriptions, and they all said they expire August 11th.

6 Q. So did you actually physically look at a map or an airport
7 diagram or the MFD? Could you call up --

8 (Crosstalk)

9 A. I --

10 Q. -- ground?

11 A. On the 605?

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. No. I don't know how to do that. But when I saw the
14 airplane, it just, on the MFD it just showed what I think is
15 normal, like a little circle on the com frequency and stuff like
16 that.

17 Q. So you were just trusting that the pilots had their own
18 approach plates, contractors?

19 A. I mean, to be honest, I --

20 Q. Yeah. I want you to be honest.

21 A. -- didn't even think about the approach plates with this
22 flight.

23 Q. So when the airplane was going through its entry into import,
24 imported from Malta, I think, or some place, was there any -- do
25 you know of any work that was done on the FMS's at that time?

1 A. Not that I'm aware of.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. As far as my knowledge, the airplane was airworthy, and --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- signed off like everything was done for the import and to
6 get on the M register.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. I wasn't -- I'm not familiar with the details of what --

9 Q. And neither am I, to be honest with you. I'd have to look at
10 it. Because but I do know it's quite the extensive inspection and
11 everything else they do. So nothing -- this is not a check ride.
12 Don't be nervous.

13 A. Okay. It's hard not to.

14 Q. I know, but it's not, dude.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. It's just Dave and Todd trying to find out as much as we can.
17 That's all it is. So don't -- try not to be nervous.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. I know you're nervous, but try --

20 A. I want to help and --

21 Q. So do we. Yeah. That's why we're here. That's why all four
22 of us are in this room is to help. So I get it. But I don't want
23 you to be guarded either.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. I want you to just be --

1 A. Yeah, yeah, no.

2 Q. -- yourself.

3 A. Yeah. Trying to tell you everything I know and --

4 Q. Right.

5 A. -- be honest when I don't know something.

6 Q. Right. So was it your idea to start the 135 business with
7 the intentions of also doing a management like aircraft management
8 business?

9 A. Yeah. That was the goal. But most of our efforts were
10 focused on getting leased aircraft so that we could grow the fleet
11 quicker. And like I mentioned earlier, resell the business.

12 Q. So with that in mind, and I know I'm, I know I'm thinking
13 farther down on the vision scale than where we are.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. But would you expect those pilots who are -- you're managing
16 that aircraft for to fly the same way as your charter pilots?

17 A. Oh, yeah, definitely. I mean --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. -- if it was like a formally managed aircraft.

20 Q. With the same training?

21 A. With the same training. I mean, you've got to abide by
22 what's in the GOM, and the same standards that 135 flights
23 operate.

24 Q. Right. So in this case, we have a partner of the business in
25 an airplane with pilots that were contracted that you really

1 couldn't verify. That means -- is that right?

2 A. I mean, what do you mean by verify?

3 Q. Well --

4 A. I don't mean to play with words. I just --

5 Q. No, no. I'm with you. I know you made phone calls to try to
6 at least talk to people who Brett had flown for, right, you did?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. And the results of those phone calls were positive?

9 A. They were positive.

10 Q. Yeah. And so did you do that same thing with Alberto?

11 A. Yeah. So I left a lot of that to our typical hiring process
12 for the 135 because that was our goal with Alberto was to have him
13 fly charters. So --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- I guess the due diligence was different just because we
16 were only planning on using Brett for the 191 flight, and then --
17 he made it clear to us that he was a professional contract pilot.
18 Had he expressed interest in flying charter, we would have been
19 interested in going down that avenue as well but --

20 Q. Right.

21 A. -- he said something along the lines of, like, I've been
22 flying like every day as a contractor. It's been so busy. So I
23 didn't even bother asking him if he was interested in full-time
24 work.

25 Q. No, that's fine. That's your business.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. That's your business. I think that's it -- I think that's it
3 for now anyway. Oh, you mentioned ERP earlier.

4 A. Oh, for the --

5 Q. Do you have an official ERP? Is there a written emergency
6 plan somewhere?

7 A. Dave was the one that pulled it up when I was thinking, like,
8 we went through the ERP that was I was referencing was Dave pulled
9 up what's in the GOM.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And so that's kind of what we were following as an ERP.

12 Q. Okay.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Which is essentially notification to the FAA
14 and NTSB, correct?

15 MR. JADWIN: It's pretty straightforward, yeah.

16 BY MR. GENTRY:

17 Q. Okay. Have you done a gap analysis for your IS-BAO or any
18 kind of SMS program?

19 A. No. I --

20 Q. And that was what the guy that you were going to hire was
21 going to come out and do?

22 A. Bernie, yeah.

23 Q. Bernie.

24

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Right. He was going to come out and do the gap analysis and

3 A. Yeah, the full audit. It takes, I think, four days or
4 something like that.

5 Q. Okay. I'm with you. That's a lot of work.

6 A. Yeah. That's what he was saying.

7 Q. I've done it a lot.

8 A. -- planned for (Indiscernible.)

9 Q. It's a lot of work. That's all I got for now, dude.

10 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

11 Q. Okay. Air Charter Safety Foundation, NBAA, what other --
12 disregard the third-party audit and IS-BAO, WYVERN, Argus. Just
13 what other trade organizations?

14 A. I think that's it. Argus, WYVERN, NBAA, Air Charter Safety
15 Foundation -- IS-BAO. I don't know if that's a charter
16 organization or not, but I think that's it.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I mean there's like (indiscernible) those are more
19 subscriptions, right, not really trade organization.

20 Q. Yeah. You know what, Conner, you've been really helpful.
21 You really have. And I really appreciate your candor. And I
22 don't have any more questions. Do you have any questions for Todd
23 or I? I promised you that opportunity.

24 A. I mean, my mind is just wandering, like, I've lost
25 (indiscernible) and it's just like the emotions are raw again.

1 I'm wondering like what the heck happened like everyone else is.
2 Is there anything you guys can share to calm my wandering mind at
3 this point?

4 MR. GENTRY: A valid question.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: It's still so early, you know. It's still
6 early. We're just gathering as many facts as we can. What we can
7 share with you, we will. I want to make sure that you guys are
8 hooked up with our TDA people.

9 MR. JADWIN: Yeah.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: Have you contacted them or have they contacted
11 you?

12 MR. JADWIN: What does that stand for?

13 MR. LAWRENCE: TDA is Transportation Disaster Assistance.
14 John, you can write that down. TDA. I will have our TDA people
15 get a hold of you. They made contact with Ryan and Christine and
16 the families, the other ones, and they were the ones that were
17 working with them. I want to make sure that they also make
18 contact with you guys here. It's a small organization, and I want
19 to make sure that --

20 MR. GENTRY: Yeah. And they're good people.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: They are good people.

22 And I want to make sure they --

23 MR. GENTRY: They really are.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: -- available.

25 MR. GENTRY: They help a lot with grief, how to deal with

1 things like this. That's what they do, and they're good people.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: So I'll make that pledge that I'll get the you
3 all's contact so they can reach out to you. Anything else? You
4 have questions or --

5 MR. JADWIN: Nothing specific. It's obviously hit us hard.
6 So if I could talk to someone --

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

8 MR. JADWIN: -- that's been through this, that would probably
9 be beneficial.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: They're the ones. And I promise you I'll do
11 that as soon as we're done here.

12 MR. GENTRY: You're going to get through this.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

14 MR. JADWIN: Thank you.

15 MR. LAWRENCE: If there's anything else that you think of,
16 you know, a lot of times we metabolize a lot of the information
17 especially after you had the chance to talk with us, and you think
18 oh, wow, I should have said this or I should have provided this
19 information or here's a tip, maybe it would be worthwhile or
20 something like that. Feel free to get a hold of us. You can do
21 that through John. You can do it through -- directly send emails
22 to us, and just keep John.

23 MR. HANSON: Just copy me on it.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: Just copy John.

25 MR. HANSON: You don't need to clear it with me.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah. Feel free to open up, and talk to us,
2 and share whatever anything you think might help us consider in
3 this safety investigation. Okay?

4 MR. JADWIN: The only other fact that didn't really come up
5 in question I think you guys should be aware of is there was a
6 news article that Monday morning of the accident, and it was
7 published on the MBAA insider e-mail that they send out every day,
8 and it caught my attention because it said western airports
9 running out of fuel. So I opened it, and it said that Reno was
10 running out of fuel in that airport. So I hope that didn't play
11 in the crew's decision making. I don't know if that was confirmed
12 that they were out of fuel or not. Just in hindsight looking at
13 all the facts I'm like --

14 MR. GENTRY: We know that article you're talking about for
15 sure. We saw it that same day as well. But they were planning to
16 go into Truckee.

17 MR. JADWIN: Yeah, yeah, there was no plan to go to Reno.

18 MR. GENTRY: So there was no plan to go?

19 MR. JADWIN: No.

20 MR. GENTRY: Okay. So --

21 MR. JADWIN: But I just, I hope you guys doing your
22 investigation that stuff doesn't up that someone not being able to
23 find a truck driver played into this whatsoever, but we'll see.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate your time.

25 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

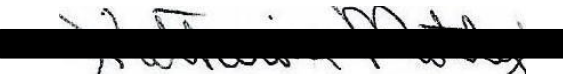
IN THE MATTER OF: N60TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Conner Jadwin

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Van Nuys, California

DATE: August 31, 2021

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Katherine Motley', is written over a solid black rectangular redaction bar.

Katherine Motley, Transcriber
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Investigation of: *

*

N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: DAVE VENTRELLA, Director of Operations
Aeolus Air Charter

Van Nuys, California

Tuesday,
August 31, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Investigator
FAA Accident Investigation Division

JOHN HANSON (Representative for Mr. Ventrella)
Worthe, Hanson & Worthe

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:00 p.m. PDT)

1
2
3 MR. LAWRENCE: My name is David Lawrence with the NTSB. And
4 on behalf of myself, the Agency and the Investigation Team, Dave,
5 our condolences for your loss. I'm sorry we're here for this.
6 But I know we've talked about this multiple times. Our role is to
7 really try to find out what happened, and help prevent it from
8 happening again. And so part of the process that we go through is
9 to talk to any of the 119s on a certificate. Even though this was
10 a 91, I get that, we still talk to the head people, and to learn
11 about the operation, and see if there's anything we can do to help
12 prevent the accident again.

13 We work on a party system. The FAA is by federal statute
14 party to all our investigations. That's why Todd's here, and I'll
15 let him explain his role.

16 MR. GENTRY: So I'm Todd Gentry, and I'm from the FAA's
17 Office of Accident Investigation. We're a small group that works
18 directly with the NTSB on all fatal accidents. So our job is to
19 find out if the FAA has any places that we can improve based on
20 the accident happening. Part of that means my role has zero to do
21 with enforcement, nothing. I can't even give those kinds of
22 people my notes. I can only give the NTSB safety reactions and
23 recommendations. That's what we do. We communicate that way. So
24 the reason I say that is because I want you to be able to speak
25 freely. Nothing you tell me today will ever go to any other part

1 of the FAA that has anything to do with enforcement actions ever.
2 If they want to do something like that, they have to do it on
3 their own.

4 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay.

5 MR. GENTRY: So my job is to help him find probably cause,
6 and me to look at FAA responsibilities, and see if there's
7 anything we need to improve. That's why I'm here.

8 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay. Understood.

9 MR. GENTRY: So thank you. Appreciate your time.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: And John Hanson for your representative,
11 that's okay with you?

12 MR. VENTRELLA: Absolutely.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And one of the things we do is so Todd
14 and I aren't getting writer's cramp in writing notes the entire
15 time, we tape record these interviews, and they'll go to a
16 transcription service the government uses, and there will be a
17 nice transcribed interview. All our interviews are transcribed
18 and such. That will eventually be placed in the docket. It maybe
19 months from now that the docket gets opened and released to the
20 public. But if that's okay if we tape record and for
21 transcription?

22 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Just a couple of preflight items. I
24 will take a few notes. I'll start off asking a few questions.
25 Let you tell us about in general some things but I might type, and

1 I types slow. I type -- my first officers hated it when I typed
2 with (indiscernible) the FMS. So it takes some time. If I don't
3 make eye contact with you or if I'm taking my time catching up on
4 my notes, please don't think anything of it, okay. It's just
5 that. I'm a little slower than normal.

6 Also, if I ask a question that you don't understand or maybe
7 should be worded a little bit better, just stop me, and say can
8 you rephrase that, do you mean this or whatever. The whole
9 concept here is more conversational so we have an understanding of
10 the facts, and what's the factual record, and I want to just make
11 sure we're all clear on what the factual information is. Also, if
12 I ask you a question, and you simply don't know, just say so. I
13 don't know is a perfectly acceptable answer.

14 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay.

15 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Any questions about the process?

16 MR. VENTRELLA: No.

17 INTERVIEW OF DAVE VENTRELLA

18 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

19 Q. Okay. Well, let's get started with the easy ones. Let me
20 get your full name and age.

21 A. Dave Ventrella, 66.

22 Q. V-E-N-T-R-E-L-L-A?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. And your age was?

25 A. 66.

1 Q. 66. Thanks so much. And you don't mind if I call you Dave?

2 A. That is my name.

3 Q. Not David or anything like that?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Just Dave?

6 A. Dave.

7 Q. Okay. And as it relates to Aeolus, what is your title here?

8 A. The DO.

9 Q. Okay. Director of Operations?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Are you a Director of Operations or do you hold a Part 119
12 position with any other company?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay. Are you a direct hire with Aeolus? In other words,
15 are you an employee of Aeolus?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. As Director of Operations in general, what are your
18 roles and responsibilities?

19 A. Oh, numerous. Safety, pilots. I'd have to look and go
20 through all of this, but there's numerous, numerous things here.
21 Give it to you.

22 Q. Well, I don't need you to read the GOM stuff.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. I just want your impressions and all. I see you have the
25 computer out too. If there is something you need to refer to,

1 like specifics and stuff on the GOM or wherever, you're welcome to
2 take a look at that, but right now, I'm just trying to get
3 general.

4 A. Yeah. I'm just -- pilots, budgets, the whole myriad of the
5 company basically.

6 Q. And if I could get like a Cliff Notes version of your
7 background. What led you to being Director of Operations at
8 Aeolus?

9 A. Conner wanted to start a charter outfit, and I've been a
10 long-time family friend of his. He knew my background with the
11 airlines, and thought that that would be a great addition to the
12 company. So that's how this all started out.

13 Q. And when did this happen when he approach you about being
14 Director of Operations?

15 A. Beginning of probably -- or the end of 2019.

16 Q. And then you mentioned in your background airlines. So kind
17 of just what led you up this point? What was your background
18 aviation-wise as you got started and all?

19 A. Started with private airplanes. Went to commuters. Went to
20 airline one, then airline two, and then airline three, and that's
21 where I ended up.

22 Q. Okay. I'm jumping around here, and I apologize. Do you know
23 who your principal operations inspector is with the FAA?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And who is that?

1 A. Sean Mosher.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Up in North Dakota.

4 Q. And have you ever met Sean?

5 A. Not personally, no. Lots of Zoom meetings.

6 Q. You haven't met him, but has Sean been here to your
7 knowledge?

8 A. No. We've been up to North Dakota.

9 Q. Okay. And simplistic question, but why have you been up to
10 North Dakota?

11 A. We had to open an office up there.

12 Q. Primary base of operations for the certificate?

13 A. The certificate is North Dakota.

14 Q. Right. But that's why you had to do that?

15 A. Yes. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And do you have the Part 135 certificate? Is it
17 active at this time?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. When was it activated?

20 A. July 13th.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. 2021.

23 Q. '21. How many aircraft did you have on the certificate?

24 A. We only have one aircraft on the certificate.

25 Q. The Premiere?

1 A. Premiere.

2 Q. Okay. How did you learn about the accident, Dave?

3 A. Got a call from Conner, and he said they didn't arrive on
4 time. And I was tracking it, and I saw them take off, and I was
5 busy doing some personal things that day. And he called and said,
6 hey, they haven't called. I think it was probably about 1:40-ish
7 in the afternoon. So I went on my computer and looked, and it
8 showed that the track went to the airport or just shy of the
9 airport. And then I looked up the weather, and I thought, well,
10 maybe they missed and went to Reno. So that's kind of where I
11 left it for a little bit, and then I went back, and I called the
12 FBO, and I asked them did Aircraft 605 Tango Romeo arrive? And
13 the girl said she'll go look; I'll call you right back. Well, she
14 never called. So that led me to believe that something is up.

15 And then we started doing some phone calls back and forth
16 between myself and Conner, and that's when we kind of surmised
17 that something could be amiss right now. So --

18 Q. Then what happened?

19 A. Then there were some news reports of an aircraft crashing up
20 there. So we still didn't know. But now it's been a good
21 probably hour. So I decided to call -- I called the NTSB and the
22 FAA, and left a message saying that we have an overdue aircraft
23 that we can't get in touch with. We tried calling Alberto because
24 that's the only phone number I had. Didn't answer. So that's
25 when I called, and said we had an overdue aircraft. And that's

1 where they asked a whole bunch of questions on the aircraft, and I
2 gave them all that information, and we moved on.

3 MR. LAWRENCE: Let us pause for just a moment.

4 (Off the record)

5 (On the record)

6 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. We're back.

7 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

8 Q. And I don't believe I asked you this, but was there an
9 emergency plan implemented after the accident?

10 A. Yeah. Calling the NTSB, and then giving them the
11 information. And then, of course, the news started coming out.
12 So that's when we started really getting sick because now we
13 pretty much surmised that it was our airplane.

14 Q. All right. Tell me a little bit about Aeolus Air Charter.
15 Tell me about the company in general.

16 A. Well, being brand spanking new on July 13th, the accident on
17 July 26th, 13 days into it, what do you want to know?

18 Q. Well, it's a charter company. Is there flight instruction?
19 I mean, tell me what type of company Aeolus is.

20 A. Well, we are a charter outfit. We have one aircraft. We
21 were trying to -- we just leased the 605 to put on our
22 certificate, and we were going through conformity at the time.

23 Q. And conformity means?

24 A. With the FAA to get that airplane on our certificate.

25 Q. Okay. What is basically the corporate structure here?

1 A. We have Conner pretty much at the top of the CEO so to speak.
2 Then myself as the DO. Kind of the safety manager and compliance
3 all in one. We do multiple roles here. And then we have Joe,
4 which is the DOM. And then Conner actually works as the charter
5 coordinator too. So he coordinates all the charters. And then
6 Takeshi, the chief pilot.

7 Q. Okay. Tell me a little bit about the safety structure here.

8 A. Explain what you mean by the safety structure.

9 Q. Is there a safety structure? Is the safety -- you said
10 you're a safety manager. Is it a director of safety or is it just
11 safety manager?

12 A. Manager. Yeah. We were vetting Polaris, WYVERN, and another
13 company during this period, and seeing which SMS program we wanted
14 to go with. That kind of came to a screeching halt until we get
15 through this here. Not that we want to put it on a back burner,
16 but just there's a lot going on with this.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. We're -- we'll be making that decision here probably next 30
19 days.

20 Q. Okay. Are there voluntary safety reports that the pilots can
21 -- I know you don't have that many but --

22 A. They -- no. We actually have where they -- the guys will
23 call me up, and tell me that there's certain things that they want
24 with passengers, and how they bring their luggage, and how to
25 store it. The Premiere is a small aircraft. So this is all to do

1 with the Premiere. This has nothing to do with the --

2 A. I understand.

3 Q. -- the aircraft in question here. But so they have called me
4 on certain occasions to look at or say we can do things better,
5 that would be a safer manner.

6 Q. Okay. Does Aeolus have standard operating procedures, SOPs,
7 for its pilots?

8 A. Through the GOM, yes, we do.

9 Q. Okay. In general, what are those SOPs? What do they cover?

10 A. Be more -- can you ask me the question? Because I don't --

11 Q. Sure.

12 A. Out of thin air, I don't know.

13 Q. Is it just pilot monitoring, pilot flying duties, call-outs,
14 check lists? Is that what's in the GOM or does it include
15 profiles?

16 A. No, no. Profile, all that's done through Flight Safety.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. So they go by the Flight Safety recommendations and teachings
19 there. So that's checklist from checklist to profiles to pilot
20 monitoring, pilot flying duties. That's all done.

21 Q. All right. They're using Flight Safety profiles, Flight
22 Safety checklists or are they using the manufacturer's checklists
23 and profiles?

24 A. I believe they are using Flight Safety's, which is the actual
25 aircraft.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I've never flown the Premiere so I don't know.

3 Q. Got it. You answered one of -- the question I was going to
4 ask you. And you said the Premiere is still on the certificate.
5 Who owns the Premiere jet? Do you know?

6 A. Well, Ryan Thomas was the leasor of that aircraft before he
7 perished.

8 Q. Right. And that leads me to my other question. Tell me
9 about the passengers, who were on this particular flight, the
10 accident flight.

11 A. I only knew of Thomas and Christine, and the two pilots,
12 Alberto and Brett.

13 Q. And what was Thomas' relationship to the company?

14 A. Partner.

15 Q. Okay. Was this, the accident flight, a Part 91 operation or
16 Part 135?

17 A. It's a 91. It was not on our certificate. You're talking
18 the 605, correct?

19 Q. Right.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. 605 Tango Romeo.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. I know it wasn't on your certificate, but was there any
24 compensation from Ryan or any of the passengers to the company for
25 this particular flight?

1 A. Not to my knowledge. You'd have to ask Conner.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I don't deal with the money portion of things. But I
4 certainly don't believe so.

5 Q. I have to ask these questions.

6 A. Yeah, no. You're --

7 Q. So who had operational control of the accident flight?

8 A. Well, Alberto had. He was the pilot-in-command.

9 Q. So Alberto was the PIC, and Brett was the SIC, correct?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Was that information communicated to either of the pilots
12 that that's how it was supposed to be that Alberto was going to be
13 the PIC and Brett was the SRC -- SIC? Or was that something that
14 they would figure out themselves?

15 A. Well, we, I, I -- we run the -- we ran that flight as we
16 would a Part 91, Part 135. So we ran it through our system. So
17 it showed Alberto as the PIC. I believe on the paperwork that you
18 should have received. And Brett as the SIC.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And then the two passengers that we knew about.

21 Q. Well, speaking of those two passengers that you knew about.
22 Subsequently found out there were two other additional passengers,
23 correct?

24 A. That's correct.

25 Q. And you said that you run the flights, and I assume it's your

1 intention to run the flights that are Part 91, as they are 135,
2 just everything the same, correct?

3 A. Right. I mean, this was not a 91 under a 135 operation.

4 Q. True.

5 A. This is a 91 under --

6 Q. Part 91.

7 A. Yeah. 91.

8 Q. True but --

9 A. So I just want to make sure we're all on the same page.

10 Q. Totally get it. Totally get it. But as Director of
11 Operations, you were the one that was doing, kind of creating this
12 flight, right?

13 A. No. Conner would run -- as the coordinator would put the
14 flight together.

15 Q. Okay.

16 MR. GENTRY: We didn't know that.

17 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. I don't -- in other words, like on a
18 135 operation flight like in the Premiere it goes to our -- from
19 our in-house broker or Conner, which is an in-house broker. That
20 he would take the phone call, get the passenger -- they want to go
21 from Point A to Point B. He would put that all in our jet
22 insight, create a flight, and then we go through, and start what
23 services do we need? Where are we -- what FBO? What fuel stop?
24 What -- and all the different steps. So we just follow a
25 checklist out.

1 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

2 Q. Yeah. That's what I meant when you were creating, you were
3 creating the actual --

4 A. Yeah. So that was --

5 Q. -- building --

6 A. -- created through coordinator.

7 Q. Right. And through this whole time, the expectation was
8 there were only two passengers that were going to be on the
9 flight?

10 A. That's all we, that's all -- you'll have to ask Conner.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. But that's all I saw.

13 Q. As the Director of Operations, would it be your expectation
14 that the pilot would contact you guys if there were two additional
15 passengers that you hadn't planned?

16 A. With our pilots that we have that we employ --

17 Q. Right.

18 A. -- they tell us everything.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. In other words, they give me a weight and balance. So I
21 check it before they even release the brake. But this was
22 different. This was not that kind of a flight.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. How was it staffed? I know you had Alberto. So how was it
25 -- was Alberto employed by Aeolus?

1 A. No. He was a contractor. We were looking at him to become a
2 employee, but because of him being of the Mexico -- or didn't have
3 a visa or a Social Security Number we could not hire him. So we
4 could only contract him. And, again, Conner knows all that whole
5 part of it.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Because he dealt with that.

8 Q. Okay. Because I noticed he -- that Alberto had a Aeolus
9 email address.

10 A. Um-hmm.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah. Because we were trying to vet him on, yes.

13 Q. And I know this is probably just in relation to the Premiere
14 jet, but what do the pilots use for flight planning?

15 A. Flight planning is flightplan.com and ForeFlight.

16 Q. Are those Aeolus accounts for those or the pilots' personal
17 accounts?

18 A. Well, we, Aeolus does have our own. Our pilots have their
19 Aeolus accounts.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I don't know what Alberto or Brett had.

22 Q. And what about weight and balance? How are those --

23 A. Well, actually, let me see. Because I can tell you.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I sent you the --

1 Q. Yeah, the ForeFlight for both -- I've got the one --

2 A. Were those flightplan.com or --

3 Q. No. Those were ForeFlight.

4 A. ForeFlight. Okay. So they were ForeFlight.

5 Q. But it wasn't an account Alberto had through Aeolus. It was
6 his own personal?

7 A. I don't know the answer to that.

8 Q. Okay. And I know you have an ops specs, an A061 ops specs
9 for EFBs. Were you aware if 605 Tango Romeo had one? In other
10 words, is the EFB assigned to the airplane or do the pilots.

11 A. To the pilots.

12 Q. Okay. So did -- are you aware if Alberto had an EFB in his
13 possession?

14 A. I don't know if he did. I would assume that he did, but I
15 don't know.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Because he had -- he uses ForeFlight. So usually you have an
18 iPad for that.

19 Q. I just didn't know if when you guys hired him under contract
20 to operate this series of flights, did somebody hand him a --

21 MR. GENTRY: An iPad.

22 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

23 Q. An iPad.

24 A. I don't know the answer to that.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I did not.

2 Q. Okay. Conversely, with Brett, I want to ask you about how he
3 came around, but was he -- were you aware if he had an iPad or EFB
4 or anything like that?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. Or you don't know if he used his own or?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Specific to this accident flight, and I apologize if this is
9 redundant, but was a weight and balance conducted for this
10 particular flight?

11 A. I did not receive any weight and balance on this flight, no.
12 To answer your question did they, I could only assume as Alberto
13 being PIC that he did a weight and balance as a professional pilot
14 would.

15 Q. But you did not receive any copy from him on a weight and
16 balance like you would for a normal 135 flight?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I did not.

20 Q. Would it be your expectation as the Director of Operations
21 that they should even though it's a 91?

22 A. My expectation? No. Because I looked at this as they --
23 Alberto being the pilot-in-command had operational control. He
24 would take care of the weight and balance on that.

25 Q. Does Aeolus have any copies of the 36-month weight and

1 balance for 605 Tango Romeo or the most current weight and
2 balance?

3 A. Yes, they do.

4 Q. Okay. Where is that located?

5 A. It would be -- you'd have to get that from Joe.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. The DOM.

8 Q. Right. And we have asked him for it, and he's going to
9 provide it.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. I just didn't know if you're aware of any --

12 A. I know they have it.

13 Q. Okay. Tell me about Alberto. How did you know him? Where
14 did he come from, and how did he come into the picture?

15 A. We put out for 605 pilots that we were hiring because we were
16 going to get a new aircraft. And we went through a bunch of
17 pilots, and Alberto stood out. We did some Zoom meetings with him
18 because he lives in Mexico, and we didn't want to have him come
19 out just for an interview. And then we liked what we saw. We saw
20 his qualifications. And that's how we hired him.

21 Q. Okay. Was he actually employed by Aeolus?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. You had just --

24 A. I mean, we -- when I say we hired him, we wanted to hire him
25 as a pilot for Aeolus Air Charter.

1 Q. Okay. So kind of tell me about that hiring process, the
2 interview and all that. It was all Zoom meetings?

3 A. Um-hmm.

4 Q. And based on an internet advertisement, I guess, lack of a
5 better word.

6 A. Through the -- you'd have to ask Conner what system it went
7 through. I think it's something 350 or something. It's a --

8 MR. GENTRY: Flight Level 350?

9 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. Is that what it's called? Yeah.

10 So --

11 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

12 Q. Were you part of that process, the interview process?

13 A. Yeah. I was on the Zoom meetings, yes, definitely.

14 Q. Who else was on the Zoom meetings?

15 A. Conner and myself.

16 Q. Okay. This might be another silly question, but have you
17 ever had a chance to fly with Alberto?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Were any background checks done on Alberto?

20 A. PRIA, yeah, PRIA check.

21 Q. You did a PRIA check?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Um-hmm.

25 Q. And did -- was Aeolus involved anywhere financially in his

1 most recent training at Flight Safety International?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. In what regards?

4 A. We put him through 605 training.

5 Q. Not initial but recurrent?

6 A. Yeah. Yeah, recurrent.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Was he not current on the 605 when you guys had these Zoom
10 meetings and decided to hire him?

11 A. Well, we wanted to hire him so we had to put him through that
12 training, and that's what we did.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Put him through our training.

15 Q. So that he could eventually be a part of the 135 operation?

16 A. Once the 605 became part of the 135 operation.

17 Q. True.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. How did he do in training?

20 A. All his paperwork showed satisfactory on everything.

21 Q. Did you review his training records after he completed?

22 A. Oh, yeah, definitely.

23 Q. Okay. No -- anything in instructor comments or anything like
24 that?

25 A. There were no instructor comments that were written. There

1 was a place for them, but there weren't that I saw any instructor
2 comments. Just all the satisfactory.

3 Q. Okay. Conversely, tell me a little bit about Brett Ebaugh.
4 How did you get his name?

5 A. He was, I believe, referred through Flight Safety. And,
6 again, you'll -- Conner vetted him out. So you'll have to talk to
7 Conner on that.

8 Q. Did you ever speak to Brett?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. I assume never have flown with him either?

11 A. No. Conner and I did discuss everything that Conner and him
12 discussed, and I saw his qualifications, and he was like primo. I
13 mean, he was pretty high up on the 605 list there for people.
14 So --

15 Q. What stood out? You say primo.

16 A. Well, because he was -- companies were asking him to instruct
17 their -- do like IOE like in an airline, you know, Initial
18 Operating Experience.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. So if you're an instructor type, that's kind of who you would
21 want on your airplane.

22 Q. Did you or Conner speak with any other employers or other
23 contract services that employed him before?

24 A. Conner has, yeah, I believe.

25 Q. Did Brett sign any kind of contract or agreement to operate

1 the aircraft for Aeolus, I guess?

2 A. As a contractor?

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. Again, you'd have to talk to Conner. He handled all that.

5 Q. Okay. I asked a little bit earlier, but just want to be
6 clear. As a Director of Operations, Brett, to you, should have
7 been or was the SIC the second-in-command, and Alphonso [sic]
8 would have been the --

9 A. Alberto?

10 Q. I'm sorry, Alberto.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Sorry.

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Okay. Did you have any concerns? You knew Alberto, and you
15 had gone through, and you guys had vetted Brett. So you had
16 communications. Was there any concern pairing these two pilots
17 together?

18 A. No, not to my understanding there was no concern. I mean
19 Conner and I talked about it.

20 Q. Is it kind of typical to bring pilots like Brett that are --
21 you kind of did some vetting of Alberto before having him on this
22 trip, but Brett was -- you had to go out and find, I guess.

23 A. He was just highly recommended to Conner. So --

24 Q. Is that typically to have that contract pilots coming in and
25 flying either --

1 A. For 91 stuff it happens daily.

2 Q. Really?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. That's normal?

5 A. Yes, that is very normal.

6 Q. Okay. Were there plans to hire other pilots besides Alberto
7 on --

8 A. Oh, yeah.

9 Q. -- the Premiere?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Not on the Premiere --

12 A. The 605.

13 Q. Gulfstream. Yeah. After the decision was made for Brett to
14 operate as SIC on these series of flights with Alberto, did -- was
15 he provided, like, a copy of the GOM or any of the SOPs for
16 Aeolus?

17 A. Not by me, no.

18 Q. Okay. Should he have been, in your opinion? I mean, if he's
19 going to operate the aircraft on your behalf or the company's
20 behalf, should he have been?

21 A. No. If he had a 91, no. I don't see any reason for him to
22 have a GOM of Aeolus.

23 Q. Okay. Tell me about what you know about the airplane, 605
24 Tango Romeo. When did you guys lease it? When was it supposed to
25 come on? I mean, it was going through conformity, but tell me

1 what you know about it.

2 A. Not a whole lot. Because I was dealing with my POI trying to
3 get a certificate. So I was doing approving runs, and so at least
4 a month before we had that aircraft on property or so. So but I
5 don't -- I didn't have a lot to do with that aircraft.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And I was working to get our certificate.

8 Q. Understood. Who with the company really had their hands in
9 the mud on this thing really?

10 A. Conner.

11 Q. Conner?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. Crew Resource Management, CRM. Do your pilots -- I
14 know it's just the Premiere now, but do your pilots get trained in
15 CRM?

16 A. Yes. Through Flight Safety, and also we had -- we did some
17 ground school here too.

18 Q. Is that during indoc?

19 A. Indoc, yeah.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Um-hmm. And, of course, that was being watched by our POI.
22 So --

23 Q. But you said the POI had never been here. So --

24 A. Zoom. Everything is Zoom now. Come on.

25 Q. So he actually, the POI would actually attend the indoc

1 portion?

2 A. Because he had to vet me as a --

3 MR. GENTRY: (Indiscernible).

4 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

6 MR. VENTRELLA: As an instructor along with Takeshi. So
7 we're both instructors.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: Got you.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's a different world.

10 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

11 Q. So CRM training through Flight Safety. Do you know what it
12 is they're teaching at Flight Safety --

13 A. I --

14 (Crosstalk)

15 Q. -- to your pilots?

16 A. -- the course so, no.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But I -- on their, on their ground school stuff it talks
19 about CRM. And then, also, we did Zoom -- Boom training, which is
20 another program that we did CRM too.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. What was that face about? Do you know him or --

23 Q. No.

24 A. Oh, okay.

25 Q. No, I was -- Boom and Zoom.

1 A. Oh, okay.

2 Q. Do you know if your pilots when they go to Flight Safety, are
3 they paired with another company pilot or are they paired with
4 other pilots from separate companies or seat support from
5 instructors? I mean --

6 A. Well, if our pilots went together, they would have been
7 paired together.

8 Q. True. So do you know if --

9 A. But they did not.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. No.

12 Q. So in your all's cases who were they paired with? Do you
13 know? Pilot from another company or just seat support?

14 A. I don't recall that. I don't remember back that far.

15 Q. Do your pilots get leadership training anywhere?

16 A. Yeah. I would say that in our indoc that we did some
17 leadership stuff.

18 Q. For example?

19 A. Just the, you know, hierarchy in the cockpit, captain, first
20 officer. Lead by example, not with words. The Golden Rule.
21 Treat others as you want to be treated.

22 Q. So that is just in the indoc portion you would say there is
23 leadership components of -- leadership training?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. In indoc?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And we've had some meetings after indoc, in which those could
4 have occurred in. Yeah. But we've talked about it.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Not in great depth, but we have talked about it.

7 Q. Okay. Had Alberto received leadership training then?

8 A. No. He did not go through indoc or anything from the
9 company.

10 Q. And just so to ask the question, close the loop on that one.
11 Do you know if Brett had ever received leadership or CRM training?

12 A. From Aeolus? No.

13 Q. Any.

14 A. I have no clue.

15 Q. Okay. Had you ever reviewed any of Brett's training records
16 at CAE?

17 A. Not from CAE. Only what was written in his resume, and he
18 had a web page that you could go to, and also see what he had.

19 Q. And I believe you said you did a PRIA background check?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. On him.

22 A. Not -- no, no, no. Not on Brett.

23 Q. Oh.

24 A. On Alberto.

25 Q. Okay. Thank you. So you had done a PRIA --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- on Alberto prior to being hired here.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Did you do a PRIA or a PRD on Brett?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Before --

7 A. No.

8 Q. Why not?

9 A. Because he's just a contract pilot. Had no intention of
10 hiring Brett. He doesn't hire out. I mean, he doesn't become a
11 company person. He's a contract only.

12 Q. Okay. Any other means of doing background checks then other
13 than PRIA and PRD that you would look at a contract pilot for?

14 A. We didn't in this case, no.

15 Q. I asked a little bit about this on the difference between 91
16 and 135. Is it your expectation that the pilots are going to fly
17 the aircraft regardless of what part it's being flown under the
18 same the way it's supposed to? In other words, is it your
19 expectations the pilots are going to comply with SOPs, the
20 limitations of the aircraft and profiles that the aircraft is
21 supposed to be flown under regardless if 91 or 135?

22 A. Yes. I would expect them to fly that, yes.

23 Q. Why? Why would you expect them to fly that way?

24 A. Because they were trained from very high quality training
25 facilities that are vetted by the FAA.

1 Q. Then as Director of Operations, how do you know when the
2 airplane leaves the ramp here -- Premiere jet now, presumably
3 other aircraft down the road -- how do you know your pilots are
4 actually flying the airplane in accordance with company policy and
5 procedures, limitations, federal regulations? How do you know?

6 A. Well, none of them had violations, and there's no way to
7 monitor that. I have flown in the back of the aircraft when it's
8 empty, and I do kneel down when we're airborne and watch them. So
9 being an ex-check airman, I kind of know what to look for. So --

10 Q. En route check would you say?

11 A. No. I can't call it that, but --

12 (Crosstalk)

13 A. -- I observe it, yes.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah. So I have observed a couple of our pilots actually.

16 Q. Okay. Did you have any flight monitors onboard the aircraft?

17 A. On the Premiere, no. Not to my knowledge.

18 Q. Okay. Any plans for Aeolus to establish some type of flight
19 data monitoring program where you install some type of lightweight
20 -- recorder or something, and then monitor the operational data it
21 provides to see how your pilots are comply? Are there any plans
22 for that down the road?

23 A. Not on the Premiere because that aircraft probably won't be
24 around very much longer because it's just not -- it's an old
25 airplane.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. So the new aircraft we get, I would definitely say yes to
3 that.

4 Q. Okay. I think that's all I got for right now, Dave. I might
5 have some follow-ups.

6 A. Okay.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Todd.

8 MR. GENTRY: I just have a couple. I know you've been
9 talking a lot so --

10 MR. LAWRENCE: No. Ask away.

11 BY MR. GENTRY:

12 Q. So Mr. Thomas was the owner of the Premiere or the leasee?

13 A. Leasee.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And so when he -- did he fly on the Premiere.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. He did.

19 A. Numerous times.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Numerous times.

22 Q. So when he flew on the Premiere, how did he pay for it?

23 A. You'll have to talk to Conner on that.

24 Q. Or did he?

25 A. I don't -- that's what I mean, I don't think he ever paid.

1 So talk to Conner.

2 Q. So that -- so when the owner would fly on the airplane,
3 Mr. Thomas would fly on his premiere, who had operational control
4 at that point?

5 A. Again, that was all -- that was prior pre-Aeolus Air Charter.

6 Q. Okay. So he never flew on it after the 13th of July then
7 probably?

8 A. I don't think so.

9 Q. It's not a big window. I understand.

10 A. Yeah. I don't believe so. In fact, I'm almost positive he
11 didn't, but let me check. Because --

12 (Pause)

13 Q. While you're looking that up, can I ask another question?

14 A. Yeah. You can go right ahead.

15 Q. Multi-tasking.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Have you been to Flight Safety?

18 A. I have not been to Flight Safety.

19 Q. Any of them, right? I mean, just not even to visit?

20 A. No, not even, no.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I am going to be required to go there, but not as yet. So --

23 Q. Is there a PIC upgrade in the training program? Like a
24 captain upgrade?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. There is?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Who teaches that?

4 A. We haven't got there yet so --

5 Q. Okay. Well, how did the captain get to be a captain on the
6 Premiere?

7 A. They were all -- that was all during the proving runs. So we
8 had one, Takeshi --

9 Q. Right.

10 A. -- who was the captain that was -- went through Flight
11 Safety.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. And that's how he got his 299 ride during that timeframe.

14 Q. Right. Takeshi did?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. But he said there was another captain.

17 A. We just, yeah, we just brought him through Flight Safety as a
18 captain.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So Flight Safety is --

21 Q. So he hasn't gone through your -- has he gone through indoc?

22 A. Yeah, oh, yeah, yeah.

23 Q. So he's done --

24 A. He went through with the POI.

25 Q. Okay.

- 1 A. On the Zoom. It was him and Takeshi.
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 A. So now they're both captains, but that just happened
- 4 recently.
- 5 Q. Are you a check airman for Aeolus then?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. You're not?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. So who -- there is none, I guess, right?
- 10 A. No. There is not.
- 11 Q. So only the POI can do 290 --
- 12 A. 9's.
- 13 Q. 9's?
- 14 A. Right, right. Again, we're brand new. So --
- 15 Q. I understand. Your POI lives in --
- 16 A. They brought -- on the proving runs, they had FAA gentleman
- 17 from Texas. So we went to Fargo to pick up our POI, flew him down
- 18 to Texas or Wichita, I think it was, and picked him up.
- 19 Q. Got you.
- 20 A. So they didn't fly -- they didn't fly around. We flew --
- 21 Q. Oh, yeah. I'm not worried about --
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. Yeah. I'm not worried about spending the money. I'm worried
- 24 about you guys spending the money.
- 25 A. We spent the money.

1 Q. I'm sure you did. I understand. I've done a lot of proving
2 runs, and they are not cheap.

3 A. No.

4 Q. Especially when you do overseas stuff.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Because then it gets really big. I don't think I have, I
7 don't think I have a lot of more questions right now anyway. I
8 think I'm questioned out for now.

9 A. Okay. To answer your question if Ryan Thomas flew between
10 the 13th and 26th on the Premiere jet, I don't see it.

11 Q. Got you. Thank you.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. Yeah, I didn't -- it's a small window.

14 A. Yeah.

15 D. Can we go back one more question? I mean, we talked about
16 your experience just briefly. You said private commuter airline
17 times three. What type ratings do you have?

18 A. Dash 8, 200, 737.

19 Q. 200. 73 or the older ones?

20 A. 200, 300, 500, 700, 800 max. They're all one type rating.
21 Just like the 604, 605 is one type rating.

22 Q. Right. I just didn't know which. If you had NG experience
23 or not. That was --

24 A. Oh, yeah.

25 Q. That's important because --

1 A. And the Max.

2 Q. -- the avionics in the 605 was more NG stuff than it was --

3 A. Right.

4 Q. -- 235s, 7s --

5 A. Oh, yeah, that's --

6 Q. 5's anyway. Okay. So I got up to 73. What was after that?

7 A. That's it.

8 Q. Okay. Just Dash 8, 200 --

9 A. Oh, Metroliner 227. Sorry.

10 Q. Metro.

11 A. Forgot my first job. I'm old. I'm sorry.

12 Q. It's been a rough week.

13 A. It's been a rough month.

14 Q. I get it. Trust me. I apologize for having to take your
15 time.

16 A. No. This is --

17 Q. It is important though.

18 A. Yes, definitely.

19 MR. GENTRY: I think that's it for me. Thank you for your
20 time.

21 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

22 Q. Has Aeolus hired any other contract people other than Brett?

23 A. I believe so. Yes. Yes.

24 Q. And maybe this is a Conner question, but what was the process
25 to find those?

1 A. That's a Conner question. Because that's how I believe we
2 got the aircraft down here.

3 Q. From Bangor?

4 A. Um-hmm.

5 Q. It was two contract -- I would assume two contract pilots to
6 get it down here?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Alberto wasn't one of them?

9 A. No. Alberto, no, Alberto was not one of them.

10 Q. Okay.

11 BY MR. GENTRY:

12 Q. So was this the first flight after you guys had received the
13 airplane or did it do anything in between the time where you
14 actually got it on the ramp here?

15 A. I believe it went up to -- I believe it went out one other
16 time.

17 Q. There was a trip before this one that --

18 A. Yeah. I don't know what, again, that would be. Conner,
19 you'd have to ask him on that.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah. So I think there was -- this would have been its third
22 flight, if I'm recalling, yeah.

23 Q. So did Alberto fly any of those previous ones?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No.

1 A. This was Alberto's first flight in this aircraft.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And Brett's for that matter.

4 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

5 Q. Is it hard to get staffing, find these contract guys?

6 A. No, not at all.

7 Q. I didn't know if there was like a pilot shortage in
8 Challenger pilots out there.

9 A. I don't believe so. I mean, I know Conner put out a message
10 for -- we were getting a 605. We started looking at pilots, and
11 we got 50 or 60 applications. I would think at least that many.

12 MR. GENTRY: Yeah, probably.

13 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. It was quite a few.

14 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

15 Q. I'm just interested from your perspective and experience as a
16 check airman having gone through two pilot training
17 (indiscernible) probably well over 20,000 hours or something.

18 A. Um-hmm.

19 Q. Do you have any concerns, and this is your opinion, but do
20 you have any concerns kind of putting two pilots from backgrounds
21 you have absolutely really no clue that you can verify and such
22 together in a cockpit, particularly on an airplane that you're
23 putting a partner on? I mean --

24 A. In hindsight, who konws? But in the real world happens every
25 day, every day. I mean, every day that I was on an airline

1 -- a new hire in my airplanes that I flew, you've got a brand new
2 F-15 pilot who just sat in --

3 (Crosstalk)

4 Q. -- went through your company's --

5 A. (Indiscernible).

6 Q. -- training. So you had expectations of what he should know?

7 A. Right. But these two people went through the same training,
8 Flight Safety. So --

9 MR. GENTRY: That's what they said.

10 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. Okay. I mean, that's what I know. So
11 the question you're asking is I'm thinking no problem. I wouldn't
12 make a decision on this until after the NTSB gets done with --
13 when we have all the information in front of us to know what
14 really happened. Because right now I'm just guessing what's going
15 on.

16 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

17 Q. Yeah. It's a valid point, but I'm just curious from your
18 perspective. I wasn't there. (Indiscernible) for years and years
19 too, and a check airman also. And so it's like we have a product
20 that came through and it was all together. It's just this is a --
21 it seems a different world when you're having to pick guys that
22 are going through maybe different training programs. You don't
23 know necessarily when they went through the training programs or
24 how long ago. And some are going through 135, 293 checks, 297s,
25 299s, and others aren't doing any of the 135. So it's just there

1 seems to be a difference in backgrounds, and I'm just curious from
2 somebody with a structured training program with the airlines does
3 that throw you a little bit, concern you a little bit, give you
4 pause?

5 A. Well, when you explain it like that, yeah, a little bit.

6 Yeah. But before this happened --

7 Q. Right.

8 A. -- I didn't know that that's how they got trained. And I
9 came from a different world. I came from a 121 world.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. So that's where my thinking is. The 135, a lot of
12 assumptions there, I guess.

13 Q. True.

14 A. So --

15 MR. LAWRENCE: Todd, anything more?

16 MR. GENTRY: No.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: Been very helpful, and I really do appreciate
18 it. If -- is there anything that you can think of Dave that maybe
19 we didn't talk about but you want to make sure that we're aware of
20 because this is a safety investigation? Anything you can think of
21 that would help us going forward?

22 MR. VENTRELLA: No, not really. I mean, again, once we get
23 the information like the voice recorders and the, you know,
24 whatever information we can get, it might put this all together.
25 But two highly qualified pilots having this happen, I'm -- believe

1 me, I'm at a loss right now.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

3 MR. VENTRELLA: Totally.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, do you have any questions of us, for
5 Todd and myself?

6 MR. VENTRELLA: No. I just -- when you get information, I'd
7 like to know what --

8 MR. LAWRENCE: What we can share.

9 MR. GENTRY: Yeah, what you can share.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, if there is anything, and I know we're
11 going to be in communications going down the road.

12 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: But if there is anything you can think of,
14 don't hesitate to get a hold of us.

15 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: If you can think of something that -- the
17 piece of the puzzle. There might be a small piece.

18 MR. VENTRELLA: You'll get -- I'm sure you'll get information
19 that -- you'll have questions that -- because for me to try to
20 think of --

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, I know.

22 MR. VENTRELLA: -- something that --

23 MR. GENTRY: Right.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: It's something I offer everybody we talk to so
25 that if they have questions or anything they want to add.

1 MR. GENTRY: We have an open door.

2 MR. VENTRELLA: Right. Well, I believe that I've been very
3 open to you with the calls I've made and --

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

5 MR. VENTRELLA: -- information that I've handed over. I'm as
6 transparent as --

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

8 MR. VENTRELLA: -- I know how to be. So yeah.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thanks so much, Dave.

10 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

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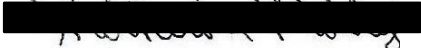
IN THE MATTER OF: N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Dave Ventrella

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Van Nuys, California

DATE: August 31, 2021

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.



Katherine Motley, Transcriber
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: JOSEPH VINCENT PONCE, Director of Maintenance
Aeolus Air Charter

Van Nuys, California

Tuesday,
August 31, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Investigator
FAA Accident Investigation Division

JOHN HANSON (Representative for Mr. Ponce)
Worthe, Hanson & Worthe

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:00 a.m. PDT)

1
2
3 MR. LAWRENCE: My name is David Lawrence. I'm with the NTSB.
4 And on behalf of our agency, our Investigation Team, our
5 condolences for your loss. We're really sorry you guys are going
6 through this. Talking to any of the 119s on a certificated
7 carrier, regardless of how the airplane was flown is a very normal
8 part of our process. So I just want you to know that talking to
9 you is just part of the investigative process. It's very typical.
10 We do things by group, and so it's not just the NTSB. It's also
11 the FAA. So Todd's here. He'll explain his role as well.

12 MR. GENTRY: Yes. My name is Todd Gentry, and I work for the
13 FAA's Accident Investigation Division. So our role is to make
14 sure that we cover any of the areas of responsibilities to make
15 sure that if anything needs to change that we can change, we
16 actually do that. So we work hand-in-hand with the NTSB on all
17 fatal accidents. It's not uncommon. It is what we do. So this
18 is just part of the normal process of the investigation, and I
19 said.

20 My role though is to make sure you understand nothing you
21 tell me can ever be used against you in enforcement actions. I
22 have zero responsibility. I can't even let them see my notes. I
23 can't talk to anybody about enforcement. So I never even get
24 involved. So if somebody on the outside of the FAA on a different
25 section wants to do that, they have to do that on their own

1 completely. They can't even talk to me about it. So I want you
2 to feel free and open to talk openly. I have nothing to do with
3 anything that's ever going to harm you. We're still here just to
4 find out what happened, a probable cause, and see if there's any
5 responsibilities that we can fix.

6 MR. PONCE: Understood.

7 MR. GENTRY: That's it.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: Great. And like I mentioned earlier since
9 we're not going to -- we're going to be taking some notes and
10 such, but we prefer to tape record this, and then we'll send it to
11 a transcription service. They'll transcribe that. Eventually,
12 all the interviews we do, yours included, will become part of the
13 public record for the facts of this case sometime down the road.
14 Do you understand? You're okay with that?

15 MR. PONCE: Yes, sir.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And, also present is John Hanson, and
17 he's your representative?

18 MR. PONCE: Yes, sir.

19 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Great. A couple of preflight actions.
20 I will take a few notes on my computer. And I apologize if I'm
21 not making eye contact with you.

22 MR. PONCE: That's understood.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: And if I'm looking down, and don't read
24 anything into it, okay? It's just me catching up. And I, I'm an
25 old school pilot. I sometimes type like that.

1 MR. PONCE: No worries.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: If there's a question either Todd or I ask you
3 and you don't understand, just stop us and ask us to explain. And
4 if there is a question that's asked that you simply don't know the
5 answer to, I don't know is a perfectly acceptable answer. Okay.
6 The whole point of this, like Todd said, is so that we can have a
7 conversation with you, and learn as much as we can from everybody
8 that we're talking to so that we get the picture and find out what
9 happened. So primarily to just prevent it from happening again.
10 That's our sole role. Okay. Is there any questions you have of
11 myself or Todd before we get started?

12 MR. PONCE: No, not at all.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I'll give you a chance at the end to
14 ask us any questions you want. Okay.

15 INTERVIEW OF JOSEPH VINCENT PONCE

16 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

17 Q. So let's get started with some of the easier ones. Let me
18 get your full name and age.

19 A. Joseph, middle name Vincent, last name P-O-N-C-E. And I'm --

20 Q. P-O-N --

21 A. P-O-N-C-E, Ponce. And age is 40.

22 Q. Okay. And as it relates to Aeolus, what is your title?

23 A. Director of Maintenance.

24 Q. And how long have you been Director of Maintenance?

25 A. I've been since we've got certed (verbatim), and preliminary

1 stages of certification. So I can't tell you the exact date of
2 our certification. So many things going through our heads here
3 lately. But from date of certification going forward.

4 Q. Okay. This year?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Okay. So less than a year?

7 A. Less than a year.

8 Q. And in general what are your roles and responsibilities as
9 Director of Maintenance?

10 A. As defined by the GOM, overseeing the aircraft fleet.
11 Basically overseeing our maintenance technicians, and ensuring
12 that the aircraft are airworthy.

13 Q. Okay. And currently you just have the Premiere on the
14 certificate?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. Okay. I should have asked, do you mind if I call you Joe,
17 Joseph?

18 A. Joe is fine.

19 Q. Joe is fine. Great. And if you could kind of give me just a
20 Cliff Notes version of your aviation background, your maintenance
21 background that led you to here.

22 A. Started off in the United States Air Force back in '99. Got
23 out of the military in 2006. I started working in the civilian
24 field. First large job that I -- first large manufacturers job
25 that I got with Bombardier out of Tucson, Arizona. That's where I

1 started learning the product. And from there, I got hired and
2 moved out to Virginia with -- I worked with a private contract
3 company called Orion Air Group. I was deployed out to
4 Afghanistan as a civilian. Oversaw the BACN Project, which is --
5 Global Express (indiscernible). And then I came back to Virginia.
6 Worked out of Newport News. Became Director of Maintenance for
7 our 145 there. And then was offered a position out here in
8 California with a small company called Advanced Aircraft
9 Management, and I was with them for a number of years. We became
10 Zetta Jet. And was the Director of Maintenance for both AAM and
11 Zetta Jet on the 135. Zetta Jet, unfortunately, went through a
12 bankruptcy, and the same owners, pretty much the same group banded
13 together, created Planet Nine, which is another charter company.
14 Became a Director of Maintenance for Planet Nine. I was based out
15 of here, Van Nuys. And then decided the charter world was a
16 little too much for me with the Falcons, and took a leave of
17 absence. And that led me to start my own company for awhile as an
18 independent contractor. And I actually crossed paths with Conner,
19 and he said he was going to try to start up his own charter. That
20 kind of got me engaged again. I was, like, startups have always
21 been kind of a fun part of this whole business. And that's how I
22 ended up here.

23 Q. Going back to that 135 Cenijet (verbatim), what -- how do you
24 spell that?

25 A. Zetta Jet.

1 Q. Zetta Jet.

2 A. Z-E-T-T-A.

3 MR. GENTRY: They're pretty good --

4 MR. PONCE: Yeah. So we had about 22 aircraft that we were
5 (indiscernible). We were running them pretty hard. That was
6 actually one of the harder charter companies that I took.

7 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

8 Q. So are you, Joe, are you a direct employee of Aeolus?

9 A. Yes. I'm a, I guess, I'm a contractor, but an employee. I
10 don't how that goes. I bill through my own company.

11 Q. Okay. Are you a 119 on any other certificate?

12 A. No, sir.

13 Q. Okay. Do you know who the PMI is?

14 A. Yes. It's Gary Kwasniewski out of Fargo.

15 Q. Okay. Have you ever met him?

16 A. Yes, sir, multiple times.

17 Q. When was the last time?

18 A. Zoom call, I think during our -- I think it was finalization
19 of our ops specs.

20 Q. But not in person?

21 A. Unfortunately, because of COVID.

22 Q. Yeah. Understood. Did you communicate with Gary after the
23 accident?

24 A. No, not since the accident I have not.

25 Q. Okay. So we're trying to get a history of 605 Tango Romeo

1 how it ended up here. Can you kind of explain maybe the history
2 of the airplane so we know where it was, how it got here?

3 A. I don't -- I couldn't -- other than speculation because I
4 don't have facts on how the transition or the acquisition
5 transpired.

6 Q. Understood.

7 A. The only thing I know is a round about the way the aircraft
8 was sought out. I know that Conner's partner Ryan had been
9 searching for a larger aircraft. He is obviously the owner of the
10 390 Sierra Alpha. And the general conversations that were being
11 had were a larger cabin that can, you know, obviously, do longer
12 hauls. And then the 605 was one of the ones that was targeted.
13 Other than that, I really don't know how.

14 Q. Great. But you got involved once it -- they acquired it
15 under lease, and so --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- how -- tell me about that.

18 A. So initially when the aircraft got acquired, my job and
19 objective was to get it conformed, and introduce it to the fleet.
20 It's probably a little more challenging aspects of the job because
21 it's a new aircraft to a new owner. They always want to jump on
22 it, and use it, right. So my intention prior to the tragic events
23 was I was under a -- basically the start of conformity. So kind
24 of going through the logs, trying to sort everything to get it,
25 get all placed and put together. Essentially, going through

1 maintenance records, and then basically just going through the --
2 Aircraft Advisory Circulars issued by the FAA, make sure that it's
3 compliant.

4 Q. How far into that process did you get?

5 A. I got quite through -- I got through quite a bit. I think
6 the AD Scruggs. Because I like to go back through all Ads, and
7 make sure that those were all up to snuff. The historical Ads
8 probably the ones that I hadn't really gotten too far into because
9 the records were European managed. So they were kind of, kind of
10 difficult to get through. But other than that, I mean, I'd say a
11 fair amount. I wouldn't be able to pinpoint exactly how much, but
12 I'd say a fair amount.

13 Q. Okay. The lease on the aircraft, I don't know if you know
14 this, but it was dated May 1, 2021. Does that sound about right?
15 With Tarka (ph.).

16 A. Can't recall.

17 Q. Okay. That's fine. There was a provision in the lease that
18 says that the Leasee, which would have been Aeolus, who you work
19 for, is to fully inspect the aircraft, having acknowledged that
20 it's in good condition, and that the Leasee is satisfied with and
21 accepts the aircraft in a condition (verbatim) and repair. And
22 there is a provision in the lease, an inspection by Aeolus of the
23 aircraft. Were you involved after the lease? Were you involved
24 in the inspection process? Can you talk to me a little bit about
25 that?

1 A. Essentially, it was an inspection that we performed for all
2 the emergency equipment onboard, placard inspections, the
3 interior, and then anything that would kind of come up during a
4 conformity like the -- any ICAs modifications. I think that's why
5 the -- I hate to assume, I guess, but my understanding is that's
6 basically the inspection portion from my end. The last
7 maintenance that was performed at C&L was something that was also
8 a highlight, you know, making sure that that inspection had been
9 complied with, and the next scheduled maintenance was far out
10 enough to where we aren't going to be bringing on an aircraft --

11 Q. I'm sorry. I'm a pilot. So can you explain that what you
12 just -- what those inspections were?

13 A. So the conformity, the conformity will require you to go
14 through a number of things, the modifications on the aircraft. So
15 if there's any structural modifications that were performed or
16 done to the aircraft, we basically just kind of make sure that
17 there's paperwork backing that up. And then if there's any
18 instructions for continued airworthiness inspections that are
19 required based on those modifications, that those are integrated
20 into the aircraft's maintenance tracking.

21 Q. Was there any discrepancies or any abnormalities that you
22 noticed during your --

23 A. The only abnormality that we had was a delay in getting C&L's
24 paperwork uploaded to the CAMP, which is automated electronic
25 system. That never really got done. So I was basically -- I had

1 a logbook that I generated here, and I was bouncing off of what
2 CAMP had, and then basically seeing the airworthiness of the
3 aircraft with the paper logs that I had access to, which is common
4 practice. A lot of times when some of the operators they -- an
5 aircraft's records don't get shipped off to CAMP right away,
6 there's generally a little bit of a lag. So, basically, wanted to
7 get all of that sorted so I could handle one lump sum of paperwork
8 rather than piecemeal. But that was the only real big abnormality
9 that we had. A few small items that we had to take care of when
10 the -- like I said, I didn't really get to see the aircraft for
11 very long. I think the crew came in, and they had identified an
12 issue with the batteries taking off out of C&L, but they were able
13 to rectify that on their flight home.

14 When they arrived, I discussed this with Conner and David,
15 our Director of Ops, and I decided to just go ahead, get those
16 batteries removed, and send them out anyway just to be safe. I
17 think there's a portable fire extinguisher that needed to get
18 done, and a first aid kit, I believe. Those were the only items
19 that were scheduled that had come up post-maintenance at C&L.

20 Q. Was there any paperwork done or shown about the software on
21 the flight management computer?

22 A. Other than the AED that C&L had performed during their
23 maintenance, I don't believe I had seen anything other than that.

24 Q. Would that normally be part of some inspection?

25 A. The software? I don't -- I can't say that there is. I know

1 that the -- I can't say. I don't know the answer to that. I
2 don't believe that there is an inspection for the FMS software.

3 Q. Is there any -- are you aware if there was a subscription or
4 any type of update with coms or anything?

5 A. No, not aware.

6 Q. Should there have been?

7 A. I believe the subscriptions were up-to-date when the aircraft
8 arrived. I'm not aware of whether or not the subscription was out
9 of date.

10 Q. Is there any inspection that is done on the aircraft either
11 routine or non-routine that would check the currency of the
12 software in the FMS?

13 A. Not necessarily. Normally, the pilots will give us
14 indications on whether or not subscriptions are out of date when
15 they do their routine preflight. I believe that that's pretty
16 much something that they'll identify. Our preflights are
17 generally tire servicing, oil checks, stuff like that.

18 Q. Then I didn't ask you, but I want to go back a second as far
19 as the day of the accident. Walk me through that day, and how did
20 you learn about it, and what was your response?

21 A. I was on a trip with my family, and I got advised that there
22 was an accident by Conner. And I was just, I was pretty much
23 distraught like anybody else. Outside of that, I really don't
24 remember much. It was a pretty, pretty rough day for all of us.
25 But that's how I was informed of the accident.

1 Q. What were your next actions after you learned about the
2 accident?

3 A. I was out of town so I was just, I was, I was really, really
4 concerned. First thing I did was I gathered all the paperwork. I
5 knew that this was going to be pretty much something that was
6 going to be asked of us immediately. So I gathered the paperwork
7 that I had stated was kind of on hold to send over to CAMP. I
8 made sure that that -- what I had at the time was sent over. And
9 that was pretty much it. Started gathering my records. I knew
10 that that was going to be the next step having records get sent
11 off. That was about as best as I thought I could do for my part.

12 Q. I assume this is the first time you've had to go through
13 this.

14 A. First time ever. In the military, I mean, we've had
15 incidents, but nothing, nothing to this extent.

16 Q. Was there any kind of emergency plan that was activated as a
17 response?

18 A. There was. Per our GOM, there's a plan, and Dave Ventrella
19 took care of most of those actions, notifying FSDOs, and doing
20 that part. From my end, I was basically just on standby because
21 Dave had taken on the majority of that side.

22 Q. Okay. When was the last time you had actually seen 605 Tango
23 Romeo?

24 A. I wouldn't be able to tell you the exact date. It was
25 definitely days, I mean, maybe even a week before the flight, the

1 incident.

2 Q. Do you guys have, like, a contract third party? Anybody that
3 does the routine maintenance on the aircraft?

4 A. Not on this aircraft. We hadn't got really deep into it to
5 have third parties on it just yet. I think we had Aero-Nasch,
6 which is an interior shop, come by and do some quotes. We did
7 have LuxAir do a deep cleaning on the seats, and that was pretty
8 much it.

9 Q. Okay. To your knowledge, Joe, was there any discrepancy on
10 the aircraft when it left Van Nuys that day or --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- on the trip?

13 A. No, none at all. As far as I was concerned, the aircraft was
14 airworthy. There was no known discrepancies that the aircraft
15 took off with.

16 Q. I might have to ask you this in a different way, and I
17 apologize if I'm repeating myself. But when was the last time you
18 did any maintenance work or maintenance-related work on the
19 aircraft?

20 A. I think it was when we did the seat. We did the seat
21 installs on the aircraft. We had to remove seats, like I said,
22 did full carpet cleaning and detailing the seats. But I think
23 that was the last time I did physical maintenance on the aircraft.

24 Q. And I assume that was logged in the aircraft logs?

25 A. Correct. Actually, though, it was the extinguisher. I --

1 without having the records in front of me, I can't remember. But
2 I know that there was seats and the walk around extinguisher that
3 needed to get hydro. I think were the last items that were done
4 on the aircraft.

5 Q. Had you had a chance to fly on it?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Do you recall, just since it was brand new coming over here,
8 going through conformity, so it hadn't gone, completed that
9 process, how often was it flown?

10 A. I don't recall how many legs the aircraft had. I know for
11 sure the one leg that it came into Van Nuys, and then the one leg
12 prior to the tragic event are the only legs that I know of.

13 Q. So to your knowledge, the leg coming in here, and this was
14 the first time?

15 A. No. The leg coming into here, and then I think there was one
16 more flight prior to the accident that I know of.

17 Q. Yes. It was a series of flights going up Coeur d'Alene?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. So that was literally the first time to your knowledge --

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. -- that it had been? Okay. Do you know who was being flown?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Who were they?

24 A. It was the -- I only knew of one person, obviously, it was
25 Ryan, which is one of the partners here at Aeolus.

1 Q. You know the pilots?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. I was going to ask you about the weight and balance of the
4 aircraft. Did it have a 36-month weight and balance?

5 A. I believe it did. I think Conner had asked for that prior to
6 because they were trying to get an application or something set up
7 for the aircraft. I want to say I sent him the CAMP the last time
8 I got done. I believe it was done at TAG Aviation. I'm not sure
9 if that was Geneva or not, but it was TAG Aviation, if I'm not
10 mistaken.

11 Q. So that would be in your CAMP records, right?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Okay. So that's one thing we do not have that we would like
14 to get a copy of.

15 A. Okay. I think Mr. Stein may have had that. I'm not sure. I
16 can see if I can track the last time, and it's in CAMP for sure.

17 Q. Do you have access that you can get that today?

18 A. Yes. I can send that over to your email.

19 Q. Oh, great.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. I would appreciate that, Joe. Thanks. For right now, I
22 don't have any further questions.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: Todd, do you?

24 BY MR. GENTRY:

25 Q. C&L.

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. Who are they?

3 A. I've never really actually dealt with them other than this.

4 Q. Me neither. That's why I'm asking.

5 A. They're a repair station out of Bangor, Maine, I believe.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I know that they're a pretty large outfit, but I haven't had
8 too many dealings with them other than the release of this
9 aircraft.

10 MR. GENTRY: Right. I don't have any other questions, Joe,
11 not right now anyway.

12 MR. PONCE: Okay.

13 MR. GENTRY: I'm sorry. I got a lot on my mind too.

14 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

15 Q. When the aircraft arrived in Van Nuys, and I'm not talking
16 about the acceptance inspections done per the lease, but I'm
17 assuming those were done here, right? Or were they done where it
18 was --

19 A. The only large scale inspections that I would -- and I'm not
20 calling them large scale inspections, but these are just like
21 connecting the dots, were done by a gentleman that I've had work
22 with me, who is now an employee of Aeolus. He was contracting at
23 the time. He was sent out just to do the emergency equipment
24 inspection. So life vests. He did placard inspections. It was
25 really light stuff. I just wanted to get kind of like the meat

1 and potatoes of emergency equipment before we took on the aircraft
2 but --

3 Q. What was his name, Joe?

4 A. Juan, Juan Navares. But other than that, there was no other
5 inspections that were, like, performed. I was doing all of the
6 inspections as far as the aircraft when it arrived here once I had
7 access to records.

8 Q. Right. And like I said, I'm a pilot. So I'm not a mechanic,
9 and I don't know all the nuances and such, but I'm assuming there
10 were certain inspections that the aircraft has to have logged like
11 a 100-hour inspection or whatever.

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. And those things. How was that verified that all the
14 required inspections --

15 A. So this aircraft is enrolled in CAMP. It's an electronic
16 maintenance tracking system. What it does is it has an algorithm,
17 and it will run through all of your hourly checks, calendar
18 checks, and then your cyclical checks. And what it does is as you
19 enter in the data for the current times and cycles, it will
20 generate a list of items that are due, and you'll capture those
21 items as they come due. We call them CAMP cards, but they're task
22 cards essentially that get signed off based on log entries that
23 are performed. So this aircraft at the time that we took on the
24 aircraft it was all up-to-date. C&L had just performed all the
25 last major inspections. So interesting part of that, like, that

1 was one of my main first tasks was to basically balance their log
2 entry up against CAMP. Because, like I said, CAMP hadn't been
3 updated yet. So that -- other than that, I mean, the aircraft was
4 in airworthy condition based on scheduled maintenance.

5 Q. So prior to it leaving Van Nuys that day or couple days
6 before the accident on that trip, CAMP had everything, the flight
7 logs -- or the logs?

8 A. CAMP still didn't -- still had not been updated from C&L.
9 The records had still not made it over. And I talked to Conner.
10 I believe that the owner -- I'm not sure what the owner's name is,
11 but the owner was working with C&L to get those over to CAMP so
12 all that could get updated.

13 Q. But C&L has that?

14 A. Yes. They have to. It's a two-year requirement.

15 Q. So they should in theory have everything on the aircraft
16 absent the delivery flight to Van Nuys and those few days of
17 flights prior to the accident?

18 A. I'm not sure I understand the question.

19 Q. I'm just trying to see all the maintenance records and
20 everything, who has those --

21 A. Oh.

22 Q. -- and since they're not all loaded up in CAMP --

23 A. Correct. So C&L retain two years worth of all the
24 maintenance that they perform, and then they'll send that off to
25 CAMP copies of it.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. Usually electronic. But the actual physical records, we'll
3 get a work package as a customer. So the owner, if you would,
4 would have got a copy of that along with the log entry. That's
5 what we utilize to cross-reference what CAMP has --

6 Q. Got it. So the logbooks that were on the aircraft, do you
7 guys have copies of what you have --

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. -- those copies?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Okay. And within CAMP, I asked you a little bit earlier
12 about the FMS software update, is that something logged in CAMP
13 that should --

14 A. No. FMS doesn't have anything in this CAMP run. In my past
15 history with other operations most aircraft don't have
16 (indiscernible) subscriptions log as part of their maintenance
17 planning documents --

18 Q. Right.

19 A. -- call it. So but this aircraft didn't. It wasn't anything
20 that was showing up in CAMP that I'm aware of. I don't remember,
21 recall seeing anything like that.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: Go ahead, Todd.

23 BY MR. GENTRY:

24 Q. So I appreciate your time. Because now I'm starting to get a
25 good picture here, and I'm very familiar with CAMP. I'm not

1 familiar with C&L. But so when the pilots, and I know you weren't
2 here that day, when they got into the airplane did they have a
3 sheet or something that told them the status of the inspections
4 due? Was there anything that they could look at to go I've got 10
5 hours of time before blah is due next? Did they have a sheet like
6 that or do you know?

7 A. Oh, man, no, I don't, I don't -- I can't speak to this
8 aircraft. I know on our 135 --

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. -- how we released aircraft. But on this aircraft since it
11 was being operated 91, I don't know. I don't know the answer to
12 that. These are contract pilots. And, unfortunately, I wasn't
13 necessarily part of that day's release.

14 Q. I understand. So but you said something important to me
15 there, the release of the airplane. How would they be released on
16 a 91 trip?

17 A. That's a good question. Dave Ventrella had reached out to me
18 along with Conner, and asked if the aircraft was up-to-date on all
19 the maintenance records. Because CAMP, like I said, was lagged.
20 It wasn't up-to-date. I had done a review of all the logs, and
21 then the associated items, I think it was a first aid kit, and a
22 walk around extinguisher that needed to be inspected, those had
23 been complied with by us. So everything as far as CAMP was up-to-
24 date. There wasn't anything that was overdue. I said, yeah,
25 we're all good. That was AD as well that had been accomplished.

1 Q. How would the pilots know that? Were they -- was there --

2 A. I think, I want to -- actually, I don't know. I don't know
3 the answer to that. I'd be assuming if I said how that happened.
4 I don't know.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I spoke to, like I said, just my interaction was with Dave
7 and Conner on the release of the aircraft, and whether or not it
8 was airworthy.

9 Q. Is it your intention to release 91 flights the same as you
10 would a Part 135 flight? I mean --

11 A. That's a --

12 Q. -- I'm not saying this is this accident, but I mean was that
13 your intention to do stuff like that or were you going to do it
14 different?

15 A. Yeah. This aircraft was still new. So it hadn't really
16 been, like, integrated into our system so that we could have that
17 release.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. Definitely if this aircraft would have been here for a longer
20 duration, that would have definitely been the plan. Still new.

21 Q. So do you do 91 in the Premiere?

22 A. No. I haven't done --

23 Q. It's all charter?

24 A. All charter other than -- that's a good question. I don't
25 know if we -- I don't believe we've done 91 flights on the

1 Premiere since we got our cert.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Not at all.

4 Q. I'm sure I'll have more questions, but I --

5 A. Actually, though, to answer your question because I do, I
6 think I understand. On the Premiere because it's on cert, I treat
7 all flights as 135. You understand?

8 Q. Sure.

9 A. This aircraft was Part 91. I can't treat it as 135 without
10 impacting -- this doesn't make sense. Basically, it's kind of
11 like it's the opposite. If the aircraft would have been 135, then
12 all flights as far as the Director of Maintenance, the aircraft is
13 always 135 for me. I know that there's a difference from
14 operations standpoint there's a difference. But from the
15 maintenance standpoint, the aircraft is always upheld as a 135
16 aircraft.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. I can't turn it on and off without having to reconform it.

19 Q. No. Exactly right. You don't want to reconform it.

20 A. But, yeah. So for the premiere, I mean, all fights are
21 released 135. This aircraft it just wasn't -- it wasn't really
22 integrated into our fleet to have that same process, if you will.
23 But to be fair, the process is pretty, pretty tied in with what we
24 do anyway on a 135. Spoke with Dave and Conner, which is part of
25 our team. That's how the aircraft was released.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Any other questions?

2 BY MR. GENTRY:

3 Q. Do you -- I want to go back a little bit on subscriptions a
4 little bit. The 605 has a chart display capability in the
5 cockpit. So you have to have a Jeppesen subscription for the
6 airplane to do that. Do you know if anybody was working on that?
7 Was somebody asking you to get those subscriptions or --

8 A. No.

9 Q. No.

10 A. I hadn't heard of those subscriptions. I know that it was
11 something that was going to be in the process, obviously. Usually
12 that gets taken care of once we bring on any aircraft, but I
13 hadn't, I hadn't heard of --

14 Q. Yeah. And maybe the DO or somebody else was going to do that
15 anyway. That was not something they wanted you to do. I don't
16 know. So I just thought I'd ask you.

17 A. Yes, sir. Not familiar from my end.

18 MR. GENTRY: Captain Lawrence, I don't have anything else.

19 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

20 Q. I've just got one follow-up question, Joe, and it's -- I'm
21 trying to understand this. Because in CAMP to determine the
22 airworthiness and the status of this aircraft you use CAMP, right?

23 A. Yes. It's a tool.

24 Q. But you also said C&L hadn't uploaded everything into CAMP.

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. So how do you know if everything was that to make sure it was
2 airworthy had been done if not all the records had been uploaded?

3 A. Because they generate a lot entry. So before an aircraft can
4 release, Part 91, FARs, you have to have a statement of work,
5 signature, date, and then the time that it was performed. So that
6 log entry basically backs up everything that's on CAMP.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. Showing all the --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. That's basically like what I was discussing earlier is you're
11 cross-referencing. So say in CAMP you had lubrication of slat
12 overdue, and a log entry states lubrication of slat performed X,
13 Y, Z, on X day. And that's when the cross-reference comes into
14 play. It's not uncommon -- definitely not the preferred method,
15 especially the larger, large scale work packages, but large scale
16 work packages do take quite a bit of time to get shipped from one
17 place to another. So it's just kind of something that I've been
18 used to doing for many years. It's not uncommon practice to
19 basically do cross-referencing.

20 Q. Okay. Is there anything that you can share with us knowing
21 that this is a safety investigation? We're just trying to figure
22 things out. Is there anything else that maybe we haven't really
23 touched on during the last few minutes or so or something that you
24 can think of that might help us with the investigation? Somebody
25 to talk to, some records to look at, anything?

1 A. No, nothing that comes to mind.

2 Q. I promised you the chance. Do you have any questions of Todd
3 or I?

4 A. No. No questions.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thank you for your service.

6 MR. PONCE: I appreciate it. Thanks for your time.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: You bet.

8 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

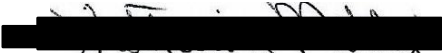
IN THE MATTER OF: N60TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Joseph Vincent Ponce

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Van Nuys, California

DATE: August 31, 2021

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.



Katherine Motley, Transcriber
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: TAKESHI YANAGI, Chief Pilot
Aeolus Air Charter

Van Nuys, California

Tuesday,
August 31, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Investigator
FAA Accident Investigation Division

JOHN HANSON (Representative for Mr. Legarreta)
Worthe, Hanson & Worthe

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:15 p.m. PDT)

1
2
3 MR. LAWRENCE: My name is David Lawrence with the NTSB, and
4 I'm investigating this accident that happened up in Truckee,
5 California. On behalf of myself, the Investigative Team, and the
6 whole NTSB, our condolences for your loss. I wanted you to
7 understand that our role here is simply safety. We're trying to
8 find out what happened so we can help prevent it from happening
9 again. So feel free to share with us any information you think
10 that would be able to assist us in that endeavor. We work as a
11 team. We have parties that participate, and the FAA is in on all
12 our investigations, and I'll let Todd explain his role with the
13 FAA in this investigation.

14 MR. GENTRY: So my name is Todd Gentry, and I'm with the FAA
15 Accident Investigation Division. So our group works hand-in-hand
16 with the NTSB on all fatal accidents, and we try to find out what
17 happened so that if there's something the FAA can do to change it
18 so it doesn't happen again, that's what I do. I make sure that we
19 do the right thing. So I don't work enforcement, like I said
20 earlier. I don't work enforcement actions at all. Nothing I say
21 or nothing you tell me can be used in any kind of enforcement
22 action ever. If the FAA side of the house that does that wants to
23 do something like that, they have to do their own thing. They
24 can't even talk to me about it. So I want you to be comfortable
25 and open and free with your communications for sure.

1 MR. YANAGI: All right, sir.

2 MR. GENTRY: Thank you for your time. Sorry for your loss.

3 MR. LAWRENCE: So and also present is John Hanson, your
4 representative, if that's --

5 MR. YANAGI: Yes, sir.

6 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. One of the things we will be doing is
7 tape recording this interview. It will be -- the recording will
8 be sent back to a transcription service for them to transcribe it
9 into a written document, and that document will eventually be part
10 of the public record for this accident investigation, and will be
11 open to -- the public docket will open sometime we hope within the
12 next year. It takes some time. Okay. Some preflight actions. I
13 will start off by asking some questions, and get you to tell me
14 about a few things and such. I might be typing some things on my
15 computer. I type my flight management computers like this. So I
16 am slow, and I apologize.

17 MR. YANAGI: I understand.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: If I don't make eye contact or there's a
19 pause, please don't read anything into it. It's just me catching
20 up.

21 MR. YANAGI: Yes.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. If I ask a question that you do not
23 understand or Todd asks you a question you don't understand,
24 please ask us to explain it or talk slower. I tend to talk fast,
25 and I apologize. So if you need -- let me catch or catch up to

1 what I'm saying or explain what I'm asking, please.

2 MR. YANAGI: I understand.

3 MR. LAWRENCE: And I'll do the same for you too, if you say
4 something. And if either of us asks a question that you do not
5 know the answer to, I don't know is a okay answer. Okay?

6 MR. YANAGI: Yes.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Do you have any questions of us before
8 we get started?

9 MR. YANAGI: No, sir.

10 INTERVIEW OF TAKESHI YANAGI

11 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

12 Q. Well, let's start with very easy questions. Let me get your
13 full name and age.

14 A. Oh, Takeshi Yanagi, and 54.

15 Q. And 54 years old?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. And with relations to Aeolus Air Charter, what is your title?

18 A. My title is the Chief Pilot of this company.

19 Q. Is this the only 119 position that you hold? Do you hold
20 chief pilot or any other 119 --

21 A. No. This is only --

22 Q. -- with other companies?

23 A. No. This is the company.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. The only company.

1 Q. Are you a direct employee of the company?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. And in general, what are your roles and responsibilities as a
4 chief pilot?

5 A. Make sure that the pilots are properly certificated, and also
6 properly trained. And then we got to keep the record, and then
7 you can see (indiscernible).

8 Q. If you'd just speak up just a little bit.

9 A. Oh, okay.

10 Q. Yeah. Speak --

11 A. (Indiscernible).

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. Also any report from the pilots, and I listen and I talk to
14 the DO.

15 Q. Okay. And then if you can give me a very brief summary of
16 your aviation background.

17 A. Oh. Started out working 1990s, and then go to college, and
18 then do the -- started training private pilot, and then so on, and
19 then flying for someone have airplanes, and then flying for him
20 because he doesn't have the proper certificate. So at that time I
21 had a commercial pilot's certificate. It's not flying
22 commercially, but instrument I have rated. So the person has the
23 airplane don't have a instrument rating. So I flew -- I don't
24 know if he still flies or not because that's back in 30 some years
25 ago.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. So and then after the college, and I did flight instructing
3 at university. And after that airlines. And then I did in the
4 corporate. And the here I am.

5 Q. What airline did you fly for?

6 A. I flew for the Mesa and then Republic.

7 Q. And Republic?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And can you briefly tell me what licenses and type ratings
10 you have?

11 A. Oh, ATP with a type rated on EMB 145, and then 170, 190, and
12 RA 390, which is the Premiere, and then also CE 500 series,
13 Citation.

14 Q. Okay. Can you estimate how much total time you have?

15 A. About 14,000 hours.

16 Q. Okay. I notice you don't have a Challenger, you don't have a
17 Challenger type rating.

18 A. No, I don't.

19 Q. Okay. Do you have any time in the Challenger?

20 A. No, I don't.

21 Q. Okay. How much of your 14,000 total time, how much of that
22 as pilot-in-command?

23 A. Oh, I have about 6,800, close to 7,000 hours in PIC time.

24 Q. Okay. Is this your first experience as a chief pilot?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Do you know who your principal operations inspector with the
2 FAA, do you know who that is?

3 A. You mean the POI?

4 Q. Right.

5 A. Sean -- for the last name, but we talked about it, and then
6 he was doing our proving runs. What's his last name? I'm sorry.
7 I forgot.

8 Q. That's okay.

9 MR. GENTRY: That's okay.

10 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

11 Q. That's fine. And he was doing approval runs for the
12 Premiere?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Have you ever met Sean?

15 A. Yes. I mean, when he, he actually came out and sit on back
16 of the airplane.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. (Indiscernible) FAA inspectors.

19 Q. Okay. Two other inspectors?

20 A. Yes. I mean (indiscernible) inspectors, I believe.

21 Q. Do you recall the last time Sean was here?

22 A. Last time I saw him was the last day of approving
23 (indiscernible), and then after that we had a Zoom.

24 Q. Zoom.

25 A. Zoom meetings, and after that. So that's the last. I

1 forgot, when it was. I forgot when was the last, but the last.
2 So I didn't see him here, but I saw him on the Zoom, that's the
3 last.

4 Q. So it was this year?

5 A. Yeah, oh, you mean, yes, this year, yes.

6 Q. Okay. So like June or July or?

7 A. Yes. Back in June, I believe.

8 Q. Okay. And how did you learn about the accident?

9 A. I was finish my trip on the way to home, and next morning
10 that Dave, DO, he call me and said about the accident. So I was
11 just kind of, oh. I couldn't say anything, I mean. So that's the
12 -- so I think it was back in, I think after the accident, I think
13 I heard it. I mean Dave called me.

14 Q. Right. Okay.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And then what did you do next?

17 A. I was kind of -- he want me to stand by so I was in standby
18 for them. So I was at home. So I just keep my phone on, and then
19 I was kind of waiting for hear from him. That's it. I mean,
20 that's all I can do. So --

21 Q. Right. Is there an emergency plan that got activated to your
22 knowledge?

23 A. Not my knowledge. I don't know. I mean, because this
24 airplane is not on our certificate yet. So --

25 Q. Okay. And I'll ask you about that a little bit later. We'll

1 talk about that a little bit more. So if you could, Takeshi, tell
2 me a little bit about this company, Aeolus.

3 A. This company is brand new, and I understand it just -- when
4 they hire me just to do the processing of getting certificate. So
5 and then --

6 Q. Getting a certificate?

7 A. Right.

8 Q. A Part 135 certificate?

9 A. Yes. 135 certificate. Yes. That's it. I mean, they tried
10 to do Part 135 operations.

11 Q. When did they hire you?

12 A. They hire me April, back in April -- this year.

13 Q. This year?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Does the company have a SMS program?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Safety Management System.

18 A. Yes. I think, yes. That's most of handled by Dave.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Does it have -- because you did have a Part 135 certificate.
22 I understand this airplane wasn't on it, but you had a 135
23 certificate.

24 A. Um-hmm.

25 Q. Did you have any type of voluntary reporting system for the

1 pilots to submit safety reports or anything?

2 A. That's -- I'm not sure. But the reason (indiscernible)
3 because basically something happen other pilot report me, and then
4 I report it to Dave. So and then (indiscernible). So --

5 Q. Does the company have a director of safety?

6 A. Yes. I mean, that is Dave.

7 Q. Okay. So it's a little different. I know the GOM says a
8 safety manager.

9 A. Right.

10 Q. Correct?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Is that what you're talking about, Dave's the safety manager?

13 A. Um-hmm.

14 Q. Okay. So Standard Operating Procedures, SOPs.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You're familiar with those. Does Aeolus have SOPs for its
17 pilots?

18 A. Yes, sir. It's in the GOM.

19 Q. Okay.

20 MR. GENTRY: It's in the GOM?

21 MR. YANAGI: Yes, sir.

22 MR. GENTRY: Okay.

23 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

24 Q. And so just in summary, what are those SOPs that are listed
25 in the GOM?

1 A. Of course safety of airplane to operate. So basically
2 standard operation, how to handle airplanes, and what's the
3 operation procedure, how to get the weather type, for example.
4 And then designate for the PIC and the SIC, and -- yes. It's just
5 like a -- the operation that's how to operate, that what you do,
6 how to do like 135 operations. So --

7 Q. Okay. I'll come back to that. So the SOPs do they also
8 discuss checklist usage?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Do they discuss call-outs?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Are these SOPs specific to Aeolus?

13 A. Well, that, I mean, specific to the airplane, I believe.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah. For what we operate so which is the Premiere.

16 Q. Right. So for right now the call-outs, the checklists I
17 asked you about, and you said those are in the SOPs, that's
18 primarily for the Premiere?

19 A. Primarily for Premiere for, yes.

20 Q. Does the Premiere, since it's the only one on the
21 certificate, does it have tailored checklists or is it using the
22 Premiere checklist?

23 A. We using Premiere checklist.

24 Q. Okay. I know you don't fly the Challenger, but did the
25 Challenger have any specialized checklist or was --

- 1 A. I --
- 2 Q. -- were they only Bombardier?
- 3 A. -- don't know.
- 4 Q. Okay.
- 5 A. I don't know.
- 6 Q. Okay. Did you ever see the airplane, the Challenger?
- 7 A. No, sir. I don't see the airplane. That was --
- 8 Q. You weren't here when it came, was delivered?
- 9 A. No. I was not here.
- 10 Q. Okay. And you're familiar with operational control.
- 11 A. Yes, sir.
- 12 Q. Correct?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Okay. Tell me who here at Aeolus has operational control?
- 15 A. DO and -- well, some of the control by the PIC and the -- me,
- 16 the chief pilot.
- 17 Q. What about the Part 91 flights?
- 18 A. Part 91 for what?
- 19 Q. Well, let's say the Premiere is going to go reposition or go
- 20 fly some place else, and or do training, and not be flying 135.
- 21 Who has operational control if the airplane is being flown under
- 22 Part 91?
- 23 A. Oh, the same.
- 24 Q. Same?
- 25 A. Yeah. DO or chief pilot or some operational control by PIC.

1 Q. So are the flights, if they are -- and I know this is just
2 for the Premiere because the Challenger wasn't on, but are the
3 flights that are operated under Part 91, are they dispatched like
4 they were under 135 or is there a difference in how they're
5 dispatched?

6 A. No. The lease we have it's either 135 or Part 91. That's
7 specifically say -- so.

8 MR. GENTRY: Release?

9 MR. YANAGI: Yeah. We have a website we call the JetInsight.

10 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

11 Q. I'm sorry. What's it called?

12 A. JetInsight.

13 Q. JetInsight?

14 A. Yes. That's a website. I mean, not website. It's the
15 program.

16 Q. Okay. Program.

17 A. And, yeah. They have a kind of schedules. So they
18 specifically say either 135 or Part 91.

19 Q. Okay. That's the first I heard of that. JetInsight program.
20 It's primarily a scheduling program you said?

21 A. Yes. And also passenger manifest also.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Yes. And other information necessary for the flight.

24 Q. Great. Passenger information. So that would be considered
25 under 135 a manifest, correct?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Does it have weight and balance information on it?

3 A. No. Well, I don't know, I will say. But usually a passenger
4 how much weight. So I'm not sure that's considered as a weight
5 and balance information, but passenger weight, bag counts and bag
6 weight. Sorry, can I -- water?

7 Q. Get some water, yes, please. I'm sorry. I'm going to look
8 something up and ask you. Well, I'll come back to this. I have
9 some information about -- that was sent to us about the
10 passengers, and I just want to make sure maybe the chart that
11 you're talking about is -- well, I'll come back to that.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. Don't want to take time. So the passengers onboard this,
14 tell me about them. Are you familiar with them or did you know
15 who was on the accident flight?

16 A. Oh, I think one couple in the Challenger, Mr. Thomas.

17 Q. Mr.?

18 A. Thomas, I think, the last name. He's -- I flew him and his
19 wife couple times on the Premiere. Yeah. So I wasn't very
20 familiar with him, but I flew him for couple of times.

21 Q. And how does -- how is he related to this whole company?

22 A. Oh, I think, I believe, he is investing in airplane, I
23 believe.

24 Q. Okay. So had you seen him before?

25 A. Well, yes.

1 Q. Just other -- obviously --

2 (Crosstalk)

3 A. -- the flying.

4 Q. Right. Okay.

5 A. That's it.

6 Q. Okay. I know you guys have talked about this, but was this
7 particular, the accident flight, conducted under Part 91 or 135?

8 A. I believe, but I don't know this flight much. So I don't
9 know 135 or Part 91. I don't know, sir.

10 MR. GENTRY: That's a good answer.

11 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

12 Q. A fair answer. Were you aware of any compensation from the
13 passengers to Aeolus for the accident flight? Did they pay for
14 anything to your knowledge?

15 A. I don't know.

16 Q. Okay. And just to your knowledge, who had operational
17 control of the accident flight?

18 A. My knowledge?

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. I don't know who released it. So I don't know, sir.

21 Q. Okay. Fair enough. Had you ever met either of the pilots
22 that were on the accident flight?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. Tell me how the pilots at Aeolus and, obviously, this
25 would be you and -- first off, let me ask you, how many pilots

1 does Aeolus have?

2 A. Right now there are three pilots.

3 Q. Okay. Yourself --

4 A. And other captain, and then one first officer.

5 Q. And these are only Premiere?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So tell me about how you guys flight plan. What tools do you
8 use?

9 A. We're using the program called the ForeFlight, and that's for
10 the plan, and then file.

11 Q. And then, I'm sorry?

12 A. And then file the flight plan.

13 Q. And then you -- okay, you plan it, and then file it through
14 ForeFlight?

15 A. ForeFlight, yes.

16 Q. Are the ForeFlight accounts the pilots accounts or is it a
17 company account?

18 A. That's company accounts.

19 Q. Okay. And I know that Aeolus has an ops specs AO 61 for
20 EFBs, Electronic Flight Bags. Do you utilize those?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What EFB do you use?

23 A. Most of the times for the flying the ForeFlights, they have a
24 approach plate, and then -- I mean, IFO chart, and the section
25 chart, and it's pretty much during the flight --

1 Q. Right.

2 A. -- it's the -- that's the tool.

3 Q. So you touched your iPad.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So you use all those programs and means through your iPad?

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. So the EFB would be your iPad?

8 A. iPad. Oh, okay. I see.

9 Q. Okay. Great. Is that a company-issued iPad?

10 A. Yes, company-issued.

11 Q. Okay. I know you were still in conformity checks such to
12 integrate the Challenger, but would it also have had the iPad and

13 --

14 A. I don't know.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I never --

17 Q. Okay. So how do you -- how do Aeolus' pilots conduct weight
18 and balances?

19 A. That's -- we using another program in the iPad called the
20 iPreFlight.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. So you use iPreFlight, and you use it on your iPad?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How do you verify like the -- for your Premiere, how would

1 you know that you've got the right basic operating weight or basic
2 MP weight, whatever?

3 A. That's the company program -- is already set'd (verbatim) up.
4 Once the weight, and then all like a limitations in the program.
5 So all we have to do is just the numbers, and then find it.

6 Q. Pretty easy to use?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. Okay. And I assume you don't know how the weight and balance
9 calculations were done on the accident flight, do you?

10 A. No, I don't know.

11 Q. Great. As a chief pilot, I understand this was being flown
12 by Part 91. I understand. But the manifest that was provided to
13 us showed two passengers when there were four. So as a chief
14 pilot of this company, would it be your expectation that these
15 pilots should call either you, the Director of Operations,
16 somebody to inform them of the additional passengers?

17 A. That's yes, but I was not involving of this.

18 Q. I understand you weren't involved. But you're the 119.
19 You're the chief pilot. Would you expect your pilots to contact
20 somebody if there is a change in the manifest?

21 A. If the airplane is on this certificate, which is the
22 (indiscernible), but I, but, no, 605 is I don't think certificate.
23 So I don't know how (indiscernible) knowledge of 605 passengers.

24 MR. GENTRY: Can I jump in?

25 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah. Go ahead.

1 BY MR. GENTRY:

2 Q. So if you were on a trip in the Premiere, and you thought you
3 were going to get three passengers, but five people showed up,
4 what would you do?

5 A. I call the DO, and I say make sure that's on the manifest
6 that say three passenger but five showed up, and have to verify it
7 how many, and then we have to correct the paperwork. That's the
8 procedure, and the other pilots supposed to call me or DO to
9 verify. If other pilot call me, and say they have more
10 passengers, they have to call Dave, which is the DO. So have to
11 verify with them.

12 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

13 Q. And I'll follow-up on that in a moment. Let me shift gears.
14 And I think you alluded to it earlier. I just want to be clear.
15 You had never met Alberto?

16 A. No, I don't.

17 Q. Okay. Do you know how he came to be hired here or had he
18 been hired?

19 A. No, sir. I don't know.

20 Q. Were you involved in his interview process at all?

21 A. No. I don't -- no. Because I'm, like I said, 605 is not on
22 the certificate. So I have no knowledge. I don't know.

23 Q. But he was going to be a pilot for Aeolus, correct?

24 A. I think so but, I mean, yeah, I mean, I don't know.

25 Q. So had he been a pilot, would you be involved in the

1 interview process or the hiring process? You're the chief pilot.

2 So would you have been involved?

3 A. In this company?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. Not yet. Because anybody -- no new pilots hired since I was
6 chief pilot on this company.

7 Q. Okay. Had there been pilots, if they had started hiring more
8 pilots, would you be involved in that?

9 A. I think so.

10 Q. Okay. So you haven't been involved in any hiring --

11 A. No, sir.

12 Q. -- of any pilots since they haven't hired any, and they're
13 brand new? Okay. Just wanted to make sure I'm clear. And you
14 did not know the second-in-command of the accident flight; is that
15 correct?

16 A. No, I don't.

17 Q. I've got to ask these questions.

18 A. Yes. I understand.

19 Q. Do you know if the second-in-command on this particular
20 flight he obviously was not a company, he was under contract,
21 correct, to your knowledge?

22 A. I don't know.

23 Q. Don't know. Okay.

24 A. I don't even know this flight was.

25 Q. Okay. Let me just go a little bit more general now. Do your

1 pilot receive CRM training?

2 A. CRM?

3 Q. Crew Resource Management -- yeah, Crew Resources Management.

4 A. Oh, Crew Resources Management. Oh, CRM.

5 Q. CRM.

6 A. Oh. Yes.

7 Q. They do?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Is that important for your pilots to have CRM
10 training?

11 A. Yes, I believe so.

12 Q. Why?

13 A. Well, I mean, it's -- the two men flying the airplane, and
14 then have each job to do, and then sometimes I have to interrupt.
15 So I mean -- to manage, I think you can just go -- each pilot go
16 only what they (indiscernible).

17 Q. Sorry?

18 A. To be safe, have to be certain way to fly the airplane. So I
19 have to leave it to (indiscernible) fly the airplane for CRM.

20 Q. Where did you get your training for the Premiere jet?

21 A. Flight Safety.

22 Q. Okay. Where? In Wichita or?

23 A. In Wichita, Kansas.

24 Q. Okay. Did you receive CRM training at Flight Safety in
25 Wichita?

1 A. Yes. I'm not sure. Because -- I'm sorry. The reason I say
2 that because I already had the CRM training on (indiscernible).
3 So I think it's not a program is included because it depends on
4 that airplane is certified for single pilots.

5 Q. The Premiere jet?

6 A. Premiere jet. (Indiscernible). So, I mean, I didn't do
7 because this company (indiscernible). So but didn't say CRM but I
8 think it's they including all of those type rating. I think CRM
9 is in the program.

10 Q. In the Flight Safety program?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Do you recall in general, and if you don't, that's fine, do
13 you recall what they taught you about CRM at Flight Safety? Do
14 you recall was it a full day, multi-day? Just like a one-hour
15 module? What do you recall about that training?

16 A. It's, honestly, I don't know what they call, but it's -- you
17 have to (indiscernible) pilots, and then two hours each in the
18 training on a simulator. So have to swap. And then so -- I don't
19 know if it's PM or PF, pilot flying, pilot monitoring. So we have
20 to do that. And then before that it's in the book what the PM
21 doing and what's the PF doing. So I'm sure it's -- it's simulator
22 sessions, and then you are kind of receiving the training that
23 way. So I don't, honestly, I don't know what they call.

24 Q. Okay. When you were at Flight Safety on the Premiere
25 training, did you train with another Aeolus pilot or was it an

1 instructor doing seat support? Do you understand what?

2 A. Oh, yes, I understand.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I was with a pilot for other companies.

5 Q. Okay. What procedures did you use? Was it Premiere
6 procedures?

7 A. Was Premiere procedures.

8 Q. Does Aeolus or any of your contract training partners provide
9 leadership training?

10 A. Yes. PIC, yes. And SIC, I don't know.

11 Q. Did you get leadership training?

12 A. Oh, you mean leadership. I'm sorry. I don't --

13 Q. How to be a leader. How to be a captain. Not just the pilot
14 flying and pilot monitoring roles, but did you ever receive beyond
15 Mesa and Republic, at Flight Safety for the Premiere jet, did you
16 get any kind of training on how to be a leader, and how to be a
17 captain?

18 A. Honestly, I don't know because it's -- if you do the type
19 rating, which is the PIC type rating, I think that's the, I guess,
20 included with the leadership. Because you getting a airplane type
21 rating as a PIC so how to be a captain. So --

22 Q. Is the -- for the Premiere jet since that's what you know --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- do you fly that airplane different if you're flying under
25 Part 91 versus Part 135?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Why?

3 A. Well, the airplane is the same. Procedure the same. Flying
4 is the same on 135, 91. So no changing.

5 Q. Understand. Now I'm going to have you put your chief pilot
6 hat on. Do you expect your pilots that you're in charge of at AOL
7 -- at Aeolus to fly the airplane as you just said, the same
8 whether it's Part 91 or Part 135?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. Would that include procedures and SOPs that may not
11 have to do with the actual flying of the airplane? For instance,
12 conducting a weight and balance.

13 A. Yes. The same.

14 Q. So you would have them do the weight and balance the same
15 even if it was a Part 91 flight?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. And as part of the weight and balance procedures,
18 would you expect the pilots to -- you already answered Todd's
19 question about notifying about to -- are they required under 135
20 to send paperwork to the company the manifest?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Is the weight and balance included in that?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. So as chief pilot, you would expect them to do a weight and
25 balance, notify changes in the manifest, and send that paperwork

1 to the company prior to flight?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. As chief pilot, when you're here and you're Premiere,
4 you have two other pilots that are out flying, how do you know
5 they're flying according to the SOPs of the airplane, the policies
6 of the company, and even FAA regulations? How do you know they're
7 doing that when they're out flying?

8 A. That's a good question. All company personnel expect they
9 follow. So, I mean, if I'm here or home, and I got pilots flying,
10 we expect them to do the same and follow the rules, FAA rules.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Common sense. But I don't know. I mean, especially, I mean,
13 that we expect it.

14 Q. Is there a -- other than the flight data recorder, is there
15 any other device in the aircraft like a flight data monitoring
16 device that you could use to maybe review, and take a look at?

17 A. Well, they have a flight recorder, but I have no way to -- I
18 mean --

19 MR. GENTRY: In the Premiere?

20 MR. YANAGI: Yes. Premiere have a data --

21 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

22 Q. Flight data recorder, FDR?

23 A. FRD, yes.

24 Q. Okay. It also has a cockpit voice recorder, if I remember
25 correct.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Does the company -- but there's no other, there's no
3 other device or flight data monitor?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. Is there any means or does the company have or plan to
6 have a flight data monitoring program where you will develop some
7 means to monitor the operation and the pilots' compliance with
8 SOPs?

9 A. I don't know.

10 Q. So just to -- your words. Right now as it stands, there's
11 really no way you know when they leave to be absolutely certain
12 that your pilots are flying according to SOPs and the aircraft
13 limitations?

14 A. Well, that's correct.

15 Q. I understand it's your expectation, but there's no
16 verification.

17 A. Right. No verification.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I appreciate your time. Let's see if
19 Todd's got a few.

20 MR. GENTRY: I do. Just a couple.

21 BY MR. GENTRY:

22 Q. So there's three pilots right now?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And who hired the captain and FO? You were already -- they
25 were already here or did you hire them for the Premiere?

1 A. No. I was not -- I mean, it's only a few days kind of
2 difference from the other pilots. So I (indiscernible) process.
3 I was after hired, I had -- the DO told me they hired another
4 pilot.

5 Q. Okay. So were, you were here. You got hired first?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And then he hired two more pilots to work with you?

8 A. Right. But that time I was just a brother pilot, and then I
9 was made chief pilot that time.

10 Q. Understand. Do you know who hired the pilots for the
11 Challenger?

12 A. I don't know.

13 Q. Okay. So back in the beginning when we talked about
14 responsibilities, you said you're responsible for training and the
15 certification of the pilots, and a couple other things, right. So
16 have you trained any of these other pilots that are here?

17 A. Not yet.

18 Q. No ground schools or any classes or anything?

19 A. Oh. We did ground school.

20 Q. What was it on?

21 A. It's in the indoc and also --

22 Q. Indoc?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. So you taught indoc to those other two pilots; is that
25 correct or no?

1 A. No, not two other pilots. The other captains. They had
2 another captains and then --

3 Q. Okay. But you taught that?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And where did you get that syllabus?

6 A. Oh, that's for the company has -- that's what we use.

7 Q. Okay. So did they have a training program? I'm just trying
8 to find out.

9 A. I'm not sure that's called a training program, but it's in
10 that -- according to the GOM that they have indoc.

11 (Indiscernible).

12 Q. Sure. So did you -- when did you get indoc, and who gave you
13 your indoc?

14 A. Dave.

15 Q. Okay. Dave.

16 A. The DO.

17 Q. Got you. And how long is indoc? Do you remember?

18 A. Indoc --

19 Q. Don't have to be exact. I'm just trying to get an idea.

20 A. I think, I believe, three days. Yes, three days.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Whole day actually.

23 Q. And in indoc, do you remember talking about CRM?

24 A. Actually, I don't remember.

25 Q. Okay.

- 1 A. Because there's a lot about like a training what's going on.
- 2 Q. Sure.
- 3 A. So I'm not sure if the CRM was on indoc or not.
- 4 Q. But now you're responsible for the training?
- 5 A. Well --
- 6 Q. For the other guys below you now?
- 7 A. Yes, sir.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. I mean for -- after chief pilot, yes.
- 10 Q. Yeah, right. So the iPreFlight is for the weight and
- 11 balance, right?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. I'm jumping around I know. I'm sorry. So the company sets
- 14 up the account with the weights and all that stuff for the
- 15 airplane --
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- in your iPad?
- 18 A. Yes, sir.
- 19 Q. And then you just plug in weights.
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. I've used it before. So I understand it. But we don't know
- 22 who set that up for the company though do we? Or do we know?
- 23 A. That's the --
- 24 Q. It wasn't you?
- 25 A. No. It's not me.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I think Dave and --

3 Q. Okay. We'll ask.

4 MR. GENTRY: Okay. I think that's all I've got, Dave.

5 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

6 Q. Is there any plans -- I might have asked this, Takeshi, and I
7 apologize. Are there any plans to establish an SMS program here?

8 A. Yes. I mean, what's SMS? I forgot. What's SMS stand for?
9 Safety Management System.

10 Q. Exactly.

11 A. SMS. I'm not sure. Sorry. I think they have, but I mean --
12 I'm sorry. I was kind of busy on flying.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. There are only three pilots so --

15 MR. GENTRY: Don't be sorry. It's okay. Thank you. Doing
16 your job.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: I don't have any more questions, and I wanted
18 to know if you had any questions for Todd and I?

19 MR. YANAGI: No, sir. No questions for right now.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Is there anything that you can think of
21 knowing that we're doing a safety investigation anything you can
22 think of that may help the investigation or somebody that we could
23 talk to or anything? Because we're just trying to find out what
24 happened so we can prevent it from happening again.

25 MR. YANAGI: I see. I don't know. Like I said, I didn't

1 even know the accident was because I wasn't on the plane.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

3 MR. YANAGI: At home, and then accident -- I heard an
4 accident, and then Dave called me on the next day.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

6 MR. YANAGI: So and after that I was kind of -- he told me to
7 standby (indiscernible) to standby at home, and keep the phone on
8 all day, and then hear from him. So --

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, if there is anything you can think of,
10 maybe a day, two, three days later, and you just recall, I just
11 thought of something that might help, please, go through John, go
12 through Dave. Just get whatever information, no matter how
13 unimportant you may think it is, just feel free to pass it on.
14 Okay?

15 MR. YANAGI: Yes, sir, I will.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thank you so much.

17 MR. YANAGI: Thank you.

18 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: N60TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Takeshi Yanagi

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Van Nuys, California

DATE: August 31, 2021

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.


Katherine Motley, Transcriber
FREE STATE REPORTING, INC.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: DAVE VENTRELLA, Director of Operations
Aeolus Air Charter

Van Nuys, California

Tuesday,
August 31, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Investigator
FAA Accident Investigation Division

JOHN HANSON (Representative for Mr. Ventrella)
Worthe, Hanson & Worthe

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:00 p.m. PDT)

1
2
3 MR. LAWRENCE: My name is David Lawrence with the NTSB. And
4 on behalf of myself, the Agency and the Investigation Team, Dave,
5 our condolences for your loss. I'm sorry we're here for this.
6 But I know we've talked about this multiple times. Our role is to
7 really try to find out what happened, and help prevent it from
8 happening again. And so part of the process that we go through is
9 to talk to any of the 119s on a certificate. Even though this was
10 a 91, I get that, we still talk to the head people, and to learn
11 about the operation, and see if there's anything we can do to help
12 prevent the accident again.

13 We work on a party system. The FAA is by federal statute
14 party to all our investigations. That's why Todd's here, and I'll
15 let him explain his role.

16 MR. GENTRY: So I'm Todd Gentry, and I'm from the FAA's
17 Office of Accident Investigation. We're a small group that works
18 directly with the NTSB on all fatal accidents. So our job is to
19 find out if the FAA has any places that we can improve based on
20 the accident happening. Part of that means my role has zero to do
21 with enforcement, nothing. I can't even give those kinds of
22 people my notes. I can only give the NTSB safety reactions and
23 recommendations. That's what we do. We communicate that way. So
24 the reason I say that is because I want you to be able to speak
25 freely. Nothing you tell me today will ever go to any other part

1 of the FAA that has anything to do with enforcement actions ever.
2 If they want to do something like that, they have to do it on
3 their own.

4 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay.

5 MR. GENTRY: So my job is to help him find probably cause,
6 and me to look at FAA responsibilities, and see if there's
7 anything we need to improve. That's why I'm here.

8 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay. Understood.

9 MR. GENTRY: So thank you. Appreciate your time.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: And John Hanson for your representative,
11 that's okay with you?

12 MR. VENTRELLA: Absolutely.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And one of the things we do is so Todd
14 and I aren't getting writer's cramp in writing notes the entire
15 time, we tape record these interviews, and they'll go to a
16 transcription service the government uses, and there will be a
17 nice transcribed interview. All our interviews are transcribed
18 and such. That will eventually be placed in the docket. It maybe
19 months from now that the docket gets opened and released to the
20 public. But if that's okay if we tape record and for
21 transcription?

22 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Just a couple of preflight items. I
24 will take a few notes. I'll start off asking a few questions.
25 Let you tell us about in general some things but I might type, and

1 I types slow. I type -- my first officers hated it when I typed
2 with (indiscernible) the FMS. So it takes some time. If I don't
3 make eye contact with you or if I'm taking my time catching up on
4 my notes, please don't think anything of it, okay. It's just
5 that. I'm a little slower than normal.

6 Also, if I ask a question that you don't understand or maybe
7 should be worded a little bit better, just stop me, and say can
8 you rephrase that, do you mean this or whatever. The whole
9 concept here is more conversational so we have an understanding of
10 the facts, and what's the factual record, and I want to just make
11 sure we're all clear on what the factual information is. Also, if
12 I ask you a question, and you simply don't know, just say so. I
13 don't know is a perfectly acceptable answer.

14 MR. VENTRELLA: Okay.

15 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Any questions about the process?

16 MR. VENTRELLA: No.

17 INTERVIEW OF DAVE VENTRELLA

18 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

19 Q. Okay. Well, let's get started with the easy ones. Let me
20 get your full name and age.

21 A. Dave Ventrella, 66.

22 Q. V-E-N-T-R-E-L-L-A?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. And your age was?

25 A. 66.

1 Q. 66. Thanks so much. And you don't mind if I call you Dave?

2 A. That is my name.

3 Q. Not David or anything like that?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Just Dave?

6 A. Dave.

7 Q. Okay. And as it relates to Aeolus, what is your title here?

8 A. The DO.

9 Q. Okay. Director of Operations?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Are you a Director of Operations or do you hold a Part 119
12 position with any other company?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay. Are you a direct hire with Aeolus? In other words,
15 are you an employee of Aeolus?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. As Director of Operations in general, what are your
18 roles and responsibilities?

19 A. Oh, numerous. Safety, pilots. I'd have to look and go
20 through all of this, but there's numerous, numerous things here.
21 Give it to you.

22 Q. Well, I don't need you to read the GOM stuff.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. I just want your impressions and all. I see you have the
25 computer out too. If there is something you need to refer to,

1 like specifics and stuff on the GOM or wherever, you're welcome to
2 take a look at that, but right now, I'm just trying to get
3 general.

4 A. Yeah. I'm just -- pilots, budgets, the whole myriad of the
5 company basically.

6 Q. And if I could get like a Cliff Notes version of your
7 background. What led you to being Director of Operations at
8 Aeolus?

9 A. Conner wanted to start a charter outfit, and I've been a
10 long-time family friend of his. He knew my background with the
11 airlines, and thought that that would be a great addition to the
12 company. So that's how this all started out.

13 Q. And when did this happen when he approach you about being
14 Director of Operations?

15 A. Beginning of probably -- or the end of 2019.

16 Q. And then you mentioned in your background airlines. So kind
17 of just what led you up this point? What was your background
18 aviation-wise as you got started and all?

19 A. Started with private airplanes. Went to commuters. Went to
20 airline one, then airline two, and then airline three, and that's
21 where I ended up.

22 Q. Okay. I'm jumping around here, and I apologize. Do you know
23 who your principal operations inspector is with the FAA?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And who is that?

1 A. Sean Mosher.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Up in North Dakota.

4 Q. And have you ever met Sean?

5 A. Not personally, no. Lots of Zoom meetings.

6 Q. You haven't met him, but has Sean been here to your
7 knowledge?

8 A. No. We've been up to North Dakota.

9 Q. Okay. And simplistic question, but why have you been up to
10 North Dakota?

11 A. We had to open an office up there.

12 Q. Primary base of operations for the certificate?

13 A. The certificate is North Dakota.

14 Q. Right. But that's why you had to do that?

15 A. Yes. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And do you have the Part 135 certificate? Is it
17 active at this time?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. When was it activated?

20 A. July 13th.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. 2021.

23 Q. '21. How many aircraft did you have on the certificate?

24 A. We only have one aircraft on the certificate.

25 Q. The Premiere?

1 A. Premiere.

2 Q. Okay. How did you learn about the accident, Dave?

3 A. Got a call from Conner, and he said they didn't arrive on
4 time. And I was tracking it, and I saw them take off, and I was
5 busy doing some personal things that day. And he called and said,
6 hey, they haven't called. I think it was probably about 1:40-ish
7 in the afternoon. So I went on my computer and looked, and it
8 showed that the track went to the airport or just shy of the
9 airport. And then I looked up the weather, and I thought, well,
10 maybe they missed and went to Reno. So that's kind of where I
11 left it for a little bit, and then I went back, and I called the
12 FBO, and I asked them did Aircraft 605 Tango Romeo arrive? And
13 the girl said she'll go look; I'll call you right back. Well, she
14 never called. So that led me to believe that something is up.

15 And then we started doing some phone calls back and forth
16 between myself and Conner, and that's when we kind of surmised
17 that something could be amiss right now. So --

18 Q. Then what happened?

19 A. Then there were some news reports of an aircraft crashing up
20 there. So we still didn't know. But now it's been a good
21 probably hour. So I decided to call -- I called the NTSB and the
22 FAA, and left a message saying that we have an overdue aircraft
23 that we can't get in touch with. We tried calling Alberto because
24 that's the only phone number I had. Didn't answer. So that's
25 when I called, and said we had an overdue aircraft. And that's

1 where they asked a whole bunch of questions on the aircraft, and I
2 gave them all that information, and we moved on.

3 MR. LAWRENCE: Let us pause for just a moment.

4 (Off the record)

5 (On the record)

6 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. We're back.

7 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

8 Q. And I don't believe I asked you this, but was there an
9 emergency plan implemented after the accident?

10 A. Yeah. Calling the NTSB, and then giving them the
11 information. And then, of course, the news started coming out.
12 So that's when we started really getting sick because now we
13 pretty much surmised that it was our airplane.

14 Q. All right. Tell me a little bit about Aeolus Air Charter.
15 Tell me about the company in general.

16 A. Well, being brand spanking new on July 13th, the accident on
17 July 26th, 13 days into it, what do you want to know?

18 Q. Well, it's a charter company. Is there flight instruction?
19 I mean, tell me what type of company Aeolus is.

20 A. Well, we are a charter outfit. We have one aircraft. We
21 were trying to -- we just leased the 605 to put on our
22 certificate, and we were going through conformity at the time.

23 Q. And conformity means?

24 A. With the FAA to get that airplane on our certificate.

25 Q. Okay. What is basically the corporate structure here?

1 A. We have Conner pretty much at the top of the CEO so to speak.
2 Then myself as the DO. Kind of the safety manager and compliance
3 all in one. We do multiple roles here. And then we have Joe,
4 which is the DOM. And then Conner actually works as the charter
5 coordinator too. So he coordinates all the charters. And then
6 Takeshi, the chief pilot.

7 Q. Okay. Tell me a little bit about the safety structure here.

8 A. Explain what you mean by the safety structure.

9 Q. Is there a safety structure? Is the safety -- you said
10 you're a safety manager. Is it a director of safety or is it just
11 safety manager?

12 A. Manager. Yeah. We were vetting Polaris, WYVERN, and another
13 company during this period, and seeing which SMS program we wanted
14 to go with. That kind of came to a screeching halt until we get
15 through this here. Not that we want to put it on a back burner,
16 but just there's a lot going on with this.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. We're -- we'll be making that decision here probably next 30
19 days.

20 Q. Okay. Are there voluntary safety reports that the pilots can
21 -- I know you don't have that many but --

22 A. They -- no. We actually have where they -- the guys will
23 call me up, and tell me that there's certain things that they want
24 with passengers, and how they bring their luggage, and how to
25 store it. The Premiere is a small aircraft. So this is all to do

1 with the Premiere. This has nothing to do with the --

2 A. I understand.

3 Q. -- the aircraft in question here. But so they have called me
4 on certain occasions to look at or say we can do things better,
5 that would be a safer manner.

6 Q. Okay. Does Aeolus have standard operating procedures, SOPs,
7 for its pilots?

8 A. Through the GOM, yes, we do.

9 Q. Okay. In general, what are those SOPs? What do they cover?

10 A. Be more -- can you ask me the question? Because I don't --

11 Q. Sure.

12 A. Out of thin air, I don't know.

13 Q. Is it just pilot monitoring, pilot flying duties, call-outs,
14 check lists? Is that what's in the GOM or does it include
15 profiles?

16 A. No, no. Profile, all that's done through Flight Safety.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. So they go by the Flight Safety recommendations and teachings
19 there. So that's checklist from checklist to profiles to pilot
20 monitoring, pilot flying duties. That's all done.

21 Q. All right. They're using Flight Safety profiles, Flight
22 Safety checklists or are they using the manufacturer's checklists
23 and profiles?

24 A. I believe they are using Flight Safety's, which is the actual
25 aircraft.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I've never flown the Premiere so I don't know.

3 Q. Got it. You answered one of -- the question I was going to
4 ask you. And you said the Premiere is still on the certificate.
5 Who owns the Premiere jet? Do you know?

6 A. Well, Ryan Thomas was the leasor of that aircraft before he
7 perished.

8 Q. Right. And that leads me to my other question. Tell me
9 about the passengers, who were on this particular flight, the
10 accident flight.

11 A. I only knew of Thomas and Christine, and the two pilots,
12 Alberto and Brett.

13 Q. And what was Thomas' relationship to the company?

14 A. Partner.

15 Q. Okay. Was this, the accident flight, a Part 91 operation or
16 Part 135?

17 A. It's a 91. It was not on our certificate. You're talking
18 the 605, correct?

19 Q. Right.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. 605 Tango Romeo.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. I know it wasn't on your certificate, but was there any
24 compensation from Ryan or any of the passengers to the company for
25 this particular flight?

1 A. Not to my knowledge. You'd have to ask Conner.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I don't deal with the money portion of things. But I
4 certainly don't believe so.

5 Q. I have to ask these questions.

6 A. Yeah, no. You're --

7 Q. So who had operational control of the accident flight?

8 A. Well, Alberto had. He was the pilot-in-command.

9 Q. So Alberto was the PIC, and Brett was the SIC, correct?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Was that information communicated to either of the pilots
12 that that's how it was supposed to be that Alberto was going to be
13 the PIC and Brett was the SRC -- SIC? Or was that something that
14 they would figure out themselves?

15 A. Well, we, I, I -- we run the -- we ran that flight as we
16 would a Part 91, Part 135. So we ran it through our system. So
17 it showed Alberto as the PIC. I believe on the paperwork that you
18 should have received. And Brett as the SIC.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And then the two passengers that we knew about.

21 Q. Well, speaking of those two passengers that you knew about.
22 Subsequently found out there were two other additional passengers,
23 correct?

24 A. That's correct.

25 Q. And you said that you run the flights, and I assume it's your

1 intention to run the flights that are Part 91, as they are 135,
2 just everything the same, correct?

3 A. Right. I mean, this was not a 91 under a 135 operation.

4 Q. True.

5 A. This is a 91 under --

6 Q. Part 91.

7 A. Yeah. 91.

8 Q. True but --

9 A. So I just want to make sure we're all on the same page.

10 Q. Totally get it. Totally get it. But as Director of
11 Operations, you were the one that was doing, kind of creating this
12 flight, right?

13 A. No. Conner would run -- as the coordinator would put the
14 flight together.

15 Q. Okay.

16 MR. GENTRY: We didn't know that.

17 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. I don't -- in other words, like on a
18 135 operation flight like in the Premiere it goes to our -- from
19 our in-house broker or Conner, which is an in-house broker. That
20 he would take the phone call, get the passenger -- they want to go
21 from Point A to Point B. He would put that all in our jet
22 insight, create a flight, and then we go through, and start what
23 services do we need? Where are we -- what FBO? What fuel stop?
24 What -- and all the different steps. So we just follow a
25 checklist out.

1 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

2 Q. Yeah. That's what I meant when you were creating, you were
3 creating the actual --

4 A. Yeah. So that was --

5 Q. -- building --

6 A. -- created through coordinator.

7 Q. Right. And through this whole time, the expectation was
8 there were only two passengers that were going to be on the
9 flight?

10 A. That's all we, that's all -- you'll have to ask Conner.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. But that's all I saw.

13 Q. As the Director of Operations, would it be your expectation
14 that the pilot would contact you guys if there were two additional
15 passengers that you hadn't planned?

16 A. With our pilots that we have that we employ --

17 Q. Right.

18 A. -- they tell us everything.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. In other words, they give me a weight and balance. So I
21 check it before they even release the brake. But this was
22 different. This was not that kind of a flight.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. How was it staffed? I know you had Alberto. So how was it
25 -- was Alberto employed by Aeolus?

1 A. No. He was a contractor. We were looking at him to become a
2 employee, but because of him being of the Mexico -- or didn't have
3 a visa or a Social Security Number we could not hire him. So we
4 could only contract him. And, again, Conner knows all that whole
5 part of it.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Because he dealt with that.

8 Q. Okay. Because I noticed he -- that Alberto had a Aeolus
9 email address.

10 A. Um-hmm.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah. Because we were trying to vet him on, yes.

13 Q. And I know this is probably just in relation to the Premiere
14 jet, but what do the pilots use for flight planning?

15 A. Flight planning is flightplan.com and ForeFlight.

16 Q. Are those Aeolus accounts for those or the pilots' personal
17 accounts?

18 A. Well, we, Aeolus does have our own. Our pilots have their
19 Aeolus accounts.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I don't know what Alberto or Brett had.

22 Q. And what about weight and balance? How are those --

23 A. Well, actually, let me see. Because I can tell you.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I sent you the --

1 Q. Yeah, the ForeFlight for both -- I've got the one --

2 A. Were those flightplan.com or --

3 Q. No. Those were ForeFlight.

4 A. ForeFlight. Okay. So they were ForeFlight.

5 Q. But it wasn't an account Alberto had through Aeolus. It was
6 his own personal?

7 A. I don't know the answer to that.

8 Q. Okay. And I know you have an ops specs, an A061 ops specs
9 for EFBs. Were you aware if 605 Tango Romeo had one? In other
10 words, is the EFB assigned to the airplane or do the pilots.

11 A. To the pilots.

12 Q. Okay. So did -- are you aware if Alberto had an EFB in his
13 possession?

14 A. I don't know if he did. I would assume that he did, but I
15 don't know.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Because he had -- he uses ForeFlight. So usually you have an
18 iPad for that.

19 Q. I just didn't know if when you guys hired him under contract
20 to operate this series of flights, did somebody hand him a --

21 MR. GENTRY: An iPad.

22 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

23 Q. An iPad.

24 A. I don't know the answer to that.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I did not.

2 Q. Okay. Conversely, with Brett, I want to ask you about how he
3 came around, but was he -- were you aware if he had an iPad or EFB
4 or anything like that?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. Or you don't know if he used his own or?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Specific to this accident flight, and I apologize if this is
9 redundant, but was a weight and balance conducted for this
10 particular flight?

11 A. I did not receive any weight and balance on this flight, no.
12 To answer your question did they, I could only assume as Alberto
13 being PIC that he did a weight and balance as a professional pilot
14 would.

15 Q. But you did not receive any copy from him on a weight and
16 balance like you would for a normal 135 flight?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I did not.

20 Q. Would it be your expectation as the Director of Operations
21 that they should even though it's a 91?

22 A. My expectation? No. Because I looked at this as they --
23 Alberto being the pilot-in-command had operational control. He
24 would take care of the weight and balance on that.

25 Q. Does Aeolus have any copies of the 36-month weight and

1 balance for 605 Tango Romeo or the most current weight and
2 balance?

3 A. Yes, they do.

4 Q. Okay. Where is that located?

5 A. It would be -- you'd have to get that from Joe.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. The DOM.

8 Q. Right. And we have asked him for it, and he's going to
9 provide it.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. I just didn't know if you're aware of any --

12 A. I know they have it.

13 Q. Okay. Tell me about Alberto. How did you know him? Where
14 did he come from, and how did he come into the picture?

15 A. We put out for 605 pilots that we were hiring because we were
16 going to get a new aircraft. And we went through a bunch of
17 pilots, and Alberto stood out. We did some Zoom meetings with him
18 because he lives in Mexico, and we didn't want to have him come
19 out just for an interview. And then we liked what we saw. We saw
20 his qualifications. And that's how we hired him.

21 Q. Okay. Was he actually employed by Aeolus?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. You had just --

24 A. I mean, we -- when I say we hired him, we wanted to hire him
25 as a pilot for Aeolus Air Charter.

1 Q. Okay. So kind of tell me about that hiring process, the
2 interview and all that. It was all Zoom meetings?

3 A. Um-hmm.

4 Q. And based on an internet advertisement, I guess, lack of a
5 better word.

6 A. Through the -- you'd have to ask Conner what system it went
7 through. I think it's something 350 or something. It's a --

8 MR. GENTRY: Flight Level 350?

9 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. Is that what it's called? Yeah.

10 So --

11 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

12 Q. Were you part of that process, the interview process?

13 A. Yeah. I was on the Zoom meetings, yes, definitely.

14 Q. Who else was on the Zoom meetings?

15 A. Conner and myself.

16 Q. Okay. This might be another silly question, but have you
17 ever had a chance to fly with Alberto?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Were any background checks done on Alberto?

20 A. PRIA, yeah, PRIA check.

21 Q. You did a PRIA check?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Um-hmm.

25 Q. And did -- was Aeolus involved anywhere financially in his

1 most recent training at Flight Safety International?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. In what regards?

4 A. We put him through 605 training.

5 Q. Not initial but recurrent?

6 A. Yeah. Yeah, recurrent.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Was he not current on the 605 when you guys had these Zoom
10 meetings and decided to hire him?

11 A. Well, we wanted to hire him so we had to put him through that
12 training, and that's what we did.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Put him through our training.

15 Q. So that he could eventually be a part of the 135 operation?

16 A. Once the 605 became part of the 135 operation.

17 Q. True.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. How did he do in training?

20 A. All his paperwork showed satisfactory on everything.

21 Q. Did you review his training records after he completed?

22 A. Oh, yeah, definitely.

23 Q. Okay. No -- anything in instructor comments or anything like
24 that?

25 A. There were no instructor comments that were written. There

1 was a place for them, but there weren't that I saw any instructor
2 comments. Just all the satisfactory.

3 Q. Okay. Conversely, tell me a little bit about Brett Ebaugh.
4 How did you get his name?

5 A. He was, I believe, referred through Flight Safety. And,
6 again, you'll -- Conner vetted him out. So you'll have to talk to
7 Conner on that.

8 Q. Did you ever speak to Brett?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. I assume never have flown with him either?

11 A. No. Conner and I did discuss everything that Conner and him
12 discussed, and I saw his qualifications, and he was like primo. I
13 mean, he was pretty high up on the 605 list there for people.
14 So --

15 Q. What stood out? You say primo.

16 A. Well, because he was -- companies were asking him to instruct
17 their -- do like IOE like in an airline, you know, Initial
18 Operating Experience.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. So if you're an instructor type, that's kind of who you would
21 want on your airplane.

22 Q. Did you or Conner speak with any other employers or other
23 contract services that employed him before?

24 A. Conner has, yeah, I believe.

25 Q. Did Brett sign any kind of contract or agreement to operate

1 the aircraft for Aeolus, I guess?

2 A. As a contractor?

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. Again, you'd have to talk to Conner. He handled all that.

5 Q. Okay. I asked a little bit earlier, but just want to be
6 clear. As a Director of Operations, Brett, to you, should have
7 been or was the SIC the second-in-command, and Alphonso [sic]
8 would have been the --

9 A. Alberto?

10 Q. I'm sorry, Alberto.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Sorry.

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Okay. Did you have any concerns? You knew Alberto, and you
15 had gone through, and you guys had vetted Brett. So you had
16 communications. Was there any concern pairing these two pilots
17 together?

18 A. No, not to my understanding there was no concern. I mean
19 Conner and I talked about it.

20 Q. Is it kind of typical to bring pilots like Brett that are --
21 you kind of did some vetting of Alberto before having him on this
22 trip, but Brett was -- you had to go out and find, I guess.

23 A. He was just highly recommended to Conner. So --

24 Q. Is that typically to have that contract pilots coming in and
25 flying either --

1 A. For 91 stuff it happens daily.

2 Q. Really?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. That's normal?

5 A. Yes, that is very normal.

6 Q. Okay. Were there plans to hire other pilots besides Alberto
7 on --

8 A. Oh, yeah.

9 Q. -- the Premiere?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Not on the Premiere --

12 A. The 605.

13 Q. Gulfstream. Yeah. After the decision was made for Brett to
14 operate as SIC on these series of flights with Alberto, did -- was
15 he provided, like, a copy of the GOM or any of the SOPs for
16 Aeolus?

17 A. Not by me, no.

18 Q. Okay. Should he have been, in your opinion? I mean, if he's
19 going to operate the aircraft on your behalf or the company's
20 behalf, should he have been?

21 A. No. If he had a 91, no. I don't see any reason for him to
22 have a GOM of Aeolus.

23 Q. Okay. Tell me about what you know about the airplane, 605
24 Tango Romeo. When did you guys lease it? When was it supposed to
25 come on? I mean, it was going through conformity, but tell me

1 what you know about it.

2 A. Not a whole lot. Because I was dealing with my POI trying to
3 get a certificate. So I was doing approving runs, and so at least
4 a month before we had that aircraft on property or so. So but I
5 don't -- I didn't have a lot to do with that aircraft.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And I was working to get our certificate.

8 Q. Understood. Who with the company really had their hands in
9 the mud on this thing really?

10 A. Conner.

11 Q. Conner?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Okay. Crew Resource Management, CRM. Do your pilots -- I
14 know it's just the Premiere now, but do your pilots get trained in
15 CRM?

16 A. Yes. Through Flight Safety, and also we had -- we did some
17 ground school here too.

18 Q. Is that during indoc?

19 A. Indoc, yeah.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Um-hmm. And, of course, that was being watched by our POI.
22 So --

23 Q. But you said the POI had never been here. So --

24 A. Zoom. Everything is Zoom now. Come on.

25 Q. So he actually, the POI would actually attend the indoc

1 portion?

2 A. Because he had to vet me as a --

3 MR. GENTRY: (Indiscernible).

4 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

6 MR. VENTRELLA: As an instructor along with Takeshi. So
7 we're both instructors.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: Got you.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's a different world.

10 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

11 Q. So CRM training through Flight Safety. Do you know what it
12 is they're teaching at Flight Safety --

13 A. I --

14 (Crosstalk)

15 Q. -- to your pilots?

16 A. -- the course so, no.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But I -- on their, on their ground school stuff it talks
19 about CRM. And then, also, we did Zoom -- Boom training, which is
20 another program that we did CRM too.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. What was that face about? Do you know him or --

23 Q. No.

24 A. Oh, okay.

25 Q. No, I was -- Boom and Zoom.

1 A. Oh, okay.

2 Q. Do you know if your pilots when they go to Flight Safety, are
3 they paired with another company pilot or are they paired with
4 other pilots from separate companies or seat support from
5 instructors? I mean --

6 A. Well, if our pilots went together, they would have been
7 paired together.

8 Q. True. So do you know if --

9 A. But they did not.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. No.

12 Q. So in your all's cases who were they paired with? Do you
13 know? Pilot from another company or just seat support?

14 A. I don't recall that. I don't remember back that far.

15 Q. Do your pilots get leadership training anywhere?

16 A. Yeah. I would say that in our indoc that we did some
17 leadership stuff.

18 Q. For example?

19 A. Just the, you know, hierarchy in the cockpit, captain, first
20 officer. Lead by example, not with words. The Golden Rule.
21 Treat others as you want to be treated.

22 Q. So that is just in the indoc portion you would say there is
23 leadership components of -- leadership training?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. In indoc?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And we've had some meetings after indoc, in which those could
4 have occurred in. Yeah. But we've talked about it.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Not in great depth, but we have talked about it.

7 Q. Okay. Had Alberto received leadership training then?

8 A. No. He did not go through indoc or anything from the
9 company.

10 Q. And just so to ask the question, close the loop on that one.
11 Do you know if Brett had ever received leadership or CRM training?

12 A. From Aeolus? No.

13 Q. Any.

14 A. I have no clue.

15 Q. Okay. Had you ever reviewed any of Brett's training records
16 at CAE?

17 A. Not from CAE. Only what was written in his resume, and he
18 had a web page that you could go to, and also see what he had.

19 Q. And I believe you said you did a PRIA background check?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. On him.

22 A. Not -- no, no, no. Not on Brett.

23 Q. Oh.

24 A. On Alberto.

25 Q. Okay. Thank you. So you had done a PRIA --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- on Alberto prior to being hired here.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Did you do a PRIA or a PRD on Brett?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Before --

7 A. No.

8 Q. Why not?

9 A. Because he's just a contract pilot. Had no intention of
10 hiring Brett. He doesn't hire out. I mean, he doesn't become a
11 company person. He's a contract only.

12 Q. Okay. Any other means of doing background checks then other
13 than PRIA and PRD that you would look at a contract pilot for?

14 A. We didn't in this case, no.

15 Q. I asked a little bit about this on the difference between 91
16 and 135. Is it your expectation that the pilots are going to fly
17 the aircraft regardless of what part it's being flown under the
18 same the way it's supposed to? In other words, is it your
19 expectations the pilots are going to comply with SOPs, the
20 limitations of the aircraft and profiles that the aircraft is
21 supposed to be flown under regardless if 91 or 135?

22 A. Yes. I would expect them to fly that, yes.

23 Q. Why? Why would you expect them to fly that way?

24 A. Because they were trained from very high quality training
25 facilities that are vetted by the FAA.

1 Q. Then as Director of Operations, how do you know when the
2 airplane leaves the ramp here -- Premiere jet now, presumably
3 other aircraft down the road -- how do you know your pilots are
4 actually flying the airplane in accordance with company policy and
5 procedures, limitations, federal regulations? How do you know?

6 A. Well, none of them had violations, and there's no way to
7 monitor that. I have flown in the back of the aircraft when it's
8 empty, and I do kneel down when we're airborne and watch them. So
9 being an ex-check airman, I kind of know what to look for. So --

10 Q. En route check would you say?

11 A. No. I can't call it that, but --

12 (Crosstalk)

13 A. -- I observe it, yes.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah. So I have observed a couple of our pilots actually.

16 Q. Okay. Did you have any flight monitors onboard the aircraft?

17 A. On the Premiere, no. Not to my knowledge.

18 Q. Okay. Any plans for Aeolus to establish some type of flight
19 data monitoring program where you install some type of lightweight
20 -- recorder or something, and then monitor the operational data it
21 provides to see how your pilots are comply? Are there any plans
22 for that down the road?

23 A. Not on the Premiere because that aircraft probably won't be
24 around very much longer because it's just not -- it's an old
25 airplane.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. So the new aircraft we get, I would definitely say yes to
3 that.

4 Q. Okay. I think that's all I got for right now, Dave. I might
5 have some follow-ups.

6 A. Okay.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Todd.

8 MR. GENTRY: I just have a couple. I know you've been
9 talking a lot so --

10 MR. LAWRENCE: No. Ask away.

11 BY MR. GENTRY:

12 Q. So Mr. Thomas was the owner of the Premiere or the leasee?

13 A. Leasee.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And so when he -- did he fly on the Premiere.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. He did.

19 A. Numerous times.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Numerous times.

22 Q. So when he flew on the Premiere, how did he pay for it?

23 A. You'll have to talk to Conner on that.

24 Q. Or did he?

25 A. I don't -- that's what I mean, I don't think he ever paid.

1 So talk to Conner.

2 Q. So that -- so when the owner would fly on the airplane,
3 Mr. Thomas would fly on his premiere, who had operational control
4 at that point?

5 A. Again, that was all -- that was prior pre-Aeolus Air Charter.

6 Q. Okay. So he never flew on it after the 13th of July then
7 probably?

8 A. I don't think so.

9 Q. It's not a big window. I understand.

10 A. Yeah. I don't believe so. In fact, I'm almost positive he
11 didn't, but let me check. Because --

12 (Pause)

13 Q. While you're looking that up, can I ask another question?

14 A. Yeah. You can go right ahead.

15 Q. Multi-tasking.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Have you been to Flight Safety?

18 A. I have not been to Flight Safety.

19 Q. Any of them, right? I mean, just not even to visit?

20 A. No, not even, no.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I am going to be required to go there, but not as yet. So --

23 Q. Is there a PIC upgrade in the training program? Like a
24 captain upgrade?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. There is?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Who teaches that?

4 A. We haven't got there yet so --

5 Q. Okay. Well, how did the captain get to be a captain on the
6 Premiere?

7 A. They were all -- that was all during the proving runs. So we
8 had one, Takeshi --

9 Q. Right.

10 A. -- who was the captain that was -- went through Flight
11 Safety.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. And that's how he got his 299 ride during that timeframe.

14 Q. Right. Takeshi did?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. But he said there was another captain.

17 A. We just, yeah, we just brought him through Flight Safety as a
18 captain.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So Flight Safety is --

21 Q. So he hasn't gone through your -- has he gone through indoc?

22 A. Yeah, oh, yeah, yeah.

23 Q. So he's done --

24 A. He went through with the POI.

25 Q. Okay.

- 1 A. On the Zoom. It was him and Takeshi.
- 2 Q. Okay.
- 3 A. So now they're both captains, but that just happened
- 4 recently.
- 5 Q. Are you a check airman for Aeolus then?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. You're not?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. So who -- there is none, I guess, right?
- 10 A. No. There is not.
- 11 Q. So only the POI can do 290 --
- 12 A. 9's.
- 13 Q. 9's?
- 14 A. Right, right. Again, we're brand new. So --
- 15 Q. I understand. Your POI lives in --
- 16 A. They brought -- on the proving runs, they had FAA gentleman
- 17 from Texas. So we went to Fargo to pick up our POI, flew him down
- 18 to Texas or Wichita, I think it was, and picked him up.
- 19 Q. Got you.
- 20 A. So they didn't fly -- they didn't fly around. We flew --
- 21 Q. Oh, yeah. I'm not worried about --
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. Yeah. I'm not worried about spending the money. I'm worried
- 24 about you guys spending the money.
- 25 A. We spent the money.

1 Q. I'm sure you did. I understand. I've done a lot of proving
2 runs, and they are not cheap.

3 A. No.

4 Q. Especially when you do overseas stuff.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Because then it gets really big. I don't think I have, I
7 don't think I have a lot of more questions right now anyway. I
8 think I'm questioned out for now.

9 A. Okay. To answer your question if Ryan Thomas flew between
10 the 13th and 26th on the Premiere jet, I don't see it.

11 Q. Got you. Thank you.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. Yeah, I didn't -- it's a small window.

14 A. Yeah.

15 D. Can we go back one more question? I mean, we talked about
16 your experience just briefly. You said private commuter airline
17 times three. What type ratings do you have?

18 A. Dash 8, 200, 737.

19 Q. 200. 73 or the older ones?

20 A. 200, 300, 500, 700, 800 max. They're all one type rating.
21 Just like the 604, 605 is one type rating.

22 Q. Right. I just didn't know which. If you had NG experience
23 or not. That was --

24 A. Oh, yeah.

25 Q. That's important because --

1 A. And the Max.

2 Q. -- the avionics in the 605 was more NG stuff than it was --

3 A. Right.

4 Q. -- 235s, 7s --

5 A. Oh, yeah, that's --

6 Q. 5's anyway. Okay. So I got up to 73. What was after that?

7 A. That's it.

8 Q. Okay. Just Dash 8, 200 --

9 A. Oh, Metroliner 227. Sorry.

10 Q. Metro.

11 A. Forgot my first job. I'm old. I'm sorry.

12 Q. It's been a rough week.

13 A. It's been a rough month.

14 Q. I get it. Trust me. I apologize for having to take your
15 time.

16 A. No. This is --

17 Q. It is important though.

18 A. Yes, definitely.

19 MR. GENTRY: I think that's it for me. Thank you for your
20 time.

21 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

22 Q. Has Aeolus hired any other contract people other than Brett?

23 A. I believe so. Yes. Yes.

24 Q. And maybe this is a Conner question, but what was the process
25 to find those?

1 A. That's a Conner question. Because that's how I believe we
2 got the aircraft down here.

3 Q. From Bangor?

4 A. Um-hmm.

5 Q. It was two contract -- I would assume two contract pilots to
6 get it down here?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Alberto wasn't one of them?

9 A. No. Alberto, no, Alberto was not one of them.

10 Q. Okay.

11 BY MR. GENTRY:

12 Q. So was this the first flight after you guys had received the
13 airplane or did it do anything in between the time where you
14 actually got it on the ramp here?

15 A. I believe it went up to -- I believe it went out one other
16 time.

17 Q. There was a trip before this one that --

18 A. Yeah. I don't know what, again, that would be. Conner,
19 you'd have to ask him on that.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah. So I think there was -- this would have been its third
22 flight, if I'm recalling, yeah.

23 Q. So did Alberto fly any of those previous ones?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No.

1 A. This was Alberto's first flight in this aircraft.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And Brett's for that matter.

4 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

5 Q. Is it hard to get staffing, find these contract guys?

6 A. No, not at all.

7 Q. I didn't know if there was like a pilot shortage in
8 Challenger pilots out there.

9 A. I don't believe so. I mean, I know Conner put out a message
10 for -- we were getting a 605. We started looking at pilots, and
11 we got 50 or 60 applications. I would think at least that many.

12 MR. GENTRY: Yeah, probably.

13 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. It was quite a few.

14 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

15 Q. I'm just interested from your perspective and experience as a
16 check airman having gone through two pilot training
17 (indiscernible) probably well over 20,000 hours or something.

18 A. Um-hmm.

19 Q. Do you have any concerns, and this is your opinion, but do
20 you have any concerns kind of putting two pilots from backgrounds
21 you have absolutely really no clue that you can verify and such
22 together in a cockpit, particularly on an airplane that you're
23 putting a partner on? I mean --

24 A. In hindsight, who knows? But in the real world happens every
25 day, every day. I mean, every day that I was on an airline

1 -- a new hire in my airplanes that I flew, you've got a brand new
2 F-15 pilot who just sat in --

3 (Crosstalk)

4 Q. -- went through your company's --

5 A. (Indiscernible).

6 Q. -- training. So you had expectations of what he should know?

7 A. Right. But these two people went through the same training,
8 Flight Safety. So --

9 MR. GENTRY: That's what they said.

10 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah. Okay. I mean, that's what I know. So
11 the question you're asking is I'm thinking no problem. I wouldn't
12 make a decision on this until after the NTSB gets done with --
13 when we have all the information in front of us to know what
14 really happened. Because right now I'm just guessing what's going
15 on.

16 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

17 Q. Yeah. It's a valid point, but I'm just curious from your
18 perspective. I wasn't there. (Indiscernible) for years and years
19 too, and a check airman also. And so it's like we have a product
20 that came through and it was all together. It's just this is a --
21 it seems a different world when you're having to pick guys that
22 are going through maybe different training programs. You don't
23 know necessarily when they went through the training programs or
24 how long ago. And some are going through 135, 293 checks, 297s,
25 299s, and others aren't doing any of the 135. So it's just there

1 seems to be a difference in backgrounds, and I'm just curious from
2 somebody with a structured training program with the airlines does
3 that throw you a little bit, concern you a little bit, give you
4 pause?

5 A. Well, when you explain it like that, yeah, a little bit.

6 Yeah. But before this happened --

7 Q. Right.

8 A. -- I didn't know that that's how they got trained. And I
9 came from a different world. I came from a 121 world.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. So that's where my thinking is. The 135, a lot of
12 assumptions there, I guess.

13 Q. True.

14 A. So --

15 MR. LAWRENCE: Todd, anything more?

16 MR. GENTRY: No.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: Been very helpful, and I really do appreciate
18 it. If -- is there anything that you can think of Dave that maybe
19 we didn't talk about but you want to make sure that we're aware of
20 because this is a safety investigation? Anything you can think of
21 that would help us going forward?

22 MR. VENTRELLA: No, not really. I mean, again, once we get
23 the information like the voice recorders and the, you know,
24 whatever information we can get, it might put this all together.
25 But two highly qualified pilots having this happen, I'm -- believe

1 me, I'm at a loss right now.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

3 MR. VENTRELLA: Totally.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, do you have any questions of us, for
5 Todd and myself?

6 MR. VENTRELLA: No. I just -- when you get information, I'd
7 like to know what --

8 MR. LAWRENCE: What we can share.

9 MR. GENTRY: Yeah, what you can share.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, if there is anything, and I know we're
11 going to be in communications going down the road.

12 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: But if there is anything you can think of,
14 don't hesitate to get a hold of us.

15 MR. VENTRELLA: Yeah.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: If you can think of something that -- the
17 piece of the puzzle. There might be a small piece.

18 MR. VENTRELLA: You'll get -- I'm sure you'll get information
19 that -- you'll have questions that -- because for me to try to
20 think of --

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, I know.

22 MR. VENTRELLA: -- something that --

23 MR. GENTRY: Right.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: It's something I offer everybody we talk to so
25 that if they have questions or anything they want to add.

1 MR. GENTRY: We have an open door.

2 MR. VENTRELLA: Right. Well, I believe that I've been very
3 open to you with the calls I've made and --

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

5 MR. VENTRELLA: -- information that I've handed over. I'm as
6 transparent as --

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

8 MR. VENTRELLA: -- I know how to be. So yeah.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thanks so much, Dave.

10 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

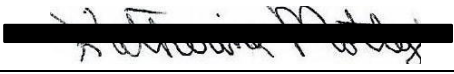
IN THE MATTER OF: N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Dave Ventrella

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Van Nuys, California

DATE: August 31, 2021

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.



Katherine Motley, Transcriber
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NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: DONALD DENGLER, CL-605 Simulator Instructor
Flight Safety International

Via video conference

Friday,
October 8, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Air Safety Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

CHARLIE SMITH, Attorney
Flight Safety Legal Counsel

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. LAWRENCE: Let's just get started and dive right in, if
3 you would? My name's David Lawrence with the NTSB and I'm helping
4 investigate the Truckee, California Challenger 605 accident from
5 this summer. And part of our process and it's a very normal part
6 of our process, Don, is to talk to the most recent instructors and
7 evaluators of an accident crew. So, having you here with us is
8 just a very organic part of the process, so I appreciate you
9 taking the time. Zack gave us a lot of really great information
10 that we don't need to really rehash and such and I know you had a
11 limited time experience with Alberto, but we do just have a few
12 questions. Before I get started, let me do some preflight stuff.
13 We work on a party system -- I don't know if you've ever talked to
14 the NTSB before, Don?

15 MR. DENGLER: No.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. So, we have a party process, so we
17 bring in parties to assist us in the investigation. The FAA is
18 part of all of our investigations, so that's why we have the good
19 looking gentleman on this screen there, Todd Gentry and I'll let
20 Todd introduce himself and explain his role.

21 MR. GENTRY: Hey I'm going to turn my camera off because I
22 just don't have enough bandwidth here to do both. Don, my name's
23 Todd Gentry. I am the FAA safety rep for this accident, but I
24 want to clarify what my role is and I know it's loud here and I
25 apologize. My role is actually just accident investigation,

1 that's all I do. I work directly with the NTSB to help us find
2 out where the issues are and what we can do to solve some of the
3 problems if there are any problems. So, anything that you tell me
4 cannot be used in any kind of enforcement action. I'm not in that
5 part of the agency, I strictly work safety accident
6 investigations. So, by saying that, I want you to feel free to
7 open up and say whatever you think is important and so we can try
8 to figure out what happened and maybe make sure it doesn't happen
9 again.

10 MR. DENGLER: Thank you, sir.

11 MR. GENTRY: Yep.

12 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, thanks, Todd.

13 So, Don, so that I'm not typing notes the entire time and
14 such, what we typically do is we'll go ahead and just tape record
15 this interview and it'll be transcribed at our transcription
16 service at a later time if that's okay with you?

17 MR. DENGLER: Yeah, sure.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, and I know Charlie's there in the room
19 with you and if Charlie -- is Charlie Smith who you want to sit in
20 with you? You're welcome to have somebody.

21 MR. DENGLER: No, he's great. He's been helping me a lot.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: I can attest to that, and so -- good. A
23 couple of things, I'm going to be -- I will type a few things up,
24 you know, just to keep my brain in gear when you give us some
25 answers. So, if I'm not making the virtual eye contact on the

1 screen or if I'm looking down or something like that, please don't
2 read anything into it, I'm just catching up with some notes. If I
3 ask or Todd asks a question that you don't understand and you want
4 clarity, please ask us to stop and clarify it because we're try to
5 get as good of information as we can. Conversely, if we ask a
6 question that you simply know don't know the answer to, I don't
7 know is a perfectly acceptable answer, okay?

8 MR. DENGLER: Sure.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Great. We don't have to bill the clock type
10 of thing. Also, I've got the 8410 that you filled out for this
11 particular evaluation, I don't know if you brought in a hard copy
12 with you. If you do not have one, I can screen share and bring
13 this up and I don't want you to guess on it, I can show it to you
14 and you can answer any question straight from that, okay? So, if
15 you need --

16 MR. DENGLER: No, I don't have mine with me.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. I have it, so if you need to
18 refer to it, please just let me know and I'll bring up it -- I'll
19 bring it up on the screen, okay?

20 MR. DENGLER: Sure.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Great. Do you have any questions about the
22 process?

23 MR. DENGLER: No, just questions and answers, everybody's
24 here to help, everybody's here to find out what happened.

25 MR. LAWRENCE: You got it, great.

1 INTERVIEW OF DONALD DENGLER

2 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

3 Q. I'll tell you what, let's start off with the easy ones, if I
4 could get your full name and age?

5 A. Donald Chris Dengler, I'm 67.

6 Q. Great. And what's your current title, Don? Do you mind if I
7 call you Don?

8 A. Instructor and training center evaluator.

9 Q. Okay. Do you mind if I call you Don, would you prefer
10 Donald?

11 A. That's perfect, Don's great.

12 Q. Great, an evaluator. Great, and, Don, if you would, just
13 kind of give me the Cliff's Notes version of your background, what
14 got you to Flight Safety on the Challenger?15 A. It's been a long time. I started off -- my dad had an
16 Aeronca Champ, so I sat in the back seat of his Aeronca Champ and
17 started flying. When I decided to take lessons, I started north
18 of Pittsburgh at a place called Glade Mill and got my private.
19 And then I went to Embry Riddle in '76 through '79 and got a four-
20 year degree and got all the ratings up until multi-engine
21 instructor. And then after I left there, I worked as an
22 instructor at Butler, Pennsylvania, and then Alleghany County at a
23 couple different flight schools. And then I tried to build some
24 Turbo Prop time, so I worked with a commuter out of Washington
25 County, Pennsylvania, Christman Air Systems.

1 And then from there I went to Corporate Jets at Allegheny
2 County and worked in charter and medivac for about 12-and-a-half
3 years and then that job kind of evaporated and I got on with
4 Corporate Ways in Cleveland for a while. And then I got a
5 corporate job Hearth Stove in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and I was
6 there for about ten years and that job went away and I got on with
7 a management company called Aerosmith in Martinsburg, West
8 Virginia. And they were managing airplanes for a hedge fund
9 manager and it started off with a Hawker 800XP and then he got the
10 Challenger 604 and that's where I got my Challenger time and that
11 job went away. And then I got a job for an industrial pump
12 company in New Jersey and they had their airplane based here at
13 Wilmington and I was there for about three and then that job went
14 away and I ended up here so I wouldn't have to move around the
15 country anymore to find another flying job. So, that brings you
16 up to date.

17 Q. You're a smart man. Very good, thank you very much. And
18 just briefly, the certificates and ratings that you hold
19 currently?

20 A. I have an ATP, I have type ratings in citation 500 series,
21 Hawker series, Falcon 50, Challenger, and I think that's about it.
22 I have a commercial, single-engine land rating and that's pretty
23 much it.

24 Q. There you go and just a guesstimate of your total time?

25 A. It's real close to 15,000, maybe 14,800.

1 Q. Okay, that's a good guess. And you have -- you're typed on
2 the Challenger, you flew, can you guesstimate how much flight time
3 you have on the Challenger series?

4 A. Around 500.

5 Q. Okay, great. And how long have you been at Flight Safety?

6 A. About nine-and-a-half years. I think it was nine years in
7 July.

8 Q. Okay. All that time on the Challenger or any aircraft?

9 A. I was in the Hawker originally and then I got into the
10 Challenger about four-and-a-half years ago.

11 Q. Great. And do you teach in the -- I know you're an evaluator
12 because we see it on the form, but do you teach in the simulator
13 and ground school?

14 A. I teach in 604 and 605 and I do some, like, (indiscernible)
15 training and every once in a while I do some other training
16 basically in the sim. I don't do ground school anymore.

17 Q. Okay, great. Have you had a chance at any point in time
18 before we talked to review the proficiency form that you completed
19 for Roberto Montero?

20 A. I did briefly. I just took a look at it and I know Don
21 Gorman and some other people went over it to make sure that
22 there's nothing missing or anything like that. So, that's about
23 it.

24 Q. And again, I'll have it here and I'll probably bring it up
25 here in just a few moments just to kind of refresh your memory so

1 we can talk from that a little bit very briefly. Do you recall
2 what Alberto was -- at Flight Safety, what kind of training he was
3 getting when he was there?

4 A. I believe it was 135 recurrent.

5 Q. Okay. And this may stretch your memory a little bit, Don,
6 but just tell me what you remember about Alberto?

7 A. Well, I ran into him in the hallway prior to the check ride,
8 I think it might've been his first day of training and I
9 recognized him and he recognized me and he was a very friendly
10 guy. We talked a little bit about what he'd been doing since we
11 saw him last and the one thing he mentioned was that he hadn't
12 been flying much and I think I remember hearing his number, like
13 in the low 30s -- the hours he's had since he's been here. So, he
14 was a little concerned and I asked him who his instructor was
15 going to be and he told me he had Zack and I told him well, you
16 got one of the best instructors in our facility here, so he'd do
17 what he could to get you back up to speed again.

18 So, that was it, just kind of brief and friendly and, you
19 know, that's about it and then I told him about the check ride. I
20 said you know what the check rides are like and it's probably the
21 easiest part of the training, you know, you will have done
22 everything and seen everything, and all the complicated maneuvers
23 would've been done. So, the check ride's going to be easy
24 compared to everything else, so, you know, just try to put his
25 mind at ease since he said he hadn't flown that much.

1 Q. Right. You said that you recognized him, when was the
2 previous time that you had met with him?

3 A. I think when he was here for his initial. I talked to him,
4 we were out in the briefing room when I was getting ready to leave
5 and they were getting ready to come in and I introduce myself and,
6 you know, he told me about himself. So, I can't remember if it
7 was a year or maybe more. I don't really know.

8 Q. Okay. During any time during your interactions with him,
9 whether it be this last July or the previous time that you all
10 spent together in his initial, did he express any concerns or
11 issues going on either with family life, his flying, his
12 professional career? Any concerns he voiced to you?

13 A. Nothing in particular that I can remember.

14 Q. Okay. And overall, can you describe his overall performance
15 in the simulator with you?

16 A. He did very well. It was a little surprising since he
17 mentioned he hadn't flown that much and he did a really nice job.
18 Yeah, it's kind of nice to see that from time to time because
19 every once in a while, things don't go as well. No, I was
20 pleasantly surprised.

21 Q. Okay. Do you recall who was seat support for him during his
22 check ride?

23 A. I can't remember his name, but I do basically remember who he
24 was.

25 Q. Was he the same guy that went through the training with him?

1 A. I think so. I think they still had them paired, I really
2 don't know for sure.

3 Q. Okay. We'll look at the form to see if it jogs your memory
4 if there was anything on there here in a second. Did he -- during
5 his check ride, was he evaluated on his pilot monitoring duties?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. In what regards?

8 A. That he's doing the job that a pilot monitoring should be
9 doing. You know, they work together as a crew, he does checklists
10 when it's time to do the checklists, he takes over the airplane
11 with the pilot flying needs to do a briefing or needs to do a
12 checklist. So, they do normal crew support.

13 Q. Okay. And so, when -- with the other that may or may not
14 have been the one he was going through training with, did they
15 both take their check rides? In other words, you did the
16 proficiency check, you did the 293 and 297 on Alberto, then you
17 get out of the sim, swap seats, and the other guy do the check
18 ride?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. Is that what happened here?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. So, in the evaluation part, it wasn't necessarily on
23 his portion of the check ride, but you were able to observe his
24 pilot monitoring while he was in the right seat, correct?

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. Okay. And how did he do?

2 A. He did fine. He did an excellent job.

3 Q. Okay. Let me pull up and share screen here with you and show
4 you the form and this should look familiar. Can you see it?

5 A. No. Oh, there it is.

6 Q. There it is up? Okay, great. So, all S's mean satisfactory,
7 correct?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. I don't see anything on here that shows who the other
10 person was in the seat, do you?

11 A. No, but we normally don't have that on that form.

12 Q. Okay, not on the 8410. Good. Just a couple of brief things
13 if I can jog your memory on a few things. Go arounds, what was
14 the approach on the go around that was graded satisfactory and
15 where did he go around?

16 A. Well, they have a VOR for left approach at Kennedy and when
17 they get down to approximately between 150 feet above the ground,
18 I just call out, you know, go around. So, usually happens
19 somewhere around 50 feet.

20 Q. Okay. So, almost like a rejected landing maneuver?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Got it. And I know you said satisfactory, but did you see
23 any concerns or any delay or problems with his decision making on
24 executing the go around?

25 A. No, nothing. He did a very good job.

1 Q. Okay. And then here we -- sorry, here we have the unusual
2 attitudes, were those demonstration or were they evaluated?

3 A. They were evaluated. Normally, what we do is set them -- you
4 know, tell them now I take the controls, you close your eyes, put
5 your head down. When I tell you your airplane, you return us to
6 straight and left.

7 Q. Okay. Was this conducted -- it's graded satisfactory, but
8 were these performed by Alberto?

9 A. I set them up and he recovered.

10 Q. Got it. Any -- I know he was satisfactory, but do you recall
11 any delay in his actions or any -- he may have been able to get
12 out of it, but any delay or concerns with the performance?

13 A. No, he was smooth and it wasn't, you know, rough, it was done
14 properly. I think I gave him a climbing to turn and he recovered
15 the way we're taught to, you know, continue to roll the airplane
16 at power, recover to straight and level. And that was normal, you
17 know, there wasn't any jerking the airplane around, it wasn't,
18 like, a negative pushover or anything like that. It was done, you
19 know, just the way they're taught.

20 Q. Okay. And then for stall prevention, he was graded
21 satisfactory for all three series, did he just do one for credit
22 or did he do all three of the stall series?

23 A. All three.

24 Q. Okay. I'm most curious, Don, about the landing configuration
25 stall and what was the scenario that you use in your evaluations

1 to set them up for this stall?

2 A. Usually, I bring them back to Kennedy, we do an arrival
3 procedure back to Kennedy and then we have them load up the VOR
4 approach with the transition for the procedure turn. And then
5 while they're descending, I have them slow down and get the
6 airplane in the landing configuration and I just have them, you
7 know, leave the power back or have them reduce the power so that
8 while they're descending -- and I have them do vertical speed 500
9 per minute. And then with the power reduced, they eventually will
10 get into the stall and then they'll recover and I have them climb
11 up the -- whatever the next thousand feet is above us and then
12 level off and make sure they recovered properly. And then they
13 get themselves into the clean configuration again.

14 Q. As an evaluator, what are you looking for as far as the
15 initiation of the stall recovery, is it the impending stall, is it
16 the shaker, what is it that you're looking at?

17 A. Normally, say the first indication of the stall, which is the
18 shaker.

19 Q. Okay. And again, any problems that you saw with the delay of
20 the landing configuration stall with Alberto?

21 A. No, I thought it was, you know, done properly and there
22 wasn't any secondary stalls, no control problems, and didn't seem
23 to have any problems returning back to straight and level and, you
24 know, making sure he was in the correct configuration.

25 Q. Perfect. And then on instrument procedures, he was graded

1 satisfactory on the circle approach, can you tell me what type of
2 circle approach you use for your evaluations?

3 A. We use Kennedy, we use the RNAV GPS, Yankee for right
4 approach and then we circle the runway three-one right.

5 Q. Is that the same approach that they use or see in training to
6 the best of your knowledge?

7 A. Most of the time it's Kennedy or Memphis. I'm not sure if
8 Zack uses Kennedy. I think he does, so it's probably the same
9 thing.

10 Q. Okay. So, probably the same approach, but we don't know. Is
11 that a fair answer? Okay. Any issues that you recall even though
12 he was satisfactory? Was there anything that you saw that was
13 different about his execution of the circle approach, was there a
14 delay in the visual portion of the maneuver, was he in tight, did
15 he overshoot the final, anything like that?

16 A. No, he did a very nice job and typically what I do is after
17 they report the runway in sight, I clear them to circle. I put
18 the monitor in the back that has the descent profile for the
19 landing runway so that I can see if they're on, you know,
20 approximately a three-degree angle and it has the speed tape on
21 the bottom so you can monitor the speed. And when he made his
22 circling maneuver, he did keep the airplane far enough from the
23 runway that, you know, he didn't need to do a steep descent when
24 he turned his final.

25 The speed was under control, I believe, you know, when he

1 turned final, he was probably between three to five knots faster
2 that REF speed, which is fine, you know, we like to see that
3 rather than below REF. And he was on, you know, practically a
4 three-degree glide path all the way down and a lot of times we see
5 some variations, some pitching up and down and he had a fairly
6 stable approach all the way down. He did land in the landing
7 zone, so, you know, it was one of the better circles.

8 Q. Oh, good. And for the setup on the approach, did he use any
9 type of, like, a circle around the end of the runway to identify
10 the protected airspace or anything like -- did he use that as a
11 tool or guide on where to keep within?

12 A. Yeah, he did and, you know, that's something we teach so that
13 people don't drift too far away from the airport and don't get
14 themselves in too close. So, you know, basically, he used
15 everything that most of the instructors normally teach them to
16 help them out through the circles. It's not that easy of a
17 maneuver, so most people show them ways to help themselves when
18 they do that approach.

19 Q. Do you recall, Don, if he ever used speed brakes to assist in
20 either slowing, configuration, anything like that? Did he use the
21 speed brakes other than just to, obviously, descend from altitude,
22 but any other time?

23 A. No, he had a stable approach all the way down and never had
24 to use speed brakes.

25 Q. Okay. And his configuration of the aircraft during the

1 circle maneuver was timely, I should say? I think it's, what,
2 flaps 30 and REF plus something?

3 A. Yeah. Zack probably told you about how we find the REF
4 speeds for the different flaps configuration.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. But he had the correct flap configuration and the correct
7 speed.

8 Q. Okay. Do you recall in general with his interaction with the
9 other guy flying, did he have to be prompted to get checklists or
10 briefings accomplished?

11 A. No, he did them himself when it was time or he asked for them
12 when he needed it and that was all in time. So, it wasn't like
13 they were trying to catch up at any time.

14 Q. Okay. So, he wasn't behind the aircraft, is that was you're
15 kind of alluding to?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. No, he was good. He had good control and good timing.

19 Q. Okay. Do you evaluate anywhere on the 8410 crew resource
20 management?

21 A. Yeah, I mean, we observe it when they're doing things
22 together and, you know, it's something that -- you know, it's not
23 a single-pilot operation. So, they -- usually when they come here
24 for initials, they do have background with crews and, you know, we
25 observe and if it's necessary, we'll interject if we don't see

1 things done the way we think they should be done. But yeah, he
2 didn't need any prompting or -- it seemed like had been working
3 with as a crew for long enough that his procedures we good.

4 Q. Good. And I know it's a little different and it's a unique
5 -- you actually have experience in the Challenger actually flying
6 the airplane. So, let me ask you a question and I'm going to have
7 you take off your instructor hat for a second and try to recall
8 the actual airplane a little bit. And I'm just kind of curious
9 because I've never flown it, are there any uniqueness issues to
10 the Challenger? We've heard things like it's got a critical wing
11 and I don't know how it -- that may mean a lot of different things
12 to a lot of different pilots. But I'm just curious, in your
13 experience, are there any specific challenges to flying a
14 challenger?

15 A. Just the feel basically compared to some other airplanes.
16 You know, like, I moved up -- this is the biggest airplane I've
17 ever flown, so I moved up from, you know, smaller airplanes and
18 what I flew previous was the Falcon 50 and, you know, a lot of
19 these smaller airplanes are a little more responsive than the
20 Challenger.

21 The Challenger is, like, a very stable airplane, but it takes
22 a little more control inputs than some of the other ones. Other
23 than that, you know, the other biggest thing about that super
24 critical wing that I found is contamination. So, when we have our
25 cool weather days, we talk about it has to be a completely clean

1 airplane, there was no acceptable amount of frost or anything
2 else. So, you know, that's probably the biggest challenge that
3 I've seen. Other than that, I thought it was a great airplane,
4 you know, it's, like, a big, comfortable airplane and has plenty
5 of range, and decent speed. So, I really liked it.

6 Q. Is speed control on approach a problem with this, is it hard
7 to keep it on REF speed or REF plus your additives?

8 A. No, not especially. It's very stable and the speed brakes,
9 you know, if you need them to slow down, they're very effective.
10 But, you know, I know a lot of people handle it as, like, an
11 automated airplane and I kind of joke, you know, normally it's
12 gear up, flaps up, autopilot on, and then eight hours later,
13 disconnect from the autopilot prior to landing. You know, that's
14 how a lot of people fly it because it is, you know, very good as
15 far as automation goes and it's just a matter of -- I try to get
16 people to hand fly as much as they can. When we do steep turns,
17 you know, since a lot of people don't hand fly that often,
18 sometimes steep turns are challenging. But other than that, it's
19 a great airplane.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate it, Don. Let me see if Todd has
21 any questions for you.

22 Todd?

23 MR. GENTRY:

24 Q. Hey, thanks, Don. Yeah, I do have a couple real quick
25 questions. We're actually asking questions about Alberto. We

1 know that you are an outstanding evaluator, there's no question
2 about that. So, our questions don't have anything to do with you,
3 they have to do with Alberto. So, did you -- when he did his
4 circling approach and the FMS was programmed to show the safe area
5 for circling -- the radius, who programmed that?

6 A. The other pilot did when Alberto was flying, Alberto did it
7 when the other pilot was flying.

8 Q. Okay. So, did you notice -- and this is just your
9 assessment, did you notice anything that would indicate Alberto
10 struggled with the FMS?

11 A. No, he had a -- you know, we do a lot of different things
12 with the FMS, you know, initially, they program everything they
13 need to do, they put in the performance, we did a full --

14 (Audio lapse)

15 A. -- and, you know, you do holds and fixes. So, they build
16 holds, you know, that's in the same page where the fixes are that
17 they use for when they do their circles. So, he seemed to have
18 good mastery over the FMS.

19 Q. Okay. And he was -- when he was the pilot monitoring for the
20 other one -- the other person's 293, 297, was -- did he prompt the
21 checklist usage appropriately?

22 A. I think when both of them were flying, they asked for what
23 they wanted, so it's not like either one of them needed prompting.

24 Q. Okay, got you. So -- and I'm going to ask because I don't
25 have any time in the 604, 605, so I'm going to ask just like Dave,

1 when you were -- let's, for example, say you're in a circling
2 approach and you go more than 30 degrees at bank, is -- first of
3 all, is that effecting the critical wing nature? I mean, how fast
4 will the airspeed indicator -- the low-speed indicator rise on the
5 airspeed if you do that? Let's say you go 30 to 38 degrees, is
6 that a huge thing on this aircraft?

7 A. Typically, we avoid doing more than 30 degrees, so it's not
8 like I really get into that situation and watch it that closely.
9 So, I really can't say.

10 Q. Okay, that's a fair answer. If somebody did do that on a
11 check ride, as an evaluator, would you make that item unsat (ph.)?

12 A. If they promptly recover from it, I don't. But if they, you
13 know, maintain us steeper than a 30-degree bank and don't do
14 whatever necessary to rectify it, that would be an unsat.

15 MR. GENTRY: Okay, roger.

16 I think that's all I got, Dave.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, thanks, Todd.

19 I have no follow ups either, Don. So, I really appreciate
20 the time. I'll give you the opportunity, do you have any
21 questions of us?

22 MR. DENGLER: I'm just wondering how the investigation's
23 going, you know, if there's anything that's come up? I just read
24 the articles and saw the videos and that sort of thing. I don't
25 really have any conclusions; I just wonder if you have anything so

1 far?

2 MR. LAWRENCE: The preliminary report was -- has been
3 published on that. It's got some preliminary factual information
4 --

5 MR. DENGLER: Yeah, I saw that.

6 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, that's all that we can release right now
7 and that's been approved for release. We're still collecting a
8 lot of information on this one. We've, you know, got the
9 recorders, we've got all the downloads and all the good
10 information in there, so we're still collecting information. It
11 may take a little while because as you well know, we're juggling
12 as many chainsaws as you are sometimes with our schedule. But
13 there's really nothing from a factual standpoint that we can share
14 other than what's already in the preliminary.

15 MR. DENGLER: Yeah. No, I mean, when I heard about it, I --
16 somebody mentioned and I was surprised that it was Alberto, I
17 thought wow, what happened? I never would've thought something
18 like this would happen to him.

19 MR. LAWRENCE: Right. Well, I appreciate your time. One
20 other offer to you is a lot of times when people talk to us in
21 these investigations, after we're done, a day or two or maybe a
22 week later, as they kind of metabolize their conversation with us,
23 they may think of something. Like oh, wow, I just thought of
24 something that he may have said that may be a benefit to you guys.
25 So, what I offer you is that if that happens, something comes up

1 or there's some tidbit of information, no matter how minor it
2 might be, feel free to get ahold of Charlie so he can, you know,
3 pass that information onto us because sometimes the littlest
4 things become important.

5 MR. DENGLER: Yeah. I mean, I wish I had more help, but I
6 really can't think of anything right now.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. I really appreciate it, thanks.
8 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: N60TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Donald Dengler

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Via video conference

DATE: October 8, 2021

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.



Carolyn Hanna
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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* * * * *

Interview of: IKO ZAKARIJA, CL-605 Simulator Instructor
Flight Safety International

Via video conference

Friday,
October 8, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Air Safety Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

CHARLIE SMITH, Attorney
Flight Safety Legal counsel

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I N T E R V I E W

MR. ZAKARIJA: Who's with you on the screen there?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, I'm going to go through introductions here in just a second. First off, I'm David Lawrence with the NTSB, Zack. I'm in the process of the investigating the Challenger 605 accident in Truckee, California and as part of our process, it's very typical for us to just simply touch base with the instructors and evaluators who've last had any kind of training event with the accident pilots. So, this is a very normal part of the process.

The other part of the process is that when we do these investigations, we have parties. I don't know if you've been through one of these before, Zack, but the -- okay, the NTSB has a party system. What we do is we're not the experts on the 605's or Challengers and a lot of times we're the operators. So, we invite people in the participate in our investigation. Now, the FAA is always a party to our investigation and the good-looking gentleman that you see on the screen there is Todd Gentry and I'll let Todd introduce himself.

MR. GENTRY: Hey, Zack, it's good to meet you. I'm Todd Gentry, I'm with the FAA. I am currently out in my RV, so my internet is not too good. So, I may drop off from my video in just --

(Audio lapse)

MR. LAWRENCE: Todd, you're breaking up a little bit, so you

1 might want to go off video so you have your audio a little bit
2 better.

3 MR. GENTRY: Yeah, there you -- I'll just -- can you hear me?

4 MR. LAWRENCE: We can hear you now.

5 MR. ZAKARIJA: Yeah, you're loud and clear.

6 MR. GENTRY: Okay, I apologize. I'm with the Accident
7 Investigation Division with the FAA and we're a small group that
8 works directly with the NTSB to help them in anything they need as
9 well as what the FAA can do to help. So, part of my job is --
10 (Audio lapse)

11 MR. GENTRY: -- in any kind, so I want you to feel free to
12 openly discuss anything that you want to with us because I can't
13 do anything except for safety, just like Dave Lawrence. It's all
14 about safety for us. So, I do appreciate your time. Thank you
15 for allowing us to ask questions and taking your Friday.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Great, thanks, Todd.

17 MR. ZAKARIJA: Thanks, Todd.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate it.

19 Zack, just a few preflight items before we get started. As
20 standard for our interviews, we're going to be tape recording this
21 and it'll be sent to our transcription service and they'll just
22 transcribe it. It prevents me from having to type up a bunch of
23 notes and such, if that's okay with you?

24 MR. ZAKARIJA: No problem.

25 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And I noticed Charlie's there, is

1 Charlie Smith who you want to represent you? You can have anybody
2 you want in to sit in with you if you want.

3 MR. ZAKARIJA: Yes.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. Other preflight items, I'm going
5 to be just typing some things as we go, just to, you know, keep me
6 on track. So, if I don't respond initially to an answer or if
7 there's a little pregnant pause in our conversation, don't think
8 anything of it, I'm just trying to catch up. I know we're
9 virtual, so I apologize if we're not making the virtual eye
10 contact. If I'm looking down, it's just I'm looking at some of my
11 notes. So, don't think anything of that.

12 If I or Todd ask you a question that you don't know the
13 answer to, Zack, just -- I don't know is simply -- is a perfectly
14 acceptable answer. So, if I ask a question and you want more
15 clarity, stop me and I'll try to provide a little bit more
16 clarity. Just so -- we're trying to get, you know, the facts and
17 good information from you. Since you're on video, I do have the
18 training records for Alberto up on another screen and at any point
19 in time if you want to go back and look at those -- I don't know
20 if you have hard copies in front of you -- do you?

21 MR. SMITH: We don't. I could probably get those fairly
22 quickly.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: You know what, there's just the few, the
24 training forms, the evaluation form, which we're actually going to
25 be asking Zack about the training forms. I'll have it on screen,

1 you can share the screen and show anything you guys need, anything
2 you want to see. Okay?

3 MR. SMITH: Yeah.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: So, let me ask, Zack, any questions about the
5 process before we get started?

6 MR. ZAKARIJA: No.

7 INTERVIEW OF IKO ZAKARIJA

8 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

9 Q. Okay. Well, let's just start with the easy ones. Let me get
10 your full name and your age?

11 A. It's Iko and you pronounce it as Zachariah's fine, but it's
12 actually Zakarija and I'm 74.

13 Q. Okay, great. And so, you don't mind if I call you Zack?

14 A. No, not at all. Triple consonants --

15 Q. Okay. I appreciate that and for your benefit, it's just Todd
16 and David, so when we go through -- what is your current title
17 there at Flight Safety?

18 A. I'm a simulator instructor, part-timer.

19 Q. Okay. And what do you instruct?

20 A. 604 and 605 Challenger.

21 Q. Okay. And if you could, Zack, just kind of give me a really
22 Cliff's Notes version of your background -- your aviation
23 background that lead you to Flight Safety?

24 A. Basically, started out in the military, I'm a cockpit pilot,
25 did the normal stuff throughout my career and came to Flight

1 Safety originally for China Eastern when they were here,
2 instructing them on the Fokker 50. Then I went to Continental
3 Airlines and flying all the Boeing 700 -- you know, seven series
4 and retired at 60. And then went to Air India when the 64 came
5 into effect, 65 went into retire, and was there as a
6 (indiscernible) pilot, learning the triple seven for that.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And then I came here because I knew previous people and they
9 needed instructors.

10 Q. Great. How long have you been teaching on the 605, Zack?

11 A. Since 2014 -- August I came in 2014.

12 Q. Okay. And just a brief rundown of your certificates and
13 ratings right now?

14 A. ATP, triple seven, the 604, 605, I fly a Bell helicopter 206,
15 both VFR and IFR.

16 Q. Okay. And just your estimated total flight time?

17 A. Last count when I kept count was around 25,000. Somewhere
18 around there.

19 Q. Wow, good on you.

20 A. What?

21 Q. Good on you.

22 A. Thank you.

23 Q. You're welcome. And I know you're on -- you're typed on the
24 604 and 605, have you ever actually flown the airplane?

25 A. No, never flown it.

1 Q. Okay. And do you teach in the ground school and the
2 simulator?

3 A. No, just simulator.

4 Q. Okay, great. And have you had a chance to review the
5 training records for Alberto Montero from July of this year?

6 A. No, I have not.

7 Q. Okay. And again, I have the records, so if you want to take
8 a look -- in fact, I may ask you some questions down the road here
9 on a few of those and I'll bring it up on screen and ask you,
10 okay?

11 A. Okay.

12 Q. Make it easy. Do you recall what the purpose of the training
13 for Alberto was?

14 A. Recurrent.

15 Q. Recurrent on --

16 A. 605.

17 Q. Okay. This is a part 135 recurrent?

18 A. Yeah, I -- yes, I think. Yes, it was.

19 Q. Okay, great. And just in general, whatever you can help us
20 with, tell us what you remember about Alberto?

21 A. Very conscientious and a very polite gentleman.

22 Q. At any point in time, did you have an opportunity to talk or
23 did he ever mention any concerns in his life, or financial issues,
24 or any events that were taking place?

25 A. Not that I know of. He said nothing to me.

1 Q. Okay. And just in general, can you describe his overall
2 performance in the simulator during the three days you had him?

3 A. Very conscientious, very concerned about safety and he
4 enjoyed flying the aircraft and he just wanted to get back up to
5 proficiency. Very professional.

6 Q. Okay. So, he wanted to get back up to proficiency, did he
7 account to you that he had been off for a while or something or he
8 hadn't been flying?

9 A. Yes, he has.

10 Q. What did he say?

11 A. Well, because of the pandemic like everyone, their time was
12 very limited.

13 Q. Okay. So, who was with him -- since he was going through a
14 recurrent, do you recall who was with him in the simulator?

15 A. I remember the name, I think it was Stefan (ph.), but I do
16 not recall the company. I think -- no, I don't recall it at all.

17 Q. Okay. We'll pull it up here in just a second and see if
18 there's something on the forms that might trigger your memory.

19 Just in general also, can you describe his leadership in the
20 cockpit when he was working with the other person?

21 A. He acted very professional and when he was the PM on his
22 time, he was very good at it, very CRM oriented. When he was in
23 the left seat as the PIC, he gave pretty good -- you know, normal
24 commands, please give me this and please give me that.

25 Q. Okay. How about his automation management?

1 A. He was up to standard on that. He knew where to go.

2 Q. Okay. Was he trained in CRM during the course of those three
3 days?

4 A. Yes, and I had him and them -- I stressed professionalism
5 based on being conscientious of what's going on, stabilizing,
6 safety, and a lot of it has to do with CRN, talk to each other, so
7 keep an eye on each other.

8 Q. Okay. Is CRM formally trained at Flight Safety, or is it
9 just an evaluated element?

10 A. You mean is there a curriculum? I'm not too sure what your
11 question is asking.

12 Q. Exactly. Is there some module in ground school or something
13 like that that is trained for CRM that when they go to the
14 simulator, you now apply what he learned in ground school?

15 A. Yes, and we have briefings and things. We always stress that
16 a CRM is always active at all times.

17 Q. Okay. And just a general observation on your part, what do
18 you think of when somebody asks you what is CRM?

19 A. Basically, I tell them that its nomenclature is a true
20 resource management and we do, at Flight Safety, teach how to
21 apply that and they teach that in the ground school. But mainly
22 as if from a human factor it's ask questions if you're not too
23 sure of what the individual wants done, ask questions. Find out
24 what exactly they want to do or you have to do. Leave no doubt.
25 It's a very safe -- it's basically being safe.

1 Q. Okay. And I know you touched on it just a moment ago, but I
2 just want to confirm, Alberto, during those three days, got pilot
3 monitoring training as well?

4 A. No, it's part of the normal curriculum. That becomes its
5 normal, pilots talk to each other in the cockpit.

6 Q. Okay. I'm talking about was he pilot monitor during some of
7 the simulator time?

8 A. Oh, I'm sorry. Yes, we switch. We have a two-hour session,
9 one flies as pilot flying, then the other person switches seat and
10 the person pilot flying becomes pilot monitoring.

11 Q. Okay. How did he do --

12 A. And vice versa.

13 Q. I'm sorry?

14 A. And vice versa.

15 Q. Got it. So, you split the two-hour sim by two hours and they
16 switch seats?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Okay. So, all the pilot flying time is in the left seat?

19 A. Unless specified by a company that they want a PIC pilot
20 flying from the right seat, yes, it is.

21 Q. Do you recall in this instance, did he -- Alberto do all his
22 PIC pilot flying time in left seat and then they switched seats
23 and he became pilot monitoring in the right seat?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. Then at Flight Safety, what checklists do the pilots

1 use and what does Flight Safety train as far as the checklists?

2 A. They're trained if they have a company checklist, it's put
3 into our computer or there's a hard copy. If they're from two
4 different companies, we -- they use a standard, which is
5 Bombardier's (indiscernible).

6 Q. Okay. And for Alberto, did he use the Bombardier QRH or did
7 he have anything special?

8 A. I guess because they were two separate companies, so that's
9 the standard and no confusion involved.

10 Q. Okay. Was it -- did he primarily use a QRH or was there an
11 electronic checklist that they used?

12 A. They used the -- what we call the paper, which was -- we used
13 a QRH1.

14 Q. Okay, great. And I'm curious, at Flight Safety when you are
15 teaching or they're using the checklist, is it a do list or do you
16 teach flows in the cockpit? Do you understand?

17 A. Yes, it's a do list. We have an action and a response and
18 then a response from that.

19 Q. So, it's a challenge, response, response?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay, great. Is that how Alberto performed the checklist, as
22 challenge, response, response?

23 A. Yes, so it was done according to the standards.

24 Q. Okay. And before we pull up his training records so we have
25 a look at that, teach me a little bit, Zack, about how is the

1 landing weight determined in a Challenger? When you're coming
2 toward an airport and you're setting up an approach, how do you
3 determine the landing weight?

4 A. The landing weight is determined by -- on the approach page
5 of the FMS. It has a side to it that you put in the temperature,
6 the winds, and the barometric and then on the opposite side of
7 that same page at the bottom, you also have runway conditions,
8 dry, wet, compact snow, et cetera. Okay, and then what you do
9 when you enter that, you go to the second page of the approach,
10 and that will have your VREF speeds for approach on there. Okay,
11 also it has engine bleeds, whether you're mute, whether they're
12 off, whether they're on, you know, a temp stage, whether they use
13 (indiscernible). So, it gives you those parameters. When you
14 press the send button, it propagates your landing weight based on
15 the previous weight and it gives you your REF speed on the next
16 page for that.

17 Q. Okay. And are those REF speeds then transferred to the
18 airspeed strip on the PFD, are they visible there?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah, it populates on both sides.

22 Q. Okay. What speeds are populated on that airspeed strip?

23 A. V1, V2 are, then also VT, which is flap retraction.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. You know, and V2.

1 Q. I'm talking about for approach, Zack, not --

2 A. I'm sorry?

3 Q. I'm talking about for approach, not for takeoff, like V1 and
4 V2.

5 A. Yeah, for --

6 Q. For the approach.

7 A. Oh, I'm sorry. For approach, it gives you a V1, it gives you
8 the ALC, the speed, and then also it gives you a flap retraction
9 speed.

10 Q. Okay. You said V1 again, do you mean VREF?

11 A. Oh, VREF, yes, VREF, V1.

12 Q. Okay. And then when it gives a VREF, is that what the pilots
13 are flying in the pattern if they're flying an approach or coming
14 in or is there, like, some type of additives that they're taught
15 to use?

16 A. Yeah, the add is normally with every crosswind, whether they
17 have a company SOP how they put the, you know, gusty winds in, the
18 normal winds in and some of them have a policy -- it depends if
19 it's their SOP or they use the gust factor, which is -- which they
20 put into it.

21 Q. Okay. And for the FMS -- I assume the software on the FMS
22 needs to be updated regularly. Do you -- are you familiar with
23 that?

24 A. That is IT's, we don't update that at all.

25 Q. Okay. Is there anywhere in the FMS during the preflight that

1 a pilot looks to see that the software is current?

2 A. Yes, it's on the page when you do your index. The index is
3 broken down and you can check the date on that when it was put in
4 and I'd have to take a look at the specific numbers it says. But
5 off memory I don't know exactly, but one of the pages on the IDX
6 tells you that.

7 Q. Okay, on the index?

8 A. The index.

9 Q. Is that part of the pilot's preflight routine? Is there a
10 checklist item that tells them to go to the software database?

11 A. It defines it as programming when you program the FMS. You
12 start out with checking first if it's within the peak period, that
13 it's up to date on that. Then you go to the next page, you put
14 position in there, it gives you airport if you want to type that
15 in. Then down below to update that to get it on its cycle, you
16 can hit on the GSN 1 and it populates underneath there so that it
17 knows for its IRS positions, GPS positions.

18 Q. Great, and I appreciate that. I'm going to share my screen,
19 Zack, so you can see the training form and I've got it up. It
20 might be a little delay, but let me know if you can see it?

21 A. Yes, I can.

22 Q. Great. This is the training form, just for the recording, of
23 July 13th through July 15th, the recurrent -- 135 recurrent. I
24 don't know on here if you can see who the seat support was?

25 A. Yeah, left seat and right seat, I can see PF, PM.

1 Q. Okay. But it doesn't say who that was, it was just another
2 company pilot?

3 A. Yeah, that's -- no, that isn't geared to specifically for
4 when did he do PM from the left seat, when did he do PF from the
5 left seat or from the right seat.

6 Q. Got it, okay. So, I'm going to scroll down here in just a
7 moment here. So, I want to go back to where you have landings and
8 approaches to landings and then back on July 15th, you had marked
9 -- I guess what is one? Is that satisfactory?

10 A. That's satisfactory, yes.

11 Q. Okay. So, you marked satisfactory on landing the circle
12 approach, do you recall which type of approach you gave him for
13 this?

14 A. Yes, I gave him the localizer with no guidance, four rights,
15 circle to land, three-one right at Kennedy.

16 Q. Okay. And just as best you can recall, how did he do on this
17 approach? I understand it was standard, but I'm just curious how
18 he did?

19 A. He did well. He picked his -- the sense of the step downs
20 because it was done in vertical speed as per standard from a point
21 (indiscernible). Then breaking off from that, staying within the
22 lateral protection, vertical protection that he'd put a circle
23 around and he put an extension line from the runway, the opposite
24 leading to three-one right. So, he came back out so he wouldn't
25 need the protection circle. So, he had situational awareness and

1 he did fine on that. He had -- was he a little bit -- I would say
2 it was fine, basically, and there was no major issue with that.

3 Q. I understand. And he did this from the left seat, am I
4 correct?

5 A. Left seat.

6 Q. Left seat?

7 A. Left seat, yes.

8 Q. Okay. And you kind of led me to my next question, in
9 general, how is it taught to conduct a circling approach in the
10 Challenger just in general, like configuration and things like
11 that.

12 Q. Okay, generally, divided into the approach for the IMC to the
13 runway, you need to break out from the MDA for circling and we
14 teach to do that at flaps 30 and in flaps 30 it's resting on 17.
15 And then you keep that all the way when you break off, you
16 parallel runway full length, which would have been the approach
17 that you did to stay within the parameters of the protection of
18 the circle. And then when you start turning, when you've got the
19 runway in sight and you start first stabilizing yourself and
20 stabilizing that aircraft is very important before you start that
21 turn full flaps -- you'll have it from 30 to full flaps. And then
22 also, you have your REF speed from VREF plus 30, you go to REF
23 speed and then you disconnect the autopilot and turn it towards
24 three-one. And the briefing, which he did very good, he said
25 there's a PAPI on that, I'm going to turn it. Once I get the

1 PAPI, I'll follow the PAPI and it was done fine. There was no
2 issues, it was very standard, very easy going and he did a very
3 good landing on that.

4 Q. Great. Maybe I missed something and I'm a little confused,
5 but you said that the maneuvering portion is at flaps 30 and VREF
6 plus --

7 A. No, not -- yeah, when he was doing the approach, Bombardier
8 puts in a category D. So, you do VREF plus 30 for your flaps set
9 -- I'm sorry, VREF for flaps 30, plus 17 on the speed.

10 Q. And why --

11 A. He could keep that --

12 Q. Why 17?

13 A. Sorry?

14 Q. Why is it VREF flaps 30, plus 17? Where did the 17 come
15 from?

16 A. The 17 comes from if you go into the QRH 2, the way
17 Bombardier does it is they take the flaps 30, okay, setting, it's
18 normally plus seven and that's what you add to it for approaching
19 at flaps 30 is VREF plus seven. Then what you do is, you have
20 maneuvering speed because when you break away from the IFR and you
21 go to the downwind to keeps the flaps at 30, you're going to bank
22 angle greater than 15 degrees. So, you had ten knots for the
23 maneuvering speed and seven and ten is 17.

24 Q. There you go. That helps explain it. At what point -- once
25 they break off and become a visual, maneuvering flight to

1 maneuver around to line up with the runway at what point in time
2 is it trained that you go to flaps 40?

3 A. We train them to go to flaps 45. At that point, once you've
4 identified the environment of three-one right -- visually identify
5 it, recommend -- because the aircraft tends to balloon, leave the
6 auto pilot on, leave the auto throttle on. Call for flaps 45,
7 pick that point in space where you're going to start your turn and
8 be configured total for that at flaps 45 and REF speed on that,
9 then you disconnect your autopilot. But it's a point at space in
10 time that you would pick before you would start your turn to land
11 up with three-one right until you get the PAPI's in sight.

12 Q. Okay. So, the maneuvering is being done at flaps 30, but the
13 flaps 45 is when you start the lineup? Is --

14 A. When you start -- yes, when you start to turn inbound to the
15 runway, to line up to land usually. It keeps the aircraft stable.

16 Q. Okay. Is -- in your experience as an instructor, have you
17 ever seen a student on a circle approach try to either slow or
18 maneuver the aircraft using speed brakes?

19 A. Just one minute on that one. No, I don't think I've seen it.
20 They're pretty conscientious, most of the pilots, about that.

21 Q. Okay. Are there limitations on the use of the speed brakes
22 like the altitude limitation?

23 A. Yes, and right now, I'm trying to remember that. On the
24 speed brakes, I think you cannot use it. I'll tell you what, at
25 this time, I don't recollect on that.

1 Q. That's fine.

2 A. I'd have to look that up again.

3 Q. Yeah, and we're not giving you a type-rating oral. I was
4 just curious if you recall it. But in your experience teaching
5 the Challenger, the use of speed brakes -- kind of -- what does it
6 do to the airspeed, what does it do to the pitch? Can you kind of
7 just explain to me if somebody pulled the speed brakes out, what
8 does it do?

9 A. Well, when you pull the speed brakes out, it does tend to
10 pitch the aircraft a little bit and it starts to bring -- it
11 depends, what happens is your airspeed will start to come back
12 because you're straight and level. If you're on a descent and you
13 pull the speed brakes, it can do both, either reduce the speed and
14 definitely give you a higher descent rate.

15 Q. Okay. And when you said it --

16 A. It's not recommended using that. I don't teach it that way.
17 Stability comes from your -- having your configuration and having
18 your airspeed already at the point where you're supposed to be at
19 flaps 45.

20 Q. Understand. And you said it pitched? Does it -- do you mean
21 pitch up? If you -- when you pull the speed brakes, you get a
22 pitch up moment?

23 A. You get a slight pitch up moment on that.

24 Q. Okay. And --

25 A. It goes --

1 Q. I'm sorry?

2 A. It goes into the -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

3 Q. No, that -- no, I was interrupting you and I apologize. I'll
4 let you finish. Then I'll scroll down a little bit further down
5 here and it said the usage and CRM expectations have been trained.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Just, you know, help me understand, what are CRM
8 expectations?

9 A. Well, the normal CRM expectation is that the pilot monitoring
10 or the pilot flying -- well, the pilot monitoring basically makes
11 sure that all the checklists are complete at QRA 20. At a
12 descent, you'll have an in range before landing, all those
13 checklists are done. That's the normal checklist and if the
14 captain or the PF calls for anything on the left side, it's also
15 the responsibility of the PM. It's a very -- it's an aircraft
16 where the PM has a lot of responsibilities in the workload. So,
17 the PM basically watches to make sure that each of the couple outs
18 are done properly and each of the checklists are completed. And
19 also, if the PF forgets something, which we do every once in a
20 while, the PM will remind you want this captain or you -- oh,
21 yeah, give me this.

22 Q. So, this is really -- I know it's certified for two pilots,
23 but this is an airplane, would you agree, that really needs two
24 pilots to be in the same loop to fly?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. Then I just want to go through just a few of the
2 comments that you had put down talking about Alberto?

3 A. Yes, go ahead.

4 Q. This is back on July 13th and one of the things you wrote,
5 recommendation -- you said rushes doing abnormal checklist and you
6 said slow down and read checklist requirements. Can you just
7 elaborate a little bit on that?

8 A. Yeah, you know, we -- because everyone's under pressure,
9 let's face it, trying to do training and everything and he was --
10 excuse me, he was reading the checklist just a little bit
11 mumbling. So, I just slow it down so you're a little bit more --
12 people can hear you and understand what you're saying. That's
13 where CRM come in. The pilot that's flying, if the pilot
14 monitoring is reading a checklist, the pilot flying should be
15 able to be in the loop by talking about it.

16 Q. Okay. And then on July 14th, the following day, you had a
17 very similar comment that says weaknesses, rushes checklist and
18 then your recommendation, slow down reading doing normal/abnormal
19 checklists. Would -- is this something similar as what you saw on
20 the 13th?

21 A. Yeah, it's something similar. But he was starting to slow it
22 down, but he even slowed it down a little more.

23 Q. Okay. And I want to scroll up here then, on the final day of
24 the training that you had him, you said procedures for approaches
25 need prompting from the pilot monitoring. Can you elaborate,

1 Zack?

2 A. Yeah, you know, sometimes we forget certain things to do and
3 the PM would remind us how to do the -- you know, Captain, do you
4 want this, oh, yeah. It's just -- it's a small -- the weakness
5 was that lack of time that he had during the 15 months, so -- he
6 was coming up to snuff, though. But there was nothing unsafe
7 about it.

8 Q. I understand --

9 A. Nothing.

10 Q. And then your recommendation was refamiliarize with setting
11 up approach procedures without pilot monitoring prompts. What do
12 you mean by refamiliarize with setting approach procedures?

13 A. You know, just rather than telling him set this up for me, I
14 recommend it's good to tell the PM and refresh it so that yeah,
15 would you bring up the ILS for this for me or LNAV, VNAV and just
16 stay in the loop so the CRN stays together.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Because that's mainly -- I should've been more detailed. It
19 should've been more CRM.

20 Q. Okay. And -- but he was graded standard for his CRM,
21 correct?

22 A. Yeah, he was. He had -- there was no issue, the other guy
23 understood pretty much. But you had two experienced people in
24 there, so it was very good.

25 Q. Okay. Does Flight Safety teach -- when setting up the

1 approach, do they have the pilot monitoring set up the approach
2 and the pilot flying brief it? In other words, a transfer of
3 control during the brief? How do they teach the set up and the
4 brief, who does what?

5 A. Initially we teach that the pilot flying would transfer the
6 controls, sets it up and briefs it, and then after a while, if
7 you're comfortable, you can have the PM do it. But we teach first
8 to see -- make sure that if everyone knows what they're doing, how
9 to set it up -- you know, basic set ups. We have the pilot that
10 flies it transfer the controls and we also teach -- the way I
11 teach it is give them a heading, give them an airspeed, give them
12 an altitude in whatever mode you have on the FCP panel. You know,
13 I'm in that mode or whatever and just -- then give the transfer to
14 him and that way both pilots are in the loop and then he proceeds
15 to do the briefing.

16 Q. Yeah. So there -- you teach a positive transfer of control
17 from the pilot flying to the pilot monitoring and the pilot flying
18 -- the guy that's going to do the approach, sets it up in the box,
19 and then briefs it, and when they're complete, then you transfer a
20 positive control back and now he's flying it --

21 A. The same -- yes.

22 Q. That's how it's done?

23 A. Yes.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, I appreciate that.

25 Todd, I'm going to bring you in and see -- maybe not on your

1 video because it'll be helpful for your audio. But I'm going to
2 see if you have any questions?

3 BY MR. GENTRY:

4 Q. You know, I appreciate your time, Zack. I don't have a lot
5 of questions. I do have one, though, when you're a captain,
6 you're supposed to have some command authority, you know, like
7 you're supposed to be delegating the responsibilities to items to
8 your pilot monitoring. Did you notice anything about Alberto that
9 you could elaborate on in that respect? Was he a take charge kind
10 of captain or was he basically, you know, let the PM drive the
11 show?

12 A. No, he was predominantly a take -- he gave good command. It
13 wasn't, you know, forceful commands, he just said would you please
14 give me this or would you please do this and he would be specific
15 about what he needed done.

16 Q. Okay. Did you ever hear him actually give an approach
17 briefing?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And on the last training day that you had him, you
20 marked a two/one for circling approach. I know his landing out of
21 the circling approach was marked as one, proficient, but his
22 circling approach was two/one, could you elaborate on that?

23 A. Well, basically what happened was he did everything within
24 parameter. He got a little shallow towards the end, and he was
25 correcting it, and the PM and him said you're a little bit going

1 shallow, and he said yes, I'm correcting, and he did. He started
2 banking a little bit and the guy said watch your bank angle, yeah,
3 there was no problem and he corrected. He never had any warnings
4 or cautions come up like bank angle, or sink rate, or anything
5 like that and he landed out of that, and he finally caught sight
6 of the PAPI, and he adjusted to that, and landed fine.

7 When we got on the ground, I asked him how'd you feel about
8 it, he said I felt okay. I said well, if you feel okay, I said do
9 you want to try this again and he said yeah, do you mind, do we
10 have time, I said no, we have time. So, I took him back out to
11 Ebby (ph.) -- outside of Ebby, set everything up, and had him do
12 it again and there was no issues on the second one. He was much
13 more tighter on that.

14 Q. Okay, great. Thank you. So, it was not an overshoot issue
15 at all, right, or was it? He was just --

16 A. No, it wasn't an overshoot. It was just basically he -- you
17 know, the way it happens when you get at night, you have no depth
18 perception. He -- his adjustment -- he was trying to keep the
19 descent rate the same. It got a little shallow, but then he
20 corrected it, it was fine. But he felt like he wanted to do it
21 again, so I had him do it again.

22 MR. GENTRY: No, that's fine -- that's absolutely fine. I
23 appreciate your elaboration on how the crews set up the
24 approaches, you know, changing the pilot flying duties, briefing,
25 and setting up the approach and then changing it back. I

1 appreciate that so much.

2 Dave, I don't have any other questions.

3 MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Todd.

4 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

5 Q. I just have a couple of follow ups, Zack. On the screen now,
6 the inflight maneuvers, you trained approach to stall and the
7 landing configuration and I'm kind of curious, is that scenario
8 based? In other words, they're on a simulated approach at maybe a
9 couple hundred feet or four, five hundred feet, or leveling off at
10 MBA? How do you teach the approach to landing stall?

11 A. I do it to an actual approach and that way they're totally
12 configured and then I take over the files and put it back a little
13 bit, like 29, 30 percent and then one and said okay, you're going
14 to stall, recover from this. It's doing an actual approach.

15 Q. Okay. And about where -- do you recall on this one, where
16 did you do this landing configuration?

17 A. It should've been, I think, the localizer back course in
18 Lunken, KLUK. I think, I don't -- I got to see what -- I usually
19 teach that.

20 Q. Okay. And about what altitude was that at?

21 A. Between -- I would say around 2,000, 25 hundred, between the
22 two -- somewhere in between there.

23 Q. Okay. Any problems that you recall? I know he was great at
24 standard, but any issues you recall on --

25 A. No, none. He did exactly that, he knew the procedure, he hit

1 full board power, he hit his TO/GA's. He called for flaps 20,
2 (indiscernible), gear up, and then he called for the switch in the
3 needles because our localizer back course is green and you need to
4 go to white. And he went up to the panel and he called for all
5 the appropriate, you know, Nav, vertical speed, and when it was
6 weak, go autopilot.

7 Q. Okay. And staying on the stalls series here, how is -- how
8 are low speed queues -- what are the low speed queues for a
9 Challenger and how are those trained --

10 A. I can't hear you, I'm sorry, say that again?

11 Q. Yeah, I'm sorry. In the stalls series here, I'm curious
12 about the low-speed queues that are available to the pilots. What
13 are they in the Challenger? I mean, how does a pilot know how
14 they're getting slow and what's trained?

15 A. Well, one of the things that you have on the PFD, you have a
16 speed track indicator that tells you -- it's a little red, it
17 looks like a hook coming down on the speed side of the PFD on the
18 left side and it starts to go -- if it goes down, it tells them in
19 ten seconds what speed that's going to be and you can see a trend
20 going and that's one indication. The other one, obviously, you
21 have your barber pole on that side, okay, and then you have an AOA
22 that also -- which I teach, use it as part of your scan on the
23 PFD. AOA is pretty good, pretty accurate in combination with your
24 speed indicator and the trend. So, those three elements in a
25 normal situation, if you want them practicing a stall and it was a

1 real situation, that should've given you sufficient knowing.

2 Q. Great, I appreciate --

3 A. Which we usually do. And then if you do stall, it does yell,
4 you know. I teach them to call out, yell stall, you know, and we
5 cover for that.

6 Q. And bring firewall thrust and then --

7 A. Sorry?

8 Q. Initiate firewall thrust?

9 A. Yeah, and initiate firewall, hit the toe belt, and go through
10 your procedure for flaps gear, and then whatever nav you need to
11 pick.

12 Q. Great. And then one last question, I'm curious what Flight
13 Safety trains with regards to a go around. When and under what
14 circumstances are pilots trained to execute a go around?

15 A. Standard usually is to get to your MDA and/or down to your
16 minimums for DA. If you don't see anything, guess what, you go
17 around. That's the first one. That's the standard, you know,
18 normal on the approaches. The other one is if it's not stable.
19 If you are not stable, okay, on an approach, any point in time you
20 don't feel comfortable about it, you don't have to wait until
21 missed approach point, you execute it. It's a safety issue.

22 Whatever you feel safe about. If you don't feel right on it and
23 you need more time to organize yourself, just TO/GA go around.

24 Q. Great. And what does Flight Safety train its students in
25 regards to stable approach, what constitutes a stable approach?

1 A. A stable approach constitutes predominantly that you're on
2 your target, you have your configuration that's required for
3 whatever you're doing and whatever point in time and space you
4 are, okay, and your power settings -- you know, pretty much
5 familiarize yourself with the power settings, and flaps, whatever
6 need. And then at a thousand feet -- if you're not stabilized by
7 a thousand feet, okay, you should it a go around. If you're
8 unstable, you're too fast, you're sinking too fast, or you're not
9 configured enough, go around, especially under IFR.

10 Q. Would the use of speed brakes to try and control airspeed or
11 alignment with the runway be considered unstable?

12 A. If you're using speed brakes, it's not recommended on doing
13 -- when you're actually doing the approach, you're too close to
14 the ground and it kind of -- we would talk before pinching
15 everything. It makes you unstable. It does, it makes you
16 unstable period.

17 Q. Great. And during Alberto's training, did he -- was he
18 trained for any go arounds?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. He was, yes.

22 Q. Do you recall from what approach? Just curious.

23 A. Yes, we did -- when we did that stall -- landing stall with
24 the localizer back course, I had -- and one approach on an ILS.
25 The first one, there was nothing -- when they hit their minimums,

1 there was nothing to go around. He did that, there was no issues
2 there on that. And when we did non-precision approach, MDA,
3 whichever one we're doing, VOR, anyone of those, same thing again,
4 if you're not seeing the runway when you're supposed to see it by
5 the point that you pull fire on your jets, then go around.

6 Q. What are the first actions in a Challenger to execute a go
7 around? What does the pilot do to begin the --

8 A. Now, the first action you do basically is bring the power up
9 and hit the TO/GA at the same time. Make sure that you have
10 checked match power.

11 Q. Okay. And then --

12 A. If you go to -- yeah, sorry.

13 Q. And then hitting the TO/GA button gives you, what, flight
14 director commands?

15 A. Yeah, and the V bar automatically goes up -- depending on if
16 you're on two engine or single engine, it automatically goes up to
17 set either 12 degrees to ten degrees for single and then sequences
18 you on your go around on your missed approach.

19 Q. And I just thought of one more question, Zack. I'm kind of
20 curious because I don't fly the Challenger, and you're the expert,
21 and I'm curious if the -- what are the general differences between
22 a 605 and a 604?

23 A. It's pretty much the same aircraft. The difference comes in
24 the avionics and the ability to -- or a good example, if you set,
25 like, your MDA on a circling 680, you cannot do it in a 604. You

1 can set it in your MDA -- your actual MDA, but when you go to the
2 panel, you set your stepdown for the MDA. You can't put 680 in
3 there, you have to go up to 700.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Okay, that's it. 605 you can do that, whatever you put in
6 your barrel window, you can put in your altitude when you go FM on
7 your FCP.

8 Q. So, the 605 has a little bit more sophistication in the
9 automation?

10 A. Much more sophistication.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. It has an AOA, which the 604 does not.

13 Q. Oh, the 604 doesn't have an angle of attack indicator?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay. And that's -- angle of attack is located on the left
16 side in front of the captain?

17 A. On the 605, next to the speed tape.

18 Q. On the captain's side?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Is there one --

21 A. And on the CO -- on both sides.

22 Q. Oh, on both sides? Okay.

23 A. Yeah.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: Great, I appreciate that.

25 Todd, do you have anything more?

1 MR. GENTRY: I did and I forgot what it was. I was listening
2 to this good explanation about the AOA's.

3 BY MR. GENTRY:

4 Q. So, I do remember a little bit. So, was he -- did Alberto
5 use the onboard approach plates that you call up on the MFD's?

6 A. Yeah, on the chart. We have a -- on the 605 there is a
7 chart, it's actually down on the panel and you push chart and
8 it'll bring up all of the origin, destination, anything you want
9 as it started approaches.

10 Q. Okay, got you. And so, he used that, he did not use an iPad
11 or anything, right, or did he?

12 A. No, he -- theirs is -- he had an iPad with him for a backup
13 on his side. A lot of pilots will bring in an iPad with them,
14 too.

15 Q. Sure. But he did not use that? I think I lost Zack,
16 actually. Oh, there he is. Okay, thank you, Zack, I appreciate
17 that.

18 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

19 Q. So, he did have an iPad with him that he brought?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. And he would use it to backup, but he mainly used a chart and
23 sometimes when you have the chart up there and you need to go and
24 do something else, that iPad on there -- and it is an official
25 iPad that he subscribed to and they get all the jets on there.

1 Q. Okay. Very good, I think that's all the questions we have
2 for you, Zack. Let me ask you, do you have any questions for us?

3 A. No.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Well, I really appreciate your time and
5 also, one thing I offer a lot to everybody we talk to, sometimes
6 when -- after you finish talking to the NTSB and we talk about
7 some of these issues and things that we asked about, later on a
8 day later, two days later, or something like that as you
9 metabolize our conversation, you may think of something that you
10 may have wanted to share with us. Like, you know, I just thought
11 of this and this might be helpful and as Todd said earlier, it's
12 just a safety investigation. We're trying to find out what
13 happened to prevent it from happening again. So, I offer that to
14 you to reach back out through Charlie to us and let us know if
15 there's anything else that you can think of to add.

16 MR. ZAKARIJA: Yes.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I appreciate your time guys.

18 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: N60TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Iko Zakarija

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Via video conference

DATE: October 8, 2021

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Carolyn Hanna', is written over a solid black rectangular redaction box.

Carolyn Hanna
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: STEVEN FORD, CL-605 Simulator Instructor
CAE Simuflite

Dallas, Texas

Friday,
September 24, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

TODD GENTRY, Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

RICHARD SHIARELLA, Attorney
CAE Legal Department

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, let's get started. My name is David
3 Lawrence with the NTSB, I'm an operations investigator and, of
4 course, we're here for the Challenger accident that we're
5 investigating in Truckee, California. So, first off, what we do
6 is when we talk to instructors -- this is a very normal and
7 organic part of the process. So, we talk to the instructors who
8 last touched in a training environment any of the accident pilots.
9 So, I just want you to understand that this is a very normal
10 process. Before we get started -- also, I know you have your
11 representative here, but to facilitate the data collection and the
12 accuracy of the record, if it's if I record our interview?

13 MR. FORD: Yes.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great, and you're also afforded one
15 representative of your choice, who do you choose?

16 MR. FORD: Richard.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: Richard, good, great, got it. Also, a part of
18 the process is that the NTSB uses parties. They bring outside
19 parties in who have technical expertise to assist us. We have two
20 party members in addition to me on our ops group, the FAA and
21 Bombardier. CAE has asked that Bombardier not be part of these
22 interviews in simulator work and that's perfectly within their
23 rights. So, that's why we have Todd here with the FAA and I'll
24 let Todd explain his role.

25 MR. GENTRY: Yeah, my name is Todd Gentry, I work at the

1 headquarters FAA building under the Accident Investigation
2 Division for the FAA. The important thing that I will tell is
3 that we work directly with the NTSB and that we are basically
4 involved with making the FAA nine areas of responsibilities have
5 been taken care of correctly. So, we have nine areas of
6 responsibilities that we specifically look at, as well as help
7 them with anything that the NTSB might need for data and
8 everything else that they ask for.

9 I am not part of any kind of enforcement action, so anything
10 that you say to me, anything that you relay to me in any way will
11 never be used against you for any kind of enforcement action
12 period. I can't do that, I won't do that, it's not even part of
13 my job. I don't even talk to those people in the FAA that do that
14 kind of stuff. So, I want you to be open and feel free to tell us
15 whatever you think is important to say. That's the bottom line.

16 MR. FORD: Sure.

17 MR. GENTRY: And like I said, we're here as a team, so we
18 work together in everything to try to solve issues and make sure
19 that they don't happen again.

20 MR. FORD: Outstanding.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Todd.

22 And Richard, if you could introduce yourself as the rep?

23 MR. SHIARELLA: Sure, I'm Richard Shiarella, I'm with the CAE
24 Legal Department. I'm based in Whippany, New Jersey and because
25 of my background as a pilot and as a lawyer, I typically am called

1 to participate in these kinds of interviews.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: Perfect, thanks.

3 Just some brief items, Steve, I'm going to take some notes
4 here, so I apologize if I'm not making eye contact, don't read
5 anything into that.

6 MR. FORD: No.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: I do have a Brett Ebaugh's training records,
8 his most recent ones. So, if you want to refer to those at any
9 point in time, please let me know.

10 MR. FORD: Sure.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: If I ask a question that you don't understand
12 or want me to clarify, stop me and ask me to clarify it and
13 conversely, if I need a little bit more information from you, I'll
14 just ask you to explain something to me. But if I ask a question
15 and you don't know the answer, I don't know is a perfectly
16 acceptable answer, okay?

17 MR. FORD: Sure.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: All right, cool. Any questions about the
19 whole process?

20 MR. FORD: No.

21 INTERVIEW OF STEVEN FORD

22 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

23 Q. Okay. Let's start with the easy ones, let me get your full
24 name and age?

25 A. Steven Ray Ford, 57 years old.

1 Q. All right, 57?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. Do you mind if I call you Steve or Steven? What do you like?

4 A. Steve's fine.

5 Q. Okay, and what is your title here?

6 A. I'm an instructor examiner on the Challenger 604.

7 Q. All right, and if you could give me just like a Cliff's Notes
8 version of your background, what lead you to here?

9 A. I flew corporate about ten years -- a little more than ten
10 years in the fractional industry and came to work here in 2008 as
11 an instructor and I've been here since the summer of 2008.

12 Q. Great. All on the same airplane?

13 A. Negative.

14 Q. And which aircraft?

15 A. I started here on the CJ Citation XL, the Phenom program,
16 both 500 and 505. And as an instructor, I've been on the 604
17 since 2008 and I worked for about three years in training
18 standards.

19 Q. Okay, excellent. Just an overview of your certificates and
20 ratings right now?

21 A. ATP, I think I've got 13 type ratings, flew most of them, CFI
22 lapsed early 90's.

23 Q. Okay, and just a rough guesstimate of your total flight time?

24 A. Without any simulator, just under 10,000.

25 Q. Okay, and flight time in the Challenger, the 604 or 605?

1 A. Zero actual flight time.

2 Q. Okay. You teach -- you said you were an instructor and
3 evaluator, do you also teach at the ground school on it?

4 A. I do.

5 Q. Okay. Well, we're here, obviously, because you did training
6 for Brett Ebaugh, so do you remember Brett?

7 A. I do remember him.

8 Q. Can you just kind of tell me what you remember about him as a
9 person and as a student?

10 A. Very personable, soft spoken, easy to work with --

11 Q. I'm sorry, soft spoken?

12 A. Very soft spoken, he wasn't loud, he wasn't obnoxious, a
13 gentleman, easy to work with, and he was a good stick. He really
14 didn't require a lot of training, you ask him to do something, he
15 could do it and do it right the first time.

16 Q. Yeah. At any point in time -- we'll get into the training in
17 a second, but at any point in time, did he voice any concerns in
18 his personal life, financial, anything going on?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Did you all have an opportunity to talk outside the training
21 environment?

22 A. We did.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Day one of the simulator, we got in -- I don't think we even
25 took off yet, we were having sim problems. We got out, tried to

1 have them reboot it, it was down for at least 24 hours that I
2 remember. So, we sat around and talked for -- all afternoon
3 waiting for the sim to come back up.

4 Q. Generally, what do you remember about those conversations?

5 A. Not much, it was small talk and --

6 Q. And what type of training did you provide him in June of last
7 year?

8 A. The way our curriculum is, there was no training. It's 61/58
9 spread out over two sim sessions over two days. In that
10 curriculum, the only training that occurs is that if they're unset
11 on a maneuver and he was satisfactory on all of his maneuvers.
12 So, no real training ever took place.

13 Q. Okay. So, they -- he hops in the sim and you just give him
14 elements to complete and he just completes them?

15 A. One hour briefing, we go over what the footprint looks like,
16 the airport, the flight plan, flight planning, the approaches
17 we're going to do, the malfunctions that we're going to see, what
18 the ACS completion looks like, so what he's going to be graded by,
19 and we ask him to do these maneuvers, these approaches, and
20 they're graded first time. So, if they're not satisfactory on
21 that first attempt, the checking hat comes off, training hat goes
22 on and we train them on that maneuver. That and --

23 Q. So, you train to proficiency only if there's a substandard
24 element.

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. Got it. I know you alluded to it when you were talking in
2 general, but can you describe his overall performance in the
3 simulator?

4 A. To be honest with you, I do not recall a lot. I probably
5 trained 260 pilots in a year, the only ones that stand out are the
6 guys that were incredibly good or incredibly bad. I don't recall
7 a lot of detail about anything that we did.

8 Q. Okay. When he came through, was he in the right seat or the
9 left seat?

10 A. He was the left seat. He also did two hours in the right
11 seat.

12 Q. Did he have seat support?

13 A. He came by himself, so he was paired with a classmate.

14 Q. Do you recall who that was?

15 A. I do not.

16 Q. Okay. Paired with a classmate, so a classmate from the
17 ground school portion?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. So, since he had another person in there -- I know you
20 don't remember who it was, can you describe his -- their work as a
21 team, their crew resource management, their decision making,
22 anything?

23 A. I don't recall any details. I did look over his training
24 record and he scored threes, which is middle of the road. He
25 wasn't deficient, he wasn't exceeding any standards, so he --

1 there must not have been any problems. If there were problems,
2 there would -- I would take notes and it would stand out because
3 it's not very common to have deficiencies and communication and
4 things like that. Well, not for FAA pilots.

5 Q. I'm sorry?

6 A. Not for FAA pilots.

7 Q. What are --

8 A. Guys that have U.S. licenses. Foreign nationals, more
9 common.

10 Q. What's more common -- why foreign nationals or what did you
11 notice --

12 A. CRM doesn't -- isn't as enforced with foreign nationals is my
13 experience. You've got guys coming up from South America, or
14 Central America, Central African countries, and checklists don't
15 even really seem that important.

16 Q. Really?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. You see that a lot on the Challenger -- in your role as a
19 Challenger instructor and evaluator?

20 A. Not a lot, but you see it and it's more common. It's rare to
21 see on the FAA side of the house U.S. pilots.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Guys coming up from the south, it's not uncommon.

24 Q. Was -- in this (indiscernible) that Brett was going through
25 in June of this year, was CRM teach -- taught either in the ground

1 school?

2 A. I think that there are elements of CRM.

3 Q. Okay, do you recall what it is that they tend to teach?

4 A. No, I don't.

5 Q. Okay. Do you teach that portion of the ground school on
6 occasion, then?

7 A. On rare occasion.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. We have guys that pretty much just teach ground school and if
10 they're out sick or on vacation, one of us might get called up.
11 But it's been indeed about six months since I've taught any
12 portion of the ground school mods.

13 Q. I'm just curious how comprehensive of a module the CRM is in
14 this type of footprint.

15 A. It is not robust.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. It is not robust.

18 Q. Introductory or just cursory?

19 A. Cursory.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. It's more enforced in briefings -- preflight briefings or
22 postflight debriefings.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And it's part of the ACS now as far as briefings

25 (indiscernible) management. So, it's part of the grading process

1 -- embedded in the grading process.

2 Q. So, I got to ask, I know he scored threes, but how was
3 Brett's CRM?

4 A. If it was deficient, he would've received something other
5 than a three.

6 Q. Got it. On June 17th, the record showed that he -- I guess
7 he wasn't trained, he performed a circle to land approach. I
8 think it was Peterborough to JFK?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. Can you talk to me about that particular approach and maybe
11 if you recall anything about Brett's performance?

12 A. I don't recall him doing the circle. I can tell you about
13 that approach and what we teach, the problems that we see
14 typically.

15 Q. Sure.

16 A. And it's not uncommon for somebody to struggle with that,
17 ended up getting a score of a 2-3. They did it, it wasn't right,
18 we worked on it and they demonstrated the proficiency, so that's a
19 2-3, not an uncommon grade. It's a VOR approach, I have it right
20 here into JFK.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. The normal sequence of things --

23 Q. So, it's the four left, circle --

24 A. Circle three, one right.

25 Q. Three, one right. So, it would be a right maneuvering to a

1 left traffic pattern to three one, right?

2 A. It would be --

3 Q. A right maneuvered -- right turn off the approach, left
4 traffic pattern --

5 A. Yes, left traffic pattern.

6 Q. Got it, and almost at a 90-degree angle? Almost.

7 A. Almost.

8 Q. Yeah, okay.

9 A. And it is the only circling maneuver that we're approved for,
10 only approach, and only circle runway that we're approved for in
11 JFK. So, it's what we typically use.

12 Q. Okay, and this is the approach that Brett did?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Did -- do you recall if he did this from the left seat
15 or the right seat?

16 A. He would've done it from the left seat and his sim partner
17 would've don't it as well from Brett being in the right seat.

18 Q. Okay. Was he pilot flying when he did this? When he --

19 A. Brett, yes, he would've been pilot flying in the nexem (ph.)
20 session. Or the previous, he would've been on the right seat
21 while this approach was flown.

22 Q. I'm sorry, I may have missed it. Was he in the left seat or
23 right seat when he was pilot flying?

24 A. He would've been in the left seat.

25 Q. In the left seat, okay, and then he would've been on the next

1 --

2 A. Supporting crew member, yes.

3 Q. He would've been pilot monitoring for the other person's.

4 Okay.

5 A. No, they don't -- you don't get out of your training program
6 and graduate successfully unless you demonstrate every element
7 that's required and this is required.

8 Q. Totally understand. For this approach, what are the -- you
9 said sometimes you get two-and-a-half or whatever to three -- or
10 two to three, you're saying that's not uncommon.

11 A. Right.

12 Q. What are the challenges and what are the deficiencies you
13 typically see in this particular approach?

14 A. Air speed management.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Altitude management, automation management, they're trying to
17 do a visual pattern using too much automation. They get behind,
18 they stay too high, they don't turn base to final in time and they
19 find themselves out of position. They announce that they're
20 leaving MDA, click the autopilot off, and climb 60 feet in the
21 turn and now they're --

22 Q. Back in the clouds.

23 A. They're way too high or they're going up in the clouds.

24 Q. Right. Do you have -- where do you the weather set on this,
25 right at --

1 A. They circle at 700, we have the ceiling set a hundred feet
2 above.

3 Q. Okay, so 800 and the visibility I see is -- your cat C's are
4 -- what is that, a mile or three quarters?

5 A. We use cat D for all circles.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And that's all that we teach is this is a -- for circling,
8 category D.

9 Q. Okay. Even though the airplane is category C?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. So, you use category D?

12 A. And that's all we teach.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And we strongly recommend when you go out in the field it's
15 category D.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. More conservative.

18 Q. I'm just kind of curious, this just popped in my head, can
19 you -- if you didn't have category D minimums, could this airplane
20 -- based on your trainings, you do all D, but if it was NA for
21 category D, could you fly a circle approach in the Challenger?

22 A. Would I, or could you?

23 Q. Well, could you teach?

24 A. We teach category D period and that's all I would fly.

25 Q. Okay. But is there -- is it required to have the D minimums

1 at -- I'm just curious, I don't know the total answer, but --

2 A. I don't think it's required, but Bombardier, when I got my
3 training, they strongly recommend category D only.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. And so, anybody that comes to our class, that's what they
6 walk away with it's a cat D airplane, fly category D minimum.

7 Q. It's the certification of C?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. If you're going to do a circle, do it as a D?

10 A. Absolutely.

11 Q. Summary, got it. I didn't ask what -- you told me the
12 weather, what are the winds that you usually do?

13 A. 310, ten knots.

14 Q. Okay. Were any go-arounds demonstrated by Brett in June?

15 A. Yes. In the profile, the approach prior to this one, is a
16 rejected landing off of GPS to four left.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. So, at 50 feet give them the command to go around and execute
19 a (indiscernible) approach.

20 Q. Okay, and to the best of your recollection, how did Brett do
21 on his go-around?

22 A. He got a three on that, there was no problem.

23 Q. Okay. Do you recall any delay in that or any -- was it
24 decisive?

25 A. There can't be much delay on this airplane. It's not an easy

1 maneuver, especially at 50 feet. As the engines spool up, that
2 nose comes down like this and that 30 feet above the runway, it
3 can be a handful.

4 Q. So, spooling engine on this will do a pitch-down moment here
5 as it's spooling up because of the tail-mounted engine?

6 A. Very much so. If you don't interrupt it a minimum of ten
7 degree.

8 Q. Right. In your -- have you heard if this airplane has --
9 because you haven't flown it, but does it have a critical wing?

10 A. It does.

11 Q. And what does that mean?

12 A. It won't tolerate any contaminants on it, so if you've got
13 any type of frozen precip (sic) on the wing, it's got to be de-
14 iced. When loading, it's fairly easy to stall this wing in
15 accelerated stall. I had a guy yesterday demonstrate an excellent
16 high-speed buffet at 240 knots doing steep turns. It was a tough
17 day.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah, more like --

20 Q. In your experience, do you see students that are reluctant to
21 go around? I mean, this is the training environment and I know
22 it's an evaluation type of ride, but do you see people that are
23 trying to salvage approaches as opposed to going around? I mean,
24 are they afraid to do the go-around because it's challenging?

25 A. I don't really see it that often. Every now and then you'll

1 see people try to salvage an approach out of expectancy, not
2 because it's difficult to go around and I think that's just an
3 error in judgement.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. They're expecting to land, so they're doing everything in
6 their power to land as opposed to going around while they still
7 have safe altitude.

8 Q. You -- would you classify that as, like, you see confirmation
9 bias that they're trying to land the airplane as opposed to --

10 A. Possibly, yeah.

11 Q. Right. Are overshoots common? Like, overshoots are the
12 final and generally in a circle?

13 A. In a circle. I haven't really seen it in a while, but it
14 does happen and a lot of that can be the simulator also.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. That perception.

17 Q. Is it a D or a C?

18 A. It's a D? Okay. I'm curious also, when they start
19 maneuvering -- and I have not flown this airplane, okay, so I
20 appreciate you giving me your experience, but how far out should
21 the pattern be, generally, on a circle, a couple miles, a mile-
22 and-a-half? What's too tight in, in your opinion?

23 A. I use the TLAR method, right, are you familiar with TLAR?

24 Q. I'm not.

25 A. That looks about right, yeah.

1 Q. Oh, okay.

2 A. It's a visual maneuver. If the edge of the runway is covered
3 up by your lower part of your window, you're way too close. A
4 comfortable pattern, you should be -- well, the minimums on this
5 are two miles and I'll tell you this, in the simulator, because
6 it's a simulator, two miles doesn't work very well and it's the
7 new TERPS protected area.

8 Q. Right, because it's got the inverse C?

9 A. Right. So, you can go out, based on that, actually further
10 than what the visibility requirements are on this. So, we
11 typically set the visibility around three miles and as long as you
12 keep it within two-and-a-half to three miles, it's -- you -- it
13 gives you a comfortable margin of maneuvering.

14 Q. Is a mile-and-a-half pattern too close? I know it's hard to
15 visualize right now because we're not in the sim, but would that
16 be --

17 A. That's pretty close, especially doing 155 knots.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. That's pretty close.

20 Q. And you just teed me up for the next question. Talk to me
21 about the profile, how is this a -- for instance, an RNAV --

22 A. VOR.

23 Q. This a VOR, but, like, an RNAV, a VOR -- an approach that's
24 coming in at a 90-degree angle similar to this, similar to what
25 Truckee was, talk me through the configuration and the profile?

1 A. Okay. The way that we teach, as you're rolling on the final
2 in this course reversal, start bringing your airspeed to 155
3 knots, flaps 30, geared down prior to the final approach fix.

4 Q. Okay, prior to the final approach fix?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And we normally give the recommendation when you're about
8 three miles to it.

9 Q. To what?

10 A. To the final approach fix.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Start getting your speed under control, start configuring.
13 So, we're going to circle flaps 30, geared down, 155 knots.

14 Q. Flaps 30, geared down, 155?

15 A. Yes, and that's a standard that we use for what we teach.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. Dive and drive, so a thousand feet a minute crossing the
18 final approach fix to your MDA, this case 700 feet, call the field
19 in sight, begin your circle with leaving plenty of room to
20 maneuver, keeping the airport in sight, and their clearance would
21 be circle east, enter left base, 31 right, hit the wind, clear
22 land 31 right. I don't like to teach timing, though our profile
23 shows timing scenarios and if they do elect a time, we use 20
24 minutes from about the center of the -- 20 seconds from about the
25 center of the airport. Turn base, we change our configuration

1 then once the landing runway is in sight, flaps 45, speed 145, and
2 begin your descent prior to rolling to final at least 500 feet a
3 minute.

4 When you get in the airplane this afternoon, as soon as you
5 get flaps 10, the nose goes down like this. Very strange looking.
6 So, it's not uncommon for guys to say okay, I'm leaving MDA (ph.),
7 flaps are landing position now, speed's back to 145, which is
8 going to be ref plus about 15. And they think they're going down
9 because they're in a nose-down attitude, and they're not. It's
10 where most people start getting themselves into trouble.

11 Q. Hence the balloon up that you see because they're actually
12 pitching up a little because they're -- yeah.

13 A. Correct. So, start down at least 500 feet a minute and --

14 Q. From MDA -- from the final?

15 A. That's correct, 500 a minute from MDA to roll final.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. What we teach, at a one-mile final you should be at about 300
18 feet. The simulator you don't have the same depth perception as
19 you do in an aircraft, so that gives them visual clues of where
20 they need to be vertically.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. And with most people, it's a very easy maneuver.

23 Q. So, you basically fly profile speeds, 155, 145, and then 135?
24 Or what was the final speed, ref plus whatever additives?

25 A. ref plus whatever additives.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Once you're finished maneuvering, slow to ref plus your
3 additives.

4 Q. Okay. Let me pull up real quick -- I had a question -- so,
5 there's a -- on the downwind here it says landing gear down. This
6 is the circle maneuver profile that's in the Challenger AFM -- or
7 manual. Landing gear down, flaps 30 degrees, and then flaps 30 --
8 sorry.

9 A. No problem.

10 Q. Flaps 30 speed plus ten, is that the 155 you're talking
11 about?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. You all teach it as 155 and then where do you go 145?

14 A. On your base leg.

15 Q. Okay, base leg 145?

16 A. And once flaps go to land.

17 Q. So, it says flaps 45, vREF plus winds, so there's your
18 additives for your final approach, okay. But you all teach -- you
19 don't teach at flaps -- because I don't know what a flaps 30 speed
20 is?

21 A. That would be -- I would need to get in the manual to dig out
22 exactly what that -- but your maneuvering speed plus an additive.

23 Q. Right, okay.

24 A. So, flaps zero, 170, I think it's 150, 140 plus.

25 Q. Okay. The profile speeds until final?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And then it's rough plus additives?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Typically, what are the additives, is it just wind or --

5 A. Just wind.

6 Q. It is?

7 A. Yeah, based on the manual, it's just wind. So, half the
8 steady stayed all of the gusts up to 20 knots.

9 Q. Got it, answered my question for me. So, the gear comes
10 down -- I'm sorry, is was --

11 A. Prior to the final approach.

12 Q. Final approach. So, you use a drag.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Are speed breaks used at any point during this?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Why not?

17 A. You really don't need them.

18 Q. Okay. Are speed break usage taught in the sim? I know it
19 wasn't in this -- maybe in this one, but --

20 A. As part of a procedure, no.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. As a tool, yes, they're allowed to be used, they're not
23 discouraged. I've never seen anybody use them in the almost four
24 years I've been in the program on approach. They're really not
25 required.

1 Q. Is there a limitation on their use?

2 A. Not during the approach. They have to be stowed by three
3 hundred knots -- three hundred feet. In fact, you get a warning
4 if they're not.

5 Q. What kind of warning?

6 A. A CASS message.

7 Q. What does it say?

8 A. Stow speed breaks.

9 Q. It's an oral word as well on that -- is there an oral alert?

10 A. It's a CASS message caution.

11 Q. It's tied to the radar altimeter?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. At three hundred feet?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. So, you just get a CASS message, but nothing's banging at you
16 in the cockpit is it?

17 A. You get the chime.

18 Q. Oh, you do?

19 A. A caution chime, yeah.

20 Q. Okay. Ever seen anybody try and land with speed breaks out?

21 A. Not that I recall.

22 Q. Okay. What checklists are used? Are they AFM CAE
23 checklists? Whose checklists, are they Bombardier, the
24 manufacturer?

25 A. The manufacturer's checklist unless the client -- and this is

1 a CAE rule -- unless the client has gone through the proper
2 channels with the FAA to get a custom checklist and then they've
3 submitted it through regulatory and it's been checked out, the
4 paperwork's been checked out, the LOA's been checked out. Then
5 they'll upload it and we can use that in the simulator. 91

6 operators for us, we don't have any. In fact, in the entire
7 building, there may be one or two operators that have done that.

8 Q. Tailored checklists or their own --

9 A. Yes. Many of them have it, but we don't let them use it
10 during training unless it's absolutely approved. 135 operators,
11 there's a few that do have it and they've gone through proper
12 channels, it's approved -- FAA approved and it's gone through
13 regulatory, through the bowels of the building, and has now
14 funneled up to the computer where we have access to it. The same
15 with SOP's, they may use their own SOP's in the world, when they
16 come here, unless it's approved, they use ours. And I know that's
17 a rub for some people, but for me, I love it.

18 Q. So, when you say SOP's, are you talking call out procedures?

19 A. All of it. Standard operating procedures for call outs, for
20 configurations and all of that stuff.

21 Q. Profiles, call outs, all are CAE?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And just so we have it on record, what Brett used in June of
24 this year was CAE?

25 A. CAE.

1 Q. Was CAE?

2 A. Absolutely.

3 Q. Got it.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Does CAE train -- the checklists are flow checklists or due
6 checklists?

7 A. We do not teach flows.

8 Q. You don't teach flows?

9 A. Flows are great, flows are wonderful, but we don't have any
10 developed and we don't push flows on people. I encourage people
11 to use flows if they've developed them and then use their
12 checklist as a checklist and not a work list. Whether they do
13 that or not -- and it's almost impossible to use flows unless you
14 brought your supporting pilot. It doesn't work right because
15 they've got duties, you've got duties, and if you're doing your
16 flows, they're not doing theirs, you still have things undone.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. So, it's most people that don't bring their second crew
19 member end up just using the checklist as a work list.

20 Q. Is it challenge, response, response? Is that how it's run?

21 A. Challenge, response.

22 Q. Just challenge response?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And no confirmation from the other person?

25 A. Specific items and even the -- for QRH-1, the emergency

1 abnormal, it'll call for both eyes on it and confirmed. Pressing
2 a fire switch, bring the throttle to cut off and --

3 Q. The irreversibles, right.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So, it -- but if I'm running a checklist, I just call it and
6 then do it as I'm doing the response?

7 A. Per Bombardier, some of the checklist are challenge,
8 response, some are single sided. After takeoff, single sided,
9 make your call outs, say what you're doing, but it doesn't involve
10 the pilot flying.

11 Q. Are any of the checklists silent?

12 A. Those could be silent after takeoff, things like that, but I
13 rarely see anybody do them silent.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Most of them, it's challenge and response or they call it out
16 loud as they're doing it.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. It's not common to see a silent checklist run.

19 Q. If the silent checklist is run, is there -- does CAE teach
20 that it's verbalized checklist complete?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Are there --

23 A. On all checklists, yeah.

24 Q. On any of the checklists, are any of the checklists from the
25 descent all the way down to landing, all those checklists that the

1 crew has to accomplish, are any of those silent?

2 A. No.

3 Q. And I'm almost done and you're doing really great. Do you
4 need water or take a break or anything?

5 A. Oh, I'm good.

6 Q. How is the landing weight on the aircraft determined?

7 A. Flight management system.

8 Q. Flight management system? So, talk me through that process.
9 First off, I would assume that CAE teaches the pilot flying to
10 brief the approach, correct?

11 A. Yes, we do.

12 Q. Okay. Is there a transfer of control between the pilot
13 flying and the pilot monitoring so the pilot flying can set up the
14 approach?

15 A. What we teach, first off is our pilot line flying sets up the
16 approach, sets the minimums, gets everything ready to go, and then
17 the captain would transfer the controls, brief the approach.

18 Q. If he's flying it?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Right. So, the person who is flying the approach briefs the
21 approach?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Got it. So, continue with the setup of the FMS and how to
24 figure out the landing speeds?

25 A. There's a performance page, verify the fuel weights and

1 update as needed.

2 Q. What does that mean?

3 A. If your fuel in the flight management system differs from
4 what you see in the tanks as far as weight, update the weight.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So, if the burn was off -- because there's actual weight and
7 there's an anticipated landing weight. If it looks like it's off,
8 you can update it with actual landing weight.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Is it going to make aviation an enormous difference? No, one
11 or two knots, maybe.

12 Q. So, possible fuel burn difference, there might be a delta on
13 that that you are going to adjust -- or update I should say?

14 A. That's correct and from there you simply load your winds,
15 your temperature, and send the speeds. It calculates them
16 already.

17 Q. Who?

18 A. If you're in icing conditions, you would select what bleed
19 configuration you're in, wing and cal (ph.), cal only. Things
20 like that -- any runway contaminants.

21 Q. And those will make automatic adjustments to the speeds?

22 A. Absolutely.

23 Q. And that's what spits your vREF speed?

24 A. Correct, all of your speeds.

25 Q. All your speeds. So, it spits out vREF, I understand that.

1 What are the other two speeds?

2 A. VAC.

3 Q. Which is?

4 A. Approach climb.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And VFTO, their final segment or flaps retract speed.

7 Q. Okay. Second segment climb, flap retract speed, is that what
8 FTO is?

9 A. Your final segment, not second segment.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Final segment.

12 Q. Got it. Okay.

13 A. So, that's basically your VYSE.

14 Q. And, you know, my limitation of not having flown this
15 airplane, so just help me out, so once it spits those speeds out
16 in the FMS, you --

17 A. They'll post it -- they'll automatically post.

18 Q. You don't have to manually bug anything?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay. Are approaches like the circle approach done with auto
21 thrust or -- so then it'll maintain -- I guess you go --

22 A. Not all airplanes have auto throttle.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Some do. Our sim does have it and it's 50/50 people coming
25 through whether they want it or not. So, yes, you can use auto

1 throttle, it works fairly well.

2 Q. And that would be -- you would just simply be selecting on
3 the remote-control panel whatever speed --

4 A. Manual speed with a speed knob.

5 Q. Got it.

6 A. It does have flight management speed capability, not a lot of
7 people use that.

8 Q. Okay. How's CAE for circle to land, how do they teach mode
9 management? What is -- how do you want to see your students
10 flying these circle approaches?

11 A. We don't really because a lot of that is technique and it
12 depends on what equipment they have on their aircraft. So, we
13 really don't have a blanket idea for how they're going to fly
14 this. We tell them how to configure, what speed it should be
15 flown at, and we give them the weather. Everything else is pretty
16 much up to them. If they use auto throttle -- I've never seen
17 anybody use flight management speeds with auto throttle in the
18 circle. I may someday, but I haven't yet. If people use auto
19 throttle, it's very helpful on the circle. If they don't use auto
20 throttle, speed control then becomes a bit more unstable.

21 One of the worst check rides I've ever given was in the
22 phenom. Two FAA guys, two Gulf Stream guys, they'd been test
23 pilots at the Gulf Stream factory for 20 years, they're going to
24 prepare for the phenom, so they're getting the phenom type. On
25 their -- so, they've used auto throttle for 20 years, nothing but

1 auto throttle. Speed management on that circle was between the
2 stick pusher and overspeed, just back and forth. So, we really
3 don't tell them how they're going to fly this using the variable
4 equipment that's on the aircraft.

5 Q. Is there a difference in how the circle approach from a task
6 management -- in other words, what pilot monitoring and pilot
7 flying are doing, is there a difference on the circle approach
8 versus, like, an ILS or anything like that?

9 A. Yeah, there is. For one, it's a visual -- once you've the
10 field in sight, it's a visual approach from there, you've left
11 course guidance. So, there's a lot that coming -- somebody's got
12 -- pilot flying's monitoring airspeed altitude, the auto flight
13 system, looking at the airport to make sure that they stay within
14 visual range. So, while he's looking outside, the pilot not
15 flying should be inside calling out airspeed deviations, altitude
16 deviations, running the timer. So, there's -- it's busy, there's
17 a lot more going on than there is riding an ILS glide slope and
18 path to the runway. A very high workload environment and its
19 dynamic, it changes.

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. It's not an ideal approach, that's why the airlines don't do
22 it.

23 Q. Right. Does CAE teach or recommend who should be conducting
24 the approach based on the direction of the pattern? If it's a
25 left traffic pattern, do you teach, or suggest, or encourage the

1 captain to be flying that because -- to keep the visual pattern?

2 A. I don't know that that is stressed as a practice. In other
3 words, I'm briefing you guys and I'm going to tell you how to fly
4 a circling approach. One, there's a hundred different ways to
5 circle. Two, if you've ever done a circling approach, you're in
6 the right seat and you're doing left traffic, you're in the blind
7 and somebody's having to call your positions and turns for you.
8 So, I think it's evident who should be flying it and what
9 direction he should be circling to keep the field in sight.

10 Q. Okay. Does CAE teach or train -- and I know probably not in
11 this case because it wasn't training, but do you do stall
12 training?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Is it scenario based? In other words --

15 A. Situational based.

16 Q. Okay, explain?

17 A. On takeoff, we overcome all of our safety features, per the
18 FAA, auto throttle off, climbing in vertical speed, not flight
19 level change, auto pilot on, in the bank at 800 feet, pull the
20 power to idle, stall. So, you've got skin in the game.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. You can't shove the nose over and add all this power and get
23 the nose down at -- it would be 20 degrees nose down and in the
24 ground that quick. But yes, we do, and it's all close to the
25 ground.

1 Q. Okay. You do that for landing as well?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. In the landing configuration?

4 A. One the ILS approach at about 1200 to a thousand feet AGL,
5 power to idle, in about 500 AGL you get the stall. So, it's
6 critical and I'm glad we're doing this, clients don't much like
7 it -- and I'm glad we're doing this in the simulator.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. In the aircraft, this would be impossible.

10 Q. Right. What are the low-speed cues in the Challenger that
11 are taught to the students?

12 A. What are the low --

13 Q. Yeah, what low-speed cues are taught? Is there something on
14 the EFD, is there --

15 A. Yeah, you've got low-speed cues on their speed tape. They
16 account for flight configuration, they account for turbulence, G-
17 loading. So, you can be at 250 knots, like was demonstrated
18 yesterday, and load that thing up and you, you'll get above it.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. The low-speed cue will come right up and touch it. Do we do
21 maneuvers that demonstrate that? Not during recurrence except for
22 stall recovery training. That's the only time they really
23 interact with the low speed, unless they're doing something that
24 causes it.

25 Q. Got it. Do you recall on this particular recurrence session

1 with Brett, did -- was there any stalls or any low-speed
2 demonstrations during that?

3 A. Looking over his training records, I saw that we did the
4 stalls, I don't recall how he did with them.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. But he was graded a three, so he had no trouble.

7 Q. Got it. And I will finish up and then let Todd ask some
8 questions. You're doing great.

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. What -- how are -- and this is in decision making for go-
11 arounds, what would you consider the conditions where a crew
12 should discontinue an approach and conversely, when and under what
13 circumstances is a crew expected to go around?

14 A. If you're not in position to land under normal descent and
15 flight maneuvering, go around. Don't leave the safety of your
16 altitude and go lower to the ground, go around. If you're out of
17 position in any way on the approach, you're not configured for the
18 approach, you're not stabilized by -- on an instrument approach,
19 a thousand feet, not precision, 500 feet -- visual 500 feet, go
20 around.

21 Q. On a --

22 A. So, they're taught all of this either in initial or when
23 we're in the sim.

24 Q. You mentioned stabilized approach and it's variable based on
25 -- obviously, on operators and stuff like that, but what is CAE's

1 definition of stabilized approach and how it's taught to the
2 students?

3 A. If you're configured on speed, such as an ILS, I think
4 standard speed configuration, final approach fix or glide slope
5 intercept, ref plus 25 trending toward ref is considered
6 stabilized. Ref plus 70, no.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Your flaps aren't in position, your gear's not in position,
9 you're not able to -- you're not on -- you don't have lateral
10 guidance on the final approach fix, vertical course guidance, then
11 you're on stabilized go-around.

12 Q. On a circle to land approach, where's the final gate of
13 aircraft that a pilot should determine I am not stable, I should
14 go around?

15 A. You should be on speed at the final approach fix, still
16 configured at the final approach fix.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. You should be crossing the final approach fix at the posted
19 altitude on the chart -- prescribed altitude, descending no more
20 than a thousand feet a minute to the MDA or on VNAV.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. Circle approach, you really can't use VNAV. You could but
23 it's going to get you too close to the airport. You get to MDA,
24 your visual ascent point, nothing's in sight, or if you're
25 circling and you're too close to the field, you have to rethink

1 which direction you're circling.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. And that should be thought out prior to. We're going to
4 cross midfield, we're going to turn this way, prior to the field,
5 we're going to turn this way. So, everybody's in, what is your
6 plan if you -- once you've left course guidance, we lose sight of
7 the field, we're not in position, how are we going to go with this
8 approach. That should all be all included and I drive that home
9 during recurrence --

10 Q. But it should also be stable at 500 feet, correct? Is that
11 -- at that gate --

12 A. Absolutely.

13 Q. I lied, I got one more question before I hand it over to
14 Todd. On a circle to land approach, in your opinion as an
15 instructor -- an evaluator, how critical is the approach briefing
16 for circle versus other approaches?

17 A. They're all critical. Circling, you leave course guidance
18 and that becomes super critical because now you have to see and
19 avoid obstacles, altitudes have to be discussed. What are we
20 going to do if we go missed approach and we've already left course
21 guidance, which way are we going to turn, what are we going to
22 climb to? When we're -- when MDA is captured, what do we do with
23 our altitude pre-select? And that's kind of critical if you try
24 to start down and you haven't set your list approach altitude. If
25 it's still at your MDA, it's not going to let you down. That's

1 going to -- just a few seconds and that dynamic phase of flight is
2 going to put you off. You're going to be too high if you try to
3 start down, automation's in the way now. You've got the autopilot
4 off and hopefully you start down. A lot of people start up.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Like you said earlier.

6 Todd, do you have any questions?

7 MR. GENTRY: I just have a couple clarification questions,
8 really.

9 MR. FORD: Yes.

10 MR. GENTRY: I mean, you answered a ton of them, so I
11 appreciate that.

12 BY MR. GENTRY:

13 Q. During the two-day 61/58 check that you guys do here, is
14 ground school included with that? Because we didn't talk about
15 ground school.

16 A. Two days of ground school, then on the R4, four-day
17 recurrence, two days of the simulator.

18 Q. Okay, so what did Brett do?

19 A. I think he was an NR4.

20 Q. He was in a four-day 61/58?

21 A. 61/58, two days of ground school, and two simulator sessions.

22 Q. So, he was probably paired with somebody who was in that
23 ground school with him, then?

24 A. I believe that he was.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. He paid out-of-pocket, so he didn't bring anybody with him.

2 Q. Right, of course. I guess my question was --

3 A. Yeah, it's an R4 --

4 Q. Okay, so it could've been another student with him, versus
5 another instructor sitting right seat for him? Because if it was
6 an instructor, would he be required to fly the right seat, you
7 know what I mean?

8 A. He would not.

9 Q. He would not?

10 A. He would no.

11 Q. So, as soon as he completes the program in the left seat,
12 he's don't. Is that correct? If he's with an instructor --

13 A. We typically do -- the curriculum calls for two hours; we
14 typically give them an extra hour and get three hours. If they --

15 Q. You mean that extra hour in the right seat then? Or another
16 --

17 A. Just an extra three hours. If they want some right seat
18 time, they can get it.

19 Q. I got you.

20 A. Let me look and see here -- it was another client.

21 Q. It was another student then?

22 A. It looks like that it was. It's showing a P99X for the
23 identifier of who it was, so that's a client ID. I don't recall
24 who it was, though.

25 Q. Okay. So, on the -- I'm going to jump around because he

1 covered 99 percent of it.

2 A. That's fine.

3 Q. But on the circline approach, do you normally teach vertical
4 speed for the initial down to MDA?

5 A. Yes, we do.

6 Q. Like you said, dive and drive, so the vertical speed is
7 probably what you would normally see?

8 A. That is what we recommend. If they want to use flight-level
9 change, they could do that, though I don't recommend it because
10 you limit your control over vertical velocity. Vertical speed,
11 you can roll at a thousand feet a minute. It's not an excessive
12 descent rate, especially at that speed, so it keeps you just above
13 a three-degree glide path.

14 MR. GENTRY: I don't think I have any other questions, Dave,
15 to be honest with you. I'm sure I'm missing something.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Now, Richard, as a deliverable, can we get the
17 contact information of this P99X who sat -- if you could do that?

18 MR. SHIARELLA: What's the identifier? PD9 --

19 MR. LAWRENCE: P99X and he was the OCN on --

20 MR. FORD: That's a client ID.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, because we'd like to reach out and talk
22 to him for obvious reasons.

23 MR. SHIARELLA: Sure.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

25 MR. FORD: We definitely can get that.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Steve, I don't have anything more. I mean,
2 this has been extremely helpful.

3 Todd, you don't have anything else?

4 MR. GENTRY: I don't because you answered all -- you asked
5 all my questions that I wanted to ask. So, that's good.

6 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

7 Q. Is there anything -- with the understanding that we're trying
8 to find out what happened and I'm certain you guys and the
9 Challenger community has talked and such?

10 A. We have a little bit. I don't know any of the facts. I
11 don't know if he was flying or not and I'll tell you now that it
12 truly affected me when I learned that it was this guy. I shed
13 tears over it.

14 Q. I know and I'm so sorry that you had to go through that. But
15 is there anything that maybe Todd and I didn't ask or something
16 that you want to share or want to direct us toward to help the
17 investigation? Because we're just trying to find out what
18 happened and prevent it.

19 A. There's not. You know, you've got captain on this, so you're
20 obviously a pilot, you've got -- right, you're a pilot?

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. You're a pilot, you know, out doing the job, things change,
23 you know, the weather changes, your alertness changes, there's
24 always these challenges. And making decisions on the spur of the
25 moment, we've all done it, we've all been there, and we've all

1 survived it. Sometimes they're great decisions, most of the time
2 they are, sometimes you make poor decisions and I've made probably
3 poor decisions. I've never put a scratch on an airplane and
4 things have always worked out fine and it's just terrible that --
5 well, I don't know any of the facts of the case. Some of the guys
6 in the training program seemed to know more than I did. Maybe
7 three or four weeks ago we were in the sim doing some instructor
8 training and we went to Truckee and flew this approach, we brought
9 down to two miles visibility and that was one of those decisions
10 that wherever he's at now I'm sure he's thinking damn.

11 Q. I just of something that I should've asked you.

12 A. And I just -- I hate that.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. You're going to down and do it here in a little bit. You'll
15 put it on two miles visibility, you'll see.

16 Q. We'll take a look. But how much -- in your experience, how
17 much speed decay is there with the use of speed breaks on the this
18 and what does the pitch moment do when you extend the speed beaks?

19 A. The speed breaks are effective, flaps 45 are damned
20 effective. It'll slow you down. I've never had any need for
21 speed breaks with flaps fully extended and the gear down.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, thanks, I just -- I don't know why I
23 didn't think to ask that.

24 MR. FORD: Are there any questions that I can ask?

25 MR. LAWRENCE: Hang on a second, I want to see if Todd --

1 MR. GENTRY: That's a good question. No, I --

2 MR. LAWRENCE: You're thinking.

3 MR. GENTRY: No, I think you answered it when you said I've
4 never seen any reason to put speed breaks out with flaps 45.

5 No, I can't think of anything. Honestly, Dave, that was --

6 MR. LAWRENCE: I'll give you a chance.

7 But let me kind of wrap it up and if there is anything down
8 the road -- because a lot of people metabolize their conversations
9 with us over a couple of days and such and then they think about
10 it and they go wow, you know what, I just thought of something I
11 could've shared. Contact Richard and have him just get the
12 information to us and such.

13 MR. FORD: Okay.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Any questions you have of us that we
15 can answer?

16 MR. FORD: There's information that's out there. I did a
17 search just on Google on this crash and I found cockpit voice
18 recordings and timelines. I know that he was talking on the
19 radio, so I was assuming that he was pilot not flying. Is that
20 correct?

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, that's what -- that would be what the
22 tapes indicate. You mentioned cockpit voice recording, there is
23 none.

24 MR. GENTRY: Nothing.

25 MR. SHIARELLA: ATC just --

1 MR. LAWRENCE: ATC --

2 MR. FORD: It's ATC, okay. ATC then because I heard him
3 saying hey (indiscernible) and it sounded just like him.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: But that would be consistent with it, but I
5 can't really --

6 MR. FORD: I know he was a contract guy, I guess the person
7 he was flying with was contract as well. I read that it was a
8 Mexican national? I don't know any of the facts about this.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah, it's limited and there's -- it's very
10 limited of what we can share.

11 MR. FORD: Yeah, I understand.

12 MR. LAWRENCE: And it'll take a little while to get the
13 docket open on this, which will have all of the factual
14 information. It won't have analysis when we open the docket.

15 MR. FORD: Right.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: But it'll have the factual information and
17 from that point, we'll work on the analysis to determine why it
18 happened.

19 MR. LAWRENCE: So, if there's anything else that you can
20 think of down the road, just get a hold of Richard

21 MR. FORD: Now, you had asked about -- talking to how, how
22 was he, did he sound like he had a problem. No, he sounded very
23 happy, good home life, that's the impression that I got and I
24 guess that's probably why, you know, being able to spend half the
25 day with him waiting on the sim to come back up, which never did,

1 you know, he -- I guess he found his way in my heart a little bit.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: Sure.

3 MR. FORD: Very knowledgeable, very competent. I never
4 would've thought this in a million years. There's some people
5 that I would say yeah, that kind of makes sense, but not him.

6 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah. Thanks so much, Steve, I appreciate it.
7 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

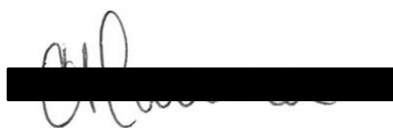
IN THE MATTER OF: N60TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Steven Ford

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Dallas, Texas

DATE: September 24, 2021

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.



Carolyn Hanna
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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N605TR CHALLENGER FATALITY *

IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

ON JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: DONALD FISHER, Simulator Instructor
CAE

Dallas, Texas

Friday,
September 24, 2021

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

RICHARD SHIARELLA, Attorney
CAE Legal Department

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. LAWRENCE: -- and we will get started. My name is David
3 Lawrence with the NTSB. I'm here investigating the Challenger
4 accident in Truckee, California and just so you know, Don, that
5 there's -- it's standard for us to come talk to the instructors
6 who more recently touched one of the accident pilots in some -- in
7 a training environment.

8 MR. FISHER: Understood.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: So, that's -- this is very normal, okay.
10 You're allowed to have a representative of your choice. Is
11 Richard who you choose?

12 MR. FISHER: Yes.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Great, and normally we have party members with
14 us. The FAA couldn't make it and Bombardier couldn't make it, so
15 it's just you and me right now, okay?

16 MR. FISHER: Understood.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: A couple of preliminaries, we are going to be
18 tape recording this for transcription later and it'll be part of
19 the public docket if you're okay with that?

20 MR. FISHER: I am.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Great. I'll take some notes as we go, but --
22 and if I'm not looking at you or making eye contact, I apologize.
23 Don't think anything of that.

24 MR. FISHER: No problem.

25 MR. LAWRENCE: If I ask a question -- and this is not going

1 to take very long, but if I do ask a question that you don't
2 understand or want some clarity, please stop me at any point in
3 time.

4 MR. FISHER: Sure.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: And then if you don't know the answer to a
6 question, I don't know is a perfectly acceptable answer, okay?

7 MR. FISHER: All right, sir.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Any questions?

9 MR. FISHER: No, sir.

10 Do you have anything you need to tell him?

11 MR. SHIARELLA: No.

12 MR. FISHER: Nope.

13 INTERVIEW OF DONALD FISHER

14 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

15 Q. Okay, let's start off with the easy ones. Let me get your
16 full name and age?

17 A. Donald James Fisher, F-I-S-H-E-R, no C in it. March 14th,
18 1957, I'm 64 and-a-half plus.

19 MR. SHIARELLA: You're a baby.

20 MR. FISHER: It doesn't feel like it.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: 64.5, okay, great. Excuse me a second.

22 MR. FISHER: Sure.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: I'm just playing catch up here.

24 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

25 Q. Okay, and if I could get your current title?

1 A. Flight instructor, I'm in the Gulfstream 4 program and
2 finishing out my tenure in the Challenger 604.

3 Q. Okay, great, and how long have you been at -- here training?

4 A. CAE, I've been employed here since August 15th, 2015, so a
5 little over six years.

6 Q. Okay, super, and if you could give me just a Cliff's Notes
7 version, Don, of your background?

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. Just -- yeah, what lead you here?

10 A. I'm a -- I started flying in the 1970's, became a commercial
11 pilot in 1976 and continued my career flying mostly Part 91
12 aircraft throughout my career, including Falcons, Learjet's,
13 Hawkers, Citations, King Airs, and I came here after medical
14 issues with an injury that required me to discontinue my actual
15 flying career, so I teach here now. I started in the Hawker, was
16 there for about two-plus years, then went to the Challenger, where
17 I've been for over three-and-a-half years, I think, and then I
18 went to the Gulfstream in July 3rd, I think it was.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Just went through the training for that and then I'm still
21 doing a few things for them in the Challenger, but I think today
22 might've been my last one, actually.

23 Q. Oh, okay. Good. Basic certificates and ratings you have?

24 A. ATP, I've got type -- ATP multi-engine land, commercial
25 single land, and rotorcraft helicopter. I've got eight type

1 ratings, I think -- yeah, eight, Falcon, Citation, Lear 45,
2 Gulfstream, Challenger -- what else, King Air 3800, 350.

3 Q. Great, total time?

4 A. Oh.

5 Q. Estimated, just --

6 A. Around 19,000 hours.

7 Q. That's all I need. Have you actually flown the Challenger?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. No, I have not had a medical since late 2015. I let it lapse
11 because of my injury, there was no point because I have to take a
12 medication that precludes me from flying.

13 Q. Not a problem. And do you -- here at CAE, do you teach at
14 the Sim and Ground School?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. Okay, teach both. Great. Have you had a chance to review
17 your training records that we're going to talk about with Brett?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Well, I have them right here, okay. They were sent to us, so
20 if there's something you want to reference, just ask me.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. There's no secrets here, so I want to make sure that you're
23 getting the information -- the same information I'm having. Tell
24 me what you remember about Brett Ebaugh?

25 A. Well, the only reason I actually really remember this is

1 because the day we had this wet sim -- and a wet sim is where he
2 rented the sim with an instructor to just run the sim for him or
3 he could do some stuff. My understanding from him was that he was
4 a 605 guy -- a contract guy, that all he did was contract flying
5 and that he had an opportunity or was -- a trip had popped up for
6 him to fly on a 604 -- I think he said to Israel. I'm not
7 positive about that, but I think that's what it was and he wanted
8 to get tuned up back in the 604 because he hadn't been in one for,
9 I want to say, maybe two or two-and-a-half years, something like
10 that comes to mind. And if I remember right, what he said was my
11 wife runs this company -- which he has his own company for pallet
12 service -- and she told me I'm going to go somewhere and get some
13 time in the thing before I fly it again.

14 So, that's one of the reasons I remember him, because of what
15 he said, and the other reason is because somehow in scheduling, it
16 got messed up a little bit. He had his schedule saying that he
17 was supposed to start at noon, my schedule it was supposed to
18 start at 1:00 and the right seater that was supplied wasn't even
19 on the schedule. So, you know, it was just a mess. So -- in
20 fact, we spent probably 25, 35 minutes before he -- the right
21 seater showed up in the cockpit just going over switchology and
22 stuff, the differences between the 604 and 605 because the 605
23 uses a more advanced avionics and there's a few little
24 differences.

25 So, he was just trying to get back into it and then when the

1 right seater showed up, we did -- let's see, he asked to do some
2 GPS approaches and I think, maybe a holding entry and how to
3 change the holding entry, which he was fine with. He didn't seem
4 to have any problems doing that and then that was it, we didn't
5 really do anything else. I mean, we didn't do any single engine
6 work, we didn't do any air work, we didn't do any -- I don't think
7 we did any ILS's, and maybe a couple landings -- maybe three
8 landings or something. I don't remember.

9 Q. Yeah, let's take a look.

10 A. What does that say? Yeah, we did some landings -- oh, you
11 know, may have done -- oh, you know what, I take that back. We
12 did the ILS because he couldn't remember how to do the nab-to-nab
13 transfer. I'm glad you told me that. So -- yeah.

14 Q. And you're reading that from the paperwork?

15 A. Yeah, you can see down here that the -- we did -- it says two
16 ILS's, which I don't remember exactly what we did, but I'm
17 assuming it's because he -- yeah, because you know what, when you
18 do this, it's just your sim operator -- wet sim and it's not any
19 organized events. It's just what he basically -- before we
20 started, he said hey, Don, I want to do some of this and that
21 sounds about right, I guess.

22 Q. So, the wet sim, what was that again?

23 A. Wet sim is a leasing simulator and an instructor. You could
24 have a dry sim where it would be just the simulator only and then
25 they would supply their own instructors.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. For instance, we have a lot of sim that are leased to
3 American Airlines, 737's, 8320's, stuff like that. They have
4 their own instructors, so that's a dry lease that CAE has with
5 those guys. So --

6 Q. In this case with Brett, was there somebody doing seat
7 support?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Who was that?

10 A. I'll see if it says down here, I'm not sure.

11 Q. You just ran the ILS, man.

12 A. I'm an ILS, pal. They were doing their thing up front and, I
13 mean, he would say hey, we want to go do whatever approach,
14 whatever it was, and so, I'd (indiscernible) for that approach.
15 You know, that's what you do.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. I mean, I'm not supposed to be instructing in it because it's
18 not part of our 142, you know, stuff that we're doing. I mean,
19 it's just like -- I mean, he could go in there and just do touch
20 and go's if he wanted to since he's renting it to do it for his
21 own -- I mean, he doesn't even have to do anything. I mean, it's
22 not an organized even for training.

23 Q. Got it. Was he in the left seat or right seat?

24 A. He was in the left seat I'm pretty sure.

25 Q. Did he do any right seat time?

1 A. I don't remember. Let's see if it says anything about that.
2 It doesn't say that, it just says he did some takeoff and landing
3 stuff. He probably was also trying to get current for landing, so
4 it looks like he did a total of six. I don't remember that many,
5 but it may have been. I mean, honesty, these things are kind of
6 like I ask you what did you do last Wednesday, you know? You do
7 it every day, you don't remember the details about a lot of stuff
8 and like I said, the only reason I remember this is because of the
9 unusual start of the thing because of the times being off and
10 everything. And then I had to go find him in the building and
11 then had to find whoever the -- I think it might've been Mike Chen
12 (ph.), but I won't swear to that. And let's see --

13 Q. Now -- well, how did he do generally overall?

14 A. I thought he was a competent guy. From what I recall, he
15 seemed to be very aware of his orientation of everything, and
16 where we were, and what we were doing, and he just seemed to have
17 a good feel for it. I mean, from what I remember, I mean, he
18 probably wasn't the very best pilot I've worked with, but he
19 certainly was above most of them as far as his situational
20 awareness. I mean, I didn't seem to think that he had any issues
21 of anything really. He was a very amicable person, very likeable,
22 and his procedures -- the CRM that he was using was very good, I
23 remember that.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. That's about it.

1 Q. Did you do any circle to land approaches with him during that
2 time?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay, just curious. At any point in time, did Brett talked
5 to you about any possible issues going on at home, or financial
6 issues, or any concerns or worries?

7 A. No, and, you know, he and I discussed -- I have a Facebook
8 page that's called Professional Jet Pilots and there's, like,
9 probably 15,000 people are on that thing now and he -- I can't
10 remember if he asked me or if I mentioned it. I don't really
11 remember what started it, but he said oh, I would like to be on
12 your page and I said well, just send me a Facebook request and
13 I'll put you on there and he did. And that's why -- that's the
14 only reason I knew it was Brett who was involved in this accident
15 because after the crash, his wife put it on his Facebook page,
16 which popped up on my Facebook feed and I go oh, my God, I know
17 that guy because he was here, you know, whenever it was. So,
18 that's the only reason I even that it was Brett because they
19 didn't put it in any of the papers for a while I don't think. I
20 mean, it was -- and I still don't know who the other person was.

21 Q. Okay. During your time with -- in sim, that was about an
22 hour-and-a-half, correct?

23 A. Something like that.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. It went a little bit long because the -- we started out off

1 motion, basically, but we were doing stuff until the other support
2 showed up because he wasn't put on the schedule right.

3 Q. Okay. Did you ever have an opportunity to see him -- did you
4 ever observe him over control the airplane?

5 A. Oh, no, he seemed to be a pretty sharp pilot. No, I don't
6 remember anything like that. You know, one of the things about
7 the 604 is we tend to fly it on the autopilot most of the time, I
8 mean, it's just a heavy autopilot automation airplane and -- but
9 he -- when he was hand flying it, he was fine. It seemed like,
10 from what I could gather, he was a fairly experienced guy. I
11 mean, you know, I don't know what his total time was or anything
12 because I didn't have access to his logs or anything. But he
13 seemed to be very, you know, competent and knowledgeable.

14 Q. And this was the 605 sim, right?

15 A. No.

16 Q. This was the 604?

17 A. 604.

18 Q. You told me that and I apologize.

19 A. No, no problem.

20 Q. And so, generally, what -- the differences are just in the
21 avionics --

22 A. I think the biggest issue is probably like --

23 Q. Between the 605 and the 604, the differences?

24 A. Right, the biggest is avionics, yes, sir.

25 Q. Okay. Is it that big of a -- you don't have different sim

1 training?

2 A. Well, there is, yeah. There's 605 to 604 and 604 to 605 if
3 you do it and those classes are offered here at CAE. I think they
4 still do, I haven't done one for a long time. I used to do 605 to
5 604, so if you're flying the 605, you can step back down to the
6 604. But it's pretty -- there's not a lot to it, really, because
7 the Pro Line 4 avionics is, like, the grandfather of Pro Line 21
8 and it's very similar and the --

9 Q. So, the 604 has what type of --

10 A. Pro Line 4 it's called.

11 Q. Okay, and the 605 has --

12 A. Pro Line 21 for the 605, yeah. I don't fly or teach in the
13 605, but I know what it is.

14 Q. Yeah, and I have never flown a Challenger or the Challenger
15 series, so I'm trying to understand. 604 is probably, like, the
16 round isle type of this or is it --

17 A. No, it's AFIS.

18 Q. Oh, it does have AFIS?

19 A. It's a full (indiscernible) cockpit and it has auto throttles
20 just like the 605. The difference being the -- it's almost like
21 saying okay, this one has black and white TV, this one has color
22 because the 604 doesn't have the ability to put, like, charts up
23 on the displays and stuff like that. Where the 605, you can put
24 the jet charts up there and it has the ability to, when you're
25 taxiing out, seeing where you're at on the runway diagram chart

1 and things like that. It's just more advanced.

2 Q. Okay, I appreciate that. During this wet lease -- wet sim
3 session, did -- at any time was -- did Brett operate as a pilot
4 monitoring? In other words, the other guy flew while he was --

5 A. You know, I don't recall him doing that. I think -- well, I
6 don't remember him doing that because he would have the other guy
7 fly for just a moment while he was briefing, you know, the
8 approach or whatever they were doing. But he didn't do any right
9 seat stuff that I recall. I don't remember him doing it. I'm not
10 saying he didn't, I just don't remember.

11 Q. Okay. Then that leads me to my -- segue to debriefing
12 question, did he conduct -- approach briefing?

13 A. Like a pro. I remember that for sure, he was very diligent
14 in his briefings and what he spelled out. He acted like he was --
15 and he was, so he acted like he was flying with a pilot he'd never
16 flown with before and that he wanted -- did not have any
17 miscommunications. So, he was very -- you know, I was impressed,
18 that I remember about that. I was impressed with his briefings,
19 he was very, you know, diligent.

20 Q. What are about his checklist usage?

21 A. Oh, yeah, he called for the checklist at the appropriate
22 time, that sort of thing. Of course, our -- all of our right
23 seaters are very proficient in running the checklist, but they
24 don't lead the clients. Even though this wasn't a training event,
25 what you're going to do is you'll get the moral support, if they

1 ask for it, and make sure that they're -- if they miss something,
2 you might nudge them a little bit. But you're trying to make sure
3 while you're watching somebody that -- but that's in training.

4 In this particular instance, you know, we try and do the same
5 thing, we try and make sure that we follow the standards and
6 everything. But we're not -- you know, I'm not going to -- I
7 can't grade him is what I'm trying to get at. So, this is a non-
8 gradable event.

9 Q. Right. His (indiscernible) and decision-making ability, how
10 would you characterize those?

11 A. I thought he was at least average, maybe even a little above
12 average as far as his -- you know, he certainly, to me, in my mind
13 remembering what I do and what we did, he was -- he met the
14 standard and then some. I'm not sure how long he had been
15 operating that thing, but he seemed to have a lot of knowledge
16 about the aircraft, so that I remember. And, you know, I hate to
17 say this, but it was almost like -- I was thinking this is almost
18 a waste of time, this guy is sharp. He doesn't need to do all
19 this, but he -- I guess he thought enough to go do it since he
20 hadn't been in one in a while.

21 Q. Yeah, and I'm curious, how often do you see that, where
22 someone is --

23 A. Well, he's paying for it out of his own pocket, too --

24 Q. That's what I'm getting at.

25 A. It tells me he's a conscious kind of person that's -- well,

1 that and he told me his wife told him you will take this. But
2 that's neither here nor there. But I just -- you know, it seemed
3 like he was trying to do everything the right way as best I can
4 tell. I mean, I'd be hard pressed to find very many pilots or
5 contractors who would pay for something like that out of their own
6 pocket if they didn't have too. I mean, that's a lot of money. I
7 don't know how much, but I know it's more than --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. It had to be thousands of dollars.

10 Q. Yeah. At any point in time during this session, did he
11 execute a go-around that you observed?

12 A. I don't remember, honestly.

13 Q. Okay. Do you recall if his use of -- was his profile for the
14 approaches appropriate? In other words, did he configure the
15 airplane at the appropriate time?

16 A. Yeah. I mean, I thought he was pretty spot on on what we
17 did. Nothing raised concern in me. I mean, if he'd have been
18 doing something bad, I probably remember it, but if he's doing it
19 to standard and everything was normal, it's kind of like I don't
20 remember as much about it because it didn't raise an eyebrow.

21 Q. And I got to ask some of these questions just so we have
22 them. Speed break usage -- do you recall him using the speed
23 break either out of a cruise descent or during an approach?

24 No, I don't recall that.

25 Q. Any other considerations or anything else or observations you

1 remember about Brett?

2 A. Well --

3 Q. Or maybe something he said?

4 A. He just seemed to be kind of an amicable, you know, nice,
5 easy going fellow that -- you know, from a personal standpoint and
6 he was -- I thought he was a proficient pilot. I mean, I -- he
7 didn't do anything that would make me think wow, you know, we got
8 to watch that guy.

9 Q. And the only reason -- and this is reiteration, I guess, but
10 the only reason he -- I guess he told you that he was doing this
11 wet sim to prepare for a trip to Israel or some place?

12 A. I think that's where he was going; he said something like
13 that. I mean, it's been a while ago and I can't remember
14 everything. But I knew he had a contract trip in the 604 that he
15 said that his wife told him -- she said you're doing that and you
16 haven't been in one in -- I think he said, two years maybe,
17 something like that -- you're going to go do that because you've
18 bene flying the 605 all that time. And so, he said yeah, that's
19 why I'm here, my wife told me -- that's his -- that's a good idea.
20 He said it's a good idea. I remember him talking about that trip
21 and then someone, I don't know who it was, they told me, you know,
22 he didn't even take that trip, it got canceled.

23 Q. Oh, okay.

24 A. So, that's -- and Lord knows, I don't remember who it was.

25 Q. Do you know anything about Brett's background?

1 A. No.

2 Q. No? Okay.

3 A. Not really, I mean, he's on my Facebook.

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. But I've never really -- yeah, you know, a thousand on there.

6 Q. So, you've got a lot of people on that Facebook? You said
7 it's like a Challenger community or just jet pilots?

8 A. No, just pilots mostly and family and friends and stuff.

9 Mostly people that fly, but it's a page about professional pilots,
10 so a lot of people send me friend requests.

11 Q. Have you ever heard of a pilot -- a Challenger pilot named
12 Alberto Montero (ph.).

13 A. I don't think so.

14 Q. Okay. He was the captain.

15 A. Oh, was he?

16 Q. Yeah, and that's probably --

17 A. Has he trained here before?

18 Q. No.

19 A. No, it doesn't ring a bell. Was he from -- it doesn't
20 matter.

21 Q. Okay. No, I was just curious since you have this page.

22 A. Yeah, I mean, he could be on that page for all I know. We've
23 got, like, 15,000 people on there.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So, how am I going to know?

1 Q. Yeah, I was just asking.

2 A. I get people all the time saying aren't you the guy that does
3 -- I'm like yeah, a lot to get out of it.

4 Q. Okay. Anything else that you can think of that might help
5 with our investigation?

6 A. Well, honestly, I got to tell you, from what little I was
7 around him and like I said, it was only like an hour-and-a-half,
8 two hours -- maybe two hours with the time we were on the ground
9 talking and whatever. When I saw the information that said he was
10 one of the pilots, I was shocked because it just didn't seem like
11 he was going to put himself in a situation where he would, you
12 know, be in the crash. Honestly, I haven't even looked at any of
13 the information on the crash because I just don't do that. I
14 don't want to second guess people and I have no idea what
15 happened. I just know that from what people tell me, that they
16 were circling and they crashed. But I don't know any of the
17 details or what happened.

18 Q. Right, okay.

19 A. That's left up to you guys as far as I'm concerned.

20 Q. Well, honestly, that's all I really have. One of the things
21 I always tell the people I talk to is sometimes it takes a couple
22 of days to metabolize the interactions with the NTSB and when
23 you've had -- we talked and you may think of something.

24 A. Oh, yeah, I'll let you know.

25 Q. Yeah, through Richard, just please let us know.

1 A. Oh, sure.

2 Q. Yeah, send an email or something to Richard and he'll get it
3 to us. And any questions you have?

4 A. About this? No, not really. I mean, it's just a very
5 unfortunate thing, you know, because of what happened here in the
6 first place. Every time there's a crash, you hate, you know.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

8 MR. FISHER: This makes me want to work harder so it doesn't
9 happen again to somebody, you know.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: That's what we're here for. Thank you so
11 much.

12 MR. FISHER: Sure.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate it.

14 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

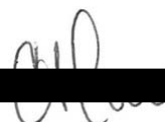
IN THE MATTER OF: N60TR CHALLENGER FATALITY
 IN TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA
 ON JULY 26, 2021
 Interview of Donald Fisher

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Dallas, Texas

DATE: September 24, 2021

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.




Carolyn Hanna
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

FATAL ACCIDENT OF BOMBARDIER *

CHALLENGER N605TR NEAR *

Accident No.: WPR21FA286

TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA ON *

JULY 26, 2021 *

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Interview of: LISA EBAUGH
Pilot's Wife

Via telephone

Friday,
August 6 2021

APPEARANCES:

STEPHEN STEIN, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

KATHERINE "KATIE" DETTMAN
Friend of Interviewee Lisa Ebaugh

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By Mr. Stein		4

I N T E R V I E W

(9:03 a.m. PT)

MR. STEIN: All right, here we go. Okay. This is Stephen Stein with the NTSB, it is August 6, 2021; it is 9 a.m., 9:03 a.m. Pacific Time, 12:03 Eastern Time. I'm on the phone with is, is it Lisa Ebaugh?

MS. EBAUGH: Correct.

MR. STEIN: Okay. Thank you. And, Lisa, you are okay with me recording this interview?

MS. EBAUGH: Correct.

MR. STEIN: Thank you very much, okay.

MS. EBAUGH: And I also have a friend here so I don't miss a thing, her name is Katie Dettmann.

MR. STEIN: Okay, thank you, Katie. Hi, Katie, would you mind spelling your first and last name for us?

MR. DETTMANN: No worries, first name is Katie or Katherine, K-A-T-H-E-R-I-N-E, the last name is Dettmann, D-E-T-T-M-A-N-N.

MR. STEIN: Okay, thank you, Katie. I don't have anyone else with me at this time. It's just me solo. Part of our team actually or, well, one member of our team got sent out to another tragedy this morning so it will just be me today.

INTERVIEW OF LISA EBAUGH

BY MR. STEIN:

Q. So, okay, anyway, let's, let's begin. The first question I had was actually in reference to your husband's electronic flight

1 logbook, so I understand you did have electronic flight logbooks
2 and you have access to those?

3 A. I broke the code yesterday --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- in trying to figure out how the whole system works in
6 order to get you what you need, which Kim had said you wanted the
7 last like three to four pages, which, you know, in electronic
8 books it's not like that really. So is there a timeframe that
9 you're looking for?

10 Q. I mean, if it might be easier for us anyway because we're
11 going to have to review the whole thing for you to send me the
12 whole file if there is a file.

13 A. I will check that. I'm sure there is because he was
14 meticulous at keeping his logbooks so, I mean, he even had his
15 flights from Saturday logged in so --

16 Q. Good.

17 A. He just didn't, he just didn't have Monday's, that's all, so
18 --

19 Q. Okay, all right. Yeah, that's -- is it, is it on an app or
20 in an Excel sheet?

21 A. Well, I don't, I don't know, it's something that said Pilot
22 Pro Logbook.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I probably have some resources, some other pilot friends that
25 probably used the same software and I will, I will do my best to

1 get that to you.

2 Q. Okay. And I can, I can check on my end as well.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. It's Pilot Pro. I could -- I'll, I'll follow-up with some of
5 my resources here and would it be okay if I do get lucky and find
6 someone who's well versed in the program, is it okay if they reach
7 out to you directly?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay, great. Thank you. Okay, so that's good. Then my next
10 question is who -- I wanted to talk a little bit about who your
11 husband had been flying for recently, I was wondering if you could
12 maybe list some of his previous employers and starting with a few
13 years ago?

14 A. So I might have to take some of these back just to go
15 through, so Endeavor Aviation is who he flew with, I'm going to
16 say 2017 I think he went there through December of 2019 and that's
17 a family corporation in Lexington, and I can get you the director
18 of flight operations information from them, but I mean there were
19 three pilots that flew wherever they wanted to go, they didn't do
20 any contracting or corporate stuff, the family didn't want the
21 aircraft used for them.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Prior to that, he was with a family in Seattle and again I'll
24 have to double check the name for that family. They did do
25 contracting with their aircraft when they weren't using to

1 (indiscernible) base that was in Seattle, and again, I'll have to
2 -- I'll get you the titles of their organizations.

3 Before that he was just doing contract flying
4 (indiscernible). So, I mean, he was on, you know, any of the
5 websites that are online that you are a contract pilot.

6 Q. Okay. So Endeavor, I apologize, was 2018 to 2019?

7 A. I think he started there actually in 2017, towards the end of
8 2017.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Maybe like September-ish, something around that timeframe.

11 Q. Okay. And then the Seattle family was that, was that last
12 year, this year?

13 A. That was before the Endeavor Aviation.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I think it's Gamma maybe, G-A-M-M-A, is maybe what he used to
16 go under for flights for them but again, I'll double check.

17 Q. Okay. And then --

18 A. That was probably 2016 through 2017. He was there for just a
19 short period of time before he connected with this family in
20 Lexington to kind of get out of the Part 135 operation, that way
21 he could be home when it was just (indiscernible).

22 Q. And then what did he do after -- Endeavor ended in 2019,
23 right, so what did he do after that?

24 A. So in March of 2020 he flew one more contract flight, also I
25 think that first week COVID hit and everything kind of shutdown

1 for everything but he was a (indiscernible) pilot on all of those
2 aircraft because, well, it was during (indiscernible) 328 that he
3 had (indiscernible) in from working at PSA Airlines but the
4 captain of the aircraft (indiscernible).

5 I just remember having a conversation about that because he
6 was bummed because, you know, it was like an old original aircraft
7 and anyway -- but that would have been his, that would have been
8 his only flight for 2020 because then his recurrent was due for
9 April and with how COVID was going we weren't quite sure if we
10 wanted to invest the money at the time or save it.

11 And I also worked for the airlines so, you know, we didn't
12 know what was going to happen, if we were all going to lose our
13 jobs or -- so he started working at The Home Depot just to get
14 out.

15 Q. Okay. So his recurrency was due in April 2020 you said?

16 A. Yes, yes.

17 Q. And, and at the time everything was up in the air for
18 everyone so that's --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. I get that completely. What do you do for the airlines, if
21 you don't mind me asking?

22 A. I am a qualified crew member as a flight attendant but I --
23 once we started having kids one of us decided not to fly anymore,
24 which was me, but I am a regulatory compliance manager for the
25 inflight department and I work with the NTSB and the FAA and the

1 DOT and all of you guys as part of my job.

2 Q. So unfortunately you're somewhat familiar with this process
3 then?

4 A. A little bit, I mean, we haven't had an incident at Endeavor
5 so which I'm aware that he worked for Endeavor Aviation and I
6 worked for Endeavor but, yeah.

7 Q. Okay. Well, it's good; it's good that actually you have a
8 lot of industry experience so you're very familiar with the
9 terminology --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- and a lot of this -- these requests, so thank you for
12 that.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. So April 2020ish he started working at, is Home Depot
15 a retail outlet like a --

16 A. Or just a regular Home Depot store.

17 Q. Got it, so he wasn't like flying for them or doing flight
18 anything?

19 A. Nope.

20 Q. Okay, he was just working at the store, okay.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And when did that finish?

23 A. He ended that June of this year, he went back to flying.

24 Q. He ended that in June and so what happened in June?

25 A. So he went knowing that both of us are stable, well, at least

1 I was stable with my airline job, he booked a recurrent class at
2 CAE in Dallas and (indiscernible) and then started contracting
3 again.

4 Q. So he booked a recurrent, recurrency course in Dallas with
5 CAE --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- and then started contracting after that?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay, okay. So my next question is how do you find out about
10 Aolas (ph.)?

11 A. I'm not sure. Sometimes we talked about contracting,
12 sometimes there are repeat families or, you know, clients. This
13 one it was he was supposed to home on Sunday but there was
14 rumblings that there could potentially be an additional trip after
15 that and he would let me know, which Saturday he said, so we're a
16 go, I'll be home on Tuesday.

17 I mean, it's typical for our life to be like that and then
18 Aolas showed up on the calendar through Tuesday, we made plans
19 for, you know, he was looking at flights that would get him back
20 in on Tuesday and I was coordinating my schedule so I could swing
21 by the airport and grab him and then still go back to work and,
22 you know, all that sort of stuff.

23 So I don't really know how he got connected with that trip.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I can, I can hunt around with some of our pilot friends that,

1 you know, are all in the contracting world to see if they know
2 because, you know, they were always helping each other out with,
3 you know, hey, so-and-so needs a pilot, are you available, I mean,
4 they do that all the time, you know.

5 Q. So from what we understand the Aolas got connected with your
6 husband, I don't know if it was through a site, all they -- all I
7 know at this time is that they connected with him through their
8 network of contacts.

9 Yeah, if you do have some friends in that contracting world
10 that happen to know a little bit more about how that relationship
11 began, that would be very helpful.

12 A. I did receive a call from the management company. I did not
13 take -- I haven't taken any calls except for Kim and a couple
14 others but the company had called and, you know, sincere
15 condolences and I don't know if they worked with him on other
16 contracts over the years or not.

17 I do have that information, if you want I can forward it to
18 you because he left his callback number and he didn't say what the
19 management company was called, I guess, he just --

20 Q. Actually, yeah, if you could, if you could forward that to me
21 that would be very helpful.

22 A. Okay. And I don't -- well, and I don't think I have your
23 email.

24 Q. I will give it to you right now. So it's going to be Stephen
25 -- actually let me -- sorry to jump off there.

1 A. That's okay.

2 Q. Do you have -- are you, are you ready to copy?

3 A. I am.

4 Q. Okay, all right. It's Stephen, S-T-E-P-H-E-N.Stein, S-T-E-I-
5 N, at NTSB.gov.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. And so I think I know the answer to my next question which is
8 did he have any relationship with this captain, did he know him
9 from prior work or anything like that?

10 A. I don't know.

11 Q. Okay. All right.

12 A. He had said like the night before he's like, these guys
13 remember me from my time in Mexico, which was when he first
14 started flying and then, you know, I asked him a question that he
15 never responded.

16 But I don't, I don't know. I mean, they may have, they may
17 have not, I don't -- and that could have been the man at the
18 company, I don't know.

19 Q. Okay, all right. Yeah, so these guys that --

20 A. Yes (indiscernible).

21 Q. Yeah, that indicates -- yeah, that doesn't close the door on
22 that so but that's interesting still.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. And then my last question is, we heard that he was scheduled
25 to start a job with the FAA?

1 A. He was.

2 Q. Okay. Do you want to tell me a little bit about that?

3 A. Yeah. So January of 2020, you know, we're trying to like
4 figure out what to do and what our next plan was, he wasn't going
5 to go back to contracting or whatever, and he went to, I guess,
6 reup his CFI because he and my son were talking about flying and
7 that he had -- which Tristan (ph.) wanted to learn and then that,
8 you know, I could instruct while I'm waiting for something.

9 And so while he was in the office doing that he stopped and
10 talked to somebody and they were like, yeah, we're always looking
11 for inspectors, and I know people obviously in the local
12 (indiscernible) and then a week later he had a phone interview.

13 A week after that, you know, it was the negotiating process
14 of the job. In the time of all that COVID was starting to breakup
15 and then his currency was coming due and he had to go and get a
16 check ride done with the FAA, a final part of the application
17 process because all the (indiscernible) were shut down because of
18 COVID.

19 And so we were on a time waiting for those to open, probably
20 every three months or so he'd get an email with an update, you
21 know, like the (indiscernible) are so close, you know, dah, dah,
22 whatever.

23 In February of this year he went down to Dallas,
24 (indiscernible) were open and did his check ride, passed with
25 flying colors obviously, and then, you know, it was from that

1 point on waiting for the next letter which then became -- because
2 the FAA was now not doing so many investigations or in so much
3 need because there were so many extras lying around from, you
4 know, airlines not training or whatever.

5 So he got put on the wait list and was waiting for that call
6 and he got a letter there was a position that was open, it was
7 while he was at (indiscernible) in June, you know, with an
8 acceptance of this position and a start date, you know, and he was
9 kind of like, dang, why all now, you know, does that come when
10 I've been waiting for this forever and now I'm all ready to go
11 back to flying.

12 And he had some trips on the books for July and so he reached
13 out to his FAA contact and, you know, asked if he could postpone
14 his decision, which they agreed, and I think August 26th was
15 supposed to be his start date here in the local office.

16 Q. So he was hired -- where was he hired?

17 A. In the Minneapolis FSDO.

18 Q. Minneapolis FSDO.

19 A. Well, it was for the Minneapolis FSDO but technically it was
20 for SkyWest out of the Salt Lake City Office that they were, I
21 guess, loaning to the Minneapolis so he would still be based here,
22 he wouldn't have to go to Salt Lake City but, I don't know, it's
23 very confusing.

24 Q. Yeah. So he'd be reporting to the Minnesota FSDO?

25 A. Right, an inspector for SkyWest because he couldn't do

1 anything with the Endeavor or Delta certificate, my position.

2 Q. Sure, sure, okay. So reason why he wanted to go for the FAA,
3 was it more to find something stable? I'll let you answer.

4 A. One, to be stable, two, our son is 14, will be 15 in November
5 and I think he just wanted to be home. He was kind of looking at,
6 you know, that, that aspect of time for me to be home for a few
7 years and let him finish school and then I can go back to flying
8 later.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So personal reasons probably would be a good response for
11 that just to --

12 Q. And that makes sense.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. I'm trying to think if I have anything further.

15 I think that will do it for now in addition to having a Q and A
16 and back and forth I've given you some homework, sorry about
17 that.

18 A. That's okay. All right, checklists, in the aviation world
19 checklists are my life and right now I don't have a checklist so I
20 don't know how to, I don't know how to muddle through this. So a
21 checklist is great.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And just so I make sure I have everything I need to give you,
24 you would like his whole logbooks?

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. Figure out how to get that to you. The Seattle Company name
2 and dates?

3 Q. Actually if -- it might be, might be better for us if you
4 could provide a list of those employers so per our discussion just
5 if you had the names and dates or just approximate time ranges of
6 his employment with those companies.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. That would be very helpful.

9 A. Okay, I will see what I can find going back to
10 (indiscernible), I mean, that started in 2013. Might be a long
11 list because there were random contracts, but if you want just the
12 more recent ones that might be a little bit easier.

13 Q. So he'd been contracting since 2013?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. Okay. And prior to that he was with --

16 A. We started up out in California called California Pacific
17 Airlines.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. It did not -- well, I guess, eventually it started up not a
20 part of it when it actually did for a brief time. Before that he
21 was with Eos (ph.) that went out of business and then US Airways
22 Express is where we met, where it all began.

23 Q. Where it all began. Okay, so US Airways he was -- what was
24 he flying for -- what did he fly for US Airways, Eos and then
25 California Airways Express or California Pacific?

1 A. So for US Airways it was the Dornier 328 and then we grew up
2 and we got jets and we had this CRJ-200, the CRJ-700. He went to
3 Eos and (indiscernible) on the 7576.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Between Eos and that startup he did do work with an airline
6 called PLUNA in South America in Uruguay where actually went from
7 75s to CRJ Aircraft, kind of crazy, but he was one of the
8 instructors (indiscernible) all of their pilots down there.

9 Q. So he did -- I'm sorry, it cut out for a second, so in PLUNA
10 he was doing --

11 A. Training.

12 Q. He was doing training in 75 and CRJs?

13 A. He was training their pilots. So PLUNA from, I don't know
14 what was happening with the company but they were getting rid of
15 their 75s and they were acquiring CRJ aircraft.

16 Q. Oh, gotcha, okay.

17 A. And he was a contract pilot that went into, you know, the
18 operating experience for their pilots. There was a group of
19 pilots that, you know, were down there doing the training for
20 that. Giving, giving training for that.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. And then when that was over we were home for a little while
23 doing nothing in aviation, either one of us. I was a stay-at-home
24 mom, and we went to this startup in California Pacific. We had
25 the EMB 170. He was typed in it, he had (indiscernible) and then

1 it parked on the ramp for (indiscernible).

2 Q. One more time, so at California Pacific what was he -- you
3 said he was typed in which aircraft?

4 A. The EMB 170, 175.

5 Q. EMB, got it, okay. EMB 170, 175, okay, got it. Okay. If
6 you can when you're making the previous employer list we might as
7 well add the prior work as well so the US -- I mean, you can just
8 give me rough year timeframes 2001 to 2004, 2006, et cetera, et
9 cetera.

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. Or whenever it took place.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. Okay. And then I will check with my colleagues here in Pilot
14 Pro to see if I can -- we can help extract that file.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. Yeah, okay. All right. Let's see, Ms. Ebaugh, can I get
17 your email address?

18 A. Sure, it is Lisa Ebaugh@gmail.com

19 Q. Gmail.com, okay. Okay, great. So Ms. Ebaugh, I really
20 appreciate you taking the time to do this. Thank you.

21 A. A question that I have for you --

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. -- will there ever be a time that, when we're ready, we'll be
24 able to hear the CVR tape?

25 MR. STEIN: I'll have to get back to you on that. So before

1 the -- so right now we're kind of at the initial stages and I'm
2 going to, I'm going to go ahead and stop recording now.

3 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

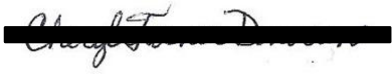
IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL ACCIDENT OF BOMBARDIER
CHALLENGER N605TR NEAR TRUCKEE,
CALIFORNIA ON JULY 26, 2021
Interview of Lisa Ebaugh

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR21FA286

PLACE: Via telephone

DATE: August 6, 2021

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.



Cheryl Farner Donovan
Transcriber