

WPR22FA151

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

Specialist's Factual Report - Attachment 1

Interview Transcripts

July 23, 2022

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT

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NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO

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Accident No.: WPR22FA151

ON APRIL 13, 2022

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Interview of: TIM VENNELL, Operations Manager
Gem Air

Via Microsoft Teams

Monday,
May 16, 2022

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

FABIAN SALAZAR, Regional Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:00 p.m. CDT)

1 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Let's go ahead and get started.
2
3 Just for the record, my name is David Lawrence. I'm with the NTSB
4 and I am assisting Fabian Salazar, who's the investigator in
5 charge for the accident that occurred on April 13th involving 928
6 Juliet Papa. First off, with us today is Tim Vennell, and he's
7 with Gem Air. And also on the call is Fabian Salazar; he's the
8 investigator in charge for the accident. Tim, let me start off,
9 do you have any -- do you have a representative or did you want
10 one to sit in?
11

12 MR. VENNELL: No, I don't. It's just me. I assume this is
13 recorded, so --

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Right.

15 MR. VENNELL: -- it is what it is.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, it will be, like I said, and I told you
17 earlier, we record it just for transcription, not the video
18 portion, just audio, and that will be part of the record. Very
19 standard for us as well. And, also, just to confirm that I had
20 briefed you that the FAA typically is party to our investigations.
21 And we're not forming an operations group, so I don't have
22 operators, manufacturers, accredited reps, people like that
23 participating with me. It's just really me and typically I have
24 the FAA alongside, but I just want to confirm it was your request
25 not to have the FAA included in these interviews. Correct?

1 MR. VENNEL: Correct. This -- yes.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. Now, and I did mention to you
3 earlier that if any of the other Gem Air people that are on the
4 list that I want to talk to, that we're going to be talking to
5 down the road, they'll need to make that same request if that's
6 what they want, individually each time. So, instead of a blanket
7 request, they'll just need to, you know, tell me that in advance
8 and I'll accommodate accordingly. First off, condolences, Tim. I
9 am so sorry you guys are going through this. I try to make this
10 as painless as possible. You know as well as anybody that our
11 whole role here is safety and we're just trying to find out what
12 happened so we can bring -- prevent it from happening again. None
13 of the information that's contained in the factual record here
14 could be used by the FAA or anybody for certificate action or
15 enforcement action. So, I just want to put your mind at ease.
16 This is all safety-related and so, it's an opportunity to learn.
17 And this process of talking to management personnel with the
18 certificate of carrier, you do have a 135 certificate, it's a very
19 normal part of the process. We talk to everybody regardless of
20 when we get involved in the investigation, what the extent of it,
21 we're going to talk to the management folks. I'm going to -- we
22 have -- we are going to be recording for transcription, but I like
23 to take notes, you know, and so I apologize if I don't make eye
24 contact with you virtually. And so, if I'm looking down, I type
25 like I do on the flight management computer with one index finger

1 on each hand. So, it may take --

2 MR. VENNELL: Sure.

3 MR. LAWRENCE: -- me a while to catch up on some of my notes.
4 If there's a pregnant pause at any point in time, please don't
5 read anything into it. Okay. It's just me catching up with my
6 notes. If I ask you a question that you don't understand, please
7 ask me to repeat it or maybe reclarify or try and -- we're trying
8 to get clear information, so sometimes I might ask a question that
9 you're not sure about. If you're not sure about it, stop me and
10 ask me to rephrase it.

11 MR. VENNELL: Sure.

12 MR. LAWRENCE: Also, just so you know, I don't know is a
13 perfectly acceptable answer. If you don't know the answer, just
14 say I don't know. That's fine with me. Okay. And as previously
15 mentioned, we'll be tape recording for transcription. Any
16 questions about the process, Tim?

17 MR. VENNELL: No. I've never done this, so it'll all be a
18 learning experience for me and one I hope I never have to go
19 through again.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: I agree. I hope this is a bucket list that
21 you do not have to check off again. And that's what our whole
22 role here is try and make that goal.

23 INTERVIEW OF TIM VENNELL

24 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

25 Q. So, let me start off with some of the pre-flight information,

1 just some really basic stuff. Can I get your full name, your age
2 and what your title is at Gem Air?

3 A. Sure. My name is Tim or Timothy Vennell and I am 50 years
4 old.

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. And I'm the operations manager at Gem Air. The function is
7 more like an assistant to the deputy of operations.

8 Q. The director of operations?

9 A. I'm sorry, right. I'm sorry, to the director of operations.

10 Q. Okay. I know what you --

11 A. I'm the deputy. That's what I meant.

12 Q. There you go. Director of Ops and you're considered the
13 deputy to him. Correct?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. In essence, that's how I would function.

17 Q. Great. And how many years at Gem Air have you been?

18 A. Just over a year.

19 Q. Okay. And just briefly, kind of go over what are your roles
20 and responsibility as the ops manager for Gem Air?

21 A. Sure. Because it's a smaller company, I wind up being
22 involved in multiple areas. I am a pilot, as well as a mechanic
23 and an inspector on the maintenance side. And so, I kind of
24 coordinate a lot between flight and maintenance. I work a lot
25 mostly with the schedule of aircraft and pilots, as well as

1 organizing any charters, kind of general stuff with the charter
2 operation. And mostly work in the office as far as that goes.

3 Q. Okay. Do you ever fly the line or fly any of the aircraft?

4 A. Not with Gem Air. I did for a number of years with my
5 previous -- I was with a group called Mission Aviation Fellowship
6 and we lived in Africa doing mission work, flying missionaries and
7 such in and out of the bush. And so that's where I did most all
8 of my flying time.

9 Q. So, the answer to the question is that you are a pilot. Just
10 in general, a guesstimate of how many hours do you have?

11 A. 1700, 1800 hours.

12 Q. Okay. And certificates and ratings?

13 A. Multi-engine, flight instructor with an AMP and an IA.

14 Q. Private or commercial?

15 A. Commercial, sorry.

16 Q. No problem.

17 A. Commercial flight instructor, multi-engine, aircraft single
18 (indiscernible).

19 Q. Perfect, great. And you started off, so let me -- let's go
20 ahead and finish. Give me kind of the cliffs notes version, not
21 the whole, you know, thesaurus, but the cliffs notes version of
22 your background. What led you to Gem Air?

23 A. Yes, I've been involved in Mission Aviation Fellowship for 22
24 and a half years and we just felt like it was time to change.

25 That was a ministry, so we raised our own support, kind of did

1 missionary work for all those years. And I felt like that there
2 was -- it was just the time for a shift. Looked for something
3 similar, didn't really find much for some time. But ultimately a
4 friend told me about Gem Air, and that's what landed me at Gem Air
5 was because it kind of fit. The niche and the type of aircraft
6 that I was used to flying, most of my flight time was in a Cessna
7 206 in the mountains in Africa, so --

8 Q. Um-hum. And do you have formal 208?

9 A. No, but I maintained them in the past. We have -- I managed
10 them as director of operations on a program in Kenya. We had five
11 of them.

12 Q. So, you were a D of O operator in Kenya?

13 A. Yes, that's for Mission Aviation Fellowship. I was in the
14 Congo, then Lesotho, another country in southern Africa, and then
15 ultimately in Kenya and South Sudan. Pilot mechanic in all of
16 those roles, except for Kenya and Kenya I was the director of
17 operations.

18 Q. Okay, great. And I know we touched some of this on our phone
19 call the other day, but -- and you've only been there a little bit
20 less than a year -- but if you can give me kind of just a brief
21 history of Gem Air.

22 A. Sure. Gem Air used to be Salmon Air up until 2009. They
23 sold the business, ma and pa had to retire, sold the business --
24 or the name, rather -- kept the certificate. Leased the aircraft
25 out. Five years later, the outfitters that we flew for on a

1 regular basis said please come back into the business, we don't
2 get the service that we want. And so, the ma and pa, now with a
3 couple of other kids, came back into the business in 2014 and
4 started it back up, rebranded it Gem Air and then started back
5 into that business in 2014 and it's been going ever since.

6 Q. Okay. And you said family and kids, just what family, what
7 are their names, just --

8 A. Oh, it's -- they're the company owners, David and JoAnn.
9 JoAnn's last name is Wolters, w-o-l-t-e-r-s, and then Dan
10 Schroeder, spelled Schroeder.

11 Q. Yes.

12 A. And then David and Jo are the -- David is our chief pilot and
13 then Jo is the business manager.

14 Q. Okay. And roughly how many pilots do you have and what --
15 how many aircraft do you have?

16 A. During our peak seasons, we'll have 11 or 12 pilots and
17 currently 11 aircraft.

18 Q. And the breakdown of those aircraft?

19 A. The ones that will be left when the dust all settles is 4
20 Caravans, 4 Islanders, a 206, a 210 and a 172. I guess in
21 addition to that, we do have a Seneca, so we're at 12 aircraft
22 total.

23 Q. Okay. And to your knowledge, had Gem Air been involved -- or
24 I guess the Gem Air portion of that Dan and Dave and JoAnn were
25 part and such -- had they been involved in any other incidents or

1 accidents to your knowledge?

2 A. I believe in the past, in the early 2000s, we had a -- they
3 had a Caravan icing accident. It was a booted Caravan, that's all
4 I really -- I don't know much of the details on that one --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- as far as that goes. And then I think there was one other
7 one with the -- I would say where the pilot that -- I'm not -- I
8 actually don't know the story --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- on that accident.

11 Q. Well, if you don't know, that's fine. Let's leave it at
12 that. Since you were the director of operations, so some of this
13 you should be familiar with. Let me ask, does Gem Air have an SMS
14 program?

15 A. It's a rudimentary program. We do have a safety program.
16 It's been started in the last -- probably right before I came,
17 they started a safety program. David is the safety manager.

18 Q. All right. Isn't it a -- but -- well, explain it a little
19 bit because a safety program and a formalized SMS are two
20 different things, so what is --

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. -- their SMS program?

23 A. It really is a way of people to report hazards so that we
24 could address them as they see them. They have both anonymous
25 boxes as well as an email that they can send, and then we address

1 the safety situation or the hazard that is presented to us in that
2 sense. But you're right, it's not a -- we don't have a full
3 auditing type process in place yet as far as that goes.

4 Q. Do you need to get that phone?

5 A. No, it's a car thing. I'll get it later on.

6 Q. Okay. So, it's not a formalized SMS program. Why don't you
7 -- why doesn't Gem Air have an SMS?

8 A. I think it boils down to largely, one, it's not fully
9 required yet, and two, it's a manpower issue to increase the
10 capacity to the point that we can fully manage an SMS. And on top
11 of that, we're kind of waiting to see -- I'm speaking on behalf,
12 without fully knowing -- I would think that we're also waiting to
13 see what are going to be some of the requirements that the FAA is
14 going to push out for smaller 135 operators before we start
15 something that's either not met -- or not met the qualifications
16 or those kinds of things. Kind of wait and see what the dust is
17 going to settle and be required ultimately.

18 Q. Okay, I understand. Is that what you meant when you said --
19 I don't want to put words in your mouth -- but when you said we
20 don't have a formalized SMS yet. Is that what you mean, you're
21 just waiting to see what the NPRM and what the rule -- might
22 things is going to be, apart --

23 A. Well, I think that's largely part of our discussion points
24 right now is just to hold off and see what is going to be the full
25 requirement when the time comes.

1 Q. Got it. Are risk assessments part of your operations? Do
2 you conduct risk assessments prior to each flight?

3 A. Nothing formal, no.

4 Q. Okay. Informal?

5 A. Well, I mean, every pilot has to do a pre-flight, which
6 involves weather looking and those kinds of things to assess can I
7 go, can I not go. And so, without it being called a FRAT, it
8 largely is -- many of the components of a FRAT are involved in a
9 pre-flight briefing and a pre-flight check before they go. But,
10 no, they don't do -- we don't evaluate it as far as that goes and
11 give it a go/no-go from that numbering perspective like a typical
12 FRAT would.

13 Q. Yes. So, there's not somebody else, other than the pre-
14 flight and the weather briefing that the pilot would get --
15 correct me if I'm wrong -- there's not anybody else that is
16 involved in the decision-making process for launch or no-launch
17 other than --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- you and the (indiscernible). Okay.

20 A. Yes, um-hum. Once the (indiscernible) has been set, then the
21 pilot is responsible at that point.

22 Q. Got it. Does Gem Air use flight data monitors on their
23 aircraft, any type of recording device to monitor the operation of
24 the aircraft?

25 A. No.

1 Q. No, okay.

2 A. And I mean, FlightAware -- I would use FlightAware to see as
3 in where they're at and what their estimates are in that sense.
4 We don't have any satellite flight following or anything. Except
5 for we do have some on our forest service aircraft when we do have
6 a forest service flight, but we have to due to that contract, but
7 we don't use them all the time.

8 Q. Yes. I should have asked this in the very beginning, I
9 apologize. So, Gem Air -- what type of flying is Gem Air doing?
10 Are they doing scheduled flying? You've mentioned forest and
11 there's some contract work. So, you know, what kind of flying are
12 they doing with these aircraft and what is kind of the bulk of it?

13 A. I mean, it's kind of a three-tiered system. It's charters
14 year-round, it's UPS cargo, that's also year-round as well as the
15 peak season from November to January. That's more of an intense
16 time with more aircraft than just our typical routes that we do
17 year-round. And then in the summer, the peak season -- the other
18 peak season for us is the rafting people that are going on the
19 Middle Fork or the Main Salmon rafting trip, so moving them from
20 Boise to various towns or villages or in the wilderness depending
21 on where they're being flown to for their river trips. As well --
22 I mean, I guess we do quite a bit of hunting trips as well in the
23 spring and the fall. But -- so that's kind of the type of flying
24 that we do. We used to have -- or we have a commuter status, but
25 it's not fully active right now. They did in the past do

1 essential air service where they did scheduled routes.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. Currently, we don't have anything of that nature.

4 Q. On the UPS supplemental cargo operations, that like what this
5 Caravan was doing, were those scheduled operations?

6 A. They're just -- they're regular routes, but they can actually
7 change each day to a different location in that sense. So, I
8 don't know. We wouldn't necessarily call them scheduled, but they
9 -- but that's what this was. This was strictly cargo.

10 Q. Okay. And so, getting back to the flight data monitoring
11 program, I asked you -- you mentioned something about FlightAware
12 and it sounds like you're using FlightAware as your flight
13 following under 135 primarily?

14 A. That's what we -- other than -- yes, that's what we would
15 look to see where things are at and when we expect them and are
16 seeing when they had landed. Unless, like I said, if they're with
17 the Forest Service, the Forest Service requires a type of
18 satellite flight following, so we have that on those flights --

19 Q. Right.

20 A. -- only.

21 Q. So, FlightAware you said so we can see. Who's we can see?

22 A. Just the office in that sense from dealing with customers
23 and/or those kinds of things, and then those of us in operations
24 that are wondering, you know, what are the -- what the aircraft is
25 doing and where it's at and that sort of thing, what time they're

1 expected to be on the ground and/or return.

2 Q. Okay. So, there's not a single person dedicated. I noticed
3 dispatch is not required under 135. So, there's not a dedicated
4 person that's looking at the flight, following FlightAware. It's
5 just a combination of these people, management and I guess the
6 chief pilot, correct, that are doing the flight following?

7 A. Right. And the pilots do send notice when they're -- if
8 they're launching or on the ground through email.

9 Q. Okay. From their what, their cellphones?

10 A. Cellphones, yes.

11 Q. Okay. Are those their personal phones or company issued?

12 A. I'm sorry, personal phones.

13 Q. Okay. And you mentioned -- you touched on voluntary means of
14 reporting safety issue by the pilots and I guess mechanics and
15 some of the -- any other personnel, would they be included in
16 that?

17 A. Yes, anyone that's in the -- that works for us as far as that
18 goes.

19 Q. Okay. And is it deidentified reporting?

20 A. What's that?

21 Q. Is it deidentified? In other words, can you report a safety
22 issue without giving your name?

23 A. You can.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Who --

2 A. We have the anonymous boxes stationed in the maintenance
3 hangar as well as in the main office area.

4 Q. Okay. And I think you said Dave was manager -- safety
5 manager, I think is what --

6 A. Safety manager.

7 Q. Is he the one that gets those or does anybody else?

8 A. He would.

9 Q. He would? Okay. Do you see those or does Dan see those?

10 A. I'm not sure if Dan sees them. I would see them only if
11 there's something that I need to help address.

12 Q. Okay. All right. Then I kind of ask this question -- you
13 don't really have flight data monitors, any kind of like a
14 lightweight access recorder or something. I'm not talking about a
15 full FDR, but you don't have any kind of means to monitor if the
16 airplane's being flown in the way in compliance with company
17 procedures SOPs or would I be correct in saying that?

18 A. You are correct, yes.

19 Q. Okay. So, I ask this question, so you're not the only one,
20 but I ask this of everybody that I talk to, their certificate.
21 How would you know that your pilots are complying with your
22 procedures once they leave and they're out flying?

23 A. There's a lot of trust involved.

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. You know, I guess if a guy really wanted to, we could

1 download the data out to G1000 and go scrutinize it to the max,
2 but we're not going to do that.

3 Q. Okay. Oh, yes, the (indiscernible) to memory or the --
4 whatever the data card is.

5 A. Yes, they can look at the parameters and I can put them in
6 the graphs and all that stuff. It's just not worth it and that's
7 only on the G1000 so we don't have G1000s on all of our fleet. So
8 -- but no, there's a lot of trust factor and then the check rides
9 that come, you know, on a regular basis.

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. And/or we move a lot of pilots with other pilots. We
12 position pilots with other pilots and so there's some eyes on the
13 ground in that sense from just their colleagues riding with them.

14 Q. Right. And I know that you're not -- you don't need to
15 answer for Dave or Dan -- but as chief pilot or any of the other
16 check airmen, do they go out there and do any, like, line checks?
17 I know it's not required under -- you know, you get that on your
18 293s, 99s and 97s. But does anybody go out there and just ride
19 along just to see how things are going?

20 A. Not that I know of, but you have to confirm that with them.

21 Q. Yes, okay. For any particular flight, who has operation
22 control of that flight?

23 A. Operations does in that sense. The --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- from the -- yes.

1 Q. So, the ones -- I would assume the ones specified in the ops
2 specs would be the ones with operation control?

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Okay. And you said Dave -- I was going to ask about director
5 of safety. I know there is -- you're not required under 135, but
6 the equivalent position of director of safety would be -- safety
7 manager would be Dave -- right -- Schroeder?

8 A. I think so. I'm not 100% sure exactly. I haven't paid much
9 attention to the under nine packs or less stuff with the SMS in my
10 role at Gem Air, so --

11 Q. Okay, okay. And just to close the loop on the flight
12 following, the pilots are required -- are they required to email
13 via the cellphones when they're departing or just when they
14 arrive?

15 A. Yes, they send us a notification that they're departing.

16 Q. Oh, okay. And then once they arrive, the notification --

17 A. Yes, then once they arrive so that we can do a couple of
18 things with that, we can monitor the Hobbs time, if there's any
19 kind of maintenance tracking, you know, issues that we're keeping
20 an eye on.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. As well as just a look over their stuff and see what they're
23 doing.

24 Q. Okay, great. And you said you used FlightAware. You can
25 access FlightAware to see where they are at any point in time.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Yes.

3 A. With the ADS-B, it's a great thing.

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. Except for the back country, we still got some black spots
6 and some shaded areas in the wilderness that just don't work.

7 So --

8 Q. (Indiscernible) that's up in Alaska, they have the same
9 problem, you know.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. I'm just curious, to get a little bit more toward the
12 accident and stuff. How did you learn about the accident?

13 A. David got a call from UPS that said -- literally said our
14 plane just landed on the roof of the potato factory.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And then he asked me to start finding out from the law
17 enforcement or anything if I could find out anything there was to
18 find out about it at that point. So, I just started down my track
19 of trying to find what had happened.

20 Q. Okay. Does Gem Air have a formalized emergency response plan
21 or any kind of manual?

22 A. That's a great question and I can't answer it. I do know
23 that I started -- from my previous experience, I started -- kind
24 of started a log just because of what I was -- we had that
25 requirement in my previous world. But I'm not sure, the Gem Air

1 thing.

2 Q. Okay. Would that be something -- just kind of curious --
3 would that be something that you think in your role as the ops
4 manager that you would -- would it be beneficial for your role in
5 the case of the --

6 A. So, hands down, yes.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. And there's a lot that came out of this that we hope to
9 formalize maybe long-term, but that we hope to have learned out
10 of.

11 Q. Did you know the accident pilot?

12 A. I did.

13 Q. In what sense? I mean, did you --

14 A. I think it's -- we're a small operation, so we know everybody
15 in that sense. I was part of onboarding her back when she came
16 on. She's a local gal in that sense. Most of our people often
17 are from outside of the Salmon area just because of the nature of
18 the town, it's so small.

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. But she was a local in that sense. And so -- but just worked
21 with her for the entire year as the guy who does most of the
22 scheduling and interaction with the pilots about their schedule
23 and yes, just we worked quite well in that -- from that
24 perspective.

25 Q. Yes, I'm real sorry. Did she have any -- and this is a

1 typical question I have to ask. Were you aware of any personal or
2 financial issues that she was going through at the time?

3 A. No, I can't imagine that she had any finance issues.

4 Q. Okay. Why can you not imagine that?

5 A. Well, it's -- her family is quite well-to-do in that sense.
6 And she had her own airplane and yes, she's -- she was very good
7 with -- she managed her things well, let's just put it that way.

8 Q. Okay. What kind of airplane did she have?

9 A. I don't know. I think she had a Skyhawk or 182 and maybe
10 even another one. I'm not 100% sure because I never got to fly in
11 it, but yes.

12 Q. And you mentioned her onboarding. So, why don't you start
13 from the very beginning. How did you all find out about her and
14 tell me a little bit about the hiring process for her.

15 A. Sure. The -- her -- the families have known each other for
16 years, the Schroeders and the Infangers.

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. And she had gone off after college, and this is what I'm kind
19 of recapping from the stories at the funeral, so to speak, because
20 I didn't know some of this. But anyway, she had gone off after
21 college, becoming a finance -- kind of a major in finance and then
22 just wanted to get more experience in aviation. So, she went down
23 to ATP down in Arizona and got a bunch of flight ratings and then
24 became an instructor down there for a bit. And then I guess the
25 opportunity came up for her to come back to Salmon to work for us

1 for a summer. And after the summer we had an opportunity for her
2 to continue down into the Caravan and transition into the Caravan.
3 She needed to get some, like every other person trying to fly a
4 135 right now, she needed experience and so that's what she did
5 with us. She flew really hard for us the last summer; that was
6 her first time with us. She started flying in June, I think,
7 after basic indoc; it was the last week in May. And then she only
8 flew the singles last year, the 206, 210, 172 --

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. -- through the summer and then transitioned to the Caravan in
11 the fall.

12 Q. Okay. So, do you know if there was a pre-up background check
13 that had been completed for her?

14 A. Yes, we would have done all of that.

15 Q. Okay. And I think I asked you maybe via email if there was a
16 resume. I couldn't remember who responded, if you all had any
17 kind of copy of her resume.

18 A. Yes, David is searching for it, but it was just a paper copy,
19 it wasn't emailed to us because she was from Salmon, so she
20 brought it in, dropped it off. And so, I couldn't find it in that
21 sense from her resume, but anyway he was -- he had looked for it.
22 I don't know if he ever came across it or not.

23 Q. It sounds like the families knew each other anyway, so she
24 was pretty well-known to the operation.

25 A. Yes, they've known each other for years in that sense, like

1 years.

2 Q. Other than for the accident pilot, who kind of knew the
3 owners and their families knew each other, how does Gem Air
4 typically get their pilots?

5 A. This last round was through JSfirm or Indeed.com. We posted
6 a --

7 Q. I'm sorry, could you repeat that? What was it?

8 A. JSfirm or Indeed.com, kind of the two big posting places for
9 posting jobs.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Then they would send in a request or have me send in an email
12 if they're interested, as well as their resume. And either myself
13 or David would potentially interact with them and perhaps have a
14 -- we have an interview, comments and questions that we ask and
15 then from there we'll follow-up references. And then generally
16 we'll ask them to come to Salmon and we do a flight exercise and a
17 written test for them just to see where they're at and what their
18 knowledge base is, and how they are, even some old-school things
19 like an MDB just to see --

20 Q. Ouch.

21 A. -- what they might know or how they can control a simulator
22 with some of the things that they may or may not be familiar with.

23 Q. Okay. So, what kind of simulator? Is it like a Frasca,
24 desktop type of thing?

25 A. We have two simulators, an ATC-16, I think it's called, the

1 old, old one. And then we also have -- I can't remember the name
2 of it, it's not a Redbird, it's the other one -- a Precision.

3 Q. Motion, any other?

4 A. What's that?

5 Q. Motion, any of these motion sims or --

6 A. No --

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. -- no. They've got screens but no motion.

9 Q. Okay. So, they're all FTDs?

10 A. Yes, they are FTDs, yes.

11 Q. Okay. And --

12 A. ATDs.

13 Q. Yes, fixed-based training devices.

14 A. Yes --

15 Q. Correct?

16 A. -- yes.

17 Q. So, you mentioned earlier that she was one of the few that
18 was local, and you usually get people from outside. What kind of
19 experience levels are you getting for the pilots coming?

20 A. We strive to try to get them with as much as 600 -- or I'm
21 sorry -- as much as 1,000 hours for VFR pilots and we look for
22 them with ratings up to multi-engine. And I think she was less
23 than that, but I don't know exactly how many hours she had because
24 I had just started myself --

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. -- right before that. So, I was still new in the process of
2 learning what they did and how they did it.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. But this last round of pilots, we looked for people that have
5 about at least 1,000 hours.

6 Q. Um-hum.

7 A. Sometimes we can find them, sometimes we can't. Right now,
8 it's getting more and more difficult to locate pilots that -- at
9 our stage that have 1,000 hours plus.

10 Q. Why? It's just the inventory?

11 A. Yes, inventory is just not there.

12 Q. Yes.

13 A. And then you narrow that inventory quite small when you put
14 them -- ask them to move to a small town that's two and a half
15 hours from a Walmart.

16 Q. Okay. And you said you weren't sure about her hours, but you
17 were part of her onboarding. You don't recall how much time she
18 had when she came and applied?

19 A. No, and what I've said, me being part of the onboarding is I
20 just help process some of the paperwork and/or went through basic
21 indoctrination with her, that sort of thing, because it was my
22 first time and I wanted to see how they do basic indoc and all of
23 that. So, I sat through it last year just so that I could be
24 familiar with our processes.

25 Q. Okay. I'll ask about the training here in just a second,

1 because I was just going to ask about the basic indoc but let me
2 clean up a couple of things. Did anybody at the operation or
3 anybody else on the operation have any concerns about her
4 abilities, her flying abilities?

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

6 Q. Okay. And oh, here we go, training. So, kind of give me
7 just a rough -- since you've kind of gone through this and maybe
8 not all the way to the aircraft training because you don't do the
9 aircraft stuff -- but talk to me about the training that Gem Air
10 does for their pilots when they come on.

11 A. Sure. Summer pilots, when Brittany came on, for example, we
12 bring all the summer pilots out for the same basic indoctrination.
13 It starts -- it's usually the end of May, it's a week-long for the
14 ground school.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And it's got all the subjects that are in our training
17 manual, as far as I can't remember what all they are, but
18 nonetheless, we go through that process for a whole week. And
19 then after that, they start kind of aircraft ground specific and
20 then get into flight training shortly after that based on the
21 aircraft that they're going to fly. Most everyone starts in the
22 singles and then some will go and transition into the Islanders,
23 and then depending on where the people's flight time is and their
24 experience, there might be a couple that move into the Caravan for
25 the summer. But most of the time, the Caravan pilots have already

1 been with us at least one season or multiple seasons. We've got
2 people that return season on seasons for the summer. And now if
3 we add a pilot throughout the year like, for example, for the Salt
4 Lake crew or for one of the other positions that we might have
5 that's year-round, then we would do basic indoctrination unique to
6 them as far as that goes with the ground school specific to them,
7 you know, in the sense it's not a big class. It's just kind of a
8 one-on-one kind of process.

9 Q. Right. So, the Caravan is -- you have to transition up to
10 the Caravan. Right?

11 A. You do, yes.

12 Q. Okay. So, you start off from the 172, one of the lighter
13 twins -- or singles rather and then move up. And I think you said
14 usually they transition after you've got a complete season under
15 your belt and then you go to the Caravan. Right?

16 A. Well, that's just how it's worked. With what I've seen,
17 however, we have -- we do onboard people and put them right into
18 the Caravan --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- depending on their experience level, especially for the
21 UPS route.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. We've just hired a new person for that and so they would just
24 train and go specifically do that route.

25 Q. Okay. Because she hadn't had a full season when she

1 transitioned to the Caravan because she indoc'd last summer.

2 Right?

3 A. Well, no, she did in the sense that she went through our
4 summer season. When I talk about seasons, I'm talking about
5 summer season.

6 Q. Okay, okay.

7 A. So, she had finished the summer season and had flown a ton
8 for us and had done all of that, and so then it was the fall that
9 she transitioned into the Caravan.

10 Q. Okay. Thanks for clarifying that. And you had gone through
11 basic indoc with her at the same time. Right?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Any issues with her training that you saw based on your
14 personal experience and interaction with her during the training?

15 A. No.

16 Q. No. She was able to get --

17 A. No.

18 Q. -- capture the data and the information from the instructors
19 sufficiently?

20 A. Yes, she's a fairly sharp gal as far as that goes. I didn't
21 notice anything out of the ordinary with her abilities or even
22 understanding of what she was absorbing.

23 Q. Okay. So, most of the training -- I guess you do some basic
24 training in these sims that you have -- but most of the training,
25 like for the Caravan, is done in the airplane itself?

1 A. They'll do an extensive amount of sim training before they
2 ever get in the airplane, yes.

3 Q. (Indiscernible).

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. And I know you're not really familiar, so I'm not
6 going to deep dive into the training. I can talk to Dave and --

7 A. Yes, they could give you all the specifics of it.

8 Q. Yes, great. Let me change gears here a little bit. How -- I
9 was going to ask you if you need water.

10 A. I'm drinking tea.

11 Q. Oh, there you go. Are you familiar with the Burley Airport?

12 A. Just what I hear from the pilots. I flew in there once in a
13 Tri-Pacer, but I didn't pay much attention to it because I wasn't
14 with Gem Air and it was -- I went out there for a drug training --
15 supervisor training thing that we went to from -- with me and one
16 of the other supervisors in MAF, so --

17 Q. Right, okay. Well, did the company -- because you're
18 management so you're in this -- these -- I'm sure these meetings
19 and probably hear from Dave and Dan and some of the others, did
20 management, anybody else as a company have any concerns about
21 Burley Airport?

22 A. Well, they've always said that it's kind of -- I don't know
23 that squirrely is the right term. They refer to it as there's a
24 lot of gotchas there, in that sense, just because of all of the
25 obstacles that are around the airport.

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. It's been known for years. I think they've even written
3 letters about the state of the airport and addressed it. I can't
4 tell you to who or when, but --

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. -- it's my understanding that only them, but even other
7 pilots that weren't on our crew had written letters to raise
8 concerns over the Burley Airport.

9 Q. Primarily the obstacles? Is that --

10 A. Yes, the towers and the stuff that's not listed on the
11 approach plates or that's not -- well, one never knew the extent
12 of where they were until after this when we started really digging
13 into it and found to the degree of what's out there that you
14 actually don't know that's out there. You can visually see it,
15 but you don't see it on -- from our perspective, you don't see it
16 anywhere --

17 Q. All right.

18 A. -- on the chart anywhere.

19 Q. And maybe with your flying in Africa when you were director
20 of operations, I know there are some challenging airports there.
21 For this particular one, was there any specialized procedures for
22 the pilots or any ops bulletin or classification of the special
23 airport, you know, anything like that that would make the pilots
24 aware other than tribal knowledge and everybody talking about it
25 being squirrely and gotchas? Anything formal?

1 A. I don't know about anything formal. I know that when they do
2 the check and when they go there all of the check airmen or the
3 training captains would be speaking about the unique nuances to
4 every airfield that they check a pilot in. So --

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. -- but to what degree that is and how in-depth it is, I don't
7 know because I'm not involved in that per se.

8 Q. Right, okay. Were you aware of the action pilots divert the
9 day before going into Burley?

10 A. Yes, I was.

11 Q. Okay. Can you explain that?

12 A. Yes. Burley is -- typically if there's snow falling at
13 Burley or some of the other places that we go to with UPS, if they
14 do not have a deicing capability or a hangar to put our airplane
15 in, that our typical manner to operate -- or if it's below
16 minimum, I guess -- but typically on the snow side -- is to leave
17 it and go to the next place where they could do the drop, in this
18 case it was Twin Falls --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- out of Burley, because they don't have deice and if the
21 airplane lands and there's snowfall and we can't get it cleaned,
22 you can depart.

23 Q. Okay. I was trying to look in the operations manual you all
24 had sent and some of the other guidance. I couldn't find anything
25 specific that was written for Burley or any of the airports that

1 if it's snowing, depart. Is that institutionalized someplace or
2 is this just something that you just tell the pilot if it's
3 snowing, go someplace else?

4 A. No, and it's not just if it's snowing. If it's snowing and
5 there's no deice equipment there -- because if there's snowing in
6 Jackson, we're still going to go to Jackson because we can get
7 deiced.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. And so, the pilot has to know if you're landing at this
10 airport and it meets your minimum criteria to land, as long as
11 they've got deicing stuff, you're fine or a hangar to park it in.
12 But otherwise, you'd be in a pickle if it's snowing and you're
13 going to (indiscernible) somewhere.

14 Q. I understand.

15 A. That's the knowledge that we give them basically is that,
16 hey, whatever because of your tactile ice check, you're going to
17 have to get deiced if you don't. So, if it's snowing, you'd
18 better be prepared to sit there if they don't have deice stuff.

19 Q. So, does Burley have deice capability or a hangar?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. No, they don't. And that's why it was a depart from there if
23 it's snowing.

24 Q. Okay. And she diverted and were you looped into the flight
25 following for that leg when she diverted or were you aware of what

1 was --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- going on?

4 A. Typically, if it comes through depending on where they're at,
5 they'll text it to me or I'll get the email that says I'm
6 diverting to Twin because of snow or whatever.

7 Q. Okay. And so, she diverted and she got to Twin Falls.
8 Right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. And do you know what happened while she was at Twin
11 Falls? Did she offload? Did they bring --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- trucks to --

14 A. She'll text the UPS driver -- well, they'll actually probably
15 hear her depending on where she's at -- but she would text the UPS
16 contact and say I'm diverting to Twin Falls and then they'd send
17 the driver over there. She waits till the driver gets there, they
18 offload at Twin and then she goes back to Salt Lake on that route.

19 Q. Okay. So, on that day, that's what happened with the UPS
20 driver. She texted or called, the UPS driver came back, came
21 there, offloaded and then what did she do? Do you recall?

22 A. I don't recall other than I think she just returned back to
23 Salt Lake.

24 Q. Okay. Do you know if she talked to either Dave or Dan or
25 anybody like that?

1 A. I don't know.

2 Q. Okay. Any repercussions for pilots who have to divert?

3 A. No. No, they didn't have any -- no, I've never -- it's their
4 decision and we fully support them based on what they see is the
5 weather and what they think is safe to do at that time. But, no.
6 And there's no added cost to anybody as far as that goes. It's
7 not something that has a negative factor on the UPS or on Gem Air.
8 It's actually built-in to our -- I mean, it's kind of built into
9 the understanding for various areas and we work those things out
10 ahead of time with the UPS to know where is -- if we can't land
11 here, where do you want us to go. In some cases, it's turn
12 around, go back to Salt Lake, but in this case it's -- with Burley
13 it's Twin Falls is the --

14 Q. Yes.

15 A. -- go-to.

16 Q. But just closing the loop on this one, Tim, there isn't
17 anything in the operations manual that says specifically that
18 Burley, if it's snowing, you're going there. This is just kind of
19 something that the pilots all know or -- but it's not any --

20 A. If you look at some of those training records and some of
21 those question-and-answer things that we did with the pilot --

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. -- you'll see where there's a story about Burley and the
24 forecast scenario. It's a scenario-based training module --

25 Q. Um-hum.

1 A. -- that says if it's doing this, what are you going to do,
2 and she answered the question correctly.

3 Q. Yes, and that was what -- I saw the ground test saying that.
4 She answered it correctly saying I would divert to Twin Falls.
5 But I'm just kind of curious, where did she get that? Somebody
6 just told her or is it in a manual someplace that she can
7 reference to say these airports, if it's snowing, I'm going to X
8 airport, period.

9 A. Not that I know of, but I also wasn't involved in that
10 training class --

11 Q. Right.

12 A. -- when they did that exercise.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. But I do know that it is something that they discussed on all
15 of our routes, but I can't tell you if it's formalized because I
16 don't know that the training module enough since I don't deliver
17 it.

18 Q. I got it, yes, totally understandable. And this may be in
19 the same vein, too, Tim, but I'm kind of curious on -- let me
20 share the screen here real quick. I'm going to pull up the
21 approach and the chart.

22 A. And they do that winter weather operations, too. You saw
23 that probably.

24 Q. I did and I appreciate that. So, this is the RNAV chart, and
25 I don't need you to get into the weeds with this and such, but I'm

1 kind of curious. It looks like a stepdown, you know, RNAV, but
2 I'm curious how in the Caravan with the 1000, how would a pilot
3 fly this? Would they fly it as a dive and drive stepdown to these
4 altitudes or would they fly this on a whatever the glide path
5 angle would be that they would --

6 A. Yes --

7 Q. -- should be --

8 A. -- and I -- because I --

9 Q. -- like .75 --

10 A. Because I don't fly it, I can't answer that question and I've
11 never flown a G-1000 aircraft, so --

12 Q. Okay, okay.

13 A. -- I can't -- I couldn't answer that.

14 Q. Well, let me stop sharing then, because that won't do you any
15 good. Now, I'm curious if somebody --

16 A. Well, it's actually a David and Dan question for sure --

17 Q. Sure.

18 A. -- and/or the other pilots. Without a doubt they'll tell you
19 exactly what they've done, how they do it at Burley.

20 Q. Got it. And I'll leave it to that.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. So, you mentioned a little bit about they had concerns and
23 there aren't any, like, formalized special procedures that, you
24 know, maybe Dan and Dave have -- can tell us something in the
25 training for Burley. But you said they had approached Burley

1 airport with some of their concerns about -- prior to this
2 accident, and I guess you guys were alerted more to the visual
3 obstacles by seeing those how, you know, those were affecting the
4 glide path and such. Do you know who they went to at the airport
5 and approached with their concerns? Did they approach their POI
6 or anybody?

7 A. I don't know. That was before my time.

8 Q. Okay. Well, then the time that you've been here, since last
9 summer. Had they -- do you --

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. From my understanding, all I ever heard was that the Burley
13 airport continues to have a bit of deterioration. There's fewer
14 runway lights that worked, there's fewer this that works. And so
15 -- but I don't know when and how they've communicated those things
16 in the past.

17 Q. Okay. Who's the POI for Gem Air?

18 A. Paul Pia.

19 Q. How do you spell his last name?

20 A. P-i-a.

21 Q. P-i -- Pia, okay. Do you ever met him?

22 A. I have.

23 Q. Okay. When was the last time you met him?

24 A. When was he here last? Whenever the last inspection was. I
25 can't remember if it was in the fall last year. I've known Paul

1 from working in my previous job as well from Mission Aviation
2 Fellowship. I had worked with him on some things that we did as
3 well through that certificate, so --

4 Q. Okay. How long -- do you know how long he'd been on the
5 certificate as POI?

6 A. I don't know how long. He was with Gem -- or he was on Gem
7 Air's certificate before I came.

8 Q. Okay. And has he been out there since the accident, to your
9 knowledge?

10 A. No, they were actually slated to come for our normal
11 inspection on the 22nd of April, just a week later, and they
12 decided not to come in light of the situation.

13 Q. Okay. Have you observed their inspections when they come
14 out? You said you had one in the fall so you were there then.
15 Were you --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. What did they do?

18 A. Well, I actually was the one who handled the last one on
19 maintenance, because we didn't have a DOM at the time. And so, I
20 met with the maintenance inspector for his last inspection and he
21 was doing follow-up stuff on SAS stuff that they had been working
22 on on the SAS system that the FAA is using now.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. Paul did a couple of rides, I believe, and then we just had a
25 recent -- although I don't think Paul did it -- we just had a new

1 check airman that we added that they did in Twin Falls about a
2 week ago or a week and a half ago.

3 Q. Um-hum. Okay. You did a couple of rides. Were you talking
4 about --

5 A. I did a check ride for -- to qualify a check airman.

6 Q. Oh, okay.

7 A. I took care of it.

8 Q. Okay, not --

9 A. No, Paul did also a recertification of check airman, I
10 believe is what he did when he was -- that's typically what he
11 does when he comes.

12 Q. Okay. Does he ride on any of your -- observe any of the 293s
13 or the 299s, 297s --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- any of those?

16 A. I believe so. A check airman giving one of those rides --

17 Q. Got it.

18 A. -- all would have observed that, yes.

19 Q. So, he would be -- he'd be observing the check airman getting
20 a 293, 97 --

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. -- 99.

23 A. That's it.

24 Q. Okay. Great. I mean, this has been really helpful, Tim, I
25 appreciate it.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Fabian, do you have any -- do you want to come
2 in and see if you have any questions for Tim?

3 MR. SALAZAR: Thank you, Dave. I don't have any questions.
4 My video should be coming up soon. Tim, thank you for being here
5 for the interview.

6 MR. VENNELL: Yes.

7 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

8 Q. Yes. And just, I don't have any follow-ups either, Tim, so
9 one of the things I always like to ask the guys, is there anything
10 more that you want to add or anything you think that might be
11 helpful, because understanding this really is a safety
12 investigation. We're just trying to find out what happened, any
13 information maybe I didn't ask about that you really want to
14 share?

15 MR. VENNELL: Yes, I would and you can find this as you dig
16 into information. And I have no idea if this played into, and I'm
17 not -- yes, anyway -- if this played into her thought pattern that
18 day, but I know that she had been working towards a hair
19 appointment for that day that had been rescheduled on numerous
20 occasions, like a haircut thing. And I have -- I just know that
21 the reason why she did Burley on a back-to-back, normally pilots
22 don't do Burley the same, you know, two days in a row because of I
23 need to give some a long day and some a short day, and so that's
24 how I do it. But she needed that day because of a hair
25 appointment that she had that had been rescheduled on numerous

1 occasions and she had already paid for it. As you look into it, I
2 would be curious to know what time that appointment was supposed
3 to be scheduled for. I can't tell you when it was, and I don't
4 know who it was with. It was in Salt Lake.

5 Q. Was it on the same day of the accident?

6 A. It was.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And that's the reason why she had Burley that day was so that
9 she could get that hair appointment done. And so, I --

10 Q. So, she had the rest of the day off, you were able to give
11 her a half day to do the Burley run and then get back --

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. -- to Salmon --

14 A. No, it was actually in Salt Lake. She was staying in Salt
15 Lake --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- for -- she was covering down there. So, it was in Salt
18 Lake where the appointment was and so -- but I don't know when
19 that appointment was. I don't know if it played a factor in
20 reasons why she chose to, you know, to shoot the approach twice or
21 I don't know. I just know that there was a lot of -- a lot of
22 effort went into that hair appointment as far as that goes. But
23 --

24 Q. Well, if she diverted -- if she had to divert to Twin Falls,
25 I'm assuming since that would have been the end of her actual duty

1 day, she would have been just coming back to Salt Lake City.

2 Correct?

3 (Crosstalk)

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. But if she had finished her run and landed in Burley, then
8 her next flight would have been straight to Salt Lake. Right?

9 A. Correct, yes.

10 Q. Okay.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Anything else that you can think
12 of?

13 MR. VENNELL: No, unless you guys got any other questions --

14 MR. LAWRENCE: No, if there's any time -- well, you and I are
15 going to talking a lot over the next couple of weeks anyway and
16 we're going to be corresponding and such. But anytime that you
17 could think of anything in connection with this interview that you
18 think might be helpful. A lot of times people go home and they
19 go, wow, I should have said this or, you know, they kind of
20 metabolize the whole process and --

21 MR. VENNELL: Sure.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: -- think of something that might help. And I
23 just want you to reach out, even though we're going to be talking
24 a lot anyway, reach out and let me know or let Fabian know, too.

25 MR. VENNELL: Sure.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. I appreciate it.
2 (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 CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT
 NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO
 ON APRIL 13, 2022
 Interview of Tim Vennell

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR22FA151

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: May 16, 2022

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.



Maria Socorro R. Abellar
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT

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NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO

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Accident No.: WPR22FA151

ON APRIL 13, 2022

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Interview of: DAN SCHROEDER, Director of Operations
Gem Air

Via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday,
May 24, 2022

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

FABIAN SALAZAR, Regional Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CRAIG KAREL, Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

JOANNE WOLTERS, President
(Representative for Mr. Schroeder)

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:00 a.m. CDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: -- just go ahead and get started. For the record, my name is David Lawrence. I'm with the NTSB. I'm an operations investigator assigned to this accident investigation. So I'm looking at pilot issues and everything related to the pilot.

Fabian Salazar is on and he -- I'll let him introduce himself.

MR. SALAZAR: Hello, Dan. Fabian Salazar, regional investigator for the NTSB. I'm the investigator in charge of this accident.

MR. LAWRENCE: And also, party to our investigation we have, Dan, is the FAA. And as part of our group, the FAA's Craig Karel is going to be on.

Craig, do you want to introduce yourself?

MR. KAREL: Hello, Dan. Craig Karel. I've been assigned from the office to be investigator in charge for the FAA. So I'm participating with the NTSB on the investigation.

MR. LAWRENCE: Dan -- go ahead.

MR. SCHROEDER: And JoAnne is here. JoAnne Wolters who is the president of Gem Air.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. Thanks. Hi, Joann.

MS. WOLTERS: Hello.

MR. LAWRENCE: Just so you know -- so everybody is on the

1 same page. The FAA is party to our investigation but I want to
2 assure you that their role is no different than Fabian's and mine
3 with the NTSB. We're just trying -- it's a safety investigation.
4 We're trying to find out what happened so we can prevent it again.
5 Anything said in any of the interviews that the FAA is
6 participating in cannot be used for certificate or enforcement
7 actions. Craig's role is simply to help us out. And his role is
8 to try and help find out what happened so we can prevent it from
9 happening again.

10 Couple of things -- so you've got JoAnne. JoAnne, your last
11 name is Walters. Right?

12 MS. WOLTERS: Wolters with an O.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Excuse me?

14 MR. SCHROEDER: It's Wolters with an O. W-o-l-t-e-r-s.
15 Yeah.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Good, thanks. I just want to -- both of you
17 guys to understand and Dan especially, that this is a very normal
18 part of our process in investigations to talk the 119s and the
19 management personnel of a certificate and carrier. So don't read
20 anything into this. This is just normal for us to have a
21 conversation with the head people on a certificating carrier on
22 the 119s.

23 Like I said, it's a safety investigation. As we're doing
24 this -- I guess, you don't have video capability or do you?

25 MR. SCHROEDER: Well, let's see. There you go.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: There you go. Good. It works better if we
2 have video, too. Because one of the things I might do is I might
3 pull up some documents or something just to ask a question on so
4 you can at least see it, Dan.

5 If there's anything I ask about that you want to reference,
6 just let me know and I'll pull it up for you. There's no -- it's
7 all transparent. We're not trying to -- there's no tricks to
8 this. We're just trying to get some information.

9 MR. SCHROEDER: Yeah.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: I know we're doing this virtually. So -- and
11 we are going to be recording this interview of transcription at a
12 later date. I will be taking notes. I type like -- I'm a former
13 airline. I type with my two fingers on the flight and management
14 computer. So I take my time sometimes. And if I'm not making eye
15 contact or there's a little pause in the conversation, don't read
16 anything into it. It's just me catching up with some of my notes.

17 If I ask you a question that you don't understand, please
18 just stop me and ask me to clarify it. I don't know is a
19 perfectly acceptable answer. If you don't know the answer to it,
20 just say, I don't know. That's fine.

21 MR. SCHROEDER: Right.

22 INTERVIEW OF DAN SCHROEDER

23 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

24 Q. Do you have any questions on the process?

25 A. You know, we have looked into this ourselves. Or I've looked

1 into this. And I have quite a few concerns regarding this. And
2 it's concerns with the FAA, their publications, and the airport.
3 And I don't believe that this airport has -- I think it's -- I
4 think that the FAA, the airport management are responsible for
5 what's happened. Because the research that I've done indicates to
6 me that there are certain things that are way out of whack at this
7 airport. And I will give you one to start with if I may.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. On the approach, the VOR approach, it's certified for
10 category A, B, C, and D aircraft. So if I asked any of you what
11 is a category D aircraft, could you come up with one? How about a
12 747? So the FAA has made a publication that you can execute this
13 approach in a category D aircraft on the VOR approach. And I
14 don't think that that can happen. And it is my believe now that
15 the FAA has been extremely negligent in having that sort of
16 approach and putting out to the public.

17 Q. So you --

18 A. We have -- and that's kind of working backwards on this thing
19 a bit. There's also all of these things that we have looked into
20 that the FAA (indiscernible) for the airport because they did not
21 believe it was safe. It didn't meet their current standards and
22 that has been going on for a long time.

23 This organization, through our normal pre-flighting, didn't
24 have privy to that information. That the airport did not meet
25 standards because of the stats that were put up there. Brittney

1 did not have access to that information.

2 Q. Well, I'll tell you what. I'll give you a chance to kind of
3 expand on that in a little bit because that will be part of some
4 of the questions I have for you and all. But let me get started
5 with just -- so we can get some foundation first. And we do this
6 for --

7 A. Sure.

8 Q. -- all the interviews, Dan. If I can get your full name and
9 age.

10 A. My name is Daniel Lee -- pronounced Schroeder spelled
11 Schroeder and I was born May 2nd, 1948, so I'm like, what, 73 or
12 74.

13 Q. What is your current title at Gem Air?

14 A. I am director of operations.

15 Q. Just kind of briefly -- can you just tell me what your roles
16 and responsibilities as the DO for Gem Air?

17 A. The overall operations of the aircraft (indiscernible) try
18 and make it a safe organization.

19 Q. You're obviously a pilot. Just briefly, what kind of
20 certificates do you hold and ratings?

21 A. I've been flying since 1977. I hold an ATP (indiscernible)
22 multi-engine, multi-engine instructor, instrument instructor,
23 ground instructor, advanced ground instructor. I have 27,000
24 hours. My average written test score for all of those licenses
25 that I've helped put people in for ground school, for written

1 exams is just slight south of 95 percent. And I've had one person
2 bust a check ride, say, in the last 40 years.

3 Q. Great. Just a very short Cliff Notes version of your
4 background, your personal background. Just a short version.

5 A. Well, let's see. I'm a Vietnam veteran. I served in Vietnam
6 with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade with the (indiscernible) and
7 with the 4th as an operations and intelligence infantry. And
8 after that, I got out -- after the service, I used my VA money to
9 learn how to fly and have been flying since '77. Been here since
10 '82.

11 Q. And that's a nice segue, Dan. If you can give me just a --
12 kind of a brief history of Gem Air. Just a Cliff Notes version of
13 it.

14 A. Geez, you know, we started -- my wife and I (indiscernible)
15 back in 1982. And it was called (indiscernible) at the time. And
16 same certificate number. We went from single engine backcountry
17 operation to multi-engine to IFR capabilities. We still have
18 commuter status. We've run a commuter airline under EAS out of
19 Salt Lake for a while. We still have our commuter status. We're
20 kind of a half freight company, half (indiscernible) tourist
21 backcountry organization. We fly for the United States Forest
22 Service into the backcountry for them whatever they have in mind.
23 And we still do instruction around here. Yeah.

24 Q. Great, thanks. Total number of aircraft and total number of
25 pilots.

1 A. Oh, geez. We're getting ready for our summer season right
2 now. So we're bringing in like another -- we have 11 airplanes
3 and -- let me see -- one, two, three. Gosh, we got -- we're
4 bringing another five pilots this summer. And we have one, two,
5 three, four, five, six -- we have about eight, nine pilots right
6 now. Yeah.

7 Q. Total number of aircraft. About 11? Is that what you said?

8 A. On certificate --

9 Q. If you don't know right offhand, that's fine. We've got the
10 ops specs so we have the --

11 A. (Indiscernible) certificate. Yeah.

12 Q. Yeah, we have that.

13 A. Yeah. Sorry.

14 Q. Appreciate it. Is -- who is -- you mentioned about, you
15 know, doing things safely and such. Who is responsible for
16 safety? Is there -- you're not required to have a director of
17 safety. But do you have an equivalent position?

18 A. We're not required. David is our director of safety. And we
19 go back to 91.3 of the Federal Aviation Rules and Regulations.
20 And try to emphasize that.

21 Q. Does Gem Air have an SMS program?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Safety management system. So you do not have an SMS program?

24 A. Well, not officially.

25 Q. Why not?

1 A. Why not?

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. I guess we just haven't gotten into it. But you know, I
4 don't think we're so actively -- yeah, yeah.

5 Q. Does Gem Air use any flight data monitors? I know it's not
6 required to have like a flight data recorder. But are there any
7 type of recording devices or flight data monitors for you to
8 either download or review for operational data to see what's going
9 on on the line?

10 A. No, we don't. Although I believe within the G1000, you can
11 pull up all kinds of information there.

12 Q. Do you do that?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Just curious why not if it's capable to look at operational
15 data on the G1000. Why don't you look at it?

16 A. You know, maybe we're too trusting, I guess. I don't know.
17 There's FlightAware that we use. We try to monitor the flights as
18 best we can. Yeah.

19 Q. Is FlightAware how you do flight following under the 135 or
20 flight locating, I should say, under --

21 A. No.

22 Q. What do you use -- how do you do flight locating?

23 A. Pilots snap a picture of their flight data sheet and send it
24 to the office. Within that is their time off, their estimated
25 time to the next point. Things like that. Yeah.

1 Q. Do they contact the company or anything when they arrive?

2 A. Sure.

3 Q. Is that via phone or is that looked at --

4 A. Either (indiscernible).

5 Q. Does Gem Air have any kind of voluntary means of reporting
6 safety issues to management?

7 A. Yeah. We have a safety program drop box where people can
8 make suggestions or -- and we're always open to anything.

9 Q. Is that drop box or are those suggestions anonymous?

10 A. They can be. Yeah. It's in a locked box with a hole in it.

11 Q. That would be the primary means if they needed to communicate
12 with you or communicate a safety issue with the company? That's
13 how they would do it via that drop box?

14 A. Unless they want to do it on phone or a visual.

15 Q. You said you don't have an SMS. And you don't have like
16 flight data monitors other than the G1000 but you don't do
17 downloads on that. This is something I ask most all of --
18 certificated operators. How do you know that your pilots are
19 complying with procedures if you don't have an (indiscernible)
20 program or SMS or anything like that? So how do you know when
21 they got out there and they're flying the line that they're
22 actually complying with the procedures?

23 A. You know, there's a certain amount -- we hire pilots who have
24 been certified by the Federal Aviation Administration. And there
25 is -- with -- and we go through training. We go through our check

1 rides. And there's a certain amount of -- or a good degree of, I
2 guess you could say, trust that the FAA has trusted you, the
3 federal government has trusted you to be a commercial pilot. We
4 also trust those people to do -- to follow our procedures and to
5 do the right thing. So there's a big amount of trust, I guess, in
6 there. Yeah.

7 Q. Switching gears a little bit, Dan, how did you find out about
8 the accident and then what did you do?

9 A. I'm not sure exactly how we found out about it. Yeah. I'm
10 not sure. I think we -- yeah, I think David heard about it. And
11 then David went down to it.

12 Q. So David went to --

13 A. Burley --

14 Q. -- down to Burley. Does the company have like an emergency
15 response plan or a manual or anything like that to follow?

16 A. We have our operations manual. And I'm not sure what kind of
17 emergency response we could have had in this case here, you know.

18 Q. Switching gears again. Tell me a little bit about Brittney
19 and how you knew her and how she came on with Gem Air.

20 A. Brittney is -- I don't know -- part of Salmon. You could sit
21 there and say she's part of the Salmon family. Her dad I taught
22 how to fly. And Brittney started here, too. And then went off to
23 some flight school and started teaching that. And then after a
24 period of time, she came back to her home -- stopping grounds.
25 It's where she was --

1 Q. You okay? It's okay, Dan. Just take a moment. We can move
2 on to some other lines, you know, Dan. I'm just kind of curious
3 about -- are you okay? Do you need some water by the way?

4 A. No, I'm fine.

5 Q. Pilots in general at Gem Air, where do they typically come
6 from? Do you recruit them or what?

7 A. Lot of our pilots are young pilots. They come from flight
8 schools. They're -- I don't know -- I think many of them use us
9 as steppingstones to move on to the airlines or something else,
10 you know. We have some people -- like Salmon, like to live here,
11 so they're more permanent people that will stay around for a long
12 period of time.

13 Q. Then for the training of the pilots, when they come onboard,
14 are they all basically VFR pilots to start with? Because I
15 noticed on Brittney's 8410 that you did for her when she onboarded
16 last year, they had the 293 and the 299 check but there wasn't a
17 297 check. Are they just VFW to start with?

18 A. Sometimes.

19 Q. When they transition like -- in this case, it was Brittney.
20 When they transition to the Caravan, are they transitioning as
21 instrument rated and IFR qualified to go in, go fly the Caravan?

22 A. I'm not sure what you're saying -- asking.

23 Q. Yeah. Let me just bring up real quick the -- I'm going to
24 share my screen so you can see it. I'm going to share it so that
25 -- this was the -- you did the first 8410 on her and I noticed

1 that there wasn't a -- there was a 293. This was when she
2 onboarded back in June 10th last year. I may be missing
3 something, Dan. I'm not trying to trick or anything. I'm just
4 trying to check the boxes as such. But there wasn't a 297 check
5 on this and she didn't do any instrument approaches. That's why I
6 ask are they all VFR -- only VFR for when they first come on.

7 A. Some of them are. Yes. And I think she probably didn't have
8 the time to go IFR.

9 Q. Got it. And then, in November, David had given her a check
10 ride, too, in the 208. And she did do instrument approaches down
11 here but there -- she wasn't signed off on a 297 up here. So I'm
12 just -- maybe I'm missing something. I don't know.

13 A. Well, I think that that's what -- the whole thing check ride
14 was all about.

15 Q. The 297?

16 A. That she was -- so she would be instrument qualified.

17 Q. I just -- I didn't know if there was another 8410 someplace
18 that showed that she had a 297 check. I just didn't know. But I
19 just happened to notice that.

20 A. Well, I just -- I don't know -- you know, I don't think that
21 that was the intent of that at all. She should have had her IFR
22 check at that point. And that --

23 Q. Well, she did have it on this one. This is the one Mike Hart
24 did back in February of this year. She did get a 297. But that's
25 why -- I was just asking why there was -- some had them signed off

1 and some didn't.

2 A. So some -- you know, they can come in and fly VFR and then we
3 try to -- I think in Brittney's case, she did a lot of deadhead
4 legs with someone else who was capable of IFR and would pick up
5 her IFR that way on deadhead legs to get her instrument time and
6 more training done.

7 Q. Again, I appreciate that. The training that's conducted for
8 the Caravan pilots, is it a combination of simulator and actual
9 airplane? It's like you're going to flight safety anyplace for
10 Caravan. So just kind of describe the training for the Caravan
11 pilots.

12 A. Well, there's all of the ground school. And we do have a
13 simulator here for -- and we can -- we can hook it up to a Caravan
14 so we will do that. Then we do flight training. So we try to --
15 our idea is even though it doesn't count, we try to get the people
16 out on the SIM and ground school so that when they get in the
17 airplane it's easy-peasy for them, so to speak.

18 Q. Good. And now, you did some training for Brittney. Was
19 there any concerns -- this is a standard question. Any concerns
20 about her pilot ability, piloting ability?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Good. Then switching gears again. This may get back into
23 what you started with a little bit. But you're obviously familiar
24 with Burley Airport. Correct?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And you've flown in there personally. Correct?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. You mentioned the VOR approach. I think you were referencing
4 actually the RNAV approach. Is that what you were alluding to,
5 going into --

6 A. No, no. It's been a while since I've been to Burley. And
7 I've been in there a couple of times. And I didn't have any
8 issues that I can remember at this time with the Burley Airport.
9 But for whatever reason, I -- it's not on my plate to go into --
10 or it hasn't been on my plate to go into airports and sit there
11 and see if it's a good airport or not a good airport. So yeah, I
12 went in the airport and I didn't have any issues with it. And
13 that's all I can say as far as that goes.

14 Q. I want to bring up -- and I'm going to share my screen here
15 just a real quick second. It's been -- I actually have flown,
16 Dan, the 208 but it was back in the 1980s so it was definitely not
17 with a Garmin 1000 and all the gee whiz stuff. But this is the
18 RNAV GPS 2-0 approach.

19 A. Sure.

20 Q. And I know you fly the Caravan. Correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Yeah. I'm just kind of curious. On this approach -- and
23 we're looking at the profile view down here and the plan view up
24 here. How would -- how are Caravan pilots trained to actually fly
25 this approach? Is it on autopilot? How do they fly it in an RNAV

1 or lateral and vertical modes? I mean, how are they trained to do
2 this type of approach?

3 A. You know, I think we do a lot of different approaches into a
4 lot of different airports. I personally try to get them to use
5 the autopilot as much as possible so that they are familiar with
6 the autopilot. But then, on the other side of the coin, when we
7 fly, we have to demonstrate that we can execute approaches, fly
8 the airplane without an autopilot. This aircraft doesn't need an
9 autopilot.

10 So it's really kind of a double-edged sword where you need to
11 fly the airplane with the autopilot. And you need to fly -- be
12 able to fly the same approach without the autopilot. Because
13 that's -- in reality, that's how we're tested anyway.

14 Q. Yeah. Totally understand. Just going back to this approach
15 though. If you're flying the RNAV in a lateral mode -- so you're
16 flying it on the Garmin -- how would -- are Caravan pilots taught
17 to descend? Is it to follow some type of pseudo-glide slope
18 that's been built in the RNAV -- or in the Garmin or is it to do a
19 vertical speed descent down to the runway?

20 A. Well, you know, if you have the assistance by Mr. Garmin, I
21 would sit there and say that, you know, we have -- Mr. Garmin
22 comes out and assists on different approaches with vertical
23 guidance. At the same time, many of our approaches that we
24 execute, there is no vertical guidance. So we're then going with
25 an air speed and power setting to pick a predetermined rate of

1 descent.

2 Q. So you're trying to -- and I don't want to put words in your
3 mouth but you're trying to maintain a constant glide path down to
4 the runway or you doing dive and drive?

5 A. No. I don't -- no, I don't do a dive and drive. No. It's a
6 constant rate of descent. I mean, there may be pilots who wish to
7 dive and drive. There's different schools of thought. But
8 personally, no, I'm kind of a constant rate of descent kind of
9 guy.

10 Q. Right. Is that -- that's called CDFA, constant descent final
11 approach. And is that in any of your manuals or guidance for the
12 pilots to execute these approaches as CDFA?

13 A. No. Not that I know of.

14 Q. Let me get out of that. Stop sharing that. For Caravan
15 pilots or, I guess, any Gem Air pilots, is there any special
16 procedures when operating into Burley?

17 A. No, I don't think so. No. There is right now. We don't go
18 into Burley.

19 Q. I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

20 A. There is right now. We don't go into Burley because --

21 Q. So you ceased operations into Burley?

22 A. We have because of the things that we found out that it's --
23 it doesn't meet standards. And -- yeah.

24 Q. Share something really quick with you. This is the ground
25 test portion that Brittney had taken. And it's -- there was

1 something in here -- Salt Lake to Burley, forecast minimums 1903
2 Twin Falls being the alternate. And what course of action is
3 Burley -- if it's snowing at Burley and her response was, divert
4 to Twin Falls. And I'm just kind of curious. Is that written
5 anywhere or is this kind of one of those (indiscernible) knowledge
6 that pilots know that if it's snowing in Burley, you're going to
7 divert?

8 A. Well, we fly into a couple of airports on a regular basis for
9 UPS that if there are ground icing conditions occurring, we don't
10 fly into those airports because those airports don't have a way to
11 deice the aircraft.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. So we have to (indiscernible) those airports. One is Burley.
14 And the other is Logan. So -- and -- yeah. So if there's ground
15 icing conditions going down or if it's snowing, then we just don't
16 go into those airports.

17 Q. But there's nothing written anywhere. That's just something
18 pilots know to do?

19 A. Yes. Well, I guess the only way that it's written is in this
20 thing here. Where Brittney was tested on that.

21 Q. You are aware, I would assume, that Brittney had diverted the
22 day before from Burley over to Twin Falls. Is that true?

23 A. Yes. Yeah.

24 Q. Do you know why she did and did she talk to you about that?

25 A. She -- the day before that diversion, she diverted from --

1 instead of going into Logan, she just went to Salt Lake because
2 they had ground icing conditions. The day before the accident,
3 she diverted out of Burley and went to Twin Falls because they had
4 ground icing conditions.

5 Q. Did she talk to you about that after that divert the day
6 before?

7 A. No, not personally. No.

8 Q. Did she talk to anybody? David or any of the other people
9 that -- to your knowledge?

10 A. To my knowledge, no. Yeah.

11 Q. It's kind of a standard question, too, Dan. Are there any
12 repercussions for a diversion like what she did the day before?

13 A. Not at all. It's what -- it's what we want if -- because we
14 don't want them going into an airport that has ground icing
15 conditions occurring and not a way to deice the airplane. So
16 they're encouraged to do that, to divert. It's been a policy.

17 Q. And I know you had -- you talked about Burley a little at the
18 very beginning and such, about your concerns with the airport and
19 one of the approaches. Have you approached anybody at the airport
20 or the FAA with your concerns about the airport and the approaches
21 there?

22 A. I have tried to get a hold of the FAA in Boise. I've tried
23 to get a hold of design in Salt Lake. I've tried to get a hold of
24 United States senators to sit there and say, hey, you guys need to
25 do something about this airport because of safety concerns. I try

1 to get everyone I can to do something about this airport. And as
2 of now, I have gotten nowhere. I have contacted every federal
3 government official that I can get my hands on to try to get them
4 to do something about this airport and I have gotten nowhere.

5 Q. Was this all since the accident or was some of these efforts
6 done prior to the accident?

7 A. This has all been since this has occurred.

8 Q. Just -- I'm going to wrap it up because you're probably
9 getting tired of hearing me talk and we'll let somebody else. But
10 another switch of gears. Operational control is a concept that
11 all certificated carriers must --

12 A. Sure.

13 Q. -- comply with. Who has operational control at Gem Air?

14 A. Well, we have quite a few people who have operational
15 control. I mean, I have. David (indiscernible) pilot has. The
16 director (indiscernible). Tim has. Yeah. And JoAnne has.

17 Q. And JoAnne does, too?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. On the day of the accident, who was responsible for
20 operational control of that particular flight?

21 A. Well, I guess you could say everyone was.

22 Q. I just touched on one last question before I pass it off.
23 The flight following, you had -- we talked a little bit earlier
24 but was there anybody that was monitoring the flight specifically
25 on the day of the accident?

1 A. You know, I get up usually at 6:00 in the morning or whatever
2 and I start looking at flights. I -- but as a general, David is
3 the contact. But as a general statement also, I think she was on
4 an IFR flight plan.

5 Q. Well, do you need a glass of water or anything? How you
6 doing, Dan?

7 A. I'm doing okay.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: I know. We're almost done. I'm going to see
9 if Fabian -- he's the investigator in charge with the NTSB. I'm
10 going to see if he has any questions, any follow-up.

11 MR. SALAZAR: Dan, I do not have any questions for you, sir.

12 MR. LAWRENCE: Then I'll pass it off to Craig.

13 MR. KAREL: Yeah, I just have one question, Dan.

14 BY MR. KAREL:

15 Q. I know when the pilots have to divert, they have a cell phone
16 that they call the UPS drivers to tell them to drive to Twin
17 because that's where the aircraft is going to divert to. Is those
18 cell phones -- are they personal use or does the company issue
19 cell phones to the pilots?

20 A. We don't issue any cell phone.

21 Q. So they'll use their personal phone to call to tell the UPS
22 drivers they're diverting to another airport?

23 A. I guess so. Yeah.

24 Q. Well, what is the procedure if they have to divert? I mean,
25 is there written procedure?

1 A. No, we don't have a written procedure for that.

2 MR. KAREL: Okay, that's the only question I had, David.

3 Thanks, Dan.

4 MR. SCHROEDER: Yeah.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: I don't have any follow-ups, Dan. This is
6 kind of your opportunity. Is there anything that you want to
7 share with us in the investigation knowing that this is a safety
8 investigation? We're trying to find out what happened and what we
9 can do to improve things and such and maybe something I -- we
10 didn't ask you about and you want to share.

11 MR. SCHROEDER: First of all, I'd like to say thank you for
12 the opportunity to do that. I do have some questions. At the
13 tail end of my questions, I'm going to revert back to that airport
14 on -- not on the approach that Brittney that was on but on the VOR
15 approach. It's certified for category Charlie and Delta aircraft.
16 So these Charlie and Delta aircraft, you're talking a 747 landing
17 at the Burley airport.

18 Somewhere along the line, design -- instrument approach
19 design and -- I don't know -- and the airport itself, they don't
20 talk to each other. They can't otherwise there would be no way
21 that they would certify that fast of an airplane to go in and
22 execute those approaches with the displaced thresholds and
23 everything else.

24 The information that -- the other information that Brittney
25 didn't have that we didn't have was the FAA to keep it up to

1 standards -- was that they needed to shorten the runways because
2 of the displaced thresholds. Brittney didn't have that
3 information. Gem Air didn't have that information. The FAA had
4 information that they were no longer going to fund the airport
5 because it didn't meet their criteria. Brittney didn't have that
6 information. I did not have that information.

7 On the approach that she executed there, there's some
8 structures that are mentioned. But the structures that she hit
9 weren't mentioned on the approach plate. And I listened to
10 somebody else who went in there and did this. And he was all
11 (indiscernible) try to crucify us, but the rotating beacon that
12 was on top of this wasn't functioning. It wasn't the right color.
13 And so the -- it's a little bit like a perfect storm that Brittney
14 went into. She -- there was so many things that were wrong with
15 the airport. That it didn't meet standards. Brittney didn't have
16 an opportunity.

17 So I have to sit there -- and for me, for all of the things
18 that I've -- for all the -- for all of the things that I've seen
19 and heard and discovered is that there's a big disconnect. And my
20 hopes are that these things are taken care of very quickly so that
21 something worse doesn't happen at the Burley Airport because
22 people are just not acting the way that they should.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate that, Dan. And actually, I'm
24 going to let Fabian, who is the investigator in charge, kind of
25 jump in here and just kind of tell you the nature of our

1 investigation and what we're looking at. If you want to just
2 share, Fabian.

3 MR. SALAZAR: Thanks, David. Dan, I think the first thing
4 I'd like to offer you is on behalf of the NTSB, our condolences.
5 We can tell that this is a huge loss to you personally, as well as
6 your company. So we definitely feel for you. I'd like to give
7 you my assurance that we have specialists in airports, TERPS. We
8 have specialists in TERPS looking into this accident,
9 investigating it, and we will give every one of your concerns its
10 due diligence. And hopefully, give you some closure when we get
11 to the end of this investigation.

12 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Fabian. And Dan, before I go, just --
14 I always make this offer to everybody we get a chance to talk to.
15 A lot of times when you -- we finish and after a day or so, you'll
16 metabolize a little bit about what we talked about and there may
17 be something else that comes to your mind that you would like to
18 share.

19 And I want to offer it to you that you're welcome to reach
20 out to us. You have all our emails. We're very transparent and
21 we're easy to get a hold of. So if you think of anything you want
22 to add, I want to offer to you that -- feel free to contact us any
23 time and add whatever you think you need to add or you think is
24 pertinent.

25 MR. SCHROEDER: Yeah. I appreciate that. And I had a

1 laundry list of stuff. And I'm reasonably sure that David, I
2 think, covered some of those things with you guys. I covered some
3 of those things. I just think that the whole airport procedures
4 need to have a thorough revisit.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate it. Thanks again for taking the
6 time to speak with us.

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: FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT
NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO
ON APRIL 13, 2022
Interview of Dan Schroeder

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR22FA151

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: May 24, 2022

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 black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the transcriber.

Katie Leach
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT

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NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO

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Accident No.: WPR22FA151

ON APRIL 13, 2022

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Interview of: DAVID SCHROEDER, Chief Pilot
Gem Air

Via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday,
May 24, 2022

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

FABIAN SALAZAR, Regional Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CRAIG KAREL, Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:00 p.m. CDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: Let's go ahead and get started. And this shouldn't take too long, David. Just for the record, my name is David Lawrence. It's nice to meet you. I'm with the NTSB. I'm an operations investigator and I'm assisting Fabian Salazar who is the investigator in charge who is on this. And he'll introduce himself here in a second.

I want to start off and just say, you know, on behalf of all of us, our condolences for your loss. And I know this is a tough time. You're a small organization where everybody knows everybody.

But I want to assure you that what -- we're talking to the 119s and the chief pilots, directors of operations of a certificated carrier is a very organic and normal part of our investigative process. So this is very typical for us but our total role in this is to try and find out what happened to Brittney and hopefully prevent it from happening again. So that's our primary goal here.

Talking to you is just a normal part of the process so I appreciate you taking the time. We --

MR. SCHROEDER: Glad to help.

MR. LAWRENCE: Appreciate that. We got a couple of people on the call here. First off, I'll let Fabian introduce himself first.

1 MR. SALAZAR: Hello, David. Nice to meet you.
2 Fabian Salazar. As Dave Lawrence had mentioned, I'm the
3 investigator in charge for the accident.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: And also, part of -- David -- our normal
5 process -- the FAA is party to all our investigations by federal
6 statute. So we have Craig onboard. And I'll let Craig introduce
7 himself and explain his role as the FAA on this.

8 MR. KAREL: Good morning, David. Craig Karel. We know each
9 other from the past. Yeah. I've been assigned by the Boise FSDO
10 to investigate the FAA side of the accident. So I'm working with
11 both David Lawrence and Fabian Salazar on trying to figure out
12 root cause and how to prevent this from happening in the future.
13 I'm hoping we have a good open discussion and we can get some good
14 questions answered.

15 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah. FAA's role, Dave, is no different than
17 ours. Just safety in mind. And anything that's said or discussed
18 during the interview cannot be used for enforcement action or
19 certificate action or anything like that. So feel free to just be
20 open, you know, in your answers. Nothing that is going to come
21 back to certificate or enforcement.

22 Do you have anybody with you in the room or are you just
23 solo?

24 MR. SCHROEDER: Just me.

25 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great. So I mentioned the safety

1 aspects. We will be recording as typically. These interviews for
2 transcription -- they'll be transcribed. Just the audio portion.
3 And then they'll be transcribed for a part of the record.

4 I will be taking some notes on my computer and I'm old school
5 from the airlines. I type with my two fingers like the flight
6 management computer. I type like that. So if I'm not making
7 virtual eye contact with you while we're talking or if I'm looking
8 down, I'm just catching up on my notes. So don't read anything
9 into it.

10 If there is a pause while I'm catching don't read anything
11 into it. It's just me typing and trying to catch up. If I ask a
12 question or anybody asks a question that you don't know the answer
13 to, I don't know is perfectly acceptable. If you just don't know,
14 that's fine.

15 If you need clarity on a question, you know, just ask me to
16 rephrase it or ask me to clarify. You guys are the expert on the
17 operations so I may ask a question that you just want to make sure
18 we're getting the right answer for.

19 And there's really -- do you have any questions on the
20 process?

21 MR. SCHROEDER: I don't think so. Not right now.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: Great.

23 INTERVIEW OF DAVID SCHROEDER

24 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

25 Q. Let's kind of just dive into the easy ones to start with.

1 I'm just -- for some background information. Let me get your full
2 name, age, and your title at Gem Air.

3 A. David Michael Walter Schroeder, full name. I'm 38 and chief
4 pilot at Gem Air.

5 Q. How many years have you been with Gem Air?

6 A. I've been doing this -- I've been with Gem Air full time
7 since 2014.

8 Q. As chief pilot, just in general, what are your roles and
9 responsibilities?

10 A. I oversee pilot hiring, pilot training. I handle a lot of
11 the manuals, operation manuals, training manuals, as well. I
12 assist the director of operations in a lot of responsibilities.
13 And I recommend and train check airmen. Training captains for the
14 company, as well. As well as acting as a training captain and a
15 check airman.

16 Q. Great, I appreciate that. Obviously, you're a pilot. So in
17 general, how many hours do you have and what certificates and
18 ratings?

19 A. Pretty near 4,000 hours. And I'm an ATP rated pilot.

20 Q. Any type ratings?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Just a guesstimate of your total time.

23 A. Four-thousand hours.

24 Q. Oh, that's right. You did say that. I apologize. How much
25 of that time is in the Caravan by the way?

1 A. Probably about 1,000 hours.

2 Q. Just -- David, a Cliff Notes, short version of your aviation
3 background.

4 A. Let's see. Before joining Gem Air in 2014, I was -- I only
5 had 500 hours. So most of my hours and experience have come here
6 at Gem Air. But I got my private pilot's license here in Idaho as
7 a 19 or 20-year-old. I got my instrument rating. Worked on it as
8 I went through college. And got my commercial multi-engine, you
9 know, just before -- 2013/2014 area time. And was just flying
10 privately though. Not a CFI or anything like that.

11 Q. That was a nice concise answer. I like that. Thanks so
12 much. Could you do the same for just a brief history of Gem Air
13 as you know it? What is Gem Air and where did it come from?

14 A. Gem Air is -- well, an on-demand charter backcountry and
15 cargo air service provider based on Salmon, Idaho, since 1982
16 essentially. There was some change in ownership all throughout
17 (indiscernible) but the current owners are the same. Owners from
18 1982. Cargo represents -- cargo operations represent half the
19 business or so. Backcountry and other on-demand (indiscernible)
20 probably the other half of the business.

21 Q. How many pilots -- since you're chief pilot, how many pilots
22 are under your charge?

23 A. It's variable from time to time. Right now, we're just -- we
24 have seasonable hires that we're bringing on which is -- there's
25 five seasonable pilots that we're bringing on right now. And that

1 would be to join our existing, including myself, existing six
2 pilots that are year-round.

3 Q. And total number of aircraft and a breakdown if you can think
4 of it.

5 A. Yeah. I think we've got -- think we currently, after the
6 accident, minus that Caravan, have 12 aircraft. That would be
7 four Caravan, two Islanders, Piper Seneca, Cessna 206, Cessna 210,
8 Cessna 172, and currently we still have two Navajo Chieftains on
9 certificate but they're essentially retired. They're for sale.
10 They'll be removed from certificate shortly.

11 Q. Who is responsible over at Gem Air -- I know you don't have
12 to have a director of safety but do you have somebody that kind of
13 holds the equivalent responsibility?

14 A. Yeah, I am the director of safety for our safety program.

15 Q. Describe your safety program.

16 A. It's a voluntary non-punitive hazard reporting system. The
17 hazard reporting system -- it can be set up so it has an anonymous
18 factor to it if anybody reporting wants to be anonymous. Although
19 being anonymous isn't a requirement or anything. And currently,
20 the safety program -- as the safety manager, I take in any hazard
21 reports that are received.

22 And with the director of operations and our operations
23 manager and our maintenance personnel, we discuss each hazard
24 report as they come through, as needed. We don't always have --
25 it's not always a maintenance issue so maintenance isn't always

1 involved. But -- and then we try to come up with resolutions to
2 it if needed and -- or -- which could be training program changes
3 or recurrent training or better equipment, different equipment, et
4 cetera.

5 Q. Is there like a safety manual or policy that you guys have?

6 A. Yeah, we do. Our safety -- we have a safety -- we would like
7 to grow the safety program to where we have a full committee and
8 regular meetings but to be frank with you, we just don't have the
9 staff to be able to do that. So we do have a safety program,
10 safety mission statement. And kind of -- we call it our safety
11 program board which is at are base of operation in our maintenance
12 hangar with our maintenance personnel.

13 And then over in the operations side, as well, we have
14 another one. It has a drop box so that you can make anonymous
15 paper, written reports. Then there's also an electronic version
16 of it to be able to make an anonymous report to electronically, as
17 well, if you can't make it to the drop boxes.

18 Q. Do you all have a formalized SMS program?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Why not?

21 A. It's something we're working toward with our safety program.
22 The safety program is not drastically, I guess, different than I
23 think what a safety management system would be. So basically, our
24 safety program is the first step toward an SMS.

25 Q. I know there's regulatory requirements that are coming up in

1 the future for a 135 and such. But I was just curious if you had
2 one now. Do you guys use any kind of flight data monitors? I
3 know you're not required to have like an FTR and the whole -- that
4 whole thing and focal programs and such. But do you have any kind
5 of system or device on the aircraft to monitor operationally how
6 the airplanes are being flown?

7 A. No, we don't. Other than the G1000-equipped aircraft has
8 some capability to record operational data within it. But nothing
9 beyond that.

10 Q. So you -- do you take a look at that data on the G1000?

11 A. Yeah. Typically, it's just an audit that I do once a year.
12 And sometimes it's just -- sometimes the audit -- my -- isn't in
13 response to any accident or incident or hazard or anything. It's
14 just an audit just to see the pilot -- how pilots are operating
15 takeoff, cruise, following SOPs. And other times, you know, there
16 may be an exceedance of some sort of tolerance that we're going --
17 coming back and looking at for maintenance actions or -- if
18 maintenance action is required. So we don't have a regular set
19 though. A regular date that we review those -- review that
20 information. It's unscheduled.

21 Q. You mentioned something there that got my interest. Because
22 one of the questions I always ask certificated operators is how
23 would you know your pilots are complying with the SOPs. And you
24 just said that you look at that in -- not regular audit and check
25 that they're following SOPs. How do you know they're following

1 the SOPs?

2 A. Well, in the G1000, it collects information such as -- I
3 mean, I know exactly the power setting that they're using for
4 takeoff, climb, for cruise, everything like that. So those are
5 basic SOPs that we have in place. We operate at reduced takeoff
6 (indiscernible) reduced cruise power settings. Same thing that
7 goes with approach speeds and landing speeds. So I've looked at
8 that in the past to determine if pilots are following our SOP for
9 cruise operations.

10 Are you running it at max cruise or are you running it at the
11 required reduced power setting for cruise and how fast are you
12 typically coming in when you're on final (indiscernible) final.
13 So those are the sorts of things that I look at operationally when
14 I pull those cards.

15 Q. You said you only pull those maybe once a year or so.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Let me shift gears a second, David. How did you learn about
18 the accident and then what did you do?

19 A. I was notified by UPS. A UPS supervisor in Salt Lake City
20 who had just been -- I guess they had personnel on the ground in
21 Burley that was across the street from the accident and witnessed
22 the airplane sitting on top of the (indiscernible) Salt Lake
23 Office and then they called me immediately.

24 After I got the call, I notified our operation personnel
25 Tim Vennell in the office and then started making calls to try to

1 confirm the fact of the accident. And whether or not that was
2 indeed our airplane. And alert emergency personnel. And I gave
3 the father a call immediately (indiscernible). Well, actually,
4 not immediately. Once I could confirm that it was our airplane, I
5 called him. And I think Tim Vennell called the Boise FSDO and
6 relayed the information, I think, to Tom Weeks (ph.) down there.

7 Q. Do you guys have like an emergency response manual that you
8 follow?

9 A. Yeah, yeah. It's an operations (indiscernible) we shared
10 that with you, as well.

11 Q. I'll shift one more gears again here. And tell me about
12 Brittney and how did she come about flying for Gem Air? And talk
13 to me a little bit about her as a pilot.

14 A. Brittney -- we'd known Brittney for quite a long time.
15 Probably 10 years ago estimating she probably -- I think she
16 started her flight training here with us or at least had some
17 private flight training or private pilot's license. And she later
18 went on to flight school at I believe Utah State University. And
19 finished her -- maybe one of her ratings there before continuing
20 on to flight school in Arizona where she completed her commercial
21 rating, her multi-engine, her CFI, CFII, down there.

22 Her dad had and her -- her dad always had an interest of her
23 coming home. So and we -- since we knew her as a local in the
24 community, we always kind of stayed in contact. She would ask at
25 times for advice on what she should do for a career. And we

1 recommended that she go through CFI, CFII route and gain both
2 knowledge and experience since she's training others.

3 And we were coming to hire pilots -- it was over
4 (indiscernible) year ago doing our seasonal pilot hiring and
5 recruiting. And at that time, I don't know exactly how she became
6 a candidate but she reached out to us -- or if we had just been
7 staying in contact and mutually were understanding each other's
8 situation.

9 But she was interested in coming back to Salmon. And so she
10 came back to Salmon. And -- well, she interviewed with us
11 actually. Actually, she was already back in Salmon working for
12 her father is what she was doing. I think her flight school had
13 closed. So she came back to Salmon. Was already working here.
14 And came in and interviewed with us. And qualified for a seasonal
15 position with us.

16 And being a local pilot, she was a great fit, as well. Lived
17 locally. She flew -- she joined our new pilot training in May of
18 last year and completed that. Then flew a busy summer with us
19 last year flying single engine (indiscernible) just our single
20 engine Cessnas only. We didn't put her in a multi-engine Islander
21 or a Caravan at that point.

22 She performed well. She was very (indiscernible). She was
23 always prepared. She didn't have any training issues. No
24 training needed to be repeated. She progressed well through all
25 of it. Picked up the training quickly. Had good skills to begin

1 with. Good knowledge to begin with. And at the end of the summer
2 season, she was considering other flying opportunities but she had
3 been a good employee for us and had expressed interest in staying.
4 And we had opportunities for her to stay on with us as a full-time
5 year-round pilot.

6 At that point, this would have been in September or so.
7 Maybe late September/October. We started transitioning her into
8 flying the Caravan. And so she started ground training in the
9 fall for the Caravan and started to do flight training, as well.

10 She didn't meet IFR minimums right off the bat at -- in the
11 fall. So we trained her and gave her a VFR only check ride to be
12 able to fly VFR only. And she wasn't flying routes at that point.
13 But she was flying -- mainly gaining experience on VFR legs or on
14 empty leg where she could fly Part 91.

15 You didn't -- she didn't meet her IFR weather minimums or IFR
16 135 minimum until maybe January, mid-January or so. But for all
17 -- but through November, December, and January, she was frequently
18 -- I think she probably road along with me or I rode along with
19 her flying one-legs for a lot of time, dozens of flights, night
20 flights, actually IFR flights.

21 She flew along with -- one of our other training captains and
22 pilots, Mike Hart, who has been with us for a lot -- for several
23 years. Gaining experience on those Part 91 legs. Lot of IFR
24 flying on Part 91 legs, as well as observation from the right seat
25 on some of those Part 91 legs or the 135 legs when she wasn't

1 qualified, we're certified to fly. She was in training a long
2 time for the Caravan until (indiscernible).

3 I think you probably got that paperwork. I think it was very
4 early February maybe when she got an IFR check ride. And at that
5 point, she had a couple of months of Caravan flying and a lot of
6 IFR and Part 91 in it, as well, with a pilot sitting with her
7 right seat. She began flying the routes independently at that
8 point. I guess not (indiscernible) but without another pilot with
9 her. And was capable of flying all the IFR routes from that point
10 forward.

11 She was detail-oriented. She was one of our higher
12 performing pilots when it comes to the ground training or flight
13 training. She did very well on check rides, as well.

14 Q. Yeah. Let me share my screen real quick. And I think you've
15 already answered this for me. If you can see this. Hang on just
16 a second. But like I said, this is her 8410 that you had done.
17 This was back in November. Just to clarify. She had her 293 and
18 her 299 but you kept her VFR which is why didn't get her 297.
19 Correct?

20 A. That's right.

21 Q. Then this is the 8410 from February 17th. And that's when
22 she got IFR rated because she got the 297. From that point on
23 after 217, she was instrument qualified for the routes?

24 A. Yeah. And I think her issue wasn't total time. It was
25 nighttime. She was missing the nighttime -- 100 hours of

1 nighttime is what was limiting her for that 135 IFR flying.

2 Q. Got it. Where do you guys normally get your pilots? I know
3 you explained about how Brittney came and she was kind of a known
4 quantity. But typically, where do you get your pilots? Do you
5 recruit them someplace?

6 A. We use JSfirm and some online job recruiting websites. We
7 make posts there. Most of our summer pilots -- or a lot of summer
8 -- a lot of candidates just come submitting resumes. They're
9 interested in backcountry flying. So several -- lots of them are
10 unsolicited. They just send it in because they'd like to get some
11 -- do a summer or two of backcountry flying.

12 A lot of our pilots transition from a summer of backcountry
13 flying into a winter of cargo flying, as well. So after
14 (indiscernible) and if they're good pilots and show good promise,
15 then we will transition them into IFR flying for the winter
16 season, as well.

17 Brittney was one pilot last year that did it. But we had two
18 other pilots that did it, as well, that were just seasonal with
19 us.

20 Q. Just in general, the -- for the Caravan itself, kind of
21 describe the training for that. It's not like (indiscernible)
22 guys down to flight safety or anything like that. So what kind of
23 -- and the combination of the simulator and actual flying and
24 ground school, just kind of briefly -- what is the training for
25 Caravan pilots?

1 A. Well, the ground is -- you know, we follow our ground
2 training program for the Caravan, which is comprised of a lot of
3 instructor lead, as well as self-study. Quizzes and forms for the
4 pilot to fill out. There's annual Cessna -- Cessna provided cold
5 weather training the pilots are -- pilots have to do, as well, for
6 flying the Caravans in icy conditions.

7 We use our simulator to introduce pilots to the airplane and
8 pilots to the procedure. The simulator is not a G1000 Caravan
9 cockpit but it's a Garmin 530 Caravan cockpit. And we do have
10 Garmin 530-equipped Caravan. It's a good -- really good
11 transition into flying that IFR, flying the Caravan in IFR. So
12 Brittney did a lot of that prior to actually getting in the
13 airplane.

14 And then our -- you know, our flight training -- we begin
15 with basic VFR flight training maneuvers, SOPs. And then we move
16 on to the more advanced flying with the IFR flying after the fact.

17 Our -- we use a lot of our routes that we fly as training.
18 So on the simulator, we fly a lot of the routes. Usually all the
19 routes that we fly in the Caravan, we do that on the simulator.
20 Then for flight training, most of the flight training occurs out
21 of Salmon. And we use -- sometimes we use empty legs, deadhead
22 return legs as flight training opportunities.

23 We do a lot of ride alongs for new pilots so they can sit in
24 the right seat and experience the IFR in the (indiscernible)
25 environment from the right seat, as well, to gain experience that

1 way. So it's not all theoretical. Yeah.

2 Q. It's a nice overview. I appreciate that. I'm going to shift
3 gears again and talk a little about Burley Airport specifically.

4 But before I do, you guys -- do your pilots use Jeppesen charts or
5 the FAA charts?

6 A. Use FAA charts.

7 Q. The FAA charts? Are those --

8 A. You cut out.

9 Q. Yeah. You're breaking up a little bit, too. I apologize.
10 So you use the FAA charts. Correct?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. Are those company issued?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Tell me about Burley Airport, what you know about that.

15 A. Well, we've been operating in there for a few years. You
16 know, our real only operations in there are for UPS. We don't
17 have any other reasons for going in there. So the Burley Airport
18 -- prior to this accident -- we've learned a whole lot since the
19 accident, to be honest.

20 But prior to this accident, we were aware of some of the
21 shortcomings of the airport. Mainly that there's a lot of -- that
22 there are hazards around the airport. And I -- most of my flying
23 in there as -- most of my flying in there has been on training and
24 check rides which have all been pretty much VFR conditions. And
25 the biggest hazard that I ever recall accounting for was the

1 tremendous number of birds surrounding that airport being that it
2 was next to the water. A bird strike on landing was something I
3 was -- had heightened (indiscernible) everybody about.

4 The obstacles on final were another hazard that -- for the
5 runway 2-0 were another hazard that we made sure all pilots were
6 aware of. But we've learned since the accident (indiscernible)
7 present. Those steam stacks present. You know, a quick overview
8 of like the instrument approach chart for that RNAV 2-0 approach
9 will show a hazard up there --

10 Q. If I could stop you a second, Dave. Yeah, I'll put up the
11 chart here in a second so we can all -- both look at it in a
12 second. But before I go to there. You said you were aware of the
13 obstacles prior and you told the pilots. How were the pilots
14 taught or what guidance were they given about those? I mean, is
15 it just word of mouth or was there anything -- any policy or
16 anything -- or warning about those stacks that you provided the
17 pilots ahead of time?

18 A. Our hazard avoidance was to follow the FAA -- instrument
19 procedures. And then, the hazard avoidance that was built into
20 that is -- obviously is -- if you're going to descend below the
21 MDA, you're doing it visually and can visually avoid hazards.
22 That was our policy.

23 However, we had an additional policy concerning the Burley
24 Airport. It didn't necessarily reflect this -- the hazard of
25 stacks and obstacles directly in any way. And our policy was we

1 just -- we don't go in there when it's snowing whatsoever. And
2 that was a policy born out of ground icing conditions more than
3 anything. Because if you go in there in the snow, you may land
4 but then you'll get -- it'll turn into an ice (indiscernible) and
5 you won't be able to park.

6 So frequently, during the wintertime, we can't get into
7 Burley because it's snowing there and we just go to Twin Falls.
8 That's been basic standard operating procedure, as well.

9 But as far as the stacks, in my own experience, flying the
10 approaches -- and as I say, I've done it in training, I've done it
11 on check rides. On a clear VFR day, those stacks are pretty easy
12 to avoid. So they didn't represent (indiscernible) in VFR
13 conditions flying in there. But I can say that I never flew it at
14 minimums either.

15 Q. The -- hang on a second. I was going to ask you something
16 about -- oh, the divert. Is that policy written anywhere, the
17 diversion policy, about if it's snowing, you have to divert? Is
18 that written anywhere in the guidance or in the manuals?

19 A. Yeah, yeah. Well, I guess, is it written anywhere? Yeah, we
20 have a written procedure where it is written. Then pilots -- I
21 shared this with you. I know you're probably going through
22 everything. I don't know if you got a chance to look at it but in
23 November of last year, we had training on winter operations and
24 that was one of the specifics was to make sure everybody was aware
25 of that procedure. That we don't go in there in snow. We just go

1 to Twin Falls.

2 Q. Are you talking about the ground school testing that had --
3 that Brittney had done and said that -- if it's snowing, you've
4 got to go to Twin Falls?

5 A. That's right. That was all of our -- it was basically winter
6 weather prep. Winter flying preparation. So that was a quiz that
7 all the pilots filled out. And then the basic -- we did basically
8 a two-hour ground training session in addition and reviewing the
9 answers of the quiz. Yeah.

10 Q. I just -- I hadn't seen anything in the manual that said
11 specifically for Burley, if it's snowing, you divert to Twin
12 Falls. I saw the test with the answer. But I'm trying to find
13 out if there --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- was any policy on that.

16 A. Yeah. We had a written -- route procedure, as well, that
17 stated -- that was -- we have for all the routes and sometimes
18 it's very -- it's just -- it's more so generic but for Burley, it
19 was written out that if it's snowing in Burley, you need to go to
20 Twin Falls. And there's some other things that you need to do
21 like inform operations about that so that we can coordinate
22 drivers repositioning and picking up the cargo, et cetera.

23 Q. Yeah. If you could at some point in time, if that written
24 guidance or wherever that is that was provided to them, if you
25 could just get me like a copy of that or something, wherever it's

1 in the manuals. Because I just haven't been able to find it. And
2 that's probably just me.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Were you aware that Brittney had gone into Burley the day
5 before the accident and diverted?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Do you recall -- tell me about that, what you recall about
8 that and how that was handled.

9 A. Basically, it was handled -- it was a pilot decision to
10 divert and go to Twin Falls. It wasn't abnormal. It wasn't an
11 unusual procedure for wintertime operations. So it's a pretty
12 easy -- it's a pretty standard easy sort of choice. It doesn't
13 require a whole lot of pivoting or change in operation.

14 Simply notifying that because of weather, she needs to go to
15 -- go over to Twin Falls is basically an approved choice
16 automatically because the pilot can do that for weather.

17 Q. So you say it's not unusual to see somebody divert out of
18 Burley and go to Twin Falls?

19 A. No. Yeah.

20 Q. I know you touched a little bit on the ground training that
21 you guys had specific to Burley. But is there any specific flight
22 training? In other words, do you -- does the check airmen or a
23 ride along or something like that have to occur going into Burley
24 so they actually see it before they start revenue operations in
25 there?

1 A. It's not a requirement that a training captain or a check
2 airman go with the flight -- go with the pilot in there. However,
3 the pilot will always receive route familiarity training in the
4 form of either another pilot rides along or that pilot will ride
5 as passenger and observe the flight.

6 Q. This route familiarity training, does that include Burley or
7 is that just anywhere?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. It does include specifically that airport?

10 A. Yeah, yeah.

11 Q. It's kind of a standard question. Are there any
12 repercussions that occur for a divert from the pilot?

13 A. No, not at all.

14 Q. Let me share my screen. I'm going to pull up the charts.
15 You started to talk about it. And -- hang on a second. I do want
16 to get --

17 A. And I --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. I should add, too, so you know, David, UPS is a fantastic
20 customer to fly for when it comes to weather, weather decisions.
21 Because they have no pressure on weather decisions whatsoever.
22 There have been times when I've been flying routes and I've
23 diverted. And when I -- by the time I've landed and gotten on the
24 ground to my diverted -- my destination -- alternate destination,
25 I can pull out my phone on the ground and I can see that I've got

1 a notice from Amazon that says my shipment was delayed due to
2 weather. Because I got a box that was intended for me in the back
3 of my airplane.

4 So UPS basically -- that's -- any UPS contract, their get out
5 of jail free time -- or get out of jail free card is weather. So
6 anybody says weather, UPS has no more obligations and there's no
7 pressure whatsoever. So they're a good company to work for in
8 that sense.

9 Q. I do have a question about pressure and such. Are you aware
10 of any -- I'm specifically going to ask about Brittney. Are you
11 aware of any pressure she may have had on that day when she was
12 flying?

13 A. I am aware that she had a hair appointment that she was --
14 but I'm not sure that that was a pressure. It would be
15 speculation on my part to say that that was a pressure; that she
16 was trying to make a timeline for. I don't know when her hair
17 appointment was. It might have been later that evening. I have
18 no idea.

19 But no, I don't know of any other pressures. She was very
20 open about discussing my thoughts on whether or not she should
21 divert to another airport or change the flight plan. I had had
22 discussions with her the week before. I think she was heading
23 into Logan. And same procedure into Logan where if it's snowing
24 there, we don't go into Logan. They don't have the ground deicing
25 capabilities.

1 And she had told me her reasons why she didn't want to go --
2 why she thought going into Logan wouldn't be a good choice and I
3 agreed it wasn't a good choice. And I told her great decision
4 because it could have easily been missed. It could easily have
5 been a go into Logan and then been surprised and gotten frozen up
6 on the ground.

7 She had been exercising good judgment and I don't think -- as
8 far as I know other than maybe trying to make a hair appointment
9 back in Salt Lake City, you know, I don't see any pressures. Not
10 from the customer, not from the organization.

11 Q. Just to --

12 A. Pilots still get paid the same amount whether they end up
13 flying or whether they stay on the ground.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Was -- that kind of leads me to a couple of my
15 other questions. Are they compensated -- well, stand by. I think
16 we might have lost Dave. Oh, there you are. Good.

17 MR. SALAZAR: David Lawrence, can I make a suggestion?

18 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

19 MR. SALAZAR: Let's -- I'll take my video camera off. And
20 Craig, if you don't mind. That way -- maybe we can --

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Help with the bandwidth.

22 MR. SALAZAR: -- stop some of this -- yeah.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: There. Better.

24 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

25 Q. I was going to ask specific to Brittney, to your knowledge,

1 did she -- was she experiencing any family difficulties or
2 financial difficulties to your knowledge?

3 A. No. No, not at all. I mean, financially -- her parents are
4 supportive. And her family is well off financially. As far as
5 personal things, I think she was at an apex of her life. She was
6 about to get engaged, I believe. So she was, I think, on cloud 9.
7 She was always thrilled about flying. Every time I saw her, she
8 was very excited to be going flying, as well. No. I'd say she
9 was just doing excellent.

10 Q. And the pilots -- you touched on it. Their compensation, are
11 they compensated by the flight hour or day, or how are they
12 compensated?

13 A. By the day. Actually, Brittney was -- let's see. Brittney
14 was salaried. Then -- but most -- but pilots that aren't
15 salaried, they're not compensated by the flight hour. They just
16 get paid by the day whether it's four hours or two hours of
17 flying.

18 Q. Got it. Now let's get to the chart. And I'll pull that back
19 up real quick so you can see as we talk about it. This is the FAA
20 chart just so you can see. It's the -- can you see this okay,
21 David?

22 A. Yeah, I can see it.

23 Q. Okay, cool. Well, we'll just go to here. And one thing I
24 really am glad I get to talk to you about -- because your
25 experience in the Caravan -- and I just want to try and figure out

1 how the pilots are trained to shoot this type of non-precision
2 approach. In other words, how are they setting up the lateral
3 guidance and following it and how are they setting up the vertical
4 guidance and following it?

5 A. So the pilots are trained -- I mean, the G1000 is a lot of --
6 is really easy -- it's a great tool for flying IFR for situational
7 awareness and everything. So the pilots would load the approach
8 and activate the approach prior to beginning it. Then once they
9 begin the approach, you know, they're getting lateral guidance on
10 an approach like this. And they're -- so lateral guidance is very
11 easy to follow with that needle on HIS.

12 And as far as vertical guidance goes, anything -- there is no
13 vertical guidance. There may be advisory guidance. But what we
14 train pilots to do is to arrive at the step-down fixes at the
15 altitude. The G1000 gives you an ETA to the next step-down fix.
16 If it's -- you've got 1,000 feet to descend and you've got two
17 minutes to do it, you're going to descend at 500 feet a minute.
18 So in that sense, we're trying to arrive at the fix -- at the
19 altitude.

20 The autopilot is used, as well. Pilots will frequently use
21 the autopilot on a VNAV function to precisely navigate vertically
22 from one fix to the next fix. So the autopilot would have been
23 engaged on this approach and she could have been using it and be
24 setting a vertical speed navigation and -- or she could have been
25 using the approach function on the autopilot. Would have set in a

1 descent to -- a descent rate to arrive at the next fix at that
2 step-down altitude.

3 Q. On this --

4 A. Then the -- yeah, go ahead.

5 Q. So on this one, say they were coming up to Ireem (ph.) at
6 7,000 feet, would they normally or are they trained to do, like
7 you said, vertical speed down to follow so they arrive at Hicklow
8 (ph.) at 6,000 and then arrive at Jamit (ph.) at 4800 at that time
9 so they can just do a constant descent to the runway?

10 A. Well, it would have been fix by fix. So it wouldn't have
11 been Ireem straight to Jamit. It would've been Ireem to Hicklow.
12 And this approach does provide advisory vertical guidance. So it
13 would actually -- if you put it in approach mode, the autopilot
14 would cross the Ireem at 7,000. If you wanted it to, it could
15 start a descent -- if you had it on, it could start a descent down
16 to Hicklow, to arrive at Hicklow at 6,000. And the pilot would
17 just be basically configuring the airplane and adjusting the power
18 settings to maintain the approach speed.

19 Q. But after Hicklow, would they still be following the VNAV
20 portion down?

21 A. After Hicklow, they would be following the VNAV portion down
22 as low as the MDA.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. But not below the MDA.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. Yeah. So yes, from Hicklow to Jamit, yes, I -- yes, inside
2 the final approach fix, pilots would be -- could be hand flying it
3 but most pilots would probably have the autopilot active and be --
4 and it would be calculating a descent rate from Hicklow down to
5 4800 feet at Jamit.

6 Q. That's how pilots are trained or is it their choice vertical
7 speed or VNAV, follow the VNAV?

8 A. Pilots will use the approach function if it has those step
9 downs. Now, the step downs is different than the glide path or
10 vertical guidance. So advisory vertical guidance obviously is
11 used but nothing below the MDA is used as far as advisory vertical
12 guidance but between -- but for the step downs, yeah, pilot are
13 trained to use the autopilot and use that as a function for a
14 stabilized approach.

15 Q. So I just want to make sure I'm clear. Are they tying the
16 vertical mode to the VNAV on the autopilot so they're -- so the
17 autopilot is following the VNAV or are they simply using that
18 little diamond on the VNAV as a guidance but they're flying
19 vertical speed?

20 A. Well, some approaches don't have that little diamond so -- in
21 which case they're going to use a VNAV on a non-precision. On
22 this approach, it's going to draw -- that diamond is going to draw
23 you a constant descent rate from Hicklow to Jamit. So in that
24 sense, they can fly that diamond down to Jamit and the -- they
25 could do -- put the autopilot on approach mode or they could do it

1 in VNAV mode, as well. But most pilots would probably allow it to
2 work in approach mode. For that extent, the approach mode would
3 be carried on through the autopilot and that glide path indicator.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. That magenta diamond.

6 Q. All the way down to at least MDA.

7 A. Usually to the -- usually (indiscernible) inside that final
8 approach. So Jamit but no lower than the MDA.

9 Q. Right. Then this 3.75, explain that to me and what your
10 knowledge of that is.

11 A. So that 2.75 [sic] is a vertical descent angle. And it
12 appears on charts where the FAA has given an advisory descent
13 angle to help pilots descend to the MDA or to actually the
14 threshold. And this one is posted inside of Jamit so that tells
15 you -- it's giving that 3.75 degree from Jamit to the threshold
16 crossing height of 40 feet.

17 And that 3.75 degrees is listed as a safe angle of descent to
18 be kept clear of obstacle or terrain. And it's not published on
19 all non-precision approaches. It's only published if the FAA is
20 telling pilots that hey, this is a safe descent angle that will
21 keep you clear. So it's not on all RNAVs because some RNAVs, they
22 can't tell you that it's going to be safe, that it's going to be
23 clear.

24 Q. Is this specifically trained to the pilots -- sorry --
25 trained for the pilots that they -- that is the obstacle clearance

1 from Jamit down to, I guess, threshold crossing of 40 feet?

2 A. No, it isn't. No. Essentially, we would continue descent
3 from Jamit to the MDA. And no lower than the MDA. And then if
4 you are going to proceed, then obviously you've got runway in
5 sight at that point to proceed any lower. And then you're
6 avoiding obstacles visually.

7 Q. To your knowledge, going from Hicklow, the final approach fix
8 all the way down to this point where you're arriving at MDA to
9 make a decision if you're going to continue below, does -- will
10 that guarantee you obstacle clearance? Because that angle from
11 Hicklow down to the MDA if it's a continuous descent final
12 approach is not a 3.75. So how does the pilot know that this is
13 going to give them obstacle clearance?

14 A. How does the pilot know that 3.75 is?

15 Q. No. That if you're going to follow the vertical guidance
16 from Hicklow and the vertical guidance that the Garmin 1000 is
17 providing is advisory guidance, how do you know that's going to
18 give you obstacle clearance if you have a 3.75 inside Jamit down
19 to the -- that's the recommended angle down to the runway?

20 A. So from the 3.75 (indiscernible) from Jamit so as you're
21 looking at Hicklow to Jamit, outside of Jamit, Hicklow to Jamit,
22 the advisory vertical guidance is nothing but drawing a line from
23 Hicklow to Jamit. So --

24 Q. Right, okay.

25 A. -- that's just going to put you arriving at Jamit at 4800

1 feet. Now, inside of Jamit you can continue your descent down to
2 -- you know, to the MDA. The vertical guidance may continue all
3 the way down to the threshold. But from 4800, at that point,
4 you're not following vertical -- you're not following 3.75
5 degrees. You're making a descent down to 4,500 --

6 Q. Sixty feet.

7 A. -- Sixty feet. And you can do that with the autopilot. You
8 can do that by hand. But from that point (indiscernible) 4560 is
9 basically your limit. And there is no, I guess -- there is no
10 approved vertical guidance as far as the G1000. It may be
11 advisory but --

12 Q. Right, okay.

13 A. -- from that point, from 4800 inbound, 4560 is what you get
14 to come down to. And anything below 4560, whether there is
15 guidance or not, it's nothing but advisory. You have to visually
16 stay clear of any obstacles. And that's how pilots are trained.

17 Q. But the vertical guidance may, you said, continue between
18 Jamit and down to runway threshold?

19 A. I know from experience that the G1000 will actually take
20 vertical guidance all the way down to the runway.

21 Q. That was helpful. And I appreciate it on how to fly the
22 Caravan on that approach. Have -- to your knowledge, has Gem Air
23 down any -- or approached anybody about concerns about this
24 particular approach or the obstacle clearance? Have they voiced
25 their concerns to anybody prior to the accident or after the

1 accident?

2 A. Yes. Well, prior to the accident, we hadn't voiced any
3 concerns. But I think just maybe a month earlier, we had had a
4 pilot come into the office who was an experience pilot for us.
5 And he had flown the approach. And the weather was above minimums
6 I recall. But he flew the approach and he was remarking how
7 uncomfortable it felt. And I believe he did a circle to land.
8 And it was near minimums but above minimums, obviously. But he
9 felt like it felt uncomfortable. And I'd say this was probably in
10 March.

11 And at that point, I had started -- I had a very brief
12 conversation with my father about the approach because he was
13 considering -- he was contacting -- whoever it is at the FAA that
14 makes approaches and departures. He was contacting them about a
15 suggestion about a departure out of Salmon. And I had -- and I
16 said, you know, would you -- since you're contacting them, would
17 you also contact them about recommending an approach to a
18 different runway other than just the (indiscernible) into runway
19 2-0 and see if they've got any other options for approaches.

20 And I don't believe -- I think he had already sent off his
21 request and I don't believe, at that point, he made another
22 request about -- specifically about the Burley Airport. But
23 that's about all -- that was about it as far as internally.

24 Since then, we've learned a lot about the airport, you know.
25 And we have -- we've made a lot of appeals about that to -- about

1 that approach and about that airport to state aeronautics and
2 other FAA officials. And ourselves, we're just staying out of
3 (indiscernible) airport. I believe the airport can still be
4 operated to safely but there's a lot of hazards at that airport
5 that a pilot is not aware of. And that an operator is not aware
6 of.

7 And there's hazards there that -- a pilot right now would be
8 unable to identify. And they're extreme hazards. We're not
9 talking about an unlighted obstacle 20 miles from the airport, 150
10 feet AGL. We're talking about smokestacks, steam stacks that
11 penetrate the obstacle surface area of an approach. And there's
12 no (indiscernible) no note or depiction of it in the approach
13 (indiscernible) or the departure procedure, or the facility
14 directory. So aside from maybe some local knowledge, if you don't
15 have that, then you don't understand the hazards that are there
16 even close. So yeah, so we made some appeals and we'll continue
17 to do so.

18 Q. I appreciate that. I've just got one last topic real quick
19 and then I'm going to see if anybody else -- by the way, how are
20 you doing? Do you need water or anything, Dave?

21 A. Oh, I'm okay. Thank you.

22 Q. I appreciate it. Real quick. Who has operational control at
23 Gem Air?

24 A. Chief pilot, director of operations. Also, Tim Vennell, our
25 operations manager. Joe Schroeder. She's a scheduler, as well.

1 My sister. JoAnne Wolters, president of the company. And then,
2 Mike Frieze (ph.), director of maintenance, also.

3 Q. On the day of the accident, who was exercising operational
4 control?

5 A. Essentially, Tim Vennell and I were. The two of us together.

6 Q. Flight locating, how is that done for your flights?

7 A. We have several people monitoring an email and flight
8 locating is accomplished by -- the pilots announce their
9 departures and their arrivals through sending a message
10 (indiscernible) that we all monitor.

11 Q. You broke up a little bit. So pilots announce their
12 departures and arrivals via what means?

13 A. I mean, they can do it through a phone call but most flights
14 are accomplished through an email to our flight ops. And flight
15 ops is monitored by several people in the office in the
16 organization.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: I appreciate it. I'm going to see if Fabian
18 has anything. You've been really helpful and I really appreciate
19 it, David.

20 Fabian, do you have anything?

21 MR. SALAZAR: David Schroeder, thanks for being here. I
22 don't have any questions.

23 MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks. Craig Karel with the FAA, any
24 questions?

25 BY MR. KAREL:

1 Q. Just one question, David. Listening to the interview, just
2 things pop into my head. Do you have an approved EML for that 208
3 Caravan?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Was there any item deferred do you recall on the --

6 A. No. No, not on that airplane.

7 MR. KAREL: That's all I have. Thank you.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: And I don't have any follow-ups either. I
9 appreciate that, Craig.

10 David, I really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us.
11 And considering this is a safety investigation, we're trying to
12 find out what happened so we can help it not happen again and you
13 guys have -- anybody have to go through this ordeal.

14 Is there anything else you want to add, anything else that
15 maybe we didn't ask about but you want to make sure that the
16 investigation has knowledge of or could assist us?

17 MR. SCHROEDER: Yeah, yeah. I want to make sure that you
18 guys -- from my standpoint -- I flew with Brittney a lot. I did a
19 lot of her training for our summer flying. I did a lot of
20 training and have a lot of hours with her in the airplane for the
21 Caravan flying, as well.

22 She was a good pilot. She was doing things right. She
23 wasn't -- she was the type of pilot I could always walk away from
24 a training flight and say, she's doing well every time. You know,
25 I didn't have (indiscernible) and say, actually, I've got my

1 doubts about her. But she was always doing well.

2 And I know that you -- I know that there's some -- hopefully,
3 you guys can get some good information from the G1000. And those
4 data cards. That will provide some insight to what otherwise is
5 just going to be speculation.

6 The big thing that I come back to is that whether or not
7 Brittney -- and I don't think Brittney did mess up in the
8 airplane. I think she was following her training. I think she
9 was following what the FAA would have trained her to do. But I
10 think that airport is hazardous enough that I think it could cause
11 that accident.

12 And if I just have -- it won't take me long but I'll tell you
13 why. She ran into the 20 feet of one of those stacks. And those
14 stacks -- and I hope you found this, David, or maybe somebody on
15 your team has found this. But those stacks, according to an FAA
16 Part 77 aeronautical study, those stacks penetrate the obstacle
17 free air for that approach by over 60 feet. So she hits the top
18 20 feet of a stack that (indiscernible) the approach by 60 feet.
19 Well, if that approach safety area had been protected and
20 preserved, there would have been no accident that day with that
21 pilot.

22 I think that's extremely relevant. In addition to that
23 information, there's no way for any pilot who flies into Burley
24 and flies that approach, there's no way for any pilot to know that
25 there are obstacles penetrating the approach. There's no notice

1 that the FAA knew exactly how much they penetrated. There's
2 nothing documented in any of the airport procedures, approach or
3 departure procedures, or facility directory or charts or anything.

4 There's no way for anyone to know that there are obstacles on
5 center line penetrating the approach. And that -- in this -- in
6 our day and age is -- that's a huge oversight. That is a major,
7 major thing that I want to bring up.

8 The other thing that I think -- hopefully you guys have
9 thought of this, too. As I'm trying to decide or figure out how
10 this accident happened, I don't think Brittney would ever fly
11 below MDA unless she had the runway in sight. The weather was
12 well above minimums at the time of the accident. Two miles and
13 visibility and -- I don't know -- scatter 26, overcast at 29 or
14 something like that (indiscernible).

15 Two miles and light snow. And while there is a lot of
16 speculation and this is speculation also. I think it's totally
17 plausible for a pilot in that scenario to arrive at the MDA and
18 have the runway in sight. And given that the winds are blowing
19 directly down the runway -- have you seen how much smoke those
20 stacks put out in steam? Have you seen videos of these things?

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

22 MR. SCHROEDER: A tremendous amount of smoke and steam can be
23 coming out of those and it's not necessarily rising. It can stay
24 basically at the stack level or below or above it by several feet
25 and obscure the stacks. I think it's absolutely plausible, if

1 we're speculating and we have to speculate a little bit, for her
2 to arrive at MDA, have the runway in sight and be continuing to
3 make a VFR approach to landing. He air speeds shown on
4 FlightAware show me that she was slowing the airplane down for
5 landing.

6 Those stacks -- what she hit is she's about a half mile final
7 and she's going about 100 knots indicated. Tells me that she's
8 configuring the airplane for landing. And it's easy -- as I've
9 flown the approach since then, it's easy to see how you can have
10 the runway in sight and be descending to land with runway in
11 sight and then with smoke blowing at you (indiscernible) the
12 stacks, you don't see the stacks and you don't see the smoke
13 because it's white and it's snowing in two miles visibility.

14 And it had just been snowing so the surface was covered in
15 white. Everything below her is covered in white. So I think it's
16 plausible to have runway in sight and inadvertently descend into
17 smoke and steam that you can't see. And then at that point, it's
18 a little bit too late. Those are my big thoughts.

19 I -- gosh, I don't know why the FAA wouldn't do this
20 immediately. But if you got any pressure, David, there's no
21 NOTAM, there's no anything about those stacks and those hazards.
22 Everything that remains is as it is. And you shouldn't have to go
23 do an archive search through the FAA records to find that there
24 are hazards on the center line on final and that the hazards put
25 out steam. I mean, there's no information about that.

1 And it could be an easy NOTAM. The FAA can put out NOTAMS.
2 The airport can put out NOTAMS and that's it. And neither of them
3 has done it. And if there's another accident before you guys put
4 out this report in a year or two, where are we going to be.
5 Nobody has done anything in the immediately. And the FAA is a
6 conservative organization. Be conservative for crying out loud.
7 Be conservative. Fix this problem. At least let pilots know.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: Right. Let me -- I'll tell you what. And
9 this is a good point to bring Fabian in to just kind of -- he's
10 the ICC, the investigator in charge for the NTSB in charge of the
11 investigation. Maybe he can just kind of give you a really brief
12 overview of what the investigation is entailing right now.

13 MR. SALAZAR: David Schroeder, we've got a gentleman on the
14 investigative team who was a specialist in TERPS operations in the
15 Marine Corps. We have a specialist in airports. Dave Lawrence is
16 a specialist in operations. We also have performance. So we've
17 got a number of individuals, as well as air traffic control and
18 weather.

19 So we've got a number of specialists who are dedicated to
20 those areas. So we will give your areas of concern its due
21 diligence. Everything that you brought up we're aware of which is
22 good. So we're not learning that there's new evidence. The
23 document that you have that identified the stacks penetrating the
24 protected air space by over 60 feet we have.

25 So let me just give you the assurance that your concerns are

1 being addressed. I don't have any answers for you right now, but
2 they're being looked at, investigating.

3 MR. SCHROEDER: I'm glad that you guys are all aware and
4 working hard at it. I'd just like to help if I can in any way.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Yeah. And I'll -- that'll kind of close the
6 interview how -- when going forward, a lot of times after we talk
7 to somebody, David, you'll begin to metabolize what we talked
8 about and things like that. Then there may be something that
9 comes up in your mind that says, wow, I should have mentioned that
10 or wow, I should have included that.

11 You guys have been really great about providing us the
12 information that we need and requested documentation and stuff. I
13 want to encourage you that if there's something else that you
14 wanted to share with us, feel free to do so. Because this is a
15 safety investigation. We're just -- we need all the help we can
16 to gather the information. And if there's something else that you
17 can think of that you want to share with us, reach out to us at
18 any time. Okay?

19 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you. I (indiscernible) do that. I
20 will.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: I really appreciate it.

22 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT
NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO
ON APRIL 13, 2022
Interview of David Schroeder

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR22FA151

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: May 24, 2022

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.



Katie Leach
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

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FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT

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NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO

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Accident No.: WPR22FA151

ON APRIL 13, 2022

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Interview of: MIKE HART, Gem Air Check Pilot
Gem Air

Via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday,
May 24, 2022

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

FABIAN SALAZAR, Regional Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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Federal Aviation Administration

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:00 p.m. CDT)

MR. LAWRENCE: Let's just go ahead and get started and this shouldn't take long, Mike. Just for the record, my name is David Lawrence with the NTSB and I'm the operations investigator of this accident that happened at Burley Airport. And with me are two individuals and I'll allow them to introduce themselves. The first one is Fabian Salazar, if you'll say hi.

MR. SALAZAR: Hello, Mike. I just chatted with you for a moment ago.

MR. HART: Yes.

MR. SALAZAR: So, it's good to see you. I know you're inside your airplane and I'll be listening in.

MR. HART: Okay, sounds great.

MR. LAWRENCE: And the other person on here is Craig Karel. And, Craig, if you'll introduce yourself.

MR. KAREL: Yes, hello, Mike. Craig Karel with the FAA out of Boise, Idaho. I'm going to turn my video off because of the bandwidth. I don't want to be buffering. So, yes, I'm here representing the FAA, the Boise FSDO. I've been assigned to assist with the NTSB on the accident investigation at Burley, so.

MR. HART: Okay.

MR. KAREL: -- that's -- over.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thanks, guys, and thanks for turning off your video. And just so you know, Mike, and I know we've

1 talked about this before previously when we chatted yesterday, but
2 the FAA's role here is not anything different than the NTSB's
3 role. Their job is safety and that's it and they're trying to
4 assist us by regulation. They're a party to all our
5 investigations and they're assisting in trying to find out what
6 happened so we can prevent it from happening --

7 MR. HART: Right.

8 MR. LAWRENCE: -- again. So, you know, feel free to speak,
9 you know, openly and candidly because nothing in this interview
10 can be used against -- for certificate or enforcement action or
11 anything like that. That's not their role. Okay.

12 MR. HART: Okay.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: And on behalf of the NTSB and the FAA, you
14 know, our condolences for your loss. I'm sorry you guys are going
15 through this, but it's tough, but our job is just to try and find
16 out what happened. So, hopefully other operators and other pilots
17 don't have to go through this.

18 MR. HART: Right.

19 MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have anybody with you in that airplane,
20 Mike?

21 MR. HART: No, I'm all by myself.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

23 MR. HART: And I didn't -- I thought about inviting the --
24 David with the company, but I thought, you know, you're going to
25 get -- I don't know that it would change -- it wouldn't change my

1 answers, but it would change my -- I would speak differently if I
2 had another person with me here. So, I figured you'd probably get
3 better results or more -- less uptight and less anxiety if I'm
4 just by myself. So, I chose not to bring anybody on board.

5 (Crosstalk)

6 MR. HART: Not because I think that they have anything to
7 hide. I just think I'll be far more forthcoming knowing that I'm
8 by myself.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. And I appreciate that, and just so you
10 also know that this is a very organic and natural part of an
11 accident investigation to speak with a check airman or an
12 evaluator of the accident pilot. So, this is normal for us; I
13 know it's not normal for you, but it's normal for us to --

14 MR. HART: Right.

15 MR. LAWRENCE: -- speak to people like you. And I'm going to
16 be -- as we mentioned earlier, we're going to be tape recording
17 this and -- not the video but just the audio. And we'll send that
18 in --

19 MR. HART: Right.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: -- for transcription as part of the record.
21 And even though we're going to be recording it, I will be taking
22 some notes on my, you know, computer.

23 MR. HART: Right.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: And I'm old-school. I used to type in the
25 flight management computer in an airplane like this --

1 MR. HART: Right.

2 MR. LAWRENCE: -- with my two fingers. So, if I'm not making
3 eye contact with you, Mike, don't read anything into it or if
4 there is a like a pause in the conversation, it's just me catching
5 up with my notes. So, don't read anything into that.

6 MR. HART: Right.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: If I ask a question that you don't understand,
8 feel free to ask me to clarify it, and -- because we're just
9 trying to get accurate information.

10 MR. HART: Right.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: If you don't something, I don't know is a
12 perfectly acceptable answer. So, you know --

13 MR. HART: Okay.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: -- don't make anything up. We're just trying
15 to get accurate information. And --

16 MR. HART: Right.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: With that, do you have any questions about the
18 process? I think we went over it pretty clearly yesterday on the
19 phone call.

20 MR. HART: Yes, I was going to say, when I talked to you
21 earlier, I have a pretty good sense. Like you said, as a writer
22 for Aviation Safety magazine, I read a lot of NTSB reports and
23 both the superficial summary ones and the full reports and then
24 all the way into reading, going into the dockets. So, I have a
25 sense of what it is you're up to and what you're trying to get at.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, great, and I appreciate that.

2 INTERVIEW OF MIKE HART

3 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

4 Q. So, I'll tell you what, to get started, why don't we just go
5 over the easy ones just for background information. If I can get
6 your full name, your age, and what your title is with Gem Air?

7 A. Okay. My name is Michael J. Hart, h-a-r-t. Age is 58 years
8 old.

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. I have to stop and do the math. Yes, I'm 58. And title, I
11 am the line pilot, but also training captain and check airman.
12 So, officially I think my pilot's just line pilot, but I think the
13 roles I play also include check airman and training captain, so.

14 Q. Okay. And you're a training captain, check airman on the
15 Caravan?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. All right.

18 (Crosstalk)

19 Q. -- aircraft?

20 A. I did do the Islanders. I don't think I'm current as a check
21 airman for Islanders. So, I know I am current as a check airman
22 for the Caravans, and they may have me do Cessna singles as well.
23 Not sure what role besides Caravans at this point, but I imagine
24 it will be at least one other airframe, but I'm still TBD.

25 Q. Okay. And do you know -- do you recall when your last FAA

1 observation was for your check airman on the Caravan?

2 A. I just did one in April with the FAA onboard because they
3 were doing -- they were doing a check ride for Hussein, who's your
4 next interview. He was getting his flight or check ride to become
5 a check airman. So, his -- I guess that was actually just my 297
6 ride, though. That wasn't a check airman ride. The ride I did --
7 I did an FAA ride last -- you know, I don't actually recall. It's
8 all going to be in the records, but I did a ride where I had the
9 FAA onboard and I rode in a Navajo Chieftain, I believe it was, or
10 was it a Caravan. I guess it was a Caravan.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. With -- I gave Siegfried (ph.) a check ride and then the FAA
13 was there.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. So --

16 Q. How many years --

17 A. -- that was -- I can't remember the date though.

18 Q. Oh, that's okay. It's just -- I was just curious. How many
19 years have you been with Gem Air?

20 A. Since 2017.

21 Q. Okay. And basically --

22 A. I've got a Caravan taxiing by here momentarily, so it may be
23 a little loud. Windows are shut, but let me know if you can't
24 hear --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- if it gets too loud.

2 Q. I can hear you just fine.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. And if you could, just a guesstimate, Mike, if you can
5 guesstimate how much total time you have?

6 A. It's over 4000, I think. I can do a quick look. It's about
7 4300, I think.

8 Q. 4300, okay. And how much time is that in the Caravan?

9 A. I think a bit under 1000.

10 Q. Okay. And just an overview of your certificates and ratings.

11 A. So, I've got CFI, but not a CFII. And then commercial and
12 IFR ratings. I don't have an ATP, so I'm basically just a
13 straight commercial pilot with -- and a CFI rating.

14 Q. Okay. Multi and single?

15 A. Just a single. For the CFI, a multi. As a commercial pilot,
16 I have multi and IFR, I have multi and single. As a CFI, it's
17 just single.

18 Q. Okay, got it. And if you could give me the cliffs notes
19 version of your aviation background and what led you to Gem Air?

20 A. Okay, cliffs notes version, I got my license when I was 18.
21 Basically, my Dad never graduated from high school, so he was
22 intimidated by all the book work. So, while I was in high school,
23 he enrolled me and my mom in ground school. We then helped him as
24 a tutor and then I think one of the rewards for me helping him get
25 through ground school was I got flight lessons. And right after

1 -- consequently graduated from high school, I got my private. I
2 flew for 200 hours and then went to college. Didn't have access
3 to a plane. We had a 152 that we flew off the past year in
4 Kansas. So, after graduating from college, I didn't have access
5 to an airplane, so I went for 23 years without flying.

6 In Idaho Falls, I had a business relationship with a company
7 that we had a contract in Boise that was either a four-hour drive
8 or a two-hour flight in a 172. And the business partner I was --
9 the company -- another guy who owned the business that I was
10 subcontracting to had just got his pilot's license, so that
11 renewed my interest. So, after 23 years of being dormant as a
12 pilot, I reengaged. Not comfortable flying out of towered
13 airports; got comfortable. Learned that they invented this thing
14 called GPS, so I got to learn about that. And then after, you
15 know, getting acquainted from the right seat, got a BFR and
16 started flying again. Mostly was using it for that contract going
17 back and forth to Boise.

18 So, it was the business benefit of having access to a plane
19 to shorten the commute and make it possible to do a long business
20 day without having to overnight in Boise was a huge business
21 convenience.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And it opened up a lot of contracts in Boise for me, so --
24 because Boise became suddenly an option. So, as a result, I ended
25 up flying -- I started renting a lot that I ended up buying a

1 plane and I was flying 100 to 250 hours a year. And that quickly
2 -- and that was, again, a combination of business and pleasure. I
3 bought an aircraft for aviation -- or for videography, for aerial
4 photography and videography -- a Turbo 206 and I had a contract to
5 use it to do a construction project that ended up not coming to
6 pass in 2008. I had the contract, but then the uranium enrichment
7 plant did not get built. So, even though I flew one mission
8 commercially off of my regular pilot's license, I didn't really
9 make much -- or didn't really use the aircraft for business other
10 than commuting back and forth to support work. But I did start
11 doing more videography and stuff out of the airplane, using it for
12 aerial photography.

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. And then in 2017, basically I -- the company I ran for 20
15 years, I had a business -- or company -- I teamed as another
16 company and they started taking my employees and blocking me out
17 of business opportunities. And I just -- really that was it, I
18 was done running my own company. I just decided what else do I --
19 what can I do, what else can I do that I enjoy, and flying was one
20 of those things.

21 So, that's what led me to Gem Air. In the interim also I --
22 starting about ten years ago, 2008 actually, I started writing for
23 Aviation Safety magazine. So, my business that I ran was a
24 science communication, technical communication company, and so I
25 did a lot of writing. So, I started just writing monthly articles

1 for Aviation Safety starting around 2008, but I really started
2 becoming a monthly contributor a little later like 2010, I think.
3 And then I haven't written for them in a while, but I think in
4 2019 I took a hiatus with them not for any reason other than I got
5 busy on some other projects.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So, that's another side relationship on my aviation.

8 Q. Okay. Well, I appreciate that. How did you learn about the
9 accident, Mike?

10 A. So, I was actually flying that day. I actually left --
11 departed with Brittany right behind me. I -- in the air I got a
12 text from her. She saw me on ADS-B and said I see you and had a
13 screenshot of me eight miles ahead of her. I was paying attention
14 to the weather. It wasn't bad, but there was some icing in the
15 clouds, so I texted back to her that I'd hit -- got out of the
16 clouds and was out of the tops at 12,000 feet. So, that was just
17 something we did, you know, it was a way of aiding her, letting
18 her know that, you know, tops are at 12,000 so you would be out of
19 any ice if you can get up there. Her response back was that the
20 airplane was climbing real slow and she had 1800 pounds of load
21 that day.

22 So, that text exchange happened in the air and then that was
23 the last I heard of her and she peeled off as I continued on to
24 Challis. She, you know started the approach into -- went to
25 change frequency, so I heard her frequency change to, you know,

1 contact Twin Falls approach. That was the last time I heard of
2 her -- heard from her. When I landed at Challis, offloaded my
3 load there, then I continued on to Salmon and somebody came to the
4 airplane and said Brittany was in an accident at Burley. And
5 that's where I found out about it was arriving that same day
6 immediately after it happened.

7 Q. Okay. And both of you, just for the record, both of you all
8 had departed from where?

9 A. We both left north cargo, so she was taxiing right behind me,
10 getting her clearances as I, you know -- we all -- so you load up
11 at north cargo at the UPS ramp. After you get the load, you do
12 the sequence of getting your IFR clearance and then you report
13 back to -- well, IFR clearance and then your taxi instructions,
14 you do your run up and then continue on. And so, her run up --
15 like I said, she was literally, physically right behind me as I
16 took off. She was --

17 (Crosstalk)

18 A. -- the next aircraft.

19 Q. Just for the record, what airport?

20 A. Salt Lake City International and runway 1-6 left.

21 Q. Okay. So, we'll get into it in a second. I'm going to show
22 -- I'll do screenshots, and by the way, if there's any information
23 or any document that you need to reference at any point in time,
24 just let me know and I can bring it up to share my screen and show
25 it to you just to refresh your memory. I'll do the --

1 A. Okay.

2 (Crosstalk)

3 Q. -- approach in a second because as I mentioned earlier --
4 yesterday, we'll talk about the approach and the 8410 that you
5 signed her off on in February. But just in general, how did you
6 know Brittany and tell me a little bit about her, her piloting
7 skills.

8 A. So, Brittany flew with us, with Gem Air in the summer, so I
9 got to know her during the summer flying. And then she came on
10 board to fly winter and be -- I did -- as she was getting up on
11 the Caravan, I -- we had a trip together where we flew to South
12 Dakota. So, she was in the Caravan; I think she was in left seat.
13 It was a training flight; it was VFR conditions and I'm pretty
14 sure she was left seat. Now, it's interesting is now I'm trying
15 to think if like -- it was largely a training flight because we
16 were going to pick up -- we went there twice. Once to drop off
17 some pheasant hunters and once to pick it up -- pick them up. So,
18 when we had the customers on board, I was piloting command and
19 flying in left seat. When we were doing the deadhead legs, either
20 after dropping them off or going back to pick them up, she flew
21 the deadhead legs, so.

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. -- and I got to know her well on those flights just because
24 it was a long way. It's to South Dakota from Salmon. We also --
25 after training her or I did a couple of training flights in and

1 around Salmon in the Caravan with her and then did her check ride.
2 And then really probably started to get to know her much better
3 because we were both living out of the same hotel in Salt Lake, so
4 I was driving -- we had a common car that was run by the company
5 that whoever would arrive at the airport would pick up the other
6 person. So, if you were on a shorter day then you would arrive at
7 the airport and then you would come back to the airport, pick up
8 the other person and likewise in the morning we would ride
9 together and then walk out to the ramp together, prep our
10 airplanes.

11 So, that's where I kind of got to know her more personally.
12 I'm trying to think, we did a couple -- we also did a lot of
13 deadhead flights together because we were both Salmon based, so if
14 I was, you know, coming out of the hotel at Salt Lake a lot of
15 times, I would deadhead back with her so I would have time right
16 seating with her not as a check airman, not as an instructor, but
17 just as a pilot deadheading back.

18 Q. Um-hum, okay.

19 A. And you -- the second part of that was a question about her
20 skills as a pilot, I think?

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. My observation was she very much carried herself and you can
23 tell she was a CFII instructor. She really did everything by the
24 book, you know. When she did a (indiscernible) approach, she ran
25 everything on the screen. If we were on a T-1000 that had the

1 approach plate up, you know, she was very methodical. One of the
2 things, she took her time. She was very much like a lot of -- I'm
3 going to say not really inexperienced -- but she -- a pilot that's
4 trained to teach others, she -- it was almost like she was
5 demonstrating, but she really wasn't. That was just -- her habit
6 was to, you know, basically prep and brief the flight, go through
7 the checklist methodically.

8 So, she had really good skills and good habits, I would say,
9 as an IFR pilot. Likewise, you know, every approach she would
10 actually, you know, she would take the plate out or pull it up
11 onscreen and brief it out loud as though she was instructing even
12 if I'm just sitting her in the right seat not evaluating her, not
13 doing anything other than being present while she was doing the
14 approach. She did it -- that was -- my observation would be that
15 she flew the same during a check ride as she did, you know, as a
16 pilot. I mean, that would be my guess, just from my observations.

17 Q. Okay. Were you involved in her hiring at any point?

18 A. No, I don't think -- I'm not a -- in my role at Gem Air, I'm
19 just a line pilot. I don't have any management --

20 Q. Right.

21 A. -- roles in the company.

22 Q. And when you guys got to know each other a little bit better
23 in Salt Lake City at the shared hotel and such, did she ever voice
24 any concerns about flying for Gem Air or any concerns that she may
25 have had personally like at home or financial or anything like

1 that?

2 A. No, the big observations, particularly a couple of days prior
3 to the accident -- two days prior to the accident, I was supposed
4 to deadhead back to Salt Lake with her and I was looking forward
5 to the flight because I enjoyed her company. Instead, we -- I was
6 assigned to marry an aircraft down, so I got into Caravan 585
7 Sierra Alpha and she was in I think 19280 -- I think she in the
8 accident plane -- but it was two days before. We can look it up.
9 It was a bad day that day in terms of icing and conditions. Maybe
10 I should say it was bad in terms of icing. I anticipated it being
11 bad for icing because looking at the radar, the system that was
12 moving through it, it was probably the same system that was in --
13 at play on the day of the accident. There was -- the radar
14 coverage you can just see there was a big blockage of
15 precipitation over the Snake River plain between Salmon and Logan.

16 I was flying direct to Salt Lake from Salmon and she was
17 going to Logan to pick up the UPS load. And on that day, I was
18 kind of -- I looked at the weather and chose to deviate -- not
19 just -- deviate from the precipitation that was showing up on the
20 radar, because usually when I see active precipitation on the
21 ground, the clouds up above, typically you have a lot more ice in
22 them. And if there's no precipitation, a lot of times the cloud
23 densities are less.

24 So, I deviated just to stay away from the radar paint
25 signature where the precipitation was showing. And I thought

1 about, I mean, mentally I was thinking if like, well, I wonder
2 what Brittany's going to do here because she hasn't been in a lot
3 of icing conditions. She might not know that this would be a real
4 good time to not, you know -- it wasn't like I would have said I'm
5 not going to go through that cloud, but if I would have -- with my
6 experience going into that cloud I would have had like, okay, be
7 ready for some ice and maybe even be ready for moderate ice.

8 It turned out it didn't have the kind of icing that I would
9 have been worried about that day from debriefing her afterwards.
10 She did -- when she went into Logan, that system produced some
11 unforecast low visibility. Logan has a fairly low approach, but
12 visibility dropped to 3/4 of a mile with snow, and she said she
13 texted David, the chief pilot, and she went missed. Because of
14 those conditions, she started down then went missed -- or maybe
15 she didn't do the approach. Again, you can look at the radar, but
16 she chose not to go in, whether she went missed or she just chose
17 to not land at Logan because of the low visibility and the snowing
18 conditions.

19 And the comment she made to me was -- afterwards, she was,
20 like, you know, she was really glad that David had told her -- his
21 reply was do what's safe. You don't need to go into Logan; do
22 what's safe. So, she -- I think she did go missed, so she had
23 continued on to Salt Lake because I -- and then when she landed at
24 Salt Lake, the conditions were horrible. It was raining, pouring,
25 in fact, and low visibility, a lot of turbulence. It was

1 basically a driving rainstorm. In fact, we both went back to the
2 hotel, we were both soaked. I actually took my pants off and used
3 the blow dryer in the hotel. They were so wet, just my jeans, and
4 I only had the one set of jeans. So, it was really a driving
5 rainstorm, and she didn't express any concerns or trepidation or
6 issues with the flight or the approaches or with the -- any
7 discomfort with the IFR conditions. She did say it was snowing
8 and the visibility was low enough that she didn't think going into
9 Logan was an option.

10 And then she was happy the company response was not punitive
11 or no suggestion that she go back and try the approach again. So
12 she did -- I mean, literally, she told me, she goes that was
13 really nice; that was really nice to know that I could just do
14 what I think I need to do and they're comfortable with me making
15 those decisions. And I was actually, you know, not that I
16 expected a different answer, but I was very glad that that was her
17 experience --

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. -- that as a -- that hadn't -- didn't have a lot of time,
20 that she would have had that experience of going missed, choosing
21 not to go back and the company saying good call, do what's safe.

22 Q. And that was --

23 A. The --

24 Q. Mike, that was two days before the accident?

25 A. Yes, she did Logan -- or Salmon to Logan, then she did Burley

1 and then she did Burley the second day. So, she did Burley two
2 days in a row, and this was the day before that --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. -- sequence. The only other thing that she and I had
5 conversations about relative to the company was our schedule. She
6 and I were kind of alternating. So, I would go on duty on a
7 Thursday -- so, she would fly back to Salmon on Thursday, then I
8 would fly Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, fly back to Salmon on
9 Tuesday. Then she would pick up the route, fly to Logan on
10 Thursday and be in Salt Lake. So, it was working out well that we
11 were kind of tag-teaming.

12 And there were -- I had some commitment that I had to go do,
13 so she ended up working two days in a row. I can't remember what
14 it was -- or not two days but a cycle. She did an extra cycle in
15 Salt Lake because I had -- so we got out of phase in that
16 alternating. And so, we did discuss the fact that, you know, that
17 Gem Air really needed to hire another pilot because our -- we were
18 the ones who were making up the schedule between the two of us,
19 and we were looking forward to a little more predictability in the
20 schedule once they got another pilot on board. So, I think, you
21 know, there was an awareness between the two of us, we were both
22 the fill-in pilots making up for the lack of Salt Lake based
23 pilots.

24 Q. Um-hum, okay. Let me shift gears real quick here. Burley
25 airport, tell me about that airport, the challenges of that

1 airport, your experiences there.

2 A. So, the big challenge really is winter ops there. They don't
3 have ground deicing, so if it's snowing and you know you're going
4 to accumulate snow, it's a no-go. That's kind of a given. Number
5 two, if it has snowed in recent history, the airport is serviced
6 by the City of Burley, I believe, and they don't plow the runway
7 -- they don't have a high priority of plowing the runway. So,
8 usually what we do is call Twin Falls tower, because if they do
9 plow the runway, they call Twin Falls tower to let them know that
10 the runway is closed while they're doing plowing operations. So,
11 you could call Twin Falls tower and find out if they've plowed the
12 runway, but again you might get -- yes, they called us two days
13 ago but that doesn't tell you that it might have snowed yesterday.
14 So, two days ago, Twin Falls tower could say that they called and
15 had plowed the runway two days ago, but you don't know that it
16 didn't snow yesterday. And so, you're -- so that's one of the
17 always an unknown at Burley airport is runway conditions with
18 respect to snow clearance, whether it's been plowed or not.

19 Another issue of Burley is, well, that for runway conditions
20 -- so, you can call the tower, you can call the City of Burley
21 early in the morning. They don't, you know, you're not going to
22 get a lot of response from the city. So, another option is we'll
23 talk to the UPS driver and get their assessment. Mainly, the
24 question is ultimately is it snow-covered? You know, if the wind
25 -- wind is almost always blowing at Burley so it tends to blow the

1 snow off the runway and if they plowed, the UPS driver could at
2 least tell you that it's snow-packed, there's snow all over
3 everywhere, everything's snow-covered, or no, the taxiway is clear
4 of snow, you know, that either they plowed or the snow has been
5 blown for you. So, we often use the UPS drivers there.

6 In terms of the approaches, I've done that, the runway 2-0
7 approach many times. I have flown into Burley so frequently. I
8 haven't encountered it at Lowe. I have far conditions very
9 frequently where, in other words, close to the minimums. I think
10 I probably landed there a handful of times where when the
11 conditions were IFR and it was, you know, bad, you know, meaning
12 that ceilings were below 1,000 and visibility's below 2 miles.
13 I've only landed there a handful of times.

14 One time this season, I did the approach. I know the ceiling
15 was below 1,000 and visibility was less than 2 miles. It was one
16 of those winter IFR days and I -- when I broke out, I had -- the
17 steam, you know, the towers were there and I ended up feeling too
18 high and hot to try to push the landing in from where I broke out
19 and what the visibility was, and I ended up doing a circle to land
20 on the other runway.

21 At the time it was just a decision, you know, I made at the
22 time and I didn't think about passing on to others that when you
23 -- I would have attributed it to the fact that maybe I was a
24 little high or after breaking out, you know, I was looking at what
25 the side picture was, made the decision and didn't really evaluate

1 it from the standpoint of, you know, when you break out at Burley
2 at MDA, this is what it looks like. I was just, you know, I was
3 just flying an IFR approach when I broke out, I made the choices
4 that I made based on what the conditions I saw out the window. I
5 do remember not being real happy doing a circling approach, but a
6 ceiling like that was better than doing a missed approach, because
7 I had the runway in sight. I just wasn't going to be able to land
8 2-0 at the speeds and altitudes I was at while maintaining
9 clearance from that stack.

10 Q. Did you see the stacks when you broke out?

11 A. Yes. You know, what's interesting is they're kind of
12 omnipresent when you break out. It's hard not to be aware of them
13 because they're right smack in your way, and that's really kind of
14 what is the rate-limiting step on your descent is feeling
15 comfortable that you're clear of them. And once you've descended
16 from MDA, you've cleared the stacks, then you set up for landing
17 at the runway.

18 I do remember, though, after Brittany's accident, realizing
19 that as I'm in IMC conditions and I am very aware of those stacks
20 flying into Burley on a regular basis in DFR, but realizing that
21 mentally when I'm flying an IFR procedure, my head is in the
22 procedure and in the instruments and flying the instruments. And
23 I don't know, it occurred to me, it's like, you know, I know
24 there's an obstruction there mentally when I'm in VFR and when I
25 break out. But when I'm flying the procedure, I don't think --

1 it's almost like out of sight, out of mind.

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. It dawned on me that, you know, I never really was -- when I
4 flew the approach into Burley, it didn't occur to me to be mindful
5 of the stacks because they're out there post-MDA. You don't
6 encounter them if you're, you know, above MDA. So, anyway I --

7 Q. What do you mean -

8 A. I think the other thing about Burley, Burley is always windy.
9 It's usually 20 to 30 knot winds, often 40 knot winds there. So,
10 that's -- Burley is a tough airport just because it's also very,
11 very windy there.

12 Q. Let me ask this, Mike. You said something that was
13 interesting. You said you were mindful of the stacks, but they
14 are post-MDA. What do you mean by that?

15 A. Yes, you know when you're flying the approach, I'm not
16 thinking about the stacks or I wasn't, you know, prior to this
17 accident. The stacks were not something that was in my IFR
18 mindset because you break out at MDA you're like a mile and a half
19 away from the runway typically where that last fix is. And if
20 you're at that altitude at that fix, you either go missed or you
21 see the runway. Those are the two options. I've never gone
22 missed at Burley, I've never in part because, you know, you're not
23 going to do the approach if it's below minimum, so you -- so it's
24 very unlikely to go missed if the conditions are such that you
25 could see the runway at MDA.

1 It's interesting, a couple of weeks, maybe a month before,
2 there was a low fogbank that hit the Snake River Plain, and
3 Hussein and I were both -- I flew to Twin Falls; he was at Burley
4 over the VOR. Burley had -- was reporting 200 feet vertical
5 visibility, so clearly not, you know, not doable. And, in fact,
6 we were waiting for a fogbank to clear at Twin Falls that wasn't
7 forecast to be at Twin Falls, but it was blocking our -- there
8 were a lot of airplanes on the approach into Twin and subsequently
9 the conditions were doing well, so we were -- there were like four
10 planes stacked up between Burley and Twin.

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. And a pilot for another company said, well, I'm going to go
13 try the approach at Burley and it was like, well, it's reporting
14 200 or 400 feet vertical visibility. I don't know what the point
15 of doing an approach and doing it when it's below mins, and he
16 went missed. And I remember talking to Hussein afterwards, like
17 that was really stupid for him to do an approach into an airport
18 that's below it's minimums. But at the time, I just thought it
19 stupid because it's stupid to do an approach into an airport that
20 when you're below minimums, I didn't even think about that
21 obstruction even though I know -- I mean, obviously I was aware of
22 that obstruction. And if I really would have been thinking about
23 it, it's like that's double reason why it's stupid to go into
24 Burley if it's reporting below mins.

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. But, again, that's a lesson that Hussein and I, probably a
2 month or so earlier, had chatted about the Burley airport, but we
3 didn't bring up the obstructions so much as we brought up the fact
4 that a pilot did a really stupid thing by accepting and trying an
5 approach with a bunch of people listening in.

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. That's the part that also got me. It's like, dude, you've
8 got witnesses. Why are you doing this? This is really stupid.

9 Q. When you -- Mike, were you --

10 (Crosstalk)

11 Q. Did Brittany talk to you about -- the day before she diverted
12 to Twins after trying to get into Burley, did she talk to you
13 about that and why that happened?

14 A. No, she didn't. In fact, I didn't find out that she had gone
15 missed at Burley until after the accident because I just thought
16 -- well, I knew she was doing Burley because she did mention that
17 she was doing Burley and she had swapped with Hussein because she
18 had a hair appointment. She introduced me to the boyfriend she
19 was going to introduce for -- to her parents that weekend. And
20 she mentioned that do you know how hard it is to get a hair
21 appointment, so I've got to get back to Salt Lake. And that's why
22 I asked her to do Burley.

23 So, I knew why she had asked to do Burley the day of the
24 accident and why she -- that it was important for her to get to a
25 hair appointment that day. I knew that she -- the day before she

1 was already on the schedule to do Burley, and at that time I told
2 her due to this weather system, if you do Burley IFR, when you
3 break out, don't feel like you have to land because when you get
4 down, they don't always plow the airport. So, if you break out
5 and you see the airport and it looks like it hasn't been plowed or
6 the runway looks like it snowed since the last time it was plowed,
7 take the time to evaluate whether the runway conditions are
8 landable. You can always go back and do the approach again.

9 I just -- so, that was one piece of advice I gave her two
10 days before after we had done, you know, when we got -- when we
11 were going into -- you know, we came back soaked from her landing
12 at Salt Lake after Logan. I knew she was doing Burley the next
13 day and since we had active precipitation, I was telling her that
14 be mindful that if snowed in Burley, you know, call Joe, call Twin
15 Falls tower. And if -- when you break out if you see snow on the
16 runway, you can do a low pass to evaluate whether it's landable.

17 So, that was my last advice to her on Burley. And we didn't
18 chat -- so, I didn't realize she had gone to Twin Falls the day
19 before. So, I didn't realize that even though we rode in the car
20 together, we were talking about other things, I suppose.

21 Q. Okay. As a company, does Gem Air -- did they voice any
22 concerns about Burley airport or that approach prior to the
23 accident to your knowledge?

24 A. No, I mean, I think everybody -- it was always -- we were
25 always told, you know, Burley -- we were instructed it's a

1 challenging airport. But there's a reason we were doing it in
2 Caravans, that the B99s don't -- can't get in there because it's
3 too short for their accelerate stop distance for the company
4 protocol for Alpine.

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. So, I think that's one of the reasons they don't -- weren't
7 flying the twins into Burley. So, when we got the route
8 originally, because when I first started working for Gem Air,
9 Burley was not one of the flights then we added Burley as a route.
10 And when they got added, again it was -- we were told, you know,
11 it's a short field, it's got a lot of challenges because of the
12 maintenance issues with respect to getting plowed and that they
13 don't have deice equipment. So, if it's snowing, don't land
14 there; divert to Twin Falls.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. So, nothing specific was called out about hazards of -- that
17 I'm aware of. I mean, what's interesting is I went down, I was
18 told about that stack but not necessarily from an IFR standpoint
19 but just as a oh, by the way, there's a lot of obstructions
20 including one right smack in the middle, you know, on the main
21 runway we use.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Again, that stack was omnipresent. It was hard to be -- do
24 Burley and not be aware of that stack.

25 Q. Okay. Are there any special procedures for Caravan pilots

1 operating into Burley or are they just -- any special instructions
2 pilots are getting?

3 A. Not that I was aware of. You know, other than the ones I
4 just mentioned, you know, the being really aware that it may not
5 be landable because of snow removal, that there's no ground deice,
6 so if it is actively snowing and you think you're going to
7 accumulate, definitely divert. And probably I would imagine we --
8 a warning that just the general winter ops, Burley's no different,
9 that, you know, if it's snow-covered when you break out, it's hard
10 to find a runway because if it's not been plowed or if it's part
11 plowed and they left me the snow floor, which sometimes plowing
12 doesn't always get all the snow off the runway if it's been packed
13 down and you end up with a snow floor. And it's plowed but it's
14 still -- and it's relatively short that, you know, if you land --
15 if you come in hot, that it's shorter than it looks.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. A 4,000-foot runway -- we do so much back country, a 4,000-
18 foot runway seems long, but Burley is one of the exceptions where
19 it actually does feel short.

20 Q. Okay. Are -- as a check airman, are you instructed or are
21 you guided to try and get pilots over to Burley so they can see
22 that approach?

23 A. No, we haven't. You know, what's interesting is our check
24 airman duties were previously constrained back to -- we just
25 recently were given authorization to do LPV approaches. Before,

1 all the check airmen -- IFR check airmen were -- we always had to
2 go out of our way to find an ILS. So, we either had to go to it
3 at Boise or Idaho Falls or Butte, Montana --

4 Q. Um-hum.

5 A. -- to get an ILS in. So, all our check airman, IFR stuff was
6 really constrained by the need to find an ILS. With the
7 authorization of being able to do LPV and LNAV precision, you
8 know, more GPS. But in general, they tend to be -- the approach
9 is when we're doing a check ride is --

10 Q. You're --

11 (Crosstalk)

12 Q. You're breaking up a little bit, Mike.

13 (Crosstalk)

14 A. Oh, okay. So, the logistics of which airport we do is driven
15 probably by economics and convenience --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- which airport is along the way that might be, you know, a
18 deadhead ride. And when I did Brittany's check ride, we did it
19 enroute to Jackson, so we -- and then another factor is, again,
20 whether -- if you can dovetail it with another scheduled flight or
21 if not then it's the nearest field that has the approaches that
22 you can do.

23 Q. Now, I'm going to share my screen with you, so hopefully you
24 can see this, Mike. I'm going to pull it up here in a second.

25 You mentioned the check rides that you had. Let me know if you

1 can --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- see -- this is the 8410 that you did back on --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- 2/17/22. So, you signed her off for her 293, also her
6 297. Was this, to your knowledge, was the first time that she had
7 an IFR proficiency check -- a 297 check in the Caravan?

8 A. Yes, this was her initial.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I believe it was, yes.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. She had been flying -- she'd just been checked out in the
13 Caravan, had been flying VFR. She was doing a lot of nightly
14 flights into Salt Lake to bring her -- to get her night -- the
15 minimum insurance requirement required a certain number of hours
16 or night flight.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. So, that was -- so, I knew she wasn't IFR-checked -- hadn't
19 had an IFR check.

20 Q. Got it. And on line number 15 here, so from the ILS, this is
21 what you were talking about -- I think referring to -- you did an
22 LPV precision for her on this check ride?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. And then the only other question I have is over here
25 on line 7 on -- under general, for judgment, it looked like

1 something was scratched out. I don't know if you recall this.

2 A. Yes, what happened was I pencil-whipped the lines. You can
3 see over there on the right all the lines that this doesn't apply,
4 doesn't apply, doesn't apply.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. And I X'd those out and I said, oh crap, there is one that
7 does apply.

8 Q. Oh, okay.

9 A. That was the judgment. So, I had pencil-whipped it as not
10 applicable, then realized no, it is applicable. And interesting,
11 even though, obviously, judgment cost her life, I still think she
12 had good judgment.

13 Q. Okay. Let me kind of expand on that. What do you mean
14 judgment cost her life?

15 A. Well, I mean, my take on the accident is -- the bottom line
16 is she got too low on the approach. How that happened,
17 ultimately, is pilot error. Maybe pilot error, whether you call
18 that judgment or just pilot error, I don't think she made bad
19 judgment calls. I think she probably ran into an experience that
20 was just an issue of being a fairly new pilot flying cargo. She
21 was in a heavy aircraft, the Caravan that day, she -- like I said
22 in the text to me, she complained it was heavy and climbing out
23 slow. I said, yes, welcome to cargo; you fly heavy loads. And
24 she had been flying cargo all summer, so she's used to -- or was
25 not inexperienced or alien to being close to gross weight in an

1 airplane.

2 So -- but the one thing is I think some of her prior flights
3 have been in a 247 -- in the EX Caravans, which have greater
4 horsepower. So, I think one of the things that kind of ganged up
5 on her is she had a heavy load in a Caravan, relatively low
6 Caravan time -- well, definitely low Caravan time, and she had two
7 or three days of flying -- or lots of experience flying the EX
8 Caravans with lots of horsepower. And then the load into Burley
9 -- make Caravan was the -- below her horsepower model.

10 You know, we train the differences, but again training and
11 experience, you know, you experience lots of -- it's not less
12 responsive when you spool up the PT6, it spools up at the same
13 rate. It's just delivers less horsepower once it's spooled up to
14 the full power. She got low slope and (indiscernible) is not
15 going to respond back, and when it gets power, it's not in the
16 (indiscernible), getting too slow, having an airplane that's not
17 -- that's doggy because it's heavy and doggy because it's got less
18 horsepower.

19 Q. Right. So, you're breaking up a little bit in, Mike. So,
20 you said --

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. -- that she had higher time or more recent time in some of
23 the higher horsepower Caravans than this --

24 A. Right.

25 Q. -- particular one in that it's -- it does -- it spools up the

1 same, however, it's not going to develop the same amount of
2 horsepower.

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Yes, and, you know, it's one of those things where I think,
6 you know, that's one of the issues that when you fly a lot, you're
7 a little bit aware of the fact that when you're in a non-EX
8 airframe, you think okay, I'm in something that's not as powerful.
9 And if I'm heavy, it's not going to be as responsive as one of the
10 higher horsepower models is.

11 Q. Okay. I'm going to share with you, because I want you to
12 walk me through how to shoot this approach. So, I'm going to
13 share my screen again and I'm going to pull up -- let me know if
14 you see the approach plate for the RNAV GPS 2-0 at Burley.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. You see that?

17 A. I could see the top half.

18 Q. Can you see the profile view?

19 A. I can see -- now, I can see the bottom half.

20 Q. Okay. Yes, I didn't have the whole plate up, because I want
21 you to be able to see it clear. I'm just showing the profile view
22 of the approach. So, walk me through this as a check airman on
23 the Caravan and a trainer on the Caravan. How would you expect
24 Brittany to have flown this approach that day? In other words,
25 what --

1 A. So --

2 Q. -- how is she setting up the Garmin 1000, what is her lateral
3 and vertical guidance, how is she doing this, since she used to do
4 it --

5 A. Right.

6 (Crosstalk)

7 A. Right, so you know, assuming, you know, you come in at
8 (indiscernible) at 7,000 and intercept the glide path, and on the
9 G1000, if you press vertical navigation, then it gives you the
10 glide path as a carrot over in the display. So, that's an aid
11 that we use in training her and it's shown her that, you know,
12 this is useful to get -- having the VNAV or vertical path
13 displayed -- or not displayed -- but when you load it with the
14 VNAV -- in general, I personally prefer letting the autopilot fly
15 the profiles and get a -- so, when I -- if I were instructing her
16 on this, I'd say set up the profile so that your glide path gets
17 you to jam (ph.) at your decision point at MDA.

18 So, you arrive at MDA at your -- on a basically a stabilized
19 approach. So, maybe not jam. Jam is not the -- so, in general
20 our instruction is to fly a stabilized approach. Oftentimes on --
21 the standard kind of procedure is you usually are going to need a
22 fairly, on most of our non-precision approaches, you need a fairly
23 high descent rate of like a -- if you're at 120 knots and there's
24 not a lot of wind, that you're going to need probably 1,000 feet
25 per minute to stay for your descent rate to give you -- get you to

1 the MDA without being too high at MDA when you're at the threshold
2 where you need to --

3 So, you need to have a reasonably high, you know, 1,000 feet
4 per minute, descent rate to get you to the MDA, so you hit MDA
5 prior to arriving at the runway.

6 Q. So, you would train that prior to Irene (ph.) if you're at
7 7,000 feet to arm the approach or to select approach so that it
8 would follow lateral guidance and the vertical profile?

9 A. To be honest, I would have, you know, it would have been set
10 for the approach mode further out. So, you would already have
11 been in approach mode at this point. It would have picked up --
12 typically when I'm instructing -- under the assumption that I'm
13 training her, we're talking about how to use the autopilot to do
14 the approach.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. It's get the approach, set up early so you're going to be out
17 at muto (ph.). Now, it would be -- you're going to want to have
18 the approach set up so you don't have to do the procedure turn.
19 So, you want to be at 7,000 at, you know, so you can do the
20 approach without the inconvenience of the procedure turn. Once
21 you're inbound and lined up, verify that it stays in approach
22 mode, because a lot of times if you didn't hit the button
23 correctly and you're not in approach mode, it's not going to give
24 you the options for vertical navigation, vertical guidance. And
25 if you do press the VNAV button, now you get vertical navigation

1 assistance on the autopilot helping you in.

2 Q. Okay. So, you just clarified something for me. By hitting
3 the approach mode, you're only getting lateral guidance, but
4 that's not going to start you down when you get to the glide path.

5 A. Well --

6 Q. You need to select vertical, the VNAV, to do that.

7 A. You have to -- and it's making sure that you are -- making
8 those selections, but then not trusting the autopilot to be
9 correct. In other words -- and then the next thing is look up at
10 the -- on the G1000, you have VPath, vertical path, and GS glide
11 slope. They will be cued up in white indicating the autopilot is
12 expecting them, but it has not --

13 Q. Captured them.

14 A. -- captured them, and that your attention, if you're flying
15 with an autopilot on this approach, is to pay attention to those
16 modes and the vertical carrot, because if it didn't -- doesn't
17 capture it, now you're hand-flying the approach.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. And now you're -- if that vertical path carrot starts
20 dropping way, you're going to have to manually get back on glide
21 slope because the autopilot didn't capture. So, the things I
22 probably emphasized in training and in doing this approach is
23 being distrustful of the autopilot and watching it at every step.
24 And being there prepared to -- and part of it's a lot of what gets
25 the autopilot or makes the autopilot less reliable is really input

1 error from the operator. It's not that the autopilot's failing,
2 although it can fail to capture after you've told it capture the
3 glide path. If you're off too many clicks, it's not going to
4 capture. That could be the way you were flying it or it could be
5 the way you set it up.

6 Q. Um-hum.

7 A. But I always taught to be skeptical of the autopilots and to
8 be hand-flying it and/or be prepared to hand-fly in the event the
9 autopilot doesn't capture the glide path, then you're hand-flying
10 it or if it captures it and then loses it, you're now taking over
11 from the autopilot. So, I think I always trained autopilot
12 skepticism.

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. In other words, don't let the autopilot just -- don't trust
15 it to always do you right. Expect that it's always doing you
16 wrong is kind of the paradigm I always taught.

17 Q. Have you -- did you notice in the times that you flew and did
18 some deadheads in training outside the evaluation -- 8410
19 evaluation, right, with Brittany, did she tend to use the
20 autopilot for approaches or did she like to hand fly?

21 A. I would say that we didn't do a lot of approaches together
22 other than the, you know, the check airman approach, which -- and
23 I don't know that if I have enough experience to be able to say
24 one way or the other. I would say in general when we were flying
25 together, it was in instructional mode often. So, what we would

1 be doing a little mix of both --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- because it would be let's do this one coupled, show me how
4 you would set it up and then we'd critique, you know. Well, why
5 did it not capture, what do you think went wrong there or -- a lot
6 of times she was pretty facile with the G1000, so there were
7 actually things she taught me, but there were some things I taught
8 her on an XI model, for example. It has a -- the autopilot will
9 follow a visual approach, but you have to be mindful that the
10 visual approach doesn't provide terrain separation.

11 Q. Yes.

12 A. So, you can set up and let the autopilot fly an approach to
13 an airplane, an airport that doesn't even have an approach and it
14 will take you right in. Of course, it will take you right in to
15 the side of a hill if there's a side of a hill in the way.

16 Q. Okay. On this one, if you'll look at the screen, I'm still
17 on the profile view for the approach.

18 A. Um-hum.

19 Q. Is an option on this, Mike, to descend usually at vertical
20 speed and is that likely?

21 A. You know, I don't think that's likely. I don't see an option
22 for really using vertical speed here.

23 (Crosstalk)

24 A. You can by doing the math.

25 Q. Yes. It's not like a Jepp Chart where it has the ground

1 speed and --

2 A. Yes, and --

3 Q. -- air speeds.

4 A. We, you know, we -- I could see that you could do it, but
5 that's not something that I would see us doing or her doing --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- you know, manually calculating and coming up with a
8 timing --

9 Q. Okay, so --

10 A. -- for doing vertical speed.

11 Q. So, keep looking at your screen. I'm not going to flip over
12 to the training program manual and this is for the Caravan. I
13 forget what page --

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Page 18. And this is what the training program calls for.
16 Descent should be approximately a 1,000 feet per minute to ensure
17 that you are at level at the next required altitude. This is for
18 a non-precision approach.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. Failure to make the descent to the MDA at a timely manner may
21 result in missing the opportunity to visually identify the
22 airport. So, this tends to outline guidance for the dive and
23 drive. You're going 1,000 feet down, so you get to the next
24 altitude and you level off. You hit a fixed --

25 (Crosstalk)

1 A. You know, it's interesting, I agree that what it sounds like
2 it says and you're right it does. It says 1,000 feet per minute
3 then level off. The fact is or the reality of most of the non-
4 precision approaches we do the 1,000 feet per minute at 120 knots
5 gets you to the points at where you're literally hitting the --

6 Q. The next altitude.

7 A. The next altitude without -- you're not leveling off.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. Let's just put it that way.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. While curriculum does say that, the approaches in reality
12 that we fly -- I'm thinking particularly of the approaches into
13 Salmon -- they're fairly steep and you have to get a pretty steep
14 descent or you have to get a lot of descent rate to make each one
15 of those fixes.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Not so much -- and there are a couple that you level off for,
18 where you're literally there's not much delta between the fixes
19 where you -- but they're closer to where you're getting to the
20 decision height. Particularly, I'm thinking of RNAV delta into
21 Salmon.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. But in general, I mean, just my experience with the non-
24 precision approaches that I've flown, that that 1,000 feet per
25 minute tends to get you to the next fix. But, you know, when I'm

1 training with Brittany and when I'm training, I always tried to --
2 I always try to time it, not by calculation but by using the
3 various tools that the G1000 gives you, so you can load out
4 descent rate and then it projects where that descent rate will get
5 you to the target altitude.

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. So, you dial in the next fixed target altitude, load up a
8 descent rate so that you're crossing that fix at that target
9 altitude at a constant descent rate --

10 Q. Right.

11 A. -- so that you're not having to do that dive drive and level
12 off thing.

13 Q. And so, just -- I'm going to have a couple of follow-up
14 questions, but I want to give a couple of the guys a chance to
15 chat with you because you've been really helpful. But before I
16 give it to Fabian here, there is still -- there is no guidance or
17 correct me if I'm wrong -- but there's no guidance in Gem Air
18 training manuals or anything that -- other than when you're
19 leaving MDA, you still have to have the airport in sight and
20 execute a normal landing prior to leaving MDA. Am I correct?

21 A. I guess I don't understand the question.

22 Q. Well, it's still -- to leave MDA, it's still the old
23 regulations that says you --

24 A. Oh, yes, absolutely.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yes, you have to have the airport in sight. Yes, I mean,
2 that -- there's no question -- to me in my mind, I can't imagine
3 that she didn't have the airport in sight, because why would you
4 leave a decision altitude or any decision height of any kind
5 without the airport.

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. And I mean -- and not just -- and as a new pilot, we're not
8 talking, you know, because she was probably still on low mins.
9 You know, you're not just encouraged to have -- just barely I
10 could see the runway lights and the rabbits, I could get a -- it's
11 more the cautionary. You need the runway in sight, you need to
12 see that you can really land.

13 Q. Right, okay.

14 A. And -- so, no. No, we're definitely -- yes, we don't do it
15 -- after MDA you're basically a VFR pilot. At that point, you are
16 flying VFR and landing visual -- on a visual once you've --

17 Q. Right.

18 A. -- got the runway at sight.

19 Q. Okay. I appreciate --

20 A. It wasn't -- unless it's a circling approach and then you're
21 still in a circling approach mode, but that's still a visual with
22 some gotchas and issues.

23 Q. Right. Visual maneuvering on a circling. Okay. I have some
24 just a couple of follow-ups, but I want to give Fabian an
25 opportunity and I'll pull off my video and let Fabian see if he

1 has any questions.

2 BY MR. SALAZAR:

3 Q. Actually, Mike, I would like to ask you just a few questions.
4 What type of anti-icing --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- system does the Grand Caravan have that you guys operate?

7 A. They're TKS, so they're all TKS systems. And we have -- most
8 of the airframes have TKS; it's the factory TKS. We have one
9 airframe that has a second -- an STC or a different TKS, but it's
10 currently not authorized for -- we're not using it for IFR now.

11 Q. Okay. The accident airplane had a TKS system with a tank.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Where do you guys get the tank serviced?

14 A. The TKS is loaded -- we fill our own airplanes at the UPS
15 ramp. So, and while we all trained about dispatching with TKS at
16 the, you know, the sight gauge showing that we still haven't --
17 but all of the pilots that I am aware of, Brittany included, our
18 standard was to fill the TKS, particularly if you're flying into
19 known (indiscernible) with full tanks. So, you -- we would have
20 funnels and TKS on the ramp there at the UPS ramp, yes.

21 Q. Do you know if --

22 (Crosstalk)

23 A. You can carry two or three -- usually (indiscernible) and TKS
24 with you in case you're (indiscernible) that doesn't have TKS.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. So, you can -- are you there?

2 Q. Yes, you're breaking up, but I'm following you. Did the ramp
3 north --

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. -- or the north ramp have TKS or do you guy -- did you guys
6 load it up yourself at Salt Lake City?

7 A. Yes, there's -- at Salt Lake City at the UPS ramp in Salt
8 Lake, we have TKS.

9 Q. At the ramp?

10 A. Yes, we have it at the UPS ramp. We have -- there's a
11 staging area where we -- right by where the planes are parked
12 where there's a pallet that has a large -- well, there's several
13 different ways we do it. There's a 55-gallon -- or not a 55-
14 gallon -- there's a drum on a dolly that has a handpump and we
15 also have 5-gallon individual TKS -- 5-gallon jugs that you can
16 carry over to the airplane and then hand fill from those. So, you
17 can either use the dolly --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- and then a hand pump that you use to (indiscernible) and
20 top off. Generally, what we try to do is top of TKS in the
21 afternoons or in the evenings when you bring the plane back, that
22 way you're not having to do it in the early morning because it's
23 just -- nobody wants to do -- mucking with airplanes in the early
24 morning. If you can get it done in the afternoon or do your
25 fellow pilot if you're handing them the plane, the last pilot that

1 landed -- if you land in the afternoon and you use TKS, you would
2 top it off as a courtesy to the other pilot. And generally
3 speaking, if you didn't do that, you're going to get a very
4 sarcastic thanks for filling the TKS up yesterday.

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. You know, kind of -- you know, because we all are responsible
7 for doing it ourselves, but it's always -- it's just kind of
8 considered a common courtesy to do it the day before.

9 Q. Okay. Do you know if Brittany serviced her aircraft with TKS
10 prior to the departure?

11 A. You know, I don't know. I would say just based on -- my
12 assumption would be yes because we all would -- it was a -- we
13 were flying into known icing. Everybody flies with TKS when
14 you're flying into known icing. And we all checked that pretty
15 diligently because nobody likes ice.

16 Q. Yes --

17 A. So, as a result I can't imagine that she (a) didn't check,
18 and (b) that she wasn't absolutely chock-a-block full.

19 Q. Yes, okay. Last thing is training for icing. Do you guys
20 have -- cover icing, deicing, anti-icing and flying in icing
21 during the training in the year?

22 A. Yes, the Caravan is not of those airframes that has a --
23 you're required to have, flying into known icing, winter
24 operations training, which is an online course. So, she would
25 have had that fairly recently, so there's that. And then there

1 was an emphasis in our ground training about icing operations and
2 again that's where the emphasis on which airports have ground
3 deicing and which ones don't. Most of the smaller outlying,
4 there's no ground deicing in Moab, there's no ground deicing in
5 Ely, no ground -- actually Winnemucca may have it. But the
6 training is if there's -- if you're going into a place without
7 known ground deice then you don't land if it's snowing. You call
8 the trip.

9 And I'm going to say that there's known snow where you feel
10 like you're going to have a ground deicing situation. I mean,
11 there are times when you get a spindrift of snow and it's super
12 cold and it's not accumulating, and you're only going to touching
13 down briefly, but that's not something anybody trains that you
14 would have any options. Beyond the training is if it's snowing,
15 if there's a ground deice situation, you bypass the airport and
16 divert. It looks like you're frozen.

17 Q. No, I was listening. You broke up a little bit right at the
18 end. Last thing for me just so I know, what -- how -- what does
19 the pilot have as far as visual cues when they're flying in the
20 Grand Caravan to show them that they're picking up ice? Where do
21 you look?

22 A. It's fairly obvious. The first place I always check just to
23 see if there's any ice is the tires, just because black tires show
24 the contrast of ice way better than the silver leading edges of
25 the wings and struts.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. You then see it on the wings and struts and then also on the
3 just the outboard parts of the wing. That's where it shows up the
4 most probably.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And even when you're -- when you have deicing on, and she
7 would have it on that day because I had to deice as I was flying
8 through the clouds, you turn it on when you're going to go into
9 known icing. You start by doing a prime to pump on the ground so
10 you turn on deice to verify that the wing is weeping, then you can
11 visually see that there's flow for -- usually you do that as a
12 ground check, particularly on a day where you know it's going to
13 be known icing, just to prime the pump and also verify that your
14 airplane is actually (indiscernible) for ice. Because if it
15 doesn't, then you don't want to launch into the clouds, so it's
16 a --

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. -- part of the pre-flight. Then also before -- typically
19 when you -- if you're in VMC but being vectored and you can see
20 your (indiscernible) or a cloud, you would turn deice on prior to
21 entering the cloud because it's an anti-ice system. It doesn't
22 deice, it doesn't remove ice, it prevents ice --

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. -- so, the training and everything about how we operate is so
25 that you start the deice before you enter a cloud and you start --

1 verify the system on the ground before you launch into a known
2 icing weather pattern.

3 Q. All right. Thank you very much. That's all the questions I
4 have.

5 MR. SALAZAR: Back to you, Dave.

6 MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks, Fabian. Craig, do you have any
7 questions for Mike?

8 MR. KAREL: No, I don't. Thank you very much, Mike, for your
9 participation. You're a very knowledgeable pilot, it sounds like.
10 But I do not have any questions, David. Thank you.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: You bet, Craig.

12 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

13 Q. I just have one more follow-up, Mike -- question. Since
14 you're experienced in the Caravan, can you explain the performance
15 of the airplane when you reduce thrust or where you reduce the
16 power --

17 (Crosstalk)

18 Q. Yes, when you reduce the power on the airplane during a
19 descent or on an approach, just kind of describe what is happening
20 to the airplane and what it feels like.

21 A. Right. So, this is -- I think this is a significant factor
22 on this, which is -- so, when you're -- again, let's just start
23 from where an approach speed coming in at 120 knots. If you hold
24 power all the way back, the -- there'll be a wag, then you'll
25 start to get some degrading airspeed. And then once you're around

1 -- below 100 knots -- 100 to 90 knots, that disk effect of the
2 prop really starts to be aggressive and it will -- literally, you
3 can -- it'll go from slowing down on the -- it's non-linear, is
4 what I would describe it as. You're slowing down from 120 knots
5 to 110, you know, you'll lose that in a few -- let's just say it
6 takes 5 seconds or 10 seconds to go from 120 to 110; 110 to 100
7 it's going to take 5 seconds; 100 to 90 is going to, say, take 2
8 seconds; 90 to 80, it hits really hard as you -- as airspeed
9 degrades. The effect of -- and it's the disk effect of the
10 propeller. And once it -- if you hit 90 and now you're trying to
11 maintain airspeed, you're going to have to fairly aggressively
12 drop the nose to -- and you're going -- or you're going to see it
13 -- if you push the nose down to keep the airspeed, you're going to
14 see a real high and very quickly accelerating vertical speed
15 reduction. So, you're going to go from 1000 feet per minute to
16 1500 to 2000 very quickly.

17 And it's one of those things where after Brittany's accident,
18 I was trying to figure out how did she end up so low so quickly on
19 the approach if she was following the glide path. And I -- I've
20 always instructed in the Caravan about that disk effect being
21 something that helps you slow down, that helps you descend quickly
22 if you get a chop and drop clearance, it allows you to lose
23 altitude quickly. But I didn't really taught it as a hazard. I
24 think we were all aware of it.

25 In fact, I had a bad indication on one of the -- on 585

1 Sierra Alpha. So, I landed, did a precautionary landing in Provo,
2 and the first thing I did is I pulled the power all the way back
3 because I had an oil temperature that was in the red and
4 (indiscernible) quickly, so I thought I had an engine issue. I
5 pulled the prop back, because if you don't pull the prop back, you
6 sink like a stone. And that's something that we do teach, but I
7 think it's one of those things where I recommended to the company
8 that we add it to the training. It's almost part of the -- you do
9 the stall sequence, get the airplane slow, stall it. Now, get the
10 airplane at 100, pull the power all the way back and watch what
11 happens with the prop disk effect, because I think it's something
12 that you don't experience it in piston-driven airplanes and it's a
13 prominent feature of the Caravan.

14 Now, I do think Brittany was aware of it, but aware and
15 having experienced a wide variety -- I've been doing a lot of
16 short field practice, because I already checked out, taking
17 Caravans into the backcountry. It is far more aggressive at low
18 speeds. And like I said, it's a non-linear response. You think
19 you're slowing down a little bit and then as you get slower, the
20 sink rate and the deceleration hits aggressively at 80, 90 knots,
21 and it's very, very noticeable when you're doing short-field work.

22 So, anyway, I think that was a significant factor. I think
23 she may have felt she was high and too fast, pulled power all the
24 way out and it happens at about 500 pounds torque. If you're
25 above 500 pounds torque, you really don't -- the effect goes away.

1 If you're below 500 pounds of torque, you can adjust. If you pull
2 it to 300, you're going to get more of that effect. If you pull
3 it all the way back you're going to get a lot of the effect. If
4 it's bothering you as a pilot that it's -- this is causing me to
5 slow down too much or to sink too fast, the typical thing is you
6 would add power. But it could be requiring you to drop the nose
7 out of power and, you know, get you in a situation where you're
8 managing a lot of airspeed and descent rate issues in a short
9 amount of time.

10 So, it's just a factor I think that's -- I went after the
11 accident, I went and simulated her approach path and altitudes and
12 descent rate and airspeeds, but -- from looking at FlightAware.
13 And then I just pulled the power back, and it was like, oh, wow,
14 this could be really bad. That could have what got her. And I'm
15 going to assume that with a heavier airplane, the responsiveness
16 to recover from getting an excessive sink rate and an excessive
17 disk effect is going to lag. And so, I think she may have had
18 that surprise her.

19 Q. Okay. Well, I appreciate you sharing --

20 A. That's -- yes, that's my theory at this point is why -- what
21 I've been saying a good pilot who knew how to fly and knew the
22 airplane and knew the rules, what would have gotten her in
23 trouble. And then combined with that happening and probably about
24 the same time she was coming up on the steam plume. So, it's, you
25 know, that multiple factors hitting all at once.

1 Q. Right. Well, I appreciate --

2 (Crosstalk)

3 A. -- a little too high, a little too fast and then pulling back
4 and then entering the cloud. You know, just everything hit all at
5 once and she was a lower-ton pilot, so wasn't necessarily equipped
6 to get out of that situation as fast as it developed.

7 Q. Well, I appreciate your time, Mike, and that's, I think, all
8 of the questions that we have. One thing I do offer everybody I
9 talk to is after our talk and maybe a day or two later, you start
10 thinking about our conversation and maybe there's something maybe
11 we didn't ask, and you wanted to, you know, make sure that we're
12 aware of. I offer you to get a hold of us anytime. You got my
13 email, and you can shoot me an email any time with additional
14 information that you want to share.

15 A. Yes, that would be -- I think I'm flying into the Burley area
16 tomorrow, so one of the things -- I'm still trying to test my
17 theories on Caravans and altitudes. I'm going to try to reproduce
18 her profile --

19 Q. Well, I just want you to be safe. You know, don't --

20 (Crosstalk)

21 A. I think VFR conditions and I'm not being a test pilot. I'm
22 mostly wanting to try to figure out what I could add to
23 understanding of what happened, so that we -- so I can incorporate
24 it into the training.

25 Q. And I appreciate that, but, you know, safety first. So, you

1 know --

2 A. Absolutely --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- absolutely.

5 Q. Well, I appreciate your time and I really thank you, and
6 really good information. And be in touch if there's anything else
7 you, you know, thinking you might want to share with the
8 investigation that might be helpful. Okay?

9 A. Okay, thank you very much.

10 Q. Mike, thanks.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: Craig, thanks. Fabian, thanks.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're welcome.

13 `Thanks, Mike.

14 MR. HART: All right. Talk to you later.

15 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.

16 (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 CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT
 NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO
 ON APRIL 13, 2022
 Interview of Mike Hart

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR22FA151

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: May 24, 2022

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.



Maria Socorro R. Abellar
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT *

NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO *

Accident No.: WPR22FA151

ON APRIL 13, 2022 *

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Interview of: HUSSEIN SALEH, Pilot, Captain
Gem Air

Via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday,
May 24, 2022

APPEARANCES:

DAVID LAWRENCE, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

FABIAN SALAZAR, Regional Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CRAIG KAREL, Investigator
Federal Aviation Administration

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Interview of Hussein Selah:		
By Mr. Lawrence		6

I N T E R V I E W

(2:00 CDT)

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2
3 MR. LAWRENCE: And go ahead and get started. For the record,
4 my name is David Lawrence. I'm the Ops Investigator for this
5 particular accident at Burley Airport. I'm looking at the
6 operations side of it and I'm assisting Fabian Salazar who's on
7 the call also. And just so you know, Hussein, on behalf of the
8 NTSA and the FAA, are condolences for your loss. I know it's a
9 small company and everybody knows everybody, and it's a tough
10 time, but I really want you to understand something, is that our
11 process is all safety related. We're just trying to find out what
12 happened so we can help prevent it from happening again. And
13 typically when we do these interviews, we have a couple other
14 people on, and I'll just go ahead and let them introduce
15 themselves and I'll start with Fabian.

16 MR. SALAZAR: Hello, Hussein. My name is Fabian Salazar.
17 I'm the Investigator in charge for the accident. Thanks for being
18 here.

19 MR. LAWRENCE: And Fabian's with the NTSB as well. And then
20 with the FAA we have Craig Karel. Craig.

21 MR. KAREL: Hello, Hussein. Yeah, Craig Karel. I'm with the
22 Boise Flight Standards District Office, and I have been assigned
23 to assist the NTSB in trying to determine the cause of the
24 accident in Burley.

25 MR. LAWRENCE: And just to expand on that, by federal

1 statute, the FAA is party to all our NTSB investigations, so
2 that's why Craig's here, but I want you to rest assured that
3 Craig's role here is purely safety as well. He has no regulatory
4 or rather certificate or enforcement actions that he can -- he
5 pursues. He's just trying to help us trying to find out what
6 happened on the accident investigation side, so I want you to feel
7 comfortable with his presence and also that if you'll open to, you
8 know, share whatever information you can to assist us in the
9 investigation.

10 Do you have anybody sitting in with you, a representative or
11 anybody with you, Hussein?

12 MR. SALEH: No, I don't. It'll just be me.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. That's fine. And I want you to also
14 know that it's very normal and organic for us in our accident
15 investigations to talk to people who had either some type of
16 training experience or some type of interaction with an accident
17 pilot in one of these situations, so us talking to you is really a
18 very normal part of the process. We've already got a lot of
19 really good information. I don't think this is going to take that
20 long so we're not going to take up your day that much.

21 We are going to be tape recording this interview, just the
22 audio, not the video, and what I do with that is we're going to
23 send it to a transcription service and they just simply transcribe
24 it into a written document, and that will be part of the record.
25 I will take some notes as we go through and I type with two

1 fingers like this, old school, so if I'm a little slow in getting
2 a question back to you or a response, don't read anything into it.
3 If there's a pause in the conversation, please don't read anything
4 into that, it's just me catching up with my notes. If I ask you a
5 question that you don't understand, Hussein, ask me to clarify it
6 or any of the people that ask you a question. I'll start off the
7 process and then Fabian and then Craig may have a few follow up
8 questions, and if you don't know the answer to a question I ask,
9 just simply say I don't know. That's perfectly acceptable.

10 So do you have any questions about the process at this point
11 in time?

12 MR. SALEH: No, I understand.

13 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Good.

14 INTERVIEW OF HUSSEIN SALEH

15 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

16 Q. Well, let's get started with the easy questions first, just
17 some background information. Can I get your full name, and help
18 me with the spelling, your age and what your title with Gem Air
19 is.

20 A. Hussein, that's H-u-s-s-e-i-n, Mohamed which is M-o-h-a-m-e-
21 d, Suleiman, S-u-l-e-i-m-a-n, last name is Saleh, which is S-a-l-
22 e-h. I'm 27, currently a pilot, captain, (indiscernible).

23 Q. Okay. You broke up a little bit there, so you're a pilot,
24 you're a training captain and what else was there?

25 A. Check airman and base manager at Salt Lake.

1 Q. And base manager in Salt Lake?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. Great. And how many years have you been with Gem Air?

4 A. Four years now.

5 Q. Okay. And I know what your role is as a pilot, as a training
6 captain and a check airman. Why don't you tell me what a base
7 manager does?

8 A. So my job as a base manager is to make sure operations in
9 Salt Lake go smoothly in terms of communication, changes, UPS --
10 between UPS and operations out here, so I kind of keep that
11 (indiscernible). I make sure all the plane, the data base are
12 updated, charts are updated. I make sure that (indiscernible)
13 issues are reported to the director of maintenance. Also, I make
14 sure the pilots come into work, so that's basically -- and any
15 equipment that we might need at Salt Lake I might be missing in
16 terms of (indiscernible), PKS. I make sure all of that is
17 operating in Salt Lake.

18 Q. Okay. Great. I appreciate that. As a pilot, just a
19 guesstimate of your total time.

20 A. I believe I have about 5 -- 4,000 hours.

21 Q. Okay. And how much of that if any is in a caravan?

22 A. Oh, 35 -- 3,500 hours in a caravan.

23 Q. Okay. So much of your time is in the caravan.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And just a broad brush overview of what your certificates and

1 any ratings, pilot certificates.

2 A. So I have the commercial multi -- single and multi, and I am
3 a CFI, also.

4 Q. Okay. Very good. And, Hussein, if I could get a -- just a
5 cliff notes brief version of your background, your aviation
6 background. What led you to Gem Air?

7 A. So I (indiscernible) my flight training in Long Beach
8 basically California. In instructed there (indiscernible) as an
9 apprentice CFI. Then I went back to Tanzania for about a year-
10 and-a-half to two, flew the caravans as well, but passenger
11 (indiscernible). And I just wanted to try something different in
12 terms of cargo and weather wise which is winter weather, and
13 that's how I ended up in Gem Air.

14 Q. Great. And if you could, tell me what you know about
15 Brittney and your interactions with her and how, you know, any
16 time that you had flown with her and that type of stuff.

17 A. As far as how I know Brittany, I met her up in Salmon
18 (indiscernible). We talked in there as a colleague. She was
19 brought down to Salt Lake during -- just before winter, you know,
20 to (indiscernible) Salt Lake as we do a lot, and as far as
21 (indiscernible) she was very good colleague and a good pilot, very
22 accomplished.

23 Q. Did you have a chance to obviously fly with her?

24 A. Let's see. Have I flown with Brittany together? Honestly I
25 can't recall because most of her training was done by the chief

1 pilot.

2 Q. And that would be David Schroeder?

3 A. Yes, yes.

4 Q. Okay. So when you say that she was a good pilot, what do you
5 base that on if you hadn't flown with her?

6 A. I base it on what I've seen in terms of her hours, and in
7 terms of all the flying she's done (indiscernible) and different
8 type of flying. And also being an instructor is (indiscernible)
9 which I know she was a CFI.

10 Q. Um-hum.

11 A. So that's what I base it off on.

12 Q. Okay. Have you ever been in any kind of training, maybe
13 ground school or recurrent training or anything like that with
14 her?

15 A. In terms of Brittany, no, but I was the (indiscernible)
16 manager and also I am the most experienced pilot at Salt Lake, so
17 when they first came down to Salt Lake, Brittany, I made sure to
18 inform her of the thing I have as experience in terms of the
19 things to look out for.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And one of the other things was (indiscernible) she was
22 flying winter. I tend to tell new pilots if there's a route you
23 feel that maybe the weather looked a bit (indiscernible), you
24 aren't comfortable, you could let me know so we could exchange and
25 maybe I could fly that route.

1 Q. Okay. Did Brittany ever tell you of the route that she was
2 not comfortable with?

3 A. No, not Brittany. I've had one other pilot, you know, in
4 terms of flights that he felt uncomfortable with which I did, but
5 not Brittany.

6 Q. Just curious, where -- what route was that that the other
7 pilot was not comfortable with?

8 A. It was Jackson, Jackson Airport which the weather's normally
9 tricky. The approach is really tricky which is understandable if
10 you're (indiscernible) starting.

11 Q. Right. So how often did you interact with Brittany?

12 A. Quite often in the morning. As I said I was in charge of
13 basically making sure all of the (indiscernible) so there's
14 sometimes where you have different loads, change of routes, maybe
15 you get (indiscernible), so I did have that interaction with that,
16 you know, the morning, you know, making sure whatever
17 (indiscernible) making sure operation notes, and the normal,
18 making sure she's here at work, and that's about it.

19 Q. Okay. On the day of the accident, how did you learn about
20 the accident?

21 A. I got a phone call from our operation manager, and they
22 inform of what had happened. Around -- I believe it was around
23 9:00, 9:30 in the morning.

24 Q. Okay. And what did you do then?

25 A. Honestly I was in shock. I was in shock because I had just

1 seen her early in the morning.

2 Q. Tell me about that interaction when you saw her the morning
3 of. How did she seem? How did she appear? Was she tired or did
4 she provide any concerns about the day, anything?

5 A. No, she looked her normal happy self. We did interact a
6 little bit. On that day she seemed actually happy because she
7 actually had a hair appointment which she was excited about, and
8 also she was going on vacation on the 29th of April.

9 Q. What day was she going on vacation?

10 A. 29th.

11 Q. Okay. To your knowledge, and this is a standard question to
12 you, Hussein, but to your knowledge, were you aware of Brittany
13 having any financial difficulties, family issues, any distractions
14 like that?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Okay. Had she ever voiced any concern you said about routes,
17 but I want to be kind of specific. Had she ever voiced any
18 concerns about flying into Burley?

19 A. Burley, no. I think in terms of Burley as I said, I've done
20 these routes more than anyone, so I am actually the one who gave
21 on tip in terms of any new pilot that joined in terms of these
22 routes, and one of them being Burley, I do normally tell every
23 pilot who's ever joined that if Burley is ever at minimum or just
24 above minimum, not to bother because of that smoke. I'm not going
25 to be able to get in, so that's the tip for me because I've done

1 it so much and I've heard it so much.

2 Q. Okay. And I'm going to pull up -- now that we have video in
3 just a moment I'm going to pull up the approach flight, and ask
4 you just a few questions since you're so experienced going in
5 there, and you have probably some good knowledge about that, but
6 did Brittany ever voice any concerns not just about the route or,
7 you know, her personal life, but did she voice any concerns either
8 about Gem Air or maybe her schedule? I know you're in charge of
9 scheduling, but did she ever have any problems or voice any
10 concerns about the company or her scheduling?

11 A. Not that I'm aware of. She never told me anything about
12 that, anything about either of that, scheduling or Gem Air, no.
13 Not that I'm aware of.

14 Q. Okay. And what was her typical schedule?

15 A. So we kind of have a balance of long days and short days, and
16 normally the long days like when you come to Salmon is a 14 -- 13-
17 1/2 hour days, and break (ph.) is the short one, basically kind of
18 finish at 9:30, and those are a 4 hour days, so we have a balance
19 of those, so, you know, you don't get tired, get overworked.

20 Q. Did she prefer the short days or the long days?

21 A. I mean, honestly all pilots prefer the short days.

22 Q. Okay. But did she typically get the short days or long days?
23 I mean, I know it's a balance and such.

24 A. It's from what I know and I remember, she would have a Salmon
25 day which is a 13 hour day, then she would have a short day, and

1 then in this point in time we added more (indiscernible) which is
2 a kind of 4 hour day, and then she'd have a short day, and most of
3 the time they -- she would get Saturday and Sunday off most of the
4 time.

5 Q. Okay. How many pilots were based up there that you would
6 schedule for the caravan?

7 A. They were, let's see, Brittany, Tyler, myself, Dave -- so
8 about four to five.

9 Q. And you --

10 A. Depending because some --

11 Q. And you would rotate in to fly some of the routes as well?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. Where did they stay when they're up there? If they
14 were based or they lived in Salmon, where would they stay?

15 A. I believe the company has a hotel for them that is about
16 three, four miles from the airport. It's called Radisson.

17 Q. Okay. Just a couple of general questions, too, since you've
18 been company for a while and you're pretty experienced there.
19 Does the company have like a safety program or a safety management
20 system, SMS? Are you familiar with that?

21 A. Yes, I'm familiar with that. We do have a safety program
22 (indiscernible) for how we use that. We have safety boxes all
23 around the company that you could view, and if you're
24 uncomfortable with that, too, there was me to talk to, there was
25 the chief you could talk to, so -- and we regularly tried to

1 (indiscernible) things that we were concerned about.

2 Q. Okay. You said safety boxes. What are you talking about?

3 A. We have a safety box here in Salmon that, you know, if you
4 want to -- if you don't know how to use that online SMS you can
5 put in your suggestions in terms of safety.

6 Q. All right.

7 A. So we have that, and before winter we always had a meeting
8 that we talked about all the rules and safety concerns
9 (indiscernible).

10 Q. Okay. But just to be clear, you don't have a formal SMS
11 program, is that correct?

12 A. Well, I think that's formal. SMS basically -- yeah, we do
13 have a formal I believe so, yeah.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But you can go online and basically submit any safety
16 concerns you have.

17 Q. Okay. So that's -- the safety reporting, the safety concerns
18 and stuff, that's what you're considering a safety management
19 system.

20 A. Yes, that's what I'm considering.

21 Q. Okay. So let me ask about the pilot experience levels. I
22 know you're experienced there, but the new pilots that Gem Air are
23 getting to come in, what is in general their experience levels?

24 A. I think that the -- I know one of the main criteria --

25 Q. I'm sorry, say that again, Hussein.

1 A. The part 135 minimums.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. That's basically the -- I think that's the minimum that they
4 want, the 135 minimum.

5 Q. And since you're managing the base there, I'm curious. Does
6 the FAA come out and do inspections?

7 A. Over in Salt Lake, no. We haven't had the FAA come out at
8 Salt Lake.

9 Q. Are you --

10 A. (Indiscernible) and all that come out there, but I've never
11 seen the FAA.

12 Q. Okay. Do you know who the principal operations inspector is?

13 A. No, I don't.

14 Q. Okay. So let me ask you a couple of questions about Burley,
15 all right, the airport. Is there any specialized training for
16 pilots, particularly on the caravan in this case, about Burley
17 airport?

18 A. When you say special, all I know is that when we do training,
19 we normally have a route training which we do with every new hire
20 or pilot that comes in with every route in terms of, you know, we
21 go to Burley one time, we go to Salmon together one time with the
22 training captain, and on top of that we do more with them in
23 approaches and kind of see how it's done.

24 Q. And so Burley's a part of that?

25 A. Yes, Burley is also a part of that.

1 Q. Okay. And I'm not sure, I apologize if I already asked this,
2 Hussein, but did you do any training with Brittany and if so did
3 it include Burley?

4 A. No, I did not do any training with Brittany.

5 Q. Okay. Have you -- and I apologize if I asked this as well,
6 have you ever ridden with her or flown with -- oh, you told me you
7 had not flown.

8 A. No, I haven't flown with Brittany. In terms of training I
9 have not. Now that I -- I have flown with once to bring her back
10 to Salmon.

11 Q. You were flying and she was heading back with you.

12 A. Yes, I was the (indiscernible).

13 Q. Okay. I'm going to get to Burley here in a second, but I am
14 interested in a comment you made earlier about the approach and
15 we'll get into a little bit more detail when I pull the approach
16 out, but you said if the weather -- you would tell the pilots and
17 the new pilots, and correct me if I'm wrong, that if there was
18 weather that was at minimums at Burley for the runway 20 approach
19 I assume, not to do it and divert, or don't go in there because
20 with the smoke you're not going to get in there. What do you mean
21 by that?

22 A. Well, you see, I have (indiscernible) so much and it is the
23 direction of the smoke, if the smoke is blowing up at 400 feet
24 which is minimum or even up to 600 feet which is just above
25 minimum to 700 feet, the problem is that smoke blocks that runway.

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. When that smoke blocks that runway, well, normally you can't
3 descend below the MD without seeing the runway, so now you have to
4 stay on top of that smoke. By the time you clear that smoke, the
5 runway's right there, and now you're about 400 feet off the
6 ground. Even if you decide to basically, you know, pull the power
7 back and try to land, the runway's too short, so abrupt maneuver,
8 it's too risky. You could run out -- I've seen as little as 172s
9 run towards the end of the runway, you know, so -- and since I've
10 done it, and I've seen that the outcome is -- if that smoke is
11 there and you are just at minimums or just above the weather, just
12 above minimum, but there's a lot of risk you are going to take.
13 It's not necessary with the fact that we know this
14 (indiscernible). Those are like 10 minute flight. I make sure to
15 advise all the pilot and in general the company that we do not
16 need to bother going into Burley.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And the thing is, when you think about it, this happens, if
19 it's in winter maybe six, seven times in the span of those four
20 months, so why do we need to force it?

21 Q. Right. Is this something based on your experience or is this
22 something that pretty much is common knowledge companywide about
23 the airport and that approach?

24 A. It wasn't company knowledge per se. Based on experience and
25 I just tried to pass it along.

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. And I've seen because, as I said, I'm the longest serving
3 (indiscernible) so that's what I passed along --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- through the company, also, to my fellow pilots.

6 Q. Who at the company did you pass this information and this
7 knowledge that you have about the airport and the approach, who'd
8 you pass that onto?

9 A. Mostly is my operations manager and my chief pilot which
10 particularly I would just text ahead of time, hey, listen,
11 weather's bad or just above minimum. There's no point, you know,
12 the smoke is going to be there, so I'm going to Twin, which 100
13 percent of the time we can (indiscernible) problem with it, so you
14 just go along to Twin or Jerome, but mostly 99 percent of the time
15 it's Twin (indiscernible), so --

16 Q. Right. Did you interact with Brittany the day before the
17 accident?

18 A. No, not the day before, no.

19 Q. Okay. Were you aware that she had tried to get into Burley
20 and diverted to Twin the day before the accident?

21 A. No, not until after the accident.

22 Q. Okay. I just didn't know. I want to make sure if you had
23 heard about it or talked to her, but you did not interact with her
24 that day?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay. Is there a written policy about diverting from Burley?

2 A. Yes. So we have company policy that whenever Burley is
3 snowing, we (indiscernible) Burley at all because of the ice so we
4 just go to Twin. Before doing this year's winter, UPS allowed us
5 to go to Jerome, too, if we think the weather's better there, so
6 we have that in company policy. As a matter of fact, I wrote the
7 questions before winter operations, questions about, you know,
8 different airports, you know, in terms of A, (indiscernible)
9 Burley, what do you do, you know, there's freezing fog, you know,
10 you're just on you're about to do the approach, there's freezing
11 fog, what do you do, things like that, you know. So I
12 specifically made the questions with a little bit of help from my
13 chief pilot, and they were answered before winter operation.

14 Q. Okay. I'm going to share my screen and show you just a
15 couple of things, and get you to ask -- let me know if you've --
16 if this is coming up yet.

17 A. Yes, I do see it, and, yeah, these are the questions that I
18 basically developed.

19 Q. Okay. So the divert to Twin Falls here, what -- to answer a
20 question, what is the course of action if Burley is snowing at the
21 time of arrival, and Brittany had written divert to Twin Falls,
22 ATC, let ops know, UPS driver, right. So you wrote these
23 questions for this particular ground -- the winter test, right?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. Where does divert to Twin Falls, what manual is that

1 -- can that be found in?

2 A. It's in our, what do you call it, we have these -- I don't
3 know, I couldn't find the word, but in our hands in the plane in
4 terms of routing, like procedures so we have these procedures, and
5 in the ops (indiscernible), we have this, too.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. It's training.

8 Q. Okay. So let me flip this, and I'm going to pull up the
9 profile view for the RNEB GPS Runway 20 at Burley. Can you see
10 this on the screen?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. All right. So I flew the caravan back in the 1980s. This is
13 way before Garmin 1000, you know, just flew it briefly before all
14 the nice gee whiz stuff got on these airplanes, and one of the
15 questions I have is how would -- hang on a second. My question is
16 how would a pilot set up the Garmin 1000 and fly this approach if
17 they were going to fly it on auto pilot? So talk me through that.

18 A. So the first things first, when we are doing this approaches,
19 when loading it from MUTO (ph.), they're always going to be sent
20 to MUTO which is the initial approach (indiscernible) approach.
21 So about 50 miles up, center will allow you to go directly to
22 MUTO, so you go on your G-1000, you press procedure. You go
23 approaches, you go off land 20, and load it from MUTO. So once
24 you do that, you press approach or NAVNO (ph.), and in this case
25 it will take you all with MUTO. Now just before reaching MUTO,

1 they will allow you to be at 10,000 when you have to start
2 descending down to 7 just before passing Ireme. And this you have
3 to do manually.

4 Q. Okay. Manually in what -- what do you mean? Manually at
5 vertical speed or --

6 A. Vertical speed, lower that plane down because five miles you
7 have to (indiscernible), you're going to have to slow it down a
8 little bit. So you'll descend to 7,000 and most of the time you
9 pass Ireme at about 7,500. You report to, in this case it will be
10 Twin Falls approach, passing Ireme, 7,500, and the last call would
11 be basically to let Twin Falls know you're passing Hiklo.

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. So once you reach (indiscernible) flying, but it's giving you
14 the NAV mode at this point. It's pulling the cord, but it's not
15 giving you the glide.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. But once you do reach upon Hiklo an advisory glide slope does
18 come on where the G-1000s pick it up and it start flying the glide
19 slope as well. And you have to make sure that that once reaching
20 4,560 have to jam it like you basically stop descending if you
21 don't have that runway.

22 Q. Okay. Let me go back a little bit. So you typically will
23 pass Ireme, I-r-e-m-e, fix, rather, waypoint I should say, and
24 then you will manually or vertical speed down until you get to
25 6,000 and then cross Hiklo, H-i-k-l-o, the final approach fix, and

1 at that point, the Garmin 1000 at the final approach fix will
2 provide an advisory glide path and --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- just -- I believe the Garmin runs that all the way down to
5 the threshold crossing height of the runway, correct?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And would a pilot on auto pilot tie this to vertical NAV when
8 they hit the Hiklo intersection, would they arm or engage VNAV or
9 would they fly this down in vertical speed just keeping the
10 diamond of the VNAV level like pseudo glide slope but flying it
11 with vertical speed?

12 A. Now just before Hiklo, if you have the Garmin G-1000 is a NAV
13 (indiscernible) and is approached by them. If you have to
14 approach button on, it will intersect that and tries to fly the
15 glide slope for you all the way down to 4,560.

16 Q. And 4,560 is the MDA. At that point you have to make a
17 decision whether you see the runway or not and execute a
18 misapproach because it's flying it. It would in theory, and
19 correct me if I'm wrong, Hussein, it would in theory fly all the
20 way down to this runway threshold -- the threshold crossing
21 height, correct? The guide --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- will get it all the way down. All right. Are pilots,
24 caravan pilots, trained to hit the approach mode so that it would
25 capture a VNAV path or would they -- are they trained to just fly

1 vertical speed and use the VNAV diamond on the Garmin 1000 as kind
2 of a guidance?

3 A. They are basically trained to use the approach mode and the
4 NAV mode, but in terms of Burley, now this is where I think what
5 comes to the training, I do not know because in terms of my
6 training, I (indiscernible) because at this point in time we
7 weren't allowed to do the LPV. We weren't authorized yet.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. So we couldn't use the vertical guidance with the auto pilot
10 and just fly it, so we used it as an advisory but couldn't follow
11 it because we weren't authorized. But during the time -- we just
12 got authorized around last year I believe, somewhere before this
13 winter, so my training was different from Brittany's perhaps.

14 Q. So your training was to use, arm the approach mode and then
15 allow the auto pilot to fly the vertical path down?

16 A. No, my training was basically I use vertical speed and that
17 glide slope as an advisory --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- because we weren't allowed at that point (indiscernible).

20 Q. Okay. Is there anywhere in the training footprint or in the
21 training manual that talks about time the VNAV and that approach
22 mode and using the approach mode to allow the vertical guidance to
23 -- the auto pilot to follow the vertical guidance down to the MBA?
24 Is that in the manual anywhere?

25 A. I don't know about that.

1 Q. Okay. Then let me ask you about since you've gone in here a
2 bunch, talk to me about this 3.75 degrees and threshold crossing
3 height of 40 feet. So what is this 3.75?

4 A. So that's basically telling them that if you are extending at
5 an angle of about 3.75 degrees, you would pass that threshold
6 height of 40 feet. That's what I know about that.

7 Q. Okay. So --

8 A. And basically at that angle, it should keep you safe from
9 (indiscernible).

10 Q. Okay. That leads me to my next question. If you were to
11 follow from Ireme to Hiklo to Jamid, J-a-m-i-d, here all the way
12 down to MDA, you're to follow this vertical path all the way down
13 from final approach fix down to MBA, is that going to guarantee
14 you obstacle clearance?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. So that would guarantee you the obstacle clearance all
17 the way down to MDA and then MDA is going to guarantee you
18 obstacle clearance prior to you descending out of it for the
19 runway, am I correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. I'm going to go up here to the plan view real quick
22 and just show you this, and I'm going to ask you a question, if
23 you ever noticed this 4304 that's right past Jamid.

24 A. Yeah, I do notice the 4304.

25 Q. Do you know what that's for?

1 A. I always thought those were the (indiscernible).

2 Q. Okay. And it's not a quiz, Hussein. I'm just trying -- I'm
3 trying to understand this, and you're much more experienced flying
4 here so I'm not trying -- it's not a type rating oral or anything
5 like that, I'm just trying to understand what the chart's telling
6 you. And these are the charts, these FAA charts, you know, as
7 opposed to Jepson (ph.), these are the charts that you use in the
8 airplane, right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. And back to this view again, let's see, LNAV 4560 and
11 I believe the Cessna is a category B airplane, correct?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. So 4560 MDA should be above this 4304, so if you're level at
14 MDA, you're above the obstacle as depicted on this plan B,
15 correct?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. And what is the guidance either regulatory or company
18 procedure, when can you leave the minimum descent altitude?

19 A. When you have run wind side or you have basically run wind
20 (indiscernible).

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. In this case, if it's one flight, runway markings, that's all
23 I know of. (Indiscernible) the MDA who have the run winds, the
24 runway markings or (indiscernible).

25 Q. Okay. Great And one last question on this chart. Up here

1 it says VGSI and decent angles are not coincident. And my
2 question to you is as many times as you've gone into Burley, is
3 there a visual glide path, like a PAPE (ph.) or a VASE (ph.) or
4 anything else on runway 20?

5 A. Not on 20. We have on 24, not 20.

6 Q. Okay. I'll stop presenting that, and I'm back now. And then
7 just a couple of things about the use of TKS system on there, and
8 you told me that it's your responsibility as station manager to
9 make sure oil and TKS is available there at your airport. What is
10 the pilot's responsibility as far as loading up TKS?

11 A. So they had to make sure that before you leave, you've got to
12 make sure that the TKS is filled up --

13 Q. Right.

14 A. -- which is about 20, 25 gallons. You've got to make sure
15 that TKS system (indiscernible) working, the --

16 Q. Can you hold on just a second? Can you pause for one moment?

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. I apologize, Hussein. So please continue about the TKS.

19 A. So, yeah, we make sure that we basically are filled up on the
20 TKS, and that's your responsibility as a pilot to make sure you
21 have full TKS. We have a side gauge that you check, and we do
22 have that indication in our G-1000. We always go by the side
23 gauge. We have a bunch of TKS that's basically is just next to
24 the planes. We have a little area that UPS gave us where we store
25 our TKS.

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. You make sure that system, it works properly, the wings are
3 fine, the tails are fine, the prop is fine, the windshield is
4 fine. Once you have that determined, then you're good to go, but
5 not only that, you make sure you take about an extra 10 gallons
6 with you which are those jugs outstation if you need more.

7 Q. Right. On the day of the accident, you said that you had
8 interacted. Did you happen to observe whether or not Brittany had
9 loaded up the TKS or loaded up any extra jars?

10 A. No.

11 Q. No, you didn't observe it or no, she didn't?

12 A. No, I did not observe.

13 Q. Okay. Good. And I'll tell you what, how are you doing by
14 the way? Do you need water or a break or anything? Are you doing
15 okay?

16 A. Thank you. I have some right next to me.

17 Q. Okay. No, very good. What I'm going to do is see if Fabian
18 has any questions for you, so I'm going to pop off video for a
19 moment and let Fabian come in.

20 A. Okay.

21 MR. SALAZAR: Actually I don't have any questions. I
22 appreciate you being here and giving us all the information that
23 you have been.

24 MR. SALEH: Thank you.

25 MR. SALAZAR: All right. Dave.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Thanks. And, Craig, do you have any questions
2 for Hussein?

3 MR. KAREL: No. No, I think you covered everything
4 thoroughly. Thank you for your participation, Hussein, and keep
5 flying safe. Over.

6 MR. SALEH: Appreciate that.

7 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

8 Q. Hussein, I don't have any more follow ups. You know,
9 considering that this is a safety investigation and our goal is to
10 try and find out what happened, is there anything else that you
11 can think of that might -- maybe we didn't ask you about, but
12 might help us in the investigation from the safety side and assist
13 us? Anything you can think of that you'd like to add?

14 A. I mean, just in terms of the approach, I mean, if possible
15 that that smoke stack gets depicted properly, that would help, you
16 know. Maybe an auto advisory that talks about that smoke that
17 comes up, you know. I can tell, you know, (indiscernible) about
18 it, but, you know, it helps when you have such an advisory out
19 there, a (indiscernible). I think that would help in making
20 Burley safety.

21 Q. Okay. I did have another question about the performance of
22 the caravan. Do you ever notice an increased drag or increased
23 descent rate when you bring the throttles back or the throttle
24 back and start reducing thrust on that PT-6, do you ever notice a
25 deceleration effect on the airplane?

1 A. I do, but that's before 1,000 pound of torque. Once you go
2 below that down there you start really realizing the descent rate
3 increased and drag.

4 Q. Below, typically before 1,000 pounds of torque?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. And the type of -- I understand there are a couple of
7 types of caravan with different type of thrust ratings on the
8 engines, are you aware of that?

9 A. Yes. We have the X and we have the normal Bravo 08 which was
10 basically the plane that was in the accident and we do have
11 (indiscernible) 600 and 75 plus our EX which is 867.

12 Q. Okay. So the accident airplane was the lower thrust setting,
13 correct, or thrust rating.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. How often are pilots flying both or is it just depending on
16 the schedule how often would they pick one or the other?

17 A. It depends on the schedule, you know, depending on
18 maintenance, what (indiscernible) our planes, so it's optically by
19 one day, maybe 675 horsepower, another day you could fly the 857,
20 so it all depends.

21 Q. Okay. Do you have any idea how often Brittany flew the lower
22 rated airplane versus the higher?

23 A. I think once -- whenever she would do Burley, it would be the
24 lower one because I think we had Burley on the 675 horsepower.

25 Q. Why is that?

1 A. I just think maintenance wise, trying to save hours on the
2 plane I believe (indiscernible), but all has -- it depends on
3 maintenance --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- and what we're trying to do with the op.

6 Q. Okay.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Anybody else have any other questions for
8 Hussein?

9 MR. SALAZAR: I'm good.

10 MR. KAREL: FAA's good.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Hussein, thank you so much, and if
12 you ever think of anything else after, you know, a day or two, you
13 might come up with this after, you know, thinking about our
14 conversation, wow, there's something else I should have probably
15 added to help them, you know, feel free to reach out to us. You
16 have my emails, you have Craig's and Fabian's emails, so feel free
17 to reach out to us at any time with additional information you can
18 think of, okay?

19 MR. SALEH: All right. Thank you, guys.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: All right. I appreciate your time.

21 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

22

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

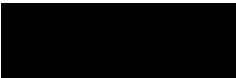
IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL CESSNA 208B ACCIDENT
NEAR HEYBURN, IDAHO
ON APRIL 13, 2022
Interview of Hussein Saleh

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR22FA151

PLACE: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: May 24, 2022

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.



Lois D. Rush
Transcriber