

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*  
\*  
ANDREW J. BARBERI \* Docket No.: DCA-10-MM-017  
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK \*  
\*

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Interview of: IRENE CRESPO

Staten Island Ferry Facility  
Staten Island, New York

Wednesday,  
May 12, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MICHAEL KARR  
Chairman, Preparedness and Response Group

## APPEARANCES:

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LENNY KINNEAR  
United States Coast Guard

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Irene Crespo:

By Mr. Karr

4

I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. KARR: Good afternoon. This is Mike Karr of the  
3 National Transportation Safety Board. Thanks for letting us  
4 record the announcement. And, ma'am, may I have your name,  
5 please?

6 MS. VASQUEZ: My name? Ilia Vasquez.

7 MR. KARR: And how is that first name spelled?

8 MS. VASQUEZ: My name or my mother's name?

9 MR. KARR: Your name, ma'am.

10 MS. VASQUEZ: My name? I-L-I-A.

11 MR. KARR: And Vasquez is?

12 MS. VASQUEZ: V-A-S-Q-U-E-Z.

13 MR. KARR: Thank you. And your mother's name is Irene  
14 Crespo? Is that correct?

15 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

16 MR. KARR: Thank you. Ms. Vasquez, on this end of the  
17 phone conversation we also have Lenny Kinnear of the U.S. Coast  
18 Guard and, of course, Max Green, who you already spoke with.

INTERVIEW OF IRENE CRESPO

20 (Whereupon, Ilia Vasquez interpreted for Irene Vasquez.)

21 BY MR. KARR:

22 Q. The first thing, could your, could -- could I find out  
23 where your mother was sitting or standing at the time of the  
24 allision?

25 A. In the accident?

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. Okay. She was on the second floor, right in the middle  
3 of the -- on the ferry boat.

4 Q. Was she sitting or standing?

5 A. She was sitting.

6 Q. And which direction was she facing, Brooklyn or New  
7 Jersey?

8 A. She don't have no idea, but she was inside. She was  
9 facing the front.

10 Q. Ah, thank you.

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. Does your mother remember any whistles or announcements?

13 A. No, she didn't hear no announcements, nothing like that.

14 Q. How did your mother -- Ms. Vasquez, you know, I'd like  
15 to find out how your mother took the impact, you know, what  
16 happened to her.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. So, could you find out what happened to her?

19 A. Right. Hold on.

20 Okay. The reaction she had, it was -- it was very scary  
21 and she had -- she felt like her heart was coming up, because it  
22 felt like a heart attack on it, you know, like real, real -- like  
23 she didn't expect that was going to happen. So, very, very, very  
24 scary.

25 Q. Did she remain seated during the entire allision?

1           A.    No.  What happened is that she fell like when it -- you  
2 know, when something strikes like that, so she fell.  At the time  
3 that the ferry struck, you know, she fell out from the seat.

4           Q.    And did she fall to the floor?

5           A.    Yes.

6           Q.    Did she get hurt in any way?

7           A.    Well, she right now has got pain all over of her body.  
8 She said she got a back pain.

9           Q.    And did the -- did she have the back pain immediately or  
10 is that something that she woke up with the next day?

11          A.    She said that in the morning she felt the neck pain, so  
12 she went to a hospital.

13          Q.    Was that Saturday morning?

14          A.    Yes.

15          Q.    Okay.  And which hospital did she go to?

16          A.    It's just right here in Manhattan, Metropolitan  
17 Hospital.

18          Q.    Oh -- pardon me?

19          A.    Metropolitan Hospital.

20          Q.    Okay.

21          A.    It is located on 96th Street.  It's at 96th and --  
22 Metropolitan Hospital Center, 1901 1st Avenue.

23               MR. KARR:  What day was it -- did she feel the pain?

24               MR. KINNEAR:  Saturday morning.

25               MR. KARR:  Okay.  All right.

1 MR. KINNEAR: Or it would be the next day, whatever it  
2 was.

3 MR. KARR: The next day. Next day.

4 MR. GREEN: It would be Sunday.

5 MR. KARR: Okay.

6 MR. KINNEAR: Sunday.

7 BY MR. KARR:

8 Q. All right. Can you ask your mother if anyone -- or how  
9 many times people came and checked on her? So, I guess the key  
10 thing is did anyone check on her and then how many times did  
11 people ask if she was okay?

12 A. Okay. Well, they constantly like -- they just  
13 (indiscernible) and they asked if she was okay. (Indiscernible)  
14 they take her out, you know, they were coming like to help her get  
15 up.

16 Q. And how did she, how did she leave the boat? I'm  
17 anxious to know how she got off the boat.

18 A. Okay. Somebody grabbed her like through the arm and  
19 told her to wait to go up the stairs. After, you know, she was up  
20 a while that -- she don't know what was going on, but at the same  
21 time after that a police officer came and got her out and walk her  
22 up the stairs to get out.

23 Q. Did she go off the front of the boat or off the side of  
24 the boat?

25 A. They think that they have a ladder -- you know, another

1 ladder to get people out of the boat.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. Okay. Give me one moment as I think up any more  
5 questions.

6 A. Sure.

7 Q. Oh, what was your mother's purpose of visiting Staten  
8 Island that day?

9 A. Okay. I have a brother that he's in the hospital. He's  
10 very ill. So, she goes every weekend or -- every day she goes  
11 there to go visit him.

12 Q. Okay. All right.

13 MR. KARR: Do you have any other questions?

14 BY MR. KARR:

15 Q. Can your mother -- we have no more questions on this  
16 end. So, is there anything your mother would like to tell us to  
17 make -- you know, that -- about the accident?

18 A. Okay. Okay. She just -- she said that nobody makes  
19 announce that people should be sitting down and so that -- she  
20 said there's a lot of people who were standing up, and it was kind  
21 of funny that at that moment that happens to her. Everybody is --  
22 you know, especially how she fell out of the seat, and then at the  
23 last minute there were so many people. So she was probably like  
24 one of the last people they noticed to give a hand and help her  
25 out. And so (indiscernible), because, you know, because she got a



1 heart, you know, problem. So because she was (indiscernible) and  
2 probably something like that that happens they should, you know,  
3 make an announce and how is everybody doing. And she's -- right  
4 now, she's (indiscernible) beside me. It's -- she said that she  
5 don't know how to go and try to go see my brother because of the  
6 experience she went through. She's very nervous and she don't  
7 know what could happen next time.

8 Q. Did --

9 (Phone rings.)

10 MR. KARR: Pardon -- Ms. Vasquez, excuse me one moment.  
11 Safety Board, Mike Karr speaking.

12 (Phone conversation.)

13 MR. GREEN: Ms. Vasquez?

14 MS. VAZQUEZ: Yes.

15 MR. GREEN: This is Max Green again. While Mike is on  
16 the phone, do you have an e-mail address?

17 MS. VAZQUEZ: Oh, no, she don't have one.

18 MR. GREEN: No, do you use an e-mail?

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, no. I don't have one right now. I'm  
20 sorry, sir.

21 MR. GREEN: No? Okay. What about your sister?

22 MS. VASQUEZ: Well, I would have to find out about from  
23 my sister to -- I don't know if she have one because we don't  
24 speak to each other like that often, you know?

25 MR. GREEN: Okay. All right. No, I was just asking

1 because if you did I'd send you some information about our agency.  
2 If you have a pen and paper, I would like to just give you my  
3 phone number in case you have any questions.

4 MS. VASQUEZ: Right. I have a pen.

5 MR. GREEN: Okay. So, again, my first name is Max,  
6 M-A-X, last name is Green, G-R-E-E-N.

7 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

8 MR. GREEN: And, my phone number -- I'll give you my  
9 cell number and my office number.

10 MS. VASQUEZ: All right.

11 MR. GREEN: Cell number is area code 202.

12 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh, 202.

13 MR. GREEN: 527.

14 MS. VASQUEZ: 027.

15 MR. GREEN: 4611.

16 MS. VASQUEZ: 1611?

17 MR. GREEN: 4611.

18 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, 46 --

19 MR. GREEN: Right.

20 MS. VASQUEZ: -- 11. Um-hum.

21 MR. GREEN: And my office number is area code 202.

22 MS. VASQUEZ: 202, uh-huh.

23 MR. GREEN: 314.

24 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

25 MR. GREEN: 6611.

1 MS. VASQUEZ: 6611.

2 MR. GREEN: Okay?

3 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

4 MR. GREEN: All right.

5 MS. VASQUEZ: That's your office number, right?

6 MR. GREEN: Right. Okay. And here's Mike again.

7 MR. KARR: All right. I'm back.

8 MS. VASQUEZ: Thank you.

9 BY MR. KARR:

10 Q. I'm back.

11 A. Thank you.

12 Q. Let me talk to you about your mother's concern for her  
13 heart.

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Was she able to, to communicate that to anyone on the  
16 ferry? Was she able to communicate that to a deckhand, to the  
17 police or the firemen?

18 A. Since she don't know English, she was just trying to  
19 tell the police officer that with the heart (indiscernible) she  
20 went through, it got worse, you know.

21 Q. That she what?

22 A. She got very -- you know, she got all excite. Her heart  
23 started getting more, more ill.

24 Q. Does she have a history of a heart problem?

25 A. No, it was -- no.

1 Q. Okay. All right. Does your mother have any suggestions  
2 on how the trip can be made safer for passengers, so that if  
3 something like this happens again people don't get injured?

4 A. Okay. Okay. Prevent something, she's -- I mean, if  
5 something like that should happen -- and at this moment, I'm  
6 sorry, she was -- she can't tell me because she's very nervous I'm  
7 talking to you guys. I don't understand what she's trying to say.  
8 But she said that I don't know if I'm going to travel again from  
9 this ferry. They said something that they're responsible for what  
10 happens and they should let people know that an accident like  
11 that -- you know, be aware, and they didn't say nothing and she's  
12 just very upset. She don't think that -- she thought it was the  
13 terrorists that happened -- to make that happen, you know.

14 Q. She what?

15 MR. KINNEAR: She thought it was terrorists.

16 MR. KARR: Okay.

17 MS. VASQUEZ: Thought it was terrorists.

18 BY MR. KARR:

19 Q. Oh, terrorists. Okay.

20 A. Yes. And right now she don't know what's truth. She  
21 don't know how she is going to travel again in the ferry.

22 Q. All right. How does your mother -- ask your mother what  
23 she would -- you know, as a Spanish speaker, ask your mother what  
24 she'd like to see from the ferry with regard to helping her  
25 understand things.

1 A. Did they have any signs of Spanish and English?

2 Q. The signs are in English. I didn't recall seeing any  
3 signs in Spanish.

4 A. Right. Right. So, that's something she's always  
5 checking for any directions, signs on what to do if any emergency,  
6 of any tragedy or anything happens, she wasn't aware of that. So,  
7 that's something she's always checking wherever she goes.

8 MR. KARR: All right. We have no other questions, so  
9 we'll wrap up our conversation. I thank you for spending time  
10 with us. Let me give you my office number in case your mother  
11 would like to tell me anything else.

12 MS. VASQUEZ: Right.

13 MR. KARR: It's area code 202 --

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

15 MR. KARR: -- 314 --

16 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

17 MR. KARR: -- 6455.

18 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

19 MR. KARR: And, Ms. Vasquez, thank you for taking the  
20 time to interpret for us.

21 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, thank you. What's your name again,  
22 sir?

23 MR. KARR: It's Michael --

24 MS. VASQUEZ: Michael, uh-huh.

25 MR. KARR: -- okay, last name begins with a K. It's

1 Karr, K-A-R-R.

2 MS. VASQUEZ: Okay. Okay. Michael, I've got your phone  
3 number here.

4 MR. KARR: Okay. Super.

5 MS. VASQUEZ: You like to speak her -- I'm sorry,  
6 because right now she seems like very nervous. I'm sitting next  
7 to her, so I have to wait for her to calm down a little, you know?

8 MR. KARR: Yes.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: And maybe I'm going speak more. It  
10 depends on her.

11 MR. KARR: All right. Well, now, Max?

12 MR. GREEN: Yes. Ms. Vasquez, again, thank you very  
13 much for helping us out today. One of the things that -- as I was  
14 listening to you talk, it sounds like your mom -- your mother may  
15 have some concerns about the -- you know, going back on the ferry  
16 and, you know, it was obviously, you know, a scary event for  
17 anybody that was on the ferry. One of the things that I was doing  
18 over the last couple of days was coordinating some services with  
19 the American Red Cross.

20 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

21 MR. GREEN: They have an 800 number, and they are  
22 prepared, if you think that your mother -- it might be helpful for  
23 your mother to talk with a, with a crisis counselor.

24 MS. VASQUEZ: Right.

25 MR. GREEN: You know, often what happens after an event

1 like this, you know, even though victims have their family members  
2 and friends to talk with --

3 MS. VASQUEZ: Right.

4 MR. GREEN: -- sometimes it's helpful for them to have  
5 an opportunity to talk with a professional who works --

6 MS. VASQUEZ: Sure.

7 MR. GREEN: -- with people who have gone through a  
8 crisis.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Right.

10 MR. GREEN: Okay? So, I'm going to give you the phone  
11 number for the Red Cross.

12 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

13 MR. GREEN: It's something that you can talk with your  
14 mother about. It's confidential.

15 MS. VASQUEZ: Okay. Right.

16 MR. GREEN: And it's local. You know, they have people  
17 in New York -- I mean, in Manhattan, all across, you know, all of  
18 the boroughs.

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Right.

20 MR. GREEN: So, it's something -- it's a resource that  
21 she might, she might be -- she might want to use, okay?

22 MS. VASQUEZ: Okay. Great.

23 MR. GREEN: So, the phone number is 877 --

24 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

25 MR. GREEN: -- Red Cross.

1 MS. VASQUEZ: Red Cross, right?

2 MR. GREEN: Right.

3 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

4 MR. GREEN: Okay. And if you call that number and you  
5 identify yourself as a family member, you know, tell them that  
6 your mother was involved in the ferry accident and you'd like to  
7 talk about her possibly working with a crisis counselor. They'll  
8 be able to give you some information and set that up for her,  
9 okay?

10 MS. VASQUEZ: Okay. That's good. Okay, thank you, sir.

11 MR. GREEN: All right. And you have my phone number, so  
12 if there are any questions you shouldn't hesitate to give me a  
13 call. And, again, thank you very much for your time.

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Thank you so much, sir. Okay.

15 MR. GREEN: All right. Take care.

16 MS. VASQUEZ: Bye-bye.

17 MR. GREEN: Bye-bye.

18 (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:           ANDREW J. BARBERI  
                                  STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK  
                                  Interview of Irene S. Crespo

DOCKET NUMBER:           DCA-10-MM-017

PLACE:                    Staten Island, New York

DATE:                     May 12, 2010

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to  
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

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Jane Gilliam  
Transcriber