

Docket No. SA-540

Exhibit No. 2 B

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C.

Interview Transcripts

(353 Pages)

Attachment 1
To Operational Factors Specialist Factual Report

ANC17MA001

Interview Transcripts

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER *
ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016, *
TOGIAK, ALASKA *

Docket No.: ANC17FA001

* * * * *

Interview of: BRIAN AMIK

NTSB Offices
Anchorage Federal Building
222 West 7th Avenue, Room 216
Anchorage, Alaska

Tuesday,
December 6, 2016

APPEARANCES:

SHAUN WILLIAMS, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

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

MARVIN FRANTZ, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

ERIC WEST, Air Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention
Washington, D.C.

Also Present:

DAVE LOWELL, Director of Safety
Hageland Aviation
Anchorage, Alaska

MARC WILHELM, ESQ.
Richmond & Quinn
Anchorage, Alaska
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Amik)

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:34 p.m.)

1
2
3 DR. WILSON: Good afternoon. Thank you for being here
4 today. As I said, my name is Katherine Wilson. I'm a human
5 performance investigator with the NTSB.

6 If you're not aware, the NTSB is an independent federal
7 agency. We're charged by Congress to investigate transportation
8 accidents in order to determine the probable cause and to make
9 safety recommendations. We are not a part of the DOT or the
10 FAA, so we don't have any enforcement or regulatory powers.

11 We'll go around the room and everybody can introduce
12 themselves so that you're aware of who's here.

13 MR. FRANTZ: Hi, Brian. My name is Marvin Frantz. I'm an
14 operational factors investigator with the NTSB and I'm out of
15 Washington. I work with Katherine.

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Shaun Williams. I'm the investigator in
17 charge, the NTSB based here in Anchorage.

18 MR. LOWELL: Dave Lowell, Vice President of Safety,
19 Hageland.

20 MR. WEST: Eric West. I introduced myself. I'm a air
21 safety investigator with the FAA and out of Washington, D.C.

22 MR. WILHELM: I'm Marc Wilhelm, attorney for Brian.

23 DR. WILSON: Okay. So today we are using the services of a
24 court reporter who's going to record this interview and then
25 transcribe it. And the transcription itself, not the audio

1 recording, will be a part of our public record.

2 As I said, the purpose of our investigation is safety and
3 to determine the probable cause. We don't assign fault, blame
4 or liability for an investigation. This interview is routine,
5 so it's a part of our fact-finding phase of the investigation.
6 And we're here to ask you questions about the morning briefing
7 the day of the accident, your interaction with the pilots, and
8 also some general questions about the company, policies,
9 procedures, things like that. We cannot offer a guarantee of
10 confidentiality or immunity.

11 We're going to go around the room. Each of us will ask you
12 questions one at a time and then we'll likely do a second round
13 of questions for anybody who has follow-up questions as we go
14 on. Because we are using a court reporter we ask that you
15 answer verbally versus an uh-huh or a gesture so that it can be
16 accurately transcribed. If you don't understand a question,
17 please ask us to clarify, or if you don't know the answer it's
18 okay to say "I don't know." You're the expert here, so we're
19 just looking to gather information from you.

20 You are entitled to have one person representing you,
21 someone of your choosing. Who would you like that to be?

22 MR. AMIK: Marc.

23 DR. WILSON: Marc? Marc Wilhelm will be your
24 representative? Yes? Can you state yes?

25 MR. AMIK: Yes.

1 DR. WILSON: Thank you. All right. And so Mr. Wilhelm may
2 direct you to not answer a question, but he cannot answer any
3 questions for you. Do you have any questions before we get
4 started?

5 MR. AMIK: No.

6 DR. WILSON: Okay.

7 INTERVIEW OF BRIAN AMIK

8 BY DR. WILSON:

9 Q. For the record, could you please state your full name?

10 A. Brian Jonathan Amik.

11 Q. And what is your -- could you spell your last name for us?

12 A. A-m-i-k.

13 Q. M-a-i-k.

14 A. A-m-i --

15 Q. A-m-i-k.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Sorry. And what is your position?

18 A. I'm a lead pilot in Bethel, first shift.

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

20 A. Three years I think.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I'm not too sure.

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

25 A. Well, to have a meeting in the morning about weather,

1 runways, any issues on the ramp and if they encountered anything
2 in the villages, runways, NOTAMs. And then make sure the pilots
3 have their charts and everything.

4 Q. Okay. Have you held any -- and you work for Hageland?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Have you held any other positions at the company?

7 A. Just a pilot.

8 Q. Okay. What was your date of hire?

9 A. November 29, 1999.

10 Q. Okay. And what aircrafts have you flown at Hageland?

11 A. 172, 207, Caravan, Navajo, 406.

12 Q. Okay. And what certificates and ratings do you hold?

13 A. ATP.

14 Q. Okay. Who do you report to?

15 A. Chief pilot.

16 Q. Okay. And what is your total time?

17 A. Close to 19,000.

18 Q. Okay. Are you still currently flying?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. How often do you fly?

21 A. Depends; when they need me. I do a lot of extra days,
22 extra flying.

23 Q. Is there a minimum number of hours you're supposed to fly
24 for your position a month?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Just the regular rules.

3 Q. Okay. Are you referring to FAA rules or company rules?

4 A. FAA rules.

5 Q. Okay. Have you always been in Bethel or have you worked at
6 other bases?

7 A. Just couple months in Nome at first, St. Mary's, and there
8 in Fairbanks and here, Anchorage.

9 Q. Okay. What -- I apologize if I asked you this. What
10 aircraft are you currently flying?

11 A. Caravan.

12 Q. The Caravan. Okay. So walk me through the morning meeting
13 that you had on October 7 -- or October 2nd. What was
14 discussed?

15 A. Well, on -- it was a Sunday, so we don't do the meetings on
16 Sundays.

17 Q. Oh. Okay.

18 A. But we have OCC, they conduct, too, for weather and they
19 got weather on the computers, internet.

20 Q. Okay. What days of the week are these meetings held?

21 A. Monday through Saturday.

22 Q. Okay. Why aren't they held on Sunday?

23 A. Because it's usually a slow day. We show up later.

24 Q. Knowing that you aren't going to have a morning meeting on
25 Sunday, do you discuss anything on Saturday?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. So did --

3 A. They know what to do.

4 Q. And --

5 A. They should know.

6 Q. So you had a discussion on Saturday about Sunday?

7 A. It was pretty much straightforward. I mean, they -- like I
8 said, they have OCC to talk to about weather and weather cams
9 they can look at.

10 Q. Okay. Who attends the morning meetings?

11 A. Everybody.

12 Q. Okay. All pilots that --

13 A. Oh, pilots and managers and -- that's pretty much it.

14 Q. So you mentioned that you're on in the a.m. Is there also
15 -- you're on the morning shift or you work in the a.m.?

16 A. We got duty days, 14-hour duty day.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Ours is 7:30 to 9:30.

19 Q. Okay. And does somebody come on?

20 A. No.

21 Q. No. It's only the one duty day?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Are you the only lead pilot on, or is there another?

24 A. There's another one on the other shift.

25 Q. Okay. What is that other shift?

1 A. Second shift.

2 Q. Okay. When is that?

3 A. Second half of the month.

4 Q. Second half of the month. So you work the 15 days?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Do you always work the first 15 days?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Is there an attendance roster? How do you know --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- who's there?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. Do you recall anything specifically being discussed
13 on Saturday for the Sunday flights on October 1st? Do you
14 recall Mr. Cline or Mr. Welty discussing anything about the next
15 day's flights?

16 A. No, but they usually talk to the dispatchers what they're
17 going to do in the morning if -- in the morning flights.

18 Q. Okay. Are there any notes that are kept from these
19 meetings?

20 A. No.

21 Q. No? So do you have Sundays off or are you working on
22 Sunday also?

23 A. We're still working.

24 Q. You're still working. Okay. But just not the morning
25 meeting?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Did you see Mr. Cline or Mr. Welty that morning, on October
3 2nd?

4 A. No. I saw them on the 1st.

5 Q. You saw them on the 1st. Okay. How did they seem when you
6 saw them?

7 A. They were happy. Good to be back and all that.

8 Q. They had just come off of being 2 weeks off?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. Any of them -- was there any concerns about weather
11 in the area, anything -- deteriorating weather to be expected?

12 A. I don't know. I wasn't there.

13 Q. Okay. If a pilot wanted to cancel a flight that he was
14 scheduled for or trade with another pilot, who would he contact
15 about that?

16 A. Say that again.

17 Q. So if a pilot was scheduled to fly a certain flight and he
18 wanted to trade or cancel that flight, who would he contact
19 about that?

20 A. The dispatcher.

21 Q. The dispatcher?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Even just to switch pilots --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- he would do that? Okay.

1 A. Oh, are you talking about copilots switching?

2 Q. Uh-huh.

3 A. They're -- they can go through me, or just -- I don't mind
4 if they do it on their own, if they just swap around.

5 Q. Okay. Were you aware that Cayce Morin had traded with
6 Mr. Welty for the morning of October 2nd?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Did he inform you about that?

9 A. No.

10 Q. No. How did you find out about that?

11 A. They just -- Tim offered him sleep in, in the morning if he
12 wanted to, that he's going to go do that Togiak flight.

13 Q. So Tim --

14 A. I mean, I heard about it. Cayce told me that.

15 Q. Oh. So -- if you could just clear it up in my mind. So
16 what did Cayce tell you about the switching of the flights?

17 A. Tim offered him to stay and go on a later flight if he
18 wanted to.

19 Q. Got it. Okay. So Cayce didn't necessarily have any
20 concerns that you knew about, about that flight or flying with
21 Tim or anything like that?

22 A. No.

23 Q. No. Okay. As a lead pilot are you involved in pilot
24 training at all?

25 A. No.

1 Q. No.

2 A. No.

3 Q. Do you attend the same training that pilots do?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. Recurrent training?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. How often is that?

8 A. Recurrent is -- what are you talking about? It's --

9 Q. So you have --

10 A. -- a lot of meeting.

11 Q. So you have recurrent training every 6 months, once a year?

12 A. Six months for IFR and once a year for the airplane you're
13 in.

14 Q. Okay. And is that ground school or sim training, flight
15 training?

16 A. Check ride.

17 Q. I'm sorry?

18 A. Check ride.

19 Q. Check ride. Okay. Do you have any --

20 A. And then we have the annual ground school once a year.

21 Q. Okay. Does the training cover CFIT avoidance?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Can you explain to me what is trained?

24 A. We go to a simulator and simulate bad weather and
25 turnaround.

1 Q. Okay. Is that the -- the typical procedure would be, if
2 you were to get into inadvertent IMC, you would --

3 A. Turn around.

4 Q. -- turn around?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Does training cover CRM, crew resource management?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Is there a specific module on that or how is that
9 covered?

10 A. Just as a subject.

11 Q. Okay. What specifically in CRM is covered? Do you recall?

12 A. How to manage the crew.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Does it talk about decision making and judgment at all?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. Is that a part of CRM or is that a separate subject
18 that's covered?

19 A. Decision making versus CRM?

20 Q. Right. So is decision making covered as a part of CRM, or
21 is that --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- a separate subject?

24 A. No. It -- I think it's covered like that.

25 Q. Okay. Were you trained on the risk assessment process?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Yeah. Was that a one-time training? Is that something
3 that's covered in recurrent training?

4 A. It's covered in current.

5 Q. Okay. Can you elaborate on the risk assessment process
6 that a pilot would go through prior to a flight?

7 A. They would go through the weather and runways. And we have
8 a chart with numbers and letters. With each letter there's a --
9 the risk. Like runway contamination is Golf.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And then it's RA -- it's like a risk 2.

12 Q. Is the risk assessment done by the pilot alone or is that
13 done in conjunction with the OCC?

14 A. With OCC.

15 Q. Okay. The morning meetings, are those -- is that the very
16 first thing that pilots come in and do, or might they do their
17 risk assessment first and then come to a morning meeting?

18 A. Morning meeting first.

19 Q. First? Okay. Is there -- is the on board, the Garmin on
20 board the aircraft, is that covered -- is there training for
21 that in recurrent training? Or is that covered, what the system
22 can do, how to use it?

23 A. What's the on board?

24 Q. The Garmin. Do you have a Garmin on-board system with
25 terrain and weather?

1 A. Oh, ground proximity warning system?

2 Q. Well, you've got --

3 A. GPWS?

4 Q. So you've got that?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Yes. And then do you also have a system where you can view
7 terrain and weather?

8 A. Oh, yeah.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Is that covered in training or --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Recurrent, or was that something that was in initial
14 training or when it got --

15 A. Both.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Do you feel pretty comfortable using that system?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Can you overlay weather on top of terrain in the system, or
21 is -- are the pages separate?

22 A. They're separate.

23 Q. Okay. When you're flying, what page do you typically have
24 up?

25 A. The map.

1 Q. The map?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. Is it pretty easy to toggle between the pages, to --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- switch between them?

6 Speaking of the GPWS, have you ever heard it go off during
7 flight?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. When would that be?

10 A. When it's VFR and you're -- like 6,700 and there's terrain,
11 like little knolls on the hills -- I mean, the ground. Then
12 it'll go off and it'll stop.

13 Q. Okay. Do you inhibit it when that happens or --

14 A. When it gets annoying, yes.

15 Q. Okay. And then --

16 A. But I wouldn't -- I don't do that in IFR. When it's IFR, I
17 leave it on all the time.

18 Q. Okay. Is there -- how do you know when it's inhibited?

19 A. There's a button.

20 Q. Right. So is -- does it light up when it's inhibited?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Some of them light up. Some of them just stick on or --

24 Q. Do you notice that it's depressed?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. Have you ever gotten a GPWS alert in IFR conditions?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Is the alert terrain -- or what is the alert that you've
4 gotten in VFR conditions?

5 A. Terrain.

6 Q. Okay. Did it require you to change the flight path at all
7 or --

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. Do you know what triggers it, how close you have to
10 be to the terrain for that to trigger?

11 A. I think less than 500.

12 Q. Okay. Have you ever flown in the Caravan where any of the
13 instruments on the right side of the cockpit have been
14 inoperative when you've had a second in command sitting there?

15 A. No. I usually have it get fixed.

16 Q. Okay. Have you ever had ADS-B MEL'd for a flight?

17 A. I can't recall.

18 Q. Okay. Had you flown with either Mr. Cline or Mr. Welty?

19 A. No.

20 Q. No. Did you know both of them though?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. Ever heard anybody voice any concerns about flying
23 with either one of them?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No? Since the accident has there been any conversation

1 about the flight crew amongst the pilots? Any thoughts on what
2 might have happened, what the --

3 A. We don't know yet, so --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- I can't answer that.

6 Q. Okay. What safety programs are in place at the airline?

7 A. Could you clarify?

8 Q. ASAP, safety reporting systems.

9 A. WBAT. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. And is there an ASAP program?

11 A. Just WBAT.

12 Q. Okay. Any other ways that you could report a safety
13 concern?

14 A. Verbally on the phone, chief pilot.

15 Q. Okay. So calling the chief pilot. Is there an anonymous
16 hotline that you could call if you didn't want it to be known
17 that you were the one making that safety report?

18 A. No.

19 Q. No? Okay. Have you ever reported safety concerns?

20 A. You mean in WBAT? Yes.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. Those are -- yes.

23 Q. Okay. What was it in regards to, do you recall?

24 A. Not at the moment.

25 Q. No? Okay. Did you feel like the company responded well to

1 the safety concern?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. Have you ever talked to the chief pilot with any
4 safety concerns?

5 A. Yes, and they were already handled --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- correctly.

8 Q. Since the accident have there been any changes to pilot
9 procedures?

10 A. Could you clarify that? Like what do you mean?

11 Q. Sure. Well, anything that's changed with the risk
12 assessment or what type of flight plan you file.

13 A. Yeah. The Caravans have changed a little. Have to go IFR
14 when able.

15 Q. Okay. How were you informed about the accident?

16 A. They called me.

17 Q. Did you have any responsibilities once you learned about
18 the accident, or was it more just to inform you that it had
19 happened?

20 A. Just -- they just informed me.

21 Q. Okay. Were you working that day?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Yeah? Okay. I think that's all the questions that I have
24 for now. Thank you.

25 DR. WILSON: Marvin?

1 BY MR. FRANTZ:

2 Q. Hi, Brian.

3 A. Hi.

4 Q. Just a couple. As lead pilot, that -- is that an official
5 title in the company --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- lead pilot? Do you routinely fly in that position or
8 just as they need a pilot; or do you have a normal flying
9 schedule?

10 A. I got a normal, just like a regular pilot, I fly, but I'm
11 the lead. Like --

12 Q. Is that --

13 A. -- lead pilot.

14 Q. Okay. Do you -- is that a supervisory position at all? Do
15 you supervise other pilots at that base as a lead pilot? Is
16 that what the lead pilot --

17 A. Yeah, pretty much.

18 Q. Okay. Some -- so some airlines we call that a base chief
19 pilot because you're the top guy at that base. Is that your
20 position at Bethel, top pilot? I mean --

21 A. Kind of, yeah.

22 Q. Yeah. Okay. When you talk about weather that's available
23 to you in flight on your screen, is it radar? Are there radar
24 returns that you can look at, is that what you're talking about?

25 A. No, it's actually the METARs on the --

1 Q. Okay. So it's data. You're --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- you can read --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- you can read. Can you display through anything that you
6 have, any real-time or near real-time radar --

7 A. Weather.

8 Q. -- aviation radar returns on the screen? The airplane
9 itself has weather radar, right? The Caravan has --

10 A. No. No, just --

11 Q. It doesn't -- you don't have weather radar?

12 A. Just the EX's, the new EX Caravans we have.

13 Q. Yeah. Okay. But most of -- but the ones that you guys fly
14 don't have weather radar. So through any other system you can't
15 see -- there's no way you can see any actual weather radar
16 returns? All you're --

17 A. No.

18 Q. -- talking about weather is data, reading METARs, TAFs,
19 AIRMETS, is that -- okay.

20 COURT REPORTER: Audibly. Audibly.

21 MR. AMIK: Yes.

22 BY MR. FRANTZ:

23 Q. Yes? Okay.

24 A. Sorry.

25 Q. METARs, TAFs. Okay. The risk management sheet that you

1 work out with -- before every flight I understand that's worked
2 out between -- with both the pilot and the OCC?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. And have you ever had a risk management assessment
5 that's come up as a 3 --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- or greater when you worked that out?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. And then what happens then when you have a higher
10 risk number?

11 A. They have to call another higher up, like the chief or
12 whoever is assigned to that position.

13 Q. Okay. And then they have to issue a final release, or they
14 approve the flight --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- at that time? Okay.

17 What percentage of your flights are IFR, are flown IFR
18 versus VFR? What's the ratio would you think?

19 A. I don't have the numbers right now.

20 Q. More than half the time are you flying IFR, would you say
21 or VFR or --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Yeah? Which is more common, to go IFR or to go VFR, would
24 you say?

25 A. It depends on the weather.

1 Q. Okay. The route that the accident flight took, are you
2 familiar with it?

3 A. It's a very challenging terrain over there, so you could
4 think you're familiar. but I wouldn't say.

5 Q. Have you flown that --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- route in the last couple months?

8 A. I didn't fly that route too much. I mean --

9 Q. Yeah, I'm talking Quinhagak --

10 A. Yeah. Quinhagak.

11 Q. Huh? Sorry.

12 A. Quinhagak.

13 Q. Quinhagak to Togiak.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Yeah. You haven't flown that recently?

16 A. No.

17 Q. What makes it challenging? You said it was --

18 A. The terrain.

19 Q. Okay. Are there work-arounds for that? If you don't want
20 to fly over the terrain are there other routes that would
21 typically be used that would fly over lower terrain between
22 those two cities or those two airports?

23 A. Yeah, if you go way around it.

24 Q. So it's longer, but it keeps you away from higher --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- more challenging terrain? Okay.

2 If the weather is VFR and you're confident it was VFR,
3 would you have any problems flying a straight line over the
4 terrain between those two cities?

5 A. If you can see it, yes, go high.

6 Q. Did you know about the flight that was just a few minutes
7 from the accident flight that took a different route between the
8 same two cities? Were you aware of that?

9 A. I wasn't there.

10 Q. Why do you think one pilot's leaving at roughly the same
11 time, one would choose a straight line over the terrain and the
12 other would take a different route?

13 A. I'm not -- I don't know.

14 Q. How often do you see FAA personnel doing inspections or
15 doing checks, line checks or PCs or just inspecting ground
16 facilities or ground operations? How often do you encounter
17 them in Bethel?

18 A. At least once a month. Sometimes a little more.

19 Q. Have you ever -- personally have you ever had a line check
20 or a PC conducted by an inspector, an FAA inspector?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Yeah. Okay. Do you have any flying experience outside of
23 Alaska? I mean significant -- any commercial flying outside of
24 Alaska?

25 A. When I was a passenger, yes.

1 Q. Yeah. Okay.

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Well, I did when I went to Arizona for my ATP.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. That's the only place.

7 Q. All right. Okay. What's the biggest challenge in flying
8 in Alaska?

9 A. Making the right decisions.

10 Q. In the past -- let's see -- say, in the past couple years,
11 how many times have you, as a PIC, decided to cancel a flight or
12 you weren't going to do a flight because of weather conditions?

13 A. How many times?

14 Q. Yeah. How many times in the past, say, 1 or 2 years can
15 you recall not going on a flight that you were supposed to go on
16 because of the weather?

17 A. Lots. Like over -- quite a few because of winter.

18 Q. Okay. Okay. That's all I have for now. Thanks.

19 DR. WILSON: Shaun.

20 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

21 Q. Since the accident, I know you said that most of the
22 flights now or a majority of the flights now are IFR, if able,
23 in the Caravan. Prior to the accident did you have any
24 instances that you can remember where you've called OCC and
25 maybe you've wanted to go VFR and they've suggested IFR?

1 A. Yes, and we went IFR.

2 Q. You went IFR?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. When you guys are out and you encounter weather, adverse
5 weather, you call it back to base through either the station or
6 however you get it back there, do you know, does that
7 information then go out to all the other pilots? Like maybe all
8 the other Bethel pilots that are flying that day. Does that go
9 into the PIREP system? Do you know how that -- what happens to
10 that information?

11 A. We report it to OCC.

12 Q. And then is it up to them to kind of disseminate it out?

13 A. Yeah, and they keep it in next notes for the other pilots.

14 Q. Okay. The weather information that you get from either the
15 web cams, the National Weather Service, like the METARs, the
16 TAFs, that sort of thing, what's kind of the -- do they seem to
17 be accurate? Do they seem to be way old and useless? What's --

18 A. Depends on the time it was taken.

19 Q. Okay. What about the reports you get from some of the
20 station agents out in some of the villages, does that seem to be
21 reliable?

22 A. Yes and no.

23 Q. Okay. Is it some stations are better than others, or --

24 A. Yes. When we get the village agent weather, they're not --
25 what do you say -- like they're not qualified. You know what I

1 mean?

2 Q. Okay. Are you going --

3 A. That's the only weather we have and when they -- when
4 they're not accurate, we just turn around.

5 Q. So does that also take place at some of the stations you're
6 going to IFR?

7 A. What do you mean?

8 Q. So that where you're using a village agent to determine --
9 you know, tell you what's going on down there.

10 A. No, we use certified weather for IFR.

11 Q. Okay. Couple other questions here and kind of move on.

12 The GPWS system, how often is that tested?

13 A. I don't know. I'm not sure.

14 Q. Do you test it before every leg --

15 A. Oh, yeah.

16 Q. -- as PIC, or is it once a day, or do you know how often
17 you actually run that test?

18 A. Once a day.

19 Q. Once a day.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And the radar altimeter, if you're just en route is it --
22 do you set it at anything? Does it -- do you just leave it at
23 zero or --

24 A. I just leave it at zero unless I use it for IFR.

25 Q. Okay. If you use it for IFR, you only use it for the

1 approach or --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. You said on Sundays when you're not there to do the
4 morning briefings that the pilots will talk to dispatchers in
5 the morning. Is that dispatchers in base, is that OCC? Who are
6 those dispatchers that the pilots are talking to about weather?

7 A. They will be talking to OCC and dispatchers if they got any
8 questions.

9 Q. Okay.

10 MR. WILLIAMS: All right. That's all I have, Kathy.

11 DR. WILSON: Okay. Dave?

12 MR. LOWELL: I have no questions.

13 DR. WILSON: Eric?

14 MR. WEST: I have none.

15 BY DR. WILSON:

16 Q. This is easy. It's back to me. All right. A few follow-
17 ups. You've been at Hageland for a long time. Have you seen
18 them -- have you seen pilots get released from Hageland for not
19 following standard operating procedures or sort of being a
20 cowboy pilot?

21 A. What's cowboy pilot?

22 Q. Somebody who maybe cuts corners, scud runs.

23 A. Yeah, they -- we don't do that. They release.

24 Q. Okay. Shaun asked you about whether you have ever called
25 the OCC wanting to fly I VFR, but OCC recommended flying IFR.

1 You said you went IFR. I'm curious about the opposite. Have
2 you ever called them thinking that you needed to go IFR, OCC
3 says VFR --

4 A. No.

5 Q. -- and you compromised?

6 Okay. When did you come on duty on October 2nd? I know
7 you said you weren't there in the morning. Did you work at all
8 that day?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. What time do you recall you came on duty?

11 A. Around 11:00, I think.

12 Q. Okay. What would a common day look like for you? The
13 hours that you would normally work, I think you said 7:30 to
14 9:30, or is that --

15 A. That's our limit.

16 Q. That's the limit. Okay.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What do you typically work?

19 A. 7:30 to mostly 7:00.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. 7:00 p.m.

22 Q. And how many flights would you fly?

23 A. Three or four flights.

24 Q. Three or four flights? And those flights might have a
25 couple legs?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Have you ever had any concerns about the OCC, any of
3 the agents you've worked with there?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Do you do any joint training with the pilots and OCC
6 together?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Since the St. Mary's accident that occurred back in 2013,
9 how has the safety culture improved or changed at Hageland?
10 Have you seen changes?

11 A. Aren't we talking about Togiak right here, I mean the
12 Togiak incident?

13 Q. I'm sorry?

14 A. We're talking about Togiak, right? Not St. Mary's.

15 Q. Right, but since -- and you've been at the company. Have
16 you seen changes in the company, how things are done since the
17 St. Mary's accident?

18 A. Could I have 5 minutes with Marc?

19 Q. Sure.

20 DR. WILSON: Off the record.

21 (Off record at 3:16 p.m.)

22 (On record at 3:18 p.m.)

23 BY DR. WILSON:

24 Q. Okay. Since the St. Mary's accident in 2013, what changes
25 have you seen in the safety culture at Hageland?

1 A. Our safety culture has always been good, but we made
2 changes, like OCC and wind restrictions. And restrictions on
3 new pilots or when they upgrade.

4 Q. What sort of restrictions are on new pilots?

5 A. Like no IFR, 15-knot crosswind limit, no special VFR.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Those are basic.

8 Q. Okay. How would you characterize the morale of pilots at
9 Hageland?

10 A. I'd say they're -- it's high.

11 Q. Okay. How about the pay of Hageland pilots compared to
12 other operators in the area, how does that compare?

13 A. I think it's the best.

14 Q. Okay. Have you heard of any pilots -- are there any
15 competition between flights that are flying the same route, any
16 guys who are trying to -- making sort of beer bets, you owe me a
17 beer if I beat you to the, you know, the village or --

18 A. No.

19 Q. No competitions that you see among the pilots?

20 A. (Inaudible response).

21 Q. Okay. I realized I also forgot to ask you, if you could
22 describe your aviation background for me leading up to getting
23 hired at Hageland?

24 A. Say that one more.

25 Q. Your aviation background prior to Hageland. So what was

1 your aviation career like prior to getting hired, you said, in
2 1999?

3 A. I was in flight school.

4 Q. Okay. Where'd you do your flight school at?

5 A. AeroTech.

6 Q. AeroTech?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And where is AeroTech based?

9 A. Merrill Field, but it shut down.

10 Q. Okay. So you haven't flown for any other companies outside
11 of Hageland?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay.

14 DR. WILSON: One more time around the room. Any questions,
15 Marvin?

16 MR. FRANTZ: No.

17 DR. WILSON: Shaun?

18 MR. WILLIAMS: No.

19 DR. WILSON: Dave?

20 MR. LOWELL: No.

21 DR. WILSON: Eric?

22 MR. WEST: No.

23 BY DR. WILSON:

24 Q. All right. Anything that we didn't ask you that you were
25 hoping we would ask you or any information that you'd like to

1 share with us that you think might be relevant to the
2 investigation at all?

3 A. No.

4 Q. No? Okay. Marvin and I, we'll give you one of our
5 business cards. Shaun has one too. If you have any information
6 that you think might be relevant between now and the next 12 to
7 18 months -- that's how long we'll be working on this
8 investigation -- please feel free to reach out to any of us.
9 And we thank you for your time today.

10 A. Okay. Thank you.

11 DR. WILSON: Off the record.

12 (Whereupon, at 3:21 p.m., 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: FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER
 ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016
 TOGIAK, ALASKA
 Interview of Brian Amik

DOCKET NUMBER: ANC17FA001

PLACE: Anchorage, Alaska

DATE: December 6, 2016

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 interview.

Nicolette Hernandez
Official Reporter

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER *
ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016, *
TOGIAK, ALASKA *

Docket No.: ANC17FA001

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Interview of: WILLIAM COON

NTSB Offices
Anchorage Federal Building
222 West 7th Avenue, Room 216
Anchorage, Alaska

Wednesday,
December 7, 2016

APPEARANCES:

SHAUN WILLIAMS, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

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

MARVIN FRANTZ, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

ERIC WEST, Air Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention
Washington, D.C.

NOREEN PRICE, Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

Also Present:

DAVE LOWELL, Director of Safety
Hageland Aviation
Anchorage, Alaska

MARC WILHELM, ESQ.
Richmond & Quinn
Anchorage, Alaska
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Coon)

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:42 p.m.)

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MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Hi, Willy. What's your last name? I'm sorry.

MR. COON: Coon, C-o-o-n.

MR. FRANTZ: That's right. We just mentioned that --

MR. COON: Yeah.

MR. FRANTZ: -- didn't we?

I'm Marvin Frantz. I'm an aviation air safety investigator with a operational factors specialty --

MR. COON: Um-hum.

MR. FRANTZ: -- from the NTSB out of Washington. And we'll go around the room in a minute, everybody else introduce themselves again.

MR. COON: Okay.

MR. FRANTZ: But let me give you a little briefing about what's going on today. As you probably know from your time in aviation, NTSB is a federal agency but we're not affiliated with the FAA or the Department of Transportation. We're an independent agency, board. And our goal is to investigate aviation accidents, determine probable causes and contributing factors and ultimately come up with safety recommendations with the goal of mitigating or preventing the same kind of accidents in the future.

MR. COON: Okay.

1 MR. FRANTZ: So that's what we're trying to do by taking a
2 look at this particular accident today. We don't have
3 regulatory or enforcement powers.

4 MR. COON: Um-hum.

5 MR. FRANTZ: We're strictly fact gathering, analysis, and
6 try to determine some conclusions about a particular accident.

7 Today for this interview we're using the services of a
8 transcription agency, a court reporter. There'll be a written
9 transcript of the interview put in the public docket. The audio
10 recording which is being made is just to facilitate that
11 transcription. The audio recording is not going to be kept.

12 Again, NTSB, the goals are -- our mission's not to assign
13 fault, blame or liability, just to determine what happened and
14 why.

15 MR. COON: Um-hum.

16 MR. FRANTZ: We cannot offer -- offers of confidentiality
17 or any sort of immunity based on our interview today.

18 Each group member will have a chance to ask questions, and
19 then at the conclusion of one round, if anybody has any follow-
20 ups, we'll probably go around again and see if --

21 MR. COON: Okay.

22 MR. FRANTZ: -- there are any follow-up questions about
23 anything that was talked about.

24 Please answer all questions to the best of your ability.
25 And when -- make sure it's an audible answer as opposed to just

1 a nod or a uh-huh --

2 MR. COON: Okay.

3 MR. FRANTZ: -- because we're trying to get it so our
4 recorder can get it on the tape and so she can also enter it in
5 -- as she's entering things as they're spoken. So --

6 MR. COON: Okay.

7 MR. FRANTZ: -- just make sure that responses are spoken.

8 You are entitled to have a representative with you during
9 the interview, and can you just tell us who you've chosen as
10 your representative?

11 MR. COON: Marc here.

12 MR. FRANTZ: Okay.

13 MR. COON: Marc, Marc Wilhelm.

14 MR. FRANTZ: Marc Wilhelm. Very good. Before we go around
15 for introductions and get started, do you have any questions for
16 us?

17 MR. COON: No.

18 MR. FRANTZ: No? Okay. We'll start with Katherine.

19 Just --

20 DR. WILSON: Katherine Wilson. I am a human performance
21 investigator with the NTSB.

22 MR. COON: Okay.

23 MR. FRANTZ: And I work with Katherine in Washington --

24 MR. COON: Okay.

25 MR. FRANTZ: -- out of the headquarters office.

1 MR. WILLIAMS: Shaun Williams. I'm the investigator in
2 charge with the NTSB here in Anchorage.

3 MR. COON: Okay.

4 MS. PRICE: Noreen Price. I'm an investigator here in
5 Anchorage. I'm assisting Shaun with this investigation.

6 MR. WEST: Hi. I'm Eric West and I'm a senior air safety
7 investigator for the FAA out of Washington, D.C.

8 MR. COON: Okay.

9 MR. LOWELL: Dave Lowell, Vice President of Safety,
10 Hageland.

11 MR. COON: I know Dave Lowell.

12 MR. WILHELM: Marc Wilhelm, attorney for the witness.

13 INTERVIEW OF WILLIAM COON

14 BY MR. FRANTZ:

15 Q. Okay. Good. To start, could you give us your full name?

16 A. William Robert Coon, C-o-o-n.

17 Q. Sorry, can you spell it? C-o-o --

18 A. C-o-o-n.

19 Q. Okay, C-o-o-n. Okay. And you go by Willy?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay. And your relationship or former relationship with
22 Hageland Airlines? Or Hageland --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- Aviation. Well, tell me what -- can you tell us what
25 that was?

1 A. Oh. Well, I -- well, how far do you want to go back? I
2 was the chief pilot for -- assistant chief pilot for 2 years,
3 the chief pilot for a year, and now I'm the Director of Single
4 Engine Operations.

5 Q. Okay. When did you first -- when were you first hired at
6 Hageland?

7 A. That was May 21, '09.

8 Q. And what position were you hired into then?

9 A. I was hired as a pilot, as a 207 pilot.

10 Q. Okay. So can you just give us a progression of your
11 history at Hageland? Starting as a 207 pilot, how long you did
12 that and then when you moved to --

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. -- the next job and the next job.

15 A. Was a 207 pilot, started in Bethel for about a shift and
16 then after that went to St. Mary's for almost 2 years. Then
17 went back to Bethel to upgrade into the Caravan. Flew the
18 Caravan -- flew the line in the Caravan up until 2013. I
19 believe it was in November of 2013 I became the assistant chief
20 pilot, did that for about 2 years, and then was the chief pilot
21 starting in 2015 up until about 11 months later.

22 Q. Okay. So you were a chief pilot until sometime in 2016?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And then -- and now you're -- sorry, what was your title
25 again now?

1 A. Single engine program manager is the --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- title. Yeah.

4 Q. And where do you work out of now?

5 A. Mostly Palmer.

6 Q. Okay. Can you tell me about your FAA certificates and
7 ratings?

8 A. I have a ATP, multi-engine and single engine commercial
9 privileges and a CFII.

10 Q. Okay. What is your total time, aviation time, flight time?

11 A. 6,800 hours.

12 Q. Okay. Before you started with this company, what did you
13 do in aviation? What's your previous aviation work history?

14 A. I call it aviation odd jobs. In order to build hours, I
15 ferried airplanes from the lower 48 to Alaska, vice versa, and
16 that's mostly what I did to build my time.

17 Q. Okay. So is this the first certificated operator you've
18 worked for?

19 A. Second.

20 Q. Second?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Who else did you work for?

23 A. Bush Air Cargo out of Palmer. They were a -- they're a
24 Part 135 operation.

25 Q. Okay. How long were you with them?

1 A. Well, our time overlapped, but it was about 5 years. So I
2 was working for them at the same time I was working for
3 Hageland.

4 Q. Okay. What -- did you fly for them?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What were you flying for them?

7 A. DC-3, right seat.

8 Q. Okay. So I guess we're going to primarily -- well, so --
9 I'm sorry. Again, when did you leave the chief pilot duties
10 here at Hageland? What was -- what month was it?

11 A. What was it? End of August is when I left.

12 Q. Okay. So when you were chief pilot give me a quick
13 synopsis of what your duties were.

14 A. Hiring pilots, dealing with pilot issues, disciplining
15 pilots and just basically interacting with them in every way I
16 could just to, you know, try and keep a pulse on things.

17 Q. Did you have any involvement or oversight in training,
18 pilot training?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. Can you give me a description of a training program
21 that a new hire pilot would receive? He wasn't being hired in
22 as a captain because of experience, but just initially you hired
23 somebody that has a few thousand hours but no time with a
24 certificated carrier, but he wants to get into this -- in this
25 field, what kind of process would he go through training-wise

1 and airplane-wise as he was --

2 A. Yeah, sure.

3 Q. -- from start to as he progressed through the organization?

4 A. Well, we'd start with an interview -- receive the resume,
5 start with the interview. If the person seemed to -- like
6 they'd be a good fit, we would invite them to ground school.
7 They'd go through ground school.

8 We would then start training in -- and it depends on what
9 they were going to be doing. If they were a captain, we'd go
10 right into the airplane and -- and the training flights depend
11 on the pilots, where they're at, you know, how much do we have
12 to work with them in order to bring them up to company
13 standards. It could be anywhere from two to -- I mean, there's
14 really no limit on the number of training flights we'd give
15 them, but once we felt like they were up to company standards,
16 then we would recommend them for a check ride.

17 Q. Are those flights with an instructor and not revenue
18 flights? Do you have specific flights that are just training
19 flights for --

20 A. They're specifically dedicated to training. We don't
21 combine revenue flights with training flights.

22 Q. When a new hire pilot completes ground school and completes
23 training and is ready to enter line flying, is there anything
24 equivalent of operating experience or --

25 A. Yes. Yes. We --

1 Q. -- guided or --

2 A. We give 10 hours of operating experience, but above and
3 beyond that, we continue to have an experienced pilot in that
4 airplane fly with them for a total of 50 hours in type, in
5 addition to the required OE.

6 Q. The OE is with a check airman?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Okay. And we're talking about an SIC position. Or I guess
9 a PIC as well?

10 A. The SICs don't require OE.

11 Q. Right. But does --

12 A. But this would be with a PIC, a new PIC.

13 Q. Okay. New SICs, do they -- are they paired with anybody in
14 particular once they actually start flying the line?

15 A. We try to keep them with a more experienced captain.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So -- yeah.

18 Q. So are you familiar with the accident pilot? I mean, did
19 you know him?

20 A. Yeah, briefly.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Briefly.

23 Q. Did you -- were you involved in his hiring?

24 A. I was.

25 Q. Okay. Do you have --

1 DR. WILSON: Sorry, can we clarify which pilot you're
2 referring to?

3 MR. FRANTZ: Oh yeah, the captain.

4 DR. WILSON: Okay.

5 MR. COON: Tim?

6 BY MR. FRANTZ:

7 Q. Yes. Cline.

8 A. Tim Cline, yeah.

9 Q. Yes. Okay. Yeah. So when you -- did you interview him
10 initially?

11 A. I did.

12 Q. Okay. Do you have any recollection of anything from the
13 interview or his initial being brought on board, that stands out
14 in your memory about him that might put him in contrast in any
15 way to your general pilot population that made him -- brought
16 him to your awareness, you know, good or bad, as a pilot or a
17 candidate for a captain or SIC here?

18 A. He was a low-key individual. Kind of quiet, respectful.
19 Had a pleasant personality. Those are the main things that
20 stick out about him.

21 Q. How did -- before you hired him, how were you able to
22 evaluate his flying skills? Is there any kind of --

23 A. I wasn't.

24 Q. -- simulator or flying --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- review that's done before you hire someone --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- to evaluate their technical skills? Okay. Do you
4 recall after he was hired, any instances or anything that came
5 to your attention regarding him during his training or his
6 initial OE?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Never rose to the level of --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- the needing attention of the chief pilot? Nothing?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. How about afterwards, after he became -- I'm not
13 sure, did he start as an SIC and then he --

14 A. No, he started as a --

15 Q. He started as a captain.

16 A. He started as a captain.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. So after he was flying as a captain, any recollection of
20 any interactions that you had with him or any in line with the
21 chief pilot duties?

22 A. No.

23 Q. No? Okay. Besides low key, do you have any description or
24 anything that you recall about his abilities as a pilot or his
25 judgment or decision making, anything -- any stories or anything

1 that ever rose to your attention about those things concerning
2 Mr. Cline?

3 A. No. No.

4 Q. Okay. Let me ask you the similar set of questions about
5 the first officer, Mr. Welty.

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. Did you -- were you involved in his hiring?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. So the same thing, in his interview or his initial training
10 anything stand out one way or the other about him as a pilot?

11 A. No.

12 Q. No? Okay. And same thing, during his -- I guess he was
13 just in his first couple weeks of actually flying the line, so
14 okay, when the accident happened. And you were not in the chief
15 pilot position at the time of the accident; is that right?

16 A. That's correct.

17 Q. Okay. What are the pilots taught and what is -- well, what
18 are they taught initially when they're brought on at Hageland
19 regarding picking routes or picking -- yeah, routes between
20 particular destinations if they're VFR? Is there -- what kind
21 of guidance are they given, or are they taught anything about
22 how to decide how to go from point A to B if you're VFR so you
23 can kind of choose your way or choose your route? Is there
24 guidance that is provided to pilots? Are there standard routes
25 that most people adhere to between certain cities or is it just

1 each pilot decides on each particular flight what he thinks is
2 best?

3 A. B50 night routes is the only guidance we have regarding
4 VFR.

5 Q. Op spec?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Okay. So other than that a pilot can fly however he wants
8 route-wise as long as he -- if it's a VFR flight and he
9 maintains --

10 A. I believe it says, I believe it says in our GOM the most
11 direct route, is the guidance that we have in our --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- in our GOM.

14 Q. All right. Have you -- in your experience did you ever --
15 have you ever seen a pilot fly one route and a -- between points
16 A and point B, and another pilot in another flight flying very
17 close to the same time and the same weather conditions fly
18 another route between the same two cities?

19 A. Not that I can recall.

20 Q. If you saw that because you were in the OCC one day, say,
21 you happened to see that 10 minutes later another flight flew a
22 different route than the one just ahead of it by looking at,
23 say, flight tracking, the capability you have there, what would
24 that say to you? What would you think about it?

25 A. Well --

1 MR. WILHELM: Think about it as the OCC controller, as the
2 pilot or what? Chief pilot or --

3 MR. FRANTZ: As the chief --

4 MR. WILHELM: -- in what role?

5 BY MR. FRANTZ:

6 Q. As the chief pilot and --

7 A. It probably wouldn't alarm me if somebody didn't go --
8 because maybe they're going around some weather. I don't know.
9 But it wouldn't alarm me if I saw that.

10 Q. Okay. I'm going to -- I'll stop there for now and pass it
11 on to Katherine. Thank you.

12 A. Okay.

13 DR. WILSON: Thanks.

14 BY DR. WILSON:

15 Q. What experience level are you looking for, for pilots that
16 you hire?

17 A. Well, we're looking for at least what is required. And
18 actually we go above and beyond what's required. The FAA
19 requires 500 hours and our minimum for a captain is 1,000 hours.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So that's the first thing.

22 Q. In any type airplane or --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. You said that you were involved in the process of
25 hiring Mr. Cline. Are there others that are involved in that

1 process also?

2 A. Yes, but not always.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I believe I was the only interviewer with Mr. Cline when I
5 hired him.

6 Q. Okay. So then did you make -- did you have the final
7 decision on hiring him?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Did you contact his previous employer?

10 A. I don't recall if I did or not. I did speak with previous
11 folks that had worked with him.

12 Q. How did you learn of those people?

13 A. Well, they recommended him.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. When you spoke to these other colleagues of his, they
17 recommended Mr. Cline as a pilot for you?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And how did you get those names? Did Mr. Cline
20 supply them or --

21 A. They were pilots who worked for us already.

22 Q. Okay. Is it typical that -- to not contact a previous
23 employer?

24 A. Not necessarily, no.

25 Q. Okay. You are also a check airman? Well --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Are you currently still a check airman, or you --

3 A. I am.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And it's my understanding that you flew with Mr. Cline on
7 his last check ride?

8 A. I'd have to go back and look at the records. I don't -- I
9 don't remember.

10 Q. Okay. Let's talk in generalities. As a check airman what
11 are your duties and responsibilities?

12 A. Training, checking, be it a check ride, route checks,
13 making sure pilots are proficient. Yeah.

14 Q. Is there a list -- checklist that you're following of items
15 to observe during those flights or maneuvers to be performed?

16 A. No -- no, not necessarily, because a route check, for
17 example, would be -- well, let me back up. Are we talking about
18 check ride here or are we talking --

19 Q. Check ride.

20 A. Yes. Oh, yes, there is a list. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Or -- yeah, absolutely. So --

23 Q. And what are you doing during route checks?

24 A. Observing the pilot, their judgment, what are they doing.
25 You know, how are their time skills looking. That type of

1 stuff.

2 Q. Do you recall doing that? Do you recall doing anything
3 like that with Mr. Cline?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. And you don't remember the check ride either?

6 A. I can't remember who gave Tim his check ride.

7 Q. Okay. Do you have any recollection of flying with him at
8 all?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. If something didn't go well in the check ride would
11 that typically be something that would stick out in your mind
12 and make you remember a pilot that you flew with?

13 A. Uh-huh, yes.

14 Q. Okay. How would you characterize Tim's personality?

15 A. He was laid back. Respectful. Easy to get along with.

16 Q. Okay. And I believe you said that nothing rose to the
17 attention of the chief pilot in terms of concerns about him as a
18 pilot?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Anything since the accident, has anybody mentioned anything
21 to you?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you teach ground school at all, or just you're checking?

24 A. Mostly checking.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Light ground school.

2 Q. Okay. What would you typically cover in ground school?

3 A. Well, if we're talking an initial ground school, no, I
4 don't typically do those. But I'll sit the guys down before we
5 go out and fly and we'll get on the white board and talk about
6 what we're going to do and that type of thing and -- you know,
7 so --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. That's what I mean by --

10 Q. All right.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Are pilots trained on the risk assessment form that they
13 complete prior to every flight?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. When is that training?

16 A. During the -- it -- well, it's right away. I mean, even if
17 -- the very first flight that we do with them, on a training
18 flight we'll go into the OCC, meet with the folks there, you
19 know, if we're in Palmer. We look at the risk assessment form
20 and decide what risk level we are and then have a conversation
21 with the OCA and talk about the flight, what we're going to
22 do --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- have an agreement and then we go do it.

25 Q. Is it covered in ground school --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- also? Okay. Do you cover weather in ground school?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. What -- are the challenges of the weather in Alaska
5 discussed for the --

6 A. Oh, yes.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Absolutely.

9 Q. What sort of challenges are covered?

10 A. Well, fog, low visibility. Icing is a big one.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah, icing is a major concern.

13 Q. Are changing weather conditions covered?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. How about crew resource management, is that covered in
18 training?

19 A. Crew resource management, is it covered in training? Not
20 so much.

21 Q. Okay. Do you have a say in items that are covered in
22 training as the chief pilot?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. What sort of training have you recommended be
25 included?

1 A. Well, our training program was -- I've always felt was
2 pretty good. I hadn't made any recommendations --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- based on the fact that I thought our training program
5 was already a good training program. And our director of
6 training was doing a good job.

7 Q. But if you wanted to recommend something, you could make
8 that --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Going back to hiring. You were also involved in hiring
13 Mr. Welty you said?

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 COURT REPORTER: Yes?

16 MR. WILHELM: You need to answer audibly yes.

17 MR. COON: Oh.

18 MR. WILHELM: With the court reporter.

19 MR. COON: Yes.

20 BY DR. WILSON:

21 Q. She's good at catching that.

22 Do you recall if you contacted a previous employer of
23 Mr. Welty, or who you might have talked to in that decision-
24 making process?

25 A. No, I don't.

1 Q. Okay. Were there others involved in that decision?

2 A. I believe it was only me.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Had you ever flown with him?

6 A. No.

7 Q. No? Ever hear anybody talk about flying with him, what
8 their perceptions of him were?

9 A. I did not, no.

10 Q. Okay. Are you also involved in creating the schedules for
11 pilots?

12 A. No. I was at the time, but not any --

13 Q. When you were --

14 A. -- not anymore.

15 Q. Right. As chief pilot.

16 A. Yes, I was involved, yeah.

17 Q. Okay. So how is it that you determine pilot schedules?

18 A. Well, usually my first question was where would you like to
19 be and what would you like to have, and if I can accommodate
20 that I try to make that happen. Otherwise it's based on
21 seniority, company needs. So a pilot could be placed anywhere
22 based on company needs.

23 Q. Are you referring to a base?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. So we've got -- now are you doing schedules for all

1 the bases? There's nine bases. So as the chief pilot are you
2 doing schedules for all nine bases?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. And then within those bases pilots are on duty for
5 15 days?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. And then do they all work the same hours, 7:30 to
8 7:00, do they --

9 A. Pretty -- yes.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And then within that, how is it determined which route
13 they're going to fly?

14 A. There's no set determination. It's who's available and
15 it's based on the needs of the base and the departure control
16 agent at the base.

17 Q. Can pilots suggest a route that they want to fly?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Do they do that often, or do you just schedule them?
20 Did you just schedule them?

21 A. It's both. You know, if somebody volunteers and it happens
22 to work out, then we roll with that.

23 Q. Are there some routes that are more desirable than others?

24 A. No, not really.

25 Q. Do you recall if Tim ever made recommendations as to the

1 routes he wanted to fly?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Are pilots trained on CFIT avoidance?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. What's included in that training?

6 A. It's simulator training.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And it's scenario based. And every pilot does it every
9 year. We do it every year.

10 Q. Does it involve inadvertent IMC or changing weather
11 conditions?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. And what is the -- what are pilots trained to do in
14 that situation?

15 A. Climb and confess.

16 Q. Explain that a little more, the confess part.

17 A. Well, one of the scenarios is I don't tell them where
18 they're at. I put them in a mountain pass, for example, bring
19 the weather down and my expectation is that they climb to safety
20 and then call and get help from ATC, declare an emergency. That
21 -- that's it in a nutshell, what --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- what we're trying to get pilots to do.

24 Q. How would they know what altitude to climb to?

25 A. Well, we have equipment on board the aircraft that can help

1 them with that. We've got terrain on our GPS systems that can
2 help them with that. We have TAWS, we have radar altimeters.

3 So --

4 Q. Okay. What else -- what other functionality does the on-
5 board system have? So you said terrain. Does it have weather?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Weather radar?

8 A. Provided we're in -- yeah, provided we're in range of
9 ADS-B.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Is it just METARs, or is it actual radar?

13 A. METARs. Well, yeah, METARs, TAFs, special reports. And
14 yes, there is a radar page. It's not real time. You know, it's
15 recent history. But yes, there is a radar function on there.

16 Q. Okay. If you were on the terrain page of the system could
17 a pilot zoom in close to see where their aircraft is located in
18 relation to the terrain?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. And all pilots are trained on how to use that
21 system?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. What is the procedure for a pilot if they get a GPWS alert?

24 A. If they're IMC or if they're on a IFR flight plan, tell ATC
25 and request to climb. I'm not aware that that's ever happened.

1 If you're VMC and you get an alert, then climb. Because we're
2 not allowed to inhibit our TAWS units. Climbing we usually make
3 it stop.

4 Q. What do you mean by you're not allowed to inhibit it? The
5 company does inhibit it, or a pilot can't?

6 A. A pilot can't inhibit it.

7 Q. Because it's the procedure or they physically can't do it?

8 A. No, it's because that's the policy.

9 Q. Okay. Have you ever flown with anybody who did inhibit it?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Is that -- is there a scenario in training, simulator
12 training, where the GPWS goes off?

13 A. Yeah, there is.

14 Q. What sort of scenario is that?

15 A. Similar to what I told you. Of course we can't make it --
16 the simulator actually do it, so we have to just tell the pilot,
17 okay, your TAWS warning just went off --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- what are we going to do?

20 Q. Why can't that be simulated, or why can't it go off?

21 A. I don't think that the simulator has that function built
22 into it.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. How would you describe the safety culture at Hageland?

1 A. I think it's excellent. I think we have a fantastic safety
2 culture.

3 Q. Okay. What makes it excellent?

4 A. Well, I can tell you from personal experience I've never
5 been once chastised or made to feel bad about turning around
6 because I was encountering weather that I didn't want to fly
7 into, and turned around and went back to base and no one -- you
8 know, I've never been punished for turning around because of
9 weather. So --

10 Q. Okay. Ever feel pressured to continue into marginal
11 weather --

12 A. Never.

13 Q. -- that you're not comfortable?

14 A. Never.

15 Q. Do you feel that pilots in general, from your understanding
16 or interactions with them, that they feel the same way about the
17 safety culture and --

18 A. 100 percent.

19 Q. Okay. Do you get any safety data from the airline or from
20 the company?

21 A. Safety data. Yeah, we have Dave.

22 Q. What is --

23 A. But -- and we get also newsletters from our sister company.
24 They put out safety newsletters. So yeah, there's safety
25 information available to us.

1 Q. Okay. So you get a newsletter from Dave. Do you get any
2 other data?

3 A. I don't know -- do you write that, Dave? I don't -- we get
4 it from our sister company.

5 Q. Okay. So then what information do you get from the safety
6 department, Dave?

7 A. Well, any time we see a problem with -- be it a possible
8 safety hazard or just maybe something, an event that might have
9 happened, we can fill out a report, a WBAT report. Dave's
10 department looks over these and they take it seriously. The
11 times that I have personally filled out those reports they have
12 been taken seriously and the issues were dealt with.

13 Q. Okay. So does the safety department/Dave provide any trend
14 data? If they see a certain number of reports coming in around
15 a specific topic, is that shared with the chief pilot that can
16 then be shared with the pilots?

17 A. The data, the -- what sticks in my mind the most is at
18 recurrent ground school, Dave will present that type of
19 information at recurrent ground school.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Any monthly safety meetings held?

23 A. We have --

24 Q. Or quarterly?

25 A. We have -- well, we have pilot safety meetings every

1 morning at the bases. Weather is discussed. NOTAMs are
2 discussed. Any type of possible hazard. So yeah, we have daily
3 safety meetings with pilots.

4 Q. But no monthly or quarterly safety meetings to discuss
5 safety concerns or reports that are submitted through WBAT?

6 A. No.

7 Correct me if I'm wrong, Dave, but I can't think of any.

8 Q. You know better than me, so I'm just --

9 A. Yeah. Yeah.

10 Q. -- asking. It can be no.

11 A. Yeah, no. I mean not quarterly.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Yearly, you know.

14 Q. Okay. And that's a part of recurrent training?

15 A. Yeah, uh-huh.

16 Q. Are you involved at all in the review of any safety reports
17 that are submitted through WBAT?

18 A. No. Well, wait a minute. Let me back up on that. Yes, I
19 do occasionally or I did occasionally get emails from the safety
20 department if it was a pilot-related issue.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Yes, so --

23 Q. Have any of the safety reports that you received a pilot-
24 reported issue that -- about a safety concern about a pilot?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Why did you leave the chief pilot's position?

2 A. I'd been in the office for 3 years and I just had enough.
3 I was ready to go get more hands on into the flying.

4 Q. Okay. What sort of training was done as you were outgoing
5 chief pilot and the new chief pilot coming in? Was there any
6 overlap or training that you did with the incoming chief pilot?

7 A. Other than just casual discussions, no.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. No formal training.

10 Q. How were you informed of the accident?

11 A. By a phone call.

12 Q. Okay. And did you have any duties or responsibilities
13 required as a part of the emergency action plan --

14 A. No.

15 Q. -- once you were notified?

16 A. No. I was on -- actually I was on vacation when I got the
17 call, so --

18 Q. Okay. Okay. I think that's all that I have for now. You
19 doing okay? Do you need a break or anything?

20 A. Yeah. No, I'm good, yeah.

21 Q. Okay.

22 DR. WILSON: Shaun.

23 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

24 Q. So Willy, let's think back to when you were a chief
25 pilot as far as operational control. What kind of operational

1 control did you have?

2 A. Well, I was part of the 119 team, so -- and we -- you know,
3 other than the Operational Control Center that we have in
4 Palmer, whenever there was an RA-3, Risk Assessment 3, that
5 required a 119 person to be involved, then -- I wasn't the only
6 one that could be called, but oftentimes I was called to discuss
7 the risk of the flight and any -- either release it or not
8 release the flight based on the information given.

9 Q. So when you were on these calls, whether it was an RA-3 or
10 been told that there was a disagreement, the pilot says it's a
11 2 --

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. -- OCA says it's a 3, makes it a 3, you guys get involved.
14 Can I understand that aspect of it? Were you ever notified or
15 knew of VFR versus IFR -- I don't want to say conflict, but say
16 the captain wanted to go VFR, OCA says I recommend IFR on this.

17 A. Yep.

18 Q. How does that go; who wins?

19 A. Well, I'm the tiebreaker. So based on the information I'm
20 given, I may say, yeah, you're perfectly legal and safe to go
21 VFR, or no, you need to go IFR or don't do the flight. And
22 that --

23 Q. So that -- those kinds of discussions didn't make it up to
24 your level?

25 A. They did.

1 Q. Okay. Do you remember ballpark how many of those you had?

2 A. Oh, goodness. I hate to guess, but --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- but there's been many times.

5 Q. Been many times.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Okay. As the chief pilot did you ever kind of sample the
8 work of the OCAs? Did you ever go through there and just kind
9 of watch what was going on?

10 A. All the time. I worked out of the same building the OCC is
11 in. I'm just four doors down. So yeah, I was in there quite
12 often.

13 Q. Excuse me. You mentioned when -- in talking about building
14 schedules.

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. So the pilots have been assigned their bases. So we'll
17 take Bethel, for example. They're on first shift, so the first
18 half of the month out there. Who's assigning pilots and
19 airplanes to routes?

20 A. That would be the departure control agents and the lead
21 pilot at the base.

22 Q. Okay. During this assignment, do you know, do those
23 departure control agents have access to flight duty records?

24 A. I don't believe they do.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. That would be -- I don't want to talk out of turn here.

2 No, I don't believe they do.

3 Q. Okay. So who would ensure along this way that maybe the
4 previous day was okay or -- for flight time, but to ensure that
5 -- whether it was days off or rest or the quarterly times, whose
6 responsibility was it to ensure that Part 135 flight and duty
7 regulations were complied with?

8 A. Well, I believe we have that info available to us in
9 FlightMaster to the --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- to the OCAs in the Operation Control Center. The pilot
12 of course, pilot -- the pilot has a vested interest in not
13 breaking duty times. That's pretty much it.

14 Q. So did you as chief pilot ever go back and -- okay, the
15 night before. So, you know, on Friday there's a big push coming
16 out in the morning. On, you know, Thursday when the schedules
17 are built or anything like that, did you ever go in and kind of
18 sample to make sure --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- everyone was legal to go?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. The morning briefings, were they every morning?

23 A. Every morning.

24 Q. Okay. Even on weekends?

25 A. Even on weekends.

1 Q. As the chief pilot being in OCC, if you saw something on
2 the screens that did not -- as far as the mountainous terrain
3 and the altitude at which an aircraft was flying, something that
4 threw up a flag for you --

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. -- I've been there; I know that that's pretty low --

7 A. Um-hum.

8 Q. -- would you try to contact that crew in flight, or the OCA
9 contact that crew? What would happen?

10 A. Getting ahold of a plane in flight can be difficult.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. It just depends on where they're at. It can be easy, or it
13 can be very difficult depending on where the plane is at.

14 Q. You talked about the minimums for hiring captains as far as
15 the FAA being 500, Hageland prefers 1,000 or requires 1,000.

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. What about the SICs?

18 A. Commercial instrument. It's the requirement.

19 Q. And one last one here for me. You mentioned keeping the
20 SICs, try to keep them with the more senior pilots.

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. Was there a cutoff or a determination as to what you
23 considered a senior pilot?

24 A. No. We didn't have a definition for it, but we just wanted
25 to make sure that it wasn't, you know, for example, it wasn't

1 the pilot's or the captain's first shift. Or, you know, I mean
2 not even -- maybe not even his second shift. They wanted -- we
3 wanted somebody that had some experience in the airplane.

4 Q. Okay. That's all I have for you.

5 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Thanks.

6 Noreen.

7 BY MS. PRICE:

8 Q. Okay. In regards to the SIC training program, are they
9 taught about the GPWS system and how to use it and how to test
10 it?

11 A. They are -- now the SICs are not taught how to test the
12 GPWS system. The captains are.

13 Q. Okay. Are they -- who -- do the SICs perform preflight of
14 the aircraft?

15 A. They do.

16 Q. But they're not taught how to preflight the GPWS system?
17 Test it, I should say.

18 A. The GPWS system is tested during the run-up.

19 Q. Okay. All right. Thanks.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. What's the minimum altitude you can fly en route on a VFR
22 flight?

23 A. 600 and 2 is our company minimum.

24 Q. That's your weather minimums, or --

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- the altitude?

2 A. 600 feet and 2 miles visibility on a VFR flight in non-
3 mountainous.

4 Q. Okay. So if you're -- you have a new SIC and you're
5 talking about route and altitude selection to get to your
6 destination, what kind of guidance -- what would you say
7 regarding altitude selection on a VFR flight?

8 I know your GOM says you can go down to 500 feet. Some
9 pilots are telling us they like to fly high, 5,000 feet, well
10 above mountains. Others obviously like to go low and through
11 and around mountains. Is there any kind of guidance, you know,
12 that you would provide to, say, a new SIC as to altitude
13 selection, regards to smooth, clear airspace where you're going
14 to avoid terrain?

15 A. Well, I think the guidance is mainly provided by the SIC
16 watching the captain and having a -- maybe having a conversation
17 with the captain in that regard.

18 Q. Would you agree with the statement saying that some pilots
19 fly, like to fly high over mountainous terrain and some pilots
20 like to fly low through and around mountainous terrain; it's
21 your own personal preference, or would I be wrong there?

22 A. My personal preference is to go high, but --

23 Q. What about the -- you have an idea of what the other pilots
24 like to do because you've given check rides and you've talked to
25 the other pilots. I get a feeling that there's -- everybody

1 does something different, and I'm trying to figure out -- is it
2 just personal preference?

3 A. I can't specifically say. I don't --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- really know.

6 Q. But you like to go high, you said, right?

7 A. Sure.

8 Q. Why?

9 A. Because it's safe.

10 Q. Why is it safe? I mean, I know these are --

11 A. Altitude --

12 Q. -- element questions, but that's --

13 A. Altitude is -- there's safety in altitude. I mean, that's
14 a -- you know.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. But if you're going over the tundra in the Bethel area, 600
17 feet or -- can be safe, you know. So there's really no specific
18 answer to --

19 Q. Yeah, but --

20 A. -- what altitude needs to be flown.

21 Q. Okay. I know there's no answer. I was looking for
22 guidance. I'm a new pilot; I know nothing.

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. What kind of guidance are you going to give me? And you
25 did. You said you like to fly high because it's safe and --

1 over terrain, but -- so when there's a new route at one of the
2 stations would the chief pilot -- were you ever involved in a
3 decision, that decision-making process? The company said we're
4 going to pick up a new route here, would they talk to the chief
5 pilot regarding that route?

6 A. I don't believe -- I think all the routes that we had when
7 I was at -- when I became a chief pilot stayed the same. I
8 don't believe there were any new routes. But yes, I mean the
9 chief pilot would definitely have say.

10 Q. So the -- this particular one for this accident flight was
11 Quinhagak to Togiak, was a new route was -- is my understanding.
12 So --

13 A. I'm trying to remember what the process was there. I --
14 no, there was no -- I didn't have a discussion as to the route.
15 Because the guidance in our GOM is the most direct route.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So -- so that -- that's the -- that's how the route was --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- was -- they came up with it.

20 Q. Have -- no, that's good.

21 Have you heard of crews at a base racing each other to get
22 to a destination, or making bets as to who can finish first that
23 day, or any of that sort of stuff?

24 A. Never.

25 Q. Has that ever come up --

1 A. Never.

2 Q. -- in a safety report or discussions or off the record over
3 beers?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Have you ever heard of anybody betting on beers for
6 anything flight-wise, at the end of the day you owe me a beer
7 because I did this, I owe you a beer --

8 A. No.

9 Q. -- for something that went on during -- okay.

10 A. No.

11 Q. Is there -- I know you said there's no crew resource
12 management training provided because these are single pilot
13 aircraft, but is aeronautical decision making or threat error
14 management training part of initial and recurrent training for
15 pilots?

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

17 MS. PRICE: Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

18 MR. COON: Um-hum.

19 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Eric?

20 BY MR. WEST:

21 Q. All right. Going to ask a few questions about your check
22 airman status. How many check airmen are at Hageland? Or
23 Hageland. Do you know?

24 A. Oh --

25 Q. Or when you -- this is when you were chief pilot.

1 A. I'm going to say roughly 10.

2 Q. Ten.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Do you -- does Hageland utilize certified flight
5 instructors?

6 A. Some of -- I believe some of our check airmen are certified
7 flight instructors --

8 Q. Right.

9 A. -- but that's not a requirement to become a check airman.

10 Q. No, I don't think it's required. But in the course of
11 training are certified flight instructors used at Hageland?

12 A. If the check airman happens to be a certified flight
13 instructor, then yes, but if not, then no.

14 Q. All right. So my question is, is there a necessity in
15 Hageland's training to utilize a certified flight instructor?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay.

18 DR. WILSON: Do we need to go off the record?

19 COURT REPORTER: Yes, did he say yes?

20 DR. WILSON: No.

21 COURT REPORTER: Okay.

22 BY MR. WEST:

23 Q. Okay. You -- there was a mention about 50 hours of time in
24 the aircraft.

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. Would that have applied to Mr. Cline?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. And so can you give me a scenario in my -- I'm
4 trying to picture this in my head. So he would be -- would this
5 all be familiarization flying? Then he would be flying with --

6 A. With an experienced pilot.

7 Q. -- a PIC --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- or would Mr. Cline be acting as the PIC?

10 A. Mr. Cline would be acting as the PIC and then another
11 experienced pilot in that aircraft would be flying with him.

12 Q. As a safety pilot?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Would this be in the Caravan?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. All right. You, as an experienced pilot then, tell me how
17 if Mr. Cline has never flown a turbine powered aircraft before,
18 wouldn't he need some kind of sign-off for that or -- I'm not
19 sure how that works.

20 A. Well, he's went through our company training program --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- and -- no, it's -- yeah, it's our company training
23 program that's -- you know, so you get training check ride and
24 OE and then --

25 Q. Is that the same as an IOE?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. It's -- that term's been changed. It's not IOE --

4 Q. Okay. Got you.

5 A. -- anymore, it's OE.

6 Q. Boy, am I in the dark ages. Okay. OE, operational
7 experience.

8 A. Yeah, operational.

9 Q. All right. Then at the end of this 50 hours, then you come
10 along and give him the final okay check ride. Am I correct?

11 A. No. No, the check ride has already been given.

12 Q. I see.

13 A. And at the end of the OE, a check airman will give them a
14 route check for a --

15 Q. I see.

16 A. -- for a brand new pilot in that aircraft. And then
17 another experienced pilot, doesn't have to be a check airman,
18 just a safety pilot, will ride with that pilot until they have
19 50 hours in type.

20 Q. Okay. Who makes the determination that he has -- that he
21 is ready to be a PIC for your company? Who gives that final
22 determination?

23 A. The check airman.

24 Q. The check airman.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Were you that check airman for Mr. Cline?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. Who -- do we know who that was?

4 A. I don't. I'd have to look on the records.

5 Q. All right. We might want to know who that is. All right.
6 Fifty hours. Is there a set training program at Hageland for
7 this type of 50 hours transition so that the person giving him
8 the familiarization has something to go by? Some kind of
9 checklist or some kind of training program incorporated into
10 your formal training program at Hageland? In other words,
11 you --

12 A. I'm not sure what --

13 Q. -- are required under Part 135 to have a formal training
14 program. It is approved by the FAA.

15 A. Right.

16 Q. So it's one of the few things that are approved by the FAA,
17 other than your maintenance program.

18 A. Um-hum.

19 Q. So, is this 50 hours of -- does it have any type of -- does
20 the person giving the familiarization training or the people
21 that are giving this familiarization have anything to go by to
22 help this guy along?

23 A. No.

24 Q. No.

25 A. They're there to be eyes and ears and offer help if needed.

1 Q. So there's no structure within this 50 hours? You just
2 require 50 hours. So they in essence could be going up
3 sightseeing. In other words, there's --

4 A. No, they're not going to -- they're not --

5 Q. I'm looking for structure.

6 A. -- they're not going sightseeing.

7 Q. I understand that, but -- in other words, I'm looking for
8 something formal and structure, but you're telling me there
9 isn't anything written.

10 A. You know, I'd have to -- I'd have to look. I don't want to
11 give you a yes or a no. I'd have to take a look and see how
12 it's written.

13 Q. All right.

14 A. Some of these --

15 Q. Can somebody make that an action item?

16 A. Some of these things you --

17 Q. Okay. I just want to -- I want to see if there's anything
18 formal that would give guidance in the training program during
19 that 50 hours so that, you know, they're not going up
20 sightseeing and looking around or whatever. Something formal
21 that would tell that other pilot, hey, today we're going to go
22 up and do -- you know, we're -- I'm going to show you how the
23 Garmin works, or the maps, or we're going to do this route.

24 A. I don't think you're understanding what the 50 hours of
25 safety pilot is, is a pilot riding with this new captain on

1 routes.

2 Q. Okay. The different routes?

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. To familiarize them with the different routes that Hageland
5 flies; is that correct? He may not be flying those routes all
6 the time.

7 A. No, the safety pilot during those -- the end of the
8 training is flying with that pilot on revenue routes.

9 Q. The end of the training.

10 A. What we call safety pilot.

11 Q. Okay. The end of what training? Of --

12 A. At the end of the check ride, at the end of the OE we do --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- an additional -- we do additional hours to get that PIC
15 a total of 50 hours in type.

16 Q. Okay. So let's go back to the OE. This is the part I'm
17 interested in. So how long does that last?

18 A. At least 10 hours.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Which is required by the FAA.

21 Q. So this is what I'm trying to get at. Okay.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. So there is a formal OE --

24 A. Oh, yes.

25 Q. Oh, okay.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. All right.

3 A. Absolutely.

4 Q. That's what I'm trying to get at.

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. Is that portion, does that portion have a formal training
7 checklist of some kind or a formal written?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. Is that possible to get that -- is that part
10 of the -- do you guys have the training manual?

11 DR. WILSON: Yes.

12 MR. WEST: Okay.

13 DR. WILSON: We can talk about --

14 MR. FRANTZ: Yeah.

15 DR. WILSON: We can go through what we have and --

16 MR. WEST: Yeah. All right.

17 DR. WILSON: -- see if we need to make more requests.

18 MR. WEST: Okay.

19 BY MR. WEST:

20 Q. Then after the OE, he gets the check ride, then he's cut
21 loose for the additional 50 hours?

22 A. No, he gets the check ride and then the OE.

23 Q. Then the OE.

24 A. And then the safety pilot.

25 Q. Then the safety pilot.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Then he's cut loose. Okay.

3 A. That's right.

4 Q. Okay. Excellent. So is there something then -- do you
5 then talk to the maybe several pilots or pilots that flew with
6 him to get an evaluation?

7 A. Yes, and that happens during the process while they're
8 flying with, you know, this new pilot. Either I'll give them a
9 call or they'll give me a call to tell me about the progress.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Always, yeah --

12 Q. All right.

13 A. -- keep a pulse on things, you know.

14 Q. Do you have any type of formal way that you write that
15 down? Do you -- is there some way that you have Mr. Cline's
16 progress report and some way or another a person --

17 A. No.

18 Q. So this is just something that you keep. Was the progress
19 good, was it --

20 A. Well --

21 Q. -- outstanding, was it just average?

22 A. Well, that type of -- that -- that's being -- that's a
23 record that's kept on the training forms.

24 Q. Okay. All right. All right, but I'm not getting the sense
25 that these informal calls that you received from these pilots

1 were part of the training form.

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. All right. All right. The operational -- the OE,
4 how long did it last? Do you have any idea typically?

5 A. I don't know. Well, typically 10 hours.

6 Q. Ones that you give.

7 A. Ten hours typically.

8 Q. I mean -- okay. But they go on individual flights though,
9 right?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. The whole thing is cumulative 10 hours --

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. -- but each individual flight might last an hour or so in
14 a --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- accumulation of about 10 days it takes or --

17 A. It usually doesn't take 10 days. It usually takes 2 to 3
18 days.

19 Q. Two to 3 days.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. So you're doing them in segments or 2, 3 hours, or
22 something like that.

23 A. Yeah, whatever --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- whatever the --

1 Q. All right. Are you familiar as chief pilot in the hiring
2 phase that the FAA requires that you get information from a
3 former employee about --

4 A. We -- and we do that.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Through the -- what is it -- PRIA.

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. Yeah --

9 Q. The PRIA.

10 A. -- we do that.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah.

13 MR. WEST: That's all I have.

14 DR. WILSON: Okay. Can we go off the record?

15 (Off record at 1:45 p.m.)

16 (On record at 1:46 p.m.)

17 DR. WILSON: Dave.

18 MR. LOWELL: I don't have any questions. Thank you.

19 DR. WILSON: Okay.

20 BY MR. FRANTZ:

21 Q. Okay. I got a few follow-ups, then we'll do a quick round,
22 see if anyone else does. I want to go back to the flight duty
23 time requirement. Did I understand you to say as chief pilot
24 you were not responsible for assuring that any particular pilot
25 flying any particular day was not violating any FARs regarding

1 flight or duty time?

2 A. No, the chief pilot is responsible for that.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But -- I guess I don't know where you're going, but --

5 Q. How, so how did you assure -- how did you as chief --
6 ultimately, would you say, in the company level of
7 responsibility, ultimately is it up to the chief pilot? If the
8 guy got violated, yes, the pilot would get violated and the
9 company would get violated. Would that ultimately come to you
10 as chief pilot saying you should have been the one, or who at
11 the company would say it's my job to make sure that pilots don't
12 fly more time than they should, or on duty more time than they
13 should be? Whose job at the company is that? Besides the pilot
14 himself.

15 A. Well, that's a -- that's a tough question to answer. I'm
16 not sure.

17 Q. Does Hageland utilize some sort of software program or some
18 kind of computer tracking that keeps track of pilots' flight and
19 duty times and might spit out a red flag if a pilot was
20 scheduled when he -- when that schedule would violate, or
21 something like that? Is there anything like that that you're
22 aware of that the company uses?

23 A. We have a system called FlightLogger. I don't believe that
24 it will flag if the pilot is going to fly over 8; however, we do
25 have a system where a pilot can say, hey, I've 6 hours, this is

1 the route that they've given me, what am I looking at for flight
2 time? Is this -- am I going to go over my duty -- my flight
3 time if I take this flight?

4 Q. Right.

5 A. And they can get that information --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- from what we call FlightMaster.

8 Q. But -- okay. But are -- okay. It sounds like you're
9 saying though it's up to the pilot. But do you recognize
10 that --

11 A. It's mostly up -- yeah, it's up to the pilot.

12 Q. To make sure he doesn't --

13 A. That -- that's it. Yeah, it's up to the pilot.

14 Q. So from your point of view as the chief pilot, the company
15 doesn't have a responsibility to check on their side to make
16 sure that the pilot is not going to exceed flight duty time,
17 right?

18 A. I'm not aware of any system in place to --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A -- keep track of every single pilot's day up, flights
21 during the day, as far as whether they're going to go over their
22 flight time or not.

23 Q. Have you been a check airman at any other carrier --

24 A. No.

25 Q. -- besides Hageland?

1 A. Only here.

2 Q. Okay. Have you ever failed anyone during a PC?

3 A. Washed a guy out yesterday. During a PC. What is a PC?

4 Q. Sorry, a 296, 299, any of the elements that they have to do
5 every 6 months or the instrument proficiency check every year.

6 I'm not sure how you conduct them, if you conduct them all in
7 one flight or if you spread them out. But when you're going up
8 to perform a regulatory requirement -- required check of a
9 captain; let's put it that way.

10 A. Have I never failed anyone? I don't believe I have.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I haven't been a check airman for not even a year yet, I
13 don't think, but --

14 Q. How many proficient -- I'm not sure if you use different
15 terminology. The annual and 6-month checks required for
16 captains --

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. -- you -- do you conduct those routinely, or did you as --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- your check airman --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. How many of those a year would you say you do?

23 A. I don't know. I can't give you a number. I -- if I gave
24 you a number it would just -- I don't know.

25 Q. Fewer than five?

1 A. I do more than five.

2 Q. Okay. If I asked a typical or pulled a random line pilot
3 captain off the line and said what would you do -- what has the
4 airline trained you to do and what would you do if you
5 inadvertently entered IMC during a flight, what would he tell
6 me?

7 A. He'd tell you that he would climb and confess. Declare an
8 emergency if -- their, in their training we're trying to get
9 pilots to climb, confess, declare an emergency, utilize whatever
10 resources are available --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- be it center, approach control.

13 Q. When you were a 119 official chief pilot, how often would
14 you receive that call from the OCC to resolve a level 3 RA?

15 A. I'd say, oh, goodness, many times a week.

16 Q. Okay. Were --

17 A. Now are you -- maybe you need to be more specific on your
18 question.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. Because -- go ahead and rephrase it please.

21 Q. Let me ask a follow-up and see if -- did those calls, have
22 they ever or did they ever involve actual resolving in that the
23 pilot said one -- thought one thing and the OCA thought another?

24 A. Absolutely.

25 Q. And you were the -- you had to act, as you said, as the

1 tiebreaker?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Was that a common occurrence when you'd receive those
4 calls, or was it a -- just a small portion of the calls that you
5 had to do that? How would you characterize that?

6 A. Well, getting an RA-3 call is common, is a common thing.
7 Now resolving a conflict between the OCA and a pilot didn't --
8 was not a -- was not very common.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I'd say if it happened once a week then it was happening
11 quite a bit.

12 Q. Okay. Do you have any knowledge of how many hours OE the
13 captain -- the accident captain required? I know you said 10
14 was the standard, 10's the minimum. Do you know if he
15 required --

16 A. It can be, it can be -- the time can be reduced down to 5
17 hours with more landings.

18 Q Right. Okay. Okay.

19 A. Okay. How many he had, I don't know. I don't know how
20 much time he had for his OE.

21 Q. And did I hear you say that the standard or the average or
22 most pilots complete OE in 10 hours? That's pretty much --

23 A. I believe that's true, yes.

24 Q. Okay. GPWS, trained in the simulator? They have a GPWS --
25 EGPWS scenario that they at least at some point in their

1 training go through in a simulator?

2 A. Yeah. Well, this would be during the -- well, the
3 simulator doesn't have an EGPWS.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So the only thing we can do is verbalize it. Okay, your
6 EGPWS just went off, what are you going to do?

7 Q. And that is a scenario that's included in training?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Where and whose simulator is this that you -- in the
10 Caravan, where and who does it belong to?

11 A. We use UAA's simulator.

12 Q. What's UAA?

13 A. University of Alaska.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. They've got a Caravan simulator. And we also use the
16 Medallion Foundation simulator.

17 Q. Is that specific Caravan or is that just a generic?

18 A. The UAA simulator is a Caravan and the Medallion simulators
19 are generic.

20 Q. And neither has the EGPWS?

21 A. I don't believe so.

22 Q. Okay. How many hours does a new hire pilot going into the
23 Caravan, how many hours in the simulator do they get?

24 A. Well, usually an hour -- an hour and a half to 2 hours, I
25 want to say, is pretty typical.

1 Q. And is the remainder of their flight training conducted in
2 the airplane?

3 A. In the airplane, yeah.

4 Q. So you have -- you conduct specific flights that are just
5 flight training flights in the airplane?

6 A. Yeah, and -- yeah.

7 Q. Okay. So they only submit a small amount of their total
8 flight training time in the simulator, or a --

9 A. Yeah, very --

10 Q. -- small percentage?

11 A. Small percentage, yes.

12 Q. Okay. During your tenure as chief pilot -- I think this is
13 my last question. During your tenure as chief pilot did you
14 ever discipline or release any pilots for performance-related
15 issues, specifically flight performance-related issues?

16 A. Oh, gosh. Yeah, I fired a lot of pilots. I'm trying to
17 remember if they were performance-related issues. Yeah, I'm
18 going to say that yes, I did. There were a lot of pilots that
19 were fired while I was the chief.

20 Q. Was there --

21 A. They weren't all based on performance, but seems to me like
22 there was probably one or two that was.

23 Q. By performance I mean aviation -- skills as a pilot or the
24 conduct or the professionalism as a pilot. That's what I --

25 A. I don't think that there were any pilots that were fired

1 based on performance issues, but I know of pilots that didn't
2 make it through our program because of performance issues.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Have you ever disciplined or fired a pilot though for
6 unprofessional conduct in flight? You know, you've got a report
7 or you found out that he performed some maneuver or conducted
8 some flight in some unsafe way, and you investigated and found
9 out, yeah, this guy is a danger, he's a threat, he's not acting
10 the way we expect him to, we're going to let him go?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. How many times you think that happened while you were chief
13 pilot? Once?

14 A. One time that I can think of.

15 Q. Okay. Okay. Thanks.

16 MR. FRANTZ: I'm going to see if anyone else has any
17 questions.

18 Katherine?

19 DR. WILSON: I have a couple.

20 BY DR. WILSON:

21 Q. Have you ever flown in the Caravan where some of the right
22 seat instruments are inoperable?

23 A. If an instrument went inoperable, the plane was written up
24 and it was given to maintenance to be fixed. So there, I -- I'm
25 -- I can't think of a specific time, but anytime we find an

1 instrument that isn't working we write it up and we give it to
2 maintenance to be repaired.

3 Q. Okay. So an airplane wouldn't be released if there was an
4 instrument that was inoperable?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. As the chief pilot, how often did you visit the
7 different bases?

8 A. Oh, probably a couple times a month I'd get out there.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And then what training did you have to become a check
12 airman?

13 A. Well, it was with -- geez, I don't remember how many hours
14 it was doing this. It was probably more than 5 and less than 10
15 hours of training. It was under the supervision of -- some of
16 it was under the supervision of an FAA representative. So,
17 yeah.

18 Q. Okay. Was there any additional ground school or lecture --

19 A. Yeah --

20 Q. -- or anything like that?

21 A. Yeah, we do -- periodically do check airman company ground
22 instructor -- or company flight instructor ground schools.

23 Q. Okay. Was that required before you became a check airman,
24 or that's just something that you go through periodically?

25 A. It's required before you become a check airman, yeah.

1 DR. WILSON: Okay. That's all that I have.

2 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Shaun.

3 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

4 Q. Just have one for you. As far as the instruments on the
5 right side, if they're completely inoperative I understand that
6 it'd be entered into the logbook, the aircraft would not be
7 dispatched.

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. What about -- you know, they're functioning, but maybe
10 they're not as accurate as the ones on the left or, for example,
11 procession of the DGs and the -- indicator that's, you know, a
12 little off kilter there?

13 A. Well, then they get written up and they get -- it gets sent
14 to maintenance. Sorry.

15 MR. WILLIAMS: That's all I have.

16 MR. FRANTZ: Okay.

17 MR. WEST: I have nothing.

18 MR. FRANTZ: Eric.

19 MR. WEST: Thank you.

20 MR. FRANTZ: Dave?

21 MR. LOWELL: Nothing.

22 MR. FRANTZ: Noreen?

23 BY MR. FRANTZ:

24 Q. Okay. Thanks, Willy.

25 A. Okay. Thank you.

1 Q. Let me wrap it up by asking you is there anything that we
2 didn't ask that you felt should have been asked to help in this
3 investigation?

4 A. Not that I can think of, no.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I think there were plenty of questions.

7 Q. Katherine and I and Shaun, you should have all our contact
8 information. If you don't, we'll get you a card. So anything
9 that comes to mind later, any corrections you want to make or
10 additional information you think would be helpful to us, feel
11 free to get in touch with us and pass it on to us.

12 A. Okay.

13 MR. FRANTZ: And with that we can go off the record.

14 (Whereupon, at 2:00 p.m., 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: FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER
 ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016
 TOGIAK, ALASKA
 Interview of William Coon

DOCKET NUMBER: ANC17FA001

PLACE: Anchorage, Alaska

DATE: December 7, 2016

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 interview.

Nicolette Hernandez
Official Reporter

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER *
ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016, *
TOGIAK, ALASKA *

Docket No.: ANC17FA001

* * * * *

Interview of: LUKE HICKERSON

NTSB Offices
Anchorage Federal Building
222 West 7th Avenue, Room 216
Anchorage, Alaska

Tuesday,
December 8, 2016

APPEARANCES:

SHAUN WILLIAMS, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

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

CAPTAIN MARVIN FRANTZ, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

JAMES RODRIQUEZ, Air Safety Inspector
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.
(Via telephone)

ERIC WEST, Air Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention
Washington, D.C.

Also Present:

DAVE LOWELL, Director of Safety
Hageland Aviation
Anchorage, Alaska

MARC WILHELM, Esq.
Richmond & Quinn
Anchorage, Alaska
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Hickerson)

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:02 a.m.)

1
2
3 DR. WILSON: Okay. Good morning, Luke. Thank you for
4 taking the time to be with us today. My name's Katherine
5 Wilson. I'm a Human Performance Investigator with the NTSB. If
6 you're not aware, the NTSB is an independent federal agency.
7 We're charged with investigating all transportation accidents
8 and determining probable cause and making recommendations to
9 promote transportation safety. We're not a part of the DOT or
10 the FAA, so we don't have any enforcement powers or can't make
11 regulatory changes.

12 We'll go around the room and everybody can introduce
13 themselves, so that you know who they are for the record. We're
14 going to be using a court reporter today who will record and
15 then transcribe the interview. The transcript, not the
16 recording, will be a part of our public docket.

17 The purpose, again, is safety. We don't assign fault,
18 blame or liability as a part of our investigation. This
19 interview is routine for us. It's a part of our fact finding
20 phase and we will use this in order to create factual reports,
21 analysis and to our probable cause. We can't offer any
22 guarantee of confidentiality or immunity as a part of this
23 process.

24 Each of us will have a chance to ask questions. We'll do
25 it one at a time. We'll go around the table and then likely

1 there might be a second round of question as people have follow-
2 ups that come up throughout the process.

3 Because we are using a court reporter I ask that you answer
4 verbally with a yes or a statement, versus a nod or an uh-huh,
5 so that she can accurately transcribe that.

6 You are entitled to have one representative of your
7 choosing. Who would you like that to be today?

8 MR. HICKERSON: Mr. Wilhelm.

9 DR. WILSON: Okay. And Mr. Wilhelm may direct you to
10 either answer -- not answer a question or ask to confer with you
11 outside, but he can't actually answer questions for you.

12 Let's go around the room and everybody can introduce
13 themselves.

14 MR. FRANTZ: Hi, Luke. I'm Marvin Frantz. I'm an
15 Operational Factors Investigator with the NTSB out of the
16 Washington office.

17 MR. WILLIAMS: Shaun Williams, investigator in charge with
18 the NTSB here in Anchorage.

19 MR. LOWELL: Dave Lowell, Vice President of Safety,
20 Hageland Aviation.

21 MR. WEST: Eric West, Air Safety Investigator, FAA,
22 Washington, D.C.

23 MR. WILHELM: Marc Wilhelm, counsel for the witness.

24 DR. WILSON: Do you have any questions before we get
25 started?

1 MR. HICKERSON: No.

2 DR. WILSON: Okay.

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Is Mr. Rodriguez on the phone today?

4 DR. WILSON: Yes.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, Jim Rodriguez from the NTSB Office of
6 General Counsel is on line.

7 DR. WILSON: Thanks, Jim. So if we ask you a question and
8 you don't understand it please ask us to repeat it. Just answer
9 to the best of your recollection. If you don't know the answer,
10 that's okay too to say I don't know. Okay.

11 INTERVIEW OF LUKE HICKERSON

12 BY DR. WILSON:

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

14 A. Luke Hickerson.

15 Q. And what is your title?

16 A. The Vice President of Operations for Hageland Aviation.

17 Q. How long have you been in that position?

18 A. Since June of 2015.

19 Q. Okay. And what other positions have you held with the
20 company?

21 A. I was the chief pilot starting in I believe it was February
22 of 2014.

23 Q. Okay. And a brief history of your aviation background, how
24 -- what led you to Hageland.

25 A. I started flying in 2000 -- started working for Hageland in

1 2003. I flew the line as a line pilot until 2013. April of
2 2013 I transferred certificates to our 121 carrier and flew
3 there until January of 2014 -- or through January of 2014.

4 Q. Okay. And as the Director of Operations, what are your
5 duties and responsibilities?

6 A. I'm responsible for the operational control of the airline.

7 Q. Is that for the 121 and 135?

8 A. No, that's only for the 135 side.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. No.

11 Q. What's your total time?

12 A. Approximately 10,000 hours.

13 Q. Okay. Any time in the Caravan?

14 A. Approximately 5,500.

15 Q. Okay. PIC or SIC?

16 A. PIC. Two hundred hours of SIC time or something like that.

17 Q. Okay. And who do you report to?

18 A. I report directly to the president.

19 Q. Do you have any direct reports to you?

20 A. Do I -- I'm sorry?

21 Q. Direct reports. Who reports directly to you?

22 A. The chief pilot reports directly to me. The director of
23 training reports to me. The -- have to look at the org chart to
24 see exactly, run down through the list, but outside of --
25 outside of maintenance and safety most of the operations

1 individuals in some way, shape or form report directly to -- or
2 report to me.

3 Q. Okay. I know you're on the 135 side. Do you interact at
4 all with the 121 side?

5 A. In what capacity?

6 Q. In any capacity. Do you all share safety -- do you have
7 shared safety meetings or talk about changes that are going to
8 happen in both the 121 and 135 side?

9 A. Yeah, we work --

10 Q. Any interaction.

11 A. -- we work in the same building, so I mean I -- to say --
12 to say we don't work together would be a lie, but -- so yes, we
13 work together. I don't know -- kind of throughout the entire
14 thing we work together, so.

15 Q. Are there any joint management decisions that are made for
16 -- between the 135 and the 121 side that you're involved in?

17 A. No, because ultimately I'm -- they have their own director
18 of operations. I have -- so I have plenty of discussions with
19 the director of operations on the 121 certificate to find out
20 maybe best practices that he's got going on, as well as what
21 we're doing best practices. So those conversations obviously
22 take place on a --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- on a regular basis. But to say -- you know, I can't
25 make a decision that -- and mandate something on his certificate

1 and vice versa.

2 Q. Sure. Okay. Are you involved at all in hiring of pilots?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. What's your involvement in that?

5 A. Right now in my current role I've been involved in the
6 interviewing. I haven't been involved in anything outside of
7 that. But the interviewing process I've -- being that I've been
8 with the company for a while and was in the role as chief pilot,
9 I feel that that's a place that I can offer some benefit.

10 Q. Great. In terms of the hiring, who has the ultimate
11 authority as to which pilots are going to be hired?

12 A. The chief pilot.

13 Q. Okay. Do you know the experience level that Hageland's
14 looking for when hiring pilots?

15 A. Experience level with regards to?

16 Q. Flight hours, previous flight experience, any --

17 A. That would all depend on the position we were hiring them
18 for.

19 Q. Okay. So a pilot into the Caravan, what would you be
20 looking for?

21 A. Left seat or right seat?

22 Q. Both.

23 A. The right seat you need a commercial license.

24 Q. Okay. Minimum number of hours?

25 A. A commercial license.

1 Q. Okay. Not above that? Okay.

2 A. That -- that's the -- that would be the minimum.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. How about for the PIC?

6 A. We don't typically hire directly into the left seat --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- of the Caravan. It's not something we've done very
9 often. And so there's not an absolutely minimum saying at X
10 number of hours you qualify because, as we all know, just
11 because you have a certain number of hours doesn't mean anything
12 for your experience.

13 Q. So it's not typical, but it is possible to hire into the
14 left seat?

15 A. Absolutely.

16 Q. Okay. Did you know Tim Cline?

17 A. Yeah, I --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. In what capacity did you know how?

21 A. He was a pilot of ours.

22 Q. Okay. Were you involved in the hiring of him?

23 A. I don't believe so. I don't recall that I was. Outside of
24 seeing his resume.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. I typically will look through resumes just to see if there
2 was any -- given my experience and history, if there was anybody
3 that I felt shouldn't -- we shouldn't bother expending energy
4 on.

5 Q. Do you remember looking at his resume by chance?

6 A. I don't. I'm --

7 Q. Okay. Do you know if he was hired into the left or the
8 right seat?

9 A. I believe he was hired into the 207.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Which is typical.

12 Q. Okay. And for the 207, that's a PIC position?

13 A. That is.

14 Q. Okay. Had you ever flown with him?

15 A. I have not.

16 Q. How about Mr. Welty, did you know him?

17 A. Again, outside of knowing that he was a pilot and I
18 typically attend the ground school at least in some way, shape
19 or form and I'm available at ground school, I meet the -- all
20 the pilots there. I didn't know him --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- outside of that.

23 Q. All right. So you weren't involved in the -- his hiring
24 either?

25 A. I don't believe so.

1 Q. Okay. When you say that you attend ground school, is that
2 -- are you observing, or are you there just to meet the pilots?

3 A. No, I present as well.

4 Q. Oh, you're presenting too?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. Okay. What do you teach?

7 A. Well, typically I do an introduction and speak about the
8 expectations from the director of operation, you know, my
9 expectations. And then I believe in both of those, but I'd have
10 to go back and look for certain, I typically teach the GOM and
11 the op specs.

12 Q. Okay. Do you still fly?

13 A. Yes, I'm still current to fly.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I don't have a line position.

16 Q. Right. Okay. How often do you fly?

17 A. It varies. I flew as recently as 2 days ago.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So it --

20 Q. Do you fly just to keep current, or is there a minimum in
21 your position --

22 A. No, I fly --

23 Q. -- do you have a minimum number of hours to fly?

24 A. I fly -- I'll fill in to fly. Obviously that's -- I like
25 to get out of the office as well, so --

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. But I think it would be a bad idea to not fly. I got to
3 stay in touch with what's going on with the operation obviously.

4 Q. Sure. Okay. When you do fly, what airplane are you
5 flying?

6 A. The 1900.

7 Q. Okay. How familiar are you with the training that's
8 provided to the flight crews? I mean if I --

9 A. I would say I'm familiar.

10 Q. Okay. Does Hageland train for CFIT avoidance?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Is that a ground school, simulator?

13 A. Both.

14 Q. Okay. What is -- can you give me sort of a brief overview
15 of what's trained, what's the procedure that a pilot should
16 follow?

17 A. I mean, I'd have to go to the OTM to tell you exactly what
18 it entails. And we have a CFIT manual that correlates with our
19 involvement with Medallion, the Medallion Foundation. And so
20 that's what it's conducted in accordance with.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. But, yeah.

23 Q. So if a pilot had inadvertent IMC and what would -- would
24 that be a part CFIT avoidance training?

25 A. Flight into --

1 Q. IMC.

2 A. -- IMC?

3 Q. Uh-huh.

4 A. While VFR?

5 Q. Right.

6 A. Yeah, that would be part of the training.

7 Q. Okay. And then is there -- what's the procedure? What
8 does the company train pilots to do in that situation?

9 A. I mean, I guess I'd have to know the specific situation,
10 but we've continually told people if you see something that
11 isn't safe, legal or best practice, turn around.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. It's real simple.

14 Q. Versus continue and climb or --

15 A. Turn around.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Simple. If it was VFR behind you.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Or VMC rather behind you, turn around.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Simple.

22 Q. There's no trick questions. You --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- you guys know your training --

25 A. Oh, yeah.

1 Q. -- better than we do, so that's why I'm --

2 A. Yep, yep. Understood.

3 Q. -- I'm trying to get your perspective on it. How about
4 crew resource management, is that trained?

5 A. It is.

6 Q. Okay. Is that module in ground school?

7 A. It is. I -- again, I'm not -- because I don't do the
8 training anymore, I've been -- it's been years since I was
9 involved in it. It is a module in training. Again, I'd have to
10 look at the OTM to see exactly what the page or verse was on it.
11 But yes, it is.

12 Q. Okay. Is that something that's observed in simulator
13 training also?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. Okay. Do you still attend ground school, like recurrent
16 training, if you're going to stay current?

17 A. Yeah, I still attend -- I still have to go through -- we
18 have -- a lot of our training is done on a computer based
19 training --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- so I still have to go through all of that. And I still
22 have to stay current as far as my check rides every 6 months for
23 -- you know, so and so forth.

24 Q. Okay. So when you go through recurrent training is CRM a
25 CBT module?

1 A. Yes. There's a CBT module and then obviously the
2 interaction on your check ride has to be done in accordance with
3 how we operate, which CRM is part of everyday flying.

4 Q. Okay. Is CRM taught in terms of single pilot operations,
5 or --

6 A. Both.

7 Q. Okay. What guidance is given to pilots in terms of fitness
8 for duty?

9 A. What items?

10 Q. Like how do they ensure that they're fit for duty? In the
11 GOM it says that's one of the assessments that needs to be done
12 prior to a flight, ensuring fitness for duty.

13 A. Sure.

14 Q. How do pilots make sure they're fit?

15 A. Well, I believe that's spelled out already in the AIM as
16 far as your fitness for duty.

17 Q. Okay. So you follow the guidance in the AIM.

18 A. Absolutely.

19 Q. Okay. Do you direct pilots to just read the AIM, or do you
20 know, is it discussed in training at all and how to --

21 A. No, we talk about it in training as well.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Do you approve the training? How does that work? I mean,
25 if there's changes to training does the director of training say

1 this is what we're thinking? Do you have to approve that, or is
2 that just done at the director of training level?

3 A. I would say it depends on what the change is.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. If we're going to completely overhaul something, then
6 absolutely I would be involved in that. But you've to remember,
7 we're a fairly small company, so it's not that a change happens
8 and there's somewhere that's so disconnected I wouldn't know
9 about it. So even typically the small changes I'm aware of just
10 by nature of the fact that we're still a small company.

11 Q. Right. The CFIT manual that you were talking about, is
12 that something that's approved by the FAA or accepted --

13 A. No, that's --

14 Q. -- it's just on the Medallion side?

15 A. That's -- that is a Medallion document, correct.

16 Q. Since the accident have you been aware of any -- or been a
17 part of any discussions to changes in training or procedures,
18 policies?

19 A. Has there been discussions? Absolutely. We'd like to know
20 what happened in this accident just as a -- well, as a lot of
21 other folks would. So have there been specific discussions on
22 training to prevent something like this? No. Until we know
23 what happened, no.

24 Q. Okay. Have there been any changes to procedures since
25 then?

1 A. To any procedures, to --

2 Q. Since the accident.

3 A. Regarding?

4 Q. Risk assessment, flying IFR versus VFR.

5 A. We've been telling people to try to fly IFR more, but the
6 infrastructure here in Alaska doesn't support it and so it's
7 become more problematic than helpful.

8 Q. Flying IFR, is that what you mean?

9 A. In some --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. -- in some situations, absolutely.

12 Q. Okay. So it's encouraged to fly if you can, and if not,
13 you maintain VFR.

14 A. Sure.

15 Q. Okay. Does Hageland follow an SMS program?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. The principles at all, or just that you don't have a
18 formal program?

19 A. We do not have a formal SMS program.

20 Q. Okay. What safety programs are in place at the airline,
21 the company?

22 A. What safe --

23 Q. Do you have ASAP, FOQA.

24 A. We do have ASAP.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. We have a employee reporting program, WBAT.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Not sure what else you're looking for.

4 Q. Any anonymous ways that pilots can report safety concerns?

5 A. Yeah, there's -- you can call in and report a concern.

6 Q. Okay. It's like a hotline or something?

7 A. Yep.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Absolutely.

10 Q. Are you involved in or briefed on safety reports that are
11 sent to the company?

12 A. Correct, yeah.

13 Q. Okay. How often does that happen?

14 A. Every 2 weeks. So -- but I get them if they're directed to
15 operations. If there's a safety concern I'll get the specific
16 report and then I get the -- we have a meeting every 2 weeks to
17 discuss and risk appropriately the different reports. Again, if
18 it's a high risk report it goes -- that's something I'd see
19 right away. Excuse me. But the review of them is every 2
20 weeks.

21 Q. Okay. Who's involved in those meetings?

22 A. Let's see. Myself, director of safety, president, chief
23 pilot, some safety analysts.

24 Q. Okay. Are you just looking at specific reports or are you
25 looking at trends in data?

1 A. Both.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Any recent trends that have come out of the safety reports
5 that you can recall?

6 A. Not that I'm aware of at this point.

7 Q. Okay. Any increase in safety reporting since the accident?

8 A. I'm not aware of it one way or the other.

9 Q. Okay. Besides the -- I'm assuming when you come in -- when
10 you say that you teach training, is that initial training?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. Okay. Do you do anything with recurrent?

13 A. Well, I have to attend recurrent as well.

14 Q. For yourself --

15 A. For myself, yeah.

16 Q. -- but in terms of teaching.

17 A. I believe I have taught some of the classes in the past. I
18 don't recall which ones. So I'm --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- I'm always involved in them. It's my opportunity to
21 have face time with all of the pilots. So I'm there quite a
22 bit.

23 Q. Yeah. Do the pilots come to Anchorage for training? Is
24 the training at their base? How does that work?

25 A. They come to Anchorage for training.

1 Q. Okay. I guess that was going to be my next question. What
2 is your interaction with the pilots? How often are you seeing
3 them? Do you see them outside of recurrent training?

4 A. Yeah, when I travel out to the bases --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- I see them.

7 Q. How often do you do that?

8 A. On I'd say a regular basis. I don't have a schedule
9 necessarily, but --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. -- we have flights that go to most of these places, so it's
12 easy to travel out and --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. -- gets me out of the office.

15 Q. I like to get out of the office too.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Ever have pilots, you know, voice safety concerns when
18 you're out there, or is it just catching up, seeing how things
19 are going?

20 A. They voice all sorts of concerns.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. So I -- to say they don't voice safety concerns would be
23 false, but -- yeah, they voice -- pilots typically are very
24 opinionated, so they have all sorts of stuff they like to share.

25 Q. Yeah. Is anybody -- or are you aware of any safety

1 concerns that anybody had about either Mr. Cline or Mr. Welty?

2 A. I am not.

3 Q. Okay. Have you ever heard any pilots complain about or
4 have a concern about instruments being inoperable, particularly
5 in the Caravan on the right side?

6 A. No.

7 Q. What's your interaction with the FAA?

8 A. I'm the director of operations. I have a lot of
9 interaction with the FAA.

10 Q. Weekly basis, daily basis?

11 A. Weekly. I don't think it'd be a stretch to say daily, but
12 probably at least weekly. Yeah, absolutely.

13 Q. Okay. How often does the FAA travel to the bases? How
14 often do you see them interacting in the operation?

15 A. Being that I'm not in the -- at the bases all the time, I
16 don't know exactly their -- the numbers of times that they
17 travel to the bases. I just know that they're very visible.
18 They're there enough to where it's not uncommon to see them.

19 Q. Right. So you don't get alerted if they're going to one of
20 the bases? Okay.

21 A. No.

22 Q. Were you involved at all in the audits that the FAA did
23 following the St. Mary's accident?

24 A. The audit. The AFS-900 audit, I believe it was?

25 Q. Uh-huh.

1 A. Is that -- yes.

2 Q. Okay. What was your role in it?

3 A. I was the chief pilot.

4 Q. Okay. And as a result of that were you required to do --
5 make any changes, do -- were there any actions that came out
6 that required the chief pilot to take some action from that
7 audit?

8 A. I don't recall.

9 Q. Okay. Do you recall changes that came out of that audit in
10 general for the organization as a whole?

11 A. I don't recall, no.

12 Q. Okay. How did you hear about the accident?

13 A. The --

14 Q. How were you informed about it, this accident?

15 A. I got a call from the RCC and said that they had a ELT
16 going off.

17 Q. And then what did you do?

18 A. I called our Ops Control Center and asked where the
19 aircraft was. And as well as, I can pull it up on my phone, I
20 can track all the planes on my phone. So I pulled it up and saw
21 that it was stationary on the screen and then made the call to
22 the OCC to see if -- what the situation was and then we started
23 our overdue aircraft procedure and that was my notification.

24 Q. Okay. You sort of peaked my interest when you said you
25 noticed that the aircraft was stationary. From a flight

1 following type perspective would that be common to see an
2 aircraft not moving due to like a loss of signal given different
3 ranges? You know, the terrain and things like that, are the
4 signals ever interrupted whereas, you know, you might see an
5 aircraft stationary for a certain amount of time before the
6 system would update?

7 A. I'm not sure what your question is.

8 Q. So your pinging -- so the -- your software where you're
9 getting, you've got, you know, all these aircraft that are
10 moving.

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. How often are -- is the signal being updated? How often do
13 you see them moving across your screen?

14 A. I'm not a -- I'm not certain. Depending on what
15 equipment's reporting it has different reporting --

16 Q. So it could be 2, 6, 10 minutes?

17 A. Two minutes or 6 minutes.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Yep.

20 Q. But do you feel that -- is that signal ever interrupted
21 where maybe something that should be pinging every 2 minutes is
22 not because of --

23 A. I can't say one way or another.

24 Q. Okay. I think that's all the questions that I have for
25 now. Thanks, Luke.

1 A. Thank you.

2 DR. WILSON: Marvin?

3 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Thank you.

4 BY MR. FRANTZ:

5 Q. Tell me about the flight planning process that a typical
6 pilot would use to plan say like a flight that might contain
7 three legs. What would happen from the time he shows up at the
8 airport or at the station where he's departing from, what would
9 he be doing before he actually goes out and takes off?

10 A. With regards to?

11 Q. Flight planning. To execute the flight that he's about to
12 carry out.

13 A. Well, you would receive your instructions on where you --
14 where the company intends on having you travel, receive your
15 aircraft and look at the route going from -- you said three
16 stops?

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. Okay. Here's where I'm going. You would check the
19 weather. In most cases the flight plan is going to be direct
20 from point A to point B and if you have weather reporting in
21 between that weather gets checked. The risk assessment gets
22 conducted by the pilot and a call to the Ops Control Center to
23 have the conversation about the flight takes place.

24 Q. Who's determining if the flight goes IFR versus VFR?

25 A. Well, the weather determines whether the flight goes IFR or

1 VFR. So the pilot's going to make that decision with the Ops
2 Control Center and if it's legal to go VFR and there's reason to
3 go VFR, then it will go VFR. If it's not legal to go VFR, then
4 the flight will go IFR or won't be conducted.

5 Q. And how is the pilot determining VFR if he's flying in
6 remote areas and -- so he can only check his departure area, you
7 know, the weather -- departure the weather, his arrival; he
8 might have limited ability to determine the weather conditions
9 in between.

10 A. Absolutely. So it's -- be --

11 Q. So is he -- is it a default, in that case it would be IFR
12 if he has any uncertainty or -- when he doesn't have a good
13 picture of the space between the airports what factors are you
14 using to determine, yeah, I think I can go IFR versus I better
15 file -- or VFR versus I better file an IFR flight plan?

16 A. I'm not sure what your question is.

17 Q. How is he -- what is the pilot using to determine and
18 what's his process to determine if he can go VFR when he may
19 only have weather, current accurate weather at his departure
20 airport, maybe at his destination airport, but the space in
21 between might be spotty as far as reporting or weather
22 information?

23 A. Most of the places that we travel to don't have weather
24 reporting at all or, as you're saying, the spotty reporting in
25 between. So you'd conduct in-flight visibility and if you can't

1 maintain VMC conditions, again, like I stated earlier, you would
2 turn around and come back.

3 Q. So he might file --

4 A. So if it's VMC --

5 Q. -- VFR --

6 A. Absolutely.

7 Q. -- planning on a return if he encounters IMC.

8 A. We are always planning on a return if you can't maintain
9 VMC.

10 Q. Do you have an idea what percentage of Hageland flights
11 depart VFR versus IFR?

12 A. I do not.

13 Q. Do you have an idea what percentage of flights that depart
14 VFR end up returning because of weather?

15 A. I don't know the actual --

16 Q. Turning around.

17 A. -- percentage, no. I get a report of every turn around.

18 Q. How many reports did you get last week, any -- more than 5,
19 more than 20, 1 or 2?

20 A. I don't recall.

21 Q. No idea.

22 A. But let's say -- are we looking for an approximation?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. Fifteen.

25 Q. In a week's time?

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. How often do you personally get the call to resolve or to
3 approve an RA-3 flight? As opposed to some of the other
4 individuals that can do that, how often does that call come to
5 you?

6 A. Well, we're on a RA-3 call schedule, so I have days that
7 I'm on, I'm the call person.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. So I would say I get them as much as -- I guess as much as
10 the next guy, if that would be the way to put it.

11 Q. A pilot determines that he's going to make a flight VFR.
12 Is it totally up to him to select his VFR routing between two
13 airports? Is there any standard or recommended routing by the
14 carrier, or is it just the pilot looks at a sectional, looks at
15 a map, he's happy with the weather, so he says, well, which way
16 can he go. He can go any way he wants. Is that a fair
17 statement?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. How does he determine how he's going to get from A
20 to --

21 A. Most of the origin and destination airports that we fly
22 between are less than 50 miles, so there's not very many routes
23 per se to get between point A and point B or you'd be landing
24 somewhere else. So most of the routes are going to be direct
25 from this airport, direct to that airport. There's very few

1 route -- very few places that we fly where you would take a
2 different route, per se.

3 Q. So terrain -- as far as if weather wasn't a consideration,
4 terrain usually wouldn't be a consideration either. He would
5 plan on going up and over --

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. -- if that was the direct route between the two places.

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. Okay. Are all the Caravans equipped with a GPWS system?

10 A. Yes, I believe so.

11 Q. Are there different systems in different Caravans?

12 A. As far as actual part number systems? I don't -- I'm not
13 aware of that.

14 Q. Are they all -- they're all -- are they all equipped with
15 the same avionics package that would incorporate a GPWS display
16 and warning system?

17 A. The GP- -- yes. As far as the GPWS is concerned, yes.

18 Q. Okay. So there's -- there would be -- would there be
19 separate training required to fly one Caravan versus another
20 depending on how it was equipped with --

21 A. Yes, there is.

22 Q. -- with avionics?

23 A. Yes, there is.

24 Q. And do all pilots get training in both aircraft?

25 A. No.

1 Q. They're -- are they only assigned to be able to fly one
2 type or another of the Caravan?

3 A. Yes, we have currently two EX, 208B EX Caravans that have
4 the G1000 suite in them. And so that's completely separate
5 training to fly the EX's.

6 Q. And all the pilots that fly Caravan have not all been
7 trained on that system. Is that correct?

8 A. In the EX?

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. So there has to be some discrimination when people
12 are assigning -- if someone's assigning flights they have to say
13 that -- look at someone's record and say this guy can fly this
14 airplane because he's been trained, but this guy can't.

15 A. Yes, just -- we treat it as a separate fleet type as far as
16 the training is concerned. Just like you would be checked out
17 in the Caravan, you wouldn't be allowed to fly the 1900. You'd
18 be checked out in the Caravan 208B, not the 208B EX. We treat
19 it as a completely separate line item on training.

20 Q. Okay. Does Hageland provide a training module in ground
21 school for the use of the GPWS?

22 A. I'd have to look at the training manual specifically. But
23 we do provide training on all of the systems for the aircraft.

24 Q. How new are the -- or how long have you had the EX
25 aircraft?

1 A. I believe since March of this year.

2 Q. Okay. How did your -- how did you initially get people
3 trained on the EX so they could come and train the pilots on the
4 EX, on the differences or the specifics that the EX has that the
5 other Caravan does not?

6 A. It was a completely new training program. It was -- we had
7 to do -- I'm forgetting the terminology. I can't recall the
8 terminology, but we had -- the check airmen had to get training.
9 We had to have them get observed by the FAA conducting training.
10 The checks -- the initial check rides had to be observed by the
11 FAA, then the two pilots. It was the chief pilot at the time
12 and another senior pilot.

13 Again, conducted training and check rides observed by the
14 FAA and then we're given the -- and I'm losing the term here,
15 but their initial check airman checkout in that aircraft.

16 Q. And how did those initial check airmen, where'd they get
17 their training?

18 A. That's what I'm saying, it was all conducted and observed
19 by the FAA. So we went down and did the initial stuff at Cessna
20 in Wichita as far as the training goes, but the initial
21 observations were conducted by the FAA.

22 Q. Right. Okay. So Cessna trained your check airmen on this
23 new system in their simulator in Wichita. Is that correct?

24 A. Correct. That was part of it, yes.

25 Q. Was that observed training by the FAA in Wichita?

1 A. I don't believe so.

2 Q. Okay. So then those check airmen came back here and they
3 had to be observed conducting training by the FAA before the FAA
4 would sign them off to conduct this particular training. Is
5 that correct?

6 A. Correct. Now this is in the EX aircraft, which the
7 aircraft we're speaking of was not. Right?

8 Q. Say that again.

9 A. We're talking about the EX aircraft?

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. This --

12 Q. The avionics.

13 A. Right, but this accident was not involving the EX.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. Okay. Just so we're clear on that.

16 Q. Yeah. Yeah. Do the pilots that are -- right now I assume
17 you have a cadre of pilots that are trained in the EX, but not
18 all of the Caravan pilots are. If they're trained in the EX,
19 they've got the new suite down, they know how to operate that,
20 are they still eligible to fly the older Caravans? Are they
21 still on -- approved to be on the list to be assigned to fly one
22 of the older aircraft?

23 A. We would keep them current and tested in both, yes.

24 Q. Okay. Do you know if the accident captain was qualified in
25 the EX or not?

1 A. I do not believe so, but I'm not certain.

2 Q. Do you know if the GPWS system can be MEL'd?

3 A. Without looking at the MEL, I'm not sure.

4 Q. Have you heard the term used by the pilots, or maybe you've
5 used it or experienced it, erroneous alerts from the GPWS?

6 Erroneous alert.

7 A. A false alert?

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Is -- I mean, is that what you're --

10 Q. I don't know. Have you heard -- is the term erroneous
11 alert in common use? People talk about, oh yes, I had -- I was
12 over here and I had an erroneous alert. Is that any kind of
13 common usage that you're aware of?

14 A. I don't know that that specific term has been used.

15 Q. Okay. False alert, is that common, that people say I had a
16 false GPWS alert or --

17 A. Is it common? No. Is it uncommon? No. Have I heard it?
18 Yes.

19 Q. Okay. In your mind do you distinguish those terms,
20 erroneous and false alerts, from nuisance alerts, the GPWS?
21 Have you heard that term, a nuisance alert from a GPWS?

22 A. I'm not sure what your question is.

23 Q. Have you heard or are you familiar with the term nuisance
24 in referring to an alert from the GPWS? Oh, it's a nuisance
25 alert and it might lead you to cancel --

1 A. I am familiar with that, yes.

2 Q. Okay. So in your mind is there any distinction between
3 erroneous, false or nuisance alerts referring to the GPWS?
4 Would you use all those interchangeably if you were talking
5 about an alert that you got that didn't actually -- wasn't
6 actually putting you in danger with, well, proximity of terrain?
7 Would you use those terms interchangeably, nuisance alert,
8 erroneous or false, is that -- in your mind is it all the same?

9 A. I -- without specifics I'm not sure I can answer yes or no
10 to that.

11 Q. What would you call it if you're flying along and you're
12 3,000 feet above terrain and it's flat above you and your GPWS
13 starts giving you terrain, terrain, pull up, pull up, and you
14 look out and there's no terrain around? What would you say, I
15 got -- what would you call that? If you were describing to
16 somebody the GPWS went off, it was a --

17 A. The GPWS --

18 Q. -- false -- would you say false alert?

19 A. Correct. I would say it was false alert, yes.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yep.

22 Q. Is there a minimum en route altitude that Hageland pilots
23 are required to fly at when they're VFR?

24 A. Yes, minimum of 500 feet above the ground.

25 Q. Okay. Let me ask you about your ground school. Initially

1 -- initial ground school, when you hire a new pilot, how long is
2 ground school?

3 A. I believe it's 5 days. And that -- that's just the in
4 class portion of it. There's the online computer based training
5 and I'm not sure the exact time frame on that.

6 Q. Okay. That 5 days, is that just in dock, or does that
7 include aircraft systems, air -- specifics for the aircraft that
8 they're going to be flying? Or is --

9 A. It would depend --

10 Q. Go ahead.

11 A. It would depend on the aircraft that they were going to be
12 flying. But the ground school is 5 days. Again, I can -- I'd
13 have to reference the OTM, but I believe in this case would
14 include the system for that aircraft.

15 Q. Okay. And then when they finish ground school do you have
16 a required number of hours for flight training? And let's just
17 talk about the 208.

18 A. We do not. It's a train to proficiency, so whether that
19 takes 5 hours or 20 hours, depending on what the company would
20 like to put into it as far as resources. That decision would be
21 made there.

22 Q. Okay. Do you have a -- in your training program do you
23 have any kind of mountain flying training, specific to operating
24 in mountainous terrain?

25 A. I'm not aware of that. I don't recall whether we do or

1 not.

2 Q. Do you recall when the last time you as the DO got a
3 debrief from an FAA inspector that had either inspected
4 something on the ground or had ridden along on a flight and then
5 came to you and you had a discussion about how it went? Do you
6 recall the last time that happened?

7 A. I don't recall the last time it happened. It happens on a
8 regular basis. I'm briefed by the FAA inspectors quite
9 regularly when they conduct en route inspections.

10 Q. Do you have any -- why would you think that two aircraft
11 flying the same route in the same weather conditions and within
12 15, 20 minutes of each other, why would one pilot select one
13 route and another pilot select a completely different route? I
14 mean, if you saw that, if you were in the OCC and you were
15 looking at the flight tracking display and you saw one airplane
16 this way and one airplane completely different route, but they
17 were both going to the same airport, would you -- would that be
18 cause for -- I don't want to say concern. Would it get your
19 attention? Would you wonder? Would you make -- want to talk to
20 a pilot later and say -- or is it not anything that would raise
21 to the level of I need to inquire about this, see what's going
22 on?

23 A. Without specifics of that exact flight, I don't know that I
24 can say it would or would not.

25 Q. Is Hageland conducting their own investigation into this

1 accident?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Who's leading that investigation?

4 A. We will be doing a taproot at some point on this
5 investigation as we collect --

6 Q. You're doing a what?

7 A. Taproot.

8 Q. What's that?

9 A. Our own internal investigation as to try to find out what
10 happened here.

11 Q. Taproot?

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. Okay. I don't know what that term is.

14 A. It's an internal investigation that we do anytime something
15 like this happens. It's --

16 Q. Okay. It's an accident --

17 A. And I --

18 Q. -- you're investigating this accident, but --

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. -- but your term is taproot? Is that what you're saying,
21 it's a taproot --

22 A. It's not our term. It's a term that the industry here uses
23 that's coordinated with Medallion and it's the -- that's the
24 form of investigation into an accident.

25 Q. But it's conducted strictly by your company, or is

1 Medallion or outside --

2 A. Correct. No, it's our company.

3 Q. -- folks involved in it?

4 A. It's our company.

5 Q. Okay. But that's not an FAA term. That's an industry
6 term, you're saying, taproot?

7 A. I believe so.

8 Q. Yeah. Okay. I was just -- I'm --

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. -- unfamiliar with it. Okay. Okay. Thanks. That's all I
11 have for now.

12 A. Thank you.

13 DR. WILSON: Shaun.

14 MR. FRANTZ: Give it to Shaun.

15 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

16 Q. Hey, Luke.

17 A. Morning.

18 Q. You doing okay, need a break, more coffee?

19 A. I'm doing all right.

20 Q. Okay. Good. So I'm going to kind of bounce around here a
21 little bit, so bear with me. I'm just trying to fill in some
22 gaps in my head in --

23 A. Sure.

24 Q. -- in what we've got down here. When we discussed that
25 audit from the FAA, the AFS-900 audit, were you issued or was

1 Hageland provided a findings report from that audit?

2 A. I believe so.

3 Q. Okay. When -- this kind of leads into the EX versus the
4 Caravan Bravo there. Who schedules the pilots for an actual
5 flight?

6 A. On the day to day scheduling, or the --

7 Q. Yes, the day-to-day scheduling.

8 A. The departure control agent at the base would propose the
9 flight.

10 Q. Okay. What do you mean by would propose the flight?

11 A. The flights are proposed by the departure control agent,
12 whereas from the business side of things I believe Flight A
13 should be conducted in a nine seat aircraft with that pilot --
14 with this pilot flying it. That's the proposal into the
15 computer.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. The Operation Control -- which we've separated business and
18 operations completely, the Operation Control Center then reviews
19 the flight and reviews safe, legal, best practice to see if the
20 company from an operations standpoint wants to release that
21 flight.

22 Q. So then when does the pilot know that this has been
23 assigned to them?

24 A. When does the -- I'm not sure what you're asking.

25 Q. So the pilot shows up in the morning. Do they call the OCA

1 and say, hey, what am I doing today, or --

2 A. No, that would be done right at the base.

3 Q. Okay. The night before, the day before?

4 A. In some cases the day before. In some cases that morning
5 where things aren't as busy. I mean, we're -- we only have a
6 couple of airplanes in some of these bases, so it's fairly slow.

7 Q. Okay. So then when does the OCA find out about this
8 proposal?

9 A. It's the second it's entered. Because it's all entered
10 into a computer system.

11 Q. So they would know the day before and go and look at the
12 schedule?

13 A. If it was entered the day before.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But again, there's no requirement to enter them the day
16 before. We have set schedules that we run, so we know we're
17 running certain flights. There's not very many combinations of
18 people or planes or schedules that you can put on these certain
19 runs. If you only, for example, have three schedules in the
20 morning and three airplanes, well, the combination is fairly
21 simple of who's going to conduct what flights, right?

22 Q. Okay. So the schedule's put in, the OCA -- if it's -- say
23 it's put in the day before. Does -- and we'll use -- let's use
24 the accident flight as an example. Okay? The flight departed
25 Sunday morning. On Saturday if the schedule was already built

1 would the Saturday OCA go in and review everything for Sunday
2 and say, yeah, this is good, this matches for this pilot to be
3 able to run this route?

4 A. What would they be reviewing I guess that you're --

5 Q. That's what I'm asking. You said that they propose it and
6 then the OCA assigns it or approves it.

7 A. Approves it.

8 Q. So do they approve it -- would they approve it the day
9 before? Like on Saturday would they have approved this accident
10 flight?

11 A. No, the approval's not done until the conversation between
12 the pilot and the OCA takes place. Because it's a two-tiered
13 system. The operational control is between the OCC and the
14 pilot for that flight to actually take place. So the approval
15 is not -- it's not stamped for approval until that conversation
16 has taken place, the risk assessment has been completed.

17 Q. Okay. So when this is done -- I know there's only certain
18 pilots that can fly the EX, like you said, and that's kind of
19 treated as a separate line item, but they're also kept current
20 on maybe the regular Caravan.

21 A. Absolutely.

22 Q. Does the control agent out there have access to know the
23 difference for who can fly what when they start looking at
24 putting -- proposing pilots with airplanes?

25 A. The schedule that the chief pilot puts out separates that,

1 as well as in our computer system. If, for example, I was to
2 assign you a flight today it would flag saying I can't do that
3 because you're not current in the -- that aircraft, in any of
4 our aircraft for that matter, right?

5 Q. Right.

6 A. So that's done computer -- it's computer generated that
7 that's not -- that you would not be current in that aircraft, so
8 I can't assign you for it.

9 Q. Would the control agent see that, or is that only at the
10 OCA level that they would see that I'm not --

11 A. I'm not --

12 Q. -- current on your aircraft?

13 A. I'm not certain.

14 Q. Okay. How do you guys do fuel planning? Do you roundtrip
15 fuel on these -- like the accident flight, Bethel, Togiak,
16 Quinhagak, Togiak, Bethel, would that have been round-tripped?

17 A. On that particular flight, I believe so. It depends on if
18 we have fuel stop. I mean, if I'm going between bases where I
19 know I have fuel, then I may not take roundtrip fuel. Most of
20 our places we're going to are small villages that don't have
21 fuel available at them, so we would roundtrip fuel.

22 Q. And VFR versus IFR, that's a leg-by-leg decision?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay. So is there any -- so on this trip, say they round
25 tripped out of Bethel on their fuel. Everything was VFR until

1 maybe the Togiak to Bethel run. Now they're IFR. There's no
2 fuel available out there. How do they ensure -- when you guys
3 roundtrip the fuel do you plan it as all being IFR so that you
4 have the IFR reserves?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. So then is it up to the PIC just to ensure that he's
7 got his reserves?

8 A. For whatever operation is being conducted. I do believe
9 there is fuel available in Togiak. I'm not sure if it's
10 available on the weekends or not. I'm -- I wouldn't be able to
11 say one way or the other. But there's other alternatives. We
12 have bases elsewhere and if things change and the pilot is
13 somewhere where things have changed such that the flight can't
14 be conducted safely going under best practices, then a phone
15 call can be made either to the OCC or one of the RA-3 managers
16 and say, here's where I'm at, what would you like me to do?

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And that happens on a regular basis.

19 Q. What do you guys use for fuel reserves?

20 A. The standard fuel reserves, 30 minutes for VFR and 45
21 minutes after your alternate for IFR.

22 Q. Okay. When the -- so you have the ultimate responsibility
23 of operational control. Correct?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. So when a pilot calls into the OCA part of their

1 requirement is to determine this fitness for duty. Is the AIM
2 taught to the OCA as far as determining fitness for duty?

3 A. I'd have to go through their training program to say one
4 way or the other if it's specifically the AIM.

5 Q. So one of their responsibilities is to determine fitness
6 for duty.

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. So how do you -- on a day-to-day basis what do you expect
9 from them as far as how to make that determination?

10 A. What do I expect from the OCA?

11 Q. What criteria do you expect the OCA to use to make sure
12 that they are fit for duty?

13 A. I'm not sure I'm following you.

14 Q. Like do you expect them to ask questions, hey, did you get
15 enough sleep, did you -- were you out late last night, or --

16 A. No, it's -- the risk assessment under an RA-4, which is the
17 flight is cancelled, specifically addresses fitness for duty
18 and, if you're not, then you would be a RA-4 and the flight
19 would not be -- it would not take place. So when I ask you what
20 are the risks that you see for the flight, that is one of them.

21 Q. Okay. So it's the OCA just asking the pilot what risks do
22 you see?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay. So they're not actually --

25 A. Yeah, because they're located in Palmer and the pilots are

1 located at any one base around the system, or could be not even
2 at a base if they're brought on flights, charter flights or
3 something.

4 Q. Okay. So if it's up to the pilot to tell the OCA as far as
5 the risks that are associated with that flight how is it a joint
6 decision?

7 A. Because the OCC also says here's what I believe the risks
8 are for the flight from their -- from what they're looking at.
9 So it's a conversation between the two, the pilot and the OCC,
10 to say here's what I believe the risks are for the flight. Oh,
11 well, here's what I believe the risks are for the flight and
12 that's why the discussion takes place.

13 Q. Okay. So if I don't ask you how much sleep you had last
14 night how can you -- how is that a discussion as to it being an
15 RA-4? If I'm not -- so you said it was an RA-4 --

16 A. Right.

17 Q. -- for the fitness for duty --

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. -- aspect of it. If I'm not asking those questions as an
20 OCA --

21 A. Yep.

22 Q. -- hey, how much sleep did you get or whatever, you just
23 told me that it was up to the pilot to assess the risk. How is
24 that an adequate conversation that I'm having as an OCA with you
25 as the pilot? I don't know what you got for sleep last night,

1 so how am I in tune to make this combined decision?

2 A. I wouldn't say unless you were in the bedroom watching
3 somebody sleep that you would know that that was a correct
4 answer to start out with. So if I ask you if you're fit for
5 duty I have to -- and you say yes, that I have to believe that
6 that's a true statement, just like if I asked you how much sleep
7 did you have and you told me 8 hours I would have to have some
8 level of trust that you're making a professional decision that
9 that is a true statement.

10 Q. Okay. If I asked -- if I was required to ask do you
11 consider yourself fit for duty, then we have that understanding.
12 Correct? I mean, if I asked you are you fit for duty and you
13 say yes we both understand that from this conversation you're
14 good to go. If we don't have that conversation and I don't say
15 do you consider yourself fit for duty, then that whole portion
16 of that risk assessment for the fitness for duty is on you as
17 the PIC.

18 A. I do not agree with that.

19 Q. Okay. What?

20 A. I do not agree with that.

21 Q. Okay. Can you -- I'm -- help me understand. That's what
22 I'm looking for. I'm not -- if you don't agree, how do you see
23 it?

24 A. There is a professional responsibility that the pilot has
25 to himself and to the company and to the customers to be fit for

1 duty. We've trapped that in the risk assessment form and at any
2 point that the pilot does not feel that they're fit for duty --
3 because really it's a self-assessment of whether you're fit for
4 duty or not. Only you know truly whether you're fatigued,
5 whether you're fit. You might have got 8 hours of sleep and
6 still don't feel fit for duty, right? So the number of hours
7 that -- none of that is relevant here. The pilot themselves has
8 a professional duty and responsibility to determine they're fit
9 for duty. When you say, yes, my risk assessment level is
10 whatever it is and it -- and you haven't elevated it to an RA-4
11 for fitness for duty that is the agreement, you're telling the
12 OCC I'm fit for duty.

13 Q. Okay. So you believe that as long as the pilot doesn't say
14 we're at a 4 because I'm tired that --

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. -- they are assumed to be fit for duty?

17 A. Correct. Because in the past we have had pilots call in
18 saying, you know what, I'm just a little bit tired today. Okay,
19 go home, get some sleep. Thank you for your help today. That's
20 a -- that's how the conversation takes place.

21 If the pilot doesn't feel fit for duty they say I don't
22 feel -- for whatever reason, I'm just not feeling fit for duty
23 today and okay, enjoy your day, go home and get some rest.

24 Q. Okay. Talk about the GPWS for just a second. Marvin kind
25 of touched on the erroneous false nuisance alerts. How common

1 is it to see terrain alerts when you're VFR out there? I mean,
2 you still fly out there, so -- occasionally, to see that it's
3 not accurate? Is that a common thing?

4 A. I'm flying the 1900 most of the time now, so it's been a
5 couple of years since I've flown the Caravan. Most of my flying
6 is up in flight level, so I don't think that my assessment of it
7 would be accurate.

8 Q. Okay. What's the company procedure for inhibiting the
9 terrain system?

10 A. The company procedure is if you are in IMC conditions to
11 heed the warning. It says terrain, pull up, and you can't
12 verify visually that you're not about ready to hit something
13 that you heed the warning. If you're VMC then you can confirm
14 that it is a false warning or erroneous warning or what have
15 you. Then it's be inhibited. At this point we have a checkbox
16 on our Flight Logger for tracking that and the pilot would say I
17 had inhibited on this segment here. In the past we've relayed
18 this information to the manufacturer and they come out with
19 updates to the system on -- I don't believe it's on a regular
20 basis. It's just as we relay information to them.

21 Q. So is there a separate like cancel versus inhibit button
22 that you know of?

23 A. No.

24 Q. So once it's inhibited when is it taken out of inhibit
25 mode?

1 A. When would it be taken out of inhibit mode?

2 Q. Right, once you inhibit it --

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. -- does it stay inhibited?

5 A. Until you physically take it out of inhibit mode, yes.

6 Q. Okay. Is there any policy or anything as far as when to
7 take it back out, or do you just leave it in for the remainder
8 of that flight?

9 A. No, I wouldn't say that there's a policy one way or the
10 other.

11 Q. Okay. And is that a switch that will reset upon shutdown?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. So hypothetically you could inhibit it on the first
14 leg, forget to take it back out and go the rest of the day with
15 it inhibited.

16 A. Would it be possible? Yes.

17 Q. Okay. So you receive -- following the accident you receive
18 a call from the rescue coordination center regarding the 406 ELT
19 activation.

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. You said that you looked at your phone, you saw that it was
22 stationary, you called the OCA. How long does it take for it to
23 show up? Because it -- does it change colors or do anything
24 like that?

25 A. As I looked at it, it went from yellow to blue.

1 Q. Okay. And what does that mean?

2 A. That means that the -- that was the last report and it's
3 been -- it hasn't reported within 20 minutes I believe.

4 Q. Okay. So part of the functioning or the functions of the
5 OCA being the flight locating aspect of it and they're
6 monitoring these flights as they progress.

7 A. They're not flight followers.

8 Q. Right. Flight locating. But they have mentioned and we've
9 heard mention that they're monitoring the progress of each
10 flight. So is it -- do you find it abnormal or concerning that
11 the aircraft hadn't moved in 20 minutes and they didn't notice
12 it?

13 A. No, I don't find that concerning at all given the equipment
14 that we have and given that the aircraft was not overdue at the
15 destination yet. I don't find that concerning at all.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Do I wish that was different? Sure. But that's the
18 equipment we're using and the operation we're using.

19 Q. Okay. I'm good for right now.

20 MR. FRANTZ: Thanks, Shaun.

21 DR. WILSON: Dave.

22 BY MR. LOWELL:

23 Q. I just have one question, Luke. Your CFIT program, your
24 CFIT training program, is it audited by the Medallion
25 Foundation?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And what's the time period of the audits, do you remember?

3 A. If I recall, it's a yearly audit.

4 Q. Yearly audit? Okay. I have no further questions.

5 A. Thank you.

6 DR. WILSON: Eric.

7 BY MR. WEST:

8 Q. Just for clarification, the taproot is a root cause
9 analysis program. It's quite -- a rather large company that
10 puts out this program. We were using it in our office for quite
11 some time.

12 A. Thank you.

13 Q. Absolutely.

14 Clarify to me -- and forgive me, I came in on this
15 investigation a little late.

16 A. Sure.

17 Q. The accident -- the actual accident flight route, where was
18 it from and to?

19 A. From Quinhagak to Togiak.

20 Q. Okay. Is this a normal flight route?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And on that particular day there were just the two crew
23 members on board?

24 A. On that specific leg?

25 Q. On the accident flight. Just the two --

1 A. No, there was a passenger on board.

2 Q. There was a passenger.

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Okay. Forgive me.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. I did know that. All right. Is that particular flight
7 route covered in your op specs? Is that approved for --

8 A. I would have -- I'd have to look. As being for scheduled
9 operations, for --

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. -- we do charters, we do -- so I would have to -- I'd have
12 to look at and reference that for --

13 Q. I would think you would be quite familiar with this, with
14 your op specs.

15 A. I am quite familiar, but we have a lot of routes and
16 locations in there, so I don't want to, I don't want to --

17 Q. Well, especially after this accident. I would think this
18 would be blazened into your head that that route was either
19 approved or not approved.

20 A. Well, we're approved for operations throughout the whole
21 state. So I guess I'm not sure what you're referring to.

22 Q. I'm asking if that's an approved route in your op specs.

23 A. Again, I would have to look specifically on what you're
24 asking, but are we approved to go -- to travel between Quinhagak
25 and Togiak?

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. The answer is yes.

3 Q. The answer is yes. Okay. That -- okay. Okay. So this
4 was an actual revenue flight?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. Okay. And am I to understand that the SIC then rides along
7 with the captain for the purpose of assisting him on the flight,
8 loading, unloading and things like that? Is that what he does?

9 A. The SIC conducts themselves as a crew member of the flight,
10 just like any other SIC in any other aircraft.

11 Q. Okay. Okay. As a crew member.

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. All right. I'm having a little difficulty because this
14 particular crew member, he probably went through some ground
15 school and then that's probably it. Am I correct?

16 A. You're absolutely incorrect.

17 Q. Okay. So what did he go through?

18 A. He went through the approved training for a SIC training
19 program which is ground school, systems, flight training and a
20 135.293 check ride.

21 Q. Okay. And he had a total of about 180 or so hours, 187
22 or --

23 A. I think he was hired at 189, but had already flown one
24 shift. So what I -- I'm not sure the exact time.

25 Q. About 100-and -- okay.

1 A. So let's call it 250 or some odd hours, sure.

2 Q. All right. Had 250 hours total time. Okay. When you use
3 the term instructors in the Lexicon in the training in your
4 company is that the same as check airman?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. So what do -- are instructors considered to be in
7 flight instructors as well, guys that are in -- actually in the
8 airplanes?

9 A. They can be.

10 Q. Okay. So clear me up with this because I'm a little
11 technical on this end. In my world to be an instructor in an
12 airplane under 12,500 pounds you need to be a CFI. So clear me
13 up on that. So --

14 A. Under 135 that's not a true statement.

15 Q. Okay. So I'm Joe Blow off the street. Tell me a little
16 bit about that. Tell me under Part 135 how that works.

17 A. So we would have to train you under our instructor program
18 and the additional -- if you did not have a CFI --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- the additional training that you would have to get as
21 the fundamentals of instruction. Again, I'd have to go back and
22 look at the regulations to see specifically, but if your
23 question is do I have to have a CFI to be an instructor in a
24 company aircraft the answer is no.

25 Q. Okay. Okay. Is your training program approved by the FAA?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. So when you make -- if you want to make a change to
3 the program, no matter how big or small, does the FAA have to be
4 part of that?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. On the GPWS, does your company have a specific unit that
7 you can train your pilots on? Do you have like a spare unit or
8 anything that you can use?

9 A. No.

10 Q. So it's just simply done through either the simulator or an
11 online course?

12 A. Correct, go through ground training or -- or we do a lot of
13 flight training in the actual aircraft since we don't have
14 simulators available a lot of times, so --

15 Q. And you mentioned that all the GPS units are the same in
16 all the Caravans, or are they different?

17 A. GPS or GPWS?

18 Q. GPWS, right.

19 A. WS? Okay. I believe they are all the same. Again, I'm --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- that's my understanding.

22 Q. All right. Back when you were a line pilot, and you said
23 you started in 2003, has anything significantly changed since
24 those days that you were a line pilot or are the airplanes
25 pretty much the same? I guess you flew mostly the 1900s; is

1 that correct?

2 A. No, I've flown every aircraft in our fleet, except for the
3 Navajo.

4 Q. The Navajo. Okay. So back in 2003 -- well, let me get
5 right to the crux of it. Did you fly the Caravan -- when did
6 you start flying the Caravan as a line pilot?

7 A. 2005.

8 Q. So you've had -- and you flew it for how many hours? I
9 think you said you had quite a few hours.

10 A. 5500.

11 Q. 5500 hours.

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. So you have a lot of time in that airplane and you have a
14 lot experience and it had the GPWS installed in the aircraft at
15 that time?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. So -- okay.

18 A. I believe so, yes.

19 Q. You have a lot of I believe so's. I mean, you have a lot
20 of time in this airplane and a lot of experience. You know, I'd
21 like to hear a little more yes, that's exactly --

22 A. Sir, I don't recall when these units were installed or
23 whether they --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- were specifically installed in 2005. I do know when I

1 operated the aircraft at some point during my 5,500 hours that,
2 yes, the GPWS was installed.

3 Q. Okay. So it wasn't installed when you first began, but --

4 A. I don't recall whether it was installed when I first began.
5 That was in 2005. That was 11 years ago and --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- I don't specifically remember whether it was or not.

8 Q. Okay. All right. That's it.

9 DR. WILSON: Thanks, Eric.

10 BY DR. WILSON:

11 Q. I have a -- excuse me, a few follow-ups. Dave asked you
12 about auditing of the CFIT program. Can you explain that to me
13 a little bit? What's being audited, what are they looking at?

14 A. The director of training is responsible for the CFIT
15 program, so I don't want to --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- overstate what is. The CFIT program is a -- is one of
18 the Medallion stars. What their exact audit points are, I don't
19 want to say one way or the other. But they are auditing the
20 entire program, so I --

21 Q. Okay. Do they look -- are they just looking at a manual,
22 or do you know if they do like observations of --

23 A. They look at our --

24 Q. -- the training too or --

25 A. No, they look at our manual; they look at our records that

1 it's being conducted. They'll put out recommendations on what
2 other carriers are using for their CFIT training. As industry
3 best practices improve there's a lot of conversation with them
4 about, hey, this carrier A is doing this or carrier B is doing
5 this and then we'll -- they make recommendations on how to
6 improve the program.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Maybe let's step back one or go a little bit higher. The
10 Medallion Foundation, can you just explain what that is, what
11 that process is? The different stars, where Hageland fits in
12 with that.

13 A. We -- Hageland received the Medallion Shield in October, I
14 believe. I believe it was October.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. So there's five stars of the Medallion Foundation, the CFIT
17 star, operational control star, safety star, IEP and ground
18 service maintenance. Those five -- they have a list of
19 requirements for each of those and then again an audit for each
20 of those to see that they meet a certain standard. And
21 Medallion Foundation, the entire Foundation is built on
22 promoting safety, safe operations and best practices. So it's
23 our opportunity to be involved with an organization that sees
24 best practices throughout the industry here in Alaska and be
25 able to incorporate that into our operation.

1 Q. And when you say October, October 2016? But you're talking
2 about this year?

3 A. I -- yes, this year.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I don't remember the exact month, but I want to say it was
6 October of 2016 or -- September or October of 2016.

7 Q. Okay. Have you ever gotten into an airplane and noticed
8 the GPWS inhibited?

9 A. I would probably say yes, but I don't recall a specific
10 situation one way or the other.

11 Q. It's not common that you see that?

12 A. No. It's not a common practice.

13 Q. Okay. What are safety pilots? I've heard that brought up
14 in a couple of previous interviews.

15 A. So the FAA requirement for single or -- single engine
16 aircraft is 10 hours of OE, operating experience. So we conduct
17 -- to meet the regulation you would conduct the flight training,
18 you would conduct a check ride and then you would conduct 10
19 hours of operating experience with a check airman. What we've
20 incorporated into that is the safety pilot time. We felt that
21 it was beneficial to have a pilot experienced at the location
22 that you were going to be flying at fly with these pilots. So
23 they're not necessarily -- they don't have to be check airmen,
24 but typically they're senior pilots at that location that you're
25 going to be flying at so we can get into specifics about

1 terrain, specifics about local weather patterns, specifics
2 about, you know, maybe village agents or certain runways and try
3 to get that knowledge permeated through the pilot group. And so
4 we have that and we fly safety pilots with these -- with the
5 PICs until they have a total of approximately 50 hours of time
6 in the aircraft for us.

7 Q. Okay. And then they fly single pilot --

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. -- in that aircraft out there.

10 A. Yep.

11 Q. Okay. Is there any specific training for the safety
12 pilots, or it's just based on they're experienced at that base
13 and -- or is any additional guidance given to them?

14 A. No, it's -- there's not -- they're not part of the -- we'll
15 call it the training program for it. We have lead pilots at
16 each base. We'll take their recommendations. We'll take the
17 check airman's recommendations. A lot of times they are our
18 instructors and our check airmen, but it doesn't -- that's not a
19 requirement for it. So we'll take the recommendations of our
20 instructors and check airmen saying, you know, this guy I think
21 should be a safety pilot, he's very familiar, very, you know,
22 knowledgeable and willing to help out and be a mentor really.

23 Q. Okay. Scheduled flights, you've got passengers that are
24 booked to go between two villages. Is there ever a time when
25 there may be more passengers booked than seats on an airplane?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Then what happens?

3 A. We send another aircraft.

4 Q. Okay. How is that scheduled? Is that considered a
5 nonscheduled flight then because it's not -- so you have one
6 flight scheduled to go between, you know --

7 A. Right, point A, point B.

8 Q. -- village A and B --

9 A. Yep.

10 Q. -- and there's nine seats, but you've got 15 passengers.

11 A. So typically the village agent is going to call or the
12 departure control will call the village agent. Because the
13 passenger loads fluctuate. Just because there's 15 on the list
14 doesn't mean there's 15 traveling. It could be 5, it could be
15 25. So we recommend that all of our passengers check in with
16 our village agent --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- who's kind of our -- the company representative we'll
19 call it there at the village, and call them and say, hey, how
20 many do you have this morning, and then we'll build the flight
21 off of that. So the scheduled flight, sure, would maybe only
22 have 9, but if you got 18, we'll say, okay, we'll send you two
23 flights.

24 Q. Okay. And is that second flight still considered
25 scheduled? I don't know.

1 A. It's not a charter, so it's a normally operated flight. So
2 it's an extra section.

3 Q. Okay. And does somebody beyond at the base need to approve
4 that second airplane, or --

5 A. It's still approved through the Operational Control
6 Center --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- as far as the operations goes, but from the business
9 side of things, no, that's -- that -- that's completely
10 conducted between -- that's a station manager, the departure
11 control. We don't -- I don't specifically get into whether the
12 flights make money or what the revenue is on them. That's for
13 somebody else to figure out.

14 Q. Okay. I just didn't know whether that needed to --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- have approval of somebody else higher up to --

17 A. No, that --

18 Q. -- add an additional airplane to a route.

19 A. Uh-uh.

20 Q. Okay. If somebody -- if you heard somebody refer to
21 Hageland operations as the Wild West would that surprise you?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Ever heard anybody say that?

24 A. I've heard people say a lot of things.

25 Q. Since the accident or before?

1 A. Both I guess. I don't know. I mean, I --

2 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you. That's all that I have.

3 DR. WILSON: Marvin.

4 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. I got a couple quick follow-ups.

5 BY MR. FRANTZ:

6 Q. Night VFR, how is that different -- what different policies
7 or procedures or regs, Hageland regs or FAA regs, do pilots have
8 to follow if they're doing a night VFR flight versus a day VFR
9 flight?

10 A. The weather requirements change for night VFR. The 135
11 regulation to conduct night VFR in non-mountainous terrain is
12 you have to be 1,000 feet above the highest point within 5 miles
13 for the intended route to be flown and 2,000 feet from
14 mountainous terrain for the route to be flown. So that's
15 different than the day VFR routes. Or day VFR minimum --
16 weather minimums.

17 Q. So they have to fly at a higher altitude at night.

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. To meet those requirements you just listed.

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. You mentioned -- when we were talking about GPWS and
22 cancelling a warning that was described as erroneous because you
23 looked out and there was no terrain, you said there was a box
24 you could check on a flight log -- I believe you said flight
25 log, where that report, that erroneous or false report would

1 somehow get reported or recorded?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. And does Hageland have a database of false or erroneous
4 GPWS reports?

5 A. We have just started recording it in that function. And
6 I'm not sure how long, but we just started recording it there.

7 The other report was through the company employee reporting
8 WBAT system to say, hey, this -- and it happens a lot when
9 there's -- like in Barter Island they just moved the runway.
10 They opened a new runway that's not in the database. So we have
11 to make a report to -- from the pilots. They fill out our
12 company -- we call it the WBAT safety report. We get that. We
13 forward it to the maintenance department who forwards it to
14 Honeywell, and Honeywell says when we come out with a update
15 that'll be added to it.

16 Q. And what part did you say you just started?

17 A. The checkbox for the -- instead of making it a full report,
18 it's just a checkbox on that segment.

19 Q. Okay. So are either of those currently making sure the
20 pilot checks the box, or before that system making sure that --
21 or asking the pilot to complete the WBAT report, were those
22 mandatory reports that the pilots had to file when they got an
23 erroneous or a false GPWS?

24 A. Yes, that was -- it was policy to file the report, yes.

25 Q. They -- and do you have a record in some system of --

1 before you started the current checkbox, do you have a record of
2 the previous system of how many of those you received over the
3 course of a year, a month, 5 years --

4 A. I would, I would --

5 Q. -- in that WBAT system?

6 A. I would think we would, yes.

7 Q. Did you describe them as -- the actual false or erroneous
8 reports as not uncommon? Rare? If you had to characterize it
9 how would you say?

10 A. Well, it depends on the operation being conducted. And
11 again, I may misspeak one -- a hundred feet or the other hundred
12 feet, but the certification process for these units do not match
13 up with the regulatory requirement for 135 operations. So the
14 alert, while conducting operations in accordance with the
15 regulations you can still get a alert that altitude too low and
16 you can be at an altitude that is safe and legal by 135
17 regulations. So depending on the operation you're conducting,
18 some operations may be more common than others.

19 Q. So if it was legal to be there but you go the alert anyway
20 because of that mismatch, was that something a pilot would still
21 have to report, if he got that alert?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. And so if a pilot got it every day because he flew
24 the same route every day and every day 15 minutes into the
25 flight he got the alert because of that mismatch, he would --

1 every day he'd report got -- received erroneous GPWS --

2 A. That is what the expectation would be, yes.

3 Q. Okay. And then at some level someone would try to -- you
4 can't really do anything to correct it because you can't change
5 the unit. Is that what you're saying, the certification?

6 A. And we can't change the certification process for it, yes.
7 That's what we've -- we've gone down that road before and that's
8 the answer we -- that's come back, correct.

9 Q. Would you say that all pilots are then aware of this
10 mismatch or this issue that you're going to sometimes get
11 alerts, but they're not always valid?

12 A. Yes, I would say that's a true statement.

13 Q. But they're still told -- are they still told that if
14 you're IMC you follow it, regardless of whether you think it's
15 valid or not?

16 A. If you're IMC, yes, you're supposed to follow it because
17 you're -- in the IFR system there you're supposed to be in a
18 protected area, but as we know from accidents in the past that's
19 not always the truth. So we'd rather be safe. You're not going
20 to climb -- you're not going to climb into terrain.

21 Q. Why would a pilot actually inhibit the GPWS system? As
22 opposed to cancelling an alert. You get an alert, you can push
23 the button to stop the warning, but why would he go into the
24 system and inhibit terrain?

25 A. With this system there is not an ability to just cancel

1 that specific report.

2 Q. Their specific warning you mean, or reporting a warning?

3 A. It says terrain, terrain and the --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. -- the one button is inhibit.

6 Q. The button you push stops the voice?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. It's on or off.

10 Q. Is that what we mean when we say inhibited?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Because it doesn't stop the voice forever, it just cancels
13 that warning; doesn't it?

14 A. No, that's incorrect. The -- it stops. You've inhibited
15 the system now.

16 Q. And so half an hour later if you fly into terrain you won't
17 get a warning, if that button is still --

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. -- pushed in you would get no warning.

20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. So that's like an on/off button --

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. -- for the -- and is that a separate button right on the
24 panel there that says terrain or GPWS?

25 A. Correct. And it says INHB or something for inhibit, yes.

1 Q. Okay. And it's in/out, off/on button?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. Okay. And is that the same button you would push just to
4 stop the voice?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. If you wanted to just stop the voice for a particular --
7 it's the same button?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. So you turn it off, it's off until you turn it back on?

10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. Okay. Do you know why there was an SIC on the accident
12 flight?

13 A. Do I know why there --

14 Q. Some flights go with SICs, others don't. I think we
15 discussed a little bit about the reasoning why there's some
16 flights have an SIC and others don't. You know, is it somebody
17 determined that this flight needs an SIC, so we have two pilots
18 versus -- I mean --

19 A. No, it -- there's a multitude of reasons you may put an SIC
20 on a flight. If -- we have the ability under regulation to fly
21 up to 10 hours and if there is going to be a day that a flight
22 is going to -- or a particular pilot is going to -- we could
23 schedule for 10 hours, then we would have to have a two-pilot
24 crew for that. So you would -- that would be one reason why you
25 would say we're going to have an SIC on this flight. If we're

1 going to have flights where we're, like in this case, hauling
2 cargo it's always beneficial to have an extra hand, so we would
3 put two pilots on that particular flight. So there's a
4 multitude of reasons that we may decide two or not two.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And then again, at the end of the day we have pilots that
7 we have SICs assigned to the base and so they're assigned to
8 flights -- they're going to fly that day. They're at work,
9 right? So if there's not a specific reason, then you're
10 assigned to this flight and that's your job.

11 Q. And you don't -- you're not aware of the specific reason
12 that this flight had an SIC assigned to it?

13 A. I am not.

14 Q. Are you -- do you know if the accident flight was operating
15 under any deferrals, any MELs?

16 A. The ADS-B had some sort of deferral on it, yes.

17 Q. Do you know if there were any pilot operator actions
18 required or operational changes required if ADS-B is deferred?

19 A. I'll have to look at the MEL to be certain, but I don't
20 believe so.

21 Q. Who at the airline monitors pilot duty and flight times to
22 make sure that they don't exceed FAR limits?

23 A. The OCC would be able to look at that for the day before.
24 And we have them on set duty times, so the minimum amount of
25 rest they're going to have is 10 hours as far as their duty day

1 because it's a set duty day no matter what.

2 Q. But if they exceed that, circumstances beyond control of
3 the operation --

4 A. Yep, then I would get a phone call.

5 Q. But the OCC -- OCA on duty would be able to also look at
6 the pilot for a particular flight and see, oh, he -- because he
7 was delayed for weather he was on duty 15 hours yesterday, so
8 therefore he needs this amount of compensatory rest. The OCA is
9 trained and competent in that analysis?

10 A. I believe that they're going to say the pilot went over
11 their duty time yesterday. I will get a phone call to make that
12 -- to have that discussion. But I can tell you in the 3 plus
13 years I can count on one hand how many times that we've had that
14 conversation because we have a 14-hour duty day. Most of these
15 places, remember, it's -- we're flying to small villages.
16 People aren't traveling at 10:00 at night on a regular basis, so
17 that's -- that's not where the bulk of our operation is operated
18 at.

19 Q. The FARs specify different flight duty time limits for
20 scheduled versus nonscheduled operations. Hageland does both.
21 So what duty time limits does Hageland follow for different
22 limits?

23 A. Well, they have scheduled, nonscheduled. They also have
24 nonscheduled and operations solely operated within the state of
25 Alaska as well. So 135.267 is what our -- what we comply with.

1 Q. And that doesn't -- 135.267 doesn't distinguish between
2 scheduled, nonscheduled?

3 A. It says operations operated solely within the state of
4 Alaska.

5 Q. Okay. Okay. That's all I have now. Thanks.

6 A. Thank you.

7 DR. WILSON: Shaun.

8 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

9 Q. Just a few more. We're nearing the end. You doing okay?

10 A. Yeah, yeah. I'm good.

11 Q. All right. So while we were talking about the flight time
12 from the OCA, you said that they can see the day before.

13 A. Sure.

14 Q. What about the quarterly and annual times, whose
15 responsibility is it to monitor that?

16 A. So each month when we get the monthly flight summaries in
17 from -- at the end of each month we get the monthly flight

18 summaries in. Those times are totaled at my office or at the
19 Anchorage office, the headquarters building here, and totaled

20 up. The chief pilot and the assistant chief pilot are

21 responsible for scheduling the pilots for the next month.

22 Excuse me. The typical work shift is 15 days on and 15 days off
23 or the 1st to the 15th and then the 16th until the end of the

24 month. That's the -- a normal work schedule.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. They -- if there was ever going to be an issue, which I
2 don't recall, but if there was ever going to be an issue where
3 we said a pilot hasn't had 13 days off in a quarter, they
4 wouldn't be scheduled to work. So that -- that's how that's
5 done the month prior to. But that's a lot -- 77 days would be a
6 -- good luck on working that.

7 So -- and then as far as the duty times, the same thing.
8 So we get -- we have an admin that adds up all the times and
9 then as we get close to those times she'll say, hey, we've got a
10 pilot, you know, looking out -- looking forward, we're halfway
11 through the year and they're at 700 hours. Okay. We got to --
12 so we just kind of color code them and each month we have a
13 report of what the quarterly -- two consecutive quarters and
14 annual time limits are.

15 Q. Okay. That clears up a lot.

16 A. Yep. Yep.

17 Q. Thank you. Is there any incentive for on time performance
18 or anything like that for the pilots?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay. When there's a change to scheduled service whose
21 responsibility is it to ensure that the op specs are updated
22 accordingly?

23 A. Well, the ops -- I take care of the op specs. So I would
24 expect to be -- from a -- if the business side of things were
25 going to operate scheduled flights, I would expect to be

1 notified of that.

2 Q. Okay. The CFIT program for Medallion, it's a separate
3 manual. Correct?

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. Is that incorporated within your FAA approved training
6 program?

7 A. I don't believe so. I don't -- no.

8 Q. Okay. Do you know any specific reason why? Was there --
9 is there anything, any guidance given for, hey, don't -- we
10 don't want this included in there, or you guys just have a
11 module and that's acceptable enough? Is there any definitive
12 reason as to why that CFIT program would not be in the --

13 A. No, I don't think there's any specific reason. It's just
14 that -- that manual is to meet a requirement for Medallion and
15 so changes -- our changes may take place with them. And so I
16 don't think there's a reason why it wouldn't be. I don't -- one
17 way or the other, no.

18 Q. Okay. And I think this is my last one. Don't hold me to
19 it, but -- in May of this year a letter was sent out by the FAA
20 division manager for the Alaska Region concerning a recent spike
21 in CFIT accidents or events. Are you aware of this letter?

22 A. I am.

23 Q. Were there any changes made at Hageland as a result of this
24 letter?

25 A. No. There was conversation taking place with our CMT to

1 address some of the concerns. The FAA was very active in
2 saying, you know, here's the letter, let's talk about
3 individually with your company and your operation what we can do
4 to improve your operations or whatnot to meet the
5 recommendations from Mr. Wease.

6 Q. So was anything done?

7 A. We had not got a point where anything had taken place yet,
8 no.

9 Q. Have there been any discussions regarding a data monitoring
10 program, such as FOQA?

11 A. There have been discussions, yes.

12 Q. Is that in -- are you guys -- looking into the future is
13 that something that you guys are exploring to put in place at
14 Hageland?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Does the OCA have -- how do they ensure like runway
17 conditions and surface conditions at airports at some of these
18 villages? How does the OCA get that information?

19 A. So the information's going to be passed along from the
20 station. Again, because we have we'll call it 100 destinations
21 or -- approximately, right? The departure control agent's
22 calling out saying, hey, can you send me your report, send me
23 your report. And a lot of times it's just going to be the
24 village agent saying -- going out to the runway and saying,
25 yeah, it didn't snow last night. Right? And so we go off of

1 that and then we try to make pilot reports as conditions change
2 because there's not a very good monitoring system throughout the
3 state of Alaska for those operations. They're contract
4 employees that maintain the runways. So if it hasn't changed
5 since yesterday or it didn't snow, they're not going to go out
6 and check it, right?

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So that's how we get our -- we get village reports for
9 weather. That's supplemental. That helps us make our
10 decisions. We'll say, hey, go look out your window and tell me
11 what you see. And that's, again, because of the lack of
12 infrastructure within the state, that's what we use in helping
13 determine whether a flight is going to be conducted or not.

14 Q. And so those village agents, then they -- and I've heard
15 the term so many times, everything's running together.

16 A. Right.

17 Q. Do you say operations control agent or the dispatch?

18 A. The departure control. So departure --

19 Q. The departure control agent.

20 A. Yeah, departure business -- departure control is the
21 business function of it and the operational control agent is the
22 operations function of it.

23 Q. So on -- so the village agents are giving these weather
24 reports to the departure control agents.

25 A. Yeah, they're collecting all the information --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- into there and then that gets passed on to the
3 Operational Control Center.

4 Q. Okay. How does that -- is it just electronic into the
5 system?

6 A. No, no. They're literally making a phone call and having
7 to write it down saying, hey, what's the weather out there today
8 and you're writing it down.

9 Q. The OCA is?

10 A. No, the departure -- right there in Bethel. So the
11 departure --

12 Q. Right.

13 A. -- control there in Bethel is going to call the village
14 agent in -- if there's not, weather reporting is going to call
15 the village agent at point A, say hey, what's your weather
16 looking like today, what's it looking like this morning here?

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Because that's the best report we can get given -- it's
19 that or zero report, right?

20 Q. Right. I understand that. So the departure control agent
21 gets this information --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- from the village agent. Then how does it get
24 transmitted over to the OCC? Is that put into a system and then
25 the OCA can see that?

1 A. No, that's not put in -- I -- no, that's not put into a
2 system. So the village reports are going to come in and they're
3 going to say, okay, here's what the village agent is saying.
4 Again, it's an unofficial report. It's just an observation made
5 by our agent there. And the pilot's going to say okay, that
6 looks like that's consistent with what we're seeing with TAFs
7 and area forecasts and so on and so forth, and they're going to
8 call saying, well, the village report is whatever the village
9 report is. And again, that's just for VFR operations, the
10 village reports. It's unofficial weather. It's a basic
11 observation of what the weather is.

12 Q. Okay. That's all I have.

13 DR. WILSON: Thanks. Dave.

14 BY MR. LOWELL:

15 Q. Luke, are any of the Medallion Foundation stars or
16 associated checklists required by the Federal Aviation
17 regulations under Part 135?

18 A. No.

19 Q. So there is not a CFIT avoidance requirement in the FAR
20 Part 135.

21 A. No.

22 Q. Or a training requirement.

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. Is there a requirement for a continuing
25 airworthiness maintenance program for Cessna 207s in the Part

1 135?

2 A. No, there's not.

3 Q. Okay. Is there a requirement for a safety program in the
4 Part 135?

5 A. No, there's not.

6 Q. Okay. So would you characterize the Medallion Program and
7 their associated checklists as above and beyond the Part 135
8 regulations?

9 A. It's absolutely above and beyond.

10 Q. Okay. I don't have any other questions.

11 A. Thank you.

12 DR. WILSON: Eric?

13 BY MR. WEST:

14 Q. Well, that's interesting. There's no requirement for a
15 CAMP program, but there is a requirement for a maintenance
16 program.

17 MR. LOWELL: There is.

18 MR. HICKERSON: That is a true statement.

19 BY MR. WEST:

20 Q. Okay. A continuous airworthiness maintenance program of
21 course is a very different type of maintenance program, so --

22 Okay. I was made aware of an issue with your training
23 program. I was made aware of it by the FAA that you had an
24 issue with your training program. Were you aware of that at
25 all? It was suspended for a little bit of a time.

1 A. That was prior to me being involved with management at this
2 company. I've heard that, yes.

3 Q. Well, this was very recent.

4 A. I'm not aware of what you're speaking of.

5 Q. Okay. Are you aware of --

6 A. Our training program was suspended recently?

7 Q. It was, a portion of it that I just was made aware of it
8 and I wish I had more information about it. I thought maybe you
9 could shed some light on it, but apparently not.

10 A. I don't think that's a true statement.

11 Q. Okay. Did -- has the FAA given any of your pilots
12 additional instruction on any of the avionics equipment by any
13 chance? Have they been helping you or your pilots?

14 A. Our POI was very involved with our EX training.

15 Q. EX.

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. Okay. Specifically on a piece of equipment, or --

18 A. Well, just with the automation that comes with the G1000.

19 Q. The G1000.

20 A. Correct. The automation that comes with the G1000 was new
21 to the company.

22 Q. That's the Garmin, right?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Yes. And so the -- our POI was well versed in these

1 automated type avionics systems and was able to offer a lot of
2 help in conducting or putting together our training program for
3 it and providing or establishing best practices when operating
4 with this type of equipment.

5 Q. Very good.

6 A. Yep.

7 Q. Okay. Thank you.

8 A. You bet.

9 BY DR. WILSON:

10 Q. I have a follow-up to that. Would pilots switch between
11 the EX and the -- 208B and the 208B EX?

12 A. The possibility for it --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. -- yes, absolutely. Right now we don't have very many
15 pilots checked out in the EX, so I don't have very many people
16 switching back and forth very often because I -- the company
17 felt it was necessary once we got somebody checked out to leave
18 them in that aircraft for a while, just like we do with any new
19 aircraft, to engrain the systems, you know, when -- once you're
20 flying in something with a new piece of equipment. That goes
21 for any aircraft. I mean, I think it's a -- just a good
22 practice.

23 Q. Okay.

24 DR. WILSON: Anyone else?

25 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

1 Q. One last one here concerning the Medallion, the CFIT stuff.

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. Understand it's not a required training. Does that
4 training program give any guidance towards pilots as far as
5 operating in lower visibility or how to assess visibility
6 requirements and things like that?

7 A. It does.

8 Q. So without accessing that, does the -- if it's completely
9 separate, the FAA then never technically sees what guidance is
10 being given to those pilots for that operation. Correct?

11 A. I would say that our interaction with the FAA, they're
12 familiar with it. Are they specifically testing us on that when
13 they do an observation? No. But again, we're a small company
14 with regards to the number of pilots we have there. The FAA has
15 had plenty of oversight in our training and our operations that
16 I think -- I think that the entire CMT is familiar with all of
17 our different programs.

18 Q. But it's not --

19 A. We've been very open with them about it. It's not --

20 Q. But they don't have approval authority over what
21 information's in there.

22 A. In the CFIT --

23 Q. Correct.

24 A. No, they do not.

25 Q. Okay. And, you know, just -- I understand it's a small

1 company in size of pilots, but I want to make it clear that you
2 guys are the largest scheduled 135 in the country.

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Okay.

5 MR. WEST: Thank you.

6 MR. WILLIAMS: That's all I have.

7 BY DR. WILSON:

8 Q. One more.

9 A. Excuse me.

10 Q. The Medallion Program, I understand that is something
11 that's not approved. It's something above and beyond the
12 requirements. Has there been any discussions between the 121
13 and the 135 side about bringing up the 135 side to 121 in terms
14 of, you know, requirements, training to make it one level of
15 safety across the entire organization versus having two levels
16 of safety, if you will?

17 A. I would respectfully disagree, that -- I don't feel that
18 the 135 operation is any less safe than a 121 operation. I have
19 the requirement as the DO to operate at the highest level of
20 safety and that's what I hold myself to. To say that we're
21 going to conduct ourselves like a 121 operation, I absolutely
22 wish that I could. The infrastructure within the state of
23 Alaska does not exist to do that, so I don't think it's a fair
24 comparison to say we're going to conduct ourselves like a 121
25 operation given that I can't fly from a paved 10,000 foot strip

1 to another paved 10,000 foot strip within an IFR infrastructure
2 that supports IFR flying. It does not exist in this state.
3 However, the safety of the operation should still be maintained
4 at the highest level, whatever that highest level is, and that's
5 what our intentions are.

6 Q. When you say it maintains the highest level, are you
7 talking about that it meets the 135 requirements?

8 A. The 135 requirements are the minimum level.

9 Q. Okay. So what is the highest level then that you're
10 referring to that you're going to?

11 A. I have not been able to have anybody tell me what that
12 level is. It is the -- the regulation is that it meets the
13 highest level of safety. So that is what we strive for is to
14 meet the highest level of safety, with the 135 regulations being
15 the minimum level that we have to maintain to maintain a
16 certificate.

17 Q. Okay. Thanks. All right. Is there anything else that we
18 haven't asked you -- I know we've asked you a lot of stuff, but
19 is there anything else that we haven't asked you that you wished
20 we had, something that you want to share that you think would be
21 beneficial to our investigation?

22 A. No.

23 Q. I gave you my card.

24 A. I do have it, yes.

25 Q. You'll have contact information for Shaun and Marvin also.

1 A. I've got Shaun's.

2 Q. Should anything come up --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. -- our investigations typically take 12 to 18 months --

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. -- so we'll be working on this for a while. But if
7 anything you think is relevant, please don't hesitate to reach
8 out to one of us and we'll be happy to include it as a part of
9 our process.

10 A. Perfect.

11 Q. So thank you, Luke.

12 A. Thank you very much.

13 DR. WILSON: And we are off the record.

14 (Whereupon, at 9:50 a.m., 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: FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER
 ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016
 TOGIAK, ALASKA
 Interview of Luke Hickerson

DOCKET NUMBER: ANC17FA001

PLACE: Anchorage, Alaska

DATE: December 8, 2016

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 interview.

Nicolette Hernandez
Official Reporter

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER *
ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016, *
TOGIAK, ALASKA *

Docket No.: ANC17FA001

* * * * *

Interview of: GREG TANNER

NTSB Offices
Anchorage Federal Building
222 West 7th Avenue, Room 216
Anchorage, Alaska

Wednesday,
December 7, 2016

APPEARANCES:

SHAUN WILLIAMS, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

KATHERINE A. WILSON, PhD, Senior Human Performance
Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

CAPTAIN MARVIN FRANTZ, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

ERIC WEST, Air Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention
Washington, D.C.

NOREEN PRICE, Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

Also Present:

DAVE LOWELL, Director of Safety
Hageland Aviation
Anchorage, Alaska

MARC WILHELM, ESQ.
Richmond & Quinn
Anchorage, Alaska
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Tanner)

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I N T E R V I E W

(9:55 a.m.)

1
2
3 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Good morning, Greg.

4 MR. TANNER: Good morning.

5 MR. FRANTZ: My name's Marvin Frantz. I'm an air safety
6 investigator with a specialty of what they call operational
7 factors and with the NTSB out of Washington. We'll go around
8 the room in a minute and I'll -- everybody else will introduce
9 themselves, tell you what their -- what they do, where they're
10 from.

11 But I need to just give you a little briefing about what's
12 going on here today and a little background. As you probably
13 know, because you have, you know, some time in aviation, the
14 NTSB is an independent federal agency. We're not part of the
15 FAA, we're not part of the Department of Transportation and we
16 don't have enforcement or regulatory authority. Our mandate is
17 to investigate accidents, in our case aviation accidents, try to
18 find causes and ultimately to devise -- derive from those causes
19 safety recommendations that will help mitigate or prevent
20 accidents of that nature in the future. So that's what we're
21 trying to do. We don't assign liability or blame. That's not
22 what our report will ultimately say.

23 We're going to use the services of a court reporter today.
24 She -- or that organization will be transcribing the interview,
25 producing a written copy of it. The recording won't be

1 maintained, but the written copy will and it'll be part of the
2 public record ultimately.

3 We don't guarantee confidentiality or immunity for anything
4 that may result out of this, but again, the NTSB and even our
5 FAA cohort here who's working with the NTSB as part of this
6 accident, we're not here to figure out who to blame and how
7 we're going to punish them. The goal is to just gather the
8 facts and figure out what happened.

9 We'll go around the room. Each member will have a chance
10 to ask you questions and then after the first round if anybody
11 has any follow-up questions we'll go around one more time.

12 We'd like to ask you to answer the questions to the best of
13 your ability. You know, if you don't know the answer or you're
14 uncertain that's fine, just say that. If you know where you can
15 find the answer, you can get it to us later, go ahead and state
16 that. We'll have contact information for all of us at the end
17 so you'll be able to forward us documents or just contact us
18 directly after this if you -- anything else you need to provide
19 us.

20 And you're not under oath. It's not sworn testimony. If
21 you misstate something or you want to modify a previous answer
22 that's fine, feel free to do it. Please don't answer with just
23 uh-huh or a nod because we're trying to get it on the record, so
24 answers need to be verbal so our recorder can be aware of them.

25 You are entitled as part of the interview here to have a

1 representative and it can be of your choosing. So can you tell
2 us who you're choosing for your representative?

3 MS. TANNER: Marc here.

4 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Thank you. And Marc knows this, but
5 for your information Marc can't answer questions for you, but he
6 can advise you not to answer a question and you can confer with
7 him privately if you need to anytime during the interview.
8 Also, during the interview if you need to take a break that's
9 fine, just let us know and we'll stop the proceedings and we'll
10 take whatever break you need and then pick it up later.
11 Shouldn't take more than 60 to 90 minutes to go around the room
12 a couple times and get all the questions answered. Do you have
13 any questions before we get started --

14 MR. TANNER: I don't.

15 MR. FRANTZ: -- anything for us?

16 MR. TANNER: No.

17 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Start with Katherine here and we'll
18 just go around and tell you who we are.

19 MR. TANNER: Okay.

20 DR. WILSON: Katherine Wilson. I am a human performance
21 investigator with the NTSB.

22 MR. FRANTZ: Okay.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: Shaun Williams. I'm the investigator in
24 charge with the NTSB.

25 MS. PRICE: Noreen Price. I'm an accident investigator

1 assisting Shaun in this investigation.

2 MR. WEST: Hi. My name's Eric West. I'm the senior air
3 safety investigator with the FAA out of Washington, D.C. Hi.

4 MR. LOWELL: Dave Lowell, Vice President of Safety,
5 Hageland.

6 MR. WILHELM: Marc Wilhelm, attorney for the witness.

7 INTERVIEW OF GREG TANNER

8 BY MR. FRANTZ:

9 Q. Okay. Get started. Could you just state your full name?

10 A. Sure. It's Gregory W. Tanner.

11 Q. Okay. And could you spell your last name?

12 A. T-a-n-n-e-r.

13 Q. Okay. And what's your current position?

14 A. I am the manager of the Operations Control Center for
15 Hageland Aviation.

16 Q. Okay. What was your date of hire at Hageland?

17 A. The pause is because we've been so many different
18 companies, but I started with the Frontier Flying Service in
19 2007, spring of 2007.

20 Q. Okay. How long have you been in your current position?

21 A. Since January of 2014.

22 Q. Was that when the OCC was actually stood up --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- at Hageland? Okay. Do you have any FAA certificates?

25 A. A 121 dispatch license.

1 Q. Okay. That's the certificate, you have the 121 --

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. -- the certificate? Okay. When did you get that, what
4 year?

5 A. That would have been I believe 2006.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Thereabouts.

8 Q. You know, I'm not as familiar with that certificate as I
9 should be. Does that have any kind of recurrency or renewal
10 requirements once you get the certificate?

11 A. Not for the certificate, no. And it only applies to 121
12 dispatch --

13 Q. Right.

14 A. -- functions.

15 Q. Okay. But once you get the certificate it's good.

16 A. The certificate's good. There may be recurrent training on
17 your position, but not for this --

18 Q. The carrier you work for may impose --

19 A. -- the carrier that you work for.

20 Q. Okay. Thanks. Okay. Manager of the OCC. How many
21 employees do you have working for you at the OCC?

22 A. Six.

23 Q. Okay. And that -- are they the individuals that are
24 designated operational control agents?

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 COURT REPORTER: Okay. Yes?

2 MR. TANNER: Yes. Sorry.

3 BY MR. FRANTZ:

4 Q. Can you give me a brief description of your duties as OCC
5 manager?

6 A. My duties as OCC manager are to oversee the operation of
7 the OCAs and ensure that we're in compliance with all of our
8 policies and procedures for operating the OCC.

9 Q. Do you have written guidance or a publication that provides
10 you information on how to do that, how the OCC should be run
11 and --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. Is that found in the GOM?

14 A. In the GOM and we also have an SOP for the OCC.

15 Q. Okay. Let me go back a little bit to your history. Do you
16 have -- before Hageland, do you have experience with other 135
17 or 121 carriers?

18 A. I retired from the Alaska State Troopers and worked around
19 the aviation in the capacity to some degree, but not -- no, not
20 135 or 121 specifically.

21 Q. No. Okay. Give me a brief rundown of a typical day in the
22 life of a OCC manager. What is your typical day like?

23 A. I usually arrive at the office around 7:00 to 7:30 and then
24 I go over the weather in the state. I go into the OCC and speak
25 with the OCAs about how things are looking and whether we've got

1 any concerns identified for the day for operations. I go over
2 the checklist that they complete when they first get there and
3 then I monitor the operations there throughout the day.

4 Q. How many OCAs are on duty at a particular time?

5 A. As little as one, as many as four.

6 Q. Dependent on?

7 A. Generally the last shift of the day in the -- before
8 closing we'll have one when they're primarily flight following
9 only. It's just a few aircraft out. In the busier times of the
10 day there'll be always two on and then when there's some
11 overlapping there'll be four.

12 Q. Do the OCAs have a Hageland imposed duty or -- yeah, duty
13 time limit? Is there any kind of limitation that Hageland
14 imposes on how long every week or every day they can be on duty?

15 A. Well, they generally work a 40-hour work week, but there's
16 not a specific limitation if someone was required to stay on
17 overtime.

18 Q Is overtime common among OCAs?

19 A. I wouldn't call it common. There are times when we have
20 unscheduled charter flights that don't come back at our normal
21 closing hours and in that case either one will stay or a manager
22 will monitor that flight until the -- it returns. So I -- but I
23 couldn't tell you off the top of my head how common that is. I
24 don't really consider it common.

25 Q. You said a manager. Would that be you?

1 A. Me or the director of operations or the chief pilot.

2 Q. Do they also work occasionally or part-time or sometimes in
3 the OCA, or are they just --

4 A. No.

5 Q. That's not a duty position --

6 A. That's not a duty --

7 Q. -- location for them.

8 A. No, it's not.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. Are you involved in the hiring of OCAs?

10 A. I am.

11 Q. Okay. When you interview someone for that position what
12 sort of qualifications are you looking for?

13 A. I'm looking for reliability and intelligence above all else
14 because with a reliable, intelligent person I can train them to
15 do the duties of an OCA. I prefer pilots, licensed individuals.
16 I prefer 121 dispatch licensed individuals. And I've had people
17 who have gone to school for air traffic control. So we've got a
18 number of different things that we've looked for, but I'm
19 absolutely looking for intelligent, reliable people above all
20 else.

21 Q. Do you consider six to be fully staffed in your department?

22 A. It has been.

23 Q. Six people is sufficient to operate the OCC.

24 A. It has been, yes.

25 Q. Okay. It has been. Are you -- does that imply that you

1 think it's changing now, that you might need -- you need more
2 or --

3 A. I -- we are hiring two more.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. But what we've had has been sufficient for the last 3 years
6 to do what we've been asked to do.

7 Q. How would you describe the turnover rate in the OCA
8 position?

9 A. It's fairly low. You know, I like to keep the employees
10 happy and it's a good working environment. They gets lots of
11 break time and I make sure that they don't get overstressed. So
12 it's a good working environment and employees are fairly happy.
13 Most of the ones that have left in the last 3 years have gone on
14 to greater things that they've inspired to do, but it's a pretty
15 lower turnover rate. I -- yeah. Maybe one a year, maybe one
16 every 2 years.

17 Q. Okay. Of your current six OCAs, how many have either
18 dispatch certificates or pilot certificates?

19 A. Let's see. Four.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And then another one has been to 121 dispatch school, but
22 hasn't received his certificate.

23 Q. Okay. Once an individual is hired what's the training
24 process? First of all, are you in charge of training for the
25 new hire OCAs?

1 A. I am, yes.

2 Q. Okay. And what's that process and program like?

3 A. We spend 8 hours on initial orientation training and
4 there's a test after that. And then there's a very minimum of
5 40 hours of OJT and that could be -- that's the minimum, 40. It
6 could go as much as -- well, as long as we needed to go.

7 Q. So with 8 hours, is that sufficient to bring, in your view,
8 someone up to speed that may not have a pilot's license and is
9 not intimately familiar with say aviation weather or the
10 national airspace structure that we -- you operate in? Is 8
11 hours --

12 A. Eight hours is sufficient for the orientation that we
13 provide. The OJT is, again, where they're directly supervised
14 and not left alone and a lot of it is learned then and in self-
15 study.

16 Q. Is the self-study prescribed and monitored? I mean, is it
17 something they're assigned to do outside of the job, computer
18 based training or anything of that nature?

19 A. No, they're encouraged, if they need that, to get up to
20 speed on essentially reading METARs and NOTAMs and learning our
21 geography and our destination codes.

22 Q. Okay. But that's -- is that up to them to do that? I
23 mean, they're encouraged, given the resources, but they're not
24 monitored or evaluated on that sort of study that they do away
25 from --

1 A. Right. At some point during the OJT the employee, the OJT
2 trainer and myself will have to agree that the person's ready to
3 work more independently. And so they need to get to that point
4 and if they need to do self-study to help them get there then --
5 then that's how that works.

6 Q. At the end of the OJT or anytime during their initial
7 training process is there a written or performance evaluation
8 made of the individuals? Or a test or -- practical test,
9 written test?

10 A. There's a test at the end of the initial training and then
11 there's an OJT assignment check-off that they need to check off,
12 the employee, the OJT trainer and myself. And then there's a
13 90-day and a yearly evaluation after that. The first 90-day
14 evaluation is after probationary period and then their annual
15 evaluations.

16 A. Who does the evaluations?

17 A. I do.

18 Q. Have you ever had any new hires fail the -- either the test
19 at the end of the initial training or at the end of the OJT
20 period deemed inadequate for the position and --

21 A. No.

22 Q. -- had to release them? No. Talking specifically about
23 the accident that we're looking at here, how did you first
24 become aware?

25 A. Just -- my wife and I had just left church and I got a call

1 from the director of operations that said we were looking for an
2 airplane.

3 Q. And then what actions did you take at that point?

4 A. I immediately went, drove to the Operations Control Center.

5 Q. Okay. Did you speak with the OCA that was -- had left --
6 or had released that flight?

7 A. I did.

8 Q. And did he provide you with any information that you
9 weren't aware of or anything that was unknown or unusual to you
10 when he -- when you asked him about that flight?

11 A. I'm just trying to go through the sequence there. I mean,
12 I didn't know anything about the flight until I spoke with the
13 OCC, you know, about what aircraft we were missing and what had
14 happened during the release. So everything they told me was
15 something I hadn't known.

16 Q. Okay. Anything unusual you learned or raised any questions
17 in your mind when you started gaining information about the
18 particular -- this particular flight regarding weather or
19 routing or anything like -- of that nature?

20 A. As the OCC manager, my first -- well, my first concerns
21 were to assist the director of operations with the process of
22 locating the airplane, but also to ensure that the OCC had
23 functioned as it should function. So as I looked at those
24 things I saw that the -- all indications were that the flight
25 was released appropriately and the OCC had worked as it should.

1 Q. What's the level -- ideally or in reality what's the level
2 of involvement of the OCA in determining a route and -- well,
3 let's just start with that. In determining a particular route
4 that a pilot's going to fly on each leg, how involved is an OCA
5 in providing input or feedback to the pilot in just that, you
6 know, weather side, just a route that this -- you know, straight
7 line, around, under, over?

8 A. To the OCA, routing generally means you're going from one
9 location to another. For instance, Bethel, Chevak, Hooper Bay,
10 or you're going to go perhaps Bethel to Hooper Bay to Chevak.
11 They're not -- if you're referring to airways, the OCAs aren't
12 very involved at all in discussing the airway that the pilot
13 might take.

14 Q. Or if it -- if the pilot's going VFR, are the OCAs at all
15 involved in input to routes because of terrain considerations?

16 A. Not -- no, not to terrain.

17 Q. No.

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. How about on the weather side?

20 A. Weather, they might be. We have OCAs that have had
21 discussions with pilots that say, you know, we've got a PIREP or
22 some information that there is some weather in an area that
23 doesn't report weather that we want to avoid. So we may change
24 routing based on that and go to another village first where
25 we're not -- don't have that concern and get additional

1 information before we go the direction where we may have
2 unreported weather that's not what we want it to be.

3 Q. Okay. What's the process that an OCA would use to evaluate
4 the weather between points A and B once the -- I assume that
5 initially, of course, they'll look at the weather at point A,
6 the weather at point B, the forecast for the two points, the
7 departure and the destination. But Alaska being Alaska, you may
8 or may not be able to find out a lot about what's in between.
9 So what does an OCA do to determine and give input to the pilot
10 about that weather in between A and B?

11 A. And they certainly don't all report forecasts either. But
12 we would, again, look at area forecasts to try to discern what
13 we could from that. Also get village reports. It's not
14 something that is official weather by any means, but it's things
15 that we can consider as far as what our agents are telling us
16 the weather looks like in their areas. And then it's -- beyond
17 the known weather it amounts to our pilot providing us with
18 PIREPs or other agencies providing us with PIREPs.

19 Q. Are there any online sources that you use that provide say
20 satellite imagery that are close enough to real time of an area
21 that you find would be valuable in tactical planning, flight
22 planning just between two points?

23 A. We do look at -- we do look at all of the weather resources
24 online that are available to us. And yeah, if we see a system
25 moving through an area then that would be a discussion we'd have

1 with the pilot. But generally speaking when systems are moving
2 through, they're usually close enough to weather reporting areas
3 to give us a better idea.

4 Q. In your view how valuable are the FAA web cams?

5 A. Extremely valuable. Extremely valuable.

6 Q. You find that the information you get from them is usually
7 accurate and a good maybe indication of what's going on and what
8 might be -- what's happened?

9 A. Yeah, I've --

10 Q. What might happen.

11 A. -- I've written and -- and even asked that they add NOTAMs
12 to that website. We use them all the time. It's -- yeah, it's
13 great to be able to look at the picture and then look at the
14 METAR, look at the TAF, look at our twilight, we can get it all
15 right there, use them all day long.

16 Q. Do you know if any web cam data was used in the evaluation
17 of the weather for the accident flight?

18 A. I do not know that, no.

19 Q. Have there been any changes in the release -- flight
20 release procedures since the accident?

21 A. No, there haven't.

22 Q. Who makes the final decision about whether a flight goes
23 VFR or IFR?

24 A. Historically that has been the pilot that's made that final
25 decision. Now I say that I guess with a few qualifiers. If a

1 pilot is concerned about flying into icy conditions and wants to
2 stay out of the weather and feels that they need to do it VFR
3 and that it's a legal VFR release that has been up to the pilot.
4 But if the OCA were to see something that concerned them greatly
5 enough then they would bump it up to another management level
6 and then you would get a manager involved in that decision and
7 the manager, you know, would -- can certainly tell the pilot
8 that they did not want them to go VFR.

9 Q. Do you -- can you give me a ratio of what you think VFR and
10 IFR flights typically are for Hageland?

11 A. I've been asked that before and it's really difficult, and
12 I think if you ask a -- you'll get a different answer from
13 everyone you ask. But I would say it's just -- it's difficult
14 because in some of our areas we operate a lot of IFR, like on
15 the North Slope. You know, I'll just throw out there that
16 perhaps given all of our flights 45 percent, perhaps 50 percent
17 IFR. It's a difficult thing to come up with off the top of my
18 head because a lot of -- the problem is sometimes a flight is
19 IFR because it has the infrastructure, but then during the
20 routing it now has to be VFR because there isn't the
21 infrastructure. So it's just -- that's a difficult thing.

22 Q. What percentage of flights would you say end up with a 3 or
23 a 4 on the risk assessment matrix?

24 A. When there's a 3 I take the phone call or one of the other
25 authorized managers and that's a lot. We take a lot of phone

1 calls. We -- so percentage of 3's, I would say maybe 20, 30
2 percent. Percentage of 4's is very minimal, very minimal. It's
3 hard for me to pull it off the top of my head, but I would say
4 4's are probably 5 percent.

5 Q. Okay. Okay. Last question. If a pilot inadvertently were
6 to fly into IMC is there any way that ultimately you or the OCA
7 might become -- would become aware of that through official
8 channels or unofficial channels? Would you have confidence that
9 you would be aware if there had been an inadvertent IMC
10 encounter on any particular flight?

11 A. I'm sorry.

12 Q. Do you have confidence that you as OCC manager and your --
13 and the OCC would become aware of an inadvertent IMC encounter
14 that happened on any flights that were released?

15 MR. WILHELM: Just so we're clear, when you're talking
16 about an inadvertent IMC encounter what are we -- I mean can you
17 define that a little bit more?

18 BY MR. FRANTZ:

19 Q. A pilot ends up in IMC unintentionally because it happened
20 too quickly, he didn't take the needed action soon enough, so
21 suddenly he's now either VFR pilot -- he's flying a VFR flight,
22 but now he's entering IMC and so he -- the company has required
23 actions and he's been trained to do certain things, but would
24 you in the OCC become aware of every or any of those particular
25 instances where there was an inadvertent encounter, IMC

1 encounter?

2 A. Maybe.

3 Q. Have you ever become aware of anyone that that happened --

4 A. I have -- in 3 years I've never become aware of a pilot
5 operating VFR that got inadvertently into IFR weather.

6 Q. Okay. I said that was the last question. One more. So if
7 that did happen and say the pilot now had to turn around or
8 deviate or return he would -- would you become aware of that, of
9 a return? If he's --

10 A. Yes. And it's not -- and see, the -- what you're asking,
11 we have every day or it's not an uncommon occurrence for pilots
12 to be flying VFR and turn around and divert because they
13 identify IMC conditions --

14 Q. Right.

15 A. -- that they have not flown into. And every time that
16 happens we are notified of that.

17 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Okay. That's all my questions for now.
18 Thanks. I'll give it to Katherine.

19 BY DR. WILSON:

20 Q. I might jump around a little bit to fill in some of the
21 gaps, but things that weren't clear to me and then have some
22 other questions for you. You said that you talked to the OCA
23 when you went to the OCC the day of the accident. What did he
24 tell you?

25 A. Well, when I got there we had not located the airplane. So

1 there's a -- obviously there's a lot of things happening, and I
2 can't specifically remember if Eddie was even there or whether
3 he was at lunch when I arrived. I don't remember. But when I
4 went in I remember, you know, okay, where are we at, what do we
5 have, what do we know and then I'm involved in assisting and
6 locating the airplane and finding information.

7 So I know that when I got there I was briefed that the
8 flight was a flight from Bethel to Togiak to Quinhagak to Togiak
9 and then I believe back to Bethel. So I knew the routing and I
10 knew what they were supposed to be doing, who the crew was and I
11 looked at the release. Is that --

12 Q. So did you talk directly at any point with Eddie to say
13 talk to me about the phone call that you had --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- with the pilot?

16 A. That would have been later.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But yes.

19 Q. So tell me what he told you about that.

20 A. He told me that it was a pretty standard release, that
21 there was reported -- AWOS reported VFR weather both in Togiak
22 and in Quinhagak. He said that he had discussed going IFR with
23 the pilot because of heavy rain that he saw in Quinhagak. The
24 weather was still legal VFR though and the pilot chose to go
25 VFR.

1 Q. Okay. Did Eddie stay on duty the rest of the day, or was
2 he removed from duty?

3 A. He stayed on duty.

4 Q. Okay. So you were off duty. Who was the supervisor on
5 duty then on Sunday?

6 A. There wasn't a designated supervisor.

7 Q. Okay. So if there had been a problem or a concern or a
8 question who at -- who would Eddie have called?

9 A. Myself or director of operations.

10 Q. Okay. Does he start with you and if he can't get a hold of
11 you call the DO?

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. Okay. Marvin asked you about your typical duty day and I
14 missed if he -- if you described what your workload would
15 typically be like.

16 A. And I don't quite know what you mean by workload. I don't
17 have cases assigned to me or flights assigned to me, so I'm --
18 I'm just verifying that the OCA is functioning as it should.

19 Q. Okay. So a low workload, not -- you don't feel like
20 there's not enough time in the day to get your work done.

21 A. No, I don't feel that way.

22 Q. Okay. Do you ever call in for the morning meetings that
23 are at the different bases?

24 A. I call into the morning meetings for shift change with the
25 pilots.

1 Q. Okay. When are those? So is there a typical time, a
2 standard time of shift change every day?

3 A. Every 2 weeks.

4 Q. Every 2 weeks.

5 A. Every 2 weeks.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And so the chief pilot does a teleconference with all the
8 pilots at the beginning of each shift, every 2-week period.

9 Q. What's typically discussed in those calls?

10 A. Oh, I mean -- it's a wide range of discussions, but they --
11 but a lot of times it's what's -- things that have come up in
12 the week, 2 weeks prior while they haven't been there, policy
13 changes. It's just a wide range of discussion.

14 Q. When the pilot calls the OCC are those calls recorded?

15 A. No.

16 Q. There's two OCAs on duty on Sunday in the afternoon, late
17 morning to afternoon.

18 A. Uh-huh, uh-huh.

19 Q. If one of them goes to lunch is there a hand-off between
20 one OCA to the other?

21 A. There is. They -- there's a briefing for anybody that's
22 coming in or taking over, coming back from lunch. They're
23 working right next to each other and, yes.

24 Q. What typical information is shared during that briefing?

25 A. Weather is a big one. If there's any particular flights

1 that are on hold for weather or any concerns for what, you know,
2 a weather system is doing or what we're watching to release a
3 flight.

4 Q. And how are the duties divided between the two to four OCAs
5 that would be on duty?

6 A. We have a north and a south desk and essentially loosely
7 Aniak, Bethel, St. Mary's are south stations and they -- when --
8 when those pilots call they generally call the south number.
9 That rings at both desks, but it shows that it's a south call.
10 So the first person to try to get that would be the south
11 designated OCA. All the other stations are designated north and
12 -- and that, again, rings at both phones and it indicates it's a
13 north call. So they try to pick up the call north and south as
14 they're assigned, but it ends up that they pick up both calls
15 and if someone walks up to the restroom of course, you know, you
16 -- then you're picking up all the lines. And so it's not
17 absolutely defined.

18 Q. Is there -- do OCAs operate different if they're working
19 the north versus the south?

20 A. No, complete -- exactly the same.

21 Q. Okay. Any special training that's needed to work either --

22 A. No.

23 Q. -- section? So OCAs can work both. There's not --

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. -- special qualifications. What's the typical number of

1 aircraft that an OCA might be handling on a shift?

2 A. Well, I think we have 58 airplanes and, of course, they're
3 not all active at the same time. There could be, I would say
4 20; 20, 25.

5 Q. During a shift?

6 A. Oh, during a shift there --

7 Q. Or is that at one time?

8 A. That's at one time.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Could be, could be.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Because it -- we average about 145 flight releases a day --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- is what the average is. And a flight release is one
15 airplane.

16 Q. Do you think that is managing -- 20 to 25 flights at one
17 time, is that manageable for an OCA?

18 A. It has been for the last 3 years with what they've -- what
19 we've been asked to do in our operation it has been. And it's
20 something we've looked at very carefully. One of my measures is
21 if I have pilots that can't get through to the OCC because
22 they're on the phone and they can't get through, that's a big
23 measure that I've got to make some adjustments. But it's been
24 more than adequate for the last 3 years.

25 Q. If an OCA felt like he was overloaded, that he had too many

1 flights to manage, what would he do?

2 A. Tell me.

3 Q. Okay. And then would you take over some of the flights, or
4 how would that --

5 A. I would take over or I would call somebody else in. I'd
6 get more people hired. Whatever I needed to do.

7 Q. Okay. I apologize if I missed it. Did we already discuss
8 the risk assessment process? Okay. Could you explain that to
9 me?

10 A. Sure. We have a risk assessment process that is -- it's
11 pretty comprehensive. Just speaking to the pilot phone call,
12 there is a 1, 2, 3 and 4 level of risk and then each number has
13 associated with it letters of the alphabet for specific issues.

14 For instance, not having official weather reporting would
15 be a letter of the alphabet. So the pilot calls and they have
16 this risk assessment form in front of them, as does the OCA, and
17 they go over it together, this is what I've identified as risks,
18 and they come to an agreement on what risk they determine the
19 flight to be. And then the OCA indicates that in the computer.
20 It then prints out on the manifest, the revenue manifest that
21 the pilot takes with him to fly at their station, and away they
22 go.

23 Q. If there was -- if the OCA and the pilot couldn't come to
24 an agreement on the risk value, what would the OCA do?

25 A. He would -- that then would become an RA-3 which requires

1 an authorized manager's involvement and then it's a three-way
2 conversation between the pilot, the OCA and the manager.

3 Q. Does that happen often?

4 A. The RA-3 manager call happens a great deal, not the
5 disagreement between the OCA and the pilot. That's --

6 Q. Right.

7 A. -- very, very rare.

8 Q. Okay. How would an OCA determine that a pilot is fit for
9 duty?

10 A. Human factors, or --

11 Q. Well, in the GOM it says one of the items that is supposed
12 to be agreed upon is that the pilot is fit for duty.

13 A. So there's a number of ways. There's a -- we were talking
14 about do they have a medical certificate, do they have a -- are
15 they current on their check rides, did they get enough rest the
16 day before and -- and we have procedures. Many of them we've
17 engineered out the human factors and we have alerts in the
18 computer that will tell us when you try to assign a pilot that
19 his medical is expired or about to expire. One of their
20 checklist functions in the morning is to go take a look at what
21 the pilot did the prior day and determine if they've had enough
22 rest.

23 Q. Okay. So that's rest opportunity. But what about if the
24 pilot mismanaged that, was sick the night before, he calls in
25 the next morning for his release. Is there something that the

1 OCA is supposed to discuss with the pilot to ask if -- how do
2 you feel, or are you good to go today?

3 A. No, that would be -- again, because they're so far away at
4 a station generally speaking they would rely on the phone
5 conversation and the lead pilot and the other pilots that are
6 with that pilot to -- as far as a face to face assessment of
7 their readiness.

8 Q. Do the OCAs have any joint training with the pilots?

9 A. I qualify a no. I've tried to get them to the ground
10 schools to have face to face time with the pilots and then we've
11 had some OCAs actually travel out into the stations. So the
12 answer is yes, but not officially. It's not part of an official
13 program.

14 Q. Okay. And then the OCAs do flight following of a flight
15 once it's released?

16 A Uh-huh.

17 Q. What -- explain that process and what the software is that
18 they're using.

19 A. Our company software is called FlightMaster. And the
20 station will enter the plan for what they would like the pilot
21 and the airplane to do and they will put the routing in. So a
22 flight strip will have a crew, an airplane, a lot of other
23 information, but also a routing, Bethel, Hooper Bay, Chevak,
24 Bethel.

25 When the release is authorized it's put in that particular

1 program. When the pilot leaves their progress on the
2 FlightMaster flight strip is moved forward by a number of
3 people. It could be an OCA, it could be station personnel who
4 will say, okay, this plane has left Bethel. So they show it
5 departed and there's a line on there that shows the progress of
6 the flight. If a flight is 30 minutes overdue from being moved
7 on its bar, then they'll get an automatic red alert come up on
8 the screen that says this airplane hasn't been moved forward for
9 30 minutes.

10 Also we have a flight tracking system with a number of
11 different tools for the actual tracking of the airplane. We've
12 got Spidertracks, ADS-B, TAMDAR and we're watching the airplanes
13 on those systems and if an airplane hasn't moved in 30 minutes
14 or hasn't pinged in -- in 20 minutes. I'm sorry, if it hasn't
15 pinged in 20 minutes, then it turns blue on that screen. That
16 happens on a regular basis because ADS-B fails in many areas and
17 our 207s in the past have only had ADS-B, but I -- but we are
18 getting them Spidertracks. So at any rate, they would -- they
19 use all those tools and watch the flights and they will -- if
20 the flight doesn't -- if they get a red, then they're looking
21 for that airplane and then they're calling the station saying,
22 hey, where do you know the plane to be.

23 And most of the time it's just a matter of moving it along
24 the bar. If the plane's turned blue, again, they're calling the
25 station and finding out, you know, what they know about where

1 the airplane's at or calling other pilots to make contact with
2 the airplane.

3 Q. So do all airplanes have Spidertracks and ADS-B?

4 A. No. Currently only the ones that do not are the 207s.
5 However, I understand the plan is to have them all have ADS-B
6 and Spidertracks. Some airplanes have Spidertracks and ADS-B.
7 Some airplanes have different GPS tracking systems besides
8 Spidertracks and ADS-B --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- the, like the 1900s.

11 Q. So if an OCA is monitoring 20 aircraft at a time is there
12 one screen that sort of shows the location of all of the
13 aircraft at once?

14 A. Not necessarily. Yes and no. There is one screen on the
15 side of the room that shows them all, but in front of them they
16 have a split screen that has the FlightMaster flight strips and
17 right next to them is a picture of Alaska with every single
18 airplane visible on that.

19 Q. And is the -- what's the update rate of the signal from the
20 aircraft?

21 A. It depends on the device. ADS-B is every few seconds.
22 Spidertracks is either every 6 minutes or every 2 minutes
23 depending on what we're doing. And TAMDAR is involved with
24 weather reporting. So as the planes are descending or --
25 they're getting a lot more pings, but when they're cruising

1 their pings are a little less, and I don't know exactly what
2 they are.

3 Q. Okay. So is the location of the actual aircraft moving
4 along the screen?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Can that be zoomed in to look at one particular
7 aircraft?

8 A. It can, and when you talk about -- it tells you the
9 altitude and the coordinates and other information.

10 Q. Would --

11 A. Time.

12 Q. Is the screen -- we're going to go there tomorrow, I
13 believe, and see it, but I'm trying to get an understanding now.
14 If I'm looking at a screen and I've got some that have ADS-B,
15 some that have Spidertracks, would that -- would the display
16 look different --

17 A. No.

18 Q. -- what I'm seeing?

19 A. All -- well, the display looks exactly the same, but when
20 you scroll your cursor on that airplane it's going to pop up the
21 information box. The bottom of the information box is going to
22 tell you what the source of the tracking is that's reporting.

23 Q. Okay. And is there orientation training on the software on
24 the risk assessment in that 8-hour course, or is it learned on
25 the job training?

1 A. It's a familiarization. There is so much to know that I
2 can't call anything more than a familiarization. You learn it
3 truly when you're in there doing it. Just as if you spend, like
4 I did, 5 months at a 121 dispatch school, you still don't know
5 anything until you get in there and do it.

6 Q. You said that you do a 90-day and then after that a 1-year
7 evaluation of the OCAs. What are you looking for?

8 A. Well, the -- we have a standard evaluation form that's an
9 annual evaluation, but in addition to that we have
10 recertification training for the OCAs. And we'll take the same
11 test we do annually. We go over the same thing to make sure
12 that a person still understands it, that no one's gone senile on
13 me in a year and that they can still hear and they can do the
14 basic things.

15 But then I also try to bump it up a notch and find
16 something more challenging to learn about during that training.
17 So, for instance, this year we're going to spend a lot of time
18 and get some instruction in digging a little deeper into
19 approach plates. So just things like that.

20 Q. Do you evaluate them on the job also?

21 A. Yes, the OJT form is done, again, every year and it's
22 making sure that they can still hear on the telephone, that they
23 can still function and do the things that they've been doing all
24 year. Which I'm in there all the time anyway, so I would know
25 that before a year if someone couldn't, but yes, we do that.

1 Q. Okay. Is the OCA required to do any ride-alongs with the
2 flight crews?

3 A. They're not required.

4 Q. Is it encouraged to do it?

5 A. It is encouraged. Again, one of my OCAs flew his own
6 airplane to Bethel and spent a lot of time learning the
7 stations. I've sent people out. A couple of my OCAs are from
8 the Bethel region and so they grew up out there flying around on
9 our airplanes. But it is encouraged. I mean, I've got one
10 person who really isn't comfortable in small airplanes and would
11 rather not and I haven't mandated that they do that.

12 Q. If they wanted to ride along would that be a part of their
13 official duties? Would they get paid for that, or is that
14 something that they would have to do outside of --

15 A. They'd get paid for that.

16 Q. Okay. Have you reviewed Mr. Donis' or Eddie's records
17 since the accident to notice if there was anything unusual in
18 his performance evaluations or his training records?

19 A. Well, of course, all -- I'm going to be the one doing all
20 those records, but I've kept a close eye on Eddie and had many
21 discussions with him about how he feels about what happened.
22 And I'm -- I've been very in tune to how he's doing, and his
23 performance has been fine and he assures me that he's doing all
24 right. I do know that understandably it was a big impact on
25 him, but he's doing fine.

1 Q. Okay. So there was nothing in his records that was cause
2 for concern or where you felt like he needed any retraining?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. How do you like working for Hageland?

5 A. I like it a lot. I'm a retired Alaska State Trooper
6 captain and I've done a lot of things in my life and this is one
7 of the best jobs I've ever had. It's a good company to work for
8 and I'm very happy with them.

9 Q. How do you -- how would you describe their safety culture?

10 A. It's excellent.

11 Q. Can you describe like what -- your thoughts on it a little
12 bit more, how --

13 A. The pilots are truly encouraged from the highest levels of
14 the organization not to take unnecessary risks. And I would say
15 any risk, but that's silly. I mean, we're an aviation business,
16 so there's inherent risks. But there is no encouragement from
17 any level or the highest levels to take risks out there that
18 they shouldn't be taking, and that's a big deal in 135 rural
19 Alaska operations.

20 Q. Have you heard anything about pilots -- I understand it's
21 not encouraged by the company, but have you heard of pilots
22 taking unnecessary risks?

23 A. Have I heard of that. I mean geez, if I go back to when I
24 was a trooper I could tell you all kinds of stories about us
25 doing that. So I mean, I don't know how to answer that question

1 really. Have I heard of that.

2 Q. Or -- okay. I can rephrase it a different way. Do you
3 think that pilots take unnecessary risks at Hageland?

4 A. I do not. I do not.

5 Q. Okay. Have you heard of pilots having any sort of
6 competitions out in the field? Who -- you know, I'm going to
7 get to the base before you or --

8 A. Absolutely not, no.

9 Q. Okay. Does the company encourage a flight to go VFR versus
10 IFR?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. So they would support a pilot who wanted to go IFR,
13 even though maybe the conditions would warrant a VFR flight?

14 A. I -- absolutely. It would be encouraged. If the pilot --
15 it would be encouraged for the pilot to go IFR.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Yes. Always.

18 Q. Did you know either Mr. Welty or Mr. Cline?

19 A. I knew Mr. Cline from -- in the capacity of speaking with
20 him when he would be in Palmer delivering planes or picking up
21 airplanes, but not well.

22 Q. What was your impression of him the few times you saw him?

23 A. A nice guy.

24 Q. Did you have any initial reactions when you heard that he
25 was the pilot involved in the accident?

1 A. I didn't.

2 Q. Are there ways that OCAs can -- or even yourself can report
3 safety concerns that they may have?

4 A. Yeah, there's a number of ways. We can -- we're strongly
5 encouraged by Mr. Lowell there to do safety WBAT reports, but we
6 also do informal reporting. It's very easy to just pick up the
7 phone and call the -- me or the director of operations or the
8 chief pilot and talk about concerns.

9 Q. Do you feel that the company responds positively to safety
10 concerns that it receives?

11 A. I do.

12 Q. That's all I have. Thank you.

13 DR. WILSON: Shaun.

14 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

15 Q. Do you ever just go pick up a shift, work the desk, as an
16 OCA?

17 A. I do rarely. Mainly it's not just to go pick one up, it's
18 when somebody's called in sick or someone's on leave then I do.

19 Q. About how often does that happen where you're working the
20 desk?

21 A. You know, those kind of things go in waves it seems like.
22 I might go a couple months without working a shift and then I
23 may just work one for 5 minutes while somebody's in the
24 bathroom. So it kind of varies.

25 Q. You mentioned having six OCAs, six people to do what you

1 had been asked to do, and now you're -- you guys are hiring two
2 more. So what changed to prompt the hiring?

3 A. You know, I was told to hire two more. I think we're still
4 sorting out what we're going to have them do.

5 Q. And apologize if I'm bouncing around here. Jotting notes
6 and tried to put it in order, but it doesn't always work out so
7 well. You mentioned that you tried to get them in ground
8 schools with pilots, the OCAs. Is that asking them to do it?
9 Were you getting pushback from management, from training or --

10 A. Not at all. It's completely up to me and I -- you know,
11 frankly they've done a tremendous job and they're -- they've all
12 performed outstanding in the last 3 years. So as a manager how
13 advantageous is it for me to have them go into -- to Anchorage
14 from Palmer and lose them for the day? I've done that and I
15 want to continue to do that and as I have two more people
16 I'll -- that will give me the opportunity to do that more.

17 But -- it's a good thing, but when I evaluate personally
18 the cost-benefit of it, I just -- that's where it's -- that's
19 why. I mean, I try because I have to decide when I can do
20 without them and who's going to cover for them. And it's -- the
21 ground schools are generally in Anchorage and we're in Palmer,
22 so you're going to lose somebody for the whole day.

23 Q. Has there been any significant training -- changes in the
24 training for OCAs --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- past year or so?

2 A. No.

3 Q. So Spidertracks updates, you said every 2 minutes or every
4 6 minutes dependent on what we were doing.

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 COURT REPORTER: Yes?

7 MR. TANNER: Yes.

8 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

9 Q. What makes that decision, how is that changed?

10 A. Some charter contractors require a 2-minute ping and when
11 we contract with them then we turn it to a 2-minute ping.
12 Otherwise it's a 6-minute ping.

13 Q. Do you remember what was required on the accident flight?

14 A. Six minutes.

15 Q. So there isn't -- as an OCA you're watching the flights,
16 kinds of doing the monitoring. If they see based on that a
17 pilot maybe doing something unsafe, whether it be low altitude
18 through mountainous terrain, they know there was weather there,
19 what do you expect the OCA to do?

20 A. Contact me or the director of operations.

21 Q. So there would be no contact between them trying to reach
22 the pilot?

23 A. Well, I think -- again, we're always seconds away and so I
24 think, you know, it might well be a contact with me or the
25 director of operations saying, hey, this is what I'm seeing, you

1 know, what do you think I should do about this or where should
2 we go with this? It's not -- has not been something that's
3 frankly come up before. I have not had a OCA see somebody
4 flying at an altitude that disturbed them. But they -- but
5 that's the way it would work. Now to reach the pilot, again, we
6 -- there are ways that we can try to make contact with the
7 pilots when they're flying. That's relaying through other
8 people generally speaking.

9 Q. The VFR versus IFR decision, have you seen instances where
10 the OCA has recommended IFR and the pilot just elects to go VFR
11 instead?

12 A. Other than this Togiak incident, I'm not aware of one.

13 Q. So is that what happened on this accident?

14 A. Well, Eddie said that he recommended IFR, but the pilot
15 chose to go VFR.

16 Q. Did he tell you that right after, like when you got up to
17 the OCC after the accident, or was that a recent --

18 A. It was short -- it wasn't -- I mean I don't remember
19 exactly when he told me, but it was the day of the accident when
20 I talked to him about what had happened.

21 Q. That's the first time you've heard of -- not necessarily
22 with this pilot or with Eddie, but just one of the first times
23 you've heard of that instance happening?

24 A. Correct, because if a -- yes. Yes.

25 Q. And if there's that disagreement would you expect a call to

1 go up, you know, to the 119? Because you mentioned before with
2 it being a 2 versus a 3, if you can't agree, then it's
3 automatically a 3.

4 A. Well, I don't -- I'm -- I don't believe there was a
5 disagreement. It was a recommendation and an observation made,
6 but when the pilot says, well, this is what I elect to do and
7 it's legal and the OCA doesn't see a reason why he can't do
8 that, I don't consider that a disagreement. I think if -- yes,
9 if the OCA was in disagreement then they would elevate it to a
10 manager, but it's not a disagreement to have a discussion and
11 then agree on a -- ultimately on a course of action.

12 Q. So the signature at the bottom of the flight risk
13 assessment or the sign-off that takes place, understand there's
14 not the actual signature, that is a sign of acceptance or
15 agreement?

16 A. Agreement.

17 Q. Do you feel that form is adequate?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. It assesses the risk in the remote areas in Alaska well
20 enough?

21 A. I think it does. There's -- because there's many
22 challenges in rural Alaska and this is far beyond anything that
23 I've been aware of before for assessing risk. So I -- yes, I do
24 think it's -- it has proven adequate.

25 Q. What about the frequency of use? It's before every flight.

1 Understand the flight can consist of multiple legs. Let's take
2 the accident flight for example. I believe the sign-off on this
3 flight happened around 8:30 or 9:00 in the morning. And so the
4 accident happened about 11:54 and there were still multiple legs
5 after that. Do you feel that one sign-off in the early morning
6 is adequate to cover all the legs?

7 A. I -- yes, I do. And -- yeah, I do.

8 Q. Have you -- what is your relationship with the FAA?

9 A. Pretty good actually. The FAA was in very -- and I don't
10 mean good like we drink beer or anything, but good like they
11 were very involved in setting up the OCC. Mr. Larson was a huge
12 part of putting the thing together when we developed it in
13 January of 2014 and worked real well with us in giving us ideas
14 and helping us put the thing together. So it's been really good
15 and our POI is somebody that we can talk to, and I do. On a
16 regular basis me or the chief pilot will call him and go over
17 interpretations and things with him. It's been good.

18 Q. Do you ever see them coming through and just kind of
19 sitting back and watching in the OCC?

20 A. Yeah, on regular basis. They haven't as much sat in there
21 as they did in the earlier years and in the development of it,
22 but they're in our building all the time.

23 Q. So have you heard this term tier one operational control or
24 Tier 2 operational control?

25 A. I have.

1 Q. Do you understand or know the difference between the two?

2 A. Well, I've -- it used to be in the old days prior to 2014
3 there were Tier 1, 2's, 3 perhaps incorporated in the -- our
4 Hageland manuals. And so I know how it -- vaguely remember how
5 it worked there, but I'm not sure what capacity you're referring
6 to.

7 Q. So who builds the trips, assigns the pilots and assigns the
8 airplanes?

9 A. The station personnel.

10 Q. So that in this case would have been Bethel.

11 A. Bethel.

12 Q. Okay. And are they -- those personnel, are they listed in
13 the GOM or any sort of operational control?

14 A. No, because what they're doing is they're saying this is a
15 plan I'd like to conduct and it's the job of the OCC to look at
16 that plan and say, yes, that airplane is appropriate for that
17 assignment, that pilot is appropriate for that assignment, the
18 weather and the runways and the -- all the other conditions are
19 appropriate for that assignment. So all they're doing is saying
20 this is what we'd like to do with the airplanes that we have
21 here and the crews and the operational control all happens at
22 the OCC to verify that that plan can be carried out.

23 Q. So when do they do that verification?

24 A. It's a -- there's stages of it throughout the day. A lot
25 of it is done when the pilot calls, but there's things done well

1 in advance of that as well.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And there's parts of it that as soon as you -- the pilot
4 calls and you go find the strip, the plan that a station has put
5 in, and you open that strip to look at it, there's things
6 engineered in there to alert if the airplane isn't current or
7 the pilot isn't current. So some of it is automated and some of
8 it is looked at every time.

9 Q. So let's take the -- this accident flight for example. It
10 was early in the morning on a Sunday morning. So would the trip
11 and the assignments and stuff taken place at least the night
12 before by the station personnel out in Bethel?

13 A. It may have, but not at least the night before. It could
14 have been done an hour before.

15 Q. Okay. So the pilot shows up for work, this is what I'm
16 flying. Okay. Now I'm going to go call the OCA for my sign-
17 off. Is that the first time that the two of them would have
18 conversed, when the pilot calls for that sign-off?

19 A. Most likely.

20 Q. Okay. So the personnel out in the base that do this, are
21 they trained for putting these together?

22 A. Yes, they are.

23 Q. Who conducts that training?

24 A. I actually couldn't tell you specifically.

25 Q. Okay. So since the accident what's changed with the IFR

1 versus VFR?

2 A. We're flying more IFR.

3 Q. Are there any requirements or criteria for making that
4 determination that's changed maybe since the accident?

5 A. Yes, but I think probably the chief pilot or DO could
6 better address some of that than I could.

7 Q. So are the OCAs then aware of when a flight should be IFR
8 versus VFR now?

9 A. Yes. There's a written guidance.

10 Q. Are you familiar with that written guidance?

11 A. I am, but I don't want to try to rattle it off verbatim. I
12 don't --

13 Q. No, no, I'm not asking for every single point. One thing
14 that we've heard is that a flight over 20 miles. Do you know if
15 that is -- I know a flight is considered multiple legs. Do you
16 know, is that --

17 A. That's --

18 Q. -- adding the multiple legs, or is it per leg over 20?

19 A. That would be per leg. That would be per leg.

20 Q. Okay. So within a flight some legs can be released VFR
21 versus some IFR?

22 A. Have to be. There isn't the infrastructure in many places
23 to have them all IFR.

24 Q. And that's still just done with the one release for the
25 whole flight.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 COURT REPORTER: Yes?

3 MR. TANNER: Yes. Yes.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: I think that's all I have.

5 DR. WILSON: Okay. Noreen.

6 BY MS. PRICE:

7 Q. How you doing, Greg?

8 A. Good. How are you?

9 Q. Okay. I have a couple random ones and then some big ones.
10 I just wanted to clarify. You mentioned that when you're doing
11 flight following that the plane turns blue if it hasn't been 20
12 minutes, but you said ADS-B. If you're using Spidertracks to do
13 the tracking is it also a 20 minute alert?

14 A. It is. Any system that stops -- well, if it stops alerting
15 for 20 minutes it will turn blue. So if ADS-B quits working,
16 but Spidertracks is continuing to work it's not going to turn
17 blue because you're going to get those 6-minute pings.

18 Q. Okay. And then do you pay more to do 2-minute pings by 6-
19 minute pings? Is that why you -- the difference? Okay.

20 A. Well, it's not just the pay. You know, yes, we do pay
21 more, but we also look at -- you know, we've got a lot of
22 redundancy. And, you know, to find our airplanes in -- in the
23 worst case scenario we have ELTs, we have Spidertracks and we
24 have ADS-B. So we have at least three things. We have
25 satellite based, ground based and so -- and the ELT. So with

1 those 3, we've determined that it's adequate to find our
2 airplanes with 6 minutes.

3 Q. But the ADS-B is not always working.

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. Right. Correct.

7 Q. Yeah. Okay. A couple GOM questions. This one's kind of
8 broad, but after release the -- you're required to provide
9 monitoring progress of each flight. Can you describe what that
10 means? I understand your release process, but I'm still a
11 little fuzzy about what you're doing to monitor the progress of
12 each flight while they're flying.

13 A. Okay. Sure. Of course at release time in the morning it's
14 pretty busy. Those phones are ringing one release after another
15 as all of the planes in all of the stations are launching in the
16 morning. So at that time there is not a lot of flight following
17 going on. There's a lot of releasing going on. But as time
18 allows then they are looking at more of the flight following
19 aspect of it. I myself have been in there and released a flight
20 only to find that the weather after the release went to a
21 quarter mile. So I call back the station and say, oh, I just
22 released this plane and the -- do you guys see what the
23 weather's done? Most of the time the station's going to know
24 it, or -- or they may not know it.

25 In this case I'm thinking they didn't know it. Nobody had

1 known it because it went to a quarter mile, you know, right
2 after a release. Fog rolled in there and there it was, so -- so
3 we stopped the airplane. So even when they're not actively
4 flight following, because they're continuing to release other
5 airplanes they're looking at all of the weather for the next
6 flight.

7 So they're very much aware of what's going on. You know,
8 somebody else wants to go, oh, look what the weather's doing
9 now, let's get word to the other airplanes. So there's that
10 part of it too that's follow up. We've gotten PIREPs from
11 planes out of Bethel en route to the west coast with
12 unforecasted or unreported weather that they aren't able to
13 continue and then -- so they let us know that. And then
14 St. Mary's wants to go that direction, but we tell them no
15 because we have this information. So there's a whole -- a
16 number of things that are doing to monitor.

17 Q. So what you're describing is monitoring the weather at
18 destinations, but the actual flights themselves, what they're
19 doing en route.

20 A. That's the tracking that I described earlier.

21 Q. Okay. All right.

22 A. The tracking on the bar.

23 Q. So if a flight for -- as an example, say a pilot needed to
24 deviate around whatever, weather or mountain or say the sight's
25 come down to 500 feet because the weather was dropping and make

1 a 90-degree turn to avoid something. Is that something -- I
2 mean, you're -- you have a lot of aircraft up there. You're --
3 they're releasing other aircraft. Is that something that
4 somebody would see on the screen taking place or --

5 A. Precisely what you just described, we're probably not going
6 to see that on the screen. The pilot would report it to us,
7 that they had to deviate because of a --

8 Q. But they're not talking to you, right? They're talking to
9 the base because they're --

10 A. They're talking to the base. So we're going to find out
11 either when the --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. -- pilot gets back, or when they report it to the base. If
14 they change their routing and say I was going to this village,
15 but now because I see IMC ahead and I'm going to stay out of
16 that, so now I'm going to go to this village, they have to call
17 the station. The station calls us and says, hey, we're changing
18 things and we say, okay, here's your new authorization for that
19 change and then the station relays that to the pilot.

20 Q. Okay. And how do the company PIREPs gets disseminated?
21 How would you get that information and then how that information
22 get communicated to the other aircraft that are out there?

23 A. There's a number of ways. Again, a pilot might call us
24 when they get back, but more frequently they tell their
25 departure control station personnel that they're in radio

1 contact with and then they call and tell us. Depending on what
2 the information is, we might write it on a board at the OCC. If
3 it's longer term than just right now, we will enter it in our
4 database for that airport and then when they print out a release
5 everybody sees it because it prints out on their flight release
6 manifest.

7 Q. Okay. All right. That answered that.

8 So this is another broad question. When the company has a
9 change to something, as an example would be a new route, like
10 Quinhagak to Togiak is put in place, does Hageland have any
11 processes for managing that change? Is there a formal
12 management of change process that you're aware of where you sit
13 down and talk about what you need to do to make this change come
14 about safely?

15 A. I believe there is. I haven't been personally involved in
16 a lot of that. We do have a process in our SOP when we go to an
17 airport that we're not familiar with. And I think I'm speaking
18 to a lesser program than what you're referring to, but again,
19 you know, I believe that there is the analysis that takes place
20 that you're describing in the company. Yeah, generally.

21 Q. So for this particular route -- because it was new. Am I
22 understanding right, it had only --

23 A. I don't know if it was done for this route.

24 Q. Okay. But from a -- from your -- from OCC's standpoint
25 there are a number of things would have to take place to have a

1 new route put in the system, right?

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. Would one of those --

4 MR. WILHELM: So you need to say yes.

5 MR. TANNER: Yes. I'm sorry, yes.

6 BY MS. PRICE:

7 Q. Yeah. Would one of those be looking at the mountainous
8 terrain or obstacles between point A and point B, or is that
9 something you leave for the chief pilot and the pilots to work
10 out?

11 A. It is currently left for the chief pilot or pilots to work
12 out.

13 MS. PRICE: All right. Thank you. That's all I have.

14 BY MR. WEST:

15 Q. I was going to ask that question. Are the OCAs
16 specifically trained on individual flight routes?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay. All right. Regarding the training of OCAs and the
19 agreement, is that a formal training that takes place either
20 through your initial training or through OJT?

21 A. I'm not -- I'm sorry, I'm not sure I understand the
22 question. It is formal training. It is in the --

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. -- training manual, described in the training manual.

25 Q. So this is a very unique situation. You're training a new

1 OCA to have this phone conversation with a pilot. Pilots have
2 egos.

3 A. Do they?

4 Q. And I -- and we're talking about weather. We're talking
5 about this risk assessment. We're talking about whether it
6 should be IFR or VFR. And I saw Eddie sitting there and I'm
7 thinking I don't know this guy -- pilot Cline, but I saw Ron
8 sitting there and Ron is a very strong personality. And I'm
9 thinking to myself, okay, so Ron, he's there and he says I want
10 to go VFR, but Eddie's sitting there going, geez, you know, I
11 think this is IFR, you know. And I just want to know what kind
12 of real training there was to begin with during OJT that
13 would --

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. -- you know what I'm saying?

16 A. Um-hum. Sure. Our role in that capacity historically has
17 been to make sure pilots have all the information to help us
18 make good decisions, not to dictate how they will operate. With
19 the caveat that if -- that it's always, always been pounded and
20 reiterated that if you have safety concerns or just the pilot is
21 being difficult that you are always to get a manager involved.
22 But the philosophy had been in the program is that we're there
23 to make sure that they have all of the information available to
24 them to make good decisions.

25 Q. I see. Final decision is up to them. I heard you say

1 that.

2 A. It -- unless there's an identified safety concern --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. -- that makes -- that would make the OCA think they need to
5 bump that to a manager, then yes, the final decision would be up
6 to the pilot.

7 Q. Okay. Yeah. Very good. You mentioned that maybe a chief
8 pilot or a director of ops may have to step in sometime to do an
9 OCA job. They trying to do that?

10 A. Well, by the nature of their position they are trained to
11 know the policies and procedures and what we're doing in there
12 to actually function at how to work the computers and the
13 programs. I can tell you that the former chief pilot, Willy
14 Coon, was because I trained him.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. But it's a different thing to show somebody this is the
17 button you push that brings the screen up to do this. Because
18 he by the nature of his position as chief pilot already knows
19 all of the policies and procedures.

20 Q. Yeah. But not -- no formal, actually 40 hours of OJT or
21 anything like that.

22 A. No, no, no.

23 Q. No.

24 A. And I -- and to qualify, I have never seen Luke or Erin,
25 the director of operations or the current chief pilot, sit at

1 the desk and perform those duties.

2 Q. Okay. How has the increased amount of IFR changed the
3 involvement of the OCAs at all?

4 A. I think that it has expanded some discussions on whether
5 the infrastructure's available or not.

6 Q. That's a very good point. Very good point. So in other
7 words, the OCAs have to be aware within the state of Alaska
8 which areas might not be capable of handling it.

9 A. For a whole lot of reasons, correct.

10 Q. Very good, very good point. Okay. Hageland is -- is
11 Hageland a complete on demand Part 135 operator, or is there
12 scheduled operations?

13 A. There's scheduled operations.

14 Q. There are.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Can you give me a percentage?

17 A. Well, the -- yeah, the majority of it is scheduled
18 operations --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- and we also do charters, but it's a scheduled airlines.

21 Q. It's mostly scheduled.

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. Okay. Also, I just wanted to let you know that since you
24 mentioned the approach plate, I just took a course for tech ops
25 in the FAA and they had a superb presentation that's available

1 on YouTube. I'm going to get the information --

2 A. Oh, great.

3 Q. -- for you. And it's all about approach plates. They go
4 through it specifically step by step and I'll --

5 A. Thank you.

6 Q. -- make sure you get that information.

7 A. Thank you. As a 121 dispatcher we were -- and my 121
8 dispatchers I have were accustomed to GPWS and we're not using
9 GPWS now, and so there's a lot we need to go over. But we -- I
10 appreciate that.

11 MR. WEST: Yeah. It was great. So anyways, thank you.
12 That's it for me.

13 DR. WILSON: Dave.

14 MR. FRANTZ: Dave.

15 MR. LOWELL: I have no questions for you.

16 BY MR. FRANTZ:

17 Q. Couple of quick follow-ups. Flight following, they're
18 looking at -- the OCAs are looking at a screen that -- or maybe
19 a split screen, but part of the screen they're looking at
20 depicts -- that screen can depict all Hageland flights that are
21 in flight and even though some are being tracked via ADS-B and
22 others are using Spidertrack, they're both -- they can all
23 appear on the same screen. Is that correct?

24 A. Yes. They're all on the same screen. They all look
25 identical and the only way you know the -- what tracking device

1 or source is when you scroll on it, it tells you at the bottom
2 what the source is.

3 Q. What are the -- what is that picture overlaid over? What's
4 the underlying map?

5 A. Well, for a long time it was Google Earth and now it's
6 something similar to that. I think that -- it's a proprietary
7 thing that our IT people developed, but it's similar to Google
8 Earth.

9 Q. Could a -- does an OCA have any control over what the
10 overlay is or what the background of the overlay is? Like could
11 you put up an aviation sectional as a background?

12 A. I don't know that you could. I know that we could ask our
13 IT people that. But no -- no, we can't do that. We can't
14 change --

15 Q. Yeah. Okay.

16 A. -- the background. It's an IT setup.

17 Q. Okay. Do both these tracking -- first of all, what is --
18 this is a new one to me.

19 A. TAMDAR?

20 Q. Yeah. I wrote it down, now I can't see it. But yeah, what
21 is that?

22 A. TAMDAR is a -- and I think it's been sold to -- oh, I can't
23 remember the name of it. But it -- but essentially it is a --
24 it was technology from a weather reporting company that provides
25 us with GPS tracking and cell phone in order to give them

1 weather data. So they have equipment mounted on our airplane
2 that as airplanes take off and land gives them an awful lot of
3 ping so they can get a lot of weather data and then if they're
4 at altitude there's a few less pings. And that data goes to
5 them and then they do something and sell the weather. But we
6 get out of that GPS tracking and sat phone usage.

7 Q. And so that's -- is there only a portion of your fleet
8 that's equipped with those?

9 A. Our 1900 --

10 Q. That equipment.

11 A. -- fleet is equipped with that.

12 Q. Okay. Do all of these tracking abilities, methodologies
13 provide a, what I call a breadcrumb trail of the flight?

14 A. They do. And they're all -- historical data is there as
15 well to go back and look at.

16 Q. So could you walk into the OCC tomorrow and pull up the
17 track of the accident flight right to the point where it stopped
18 pinging?

19 A. Yes, I can. I could.

20 Q. Yeah. Have you done that?

21 A. Yes, I have.

22 Q. Okay. Did anything strike you about the route that that
23 flight took when you looked at it?

24 A. No, not when I looked at it. No.

25 Q. There was another flight that was near in time, same --

1 between the same two airports which took a different route.
2 What are your thoughts about that? Why would one -- why would
3 two flights departing very close to the same time, going between
4 the same two places fly two different routes?

5 A. I'd rather not get into my thoughts about that because I
6 haven't -- I have not investigated that, and so for me to give
7 my thoughts would be based on incomplete information.

8 MR. WILHELM: It'd really be -- I would ask the witness not
9 to speculate here.

10 BY MR. FRANTZ:

11 Q. Is your training program for OCAs, it's a written -- do you
12 have a written syllabus that you follow for the 8-hour portion?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. How about for the OJT portion, are there checklists or
15 written guidance that they follow --

16 A. There is.

17 Q. -- during the -- but that's not FAA approved because -- and
18 it's not in the GOM; is that correct?

19 A. It's in the training manual and it's -- FAA, what's the
20 other term --

21 Q. Accepted?

22 A. -- besides approved? Accepted, yes. Yes.

23 Q. Yeah. Okay. All right. You mentioned that you -- when
24 there's a 3 or a 4 risk assessment someone receives a call, and
25 did you say it is sometimes you --

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. -- you would receive the call? And you can resolve that 3
3 or 4 issue or release --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- a flight?

6 I thought I saw -- let me see. Well, okay, I -- yeah, it
7 doesn't have to be a 119 official --

8 A. Correct. It's --

9 Q. -- to resolve that, according to the program that you guys
10 put in place. Is that correct?

11 A. Correct. It's an authorized manager.

12 Q. An authorized manager.

13 A. It one time was 119, but not anymore.

14 Q. Okay. Are there standard or published or somehow recorded
15 VFR routes between common airports that pilots -- you know, this
16 is the way we always fly -- weather permitting, we're always
17 going to fly this VFR route, or is -- can each pilot each day
18 decide whatever -- if he's going VFR, whatever route he wants?

19 A. For nighttime VFR there's defined ceilings and -- minimum
20 ceilings and altitudes for nighttime VFR, but daytime VFR there
21 is not.

22 Q. There's weather requirements at night, but the actual route
23 they fly VFR at night is still up to them --

24 A. It's still up to them as long as they're --

25 Q. -- as long as they meet the weather requirements --

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. -- or restrictions?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Okay. Last question. As far as fitness for flight that
5 Katherine mentioned, how does -- is it an OCA's responsibility
6 in part or in full to determine, well, that the pilot is fit for
7 flight? And we're not talking his general physical condition
8 that day, but what about meeting regulatory requirements like
9 duty times or flight times, does an OCA have an ability to look
10 at that pilot's recent experience and duty log and see that,
11 okay, he's still within -- if he flies today for 6 hours he
12 won't violate any maximum flight hour requirements, he won't be
13 on duty longer than he needs to be, he hasn't been on duty in
14 the last week longer than whatever restrictions? Does an OCA --
15 how does an OCA do that, determine that, yeah, he's legal to
16 fly?

17 A. We review the flight logs from the day before, but it's --
18 they do not go back to see weekly hours or anything like that.
19 It's pretty much -- it's confined to just the prior day. They
20 look at what they did the prior day and make sure that they're
21 okay to fly for --

22 Q. Do you -- as a manager do you have familiarity with the
23 regulations about what -- the flight and duty time regulations
24 governing 135 pilots?

25 A. It's not something that's a scope of what I do now. I do

1 have familiarity with them from prior experience.

2 COURT REPORTER: Hold on, please.

3 (Off record at 11:25 a.m.)

4 (On record at 11:25 a.m.)

5 COURT REPORTER: We're back on. I apologize.

6 BY MR. FRANTZ:

7 Q. Okay. Thanks. Who has the -- at Hageland who has official
8 responsibility for making sure that a pilot is not assigned or
9 completes or has attempted to complete a flight that would cause
10 him to violate his either flight time limitations or his duty
11 time limitations?

12 A. As far as I know, it's the chief pilot.

13 Q. And on a day to day basis then the chief pilot should be
14 looking at each pilot's assignment for that day and either
15 through a software program or a log or something verifying that,
16 yeah, it's okay to use this guy today on this flight?

17 MR. WILHELM: If you know.

18 MR. TANNER: I don't know.

19 BY MR. FRANTZ:

20 Q. Do you know if he does that?

21 A. I don't know.

22 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Okay. That's all I have. Thanks.

23 Did you have any follow-ups, Kathy?

24 DR. WILSON: I have one follow-up.

25 BY DR. WILSON:

1 Q. Eric was asking you about how OCAs might assert themselves
2 to pilots who have a strong opinion. Is there any training for
3 the OCAs on good decision making or judgment?

4 A. There's discussions about that. It's not a formal human
5 factors type of training, but we have discussions about that. I
6 mean it's -- we've got 130 pilots, so, you know, they talk to
7 me.

8 Q. So the discussion would happen if somebody came to you, or
9 it's discussed during OJT, or --

10 A. It's --

11 Q. -- explain a little bit more about the --

12 A. It -- well, yes to all of the above. It's discussed during
13 training initially that, you know, some pilots do have egos and
14 if you -- if you have a situation where you're having a
15 disagreement or you don't think it's going like it should, those
16 kind of discussions. And then when a OCA does have a feeling
17 that it's not quite going as it should we have that discussion
18 then too.

19 DR. WILSON: Okay. Thank you.

20 Shaun?

21 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

22 Q. Without speculating as far as two pilots taking different
23 routes, because you weren't up there, you're not in their head,
24 you don't understand why somebody makes that decision. Is it
25 common to see multiple airplanes on the same route between two

1 cities take different actual routings?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Have you ever seen it before?

4 A. No.

5 Q. That you can remember.

6 A. No, I haven't.

7 Q. Okay. That's all I have.

8 DR. WILSON: Okay. Eric?

9 MR. WEST: Oh, no. Nothing from me. Thank you.

10 MR. FRANTZ: Okay.

11 BY MR. FRANTZ:

12 Q Okay. Think we're done, Greg.

13 A. All right.

14 Q. Anything we didn't ask you that you think we should have in
15 furtherance of this investigation?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Anything we asked you that you think we shouldn't have?

18 Not a real question. Anything else you want to add --

19 A. No. No.

20 Q. -- that you think could help us out? Okay.

21 You'll have our -- you'll have contact information for
22 Katherine, myself and also for the investigator in charge,
23 Shaun. So if things come up after the fact or you think of
24 something else that you meant to say, but didn't or correct or
25 additional piece of information, get in touch with us please.

1 A. And it sounds like I'll see somebody out there tomorrow in
2 Palmer?

3 MR. WILLIAMS: I was going to --

4 MR. FRANTZ: Yeah.

5 MR. WILLIAMS: -- mention to you that they're going to come
6 out tomorrow.

7 DR. WILSON: Sometimes -- we're off the record.

8 (Whereupon, at 11:29 a.m., 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: FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER
 ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016
 TOGIAK, ALASKA
 Interview of Greg Tanner

DOCKET NUMBER: ANC17FA001

PLACE: Anchorage, Alaska

DATE: December 7, 2016

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 interview.

Nicolette Hernandez
Official Reporter

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER *

ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016, * Docket No.: ANC17FA001

TOGIAK, ALASKA *

* * * * *

Interview of: EDDIE DONIS

NTSB Offices
 Anchorage Federal Building
 222 West 7th Avenue, Room 216
 Anchorage, Alaska

Tuesday,
 December 6, 2016

APPEARANCES:

SHAUN WILLIAMS, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

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

CAPTAIN MARVIN FRANTZ, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

ERIC WEST, Air Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention
Washington, D.C.

NOREEN PRICE, Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

Also Present:

DAVE LOWELL, Director of Safety
Hageland Aviation
Anchorage, Alaska

MARC WILHELM, Esq.
Richmond & Quinn
Anchorage, Alaska
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Donis)

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:17 p.m.)

1
2
3 DR. WILSON: Good afternoon. I am Katherine Wilson. I'm a
4 human performance investigator with the NTSB. If you're not
5 aware, the NTSB, we're an independent federal agency. We've
6 been charged with investigating transportation accidents and
7 determining probable cause. We also promote transportation
8 safety. We're not a part of the FAA or DOT and we don't have
9 any regulatory or enforcement power. So we're strictly here
10 from the safety side, and that goes for everybody that's in the
11 room, including our FAA representative.

12 So we'll go around the room and everybody can introduce
13 themselves so that you're aware of who is a part of this
14 interview.

15 MR. FRANTZ: Marvin Frantz. I'm an operational factors air
16 safety investigator from the NTSB. I work with Katherine in
17 Washington.

18 MR. WILLIAMS: Shaun Williams. I'm the investigator in
19 charge, NTSB here in Anchorage.

20 MR. LOWELL: Dave Lowell, Vice President of Safety,
21 Hageland Aviation.

22 MR. WEST: Eric West, air safety investigator, FAA,
23 Washington, D.C.

24 MS. PRICE: Noreen Price, Accident Investigator here in
25 Anchorage. I'm assisting with the investigation.

1 MR. WILHELM: Marc Wilhelm, attorney for the witness.

2 DR. WILSON: Okay. So, as Mr. Wilhelm stated, we're using
3 a court reporter today who will be recording the interview and
4 then transcribing it into a transcript. The transcript itself,
5 not the recording, will become a part of our public docket.

6 As I said, our purpose is to determine probable cause and
7 prevent a recurrence of an accident like this from happening
8 again. We don't assign fault, blame, liability. This interview
9 is routine. We understand it's not necessarily routine for you,
10 so we'll take it one step at a time. And if you need to take a
11 break just let us know. But this is a part of our fact finding
12 phase of the investigation. We cannot, however, offer a
13 guarantee of confidentiality or immunity.

14 As Mr. Wilhelm also stated, we will go around the room.
15 Each person will have a chance to ask questions. We'll probably
16 do at least two rounds of questions in case anybody has any
17 follow-ups because we'll only asking questions one at a time.
18 Also try to avoid uh-huh or nodding your head so that we can
19 have an actual verbal answer that can be transcribed for the
20 record.

21 You are entitled to have one representative of your
22 choosing. Who would you like that to be? Would you like
23 Mr. Wilhelm to be your representative?

24 MR. DONIS: Yes, Mr. Wilhelm, please.

25 DR. WILSON: Okay. Do you have any questions before we get

1 started?

2 MR. DONIS: No.

3 DR. WILSON: Okay. And just a reminder to Mr. Wilhelm, he
4 can direct you to answer -- not answer a question, but he can't
5 answer questions for you.

6 INTERVIEW OF EDDIE DONIS

7 BY DR. WILSON:

8 Q. We will now begin the interview. If you can state for the
9 record please your full name.

10 A. Eddie Donis.

11 Q. And could you spell your last name please?

12 A. D-o-n-i-s.

13 Q. Thank you. And what is your current position?

14 A. I am a operational control agent at Hageland Aviation.

15 Q. Excuse me. And where is your position based out of?

16 A. Palmer, Alaska.

17 Q. Okay. How long have you been in that position?

18 A. Going on 2½, 3 years almost.

19 Q. Okay. Have you held any other positions with the company?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. And what are your duties and responsibilities as an
22 OCA?

23 A. Well, I am a dispatcher of the flights and I assess the
24 risks involved in every flight.

25 Q. Okay. Do you have any additional duties once the flight is

1 actually dispatched?

2 A. Yes. I flight follow. I always monitor weather, NOTAMs,
3 any other things that -- any other information that's important
4 for any flights that we conduct.

5 Q. Okay. And if you could provide a brief background of your
6 work history leading up to your position with Hageland.

7 A. My work history before Hageland?

8 Q. Uh-huh.

9 A. Salesman.

10 Q. Okay. So this is your first position as a -- in a dispatch
11 type position?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Does this position require any certificates or ratings?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay. Are you a pilot?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Who do you report to?

18 A. Greg Tanner. And also Luke.

19 Q. Okay. Who is Luke?

20 A. Luke Hickerson, our DO.

21 Q. Oh, right. Do you interact with Greg on a daily basis,
22 weekly?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Week -- daily?

25 A. Daily basis.

1 Q. Okay. How about Luke?

2 A. Not so much. I'll take whatever I need on a day to day
3 with Greg, and I do speak to Luke whenever we have RA-3s or --

4 Q. Okay. And RA-3 is -- that's the risk assessment value?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. When we have a high risk assessment. And the pilot is
8 required to talk to the DO as well before release.

9 Q. Okay. So it's my understanding that you were working on
10 October 2nd, which was the day of the accident.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Walk me through your duty day, when you came on duty, what
13 you did up until finding out that there was an accident.

14 A. Well, got to work at 6:00 a.m. And I go through my process
15 of examining weather, NOTAMS, aircrafts, any kind of
16 maintenance. Anything that needs to be dealt with in the
17 morning. And yeah, that's it. Releasing flights.

18 Q. And so how do you know what flights you're going to be
19 working on?

20 A. We have a list of scheduled flights that I go through in
21 the morning. And -- yeah. In our computer system,
22 FlightMaster.

23 Q. Are there other OCAs on duty, or are you the only OCA on
24 duty at a particular time?

25 A. In the morning on the weekends I am the only opener.

1 Q. Okay. So on the morning of October 2nd do you recall how
2 many flights you were looking at weather for and doing this prep
3 work?

4 A. Many. Don't remember. No, not an exact number.

5 Q. Okay. Could you give me a rough estimate, 5, 10 --

6 A. No.

7 Q. -- 15?

8 A. I can't.

9 Q. Okay. When did you first come into contact or talk to
10 Mr. Cline, the PIC of the accident flight?

11 A. On that day?

12 Q. Uh-huh.

13 A. When he called for his release.

14 Q. Okay. Do you recall what time that might have been?

15 A. I don't remember. It was in the morning.

16 Q. Okay. Typically if some -- if a pilot is calling for a
17 release do you know how long before that is typically before a
18 flight? Is it 30 minutes, 20 minutes, an hour?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. They have their process of doing things.

22 Q. Okay. Do you recall the conversation that you had with
23 Mr. Cline?

24 A. I do.

25 Q. Could you walk me through what you discussed?

1 A. Well, our basic risk assessment process. I confirmed the
2 routing. I confirmed the aircraft, the pilot, the FO. We went
3 over weather, NOTAMs. Discussed the weather cams with him and
4 also -- yeah, just part of the risk assessment. That's
5 basically it.

6 Q. Okay. And do you recall what the risk assessment value
7 that was assigned to that flight?

8 A. I don't remember exact. It was a while ago. But --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- it was a legal VFR flight at the moment.

11 Q. Okay. Did you all determine the risk assessment value
12 together, or who -- how is that determined? So you talk about
13 all of the risks. Who says this is what the risk value is going
14 to be?

15 A. We agree on it, the pilot and I.

16 Q. Okay. Do you call in for the morning briefings that they
17 do at the Bethel base?

18 A. I do not.

19 Q. Okay. Did you have any contact with the SIC, Mr. Welty,
20 that day?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Did you know Mr. Cline? Had you ever met him?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. Had you talked to him on the phone before?

25 A. Definitely.

1 Q. Okay. How did he seem that day relative to other times
2 that you've talked to him?

3 A. Can you clarify the question?

4 Q. Sure. Did he seem like his normal self, or did anything
5 seem out of the ordinary when you talked to him?

6 A. Normal.

7 Q. Normal? Okay. Did he discuss or bring up any concerns
8 that he might have had about the flight?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. What were those concerns?

11 A. Like I said, the risk assessments and all the factors that
12 were involved.

13 Q. Okay. Was there any talk of deteriorating weather
14 throughout the day?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Wait, throughout the day?

18 Q. Well, throughout that flight. So for that flight was
19 there --

20 A. At the time of the risk, there was talk about the weather
21 at the time. So when I released him for that flight we did
22 speak of the weather at the time of release, yeah.

23 Q. Do you also look at forecasted weather?

24 A. We do.

25 Q. Was the forecast, did that show deteriorating conditions?

1 A. No.

2 Q. No? Okay. Okay. So you agreed on the risk assessment.
3 Was there any other discussion or did he hang up at that time
4 and you released the flight?

5 A. Before agreeing to the flight I did recommend or state that
6 there was rain and clouds. But like I said, we agreed on the
7 flight was legal and he was able to perform a VFR flight.

8 Q. The rain and clouds, do you recall what particular area
9 that the rain and clouds were in?

10 A. At the moment, Quinhagak.

11 Q. And in discussing the rain and clouds was there a
12 discussion of not continuing the flight, or talk to me about
13 what discussion surrounded rain and clouds?

14 A. Just the overall conditions of the flight.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Of the weather and what we have to look at, of course.
17 Just part of the risk assessment.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Nothing out of the ordinary.

20 Q. Okay. So even though there were rain and clouds in the
21 area, the flight could still operate under VFR conditions?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. So anything else that you think is relevant in the
24 conversation that you had with him on the phone?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay. So you hang up the phone, the flight's released?

2 A. I give him a time and a risk assessment value for release
3 and we both sign off on it and that's it. After that they get
4 their manifest printed at the station with my release on it.

5 Q. What is the time that you give them, the time that --

6 A. The time of release.

7 Q. The time of release. Okay. And is that the current time
8 or is that a future time?

9 A. The current time.

10 Q. Okay. Is the risk assessment, does that become invalid if
11 the flight doesn't depart within a certain amount of time?

12 A. Thirty minutes.

13 Q. Okay. All right. So the flight departs. What are -- what
14 is your -- excuse me. What are you required to do in terms of
15 flight following for that flight once it's released?

16 A. Well, the aircraft is being -- has ADS-B and we track it.
17 We follow the flight, make sure that they get to their
18 destination.

19 Q. Were you doing that for this flight?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Is there a delay in the data that you get, or is it
22 real time?

23 A. Maybe a 2 or 3 minute delay.

24 Q. Were you also checking up -- checking the weather
25 throughout this time?

1 A. Of course.

2 Q. Okay. Was there any updates that needed to be shared with
3 the flight crew during that flight?

4 A. No. Weather was improving.

5 Q. Okay. What weather programs do you use?

6 A. AAWU, ForeFlight, the Alaska weather cams website and
7 that's basically it.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. We also have village agents for certain things, but --
10 yeah.

11 Q. Were there --

12 A. Observations.

13 Q. Okay. Were there any village agents for this particular
14 flight?

15 A. I don't know.

16 Q. Okay. So when -- so you're doing flight following. When
17 did you recognize that something was amiss?

18 A. Well, this was after. Because they completed their first
19 trip to and from and then I went to lunch and the other OCA took
20 over. At this point there's two there.

21 Q. Okay. Is there a hand-off between you and the OCA?

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. What is that hand --

24 COURT REPORTER: Yes?

25 MR. DONIS: Yes. I go over anything and everything that we

1 need to discuss on the station, specific flights, any kind of
2 weather abnormalities, any kind of AWOS-7s being out of service.
3 And future flights and flights that I have released.

4 BY DR. WILSON:

5 Q. So were you still following this flight at the time that
6 you did the hand-off? You mentioned that they completed a trip.
7 I just want to make sure that --

8 A. Yes, I was.

9 Q. Okay. So you were still following it.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And you handed it off to another OCA when you went to
12 lunch.

13 A. Yep.

14 Q. Okay. And then how did you learn about the accident?

15 A. When I got back from lunch I was at the station for 20
16 minutes and we completed another, you know, transition, I guess
17 you can say. He shared his information with me.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And 20 minutes later we realized that the tracker was late
20 and the aircraft was late to his destination.

21 Q. Okay. And then what did you do?

22 A. Spoke to our DO, Luke Hickerson, and he confirmed with me
23 the status and he went ahead and called the station and I went
24 ahead and started our emergency protocol.

25 Q. So the flight tracking software that you use, is there an

1 indication that it gives you that a flight is late, or you were
2 just basing that --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- on something else?

5 A. When a plane is 20 minutes late to the destination the
6 plane will go blue stating that it hasn't reported a ping in 20
7 minutes. And that's what the situation was. When it is not
8 blue it's yellow and it's active and it's reporting, yeah, pings
9 or tracking, you know.

10 Q. So in the 20 minutes between the time of the accident and
11 then when it turns to blue, what's happening on the screen? Is
12 the yellow staying in the same spot, or --

13 A. No, the aircraft will turn blue and that means that it's 20
14 minutes late.

15 Q. So on your screen are you seeing the actual track of the
16 flight, or what are you seeing that's showing the airplane as
17 yellow? What does your screen look like that you're looking at?

18 A. Well, we have a -- it's a yellow aircraft and it is
19 tracking and moving along and progressing. When it turns blue
20 it stops moving.

21 Q. So did it stop turning -- did it turn blue at the time of
22 the accident, or it turned blue 20 minutes after the accident?
23 Or after the time that it was supposed to arrive at its
24 destination.

25 A. I don't know.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. When it turns blue it means it's 20 minutes late, that it
3 hasn't pinged in 20 minutes.

4 Q. So did you notice that -- for that 20 minutes that there
5 was no position being updated on the flight?

6 A. Uh-huh. Yes.

7 Q. If you see that an aircraft is not moving for a certain
8 amount of time is there something that's supposed to be done?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. We call the station and inquire about the specific aircraft
12 and they will try to get a hold of him by radio or radio relay.

13 Q. Okay. And you made that phone call before or after the
14 aircraft turned blue?

15 A. I made the phone call after our DO instructed me to.

16 Q. Okay. And you contacted the DO after the aircraft turned
17 blue?

18 A. I spoke to him. He contacted me. He got -- he had an
19 emergency alert that he gets and he contacted me.

20 Q. Okay. He gets an emergency alert based on the flight
21 following software?

22 A. I don't know.

23 Q. Or -- you don't know. Okay. If during your flight
24 following you notice that the weather was not improving or was
25 deteriorating, what means do you have to get that information to

1 the pilots?

2 A. The stations.

3 Q. So, for instance, you would contact Bethel and then Bethel
4 would contact the pilots?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Have you done that before?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. How often would you say you have to do that?

9 A. Day to day.

10 Q. Okay. How long do you think that -- are you then alerted
11 after you contact base and they attempt to contact the pilots,
12 do they report back to you that they were able to transmit that
13 information?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. How long about does that process take? From when
16 you call the base until you hear back that the flight crew
17 received your information.

18 A. I don't know.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. It varies. I can't say an exact time.

21 Q. Okay. Do you see terrain on your screen also, your flight
22 following screen?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. Does -- your software, does it tell you the
25 airplane's altitude as well?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Have you ever contacted a pilot based on his
3 altitude and known terrain if you thought that that was
4 dangerous?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Have you noticed that before? That a pilot is flying lower
7 than he should be flying --

8 A. No.

9 Q. -- near terrain? Okay. Is it something that you look at
10 or would be concerned if you saw?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Is there any talk in your training that you should contact
13 a pilot if you notice something like that, or is it typically
14 that you would just report updated weather to the pilots?

15 A. Can you repeat that?

16 Q. Sure. I was wondering if you're trained to alert a pilot
17 if you notice that he's flying too low, close to terrain.

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. Did you happen to notice this flight's altitude
20 relative to terrain during the flight following?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Did it look -- did you notice anything unusual? Did you
23 think that the pilot was flying too low?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. On the release does it have what the recommended

1 altitude is that a pilot should fly or anything about altitude
2 along the route?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. As a part of the GOM I was reading that one of -- a
5 part of the assessment is to determine that the pilot is fit for
6 duty. Do you discuss that with the pilot, whether he's fit for
7 duty, prior to a flight?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What is discussed specifically?

10 A. Just based on rapport. There's no specific questions.

11 Q. Okay. Is it actually discussed, or just based on how the
12 pilot sounds you assume that they're fit for duty?

13 A. Can you clarify that?

14 Q. Yes. Do you specifically discuss whether he's fit for
15 duty, or is it just assumed based on how the pilot sounds when
16 you're talking to them that they're fit for duty?

17 A. There's not an assumption and there is no specific question
18 to discuss that.

19 Q. Okay. So who determines that the pilot's fit for duty, the
20 pilot or you or jointly?

21 A. The pilot and I.

22 Q. Okay. But there's no specific question to ask that --
23 whether they're fit for duty or not?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. What training did you receive on the risk assessment

1 process?

2 A. Initial training on -- when I was hired?

3 Q. Uh-huh.

4 A. On-the-job training for a week and continually as we go.

5 Q. Was any of your training -- did you do joint training with
6 pilots, or did you just do training for the risk assessment on
7 your own?

8 A. Training with my manager and also another OCA.

9 Q. As a part of OJT were you working with the pilots to
10 develop risk assessments, or was that just working with your
11 manager and another OCA also?

12 A. All three.

13 Q. Okay. I know you said you don't remember the number of
14 flights that you were working that particular day, but is there
15 a particular number of flights where you would say that is the
16 maximum number of flights that you can be monitoring at once
17 that you're comfortable doing?

18 A. Well, the opening shift on weekends usually deals with the
19 freighter. So it's one flight in the morning. That's why I am
20 there.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Any other charters are dealt with after. But the schedules
23 don't start until later when we have two OCAs already there.

24 Q. Okay. How do you split the work between you and the other
25 OCA?

1 A. We have a south station and a north station. North deals
2 with the north, the northern region of the state, and south
3 deals with the southern, of course.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. For the most part. But we both deal with both.

6 Q. Okay. And were you working the north or the south that
7 day?

8 A. South. That morning.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. We rotate as the day goes.

11 Q. At the time that the accident airplane turned blue were you
12 still working south or were you on north?

13 A. I was on the north side.

14 Q. Okay. What sort of training did you get on that flight
15 following software?

16 A. It's part of our OJT.

17 Q. Okay. Were you first hired at Hageland when the OCC
18 opened, or had it already been opened? Were you one of the
19 initial hires?

20 A. No.

21 Q. No. Okay. Has there been any change in the flight
22 following software since you've been there?

23 A. No.

24 Q. No. Any changes in the risk assessment since you've been
25 there?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. What are those changes?

3 A. Just the letters on our risk assessment. The risk
4 assessment itself hasn't changed.

5 Q. Okay. I know you said you couldn't tell me the number of
6 flights that you were working, but how would you characterize
7 your workload on the day of the accident? So when you come in
8 for that morning shift.

9 A. For the whole day?

10 Q. Well, start -- we can split it up. So before lunch what
11 would you say your workload was like?

12 A. Normal.

13 Q. Okay. How about after lunch?

14 A. The same.

15 Q. Okay. Do you know if the phone calls between the pilots
16 and the OCC, are those recorded?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay. You know how many other OCAs there are working at
19 Hageland?

20 A. Yes. Five.

21 Q. Five including you?

22 A. Uh-huh. No --

23 Q. Okay. So --

24 A. -- not including me.

25 Q. All right. Are there intermediate supervisors or do you

1 just report to Glenn?

2 A. To who?

3 Q. Glenn. Oh, not --

4 A. Greg?

5 Q. Greg. Sorry.

6 A. No other supervisors. Greg is our manager.

7 Q. Okay. How do you like working for Hageland?

8 A. I love it.

9 Q. What do you love about it?

10 A. Many things.

11 Q. Can you elaborate?

12 A. Sure. It gives me a sense of actually contributing to
13 safety and responsibility and helping. Yeah.

14 Q. Do you ever feel like there's any external or pressures
15 from the company to release a flight?

16 A. On me?

17 Q. Uh-huh.

18 A. No.

19 Q. No. Have you ever been asked to release a flight that you
20 weren't comfortable releasing?

21 A. No.

22 Q. How would you characterize morale of the employees at the
23 OCC?

24 A. It's great.

25 Q. Your initial training that you got when you first got

1 hired, what did that include?

2 A. Didn't we already talk about that?

3 Q. Well, you told me that you did initial and OJT training,
4 but what specifically?

5 A. That includes all the training I need to assess flights and
6 dispatch flights.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And it -- and how we use our programs and weather and all
9 the other things that I have to do.

10 Q. Okay. Do you get a dispatch certificate along the way, or
11 no?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. Do you have recurrent training?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. How often is that?

16 A. Every year.

17 Q. Okay. Have you had recurrent training since you've been
18 with the company?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Not yet?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Oh, yes. Okay. When was your last recurrent training?

23 A. I don't remember the exact date, but it was the beginning
24 of the year sometime.

25 Q. Okay. As a part of your position are you required to do

1 any ride-alongs on the flights?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Are you allowed to?

4 A. I don't know.

5 Q. Do you think it'd be beneficial to ride along?

6 A. From my position?

7 Q. Uh-huh. Yes.

8 A. In some ways, maybe.

9 Q. Okay. What ways do you think it could be beneficial?

10 A. Well, since I'm not a pilot I've never -- and I've never
11 been on a flight, it'd be nice to see the mountains and stuff.
12 See the actual terrain.

13 Q. Okay. Had you ever talked on the phone with Mr. Welty? He
14 was the second in command on the flight.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. Was that to do a risk assessment or for some other
17 reason?

18 A. No. I think I -- actually I think I talked to him for his
19 training.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. But I don't remember.

22 Q. Do you ever get to travel out to the bases?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Did you ever hear anybody have concerns about flying with
25 either Mr. Cline or Mr. Welty?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Did either of them ever express concerns to you about
3 either the company or the equipment they were flying?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. Have you ever released a flight with instruments on
6 the right-hand side of the cockpit inoperative?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. How would you describe the safety culture at
9 Hageland?

10 A. I think it's great. It's our number one priority.

11 Q. Okay. If you had a safety concern, what programs are
12 available for you to report those?

13 A. WBAT. I don't know what the program's name is, but I know
14 that -- I know where to find it and I know where to go.

15 Q. Okay. Any safety hotlines or any way that you can report a
16 safety concern anonymously?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What is that?

19 A. The same one.

20 Q. Okay. Have you ever reported a safety concern?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Have you had a concern that you didn't report?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Okay. I have a few more questions that I'm going to save
25 for the end. You doing okay, do you need a break or anything?

1 A. No, I'm good.

2 Q. Okay.

3 DR. WILSON: Marvin.

4 BY MR. FRANTZ:

5 Q. Hi, Eddie.

6 A. Hello.

7 Q. Think back to when you got hired by Hageland to -- you
8 applied for a job as an OCA; is that correct --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- specifically? What were the -- at that time do you
11 remember what were the qualifications for that job? Do you
12 remember what Hageland was looking for that you had?

13 A. Yes, experience reading NOTAMs, reading weather, being
14 familiar with the aviation industry and the FAR and the
15 regulations.

16 Q. Okay. And how did you -- where did you gain that
17 experience?

18 A. I went to school for aircraft dispatching. I have not
19 completed getting my license yet though, but I did complete the
20 program.

21 Q. You went to a dispatch course or --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. So that was -- you met Hageland's qualifications
24 primarily through that. Had you worked in the aviation industry
25 before?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Okay. When you were hired, do you recall how long your
3 training was at Hageland, what period of time?

4 A. About 2 weeks.

5 Q. And where was it conducted?

6 A. At the OCC.

7 Q. Were there written or practical or oral tests involved in
8 the training?

9 A. Yes. Both.

10 Q. Okay. Do you remember if you had any problems with any of
11 those? Did you pass all of them, or did you have to do any
12 retakes, anything that you can recall?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Once a crew departs, you give them a release and they're in
15 flight, what is the trigger for you to -- what would trigger you
16 to say I need to get a message to this crew about any particular
17 issue? What would be something that would say I need to get the
18 crew, so I'll call the stations, that's how you would contact --
19 call on what stations. What would make you do that?

20 A. Several things, but mainly a change in weather. Or any
21 airport closures.

22 Q. How many hours a week do you work as an OCA?

23 A. Forty.

24 Q. Do you ever work overtime?

25 A. Yeah, sometimes.

1 Q. Does Hageland have any restriction on how many hours a week
2 you can work or how many hours a day you can work as an OCA? Is
3 there any regulation -- not regulation, any Hageland rule about
4 how long you can work either in a day or a week?

5 A. Yeah, but I don't know at the moment.

6 Q. Do all of -- do the other OCAs -- or do you know, do they
7 typically work a 40-hour week?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. There was another flight that was I'll use the term
10 shadowing. It was flying very close to the same schedule as the
11 accident flight. I think it was a few minutes ahead or behind,
12 but it was the same route. Did you release that flight as well?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Did you note that for the accident leg the first flight or
15 the other flight took a different route than the accident flight
16 took? Did you notice that when you released the two of them?

17 A. Can you repeat that? It's a little convoluted.

18 Q. They took -- the two flights that left within a few minutes
19 of each other, one, the accident flight, the other -- and the
20 other flight, they took different routes to the same airport,
21 but one had the accident and one didn't. Did you note that,
22 when they left that they were taking different routes, even
23 though they were both going to the same place at roughly the
24 same time?

25 A. No.

1 Q. The risk assessment, when you -- when that's completed -- I
2 just want to understand how it's done. Is it completed when
3 you're on the phone with the pilot and you're both going over
4 the issues and then you -- and then one or both of you say yes,
5 it's a 2 or, yes, it's a 3 and we have to contact someone?

6 Or alternately is -- do you do the risk assessment for the
7 flight, the pilot's done his and then you talk and you say,
8 well, you got -- I got a 2; what do you got, I got a 2? I mean
9 is that how it works, or do you reach the number while you're
10 both on the phone together, the risk assessment number?

11 A. When we're on the phone.

12 Q. Okay. How long is -- typically how long is one of those
13 phone calls?

14 A. Well, depending. Anywhere from 2 to 5, 10 minutes.

15 Q. Okay. Flight tracking, we were talking about that. Were
16 you talking about ADS-B or Spidertracks when you were talking
17 about flight tracking?

18 A. ADS-B.

19 Q. Do you use Spidertracks as well as an OCA?

20 A. I think so, yeah.

21 Q. And ADS-B, the airplane on the picture turns blue if it
22 hasn't received a report in 20 minutes from the airplane; is
23 that correct?

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Do you know typically how often it will receive a report?

3 I know 20 minutes triggers the blue. But if everything's going
4 well, how many minutes between points on the map for the
5 airplane? Is there a standard for that? How often is a normal
6 ping supposed to come to tell you where the plane's at?

7 A. Every 2 to 5 minutes it's -- yeah. I don't know the exact
8 number though.

9 Q. Okay. But it's more frequent than 20?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. But the software -- the system itself doesn't alert you
12 until it's been 20 minutes since that plane responded then to a
13 ping; is that right?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Twenty minutes. Okay. I'm a little -- well, I'll ask you.
16 The sequence of how you became aware of the accident, did the --
17 did you notice the plane blue and therefore hasn't responded for
18 20 minutes, did you notice that first, or did you receive a call
19 from the DO first asking you about the flight?

20 A. I received the call first.

21 Q. From the DO?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. So as far as you knew then everything was okay with the
24 flight because it hadn't turned blue yet, so --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- you thought -- you didn't know there was anything out of
2 the ordinary?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. And you don't know -- you don't have any specific
5 knowledge of how the DO became aware that there was a problem.

6 A. I don't know the exact -- I don't know.

7 MR. LOWELL: Would you like me to clarify?

8 DR. WILSON: We can talk about it after.

9 MR. LOWELL: Okay. Thank you.

10 BY MR. FRANTZ:

11 Q. But routinely you don't watch the Spidertracks program to
12 follow a flight. Is that correct? You watch the -- you watch
13 it on ADB --

14 A. ADS-B.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. ADS-B.

17 Q. ADS-B, yeah.

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. That's right, not Spidertracks.

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. Is there always a supervisor on duty in the OCC?

22 A. Our manager? Yes. There's no supervisor. He's our
23 manager.

24 Q. Greg.

25 A. Yes, Greg Tanner.

1 Q. Okay. So he's -- is he there anytime the OCC is in
2 operation then?

3 A. Except on Saturday and Sunday.

4 Q. Okay. So if he's there is he -- who's the first person you
5 go to if you have some issue with a flight or some awareness
6 that there's something wrong? Who's the first person you
7 notify?

8 A. Greg.

9 Q. Okay. And if he's not there because it's a weekend do you
10 -- what do you do?

11 A. I would call our DO or our chief pilot.

12 Q. Okay. Do you know what an MEL is?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. Does Hageland operate with an MEL for their
15 aircraft?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Have you ever been involved in any previous accidents or
18 incidents at Hageland?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Okay. Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

21 DR. WILSON: Shaun.

22 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

23 Q. Yeah, I have a few questions here. I want to go back to
24 this conversation about the fitness for duty with the pilot and
25 say -- it's not necessarily a question, you know, specific, are

1 you fit; it's more understanding talking to them. Have you had
2 a pilot call in that it was determined they were unfit?

3 A. No.

4 Q. When the pilots do call in, you're doing your discussion
5 for the risk assessment for weather and things like that. Kind
6 of going back towards the aircraft that was 5 minutes behind the
7 accident aircraft, do you discuss -- is there ever that
8 discussion about the actual route to be taken between point A
9 and point B?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. Did Tim discuss that he -- the direct routing on
12 this flight, do you recall?

13 A. Can you specify what you mean by routing?

14 Q. How he was going to get between -- from Togiak -- or from
15 Quinhagak to Togiak. Did he explicitly say how he was --

16 A. No.

17 Q. -- traveling that route?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. What about the other aircraft, did they discuss that
20 they were going to go around the mountains versus through them?

21 A. They didn't say they were going around. Who -- yeah, they
22 didn't say they were going around.

23 Q. Who builds the actual flights? Like do you know when you
24 show up who's going to be calling you and what the routing is?

25 A. The stations do.

1 Q. The station builds the flight?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. So then they assign the flight crews to those
4 routings and things?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And then do you have that information ahead of time?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And who makes -- so with this -- with the accident flight
9 you were talking about rain showers and clouds and things. Was
10 there a discussion about IFR versus VFR?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What -- can you give me a little insight into that
13 discussion?

14 A. No, we spoke about the weather and I asked the pilot if he
15 is going to be going IFR or VFR, and we discussed what was going
16 on at each part of the route, I guess.

17 Q. So did you have any concerns with it going VFR versus IFR?

18 A. I did.

19 Q. Okay. What were those concerns? Can you kind of elaborate
20 for me, please?

21 A. Well, I remember specifically that Quinhagak was reporting
22 heavy rain, and that's what I went over with the pilot, both
23 pilots, both flights.

24 Q. Okay. So did you recommend IFR?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And the -- so the pilot decided to go VFR anyway?

2 A. Yes, because it was legal. It was a recommendation, but, I
3 mean, he could go VFR.

4 Q. Do you run into that often?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Have you -- I believe you said you had worked with Tim
7 before? Cline.

8 A. What do you mean?

9 Q. You had worked some of his flights --

10 A. Oh.

11 Q. -- released his flights before?

12 A. Yes, I released him.

13 Q. Had you -- can you recall any other times when you kind of
14 had this discussion as far as -- maybe not necessarily the
15 discussion, but the concern of IFR versus VFR?

16 A. With him?

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. No. Can I take a break?

19 DR. WILSON: Sure. Yeah.

20 MR. DONIS: Is is -- it is all right?

21 DR. WILSON: Yeah. Can we go off the record?

22 (Off record at 1:12 p.m.)

23 (On record at 1:23 p.m.)

24 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

25 Q. Okay. So Marvin had asked you about MELs, being familiar

1 with them. Do you recall if this aircraft had any MELs on it?

2 A. I don't remember.

3 Q. Okay.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: I think that's about what I have. Dave.

5 BY MR. LOWELL:

6 Q. Okay. Eddie, on any given day after your first push in the
7 morning, how many targets do you have that you might be
8 tracking? Or flight following would be a better term.

9 A. How many aircraft?

10 Q. Uh-huh.

11 A. It can depend, but anywhere from 15 to 20.

12 Q. Okay. All right. I don't have any other questions.

13 DR. WILSON: Okay. Eric?

14 BY MR. WEST:

15 Q. Okay. What are the various types of weather reports that
16 you get or that you look at?

17 A. Well, like I mentioned earlier, the AAWU, the Alaska
18 weather cams.

19 Q. I'm looking for something a little different than that, a
20 little more technical. Not the sources, but, you know, like a
21 pilot, he looks at the various forms of weather reporting. Do
22 you look at those specific types of weather reporting?

23 A. Like METARs?

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. That's basically it.

3 Q. Okay. Whip them off to them. Do you know what -- you went
4 to this dispatcher school. You should know all of these.

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. METARs.

7 A. METARs, TAFs --

8 Q. Got it.

9 A. -- area forecasts.

10 Q. Good.

11 A. NOTAMs.

12 Q. Okay. NOTAMs aren't weather, but --

13 A. No, but that's part of what I do every day.

14 Q. Okay. I just want weather. METARs, TAFs, area forecast.

15 Oh, oh. Thanks.

16 DR. WILSON: It's a sign.

17 MR. WEST: This is a government pen?

18 MS. PRICE: I think so.

19 BY MR. WEST:

20 Q. Okay. Good. Okay. These weather cams you spoke of, do
21 you have access to these on the Internet?

22 A. Uh-huh. Yes.

23 Q. So you're actually watching them?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Excellent. The ones that you watched, are there ones

1 located along this route, this accident route that we're talking
2 about, Togiak to whatever they were heading from?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. Were you monitoring those that day, the accident?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. So you actually saw live time or --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Can you give us a little sense of what they were
9 showing that day with deteriorating weather, anything you can
10 tell us about that day? I mean, we're trying to get to the
11 bottom of this darn thing. Was the weather getting bad, was it
12 getting worse, was it -- what did you see?

13 A. Well, the weather cams you can see, it wasn't completely
14 fogged in. So the weather cams were favorable. The METAR was
15 more of a concern for me --

16 Q. I see.

17 A. -- personally.

18 Q. So the METAR. Okay. And the METARs come out how often?
19 Do you remember? Is it every --

20 A. It's every --

21 Q. I can't remember.

22 A. For some it's every half and for other stations every hour.

23 Q. Right. Okay. All right. Good enough. Good enough. All
24 right. I got to -- if I can find out where you are here. Okay.
25 Sorry about that. I lost track of you for a second here. Got

1 so many notes. Oh, here we go.

2 And the location you get the NOTAMs from, is there a
3 specific location that you get on the Internet that you get the
4 NOTAMs from?

5 A. I don't remember the, I don't remember the website name.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Yeah.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Everybody dance.

9 MS. PRICE: Sorry.

10 BY MR. WEST:

11 Q. Okay -- okay. Got the letter. These routings, I'm very
12 interested in these routings that these pilots -- are they
13 totally in control of these routings? Do they -- I mean, is it
14 totally at the discretion of the pilots which way they fly?

15 MR. WILHELM: If you know.

16 BY MR. WEST:

17 Q. If you know, right. I mean, you guys do all this
18 discussion in the morning.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. You know, the risk assessment, the -- you know, all the
21 stuff that you agree on and everything. And I'm trying to
22 understand if Hageland has a pre-described, you know, VFR we're
23 talking here. IFR, I understand that. But VFR, is -- I'm not
24 under the impression that there's a pre-described actual routing
25 for the flight. It looks like the pilot has more of a

1 discretion of that. Do you guys have -- I mean, you know, other
2 than your tracking them through ADS-B, you know where they are,
3 but you guys, have you determined or talked about a certain
4 routing that they take?

5 A. No.

6 Q. No. See, this is where I'm confused because you're talking
7 about weather and you're agreeing on a risk factor and
8 everything. This is where you have your say. You're putting
9 your name on this risk assessment and yet the pilot seems to
10 have much more of a discretion of where he's going to fly, even
11 though that you've agreed to dispatch the airplane.

12 A. All right. Can you elaborate on your question? When you
13 say routing.

14 Q. The routing of where he's going to fly.

15 A. The routing we do discuss.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Okay. So where he will be. Like every destination, we do
18 discuss that.

19 MS. PRICE: When you say routing you mean destination? Is
20 that what you mean or -- he's talking specifically about where
21 the aircraft is physically around the mountains.

22 MR. DONIS: Okay. We agree on, when we dispatch them, what
23 route they will take.

24 BY MR. WEST:

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. That is what we do in our risk assessment. And I check
2 weather and NOTAMS for every place that he will be going.
3 That's what -- that's the part of it. Whether he goes one way
4 or the other, I don't know.

5 MR. WEST: Okay. Okay, I'm good. Thank you.

6 DR. WILSON: Okay. Noreen.

7 BY MS. PRICE:

8 Q. All right. Just a quick one. I may have missed it
9 earlier, but who dispatches the aircraft? Is that you or is
10 that base? Who assigns the aircraft to the flight itself?

11 A. I don't know.

12 Q. The specific aircraft.

13 A. The base.

14 Q. Okay. So if there was an MEL, say for instance ADS-B is
15 down, would you be aware of that --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- in your processes?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And -- or an instrument that might not be working so that
20 they couldn't go IFR, how would you know that an aircraft has
21 sight instruments that weren't working?

22 A. We have a bubble board that we check and on the bubble
23 board it has every aircraft and it's conducted by MCC, our
24 maintenance control.

25 Q. Okay. And then if there were special limitations or

1 procedures that would be required if something was MEL'd, are
2 you aware of those special limitations or procedures? Is that
3 part of the bubble board?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. Is that --

6 A. We go over that in the morning when I open.

7 Q. Okay. So --

8 A. Whenever there's a change to anything, we are in contact
9 with MCC.

10 Q. Do you remember if ADS-B was operating on this aircraft?

11 A. I don't remember.

12 Q. Okay. How about generally, have you seen instrumentation
13 being MEL'd for the right side, right seat, in any of your OCA
14 work?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. So you have seen MELs for instrumentation being not
17 operable on the right side?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Are there -- do you recall if there had been an SIC
20 assigned to the flight where the instrumentation was not
21 functional on the right side?

22 A. No.

23 Q. How often generally do -- are there MELs on an aircraft?
24 Is there usually one with each aircraft, do you have deferred
25 maintenance, or is it a rare occurrence?

1 A. Can you repeat that?

2 Q. How often in your opinion are items deferred, maintenance
3 items on the aircraft, that are dispatched? Is it a routine
4 thing, a pretty rare thing?

5 A. Day to day.

6 Q. Day to day. So every day how many aircraft do you guys --

7 A. I have no idea.

8 Q. How many are -- do you know how many aircraft you guys
9 control every day and assign to flights? Is it 20, 30, 40,
10 80 --

11 A. I don't know the number.

12 Q. -- 10? Okay.

13 A. It's quite a bit.

14 MS. PRICE: Okay. All right. That's all I have. Thanks.

15 BY DR. WILSON:

16 Q. Okay. I have a few follow-ups for you. You said that
17 after you spoke to the DO you initiated the emergency plan.
18 What is your specific responsibilities as a part of that
19 emergency plan?

20 A. We have a emergency checklist at the OCC that I go down.

21 Q. Okay. And you did that?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And I did this after I was instructed to by Luke --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- by our DO.

2 Q. Have you ever had to initiate the emergency plan before?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Does the company encourage flights to go VFR versus IFR?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. Since the accident have there been any changes to
7 procedures that you or pilots need to follow?

8 MR. WILHELM: I'm just going to just state for the record,
9 you know, that this is kind of an ongoing process and so things
10 are still being -- it's not necessarily one final thing in
11 place. So it's kind of a moving target. He can answer the best
12 he can.

13 A. I don't know.

14 Q. Okay. So you're not doing any -- you haven't been told to
15 do anything different since the accident.

16 A. I mean, I have, yes.

17 Q. What have you been told to do differently?

18 A. I mean, specifically -- can you ask that again?

19 Q. Sure. What have you been told specifically to do different
20 since the accident?

21 A. More IFR flying.

22 Q. Okay. Are all flights now IFR, or is it if they're going a
23 certain distance?

24 A. Can you ask that again?

25 Q. I was asking if all flights are required to go IFR, or if

1 it's based on a certain distance that a flight is?

2 A. If capable, yes.

3 Q. Okay. The flight following that you do, would you know
4 whether you were using ADS-B or Spidertracks?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. All right. What's the difference between the two, what you
7 would see?

8 A. The program that we have in front of us. I would have to
9 have it in front of me to tell you.

10 Q. Okay. So if you're flight following -- when you're flight
11 following aircraft do you see all the aircraft at one time on
12 the screen or do you have to pull up each individual flight
13 separately?

14 A. Yeah, we see all active aircrafts and we can zoom in and
15 follow each individual flight.

16 Q. Okay. So if -- and that would show up on the same screen
17 if some were using ADS-B and some were using Spidertracks? For
18 example, if ADS-B was inoperative.

19 A. Can you say that again?

20 Q. Sure. If ADS-B was inoperative on an aircraft, therefore
21 you would be using Spidertracks for the following, would those
22 aircraft show up on the same screen with aircraft using ADS-B?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. Can the GPWS ever be MEL'd? Or have you ever seen
25 it MEL'd?

1 A. Not that I recall.

2 Q. Okay. The schedule that you were working on October 2nd,
3 you said you came in at 6:00 a.m.

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. What time were you scheduled to work until?

6 A. 4:00.

7 Q. Is that a typical schedule for you?

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. What is your normal schedule? Days of the week that you
10 work and hours.

11 A. 6:00 to 4:00. Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday.

12 Q. Okay. Now I understand that this is going to be taxing
13 your brain a little bit, so if you don't remember it's okay,
14 just tell me. But I'm interested in your activities in the days
15 leading up to October 2nd, when you went to bed, when you went
16 -- when you might have woken up. Starting on Thursday,
17 September 29th, do you recall when you might have woken up that
18 morning?

19 A. On the -- on when?

20 Q. September 29th, so 3 days before Sunday which was the
21 accident day.

22 A. Yeah, usually -- this is usual. I don't remember --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- but usually around 8:00 a.m., wake up.

25 Q. And so given that it's your day off, what do your

1 activities typically include?

2 A. Well, like personally?

3 Q. I run errands --

4 A. Yeah, run errands.

5 Q. -- I hang out at the house. I mean --

6 A. Yeah, I run errands. Walk my dog, go to the park, visit my
7 family in Anchorage.

8 Q. Okay. Do you recall -- so that would have been -- so you
9 were off duty Thursday and Friday?

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. Those activities seem pretty routine for those 2 days?

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. Okay. On Thursday do you recall when you might have gone
14 to bed?

15 A. No, I don't know.

16 Q. Okay. That's okay. I know it's --

17 A. Around 10:00. That's normally when my body's like --

18 Q. Okay. And then on Friday you think your schedule would
19 have been about the same, awake around 8:00, asleep around
20 10:00?

21 A. I go to sleep earlier because of my shift.

22 Q. Okay. What time about before you have to go to work would
23 you go to bed?

24 A. 9:00 something.

25 Q. Okay. And for a 6:00 shift what time do you have to wake

1 up?

2 A. Usually around 5:00.

3 Q. Okay. And Saturday night what time do you think you might
4 have gone to bed?

5 A. Same thing, early.

6 Q. 9:00?

7 A. Yeah, because I got to work.

8 Q. Okay. And Sunday you would have woken up at 5:00?

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. Okay. Did you feel rested when you came to work?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Okay. Do you take any medications, either prescription or
13 non-prescription, that affects your performance or how you feel
14 during the day?

15 A. No.

16 Q. No? Okay. Do you wear glasses or contacts?

17 A. I do.

18 Q. Okay. Which one?

19 A. Both.

20 Q. Okay. Do you recall what you were wearing that day?

21 A. Glasses.

22 Q. Okay. Is there a medical required for doing this type of
23 work or -- most likely not, but do you have to do a medical
24 exam?

25 A. (Inaudible response.)

1 Q. No. Do you have any problems with hearing?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. Anything in the 3 days prior to the accident,
4 including the accident day, that was unusual or you think might
5 have affected how you were performing that day?

6 A. No.

7 Q. No? Okay. Have you ever called in sick to work?

8 A. Yes. For the first time this year last week.

9 Q. Okay. That's pretty impressive.

10 A. Um-hum.

11 Q. Any repercussions for calling in sick? The company
12 encourage you to come to work even if you are sick or --

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay.

15 DR. WILSON: All right. Any last questions, Marvin?

16 MR. FRANTZ: Just two follow-ups.

17 DR. WILSON: Okay.

18 BY MR. FRANTZ:

19 Q. In your position as an OCA you have your initial training,
20 you have -- did -- I believe you said you have annual recurrent
21 training. Do you have any kind of evaluation or check or test
22 that somebody does with you to, you know, sign you off or say,
23 yeah, you're qualified now? You did that initially -- or did
24 you do that initially? Was there an initial check that someone
25 sat with you or observed you doing your job and that you met

1 criteria, or do you recall anything like that for your initial
2 -- after your initial training?

3 A. For my initial, yes.

4 Q. Okay. And then is that something that is ongoing? Do you
5 have to do that every so often, have somebody observe or
6 evaluate you?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And do you know when the last time that was done for you,
9 do remember when that was?

10 A. I don't. It's ongoing. Greg's usually in there and --
11 yeah. Our manager.

12 Q. Is it ever -- is it a formal thing that he tells you, okay,
13 today we're going to evaluate your performance as an OCA? Is it
14 ever like that, or is it just he's always evaluating you because
15 he's always there overseeing?

16 A. Sometimes, yes. Sometimes it's more about I guess what he
17 does, you know.

18 Q. What percentage of the flights that you release are IFR
19 versus VFR, roughly what kind of ratio?

20 A. I'm not sure. Yeah, I'm not sure.

21 Q. Do you still do some of each though? Still there are some
22 flights that'll go IFR and others will go VFR, you still have a
23 mix?

24 A. Are you saying now?

25 Q. Yeah, now.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Okay. That's all I got. Thanks, Eddie.

3 DR. WILSON: Shaun?

4 MR. WILLIAMS: I don't have anything else.

5 DR. WILSON: Dave?

6 MR. LOWELL: I don't have any other questions.

7 DR. WILSON: Eric?

8 MR. WEST: No.

9 DR. WILSON: Noreen?

10 MS. PRICE: One really quick one.

11 BY MS. PRICE:

12 Q. I'm real curious about -- do you work off of computer
13 monitors or do you guys have a big LCD, LED screen on the -- in
14 your office?

15 A. That'd be cool.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Computer monitors.

18 Q. Okay. Thank you.

19 A. We have three.

20 Q. Okay. Thank you.

21 BY DR. WILSON:

22 Q. What do you typically have up on the three screens?

23 A. Flight following, weather, and maintenance.

24 Q. Okay.

25 DR. WILSON: What were you just asking about?

1 MR. FRANTZ: IFR, VFR ratio --

2 DR. WILSON: Right.

3 MR. FRANTZ: -- or evaluations.

4 DR. WILSON: Oh, right.

5 BY DR. WILSON:

6 Q. The two flights, the flight that Tim Cline was ISE -- or
7 PIC and then the flight that left a few minutes behind him, were
8 they both VFR flights, or did the second flight go IFR by
9 chance? Do you recall?

10 A. They were both released as VFR.

11 Q. Okay. And two more questions I forgot to ask you. Any
12 problems either falling asleep or staying asleep at night?

13 A. No.

14 Q. No? Okay.

15 A. Just my dog wakes me up.

16 Q. Do you recall if your dog woke you up in the 3 days --

17 A. I don't.

18 Q. -- before the accident? Got to ask.

19 MR. WILHELM: Don't have to answer that one.

20 BY DR. WILSON:

21 Q. Ever been diagnosed with a sleep disorder?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Ever seen a doctor for sleep problems?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. All right. Anything else that we didn't ask you

1 that you were hoping we would ask you, or anything that you want
2 to share that you think might be relevant to the investigation
3 or that could help us?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay. I'll give you one of my business cards. If anything
6 should come up -- we'll be doing this investigation for 12 to 18
7 months, so if something comes into mind that you think is
8 important, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. Thank you.

9 A. Okay.

10 DR. WILSON: Off the record.

11 (Whereupon, at 1:50 p.m., 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: FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER
 ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016
 TOGIAK, ALASKA
 Interview of Eddie Donis

DOCKET NUMBER: ANC17FA001

PLACE: Anchorage, Alaska

DATE: December 6, 2016

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 interview.

Nicolette Hernandez
Official Reporter

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER *
ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016, *
TOGIAK, ALASKA *

Docket No.: ANC17FA001

* * * * *

Interview of: CAYCE MORIN

NTSB Offices
Anchorage Federal Building
222 West 7th Avenue, Room 216
Anchorage, Alaska

Tuesday,
December 6, 2016

APPEARANCES:

SHAUN WILLIAMS, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

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

CAPTAIN MARVIN FRANTZ, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

JAMES RODRIQUEZ, Air Safety Inspector (Telephonic)
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

ERIC WEST, Air Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Accident Investigation and Prevention
Washington, D.C.

NOREEN PRICE, Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Anchorage, Alaska

Also Present:

DAVE LOWELL, Director of Safety
Hageland Aviation
Anchorage, Alaska

MARC WILHELM, Esq.
Richmond & Quinn
Anchorage, Alaska
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Morin)

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:02 a.m.)

1
2
3 DR. WILSON: Good morning, Cayce. Thank you for being with
4 us today. As I said, I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a human
5 performance investigator with the NTSB. The NTSB, if you're not
6 aware, is a -- we're a federal agency. We're charged with
7 investigating transportation accidents and determining probable
8 cause of those accidents. We are not a part of the DOT or FAA.
9 We don't have any enforcement authority or enforcement powers or
10 anything. So we're here strictly from the safety side of
11 things.

12 I want to go around the room and have everybody introduce
13 themselves so that you'll know who we are. Marvin.

14 MR. FRANTZ: Hi.

15 MR. MORIN: Hey.

16 MR. FRANTZ: Marvin Frantz. I'm a operational factors
17 investigator and I work with Katherine at the NTSB.

18 MR. WILLIAMS: Shaun Williams. I'm the investigator in
19 charge on the accident.

20 MR. LOWELL: Dave Lowell, Vice President of Safety for
21 Hageland Aviation.

22 MR. WEST: Eric West. I'm an accident investigator with
23 the FAA. I work in conjunction with the NTSB on safety matters.

24 MR. WILHELM: And Marc Wilhelm. I'm counsel for the
25 witness.

1 MS. PRICE: Noreen Price. I'm assisting Shaun Williams
2 with the investigation.

3 DR. WILSON: Great. So we're using the services of a court
4 reporter today who will record and then transcribe the
5 interview. The transcript, not the recording, will become a
6 part of the public record when -- as a part of this
7 investigation.

8 As I said, the purpose of this investigation is from the
9 safety side. We're going to determine probable cause to
10 hopefully prevent a reoccurrence of this event. We don't assign
11 fault or blame in the -- or liability as a part of this process.

12 This interview is routine. It's a part of our fact finding
13 phase of the investigation and we're here just to ask you
14 questions about your interactions with the accident crew and
15 also at the company. We cannot, however, guarantee
16 confidentiality or immunity.

17 We're going to -- I'm going to start asking the questions
18 and then each person at the table will have a chance to ask
19 questions as well. We'll do that one at a time. We'll most
20 likely do a second round of questions in case anybody has any
21 follow-ups after the first round of questions.

22 So please answer to the best of your -- yes?

23 MR. WEST: Don't we introduce the person on the --

24 DR. WILSON: Oh, I'm sorry. Yep.

25 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I just wanted to introduce myself.

1 DR. WILSON: Sorry, Jim.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: That's okay. I just wanted people to know
3 that I was on the phone. It's Jim Rodriquez from the NTSB's
4 Office of General Counsel. Thanks.

5 DR. WILSON: Thanks, Jim. So please answer to the best of
6 your recollection. If I ask you a question or anybody else that
7 you don't understand, ask us to clarify. If you don't know the
8 answer it's okay to say I don't know. Because we are using a
9 court reporter, if you could answer verbally versus a head nod
10 or an uh-huh. That's hard for the court reporter to transcribe
11 that.

12 You are entitled to have one representative of your
13 choosing. Who would you like that to be?

14 MR. MORIN: I guess be this guy right here.

15 DR. WILSON: Okay. And your role here is you may direct
16 Cayce to answer a question or not, but you cannot actually
17 answer questions for him. Do you have any questions before we
18 get started?

19 MR. MORIN: No.

20 INTERVIEW OF CAYCE MORIN

21 BY DR. WILSON:

22 Q. Okay. We will now begin the interview. For the record,
23 could you please state your full name?

24 A. Cayce James Morin.

25 Q. And what is your position?

1 A. I'm a pilot at Hageland.

2 Q. Okay. How long have you been in that position?

3 A. Since August of 2015.

4 Q. And as a pilot do you fly as pilot in command, second in
5 command?

6 A. Second in command.

7 Q. Okay. On what aircraft?

8 A. Cessna 208.

9 Q. And as a pilot, a second in command pilot, what are your
10 duties and responsibilities?

11 A. What do you mean by that?

12 Q. Do you have certain responsibilities in the cockpit, in the
13 flight planning?

14 A. Yeah. On my leg I, you know, take off and land, everything
15 that a pilot would do to conduct a safe flight.

16 Q. Okay. Do you perform the risk assessment prior to the
17 flight if it's your leg, or is that done by the PIC?

18 A. I would say that it's usually the PIC.

19 Q. Okay. Have you heard -- excuse me. Have you held any
20 other positions at the company?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What positions were those?

23 A. I used to be a ramper.

24 Q. Okay. And was that through Hageland, or were you with
25 another company?

1 A. Ravn.

2 Q. Oh, with Ravn. Okay. And when were you in that position?

3 A. 2013, 2014.

4 Q. Okay. Are you a safety pilot?

5 A. A safety pilot. No.

6 Q. No? Okay. About what's your total time in the Cessna 208?

7 A. Probably close to 800 hours.

8 Q. Okay. And total time all aircraft?

9 A. About 1,100 hours.

10 Q. Any of that PIC time?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Do you know about how much?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I'd have to look at my logbook.

16 Q. Okay. What other aircraft have you flown?

17 A. Cessna 152, Cessna 172, Piper Seminole and Piper Archer.

18 Q. And what certificates and ratings do you hold?

19 A. Commercial single engine, commercial multi-engine,
20 instrument rating. I guess that's it. My --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- commercial supersedes my private, so --

23 Q. Okay. So you're here today, it's my understanding, because
24 you've flown with Mr. Cline previously?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. How many times have you flown with him?

2 A. I don't know.

3 Q. No? More than five or --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Yeah. Okay. Do you recall the last time that you flew
6 with him?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. Do you know when that was?

9 A. It was the day before the accident.

10 Q. Okay. Walk me through the flight, what you all did, what
11 your interactions were like.

12 A. Well, it was several flights. Do you want to know one
13 specific flight or --

14 Q. No, just an overview of what your day with him was like.

15 A. Just normal day. It was my first day on shift. Just I
16 don't know, normal day.

17 Q. Okay. How many legs did you all fly?

18 A. I'd have to look at my sheet.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Maybe 12.

21 Q. Okay. Is 12 --

22 A. Sixteen is a -- 16 is a full sheet. I know we didn't fill
23 up a full sheet, but I know we flew the whole day, so --

24 Q. Okay. Was the schedule pretty -- you said it was a normal
25 day. Was the schedule you were flying, was that a normal type

1 schedule?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay. Do you recall any of the cities that you went to?

4 A. I'd have to look.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. What was the weather like when you all were flying that
8 day?

9 A. I would have to look. I don't know.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I -- it's been a while since that day.

12 Q. Sure. Do you recall what the risk assessment rating was
13 for that flight?

14 A. I don't.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. It would have been not a RA-3, which is the highest,
17 because -- I don't know. It was just a normal day, I think.

18 Q. Okay. Do you recall anything unusual about that day flying
19 with him, any changing weather conditions that made you have to
20 change your route of flight?

21 A. Not that I remember.

22 Q. Okay. Had you ever flown with Mr. Cline when there was a
23 change in weather conditions where you all had to alter your
24 flight route that you recall?

25 A. Not that I recall.

1 Q. Okay. Has that happened in general flying where there's a
2 change in weather conditions?

3 A. Yeah, sometimes.

4 Q. What's the process that you as a pilot would go through?

5 A. If the weather changes from what it was foreseen to be we'd
6 turn around.

7 Q. Okay. You would go back to your departure airport or would
8 you try to go around the weather?

9 A. We -- if it's, you know, really bad and widespread we'd go
10 back to base.

11 Q. Okay. When you have to do that do you make a call to
12 somebody? Do you call dispatch or do you call OCC?

13 A. Yeah, I call dispatch and they'll call OCC to get a
14 re-release.

15 Q. Okay. When you flew with Mr. Cline did he seem like the
16 type of pilot that was open to suggestions that you had or
17 opinions that you wanted to share about the flight?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Was there ever a time flying with him where you gave
20 a suggestion and he didn't seem open to your input?

21 A. No.

22 Q. No? Would you feel comfortable speaking up if you saw him
23 doing something that was not in line with standard operating
24 procedures?

25 A. Yeah, of course.

1 Q. Okay. Did you ever have to do that with him?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. Was Mr. Cline someone you enjoyed flying with?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. Did he ever discuss with you his experience flying
6 this type of airplane?

7 A. Yeah, I guess.

8 Q. Okay. Was it -- do you recall anything that he said about
9 it?

10 A. Just that he liked flying the plane. Yeah, he liked that
11 plane.

12 Q. Okay. How did he compare as a PIC to other PICs that
13 you've flown with at the company?

14 A. Like we talked about before, he's just really open to like
15 how you feel about things and I think he's a good teacher.

16 Q. Okay. If you had to describe what you thought his greatest
17 strength as a pilot was what would that be?

18 A. I don't know.

19 Q. Okay. Any areas where you thought as a pilot he could
20 improve?

21 A. I know he knows a lot more than me.

22 Q. Okay. Did you ever have any concerns when flying with him?

23 A. No.

24 Q. No? How would you characterize his personality? What was
25 he like?

1 A. Just down to earth, nice guy.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Did you ever hear any other pilots have any concerns when
5 flying with him? No?

6 A. Uh-uh.

7 Q. Okay. When you flew together did Mr. Cline use the
8 checklist, the required checklist?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. Ever see him take any unnecessary risks? Okay.

11 A. No.

12 COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry?

13 MR. MORIN: No.

14 COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

15 MR. MORIN: Sorry.

16 BY DR. WILSON:

17 Q. Did you ever see him doing any scud running or --

18 A. No.

19 Q. No? Okay. Have you ever had any other concerns when
20 flying at the company?

21 A. No. I mean the way it's set up it's like I feel really
22 safe on a daily basis. The guys that we fly with are -- they
23 know their stuff, so --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- I've had a good experience.

1 Q. During that -- during the flight with Mr. Cline the day
2 before the accident, did you all have any conversations about
3 the flight the next day?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. They schedule flights in the -- like sometimes at night or
7 in the morning.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. So usually you don't really know.

10 Q. Okay. So you might not know the day before what you're
11 flying the next day until later?

12 A. At least until like the -- you go home at night.

13 Q. Okay. Did you know the SIC, Drew Welty?

14 A. Not very well, no. I think that was like his second shift
15 or --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So I knew him from just being at the airport and stuff, but
18 I didn't know him very well.

19 Q. Okay. Did you ever socialize with Mr. Cline outside of
20 Hageland?

21 A. No. I mean, he had dinner with us a couple times, but he
22 lived at a separate house, so we didn't really -- those guys
23 hang out at their house and we hang out at our house.

24 Q. Okay. I know you said that the day before things seemed --
25 it was a normal day, but didn't -- in terms of Mr. Cline, did he

1 seem out of the ordinary in any way?

2 A. No. He seemed really happy. Like I remember talking to
3 him about he had a piece of property at -- in Montana. We
4 talked about his property. He had dirt bikes and he wanted to
5 go elk hunting.

6 Q. Okay. I forgot to ask you. Could you walk me through your
7 aviation background of how you got to Hageland? Cliff Notes
8 version of --

9 A. Cliff Notes version.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. I got my private pilot's license when I was a ramper. Went
12 and got my commercial and my instrument and my ratings. Came
13 back, applied at Hageland. They put me in ground school and
14 went through ground school and trained.

15 Q. Are you familiar with the risk assessment program enough to
16 explain it to me?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So, you know, you get your flight, you see where you're
20 going, check the weather, NOTAMs, get all that -- the normal
21 information you would want to have to conduct a flight. And
22 then you would call OCC and have a risk assessment sheet. So
23 you look over the risk assessment sheet, compare it to the
24 information you got from the weather and NOTAMs, information
25 like that. And then call OCC, tell them your route, your risk

1 assessment and then they'll give you a release.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Or sometimes they won't give you a release.

4 Q. Okay. This process, the risk assessment, do you sometimes
5 do that, or I believe you said usually --

6 A. Yeah, not --

7 Q. -- it's the PIC?

8 A. -- not as -- yeah, not as a SIC, no.

9 Q. When the PIC does this are you a part of the process? Are
10 you with him or her when she's doing it, or are you just -- do
11 you discuss it afterwards?

12 A. Not always. But like a lot of times as the SIC we're next
13 to the plane as they load it making sure that the load is right
14 and where it should be while the PIC is getting a release.

15 Q. Okay. And as the SIC do you do the walk around also?

16 Okay.

17 COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry?

18 MR. MORIN: Yes.

19 BY DR. WILSON:

20 Q. So it's the PIC that does the risk assessment, not the OCA?

21 A. The OCC I'm sure -- like the way I understand it is they --
22 they'll double check. So they're looking up the weather as
23 well. So when you give them the risk assessment, as I
24 understand it, if they agree then you can get released.

25 Q. Okay. The weather that you're reviewing, are you -- you're

1 reviewing that for the entire day or for a particular leg?

2 A. Both. I mean, there's TAFs. You're looking at TAFs.

3 You're looking at area forecast. You're looking at like if

4 weather's moving in, you know. But you're also looking, okay,

5 what's the weather going to be like on the route of flight. So

6 both.

7 Q. Okay. And is this -- to check the weather, is it a

8 computer that you log into, or is it an open computer that

9 pilots just walk up to to get the information?

10 A. It's open computer.

11 Q. Okay. Have you ever had a risk assessment of a 3 or a 4?

12 A. If you do like a check flight, they'll give you a 3.

13 Q. Okay. Did you ever feel that a rating should be higher

14 than it was? The PIC said it was a 2, but you thought it should

15 really be a 3?

16 A. What do you mean by a rating?

17 Q. Or the value, the risk assessment value.

18 A. A risk assessment?

19 Q. Uh-huh. No?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Are there assigned routes to fly between two airports, or

22 does the pilot determine the route that's going to be flown?

23 A. There's no assigned routes. I mean, they have --

24 there's -- no, but --

25 Q. Okay. Is it pretty typical that another Hageland airplane

1 may be flying the same route as you, but leaving 5, 10 minutes
2 behind, flying the same route?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Do you all communicate with each other?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What information are you sharing?

7 A. All kinds of stuff. Weather, what I did last week on my
8 time off. I don't know, just --

9 Q. So it's --

10 A. But we're usually in constant communication with each
11 other.

12 Q. Okay. Is there ever any competition between the flights
13 that have taken off, any bets made as to who's going to get
14 there first or faster or --

15 A. No.

16 Q. No? Have you ever heard of anybody doing that?

17 A. I haven't, no.

18 Q. Okay. Have you ever inadvertently flown into IMC?

19 A. If the weather gets bad, I mean, turn around. If it's --
20 if we see it's getting bad in front of us, turn around.

21 Q. Okay. Besides calling dispatch and OCC, if you have to do
22 that, do you -- is there any paperwork that has to be filled out
23 if you have to turn around? No?

24 MR. WILHELM: Can you say no audibly?

25 MR. MORIN: Oh. No. Sorry.

1 BY DR. WILSON:

2 Q. How do you like working for Hageland?

3 A. Love it.

4 Q. What do you like -- what do you love about it?

5 A. Just being able to fly planes across Alaska.

6 Q. Are you from this area?

7 A. I live in Fairbanks.

8 Q. Okay. Were you born and raised here or move here --

9 A. No.

10 Q -- as an adult?

11 A. I moved to Alaska in 2007.

12 Q. Okay. Do you ever feel any pressures from the company to
13 accept a flight or continue a flight?

14 A. No.

15 Q. How would you characterize morale among the pilot group?

16 A. Good.

17 Q. Okay. How's the pay, any ideas of how the pay compares to
18 other companies in the area?

19 A. I haven't really looked into it, so no.

20 Q. Okay. Could you describe the safety culture at Hageland?

21 A. What do you -- like what do you mean?

22 Q. How would you characterize the safety? Is it positive,
23 negative, do you feel like it's an open environment where you
24 can share concerns?

25 A. I would say it's -- yeah, it's positive and it's -- they're

1 open to -- we have some good systems in place for safety
2 concerns.

3 Q. Okay. What are those systems?

4 A. Well, they have the WBAT system.

5 Q. Any other systems?

6 A. OCC.

7 COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry?

8 MR. MORIN: OCC.

9 COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

10 BY DR. WILSON:

11 Q. Any opportunities to report a safety concern anonymously?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. How would you do that?

14 A. You can -- when you do the WBAT, you can -- I guess you log
15 in as your -- with your name, but you don't have to like sign
16 it, I guess.

17 Q. Okay. Is there a safety hotline that you could call?

18 A. I could call Dave.

19 Q. Okay. So if you had a safety concern what would be your
20 first means of reporting it?

21 A. Probably WBAT.

22 Q. Okay. Who do you report to?

23 A. Chief pilot.

24 Q. Chief pilot? Okay. Do you feel comfortable reporting
25 concerns?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Yeah? Have you ever done it?

3 A. Yeah. Not about flights really. More about like
4 equipment, like ground equipment, if it breaks or something like
5 that.

6 Q. Okay. Did you feel that the company followed up on your
7 concern and it was resolved?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. How did they communicate to you what they did?

10 A. They sent a guy out and he fixed it.

11 Q. Okay. Have you submitted -- was that through WBAT, or
12 through a different system that you used?

13 A. It was WBAT.

14 Q. Okay. If you needed to cancel a flight would you call
15 dispatch or OCC for that?

16 A. To cancel a flight.

17 MR. WILHELM: Kind of at what point? I mean are we --

18 BY DR. WILSON:

19 Q. How about you're at an airport, the weather's deteriorated,
20 you can't depart.

21 MR. WILHELM: So do you understand the question?

22 MR. MORIN: Not really.

23 BY DR. WILSON:

24 Q. Okay. So have you ever been -- you know, you've got
25 several legs that you're flying, you're not at base and you

1 can't depart because the weather has changed. Has that ever
2 happened to you?

3 A. I --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- yeah, I can't speak from experience.

6 Q. Okay. If that did happen, who would you call?

7 A. I would assume you would call dispatch.

8 Q. Okay. Ever have any concerns about flying the airplane?

9 A. No.

10 Q. How about the functionality of the controls and instruments
11 on the right side of the cockpit? Are they always working? Do
12 you ever find that they're not working or they're not
13 operational?

14 A. Not when we're flying.

15 Q. No? Okay. And when you are flying between different
16 airports you switch off legs between you and the PIC, or how is
17 it determined who will be the pilot flying?

18 A. It's determined by the PIC. There's no set -- we switch
19 every other leg, but -- it's common to switch every other leg.

20 Q. Okay. Are you trained for inadvertent IMC?

21 A. What do you mean?

22 Q. Does -- is it talked about either in ground school or is
23 there a simulator scenario where you might inadvertently fly
24 into instrument conditions?

25 A. We do have a simulator scenario like that.

1 Q. Okay. Is that in initial training, recurrent training?

2 A. Both.

3 Q. Okay. And what -- you mentioned that if you were to do --
4 inadvertently fly into IMC that you would turn around. Is that
5 what the training scenario focuses on?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. How about training for CFIT avoidance?

8 A. That is -- like the CFIT training -- you inadvertently fly
9 into IMC, the plane is to turn around and fly to Nome VFR.

10 Q. Okay. Do you receive training for crew resource
11 management?

12 A. Crew resource management?

13 Q. CRM.

14 A. Like how to -- how you're going to fly with the other pilot
15 or --

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. I don't know.

18 Q. Okay. Is the training that you received, initial and
19 recurrent, is that provided through Hageland or is it outsourced
20 to another company?

21 A. Hageland.

22 Q. Okay. How would you describe the quality of the training
23 and instructors?

24 A. Good. Long. Thorough.

25 Q. During any of your check rides you ever see the FAA

1 present?

2 A. I have not.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. You mean me specifically, right?

5 Q. Uh-huh. Yes.

6 A. Yeah, I have not, but I have seen other people -- FAA go on
7 other people's check rides.

8 Q. Okay. If someone commented -- asked you if Hageland was
9 like the Wild West, how would you respond to that?

10 A. What do you mean by the Wild West? I mean --

11 Q. That's what I'm asking you.

12 A. I would tell them I don't know --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- I don't know what they mean.

15 Q. Okay. Going back to crew resource management, how would
16 you describe Mr. Cline's crew resource management in the
17 cockpit?

18 A. Good.

19 Q. Yeah. Did he -- so in terms of he had -- how was his
20 communication between the two of you?

21 A. Good.

22 Q. Did he always seem to have good situation awareness of
23 where you were and what was going on with the airplane?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. Any concerns about his decision making or judgment?

1 Okay.

2 A. No.

3 Q. I think that's all that I have for now. I will pass it on
4 to Marvin.

5 MR. FRANTZ: Okay. Thank you.

6 BY MR. FRANTZ:

7 Q. Hi Cayce.

8 A. How's it going?

9 Q. How are you? Doing okay?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. If you need a break let us know.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. We'll try to not make this too long. You mentioned WBAT.
14 Can you tell me -- give me a brief synopsis of what that is,
15 what that system is, what that stands for, how it works?

16 A. It's a way of reporting safety concerns.

17 Q. Within Ravn?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And it's -- you can do it online or submit a written form?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. It's strictly for safety items, is that its main use?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Have you done any flying outside of Alaska?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How many hours did you -- have you flown in a non-Alaska

1 environment?

2 A. I'd have to look at my logbook. Probably 150 hours or so.

3 Q. Okay. What would you describe is the biggest challenge for
4 flying in Alaska with a 135 operation?

5 A. The cold.

6 Q Temperature? And I'm sorry, I may have missed it
7 initially. How many hours do you have flying in a 135 or any --
8 let's say any operation in Alaska, roughly?

9 A. Roughly 800 or 900 hours.

10 Q. Okay. Can you split that up? Could you say what
11 percentage of that was VFR, on a VFR flight plan versus an IFR
12 flight plan?

13 A. I couldn't really tell you.

14 Q. Is it a decent mix would you say --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- typically?

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. Okay. What was your last training event at Hageland?

19 A. My last training event?

20 Q. Or Ravn, I should say.

21 A. What do you, what do you --

22 Q. Ground school, flight training, flight check, what was the
23 last thing that you had to go through as part of your training?

24 A. I would guess recurrent or ground school. I guess 207
25 training.

1 Q. Okay. And you've never flown with an FAA inspector?

2 A. I think I have once.

3 Q. At this job or in another?

4 A. At this job, yeah.

5 Q. Okay. Was it a check ride --

6 A. No.

7 Q. -- or an observation?

8 A. It wasn't a check ride.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. As a PIC -- or a SIC. I was there and I know that there
11 was an FAA guy present, but I'm not really sure what he was
12 looking at.

13 Q. Okay. I want to ask you about the risk assessment. Is
14 that called an SFC form, or what do you -- the form that you
15 fill out, what's that called when they do the risk assessment?

16 A. We don't fill out a form.

17 Q. So how does the PIC do a risk assessment?

18 A. There's a card with different risk factors on it.

19 Q. Okay. And he just reviews that card and arrives at a risk
20 assessment category? Is that how it works?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Does it look like that?

23 A. Yes. Yep.

24 Q. Okay. Yeah, this is a Hageland form. It's from Section 14
25 of the --

1 A. GOM?

2 Q. Yeah, the GOM. It's called Hageland Aviation Safe Flight
3 Categories form. Okay. Okay. And when that form -- when the
4 PIC of the flight reviews that form, then did you say that's
5 when he'll make a call to the -- talk to an OCA and they will
6 review the form together basically over the phone? Is that the
7 general --

8 A. Can you repeat that?

9 Q. When an SIC -- sorry -- a PIC takes this form and arrives
10 at a risk assessment, it's then that he calls the OCC --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- and they will discuss and agree that the -- this is the
13 risk assessment number for this flight and -- or here's some
14 things to consider. Is that how it works?

15 A. Yes, to my knowledge.

16 Q. Okay. Have you ever seen or been on a flight that was
17 cancelled or that the PIC just said we're not going to do this
18 even before he called the OCC?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Was it weather related --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- do you remember? Okay. If there's a flight that
23 involves multiple legs for a day, how many -- does the PIC
24 conduct the risk assessment and the -- talk with the OCC before
25 every takeoff, or before just the beginning of the day when he's

1 starting the flights if it's multiple flights, multiple legs?

2 A. It's not before every takeoff, but it's not only at the
3 beginning of the day. It's before each flight, before a flight
4 is released. So if a flight has four legs, four takeoffs and
5 landings, it's still one flight. That is a flight from -- if
6 you're going three stops. So before you take off to go to those
7 three stops, check the weather for those three stops, you do the
8 risk assessment and talk to OCC. So you're doing it more than
9 just at the beginning of the day.

10 Q. Okay. But I just want to make sure I understand. Is there
11 a conversation with an OCA at each stop before you leave for the
12 next stop?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. There is. The PIC makes the phone call, calls the OCC
15 before he departs for each next destination?

16 A. On one flight is what you're asking?

17 Q. I guess I'm -- the terminology is confusing me. A flight
18 could be --

19 A. A flight could have three legs.

20 Q. Three legs or --

21 A. One flight number is one flight. So flight 3122 could have
22 three legs.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So before you depart on 3123 you're going to have to call
25 OCC again, but for 3122, that one flight, if it has three legs,

1 you're not calling him in Newtok saying, hey, I'm about to take
2 off from Newtok, this is what the weather is like.

3 Q. Is there any -- is there a process for the PIC to do any
4 kind of last minute check of the weather for his next
5 destination before he leaves one -- on just one flight? If he's
6 on the second leg of the flight, does he --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is that just informal? Is that the PIC's call as to what
9 level or how he checks the weather for the next station he's
10 going to?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. It's up to him to just make that determination?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Weather, how it's good, go or no-go. Okay.

15 A. And if it got worse from when we left, the common thing to
16 do is not go there. If it's down, if it's bad, we go back.

17 Q. Okay. I might have missed it. How long have you been an
18 SIC here, how many months, years?

19 A. A little over a year.

20 Q. Little over a year? Okay. Okay. That's all I have for
21 now. Thank you.

22 DR. WILSON: Shaun.

23 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

24 Q. Cayce, I just have a few questions here, try and wrap it up
25 for you. Okay. You stated before that the SIC does the

1 preflight. Correct?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you also do the interior as far as like the ground
4 proximity system? Do you know about how often that system is
5 tested?

6 A. As the SIC I don't test that, but I know that when they do
7 run-up they test it.

8 Q. Okay. So how often do they do a run-up?

9 A. Every morning.

10 Q. So just once a day?

11 COURT REPORTER: Audibly.

12 MR. MORIN: Yes.

13 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

14 Q. So the training system has an inhibit function on it. Do
15 you know about how often that's inhibited?

16 A. I do not.

17 Q. When it is inhibited is there -- it takes away the oral
18 warnings, but is there still a visual depiction of terrain?

19 A. I don't know. I've never -- I don't know.

20 Q. Have you ever heard it going off as you're --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q -- flying along?

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. What about the radar altimeter? Is there a company policy
25 or procedure on the use of it as far as what it should be set

1 at, or is that up to the pilot flying or the pilot in command?

2 A. I don't know. Yeah, I don't know. It's on the PIC side.

3 Q. Have you done this route, the Quinhagak to Togiak --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q -- flight before? Do you remember doing it as far as did
6 you go straight, did you go around those mountains? Do you
7 remember the route that you took?

8 A. Just VFR route. I mean, usually over.

9 Q. Okay. You don't remember the altitude by chance?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Just like a ballpark.

12 A. I --

13 Q. Have you done it at night?

14 A. No.

15 Q. When you're en route, say, between Quinhagak and Togiak, do
16 you guys -- do you have communication with OCC or any other
17 company personnel?

18 A. What do you mean by company personnel?

19 Q. Is there a way to get in touch with anybody like that has
20 operational control or --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. So how would you do that?

23 A. There's multiple ways. You could use a cell phone if you
24 really had to. You could use the radios.

25 Q. So by using the radios would you communicate directly with

1 Palmer to the OCC --

2 A. No.

3 Q -- or who would you be communicating with?

4 A. Base.

5 Q. Base. Okay. So one thing that's been -- I've heard
6 dispatch and we've used OCC. Are those two separate entities,
7 or is it the same thing?

8 A. What do you mean?

9 Q. Is dispatch the OCC, or is dispatch Bethel, or where is
10 dispatch?

11 A. It depends how you define dispatch because OCC is
12 dispatching flights, but -- so I guess informally we call base
13 dispatch.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But they're not, I guess, dispatching flights in the sense
16 of a dispatcher.

17 Q. So what would their role be, this base dispatch?

18 A. Base dispatch? To assign flights and print manifests and
19 record off/on times.

20 Q. Do they give any weather updates or anything like that to
21 you guys?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. And last one for me here. Can you categorize or
24 kind of give me a ballpark as far as how often flights are VFR
25 versus IFR? Do you do more of one than the other?

1 A. Now it's all IFR.

2 Q. Everything is?

3 A. Pretty much everything.

4 Q. Is that since the accident?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And -- okay. I promise this is the last one. Who makes
7 the --

8 MR. WILHELM: Shaun, you're going to get a reputation as a
9 lawyer here. One -- always one more question.

10 BY MR. WILLIAMS:

11 Q. Who makes that determination if it's going to be IFR versus
12 VFR? Prior to the accident. Since, now everything is IFR.
13 Prior to the accident who made the determination?

14 A. If it's more than 20 miles it has to be IFR. Company
15 policy.

16 Q. Since the accident?

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. What about before the accident, do you remember who made
19 that call?

20 A. If it's going to be IFR or VFR?

21 Q. Correct.

22 A. It's kind of company because we have specific minimums that
23 -- so it's kind of the FAA because they have specific minimums.
24 Whatever's legal to do the flight. And then if it's legal to go
25 VFR, a guy might choose to go VFR.

1 MR. WILLIAMS: Okay. Do you have any questions?

2 MR. LOWELL: I have no questions.

3 DR. WILSON: Great. Eric.

4 BY MR. WEST:

5 Q. I'd sure like to get that cleared up. First of all, I'm
6 unfamiliar with the procedures here in Alaska versus -- flying
7 IFR versus VFR. Is there full radar coverage here in Alaska?

8 A. I don't know.

9 Q. Yeah, I don't either. Does anybody know?

10 Shaun, do you know if there's full --

11 MR. LOWELL: I do.

12 MR. WEST: There is full --

13 MR. LOWELL: There is not.

14 MR. WEST: There is not?

15 MR. LOWELL: No.

16 MR. WEST: So -- okay. So you're flying along -- and you
17 don't have to answer this. You're flying along here in Alaska
18 and you don't have full radar coverage. How can you fly IFR
19 then?

20 MR. LOWELL: There's many locations you cannot.

21 MR. WEST: Okay.

22 MR. LOWELL: Even if they have instrument approaches they
23 may not have communications or radar.

24 MR. WEST: So everything is done by timing? Or how can you
25 file an IFR flight plan?

1 MR. LOWELL: You can't to a --

2 MR. WEST: You can't.

3 MR. LOWELL: -- to a non-supported area.

4 MR. WEST: Okay. And I know he can't answer this question.
5 How could -- then can Hageland fly into areas IFR that aren't
6 supported then?

7 MR. LOWELL: We don't.

8 MR. WEST: Okay. All right. Thank you.

9 BY MR. WEST:

10 Q. I need to get something squared away here about CRM. Do
11 you know what CRM is?

12 A. Yes, crew resource management.

13 Q. Okay. And have you been trained in CRM with your company?

14 A. I guess not specifically. I'm not part of a two-person
15 crew. I mean, we are a two-person crew, but --

16 Q. So I'm just wondering, is there a formal CRM training
17 course that you've taken with Hageland?

18 A. Not that I recall.

19 Q. Okay. I don't know if Marvin covered this, but what type
20 of recurrent training do you receive on a regular basis and how
21 often do you receive it?

22 A. Once a year, ground school.

23 Q. Ground school. Okay.

24 A. Yeah. And there's also online courses that they send out
25 to us throughout the year. But I don't have a specific timeline

1 on when they send those out

2 Q. Do you have a check ride every so often as well?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. So that's part of your training as well. So what
5 does that entail?

6 COURT REPORTER: Audibly.

7 MR. MORIN: Oh, yes.

8 BY MR. WEST:

9 Q. So what does that entail and how often is that?

10 A. The check ride?

11 Q. Yes.

12 A. It's once a year.

13 Q. Once a year. And have you had one since you've been with
14 the company?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. Could you just give me a 25 cent version of what
17 that check ride entailed?

18 A. A normal. A maneuvers. Just a check ride.

19 Q. Okay. And you passed.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. All right. Let me ask you now, what is the average
22 length of a flight that -- and you mentioned you had a list of
23 12 of them you took say in the course of a day. What is the
24 average length?

25 A. I don't know.

1 Q. You don't. And I was going to ask you what your short one
2 was and what your long one was, but that's not going to be
3 there. All right. So let me ask you this. When you take these
4 flights, what is the average length of a stay over at a
5 particular location?

6 A. I don't know. It depends.

7 Q. So it varies?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. When you go to these locations -- and once again,
10 they can vary in types of locations you go to, but do these
11 locations vary in types of support that they offer? In other
12 words, when you go to a place, can they have computers, say,
13 that you could go look up weather?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Do all of them have that?

16 A. No.

17 Q. No. Okay. Are some of them towered?

18 A. What do you mean?

19 Q. Do some of the airports have FAA towers?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. Many of them don't though?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. They're --

24 A. Yes, they don't.

25 Q. -- uncontrolled airports?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Okay. Have you ever been to the Palmer to see the
3 dispatch office?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. And you've met some of the people that --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- the -- what do they call them, OCAs? Is that what
8 they're referred to, OCAs?

9 A. Operational control agents.

10 MR. WEST: Agents. Okay. Okay, I'm done. I got that IFR
11 thing out of the way.

12 DR. WILSON: Okay. Noreen, did you have anything?

13 MS. PRICE: I just have a couple quick ones. Are you doing
14 okay? Thanks.

15 COURT REPORTER: Can you get closer to the microphone?

16 MS. PRICE: Sure.

17 BY MS. PRICE:

18 Q Yeah, what are your VFR weather minimums, what are the
19 company minimums for deciding whether you go VFR? Do you know?

20 A. Yes, I know. Yes, I know, but I'm just kind of flustered
21 right now and my brain's --

22 Q. That's okay. No, that's all right. We can look at them.
23 No big deal. Are you permitted to -- if you're on a VFR flight
24 to -- and the weather starts getting bad, to cancel and proceed,
25 pick up an IFR clearance and proceed IFR, or are your procedures

1 to turn around and go back to base?

2 A. Usually to go back.

3 Q. Have you ever seen anybody pick up an IFR clearance in the
4 middle of a leg and continue that way?

5 A. Not that I recall.

6 Q. Okay. That's all I have.

7 A. But yeah.

8 BY DR. WILSON:

9 Q. Okay. I know we've been going at this for a bit of time,
10 but I do have a few clarifying questions. You need a break or
11 anything?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. As a part of your training do you ever go in the
14 simulator for recurrent?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. Is that every year?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. So now that you're required to -- if you're going
19 farther than 20 miles it's an IFR, considered an IFR flight,
20 what as a pilot are you doing differently now that it's an IFR
21 flight versus VFR?

22 A. Sitting on the ground longer picking up IFR clearances.

23 Q. Okay. But in terms of the route, does that change at all?

24 A. Obviously, yeah.

25 Q. Okay. Walk me through what -- so now what's different?

1 A. You go -- you fly the route that center -- I mean, usually
2 it's direct, but if you have to go to a fix or whatever --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- that's going to be different. And the altitudes are
5 obviously different.

6 Q. Okay. Right. When do you call base? Do you call base
7 before every takeoff? Do you call base when you land? What
8 communication do you have with base during a flight?

9 A. Call base when you take off, tell them how many souls, how
10 much fuel. You call base when you're inbound so they know that
11 you're coming back, when to expect you back.

12 Q. Okay. How far out would you be calling base for that?

13 A. Usually we like to call them as far out as we can reach
14 them because -- so that they know when to expect us.

15 Q. And is that for every leg, or is that for a flight?

16 A. That is for a flight?

17 Q. Okay. Can you check the weather in flight?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. Is that an onboard radar system, or do you carry an
20 iPad or how are you doing that?

21 A. It's the Capstone.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. You can look up weather on there.

24 Q. Okay. Do you do that frequently during a flight?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Okay. Do you receive training, was there a module on how
2 to complete that risk assessment form?

3 A. Yes, in the -- like in initial?

4 Q. Uh-huh.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay. Did you feel like it was clear as to how to fill it
7 out?

8 A. It's pretty straightforward.

9 Q. Okay. The flight, when is it determined that there will be
10 an SIC on board? Some of the flights can be a PIC only. Yes?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Do you know how it's determined when there's going to be an
13 SIC on board?

14 A. I do not, no.

15 Q. Okay. Do you get a monthly schedule? Do you know when
16 you're going to be flying or what days you're going to be
17 working?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q Okay. And then you mentioned that -- how far out do you
20 get a schedule?

21 A. A week or so. And it -- when you say a schedule, it's not
22 like -- they don't tell you what flights you're going to go on
23 or anything.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. It's just you'll be here from this date to this date.

1 Q. Okay. So it's like an -- is it considered --

2 A It's a line.

3 Q. -- on call or --

4 A. No.

5 Q. -- you're at the airport? Where do you stay during those
6 times?

7 A. The pilot housing.

8 Q. Okay. And then it could be the day before that you're
9 finding out when you're going to fly the next day?

10 A. No. Like -- what do you mean by that?

11 Q. So you know that you're going to be working let's just say
12 a Monday through Friday schedule and you're going to be at the
13 housing, and then how do you know what specific flights you're
14 going to be flying?

15 A. Either the night before or you come in, in the morning,
16 look at the flight strip. The flight strip will tell you you're
17 in this plane going here.

18 Q. Okay. And does it vary day to day what route you're flying
19 and also -- or what flight you're flying and also who you're
20 flying with?

21 A. Usually you stay with the same person.

22 Q. Okay. For how long, a week or longer, shorter?

23 A. I say usually you stay with the same person, but things --
24 things change. So sometimes it's a week, sometimes it's 2
25 weeks, sometimes it's a few days.

1 Q. Who do you get your schedule from?

2 A. Which schedule?

3 Q. So your -- you know you're going to be working a certain
4 week or 2 weeks. Do you get that from the chief pilot, do you
5 get it from --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- base?

8 A. Chief pilot.

9 Q. Okay. Chief pilot. Can you explain to me the difference
10 between -- so there's OCAs. Are there flight coordinators too,
11 or are OCAs considered flight coordinators?

12 A. I don't know what you mean by flight coordinator.

13 Q. Okay. You haven't heard flight coordinator before? Okay.
14 So are the OCAs doing any sort of flight following while
15 you're en route?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Okay. But you're not in direct communication with them.

18 A. No.

19 Q. Thanks. You're doing better at remembering that than I am.
20 So if -- have you ever been contacted in flight, let's say, from
21 base that the OCA was trying to get a hold of you?

22 A. Not that I recall.

23 Q. Okay. In your training was there any mention of the St.
24 Mary's accident or other accidents that Hageland has had that
25 they use as examples as a part of training?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Do you recall which ones?

3 A. St. Mary's.

4 Q Okay. And what -- do you recall what they talk about
5 and --

6 A. They don't really --

7 Q. -- what are they trying to reinforce?

8 MR. WILHELM: Now given that there's still litigation going
9 on against St. Mary's I'm not comfortable having this person
10 talk about the St. Mary's accidents. I'm going to ask him not
11 to answer.

12 DR. WILSON: Okay.

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hey, Marc?

14 MR. WILHELM: Yes.

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I mean if our guys want to ask questions we
16 can ask and he can decline to answer it. Just because it's --
17 there's litigation ongoing outside of our investigation, that's
18 not a reason for us not to ask questions.

19 DR. WILSON: Can we go off the record for a minute?

20 THE REPORTER: Off record.

21 (Off record at 9:07 a.m.)

22 (On record at 9:09 a.m.)

23 COURT REPORTER: Back on the record.

24 BY DR. WILSON:

25 Q. As a part of the training does Hageland discuss any

1 previous CFIT accidents?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. And what specifically do they -- are they providing
4 to you?

5 A. They're using it as an example to teach us about OCC and
6 explain to us why OCC is -- why we use it and how it got
7 started, how it works.

8 Q. Okay. Do they discuss any other changes at Hageland since
9 the accident as a part of training?

10 A. No.

11 Q. No? Okay. Has any information been shared about this
12 accident with pilots?

13 A. No.

14 Q. No. Okay.

15 DR. WILSON: I think that's all the questions that I have.
16 We'll go around one more time and see if anybody else has any
17 additional follow-ups. Marvin?

18 MR. FRANTZ: I have none. Thanks.

19 DR. WILSON: Shaun?

20 MR. WILLIAMS: I have nothing.

21 DR. WILSON: Eric.

22 BY MR. WEST:

23 Q. I just wanted to clarify what you meant by OCAs versus
24 flight following. When I think of flight following I'm thinking
25 of contacting air traffic control under, usually under VFR

1 conditions and having them assist pilots in getting assistance
2 during flying. Do the OCAs in any way contact flight -- contact
3 air traffic control and get assistance for you guys --

4 A. No.

5 Q. -- when you're flying VFR?

6 A. No.

7 Q. No. Okay. So OCAs provide flight following themselves.

8 A. They're not providing flight following, no.

9 Q. Okay. They're just providing maybe weather information
10 or --

11 A. We're not in direct contact with them as we're flying.

12 Q. I see. I see. Okay. Good. That clears that up.

13 MR. WEST: That's all I have.

14 DR. WILSON: Okay. Is there anything else that you would
15 like to share with us that you think is relevant to the accident
16 or the pilots or the company that might help us with our
17 investigation?

18 MR. MORIN: No.

19 DR. WILSON: Okay. We appreciate you taking the time to
20 talk to us today. I will give you my business card. If you
21 think of anything please feel free to reach out to myself or
22 Shaun or any of us here with any information that you might
23 have. Thank you.

24 Off the record.

25 (Whereupon, at 9:12 a.m., the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: FLIGHT 3153, AIR TAXI AND COMMUTER
 ACCIDENT, OCTOBER 2, 2016
 TOGIAK, ALASKA
 Interview of Cayce Morin

DOCKET NUMBER: ANC17FA001

PLACE: Anchorage, Alaska

DATE: December 6, 2016

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 interview.

Nicolette Hernandez
Official Reporter