

Docket No. SA-534

Exhibit No. 2-BV

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF BARRY MITCHELL, PG&E
(JAN-7-2011)

(32 Pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY *

SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 ACCIDENT *

Docket No. DCA-10-MP-008

SAN BRUNO, CALIFORNIA *

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Interview of: BARRY MITCHELL

Marriott Hotel
San Francisco Airport
1800 Bayshore Highway
Burlingame, California 94010

Friday,
January 7, 2011

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to
notice.

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Investigator-in-Charge

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1 chosen Dane to be present. My name is Barry Mitchell. I live at
2 . My work email is
3 . Do you need my home phone?

4 MR. JAQUES: Why don't you use your work phone?

5 MR. MITCHELL: My work phone is .

6 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you for that. Now I'd like to go
7 around the room and have each person introduce themselves. Please
8 state your name, spelling of your name and title, and organization
9 that you represent, starting with PG&E.

10 MR. DAUBIN: Brian Daubin, PG&E, and the information is
11 on the card provided.

12 MR. FASSETT: Bob Fassett, PG&E. It's on my card.

13 MS. JACKSON: Connie Jackson, City of San Bruno, and the
14 information is on my card.

15 MS. FABRY: Klara Fabry, City of San Bruno. The
16 information is on the card.

17 MR. SHORI: Sunil Shori, California Public Utilities
18 Commission. My information is on the card I already provided.

19 MR. KATCHMAR: Peter Katchmar, United States Department
20 of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety
21 Administration, PHMSA, and my information's on the card.

22 MR. GUNTHER: Karl Gunther, NTSB, operations group
23 chair. karl.gunther@NTSB.gov. Phone, 202-314-6478.

24 MS. MAZZANTI: Debbie Mazzanti, IBEW, Local 1245, and my
25 information is on the card.

1 MR. SPERRY: Joshua Sperry, Engineers and Scientists of
2 California, Local 20, IFPTE. My information has been provided.

3 MR. NICHOLSON: Matthew Nicholson, NTSB, spelled
4 Matthew, M-A-T-T-H-E-W, Nicholson, N-I-C-H-O-L-S-O-N. Contact
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6 MR. CHHATRE: Ravindra Chhatre. Email is
7 ravindra.chhatre. My phone number is 202-314-6644.

8 MR. NARVELL: Rick Narvell, N like in Nancy, A-R-V-E-L-
9 L, Human Performance Group Chair, NTSB, Washington, D.C. Phone is
10 202-314-6422. Email is narvell@NTSB.gov.

11 MR. JAQUES: Dane Jaques on behalf of the witness, and
12 my information is on the business card provided.

13 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you all. Karl, do you want to go
14 first or --

15 MR. GUNTHER: Yeah, I'll start first.

16 INTERVIEW OF BARRY MITCHELL

17 MR. GUNTHER: Karl Gunther, NTSB.

18 BY MR. GUNTHER:

19 Q. I'd like to get your job title and affiliation.

20 A. Gas System Operator with Pacific Gas and Electric.

21 Q. And what is your educational qualifications?

22 A. I completed high school and I have some college.

23 Q. Have you had any courses in SCADA and things?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. Basically what I'd like you to do is on a day --

1 go back to the day of the accident, just start from the beginning
2 and just what you saw and what you did.

3 Q. Starting with the morning?

4 MR. JAQUES: Why don't you give him an overview and then
5 you can go into detail.

6 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. Went into work that day. It was a
7 normal day shift. There was nothing to make it any different than
8 any other. It wasn't extremely busy or extremely slow. That
9 afternoon a clearance was started as Milpitas terminal to replace
10 the UPS system. I went out to lunch late that afternoon and when
11 I came back the clearance had already begun.

12 At some point after 5:00 we lost SCADA with Milpitas
13 terminal. I started working with Oscar Martinez to try to solve
14 that problem, and then after that we had the line rupture and we
15 were involved in dispatching crews or I was involved in
16 dispatching crews and communicating with people in the field and
17 with the engineers that were getting involved.

18 Q. All right. Well, I tell you what, that's a good
19 overview. Start with the Milpitas clearance and then can you go
20 into some detail?

21 A. About the clearance itself?

22 Q. No. I mean from the time that you started seeing in
23 Milpitas to the time that you were off your shift.

24 A. Like I said, after 5:00 we did lose SCADA with Milpitas.
25 I was looking at the screen and I could see that most of the

1 valves appeared to be shut. We had some crazy pressures,
2 indications that couldn't possibly be right. And shortly after
3 that we started seeing some pipe pressures downstream of Milpitas.
4 That would be the peninsula and also into San Jose as I recall.

5 Q. Let's see, once you noticed that the problem was real
6 did you call any outside authorities like 911 or anything like
7 that?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. No more questions for now.

10 MR. DAUBIN: No questions.

11 MR. FASSETT: No questions.

12 MS. JACKSON: No questions.

13 MS. FABRY: No questions.

14 MR. SHORI: Sunil Shori, California Public Utilities
15 Commission.

16 BY MR. SHORI:

17 Q. Mr. Mitchell, you indicated you were involved in the
18 clearance going on at Milpitas.

19 A. When I came back from lunch the clearance had begun and
20 I was made aware of that situation.

21 Q. But the way it works in the control where you were at,
22 is that a clearance assigned to you to oversee or work with?

23 A. Not in person, no.

24 Q. And so you said the clearance had started by the time
25 you got back from lunch. Had you had any discussions related to

1 that with anybody that had Milpitas prior to its starting, prior
2 to the clearance starting?

3 A. No, I had not.

4 Q. And when you lost communication with Milpitas you said
5 you spoke with Oscar Martinez and worked with Oscar -- Mr.
6 Martinez to troubleshoot. Can you convey what was the first
7 discussion or the first time you spoke with him related to this
8 matter on that day?

9 A. I communicated to him that we had lost SCADA, that I
10 couldn't see what was happening at Milpitas any longer, and that
11 we were experiencing high pressures downstream, that we were on
12 monitor control, that something was open is what I said, I
13 believe.

14 Q. And what did he indicate to you, what did he convey to
15 you? Is that something that he may have seen also or that was the
16 first that he had been made aware of that?

17 A. I don't remember.

18 Q. Do you know what he was doing at the time when you
19 called him, when you spoke to him?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Did he convey to you what he was going to be doing in
22 regard to your contact with him?

23 A. Do you mean after I started talking to -- can you
24 clarify that again?

25 Q. Sure. When you started -- when you called him you

1 talked to him about it and indicated to him, again, what you have
2 stated, that you were seeing high pressure conditions or high
3 pressures?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And you conveyed that to him?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Did he convey to you what he was going to be doing or
8 what -- did you convey anything to him in terms of what you
9 expected him to do?

10 A. I think I asked him what was going on.

11 Q. And what did he tell you?

12 A. I think he was unsure.

13 Q. And, again, did he convey anything in terms of what he
14 was going to be doing to -- you know, going forward from there?

15 A. Not that I recall.

16 Q. And what did you proceed to do after this first contact
17 with Mr. Martinez?

18 A. To bring the pressures back down to normal range on the
19 peninsula, downstream of Milpitas I should say. I started asking
20 him if we could -- if he could look around in the yard so we could
21 determine what was causing the high pressures, what was open that
22 was causing the high pressures.

23 Q. So, again, going back to my initial question, so that
24 wasn't the same conversation?

25 A. It probably was the first conversation, but I'm not

1 sure.

2 Q. Okay. When did you next speak with Mr. Martinez? So
3 after that -- let's assume that's your first conversation. When
4 did you next speak with Mr. Martinez?

5 A. We had a series of conversations, so I asked him to go
6 check something, to go check if this valve -- what's the position
7 of this valve. He told me. I told him to close it because it
8 shouldn't have been open. We went through a series of valves that
9 way.

10 Q. Which valve was it that you told him to check or close
11 that shouldn't have been open?

12 A. That would be the station bypass valve.

13 Q. And do you recall what valve number that is?

14 A. Sixty-five or sixty-eight. I'd have to see the drawing.

15 Q. And how did you know that that valve was open and it
16 should have been closed?

17 A. I didn't know that it was open. Since I couldn't see
18 anything from SCADA I was trying to use Oscar as my eyesight by
19 having him check local -- to check things that I thought were
20 possible causes of the problem.

21 MS. MAZZANTI: Off the record for a minute. I'm sorry.

22 MR. CHHATRE: Hold on. Off the record.

23 (Off the record.)

24 (On the record.)

25 MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record. Go ahead, Sunil.

1 MR. SHORI: Sunil Shori, California PUC.

2 BY MR. SHORI:

3 Q. How did you identify those particular valves for Mr.
4 Martinez to go look at? And, again, there's a lot of valves in
5 Milpitas.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. How did you decide which particular valves for Mr.
8 Martinez to go examine?

9 A. There's two real obvious culprits and one of them is the
10 station bypass valve, and the other one is the mixer bypass valve.
11 I prioritize those two.

12 Q. Did you have discussions then after that -- let me back
13 up a minute. So did Mr. Martinez get back to you in terms of
14 having looked at those valves?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. What did he convey to you after he had looked at those
17 valves?

18 A. They were open --

19 Q. And your --

20 A. -- as I recall.

21 Q. -- understanding of the positions on those valves
22 normally is they would be closed?

23 A. Absolutely.

24 Q. Do you have any idea -- and, again, these are control
25 valves. These are valves that are remote controlled?

1 A. That's correct.

2 Q. Had you as an operator opened those valves?

3 A. Have I ever in the past opened those valves?

4 Q. No, no. Let me make my question clear. At this event,
5 at this time, those would be normally closed valves or the valve
6 would be expected to be closed?

7 A. Under normal station operations, yes.

8 Q. Had you sent any command or any signal to open those
9 valves?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Did Mr. Martinez convey to you as to what he had found
12 as far as -- had he done anything to open those valves?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Did he convey anything further to you in terms of what
15 he did to close those valves or what was he doing to resolve the
16 fact that these valves were open?

17 A. I believe I directed him to close them.

18 Q. Do you recall what time this was?

19 A. I can give you a range.

20 Q. That's fine.

21 A. Between 1730 and 17 -- and 1800.

22 Q. Are these valves specific in terms of -- with the bypass
23 as far as there's only -- are there only these two valves that are
24 bypass for the Milpitas terminal to the mixer?

25 A. I'm not sure I understand the question. Can you say it

1 again?

2 Q. Between the gas supply coming into the terminal and to
3 the mixer, between the supply coming in and the mixer, are these
4 the only bypass valves?

5 A. Yes. If I understand your question correctly, yeah.

6 Q. There's not another parallel run of bypass valves?

7 A. No, those two.

8 Q. Okay. And did Mr. Martinez convey to you that after you
9 had asked him to get those closed he was able to get them closed?

10 A. I believe so, yes.

11 Q. Did he convey to you anything about any other valves
12 that he had looked at in the meantime at the time you had that
13 conversation with him?

14 A. Not that I recall.

15 Q. Did he convey to you anything about what he was going to
16 be doing next while you were talking to him?

17 A. I'm really not sure. I really don't remember.

18 Q. Did he convey anything to you in regard to why he
19 believed those bypass valves had gone open?

20 A. Not that I recall, no.

21 Q. When did you next speak with -- well, how did you
22 proceed after that conversation with Mr. Martinez, what did you do
23 next within your scope of the work?

24 A. Well, I was looking at the SCADA screen trying to figure
25 out, you know, how to proceed next with trying to reduce the

1 pressure once we did those two things.

2 Q. Were you involved in the process to basically restrict
3 flow coming into the Milpitas terminal from sources outside the
4 station?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What did you do to do that?

7 A. I was instructed by Mr. Ceniceros to set the pressure at
8 Sheridan Road to 370 pounds, I believe, and also at POS-7A and 7B
9 also to 370.

10 Q. And why was that done?

11 A. That would be one method of controlling the pressure
12 downstream of Milpitas to get it back down to range.

13 Q. At the time this was all going on did you have any
14 concerns that overpressure protective devices at Milpitas terminal
15 were not functioning?

16 A. Not at all. We were completely under monitor control.

17 Q. And how did you determine that or how do you determine
18 that?

19 A. By observing all the downstream pressures.

20 Q. Did you have any further conversations with anybody down
21 at Milpitas terminal beyond -- after that last conversation with
22 Mr. Martinez that you talked about?

23 A. I only spoke to Oscar and we did have a series of
24 conversations, but it's very difficult for me to be specific about
25 them.

1 Q. Did you -- are those -- did you make any notes on those?
2 Did you -- what device were you using when you were communicating
3 with Mr. Martinez?

4 A. I was using the telephone.

5 Q. A cell phone, your --

6 A. No, the --

7 Q. -- office phone?

8 A. Yeah, the basic office line, yes.

9 Q. And I'll ask one more time. So as far as any of the
10 conversations beyond that what -- do you recall any other
11 discussions with Mr. Martinez and what they were about?

12 A. I asked him at one point if he could undo what he had
13 done and, if so, that we could get SCADA back so I could see what
14 was happening.

15 Q. Thank you. That's it.

16 MR. KATCHMAR: Peter Katchmar, U.S. DOT.

17 BY MR. KATCHMAR:

18 Q. Does the station bypass valve actually bypass the
19 station, allow the gas to bypass the station?

20 A. Yes, it does. If the station was out of service for
21 some reason you could supply the peninsula and San Jose via that.

22 Q. Okay. Is that the reason that you had to go upstream to
23 the Milpitas station to close or hinge down those valves to drop
24 the pressure downstream of Milpitas?

25 A. You mean because the bypass was open? Is that why we

1 went to the POS-7 at Sheridan Road? No. I believe I instructed
2 Mr. Martinez to close it.

3 Q. How long do you think that valve was open?

4 A. Probably when we lost SCADA, but I'm not sure.

5 Q. Okay. And if the station is being bypassed that takes
6 the monitor on line 132 in the station out of line? I mean if
7 you're bypassing the station and that monitor valve was in the
8 station --

9 A. The station bypass has its own monitor.

10 Q. Okay. Well, what is that set at?

11 A. 385.

12 Q. Okay. All right. So you're fairly certain that the
13 pressures downstream of that wouldn't have seen anything higher
14 than that?

15 A. I'm sure of it. I was looking at it.

16 Q. Okay. All right, good. It's just something I hadn't
17 heard before. We needed to get that on the record. Can you tell
18 me what you think happened?

19 A. You mean -- to what?

20 Q. What -- oh, I'm sorry. Could you tell me what you think
21 happened that caused the rupture to the pipe?

22 MR. JAQUES: I'm going to object. It's outside of the
23 scope of this witness's background and --

24 MR. KATCHMAR: I asked the same question to the
25 gentleman that was standing besides him yesterday.

1 MR. JAQUES: I must not have been listening that
2 closely. I'm sorry. It's objectionable. How would he know
3 what's going on with the mechanics of the pipeline?

4 MR. KATCHMAR: No. I asked him what did you -- you
5 know, I asked has there any conjecture been, you know, discussed
6 afterwards and --

7 MR. JAQUES: It calls for speculation.

8 MR. KATCHMAR: Okay. I was wondering why you didn't
9 tell me that's a bad question yesterday, so I apologize for that.

10 BY MR. KATCHMAR:

11 Q. Can you tell me why is there a mixer valve, why do you
12 mix the gas?

13 A. Oh, the way I understand it, there was some local
14 production of gas --

15 MR. CHHATRE: Just a minute. Just go off the record
16 here for a second.

17 (Off the record.)

18 (On the record.)

19 MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record.

20 MR. MITCHELL: It's my understanding that in the past
21 there was some local production of gas that was of lower quality,
22 and so hence the mixer. It would mix that gas with higher quality
23 gas to feed the peninsula and San Jose.

24 MR. KATCHMAR: Thank you.

25 MR. CHHATRE: Karl?

1 MR. GUNTHER: No more questions.

2 MS. MAZZANTI: I only have one and I --

3 MR. CHHATRE: Identify yourself.

4 MS. MAZZANTI: Debbie Mazzanti, IBEW 1245.

5 BY MS. MAZZANTI:

6 Q. All the calls that you had been having -- all the
7 conversations you had been having with Oscar, if it's on a
8 landline are all those calls recorded out of the dispatch -- out
9 of Gas Control?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So any of the conversations that you would have had with
12 Oscar would be recorded, is that a good assumption?

13 A. All of the -- all of our conversations were recorded,
14 yes.

15 Q. Okay. Thank you. No other questions.

16 MR. SPERRY: No questions.

17 MR. NICHOLSON: No questions at this time.

18 MR. CHHATRE: Ravi Chhatre, NTSB.

19 BY MR. CHHATRE:

20 Q. I'm going to back to the station bypass valve. You said
21 the valve probably was opened when you lost SCADA. Am I stating
22 that correctly?

23 A. Yes. That's a supposition.

24 Q. Okay. When the SCADA is operating that valve would be
25 closed, correct or not correct?

1 A. Yeah. The normal station valving -- we don't use that
2 valve.

3 Q. Okay. Now when that valve is open the gas incoming to
4 Milpitas will directly feed all the lines leaving Milpitas?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Do you recall the places where are the incoming lines at
7 Milpitas?

8 A. When?

9 Q. (Indiscernible) and when the valve was fully open.

10 A. No, I don't.

11 Q. Do you remember what the normal pressure bracket for
12 those valves or incoming (indiscernible) is?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Can you tell that?

15 A. Line 300A, I believe, has a MOP of 597; 300B, 555; 131,
16 I believe is also 551 or close to it; and line 107 wasn't really
17 in service.

18 Q. Okay. And what is your normal shift time for the
19 record?

20 A. Six a.m. to six p.m. that day.

21 Q. Again for the record, when you say -- when you came back
22 from lunch the clearance already had begun?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. What does that mean? I mean the work had begun or --

25 A. Yes. I had known earlier in the day that this clearance

1 was going to occur, and at some point when I was at lunch they had
2 called and said we're starting.

3 Q. Do you recall approximately what time that would be? If
4 you don't that is fine.

5 A. Yeah. I really don't know, not for sure.

6 Q. Okay. And I think you told Mr. Martinez to undo -- at
7 sometime during your conversation with him whatever he was doing
8 go back and don't do it or go back to -- what did that mean?

9 A. What I meant is is it possible to make the station the
10 way it was before it went bad.

11 Q. Okay. I just wanted to get that just for the record.

12 A. I just wanted SCADA back.

13 Q. I knew what you meant --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- but for the record I wanted to get it exactly. And
16 what was his answer?

17 A. I think -- I don't remember whether he gave me a direct
18 yes or no.

19 Q. Okay. You might have answered this question already,
20 but I'll ask anyway. I'm sure your counsel will remind me if it
21 already was asked. But what -- you said the bypass valve is open,
22 but you didn't see any pressure increase downstream of Milpitas?

23 A. We did see a pressure increase.

24 Q. And what was that, do you recall?

25 A. Yeah. The pressure downstream of Milpitas went up into

1 the 385 range --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- everywhere, from San Jose and going up the peninsula.

4 Q. That's all I have. Thank you very much for the help.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions. Oh, I'm sorry. I
6 apologize.

7 MR. NARVELL: No acronyms. This is Rick Narvell, NTSB.
8 No, I have no acronyms for this gentleman. I do have a follow-up
9 just to confirm.

10 BY MR. NARVELL:

11 Q. Mr. Mitchell, just to confirm, your regular work hours
12 for that day were 06 to 1800. Was that a standard for the week or
13 just that day?

14 A. That's our standard shift change time.

15 Q. So your normal is 06 to 1800?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. Okay, very good. And just for the record, as with some
18 other witnesses, Mr. Mitchell was gracious enough to provide
19 written responses to separate performance questions and I have
20 them now. That's all I have. Thank you.

21 MR. DAUBIN: No questions.

22 MR. FASSETT: No questions.

23 MS. JACKSON: No questions.

24 MR. SHORI: Sunil Shori, California PUC, one or two
25 follow-ups.

1 BY MR. SHORI:

2 Q. The monitor on the bypass --

3 A. The station bypass?

4 Q. The station bypass that we talked about earlier. Do you
5 know what the set point on that is?

6 A. I think I already answered that. It was set at 385.

7 Q. And is that a -- do you know if that's a type of valve
8 that has -- that you can't override that setting? Do you as an
9 operator have the ability to override that setting?

10 A. You mean to make it higher?

11 Q. To make that set point higher?

12 A. I don't believe I do, no.

13 Q. Had you done anything to make that set point higher?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Thank you very much.

16 MR. GUNTHER: I have no more questions.

17 MR. NICHOLSON: I've got a couple. This is Matt
18 Nicholson, NTSB.

19 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

20 Q. Do you receive status on the monitors over SCADA?

21 A. Whether they're open or closed, yes. When it's working.

22 Q. Right.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's an assumption there.

24 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

25 Q. When you got Oscar to close the bypass valves, did you

1 see a change in pressure downstream?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Is that no?

4 A. No.

5 Q. I'm a little confused by the clearance. Maybe you can
6 clarify it for me. You said you went to lunch and you came back
7 and the clearance at Milpitas had already started, and you found
8 that out from Mike? Did I hear that correctly?

9 A. I didn't say who told me. I'm not sure who told me, but
10 I knew it was underway.

11 Q. So I'm trying to understand clearances. I thought they
12 would have been assigned to one operator who saw them through from
13 start to finish. Is that not correct?

14 A. No, it's not correct.

15 Q. Okay. So tell me -- explain to me how a clearance that
16 was already underway when you came back from lunch became
17 something you worked on. How did you get involved with that?

18 A. I saw the problem at Milpitas and I just made the call.
19 Simple as that. I saw the problem, I made the call to Oscar.

20 Q. Okay. So you really weren't overseeing the clearance at
21 that point at all, you were just troubleshooting the loss of
22 communication?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. So was someone else then still overseeing the clearance?

25 A. Clearances aren't assigned to an individual. We manage

1 them as a group.

2 Q. Okay. If I were to look at an event in the alarm logs
3 how would I distinguish your commands from your other console
4 mates?

5 A. Mine will say BDMH next to them.

6 Q. Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

7 MR. CHHATRE: Ravi Chhatre, NTSB.

8 BY MR. CHHATRE:

9 Q. During your conversations with Mr. Martinez were you --
10 or after that, were you looking at the SCADA screen that displayed
11 Milpitas, do you know?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. When did the -- I'm just trying to -- for the record,
14 I'm trying to log down the events that happened. Did you have
15 pressure displays at any time for Martin and/or Milpitas?

16 A. I'm sorry. Could you repeat that again?

17 Q. Yeah, sure. Did you have pressure displays on your
18 SCADA for Milpitas and/or Martin Stations?

19 A. I was definitely looking at Milpitas. I may have looked
20 at Martin.

21 Q. Martin?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Did you see a sharp pressure drop at Martin on your
24 SCADA display?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Do you recall what time?

2 A. No.

3 Q. What was your reaction to that display?

4 A. We had a conversation to address it, and I'm not sure,
5 you know. I don't know a lot of details about it.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. We discussed it.

8 Q. Okay. So did you do any follow-up work regarding that
9 pressure drop display or somebody else did?

10 A. I remember that Michael Valenti called Chuck Martinez
11 and he left a message. Some time later after realizing -- I
12 realized he hadn't called back and I said let's call his home, and
13 then I made contact with him.

14 Q. Do you -- did you discuss with your coworkers about the
15 sharp pressure drop and what could cause that?

16 A. I don't remember.

17 Q. Okay. Did you suspect it could be a rupture, a leak, or
18 you did not, the sharp pressure drop in your experience as an
19 operator?

20 A. At some point I did. When that was I can't tell you.

21 Q. Okay. That's all I have. Thank you much.

22 MR. CHHATRE: Okay?

23 MR. NICHOLSON: This is Matt Nicholson, NTSB.

24 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

25 Q. I'm looking at an alarm screen here and I want to be

1 sure I understand this. I see under state it says on,
2 unacknowledged. Is that -- I see UNACK. Is that unacknowledged?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. The one I'm looking at is red. And then under
5 description I see MIL TER.

6 A. Milpitas terminal.

7 Q. Okay. That one happens to be red. And then I see
8 another one that appears in yellow. And can you tell me what's
9 the difference when I see it in yellow versus red?

10 A. You're seeing the Milpitas terminal? What is it --

11 Q. Yeah. You want to look at this? What I'm seeing is MIL
12 TER V10R, controller error.

13 A. I think in this case that the color refers to the --
14 what's considered to be the degree of the --

15 Q. Severity?

16 A. -- severity. Thank you.

17 Q. Okay. Okay. So yellow is a lower severity than --

18 A. Red.

19 Q. -- red?

20 A. Absolutely.

21 Q. Okay. But there's nothing else that will tell me the
22 severity? There's no code in the tag name or --

23 A. No.

24 Q. What is the 1 and the 0?

25 A. That would be alarm state or normal state, yeah. It's

1 just a --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- digital value.

4 Q. Okay. Thank you. That's all I have. Thanks.

5 MR. CHHATRE: I have no more follow-up questions.

6 MR. SHORI: One quick follow-up.

7 MR. CHHATRE: Sunil, identify.

8 MR. SHORI: Oh, Sunil Shori, California PUC.

9 BY MR. SHORI:

10 Q. Just going back one more time to the decision to bring
11 down Sheridan PLS-7A and 7B to the 375 -- one of those pressures
12 that we mentioned earlier, why did you see the urgency of having
13 to do that if, as you indicated, you had confidence that the
14 monitor on the bypass had taken over and the other monitors had
15 taken over? Why did -- what was that step necessary?

16 A. Whenever we exceed a MOP we do what we have to do to get
17 the pressure back down as soon as we can. I was working with
18 Oscar at Milpitas. After some period of time we were still having
19 those high pressures. This was the next step. This was another
20 step.

21 Q. Well, the pressure several hours preceding this point, I
22 think it was normal 360, 350 psig. Why 375 then, why not lower
23 that more coming in if you're trying to bring pressure down to --

24 A. I think he was perhaps trying to maintain adequate
25 minimums.

1 Q. Okay. Thank you.

2 MR. CHHATRE: Last chance. Nobody has questions? Thank
3 you very much for coming in to help us with this investigation.
4 Off the record.

5 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY
 SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 ACCIDENT
 SAN BRUNO, CALIFORNIA
 Interview of Barry Mitchell

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MP-008

PLACE: Burlingame, California

DATE: January 7, 2011

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

Cheryl L. Phipps
Transcriber