

Docket No. SA-534

Exhibit No. 2-BY

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF STEVEN POULO, PG&E
(JAN-5-2011)

(68 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: STEVEN POULO

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

Wednesday,
January 5, 2011

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to
notice.

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Investigator-in-Charge

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. CHHATRE: Today is Wednesday, January 5th, 2011. We
3 are currently in Burlingame, California in the San Francisco
4 Airport Marriott. We are meeting in regards to the investigation
5 of a pipeline rupture in San Bruno, California that occurred on
6 September 9, 2010. The NTSB accident number for this
7 investigation is DCA10MP008.

8 My name is Ravindra Chhatre. I'm with National
9 Transportation Safety Board and I'm investigator in charge of this
10 accident. I would like to start by notifying everyone present in
11 this room that we are recording this interview for transcription
12 at a later date. All parties will have a chance to review the
13 transcripts when they are completed.

14 I also would like to inform Mr. Poulo -- am I
15 pronouncing it right?

16 MR. POULO: Close enough.

17 MR. CHHATRE: Steven Poulo, you are permitted to have
18 one person with you during this interview. That person is of your
19 choice, maybe your supervisor, friend, family member and, if you
20 choose, nobody at all. So for the record, please state your full
21 name, spelling of your name, contact information like email,
22 telephone number, postal mailing address, and whom you have chosen
23 to be with you during this interview.

24 MR. POULO: Steven Poulo, S-T-E-V-E-N, P-O-U-L-O. I
25 reside in , email is .

1 As representation, I have Dane here.

2 MR. CCHATRE: Thank you. Now, let's go around and
3 introduce ourselves with your name, email, title, which company you
4 represent starting with the city.

5 MR. CALDWELL: Jeff Caldwell, City of San Bruno. All of
6 my information is contained on the card.

7 MR. DAUBIN: Brian Daubin, PG&E. All my information
8 contained on the card.

9 MR. FASSETT: Bob Fassett, PG&E. Information on the
10 card.

11 MS. JACKSON: Connie Jackson, City of San Bruno. My
12 information is on the card.

13 MS. FABRY: Klara Fabry, City of San Bruno. Information
14 is on the card.

15 MR. SHORI: Sunil Shori, California Public Utilities
16 Commission. My information is contained on the card.

17 MR. KATCHMAR: Peter Katchmar, USDOT, Pipeline and
18 Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, PHMSA. Information is
19 on the card.

20 MR. GUNTHER: Karl Gunther, NTSB, Operations Group
21 Chairman, email karl.gunther@ntsb.gov, phone 202-314-6478.

22 MS. MAZZANTI: Debbie Mazzanti, IEW Local 1245, and my
23 information is on the card.

24 MR. SPERRY: Joshua Sperry, Engineers and Scientists of
25 California, Local 20 IFPTE. My information is on my card.

1 MR. NICHOLSON: Matthew Nicholson, M-A-T-T-H-E-W N-I-C-
2 H-O-L-S-O-N, NTSB engineer, matthew.nicholson@ntsb.gov.

3 MR. CHHATRE: Ravindra Chhatre, R-A-V-I-N-D-R-A C-H-H-A-
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6 MR. NARVELL: Rick Narvell, N-A-R-V-E-L-L, Human
7 Performance Investigator NTSB, Washington, DC. Phone, 202-314-
8 6422, email, narvelr@ntsb.gov.

9 MR. JAQUES: Dane Jaques on behalf of the witness, and
10 you have my information.

11 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you. Let us start with -- Karl, you
12 would like to go first?

13 MR. GUNTHER: Yeah, I prefer to, yeah.

14 INTERVIEW OF STEVEN POULO

15 BY MR. GUNTHER:

16 Q. Could I get your job title and your affiliation?

17 A. I'm a gas mechanic in the T&R Department, PG&E.

18 Q. Okay. Could you give me your formal education.

19 A. High school.

20 Q. Okay. Question -- let's see. I believe you were at the
21 intersection of Glenview and Earl as an inspector to watch a
22 project where they were installing a sewer line in 2008?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Could you describe what you did and what you saw.

25 A. On the first day, I went out to make contact to see what

1 they were doing, what process they were doing and, at that time,
2 they were potholing our facilities at the intersection.

3 Q. Okay. And did you observe -- so what were they doing
4 then?

5 A. In the intersection, they were hand digging around our
6 facilities.

7 Q. And did you observe the whole process?

8 A. No.

9 Q. So were they finished when you left or --

10 A. That day, no.

11 Q. Okay. Well, how far along were they when you left?

12 A. They had the man exposed.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Maybe down along the side, that's it.

15 Q. All right. And did you tell the foreman anything before
16 you left or have any problem with the work or --

17 A. I left information and a request to call PG&E when they
18 approach our facilities.

19 Q. Okay. So -- and at that point, you left the job for
20 that first day?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. All right. And then the second day, what did you do?

23 A. I was in the office working.

24 Q. Okay. So you didn't go out on the job on the second
25 day?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Well, according -- at least what I'm looking at it said
3 three hours on 6/10.

4 A. That was after hours, sir. During the day I was working
5 as a supervisor in the office.

6 Q. Okay. Then you were out later that day?

7 A. After I received a call from my supervisor.

8 Q. Okay. Well, again, what did you observe on the 10th?

9 A That the job had been completed basically, physically,
10 with the new sewer.

11 Q. Okay. Did you take any measurements or observe any
12 measurements?

13 A. Tuesday evening, yes.

14 Q. Okay. And what measurements were taken?

15 A. I measured the top of the gas main and the top of the
16 sewer installation.

17 Q. And what did you find out the distance was?

18 A I estimated ten inches of clearance.

19 Q. Okay.

20 MR. FASSETT: Excuse me, Bob Fassett, PG&E. For the
21 record, can you mention that we're looking at his document.

22 MR. GUNTHER: Sure. Yeah, we -- at this point, we are
23 looking at a document. The notice said "Standby Request, Gas
24 Operations Peninsula Division." And it does say contractor. It
25 remarks, "Contractor completed, Dwight Persing 7:00 p.m. 6:10:08,

1 clearance six inches. And then the locator, 30 inch main, 31 to
2 top, 8 inch sewer, 10 inch -- I'm guessing rotor or -- I can't
3 quite read that.

4 MR. FASSETT: It looks like 70 inches to top.

5 MR. POULO: Seventy inches to top.

6 MR. GUNTHER: Oh, okay. It looked to me like 31 to top.

7 MR. POULO: Thirty-one to top to the gas main, 70 inches
8 to the top of the sewer.

9 MR. GUNTHER: Okay.

10 BY MR. GUNTHER:

11 Q. So in that case, was the clearance 6 inches or
12 approximately 10 or --

13 A. Approximately 10.

14 Q. Okay. Did you ask them to do anything to put between
15 the gas main?

16 A. Negative, nope.

17 Q. They made no requests. Were you satisfied with what
18 they did?

19 A. With the clearances, the measurements, I found that it
20 was okay.

21 Q. And did you observe any damage to your pipe?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Go ahead Next.

24 BY MR. CALDWELL:

25 Q. Jeff Caldwell, City of San Bruno. Do you remember

1 anything about 2 x 4s being placed under the --

2 A. Negative, that would not be allowed.

3 Q. And you didn't see any?

4 A. Negative.

5 Q. And did you make any mention to any workers that there
6 was a nick in the transmission main and to repair the nick?

7 A. Negative.

8 Q. Okay, thank you.

9 BY MR. FASSETT:

10 Q. Bob Fassett, PG&E. Just to clarify, you mentioned it
11 earlier, but if I gather it correctly, the bursting -- the pipe
12 was already in and connected by the time you got there, according
13 to this note, 7 o'clock at night?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Was there anybody on the job at 7 o'clock at night?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Who was that?

18 A. Contract workers.

19 Q. You didn't get a name of the foreman?

20 A. I'm not sure.

21 Q. In this document in the left-hand corner, there's, sir,
22 there's a -- under locator, there's a Jose P. and then a phone
23 number.

24 A. Yes, I believe that's our PG&E locator, Jose Prieto.

25 Q. Okay. So you didn't locate the main?

1 A. Negative.

2 Q. All right. So to be clear, you went out there to
3 observe? Just for clarification, we have a requirement that if
4 somebody's digging near the transmission main --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- we have to have someone present to observe that
7 pothole, is that correct?

8 A. Yes, yes.

9 Q. That's what you were there to do is to observe that?

10 A. Exactly.

11 Q. Do you approve other people's construction methodologies
12 for how they encroach the pipeline?

13 A. No, I have nothing to do with approval.

14 Q. So to be clear, you're not an engineer that would
15 evaluate other people's technology, is that correct?

16 A. No, sir.

17 Q. I asked you who the foreman was. You -- so it was
18 already -- was it tied into the sewer --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- or was it just in the box?

21 A. No, I think it was just across our main.

22 Q. Okay. So it's under the main, it's exposed. You wrote
23 down these dimensions shown in this document?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Thank you.

1 BY MS. JACKSON:

2 Q. Connie Jackson, City of San Bruno. I'm follow up on
3 Mr. Fassett's comments. Are you aware of any other PG&E
4 employees, other than Jose P., who apparently located -- marked
5 the location of the pipe? Were there any other PG&E employees
6 that you are aware of who observed or were called out to the site
7 during the construction?

8 A. Not that I know of.

9 Q. Thank you.

10 MS. FABRY: Klara Fabry, City of San Bruno. One other
11 follow up question. During your follow up visit to the site, best
12 experience witnessing this type of project, you had any concern
13 based on what you saw in the field, you had -- that's the first
14 question.

15 MR. JAQUES: I'm going to object. I think that's
16 outside his qualifications, as his prior testimony stated. He's
17 not an engineer.

18 MS. FABRY: Based on your purpose on the job, the reason
19 why you went to field (indiscernible) in that location, you had
20 any concern based on what you saw?

21 MR. JAQUES: I object. Same objection. That's beyond
22 his qualifications. And he was there to observe the work which
23 had been completed by the time he got there. So the first part of
24 your question is inaccurate.

25 MS. JACKSON: Could we go off the record?

1 MR. CHHATRE: Yes, off the record.

2 (Off the record.)

3 (On the record.)

4 MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record.

5 BY MS. FABRY:

6 Q. When you went back on the job in the evening, what you
7 witness?

8 A. The job was complete.

9 Q. And you record that what -- how -- what exactly the
10 completed job was?

11 A. Recorded, no. I took measurements of what was left at
12 the site.

13 Q. When -- what was your next step? You recorded -- you
14 reported back to your supervisor after you went back the next day
15 or what your next step was?

16 A. My next step, I didn't have one. My job was to make
17 sure that they backfill it correctly and that was it.

18 Q. You said your job was to make sure that was backfilled
19 correct. I am correct?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And you were satisfied with that requirement that you
22 were responsible for?

23 A. I was satisfied with what they had done that night. I
24 wasn't satisfied that they did it without representation of PG&E,
25 but what was left seemed to be okay.

1 Q. Okay.

2 BY MR. SHORI:

3 Q. Sunil Shori, California Public Utilities Commission.

4 Let's back up to the entire step of the USA process. In a
5 particular case like this, a USA ticket would have been called in.
6 Was there a USA ticket called in for this that you're aware of?

7 A. Sure.

8 Q. Sure, you're aware of or not?

9 A. Well --

10 MR. JAQUES: Testify to what you know.

11 MR. POULO: In order to go out there, there would have
12 to be one.

13 MR. SHORI: Okay.

14 MS. FABRY: Note of clarification. You have that
15 information, a copy of the USA, you have that information.

16 BY MR. SHORI:

17 Q. So -- and I don't know what days we're talking about on
18 here based on these dates, but there's several notes on the form
19 that we're provided. There's a Monday, there's a reject Tuesday.

20 A. Wednesday with a question mark.

21 Q. I'm sorry?

22 A. That's Wednesday with a question mark.

23 MS. JACKSON: It's up in this corner.

24 MR. POULO: Yeah, up at the top.

25 BY MR. SHORI:

1 Q. So do you know when the ticket was originally received?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Now, you said that the first you made contact. So first
4 day being what day for you?

5 A. Monday.

6 Q. I'm sorry?

7 A. Monday.

8 Q. Monday which is what date?

9 A. The 9th.

10 Q. And that's the time when you went for the two hours --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- that you were there?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And you said you found potholing to excavate around
15 facility. So at that point, there was still potholing?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. They hadn't done any work?

18 A. Monday, they had just taken the surface off and was
19 beginning to do the excavation to find our facilities.

20 Q. And you said they were hand digging?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. In what direction were they hand digging?

23 A. Down.

24 Q. I know it's down. What direction, east, west?

25 A. They were on the westside of the main.

1 Q. Westside of the main. How far were they down?

2 A. I would say they were beyond midpoint, if not even
3 deeper.

4 Q. And was there anything indicated to you from -- to you
5 to them in terms of anything particular you wanted them to do in
6 regard to that -- what they were digging --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- in regard to the excavation they were performing?

9 A. I need to see both sides of the gas main and at least 18
10 inches below the gas main.

11 Q. And did they do that while you were there?

12 A. They hadn't completed.

13 Q. And when were you -- when did you see that 18 inches
14 that you wanted or when did you indicate to them that you would
15 come back and want to see that or that you would come back and see
16 that?

17 A. When they were approaching our gas main.

18 Q. And did you note that anywhere?

19 A. Not on my paperwork, no.

20 Q. Who did you convey that to?

21 A. One of the workers.

22 Q. Which worker?

23 A. I have no idea.

24 Q. Now, prior to this, do you know if there was any other
25 field meet noted or any other field meeting that occurred --

1 A. No.

2 Q. -- between PG&E and the contractor?

3 A. Nope.

4 Q. So your meeting is 6/9. Now, when you showed up at the
5 scene, were there already gas marks on the line -- on the ground
6 in terms of what the location of the facility?

7 A. If mark and locate had received the tag, yes, it was.

8 Q. Well, did you see marks?

9 A. I don't recall.

10 Q. Well, would you have looked? I mean, if you saw them
11 digging, would you have looked for marks?

12 A. They had the main exposed.

13 Q. Did you or did you not see marks on the ground?

14 MR. JAQUES: He said he didn't know.

15 BY MR. SHORI:

16 Q. And at that point, on the type of work, it says pothole
17 for attempt -- TL depth, a transmission line depth, find out what
18 they're installing, need one for clearance at crossing. Did you
19 find out what they were installing?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And what did they tell you they were installing?

22 A. Sewer.

23 Q. And did they tell you how they were installing that?

24 A. I don't know if there was a specific name to it, but it
25 was bursting the pipe.

1 Q. Okay. So they told you the method they were using.
2 Besides the excavation that you said saw on the westside, did you
3 see any other excavations that had already been performed by that
4 point?

5 A. No, they had just started.

6 Q. Now, on the 10th when you went again, at this point you
7 said they've completed their work, but the excavation was still
8 open?

9 A. Okay. They completed installing their sewer.

10 Q. Okay. But was the excavation still open?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. So by that point, had they created the separations
13 around the pipe that you had asked for on the 9th that you wanted
14 them to make?

15 A. I have ten inches approximate clearance between the two
16 pipes.

17 Q. No. I'm asking about the horizontal separation -- the
18 horizontal clearance because you said earlier you wanted them to
19 expose the line --

20 A. On both sides.

21 Q. -- on both sides.

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Had they done that?

24 A. I had only observed the one side that night.

25 Q. Did you ask them to open up the other side because they

1 hadn't done what you had asked?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Did you see at that point a manhole or any other
4 excavation east of the line?

5 A. I don't recall.

6 Q. So was it complete pavement beyond that side, on the
7 east side of the line?

8 A. I don't believe so.

9 Q. Was there nothing exposed?

10 A. They may have had bridges down. There was no open
11 trench.

12 Q. Did they have any shoring in the excavating that was
13 open?

14 A. No.

15 Q. And so you said you wanted a 1 foot separation, but you
16 measured out 70 inches to the top, 31 to the top of the line. So
17 you had about what, 10, 11 inches?

18 A. Approximately, yes.

19 Q. Did you ask them to create more separation?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Why not?

22 A. Ten inches is probably sufficient.

23 Q. Do you know of anything in terms of -- did you have
24 discussions with them in terms of how they completed the work that
25 they did complete? You said you found the sewer had already been

1 done by the time you got there on the 10th?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Did you have any discussions with anybody on site in
4 terms of how they completed that or what they did?

5 A. No.

6 Q. And you noted that there wasn't any damage that you saw
7 to the coating on your line or any backhoe marks or any kind of
8 obvious --

9 A. Nope.

10 Q. And then you mentioned a Jose P. What was the last
11 name?

12 A. I believe it's Jose Prieto. It would be P-R-I-E-T-O.

13 Q. Now, there's a note on here in terms of recheck Tuesday.
14 So I guess I still want to make clear from himself. Maybe I
15 missed it. So the 6/9 was what day, Monday?

16 A. Monday.

17 Q. And then 6/10 is Tuesday?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And then what was the Wednesday with a cross -- with the
20 question mark?

21 A. Speaking with the contractor on Monday, I asked him when
22 he expected to be at the intersection of our -- where our gas main
23 is located. He had told me they hoped to be there Wednesday.
24 Tuesday was to go out to see how they were progressing on the job.
25 I didn't get that opportunity.

1 Q. And there's another name on here ISC Mike something or
2 other. Do you know who that refers to?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Is that TSC or ISC? Are those your notes there?

5 A. I believe that they are, but I don't know. It could
6 have been a couple of people on the construction site.

7 Q. And the PM number on the top, that's -- what is that
8 referring to?

9 A. That's just the standard order number for gas
10 transmission to charge the standby to.

11 Q. Do you know of anyone beyond 6/10 that went after you
12 had gone to this -- the site?

13 A. No.

14 Q. And as far as the backfill that was placed in, do you
15 recall what kind of backfill was used?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Did you have any problems with the backfill that was
18 used?

19 A. I didn't see the backfill that was used.

20 MR. SHORI: That's all I have for him.

21 BY MR. KATCHMAR:

22 Q. Peter Katchmar, USDOT, PHMSA. Steve?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Thanks for coming in and talking to us today. You used
25 the term main.

1 A. Yeah, just a main.

2 Q. And to what pipe are you referring to when you talk
3 about the main?

4 A. Line 132.

5 Q. Okay. The 30-inch transmission line?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. Are you aware of any other facilities of PG&E's
8 in this area?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. Do you work for only the transmission side or do
11 you work for the distribution side as well?

12 A. Both sides. I support -- I support the construction
13 side.

14 Q. Okay. It appears that there's a 4-inch steel main,
15 actual distribution main, just to the west of the transmission
16 line about 6, 8 feet or so. And you're saying that you're not
17 aware of that?

18 A. It wasn't my concern. My concern is only the
19 transmission line.

20 Q. Why?

21 A. Because it's high pressure and it's over a 6-inch
22 diameter.

23 Q. Okay.

24 MR. CHHATRE: Can I interrupt for a second? Ravindra
25 Chhatre.

1 MR. JAQUES: Off the record or on the record?

2 MR. CHHATRE: No, on the record.

3 BY MR. CHHATRE:

4 Q. I guess if I got your question correctly, you're asking
5 are you aware of a gas main being there, okay. And the answer
6 given was, "It was not my concern." And I'm confused. Were you
7 aware or were you not aware of a gas main?

8 A. Of the distribution main?

9 Q. Yes, sir.

10 A. No, I was not aware of where it was located.

11 Q. Okay. Thank you. Go ahead.

12 MR. KATCHMAR:

13 Q. Okay. It probably had nothing to do with the incident
14 itself, but it concerns me that a PG&E employee does not -- was
15 not concerned about another gas line that's in the area.

16 MR. FASSETT: Bob Fassett, clarification. He explained
17 earlier his job is to go out and perform standby on the
18 transmission main. This is a requirement that PG&E requires of
19 operators. It's not a state requirement. It's something we do
20 for extra protection on that main.

21 MR. KATCHMAR: On the transmission line?

22 MR. FASSETT: For a transmission main. That's his job.
23 He was assigned to go out to observe the exposure of the
24 transmission main. He was not assigned to do that for the
25 distribution main. We do not require standby on distribution

1 main. The State of California does not require standby on
2 distribution main. The requirement is to mark the pipe.

3 It was stated by the contractor, by the engineer, that
4 the pipe was marked. It was already confirmed here that there was
5 a USA tag. His job is not to mark and locate the pipe. He
6 clarified that --

7 MR. KATCHMAR: I understand that.

8 MR. FASSETT: -- Jose P. is the one that marked and
9 located the pipe.

10 MR. KATCHMAR: I understand that.

11 MR. FASSETT: I'm just clarifying so you understand what
12 we do.

13 MR. KATCHMAR: I understand that.

14 MR. FASSETT: We actually do more than is required for
15 our pipe, for our transmission pipe. And that's what he was
16 doing.

17 MR. KATCHMAR: That's fine.

18 BY MR. KATCHMAR:

19 Q. Did PG&E mark the distribution line, as well?

20 MR. FASSETT: The contractor confirmed that. He's not
21 the mark and locator.

22 MR. KATCHMAR: No, no, I know that. But he was there to
23 watch the transmission line main. I'm just trying to find out if
24 he was aware that there was another PG&E pipe in the immediate
25 area and I'm wondering why it wasn't potholed.

1 MR. FASSETT: Your going to have the contractor there --
2 that. They already confirmed that it was there and that -- and
3 their engineer confirmed it was profiled.

4 MR. KATCHMAR: Okay.

5 BY MR. KATCHMAR:

6 Q. Sir, do you have any procedures that you -- written
7 procedures that you are to follow when you do your job?

8 A. They have documents, yes, procedures, yes.

9 Q. Okay. And do you know the number of that procedure that
10 I can go look it up?

11 A. I don't have it off-hand. I'd just be guessing.

12 Q. Okay. Do you know where to find it?

13 A. It's in the work procedure section of our documentation.

14 Q. And what would that documentation be? Can you give me a
15 name of a book where I can go and look in a book or something?

16 A. I don't know the name. I'd only be guessing giving you
17 a document number.

18 MR. FASSETT: Bob Fassett, clarification. That's
19 already been provided to this proceeding. We have those --

20 MR. KATCHMAR: I know. But I'm asking him if he knows
21 what the book is and what the procedure is and where to find it.

22 MR. POULO: I have a copy of it my crew truck.

23 BY MR. KATCHMAR:

24 Q. Okay. Okay. In those specific procedures, does it
25 require you to be onsite while the --

1 A. If they are using any equipment, our equipment around
2 our facilities within a 5-foot area on the sides of the pipe, we
3 need to have PG&E representation.

4 Q. So if they get close within 5 foot of the pipe with any
5 mechanical equipment --

6 A. Well, yes.

7 Q. -- you need to be there?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. Did -- do you know that the contractor knew this?

10 A. No, I don't.

11 Q. Okay. You mentioned in your testimony that you did not
12 get the opportunity to go out on Tuesday during the day.

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Why did you not?

15 A. I was in the office doing my supervisor's desk.

16 Q. You were in the office doing supervisor work?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. Was there anyone else that you could have sent
19 out to watch this?

20 A. No, I was waiting for a phone call. They were to call
21 when they approached our intersection.

22 Q. Oh, okay. So let's go back to Monday then. You did
23 have a meeting with --

24 A. The contractor.

25 Q. -- someone out there?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. And you don't know who it was you talked to?

3 A. Nope.

4 Q. But you did express the fact that what -- what did that
5 conversation entail please?

6 A. Basic conversation would be to notify us when they start
7 to encroach our gas main, our location within the 5 foot. They
8 need that representation from PG&E if they do, when they do. We
9 need to see whatever process they're using to install the sewer,
10 come into the excavation and exit the excavation so we can see the
11 clearance between their equipment and ours.

12 Q. Okay. And I guess from your testimony, I'm gathering
13 that you were that person for PG&E and you were the only person
14 for PG&E and you were not there because they didn't call you?

15 A Yeah, exactly.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I was under the premise that they were going to be there
18 by Wednesday.

19 Q. All right. And that's fine. Have you worked with this
20 contractor before?

21 A. I don't know.

22 Q. Okay. Have you -- do you do this job often?

23 A. Yeah, I have.

24 Q. Okay. Do you normally not ask them to reopen the
25 excavation around your pipe to check it if they have not -- if you

1 were not there when they crossed it?

2 A. Contractors cross our pipes all the time without our
3 knowledge. In this situation here, the one side was open
4 completely where I could see the completed installation.

5 Q. And this was the side towards --

6 A. The westside.

7 Q. From which they came into the excavation?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you, sir.

10 BY MR. GUNTHER:

11 Q. One thing I wanted to clarify. You said that they
12 had --

13 MR. CHHATE: Identify yourself.

14 BY MR. GUNTHER:

15 Q. Oh, Karl Gunther, NTSB. One thing I wanted to clarify.
16 You said that there had to be a USA ticket. Did you observe the
17 ticket or did you have it?

18 A. I did not have a copy.

19 Q. So you did not see it?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay.

22 BY MS. MAZZANTI:

23 Q. Debbie Mazzanti, IBEW. In normal circumstances, would
24 we -- would PG&E -- I'll rephrase it. When a contractor is
25 working around PG&E's equipment, is the normal -- is the normal

1 practice to have a PG&E person onsite during that work around --
2 specifically around PG&E equipment?

3 A. Do you mean what is the procedure?

4 Q. What's the procedure. Thank you.

5 A. You'll have to clarify that.

6 Q. When the contractor contacts PG&E to do work around
7 PG&E's facilities, the gas lines, once USA has done their -- once
8 they've contacted USA, once we -- things have been marked and
9 located and the work is going to be done, is it normal procedure
10 that a PG&E person would be observing the work while the
11 contractor is doing the work?

12 A. The contractor needs to make contact with PG&E and
13 notify the day and time that they're going to do the work before
14 we would go up there.

15 Q. And if they don't do that --

16 A. Then we don't know.

17 Q. -- we wouldn't go. But would there be any recourse that
18 PG&E would have for our contractor to do work around a facility if
19 they didn't notify PG&G first?

20 MR. JAQUES: I'm going to object. That's beyond the
21 scope of this witness' knowledge.

22 MS. MAZZANTI: No other questions.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

24 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

25 Q. I've got a few questions for you. Matt Nicholson, NTSB.

1 I just -- I don't understand this form completely. Who fills this
2 form out?

3 A. Whoever takes the call. Normally, it's the supervisor
4 sitting at the desk.

5 MR. GUNTHER: Matt?

6 MR. NICHOLSON: So that's in the taken by?

7 MR. GUNTHER: Could we go off the record for a minute?

8 MR. NICHOLSON: Go. Yes.

9 MR. CHHATRE: Off the record.

10 (Off the record)

11 (On the record)

12 MR. CHHATRE: We're back on the record. Go ahead.

13 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

14 Q. Matt Nicholson. Okay. So we've had a conversation on
15 how this form is generated. And I understand all that. That's
16 great, thanks for the background. And from that discussion we've
17 heard that everything down to location is filled out by supervisor
18 the standby request, is that correct?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And what I was really going for is I'm trying to just
21 piece together this timeline a little bit. It says here date 6/6
22 of '08. And you said you didn't get out there until the 9th?

23 A. Right.

24 Q. How does that work? Did you go there on the 6th as a
25 request?

1 A. I don't recall.

2 Q. Would you have talked to the requester to know to be
3 there on the 9th instead of the 6th?

4 A. It's possible, I don't now.

5 Q. So I was told the supervisor fills everything out to
6 location. Who fills out type of work?

7 A. Supervisor.

8 Q. Supervisor as well. Okay. Where are your notes on
9 here? I'm trying to distinguish handwriting?

10 A. Where it says hours worked and below.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And at the very top of the page.

13 Q. Okay. So remarks aren't yours?

14 A. Remarks are mine.

15 Q. I'm sorry.

16 A. I said, yes.

17 Q. And under the remarks we -- I want to go back.

18 Contractor completed pipe bursting 7:00 p.m. 6/10/08. Clearance
19 looks to me there's a 6 inch.

20 A. Right.

21 Q. Well, can you explain that?

22 A. It's probably what the contract worker had told me.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I asked for a tape measurer to verify.

25 Q. And below that I see locate or locator, Jose P.

1 A. Yep.

2 Q. And then I see the 30-inch main equals 30 inch at the
3 top, 8 inch sewer, 70 inch to top. Are those Jose P's ratings?

4 A. Those are my measurements.

5 Q. Okay. And those are done by tape measure?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. I'm looking at this form and I see it looks like it's
8 stapled to something else. All I have is a copy.

9 A. Probably a map, shot of the map.

10 Q. You would have stapled that to a map?

11 A. Or that would be presented with me with this. The map
12 would be provided. Not all the time, but most of the time there
13 would be a map attached to this so I know what I'm looking at when
14 I get out there.

15 Q. That would be a map, an alignment sheet showing your
16 line?

17 A. All of our facilities.

18 Q. Okay. So you also mentioned on the timeline you said --
19 and you've written it down Wednesday to go back because you
20 thought that's when they would cross your line?

21 A. Yep.

22 Q. Yet, it says recheck Tuesday.

23 A. If I had an opportunity to go out to see the
24 progression, I was going to go up there.

25 Q. Okay. So you weren't told to be there, you took that

1 upon yourself?

2 A. Exactly.

3 Q. You said earlier to someone's question about looking at
4 both sides of the pipe and the 18-inch clearance, you said you
5 would have told this to a worker. I just wanted clarification.
6 Do you typically just give instruction to anyone available in the
7 contractors?

8 A. I ask for whoever's in charge. To me they're a worker.
9 To me, John Hardy is a worker. I have no idea who I spoke with,
10 but I always ask for somebody who's in charge.

11 Q. Would that typically be a foreman?

12 A. Typically.

13 Q. Okay. You said it was part of your job as an observer
14 to see what backfill was put in the trench?

15 A. Or to specify what was to be used which we normally ask
16 for a clean sand, clean fill.

17 Q. But you did not see the backfill?

18 A. No.

19 Q. So the procedure doesn't require that you watch them
20 backfill?

21 A. I think it might be.

22 Q. So if you didn't see the backfill, how do you know that
23 they met the requirement of PG&E?

24 A. If I didn't see it, I wouldn't know.

25 Q. And -- okay. So procedure doesn't require that you make

1 the contractor produce something that would tell you what was in
2 there?

3 A. Not at that time, no.

4 Q. It's just kind of open-ended. All right. If they don't
5 call you to look up at the backfill, if you don't see it, there's
6 no requirement that you dig it back up or take core samples?

7 A. If I'm called out there, I would go out there.

8 Q. So then Bob says you offer the extra protection on the
9 main and I'm trying to figure out then what exactly is that extra
10 protection?

11 A. Damage prevention.

12 Q. Okay. Damage prevention on mechanical --

13 A. By outside forces, by contractors, yes.

14 Q. But, yet, you weren't there when they -- when they were
15 anywhere near the pipe with mechanical?

16 A. No.

17 Q. You made a comment that you were supposed to -- they
18 were supposed to have kept a foot clearance. It came out to be 11
19 inches, 10 inches. And you said that's probably enough. Yet
20 earlier, there's a lengthy discussion about what you were there to
21 do or not to do. I mean, are you trained to make that judgment
22 call whether 10 is good or 12 is good?

23 A. In some cases you get what they give you or you stop
24 them.

25 Q. Is there something in the procedure that would tell you

1 10's okay for this one?

2 A. Well, they asked for a 12-inch minimum on our
3 documentation, but I never really thought that to be in concrete.
4 You give them an inch, sometimes they give you more. If they
5 encroach anything less than, you know, a comfortable feeling, you
6 tell them no.

7 Q. And it's your call, right? Is it your call?

8 A. Well, at that time I didn't have that call.

9 Q. Well, you measured the clearance?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I'm asking is it --

12 A. After the fact.

13 Q. But it's your judgment whether to allow it to stay as is
14 or not?

15 A. On my initial meeting with them on Monday, I tell them
16 we need a foot clearance.

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

18 BY MR. CHHATRE:

19 Q. Ravindra Chhatre, NTSB. I've got several questions, but
20 really I'm confused with the answers given in this
21 (indiscernible). So I'm going to go back all the way on the first
22 day. And this question is you said you were required -- or
23 requested to be there on 6/6?

24 A. Right.

25 Q. And this form, now what kind of information goes on this

1 form? It looks like some -- a lot of details has gone on some
2 items and not so many on the other items. So if you didn't go on
3 6/6, wouldn't you write down why you didn't go?

4 A. No.

5 Q. You would not write that down?

6 A. If I wasn't -- if it wasn't necessary for me to be
7 there, no.

8 Q. How would you know if it's necessary for you or not if
9 the form says you have to be there on 6/6?

10 A. I don't recall. Maybe they said they didn't need me
11 until the next Monday.

12 Q. But wouldn't you make a note of that then?

13 A. Not necessarily.

14 Q. So it's not required. So you can kind of decide which
15 notes to make on the form as you --

16 A. I can decide when I need to be there when a contractor
17 calls for a standby.

18 Q. No, no, that's not my question. My question was so you
19 decide what goes on this form? If you feel like putting something
20 you do, if you don't feel like putting, you don't. Is that
21 correct statement?

22 A. If it's pertinent.

23 Q. What is pertinent?

24 A. Obviously, the 6th wasn't, the 9th was.

25 Q. If you are required to go there on the 6th, why it is

1 not pertinent if you did not go?

2 A. Whether or not I was there, I don't recall. For the
3 6th, if I was called and had to be there on the 6th I would have,
4 but it wasn't necessary because they hadn't started their
5 excavation until Monday.

6 Q. I hear what you're saying, but I'm still not getting my
7 answer because my answer -- question is when you go there you make
8 a note --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- that I went at certain time. Why would you not make
11 a note when you didn't go for whatever reason? I'm not saying
12 you're required on that day. Why would you not make a note that
13 on the 6th you didn't go?

14 MR. JAQUES: That's been asked and answered. Could we
15 go off the record for a minute.

16 MR. CHHATRE: Sure we can. Off the record.

17 (Off the record)

18 (On the record)

19 MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record.

20 BY MR. CALDWELL:

21 Q. Jeff Caldwell, City of San Bruno. Mr. Poulo, with
22 regard to the standby request, is that only with mechanized
23 excavation tools or is it even with hand tools that a standby
24 would be required?

25 A. We like a field meet. We like a field meet whether or

1 not they're going to use equipment or not, verify that they're
2 going to be outside our area.

3 Q. Okay. And then a field meet is just to discuss what's
4 going to happen?

5 A. Sure. And that could be the same day as the first
6 standby.

7 Q. Okay. And then when you got out there on the 9th,
8 Monday, you mentioned earlier that excavation had already begun.

9 A. Sure.

10 Q. How much had begun and how deep, do you remember?

11 A. The surface was open.

12 Q. Okay. And on what side -- was it on the transmission
13 line or was it on --

14 A. It was on the transmission side.

15 Q. Okay. Are you -- and what is the requirement to have a
16 standby within how many feet of the transmission line?

17 A. Within 5 feet of the outside edges.

18 Q. Okay. And then a standby, is it literally meant to be
19 that we need a physical PG&E representative here standing by while
20 the work is completed?

21 A. With equipment, yes.

22 Q. Okay. Well, the question I have is are you aware of the
23 depth of the transmission line from the top of the roadway?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Which is what?

1 A. Thirty-one inches to the top.

2 Q. Right. And that's less than 5 feet. So my question is
3 why would have left and not stand by --

4 A. Because they were hand digging. It's not a requirement
5 while they hand dig.

6 MR. FASSETT: Clarification, Bob Fassett. The 5 feet he
7 said was from the outside each edge of the pipe. He was referring
8 to the horizontal distance. You asked for clearance to street.
9 He said 31 inches. That's a vertical distance.

10 MR. CALDWELL: Correct.

11 MR. FASSETT: The code only requires 30 inches to cover
12 on the transmission.

13 MR. CALDWELL: Correct. Are we on the record or off the
14 record?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: On the record.

16 BY MR. CALDWELL:

17 Q. The way I see it, in layman's terms -- because I'm not
18 an excavator by any means, but 5 feet would be 5 feet around your
19 pipe. Is that -- you're only worried about the lateral distance
20 between your pipe?

21 A. I'm worried --

22 Q. Why not on the top?

23 A. I'm worried about equipment operating around our
24 facilities.

25 Q. Okay. So to your knowledge, when you left on Monday,

1 they were just going to use hand tools?

2 A. They were hand tools.

3 Q. And you were good with that?

4 A. Absolutely.

5 Q. And then you left. So and that was -- you had a field
6 meeting at that time and that's how you determined that?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. And to your knowledge, did they ever use
9 equipment?

10 MR. CHHATRE: You want this on the record or you don't
11 want this on record?

12 MR. CALDWELL: Yeah, I thought we were on the record.

13 MR. CHHATRE: We're on the record.

14 BY MR. CALDWELL:

15 Q. And to your knowledge, did they use any excavating
16 machines at all within 5 feet?

17 A. Possibly they took the asphalt off with a backhoe, but I
18 wasn't there when they did that.

19 Q. Okay. So I'm just trying to find in your mind was there
20 any -- obviously, there wasn't otherwise you would've have stayed
21 there, correct --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- if you thought that they were going to use a machine
24 within 5 feet? And then when you returned the next day at 7:00
25 p.m., were you informed that they used any equipment that would

1 have -- what's the word? Necessitated?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Necessitated.

3 BY MR. CALDWELL:

4 Q. -- your requirement to have been there?

5 A. Clarify that.

6 Q. Well, did they say, hey, Jimmy got a backhoe and
7 backfilled the thing or we were driving over it with our tractor.
8 Was there any evidence that they used something other than hand
9 tools to back fill?

10 A. On Tuesday, no.

11 Q. When you returned?

12 A. Only the bursting equipment that they used.

13 Q. Okay. And then the last question I have, well, last
14 parted question. You wrote down 6 inch clearance here and that
15 was because some worker there told you it was 6 inches?

16 A. Possibly, yeah.

17 Q. Well, that's what you said earlier.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. So you wrote that down and then you wrote the
20 measurement explaining the measurements and distances between the
21 sewer pipe, the surface and that equals about 9 inches, but you're
22 saying 10 inches. Why would you have left a 6 inch -- I know that
23 you probably never expected to be here and all that stuff. But
24 why would you have left 6 inches there because to me it seems
25 confusing? But for your own records, for PG&E records, why

1 wouldn't --

2 A. Just as a note, somebody might have told me 6 inches. I
3 clarified it by taking actual measurements.

4 Q. Okay. But let's say that you're not around and they go
5 back to look at this for clarification. Would you say that that's
6 confusing or how would somebody know that there's -- it's
7 obviously a discrepancy. Why would it be like that?

8 A. Apparently this whole form is confusing.

9 Q. Well, it's not confusing to me, but your notes are
10 confusing to me.

11 A. Yes. I have no organizational skills. I'm a ditch
12 digger. I just write stuff down as a little mental note. My
13 mental note told me 6 inches, my tape measure told me it was more
14 than 6 inches.

15 Q. And that's verified via your explanation with the top
16 and the sewer?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And that's how -- okay. And your -- is this approved by
19 anybody above you or does it just go into a file cabinet and
20 that's the end of it?

21 A. At the end of the job it's filed.

22 Q. It's filed. And nobody cares to look at it?

23 MR. JAQUES: I object to that. Don't answer.

24 BY MR. CALDWELL:

25 Q. Okay. Is there ever a requirement that somebody looks

1 at this?

2 MR. JAQUES: I object. That's outside the scope of his
3 responsibilities.

4 BY MR. CALDWELL:

5 Q. To your knowledge, has anybody ever pulled one of these
6 tickets and looked at it after a job?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. Thank you.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Off the record.

10 MR. CHHATRE: Off the record.

11 (Off the record)

12 (On the record)

13 BY MR. CHHATRE:

14 Q. Back on the record. Actually, I lost my train of
15 thought here for a second.

16 Going back on the first day, you said two hours 6/9/08.
17 Do you recall what time was it? From what o'clock to what
18 o'clock?

19 A. No, I don't.

20 Q. Was it morning, afternoon, evening?

21 A. It could be morning.

22 Q. Morning. Typical -- you have done this a lot of times.
23 Typically when you go on the scene, what is your procedure? Do
24 you ask who the foreman is or do you just talk to anybody?

25 A. Yes, I ask for the man in charge.

1 Q. Okay. And did you ask this time --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- for the man in charge?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. I just want to clarify for the record that when you said
6 you talked to a worker, I just want to make sure it was not a
7 worker but it was either foreman or man in charge?

8 MR. GUNTHER: He stated that several times already.

9 BY MR. CHHATRE:

10 Q. Now, what other discussion with the person you talked
11 to?

12 A. The process that they're using to install whatever
13 they're installing.

14 Q. And are you familiar with the process?

15 A. I've seen bursting before.

16 Q. Okay. During your conversation with the contractor, did
17 you at any time tell the contractor, hold on, I have to make a
18 phone call?

19 A. No.

20 Q. When you were at the scene, did you ever make any phone
21 call to somebody in PG&E?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And was it regarding this job or some other work?

24 A. It was probably that job.

25 Q. Do you recall whom you talked with and what did you

1 discuss?

2 A. Well, it possibly could have been load center. They
3 want notification anytime somebody is working around our facility.

4 Q. Okay. So you didn't ask whether this process is
5 adequate or not? During the conversation, did he ask if the
6 process is okay to work around the pipe?

7 A. Did somebody ask me if that process was adequate?

8 Q. No, no. My question is when you made that phone call to
9 your possibly load center or whoever you made the call, did you
10 ask if the pressure bursting was acceptable at that location?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. Did you object to the process of pressure
13 bursting?

14 MR. JAQUES: I'm going to object to that question. He's
15 not an expert in that process and that's not his job to talk about
16 that in advance.

17 BY MR. CHHATRE:

18 Q. All right. So if somebody is digging next to the pipe
19 with the backhoe, would you object?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And why would you do that?

22 A. I have to make sure that he exposes two sides of our gas
23 pipe before he drops a piece of equipment in there to dig.

24 Q. And that is for the reason of safety or what?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. So the process is important to you how other people work
2 on the pipeline?

3 A. For the backhoe, yes.

4 Q. That is important. So then when they told you they're
5 working doing pressure bursting and you didn't object, did that
6 mean the process okay to you? I'm just trying to understand. If
7 you're okay with backhoe, why you did not okay with pressure
8 bursting?

9 A. I don't have any knowledge of what the bursting would do
10 unless it was physical contact against a pipe.

11 Q. Understand. So you feel it was an adequate process.
12 You didn't feel threatened -- that your pipeline is threatened?

13 MR. JAQUES: I'm going to object. He hasn't testified
14 that he has detailed knowledge on what the process was. That's
15 not his job, that's not his background.

16 MR. CHHATRE: Fully understand.

17 MR. JAQUES: There's no indication that it was explained
18 in detail what that process was.

19 BY MR. CHHATRE:

20 Q. So in that case, were you -- if you do not know the
21 process and if you do not know you are going to tighten your pipe,
22 what you would have done and what you should have done, either
23 way.

24 MR. JAQUES: He's already testified as to what he did.
25 He told them that --

1 MR. FASSETT: Bob Fassett. Just to clarify. He
2 testified earlier that he had informed them that they needed to
3 expose the sides of the pipe, the top of the pipe and 18 inches
4 under the pipe. And when he got there the work had already been
5 done. And he measured a clearance of 9 inches or 11 inches
6 between the pipe.

7 MR. CHHATRE: Was it -- was that log on 6/9? I think it
8 was on 6/10 I thought.

9 MR. FASSETT: When they were prospecting on Monday, he
10 testified that he told them that they need to progress and abide.
11 They need to have --

12 MR. CHHATRE: Right.

13 MR. FASSETT: -- the top, the sides and 18 inches of
14 clearance under it. And he just told you he is concerned if it's
15 going to be touching the pipe. Well, if you have the clearance,
16 by definition of the word, it's not touching.

17 BY MR. CHHATRE:

18 Q Okay. All right. So on 6/9, the work just begun and
19 you saw only one side of the pipe exposed?

20 A Yes.

21 Q And you saw it was clearly 18 inches?

22 A I'm sorry?

23 Q Do you see that the pipe was exposed and there appeared
24 18 inches --

25 A No.

1 Q. -- around the excavation?

2 A. No.

3 Q. So it was just exposed on one -- on both sides?

4 A. They had exposed a pipe located where it was at.
5 Excavation had not been completed.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. They were digging by hand. I had no reason to be there
8 until they actually did the pipe bursting.

9 Q. So the other side you felt you did not --

10 A. They had not exposed that side yet.

11 Q. Other side, okay. Now, your note says, "recheck on
12 Tuesday." Does that mean they ask you or you told them?

13 A. No, that's the drive-by to see how they were doing,
14 where they were at.

15 Q. Okay. On Tuesday?

16 A. The progression of their job, yes.

17 Q. Did you tell them that you will be checking on Tuesday
18 or they should be contacting you or you will contact them?

19 A. I told them to call me when they encroach our gas main.

20 Q. Okay. And what time on Tuesday you went there? Is it
21 after 7:00, around 7:00 --

22 A. Around 7:00. They were complete.

23 Q. Okay. And you didn't get any call from the contractor?

24 A. On Tuesday, no.

25 Q. On Tuesday no. And will you be getting that call? Had

1 you given your phone number to them or they be calling your
2 supervisor?

3 A If I had given out a business card, they would have my
4 number, but they probably would call the office or somebody.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I don't know who.

7 Q. The supervisor will call you and the supervisor did not
8 contact you on Tuesday?

9 A. He contacted me after hours.

10 Q. Did he tell you what time the call came in?

11 A. I don't know.

12 Q. Would there be some kind of a record?

13 A I have no idea.

14 Q. What is not clear to me is obvious the call came in if
15 you went Tuesday, but I'm not sure when the call came in. Now,
16 you said do -- do you have any map when you went at the site? And
17 I believe you said you had a map from the --

18 A. Normally, I would have a shot of the map, yes.

19 Q. And would that go with the file when you file it? Will
20 the map -- because that is one document? Would that be attached
21 to the document when you file it?

22 A. Yeah, at times, they were. Sometimes I rip them off so
23 I don't have both pieces of paper with me out on the site. It may
24 not get reconnected. However, there's always a copy in the
25 office.

1 Q. Did anybody mention to you that they had put 2 x 4 when
2 you went in there and you said the job was done?

3 MR. GUNTHER: Let's go off the record for a minute.

4 MR. CHHATRE: Off the record.

5 (Off the record)

6 (On the record)

7 MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record.

8 BY MR. CHHATRE:

9 Q. Did you ask the contractor if they had backfilled with
10 sand?

11 A. I wasn't there after the process.

12 Q. No, no. When you went in there, the job was done and it
13 was filled.

14 A. When I was there, the sewer line was installed,
15 excavation was still open.

16 Q. So it was still open. Okay. And did you tell them
17 that -- did the contractor tell you that that will be backfilled
18 with sand?

19 A. No, there's normally said within conversation.

20 Q. I understand. But the contractor didn't tell you that
21 this is the material I'm going to use to backfill? Anything to
22 that?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Now, on 10th, when you said -- when you went next time
25 on the 10th and the job was done, did you have any conversation

1 with the contractor at that time at 7 o'clock was it?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, it was 7 o'clock the night
3 before.

4 MR. CHHATRE: The night before. Okay.

5 MR. POULO: No, 9th -- the 10th was 7 o'clock.

6 BY MR. CHHATRE:

7 Q. So on the 10th, and that's when the job was done?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Did you have any conversation with the contractor on
10 that?

11 A. Only the workers that were out there.

12 Q. Before the man in charge wasn't there?

13 A. I don't know who was there at that time.

14 Q. Okay. So what --

15 A. They didn't have a full crew out there at 7 o'clock at
16 night.

17 Q. Understand, understand. So I guess my question is did
18 you have any conversation? Did you say why or you said it looks
19 good? What happened on your visit?

20 A. If I said anything at all, it was I didn't get a phone
21 call. Why didn't we have representation here. I thought you were
22 going to be here on Wednesday. This is what I was told. Give me
23 a tape measure.

24 Q. And how long you think you were at the site then?

25 A. That night?

1 Q. Probably about an hour.

2 A. Probably an hour.

3 Q. And did you do any measurements in that hour or -- I
4 don't understand what was happening for one hour.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Let's go off the record again.

6 (Off the record)

7 (On the record)

8 MR. CHHATRE: Going back on the record.

9 BY MR. CHHATRE:

10 Q. Were any comment made or statement made or document that
11 you told your supervisor the job was finished and that you didn't
12 (indiscernible)? Did you get reaction from the supervisor?

13 A. No.

14 Q. During these two days, was there any concern in your
15 mind that your pipeline was tapped?

16 A. I was concerned from the time I got the phone call to
17 the time I found what the measurements were.

18 Q. Okay. And did you express that concern to somebody?

19 A. Yeah, to myself because I'm worried that they hit our
20 pipe.

21 Q. Okay. But you didn't pass it on to your supervisor?

22 A. I was the supervisor, basically.

23 Q. You were the supervisor. But above you, I mean. How
24 often it happens that people -- is it pretty common practice that
25 people do this kind of stuff and don't call you when you tell them

1 to call you?

2 A. Yes.

3 MR. DAUBIN: Ravi, for the record, Steve is responsible
4 for -- I'm sorry, Brian Daubin, PG&E. Steve is a standby in the
5 Peninsula Division, not for the entire system.

6 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. So his comment would be for the
7 division only.

8 MR. DAUBIN: Thank you.

9 MR. CHHATRE: That's fine.

10 BY MR. CHHATRE:

11 Q. After the September 9th incident, were there any
12 discussion about -- between you or your supervisor or anybody else
13 about this particular job and whether it was done right or not
14 done right?

15 A. No.

16 Q. That's all, thanks.

17 MR. NARVELL: I have no questions for Mr. Poulo. Thank
18 you. Rick Narvell.

19 MR. CHHATRE: (Indiscernible).

20 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

21 Q. I have one follow-up question, sir. In your procedures,
22 are you required to check any as-built drawings before you go out
23 to standbys or bring them with you when you go out?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Thank you.

1 MS. FABRY: One follow-up.

2 MR. CHHATRE: Sure.

3 BY MS. FABRY:

4 Q. Klara Fabry. Steve, when you've been to the site
5 Monday, if you can specify how the location of the work at that
6 time on the westside of the pipe how close to the pipe they were
7 at the time (indiscernible)?

8 A. Their actual bursting?

9 Q. Monday.

10 A. Monday.

11 Q. You indicated that they were working, they started
12 excavation and they were hand digging.

13 A. They were hand digging around the gas main.

14 Q. How close to the pipe at that time when you were on the
15 site?

16 A. When they were hand digging?

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. They were exposed to pipe. I would say they were on the
19 pipe, around the pipe, at the pipe.

20 Q. Now, when you went back Tuesday night, you indicated
21 before that you did not see any excavation on the eastside of the
22 pipe.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. Do you recall any excavation on the eastside of the
25 pipe?

1 A. I'm sure that there must have been, but it was not
2 exposed.

3 Q. You have any recollection of any length or any distance
4 or any other excavation close to the pipe on the eastside?

5 A. Not exposed.

6 Q. Without to be exposed, you have no recollection -- you
7 can -- if you could recall -- if you can recall, I am very
8 impressed by your recollection. Really congratulate on how very
9 well you remember (indiscernible). If you could -- you can recall
10 and help us to have better information if you can recall any
11 excavation on the eastside of the pipe?

12 A. I did not see any excavation on the eastside of the
13 pipe.

14 Q. Okay. The last question. Was it your intent or
15 typically your -- after they will finish with the backfill,
16 typically you are going back to the site to better find that or
17 you was your intent --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm sorry. I'm going to
19 interrupt you and object because you really need to start that
20 over so it's one coherent question. There are a lot of bits and
21 pieces there.

22 BY MS. FABRY:

23 Q. I will start over. After you left the site -- when you
24 left the site Tuesday evening and you had the discussion about the
25 backfill, was your intent to come back next day to field verify if

1 the backfill was done?

2 A. The actually backfilling I probably would like to see it
3 done. However, on Wednesday, I had not gone back.

4 Q. In your experience, how many this type of construction
5 work did you witness around this transmission line?

6 A. How many years have I been doing standbys?

7 Q. How many work, construction work, other utility work
8 disclosed to this transmission line did you witness and basically
9 perform standby work?

10 A. Are you saying on that line 132, in that location?

11 Q. No, in any other location.

12 A. I have no idea how many I've done.

13 Q. Very high number?

14 A. Possibly.

15 Q. Thank you.

16 MR. CHHATRE: I think Bob -- Brian.

17 MR. DAUBIN: Couple follow-up questions for you,
18 Mr. Poulo.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Name.

20 MR. DAUBIN: I'm sorry.

21 MR. CHHATRE: Identify.

22 BY MR. DAUBIN:

23 Q. Brian Daubin, PG&E. Thank you. You had mentioned
24 earlier that you contacted load center --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- or also known as gas control?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Why would you have done so?

4 A. As a procedure to notify when there is a contractor
5 working around our facilities.

6 Q. Do you know what the purpose of that is?

7 A. It's to not know.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I'm sure they like to know if somebody's there and if
10 something happens and they've got an indication of failure
11 somewhere that they have a good indication if there's somebody
12 working in the area.

13 Q. Thank you. Had the work -- speculation. Is there
14 anything you could have done at the time once that sewer was in --
15 construction already completed, to move that sewer line down 2
16 inches to get your 12 inches of clearance?

17 A. I don't know.

18 Q. Is there anything that you could have done?

19 A. Personally, no.

20 Q. Okay.

21 BY MR. FASSETT:

22 Q. Bob Fassett, PG&E. Just to clarify, going back to
23 Carla's [sic] questioning and what was on the eastside or wasn't
24 on the eastside, you stated that you saw the completed sewer pipe.
25 Was it accurate to say therefore on the east of the transmission

1 pipe, you saw excavation and the completed sewer?

2 A. I saw the installation of the sewer on the westside of
3 the gas main going under the gas main. The eastside of the
4 excavation was covered, not backfilled, covered.

5 Q. And you mentioned earlier there may have been a
6 bridge -- the bridge refers to the steel plates?

7 A. The steel bridges, sure.

8 Q. So, again, to clarify, all you observed of the completed
9 sewer pipe was what you could see on the westside of the
10 transmission pipe and to the degree that you could see it going
11 under the pipe?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Thank you.

14 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

15 Q. A couple of follow-up questions. Do you know or do you
16 have any way of knowing what the clearance was between the sewer
17 line and your gas line, the original clearance?

18 A. No.

19 Q. What yard do you work out of? Where do you --

20 A. San Carlos.

21 Q. San Carlos. And what are your normal work hours?

22 A. 7:00 to 3:30.

23 Q. And I think earlier you said on the 10th you were on
24 scene for about an hour.

25 A. About an hour.

1 Q. I don't have anybody to reread that, but that's what I
2 recall hearing, one hour. You had three hours work that day, so
3 is that --

4 A. Travel.

5 Q. Do you normally go back on projects where you've done
6 standby to go back and look at the backfill or basically a final
7 project completed?

8 A. Most standbys are being done during the work hours and
9 you are there during the backfill.

10 Q. Okay. So more often than not, you would be watching the
11 backfill? You would watch --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- the final closeout of the whole --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And, again, just for clarification. As far as any other
16 field meeting that took place prior to your work on this on 6/9,
17 you weren't involved with any other prior meetings or field
18 meetings or anything else --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- related to this project for this contractor?

21 A. No.

22 MR. CHHATRE: Bob.

23 BY BOB FASSETT:

24 Q Just to clarify. I believe you stated earlier that
25 although you weren't able to observe the backfill, you did

1 instruct them that the backfill needed to be clean sand, is that
2 accurate?

3 A. It's normally a procedure in your field meet.

4 Q. Okay. In other testimonies we've heard, it was stated
5 that they were going to use gravel and you okayed that?

6 A. No, I never would.

7 Q. Thank you.

8 A. We require six inches of clean sand around our
9 facilities.

10 Q. Thank you.

11 BY MS. JACKSON:

12 Q. Connie Jackson, City of San Bruno. Can you give me just
13 a very general idea of the policy or -- you said there's a
14 procedure that you carry in your truck having to do with the
15 responsibilities associated with the type of work that you do.

16 A. Right.

17 Q. Can you give me a general idea of what that policy calls
18 for in terms of your authority to stop the work or require
19 additional exposure or any other activities you might determine to
20 be necessary?

21 A. Can you clarify that?

22 Q. If you felt that there was a need to -- that the work
23 was not adequately visible or that something maybe was of concern,
24 what is -- what does your policy call for --

25 A. I can stop --

1 Q. -- you to do in that instance?

2 A. I can stop the job.

3 Q. And anything else? Is there a notification procedure
4 to --

5 A. If I'm onsite I can stop the job. Just stop the job, go
6 back into a field meet and tell them what our expectations are.

7 Q. And that did not occur in this case?

8 A. You're talking Tuesday when they did the bore when I was
9 not present?

10 Q. At any time that --

11 A. Did I feel that they needed to stop the job?

12 Q. Correct.

13 A. No.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Bob.

15 BY MR. FASSETT:

16 Q. Bob Fassett, PG&E. Can you stop a job that's been
17 completed?

18 A. I don't think so.

19 Q. And a job that's been completed without you present even
20 though you asked to be present for them to actually do their job,
21 can you stop that kind of job that's already been completed?

22 A. No, it's done.

23 Q. Thank you.

24 BY MR. CALDWELL:

25 Q. Jeff Caldwell, City of San Bruno. Do you have the

1 authority to tell the contractor to remove the work that he's
2 already completed to ensure that it was done correct?

3 A. No, I don't have the authority.

4 Q. Even when he's not within the 12-inch clearance as
5 required?

6 A. After --

7 Q. You wouldn't have the authority --

8 A. I have the authority to stop them if they weren't going
9 to provide something that was comfortable being the 12 inches.
10 But if they have it in and they have clearance, what's the need?

11 Q. Well, it's not -- he's less than 12 inches.

12 A. That's okay.

13 Q. Okay. But you would have -- let's say that you were
14 very specific in your duties and you wanted it followed by a
15 letter, could you, in fact, tell that contractor, hey, you're
16 under 12 inches?

17 A. Sure.

18 Q. Could you remove the pipe --

19 A. Sure. If I had been out there on Tuesday and the
20 existing sewer was only six inches of clearance, I can ask them to
21 dig it down and drop their pipe in at a lower depth.

22 Q. Okay. Thanks.

23 MR. CHHATRE: Anybody else?

24 BY MR. CHHATRE:

25 Q. Ravindra Chhatre, NTSB. You mentioned you could have

1 stopped the job if they are using backhoe or something near the
2 pipe?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. How will you go about doing that?

5 A. Tell the backhoe operator to stop digging. If they have
6 defiant -- if you have defiant contractors, I would call 9-1-1.

7 Q. Okay. That's what I'm trying to get at. And have you
8 ever done that?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Now, have you asked anybody to dig up again because
11 you're not there?

12 A. No.

13 Q. And is it a judgment call or why would you not do that
14 if you're uncomfortable? And when you stated that you were
15 concerned earlier that the safety --

16 MR. GUNTHER: I'm going to object. He said he was
17 concerned until he got there and looked at it.

18 BY MR. CHHATRE:

19 Q. Okay. And my question is at that point, could you have
20 asked them to redo the whole thing by calling again when they call
21 up. What number is it?

22 MR. GUNTHER: I'm going to object. It's hypothetical
23 because he said once he got there he was comfortable with the
24 clearances.

25 BY MR. CHHATRE:

1 Q. Were you comfortable with the backfill also?

2 MR. JAQUES: And I'm going to object. That's been asked
3 and answered several times already.

4 MR. CHHATRE: I don't believe he answered whether he was
5 comfortable with backfill or not.

6 MR. JAQUES: He testified to what was done, what he saw,
7 and what he did.

8 BY MR. CHHATRE:

9 Q. And my question is --

10 A. I did not see the backfill.

11 Q. -- was the issue of 2 x 4 ever came in conversation?

12 MR. JAQUES: You know, that's been asked and answered
13 several times.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. All right. I'll withdraw the
15 question. I will withdraw the question and I'll ask no more
16 questions then.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We done?

18 MR. CHHATRE: Last call. Okay. Thank again for the
19 time.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, sir.

21 MR. CHHATRE: Off the record.

22 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY
 SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 ACCIDENT
 Interview of Steven Poulou

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MP-008

PLACE: Burlingame, California

DATE: January 5, 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.

Lisa Kane
Transcriber