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NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF LARRY ROCCHOLZ, PG&E
(JAN-6-2011)

(54 Pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY

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SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 ACCIDENT

* Docket No.: DCA-10-MP-008

SAN BRUNO, CALIFORNIA

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Interview of: LARRY ROCCHOLZ

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

Thursday,
January 6, 2011

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to
notice.

BEFORE: RAVINDRA CHHATRE
Investigator-in-Charge

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record. Good afternoon,
3 everyone. Today is Thursday, January 6th, 2011. We are currently
4 in Burlingame, California at the San Francisco Airport Marriott.
5 We are meeting in regards to the investigation of the pipeline
6 rupture in San Bruno, California that occurred on September 9,
7 2010. The NTSB accident number for this investigation is DCA-10-
8 MP-008.

9 My name is Ravi Chhatre. I'm with the National
10 Transportation Safety Board, Washington, D.C., and I'm
11 investigator in charge of this accident.

12 I would like to start by notifying everyone present in
13 this room that we are recording this interview for future
14 transcription at a later date. All parties will have a chance to
15 review the transcripts when they are completed.

16 Also, I would like to inform Mr. Roccholz that you are
17 permitted to have one person with you during today's interview.
18 This is a person of your choice; your supervisor, friend, family
19 member, or if you choose no one at all. So for the record, please
20 state full name, spelling off your name, contact information like
21 email, telephone, address, and whom you have chosen to be present
22 with you during your interview.

23 MR. ROCCHOLZ: Okay, my name's Larry W. Roccholz.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Spell it.

25 MR. ROCCHOLZ: R-o-c-h-h-o-l-z. I'm a little nervous,

1 so I apologize.

2 MR. CHHATRE: Your contact information, telephone,
3 email?

4 MR. ROCCHOLZ: My telephone number is area code -----
5 ----- I have two emails. My company email is -----com. My
6 private email --

7 MR. NARVELL: You don't need to give that out.

8 MR. ROCCHOLZ: Okay.

9 MR. GUNTHER: No, that's it.

10 MR. ROCCHOLZ: And I want Dane to be my representative.

11 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you very much. Now I would like to
12 go around the room and have each person introduce themselves.
13 Please state your name, spelling, and the title and organization
14 that you represent. A business email and phone number, starting
15 with the city.

16 MR. CALDWELL: Geoff Caldwell, city of San Bruno. My
17 information's on the card provided.

18 MR. DAUBIN: Brian Daubin, PG&E. My information's on
19 the card provided.

20 MR. FASSETT: Bob Fassett, PG&E, information's on the
21 card.

22 MS. JACKSON: Connie Jackson, city of San Bruno, and my
23 information's on the card.

24 MS. FABRY: Klara Fabry, city of San Bruno. My
25 information is on the card provided.

1 MR. SHORI: Sunil Shori, California Public Utilities
2 Commission, and my information is on the card provided.

3 MR. KATCHMAR: Peter Katchmar, United States Department
4 of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety
5 Administration, and my information is on the card.

6 MR. GUNTHER: Karl Gunther, NTSB, Operations Group
7 Chairman, karl.gunther@ntsb.gov. Phone 202-314-6478.

8 MS. MAZZANTI: Debbie Mazzanti, IBEW, Local 1245, and my
9 information's on the card.

10 MR. SPERRY: Joshua Sperry, Engineers and Scientists of
11 California, Local 20, IFPTE, and my information's been provided.

12 MR. NICHOLSON: Matthew Nicholson, NTSB, Engineer. M-a-
13 t-t-h-e-w, N-i-c-h-o-l-s-o-n. Matthew.nicholson@ntsb.gov.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Ravindra Chhatre. I'm with the National
15 Transportation Safety Board. My email is
16 ravindra.chhatre@ntsb.gov. Telephone 202-314-6644.

17 MR. NARVELL: Good afternoon, Mr. Roccholz. Rick
18 Narvell. I'm the Chair of the Human Performance Group for NTSB,
19 Washington, D.C. Email is narvelr@ntsb.gov. And the phone is
20 202-314-6422.

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

23 MR. CHHATRE: Okay, thank you much. Karl, do you want
24 to go first or should we start with Geoff Caldwell?

25 MR. GUNTHER: Yeah, I'll go ahead and start. Karl

1 Gunther, Operations Group Chair.

2 INTERVIEW OF LARRY ROCCHOLZ

3 BY MR. GUNTHER:

4 Q. What I'd like to ask you first is your job title?

5 A. Gas System Operations, System Operator.

6 Q. And your affiliation? Well, who do you work for?

7 A. Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

8 Q. Okay. What area do you work or what city?

9 A. I work in San Francisco.

10 Q. Okay. And what are your duties?

11 A. To operate and control the gas lines for the company of
12 PG&E systemwide.

13 Q. On the day of the accident, can you describe what you
14 did? Just start from the beginning.

15 A. I started -- got to work at about 0515 hours. I was
16 doing approval clearance work that day. Basically approving
17 clearances for future jobs on the pipeline and stations. At 1600
18 hours that day we were making a change where the night
19 crews --quarterly we go to our alternate gas site and set it up
20 where it's run for three days and nights. So we sent one of the
21 operators that was currently working with the paperwork needed for
22 the clearances that were ongoing, et cetera, out to the site. She
23 left at 1600 hours, and I assumed her position at the controls.
24 And I was one of the three operators operating from 1600 hours on
25 that day.

1 Q. Okay.

2 MR. GUNTHER: And for the city of San Bruno?

3 MR. CALDWELL: No questions at this time.

4 MR. DAUBIN: No questions.

5 MR. FASSETT: No questions.

6 MS JACKSON: No questions right now.

7 MS. FABRY: No questions at this time.

8 BY MR. SHORI:

9 Q. Larry, so you're one of the operators then at San
10 Francisco then in terms of when the event -- when the incident
11 occurred?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. And what was your -- what were the first alarms
14 that you received that you responded to?

15 A. We lost station data. When I assumed the position at
16 1600 hours we were having trouble with the clearance out of
17 Milpitas as far as data coming in accurately and correctly. And
18 basically from that point on I was a watchdog where they were
19 trying to reestablish communications and get the proper readings
20 in so we could determine, you know, if we had problems on the
21 pipeline or not. Also during that time frame, I was also dealing
22 with other problems in the system. My partner -- well, there was
23 two of us on; Mike and Barry. Barry was dealing directly with
24 Milpitas. I received calls from Oscar Martinez, the gentleman
25 involved with the clearance, and I transferred him immediately to

1 Barry from the standpoint it gets confusing sometimes when you
2 have more than operator working a job. So I tried to keep it
3 tunneled to Barry because he was the one handling the clearance.
4 But we were all watching the system.

5 Q. What other problems -- well, I guess what other problems
6 were you dealing with that you had to move this on to Barry, or
7 that was simply -- is that the normal protocol in terms of he had
8 the clearance?

9 A. He had the clearance. What we try to do in the control
10 room just basically to avoid confusion and just a more direct
11 process is the person dealing with the clearance is the one that
12 deals with the people in the field that are on the clearance. It
13 just leaves -- you don't get confusion going, you know, like that.
14 And I had been made aware when I sat down at 1600 hours that Barry
15 had this clearance going on. And I was dealing with -- we had a
16 failed RTU system in the Berkeley/Oakland area, and it was a dead
17 end system. And I had a gas tech out there. He was having
18 trouble finding the location, so we were helping him find the
19 location to get that system back online so we could read it
20 correctly, which he was able to do.

21 Q. At some point did you get back involved again with the
22 Milpitas situation after you had handed it off to Barry?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. At what point?

25 A. When I was completed with working with the gas tech. I

1 was watching the system. At that time we started to over
2 pressure, and we could see it downstream, basically from Gilroy to
3 San Francisco. That whole corridor south and north had started to
4 over pressure, so we knew that the valves had opened up with that
5 piece of equipment going bad. And we started monitoring the
6 system, and started looking at the individual stations, and trying
7 to determine -- you know make sure there wasn't going to be any
8 breakage. You know, were the stations handling the pressure all
9 right, et cetera.

10 Q. Now you said Gilroy? You were saying --

11 A. That was --

12 Q. -- that the pressure --

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. -- down in Gilroy as well?

15 A. Yes, sir. The lines that feed out of the Milpitas
16 terminal go north and south.

17 Q. So which line would it have been going down to Gilroy?

18 A. I don't recall. I'd have to look at the map to get it
19 right. I want to say 100, but I might be wrong on that.

20 Q. And that -- the 100 comes off the same header as 132,
21 109, and 101?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. And do you know what the normal MOP is on 100?

24 A. It should be 375.

25 Q. And what kind of values were you seeing? I mean were

1 you trending as far as different locations or what were you
2 looking at?

3 A. Okay, we started initially -- we were feeding the line
4 at 360 pounds. And then the valves, like I said, due to the
5 equipment failure on the UPS system, the valves open, wide open.
6 So we hit MOP, and then we kept climbing until the monitors kicked
7 in at 385, 386, in that range. And we saw the pressure slowly go
8 up. Because you're talking basically a tremendous amount of
9 pipeline as far as mileage and, you know, 24 to 36-inch pipe. It
10 just takes a while for the volume to pack. But it took up to get
11 up to the 385, the 386, at the far points of the system. But it
12 was a slow climb and eventually got there, and then it seemed to
13 stabilize.

14 Q. When did you see it -- when do you recall it
15 stabilizing?

16 A. In my mind I want to say about 1745 hours.

17 Q. And after it stabilized did it pick up again?

18 A. Not until the break. Well, I take that back. It
19 didn't -- it didn't increase, okay. The line stayed where it was
20 at pressure-wise, but the pressures change when the line broke
21 going north. But what we also did for reactive is we shut in 300A
22 and B at PLS 7, dropped that down to below 300 to -- so there
23 would be no feed coming that way. I, myself shut in Sheridan
24 coming the other way, which would be gas coming from Brentwood.
25 Shut that in to below the 300 to where basically we were trying to

1 get the line packed down that way, by cutting the primary feeds
2 coming in to the station at Milpitas and to hopefully the load,
3 the evening load would take the pressure off.

4 Q. But you said -- earlier you said you noticed or you felt
5 that the monitors took over. Why would you need to do that if you
6 saw the monitors take over?

7 A. Because it's still above MOP. The monitors are set 10
8 pounds above MOP per book of standards. So I don't want to run
9 that line over 375 pounds. The monitors are set with a 10-pound
10 safety of 385 and they catch there. They're set well below the
11 MAOP of the line, which I believe is 400. They're set well below
12 that.

13 Q. And who's decision was it to go back to PLS 7 A and B
14 and --

15 A. It was my senior.

16 Q. Name?

17 A. Mark Cenicerros. While this was going on, I might add,
18 we are talking in the control room, you know, about the pipe,
19 what's going. We're talking to each in the control room.

20 Q. Basically the measures that you took of that, did you
21 see line 100 come down as well?

22 A. Slowly but yes.

23 Q. Thank you. That's all I have for now.

24 MR. KATCHMAR: No questions.

25 MR. GUNTHER: No questions.

1 MS. MAZZANTI: No questions.

2 MR. SPERRY: No questions.

3 MR. NICHOLSON: No questions.

4 MR. CHHATRE: Ravi Chhatre, a couple of questions.

5 MR. ROCCHOLZ: Okay.

6 BY MR. CHHATRE:

7 Q. Did you say you were reporting to work at 0515 or 1515?

8 A. 0515 hours.

9 Q. 0515 hours, okay.

10 A. Our shifts are 0600 to 06 -- or excuse me. We work 12-
11 hour increments, so it's 0600 to --

12 Q. To 1800.

13 A. -- 1800 and 1800 to 0600.

14 Q. Okay. And were you monitoring the screen that displayed
15 the Milpitas Station --

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. -- condition? And maybe this was early, but I just want
18 to confirm that -- what time do you believe the communications
19 stopped from Milpitas?

20 A. I'd say between 1600 and 1630, I believe is when they
21 stopped communicating.

22 Q. Okay. Did you at that time -- what actions did you take
23 at that time?

24 A. Okay, as I said, we looked downstream at anything we
25 can, okay. By looking upstream CPLS-7 and looking upstream at the

1 other side at Sheridan, we were looking to see if flow increases.
2 A flow increase, a major flow increase would indicate there's a
3 line break. But there wasn't. The flow had increased a little
4 bit, but that was the packing of the line. What I'm going by is
5 the experience I have myself and how long I've been an operator
6 and done the system. Okay, the flow hadn't increased
7 substantially, so we didn't feel we were in trouble that way. Can
8 you repeat the question again?

9 Q. Yeah, my question was, when you lost the communication,
10 what actions did you take?

11 A. Okay, on that vein that way, Barry was in constant
12 contact. I was right next to him is why I know. Barry and I were
13 talking and he was in constant contact with Oscar, trying to get
14 it reestablished. What's the problem, what are we doing, what's
15 going on, you know, we're blind, we can't see the station itself.
16 But we could see downstream and we could see upstream. So then we
17 were monitoring the downstream stations, okay. We were looking at
18 the peninsula stations. Lomita Park, Martin, Sullivan. We were
19 looking at Gilroy, the southern stations. There's -- I'd have to
20 look at a map to get the other ones down in my mind, but the other
21 stations that were south of that to make sure that there wasn't
22 any increase in flow, okay. That there wasn't a low or low-low
23 starting to happen or whatever. We just were basically monitoring
24 the system and trying to stay on top of it.

25 Q. Excuse me. Could you on SCADA see the lines -- the

1 lines that are coming into Milpitas? And I believe there are four
2 lines coming in to Milpitas?

3 A. There are. We've got 300A and B, and then on the other
4 side I got 107 and 131. So there's four. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Your said 300A and B, 101, and 137?

6 A. No, 131.

7 Q. Oh, 131. Sorry.

8 A. And 107.

9 Q. 131 and 107. 300, 107, 131.

10 A. Okay, the 131 and 107 are coming from the northern side,
11 meaning coming from Brentwood, and it comes from our 400-401
12 system.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And the 300A and B is what's coming out of the desert
15 that we're getting from our suppliers out of Texas.

16 Q. Meaning Texas?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. What about the typical places you'll see on the SCADA
19 for these four lines indicating to you one at a time, if you
20 recall?

21 A. I'm sorry?

22 Q. For these four lines, if you recall, can you tell me
23 what is the pressure range as it comes into Milpitas for these
24 four lines?

25 A. I've got to the think about the MOPs and the line.

1 600 -- I want to say 630, 632 is the maximum.

2 Q. For --

3 A. I think that night we were running -- I want to say
4 about 580 coming into the station.

5 Q. For 300?

6 A. For 300A and B.

7 Q. Okay. And 107 and 131?

8 A. Okay, 107 and 131. I'm trying to remember what I
9 reduced it as. It was four months ago. I want to say we were
10 right around 500.

11 Q. 500 for those, okay. And can you monitor flow for these
12 four lines as they come in?

13 A. You can monitor at the sites themselves, PLS 7A and B.
14 Okay --

15 Q. And that you mean --

16 A. When I say PLS 7A and B, that's the station where I can,
17 you know, adjust pressures or whatever. So when I say 7B, that's
18 actually 300B. When I say 7A, that's 300A. Sheridan would be 131
19 coming in and then the 107 comes out of another part, and --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Yeah, you just check the flow and pressures there. Then
22 when they come into Milpitas I have the ability at Milpitas, if
23 I'm getting the correct data, if the PLC is working, I am able to
24 monitor flow, pressure, et cetera, at Milpitas --

25 Q. For these --

1 A. -- for everything.

2 Q. For these four lines as they come into the station?

3 A. And also the header going out.

4 Q. Okay. On the day of the accident, can you tell me where
5 were you for the period between 5:45 and 6:15?

6 A. I'm sorry?

7 Q. Between 5:45 and 6:15 do you recall any significant
8 events as they happened? Because lots of things happened every
9 minute.

10 A. Right. Yes, sir.

11 Q. So I don't want you to -- I don't expect you to give me
12 all the details.

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. But some significant thing that you saw that was
15 significant?

16 A. Okay. At -- I would say around 1811, 1812 hours
17 Barry -- I was looking at down south. Barry said I got a low
18 alarm at Martin. I immediately transferred my attention to the
19 peninsula. I looked at it, and we had a low alarm, all right.
20 But there was no other indication at any other station that
21 anything was going on. There was no excessive flow. There wasn't
22 anything. Okay, Milpitas is still dark, meaning I can read
23 nothing out of there. And that would have been my first
24 indication besides Martin if anything was wrong because I could
25 have picked up the flow on that of 132 coming out of there, a

1 pressure drop, whatever. When we went into low alarm, and Martin
2 is a step down station.

3 Okay, so I got 300 and -- excuse me, at that time it was
4 probably around 390. I got 390 coming in but I'm stepping down to
5 235. So I'm not going to see it on the other side until that
6 pressure gets below the 235. Then I see the flow increase. It's
7 also the timing of it. The way the RTUs are setup, PLCs, is
8 they're all set at different timers. So I might get an update at
9 Martin every minute, every 2 minutes. At Milpitas, because it's
10 such a vital station, I get updates with that equipment every 5,
11 10, 15 seconds it wants to repeat and give me new data. So
12 there's a little bit of a time lag there.

13 So we're looking, we observing, we're still looking at
14 stations, we're trying to determine if this is a bogus alarm or
15 not. Because at times anybody that's operated for a long amount
16 of time -- I call them gremlins, but you get like ghosts in the
17 system where you will get an alarm that says I'm in low-low or
18 you'll get a flow alarm that says high-high or low-low for no
19 reason at all. But you have no other data to back it up. None
20 whatsoever. So then you're looking at the system trying to
21 determine yes, no, whatever. Since this was not a dead end
22 system, meaning that that was my last read on that system, I had
23 downstream and upstream I could look at. Okay, I was seeing no
24 indication period of anything else. Between 6, 7 minutes later I
25 want to say I finally saw something at Lomita Park, a pressure

1 drop there.

2 Q. Where?

3 A. At Lomita Park. That's the station upstream of Martin,
4 coming out of Lomita Park and Martin. Okay, so we say pressure
5 and flow. We saw flow increase and pressure drop at Martin, so we
6 knew we had a problem. But where was the problem at? Okay, we
7 had verified -- okay, I'm going by my operational experience here
8 right now. I had verified that I knew that it wasn't on the San
9 Francisco side, meaning the 240-pound system side of Martin
10 because that never went flat initially. Okay, I never saw an
11 increase in flow or pressure on the opposite side, which is
12 Sullivan Station, which feeds on the opposite side of San
13 Francisco that comes around in a loop. They're tied in. They do
14 a loop. So there was no problem there. So we're looking at it,
15 and then all of the sudden bam, I've got a second station. So I
16 know it's between Lomita and it's between Martin. But where?
17 That's 12 miles. I don't know exactly where.

18 So we're looking at other stations. Okay, are we seeing
19 something, are we -- you know, what's going on. We hit low-low at
20 Martin. Finally it reached the point where the pressure's
21 dropping on the San Francisco side of Martin Station, the 240-
22 pound. That's starting to drop, and I notice that the pressure --
23 it's not the pressure, excuse me. The flow is increasing at
24 Sullivan, which means I'm feeding all the way around. Okay, so
25 I'm starting to feed, possibly feed this break.

1 So in this interim, that 5 or 6 minutes it took us
2 waiting for another signal to see if that was good or not -- per
3 our company standards we're allowed 10 minutes to determine what's
4 going on. Okay, they give us the time instead of jumping on
5 something immediately to see if it's an anomaly or find out if
6 something's happening. Okay, so within that 6, 7-minute period,
7 yeah, something's going on because now I've got a second station
8 telling me it is. So now okay, exactly where is it at. I'm
9 trying to determine where it's at. We've notified Milpitas,
10 telling them we've got a line break we think. The location -- you
11 might start think about rolling crews, but we're still not sure if
12 it could possibly be on the San Francisco side. We do not think
13 so. We think it's on the peninsula, meaning -- I'm sorry. The
14 company's divided up into divisions. So these are workgroups,
15 okay. And we want to make sure we make the right call because
16 it's after hours. Okay, everybody's gone home. Construction
17 crews are home.

18 Q. Um-hmm.

19 A. It's rush-hour traffic. The worse time of day possible
20 it could have happened. Okay, everybody's gone home and they've
21 been home an hour.

22 Q. Um-hmm.

23 A. So we determine where it's at, and then Mike on my other
24 side receives a phone call from gas dispatch. I want to say 1829
25 hours, somewhere in there, receives a call from gas dispatch,

1 telling him we have a report of a gasoline station that's blown
2 up. We've got houses on fire and we're not sure if it's our
3 stuff. Well, that explains it, okay, what's going on. But Mike
4 wasn't in the loop per se with this immediately on what Barry and
5 I were working on. Mike was working on some other stuff.

6 So I -- within the next 30 seconds call gas dispatch
7 back. It might have been a minute or two, you know, in your mind
8 going. But I called gas dispatch back and said, yeah, our stuff
9 is affected. We've got a break. You know, where is at? We're
10 talking and he says okay. He says I'm rolling my people, which
11 means he's rolling his peninsula people. Okay, I got off the
12 phone and told Mike it's real and this is where it's at. So Mike
13 gets a hold of the San Francisco people, okay, to alert them that
14 the peninsula's probably going to need some assistance doing this.
15 Okay, so I'm saying we're at 1830, 1835, somewhere in that range.

16 So in this meantime I've called my CPUC contact. I'm
17 the one that made the report out for the CPUC that night, okay,
18 and then it to the engineer that makes the finalized report that
19 goes to CPUC. So I contact him and say we got a problem. Okay,
20 our stuff -- it looks like it could be pretty bad. So I said but
21 right now here's the rumor I have that a gas station's blown up
22 but it has caught our equipment. Five minutes after that while
23 we're looking, you know, rolling the crews and whatever, I get a
24 phone call from gas dispatch saying we just got a call from the
25 electric department. They reported that some of the transmission

1 lines have been hit -- this is the call I'm remembering, and that
2 an airplane did it. It's an airplane crash that took out our
3 main. Okay, but probably -- the things is our stuff is still out.
4 It's still, you know, going on. We know it's on fire because that
5 was the initial report; a gas station on fire. So I called the
6 CPUC -- my engineer. I don't mean CPUC. It might sound
7 confusing. My engineer who contacts the CPUC, and tell him okay,
8 now the reporting an engineer -- an airplane but rumor only.
9 Okay, it is our stuff that is affected.

10 So within I'd say the next 15 minutes after that we got
11 the correct scenario that it was our main, only our main involved,
12 that it wasn't an airplane, it wasn't a gas station going up. I
13 got this -- I believe Mike received the call. Yeah, it was Mike
14 who received the call from -- I believe it was either peninsula or
15 San Francisco superintendent had been coming home and heard it on
16 the radio, went out to the site, verified it was our stuff, no
17 airplane was involved, et cetera. So from there, I started
18 calling the rest of the crews to get whoever we can. 250 phone
19 calls later it's 9 o'clock at night.

20 Q. So you worked through your shift?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. You worked --

23 A. Well, the night crew was in Brentwood, which was -- see
24 I'm trying to think mileage, 70 miles away.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Because it just so happened that night was when we
2 quarterly moved all on a gas billing to make sure everything's
3 operational, and we'd go three days and three nights, and it's
4 standard. We do it four times a year to make sure the alternate
5 site is up and running fully, functional, whatever. And the night
6 crews were an hour-and-a-half -- it was rush hour. Again, they
7 were two hours away from us. So all of us were --

8 Q. Leaving.

9 A. Plus, I might add this. Mark didn't want us to leave
10 anyway. We had been talking to them, telling them about the
11 situation before the break. This is what was going on. And Mark
12 Ceniceros, the senior, says we're staying here until we know for
13 sure there's no problem. We're not going to release it to the
14 night crew. We're staying right here.

15 Q. Okay. Now when you got the alarm that -- I believe the
16 first alarm was low-low at Martin? If I didn't get it right,
17 correct me, please. You said 1800?

18 A. Well, the 1811 was when the line -- when I trended back
19 a minute or two later, that's when it showed me that the line
20 broke.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Okay, where I could see the boom, okay. Barry's the one
23 that acknowledged the alarm in the low. I was looking at
24 something else. Barry was next to me. He -- I heard him say I
25 just got a low alarm at Martin.

1 Q. And that's when you came and --

2 A. That's when I immediately focused all my attention to
3 the peninsula where I was looking at down south stuff.

4 Q. When you mean peninsula, you mean Peninsula Division or
5 there is a --

6 A. No, peninsula I go -- when I say -- okay. Peninsula
7 meaning the area.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. For basically Milpitas up --

10 Q. To San Francisco?

11 A. Not Milpitas down.

12 Q. Okay. Okay. I just want to -- because I didn't quite
13 understand.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. I thought maybe you said division unit or other word.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. Okay. So when you went and focused your attention on
18 that Milpitas display, did you -- and I forget the name. Was
19 it -- who was -- Mark was it or was it -- who was looking at and
20 who said that I got a low-low alarm?

21 A. Barry.

22 Q. Barry, okay.

23 A. He was another operator with me that night.

24 Q. Did you or Barry look for the pressure displays on the
25 screen at that time?

1 A. We're looking at everything.

2 Q. So you're looking at the pressure display?

3 A. We're looking at everything. He's got Milpitas up
4 already. Like I said before, Milpitas is completely dark.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. We're getting no data all.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. We have five screens. We have five 21-inch screens in
9 front of us. Four of them we can use for operations. Those four
10 screens -- and I can't vouch for Mike and I can't vouch for Barry,
11 but my four screens were looking -- one was on the south, one was
12 at Milpitas, and the other two were looking at the peninsula. And
13 I was going through the screens. Okay, when we look at different
14 stations to see how they're affected, it takes 30 to 45 seconds to
15 check it out. I've got to call it up, get it up, trend it, you
16 know, 5, 10-second delay to get the trend up. Don't want to break
17 it down from an hour or 24-hour a week. 15-minute, I've got to
18 break it down to a 15-minute, you know, to get the most accurate
19 data --

20 Q. Um-hmm.

21 A. -- I can, et cetera. So each time I look at a station,
22 it's going to take me 25, 35, 45 seconds to do it. So it's not
23 something like oh, gee, I got that. I got that and I can do, you
24 know, check eight stations in 30 seconds. It doesn't happen. Not
25 if I want to be accurate and know what I'm looking at.

1 Q. So you did see a pressure drop at that time? You said
2 when you were looking at the pressure chart, did you --

3 A. I -- well.

4 Q. See I thought you said you --

5 A. Pressure trend.

6 Q. Yeah, pressure trend. And then you --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. -- see a drop, a sharp drop?

9 A. At 1800 hours there was a spike down immediately, which
10 indicated to me -- okay, is it bogus or not? Because that was the
11 first indication we had of anything. Then when Martin came in
12 showing that low pressure and the flow increasing, we knew we had
13 a break.

14 Q. And when was that --

15 A. In the spike.

16 Q. I'm sorry. When was the Martin Station input came in?

17 A. I want to say 6 or 7 minutes later. I would say, in my
18 mind 1817, 1818, 1819 hours, somewhere in there.

19 Q. 1818.

20 A. Somewhere in there.

21 Q. It's in there.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay.

24 MR. GUNTHER: Yeah. 18, yeah.

25 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. You use military time, and I don't

1 convert that.

2 MR. ROCCHOLZ: I'm sorry.

3 MR. GUNTHER: I know.

4 MR. CHHATRE: No, no. Go ahead.

5 MR. ROCCHOLZ: Everything we do is military.

6 MR. CHHATRE: Go ahead.

7 MR. ROCCHOLZ: I apologize.

8 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. So 1818. Okay.

9 BY MR. CHHATRE:

10 Q. So you suspected a rupture, but you just didn't know
11 where it happened, is that correct?

12 A. We had a 12-mile gap.

13 Q. Right. Okay.

14 A. Okay, so I can't -- okay, here's another thing is call
15 now to send them where? I mean I have to give them a location.
16 We're talking after hours. I mean this is all like bam, bam, bam,
17 5 or 6 minutes. Okay, but where do I send them? I need a
18 location. Okay, I don't have 25 crews. I've got 5, 10, 15 crews
19 maybe, but I don't have 25 crews. So I've got to have some kind
20 of approximate of where the -- where the break is at. So that's
21 what we were trying to determine in that 12-mile corridor; where
22 is the break.

23 Q. So could you send the crews on your own or you had to
24 contact somebody to dispatch the crews?

25 A. We call them on our own.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Okay, gas dispatch had been proactive because they had
3 gotten a report of the explosion. They had already been sending
4 servicemen out --

5 Q. Right, right.

6 A. -- to investigate. He was already proactive. They were
7 already all over it because they already had a report of the fire.
8 So peninsula was dispatched by the gas dispatch people, meaning
9 they called a supervisor and the engineer and they had people
10 going. Okay, once we established where it was at, then we in turn
11 confirmed with dispatch, which I did. Peninsula was notified. My
12 partner Mike on one side was fully aware by then of what was going
13 on with us, and he contacted the San Francisco people. Barry and
14 I were in contact with the Milpitas people. In fact, in that time
15 frame I was also calling Milpitas people at home and getting them
16 rolling per their supervisor.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Because their supervisor was home trying to call people
19 and he only had one phone, so he thought we could help him get his
20 guys rolling. So we were calling guys at their homes to get them
21 going.

22 Q. Now do you recall in your -- I'm using the term station,
23 but it may not be the right term, for wherever you sat and how the
24 computer displays. Do you call it a station or --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Or what's your term for the unit --

2 A. That's fine.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Station unit. Workstation, yeah.

5 Q. Workstation. Do you have in your station a kind of a
6 list of telephone numbers that you could call if you are not
7 sure --

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. -- what the display means? And who that department it
10 will be?

11 A. What would it display?

12 Q. No, no. If you have -- if you see a display on your
13 screen, and if you're not sure whether is that right or wrong, or
14 erroneous or accurate, is there some number you can call?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Somebody you can call to help you over the phone?

17 A. Yes, sir, I do. Like I said, within that -- we're
18 allowed 10 minutes, okay. Most of the time on something that's
19 like a phantom or whatever, okay, or just a normal alarm, most of
20 the alarms will clear in that 5 to 10-minute allotment on their
21 own when they recycle. Or we have the ability to go in and I can
22 reconfigure the RTU. So if I have a failed RTU, meaning I'm not
23 getting any signal, I can go in and reconfigure it. I can bang on
24 it, you know, turn it off, turn it on, bang on it, and get it to
25 maybe starting thinking itself. Sometimes I'm successful,

1 sometimes I'm not. Okay but, yes, we do have a protocol. If I
2 need to, I can get a telecommunication tech out there. I can get
3 a gas tech out there.

4 The procedure is usually is we send a gas tech out
5 first. Okay, because it could be gas related, meaning that the
6 memory card and the RTU chip or whatever might be bad. So, you
7 know, he's checking that out. Okay, if that's not the problem, he
8 hooks his laptop up, checks that stuff, and he's saying all my
9 signals are coming good through my laptop and you're just not
10 getting it. Then we get a hold of telecommunication and get the
11 radio people out there to verify the radio signal.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. But, yes, we have that ability and we have the phone
14 numbers.

15 Q. So your dilemma was not like it's a rupture. You were
16 like -- your dilemma is where to send the crews? You just didn't
17 know where it happened on your line?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. Okay. And how did you figure that out? I mean I guess
20 my question is if you wouldn't have gotten any calls, how would
21 you have figured it out?

22 A. The public. Usually the public would be making calls
23 saying okay I smell gas, there's a fire going on, there's been a
24 tremendous explosion. But it's the public calling in to our 800
25 number --

1 Q. Then you can know --

2 A. -- saying I live in this area and we got a problem.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. And then I can focus. Other times we are able to pick
5 it up, you know, and determine where it's at. You know, just by
6 the proximity of -- the stations might be close or whatever. But
7 I would say on stuff like that most of the time it's the public
8 just calling in and saying -- even though we're seeing something,
9 we're not quite sure where it's at. But we're also looking at
10 10,000 miles of pipeline, okay, and some of that stuff is not, you
11 know, where we can see it accurately or there's long stretches.
12 So, you know, they are a big help. The public is a big help in
13 determining where stuff's at too.

14 Q. Did you see at -- I'll use your term, 1811 --

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. Did you see any flowing freeze at the incoming lines at
17 Milpitas or you did not look at that at that time?

18 A. Milpitas is blind.

19 Q. Oh?

20 A. I could see nothing.

21 Q. So even the incoming lines are blind? I thought --

22 A. Well, okay. We shut the pressure in at 7A and B. Okay,
23 so nothing's going through that pipe until that pressure gets
24 below 300.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I shut it in at Sheridan. Nothing's going down Sheridan
2 towards Milpitas until the pressure gets below 300 pounds. It's
3 still above 300 pounds. I'm seeing no flow there because I've
4 shut it in. Milpitas is blind.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. No data is coming --

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. -- out of Milpitas. I can't see squat.

9 Q. Now when did you shut -- if I'm using your term
10 correctly, when did you shut in this 300A and B or all the lines
11 you discussed?

12 A. I -- I might have earlier said 1745. I want to say it's
13 in that time frame.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. But it was 30 -- I want to say 30 to 40 minutes --

16 Q. But that was --

17 A. -- before it broke.

18 Q. Okay. But that was --

19 A. That we shut the --

20 Q. -- much later after the rupture?

21 A. Right. Well, we still never got communication
22 established, all right?

23 Q. Understand.

24 A. That's a major hub for gas for the whole Bay areas.
25 Everybody knows. And we don't want to do anything that could

1 affect customers. Okay, so nothing's happened yet. Okay, so --
2 okay, so it looks like the communication's going to be out and we
3 got no control, then we need to shut the pressure off.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. And that's what we did.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. 30 to 40 minutes before anything broke.

8 Q. And the last question, when you earlier -- what do you
9 call? Gremlins? Gremlins or creatures --

10 A. That's just my terminology for it.

11 Q. So I just -- when something like that happened then, do
12 you have some kind of a procedure or protocol or established
13 practice that you guys kind of --

14 A. Yes, we do.

15 Q. -- discuss or report to somebody that hey, you know,
16 this is what happened. I checked it and it was a false alarm?

17 A. Yes, sir. We will immediately call the supervisor in
18 that 10-minute rule. We usually wait 10 minutes. If there's no
19 other indication anywhere else, we'll call the supervisor and tell
20 him this is what we got and what do you think. Now it's a dead
21 end system. Okay, meaning that's the last on that system. And we
22 can't see anything beyond that. He'll automatically send people
23 out. But it's not a dead end system, okay, and stuff on either
24 side is working correctly, he usually -- I don't mean he usually.
25 The company policy usually means that they won't send anybody out

1 because I could see good data on either side, and that would show
2 me if anything was going on.

3 Q. Okay. My question wasn't about sending people. What I
4 was thinking like if you have the glitches or gremlins, kind of --

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. -- occurrences, if somebody in the SCADA looks at it, is
7 somebody reporting it saying hey, you know, we had a false alarm
8 in our SCADA, just to improve the SCADA system or if it's going to
9 be a systemic problem, periodic problem, or frequent problem?

10 A. Fanyee is notified of this.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I'm sorry --

13 Q. And that's what I --

14 A. We have --

15 Q. -- was referring to.

16 A. We have site techs I should say. There's three of them.
17 Four of them, actually. We had another guy a few months back.
18 But four of them and, yes, if it's a consistent problem or it's
19 something we can't clear up, the answer is yes, they're notified.
20 But I go back to what I said before. First, supervisors are
21 called first. What does he want to do?

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. A gas tech is sent out. A telecommunication tech is
24 sent out. If they can't resolve it, then it goes to the site tech
25 people because it may be a SCADA tech.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. But 9 times out of 10 it's a field problem.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Okay, but every once in a while, like I said, you go out
5 there -- say it's been out for an hour. If you've got a -- you
6 think you got a problem. The guy goes I can't find anything
7 wrong. Before he gets out there, it clears itself. But he still
8 goes through all the equipment but can't find anything wrong. And
9 that happens unfortunately a couple times a month. You'll get
10 these phantom --

11 Q. A couple of times a month?

12 A. Don't know. But it does. I mean I'm going by my
13 experience in the pipeline.

14 Q. Okay, sure.

15 A. It will happen a couple times a month, but you check it
16 out anyway. Nothing's ever assumed.

17 Q. Okay. Okay, that's all for me. Thank you much.

18 BY MR. NARVELL:

19 Q. Rick Narvell with the NTSB. Mr. Roccholz, thank you for
20 that very detailed accounting of the events to surrounding the --
21 up to and including the incident. I just have a couple questions,
22 and I'll pass it along. Earlier you had mentioned -- just to
23 clarify here, you had talked about that perhaps a gas station had
24 been involved in some capacity. Just for my edification, are you
25 talking about like a filling station --

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. -- or one of your facility gas stations?

3 A. Okay, a --

4 Q. Just to clarify.

5 A. Okay. A gasoline gas station.

6 Q. Okay, like a 76 or Arco --

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. -- or BP or something like that? Okay, as opposed to
9 potentially an asset gas -- PG&E asset gas station, gas facility?

10 A. My understanding --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- and what I understood that night it was, it was a
13 gasoline station --

14 Q. Very good.

15 A. -- that had exploded.

16 Q. Okay. That clarified that. And then the last question
17 is, if you know, do you know what time that you could affix to
18 realizing that in fact that it was a pipeline rupture at a
19 neighborhood in San Bruno? Do you have any idea what time?

20 A. I would -- when we verified on both sides --

21 Q. Confirmed.

22 A. I would say best ballpark 1818, 1817 hours in that
23 timeframe.

24 Q. So it was very shortly that you knew in San Bruno that
25 you had a rupture and a subsequent explosion center?

1 A. Within 6 or 7 minutes, yeah. From the initial break at
2 1811 when the first low alarm came in --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- to where we saw it affect another station was a 7 to
5 8-minute time frame.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So I'd say -- like I said, 1817, 1818, 1818 hours in
8 that time frame.

9 Q. I kind of gathered that, but I just wanted to have you
10 say that on the record that you were able to confirm the location
11 and in fact what type of incident you did have.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. So very shortly thereafter.

14 A. Okay, well --

15 Q. That's fine.

16 A. We -- okay, just to verify -- I mean to clarify it, we
17 confirmed that there was a line break.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. We were not able to confirm -- and we're able to confirm
20 a physical 12-mile corridor. But we weren't able to confirm site
21 specific until we received --

22 Q. Within that 12-mile section?

23 A. Until we received a phone call from gas dispatch --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- saying they had gotten customer calls that a gasoline

1 station had exploded, did we show anything, and that was I want to
2 say 1828, 1829 hours.

3 Q. Okay. All right. And finally, just a comment for the
4 record. Mr. Roccholz earlier was gracious enough to respond in
5 writing to some questions that we had as we've done with some
6 other folks for the human performance segment of this, and I have
7 that and it will be incorporated in my report. Thank you for
8 that.

9 A. You're welcome.

10 Q. That's all I have. Thank you.

11 MR. CHHATRE: Any follow up questions?

12 MR. SHORI: Just Sunil Shori, PUCCP, with a short follow
13 up.

14 BY MR. SHORI:

15 Q. You mentioned that pressure of PLS 7A and B in Sheridan
16 as being 300. Could you be wrong on that? Could it have been
17 higher?

18 A. I could be. We -- I know -- we -- no, what I'm saying
19 the existing pressure was higher and we dropped it down to 300.

20 Q. That's what I'm asking. Could it have --

21 A. Yeah --

22 Q. -- been that it was dropped to something higher than
23 300?

24 A. PLS 7A and B might have been. I know for a fact
25 Sheridan, I thought was 300 because I was the one that did the

1 order. To the best of my recollection --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- I set it at 300.

4 Q. The second question was you -- earlier you indicated
5 that you noticed flow increasing at Martin?

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. Would that --

8 A. Not -- excuse me. No, sir. The initial was pressure
9 only. Okay, I got 390 pounds on one side. I'm only asking it to
10 feed it 235 on the.

11 Q. Um-hmm.

12 A. So until that pressure on the Martin side that's 395
13 gets below the 235, it's not going to feed. I'm not going to see
14 any flow.

15 Q. Um-hmm.

16 A. Okay, once it dropped down below that, I would possibly
17 see some flow pick up. The initial alarm we got was low, not low-
18 low. So the pressure hadn't drop below that 235 pounds. So I'm
19 not going to get a flow indication at that station until that
20 pressure drops below. That's not normal. What I'm saying is, is
21 I'm going to get a little bit of a normal flow that's maintaining
22 the 235 --

23 Q. Coming into Martin?

24 A. -- but nothing --

25 Q. Coming into Martin you're going --

1 A. Right.

2 Q. -- see a normal flow, and you weren't seeing any flow?

3 A. No, sir.

4 Q. Okay. Based on your experience in terms of the flow, a
5 lot -- you were describing also some flows around the peninsula
6 that you were using to gage where and kind of triangulate where
7 the event was?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. Based on your experience -- and you also described that
10 there's a bit of a delay in SCADA -- and I'm not a SCADA expert in
11 terms of how long things take to refresh, but based on your
12 opinion and experience, what do you think would have helped you
13 that night to perhaps triangulate the location of this rupture? I
14 understand you can't have a unit and, you know, transmitters every
15 5 feet, 10 feet. But what would have helped you, if anything, to
16 maybe triangulate some locations better?

17 A. If we hadn't lost the SCADA data out of Milpitas, that
18 was the biggest issue right there because we were totally blind.
19 Okay, totally. Coming in and going out. Nothing. It was all
20 bogus, we knew it was bogus, and we had no read at all. If we had
21 had Milpitas, it would have made all the difference in the world.

22 Q. But I guess what I'm asking is once the rupture happens
23 and you're trying to determine where it potentially happened, is
24 there anything that could have helped?

25 A. Well, yeah, it would have helped if I had had SCADA --

1 if I'd had a SCADA site between Martin and Lomita Park, yeah. But
2 12 miles is really close in SCADA. That's a close -- you know,
3 it's not like oh, gee, that's 100 miles. 12 miles is really
4 reasonable placed. If I'd had one at that midway point at the 6-
5 mile mark, yeah, I'd have picked it up quicker.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Okay but unfortunately that data was not available to
8 me.

9 Q. Thank you very much.

10 MR. CHHATRE: Anybody else has questions?

11 MR. KATHCMAR: Peter Katchmar, DOT.

12 MR. ROCCHOLZ: I'm sorry?

13 MR. KATCHMAR: Peter Katchmar, DOT.

14 MR. ROCCHOLZ: Yes, sir.

15 BY MR. KATCHMAR:

16 Q. Have you talked with anybody outside or after the
17 rapture as to what you think might have happened?

18 A. That night with each other?

19 Q. Um-hmm.

20 A. It was all speculative. Not really. I mean we knew we
21 had a line break. What threw everybody is we knew we had hit 390,
22 but the pipe -- MAOP was 400, and I might be wrong in this, but I
23 thought the integrity was 420. So to me it shouldn't have broke
24 until it -- you know, that would have did it and not until it hit
25 420. But it was all speculative. I didn't know -- you know, at

1 first did somebody hit it? You know that's why the gasoline
2 explosion took -- the explosion took it out, the airplane hit, you
3 know, the crash caused like a bomb hole type thing.

4 Q. Sure.

5 A. No idea. No idea. In fact, I didn't even know that
6 that's what per se had happened that night until three or four
7 days later when I read some initial stuff through the company,
8 other than I had a line break, you know, and the line did break.

9 MR. DAUBIN: Yeah, well, that night you didn't know
10 anything.

11 MR. ROCCHOLZ: Yeah. But -- right. We really didn't.
12 And like I said -- a tremendous amount of volume of phone calls
13 too. Once we got everybody, you know, from I said 6:30 to 9:00; I
14 don't think I'm exaggerated when I said the three of us probably
15 handled 250 phone calls.

16 MR. KATCHMAR: Okay, thank you, sir.

17 MR. CHHATRE: Any questions? Go ahead.

18 MR. NICHOLSON: I've got a question.

19 MR. CHHATRE: Go ahead.

20 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

21 Q. I'm going to back up for a minute. I heard you
22 mention -- this is Matt Nicholson, NTSB. You mentioned a 10-
23 minute standard. I think that was in relation to a low pressure
24 line? Can you elaborate a little bit?

25 A. Okay, we're allowed -- okay, it's policy in our

1 department, okay, that we're given 10 minutes per se to
2 troubleshoot something.

3 Q. Something being a?

4 A. Okay, an RTU failure.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Okay, a low alarm, you know, low-low. The idea is the
7 10 minutes gives us an opportunity to determine hopefully what is
8 wrong, so we're not like waking somebody up in the middle of the
9 night, you know 2 minutes in and the alarm clears a minute later.
10 But the 10 minutes gives us a fair amount of time to make a fair
11 evaluation on what's going on with the pipeline. And it's just
12 something that we've been using as long as I've been an operator
13 the last 25 years.

14 Q. Is that --

15 A. But that's what's --

16 Q. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

17 A. -- been going on.

18 Q. Is it a formal procedure, written?

19 A. I think it's more of an agreement in our department.
20 I've seen it in writing, but I don't necessarily believe it's a
21 company -- what I'm saying is, is it's not a standard, but it's
22 just an agreement we have is to operate through our supervisors as
23 to time frame, as to, you know, when to stop trying to figure
24 something out and get on the phone and call people about getting
25 out there.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. It's -- yeah.

3 Q. That's my next --

4 A. That's the best I can do.

5 Q. -- question. So when the 10 minutes expires, you are to
6 have called someone out to a station?

7 A. If it has not cleared up, if we determine that we have
8 something bad going down. If we know for a fact something bad's
9 going down, that would be an immediate call. We wouldn't wait the
10 10 minutes. But it's just a time frame that's out there that's
11 used to try to determine what's going on before we start making
12 the calls.

13 Q. Okay. But the intent is not that you shut a line down
14 at the end of that 10 minutes if you can't explain the alarm?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Okay. If I am looking at event logs or alarm logs --

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. -- for the control center, can I distinguish which
19 controller made which setpoint changes? Are you guys identified
20 by --

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. -- console?

23 A. Yes, we are.

24 Q. Okay. What console were you on?

25 A. The middle one.

1 Q. What would that read in the --

2 A. Two.

3 Q. Okay. I want to clarify. I keep hearing you say you
4 lost communications at Milpitas, but to me that means no readings
5 at all.

6 A. Affirmative.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Okay --

9 Q. I thought they were erratic readings.

10 A. Well -- I'm sorry. My terminology -- okay, when I say
11 lost, is I'm not getting accurate data.

12 Q. Okay. How --

13 A. I don't trust what I'm getting.

14 Q. Okay, right. But you were getting values?

15 A. Yeah, but they weren't okay.

16 Q. I understand.

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. Okay. How long have you been an operator? I didn't
19 catch that.

20 A. Twenty-four years.

21 Q. Okay. And all 24 years with PG&E?

22 A. I've got 36 1/2 with them. The first 12 I was working
23 on the pipeline.

24 Q. Oh, okay. For PG&E?

25 A. Yes, sir.

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

2 BY MR. CHHATRE: Just one question by Ravi Chhatre. You
3 mentioned 10-minute, that you had a leeway --

4 MR. CHHATRE: Or maybe -- did you ask that question?

5 MR. NICHOLSO: I did just ask.

6 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Then I have no more questions.
7 Thank you.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Off the record?

9 BY MS. JACKSON:

10 Q. I just have a quick question. Connie Jackson, city of
11 San Bruno, and we also thank you for what I think has been at
12 least for me a most clear, precise explanation of what was going
13 on in the control room that evening.

14 I'm curious about the relationship between your office
15 and the dispatch center. I'm assuming that your crews are
16 typically dispatched through a different -- you don't typically do
17 that. I understood what you said that you call -- you are able to
18 make callouts. But I'm wondering what is your relationship
19 between the normal work dispatch center and how did that happen on
20 that night. Were calls from the public coming into you or were
21 they coming into the dispatch center? And then similarly, where
22 were the callouts being made?

23 A. Okay, normal procedure on a line break is we make the
24 callouts. Okay, we have every division T&R supervisor and a list
25 of his employees and their phones numbers. We have every GSM --

1 that's gas system maintenance workgroups, supervisor and phone
2 number. We make the calls. In this case, gas dispatch was
3 proactive. They had a fire, okay, and peninsula is a division,
4 not a GSM workgroup. The distinction is GSM workgroup works on
5 the bigger stuff normally. Some of the divisions pickup the
6 bigger stuff if it runs through their division, and the GSM
7 workgroup is basically too far away per se. Okay like, you know,
8 it's 100 miles where their station's at or their -- excuse me,
9 their point of they start work every day, and some of it is passed
10 off to the division. Okay, so gas dispatch, like I said, was
11 really proactive that night. They had a fire, they knew they had
12 a problem, and when gas dispatch -- I can't speak for them per se
13 because I don't know their procedures. They're different than
14 what I do. But normally we make the callouts on line breaks.

15 Q. So when you say that gas dispatch knew that they had a
16 fire, that was because, if I understood you previously, they were
17 receiving calls from the public about a gas station explosion?

18 A. Affirmative.

19 Q. And then are they -- they're communicating with you and
20 telling you that, and did they know you were simultaneously trying
21 to locate a line rupture?

22 A. When they first called us -- okay, I want to say 1828,
23 1829 hours -- okay because it -- like I said, once the break hit,
24 I was trying to time-wise this. Mike received a phone call. Mike
25 says I'm not sure, but I don't think it's ours, but I'll check and

1 I'll call you back. Mike turned around to me and says I just got
2 a call from peninsula gas dispatch and they got reports of a fire
3 at a gas station, houses are burning, are we showing anything, and
4 I said, yeah, we are. I will call gas dispatch back, which I did.
5 And like then I said, 30 seconds, a minute, minute-and-a-half
6 later I called dispatch, got a hold of them and said yeah, we got
7 something going on, our stuff's affected, and it went from there.
8 But like I said, I can't speak for gas dispatch and their
9 protocol. I only can speak as to what mine is, and normally -- I
10 know I'm being redundant here; normally we make the callouts to
11 roll the crews.

12 Q. Is there any procedure that you're aware of, any
13 standard procedure? And I know this was an extraordinary
14 situation. Is there a standard procedure that speaks to the
15 coordination between your office and gas dispatch that sets up a
16 protocol for how and when you would communicate -- let's say that
17 there wasn't a call about a gas station explosion. Would you
18 have --

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. -- been required at some point to coordinate with them?

21 A. Yes. In fact, when I called him back the second time to
22 let him know it was our stuff, a few minutes later when the
23 pressure dropped into the low-low range on the San Francisco side
24 of Martin, I called gas dispatch back, told them that they needed
25 to get some servicemen out to check the pressure around the San

1 Francisco Airport and south San Francisco to make sure we're not
2 losing customers because the pressure had got so low on that side
3 coming around. And he took the recommendation, and he dispatched
4 people and did it. Basically, everything's funneled to us, okay,
5 on the responsibility factor. Gas dispatch has stuff that they
6 have to do, which I -- like I said, I'm not familiar necessarily
7 with their protocol. But basically the buck stops with us. It
8 comes to us and we deal with it.

9 Q. So that's actually --

10 A. And then we delegate back out.

11 Q. That's actually an interesting lead into my very last
12 question, which is there any procedure, any consideration of
13 communication outside of your organization in a situation like you
14 were dealing with? For example, to county fire dispatch or our
15 organizations to try and figure out if there's anything going on
16 out there.

17 A. Okay. Yes, there is. But it -- and the company policy
18 and what I follow is no outside agencies are called unless the
19 supervisor out in the field requests it. So until that supervisor
20 requests it because they want boots on the ground, until that
21 supervisor requests it, we make no calls.

22 Q. Thank you.

23 MR. CHHATRE: All right, any other questions?

24 BY MR. CHHATRE:

25 Q. One follow up question with the city is supervisor --

1 you're a supervisor? And this is Ravi Chhatre, NTSB. You said no
2 calls are made without contacting supervisor outside area -- no
3 outside contacts are made --

4 A. Outside contacts.

5 Q. -- without supervisor?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And that would be your supervisor?

8 A. No. That is the field supervisor. In that case,
9 peninsula, that would have been Bob Dyson (ph.).

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Or the superintendent. I couldn't tell you who his name
12 is, but somebody that is in charge of the field crews or the
13 situation in the field would call me and say I need you to get a
14 hold of the fire department, police --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- et cetera. And I would make the phone calls for
17 them.

18 Q. So depending on where the location it would be a
19 different person, different --

20 A. Right.

21 Q. Different person contacting you, if they need help?

22 A. Yes. And I -- like I said, once again, I don't know the
23 gas dispatch protocol, but --

24 Q. But you couldn't contact them?

25 A. But that might be double -- I would --

1 Q. You can contact?

2 A. -- or they might be too.

3 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. All right. Thank you so much. If
4 no follow up questions, we really appreciate a very nice
5 explanation of how it happened and what had happened. I
6 appreciate your time, energy, and patience.

7 MR. ROCCHOLZ: Thank you.

8 MR. CHHATRE: Off the record.

9 (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 Larry Roccholz

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MP-008

PLACE: Burlingame, California

DATE: January 6, 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.

Kimberly A. Hawkins
Transcriber