

# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD Investigative Hearing



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Metrorail train 302 that encountered heavy smoke in the tunnel between the L'Enfant Plaza Station and the Potomac River Bridge on January 12, 2015

Agency / Organization

Title

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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WMATA INCIDENT AT L'ENFANT PLAZA

STATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 12, 2015

\* Docket No.: DCA-15-FR-004

Interview of: JEFFREY HULL

Monday, February 2, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: RICHARD DOWNS, JR.
Survival Factors Investigator

#### APPEARANCES:

RICHARD DOWNS, JR., Survival Factors Investigator Chairman, Survival Factors Technical Working Group National Transportation Safety Board

RUBEN PAYAN, Railroad Accident Investigator National Transportation Safety Board

KIMBERLY BURTCH, Senior Program Analyst Office of Transit Safety and Oversight Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

DENTON ROURKE, Operations Manager Office of Emergency Management WMATA

DERRON HAWKINS, Deputy Fire Chief
D.C. Fire and EMS
Homeland Security & Special Operations Division

## I N D E X

ITEM			PAGE
Interview	of Jef	frey Hull:	
	By Mr.	Downs	6
	By Mr.	Rourke	15
	By Mr.	Downs	21
	By Mr.	Rourke	23
	By Mr.	Hawkins	26
	By Mr.	Downs	29
	By Mr.	Rourke	37
	By Mr.	Downs	39
	By Mr.	Rourke	40
	By Mr.	Payan	41
	By Mr.	Downs	44

### 1 INTERVIEW

- 2 MR. DOWNS: Okay. Today's date is February 2, 2015 and
- 3 the following is an interview being conducted in reference to NTSB
- 4 investigation number DCA-15-FR-004, which relates to an accident
- 5 involving a heavy smoke release and train evacuations that
- 6 occurred in and near the L'Enfant Plaza Station of the WMATA
- 7 Metrorail System in the District of Columbia on the afternoon of
- 8 January 12, 2015.
- 9 This interview is being conducted by a member --
- 10 conducted with a member of the District of Columbia Fire and
- 11 Emergency Medical Services Department as conducted by the NTSB
- 12 Survival Factors Technical Working Group of the investigation. My
- 13 name is Richard Downs, Jr. and I'm a Survival Factors Investigator
- 14 with the NTSB, in which I -- in which I also serve in the role as
- 15 Survival Factors Technical Working Group chairperson.
- I will preside over this interview, which is being
- 17 recorded for the record, in which a transcript may also be
- 18 compiled of the recording as a permanent docketed record of the
- 19 interview. Additionally I'd like to mention that the purpose of
- 20 the investigation is to increase safety and not to assign fault,
- 21 blame or liability, and that the NTSB cannot guarantee -- cannot
- 22 offer any guarantee of confidentiality or immunity from legal or
- 23 certificate actions.
- Further, pursuant to the criteria under 49-CFR-831.7,
- 25 the interviewee may have one representative of the interviewee's

- 1 choice accompany him or her at this interview in which the
- 2 representative may not testify for the interviewee. It's also
- 3 requested that comments of the interviewee's representative be --
- 4 should be limited and objections expressed by the interviewee's
- 5 representative are not grounds for the NTBS to refrain from asking
- 6 questions.
- 7 I'll now ask that our interviewee, our witness, to
- 8 please identify themselves, their employment affiliation and job
- 9 position title for the record.
- 10 MR. HULL: Jeffrey Hull. I'm a battalion fire chief
- 11 with the 6th Battalion with Washington, D.C. Fire and EMS
- 12 Department.
- MR. DOWNS: Thank you for joining us today, Chief. And
- 14 are you accompanied by anyone today?
- MR. HULL: I am not.
- MR. DOWNS: Thank you. I'll now ask the participants of
- 17 this interview who will have an opportunity to present questions
- 18 to the witness to please identify themselves individually, their
- 19 employment affiliation, and job position title for the record.
- 20 MR. ROURKE: Good morning, Chief. I'm Denton Rourke. I
- 21 work for WMATA. I am the Operations Manager in the Office of
- 22 Emergency Management.
- MR. PAYAN: I'm Ruben Payan, P-A-Y-A-N, and I'm one of
- 24 the investigators with the NTSB, Washington, D.C.
- MS. BURTCH: Kimberly Burtch with the Federal Transit

- 1 Administration's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight.
- 2 MR. HAWKINS: Derron Hawkins, Deputy Fire Chief, D.C.
- 3 Fire and EMS, Homeland Security Division.
- 4 INTERVIEW OF JEFFREY HULL
- 5 BY MR. DOWNS:
- 6 Q. Thank you. And as my first question for the witness,
- 7 would you please briefly describe for us your role and
- 8 involvement -- or involvement in this event?
- 9 A. We -- the 6th Battalion chief was dispatched with three
- 10 engines.
- 11 Q. Let me clarify. Your role in the event.
- 12 A. My role in the event.
- 13 Q. You responded to the --
- 14 A. I responded to a fan vent shaft.
- 15 Q. Vent shaft. That's what we're looking for. Thank you,
- 16 Chief.
- 17 A. Okay.
- 18 Q. And with that, could you please describe for us, in your
- 19 own words and to your best recollection, what occurred on the day
- 20 of the event relative to your actions and involvement at the
- 21 L'Enfant Plaza Station or other sites, commencing at the time that
- 22 you were alerted to respond?
- 23 A. Okay. We did not go to the L'Enfant Plaza. We went to
- 24 fan vent shaft FL-1, which was at 9th and Main, or 9th and Water
- 25 Streets, N.W. We went with three engines and a truck, were

- 1 dispatched there for smoke coming from a shaft.
- When we got there we didn't see any -- or I didn't see
- 3 any smoke coming from the shaft. We did not -- the companies
- 4 there reported back to me that they did not see anything, you
- 5 know, coming from or in the shaft. I did not authorize anyone to
- 6 go down the shaft at that time since nothing was visible. We just
- 7 staged up top for a number of minutes -- I couldn't say how many
- 8 anymore, 5, 10 minutes, perhaps -- when they put out a Metro box
- 9 alarm for the L'Enfant square.
- 10 Q. Okay. So make sure that I'm following you here, Chief.
- 11 The initial call that you got was simply respond to a vent shaft
- 12 for smoke coming out of the shaft?
- 13 A. Correct.
- 14 Q. And it would be your standard protocol when you arrive
- 15 there, if there was smoke coming out, you would do something
- 16 specific?
- 17 A. We would call in and we would not send anyone down, you
- 18 know, that shaft. You know, if you saw someone there, yes, you
- 19 would go down to rescue, but if you just had smoke, no, you would
- 20 not go down there.
- Q. And in this particular case there was no smoke at your
- 22 arrival, and you arrived about the same time as the three engines
- 23 and the truck company?
- 24 A. Yes. Yes. They may have arrived, you know, 30 seconds
- 25 before, you know.

- 1 Q. Pretty close to the same time?
- 2 A. Correct. Correct.
- 3 Q. Very good. And upon your arrival, Chief, tell me, is
- 4 that particular area involved in a construction zone at this time?
- 5 A. It is. They are working on the wharf construction area
- 6 there. There used to be some restaurants, et cetera, there, which
- 7 have been torn down and they're working on a large, you know,
- 8 construction project there.
- 9 Q. Did you have trouble at all with any of the construction
- 10 vehicles blocking that particular vent shaft location or were you
- 11 able to pull right up and have good access?
- 12 A. We were able to pull right up and have access.
- 13 Q. Good.
- 14 A. There were some barriers up and that but that did not
- 15 interfere with us.
- 16 Q. As far as you were concerned, you were able to get right
- 17 in there and do what you needed to do straightaway?
- 18 A. Correct.
- 19 Q. Very good. Okay. So you arrived on scene and shortly
- 20 thereafter -- you saw no one. Shortly thereafter, you got an
- 21 alarm box for the Metro box you were describing?
- 22 A. We heard that being put out and so then we monitored
- 23 that radio channel as well as our own, kind of figuring that the
- 24 two were one and the same. Although since they were dispatched
- 25 differently and we were on different channels, you know, we had

- 1 our incident to handle. Some minutes into the event, it was
- 2 figured out that it was one in the same and then we were put onto
- 3 their channel.
- 4 Sometime thereabouts, I can't remember if it was before
- 5 or after, it was reported by one of the companies, Engine 13, that
- 6 they saw people at the bottom of the shaft. At that point I told
- 7 them to open up the shaft and enter the shaft and assist those,
- 8 you know, those persons, however many --
- 9 Q. That was your instructions to your three engines and
- 10 truck company?
- 11 A. Correct.
- 12 Q. Okay. Did you go down with them?
- 13 A. I did not.
- 14 Q. You stayed at the command up topside?
- 15 A. Correct. Correct.
- Q. And that's your normal protocol for an event like that?
- 17 A. Correct. Yes, yes.
- 18 Q. Okay, very good.
- 19 A. At that point in time we instituted or I instituted
- 20 Level 3 accountability. I had Engine 7 as the accountability
- 21 company. They stayed up top, collected the PAT tags of those that
- 22 went down. Initially I sent Engine 13 down, which was the officer
- 23 and one person, to assist anyone at the bottom. After a few
- 24 minutes when those guys came up -- it happened to be a naval
- 25 officer and a Secret Service employee came up.

- 1 Q. And these were passengers on the train?
- 2 A. Correct. Correct. They came up. We did -- or, you
- 3 know, companies or members did, you know, check them out. They
- 4 had no medical problems. They were not complaining of anything.
- 5 Q. No respiratory distress to speak of?
- 6 A. Correct.
- 7 Q. Very good.
- 8 A. They didn't have anything. They were fine.
- 9 Q. Do we -- are we able to get a timestamp for any of these
- 10 steps of the process; do you know? Did you keep notes or anything
- 11 like that?
- 12 A. I did not keep timestamps, no.
- 13 Q. There would be radio communications, so we could go
- 14 maybe from that in terms of identifying the milestones as we're
- 15 working through?
- 16 A. That could be possible, yes.
- Q. Perfect. Okay, thank you. So then what happened? The
- 18 two train passengers came up out of the shaft --
- 19 A. Right.
- 20 Q. -- and you checked them out. They seemed to be okay.
- 21 A. Right.
- Q. What happened next?
- 23 A. They said that there could be others coming as well,
- 24 that they had told other members of the train to follow them. So
- 25 at that point in time I told Truck 10 to take their personnel, all

- 1 the oxygen bottles, the SCBA bottles that they could carry, and go
- 2 down.
- 3 Q. Now let me interrupt you for a moment. When your
- 4 companies first responded down the shaft, did they have SCBA with
- 5 them going down?
- A. Yes, they were in full PPE.
- 7 Q. Did they -- were they actually on air --
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. -- or they just carried it with them?
- 10 A. No. They --
- 11 Q. So they -- in the fire service we call it dangling
- 12 masks. You didn't actually engage them but they were instantly
- 13 available?
- 14 A. Correct.
- 15 Q. Very good.
- 16 A. They were on their backs. They were ready to go. They
- 17 were turned on but they did not have the face piece in place --
- 18 Q. Okay. So --
- 19 A. -- because they had no reason to.
- Q. Right. So you're anticipating my question in that
- 21 because there had been no smoke visible at that time, you -- it
- 22 wasn't necessarily warranted but it was a precautionary measure.
- 23 Would that be correct?
- A. Correct.
- Q. Very good.

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. So your crew -- your fire crews go down in the tunnel,
- 3 find the two passengers, send them up topside.
- 4 A. Correct.
- 5 Q. Your next command was to get additional manpower --
- 6 A. Correct.
- 7 Q. -- and bring all the bottles that they could and proceed
- 8 down the shaft and do what?
- 9 A. Just go along the tunnel to see if they could find
- 10 anyone else that might need assistance.
- 11 Q. How did they know which direction to move?
- 12 A. That, I don't know. They had --
- Q. Would it be a standard practice to go in both directions
- 14 in terms that could be -- train could be located anywhere?
- 15 A. It could be they probably talked with the guys that came
- 16 up and got some directions from them as to, you know, which
- 17 direction to go. That part I don't know.
- 18 Q. So that was not communicated to you?
- 19 A. That was not communicated.
- Q. Would it be fair to say had it been communicated to you,
- 21 would you have passed that on to command, incident command?
- 22 A. I certainly would have.
- Q. Very good. Okay, please continue.
- 24 A. I also questioned the two members, the two train
- 25 passengers that came up. I asked if they saw any signs, any mile

- 1 markers, anything that might help us to identify where, you know,
- 2 the train was or -- they said that they did not see any, you know,
- 3 chain markers or anything of that sort.
- 4 At that point there were five Metro police officers
- 5 there. They took charge of those two passengers then, and after
- 6 they were given the, you know, a clear bill of health, so to
- 7 speak, they were taken wherever, you know --
- 8 Q. Taken off somewhere?
- 9 A. Right.
- 10 Q. Okay, very good.
- 11 A. Right.
- 12 Q. Okay. So what did you do next in terms of your process?
- 13 A. About some point in time there, three members of Tower 3
- 14 came up through there. One member was having medical problems.
- 15 I'm not exactly sure what it was, you know, trouble breathing, out
- 16 of breath, something of that nature.
- 17 Q. It was respiratory related?
- 18 A. Yes. It was something to that effect, yes.
- 19 O. Was this --
- 20 A. Now, whether it was from the smoke or whether it was
- 21 from --
- 22 Q. Something else.
- 23 A. -- exertion or so, you know, I don't know. I just
- 24 assigned a medic from -- was it Engine 3 or Engine 7's medic to --
- Q. A medic.

- 1 A. Right. To take care of that person. Eventually called
- 2 an ambulance. Medic 30-B, I believe it was, showed up and
- 3 transported that firefighter to Providence.
- 4 Q. And was this firefighter -- did this firefighter have
- 5 air with him?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Do you recall?
- 8 A. Yes, they had full PPE, SCBA.
- 9 Q. So as far as you were concerned, they were properly
- 10 outfitted for being --
- 11 A. Correct.
- 12 Q.  $\rightarrow$  down in the tunnel  $\rightarrow$
- 13 A. Correct, had --
- 14 Q. -- as opposed to having no air?
- 15 A. Correct. Definitely.
- 16 Q. Very good.
- 17 A. Definitely.
- 18 Q. Okay, please continue.
- 19 A. So then I radioed that back to, you know, the incident
- 20 commander to tell him that three members came up, so that if he
- 21 did an accountability that, you know, those members were counted
- 22 for.
- 23 Q. For tracking purposes.
- 24 A. Right. Since they did not exit where they had entered.
- 25 After that we pretty much, you know, just remained up -- you know,

- 1 I remained topside with Engine 7. Like I said, they were the, you
- 2 know, the accountability company. The other companies were down
- 3 below. After a period of time it was, you know, declared that
- 4 they were no longer needed down there so they came up. We did an
- 5 accountability, which I reported that we were even, all members
- 6 were topside and, you know, that one member of Tower 3 was
- 7 transported to the hospital. After that we were placed in service
- 8 and that was about it.
- 9 Q. As far as you know there was only that one firefighter
- 10 that had medical difficulties?
- 11 A. At my end, yes.
- 12 Q. Your end. Okay.
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Very good. Okay, next step of the process, were things
- 15 winding down at that point?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. So you were pretty much winding down in preparation of
- 18 packing up and going back to your fire station or going over to
- 19 incident command?
- 20 A. No, back to the fire station. We were returned to
- 21 service.
- 22 Q. Okay, very good. That completes my questioning. We'll
- 23 pass it on to the next line of questions.
- BY MR. ROURKE:
- Q. Yeah, Chief. Denton Rourke from Metro. I'm going to

- 1 ask you just some general questions about Metro training and Metro
- 2 incident management and then maybe a few questions about this one
- 3 in particular.
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 Q. Can you describe for me just from your point of view the
- 6 Metro training program for the fire department? This can be stuff
- 7 that you do with Metro or that you do at the battalion or that
- 8 your companies do at the station level.
- 9 A. We do go -- I do send companies out for Metro inspection
- 10 periodically. You know, they go down and do the station, the
- 11 platform inspections. I just had CB-EMIS training Friday.
- 12 They're, you know, redoing the CB-EMIS program. You know, check
- 13 out the equipment each morning when assuming duty, you know, the
- 14 Metro bag, et cetera.
- 15 Q. Um-hum.
- 16 A. That's kind it, you know, other than any responses
- 17 that we would have.
- 18 Q. Right. Is the station level drills managed at the
- 19 station level or does the battalion chief manage that?
- 20 A. It's generally at the station level. I might tell a
- 21 company that today, you know, Engine 16, you'll be the one, you
- 22 know, doing Metro inspections or -- so, just due to other training
- 23 and other things that are going on, that we don't have everyone
- 24 out at one time doing training, you know, of some sort or, you
- 25 know, whatever they might be doing.

- 1 Q. And how about Metro training that you participated in?
- 2 I know you've been with them a long time, so -- but just whatever
- 3 you can recall?
- A. Yeah. Well, just, you know, various Metro inspections.
- 5 You know, the CB-EMIS training, you know -- I just can't remember
- 6 all the trainings that I've had over, you know, the course of 30
- 7 years.
- 8 Q. How about, have you ever participated or when the last
- 9 time you participated in a full-scale Metro exercise? This could
- 10 have been something that happened at after hours, 2 in the morning
- 11 or early on a Saturday or Sunday morning.
- 12 A. Wow. I can't remember, you know, of any time that I did
- 13 or when it might have been.
- Q. Okay. So what's the -- just briefly, what is the DCFD
- 15 SOG for commanding a Metro incident, managing a Metro incident?
- 16 A. You would send -- initially you would send the recon,
- 17 you know, supervisor -- or group down to recon. It would be two
- 18 engines and a truck. Of course, Level 3 accountability is always
- 19 in when we do a Metro.
- Q. And what is -- briefly, what is that? That's --
- 21 A. We have a company at the top of the escalators that will
- 22 take everyone's PAT tag and account for everyone that's going down
- 23 into the Metro and then when they come back out, you do a physical
- 24 accountability, hand the person's tag back to them, you know, so
- 25 that you're sure that all the tags of the people that went down

- 1 came back out. We also do it by radio as well, you know, make
- 2 sure that everyone is --
- 3 Q. And how do you make sure that they get all the tags?
- 4 A. They just -- you hand them to them.
- 5 Q. Well, like, at L'Enfant, there's three entrances.
- A. Well, you go in and come out of one entrance.
- 7 Q. They designate one entrance?
- 8 A. Yeah.
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. Yeah. One, yeah -- sorry.
- 11 Q. No problem.
- 12 A. Yeah, one entrance is designated as the entry control
- 13 point.
- MR. DOWNS: If I may interject?
- MR. ROURKE: Um-hum.
- 16 MR. DOWNS: In this particular case, this is a major
- 17 station of Metro. It has three entrances. We have testimony
- 18 where the passengers were evacuating through all three exits.
- 19 Your standard protocol, correct me if I'm wrong, please, is that
- 20 you have a maximum of two control stations, accountability
- 21 stations. Having a third exit point of the Metro, would that
- 22 complicate things in terms of the accountability process? Is this
- 23 something that the fire department might want to think about in
- 24 terms of future events?
- MR. HULL: It definitely would complicate, yes. We do

- 1 have a primary entrance where the entrance control is, and then do
- 2 have a secondary, you know, at times as well. So, yeah, a third
- 3 would definitely complicate the situation.
- 4 MR. DOWNS: Very good.
- 5 BY MR. ROURKE:
- 6 Q. All right. Thank you. So what is the role of, what
- 7 is -- is there a role for a Metro police official or a rail
- 8 supervisor in the command structure?
- 9 A. I know when I get on the scene, generally, you know, I
- 10 look for or one of the members, now I'm not always sure who or
- 11 what it is, gets in the back seat of the buggy and, yes, I do
- 12 communicate with that member. It is helpful at times because our
- 13 radios are, what would I say, less than good in the Metro. It
- 14 seems that the Metro, you know, police or Metro officials do have
- 15 better radios, so there are times that, you know, we do kind of
- 16 use that. And also with them going back and forth to OCC, that is
- 17 a help.
- 18 Q. And would you consider that to be like a unified -- do
- 19 you think -- let me say that. Is Metro a good place for a unified
- 20 command?
- 21 A. What do you mean; in my buggy? Is that a --
- 22 Q. Well, wherever you want to have it, but having a Metro
- 23 official there and hand-in-hand with you?
- A. Yeah, I think it's handy.
- Q. All right. So going back to the fan shaft that you got

- 1 dispatched to.
- 2 A. Okay.
- 3 Q. You said that when you arrived on scene there was
- 4 nothing evident --
- 5 A. Correct.
- 6 Q. no smoke, fire coming out?
- 7 A. Correct.
- 8 Q. Was there any -- do you know of any communications
- 9 between OUC and Metro related to that shaft?
- 10 A. I do not know of any, no.
- 11 Q. All right. And was there any Metro -- anybody from
- 12 Metro there when you first got there?
- 13 A. That I don't remember. I do remember that shortly
- 14 afterwards there were upwards of five, I want to say Metro police,
- 15 but --
- MR. DOWNS: Transit police officers?
- MR. HULL: Something -- yes. Yes, I know several of
- 18 them, you know, had badges and didn't have side arms.
- 19 BY MR. ROURKE:
- 20 O. Um-hum. Okay.
- 21 A. Whether they all did or not, that, you know, I --
- 22 Q. Right. And then so describe for me when it transitioned
- 23 from being your run at the fan shaft to being a part of the
- 24 overall L'Enfant incident?
- 25 A. Okay. When my aide and I, we were in the buggy -- and,

- 1 you know, the battalion chiefs have an aide who drives and assists
- 2 as needed. When we heard that there was, you know, a Metro box
- 3 being put out, then we monitored both channels. I want to say
- 4 that we at the vent shaft were on A3 and the Metro box was on A7.
- 5 We monitored both channels.
- 6 At that point we did -- or I did call the command post
- 7 on my cell phone and, you know, asked if they wanted to, you know,
- 8 merge the two events. At that time it was said, yes, that they
- 9 did want to. And so, therefore, then we switched to A7, although
- 10 we did have a radio on A3 just in case any of my members that were
- 11 there, you know, didn't get the message, you know, so that we
- 12 would still have communication with them.
- Q. Right. Did they -- when you called them on -- did they
- 14 know you were there and what you were doing there?
- 15 A. I'm not sure if they did immediately. You're talking
- 16 about the command post at L'Enfant?
- 17 Q. Right. To your knowledge, did they know that there
- 18 was --
- 19 A. A separate incident?
- Q. -- an alarm for smoke coming from a vent shaft as well?
- 21 A. That I don't know. I don't remember if -- but in a
- 22 minute or so, you know, I briefed them and --
- BY MR. DOWNS:
- Q. And that was a radio conversation that you briefed them
- 25 on or telephone?

- 1 A. No. I went through cell phone.
- 2 Q. Cell phone. Okay.
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Yeah. We're experiencing, Chief, the problem that most
- 5 cell phone communications, unfortunately, aren't recorded. So
- 6 we're trying to get timestamps for these key --
- 7 A. Right.
- 8 Q. -- communication points. Did you compile notes, by
- 9 chance, of the various principal activity bullets during --
- 10 A. I did have a worksheet, yes.
- 11 Q. Okay. And would that be captured on there, by chance?
- 12 A. I can look and see.
- Q. Okay. Well, I don't want to burden that right now. We
- 14 can defer that for the moment.
- 15 A. No. I don't have that on my sheet.
- 16 Q. Don't have that on there. Are we able to offer a best
- 17 guess recollection of that, when that occurred?
- 18 A. No, sir.
- 19 Q. Everything jumbles together at that point?
- 20 A. Right. It was, I want to say, 15 minutes after we
- 21 arrived, and that is purely a "pulled out of thin air" guess.
- Q. Okay. That's fine.
- MR. DOWNS: Go ahead. Sorry.
- MR. ROURKE: As a note, before I forget, I don't know if
- 25 we -- if you all requested the tapes of that particular alarm to

- 1 match up with the whole overarching thing.
- 2 MR. DOWNS: We did request all the communication tapes.
- MR. ROURKE: Did they get that run to the vent shaft; do
- 4 you know? It may be helpful to figure out the timeline.
- 5 MR. HAWKINS: Okay. So we can get the recordings from
- 6 this incident as it transitioned into L'Enfant Plaza.
- 7 MR. ROURKE: Right. Then we could match them up. It
- 8 might help a little bit with the timeline.
- 9 MR. HAWKINS: We can get that.
- MR. DOWNS: Yeah. Yeah, that will be helpful, yes.
- 11 MR. HAWKINS: We got some subsequent interviews coming
- 12 up with OUC so we can get all of that.
- MR. ROURKE: Okay, that's good. Yeah.
- 14 BY MR. ROURKE:
- 15 Q. All right, so you said Truck 10, you sent them down to
- 16 check?
- 17 A. Correct. Along with a medic from -- either Engine 3 or
- 18 Engine 7's medic. I'm not sure which one it was.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. So there were six -- first of all, two guys went down.
- 21 Then I sent down Truck 10, which was five guys, and then along
- 22 with the medic, which would have made six. And then I sent down
- 23 two additional -- I sent down the officer from Engine 3 along with
- 24 one of his members to stay just at the bottom of the vent shaft
- 25 to -- for communication purposes.

- 1 MR. DOWNS: Kind of like a forward command for you?
- 2 MR. HULL: Correct. Well, or to relay messages that I
- 3 might not have been getting.
- 4 BY MR. ROURKE:
- 5 Q. Right. And so, do you -- what did -- so when they went
- 6 down, did they -- we'll assume they, assume -- we'll, we shouldn't
- 7 assume. But do you know what'd they do? That's my question.
- 8 A. Engine 13's members when they went down -- and you'll be
- 9 interviewing Lieutenant Johnson here in a minute, he was Engine
- 10 13's officer. Him and one member went down. I'm not exactly sure
- 11 to -- you know, I can't testify exactly to what they did.
- 12 Q. Um-hum.
- 13 A. You know, I told them just to assist any other
- 14 passengers that might be coming out that way, you know, in any way
- 15 that they could. When we did have those two come out, you know,
- 16 then I decided to send down Truck 10, like I said, with an extra
- 17 medic just in case there were members that, you know, needed some
- 18 kind of medical -- you know, higher medical than what the EMTs
- 19 could provide.
- 20 Q. Right.
- 21 A. And, again, you'll be talking with
- 22 Lieutenant Kalinowski, who was Truck 10's officer.
- 23 Q. So you don't know if they stayed at the bottom of the
- 24 shaft or if they went one way or the other?
- 25 A. They did not stay at the bottom of the shaft.

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. They did not. Those members did not. Engine 3's
- 3 members, which was DJ, which I don't believe you're going to be
- 4 interviewing him. Him and his member did stay at the bottom of
- 5 the shaft as, you know, a communication relay.
- 6 Q. Um-hum. But you're unclear of where the other eight
- 7 personnel went?
- 8 A. Correct. I do know they went down the tunnel and I do
- 9 believe they wound up at the train eventually, but I -- they can
- 10 testify to that better than I can.
- 11 Q. Okay. I think the only thing I have -- that struck me
- 12 was that the three from the Truck 3 that came upstairs --
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. -- and transported one.
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Did the other two go back down or did they go home?
- 17 A. No. They stayed up with us and then were transported
- 18 back. One of the engine companies, and I can't remember which
- 19 one, either Engine 3, Engine -- took them back to, you know, to
- 20 meet up with the tower then and they came back to the station.
- 21 Q. And did -- was the Truck 3 officer aware of where they
- 22 were?
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. That's all I've got right now. Thanks.
- 25 MR. PAYAN: I'll go last if that's okay.

- 1 MS. BURTCH: I'm gonna pass right now.
- 2 MR. DOWNS: So, you're going to pass?
- 3 MS. BURTCH: Pass.
- 4 MR. DOWNS: Chief, any questions?
- 5 BY MR. HAWKINS:
- 6 Q. Yes. Derron Hawkins, D.C. Fire and EMS. So,
- 7 Chief Hull, regarding Metro training, you stated that you
- 8 participated in a -- had companies participate in inspections and
- 9 you had had various training over the course of your years of
- 10 service. So, currently, do you feel that D.C. Fire and EMS is
- 11 ready to respond or capable to respond to Metro incidents based on
- 12 your training and experience?
- 13 A. I think so. You know, training's always a good thing,
- 14 but, you know, I think that -- you know, it is part of probation,
- 15 so obviously you get it coming on. And then with being downtown,
- 16 you know, with so many stations there, you know, we do do
- 17 training, you know, whether it's individual, company level or
- 18 whether it is larger. You know, so, yes, I think that our
- 19 training is, you know, is good.
- Q. Okay. Also regarding communications, you've spent a lot
- 21 of time in the 6th Battalion. Can you explain what is
- 22 communication procedures when we start to experience problems with
- 23 communications inside a Metro station?
- A. Well, there's several things we can do. You can switch
- 25 to a talk-around channel, which is, you know, channel 15 or 16.

- 1 It's more like a walkie-talkie line of sight communication. If
- 2 that doesn't work from in the station to the -- I'll say to the
- 3 buggy, then we may have, you know, put like runners, you know,
- 4 where they're spaced so far apart and then you just, you know, go
- 5 with your radios that distance.
- 6 Q. Um-hum.
- 7 A. Cell phones are, you know, are another option. There's
- 8 been several occasions when, you know, I've gotten a cell phone
- 9 call from someone that's down relaying information. I know that's
- 10 not a timestamped official way, but, you know, as firemen we kind
- 11 of make things work sometimes, you know, to get the job done.
- 12 Q. Sure.
- 13 A. And then as a last resort you could just have a physical
- 14 runner. You know, but I say that that's last resort due to time,
- 15 you know, that that would take for a person to actually, you know,
- 16 do the running.
- 17 Q. I have one more question for you. So once you
- 18 transition from your fan shaft and you became a part of the
- 19 L'Enfant Plaza box, what was your tactical assignment?
- 20 A. I was then the FL-1 fan vent shaft supervisor.
- 21 Q. Okay. So you was the --
- 22 A. So I was kind of put into my own little group, I guess
- 23 you'd say.
- Q. And that was a -- okay.
- 25 A. Yeah. It was my --

- 1 Q. Fan shaft supervisor?
- 2 A. Yeah.
- 3 Q. FL-1 fan shaft supervisor.
- 4 A. Yeah. So I was kind of my own little thing, my own
- 5 little area. And then I did report back, you know, with the
- 6 accountability and, you know, what we had to operations.
- 7 I'm not sure of my, you know, exact designation but it
- 8 was something, you know, that was -- you know, FL-1 or fan shaft
- 9 supervisor, something to that effect.
- 10 Q. Okay. Okay, and you mentioned that Level 3
- 11 accountability was established at the fan shaft. What about the
- 12 whole overall incident, Level 3 accountability, was it
- 13 established? Were you aware of it established, the L'Enfant Plaza
- 14 box assignment?
- 15 A. That I can't say. I do know that I heard them doing
- 16 accountabilities and then that's when I chimed in. You know, when
- 17 I was called for my members, I chimed in. So I hate to use the
- 18 word assume, but, you know, just from the radio traffic that I
- 19 heard and then when they called me for my accountability, I just
- 20 guessed that, you know, they had been doing Level 3 there as well.
- Q. Okay. So under your command structure, what was the
- 22 companies you had again?
- 23 A. I had Engine 13, Engine 7, Engine 3 and Truck 10.
- Q. Okay. And Truck 10. Okay.
- 25 A. And then like I say, when we transported the

- 1 firefighter, Medic 30-B was also, you know, assigned there then as
- 2 well, but that was later after we called.
- 3 Q. Medic 30 was called.
- 4 A. Yeah.
- 5 Q. Okay. Okay, that's all I have right now.
- BY MR. DOWNS:
- 7 Q. Thank you. Downs, NTSB again. Chief, when you arrived
- 8 at the vent shaft, did you establish your own incident command at
- 9 your particular site?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And did -- was it elevated at all to a unified command
- 12 or it -- you didn't need to elevate it at that point because the
- 13 event had not escalated to the degree of necessity of a unified
- 14 command, or no?
- 15 A. That is correct, I did not escalate it. I just stayed
- 16 in my own little, you know, command there.
- 17 Q. I see. And when you became aware of the box alarm, you
- 18 then deferred your command to the main incident command, the
- 19 unified command process back at L'Enfant? Would that be an
- 20 accurate characterization?
- 21 A. Yes. And then I was like the supervisor of my area of
- 22 the vent shaft.
- 23 Q. Your particular branch?
- A. Correct.
- 25 Q. Would that be a good way of saying it?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. The vent shaft branch --
- 3 A. Branch.
- 4 Q. -- for lack of a better description.
- 5 A. That'll work.
- 6 Q. Very good. Okay. Let's divert a little bit on your
- 7 personal work history and experience. You say you're a 30-year
- 8 veteran of the fire department?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Can you give us the highlights, the bullets of 30-year
- 11 career? I'm not looking for detailed dates or anything. Just
- 12 give us a rundown of your experience.
- 13 A. Okay. I was appointed to Engine 19 as a firefighter,
- 14 was a pumper driver there.
- 15 Q. This is '85?
- 16 A. That was 1985, yes.
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. You know, after completing training school.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- 20 A. Then I was a sergeant at Truck 17. Then they put the
- 21 4th Platoon in service or in however. So I went to Engine 23 as a
- 22 sergeant but I was a platoon commander because they did not have
- 23 enough lieutenants at that time.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. Took the lieutenant's exam, was promoted to lieutenant,

- 1 went to Engine 33. Was there for, you know, 3½, 4 years. Was
- 2 promoted to captain. Went to Truck 5, was there but a minute so
- 3 to speak. Went to Engine 8, was there for 2, 2½ years at Engine
- 4 8. From Engine 8, I went to Truck 11. From -- let's see, from
- 5 there, I was involved in a collision, was off for about 9 months.
- 6 Q. A collision?
- 7 A. Yeah.
- 8 Q. Accident or you mean your --
- 9 A. Yes. Engine 24 --
- 10 Q. -- apparatus collision?
- 11 A. Yes. Yeah.
- 12 Q. And you recovered from that?
- 13 A. Yes. After knee surgery and et cetera, et cetera. I
- 14 then wound up doing 2 years of day work as a regulations officer,
- 15 working in the basement of Grimke, basically under the fire chief.
- 16 From there I went to Engine 5 and then I went to the safety
- 17 office, was in the safety office for about 5 years. Then I was
- 18 promoted to battalion chief in 2011. Then I was assigned to the
- 19 2nd Battalion for about 2 years and then assigned to the 6th
- 20 Battalion.
- Q. Very good. Thank you for that summary. I see you
- 22 brought some notes of the event. This is your worksheet?
- 23 A. Yes. This was --
- Q. And this would be available to the investigation through
- 25 Chief Hawkins here. Is this something that's normally collected

- 1 as part of the process?
- 2 A. It's not normally collected, but it's just something
- 3 that I just --
- 4 Q. Well, we try to capture it because it's the
- 5 investigation.
- A. I just thought it might be helpful or to jog my memory
- 7 depending what, you know, kind of questions were asked and so on.
- 8 Q. That's perfectly appropriate. Thank you.
- 9 A. You know, I'm not sure there's much on there that will
- 10 help, but --
- 11 Q. We're looking for all we can because, like I mentioned
- 12 before, we're not able to -- we're discovering we're not able to
- 13 really capture the timestamps of the various communications that
- 14 were by the various agency-issued cell phones, for example,
- 15 because that's just not recorded. Okay. Let's go over to the
- 16 topic of radios. First of all, radios in this event and then
- 17 generally the new digital radios that were issued maybe a year ago
- 18 or so.
- 19 A. Okay.
- 20 Q. In this event, did you have -- any challenges with the
- 21 use of your ordinary radios that you were using?
- 22 A. Yes. There was some communications we could not get
- 23 from inside the tunnel out.
- Q. So you're at the topside and you had your crew down at
- 25 the bottom of the shaft, which is like 80 feet down or whatever.

- 1 And from my inspection of the site, you have just a series of
- 2 grates and you've got basically an open shot, top to bottom --
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. -- where you could actually yell down. And you're
- 5 saying to me you had radio challenges down to the bottom of the
- 6 shaft?
- 7 A. No. To the bottom of the shaft, we were okay.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. But the members that were up the tunnel, we had
- 10 problems. That's --
- 11 Q. So as soon as they left from the bottom of the shaft, as
- 12 soon as they started going down a tunnel to some degree, you'd
- 13 lose them?
- 14 A. Correct.
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. That's why I sent the company to the bottom of the shaft
- 17 to do the relay.
- 18 Q. Relay at the bottom, and that solved the problem for the
- 19 most part?
- 20 A. Yes. I had them go to channel A6, which was not used in
- 21 the incident, although it's --
- Q. Available.
- 23 A. -- part of the group. Basically 3, 4, 5, and 6 would be
- 24 like one group; 7, 8, 9, 10 would be another. So I had them go to
- 25 A6 and that way then they could communicate, you know, back and

- 1 forth.
- Q. I see. Did you have to resort to runners, physical
- 3 runners at all --
- 4 A. No, I didn't.
- 5 Q. -- or just the relay? Radio relay worked?
- 6 A. Correct.
- 7 Q. Very good.
- 8 A. No runners.
- 9 Q. Generally your experience the last year or so with
- 10 radios, particularly in the Metro tunnels or out in the open air.
- 11 You have some challenges there you can tell us about?
- 12 A. Yes, we do.
- 13 O. Fill us in.
- 14 A. Just in the open air, they're pretty -- you know,
- 15 they're fine. In the Metro, no, we have -- again, it might be a
- 16 hit and miss. Some are fine; some are not.
- 17 Q. Dead spots?
- 18 A. Yes. And --
- 19 Q. Is that principally the problem is dead spots?
- 20 A. Yes, yes. You know, some stations may be fine and then
- 21 some may not. Just general radios overall, some buildings same
- 22 way. You go into a building, you know, you get honked out,
- 23 there's nothing.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. Other buildings are fine.

- 1 Q. Okay. Has the agency been researching the challenges,
- 2 the difficulties, upon receiving reports over the past year or so?
- 3 Do you know?
- 4 A. Yes, they are.
- 5 Q. Successful? Yes or no?
- 6 A. That I'm not sure of. I do know that they are working
- 7 on that and --
- Q. And there's ongoing issues as far as you know?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Very good. That concludes the radio part.
- 11 Relationships with Transit Police Department, generally and in
- 12 this particular event. Can you offer anything?
- 13 A. I generally have no problems with them. They seem to be
- 14 very helpful. In this event, yes, they were very helpful. You
- 15 know, they were there, you know, willing to help in any capacity
- 16 that they could. And, you know, I'm always, you know, welcome for
- 17 their help, you know. So, I mean --
- 18 Q. How about relationships with WMATA OCC? Are there
- 19 challenges there sometimes, generally?
- 20 A. They're generally helpful. I do know that sometimes
- 21 calling in, you know, to establish whether the third rail's down
- 22 and that, get put on hold --
- Q. And this is something that you've really not welcomed in
- 24 terms of needing to know straightaway?
- 25 A. Yeah, you know, they're very -- they're not mean or ugly

- 1 or anything of that nature. It's just that, you know, they --
- 2 Q. Sounds like they might be busy.
- 3 A. That could be or they're just not exactly sure, you
- 4 know, what to do or how to help or, you know, something of that
- 5 nature and you get put on hold. Of course, you know, that -- once
- 6 you're on hold, you're -- you may as well be hung up then. You
- 7 know, it's --
- 8 Q. And it sounds like it's very frustrating for --
- 9 A. Yes, it is.
- 10 Q. Okay.
- 11 A. It is. And --
- 12 Q. Okay. And you've been --
- 13 A. -- sometimes the incident commander's calling, you know,
- 14 is the third rail down and, well, I'm on hold, you know.
- 15 Q. And you've been incident commander so far as other WMATA
- 16 Metro events and have had the same issues with OCC during those
- 17 events?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Very good. Okay, digress a little bit. In your command
- 20 at Battalion 6, that serves several Metro stations, I believe?
- 21 A. Several, yes.
- Q. And it's obvious that you yourself and your crews need
- 23 to know about Metro cars. I'm going to ask you about emergency
- 24 access doors. Spot quiz. Emergency access doors on Metro cars,
- 25 what's your understanding of how they work? We're asking all of

- 1 our interviewees, so don't feel like we're pointing it out to you.
- 2 A. I'm not really sure.
- 3 Q. Fair enough. If that's what your -- it's been a while,
- 4 it sounds like, since training?
- 5 A. It has been, you know, to that level, yes.
- 6 Q. Okay, that's fair enough. We can move on.
- 7 MR. DOWNS: That concludes my questions for the moment.
- 8 We have our next round of questioning starts.
- 9 BY MR. ROURKE:
- 10 Q. Yeah, Denton Rourke again from Metro, Chief. There was
- 11 a report from an incident maybe a week before the one on January
- 12 12th, that there were radio issues at L'Enfant Plaza. Were you --
- 13 before this incident this morning, were you aware that there were
- 14 reported issues at L'Enfant Plaza radio?
- 15 A. Yes. I believe that one of my companies had gone and
- 16 tested the radios, you know, had done the Metro inspection and,
- 17 you know, the radios were weak, at which time I got the reports
- 18 and forwarded them up, you know, up the chain.
- 19 Q. And does that get reported then throughout the battalion
- 20 or throughout the city?
- 21 A. It does to, you know, to my battalion, my shift, you
- 22 know, through me. Now, when I send it up, you know, up the chain
- 23 of command, I'm not exactly sure where it goes or what happens at
- 24 that point.
- 25 Q. All right. So but you notified your companies on your

- 1 shift?
- 2 A. Yes, my -- yes, yes.
- 3 Q. And you pass that, I assume -- well, I don't want to
- 4 lead you. Do you pass that along to the next shift?
- 5 A. Yes. Yes. Now whether, you know, he passes it on to
- 6 his company is --
- 7 Q. Right.
- 8 A. Once again, the generally the technicians and the
- 9 officers, you know, of the offgoing will pass along information to
- 10 the oncoming shifts as well. So, you know, sometimes that gets
- 11 passed along, but sometimes if you have a detail officer, he might
- 12 not think that that's important.
- MR. DOWNS: Let me intercede with a question --
- MR. ROURKE: Yeah, go ahead.
- 15 MR. DOWNS: -- if I may. When you make a report of
- 16 radio issues, does the department send around radio technicians to
- 17 investigate the issues that you report?
- 18 MR. HULL: That I don't know.
- MR. DOWNS: Thank you.
- 20 BY MR. ROURKE:
- Q. Chief, when did you become aware, if you did -- well, I
- 22 know you did at least one point -- that there was a train stuck in
- 23 that tunnel?
- 24 A. It was -- again, I can't put a definite time on it, but
- 25 somewhere in the incident after we started -- after we were pulled

- 1 in or reassigned to the main Metro incident and we were on A7, it
- 2 did come across that there was a train and that they had multiple
- 3 casualties that they were evacuating.
- 4 BY MR. DOWNS:
- 5 Q. And this was before you saw the two train evacuees that
- 6 came up through the vent shaft?
- 7 A. It -- see, again, I can't remember exactly. It was --
- Q. Which happened first? In other words, do you remember?
- 9 A. I want to say that the two members, the two train
- 10 evacuees came up first and said that there were possibly other,
- 11 you know, patients or persons there.
- 12 Q. So that was your first --
- 13 A. So then it starts --
- 0. -- information that you had in terms of there was a
- 15 train down there?
- 16 A. That there could be a possible train, yes.
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. And then by then we had already switched over to, you
- 19 know, to the main --
- 20 Q. So it was shortly thereafter that command communicated
- 21 with you that there was a train in the tunnel?
- 22 A. Perhaps not directly to me but just through
- 23 communications you --
- O. There was communications --
- 25 A. -- you ascertained --

- 1 Q. -- on the radio that you became aware of?
- 2 A. Correct.
- 3 Q. Okay.
- 4 A. Correct.
- 5 MR. ROURKE: And how about, did you ever tell him --
- 6 MR. DOWNS: Him who?
- 7 BY MR. ROURKE:
- 8 Q. Did you ever tell the IC that you -- about the
- 9 passengers that came out of the shaft?
- 10 A. Yes, I did.
- 11 Q. All right.
- 12 A. Yes. And I informed him that we were sending other --
- 13 that I was sending other members down to, you know, check for any
- 14 additional passengers that may have followed those two. You know,
- 15 because I didn't know if there were, you know, maybe people passed
- 16 out along the right-away, you know, the rail line. So that was my
- 17 thought to go and assist, you know, in any way that we could.
- 18 Q. And is that -- right. Okay, good. And is that one
- 19 telephone or radio?
- 20 A. That was over the radio. I think the only time that I
- 21 used the phone was to contact before we were integrated into the
- 22 main Metro -- you know, to contact him to tell him that we were at
- 23 the vent shaft and that it was the same incident and if he wanted
- 24 us to, you know, come over.
- 25 Q. Okay. So let me ask you as a -- when did you get

- 1 promoted to battalion chief?
- 2 A. 2011.
- 3 Q. '11. So you've been a chief for 4 or 5 years now?
- 4 A. Yes. Yeah.
- 5 Q. With 30 years on the job. I know the IC was an acting
- 6 captain. He's got a lot of time on but he was acting.
- 7 A. He was a captain, acting battalion chief.
- 8 Q. Acting battalion chief, right.
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Did you get a feel for, when you switched over or when
- 11 you were listening to the radio, how his command control structure
- 12 was functioning?
- 13 A. I thought he was doing pretty well.
- 14 Q. That's all I got now. Thanks.
- MR. PAYAN: All right. You doing okay? You need a
- 16 break or --
- MR. HULL: Yeah. No, I'm --
- 18 MR. PAYAN: No? All right.
- MR. HULL: -- I'm fine.
- 20 MR. PAYAN: All right. All right.
- MR. DOWNS: Identify.
- 22 MR. PAYAN: This is Ruben from NTSB. You beat me to it.
- BY MR. PAYAN:
- Q. I know that some of these are getting repetitive but we
- 25 kind of -- we weren't there, so it kind of helps us a lot.

- 1 A. Right. I understand.
- 2 Q. So please bear with us. You mentioned two passengers
- 3 that were in the shaft.
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Did your firefighters let them out or did they open the
- 6 vents?
- 7 A. No, the -- we had -- the gate was -- the vents were
- 8 already open. So we --
- 9 MR. DOWNS: That's the topside door?
- 10 MR. HULL: Correct. Correct. The grates or whatever
- 11 you would officially call them. It did have a padlock on, but I
- 12 believe that the Metro keys that we had, had a key to that. I do
- 13 not think that they cut the lock.
- 14 BY MR. PAYAN:
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. But, again, you may have to refer --
- 17 Q. Sure.
- 18 A. -- to the -- you know, to Lieutenant Johnson or
- 19 Lieutenant Kalinowski for that.
- Q. But it was your people that opened it?
- 21 A. Correct.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. Correct.
- Q. Did you by any chance physically get up on the shaft?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Did you? Do you recall any kind of draft either coming
- 2 in or out or the direction of it?
- 3 A. I want -- there was not an air blowing out, you know,
- 4 that made you hold onto your hat, so to speak.
- 5 O. Sure. Sure.
- 6 A. And there was not a draft pulling you down that if you
- 7 let go of a piece of paper that it sucked it fast.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. So, but I don't remember if there was, you know, like a
- 10 light air, you know, going one way or the other.
- 11 Q. Okay. And once you got your firefighters down the
- 12 shaft, did they report the status of the fans, whether they were
- 13 operating or shut down?
- 14 A. No, they did not.
- 15 Q. They did not. Okay. Do you recall hearing anything?
- 16 A. I do not.
- 17 Q. Do not. Okay. Once you assumed -- you were merged into
- 18 the bigger incident, the L'Enfant Plaza, were you reporting the
- 19 status of the fans, by any chance, or were you asked for the
- 20 status by anyone?
- 21 A. I don't remember.
- Q. Okay. And then once your firefighters went down into
- 23 the tunnel, did they report seeing any kind of arcing or fire when
- 24 they were there?
- 25 A. No. They did not report seeing any arcing or any fire.

- 1 Q. Okay. I think that's all I got. Thank you.
- MS. BURTCH: I have no further questions.
- 3 MR. DOWNS: Chief?
- 4 MR. HAWKINS: I have no further questions. I'm good.
- 5 BY MR. DOWNS:
- 6 Q. Thank you. We're kind of wrapping up our questions
- 7 here, Chief, and I always like to give our witnesses the
- 8 opportunity to express or recall retrospective thoughts, meaning,
- 9 knowing what you know now, kind of in hindsight, as a learning
- 10 experience, thoughts that you might want to share with the
- 11 professional firefighting community or Metrorail? Things you
- 12 might do differently or have done differently in the future should
- 13 get an event of this sort? We're not suggesting that you did
- 14 anything wrong. Things that prior to events you just didn't see
- 15 because this is a first experience. Anything you can share with
- 16 us?
- 17 A. That's kind of tough. Nothing really jumps out at me.
- 18 No, I don't think that there was anything that I really would have
- 19 done differently. Maybe now just, you know, with the questions
- 20 and that, maybe, you know, maybe writing down some times. You
- 21 know, when --
- Q. A little better documentation maybe?
- 23 A. Yeah. Yeah. You know --
- Q. You had an aide, right?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Would it be fair to say that in the future you might
- 2 think, ah, let me make sure the aide is jotting down notes or
- 3 something like that?
- A. Well, the aide was researching in the Metro maps to find
- 5 out exactly what map we were on so that we could get an official
- 6 designation of, you know, of where we were, you know, what the
- 7 shaft was actually called where we were. So he was engaged in
- 8 that as well as, you know, monitoring the different channels that
- 9 we were monitoring. So, you know -- you know, with that question
- 10 sitting here, maybe writing down a few times.
- 11 Q. Just a little more documentation for your
- 12 retrospective --
- 13 A. Yeah.
- 14 Q. -- report writing?
- 15 A. You know, had I known that it was going to go, you know,
- 16 to this extent, maybe sending, you know, more personnel down
- 17 immediately, not waiting for, you know, for passengers to come
- 18 there. But again, that could, you know, get into -- get you into
- 19 some trouble too. You send guys down, not exactly knowing, you
- 20 know, what the situation is at the other end, so --
- 21 Q. So in other words, more recon initially to --
- 22 A. Perhaps, you know, knowing now what -- you know, had I
- 23 known now what I know, you know, back then, I probably would have
- 24 sent more guys sooner. But, you know, thinking of the safety of
- 25 my members as well, you know, I didn't want to send guys into the

- 1 unknown.
- Q. And you had plenty SCBA and all that --
- 3 A. Yes, we did.
- 4 Q. -- so you wouldn't necessarily have an initial -- or
- 5 have a concern over air for a while.
- 6 A. No. Correct.
- 7 Q. You could always get more air if needed?
- 8 A. Correct.
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. Correct.
- 11 Q. Okay. Anything else comes to mind?
- 12 A. No.
- Q. Okay. Very good. Go ahead.
- MR. ROURKE: Do you all use the 30 or 45 minute bottles?
- MR. HULL: We have 60 minute, although you might get 45.
- MR. ROURKE: You don't get that -- right. Okay, 60-
- 17 minute bottles. All right. Thanks.
- MR. HULL: Yeah.
- 19 MR. ROURKE: That was was Denton Rourke from Metro.
- MR. HULL: Yeah.
- BY MR. DOWNS:
- Q. No further retrospective thoughts then?
- MR. ROURKE: Sorry about that.
- Q. Okay. Other than more recon initially maybe knowing
- 25 what you know now --

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. -- and better documentation, should the event escalate
- 3 to a --
- 4 A. Timestamps, yeah.
- 5 Q. Very good.
- 6 A. Time documentation.
- 7 Q. Communications about reversing the fan directions, were
- 8 you aware of any communications that came along your way, by
- 9 chance?
- 10 A. I did not hear anything.
- 11 Q. Didn't hear anything? We had other testimony, various
- 12 individuals where there was a request to reverse fanning
- 13 operations, and I was curious if you had heard anything about
- 14 that?
- 15 A. I had not heard anything.
- 16 Q. Okay. That kind of winds up my questions.
- 17 MR. DOWNS: Do we have any final questions from anyone?
- 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.
- 19 MR. DOWNS: All right. That concludes the interview.
- 20 Thank you very much.
- MR. HULL: Thank you.
- 22 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

24

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: WMATA INCIDENT AT L'ENFANT PLAZA

STATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

JANUARY 12, 2015

Interview of Jeffrey Hull

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-15-FR-004

PLACE: Washington, DC

DATE: February 2, 2015

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed to the best of my skill and ability.

Heidi E. Gardner

Transcriber

Page 6

line 24

should read

"Maine Ave. SW"

Page 6

line 25

should read

"SW"

2/21/15

[signed: Jeffrey Hull]