



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

GROUP	
EXHIBIT	

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 *

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Docket No.: DCA-15-FR-004

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Interview of: STEPHEN KUHN

Washington, D.C.

Thursday,
January 29, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: RICHARD M. DOWNS, JR.
Survival Factors Investigator

APPEARANCES:

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

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WMATA

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D.C. Fire and EMS
Homeland Security & Special Operations Division

JAMES GORDON, Secretary
International Fire Fighters Association Local 36
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Kuhn)

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I N T E R V I E W

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2 MR. DOWNS: Today's date is January 29, 2015, and the
3 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 Metro
7 Rail System here in Washington, D.C. on the afternoon of
8 January 12, 2015. This interview is being conducted with a member
9 of the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services
10 Department, as conducted by the NTSB Survival Factors Technical
11 Working Group of the investigation.

12 My name is Richard Downs, Jr., and I'm a survival
13 factors investigator with the NTSB in which I also serve in the
14 role as the Survival Factors Technical Working Group chairperson.
15 I will preside over this interview, which is being recorded for
16 the record and which a transcript may also be compiled of the
17 recording as a permanent docketed record of the interview.

18 I'll now ask that our witness please identify
19 themselves, their employment affiliation and job position title
20 for the record.

21 MR. KUHN: My name is Stephen Kuhn. I work for the D.C.
22 Fire Department. I am currently a lieutenant assigned to Rescue
23 Squad Number 1.

24 MR. DOWNS: Thank you for joining us today. And if
25 you're accompanied by anyone in this interview, can you please

1 identify that person?

2 MR. JAMES GORDON: My name is James Gordon. I'm a
3 secretary for Local 36, and I'll be his union representation
4 today.

5 MR. DOWNS: Thank you, sir. I'll now ask the
6 participants of this interview, who will also have an opportunity
7 to present questions to the witness, to please individually
8 identify themselves, their employment affiliation and job position
9 title for the record.

10 MR. ROURKE: Good morning. My name is Denton Rourke.
11 I'm with Metro. I am in the Office of Emergency Management.

12 MS. BURTCHE: Good morning. I'm Kimberly Burtch for the
13 Federal Transit Administration's Office of Transit Safety and
14 Oversight as the safety assurance and risk management
15 (indiscernible).

16 MR. HAWKINS: Good morning. I'm Derron T. Hawkins,
17 Deputy Fire Chief, D.C. Fire and EMS division (indiscernible).

18 MR. TEBO: Joseph Tebo, Maryland Department of
19 Transportation. I am the Maryland representative for the Tri-
20 state Oversight Committee.

21 MR. JOE GORDON: Joe Gordon, National Transportation
22 Safety Board, the investigator in charge on the L'Enfant Plaza
23 incident.

24 And before we get started, I wanted to let you know the
25 purpose of the NTSB investigation is to enhance safety. We're

1 looking for process improvements, not here to assign any blame,
2 any fault. Mr. Downs mentioned the transcript that would come
3 from the recording today. NTSB cannot offer or guarantee any
4 confidentiality or immunity from any legal action or certificate
5 action.

6 With that, Mr. Downs, if we can get started with the
7 interview.

8 MR. DOWNS: Thank you.

9 INTERVIEW OF STEPHEN KUHN

10 BY MR. DOWNS:

11 Q. And as my first question for our witness, would you
12 please briefly describe for us your role or involvement in this
13 event?

14 A. I'm the lieutenant in charge of Rescue Squad 1.

15 Q. Thank you. And could you please describe for us, in
16 your own words, what occurred on the day of the event relative to
17 your actions and involvement at the L'Enfant Plaza Station
18 starting at the time you first received the response notification.

19 A. We received a call for smoke at the L'Enfant Plaza Metro
20 Station. We were assigned on the initial Metro box alarm. We
21 arrived at the scene and took our position at the elevator. I
22 advised the chief that there was nothing evident, and as we were
23 disembarking and getting our equipment, I noticed that, you know,
24 I heard other companies marking on the scene. And I looked over
25 across the street at the Metro Station entrance at 7th and D

1 Streets; I noticed that no one was exiting. Something did not
2 feel right, so I told the guys that we were going to go down. I
3 advised Battalion 2 of the same. And we took the elevator down to
4 the Metro. I told my driver, too, to take our unit designator
5 (indiscernible) with our personal accountability tags and drop
6 that off at the entry control point and then to have him meet us
7 downstairs.

8 As soon as we got down to the mezzanine level of the
9 Metro, saw heavy smoke across the ceiling and right away knew
10 something was wrong. We made our way to the kiosk. A manager was
11 in the kiosk, and he told us to take the closest elevator on his
12 left -- elevator -- escalator on his left-hand side, go to the end
13 of the platform, and he said, "It's in the tunnel." We made our
14 way down, and of course, smoke is getting heavier at the time.
15 And we got to the end of the platform at the tunnel. By that
16 time, it's down on the floor. There were four Metro Transit
17 officers there and they -- at that time, one of them told me, said
18 there was a train full of passengers in the tunnel. I told the
19 officer -- I just directed it to the group of them -- I said tell
20 OCC, Metro Operations Control Center, to cut third-rail power now.
21 One of the officers was on his cell phone. He looked up, and he
22 said, "OCC says the power is down."

23 We immediately went down the catwalk toward the train,
24 and a firefighter who was with me, who was in front of me, he
25 activated the ETS, the blue light station.

1 Q. That's the pushbutton?

2 A. The pushbutton, that's correct.

3 Q. And you had two or three firefighters with you?

4 A. I had three firefighters with me.

5 Q. Thank you.

6 A. Let me back up a minute. Prior to entering the tunnel,
7 I attempted to call Battalion 2 to let them know that we had a
8 train full of passengers in the tunnel with heavy smoke
9 conditions. My radio honked out twice and I told -- one of the
10 firefighters, the driver who had come down, he came down with
11 meters at that time. I told him when he went back up to get his
12 gear to make the transmission to the battalion chief and let him
13 know that we were going into the tunnel.

14 We proceeded down the catwalk. The smoke was very
15 heavy, very thick. We did not see the train. We couldn't see the
16 taillights until we were right on top of the train. We looked
17 inside the train, and we saw it was full of people, at least that
18 car we were at, at the rear of the train. And most of the
19 passengers were on the floor of the train, trying to get where the
20 good air was. And there was as much smoke on the train as there
21 was in the tunnel.

22 Firefighter Woods who was with me, who happened to be
23 just in front of me, we made our way to the first set of doors on
24 the right rear of the car. Two firefighters remained behind at
25 the back of the train. We got to the door, and Firefighter Woods

1 pounded on the door and yelled, you know, "Open the door," and
2 passengers said that they couldn't. So he asked me what, you
3 know, said, "What do you want to do, Lieu?"

4 And I said, "Open the door." And he took his barrel
5 key, Metro barrel key that we have on all our key rings, and
6 opened the door with that.

7 Q. And that's the first side door you came to at the back
8 of the train?

9 A. First side door we came to at the back of the train.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. Please continue.

13 A. Okay. He climbed aboard, said he was going to do
14 triage. And I explained to the passengers, I said, "This is
15 what's going to happen. This fireman is coming aboard to do
16 triage. We want to get the people who are in the worst shape off
17 first, and we'll go from there."

18 At that time, a woman was brought to me. I remember it
19 as Firefighter Woods bringing her to me, but he said that two
20 other passengers brought her up. I guess he was moving forward in
21 the car, and they told him that she was unconscious. And he said,
22 "Bring her to the doors that are open."

23 Q. So this person was on some other rail car?

24 A. Or she could have been on that car.

25 Q. You don't know?

1 A. I do not know. But she was the first one brought out.
2 She was unconscious.

3 Q. The very first person brought off the train?

4 A. Off the train at that car we were at. They placed her
5 on my shoulder, and I brought her to the rear of the car, and I
6 handed her off to two firefighters who subsequently carried her
7 back to the platform, checked her for pulse -- she had a pulse --
8 carried her across the platform, up the escalator to mezzanine
9 level, checked for a pulse again. They said she had a pulse.
10 Brought her through the Metro Station, up the escalator, outside,
11 where unfortunately, they determined she no longer had a pulse,
12 and they started CPR.

13 Q. And that ultimately was the fatality of the event?

14 A. Correct. That's correct.

15 Q. Thank you.

16 A. After that, passengers were assisting bringing other
17 passengers forward who had children; other passengers with
18 legitimate medical concerns and two very pregnant women were all
19 brought to the front of the line. I assisted them off the train.
20 I told them to go down the catwalk; there were other firefighters
21 who would help them to the platform.

22 Q. And those were your other crewmembers that were on
23 the --

24 A. Correct, Squad 1.

25 Q. -- on the track bed helping the folks guide them along

1 the catwalk?

2 A. They were -- correct. Correct. Let me see. At this
3 time, we were still operating in heavy smoke conditions.

4 Q. And it's still just the four of you firefighters --

5 A. It was still just Rescue Squad 1 at that point.

6 Q. At that point. Okay.

7 A. Remarkably, I mean, this is the point that sticks out
8 most in my mind, is the -- there was no pushing. There was no
9 shoving from the passengers, I mean, no yelling. They were very
10 calm.

11 Q. Calm and orderly?

12 A. Calm and orderly, yeah.

13 Q. Thank you.

14 A. The fire department could not have evacuated that train
15 as quickly as we did without their cooperation. So we continued
16 in this manner, getting people off the train, and I would say we
17 were operating probably by ourselves for about 10 minutes.

18 Q. Ten minutes?

19 A. That's my guess.

20 Q. Before -- we realize --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- we realize that time compresses and everything when
23 you're under a stressful environment. So --

24 A. That's --

25 Q. -- that's your thinking at the time --

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. -- was maybe 10 minutes before another fire crew
3 arrived?

4 A. Before reinforcements arrived.

5 Q. And what fire crew was that?

6 A. Well, the first person I met or the first firefighter I
7 met was Battalion Fire Chief Welsh.

8 Q. Welsh?

9 A. And he had other companies with him. I do not know who
10 it was.

11 Q. And Welsh had actually worked his way down to the train
12 to assist you with the passengers --

13 A. Correct. Well, he said to me, he said this is what
14 we're doing. I said yes. We got to get these people out of here.
15 And he said okay. Let's make it happen. And the other
16 firefighters or companies that were with him had brought two
17 E-tech carts with them. So we were able to get other passengers
18 who could not walk off, you know, out of the bulkhead door at the
19 very rear of the train, load them on that and went down the
20 track --

21 Q. But you just described how you were evacuating through
22 that last side door.

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. When was the end door opened? Was it opened?

25 A. Apparently, at that time, it was opened. I do not

1 recall when it got opened. But when the other firefighters showed
2 up with the E-tech carts, they were able to get the cart directly
3 to the back of the train and offload --

4 Q. Right up against the car?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. Offload in through the end door --

7 A. Offload additional passengers through the end door.

8 Q. So it would make sense, I guess, that they might have
9 opened that door?

10 A. Possibly.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. After the, you know, after the fact, I found out that
13 there were two Metro Transit officers on board the train and the
14 train officer who's -- train operator who stayed on board until
15 all the passengers were evacuated. And I'm sure that they had
16 something to do with getting the bulkhead doors open, also
17 assisting with offloading passengers because they apparently did
18 not leave until all the passengers were off.

19 I would say that shortly after the -- our backup arrived
20 is when the smoke started clearing out of the tunnel. However, it
21 did not clear the smoke that was in the train cars out of the
22 train so --

23 Q. It did not?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Were the end doors of these cars -- between cars opened

1 in any manner or were other doors opened to --

2 A. By the time we had offloaded, we meaning the department
3 had offloaded the train and Rescue Squad 1 was -- all the members
4 were on board at the back of the train, because our job after that
5 was to do a primary and secondary search to make sure there was no
6 one left behind, all the doors were open as we moved -- the
7 bulkhead doors were open at the ends of the cars as we moved
8 forward doing --

9 Q. Do your fire crews bring door chocks to wedge doors open
10 and such?

11 A. Nothing to wedge the doors open. When the doors are
12 open, they stay open. I mean, that's been our experience.

13 Q. So you didn't need any chocks or anything like that?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I think that pretty much wraps it up.

17 Q. So you continued your evacuation process until the
18 process was cleared?

19 A. The train was offloaded.

20 Q. Was cleared.

21 A. Completely offloaded.

22 Q. Did any of your fire crew, yourself or any of your fire
23 crew, sweep the train for lasting passengers?

24 A. Yeah. We did the entire -- all of Rescue Squad 1 did.
25 We did it twice per our protocol.

1 Q. That's your protocol. And nobody was found, so at that
2 point, you cleared the train, and what did you do?

3 A. Before we started our primary and secondary search of
4 the train, Deputy Fire Chief Baker was down -- had made his way
5 down there, and he asked me to record the car numbers for him.
6 And they were all 3000 Series cars except for 2 that I remember as
7 being -- can't be sure, but I think they were 8000 Series.

8 Q. Eight thousand?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. Very good.

11 A. They're two newer cars.

12 Q. Okay. So after doing that, what happened?

13 A. We reported back to Chief Baker, said -- notified him
14 that the train was completely clear, and he advised us that we
15 could go up above and take a break.

16 Q. Take a break. Okay. When you went down into the
17 station and then the subsequent tunnel, did you have SCBA?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Did you use the SCBA?

20 A. Going into the tunnel, we were breathing air. When we
21 got to the train, the first thing we all did -- no one said
22 anything, but we all did it, is we took our face pieces off.

23 Q. And why was that?

24 A. Reason being is it's kind of tough to control someone in
25 a high-smoke environment, tell them to relax, slow their breathing

1 down, when I'm breathing good air or, you know, my guys are
2 breathing good air. And if at any time we needed air, it was just
3 a matter of putting the face piece back on.

4 Q. So it's instantly available had it been needed --

5 A. Had it been -- right.

6 Q. So it's your -- would it be fair to say it's your
7 experience that in order to calm a passenger in an environment
8 when the smoke is somewhat thin enough to where you didn't
9 necessarily need the air full time, your practice would be to go
10 off air, leave the mask dangling, and allow the patient -- the
11 passengers to see that, well, if you don't need the air, then
12 they're going to be okay? Would that be a fair way of
13 representing it?

14 A. That was my call at the time. It's not official
15 department policy.

16 Q. But it works.

17 A. It works. Correct.

18 Q. Very good.

19 A. I mean, the department wants us to -- you know, it's for
20 our own good, you know, our own benefit, our own safety. Like I
21 said, it was purely a judgment call on my part.

22 Q. Is there a policy generally that says you do what's
23 necessary to get the job done?

24 A. I mean, there's nothing in writing, but that's what we
25 do.

1 Q. That's the best practice.

2 A. Correct.

3 MR. DOWNS: Very good. Okay. That concludes my
4 questions for the moment. Let's go to the next questioner.

5 BY MR. ROURKE:

6 Q. Yeah. Lieutenant Rourke from Metro. I'm going to ask
7 you just some basic questions about Metro training that we're
8 asking everybody. Then we'll talk a little more specifically
9 about the incident in question. Can you describe for me the DCFD
10 Metro training program?

11 A. With Metro?

12 Q. Stuff you do on your own, stuff you do with Metro,
13 everything.

14 A. Yeah. On our own, we do go down and conduct
15 inspections. However, usually when a formal inspection is done,
16 you know, we're assigned that task. However, my -- as an officer
17 in the department, my practice has always been to get guys down
18 into the Metro within our box alarm areas just so they get
19 familiar with wherethings are.

20 Q. Okay. Can you just briefly tell us what kind of -- what
21 Metro training you participated in recently with Metro or with the
22 department?

23 A. With Metro, I mean, I can tell you that in the past,
24 I've been down to the -- what is it, Pennsy Road in P.G. County.
25 We've gone there for training on new cars, you know, the safety

1 features of the new cars Metro is receiving. They have a
2 simulator down there that simulates a Metro train car that's
3 overturned, just to give us an idea of what it's like to go
4 through there. Been down there before for, I guess, operational
5 procedures, you know, with -- concerning third-rail power, how to
6 cut it off, when to cut it off. What else? I mean, and then just
7 assorted different departmental procedures on, you know, how we
8 operate different types of alarms concerning Metro.

9 Q. Okay. Have you ever participated and if you so -- when
10 was the last time in a full-scale drill or exercise done after
11 hours or anything like that?

12 A. Yeah, I have. It was a long time ago. Let me think. I
13 was assigned with Truck Company 7 on Capitol Hill at the time, so
14 we're talking probably, I would guess, I don't know, maybe
15 15 years ago, 10 to 15 years ago.

16 Q. Let's see. You've been to Carmen Turner, so we got the
17 answer to that one. Let's see (indiscernible) question. When you
18 got down to the platform, and you ran into the transit officers,
19 is that the first time you've heard about the train in the tunnel?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. Nothing over the radio?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Do you know, did those officers go with you, or
24 did they stay on the platform?

25 A. No. No, they didn't. In fact, we asked them if they

1 were going, and they said no, they were going to stay behind which
2 actually worked better for us. I mean, I can't say enough about
3 the Metro employees who were on the train. As far as I'm
4 concerned, the two transit officers and the train operator who
5 stayed until the train was evacuated were working above and beyond
6 the call of duty. I think personally, any police officer who
7 subjects himself to that kind of environment is above and beyond
8 what they're normally called upon to do.

9 Q. Talked about the door. When you left the platform, you
10 said you were on air?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. Right. You felt like you needed to be at that point?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. It was that --

15 A. It was that thick. That's correct. And as I said,
16 the -- we weren't able to see the train itself until we were right
17 next to it.

18 Q. What did the police officers tell you about where the
19 train was?

20 A. They just said that there was a train in the tunnel that
21 was full of passengers.

22 Q. Did they tell you like which -- how did you determine
23 which tunnel it was in?

24 A. We were on the correct platform, and at the tunnel where
25 the police officers were, the station manager directed us to that

1 platform in the tunnel.

2 MR. DOWNS: And was it a matter of this officer just
3 pointed to the obvious tunnel that was right next to you?

4 MR. KUHN: That's correct. That's correct. You know,
5 it was directly in front of us.

6 MR. DOWNS: Directly in front of you.

7 BY MR. ROURKE:

8 Q. You checked with the police officers about third-rail
9 power you said?

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. And they told you it was down?

12 A. The one officer I spoke with said OCC says third-rail
13 power is down.

14 Q. And then what did you all do then?

15 A. We proceeded down --

16 Q. Did you take their word for it or --

17 A. That's correct. In a situation like that, you know, if
18 we've got a lot of smoke and passengers trapped, we -- our issue
19 or our function is to get as many passengers out as possible. To
20 me, if a cop is on his phone, and he says OCC says power is down,
21 power is down.

22 BY MR. DOWNS:

23 Q. You take his word for it?

24 A. I take his word for it. That's correct.

25 Q. And you have --

1 A. And then again, as I said, when we hit the first blue
2 light station, the ETS, you know, we activate the --

3 Q. Just to be safe.

4 A. That's correct.

5 Q. Do you have any light stick or hot sticks with you to
6 double check --

7 A. We have hot sticks and we have the WSAD, the warning
8 strobe and alerting device.

9 Q. Did that get engaged by you guys at that time?

10 A. Did not. I mean, after the incident, when we were all
11 gathered back at the rescue squad, we talked about what could have
12 been done, what should have been done. And you know, I brought up
13 the fact, you know, we brought that WSAD down. We didn't hook it
14 up. I said we could have checked the third rail with the hot
15 stick. But again, I guess the best way to describe it is to tell
16 you to hold your breath for a minute. Most people can do it for a
17 minute, and then hold it for another minute. And then after that,
18 okay, hold it one more minute; help is on the way. At that time,
19 we just engage and go. And I made the judgment call that third-
20 rail power is down; we're going in. And the guys all, you know,
21 we all operated as a team and just all went together.

22 BY MR. ROURKE:

23 Q. So let me ask you, how do you -- as a rule of thumb, if
24 there is one, how do you consider the third rail?

25 A. We always consider it live.

1 Q. Always consider it live.

2 A. Even if we've tested it with the hot stick or the WSAD
3 is hooked up, the guys always -- and you know, we're told even if
4 it's down, power's down, and you've checked that it's done, just
5 treat it as live anyway.

6 Q. So I don't want to put words in your mouth but --

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. -- how did you then treat it on your way down to the
9 train?

10 A. It was live, as far as we're concerned. It's still
11 live. I mean, I know, and the guys on the squads know, too, that
12 even with the third-rail power down, the train still has its own
13 power so that it can be moved out of a situation, like under pulse
14 power, to get it, you know, back into a station or move forward.
15 If the train is still energized, if those paddles are still making
16 contact with the third rail, that means that third rail, at least
17 close by, is still going to be energized.

18 BY MR. DOWNS:

19 Q. When you walked down the tunnel, were you on the
20 catwalk, or were you on the track bed?

21 A. We were on the catwalk.

22 Q. So you don't have a third rail necessarily that's right
23 there --

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. -- so it wouldn't be an imminent peril at that point --

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. -- as compared to say walking the track bed?

3 A. Track bed. And even then on the track bed, you know
4 where the third rail power is. You just stay away from it.

5 MR. ROURKE: Good. Thank you. That's all I've got
6 right now.

7 MS. BURTCHE: I don't have anything at this point.

8 MR. KUHN: Okay.

9 MR. DOWNS: Identify, please.

10 MS. BURTCHE: Oh, sorry. Kim Burtch. No questions.

11 MR. DOWNS: Chief, questions?

12 MR. HAWKINS: Yes, first (indiscernible) lieutenant,
13 Derron Hawkins, D.C. Fire.

14 BY MR. HAWKINS:

15 Q. Regarding communications, we have procedures regarding
16 communications when we have proper communications. Can you
17 explain those procedures?

18 A. As far as when radios are not working?

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. If the radios are not working, we can set up line of
21 sight communications either going to Channel 16 or Channel 15 with
22 the BRS. We were able to use those communications between -- I
23 was able to talk with my company, and we can set up -- we set
24 up -- the department set up, I guess, other members with their
25 portables line of sight. We were able to eventually get --

1 transmit to the outside.

2 MR. DOWNS: In the tunnel.

3 MR. KUHN: In the tunnel. That's correct. It's just
4 initially, on the initial TAC channel, we weren't able to
5 transmit.

6 MR. ROURKE: And you think they did set that up at some
7 point, the line of sight?

8 MR. KUHN: I'm sure we did because the communications,
9 once everyone -- the reinforcements showed up, I mean, it was just
10 seamless cooperation. So I know that we were communicating.

11 MR. ROURKE: And you think the radio got better at some
12 point?

13 MR. KUHN: Well, it did on our -- with our line-of-sight
14 channels.

15 MR. ROURKE: Okay. Thanks.

16 BY MR. HAWKINS:

17 Q. Okay. I have a question regarding accountability. Can
18 you explain to me what is the level of accountability we have
19 (indiscernible)?

20 A. Whenever we have a special -- concerning a Metro
21 incident, we have what's called level three accountability. Well,
22 we'll have a company assigned to be the accountability -- to take
23 care of accountability at each entrance. Initially, when we got
24 there, I believe we handed -- my driver handed off our UDC to the
25 safety officer who showed up. But the accountability works that

1 each company turns in their unit designator card with all these
2 personal accountability tags of who is going into the tunnel to
3 the officer at that entrance. And that way, the officer is able
4 to verify to the battalion fire chief in charge who is in the
5 tunnel and who is not in the tunnel.

6 Q. So regarding training, inspections that we do in Metro
7 and any after-accident reports, based on your experience with
8 Metro, training, inspection and after-accident reports, do you
9 feel as though you have the knowledge and skills to respond
10 (indiscernible) incident?

11 A. I feel that I and my company have the knowledge. I
12 don't necessarily know that all the other companies do. I mean,
13 we're a specialized unit. We're in the Special Operations
14 Division. So let me think how I want to word this. I think there
15 can always be more training with Metro. I don't know how easy or
16 how difficult it is for the department management to set stuff up
17 with Metro for training. But as I said earlier, as a company
18 officer, I just take it upon myself to make sure my guys know, you
19 know, what's going to go down, how it's going to go down and get
20 as much knowledge on Metro just simply by going down and looking
21 at where things are. The department's pretty good about putting
22 out notices when there are changes to Metro, like when they get
23 new cars or, you know, other improvements are made. But as far as
24 formal training between the department and Metro, not a knock on
25 the department, not a knock on Metro, but I mean, we could always

1 use more training. It's not going to hurt anything.

2 Q. Right. More formal training.

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Okay. And lastly, regarding the catwalk, can you
5 describe the conditions of the catwalk? Were they well lit; were
6 they dark?

7 A. There's some lighting, not a whole lot of lighting.
8 However, you know, all -- every member of my crew has a minimum of
9 two flashlights on them, you know, one for backup in case one --
10 you lose one or one breaks. The lighting down the catwalk was --
11 it was dim. Of course, it was mostly obscured because of the
12 smoke. But the biggest issue with the catwalk, and again, it's
13 not a knock on how it's built -- it's just that's the way it is
14 for the train tunnel; it's only about 22 inches wide -- and
15 unfortunately, every so often, there are other boxes, like
16 electrical boxes or whatever on the walls, so the pathway is
17 narrow at the time. Sometimes, to be able to stay on it, you have
18 to turn sideways, facing the wall so that you, you know, stay on
19 the catwalk.

20 BY MR. DOWNS:

21 Q. So these are, would you say, obstructions as to -- along
22 the lengths -- at various places along the wall that you would
23 have to maneuver around --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- in order to make your way down the catwalk?

1 A. That's correct. That's correct. But, however, you
2 know, the catwalk's also not designed for evacuation.

3 Q. It's not designed for --

4 A. I don't believe so. I mean, it's only 22 inches wide.
5 I mean, we use what we can to get people off.

6 Q. Is there a railing along the catwalk?

7 A. No railing, no.

8 Q. Not even when you get close to the station?

9 A. Well, when you leave the platform and initially go down
10 the catwalk to the tunnel, there are several doors, and there are
11 usually equipment rooms or access to fire extinguishers or fire
12 department standpipe connections. You'll have a railing there.
13 But once you go past that --

14 Q. So for a short length, you've got a railing --

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. -- and beyond that, there's no railing?

17 A. There's no railing. Correct.

18 MR. DOWNS: Thank you. Go ahead, Chief. Sorry.

19 MR. HAWKINS: That's all I have. I'm through with the
20 questions.

21 MR. DOWNS: Mr. Tebo?

22 BY MR. TEBO:

23 Q. Joe Tebo at Tri-state Oversight. Good morning,
24 lieutenant. Thank you for your time. Lieutenant, at any time
25 while you or any of your crewmembers exhaust your air supply in

1 your bottles?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Do you know of any of the other crews that came in?

4 A. I don't know. Like I said before, we were operating in
5 the tunnel, and again, it's a guesstimate, but around 10 minutes,
6 and during that time is when the smoke was the heaviest, and then
7 after that is when it cleared and, you know, supplemental air
8 wasn't needed after that.

9 Q. During your time in there, either initially coming into
10 the station or while you were operating at the track to train, do
11 you recall if any additional trains came in the station on the
12 opposite side rail?

13 A. I did not see any. I did not hear any.

14 Q. Thank you, sir. No other questions.

15 BY MR. JOE GORDON:

16 Q. Joe Gordon, National Transportation Safety Board. Set
17 geographical a little bit for us. Met at the L'Enfant Plaza
18 Station being back to the rear of the train, that would be north.
19 Train was heading southbound.

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. So as you're going down into the train, you're walking
22 on the catwalk that would be on the right-hand side --

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. -- of the tunnel going in. You mentioned the trip to
25 the ETS. How far into the tunnel was that trip stop?

1 A. That's not far. It's probably just past where the
2 handrailing ends so I guess it's -- once you leave the platform
3 and go into the tunnel, it's probably about 20, maybe 25 feet.

4 Q. Okay. So that trip was hit there --

5 A. It's plainly visible, yeah.

6 Q. Okay. And then, so as you're walking down the catwalk,
7 the door that you used to access, you know, to open, to gain
8 access to the passengers was the first door on that catwalk side
9 of the train?

10 A. Correct. First door, right rear of the train.

11 Q. Okay. And how long in your mind and, you know, knowing
12 that time is hard to -- it's hard to really put a solid time on
13 that but how -- in your mind, how long would you say that it took
14 to gain access to get that door open?

15 A. It didn't take any time at all.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. The rescue squad -- every fire company in the city has a
18 Metro bag, and in this Metro bag is maps of the Metro. It's got
19 what we have -- what we call a Metro tool which is a sort of
20 universal tool to be used in Metro for opening manhole covers, you
21 know, stuff like that. And then it's got a hot stick to test the
22 third rail. And then it's got a set of keys for the officer.
23 Rescue squads are a little different. We have a set of keys for
24 each member because sometimes we're going to be operating alone or
25 in pairs.

1 So as I said before, had Firefighter Woods, who was
2 directly in front of me on the catwalk. He already had his key --
3 barrel key out and ready to open the door and, you know, after he
4 pounded on the door and yelled for the passengers to open up and
5 they couldn't, it was just a matter of inserting the barrel key in
6 the side and opening the door.

7 Q. Okay. No issue --

8 A. No issue.

9 Q. -- no issue gaining access?

10 A. None. Absolutely none.

11 Q. Okay. You mentioned the E-tech carts. Approximately
12 how many people would you say were evacuated using the carts from
13 what you saw?

14 A. I couldn't tell with any certainty because they were
15 going out of the bulkhead door and we were -- I was on the side
16 door assisting passengers down.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. It's about -- from the side door down to the catwalk is
19 about a 3-foot drop. So it's pretty --

20 MR. DOWNS: Side door to the catwalk is a 3-foot drop?

21 MR. KUHN: It's about a 3-foot drop because, you know,
22 the train's not at a platform anymore. So it's about a 3-foot
23 drop, so it was pretty labor intensive, you know, getting people
24 down and off. A lot of people had to sit down, dangle their legs
25 and then scoot off.

1 MR. DOWNS: And the darkness wasn't helping any?

2 MR. KUHN: No. Not at all.

3 BY MR. JOE GORDON:

4 Q. Okay. And one more question. To your knowledge, did
5 you see any passengers that may have self-evacuated? Did you see
6 anybody coming from the tunnel portal?

7 A. No. After we had opened the door and had begun
8 evacuation, I'd say maybe about 5 minutes into the operation is
9 when I saw other passengers coming toward us on the catwalk.

10 Q. Okay.

11 MR. DOWNS: From cars that were further south?

12 MR. KUHN: Further south. Correct. At that point, you
13 know, I saw the passengers coming toward me. I told the
14 passengers at the door to hold up a second, let me climb onboard,
15 and I climb onboard, you know, sat down with my legs facing the
16 catwalk, and I waved the other passengers on the catwalk forward.
17 I let --

18 MR. DOWNS: In other words, to get clear so they could
19 pass?

20 MR. KUHN: Correct. Probably let about maybe five, six,
21 seven through, and then I'd say all right, hold up, and then
22 basically traffic cop, get more off the train.

23 MR. DOWNS: So you became a traffic cop.

24 MR. KUHN: That's exactly right. Yeah.

25 BY MR. JOE GORDON:

1 Q. Right. Okay. And how many, approximately, would you
2 say came from further down the train?

3 A. That's hard. I would say probably, I don't know, I
4 guess maybe around 50.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. They were able to self-extricate.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I'm assuming, or they were either assisted by the
11 transit officers onboard or the train operator.

12 Q. Okay. So there was another door that was opened
13 somewhere further south?

14 A. Further down, further south. Right.

15 Q. Okay. I have nothing further right now.

16 MR. DOWNS: Thank you.

17 BY MR. DOWNS:

18 Q. Downs, NTSB. Lieutenant, you described a little bit ago
19 here, it was about 10 minutes before another fire department crew
20 arrived at your location to assist, and they worked the back end
21 of the train with the E-tech carts and such. When you arrived,
22 and then you were advised there was a stranded train down the
23 tunnel and such, did you request additional support at that time,
24 or how did that support come?

25 A. The support showed up. I knew that -- and again,

1 initially I was not able to make the report that we had a train in
2 the tunnel with passengers. But I knew that when that
3 transmission got made that, you know, more help would be arriving.
4 I mean --

5 Q. So you assumed it rather than taking the initiative to
6 get a message up to incident command saying Rescue Squad 1 here
7 with this portal. We've been told train in the tunnel. We're
8 going down the tunnel to effect evacuation. Send help. You did
9 not do that?

10 A. Did not say send help. Just said that we were going
11 down the tunnel. We had a train in the tunnel, heavy smoke, train
12 full of passengers.

13 Q. And your expectation would be they would send help
14 because --

15 A. Automatically, that's --

16 Q. -- that would be an automatic protocol?

17 A. Right.

18 Q. Very good.

19 A. We try to reduce unnecessary transmissions on the radio
20 because of the nature of an emergency. So when a company makes a
21 transmission like that, I mean, the battalion chief in charge
22 know, you know --

23 Q. There's an expectation that's going to be following
24 automatically.

25 A. That's correct.

1 Q. Very good. Thank you, sir. Emergency access doors,
2 let's go back to that. You described approaching the train up on
3 the catwalk. You went to the first door you came to on the back
4 of the train. You opened that door with a barrel key and started
5 your evacuation through there. Tell us about your understanding
6 of the emergency access doors on the rail cars.

7 A. I'm assuming that you've read my informal statement. I
8 don't know if you read my formal statement. In it, I mentioned
9 that the 3000 Series cars and below did not have readily
10 accessible, to the passengers, procedures to evacuate or how to
11 open doors in case of emergency.

12 Q. Procedures meaning the placard on the inside of the car?

13 A. Placard on the inside of the car with a red-handled pull
14 to open the door --

15 Q. You're saying that that's incorrect?

16 A. No, no, no. I'm not saying it's incorrect. I'm saying
17 when Metro first came out with those cars, they did not have
18 emergency procedures labeled on how to open a door in an
19 emergency.

20 Q. I see.

21 A. I took a personal field trip to the closest Metro to me,
22 about 3, 4 days after the incident, and I got on a 3000 Series
23 car. And they do have -- it's plainly marked; the middle doors on
24 both sides are plainly marked with a handle that says, "In case of
25 emergency, pull handle to open door."

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I think we were doing the -- our search after the train
3 had been offloaded, again, I did not notice that and I just -- I
4 put it in my report that, you know, that was not readily apparent.
5 It is readily apparent. I was going back to my old training when
6 Metro first came out with the 1000, 2000, 3000 Series car where it
7 was not apparent.

8 Again, the only explanation I can come up with for my
9 not noticing that is you've got a train full of people. It's got
10 heavy smoke inside. And in my mind, I could not understand why
11 they didn't start self-evacuating. Now granted, you have people
12 in authority saying, you know, we're trying to move the train,
13 stay put. But again, this is my training. At some point, at
14 least for me, it kicks in, something's not right. It's time to
15 go.

16 Q. So Lieutenant, would it be fair you described that you
17 were relying upon your original training --

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. -- and how the setup was with the emergency access doors
20 and that when you arrived at this rail car, it was different than
21 your original training, or that original training didn't
22 necessarily come back to you immediately at that time because your
23 focus was on other things? Would that be a fair characterization?

24 A. That's correct. That's a fair characterization. That's
25 correct.

1 Q. Very good. So you felt that, and correct me if I'm
2 wrong, you felt that just simply opening that first door you came
3 to was sufficient to enact the evacuation process. Are there
4 other doors -- please answer for the record.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Are there other doors on the rail car that could be used
7 or should be used as the normal access doors?

8 A. Preferably the middle doors of the cars are the ones
9 that should be used for emergency access, the reason being is that
10 at the ends of the cars there is the paddle that makes contact
11 with the third rail. The problem is, especially if you're not at
12 a platform or a catwalk, it looks like a step. And if we're
13 pulling people out of those cars, we don't want them to step down
14 on that paddle even if the train has been de-energized and third-
15 rail power is down.

16 Q. And in this case, the third rail was on the other side
17 of the car from the catwalk; is that correct?

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. So it was not of concern in this particular case?

20 A. Oh, no. It's a concern. If one paddle is in contact
21 with the third rail, all the paddles are --

22 Q. But can one touch the paddle, though, if one has the
23 catwalk right there?

24 A. Not unless you reach down and touch it.

25 Q. So you'd have to go out of your way --

- 1 A. Correct.
- 2 Q. -- in order to touch it. I see.
- 3 A. Correct.
- 4 Q. So going back to the emergency -- it's the access door
5 you're saying is the middle door?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. How do you open that middle door, with a barrel key?
- 8 A. From inside the car or outside?
- 9 Q. Well, both ways.
- 10 A. Okay. Outside the car, we've got a barrel key that will
11 open it.
- 12 Q. Okay.
- 13 A. Inside the car, it's clearly marked, clearly
14 placarded --
- 15 Q. Okay.
- 16 A. -- with a red handle.
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. And it states that in case of emergency to open door,
19 pull the red handle.
- 20 Q. And that's located where inside --
- 21 A. Typically, to the left side of the door.
- 22 Q. So immediately --
- 23 A. And it's plainly visible.
- 24 Q. -- immediately adjacent to the door is the door release?
- 25 A. Correct.

1 Q. And on the outside you always use the barrel key?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. Is there a release on the outside of the car that you're
4 aware of?

5 A. Not that I'm aware of, no.

6 Q. Very good. Okay. Let's see. Portable lights and
7 portable fans on your vehicle, your rig, do you carry those?

8 A. Yeah. We have portable lights.

9 Q. Portable lights, portable fans or no?

10 A. Portable fans, no.

11 Q. Portable fans would be carried on a truck company?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. And these are self-contained fans that have their own
14 energy source, and some have electrical cords you can plug in?

15 A. That's correct.

16 Q. Okay. Did you bring any portable lights or fans down
17 with you?

18 A. No. The only lights we had were --

19 Q. Your flashlights?

20 A. -- flashlights and, you know, department-issued hand
21 lights.

22 Q. And that would be a standard initial response just to
23 bring that?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. And could you go back if you needed the portable lights

1 and fans if the situation warranted?

2 A. If the situation warranted, yes.

3 Q. And because your rig was topside, would it have been
4 somewhat of a process to go back to the rig to be able to get
5 additional equipment? In other words, your focus was on the
6 exigent evacuation, and rather than stop and dispatch somebody up
7 to the truck to get lights or fans or whatever because you were
8 describing the low-light environment, the process would call for
9 for you to simply run through your evacuation process given what
10 you had in hand, right?

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. You described the rail car interior, once you opened the
13 door, was smokier than the exterior. Was that correct?

14 A. It had as much smoke as the exterior, yes.

15 Q. As much smoke?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Would it have been beneficial to set up a fan, a
18 portable fan at the rail car at that time if you had one?

19 A. I mean, I guess you could have. The problem with the
20 portable fan, their gasoline powered, so they're making up
21 their -- they're making their own set of --

22 Q. Generating their own smoke.

23 A. Well, their own fumes. And again, in a situation like
24 that, when you've got a crush load train -- I'm assuming it's
25 crush load. It was right at the beginning of rush hour.

1 Q. Was it crowded when you go there?

2 A. It was packed. It was packed. I know the news reports
3 have said 200 people evacuated. I think that should be corrected
4 to 200 people evaluated. Again, I can't say for sure how many
5 people were on the train but you can't --

6 Q. It was --

7 A. -- you can't tell me that a train leaving L'Enfant Plaza
8 at the beginning of rush hour had only 200 people on it.

9 Q. So we had elbow-to-elbow crowd?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Very good.

12 A. And the immediate, absolute, 100 percent immediate thing
13 to do is start evacuation.

14 Q. Just get everybody out.

15 A. Get everybody out.

16 Q. Very good. Thank you, sir. The downed firefighter we
17 have a report of, was that one of your fire crew?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Do you have any idea who that was?

20 A. I mean, I do now, after the fact.

21 Q. Who was that?

22 A. It was a member of Tower 3.

23 Q. Tower 3. Okay. And what was the nature of the
24 distress? Was that a respiratory distress, do you happen to know?

25 A. I believe so.

1 Q. But you're not sure.

2 A. I can't say with 100 percent certainty, but I believe
3 that's what it was --

4 Q. Okay. Well, we'll research that otherwise. Thank you.

5 MR. DOWNS: I'm going to pass it on through further
6 questions.

7 MR. ROURKE: Yeah, Captain. Denton Rourke from Metro.

8 MR. DOWNS: Lieutenant.

9 BY MR. ROURKE:

10 Q. Oh, Lieutenant.

11 A. Lieutenant. That's all right.

12 Q. You're on the list now. All right. Yesterday, we
13 interviewed Carmody, the squad driver, and he said while you all
14 were staged at -- by the elevator, your normal SOP position --

15 A. Right.

16 Q. -- he said you articulated you felt like something was
17 wrong?

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. And you have said the same thing. Can you put that into
20 words? You know, I know you got a lot of years on and, you know,
21 you have your hair on the back of your neck, and you got feeling,
22 but if you can articulate it a little bit, it might be helpful.

23 A. You know, the best way to describe it is it happens to
24 everyone on the job. Eventually you get enough time on where you
25 just start getting these gut feelings. And the best way I can

1 describe it is in my gut, something was wrong. And as I said
2 before, when I looked up across the street again at the Metro
3 Station, I just saw there was no one coming out. Normally on
4 these calls, you know, smoke in the tunnel or whatever, you know,
5 99 percent of the time it's nothing; it's a piece of paper that's
6 on -- but there are always people streaming out of the Metro. I
7 mean, in this case, there was just -- there was absolutely no one
8 coming out of the Metro.

9 The best way I can describe it is, you know, I got
10 29 years on the job. It didn't feel right. It didn't feel
11 normal. Something felt wrong.

12 Q. And on radios, I guess a week before there was an alarm
13 at L'Enfant Plaza where they had some radio issues. Before this
14 call on the 12th, were you aware that there were radio issues at
15 L'Enfant Plaza?

16 A. No, I was not.

17 Q. And I just want to ask you one more time, the hot stick,
18 when you guys were leaving the platform to head down into the
19 tunnel, did anybody from the fire department or Metro or anybody
20 hot stick at all?

21 A. Members of Rescue Squad 1 did not.

22 Q. Did you see anybody from Metro hot stick or anything?

23 A. Did not. As I said before, the only Metro employees we
24 saw down there at the tunnel were the initial four Metro transit
25 officers.

1 Q. Thank you. That's all I got.

2 MR. ROURKE: Ma'am?

3 MS. BURTCH: I have no --

4 MR. DOWNS: No questions? Chief, any questions?

5 MR. HAWKINS: No. I have no further questions.

6 MR. TEBO: No, sir. No questions.

7 BY MR. JOE GORDON:

8 Q. Joe Gordon, NTSB. When you were standing on the catwalk
9 helping people off the train onto the catwalk to evacuate, did you
10 feel any airflow in the tunnel?

11 A. Initially, no. Like I said, I believe we were operating
12 for up to maybe 10 minutes, and I noticed no airflow and the smoke
13 not clearing. It wasn't until our additional fire department
14 resources arrived that the smoke did finally start clearing.

15 Q. So about 10 to 15 minutes after you arrived or --

16 A. I would say that within the 10 minutes after we arrived,
17 it started clearing.

18 Q. Okay. Do you have any feeling for which way that air
19 there was flowing?

20 A. To me, well, it was moving south. That's how I remember
21 it. It was moving south.

22 MR. DOWNS: Away from the station?

23 MR. KUHN: Away from the station. Correct.

24 BY MR. JOE GORDON:

25 Q. Okay. And one question, I know you mentioned the number

1 of people that were on the train. In your opinion, had more doors
2 been opened on that side that you were on, would that have helped
3 or hindered with the fact that you only got a 22-inch catwalk;
4 you've got -- you're going to have a funnel effect of everybody
5 coming into this one location to get off the -- more doors
6 opened --

7 A. I think, you know, with a crush load train, when it
8 stops at a platform, and there are no issues, full lighting, no
9 smoke, I mean, it's -- and all the doors opened on the sides of
10 the train, it's going to take, in my opinion, about 10 minutes to
11 unload the train. I think the biggest issue with unloading the
12 train was the fact that it was in the tunnel, it was dark, it was
13 full of smoke, and it was being emptied onto a catwalk. I think
14 if more doors or if all the doors had been opened at once, it
15 probably would have created a more -- not -- it would have created
16 a not as orderly evacuation.

17 MR. DOWNS: It would have hindered the process --

18 MR. KUHN: It would have (indiscernible) yes.

19 MR. DOWNS: -- rather than aided the process?

20 MR. KUHN: Correct.

21 MR. DOWNS: Would that be a fair characterization?

22 MR. KUHN: Yes. In my opinion, yes.

23 BY MR. JOE GORDON:

24 Q. Okay. And did you, at any time, hear any plan from any
25 Metro employee to make a reverse move with that train back to

1 L'Enfant?

2 A. When Firefighter Woods and I initially got to the right
3 rear passenger doors, I remember hearing the train operator
4 telling the passengers to remain calm and that he was going to
5 continue trying to move the train. At that point, my initial
6 thought is the safety of my guys. There are two of us on the
7 catwalk, and there are two back behind the train. I made a
8 judgment call again. I didn't think it was in the best interest
9 to try to move the train. I felt that if the train had been able
10 to move and would have been moved at that time, we needed to open
11 the door, and again, that would have stopped all progress with the
12 train moving, and just get the passengers out.

13 MR. DOWNS: And were you aware that opening a train door
14 prohibits the train from being moved anyways?

15 MR. KUHN: Yes.

16 MR. JOE GORDON: No further questions.

17 MR. DOWNS: Thank you.

18 BY MR. DOWNS:

19 Q. Lieutenant, you mentioned you were with the force
20 29 years?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Maybe you can give us a quick thumbnail as to your
23 lineage, your history with the fire department, your various
24 positions you've held? I'm looking for dates or details, just if
25 you can give us a rundown.

1 A. Just a rundown?

2 Q. Brief rundown, yeah.

3 A. Actually, it's 29 years, 6 months, 5 days. I was
4 appointed back in June of 1985. I've spent most of my career east
5 of the river, east of the Anacostia River. Appointed to Engine
6 Company 27, spent 6 years there. I was a wagon driver for one
7 year. I got promoted to sergeant. I was a sergeant for 4 years,
8 and I was promoted to lieutenant. And come March, I'll have been
9 a lieutenant for 20 years.

10 I've been assigned to just about every quadrant in the
11 city. I spent time at Truck Company 7 on Capitol Hill. After
12 that, I was moved to the Fifth Battalion east of -- I mean, west
13 of Rock Creek Park for a year at Engine 31, then to Engine Company
14 30, again, east of the river in the Lincoln Heights section of the
15 town. I spent 10 years there on the engine company. After that,
16 I was moved into the Special Operations Division. I spent 2 years
17 at the fireboat, and then I was moved to Rescue Squad 1, where
18 I've been for the last about year and a half now.

19 Q. Have you been at other Metro events that were of this
20 magnitude over the years?

21 A. No.

22 Q. So suffice to say this is the most significant involved
23 event that you have participated in?

24 A. In Metro, yes.

25 Q. Very good. Lieutenant, we're wrapping up questions

1 here, and I like to give all my witnesses the opportunity to
2 express what we call retrospective thoughts. Knowing what you
3 know now, not that you did anything wrong, we've discovered that
4 emergency responders always see something different, particularly
5 with a new event, that they might do differently. Are you able to
6 offer any thoughts to share with the professional firefighting
7 community on those perspectives?

8 A. Sure. Immediately after we were, you know, told we
9 could leave the tunnel and went back to our unit, right then we
10 started -- my crew, we started talking about, you know, what could
11 have been done differently. I think one of the things we probably
12 should have done immediately was set up the WASD at the entrance
13 to the tunnel, and that way, it would have let incoming companies
14 know with certainty that the third-rail power was down.

15 We've come up with a plan on my unit that we will now
16 bring, in addition to bringing meters on every Metro incident
17 because you never know for sure what you're going to run into, you
18 know, atmospheric meters, we're going to bring a couple SKEDs
19 which are -- it's a flexible -- it's like a flexible -- that
20 are -- that we can use to move people who are unable to walk.

21 Directly behind me in the compartment where I, you know,
22 where I sit on the rescue squad, there's also a cloth stretcher
23 which I'm going to grab and just throw over my shoulder.

24 Q. Is that because of the challenges involving --

25 A. That's correct.

1 Q. -- the incapacitated woman, unconscious woman?

2 A. Absolutely.

3 Q. And it would have helped maybe?

4 A. Yeah. Absolutely, 100 percent it would have helped at
5 getting her out. It would have helped to moving other additional
6 passengers who were unable to walk because when we started working
7 the ones who were -- we were getting toward the back of the train
8 who were unable to walk before the arrival of the E-tech carts, we
9 just sort of held them in a staging area, you know, while we were
10 moving the ambulatory ones out.

11 We have modified one of our SKED stretchers. Normally,
12 it's pretty involved to tie a passenger in. It's like a
13 plastic -- piece of plastic sled that's flexible. And when a
14 victim is placed in it, you have numerous ties to make so that it
15 sort of wraps around their body, and we've got to pull forward on
16 the --

17 Q. Sounds time consuming.

18 A. Yeah. So we've modified one to have two seatbelts, snap
19 it and go.

20 Q. Anything else you can think of?

21 A. Not right now. No, sir.

22 MR. DOWNS: Okay. Very good. Well, that wraps up my
23 questions. Any further questions on my right?

24 MR. JOE GORDON: No. No further questions.

25 MS. BURTCHE: No.

1 MR. DOWNS: Questions on my left?

2 MR. ROURKE: None, sir.

3 MR. DOWNS: Very good. Thank you for joining us today,
4 Lieutenant. That concludes our interview.

5 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: WMATA INCIDENT AT L'ENFANT PLAZA
STATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 12, 2015
Interview of Stephen Kuhn

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-15-FR-004

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: January 29, 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.

Karen Ehatt
Transcriber