



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

Interview of: STEPHEN LEONARD

Washington, D.C.

Wednesday,
January 28, 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

ROBERT JOE GORDON, Investigator-in-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

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Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

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Office of Emergency Management
WMATA

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

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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 28, 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 evacuation that occurred
6 in and near the L'Enfant Plaza Station of the WMATA Metrorail
7 system here in Washington, D.C. on the afternoon of January 12,
8 2015. This interview is being conducted with a member of the
9 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 a role
14 as the Survival Factors Technical Working Group Chairperson. I
15 will preside over this interview which is being recorded for the
16 record in which a transcript may also be compiled of the recording
17 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. LEONARD: My name is Stephen Victor Leonard. I am a
22 battalion fire chief with the District of Columbia Fire and EMS
23 Department assigned to Battalion 1, Platoon No. 2.

24 MR. DOWNS: Thank you, sir. Thank you for joining us
25 today. And are you accompanied by anyone in this interview?

1 MR. LEONARD: No, I'm not.

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

7 MR. ROURKE: Good afternoon, Chief. I'm Denton Rourke.
8 I'm with WMATA's Office of Emergency Management. I am the
9 operations manager.

10 MS. BURTCH: Good afternoon. My name is Kimberly
11 Burtch. I'm with the Federal Transit Administration's Office of
12 Transit Safety and Oversight.

13 MR. HAWKINS: Good afternoon. Derron T. Hawkins, D.C.
14 Fire and EMS, Homeland Security Division. I'm a deputy fire
15 chief.

16 MR. BLACKISTONE: Steve Blackistone, National
17 Transportation Safety Board Office of Communications.

18 MR. GORDON: Joe Gordon, National Transportation Safety
19 Board investigator in charge on the WMATA incident. To add just a
20 few things to what Mr. Downs said before, we get started with the
21 interview, the purpose of the NTSB interview is to enhance safety,
22 looking for process improvements. We're not here to assign any
23 fault or blame to anyone. NTSB cannot offer any guarantee of
24 confidentiality or immunity from legal action. As Mr. Downs
25 spoke, the transcript will go in the public docket. So with that

1 we'll get started with the interviews.

2 MR. DOWNS: Okay, Chief. Thank you.

3 INTERVIEW OF STEPHEN LEONARD

4 BY MR. DOWNS:

5 Q. As my first question, would you please describe briefly
6 for us your role or involvement in this event?

7 A. Sure. My assignment on the initial station box alarm
8 for the incident is the second due battalion chief. My assignment
9 is the Metro liaison officer. Typically on incidents, I am
10 assigned to make contact with Metro usually via my cell phone and
11 ask for a conference line to be established so we have direct
12 communication between incident command via myself and Metro.

13 Q. Very good, Chief. And you were stationed at L'Enfant
14 Plaza that day, or did you go up to WMATA Metro?

15 A. I responded -- my station is at 2225 5th Street
16 Northeast right off of Rhode Island Avenue, and being that I'm
17 closer to getting out of the city, usually they'll put me as that
18 Metro liaison officer. We responded from station -- from
19 quarters -- Engine 12's quarters to Pennsy Drive OCC.

20 Q. The OCC control room.

21 A. Right.

22 Q. Very good. Thank you. And could you please describe
23 for us in your own words what occurred on the day of the event
24 relative to your actions and involvement at L'Enfant Plaza Station
25 starting from when you first got the call.

1 A. We received the call as we were backing into station
2 from a prior call, so we were already in the buggy. When the call
3 was placed for the Metro Station box along the L'Enfant Station, I
4 immediately grabbed my cell phone and made contact with Metro via
5 the (202) [REDACTED] number, told them what we had and that we were
6 still sitting on the apron of the fire station, Engine 12, told
7 them what we had. We had units responding for a Metro Station box
8 alarm at L'Enfant Station -- L'Enfant Plaza Station for a report
9 of smoke.

10 The gentleman that answered the phone -- I'm trying to
11 remember his name, I can't at this time. The gentleman that
12 answered the phone said they had no information other than what I
13 stated, that it was report of smoke on the platform. And I said,
14 okay, well, you know, I identified myself and said, I want to
15 establish the conference line. And he said, okay, very well.
16 Sounded like he was talking to somebody in the background, and I
17 waited a few minutes, and he got back on the line, and I said, are
18 you, you know, okay with establishing a conference line, and he
19 said, oh, hold on, let me see what I can do. Said a few things to
20 someone else in the background, and I thought I heard muzak, like
21 I was put on hold.

22 Q. Oh, like you were put on hold.

23 A. Yeah. Like muzak.

24 Q. Right.

25 A. And I remember commenting to my aide, I think I just got

1 put on hold. So I was there for a while. I could hear our units,
2 you know, responding and checking in with the incident commander,
3 so forth and so on. I think they still hadn't made entry into the
4 station by this time, so I hung up and called back.

5 Went through the same process again, identified myself,
6 Chief Leonard, I'm trying to establish a conference line. We have
7 units going to L'Enfant Station for the smoke. And the gentleman
8 answered the phone and said, okay. I asked him did he have any
9 other information. He said at this time all we have is a report
10 of smoke. I asked if he had their emergency response team
11 responding. He said, yes. I said, are they on the scene? He
12 says, I don't think so. And he said, I'd like you to call back on
13 another line that's a conference line, and that number he gave me
14 was (202) [REDACTED].

15 So at that point I told the driver, let's respond out to
16 Pennsy Drive, because the report was heavy smoke and that's all we
17 had, and it seemed like it was going to be only one incident. So
18 we responded to Pennsy. En route I dialed the new number.
19 Believe on that number I was given a name of a Mr. Malloy. Talked
20 to Mr. Malloy for few minutes about if they had any new
21 information. Said, no, there's a report of smoke on the train, I
22 mean, on the mezzanine level. They're trying to determine the
23 source. They hadn't determined the source. And their emergency
24 response team was en route. Couple sporadic conversations on the
25 way out there, nothing major, just the same thing. And I kept

1 checking, you know, I'd say, Mr. Malloy, you still there?

2 Mr. Malloy, you still there? Yes, I'm here, and I could hear him
3 talking to people in the background.

4 Once I got to -- once we got to Pennsy Drive, a security
5 guard escorted us in. And I've been there a couple of times
6 before for training and what have you, and that so I told the
7 driver where to park. My aide was a fill-in aide, Sergeant Kenton
8 Rambo, and he had never been there before, so I showed him where
9 to park. We got out, the security guard walked us in and got
10 inside the door and took to the left. And then from my
11 recollection, you go in and go right, and you go left maybe two,
12 three turns, and you're in OCC.

13 Told the security guard, I don't think this is where
14 we're going, and I had the cell phone on my head the whole time.
15 Long story short, 2, 3 minutes later, we ended up in the data
16 center.

17 Q. So the security guard --

18 A. Took --

19 Q. -- took you the incorrect direction --

20 A. Took us to another room.

21 Q. -- as what your observation was?

22 A. Yes, took me to another room.

23 Q. And it was 2 or 3 minutes until what happened?

24 A. Till I told him we were in the wrong place, and the
25 gentleman in the data center said, what are you looking for? I

1 said, OCC, and he said, yeah, it's around the corner, down the
2 hall, I'll take you.

3 Q. Okay. So there was nobody from OCC waiting for your
4 arrival.

5 A. No.

6 Q. It was a security guy that you first encountered.

7 A. Yeah. Just a -- the security guard at the gate out on
8 Pennsy Drive.

9 Q. At the little reception gate --

10 A. The little --

11 Q. -- to Pennsy Drive.

12 A. -- the little kiosk, yes.

13 Q. I see. Okay.

14 A. So the data center gentleman took us out the back hall,
15 was taking us to OCC, and I told Mr. Malloy that I'm in the data
16 center, I'm -- I was taken to the data center, I'm trying to get
17 to you now. Then he stepped out into the hallway and waved, here
18 we are. And I said, okay, nice to meet you.

19 Q. So you finally met up.

20 A. Right. Said, Chief Leonard. I'm here to Metro liaison
21 for the incident. And he said -- You Mr. Malloy? And he said,
22 no, I'm not Mr. Malloy. I -- Mr. Malloy gave me the phone. I'm
23 somebody else. So -- okay.

24 Then he took us in. Introduced myself to the two
25 gentlemen at my station the -- there is a desk in the rear of the

1 OCC that's assigned to us, and I've been there before. It has a
2 mobile radio and a table. And two gentlemen from their emergency
3 operations staff. Introduced myself to them. Couple of people
4 that were around, hi, I'm Chief Leonard and tried to make contact
5 with our incident commander on the radio. I was having trouble.
6 It was honking out, not receiving well, I mean, not transmitting
7 well, I thought. Receiving sporadically. And I tried to find a
8 place in the room that I could actually get good reception, which
9 was very difficult. Went to the emergency management gentleman
10 and asked him if, you know, our mobile radio there was able to
11 pick up because I'm having trouble. They said, you know, all they
12 could receive was channel 2.

13 Q. Uh-huh.

14 A. We spoke to them about our frequencies. Sergeant Rambo
15 gave them our frequency to try to see if we could tune them in
16 maybe, and we weren't able to do it, and then I contacted the
17 incident commander through my BlackBerry via Chief Moore, who was
18 in the buggy. I knew Chief Moore, Deputy Operations Chief Moore
19 would be in the buggy, so I would get me a direct contact with
20 him. Told him I was in OCC, they had no new information, just a
21 report of smoke on the tracks and on the mezzanine level.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. Also I believe it was maybe 5 or 10 minutes inside OCC
24 when they said they thought they had a train in the tunnel.

25 Q. Who said that to you?

1 A. I have no idea.

2 Q. Was it somebody from the OCC --

3 A. Someone from OCC, yes. There were approximately 15, 20
4 people around OCC, and I was getting questions from a lot of
5 people and never did know a lot of times who I was talking to.

6 Q. And you're -- all this time you were at the fire
7 department liaison desk --

8 A. Right.

9 Q. -- in the back of the room --

10 A. Right.

11 Q. -- and your observation --

12 A. And there were people walking all around in front of me
13 and I could see screens and tracks --

14 Q. Was the, was the environment there somewhat confusing at
15 the time?

16 A. Yes, to say the least.

17 Q. That was your distinct impression?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And at about 5 minutes into that, you were told
20 by somebody at OCC --

21 A. That they believe they have a train in the tunnel with
22 people on it. And I said, okay, and I tried to transmit that. I
23 don't know if I got out or not.

24 Q. Transmit it to -- via your --

25 A. Through my radio.

1 Q. -- service radio.

2 A. Right.

3 Q. And you couldn't get through?

4 A. I'm trying to remember, but I believe someone
5 acknowledged my transmission, but, you know, my reception of what
6 they were saying wasn't clear if they knew what I was telling
7 them, so --

8 Q. You weren't sure you got through.

9 A. I wasn't sure if I got through.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. So I called on my cell phone again --

12 Q. BlackBerry?

13 A. -- to Chief -- BlackBerry, assigned BlackBerry for D.C.
14 Spoke to Chief Moore and said they still have no further
15 information other than smoke. They were unable to determine the
16 source. Sporadic reports of maybe it's an ancillary room that's
17 on fire. They had their emergency response team in the station
18 now trying to find the source. And they had reports of people
19 self-evacuating from a train in the station and possibly out of
20 the tunnels, the vent shafts, I believe I heard. But I'm not sure
21 if I heard that from them or I just heard that from our radio.

22 Approximately 15, 20 minutes into the incident, Chief
23 Moore called me on the cell phone and said, we need to place -- it
24 -- you know, it may have been later than that, but, we need to
25 place fan F, identified as FL-1, in supply mode rather than

1 exhaust mode. I said something to the EEO -- EEO -- to the
2 emergency management guy who controls the fans. Gentleman turned
3 around in front of me and identified himself as having control of
4 the fans. Later on he told me his name was Mr. Bay. I said,
5 incident commander's requesting that fan FL-1 be placed in supply
6 rather than exhaust. And Mr. Bay said, why do you want that?

7 And --

8 Q. He asked why?

9 A. He asked why. I said --

10 Q. And who was this that asked you?

11 A. Mr. Bay.

12 Q. Bay?

13 A. Bay, B-a-y.

14 Q. B-a-y.

15 A. I believe that was his name. I informed him that I was
16 in contact with the incident commander, incident commander was
17 requesting that the fan be placed in supply, not exhaust. He then
18 told me that that didn't make sense because if you have a fire
19 situation and the fan is in supply, it's going to bring air past
20 the people working and possibly push heat and smoke on the people
21 you're trying to rescue. I then reassured him that there was --
22 the request came from boots on the ground in the tunnel and the
23 incident commander's requesting that. He still wasn't satisfied,
24 asked me to confirm the order. I picked up my BlackBerry again,
25 called the incident commander, who I'll call Chief Moore, said

1 that Metro is requesting that we confirm the order that FL-1 be
2 placed in supply, not exhaust. Chief Moore said the direct -- the
3 order -- the request came directly from Chief Baker, who was in
4 the tunnel and to tell them that we wanted it supplied. So I did
5 that. I said, the order's confirmed. They want it in supply.
6 And he said, okay, and finally -- I thought I saw him do
7 something.

8 Q. So he agreed verbally at that point, and then you
9 thought you saw him go to the control panel --

10 A. Right.

11 Q. -- and do something to --

12 A. -- put it in supply.

13 Q. -- what could have been activating a fan in the correct
14 supply mode.

15 A. Right.

16 Q. Okay. And that was about 20 minutes into the event,
17 you're thinking?

18 A. Maybe 25, maybe even 30. I don't know.

19 Q. Okay. We can look that up later on, but just trying to
20 get a --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- rough timing on it.

23 A. Yeah. I had been there for some time. Kind of hard to
24 keep track of how fast everything's moving, going, you know, seems
25 like couple minutes was really was probably more like couple

1 hours.

2 The only other request I think I gave them or requested
3 of them was if they could identify the actual chain marker of the
4 train, and I don't believe I got that. I think they identified
5 the train as probably 302 or -- maybe it was 302. And that was
6 later in the incident. And then I decided that this wasn't
7 working for me. I couldn't hear anything on my radio. Channel 2
8 was just, you know, returns from the incident commander to
9 communications, kind of update, so it's not, you know, real time,
10 everybody on scene asking for what they're asking, so I told my
11 aide that I was going to go back out to the buggy where I could
12 hear channel -- the -- operate the tactical channel, dispatch
13 channel for anything else coming out in the area, everything, and
14 then --

15 Q. So the radio at the fire department desk in OCC was --

16 A. On --

17 Q. -- in essence --

18 A. -- you know, channel 2, basically that's it for --

19 Q. And it was essentially malfunctioning. It was useless
20 at that point.

21 A. It -- I wouldn't say malfunctioning. It was just -- it
22 was channel 2, and channel 2 is just our returns to communications
23 or, you know, not the --

24 Q. But that's not --

25 A. -- not the tactical --

1 Q. -- that's not a --

2 A. -- not the tactical stuff.

3 Q. -- that's a -- not a direct tactical channel, so --

4 A. Right. Not a direct tactical.

5 Q. -- it was not of direct use at that point.

6 A. Right.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So told my aide to just call me on the cell phone if
9 they have any request and if I have anything to tell them, you
10 relay it through your cell phone. He said, fine. I went out to
11 the buggy, and that's when I felt like I was back in the game. I
12 could hear everything going on, I could talk to communications, I
13 could talk to the incident commander and, you know, more of a
14 liaison to them with the fact that I could --

15 Q. But you're separated by several hundred feet or whatever
16 from the actual OCC --

17 A. Yeah, it --

18 Q. -- itself, so you didn't have that direct ability
19 without actually getting out of your car and going in --

20 A. Right. Going in.

21 Q. -- inside.

22 A. I mean, I was confident that my aide would tell me
23 whatever I needed to know from inside. Other than their screens
24 with the tracks on it, maybe a couple of video cameras or video
25 screens in the corner, other than that I'm getting, you know,

1 pretty much nothing from them then.

2 Q. I see. You mentioned that you had asked the OCC staff
3 to identify for you the location of a train in the tunnel?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Did they ever give you a -- an answer on that?

6 A. I just got in the tunnel, and I don't think I ever got a
7 chain marker or anything.

8 Q. And data normally would be an expectation -- it -- it's
9 a reasonable request --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- to ask them in an emergency event such as this?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Very good. Okay. So you're out at your car at this
14 point back in radio communication.

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. You have your aide inside at the OCC.

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. Did the two of you talk?

19 A. We talked maybe four or five times, but nothing
20 significant other than had a couple revenue questions about
21 opening the station back up, how long do we think we're going to
22 be there, that sort of thing from different people inside.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. And, you know, I told him for all practical purposes you
25 can --

1 Q. And your --

2 A. -- just (indiscernible) --

3 Q. -- your aide had his radio so the two of you --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- were just talking on your local channel.

6 A. No, no, no, we were talking cell phone.

7 Q. Cell phone.

8 A. Cell phone to cell phone.

9 Q. Cell phone to cell phone.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. So you had to rely on a combination of cell phone to

12 cell phone --

13 A. To the radio.

14 Q. -- your car radio to command and --

15 A. Right.

16 Q. -- and such. Okay.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. Make sure I was following that correctly.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Okay, Chief --

21 A. And the, like I said, the questions I was getting from

22 Metro were more revenue related. Were more, can we open the

23 station, can you -- can't you work on the track you're on while we

24 have tracks working, that sort of thing, and I kept -- and I got

25 it from five, six different people.

1 Q. So --

2 A. So I had to keep saying, no --

3 Q. -- they were focusing on trying to get the station --

4 A. Moving trains to --

5 Q. -- back in business --

6 A. Right.

7 Q. -- rather than addressing the issue at hand --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- which was this train in the tunnel.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. Anything else to add, Chief?

12 A. No, that's about it.

13 Q. That's about it? How long did you remain at the OCC?

14 Till roughly when?

15 A. Hmm. Wow, I didn't get back to the station till

16 probably 7:30, I don't think.

17 Q. 7:30 or so?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. In terms of activities regarding L'Enfant Plaza, when

20 did they kind of really wind down at some point before you

21 departed the OCC?

22 A. Hmm. Probably maybe 6:45 or something, 7:00.

23 Q. About 6:45 or so? It really --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- mellowed out and --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- and wound down, and it was not really any frenzy of
3 activity at that point?

4 A. Right. The smoke had started dissipating. They still
5 hadn't found the location of the incident.

6 Q. Okay. I'll turn --

7 A. I'll -- I'm not --

8 Q. Go ahead, Chief.

9 A. -- I'm not sure if the -- I heard from the incident
10 commander -- I mean, Acting Chief Chapman that it was an -- a --
11 an explosion on the third rail and --

12 Q. That's what you heard on the radio on your end?

13 A. That's what I heard when I got back to the station.

14 Q. Oh, when you got back to your station.

15 A. Yeah, that water had leaked in, and then the third rail
16 was -- I think it had actually arced and exploded and possibly
17 burned the top cover of the third rail, and that was the cause of
18 the --

19 Q. The source of the smoke?

20 A. -- the source of the smoke, yeah.

21 Q. I see.

22 A. So --

23 Q. Okay. But you didn't learn that until you actually went
24 back to the station --

25 A. Till I got back to the station.

1 Q. Okay. All right.

2 MR. DOWNS: I'm going to turn the next line of
3 questioning over to my associate here.

4 MR. ROURKE: Yeah.

5 BY MR. ROURKE:

6 Q. Hey, Chief, Denton Rourke for Metro.

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. I just want to clarify a couple points in your
9 statement, and then I'll ask you some questions.

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. You said you got the call, you were still in the buggy
12 and then you called OCC immediately.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. On [REDACTED].

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. And they told you the -- they had a report of smoke.
17 Well, you told them what you thought, and then they pretty much
18 said the same thing back to you. And you asked them about the
19 conference line. What were you asking them for at that point?

20 A. I asked them to establish the conference line. I
21 basically -- the majority of time I run a incident on the Metro,
22 and I am the Metro liaison officer, whoever answers that line, I
23 have to explain to them what we're doing and why I'm doing it. I
24 identify myself, I'm battalion fire chief of D.C. Fire. We have a
25 incident -- we have units responding to L'Enfant Plaza for a

1 report of smoke on the platform, and I am calling to establish the
2 conference line.

3 Q. Is --

4 A. I usually have to --

5 Q. Uh-huh. But --

6 A. -- go through that two, three times. But --

7 Q. And you're asking for the command conference line.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. So you want to hang up from 1652 and dial into the other
10 number.

11 A. No. I wanted the gentleman that -- whoever I'm talking
12 to to be able to set that conference line up.

13 Q. Okay.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Without question.

15 MR. LEONARD: Right.

16 BY MR. ROURKE:

17 Q. What -- after they set it up, then how do you get into
18 it?

19 A. I -- if I need to dial back in, then he would tell me
20 that. If not, I was under the impression that through that 1652
21 number, they were able to maybe connect my call and set up the
22 conference line. But I've never had anyone that answered that
23 line, you know, right off the bat know what I'm talking about.

24 MR. DOWNS: And that's a dedicated phone line for fire
25 department contact?

1 MR. LEONARD: That's our contact in our BlackBerrys for
2 Metro OCC.

3 MR. DOWNS: Thank you.

4 BY MR. ROURKE:

5 Q. Okay. So and then you said they told you that -- they
6 told you, no, they didn't have any additional information.

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. And you went to -- you had the conference line
9 conversation, you were on hold -- you thought you were on hold for
10 a minute.

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. Then you called back and hung up. Eventually you got --
13 you said the same thing, got the same information.

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. So how many -- we were, like, 5 minutes into it by now
16 after you got dispatched?

17 A. Easily. Easily. Maybe longer because I was on hold for
18 a while, and I would say, Mr. Malloy, you still there, or I'm
19 trying to remember the gentleman's --

20 Q. Well, you got Malloy when you called back on that other
21 number.

22 A. Yeah --

23 Q. On [REDACTED]. All right. So you got Malloy. So we're at
24 least 5 minutes, maybe longer, into it, and they still haven't
25 provided you with any information beyond smoke in the station.

1 A. No.

2 Q. You got to OCC, you took the tour.

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. You found your way in there eventually and then what --
5 they didn't give you anything else, additional information?

6 A. No. The emergency operation gentleman at the table gave
7 me a couple of chain markers where they had asked the -- I guess
8 their emergency response team to check the third rail and
9 confirmed that they thought third rail power went down, and he
10 gave me maybe three or four chain markers, like, two on this side,
11 I believe and two on that side --

12 Q. Uh-huh.

13 A. -- that they had confirmed in their opinion the third
14 rail was down, and I thanked them and, you know, we consider third
15 rail up the whole time anyway.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. That's the safest way to operate. So whereas it was
18 helpful, it really meant nothing to me. I concentrated on trying
19 to make some sort of communication between me and the incident
20 commander and that was my main idea, to be able to give them
21 information soon as I got it.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. And --

24 Q. All right. So you were in there, you think, 5 to 10
25 minutes when the first mention was made of the train in the

1 tunnel?

2 A. No. I'm thinking more like maybe 10 to 15, maybe even
3 20 minutes. And, as I said, I was on the phone the entire way out
4 there --

5 Q. Uh-huh.

6 A. -- so travel time from Rhode Island Avenue all the way
7 out there was 15, 20 minutes.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. So it was well into the incident.

10 Q. Yeah. The two -- the -- you said there was two people
11 at the desk in the back?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Did either one of them say anything about it?

14 A. (No audible response).

15 Q. All right. So when you finally got that, then what'd
16 you do with that information?

17 A. Gave it to the incident commander. Now, I believe I
18 tried to transmit it first.

19 Q. Uh-huh.

20 A. And, you know, I'm walking around OCC just trying to
21 find a spot that would work. After the incident, I talked to
22 Chief Moore, and he said he thought he did hear me a couple of
23 times with a good transmission, but I was not able to confirm that
24 in my mind that I was getting out.

25 Q. Right. You definitely didn't have good coms on the

1 portable.

2 A. Yeah. I --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. I was not confident that the radio transmission I was
5 making was getting out --

6 Q. So did you then --

7 A. -- so that's when I called him on the cell phone.

8 Q. You did call him and pass that information along.

9 A. Right.

10 Q. Okay. When you had the conversation with them when they
11 wanted to get track -- the --

12 A. Train.

13 Q. -- other track back, how long was that into the
14 incident?

15 A. Oh. I think the first request I had was to -- if it was
16 possible to open the station for passengers since we were working
17 on one level. The way the request came to me was since you guys
18 are working on one level, can we have the station open so we can
19 have people going on the other tracks.

20 Q. Uh-huh.

21 A. And I told them no.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And then maybe 2, 3 minutes later, someone else asked
24 me, how long do we think we're going to have the whole station
25 closed.

1 MR. DOWNS: Same question essentially.

2 MR. LEONARD: Same question, yes. And I said, it's
3 going to be a while. We're using your entrance to get equipment
4 in, equipment out, people in, people out, and we have people on
5 the tracks. It's not an option. And then a -- maybe 5, 10
6 minutes later, I had someone else ask me how long do we think
7 we're going to have the station closed.

8 MR. DOWNS: A third repeat question.

9 MR. LEONARD: Third. Third. Yeah. But a different
10 person.

11 BY MR. ROURKE:

12 Q. Right. But this is how much, I mean, is it winding down
13 by that point, or is it still an active --

14 A. No, it's still very active and we're --

15 Q. Uh-huh.

16 A. -- and as I said that -- all of that probably happened
17 before I even got the request to put that fan into supply.

18 Q. Okay. And I'm going to ask you just some general
19 questions about some Metro training and then a few more specific
20 about L'Enfant, so --

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. -- just bear with me if you would. Could you describe
23 for me the DCFD Metro training program?

24 A. We have a familiarization with Metro on general
25 familiarization with the operations of the trains that the rookies

1 go through and the -- as I said, as command staff I've been
2 trained at OCC and of -- just the general familiarization of our
3 setup out there, if you will.

4 Q. Uh-huh.

5 A. We also get training on how to operate in Metro vis-à-
6 vis the third rail, testing the third rail, emergency trip station
7 and operation, how to notify trains coming to the station whether
8 we want to operate on the track level or whatever that, you know,
9 please stop the train by waving across or up and down to go.
10 We're trained on the operation of WSADs and warning devices to
11 notify us whether or not there's third rail power. I've had many
12 classes on actual train operations, how to forcibly entry -- use
13 forcible entry techniques in getting in the doors, out of the
14 doors, in the windows, the zip strip for getting the windows out,
15 general kiosk and platform identification in terms of electrical
16 outlets, where to find them, maps, map books on how to read the
17 train markers and the train locations, station tunnel layouts,
18 surface stations and the underground stations. We get training on
19 the standpipe systems, of course, how to locate standpipe systems,
20 our general SOGs on responses to the station, where you should be
21 in terms of your position duty on the assignment, the general
22 incident command setup of an incident and accountability, vent
23 shafts, fan shafts. We get training on how to identify the fan
24 shafts, vent shafts, and how to place them in different modes of
25 operation if we need to manually. How to enter vent shafts, exit

1 vent shafts --

2 Q. Uh-huh.

3 A. -- with the -- and we do a lot of continual training on
4 actually how to open a vent shaft or fan shaft to get -- to access
5 the ladders and the ladder systems, also the locks boxes. We
6 check those frequently, make sure the locks boxes contain keys
7 that we need. Just a lot of training.

8 Q. Uh-huh.

9 MS. BURTCH: Yeah.

10 BY MR. ROURKE:

11 Q. Now, is that a -- all that stuff grouped together, is
12 that stuff you do with Metro and --

13 A. Yeah, well --

14 Q. -- you do individually?

15 A. -- we've had a lot of joint training with Metro in my
16 years on.

17 Q. Uh-huh.

18 A. Frequently, especially after the incident where we had
19 the train crash, we've had a lot of daily drills where as a
20 battalion chief I might, you know, tell my units to, you know, you
21 guys go out and check Fort Totten today. Make sure, you know, you
22 can -- your keys are working, you can access the E-tech carts and
23 stuff like that.

24 Q. Okay. Thank you. Have you ever participated in a full-
25 scale Metro exercise?

1 A. Full-scale Metro what?

2 Q. Exercise down on --

3 A. Or --

4 MR. GORDON: Training drill.

5 BY MR. ROURKE:

6 Q. Training drill.

7 A. Training drill?

8 Q. A drill, yeah.

9 A. Hmm. Yeah. I had the exercise out at Pennsy where they
10 had a full-size train setup with the third rail actual -- but it's
11 not hot -- but an actual third rail and train on it --

12 Q. Uh-huh. Okay.

13 A. -- and how to set WSAD, and then we had drills that same
14 day, I believe, on the new trains that they were putting in
15 service and the doors and the way they open now and the way the
16 window strips come out, that sort of thing.

17 MR. DOWNS: But you've not had any other training aside
18 from the training facility out in Pennsy Drive?

19 MR. LEONARD: I believe we had a drill at the Brentwood
20 Station a few times too. We had a -- the Brentwood Station, the
21 facility inside, I believe they had an electrocution there one
22 time, and right after that we had a drill on the overhead power
23 and how they bring the trains in and out and how to access
24 underneath the trains. I've had -- also had, now that I'm
25 thinking about it, we've had a few drills on the brake systems and

1 the storage capacitors under the trains and how to dump those. I
2 believe that might have been the same drill. I'm not sure, but --

3 MR. ROURKE: Uh-huh.

4 MR. DOWNS: Do you remember roughly what year that might
5 have been?

6 MR. LEONARD: I would say the last formal big drill
7 maybe was -- hmm. Was I a chief then? No. I think I was a
8 captain, so that would be '08, maybe.

9 MR. DOWNS: 2008?

10 MR. LEONARD: Yeah.

11 MR. DOWNS: Roughly?

12 MR. LEONARD: Yeah.

13 MR. DOWNS: Go ahead.

14 BY MR. ROURKE:

15 Q. What -- how long have you been a battalion chief?

16 A. Since 2012.

17 Q. 2012? And have you received any Metro-specific incident
18 management training?

19 A. Metro-specific management training. Yes, I -- that
20 would be the Pennsy Drive familiarization drill --

21 Q. Uh-huh.

22 A. -- that we had.

23 Q. Okay. Last year did you attend -- there was a joint
24 supervisor training program at Carmen Turner. It would have been
25 with police, fire, rail, and bus people all training together on

1 incident management?

2 A. Where was that?

3 Q. At Carmen Turner, Pennsy Drive.

4 A. I believe I was in that.

5 Q. And do you guys have a specific worksheet for Metro
6 incidents?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Did the -- when you were at OCC, you talked to somebody
9 on the phone. On the phone -- we'll call him phone guy. And then
10 you talked to Malloy.

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. And then when you got in there, when you finally made
13 your way in, were you talking with Malloy at that point?

14 A. No. I believe he pointed to the guy that was Malloy,
15 but when he pointed there was four or five --

16 Q. Right. Uh-huh.

17 A. -- guys there, so I never was sure who Malloy was.

18 Q. So at that point you dealt with Bay after that?

19 A. Yeah. Probably mostly with Bay and then the two
20 emergency management guys at our desk.

21 Q. Uh-huh. Okay. Thanks. Did they have emergency
22 response map out there for you?

23 A. I'm sorry?

24 Q. An emergency response map?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Well, we know we talked about the radios.

2 A. And then there was a PG County firefighter, Chief
3 Thomas, I believe, came in later in the incident, and he and I
4 just chitchatted a little bit about the responses and what they
5 normally do, and he said they had people -- that they had mutual
6 aid coming into the district.

7 Q. All right.

8 MR. ROURKE: I think that's all for right now. Thank
9 you.

10 MR. DOWNS: Next questions?

11 MS. BURTCHE: I don't -- this is -- I don't have any for
12 you.

13 MR. LEONARD: Okay.

14 MS. BURTCHE: Thank you.

15 MR. DOWNS: No questions?

16 MR. HAWKINS: Yeah, I got some questions here. Derron
17 Hawkins, D.C. Fire.

18 BY MR. HAWKINS:

19 Q. I have a couple of questions. Chief Leonard, you
20 mentioned that -- is it a normal practice when we get a Metro
21 incident to respond over there, or you try to establish that
22 conference line and try to get situation awareness before heading
23 all the way out to Landover? What is --

24 A. My typical response for Metro incidents as the Metro
25 liaison officer is to make contact and set up the conference line

1 and have a means of communicating directly with them and directly
2 with our incident command. If I've been on 10 Metro incidents as
3 the Metro liaison officer, this is the first one I had to go out
4 to Pennsy Drive.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. Usually I have to identify myself two or three times,
7 tell them what's going on, and usually I get some useful
8 information that I can transmit to the incident commander. This
9 probably was the first time I don't think I got useful information
10 in all of the responses I've had out there.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Usually there was -- they can give me an idea of what --
13 what's going on. They -- if we think it's a brake issue, you
14 know, we think it's trash on the tracks, we think it's an
15 electrical short in the elevator, usually. This time I got smoke
16 on the platform, we don't know where it's coming from.

17 Q. Okay. So final question to that is, in terms of
18 responding over there, what is -- what was your time line from
19 Battalion 1 quarters to Pennsy Drive, if you had to go all the way
20 out there in terms of minutes.

21 A. The call came out about 3:30. Rush hour, typically
22 Rhode Island Avenue starts getting really heavy about -- between
23 3:30 and 4:00, so we encountered heavy traffic all the way out.
24 Lights and sirens usually we can get around most of it, but travel
25 time, lights and sirens, 25, 30 minutes to Pennsy Drive.

1 Q. Okay. Responding. Okay. Okay. And at Pennsy Drive,
2 was you able to look at any video footage of the tunnel and see
3 units inside the tunnel? Was any video available to you?

4 A. No. I didn't see any.

5 Q. Hmm.

6 A. I -- their screens that are in front of me were their
7 screens that show their track diagrams, just black screens with
8 lines in red and green and -- which is really not helpful for me
9 at all. I could see a, I thought, to the -- from my position to
10 the 2 o'clock position a couple of screens that looked like they
11 had video feeds on it, but for all practical purposes, I'm just
12 standing in there blind.

13 Q. Okay. Okay. So you couldn't see any, like, patients
14 coming out of the --

15 A. Uh-uh.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. When I got back to the station and saw the video on
18 television, it was shocking.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. To say the least.

21 Q. Okay. Hmm. So in terms of training, and I want to try
22 to clear this up. This -- we -- there's training, there's
23 inspection, and there's things we do, and that's the action
24 report.

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. In terms of training, well, how do you think in terms of
2 your knowledge or your skill base, in terms of training on Metro
3 as it relates to managing Metro incidents?

4 A. The way that it -- a suggestion of improvement or what I
5 think its current state is?

6 Q. Yeah. What do you think overall, yeah.

7 A. Overall, I think that some more training should be done
8 between Metro and ourselves. I don't think that, just from my
9 experience with the fan question, I don't think that they have an
10 idea -- or the people that I was talking to in that room have an
11 idea about how the incident command system works and the benefits
12 of having an incident command system. My general take on the --
13 my whole experience during this incident was that we would be more
14 productive if everybody understood how the incident command system
15 works, and maybe they can identify one person there that is their
16 incident commander and then I could talk to him and he could talk
17 to me and then I could talk to the incident commander on the
18 ground.

19 Because the entire time I was there, I felt like I was
20 being inundated with questions from everywhere, but I had no idea
21 who I was talking to the entire time. I would introduce myself,
22 say, well, I'm Chief Leonard, and you are? And I'd get a name
23 really quick, but it didn't help me -- I don't think it helped
24 that there was so much confusion going on in that room, and I
25 didn't know who was exactly in charge and who was exactly running

1 the incident in terms of Metro. I think that we would be a better
2 team if we all took -- maybe they could identify two or three guys
3 that would take incident command --

4 MR. GORDON: Yes.

5 MR. LEONARD: -- incident command class with us and
6 maybe do some mock drills on similar incidents so we could get a
7 better understanding of how we can attack it and remedy the
8 situation.

9 BY MR. HAWKINS:

10 Q. Okay. So regarding inspections, has there been an
11 increase in Metro Station inspection in your battalion since --

12 A. Yeah, I --

13 Q. -- the recent --

14 A. Yes, I -- I'd say that has been. As I said before,
15 there are many tours of duty where I will say, you know, what are
16 you guys going to do today, and some of my good officers, and I'm
17 fortunate to have a bunch of good officers underneath me, will
18 say, well, we're going to go up to -- we have a rookie, and we're
19 going to go up to Rhode Island Avenue and show him what the E-tech
20 cart looks like and how to access the elevator control room or
21 something like that.

22 So it's an ongoing thing. It's not a formal, you know,
23 we want you to go out every Thursday and check Metro, but it's not
24 as if we put it out of sight and out of mind. We do this because
25 we have new rookies coming in every day. We do this and we do

1 this to maintain the training that we have, because if you don't
2 do it, you know, it gets rusty and you -- when you need an
3 incident -- when you need to be able to work an incident, you, you
4 know, you don't know what to do. So I could -- I can safely say
5 that my guys, I have Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station in my first
6 due. I have Fort Totten in my first due, I have Brookland in my
7 first due. We haven't been drilling more since the incident but
8 we haven't drilling less, you know. We've -- we do it ongoing.

9 Q. Uh-huh.

10 A. And I know for a fact that, you know, before this
11 incident, I had guys at Brookland, because that station had a
12 rookie, and I had guys at Rhode Island Avenue because that station
13 has a rookie. And I had guys at Fort Totten because they have a
14 rookie. So.

15 Q. Okay. And lastly, and we talked about training, we
16 talked about inspections. Regarding incident other than this one
17 here --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- where you -- there was a after-accident report, maybe
20 the incident you had at Brooklyn and Rhode Island Avenue and --

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. -- was there something that stood out about after-action
23 report? Was it a communication problem or something that you can
24 expand on, or what incidents you may have -- previous Metro
25 incidents you ran and something really stood out about an after-

1 action report.

2 A. Just the general -- well, no, I can't even say that.
3 No, I don't have anything that stands out in my mind with a after-
4 action report. In terms of Metro responses?

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. Just the usual itch on the back of my neck about not
7 being able to, you know, know who I'm talking to at Metro.

8 Q. Uh-huh. Okay.

9 MR. HAWKINS: Okay. I have no further questions.

10 MR. BLACKISTONE: Thank you. Steve Blackistone with
11 NTSB.

12 MR. LEONARD: Yes, sir.

13 BY MR. BLACKISTONE:

14 Q. I was intrigued by one of the things you said a moment
15 ago about Metro employees having better knowledge of the fire
16 department, and I suppose that's true not just in D.C. but all
17 the --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- surrounding jurisdictions. It's your impression that
20 they don't really know or understand fire department operations?

21 A. Yeah. I felt that way.

22 Q. And --

23 A. Especially when we requested that fan to be put in
24 that --

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. -- supply position, the fact that I had to have a 3-, 4-
2 minute conversation with the gentleman about orders, you know,
3 minutes mean lives in our business. If my officer tells me to do
4 something then, you know, I do it. I don't question it.

5 Q. Uh-huh.

6 A. And I was very confident when I got that request that it
7 was something that needed to be done, and having to explain it to
8 that gentleman really, really seemed like a waste of time.

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. Well, I know it was a waste of time, but it just really
11 seemed -- it made me really uncomfortable and made me not
12 understand what was going on around me in terms of being in the
13 OCC, you know?

14 Q. Yeah. So at any rate, that's an intriguing thought that
15 maybe we should follow up on.

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. A particular question I wanted to ask you about was
18 having to do with dispatch policies. I assume first battalion
19 chief is geographically the one that's closest to --

20 A. Right.

21 Q. -- Pennsy Drive.

22 A. Right.

23 Q. So if there is a Metro incident that's not in the first
24 battalion, not at one of the stations you mentioned --

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. -- is the first battalion chief automatically dispatched
2 there regardless of where in the city it happens?

3 A. It usually -- we have three chiefs.

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. The one chief that's geographically closest.

6 Q. Closest.

7 A. The second due chief, which would usually be the chief
8 that you're going to send out to Pennsy, and then the third your
9 chief would be the special operations chief. Now, I think our
10 books allow for the operations -- unified operations chief to go
11 out there if I'm not available or if another chief is not
12 available.

13 Q. Hmm.

14 A. But typically on a Metro incident, you're going to have
15 one battalion chief that's going to respond to Pennsy or to make
16 that initial call to set up the conference line.

17 Q. Right. What I'm thinking is if you have a Metro
18 incident on the other side of the city, say on the western half of
19 the red line --

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. -- one of the stations there, the first due battalion
22 chief -- well, the second due battalion chief is going to be a
23 whole lot further --

24 A. Right.

25 Q. -- from Pennsy than you are going to be.

1 A. Right.

2 Q. So does he then get dispatched to drive right past you
3 and go out there?

4 A. If I'm not available --

5 Q. No, I'm saying if you are available.

6 A. Oh. No, I think if I'm available, they'll put me on it.

7 Q. Regardless of --

8 A. Regardless, yes.

9 Q. Regardless of geographically located.

10 A. Regardless of geographic because I'm closer to get out
11 there.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Exactly. That's what I was trying to clear up, so --

15 A. Right.

16 Q. Yeah. All this --

17 A. You know, and --

18 Q. -- assumes that you're available and --

19 A. And then if I'm not available, it'd be probably --

20 Q. -- and you're not the first --

21 A. -- be the closest chief to me --

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. -- that could get out there, maybe second chief or the
24 third chief --

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Yeah. So. Okay. That was the one thing I wanted to
3 clear up. Thank you very much.

4 MR. GORDON: Joe Gordon, NTSB.

5 BY MR. GORDON:

6 Q. I know there's been quite some time since the
7 incident --

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. -- and that -- and the times are probably going to be
10 really difficult.

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. You say 3:30 the call went in, and then there was a
13 lapse in time trying to get the conference call set up, making
14 your way to the OCC.

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. These times, you know, I understand they're not going to
17 be exact, but to the best of your knowledge, because we're trying
18 to figure out from the response to the incident, the request for
19 the fan. That's very important. How early on from the 3:30 call
20 would you say that that request was made from the field to put
21 that fan, and I want to be sure that they were requesting from
22 exhaust to supply at FL-1.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. And then as close as you can on time.

25 A. Okay, 30 when we leave. Took us 20 minutes to get out

1 there, maybe 4:00, maybe 4:30.

2 Q. Maybe -- okay.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. So still early on when the evacuation's going on and --

5 A. Right.

6 Q. -- and everything like that.

7 A. Right.

8 Q. Okay. And when -- there again on that same time, about
9 what time do you think that you got notified that there was a
10 train stopped in the tunnel?

11 A. At 4:00 -- maybe 4:15, 4:20 maybe.

12 Q. Okay. Just right there around the same time, so --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- that really seems like that's when a little bit of
15 information started flowing --

16 A. Right.

17 Q. -- from the field back to OCC.

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. Okay. After you were told of the train stopped in the
20 tunnel, were you -- did anyone ever relay any plan to possibly
21 make a reverse move of that train back to the station platform in
22 order to offload?

23 A. As far as Metro personnel?

24 Q. Right. Metro personnel --

25 A. Giving me a plan?

1 Q. -- to you.

2 A. Metro personnel never gave me a plan.

3 Q. Okay. You never heard any plan like that?

4 A. Uh-uh.

5 Q. So when you tell -- when you relay to your guys in the
6 field, we've got a train stopped in the tunnel --

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. -- their first order was most likely to kill power to
9 that location and try to get to that train based on --

10 A. I was told while I was on the phone, I guess I should
11 have told you this, that someone from D.C. Fire and EMS had
12 activated the ETF switch near the station.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And that struck me as odd because when they told me that
15 I was still on the phone, that initial call, and I don't
16 believe -- I believe Engine 18 may have been the first due unit as
17 recon, and I don't believe he had made entry into the station. So
18 I think I told the guy on the line, I'm -- no, we didn't, I don't
19 think we activated any trip stations yet because we're still
20 making entry to the station.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. As far as the timeline in terms of when we were notified
23 and, yeah, very, very late in the incident, maybe, like I said, 20
24 minutes after being there.

25 Q. Okay. Okay.

1 MR. GORDON: I have nothing further right now.

2 MR. DOWNS: Thank you. Downs, NTSB.

3 BY MR. DOWNS:

4 Q. Chief, your personal job history; how long you -- have
5 you been with the fire department?

6 A. Twenty-nine years.

7 Q. Twenty-nine years. Wow. And you -- can you go through
8 the lineage of your experience with the fire department? You
9 signed on as a firefighter, or what was the history there?

10 A. Well, I was assigned as a firefighter to Engine 3 on
11 Capitol Hill, New Jersey Avenue, 439 New Jersey. As a rookie I
12 stayed the entire time at Engine 3. I would get detailed out to
13 other stations, but for the most part Engine 3.

14 They closed Engine 3, and I was assigned to rescue squad
15 4 on Connecticut Avenue at Engine 31's quarters. Shortly after
16 being assigned there, I tested and received the job of squad
17 driver for rescue squad 4. Drove rescue squad 4 for about a year
18 and a half until they closed it and sent all of the technicians to
19 truck 12, as a rescue technician on truck 12. There I made
20 sergeant and was assigned to the third battalion --

21 Q. What year was that roughly?

22 A. '96 --

23 Q. '96?

24 A. -- 97.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. '96 list, so I got promoted in '97, I believe. Was
2 assigned to southeast, Battalion 3. Worked very frequently on the
3 rescue squad 3 there and various houses in the third. Made
4 lieutenant, was assigned to Engine 5 in Georgetown --

5 Q. When was that?

6 A. I actually made acting lieutenant in -- so I wasn't
7 actual lieutenant. I was a acting lieutenant sent to Georgetown
8 in '98, I believe. From there I made lieutenant finally. Got
9 sent to southwest, Engine 7, and from there I made captain in
10 '06 -- on the '06 list. Was assigned to Engine 26, Paramedic
11 Engine 26, on Rhode Island Avenue right up street from where I'm
12 working now. Worked there 2 years and made chief and was assigned
13 to the first battalion down the hill at Engine 12 in 2008 -- I
14 mean, 2012.

15 Q. 2012. Thank you. Chief, I always like to give my
16 witnesses the opportunity to offer what we call retrospective
17 thoughts. You've already expressed some of your thoughts
18 regarding the -- you got the impression that the OCC staff is not
19 familiar with the incident command process, and from that would be
20 a logical follow-up thought is that they would need training in
21 incident command. Would that be a fair observation?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Anything else that you can think of in terms of
24 things that you might do differently in this event that might help
25 for a future event of this magnitude to share with the

1 professional firefighting community?

2 A. I believe that I would probably take better notes.
3 Because the, you know, the adrenaline is pumping and you're trying
4 to do your job and you're trying to do the best you can, you don't
5 often take time to figure out what information you're hearing and
6 when you're hearing it, so I had my worksheet and I was trying to,
7 you know, make notes on it, but I didn't indicate what time those
8 notes were --

9 Q. In other words, notes were something that wasn't
10 necessarily priority at that moment.

11 A. Right. My initial communication problems took
12 precedence over every -- precedent over everything I was doing. I
13 mean, it was very frustrating not being able to just pick up my
14 radio as I'm used to and calling and telling them what we have.
15 Also, I believe if there's some sort of dual training with us in
16 terms of the incident command system --

17 Q. With WMATA?

18 A. -- with -- yeah, with Metro, that the process would
19 probably move a lot smoother and communication wouldn't get
20 dropped in certain instances. I felt like that -- when I saw the
21 video of the people on the train, I had no idea that that's what
22 was going on. And I think that if I had known, I would have been
23 more in tuned and more directed towards finding out exactly where
24 that train was and how to help those people get off that train.

25 Q. In other words, you would have pressed OCC --

1 A. Right.

2 Q. -- better and harder --

3 A. Harder.

4 Q. -- find that train and --

5 A. Right.

6 Q. -- and where is it because I need to get that
7 information back to my guys in the field.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Exactly.

11 Q. Great. Anything else you can think of, Chief?

12 A. No. I do think that there was a time during the
13 incident that I heard Metro -- someone yell out of the room, what
14 was the incident start time.

15 Q. Incident start time?

16 A. Right. And I thought I heard 15:03. And it struck me
17 as odd because, you know, I was sitting on the apron when that
18 call came out and I made my first call before they even started
19 putting the tactical channel response out. So I looked at my cell
20 phone, and I looked at when I first called and then it was around
21 13:25, I think, 27, something like that.

22 Q. So it was a good chunk of time in there that --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- what happened during that interval. Is that what
25 you're thinking?

1 A. Right. And that struck me as very odd and I kept -- I
2 remember asking my aide, I was, like, did he say that their
3 incident start time was 15:03? And he said the same thing, yeah,
4 I think that's what he said. And this is after, you know, we're
5 on our way home, riding in the car. So I just got the impression
6 that once again they had an incident and they were trying to
7 figure out what was going on before the call got to us. And I've
8 felt that way on many calls with Metro.

9 Q. Really.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So there's a bit of a history here regarding a
12 disconnect between --

13 A. Well, you -- I don't think it's a disconnect. I think
14 it's more of a -- an investigatory we need to find out what's
15 going on before we make this call and I don't know if that's that
16 they're -- I'm thinking that they're doing -- they're thinking
17 they're doing the right thing, but a lot of times, you know, just
18 making the call --

19 MR. GORDON: Yeah. Sometimes you just --

20 MR. LEONARD: -- to get the ball rolling, you know?

21 MR. GORDON: -- would be inclined to err on the side of
22 caution and --

23 MR. LEONARD: On the side of caution, exactly. And I've
24 felt that on, you know, many incidents with Metro, that, you know,
25 they have an emergency response team, then, I think, and I -- they

1 work real hard to try to figure things out and help us out in
2 terms of our response to the stations or to the tunnels or to
3 platform stations, but I feel like, you know, the calls that go
4 around between them are trying to do stuff that we can help them
5 do a lot faster.

6 BY MR. DOWNS:

7 Q. So it would be far more efficient for fire department --

8 A. Right.

9 Q. -- bottom line here is to make the call --

10 A. Right.

11 Q. -- get you rolling.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. Even if it turns out an unfounded situation, it's far
14 better to be there, have the resources at the location should they
15 be needed --

16 A. Right.

17 Q. -- and then called off rather than investigation be
18 conducted --

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- to determine the extent of the event and so on and so
21 forth and then make the call, which then you have to deal with the
22 transportation element --

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. -- and further communication element and so on. A loss
25 of critical, precious time.

1 A. Yes. Exactly.

2 Q. Would that be a fair way of saying it?

3 A. Yes. And I, and like I've said, I've had that feeling
4 on many, many responses.

5 Q. Many responses with Metro.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Going back how far roughly?

8 A. My 2 years as a battalion chief because I'm, you know, I
9 went from just boots on the ground going in the tunnel doing the
10 job that way to being the Metro liaison and having to contact them
11 and talk to them and see what's going on, and I've had that
12 feeling many, many times.

13 Q. So your personal experience is at least 2 years.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Do you have any other information from other officers,
16 fire department officers that it might have gone on earlier?

17 A. I believe if you asked all four shifts of Battalion 1,
18 my battalion that responds to Metro --

19 Q. Uh-huh.

20 A. -- or at least calls Metro on incidents --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- I believe all four would tell you the exact --

23 Q. Same story. Okay. And in terms of their experience for
24 2 years, but how about preceding 2 years?

25 A. Probably longer than that, yes.

1 Q. Probably that's your guess right now?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. All right.

4 MR. DOWNS: That concludes my questions for the moment.
5 Any further questions?

6 MS. BURTCH: If you mind -- don't mind, I'd like to
7 clarify. Kim Burtch.

8 BY MS. BURTCH:

9 Q. You were saying, so you left the OCC because of the
10 noise factor --

11 A. Well --

12 Q. -- I guess, or --

13 A. -- well, because I couldn't --

14 Q. You couldn't make communications.

15 A. -- I couldn't make communications. Uh-huh.

16 Q. Oh, I'm sorry. I apologize. You -- because you
17 couldn't communicate so you went to your vehicle --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- to make calls and you left your aide inside --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- the facility. So at any point did you go back into
22 the facility?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Or did you --

25 A. After the incident was winding down --

1 Q. Uh-huh.

2 A. -- and the incident commander had started returning
3 units, I went back inside and, you know, talked to a few people
4 and told them that the, you know, the -- believe the fire
5 department's going to give you the incident back -- give you the
6 station back, and asked a few questions about if they had anything
7 further on where -- if they ever found it, and they, no, we didn't
8 know --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- we never did.

11 Q. And so -- and if I can clarify, the call for the vent
12 switch?

13 A. The fan shift?

14 Q. From exhaust?

15 A. Fan --

16 Q. Fan.

17 A. -- FL-1.

18 Q. Fan, sorry.

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. From supply to -- to supply.

21 A. From exhaust to supply.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Was that done while you were in your vehicle, or were
25 you in the facility?

1 A. That's while I was inside.

2 Q. You were inside during that --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. Thank you. That's all.

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 MR. DOWNS: Mr. Rourke, further questions?

7 BY MR. ROURKE:

8 Q. Chief, I just want to clarify, your request for the
9 conference line.

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. Can you just describe for me again how you think that's
12 supposed to work?

13 A. I was always under the impression that this conference
14 line that we're asking to be established was something that they
15 could do from the [REDACTED] number and maybe even use that -- I mean,
16 the [REDACTED] number -- as the conference line that other people can
17 dial in and access. Now, I know that there's another number in
18 our books, I believe, that states that they'll give you the number
19 and you dial in and you wait for the beeps and all that, but any
20 -- all of the times that I've responded on a Metro incident and
21 made a call to that number, I was never redirected until today --
22 not today -- until that incident when they told me to hang up and
23 dial the [REDACTED] number, which I --

24 Q. And that number you've never --

25 A. -- which I did.

1 Q. -- have you ever heard that number before?

2 A. No.

3 MS. BURTCH: Hmm.

4 MR. ROURKE: Thank you.

5 MR. LEONARD: Uh-huh.

6 MR. DOWNS: Anything further, Mr. Rourke?

7 MR. ROURKE: No, sir.

8 MR. DOWNS: Further questions?

9 MR. ROURKE: Uh-uh. Uh-uh.

10 MR. DOWNS: Chief, any follow up questions?

11 MR. HAWKINS: Yeah. I have one follow-up question.

12 BY MR. HAWKINS:

13 Q. You mentioned that -- and it's Derron Hawkins, D.C.
14 Fire. You mentioned that OCC was questioning whether or not they
15 can bring a train in -- or what time they could bring a train in
16 the station, and you said you couldn't see any of the video. I
17 was -- I'm trying to get a understanding of was -- were they
18 looking at a video, or could they see conditions of smoke when
19 they was requesting to bring the train in the station, or was this
20 more a communications with Metro? I'm just trying to figure out
21 that piece where they wanted to bring in a train and, you know, we
22 was experiencing --

23 A. Well --

24 Q. -- smoke conditions or it wasn't --

25 A. I don't think they ever asked me if they could bring a

1 train in. I think they -- the questions I got were more related
2 to continuing revenue operations on the other tracks in the
3 station.

4 MR. DOWNS: Reactivating service on the other tracks.

5 MR. LEONARD: Right. On the other tracks.

6 MS. BURTCH: Uh-huh.

7 MR. LEONARD: And my response to them was, third rail is
8 down. Leave it down. Do not attempt to put third rail back up
9 because we have people working on the tracks, and I verbalized, we
10 have people working on the tracks, and we have, from what I could
11 hear on the radio coming out there, people self-evacuating on the
12 tracks. So --

13 MR. DOWNS: And you didn't know if it was the upper
14 level or lower level.

15 MR. LEONARD: No, I didn't.

16 MR. DOWNS: As far as you were giving information at
17 that time.

18 MR. LEONARD: No. That's my -- from my understanding we
19 needed that whole station to be down because we were, you know,
20 working on the tracks at that time. As far as them bringing in
21 another train, no, I never got any information about them trying
22 to bring in another train. All I got was, you know, we'd like to
23 bring third rail back up. And in my mind it was more of a getting
24 business going again instead of rescuing those people.

25 BY MR. HAWKINS:

1 Q. Okay. Okay. And one more thing. Were you aware of
2 Battalion 6 on that first initial response for smoke investigating
3 a fan shaft initial prior to the L'Enfant --

4 A. I believe I heard Battalion 6 call the incident
5 commander once the response was -- once the box alarm was
6 dispatched, and he advised him -- Battalion 6 advised Battalion 2,
7 I believe, was Acting Chief --

8 Q. Uh-huh.

9 A. -- Chapman that he was working in the area on a -- which
10 might be possibly related to the response that we had for a report
11 of smoke from a --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. And you heard it prior to being --

15 A. I heard that --

16 Q. -- on -- dispatched from this assignment.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. All right. Okay.

19 MR. HAWKINS: I have no further questions.

20 MR. DOWNS: And Mr. Blackistone?

21 MR. BLACKISTONE: No, thank you. Nothing further.

22 MR. DOWNS: Mr. Gordon?

23 MR. GORDON: Nothing further. Thank you.

24 BY MR. DOWNS:

25 Q. Chief, I have one final -- Downs, NTSB -- I have one

1 final follow-up question. You gave us a little testimony earlier
2 that when you first arrived at OCC before you became frustrated
3 with the radio communication --

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. -- and went to your car, you first -- you expressed an
6 observation that you got the impression that the OCC staff was
7 very confused at that point and then a lot of confusion and then
8 cross-talk going on and such. And you went out to your car for a
9 while to make -- or resume your communications, then you came back
10 inside the OCC later.

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. What was the state of organization in the OCC at that
13 point? Was it still a high level of confusion or what -- is
14 things calmed down?

15 A. I wouldn't say it was a high level of confusion. I
16 would say it had calmed down, and to me, being an outsider looking
17 in, it still looked confusing, but it just wasn't a higher level
18 as --

19 Q. Wasn't as high as earlier that you observed.

20 A. -- as earlier, yes. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. When you came --

22 A. I still saw many people walking around and doing I guess
23 what they do, but I have no idea what it was.

24 Q. I see. And when you came back inside from the car from
25 being outside for a while --

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. -- roughly what time was that; do you recall?

3 A. It was once he started returning -- I can't remember
4 exactly. It was when the incident commander had started returning
5 units from the response, and I heard them on channel 2 starting to
6 give communications update that they were going to start to
7 give --

8 Q. The on-scene wind-down?

9 A. Wind-down, yes, sir.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And give the scene back to Metro.

12 Q. Very good.

13 MR. DOWNS: All right. That concludes my questions.
14 One final opportunity for anybody.

15 Okay. We're good to go. Thank you very much, Chief.
16 That concludes our interview.

17 MR. LEONARD: All right. Thank you.

18 (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 Leonard

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-15-FR-004

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: January 28, 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.



Patricia Noell
Transcriber