



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

<b>GROUP</b>	
<b>EXHIBIT</b>	

Agency / Organization

Title

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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WMATA INCIDENT AT L'ENFANT PLAZA  
STATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.  
JANUARY 12, 2015

Docket No.: DCA-15-FR-004

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Interview of: MATTHEW MULLER

Washington, D.C.

Saturday,  
January 17, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: DAVID BUCHER  
Railroad Accident Investigator

## APPEARANCES:

DAVID BUCHER, Railroad Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)

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

SHARMILA SAMARASINGHE, Vice Chair  
Tri-State Oversight Committee

DORSEY ADAMS, Manager of Rail Safety  
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

HERCULES BALLARD, Managing Director Rail Transportation  
WMATA

THOMAS LITTLETON, Associate Administrator for Transit  
Safety and Oversight; FTA Investigator-in-Charge  
Federal Transit Administration

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:45 a.m.)

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3 MR. BUCHER: This is Dave Bucher, Rail Accident  
4 Investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board. This  
5 is the interview of Matthew Muller, Sergeant Muller, of the Metro  
6 Police Department. Interview relating to the WMATA incident at  
7 L'Enfant Plaza on January 12th, 2015, NTSB accident number DCA-15-  
8 FR-004.

9 To my right I have?

10 MS. SAMARASINGHE: Sharmila Samarasinghe, Tri-State  
11 Oversight Committee, Virginia, full-time member.

12 MR. LITTLETON: Thomas Littleton, I'm the Associate  
13 Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight with the Federal  
14 Transit Administration and the FTA Investigator-in-Charge.

15 MR. BALLARD: I'm Hercules Ballard, Metro Managing  
16 Director.

17 MR. ADAMS: Dorsey Adams, Washington Metro, Manager of  
18 Rail Safety.

19 MR. DOWNS: Rick Downs, NTSB Survival Factors Group  
20 Chairperson.

INTERVIEW OF MATTHEW MULLER

21  
22 BY MR. BUCHER:

23 Q. Okay. Matt, like I said before, if you just could go  
24 back to the 12th and give us in your own words your experiences at  
25 L'Enfant Plaza relating to the incident?

1           A.    All right. Good morning. Sergeant Matt Muller. I was  
2 actually not at L'Enfant Plaza. I was at the Rail Operations  
3 Control Center. I got to the Rail Operations Control Center  
4 somewhere between 1530 and 1534 hours. I had left work at 1500,  
5 and I had left my radio on. It was strapped to the top of my bag.  
6 I heard the broadcast start. And when I heard the panicked voice  
7 of the officer on the train, and then Officer Buchan, I believe he  
8 was Baker 23 or -- I can't remember which Baker number he was --  
9 he sounded distressed and he pulled at the heartstrings, so I made  
10 my best legal turn through the emergency cut through down 95 North  
11 and I headed back to Landover, where I work. That's where my  
12 office is in the back. And I responded to OCC.

13                I met with Mr. Charles Byro (ph.), who was working there  
14 for the Office of Emergency Management. And as best as he could,  
15 because he was running around trying to liaise with the workers in  
16 the -- that were already there in the OCC, tried to get me up to  
17 speed. I took over the radio duties for liaison in OCC with the  
18 police and Charlie did the running for me between our desk and the  
19 line controllers.

20                As far as that goes, we got my notes. I haven't  
21 transcribed them at all. I haven't had a chance. I've been in  
22 training in several meetings for other issues that we have off  
23 this subject totally. So I've got my rough stuff here.

24                When I got there, after Charlie briefed me, I know there  
25 was a question as to whether the fans were on. When I looked up

1 at the clock, it was 1534 hours. Sometime shortly after that, it  
2 was confirmed that the fans were on.

3 At 1542 hours, I had a report that the fire department  
4 was entering the roadway and that they had taken power down via  
5 the ETS box.

6 At 1549, I broadcast over the police channel that there  
7 was a self-evacuation from train 302. A self-evacuation meaning  
8 that the patrons on board that train had taken it upon themselves  
9 to exit and were now on the roadway. I broadcast that as a  
10 priority for the units on the scene and how they started  
11 addressing it down there.

12 Let's see. What else? Other than that, my job running  
13 the radio in OCC is basically as a conduit of information between  
14 our officers, our officials on scene, and the ROT (ph.)  
15 controllers. At times, I dispensed some knowledge. I'm a Level 4  
16 of the RWP, and, you know, so at times I talked them through  
17 different things. So with that being said, you know, I just -- I  
18 try to dispense whatever communications are going on, whatever  
19 they need to know. They'll ask -- they'll send me requests and  
20 when they would come in, I would have Charlie go up, because it  
21 would be -- it doesn't make sense to have two people running back  
22 and forth, so Charlie became the runner and I became the voice.

23 I know during the -- I made several broadcasts, so I  
24 know I had pointed out where power was confirmed down on both  
25 lines, the line towards Anacostia and the line towards Pentagon.

1 I communicated with Mr. Denton Rourke when he was investigating  
2 the source of the fire down there and the chain marker associated  
3 with that with the -- what do you call them -- blown pot heads.

4 I fielded several other calls while I was down there.  
5 They had a suspicious package on the Red Line. I facilitated an  
6 escort for the plant people to get to some of the ancillary rooms  
7 down there past the platform end, because at that time they needed  
8 a police escort to get to where they were going.

9 I -- when Battalion Chief Leonard from Battalion 1  
10 showed up with his aide, Sergeant Rambeau (ph.), I answered  
11 whatever questions they had as far as, you know, what was going  
12 on. I briefed them as best I could. I know their -- the radio  
13 that we have available to the fire departments, they could hear,  
14 but they could not broadcast from OCC, and it more than likely had  
15 something to do with their new encryption. So what they did is  
16 Chief Leonard went outside to the buggy and Sergeant Rambeau  
17 communicated with him via cell phone with any information that he  
18 thought he might need.

19 I can't recall -- there was a chief from Prince George's  
20 County that came to assist. It's one of their protocols they come  
21 out to OCC to assist with anything that goes on with D.C. or  
22 Virginia. They'll -- I guess it's a part of their memo of  
23 understanding where they'll come and assist and facilitate. He  
24 was there and basically, he was just an observer since the D.C.  
25 Fire was there.



1           Other than that, you know, I was there. I was  
2   facilitating requests; I was providing information. You know, at  
3   one time somebody asked what the cover boards of the third rail  
4   were made of.

5           And I know Denton Rourke went down range. Lieutenant  
6   Hanna (ph.), I believe he's Cruiser 30, he, along with some track  
7   workers, did a sweep of track 1 and 2 towards, I believe it was,  
8   Waterfront to make sure there were no patrons in any of the  
9   cutouts or ladder wells between the incident train and the next  
10   station from L'Enfant Plaza. At one point, I did advise him he  
11   was past the confirmed power-down area. I had Charlie go forward  
12   and we got the power taken down all the way to the next platform  
13   so he was operating within, you know, a safe area with no power  
14   up.

15           Other than that, that's -- you know, just a conduit of  
16   information. I didn't make any decisions, but I did, you know,  
17   try to provide some information to the troops that were out there.

18         Q.    Sure. Thank you.

19           BY MR. DOWNS:

20         Q.    Okay. Downs, NTSB. Thank you, Sergeant, for joining us  
21   today.

22           Do you have the arrival time on yourself at L'Enfant  
23   station? Do you recall or have it logged somewhere?

24         A.    I never appeared at L'Enfant. I was at the Rail  
25   Operations --

1 Q. So you were strictly at OCC?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. I see. All right. We had testimony from Officer Buchan  
4 that they were instructed to switch to channel 2?

5 A. That's correct, sir.

6 Q. Was that your instruction?

7 A. No, sir. That came from -- that's either communications  
8 or the on-scene commander.

9 Q. I see. And would that be a normal protocol to switch --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- when you've got an event?

12 A. When we have a major incident and we have dispatcher --  
13 we have sufficient staffing and communications able to switch to  
14 an alternate channel.

15 Q. Okay. Tell us about your radios. We had a lot of  
16 frustration expressed to us by various folks over the past several  
17 days about the WMATA-issued new digital radios.

18 A. Well, sir, I was using a base station comparable to what  
19 you would see in the communications center, so my radio is -- the  
20 radio I was utilizing is more effective than the ones they have  
21 out there in the system.

22 Q. So you wouldn't be experiencing the same field problems,  
23 usually?

24 A. No. No.

25 Q. I see.

1           A.    Now, you do have trouble copying their transmissions  
2 from time to time.

3           Q.    I see.

4           A.    So you do hear that, but as far as my broadcasts going  
5 out, I have the entire --

6           Q.    You had no trouble?

7           A.    No, sir.

8           Q.    At all. I see. Has it been your experience in the  
9 field, though, with these radios that there's been challenges?

10          A.    Yes, sir.

11          Q.    Can you elaborate on that for us?

12          A.    There are times and areas that the radio doesn't work  
13 very well.

14          Q.    Okay.

15          A.    And it's not always the same places. It migrates from  
16 place to place. I don't know that there's any rhyme or reason to  
17 it. It's -- you know, I know it's a tough environment for a radio  
18 system to work and it's incredibly dirty, you know, because of the  
19 trains, the brake dust, and, you know, because of the way the  
20 system ventilates the piston action, you're pulling in whatever's  
21 outside, so you've got a lot of dirt coming with, a lot of dirt  
22 being pushed in front of. You've got a concrete structure  
23 reinforced by steel and it's 100 feet underground.

24          Q.    Hard to get a signal through?

25          A.    It can be, I imagine. I'm not -- if I was good with

1 that stuff, I probably wouldn't be a cop.

2 Q. Okay. Respirator masks. We're hearing testimony from  
3 various officers that respirator masks had been issued in the  
4 past?

5 A. We've had Quick Masks, yes, sir.

6 Q. Quick Masks?

7 A. They were called Quick Masks, yes. They're --

8 Q. Evacuation --

9 A. Escape --

10 Q. Escape hoods?

11 A. Yes, an escape hood type of apparatus.

12 Q. Okay. Do you recall have you been issued one?

13 A. I have.

14 Q. Do you still have it?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Do you still -- do you use it at all?

17 A. I haven't had the cause to --

18 Q. Haven't had the need?

19 A. No, sir.

20 Q. Okay. Training drills, what's the recent training  
21 history regarding rail events that you've participated in?

22 A. Which events?

23 Q. Rail events, rail evacuation events and such?

24 A. No real life -- I mean, no, you know, hands-on type of  
25 situations. But I was assigned to the Office of Emergency

1 Management prior to September for approximately a year and a half.  
2 During that time, we did have training called the supervisors'  
3 training, where we would have members from usually battalion  
4 chiefs, captains, from outside fire departments, and members from  
5 within WMATA, usually supervisors, people who would be, you know,  
6 in charge of their section, they would come out to our facility at  
7 CTF (ph.) and we would, you know, basically run through scenarios  
8 like this. Not necessarily a (indiscernible) station, but how we  
9 would respond and what we would respond to and, you know, certain  
10 things to think about, such as entering the roadway, you know,  
11 some of the procedures, communications, chain-of-command, incident  
12 command, NIMS (ph.), stuff like that.

13 Q. Okay. How about yourself, your history with WMATA? How  
14 long have you been with the outfit?

15 A. Oh, I was hired August 25th, 1997, so I guess I'm 17  
16 plus in now.

17 Q. Seventeen years?

18 A. Seventeen and a half.

19 Q. Roughly, okay.

20 A. Don't cheat me. I'm trying to get out of here at 25.

21 Q. Okay. And you've always been a sergeant or --

22 A. No, sir. I was an officer until June of '04, where I  
23 got promoted to the rank of sergeant. And I've been a sergeant  
24 since and I've served in different capacities for the department.

25 Q. Preceding WMATA, what was your work history, roughly?

1 A. I was a --

2 Q. Generalized.

3 A. Prior to that, for 2½ years I was a corrections officers  
4 in Howard County, Maryland. Prior to that, I drove a truck. I  
5 was -- I did home deliveries and moved scrap appliances and  
6 recovered refrigerant from older refrigerators.

7 Q. Academic, college, or anything like that?

8 A. Graduated high school. I went to the Naval Academy Prep  
9 School up in Rhode Island, and then I attended the University of  
10 Maryland, Baltimore County for 2 years.

11 MR. DOWNS: Okay. Very good. That's my questions for  
12 now.

13 BY MR. ADAMS:

14 Q. Okay, Dorsey Adams. Officer -- Sergeant Muller --

15 A. That's all right. I get paid the same regardless of  
16 what you call me.

17 Q. Regardless of what I call you, okay. Is it usually one  
18 person in ROCC when you have an event?

19 A. Typically, what will happen is they'll assign a patrol  
20 sergeant to head over. They were going to that, and they had  
21 actually started making calls for it. As I said, I had my radio  
22 on and I responded to it because I had made the decision that I  
23 was going to turn around and come back. So instead of taking  
24 somebody that was out in the field, I went over there. And  
25 typically, it will be -- you know, if it's not during rush hour,

1 when there's a person from Emergency Management assigned down  
2 there, it'll be one person. It'll be a sergeant or it could be an  
3 officer if there are no sergeants available.

4 Q. So that's during peak hours or --

5 A. During peak hours, you're always going to have an  
6 Emergency Management person in there. And during non-rush hour,  
7 it's not staffed and they'll assign -- for a major incident like  
8 this, they'll assign a sergeant or possibly a lieutenant or an  
9 officer to come over and take over those duties.

10 Q. Okay. During the event and an officer does come over,  
11 who are you talking with?

12 A. What I would do -- I can't speak for anybody else, but  
13 what I would -- if I was to come in and there was nobody there  
14 from OEM, I would get with the assistant superintendent and get  
15 brought up to speed on what was going on and what particular needs  
16 they might have from the police department.

17 Q. So is that discussion -- when events happen and you're  
18 kind of relaying information, is that going on between you and the  
19 controllers or you and the assistant superintendent? How does  
20 that work?

21 A. Typically, it's from the assistant superintendent.  
22 That's where I'll get my information from.

23 Q. Um-hum.

24 A. At times, if they're not available, if they're doing  
25 something else on the phone communicating with something, you

1 know, one of their people, I may go up and talk to a line  
2 controller. I try not to interfere and get into that, because  
3 their job is difficult enough. So I try to get my information  
4 from the assistant superintendent.

5 Q. In the field, who are you communicating with?

6 A. If I was out in the field, I would --

7 Q. No, no. The person assigned to OCC on the desk, who is  
8 he communicating with out in the field?

9 A. Oh, he could be communicating with the incident  
10 commander, the on-scene commander, the (indiscernible) liaison,  
11 basically whoever proffers a request.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. You know?

14 Q. I've heard some talk about the new radio, the digital  
15 radios. Did you have problems with the radios that you had  
16 before?

17 A. We've -- it's not -- I've had problems with the radios  
18 since I've been here in 1997.

19 Q. So it's not a new problem specific to the new digital  
20 radios?

21 A. No, sir. I think it's a problem more specific to our  
22 environment rather than our -- the radio system in particular. I  
23 wouldn't want to make a diagnosis. It's -- you know, it is what  
24 it is.

25 Q. You're not a radio guy?



1 A. I am not a radio guy.

2 Q. You said Denton Rourke was down in the system?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. At what point was he in the -- and Mr. Rourke's position  
5 is?

6 A. He is the operations manager for the Office of Emergency  
7 Management.

8 Q. And I'm understanding from what somebody else has said  
9 that he found that -- the location of the fire?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. And at what point did he find this? Was it after the  
12 evacuation?

13 A. It was after the evacuation, sir. And I don't have a --  
14 I had a lot of things going on. I was trying to listen to a  
15 couple different radios. I don't have a time. I have the  
16 location of it. I didn't write down a time.

17 Q. All right. But at this point, was the 302 already  
18 evacuated?

19 A. Yes, it was already evacuated.

20 Q. I think that's all the questions I have for you now.

21 BY MR. BALLARD:

22 Q. Hercules Ballard. Sergeant Muller, again, talking about  
23 -- first of all, where is your office located?

24 A. I work in the OEM's office back in the F Building.

25 Q. So that's at the Carmen Turner Facility?

1           A.    Yes, sir.

2           Q.    During an emergency not during rush hour, who will  
3 respond normally to OCC until a sergeant from the field can?

4           A.    If there's a member from OEM available that's in the  
5 building, they'll walk up there from, you know, back from the  
6 offices.  It's about, you know, less than a 5-minute walk.  It's a  
7 big building, but you can get there fairly quickly.

8           Q.    And when you or Emergency Management staff arrives at  
9 OCC and you're communicating over the radio where you're being the  
10 sergeant, who are you communicating with?  Are you communicating  
11 with the dispatchers?  Are you communicating with the dispatchers  
12 and with the person, you know, at the incident scene?

13          A.    It would depend on what the broadcast was.  It could be  
14 all of them.  It could be the on-scene commander.  It could be  
15 communications, you know, just to get something listed in the CAD,  
16 which is the computer system, so they'll log it.  It really  
17 depends on what the broadcast would be.

18          Q.    Okay.  In an incident like the one Monday, were you in  
19 communications with the officers who were at the incident scene or  
20 just the incident commander?

21          A.    My broadcasts are heard by everybody, but I'm fairly --  
22 I'd have to listen to the tape.  I don't think I communicated with  
23 any officer specifically.  I know I communicated with a couple of  
24 officials that were on scene, specifically, about certain points  
25 that I thought were salient, like, the power being up where they

1 were at, or, you know, when Mr. Rourke was down range and they had  
2 inquired about bringing power back up in the area. I inquired to  
3 his status and when they might be clear. So it really depends on  
4 what the broadcast is, you know, but I didn't communicate with any  
5 officers directly there on the scene.

6 Q. Okay. Thank you, sir. That's all I have.

7 MR. LITTLETON: Tom Littleton of the Federal Transit  
8 Administration, no questions.

9 MS. SAMARASINGHE: Sharmila Samarasinghe, Tri-State  
10 Oversight Committee. Just a few questions.

11 BY MS. SAMARASINGHE:

12 Q. You mentioned that you are RWP Level 4?

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. And that's the highest level of Roadway Worker  
15 Protection training that somebody can have at WMATA?

16 A. That I know of, yeah.

17 Q. Yes. Do you happen to know what level of training  
18 comparable to the 1, 2, and 4 levels that MTPD officers receive  
19 for Roadway Worker Protection?

20 A. I think most everybody is a Level 2.

21 Q. Level 2, okay. Thank you.

22 Just to get things clear as far as the configuration on  
23 the OCC floor, you have the OEM desk at the back?

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. Is there another MTPD desk anywhere inside --

1 A. No, ma'am.

2 Q. -- the OCC floor? There is not. Okay.

3 And you explained a lot of things in terms of what  
4 happens typically. The OEM desk has the Emergency Operations  
5 Procedures Manual?

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. When you or anybody else, to your knowledge, was asked  
8 to be ready to take over a position at the OEM desk, were you all  
9 provided any kind of familiarization on the Emergency Operations  
10 Procedures for the OEM desk, or what level of training did you all  
11 get?

12 A. During -- we have supervisors' training during the  
13 course of the year. We try to do it every month. It doesn't  
14 happen all the time.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. A couple of those sessions we've taken the supervisors  
17 that were in the class and we took them up to OCC and showed them  
18 the lay of the land, you know, where everything was. As far as  
19 specific procedural training, no.

20 Q. All right. And when an incident is identified as being  
21 an emergency, is the OEM desk responsible for putting up whatever  
22 cameras -- camera views onto the main screen at the OCC desk?

23 A. No, ma'am.

24 Q. I mean, at -- okay. Who would bring those visual --

25 A. I believe that would be at the direction of the

1 assistant superintendent, but I couldn't speak to that. That's  
2 just a speculation on my part.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But I know that we don't do that --

5 Q. You don't do it.

6 A. -- from the back.

7 Q. Okay, all right. Mr. Downs asked you about training in  
8 particular, but in -- going -- honing down into emergency response  
9 training and emergency response training you might have had in  
10 concert with other response agencies, have you had the opportunity  
11 to cross-train with them, either in full-scale drills or during  
12 training sessions?

13 A. We've had a couple drills recently. They were for the  
14 Silver Line. I know we did a train evacuation and we had one  
15 other drill. I don't recall that. I don't think I attended that  
16 one, but I went to the one at --

17 Q. Was it Spring Hill (ph.)?

18 A. -- I think it was -- yeah.

19 Q. Okay. And have you had the opportunity to work with  
20 D.C. Fire Department on various actual events?

21 A. Have I in the past?

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. Yeah, I -- yeah, I'm sorry. Yes, ma'am, I have. You  
24 know, it -- different things. Typically, for me it was jumpers,  
25 stuff like that. I haven't worked a smoke or a fire scene.

1 Q. All right. And what has your experience been working  
2 with D.C. Fire Department as far as interactions, getting things  
3 done efficiently, restoring service back to a particular location?

4 A. It's gotten better. Over the years, it's -- I mean,  
5 there was a time where it wasn't -- I wouldn't call it a bad  
6 relationship, it wasn't a great relationship, and they were going  
7 to do what they were going to do and, you know, they were going to  
8 do it in whatever amount of time they decided they were going to  
9 do it in. I think with some of the joint training and, you know,  
10 with having some of the relationships that our people have with  
11 them, you know, we have a bunch of retired firefighters over at  
12 OEM, things have progressed to the point where they understand  
13 what's going on as far as restoring operations.

14 Just because you have one place shut down, that's not  
15 typically where we're going to run into problems. We run into  
16 problems on both sides of it. Rather -- the problem itself is  
17 usually not the problem. Obviously, this situation was different.  
18 But typically, when we're dealing with a jumper or something of  
19 that nature, we run into problems above and below the incident  
20 where you're stacking commuters like cordwood, because you can't  
21 move them, and we set up the magical bus bridge to move people.  
22 But when you're moving -- when your trains are dumping between 12-  
23 and 1800 people every 4 minutes during rush hour into a specific  
24 place, and you're scooping them out 68 people at a time with a  
25 bus, it doesn't make for effective movement. So I think over the

1 years, we've helped get that point across that it's not just a  
2 central problem. Problems are on both sides of the incident.

3 Q. Did you have any conversations or interactions over the  
4 radio with the on-scene commander?

5 A. Just dispensing information or answering questions.

6 Q. Okay. So you were able to communicate with him during  
7 the incident?

8 A. Yes, ma'am.

9 Q. Okay. Explain a little bit more about how -- you said  
10 that the fire department has their own radios and -- let me go  
11 back to what you mentioned.

12 A. Would you be referring to me saying they had a radio in  
13 OCC?

14 Q. Yeah, you mentioned a radio is available to the fire  
15 department, and I just wanted to understand what you meant by  
16 that.

17 A. There -- right next to the -- we have a base station  
18 that has -- that we can pull up all of the police channels. And  
19 right next to it, there is a radio head that has all of the fire  
20 departments in the area programmed into it.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. And in the past, I know that the fire department has  
23 been able to communicate with their units in the field from that  
24 radio.

25 Q. Okay.

1           A.    Now, Sergeant Rambeau knew what frequency they were on,  
2   so we dialed it up and they couldn't broadcast.

3           Q.    Okay.

4           A.    Now, our feeling was, is that because of their new  
5   encryption that radio couldn't get through, because as far I know,  
6   nobody came out to service that radio and equip it with any  
7   encryption equipment.

8           Q.    Okay.  And so Sergeant Rambeau was trying to reach  
9   somebody in D.C.  Fire --

10          A.    Yes, on the scene.

11          Q.    -- who was at the scene?

12          A.    Yes.

13          Q.    Okay.  All right, thank you.

14          A.    Um-hum.

15                   BY MR. BUCHER:

16          Q.    Dave Bucher.  I just want to follow up on that question.  
17   It was the duty of Sergeant Rambeau of the fire department?  He  
18   was going to relay to the on-scene fire battalion people?

19          A.    Well, I can't specifically speak to that, but I know  
20   Battalion Chief Leonard and Sergeant Rambeau were there.  I'd  
21   imagine that Battalion Chief Leonard would have done the  
22   communications from OCC if it was possible.  His radio that he  
23   carried with him would not broadcast from OCC, and the radio that  
24   we have in OCC would not broadcast either.  You could hear, but  
25   they couldn't broadcast.  So they thought it would be the best



1 practice for Chief Leonard to go outside to the buggy and pull out  
2 Sergeant Rambeau to relay any information via cell phone to him.

3 Q. Okay. So they were relaying train operational  
4 information to the fire department through you and the --

5 A. I don't know what he -- he was sitting next to me,  
6 obviously.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. But I had my own set of crazy going on.

9 Q. Sure.

10 A. I wasn't really paying attention to what he was doing.  
11 And as a matter of fact, since that radio was useless, I turned it  
12 down, because I already had two other ones going.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So what he was speaking to, and I assume it was Chief  
15 Leonard about, I couldn't -- I mean, I could speculate, but I  
16 couldn't tell you.

17 Q. No, that's not a problem. I do want to go back briefly  
18 to you had in your notes about approximately what time the D.C.  
19 Fire Department showed up at the OCC.

20 A. I don't think I had that. I have them showing up -- I  
21 don't have a time for them showing up.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. It was -- I would assume it would be sometime after  
24 1600, probably not a whole lot after 1600.

25 MR. BUCHER: Okay. Okay.

1           MR. DOWNS: We could get that from some other logs,  
2 so --

3           MR. BUCHER: Yeah, I just was curious. That's all I  
4 have.

5           BY MR. DOWNS:

6           Q.    Okay, Downs, NTSB again. Sergeant, to wrap this up, I  
7 always like to give my witnesses the opportunity to express what  
8 we call retrospective thoughts, kind of a self-evaluation given  
9 what you know now. Are there any thoughts you can offer as to  
10 things that you might do differently or different processes you  
11 might have engaged that kind of help the process? Not that you  
12 did anything wrong, but there's always sometimes lessons to be  
13 learned.

14          A.    For me, personally, I would say I would like to have  
15 been more proactive and on top of the people on the scene, you  
16 know, making sure that they dotted their Is, crossed their Ts, and  
17 everything else. I didn't necessarily think it was appropriate  
18 for me to step on the -- you can fill in the blank there of a  
19 deputy chief that was running the scene. So, you know, I just --  
20 I stayed in the role as far as conveying information. I could  
21 have been more proactive.

22                   Unfortunately, I left both of my phones sitting on my  
23 ottoman at home that day, so I didn't have -- I had a phone, but I  
24 don't -- my life, just like most other people's, is in their  
25 phones. I didn't have any contact information so I couldn't reach

1 out like that to, you know, give friendly reminders. So if I had  
2 it to do over again, I'd probably be more proactive on double-  
3 checking what somebody had done or hadn't done.

4 Q. I see. How about WMATA-best practices, as far as  
5 emergency procedures and things of that sort?

6 A. I wasn't really paying attention to what they were  
7 doing. I was paying more attention to what the police were doing.  
8 I wouldn't pretend to know what the rail line controller is  
9 supposed to do. I mean, I've spent enough time down there. I  
10 think I understand what they do, but I don't. I mean, to somebody  
11 who doesn't know, I could sound like a PhD, but I wouldn't begin  
12 to pretend to know what they're supposed to do and how they're  
13 supposed to do it.

14 MR. BUCHER: Okay, great. Thanks much. That concludes  
15 my questions.

16 MR. ADAMS: I've just got a couple more follow-up  
17 questions. Dorsey Adams.

18 BY MR. ADAMS:

19 Q. Sergeant, when the fire department arrives on scene,  
20 they become the incident commanders?

21 A. They can. It doesn't -- it's not all the time that it  
22 happens. To my way of thinking, and I -- a life safety issue,  
23 they are going to be incident commander.

24 Q. And when they come on and become the incident commander,  
25 how do they communicate with OCC?

1           A.   Typically, they'll send somebody up or the person, me in  
2 this instance, communicating with Metro's on-scene commander, a  
3 police officer, will funnel the information.

4           Q.   So if -- and correct me if I'm getting this wrong, so if  
5 the fire department liaison has not arrived at OCC, that on-scene  
6 commander would have to relay any requests to ROCC that he has to  
7 the WMATA representative? I would think a police officer, MTPD  
8 police officer?

9           A.   Well, the way it's supposed to work, and the way we  
10 would like to see it set up, would be that a rail supervisor, a  
11 representative from Metro outside of the police, somebody who has  
12 knowledge, training, and experience with the rail system, and  
13 typically, that would be a rail supervisor or some supervisor that  
14 works in the environment on a regular basis, would be there at the  
15 command post and they would be the communications directly to RAYA  
16 (ph.).

17          Q.   Okay.

18          A.   Now, I can do it and, you know, with Charlie, we would  
19 push information up and push information back. But the most  
20 direct way and the way we recommend in our joint supervisors'  
21 training is to have a rail supervisor on scene and that way you  
22 have somebody that knows exactly what they're doing, because  
23 that's their job, every day they come to work, they're  
24 commuting --

25          Q.   (Indiscernible) should be at the --

1 A. They understand --

2 Q. -- command post?

3 A. Yeah, and they should be at the command post.

4 MR. ADAMS: Okay. I have no further questions.

5 MR. BALLARD: Hercules Ballard, I don't have any  
6 questions.

7 MR. LITTLETON: Thomas Littleton, and no questions.

8 MS. SAMARASINGHE: Sharmila Samarasinghe, Tri-State  
9 Oversight Committee.

10 BY MS. SAMARASINGHE:

11 Q. Sergeant Muller, just a few questions. Can you  
12 characterize what was going on ROCC during the incident? Like,  
13 just give your sense of what was working, what wasn't.

14 A. Well, it was definitely -- what's the word I'm looking  
15 for? You definitely knew something was going on. It didn't seem  
16 like there was panic or anything like that, but when you had the  
17 Mr. Zidtich (ph.) downstairs, Mr. Harris downstairs, and a couple  
18 of assistant superintendents moving around, it's definitely  
19 different than a "normal day", where it's just you're in the back,  
20 the line controllers are where they're supposed to be, and the  
21 assistant superintendent is, you know, either sitting at their  
22 desk or working the floor. So, I mean, you could definitely tell  
23 it was -- there was something going on, but I wouldn't call it  
24 chaotic or anything like that.

25 Q. Okay. And Chief Leonard and Sergeant Rambeau were from

1 P.G. County Fire or D.C.?

2 A. No, ma'am, they were from D.C.

3 Q. D.C.

4 A. Yes, ma'am.

5 Q. Okay. All right. So they were the direct link down to  
6 the incident commander --

7 A. Yes, ma'am.

8 Q. -- for D.C. Fire Department?

9 A. Yes, ma'am.

10 Q. And Sergeant Rambeau was having challenges communicating  
11 using the radio that he had?

12 A. Yeah, neither --

13 Q. That is what you had explained, right?

14 A. Neither person, Chief Leonard or Sergeant Rambeau, could  
15 communicate on their portable radios.

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. Nor the set that we have in OCC for the fire  
18 departments, none of them worked.

19 Q. Okay. And you talked about the MOU for the regional  
20 response agencies? Did I get that correct? You mentioned the  
21 MOU.

22 A. Did I?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. What knowledge do you have about the MOU, and what are

1 your expectations of the MOU?

2 A. I don't remember mentioning the MOU, but as far as the  
3 MOU goes, it's our understanding that anytime there's a life  
4 safety issue and the fire department responds, they're going to be  
5 the incident commanders. We'll be the on-scene commander for  
6 Metro and we will do everything within our power to facilitate the  
7 timely and safe mitigation of whatever incident is going on.

8 Q. And to your understanding, that MOU that exists largely  
9 relates to response assistance to especially Metro rail incidents  
10 throughout the Metro rail service area?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Is that correct?

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you.

15 BY MR. BUCHER:

16 Q. I have just one follow-up question to that question. In  
17 your mind -- and I don't think there was any -- but there was no  
18 question in your mind as the Emergency Management liaison that the  
19 D.C. Fire had assumed incident command on scene?

20 A. No question.

21 Q. No question?

22 A. No question.

23 Q. Okay. Do you know approximately what time he assumed  
24 that command?

25 A. I would have to place it before 1542 hours.

1 Q. Okay. Approximately?

2 A. I would put it somewhere around 1535, maybe.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Maybe even before that.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. But --

7 Q. That's okay.

8 A. I would -- and I base that on me, my notes. At 1542, I  
9 have the fire department entering the roadway and them doing so  
10 safely by triggering an emergency trip station, a blue light box.  
11 I don't believe they would do that without being in charge of the  
12 scene.

13 Q. True. That's all I have, thank you.

14 MR. BUCHER: Any other questions around the room?

15 MS. SAMARASINGHE: No, thank you.

16 MR. BUCHER: Okay. That concludes our interview, Mr.  
17 Muller. Thank you.

18 MR. MULLER: Um-hum.

19 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25



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 Matthew Muller

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-15-FR-004

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: January 17, 2015

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed  
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Shari K. Doyle  
Transcriber