



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

Docket No.: DCA-15-FR-004

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Interview of: HUGHEY PAYNE

Washington, D.C.

Tuesday,
January 20, 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, FTA Investigator In-Charge
Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

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Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689

RICK WALLY, Station Representative Manager
ATU Local 689

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:00 a.m.)

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3 MR. BUCHER: This is Dave Bucher, NTSB Rail Investigator
4 for the WMATA L'Enfant Plaza accident on January 12, 2015. This
5 is the interview of Hughey Payne, Station Manager, L'Enfant Plaza.

6 To my right?

7 MS. SAMARASINGHE: Good morning, Mr. Payne,
8 Sharmila Samarasinghe. I'm with the Tri-State Oversight
9 Committee, the TOC, I'm a Virginia full-time member.

10 MR. LITTLETON: Hi, Tom Littleton, I'm the Associate
11 Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight with the Federal
12 Transit Administration, and I'm also the Investigator-In-Charge
13 for the FTA.

14 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: Good morning, Mr. Payne, Marlene
15 Flemings-McCann, Assistant Business Agent for Rail Operations,
16 Local 689.

17 MR. PAYNE: Good morning.

18 MR. BALLARD: Hercules Ballard, Managing Director of
19 Rail Transportation Metro.

20 MR. ADAMS: Good morning, Mr. Payne.

21 MR. PAYNE: Good morning.

22 MR. ADAMS: I'm Dorsey Adams, I'm the Manager of Rail
23 Safety for WMATA.

24 MR. DOWNS: Good morning. My name is Richard Downs, D-
25 o-w-n-s, I'm a survival factors investigator. I'm also the

1 Technical Working Group Chairperson for Survival Factors, NTSB.

2 MR. WALLY: And Rick Wally, shop steward, Station
3 Manager, Local 689.

4 INTERVIEW OF HUGHEY PAYNE

5 BY MR. BUCHER

6 Q. Okay. Mr. Payne, if you could, just go back to January
7 12th, and if you could tell us in your own words what happened at
8 the WMATA's L'Enfant Plaza station.

9 A. On Monday, January 12th around 3:15, 3:20, I observed
10 smoke in the station, and it was a large amount of smoke, and I
11 started to make announcements for customers to evacuate the
12 station. I opened my emergency gates.

13 I contacted Central and asked for the exhaust fans to be
14 turned on, and they said they had them on, and I told them that
15 the station was continuing to fill with smoke; and I went to check
16 for my escalators and make sure they were -- the down escalators
17 were off, and they had stopped. I opened the fare gates and
18 continued to make announcements.

19 I monitored the CC-TV and people were still in the
20 station. Continued to make announcements to evacuate the station.
21 I went to close the entry gates and left the portion of it open
22 for emergency personnel to enter and exit. Came back to the kiosk
23 and continued to make announcements for people to evacuate the
24 station.

25 At a point one of the fire officials suggested I leave

1 the station. I contacted OCC and advised them that I had been
2 instructed to leave the kiosk, and I would be at the top of the
3 escalator to assist customers with making other arrangements and
4 directions for making their connections for other stations and the
5 shuttle bus at Seventh and Maryland Avenue to Pentagon Station.

6 Q. Dave Bucher. Were you involved with the evacuation at
7 all with either the train that arrived on the platform or the
8 train that was in the tunnel?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Did you come in contact -- Dave Bucher again. Did you
11 come in contact with any of the firefighters that were arriving at
12 the station?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And did they tell you anything or --

15 A. I only had communication with the one that instructed me
16 to evacuate the station.

17 Q. Okay. Did the fire alarms ever go off in the station,
18 do you remember?

19 A. Not to my knowledge.

20 MR. BUCHER: Okay. That's all I have for now. I'd like
21 to pass it off to Mr. Downs.

22 MR. PAYNE: Yes.

23 BY MR. DOWNS:

24 Q. Downs, NTSB. Mr. Payne, thank you for joining us here
25 today. I'm going to diverge a little bit, and let's touch a

1 little bit on your work history and training, okay?

2 A. All right.

3 Q. How long have you been with WMATA?

4 A. Going on 17 years.

5 Q. Seventeen?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. And when you first hired on what did you do?

8 A. Bus operator at Montgomery Garage.

9 Q. I see. How long were you a bus operator?

10 A. Almost 2 years.

11 Q. Two, okay. And from there where did you --

12 A. Oh, continue. After that -- after the bus operator I
13 turned in as a station manager at Glenmont, I went as a station
14 manager at Brentwood; station manager at Branch Avenue, got bumped
15 out of there; went to West Falls Church for about 5 years; and
16 came back to Branch Avenue.

17 Q. So, if my arithmetic is correct you've been doing --

18 A. I apologize, I went to trains after I went to West Falls
19 Church; I became a train operator for 2 years.

20 Q. Train operator, okay.

21 A. And then came back to --

22 Q. I was going to say, my arithmetic here wasn't --

23 A. Yeah, yeah.

24 Q. -- adding up just right.

25 A. Yeah, yeah, train operator.

1 Q. Train operator for 2 years in between the bus operator
2 and the --

3 A. And station manager.

4 Q. Okay, great. And you've been basically 13 years or so
5 station manager --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- in various locations of the system?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Okay, great. Training activities, you had station
10 manager training when you first moved into that position, is that
11 correct?

12 A. That, that's correct.

13 Q. There's an initial training and then there's a periodic
14 training?

15 A. Refresher course, yes.

16 Q. Refresher. How often does the refresher training occur?

17 A. Approximately -- I can't say, but for me personally it's
18 about every 3 years.

19 Q. Three years?

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. Okay. And are there periodic training activities that
22 you're required to participate in, like a training drill or
23 something?

24 A. Training drill in the station?

25 Q. In the station?

1 A. I never had a training drill in the station.

2 Q. You've never participated in a training drill?

3 A. No.

4 Q. In any of the stations that you have worked?

5 A. No.

6 Q. I see, okay. Just the 3-year training refresher that
7 you would go to a class, is that how it works?

8 A. That's it.

9 Q. Okay. And how long is this class roughly?

10 A. The original class is 6 weeks, and the refresher is
11 about a week.

12 Q. About a week, okay, great. All right. Are you issued a
13 respirator mask as part of your equipment, your regular equipment
14 that you use on the job?

15 A. For the first 6 years I received them, I haven't
16 received one since.

17 Q. Okay. Do you still have the mask somewhere?

18 A. Yes, it's at home.

19 Q. Where is it kept?

20 A. In my basement.

21 Q. At home?

22 A. At home.

23 Q. Okay. And it's been about 6 years or so since you've
24 had any involvement with the mask?

25 A. With a mask.

1 Q. Okay. Your radio, you're issued a radio as part of your
2 regular equipment on the job?

3 A. It's assigned to the kiosk.

4 Q. Assigned to the kiosk itself?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And the manager uses it for the day and then leaves it
7 there for the next manager, is that how it works?

8 A. Yes, you check and make sure it's there. You have to
9 fill out a form saying it's there and the proper operations, and
10 then the other person does the same.

11 Q. I see. In terms of the radio that you use regularly at
12 your particular kiosk assignment -- oh, by the way, while I'm
13 thinking of it, which particular kiosk in L'Enfant Plaza --
14 there's three different kiosks, correct?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Which particular one do you work normally?

17 A. I open mezzanine 56 at 5:00 a.m.

18 Q. Is that the Maryland --

19 A. That's -- no, that's 9th and D Street --

20 Q. 9th and D?

21 A. -- mezzanine 56.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And I swing off, my swing is 3 hours in between, then I
24 go to 57.

25 Q. You'll shift to one of the other ones, I see.

1 A. Yes, I'll go over to 57.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And that's at Seventh and D --

4 Q. I see.

5 A. From 12:55 to 4:00.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And I was at that, 7th and -- I mean mezz 57 9th and D
8 Street, yeah -- Seventh and D, I apologize, Seventh and D.

9 Q. Back to the radio. Any difficulties with the particular
10 radio that you use from that kiosk?

11 A. No, no problem.

12 Q. On the day of the event everything was working fine?

13 A. Everything was working.

14 Q. Okay, great. Tell me, do you use a procedural checklist
15 during emergencies by chance?

16 A. A checklist?

17 Q. In other words, a list of steps that you would follow
18 for an evacuation or whatever.

19 A. There is a protocol for a fire and smoke in the station
20 that we, we learn originally and we refresh at the refresher
21 class. We go over there and learn the procedures for doing that.

22 Q. And would that be included in your operations manual or
23 someplace?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. And I have a personal one in my bag I review
2 periodically.

3 Q. Periodically.

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. So, did you use a printed checklist in this particular
6 event or did you go from --

7 A. Just mentally.

8 Q. -- memory?

9 A. Yeah, memory.

10 Q. Okay, great. Okay. When the emergency first started
11 and the train station started filling with smoke, were you aware
12 that there was a train still in the tunnel?

13 A. No.

14 Q. You were not aware?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Okay. So you did not hear any announcement from OCC or
17 whatever as to a problem with a train in the tunnel?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. And you initiated -- correct me if I'm wrong, you
20 initiated a closure of the station of your own initiative, rather
21 than from guidance from OCC, is that correct?

22 A. With the amount of smoke that was in the station, it
23 wasn't safe for anyone to be in there, and it wasn't dissipating,
24 it was still coming in, I just said --

25 Q. It was getting worse?

1 A. Yes, it was not stopping. That's why I asked for the
2 exhaust fan. I thought that would be sufficient, but she said it
3 was already on, that -- the station was still filling up. So,
4 yeah, everyone needed to leave.

5 Q. Is it normal procedure for the OCC to provide
6 authorization to close the station?

7 A. That's normal, that's the proper procedure.

8 Q. Can you override that by insisting to close the station
9 based upon your being present at that particular station at that
10 time?

11 A. I took it upon myself. There is no protocol to say I
12 can do that, but it wasn't safe.

13 Q. You're not prohibited?

14 A. No, no, it was just --

15 Q. In other words, correct me if I'm wrong then, you can
16 enact any procedure you want providing it's reasonable and safe,
17 is that a fair assessment?

18 A. That's correct.

19 MR. DOWNS: Great. Okay. Thank you. Okay. We'll pass
20 it on to the next line of questions.

21 MR. ADAMS: Doyle C. Adams, Washington Metro, no
22 questions.

23 BY MR. BALLARD:

24 Q. Hercules Ballard, Mr. Payne. On the day of the
25 incident, and you had your radio. What radio frequency were you

1 using?

2 A. OPS 2.

3 Q. Of the blue, orange, silver line?

4 A. I'm on orange, blue, silver line.

5 MR. BALLARD: Okay. Thank you, sir. No other
6 questions.

7 BY MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN:

8 Q. Mr. Payne, good morning, Marlene Flemings-McCann. I
9 guess I have a few questions. Does your radio allow you to hear
10 different lines at one time?

11 A. If I change the channel, but because I'm on the orange,
12 blue, silver line I stayed with that channel.

13 Q. Is there a guideline to tell you what OPS to use when
14 you're in the kiosk?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. So your guideline for the line you was on was?

17 A. OPS 2 for the orange, blue, silver line.

18 Q. As a station manager, how often are you required or can
19 you or allowed to use the radio?

20 A. You can use it at any time.

21 Q. For what reason?

22 A. Emergencies, to contact Central if there's a priority.
23 Most of the time it's going to be an emergency. You're away from
24 the kiosk and you need to let Central know something that they
25 need to know whether to bring down the third rail or some

1 emergency, you can contact them at that time with the radio.

2 Q. So I guess my question, because I need get
3 clarification.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. You only will use the radio in an emergency if you were
6 not in the kiosk?

7 A. That's correct.

8 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: Okay, okay. Thank you, sir. No
9 more questions.

10 MR. LITTLETON: Hi, Tom Littleton, FTA, no questions.

11 BY MS. SAMARASINGHE:

12 Q. Mr. Payne, Sharmila Samarasinghe, I'm with the Tri-State
13 Oversight Committee. Just a couple of questions.

14 A. Yes, ma'am.

15 Q. You explained what was happening as you were evacuating
16 passengers. You said that you opened the emergency gates for the
17 first responders and you mentioned, I might have heard you wrong,
18 did the fare gates open on their own or did you do a
19 (indiscernible)

20 A. I opened the fare gates.

21 Q. Okay. All right. How were the down escalators, did
22 they stop --

23 A. The down escalators were stopped. I checked those, they
24 were off. After I did the -- as the gates were opened I ran as
25 far as I could to see the down escalators had stopped.

1 Q. Okay. And did you hear like automated announcements
2 over the station PA saying that it was, there was an emergency and
3 for passengers to evacuate, did you hear any automated messages
4 over the station PA?

5 A. Not to my knowledge, I didn't hear any.

6 Q. All right. Did you hear the fire alarm by any chance
7 inside the station?

8 A. No, no, I did not.

9 Q. And the strobe lights that would go with the fire
10 alarms?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. You mentioned that you haven't been involved in
13 any training drills. Have you, during your 13 years as a station
14 manager, seen any bulletins coming through occasionally saying
15 that there has been a full-scale drill and these were the lessons
16 learned, or there is a full-scale drill that's coming up and if
17 you wanted to be participating as a station manager or as an
18 observer that these are the particulars to attend it, have you
19 ever seen something like that?

20 A. No, nothing.

21 Q. Okay, all right. And the last question I have is, you
22 said that you had contacted ROCC to tell them what was going on
23 initially, right?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And then from that point onwards, in any situation where

1 you would consider it necessary to evacuate passengers and close
2 down the station, what's your procedure, what do you do after
3 you've contacted ROCC?

4 A. After contacting OCC it would normally be them
5 contacting me and instructing me what to do.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. But because of the volume of smoke, and it wasn't
8 dissipating, I just made the announcement and told the people to
9 leave. The gates were open, exit the station, the station is
10 closed.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And normally they will be telling me what to do, but
13 because of the volume of smoke it wasn't safe for anyone to be in
14 that station, and so that's why --

15 Q. Okay. You were saying that you were telling passengers
16 to leave. Were you like verbally as you encountered them or over
17 the PA?

18 A. No, over the PA.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Over the PA I continued to make -- because people were
21 still down there taking pictures and not moving until Transit
22 moved them out.

23 Q. Okay. And the station PA microphone that you had in
24 your kiosk is what you used?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And I could hear them making the announcements. It was
3 making proper announcements, so that was fine.

4 Q. All right. Okay, great. Thank you.

5 A. Thank you.

6 BY MR. BUCHER:

7 Q. Dave Bucher again. Just go back to the radio for a
8 second.

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. We heard from one of the other station managers, that
11 the normal use of the station manager of the radio is to monitor
12 the train operations in the station, is that correct, or --

13 A. Yeah, you're always monitoring, you monitored but that's
14 for communications is the only time that I would use the
15 emergency, but you're monitoring it at all times.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. The OCC and train operations.

18 Q. Great. Thank you. Have you ever had, in your vast
19 experience, any similar previous incidents of smoke in the station
20 or --

21 A. Only minor where I was able to extinguish the fire, but
22 nothing, you know, like on the scale of this.

23 Q. Okay. It was a --

24 A. It was just --

25 Q. A station, a fire in the station?

1 A. In the station.

2 Q. Not in a tunnel?

3 A. No, not in the tunnel.

4 Q. Okay. Okay. Just one question about when you
5 originally went to the platform area from the kiosk to I guess
6 make your initial inspection, you know, you saw some smoke so you
7 went down to the platform from the kiosk?

8 A. No.

9 Q. No?

10 A. No. I have asthma. I wasn't about to go down there.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. The volume of smoke, I saw it on the CC TV. I made my
13 assessment that the station needed to be evacuated.

14 MR. BUCHER: Okay. All right, great, that clarifies,
15 thank you. That's all I have right now.

16 BY MR. DOWNS:

17 Q. Downs, NTSB.

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. We had testimony a little bit before, that there was
20 some problems in the kiosk. Did you have any problems with a
21 microphone on one of the kiosk consoles? That's a flexible
22 gooseneck type microphone?

23 A. I opened mezz 56 and there was no problem with the
24 kiosk. People don't know you have to push the button and hold a
25 button on the mike. When I originally opened -- started that

1 station I got a failure number and I realized you had -- it's the
2 only one I know you have to push the button and push the call
3 button and it works.

4 Q. Are other microphones in the station like that in terms
5 of its operation?

6 A. Never, never seen one before.

7 Q. Is the normal operation have to push the two buttons
8 or --

9 A. Normal is push top --

10 Q. One button?

11 A. One button.

12 Q. Okay. Do you know, has the problem -- has the issue
13 been reported at all?

14 A. I called the failure in and communications came over
15 reinstructed me to push both buttons.

16 Q. So they gave you instructions on its operation rather
17 than replace the microphone?

18 A. Right.

19 Q. I see.

20 A. That's what he did.

21 Q. Okay. Does the station have a bullhorn that you could
22 use in the event that the overhead intercom doesn't work?

23 A. There's bullhorns in the safety kit and cabinet, yes.

24 Q. Did you have to use them in this particular case?

25 A. No, the PA was working fine and that was more effective

1 than a bullhorn.

2 Q. So it was available but you didn't need it?

3 A. No, I didn't need it.

4 Q. Okay, great. Did you experience any medical distress as
5 a result of being in a smoky station?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And were you treated at the scene or did you go to the
8 hospital?

9 A. No, because I have asthma I'd been nebulizing, and
10 that's --

11 Q. Self-medicating?

12 A. Yes.

13 MR. DOWNS: Okay. All right. That concludes my
14 questions at the moment.

15 BY MR. ADAMS:

16 Q. Dorsey Adams, Washington Metro. I don't want to keep
17 harping on the microphone, but that microphone, is it defective or
18 just people don't know how to use it?

19 A. People don't know how to use it.

20 Q. So there's nothing physically wrong with the
21 microphones, they're not broke or anything?

22 A. The PA system works fine. When I first -- I open 56 and
23 then move to 57 in the evening. When I first got there and tried
24 to make an announcement I got a failure number, and the
25 communications tech came over and said you have to push both

1 buttons. I've worked Glenmont, Brentwood, Branch, West Falls,
2 never had another mike like that.

3 Q. Okay. So that's the only one that you know of in the
4 system?

5 A. To my knowledge.

6 Q. Do you know why?

7 A. It was there and I just, you know, didn't question.

8 Q. All right. And how long has it been there like that?

9 A. Well, I picked this run in December.

10 Q. So, it's --

11 A. Yeah, and that's the first time I actually had to do a
12 PA announcement, and when I tried to do it, it's not working. I
13 got a failure number. Communications came over, this is the way
14 you make announcements; and if you don't know that, you don't -
15 you're saying it's not working, which I did.

16 Q. All right. Thanks, Mr. Payne.

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 BY MR. BALLARD:

19 Q. To get back on the microphone again.

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. So, once you -- you picked that run in December of last
22 year, '14?

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. So, the communication person who reinstructed you, that
25 person didn't even note anything for the next station manager to

1 alert him?

2 A. There is a note someone -- I didn't do it, someone put a
3 note in the kiosk. It's just a handwritten note, you must push
4 the mike button on the PA system and the call button and the talk
5 button. But if you don't, you know, pay attention to those little
6 notes you wouldn't know it. There's nothing official.

7 Q. How long after you picked that assignment and
8 communications came out and re-instructed you, how long after that
9 did you notice the note on the console, the desk?

10 A. About a month later.

11 Q. So someone put it on there about after that?

12 A. Yes.

13 MR. BALLARD: Okay. Thank you, sir. No other
14 questions.

15 BY MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN:

16 Q. Marlene Flemings-McCann.

17 A. Yes, ma'am.

18 Q. 689 Rep. I guess I'm kind of piggy-backing off of the
19 mike also. So, you picked that run in December 2014?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. This incident happened January 12th. The
22 (indiscernible) somewhere around December the 14th or somewhere in
23 that area?

24 A. Sometime in that area, yes.

25 Q. Okay. So it probably just got put on it is what you're

1 saying, because you hadn't seen that note until you said about a
2 month later, which would be about right in the last week or so?

3 A. Yeah, about the first of January I came back and it was
4 there.

5 Q. So, basically you would say that this mike is unique
6 from, from the --

7 A. That's, that would be the word I would use, it is
8 unique.

9 Q. So, it's a possibility being so unique no one really
10 knew what they was doing until someone like you said communication
11 showed you?

12 A. After I got the failure number I worked approximately 25
13 or 30 stations and never had another mike like that.

14 Q. Okay. The other thing, I don't know if I missed it.
15 How many times did you contact Central when you first saw smoke?

16 A. I contacted them twice, once when the smoke was
17 billowing and I -- and it wasn't dissipating. I contacted them to
18 find out if they had the exhaust fan on. The lady said, yes, we
19 had the fan on, and that's when I realized, evacuate the station,
20 this is not safe for anyone. And then I contacted them a second
21 time to let them know that I was going to the top of the outside
22 escalators, because the fire department instructed me to exit the
23 station.

24 Q. Okay. So, I guess I want to -- I have two questions.

25 A. Yes, ma'am.

1 Q. When you contacted the first time and you saw the smoke,
2 it's smoky right now you need to know and let them know, did they
3 tell you anything, give you any instructions or anything?

4 A. It was more of a -- the conversation went like, I called
5 Central, I said, do you have the evacuation exhaust fan, are the
6 exhaust fans on? And the lady said yes. And I knew they were
7 busy, so that was the end of that. I said thank you and hung up.

8 Q. Okay. So when you said you knew they were busy,
9 Central -- you're guided by Central?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And when there's an emergency or a situation where you
12 knew there were busy, I just don't understand how come the call
13 never came to you first. If they're busy, how do you know they
14 were busy?

15 A. I just assumed it, and because I've been instructed on
16 how to operate a smoke situation, I was comfortable taking the
17 initiative to do what I needed to do. I didn't need Central to
18 tell me, you know, all the little steps. So, once I saw the
19 amount of smoke in the station, I took the initiative to evacuate
20 it and to close it.

21 Q. Is that normal?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. Because I --

24 A. That's not normal.

25 Q. That's the part I -- you know, you make it sound so

1 easy, and I understand that you're saying.

2 A. Because I'm comfortable with that.

3 Q. You're comfortable with that. But that's not normal for
4 you not to be guided by Central in an emergency or smoke in a
5 station.

6 A. That's correct.

7 Q. That's not procedure.

8 A. That's not procedure, that's not SOP. They contact us,
9 tell us what to do step-by-step, Mr. Payne, do this and do that.

10 Q. Okay. Next question, then you said the fire department
11 told you, you had to leave?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. You were making announcements and they said you had to
14 leave.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Then you said you contacted Central again and said I'm
17 leaving the station.

18 A. Notified them.

19 Q. Right. What did they say?

20 A. Okay. I told them I had my handheld radio and I was
21 going to stand at the top of the escalator, outside escalator, and
22 the lady said, okay, Mr. Payne; and I left the station.

23 Q. Is that normal?

24 A. To the best of my knowledge it's normal.

25 Q. To leave?

1 A. If I tell them I need to do a station check and they --
2 once I leave the kiosk I notify Central, whether it's a station
3 check, platform check, whatever I'm doing away from that kiosk,
4 every time I leave it I notify Central, and that was my mindset
5 that if I leave this kiosk I want Central to know they can't call
6 me on the phone, reach me on the handheld.

7 Q. Okay. I guess what I'm trying to understand is, and
8 this old age is terrible, because I'm losing what I'm getting
9 ready to say. It's an emergency situation and you're saying I'm
10 leaving, but you're not getting any, any more information --

11 A. No.

12 Q. -- or any guidance and no -- well, Central normally asks
13 you for an update, I mean, no updates, nothing was going on at
14 that point?

15 A. No one called to ask me anything or to tell me anything.
16 Because I told the person that answered that the fire department
17 had instructed me to leave, and that was the conversation; the
18 fire department had just instructed me to leave the station, I
19 will be upstairs with the radio, the exit outside the escalators,
20 and the person said okay. I felt comfortable telling them what I
21 was doing.

22 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: Okay. Thank you, sir.

23 MR. LITTLETON: Hi, Tom Littleton with FTA. I won't ask
24 anything about microphones and no other questions.

25 BY MS. SAMARASINGHE:

1 Q. Mr. Payne, I'm going to ask you a question and --

2 MR. DOWNS: Name, please.

3 BY MS. SAMARASINGHE:

4 Q. I'm sorry. Sharmila Samarasinghe, Tri-State Oversight
5 Committee. I will ask you a question and if you don't know the
6 answer to that, can I ask Mr. Ballard, because he might know best
7 as to what goes on at OCC, Mr. Payne might not?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. When you pick up the phone; depending on which line
10 you're working at a station; depending on whether it's green line,
11 yellow line, silver, red, when you pick up the phone does it go to
12 that particular desk at OCC or does somebody else generally field
13 those calls and send it to the desk that's dealing with that line?
14 Say for instance, on the day of the incident you were on the
15 silver, blue, orange line, when you picked up the phone in your
16 kiosk does it go to a general person at the OCC or does it go to
17 somebody who is working the yellow -- I'm sorry -- who is working
18 the silver, blue, orange line?

19 A. I'll defer that to Mr. Ballard.

20 MR. BALLARD: When a station manager calls OCC they dial
21 1970, 962-1970. It rolls to the ROCC or customer operations desk.
22 You've got four stations on there, so any station at the ROCC desk
23 will answer the call when it comes in from the station.

24 MS. SAMARASINGHE: Okay.

25 MR. BALLARD: So it does not go to the controller, it

1 goes to the station group within our ROCC. So, a customer
2 operations supervisor would answer the phone. So, there's not a
3 customer operations supervisor assigned to a particular line
4 assigned for the entire system.

5 MS. SAMARASINGHE: I see. Okay. Thank you.

6 MR. BUCHER: Dave Bucher again. No other questions at
7 this time.

8 BY MR. DOWNS:

9 Q. Downs, NTSB again. Mr. Payne, let's go back for a
10 moment to your indication that you were not aware of the 302 train
11 in the tunnel, is that correct?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. But you had contacted OCC several times to advise them
14 that you were evacuating the station, correct?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Did I not --

17 A. I contacted them once to --

18 Q. Once?

19 A. -- request the exhaust fans be turned on.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And they said they had them on.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And there was no questions then or any communications
24 other than that, and the second time was to let them know I was
25 leaving my kiosk.

1 Q. I see. So, they did not mention any status report to
2 you in terms of a train stopped in the -- the 302 train stopped in
3 the tunnel?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Would that have been the time that would have been
6 appropriate for them to tell you that they still had a train in
7 the tunnel, to make you aware of it so that you could have
8 assisted in that evacuation process possibly?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Thank you. I'd like to give my witnesses the
11 opportunity to express what we call retrospective thoughts. Now
12 that you had a few days to think about the event, knowing what you
13 know now, not that you did anything wrong, are there any thoughts
14 you might be able to share with the group here in terms of
15 processes that you would do differently or things that you might
16 have done differently that might have helped the situation, that
17 you'd like to share with us?

18 A. Not to my knowledge.

19 Q. Nothing comes to mind top of your head?

20 A. At the time I felt comfortable doing everything I did,
21 and I tried to give that at the time the best that I could for the
22 situation and I can't think of anything I should add to that.

23 Q. Nothing you --

24 A. Making the announcements, opening the gates, calling
25 Central, closing the gates for emergency personnel, everything was

1 sort of as close to SOP as I remember, and that's what I did.

2 Q. And I think you mentioned before about the respirator
3 mask. Do you think that would have been helpful if you had--

4 A. It would have encouraged me to go to the platform if I
5 knew there was a train there, but I was not going to go down there
6 with asthma without a mask.

7 MR. DOWNS: I see. Okay. Thank you. That concludes my
8 questions.

9 MR. ADAMS: Dorsey Adams, I have no questions.

10 MR. BALLARD: Hercules Ballard, no questions.

11 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: Marlene Flemings-McCann, no
12 questions.

13 MR. LITTLETON: Tom Littleton, no questions.

14 MS. SAMARASINGHE: I have no questions, thank you.

15 BY MR. BUCHER:

16 Q. Dave Bucher. One more question.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you may have already answered this initially. How
19 many years have you been a station manager?

20 A. Out of the close to 17, about 2½ I was a train operator,
21 and 1 year -- 2 years as a bus operator, so I'll let you do the
22 math.

23 Q. Okay, all right. I just --

24 A. Two years bus operator, 2 years train operator, and
25 going on 17.

1 MR. BUCHER: Okay. That's all, that's all. I just
2 needed that. And that concludes the interview of Mr. Payne.

3 (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 Hughey Payne

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-15-FR-004

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: January 20, 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.

Elizabeth M. Cochran
Transcriber