

# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD Investigative Hearing



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

Agency / Organization

Title

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

#### NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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WMATA INCIDENT AT L'ENFANT PLAZA

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

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

Interview of: LYNN SPENCER

Federal Transit Administration Washington, D.C.

Tuesday, May 5, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MARK JONES

Deputy Chief, Railroad Division

#### APPEARANCES:

MARK JONES, Deputy Chief, Railroad Division National Transportation Safety Board

MICHAEL HILLER, Railroad Accident Investigator National Transportation Safety Board

SCOTT BIEHL, Senior Counsel Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

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### 1 INTERVIEW

- 2 MR. JONES: Okay. Good morning. It's May 5th, 2015.
- 3 My name is Mark Jones. The spelling's -- of the last name,
- 4 J-o-n-e-s. We are interviewing Lynn Spencer, the director of
- 5 system safety for the FTA. And this is in regard to the January
- 6 12, 2015, arcing and smoke incident at the WMATA L'Enfant Plaza
- 7 station that the NTSB is investigating.
- And, Ms. Spencer, I'd like to thank you for agreeing to
- 9 participate in this interview. The interview will be recorded and
- 10 transcribed, and you will have an opportunity to review the
- 11 transcript and offer errata as desired.
- One of the areas the investigative hearing will explore
- 13 is the safety oversight of rail transit as mandated by Title 49
- 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 659, Rail Fixed way Guideway
- 15 Systems, State Safety Oversight; and the Moving Ahead for Progress
- 16 in the 21st Century Act, or MAP-21, signed into law on July 6,
- 17 2012.
- 18 Now I'll ask each person to identify themselves and
- 19 spell their last name, starting with Mr. Hiller, please.
- 20 MR. HILLER: Michael Hiller, NTSB. Spelling of last
- 21 name, H-i-l-l-e-r.
- MS. SPENCER: Lynn Spencer, with FTA. Last name
- S-p-e-n-c-e-r.
- 24 MR. BIEHL: Scott Biehl, last name B-i-e-h-l. I am
- 25 senior counsel for Federal Transit.

- 1 MR. JONES: Okay. Thank you.
- 2 INTERVIEW OF LYNN SPENCER
- 3 BY MR. JONES:
- Q. And, Ms. Spencer, how long have you been in your current
- 5 position as director of system safety?
- 6 A. Approximately 15 months.
- 7 Q. Okay. And could you provide some background before you
- 8 came to this position, what you --
- 9 A. Before I came to FTA, I was working in the FAA's Office
- 10 of Accident Investigation and Prevention, focusing on SMS
- 11 implementation within and external to the FAA.
- 12 Q. Okay. All right.
- 13 A. Prior to Accident Investigation and Prevention at the
- 14 FAA, I was involved in SMS, and specifically safety risk
- 15 management, for their Unmanned Aircraft Program Office, doing
- 16 safety reviews for unmanned aircraft operations.
- 17 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you. What is the Office of
- 18 System Safety responsible for?
- 19 A. Our office is responsible for the policy development,
- 20 the drafting of the regulations that support MAP-21, accident
- 21 investigation and data collection and analysis, as well as the
- 22 training development for the transit industry, including all of
- 23 the SMS training, the development of the interim provisions, which
- 24 are the training requirements for industry while we are waiting
- 25 for a final rule.

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. And I think that's about all of it.
- 3 Q. Okay. And how many FTA employees are in the Office of
- 4 System Safety?
- 5 A. I believe we are currently staffed at 14.
- 6 Q. Fourteen? Okay. Are they all at headquarters, or are
- 7 they --
- 8 A. Those are all at headquarters.
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. Let me -- we just had a retirement last week. So that
- 11 could be 13 now, with that retirement.
- 12 Q. Okay. That's -- all right, that's good. Thank you.
- I was looking on the FTA webpage a little bit, and I was
- 14 wondering if you could help me. I saw the -- the latest safety
- 15 data I could see on the webpage was a link to 2011. I think it
- 16 showed 2002 data to 2011, accident data. And I -- is there
- 17 somewhere else that more current data is located on the webpage,
- 18 or I don't know --
- 19 A. No. I think most people go directly to NTD to see our
- 20 current data.
- Q. Okay. Can -- and could you state what NTD is?
- 22 A. That's the National Transit Database.
- Q. Okay. All righty. Who has access to that? Is that a
- 24 public website or is that a --
- 25 A. No, we do -- TSO does not control or manage the NTD

- 1 website. That is a different office within FTA.
- 2 Q. Okay. Okay.
- 3 A. But I believe it is both internal facing as well as
- 4 public facing.
- 5 Q. Okay. Does your office use safety statistics to support
- 6 any of your programs?
- 7 A. That is our goal. Currently, the data we receive is not
- 8 necessarily as timely as we need it to be able to be as quickly
- 9 responsive as we would like. And so moving forward, it -- we are
- 10 looking to assess the information we are currently collecting, and
- 11 build upon that as we feel is necessary so that we are getting
- 12 timely and accurate data and sufficient data, so that then we can
- 13 use that data to then make risk-informed oversight actions. And
- 14 so that we can internally prioritize the areas of concern and then
- 15 address them. Currently, there's a lag time that makes it very
- 16 difficult to do that with our current data.
- 17 Q. Okay. Is your office -- or, are you involved any with
- 18 the TRACS committee and their proceedings?
- 19 A. Yes, we are.
- 20 Q. Yeah. And how many times has the TRACS committee met in
- 21 the past, say, 2 years?
- 22 A. I can speak to how often they have met since I have been
- 23 here. But I could not give you an exact figure as to how --
- 24 Q. Okay. Could --
- 25 A. -- often they met prior to my coming here. I know there

- 1 had been a lapse where we were standing up Transit Safety and
- 2 Oversight office.
- 3 Q. Okay.
- 4 A. Since I have come on board, they have met twice.
- 5 Q. Okay. Okay. Is it -- was it one working committee or
- 6 were there -- were they separated doing two different tasks, or --
- 7 A. The meeting is of all of the TRACS group. And usually
- 8 at those meetings at a certain point during the meetings they will
- 9 separate into their tasking groups.
- 10 Q. Okay. It may be too early, but has the FTA implemented
- 11 any items that came from the TRACS committee meetings, that you're
- 12 aware of?
- 13 A. Yes. We take the information -- the recommendation from
- 14 TRACS and we track their recommendations. So, for example, we had
- 15 asked for their recommendations on the rulemakings in the National
- 16 Safety Plan that we're coming out with. And they had come back to
- 17 us with recommendations for items that should be included in our
- 18 rulemakings and our National Safety Plan. And then we used their
- 19 recommendations as an input as our working groups developed those
- 20 rules. So that became a tool that we used to make sure we were
- 21 including the items that the TRACS group felt were important.
- 22 Q. Okay. All right. Thank you for that.
- MR. JONES: Mr. Hiller, do you want to ask some
- 24 questions?
- 25 BY MR. HILLER:

- 1 Q. Lynn, can I just revisit the question about safety
- 2 statistics and your use of safety statistics in support of any
- 3 programs. Can you give an example of some statistic that was used
- 4 in support of a program?
- 5 A. No. Because right now, the information we're getting is
- 6 not adequate to allow us to do that. We don't get causal
- 7 information. We just get broad data. For example, we get a
- 8 fatality rate. Per million passenger miles traveled, we might get
- 9 an injury rate. That's usually insufficient information for us to
- 10 take action on that, and there's a lag time that makes it even
- 11 more difficult.
- So, currently, we're not -- other than tracking our
- 13 fatality rate and injury rate to see how we're trending, it is
- 14 very difficult to actually take specific action based on that
- 15 information because there's not enough causal information attached
- 16 to it to know, for example, are we looking at a passenger fatality
- 17 because of a door failure, are we looking at a transit employee
- 18 that was killed in the yard as a right-of-way accident? And we
- 19 can't see that information in the causal factors enough.
- So currently what we're doing is building the framework
- 21 and looking at the data we are collecting so that in the future we
- 22 will be able to be collecting the information we need and getting
- 23 it in a timely manner, so then we can use it as an input more
- 24 easily than we currently can.
- 25 Q. Okay. Thank you for that answer. From your point of

- 1 view, how are you implementing MAP-21? How are you working to
- 2 implement MAP-21?
- 3 A. So, in implementing MAP-21, we're doing several things.
- 4 We are developing the SSO NPRM, the Public Transportation Agency
- 5 Safety Plan NPRM, the National Safety Program NPRM, the training
- 6 certification NPRM, the -- and the National Safety Plan NPRM. And
- 7 if I didn't mention it, the SSO NPRM.
- 8 Q. You did.
- 9 A. Okay. I was --
- 10 O. Yeah.
- 11 A. I think I got them all. So we are -- through those
- 12 rulemakings, our intent is to develop a whole framework for not
- 13 only implementing MAP-21, but for working together with our
- 14 industry to improve safety. So, for example, our National Safety
- 15 Plan will be a policy document that allows us to communicate with
- 16 our industry on safety issues, on advisories that have been
- 17 issued, on topics of concern, for example, items that had been
- 18 TRACS -- tasked to TRACS.
- 19 Q. Um-hum.
- 20 A. It will allow us to share what our performance targets
- 21 are. And then responsive to our National Safety Plan, an agency
- 22 and their transit agency safety plan -- there are a lot of very
- 23 similar sounding rules and items -- will speak to the items we are
- 24 highlighting.
- So, for example, if in our National Safety Plan we

- 1 highlight the issue of operator fatigue, which is currently one of
- 2 the items that we have tasked to TRACS, we would expect in the
- 3 transit agency safety plan, in addition to the transit agency
- 4 speaking to what their own SMS is showing them as to their own
- 5 risks at their agency, we would expect them also to address any
- 6 performance targets that we have listed in our national plan as
- 7 well as what they're doing or how they are addressing some of the
- 8 safety topics, for example, operator fatigue, that we have raised
- 9 in our National Safety Plan. So we would expect them to be
- 10 responsive to our National Safety Plan.
- 11 And so, in addition to meeting the congressional
- 12 requirements for our rulemaking, we're trying to build a whole
- 13 safety framework that will allow our industry to stand up safety
- 14 management systems, that will allow us to receive data and
- 15 information from our industry, and conduct risk-based oversight of
- 16 our industry, and then also a safety plan that allows us to
- 17 communicate back with our industry.
- 18 Q. Thank you.
- 19 A. Um-hum.
- 20 Q. So this might sound a little redundant, but what are the
- 21 requirements of MAP-21?
- 22 A. Some of them are large and some of them are small. Some
- 23 of them are as simple as defining state of good repair. Some of
- 24 them involve setting vehicle performance standards, setting up
- 25 training requirements.

- 1 Q. Right.
- 2 A. There -- some are very specific that in and of
- 3 themselves are sufficient to populate whole rules and a whole
- 4 safety oversight program. So in our rulemakings we are speaking
- 5 to the specific requirements and, in addition, building out a
- 6 little more so that it makes sense and everything is connected. I
- 7 would probably have to get back to you and really look side by
- 8 side with what our specific items are that were by congressional
- 9 mandate --
- 10 Q. Right.
- 11 A. -- and which items we have added to build the whole
- 12 structure. I don't think I could list every one of them in a very
- 13 coherent manner for you.
- Q. Okay. So, can you -- well, let me ask you it this way.
- 15 What does safety performance criteria mean to the FTA?
- 16 A. If it's vehicle safety performance criteria, which we're
- 17 tasked with, it might be that -- for example, that a vehicle might
- 18 have to have an event data recorder. It might be that a vehicle
- 19 must be designed to fail in a certain way, a fail-safe design. It
- 20 might be a performance standard having to do with flammability.
- 21 Those are all items I would consider vehicle safety performance
- 22 criteria.
- Q. And items that are not specific to vehicles in the broad
- 24 sense -- and this is language that is from the mandate safety
- 25 performance criteria, so it's -- and it was defined specifically

- 1 that way, and then they also mention vehicle safety performance
- 2 criteria. So it was two different things. And I was really
- 3 trying to focus on safety performance criteria as was defined in
- 4 the mandate.
- 5 A. So we are currently spelling out all of that in our
- 6 National Safety Plan, which is under development currently. So I
- 7 would say that I would not have the formal verbiage we are using
- 8 to communicate that. Some of the criteria we are going to be
- 9 looking at will be the injury rates, the failure rates, the time
- 10 between failures of equipment, items such as that.
- 11 Q. Okay. That's fine.
- 12 A. And targets for that.
- 13 Q. So you mentioned items like event recorders, and that
- 14 sort of is a good seque into my next question, is how specifically
- 15 does the FTA plan to address NTSB recommendations on things like
- 16 event recorders, crashworthiness standards, and fatigue?
- 17 A. It's our intent in iterations of our National Safety
- 18 Plan to address all recommendations. I would say that this first
- 19 iteration of our rulemakings, due to the timeline that we are
- 20 under to get them out, are going out slimmer than our intent would
- 21 be for future rulemakings. Simply because if they become
- 22 significant rulemakings or the cost's prohibitive because of
- 23 specific standards we're including, we would expect a very long
- 24 delay in getting them out there. And because these are initial
- 25 rulemakings that set up our authorities, it is very important to

- 1 us that we get them out there as quickly as we can so that we can
- 2 start exercising our authorities, so we can be outlining our
- 3 authorities. So these first documents, many of the standards we
- 4 are referencing are considered voluntary standards for the
- 5 industry --
- 6 Q. Yeah.
- 7 A. -- that we will highlight. And I believe in the current
- 8 draft we have -- we are also advising our industry to expect such
- 9 standards to not be voluntary in the future.
- 10 Q. Does the current FTA regulatory language allow on-site
- 11 inspections of property by FTA representatives?
- 12 A. I believe it does.
- 13 Q. Okay. Do you believe there are some situations where
- 14 safety compliance could be enhanced by using traditional
- 15 regulatory framework the FRA and the FAA use, like civil
- 16 penalties, compliance orders, and emergency orders?
- 17 A. Absolutely. And yet, I also realize that we are not
- 18 staffed to the same levels as FTA -- as FRA, excuse me, and FAA,
- 19 to have the -- to have too similar of an oversight model based on
- 20 our staffing levels. But in terms of using the same tools, yes.
- Q. Okay. Do you feel FTA has the resources to implement
- 22 the requirements of MAP-21?
- 23 A. Minimally.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- MR. HILLER: Mark?

- 1 BY MR. JONES:
- 2 Q. Shift gears a little bit, to the -- talk about the TOC a
- 3 little bit, the Tri-state Oversight Committee. Does your office
- 4 have dealings with the TOC?
- 5 A. No.
- 6 Q. No?
- 7 A. That would be our sister office, TSO-20.
- 8 Q. Oh, okay. TSO -- what's TSO? Transit Safety --
- 9 A. Transit Safety and Oversight.
- 10 Q. Okay. Okay. You may or may not be able to answer some
- 11 of these, I -- or, just your thought. Do you believe the TOC has
- 12 adequate authority to carry out its mission?
- 13 A. I don't feel that I'm in a position to answer that.
- Q. Okay. In 2014 -- we did some research -- and WMATA
- 15 documentation shows there were 69 reported fires and 35 reported
- 16 smoke incidents on WMATA. Based on your experience, would you
- 17 characterize this as a risk?
- 18 A. I would characterize that as evidence of a problem that
- 19 I would like to see WMATA assess from a risk perspective, to
- 20 assess for WMATA what is the likelihood of certain negative
- 21 outcomes and what is the severity of those outcomes, and what risk
- 22 does this pose to WMATA in their environment? And I would expect
- 23 to see -- I would like to see through their SMS, as they refine
- 24 their SMS, that they look at this information as well as any other
- 25 hazard information that they have and make those determinations

- 1 and develop mitigations to lower their risk exposure.
- 2 That is our hope, really, in going out with SMS to the
- 3 industry, that every agency learn to -- not necessarily look at
- 4 what is required by regulation and was this preventable or not
- 5 preventable, but to really start to look at the hazards inherent
- 6 to their operation and determine what risk that poses to them, and
- 7 if that's an acceptable level of risk. And if it's not, how do
- 8 they mitigate that? And are their mitigations working?
- 9 So when I hear those numbers, I would say that I think
- 10 it would be appropriate for them to do a risk assessment and look
- 11 deeper at that issue.
- 12 Q. Okay. Thank you. Do you know if the FTA has initiated
- 13 any action as a result of those numbers, either with WMATA or --
- 14 well, or you already said you're not sure about the TOC. But as
- 15 far as -- has the FTA done anything with WMATA?
- 16 A. Well, I would probably preface that by saying I have not
- 17 been involved with anything relative to that information.
- 18 Q. Okay.
- 19 A. But our oversight structure is that we do not
- 20 individually oversee a transit agency. Their SSO agency would be
- 21 overseeing and working directly with the agency, and we work
- 22 through the SSOs. But that is not handled by my office.
- Q. Okay. Okay. This sort of hits on a couple of areas,
- 24 so -- but for the last several weeks, you know, the TOC has
- 25 participated in the FTA's safety -- I think you called it the

- 1 safety management inspection of WMATA, or the audit, if you will.
- 2 And they've participated in different areas, they say. Could you
- 3 characterize -- or have you been involved in this audit, what
- 4 all's taken place in the --
- 5 A. In the inspection? I have only been involved in the
- 6 initial SMS gap analysis portion. I was not involved in the rail
- 7 or bus assessments that followed.
- 8 Q. Okay. Do you know what office was?
- 9 A. TSO-20.
- 10 Q. TSO-20, again. Okay. All righty. Thank you. Do
- 11 you -- are you aware of any initial findings from that audit?
- 12 Have you seen any initial findings?
- 13 A. I have not seen any of the initial findings from the
- 14 rail and bus assessments. I am only familiar with initial
- 15 information coming out of our SMS gap analysis.
- 16 Q. Okay. Just -- something just popped in my head about
- 17 the SMS. How do you see that working in the future, as far as
- 18 when a agency does have an SMS program? Will FTA have to approve
- 19 that SMS program, or --
- 20 A. Every agency will certify that they have met the
- 21 requirements of the Transit Agency Safety Plan, which within the
- 22 Transit Agency Safety Plan regulation will house the requirements
- 23 for their SMS. And we would look to states to be -- as the
- 24 overseer of the transit agencies. We would look for the states to
- 25 be actively engaged with their agencies on that front. Our role

- 1 would be more specific to our triennial audits, for example, when
- 2 we might be looking at their agency safety plans and how their SMS
- 3 is doing. Or, in any investigation of an incident or accident, I
- 4 would imagine that we would step up and do a similar assessment to
- 5 what we did at WMATA.
- 6 Q. Okay. And if you did -- if something did happen and you
- 7 did an assessment, do you foresee any -- what would the penalties
- 8 be, if there was something, you know, egregious found? Would that
- 9 be the SSO that imposes the penalty or would the FTA have any --
- 10 A. It's my understanding that in our current rulemakings
- 11 would be establishing what actions we currently have the authority
- 12 to take, and I believe we have requested -- my understanding is
- 13 that we have an all or nothing approach right now, where we can
- 14 withhold their funding.
- 15 Q. Right.
- 16 A. And I believe we have requested something in the middle.
- 17 Q. Um-hum.
- 18 A. It would be very nice if we could direct them to use
- 19 certain funds to address a certain issue. I'm not sure we
- 20 currently have that authority. And until our rules are out
- 21 there --
- 22 Q. Okay. All right. Do you think some SSO programs are
- 23 more robust than others?
- A. I don't work with the SSO programs, so that would be an
- 25 opinion of a spectator.

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. Not somebody that's actively involved with the SSOs.
- Q. Okay. Okay. That's all I've got.
- 4 MR. JONES: Mike, do you --
- 5 BY MR. HILLER:
- 6 Q. So, how can -- or how is the consistency of state safety
- 7 oversight, if each state is developing its own authority for its
- 8 oversight agency?
- 9 A. The current regulation that we're going out with for the
- 10 SSO program should establish the requirements for those SSOs to
- 11 meet. I would imagine that through that regulation that we would
- 12 standardize our expectations for any SSO. Through our training
- 13 regulation, we are looking to assure a certain level of safety
- 14 knowledge for anybody serving in that role for state or at a
- 15 transit agency, in overseeing safety, to make sure that they are
- 16 adequately trained to be in that role.
- 17 Q. So did the FTA intend for the state safety oversight
- 18 program to function as a cooperative effort with transit agencies?
- 19 A. I was not here at FTA when -- at the juncture where
- 20 those determinations or decisions were made.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. And my office does not directly work in the enforcement
- 23 side of the house through the SSOs.
- 24 Q. Okay. When we first asked what are some of the
- 25 responsibilities of your office, you mentioned investigations.

- 1 Since you've been the director, how many investigations has your
- 2 office led?
- 3 A. We have participated in NTSB investigations. So I was a
- 4 party to the NTSB investigation at CTA, with that derailment. We
- 5 were participants in the NTSB investigation at WMATA. And our
- 6 investigators, I believe, were hired -- first investigator was
- 7 hired, I want to say, the week after the WMATA accident. So he
- 8 wasn't even on board yet. And our second investigator came on
- 9 board April 5th, I believe.
- So at this point, being that they are both new, they
- 11 have conducted no independent investigations. In our capacity to
- 12 have an investigative ability, we would like to be obviously
- 13 involved in any NTSB investigations. And also in any
- 14 investigations where, let's say, NTSB does not launch, we feel
- 15 good about having the ability to look deeper into incidents,
- 16 trends, and things like that in the future. And we still have one
- 17 more vacancy that we are trying to fill.
- 18 Q. Okay. So is it your intent or the FTA's intent with
- 19 these investigations to use that authority more frequently --
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. -- going forward?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Okay.
- 24 A. In collaboration with and -- in collaboration with NTSB
- 25 and also independently of when NTSB is not involved.

- 1 Q. Okay. I want to come back to a question that I had
- 2 regarding resources to implement the requirements of MAP-21 and
- 3 follow up with a question about any request to increase the
- 4 funding to reach the -- or, you know, to -- how do I want to say
- 5 this? Any efforts to -- from the FTA to increase funding to
- 6 address, maybe, certain deficiencies or certain areas where you're
- 7 not able to achieve the results as quickly as you like?
- 8 A. Yes. I think that's an ongoing challenge that we're
- 9 trying to address. I think we have challenges because TSO as an
- 10 office was not even in existence the last time we had a budget
- 11 passed for FTA. And so when you have an office such as TSO, which
- 12 is standing up and growing and taking on additional
- 13 responsibility, working off of continuing resolutions don't
- 14 satisfy that need very well. And we especially notice it in our
- 15 ability to travel and get out to agencies, get out to
- 16 investigations. And yet I feel the agency has been very
- 17 responsive when push comes to shove and we have a problem
- 18 somewhere. They scrounge, and they are getting the money to
- 19 support us. But I think that's a challenge with a growing new
- 20 office.
- I think also we have been delayed in being responsive in
- 22 our rule writings because we -- it simply took time to hire up the
- 23 individuals to fill all the positions, when the office was stood
- 24 up, I believe with -- I want to say six or eight people when it
- 25 was first stood up, and it has taken years to fill those

- 1 positions. And we're still filling the last of those positions.
- 2 So, it's -- it means that several people wear many hats, and we're
- 3 a very, very hardworking organization.
- 4 O. The FAA and other modes at DOT have moved to this SMS
- 5 approach. And they've done so only after developing a robust set
- 6 of safety requirements, specific safety requirements. So what's
- 7 the FTA's plan on developing this need for specific safety
- 8 requirements?
- 9 A. We have to be able to staff up with the manpower and the
- 10 expertise we need in-house to be able to develop, for example,
- 11 specific vehicle performance standards. I know, for example, at
- 12 FAA if there's a question having to do with an engine, well, you
- 13 go to the person that just specializes in engines.
- 14 Q. Yeah.
- 15 A. And they have one of those -- they have those subject
- 16 matter experts for everything. And we have none of that in-house.
- 17 We aspire to have some of that expertise in-house, and in the
- 18 interim we have to rely on contract support until such a time as
- 19 we do have that expertise.
- 20 O. Okay. Nothing else.
- MR. HILLER: Mark?
- 22 MR. JONES: No. All right. Nothing else to --
- 23 BY MR. HILLER:
- Q. Do you have anything you'd like to add, before we close
- 25 out? Something we might have missed, or something you want to put

- 1 on the record.
- 2 A. Let me think on that. I do believe that with SMS, even
- 3 absent of some of those very specific criteria and standards you
- 4 referenced, for example, at FAA, an organization or agency that
- 5 has a healthy SMS will make decisions and prioritize actions based
- 6 on safety regardless of those requirements. And I believe that
- 7 through SMS, agencies can develop safety cultures that are strong
- 8 enough that allow them to overcome labor challenges they have,
- 9 because most of the properties are unionized, most airlines are
- 10 unionized. I believe that in the appropriate safety culture that
- 11 you can build through an SMS, that it is possible to get the
- 12 safety information, the hazard information from your frontline
- 13 personnel and take actions on that information. And have very
- 14 strong safety records and safety cultures, because of that flow of
- 15 information, because of how safety information is handled.
- So, I guess I put that out there because even at an
- 17 airline -- and my background is in the airlines, coming from an
- 18 airline with a very strong safety culture, I can tell you that we
- 19 seldom did something because FAA told us to do something. We were
- 20 going to meet FAA requirements regardless. But we did what we
- 21 needed to do to ensure that our environment was safe for all of
- 22 our employees and for the public. And the safety culture that was
- 23 built at the airline is what kept that airline safe, I would
- 24 suggest, much more than what the FAA was doing.
- 25 And so I do believe that if -- with our limited

- 1 resources, because we are not staffed like an FAA or an FRA, that
- 2 if we can effectively train up and teach our industry the
- 3 importance of SMS and safety culture, and if we can train them how
- 4 to look for hazards in their operation and how to monitor those
- 5 hazards and be aware of the risk posed by those hazards, I think
- 6 we can have a large impact, even before we get to that point of
- 7 being able to put up more specific standards.
- 8 So, in addition to writing rules, that is something we
- 9 take very seriously, and we're focused -- we're very passionate
- 10 about trying to get the information out to our industry, trying to
- 11 develop the training, and trying to build a safety structure that
- 12 will allow us to set those standards but also build up safety
- 13 capabilities and the safety culture within our agencies.
- MR. JONES: Well, thank you very much --
- MS. SPENCER: Um-hum.
- 16 MR. JONES: -- Ms. Spencer. Appreciate your time and
- 17 all of your answers. And we'll go off the record now.
- 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 Lynn Spencer

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-15-FR-004

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: May 5, 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.

Jane W. Gilliam

Transcriber