



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

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: FRANCESCA YOUNG

Washington, D.C.

Friday,  
January 16, 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

MARLENE FLEMINGS-McCANN, Assistant Business Agent  
for Rail Operations  
Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689

BRIAN DINGWALL, Union Representative  
Fraternal Order of Police  
(On behalf of Ms. Young)

I N D E X

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:40 p.m.)

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2  
3 MR. BUCHER: This is Dave Bucher, Rail Accident  
4 Investigator for the NTSB, and this is the interview of Franchesca  
5 Young, police officer on train 302 relating to the WMATA L'Enfant  
6 Plaza incident of January 12th, 2015, NTSB accident no. DCA-15-FR-  
7 004.

8 To my right?

9 MS. SAMARASINGHE: Sharmila Samarasinghe. I'm with the  
10 Tri-State Oversight Committee, the TOC, and I'm the full-time  
11 Virginia member.

12 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: Marlene Flemings-McCann, Local 689  
13 representative.

14 MR. BALLARD: Hercules Ballard, Washington Metro,  
15 Managing Director of Rail Transportation.

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

18 MR. DOWNS: Richard Downs, NTSB Survival Factors Group  
19 Chairperson.

20 MR. DINGWALL: Brian Dingwall, FOP, Union  
21 Representative.

22 MR. BUCHER: Thank you.

## INTERVIEW OF FRANCESCA YOUNG

23  
24 BY MR. BUCHER:

25 Q. Like I said, Francesca, if you just could go back to

1 your -- to the 12th and your first association with the 302 train,  
2 and give us your story about what happened.

3 A. Okay. A little after 3 p.m., and myself and another  
4 officer were on the platform at L'Enfant Plaza on the yellow line  
5 to Huntington. And a woman flagged us down and stated that she  
6 saw -- she may have seen a spark, she thought she saw a spark in a  
7 tunnel. And I asked her for clarification. What do you mean by a  
8 spark? And I asked her was it a flash at the back of the train or  
9 was it something more. She said it may have been a flash at the  
10 back of the train, I don't know.

11 And we proceeded down the platform towards the  
12 Huntington -- towards the front of the train where the front of  
13 the train would have been, and we saw a cloud of smoke, which we  
14 believed was, like, brake dust, which is common in the metro,  
15 brake dust. And all of the sudden, it started to disappear. So  
16 we walked, myself and me, Officer Page walked on the catwalk not  
17 too far down, because there was no more smoke after we did a  
18 little tunnel inspection to make sure nothing was coming from the  
19 tunnel. When we turned around, we were walking back to the  
20 platform, there was nothing in the air. It was clear.

21 So we waited for our train to get there. And when the  
22 train, 302, I believe, came onto the platform, we boarded the  
23 train as normal, got on the train, and we pulled out of L'Enfant  
24 Plaza. We got in the tunnel -- I don't know how far we were  
25 inside of the tunnel -- and the train stopped. When the train

1 stopped, we turned around and looked out of the front of the  
2 train, and we saw this big -- well, I saw this big, orange cloud  
3 of -- looked to be, like, a fire in progress to me. And at this  
4 time, the train operator, we told the train operator to come back  
5 to the back of the train because we believed it was a fire, and we  
6 saw all of this smoke pouring into the door -- the cracks of the  
7 doors to the car that we were in. And we could no longer see  
8 anything outside of the train. All we saw was smoke.

9           Everyone panicked. The train operator left the car to  
10 try to back us up. And when he tried to back us up, the other  
11 officer went with him to the back of the train. I no longer saw  
12 her again, the other officer.

13           At this point, we were advised that -- oh, I went over  
14 to radio and said that -- I believe -- I can't remember what I  
15 said exactly because I was in a state of panic. I think I said I  
16 see smoke or fire. I don't know what I said exactly. But that  
17 was the initial call for help. I stated we had medical  
18 emergencies going on because people were struggling breathing,  
19 panicking.

20           We went -- I went to the emergency button on the end of  
21 the car, and I pressed for the train operator, because he was at  
22 the back. At that time, I no longer had any contact with him but  
23 that box. And he was stating that he couldn't back up because  
24 there was a train behind us or something. And we didn't know what  
25 was going on. Somehow I just -- I don't know. I can't really

1 tell you exactly what happened next. I just remember us -- them  
2 saying we could not back the train up, information was coming, and  
3 that there was a train blocking us in the tunnel. We could not go  
4 backwards because -- and we couldn't go forwards because that's  
5 where the fire was.

6 We were ordered not to open the bulkhead doors or any  
7 doors because the smoke would just rush in, and then I don't know  
8 what could have happened after that. So everybody was -- started  
9 to put things over their faces and trying to breathe slowly, and I  
10 was trying to keep everybody calm. We had an ex-firefighter on  
11 board. He was helping out with trying to maintain and give us  
12 tips to stay under the smoke. So we were -- he asked us to get on  
13 the ground and, you know, breathe under the seat, and stuff like  
14 that. And I don't know how long it took. It just seemed like a  
15 long time for us to actually get off the train.

16 I never left the car that I was in. We could not see.  
17 And I was in fear if we would have gotten off, self-evacuated,  
18 then something really bad would have happened. People would  
19 probably -- I don't know -- inhale way too much smoke too fast, or  
20 we could have burned, because we saw an orange cloud of smoke,  
21 which we believed to be a fire. So we stayed put.

22 We were advised that help was on the way. I don't know  
23 what time this was. At this point, I don't have any recollection  
24 of what time anything was said or done. All I remember was a lot  
25 of going back and forth, people on the air saying there was no



1 visibility at L'Enfant Plaza on the platform and that there was a  
2 train behind us. And someone said over the air that they cannot  
3 locate the other train operator to the train that blocked us into  
4 the tunnel. So of course, when people heard that, we just started  
5 panicking, because we were like we can't get out, we can't get  
6 out.

7           That's pretty much it for the just sitting, waiting,  
8 keeping everybody calm. People were -- couldn't breathe. I  
9 couldn't breathe. It was getting bad. And I believe someone said  
10 the fire department turned down the third rail power, or  
11 something. Someone stated that. And at that point, it would have  
12 been safe for them to come on the track and rescue us.

13           I saw a sergeant come through the bulkhead doors telling  
14 everyone, come on, let's get out, let's get out. At that point,  
15 the smoke was starting to clear up. It wasn't as thick as it was.  
16 I don't know how long -- I don't know how long I was under there.  
17 I still don't know to this day. But whatever time it was, the  
18 smoke started to go away, but not completely, but it was enough  
19 for us to get off the train. It was -- to my knowledge, it was  
20 safe for me to get off the train.

21           I made sure everyone was off the train with me before I  
22 exited the train. So we walked, kept walking all the way to the  
23 back of the train until we got safe exit onto the catwalk. At  
24 this point, I just went outside, and basically gasping for air at  
25 this point, just trying to get air and calm down. And there were

1 several medical teams out there. I had an oxygen mask on, along  
2 with other officers and sergeants and people that were on the  
3 train with me.

4 And that's pretty much -- I mean, as far as what was  
5 being said and what was being done, I can't really -- I just don't  
6 know because I was in the thick of it. I couldn't barely breathe.  
7 I just felt like I was going to die, so I -- my focus was just on  
8 trying to keep everyone up in spirits and letting them know we're  
9 going to get out, we're going to get out. So I don't know if you  
10 have any questions, because I may be missing a lot of things --

11 Q. Sure, sure.

12 A. -- because I'm not a good story teller. I don't --

13 Q. No, no. Dave Bucher. That was fine.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. We'll just start around --

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. -- and feed you a few questions and maybe jog your  
18 memory a little bit more.

19 A. Yes, yes.

20 MR. BUCHER: You may start, Rick.

21 BY MR. DOWNS:

22 Q. Officer Young, thanks for joining us today. Let's  
23 digress a little bit.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. How long have you been on the force?

1 A. Seven years.

2 Q. Seven years?

3 A. Seven years.

4 Q. Okay. And you're a police officer?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Correct me if I'm wrong. You underwent the  
7 original officer training?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You have a periodic annual refresher training or  
10 anything?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Does that training include evacuation processes? Do you  
13 know? Do you remember?

14 A. It has. I don't know how many times we actually had  
15 that done as far as evacuation is concerned.

16 Q. In other words, what steps to take when you're going to  
17 be evacuating a train, how the doors work, that kind of thing?

18 A. Yeah. I remember taking that class when we came in,  
19 yes.

20 Q. When you first joined the force seven years ago?

21 A. Yes, yes.

22 Q. And on the refresher training, do they touch on that at  
23 all, do you remember?

24 A. I don't recall doing that every year. I don't --

25 Q. Okay. Prior to joining the force, what's your

1 experience, job experience?

2 A. I just was a security officer for loss prevention for  
3 different department -- well, Macy's, Hecht's, and I was a  
4 security guard at Marriott Hotel.

5 Q. Private security?

6 A. Yeah, pretty much.

7 Q. Okay. Do you have any academic training in this?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Education, college, high school?

10 A. Just high school graduate.

11 Q. High school, graduated high school?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. Have you had prior events in your work experience  
14 in the seven years of anything of this magnitude that you were  
15 involved with?

16 A. No, nothing like this ever.

17 Q. Other events involving smoke or anything like that?

18 A. No.

19 Q. No?

20 A. No.

21 Q. All right. That particular day, any other events of the  
22 day that were unusual?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Just a routine day?

25 A. Just a regular day, yes.

1 Q. Okay. And this particular case, you were working with  
2 Officer Page, and you're basically approaching the end of your  
3 work shift?

4 A. Yes, we were.

5 Q. Getting on the train to head back to your duty  
6 station --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- in Huntington?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. So want to go back a little bit about when you first --  
11 before your train pulls in, the 302 train pulls in, a passenger,  
12 or whomever, on the platform there alerted you verbally to what  
13 they thought was smoke or whatever?

14 A. Well, they said they saw a spark.

15 Q. Spark?

16 A. In the tunnel.

17 Q. In that direction, and you figured --

18 A. In the opposite direction.

19 Q. Opposite direction?

20 A. Opposite of the one to Huntington. It was -- the actual  
21 spark she saw was going to Gallery Place.

22 Q. Oh, I see.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. I'm glad we got that clarified. So it was not the  
25 tunnel that you had --

1 A. No, sir. It was not the tunnel we were on.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I mean, we were in.

4 Q. You were, you were exploring or investigating what had  
5 been a spark on the opposite tunnel?

6 A. No. When she said it could have been a spark from the  
7 train and we looked and we didn't see anything, we proceeded down  
8 the platform to get on our train, at which point when we turned  
9 our bodies to the right, we saw a cloud of smoke, which we  
10 believed to be brake dust, which is very common in the metro. And  
11 it was coming from the side where we were on.

12 Q. Okay. So the smoke was in the direction that the train  
13 ultimately went into the tunnel?

14 A. Yes. And then it just went away. So we thought that  
15 maybe a train had come through the station and did something and  
16 --

17 Q. And --

18 A. Oh, there was a call for some smoke at Anacostia. I --

19 Q. That you heard?

20 A. We heard.

21 Q. On the radio?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. But the spark, was that in the tunnel that the  
24 train went into --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- or that was the tunnel from --

2 A. The opposite direction.

3 Q. Opposite tunnel, opposite direction?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. I see. Thank you for that clarification.

6 A. No problem.

7 Q. And that's the -- both you and Officer Page were  
8 together when that came in?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. But you did not go in that tunnel direction? You went  
11 in the opposite direction that the --

12 A. Right, because we saw the smoke coming from the side we  
13 were going into.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. So --

16 Q. Did you happen to notify your com center when you went  
17 down the tunnel a short distance?

18 A. No, we didn't, because we were on, we were on the safe  
19 side, and we can go there for anything we want to if we -- we  
20 don't have to notify them.

21 Q. This is where there is still a railing along the  
22 catwalk?

23 A. No, it's actually a gate there, so --

24 Q. A gate at the end of the platform?

25 A. Right.

1 Q. And then there's a railing a short distance, and there's  
2 some service doors there?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. And you're allowed to walk down there without  
5 having to notify your com center --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- because it's safe and there's no path -- the train in  
8 the way and all that sort of thing?

9 A. Exactly.

10 Q. I see. And you didn't go beyond the end of that little  
11 area --

12 A. Right. We didn't -- that was -- if we had to go  
13 further, then it would have been -- but since there was no need to  
14 go further, we didn't see anything --

15 Q. Right.

16 A. So we were like --

17 Q. But if you did see something --

18 A. Then we would have --

19 Q. -- then you would have flagged it on the radio?

20 A. Oh, yes, absolutely.

21 Q. And notified them, and so on and so forth?

22 A. Absolutely.

23 Q. I see. Okay. But nonetheless, you didn't see anything?

24 A. No. Like I said, we thought it was a cloud of something  
25 -- because it happens all the time where a train will probably



1 have brake dust, and it will carry through, and whatever station  
2 it goes to, it'll leave a cloud of smoke.

3 Q. All the time?

4 A. All the --

5 Q. And it's nothing unusual?

6 A. Yeah, and we always get calls for this, so we know.

7 Q. Um-hum. Okay. Good. So you complete that inspection?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Unfounded?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I'll use a police term. You walk back to the platform?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. The 302 train pulls in. You get in -- both get in the  
14 first car?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. I'm going to walk you through step by step. You  
17 gave us a very good summary as to what you did, but I want to kind  
18 of break that down or help you break it down a little bit.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. I did the same thing for Officer Page, okay?

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. It was very helpful. Sometimes the things I ask will  
23 prompt thoughts by you --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay?

1 A. I know it will.

2 Q. Okay. So the two of you get in that lead car. You're  
3 facing the front or the rear of the train as the train is --

4 A. Yeah, we're facing the rear where every -- we can see  
5 all of the passengers.

6 Q. Um-hum.

7 A. We don't want to turn our back to passengers.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. So we always face them.

10 Q. That's standard police practice?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Good. And you're in the front of the car?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Kind of right by the train operator's doorway there?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And you're chatting amongst yourselves --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Routine patrol?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Routine ride?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Nothing unusual?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. The train pulls out of the station and down the tunnel?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. What happened next?

2 A. I believe the train -- like I said, I don't know how far  
3 we went because we weren't paying attention. It's -- you know.  
4 So the train stopped, and we looked because we were wondering why  
5 we were stopping. And we looked and we saw an orange ball --

6 Q. Was that through the front glass?

7 A. Through the front.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Train operator's --

10 Q. Were the headlights of the train on?

11 A. Yes -- no -- I don't know.

12 Q. You don't know?

13 A. Because we -- all I saw was orange.

14 Q. Orange, okay.

15 A. Like a fire.

16 Q. I'm very familiar with the metro rail cars. The glass  
17 door to the operator's compartment is a smoked glass?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So you really can't see through it unless you're outside  
20 where you have a backlight environment?

21 A. Right.

22 Q. But you could clearly see at that point it was a bright  
23 orange?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Your characterization?

1 A. I could see it through.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I have 20/20 vision, so --

4 Q. So like you were saying before, like you were saying  
5 before, what came to mind instantly to you was that it was a fire  
6 of some sort?

7 A. Yes, yes.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I've never seen anything like that in the tunnels ever.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And if it was brake dust, it wouldn't have been that  
12 color.

13 Q. Right. And highly unusual to you?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You're thinking fire?

16 A. Yes, because immediately, we saw the smoke just pouring  
17 into the train car doors through the -- seeping through the cracks  
18 of the train car doors.

19 Q. The side doors?

20 A. Yes. The train doors that open.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. That, you know, slide open.

23 Q. Side doors?

24 A. Side doors, side doors.

25 Q. The slider doors. Okay. Not the front door?

1 A. Not the front door.

2 Q. Okay. Okay. Now, walking through it step by step.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. Was the ventilation system still on?

5 A. I have no idea.

6 Q. You weren't really paying attention?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Could you see if the ventilation system on -- was there  
9 any smoke pouring out of the top, valences, valences?

10 A. I, I did not -- I don't recall seeing the smoke come  
11 from the top.

12 Q. Just through the doors?

13 A. I just saw the doors, like, that's all. That's what I  
14 recall.

15 Q. Okay. What did you do next?

16 A. I think -- I don't know if I went on the intercom to the  
17 train operator or if I said to the other officer to get him. I  
18 can't remember. I don't recall.

19 Q. Your best recollection is fine.

20 A. But I remember saying let's back the train up. Let's  
21 get -- train operator, we need you to back, let's back up, let's  
22 back up --

23 Q. You remember saying that to Officer Page?

24 A. Or the train operator.

25 Q. Or the train operator?

1 A. I don't know which one.

2 Q. But you're standing in the front of that train, right  
3 adjacent to the door?

4 A. Yeah, I was. But then when I saw the smoke, I ran to  
5 the back of the car, and I think I did push the button.

6 Q. Oh, so --

7 A. I can't remember.

8 Q. -- the two of you, the two officers, you separated at  
9 that point? She stayed in the front --

10 A. Yeah, it was the same car.

11 Q. Same car, but you went to the back of the same car?

12 A. Yes, I believe so, because I believe seeing her on my  
13 left side.

14 Q. Okay. Why did you go to the back of the car now?

15 A. I believe I went to push the button to the operator.

16 Q. But there's a button right in the front of the car  
17 there. Did you think of that or --

18 A. No, I didn't. I went --

19 Q. You weren't thinking --

20 A. No, I --

21 MS. SAMARASINGHE: No, she cannot because the  
22 (indiscernible) door is --

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The cab door is closed.

24 MS. SAMARASINGHE: Sharmila Samarasinghe, Tri-State  
25 Oversight.

1 MS. YOUNG: Oh, yes, yes, you're right. She's right.

2 MR. DOWNS: I wanted to hear her say that --

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

4 MS. YOUNG: I'm sorry. I wasn't -- okay, yeah. That  
5 door was closed.

6 BY MR. DOWNS:

7 Q. That door was closed?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Very good.

10 MR. DOWNS: Let's go off the record.

11 (Off the record.)

12 (On the record.)

13 MR. DOWNS: Back on the record.

14 BY MR. DOWNS:

15 Q. So you went to the opposite end of the car because -- so  
16 you went to the opposite end of the car to use that button?

17 A. I believe so.

18 Q. Okay. Do you remember saying anything to the operator?

19 A. I remember saying let's back the -- can you back the  
20 train -- train operator, come to the back of the train, back the  
21 train up. I believe I said that.

22 Q. Did you identify yourself as an officer?

23 A. I may have. I'm not sure. I'm not going to say --  
24 because at that point when I saw the fire, I may have said just  
25 get out -- I don't know. I can't recall. I'm not sure. I can't

1 recall something that small --

2 Q. But the other officer is in the front of the same car?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Do you have any idea what she might have done?

5 A. No. After that, I didn't -- no. I just saw them going  
6 to the back after that happened, to the back of the whole train.

7 Q. So the next thing you recall was that the operator came  
8 out of the operator's compartment?

9 A. Yes, yes.

10 Q. Was joined by Officer Page --

11 A. Page, yes.

12 Q. And he worked himself to the rear of that car --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- with the officer? Passed by you?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And left that car?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. What did you do next?

19 A. I don't know if I had already been over the radio at  
20 this point or not, but I think I just kept getting on the radio  
21 saying we need help, we need help, and telling people calm down,  
22 stay calm, because people were freaking out. That's really all I  
23 remember for right there. And I believe I was listening a little  
24 bit from the operator saying something like we can't move, don't  
25 open the doors. And I don't know what timeframe this was, because



1 everything was just happening so fast.

2 Q. So this is the overhead intercom?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. You heard announcements from the train operator?

5 A. Yes, we did.

6 Q. To the effect, we can't move, don't open the train  
7 doors?

8 A. Yes. We're trying to, we're trying to -- I think he  
9 said we're trying to back the train up. But then something  
10 happened on the transit police side where they were -- they told  
11 us to switch over to MTPD 2. For a big incident like this, we  
12 always have to switch channels. And after that, I just started to  
13 hear all of these officers and officials saying things. And I  
14 couldn't understand, because it was like -- the radio was going in  
15 and out. And I just remember I kept trying to get on the radio  
16 saying we need medical -- we have medical emergencies here, we  
17 can't breathe. That's all I remember I kept saying that over and  
18 over.

19 Q. So, so you were instructed to change to a different  
20 tactical channel?

21 A. A different tac channel.

22 Q. So you were --

23 A. Channel 2.

24 Q. -- normally on your service channel, your routine patrol  
25 channel?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And at some point, you were instructed to switch over to  
3 the tactical channel?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Which you did?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And continue to monitor?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And you continued to broadcast to them your status?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. And tell us what you did next?

12 A. While I was in the train with the passengers, we were  
13 just following the lead of the ex-firefighter who was giving us  
14 great tips as to breathe. I just remember people crying. And I  
15 was trying to comfort people and tell them, you know, giving them  
16 hope that we're going to get out of here and we're going to -- and  
17 things like that. That's -- I just kept doing that. And I kept  
18 giving updates when they asked.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. But I just kept hearing people say the operator of the  
21 train that was behind us has left.

22 Q. You heard that on the --

23 A. I heard that on my transit police radio.

24 Q. Transit police radio?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You just have one radio, your portable radio?

2 A. Oh, yes, yes.

3 Q. And it's one channel at a time?

4 A. It's one channel, yeah, MTPD 2.

5 Q. Rather than monitoring several channels. So you don't  
6 really have the capability of listening to the rail operations --

7 A. No, I don't believe it's on there.

8 Q. -- channel?

9 A. If it's on there, I had no idea that the -- that it was  
10 on there.

11 Q. So you would never have a need necessarily to listen to  
12 it?

13 A. Right. Usually rail is already on a -- I've never been  
14 in a situation where we're in a tunnel somewhere, but if it's seen  
15 outside on a platform somewhere, rail is always there, so we will  
16 always be listening to rail's radio beside them. And then we'll  
17 be relaying messages to transit police over our radio.

18 Q. I see.

19 A. And it's always like that.

20 Q. So you remained in that particular car?

21 A. Yes, I never left.

22 Q. For the entire duration of the event?

23 A. Yes, yes, because we --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- were ordered not to open the bulkhead doors.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. Because the smoke will rush in. This is what I'm  
3 assuming would happen.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. The smoke will rush in, and then we'll all probably have  
6 --

7 Q. So you -- literally don't open the end doors because  
8 even if we --

9 A. We need to --

10 Q. (Indiscernible) car --

11 A. -- save the little air that we have in here, because --

12 Q. Gotcha. Okay.

13 A. -- if we open the doors, and fire and smoke rush in, and  
14 we're all doomed.

15 Q. And people were panicking, you were saying?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And were there any medical emergencies occurring?

18 A. There was one guy who was really -- seemed like he was  
19 having an asthma attack, and -- but he said he -- he kept saying  
20 I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine. Other people were doing the same  
21 thing, just panicking, crying, sweating, gasping for air like me.

22 Q. Did anybody become unconscious in your car?

23 A. No, no.

24 Q. Okay. And we didn't have anybody in your car that had  
25 any kind of convulsive episode?

1 A. No, no.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I kept checking. If they were laying on the ground, I  
4 would shake them, are you okay, or something, you know, tap them,  
5 and they'd be like, okay, I'm good, I'm fine.

6 Q. Okay. So you stayed for the duration of the event in  
7 your car?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. At some point, the fire department arrived?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Tell us about that.

12 A. I saw the fire department when I -- when they were --  
13 when we were moving to the front of the train, because I believe  
14 someone told us that the fire department was on the scene and that  
15 they were evacuating the train. I believe I heard that on the  
16 radio. And I saw a sergeant coming towards the back of the train.  
17 And he was saying, okay --

18 Q. The back referring to the end of the train that you're  
19 on now --

20 A. I mean, to the front -- yeah. He (indiscernible) from  
21 the back, and he was coming towards the front of the train.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Sorry.

24 Q. It's okay. You saw a sergeant, a transit PD officer  
25 sergeant --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- working his way through the train?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. You saw him through the end door windows, or whatever?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And at that point --

7 A. I'm sorry. Now I just remembered something. When we  
8 got the word that we were going to be evacuated, we started to  
9 move forward to the back of the train, but we couldn't crowd  
10 everyone into one car, because we wouldn't have anywhere to go,  
11 and that would have created even more panic. So I believe --  
12 yeah, at this time, the smoke was clearing up towards the back of  
13 the train. Not the front. The front was still smoky.

14 Q. Let's call it north and south.

15 A. North and south.

16 Q. It's a southbound train. So at that point, the north  
17 end of the train, the smoke was clearing?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Would that be a better way of saying it?

20 A. That's what we said -- that's what they, they said.

21 Q. Okay. So at that point, was it your decision to move  
22 passengers in a north direction to the next car, or how did that  
23 work?

24 A. I believe someone said -- I heard someone say over the  
25 radio they were doing -- but yes, I moved them when I heard that

1 to the --

2 Q. So you took command of the environment, and everybody  
3 pick up and move to the next car --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- next north-most car as best you could --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- to get them out of the first car in the anticipation  
8 of evacuation back into the station?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Is that a correct characterization?

11 A. Yes, that is exactly what happened.

12 Q. Okay. Good. Did that happen -- approximately when did  
13 that happen?

14 A. Like I say --

15 Q. Before the fire department arrived? After?

16 A. No, they were already on scene, but we never saw them  
17 until we got up towards the back -- towards L'Enfant.

18 Q. In other words, you kept moving people progressively  
19 north?

20 A. Yeah, we saw people moving -- we saw people moving, and  
21 the train cars were starting to get --

22 Q. As the people are vacating in front of you --

23 A. Right.

24 Q. -- you're moving people --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- further into that next car?

2 A. Yes, yes.

3 Q. I see. Okay.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And at some point, you saw firefighters?

6 A. Yes, and a sergeant.

7 Q. And a sergeant? And was that the third, last car?

8 Which car was that, roughly?

9 A. I want to say I cannot -- I don't recall.

10 Q. Okay. Okay. And you were still -- you didn't become

11 unconscious during any period of time --

12 A. No.

13 Q. But you had real difficulty breathing?

14 A. Yes, yes, I did.

15 Q. Okay. And this firefighter, ex-firefighter, retired

16 firefighter, did you get a name or anything?

17 A. I don't -- he works here. He works --

18 Q. Works --

19 A. -- in the DVR unit here at metro.

20 Q. DVR unit?

21 A. He works in DVR.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Video unit.

23 MS. YOUNG: Video, yes.

24 BY MR. DOWNS:

25 Q. Video unit? Oh --



1 A. Yes, he works there. He was off-duty. He was headed  
2 home with us.

3 Q. Okay. Well, we'll get a name, we'll get a name --

4 A. I believe it was Steve, first name.

5 Q. -- from some other organization.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. So he was helpful to you, you're saying?

8 A. Yes, and everyone on that train car.

9 Q. In terms of tips of how to deal with the smoke?

10 A. Smoke, yes.

11 Q. Good. And what were those -- some of those tips? Can  
12 you tell us?

13 A. Stay low, because the smoke clouds were --

14 Q. Ceiling?

15 A. Ceiling, yeah.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So lower, we could actually see there wasn't that much  
18 smoke.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So we were trying to keep the people down low --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- so they wouldn't just -- I was standing up. I was  
23 just too -- I was just in a panic mode, so I was standing up the  
24 whole time. I never went down with them.

25 Q. Okay. All right. So you're progressively moving

1 everybody towards the rear of the train, and at some point, you  
2 encounter the firefighters?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And did they bring you out of the last car?

5 A. No. I don't know if --

6 Q. What was the evacuation at that point?

7 A. When the last -- I believe -- it may have been the  
8 second car to the front where we were that we exited, well, I  
9 exited. I don't know. I just remember the sergeant opening the  
10 doors and --

11 Q. The side door?

12 A. The side doors, yeah, opening the side doors and all of  
13 the better air was coming through.

14 Q. Oh, better air at that time?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Meaning it was clear outside --

17 A. Clear, yeah, it was clear outside --

18 Q. -- (indiscernible) in the car itself?

19 A. -- because we were going towards L'Enfant Plaza.

20 Q. So it was actually a welcome to get out of the car  
21 because the car at that point still had smoke in it?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. I see.

24 A. So we were already evacuate --

25 Q. So you were in some car. Was it closer to the north end

1 of the train or the south end of the train, do you remember?

2 A. It was --

3 Q. Or was it maybe in the middle of the train?

4 A. I don't recall.

5 Q. You don't remember? Okay. That's fine. So the door  
6 opens, the side doors open, and you step out to the catwalk, or  
7 did you go down to the track?

8 A. No, no tracks. We went on the catwalk.

9 Q. Catwalk?

10 A. We went on the catwalk.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yes, I remember that, yes. We went on the catwalk, and  
13 everybody made it safely up from --

14 Q. Were you the last person off the car?

15 A. Off of my car, yes.

16 Q. The car that you were in?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. So, in essence, you stuck around to make sure  
19 everybody --

20 A. Yes, I did.

21 Q. -- on the train was off?

22 A. Yes, I did.

23 Q. Okay. Good. And you were at the tail end, if you will,  
24 of the progression of people, evacuees?

25 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I made sure everyone was in front of me.

3 Q. Made sure everybody made their way back to -- were there  
4 firefighters stationed along the way, do you know?

5 A. Yes. I saw the firefighters with the wheelchair patron  
6 at the back of the train, which is closest to L'Enfant.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And with Officer Page.

9 Q. Okay. That's -- so that -- finally, you saw Officer  
10 Page again?

11 A. Yes, I finally saw her.

12 Q. Okay. Okay.

13 A. And -- yeah.

14 Q. And that's as you're working your way along the catwalk?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And you could see through the window?

17 A. Yes -- or did I -- was I on the train? I don't -- I  
18 can't remember if I was on the train or the catwalk at that point  
19 when I saw her. I can't remember.

20 Q. Okay. Very good. You passed by the last car?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And do you remember from the last car, between making  
23 your way back to the station platform itself?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Did you stay on the catwalk --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- or did you go down to the track?

3 A. No, no, we stayed on the catwalk.

4 Q. Catwalk, okay.

5 A. Everyone was instructed to stay on the catwalk.

6 Q. How was the air at that point? Was it reasonably clear?

7 A. It was reasonably -- yeah, yeah, yeah, definitely.

8 Q. So you made your way to the platform. What did you  
9 encounter at the platform?

10 A. I saw a guy laying on the ground. It may have been the  
11 guy that was having a seizure. I don't know. But he was being  
12 worked on, I believe, by a medical -- I just saw these medical  
13 bags and stuff like --

14 Q. A EMS working on him?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I believe. But I was -- I saw people -- I was like,  
18 okay, he's fine because, clearly, he's, you know, so I just kept  
19 going, because I needed some fresh air, and everybody was out --  
20 off the train. So I -- at that point, I just kept going.

21 Q. Your job was done, and you needed to get out to where  
22 you could breathe?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Would that be a fair characterization?

25 A. Yes, it was.

1 Q. Good. So you made your way up. Did you use an elevator  
2 to get up or did you walk --

3 A. No, we --

4 Q. -- the stairs?

5 A. We used an escalator.

6 Q. Escalator?

7 A. Escalator, escalator.

8 Q. Escalators were still working?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah, because I didn't walk up those steps. Yeah, it  
12 was the escalator.

13 Q. Do you remember which exit you came out of the station?

14 A. 9th and D.

15 Q. 9th and D? Okay. And when you got to the top side --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- what happened then?

18 A. Well, when I opened the door, I could breathe, and fresh  
19 air, and so I just rushed past everyone and got onto a medical  
20 command vehicle where they had oxygen masks there waiting for  
21 people.

22 Q. Was it a bus, medical bus?

23 A. It wasn't a bus. It was more so like a truck.

24 Q. A truck?

25 A. Like an oversized truck. It wasn't a bus.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Yeah. It's like an oversized fire truck or something.

3 Q. But there were oxygen masks there for you?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. Go ahead.

6 A. And there were other people on there getting oxygen.

7 Q. Okay. And you were able to sit down or something?

8 A. Yes, I was sitting down with -- another officer helped  
9 me out of the station, one of the first responders.

10 Q. Escorted you from the platform level on up to the top  
11 side?

12 A. Yes. I believe -- I remember being on the escalator  
13 with him, so he must have met me down at the platform. He must  
14 have.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And you got to the medical station to be able to gather  
18 some oxygen?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And kind of gain your senses again?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. And how long were you there?

23 A. I do not recall. I left the vehicle to go use the  
24 restroom, because I had to use the restroom really bad, and when I  
25 came back, it was gone. So the vehicle I was on. So I had to

1 catch a ride with the officer that escorted me out --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- to the hospital.

4 Q. And you were taken to the hospital?

5 A. To GW Hospital.

6 Q. For treatment?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. GW Hospital.

10 Q. Okay. I'm going to turn it over, give somebody else a  
11 chance here.

12 A. Okay.

13 BY MR. ADAMS:

14 Q. Just a few questions, Officer Young. When you're  
15 getting these transmissions on the radio, is it loud enough for  
16 customers to hear also?

17 A. Yes, they could hear.

18 Q. Okay. All right.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Are there times when you wear an earpiece?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Never?

23 A. No. That earpiece that I had was for my cell phone. It  
24 wasn't for that -- no. I had my (indiscernible) mike.

25 Q. But do --



1 A. I never wear --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. No, I don't, not for that.

4 Q. Drills. You ever taken part in any drills, any  
5 evacuation drills?

6 A. We have had -- I remember in the -- having training like  
7 this when I first came on. I do not -- I'm trying to think if it  
8 was after, but I cannot recall, and if it was, it was probably  
9 years ago.

10 Q. All right.

11 A. I can't remember. I can't remember.

12 Q. If there drills, how would you find out about them, or  
13 do you find out --

14 A. They would notify us. If we had to take the --

15 Q. Well, not if you had to, but that there are upcoming  
16 drills?

17 A. Oh, no, I don't know.

18 Q. You don't get any bulletins or anything like that, or  
19 volunteers --

20 A. No, no, I don't recall. No one ever, you know, so --

21 Q. I don't have any questions, any other questions.

22 BY MR. BALLARD:

23 Q. Hercules Ballard, Washington Metro. Officer Young?

24 A. Yes?

25 Q. Based on the training you received when you were

1 initially hired on how to respond during emergency situations, do  
2 you feel today that if you were involved in an emergency that you  
3 would know how to respond appropriately based on your training?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. And one more question. On the day of the  
6 incident, when the train went into the tunnel, do you remember  
7 when the train went on emergency lighting, when the lighting was  
8 (indiscernible) reduced in the car?

9 A. No, I don't. I remember -- oh, wait, wait. It was dark  
10 -- I believe it was dark when, when I noticed the smoke coming. I  
11 believe it was dark. It was like lights -- I think they were at  
12 each exit. Was it --

13 Q. Emergency lights, the emergency lights --

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. So that was almost immediately when the car stopped?

16 A. I believe that it was dark --

17 Q. It almost immediately went to emergency lighting?

18 A. Yeah, I believe it was dark when this happened, when I  
19 saw the smoke coming in.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Unless that was my tunnel vision, but I don't know. I  
22 wish I could tell you better.

23 Q. (Indiscernible). Thank you very much.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. That's all I have.

1 A. Okay.

2 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: I have no questions.

3 MS. YOUNG: Okay.

4 BY MS. SAMARASINGHE:

5 Q. Sharmila Samarasinghe of Tri-State Oversight Committee.  
6 Officer Young?

7 A. Yes?

8 Q. You said as soon as the train stopped and as soon as  
9 things started happening in relation to the smoke event --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- you heard or you were ordered over the radio not to  
12 open the bulkhead doors?

13 A. No. We were ordered after the train operator made it to  
14 the back of the train.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. When he got back there.

17 Q. Uh-huh.

18 A. He didn't come over until he got back there, so --

19 Q. Okay. But you were ordered through MTPD communications  
20 over your radio not to open the bulkhead doors?

21 A. No, no.

22 Q. The operator --

23 A. They didn't know what was going on.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. No. The train operator --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- said do not open the bulkhead door.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. He didn't say -- I don't know -- I think he said just  
5 don't open any doors.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I think that's what he said.

8 Q. Okay. And you said that you remained on the same car,  
9 which was the lead car, when the incident took place?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And you stayed there until the first responders came and  
12 until the last passenger got off that, that car, right?

13 A. Yes. When we were evacuating, I was the last one to go.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. With the DVR guy.

16 Q. And so were you able to see through the car to any part  
17 of the platform, because you mentioned that you could see fire  
18 department personnel somewhere --

19 A. No. They were on the train.

20 Q. They were on the train?

21 A. They were on the train.

22 Q. But it took a while for them to make it to the south-  
23 most car that you were in?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay.

1           A.    I don't know how long I was waiting. Like I said, I  
2 have no idea how long we were actually on that train.

3           Q.    Okay.

4           A.    I just been -- my health has been the issue here.

5           Q.    Sure.

6           A.    I didn't focus on how long I've been -- I haven't done  
7 that research, so I don't know.

8           Q.    Sure. And also, at the somewhat in the beginning of the  
9 incident, you said you were advised that help was on the way. Was  
10 that also the train operator over the PA or was that on you radio?

11          A.    No. I don't -- I wasn't -- no, I said that help was  
12 going to be on the way, we're going to get out of here.

13          Q.    Okay.

14          A.    That's what I was saying to them because they were  
15 panicking.

16          Q.    Okay.

17          A.    So they said why don't you -- someone said why don't you  
18 get on your radio or something.

19          Q.    Okay.

20          A.    And I told them I already did that, you know --

21          Q.    Okay. All right. Throughout this -- the whole event  
22 while you were on -- still on the train before the fire department  
23 came and evacuated you all off the train, what kind of  
24 communications did you have with your MTPD --

25          A.    Radio communications.

1 Q. Yeah, what kind of radio communications did you have?  
2 But did you get anything back from them as to what you all were  
3 supposed to be doing or did you say anything as far as what was  
4 going on on the train?

5 A. I don't recall them giving us any -- because they  
6 weren't there, so they don't -- they can't tell us what to do if  
7 they're not in the, you know --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. But I believe -- when -- I believe I heard someone say  
10 they're evacuating over our transit.

11 Q. Okay. So you were hearing chatter on the --

12 A. I believe I heard someone say we're being -- yes.

13 Q. Okay. Okay.

14 A. A lot of chatter was going on over the radio, so --

15 Q. All right. And the last question I have is so -- and  
16 I've heard this, and I just wanted to make sure I have this  
17 straight, passengers were evacuated out of the first car that was  
18 closest to the L'Enfant platform, right?

19 A. No.

20 Q. The car that was closest to the platform is where they  
21 took out the passengers from?

22 A. No, I don't believe that's -- I think it may have been  
23 either a middle or second to the -- I, I don't believe -- you know  
24 what? If they started to walk off -- because it was several  
25 people in front of me.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. If they -- I don't know what doors those other people  
3 went, but I know the people that were with me were --

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. When we went off the side to the catwalk, I don't know  
6 which car it was, but I don't recall.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. I don't recall.

9 Q. Do you recall kind of as soon as you got off, you saw  
10 the railing on the catwalk, or did you have to walk a ways to see  
11 the railing?

12 A. We were, actually, we were still beside the train when  
13 we were walking off, so it must have been -- I don't know if it  
14 was a car or two where we got off.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I can't remember.

17 Q. Understood.

18 A. But I remember just walking beside the train.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And I saw the officer, but I think I saw her on the  
21 train, too. But I saw her through the window, so --

22 Q. Okay. All right.

23 A. -- with the wheelchair guy.

24 Q. Okay. Thank you.

25 A. No problem.

1 BY MR. BUCHER:

2 Q. David Bucher. I have a couple questions.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. Was there any time -- it sounds like the radio  
5 communications stayed pretty good for you. Was there any time  
6 that you felt that you lost radio communication or you were out of  
7 communication?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. There were times?

10 A. There were times, yes.

11 Q. Okay. And the other -- the next question is as you got  
12 off the train, when you exited and walked down the catwalk, do you  
13 remember if the tunnel lights were on or did you need, like,  
14 flashlight assistance or --

15 A. I didn't have my flashlight. The train operator took my  
16 flashlight. I don't recall. I know I was watching my steps, so  
17 it couldn't have been that bright, but I don't know if someone  
18 else -- I was just --

19 Q. Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

20 A. Yeah. Those details, I'm sorry, I can't give you.

21 Q. That's all right. That's all I have for right now.

22 BY MR. DOWNS:

23 Q. Downs, NTSB again. Just mentioned just now --

24 A. Off the record.

25 Q. Off the record?



1 MR. BUCHER: Okay. We'll take a pause right now.

2 (Off the record.)

3 (On the record.)

4 MR. BUCHER: Okay. We're back.

5 BY MR. DOWNS:

6 Q. Downs, NTSB again. Officer, you just mentioned a few  
7 minutes ago that the train operator took your flashlight?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. When did that occur?

10 A. I can't -- I don't recall.

11 Q. Could it have been back when the train operator went by  
12 you when you were still in the first car there?

13 A. Yes, I was still in the first car when it happened.

14 Q. And that he was leaving that car to head to the other  
15 end? Was that when it occurred or --

16 A. No. I was assisting him with the flashlight, because he  
17 was going -- he was pulling seats up in the train.

18 Q. Tell us about that, pulling the seats up --

19 A. I don't know -- he was pulling the seats up looking for  
20 some -- I don't know if it was a switch or anything.

21 Q. So, okay, so you're in the first car?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. At approximately what time did he come out of his  
24 compartment?

25 A. That wasn't the initial time. He came back after he

1 wasn't able to move.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. He came back at some time --

4 Q. That's important for us to get -- to clarify it.

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. So he had gone to the far end of the car that the -- the  
7 far end of the train, the north end of the train?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. In an attempt to reverse the train?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Was up there for a period of time?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And then came back to your car?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Tell us about that.

16 A. He was pulling up -- I didn't ask him why, but he was  
17 pulling up the seats looking into the -- under the seats. I don't  
18 what's under there. I mean, I've probably seen it in training,  
19 but this is not something I do every day, so --

20 Q. The seats. Are you talking about the seats that are  
21 between the doors?

22 A. Yes, the passenger seats.

23 Q. And it's a back-to-back seat?

24 A. Yes, yes.

25 Q. And it's on one side, and it's hinged, so it flips up?

- 1 A. Yes, yes.
- 2 Q. And like there be batteries in there?
- 3 A. Maybe. I don't know.
- 4 Q. And other control equipment?
- 5 A. Probably.
- 6 Q. And he lifted that seat up to access that compartment?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. And what was he doing in there?
- 9 A. I was just flashing the light, so --
- 10 Q. You were just holding the light?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Okay. And he was trying to --
- 13 A. He didn't ask me for help, so I assume he, you know, was  
14 doing what he knew he --
- 15 Q. So you held the light for him --
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- to help him out?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Did he ask to take your light at that point? How did he  
20 --
- 21 A. I think I gave it to him. I said, here, take this,  
22 because --
- 23 Q. Okay.
- 24 A. Because apparently, he -- it was low light in the train.
- 25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So he was looking, and I said, here, take this, and --

2 Q. Okay. Did he take it because his light no longer worked  
3 or he didn't have a light is what I'm getting at?

4 A. He didn't ask -- he didn't tell me any of that.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. So I don't know if it ran out of batteries or just he  
7 left it at the front.

8 Q. You were, you were --

9 A. I don't know.

10 Q. You were being helpful?

11 A. I was just being helpful, yes.

12 Q. Okay. And how long was he accessing this compartment to  
13 do whatever he was doing?

14 A. It wasn't that long. It was not -- it looked like he  
15 knew what he was doing. Whatever he did in there, he did it, and  
16 he got on back to --

17 Q. Okay. Did he close up the compartment when he was done?

18 A. Yes, yes.

19 Q. And then left the car immediately?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did you see him come back to that car again ever during  
22 the --

23 A. I do not believe I saw him again.

24 Q. You don't remember him ever coming back --

25 A. I don't remember, no, I don't remember.

1 Q. Okay. All right. To touch a bit on Mr. Ballard's  
2 question, I think it was, on the training drills, do you have the  
3 capability of going to voluntary training or are you assigned a  
4 training?

5 A. We're assigned to daily -- I mean yearly training, MIR  
6 training, but if you -- I'm assuming if you wanted to do  
7 something, they wouldn't have a problem with you doing something.

8 Q. So you would have options on certain training courses  
9 you could take on your own as well as the standard assignment of  
10 training that you will get routinely during the course of the  
11 year?

12 A. You probably wouldn't be paid overtime or anything for  
13 it, so it's going to be totally up to you if you wanted to, I  
14 believe.

15 Q. That's the voluntary training --

16 A. I believe, I believe so. I don't --

17 Q. Okay. But you -- have you engaged in any of --

18 A. No, I have not.

19 Q. -- that training at all?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. But the assigned training that --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- you're required to attend --

24 A. Required.

25 Q. -- that's when you're on the clock?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And you get paid for it?

3 A. Yes, you do.

4 Q. What kind of training is that? Just the annual  
5 refresher training --

6 A. Yes, it is.

7 Q. -- on various topics?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. And this training is like a recertification for  
10 your officer status training? Would that be a fair assessment --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- that we are characterizing?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Respirator masks. Are you familiar with them?

15 A. Yes, yes.

16 Q. I sensed a little pause there.

17 A. I believe -- yeah, I remember those, yes.

18 Q. And have you ever been issued a respirator mask?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. When was that?

21 A. Years ago.

22 Q. Years ago?

23 A. Don't know what year it was, but it was years ago.

24 Q. Could it have been when you first joined the force?

25 A. It could have been or after. I --

1 Q. Have you ever used the respirator mask?

2 A. No, I've never had to.

3 Q. Beyond when you were first issued?

4 A. Right.

5 Q. Did they conduct what they call fit testing? Do you  
6 know what fit testing is?

7 A. No, I don't.

8 Q. All right. Fit testing is when they actually size the  
9 mask for your face to make sure it doesn't leak, and they test it  
10 to make sure that it's the right size, and all that sort of thing,  
11 and that you know how to use it.

12 A. We did go through --

13 Q. That process?

14 A. Yes, we did.

15 Q. When it first --

16 A. We had --

17 Q. -- got issued?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. We went through putting the mask on, and then we were  
21 exposed to gas, or something.

22 Q. Went to a training process --

23 A. Mustard -- yes, yes.

24 Q. Good. Okay. That's what I'm looking for.

25 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. And you weren't sure when that occurred, but it was  
2 years ago?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Could have been very well when you first started?

5 A. Could have been.

6 Q. Could have been, okay. Where is the mask now?

7 A. In my trunk.

8 Q. Trunk?

9 A. Of my car.

10 Q. Trunk of your car?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Is that where you normally keep it?

13 A. No. I take it out, put it back in every day just in  
14 case.

15 Q. Every day?

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. So --

18 A. Along with all the other stuff.

19 Q. You carry it with you?

20 A. No, I don't carry it with me --

21 Q. When you --

22 A. -- on the beat. I just keep it there in case some major  
23 event happens and we can get back to --

24 Q. Keep it there where?

25 A. At Huntington.



1 Q. At Huntington?

2 A. In my car.

3 Q. Keep it in your car at Huntington?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. But you said you take it out every day?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And during the day --

8 A. I don't leave it in -- they said you don't leave it in  
9 your car --

10 Q. During the day, where do you keep it?

11 A. No, it's in my car during the day.

12 Q. And you take it out at night or --

13 A. Yes. Well, at the end of my shift, I take my bag with  
14 all my police stuff in the house.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And when I go back to work the next day, I put it back  
17 in and --

18 Q. Okay. So make sure I understand the process.

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. The respirator is in your equipment bag?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. That during the course of the day you would keep in the  
23 trunk of your car?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Where in that bag you would also have your other

1 equipment that you would take out and put on during the tour of  
2 duty?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. But you do not carry with you on a daily basis  
5 your respirator?

6 A. No.

7 Q. It stays in the bag?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And at night, you put all your equipment back into the  
10 bag?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Take the bag in the house?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. So that it doesn't sit in the car all the time?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. I see. Some officers, we've heard, keep the respirator  
17 in a locker, for example. That's what I was kind of --

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. -- getting at.

20 A. Oh, okay.

21 Q. Yeah, okay.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Just storage. Suffice it to say, you have never used  
24 the respirator, never had a need for the respirator?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Since you've started seven years ago?

2 A. Right.

3 Q. Okay. So you've never had it serviced?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Meaning change of filters or anything like that?

6 A. No.

7 Q. That you can recall?

8 A. No, no.

9 Q. Okay. Are you aware that there's filtered cartridges in  
10 this respirator?

11 A. I probably learned that years ago, but --

12 Q. But since you haven't used it --

13 A. Yeah, yeah.

14 Q. -- it doesn't come to you immediately?

15 A. Right, exactly.

16 Q. Okay. Filtered cartridges are dated. They expire after  
17 a certain period of time, typically about a year. And after that  
18 year period, the cartridges, they lose their effectiveness.  
19 That's what I'm getting at. In other words, when you don't use  
20 them or when you don't service them, if you go to use them, it  
21 could be a problem. Were you aware of such a service requirement?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. No.

25 Q. In this particular environment, relying upon your

1 recollection when you first had the respirator training --

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. -- do you think maybe a respirator might have been  
4 helpful here? You've mentioned before in your testimony that they  
5 did a little test with some smoke maybe?

6 A. Yes, some mustard gas.

7 Q. To see if it was properly fitted and everything?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Do you think maybe a respirator might have helped in  
10 this environment?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Yes?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. All right. Radio functionality.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. We've had testimony certain radios have dead spots.

17 Tell us your experience with your service radio?

18 A. I've been in --

19 Q. Where do I start, she says.

20 A. Exactly. I can't -- this will take until tonight, so --

21 Q. All right. Hit the high points, if you would?

22 A. There were a few times where I've been in situations  
23 where I would not be able to come over the radio and get out to  
24 transmit my emergency that I have had or, you know, if they're  
25 calling me and I can't answer up, and then everybody is like where

1 is she, where -- you know, it's a big fuss. And this has happened  
2 often, very often. There have been officers fighting, and they  
3 couldn't get over the radio, and then they will tell us -- their  
4 war stories afterwards, yeah, so --

5 Q. These are the new digital radios?

6 A. I don't have the new one. I have the one that's --

7 Q. You have the analog, the old analog radio, you're  
8 saying?

9 A. I have -- they have new ones, but I don't know what the  
10 one before is called.

11 MS. YOUNG: Do you have -- I have that one. Let me see.

12 MR. DOWNS: Is that a digital radio?

13 MS. YOUNG: Is that? Okay.

14 BY MR. DOWNS:

15 Q. So that is a digital radio. You have one like that?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. So --

18 A. I thought you were saying the newer models. They have

19 --

20 Q. No. The radio that you have is a digital radio --

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. We've established that.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. You're having trouble with your particular radio?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And your experience, for the most part, has been dead  
2 spots, you're saying?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. And you've reported these dead spots to the  
5 appropriate entity in the organization, agency --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- to see if they can fix it?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And what would the fix be? Do you have any idea?

10 A. The radio maintenance team would go out to the station  
11 or the area where you said, and then they would do radio -- they  
12 would do radio checks or have an officer meet them there and do  
13 radio checks, so --

14 Q. Would they install repeater stations, perhaps, repeater  
15 unit to amplify a signal in certain dead spots to try to minimize  
16 -- do you know anything about that?

17 A. I don't know anything about that.

18 Q. Okay. But it's been a problem, as far as your  
19 experience has been, in the last, what, year or whatever?

20 A. Seven years.

21 Q. The entire --

22 A. Ever since I've been here.

23 Q. The entire seven years?

24 A. Ever since I've been here, I've had problems with my  
25 radio. I mean, it's nothing new to any officer here.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. For the most part.

3 Q. All right. But in this particular event, were there  
4 dead spots in the train you tried to transmit during the event?

5 A. Yes. I thought -- there were times when I thought I  
6 went over, and I didn't because they kept calling me, saying 549,  
7 are you ocean king, and I would say, yeah, I'm ocean king, and  
8 then they would say, 549, are you ocean king, so apparently, they  
9 didn't hear me.

10 Q. They could not hear you --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- from what you could determine?

13 A. Right.

14 Q. I see. And you reported that in this incident to your  
15 supervisor that you were having radio challenges?

16 A. No, I was in the hospital. I was in the hospital. I  
17 didn't talk to a supervisor about pretty much anything.

18 Q. So you haven't been debriefed or anything just yet?

19 A. No, no.

20 Q. It's going to come up?

21 A. Right, it's going to --

22 Q. You're going to have a debriefing at some point?

23 A. Right.

24 Q. And I presume, correct me if I'm wrong, officer, is at  
25 that some point, you'll be asked to compile a report, give a

1 report --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- detailed about this step by step sort of thing?

4 A. Right.

5 Q. Okay. All right. I think I've hit all my points.

6 MR. DOWNS: WMATA?

7 MR. ADAMS: No questions.

8 MR. BALLARD: No questions.

9 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: No questions (indiscernible).

10 MS. YOUNG: Thank you.

11 MR. BUCHER: I don't have any questions. Dave Bucher.

12 Thank you.

13 BY MR. DOWNS:

14 Q. One final follow-up. I always like to give a witness  
15 the opportunity -- we call this retrospective thoughts. Knowing  
16 what you know now -- okay, everybody likes to share -- knowing  
17 what you know now, are there any thoughts that you'd like to share  
18 for the good of the community, so to speak, things that you might  
19 have done differently that now that you had a clear head and  
20 everything, time to think about it, that you would be doing  
21 differently that might have helped out in this situation?  
22 Anything you could offer?

23 A. No. I believe I did everything to the best.

24 Q. Not that you did anything wrong --

25 A. Yeah.



1 Q. I'm just saying sometimes we all have afterthoughts, you  
2 know, we can clear our head, you know, I could have gone around  
3 this way instead of that way.

4 A. Yeah, no. Staying put was the best option for me, and  
5 everybody pretty much said that on the train. They were, like,  
6 yeah, you know, so they agreed.

7 Q. Okay. That concludes --

8 A. They were thanking me, so --

9 Q. Okay. That concludes my thoughts, my questions.

10 MR. DOWNS: Anybody else?

11 MR. ADAMS: No questions.

12 MS. FLEMINGS-McCANN: No questions.

13 MR. BUCHER: Okay. That concludes the interview. Thank  
14 you very much.

15 MS. YOUNG: Thank you.

16 (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 Franchesca Young

DOCKET NUMBER:            DCA-15-FR-004

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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.

---

Danielle S. VanRiper  
Transcriber