



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD - **Public Hearing**

Conrail Derailment in Paulsboro, NJ with Vinyl Chloride Release

GROUP	3
EXHIBIT	
BX	

Agency / Organization

National Transportation Safety Board

Title

**NTSB Interview of Washington Township
Fire Department Captain (1)**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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CONRAIL DERAILMENT/HAZARDOUS
MATERIAL RELEASE
PAULSBORO, NEW JERSEY
NOVEMBER 30, 2012

Docket No.: DCA-13-MR-002

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Interview of: PATRICK DOLGOS

Washington Township Fire Department
Headquarters
213 East Holly Avenue
Sewell, New Jersey

Tuesday,
January 29, 2013

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MUHAMED EL-ZOGHBI
Accident Investigator

APPEARANCES:

MUHAMED EL-ZOGHBI, Accident Investigator
Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Investigations
National Transportation Safety Board
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20594

** PII **

** PII **

PAUL L. STANCIL, Senior Accident Investigator
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I N T E R V I E W

(1:35 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: This is Muhamed El-Zoghbi, a Hazardous
4 Materials Accident Investigator with the National Transportation
5 Safety Board. It is currently 1:35 p.m. on January 29, 2003
6 [sic]. We are at the Washington Township Fire Department in a
7 conference room conducting an interview with -- go ahead and
8 please introduce yourself.

9 CAPT. DOLGOS: Captain Patrick Dolgos.

10 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: And we also have --

11 MR. STANCIL: Paul Stancil, a Hazardous Materials
12 Accident Investigator with the National Transportation Safety
13 Board.

14 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: And, Captain, if you don't mind Captain
15 Dolgos?

16 CAPT. DOLGOS: Sure. That's fine.

17 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: Just for the record, to acknowledge that
18 we are recording this conversation. You have no objection?

19 CAPT. DOLGOS: Yes, I have no objections to the
20 recording.

INTERVIEW OF PATRICK DOLGOS

21
22 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

23 Q. If you could just start off, give us a brief background
24 in your experience with hazardous materials.

25 A. Sure. I joined the fire service in 1985. I have been a

1 career captain and training officer since 2002. I am a certified
2 hazmat specialist in the State of New Jersey. I'm also a
3 hazardous materials technician instructor for the New Jersey State
4 Police, teach at the Camden County Fire Academy for the hazmat
5 program. I'm also a hazardous materials decon instructor through
6 the New Jersey State Police, and also awareness and operations
7 responder.

8 I've had experience in working in the hazardous
9 materials field. I worked for a company called Clean Venture back
10 in the late '80s for several years and did hazardous materials
11 response and cleanup.

12 Prior to the incident, I was also a member of the
13 Gloucester County Hazardous Materials Team since the inception of
14 the team, and from time to time had responsibilities under their
15 leadership, as well as some training aspects.

16 Q. Thanks a lot. And if you could take a minute and look
17 back to the date November 30th and the Paulsboro derailment --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- and if you could in a narrative format just tell us
20 what you know and what you observed and your level of involvement
21 in the derailment.

22 A. Sure. A little bit after 7 a.m. on November 30th, while
23 working here at the fire department, we overheard the
24 communications on the fire band that there was a train derailment
25 involving a hazardous materials incident. After listening to

1 radio traffic and hearing it was, in fact, confirmed, and it
2 seemed to be a large scale incident, we started making necessary
3 preparations here to be ready to deploy since we do have several
4 members on the Hazardous Materials Team. I at that point departed
5 this location and headed to the Paulsboro incident.

6 My arrival time, I'm not quite sure exactly what time it
7 was. I would say it was probably in the area of 7:30 a.m. in the
8 morning. Upon my arrival, I staged myself about two blocks away
9 from the address that was given on the communications. As I was
10 approaching the scene, I noticed there was quite a few emergency
11 responders that were congregated on the street where the command
12 post was established. I'm sorry, I wish I knew the street off the
13 top of my head but I don't remember. I also noticed what appeared
14 to be either fog or a vapor cloud hovering in the area. I was
15 told by several people that it was probably fog, but at this point
16 I wasn't quite sure.

17 As I approached, I was continuing listen to the radio
18 traffic. I did hear that there was contents involving vinyl
19 chloride in a railcar.

20 As I approached, I introduced myself at the incident
21 command post, advised them that I was with the Gloucester County
22 hazmat team, and that we were here and being mustered if there was
23 anything they need from us, because also by that time we were
24 officially dispatched might I add. The incident commander
25 informed me that he had Paulsboro Refinery hazmat en route, and at

1 this point there was no decisions being made as to exactly what
2 our involvement's going to be at that time.

3 I did make a recommendation. I felt we were too close.
4 I said I think we need to be back at least a half mile. They said
5 that the command post was going to be established here at the
6 location. I also interfaced with a member from the Paulsboro
7 Refinery hazmat. I informed him as well, since it seemed like
8 they were already requested before we were, that we had teams
9 being mustered and staged and that, you know, please let us know
10 what assistance, you know, we can offer.

11 At that point I had also asked did anybody request the
12 documentation from the train in regards to the contents. They did
13 not have the paperwork with them at the time at the command post.
14 It was somewhat chaotic, and understandably why.

15 A police officer, and I don't remember his name, had
16 asked me, do you think we are too close? And I said, based on
17 what information I have now, I would say yes. I told him I was
18 not in charge and the fire department had command of the scene,
19 but I was going to be staying back myself because of the proximity
20 of the incident.

21 As I was walking away from this scene, I noticed there
22 were some rail workers on the track, I guess south of the
23 derailment behind the church, I think it was, right there. I had
24 approached them and I had asked them if they were involved in the
25 rail. They said, yes, and I said did anybody have the documents

1 to the train? And they said, yes, we have them. And I said
2 please make sure they get to the command post, and they assured me
3 that they were going to be making their way up that way.

4 At that point I had moved myself back, back to where my
5 vehicle was and stood by there for a little bit, and at that point
6 I did confer with some other officers that were coming up to the
7 scene and some other emergency responders. I also took the time
8 to start looking up some information on the WISER application on
9 my phone in regards to the material.

10 I also had some phone communications with several
11 members from our department here advising them that we were
12 dealing with -- at least we knew that there was one car at least
13 containing vinyl chloride and that was confirmed by the placard
14 and some of the first responders on scene as well as the rail
15 people. They also indicated to me that they had already printed
16 out some MSDS sheets for vinyl chloride prior to departing the
17 department so they had some knowledge of what they were dealing
18 with.

19 At that point they were probably already at the
20 Gloucester County Fire Academy getting their pre-vitals done,
21 getting checked in, and then I had requested that they relocated
22 to the Ames parking lot on I guess that's Broadway or Broad -- I
23 don't know; I'm not quite sure of the name -- for potential
24 further assignment because at that time we did not know what our
25 involvement was going to be.

1 I told them I would meet them there. As I arrived on
2 scene, they were also arriving. At that point they were starting
3 to conduct an equipment check on the vehicle since we have
4 responders coming in from all areas of the county.

5 At that point there was I believe a van or a pickup that
6 came up to the scene. The driver came out and approached myself
7 and had asked if there was any medical personnel on the scene
8 because he had some workers that were complaining of some symptoms
9 related to the exposure up at the rail. And I had asked him,
10 well, how many and were they at -- were they directly in the area
11 of the incident? And he said they were working in close proximity
12 when it happened and that they were having some signs and
13 symptoms.

14 At that point we immediately requested EMS services.
15 Then they indicated that there was like 12 or 15 workers, and I
16 was like, okay. And at that point we were trying to determine was
17 it an exposure or a contamination issue so the hazmat personnel on
18 scene can make appropriate decisions.

19 At that time there was a gentleman from New Jersey State
20 Police, Office of Emergency Management. His name is Greg Godish,
21 G-o-d-i-s-h. He's also one of our assistant chiefs with one of
22 our companies here, so I have personal knowledge with him. And we
23 both had discussed the incident briefly and we had also discussed
24 that we had heard rumors that they might be relocating the command
25 post. We were unsure exactly where. We were receiving

1 unconfirmed information that it might be moved to the fire
2 station. So at that point we both relocated to the firehouse,
3 seeing if they were going to relocate the command post there, a
4 much safer distance.

5 When we arrived at the firehouse, there was no command
6 post set up there. In fact, there were some media personnel
7 there. There were some I guess auxiliary members from the fire
8 department, but nobody knew much of anything going on. I stayed
9 there for a short duration, trying to find out what our
10 involvement was going to be. I wasn't getting much
11 communications. The remainder of our team was now getting
12 inundated with the personnel that were being exposed and they were
13 in the process of setting up either a decon or some type of
14 medical monitoring for those affected employees from the one
15 company.

16 At that point, since we weren't getting any information,
17 we did decide to relocate back to the original scene. By that
18 time it had appeared that the fog and/or the vapor cloud appeared
19 to have dissipated from earlier when I was there. I do have some
20 pictures if you would like to see them.

21 Q. Absolutely.

22 A. Do you want to see them now?

23 Q. We could --

24 A. Do you want to wait until afterwards? So I had snapped
25 a couple quick pictures when I first arrived on the scene and then

1 you'll see the difference, you know, a short time later.

2 Once we got onto the scene again, again I interfaced
3 with the gentleman from Paulsboro Refinery. He had indicated that
4 their personnel were coming out and they had already started
5 monitoring the area. I was also under the assumption that the
6 fire department was conducting metering with their capabilities to
7 their level.

8 Again, I had requested what would be the involvement
9 with our team, and at that point there were still no decisions.
10 They were still waiting for some Conrail folks and some other
11 technical services to get there and start making some decisions.
12 They were starting to get some unnecessary people away. However,
13 the command post still remained at that location.

14 At this point I had a good visual observation of the
15 actual derailment since the fog or the vapor cloud had lifted, and
16 I saw the magnitude of it and, you know, knew that it was much
17 larger than I thought it was.

18 I don't exactly remember what -- some of the
19 conversations I had, but I know they did have some reference
20 materials that they were going through at the scene. At that
21 point they did say that there was going to be a briefing at the
22 church. I don't remember exactly what time. I don't have any
23 documents with me to refer to, but there was a briefing involving
24 a magnitude of different agencies that had responded, including
25 representatives from CSX, Conrail. There was also, I believe,

1 some representatives from a company that dealt with the vinyl
2 chloride. I'm not sure if they were the ones receiving the
3 shipment farther south, but they had actually come up and had
4 indicated they actually had two meters on site specifically for
5 the vinyl chloride.

6 During that meeting, there was some discussion as to
7 briefing everybody what exactly we had, what some of the plans
8 were, which included approaching the scene and getting a detailed
9 closer-up view of the damage to the railcars and also ensure that
10 there was no more valves or anything damaged. That was going to
11 be headed up by -- the gentleman's name was Austin, I believe,
12 from CSX, and he was going to head that up. And he had indicated
13 that -- he had asked me if I would want to go with him to do the
14 tank assessments in case there was going to be some additional
15 involvement from some of the teams, and I said I would have no
16 problem at all doing that.

17 Also at that time I had called our hazmat team back at
18 the Ames, and we have a -- one of our hazmat members, Joe Schmidt,
19 just completed the rail tank car specialist, out in Pueblo,
20 Colorado in September. So I had requested him up to the scene in
21 case additional help would be needed.

22 After we left there, there was some discussion as to
23 what was going to take place with the balance of Gloucester County
24 components as well as the CSX and the Paulsboro Refinery.
25 Paulsboro Refinery had indicated, and this was after finding out

1 that some of the metering equipment on our hazmat truck was not
2 functioning, in addition to the lack of meters that we had, that
3 Paulsboro Refinery had indicated to me that they would take care
4 of all the metering and they were going to radio back to their
5 refinery, and they were doing to document all the readings and
6 that -- we both agreed that we would team up their team with our
7 team to conduct metering in the area because obviously the tank
8 car would be handled by the CSX for the assessment and determining
9 what we were going to do after that.

10 Also at that point the two meters that came from the
11 company that were specific for vinyl chloride also went out into
12 the field, and I believe one of our hazmat team members -- Hauck
13 is his last name -- I believe he was in control of one of those
14 meters and started some assessments in the area of the command
15 post.

16 At that particular time the CSX personnel and I believe
17 -- I don't know who the private contractor that was there, I don't
18 know if it was on behalf of the railroad company or somebody who
19 had a contract or had one of their boats, had brought the boat
20 over. We had a meter with us. I don't remember the gentleman's
21 name who was doing the metering on the boat, but at that point we
22 made the approach to the tanks. Because of the number of limited
23 people we can put in the boat, not everybody who we wanted or
24 anticipated to do some railcar assessments went. So I believe
25 there was four or five of us in the boat that started approaching

1 the railcars.

2 Upon approaching the railcars, the gentleman, Austin
3 from CSX, checked all the valves, opened up some of the dome lids,
4 indicated there was no additional leakage, assessed the one car
5 that was breached. We noticed that there was snow and everything
6 else so we know we definitely had a release. It was obvious.

7 At that point the meter did go in alarm. So we did back
8 off and we re-approached in a different area. But we weren't
9 getting alarms or anything on the meters, completed the tank car
10 assessment, came back out, and at that point I think it was
11 discussed while we were out there that they were going to start
12 considering relocating the command post to the police department.

13 I had some interface with some personnel at the command
14 post who had indicated that our readings were good, nothing went
15 into alarm. We decided at that point, because we were going to
16 pair up the Valero or the -- Valero -- when I say Valero, I mean
17 the Paulsboro Refinery because they were renamed. Relocate our
18 team to the scene, just west of the railroad tracks but just south
19 of the incident, slightly upwind at that point, to pair up with
20 the Paulsboro Refinery folks.

21 At that time I met our team and a representative from
22 the Paulsboro Refinery. We advised our team members what we were
23 going to do, that we were going to use the meters provided to us
24 by Paulsboro Refinery to do some metering, and at that point
25 that's what took place.

1 I was then requested to go to the -- relocate to the new
2 command post, which was at the police department, where additional
3 folks were coming into the scene and prepare for the next briefing
4 as to what was going to take place, and by that time I believe
5 there were representatives from the Coast Guard that had arrived.
6 They had the briefing. They started setting some pretty firm
7 objectives and course of actions, as well as also found out that
8 the -- I believe it was the EPA had a vehicle maybe over in Philly
9 that was relocated over to the Jersey side to do some air
10 monitoring, and I believe that was around 1:00 or 1:30 in the
11 afternoon.

12 And then basically we kind of had a little interruption
13 because we actually had a fire back here in our township. So I
14 was busy trying to get transportation for some of our
15 investigators to get back here to do some other jobs. But I
16 pretty much remained at the new command post during the briefings,
17 as they were setting up some guidelines, deciding the operational
18 periods and what ICS forms they were going to use at that
19 particular time, who was going to be sitting in the unified
20 command. So they were actually getting the work done that they
21 needed to get done at that point.

22 In the late afternoon, I returned back to the scene
23 after they had requested if we can -- there was a decision made to
24 use a water stream to start breaking down some of the vapors.
25 They were very limited on the number of firefighters to do that.

1 So we had offered our assistance to help them establish that.

2 Also at that point we started also understanding the
3 permissible exposure limits that were set. That information was
4 relayed. So our involvement at that point was still to continue
5 assisting with metering and monitoring, help establish the master
6 stream, and then shortly after that, it was, you know, pretty much
7 we were getting to the demobilization phase and, to be quite frank
8 with you, we really weren't getting exact answers of what they
9 wanted us to do in regards to our involvement. It sounded like
10 they were just basically standing by doing operational level
11 things at that point. We knew we weren't going to be making any
12 -- going on the tank cars or doing anything like that. It was
13 beyond our scope at that point.

14 We returned back to the command post as they were
15 getting ready for the -- I guess it was around maybe 5 p.m. for
16 another briefing, to get ready for the next operational period,
17 and it was at that point where we determined that the needs of the
18 hazmat component from Gloucester County was not going to be
19 required, that CSX and their contractor was going to take the lead
20 on that, and at that point, we made that notification to start
21 demobilizing, and I guess we were out of there by I want to say
22 maybe 7:00 that evening and returned home, in a nutshell. I'm
23 sure there's some other things I probably -- as I say, had I
24 known, you know -- I didn't get the information you guys were
25 going to be here interviewing today, but had I known, I would have

1 brought some notes for you, but I can definitely review and get
2 back to you.

3 MR. STANCIL: Yeah, we'll go back and pick up some
4 things in a little more detail, scenarios that we'd like to know a
5 little bit more about. You mentioned that at one point you
6 decided that it was -- that everyone was too close and needed to
7 be back a half a mile. Was that the first thing that you
8 determined when you got on scene?

9 CAPT. DOLGOS: Uh-huh. It was.

10 MR. STANCIL: And where did you get the half a mile --

11 CAPT. DOLGOS: From just general knowledge, railcar,
12 large spill, half mile.

13 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Did you convey that information to
14 the incident commander?

15 CAPT. DOLGOS: I did make mention. I said I think we
16 are too close. This is big -- but like I said, there were other
17 highly qualified hazmat personnel on location who were there, who
18 were there before I was, from Paulsboro Refinery who may have felt
19 differently than I did and may have made some of those decisions
20 and the incident commander, why they were at that point. I
21 personally felt I was too close.

22 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

23 Q. Did you witness any of that discussion at all or was
24 that just an assumption that they had communicated -- Paulsboro
25 Refinery had communicated that to the incident commander?

1 A. Well, assuming they had their meters there, they
2 probably had a lot more information that I did, but I didn't know
3 that, whether or not that actually transpired. And unfortunately,
4 because of a direct order from my chief of my department, we are
5 not allowed -- we weren't allowed to talk about the incident. So
6 I couldn't even do any follow-up after that evening to talk to my
7 colleagues as to some of the details related to that.

8 Q. Have you ever worked with Pat Robinson, I believe?

9 A. I have.

10 Q. You have?

11 A. Calvin, Pat, yes, I have. In fact, I've gone to a
12 couple of their -- every year the Refinery would send an emergency
13 responder with their team to a school somewhere in the country, as
14 a good working relationship, and I actually was selected one year
15 to go with them. I've taught classes with them. Both very highly
16 respected and dedicated individuals.

17 Q. So when you said you expressed the concern about the
18 proximity, was that directed to the incident commander?

19 A. That was at the command post. I made a general comment,
20 I think we're too close and I think we need to move back. So
21 whether they agreed with me or not, I don't know.

22 Q. But what was everybody's reaction?

23 A. I think it was still early on. I think there was still
24 a little bit of kind of chaos and they were still trying to get a
25 grip exactly the magnitude of it, and to be honest with you, it

1 was difficult to see, at least from that vantage point, the cars
2 because of the fog. And you'll see those pictures, if you haven't
3 already seen them, but -- you know, I don't know exactly why they
4 decided that was a good location.

5 Q. And what time would you say that was about? Was this
6 around 7:30 when you arrived? Was this immediately upon your
7 arrival or --

8 A. It was slightly after I arrived. So by the time I
9 parked and walked up, it was probably 7:30, 7:45 at the latest.

10 Q. And was this -- this was outside of, I guess at Deputy
11 Chief Stevenson's --

12 A. Driveway.

13 Q. -- driveway?

14 A. Yep.

15 Q. Okay.

16 MR. STANCIL: You mentioned a couple of times that there
17 were -- you were waiting some decision to be made on what your
18 involvement would be. What typically would have been requested
19 from your team?

20 CAPT. DOLGOS: Well, I think in a situation like that,
21 and that was probably the largest hazmat since the inception of
22 the team that we had to deal with, I think a lot of it was there
23 was no hard and firm decisions because of the magnitude of it, and
24 I think they were waiting for some of the technical expertise to
25 get on location to make some firm decisions, totally

1 understandable. I think the key was if we were going to be doing
2 metering and monitoring, that's fine, and that decision was made
3 slightly later, but there was some time from the beginning to the
4 end we were actually deployed for metering and monitoring where I
5 think that could have been expedited a little bit, and that's my
6 opinion, but based upon what had occurred, an hour or two later,
7 finding out about the meters not working, that we wouldn't have
8 been able to do that anyway.

9 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

10 Q. I was going to say, when you were on scene, did you
11 inquire if anybody was conducting air monitoring at the time?

12 A. I don't remember who it was, but they did have a meter
13 out there, and they did have additional meters en route. That was
14 early on and that was Paulsboro Refinery. Pat and Calvin both
15 indicated that their team was coming and they were bringing
16 meters.

17 Q. And you had no information about any air levels or -- at
18 that time?

19 A. Not at that time, no.

20 Q. Can you recollect when -- did you actually hear any
21 solid numbers being discussed at any point?

22 A. I did hear rumors, you know, discussions.

23 Q. Uh-huh.

24 A. I physically did not visually see the meters. I have
25 heard levels of 2 or 3 parts per million up to 30, 60 parts per

1 million. I personally did not hear any numbers higher than that
2 early on in the incident. Later on there was some scuttlebutt
3 that there were extremely high readings but I don't know what
4 those readings were considered high. Like I said, I had wanted to
5 request and have already requested the documents from Paulsboro
6 Refinery when they started documenting some of their meter
7 readings, or assuming because that was the game plan, that they
8 were going to document them, what they really were, and to this
9 day I still don't know what they were. The only information I was
10 able to get was actually going onto the Internet myself and
11 looking at some of the readings from the, what was that, CTHS
12 or --

13 Q. CTH.

14 A. -- and looking for myself. But like I said, I was very
15 limited on what I could do after the incident.

16 Q. So at the command post -- first of all, were you at the
17 church when they had --

18 A. The briefing.

19 Q. -- the briefing?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. I know you mentioned the parties involved. Do you
22 recall at all someone from Paulsboro Refinery mentioning or
23 discussing any of the air monitoring?

24 A. You know what? I took notes during that meeting, and
25 that's why I said, I wish I would have brought them today, but I

1 know there was some discussions that air monitoring was being
2 done.

3 Q. Was being done, okay.

4 A. That there were some evacuations close by. There was
5 also some discussions, that's why I said, we had some specific
6 meters for vinyl chloride. We also had a gentleman talk about the
7 vinyl chloride, some of the hazards associated with that, and
8 that's when I say they were starting to develop some of the game
9 plans and things of that nature. So, yeah, there were some
10 discussions on the metering, and that's when we decided at that
11 point we were going to start hooking up with each other and
12 pairing up.

13 Q. Who was responsible for conducting the site assessment?

14 A. Initially?

15 Q. Yeah, initial site assessment.

16 A. I'm assuming it would be the fire department.

17 Q. Do you know if Paulsboro Refinery or, you know, anybody
18 else did an assessment, you know, sort of from a hazmat
19 perspective?

20 A. I don't think. Maybe from the point from where they
21 were at, they might have done a visual assessment. I would assume
22 they did that because it was prior to my arrival.

23 Q. Is that something that they -- the chief would have
24 expected of your responding unit or -- I mean, I guess just to
25 clarify who -- we're trying to get a good picture of what

1 expectations are from all the different parties --

2 A. I will give you this, and again, this is the impression
3 I got when I arrived on location. Because when I first -- when I
4 made the comment was, I think we're too close, I had a couple of
5 heads turn and it was like, well, who are you kind of thing.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And obviously some of the -- they knew me, you know,
8 some of the Paulsboro folks knew me, and I said, you know, I'm
9 with the Gloucester County hazmat. We're en route. We have
10 people staging, you know, what do you need from us? And that's
11 why I said, the first reply I got was, well, I have Paulsboro
12 Refinery coming, and I have them here. So I was assuming that,
13 okay, for the time being, there's going to be no action from us
14 but we're going to be in a standby mode, and that's how I left it.

15 Q. Is that --

16 A. We are an assistant agency to any --

17 Q. That's what I was going to say.

18 A. -- jurisdiction. I am not in charge of the hazmat
19 scene.

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. But generally speaking, it's the local municipality who
22 decides who's going to be in charge of their hazardous materials
23 incident. It's usually through their emergency operations plan.
24 I don't know what Paulsboro's emergency operations plan says about
25 the hazmat. I can tell you here in Washington Township, the fire

1 department has jurisdiction of the hazmat. When a hazmat team or
2 any outside agency comes in, they are an assisting agency. They
3 don't take over the scene. They don't make decisions. They are
4 basically that technical support for the incident commander.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And that's -- we work very strictly on the incident
7 management system. I use it wholeheartedly every day here at
8 work, and that's how we respond, and that's how we assume that
9 everybody follows when we go out to locations.

10 MR. STANCIL: So you're on scene sort of taking all this
11 in and you made some observations about things such as isolation
12 distances, evacuations, hot zones. What was your overall
13 impression of how that was handled?

14 CAPT. DOLGOS: Again, my opinion, and based on my
15 experience and my training, that was way too close. It's hazmat
16 101, large spill, large incident, go right to your ERG, gives your
17 recommended immediate -- you know, a grasp on what you should be
18 doing immediately, and I felt we were too close. And for the
19 number of cars that were involved, there was no guarantee that any
20 ignition sources had been taken care of. It was a highly
21 flammable product. There was another car that was involved,
22 denatured alcohol, I believe it was, that there was still nothing
23 -- you couldn't assume it was safe. But, yeah, based on all that,
24 they were definitely way too close.

25 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

1 Q. Do you feel that they were underestimating some of these
2 hazards?

3 A. No doubt, and that's why I say I think everybody was a
4 little overwhelmed. This is probably the biggest thing that
5 anybody's ever seen in Gloucester County.

6 Q. If you can tell us sort of more about the
7 communications? How were -- I mean I know you said initially you
8 were at the command post and talked to --

9 A. Yeah, here's, here's the difficult part about
10 communications in Gloucester County.

11 Q. Uh-huh.

12 A. When there's an incident, nobody's on the same channel,
13 and if they are, it's complete chaos. So you have fire folks
14 working off of channel 3. You have some county folks, OEM,
15 hazmat, working off a radio frequency called STAR. You have the
16 police working on their frequency. You have EMS personnel on
17 their frequency. You have our components on the south side of the
18 county responding on channel 5, and then you also have cell phone
19 calls going on back and forth. So I can see why communications
20 didn't go too well.

21 Q. How -- I mean, how would the chief communicate to you,
22 Chief Giampola, and vice versa? Like how was it set up at the --

23 A. Like I said, I was not in the position to make decisions
24 for the hazmat team. We have a leadership broken down, and I had
25 discovered that there was going to be a lot of our component that

1 was not going to be able to be there, and to be honest with you,
2 that's -- sometimes that happens. I mean, you're dealing with a
3 multijurisdictional team and it's hit or miss who comes and who
4 doesn't. But being one of the most senior members there, I felt
5 it was important that I at least be the point of contact because
6 the majority of the team are our folks here from Washington
7 Township. But there really more or less would be normally the
8 clearest form of communications would be a face-to-face in a
9 situation where there's no major obstructions, and obviously it
10 was still early on in the incident. Their command post was right
11 there. He had a lot of things going on.

12 So, you know, like I said, under the assumption based
13 when he said I have Paulsboro Refinery coming, and that they were
14 there, I was assuming that, okay, it looks like they're going to
15 use them as a priority team before we're going to -- I mean
16 they're a lot closer. You know, they're not mustering. They're
17 coming from right down the street. So that was my take on that.

18 But communication-wise, he probably -- I don't know
19 exactly, I didn't listen to the radio, but I don't know exactly
20 what he had coming in at that point. And to be quite frank with
21 you, I don't know if he even requested the Gloucester County
22 hazmat team. I think that was just automatically dispatched from
23 the County Communication Center, and that's something to this day
24 I'm still unaware of.

25 MR. STANCIL: Can you discuss the state of readiness for

1 the Gloucester County hazmat team?

2 CAPT. DOLGOS: In what terms? General? Specifically?
3 I mean, I'll do my best.

4 MR. STANCIL: You have the floor.

5 CAPT. DOLGOS: I'll do my best. As I had mentioned, I
6 respect everybody who's involved with the hazmat incident. It's
7 not something that is for everybody to do and you gentlemen are
8 well aware of that. I think it takes a special breed of people to
9 want to get involved with dealing with this stuff. It takes a lot
10 of hours of training and dedication.

11 Unfortunately, there have been some events that have
12 transpired over the years. I think a lot has to do with people in
13 responsible positions being overwhelmed with other aspects of work
14 to be able to concentrate on a thing. We know there are hazmat
15 teams out there that are full-time hazmat teams. They live and
16 breathe the stuff all week, every day, and they have the ability
17 to do that. Where, in our situation, we're lucky if we train once
18 a month.

19 Our training schedule used to be once a month. Then it
20 went to every other month, and there was really no hardcore, you
21 know, areas of, if you didn't show up, you know, you have to go
22 out on your own to make sure you get your training done. There
23 are suggested recommendations out there through NFPA and OSHA and
24 everything else, as to what training we should be doing and I
25 think any team should always strive to reach those goals.

1 As far as readiness goes, after finding out that there
2 were -- and I did not physically see this; this is what was
3 reported to me by guys from my department, that there were meters
4 that were dead. I can tell you it was not the first time that has
5 happened, that meters were missing off the truck. I was unaware
6 of that. But also in the defense of the meters that might have
7 been there, there might have been some deficiencies in how to use
8 them.

9 Specifically one of the things I had asked some of our
10 guys was whether or not there were Draeger tubes on the truck, and
11 they were like -- some were saying I don't know. Some were saying
12 no. And then my question to them was, was there at least a meter
13 on there where you can start getting some LELs and maybe doing
14 some conversions and trying to get some ideas, and they said -- I
15 believe they did have one meter that might have been working, but
16 there was another meter out of calibration. Again, it's not the
17 first time.

18 They found some issues with SCBAs. They had indicated
19 that there was some other equipment missing off the truck and
20 unfortunately we don't have the truck here. It's not stationed
21 here. We have offered in the past to go there. We did physically
22 go down there to help inspect the truck. We've had the truck here
23 a couple of times during training events and would inspect it and
24 get some of the equipment taken care of.

25 As far as readiness goes, do I think they were ready to

1 handle an incident to that level? Probably not, especially if we
2 had to do some type of physical boarding on the tank car to do any
3 type of leak control. We would have probably definitely needed to
4 call additional resources, which we have done in the past as well.
5 We would call Cherry Hill in some of the incidents where we might
6 be lacking manpower or some equipment.

7 We spent a lot of time for our personnel sending them to
8 schools. We take advantage and go to Colorado. We send out guys
9 out there at least once a year. We send them to other classes.
10 We take advantage of, you know, some online stuff. So we're very
11 heavily involved in training on our own, understanding that we
12 still have our own responsibilities, and our goals are to make
13 sure our guys are trained if the county's not going to be able to
14 provide it. We still have to maintain our competency somehow.

15 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

16 Q. Could you tell me, you know, was there any -- beyond
17 that initial, you know, I'm very concerned and you retreated you
18 said to the fire --

19 A. Yeah, I went back to my vehicle and then from there I
20 went back to the staging area where I had the team move up to, and
21 then from there we were starting to hear things that they were
22 going to relocate to the fire station for the command post, so we
23 were assuming that they were going to move it. I can tell you
24 this. I know the state police OEM, they were not happy with the
25 location of the command post either, and I think that was one of

1 the major reasons why the command post was relocated because their
2 reaction was the same thing, way too close. And there were also
3 other emergency responders that were saying way too close. You
4 know, nobody felt comfortable with where it was.

5 Q. And at that point you had received no information about
6 any safety precautions that are necessary; there was no safety
7 officer?

8 A. Not that early. Not prior to the first briefing inside
9 the church. And I was even surprised to hear that's where the
10 briefing was going to be, too, but that's -- you know, by that
11 time they said that the vapor cloud or the fog, as they described
12 it, was already lifted. So, you know, they're the experts. I
13 don't work with vinyl chloride every day, you know. We go based
14 upon a lot of these, you know, experts that are there. You know,
15 we heed their advice.

16 Q. You mentioned OxyVinyl or one of the companies that was
17 there.

18 A. Yeah, there was the company there, and I don't remember
19 exactly. It was Oxy something or other. But they had
20 representatives there and they apparently brought two meters with
21 them, specific for vinyl chloride.

22 Q. Did they -- what did they discuss, you know, from their
23 perspective about vinyl chloride to the group? Do you recall?

24 A. They were talking about some of the general hazards
25 associated with it. They did say that they were going to go out

1 and start metering afterwards and that they were going to be there
2 to be available if anybody had any questions regarding it. Just
3 overview information, because there was a lot of stuff that was
4 being discussed in that first initial briefing as to everybody's
5 roles and responsibilities, reporting procedures, release of
6 information, things like that.

7 Q. And at that point were you still under the impression
8 that PBF Refinery was more of the chief's primary hazmat team?

9 A. It seemed that way --

10 Q. It still did.

11 A. -- you know, because there was no official face-to-face
12 like I need you guys to do this.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I did periodically throughout the entire day kept
15 asking, you know, various members of the unified command, what do
16 you want from us? Is there anything else? Well, we're just
17 standing by. Continue doing the metering and monitoring kind of
18 thing. That was pretty much it because then I think that's --
19 even the Paulsboro Refinery, that was the extent that they did
20 because it was one of those things where nobody was going out to
21 the railcars. That was CSX.

22 Q. Uh-huh.

23 A. You know, they had already contacted some of their
24 contractual people to start coming out and looking at the scene
25 and making some decisions there. But as far as an emergency

1 response, as far as mitigating anything up at the car, with the
2 exception of us assisting doing the water stream, you know,
3 helping the fire department, that was it, you know.

4 Q. And I guess what we're trying to clarify here, too, is
5 the chief didn't ask for any assistance but did you tell him at
6 any point that, you know, your capabilities were not fully up to
7 speed.

8 A. Well --

9 Q. I mean was that -- did that communication occur?

10 A. -- here's, here's my thing. The Gloucester County Fire
11 Chiefs Association conducts meetings, and I know the Gloucester
12 County Fire Chiefs Association also is involved with the different
13 county resources. I know at the meetings every month there's
14 reports on the hazmat team and everything else. And I personally
15 have never responded into Paulsboro for a hazmat incident, but
16 there might have been some what we call assessment calls, where
17 certain members of the team or basically a small component go out
18 and handle some of the minor stuff. There might have been some of
19 those situations. But I'm also under the understanding that every
20 chief in Gloucester County is well aware of how the Gloucester
21 County hazmat team works. And we don't come in, we don't take
22 over the scene. We are an assisting agency and you let us know
23 what you need. Because there are some jurisdictions out there
24 that will say, no, we're fine; we do things our way or, you know,
25 we'll call in another hazmat team.

1 So I will tell you this. I did have the opportunity
2 back in, it might have been the fall of last year, it might have
3 been the spring of last year, I apologize if my times are way off,
4 but the Paulsboro Fire Department came to Gloucester County Fire
5 Academy and conducted a hazmat operations refresher exercise, and
6 I was the lead instructor, and we went through various scenarios
7 on approaching hazmat, you know, resources. We talked about
8 isolation. We talked about, you know, using sources of
9 information to identify, recognize and things like that. So I
10 think they understand the capabilities and the protocols involved
11 with that.

12 Like I said, their point of view again might have been
13 different than mine, you know. Based on his assessment, he might
14 have thought he was fine of where his command post was. My
15 opinion, I don't think so. And like I said, he had some very well
16 reputable people there at the scene that may have seen things in a
17 different light than I did, but that was my opinion.

18 BY MR. STANCIL:

19 Q. Is there anything else that you can think of that you
20 consider important, an important aspect of this incident?

21 A. Well, I think the big thing that, and I hope there's
22 always going to be lessons learned, because every time you go out
23 on an incident there's always room for improvement, and that's
24 what's good about our job. You know, we strive to be the best
25 where we need to be. We learn by our mistakes but we also hope

1 that some of the mistakes are never fatal or cause long-term
2 detrimental issues, which some of us are now concerned about.

3 I know there's a lot of finger pointing going on with
4 this, and the problem is everybody's so divided right now because
5 there's not a lot of conversations going on. And I'm going to
6 talk on my behalf alone and my opinion, with my involvement, what
7 I saw initially first on. I had a lot of firsthand knowledge
8 information especially within the first few hours after leaving
9 that night as to what transpired. Up until last week, I was not
10 able to talk to anybody about the incident at all in detail. I
11 had requested to sit and talk about the incident. I was never
12 involved with any of the post-incident briefings considering my
13 role and some of the conversations and some of the decisions that
14 were made.

15 So I don't know exactly where everything comes together
16 but it seems like everybody was just away from it, and everybody
17 was blaming certain components for not being done, and one of the
18 major concerns that came out of it was that everybody was
19 overexposed at this incident. And you know what? There were
20 exposures. I was exposed. I was probably one of the ones with
21 the highest levels from the urine test that we did.

22 But it wasn't a direct result at that incident that, you
23 know, I didn't have a meter with me. We did have a meter in the
24 boat with me. It wasn't a Gloucester County hazmat team meter.
25 It was somebody else's meter. But I think a lot of things, that

1 communications as to -- up until later on, what was that
2 permissible exposure limit we were going to work with, you know,
3 what was going to be that level? And even afterwards, was when we
4 went back to the command post, there was no post-medical
5 surveillance set up, because they talked about urine tests and we
6 took it amongst ourselves to have our third-party medical
7 contractor come in and do urine collection for the Washington
8 Township responders, and then the following day we turned them in
9 and turned them over to the people who were going to send it to
10 the lab.

11 And, you know, I think a lot of these hard feelings that
12 are now coming out of this could have been solved early on had
13 everybody sat down and talked and discussed the details and did a
14 little post-incident critique and learned from what transpired
15 there and get the whole story instead of, you know, everything
16 going on, and I think it would have worked out a little bit
17 better. But right now there's a lot of animosity, you know,
18 against, you know, various components out there, and nobody's
19 perfect. You know, there's going to be mistakes made. This isn't
20 something we deal with every day. Were there some things that
21 could have been prevented? Absolutely.

22 You know, one of the things that I'm a little upset
23 about is the fact that what's going to be the future of the hazmat
24 in Gloucester County and if we're not able to fix the problems,
25 what's going to be the end result? You know, for our communities

1 out there, are we going to have the protection? Are we going to
2 have the resources?

3 I just think there's -- a lot of it's also being blown
4 out of proportion. I mean, I just -- like I said, I think there's
5 a lot of animosity out there that just needs to be -- I think
6 everybody needs to sit down, know what the facts are, this is what
7 went right, this is what went wrong. And I know you guys are
8 putting this altogether, too, in regard to the whole incident but,
9 you know, until then I think, you know, just -- I don't know.
10 It's just a very uncomfortable situation where I'm at here at work
11 with some of the things that have transpired since the incident.

12 I will tell you this, too. In regards to post-exposure
13 follow-up, I know if you're overexposed to a chemical outside of
14 the permissible exposure limits or there was some type of issue
15 where something went wrong at the incident, following the
16 incident, there should be immediate medical follow-up or some type
17 of medical surveillance. That was never done. That needs to be
18 adhered to. You know, you don't do it a month or two months after
19 an incident when by then it's -- you know, most of that stuff is
20 gone out of your system. That's lacking.

21 The various other agencies involved, whether it's the
22 Department of Health and Senior Services, whether it's County
23 Health or somebody who can help track, is sitting down with the
24 people early on after the incident to ensure there was no, you
25 know, symptoms or anything of the exposure and is there any

1 problems going on and to help let us understand that, hey, if you
2 were exposed to these various levels, you know, this is what you
3 might see and if you do, you've got to get medical surveillance,
4 or you weren't exposed to the levels to be really concerned. I
5 mean, that was done a couple of days afterwards where the CTH
6 personnel read our readings and said you should be fine. But then
7 you get other people out there with their opinions saying, no, no,
8 you're not fine, you don't know what's going to happen. And
9 rightfully so, and that puts people at edge. And I think that
10 communications needs to be addressed, too, significantly.

11 But like I said, I have notes and probably I'm leaving
12 some critical things out, but --

13 Q. Well, we would be interested in seeing a copy of your
14 notes if they're available.

15 A. Yes. I will take them out. That's fine.

16 Q. If you can e-mail them to us, that would be great.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. And after we have a chance to review them, then perhaps
19 we can -- if we have any more questions, we can follow up with you
20 by telephone or some other way.

21 A. Okay. That's fine. You know, what I'll do, before --
22 when I go back, I'll give you my card. I'll do that. As far as
23 pictures, you want to see them now or do you want to --

24 Q. Yeah, let's --

25 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: Sure, we could do that after we

1 terminate the interview.

2 MR. STANCIL: I have no further questions unless you do.

3 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

4 Q. I just have one last question. When you said that -- I
5 think it was Jim, is it Hauck?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Who had some monitoring capability from the OxyVinyl --

8 A. Yep.

9 Q. -- I believe. How was that information, his monitoring
10 being relayed back to -- was PBF Refinery, were they the ones,
11 were they sort of the repository of that information?

12 A. Once we decided that they were going to be the hub of
13 documenting this stuff, they were to receive the information.
14 Because everybody was paired up, all of our hazmat people were
15 paired up with a Valero -- or, I'm sorry, a Paulsboro Refinery
16 personnel. And that was what we discussed in our briefing --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- and our group when we assigned personnel from our
19 group, what they were going to do.

20 Q. So they were actually escorting or --

21 A. They were paired up with somebody --

22 Q. -- paired up with someone?

23 A. -- yep, somebody who had a meter.

24 BY MR. STANCIL:

25 Q. Did you all do an overall report for the incident?

1 A. The only thing I did was what we call the 214, which is
2 basically --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. -- but it's very limited. It's just general
5 information. It wasn't a lot of detailed stuff. And that was one
6 of the things I was very disgusted about, there was no post-
7 follow-up. And I was forbidden to discuss it with anybody outside
8 of my department, and even within my department, I was very
9 limited on who I could talk to, very limited, and I think,
10 personally I think that's totally wrong. I think there's
11 information that needs to be shared primarily for my health
12 concerns, especially we wanted to know what some of those readings
13 were. We are in the process of the workers' comp, because that
14 claim was finally filed, to get post-medical surveillance
15 conducted. And one of the things the one toxicologist on the
16 phone asked me to do was to try to get the levels, if you can get
17 meter readings. I can't do that.

18 Q. Did anybody record those numbers that you were getting,
19 like the Paulsboro Refinery folks or Mr. Hauck with the OxyVinyl's
20 meter? Were those readings being kept?

21 A. I'm assuming they were because that was the initial
22 understanding that I had had, that Paulsboro Refinery, they were
23 going to radio it into the Refinery, and the Refinery personnel
24 were going to document it for that situation. Was that ever done?
25 I don't know. Like I said, I didn't even have an opportunity to

1 talk to them post-incident to find out if even was done. I would
2 like to know, but --

3 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: Yeah. Well, we could discuss more
4 details --

5 CAPT. DOLGOS: Sure.

6 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: If we have no more questions, we'd like
7 to thank you again and terminate the interview at -- it's 2:30
8 right now. Thank you.

9 (Whereupon, 2:30 p.m., 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: CONRAIL DERAILMENT/HAZARDOUS
 MATERIAL RELEASE
 PAULSBORO, NEW JERSEY
 NOVEMBER 30, 2012
 Interview of Patrick Dolgos

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-13-MR-002

PLACE: Sewell, New Jersey

DATE: January 29, 2013

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.

Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber