

**DOCKET NO.: SA-519  
EXHIBIT NO. 14E**

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**HUMAN PERFORMANCE GROUP CHAIRMAN'S FACTUAL REPORT  
ATTACHMENT 4: LETTER FROM AAL MEDICAL REVIEW OFFICER**

**American Airlines flight 1420  
Little Rock, Arkansas  
June 1, 1999**

**DCA99MA060**

# American Airlines®

September 1, 1999

Mr. Evan Byrne  
Office of Aviation Safety  
Human Performance Division (AS-50)  
490 L'Enfant Plaza S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20594

Dear Mr. Byrne,

I have been asked to respond to the issues concerning post-accident drug testing on surviving First Officer Origel on American Airlines Flight #1420 in Little Rock, Arkansas. As Area Medical Director and a Medical Review Officer for American Airlines, I was on the scene several hours after the accident and was directly involved with decisions involving drug testing.

The decision was made not to perform post-accident drug testing, due to the unstable medical condition of FO Origel and his mental inability to comprehend the documentation requiring his knowledge and consent, due to narcotic sedation. FO Origel had a Foley catheter in place immediately after admission to the Emergency Room at the University Hospital of Arkansas, which precluded obtaining a clean, uncontaminated urine specimen. In addition, the FO underwent extensive emergency orthopedic surgery requiring general anesthesia and post-op heavy sedation.

Due to the fact that DOT Drug Testing regulations do not address the situation of collecting specimens from an indwelling Foley catheter, the length of time the catheter was to remain in place, and the mental condition of the FO while under the influence of medication, the decision was made to not perform Post-Accident drug testing. Mr. Jeff Pratt of the FAA Office of Drug Testing was consulted at the time of the incident and was in agreement with our decision.

Please free to contact me if I can provide additional information.

Regards,

  
Thomas Bettles, MD, MPH  
AMR Medical

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