

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

EMPLOYEE FATALITY *

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD * Accident No.: DCA17FR009

QUEENS VILLAGE, NEW YORK *

JUNE 10, 2017 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: CRAIG DONGARRA

Long Island Rail Road Headquarters
Jamaica, New York

Monday,
June 12, 2017

APPEARANCES:

TED TURPIN, Rail Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ANN GARCIA, Chair, Human Performance Group
National Transportation Safety Board.

TOMAS TORRES, Rail Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SEAN FITZPATRICK, Inspector
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

DAVID HESS,
Public Transportation Safety Board
New York State Department of Transportation.

RAYMOND PERSAUD, Inspector
Safety and Health Division
New York State Department of Labor

Brett Becker, Superintendent of Engine
Service Long Island Rail Road

MICHAEL BARTO, Supervisor of Train Movement
Long Island Rail Road

VALERIE TRICHILO, Investigation Manager, Corporate
Safety
Long Island Rail Road

WILLIAM BATES
SMART National Transportation Safety Team

DOMINIC AMENDOLARE
SMART Transportation Safety Team

DON HILL
Safety Task Force
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET)

ERIC MARTIN, First Vice Local Chairman
Division 269, BLET

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>I N D E X</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Dongarra:		
By Mr. Turpin		6
By Mr. Fitzpatrick		23
By Mr. Turpin		24
By Mr. Fitzpatrick		24
By Mr. Persaud		26
By Mr. Hill		28
By Mr. Hess		29
By Ms. Garcia		30
By Mr. Turpin		41
By Mr. Fitzpatrick		48
By Mr. Becker		49
By Ms. Garcia		50

I N T E R V I E W

1
2
3 MR. TURPIN: All Right. My name is Ted Turpin. Today is
4 June 12th of 2017. We're at the Jamaica Long Island Rail Road
5 Offices. We're interviewing the locomotive engineer in connection
6 with an accident that happened on Saturday, on June 10th. The
7 accident number is DCA17FR009.

8 Okay. The purpose of this is for safety. All we want to do
9 is gather facts. Okay? Do you understand that this is being
10 recorded?

11 MR. DONGARRA: Yes.

12 MR. TURPIN: All right. We're going to go around the room
13 real quick and we'll introduce everybody.

14 Again, my name is Ted Turpin -- and spell your name --
15 T-U-R-P-I-N.

16 MR. FITZPATRICK: I'm Shawn Fitzpatrick,
17 F-I-T-Z-P-A-T-R-I-C-K. I'm an FRA inspector in Springfield, Mass.

18 MR. PERSAUD: My name's Raymond Persaud, P-E-R-S-A-U-D. I'm
19 from New York State, Safety and Health, Department of Labor.

20 MR. BATES: William Bates, B-A-T-E-S, SMART National
21 Transportation Safety Team.

22 MR. AMENDOLARE: Dominic Amendolare, A-M-E-N-D-O-L-A-R-E,
23 SMART Transportation Safety Team.

24 MR. Becker: Brett Becker, B-E-C-K-E-R. I'm with the
25 Long Island Rail Road. I'm the superintendent of engine
service.

1 MR. BARTO: Michael Barto, B-A-R-T-O, Long Island Rail Road,
2 supervisor of train movement.

3 MR. HILL: Don Hill, BLET Safety Task Force, H-I-L-L.

4 MR. HESS: David Hess, H-E-S-S, Public Transportation Safety
5 Board, New York State Department of Transportation.

6 MS. TRICHILLO: Valerie Trichilo, T-R-I-C-H-I-L-O. I am an
7 investigation manager of corporate safety (indiscernible) for
8 LIRR.

9 MS. GARCIA: Anne Garcia, G-A-R-C-I-A. I'm the Human
10 Performance Group chair for this investigation for the National
11 Transportation Safety Board.

12 MR. TORRES: Tomas Torres, T-O-R-R-E-S, NTSB.

13 MR. TURPIN: Go ahead.

14 MR. MARTIN: Eric Martin, M-A-R-T-I-N, first vice local
15 chairman, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen,
16 Division 269.

17 MR. DONGARRA: And I'm Craig Dongarra, D-O-N-G-A-R-R-A,
18 locomotive engineer for Long Island Rail Road.

19 MR. TURPIN: Very good. Thank you.

20 Can I call you Greg?

21 MR. DONGARRA: Craig.

22 MR. TURPIN: Craig. I'm sorry. All right. First mistake.
23 Anybody in this room you have an objection to being here?

24 MR. DONGARRA: No.

25 MR. TURPIN: All Right. That is your choice. You can kick

1 anybody out.

2 MR. DONGARRA: No.

3 MR. TURPIN: Except first us.

4 INTERVIEW OF CRAIG DONGARRA

5 BY MR. TURPIN:

6 Q. All right. Let's just start this real gently here. Tell us
7 what happened.

8 A. Okay. Leaving -- I left Merillon Avenue on my last westbound
9 train for the day. And coming through Queens interlocking, I'm --
10 our next stop was Hillside. As I was approaching Queens
11 interlocking, I noticed roadway workers on or about the tracks in
12 between Main Line 3 and Main Line 1. I'd say about -- between six
13 to eight of them.

14 As I was getting closer, I sounded 14L on the horn and the
15 flagman on the east end acknowledged me, put up the whistle post.
16 I acknowledged him back. I was getting a little bit closer.
17 There was one gentleman on the west. They were pretty much all
18 bunched together in front of Queens Tower.

19 As I was getting closer, the majority of them moved, backed
20 off to the side back to Main Line 3. They all acknowledged me and
21 there was one gentleman on the west end that did not acknowledge
22 me, had his back turned to me and he was walking parallel with my
23 train.

24 Q. Take your time.

25 A. As I was approaching them, getting closer, he's still walking

1 -- still walking west, parallel to my train. And sounded the horn
2 again when I was right near them. And as soon as I was on top of
3 him, he drifted to the right. It looked like, it looked like he
4 was bending down to pick something up near Main Line 3. He just
5 disappeared underneath, off-side the cab from my train. And
6 that's when I heard the train hit him.

7 Q. Uh-huh.

8 A. I don't know why he did not acknowledge me, because everybody
9 usually gives me the hand sign to acknowledge that I was coming
10 through, at any time. And it just not happen -- just not that
11 day, all the time they usually do that. But for some reason, this
12 gentleman broke away from the pack and just drifted, drifted into
13 the -- into Main Line 3 on the side of my train.

14 Dumped the train immediately after that and that was it. I
15 lost it after that.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. The conductor contacted 204, contacted Queens. I could
18 not -- I did not speak to anybody. I was not in any shape or form
19 to speak with anybody.

20 Emergency personnel got on the train. You know, it was a
21 packed train. It was Belmont Day. Everybody's going to the race.

22 And that's about it. After that I just -- I lost it. I lost
23 it after that.

24 Q. Okay. Good very good. We'll back track and do a few detail
25 things, but we just -- let's change subjects for now.

1 Just when did you go on duty? Where did you go on duty?

2 A. My shift started 2:19 a.m. in West Side Yard.

3 Q. 2:19 a.m.?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Did a roundtrip to Ronkonkoma.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Back to West Side, and then it was another roundtrip to
9 Huntington. And that was, like I said before, my last westbound
10 train for the day. Three more stops and I was going home.

11 Q. So you only had two roundtrips for the day you were going to
12 do?

13 A. Two roundtrips; four trains, total.

14 Q. And this was the return for Huntington? You were going to go
15 all the way back to West Side?

16 A. West Side Yard. Yes.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 Okay. This train handled properly?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. No issues?

21 A. It handled properly. No issues. Brake tested. ASE
22 certified.

23 Q. Did you perform any tests on it?

24 A. Brake tests, I did. Certification was already performed.

25 Q. Okay. What kind of brake test? You can just describe it.

1 You don't have to give it a number.

2 A. Oh, it was just our standard rear end --

3 Q. Set and release?

4 A. Set and release. Correct.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Emergency and -- emergency brake valve and the dump of the
7 master controller.

8 Q. Did you do a running test when you left the --

9 A. Running test, 5 miles an hour out of South Side Extension in
10 Huntington and 30 miles an hour --

11 Q. You do two: one at 5 and one at 30?

12 A. Yes, I do.

13 Q. Oh, okay.

14 How many stops did you have between Huntington and --

15 A. Cold Spring Harbor, Syosett, Hicksville, Westbury, Mineola,
16 Merillon Avenue, and the next one after that was Hillside. Then
17 it's Jamaica and Woodside, Woodside station.

18 Q. Okay. Was this an express, considered express?

19 A. No, it's not considered express. I mean, it was express from
20 Merillon to Hillside. There are no -- westbound trains on the
21 main line do not stop at Floral Park, Queens Village, or Hollis on
22 the weekend. So after that was Jamaica.

23 Q. Okay. Just kind of mixed schedule on --

24 A. Yeah. Yeah, a little odd. There's a couple odd stops in
25 between when you go to Huntington. Sometimes it's Carle Place.

1 Sometimes it's Westbury. Sometimes it's -- it differs on whatever
2 train it is.

3 Q. Okay. Plus Saturday operation?

4 A. Right.

5 Q. Okay. All right. What -- how do you understand or what is
6 your understanding of the warning to wayside workers? Explain to
7 me what -- how you view that.

8 A. Well, when approaching roadway workers, you're supposed to
9 sound 14L, when they're on or near tracks, or bridges or like
10 structures. Sometimes temporary speed limit signs are in place.
11 Foul time is usually if they need the track taken out.

12 Nothing was implemented. Nothing was said to me over the
13 radio between Divide, Queens Tower. No Form L's were given. It
14 was actually pretty quiet that day. It was weird. You know,
15 Belmont Stake day, you'd think it was a little heavy on the radio,
16 but no it wasn't.

17 Just don't -- I just don't understand being in that area of
18 the tracks, being in an interlocking, being Belmont Day, you have
19 trains going in and out of Belmont that took -- it took place
20 right across -- you're on a main line; you have trains coming
21 through there. Main Line 1 is in -- Main Line 1 was running.
22 Main Line 3 was running. I just don't understand why there wasn't
23 more precautionary measures taken to prevent this.

24 It's just, it was just -- it was a weird -- as I came up upon
25 it, they were all -- they were all together. They weren't spread

1 out, you know, where they usually have the flagman a little -- you
2 know 50 to 100 yards --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. -- a little east to give them a warning. But I'm not putting
5 any blame on anybody, because he saw me coming. He acknowledged
6 me. Everybody else acknowledged me coming through there except
7 this one gentleman who was on the west end that, as I was
8 approaching, just -- I don't know. I don't even know how you
9 cannot hear me coming at 70. I was going 70, 72 miles an hour.

10 Q. Yep.

11 A. I just -- I don't -- especially in that area. Main Line 3,
12 you have trains coming back and forth. It's not in the yard.
13 It's not a secondary track. It's not Jamaica, where it's 15 miles
14 per hour. I dealt with roadway workers. I deal with them all the
15 time, all the time. And it just -- this one there, I don't know
16 why. Don't know why.

17 Q. Yeah. Now we're going to do everything we can here, you
18 know, to interview everybody and talk to everybody and we're going
19 to try to dig into some of those things you're asking about. But
20 realize that sometimes you won't get answers for those things.

21 A. I understand.

22 Q. And we'll try to help you with that, because we're going to
23 make things very publicly available. Everything we have will
24 be -- is available to everybody, that we gather factually. So it
25 just -- if you can hang on. I know you got these things working

1 inside you. But if you can hang on, I think we can help you with
2 some of those things.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. So -- but one of the things you mentioned is the separation.
5 How far apart do you think those people were, the rest of the gang
6 from the individual?

7 A. I'd probably say about between 10, 20 feet.

8 Q. Okay. Would you be able, on this -- this picture? There's
9 the tower. Here's the platform. Could you circle on there where
10 the gang was with a "G," and an "I" where the individual was? And
11 you're coming from here?

12 A. Yeah. This is --

13 Q. You're coming down into the interlock. So you said there
14 were people at the tower as well, when you first --

15 A. They were pretty much in -- what do you got here? This is
16 Queens. This is Queens Village.

17 Q. Queens Village platform is right here. There's the platform.
18 This is the interlock tower, the control operator. So here's the
19 overhead signal.

20 A. I'm sorry. Where's Queens Tower?

21 Q. You've already gone by the first overhead, which is
22 Interlock 1. You've gone by 1. The bridge is already -- and this
23 is 2.

24 A. This is 2. This is where he was going?

25 Q. Yes. If this is easier --

1 A. No, no, no. No, this is -- this is fine. As long as this is
2 Queens -- this is Queens Village.

3 Q. That's Queens Village and that's the platform. Yeah.

4 A. Because it was beyond -- I had stopped the train, it was
5 beyond Queens Village.

6 Q. Yep.

7 A. Yeah.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's okay. It's okay --

9 MR. TURPIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, you don't have to --
10 it's not --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You originally said that it was there.
12 It's okay. Just tell us --

13 BY MR. TURPIN:

14 Q. Yeah. You start the story -- you started the story coming
15 in. Okay? You're near the tower. You saw a group of people near
16 the tower, correct?

17 A. Yeah. But I didn't -- I thought the Queens Tower was a
18 little closer than this, because --

19 Q. You're looking at it from something less from an engineer.
20 If you come in here at 80, it is really close.

21 A. Yeah. I guess so.

22 Q. So it's quick. You know what? If this doesn't work for you,
23 let's go back to the verbal. How far apart did you think they
24 were?

25 A. All -- they were all, they were all together as I

1 was approaching them. It was just that one individual just
2 started to, just to walk west without them. I'd say 10 feet.

3 Q. Okay. So you saw him actually peel away from the crowd?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay. How far back do you think you were when you saw that?

8 A. I was maybe a car length, two car lengths. Then again, going
9 at 80 --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. Or 70, 72. Maybe like -- maybe two to three car lengths
12 before I got to the flagman.

13 Q. Okay. How soon --

14 A. He just never -- he just didn't acknowledge. It was like he
15 wasn't there. I don't know. I don't know why everybody else
16 acknowledged and he didn't. And he didn't --

17 Q. Yeah. We --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. We may never get an answer about his decision. Okay? And I
20 think it's important that you try not to figure out why he did
21 what he did. That's real important. What you did was sounded the
22 horn, acknowledged the guys' response and put the train in
23 emergency. Right?

24 A. I sounded the horn again before I put the -- when I was on
25 top of -- when I reached the flagman and the rest of the crew, I

1 sounded the horn again, because I noticed he was not paying -- I'm
2 saying paying attention. He does not acknowledge me and he was
3 walking away with his back turned to the train.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. He's the only one I --

6 Q. So as soon as you saw him diverge from the rest of the --

7 A. I gave it another one, and possibly another one when I was on
8 top of him, but it was too late.

9 Q. Yeah. How far back do you think you gave the first horn, the
10 first whistle?

11 A. Well, 14L, as soon as I see -- as soon as I saw the flagman.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And he gave --

14 Q. Here's the tough one. When did you see the flagman? It's
15 okay.

16 A. Coming over -- let's see, Floral Park. Probably around
17 Floral Park Station I noticed him. But, again, going -- you know,
18 if you're going 72 --

19 Q. Yeah, yeah, yeah. You're --

20 A. You know, as soon -- there's a little hill when you come
21 through New Hyde Park; there's a little -- you know, a little hill
22 coming over.

23 Q. Uh-huh.

24 A. And the you clear Floral Park and then you got a -- you have
25 a clear path to the Queens interlocking.

1 Q. Uh-huh.

2 A. And that's where I saw them all walking together.

3 Q. Okay. So what did you notice? Vests, hard hats?

4 A. Definitely vests. They all had vests on. I don't recall any
5 hard hats. They all had vests on. And the whistle post.

6 Q. Okay. Do you -- how -- do you see the whistle post right
7 away or that was only after he raised it?

8 A. That was only after he raised it.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. So the very first thing you see is?

12 A. The group of roadway workers.

13 Q. With their --

14 A. With their vests on.

15 Q. -- vests? If they hadn't had vests, you probably wouldn't
16 have seen them?

17 A. I probably wouldn't have seen them, because they would have
18 just blended in with -- between the track and everything coming up
19 and --

20 Q. Okay. I just needed that visual marker.

21 A. Right. No, no --

22 Q. What tells you --

23 A. No, they had vests.

24 Q. So during that -- during your instructions you've had about,
25 you know, whistling for wayside workers, do they tell you how

1 close they are, how far they are, how soon you start?

2 A. As soon as you see roadway workers on or about the tracks,
3 it's 14L and it's 14L until they acknowledge you.

4 Q. Okay. So -- I'm sorry.

5 A. But he acknowledge me right away.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. The flagman acknowledge me right away.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. Up with the post. And, like I said, it was like between six
10 to eight of them. I'm going to say seven of them backed off as I
11 was coming through, and you had -- just had the guy on the west
12 end, you know, towards the -- it was just -- started walking away
13 from the group.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. And had -- just seemed like had no knowledge of a train
16 coming down Main Line 3.

17 Q. So how close to the track do they have to be for you to start
18 the 14L or --

19 A. It's just as soon as -- they could be anywhere in the
20 vicinity and see -- if you see, or if I see roadway workers on or
21 about the track, I give them 14L, even if they're on Main Line 2,
22 Main Line 4.

23 Q. Really? All the way across all four tracks?

24 A. (No audible answer.)

25 Q. Okay. So --

1 A. Because -- the reason why is because there might be a couple
2 people over here in the vicinity, might be a couple people just --
3 you never know. You never know -- well, that's the way I operate.
4 You never know where they are, you know. And sometimes the horn
5 doesn't work.

6 Q. Okay. So you had no written instructions there was work
7 being performed?

8 A. No, no written instructions, no Form L's, no tracks-out-of-
9 service.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Main Line 1 was in service, too. They were in between both
12 tracks. They were in between Main Line 1 and 3 as I was coming
13 through.

14 Q. And just -- you're going to have to repeat, but the train
15 dispatcher or control operator never called you up? Nobody called
16 you and said there's workers?

17 A. Not -- nobody -- nothing from Divide, nothing from Queens
18 Tower.

19 Q. Okay. How often do you encounter maintenance of way that you
20 haven't had instructions or prewarning?

21 A. Pretty much every day, you know.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Like I said, unless they actually have to take a track out
24 and divert us to another track or, you know, the switches are bad
25 or if there was something like that. But almost every day, every

1 -- almost every train, I'm going to say. If there are -- if
2 there's work being performed on the tracks, there really is no
3 notice for us.

4 Q. Okay. Earlier in the first roundtrip, did you see anybody on
5 the first roundtrip?

6 A. First roundtrip to Ronkonkoma, no. It was early in the
7 morning, too, so you're running --

8 Q. Right. You're --

9 A. -- 4:00.

10 Q. How about on the way out to Huntington?

11 A. On the way out to Huntington, I did not see anybody in
12 Queens.

13 Q. Or anywhere else?

14 A. Sorry. I don't remember.

15 Q. Okay. How about Saturday? Does Saturday make a difference
16 to your expectation of whether people are going to be working or
17 not?

18 A. No. No, every day, to me, is the same day on the railroad.

19 Q. Okay. Real quick with the conductor.

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. Where was he on the train when it happened?

22 A. He was, I want to say, first or second car.

23 Q. Okay. When was the last time you'd talked with him?

24 A. Last time I talked to him was real quick when he came up
25 after I dumped the train. He asked me what happened and --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- and I said, I hit a roadway worker.

3 Q. How about prior to that, when was the last time you talked
4 with him?

5 A. It's the second car -- Hicksville. I think it was up in
6 Hicksville. Mineola -- I believe the last time it was at
7 Hicksville Station.

8 Q. Okay. Was that in person or radio?

9 A. No, that was in person. He came up to get the doors at
10 Hicksville.

11 Q. Okay. Does he stand up near the cab at all during the trip?

12 A. No. He wasn't up there at -- he wasn't up there, other than
13 to get the doors.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. At Hicksville was the last station. After that it was
16 Westbury and Mineola and Merillon. He got the doors at Hicksville
17 and that was the last time I saw him before dumping the train.

18 Q. Okay. All right. Oh, how come you weren't making speed,
19 track speed? Like you said, at 72, 73?

20 A. MAS is 80. I believe I slowed the train down approaching
21 them. I do that until -- I do that sometimes until they
22 acknowledge me, but I wasn't -- I don't like flying by them. I
23 don't, because I -- because you don't know. And --

24 Q. Okay. But there wasn't any mechanical reason or --

25 A. No mechanical reason.

1 Q. -- any problem?

2 A. The train was, the train was fine.

3 Q. And you normally could be going 80 there without much
4 trouble?

5 A. Yes. Between Merillon Avenue to Hillside with no stops in
6 between, you're going 80.

7 Q. Okay. A side question, and it's been bothering a couple of
8 us here, because we saw it. How do you feel about going through a
9 passenger station at 80 and the platform?

10 A. At 2:00 in the morning, it's fine, because nobody's on it.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. It's pretty scary. It's just -- you know, some people think
13 that train -- do I have a problem with it? No. I don't have a
14 problem with it. But I just hope nobody does anything stupid.

15 Q. Would you rather be on the inside tracks?

16 A. Yeah. I mean --

17 Q. I mean, that was an obvious, I think, question.

18 A. That's -- yeah, I think everybody, everybody would, just
19 because of the chance of somebody tripping --

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. -- you know, a little kid or, you know, something -- people
22 thinking maybe a train's stopping there and they're on the yellow
23 line.

24 Q. Right.

25 A. Yeah. It's all, it's -- it can be a little scary at times.

1 Q. Without putting words, nerve wracking?

2 A. Nerve wracking, yeah.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. It's nerve wracking.

5 Q. Yeah. Thank you. Do you have any insight on the decision
6 made on which track you're going to go at the station there,
7 knowing that you weren't going to stop? Does it surprise you, you
8 were on the platform side or did it matter? Is it pretty random?

9 A. No. That would be the, that would be the regular track that
10 we would be on.

11 Q. Okay. Even if you weren't stopping?

12 A. Even if we weren't stopping, yeah.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. You know, maybe during the week it might be different with
15 the amount of trains that are running rush hour or whatnot, where
16 you're stopping. I guess it depends on that.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But, during the weekend when it's pretty much -- I'm not
19 going to say -- you know, it's a little -- it's quiet.

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. It's quiet, more quiet than it is during the week. But it's
22 still -- like I said, there's a lot of people going to Belmont, a
23 lot people going to the city. But the trains are just, you know,
24 a little, a little less trains going on the weekend. So --

25 MR. TURPIN: Okay. All right.

1 At this point, I will walk around the table here and see if
2 anybody has any follow-ups, and we'll do more but --

3 MR. DONGARRA: Yeah. Okay.

4 MR. TURPIN: A lot of it's going to be background stuff.

5 MR. DONGARRA: Okay.

6 MR. TURPIN: So do you have any questions?

7 MR. FITZPATRICK: How are you?

8 MR. DONGARRA: Good. How are you doing?

9 MR. TURPIN: State your name, please, first.

10 MR. FITZPATRICK: Sean Fitzpatrick, FRA.

11 BY MR. FITZPATRICK:

12 Q. Everything's covered pretty well. I'm just going to touch on
13 a couple different real quick wayside detectors. Was there --
14 were there any audible wayside detectors in that area that would
15 call out, like a dragger or a -- I'm not familiar with your
16 territory, is why I'm asking.

17 A. A wayside detector?

18 Q. Somebody to go over that would tell you an axel kind of with
19 hot bearings or anything like that. There's nothing that -- an
20 audible track that's let's -- no, nobody --

21 A. Not that I'm aware of.

22 Q. Sorry for answering it for you.

23 Other traffic, when you were at that station, did you -- was
24 there anything coming at you on a opposite track, you're aware of?

25 A. There was just one train going into Belmont Yard at the time,

1 when I was -- yeah, because they -- yeah. Nobody was on 1.

2 MR. TURPIN: Let me, let me clarify that.

3 BY MR. TURPIN:

4 Q. Was he already on the Y or was he just pulling into the Y?

5 A. I saw -- I remember him just pulling in. He was approaching
6 the Y.

7 Q. So he was still out on the track?

8 A. Yeah, he was. See, now if I go -- yeah. Well, that's the
9 last -- that was, that would have been the last -- that's the last
10 time I saw him. This is where he was going. Because then I
11 dumped the train. I dumped the train down here.

12 Q. So he was across from you? Just about the time you dumped
13 it, the rear of his train was across from you?

14 A. I just remember a train that was heading into Belmont.

15 Q. Okay. Let me, let me back up. Did you see his headlight
16 when you were coming from the distance? That would tell us
17 whether he was still on the main or not.

18 A. Yes. Yes. I saw the headlight.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I saw the headlight.

21 Q. Okay. And we can -- obviously, we can get those times from
22 the dispatch system.

23 BY MR. FITZPATRICK:

24 Q. What track would that be on?

25 A. That would be on Main Line 4.

1 Q. Main 4. Okay. Thank you.

2 A. Going into the Belmont Y. Belmont.

3 Q. Won't be much more from me. I promise. Give me 10 seconds.

4 So, you had -- your conductor was on the second car. The
5 other two employees?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. I mean, what, did you have two more assistants? Were you --
8 do you know where they were?

9 A. There was a collector -- excuse me -- positioned somewhere in
10 between the -- you know, in the middle cars. Then you had the
11 brakeman on the east end.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Conductor was either in the head car or the second car.

14 Q. I think you've already mentioned this. I'm sorry if I'm
15 being repetitive.

16 A. That's okay.

17 Q. Do you see a different gang of M&W employees a little further
18 east of where you were, just before getting to where the --

19 A. It was the -- no. It was, it was the same. There was about
20 six to eight -- there was only about six to eight guys.

21 Q. Okay. All right.

22 A. And that -- the last guy just, you know, tailed off as I was
23 coming through.

24 Q. Okay. This is the last of my questions. It'll be quick.

25 After the incident were you informed -- or were you relieved

1 by the railroad?

2 A. Yes, I was. I was --

3 Q. Was it timely? How far from when the incident happened from
4 when you were released, roughly? I mean, you don't have to --

5 A. I was due there at 10:14. Really, I don't remember how long
6 it was. I was on the train for a while with oxygen. I was -- and
7 then I had to walk back the 12 cars to get to Queens Village. And
8 they took me downstairs to the ambulance.

9 Q. And that took you off the property, right?

10 A. Yes. Yeah. I don't remember exactly how long.

11 Q. You had transportation from -- did they bring you to the
12 hospital or --

13 A. Yeah, in an ambulance to Long Island Jewish Medical Center.

14 Q. Okay. And they were providing you transportation home?

15 A. My wife.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. My wife did.

18 Q. You offered counseling, guidance, EAP?

19 A. Yes.

20 MR. FITZPATRICK: That's all I have.

21 MR. PERSAUD: Raymond, New York State Department of Labor.

22 BY MR. PERSAUD:

23 Q. The 14L, what does it stand 14L?

24 A. The sign?

25 Q. It stand --

1 MR. TURPIN: What is a 14L?

2 MR. FITZPATRICK: What is a 14L, he's asking.

3 MR. TURPIN: Give the whistle.

4 MR. DONGARRA: It's two long, then like long -- one short,
5 one long.

6 BY MR. PERSAUD:

7 Q. Two long, then --

8 A. Two long, one short, one long.

9 Q. Do you remember seeing Interlock 2 as they was coming?

10 MR. DONGARRA: Do I remember seeing the interlocking?

11 BY MR. PERSAUD:

12 Q. The interlocking, yes.

13 A. The bridge, the signal bridge?

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And you sounded of all that area after or before?

17 A. No. I sounded it as soon as I know -- I saw the roadway
18 workers, as I was -- like, it was around Floral Park. As soon as
19 you, as soon as you pass Floral Park. And, obviously, I was doing
20 a good enough amount of speed. I saw them in the middle of Queens
21 interlocking.

22 Q. And then sounded it the second time?

23 A. The second time for 14L?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. When I was, when I was approaching them and --

1 Q. And then?

2 A. -- I gave them, you know, a two to acknowledge as soon as he
3 held up the whistle post, two to acknowledge. And as I was
4 approaching them again, you know, further, I noticed that one guy
5 walking alone with his back to me, so I gave another one. And I
6 said -- like I said, possibly another one, but -- when I was on
7 top of him. I just -- I don't --

8 Q. All right. The last 14L, was it given as between -- going
9 into Belmont; do you remember it there? If you don't remember,
10 it's okay. I'm just --

11 A. I -- sorry. I don't remember that.

12 MR. PERSAUD: No problem. No further.

13 MR. BATES: Bates. No questions.

14 MR. AMENDOLARE: Dominic Amendolare, no questions.

15 MR. Becker: Brett Becker, no questions.

16 MR. BARTO: Michael Barto, no questions.

17 MR. HILL: Don Hill with BLET. I just have one question, one
18 line I should say.

19 BY MR. HILL:

20 Q. Foul time over the radio -- how often did you hear foul time
21 being given over the radio, if at all?

22 A. Very few and far between. I'd say -- I've heard it but it's
23 -- I maybe -- I've been an engineer -- I've been on the property
24 for almost 3 years; qualified for 2, in November. Foul time maybe
25 two to three times off the top of my head, and that's been in

1 Harold. That's been Harold's interlockings that I've heard that.

2 MR. HILL: Okay. Thanks. That's all I need to ask right
3 now.

4 MR. DONGARRA: Yeah. It's very rare, very rare that I hear
5 that over the radio.

6 MR. HESS: David Hess. One question. One question only.

7 BY MR. HESS:

8 Q. You keep referring to that the gang was bunched together in
9 the same area.

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. Where was the flagman?

12 A. The flagman was on the east end.

13 Q. East end?

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Across from them or in the same area as these six to eight
16 individuals?

17 A. They were, they were pretty much -- they were pretty much
18 lined up.

19 Q. Pretty much lined up?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. They were pretty much lined up and then you had the one guy
23 on the west end, you know. Like I said, I don't -- could he have
24 been 50 to 100 yards east?

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. I've -- you know, I've encountered that, you know?

2 Q. Uh-huh.

3 A. Sometimes I encounter it like this. But I don't -- even if
4 he was, I don't even think it would have mattered with him,
5 because I just don't know why he didn't -- like, again, I'm not
6 going to get back to why or how we -- not know anything about
7 that. But if everybody else heard it, everybody else got out of
8 the way and he was with them, I don't know why he drifted off.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. But, yeah --

11 Q. Understood. Thank you.

12 MS. TRICHILLO: Valerie Trichilo, no questions.

13 MS. GARCIA: Ann Garcia with NTSB. I have several questions,
14 some just follow-up for Ted. They're all just standard questions.
15 Okay?

16 BY MS. GARCIA:

17 Q. First, were you -- did you do tox testing following the
18 accident? Did the FRA or Long Island Rail Road request for you to
19 give samples for a toxicology test?

20 A. I just went to the ambulance. No -- a drug test?

21 Q. Uh-huh.

22 A. No, I didn't give any sample.

23 Q. Okay. That's my understanding that --

24 MR. MARTIN: I can, I can answer that. Eric Martin, BLE.

25 I was at the hospital, and the one thing I mentioned to the

1 doctor and to the nurse was be very specific about making sure
2 that blood test -- that the actual test was not expired, the
3 box -- the tox box wasn't expired and not to do any sort of
4 alcohol on the swab. And what was told to me from the nurse and
5 the doctor was, well, to -- unfortunately, the test will come back
6 positive. I said, why? Because we -- they put some, I guess --
7 I'm not sure -- morphine, some sort of drugs in him because of
8 his --

9 MS. GARCIA: Medications?

10 MR. MARTIN: Medications, because his -- how he reacted
11 coming into the hospital. He was in shock.

12 MS. GARCIA: Okay.

13 MR. MARTIN: And that's -- and, as far as I know, there was
14 no tox box or blood taken from Craig.

15 MS. GARCIA: Okay. That was my understanding. Okay.

16 BY MS. GARCIA:

17 Q. So, with that, have you been through this procedure before?
18 Have you had any prior accidents or incidents?

19 A. I had a derailment a year ago in Jamaica. For that, I was --
20 remember being drug tested. But, other than that, no. That was
21 the first fatality. That was my first fatality.

22 Q. Uh-huh. Okay. Thank you.

23 Ted had asked you some about your work schedule. Do you have
24 a regular work schedule?

25 A. Yes. I'm on a regular -- I'm on a regular job.

1 Q. Could you go through every day of the week for us on your
2 regular job?

3 A. Sure. I'm on Job 346, which covers three different jobs
4 during the week and the weekend. On the weekend, it's a 2:19
5 report and I'm done like 10:35 in Penn Station. That's Saturday
6 and Sunday.

7 Q. That's both AMs?

8 A. Both AMs, yes.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah. For Monday and Tuesday -- and that's Job 123 -- I'm
11 sorry -- on the weekends, Saturday and Sunday. Monday and
12 Tuesday, I cover 152, which begins at 1:30 in Brooklyn.

13 Q. AM?

14 A. Correct, AM. And ends in Brooklyn in -- around -- is it
15 9:30? I'm going to say it's around 9:30, it ends in Brooklyn.
16 And on Wednesday, I cover 151, which is 1:30 out of Brooklyn,
17 a.m., and ends in -- ends in West Side Yard. Well, I pull into
18 Penn around 8, 8:05 and the train goes down to the yard. So I'm
19 off around 8:20, 8:25.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Thursday and Friday is relief day.

22 Q. Thursday and Friday. Okay.

23 A. All right.

24 Q. Okay. On your workdays, what's your normal time for going to
25 bed and getting up in the morning?

1 A. Normal time is probably around 7.

2 Q. Okay. So Saturday/Sundays you go to bed around 7:00?

3 A. Saturday and Sunday, yeah, I try -- yeah, 7 -- between 7 and
4 8:00.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Again, I guess it all depends on -- like 1:30, I'm in, you
7 know, bed like around 6. I live out east, so it takes me a little
8 while to get in here, so I got you, you know, account for that,
9 too, so -- so my normal is between 6:00 and 8:00. That's my
10 normal sleep time, I guess, time.

11 Q. Saturday through Wednesday, your workdays?

12 A. Yeah, between 6 and 8. It depends on --

13 Q. Okay. And what time would you get up then?

14 A. Really depends where I'm coming out of.

15 Q. You could break it down by day.

16 A. Saturday and Sunday, I usually take the 12:46 out of
17 Ronkonkoma to get into Penn. So I'm up at 11 -- 12:00.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Because I'm in Ronkonkoma, so it's a little easier. The
20 other, the other days I'm usually -- yeah, the other days I'm
21 usually up around 11, about 11:00.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Usually, I usually get up like at least 45 minutes to an hour
24 before the train leaves to -- you know, it depends. Sometimes I
25 have to drive to Babylon. Sometimes I go to Hicksville. It

1 depends on, you know, if there's track work. Sometimes I go to
2 Ronkonkoma. It all depends on what the schedule is and what fits
3 me best that day.

4 Q. Okay. And thank you.

5 A. You're welcome.

6 Q. And then on your days off, when would you go to bed and get
7 up?

8 A. It's almost the -- you know, it's almost the same time, 8
9 hours? It's weird. It's -- you'd think you'd stay up later, but,
10 no, it's not. Maybe like 8, 9:00. I get like an extra hour,
11 maybe.

12 Q. In bed at 8 to 9 p.m.?

13 A. Yeah. Yeah.

14 Q. And then you'd get up?

15 A. I get up probably around 6, 7:00. My wife gets up for work,
16 so I'm up with her.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Usually I drive her to work, too. So --

19 Q. Good. That's very helpful. Thank you.

20 A. Oh, you're welcome.

21 Q. It's standard questions, checking boxes.

22 And when do you normally have a lunch break when you're at
23 work? Do you have --

24 A. It depends on what the schedule is, the breaks between the
25 trains and, you know, it varies. It varies from day to day.

1 Q. Okay. But that'll be whenever on that job --

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. -- whatever the break time is?

4 A. Yeah. Yeah. Correct.

5 Q. Okay. Good. We can get all that, so we can check that box
6 off. So thank you.

7 A. You're welcome.

8 Q. A couple of questions on just some things that you said when
9 Ted was asking you questions. You mentioned that the crew and the
10 flagman, except for the one person, that they acknowledged you and
11 they backed off. Where did they back off to?

12 A. They backed -- they walked a little bit to the -- if you're
13 going west, to the left, towards Main Line 1, because they were in
14 between --

15 Q. Yeah. Or you could show me.

16 A. All right. So I -- again, I thought they were --

17 Q. You can show on here, if that's easier for you?

18 A. No. Really -- because, like I said, the train -- I dumped
19 the train and the train stopped west of Queens Village. So I just
20 might be getting my distances a little messed up. But they -- I'm
21 just going to say --

22 Q. Where did they start from and then where did they back off
23 to?

24 A. They were in between Main Line -- they were in between Main
25 Line 3 and Main Line 1.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. So they took, you know, a few steps -- or, you know, they got
3 out of the way; they cleared to the south, to Main Line 1.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So -- that's not really here, but they were in -- yeah,
6 actually, they were in this -- between these two tracks.

7 Q. Okay.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Keep in mind, that is east of the
9 tower.

10 MR. DONGARRA: Yeah. Yeah, it's not -- yeah.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's a very (indiscernible) --

12 MR. DONGARRA: It's --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- to show him.

14 MS. GARCIA: Right. Right.

15 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, it's -- yeah. So --

16 MS. GARCIA: Yeah. I did. That's why I like the --

17 MR. DONGARRA: All right. So they were in between -- okay.
18 Yeah. Well, I just wanted -- I want to write on this one, so we
19 can see --

20 Yeah. So, if I'm coming this way, they were in between --
21 well, they were -- now that I'm thinking, I don't know if there
22 was third rail there. I'm wondering if it was up here.

23 MR. TURPIN: Since the perception from where you were at is
24 so difficult, let me show you where we think it actually happened.

25 MR. DONGARRA: Okay.

1 MR. TURPIN: And then you'll get a better perspective of
2 where everything else was. Okay? So it was right here in the --
3 near the frog.

4 MR. DONGARRA: Okay.

5 MR. TURPIN: Okay. So when you're asking yourself was there
6 a third rail or not, that helps.

7 MR. DONGARRA: Yeah. That's -- right. I just remember was
8 it -- I don't remember the third rail being there.

9 MR. TURPIN: So where was the gang? Where were they?

10 MR. DONGARRA: So they were probably --

11 BY MS. GARCIA:

12 Q. On this half of it?

13 A. On -- they were in between here. They were like in this
14 area.

15 MR. TURPIN: That's good.

16 BY MS. GARCIA:

17 Q. Could you put an "A" on that mark?

18 A. Yeah, sure. So they took a step back south, away from Main
19 Line 3, closer to Main Line 1, except for the gentleman on the
20 west end.

21 Q. Okay. Good.

22 A. Yeah. I don't --

23 Q. That, that's perfect. Thank you. That's very helpful.

24 Another phrase that you used that caught my attention,
25 because I didn't understand what you meant --

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. -- and that was you mentioned that sometimes the horn doesn't
3 work. Which horn were you referring to? Was it the train horn?
4 Was it their air horn?

5 MR. HESS: I think he was -- he was referencing --

6 MS. GARCIA: Name?

7 MR. HESS: No. He was referencing the fact that when he
8 honks the horn the people don't react.

9 MS. GARCIA: Your name?

10 MR. MARTIN: Say your name.

11 MR. HESS: Oh, David Hess from PTSB.

12 MR. DONGARRA: Okay. Yeah. Because I remember -- no. All
13 the -- the horns, that's one -- obviously one thing you have to
14 check before you take a train, get on a train or whatever. You do
15 the horns.

16 MS. GARCIA: Right. Okay.

17 MR. DONGARRA: No. I guess sometimes -- like I said,
18 sometimes the horn don't work to -- for them to acknowledge.

19 MS. GARCIA: Okay.

20 MR. DONGARRA: Maybe they --

21 BY MS. GARCIA:

22 Q. They don't respond?

23 A. They don't respond. They don't hear it. Maybe there's
24 drilling going on wherever they -- you know, whatever they're
25 doing. You know, they might be a hole somewhere and that --

1 Q. Thank you. Okay.

2 A. Yeah. Thanks. Because I --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 MS. GARCIA: Thank you, David.

5 MR. TURPIN: Yeah. We didn't want to just --

6 MR. DONGARRA: Thank you. I didn't -- yeah, I didn't mean
7 that the horn -- no, the horn --

8 MS. GARCIA: Right.

9 MR. DONGARRA: The horns work or else you're not taking it,
10 you're not taking it out. Yeah.

11 MS. GARCIA: Because that was open for a lot of
12 interpretation and I didn't want to --

13 MR. DONGARRA: No. That's -- I should have just clarified a
14 little bit better.

15 MS. GARCIA: No, that's --

16 MR. DONGARRA: But no, like I said, the horns work or else
17 you're not --

18 MS. GARCIA: That's good. Thank you.

19 MR. DONGARRA: You're welcome.

20 BY MS. GARCIA:

21 Q. And, also, you mentioned that, while you were still on the
22 train, they gave you oxygen.

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. And then you were able to walk to the ambulance and you went
25 to the hospital.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. And they gave you medication there?

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Are you on medication now?

5 A. No, I'm not on medication.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. No.

8 Q. And also mentioned that EAP is available for you.

9 A. Uh-huh. Right.

10 Q. Have you had an opportunity yet to make use of that?

11 A. I think I said (indiscernible). Yeah. No, I haven't.

12 Q. Okay. Good.

13 A. Yeah. I just needed a couple of days.

14 Q. Okay. And is that also available for your wife and your
15 family members?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

17 MR. DONGARRA: That's good question.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, it is.

20 MR. DONGARRA: Okay. That's good to know.

21 MR. TURPIN: The Long Island Rail Road has confirmed that it
22 is.

23 MR. DONGARRA: Okay. Thank you.

24 MR. TURPIN: It's good to know.

25 MS. GARCIA: Okay. It's a good thing.

1 MR. DONGARRA: Right. Right.

2 MS. GARCIA: Okay.

3 BY MS. GARCIA:

4 Q. Then different track question. Checking the box.

5 Does the railroad provide you with a company cell phone?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. No.

9 Q. And do you have a personal cell phone?

10 A. Personal cell phone. Correct.

11 Q. And do you have that with you when you're working?

12 A. Yes, but it's off, in the bag. I had my bag actually hanging
13 up on a hook on the off-cab side in my -- I had my lunch bag,
14 also, on the off-cab-side seat. So --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Yeah. Phone is off.

17 Q. And so on this day --

18 A. Phone is always, the phone is always off --

19 Q. -- the phone was off?

20 A. -- whenever operating anything.

21 MS. GARCIA: Okay. Good. That's all I have for now.

22 MR. TURPIN: Okay. Good. Yeah. I've got a couple follow-
23 ups here.

24 BY MR. TURPIN:

25 Q. Do you take any prescription or non-prescription drugs?

1 A. No.

2 Q. No Claritin or anything like that?

3 A. If I have a headache, for -- Advil or something maybe once in
4 a while but I don't --

5 Q. Okay. Good.

6 So what's your railroad history, your career? When did you
7 hire out, and as what?

8 A. Hired on 2000- -- November 2000- -- well --

9 Q. We had to get these dates --

10 A. -- November 2014.

11 Q. Yes.

12 A. That was my hire-on date.

13 Q. As what?

14 A. A locomotive engineer.

15 Q. Yeah?

16 A. Off the street. On --

17 Q. And the training? How long was the training?

18 A. Training is -- what do you got -- 1, 2, 3 -- year and a half?
19 It's probably -- yeah, it's probably a year and a half.

20 Q. Okay. You -- they obviously have those records. It's -- we
21 just want your perception on it.

22 A. No. Yeah, yeah, yeah. It came out -- yeah, November --
23 November will be 2 years -- November 2017 will be 2 years
24 qualified as an engineer.

25 Q. Okay. So, in '15 -- November of '15 or whatever, they gave

1 you the keys to the train?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. When's the last time a supervisor rode with you?

4 A. A supervisor rode with me -- I just had them the other day.
5 It was actually last -- 2 weeks ago out of Jamaica. I don't know
6 his name. I don't know --

7 Q. I don't need a date. Within the last month?

8 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

9 Q. Okay. And how often do supervisors ride with you?

10 A. Every few months.

11 Q. Yeah?

12 A. I guess -- yeah. They usually come on, whether they're just
13 taking a ride into Atlantic Terminal or, you know, just working
14 that day. I mean, it didn't mean like, you know, specifically for
15 me, but they'll come up and introduce to me. So it's more often
16 than not.

17 Q. When's the last time you think you were tested or did you
18 know when you were efficiency tested or operational tested?

19 A. For operating a train?

20 Q. Yeah. Maybe they don't do this, but sometimes they -- I
21 don't know, a supervisor will say, hey, I marked you down good for
22 blowing the whistle right or using the radio or you made a good
23 air test or -- are you aware of any supervisor doing that?

24 A. I think I actually had one -- yeah, I actually have it on the
25 back of my badge, 3/29/16.

1 Q. So that's like an official check ride?

2 A. Yeah. Yeah.

3 Q. That you took on a check ride?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Okay. How about any other time? I mean, do they -- do the
6 supervisors ever call you up and say, nice job, I'm giving you a
7 good pass on this or --

8 A. Oh, no. No.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Not to me, anyway.

11 Q. No words of encouragement from management?

12 A. You know, I feel like if they're running -- you know, if
13 they're running, you know, to -- like I said, if they're just
14 going to work or something, they'll stop up and, you know, say hi.
15 They'll sit in with me or something like that. But as -- you
16 know, they're not there just specifically to check on -- you know.

17 Q. Okay. Training. Do you feel well trained?

18 A. Very well trained.

19 Q. You were --

20 A. It's a long, grueling process to become a locomotive
21 engineer. And we actually started with 15 people in my class and
22 only 6 came out. A lot of people can't handle this.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. And, you know, I've done a lot of things in my life, you
25 know, and I just needed a opportunity and it just seemed like

1 nobody was giving me an opportunity to prove to them what I can
2 bring to the table. And I got the phone call -- or actually the
3 email from the railroad and I took it from there and haven't
4 looked back since.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. I had to do what I had to do. Long grueling hours studying,
7 on-the-job training, and I love it. I mean, I can't ask for a
8 better job, better career. And this incident -- it's unfortunate,
9 and I don't know what'll happen, you know, in the future. I
10 can't, you know, I can't predict. I wish I could predict the
11 future but I can't and I wouldn't change anything on may end.

12 Q. Okay. Good.

13 You mentioned that very frequently you encounter the
14 maintenance of way. How would you characterize that response for
15 the whistle? Is it -- and I don't want to put words in your
16 mouth, but on a scale, is it like automatic? Is it a thought-
17 through process or --

18 A. No, no, no. It's automatic. You see roadway workers
19 anywhere. Like I said, they could be up on bridge. They work on
20 the signals in Harold. They could be -- they don't even have to
21 be on the right-of-way.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. They could be -- you see them -- well, what I do is, you see
24 -- if I see them, I blow the horn.

25 Q. This has nothing to do with a negative moment. But have you

1 ever not been blowing for them? You ever get by them and go, oh,
2 shit -- sorry -- like you missed it?

3 A. No, I don't -- the only way that would happen, if they were
4 tucked away somewhere and I did not see them, behind a tree.

5 Q. Uh-huh.

6 A. But most -- that rarely, that rarely happens because, like I
7 said, there's usually a flagman to give you a heads up.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. There's whistle posts all over the railroad, too. Just --
10 that rarely, rarely occurs.

11 Q. Okay. Good. Good.

12 Safe place to work?

13 A. Very safe place. I believe the railroad is a very, very safe
14 place. I know they keep trying to implement it even more, the
15 safety factor. But, you know, I guess you've got to do what you
16 have to do. But, overall, very safe place --

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. -- operational-wise and --

19 Q. Two more quick ones I wrote down here. One, that -- kind of
20 a tough schedule you have. Did you feel fully rested when you
21 went to work?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah. I -- I'm an a.m. guy. I'm -- I've been adjusted --
25 you know, I've adjusted to these hours. I have no -- you know, I

1 can't -- I just can't be on a regular 8 to 4. Not that I'm going
2 to get it. I'm only 2 years in, but I don't even -- I wouldn't
3 even want it. I just like -- there's no traffic. You come home.
4 Everybody's going to work. That's the way I've adjusted my life
5 to. And --

6 Q. Okay. Good.

7 A. I make sure I have the proper rest and everything.

8 Q. One more little detail. There's not a lot of room between 3
9 and 1. Do you think any part of the gang -- as you reflect back,
10 did any of them go over all the way to the gauge and get in the
11 gauge of 1, you know, between rails? I mean, as they -- they
12 stepped out.

13 A. I -- you know what? I believe -- you know, as you say that
14 now, I believe they had to, because it -- the roadway worker that
15 I hit was so, so close.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Because would have, unfortunately, maybe got more. I --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. I don't want to say that, but -- as I'm passing them, maybe
20 they went over to Main Line 1. But they were in between, and he
21 was just --

22 MR. TURPIN: Okay. All right. That's good enough.

23 Let's go around the table one more time and I'll finish with
24 one last question.

25 MR. FITZPATRICK: Real quick. Nothing pressing.

1 MS. GARCIA: Names?

2 MR. TURPIN: Name?

3 MR. FITZPATRICK: Oh, I'm sorry. Sean Fitzpatrick, FRA. I
4 apologize.

5 BY MR. FITZPATRICK:

6 Q. Your commute, what's your average commute to work? I know
7 you have different days where you're going different lengths.
8 What is the average, can you figure, from when you leave home on
9 your way to work?

10 A. It's usually about an -- it's about -- if I'm going into
11 Brooklyn, it's about an hour, hour and 20 minute, hour and a half
12 to -- and, again, it depends on where I come out of. Sometimes I
13 go out of Ronkonkoma, which I'm in Ronkonkoma. It's, you know, a
14 little easier. But the trains are few and far between, you know.
15 Babylon's more frequent with the trains. I might drive 20 minutes
16 here and there to Babylon. It really all depends.

17 But my commute is probably an hour, between an hour and hour
18 and a half.

19 Q. Sounds good. A little bit easier in the early morning there
20 without all the traffic?

21 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

22 Q. I'm not used to the traffic around here.

23 Just real quick here. Your certification card, I saw you had
24 it out.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Can you give me the issue date on it?

2 A. Yeah. 11/5/15 -- 2015.

3 Q. Do you wear corrective eyewear?

4 A. I got -- I have contacts on.

5 Q. And you were wearing them, right --

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. -- during that -- for the incident?

8 MR. FITZPATRICK: That's all I got.

9 MR. PERSAUD: Raymond Persaud. No questions.

10 MR. BATES: Bates. No questions.

11 MR. AMENDOLARE: No questions.

12 MR. Becker: Brett Becker from the Long Island Rail Road.

13 just Have one quick question.

14 BY MR. Becker:

15 Q. Ted had mentioned before about station -- stopping and
16 running on a particular, you know, track. You had mentioned about
17 the Main Line 3. You did have a Hillside stop, correct?

18 A. Did have a Hillside stop.

19 Q. So you had to be -- did you have to be routed on Main Line 3
20 in order to make that stop?

21 A. No. But --

22 Q. In order to make a passenger stop at Hillside Station?

23 A. Well, you have to be on Main Line 3.

24 Q. That's the --

25 A. Oh, yeah. Okay. Yeah, yeah.

1 MR. TURPIN: What he's asking is, if you're on 1, can they
2 cross you over to the platform?

3 MR. DONGARRA: Oh, yeah. No, you have to be on Main 3.

4 MR. BARTO: Michael Barto. No questions.

5 MR. HILL: Don Hill with the BLET. No questions.

6 MR. HESS: No questions.

7 MS. TRICHILLO: Valerie Trichilo. No questions.

8 MS. GARCIA: Ann Garcia. Just a couple of quick questions --
9 again, standard questions.

10 BY MS. GARCIA:

11 Q. When you report for work, what's your process? Who do you
12 check in with, anybody?

13 A. No. But I do check in with the crew. We have a briefing, a
14 job briefing with the crew, wherever it is. You know, it depends
15 on where you're starting from. But we don't report to anybody.

16 Q. Okay. There's nobody else that you check in with, just your
17 crew?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Okay. Does anybody -- when you first report in, do they do a
20 fitness for duty check for you or your crewmembers? Are you
21 familiar with that term?

22 A. Just to make -- I guess it's capable of operating a train; is
23 that what you're saying? No.

24 Q. Okay. Have you -- do you recall receiving any training on
25 yourself doing a fitness for duty check for your crewmembers?

1 A. No.

2 MS. GARCIA: Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

3 MR. DONGARRA: Thanks, Anne.

4 MR. TURPIN: That's it? All right.

5 That pretty much concludes. We just do one more thing. Is
6 there anything you want to add or anything -- suggestions you
7 have?

8 MR. DONGARRA: Maybe we'll never know why this happened.
9 But, like I stated earlier when I started talking, it's just -- I
10 just don't understand how they could be -- again, there's -- I'm
11 not blaming anybody. It was an accident. I just don't understand
12 why he was walking that way.

13 A little bit -- or actually a lot more, I believe, protection
14 for them being in that vicinity of the railroad, in an
15 interlocking with trains coming by at the rate of speed that they
16 were going -- you know, that they go. Like I stated earlier,
17 maybe further down, further down east, to acknowledge me. But to
18 be in that interlocking, again, Saturday, Belmont Day, trains
19 coming in and out there and trains flying on Main Line 3 and Main
20 Line 1 all day long -- I wish it could have been avoided.

21 MR. TURPIN: Of course.

22 MR. DONGARRA: I don't -- I'm not going to say they were
23 lackadaisical because, again, all of them did what they had to do
24 except the one individual. But there shouldn't be any, there
25 shouldn't be any messing around in that area. They're not in the

1 yard. They're not in Jamaica where the speed limit's, you know,
2 restricted speed. It's a high-traffic area with trains coming by
3 and -- I don't know. I think something else could have been done
4 to prevent this.

5 MR. TURPIN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

6 I think that concludes the interview.

7 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: EMPLOYEE FATALITY
 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD
 QUEENS VILLAGE, NEW YORK
 JUNE 10, 2017
 Interview of Craig Dongarra

ACCIDENT NUMBER: DCA17FR009

PLACE: Jamaica, New York

DATE: June 12, 2017

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.

Traci Williamson
Transcriber