

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

**INVESTIGATION INTO THE CRASH OF  
ALASKA AIRLINES FLIGHT 263**

Tuesday, August 15, 2000  
9:00 a.m.

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I N D E X

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P R O C E E D I N G S

9:00 a.m.

INTERVIEW OF BILL WEAVER

MR. MCGILL: And I'm going to start off, Bill, is Dane -- do you want Dane to be your representative here today?

MR. WEAVER: Yes.

MR. MCGILL: Okay. Could you start off by giving us a brief sketch of your background, education, how you got here, how long you been here, and so forth?

MR. WEAVER: Okay. I suppose I started out in this business in 1976 or so. I went to -- born and raised in southern Illinois and went to arts college at -- University. Specializes in aeronautical engineering. And so I went to that school and obtained my A & P license. Worked as an A & P mechanic at Bi-State Airport there in Kohokie, Illinois. Continued on with my education. Received an engineering degree, aeronautical engineering degree. Majored in aircraft maintenance.

And I continued working as an A & P and graduated in '79, and interviewed with several companies. There was one particular interview that I enjoyed most, and that was with American Airlines.

1 They were interviewing for what they -- what's really  
2 kind of a management development program. So graduated  
3 and left St. Louis. Moved to Tulsa, and was what they  
4 call management intern for American Airlines, a  
5 training program that lasted about 18 months. Took me  
6 through all the facets of the airline, the maintenance  
7 and engineering business.

8           From there I went to being a quality  
9 assurance engineer. Worked in the quality assurance  
10 organization for about a year. And then moved over to  
11 the quality assurance supervision, quality control  
12 supervision role. Operated in that for about five  
13 years.

14           At that point in time, looked for a bit of a  
15 change out of quality assurance and into the production  
16 end -- end of the business and so went into the  
17 aircraft interiors and structures end of the business,  
18 the production end of the business. Worked in that  
19 capacity for about a year and a half, two years.  
20 Interviewed and became manager of aircraft interiors,  
21 manufacturing, and composites. Worked in that capacity  
22 for a couple of years.

23           And then essentially was responsible for, at

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1 that time, an American Airlines moved a composite  
2 center. American was going through a lot of expansion  
3 and growth at that time, and so was responsible for  
4 moving the composite center off-site. So acquired  
5 properties and renovated facilities and built a  
6 composite center for the airline. Worked in that  
7 capacity for I want to say five years.

8 Then at that point went over to become the  
9 product manager of MD 11 and DC 10 aircraft. Went into  
10 being aircraft dock manager, basically. Worked in that  
11 capacity for I want to say two years.

12 And then was promoted to managing director of  
13 the component avionics maintenance and -- and wide body  
14 maintenance. And that included the composite center.  
15 So worked there for about a year and a half and then  
16 was recruited out of there to Alaska Air.

17 Came to Alaska in December of '96 as  
18 assistant vice president of maintenance. Worked in  
19 that capacity for a couple years and then was promoted  
20 to staff vice president of maintenance and engineering  
21 and where I am today.

22 MR. MCGILL: Okay.

23 MR. WEAVER: Along the way I've gotten my

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1 pilot's license and that's -- that's about it.

2 (Pause)

3 MR. MCGILL: In 19 -- in 1996, you moved up  
4 to staff vice president of maintenance. At that time,  
5 who was the -- the director of maintenance that was on  
6 the A-6 part of the Op Specs?

7 MR. WEAVER: At what time?

8 MR. MCGILL: Well, in 1996 when -- was that  
9 the year that you moved up --

10 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

11 MR. MCGILL: -- to staff vice president?

12 MR. WEAVER: No, I was assistance vice  
13 president of maintenance in '96.

14 MR. MCGILL: And at that time would Mr.  
15 Fowler have been on the Op Specs as vice president of  
16 maintenance?

17 MR. WEAVER: Director of maintenance?

18 MR. MCGILL: Mm-hmm.

19 MR. WEAVER: When I came to Alaska I was the  
20 director of maintenance.

21 MR. MCGILL: Who was on the Op Specs of the  
22 A-6 portion of your Op Specs? Are you familiar with  
23 your Operations Specifications, the A-6 portion? Those

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1 were the designations that hold your certificate. I  
2 was trying to get a feel of who -- who is listed at  
3 that time frame that held your Maintenance program  
4 together.

5 MR. WEAVER: In -- subsequent to me coming, I  
6 was the director of maintenance and on the Op Spec.

7 MR. MCGILL: You were on the Op Specs at that  
8 time?

9 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

10 MR. MCGILL: And you held -- you stayed on  
11 the Op Specs until what -- what period?

12 MR. WEAVER: I don't know exactly.

13 MR. MCGILL: You don't know when you were  
14 removed from the Operations Specifications?

15 MR. WEAVER: It was when I was promoted to M  
16 & E responsibilities.

17 MR. MCGILL: Is that when the other two  
18 people were assigned on a temporary revision --

19 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

20 MR. MCGILL: -- sharing the -- the duties?

21 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm. That's my  
22 understanding.

23 MR. MCGILL: Why would you be removed from

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1 that position until you had already filled that  
2 position?

3 MR. WEAVER: Well, essentially, it's -- it's  
4 a standing control issue. And with -- with me having  
5 total division responsibility you -- you can't have the  
6 responsibility of director of safety and director of  
7 maintenance. So it's essentially delineating areas of  
8 responsibility.

9 MR. MCGILL: Did you feel it important at  
10 that time to -- obviously, this -- this existed  
11 starting in 1998 and at the time of the accident it  
12 would still have been listed with the FAA as a  
13 temporary revision position. That's over two years.  
14 Did ya'll try to hire someone in that time frame?

15 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

16 MR. MCGILL: And in two years you couldn't  
17 find anyone?

18 MR. WEAVER: We were unsuccessful in finding  
19 a candidate in that time frame.

20 MR. MCGILL: You had said -- you mentioned  
21 the director of safety. Did that director of safety  
22 report to you at that particular time?

23 MR. WEAVER: The director of safety being Jim

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1 Trimberger?

2 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

3 MR. WEAVER: Yes. Jim did report to me at  
4 that time.

5 MR. MCGILL: When you had the title of staff  
6 vice president of maintenance, is that correct?

7 MR. WEAVER: And engineering.

8 MR. MCGILL: And engineering. In his  
9 position as director of quality control he also  
10 reported to you?

11 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

12 MR. MCGILL: And as director of training?

13 MR. WEAVER: Correct. Yes.

14 MR. MCGILL: At what time -- when did the  
15 director of safety move from reporting to you to  
16 reporting to Mr. Fowler?

17 MR. WEAVER: I'm not exactly sure as to what  
18 -- when exactly that took place.

19 MR. MCGILL: Do you ever remember any issues  
20 that were brought to your attention from Mr. Trimberger  
21 when he was in his position as director of safety?

22 MR. WEAVER: Not specifically. Jim and I  
23 have -- had a and still do have a very good working

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1 relationship and we talk to each other just -- ongoing  
2 basis.

3 MR. MCGILL: Your office is, like, right next  
4 door --

5 MR. WEAVER: Exactly. It's not too hard to  
6 get up and walk from one place to the other, so -- and  
7 we make it a point to -- to talk with each other and  
8 discuss the pertinent events and issues that, you know,  
9 require us to -- to -- to, you know, analyze and  
10 manager our business by.

11 MR. MCGILL: Prior to October of '98, which  
12 in turn whether -- and 1998 is when Alaska went onto  
13 the ATOS FAA oversight process system.

14 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

15 MR. MCGILL: Prior to that, though, can --  
16 can you kind of give me a feel of what the  
17 relationships from your maintenance position was with  
18 the FAA prior to ATOS?

19 MR. WEAVER: My interaction with the FAA  
20 specifically is -- actually, has always really been  
21 very limited. As far as relationship goes, prior to  
22 implementation of ATOS I would say very businesslike,  
23 meet with them on a regular basis, and work the issues.

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1           MR. MCGILL:  So other than some meeting,  
2 normally the FAA would -- would meet with other people  
3 from Alaska Airlines on working issues every day, is  
4 that correct?  You were not involved daily with the  
5 FAA?

6           MR. WEAVER:  No.

7           MR. MCGILL:  What about after it was -- did  
8 anything change or could you see any change when the  
9 certificate went under this management team, CMM team,  
10 that was brought about by the ATOS change?

11          MR. WEAVER:  Change being a big word.  I  
12 mean, obviously, there's been some names changed.

13          MR. MCGILL:  Obviously, you don't -- you  
14 don't deal enough every day --

15          MR. WEAVER:  Yeah.

16          MR. MCGILL:  -- on daily issues that you  
17 would really -- you saw that much difference, then?  Is  
18 that correct for me to state that?

19          MR. WEAVER:  Yeah, again, because of my  
20 interaction being so limited with the FAA, again, I can  
21 try to quantify the change.  It'd be hard for me to do  
22 so.

23          MR. MCGILL:  You come to work in 1996.  There

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1 was an evaluation performed by the FAA, NASAP  
2 inspection of 1995. Were changes being made that were  
3 recommended when you first got there? Or were you part  
4 of that change that they may have --

5 MR. WEAVER: Not that I can recall, as far as  
6 being part of or be involved in. I was aware that an  
7 inspection had taken place, but the point at which I  
8 entered the scene I had no involvement with the NASAP  
9 inspection or --

10 MR. MCGILL: What about the 1998 DOD that was  
11 performed, inspection in September?

12 MR. WEAVER: I was on the scene, and again, I  
13 had the responsibility of staff vice president of  
14 maintenance and engineering, so presented or provided a  
15 representative, you know, for the DOD to work with.  
16 And the audit took place and to my knowledge -- I mean  
17 I haven't -- I haven't gone back over the DOD findings  
18 since -- since the out-briefing, actually, but you  
19 know, very, very favorable.

20 MR. MCGILL: Let's back up. I need to --  
21 we've had issues that have arisen about the C-5 check  
22 of Aircraft 963 in 1997 involving the rechecking of the  
23 end-play MIG 4 card. Is there anything new that you

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1 know anything about that particular check?

2 MR. WEAVER: Anything new --

3 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

4 MR. WEAVER: -- that I knew about that?

5 MR. MCGILL: Has anything else come up that  
6 we -- I've asked these questions for a long time about  
7 that particular check. Do you know anything new about  
8 -- were you aware -- let's just back it up. Were you  
9 aware of what was happening in 1997 over that check?

10 MR. WEAVER: I would have knowledge that the  
11 aircraft was in Oakland going through heavy  
12 maintenance, but --

13 MR. MCGILL: Were -- were you knowledgeable  
14 that the first inspection required or suggested that  
15 the jack screw be removed?

16 MR. WEAVER: At the time?

17 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

18 MR. WEAVER: No.

19 MR. MCGILL: You had no knowledge of that at  
20 any time?

21 MR. WEAVER: No.

22 MR. MCGILL: Was there ever -- obviously, was  
23 there any discussion on purchasing or removing the jack

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1 screw? Did you have any involvement with that jack  
2 screw decision or check?

3 MR. WEAVER: Not that I can recall.

4 MR. MCGILL: Are you on the -- we've been  
5 told, like, 8:00 or 9:00 conferencing and so forth.  
6 Are you on that?

7 MR. WEAVER: Today versus '96. In '96 when I  
8 was --

9 MR. MCGILL: Well, in '97.

10 MR. WEAVER: Yeah, in '97 --

11 MR. MCGILL: Specifically.

12 MR. WEAVER: -- in -- not on a day-to-day-to-  
13 day basis. If I was in the office or was not -- if  
14 there wasn't a meeting conflict I tried to be involved  
15 in the conference, and it just would help me  
16 understand, you know, what the issues are, what -- the  
17 problems that the staff are working. So it would be  
18 my, you know, kind of modus operandi to -- to  
19 participate or be, you know, listening in on the  
20 conference at that time. Today it's -- it's kind of  
21 infrequent that --

22 MR. MCGILL: Well, in 1997 do you recall  
23 listening to anything specific about 963 while it was

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1 being --

2 MR. WEAVER: No. I don't recall.

3 MR. MCGILL: -- checked? And therefore, you  
4 wouldn't know anything about any problems involving the  
5 jack screw on 963 during the C-5 check?

6 MR. WEAVER: No, I -- I don't have any  
7 recollection of it being an issue.

8 MR. MCGILL: If there were a problem --  
9 obviously it could have been -- or any other problem,  
10 would the manager of the base or whichever base --  
11 would they call you for guidance or direction? Who  
12 would they normally talk to?

13 MR. WEAVER: In regards to?

14 MR. MCGILL: Anything. Any kind of a  
15 problem. But in this case I was referring to the jack  
16 screw. Just say the jack screw and it was written up,  
17 it needed to be replaced, and it was several days in  
18 there before it was reevaluated. But would you have  
19 been called during that time frame?

20 MR. WEAVER: That's -- that's kind of  
21 speculative. So I have an open door. If people want  
22 to talk to me --

23 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Let's --

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1 MR. WEAVER: So --

2 MR. MCGILL: Did someone call you about that  
3 airplane about that jack screw?

4 MR. WEAVER: Not to my recollection, no. I  
5 don't have any recall of that. You know, we're --  
6 we're a small company and there's a lot of questions  
7 and there's a lot of -- I'm on the floor talking to  
8 mechanics. And so there's a number of issues that  
9 could be asked and, you know, so -- but I have no  
10 recollection of that.

11 MR. MCGILL: Okay. During that time frame  
12 can you be more specific of what your -- your  
13 responsibilities were as staff vice president of  
14 maintenance and engineering? What did you do every  
15 day?

16 MR. WEAVER: During January of '97?

17 MR. MCGILL: Well, no. Say, from September  
18 of '97 on, until the last -- until the accident. What  
19 -- what are your responsibilities? What do you do  
20 every day?

21 MR. WEAVER: Well, it varies greatly what I  
22 do every day. Ultimately, my responsibilities are  
23 being the division officer for the Maintenance and

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1 Engineering organization. So I would need to --  
2 provide support and help to those directly reporting to  
3 me and --

4 MR. MCGILL: Who are those people that report  
5 directly to you?

6 MR. WEAVER: Today it is Jim Davey, our  
7 managing director of engineering.

8 MR. MCGILL: Not today, but go to the -- up  
9 to the accident.

10 MR. WEAVER: Well, I believe it's the -- Jim  
11 Davey, managing director of engineering; Steve Zerta,  
12 the managing director of planning and material  
13 distribution; Mac McFeary, who's the director of -- and  
14 contract administration. At that point in time with --  
15 we -- we had no staff vice president of maintenance, so  
16 I had at that time directly reporting to me Jim  
17 McClendon, who was -- manager of maintenance control,  
18 Director of Base Maintenance Mark Fitzpatrick, and  
19 Director of Line Maintenance Bob Hindman. And in  
20 addition to that would have been Jim Trimberger, our  
21 director of quality control and training.

22 MR. MCGILL: Okay. That's a lot of people  
23 there. So you're right. I shouldn't have asked -- a

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1 lot of -- a lot of responsibilities.

2 MR. WEAVER: Well, it's -- controls.

3 MR. MCGILL: So once the director of  
4 maintenance was shared by Mr. Fitzpatrick and Mr.  
5 Hindman, would you say they talked to you daily?

6 MR. WEAVER: I -- I think you might be able  
7 to generally characterize that. I mean daily being if  
8 I was in the office or if they were in the office, yes.  
9 You know, not providing for vacations and/or field  
10 trips and station visits and -- and that, but normally,  
11 they -- there'd be a daily interface.

12 MR. MCGILL: Okay.

13 (Pause)

14 MR. MCGILL: There was a special inspection  
15 that was performed later this -- this year, June of  
16 this year. And I guess we've all taken a copy of it,  
17 looked at it, but could you just very quickly  
18 characterize what -- what you noticed in any areas that  
19 pertain to your leadership areas off of that  
20 inspection?

21 MR. WEAVER: I'm not for sure --

22 MR. MCGILL: Well, --

23 MR. WEAVER: I'm not for sure what you mean.

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1           MR. MCGILL: Well, the -- it's a big -- big  
2 report here.

3           MR. WEAVER: Oh, okay. You're talking about  
4 this --

5           MR. MCGILL: Yes.

6           MR. WEAVER: -- Independent Safety Assessment  
7 Team?

8           MR. MCGILL: Yes. What they did --

9           MR. WEAVER: That -- there's been so many  
10 inspections that -- okay.

11           MR. JAQUES: You know, actually, that's --  
12 we're talking about three different things here. You  
13 were asking about, I thought, the FAA's special  
14 inspection --

15           MR. MCGILL: Yes.

16           MR. JAQUES: -- hold-out and airworthiness  
17 and operations action plan, and then I think Bill now  
18 is talking about --

19           MR. MCGILL: This was -- you're right.

20           MR. JAQUES: -- just so we're clear on -- on  
21 what we're dealing with here.

22           MR. MCGILL: You're absolutely correct. That  
23 was the action plan to the inspection, right. So did -

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1 - is -- from this -- from the inspection itself, ya'll  
2 created this plan, right?

3 MR. WEAVER: The FAA inspection?

4 MR. MCGILL: Yes, the FAA inspection.

5 MR. WEAVER: Okay. We --

6 MR. MCGILL: Do you feel that -- what I'm --  
7 what I was just trying to get at is that was that a  
8 fair assessment that was performed by the FAA and did  
9 you address all of the areas that you feel that --  
10 adequately that was initially brought to your -- to  
11 Alaska Airlines?

12 MR. WEAVER: I could say that I -- that we  
13 have responded to the FAA's inspection findings with --  
14 with the appropriate action and responsiveness to the  
15 items that they --

16 MR. MCGILL: So if you were -- you were part  
17 of all of these -- these new areas that are going to be  
18 done? You were part of this team that --

19 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

20 MR. MCGILL: -- says this is what we're going  
21 to --

22 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

23 MR. MCGILL: -- do and how we're going to do

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1 it and so forth?

2 MR. WEAVER: Correct. Yes.

3 MR. MCGILL: Were you surprised that there  
4 were -- some of these areas that needed to be  
5 reevaluated? Were you aware of that previously?

6 MR. WEAVER: Well, in terms of surprise, the  
7 -- the findings are, you know, straightforward. And  
8 again, I think we've -- we've addressed 'em. As to the  
9 issue of me being surprised, I don't think "surprised"  
10 is the word that I would use. It's just anytime  
11 there's an inspection there's things to learn as best  
12 practices to -- to -- to consider, and you just go  
13 forward.

14 MR. MCGILL: Do you communicate with Mr.  
15 Fowler daily?

16 MR. WEAVER: Pretty much, yeah. Yeah, I mean  
17 he's my boss, and I -- report to him. And again, on a  
18 -- on a daily basis I can tell you there's times where  
19 both of us are in the office and we do not talk. But  
20 in general, I think, to characterize the working  
21 relationship is that we talk on a daily basis.

22 MR. MCGILL: Part of the -- some of the  
23 people here fall under your guidance we interviewed

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1 yesterday with Mr. Davey in Engineering. We've been  
2 talking about the -- the changing of the lubrication.  
3 Were you involved in some of these decisions?

4 MR. WEAVER: No, I was not. "In some of  
5 these decisions" meaning was I involved in the decision  
6 to change the lubrication?

7 MR. MCGILL: Yes, sir.

8 MR. WEAVER: No.

9 MR. MCGILL: Who initiated those changes?

10 MR. WEAVER: I do not know.

11 MR. MCGILL: As staff vice president of  
12 maintenance, do -- when changes like this are made do  
13 -- would you at least be advised that a change has  
14 been made?

15 MR. WEAVER: Not necessarily, no. I mean to  
16 -- to say that any maintenance manual revision or  
17 maintenance program revision that takes place am I  
18 briefed on and -- and knowledgeable of? I'm not.

19 MR. MCGILL: So you really don't -- you --  
20 you weren't any part of the process that moved from  
21 Mobil 28 to Aeroshell 33, is that correct?

22 MR. WEAVER: No. Not involved in that  
23 process.

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1 MR. MCGILL: Weren't involved in the process.

2 (Pause)

3 MR. MCGILL: Do you ever -- do you have a --  
4 any type of an internal audit system in the Maintenance  
5 that allows you to check different areas of the  
6 Maintenance organization?

7 MR. WEAVER: Yes. We have our Quality  
8 Assurance organization that does both external and  
9 internal auditing.

10 MR. MCGILL: Do you ever recommend areas that  
11 need to be audited or do they kind of come up with that  
12 idea themselves?

13 MR. WEAVER: Predominantly, it's my  
14 understanding that they do that pretty much themselves.  
15 In the event, though, that -- that a bit of  
16 information that I would come across would -- would, in  
17 my opinion, leading the division, necessitate a special  
18 look or review I would -- I wouldn't hesitate to ask  
19 them to do so.

20 MR. MCGILL: Was -- lately there's been some  
21 issues brought forth about the tooling that is used,  
22 the tooling fixture that is used on the end-play check.  
23 Is there anything about that that you would know?

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1 MR. WEAVER: The restraining fixture used --

2 MR. MCGILL: Yes. That's correct.

3 MR. WEAVER: My knowledge is that there's a  
4 restraining fixture. As to knowledge about it and --  
5 and -- and its use, you know, I've never seen the --  
6 the end-play check done.

7 MR. MCGILL: Even after the accident you've  
8 never gone out and looked at it to see how it was done?

9 MR. WEAVER: No.

10 MR. MCGILL: If -- do -- do you recall any  
11 letters that were issued by Boeing about April that  
12 told audit operators to take a look at these  
13 restraining fixtures?

14 MR. WEAVER: No.

15 MR. MCGILL: So you -- you don't know  
16 anything about any letters sent by Boeing requesting  
17 the different carriers, which Alaska would have been  
18 one of 'em, --

19 MR. WEAVER: No, I don't.

20 MR. MCGILL: Well, I've had a -- I have a  
21 copy in Washington, D.C. I've asked several people,  
22 you know, was anything done, did they try to -- and no  
23 one seems to know that they've ever received this

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1 letter. And I was just curious if it were, it's  
2 obviously not to you and you were running the show, but  
3 it could have been someone below in your staff, but I  
4 haven't been successful in determining who would have  
5 received that and if anything had to be done about  
6 verifying the -- the different tooling.

7 MR. WEAVER: Frank, I don't recall seeing any  
8 letter covering restraining fixtures.

9 MR. MCGILL: Since the accident -- at the  
10 time of the accident you only possessed one of these  
11 tools to do this end-play check, is that your  
12 knowledge?

13 MR. WEAVER: I -- I don't -- I don't know  
14 from that --

15 MR. MCGILL: -- since that time purchased  
16 some more and you have built some more, in-house  
17 building these jack screws. Are you aware of any --  
18 anything about that?

19 MR. WEAVER: I'm knowledgeable that we have  
20 bought more as a result of the increase in inspections  
21 and -- and that sort, so --

22 MR. MCGILL: What about in-house  
23 manufacturing?

1           MR. WEAVER: My understanding is that there  
2 were some restraining fixtures that were built in-  
3 house.

4           MR. MCGILL: Who -- who would -- who would --  
5 who could I talk -- who would be -- who made that  
6 decision, for instance, to build some in-house?

7           MR. WEAVER: I don't know. I don't know who  
8 made that decision.

9           (Pause)

10          MR. MCGILL: Allow me -- if I were to ask the  
11 different people, which I probably will. I'm just  
12 trying to get to -- are all the same people are still  
13 here that at the -- there was a vacancy, of course, and  
14 you got a new person, but Mr. Davey, Mr. Trimberger,  
15 Mr. Hindman, Mr. McClendon, and Mr. Fitzpatrick, all of  
16 these people are still here and they still all work for  
17 you?

18          MR. WEAVER: Yes.

19          MR. MCGILL: Do you think one of those people  
20 would know who -- something about the --

21          MR. WEAVER: Could -- could I ask a question  
22 today?

23          MR. MCGILL: Yes.

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1 (Pause)

2 MR. WEAVER: Just clarification on everybody  
3 that worked for -- works for me is Bob Hindman no  
4 longer works for Alaska Airlines effective yesterday,  
5 so.

6 MR. MCGILL: He's the director of line  
7 maintenance?

8 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

9 MR. MCGILL: And who's he -- who is --  
10 obviously, do you have a replacement already for him?

11 MR. WEAVER: Paul Miller's the existing  
12 Seattle line maintenance manager, and --

13 MR. MCGILL: Paul -- Paul Miller?

14 MR. WEAVER: Paul, yeah.

15 MR. MCGILL: Yeah, I see him right here.

16 MR. WEAVER: Paul is -- is an acting -- will  
17 essentially take on the role of acting director of line  
18 maintenance, and we're moving to back-fill Paul with --  
19 with an individual, and that person will be back-  
20 filled, so -- but I just -- you know, I just thought it  
21 was important, you know, specifically clarify that Bob  
22 Hindman no longer works for Alaska Airlines.

23 MR. MCGILL: Is there some reason why he no

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1 longer -- that you can share with us that he no longer  
2 works here?

3 MR. JAQUES: You know, I -- I don't think  
4 that's an appropriate topic for -- for a record like  
5 this, that the reasons that Hindman may have chosen to  
6 leave or if he was asked to leave -- and I don't know  
7 what the circumstances were, but unless you feel  
8 strongly, I just don't think that's the kind of thing  
9 you ought to be inquiring about, individual personnel  
10 actions like that.

11 MR. MCGILL: Okay.

12 (Pause)

13 DR. BRENNER: I'm interested. I feel  
14 strongly.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, I do, too.

16 DR. BRENNER: I'd like to know why --

17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I do, too.

18 MR. JAQUES: Why don't we talk about it on a  
19 break?

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, we'll come back to it,  
21 Malcolm.

22 (Pause)

23 MR. MCGILL: Bill, are you involved in or

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1 have been involved in the various -- do you do  
2 escalations of the check intervals?

3 MR. WEAVER: No. Well, in my role today I  
4 may be aware of it, but to my knowledge, I've -- I've  
5 not seen any of that. Since my coming, actually, to  
6 Alaska Airlines I've not been involved in any  
7 escalations.

8 (Pause)

9 MR. WEAVER: And you're -- you're  
10 specifically speaking to C-check escalations?

11 MR. MCGILL: Yeah, any types of C-checks or  
12 any cards that are attached to C-checks or A-checks or  
13 lubrication cards, anything, those types.

14 (Pause)

15 MR. MCGILL: Have you ever seen the -- I'd  
16 asked about the lubrication change. This was your ME-  
17 01 that produced that change. Have you ever seen that?

18 MR. WEAVER: This is the first time I've seen  
19 this.

20 MR. MCGILL: Okay. There's no place for you  
21 to sign. I was just curious if you had gotten -- had  
22 been involved in --

23 MR. WEAVER: No, sir.

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1           MR. MCGILL: Okay. I don't -- why don't we  
2 just wait right here on -- on you, and let's move over  
3 to Dean?

4           MR. HAMILTON: I'm going to pass right now.

5           MR. MCGILL: Mike?

6           MR. LASLEY: I don't believe I have anything  
7 at the moment.

8           MR. MCGILL: Lance?

9           MR. SEYER: I have a few. Are you aware of  
10 the "no technical objection" letter from the FAA to  
11 Alaska Airlines Engineering regarding the switch from  
12 Mobil 28 to Aeroshell 33? Boeing, excuse me. Not from  
13 the FAA, from Boeing.

14           MR. WEAVER: I'm aware, yes, that there was  
15 one, yes.

16           MR. SEYER: Do you know who made the decision  
17 to switch over to the Aeroshell 33?

18           MR. SEYER: No, I do not.

19           MR. SEYER: Yet it's on our task cards to --  
20 currently we are using that at Alaska Airlines, is that  
21 correct?

22           MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

23           MR. SEYER: But you don't know who made the

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1 change or authorized it?

2 MR. JAQUES: He already answered that.

3 MR. WEAVER: I mean in -- I guess -- which  
4 time frame are you talking?

5 MR. SEYER: I believe the "no technical  
6 objection" letter was sent around, I believe, September  
7 of '97?

8 MR. WEAVER: So that's -- so that's the time  
9 frame you're speaking to --

10 MR. SEYER: Right.

11 MR. WEAVER: -- as to who made that decision?

12 MR. SEYER: Right.

13 MR. WEAVER: No, I do not know.

14 (Pause)

15 MR. SEYER: Mr. Trimberger is -- one of his  
16 titles at the time was director of safety. You said  
17 that he never as such brought safety issues to your  
18 concern?

19 MR. WEAVER: No, I don't -- I said that he's  
20 never brought safety issues to -- to my attention. I -  
21 - I don't recall any specifically that he's brought to  
22 my attention and mentioned that. We meet regularly and  
23 there's a possibility that he's brought issues before

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1 me, but I don't recall one specifically.

2 MR. SEYER: Okay. Do you know who Holly  
3 Geiger is?

4 MR. WEAVER: She's the manager of safety. I  
5 believe that's still her function and responsibility.

6 MR. SEYER: Have you ever had any  
7 conversations with Ms. Geiger concerning safety issues,  
8 bringing it to the corporate attention?

9 MR. WEAVER: I've had a number of  
10 conversations with Holly, yes.

11 MR. SEYER: Can you give us an example of one  
12 of those -- one of those might have been?

13 (Pause)

14 MR. WEAVER: I -- I recall Holly attending  
15 our safety meetings. We have monthly safety meetings,  
16 and I recall having a dialogue with her asking her to  
17 -- to participate in those and feel welcome and to  
18 provide any feedback, you know, from her perspective  
19 and her grain of, you know, expertise and -- and what  
20 not. So in that general nature, I've had those  
21 discussions.

22 (Pause)

23 MR. SEYER: The Training Department under

1 you, Maintenance Training, Technical Training?

2 MR. WEAVER: Yes. I mean directly underneath  
3 me, no. But it reports directly to Jim Trimberger, who  
4 reports to me.

5 MR. SEYER: Prior to the accident, say the  
6 period between '97 and the time of the accident, Alaska  
7 Airlines was going through a period of I use the term  
8 rapid growth. We were getting increased amount of  
9 airplanes and we were flying longer, utilizing the  
10 aircraft more. And we were also at the same time  
11 extending the check intervals for these aircraft.  
12 During the same time of rapid growth of the company was  
13 the Maintenance Training Department increased at any  
14 time during that time frame, do you know?

15 MR. JAQUES: Are you asking him to comment on  
16 your statements about increased flying time and  
17 increase in intervals or are you just asking him what  
18 training increases were made during that time frame? I  
19 want to make sure it's clear on whether you want him to  
20 comment or asking him about this factual predicate of  
21 that question, you're -- you're just asking about  
22 training during that period.

23 MR. SEYER: I am asking about Training

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1 Department. Was it increased during that period of  
2 rapid growth?

3 MR. JAQUES: During what time frame?

4 MR. SEYER: '97 to the date of the accident.

5 MR. WEAVER: I could not specifically answer  
6 definitively as to whether or not it has grown. As to  
7 how many people have been added, subtracted, you know,  
8 without looking at any organizational head-count  
9 information and all I -- I couldn't answer that.

10 MR. SEYER: Do you review the ME-01s that are  
11 forwarded to the FAA for approval?

12 MR. WEAVER: I do not review ME-01s. I've  
13 not reviewed ME-01s, put it that way.

14 (Pause)

15 MR. SEYER: That's all I have.

16 MR. MCGILL: Kristen?

17 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Have you recently filled  
18 the position of director of maintenance?

19 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm. Yes.

20 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And who's currently in  
21 that position?

22 MR. WEAVER: It's a gentleman named Brian  
23 Hirschman.

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1 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And when did you start  
2 looking for a replacement or someone to fill this  
3 position?

4 MR. WEAVER: The director of maintenance?  
5 Subsequent to my promotion to being the staff vice  
6 president of M & E.

7 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And approximately what  
8 date was that?

9 MR. WEAVER: To the best of my recollection,  
10 it's approximately May time frame of '97, I believe.

11 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. So -- so you  
12 actively --

13 MR. WEAVER: May of '98. '98.

14 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay.

15 MR. WEAVER: Sorry.

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Time flies when you're having  
17 fun.

18 MR. WEAVER: Yeah. Doesn't it?

19 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So it's taken you two  
20 years plus of actively recruiting?

21 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm. Any increased steps  
22 since the FAA inspection in pursuing this position to  
23 be filled? The white -- white-glove inspection, the

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1 one that came out in March? I mean did you step up  
2 activity levels to try to fill the spot?

3 MR. WEAVER: No. It's been a key position  
4 that we have put forth the effort to fill.

5 MS. VON KLEINSMID: What type of actions have  
6 you taken since May of '98 to try to fill the position?  
7 Putting advertisements in papers? What -- what sort  
8 of things have you -- have you pursued to try to find a  
9 person to fill this spot?

10 MR. WEAVER: This wouldn't be all inclusive,  
11 but from my knowledge of what we have done is pursued  
12 executive recruiters to fill the position. That was  
13 initiated immediately after the position was vacated by  
14 myself. I do not know as to whether or not we have  
15 advertised through magazine publications or the media  
16 and/or through our web site. I don't know if that was  
17 accomplished. Internally and externally, networking  
18 through the industry. There have been industry  
19 meetings of which the position was made known as a  
20 vacancy and sought input and recommendations. And  
21 that's the -- the effort that we've put forward in  
22 trying to fill the position.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Back to Aircraft 963 and

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1 the C-check, the C-5 check in approximately late  
2 September of '97. You made a statement that you were  
3 aware that the aircraft was in heavy check, is that  
4 correct?

5 MR. WEAVER: What was the question again?

6 MS. VON KLEINSMID: In -- in September of '97  
7 --

8 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

9 MS. VON KLEINSMID: I'm referring to Aircraft  
10 963 being in C-check -- and you -- I think you stated  
11 that you were aware that the aircraft was in -- in  
12 heavy check, that that was the extent of your  
13 knowledge?

14 MR. WEAVER: Generally -- generally  
15 characterizing that I would know that it was in heavy  
16 check. In other words, as I look at the maintenance  
17 delay report and -- and know of the conversations that  
18 take place in the 8:00 conferences, the tail number of  
19 the airplane is often mentioned and, of course, on the  
20 maintenance delay report it's identified. So if I were  
21 looking at those I would have -- would have known that  
22 it was in check.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Any knowledge that

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1 Aircraft 963 was going to be late scheduled completion  
2 date of the heavy check?

3 MR. WEAVER: I have no recollection of that  
4 today, no.

5 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Who approves -- if the  
6 jack screw's required to be purchased, who -- who has  
7 to give authorization for that?

8 (Pause)

9 MR. WEAVER: Specifically, I do not know who  
10 that person is. I mean it's -- it's dependent upon the  
11 type of inventory and -- and -- and part that it is  
12 that that -- whether or not we can order the part or it  
13 takes approval, based upon dollar values and things  
14 like that, so.

15 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Who has -- based on  
16 dollar value, if it's over -- is there a certain limit  
17 that the -- the base manager can -- has a  
18 responsibility over, if it's under, say, \$5000 or --  
19 that he can give authority or do you know what that  
20 cut-off is?

21 MR. WEAVER: No, I don't. I'd have to go to  
22 the signature authorization forms and find out what  
23 their authority is. Again, it would depend upon

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1 whether or not it was -- what type of inventory it was,  
2 whether or not it was available, whether it was  
3 expendable or repairable. It varies.

4 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So would you know the  
5 answer if it was a -- part and you didn't have any in  
6 stock as to who would have to -- who would have the  
7 authority to order one?

8 MR. WEAVER: In a specific example, I could  
9 sort through and know who to go to and find that  
10 information out, yes.

11 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Regarding the -- the  
12 change in the lubrication, I think you've stated that  
13 you're not aware -- I mean today you're aware of the  
14 change, the request and the changes that were made in  
15 going from Mobil 28 to Aeroshell 33. You have no  
16 recollection of any communication with anyone under you  
17 in late or middle July regarding this issue?

18 MR. WEAVER: July?

19 MR. JAQUES: What year?

20 MR. WEAVER: Of what year?

21 MS. VON KLEINSMID: '97.

22 MR. WEAVER: No. I have no recollection.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Who's -- what

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1 organization is responsible for tooling?

2 MR. WEAVER: Tooling, I'd have to refer to  
3 the GMM as to the tooling, tooling issues, and  
4 responsibilities.

5 MS. VON KLEINSMID: The -- the managers that  
6 are still left, I guess -- I guess Fowler's now -- he's  
7 ahead -- above you, I know that. But he's retired.  
8 Hindman's gone. Chet Yancey's on medical leave.  
9 Robert Fowler has been transferred. You've got a new  
10 director of safety, a new director of maintenance. J.  
11 Maloney left in July. Well, who's left? How do you  
12 feel -- Jim Davey and -- what's your opinion of Mr.  
13 Davey and his responsibilities and how he does his job  
14 and his knowledge?

15 MR. WEAVER: So, is your question what is my  
16 opinion of Jim Davey?

17 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Yeah, I guess that's my  
18 question. Of who's left under you, what's your opinion  
19 of Mr. Davey in his responsibility in managing the  
20 Engineering Department?

21 MR. WEAVER: I have a good working  
22 relationship with Jim. Jim's a smart individual. I  
23 believe he's developed a good organization with good

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1 succession planning and addresses the issues as the  
2 department head.

3 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Is he knowledgeable about  
4 everything that needs to go on in Engineering and what  
5 his responsibilities include? I mean do you feel he's  
6 knowledgeable of engineering, of the Alaska Airlines  
7 Engineering Department?

8 MR. WEAVER: Do I believe that he's --  
9 knowledgeable of his responsibilities? Yes.

10 MS. VON KLEINSMID: What about knowledgeable  
11 in terms of being able to answer questions on the spot  
12 without having to refer to a GMM?

13 MR. WEAVER: Because there are so many issues  
14 we deal with I -- I think it would be impossible for  
15 any one individual to have knowledge on all the issues  
16 that even one department may be involved in in this  
17 business.

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Well, Zerta, Z-E-R-T-A, I  
19 don't have the org chart -- is the planning -- is your  
20 director of planning?

21 MR. WEAVER: Steve Zerta.

22 MS. VON KLEINSMID: What about his  
23 capabilities?

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1           MR. WEAVER:  Again, I have a lot of  
2 confidence in Steve.  He's a -- a smart individual,  
3 knows his responsibilities, and addresses the issues  
4 and deals with the issues that his -- his department's  
5 responsible for.

6           MS. VON KLEINSMID:  Whose decision was it in  
7 Oakland in, say, around the '97 time frame, maybe even  
8 earlier, to go from a five-day work-week to a seven-day  
9 work-week?

10          MR. WEAVER:  I don't know who --

11          MS. VON KLEINSMID:  Do you have any -- did  
12 you attend any meetings regarding that?

13          MR. WEAVER:  No.

14          MS. VON KLEINSMID:  So you could just go make  
15 that change as director of planning?

16          MR. WEAVER:  Who can?

17          MS. VON KLEINSMID:  Well, I believe that kind  
18 of -- come under Planning, right?  Scheduling time in  
19 C-checks, isn't that under the Planning organization?

20          MR. WEAVER:  Well, I -- I wouldn't  
21 characterize that it would be one individual's  
22 responsibility to make that decision.

23          MS. VON KLEINSMID:  But that type of decision

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1 would be below you?

2 MR. WEAVER: Possibly.

3 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay --

4 MR. WEAVER: I don't think I understand your  
5 question. Are you asking me a question that did Steve  
6 Zerta make the decision to go from five-day to seven-  
7 day?

8 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Who made the decision?

9 MR. WEAVER: I do not know.

10 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. But you don't have  
11 any knowledge of being in on any communication about  
12 that change?

13 MR. WEAVER: Specifically to Oakland?

14 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Yeah.

15 MR. WEAVER: No.

16 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Were you in on any  
17 meetings in the last three years regarding heavy check  
18 delays?

19 MR. WEAVER: Absolutely, yes.

20 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. Can you -- were  
21 you concerned about the time that it was taking  
22 aircraft to get through heavy checks?

23 MR. WEAVER: I think more accurately it would

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1 be a concern with the plan itself, not necessarily the  
2 time that it takes but our ability to -- to meet the  
3 plan.

4 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. So did you  
5 recommend changes? I mean it was more not so much an  
6 ability to meet the plan but there was an inability to  
7 meet the plan. Would you say that's an accurate  
8 assessment of the past few years?

9 MR. WEAVER: There have been times where we  
10 have not met the plan, yes.

11 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Would there be more times  
12 when the plan's been met than the times that the plan  
13 was met?

14 MR. WEAVER: Without specifically looking at  
15 the charts and graphs, I mean to generally characterize  
16 whether or not we've met our ATRs more times than we've  
17 not, I -- I'd be speculating right now.

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So it's not something  
19 that you -- you've looked at it in any depth or have  
20 any recollection of at this time?

21 MR. WEAVER: Specifically looking -- me  
22 personally looking and finding out how many aircraft  
23 have left on time versus haven't left on time, I don't

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1 have any recollection of ever doing that.

2 MS. VON KLEINSMID: What about communication  
3 with how better to meet the plan? What steps in either  
4 meetings or conversations with your subordinates have  
5 been taken to try to go -- better job at meeting the  
6 plan?

7 MR. WEAVER: Well, I think that we have as an  
8 M & E staff discussed the -- our abilities to -- to  
9 meet the plan and produce aircraft in accordance to the  
10 plan. We've talked about those issues and what the  
11 inefficiencies and the problems or issues are that  
12 could better facilitate meeting the plan at a -- staff  
13 level. More specifically, though, a working group of,  
14 essentially, a focus team has really -- over the years  
15 has kind of -- has really focused on that from a  
16 working group, from the mechanic levels, have -- buy-in  
17 and -- and/or input into what are the issues and what  
18 are the hurdles, you know, that are inhibiting us  
19 meeting the plan.

20 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And one of those hurdles  
21 would -- would or would not be the fact that there's  
22 not enough time scheduled for aircraft in heavy check?

23 MR. WEAVER: I don't believe that that would

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1 necessarily be a hurdle. I think that one of the  
2 issues that this committee and work group has -- has  
3 identified in the past was just establishing the plan  
4 to begin with. In other words, taking into  
5 consideration all the information necessary to produce  
6 the aircraft, given all the different variables and  
7 different bills of work.

8 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Do you think it's a good  
9 plan to go and plug in a Saturday and a Sunday as a --  
10 as a labor and work day? Just like a regular Monday,  
11 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday? The work  
12 output on a Saturday or a Sunday is equivalent to the  
13 other five days of the week?

14 MR. JAQUES: I'm sorry. Are you asking if --  
15 if it's a good idea to do that or whether or not the  
16 work output is the same? There are multiple questions  
17 there.

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. Let's take the  
19 first question. Do you think the work output is the  
20 same on the Saturday and Sunday as on Monday, Tuesday,  
21 Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday?

22 MR. WEAVER: It's dependent upon staffing.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And were your staffing

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1 levels on the weekends that same as Monday through  
2 Friday?

3 MR. WEAVER: I have -- I've not -- I don't  
4 know. I don't know what our staffing levels are as --  
5 at the check as to whether or not they're the same on  
6 Tuesday as they are on Saturday.

7 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So you haven't had any  
8 communication with -- with your subordinates regarding  
9 staffing on weekends?

10 MR. WEAVER: Yes. There's been discussions -  
11 - you know, general discussions about five-day coverage  
12 versus seven-day coverage and seven-day coverage and  
13 the staffing. So I mean ideally you -- seven-day  
14 coverage is that you have essentially similar staffing  
15 levels, but the way the shifts work, 4-10s, 3-8s, I  
16 mean it's mathematically I guess next to impossible  
17 trying to make it exactly 24 people on day shift Monday  
18 through Sunday. So I mean there are tweaks that take  
19 place. But the -- the essence or I mean the gist of  
20 going from a five-day to a seven-day coverage is is  
21 that, you know, basically staffed such to where that  
22 those are productive days.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And do you believe in the

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1 1996 and '97 time frame that your Saturday and Sunday  
2 coverage was relatively close in staffing to Monday  
3 through Friday?

4 MR. JAQUES: Where? Any particular location?

5 MS. VON KLEINSMID: At Oakland. I thought we  
6 were talking Oakland.

7 MR. WEAVER: Without specifically looking at  
8 the manning charts and -- I would not know.

9 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Have you received safety  
10 concerns or letters, calls, since the crash from  
11 employees other than your safety -- Jim Trimmerger or  
12 anyone else? I mean have you received it from --  
13 questions or concerns or complaints from other  
14 employees that have gone to you?

15 MR. WEAVER: Yeah, I think that subsequent to  
16 the crash. Is that what you're saying?

17 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Mm-hmm.

18 MR. WEAVER: Subsequent to the crash we --  
19 there have been a number of employees that have come  
20 forward with their concerns, issues, and specifically  
21 safety.

22 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Mm-hmm.

23 MR. WEAVER: I -- yes.

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1 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And -- and have you  
2 responded to them? Do you -- do you take any -- what  
3 action do you take normally if it comes to you and --  
4 and how you handle that?

5 MR. WEAVER: I would write it down and follow  
6 up. Assign the responsibility to whoever, you know,  
7 had responsibility for investigating the issue and  
8 running it to ground and then following up with that  
9 employee and letting them know what to find -- you  
10 know, what the issues were, what -- I -- I may do that  
11 myself personally or I may have someone else do it.

12 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay.

13 MR. WEAVER: And normally follow up to ask --  
14 get feedback from that person who is following up for  
15 me as to whether or not it's taken place.

16 MS. VON KLEINSMID: That's all I have right  
17 now.

18 MR. MCGILL: Let's try to get one more person  
19 before the break, and then we'll take a little break.  
20 Will that be all right?

21 DR. CRAWLEY: Mr. Weaver, Mr. McGill had  
22 asked you what you do every day, and you had a little  
23 hard time describing that because you said things

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1 change so much. And could you elaborate a little bit  
2 on that? Why -- why is it that things change so much  
3 or what -- from day to day?

4 MR. WEAVER: It's demands of the business.  
5 Things change every day in the sense that I have  
6 different meetings scheduled throughout the week. I  
7 have different station visits throughout the year.  
8 Have different issues that come before me that, you  
9 know, are new issues or old issues. So it's -- I mean  
10 if you're looking for me to explain what my typical day  
11 is --

12 DR. CRAWLEY: It's hard?

13 MR. WEAVER: -- it's -- it's just hard to do.

14 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay.

15 MR. WEAVER: It's a variation. I mean thank  
16 God there is.

17 DR. CRAWLEY: Does it involve a lot of  
18 prioritization of setting things of most important to  
19 the least important, kind of like everybody else?

20 MR. WEAVER: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

21 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. I was just wondering,  
22 back in early February shortly after the crash how much  
23 you got personally involved with this whole jack screw

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1 issue and what kind of things came across your desk  
2 about it and what kind of meetings you had about it,  
3 and I would think it would be a high priority item at  
4 that point?

5 MR. JAQUES: Pretty broad question. You're  
6 free to answer it. Just make sure --

7 MR. WEAVER: I'll -- I'll --

8 MR. JAQUES: -- answer.

9 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. Let -- I -- I can do it  
10 a little more specifically, then. On -- on February of  
11 -- 11th, I believe, was the date when the emergency AD  
12 came out to inspect the -- the jack screws within 72  
13 hours. Was that a high priority item for you on  
14 February 11th?

15 MR. WEAVER: I'm -- I'm going back to my  
16 memory, which is at that point in time not crystal  
17 clear. So I cannot really tell you whether or not I  
18 was even in Seattle at that time or whether or not I  
19 was at Oxnard. Such -- such an AD, though, in this  
20 business or any type of AD that is time-sensitive is of  
21 the utmost and high importance.

22 DR. CRAWLEY: With -- with that in mind, did  
23 -- were you involved in any of the discussions on how

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1 it was going to be done, whether you were going to form  
2 a particular team, what -- what were the -- the limits  
3 that were set out in the AD? Did somebody explain the  
4 AD to you, go over the details of it, what kind of  
5 tools were -- did you get involved at that level of it  
6 at all?

7 MR. WEAVER: As to the level of knowing what  
8 tools were involved, no. No.

9 DR. CRAWLEY: How about --

10 MR. WEAVER: I think --

11 DR. CRAWLEY: -- just the general  
12 requirements?

13 MR. WEAVER: The general requirements of what  
14 the inspection, the visual inspection requirements  
15 were, yes.

16 DR. CRAWLEY: Did somebody explain that to  
17 you or did you just read it yourself and understand it?

18 MR. WEAVER: Well, I read the AD.

19 (Pause)

20 MR. WEAVER: I take that back. I believe I  
21 read the service bulletin from -- from Boeing, and  
22 again, through my involvement -- I believe that I was  
23 back in Seattle at that time when the inspections were

1 started. I believe I was, so, you know, the briefing  
2 and level of detail that I would have been briefed on,  
3 essentially, from an engineering standpoint, --

4 (Pause)

5 MR. WEAVER: I'm sure that, you know, it was  
6 discussed but to what detail I couldn't -- or who it  
7 was I -- you know, I mean I wouldn't know.

8 DR. CRAWLEY: Did -- did you --

9 MR. WEAVER: I guess what I'm trying to  
10 answer your question is is that I don't ever recall a  
11 time where Engineering huddled and said, Mr. Weaver,  
12 here's the AD, do you understand the AD, do you know  
13 the game plan here? No, that never took place.

14 DR. CRAWLEY: Did you draft any memos or  
15 issue any directives as the staff vice president of  
16 maintenance and engineering to assure the quality of --  
17 of these inspections or to set forth any kind of a  
18 policy regarding how these inspections would -- would  
19 be done? Or was that at a -- some lower level that  
20 that was done?

21 MR. WEAVER: I don't recall ever -- I don't  
22 ever recall writing any such memo, and -- and again,  
23 that -- you would have the Maintenance Manual that

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1 would be the referencing source to use for  
2 accomplishing -- either that or the service bulletin  
3 that would -- would be the reference for, you know,  
4 accomplishing whatever maintenance function it was.

5 DR. CRAWLEY: Has the Maintenance Manual been  
6 amended or changed as far as troubleshooting of a  
7 jammed stabilizer since the crash? If I as a captain  
8 pulled into Seattle today with a -- with a trim motor  
9 that didn't work, for example, and the mechanics out  
10 there went to troubleshoot that problem, has the  
11 procedure in troubleshooting changed since the  
12 accident, been amended?

13 MR. WEAVER: I don't have any knowledge of  
14 that.

15 DR. CRAWLEY: You haven't had -- had any  
16 concerns about -- about that? About whether it should  
17 be changed or amended or at least somebody looking at  
18 it or reviewing what's being done?

19 MR. WEAVER: Do I have any concerns about  
20 what's presently being done?

21 DR. CRAWLEY: About it being the same  
22 procedure --

23 MR. WEAVER: No.

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1 DR. CRAWLEY: -- that it was before the  
2 crash? Should be adequate?

3 MR. WEAVER: Again, I -- I can answer the  
4 question in -- in the sense that do I believe that the  
5 mechanics are -- have issue with what it is that  
6 they're doing and -- and that hasn't been brought to my  
7 attention. So, I have a lot of faith in the mechanics.  
8 And I think that if they had issues with the  
9 troubleshooting or felt uncomfortable with what they  
10 were doing, I think the management team would be made  
11 aware of that. And I have no knowledge that they're  
12 uncomfortable with the procedures, so --

13 DR. CRAWLEY: So you -- you wouldn't  
14 necessarily change your procedure unless there was a  
15 problem brought up with it?

16 MR. WEAVER: Well, I guess it goes back to  
17 your word "concern."

18 DR. CRAWLEY: Well, we -- we had an airplane  
19 land in Reno that turned back where neither trim motor,  
20 the primary or the alternate, was working and they went  
21 through that troubleshooting procedure down there,  
22 which did not involve actual physical inspection of the  
23 jack screw or an end-play check. And then that jack

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1 screw subsequently, several days later, after the  
2 airplane had flown, it was determined that it -- the  
3 jack screw needed to be replaced because of excessive  
4 wear.

5 MR. JAQUES: Do you have a question there? I  
6 know you stated a bunch of facts. I'm not sure he's  
7 familiar with any of that. Do you have a question you  
8 want to ask him?

9 DR. CRAWLEY: With -- with that statement in  
10 mind, would you think that maybe this procedure needs  
11 to be reviewed?

12 MR. JAQUES: Are you going to ask him whether  
13 or not he believes those statements to be true? I mean  
14 you're asking him about something in the absence of --

15 DR. CRAWLEY: Do you know that those  
16 statements are true?

17 MR. WEAVER: No, I don't.

18 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. But in any case, the --  
19 the -- as far as you know, the procedure has not been  
20 revised as far as inspection of a -- as far as you  
21 know, the inspection -- the inspection and  
22 troubleshooting procedure for a jammed stabilizer has  
23 not been revised since the crash?

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1 MR. WEAVER: That would be my understanding.

2 DR. CRAWLEY: I'd like to change to questions  
3 regarding the change in grease. And you have already  
4 stated that -- that you weren't really aware that the  
5 change had been made prior to the crash, is that  
6 correct?

7 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

8 DR. CRAWLEY: And subsequent to the crash,  
9 you are now aware that that grease change has been made  
10 previously, is that correct? You are now aware that  
11 the grease has been changed for lubricating the jack  
12 screw and other parts of the aircraft with controlled  
13 surfaces? From Mobil 28 to Aeroshell --

14 MR. WEAVER: Subsequent to the accident, am I  
15 aware that we have gone from Aeroshell 33 back to Mobil  
16 28 on any of the aircraft? Is that the question?

17 DR. CRAWLEY: No. There was a change in  
18 grease from Mobil 28 to Aeroshell 33.

19 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

20 DR. CRAWLEY: Back in January of 1998. And -  
21 - and you have stated that you weren't aware of that  
22 change. Is that correct?

23 MR. WEAVER: That's correct.

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1 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. Subsequent to the crash,  
2 now, have you become aware that that did happen back in  
3 January of 1998?

4 MR. WEAVER: Sort of.

5 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. And you have stated that  
6 you were not aware back in 1998 or that time frame that  
7 the grease had been changed from -- from Mobil 28 to  
8 Aeroshell 33.

9 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

10 DR. CRAWLEY: And my question is, now,  
11 subsequent to the crash of 261 have you become aware  
12 that that change was made prior to the crash?

13 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

14 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. And are you also aware  
15 that there's some concern in the investigation  
16 regarding that switch and that some studies are in  
17 progress over that switch of the grease?

18 MR. WEAVER: -- switch? Oh, with the -- with  
19 the change of grease.

20 DR. CRAWLEY: Back in 1998. Are you aware  
21 that there's some concern over that and there's some  
22 testing being done?

23 MR. WEAVER: I'm aware that the issue is

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1 being --

2 DR. CRAWLEY: Investigated?

3 MR. WEAVER: -- researched.

4 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. And since you've become  
5 aware of -- of that or you are aware of that, have you  
6 launched any kind of an internal investigation within  
7 the company to find out who initiated the change in the  
8 grease back in 1998 or how that all occurred?

9 MR. WEAVER: No.

10 DR. CRAWLEY: You haven't been concerned  
11 about that?

12 MR. JAQUES: I'm sorry. Concerned about  
13 what?

14 DR. CRAWLEY: About the -- the change in the  
15 grease or who -- how it all occurred.

16 MR. JAQUES: Which one?

17 DR. CRAWLEY: The change back in 1998 from  
18 Mobil 28 to Aeroshell 33. Has there been any concern  
19 on your part about how that whole process of the grease  
20 changed and why you weren't aware of it?

21 MR. WEAVER: Again, I'm not aware of all the  
22 Maintenance Program changes, and so I don't -- again, I  
23 -- my concern as to whether or not I was aware of the

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1 grease being changed at that time is not an issue with  
2 me now.

3 DR. CRAWLEY: I'd like to ask some questions  
4 about the restraining tool that is used to do the end-  
5 play check. About two weeks ago we had a grounding of  
6 17 airplanes, and I believe Alaska Airlines did that  
7 voluntarily when they discovered that this tool was not  
8 the correct tool in doing the -- doing the end-play  
9 check. Have you launched any kind of an internal  
10 investigation to -- to find out who made the decision  
11 to -- to make this restraining fixture in-house and  
12 find out how this tool ended up being used --

13 MR. WEAVER: No, --

14 DR. CRAWLEY: -- all this time? This caused  
15 the grounding of 17 airplanes, loss of revenue,  
16 customer inconvenience, public embarrassment, it was on  
17 the front page of the paper, and there's been no effort  
18 within the company to find out how this tool got there?

19 MR. JAQUES: I'm sorry. You -- your first  
20 question was what he did or didn't do. Now you're  
21 asking him what the company did or didn't do?

22 DR. CRAWLEY: Well, what -- yes. Well, what  
23 -- what -- within the company has there been any

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1 investigation into that, as far as you're aware of? As  
2 to -- as to how this occurred?

3 MR. WEAVER: Well, first of all, I did not  
4 initiate any type of investigation in regards to -- to  
5 your question.

6 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay.

7 MR. WEAVER: In regards to the issue, it's --  
8 it's being pursued from the NTSB investigation. And so  
9 we have done a run with a parallel investigation.

10 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. I don't have any more  
11 questions.

12 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Let's take a break right  
13 now.

14 (Brief recess)

15 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Malcolm, let's start  
16 again.

17 DR. BRENNER: I guess on the issue we  
18 discussed in the hallway, in general, do you think  
19 there's been a large turnover -- would you say there's  
20 been a large turnover in the management of the  
21 Maintenance group since the accident?

22 MR. WEAVER: Turnover meaning people are no  
23 longer in their positions and may be in other positions

1 or turnover being that they're no longer with the  
2 company, with --

3 DR. BRENNER: However you'd like to  
4 characterize it.

5 MR. WEAVER: No, I wouldn't -- I wouldn't  
6 characterize that we've had a large turnover in the  
7 management ranks since the accident.

8 DR. BRENNER: Okay. Thank you. And you  
9 mentioned Mr. Hindman the director of line maintenance  
10 stopped working for the company yesterday. Can you  
11 give us any sense as to why that is and how -- in the  
12 sense that it might relate to the investigation?

13 MR. WEAVER: It's our employment policy that  
14 I would not speak or -- or comment on a past employee.

15 DR. BRENNER: Okay. Thank you. A personal  
16 question. Have you personally had any leave since the  
17 accident? This is a question that came up --

18 MR. WEAVER: Yes. Mm-hmm.

19 DR. BRENNER: How much leave did you have?

20 MR. WEAVER: I think totalling up around two  
21 weeks. I was able to dump a canoe.

22 (Laughter)

23 DR. BRENNER: Where was that?

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1           MR. WEAVER: My son and I. Sixth grade. I  
2 was one of the parent chaperones to a sixth-grade  
3 retreat, so I was able to -- my son and I were able to  
4 get the distinction of dumping a canoe in Lake Hannon,  
5 so -- and there's been -- I don't call that vacation.  
6 That was work. But it was getting away, and I've been  
7 able to get away since then.

8           DR. BRENNER: Okay. And this is the nature  
9 of personal leave, is that right?

10          MR. WEAVER: Personal leave, just taking time  
11 off like --

12          DR. BRENNER: Just taking time off, exactly.  
13 Thank you. You mentioned that -- talking, I guess,  
14 the period 1996 to '99 that you had limited interaction  
15 with the FAA. I believe you said that you did have  
16 regular meetings with them. When -- when were these  
17 regular meetings?

18          MR. WEAVER: My understanding is that the  
19 regular meetings with the FAA happen every Tuesday.

20          DR. BRENNER: Okay. Were you personally  
21 involved in the meetings?

22          MR. WEAVER: No. I did not attend those.

23          DR. BRENNER: Did you have -- who did you

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1 have contact with on the FAA side, if anyone?

2 MR. WEAVER: The PMI. Essentially, all of  
3 the staff I had, you know, passing conversations and/or  
4 interaction. I mean we all know each other by first  
5 names, and -- but interaction to really discussion --  
6 discussing the issues, I -- there hasn't been.

7 DR. BRENNER: At -- at what level did, say,  
8 the PMI -- I guess we're talking -- is it John Hubbard  
9 we're talking about?

10 MR. WEAVER: Him and Bill Whitaker. I've  
11 had, you know, one-on-one dealings with both of those  
12 at -- when they were in the responsibility of the PMI  
13 of the -- for Alaska Airlines.

14 DR. BRENNER: Tell me about John Hubbard.  
15 What were his strengths?

16 MR. WEAVER: What was his --

17 DR. BRENNER: Describe the man to me. Tell  
18 me about him from your -- your interactions. What was  
19 he like? What is he like?

20 MR. WEAVER: John was a -- kind of a  
21 straightforward, tell it like it is. Pretty much knew  
22 where he was coming from.

23 (Pause)

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1 MR. WEAVER: He was a straightforward guy.

2 DR. BRENNER: Mm-hmm. Good. Do you think he  
3 was too strict with the airline?

4 MR. WEAVER: I wouldn't have any example of  
5 where he would be too strict in terms of -- I mean in  
6 the rules as he interpreted them and --

7 DR. BRENNER: Can you give me examples of  
8 some of his concerns during this period, '96, '99?

9 MR. WEAVER: I -- I think the issue that --  
10 between John and I that comes to my mind is the  
11 approval of our cold-weather procedures manual. He was  
12 very much on top of that and aware of the issues, and -  
13 - and during this time frame we went from the use of  
14 Type One to Type Four and the application of Type Four,  
15 his interpretation of how it should be applied. So I  
16 mean that's an issue that was discussed and --

17 DR. BRENNER: How did you resolve that?

18 MR. WEAVER: We essentially did it the way  
19 John believed it needed to be done.

20 DR. BRENNER: Do you think his point was  
21 reasonable?

22 MR. WEAVER: Well, I understood his  
23 perspective. I understood his position. Didn't --

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1 didn't agree with it personally, but -- but, you know,  
2 again, we move on. It's --

3 DR. BRENNER: What -- what time frame was  
4 that?

5 (Pause)

6 MR. WEAVER: I want to say June -- you know,  
7 '98. Sometime around -- sometime in '98.

8 DR. BRENNER: How about Phil -- Phil Hoy?  
9 Tell me about Phil Hoy.

10 MR. WEAVER: I really don't know the guy. I  
11 mean I essentially -- little or no dealings with Phil  
12 Hoy.

13 DR. BRENNER: There might be a suggestion by  
14 some people that the FAA during this period, the  
15 managers did not encourage strict enforcement of the  
16 airline. Can you help us put this in perspective?  
17 Would you agree or disagree or anything that might help  
18 us in the investigation along those lines?

19 MR. WEAVER: Again, what constitutes a  
20 perspective is somewhat opinionated, and all I can say  
21 is our dealing with the FAA is straightforward. We  
22 have the issues, we discussed them as an airline every  
23 Tuesday, and the issues get resolved. There's follow-

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1 up, follow-through, and I don't believe there's any of  
2 those people in those meetings in -- in -- involved in  
3 that kind of dialogue and working relationship would --  
4 would believe that there's any issues being discounted.

5 DR. BRENNER: Okay. In the -- in '97 time  
6 frame, the Oakland facility, how -- how was the on-time  
7 performance of the C-checks during that period?

8 MR. WEAVER: Really, without specifically  
9 looking at the -- the data itself I -- I don't know.

10 DR. BRENNER: How has the performance been in  
11 general from '96 to '99?

12 MR. WEAVER: '96 to '99. They've had their  
13 successes and they've had their failures. I mean they  
14 have succeeded in accomplishing their goals, and  
15 there's times that they've not.

16 DR. BRENNER: And in the cases when they have  
17 not been able to or when they have, either one, have  
18 you been involved in trying to change it?

19 (Pause)

20 MR. WEAVER: Involved in a direct sense, not  
21 necessarily. If -- if, for instance, the -- let's say  
22 I go to Oakland and Oakland had just produced an  
23 airplane and there -- there may be some comments that

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1 the employees will, you know, address on that, so --  
2 fairly open and, you know, those things that need to be  
3 addressed are addressed, so it's --

4 DR. BRENNER: '97 time frame, how was morale  
5 at the Oakland facility?

6 MR. WEAVER: At what time frame?

7 DR. BRENNER: '97.

8 (Pause)

9 MR. WEAVER: Again, I can just do a general,  
10 you know, analogy, and that is in -- in Oakland the  
11 morale has always seemed to be high. It is a  
12 tremendously diverse work force that are very attuned  
13 to the issues, and -- and it's a job work force. I  
14 tend to believe that morale in Oakland's always been  
15 favorable.

16 DR. BRENNER: And you mentioned that because  
17 it's a small company you have an opportunity to get out  
18 on the floor. During that period how often did you  
19 visit the Oakland floor, '96 to '99?

20 MR. WEAVER: Oh, I wouldn't -- I wouldn't  
21 know without looking at my --

22 DR. BRENNER: How could you characterize it  
23 in general? Once a month or once a year?

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1           MR. WEAVER: I generally characterize it as  
2 three times a year maybe, four if I'm lucky.

3           DR. BRENNER: And any observations --

4           MR. WEAVER: That may be more. There's --  
5 again, I can be surprised going back through my  
6 calendar as to the times that I get out and actually  
7 meet and greet and talk with the work force. So I mean  
8 that's a real general character -- assumption, you  
9 know, as to how many times I get down there.

10          DR. BRENNER: -- John Leotine who worked  
11 there, what -- what he -- did he report to the -- his  
12 concerns to the Internal Evaluation Board or to the  
13 management of the company?

14          MR. JAQUES: I -- let's take a short break.

15          DR. BRENNER: Okay.

16          (Pause)

17          MR. RODRIGUEZ: This is Mr. Rodriguez. I  
18 just wanted to put on the record for everyone's  
19 specific knowledge, and most especially for you, Mr.  
20 Weaver, that the Safety Board does not intend nor do  
21 any of the people here want to get involved in  
22 information or aspects that are encompassed in the  
23 grand jury and criminal investigations that are ongoing

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1 even at this time. And specifically, as we talked with  
2 Mr. Jaques outside, I made the point that the reason we  
3 are so late in interviewing you and -- and other  
4 employees of Alaska Airlines is because those other  
5 investigations were in progress.

6 And so the Safety Board is interested in  
7 safety aspects, in the accident, and the prevention of  
8 similar accidents in the future. To that extent our  
9 inquiry has a very broad background and -- and base,  
10 and we do kind of parallel or perhaps touch on those  
11 areas.

12 But I want you to feel comfortable in -- in  
13 the questions and at any time that -- that you feel  
14 like it's -- we're probing in an area that is involved  
15 in the current ongoing criminal investigations, feel  
16 free to confer with your lawyer and either decline to  
17 answer or whatever course -- I don't want to put words  
18 in your mouth. I just -- whatever course of action you  
19 feel is prudent for you, know that the Safety Board's  
20 intent -- I hope it's clear to you what our intent is  
21 and where we are headed and -- and what our motives  
22 are. Is it?

23 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

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1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: On that statement? Is that --

2 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- acceptable, Mr. Jaques?

4 MR. JAQUES: Yes, that is. I think that lays  
5 it out well.

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Go ahead, Malcolm,  
7 with the questioning.

8 DR. BRENNER: In the '96 to '99 time frame,  
9 were there any complaints that you're aware of from the  
10 Oakland facility maintenance staff that came to your  
11 level?

12 (Pause)

13 MR. WEAVER: I don't have anything specific  
14 in mind, but I would have -- I would venture to say  
15 that there may have been, yes.

16 DR. BRENNER: At what level would they have  
17 been made? Who would they have complained to or  
18 addressed?

19 MR. WEAVER: Well, they -- I don't know who  
20 is "they." If it's a mechanic over the issue of --  
21 over time shortage or whatever, they would make that to  
22 their supervisor. Again, I'm just generalizing.

23 DR. BRENNER: Okay. Thank you. Mr.

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1 Trimberger. Tell me about Mr. Trimberger. How is he  
2 as a manager?

3 MR. WEAVER: Jim's rock solid. He's a --  
4 he's just a remarkable human being, individual. Smart.  
5 Knows his job. And very capable.

6 DR. BRENNER: Now, there's a possible  
7 criticism as a director of safety he had too large a  
8 staff to control to adequately be a -- a focus for  
9 safety issues. Could you -- could you help us put that  
10 in perspective?

11 MR. WEAVER: I'm not aware of there being  
12 issues or a concern with his span of control.

13 DR. BRENNER: Okay. I believe we --

14 MR. WEAVER: I mean he -- he reported to me.  
15 Never voiced to me issues of his span of control or  
16 inability to accomplish his responsibilities.

17 DR. BRENNER: I believe that during that  
18 period the FAA indicated that they were pushing to have  
19 that -- an independent director of safety. Do you  
20 think that was a reasonable approach on their part?

21 MR. WEAVER: Again, it's the FAA's  
22 recommendation that that happen, and as to whether or  
23 not that's reasonable, I mean that is their

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1 recommendation and because it's their recommendation we  
2 implemented it.

3 DR. BRENNER: Okay. Can you give me some  
4 examples, '96 to '99, of some issues that were raised  
5 by the Internal Evaluation Board or the safety  
6 director?

7 MR. WEAVER: Some examples of issues raised -  
8 -

9 (Pause)

10 MR. WEAVER: I believe -- I believe as one  
11 example would have been our FOD Program, Foreign Object  
12 Damage Program. And again, I think the issue would  
13 have been that Jim was just briefing me on the issues  
14 and I think it was an IEB topic of discussion that,  
15 again, reviewed the program and believed that there was  
16 some training that took place or some additional -- so  
17 I mean that's just one issue that comes to my mind  
18 first as to something that the IEB was involved in.

19 DR. BRENNER: Good. When was that?

20 MR. WEAVER: Oh, --

21 (Pause)

22 MR. WEAVER: I'm guessing. I'm trying to be  
23 exact as I could, and I'm -- I'd say it was most likely

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1 some time in early '98 time frame.

2 DR. BRENNER: Thank you. John Fowler, how  
3 was he as a boss?

4 MR. WEAVER: He was a good teacher.  
5 Straightforward. You know where you stand. Very  
6 intelligent.

7 DR. BRENNER: How about Mr. Kelly?

8 MR. WEAVER: I have very little interaction,  
9 really, with John. Very outgoing. Intelligent, again.  
10 Cordial.

11 DR. BRENNER: And -- and yourself as a  
12 manager, what do you emphasize to support that?

13 MR. WEAVER: I -- I think that I would focus  
14 on and have always and continue to do is  
15 responsibility. Safety, quality. And this is -- this  
16 is a business that's -- we're in a very critical  
17 business, so it's one of which is very, very  
18 unforgiving. And so it's compliance. And --

19 (Pause)

20 MR. WEAVER: I think that we -- there again,  
21 those are generally -- I like to -- how I operate.

22 DR. BRENNER: Could you describe the culture  
23 at Alaska Airlines? How is it different from other

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1 airlines? I love this room, for example. I would  
2 start -- thank you for that. I haven't decided yet on  
3 that -- that whirling water thing, but I admire the  
4 imaginative -- but in general, how do you see it? How  
5 is the company different from others?

6 MR. WEAVER: Well, it's hard for me to base  
7 that because I'm not really attuned to other companies'  
8 cultures.

9 DR. BRENNER: Well, compared to American  
10 Airlines, for example?

11 (Pause)

12 MR. WEAVER: Well, again, just a  
13 generalization of culture for Alaska Airlines would be  
14 an airline that's very caring, focused, and capable of  
15 change.

16 DR. BRENNER: Okay. Thank you.

17 MR. MCGILL: Dick?

18 (Pause)

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I have little or no  
20 experience in maintenance. My experience is on the  
21 operations side, so I may ask some dumb questions but  
22 I'm looking for background information as to how Alaska  
23 Airlines' Maintenance and Engineering functions

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1 function. Specifically, what are the expectations and  
2 who is involved in what? That's the scope of the  
3 initial questions I have for you.

4 With respect to such things as we have been  
5 discussing with your subordinates over the last several  
6 days, we have asked about acquisition, internal  
7 functioning, technical training, reliability, quality  
8 control, and it doesn't seem that we're -- that we have  
9 derived the answers that I'm looking for in those  
10 areas, so I'm going to repeat them to you. Some of  
11 them you've already heard, but I'm going to repeat them  
12 to you and I'm going to show you some examples and ask  
13 you to comment on those. Do you understand?

14 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Let's talk about the jack  
16 screw. In terms of Stores and that sort of thing,  
17 where does that fall, if at all, within Maintenance and  
18 Engineering?

19 MR. WEAVER: Stores organization reports to  
20 -- essentially, the manager of Stores is Bill  
21 Johanson, who reports to Steve Zerta.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: And he reports to you?

23 MR. WEAVER: Steve Zerta reports to me.

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1           MR. RODRIGUEZ: So it'd be two levels below  
2 you that this would be --

3           MR. WEAVER: In this function, yes.

4           MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- parts and that sort of  
5 thing?

6           MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm. That the movement of  
7 parts and shipping and receiving of parts.

8           MR. RODRIGUEZ: As a practical matter, do you  
9 have any knowledge at all about the storing or the --  
10 the availability of jack screws prior to the accident  
11 at Alaska Airlines?

12          MR. WEAVER: No, I don't.

13          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Do you know if they had ever  
14 replaced a jack screw on an MD 80 at Alaska Airlines  
15 prior to the accident?

16          MR. WEAVER: No.

17          MR. RODRIGUEZ: You have not been privy to  
18 any conversations at the management level within the  
19 company about whether or not they have replaced a jack  
20 screw prior to the accident?

21          MR. WEAVER: Subsequent to the accident --

22          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Mm-hmm. Yes, sir.

23          MR. WEAVER: Subsequent to the accident, I

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1 know that that's an issue that has been investigated or  
2 researched. I mean through the NTSB --

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: But you don't know --

4 MR. WEAVER: -- investigation.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, I'm -- I'm talking about  
6 internally, within your company. Nobody has -- has  
7 researched that area of whether you had a jack screw  
8 before the accident in stock? Did you continue -- had  
9 it in stock?

10 MR. WEAVER: Yeah, you mean other than the  
11 context of the NTSB investigation?

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, sir. Internally, within  
13 the company.

14 MR. WEAVER: No. I mean my understanding is,  
15 is that that was in support of the NTSB investigation.

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, I'm the investigator in  
17 charge, and at this point I don't know whether Alaska  
18 had a jack screw prior to the accident or not. Do you?

19 MR. WEAVER: My knowledge is that we did not  
20 have a jack screw prior to the accident.

21 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Would you classify  
22 that as from a reliable source within the company? Do  
23 you think -- wherever you got the information, do you

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1 think that was accurate?

2 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: As a practical matter --

4 MR. WEAVER: Can -- can I back up?

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Sure.

6 MR. WEAVER: Because I'm -- I'm -- I want to  
7 make sure that I'm understanding the context and the  
8 time frame of -- of -- of your question is subsequent  
9 to the accident was I aware of any internal research in  
10 determining whether or not we had a jack screw  
11 available for 963 prior to its accident?

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Essentially, yes. I just  
13 wondered if a jack screw is something that you would  
14 expect to see in your stores or in your -- in stock in  
15 -- in some facility some place?

16 MR. WEAVER: Okay. That's a different  
17 question, and -- and so --

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Oh, okay.

19 MR. WEAVER: Yeah.

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, answer that one.

21 MR. WEAVER: Okay. I'll answer. Again, our  
22 inventory modeling and, again, would -- would really,  
23 essentially, recommend or dictate as to what kind of

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1 inventory we would keep. And to my knowledge, we did  
2 not have a jack screw as inventory -- as an inventory  
3 item.

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: From your level within the  
5 company, if you needed a jack screw and you don't have  
6 one in stock, how would you expect that to be acquired?

7 MR. WEAVER: The -- the user group or the  
8 needing group, whether it be a mechanic or supervisor,  
9 would contact Purchasing and -- and/or Inventory  
10 Control.

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Who would that be?

12 MR. WEAVER: It could be anyone. It could be  
13 -- it could be a mechanic. It could be a -- a -- a  
14 lead. It could be a supervisor that has a need for a  
15 part.

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, I mean who's -- who --  
17 you said Purchasing. Who would that be?

18 MR. WEAVER: Oh, Purchasing is -- is an  
19 organization so it's a number of individuals, and I  
20 don't know their names.

21 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

22 MR. WEAVER: Chris Collum is the manager of  
23 purchasing.

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1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Chris Collum?

2 MR. WEAVER: Uh huh. Yeah.

3 (Pause)

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And again, as a  
5 practical matter, is there -- is there a form that you  
6 would fill out to get that? What would you expect the  
7 individual who had a need for a jack screw to do to get  
8 that part?

9 MR. WEAVER: I'm really not familiar with --

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: You're not?

11 MR. WEAVER: -- the process or the paperwork,  
12 necessarily. I -- I just know the requests come from  
13 all different disciplines.

14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I think we asked -- others  
15 have asked, but I -- I didn't get a sufficient level of  
16 information. With respect to ordering of parts,  
17 expenditure of airline funds, is it your testimony or  
18 statement that you don't know specific amounts that are  
19 authorized at specific levels within the company?

20 MR. WEAVER: No, I don't.

21 MR. RODRIGUEZ: You don't?

22 MR. WEAVER: No. I mean just off the top of  
23 my head --

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1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Well, --

2 MR. WEAVER: -- I do not know --

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- let me ask you if a -- if  
4 you would think that a line mechanic, a lead mechanic  
5 in the heavy check facility at Oakland would have  
6 authority to requisition a jack screw?

7 MR. WEAVER: Dick, it would depend upon the  
8 -- whether or not it was an inventory item or --

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, it's not inventory.  
10 We've established that, so --

11 MR. WEAVER: So --

12 (Pause)

13 MR. WEAVER: Your question is, then, the jack  
14 screw, not being an inventory item, does a lead  
15 mechanic have the authorization to requisition a jack  
16 screw?

17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, sir.

18 MR. WEAVER: I -- I believe so.

19 (Pause)

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That's a fairly expensive  
21 item, isn't it? You don't know?

22 MR. WEAVER: I don't -- exact dollar on a  
23 jack screw, no.

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1           MR. RODRIGUEZ: We've been led to believe  
2 that it's in the \$60,000 range. Is that fair?

3           MR. WEAVER: Is that expensive?

4           MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, I mean is that -- do you  
5 have any concept at all of the cost of a jack screw?

6           MR. WEAVER: I've not -- no. I -- I have  
7 seen the cost of overhauls of jack screws, but I've not  
8 seen what a new jack screw costs.

9           MR. RODRIGUEZ: What does the cost of an  
10 overhauled jack screw?

11          MR. WEAVER: It varies.

12          (Pause)

13          MR. WEAVER: It varies based upon the bill of  
14 work for the specific jack screw.

15          MR. RODRIGUEZ: You can't give me any  
16 approximation?

17          (Pause)

18          MR. WEAVER: I -- I want to say that it's  
19 just generally 30,000.

20          MR. RODRIGUEZ: 30?

21          MR. WEAVER: I'm just -- I've seen several  
22 invoices, multiple invoices that have multiple bills of  
23 work, and so I couldn't -- I couldn't state that the

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1 average cost for a repair is 30,000, but that's --

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Does Purchasing function  
3 under you?

4 MR. WEAVER: No.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Do you meet at the corporate  
6 level with vice presidents and that sort of thing about  
7 budgetary considerations and that sort of thing within  
8 the airline?

9 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: With what frequency?

11 MR. WEAVER: Well, we sit down and review the  
12 budget annually, as far as going forward and trying to  
13 establish what the budget is going to be and taking  
14 into all the considerations, all the changes.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: How about a how-goes-it  
16 meeting during the course of the year?

17 MR. WEAVER: Normally, we provide on a  
18 monthly basis a summary and provide it to Corporate  
19 Finance, and -- and then Outlook. Normally, projected  
20 out a number of months, and I don't know exactly the --  
21 how we project -- how long we project it out.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Does that ever result in such  
23 as quarterly meetings or evaluation meetings as to how

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1 the budget process is going through the year that --  
2 that planned and that expected?

3 MR. WEAVER: Yes, we have -- we try to have  
4 quarterly divisional cost analysis meetings where we  
5 review, you know, where each division's at. Each  
6 division officer will speak to their --

7 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Do -- and you attend those?

8 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Do you have any concept of  
10 how many jack screws Alaska has replaced in the last  
11 year?

12 MR. WEAVER: No. Concept?

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, any idea?

14 MR. WEAVER: I -- I don't know of how many  
15 jack screws we've replaced. I know we've replaced a  
16 number of 'em.

17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Is -- would that -- see, I  
18 have no idea of budget, but would that constitute a  
19 fairly large ticket into your budget for the year?

20 MR. WEAVER: Depends. And then it's all  
21 volume-driven, so I mean repairs or purchases would --  
22 whether it's a purchase of a \$60,000 unit or a repair  
23 of a \$30,000 unit, it's -- it's -- it's all volume-

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1 driven, so.

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: What is "volume-driven"?

3 MR. WEAVER: Well, that is it needs to be  
4 replaced, it needs to be repaired, so there's a cost in  
5 -- entailed with repairing the jack screw, which ends  
6 up into a cost.

7 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, as a practical matter,  
8 you really don't have a feel for how many jack screws  
9 you've replaced in the last year in terms of -- in a  
10 ballpark figure?

11 MR. WEAVER: Do I have a ballpark figure of  
12 how many jack screw -- yes, I could come up with a  
13 ballpark number.

14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: What would it be?

15 MR. WEAVER: 12.

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: 12?

17 MR. WEAVER: Yes. Again, that's a ballpark  
18 figure. I do not --

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

20 MR. WEAVER: -- chart it. I do not watch it.  
21 And so it's not something that --

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Is -- is there -- is there a  
23 way in which you would become concerned about the

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1 number of jack screws that you're using in your airline  
2 operation?

3 (Pause)

4 MR. WEAVER: Explain "concern."

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: What I'm trying to gather is,  
6 is there a point at which this would become a problem  
7 that might surface at the highest levels of management  
8 within the company of excessive wear which is leading  
9 to inordinate expenditures, unexpected levels of  
10 expenditure within the company in a certain area that  
11 would be discussed at the management level and -- and  
12 some resolution or some emphasis or some remedy be  
13 sought?

14 MR. WEAVER: Well, I think in managing our  
15 business we -- we take into account these issues that  
16 come at us, whether it's a number three air-oil sill on  
17 a CFM engine that has a -- a capability of disbonding.  
18 We would take on a campaign. It's not in the budget,  
19 but we'd take on a campaign to replace that.

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Mm-hmm.

21 MR. WEAVER: So I mean we'd be proactive in  
22 addressing the issue and wouldn't be limited as a  
23 result of whether or not it was in the budget or not.

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1 That's a real-life example that we've gone through this  
2 year that no one anticipated.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: How much does a seal cost?

4 MR. WEAVER: I don't know.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: How many seals have you  
6 replaced?

7 MR. WEAVER: I don't know the exact numbers.

8 (Pause)

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Would -- would Mr. Kelly  
10 attend these meetings?

11 MR. WEAVER: The -- which meetings?

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: These meetings with what I  
13 consider to be vice presidents of various functions to  
14 discuss the financial health of the organization and  
15 how we're going through the budget process.

16 MR. WEAVER: I think that he's attended them.  
17 I don't know that he's attended all of them.

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Who would chair the meeting,  
19 then?

20 MR. WEAVER: It would most likely be Brad  
21 Tilton, our CFO. These meetings are really held at  
22 officers' lunch. Normally what's the venue for the  
23 divisional cost analysis. Over lunch the officers go

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1 around the table and discuss their division's cost  
2 analysis.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Do you have a feel for how  
4 much the CMF -- CFM 56 or whatever it is, the -- the  
5 737 engine seal campaign cost the company?

6 MR. WEAVER: Because it's ongoing, you know,  
7 I don't -- I don't have --

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: You don't know how much has  
9 been spent on it at this point?

10 MR. WEAVER: No. It's just important and  
11 needs to be done.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Is this something that's  
13 being done as the -- as the engines go into overhaul or  
14 is there -- they become available for removal from the  
15 aircraft? You don't do it on wing, do you?

16 MR. WEAVER: Actually, it's a special program  
17 that pulls 'em off wing and -- and --

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: On some planned basis?

19 MR. WEAVER: A planned basis, right.

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: When will it be complete? Do  
21 you know?

22 MR. WEAVER: The plan is to have it done by  
23 the end of this year.

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1           MR. RODRIGUEZ: Is there a similar plan to  
2 replace all jack screws on the MD 80 fleet?

3           MR. WEAVER: Not to my knowledge.

4           MR. RODRIGUEZ: In the C-check, C-check of  
5 '97 on 963, there was a -- a planned action to replace  
6 the jack screw on that aircraft. Are you familiar with  
7 that situation at this time?

8           MR. WEAVER: I'm aware of it at this time,  
9 yes.

10          MR. RODRIGUEZ: When did you become aware of  
11 it?

12          MR. WEAVER: I don't know for -- for sure  
13 when it was. Obviously, post-accident.

14          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Post-accident?

15          MR. WEAVER: Yeah.

16          MR. RODRIGUEZ: You didn't know about it  
17 before?

18          MR. WEAVER: No.

19          MR. RODRIGUEZ: As you have -- I -- I -- have  
20 you thought about the accident in terms of possible  
21 corrective action that the company might take? The  
22 proactive plans of what we can do since the accident?

23          MR. WEAVER: Well, the accident investigation

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1 not being done and completed, not knowing the cause of  
2 the accident, obviously, I'm aware of things that we  
3 are doing and have done being privy to that and  
4 continue to, you know, again, respond.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, what I'd be interested  
6 in is this particular C-check and replacement --  
7 recommended replacement of the jack screw. Having seen  
8 that and being aware of it and the subsequent  
9 reevaluation of the planned action --

10 MR. WEAVER: Of -- of 963?

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, sir. In '97.

12 MR. WEAVER: In '97.

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Has it occurred to you that  
14 the company almost replaced a jack screw unnecessarily?

15 MR. WEAVER: I'm not for sure I understand  
16 the question.

17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, there was a recommended  
18 action to replace the jack screw. That was  
19 subsequently reevaluated, and the aircraft was returned  
20 to service with the old jack screw still in place. Had  
21 the initial action been carried through, there would  
22 have been a replacement of the jack screw.

23 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

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1           MR. RODRIGUEZ:  If the jack screw had been  
2 replaced at that time, would you -- would you consider  
3 that to have been necessary?

4           MR. WEAVER:  Based upon today's information,  
5 no.

6           MR. RODRIGUEZ:  Okay.  So if they had gone  
7 through with the initial recommendation there would  
8 have been an unnecessary replacement of a jack screw?

9           MR. WEAVER:  Based upon the criteria we use  
10 to maintain our aircraft, yes.

11           MR. RODRIGUEZ:  And my question is,  
12 recognizing that there was almost an unnecessary  
13 replacement of the jack screw, has that triggered in  
14 your mind any changes that you would want to implement  
15 to ensure that the unnecessary replacement would not  
16 take place in the future?

17           MR. WEAVER:  No.  I -- I, again, would focus  
18 on the procedure itself and -- and the criteria that we  
19 have, so.

20           (Pause)

21           MR. RODRIGUEZ:  Are you familiar with the --  
22 the volume of discussion and activity surrounding the  
23 end-play check since the time of the accident?

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1           MR. WEAVER: I'm aware that it's an issue  
2 that's being investigated and -- and evaluated.

3           MR. RODRIGUEZ: From your position and -- and  
4 this end-play check is accomplished within your  
5 department, is that -- your division?

6           MR. WEAVER: Correct. Correct. The  
7 mechanics performing the --

8           MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. From your position, do  
9 you have any concern about the manner in which the end-  
10 play check is being accomplished either by your  
11 mechanics or by out-sourced contractors?

12          MR. WEAVER: Concern today as -- how it's  
13 being done today?

14          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Since the accident, yes. And  
15 with the various iterations and revelations that have  
16 occurred during the investigation regarding the end-  
17 play check?

18          MR. WEAVER: I have no concerns today, no.  
19 In how the -- the procedure is being accomplished, the  
20 inspection's being performed, I -- I know --

21          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Did you at the time of the  
22 accident?

23          MR. WEAVER: -- issue that's being

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1 investigated and evaluated, but no, I do not have  
2 concerns of how it's being done today.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Did you -- shortly after the  
4 accident, for instance when you became aware of the C-  
5 check revision, that -- I'm sorry. When you became  
6 aware of the revision to the end-play check on the  
7 C-check that occurred in '97 -- that was after the  
8 accident, that's what you said.

9 MR. WEAVER: Changing the procedure of -- of  
10 the end-play?

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No. I corrected myself.  
12 We'll start over.

13 MR. WEAVER: Okay.

14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: After the accident you became  
15 aware that there was a correction or an adjustment to  
16 the end-play check that was accomplished on 963 when it  
17 was in C-check in '97?

18 (Pause)

19 MR. WEAVER: I don't -- I don't know if I'm  
20 understanding the question. Okay. This is the MIG 4  
21 that addresses 963's jack screw?

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

23 MR. WEAVER: Okay.

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1           MR. RODRIGUEZ: Are you aware that a planned  
2 action regarding that aircraft and that jack screw was  
3 changed?

4           MR. WEAVER: A planned action?

5           MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, that's what it says on  
6 the form.

7           MR. WEAVER: As to -- yes.

8           MR. RODRIGUEZ: When did you become aware of  
9 that?

10          MR. WEAVER: I -- it was post-accident.

11          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Post-accident?

12          MR. WEAVER: Right.

13          MR. RODRIGUEZ: My question was, based on  
14 what you see on that form there, where one of your line  
15 mechanics, a lead mechanic, not line. Lead mechanics  
16 found an end-play at 40 thousandths, and a subsequent  
17 lead mechanic found end-play of 33 thousandths on the  
18 same jack screw during the same check. In other  
19 instances of that nature involving discrepancies or  
20 disparities in the readings that were achieved by  
21 various mechanics both in your company and as out-  
22 sourced contractors, were you concerned about the end-  
23 play check and the capabilities of your mechanics to

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1 perform it?

2 MR. WEAVER: In -- in the way you're  
3 explaining it, would I be -- yes, concerned. Concerned  
4 in -- in the matter of repeatability of the inspection  
5 itself. That is an issue that I believe is, again,  
6 being investigated by this team, the NTSB, and again, I  
7 would not run a parallel investigation. I believe that  
8 there is enough horsepower and focus on that to where  
9 if there is issues there that they will -- again, as an  
10 industry, we would benefit and have knowledge of.

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, your earlier answer to  
12 my question was that today you're satisfied with the  
13 accomplishment or the manner in which the end-play  
14 check is being done.

15 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: With the capabilities of your  
17 mechanics to perform it.

18 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: And my question that  
20 triggered all this for the last 15 minutes is were you  
21 satisfied with the end-play check shortly after the  
22 accident when you began to see disparities in the end-  
23 play check results that were being turned in by

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1 mechanics? I'm -- I'm trying to figure out when did  
2 you become satisfied with the end-play check as a  
3 measure of the condition of the jack screw?

4 MR. WEAVER: I guess my -- I guess my answer  
5 is is that I've always been satisfied with the  
6 procedure and end-process that the mechanics have to  
7 use and inspect the end-play of the jack screw.

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: And therefore, you see --

9 MR. WEAVER: I think if there's things to be  
10 learned and -- and further definition and development  
11 of this and we're privy to as an industry, and we, you  
12 know, implement --

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Has Alaska Airlines  
14 implemented any technical training with respect to your  
15 mechanics in-house or out-house dealing with the  
16 accomplishment of the end-play check on the jack screw?

17 MR. WEAVER: Not to my knowledge.

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Do you think they should?

19 MR. WEAVER: No.

20 (Pause)

21 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Your umbrella --  
22 organizational umbrella encompasses Reliability as  
23 well, is that correct?

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1 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: If you focused in the  
3 Reliability area of your job, does the kind of things  
4 we've been talking about with respect to end-play  
5 variations cause any concern?

6 MR. WEAVER: In terms of the Reliability  
7 Department?

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Mm-hmm.

9 MR. WEAVER: I don't -- are -- are you asking  
10 if individuals within the Reliability Department had  
11 knowledge of --

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, I'm asking if you as a  
13 manager --

14 MR. WEAVER: Mm-hmm.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- over areas of reliability  
16 within the organization, if you focus on that aspect of  
17 your job, does the changes or the variations in end-  
18 play checks and that sort of thing with respect to the  
19 jack screw give you any heartburn concern?

20 MR. WEAVER: Being knowledgeable of -- of  
21 different test results and them varying would -- would  
22 be a concern. It -- it could be a concern at the  
23 Reliability Department's level. It could be a concern

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1 at the mechanic's level.

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: But again, would it trigger  
3 any kind of action, proactive action on the part of the  
4 company or to you or your subordinates?

5 MR. WEAVER: In -- in terms of what? In --  
6 in -- in terms of --

7 MR. RODRIGUEZ: A different method.  
8 Additional training. More qualified people. Anything.

9 MR. WEAVER: Again, Dick, what would trigger  
10 -- what you speaking as far as triggering? The -- I'm  
11 just trying to understand the question, Dick.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Mm-hmm. I understand.

13 (Pause)

14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: The thrust of the questions  
15 for the last five minutes have been focused on the  
16 specific area of your responsibilities I would loosely  
17 label "Reliability." You have indicated that you saw  
18 no need for additional training of the Maintenance  
19 people, the mechanics who perform the end-play check.  
20 We have discussed the disparity or the variations in  
21 the values that are achieved by those mechanics getting  
22 end-play checks. And what I'm asking you to do now is  
23 to focus on the Reliability aspects of your job and

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1 those under you and evaluate for me whether or not you  
2 see as a proactive measure need for additional training  
3 or any other action by your company with respect to  
4 reliability?

5 MR. WEAVER: Let me -- let me go back to --  
6 your question was specifically technical training.  
7 When we mention technical training --

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Or anything else.

9 MR. WEAVER: Okay. Well, I'll -- I'll try to  
10 answer the question, and that is when you mention  
11 technical training I'm equating that to a technical  
12 training which has an ARTIC number in its course  
13 development. And we have not -- we have not determined  
14 that that's necessary. Have we taken actions as a  
15 company to have those individuals performing these end-  
16 play checks specialize or on-the-job training? That is  
17 -- that has been an initiative of the company to -- to  
18 see that those individuals that are involved in this  
19 procedure have been involved in it before, have gone  
20 through it with -- with engineers and with other  
21 personnel that are, we feel, confident and capable and  
22 comfortable with -- with their understanding of  
23 performing the -- the measurement. So I mean we have

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1 done that.

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Oh, you have?

3 MR. WEAVER: Yes. Yes, we have done that.

4 And --

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: When was that done?

6 MR. WEAVER: I don't know the exact day. I  
7 mean it's -- it's -- I think it's --

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Before or after the accident?

9 MR. WEAVER: Subsequent to the accident. The  
10 ensuing issues pertaining to the procedure itself.

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Before or after the grounding  
12 of the aircraft?

13 MR. WEAVER: Which aircraft and --

14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, this most recent event,  
15 August the 3rd or whenever it was where you voluntarily  
16 made the groundings of that -- where -- where you  
17 voluntarily rechecked a significant -- significant  
18 number of your aircraft.

19 MR. WEAVER: We -- we've been -- we've taken  
20 this action prior to that.

21 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Was it provided to all  
22 mechanics or to a cadre of select mechanics that would  
23 now be end-play check mechanics?

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1           MR. WEAVER:  It's not provided to all  
2 mechanics, no.

3           MR. RODRIGUEZ:  Is it provided to all people  
4 that the company would allow to do an end-play check?

5           MR. WEAVER:  It's not -- as far as company --  
6 it's not a qualification, so again, the process -- you  
7 would not find people that have never done it before  
8 doing it today.

9           MR. RODRIGUEZ:  Is that in writing anywhere?

10          MR. WEAVER:  No.

11          MR. RODRIGUEZ:  Was that training --

12          MR. WEAVER:  Not to my knowledge.

13          MR. RODRIGUEZ:  Was that training provided to  
14 outside contractors?

15          MR. WEAVER:  To my knowledge, yes.

16          MR. RODRIGUEZ:  And can you tell us who did  
17 the technical -- well, I call it technical, but it's  
18 not administrative, it's -- who did the on-job training  
19 of those mechanics?

20          MR. WEAVER:  I believe members of our  
21 Engineering group as well as Tech Services group.

22          MR. RODRIGUEZ:  Was this a specially-  
23 assembled group that did the training?  Hand-picked?

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1           MR. WEAVER: No. I mean it was those people  
2 that we believed that have the capability of training  
3 and understanding and being able to communicate the  
4 procedures and answer any questions.

5           MR. RODRIGUEZ: And how did you -- how were  
6 the people who received the training selected?

7           MR. WEAVER: I don't know.

8           MR. RODRIGUEZ: Who would know?

9           MR. WEAVER: The respective managers  
10 responsible for accomplishing the work.

11          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Would the base manager at  
12 Oakland know who received training?

13                   (Pause)

14          MR. WEAVER: Possibly. In -- in that if  
15 there's a OJT card filled out or there's some  
16 documentation of the training then he may have ability  
17 to -- to review that and -- and know who it is.

18          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Help me understand  
19 this. Where I'm at now is I understand that the  
20 company initiated some training -- on-the-job training  
21 for mechanics who were doing end-play checks.

22          MR. WEAVER: Correct.

23          MR. RODRIGUEZ: Which I assume would be at

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1 Oakland and Seattle, is that correct?

2 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: And also at Phoenix, an out-  
4 sourced contractor, is that correct?

5 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: But the company would not  
7 necessarily inform the direct supervisor of those folks  
8 that they were going to come down and give them that  
9 training, is that what you're saying?

10 MR. WEAVER: No, I don't believe that's what  
11 I'm saying.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That is what you're saying.

13 MR. WEAVER: That these people would show up  
14 and provide the training without their management  
15 knowing?

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

17 MR. WEAVER: No, that's not what I'm saying.

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Oh. Well, I asked you if the  
19 base manager would know that they had been down there  
20 doing training and you said, "possibly."

21 MR. WEAVER: Your question was would the base  
22 manager know who was selected for that training.

23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Would the base manager at

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1 Oakland know that people were coming to train his  
2 mechanics?

3 (Pause)

4 MR. WEAVER: Yes. Would the base manager in  
5 Oakland know if there was a contingent of people coming  
6 down to provide some additional training or insight  
7 into the jack screw -- end-play check? I would -- I  
8 would think that the manager would know.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Would you provide to Mr.  
10 McGill the names of those people who gave that  
11 training, and the names of the people who received the  
12 training?

13 MR. WEAVER: We will do that.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And the dates it was  
15 accomplished? As long we're getting the formal  
16 information, you might as well tell us when you did it.

17 MR. WEAVER: Okay.

18 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I have fairly extensive  
19 questioning to go. Would you like to take a lunch  
20 break now?

21 MR. MCGILL: Yeah. We probably ought to.  
22 It's 12:00.

23 (Whereupon, at 12:00 p.m., the interviews

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1 were recessed, to reconvene this same day, Tuesday,  
2 August 15th, 2000, at 12:30 p.m.)

3

4

5

6

A F T E R N O O N S E S S I O N

7

12:22 p.m.

8

INTERVIEW OF BILL WEAVER (CONTINUED)

9

MR. RODRIQUEZ: Are you familiar with the --  
10 this MEO-1 process that you have?

11

MR. WEAVER: No. I'm familiar in terms of I  
12 know the -- I know it's a form.

13

MR. RODRIQUEZ: You don't even see the forms?

14

MR. WEAVER: No.

15

MR. RODRIQUEZ: With respect to the end plate  
16 check and the jack screw condition, I was inquiring  
17 about internal activities that may have been  
18 accomplished.

19

Has the company changed their standard for an  
20 acceptable end plate check in terms of the values that  
21 are derived? In other words, are you still going by  
22 the 40,000 standard?

23

MR. WEAVER: Yes.

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1           MR. RODRIQUEZ: And in your organization  
2 description earlier, you mentioned, I believe, Mr.  
3 McCleary was your budget and administrative or  
4 something, is that correct?

5           MR. WEAVER: Mac McCleary. Robert McCleary.

6           MR. RODRIQUEZ: McCleary. Okay. That is the  
7 budget of Maintenance and Engineering?

8           MR. WEAVER: Correct.

9           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Specifically, the mission  
10 budget?

11          MR. WEAVER: Yes.

12          MR. RODRIQUEZ: Mr. Fitzpatrick is Director  
13 or Manager of Base Maintenance?

14          MR. WEAVER: Director of Base Maintenance.

15          MR. RODRIQUEZ: If they were to decide to  
16 order more tools, restraining fixtures, for the jack  
17 screw, would he be aware of it?

18          MR. WEAVER: I -- I don't know if he would be  
19 aware of it.

20          MR. RODRIQUEZ: What organizational entity  
21 within the company would do that? Order the additional  
22 tools?

23          MR. WEAVER: That -- typically, who orders

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1 tools or who orders anything is the Purchasing  
2 Department.

3 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm. Is your under-  
4 standing at this time, the entire knowledge that you  
5 have of this restraining fixture, would you consider  
6 that a maintenance item or an inspection item?

7 MR. WEAVER: The -- the -- the tool itself?

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes, sir.

9 MR. WEAVER: Would I characterize it as a  
10 maintenance item or inspection item? I'm not for sure.

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, --

12 MR. WEAVER: It is a -- it -- explain.

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: My understanding is that --  
14 that if a tool requires calibration or that kind of  
15 thing, you would classify it as an inspection tool, and  
16 if it's just a maintenance tool, it's something you  
17 use, like a hammer or pliers, no calibration. It's  
18 just a tool that you use.

19 Is -- is that -- am I off -- is that dumb  
20 pilot talk or what?

21 MR. WEAVER: Well, you know, I don't know.  
22 But as to -- to really -- I mean, I would want to  
23 reference the GMM to do -- you know, the reference of

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1       which we would use as to whether or not it's an  
2       inspection item or if it has calibration requirements  
3       or --

4                   MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, at the time -- at the  
5       time that the company was complying with this AD on the  
6       jack screw, isn't that the kind of thing that -- that  
7       at your level, you would get involved in, even though  
8       it may be being done below you? Wouldn't you be  
9       intimately involved in that? How it's done, who -- how  
10      many tools you have, how many jack screws, what are the  
11      source for those things would be, and that kind of  
12      thing? You're not involved in that?

13                  MR. WEAVER: You mentioned "intimately", and  
14      no, I would not be.

15                  MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, directly. Let me -- is  
16      that a --

17                  MR. WEAVER: Or -- or directly, no.

18                  MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. How about such things  
19      as utilization of the aircraft? Is that a -- whose  
20      department would that fall under? Do you know?

21                  MR. WEAVER: I don't believe there is a  
22      department that is responsible for aircraft  
23      utilization.

1           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, if Mr. Kelly was -- or  
2 Mr. Fowler were to decide that we're not getting the  
3 proper utilization out of these aircraft, who would he  
4 call on? Who would he speak to?

5           MR. WEAVER: I would say that it would be the  
6 operating officers. Operating officers, those officers  
7 that are a part of and have responsibility for those  
8 divisions that are considered operating divisions.

9           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Would Maintenance and  
10 Engineering be an operating division?

11          MR. WEAVER: Here at the table.

12          MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. So, you are involved  
13 in discussions concerning utilization of the aircraft?

14          MR. WEAVER: Not personally, but, I mean, the  
15 division is.

16          MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, who in Maintenance and  
17 Engineering would be at the table?

18          MR. WEAVER: Normally, it would be Chris  
19 Nicasea, who's our Manager of -- Manager of -- I want  
20 to say Line Maintenance Planning, but I don't know if  
21 that's really his complete title. So.

22          MR. RODRIQUEZ: That's a descriptor of his  
23 functions?

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1 MR. WEAVER: Right.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And in any way, are you aware  
3 of what kind of utilization you get out of your  
4 aircraft? Daily utilization?

5 MR. WEAVER: No, not daily.

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: At any interval? Monthly?  
7 Annually?

8 MR. WEAVER: I mean, we look at it on a  
9 monthly basis, yes.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you have any sense of the  
11 rough hourly utilization you get from MD-80 aircraft  
12 daily at the present time?

13 MR. WEAVER: Rough sense, not daily but again  
14 on a monthly basis, --

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: On a monthly, if you know  
16 what it is.

17 MR. WEAVER: -- I don't know the exact  
18 number. I mean, I look at some information, but I  
19 don't recall what it is.

20 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I understand. Is that  
21 something that would be discussed -- I've forgotten the  
22 title, but these manager meetings, where you and the  
23 others have a luncheon and how goes it, discussing the

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1 airline and that sort of thing?

2 MR. WEAVER: Yeah. In a very broad sense.  
3 Aircraft utilization may come up.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you know if, within the  
5 organization, there is general satisfaction with the  
6 utilization you're getting from the MD-80 fleet?

7 MR. WEAVER: Within the M&E organization?

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: With -- yes. Well, within  
9 M&E or within Alaska Airlines. For example, if there's  
10 a Fly Fast Program, I guess its predicate is on-time  
11 arrivals.

12 MR. WEAVER: Hm-hmm.

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: It's something that  
14 management has adopted as a company policy or company  
15 interest, and my question is, would -- in a similar  
16 fashion, would aircraft utilization be something that  
17 the company would have interest in maintaining a  
18 certain benchmark or any kind of values that they are  
19 striving for that would be discussed in meetings?

20 MR. WEAVER: Yes, hm-hmm.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: What would that figure be?  
22 Do you know?

23 MR. WEAVER: It's -- it's in the context of

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1 the officer discussions. It's not, you know, MD-80 is  
2 a fleet utilization, and I'm not exactly sure what that  
3 number is.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you know if there's a  
5 difference between MD-80 and 737 or are they  
6 comparable?

7 MR. WEAVER: Yeah. There's a difference,  
8 yes. There's a difference in utilization with every  
9 fleet type.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Which is more heavily  
11 utilized?

12 MR. WEAVER: I believe it's the MD-80 fleet.

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you have communication  
14 with counterparts in other airlines?

15 MR. WEAVER: Some.

16 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Some?

17 MR. WEAVER: Some.

18 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you discuss such things as  
19 utilization, things of that nature, with their fleets,  
20 comparing notes, so to speak?

21 MR. WEAVER: No, no. Let me say personally,  
22 I have not.

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Mr. McGill was asking you

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1 about intervals for C checks and that sort of thing.

2 Are you aware that your company's intervals  
3 are based exclusively on calendar?

4 MR. WEAVER: The interval of C checks?

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes, sir.

6 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

7 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I may characterize this  
8 inappropriately. Correct me if I'm wrong. But are you  
9 aware that there are standards which specify a calendar  
10 or an hourly interval, whichever comes first? Are you  
11 aware of that?

12 MR. WEAVER: Well, in -- again, in  
13 relationship to performing heavy maintenance C checks?

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes.

15 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

16 MR. RODRIQUEZ: In your mind, what's the  
17 difference between those two?

18 MR. WEAVER: In my mind, what is the  
19 difference between calendar time when due to perform  
20 maintenance versus hours when due?

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm.

22 MR. WEAVER: Increment of measurement.

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you see any wisdom in

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1 establishing either or as opposed to just calendar?

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Again, in this business,  
3 calendar- or -- or hourly-driven, you know, my under-  
4 standing of the wisdom of one or the other, I don't  
5 know that I've really --

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, jack screws are checked  
7 based on C check intervals, correct?

8 MR. WEAVER: I believe that's what we do.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: You don't know?

10 MR. WEAVER: I mean, yeah, my understanding  
11 is that Alaska Airlines performs an in-flight check  
12 every other C check.

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And that's predicated on 15-  
14 month intervals?

15 MR. WEAVER: That would be true. That's our  
16 interval.

17 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you have any idea what the  
18 hourly accumulation is in that current 30-month  
19 interval?

20 MR. WEAVER: Not exactly, no.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, in questioning of other  
22 witnesses from your department, personnel that work for  
23 you, my understanding again is that the standard under

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1 which you're operating is approximately -- give me the  
2 figure, Frank.

3 MR. MCGILL: What's that?

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: What is the standard MSG-2  
5 for intervals, hourly intervals? 3,000 hours?

6 MR. MCGILL: Well, there's MSG-2, MSG-3.

7 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yeah. I know, but they're  
8 under 2. So, it's -- it's a thousand -- I don't have  
9 the page.

10 MR. MCGILL: I've got it right here. MSG-2.  
11 Now, for which one were you looking at?

12 MR. RODRIQUEZ: For C check.

13 MR. MCGILL: Okay. C check for MSG-2 is  
14 3,500 flight hours and/or 15 months, whichever comes  
15 first.

16 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. So, that's the -- if I  
17 can call it, the -- that's what I would call the  
18 standard standard, is -- you would do a C check every  
19 3,500 flight hours or 15 months, whichever came first.

20 Currently, your standard is every 15 months,  
21 regardless of hours accumulated. That's the point I  
22 was trying to make. Do you understand that? Are you  
23 aware of that?

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1           MR. WEAVER: I am aware that we perform heavy  
2 checks every 15 months.

3           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Did you know that in  
4 the recent time frame, that you're exceeding that rough  
5 7,000 flight hour accumulation standard by several  
6 thousand hours?

7           MR. WEAVER: No.

8           MR. RODRIQUEZ: As a function of utilization?  
9 You're not aware of that?

10          MR. WEAVER: No, not to that caliber.

11          MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. If these figures were  
12 accurate, would the fact that you are going beyond the  
13 normal flight hours under some maintenance programs be  
14 of concern to you?

15          MR. WEAVER: Again, it would be taking the  
16 information, evaluating it, and without going through  
17 the information in detail, I'm incapable of answering  
18 that question.

19          MR. RODRIQUEZ: If I pointed you in that  
20 direction, would you review that for me?

21          MR. WEAVER: If you asked me to review what?  
22 The -- the prudence of performing maintenance by an  
23 hour or calendar?

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1 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes.

2 MR. WEAVER: Are you saying you want me to do  
3 that?

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Would the company do that for  
5 -- for me? I'm asking you, as a Vice President of  
6 Maintenance and Engineering, or is that something I  
7 should ask Mr. Fowler?

8 MR. WEAVER: I don't think you need to ask  
9 John or you don't need to ask anyone else. I mean, as  
10 far as whether or not we review it by hours or by  
11 calendar time, the Maintenance Program is an evolving  
12 program, and if we're asked to review it, then we'll  
13 take it under consideration.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Would you -- would you review  
15 that process and then send me a letter advising me of  
16 what corporate decision is made with respect to that  
17 criteria?

18 MR. WEAVER: Review the process, and  
19 reviewing our Maintenance Program in terms of flight  
20 hours versus calendar?

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm.

22 MR. WEAVER: If that's a request from the  
23 NTSB, yes, we will.

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1           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Thank you. Your -- we  
2 talked about this a good bit, also. Your -- your  
3 grease for the lubrication of the jack screw was  
4 changed in January of '98, I guess.

5           If -- do you have any experience in your  
6 background, which is pretty voluminous, where you may  
7 have been involved in grease programs and that sort of  
8 thing in the maintenance area?

9           MR. WEAVER: No.

10          MR. RODRIQUEZ: No? From your current  
11 position, do you have any concept of how you think a  
12 grease program -- a change in a grease program should  
13 be implemented?

14          MR. WEAVER: I would -- again, I'd defer to  
15 the experts in regards to that.

16          MR. RODRIQUEZ: And who would that be?

17          MR. WEAVER: Manufacturer.

18          MR. RODRIQUEZ: We've had --

19          MR. WEAVER: Industry, the industry, but --  
20 but primarily the manufacturer.

21          MR. RODRIQUEZ: We've had some discussion  
22 about a -- the creation of a grease purging card, task  
23 card, or some formal written program within the

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1 organization to implement a grease change.

2 Do you know what that's all about? Are you  
3 familiar with that at all? Do you know anything about  
4 that kind of activity?

5 MR. WEAVER: I know we've gone from AeroShell  
6 33 to Mobil 28, and there's procedure cards that --  
7 that, you know, identify to the mechanic what to do.

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, my -- my question is,  
9 my understanding is there's a card that tells them use  
10 this grease, but there's no card that -- that tells how  
11 you change from one to the other when a new program is  
12 being implemented. Is that -- are --

13 MR. WEAVER: I have no foundation on that.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: From your knowledge of  
15 maintenance and that sort of thing, when you're  
16 changing lubrication greases, do you think that that is  
17 something that warrants some formal instruction or  
18 documentation for personnel to use?

19 MR. WEAVER: Again, it's out of my expertise  
20 level, as to procedures and -- and direction to the  
21 mechanics in those types of processes. I would think  
22 that there would be other people that would be more  
23 knowledgeable what to do or if there was anything to

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1 do.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Is Quality Assurance still  
3 under you?

4 MR. WEAVER: No. Quality Assurance is  
5 reporting to John Fowler.

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: In your -- you have an  
7 extensive, I call it extensive, you have, as I wrote  
8 down, five years, at least on one occasion, a quality  
9 assurance background.

10 Would grease use and -- and quality and that  
11 sort of thing, would that be of interest to Quality  
12 Assurance people?

13 MR. WEAVER: I couldn't speak for Quality  
14 Assurance people. I mean, --

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: When you were a quality  
16 assurance supervisor for five years, were you  
17 interested in what kind of grease was being used and  
18 its effectiveness and that sort of thing?

19 MR. WEAVER: My concern again was complying  
20 with procedures. So, my concern would have been more  
21 along the lines of are we using the proper grease the  
22 manual calls out?

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: You wouldn't be interested in

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1 whether it was doing the job or not as a function of  
2 rejects or mechanical problems or that kind of thing?

3 MR. WEAVER: Well, from a personal  
4 standpoint, I would -- if I was aware of or had an  
5 issue of it, I'd be concerned.

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I believe you said in earlier  
7 testimony that there were monthly meetings to discuss  
8 operating problems, that's what I wrote down, with  
9 respect to maintenance, is that correct?

10 MR. WEAVER: Yeah. I would imagine there's  
11 monthly meetings, yes. I'm -- I thought I was speaking  
12 towards the safety meetings. There's monthly safety  
13 meetings.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: We also talked about an IEB.  
15 Is that a different meeting or board?

16 MR. WEAVER: Yes, hm-hmm.

17 MR. RODRIQUEZ: How often does that meet?

18 MR. WEAVER: I believe they meet monthly.

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Are you involved in that?

20 MR. WEAVER: Not -- no.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Not directly?

22 MR. WEAVER: Not directly.

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Are your people involved in

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1 that?

2 MR. WEAVER: I have individuals who serve on  
3 that board.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And the purpose of it is to  
5 what?

6 MR. WEAVER: The Internal Evaluation Board is  
7 again just a board that is continuous improvement, to  
8 oversee safety issues and see to that those divisions  
9 represented, safety issues are addressed.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, is that the same safety  
11 meeting that I mistook earlier, a few minutes ago, as  
12 monthly meetings?

13 MR. WEAVER: Oh, yeah. There's -- there's an  
14 array of different safety meetings. The supervisors  
15 have the topic of safety that they speak about. They  
16 have structured meetings that take place on a monthly  
17 basis, and then the IEB meets. So, they are separate  
18 meetings, yes.

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Is the IEB a maintenance  
20 meeting or is that all operating entities within the  
21 company?

22 MR. WEAVER: It's -- it's for the airline.

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: The airline. Your -- your

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1 company has been through quite a few investigations,  
2 and there have been quite a few significant occurrences  
3 in the past eight months, not the least of which was  
4 the use of a fixture for restraining the jack screw  
5 that we've talked about.

6 Was this -- was this discussed at that kind  
7 of a meeting?

8 MR. WEAVER: That kind of meeting being the  
9 IEB?

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Either the IEB or the safety  
11 -- monthly safety meeting.

12 MR. WEAVER: I haven't -- I haven't attended  
13 any of the safety meetings or IEB meetings subsequent  
14 to the accident. So, I couldn't state whether or not  
15 they had.

16 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Your people attend them,  
17 though?

18 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do they ever bring those  
20 problems that are discussed to you, to brief you on  
21 what's going on in those meetings?

22 MR. WEAVER: There's been occasions that Jim  
23 Trimberger has come to me over issues that were brought

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1 up in the IEB meeting. Offhand, I can't recall an  
2 issue that he's brought up recently.

3 MR. RODRIQUEZ: What's the last one you  
4 remember where Mr. Trimberger came to you with  
5 reporting something out of the IEB or --

6 MR. WEAVER: It's been within a month, month  
7 or two, that he's -- I'm trying to recall what the  
8 issue is or was.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, since -- since the  
10 August -- July 31st-August 3rd time frame when Alaska  
11 made a self-disclosure to the FAA regarding the  
12 restraining fixture -- are you familiar with that at  
13 all? Did you know they did that?

14 MR. WEAVER: Hm-hmm.

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Has -- has that issue been  
16 discussed internally within the company at all at your  
17 level?

18 MR. WEAVER: The issue of the self-disclosure  
19 of the restraining fixture?

20 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm.

21 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

22 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And is there -- are -- my  
23 understanding is that Alaska had tools that did not

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1 conform to manufacturer specifications. Is that  
2 accurate?

3 MR. WEAVER: I believe that's accurate in the  
4 sense that -- yes.

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Now, at that time, did  
6 Alaska Airlines have restraining fixtures that did  
7 conform to Boeing's specifications?

8 MR. WEAVER: To my knowledge, we had fixtures  
9 that were purchased by Boeing -- I mean, purchased from  
10 Boeing.

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: At the end of July, you had  
12 those?

13 MR. WEAVER: Yeah. As to when they were  
14 sprinkled in or when they were brought in, I don't  
15 know, but, I mean, --

16 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. When this -- when this  
17 was discovered, did you internally, in the company or  
18 within Maintenance and Engineering, did you pursue or  
19 seek an understanding of how these non-conforming tools  
20 got into the inventory?

21 MR. WEAVER: No. Again, it's -- it's -- the  
22 timing on it is such as to where I had no knowledge of  
23 it until we self-disclosed. I was not even present.

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1 So, once it became -- once I became knowledgeable of  
2 it, it was essentially part of the NTSB investigation,  
3 and again I'm careful not to have parallel on-going  
4 dual investigations.

5 It was my understanding that the matter was  
6 being resolved. Now, we did take some action ourselves  
7 in terms of making sure that none of these pieces --  
8 none of these restraining fixtures existed and could be  
9 used, in essence quarantined those suspect restraining  
10 fixtures.

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: But no activity with respect  
12 to how you got them?

13 MR. WEAVER: Yeah. Do you mean me  
14 personally?

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: You or your subordinates.

16 MR. WEAVER: No.

17 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And you're not privy to any  
18 discussions, interdivisional discussions, internally  
19 within the company of actions or activities to find out  
20 how those tools got into the inventory?

21 MR. WEAVER: Again, yes, I am.

22 MR. RODRIQUEZ: You are?

23 MR. WEAVER: I'm -- I'm understanding that an

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1 investigation is underway to determine that.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Who is heading that  
3 investigation?

4 MR. WEAVER: I do not know.

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Could you take a guess?

6 MR. WEAVER: No.

7 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you know what level it  
8 might be conducted at?

9 Frankly, the NTSB investigation isn't going  
10 anywhere in that area. So, if you're waiting for us to  
11 find it, forget it. We don't have it.

12 So, I'm asking you, do you know of anything  
13 that's going on internally that would disclose that?

14 MR. WEAVER: Again, my response is that I  
15 believe that people have been interviewed, and  
16 discussions in terms of trying to determine -- back to  
17 -- I believe your question was, how were these tools  
18 fabricated or how --

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: How did they get into the  
20 inventory, yes.

21 MR. WEAVER: How did they get into the  
22 inventory? To me, I don't know who's driving that  
23 investigation. I had assumed that it was in -- well, I

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1 don't know who's driving the investigation.

2 I -- I have knowledge, though, that people  
3 are being questioned in regards to that situation.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Who told you?

5 MR. WEAVER: Who told me?

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: That it was being done. What  
7 conversation was involved that educated you?

8 MR. WEAVER: I believe it was a comment that  
9 Art Fitzpatrick made to me, that he had been spoken to  
10 about the issue.

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Who did Mr. Fitzpatrick say  
12 spoke to him?

13 MR. WEAVER: I'm sorry. Would you repeat the  
14 question?

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Sure. Who talked to Mr.  
16 Fitzpatrick about the tools?

17 MR. WEAVER: I do not know.

18 MR. RODRIQUEZ: He didn't say?

19 MR. WEAVER: No.

20 MR. RODRIQUEZ: He just said someone has  
21 called me about the tools, and he did not say who?

22 MR. WEAVER: It was my -- no. No.

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay.

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1           MR. WEAVER: Again, I'd like just to add that  
2 through all this post-accident investigation, there's a  
3 lot of actions that are taking place, and, so, it's  
4 again not that I don't care that someone's being  
5 interviewed, it's just there's a lot of activity, and,  
6 so, while using the word "assume" around here might not  
7 be to everybody's best interests, there are times in  
8 going about your business that when people say things,  
9 you assume that there's a driving force behind it but  
10 might not take the initiative to find out who it is.

11           MR. RODRIQUEZ: I see. Now, focusing on the  
12 C check, do -- at what level of delay in completion  
13 would -- would you become involved in resolution of  
14 problems or something like that?

15           MR. WEAVER: Normally, I wouldn't become  
16 involved.

17           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Would any of your people?

18           MR. WEAVER: I would assume so.

19           MR. RODRIQUEZ: What level of your  
20 organization, Maintenance and Engineering, would  
21 problems in the completion of a C check be resolved?

22           MR. WEAVER: Varying upon the problem, it  
23 could be at any level.

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1           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, problems that would  
2 result in delay of completion date. Can you tell me  
3 some things that typically might have varied on the  
4 completion date of a C check, what typically might  
5 delay it?

6           MR. WEAVER: What might typically delay a C  
7 check?

8           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm.

9           MR. WEAVER: Initial inspection, the amount  
10 of non-routines generated, specific findings that drive  
11 extended ETR, overtime, manning, vacation, parts. I  
12 mean, all of these are factors that could extend an  
13 ETR.

14           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do -- do you have any  
15 estimate of the frequency of, let's call it, on-time  
16 performance with the C check? Do you know?

17           MR. WEAVER: No.

18           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Has the -- has the length of  
19 time allotted for the C check been changed recently?

20           MR. WEAVER: That varies upon each and every  
21 aircraft. So, every aircraft's allotted time is  
22 subject to change.

23           MR. RODRIQUEZ: So, the Maintenance Manual

1 doesn't specify a specific number of days to accomplish  
2 a C check?

3 MR. WEAVER: No, not to my knowledge.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And your -- you're not -- I'm  
5 getting negative here.

6 We had information that the weekend activity  
7 on the C check is significantly reduced from that  
8 during the week. Can you comment on that?

9 MR. WEAVER: I can comment on that, in that I  
10 don't know that that exists. I don't know what --  
11 whoever it is that -- what they define "significant" as  
12 being, and --

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I -- I may be  
14 mischaracterizing it, but the impression I got, and  
15 these are my words, I guess, is that it was not a full  
16 crew, it was more of a skeleton crew or that kind of  
17 language was used, that there wasn't that much activity  
18 being done on the sixth and seventh days.

19 Is it your understanding that the seven-day  
20 heavy maintenance schedule was essentially --

21 MR. WEAVER: Level-loaded.

22 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Level-loaded, yes. A good  
23 word.

1 MR. WEAVER: Yeah.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. And that was true from  
3 '97 on or whenever it was implemented?

4 MR. WEAVER: Definitely, I couldn't tell  
5 you as to whether or not that's the way it started or  
6 that's the way it is, without looking at the rosters  
7 and staffing.

8 Typically, though, the idea of seven-day  
9 coverage is, is that it's a level-loaded plan, under-  
10 standing that you can't, you know, mathematically  
11 completely level it at times.

12 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, for instance, there's  
13 no purchasing available on the weekend, is that  
14 correct?

15 MR. WEAVER: To my knowledge, purchasing's  
16 available.

17 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Oh, there is? I want to talk  
18 a bit about your manual in terms of -- in terms of  
19 utilization. The -- the information we've been getting  
20 is -- including you, has referred to the manual on  
21 several occasions. "Well, I go to the manual. I refer  
22 to the manual. Whatever's in the manual."

23 And I would like to get some expression from

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1 you about a lack of completeness of documentation on  
2 the C check, for instance. There have been references  
3 in the NASEP inspection, both current and previous,  
4 about completing paperwork and that sort of thing.

5 The -- are you bothered by those comments?

6 MR. WEAVER: You mentioned "NASEP  
7 inspection". We haven't had a NASEP inspection since  
8 1995.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: What about your special  
10 evaluation by the FAA in 2000?

11 MR. WEAVER: Okay. The findings brought  
12 forward by the FAA pertaining to heavy maintenance?

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes.

14 MR. WEAVER: It's specifically been that --  
15 that you're asking me as to whether or not I'm  
16 concerned about --

17 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, I -- I was trying to do  
18 it generally with comments about incomplete paperwork,  
19 failing to sign off cards. I don't -- I'm not quoting  
20 the document. Just as I scanned it, it looked to me  
21 like procedures weren't being followed, but everybody  
22 we've talked to refers back to procedures.

23 I'm just wondering if that makes sense to

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1 you.

2 MR. WEAVER: It does make sense to me for  
3 people to refer to the manuals that govern how we  
4 accomplish our work.

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, are you concerned about  
6 an FAA comment that your documentation is incomplete?

7 MR. WEAVER: From an FAA comment, I don't  
8 know who made that comment, but, yes, it would concern  
9 me.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Let's be specific, and then  
11 you can comment. There's one that says, "Alaska's  
12 manual does not specify maintenance training  
13 curriculums or on-the-job training, OJT, procedures or  
14 objectives."

15 MR. WEAVER: That's a finding.

16 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes, sir.

17 MR. WEAVER: Yes, I know that. If I can have  
18 time to look at their response, that we put together --

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Did you participate in the  
20 response?

21 MR. WEAVER: Yes. As to what all it  
22 encompasses, though, I can't tell you now.

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Another comment was that "GMM

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1 does not include how-to procedures regarding heavy  
2 check planning and/or production control." Has that  
3 changed?

4 MR. WEAVER: Has our procedures for heavy --

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, the FAA perception was  
6 that you did not have how-to procedures for heavy check  
7 planning and production control. Have you developed  
8 procedures for that?

9 MR. WEAVER: We have developed procedures in  
10 conjunction with the FAA and revised our manual.

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Well, with respect to  
12 the time frame from '97, when this C check was done, to  
13 the time that this was accomplished, do you feel that  
14 -- what can you say about the guidance or instructions  
15 or provisions for the Maintenance Manual with respect  
16 to your heavy check planning and production control?

17 MR. WEAVER: I don't have the specifics as to  
18 what was done, what it is that they reviewed, and --

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: They didn't give you any  
20 details in the out-briefing or anything of that nature?

21 MR. WEAVER: No.

22 MR. RODRIQUEZ: There's a comment that  
23 "numerous MIG-4 cards". Do you know what those are?

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1 MR. WEAVER: It's not routine.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: "Numerous MIG-4 forms had the  
3 box checked for partial work completed, but there were  
4 no entries on the back of the card for any partial work  
5 initiated or completed."

6 Does that -- does that sound -- that sounds  
7 to you like a paperwork exercise -- activity? It's a  
8 failure to completely fill out the forms? Is that it?

9 MR. WEAVER: It's -- it's a finding that they  
10 have, and again we address it in our response.

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: There's a comment here or a  
12 finding, as you appropriately describe it, "Decisions  
13 as to whether a repair is major or minor can be left up  
14 to the individual mechanic performing the job per the  
15 GMM. Engineering will not always have to get involved  
16 with this decision-making process."

17 Are you comfortable with that?

18 MR. WEAVER: Again, I would want to refer to  
19 our total response to the finding, Dick, and I --

20 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, what I'm curious about  
21 -- I mean, we -- I'm sure that form we have the  
22 response to, I have not seen it, but I'm sure we can  
23 refer to that.

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1 I'm -- I guess I'm interested in your  
2 particular evaluation -- you're a pretty high-level  
3 individual in the company, and I'm interested in --  
4 with the vast background in maintenance, I'm interested  
5 in your assessment of that activity.

6 It appears to say that a mechanic can  
7 evaluate whether a repair is major or minor. Is that  
8 what it says to you? Would you like to read it?

9 MR. WEAVER: Yeah. I'll read it again.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: It's down at the bottom  
11 there.

12 MR. WEAVER: Would you like for me to get my  
13 response?

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: You don't know what it was?

15 MR. WEAVER: Not off the top of my head.

16 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, what I'm interested in  
17 is your -- your knowledge of the company prior to this  
18 being elevated to the position of a finding by the FAA,  
19 with respect to the classification of major and minor  
20 repairs.

21 MR. WEAVER: I do not have the details  
22 pertaining to that specific finding.

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, apparently the

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1 Maintenance Manual specifies that classification of a  
2 repair can be done by a mechanic. Do you know if that  
3 was true or not?

4 MR. WEAVER: I do not know.

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: If it was true, would that  
6 bother you? Would that be of concern to you at your  
7 level?

8 MR. WEAVER: Again, it would have to be taken  
9 into consideration with those people that are more  
10 technically capable of -- of the issues pertaining to  
11 the responsibilities of the mechanic.

12 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Are you familiar with your  
13 independent assessment of Alaska Airlines?

14 MR. WEAVER: I have --

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I mean, your company's  
16 independent assessment.

17 MR. WEAVER: Yes. I've gone through it a  
18 number of times.

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Did you participate in in-  
20 briefing and out-briefing with regard to this?

21 MR. WEAVER: Yes, I did, both. Actually, the  
22 in-briefing of just M&E function and the out-briefing  
23 of the airline.

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1           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Did the company prepare a  
2 response to this? A formal response?

3           MR. WEAVER: Not to my knowledge have we  
4 prepared an official response. These are  
5 recommendations provided to us by the Independent  
6 Assessment Team.

7           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm. What was your  
8 assessment of the assessment?

9           MR. RODRIQUEZ: My assessment was that we  
10 asked these individuals and this team to come in and  
11 provide us with their technical expertise and aviation  
12 knowledge, industry knowledge, and provide us with  
13 industry best practices recommendations, and to assess  
14 our safety vulnerabilities or -- or issues, and I  
15 believe they've done so.

16           They provided us with industry-leading  
17 recommendations and -- and essentially walked away,  
18 saying that we run a safe airline, found no violations  
19 or safety issue concerns, and recommendations that will  
20 make us a better airline.

21           MR. RODRIQUEZ: This was completed in June.  
22 That's the date of the report at any rate

23           Have you implemented anything at all in the

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1 Maintenance and Engineering Division as a function of  
2 that independent safety audit?

3 MR. WEAVER: Yes, we have.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And what kinds of things  
5 would that be?

6 MR. WEAVER: Well, there's one finding in  
7 there where the mechanics in Portland are to be briefed  
8 on future facility expansion needs and requirements.  
9 That's been accomplished.

10 I -- I -- again, enhancing and adding to our  
11 capability of our CAS Program. That's been  
12 accomplished.

13 There -- there are many. There's an -- every  
14 recommendation has an action item and someone who's  
15 responsible for accomplishing that action item, and to  
16 the -- there are some that are -- only a few that  
17 actually have target dates to be established, where the  
18 individual who's responsible for that action item  
19 making sure that it's implemented, reviewed and has had  
20 time to put together the review to determine when its  
21 accomplishment will be done. So.

22 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do we have a copy of that,  
23 Frank?

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1 MR. MCGILL: I don't know.

2 MR. WEAVER: Okay.

3 MR. MCGILL: Can you be a little bit more  
4 specific? Maybe I can remember what it is.

5 MR. WEAVER: Well, it's an Excel spread  
6 sheet. If you're talking about the action item list or  
7 -- there's an FAA Action Item List, and there's an  
8 Independent Assessment Team Recommendation and  
9 Implementation List.

10 MR. MCGILL: I haven't gone -- I have several  
11 of these that I actually got from you. I don't -- I  
12 didn't get involved, and I've looked over them, but  
13 from my perspective, some of these things are --  
14 they're of very little value.

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. When you increased the  
16 heavy maintenance activity from five to seven days, did  
17 the staff level increase?

18 MR. WEAVER: To my knowledge, it did, yes.

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And based on feedback from  
20 your subordinates, was it an adequate increase?

21 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

22 MR. RODRIQUEZ: When you ran this latest  
23 campaign, for want of a better word, to recheck jack

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1 screws, etc., who took the lead on the scheduling and  
2 master-minding the accomplishment? These will be done  
3 at this facility, these will be done at that facility,  
4 and that sort of thing, the distribution of the work,  
5 who did that?

6 MR. WEAVER: I don't believe there was any  
7 one individual.

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, who was on the team  
9 that did it?

10 MR. WEAVER: Again, I wasn't present. I was  
11 in Indiana. So, I was brought in -- I was brought in  
12 essentially being just briefed as to what was going on.  
13 So, I really don't know who was involved in that.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And what -- may I ask what  
15 the activity was in Indiana?

16 MR. WEAVER: It was my wife's father, their  
17 ill.

18 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Oh, I see.

19 MR. WEAVER: So, I was at home. It's a  
20 personal thing.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I just wondered what was  
22 going on in Indiana.

23 MR. WEAVER: Ripe tomatoes and good sweet

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1 corn.

2 DR. BRENNER: Could we ask for some of that  
3 good sweet corn?

4 MR. WEAVER: It's down in -- it's down in --  
5 can't right now. Carmichael's or Campinedos.

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: We had a discussion earlier  
7 about Mr. Henman not working for the company any more.

8 May I ask, was that separation favorable?

9 MR. WEAVER: Dick, I can't answer that. It's  
10 against our employment policies to comment on any ex-  
11 employee.

12 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, I've asked about the  
13 separation of three or four employees of other people,  
14 and they've commented that they were favorable  
15 circumstances.

16 So, I guess either they don't know the  
17 company policy or is it company policy that you don't  
18 comment on unfavorable separations?

19 MR. WEAVER: Just can't comment on an  
20 employment policy. He's an ex-employee.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you know that -- do you  
22 know that people within your -- subordinates of yours  
23 have commented on the separations of company employees?

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1 MR. WEAVER: No, I do not.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Were you involved directly in  
3 that separation?

4 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you know if the company  
6 has a policy on out-brief for departing employees?

7 MR. WEAVER: No, I don't.

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Did you have an out-briefing  
9 in this case?

10 MR. WEAVER: No, I did not.

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I believe that's all the  
12 questions I have. Thank you very much.

13 MR. MCGILL: Bill, I got -- I wanted to  
14 follow up real quickly here just because there was a  
15 little bit of -- a little bit of confusion.

16 Mr. Rodriguez had asked about a -- we were  
17 getting into the planning. Under -- under your  
18 position, you do have an Assistant Vice President of  
19 Maintenance and Planning, is that correct?

20 MR. WEAVER: It's a managing director.

21 MR. MCGILL: What's that?

22 MR. WEAVER: It's a managing director.

23 MR. MCGILL: Steve Zerda?

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1 MR. WEAVER: Steve Zerda, yes.

2 MR. MCGILL: Okay. He's indicated as an  
3 Assistant Vice President of Planning and Maintenance,  
4 and I wanted to be able to kind of separate whether we  
5 were talking about the Vice President of Marketing and  
6 Planning versus Maintenance Planning, and which would  
7 continue down through Maintenance Production and  
8 Control, Maintenance Planning, Long-Range Maintenance  
9 Planning, Planning Analysts, all of these people would  
10 then be under you in that regard from a maintenance  
11 perspective, is that correct?

12 MR. WEAVER: Correct, yes.

13 MR. MCGILL: But not necessarily from a  
14 marketing or planning perspective or utilization of  
15 aircraft and that kind of thing?

16 MR. WEAVER: No.

17 MR. MCGILL: But you would in fact know how  
18 the air hours are being put on an aircraft from a  
19 maintenance perspective versus any kind of a check or  
20 whatever? Someone in your grouping down here would  
21 also be tracking all of that, is that correct?

22 MR. WEAVER: Yes, but I don't -- I don't know  
23 that it would actually be tracking it in terms of

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1 hours. They would have -- I'll make an assumption here  
2 that they would have knowledge or information  
3 pertaining to that fleet's utilization.

4 MR. MCGILL: And you don't think they would  
5 be tracking individual aircraft hours?

6 MR. WEAVER: Individual aircraft hours? I  
7 mean, yes, we do track that, but I -- I'm not sure that  
8 that is actually covered in those -- in those meetings.

9 MR. MCGILL: Okay. And you had told Mr.  
10 Rodriguez that the -- we were -- he was talking --  
11 discussing about the Quality Assurance, and you said  
12 that fell under Mr. Fowler's area?

13 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

14 MR. MCGILL: I don't know if I -- do you know  
15 that under Mr. Trimberger, that Quality Assurance is  
16 actually under his direction?

17 MR. WEAVER: Today?

18 MR. MCGILL: Well, at the time of the  
19 accident.

20 MR. WEAVER: At the time of the accident,  
21 Quality Assurance, Quality Control, Maintenance  
22 Training, were all responsibilities of Jim Trimberger.

23 MR. MCGILL: Okay. And that's what I wanted

1 to clear up because during all this period of time that  
2 we've been discussing about jack screws and all of this  
3 stuff, Quality Assurance was in fact under your  
4 direction?

5 MR. WEAVER: There's some differentiation of  
6 time frames there, of where they were brought out from  
7 underneath me, and -- and -- and Quality Assurance and  
8 reported directly to John Fowler.

9 MR. MCGILL: Well, when -- when did that --  
10 when was that -- do you happen to know when that would  
11 have taken place or --

12 MR. WEAVER: Officially, it took place when I  
13 assumed the responsibility of Director of Maintenance.

14 At that point in time, then the Director of Quality  
15 Assurance or essentially the Quality Assurance  
16 organization, that reported to John Fowler.

17 MR. MCGILL: Well, I was looking at a 19 --  
18 October 1999 Organizational Chart that was still  
19 showing Quality Assurance would be under Mr.  
20 Trimberger.

21 MR. WEAVER: Correct, and Trimberger was  
22 reporting to me --

23 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

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1 MR. WEAVER: -- at that time.

2 MR. MCGILL: So, to follow what we're really  
3 talking about, the time frame of Quality Assurance  
4 would have been really under your direction?

5 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

6 MR. MCGILL: And one other -- you had talked  
7 about the -- the Director of Safety reporting to you,  
8 which was Mr. Trimberger?

9 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

10 MR. MCGILL: In the time frame of the  
11 accident and after the accident, I believe that Mr.  
12 Trimberger would have reported to Mr. Fowler. He was  
13 not reporting to you?

14 MR. WEAVER: There was -- the exact dates, I  
15 don't know, but the reporting relationships have all  
16 changed subsequent to the accident, yes.

17 MR. MCGILL: Well, but at the time of the  
18 accident, and then through October of -- this time  
19 frame, I think even then, he would have been reporting  
20 to --

21 MR. WEAVER: Director of --

22 MR. MCGILL: -- Mr. Fowler --

23 MR. WEAVER: Yes.

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1           MR. MCGILL:  -- and reporting to you as a  
2 Director of Quality Control?

3           MR. WEAVER:  Yes.

4           MR. MCGILL:  Okay.  That's clear.

5           MR. WEAVER:  The IEB essentially reported to  
6 John and the Director of Safety.

7           MR. MCGILL:  Okay.  Do we have some more  
8 questions?

9           MS. VON KLEINSMID:  Sorry.  As part of the  
10 investigation, the NTSB has requested a number of  
11 different documents, maintenance logs.  Included in  
12 that were shift term logs.  Are you familiar with that?  
13 What a shift term log is?

14          MR. WEAVER:  Hm-hmm.

15          MS. VON KLEINSMID:  And the fact that term  
16 logs were delivered to the NTSB or --

17          MR. WEAVER:  No.

18          MS. VON KLEINSMID:  You have no knowledge  
19 about a request had been made and granted and  
20 delivered?

21          MR. WEAVER:  I may have, yeah.  I do not know  
22 of all the information that the NTSB has requested and  
23 has.

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1 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Yes, I understand that.  
2 Are you -- do you have any knowledge -- there's a  
3 number of logs that are missing. Some days. Do you  
4 have any knowledge as to where those missing log pages  
5 might be?

6 MR. WEAVER: No. I have no knowledge that  
7 anything is missing, and I have no knowledge of where  
8 they'd be.

9 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. And you had  
10 mentioned about jack screws, and we talked about the  
11 cost of the jack screw, and that I think you had stated  
12 you had seen some invoices on overhaul of jack screws,  
13 and you had a figure, approximate figure.

14 What companies do you use to overhaul your  
15 jack screws?

16 MR. WEAVER: I believe the only company that  
17 we use is the manufacturer, Pruitt.

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So, you don't recall  
19 seeing on any of the invoices that you -- that would  
20 cause you to ask any other company besides Pruitt?

21 MR. WEAVER: Not that I recall, no.

22 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And then, Dr. Brenner  
23 asked you to characterize your strengths, and I'm not

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1 sure exactly how you phrased the question, but you  
2 mentioned responsibility. Do you remember that? I  
3 think that was what you said, right? Responsibility  
4 came up?

5 At any time since the accident, have you ever  
6 felt that you performed some personal responsibility  
7 regarding the crash of Aircraft 963?

8 MR. WEAVER: I'd answer that in the sense, I  
9 don't believe any more so than every employee that  
10 works for this company. I think we all feel  
11 responsible in some way.

12 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. That's all I have.

13 MR. WEAVER: And --

14 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And? I'm sorry?

15 MR. WEAVER: Again, it's kind of an open-  
16 ended question and answer. Responsibility in regards  
17 to what?

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Well, I think that not  
19 every employee of Alaska Airlines has -- bear the same  
20 responsibility in terms of what they -- they manage and  
21 direct and oversee, such as Maintenance and Engineering  
22 and Quality Assurance.

23 So, to that extent, I think that there's some

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1 different levels of that. So, I was wondering if you,  
2 as being basically in charge and overseeing Quality  
3 Assurance, Engineering, Maintenance, felt --

4 MR. WEAVER: In that regard, no.

5 MR. MCGILL: Bill?

6 (Discussion off the record.)

7 INTERVIEW OF JOHN R. FOWLER

8 MR. MCGILL: And one other thing I needed to  
9 bring forth. I want to make sure that he's -- you want  
10 him here as your representative.

11 MR. FOWLER: That's correct.

12 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Now, go ahead.

13 MR. FOWLER: I guess probably the best place  
14 to start is where I started in this industry.

15 I started working for PanAmerican World  
16 Airways in 1967. I started working there as an  
17 aircraft serviceman, which is a different name for a  
18 cleaner, as they used in their organization. I cleaned  
19 airplanes for awhile, and then I moved into being an  
20 avionics tech, did that for a number of years, became a  
21 supervisor in Avionics, okay, and a manager and worked  
22 in Tech Services for some bit of time.

23 I was a shift manager for a number of years

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1 in Maintenance. Then I took a position as Director of  
2 Aircraft Appearance for interior maintenance on the  
3 airplane.

4 From there, I went over to a position called  
5 Assistant Director of Maintenance Planning and  
6 Production Control and did that for a couple years,  
7 also, and then, in 1989, I became Vice President of  
8 Maintenance and Engineering for PanAmerican World  
9 Airways.

10 In 1991, I left PanAm to come to work for  
11 Alaska Airlines as Vice President of Maintenance and  
12 Engineering, was -- had that title up until 1997, as I  
13 recall, early 1997, and I was promoted to Senior Vice  
14 President, Technical Operations, which essentially left  
15 me with the same responsibilities. I still had  
16 Maintenance and Engineering.

17 It also recognized some of the other work  
18 that I was doing with ATA on the Senior Advisory  
19 Committee and some across-divisional issues or across-  
20 divisional items that Alaska Airlines -- between  
21 operating divisions, and then, in 1998, I was promoted  
22 to my present position, Executive Vice President of  
23 Technical Operations and Systems Control, which added

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1 to what I had before, Systems Operations Control and  
2 Emergency Response and other issues having to do with  
3 interdivisional coordination.

4 MR. MCGILL: And, specifically, in 1998, when  
5 you added those other duties, what -- what was the  
6 extra duties that --

7 MR. FOWLER: Prior to the -- prior to the  
8 change in 1998, I had responsibility for Maintenance  
9 and Engineering as the division officer, and I had  
10 responsibility as the Alaska Airlines representative to  
11 the Senior Advisory Committee of the Air Transport  
12 Association, and I was working various other issues,  
13 coordination between operating divisions.

14 For instance, transition of aircraft in and  
15 out of the fleet, being sure that everybody was  
16 coordinated with pre-planning issues and -- and so on  
17 and so on, as well as the coordination of efforts for  
18 on-time performance.

19 MR. MCGILL: Okay.

20 MR. FOWLER: And then, in 1998, when the  
21 title changed, I no longer had direct responsibility  
22 for all the Maintenance and Engineering activity.  
23 That's when Mr. Weaver was promoted to Vice President

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1 of Maintenance and Engineering, and I retained  
2 oversight responsibility for Maintenance and  
3 Engineering, but he was the division officer.

4 I then took on responsibility for Systems  
5 Operations Control, which is an organization that  
6 didn't exist at that time. It was one that we were  
7 building to prepare for future growth and -- and just  
8 building infrastructure for the way we believed the  
9 airline needed to go, and then also formed an official  
10 Emergency Response Group to work on emergency response  
11 plan, Federal Family Assistance Act plan, things like  
12 that.

13 MR. MCGILL: At that particular time, prior  
14 to 1998, were you listed on the ops specs as the  
15 Director of Maintenance?

16 MR. FOWLER: I was not.

17 MR. MCGILL: And Mr. Weaver was?

18 MR. FOWLER: Mr. Weaver was Director of  
19 Maintenance. He was the Assistant Vice President of  
20 Maintenance. He was the Director of Maintenance.

21 MR. MCGILL: And then, both of you all kind  
22 of went up a step, and you took two people and  
23 requested a temporary position, to assign two people to

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1 that?

2 MR. FOWLER: When you say when I took two  
3 people on?

4 MR. MCGILL: Well, you assigned two -- two  
5 people was assigned. I assume that was you that  
6 assigned two people to have that responsibility on A6  
7 management personnel listed by the FAA.

8 MR. FOWLER: I don't recall whether it was  
9 myself or Bill Weaver. He was the division officer at  
10 that time, and I was certainly involved.

11 There were two choices. One choice was for  
12 the FAA to leave it vacant and just share the ops spec  
13 with that position vacant. We provided -- we proposed  
14 another alternative, which was rather than just leave  
15 it vacant and say nobody had that responsibility for --  
16 for however long it took to fill the position, that it  
17 may be more appropriate to specify who had the  
18 responsibility and to list therefore the Director of  
19 Line Maintenance and the Director of Base Maintenance,  
20 and the FAA agreed with that, and we listed two people.

21 MR. MCGILL: Was there -- when that decision  
22 was made, was there any discussion of how the two would  
23 co-share that responsibility of collaborating?

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1 MR. FOWLER: I did not have that discussion.

2 MR. MCGILL: We've several times -- I need to  
3 go back over this, this position of the Director of  
4 Safety.

5 In 1995, did you attend the Washington  
6 proceedings when that position was defined?

7 MR. FOWLER: I'm not sure I know what  
8 Washington proceedings you're talking about.

9 MR. MCGILL: Well, in 1995, that position was  
10 -- was -- the Director of Safety -- the five positions  
11 that were on the ops specs, they were changed, and this  
12 one was added.

13 MR. FOWLER: That was the Part 119?

14 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

15 MR. FOWLER: Hm-hmm.

16 MR. MCGILL: And -- and virtually all the  
17 airlines, I guess, at one time had sent  
18 representatives. I don't know whether you attended it,  
19 but probably someone from Alaska Airlines did.

20 MR. FOWLER: I did not attend it.

21 MR. MCGILL: Okay. And I was just wondering  
22 -- you said at that time, Vice President Gore was on a  
23 -- we do have this position of Director of Safety, and

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1 was it your -- did you choose Mr. Trimberger for that  
2 position?

3 MR. FOWLER: Can I go back a second, Frank?

4 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

5 MR. FOWLER: You mentioned 1995. My under-  
6 standing was that -- my recollection is that Part 119  
7 didn't come into being until 1997-98 or something like  
8 that.

9 So, I'm not aware of a required ops spec  
10 position for Director of Safety in 1995.

11 MR. MCGILL: Well, it originated in 1995.

12 MR. FOWLER: Okay.

13 MR. MCGILL: It was not required in Part 119  
14 until a little bit later, but definitely it's been  
15 there for a number of years, and by the time of the  
16 accident, Mr. Trimberger was on your ops specs in the  
17 title of that position.

18 MR. FOWLER: That's correct.

19 MR. MCGILL: And he reported to you, is that  
20 --

21 MR. FOWLER: He did.

22 MR. MCGILL: And he also had several -- two  
23 other titles?

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1 MR. FOWLER: He had one other title.

2 MR. MCGILL: What title?

3 MR. FOWLER: He was Director for Quality  
4 Control and Training, and he had the title of Director  
5 of Safety on the ops spec.

6 MR. MCGILL: I was just kind of looking  
7 through what was given to me, and it's three separate  
8 positions of Director --

9 MR. FOWLER: He had -- he had -- he had  
10 various departments working in his -- under his  
11 responsibility, but he had that title.

12 MR. MCGILL: Okay. As -- in his capacity as  
13 Director of Safety, do you recall any particular things  
14 that occurred that he would have dealt with you when he  
15 wore the hat of Director of Safety?

16 MR. FOWLER: Actually, we interfaced pretty  
17 often. I would meet with the Director of Safety once a  
18 month. I would meet with the IEB on as many of their  
19 quarterly meetings that I could make. If I wasn't able  
20 to meet with the IEB at the quarterly meeting, they  
21 would share the minutes with me, and Jim Trimberger  
22 would share with me the activities, what was going on  
23 with the IEB at that time.

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1           There were numerous issues. I'm not sure at  
2 this point I remember any specifically.

3           MR. MCGILL: Could you see a difference when  
4 -- whether or not -- whether he had the title of  
5 Director of Quality Control, would the issues be  
6 similar, or Director of Safety, would they be the same?

7           MR. FOWLER: They would very definitely be  
8 different. They were definitely different.

9           MR. MCGILL: Okay. Do you know of any  
10 instance where he as Director of Safety approached you  
11 about any particular item at all?

12           MR. FOWLER: He -- he briefed me on the on-  
13 going research that was being done between Flight  
14 Standards and Maintenance and Engineering relative to  
15 the aircraft that we had in Anchorage. I don't  
16 remember the tail number or the date, but it was in the  
17 dead of winter, I think two years ago or so, where  
18 there was a report from the crew that the airplane  
19 seemed to be nose heavy or rotate late or have late  
20 elevator response. He kept me up-to-date with that.

21           There were other issues that were being  
22 worked on throughout the company with Customer Service  
23 relative to the development of an automated weight and

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1 balance system and the interaction that was going back  
2 and forth between Flight Operations and Customer  
3 Service and the FAA, on-going updates with various  
4 other correspondences between the FAA and the company.

5 Without referring to notes, I'm not sure what  
6 --

7 MR. MCGILL: Was there any references to  
8 individual people, employees, and the company regarding  
9 safety issues that were first presented to him, and he  
10 would report those to you?

11 MR. FOWLER: Would you ask -- say that again,  
12 Frank.

13 MR. MCGILL: I was just trying to get a feel.  
14 We had already -- we had -- we had interviewed Mr.  
15 Trimberger, and I was trying to -- he could not  
16 remember any offhand that -- where individual employees  
17 had some concern over some safety issue whereas in that  
18 capacity as Director of Safety, something was presented  
19 to him -- maybe he had, and then he had talked to you  
20 about it, and if you remembered something.

21 MR. FOWLER: None -- none that I can recall,  
22 but I'd just like to point out that the IEB and the  
23 Director of Safety was not and still is not the only

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1 avenue that employees can bring up safety concerns.

2 So, -- but specifically through him to me, I  
3 can't recall any.

4 MR. MCGILL: In that time frame, prior to the  
5 accident, what -- what were all of the different  
6 avenues that one could pursue for safety violations?

7 MR. FOWLER: Starting at the front-line  
8 level, at the lowest level, all employees have the  
9 opportunity and the avenue of reporting safety issues  
10 to their supervisors or managers, and, quite frankly,  
11 that's where most effectively we would like to see them  
12 resolved, at the lowest level possible, and as quickly  
13 as possible.

14 They at that time, also, had crew safety  
15 meetings with their supervisors, who would hold them  
16 once a month, and we asked them to keep minutes of  
17 those meetings, so that they could share what they had  
18 done with the employees.

19 We -- about -- I guess it was about three  
20 years ago, four years ago, we also created a  
21 Maintenance and Engineering Quarterly Safety Committee,  
22 fashioned after the one that ALPA had, okay, in the  
23 company, where they met quarterly as well.

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1           Representatives on that board were the  
2 Director of Quality Control, okay, Jim Trimberger,  
3 okay, the Director of Line Maintenance, Director of  
4 Base Maintenance, as well as a representative from the  
5 Inspection Department, a contract employee, union  
6 employee, front-line employee, a representative from  
7 Base Maintenance, and a representative from Line  
8 Maintenance, and we would get together on a quarterly  
9 basis and talk about any issues that came up relative  
10 to safety, and the employees in the workplace, okay, we  
11 went through efforts to try to make them aware, that  
12 these people, okay, were in this forum, and they were  
13 representatives of them and meeting with us, and if  
14 they had any safety concerns, to let them know.

15           There was also the IEB, okay, and I can also  
16 tell you that my door is always open for somebody that  
17 has a safety concern if they were unable to get it  
18 resolved by some other means.

19           MR. MCGILL: What actually is your role now?

20           MR. FOWLER: As of right now?

21           MR. MCGILL: Yes, sir.

22           MR. FOWLER: I've announced my desire to  
23 retire from the company, which I'll be doing officially

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1 at the end of this year. So, right now, I guess the  
2 fairest thing to say is that I'm -- I'm in transition.

3 As you probably read in the news, my --  
4 somebody to continue with my level oversight of  
5 Maintenance and Engineering will start Monday, and  
6 there will also be other organizational changes on  
7 Monday that reassign other folks that report to me now.

8 MR. MCGILL: Does the position take on the  
9 same function, the same responsibilities, same role as  
10 you have?

11 MR. FOWLER: One of the things that happens  
12 is at my level, when you announce that you're going to  
13 leave the company, okay, you're not necessarily part of  
14 those decisions any more. So, --

15 MR. MCGILL: Okay.

16 MR. FOWLER: So, I didn't get a lot of votes  
17 in it. So, I -- I don't think -- I can't answer the  
18 question.

19 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Let's just back up. When  
20 you were the Executive Vice President of Technical  
21 Operations and Systems Control, what -- can you briefly  
22 tell us your functions, and what -- what you did within  
23 that capacity?

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1           MR. FOWLER: Okay. Let's just talk about, I  
2 guess -- let's talk about the in-house functions rather  
3 than what I did outside -- outside the company with the  
4 ATA and so on.

5           In-house, again as I said before, Maintenance  
6 and Engineering, okay, Maintenance and Engineering had  
7 a division officer. So, it had Bill Weaver running  
8 that division.

9           So, there was on-going interaction between  
10 Bill and I to keep me apprised of what was going on, if  
11 there was something that he needed to discuss or he  
12 wanted counsel on, and he was certainly available for  
13 that and so on.

14           Relative to Operations Control/System  
15 Operations Control, is a group that we set out to start  
16 last August, August of 1999, if you will, and it's been  
17 -- it's been on-going in its development, in its  
18 evolution, ever since that, and Emergency Response was  
19 started that same year as well but earlier on that  
20 year.

21           And my involvement in -- in developing the  
22 Emergency Response process and the Operations Control  
23 process, I probably had more hands-on involvement of

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1 mine than did M&E at that time.

2 For a very short period of time, Flight  
3 Operations reported to me. As you know, Mike Swan  
4 again announced in 1999 that he wanted to go back to  
5 the line and fly effective the end of the year, January  
6 1st, year 2000, which in fact he did, and from some  
7 point, days or a week or so after he went back to the  
8 line, until the reporting relationship was changed  
9 again, Flight Operations reported to me. I'm not  
10 exactly sure when it was changed again.

11 So, I'll say that Flight Operations reported  
12 to me for a month or two months or something like that,  
13 and then as a result of the activity required after the  
14 accident, Flight Operations went back to reporting  
15 directly to Bill Ayer.

16 MR. MCGILL: And you reported then to Bill  
17 Ayer?

18 MR. FOWLER: That's correct.

19 MR. MCGILL: Did you -- let's take the higher  
20 level. Did you speak with him daily or weekly or --

21 MR. FOWLER: It really depended on the level  
22 of activity. Bill Ayer has -- has staff meetings  
23 essentially once a week, as most of us do, except when

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1 he's out of town or traveling or something like that.

2 We also got together for an officer meeting  
3 once a week. So, I certainly would see him at those,  
4 and whenever there was other needs to speak with him,  
5 yes, I'd say that -- that no less than three days a  
6 week, I would speak with him and often multiple times  
7 in the same day.

8 MR. MCGILL: What kind of issues would you  
9 speak to him about?

10 MR. FOWLER: Mostly operational-type issues.

11 If we had a number of aircraft out of service in  
12 Maintenance, to brief him on, you know, what the status  
13 was going on with the -- with the airline relative to  
14 system operations, just in general, whether things  
15 impacted on the system, customer service or  
16 maintenance.

17 If we had an aircraft that came back or  
18 returned to the blocks that was likely -- it was maybe  
19 not seen as straightforward, and I thought he might  
20 have questions on it, I'd call him on those things,  
21 and then just, you know, just the general, you know,  
22 on-going nature of the business, and, you know, the way  
23 things change, fleet and administration and stuff like

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1 that.

2 MR. MCGILL: What -- what about Mr. Kelly?  
3 Did you always go through Mr. Ayer or --

4 MR. FOWLER: When -- when Bill Ayer was named  
5 president, I dealt more with Bill Ayer than John.  
6 Okay. I would -- I mean, I -- there's -- there's no  
7 requirement, okay, for me to have to go through Bill to  
8 talk to John, and in some cases, when Bill was not  
9 around, I'd just go to John, and we'd discuss  
10 something, and in cases when Bill was around, I  
11 certainly involved him.

12 MR. MCGILL: So, if somebody -- whatever  
13 might have happened, then if somebody wanted an  
14 explanation, higher up, they would come, and you would  
15 either get that or you would know about it already, is  
16 that correct?

17 MR. FOWLER: One or the other. That's  
18 correct. That's explanation to. You said if they  
19 wanted an explanation.

20 MR. MCGILL: Yeah. If -- if -- you know,  
21 what -- whatever event might be in the news currently.  
22 I think if I were CEO, I would say tell me what this  
23 is all about.

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1           So, they would be coming probably to you to  
2 get the explanation, is that correct?

3           MR. FOWLER: In most cases, yes.

4           MR. MCGILL: Okay. I know we -- I need to  
5 get this kind of -- we have talked about it so much,  
6 but I wanted to very briefly go back to the MIG-4 or to  
7 the C-5 check on 963 in 1997.

8           I just want you to state again what the -- I  
9 have asked you this, and I think I know it. I don't  
10 know that Mr. Rodriguez ever got -- if he knows, but  
11 did -- at that particular time, were you aware that --  
12 that C -- that MIG-4 had been written with a planned  
13 action of replacing that jack screw at that particular  
14 time?

15           MR. FOWLER: Okay. I'm not sure what  
16 particular time are you talking about, but it doesn't  
17 make any difference. I was never aware of the presence  
18 of that MIG-4.

19           MR. MCGILL: Okay. And, so, any -- after the  
20 MIG-4, the planned action, was written down with --  
21 there was a replacement for the jack screw. There was  
22 several days in there.

23           During that time frame, were you ever

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1 notified that there could be a potential part that  
2 needed to be sent to Oakland involving that jack screw?

3 MR. FOWLER: I was not.

4 MR. MCGILL: So, really, after the airplane  
5 had already been gone, and you didn't really know at  
6 any time anything about that particular card, because  
7 later, they rechecked the end plate check, and it was  
8 within limits, and they didn't have to take these  
9 actions.

10 So, you knew -- know anything -- that was the  
11 end of that particular card, is that correct?

12 MR. FOWLER: At the -- you're talking about  
13 at the time of the C check?

14 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

15 MR. FOWLER: I was not aware of any of it.

16 MR. MCGILL: Do you know that in a C-6 check  
17 in 1999, was that end plate rechecked?

18 MR. FOWLER: My -- I don't know for sure, but  
19 my understanding is that that end plate check was  
20 scheduled every other C check.

21 MR. MCGILL: Yeah. That's correct. It was  
22 scheduled every other C-2 check, but I was just  
23 curious. I know that some of my past experiences,

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1 sometimes when something is right there, close to the  
2 max limit, that I might have put that card back into  
3 the C check package, in the C-6.

4 MR. FOWLER: I'm not aware of that.

5 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Let's talk just briefly,  
6 John, about the -- about the lubrication change of  
7 Mobil 28 to AeroShell 33.

8 Can you -- do you know anything about how  
9 that was evolved? Did you make the initial request for  
10 that change?

11 MR. FOWLER: Direct answer to your question  
12 is no. I only became aware of the change in briefs  
13 here recently, as it was -- became an issue here in the  
14 investigation.

15 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Do you think that Mr.  
16 Weaver would have known that a change was made,  
17 changing the lubrication?

18 MR. FOWLER: He may have, but I don't know  
19 whether he did or not.

20 MR. MCGILL: Okay. But you don't -- you  
21 didn't get involved in that decision-making?

22 MR. FOWLER: I did not.

23 MR. MCGILL: We've hit on several times the

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1 escalation of different time intervals for different  
2 checks.

3           Were you involved in that process of  
4 increasing intervals?

5           MR. FOWLER: When you say "involved in that  
6 process", how do you mean "involved"?

7           MR. MCGILL: Did you initiate -- let's just  
8 take a simple check, like an A check. What did -- what  
9 -- who initiates the first thing to move it, say, from  
10 an 125 hours to, say, a 150 hours, so forth? What is  
11 that process?

12           MR. FOWLER: I couldn't tell you what the  
13 exact process is. Within the Engineering Department,  
14 exactly what the process is, I couldn't tell you.

15           MR. MCGILL: Okay. So, that would be a role  
16 for somebody like Mr. Davey that was Vice President of  
17 Engineering?

18           MR. FOWLER: Or folks within his department,  
19 yes.

20           MR. MCGILL: Or folks within his department.  
21 At what level did -- did your position of Senior Vice  
22 President there, if I may call you that, were you --  
23 were you briefed on some of these -- when you would

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1 move from the time intervals to the C checks, say, from  
2 13 months to 15 months, or did you ever get involved in  
3 --

4 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

5 MR. MCGILL: -- any of that?

6 MR. FOWLER: Yeah. All the changes that were  
7 made to the -- to the Maintenance Program relative to  
8 the intervals for C checks, I was briefed on them,  
9 okay, and had the opportunity to veto before they did  
10 it.

11 MR. MCGILL: Okay. So, you evaluate -- you  
12 looked at all the justifications that were presented  
13 with the checks?

14 MR. FOWLER: I didn't look at all the detail.  
15 What I did is I had them review the process with me.  
16 I had an opportunity to ask a whole bunch of questions.  
17 I had them walk me through their thought process and -  
18 - and brief me on what they had done. I didn't review  
19 the detail personally.

20 I asked them if they had reviewed it with the  
21 FAA, and what the FAA's response and approvals were,  
22 and having been satisfied that -- that the process was  
23 complete, based on what they -- they briefed me on, I

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1 allowed them to go ahead with the change.

2 MR. MCGILL: There's been some discussion  
3 that many of these checks are -- are performed on  
4 calendar time periods.

5 How did the utilization of flight hours --  
6 how was that taken into consideration when -- when an  
7 aircraft was changed on a calendar period?

8 MR. FOWLER: I can't tell you specifically  
9 because I'm not -- I'm not an expert on the process,  
10 but I recall that there were discussions specifically  
11 relative to our utilization and those escalations when  
12 the FAA bought off on them.

13 MR. MCGILL: Do you recall ever a time when  
14 the FAA did not buy off anything you presented on the  
15 checks?

16 MR. FOWLER: You mean relative to  
17 escalations?

18 MR. MCGILL: Yes, escalation checks.

19 MR. FOWLER: I can recall that there were  
20 times when they may have asked for more information or  
21 more detail. I cannot recall any times when  
22 ultimately, we didn't come to agreement.

23 MR. MCGILL: From my time frame, when did you

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1 -- when -- when was the period that you elected to --  
2 to retire from the air -- how long ago was that?

3 MR. FOWLER: About a month ago.

4 MR. MCGILL: About a month ago. I've asked  
5 several people, and I was just curious. Around in  
6 April, Boeing had issued a letter stating that all  
7 operators of MD-80s, they wanted to review the tooling  
8 that was used, specifically that restraint fixture,  
9 that was used on the end plate check. Do you recall  
10 ever seeing that?

11 MR. FOWLER: Are you talking about April?

12 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

13 MR. FOWLER: No.

14 MR. MCGILL: It was in April, yes. Who do  
15 these letters normally go to? I've asked several  
16 people, and nobody's ever said that they've received or  
17 seen them.

18 MR. FOWLER: I think the best answer I could  
19 give you is they go into the Engineering Department  
20 some place. Okay. Exactly who receives them and who  
21 does the distribution, I couldn't tell you.

22 MR. MCGILL: Okay. Because I've asked Jim  
23 Davey about it, and he couldn't remember either, and I

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1 was just curious because I've posed the question with  
2 each operation looking to verify what was -- what was  
3 happening, and I wanted to know, do you remember that  
4 even if it got -- and we don't know the person, but was  
5 anything -- do you remember seeing anything that Alaska  
6 did to verify that they had the right tooling in that  
7 particular time frame?

8 MR. FOWLER: Are you talking about in April?

9 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

10 MR. FOWLER: Keep in mind that I didn't say  
11 that we did or we didn't get it. All I said is that  
12 I'm not aware of it, --

13 MR. MCGILL: Okay.

14 MR. FOWLER: -- and I'm -- I think it's --  
15 it's -- it's safe to say that something like that, I  
16 wouldn't be aware of, okay, but I can't help with what  
17 the process is.

18 MR. MCGILL: Okay. So, someone else would  
19 have looked -- it just seemed like it was just the  
20 other day that we've now found out that maybe you had  
21 the wrong tools, and there was several months in there,  
22 it looked like, would have been lost if had one right  
23 away when they received a letter, maybe someone would

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1 have said, hey, we need to -- to check these things.

2 MR. FOWLER: Well, you know, Frank, you have  
3 the same question that we had, and right now, we're  
4 investigating that.

5 MR. MCGILL: The special investigation that  
6 was done this year, the results were out. Have you  
7 gone through those results that were issued?

8 MR. FOWLER: I have.

9 MR. MCGILL: Is there any particular feeling  
10 about any of those? Is it a fair assessment? Did you  
11 -- were you surprised at anything in that assessment?

12 MR. FOWLER: Relative to whether it's a fair  
13 assessment or not, I'm not sure at this point I could  
14 answer that question.

15 MR. MCGILL: That's fair.

16 MR. FOWLER: The -- I mean, the whole -- the  
17 whole thing is -- it's a work-in-process, and we've  
18 responded specifically to the FAA's findings. We've  
19 provided our responses which in many cases we do not --  
20 we do not agree that there's a violation, and even  
21 though we have our differences, I'm not sure at this  
22 point I could say it's fair or it's not fair until we  
23 see how it comes out, given our responses.

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1           You asked if there are things in there that  
2 surprised us. There was one particular piece that  
3 surprised me, and that was their -- you know, over the  
4 last number of years, our GMM has not changed  
5 substantially.

6           The regulations have not changed  
7 substantially. We've had recent inspections from DoD  
8 and from FAA, and it was kind of surprising to me to  
9 have this inspection now from FAA with the regs not  
10 having changed and with our manuals not having changed,  
11 okay, with -- and have the level of -- the level of  
12 concern that was there, okay, because the heavy check  
13 process that we use, although there wasn't a comment  
14 that that process was wrong, but that the process  
15 wasn't in the manual, and I'm not sure at this point in  
16 time that we could disagree that that's not an  
17 appropriate thing and a good thing to do, which is why  
18 we've marched off and done it along with a number of  
19 other things.

20           But it was a surprise that -- I mean, in the  
21 past, with the standards not changing, and now, okay,  
22 it generated the amount of attention that it did. So,  
23 in that regard, that was a surprise.

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1           MR. MCGILL: Which places me then back to my  
2 next question along that -- those lines. In October of  
3 '98, the FAA went under the surveillance system of  
4 ATOS.

5           Prior -- let's take the period prior to the  
6 Certificate Management Team process that's now in  
7 place. How was your relationship -- how would you  
8 define your relationship with the FAA? Were you  
9 communicating? If there had been a problem like what  
10 was put on this thing, would -- previously, wouldn't  
11 somebody have already brought that to your attention,  
12 and you would have discussed it?

13           MR. FOWLER: We've always had pretty  
14 comprehensive communication between us and the FAA.  
15 Now, let me clarify.

16           When I say "between us and the FAA", I'm only  
17 talking about us and the Airworthiness side or the PMI  
18 --

19           MR. MCGILL: The Parts side. Okay.

20           MR. FOWLER: Pardon me.

21           MR. MCGILL: Right there. PAI/PMI.

22           MR. FOWLER: There's -- there's never been --  
23 there's never been a huge problem in communications.

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1 Okay. There's -- I mean, -- and I mean that sincerely.

2 I mean, we -- we didn't always agree on what we  
3 communicated to each other. They have their job to do,  
4 we have our job to do.

5 We were always able to work through the issue  
6 one way or the other. Sometimes we ended up agreeing  
7 to disagree and doing what we just needed to do. But  
8 there's never been a lack of communication, if you  
9 will, between us and the FAA.

10 So, -- and I didn't see any change in that,  
11 okay, in October 1998, relative to when the FAA said  
12 that they were going to start implementing ATOS. I  
13 think that's when they said they were going to  
14 implement ATOS.

15 MR. MCGILL: So, from your perspective, at  
16 your level, you didn't hardly see any change at all?  
17 You still had the PMI and --

18 MR. FOWLER: You mean --

19 MR. MCGILL: -- the PAI.

20 MR. FOWLER: Maybe you need to clarify.

21 Okay. Asking me if I saw a change in what, okay,  
22 relative to that cutover to ATOS?

23 MR. MCGILL: Oversight.

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1           MR. FOWLER: I think you're making an  
2 assumption, and you're asking me to make an assumption,  
3 okay, and that is, that there actually was a cutover to  
4 ATOS. I never saw a cutover to ATOS.

5           It was announced by the FAA that that's when  
6 it was going to be, but come October of 1998, I mean,  
7 it was common within the industry as well as within the  
8 FAA that it hadn't happened in October 1998.

9           As a matter of fact, to this day, it's not  
10 happened. ATOS, I believe, conceptually, is a great  
11 concept. I think it's really an opportunity, okay, to  
12 bring this entire industry to another level, but it  
13 just hasn't gotten completely off the drawing board and  
14 hasn't been well implemented.

15           MR. MCGILL: Prior to October '98, what would  
16 you -- how would you say the number of visits or number  
17 of times you communicated with the FAA, the frequency  
18 of their times that they were over here looking at your  
19 operations? Was there a difference between that time  
20 and currently?

21           MR. FOWLER: I'd be -- I -- I'd be hard-  
22 pressed to say that there was any difference, okay, but  
23 I need to clarify that by saying that we saw the FAA a



1 lot. The FAA essentially had -- our doors were open to  
2 the FAA. I mean, unlike some airlines that -- that ask  
3 the FAA to go through an FAA liaison whenever they come  
4 in and out of the building, we didn't have that.

5 The FAA inspectors on our certificate  
6 frequently came in in the middle of the night, in the  
7 middle of the afternoon, on the weekend. They had full  
8 access to the building and that didn't change with  
9 ATOS, and that's the way it was after ATOS.

10 MR. MCGILL: Just to go back a little bit on  
11 this -- this lubrication issue, where you've now  
12 reverted back again to Mobil 28, at your level, how was  
13 that -- how was that presented to you?

14 Someone below had to explain what happened  
15 during this process. Who would have done that? How  
16 was that -- how was that related?

17 MR. FOWLER: You're talking about the process  
18 that occurred most recently --

19 MR. MCGILL: Yes, most recently --

20 MR. FOWLER: -- to revert back --

21 MR. MCGILL: -- reverting back to the Mobil.

22 MR. FOWLER: Actually, the -- I mean, the  
23 decision itself and -- and going back to Mobil 28 per

1 the FAA's request was not specifically discussed with  
2 me.

3 I mean, Engineering -- that was a request  
4 that came from Engineering, and given what's going on  
5 at the time, we certainly complied with it, and, I  
6 mean, there was not an argument or a disagreement.

7 The way that I was briefed on that was to  
8 just inform me that the FAA had come and said that they  
9 wanted us to go back to Mobil 28 on the -- on the -- on  
10 the MD-80, and that there was a phase-in period that we  
11 agreed -- that they agreed to, had a schedule of when  
12 we would do it. So, they briefed me on where that was.

13 The questions that I had relative to the  
14 grease, although I have a ton of questions, and I have  
15 a lot of concern with that, Frank, quite frankly, I  
16 mean, you start to get into a point now where we draw a  
17 line between, I mean, who's doing what investigation  
18 here, and I have a lot of concern, and we have a lot of  
19 people that are working on information relative to the  
20 grease and Engineering, and I know that they're sharing  
21 that information, okay, with you folks.

22 So, we've not tried to do -- you know, I've  
23 not tried to do my own investigation of the grease, and

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1 at this point, I just need to be satisfied that you  
2 folks and everybody else are asking the same questions  
3 that I would.

4 MR. MCGILL: Okay. And was those same kind  
5 of questions asked to you from people higher than you,  
6 Mr. Ayer or Mr. --

7 MR. FOWLER: No.

8 MR. MCGILL: No one -- no one come down and  
9 said, hey, this is in the paper, whatever happened, I  
10 don't know what happened?

11 MR. FOWLER: Well, no, not really. They --  
12 they -- we all -- we all kind of knew it was in the  
13 paper at the same time, and we provided what  
14 information we wanted to provide to the paper, okay,  
15 given the constraints, you know, with the investigation  
16 and what we knew at that point in time, but I was not a  
17 significant source of information because I just hadn't  
18 been involved with it.

19 MR. MCGILL: Okay. What about the -- the  
20 tools that were -- the ground -- I don't know what it  
21 was. 17-18 airplanes. How was that presented to you?

22 MR. FOWLER: You're talking about current  
23 times, not --

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1 MR. MCGILL: Current times.

2 MR. FOWLER: -- at the time of the accident  
3 or in April?

4 MR. MCGILL: Yes.

5 MR. FOWLER: I found out about that the  
6 Wednesday before last, which was the day before, okay,  
7 we went and told the FAA that our Engineering Group,  
8 you know, had this concern.

9 So, I didn't know about it before that, and -  
10 - and, quite frankly, my immediate response at that  
11 time was not in getting a whole bunch of answers.  
12 My immediate response at that point was to listen to  
13 what -- to what Engineering's concerns were and make a  
14 determination of what we needed to do to ensure, okay,  
15 our confidence in the safety of the fleet, and that's  
16 what consumed me for two days.

17 So, I didn't ask a lot of questions about the  
18 tool at that time, except to understand, okay, why  
19 Engineering, you know, had their differences, and then  
20 I launched off to make sure that we did the right thing  
21 with the fleet.

22 MR. MCGILL: And was there some sort of a  
23 team put together or a group that looked into this?

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1 You might have had a tool that was not --

2 MR. FOWLER: It's actually on-going at this  
3 point. Okay. When you say "a team", naturally,  
4 Engineering is looking at the differences in the tools  
5 themselves, and -- and whether or not they're concerned  
6 about the -- it's lack of conformity, okay, actually is  
7 a problem or is not a problem, they're -- they're  
8 looking at that now.

9 Relative to having a tool that was not in  
10 conformity, I think we're still -- I know we're still  
11 investigating that, and we're not at the bottom of that  
12 yet.

13 MR. MCGILL: Did you review the Maintenance  
14 and Engineering Assessment that was done by Jack  
15 Enders, Bill Hendricks, Gary Pro and that bunch?

16 MR. FOWLER: I did.

17 MR. MCGILL: What -- how were your feelings  
18 about that? Was that a fair assessment?

19 MR. FOWLER: Given that what we asked them to  
20 do was to not look at, okay, just whether or not we  
21 were in compliance or not, okay, but where there were  
22 opportunities to change practices, to become best  
23 practices, I think it served its purpose.

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1           MR. MCGILL: Are some of these changes being  
2 implemented right now?

3           MR. FOWLER: What we've done is we've  
4 prioritized them. Okay. The first order of business  
5 naturally is that we've committed to the FAA, okay,  
6 certain items in an action plan that we put together  
7 for the FAA.

8           Okay. That is Priority 1 because we've  
9 committed to them that we're going to do that.

10          Okay. Now, there are a number of the  
11 suggestions from the independent audit team, okay, that  
12 either coincide with that or will be addressed, okay,  
13 at the same time that we action the items from the FAA.

14          So, to the extent that they coincide or to  
15 the extent that they were things that we need, we were  
16 doing anyway, organizational changes and stuff like  
17 that, would actually in that list, but they're  
18 prioritized along with the FAA items which have first  
19 priority.

20          At last count, I think that out of the total  
21 number of independent audit items, some 40 percent of  
22 them have already been addressed.

23          MR. MCGILL: I think I'm going to let Malcolm

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1 ask you some questions.

2 DR. BRENNER: You mentioned that there were  
3 different areas of disagreement with the FAA that were  
4 resolved. Can you -- can you describe some of the  
5 areas from the time you started until the action?

6 MR. FOWLER: There weren't a lot. There were  
7 -- it's not a lot that I became aware of. I was  
8 keeping in mind that -- that the FAA was -- was most  
9 routinely involved with Jim Trimberger, okay, and his  
10 crew. I would only get involved with issues that --  
11 that appeared as though they were really going to be a  
12 problem or -- or -- or just general briefing sessions  
13 with the PMI to bring him up to speed with those things  
14 we were doing.

15 Issues that we had disagreement on, there was  
16 -- I guess the two that I -- that come to mind are  
17 having to do with de-icing procedures, and one having  
18 to do with the installation of a stretcher on the  
19 airplane.

20 DR. BRENNER: Would you talk about that?

21 MR. FOWLER: The -- Alaska Airlines uses  
22 stretcher installations quite frequently, mostly in the  
23 State of Alaska, for Medivacs and so on, in communities

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1 where they have limited medical care.

2 We have always had stretcher installations  
3 that had been approved by the FAA and had all of their  
4 necessary data, structural engineering and so on.

5 Essentially, what the stretcher installation  
6 entails is you fold down a seat, you lay three blankets  
7 across the top of the seat, put the stretcher on the  
8 top, and you strap it down. That's what we've always  
9 done. There may be more details to it than that, but  
10 that's the way I understand it.

11 Not too long ago, our PMI said that he  
12 believed that that was a major alteration to the  
13 airplane, okay, and therefore had to be documented in  
14 the maintenance record, the log book. We didn't agree  
15 with that.

16 We worked it through with them. We asked if  
17 we could send it to Washington for them to take a look  
18 at it, and which he agreed to, okay, which they did,  
19 and they said, well, in the strictest letter of the  
20 law, yes, it is a major alteration. So, we changed our  
21 procedures.

22 DR. BRENNER: When did that happen?

23 MR. FOWLER: I'm going to guess three years

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1 ago.

2 DR. BRENNER: What about the de-ice  
3 procedures?

4 MR. FOWLER: We started using Type 2 De-Icing  
5 Fluid about -- also about three years ago, as I recall,  
6 and the early experience that we had with Type 2 De-  
7 Icing Fluid, we had an MD-80 that took off, and it came  
8 back. I'm not sure whether it came back, but they  
9 experienced some problems not too long after take-off,  
10 okay, where the Type 2 De-Icing Fluid had -- had  
11 sheered back across the windshield, created some  
12 visibility problems, and it also evidently sheered back  
13 across the static ports on the side of the airplane,  
14 causing the crew to have to use alternate source of  
15 static.

16 We had obviously a lot of concerns about  
17 that. We immediately halted the use of Type 2 until we  
18 could understand it.

19 As we began to understand it more, okay, we  
20 realized that a lot of airlines were only applying Type  
21 2 De-Icing Fluid to the wings, okay, and the tail and  
22 the control surfaces, and we went to our PMI and said  
23 we want to do that. We don't want to apply it forward

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1 of the L-1 door or the forward-entry door, and we don't  
2 want to apply it to the whole crown, okay, because we  
3 learned that as the fluid congeals around the static  
4 ports, as the static ports are heated, it can -- it  
5 can solidify or cause a dust or whatever.

6 He wouldn't agree with that. He said, "No,  
7 you have to apply it to the entire crown, okay, and the  
8 entire fuselage". We still -- I'm not sure if that's  
9 resolved because I left direct involvement with the  
10 division a number of years ago, but at that time, we --  
11 we decided until we got some agreement on this, we were  
12 only going to use Type 2 Fluid on overnight airplanes  
13 to protect them from freezing rain or stuff and then  
14 rinse it all off in the morning.

15 We weren't going to go ahead and use Type 2  
16 Fluid based on what the PMI wanted because we didn't  
17 think that it was as controllable as we'd like for  
18 safety.

19 DR. BRENNER: What time period was that?

20 MR. FOWLER: Again, I think that was three  
21 years ago.

22 DR. BRENNER: And this is John Hubbard you  
23 were dealing with?

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1 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

2 DR. BRENNER: Who did you deal with on the  
3 FAA side?

4 MR. FOWLER: With -- for Maintenance and  
5 Engineering issues, every once in awhile, I may have  
6 had conversations with their inspectors or whatever,  
7 but by and large, it was John Hubbard.

8 DR. BRENNER: How was John Hubbard to work  
9 with?

10 MR. FOWLER: Sometimes a challenge.

11 DR. BRENNER: Did you think he was too  
12 strict?

13 MR. FOWLER: I think that, as I said before,  
14 you know, FAA's got their job to do, and we have our  
15 job to do, and John -- he's just very strong-willed and  
16 very strong-minded. I think he's more of a challenge  
17 to work with than other people we work with.

18 DR. BRENNER: What were his strengths as a  
19 PMI?

20 MR. FOWLER: I think he knows his stuff. I  
21 think that he knows the regs.

22 DR. BRENNER: Possible comment could be made  
23 that the FAA managers did not encourage strict

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1 enforcement in the case of Alaska Airlines. Can you  
2 help us evaluate that? Any -- any thoughts on that?

3 MR. FOWLER: Well, as I just said, based on  
4 our relationship with our PMI, I didn't see that, not  
5 on the M&E side and not on the Airworthiness side.

6 DR. BRENNER: And a possible comment could be  
7 made on the FAA as a possible criticism that they  
8 rotated their senior managers; they would rotate them  
9 rather than bring in fresh thoughts or other  
10 alternatives. Any thoughts on that?

11 MR. FOWLER: On them rotating their senior  
12 managers?

13 DR. BRENNER: Yes.

14 MR. FOWLER: I didn't see anything where I  
15 could say pro or con about that.

16 DR. BRENNER: And Mary Rose Diffenderfer, who  
17 had been on the Operations side, any -- any perspective  
18 that can help us evaluate that whole --

19 MR. FOWLER: I was not personally involved in  
20 any of those issues.

21 DR. BRENNER: The Oakland facility, in 1997  
22 time frame, how was morale? What was the mindset?

23 MR. FOWLER: You know, Oakland has always

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1       been a work group that has essentially had very  
2       positive morale, and they really had a team effort.

3                   I think there was only one time that I can  
4       recall in the history of Oakland, okay, where morale  
5       waned a little bit, and that was because they were  
6       having difficulty with attrition.

7                   DR. BRENNER:   What's that?

8                   MR. FOWLER:   Turnover.

9                   DR. BRENNER:   Just so I understand, what time  
10       period?

11                   MR. FOWLER:   I don't know the exact time  
12       period, quite frankly.  I'm not -- don't recall.

13                   DR. BRENNER:   How about their -- their on-  
14       time performance, completing C checks, '97 period?  How  
15       was that?

16                   MR. FOWLER:   I don't recall the '97 period.  
17       It's varied.  I mean, it's gone from -- from good to  
18       excellent to good, and sometimes been on the rough  
19       side.

20                   DR. BRENNER:   Any sense what time periods  
21       were on the rough side?

22                   MR. FOWLER:   No.

23                   DR. BRENNER:   Any idea why it was rough

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1 compared to other times?

2 MR. FOWLER: I think the reasons varied. I  
3 think that the period of time when we were having large  
4 turnover, I think, contributed to that. The period of  
5 time when the work scope was growing on aircraft and  
6 requiring more work, and the plan didn't necessarily  
7 identify all of that. I think that that was -- that  
8 was a challenge with on-time performance, and just  
9 opportunities to find out, you know, how you improve  
10 it.

11 DR. BRENNER: What time period was that work  
12 scope expanding?

13 MR. FOWLER: Actually, the work scope, I  
14 think, is something that changes over a period of time.  
15 It doesn't change overnight.

16 DR. BRENNER: So, was there a specific time  
17 that -- that -- that we can address?

18 MR. FOWLER: I -- I can't tell you exactly,  
19 okay, when, okay, because I don't recall. I'd have to  
20 go back and look at the data. I just can't tell you  
21 exactly, okay, when they had their best on-time type  
22 performance versus when they had their challenges in  
23 on-time performance.

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1 DR. BRENNER: To what extent did you monitor  
2 the on-time performance or were you aware of it or  
3 advised of it?

4 MR. FOWLER: I monitored it very closely.

5 DR. BRENNER: On a daily basis?

6 MR. FOWLER: Well, on a daily basis, for the  
7 dynamic portion of the operation for line maintenance.  
8 On a longer-scale basis, weeks or months apart for  
9 heavy maintenance, and the reason for that is because  
10 there's -- there's different -- there's different ways  
11 to improve, and there's different ways to effect the  
12 performance in a line maintenance organization on a  
13 day-to-day level, and on a heavy maintenance level,  
14 it's something that has to be looked at over a period  
15 of time.

16 DR. BRENNER: And on a day-to-day basis, what  
17 kind of things can you do to effect the line  
18 maintenance?

19 MR. FOWLER: We -- we instituted many years  
20 ago a briefing in the morning of the -- of the delays  
21 that occurred the prior day, okay, and just analyzed it  
22 and saw where there were opportunities, and if there  
23 were opportunities to improve, okay, you'd communicate

1 that, and where it's the nature of our business, then  
2 that's the way it is.

3 DR. BRENNER: And how about the longer-term  
4 maintenance? What kind of things could you do?

5 MR. FOWLER: It really depended on where the  
6 problem was. Overall, in a heavy maintenance  
7 operation, you always expect that some airplane's going  
8 to come out late, another airplane's going to come out  
9 earlier.

10 There's going to be some level of a balance,  
11 and depending on how -- on how accurate your plan  
12 matches the amount of time it actually takes, you may  
13 have to make adjustments. Those adjustments may be to  
14 expand the time in service for later airplanes, to  
15 contract an airplane out, add overtime, change the work  
16 scope.

17 There's varying things that you could do to  
18 effect it.

19 DR. BRENNER: I think during your tenure,  
20 there was a change at Oakland from a five-day work week  
21 to a seven-day work week, is that correct?

22 MR. FOWLER: There was, and there was the  
23 same change in Seattle.

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1 DR. BRENNER: And did you make that decision?

2 MR. FOWLER: It was a collective decision.

3 It was a recommendation from, as I recall, the  
4 Maintenance folks at that time and the Planning folks.

5 DR. BRENNER: How well did it work out?

6 MR. FOWLER: It -- it's always something that  
7 -- it's always something that needs to be addressed,  
8 okay, with a lot of communications with the workforce  
9 because it's not always received positively.

10 DR. BRENNER: How was it received at that  
11 time?

12 MR. FOWLER: In Oakland, it was received  
13 actually pretty well because they understood that there  
14 was a desire to want to grow the base and the amount of  
15 work that was done there.

16 DR. BRENNER: How often did you visit Oakland  
17 yourself during that period?

18 MR. FOWLER: I probably made two trips a year  
19 to Oakland since I've been here.

20 DR. BRENNER: Did you hear any complaints  
21 from the -- from the line, from Oakland, during that  
22 time period?

23 MR. FOWLER: No.

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1 DR. BRENNER: Directly or, I guess, through  
2 the -- the Evaluation Board?

3 MR. FOWLER: No.

4 DR. BRENNER: Possible comment that Alaska  
5 Airlines grew too fast during this period. Can you  
6 help us evaluate that?

7 MR. FOWLER: I don't know how you mean "grew  
8 too fast".

9 DR. BRENNER: Oh, in terms of -- I think in  
10 the FAA Evaluation, there were some comments about  
11 that. The size of the -- the relative size of the  
12 fleet over time, how fast it was growing, the ability  
13 to -- the number of training personnel, number of signs  
14 on that, the workload compared to the workforce,  
15 turnover.

16 Do you have a sense that that's true/not true  
17 or --

18 MR. FOWLER: I wouldn't agree with it, and I  
19 don't think it's fair to lump that all into one -- one  
20 discussion because it's -- we can't use the global  
21 number and the total numbers to assess whether or not,  
22 you know, one thing kept up with another. So, I  
23 wouldn't agree that we grew too fast.

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1 DR. BRENNER: Okay. Thank you. Jim  
2 Trimberger. Tell me about Jim Trimberger.

3 MR. FOWLER: Tell you about Jim Trimberger?

4 DR. BRENNER: His strengths as a manager.

5 MR. FOWLER: I think he's Mr. Integrity.  
6 He's -- he's very objective. He's very level-headed.  
7 He tends to look at things very objectively and deal  
8 with the issue and not the personality. He knows his  
9 job. He's very accountable. I think the world of Jim.

10 DR. BRENNER: How about Gerald Summers?

11 MR. FOWLER: I know less directly about  
12 Gerald Summers because I didn't have an opportunity to  
13 work directly with him that often. I'm not sure it'd  
14 be fair to give you an opinion of Gerald.

15 DR. BRENNER: Bill Weaver?

16 MR. FOWLER: Bill is -- I've known Bill since  
17 he came here in '96. As a matter of fact, I hired him.  
18 He's -- he's got a very good grasp for the way the  
19 Maintenance and Engineering organization works, the  
20 inter-relationships, the interfaces within the  
21 organization. He's been very accountable, and he's got  
22 a lot of good ideas.

23 DR. BRENNER: Bill Ayer?

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1           MR. FOWLER: Now you're asking me to talk  
2 about my boss?

3           DR. BRENNER: Sure.

4           MR. FOWLER: Bill is -- Bill's a very bright  
5 guy. As a matter of fact, he may be one of the  
6 brightest guys I've probably ever worked for, and he's  
7 -- it's amazing to me that for somebody that bright,  
8 and his -- has so large a scope of responsibility in  
9 the -- in the entire organization, that he'll also take  
10 the time to -- to care about what the individual needs  
11 are.

12           DR. BRENNER: John Kelly?

13           MR. FOWLER: John's also a very bright guy,  
14 very capable, very charismatic, and I think he's done a  
15 wonderful job with the company and -- and morale and  
16 people, and I think most notably, over the past number  
17 of years, he's really pushing ahead very quickly to --  
18 worked very hard to bring resolution to the many labor  
19 contracts that we had open.

20           DR. BRENNER: How have relations been with  
21 Maintenance?

22           MR. FOWLER: I'm sorry?

23           DR. BRENNER: How have relations been between

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1 the company and the Union on the Maintenance side?

2 MR. FOWLER: I guess you'd have to talk about  
3 time frame. I mean, from time to time, they've been  
4 strained. Most recently, I think they're probably  
5 stronger and more positive than I've ever seen them  
6 before.

7 Years before that, there were some various  
8 periods of tension.

9 DR. BRENNER: What would be the most recent  
10 period of tension?

11 MR. FOWLER: Oh, April-May 1999, which were  
12 the last days of negotiating of the AMFA contract.

13 DR. BRENNER: What were -- what were the  
14 difficulties of that?

15 MR. FOWLER: Some work disruption,  
16 distraction, lack of productivity.

17 DR. BRENNER: And prior to that period, was  
18 there another period of disagreement?

19 MR. FOWLER: You're just talking about  
20 mechanics?

21 DR. BRENNER: Yes.

22 MR. FOWLER: Prior to that period, I'm not  
23 sure I would call it disagreement. I think I would

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1 again call it distraction, and that was early in the  
2 prior year, when there was a split between IEM and  
3 AMFA.

4 Okay. IEM was the original parent bargaining  
5 unit, okay, and AMFA was elected as the new bargaining  
6 unit. There was some tension. I'm not sure there was  
7 a lot in the workplace, but there was also a lot of  
8 distraction and things to talk about, other than  
9 focusing a hundred percent on not talking about it.

10 DR. BRENNER: And you mentioned that things  
11 have recently gotten very positive. Why is that?

12 MR. FOWLER: Well, I think that the  
13 relationship with the -- without getting into the  
14 governance and everything between, you know, the two  
15 Unions, I think that the -- the interaction and the  
16 working together that I've seen between AMFA and Bill  
17 Weaver, okay, is more positive than anything I've seen  
18 in a number of years, and I think that -- I think that  
19 credit goes to the -- the folks that represented people  
20 that really represented their interests and were going  
21 to work together and find a way to just get -- get past  
22 some things.

23 DR. BRENNER: And as a manager, can you

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1 evaluate yourself? What are some of your strengths?  
2 What do you like to emphasize to your folks?

3 MR. FOWLER: Safety, accountability and some  
4 sound business logic behind the decisions we make are  
5 our strengths, I think.

6 DR. BRENNER: And safety? How do you  
7 emphasize that?

8 MR. FOWLER: Probably not a day goes by or  
9 not a day went by that there wasn't a conversation that  
10 I had with somebody, either in a conference call or  
11 individually, and stressing to them that there's only  
12 one day -- one way to do the job, and that is to do it  
13 right. If you think the airplane's not fixed, the  
14 airplane's not going to fly.

15 DR. BRENNER: And business logic? How do you  
16 assess that?

17 MR. FOWLER: There's -- that's probably been  
18 the more -- the more difficulties, and that is that,  
19 you know, we all have -- we all have responsibilities.  
20 We're all being paid to do a job, and we should -- we  
21 should be here to do it, and if we're going to -- if  
22 we're going to talk about a change in the way we do our  
23 business or a change in the way we spend money, there

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1 needs to be some logic behind it and some -- some  
2 analysis that says that the change that we're about to  
3 make it the right one.

4 DR. BRENNER: For example, the change between  
5 the two greases, did that -- did that come up to your  
6 level for some kind of review or approval?

7 MR. FOWLER: It did not.

8 DR. BRENNER: Should it have?

9 MR. FOWLER: I do not believe so.

10 DR. BRENNER: How's this company different  
11 from other companies?

12 MR. FOWLER: I can only compare it against  
13 one company because I don't have inside knowledge with  
14 other companies.

15 One of the things that I was really amazed by  
16 when I first came here, having had the opportunity to  
17 work for another company, was how much Alaska Airlines  
18 tries to do for its employees, and various award  
19 programs, recognition programs, and things like that.

20 I think that Alaska really spends a lot of  
21 time and effort in trying to figure out what's --  
22 what's a nice thing to do for employees.

23 DR. BRENNER: Thank you.

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1 MR. MCGILL: Dean?

2 MR. HAMILTON: I'll pass right now.

3 MR. LASLEY: I'll pass. Thank you.

4 MR. PAPE: John, just one question. You were  
5 BPF Maintenance and Engineering. There was an  
6 authorization to where you could come out and inspect.  
7 Was there any -- any -- any time that that exercise  
8 was -- that you had -- that authority was exercised?

9 MR. FOWLER: Not only did I never countermand  
10 an inspector, I never countermanded an inspector or a  
11 maintenance supervisor or mechanic in what they wanted  
12 to do to the airplane.

13 MR. PAPE: How would you assess the  
14 relationship between QC, QA and -- and Production in  
15 their -- in their jobs and duties?

16 MR. FOWLER: I think it's appropriate. I  
17 mean, sometimes, I think there's some tension in there  
18 because you have the QA Department, which a lot of  
19 people see as the black-hatted policemen, and they have  
20 -- they have a tough job sometimes in order to remain  
21 independent and objective, but I think they do an  
22 excellent job in doing that.

23 MR. PAPE: That's all I have at this time.

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1 MR. MCGILL: Lance?

2 MR. SEYER: I have a question in regard to  
3 spending authority and amounts each department had.  
4 For example, the manager of Line Maintenance has  
5 authority to spend X amount of dollars before he needs  
6 a next-higher authority.

7 Could you tell me who would have the  
8 authority to purchase, let's say, a jack screw for one  
9 of the C checks if one of them were required?

10 MR. FOWLER: That really -- it -- if you're  
11 talking about -- you're talking about a jack screw for  
12 the airplane that is out of service and needs it?

13 MR. SEYER: Right.

14 MR. FOWLER: Okay. In the practical sense,  
15 what would happen is whoever needed the jack screw  
16 would go and order it, and Purchasing would do whatever  
17 they needed to get it.

18 MR. SEYER: Okay. Is there a certain -- at a  
19 certain dollar level, does it have to be signed by a  
20 director, a vice president, to authorize Purchasing to  
21 go out and buy that?

22 MR. FOWLER: For an AOG airplane, parts that  
23 are needed to get an airplane back on service, those

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1 are typically signed -- those were typically signed  
2 after the fact.

3 MR. SEYER: So, Purchasing would just go out  
4 and acquire one regardless of cost?

5 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

6 MR. SEYER: And then, you would worry about  
7 paying for it later?

8 MR. FOWLER: Yes. Well, you wouldn't worry  
9 about paying for it later. If Purchasing went out and  
10 ordered it, I mean, we've committed to paying for it.  
11 The only thing that we ever did -- I'm not exactly sure  
12 how it is now, I've been away from the division for a  
13 few years.

14 The only thing that we ever did pre-approvals  
15 on, where Purchasing couldn't purchase it before they  
16 had a signature, is that they were buying for inventory  
17 or if they were buying rotables.

18 MR. SEYER: Okay. You said you had some  
19 dealings with the ex-FAA PMI, Mr. Hubbard.

20 Can you explain the difference between the  
21 FAA accepting something and approving something?

22 MR. FOWLER: No.

23 MR. SEYER: You don't know how that process

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1 works?

2 MR. FOWLER: I -- I -- I don't. I can't  
3 explain the difference between them accepting something  
4 and approving something.

5 MR. SEYER: Are you a member of the MRB?

6 MR. FOWLER: I am not.

7 MR. SEYER: Do you know who would have the  
8 final authority to accept or reject the extension of  
9 lube intervals?

10 MR. FOWLER: The best I could give you is  
11 something within the Engineering Department.

12 MR. SEYER: And I believe you stated that you  
13 said you had no knowledge of the switch to AeroShell 33  
14 approximately in 1998?

15 MR. FOWLER: I did not.

16 MR. SEYER: So, you obviously did not okay  
17 the switch then?

18 MR. FOWLER: I was not aware of it.

19 MR. SEYER: That's all I have.

20 MR. MCGILL: Kristen?

21 MS. VON KLEINSMID: First of all, I'd like to  
22 say it's refreshing to talk to someone who has got some  
23 answers to some questions. It's a nice change, and we

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1 asked others about you as a person, and everyone said  
2 very knowledgeable, and that was the opinion, and I  
3 think that that's accurate based on my observations so  
4 far.

5 A couple questions. We talked a little bit  
6 about the IEB Board, and you had mentioned something  
7 about Customer Service issues and talked about an  
8 automated weight and balance system, that those were  
9 one of the things that you were involved in, and I know  
10 that came up in the team that you guys hired as to not  
11 having an automated weight and balance system, and I  
12 guess my -- one of my questions is, when was the time  
13 frame and your involvement in trying to go towards that  
14 direction, and how come it's not there yet?

15 MR. FOWLER: I don't think it's fair to say  
16 it's not there yet. Okay. Actually, I think it's --  
17 it's either there or it's damn close, and if it's not  
18 there, it's just not there because all of the stations  
19 aren't using it.

20 But the move toward automated weight and  
21 balance systems is something that I'd say probably was  
22 initiated two to three years ago.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And what stations are

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1 using that?

2 MR. FOWLER: I don't know that.

3 MS. VON KLEINSMID: I just know that Los  
4 Angeles isn't one of them, and I think Anchorage is  
5 one, and do you know if Seattle --

6 MR. FOWLER: I don't know for sure. I know  
7 that -- I know that the system is up. It's been beta-  
8 tested. There were some issues with the PMI, which is  
9 the point which I got involved. There were some issues  
10 with the PMI, where he was interested in back-up data  
11 and the ability to go back to paper and so on, which,  
12 at the last time that I was involved with it, okay, I  
13 believe it had been resolved, and where they actually  
14 are in implementation, I'm not certain.

15 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. But that's still,  
16 to your knowledge, a goal of the company?

17 MR. FOWLER: Absolutely.

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: To go in that direction?  
19 Okay. And then, in talking about safety, we've posed  
20 the safety question to a number of different  
21 individuals in the past two days and got what I would  
22 say are very limited responses.

23 You've reeled off all the stuff, but you kept

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1 saying we, we, we, we. Who is always in terms of --  
2 who are the other managers under you that participated  
3 and had as much knowledge regarding the safety, the  
4 IEB, you talked about all employee reports, crew safety  
5 meetings that are monthly, the -- okay.

6 Who are -- who are these individuals that  
7 participate with you in developing the safety program?

8 MR. FOWLER: Talking about the IEB?

9 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Sure.

10 MR. FOWLER: Okay. The IEB was developed by  
11 -- actually, I kind of facilitated the process, and  
12 what was used as a model for the IEB was an advisory  
13 circular, which the FAA published some number of years  
14 ago, that gave a number of different models for IEBs,  
15 and I facilitated the process, I guess, probably five  
16 years ago, something like that, and the folks that were  
17 part of it at that time were Jim Winkleman, Ed  
18 Dochnowski from Flight Operations, Jim Trimberger from  
19 Maintenance and Engineering, Bob Hanley from Customer  
20 Service, Martha Mintner from In-Flight.

21 I hope I'm not leaving anybody out, but  
22 that's all I can recall at this point.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay.

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1           MR. FOWLER: Relative to the quarterly safety  
2 meeting within Maintenance and Engineering, myself,  
3 Bill Weaver, Jim Trimberger, Bob Henman, Art  
4 Fitzpatrick. I want to say others, but I'm not exactly  
5 sure -- 100 percent sure. So, I won't. But at least  
6 them.

7           What else did you have there, Kristen?

8           MS. VON KLEINSMID: There was the monthly  
9 crew safety meetings.

10          MR. FOWLER: Monthly crew safety meetings was  
11 a -- an objective or a requirement, if you will, a  
12 performance objective that was given to all our first-  
13 line supervisors, okay, that through their -- their  
14 respective managers, okay, that required them to have  
15 meetings with their crews, okay, once a month, I mean,  
16 with whoever was in and was available and so on, and  
17 provide that forum for both communications of safety  
18 issues as well as any other concerns that the employees  
19 may have had.

20          MS. VON KLEINSMID: And did you get feedback  
21 as to whether or not they were complying? The managers  
22 were complying?

23          MR. FOWLER: For a number of years, I

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1 requested feedback on the compliance with them, and --  
2 and I received that information, and actually in the  
3 beginning, on a number of occasions, I asked them for  
4 their schedules of their meetings so that I could show  
5 up every once in awhile.

6 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Which, I'm assuming, you  
7 did?

8 MR. FOWLER: A couple times.

9 MS. VON KLEINSMID: We've talked a little bit  
10 about escalation in terms of the time intervals on the  
11 -- on the checks, and I know that one change was --  
12 I'll just take the lubing, for example. I think that  
13 was done on every 8-A check, and then it went to an  
14 eight-month time period.

15 Did you have any knowledge or any input as to  
16 that change?

17 MR. FOWLER: No.

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And then, on the change  
19 from the 13 months to 15 months?

20 MR. FOWLER: As I explained before -- you're  
21 talking about the 13-month to the 15-month, not lube?

22 MS. VON KLEINSMID: No. The C check.

23 MR. FOWLER: The C check. As I explained

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1 before, my involvement with that was to review the  
2 process, okay, after they had -- they had done it, gave  
3 myself an opportunity to ask questions.

4 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And your response, I  
5 think, to the question as to who initiated this was you  
6 believed it was someone within the Engineering  
7 Department?

8 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

9 MS. VON KLEINSMID: No corporate level  
10 instigation -- is that something that -- that top-level  
11 management within Alaska Airlines would be concerned  
12 about or look at in terms of a potential cost savings  
13 to the company on maintenance, and there's no  
14 initiation at your level or one level below or above as  
15 to discussion in terms of, you know, bringing up this  
16 idea and getting it going?

17 MR. FOWLER: Not that I had.

18 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And regarding the tooling  
19 issue on the recent grounding of the 17 aircraft  
20 because of the suspect tools, you made a statement that  
21 Alaska Airlines is currently investigating this.

22 But the question came out that I have, and  
23 maybe you can't answer it or you can, I'm not sure, but

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1 at any time since the crash -- I mean, the incident  
2 occurred, we have an AD that comes out on February  
3 11th, superseded, I believe, on the -- I don't know  
4 what date it was, within a couple days.

5 You have a letter from Boeing requesting all  
6 operators check the tooling, and that's in April, and  
7 it wasn't until August that Alaska realizes that  
8 there's a potential problem with -- with tooling.

9 Do you have any idea what spurred on the --  
10 the August date for -- for realizing this?

11 MR. FOWLER: I can -- as I said, I became  
12 aware of it the week before last, when it was -- when  
13 it was an issue. What's spurring on the August date is  
14 that Engineering saw some differences in tools or  
15 identified that it didn't conform to the Boeing  
16 drawing, okay, and they therefore had some questions  
17 about its suitability.

18 So, I believe that's what's spurring on the August  
19 -- the August activity.

20 As to what transpired between any time  
21 earlier than that, I -- I can't tell you at this point  
22 because I don't know.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So, are you -- was

1     Engineering a part of the -- during the AD inspections?  
2     Were they out as part of -- with mechanics doing any  
3     in-flight checks or any -- there must have been  
4     communication between Engineering and the -- the  
5     analysis of the AD, and was that strictly a maintenance  
6     issue?

7                   MR. FOWLER:  I -- I would not have expected  
8     that there would have been any engineers out there with  
9     mechanics doing this because the initial Airworthiness  
10    Directive used the existing instructions in the  
11    Maintenance Manual to comply with the AD.

12                   MS. VON KLEINSMID:  I just wanted to clarify  
13    this.  I think you answered it, but I'm going to make  
14    you answer it again.

15                   The change back on the -- on the grease from  
16    AeroShell 33 to Mobil 28, was that initiated on the  
17    part of Alaska Airlines before communication came from  
18    the FAA that they weren't going to allow AeroShell 33  
19    or after?

20                   MR. FOWLER:  I can't tell you for sure, and I  
21    realize that that contradicts earlier testimony, that I  
22    said that they reacted to what the FAA asked them to  
23    do, but since you asked the question that way, I'm not

1       sure I know for sure.

2                   MS. VON KLEINSMID:  The only reason I brought  
3       that up is I was under the impression -- I've been with  
4       the team since February, and I wasn't quite sure, but I  
5       thought there had already been some action to go back  
6       to Mobil 28 before the end of March.

7                   MR. FOWLER:  My understanding was what I  
8       testified to earlier, and that was, it was reaction to  
9       the FAA, but now that you've asked the question, I have  
10      some doubts.  I'm not sure whether we initiated it or  
11      whether we reacted.

12                   MS. VON KLEINSMID:  You stated that --  
13      regarding the grease, that you hadn't any questions  
14      about the differences in the grease and applications,  
15      compatibility.

16                   The statement that you shared with the NTSB,  
17      your concerns, I guess I need a little bit more --

18                   MR. FOWLER:  Okay.

19                   MS. VON KLEINSMID:  I wasn't quite sure --

20                   MR. FOWLER:  I never -- I never said that I  
21      had concerns about applicability or compatibility or  
22      anything.  Okay.  What I said was, okay, or what I  
23      meant to say is that I know that this is the subject of

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1 investigation on the part of the NTSB, and we've been  
2 providing them information as they have requested it to  
3 continue their investigation. Okay.

4 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And regarding -- going  
5 back to tools -- I'm sorry. This is the order that I  
6 have them in my notes.

7 You said that there was some concern in the  
8 Engineering Group regarding the tools, and these are  
9 the tools that would be used on the fixture for the in-  
10 flight check.

11 Who in Engineering addressed to you the  
12 concerns regarding the tool?

13 MR. FOWLER: Gerardo.

14 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Can you give us his first  
15 name?

16 MR. FOWLER: That is his first name.

17 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Oh, Gerardo. Last name?

18 MR. FOWLER: Hueto, H-U-E-T-O.

19 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And he came directly to  
20 you?

21 MR. FOWLER: No. He -- he, together with  
22 Scott Patterson, okay, briefed me, and I believe Bill  
23 Weaver and Jim Trimmerger all at the same time via

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1 conference call.

2 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And approximately what  
3 time frame was this?

4 MR. FOWLER: That was Wednesday before last,  
5 as I said, which would have made it August 2nd, and as  
6 I recall, I took the conference call from home. So, it  
7 was about 6 in the evening.

8 MS. VON KLEINSMID: When the question was  
9 raised, and I'm going to the Oakland facility in  
10 particular, regarding the availability to complete C  
11 checks on time, and I think you made the statement that  
12 sometimes it was good, sometimes it was excellent,  
13 sometimes it was rough, and then you went on to say  
14 that there's many reasons for that, turnover, work  
15 scope increasing, the plan not encompassing what work  
16 had to be done.

17 But you didn't mention the fact that the plan  
18 -- any change in the plan from a five-day work week to  
19 a seven-day work week, and I'm sort of wondering if  
20 that also could have had an impact. That's my first  
21 question.

22 My second question being, have you ever spent  
23 any time analyzing that?

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1           MR. FOWLER: Let me ask -- let me answer the  
2 first question first.

3           Whether or not the change from a five-day to  
4 a seven-day work week would have impacted that? I  
5 don't believe so because when we changed from five to  
6 seven days, we also added the commensurate number of  
7 staff to provide the number of man hours that were  
8 needed each day. I mean, approximately 30 percent  
9 increase in labor for the increase of the additional  
10 two days a week.

11           And your second question was?

12           MS. VON KLEINSMID: I've forgotten. Have you  
13 analyzed that -- that overall impact on the plan as to  
14 maybe being a reason why there's been more than often  
15 aircraft being late out of C check, as being -- that  
16 might have some potential impact to that.

17           MR. FOWLER: I'm still not sure I'm -- I  
18 understand what you're asking.

19           MS. VON KLEINSMID: Let me rephrase it. Have  
20 you done any analyses on productivity, breaking it  
21 down, say, by days of the week?

22           MR. FOWLER: We have done comparisons between  
23 the number of days the airplane is planned in there,

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1 the number of days that it's required out, balanced  
2 that against the number of man hours that are required  
3 into the airplane, to validate whether or not the  
4 staffing was there or whether or not we under-estimated  
5 the work or over-estimated the work or whether or not  
6 it was just something that was unexpected that came up  
7 during the check, and the -- I mean, the findings are -  
8 - are various.

9 I mean, there's -- there's no one silver  
10 bullet that you can say it will -- will solve any  
11 individual problem. I don't think you're ever going to  
12 have a time ever where every single heavy check  
13 airplane comes out on time or early.

14 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. Has there been any  
15 analysis, particularly analyzing -- I know that records  
16 are maintained in terms of an open item for, and, you  
17 know, the number of changes as you go through the  
18 shifts in terms of completing the non-routine items and  
19 the regular routine items.

20 Any analysis or any plans, any thoughts,  
21 anyone came up to you and asked you, has anyone looked  
22 at whether or not Saturday and Sundays are -- are  
23 productive work days compared to Monday through Friday?

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1           MR. FOWLER: I don't think we've done that  
2 analysis.

3           MS. VON KLEINSMID: Has that question ever  
4 come across in your mind?

5           MR. FOWLER: Actually, quite frankly, no, it  
6 hasn't, because if you look at the industry norm, the  
7 industry norm is that heavy maintenance operations  
8 operate seven days a week. It's really a matter of  
9 asset utilization.

10           Why would you have an airplane sitting on the  
11 ground for two days a week, okay, or have an airplane  
12 sitting on the ground for 14 days if you could have the  
13 airplane back in service in 10?

14           MS. VON KLEINSMID: The only problem being  
15 that you're assuming that every single day of the week  
16 is a -- is an equitable number in terms of  
17 productivity, and that's a big key to that.

18           MR. FOWLER: Maybe I'm dating myself, but,  
19 you know, when you sign on in this industry, you accept  
20 that it's a 24-hour-a-day/7-day-a-week job, and I think  
21 that the majority of the folks out there understand  
22 that.

23           MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. Is Oakland

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1 currently in the C check scheduled to seven days?

2 MR. FOWLER: The -- Oakland is currently  
3 working seven days a week.

4 MS. VON KLEINSMID: What about Seattle?

5 MR. FOWLER: Seattle, last I was directly  
6 involved, was working seven days a week. I believe it  
7 is, also.

8 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Are you a participant in  
9 the 8 a.m. meeting? I think this is the meeting where  
10 you talked about being involved with the delays, and  
11 when we addressed line maintenance, you said you're a  
12 daily -- usually daily sort of get involved in that.

13 Is that the 8 a.m. meeting?

14 MR. FOWLER: Let's clarify. Okay. When I  
15 was directly -- when I had full responsibility for M&E  
16 as the division officer, then I was not involved with  
17 the 8:00 meeting. Okay. What I would do is meet with  
18 my staff at 7:30 in the morning, okay, on various  
19 issues. Okay. I would review the previous day's  
20 operations.

21 The 8:00 meeting would have been run by the  
22 Assistant Vice President of Maintenance. Okay. I may  
23 or may not have listened in on that meeting but

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1 typically was not a participant.

2           Since I left M&E, when I say "left M&E", I  
3 was no longer directly their division officer, I have  
4 not plugged into the 8:00 meeting.

5           MS. VON KLEINSMID: Conference call. Okay.  
6 Have you ever been involved in -- you mentioned the  
7 AOG, aircraft on ground situation. Say an aircraft has  
8 got a mechanical failure, and it's not going anywhere.  
9 It's not carrying passengers.

10           Have you ever been directly involved in any  
11 capacity where you've made phone calls to mechanics  
12 working on the aircraft or made a phone call to a pilot  
13 who might have written up the maintenance log or  
14 refused to fly the aircraft?

15           MR. FOWLER: My involvement with issues of  
16 that nature would have been through Maintenance  
17 Control.

18           MS. VON KLEINSMID: So, you're stating that  
19 you've never personally made any phone calls directly  
20 to -- to a mechanic working on the aircraft or a pilot?

21           MR. FOWLER: That's what I'm saying.

22           MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. And you're  
23 familiar with the MIG-4 card on the non-routine

1 following C check?

2 MR. FOWLER: Generally.

3 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. Can you -- can --  
4 you're familiar with the -- first of all, the MIG-4 and  
5 the procedures, the different --

6 MR. FOWLER: That was a number of questions.  
7 Ask me again.

8 MS. VON KLEINSMID: The different blocks on  
9 the MIG-4, are you --

10 MR. FOWLER: Okay.

11 MS. VON KLEINSMID: The supervisor, when they  
12 sign off -- take a look at it. Is -- it is our  
13 understanding, my understanding that the approved  
14 action to replace the jack screw was signed off by a  
15 supervisor, Ross Belfour, and then, three days later,  
16 on the 30th, that decision was overridden by a lead  
17 mechanic, Ron Hansil.

18 What authority does a lead mechanic have to  
19 override the supervisor?

20 MR. FOWLER: I -- I'm not -- I am not  
21 personally familiar with every block in here and who  
22 signs it and who does what. So, I'm not sure I can  
23 answer your question, but I would offer that whether

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1 it's a mechanic or whether it's a supervisor, whether  
2 it's a lead, okay, if an employee has an issue with an  
3 airplane and says that something different needs to be  
4 done, okay, that employee certainly has the right to  
5 make that known.

6 MS. VON KLEINSMID: But you're not aware in  
7 terms of either procedure written in your manuals as to  
8 -- to signature authority or overriding authority?

9 MR. FOWLER: I am not.

10 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Any -- any idea of who  
11 may be aware or have that information to be able to  
12 answer that question within your organization?

13 MR. FOWLER: Well, I think that the -- that  
14 the people to ask would be the people that are directly  
15 involved with the process, and I'm not directly  
16 involved with this process.

17 MS. VON KLEINSMID: I think that's all the  
18 questions I have right now. Thanks.

19 MR. MCGILL: Dave?

20 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. Mr. Fowler, are you  
21 familiar with the O53 form that pilots use?

22 MR. FOWLER: I've seen it.

23 DR. CRAWLEY: So, do you know what that form

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1 is used for?

2 MR. FOWLER: My understanding is that it's a  
3 form for pilots to fill out to communicate either  
4 irregular operations, I suspect there's probably  
5 certain specific times when the pilot's required to  
6 fill it out, okay, or for just general communication or  
7 input.

8 DR. CRAWLEY: Are you -- do you know whether  
9 there's any tracking of those or computerized databases  
10 maintained for those?

11 MR. FOWLER: I don't know.

12 DR. CRAWLEY: You don't know what happens to  
13 them after they're filled out then?

14 MR. FOWLER: No.

15 DR. CRAWLEY: You don't know if there's any  
16 procedure for following up on them?

17 MR. FOWLER: You'd have to ask somebody in  
18 Flight Operations. I don't know that.

19 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. Maybe that wasn't a fair  
20 question to ask somebody in Maintenance.

21 Did -- did you try to familiarize yourself  
22 with the contents of the Emergency AD that came out on  
23 February 11th from the FAA regarding the inspections of

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1 the jack screws?

2 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

3 DR. CRAWLEY: Did you also familiarize  
4 yourself with the process of how the -- the actual  
5 procedures for completing these checks to some degree?

6 MR. FOWLER: I'm not sure what you're asking.

7 DR. CRAWLEY: Did you try to familiarize  
8 yourself with what was meant by a "visual" inspection  
9 and what was meant by an "in-flight" check?

10 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

11 DR. CRAWLEY: How -- how did you familiarize  
12 yourself with those things?

13 MR. FOWLER: I had Engineering come over and  
14 review the AD with me, the Airworthiness Directive with  
15 me, and as I recall specifically, you'll remember that  
16 we launched off and started doing our own inspection,  
17 okay, not in-flight, okay, but visual inspection, okay,  
18 in advance of the Airworthiness Directive.

19 So, when the Airworthiness Directive came  
20 out, I asked Engineering to come over, okay, and review  
21 with me what the Airworthiness Directive said, what the  
22 differences were between it and the inspection that we  
23 had initiated on our own and then walk me through how

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1 it was actually done.

2 DR. CRAWLEY: Did -- did Mr. Weaver help to  
3 keep you apprised of what was going on there?

4 MR. FOWLER: You know, as I -- I'm not sure.  
5 As I recall, I think Weaver was still in Oxnard.

6 DR. CRAWLEY: I see. Did -- did Mr. Ayer or  
7 Mr. Kelly get involved or concerned about these being  
8 done properly, and did -- did you brief them on what  
9 was going on as far as these checks went?

10 MR. FOWLER: That was a number of questions.  
11 Maybe you could ask one at a time.

12 DR. CRAWLEY: Did -- did you brief Mr. Ayer  
13 or Mr. Kelly about the progress of these -- the  
14 requirements of the progress of these checks?

15 MR. FOWLER: I don't recall where Mr. Kelly  
16 was at that time. I'm not sure if he was back from Los  
17 Angeles or whether he wasn't, but I was communicating  
18 with Bill Ayer on a daily basis relative to what the --  
19 the mandate was, what was required, and what our  
20 findings were, what our schedule was, and -- and so on.

21 DR. CRAWLEY: Did any of the three of you or  
22 Mr. Weaver or anyone in Engineering have any concerns  
23 about just making sure that the procedure was complying

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1 totally with the Emergency AD? Assuring Quality  
2 Control and Quality Assurance, I suppose.

3 MR. FOWLER: When you say "any concerns" that  
4 we were complying with the AD, I'm not sure what you're  
5 -- the AD required -- what the AD did, okay, is it  
6 provided a specific time frame, okay, for which to do a  
7 task that was already articulated in the Maintenance  
8 Manual. So, it was not a new task, it was a new  
9 frequency for the task, a new frequency for the  
10 inspection and so on.

11 So, I'm not sure that that -- you know, just  
12 changing the frequency and how often we did an  
13 inspection would have generated concern of anybody for  
14 compliance with the AD.

15 DR. CRAWLEY: Was there consideration of any  
16 special training for the people who were going to be  
17 doing these checks and considering the fact that this  
18 is normally a check that is done during a major C  
19 check?

20 MR. FOWLER: Not that I'm aware of.

21 DR. CRAWLEY: Let me ask a couple questions  
22 on this change to the grease. You mentioned that you  
23 didn't become aware of that till after the crash and --

1 and the NTSB became interested in that.

2 Do you know who actually initiated the change  
3 in the grease?

4 MR. FOWLER: No, I don't.

5 DR. CRAWLEY: Has there been any kind of  
6 internal investigation within Alaska to pursue that?

7 MR. FOWLER: Relative to who initiated it?

8 DR. CRAWLEY: Yes.

9 MR. FOWLER: Not past what the NTSB is doing.

10 DR. CRAWLEY: Have you reviewed this MEO-1  
11 process at all, where the -- effects a change to the  
12 Maintenance Program?

13 MR. FOWLER: That's part of the whole  
14 investigation.

15 DR. CRAWLEY: So, as it stands right now, the  
16 same MEO-1 form and the process for making a change to  
17 our Maintenance Manual would still be in place at this  
18 time?

19 MR. FOWLER: It is.

20 DR. CRAWLEY: Are you familiar with the MEO-1  
21 form?

22 MR. FOWLER: Generally.

23 DR. CRAWLEY: Who approves the form, and --

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1 and to finally approve the process when it's finished?

2 MR. FOWLER: I'm generally aware of the form.  
3 I'm not intimately aware of the procedure. I'd have  
4 to check the GMM.

5 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. Has there been any  
6 change to the General Maintenance Manual for evaluating  
7 a jammed stabilizer since the crash of Flight 261?

8 MR. FOWLER: Not that I'm aware of.

9 DR. CRAWLEY: Has there been any concern at  
10 your level or have you been aware of any concern about  
11 possibly changing the troubleshooting procedures for a  
12 jammed stabilizer?

13 MR. FOWLER: I'm not familiar with exactly  
14 what's in the Maintenance Manual now for trouble-  
15 shooting procedures. There is a great deal of  
16 awareness out there among all mechanics and Maintenance  
17 Control, okay, with where we've been on stabilizers  
18 right now, and I am very confident that if there is any  
19 -- any indication at all in the discrepancy that's  
20 reported on an airplane, okay, they're going to  
21 investigate the jack screw.

22 DR. CRAWLEY: You're saying that they -- even  
23 if it involved going beyond this troubleshooting that's

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1 in the General Maintenance Manual?

2 MR. FOWLER: I don't know what -- I don't  
3 think the General Maintenance Manual includes trouble-  
4 shooting.

5 DR. CRAWLEY: Okay. I think that's all the  
6 questions I have.

7 MR. MCGILL: John, let's take a few minutes  
8 here.

9 (Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

10 MR. MCGILL: Dick?

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. I apologize, I didn't  
12 realize that I was the last one to question. I could  
13 have told you we didn't need the break.

14 John, would you know if your -- internally,  
15 if you could have made any decisions about changing the  
16 standard by which you would accept or reject an end  
17 plate measurement on the jack screws, other than what  
18 is in the manual?

19 MR. FOWLER: Changing the standard by which  
20 we would accept or reject?

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes, sir. Lowering the  
22 40,000ths tolerance.

23 MR. FOWLER: On a number of occasions lately,

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1     okay, we've changed jack screws that were less than  
2     40,000ths, and the reason why we have is because we had  
3     two airplanes out there, maybe, and I think there were  
4     34, okay, which is obviously well within the limits,  
5     but the presence of that deferred item in the log book,  
6     and the pilot's reading that it was at 34,000ths of an  
7     inch, okay, and -- and saying that's too close, too  
8     much or whatever, we just figured that right now, with  
9     all the anxiety that everybody's going through, why  
10    create something else, okay, for people to be concerned  
11    or worried about.

12                 So, we haven't changed the standard. I mean,  
13    the manufacturer's limits, I mean, are still what we  
14    use for go or no-go, but we've made some subjective  
15    decisions in some cases for the reasons that I just  
16    mentioned.

17                 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And with respect to a similar  
18    situation, it appears if you tracked the investigation  
19    and the pre-investigation stuff, such as the '97 C-5  
20    check for 963, there is a measure of variability in the  
21    end plate readings that are achieved on -- on the  
22    checks.

23                 Would you agree with that statement?

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1           MR. FOWLER: I've never done the check  
2 myself.

3           MR. RODRIQUEZ: No. But, I mean, information  
4 that comes to you and the feedback that you're getting,  
5 do you recognize that there's, I don't want to say  
6 "significant", but I'll let you use the words, that  
7 there is variability in the end plate checks that your  
8 company is getting on jack screws?

9           MR. FOWLER: Generally, yes.

10          MR. RODRIQUEZ: Is there any concern in your  
11 mind or was there before you applied for whatever you  
12 call it, make known your impending retirement?

13                 Was there any concern for a need to go out  
14 and train or ensure that mechanics were doing the end  
15 plate check accurately or correctly?

16          MR. FOWLER: You're talking about current  
17 times?

18          MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes, sir.

19          MR. FOWLER: I believe we've essentially  
20 already done that. What we've done is we've -- we've  
21 tried -- we've done our best to relegate all of the end  
22 plate checks to Oakland, okay, where they're using the  
23 same people to check it, to check them every time they

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1 get checked, and we've done that, quite frankly, Dick,  
2 I mean, for exactly the reasons you said, and that is,  
3 we've seen some variability, and we wanted to make sure  
4 that -- that we took out whatever variable there was.

5           So, we've -- we've used the same mechanics in  
6 Oakland. As a matter of fact, this most recent  
7 exercise that we went through, when there was a  
8 question of the tools, okay, in order to use our best  
9 efforts and get the fleet back in the air as quickly as  
10 possible, if we had relegated all of those inspections  
11 to Oakland, we would have had the 17 airplanes on the  
12 ground much longer.

13           So, instead, what we did was we did the  
14 airplanes in Oakland. We did two airplanes in San  
15 Francisco, but we did them with mechanics from Oakland,  
16 okay, that had already had a great deal of experience  
17 in doing the check.

18           We did those checks in Phoenix, and we sent  
19 Andy Lieber down there to observe the readings on all  
20 the first two checks in Phoenix, and in Seattle, all of  
21 the checks that were done in Seattle were done and  
22 witnessed by Gerardo.

23           So, we've essentially done what you've

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1 suggested, and again, quite frankly, it's because we  
2 have seen the same variability, and, quite frankly,  
3 there still are some questions, you know, relative to  
4 that -- that end plate measurement itself as -- I mean,  
5 let's face it, the procedure's already been changed at  
6 least once that I'm aware of in the Maintenance Manual  
7 from what was in effect during the -- at the time of  
8 the accident, and I think that there's probably a lot  
9 more to learn about it.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, I guess the question I  
11 would ask is, did Andy or Gerardo, other than  
12 observing, did they do any instruction of the mechanics  
13 involved?

14 MR. FOWLER: We earlier had sent Andy down to  
15 -- down to Phoenix to provide an OJT session, if you  
16 will, on-the-job training session, for folks that were  
17 in Phoenix that were doing our end plate checks.

18 So, I know that that had formally happened in  
19 Phoenix. Relative to the most recent visit of Andy to  
20 -- to Phoenix for these most recent end plate  
21 measurements, I couldn't tell you whether or not he did  
22 any additional training past his involvement with the  
23 measurements at that time.

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1           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Is -- is Phoenix a pressure  
2 relief valve Oakland facility? If the programming of  
3 checks produces a glut of -- of needed checks, the  
4 overflow goes to Phoenix or -- or what?

5           MR. FOWLER: We have two substantial  
6 maintenance vendors that we use on the outside. One is  
7 Phoenix, and one is B.F. Goodrich, okay, up in Everett  
8 at Payne Field.

9           The amount of heavy maintenance that we have  
10 that we're doing right now, okay, because it's one of  
11 the peaks because we have a number of airplanes that  
12 were acquired six-seven years ago, they're coming up on  
13 their first D check or 30k check or whatever, okay, and  
14 our in-house capacity couldn't handle all them at the  
15 same time.

16           So, we have two substantial maintenance  
17 vendors on our ops spec that we send those airplanes to  
18 on the outside. So, they're actually -- they're  
19 handling, I mean, on a steady diet, okay, a certain  
20 portion of our heavy maintenance work.

21           So, there are already vendors that are doing  
22 the work on the airplanes.

23           Now, to your question, whether or not they're

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1 a relief valve, if there's a need to send another  
2 airplane outside, okay, we may do that with either B.F.  
3 Goodrich in Everett or AMS in Phoenix, and if it's an  
4 MD-80, more than likely, right now, in today's  
5 environment, yes, it would go to Phoenix, but it  
6 wouldn't be fair to characterize them as existing or  
7 our business relationship existing only to take  
8 overflow work out of Oakland.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Well, I guess the  
10 reason for my question is, are you confident of the  
11 capabilities of those mechanics to perform to the  
12 standards that Alaska expects?

13 MR. FOWLER: Absolutely.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I apologize. I don't have  
15 this source, but I'm -- I -- I was informed by someone  
16 that apparently some mechanics at Phoenix facility were  
17 unable to -- to do the end plate check based on  
18 examination of the task card that was presented to  
19 them. Are you familiar with that at all?

20 MR. FOWLER: No, I'm not.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you -- and you may have  
22 said, but let me just clarify it. Do you know, do you  
23 have a specific list of mechanics that are authorized

1 to do an end plate check at Phoenix?

2 MR. FOWLER: I don't know the answer to that.

3 I certainly don't have that list personally. Whether  
4 that list exists or not, I -- I don't know.

5 MR. RODRIQUEZ: The training -- the decision  
6 to send Andy and Gerardo out, who made that?

7 MR. FOWLER: I did.

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: You did. Was there any input  
9 from your subordinates reference that action?

10 MR. FOWLER: Not that I recall, but the --  
11 the -- the forum within which we made that decision,  
12 okay, or I made that decision, okay, was more one of  
13 collaboration.

14 We had -- I was there. Line Maintenance  
15 director was there. Base Maintenance director was  
16 there. We had Line Maintenance Planning there, various  
17 other folks, as we worked through this planning process  
18 of how we were going to address the inspection process  
19 as well.

20 So, there were four or five of us sitting  
21 around. Okay. We -- we put this plan together, so  
22 that we could put -- get Operations Control into action  
23 with rerouting airplanes and so on and so on.

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1           So, it wasn't like -- I mean, it was my  
2 suggestion. I mean, it just came as part of the normal  
3 discussion, you know. Well, what are we going to do  
4 with checks? Well, we've been doing them in Oakland.  
5 How about if we also do them here and here and here?

6           Okay. We provide additional people as well  
7 because when you have an airplane in like, take for  
8 instance, Phoenix, we hadn't been doing the end plate  
9 checks in Seattle. We hadn't been doing those end  
10 plate checks obviously in San Francisco.

11           So, we certainly didn't want to put airplanes  
12 there, okay, where people were going to do them that  
13 hadn't done them before, and relative to Phoenix, we  
14 were going to be having them do end plate checks  
15 essentially around the clock, and we knew that the  
16 people that did the end plate checks on the airplanes  
17 that were in there for 30k or whatever, if they had two  
18 or three people that had done it before, that might be  
19 fine for an airplane that's there for six weeks because  
20 they can always schedule around those people being  
21 there, but for airplanes being there around the clock,  
22 it seemed like the best way for us to provide  
23 assurance, okay, that we had a good accurate reading

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1 was just to control it that way. So, that's what we  
2 did.

3 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Can you tell me who is  
4 heading up your investigation internally on the tools?

5 MR. FOWLER: It's a joint effort between an  
6 outside lawyer that we have, who's been working with us  
7 this whole time, and Jim Trimberger and Ken  
8 Blankenship, for that matter, our Director of Quality  
9 Assurance.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And the lawyer?

11 MR. FOWLER: I believe his name is Jeff Judd.

12 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Apologies to Dean, but may I  
13 ask, --

14 MR. FOWLER: You certainly may, and -- and I  
15 expected you to, and I was going to offer it if you  
16 didn't.

17 I think it goes without saying, okay, whether  
18 we in Maintenance like it or not, okay, it goes without  
19 saying that right now, everything that Maintenance does  
20 is under a microscope. Okay. There's some level of at  
21 least question, okay, as to, you know, the process that  
22 is used and things like tools and stuff like that, and  
23 we thought that in order to make sure that -- at least

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1 to assure ourselves that we had the most objective  
2 investigation possible, that we not just have it done  
3 internally by our own people, we also involved somebody  
4 from the outside.

5 So, we decided to have them do that because  
6 this individual had also -- you know, he's been working  
7 with us for quite some time. That's the reason why  
8 he's involved.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. And as far as  
10 initiation of the investigation, could you give us a  
11 date when --

12 MR. FOWLER: When it was initiated?

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yeah.

14 MR. FOWLER: Well, this all transpired on --  
15 between August 2nd, 3rd and 4th, and I discussed with  
16 -- with Bill Ayer and some others just before I left on  
17 August 4th to take a few days off. So, it was  
18 initiated on the 4th.

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And a little bit about how  
20 they're going about it, since we passed Mr. Trimberger,  
21 and he didn't seem to know anything about it or we  
22 couldn't get anything out of him, and I haven't seen  
23 Mr. Blankenship yet.

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1                   How are they operating? What's their MO?

2                   MR. FOWLER: I -- I -- that's not one of  
3 those things I got a vote in.

4                   MR. RODRIQUEZ: I see.

5                   MR. FOWLER: And I have not been directly  
6 involved, and I have not gotten briefed.

7                   MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. And you don't know, so  
8 you don't know what the status is?

9                   MR. FOWLER: I don't know.

10                  MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you still have enough pull  
11 within the company to give us an update on it?

12                  MR. FOWLER: Well, I'm not sure --

13                  MR. RODRIQUEZ: By request or should we make  
14 the request of Mr. Trimberger?

15                  MR. FOWLER: I think it would be appropriate  
16 for you to make the request.

17                  MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Would you do that,  
18 Frank?

19                  MR. MCGILL: Okay.

20                  MR. RODRIQUEZ: Good. I -- I at least have  
21 been intrigued by the -- the continuing problem of the  
22 grease as well, and we've been similarly unsuccessful  
23 in getting information about where this came from, and

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1 I'm just wondering if, in coordination within the  
2 company internally, in any capacity, way, shape or  
3 form, you would have knowledge of where the idea to  
4 switch to AeroShell 33 originated?

5 MR. FOWLER: As to an individual?

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes.

7 MR. FOWLER: I don't know.

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: And as to the source of the  
9 AeroShell 33?

10 MR. FOWLER: You mean the supplier?

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm.

12 MR. FOWLER: Oh, I wouldn't know the  
13 supplier. I mean, I would suspect AeroShell or their  
14 distributor.

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: We've talked about the -- the  
16 MIG-4 card on the C-5 check for 963 in September '97,  
17 and I realize you were not privy to the activity at the  
18 time, but as a manager subsequent and becoming aware of  
19 the activity, I -- would you -- would you be concerned  
20 that you nearly bought a jack screw unnecessarily in  
21 any capacity? Were you ever -- would something of that  
22 level ever surface as a problem within the company,  
23 that, hey, we almost wasted \$60,000 or something like

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1 that?

2 MR. FOWLER: I think it would be an  
3 opportunity to go back to those involved and explain to  
4 them, you know, how the limits are used, and what the  
5 limits mean, okay, and to let them know that the jack  
6 screw was within limits, and it didn't need to be  
7 changed.

8 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm. But apparently that  
9 never took place?

10 MR. FOWLER: I couldn't tell you what took  
11 place, Dick, because I don't know.

12 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. I'm not big on  
13 newspapers.

14 MR. FOWLER: Thank you.

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Who is -- who is your  
16 replacement?

17 MR. FOWLER: I'm not sure it's fair to say  
18 that it's my replacement because the person that is  
19 coming in will not end up with all the responsibilities  
20 that I've had.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I see.

22 MR. FOWLER: But the person that's coming in  
23 relative to Maintenance and Engineering, okay, his name

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1 is Mickey Cohen.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: C-O-H-E-N?

3 MR. FOWLER: That's correct.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, without getting too  
5 involved or pre-judging activity, are there other  
6 hirings anticipated in this -- at this level or in this  
7 general management structure?

8 MR. FOWLER: Well, as you know, there's --  
9 there's a number of positions that recently, in  
10 identifying a reorganization in Maintenance and  
11 Engineering, that are being added. Relative to this  
12 level, not that I'm aware of.

13 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Is any of this activity in  
14 any way related to the FAA -- the resolution of the  
15 FAA's suggestion that they would withdraw your  
16 maintenance authority?

17 MR. FOWLER: Any of what?

18 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, any of the additional  
19 people that are being --

20 MR. FOWLER: We talked about two things. We  
21 talked about the person that's "replacing" me, and then  
22 we talked about some other additions as well. So, I'm  
23 not sure which piece you were talking about.

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1           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, I just assumed that  
2 since no one person's going to replace you, there will  
3 be some adjustment --

4           MR. FOWLER: Thanks.

5           MR. RODRIQUEZ: No one person is going to  
6 replace you. There will be adjustments in duties,  
7 responsibilities and organizational structure or wiring  
8 diagrams.

9           MR. FOWLER: From my other responsibilities?

10          MR. RODRIQUEZ: In your absence, there's  
11 going to be some adjustments, and I don't need to know  
12 who and what their titles will be. I just was curious.

13                   Is any of that activity in any way related  
14 directly to the FAA indictment of the Maintenance  
15 Program or whatever you want to call it?

16          MR. FOWLER: Okay. None of the  
17 organizational changes related to me, okay, or the new  
18 person that comes in to "replace" me or the  
19 reassignment of the other functions that currently  
20 report to me are in any way related to the FAA  
21 inspection findings.

22          MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. May I ask what you  
23 anticipate doing?

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1 MR. FOWLER: Well, I'm going to --

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Do you have a position that  
3 you're going to?

4 MR. FOWLER: I'm going to play a lot of golf  
5 and ski a lot and ride my motorcycle.

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: So, at this point, it is in  
7 fact a retirement of sorts?

8 MR. FOWLER: Take some time to see if I'm  
9 mentally ready to do that, but that's the intention.

10 MR. RODRIQUEZ: All right, sir. In your  
11 earlier testimony, you indicated that you had discussed  
12 utilization versus calendar intervals or standards with  
13 FAA.

14 MR. FOWLER: I didn't personally.

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Oh. But people working for  
16 you have?

17 MR. FOWLER: Related to me, okay, when we  
18 reviewed the -- the escalation of the C check to 15  
19 months, --

20 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Hm-hmm.

21 MR. FOWLER: -- okay, I recall in that  
22 conversation, okay, discussion, okay, about the  
23 utilization of the airplane versus the 15 months and

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1 their communication with the FAA.

2 I didn't have that communication myself, and  
3 I don't remember the details of it.

4 MR. RODRIQUEZ: All right. Do you remember  
5 who was involved in the FAA? Was it Hubbard?

6 MR. FOWLER: I would speculate that it was,  
7 but I don't know, and my lawyer's going to kick me for  
8 speculating.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: That's okay. I've gotten  
10 other speculation out of the previous witnesses.

11 Also, you made some reference to the fact  
12 that you had done or that the company had done no  
13 independent study of grease or not doing any  
14 independent activity, but I got correspondence with Mr.  
15 Clark indicating that the company had contracted  
16 independently for a study with respect to AeroShell 33  
17 and copper. Are you familiar with that?

18 MR. FOWLER: No, I'm not.

19 MR. RODRIQUEZ: You're not. What was the --  
20 what was the objection of Mr. Hubbard to Type 2 -- a  
21 mixture of fluids on the aircraft de-icing activity?  
22 Do you know?

23 MR. FOWLER: He -- he had no objection to the

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1 mixture of de-icing fluids on the airplane. His  
2 objection was that he believed that it needed to be  
3 applied to the entire airplane, and our position was  
4 that to apply Type 2 fluid to the entire airplane was  
5 actually less safe than only applying it to the wings  
6 and the control surfaces because of the -- of the other  
7 issues associated with it streaming across windows and  
8 running down across static flows.

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Was it your intention or was  
10 it your proposition to de-ice with Type 1 on all but  
11 the wings and control surfaces and use Type 2 there?

12 MR. FOWLER: Yes. Type 2 is not a -- not a  
13 de-icer. It's an anti-icer.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes, sir.

15 MR. FOWLER: So, you would -- you would use  
16 Type 1 first.

17 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, I thought perhaps you  
18 were suggesting not to de-ice the rest of the aircraft  
19 --

20 MR. FOWLER: No.

21 MR. RODRIQUEZ: -- at all.

22 MR. FOWLER: No, no. We were not suggesting  
23 to dispatch the airplane with frost or ice on the

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1 airplane.

2 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Well, winter's coming,  
3 and you have a new PMI. Have you broached this -- I  
4 guess you have. Do you know if the company has  
5 broached the subject again?

6 MR. FOWLER: I do not know.

7 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. I was wondering if you  
8 would have in your mind any correlation between the  
9 utilization of aircraft hours per day and the non-  
10 routine work items that would be required as it entered  
11 C check?

12 MR. FOWLER: Correlation between? I'm not  
13 sure what you're asking me.

14 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Well, you are running your C  
15 checks on a calendar basis. Information that has been  
16 provided to us indicates that your utilization has  
17 increased in the same time period that your calendar  
18 intervals have increased, and that you are not guided  
19 by hours in the interval of C checks, and I'm just  
20 wondering if, where your utilization is going up  
21 between the C checks, if you have noticed any increase  
22 in non-routine items that are -- that accompany the  
23 aircraft into the C check?

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1           MR. FOWLER: That's not something that I  
2 would track the non-routine items that accompany the  
3 airplane into the C check, but, more importantly, I'm  
4 not sure that I would agree that utilization has  
5 increased since the calendar time escalation.

6           I've forgotten -- I don't know exactly the  
7 date of the calendar time escalation. If somebody has  
8 it, they can tell me. I'm not sure when it went to 15  
9 months.

10           Okay. If that's the case, okay, if you look  
11 at our utilization, utilization of our fleet, what  
12 you'll see is that the major increases in utilization  
13 occurred between 1993 and 1995, and in 1993, fleet  
14 utilization was somewhere in the nine and a half to 10  
15 hour range. By 1995, that had gone up to solidly the  
16 10-10 and a half hour range.

17           In 1996, utilization was 11. something, 11.2  
18 or .3, and utilization has not substantively changed  
19 since 1996. Okay. As a matter of fact, over the last  
20 three years, it's gone down, and if you track that to  
21 the whole fleet, that's the case, utilization is  
22 essentially flat. If anything, it's down since 1996,  
23 and for the MD-80 separately, you'll note that the

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1 utilization is exactly the same, and that is, it's  
2 either flat or down since '96.

3 So, therefore, I couldn't agree that -- that  
4 since the calendar time escalation to 15 months, the  
5 utilization of the fleet has increased.

6 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Who would have that  
7 information within the company?

8 MR. FOWLER: Which information is that?

9 MR. RODRIQUEZ: What you just said.

10 MR. FOWLER: On utilization?

11 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Yes.

12 MR. FOWLER: The Planning Department would  
13 have it. If you just make the request, we can get the  
14 information.

15 MR. RODRIQUEZ: Frank, make the request.

16 MR. MCGILL: Well, I probably got that for  
17 you.

18 MR. RODRIQUEZ: I got a document here, and I  
19 have no idea.

20 MR. MCGILL: I had the utilization for  
21 certain months, specific for that segment, but for  
22 general times, I have that. I've already --

23 MR. RODRIQUEZ: For the MD-80 fleet?

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1           MR. MCGILL: For the MD-80 fleet, and I've  
2 already requested that, and I've already received it.

3           MR. RODRIQUEZ: Okay. Good. Then that  
4 really was my last question. Thank you very much.

5           MR. FOWLER: Thank you.

6           MR. MCGILL: Mike?

7           MR. LASLEY: I don't know if I got the last  
8 name straight. Was it Andy Lieber and Gerardo Huerto?

9           MR. FOWLER: Hueto.

10          MR. LASLEY: Hueto? Are they -- in what  
11 organization are they?

12          MR. FOWLER: Frankly, I couldn't tell you.

13          MR. LASLEY: What organization are they from?

14          MR. FOWLER: Gerardo is a structural  
15 engineer. As a matter of fact, I believe he's our new  
16 Manager of Structural Engineering, and Andy Lieber is  
17 from Tech Services, and he's been working on the  
18 Systems Working Group.

19          MR. LASLEY: How was it confirmed that they -  
20 - they're a source of -- of how to do this end plate  
21 check or they've gone around making sure it's all being  
22 done correctly? How was it confirmed that they know,  
23 that they properly understand how to accomplish it?

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1           MR. FOWLER: They've been the focal points in  
2 all of the work that's being done -- being done with  
3 the NTSB and with Boeing on the -- I suspect with  
4 Boeing on the checks.

5           MR. LASLEY: Okay. Thank you.

6           MR. MCGILL: Any more questions?

7           MS. VON KLEINSMID: Yeah. I have some. Just  
8 a couple.

9           I'm going to tee off with the Andy and  
10 Gerardo issue. Were they given any training or were  
11 specific mechanics in Oakland or -- and/or mechanics or  
12 inspectors in Oakland given any particular training on  
13 end plates within the last, say, six months?

14          MR. FOWLER: I can't answer that.

15          MS. VON KLEINSMID: And you had made a  
16 statement that you replaced a couple jack screws that  
17 were not at 40,000. They were below. I think you gave  
18 the number of 34,000ths.

19                 How does that come about? Who makes the  
20 decision or is -- is there anything in writing or  
21 what's the magic number or --

22          MR. FOWLER: There's nothing in writing.  
23 Typically, the magic number is anything above the mid

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1 30s.

2 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So, is a call placed to  
3 someone?

4 MR. FOWLER: Maintenance Control and  
5 Maintenance Planning maintain a record of the end plate  
6 intervals, and if they see one that's in that range,  
7 then they call for it to be changed.

8 MS. VON KLEINSMID: Call who for it to be  
9 changed?

10 MR. FOWLER: Well, they arrange it with  
11 Maintenance Planning, Maintenance Control. They  
12 arrange for it.

13 MS. VON KLEINSMID: So, a call would come in  
14 from, let's assume, Oakland to Maintenance Control, and  
15 that's -- that's who they would call, Maintenance  
16 Control?

17 MR. FOWLER: Well, they would report what  
18 they found in the readings to the Maintenance Planning  
19 Organization, and that would -- I'm not exactly sure  
20 how the communication gets to Maintenance Control,  
21 whether they call them directly or whether they get it  
22 from Maintenance Planning.

23 MS. VON KLEINSMID: And regarding this

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1 meeting that -- when the decision was made how to  
2 handle the 17 aircraft and the recheck required, you  
3 mentioned that you made a decision in a meeting where  
4 your Director of Line Maintenance, Director of Base  
5 Maintenance, Line Maintenance and Planning.

6           Anyone from Engineering, besides yourself,  
7 present?

8           MR. FOWLER: Not that I recall. Bill Weaver  
9 was back with family. His father-in-law was very ill,  
10 and Brian Hershman just had a new baby and was back in  
11 Minneapolis. So, --

12           MS. VON KLEINSMID: Okay. You've answered my  
13 question. That's all I have.

14           DR. CRAWLEY: I've got one.

15           MR. MCGILL: Go ahead.

16           DR. CRAWLEY: Is there any process right now  
17 that tracks rates of wear on the jack screw, say, on a  
18 database comparing end plate measurements?

19           MR. FOWLER: There's not anything that --  
20 that tracks it relative to any particular analysis, but  
21 the database that Maintenance Planning maintains, okay,  
22 has all of the readings, okay, the subsequent readings  
23 on the jack screw.

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1           So, we can see how it's changing or not  
2           changing, for that matter.

3           DR. CRAWLEY: Is there any kind of an  
4           analysis of that data or planned analysis of that data  
5           as far as you know, as far as, I guess, something that  
6           would -- would pick up a suddenly-accelerated rate or  
7           something like that?

8           MR. FOWLER: I think we still have a lot to  
9           learn from -- from the jack screw measurements and what  
10          they mean and how they change. Our confidence should  
11          be derived from the fact that even if they are  
12          changing, they're still well within the manufacturer's  
13          limits in order for the airplane to be released.

14          But more importantly than that, the -- the  
15          amount that we've decreased the interval and increased  
16          the rate of inspections on the airplanes also should --  
17          should provide a great deal of confidence.

18          So, in answer to your question, I think that  
19          that's an issue that we as an industry need to get to,  
20          and that is, you know, what are these -- what are the  
21          wear patterns? What do they mean?

22          Okay. We're tracking the data, but I'm not  
23          sure we're smart enough based on the things that are

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1 still being done in this investigation to say exactly  
2 what should be done.

3 DR. CRAWLEY: Thank you.

4 MR. MCGILL: Okay, John.

5 (Whereupon, the witness was excused.)

6 (Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned, to  
7 reconvene tomorrow morning, Wednesday, August 16th,  
8 2000, at 9:00 a.m.)

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