

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ENBRIDGE - LINE 6B RUPTURE IN
MARSHALL, MICHIGAN

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Docket No.: DCA-10-MP-007

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Interview of: ROBERT DONALD

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada

Tuesday,
January 31, 2012

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MATTHEW NICHOLSON
Investigator-in-Charge

APPEARANCES:

MATTHEW NICHOLSON, Investigator-in-Charge
Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and
Hazardous Materials Investigations
National Transportation Safety Board



BARRY STRAUCH, Ph.D.
Supervisory Investigator
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KALU KELLY EMEABA, Group Chair
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1 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. Bob, you're allowed to have one
2 other person of your choice present during this interview. This
3 other person may be an attorney, friend, family member, co-worker
4 or no one at all. If you would, please indicate whom you've
5 chosen to be present with you during this interview?

6 MR. DONALD: I've chosen not to bring anybody -- with
7 Jay Johnson.

8 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. We will now go around the room
9 and have each person introduce themselves for the record. Please
10 include your name with spelling, employer's name, contact phone
11 number and e-mail address. I will start and we'll go to my left
12 after that.

13 My name is Matthew Nicholson, M-a-t-t-h-e-w, N-i-c-h-o-
14 l-s-o-n. I am the NTSB IIC. My phone number is [REDACTED] My
15 e-mail is [REDACTED]

16 MR. EMEABA: My name is Kalu Kelly Emeaba, K-a-l-u
17 K-e-l-l-y, E-m-e-a-b-a. I'm the SCADA Operations Group Chair.
18 I'm from the NTSB. My phone number is [REDACTED] and my e-mail
19 address is [REDACTED]

20 MR. JOHNSON: Jay Johnson, Enbridge, Supervisor of U.S.
21 Compliance, [REDACTED]

22 MS. BUTLER: Karen Butler. I'm with PHMSA Central
23 Region out of Kansas City. I'm the Supervisor of Accident
24 Investigations. It's K-a-r-e-n, B-u-t-l-e-r. My e-mail is
25 [REDACTED] and my phone number is [REDACTED]

1 MR. STRAUCH: And I'm Barry Strauch with NTSB. B-a-r-r-
2 y, S-t-r-a-u-c-h. My phone is [REDACTED] My e-mail is
3 [REDACTED]

4 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

5 INTERVIEW OF ROBERT DONALD

6 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

7 Q. Bob, just to begin with -- I know it's been over a year
8 since we talked to you, if you could just update us as to your
9 position at Enbridge? Are you still in shift lead capacity or --

10 A. No. We were moved into a supervisory capacity as part
11 of the new control center management. So the shift lead position
12 transitioned to supervisor and we picked 10 new operations
13 personnel to back us up on the technical side. So their official
14 is technical lead.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Two on every shift: one pipeline and one terminal. And
17 these will provide the technical support that was advised by the
18 -- I think by the -- some of the --

19 Q. Can you speak up a little bit? I'm sorry.

20 A. Yeah, the new positions, the shift lead positions were
21 factored in as part of the recommendations for the new control
22 center management.

23 Q. So the title shift lead is no longer --

24 A. No.

25 Q. Oh.

1 A. Shift lead is no longer there.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. It's still in the e-mail address, but we're under
4 supervisory now, so --

5 Q. So your title is control center supervisor?

6 A. Terminal supervisor.

7 Q. Terminal?

8 A. Yep.

9 Q. Okay. So now they define you?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Pipeline/terminal?

12 A. Pipeline and terminal, correct.

13 Q. Whereas before I think it was sort of an understanding
14 between --

15 A. It was everything.

16 Q. It was everything?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. But you -- the two shift leads would typically work it
19 out between themselves?

20 A. It wouldn't be defined as pipeline or terminal.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. They basically covered a number of consoles in the room.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. But we were open to just about any console.

25 Q. Okay. So are the duties the same now for supervisor or

1 has that changed?

2 A. Supervisory roles and technical lead roles are being
3 fleshed out right now.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So probably within another month we'll have that all
6 settled out as to what the new roles are. So a lot of the
7 technical oversight that was previously provided by shift lead has
8 now all gone to technical lead.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Yeah, so we're basically more HR related. We're still
11 part of the liaising between departments, shipper services, you
12 know, just general oversight on the whole room.

13 Q. And there's still two supervisors per shift; is that
14 right?

15 A. Two supervisors per shift, yeah.

16 Q. Okay. One terminal, one pipeline?

17 A. One terminal, one pipeline, correct.

18 Q. Okay. I appreciate that. Thanks.

19 MR. NICHOLSON: At this point I guess I'll pass it over
20 to Barry.

21 BY MR. STRAUCH:

22 Q. Okay. Bob, at the time of the accident you were a shift
23 lead?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. Were you on duty any of the days immediately preceding

1 the accident?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Was it July 25th? Any of those days, July 24th, '5th,
4 '6th?

5 A. I believe it was a Sunday, so I think I was on shift for
6 2 days prior to.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Yeah, the Friday and the Saturday.

9 Q. Okay. According to -- I believe it was Ghazal Derhami's
10 testimony. She said that you were involved with her in terms of
11 using a draft procedure that allowed one to determine calculations
12 -- and I'm maybe phrasing this incorrectly -- to calculate how
13 much quantity would be put into a pipeline in a column separation.
14 Are you familiar with that?

15 A. I think we were drafting up an interim procedure for
16 column separation. But what we had used in the past primarily, if
17 there was a suspect column sep, that we would look at the previous
18 shutdown and how much had drained out of the line to give us an
19 idea of how much time it would take us to put the column back
20 together.

21 Q. Okay. And what happened if, in calculating how much
22 would be required to put the column together, it -- in your
23 calculations it would take more than 10 minutes? What would you
24 do in that situation?

25 A. In those situations we were supposed to get approval

1 from our superiors to go beyond the 10 minutes.

2 Q. And did this, in fact, happen at any time when you did
3 seek -- where the calculations showed it would take more than 10
4 minutes and you did seek approval?

5 A. I'm trying to think. With her, I'm not sure if we got
6 the column back together before the 10 minutes or not.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. I'm pretty sure we did.

9 Q. Okay. How was it understood that people were to get
10 approval of the supervisors if the calculations showed it would
11 take more than 10 minutes using this particular draft procedure
12 that I'm referring to?

13 A. If it had gone past 10 minutes, yeah, we were supposed
14 to get a hold of the supervisor to get approval to go beyond the
15 10.

16 Q. And how was that known if it was not stated explicitly
17 in the draft procedure?

18 A. I'm not sure how you would -- if the calculation was to
19 go beyond 10 minutes?

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. We were to call the supervisor, yeah, and ask for
22 permission to go beyond.

23 Q. Okay. To your knowledge, was it stated on the draft
24 procedure itself?

25 A. We had the 10-minute rule basically, so --

1 Q. And what --

2 A. So, if it was to go beyond 10 -- we basically cut it off
3 at 10 minutes and then if the calculation goes beyond 10, we would
4 try to get supervisory approval to beyond 10.

5 There are -- with the calculations we have now with the
6 elevation profiles and crude properties and such for the specific
7 pipelines, if they do go beyond 10, we still restrict the operator
8 to cut it at 10. If he doesn't have the column back, we shut down
9 and reassess.

10 Q. Was this restriction in place at the time of the
11 accident?

12 A. I don't know. I don't think so.

13 Q. So at the time of the accident it was okay to go beyond
14 10 minutes?

15 A. No, 10-minute was the cutoff. If we couldn't get it
16 back together at 10, then, yeah, we'd have to shut down.

17 Q. Okay. Ghazal Derhami, she was one of the people that
18 you supervised?

19 A. From time to time, yeah.

20 Q. Okay. How would you characterize her performance?

21 A. At best she was a little erratic being a new operator.
22 And that was expected, so --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And she would have issues at times with her operations,
25 so we would probably have supplied some support when she asked for

1 it, so --

2 Q. Okay. And what would you attribute her erratic
3 performance to?

4 A. Just her personality type.

5 Q. Okay. What was it about her personality that led to
6 this?

7 A. She seemed like a very insecure person.

8 Q. I see. Okay.

9 A. So, just going off of conversations that we had with
10 other supervisors or shift leads, for taking direction sometimes
11 she'd get a little standoffish.

12 Q. Standoffish?

13 A. Didn't like being told what to do or being told that,
14 yeah, she had -- or her logic was may be flawed in some of her
15 approaches.

16 Q. Now, Tim Chubb was her shift mate. How would you
17 characterize his performance?

18 A. Tim had been with us, I think, a couple of years. He
19 seemed all right. I really didn't have a lot to do with Tim. I
20 didn't work with him very much, so --

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. So it would be really hard -- like I said, we do
23 assessments on operators that we actually operate with the most.
24 So if operators come across shifts on mutuals then, yeah, like I
25 said, it's really hard to determine or to get a real good grasp of

1 his operational capabilities.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. The fact that he was sitting in a chair would tell me
4 that he was competent enough to operate the pipelines, but --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. That's as far as I can, you know, take it.

7 Q. You had more familiarity with Ghazal than Tim?

8 A. Not really. Ghazal, again, was -- she wasn't on my
9 shift. From time to time I worked with her.

10 Q. Now, suppose -- well, in your experience as a supervisor
11 or shift lead, how often had operators come to you and asked to be
12 transferred away or to get a different shift mate?

13 A. To get a different shift mate?

14 Q. Yeah. If they weren't getting along with a shift mate
15 and wanted a different one, how often did that occur?

16 A. Well, I wouldn't say ever. No one has ever come up to
17 me and asked to be transferred off their shift because they didn't
18 get along with an operator.

19 Q. If somebody had come to you and asked you, what would
20 your response have been?

21 A. I would try to resolve the issue. There are issues
22 where operators argue, and so I've intervened in the past and
23 tried to get to the source of the matter. Nothing was -- we're
24 here to operate the pipelines and the terminals; we're not here
25 for, you know, social interactions and, you know -- so we try to

1 keep it on a professional level as best we can.

2 Q. And what's your expectation in terms of how shift mates,
3 how they would work sharing the space? What do you see in terms
4 of --

5 A. Well, we try to promote team concept in the room. So if
6 operators have different various questions on their operation,
7 depending on the experience level, the lesser experienced might
8 ask the more experienced an opinion on what they're seeing. And
9 so, like we do try to promote teamwork in the room, so -- with all
10 the terminals and pipelines that they interact with.

11 Q. Okay. Now, are how supervisors or shift leads expected
12 to promote teamwork in the control room?

13 A. How are we -- well, okay. So, well, basically, like I
14 said, the pipeline groups were kind of spread out and they were
15 called pods, I guess, you know. So they would basically -- the
16 console arrangement was -- not in all cases, but in some cases
17 were back to back so they were close, in close proximity to each
18 other. And depending on the training level, if they were cross-
19 trained, they would be able to watch the other console while the
20 other operator went for a bathroom break or in the kitchen to get
21 something to eat.

22 Q. Okay. So they were expected to cover when the other
23 person was away from the console for any reason?

24 A. Correct. Yep.

25 Q. What about when one operator became overloaded for

1 whatever reason, what would happen then?

2 A. My experience was when I've seen operators working in
3 the group that I worked in get overload, I would jump in and grab
4 their workload, their paperwork basically. Like I said, I had
5 seen operators involved in pipeline upsets. And depending on the
6 size of the line, yeah, it would take, you know, 20 minutes to a
7 half hour to put it all back together again, whether it was
8 starting up or shutting it down. So I used to volunteer, just
9 grab the guy's paperwork and just do it for him.

10 Q. And when you did this you were a supervisor or a
11 controller?

12 A. No, I was an operator at the time.

13 Q. You were an operator?

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. Okay. So you could tell just by sitting next to the
16 person?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. What about as a supervisor? How could you tell if
19 somebody was getting overloaded?

20 A. The operator would have to come and tell us. Given the
21 scope and the size, you know, nearly impossible to go and ask if
22 -- like I said, we know some consoles from time to time they did
23 get overloaded. Whether or not their pod mate's help out -- if in
24 the case where they don't have a pod mate, if the operator is
25 stressed out because of the workload, we'll look for alternative,

1 try and get somebody to come in and help them.

2 Q. Which consoles were more prone to this than others?

3 A. There was one console that had asked for help. The
4 workload wasn't so much that it was overwhelming every day, but
5 because of scheduling concerns, probably every other day they
6 would run into multiple deliveries and injections over a period --
7 over a short period of time.

8 Q. And what line did this console operate?

9 A. That would probably be -- at the time, one operator had
10 come to me with regard to stress levels on the workload and so, I
11 brought that forward with my immediate supervisors and it led into
12 a console workload assessment. And so, we've seen measurement
13 tools developed over the last year and a half or so, the number of
14 operations that actually take place on every console including the
15 on-calls.

16 Q. This tool, if it was a year and a half, it was developed
17 after the accident?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Okay. So how would you -- which line was that that was
20 subject to the most --

21 A. It wasn't a line. It was a terminal.

22 Q. Okay. Which terminal was that?

23 A. Clearbrook, Minnesota.

24 Q. I'm sorry?

25 A. Clearbrook.

1 Q. Oh, okay.

2 A. Clearbrook/Regina.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. The operator had told me that his stress levels were
5 high with regard to workload. And when I sat and talked to him,
6 we walked through the operation and I told him, I said, if you're
7 calling for this workload assessment to be made, then we have to
8 get the other operators on that console in line with it as well.

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. And that was to identify whether it was just his issue
11 or it was prevalent throughout the operation.

12 Q. Okay. And what did you find?

13 A. Over the period of months, I think we got the other
14 operators on line, as far as I know, to say that, yeah, that there
15 were days when that console load would constitute a lot of stress
16 for them, so --

17 MR. STRAUCH: That's all the questions I have at this
18 time.

19 MR. DONALD: Oh, sure.

20 MR. STRAUCH: Thank you.

21 MR. NICHOLSON: Karen?

22 BY MS. BUTLER:

23 Q. I guess I've just got a couple clarifications.

24 A. Sure.

25 Q. I wanted to make sure -- I think that the Ghazal

1 procedure relationship that we were talking about had to do with
2 there was a pig in the line? And I think within the 10-minute
3 rule it was possible that that pig was going to get stuck or would
4 stop approximately within a valve if it didn't come together. And
5 there was conversation about the fact they wanted to get the pig
6 past the valve before they would attempt to shut down if they
7 hadn't met the column sep come together time, the 10-minute rule.

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. Do you recall any of those specifics in the discussion
10 or not?

11 A. Nothing with regard to a pig, no.

12 Q. Okay. All right. Do you recall it in regard to
13 anything else?

14 A. I recall a column separation and working out a time to
15 figure that out with the amount of drain up.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And the column did come together in the exact time that
18 I had figured out just based on the drain up, so.

19 Q. Okay. And you kind of alluded to elevation calculations
20 being part of that procedure?

21 A. No. Not at the time.

22 Q. So that's part of a new procedure?

23 A. That is.

24 Q. Okay. I got that. Thank you for clarifying that.

25 A. Yep.

1 Q. Have you read the internal Enbridge investigation for
2 Marshall?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. And in the past when we've interviewed you and
5 you've had time to reflect, is there anything that surfaced in
6 your mind about, oh, I should have said this or why didn't they
7 ask about that; they really need to know about that or they
8 clearly need to pursue this element and it hasn't been discussed?
9 Is there anything like that you'd like to clarify for the record
10 or interject to us?

11 A. With regard to the incident itself?

12 Q. Yes. Or it could be before or after, the set-up to the
13 incident or how something worked through the process?

14 A. Not really. My perception was we were in a growth --
15 the company was in a growth mode with bringing in new pipelines,
16 new terminals, especially in northern Alberta. And my only
17 concern -- and I voiced that with my supervisors -- was that were
18 we on track with hiring and getting enough bodies in to meet that
19 new demand.

20 Q. All right. So if I were to paraphrase that, I think you
21 said you were concerned about the fact that the control room was
22 growing?

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. And you wanted to make sure that you had enough
25 controllers in the training pool? Is that -- would that be fair?

1 Or in the experience pool or how would --

2 A. Yeah. In the past, it seemed to me, as we brought in
3 new consoles, not to the extent of the growth that we're
4 experiencing now, is that we would be more probably reactive.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And we'd be hiring, but it would -- I don't know if the
7 timing would be right on the money or not.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. That's just a personal opinion.

10 Q. Okay. So at the time of Marshall, when it occurred --
11 would you -- do you think you had enough resources to cover
12 situations in the room or not?

13 A. Yeah, I would say we did.

14 Q. Okay. Would you clarify, as experienced resources or --

15 A. The experience level is diminishing now. So, a number
16 of experienced operators had vacated to other positions, some
17 still within the control center as coordinators and such.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. You know, so our experience level within the room was
20 diminishing with new employees coming in and -- so, yeah, our
21 experience level is pretty low right now.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Not many of the old folks though.

24 MS. BUTLER: Okay. That's all.

25 MR. NICHOLSON: Kelly?

1 BY MR. EMEABA:

2 Q. Kelly Emeaba.

3 A. Hey, Kelly.

4 Q. My question is also on the procedure, unapproved
5 procedure.

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. And I have a couple of them. The first one is, if I may
8 ask you why did you pull and apply the unapproved procedure for
9 column separation in May of 2010, which they have mentioned? Why
10 did you pull it and apply it?

11 A. I applied it?

12 Q. Yeah, why was it used?

13 A. There was no other way to assess column separation other
14 than by the amount of drain up. It had been used before, as far
15 as I was concerned.

16 Q. Okay. And the issue is that when you know it was
17 unapproved?

18 A. The column separation procedure, per se, was based on
19 putting the column back together within 10 minutes.

20 Q. Correct. I know.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. If you know -- when you know the procedure contained an
23 unapproved segment in it, because if you look at the entire
24 procedure, you have the approved segment on it, then the
25 unapproved procedure, which is the calculation, and an area,

1 because that's where the unapproved issue came in.

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. So when you knew it contained the unapproved segment and
4 that was also the area that was used, why did you apply it to be
5 used when you know that procedure has not been approved?

6 A. Well, there's no procedure per se for column separation.
7 The only procedure we had was if the column didn't come together
8 we were to shut down and reassess.

9 Q. Correct.

10 A. So my understanding with Ghazal was the column did come
11 together, close to -- probably close to the 10-minute mark. So,
12 there was no issue as far as I was concerned. And I told her, I
13 said, on the calculation that, you know, it would probably take
14 this long to put it together, so --

15 Q. Okay. Now, what we are trying to find out is that you
16 are speaking as though that procedure that you used was already in
17 place, accepted by the management and approved by whoever approves
18 it.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. But it was not approved?

21 A. No, sir.

22 Q. Yes, that's my question: Why was it used? If that had
23 not been put in place, you had a previous one that you only have
24 to follow. Why did you (indiscernible) to go to that unapproved
25 one? Was there a reason why you had to do it?

1 A. Just logic.

2 Q. Just logic. Okay. And if I can ask a second question?

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. How many times has the procedure been applied during
5 your shift management before the 26th of July?

6 A. I couldn't tell you.

7 Q. So you can't --

8 A. Myself, I've seen column separation come together. In
9 most of the instances it has come together before the 10-minute.
10 In the case of it going past the 10-minute, we've shut down and
11 re-assess it.

12 Q. Okay. So the answer I'm getting from you is that you
13 don't know why you pulled that procedure (indiscernible) to Ghazal
14 to use, other than the fact you wanted the column separation to be
15 filled. So even when it was unapproved and you knew it, it was
16 your own decision to use it?

17 A. Yes, that is correct.

18 Q. Without the management approval or whoever that approves
19 it?

20 A. Again, it was within the 10-minute, so the column came
21 together within the 10-minute.

22 Q. Okay. And --

23 A. So the calculation I used just verified -- my
24 understanding is that the column had drained so much oil at the
25 delivery location downstream, so we would use that, that number

1 divided by the rate to guesstimate a time for the column to come
2 together. Again, if it went beyond the 10-minute we'd have to
3 shut down and reassess.

4 Q. Okay. And the other question is that, did you inform
5 the operator that the procedure was unapproved to be used?

6 A. No, I don't think I --

7 Q. You did not tell her?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Did you --

10 A. I explained -- I think I explained to her that, that we
11 were -- I was using the number of the column -- I mean, sorry, the
12 drain on the shut down, the previous shut down, in my calculation
13 just to verify how close we'd get to actually putting the column
14 back together.

15 Q. Okay. And the last question, did you ever discuss the
16 used unapproved procedure with your supervisor?

17 A. Did I ever discuss the unapproved?

18 Q. The unapproved procedure that you used to your
19 supervisor?

20 A. I'm not sure if I talked to a supervisor about it. I
21 know other operators that I've worked that we would use that
22 calculation as a guideline.

23 Q. As a guideline?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Even when it is unapproved?

1 A. Yeah, I guess.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. It wasn't -- there was no per se approved procedure to
4 use drain off in the column sep procedure. But the logic for
5 myself is if the drain up on that column or on the line had been a
6 certain amount, that there was a reasonable expectation -- and
7 we've seen this in the past that the column would come together in
8 a number of minutes based on drain out.

9 Q. Now, we don't have any argument on what you are saying
10 in terms of the time that it comes together, the column separation
11 comes back together.

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. But the question is the fact that this procedure was
14 unapproved by the management and in some way in your system --

15 A. It wasn't part of the procedure.

16 Q. It wasn't part of the procedure?

17 A. No. That's right.

18 Q. Okay. So I know the question has gone before you. So
19 why did you have to go and get it when you know it was not part of
20 the procedure? Why did you get it and why did you use it?

21 A. I explained to Ghazal that this calculation could be
22 used as part of a column sep calculation. That was all. It
23 wasn't to say we were superseding or overseeing or writing a new
24 procedure; we were just giving her an explanation as to how a
25 column does come apart and the reasons why it comes apart.

1 Q. And it was applied?

2 A. Well, the application is within the 10-minute, so the
3 procedure states 10 minutes, correct? Yes. So we don't go beyond
4 the 10 minutes.

5 Q. The calculation aspect of it, which was new.

6 A. This was mine.

7 Q. That was -- it's yours?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. So you generate that, the calculation segment in that
10 procedure; is that what you're saying?

11 A. I'm saying I did the calculation apart from the
12 procedure.

13 Q. No.

14 A. The procedure states 10 minutes.

15 Q. Correct.

16 A. The column.

17 Q. But on this unapproved procedure there is a segment
18 which state do this calculation, do that calculation on it. Who
19 inserted that portion there? Was it by you or by your management,
20 but had not been put in place?

21 A. I'm not, I'm not following. The procedure states 10
22 minutes to put the column together. If not, you shut down and
23 reassess. Okay, so -- and then usually we would call a support,
24 so --

25 MR. NICHOLSON: Yeah, I'm going to follow up maybe -- do

1 you have anything else?

2 MR. EMEABA: No, thanks.

3 MR. NICHOLSON: I think I'm getting the gist of this.

4 Maybe we can -- maybe I could rephrase it a little bit.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I --

6 MR. NICHOLSON: Jay, do you want to clarify?

7 BY MR. JOHNSON:

8 Q. Excuse me. This is Jay. So I don't want to put words
9 in your mouth, but the draft procedure, which had a component of
10 that which talked about how to figure out how long it would take
11 for line pack --

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. -- that's the calculation you would do? That line pack
14 one?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. But you did not -- the new -- the draft procedure said
17 if it took 20 minutes you could pump for 20 minutes. So you used
18 the calculation, but said we still have to follow the existing
19 procedure and shut down within 10 minutes?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. So you were showing Ghazal -- or were you showing Ghazal
22 the calculation part of the procedure and how you came up with the
23 numbers, but following the existing one saying, but you shut down
24 in 10 minutes?

25 A. Yeah.

1 MR. JOHNSON: Actually, I don't know if that's where
2 you --

3 MR. NICHOLSON: Yeah, that's how I understood it too. I
4 think -- I want to go back a little farther too because I'm
5 getting -- I thought I was hearing inconsistent answers.

6 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

7 Q. Karen asked you about a very specific time that Ghazal
8 pointed out when she used this procedure and I thought I heard you
9 say, no, you don't remember that instance.

10 A. Just with the -- with a pig in the line. I don't
11 remember anything with regard to the pig.

12 Q. But she said with the May 2010 incident. And then he
13 asked if you used the procedure in May of 2010 and you said, yes,
14 with Ghazal, so --

15 A. Well, I thought we were referring to the same event that
16 she was putting her column together.

17 Q. It is the same.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. That's why I'm confused.

20 A. Yeah, no I --

21 Q. I heard two different answers.

22 A. Well --

23 Q. I heard no, I've never -- I didn't do it.

24 A. With Karen, I don't remember anything about a pig being
25 in the line.

1 Q. Okay. So we are clear that -- or you've confirmed that
2 you did pull this draft procedure in May of 2010 and provided it
3 to Ghazal?

4 A. I used the -- I told her the -- using the calculation we
5 could guesstimate the time it would take the column to come back
6 together, so --

7 Q. And that was with this draft procedure?

8 A. Yeah, I believe it probably was in draft. I don't
9 remember really.

10 Q. You don't remember if it was in draft or if it was the
11 draft procedure?

12 A. Yeah, I don't remember if it was a draft procedure.

13 Q. Well, I'm looking at the draft procedure.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. And it does say, item 3, when starting up into known
16 column separation, calculate a restoration time to restore the
17 column separation.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. The volume drained divided by flow rate equals time.

20 A. Right. Correct.

21 Q. That's what you're describing?

22 A. Right.

23 Q. Okay. But then you're -- what you're saying is, that
24 would not necessarily allow you to exceed your 10-minute rule?

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Yeah, the 10-minute rule -- the past 10-minute requires
3 higher approval.

4 Q. Even if your calculation said 20 minutes?

5 A. Well, if I had called that calculation in to say we were
6 going to go beyond the 10-minute based on the calculation, I would
7 have to have approval from my supervisor.

8 Q. So this allows you calculate it, but you still need
9 approval to execute it beyond 10 minutes?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. I don't, I don't see that in here. Where does it say
12 you have to call somebody?

13 MR. JOHNSON: That's why it's draft.

14 MR. NICHOLSON: Well, how could that be his -- okay. So
15 let's go back up to the original.

16 DR. STRAUCH: Maybe we can go off the record and look.

17 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. So you're saying it's draft
18 because it doesn't say --

19 MR. JOHNSON: No one approved.

20 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

21 MR. JOHNSON: And we can do this off the record if you
22 want.

23 MR. NICHOLSON: No. I don't want to.

24 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. No, it --

25 MR. NICHOLSON: I want to understand.

1 MR. JOHNSON: They didn't approve -- this would have
2 allowed an operator to do that calculation and go past the 10
3 minutes.

4 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Which management did not approve,
6 therefore this procedure was not approved.

7 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

8 MR. JOHNSON: The calculations, that fact -- that's a
9 good component of that.

10 MR. NICHOLSON: Sure. Yeah, I understand you can do
11 that.

12 MR. JOHNSON: But the minute it goes past 10 minutes,
13 then the operator --

14 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

15 Q. And your recollection is in May, it never went beyond 10
16 minutes?

17 A. My recollection is, yeah, it didn't go beyond.

18 Q. Okay. Because the statement we got was it went 15
19 minutes, so it sounds like that's different.

20 A. Well, I'm not sure.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I don't remember 15 minutes.

23 Q. You remember the instance, but you're not sure about the
24 time?

25 A. I vaguely remember the -- her putting the column

1 together and I told her this is how, this is how we would look at
2 the calculation for time.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. And it worked out exactly to the time that I had --

5 Q. So you never had an experience where you applied that
6 calculation rule and exceeded a 10-minute mark without calling
7 first?

8 A. Not to my recollection, no.

9 Q. So the 10-minute rule was strictly enforced?

10 A. It was.

11 Q. Okay. Then why wouldn't it have been enforced on the
12 26th? It almost sounds like -- you know, the 10-minute doesn't
13 get in the way of your trying to get a line started ever as a
14 shift lead?

15 A. It shouldn't. Like I said, we've had situations --

16 Q. Isn't that --

17 A. -- the 10-minute is up and then we have to shut down and
18 have other people look at it, possibly in engineering.

19 Q. Okay. Okay. Thank you for that. I think that helps
20 clarify it.

21 MR. JOHNSON: Does that explain it better for you,
22 Kelly?

23 MR. EMEABA: Yes. I mean, he has stated the fact that,
24 yeah, he did it at his own volition. Yes, I agree with that. It
25 was unapproved. He decided to use it and it was in system. It

1 was not explained to the operator it was not approved, and they
2 continued to use it.

3 MR. JOHNSON: They used a component, the math component
4 of the procedure only.

5 MR. EMEABA: Correct. Correct.

6 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. I think we're clear. Thank you.

7 MR. EMEABA: Thank you.

8 MR. JOHNSON: All right.

9 DR. STRAUCH: Yes, thank you.

10 MR. EMEABA: That's all.

11 MR. NICHOLSON: Barry, you want to --

12 MR. STRAUCH: Yeah, I want to just --

13 MR. NICHOLSON: -- (indiscernible) would you like to
14 continue?

15 DR. STRAUCH: Oh, I'm sorry.

16 BY MR. STRAUCH:

17 Q. If I may follow up on this dead horse. In your
18 experience at Enbridge did you see the 10-minute rule violated or
19 take second place to any other procedure?

20 A. I'd have to say no, I haven't.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. There are times like I said when it -- the procedure
23 states when you receive pressure at the upstream station ahead of
24 the column sep, there is no definition as to the amount of
25 pressure. So what I usually use when pressure comes into the

1 upstream station, that would be pressure enough to start a unit at
2 that location and start to fill the column from that, so but
3 there's no designated amount of pressure.

4 Q. You know, at the time of incident were you aware that
5 this draft procedure was being referred to?

6 A. On the night of, no.

7 Q. Okay. Were you aware that other people had referred to
8 this procedure at any time since you first worked with it with
9 Ghazal?

10 A. I think off the record, operators and shift leads might
11 have looked at the drain up and figured out an amount of time
12 based on what we just talked about, the calculation.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. But it wasn't official as far as procedure was
15 concerned.

16 Q. So, just if I may --

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. -- if I may say -- and please correct me if I'm not
19 saying this correctly. Your understanding of the procedure was
20 that it provided a calculation tool --

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. -- for the operator or shift lead to determine how long
23 it would take --

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. -- to put a column back together?

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. In your experience at Enbridge could you explain why
3 another shift lead misunderstood this procedure and misunderstood
4 that this procedure would take precedence over the 10-minute rule
5 if the calculation showed that it would take more than 10 minutes?

6 A. I'm not aware of what went on the night, the night of
7 the actual pumping into the -- near the breach.

8 Q. But all shift leads had the same level of
9 responsibility?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. And presumably had the same background and same
12 experience. Why is it that you understood the actual meaning of
13 this procedure and other shift leads did not?

14 A. I cannot speak for the other shift leads, other than I
15 knew they discussed it amongst themselves and with the MBS analyst
16 that was on at the time. And so, they had made their choice or
17 their decision based on that conversation that took place between
18 the operators, the shift leads and the MBS analyst.

19 Q. Okay. Thank you.

20 A. That's all I'm aware of really.

21 MR. NICHOLSON: Karen has got some I'm sure, right?

22 MS. BUTLER: Bob --

23 MR. DONALD: Um-hum.

24 MS. BUTLER: -- when you made that last comment, do you
25 believe the MBS analyst's input could have impacted that decision?

1 MR. DONALD: Personally, I didn't.

2 MS. BUTLER: Okay. Thank you.

3 MR. DONALD: You're welcome.

4 MS. BUTLER: That's it.

5 MR. NICHOLSON: Jay, we haven't --

6 MR. JOHNSON: No, I got my input when we had some
7 confusion there. So, thank you, I'm --

8 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

9 Q. I would just be curious then, Bob, when do you perform
10 this drain up -- if I've already started the line?

11 A. Yep.

12 Q. Would I perform this drain-up calculation in this -- or
13 during the start-up? Or am I to do these drain-up calcs before
14 the line is started?

15 A. If the operator is aware there is a potential for column
16 sep on a start-up, hopefully they would come to us and tell us
17 that there's column sep and we could look at the event prior to
18 start-up to determine how much was drained off and use that in the
19 calculation to put the column together. That was the only tool we
20 had at the time, basically, the draft procedure.

21 Q. So I can't wait till I get to 10 minutes, oops, it's
22 still column sep and then start my calculations while the line is
23 still going?

24 A. We'd ask the operators to probably shut down and we'd
25 reassess it at that time, so.

1 Q. And how would you know you're starting up into column
2 sep? If I'm an operator, how do I know that?

3 A. Well, you might get an alarm from the MBS analyst prior
4 to, telling you about there was column sep. But if the column
5 showed low pressures. So, what we would call low pressure would
6 be below base suction. So if 35 pounds was what we use, 10 pounds
7 above. So 25, anything under 25 pounds --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- could constitute a column separation.

10 Q. Okay. So that's readily available to operators? He can
11 look at his pressures?

12 A. Yeah, correct. Yeah.

13 MR. NICHOLSON: All right. Anything else from you,
14 Kelly?

15 BY MR. EMEABA:

16 Q. I wanted to ask the question that he just answered it,
17 because your initial statement was, you know, there was no
18 specific amount of pressure for you to know it's column
19 separation. But by answering Matt --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. -- you just mentioned, yes, threshold.

22 A. Oh, okay.

23 Q. So I'm okay about that.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. Thank you.

1 A. You're welcome.

2 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

3 Q. Okay. Bob, I guess before we close I understand that
4 Enbridge was performing some other internal interviews with
5 regards to practices in the control room recently. Were you a
6 part of that?

7 A. No. Practices?

8 Q. Just the ongoings, the environment. Any internal
9 interviews of you for control center type discussions?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. But you were part of the previous internal
12 investigation back in 2010?

13 A. Related to the -- Marshall, yes, I was.

14 MR. NICHOLSON: All right. Anything else guys? Okay.
15 With that we'll end the interview of Bob Donald. I appreciate you
16 coming in, Bob.

17 MR. DONALD: Well, thank you.

18 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: ENBRIDGE - LINE 6B RUPTURE IN
MARSHALL, MICHIGAN
Interview of Robert Donald

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MP-007

PLACE: Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

DATE: January 31, 2012

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.

Anne VanDereedt
Transcriber