

ENBRIDGE PIPELINES INC.

INTERVIEW

OF

KELLY SOPROVICH

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Operations for Enbridge
Pipelines Inc.

Stephen M. Jenner, Ph.D. For National Transportation
Safety Board

Rick Gulstad, PE
and Karen Butler For U.S. Department of
Transportation Pipeline and
Hazardous Materials Safety
Administration

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1 INTERVIEW OF KELLY SOPROVICH, TAKEN AT 8:26 A.M.:

2 MR. JENNER: Good morning. Today is Friday
3 July 30th, 2010. My name is Stephen Jenner. I'm
4 an investigator with the National Transportation
5 Safety Board in Washington, D.C. We are currently
6 in Edmonton, Canada at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in
7 regards to a pipeline spill near Marshall, Michigan
8 that occurred on Monday, July 26, 2010.

9 Let me first go around the room and have
10 everyone introduce themselves.

11 MR. GULSTAD: I'm Rick Gulstad. I'm an
12 engineer with Pipeline and Hazardous Material
13 Safety Administration [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED].

15 MR. TOLLEFSON: Tyler Tollefson, legal counsel
16 at Enbridge Pipelines.

17 MR. GOESON: Curt Goeson, control centre

18 supervisor, Enbridge Pipelines.

19 MR. SOPROVICH: Kelly Soprovich, shift lead

20 Enbridge Pipelines in the control centre.

21 MS. BUTLER: Karen Butler, PHMSA, regional

22 project management [REDACTED].

23 MR. JENNER: Great, thank you.

24 QUESTIONS BY MR. JENNER:

25 Q MR. JENNER: Kelly, would you please state

26 your full name and spelling.

27 A Okay. Kelly Lee Soprovich, K-E-L-L-Y, L-E-E,

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1 S-O-P-R-O-V-I-C-H.

2 Q What is your current position?

3 A Shift lead in the control centre.

4 Q Who are you employed by?

5 A Enbridge Pipelines.

6 Q What I'd like to do is just get a bit about your

7 background. How long have you been with Enbridge?

8 A I guess it's April 2002.

9 Q When you first hired there, what was your

10 occupation?

11 A An operator, controller, yeah.

12 Q Did you start off as a trainee?

13 A Yeah, trainee, yeah. Trainee, yeah.

14 Q Can you just walk me through just very briefly your

15 position since 2002?

16 A Okay. Like I said, I guess I started training to

17 be a gas operator and then became a gas operator, I

18 guess. Then I guess it would have been, I don't
19 know, about 2005ish -- 2004, 2005ish I became a --
20 started training to become liquids op -- liquids
21 pipeline operator. And then I had that role until
22 I was -- I guess it would have been 2008 when I
23 became a shift lead, and I've been a shift lead
24 since.

25 Q What made you change from gas to liquids?

26 A Gas -- our gas operations moved to Houston and...

27 Q That will do it.

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1 A Yeah. It was a good opportunity too, but, yeah,

2 mainly it went to Houston.

3 Q Great. And so about two years as a shift lead?

4 A Yeah, just -- yeah, two and a half, yeah.

5 Q Do you enjoy that position?

6 A Yeah, I do, yeah.

7 Q What made you decide to become a shift lead?

8 A I like working with people. I like to, you know,

9 handle situations, stuff like that.

10 Q When you were an operator, had you ever worked line

11 6B?

12 A I never have, no.

13 Q Great. Thank you for your background there.

14 A Yeah, no problem.

15 Q What I'd like to do is take you to the start of

16 your shift on Monday.

17 A Yeah.

18 Q If you would just walk us through, start with the
19 shift changeover and what time you arrived, and
20 we'll throw it in your direction.

21 A Okay, sounds good. So basically came in just after
22 6 o'clock probably, roughly. Took shift change.

23 Yeah, and then the day started. I guess probably
24 took shift change for maybe 20 minutes -- 10, 20
25 minutes.

26 Q Who did you talk to?

27 A I talked to mostly Aaron Zimmel, another shift lead

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1 in the control centre.

2 Q What were some of the things that you discussed?

3 A We discussed -- I guess the main thing we discussed

4 was line 6. They had some trouble starting up line

5 6. Trouble putting the column together between

6 Minden and Marshall. Yeah, basically just

7 discussing the issues they have -- they were

8 having.

9 Q Did you discuss other things besides line 6?

10 A No, I think that was -- not that I can recall

11 anyways. Pretty much just line 6.

12 Q So from your understanding, the other operations

13 going on were more or less routine beyond line 6?

14 A Yeah, that's correct, yeah.

15 Q Okay. So you have the shift changeover. And what

16 are your activities to start with?

17 A So I guess in the shift change, there was issues

18 getting going. We -- they asked us if they -- we
19 could check over some of their work. We had -- the
20 column wouldn't come back together in between
21 there, so we just wanted to figure out if there was
22 some issues with -- there was some pigs in the
23 line, whether we had enough power to bring the
24 column back together. They wanted us to -- yeah,
25 just see if we could piece together what was going
26 on.

27 Q Was it your impression that your task at hand was

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1 to continue to try to figure out how to get the
2 column back together?

3 A Yeah, I would say so, yeah, for sure.

4 Q Okay. From the information that you heard from
5 Aaron, did you have concerns beyond just the column
6 itself?

7 A Yeah, you know, when the column doesn't come back
8 together, you know, it could be an indication of a
9 leak. So we were going to do some digging to see
10 if we could track down whether that was a
11 possibility or whether, you know -- yeah, what the
12 possibilities might be.

13 Q Okay. I'm going to ask for -- if you could
14 elaborate about what sort of digging you do to
15 explore a leak possibility.

16 A Well, I guess that morning, we were going to get
17 the engineers involved to do some number crunching.

18 One of the things that got passed on was they
19 weren't getting enough discharge out of the
20 upstream station, so we were going to talk to the
21 engineers to see what kind of discharge we would
22 need to bring a column back together at the
23 downstream station. So that was one thing. He
24 would look back in historical.

25 Q Okay.

26 A Yeah.

27 Q And then what historicals are you looking at and

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1 why were you looking at them?

2 A Just pressure historicals to see if you could see
3 any -- any oddities, I guess, looking for -- that's
4 what we'd be looking for. Yeah, just oddities in
5 the pressure when they were trying to start up, I
6 guess.

7 Q Is it during the startup in particular that you
8 focus on? Is that when you'd expect to see
9 oddities?

10 A Well, when I came in, that's what they were having
11 trouble with, so that's, you know, where we were to
12 focus first, I guess, but...

13 Q When you looked at the historicals, how far back
14 did you go?

15 A We started -- we knew that they had shut down the
16 day before, so we started -- we looked at the
17 shutdown as well after the fact, but -- you know,

18 and that was the day before, I think, at like 1500

19 or something like that or...

20 Q So all the way back to 1500 on Sunday?

21 A Sunday, yeah.

22 Q Okay. Did you, yourself, examine the data?

23 A I was -- when I came in, Blaine Reinbolt, one of

24 the supervisors, was the on-call for that night.

25 He had made it in by then, and I was doing -- I was

26 discussing with him, you know, just where we were

27 at in trying to get line 6 started back up.

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1 Q Okay.

2 A So I know that Brad was working on that a bit.

3 When I came back from talking to -- to Blaine,

4 yeah, I started looking into it a little bit, yeah.

5 Q If you can just capture some of the conversation

6 you had with Blaine. What was discussed?

7 A Just kind of, you know, let him know that the line

8 was still down, that they had tried to start the

9 line up a second time, and they were unsuccessful.

10 We shut down, and then we were waiting for the

11 engineers to -- we were trying to track down which

12 engineer was coming in that day and when. Waiting

13 for them to verify some numbers basically.

14 Q Okay. Now, the purpose of calling the engineers,

15 is that primarily to figure out ways to close the

16 gap to deal with the column, or is the engineer

17 called for to explore other possibilities about

18 what's going on?

19 A Yeah. No, they would -- mainly just to see what --

20 to figure out, calculate the hydraulics for us.

21 You know, they're professionals with that, so they

22 would have a better idea of what pressures we would

23 need at the upstream station, what kind of suction

24 we would need at the downstream station to get that

25 column back together, yeah.

26 Q Okay. During your conversation with Blaine, was a

27 possibility of a leak ever discussed?

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1 A At that point, yeah. Probably, you know, not that
2 there was one, but yeah, that there was a
3 possibility, yeah.

4 Q What was the nature of that conversation?

5 A Just that we were waiting for the engineers to come
6 in just to verify some numbers, to see if that was
7 a possibility, I guess, yeah.

8 Q Was that discussion -- did anything come out, like,
9 well, let's get one of the operators to look at
10 historical data for the purpose of a leak or --

11 A Yeah, I had already mentioned to him that we -- you
12 know, the operators and -- one of the operators and
13 Brad were already starting to pull stuff up, yeah.
14 It's all kind of going on at the same time here,
15 but yeah.

16 Q Sure, okay. Do you know what time Blaine had made
17 it in? Did he make it in before the start of your

18 shift?

19 A I don't recall. No, no, it would have been after.

20 But, yeah, I don't recall exactly what time it was.

21 Q Okay. And after your conversation, what were your

22 activities?

23 A After my conversation, I would have phoned the -- I

24 guess I talked to the -- we had a tech that had

25 made it out to the Marshall station, and I gave him

26 a call to check out the area, let him know that we

27 weren't able to put a column together back at

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1 Marshall. And he verified that everything was --
2 was good at the station. He checked everything
3 out.

4 After that, I also talked to the regional
5 manager on call to let him know the situation, I
6 guess, and that -- yeah, we were waiting for our
7 engineer to do some number crunching and that,
8 yeah, there was a possibility that there -- there
9 could be a leak.

10 Q The regional manager, is that in Chicago?

11 A Correct, yeah. I think he's out of Chicago.

12 Chicago region anyways, yeah.

13 Q What is his name?

14 A It would have been Tom Fridel.

15 Q What was the nature of that conversation?

16 A I guess by that time, we had found that on the
17 shutdown, the pressure went to zero, so I let him

18 know that -- you know, that there was the
19 possibility of a leak and that we were just waiting
20 for our engineers to double -- double-check some
21 numbers for us.

22 Q Which shutdown are you referring to that the
23 pressure had gone down to zero?

24 A That would have been the one at -- I don't know the
25 exact time, but the day before at about 1500.

26 Q The 15 --

27 A Whatever 15 or 14, whatever it was, yeah. Sunday

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1 shutdown, yeah.

2 Q What does that mean to you when see that the
3 pressure had gone down to zero? Based on your
4 experience as an operator in your current -- what
5 is the significance of that?

6 A Well, any time a pressure goes to zero, it's a leak
7 trigger, I guess.

8 Q Who --

9 A Depending on the situation, I guess, yeah.

10 Q Right. Who had -- who had -- when you were
11 reviewing the data, is it one particular person who
12 said, "Oh, we have a pressure at zero at 1500 on
13 Sunday"? Who discovered that so to speak?

14 A Yeah, it might have been the operator; it might
15 have been -- might have been Brad. Again, I'm
16 not -- I'm not too sure who it was, but, yeah, we
17 were all looking at it, I guess.

18 Q Okay. So what happens after you've talked to these

19 people, the regional manager?

20 A Regional manager? Spoke to the regional manager.

21 He said, yeah, we'll just basically wait until

22 we -- you know, by that time, I think the engineer

23 had made it in, and he was just going to crunch

24 some numbers. Again, I don't know what time that

25 was, but...

26 I guess after that, in between -- probably

27 wasn't too far after that, the engineer got in. I

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1 received a call on the emergency line from -- from
2 a guy that worked at Consumers Energy stating that
3 there was oil on the ground just east of Marshall,
4 just south -- I guess east of our Marshall station,
5 south of Marshall, the town of Marshall, that there
6 was oil in the -- in a creek.

7 And I guess at that point, I grabbed all his
8 information. Grabbed all his information and at
9 that point, got our line operator to make sure that
10 he isolated the sta -- or isolated two valves
11 upstream and downstream of that location as per our
12 procedures.

13 After that, I did -- I notified our
14 supervisors as well as the regional again, Tom, to
15 let him know that -- that there was a leak in the
16 area and that there was a good possibility that it
17 was us. That's pretty much it, I guess.

18 Q No, there is more.

19 A Oh, there is more. Yes, there is more.

20 Q Did Consumer Energy -- who were they? Are they a
21 customer?

22 A No, just another pipeline in the area, I guess.

23 Another utility in the area anyways. I don't know
24 if they're a pipeline or...

25 Q So what is your role as a lead during an emergency,
26 abnormal emergency situation? Just in general,
27 what are your responsibilities?

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1 A Basically -- I wouldn't say head (INDISCERNIBLE)

2 but kind of be the liaison between the field, the

3 supervisor or on-call and the operator, I guess.

4 Just kind of helping out with the situation,

5 guiding things a little bit, I guess.

6 Q Did you try to relieve the operator from making

7 calls and taking calls, or are the leads primarily

8 responsible for the calls?

9 A For sure, yeah. You would do notifications like

10 that so they can concentrate on what they're doing,

11 yeah. For sure, yeah.

12 Q So after you talked to -- I think the last person

13 you mentioned was the regional?

14 A Tom, yeah.

15 Q Tom. So what else is going on for you?

16 A At that point, the line was already shut down. We

17 isolated everything. At that point, we're still, I

18 guess, digging -- digging into -- into our
19 pressures and stuff like that, still trying to
20 see -- it hadn't been confirmed that it was us, so
21 still trying to dig to see what we could see, I
22 guess.

23 Q Are you part of this digging process, the
24 investigation process?

25 A Yeah.

26 Q What data are you looking at now?

27 A I think we were probably looking at when the

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1 pressure went to zero on the shutdown just to see
2 if there was anything odd about it, looking
3 downstream, upstream to see if there was any --
4 anything that could indicate a leak.

5 Q From the data that you had looked at to this point,
6 was that -- was the zero pressure during the
7 shutdown the most interesting data for you?

8 A Yeah, I guess it stands out there, but it's not to
9 say that the pressures never go to zero. So you're
10 looking downstream and upstream to see if there's
11 drops as well. And there wasn't -- there were
12 drops but nothing drastic, I guess. So, yeah, zero
13 would stick out.

14 Q When you're looking downstream and upstream, what
15 numbers are -- what are you seeing?

16 A What are we seeing? I guess looking back and
17 seeing a drop in the suction downstream, I guess,

18 which could also mean just that we -- we just shut
19 off pumps upstream as well, so... You know, shut
20 down the whole line so you're going to see
21 pressures come down obviously, so yeah.

22 Q So is there other data that you're looking at to
23 help confirm that there is a leak? Is there
24 other --

25 A Like I said, at that point, we hadn't confirmed it.
26 I guess that wasn't confirmed until I got a call
27 back from -- I think it was Ben Camp, I believe,

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1 was the PLM or right-of-way guy that made it out to
2 the site and said, "Yeah, it looks like it could be
3 us."

4 Q Are you in the process of trying to determine when
5 the leak occurred? Is that part of the reason
6 you're looking at the historical data?

7 A Yeah, just trying to see if it -- if it could still
8 be a leak, yeah, for sure.

9 Q Was there a point where all of you were looking at
10 the data and saying, "It's us"? Because at that --
11 I think earlier you said it could be us, but now
12 you're trying -- you're in the process of
13 validating that --

14 A Yeah, when you're looking at a certain area and
15 somebody calls in a leak in that area --

16 Q But sometimes there are other pipelines that run --

17 A Yeah, no, for sure, but if you're already looking

18 in that area, then, yeah, you know, chances are

19 good; right?

20 Q Right.

21 A It's still not confirmed until we get the call,

22 but, yeah, we're definitely looking in that area.

23 And as far as when it happened, yeah, I don't want

24 to speculate as to when. Yeah, it looks like that

25 could have been when it was, but, yeah, I can't say

26 that it -- that's when it happened.

27 Q All right, if you can just continue with your

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1 activities.

2 A Okay. So, yeah, I received a call from Ben Camp,
3 the right-of-way guy and -- just bear with me here.

4 Q No problem.

5 A I'm trying to remember back, yeah. I guess at that
6 point, my role as the shift lead is to start
7 filling out paperwork. So we do incident forms and
8 start an incident log, get our -- our technical
9 people involved to assist with the fact finding and
10 information grabbing.

11 Q What's included in the incident forms, incident
12 log?

13 A Just all the information that I had been gath --
14 that I had been getting, you know, talk to Tom,
15 talk to -- received a call from an outside -- an
16 outside source saying, you know, there's a leak.
17 So, you know, you're following your --

18 treating this as a suspected leak and going through
19 the process. Yeah, and then we get a call from
20 Ben or whoever -- I can't remember who. I think
21 that's who it was -- saying, yeah, it looks like
22 it's us. And, yeah, just chronological order of
23 everything that happened, I guess.

24 Q It's sort of a time line?

25 A Time line, yeah, whatever you want to call it,
26 yeah. Just a log, yeah.

27 Q So you're in the process of doing the paperwork

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1 and --

2 A Yeah.

3 Q Are you -- let me ask about incoming, outgoing
4 calls. Focus on that. Are you making calls? Are
5 you taking calls during this time?

6 A At that point, I've talked to Tom. Asked him that
7 if you need my -- if you need anything from me,
8 give me a call back. At that point, I'm just kind
9 of -- just trying to get everything started as far
10 as logging everything that's happening, leaving the
11 field stuff to him basically. So, yeah, at that
12 point, I was just basically starting to do -- you
13 know, just starting to do the log.

14 Q Okay. I imagine the phone is starting to ring
15 pretty good at some point?

16 A Not right away, no.

17 Q Not right away?

18 A No, not right away.

19 Q All right. So after you're completing your forms

20 and logs, what -- I'll just have you work your way

21 through to the end of your shift.

22 A I get so much phone calls. What kind of phone

23 calls do you mean, I guess?

24 Q Oh, well, just -- you're to respond to people who

25 you need to notify --

26 A Yeah.

27 Q -- and the incoming calls from residents, from --

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1 A Yeah, no, not a -- not a lot of calls coming in at
2 that point in the morning or anything like that.

3 Q I haven't been to the Marshall station. Is that a
4 pretty remote location? Do you know?

5 A Pulled it up on the map after the fact. It looks
6 like there's a town just north of there. Looks
7 kind of -- a little bit in the country just south
8 of Marshall there.

9 Q Just curious.

10 A Yeah.

11 Q Okay, and what else are you doing?

12 A Yeah, like I said, basically just getting the
13 technical people involved to start pulling up
14 more -- more information. Yeah, by the end of the
15 day, there was a couple calls coming in from
16 residents, I guess, but, yeah, not a lot I wouldn't
17 say.

18 Q Who -- did you mention about getting the engineer
19 involved? Earlier we were talking about it.

20 A Yeah.

21 Q Had you heard back from him since the initial day
22 in question?

23 A At that point, Brad was dealing with that more.

24 Since I had received the call, I had started doing
25 the -- the -- basically just logging -- logging all
26 the information that we were receiving, and yeah,
27 so...

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1 Q Okay. Continue on with other stuff as best as you
2 can recall.

3 A Yeah, like, I can't remember all the calls that
4 came in or all the -- yeah, I really -- really
5 can't recall.

6 Q That's fine. Do you keep a call log of incoming,
7 outgoing calls?

8 A Yeah.

9 Q Okay.

10 A Yeah, for sure.

11 Q Okay. Yeah, I don't expect you to remember. Don't
12 worry about that.

13 A It was a busy day.

14 Q If anything, you know, whatever you can remember.

15 A Yeah.

16 Q That's fine.

17 A Yeah.

18 Q Are we half way through your shift? Toward the end
19 of your shift? What else is -- what else are you
20 doing to help out?

21 A Like I said, at that point in the control centre,
22 there's not a lot that we can -- that we can do as
23 far as -- as -- I guess as far as a leak goes. At
24 that point, my job is to -- to bring in -- receive
25 updates from the field, forward that off to my
26 supervisors and -- and our facilities group and
27 stuff like that.

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1 Yeah, at that point, it's more just
2 notification, you know, still, you know, getting
3 people in the control centre to pull up information
4 to help the technical group. It's more just --
5 just directing rather than physically doing
6 anything, I guess.

7 Q Now, do you have emergency response training for
8 any type of similar situations?

9 A Yeah, emergency response is part of our training,
10 yeah.

11 Q How did that help out with this day?

12 A It was good. You know, you receive a call; you
13 follow our procedures and... Yeah, no, it helped
14 for sure.

15 Q Good. Good to know.

16 Just a little bit more about when you're going
17 through -- you have people who are going through

18 logs and trying to make sense of all this. Who was
19 involved in that process? Who's looking over the
20 data? Are different departments or the engineers
21 or the MBS or the operators? Who's involved in all
22 that?

23 A Yeah, I guess as the operators were bringing up
24 stuff, they'd be looking through it. Our technical
25 group, the coordinators, they're involved with
26 bringing together information packages, so they'd
27 be -- they'd be taking that data and putting it

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1 into a package. Yeah, you know, the shift leads
2 would be as well. That day I was pretty busy. I
3 didn't do a lot of the -- lot of the technical --
4 technical stuff, but yeah.

5 Q Okay. Anything else of significance that you're
6 remembering now or I didn't ask you?

7 A No, I think that's -- that's pretty much it that I
8 can think of.

9 Q Okay. All things considered, do you think things
10 more or less unfolded according to procedures and
11 according to people's training?

12 A Yeah, for sure.

13 Q Okay. Well, thank you. What we do is give other
14 people an opportunity.

15 A Oh, for sure, yeah.

16 Q Do you need a break?

17 A No, I think we can keep going.

18 MR. JENNER: Karen, do you have some

19 questions?

20 MS. BUTLER: Yeah.

21 QUESTIONS BY MS. BUTLER:

22 Q MS. BUTLER: Regarding column separation

23 information, is that something that you've seen

24 before on line 6B?

25 A Like I said, I've never run -- I've never operated

26 line 6B.

27 Q Okay.

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1 A Yeah, I can't say whether I've seen it before or
2 not.

3 Q Have you seen anything like this circumstance where
4 there was multiple starts, and they couldn't get it
5 going?

6 A I've seen -- I've seen columns that are -- that
7 have been difficult to put back together, yeah.

8 Q On 6B?

9 A Just in general.

10 Q Okay. Have you noticed anything corresponding with
11 that time? Like, when you run pigs, it's more
12 difficult, or when you're done a particular type of
13 maintenance or anything that makes it more
14 difficult from your experience?

15 A Yeah, anytime the line is drained out, it becomes
16 more difficult due to, yeah, like you said,
17 maintenance. Yeah, like you said, if there's a pig

18 in the line, you're going to be bypassing stations

19 which makes it more difficult.

20 What else? If -- I believe on that day, there

21 was valves that were out of communication, so we

22 would have stations at comm. out limits upstream of

23 that which would make it more difficult to --

24 basically it limits the pressure upstream which

25 would -- it would take the column longer to come

26 back together.

27 So all those things, yeah, would make the --

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1 make bringing a column back together tougher.

2 Q Okay. Regarding things that were going on on 6B,

3 where -- the combinations of things, was that odd,

4 or is that just something that typically happens?

5 It just happened on this day to have more

6 difficulties? Meaning, like, pigging. I think

7 there were some maintenance issues on some units;

8 there were the comm. outages. Those combinations

9 of things, is that typically seen, or is that kind

10 of oddity in nature?

11 A I would say that -- yeah, I guess the whole thing

12 was odd, I guess, but the -- having a pig in the

13 line with comm. outs and the line being drained off

14 with work, yeah, I would say that's odd.

15 Q So on the line being drained out with work due to

16 work that was actually happening, where was that

17 from and to, or was that just in the setup process

18 of allowing some work it happened from and to a
19 certain point?

20 A Well, it sounds like the day before when they --
21 well, I think it might have even been before that.
22 When they shut down into our Sarnia location, I
23 didn't do any of the numbers myself. I came in on
24 the Monday, but I was under the impression that
25 there was a bit of drain-off at Sarnia when they
26 shut down the line into Sarnia.

27 Q Okay.

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1 A When we were starting up, we were -- the line was
2 then shut down into Stockbridge, which is upstream,
3 just downstream of Marshall, and then after --
4 after that shutdown when we came -- or the night
5 before I came in, they were starting up back into
6 Sarnia again.

7 Q So those combinations of things, was that
8 specifically to allow some work to go on on the
9 pipeline?

10 A No. We shut down parts of our lines, I mean, on
11 any given day depending on where the batches are
12 destined for.

13 Q So those particular shutdowns that we were talking
14 about into the Sarnia location wasn't necessarily
15 due to maintenance, but there was a little bit more
16 drain-off than may be typical?

17 A Yeah, I would say that.

18 Q And the shutdown into Stockbridge, was that for any
19 planned specific maintenance, or was that just
20 delivery based as well?

21 A I believe that was just a supply based at the -- at
22 the top end of our line.

23 Q Okay. When we're draining off --

24 A I'm not a hundred percent sure on that, but...

25 Q I'm sorry. Go ahead.

26 A I said I'm not a hundred percent sure about that,
27 but I think it was because we were short of product

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1 on the -- on the injection location.

2 Q Okay. And when we're talking about the shutdown

3 into Sarnia, do we frequently shut down going into

4 Sarnia, or is that kind of an oddity location?

5 A No, I would say that's normal.

6 Q Okay. Okay. Thank you for that clarification.

7 A Yeah, no problem.

8 Q And then when you guys serve as a liaison, did you

9 have anything to do with the NRC notification or

10 the volume, initial volume calculations that might

11 have come into play after a leak has been

12 determined?

13 A I don't know who the NR -- who's the NRC?

14 Q Okay, that answers that one.

15 A Yeah.

16 Q No, I appreciate that. But what about the amount

17 of volume that may be missing, did you have

18 anything to do with that?

19 A I guess a little bit possibly. I think I might

20 have given somebody an estimate.

21 Q Okay. When you estimate those numbers, would you

22 just step me through kind of how you go about doing

23 that?

24 A Basically just from my end was just how much we put

25 into the line.

26 Q And you pull how much you put in from the line

27 from, like, which systems? Or what do you check

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1 specifically for that?

2 A CMT.

3 Q Okay. All right. And is it the same way for what

4 you took out?

5 A Pardon me, sorry?

6 Q You said you just look at how much you put into the

7 line. I'm assuming that you got to know how much

8 you took out?

9 A Yeah.

10 Q Okay. Is that also from CMT?

11 A Correct, yeah.

12 Q Is there any other system that you would interface

13 with to try and get a handle on the initial volume?

14 A No, that would pretty much be it.

15 Q Okay. Are you -- were there -- we had known about

16 this comm. outage on the valve previously, but was

17 there any outages that you recall on any

18 instrumentation, like, pressures or flows along the

19 pipeline?

20 A Like I said, when I came in, the line was shut

21 down, so I don't -- I don't recall, yeah.

22 Q Okay. So it wasn't a big highlight for you?

23 A Not for me, no.

24 Q Okay. Okay. I think I kind of understand now that

25 you knew that a technician was out at Marshall, I

26 think, and so you called him. Were there

27 technicians out at any other locations that you

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1 recall?

2 A I think there was one at...

3 Q It's okay.

4 A What's just -- what's just downstream of Griffith
5 there, Curt?

6 MR. GOESON: They have the list.

7 A Yeah.

8 MR. GOESON: La Porte.

9 A I think it was La Porte. There we go.

10 Q MS. BUTLER: Okay, that's fine.

11 A Yeah.

12 Q And so do you have any knowledge of why the
13 technician was at Marshall, what he might have been
14 doing?

15 A Marshall was just to check out the station to see
16 if -- if he could see anything there, I believe.

17 And La Porte was -- we had units -- we only had one

18 unit available to us there, and we were looking to

19 see if they could give us one more unit there.

20 Q So nothing else rings a bell as another technician

21 location?

22 A Probably Niles because the pig was going to be

23 bypassed there.

24 Q After the fact is always so much easier to play

25 back and see things that don't pop out, but in the

26 discussions of people after we recognized that

27 there was a leak because we saw the sharp pressure

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1 drop, and then we had the call, and then we've now
2 had a member of our own crew, PMT or whatever you
3 call that -- forgive me if I didn't say it correct.

4 A PLM.

5 Q PLM, thank you -- that confirmed there was a leak,
6 were there conversations in the control room as
7 people were trying to determine and to package
8 together about what happened and how it might have
9 come about?

10 A How it -- sorry?

11 Q When I say "how it might have come about," like,
12 what might have caused this or elements that could
13 have come into play that made it difficult to
14 recognize it was a leak?

15 A Yeah, I guess looking back, the pressure going to
16 zero is -- you know, looks like that could be a
17 point when it could have happened. As far as how

18 it happened, nothing really looked odd with the

19 shutdown or anything like that.

20 Back the pressure into -- back the pressure at

21 Stockbridge up or bumped up the holding at

22 Stockbridge like you normally would when you're

23 shutting down to slow down the rate, started

24 shutting off pump -- pump units, yeah.

25 Q So the sequence of the shutdown looked typical?

26 A Yeah.

27 Q Was there anything else in that time frame besides

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1 that one pressure at either stations upstream or
2 downstream that was a little bit different than
3 normal besides the bypass situation?

4 A No, I wouldn't say so, no.

5 Q Okay.

6 MS. BUTLER: All right, I think -- I think
7 that's mine. Thank you very much for those
8 clarifications.

9 A Yeah, no problem.

10 MR. JENNER: Okay Rick, do you have any?

11 MR. GULSTAD: A few.

12 QUESTIONS BY MR. GULSTAD:

13 Q MR. GULSTAD: When you come on shift, you
14 have two shifts leads. It was you and Brad. When
15 you come on shift, how do you decide who is going
16 to do what? Do you kind of have a discussion
17 beforehand?

18 A No. I guess the room is kind of broken up with the
19 shift lead desks. One side primarily are main line
20 systems and the terminals that feed off of those.
21 The other ones would be -- the other console would
22 be more -- the other shift would be kind of the
23 feeder lines -- feeder and connecting carriers we
24 call them -- and a couple of the newer pipelines
25 that have come in, I guess.

26 Q So typically, would one or the other of you handle
27 the console that includes 6B or --

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1 A Yeah.

2 Q -- communicate with the --

3 A You're always communicating with each other, using

4 each other as a resource. You know, if -- you

5 know, in a situation like this, that's going to be

6 a priority, I guess. You know, you'll both be

7 working on bigger things together. But day-to-day

8 stuff -- day-to-day stuff you try to, you know,

9 deal with your own side, I guess.

10 Q So as you came on shift, the previous shift leads,

11 did they -- did they just specifically state that

12 there's an issue on 6B, that there's a possibility

13 of a leak, or how did they present the issues to

14 you?

15 A Just that they were -- that they had tried to start

16 the line twice, that -- that they were unable to

17 bring the column together at -- at -- from Minden

18 to Marshall.

19 Q But they didn't really --

20 A You know, that there were -- that there were issues

21 with -- you know, like we've been talking about,

22 the drain-up from the previous day, the shutdown --

23 or the line being shut down and drained the

24 previous day, the comm. out valves -- the comm. out

25 valve, having to (INDISCERNIBLE) upstream stations

26 to comm. out limits which reduces our discharge

27 pressures, you know, the pig at Niles, you know.

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1 Yeah, we've -- we talked about all those things
2 that they were -- that they were, I guess,
3 questioning.

4 Q But did they specifically state there's a
5 possibility of a leak or just the other stuff you
6 just mentioned?

7 A I wouldn't say that they said there was a
8 possibility of a leak. You know, anytime you're
9 having trouble putting a column together, that is a
10 possibility, I guess. It wasn't stated, I wouldn't
11 say, that I can remember.

12 Q Once you were informed of this, how quickly did you
13 communicate with Greg Poulin? Did he -- I know he
14 mentioned in his interview he did some historical
15 trending and thought there was a possibility of
16 something going on at Marshall.

17 A Yeah.

18 Q Did he come to you or did you, as one of the shift

19 leads, go to him and say, "What's going on here,

20 Greg" or --

21 A Yeah, like I said, we -- we got him -- I think it

22 was Brad actually that got him to start pulling up

23 some information.

24 Q Okay. And then as -- you called the regional

25 manager, Tom Fridel. Once you knew there was an

26 issue there and then you had him on the phone, did

27 he ask you any questions like, for example, when

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1 did the leak possibly occur or any other questions
2 that might have given him an idea of time lines
3 of --

4 A I believe -- you're talking when I phoned the first
5 time?

6 Q Well, we'll start with the first time.

7 A The first time, yeah. By that time, we had done a
8 little bit of digging; right? And like I said, I
9 mentioned to him that, yeah, we had seen the
10 pressure go to zero the day before and that, yeah,
11 we were having trouble getting the column back
12 together, that there was a possibility that there
13 could be a leak, yeah, and we were just getting our
14 engineers to do some number crunching for us.

15 Q What was his response?

16 A That he was going to wait until the engineer was
17 done with his calculations.

18 Q And then after that, did you call him back?

19 A In the meantime, we -- I got the call from

20 Consumers Energy --

21 Q Okay.

22 A -- saying that there's oil on the ground by our

23 Marshall station.

24 Q And then you called?

25 A And then I call him back again and say --

26 Q At that point, did he ask you any questions of

27 where the leak might specifically be at or --

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1 A Yeah, I told him where -- yeah, exactly. I got all
2 that information from -- from the Consumers guy and
3 passed all that information to him. Yeah, just
4 downstream of our Marshall station, you know, half
5 a mile, a mile away was where the guy -- you know,
6 the crossroads he said he was at.

7 So I gave him all that -- his phone number,
8 gave him all that -- all the information I took
9 from the Consumers guy, and then he goes ahead and
10 takes -- takes that away, passes that on probably
11 to Ben Camp, and yeah.

12 Q Did you have any conversation around when the leak
13 might have occurred on a previous shift or at 1500
14 hours or any -- any conversation like that from the
15 previous day at all?

16 A At that point, the second time that I called him,
17 no. It was just this is -- you know, we have a

18 possibility of a leak reported. And then I --

19 yeah -- no, I wouldn't have gong through that with

20 him. Just give him the information so he can get

21 our PLM or our staff out to the site, that it's

22 been reported, to verify whether it's us or not.

23 Q Okay. While you were on shift, did Enbridge

24 formally put together, like, an incident command

25 system as a response to an emergency or anything

26 like that?

27 A An incident command? Like, a command centre you

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1 mean?

2 Q Yeah, or just call an official emergency.

3 MR. GULSTAD: I don't know, Curt, you might

4 want to answer that or help out.

5 A I don't know what you -- sorry, I don't know what

6 you mean by an official --

7 MR. GOESON: They were in the process of

8 getting one. So when we would have advised Tom

9 Fridel.

10 MR. GULSTAD: Yeah.

11 MR. GOESON: Well, I guess once confirmed,

12 sorry, they would have initiated an on-scene

13 incident command. That's just normal Enbridge

14 process. Where they were in that process, we don't

15 know at that time.

16 MR. GULSTAD: You had participated with some

17 sort of a role during that process or --

18 MR. GOESON: We at the control centre?

19 MR. GULSTAD: Yeah.

20 MR. GOESON: We would -- our role in that

21 process is to provide updates where -- become the

22 communication outlet, so to and from the field.

23 And, of course, they have their own communication

24 protocols in the field, and so we just keep track

25 of updates from the field and communicate those

26 to -- throughout the company.

27 MR. GULSTAD: Okay.

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1 Q MR. GULSTAD: And then just one more
2 question. When you know you have a possibility of
3 a leak, how does that affect the other pipelines
4 you're controlling? Do you consider shutting down
5 any other systems, or do you monitor those more
6 closely or do anything differently?

7 A If -- if there's other pipelines in the vicinity,
8 yeah.

9 Q In this case, there's none real close to 6B other
10 than the gas system --

11 A Yeah.

12 Q -- which you no longer operate?

13 A Yeah. Correct, yeah.

14 Q And then you were aware of the pig schedules. Are
15 you updated to that when you come on shift of where
16 the pig is at or where it's supposed to pass?

17 A Yeah. When it goes out just upstream of Niles

18 about 15 minutes, I believe. I believe, right, off

19 my memory.

20 Q All right. That's all I've got. Thank you.

21 A Okay.

22 MR. JENNER: Curt, do you have any

23 questions or points of clarification?

24 CLARIFICATIONS BY MR. GOESON:

25 MR. GOESON: Just a point of clarification

26 if it's okay --

27 MR. JENNER: Yes.

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1 MR. GOESON: -- regarding Rick's question
2 about procedures and shutting down other facilities
3 in the event that there's a reported leak on a
4 common right-of-way. All those systems would be
5 shut down. In the event -- in this particular
6 case, when they became aware of it, it was a single
7 pipeline.

8 MR. GULSTAD: Would you have contacted
9 Houston control centre and discussed to vector (ph)
10 at all? I know it's natural gas, but...

11 A Yeah, I guess I could answer that. When I get a
12 call in saying that there's oil, it's an oil leak,
13 yeah, I didn't know. If it was an odour, I
14 smell -- I smell something, that would be a
15 different story. Then, yeah, it's a possibility it
16 could be oil or it could be gas.

17 MR. GOESON: In this case, it was known to

18 be oil. We didn't --

19 MR. GULSTAD: How about any foreign

20 operators, any other liquid systems in the area

21 operated by other operators that they might be in

22 contact with or --

23 MR. GOESON: In this particular case?

24 MR. GULSTAD: Yes.

25 MR. GOESON: No. That's all I have, sir.

26 MR. JENNER: Great. We go around a second

27 time just in case you're not having enough fun yet.

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1 A Oh, this is great.

2 FURTHER QUESTIONS BY MR. JENNER:

3 Q MR. JENNER: Actually, I don't have any

4 follow-up, operational questions, but I have

5 standard questions about your duty times and things

6 like that.

7 A Okay.

8 Q What other days did you work leading up to Monday?

9 A It's my first day, first day back.

10 Q First day back --

11 A Yeah.

12 Q -- since?

13 A I believe it was one week. I think I had one week

14 off.

15 Q Scheduled leave off?

16 A Yeah, it was scheduled, yeah.

17 Q I have questions just about your overall health.

18 A Okay.

19 Q You look healthy. Are you a healthy person?

20 A I think so, yeah. I hope so.

21 Q Do you have any preexisting conditions, health

22 conditions?

23 A No.

24 Q Are you taking any prescription or nonprescription

25 medications?

26 A

[REDACTED]

27

[REDACTED]

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1 Q Great. Anything that makes you sleepy or affect
2 your performance?

3 A No.

4 Q How do you sleep?

5 A Good.

6 Q How rested were you at the start of your shift do
7 you think?

8 A Well rested.

9 Q Great. Have you ever been diagnosed with any sleep
10 problems, insomnia or --

11 A No. No.

12 Q Okay, thank you for that. I don't have any other
13 operation questions.

14 MR. JENNER: Karen, do you have any
15 follow-ups?

16 MS. BUTLER: I do, but this will be very
17 quick.

18 FURTHER QUESTIONS BY MS. BUTLER:

19 Q MS. BUTLER: And that is, you know, we kind

20 of talked about the Sarnia drained down a little

21 bit more than normal. Is that something that could

22 have been prevented by some set point changes, or

23 is that something that occurred because of the

24 timing that it was done and the situation on the

25 pipeline, or do you have any thoughts on that?

26 A Actually, I have -- I don't have any -- I just --

27 when I say that, I -- that's just something that

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1 came up in conversation --

2 Q Okay.

3 A -- you know, the day before. I didn't -- I don't

4 know. I wouldn't -- I couldn't speak to that.

5 Q That's fine. I just thought maybe in your homework

6 you had found something, and I hadn't done a good

7 job in asking you.

8 A No, that's fine.

9 Q So thank you very much.

10 MS. BUTLER: That's it.

11 MR. JENNER: Rick?

12 MR. GULSTAD: No, nothing else.

13 MR. JENNER: Curt?

14 MR. GOESON: No.

15 CLOSING BY MR. JENNER:

16 MR. JENNER: Terrific. Well, I'll finish

17 up by throwing out to you that if you've had an

18 opportunity to think back on these events and if
19 anything has occurred to you that any changes that
20 can be made in terms of procedures, in terms of
21 technology that can make the system safer, we'd
22 love to hear from you if you have any thoughts on
23 that.

24 A Yeah, I haven't -- it's been pretty busy. I
25 haven't had a lot of time to really think about
26 that, I guess. I'm sure there will be something in
27 the future here, but, yeah, nothing -- nothing to

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1 this point.

2 MR. JENNER: Terrific. If there is
3 something in the future, I'll encourage you to talk
4 to people who are in a position to make a change --

5 A Yeah, for sure, yeah.

6 MR. JENNER: -- your company and us as
7 well.

8 A Yeah, for sure.

9 MR. JENNER: We encourage you to do so.

10 A Yeah, no, for sure, yeah.

11 MR. JENNER: Again, thank you very much for
12 being here and sorry for the inconvenience --

13 A Yeah, no problem.

14 MR. JENNER: -- but we do appreciate your
15 input.

16 A Okay.

17 MR. JENNER: The interview is concluded.

18 -----

19 PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 9:23 A.M.

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1 CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPT

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5 I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the

6 foregoing pages are a true and faithful transcript

7 of the proceedings taken down by me in shorthand and

8 transcribed from my shorthand notes to the best of my

9 skill and ability.

10 Dated at the City of Edmonton, Province of

11 Alberta, this 11th day of August, 2010.

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18 C. L. Stabbler, CSR(A)

19 Court Reporter

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

ENBRIDGE OIL SPILL,
MARSHALL, MICHIGAN

Docket No.: DCA-10-MP-007

* * * * *

Interview of: Kelly Sopronich

Date: July 30 / 2010

