



Motor Carrier Attachment 38:
AAAfordable Dispatcher Interview
Baltimore, MD; 11/1/2016
HWY17MH007
(18 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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SCHOOL BUS/COMMUTER BUS CRASH IN
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND ON
NOVEMBER 1, 2016

Accident No.: HWY17MH007

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Interview of: ROBERT DENT

AA Affordable Transportation
46 South Franklinton Road
Baltimore, Maryland

Wednesday,
November 30, 2016

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL FOX, Highway Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

GEORGE BOGRIS, Esq.
Mintzer Sarowitz Zaris Ledva & Meyers
(Attorney for AA Affordable)

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Robert Dent:

By Mr. Fox

4

I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. FOX: Today is November the 30th, 2016. This is Michael
3 Fox, investigator NTSB out of the Washington, D.C. office. I'm
4 currently located at AA Affordable Transportation located at 46
5 South Franklinton Road in Baltimore, Maryland. We're going to be
6 interviewing the dispatcher for the operation.

7 And there is a couple of people in the room, so we'll go
8 around and I'll ask you to state your full name and spell your
9 last name, please.

10 MR. DENT: Robert Dent, D-E-N-T.

11 MR. FOX: D-E-N-T?

12 MR. DENT: Um-hum.

13 MR. FOX: All right, sir. And go ahead, counselor.

14 MR. BOGRIS: George Bogris, B-O-G-R-I-S.

15 MR. FOX: And your title?

16 MR. BOGRIS: I'm an attorney with Mintzer Sarowitz Zaris
17 Ledva & Meyers, and I'm counsel for AA Affordable.

18 MR. FOX: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF ROBERT DENT

19
20 BY MR. FOX:

21 Q. So Mr. Dent, for the record, can you tell us your title with
22 the company?

23 A. Dispatcher.

24 Q. Dispatcher. And how long have you been employed here at AA
25 Affordable?

1 A. For them for four years.

2 Q. Four years?

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. And how long have you been a dispatcher?

5 A. For four years.

6 Q. Has that been your only duty?

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. You don't drive at all?

9 A. Uh-uh. No.

10 Q. No. Okay. And who do you report to?

11 A. Tracey and Ms. Carol.

12 Q. The reason why I asked you to come in is because we wanted to
13 talk about Mr. Chappell.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You remember the driver, right?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. He was involved in the accident that occurred at the first of
18 the month.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And specifically, we wanted to go back. The week prior to
21 the accident, he came in and reported to work on the 24th. And
22 bear with me a second. I just want to get my notes here. These
23 are my original notes that I took when I interviewed Ms. Carol,
24 and when we went over the payroll records for October the 24th, I
25 was informed that he was at a funeral and he had taken the day off

1 without pay.

2 And since then, I got a phone call and also an interview
3 yesterday with the owners that said that that was not correct,
4 that in fact that he passed out or had some kind of a medical
5 event and there was some things that went on, but they were not
6 witness to it, that you were actually present when this happened.
7 Can you recall those details on October the 24th?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And can you explain what happened?

10 A. Well, he comes in, he speaks, you know --

11 Q. This is Mr. Chappell?

12 A. Uh-huh. He comes in. He takes the -- hit the, hit the
13 clock. Speak, you know, asked me, asked me one question. "Who is
14 my, who is my aide for today?" Then he say, "Well, I'm going to,
15 I'm going to have a seat and then wait till they get here."

16 Q. And he said what?

17 A. I'm going to have a seat and wait till they come in.

18 Q. Okay, he said, I'm going to have a seat?

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. And then what happened?

21 A. And I was doing some paperwork. And then he stood up and
22 said, "I'm going to go down" -- "It's almost time for me to go.
23 I'm going downstairs and wait for the aide." I said okay, but I
24 never looked up. Then I heard him sit, heard him sit back down.
25 So I thought he figure he was going to wait till they come

1 upstair.

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. So I looked over there. I could see him looking toward my
4 direction so I called him. I said, "Mr. Glenn" -- I called him
5 Mr. Glenn. "Mr. Glenn." He didn't say nothing. I said, "Mr.
6 Glenn?" He still didn't say nothing. So I got up and walked over
7 to him and I said, "Mr. Glenn, you okay?" He ain't -- all he did
8 was look at me. You know, he never said a word.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Okay? Back to -- I mean, I got real nervous. Then when, you
11 know, after he didn't say nothing, I didn't know what could be
12 wrong with him or what. So I ran back to his desk. I had to
13 think. I was trying to dial the one -- 911. But I had to think,
14 get myself together, and I dialed. And I talked to the lady and
15 told her I had a employee that was sitting there in the chair, but
16 he's not saying nothing. And so I put the phone down for to go
17 back over. Then he was talking. He was talking --

18 Q. He was talking then?

19 A. Uh-huh. So when I picked the phone back up, the operator
20 said -- I told them could they please hurry up. They ask, you
21 know, they ask you a lot of question. But I wasn't, I wasn't
22 trying to hear they question. All I wanted the ambulance to come.
23 So they said that it was on the way. A few minutes, I heard them
24 at the door, coming in the door.

25 Q. Um-hum.

1 A. It was two. They come upstairs. They talk to him too, asked
2 him questions. What --

3 Q. These were paramedics or EMT?

4 A. Uh-huh. Yes, paramedics. Asked him what month it was, when
5 was his birthday, and did they -- he answered everything they
6 asked him. Then they told him, say, "Come on, let's go downstair
7 and we'll check you out a little bit more." He stood up. He went
8 on downstair. So I followed them to the door to watch him to go
9 downstair. He went downstair by himself.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And then, after I heard the door close, I went to the window.
12 They was at the -- we had one of the driver's cars that had broke
13 down. I looked through the window. They was walking past the
14 front of the -- that car. Then I went back to the desk.

15 Q. Did you -- then what did you do?

16 A. Okay, I sit at the desk. Fifteen minutes, he came back
17 upstairs by himself. I say, "Mr. Glenn, you can go home for the
18 day." He said, "Well, I'll be back this afternoon," which he came
19 back this afternoon, like he said. I said, "Mr. Glenn, you can
20 take off and go to the doctor and get checked out." He said,
21 "Okay, no problem." He left. He come back and said, "The doctor
22 said he had" --

23 Q. Now he came back what day? The same day?

24 A. The same day. Um-hum.

25 Q. We're still talking about Monday?

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. All right. He came back later that day, 2 or 3 o'clock or
3 something?

4 A. Um-hum., and said -- we asked him what did the, what did the
5 doctor say? He said the doctor say he had a bad reaction from
6 something he had ate. So I told him, I said, "Mr. Glenn, we need
7 a" -- he had to have a doctor's slip. He said, "No problem." He
8 go on back, go and get the -- he had the doctor fax a doctor's
9 slip.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. But the computers, the computers then went down. The
12 computers, the phone won't -- we had no source of communication.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And it was down for the, for the rest of the whole week, for
15 the whole week.

16 Q. All right.

17 A. So we know that and we never received any information from
18 the doctor.

19 Q. Okay. Was the doctor supposed to email it --

20 A. No.

21 Q. -- or fax it to you?

22 A. Yes. Uh-huh. Yes.

23 Q. But you never received it?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Did you --

1 A. He --

2 Q. Did you ask the driver to go physically to the doctor's
3 office and get a doctor's note?

4 A. To get a note?

5 Q. Yeah, from the doctor. Go back to the doctor and get a note,
6 a physical note saying he was okay?

7 A. No, no. Let me see. Did I ask him go back to the doctor to
8 get another -- no.

9 Q. You didn't?

10 A. No.

11 Q. So just for -- just to refresh your memory, he was off
12 Monday, and as you said, you instructed him to go to the doctor.
13 He said that he did and that he was going to have the doctor fax
14 it in or email it in. Do you recall which?

15 A. Um-hum. But not exactly which one he said, but I know I
16 always just ask the doctor to fax. That used to be my term, when
17 someone going to the doctor.

18 Q. Sure. So you asked the doctor to fax in the paperwork saying
19 that he had gone to the doctor, he was cleared for duty?

20 A. He was -- right.

21 Q. And so Tuesday came, and you did not have the information,
22 correct?

23 A. No.

24 Q. And you dispatched him anyway?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. And then Wednesday, he worked that day also?

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. Did you ask him for the note that day also?

4 A. We were still trying to get information from the computer.

5 Q. Right, but you did not have a receipt in your hand that said
6 that the doctor -- that the driver was cleared for duty, correct?

7 A. No.

8 Q. All right. So you dispatched him still on Wednesday?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And then on Thursday, you didn't have a doctor's note?

11 A. No.

12 Q. And you dispatched him that day also?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And then Friday you also -- you asked for a doctor's note?

15 And he still said it's coming or the doctor's --

16 A. The doctor faxed -- he told the doctor to fax it.

17 Q. Okay. But you didn't have it in --

18 A. In my --

19 Q. -- in your hand. And then Monday, he reported for duty.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And you still didn't have it?

22 A. No.

23 Q. And then the day of the crash, he still didn't produce the
24 doctor's note?

25 A. The day of the crash -- I'm a dialysis patient. I was at

1 dialysis. I didn't see him that morning.

2 Q. Oh, okay. You didn't see him on Tuesday. But all the other
3 days that he was here that we just went over, you had asked for a
4 doctor's note but yet you didn't receive it?

5 A. No.

6 Q. And yet, he still was dispatched?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. Now going back to his condition, can you recall what
9 his disposition was? When you said that you had called to his
10 name, he was just sitting there. Was his eyes open? Was he --

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. His eyes were open?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And was he looking at the sky or, you know, looking at the
15 ceiling or -- do you recall?

16 A. No. No.

17 Q. Was he --

18 A. Looking at me.

19 Q. He was looking at you --

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. -- and he just was not coherent? He was not --

22 A. Saying anything.

23 Q. -- acknowledging anything to you?

24 A. No.

25 Q. But he had his eyes open?

1 A. Yes. He had his eyes open. He wasn't shaking. He wasn't
2 doing anything.

3 Q. What was his disposition of his hands, or were they --

4 A. Resting on his leg.

5 Q. They were, they were just resting on his thighs?

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. And he was just sitting there looking at you?

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. And he didn't shake his head or anything, he just stood there
10 staring at you?

11 A. Um-hum. Yes.

12 Q. And this -- how long do you think this event lasted?

13 A. Not long.

14 Q. A minute? Couple of minutes?

15 A. Couples of minutes. Maybe one.

16 Q. One minute?

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. All right. And then that's when you --

19 A. It lasted no longer as -- like I said, when I came to the --
20 requesting aid, dialed 911. And I, and I looked -- turned around
21 and looked, he was talking.

22 Q. He --

23 A. Then I put the phone down, went back and saw his -- I say,
24 "Are you okay?" He said yeah. So then I come picked up the
25 phone, and they say, well, we did dispatch. And just a little

1 later, dispatch was -- they was at the door coming up the stair.

2 Q. Excuse me. When you realized that he had come back out of
3 his spell, did you ask him -- did you say, you know, "What
4 happened?" Or did you question him about that?

5 A. No.

6 Q. You just said, "Are you all right?"

7 A. I asked him was he fine. He said yes. But then, by the time
8 I asked that question, the paramedics come in the door.

9 Q. All right.

10 A. So yeah, I didn't, I didn't ask him anymore. But --

11 Q. Did you ever interact with the paramedics?

12 A. No, they -- when they come in, they start talking to him.
13 And they talked, he -- like I say, asked him what month it was,
14 when was his birthday, you know, blah, blah, blah.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. And then he -- they told him, say, "Well, okay." Said, "Can
17 you stand?" He stood up. He said, "Can you walk?" They say,
18 "We're going downstairs to the ambulance so we can check you out
19 more." He took off to his own all with them. They wasn't holding
20 him. He walking by himself. He went -- I watched him when he
21 went to the stair. I went there to open the door and look down
22 the stair. He went down the stair by himself.

23 Q. Um-hum. And then you -- at some point did you realize that
24 he left and didn't go by ambulance?

25 A. Later. But I didn't know he didn't do it -- not right at the

1 moment.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. Later. Later I find out he didn't, he didn't go nowhere with
4 the ambulance.

5 Q. Right. And at no point did you have a discussion with the
6 paramedics?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. All right. While you have been here at AA Affordable,
9 had you ever seen a driver behave this way before?

10 A. No. No. Uh-uh. No.

11 Q. Have you ever, have you ever heard of any incidents, not
12 witnessed, like you did?

13 A. No.

14 Q. You haven't heard any other drivers --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- discuss this type of behavior?

17 A. Uh-uh. No.

18 Q. And how would you say, prior to this incident on the 24th,
19 how was Mr. Chappell's disposition and health?

20 A. Pleasant. He was a pleasant man. Never angry, never
21 fussing. Anything you asked him to do, he would do it.

22 Q. Okay. All right, very good. Well, you've been very helpful,
23 Mr. Dent. I appreciate your time today. Do you have anything
24 else that you wish to add?

25 A. No, no.

1 Q. Okay.

2 MR. FOX: All right, so at this point, we're going to
3 conclude the interview. It is now 2:20.

4 (Whereupon, at 2:20 p.m., 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: SCHOOL BUS/COMMUTER BUS ACCIDENT
 IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND ON
 NOVEMBER 1, 2016
 Interview of Mr. Dent

DOCKET NUMBER: HWY17MH007

PLACE: Baltimore, Maryland

DATE: November 30, 2016

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.

Eileen Gonzalez
Transcriber