

DCA13MR002
Conrail - Shared Assets
Derailment/Hazardous Material Release
Paulsboro, New Jersey
November 30, 2012

NTSB - Interview of Emergency Services
Superintendent - Paulsboro Refining
Company

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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TRAIN DERAILMENT/CHEMICAL SPILL

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NOVEMBER 30, 2012

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Docket No.: DCA-13-MR-002

PAULSBORO, NEW JERSEY

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Interview of: PATRICK ROBINSON

Clarksboro, New Jersey

Tuesday,

December 4, 2012

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: PAUL STANCIL
Accident Investigator

APPEARANCES:

PAUL STANCIL, Accident Investigator
Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous
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National Transportation Safety Board
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I N T E R V I E W

(3:47 p.m.)

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2
3 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Today is December 4th, 2012. It's
4 3:47 p.m. My name is Paul Stancil. I'm a hazardous materials
5 accident investigator with the National Transportation Safety
6 Board. We're here conducting an interview at a building adjacent
7 to the incident command post for the response to the Paulsboro,
8 New Jersey train derailment that occurred on November 30th, 2012.

9 I would like to go around the room and introduce each
10 other, everyone here that's present. Sir?

11 MR. ROBINSON: My name is Patrick Robinson. I'm
12 currently the Emergency Services Superintendent at the Paulsboro
13 Refining Company located at 800 Billingsport Road, Paulsboro, New
14 Jersey.

15 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: And Muhamed El-Zoghbi, hazardous
16 materials investigator with the National Transportation Safety
17 Board.

INTERVIEW OF PATRICK ROBINSON

BY MR. STANCIL:

19
20 Q. And Mr. Robinson, if you could tell us a little bit
21 about your background in hazardous materials?

22 A: I can. I actually started in the volunteer fire service
23 outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at a very early age in the
24 Explorer Program when I was 12 years old. I did go to school for
25 fire protection and safety engineering at the Illinois Institute

1 of Technology with a B.S. in engineering degree.

2 My professional career began when I graduated in 1981.
3 I worked for Marathon Oil Company in Finley, Ohio, as the
4 corporate loss prevention engineer and in that capacity traveled
5 the entire gamut of the industry and, also, had the ability to
6 investigate accidents on behalf of the company, in addition to the
7 risk inspections.

8 I was transferred from that job in Marathon to Houston,
9 Texas, that was in 1983, and I was in charge of all the
10 environmental, safety, right-of-way fire protection for five
11 states of pipelines plus the offshore pipelines. At that time I
12 got transferred to Texas City where I was a safety manager at the
13 Texas City Refinery.

14 In 1987, I left Marathon, came to Mobil Oil at the
15 Paulsboro Refinery. And it was Mobil until 1998, at which time it
16 became Valero for a 10-year period and they were sold, after 10
17 years, to a private investment group, PBF Energy. That's where
18 I'm at today.

19 As far as emergency response experience, on the
20 industrial side I've been doing emergency response even since the
21 Marathon days and, also, in Texas City as part of the IMAS,
22 Industrial Mutual Aid System, in Texas City and here in Mobil one
23 of my first assignments in 1987 was to establish a five-state
24 response team for hazmat. The team responded to incidents that
25 were -- involved products either coming to the refinery or leaving

1 the refinery, and we responded to the communities, local
2 communities, through a written mutual aid policy with incidents
3 involving hydrocarbons and pretty much anything short of things
4 involving explosives or radioactives, which in our policy, which
5 we do not do. That's other expertise.

6 And I don't have the exact number with me; I don't have
7 a resume of all those -- the incidents but there have been many
8 incidents over the years.

9 As far as official certification, besides the
10 engineering degree, numerous certifications from the Division of
11 Fire Safety, State of New Jersey for hazmat, on-scene incident
12 commander, firefighter, Fire Instructor Level I, Level II, Fire
13 Officer I, II and just many lists of certifications.

14 Q: Well, thank you. That was very good description of your
15 background.

16 A: Thank you.

17 Q: That's very impressive. So your position now with
18 Paulsboro Refinery is?

19 A: I'm the Emergency Service Superintendent or a/k/a Fire
20 Chief.

21 Q: Fire Chief. So if you don't mind I'll refer to you as
22 Chief Robinson?

23 A: Sure. No, that's fine.

24 Q: Okay. Chief, if you would, just give us a complete
25 description and narration of everything you can remember from the

1 time that you were notified of an accident situation in Paulsboro
2 on November 30th?

3 A: Okay. At that time was shortly sometime after 0700
4 hours in the morning when the operations director came down to my
5 office at our DCS building and notified me or asked me had I been
6 contacted by Gloucester County 911 regarding a accident in the
7 Borough of Paulsboro. I said no, I had not. So we proceeded down
8 to the shift superintendent's office who was, at that time, just
9 receiving the call.

10 He explained to me that he had been contacted by the 911
11 center requesting our assistance to a train derailment in the
12 Borough of Paulsboro located approximately at Jefferson and
13 Commerce Street. So I happened to have my hazmat team captain on
14 duty that day, as overtime, so I grabbed him. His name is Calvin
15 Hargy (ph.). I got in my command vehicle and proceeded down
16 Billingsport Road going down Broad Street and making a left onto
17 Commerce, at which time I saw numerous police officers from other
18 municipalities there to assist, one, in fact, from my hometown of
19 Mantua, New Jersey. I thought that was pretty fast for them to
20 get over there but they were actually doing evaluations at that
21 time.

22 I tried to ascertain where the actual incident was. I
23 was told it was up on Jefferson Street next to Gary Stevenson's
24 house, which I kind of knew who that was. Gary is a past fire
25 chief, a councilman in the Borough of Paulsboro.

1 I tried to get a bearing on wind direction at that time
2 but it was a very still morning and I didn't see anything out of
3 the ordinary so I proceeded down Commerce, made the turn and just
4 as I turned onto Jefferson there's a parking lot there on the
5 immediate right and that's where I parked the vehicle just to make
6 sure I was out of harm's way.

7 I saw the fire apparatus from the Borough of Paulsboro
8 up in front of me so I walked up and reported to the chief, Chief
9 Alfonso Giampola, who's the borough fire chief. Said, "Chief, I'm
10 here. What can I do to help?" And he said -- he showed me the
11 incident and, obviously, there was a train derailment and he said
12 he just would like help just trying to ascertain the threat, the
13 danger, make sure we were doing the right thing for evacuation, et
14 cetera.

15 I said with the chief's permission what I'd like to is
16 page out our hazmat response team. We do have a written mutual
17 aid policy. We would be glad to do that. What that will bring to
18 the table are some trained technicians to do air monitoring
19 immediately to make sure that we can establish the hot, warm and
20 cold zone. He agreed. I made that happen.

21 Also, I suggested to the chief that I dispatch our oil
22 spill response team. We have an oil spill response team that
23 trains for two scenarios. The first scenario is containing an oil
24 spill at our dock and there's also a volunteer oil spill team that
25 has a mutual aid obligation to boom off the mouth of Mantua Creek

1 and that's our obligation in case one of our industrial neighbors
2 or someone else on the river has an incident and we do that
3 initially. It's then maintained by either our co-op directly, the
4 DBRC, Delaware Bay River Cooperative, our oil spill co-op, or one
5 of their nested contractors. He also agreed. So I called back to
6 the refinery to make that call happen, too.

7 The next few minutes were just kind of spent just kind
8 of doing a size-up. I could see a fog, possibly chemical, too,
9 but I could definitely see the fog in the basin. It was a very
10 still day. It is not unusual to see a heavy fog in the water in
11 the basin. My commute to the refinery is parallel to that creek
12 for quite a long way. I live in Mantua so I've got about a
13 6-mile commute of which probably half that's right along the
14 Mantua Creek. So it's not uncommon to see that inversion on a
15 typical day such as that.

16 So we saw that and I said, once again, we don't know for
17 sure till we get the instrumentation here. Obviously, your senses
18 are not a direct reading instrument nor should they be so I wanted
19 to get instrumentation and really get something. But I could see
20 something, did not smell, taste or anything at that point.

21 Did suggest to the chief that we try to get
22 non-essential personnel moved back and suggested we try to get
23 some type of makeshift field command post. Mr. Stevenson, Gary
24 Stevenson, councilman and former fire chief, his house was
25 involved, suggested why don't we use our living room? I said, no,

1 we shouldn't be tromping in your house, perhaps your garage or,
2 better yet, maybe this church next door. If we could open the
3 door and at least get everyone inside out of the elements and,
4 once again, until we got some instrumentation to determine if we
5 were in harm's way or not. Gary's wife, Mrs. Stevenson, was going
6 to make that happen, and she did.

7 I came back to the chief and suggested that the --
8 chief, hazmat team's on the way. We'll get instrumentation, get
9 our zones established. If you would like to, I'll help get this
10 kind of organized for you while you can focus on some of the more
11 important things, specifically, the evacuations being undertaken
12 by your police and neighboring police, and he said that was a good
13 idea.

14 I asked him, are there any Conrail representatives on
15 site? Because one of the first duties of business should be to
16 gather the consist. This will be very important in determining
17 the assay of the train, the car numbers, the arrangements, the
18 hazmat cargo, et cetera, and he pointed that there are some folks
19 over on the track there. He indicated the supervisor was Neil,
20 don't know the last name, but he asked me to go over and try to
21 corral that information and that's kind of where I went off.

22 So I did spend some time trying to track down Conrail.
23 I approached them. They were extremely busy, as you can imagine.
24 They had a small group there trying to do an assessment of their
25 own. But I did try to corral them to, at least, get someone to

1 come to the makeshift field command post with the consist with the
2 papers.

3 I went back and, once again, tried to corral people in
4 -- with the chief's permission into the church so we could have
5 some type of initial meeting. I offered to scribe for the chief
6 and he was agreeable to that. So I went back to my vehicle and
7 pulled out the ICS-201 and I started to draw a diagram of what I
8 was observing and, specifically, I drew a diagram of the cars and
9 the reporting marks of those cars. I did note pressure cars and
10 at least one non-pressure general service car and I did notice
11 some other, just general cars, like a lumber car, the pellet car,
12 that were not on the bridge proper but were farther up.

13 Meanwhile, a representative from Conrail came up and I
14 might have the exact times out of sync a little bit, but there was
15 a concern for braking the train because of the people that were
16 blocked in at Paradise Road. And Paradise Road would be farther
17 to the east and along that road on the river side of the tracks,
18 one-way in, one-way out, there's the Gloucester County Utilities
19 Authority, there is a large asphalt refinery owned by NuStar and
20 there's also some solar fields. I'm not sure if they're on the
21 river side of that train track or the other side. But I noticed I
22 knew there was at least two industries, if you will, back there.

23 I told the chief that and I suggested that it was
24 probably a good idea because if there is going to be a release or
25 if there is a release going on and the wind's that way we

1 certainly don't want to have people trapped there because the only
2 way out was like jumping ship into the river and that wasn't going
3 to be a good idea. So I think they were trying to make that move
4 anyhow.

5 I came back and I tried to just do some more things on
6 the 201, suggested to the chief that a lot of people, as you can
7 imagine, chaos, and just trying to make some order out of the
8 chaos with the chief's permission I was there just to help him.
9 So I suggested if we could at least get people back to that
10 church, went back to that church and started to rearrange the
11 tables into a large format so we could at least talk in a
12 civilized manner.

13 Sometime in the interim, once again, I don't know the
14 exact times, but our hazmat team began to show up. The Gloucester
15 County CBRNE team was also notified and I can't speak to the exact
16 arrival of who was there first, who was there second. Generally
17 speaking, our folks were there. Initially I put emphasis -- we
18 were gathering equipment back at our fire station.

19 All of our meters we have area RAEs, we have multi-RAEs,
20 all of our meters are kept off the truck because we have the
21 Industrial Scientific System II that has the docking station that
22 talks to Pittsburgh on a daily basis, a bump test that calibrates
23 immediately. The RAEs, that's the Industrial Scientific, our RAE
24 system, the area RAE kits, we have four rapid deployment kits, we
25 have a lot of multi-RAEs. Those are all calibrated, bump-tested

1 monthly by our hazmat technician, Calvin Hargy. And I had just
2 sent some of those over to an authorized service center for a
3 technician to take a look at those. I like to do that
4 periodically just to make sure. So I had at least one of those
5 kits out of service and a few of the multi-RAEs, but we still had
6 plenty reserve.

7 But the point being I have a separate cabinet at the
8 fire station where I keep all that stuff, the Industrial
9 Scientifics and their docking station, because the connectivity
10 that's required it was not successful in the truck and the RAE
11 system in these, like, vented cabinets you can charge and ready to
12 go so they have to be loaded onto the truck. So the point being I
13 was summoning the hazmat team and then I asked to, at least, get
14 some folks in another vehicle or have an immediate response with
15 some meters while the others were assembling on the hazmat truck
16 and other resources.

17 I know you haven't been to our refinery. We have a
18 whole host of equipment. We have two fire brigades, we have
19 hazmat, we have rescue, we have EMS and oil spill. They're all
20 separate emergency response entities and each one has their own
21 equipment, fire trucks, ladder trucks, ambulances, et cetera.
22 Hazmat specifically, we have a 1987 E-1 hazmat truck, walk-in
23 body, 34,000 pounds gross, and we have two trailers, one's
24 20-foot, one's 24-foot, filled with equipment. Our primary forte,
25 if you will, once again not explosives, no radioactives, but

1 primarily hydrocarbons and what we've done a lot over the years
2 for Gloucester County and the adjacent counties is responded to
3 overturned gas line tank trucks because that's what we deal with
4 mostly, hydrocarbons and have done that free of charge. Well,
5 since the inception of the County CBRNE team that has been less
6 frequent but we're still their mutual aid.

7 Anyhow, I had them respond with meters and then asked
8 our hygienist, our industrial hygienist who's on the hazmat team,
9 to be the point source to try and collect data from all the
10 people. Being a refinery we've been in this position before where
11 there's been inadvertent releases and we try to have people go out
12 and I'm at this location, at this time, with this instrumentation,
13 here are my readings and we just try to do that, too. The area
14 RAEs were deployed later. As you know, they pump out GPS
15 coordinates and everything so -- but initially we wanted to, at
16 least, see where we were at.

17 In the interim, I'm working with the chief trying to
18 assist him, get everyone corralled into the church and trying to
19 complete that 201 and trying to complete the initial incident
20 objectives which, of course, are life safety, number one. And for
21 the life safety concerns the police were doing the evacuation.
22 Also, with life safety concerns we were still trying to get a hold
23 of that consist, the actual copy there because we needed to know
24 exactly what.

25 I had done a real -- really crude sketch on the 201 of

1 the cars, I mean, I think my six-year old could have drawn a
2 better picture but it was something with reporting marks and
3 pressure versus non-pressure, so evacuation zones, trying to get
4 some order and trying to just get some coordination.

5 I remember saying -- at the time I said, you know, I'm
6 not sure in my training would tell me to suspect terrorism even
7 though, maybe, it's not but we should suspect that so law
8 enforcement please do whatever you need to do to make that happen.
9 I mean, laugh at me later but just in case. That's my training so
10 that's what I suggested to them. Also, with life safety, I just
11 want to make sure the emergency responders themselves were
12 protected.

13 As far as incident stabilization, our second main
14 objective, second main priority, just trying to, once again,
15 ascertain and we couldn't do a complete size-up. I did what I
16 could visually. Conrail was doing a more detailed size-up but,
17 you know, that would be unfolding and the third thing was the
18 property conservation and, for that reason, we had decided to, at
19 least, deploy the oil spill team for the river side. I had no
20 assets. I had no way of deploying it up river, suggested they
21 maybe contact one of the contractors to make that happen if we
22 wanted to do that, realizing, though, we did not want to put
23 people in harm's way because we don't know what's there because we
24 don't have the instrumentation there. But felt pretty secure if
25 we did deploy the river side folks they could at least stage at

1 the mouth of the creek, which was three-quarters to a mile away.

2 As it actually turns out, in fact, the oil spill team
3 assembled and our boat house did not actually respond. They did
4 contact the DBRC, that's our mother coop organization for oil
5 spill. They were alerted and they were involved and I'm not sure
6 if they actually responded or -- but there was assets there ready
7 to go but we stayed out of harm's way because we didn't know the
8 exact area of the hot zone.

9 Once again, I'm kind of losing track of exact times,
10 just kind of globally talking about the situation. Realizing we
11 were getting some hits from the hygienist and the folks, there was
12 some confusion on the actual levels as reported by other folks. I
13 don't know who those folks were in that meeting but someone had
14 reported that -- suggesting maybe that, you know, 30 ppm might be
15 right and former mayor, now State Assemblyman Burzichelli was in
16 the meeting. He was trying to get a press conference and some
17 information out to the people. I did caution Assemblyman
18 Burzichelli, I said, "Sir, I don't think that number's right. I
19 would not report any numbers like that." To the best of our
20 knowledge through our system, internally, the time weighted
21 average is 1 part per million (indiscernible) and the ceiling was
22 around 5. But we would have to wait for the research.
23 This was all happening very fast.

24 There was some concern for the location of this forward
25 command post and especially since it was getting more and more

1 densely populated from people just responding as the initial chaos
2 was. So we had discussed with the chief about possibly moving
3 this to another location, trying to make arrangements to make it
4 (indiscernible) and the Borough Hall was suggested. So provisions
5 were being made to reassemble at the Borough Hall to get all
6 parties there, and realizing this would be long-term event,
7 establish some type of unified command system.

8 There were other things happening there, you know,
9 trying to mitigate, trying to (indiscernible), trying to get the
10 consist but eventually, at some point in time I can't really
11 timestamp it, perhaps other people can better than I, but we
12 eventually did move back to Borough Hall.

13 At Borough Hall we told everybody to go there primarily
14 to get them out of the way, you know, it's like the old movies in
15 the pioneer days you tell the husband to go boil the water to give
16 him something to do. We told everybody to go to Borough Hall
17 because everybody's going to be there, da, da, da.

18 So everybody's going to Borough Hall and when I arrived
19 there personally I grabbed my forms, went in. There was already
20 discussions between some folks in the DEP, the police and whatnot.
21 So Sergeant Brian Abraham, New Jersey State Police was there. I
22 tried to capture some of those notes. After that, initial
23 discussions out there which was ongoing before I got there, I
24 suggested we go to this adjacent room which was smaller and try to
25 formally with the -- it's all -- I'm working for the chief. I'm

1 just trying to help coach him and mentor him. With the chief's
2 permission I said let's go next door to the room there. Let's try
3 to put this stuff together into a formal more -- a more formal 201
4 one than what I had done out there in the field and, specifically,
5 let's get this unified command going, some initial objectives and
6 go from there.

7 I can remember Mr. Bob Van Flaus (ph.) from the State
8 was there and said in my mind there should be, obviously, someone
9 from the Borough which was the fire chief in that unified command
10 which Chief Giampola. There should be someone from the State,
11 Mr. Van Flaus and he spoke and said yes and I have -- I think it
12 was Anthony with me, too. It was either Anthony or Patrick. I
13 think it was Anthony with him, too. I said okay. I said
14 obviously there is federal involvement here. I don't know would
15 that be Coast Guard? I don't know would that be -- who that would
16 be. NTSB, there was some suggestion about that initially and,
17 initially, someone in that room suggested that should be NTSB so I
18 put that down, initially. There was no representation there,
19 though. There were people en route.

20 I wondered, because it was a navigable waterway,
21 training would probably seem to me a federal on-scene coordinator
22 might be Coast Guard but I wasn't quite sure and, of course, we
23 had the responsible party but we couldn't -- we didn't have the
24 responsible party there. You know, I was telling the chief of
25 police, Chief Walker, I said, "Chief, it's important we really

1 need to get somebody here. I know they're strapped but at least
2 somebody with a radio. We got to get somebody here to start
3 making some key decisions." Once again, I'm only supporting the
4 chief. Just trying to help mentor him.

5 So I started making notes and tried to look for
6 agreements on our initial objectives and they were expanded on the
7 same three principles but there were some different strategy and
8 tactics. And I don't have my notes -- I don't have anything right
9 here with me but we, kind of, expanded on those. Everyone seemed
10 to agree at the time. Later that afternoon, and I don't remember
11 the exact time, sir, but that's when Captain Kathy Moore arrived
12 and she sat down and kind of took charge as a federal on-scene
13 coordinator and I said here's the organization and I just kind of
14 scribed until we got going.

15 So in a nutshell that's kind of the first two hours
16 without having exact timestamps or anything else.

17 Q. Okay. Now, let's go back to the beginning, again, and
18 talk about your initial response. You mentioned you brought a
19 captain with you. Was it just the two of you or did you have
20 additional assets from (indiscernible) --

21 A. Initially, it was just myself and the hazmat team
22 leader, I should say, in my vehicle.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. My -- I have a command vehicle.

25 Q. And then you brought in additional --

1 A. I did.

2 Q. -- assets?

3 A. Brought in the hazmat team assets.

4 Q. And could you describe what those were?

5 A. That consisted of -- they were back at the station.

6 They were, once again, putting that instrumentation onto the truck
7 because we keep it there in the docking stations and on-charge.

8 So putting together, it's a 2147 is that 1987 E-1 walk-in body
9 truck. I don't know -- I mean, to this day I haven't been back to
10 look at the reports or anything but I don't know how many hazmat
11 personnel they had, but they had hazmat personnel on that truck.
12 We have another. We have a rescue truck, a 2148. That was in the
13 process of hooking up one of our hazmat trailers, the one that
14 specializes in cargo tank truck rollovers, but there's a whole
15 cadre of equipment in there, too.

16 It was determined, at least before 2148, that rescue
17 truck, that we were not going to need that specialized trailer
18 rollover stuff so unhitched that and respond out with personnel
19 with the meters in that truck. So there was at least the one
20 truck, 48, the rest (indiscernible) was a 750 Ford rescue truck
21 that seats, one, two, three, four, five people with meters and
22 then there was people in the regular hazmat truck itself that
23 responded out.

24 That and, once again, so the oil spill team they
25 assembled at the dock and they did not actually deploy, to the

1 best of my knowledge.

2 Q. Okay. And when you arrived on scene you mentioned you
3 saw other responders from the fire department and police
4 department doing evacuations.

5 A. Absolutely.

6 Q. What information did you receive upon your arrival about
7 the nature of the hazard, what the chemical was?

8 A. I did not know that until a little bit later when I
9 caught up with Neil from Conrail, and it was mentioned that -- I
10 mean, obviously I saw a general service car, obviously, I saw
11 pressure cars. It was mentioned, at that time, that it was vinyl
12 chloride. There was denatured alcohol, ethanol, and that was the
13 primary hazmats involved. This was mentioned at that time. And I
14 don't have a timestamp on that but it was about my first discuss
15 -- looked for myself, discussed with the chief and started looking
16 for some of the Conrail reps.

17 Q. About how long do you think that would've been after
18 your arrival?

19 A. Probably, I'm estimating, within 45 minutes.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Estimate.

22 Q. And you described that there was some difficulty
23 obtaining a consist.

24 A. Well, I explained to -- once I was there to help the
25 chief. I said the first thing we had to do is get this consist to

1 know exactly what cars -- the order of the cars and know which
2 were hazmats so we knew exactly what we're dealing with. I also
3 suggested to someone that was there with the chief to call
4 ChemTrack to start pushing that message from the other way, to
5 call the DEP and get some other resources here to really just make
6 that happen, too.

7 I did forget to mention, though, during a size-up as I
8 was observing the cars, reporting marks, recording pressure,
9 non-pressure, I did notice on the banks Do Not Dredge. So I knew
10 that meant there was a pipeline there. So I kind of traced that
11 back in through some debris, some brush, found a pipeline marker
12 and saw a number. I asked Mrs. Stevenson to please go in the
13 house and notify this carrier. It turned out to be Airco. Turned
14 out to be a 500 pound nitrogen line, possibly eight inch. She
15 come out of the house reported she had called that and there was a
16 prompt that said for emergency press some number, she did, and it
17 was just a recording. So we don't -- we didn't know if it went
18 through or not. But anyway, we made the notification. As it
19 turns out, two representatives from Linde did show up concerning
20 that pipeline.

21 Q. Was -- how far out of harm's way was this pipeline?

22 A. The pipeline was approximately 20 yards up the stream of
23 the derailment from the bridge. At least, that's where the Do Not
24 Dredge signs were. So I knew that should there be an impact
25 that's something else.

1 Later, we had asked, back at the Borough Hall, I asked
2 the county to verify with the GIS maps if there was anything on
3 the downstream side between the river and the bridge to make sure
4 there's nothing impacted there. As it turns out, I think,
5 perhaps, there was some Sunoco pipeline there. I'm not sure how
6 -- to this day I'm not sure how close proximity. Obviously, I saw
7 them here at the command post but there was concern. Because I
8 saw the Do Not Dredge so I knew something was there, anyhow.

9 Q. The Sunoco is a different pipeline?

10 A. Yes, sir. This was definitely -- it said Airco and 800
11 number, a toll free number rather, and the people that showed up
12 it said Linde, L-i-n-d-e on their hat and they claimed to be the
13 owners of that nitrogen pipeline.

14 Q. And in relation to that pipeline, where was the Sunoco
15 pipeline?

16 A. Well, I don't know for sure, sir. I never did ascertain
17 that. But I think that was definitely between the river and the
18 bridge. So on the other side of the --

19 Q. On the opposite side.

20 A. Yes, sir. I only saw the one Do Not Dredge. I followed
21 that back along the actual derailment. As a matter of fact, right
22 next to the car that that had the pellets I found a marker in the
23 weeds there, transcribed the information.

24 Q. Is there any concern about the integrity of either
25 pipeline at this point?

1 A. I'm not sure, sir.

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. That's the first thing that crossed my mind, suspect
4 everything until proven otherwise. And I want -- I thought it's
5 important to get them there because, being a pipeline background
6 with Marathon, you know, you have to know where's your monitoring
7 station? Did they notice any anomalies in the pressure? Where
8 are your control valves, how fast, what is the product involved?
9 It's not labeled there and nitrogen being a simple asphyxiant,
10 just some more hazards that we need to know about and understand
11 how to control if it came to that.

12 Q. Okay. Concerning the cloud that -- or fog that you
13 observed and the monitoring that you -- your folks subsequently
14 did, can you describe what that was all about and what the nature
15 of the fog was?

16 A. Well, upon my initial arrival I, like I said, I saw a
17 rather dense fog right -- hovering on top of the water. As I
18 said, that's not unusual but realizing there was a derailment,
19 possibly some pressure cars and, obviously, we're fed by that
20 spur. So I didn't now which way the train was going at that time.
21 Right away I did not know, then I found out which way later but,
22 you know, it could have been LPG cars, I mean, I saw the domes. I
23 saw pressure cars. This is immediately. This was in the first
24 ten minutes. So, you know, knowing those properties inherently I
25 wanted to make sure that we did our safe -- safety first and then

1 we could regroup and come back.

2 As soon as the hazmat team got there with meters they
3 were doing some monitoring. I wanted to make sure to come up as
4 close to where this forward command post was set up and the people
5 where the fire trucks, do monitoring there and based, you know, on
6 some hits that they were getting, that's when we started talking
7 about let's move this. We were talking about that anyhow but
8 let's really expedite this move to the Borough Hall. We've done
9 everything we can here. We've evacuated to the best of our
10 knowledge and --

11 Q. Okay. So what sorts of discussions were going on about
12 the nature of this cloud or the fog?

13 A. Just trying to, you know, ascertain is it truly a fog?
14 Is it vapor? Is it a combination thereof? We're, you know, get
15 the instrumentation there to determine exactly what the makeup is.

16 Q. So before your instrumentation arrived, what sorts of
17 information did you hear about the fog?

18 A. Nothing. I didn't hear anything. I observed. I just
19 observed. At that time when I first arrived, it was just confined
20 to that low basin where the actual derailment was just like
21 someone laid a blanket --

22 Q. Uh-huh.

23 A. -- right there. It wasn't really moving. It was very
24 still. As we progressed with this command post to the Borough
25 Hall that must have been (indiscernible) starting to heat up and

1 starting to move and that's about when they got some hits, we were
2 starting to get ready to move anyhow.

3 Q. Did you have any contact with the train crew?

4 A. I was running to find them a couple times. Once again,
5 initially, to get a copy of the consist. I think someone, while I
6 was running over here, I think someone from there ran over here
7 and showed that to the chief. You would have to ask him exactly,
8 but it might have been one of these things try to go back and
9 forth.

10 I also remember going in early on and talking to, it was
11 not Neil it was just one of the Conrail person there. I said,
12 "Has anyone notified Allen Richter?" That's their hazmat
13 specialist who I've known for a long time. I said we need to
14 ensure that he is en route to this location. And they assured me
15 that he would be. His ETA would be soon but they didn't have an
16 actual number.

17 Q. What about police officers? Did any of them talk to
18 you?

19 A. Absolutely. The police chief was there and I believe
20 his captain, Vern Marino was there. Chief is Chris Wachter and
21 they were present up at that -- we tried to get that first
22 organization up in that church social hall and we talked about,
23 you know, what they were doing with the evacuation. Like I said,
24 when I first pulled down Commerce Street I saw Mantua Township
25 police, Gibbstown police knocking on doors, getting people out of

1 harm's way and I remember we talked about that and, obviously,
2 like I said, I already mentioned that initial briefing that said,
3 you know, don't laugh, but assume terrorism until proven otherwise
4 so -- but, yeah, they were there. They were present. Yeah.

5 Q. Did any of them ask you what they were being exposed to
6 or talk about what they thought it was?

7 A. I don't recall that.

8 Q. Did any one ever say LPG or propane?

9 A. I don't recall that. No, sir.

10 Q. You didn't hear that at all.

11 A. No, sir.

12 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Do you want to take over for a bit?

13 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: Yeah.

14 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

15 Q. I was going to say, you say you're very familiar with
16 this area. You've driven -- you drive through the area often. I
17 was wondering, that morning, did you note any fog or anything of
18 that nature coming off of the creek or --

19 A. I did. It was a foggy morning coming to work. As I
20 mentioned, I live about six miles from the refinery. Perhaps half
21 my travel route parallels that Mantua Creek. There were a few
22 spots that are -- come rather close to Berkeley Road and then I
23 can always see the fog banking up so I did see some fog that
24 morning, yes, as I have these recent mornings.

25 Q. Uh-huh. And you mentioned that you folks were out

1 monitoring and what, specifically, were they reporting or what
2 type of instrument? Were they doing VOCs?

3 A. The -- I don't know exactly. Like I say, I haven't been
4 back. I've been here ever since helping the fire branch folks, so
5 I don't know if the actual readings were from the areaRAEs, which
6 are five gas or the multi-RAEs. But in any event we have the IDs.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. I do not know, I can't tell you for sure that we got
9 into the Keller (ph.) metric tubes for vinyl chloride or anything.
10 I don't know that. To this day I don't know that. I've not
11 talked to my people.

12 Q. What sort of numbers were -- did you -- were being -- I
13 mean, I know you mentioned at one point, I think, it was 30 parts
14 per million (indiscernible) --

15 A. Someone in a meeting mentioned that the 30 == there was
16 a 30 part per million in the area. This was during that initial
17 meeting --

18 Q. Uh-huh.

19 A. -- in the church social hall and, you know, is that safe
20 and someone -- I don't know who, but someone was, oh, yeah, that's
21 -- I remember because Assemblyman Burzichelli was going to try to
22 write this down and that -- I specifically remember because I went
23 to him after we adjourned and I said, "Please, sir, don't
24 reference that as being safe because I'm not sure that is." I
25 mean, our initial quick check we tried to -- our SOG for our

1 hazmat is even gasoline, something we make and we're very, very
2 familiar with, even that we look up from three difference
3 reference sources so we do that on the real thing so --

4 Q. Did they mention 30 parts per million of what,
5 specifically? Did they -- was there --

6 A. No. And I took that to imply VOC.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Because I assumed had a VID.

9 Q. Okay. You mentioned that it seems like you went out
10 quickly and started documenting the scene --

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. -- noting the tank cars and so just to confirm, you did
13 not have a consist. No consist was delivered to St. James Church
14 where you folks were located and -- or --

15 A. I think eventually someone came there. I can't remember
16 exactly who. I physically did not touch the consist. I
17 physically did not. The chief, I'm not sure.

18 Q. At any point did -- was there confirmation of, oh, all
19 hazmats account for. We know, specifically, what these X number
20 of tank cars are during those operations -- those initial
21 operations?

22 A. Yeah, there were -- on behalf of Conrail --

23 Q. Uh-huh.

24 A. -- there was. I --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- can't timestamp that for you. But there was.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yeah. And that must have come from Neil because Neil
4 was instrumental there and trying to do that size-up initially.
5 Well, and I know when we moved to Borough Hall --

6 Q. Uh-huh.

7 A. -- I knew that -- and, obviously, sometime prior to
8 that, that they discussed at least two breaches because I remember
9 drawing that on the 201. I modified that -- my terrible little
10 sketch. I drew two breaches on that thing.

11 BY MR. STANCIL:

12 Q. On the same tank car?

13 A. Yes, sir. Yeah. And whether that's really factual, to
14 this day I don't really know. But --

15 Q. What did it look like? Did the breaches --

16 A. I don't know I just was told that so -- and where and,
17 you know, obviously, it was Conrail at that meeting eventually and
18 I said here -- I had this -- I drew a breach here and I drew a
19 breach here on my little sketch. That's all.

20 Q. Were they near the same area or are separated on the car
21 for (indiscernible) and distance --

22 A. They were separated. I can't give you a distance but it
23 was separated.

24 Q. Describe what they told -- who told you this and what
25 did they --

1 A. It was someone from Conrail at the Borough Hall meeting.
2 I don't have timestamps for it. Sorry.

3 Q. Uh-huh.

4 A. It was only mentioned that there were possibly two
5 breaches, yeah, so I (indiscernible) --

6 Q. And that was on the same tank car.

7 A. That is correct. Right.

8 Q. Okay.

9 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

10 Q. Was there a damage assessment of any of the tank cars
11 that was conducted other than -- my understanding you were
12 documenting the type of tank cars. Are you conducting a damage
13 assessment?

14 A. Oh, no sir. No. For (indiscernible), wheel burns, rail
15 burns, no. No. We're just focusing on life safety.

16 Q. Uh-huh.

17 A. And the only instant stabilization we were doing was
18 getting ready to deploy astats (ph.) for boom. There was a sheen
19 that was seen. Didn't know what that sheen was. Did not think it
20 was from, obviously, the ethanol car being miscible with water.
21 But, frankly, didn't know what it was and was told later possibly
22 by police that it was something to do with the hydraulic mechanism
23 of the bridge because I remember when the boom was deployed on the
24 inland side due to the high current there --

25 Q. Uh-huh.

1 A. -- there was a large belly in the boom and you could see
2 that hydraulic oil accumulating in that belly. Actually, in some
3 cases, rippling under because the current's very strong there.

4 Q. Could you describe what you actually observed, just sort
5 of narrate what you saw when you were looking at the tank cars
6 themselves, like the condition, the water, everything just
7 whatever you can recollect?

8 A. I saw cars in the, obviously, not the regularly
9 transportable position that were inverted and I tried to sketch
10 them on, like I said, it's a very embarrassing sketch but I tried
11 to sketch them. I left room for reporting marks on there. Down
12 low at the surface of the water you couldn't really see. It was
13 like similar to a white blanket under a Christmas tree. You could
14 not see that interface down there until later when things cleared
15 you could see that, like, hydraulic oil kind of shimmering there.

16 Q. Uh-huh.

17 A. I couldn't see anything physically emanating from the
18 car.

19 Q. From the car (indiscernible).

20 A. Could not.

21 BY MR. STANCIL:

22 Q. You couldn't tell whether there was a leak at the time
23 you were first --

24 A. I could not. No, sir.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I could not. Nor would I speculate.

2 Q. When did you first learn or when did the incident
3 command first learn about the -- what was released from the car?
4 How long did that take?

5 A. I'm not sure. I do know, recommending to Chief
6 Giampola, that, as I said numerous times, we need to get the
7 consist to know exactly what this is. We can count cars. We can
8 see which ones were hazmat cargos. We can kind of match it up
9 with pressurized, non-pressurized, general service car. But when
10 I was going over here looking for them I think they were here
11 talking to him so I think a lot of this went on a little bit.

12 Q. Well, let's do it this way. Within the first hour of
13 the response, did they know what they were dealing with?

14 A. Did who know? The fire chief?

15 Q. The incident -- fire chief -- incident command. Did
16 anyone know what had been released?

17 A. I would say it might be -- it was probably pretty close
18 to that. I'm trying to put a timestamp on it because I didn't
19 call on the county radio when we responded. Something is sticking
20 in my mind, perhaps, our arrival was perhaps, like, 7:36, 7:35,
21 something like that, perhaps. And I don't even know how that
22 matches up with the call to 911 center for that but that's kind of
23 my best recollection for arrival. So within an hour of that, I
24 would say, it's pretty close to maybe a known or shortly
25 thereafter.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. At least for the vinyl chloride.

3 Q. Did you order any special precautions after learning --

4 A. There was someone else, the County CBRNE resources
5 suggested the manufacturer or the user of the Poly 1 to maybe
6 contact them and get some representative here, at least for some
7 more specific monitoring instrumentation plus product expertise.
8 They were called. I do remember some folks from DuPont showed up
9 thinking perhaps it was some of their rail cars involved. As a
10 matter of fact, DuPont brought us a MSDS for vinyl chloride. This
11 was sometime during -- right before right after that gathering in
12 the church, church social hall.

13 Q. Is vinyl chloride something that you don't normally deal
14 with?

15 A. That is correct.

16 Q. Uh-huh.

17 A. Mostly hydrocarbons or process-related chemicals, HF
18 acid, molten sulfur, some of our byproducts.

19 Q. Did -- you mentioned someone did some research to get
20 the time weighted average figure. What sort of research was being
21 done on vinyl chloride?

22 A. I can't say exactly. Like I said our standard protocol
23 is to, you know, look up the information on the chemical from
24 three different sources. It was our industrial hygienist who was
25 involved and that's when he reported back. That's when I think I

1 first heard the number of one part per million from him for a TWA
2 and like a ceiling of five. That's where I first heard it I
3 believe.

4 Q. Uh-huh. Was he on scene?

5 A. Eventually, not initially.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Yeah. But he, I think -- once again the timestamp's
8 kind of cloudy for me but I think the -- his arrival and even
9 possibly (indiscernible) was probably just right before we're
10 getting ready to move to the Borough Hall. We had some assets
11 there doing some things but, as you can imagine, a lot of chaos
12 and a lot of people, instrumentation readings here or there. I'm
13 not sure but somehow NuStar, which is the asphalt refinery that is
14 located between the bridge and the mouth of the Delaware River on
15 the West Deptford side of the incident, so it would be east, they
16 were doing some fence line monitoring and I seem to recall maybe
17 that's where the 30 part per million came in which is, like, maybe
18 on the slight downwind side as where things started to
19 (indiscernible). As a matter of fact their plant manager and one
20 of their safety people came up to the incident and they arrived
21 just shortly before this initial let's get organized meeting in
22 the church social hall which we quickly or soon thereafter left
23 for the Borough Hall. So maybe that's where that 30 came from and
24 then who -- I don't remember who in that meeting suggested to John
25 Burzichelli that, oh, 30 would be safe. I don't remember that

1 detail but I just remember cautioning him that not to announce any
2 number was safe until it's been thoroughly researched.

3 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

4 Q. How long did the forward command post remain at
5 St. James --

6 A. I (indiscernible) get somebody for a better timestamp
7 for that.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I'm trying to think because we said, okay, it's X time
10 let's try to meet at the Borough Hall to get organized at a time,
11 I'm trying to remember what that was. 8:45, 9:00 maybe. I'm just
12 having a hard time with the timestamp stuff.

13 Q. Were there -- I mean, I'm sure -- concerns about the
14 health and safety of individuals who were reporting to the I mean
15 did you have any concerns or --

16 A. Yeah, I mean, like I said, (indiscernible) but I know
17 that. You know, didn't know what was really being released so
18 obviously saw something --

19 Q. Uh-huh.

20 A. -- wasn't too concerned, overly concerned because of the
21 possibility of the fog but knew that something could be in that
22 fog.

23 Q. Uh-huh.

24 A. So thought we should err on the caution of safety
25 knowing that the cops were out there banging on houses already all

1 the way up to -- when I came in it was like at Commerce and Broad
2 Street, they were working their way down. So I knew that they
3 were doing that initial zone for that first block anyhow. But the
4 chief kept asking shall we -- you know, we talked about moving
5 back (indiscernible) to Borough Hall so --

6 BY MR. STANCIL:

7 Q. What level of personal protective equipment -- what sort
8 of things did your crew use or did you --

9 A. For the actual day.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. I don't know that. I honestly have not seen the report.
12 I've not really talked to them. I was there the entire day, kind
13 of transitioned with the command post and have been helping with
14 the fire branch assets ever since.

15 Q. So you're saying -- you were with the chief and not
16 necessarily --

17 A. Right.

18 Q. -- on scene at --

19 A. I was with the chief, yeah, and initially, yes. Initial
20 size-up, that initial let's get together and get organized meeting
21 at the church social hall but then I did transition over to
22 Borough Hall with some meetings there and soon after the captain
23 of the port got there, you know, things were determined, I mean,
24 that was going to be -- we were going to have to get a larger
25 command post and ended up over here.

1 Q. What would have been the standard protocol for that --

2 A. For?

3 Q. Responding to a incident such as this? What sort of PPE
4 would be typical?

5 A. Well, it would depend on the hazard. It would depend on
6 what the meter is telling you. If flammability is the greatest
7 hazard then, perhaps, our fire gear with a SCBA. We do have some
8 Lion suits that have some degree of chemical protection and
9 flammability protection. We do have a vast array of level A
10 suits. We have limited use. We have reusable suits, chemfab
11 (indiscernible) 200s. All of our suits are tested annually. It
12 just depends on what the instrumentations tell you, balanced with
13 what do you know is there and what are the hazards. That's how we
14 respond. Just -- there's no one answer, just, it's based on what
15 we're responding to.

16 Q. Was that discussion ever -- did that discussion occur?

17 A. As far as PPE?

18 Q. Uh-huh.

19 A. I don't recall that. Not initially.

20 Q. Uh-huh.

21 A. (Indiscernible) I remember the emphasis was if this
22 visible fog is starting to lift, if you're getting some hits,
23 let's just back away, ensure life safety, people have been
24 evacuated and back away.

25 Q. Do you know the deputy chief, Stevenson?

1 A. I do. Yes.

2 Q. Did you get any information from him about the accident,
3 during the initial response?

4 A. No. I mean, obviously, that was his front yard, side
5 yard, whatever you will.

6 Q. Uh-huh.

7 A. Maybe I asked him what happened and I guess his wife --
8 all he told me was his wife was there drinking a cup of coffee and
9 some cereal and things just unfolded before her very eyes and she
10 hollered for him who was upstairs or something and he come down
11 that's about all I --

12 Q. Uh-huh.

13 A. -- spoke --

14 Q. He didn't tell you about the release?

15 A. I don't recall that, specifically.

16 Q. He didn't mention that at all?

17 A. The initial release -- an initial release of something?
18 I don't recall that. And he may have, sir. I don't recall that.

19 Q. He didn't tell you about seeing the hole in the car?

20 A. I don't recall that. I know that I spoke with him
21 initially. When I pulled up initially I did speak to the chief,
22 Alfonso, and I'm not sure where Gary was. I don't talk to Gary
23 initially. This was sometime after the fact in his yard, sometime
24 after I saw the Do Not Dredge sign and was trying to get someone
25 on the phone to call that operator, that pipeline operator. I

1 spoke to his wife. It was sometime around then.

2 Q. Okay. So early, middle, late in the incident, what
3 would you say?

4 A. For Gary.

5 Q. I'm talking to -- yeah, when you met up with Gary. Was
6 this before or after you learned that vinyl chloride was involved?

7 A. I probably talked to Gary right around the same time. I
8 think, perhaps, when I was over here looking for Conrail I think
9 they were over here showing the consist to somebody in this group
10 where the chief was, where Gary was. I think when I came back to
11 this group where the chief and Gary was, the guy with the papers
12 went back over here. I think that's probably what happened.

13 Q. What do you think about what happened out there with the
14 first response? How well did it go?

15 A. Well, I think there's always chaos. I think the job of
16 emergency response is try to make some type of order out of that
17 chaos. You know, I think the initial focus on life safety, the
18 evacuation I think was a great call. Don't know if they were
19 instructed to do that. I don't know that part of it but I
20 definitely saw mutual aid police from my township, which is at
21 least six miles away, there before I even arrived doing
22 evacuations and the adjacent municipality which was Greenwich
23 Township or Gibbstown.

24 Q. Uh-huh.

25 A. So I think that was good. Is any one department in this

1 county able to handle a major train derailment? Probably not, in
2 my opinion. So I think if they focus on what they can handle the
3 life safety issues, back up, back away, calling the assets that
4 are needed, try to identify what's happening, I think that respect
5 was good. Trying to get some organization to it.

6 I mean, I'm not one to criticize anybody, you know, so
7 and once again, my role was just there to help, to assist the
8 chief. We've had a long rapport with both the Borough of
9 Paulsboro and also Gibbstown. We are the Paulsboro Refinery but
10 physically that asset is in Greenwich Township, which is
11 Gibbstown. So Paulsboro, unfortunately, is on the prevailing
12 downwind side of the refinery so they're -- you know, and there's
13 been things in the past, so, with the refinery and releases that
14 went on so.

15 Q. Okay. There were a number of first responders standing
16 in the cloud with no PPE. Did -- you didn't see that?

17 A. I think when we came out of that church and when someone
18 came in and said they were starting to get some readings, you
19 know, more than oneppm, you know, that's where the decision is
20 obviously we got to expedite this move to Borough Hall and get
21 everybody out. That's what I remember.

22 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

23 Q. That's what I wanted ask too, what were your observations?
24 You mentioned that there was a blanket over the creek and then did
25 that move over or how did -- could you describe in (indiscernible)

1 --

2 A. Once again, when I first saw that blanket it was clear
3 as a painted picture. It was the embankment up by Gary's house
4 and there was definitely that cloud down below.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. There was nothing rolling. I did not smell anything. I
7 did not taste anything, once again your senses are not the
8 greatest, but until we came out of that church --

9 Q. Uh-huh.

10 A. -- it just seemed to be that something -- the solar rays
11 and whatever was starting -- something was starting to lift, fog
12 or takes up with it. So that's what I recall. It was time to
13 expedite that decision to move.

14 Q. At any point was there -- did anybody refer to that
15 emergency response guide or any other guidance on other procedures
16 for the evacuation (indiscernible) --

17 A. Yeah, there were some people that mentioned guide
18 number, and I don't remember that, but some people were thinking
19 that and I don't remember who said that but there was some
20 discussion on that. And whether they went to the (indiscernible)
21 in the beginning just based on pressure, non- -- I don't know. I
22 don't know what the guide number -- I don't remember but someone
23 did mention guide number and some initial distances so --

24 Q. Were you involved at all with any discussions about
25 determining evacuation zones (indiscernible) --

1 A. Whatever that was transpiring that happened before I got
2 there, obviously, because I encountered the police.

3 BY MR. STANCIL:

4 Q. With respect to the instrumentation that was brought in,
5 about what time in the response did you all start getting numbers
6 back?

7 A. The first I personally heard of a number, I first heard
8 that 30 part per million --

9 Q. Uh-huh.

10 A. -- and I believe that number was from monitoring at
11 NuStar. That was brought up at that initial gathering.

12 Q. Was that your people getting the --

13 A. No, sir. That was at NuStar.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Because the plant manager showed up at the scene and I
16 believe he had that information, him and his safety men. First I
17 heard a number was from our guy, from the hygienist, was some hits
18 over one ppm and higher (indiscernible) with me and that's about
19 the time we were in that church social hall and all this seemed to
20 be like more of a dynamic situation that was starting to lift or
21 change or something. So --

22 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

23 Q. Did you feel that you had adequate information to make
24 decisions about -- I mean, given the -- understanding the chaos
25 and --

1 A. Yeah. Once again, I was there just to help the chief
2 and I --

3 Q. At the incident command, not just you, but did you feel
4 that there was adequate information being discussed --

5 A. At what point --

6 Q. -- to make decisions --

7 A. -- of it --

8 Q. At the various stages, actually, of the response.

9 A. Well, first of all, I wasn't the one -- believe I'm
10 there just to help.

11 MR. STANCIL: We understand. You're not making the
12 decisions. So you're there in a technical --

13 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: Observations, other --

14 MR. ROBINSON: I personally would always want more
15 information and I know I need that piece of paper, that consist.
16 I can only do so much with a visual, pressure, non-pressure,
17 reporting marks, call ChemTrak and, you know, there's only so much
18 I can do with that.

19 BY MR. STANCIL:

20 Q. Was there a delay in getting the consist that impacted
21 the response, in your opinion?

22 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: And I'd say did you feel that there was
23 enough assistance and representation (indiscernible) --

24 MR. ROBINSON: I won't there's a delay but, like I said,
25 when I'm going over here trying to impress them that's what we

1 need to get, I'm going there trying to track it down for him and I
2 think they were here maybe showing him and, you know, I don't know
3 who the trainmaster was to this day but I think there was some --
4 it would have been nice just to corral that person and I told him
5 and I said that's why I kept saying where's Allen Richter? Get
6 him here, you know, and back at the Borough Hall I told the police
7 chief, I said, jokingly, you know, put a -- well -- just we need
8 someone here. We need someone here. It's imperative to
9 understand the situation so --

10 BY MR. STANCIL:

11 Q. And you didn't have that initially.

12 A. They were there.

13 Q. But you didn't have the paper.

14 A. I did not initially see that paper. Maybe Alfonso and
15 Uri did but I did not.

16 Q. Okay. And it showed up at the incident command post
17 how?

18 A. Well, I believe someone brought it over.

19 Q. Someone.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Once you established the command post at St. --

22 A. Well --

23 Q. James Church?

24 A. No sir, before that.

25 Q. Oh, before that.

1 A. Someone did come over because I was not there. They
2 were in a circle and I think --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- when I came back I think whoever had it just left. I
5 don't know who that was but it was happening but they were trying
6 to do their assessment, too. So --

7 Q. So the first responders during the initial minutes or up
8 to an hour, you said, they didn't know what they were responding
9 to.

10 A. I don't know that for sure. You have to ask the chief.
11 I just know from my assessment when I got there.

12 Q. Did you know what you were responding to?

13 A. Initially, no, sir. I did not. No.

14 Q. And your people that came on with their monitoring
15 instruments --

16 A. At some point that knowledge was obtained. I don't know
17 --

18 Q. Right.

19 A. -- where but initially I did not know what that was.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. You know, if Mr. Stevenson told me or something then I
22 don't -- I just don't recall exactly when that was.

23 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

24 Q. Can I ask, if you were in charge of this incident, what
25 would have -- what would you have done differently than how it

1 played out?

2 A. I can't second-guess the chief, believe me.

3 Q. Well, I mean --

4 BY MR. STANCIL:

5 Q. Well, it's -- that's not what we're asking you to do.

6 A. Yeah, I know.

7 Q. But what -- you know, we recognize you have a lot of
8 expertise, much more than some of these fire department, you know,
9 these fire departments probably will only respond to something
10 like this once in their career. You've done it your entire career
11 so --

12 A. Well, not to this extent, though, sir.

13 Q. I understand. I think it's a fair question. I mean, if
14 you were the incident commander, what would you have done
15 differently?

16 A. I would say is if you don't know then you just -- you do
17 what you need to do life safety wise and I can't make a decision.
18 That's something everybody has to make for themselves, you know, I
19 mean we do the structure fires, you know, two in, two out, SCBA,
20 but if there's someone there screaming from a window can't say no
21 you can't do that, they have a second person there, you know. So
22 I can't -- I think life safety always trumps every card you have
23 but beyond that it's probably to err on the side of safety until
24 we actually know, we can identify that.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Identify that, in my mind is a visual, is the shipping
2 papers, whatever the mode of transportation might be, and to start
3 getting some assistance, some expertise with monitoring, the
4 chemical experts for that product, via ChemTrak or whoever, you
5 know, go from there.

6 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

7 Q. Are there assets from the county? You said the CBRNE
8 team arrived. Did they offer any particular assistance or
9 knowledge or capabilities that, perhaps, were needed at the time
10 on the scene?

11 A. Well, yeah, because they are the hazmat team
12 (indiscernible) for the county but I really don't know what those
13 assets were that were deployed. I don't know what instrumentation
14 they had.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. May have been some of the same things we did because we
17 purposely have the same frequencies for the airway.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. We join together with Gloucester County and Camden
20 County, Cherry Hill Fire Department. So like I said, we have four
21 rapid deployment kits. Each rapid deployment kit has four
22 areaRAEs and we can set somewhere push a button and transmit that
23 data up to two miles away.

24 Q. Uh-huh.

25 A. So we have all those interfacing. So we -- there was

1 some thought in this process ahead of time so --

2 MR. STANCIL: Can you think of anything else that you
3 think we should know about that would be helpful to the
4 investigation of the accident?

5 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

6 Q. I mean, just other observations regardless of how,
7 perhaps, irrelevant you may think they are that, you know, may
8 come to you regarding the situation that might help us formulate a
9 good picture of the events of the day?

10 A. No. As I said, I recall, I do remember through a Coast
11 Guard representative there, the captain of the port must have
12 given orders for no booming on the river side, erring on the side
13 of caution. Because once again -- and that didn't happen anyhow
14 to the best of my knowledge because we had no instrumentation to
15 know -- but err on the side that life safety and (indiscernible)
16 trumps environmental concerns, which was a good decision. So I
17 remember that being relayed from one of the Coast Guard personnel
18 there but, I mean, all I can say is, in summary, as you can well
19 imagine, everyone's heart was in the right place.

20 Q. Uh-huh.

21 A. Would people do things differently? Absolutely. I'm
22 sure they would but --

23 BY MR. STANCIL:

24 Q. What were some of the lessons that you think could be
25 learned from this incident?

1 A. Well, certainly an awareness class on railroading and
2 what that is. I mean, obviously, the railroad comes through this
3 and a lot of other riverfront communities. Maybe some -- just
4 some brushing up on their whole hazmat awareness and operations
5 level training. Certainly, the importance of instrumentation to
6 help identify resources.

7 It's not -- I doubt that anyone there ever had a chance
8 or opportunity to speak to ChemTrak or other resources, review
9 material safety data sheets or the new way that's coming out, so
10 that's changing. That's going to be evolving, as you know.

11 (Indiscernible) how to interpret that data. You don't have to
12 memorize this stuff, just know where to get the information and
13 how to interpret the data.

14 Q. Did you see all of those issues as problems in this
15 response?

16 A. I wouldn't say they were all problems. I would think
17 that there was probably things -- some of those things could be
18 improved upon.

19 Q. Okay. Fair enough.

20 A. Okay. And once again, I know I said this few times but
21 I was just there to help the chief. I wasn't, you know, I don't
22 --

23 Q. We're not saying you were responsible --

24 A. No I --

25 Q. -- or anything like that.

1 A. Well, I'm not implying that either.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. I just don't want to -- I don't want to overstep my
4 authority and I'm very, very sensitive when I respond on the
5 outside to just offer assistance to the best of my training and
6 abilities and knowledge.

7 Q. We're sensitive to that but we do appreciate you being
8 candid with us about pointing out where there could be some
9 improvements --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- because these things can save lives.

12 A. Yes, sir. Uh-huh.

13 Q. And that's what this is all about.

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Okay.

16 BY MR. EL-ZOGHBI:

17 Q. One last question --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- for you. Do you do any training at all with the
20 railroad and given that you have, as far as my understanding
21 (indiscernible) go to the refinery. Correct?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. And have they -- if you could describe to us, sort of,
24 level of training and cooperation that has gone between --

25 A. It's been --

1 Q. -- you and the railroad.

2 A. It's been outstanding. In the early days, the Mobil
3 Oil, Conrail was a very good partner with us. I've known Allen
4 Richter for many years. I knew his former predecessor Howard
5 "Skip" Elliott who was the vice president down in Jacksonville.
6 Actually, Skip Elliot and I, Skip lived in Woodbury. I lived in
7 Mantua, separated by four miles as the bird flies. We actually
8 met for the first time at the tank car safety course in Pueblo,
9 Colorado so we actually had to fly a few thousand miles to meet
10 each other. But it was a good relationship since then. He's
11 since moved from Conrail on to CSX, of course.

12 We used to conduct our own in-house hazmat school for
13 Mobil Oil. Part of that school would always be a railroad
14 training, classroom review (indiscernible) size. We'd done that
15 for years at Middlesex County Fire Academy in North Jersey. They
16 have a lot of hazmat props there. And we have Allen Richter who's
17 done a lot of things with. We've had the DuPont Care Car in and
18 we have done evolutions at some neighboring facilities with the
19 Care Car or their competitors, I think Amoco has one and there's
20 at least one other one that we've trained with.

21 So that rapport has been great. As a matter of fact, I
22 even starred in one of their movies way back when. I'm thinking
23 the late '80s or '90s. It was a video that at the time was
24 Conrail and it was the importance of sizing up the scene and we
25 acted as like the fire department responding and stuff. So I mean

1 the rapport has been great. They've been great people to work
2 with.

3 We've lost, not some of that rapport, but some of that
4 closeness because the refinery, you know, just businesswise
5 they've a shortline that supplies via SMS Railroad. So for
6 several years now Conrail has not been in there actually doing the
7 switches. It's been the shortline SMS. So although I still know
8 the people, we still call and there is a rapport. We still talk.
9 So it's been a good relationship.

10 BY MR. STANCIL:

11 Q. And it's --

12 A. They've been great for us.

13 Q. And it's great that you all provide this mutual aid
14 service to the community. It's a big deal.

15 A. Well, it's something we've -- I mean, we do and,
16 obviously --

17 Q. You didn't have to do what you did and you did it and
18 that's a great thing. What about Paulsboro Fire and Police
19 Department? They've been into your facility --

20 A. Absolutely.

21 Q. Training.

22 A. Oh, absolutely. My door is always open to training. We
23 do not -- we are not that type of industry or facility that closes
24 and chains and locks the doors. There are industries like that,
25 but we are not one of them. We always had them in for an annual

1 mutual aid drill which we have some scenario and we practice that.
2 It's hands-on. It's not table top. It's hands-on. We do that at
3 least annually. We have always, up until recently, the last two
4 years, since we're part of PBF, have taken them with us to our
5 specialized hydrocarbon firefighting schools which were, in the
6 old days, University of Nevada at Reno but that's closed. They
7 moved to Elko, Nevada. More recently it's been in Texas A&M
8 University. They have the largest liquid firefighting school in
9 the world. It's a fantastic venue. Up until two years ago we
10 always took someone from Gibbstown and from Paulsboro and the fire
11 academies with us. So we hope to get back to that, too, but for
12 the last two years we've been barely going ourselves because we're
13 a new entity, trying to get organized.

14 But we have specialized classes for trench rescue,
15 building collapse and the rescue team side to bring them in, guest
16 speakers on the hazmat side. It's always an open door policy.

17 Q. One last thing I have, Pat, could you recommend anyone
18 else who was at the scene that you think we should talk to?

19 A. Did you talk to the chief? I mean he's obviously very
20 busy.

21 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: We haven't been able to grab him.

22 MR. ROBINSON: He's very busy, yeah.

23 MR. STANCIL: We're going to try to when he gets an
24 opportunity. Anyone else?

25 MR. ROBINSON: Did you talk to someone from law

1 enforcement?

2 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: Uh-huh.

3 MR. ROBINSON: Okay. I mean, I think, obviously, they
4 were instrumental in the initial evacuations. They would know who
5 received what and what instructions. I think that was paramount.
6 Did you talk to the Coast Guard?

7 MR. STANCIL: Which --

8 MR. ROBINSON: I don't know the gentleman's -- but there
9 were some --

10 MR. STANCIL: Who was the first responders?

11 MR. ROBINSON: There were two people there fairly --
12 well, I don't know. Once again, but there were two people there
13 because there was some discussion I mentioned about that riverside
14 boom deployment and they had echoed a comment that the captain of
15 the port did not want to do that which to my knowledge was not
16 done anyhow.

17 MR. STANCIL: Were they instrumental in the initial
18 response or just with respect to this oil booming?

19 MR. ROBINSON: Definitely the oil boom part because that
20 was a question and, obviously Conrail. Obviously. I mean, those
21 were some of the key people I interfaced with so if there were
22 some beyond that I'm not real sure.

23 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Anything else? Any --

24 MR. ROBINSON: No, not that I can think of.

25 MR. STANCIL: Okay.

1 MR. EL-ZOGHBI: Okay.

2 MR. STANCIL: Well, we really appreciate your taking the
3 time to talk to us. I know you're very busy today and we thank
4 you very much. It's 5:04 p.m. and this will be the end of our
5 (indiscernible).

6 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

7

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: TRAIN DERAILMENT/CHEMICAL SPILL
 NOVEMBER 30, 2012
 PAULSBORO, NEW JERSEY
 Interview of Patrick Robinson

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA13MR002

PLACE: Clarksboro, New Jersey

DATE: December 4, 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.

Beverly A. Lano
Transcriber