

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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ALABAMA GAS CORPORATION (ALAGASCO)

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NATURAL GAS LEAK WITH IGNITION

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Docket No.: DCA-14-MP-001

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

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DECEMBER 17, 2013

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Interview of: ROCHELLE MARYLAND

Alagasco Center for Energy Technology  
Birmingham, Alabama

Saturday,  
December 21, 2013

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MATTHEW NICHOLSON  
Investigator-in-Charge

## APPEARANCES:

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Fire Investigations Bureau  
City of Birmingham, Alabama

WALLACE JONES, Gas Pipeline Safety Administrator  
KEITH BLACKWOOD, Pipeline Safety Investigator  
Alabama Public Service Commission

DON LUPPO, Director  
Mayor's Office of Citizens Assistance  
Birmingham, Alabama

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>I N D E X</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Rochelle Maryland:		
By Mr. Nicholson		5
By Mr. Chhatre		25
By Mr. Jones		39
By Mr. Lupo		41
By Mr. Jones		42
By Mr. Nicholson		44
By Mr. Chhatre		49
By Mr. Nicholson		51
By Mr. Chhatre		53

## I N T E R V I E W

MR. NICHOLSON: Good morning. Today is Saturday, December 21st, 2013. My name is Matthew Nicholson, and I am an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington, D.C. We are currently in Birmingham, Alabama, at the Alagasco Center for Energy Technology investigating the Birmingham, Alabama natural gas leak with ignition which occurred on December 17th, 2013. This is case number DCA-14-MP-001. We are here today to interview Rochelle Maryland.

For the record, Rochelle, please state your first and last name with spelling.

MS. MARYLAND: Rochelle Maryland, R-o-c-h-e-l-l-e, M-a-  
r-y-l-a-n-d.

MR. NICHOLSON: And if you would, please state for the record your title, current employer, and business e-mail and phone number?

MS. MARYLAND: Service dispatcher for Alagasco;  
ourhomes@energen.com.

MR. NICHOLSON: And Rochelle, you're allowed to have one other person present during these interviews. If you could for the record, please indicate who you've selected to be your representative?

MS. MARYLAND: Mike Bell.

MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. We'll now go around the room and introduce ourselves for the record. Please just state your name,

1 the agency you represent, and a spelling if necessary. I will  
2 begin and will proceed to my left. My name is Matthew Nicholson.  
3 I am an NTSB investigator.

4 MR. CHHATRE: Ravi Chhatre, NTSB investigator.

5 MR. BELL: Mike Bell, representative for Ms. Maryland.

6 MR. WILLIAMS: Willie Williams, City of Birmingham, Fire  
7 Investigations Bureau.

8 MR. LUPO: Don Lupo, City of Birmingham.

9 MR. GARDNER: Bob Gardner, Alabama Gas Corporation.

10 MR. BLACKWOOD: Keith Blackwood, Alabama Public Service  
11 Commission.

12 MR. JONES: Wallace Jones, Alabama Public Service  
13 Commission.

14 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. Well, get started here, Rochelle.

15 INTERVIEW OF ROCHELLE MARYLAND

16 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

17 Q. Just to begin with, if you could maybe give us a little  
18 background about how long you've been at Alagasco and maybe some  
19 of the positions you've held there?

20 A. I was employed with Alagasco in January 4th of 1988 in  
21 the Montgomery Service Center. I was employed till January 2006  
22 and reentered the company on December 15th, 2008, in the  
23 Birmingham, Alabama area as a re-hire as a dispatcher.

24 Q. And that's what you're currently employed, as a  
25 dispatcher?

1           A.    That's correct.

2           Q.    Okay.  And you go back -- what kind of functions did you  
3 do in the service center?  What jobs or roles did you have?

4           A.    Well, dispatch job, I take emergency calls, dispatch  
5 service mechanics in various departments.

6           Q.    And that's -- so that was in the service center?  Is  
7 that where you are today, in the service center?

8           A.    Yes.  That's correct.

9           Q.    Okay.  So it's really -- it's the same -- same division  
10 that you work in now that you did before?

11          A.    That's correct.

12          Q.    Okay.  And you said as a dispatcher your role is to  
13 dispatch maintenance technicians, and what else?

14          A.    Service mechanics, construction mechanics.  I have in my  
15 past also being an employee Alagasco dispatched distribution  
16 mechanics, field operations.

17          Q.    And how do you know to dispatch these people?  Is that  
18 something that's given to you on a work order or --

19          A.    It comes into -- now we have -- it's all in the computer  
20 system on our --

21          Q.    Okay.

22          A.    -- what we call PragmaCAD --

23          Q.    Can you spell that?

24          A.    ICware -- PragmaCAD, P-r-a-m-g-C-A-D [sic].

25          Q.    Okay.

1 A. And ICware.

2 Q. So these are two computer systems that you get requests  
3 to --

4 A. Our information on. I receive my information.

5 Q. Okay. And who's entering that information?

6 A. I enter it after I receive the phone calls from the --

7 Q. Oh, okay. So your instructions are coming strictly from  
8 phone calls. Okay.

9 A. Well, phone calls for customers.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Also you have internal.

12 Q. So it could be both, external customers and internal --

13 A. Exactly

14 Q. -- work. Who do you report to?

15 A. First-line supervisor I would say Robert Rumph.

16 Q. Is the service center part of the control center? Or is  
17 it -- is where you work just dispatchers?

18 A. Just dispatchers.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Just -- yes. Dispatchers and service clerks.

21 Q. What's the difference? What's a service clerk?

22 A. Service clerks do not dispatch. They receive incoming  
23 calls, emergency incoming calls.

24 Q. Okay. So would it be a service clerk that received the  
25 incoming call for the accident we're here today discussing?

1           A.    No, sir.

2           Q.    Okay.  Who would've received that call?

3           A.    I did.  I would have.

4           Q.    Okay.  And can you -- let's go back to the 17th.  Can  
5 you talk to us a little bit, just described what happened that  
6 day, the call you received, when you received it, what -- when you  
7 were notified.

8           A.    On December 17th, 2:40 a.m., I received a call from 911  
9 stating they had a gas explosion at 6425 Joppa Court in the Gate  
10 City community in Birmingham, Alabama.

11          Q.    Okay.  What'd you do with that information once you had  
12 it?

13          A.    I dispatched my service mechanic that was duty to the  
14 location.

15          Q.    Do you remember who that mechanic was?

16          A.    Max Morrison.

17          Q.    Can you spell, just to be sure, Max?

18          A.    M -- Max, M-a-x.

19          Q.    Yeah.

20          A.    Morrison, M-o-r-r-i-s-o-n.

21          Q.    Terrific.  Okay.  So it was -- you just dispatched one  
22 person, Max?

23          A.    No, sir, that's --

24          Q.    Okay.

25          A.    -- at 2:42 a.m. dispatched service mechanic Max



1 Morrison. At 2:50 a.m. received a call from the fire department.  
2 Operator Wood called stating the apartment fire at 7547 65th  
3 Courtway South. Notified my supervisor at 2:52 a.m., Robert  
4 Rumph, to dispatch him on the scene.

5 Q. Okay. When you notified Robert, what was the  
6 conversation there?

7 A. I advised him I had an explosion and gave him the  
8 location.

9 Q. And I didn't hear, did -- when you got that 911 call, is  
10 that when they said there was an explosion or did they say it was  
11 a fire?

12 A. They said explosion.

13 Q. Oh, okay. So the extent of the conversation was that  
14 you had an explosion at this address?

15 A. That's correct.

16 Q. Okay. And did he say what he was going to do or --

17 A. What, the 911 operator?

18 Q. I'm sorry. Robert.

19 A. No. Robert Rumph is he gets dispatched to the scene. I  
20 get --

21 Q. So your call is just to dispatch him?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. Okay. Do you know what time he would have arrived on  
24 the scene?

25 A. No, I don't have what time he arrived on the scene. No,

1 I don't have the time.

2 Q. Okay. What -- I know this isn't your expertise, but  
3 since Robert is your manager, what was Robert's role when he got  
4 there?

5 A. He had to be on scene to investigate the explosion.

6 Q. Oh, okay.

7 A. He has to go out on gas leaks -- fire, gas leaks, and  
8 explosions.

9 Q. Oh, okay. So he's a -- is he a technician?

10 A. No, he's a supervisor.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. We have to dispatch a officer, company officer along  
13 with a mechanic on a fire or explosion.

14 Q. Okay. So he's -- he acts as sort of the on-scene  
15 supervisor for the mechanics?

16 A. He was on call for that night.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. He was our on-call supervisor on the 17th of December.

19 Q. Okay. I don't see him name on our list.

20 MR. GARDNER: He was on the list --

21 MR. NICHOLSON: Oh, did he get stricken?

22 MR. GARDNER: -- (indiscernible) night, two supervisors  
23 (indiscernible) --

24 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

25 MR. GARDNER: -- Mr. Gallagher. We decided just to talk

1 to Mr. Gallagher, but he (indiscernible).

2 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

3 Q. And Rochelle, you're actually referring to a log sheet,  
4 I think, here, right --

5 A. That's correct.

6 Q. -- for these times.

7 MR. NICHOLSON: And do we have a copy of that log sheet  
8 already? If not, I would request --

9 MR. GARDNER: There's (indiscernible).

10 MR. NICHOLSON: I haven't seen any, that's why I asked.  
11 It looks like good information, so we would like a copy if we  
12 could.

13 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

14 Q. This log sheet that you're referring to, Rochelle, is  
15 that your log sheet?

16 A. That's correct.

17 Q. Very nice writing. Okay, if you could continue then. I  
18 think we left off 2:52 you notified Mr. Rumph?

19 A. That's correct.

20 Q. You want to just continue and walk us through the  
21 events?

22 A. Okay. 3:23 a.m. my service mechanic, Max Morrison,  
23 reported that he was on the scene. At 3:25 a.m., I advised the  
24 fire department Alagasco was on the scene. At 3:05 a.m.,  
25 construction crew Mike Donaldson was en route to the scene of the

1 explosion.

2 Q. Okay. So you did that -- you backed up in time a little  
3 bit, right, 3:05? Because I had 3:23 that --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- Max Morrison report -- okay. Who dispatched the  
6 construction team, was that you?

7 A. Max -- service mechanic Max Morrison advised him.

8 Q. Okay. And what would a construction team do on an  
9 accident like that?

10 A. Well, my knowledge of construction, their expertise is  
11 the mains and the gas lines in the ground.

12 Q. Okay. Would they shut the valves?

13 A. I'm sure they're knowledgeable, but I believe my service  
14 mechanic shut the riser off to the gas.

15 Q. Okay. So do you know, where was Max Morrison? He was  
16 an on-call tech that --

17 A. He's on call. That's his shift.

18 Q. Okay. Is he leaving from his home? Or where would  
19 he --

20 A. No, sir. He was on another job site.

21 Q. Oh, okay. Do you know where that job site was?

22 A. I don't know the exact location, no, sir.

23 MR. NICHOLSON: Oh, okay. But we can get, right, Bob?  
24 Okay.

25 MR. GARDNER: (indiscernible). (indiscernible), okay.

1 He's the next one you'll talk to.

2 MR. NICHOLSON: Oh, that's true. Okay.

3 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

4 Q. And you said at 3:25 you were advised that the fire  
5 department was on scene, is that what --

6 A. I advised the fire department Alagasco was on scene.

7 Q. Oh, okay. So you called the fire department?

8 A. Well, they called me for a ETA.

9 Q. Oh, okay. Okay. Was that the end -- at 3:25 was that  
10 it? Or did you stay involved?

11 A. Yes, I stayed involved until my shift ended.

12 Q. When was that?

13 A. At 7 a.m.

14 Q. Okay. So do you have any other log items there of  
15 importance you want to walk through us?

16 A. At 3:35, supervisor Robert Rumph advised to call out  
17 another construction crew. At 3:45 a.m., I was advised Chris  
18 Hill, the supervisor, was on location of the explosion.

19 Q. He's a supervisor of what?

20 A. I'm going to say service department, Chris Hill.

21 Q. That's fine. If you don't know, that's perfectly all  
22 right.

23 MR. GARDNER: He has a similar position to Mr. Rumph.

24 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

25 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

1 Q. But Robert Rumph was the on-call, right?

2 A. Right. Robert Rumph was on-call supervisor.

3 Q. So Chris Hill would have been requested as an extra  
4 body?

5 MR. GARDNER: I think so. Mr. Gallagher can clarify  
6 that.

7 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

8 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

9 Q. Now you said -- I want to back up for a minute. You  
10 said Max Morrison had shut off the valve on the riser; is that  
11 what I heard you say earlier?

12 A. I believe so. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Okay. But you -- you're not certain? Is that on your  
14 log sheet anywhere when it was isolated or where it was isolated?

15 A. No, sir.

16 Q. Okay. So why don't we just continue then after -- at  
17 3:45 Chris Hill arrived on scene. What else we got?

18 A. And 3:47 a.m., supervisor Robert Rumph requested another  
19 construction crew.

20 Q. So that's a third construction crew? I guess that would  
21 be a second construction --

22 MR. GARDNER: It's the second.

23 MR. NICHOLSON: Sorry.

24 MS. MARYLAND: Actually, it's the third because I got  
25 562 already en route.

1 MR. GARDNER: Okay.

2 MS. MARYLAND: So third.

3 MR. NICHOLSON: So it is the third.

4 MR. GARDNER: Because I already got 526 en route. Mike  
5 Donaldson's en route.

6 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

7 Q. I'm sorry. Say that number again, construction team?

8 A. 562.

9 Q. 562 were en route at 3:05?

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. Okay. So then Robert Rumph called for yet another  
12 construction crew. Okay. Do you know what construction crew that  
13 was that was called for at 3:35?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. 3:35. 3:36, construction mechanic Dan Ingram accepted  
17 the callout to the emergency along with his crewmen. And I do not  
18 have their names.

19 Q. That's fine. And then you said at 3:47 they called for  
20 another construction crew. Do you know who responded at that  
21 time?

22 A. At 3:57 a.m., construction mechanic David Corbett (ph.)  
23 accepted the callout to the emergency along with his crew.

24 Q. And did you have any idea why these other construction  
25 crews were being called out to the scene?

1           A.    To assist, I'm sure, is my of working with Alagasco, to  
2 assist on the scene of the --

3           Q.    So they wouldn't have described --

4           A.    No, sir.

5           Q.    -- when you got the call like, hey, we need this guy to  
6 shut off --

7           A.    No.

8           Q.    -- a valve?

9           A.    -- no, sir. He just asked me to call our construction  
10 crew.

11          Q.    Okay. Okay.

12          A.    And 4:28 a.m., Supervisor Robert Rumph asked me to call  
13 ULIC Line Locate to get a line locate done for 7547 65th Courtway  
14 South.

15          Q.    Okay. Is that a line locate for an Alagasco line or --

16          A.    Utility line.

17          Q.    Okay.

18          A.    Locate all utility lines.

19          Q.    Locate all utility.

20               MR. GARDNER: (indiscernible) locate several  
21 (indiscernible).

22               MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. But it wouldn't just be for the  
23 gas main? It would --

24               MR. GARDNER: No. It would be for all utilities.

25               MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.



1 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. At 4:43 a.m., Supervisor Robert Rumph requested a meter  
4 number -- a address for a meter number, BA587735, and I gave him  
5 the address of 7544 64th Courtway South.

6 MR. GARDNER: Can you (indiscernible) that number again,  
7 Rochelle?

8 MS. MARYLAND: BA587735.

9 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

10 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

11 Q. And that was Robert Rumph again?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. At 4:48, Supervisor Robert Rumph requested for me to  
15 call out supervisor Rob Wall. 4:49 a.m., called Supervisor Rob  
16 Wall by phone; no answer. 4:51 a.m., e-mailed Supervisor Robert  
17 Wall. 4:54 a.m., Supervisor Rob Wall responded to the e-mail.

18 Q. Okay. And why was he calling -- before you said he was  
19 just asking for a construction crew. Now he's asking for a very  
20 specific person. What is Rob Wall's title?

21 A. He's in the Construction Department --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- one of the supervisors over in the Construction  
24 Department.

25 Q. And do you have any idea why he would've need Rob Walls

1 [sic]?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. Okay. So 4:55, Rob Wall responded -- was that by e-mail  
4 to you?

5 A. 4:54 a.m., Supervisor Rob Wall responded to me by  
6 e-mail. That's correct.

7 Q. Okay.

8 MR. GARDNER: What was the day and time again? I wrote  
9 4:57. I may have mis-wrote.

10 MS. MARYLAND: 4:54 a.m., Rob Wall responded to me by e-  
11 mail.

12 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

13 Q. And what was his response?

14 A. Thank you.

15 Q. Oh.

16 A. That let me know he received it and --

17 Q. Oh, okay.

18 A. -- because when he get the e-mail he has all the  
19 information to go to the job site.

20 Q. Oh, okay. So a thank you is the same as --

21 A. Let me know --

22 Q. -- I'm going?

23 A. Yeah. He let me know. That's correct.

24 Q. Okay. Do you know when he arrived on site?

25 A. I do not have that information.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. At 4:58, Chris Hill, supervisor, requested construction  
3 mechanic call him by phone. At 5:01 a.m., I notified construction  
4 mechanic David Corbett to contact Chris Hill by phone.

5 MR. GARDNER: What was that Rochelle? Excuse me.

6 MS. MARYLAND: At 5:01 a.m., I notified construction  
7 mechanic David Corbett to call Chris Hill by phone.

8 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

9 Q. So nothing more was shared with you why Chris needed  
10 Dave?

11 A. Yes, he did share that with me.

12 Q. Oh, okay. Can you tell us or explain to us, please?

13 A. Chris Hill needed our construction mechanics to bring  
14 lighting --

15 Q. All right.

16 A. -- to the scene.

17 Q. So he was dispatched to the immediate accident scene?

18 A. David Corbett?

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. Yes, he was the one accepted the call at 3:57 a.m. I  
21 called him out at 3:57 a.m.

22 Q. Okay. But, again -- he was again requested to respond  
23 at 5:01, right?

24 A. To make a -- to call a supervisor, make a phone call.  
25 To call the supervisor Chris Hill.

1           Q.    Oh, I'm sorry.  Okay.  And that was about getting the  
2   lighting to the scene?

3           A.    To bring -- he wanted -- he requested us to bring  
4   lighting to the scene.

5           Q.    Okay.  Okay.

6           A.    5:29 a.m., Supervisor Robert Rumph advised me to call in  
7   additional service mechanics.

8           Q.    Okay.  And a service mechanic, can you briefly tell me  
9   what's his -- what's he trained to do?  What is the limit of his  
10  work scope?

11          A.    Residential.  He can go out to the residential home and  
12  cut off meters or go inside residential with his leak detectors  
13  and detect for leaks.

14          Q.    Okay.

15          A.    We're going to shut off -- shut off meters, checks for  
16  leaks, and then we will restore service when it's time to restore  
17  the service once all meters have been shut off for safety.

18          Q.    Okay, so the service mechanic is responsible for maybe  
19  the meter downstream or meter into the house?

20          A.    That's correct.

21          Q.    Okay.  That's where his work is.  Okay.  Want to  
22  continue if you got more?

23          A.    At 6:08 a.m., I received a call from a resident.  Jamie  
24  Johnson called stating gas odor inside at 6842 Joppa Avenue, U478,  
25  apartment number U478.  She said that was her neighbor's

1 residence, and her neighbor and children were sitting outside.

2 MR. GARDNER: Rochelle, I'm sorry. Was that 6848 Joppa  
3 Avenue?

4 MS. MARYLAND: 6842 Joppa Avenue, unit U, as in  
5 umbrella, 478.

6 MR. GARDNER: Okay. Thank you.

7 MS. MARYLAND: At 6:22 a.m., I advised my service  
8 mechanic Carlo Bates of the inside odor call at 6842 Joppa Avenue,  
9 unit Apartment U478. Carlo Bates advised manager David Gallagher.  
10 They were already on the scene at the Gate City community  
11 apartment complex.

12 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

13 MS. MARYLAND: And that's where it ended for me, 6:22  
14 a.m.

15 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

16 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

17 Q. So if you weren't involved anymore after 6:22, then I  
18 guess no one -- there was no additional resources needed on the  
19 scene, I guess; is that accurate?

20 A. No. No, I would say that's not accurate because --

21 Q. Oh.

22 A. -- I'm sure we worked it -- our next shift start at  
23 7 a.m.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. So we got the 7 a.m. shift involved. But let me -- the

1 next dispatcher start at 6:45 a.m.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. So I briefed my dispatcher that came on at 6:45.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Then I have a dispatcher come on at 7 a.m. So we're  
6 briefing.

7 Q. Right. This is your handoff or --

8 A. Exactly.

9 Q. -- shift exchange?

10 A. And then I have my technicians start at 7 a.m. So  
11 everybody's getting involved in --

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. -- the situation that's going on.

14 Q. Okay. Who took over for you on the next shift?

15 A. Dispatcher Melanie Barnett arrived at 6:45 a.m.

16 Q. And she would've then filled out her own log sheet just  
17 as you have done?

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. Okay. Okay. Well, thanks. That was a very detailed  
20 timeline. I appreciate that.

21 In your experience there in the dispatch center, and  
22 you've been there for quite a while, are you divided up into  
23 regions or territories as dispatchers? How --

24 A. No, sir.

25 Q. -- does that work? Okay. So you just deal with

1    whatever calls --

2           A.    I accept calls for the whole state.

3           Q.    For the whole state?

4           A.    Yes, sir.

5           Q.    Okay.

6           A.    That we have service Alagasco.

7           Q.    Right.  Okay.  Is Birmingham probably the densest area  
8   in the state for you as far as customers?  Is that where you get a  
9   majority of your phone calls, from maybe the Birmingham area?

10          A.    It can kind of work out evenly because --

11          Q.    Okay.

12          A.    -- you know, you have your Southern Division is a large  
13   area also.

14          Q.    Okay.  I don't know much about the state, so you'll have  
15   to bear with me, but -- okay, so Birmingham is not a majority of  
16   your calls, you would say?

17          A.    Um-hum.

18          Q.    What about is Gate City or Marks Village an area that  
19   you would commonly have to send people out to respond to gas  
20   leaks?  Is that --

21          A.    I want to -- that was my first time dispatching to Gate  
22   City.

23          Q.    Oh, okay.

24          A.    On the 17th of December.

25          Q.    Okay.  Just help me, I don't know what you're looking at

1 on your terminal. Do you have like a map of your system on a  
2 terminal, like a GPS kind of --

3 A. I have access to that.

4 Q. Okay. So when you get a call and an address, you type  
5 it in, and you can kind of see on a map?

6 A. I have access to the map, but I type it in, and I  
7 dispatch.

8 Q. Okay. So you're not always looking at --

9 A. At my map.

10 Q. -- the geographic --

11 A. No, sir.

12 Q. Okay. So that was the first time you had heard of Gate  
13 City, you said, this --

14 A. No, that's the first time I dispatched to Gate City.

15 Q. Okay. And just to be clear, if someone on the Alagasco  
16 system has smelled gas and they want someone to come out and check  
17 for a leak, they would be calling you, your center?

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. We have a 1-800, 24-hour number that's a 1-800 number.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. It's 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 --

23 Q. Twenty-four hours, but is the dispatch center manned 24  
24 hours?

25 A. I'm there -- yes. We're there 24 hours, 7 days a week,



1 365 days a year.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. So pretty much all the time. Are your service  
5 technicians always available?

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. They are. So they're also on that same schedule?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. Okay. The calls don't roll over to Integrity or some  
10 other group?

11 A. No, sir.

12 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. Terrific. Okay. Thanks,  
13 Rochelle. I think at this time I'll let Ravi ask a few questions.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Thanks, Matt.

15 BY MR. CHHATRE:

16 Q. Hi, this is Ravi. I'm sure we've got too many people,  
17 you might forget the names, but -- I got a couple of follow-up  
18 questions actually. I want to try to understand the dispatch  
19 center. How many people work at a time in the center?

20 A. I work the third shift. I man the third shift. My  
21 shift is from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I man that shift, one-man shift only my -- let me just  
24 put it this way so you can understand it. It's a two-man shift,  
25 but we have off days. So let's say it's a two-man shift 11 p.m.

1 to 7 a.m.

2 Q. Uh-huh.

3 A. And my off days are Wednesday night and Thursday nights.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. And my other dispatcher off days Friday night and  
6 Saturday night.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. So when you have a dispatcher off, it's a one-man shift.

9 Q. Okay. So a few days a week, there will be two people?

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. And a few days a week, there will be one person?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. Can you tell us what the shift times? I mean, I know  
14 you work at 11 to 7 a.m. What are the other two shifts?

15 A. We have a 6:45 a.m. shift.

16 Q. Uh-huh.

17 A. Now don't quote me on this. I want to say she comes in  
18 6:45 to 3:30, there and about. Then you have a -- you have  
19 dispatcher -- I want to say you have two dispatchers come in from  
20 7 a.m. to 3, and I believe we have one dispatcher come in from 8  
21 or maybe 8:30 a.m.

22 Q. I'm sorry. I don't if -- I'm confused, so -- you have  
23 -- okay, you work 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. is one --

24 A. Two --

25 Q. -- your third shift with two people a few days and one

1 person other days, depending upon your off days?

2 A. That's correct.

3 Q. Now what is another -- what is the first and second

4 shift?

5 A. The day shift. Let's do the first shift.

6 Q. Okay, first, yeah.

7 A. First shift 6:45 a.m. to, say, about 3:30 p.m.

8 Q. PM, okay.

9 A. Then you have day shift, first shift, two dispatchers

10 7 a.m., say, about 3 p.m.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And then you have a first shift dispatcher comes in I

13 want to say 8, 8:30 a.m. --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- maybe 5 p.m. in the evening. That's the first shift.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Then we have --

18 Q. I apologize. You said the 6:45 to 3:30 p.m., but then 7

19 a.m. to 3 p.m. what happens?

20 A. You have -- these are your first -- this everybody

21 dispatching.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. This is in your radio room.

24 Q. Okay.

25 MR. GARDNER: So there's a first shift, but there are

1 several different time slots in the first shift.

2 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. That's what I lost. Okay. All  
3 right.

4 BY MR. CHHATRE:

5 Q. So in that time slot, 6:45 to 3:30 p.m., two people come  
6 in at 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

7 A. That's correct.

8 Q. And how many other people come in for the --

9 A. You got one 8 to 8:30 a.m. till about 5 p.m.

10 Q. Okay. That's one person.

11 A. That's the first shift.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And we got a second shift.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. We have two man that shift that's dispatchers from 3  
16 p.m. till 11 p.m.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Same according to the off days, okay?

19 Q. Okay. Go ahead. Okay.

20 A. Now that's dispatchers. We also have service clerks  
21 that receive emergency calls.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And they shift is the second shift, and they come in  
24 from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. daily. I want to say 5 -- let me -- I  
25 could tell you.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. We got five service clerks that take the emergency calls  
3 that come in from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Seven days a week.

6 Q. Okay. So there are no service clerks during the other  
7 two shifts?

8 A. That's correct. Your service clerks work 3 p.m. to 11  
9 p.m., Monday through -- Sunday through Saturday, 7 days a week,  
10 365 days a year.

11 Q. Okay. Only for the second shift?

12 A. That is correct.

13 Q. So no clerks on other two shifts, okay. And if you  
14 know, do you know why the clerks has only that particular shift  
15 and no other time?

16 A. Because our call center receives emergency call during  
17 the first shift at another location.

18 Q. Okay. So what happens, the emergency calls comes in and  
19 service clerk takes it? Are they supposed to route it to somebody  
20 else or what happens?

21 A. The 3 to 11 service clerk that receive the emergency  
22 calls, it goes into the computer system.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. After they receive the call, our dispatch system -- it  
25 shows up in our -- on our screen as emergency, and they also

1     notify the dispatcher that they've just taken an emergency call.

2           Q.     Okay. But that's all on computer.

3           A.     Yes, sir.

4           Q.     You don't share the same office?

5           A.     Yes. We --

6           Q.     Oh, okay.

7           A.     -- all in one office.

8           Q.     Oh, okay. And you said the crews are dispatched. Do  
9     you know how many people are in a crew typically?

10          A.     Yes, sir. There's three to a crew.

11          Q.     Three people. Okay.

12                 MR. GARDNER: Are you talking about a construction crew  
13     there?

14                 MS. MARYLAND: Yes, sir.

15                 BY MR. CHHATRE:

16          Q.     Now service mechanics, how many people in a crew? Or  
17     they are just one person?

18          A.     One service mechanic.

19          Q.     Okay.

20                 MR. BELL: At any time if you need to take a break too,  
21     they'll let you if you want too.

22                 MR. CHHATRE: Yes.

23                 BY MR. CHHATRE:

24          Q.     Now the service log, you generate that or computer  
25     generates that or how does this thing happen?

1           A.    This emergency log?

2           Q.    Yes.

3           A.    No, that's part of our -- this is part of our process in  
4 the office.

5           Q.    Okay.

6           A.    This is standard.

7           Q.    Okay.  So maybe you walk me through the process.  What  
8 is the protocol in your office when a call comes in, emergency,  
9 nonemergency?  I guess what I'm trying to understand is some --  
10 who determines the call is emergency and who determines the call  
11 is nonemergency?

12          A.    I would.

13          Q.    Okay.  And do you have any criteria by the company  
14 that's given that certain calls are emergency, certain are non?

15          A.    Well, my job is to receive emergency calls.  I -- my  
16 phone line is the emergency phone line.

17          Q.    Okay.  I understand.  And that is that toll free 800  
18 number?

19          A.    Yes, sir.

20          Q.    Okay.  And so which call service clerks get?  They have  
21 a different number for that?

22          A.    Same number.

23          Q.    Okay.  So it's the computer that decides which call goes  
24 to the service clerk and which calls come to you or it's just --

25          A.    My -- I'm a one-man shift.  I don't have service clerk

1 working with me.

2 Q. Right, but I mean --

3 A. Now when the service clerks work from 3 to 11,  
4 dispatchers do not answer the telephone.

5 Q. Oh, okay.

6 A. They do not answer external telephone calls.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. That's all for the service clerks.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Dispatcher answer internal phone calls but not external.

11 Q. Okay. But the other two shifts, dispatchers still  
12 answer both, the internal and external calls?

13 A. Just -- no, just the third shift.

14 Q. Okay, just the third shift.

15 A. Third shift answer external and internal.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Starting at 11 p.m.

18 Q. Okay. And do the dispatchers receive any training, on-  
19 the-job training, or how do you become a dispatcher in the  
20 company?

21 A. Yes, there's lots of training. We have on-the-job  
22 training.

23 Q. Okay. I mean, I guess before you take over as a  
24 dispatcher, no matter what shift, you are --

25 A. It's a probationary period.



1 Q. Okay. And what does that probation period mean?

2 A. Ninety-day probationary period.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. That's on-the-job training.

5 Q. So you sit with another dispatcher or what does on the  
6 job mean?

7 A. Sit with another dispatcher.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. That's correct.

10 Q. Okay. And which your procedure -- when you dispatch  
11 somebody on emergency call, is the person required to inform you  
12 whether he or she arrived at the scene and what time they arrived?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Okay. And if the person dispatched needs additional  
15 help, do they go through you or they can call directly into their  
16 supervisor or to somebody else? What is the procedure there?

17 A. Yes. They can call the dispatch radio room or directly  
18 to their supervisor. In that case of an emergency, in emergency  
19 situations, we have the empower to make a decision. And in that  
20 decision, Max -- service mechanic Max Morrison made the decision  
21 to contact the construction crew because he was working with  
22 them --

23 Q. Right. Right.

24 A. -- at that time --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- to get them en route also.

2 Q. Okay. So there is a (indiscernible). In emergency  
3 situations, they can call --

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. -- the other crew and kind of bypass you, if you would?

6 A. In emergency situation, yes, sir. But also Mr. --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just call him Ravi.

8 BY MR. CHHATRE:

9 Q. No, there is no Mr. --

10 A. Ravi, Mr. Ravi.

11 Q. -- there is no Mr. here. You can just --

12 A. Also Mr. Ravi, I can hear all -- we have two-way radios,  
13 so I'm listening to all trans --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- I'm listening to it all as each truck talk to each  
16 truck.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I can hear everything.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So once he's letting the other truck -- advising him to  
21 come to the location, then we're all talking by radio.

22 Q. So you know that he's asking --

23 A. Yes, sir.

24 Q. -- someone else? Okay.

25 A. We're all talking by radio.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And we have a two-way radio.

3 Q. Now all these calls that come in, are they logged in the  
4 computer that you can print out and kind of get a timeline for all  
5 these different calls that came in? Or you have to manually enter  
6 something?

7 A. They are logged into the computer. There is a time log.

8 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. I guess maybe -- I think we'll send  
9 you an official request, but that is -- maybe we should get that  
10 log, unless you already given us the time log, computer printout.

11 MR. GARDNER: You're talking about the -- which log in  
12 particular? I'm sorry.

13 MR. CHHATRE: The log that the emergency --

14 MR. GARDNER: Emergency log?

15 MR. NICHOLSON: The computer --

16 MR. CHHATRE: Computer log that she receives.

17 MR. NICHOLSON: -- computer log.

18 MR. GARDNER: Okay.

19 MR. NICHOLSON: Are these calls recorded as well in the  
20 dispatch center?

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that what it is? She said it  
22 would be called a phone log.

23 MR. GARDNER: The phone log?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

25 MR. CHHATRE: They are called, I'm sorry?

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She said it would be called the  
2 phone log --

3 MR. CHHATRE: Oh, phone log. Okay.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- so that's what you're  
5 requesting.

6 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Okay.

7 BY MR. CHHATRE:

8 Q. And that will include both internal and external calls,  
9 right? Or internal calls are all on radio?

10 A. No, internal calls also by phone.

11 Q. Okay. So the whole log will have both internal calls  
12 and outside calls that come to you?

13 A. I do not know if they have internal, sir.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Because internal calls do not come in on my emergency  
16 line.

17 Q. Okay. So they -- internal calls, they are not allowed  
18 to use 811?

19 A. I'm sure they are, but they do not come into my  
20 emergency line.

21 Q. Okay. Okay.

22 A. I'm sure if my service mechanic out there or someone  
23 have emergency, yes, but we have -- they come into what we call  
24 the radio room.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. They have a direct number to call us.

2 Q. Call -- okay, so they don't block that --

3 A. That is true.

4 Q. -- particular number? That's -- I guess that's  
5 called --

6 A. That's true, yes.

7 Q. Okay. Okay.

8 MR. GARDNER: So, Rochelle, the request should be for  
9 phone logs for the radio room?

10 MS. MARYLAND: Yes, we call --

11 MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

12 MS. MARYLAND: I'd say Andy will have that, Andy.

13 MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

14 BY MR. CHHATRE:

15 Q. Can you repeat that, what request we should be sending?

16 A. You ask for the -- you ask for -- you want the emergency  
17 phone log.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. Because if you ask for the emergency log, you're going  
20 to get --

21 Q. Right. Okay.

22 A. -- what I've written.

23 Q. But if the crew calls for help or additional resources,  
24 that information is logged also or it is not logged someplace?  
25 Because they call you directly, correct, if they need something;

1   they are not blocking your 811 line?  If the crew wants you to  
2   dispatch someone --

3               MR. GARDNER:  Ravi.  Excuse me.

4               MR. CHHATRE:  Yes.

5               MR. GARDNER:  You've made reference twice to either a  
6   911 or 811 line.  That is not accurate as far -- we have an  
7   emergency number that's an 800 number.

8               MR. CHHATRE:  Okay.  I'm sorry.  Yeah.

9               MR. GARDNER:  But it's not an 811 or a 911.

10              MR. CHHATRE:  Okay.  No, I, yeah --

11              MR. GARDNER:  I want to make sure I understood you --

12              MR. CHHATRE:  No, I --

13              MR. GARDNER:  -- correctly.

14              MR. CHHATRE:  You are correct.  It is not --

15              MR. GARDNER:  That is not --

16              MR. CHHATRE:  Yeah.

17              MR. GARDNER:  -- that is not how we describe it.

18              MR. CHHATRE:  811 is call before you dig number.  Okay.

19              MS. MARYLAND:  Yes.

20              MR. GARDNER:  Right.  Right.

21              MR. CHHATRE:  I did mean --

22              MR. GARDNER:  It's an 800 number.

23              MR. CHHATRE:  -- I meant 800, yeah.

24              MR. NICHOLSON:  I think what we're asking for is the  
25   emergency phone logs from the dispatch center radio room, and

1   that'll be all external calls into the dispatch center to  
2   Rochelle. She doesn't know if it will contain the internal stuff.

3           MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

4           MR. NICHOLSON: And I think Ravi's wondering how can we  
5   capture any internal calls that might have been made.

6           MR. NICHOLSON: Do you know that?

7           MS. MARYLAND: No, I don't.

8           MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. So maybe you could research that  
9   and just see if there is --

10          MR. GARDNER: Okay.

11          MR. NICHOLSON: And my follow-up question to that is  
12   Rochelle's -- is Rochelle being recorded? Is there a recording?

13          MS. MARYLAND: Yes.

14          MR. NICHOLSON: There is?

15          MS. MARYLAND: I am. There's a recording.

16          MR. NICHOLSON: So we would request to get the actual  
17   audio files from that night or that morning. And I think that  
18   would also probably pick up any internal communications while it  
19   was doing that.

20          MS. MARYLAND: And that night I did receive internal.

21          MR. NICHOLSON: You did?

22          MS. MARYLAND: Yes, sir.

23          MR. NICHOLSON: Terrific.

24          BY MR. JONES:

25          Q. Rochelle, if they call in on their cell phones into your

1 office, okay, are they calling in on the emergency line or are  
2 they calling in on a dedicated line? How are they getting in  
3 touch with you using their cell phone out in the field?

4 A. Wallace, I'm not sure if they're using the 800 number  
5 because I just have -- I answer one line a night.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So I don't know if that internal line is tied in after  
8 11 p.m. to the 800 number --

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. -- and that's how they reach the radio room. But I know  
11 before 11 p.m., I know first shift, second shift we have  
12 additional number they call.

13 Q. Okay. Okay, so we're not sure if they call you by cell  
14 phone if that's going to be a recorded call then? It depends on  
15 what number they call you on to get in touch with you, correct?

16 A. That's correct, because the only line I answer -- I  
17 understand to answer is the 800 emergency line.

18 MR. NICHOLSON: I see now.

19 BY MR. JONES:

20 Q. Okay. Are the radio calls recorded in any shape, form,  
21 or fashion?

22 A. Two-way?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. Not to my knowledge.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's just the phone calls; they



1 answer the calls.

2 MR. JONES: Okay.

3 MR. CHHATRE: Other than that, I really have no  
4 questions. Thank you for your time.

5 MS. MARYLAND: Thank you.

6 MR. NICHOLSON: Yeah. Next, Willie or --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you have any questions?

8 MR. WILLIAMS: No, I don't have any questions.

9 BY MR. LUPO:

10 Q. Ms. Maryland, the 311 call center for the city runs out  
11 of my office. And y'all are the frontline and you're pretty  
12 daggone good. So if you need a job --

13 MR. BELL: This'll be my first objection.

14 (Laughter.)

15 BY MR. LUPO:

16 Q. I have one question. The first Robert, Mr. Rumph?

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. R-u-m-p?

19 MR. GARDNER: H.

20 MS. MARYLAND: R-u-m-p-h.

21 MR. LUPO: Got it. Okay, that was it. Thank you.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's going to take longer --

23 MR. NICHOLSON: Well, it's going to Bob. We're going to  
24 keep --

25 MR. GARDNER: I have no questions.

1 MR. NICHOLSON: Bob, so no.

2 BY MR. JONES:

3 Q. One point of clarification, Rochelle. Going back to  
4 your log at 4:43, you requested the address of BA587735. What was  
5 that address?

6 A. 7544 64th Courtway South.

7 Q. Thank you. I missed the 64. I got it. Thank you.

8 Okay. Just a couple of quick questions. Have you ever  
9 dispatched to a situation like this before, whether it's here in  
10 -- whether here in Birmingham or in Montgomery in the past?

11 A. No, sir.

12 Q. You haven't.

13 A. When you say situation, this is my first explosion.

14 Q. Okay. You handled some fires in the past and things  
15 like that?

16 A. Fires, you know, we had storms, you know, of such, yes,  
17 sir.

18 Q. Okay. All right. Have you -- or do you have access to  
19 your emergency procedures when you're on duty there at the  
20 dispatch?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. Okay. They are there with you? So if you have any  
23 questions, you have access to something to look at?

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. Okay. What do you do or to what extent do you have OQ

1 training?

2 A. I haven't had any OQ training?

3 Q. None?

4 A. No, sir.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Wallace, what is OQ?

6 MR. JONES: Excuse me. Operator qualification training.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

8 MR. JONES: Okay. That is something that we look at  
9 when we do our inspections. So that's --

10 BY MR. JONES:

11 Q. Let's see. And getting back to the two-way radio  
12 conversations. You said you hear everything that's being said by  
13 the various parties in the field, correct?

14 A. (No audible response.)

15 Q. Do they have a frequency that they can go to that  
16 eliminates your hearing them or is everything coming through  
17 dispatch?

18 A. Everything comes through -- my knowledge, everything  
19 comes through dispatch, truck to truck.

20 Q. Okay. And how do you keep up with all these different  
21 shifts?

22 A. Well, you know, I done worked them all.

23 Q. Well, I know you used to have to work a whole different  
24 ballgame down in Montgomery, but this is unreal. Okay. That's  
25 all I've got other than (indiscernible).

1           MR. NICHOLSON: I got a few follow-ups, Rochelle. Do  
2 you need to take a break or anything?

3           MS. MARYLAND: I'm fine.

4           MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

5           MS. MARYLAND: I been up since 10:00 last night.

6           MR. NICHOLSON: Oh, really? Oh, well, this is not --

7           MR. GARDNER: She worked the night shift last night.

8           MR. NICHOLSON: Oh, wow.

9           MR. CHHATRE: Oh, wow.

10          MR. NICHOLSON: We held you over? Now I feel bad.

11          MR. BLACKWOOD: Are you driving back to Montgomery?

12          MS. MARYLAND: Today I am. It's Christmas; I have to go  
13 back to Montgomery.

14          MR. NICHOLSON: Well, I'll try to make this quick  
15 because --

16          MS. MARYLAND: I'm fine.

17          MR. NICHOLSON: -- I feel bad now.

18          BY MR. NICHOLSON:

19          Q. So you're the only person on shift. I think we've  
20 established that, right, between the 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.? On the  
21 night of the accident, it was just you; is that correct?

22          A. That's correct. Yes, sir.

23          Q. So I'm curious because you've got the whole state, were  
24 you receiving any other emergency calls that night?

25          A. Yes, I did. I received emergency call at the same --

1 right after I received my explosion call.

2 Q. Oh, okay. And what was that? Was it -- how much time  
3 did that take from you or what did you have to do to respond to  
4 that?

5 A. I immediately notified Robert Rumph, supervisor on duty,  
6 and advised him that we need to get another technician.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. I need to call in another technician because I knew that  
9 my technician on duty will be tied up --

10 Q. Sure.

11 A. -- in the Gate City community. So I was -- I got  
12 permission to call another technician. So I called Mr. Carlo  
13 Banks out to -- Bates out to work, and he accepted the call.

14 Q. And where was this other emergency at?

15 A. I apologize. I don't have it.

16 Q. No, that's fine.

17 A. I can get it, if needed, but I don't have it in my notes  
18 because --

19 Q. No, I was just curious.

20 A. -- it's not part of my log.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. It's not part of the Gate City --

23 Q. Sure.

24 A. -- situation.

25 Q. No, we're really only interested in Gate City. I'm

1 really getting at --

2 A. But it was in the Birmingham area.

3 Q. It was? Okay.

4 A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

5 Q. And that was the only other emergency call? So I'm just  
6 trying to -- I mean, Gate City took a lot of your time, right?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. And it's only you, and you've got the rest of the state  
9 to take care of. I'm just wondering whether were you over -- was  
10 there a lot of -- how was the workload? I mean, could you handle  
11 it or did you --

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. -- need another dispatcher? Or you felt comfortable?

14 A. In this type of emergency, yes, I would say, yes, you  
15 would need a dispatcher because this is an emergency situation.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. This calls everybody.

18 Q. Sure.

19 A. That type of emergency entail every man we needed at  
20 Alagasco that night.

21 Q. Sure.

22 A. So sure. But, yes --

23 Q. And it was just the one Rochelle calling people out?

24 A. That's correct.

25 Q. Okay. But you were able to manage that as well as --

1 A. I managed it.

2 Q. -- all your other --

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. Okay. You mentioned that you were getting internal  
5 phone calls earlier?

6 A. Yes. And when you receive the log, you'll see my  
7 internal phone calls came from the site, from the Gate City site.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Because I have to receive them by phone.

10 Q. Sure.

11 A. So they all came in on the phone line.

12 Q. Okay. And who -- what was -- what were these calls for?

13 A. Well, as I --

14 Q. It's just as you read earlier?

15 A. Yes, as I read earlier from the log.

16 Q. Okay. The only supervisor I heard you notify was this  
17 Robert Rumph. Did you ever notify anyone higher up in the  
18 organization of the explosion or --

19 A. No, sir, because he was the supervisor on call and his  
20 position he would go and notify them.

21 Q. He would take it up higher.

22 A. He would take it up --

23 Q. It's not you.

24 A. That's correct.

25 Q. Okay. Let's see. You've mentioned emergency procedures

1 earlier too. And I just wonder what kind of emergency procedures  
2 would a dispatcher have? Can you talk to that?

3 A. How to handle -- in that case, it was the explosion, so  
4 how to handle explosions.

5 Q. Oh, you exactly have a procedure that says --

6 A. Well, just --- yeah, how to handle explosions --

7 Q. Oh, okay.

8 A. -- you know, make contact -- you contact -- first you  
9 dispatch your mechanic. You get your crew en route --

10 Q. Sure.

11 A. -- and you may want to contact the fire department.  
12 They contacted me.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. You know, just procedures, how -- emergency procedures,  
15 how to get that call taken -- that emergency taken care of.

16 Q. Terrific. So one of those steps is actually calling the  
17 fire department?

18 A. Yes, I --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yes, I can call -- contact the fire department.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Once my technician gets on the scene and advise me  
23 what's going on, then we go from there.

24 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. I've got nothing else. Ravi?

25 MR. CHHATRE: I got a few follow-up questions. I'm



1     trying to locate one of the acronyms she's used. I think I know  
2     what that is, but I just wanted to get it for the record.

3                 BY MR. CHHATRE:

4             Q.    You called fire department telling that your technician  
5     is on scene, and I guess you used an acronym there. I'm trying to  
6     look at my notes.

7             A.    ETA.

8             Q.    ETA, yes. Estimate --

9             A.    Estimate time of arrival.

10            Q.    -- arrival. Yes. Okay. Is that correct?

11            A.    Yes, sir.

12            Q.    Could you just briefly describe the organization that  
13     you have? Like you are an emergency dispatcher. Is there  
14     supervisors? Is it a flat organization? How many people are you  
15     -- your organization is emergency dispatch center? I mean, if you  
16     don't know, you don't know.

17            A.    Yeah. Because I know the title is supervisor. Then I'm  
18     going to go from supervisor to manager. Then you have your  
19     division managers.

20                 MR. GARDNER: Ravi, that would be in the organizational  
21     chart.

22                 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. That's what I'm trying like if we  
23     narrow it down, if she knows, so --

24                 BY MR. CHHATRE:

25            Q.    Do you have any guidelines as to when the call comes in

1 as to within how many minutes, seconds that you are supposed to  
2 respond?

3 A. Inside leak, on a leak call -- now on explosion, which I  
4 worked on the 17th of December --

5 Q. Right.

6 A. -- that's ASAP.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. A fire call, ASAP.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. And on a leak call, inside leak within 25 minutes.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And an outside leak, within an hour.

13 Q. Okay. And do you have any drills, either mock drills or  
14 known drills, like kind of like a training situation where you get  
15 a call saying there's an explosion or there's a fire to see how  
16 you handle this thing?

17 A. No. I never participated in a mock drill.

18 Q. No, not you in particular, but there's a -- or the call  
19 center people, is there a program to do this -- refresher  
20 training, if you would?

21 A. Yeah, we have leak training. I've been involved in leak  
22 training, but not a drill. Of course.

23 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Okay. That's all I have, Matt.

24 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay, just -- I'm sorry. Go ahead.

25 Willie, did you have anything?

1 MR. WILLIAMS: I don't have anything.

2 MR. NICHOLSON: All right. Don?

3 MR. LUPO: Good.

4 MR. NICHOLSON: Good? Okay, I'll -- then it's back to  
5 me. I think we want to request as well, Bob, if you're keeping  
6 them running tally, that we want to those emergency procedures of  
7 the dispatch center if we don't have them.

8 MR. GARDNER: Okay.

9 MR. NICHOLSON: And if we're mostly finished here, I'll  
10 ask sort of a follow-up final question, and that, it's just --

11 BY MR. NICHOLSON:

12 Q. From your perspective -- you've had quite a lot of time  
13 in the dispatch center. You certainly understand its operation.  
14 Was there anything about this response that you would've like to  
15 have seen go differently or anything that could've made it more  
16 efficient or better? Is there any obstacles that you felt like  
17 maybe got in your way or got in someone's way in the field?

18 A. No, I don't, because as we received the call -- as we  
19 received the information, we got on the scene and worked it as  
20 needed.

21 Q. Okay. You think that communications flowed pretty well?

22 A. Yes, it did.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. From my end of it, yes, it did.

25 Q. Yeah. Well, what about the --

1           A.    I wasn't the on -- I was not --

2           Q.    -- what about the radio?  What were you hearing on the  
3 radio communications?  Anything that --

4           A.    No, the only on the --

5           Q.    -- any frustration or --

6           A.    No frustration.  Only thing on the radio was  
7 communicating the location, getting that address out there.

8           Q.    Yeah.

9           A.    We were repeating that address, because -- I want you to  
10 understand two addresses came into us.  We got two addresses came  
11 into us:  one from the police department, one from the fire  
12 department.  And then we -- got to understand they both were at  
13 the Gate City community.

14          Q.    Okay.  These were two different addresses?

15          A.    We got two addresses.

16          Q.    Okay.

17          A.    We got one explosion and one as apartment fire.

18          Q.    Okay.  So that caused some initial confusion?

19          A.    No, it didn't cause no confusion.

20          Q.    Oh, okay.

21          A.    That's the communication over the two-way radio of what  
22 address I want you to go to.

23          Q.    I see.

24          A.    I'm dispatching --

25          Q.    Some people to the --

1 A. Exactly.

2 Q. Okay, fire.

3 A. Because we don't need to all go to one location.

4 Q. I see.

5 A. We split our guys up and got them to both -- on the  
6 scene of both locations.

7 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. Ravi?

8 MR. CHHATRE: And just the last question I -- it's not  
9 really a question.

10 BY MR. CHHATRE:

11 Q. I want to understand when you say you made a phone call  
12 and he accepted. What does that mean? I mean --

13 A. "Mr. Ravi, I have an emergency call; I need you to come  
14 out to work." You could say, I accept or I decline.

15 Q. Oh, so they have a choice of saying, well, I don't want  
16 to go?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay.

19 MR. GARDNER: Or cannot go.

20 MS. MARYLAND: Yes. And a reason.

21 MR. CHHATRE: And what are the reason and -- okay. All  
22 right. Thanks.

23 MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. Last call. Any questions?  
24 Follow-ups? No.

25 Okay. Well, I want to thank you for your time,

1 Rochelle. I think at this point we'll conclude the interview, and  
2 we'll go off record.

3 MS. MARYLAND: Thank you, sir.

4 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:           ALABAMA GAS CORPORATION (ALAGASCO)  
                                  NATURAL GAS RELEASE WITH IGNITION  
                                  BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA  
                                  DECEMBER 17, 2013  
                                  Interview of Rochelle Maryland

DOCKET NUMBER:           DCA-14-MP-001

PLACE:                    Birmingham, Alabama

DATE:                     December 21, 2013

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.

---

Derick Marx Rawls  
Transcriber