

DOCKET NO. SA-516

APPENDIX 9

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
SURESH DEODAT
NOVEMBER 19, 1996
(34 pages)

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BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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In the Matter of: :
TWA FLIGHT 800 :
INTERVIEW OF SURESH DEODAT :
- - - - - x

The above-entitled matter came on for interview, pursuant
to Notice, before NORM WIEMEYER, NTSB Official, at JFK
International Airport, Jamaica, NY, on Tuesday, November 19,
1996 at 12:30 p.m.

1 APPEARANCES:

2 TERRY STACEY, TWA

3 LU LIEBER, FBI

4 STEPHEN KLAPACH, FAA

5 CHARLES HALE, IAM

6 KEVIN LONGWELL, BOEING

7 DENNIS SANTIAGO, IAM

8 LOU BURNS, AIRLINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION

9 RICH KARNIEWICZ, FBI

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E X H I B I T S

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None

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. WIEMEYER: On the record.

3 My name is Norm Wiemeyer. I'm with the National
4 Transportation Safety Board.5 We'd like to ask you some questions this afternoon
6 with regards to the loss of TWA Flight 800.7 A few of the questions at the beginning are
8 administrative in nature, so that we can identify you and how
9 to recontact you to review the transcript when it's completed.10 So if you would state your full name and spell your
11 last name, please.12 MR. DEODAT: Suresh Deodat, last name, D-E-O-D-A-T.
13 S-U-R-E-S-H.

14 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Who is your employer?

15 MR. DEODAT: -- ^{Ogden}Aviation -- ^{Twining}16 MR. WIEMEYER: And how long have you been employed by
17 them?

18 MR. DEODAT: Just over 2-1/2 years.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Do you hold any FAA
20 certificates or ratings?

21 MR. DEODAT: No.

22 MR. WIEMEYER: What?

23 MR. DEODAT: No.

24 MR. WIEMEYER: Oh, you do not. Okay.

25 What is your specific job title with --

1 MR. DEODAT: Right now, I'm the Budget Administrator
2 for the company.

3 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. And what was your --

4 MR. DEODAT: At that time, I was a Fueling
5 Supervisor.

6 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Were you working the day TWA
7 Flight 800 had the accident?

8 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

9 MR. WIEMEYER: Did you work on that specific
10 airplane?

11 MR. DEODAT: We are assigned to terminals. I worked
12 at TWA terminal.

13 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Did you work that airplane?

14 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

15 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. What was your function?

16 MR. DEODAT: As a Fueling Supervisor, you are
17 required to assign a job to a fueler, so the aircraft is fueled
18 for an on-time departure and -- you know -- correctly loaded,
19 balanced and all that stuff.

20 MR. WIEMEYER: Did you assign the fueler to --

21 MR. DEODAT: Yes, with respect to fueling, loading
22 and balancing.

23 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. During the course of the time
24 that your fueler was out --

25 MR. WIEMEYER: Let's go off the record --

1 (Brief recess.)

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Back on the record.

3 Did you go over -- around the aircraft at any time
4 during the time that your people were doing the fueling?

5 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

6 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Did you have any conversations
7 with people from TWA during that time?

8 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

9 MR. WIEMEYER: Would you relate to us the nature of
10 the conversation?

11 MR. DEODAT: Okay. I went over to the aircraft. We
12 usually check each flight and -- you know -- go from aircraft
13 to aircraft, flight for flight, just to make sure that the fuel
14 -- is pumping, the aircraft is being fueled. I went over there
15 like probably -- after I assigned the job -- probably like 45
16 minutes later to check with the fueler and maintenance --
17 that's TWA Maintenance were out there. Apparently, one of the
18 tanks were not taking in fuel, and Maintenance said they were
19 going to fuel it manually. I can't remember the exact
20 conversation, because it's been such a long time. I'm probably
21 -- you know -- just going to give you five minutes of what I
22 remember.

23 I spoke to -- I can't remember his name, actually,
24 but I spoke to TWA Maintenance regarding why weren't we fueling
25 at that moment -- 45 minutes after I went over there, and they

1 says that one of the tanks was not taking the fuel, they're
2 trying to put it in manually. That was the nature of the --
3 basically, the nature of the conversation.

4 MR. WIEMEYER: Were there any conversations with any
5 of your fuelers that were working on TWA 800 about the flight?

6 MR. DEODAT: Yes, I just asked them what happened,
7 why isn't he fueling. At the time that I went over he was not
8 fueling. He says, "Oh, Maintenance is out here. There's a
9 problem with one of the tanks. They're working on it." That
10 was about it for that.

11 MR. WIEMEYER: Do you recall the name of the person
12 that was actually doing the fueling for you?

13 MR. DEODAT: Yes, A. Lewis.

14 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay.

15 MR. DEODAT: I may be wrong. Let me see. Let me
16 see. Yes, 400 --

17 MR. WIEMEYER: How is -- notified with regards to the
18 fuel requirements for a particular airplane?

19 MR. DEODAT: Okay. We get it from the load control,
20 which is located at Gate 17, TWA. Usually, the supervisors are
21 the lead -- goes in, picks it up, then gives it out to the
22 respective fueler for the respective aircraft flight. So he
23 just goes by whatever is printed on the sheet.

24 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Are the -- people specifically
25 trained by TWA with regards to fueling TWA airplanes?

1 MR. DEODAT: We have a separate training department
2 that trains fueler. Usually, we have a one-month period of
3 training for all new fuelers, and they are trained in each
4 terminal, in each types of aircraft, not by the airline, but by
5 our company.

6 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. If the fueling ^{Sheet} machine that you
7 get from TWA gives a given amount of fuel and somebody came up
8 and asked your fueler to put in a different amount of fuel,
9 what's the training that is provided to your people on how to
10 respond to that?

11 MR. DEODAT: Okay. First, the fuelers are told to
12 put on hazard, which is -- you know -- flashers, just in case
13 he has a problem. In a scenario like that, a fueler would put
14 on his hazard and he would wait for a supervisor before he does
15 anything, unless -- the captain is the one that has the final
16 say in everything -- unless the captain says that he wants
17 this, the fuel would not -- he will notify me at the end, but
18 he will not be hooked up to the aircraft -- you know -- told by
19 maintenance cut that by 10,000, he would not do it. He would
20 notify the supervisor before he does anything, unless the
21 captain says otherwise.

22 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. So if any other person, other
23 than the captain, came to your fueler and said, "I want X
24 amount of fuel in a given tank," the fueler would or would not
25 respond to that?

1 MR. DEODAT: He would not respond to that in doing it
2 right away without consulting a supervisor.

3 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Were you consulted in any way
4 with regards to any fuel changes on this particular flight?

5 MR. DEODAT: I saw -- remember there was a decrease
6 of 10,000 pounds in the fuel requirement. That came from load
7 control directly, though. They called -- We have a radio
8 monitor -- we're on the same frequency -- maintenance
9 frequency, and if there's a change in the fuel load, they
10 notify us and we -- the field with the new fuel load. I think
11 there was a decrease of 10,000 pounds in that particular
12 flight.

13 MR. WIEMEYER: Do you make a written record of that
14 at all --

15 MR. DEODAT: Yes, I think -- yes, we usually --
16 whenever I write -- because of the fact we have so many flights
17 and so -- it's so dynamic, it's pretty hard to keep track of
18 anything, but sometimes when I can, I try to make notes of --
19 on sites of load decreases, load increases, sometimes by arrow,
20 sometimes by actually putting the actual loads. Because, see,
21 I don't always get the loads. I have a lead -- sometimes who just
22 go and get my loads.

23 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. In your contact with the people
24 that did Flight -- TWA 800 for you, were there any other
25 problems or items brought to your attention by your fuelers or

1 by anybody else that you recall with regards to that flight,
2 any other maladies?

3 MR. DEODAT: I mean, on that day?

4 MR. WIEMEYER: On that day, on that flight number.

5 MR. DEODAT: No, except for the fact that one of the
6 tanks were not accepting fuel, there was no other conversation
7 about this.

8 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. I have no further questions.

9 MR. STACEY: I'm Terry Stacey with TWA, 747 Captain.
10 What do your fuelers or did you -- what does fueling
11 manually mean? What -- Describe that to me.

12 MR. DEODAT: Sometimes they open up -- they pull the
13 fuse, which -- let's say for example the VTO, you know, if it
14 shuts off a little early, which happens in cases of (47s) they
15 do pull the fuse sometimes, just to put a little extra fuel in
16 to balance it out, you know, to accept the fuel. I guess
17 that's what I'm assuming "manually" -- that's the only thing
18 "manually" means.

19 Now, in that particular case, when the fuel says
20 "manual," I just says, "Okay. They're trying to probably put
21 that extra thousand pounds -- the reserve tank, because it
22 shuts off, I think, at like 2,200. It requires to 3,300. So
23 they were trying to put that extra 1,000 in there. I guess
24 they're trying to pull the fuse or -- I don't know what they
25 were doing -- that's Maintenance -- to put that extra 1,000 in

1 there.

2 MR. STACEY: Okay. Do you recall what time it was
3 when you received the decrease in fuel?

4 MR. DEODAT: Not offhand.

5 MR. STACEY: Not offhand.

6 MR. DEODAT: No.

7 MR. STACEY: Would that be -- Would you receive that
8 with an additional -- This M-180 that you get the load from --
9 In other words -- Well, yes -- Excuse me. What is the -- what
10 form does TWA give you to tell you the load of -- fuel load?

11 MR. DEODAT: It's -- I don't know the name of -- the
12 number of the form -- M-180 -- I think --

13 MR. STACEY: So if there had been a change in fuel by
14 load control --

15 MR. DEODAT: Um-hum.

16 MR. STACEY: -- would they give you another slip of
17 paper?

18 MR. DEODAT: Oh, yes --

19 MR. STACEY: They would give you another slip --

20 MR. DEODAT: Yes, and they would say, "Revised load."
21 It would say, "Revised," also --

22 MR. STACEY: Okay. Prior to becoming a supervisor,
23 were you a fueler?

24 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

25 MR. STACEY: You were a fueler. You fueled 747s?

1 MR. DEODAT: Um-hum.

2 MR. STACEY: Did you fuel 747s?

3 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

4 MR. STACEY: And what was the normal -- do you recall
5 the normal fuel loads you'd put in the reserve tanks?

6 MR. DEODAT: It was -- 99 percent of the time it
7 was -- 3,000, 3,300.

8 MR. STACEY: Okay. 3,300, 3,400 pounds.

9 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

10 MR. STACEY: Okay. In your experience in fueling
11 747s -- I think you already answered that -- but with TWA
12 specifically, you have never had occasion to fuel less than
13 that that you recall.

14 MR. DEODAT: Never. I mean, any other airlines,
15 period.

16 MR. STACEY: Did anyone ask you that evening --
17 Excuse me. Did you talk to a crew member?

18 MR. DEODAT: No.

19 MR. STACEY: On 800?

20 MR. DEODAT: Hum-um.

21 MR. STACEY: Do you know if your fueller talked to a
22 crew member?

23 MR. DEODAT: No, I don't.

24 MR. STACEY: Don't know.

25 MR. DEODAT: Sometimes I go up and I probably go up

1 to the captain and ask him if he's happy, because he's the one
2 that has the final say in everything, but I was pretty busy
3 that afternoon.

4 MR. STACEY: Okay. Did anyone have a conversation
5 with you about putting -- other than -- Excuse me. So you may
6 have a received a decrease in load from TWA Load Control of
7 10,000 pounds, but there any conversation regarding a decrease
8 in fuel load on any of the tanks, other than the total --

9 MR. DEODAT: Well, it goes -- I don't know -- The
10 distribution, I think, would change, obviously, for a 10,000
11 increase, but I did not look at the paper to see -- you know --
12 after he took it out, because of the fact that the reserve
13 tanks were short 2,000. They took it out of that tank. I did
14 not look for that, but I would assume that they probably took
15 it out of the one -- the main tanks and not the reserve, that's
16 what I'm assuming.

17 MR. STACEY: Okay. So let me ask you specifically,
18 then, with the decrease in 10,000 pounds of fuel load, you have
19 no -- or do you have any knowledge of a request to put less
20 fuel in the reserve tanks?

21 MR. DEODAT: No.

22 MR. STACEY: No. Okay.

23 Okay. Did you observe any kind of a fuel leak that
24 day on Flight 800?

25 MR. DEODAT: Other than when I pulled under wing, you

1 know, you have normal condensation from the wing -- you know --
2 the water -- we pulled all around the airplane. You see the
3 water falls on the windshield. There's generally some oily
4 residue mixed with the water. I mean, I think that's something
5 that happens to all airplanes.

6 MR. STACEY: Okay. Did the fueler say anything to
7 you about a fuel leak?

8 MR. DEODAT: No.

9 MR. STACEY: He did not.

10 What would be Ogden's procedure if -- Let's say the
11 fueler absolutely observed a fuel leak, what would be the
12 procedure?

13 MR. DEODAT: Notifies the supervisor and if he's --
14 maintenance -- that's TWA Maintenance or any other airline
15 mechanics -- and if -- let's say, he didn't -- maintenance, he
16 let's the supervisor know, we called -- I call maintenance on
17 the radio or the supervisor calls maintenance on the radio as
18 soon as we're on the same frequency.

19 MR. STACEY: Okay. Is that documented in any way
20 with Ogden?

21 MR. DEODAT: Sometimes it is. You know, I've heard
22 of situations where the guy -- there's a guy on TWA Maintenance
23 copying whatever is being said on the radio, like us making a
24 call. He usually writes the time and -- you know -- anything
25 pertaining to that call. I mean, just briefly, because there

1 have been situations where we called for maintenance on
2 aircraft because of an inop gauge earlier and when we go back
3 to check the log -- there's a log in the -- maintenance --
4 sometimes we see that they called -- what time. That's just to
5 prove to them that we did call and let them know -- 45 minutes
6 where there was an inop gauge in one of the airplanes and --
7 you know -- if they didn't respond in time.

8 MR. STACEY: Okay. But specifically -- not TWA, but
9 Ogden -- would the fueler fill out a form for Ogden or a
10 supervisor to place in the records that aircraft such-and-such
11 or flight such-and-such had a fuel leak?

12 MR. DEODAT: No.

13 MR. STACEY: No, just that you have notified
14 maintenance.

15 In your experience, how often would you say you have
16 to fuel a 747 manually or pull the fuse?

17 MR. DEODAT: It generally doesn't happen. I mean, I
18 know all the aircrafts that -- from working, from experience.
19 Saudia, for example. We always have to pull the fuse because
20 it never accepts the fuel -- I know certain airplanes that we
21 always have to pull the fuse on. So Saudia I think we have to
22 pull the fuse on and that's the only one I really know we have
23 to pull the fuse on. All the other airlines, it's usually
24 fueled normally.

25 MR. STACEY: Okay. Is there any specific gates at

1 TWA that's a problem that you would know about, recall?

2 MR. DEODAT: Dates?

3 MR. STACEY: Yes. In other words, if an airplane is
4 parked on Gate 25, is that a -- is that normally a problem with
5 the fueling on that gate or 31 or --

6 MR. DEODAT: Yes. Well, we drew the line recently
7 where we were having -- usually on certain gates we can't fuel
8 ^{both} boat-wings, like on Gate No. 29, 27 -- 27, 42 and 39. We can't
9 fuel on the right-hand side of the 747s, because there are no
10 fueling pits.

11 MR. STACEY: I see.

12 MR. DEODAT: So we have to fuel on the left side --
13 one -- at a time.

14 MR. STACEY: But as far as accepting fuel, you don't
15 recall --

16 MR. DEODAT: No problem.

17 MR. STACEY: Okay. I have no further questions.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. LIEBER: I'm Lu Lieber with the FBI.

20 You mentioned that there was a decrease in the load
21 of 10,000 pounds, I guess you said. Was that the total amount
22 or was that just for -- was it just -- or any additional or any
23 less or was it just 10,000?

24 MR. DEODAT: It was a decrease from the total of
25 10,000 pounds.

1 MS. LIEBER: Okay. I have no further questions.

2 MR. KLAPACH: Hi. Steve Klapach from the FAA.

3 I have no questions at this time.

4 MR. HALE: Charles Hale with International
5 Association of Machinists.

6 I just have one question. In regards to any fuel
7 leakage or anything like that, if it's a larger amount, do you
8 have an EPA form or -- things that you have to get involved with?

9 MR. DEODAT: Yes. Actually, any spill from an
10 aircraft, we have to report to the Port Authority which we --
11 and then we fill out a form -- we fill out a form.
12 Maintenance, all maintenance department does that, fill out a
13 standard form -- If it's our fault, we get a fine, you know,
14 so, yes, we do have a form.

15 MR. HALE: The other question I have is any problem
16 concerning that aircraft on the 17th, you would have known
17 about any problem being that you were the supervisor in charge
18 of the TWA area?

19 MR. DEODAT: With respect to fueling, yes.

20 MR. HALE: That's all I have.

21 MR. LONGWELL: I'm Kevin Longwell with the Boeing
22 Company.

23 Could you define, in terms of this form that you
24 report to the EPA, what you said with this fuel spill? Could
25 you clarify, maybe define a spill and how that relates to a

1 leak?

2 MR. DEODAT: Well, a spill usually comes from the --
3 tanks in the wings. Obviously, when a tank has too much, it
4 starts to spill out of the wing. It can be because of
5 negligence of the fueler. It could be because of the aircraft,
6 the VTO is not working, but if it's like, say, 10-15 gallons,
7 you know, it comes out of the wing, we have to get -- we're
8 supposed to -- I don't know the details of the form itself,
9 like, you know, where everything goes or whatever the case may
10 be -- but, yes, we are required to notify the Port Authority,
11 which we fill out a form and we give them estimated gallons and
12 explain to them -- well, try to tell them, explain to them why
13 it happened.

14 MR. LONGWELL: Now, if there were a leak in --
15 someplace, fuel coming out, other than out of the wing tips,
16 would that also involve the use of this form?

17 MR. DEODAT: Well, if it's large enough in a way
18 where it needs cleanup -- cleaning up, definitely would require
19 a form, and if there's -- TWA Maintenance -- again, if there's
20 a leak
21 -- I have never had a scenario where we had a leak on an
22 airplane where like -- you know -- you need -- well, we will
23 definitely call maintenance if we see a leak on the plane. I
24 mean, something --

25 MR. LONGWELL: How large is that when you say, if

1 it's --

2 MR. DEODAT: Since it never happened, I really
3 can't -- you know -- give you an estimate.

4 MR. LONGWELL: Do you recall any earlier problems
5 with this particular airplane prior to July 17th -- maybe a
6 week before or two weeks?

7 MR. DEODAT: Yes, I did notice a missing flap under
8 the wing. I mean, and, again, I've seen that before also,
9 under the left wing -- missing -- covering -- not for the
10 engine column, but just between the two engines, just the part
11 that protects the gear to send the flaps out. I noticed that -
12 -

13 MR. LONGWELL: Any other problems or discrepancy
14 write-ups or anything like that?

15 MR. DEODAT: Well, besides from what other -- what
16 one of the other supervisors said, he noticed -- that was after
17 the fact, though, after the crash. He told me -- besides
18 that --

19 MR. LONGWELL: A supervisor told you about --

20 MR. DEODAT: About -- a fueling supervisor, Wayne
21 Rathan. This is like a day after the crash. He told me he did
22 notice a leak on that particular aircraft, and he did mention
23 the missing flaps. That's right. He was there the prior --
24 the week before. So -- Besides that, I didn't know any
25 problems --

1 MR. LONGWELL: But is there anything to expand on
2 that? Do you know anything more about when the leak was or --

3 MR. DEODAT: He says -- taking his word for seeing it
4 -- he saw a leak on the airplane or he says he did see a leak
5 on the left wing of the -- that particular aircraft a week
6 before. He did not -- I didn't remember him telling me where
7 it came from or anything like that, which exact spot -- says
8 the left wing, and he did mention the missing flaps, which I
9 did notice that week, and there isn't nothing I can say besides
10 what we talk about, "Oh, there is a leak. Hey, there's a
11 leak." He did see a leak.

12 MR. LONGWELL: Okay. Regarding the 10,000-pound
13 increase in the fuel load, did that actually involve defueling
14 the aircraft?

15 MR. DEODAT: No, we did not finish refueling the
16 aircraft at that time, so we still had time to go up to that
17 amount. So it didn't require defueling.

18 MR. LONGWELL: When you receive a decrease in fuel
19 load request from the customer, does it also include the fuel
20 distribution?

21 MR. DEODAT: Yes.

22 MR. LONGWELL: Where it should be taken from
23 specifically for that fuel load?

24 MR. DEODAT: Yes, the distribution, yes. It has to
25 be written, has to be. We're not required to distribute fuel

1 loads -- without a written form.

2 MR. LONGWELL: Earlier in your testimony, you said
3 that you thought the delay -- after you came back 45 minutes
4 later that you were aware there was a fueling problem and you
5 said that it was because a tank wouldn't take fuel.

6 MR. DEODAT: Yes, one of the tanks wouldn't. I think
7 the reserve tank would not accept fuel.

8 MR. LONGWELL: Okay. I want a clarification to ask
9 if that statement about it being a tank as opposed to the
10 entire aircraft was your words or came from the fueler.

11 MR. DEODAT: That came from the fueler and
12 maintenance -- there was a tank. I did not go physically up
13 there to check if the other tanks were not taking the fuel or
14 not taking the fuel. So I just took their word for that one of
15 the tanks -- specifically, the reserve tank -- did not take --
16 was not taking any fuel -- The other tanks were accepting fuel
17 normally.

18 MR. LONGWELL: Is it normal procedure or a practice
19 to -- for the supervisor to ^{go up} roll up on the fueling ramp and
20 look at the fuel gauges to verify?

21 MR. DEODAT: I like to verify -- Personally, I like
22 to -- I think all the supervisors does also. I mean, I like to
23 verify, if I see a problem and I see something like, for
24 example, fuel is sometimes -- you know -- if you're going to
25 switch power and they say the aircraft isn't accepting fuel, I

1 mean, it's a simple switch, but for some reason these guys
2 don't get it. So sometimes, you know, you have to go up there
3 to check and make sure that -- you know -- it's a problem where
4 you can fix before you call maintenance for unnecessary
5 reasons, you know, for example, a power switch. I mean, a
6 simple power switch, sometimes they forget and we have to go up
7 there -- a simple switch for the tank, you know.

8 MR. LONGWELL: Okay. Thank you. I have no further
9 questions.

10 MR. BURNS: Hi. Lou Burns. I'm a TWA 747 Captain.
11 I'm representing the Airline Pilots Association.

12 Now, when TWA dispatches a flight, they normally have
13 a maintenance crew chief on duty.

14 MR. DEODAT: Right.

15 MR. BURNS: Now, explain to me the relationship
16 between the fuelers and this crew chief. Would you -- You
17 would report problems to him or take orders from him? How does
18 this --

19 MR. DEODAT: Okay. He would -- Directly with the
20 fuel? No, he has nothing to do with the fuel. He stays in
21 contact with us. If there is a problem with the -- For
22 example, an aircraft comes in -- gauge. We're not aware of it.
23 Fueling is not aware of it. He -- crew chief going to call me
24 on the radio and let me know, "Do not fuel the aircraft until
25 maintenance gets out there." Now, then, I relay the message to

1 the fueler. So it's really relaying a message between the crew
2 chief and the fuelers.

3 MR. BURNS: Now, on the night of July 17th, the crew
4 chief that was working Flight 800 give you any specific fuel
5 instructions at all?

6 MR. DEODAT: The guy that I spoke to, the maintenance
7 person, he was usually a crew chief. I don't know if he was a
8 crew chief for that afternoon, because they change positions,
9 but he was the maintenance in that aircraft. He's usually a
10 crew chief, but I don't know if he was a crew chief for that
11 afternoon.

12 MR. BURNS: But did he give you any instructions
13 regarding fuel or anything?

14 MR. DEODAT: Yes, well, after they were out there, he
15 told me they're trying to take fuel in the tank, and I --

16 MR. BURNS: Just --

17 MR. DEODAT: Just to get that fuel in the tank, yes.

18 MR. BURNS: Thank you.

19 MR. DEODAT: Brief conversation is all.

20 MR. WIEMEYER: Could you give us the name of the guy
21 who reported the fuel leak to you? I guess it was some time
22 prior, again, so make sure we have that down.

23 MR. DEODAT: You mean, the fueling supervisor?

24 MR. WIEMEYER: Yes. You mentioned something about
25 somebody telling you that there had been a fuel leak.

1 MR. DEODAT: Okay. This happened the day after
2 crash.

3 MR. WIEMEYER: Right.

4 MR. DEODAT: After the night -- he called me the same
5 night of the crash and asked me if it was aircraft 17109, I
6 think is it. Aircraft 17109. I said, "Yes, that was Flight
7 800's aircraft number." He says, "Yes, I did see a leak the
8 week before."

9 MR. WIEMEYER: And what was his name?

10 MR. DEODAT: Wayne Rathan. W-A-Y-N-E R-A-T-H-A-N.

11 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Have you had people report
12 aircraft leaks to you in the past that they have observed?

13 MR. DEODAT: No. No. I've never seen an aircraft
14 leaking fuel.

15 MR. WIEMEYER: Do you have any specific training
16 that's provided by either your company to provide your people
17 or that TWA provides to Ogden with regards to the -- procedures
18 in the event that your people see abnormalities?

19 MR. DEODAT: Well, there is no actual -- nothing in -
20 - you know -- written that -- but during our training classes,
21 fuelers are -- you know -- told that -- I mean, when I was in
22 the class -- if you see any problems in an aircraft, if you see
23 anything out of the ordinary, let your supervisors know or let
24 someone around the aircraft that's working the aircraft know.
25 So, generally -- they see something out of the ordinary, they

1 would say something to a supervisor or someone.

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. How many different types of
3 aircraft do you folks fuel?

4 MR. DEODAT: We fuel -- we have the entire contract,
5 so we fuel all the aircrafts at JFK.

6 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Do your procedures for fueling
7 the 747 -- do they differ between operators?

8 MR. DEODAT: Between?

9 MR. WIEMEYER: Between the airlines, the different
10 airlines.

11 MR. DEODAT: Procedures, yes. They do differ from
12 airline to airline.

13 MR. WIEMEYER: Could you give us an example of that
14 differentiation?

15 MR. DEODAT: For example in the IAB, International
16 Arrival Building, some of their 47s, we don't -- all the
17 fuelers do, ^{hook} look up and press a dead man and there is some
18 maintenance out there that fuels the aircraft. He does --
19 controls the gauge, everything. All we do is press a dead
20 man -- whenever he says to stop, you stop.

21 TW, on the other hand, we're required to do
22 everything for them. Okay. Now, taking the pre-readings,
23 fueling the aircraft to its required load, doing the paperwork
24 to verify that -- gallons you've put on it -- you know -- is
25 correct, taking the -- to the captain.

1 And except for the IAB, all the other airlines have
2 procedures where you have to do paperwork or something in that
3 nature, we have to do like a pre-reading, then an after-reading
4 and take something up to the captain or to some maintenance
5 department, except for the IAB, which they have their own
6 maintenance.

7 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. I don't have any further
8 questions. Anybody else has any followup?

9 MR. STACEY: Terry Stacey again.

10 Did you physically go up and look at a gauges on
11 Flight 800 that night?

12 MR. DEODAT: No.

13 MR. STACEY: Okay. Thank you.

14 MS. LIEBER: Just one quick question.

15 What time were you at where you are -- dispatched to
16 that aircraft were they actually at the aircraft?

17 MR. DEODAT: Usually, I think about 1700. It's going
18 to be about that time, because it usually takes about two hours
19 to fuel, so -- two hours before -- to get it out. About 1700
20 we got to it.

21 MS. LIEBER: Thank you.

22 MR. STACEY: It takes how long to fuel --

23 MR. DEODAT: Well, it doesn't take two hours to fuel.
24 We like to get to it two hours before, in case we have a
25 problem --

1 MR. STACEY: Okay.

2 MR. DEODAT: -- you know, a problem with the
3 aircraft.

4 MR. STACEY: How long would it take to -- Once you're
5 hooked up, once the hose is hooked up with one receptacle and
6 everything went okay, how long would it take to fuel a -- where
7 you put on about -- what? -- 150,000 pounds?

8 MR. DEODAT: It wouldn't be more than -- I'd say --
9 it shouldn't be more than -- you know -- maximum half hour to
10 do the paperwork and everything, half hour of constantly
11 pumping, no problems, you know, and a good guy, you know --
12 take more than that.

13 MR. STACEY: Okay. So you mentioned 500 gallons per
14 minute is what they will accept at -- from one -- Do you vary
15 that fueling rate?

16 MR. DEODAT: Yes, usually, there's a pressure
17 differential -- and it could be increased and decreased, but we
18 have it set so it does not -- you know -- go above 40 psi,
19 because that's the maximum the aircraft should accept the fuel at.

20 MR. STACEY: And what psi do you normally fuel it at?

21 MR. DEODAT: Forty is good.

22 MR. STACEY: Forty is good.

23 MR. DEODAT: Good. And after a while, after the
24 tanks -- get fully started -- like 20, because of the fact that
25 you only have one or two tanks taking the fuel compared to like

1 six tanks taking the fuel.

2 MR. STACEY: What kind of checks of the equipment are
3 made regarding filters and that type of thing and the hoses
4 with Ogden?

5 MR. DEODAT: Oh, we have a humongous maintenance
6 department that keeps track of every single equipment, filter
7 changes. Certain airlines, for example, require different
8 filters, and every airline -- United Airlines have different
9 procedures as to filters and -- buy more expensive filters for
10 their airplanes, and they have a specific set of -- set aside
11 for them. So in that case -- scenario, that's the only airline
12 that has different procedures as to filter, but we do change
13 our filters on a normal basis, and maintenance is in control
14 there as to when they need to be changing.

15 MR. STACEY: What procedure does a fueler use when he
16 hooks up regarding -- well, setting up the equipment? Tell me
17 how he sets up the equipment.

18 MR. DEODAT: From the time he pulls onto the
19 aircraft? Okay. He should try to locate the location at the
20 pit so that he does not try to park over it. After doing that,
21 he pulls under the fueling panel -- I mean, staying away out of
22 the engine, of course, because generally the panel is very
23 close to the engine, you know. So he locates the pit, park
24 under the fueling panel.

25 Then they have set procedure that he should hook up

1 the aircraft, meaning you bond to the aircraft, you ground,
2 then you bond, then you hook up the hydrant hose to the ground
3 system and then you hook up a 55 line, which is the air system
4 to move the fuel.

5 Then after that you go to the panels. You take the -
6 - it's a 747 -- in that case, go up, you open up the panel,
7 make sure -- and hook up your coupler to the -- to the
8 airplane, and then you take your pre-readings.

9 At the same time, they are told if an aircraft has a
10 15,000-20,000 pounds -- that's -- something's probably wrong
11 with the gauges. You know, let somebody know. I mean, that's
12 not normal.

13 Take a -- reading to fuel the aircraft to the
14 required load, generally they have a load by then. They're
15 given a load before they're even dispatched to the aircraft.
16 They will fill it to that required load, finish up -- after
17 they're done fueling, they do whatever is required of
18 paperwork, and, in case of TWA, take it to the captain.
19 Captain says he's happy, then they come back, do the paperwork,
20 give him his copy, come out and then they start reverse the
21 procedure as hooking up to the aircraft.

22 MR. STACEY: Just one more question, I'll let you go.
23 Every one is leading into another one here.

24 How many switches -- if you're going to fuel a 747
25 with 180,000 pounds of fuel, normal distribution -- i.e., fill

1 up the reserves -- and then you have a certain amount of fuel -
2 - How many switches does he have to flip in order to -- or turn
3 on in order to fill those tanks?

4 MR. DEODAT: Okay. He has two for the reserves, two
5 reserve tanks, two main -- two inner mains, two outer mains,
6 that's four, and there are two more switches for that inner
7 mains. That's six, and then two for the center -- total of
8 six.

9 MR. STACEY: Do you often, in your experience as a
10 fueler, when the center wing tank is empty, do you see some
11 kind of reading on the gauge?

12 MR. DEODAT: There's something that says, "99999,"
13 which is -- It just goes back -- It really is empty, but
14 sometimes -- if it has 100 or 200 in it, it's really something
15 that you can't get out. It's very difficult to get out a few
16 hundred pounds, so you just leave it in there --

17 MR. STACEY: Okay. Okay. Thank you very much.

18 MR. BURNS: Just one question.

19 Was the crew chief who was working Flight 800 that
20 night someone you had worked with before? Do you remember him?

21 MR. DEODAT: I know him -- his face, but some reason
22 I can't put a name to his face right now.

23 MR. BURNS: Thank you.

24 MR. DEODAT: No problem.

25 MR. WIEMEYER: You take the paperwork after you're

1 done fiddling to the cockpit, is that correct?

2 MR. DEODAT: Um-hum.

3 MR. WIEMEYER: Are you physically -- required to
4 physically give it to the captain?

5 MR. DEODAT: No, you can put it on the console of the
6 -- in the case where we -- departure time, we just put it on --
7 the captain's not there, we just put it on the console.

8 If we do have any problems, the captain usually let -
9 - control know. If I have a -- you know -- time -- When I used
10 to work, if I have time, I go speak to the captain before --
11 like a half hour before the plane departs. That way, I says,
12 you know, "Is everything okay with the fuel?" Usually, you
13 know, it's okay.

14 MR. WIEMEYER: All right. Nothing else.

15 Anybody else?

16 MR. HALE: I have one further question.

17 Prior to the departure of 800's equipment on the 17th
18 of July, the reserve tanks were filled to the standard load, to
19 the best of your knowledge?

20 MR. DEODAT: I can't remember. After I got the
21 paperwork, I just -- I didn't even -- I just scan through each
22 sheet. I just usually take the copy from the fueler after he
23 finish fueling the aircraft and -- take it into Load Control.
24 I did not check the sheet to see if it was filled to the 3,300
25 capacity or it was left at 2,200, but it should reflect -- the

1 I did not check the sheet to see if it was filled to the 3,300
2 capacity or it was left at 2,200, but it should reflect -- the
3 actual paperwork should reflect --

4 MR. HALE: So the paperwork would be correct to what
5 the load was.

6 MR. DEODAT: Absolutely, yes.

7 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Sir, appreciate you taking the
8 time out of your day to come and talk to us. Maybe it was a
9 little break for you.

10 MR. DEODAT: It's time to go home. (Laughter.)

11 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceedings before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: TWA FLIGHT 800, INTERVIEW OF SURESH
DEODAT

PLACE: Jamaica, New York

DATE: November 19, 1996

were held according to the record, and that this is the
original, complete, true and accurate transcript which has
been compared to the recording accomplished at the hearing.


Fernando Mora
Official Reporter

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DEODAT

PG 16 LN 8 BOTH WINGS JK

PG 21 LN 19 GO UP JK

PG 25 LN 17 Hook UP JK

PG 4 LN 15 Ogden Fueling

PG 8 LN 6 Shaft OK slip ✓

PG 9 LN 10 Fuel OK

PG 9 LN 21 insert
(Fuel)

PG LN 14 747

PG LN 6 — ~~short~~

pg 9 line 21 — send lead