

Docket No. SA-520

Exhibit No. 4-B

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D .C.

**Statement of Witness A,
D. Gottshall and Location Map**

(5 Pages)

WITNESS A

EYEWITNESS STATEMENT OF

**Drew Gottshall
National Park Service
Channel Islands National Park
1901 Spinnaker Drive
Ventura, California 93001**

On February 1, 2000, at 1410 Pacific standard time, Mr. Gottshall was interviewed by the National Transportation Safety Board Witness Group. In summary, Mr. Gottshall made the following statements:

For the past 19 years I have been a National Park Service employee, and I currently work for the park service as a maintenance mechanic. I have been working on Anacapa Island for the past 8 years.

I have noted that commercial aircraft which I have observed south of Anacapa Island generally fly in an easterly to westerly direction. The aircraft north of Anacapa generally fly in a southeasterly direction.

Yesterday, about 1600 PST, I went to the far east end of Anacapa Island and was digging a hole in the ground. I was facing in an easterly direction and heard an aircraft overhead. I heard a popping sound. I thought it was associated with a military jet. I have often observed military aircraft overhead flying at various speeds and altitudes. I then heard a second pop. I looked up and observed a jet airplane flying in a northerly direction. (See the flight path drawing depicting the airplane's course and estimated altitude.)

When I first observed this jet its altitude was, perhaps, 12,000 to 14,000 feet, but I am not certain. The jet appeared to be flying in a normal fashion with its wings level. Four to 5 seconds later I heard a series of 3 to 4 popping sounds.

After a few seconds the aircraft began turning in a northeasterly direction. There were high cirrus clouds above it. The aircraft's wings rocked back and forth as it turned toward the east-northeast. Basically, the jets wings were rocking back and forth, and the sun was reflecting on the aircraft in different areas which became highlighted. While maintaining direction the airplane was pitching and rolling, and then its back end appeared to drop. I thought to myself, is something wrong or is he playing around?

I then observed the jet coming down quickly. It was twisting or moving erratically and was descending in a pitching and gyrating manner. It was in a steep nose down

attitude and in a rapid rate of descent.

As the aircraft continued its nearly vertical descent it made a right 270 degree roll. As the jet was going down there was a low "woof, woof, woof" guttural suction sound. Just before hitting the water the aircraft was in about an 80 degrees nose down attitude and went straight in. Just prior to impact I could see the two engines attached to its fuselage. I know the 737 has engines on its wings and the MD's have engines on their tails.

The jet went straight into the water and disappeared. When the impact occurred I did not observe a big splash, but rather, the water appeared to engulf the entire airplane. Three to 4 seconds later I heard a distinctly different noise which I later took to be the impact sound.

I looked at the water and did not observe the airplane. There was nothing on top of the water. I called my dispatch via radio and reported my observations. The call was logged in at 1625.

(The witness group requested that the accuracy of the time clock used to record the accident time be checked. It was determined to be accurate.)

At no time did I observe any other aircraft or objects in the air in the vicinity of the accident aircraft. At no time did I observe any evidence of flames, fire or smoke in the vicinity of the aircraft. Nor did I observe any parts of the aircraft separate during its flight.

I have marked on chart #18729, entitled "Anacapa Passage," my location and the aircraft's flight path during this mishap. On the chart I have also indicated approximate altitudes for the aircraft during its flight, along with its corresponding location and point of impact.

My subsequent observation of the accident site area with binoculars revealed the appearance of a different shade of color on the water. I also observed what appeared to be a white cone shaped object floating in the water near the impact site.

I made handwritten notations of what I observed within an hour of the accident.



Drew Gottshall

Working on sign at light. head down
and working on one knee. heard air-
craft overhead and heard a popping sound.
Kept working - thought it was just a
military jet (often have military overhead
at various speeds, altitudes and awkward
flights) Heard another pop and looked up
jet was flying (about 10,000 ft)?? looked like it
was going north, turning east. or first was
going north and a few seconds later was going
northeast. Heard numerous popping sounds 3 to 4
and jet wings or fuselage was reflecting back
sunlight quickly different spots - ^{plane all over the} thought is ^{place} place
something wrong or is he playing around?
plane coming down quickly (twisting or moving
erratically nose primarily down) (is he
going to pull out of it is he testing a plane?)
plane into water nose down and looked
like I was seeing top of plane - two
engines on rear plane one each side
fuselage plane straight into water -
disappeared - 4/5 sec. later popping
sound - different from that heard in
sky lower.

NORTHBOUND COASTWISE TRAFFIC LANE

Y SP
FLY 45
PRV
135
136

133

126

129

130

124

126

05'

141

(Anacapa Passage)

18729

SOUNDINGS IN FATHOMS - SCALE 1:40,000

CRASH SITE LOCATION
TIME 60 TO 75 SEC.
AFTER FIRST OBSERVED

ESTIMATED ALTITUDE
12,000 FT.

SE TRAFFIC LANE

ESTIMATED ALTITUDE
10,000 TO 15,000 FT.

POSITION OF ACFT
10 TO 15 SEC. LATER

AREAS TO BE AVOIDED
(see note 1)

ESTIMATED ALTITUDE
12,000 TO 14,000 FT.

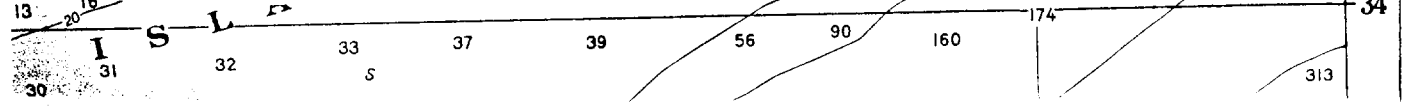
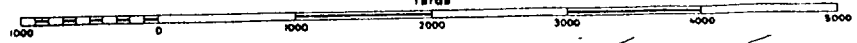
POSITION OF ACFT
5 SECONDS LATER

LOCATION OF ACFT WHEN
FIRST OBSERVED
TIME -0- SECONDS

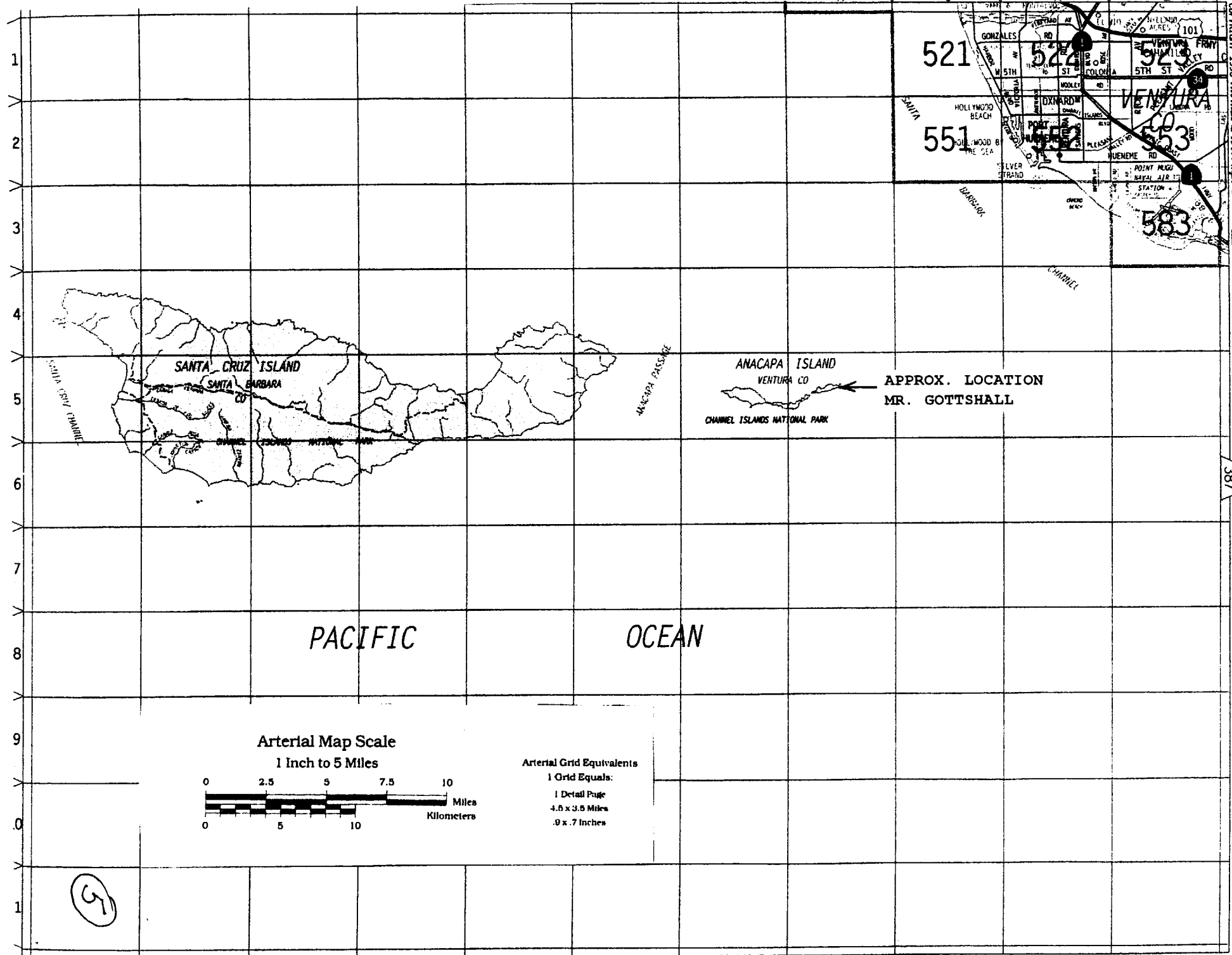
APPROX. LOCATION
MR. GOTTSCHALL

Nautical Miles

Yards



4



APPROX. LOCATION
MR. GOTTSBALL

Arterial Map Scale
1 Inch to 5 Miles



Arterial Grid Equivalents
1 Grid Equals:

- 1 Detail Page
- 4.5 x 3.5 Miles
- .9 x .7 Inches

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