

**DOCKET NO. SA-516**

**APPENDIX X**

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, DC**

**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT  
NYANG TSGT. ANTONIO RAMOS  
JANUARY 15, 1997  
(14 pages)**

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BEFORE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20594

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IN THE MATTER OF TWA FLIGHT :  
800; INTERVIEW OF: :  
ANTONIO RAMOS. :  
- - - - - X

TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

The above entitled matter came on for interview pursuant to notice before NORM WIEMEYER, NTSB Official, at the New York Air National Facilities in Westhampton Beach, New York, on January 15, 1997.

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APPEARANCES:

NORM WIEMEYER  
NTSB Official

LOU BURNS  
Air Line Pilots Association

I N D E X

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WITNESS:

ANTHONY RAMOS/C-130 Crewman, New York Air National  
Guard.

(Tape 4, Side A, second interview.)

(No exhibits were presented or accepted into evidence  
at or as a result of this interview.)

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

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Today's date is January  
3 15th, 1997. We're at the Air National Guard Base to  
4 interview Mr. Ramos who was a C-130 crewman on the  
5 night of July 17th when TWA 800 was lost.

6 The persons present are the person being  
7 interviewed, myself, Norm Wiemeyer, with the National  
8 Transportation Safety Board, and Mr. Lou Burns who is a  
9 captain for TWA and is representing the Air Line Pilots  
10 Association.

11 Mr. Ramos, for the purposes of getting some  
12 administrative things, would you state your full name  
13 and spell your last name, please?

14 MR. RAMOS: My name is Antonio Ramos. And  
15 the spelling is R-A-M-O-S.

16 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. That's not picking  
17 up --

18 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: -- on here.

20 (Pause)

21 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. And how are you  
22 called? Tony?

23 MR. RAMOS: Tony.

24 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. If you have no  
25 objections, I'll just call you Tony.

1 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. What was your  
3 involvement with regards to the events surrounding the  
4 loss of TWA 800?

5 MR. RAMOS: On that particular evening I was  
6 flying as a loadmaster for the Air National Guard. And  
7 we were going out and doing a -- a night sortie, which  
8 consisted of night training.

9 MR. WIEMEYER: What time did you depart the  
10 base here on your flight?

11 MR. RAMOS: I don't know. It's been so long  
12 now I can't give you a -- a time. I can estimate it.

13 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. That'd be fine.

14 MR. RAMOS: We usually brief around 1830.  
15 So, you figure around 1930 we were airborne. 8:00 -- a  
16 quarter to 8:00 -- 7:45, something like that, we were  
17 in the air.

18 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. And just go ahead and  
19 tell us what transpired on that flight?

20 MR. RAMOS: I was sitting at the loadmaster's  
21 position, which is behind bulkhead 245, the lefthand  
22 side, at the scanner's position when I heard the call  
23 from the pilot -- I think it was the pilot of a -- of  
24 an explosion, or what seemed to be an explosion, from  
25 the -- some sort of explosion.

1           He says, holy cow, look at that -- and that's  
2 not a quote. That's just roughly what he said.

3           Then we went in to -- I -- I guess what was  
4 going on. And one of the guesses was that it -- maybe  
5 one of the ships blew up that was in the shipping lane.  
6 So, we headed out towards that direction.

7           And then, as we were heading in that  
8 direction we had a reevaluate and said, maybe it's an  
9 airplane. And so we steered in an -- I don't know the  
10 headings, or anything like that. And this is just  
11 information that was being fed from the -- and then I  
12 began to see the smoke on the lefthand side of the  
13 scanners -- on the lefthand side of the aircraft  
14 through the scanner's windows I was able to see some  
15 smoke emanating from what appeared the surface of the  
16 earth, or the top of the water.

17           At which time I went up to the cockpit and --  
18 no, correction. Sorry. At that time I went to the  
19 back of the airplane and prepared the airplane for  
20 survival -- to send out the survival equipment.

21           MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. What type of equipment  
22 did you carry?

23           MR. RAMOS: Okay. We have an MM-1 kit, which  
24 is a two man -- a 20-man life raft, and three bundles  
25 which contain survival equipment: water, radios,

1 medical equipment. And I had that on the -- on the --  
2 on the ramp, because we were going out to do air  
3 refueling and that has to be in a very position for air  
4 refueling.

5           So, I opened the door and I got myself  
6 prepared to -- to launch that equipment out to the  
7 survivors. While looking out the back of the aircraft  
8 I was able to see what appeared to me, it was a --  
9 like, a -- a raft and a light. 'Cause later it was not  
10 a -- a raft and light. It was later determined that it  
11 was one of the slide-down ramps, and it had a light  
12 attached to it.

13           And I stood there waiting for the aircraft  
14 commander's directive to either launch the equipment,  
15 or whatever. And I stayed back there for a while. And  
16 then, he advised me to close up because apparently  
17 there are no survivors, and there was no need to launch  
18 the -- the equipment.

19           I secured the back of the aircraft and then  
20 went up front. While I was up front, then I was able  
21 to see what was in the water. And all I saw was  
22 just -- strangely enough I didn't say it to the captain  
23 but -- the aircraft commander, but later down the road  
24 I said -- I said to myself it looked like an airplane.  
25 The configuration of the -- the -- the crash site was



1 if you look at it -- I don't know if I was interpreting  
2 it in my own mind -- but it looked like an airplane.

3 So, that's basically all that I saw.

4 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. During that time were  
5 -- you were on the ICS on your headphones.

6 MR. RAMOS: Uh-huh. And intercom.

7 MR. WIEMEYER: Were you also monitoring a  
8 radio transmissions?

9 MR. RAMOS: No, I wasn't. Well, I'm -- I  
10 have Victor 2, which is the primary frequency for us  
11 for flying that particular night. And that allows to  
12 -- to hear what was going on with -- with Tower, and  
13 flight safety -- or the traffic controllers. So, I  
14 have access to that information.

15 But when I disconnected from the back of the  
16 airplane and moved up front to the airplane I didn't  
17 have my headsets plugged in. So, until I got to the  
18 cockpit, and then I plugged in.

19 And at that time, I don't totally recall, but  
20 I don't think there was any traffic going on. You know  
21 they -- it was just mostly intercom stuff of what was  
22 -- what we should; what we were going to do; what we  
23 see; what our interpretations were.

24 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. You -- so, you don't  
25 recall any specifics of radio traffic?

1                   MR. RAMOS: No. The only thing that I can --  
2 I can recall is that our aircraft commander was  
3 concerned in not giving out false information. He was  
4 very concerned about getting a -- a proper fix of the  
5 crash site -- or whatever this -- the incident was at  
6 time, because we didn't know what it was.

7                   And he was very -- how would you say? --  
8 specific about not putting out information that he knew  
9 nothing about. Just get the -- the thing that sticks  
10 out in my head is he says, get -- get the fix, get the  
11 coordinates, call back, and get that information back  
12 here.

13                   MR. WIEMEYER: Okay.

14                   MR. RAMOS: That's the -- that's what I  
15 remember vividly about his particular actions in the  
16 air. And then we -- we became a command center to  
17 coordinate. So, we became on-scene commanders to -- to  
18 -- to bring in the assets.

19                   MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. I don't think I have  
20 any further questions.

21                   MR. BURNS: Tony, Lou Burns. I have no  
22 further questions.

23                   MR. WIEMEYER: This is Norm Wiemeyer, with  
24 the Safety Board again.

25                   Tony, is there anything else that you recall

1 during the sequence of the entire evening that you  
2 think would be of value or of interest to us in this  
3 investigation?

4 MR. RAMOS: It's been a while. And I -- I'm  
5 trying to relive that moment mentally now, and see if I  
6 can come up with something I haven't stated or might be  
7 of some importance.

8 MR. WIEMEYER: Were you interviewed by the  
9 FBI?

10 MR. RAMOS: Yes, I was.

11 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Did you participate in  
12 the --

13 MR. RAMOS: After hour brief?

14 MR. WIEMEYER: -- big press conference or  
15 brief? Or whatever --

16 MR. RAMOS: No. What --

17 MR. WIEMEYER: -- you call it?

18 MR. RAMOS: I -- what I took -- participated  
19 was in the -- when we got down from the flight the FBI  
20 had us go into a room and they kind of debriefed us on  
21 what transpired in the air.

22 With regards to -- to the media, I had no  
23 participation in the media, other than that -- that I  
24 was in the background. That was it.

25 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. That brings to mind

1 another question. When you returned from the flight,  
2 or series of flights that night, there is an officer  
3 here who is -- also works for the FAA. And were you  
4 questioned or asked to give him any information or  
5 write anything down for him?

6 MR. RAMOS: No.

7 MR. WIEMEYER: Are you familiar with what I  
8 -- with what --

9 MR. RAMOS: Yeah. I think you're talking  
10 about Col. -- his name slips me now.

11 MR. WIEMEYER: Yeah. It slips me too, that  
12 it --

13 MR. RAMOS: God. What's his name? Col.  
14 Chuck Stevey.

15 MR. WIEMEYER: Stevey? Yeah.

16 MR. RAMOS: Yeah.

17 MR. WIEMEYER: Stevey.

18 MR. RAMOS: That's right.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay.

20 MR. RAMOS: He was concerned also about what  
21 transpired and I'm trying -- he spoke to us. But I  
22 can't remember -- I don't want to paraphrase it, or  
23 anything like that. I just don't have recollection of  
24 what he said. I know he spoke with us.

25 MR. WIEMEYER: That's fine.

1 MR. RAMOS: Yeah.

2 MR. WIEMEYER: One other question. How many  
3 flights did you fly that night in support of the TWA  
4 800 loss?

5 MR. RAMOS: Okay. We flew the initial flight  
6 when we took off and observed what -- what transpired.  
7 We remained on-scene be -- for as long as we possibly  
8 could until fuel dictated us to get back in. We were  
9 -- we came -- we landed and then we were going to go  
10 back out to provide support again. And they told us  
11 that it wasn't required at this time.

12 And then they launched us again to -- to put  
13 out flares for the -- the search --

14 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay.

15 MR. RAMOS: -- search flight.

16 MR. WIEMEYER: Hang on just a minute.

17 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

18 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. We're back on the  
19 record. That's all the questions I have.

20 Lou, do you have any follow-ups?

21 MR. BURNS: No.

22 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

23 MR. WIEMEYER: Tony, thank you very much.

24 MR. RAMOS: It was my pleasure.

25 MR. WIEMEYER: Thanks for --

1 MR. RAMOS: And if there's --

2 MR. WIEMEYER: -- the help.

3 MR. RAMOS: -- anything I can do to help, I  
4 -- please, you know, contact --

5 MR. WIEMEYER: Yeah. If you run across  
6 anything, you know, as you think about this -- and I  
7 know all of you've thought about it over the months  
8 that have transpired. You know, feel free to -- if  
9 you'll get a hold of Col. Stack, he knows how to reach  
10 me, pretty much 24 hours a day.

11 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

12 MR. WIEMEYER: And I'll be glad to come out  
13 and revisit with you.

14 MR. RAMOS: All right.

15 MR. WIEMEYER: And if you get the opportunity  
16 and like to come out to the hangar we could --

17 MR. RAMOS: That would be interesting. I  
18 would like to come out to the hangar.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: -- we could make arrangements  
20 for that.

21 MR. RAMOS: Yeah. That I would like to see.  
22 I would just like to see how you guys -- the science of  
23 putting it back together. That's mostly what I'm  
24 interested in. I'm not with -- I'm not too interested  
25 in seeing the disaster. I just -- I'm trying to figure

1 out how you guys do that.

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Thank you, sir, very much.

3 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

4 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded [no  
5 time noted.] .) (Tape 4, Side A rest of side is blank.  
6 Interviewing resumes on Tape 4, Side B.)

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