



Human Performance Attachment – Interview with Bus Driver's Friend

Rushville, IL

HWY24MH005

(17 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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FATAL SEMI-TRUCK & SCHOOL BUS *

COLLISION AND SUBSEQUENT FIRE *

Accident No.: HWY24MH005

IN RUSHVILLE, ILLINOIS ON *

MARCH 11, 2024 *

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Interview of: DAVID FRANCE
Angela Spiker's Boyfriend

via telephone

Wednesday,
March 13, 2024

APPEARANCES:

RAFAEL MARSHALL, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SARAH QUINN
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of David France:

By Mr. Marshall

4

I N T E R V I E W

(2:45 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. MARSHALL: I'm recording now. This is just for the
4 transcript. This is Rafael Marshall, M-a-r-s-h-a-l-l. I am here
5 with --

6 Could you give your name, please?

7 MR. FRANCE: Dave France.

8 MR. MARSHALL: Dave France. Okay. And Mr. France, you know
9 this is being recorded?

10 MR. FRANCE: Yes.

11 MR. MARSHALL: Okay. And it's 2:45, March 13th.

INTERVIEW OF DAVID FRANCE

12
13 BY MR. MARSHALL:

14 Q. So the reason why I am calling you is just to get sort of a
15 72-hour history on Angela before the crash. This is something
16 that we normally do in each of the crashes. And since she spent
17 some time with you in the weekend, I just wanted to make sure that
18 we had an idea of when her wake times and her sleep times were in
19 the few days prior to the crash.

20 A. Sure.

21 Q. Okay. So did -- was it Friday night that she spent with you?

22 A. Yes, yes. Most of the weekend, yes.

23 Q. Okay. We got from her daughter what time she usually wakes
24 up is 5:30 for Friday. Can you give me an idea around what time
25 she went to be on Friday night?

1 A. I don't know. We went out to eat with my daughter and her
2 husband, and I'm guessing went to bed probably 11 o'clock or so.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I can't remember. So and then Saturday, you know, we kind of
5 slept in just because it was, you know, not a workday. So just
6 kind of --

7 (Audio cut-off.)

8 MR. MARSHALL: Oh, shoot.

9 BY MR. MARSHALL:

10 Q. Hello, Mr. France?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Sorry. I lost you for a while because my car turned off. I
13 apologize. So you -- around what time did you, did you wake up,
14 you think, on Saturday?

15 A. It was probably 7, 7:30 that I woke up I can remember.
16 Because we just kind of slept in. We don't usually set an alarm
17 but --

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. -- get up (indiscernible) early usually, you know. It was
20 probably around 7, 7:30.

21 Q. Okay. Could you give me an idea of what activities you guys
22 did right after you woke up? Sort of like I just want to get sort
23 of an idea of the activities that she performed throughout the
24 day.

25 A. Yeah, we just -- I raise horses, and we, you know, went out

1 and settled them like we do every morning and night. We just, we
2 worked with some of the colts. We just kind of hung around home
3 basically that morning, and first part of the afternoon. Later in
4 the day the saddle club that we belong to, a horse club, they had
5 a -- one of our get-togethers that they have every year. We went
6 to that, and just kind of group gathering, and went out to eat. I
7 don't know, we probably got home, I don't even remember what time
8 it would have been Saturday evening; probably, again, probably
9 10:30 or 11, maybe would have been a little later than that.

10 Q. All right.

11 A. Sunday morning we didn't really get up very early again, you
12 know, about 7 or 7:30. I can't remember for sure. It might have
13 been a little earlier. Just kind of done the same thing, you
14 know, fed horses, and kind of worked with some horses. Late
15 Friday -- or late Sunday afternoon, we went to some friends of
16 mine. They had a fish fry or fried some fish. Again, we were
17 probably home by 8 o'clock.

18 Q. Okay. Did she spend the night with you Sunday night?

19 A. Yes, she did.

20 Q. And then what time did you guys sleep in?

21 A. She usually gets up -- on the days that she works she usually
22 gets up around 4:30. That's her usual work time. I think she
23 left my house around quarter 'til five which was, you know, she
24 has to be at work there at the bus barn fairly early. She always
25 allows herself plenty of time. Usually 4:30 was her wake up time

1 on the days that she worked.

2 Q. How about like Sunday night then, what time did she go to
3 bed?

4 A. We went to bed, you know, come to think about it we were both
5 tired. 9:30 maybe.

6 Q. 9:30.

7 A. I don't -- I'm pretty sure it wasn't even 10 o'clock. It was
8 we did go to bed early because I was exhausted too and she was.
9 And so it's not like we were -- yeah, I know, I remember we to bed
10 (indiscernible) just because we were tired, and she had to, you
11 know, had to work the next day, and I had things to do too.
12 So --

13 Q. One of the things that Michelle had mentioned to us is that
14 she had been, I guess, diagnosed with lupus somewhat recently.

15 A. Yeah. I did know about that.

16 Q. Did you -- I forgot, was it like a week only since she was
17 diagnosed?

18 A. No. It would have been longer than that.

19 Q. Longer?

20 A. It was before I got to know her that she was diagnosed as I
21 remember.

22 Q. Okay. How long have you known her?

23 A. I've known her since last summer.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I started knowing her a lot better last fall, late fall.

1 Q. Had she been experiencing -- because Michelle had mentioned
2 that she's experiencing migraines.

3 A. Yes, she was.

4 Q. So since you've known her she's been experiencing migraines?

5 A. Yes. And, actually, it was from a -- she had a previous
6 accident, and it wasn't a vehicle accident or anything. I think
7 it was a work-related or something. But she, she had to have some
8 neck surgery and stuff, and she had been having some issues with
9 the neck pain, and she actually had a doctor's appointment that
10 afternoon because she had taken the afternoon off, and was going
11 to the doctor here in Rushville, and he was -- had some kind of
12 treatment thing he was going to give her. I don't remember
13 exactly what it was for sure, but she had been going to a doctor
14 about her neck pain.

15 Q. So do you think the, the neck pain and -- well, I guess the
16 lupus and the neck pain are, are sort of totally different but --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Do you know what -- which doctor she was going to in
19 Rushville?

20 A. You know, she told me, but I don't -- I had never heard of
21 the guy.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I remember her saying it was right there by the hospital
24 across the road. I think it would be to the, the east there's a
25 clinic right across the road from the hospital in Rushville, and

1 that was where the doctor was. I don't recall his name.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I know she had an appointment Monday afternoon to go in there
4 for the -- for that.

5 Q. So what would happen when she had a migraine? I mean, how,
6 how would -- I -- this is one thing I forgot to ask Michelle. I
7 know that there's -- sometimes there's an aura that comes before a
8 migraine. Do you know if she was experiencing that prior to a
9 migraine?

10 A. No, not that I know of. I mean, she would tell me sometimes
11 that she had a headache, but I couldn't really tell any
12 difference. She just, you know, she wasn't acting any different.
13 Her activities wasn't any different. I've had friends that have
14 had migraines before. They get where they, you know, couldn't
15 even really do anything.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And I'd never seen her, I'd never seen her have a migraine
18 like that when she was with me. She'd mention, you know,
19 headaches but once in a while. And but as far as a migraine that,
20 you know, she was really so bad she had to go lay down or
21 anything, she never had anything like that around me.

22 Q. Was she experiencing other symptoms? Or was she like having
23 like some sort of life events or stressors at the time of -- or
24 around the time of the crash?

25 A. None that I know of at all. She just was always in a very

1 happy mood, and laughing, and she, you know, not any negative
2 experiences that I know of.

3 Q. Okay. So she was in a good mood --

4 (Crosstalk)

5 A. -- happy --

6 Q. -- like on Sunday?

7 A. Oh, yeah, and even, you know, I never noticed anything that
8 morning. Just the same as usual. She was going to work, and she
9 was supposed to come back up to my house around noon when she got
10 off and, you know, never showed up.

11 Q. Yeah. So with her, her neck fusion you said that she was
12 feeling, she was feeling a lot of pain, and she was going to be
13 seeing a doctor. Did you notice any limitations in her movement
14 because of the -- because of that?

15 A. No, I really didn't. Because she would help me feed horses
16 and carry buckets of feed, and throw hay over to them, carry hay.
17 I never, never ever noticed her having any issues that way.

18 Q. Okay. I know this -- lupus it's very, you know, like it's
19 very individualistic what sort of symptoms people experience. I
20 guess she never complained about visual, vision problems.

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. No, never has. I know she wore glasses. She wore contacts
24 most of the time, and glasses when she took her contacts out at
25 night and stuff, you know, but never noticed any -- she never

1 mentioned any vision problems.

2 Q. Okay. Did she have any -- did she ever like talk to you
3 about work?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Can you kind of tell me what, what she talked about? Was it
6 -- was there any issues that she was experiencing at work, or was
7 she having issues with some of the kids that she was transporting
8 or anything like that?

9 A. No. I don't think so. I mean, she love her job. She always
10 loved kids, and, and I do remember her saying something about
11 there was one parent that was kind of inappropriate or whatever,
12 but that had, that had been some time ago, I think.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And sent her different texts or something that were kind of,
15 I don't know, suggestive or something like that she was upset
16 about.

17 Q. When she, I guess, when she woke up was she usually just --
18 did she ever like feel like or did she seem like she was drowsy
19 or, or anything like that after waking up? Or do you think that
20 she had a, you know, she had pretty good sleep after waking up?

21 A. Yeah. She always seemed to. She would wake up, and pop
22 right up, and be in a happy mood. I always kind of envied her for
23 that because I was always kind of grouchy when I first got up.
24 But she would just, yeah, she'd wake right up, and be in a good
25 mood, and full of energy it just seemed like.

1 Q. Okay. Is there anything that you've noticed that's -- that
2 maybe I should know about that we haven't spoke -- I mean, we
3 haven't discussed yet?

4 A. No. I tell you, I, I've racked my brain trying to think of,
5 of anything that I overlooked at the time or, you know, where she
6 wasn't feeling well or whatever, and I just, I, I --

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. -- just can't come up with anything. I just -- believe me,
9 I've spent hours wondering, and trying to think of maybe a sign of
10 something or whatever, and I just can't come up with anything.

11 Q. Are you familiar --

12 A. I don't know.

13 Q. -- with the roadway that the accident occurred in?

14 A. Yes. Yeah, I, I just live, I just live down by Industry. So
15 I'm 15 minutes away. So, yeah, I'm very, very familiar with it.

16 Q. I was just like wondering what, what you thought of it, of
17 its design? Was there -- is there anything, any issues that you
18 can think of about the roadway?

19 A. No, none that I can think of.

20 Q. Okay. Do you know if she was taking any -- I know that
21 Michelle had mentioned that she took vitamins, and also was
22 getting injections for the migraine. Do you know if she was
23 taking any other medications besides that?

24 A. Not that I know of. I never did see her take anything. I
25 mean, I seen her take -- I don't know whether it was for the

1 migraines. I know there was vitamins that she took --

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. -- vitamins, you know.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. We'd talk about that and that kind of thing, and but I, I
6 don't know. She never even mentioned specifically taking anything
7 for migraines, but she very well could have, and I just didn't
8 know.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. She was usually pretty open with, with anything about her
11 medications. I mean, that was one thing about her, you know,
12 she --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. So --

15 Q. I'm sorry I have to ask. This is actually part of the, the
16 questions that we ask all the drivers or their next of kin. But
17 can you tell me about her use of alcohol or any other illicit
18 drugs?

19 A. I never knew of any illicit drugs. I can't imagine her ever
20 doing anything. I do remember one time she mentioned something
21 about she had never ever -- we was talking about the marijuana,
22 and said she never even ever tried it, and couldn't imagine trying
23 it. And I can't imagine her ever --

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. -- doing that. As far as the alcohol, I mean, she would

1 drink occasionally when we went out, but I know over the weekend,
2 and I thought about this too. We went out with some friends with
3 my daughter and her husband Friday night. I know she didn't have
4 anything to drink then, and Saturday night I can remember -- in
5 the afternoon (indiscernible) she had one drink, and that's all
6 she did, and that would have been it. Nothing clumsy or anything.

7 Q. Okay. Well, I can't think of any other questions. Yeah, I,
8 I think that's pretty much it. But thanks so much for your help,
9 and I don't know if Sarah gave you my information, but I'd like to
10 give you my phone number just in case you have any questions about
11 the investigation, or if you can think of anything else that would
12 be helpful to me.

13 A. Sure, yes. If I can think of anything else that might help,
14 I would -- about her health or anything, but I just, I can't think
15 of anything else --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- now anyway.

18 MR. MARSHALL: Well, I'm going to stop our interview, and
19 then I'll give you my information.

20 It is 3 o'clock, and we are ending the interview.

21 (Whereupon, at 3:00 p.m., the interview was concluded.)
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23
24
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CERTIFICATE

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

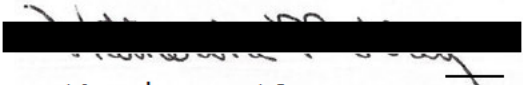
IN THE MATTER OF: FATAL SEMI-TRUCK & SCHOOL BUS
 COLLISION AND SUBSEQUENT FIRE
 IN RUSHVILLE, ILLINOIS
 ON MARCH 11, 2024
 Interview of David France

ACCIDENT NO.: HWY24MH005

PLACE: via telephone

DATE: March 13, 2024

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.


Katherine Motley
Transcriber

From: [Dave France](#)
To: [Rafael Marshall](#)
Subject: Re: FW: National Transportation Safety Board: Interview of David France
Date: Saturday, May 4, 2024 6:43:20 PM

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Everything looks accurate to me.

During our conversation we talked about her going to the doctor that afternoon for some injections because it was thought her headaches were due to her previous neck injury.

I remember her mentioning getting a head scan or MRI of her head if the injections didn't help with the headaches.

She had also been going to Gerleman Chiropractic and Acupuncture in Rushville for her headaches. I was told her vehicle was seen at the chiropractors earlier that morning, but she never mentioned anything to me about having an appointment. But sometimes if her headaches were bad she would call and they would work her in for an appointment.

If you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Dave

On Tue, Apr 23, 2024 at 9:42 AM Rafael Marshall <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi David,

I hope you are doing well. I just wanted to check if you were able to read through the transcript and confirm its accuracy. If everything is fine, please let me know.

Take care,

Rafael Marshall

Senior Human Performance Investigator

Office of Highway Safety

National Transportation Safety Board

(office) [REDACTED]

(cell) [REDACTED]