

July 18, 2022

I, YAHYA HUSSAIN, have read the foregoing pages of a copy of my interview that was held on May 13, 2022. These pages constitute a true and accurate transcription of same with the exception of the following amendments, additions, deletions or corrections:

PAGE NO: LINE NO: CHANGE AND REASON FOR CHANGE

No changes Required

I declare that I have read my statements and that it is true and correct subject to any changes in the form or substance entered here.

Date: 10/3/2022

Witness



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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CTA EMPLOYEE FOUND DEAD ON TRACKS
AT LASALLE/VAN BUREN STATION
IN THE LOOP IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
ON JULY 16, 2022

Accident No.: RRD22LR012

* * * * *

Interview of: YAHYA HUSSAIN, Operator
Chicago Transit Authority

CTA Headquarters
567 West Lake Street
Chicago, IL 60661

Monday,
July 18, 2022

APPEARANCES:

MIKE BACHMEIER, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

MIKE HOEPF, System Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ERIC DIXON, President
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 308

MUTIAT WILLIAMS, General Manager
Chicago Transit Authority

BRYANT PHILLIPS, Senior Transit System Safety Officer
Chicago Transit Authority

ROVAUGHN GRAHAM, General Manager
Chicago Transit Authority

PENNIE McCOACH, Vice President
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 308
Representative for Yahya Hussain

LINDBERGH ASKEW, III, Rail Transit Safety Coordinator
Illinois Department of Transportation

PHILIP HERBERT, Accident Investigator
Federal Transit Administration

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:36 a.m.)

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2
3 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay. Good afternoon, my name is Michael
4 Bachmeier and I am the NTSB IIC for this accident here today.
5 We're here today on July 18th at 11:36 in the CTA headquarters to
6 conduct an interview with Yahya Hussain, who works for CTA. This
7 interview is in conjunction with NTSB investigation of the
8 accident near CTA LaSalle Station. The NTSB accident reference
9 number is RRD22LR012. The purpose of the investigation is to
10 increase safety, not to assign fault, blame, or liability.

11 Before we begin our interview and questions, let's go around
12 the table and introduce ourselves. Please spell your last name,
13 who you are representing, and your title. I would like to remind
14 everyone to speak clearly so we can get an accurate recording.
15 I'll start off and then pass it off to my right. Again, my name
16 is Mike Bachmeier, spelling of my last name is Bachmeier, is
17 B-a-c-h-m-e-i-e-r, and I am the NTSB IIC for this accident.

18 MR. DIXON: Eric Dixon, E-r-i-c D-i-x-o-n, President, Local
19 308.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon. Well, good morning, I'm
21 Mutiat, spelled M-u-t-i-a-t, last name is Williams, General
22 Manager, Rail Station Management for CTA.

23 MR. PHILLIPS: Bryant Phillips, P-h-i-double l-i-p-s, Senior
24 Transit System Safety Officer for CTA.

25 MR. GRAHAM: Rovaughn Graham, General Manager Transit Safety,

1 Chicago Transit Authority. Last name is spelled G-r-a-h-a-m,
2 MR. ASKEW: Lindbergh Askew, III, last name is spelled
3 A-s-k-e-w, a representative for the Illinois State Safety
4 Oversight Agency and I'm the Rail Transit Safety Coordinator.

5 MR. HERBERT: Philip Herbert, the spelling of the last name
6 is H-e-r-b-e-r-t. I'm with the Federal Transit Administration and
7 I'm an accident investigator.

8 MR. HOEPF: Mike Hoepf, NTSB, safety investigator. Last name
9 is H-o-e-p-f.

10 MS. McCOACH: Pennie McCoach, M-c-C-o-a-c-h, Vice President
11 for Amalgamated Transit Union Local 308.

12 MR. HUSSAIN: My name is Yahya Hussain, last name is
13 H-u-s-s-a-i-n, and I work for Chicago Transit Authority.

14 MR. PHILLIPS: Mike, I have a question? (Indiscernible) --

15 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay, stop, we'll pause.

16 (Off the record at 11:39 a.m.)

17 (On the record.)

18 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay, back on the record. Bryant Phillips
19 from CTA had to recuse himself on account of another situation.
20 We'll resume. Okay, thank you for the introductions. Do we have
21 your permission to record our discussion with you today?

22 MR. HUSSAIN: Yes.

23 MR. BACHMEIER: Do you understand the transcription will be
24 part of the public docket, as such we cannot guarantee any
25 confidentiality?

1 MR. HUSSAIN: Yes.

2 MR. BACHMEIER: As we discussed, you have a representative
3 with you today, Ms. Pennie McCoach, is that correct?

4 MR. HUSSAIN: Yes.

5 MR. BACHMEIER: I'd like to ask everyone to clearly announce
6 your name and title before questioning. So let's proceed.

7 INTERVIEW OF YAHYA HUSSAIN

8 BY MR. BACHMEIER:

9 Q. Yahya, can you kind of give me a synopsis of how long you've
10 worked for CTA?

11 A. Yeah, I worked for CTA about five years and I was doing
12 flagman in the meanwhile, then became an operator and then -- more
13 than a year now.

14 Q. Okay. So you've been an operator for about a year?

15 A. Yeah, about a year.

16 Q. Okay. How long a training program did you go through to be
17 an operator? How long did it take you there to go from a flagman
18 to an operator?

19 A. I don't have the exact amount of -- being an operator, it
20 takes a long time, it took me a long time to be an operator. I
21 went through a process of going to instructors, so it was maybe --
22 I'm not sure.

23 Q. Okay, yeah. Okay, no problem. Three months, six months?

24 A. About maybe six months.

25 Q. Okay, okay. Okay. Okay, so can you kind of give us a

1 general synopsis of -- a description of what you -- your daily job
2 duties of what you do as an operator?

3 A. As an operator, like I said, the training that I had was --
4 it was very tough training that I had and I remember about
5 everything what kind of training that I had and I applied that,
6 when I was applying that, I, for instance, as an operator on site,
7 you know, and knowing the eight mark where eight marker has the
8 signals, they gave me that kind of training where I was able to
9 look -- have awareness when I'm operating and this was including
10 when I'm opening and closing doors, even.

11 The lights at the door, if there is a malfunction or anything
12 like that, you can see when you're putting your head out and when
13 you alight the passengers and bringing passengers in. So with a
14 malfunction like that, something that you could see, some of the
15 lights not popping out, like illuminating, you can see that. In a
16 case of -- in a case of something, like if it's a case of
17 something like -- this is very tough on me, you know?

18 Q. Yeah. I was just kind of asking about what your -- like when
19 you're an operator, you just operate the train, make a station
20 stop, pick up and then proceed to the next?

21 A. Yeah, yes.

22 Q. Is that kind of what you do as an operator?

23 A. As an operator, when I -- during the day or night when I
24 work, after, you know, seeing the passengers leave in and out,
25 exiting in and out, check if doors are malfunctioning, anything

1 like this, then I proceed from that station to another station --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- and make my awareness before going between the stations.

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. So --

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. -- I was trained to look at every single thing and

8 everything, if I -- for instance, if there was even a POU (ph.)

9 button, like a button to press if there's something going on in

10 the train and then what I do is I stop at a station, call control,

11 then I have -- sort of pressing the button or anything like that,

12 if you pressed it, I'm going to go and check on the lights. So it

13 was every little thing I was trained on and I was doing that.

14 Q. Okay, okay. So your job as an operator is just to get the

15 passengers from one station to another or to their destination.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And if you see something, the doors don't close or something,

18 you look back --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- and out the windows and if there's illumination --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- then you can see when you look back and then also on your

23 screen or just --

24 A. Yeah. Not a screen.

25 Q. You just look back?

1 A. You look back, but there's a panel, a door panel --

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. -- and there's a break panel and, you know, you check from
4 there, you know, if the doors are not closing, you know, anything
5 like that.

6 Q. Yeah, okay, okay. So on the night of Friday coming into
7 Saturday morning, as you're coming, approaching LaSalle, you just
8 -- normal, just everything was going normal that night?

9 A. Yeah. You mean before that? Like, everything was -- I
10 didn't feel anything. The only thing was that it was raining.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. So it was raining that night and there was, as you know, the
13 wheels of the train kind of slip and slide.

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. So that was going on.

16 Q. Yeah. So you had some wheel slips, okay.

17 A. Um-hum.

18 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay. I'm going to pass it off to Eric.

19 MR. DIXON: I have no questions.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't have anything.

21 JUDGE : Okay, Graham.

22 BY MR. GRAHAM:

23 Q. Yeah, good morning. In talking about your career at CTA, you
24 mentioned you were a flagman. Did you work in the qualification
25 of customer service assistant?

1 A. No, I did not work in customer service.

2 MR. GRAHAM: Again Graham, G-r-a-h-a-m. No additional
3 questions.

4 MR. ASKEW: Askew, State Safety Oversight, no additional
5 questions.

6 BY MR. HERBERT:

7 Q. Philip Herbert, H-e-r-b-e-r-t, from the Federal Transit
8 Administration. Just real quick, the night of the incident, you
9 said it had been raining.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay, so did you change your operating, I mean, when you
12 operate a train, do you go into stations slower?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Or account for that?

15 A. Yes.

16 MR. HERBERT: Okay, that's all I have. Thanks.

17 BY MR. HOEPF:

18 Q. This is Mike, Mike Hoepf, NTSB. Yeah. So talk a little bit
19 about -- again, I think you kind of touched on this, but the --
20 you know, when you're -- just generally speaking, you know, when
21 you're pulling into a train station, kind of walk me through that
22 process. Just generally, you know, what do you do in terms of
23 controlling the train speed, you know? You know, where's your
24 attention, you know, as you're doing that?

25 A. I have mostly attention going towards the eight-car mark

1 since it was an eight-car and so I go over there and I applied the
2 -- the brakes get applied, so I don't overstep the eight-car mark
3 and when I -- and once you stop at an eight-car mark, I open -- I
4 put my head out, then open the doors and see if all the lights are
5 open, if all the passengers have left the station, left the train
6 and then coming into the train.

7 If the doors were malfunctioning, I would right away -- first
8 I'd, right away, check the doors malfunction, address the control
9 that the doors are malfunctioning or anything like that and I
10 would try to fix, you know, if there's any situation, like I'll go
11 more into fixing it. But most likely, I would just alight and
12 bring the customers in and then stick -- and put my head back into
13 the head cab.

14 Q. Oh, okay, okay. I got you, I got you. So when you're coming
15 into the station, there's a -- when you said eight-car mark --

16 A. Eight-car mark.

17 Q. -- that's -- so that's when you're operating a train that's
18 got eight cars?

19 A. Yeah, eight cars.

20 Q. And so that's a mark like on the platform?

21 A. On the platform.

22 Q. Okay. Is it like a paint mark or something like that?

23 A. Yeah, it's yellow.

24 Q. Yellow, okay.

25 A. Yellow, yellow.

1 Q. Okay. So you're looking at that because you want to bring
2 the front of the train to that mark?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay, okay. I got you, I got you. Okay. So you talked a
5 little bit about your speed, you know, kind of depending on the
6 weather being a little bit, you know, slower. Can you talk about,
7 generally, you know, what your speed is as you're going throughout
8 the system and then when you're coming to a stop? You know,
9 what's the max speed and then what's around the curves and then,
10 you know, how much do you try to slow down when you come into a
11 station?

12 A. So when I go around the curve, it was like 10 miles per hour.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. And I kind of -- I stick it, I kind of stick to that much, I
15 don't want to over-speed, but if I want to reach up to the eight-
16 car mark, maybe go a little bit, one mile extra, but that's about
17 it and then I go, I slow back to -- slowing back to the eight-car
18 mark, to exactly stop there.

19 Q. Oh, okay. So you're talking about LaSalle Station?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. You'll kind of slow down to 10 miles an hour as you're coming
22 south and then around there, around that curve --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- and then maybe go slightly in speed but then you're
25 basically starting the descent and you slow down --

- 1 A. Yeah, just 10 miles.
- 2 Q. -- until you stop?
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. Okay, okay. I got you, I got you. So while we're talking
5 about LaSalle Station, what's the -- how's the lighting there?
- 6 A. The lighting, the lighting was not -- it was kind of dim, the
7 lighting, the light was kind of -- it was not -- there's no
8 lighting there, too much lighting and as much as when you go like,
9 for instance, from Washington -- the Washington Library to Adams
10 and Wabash and you could see there's more light over there.
- 11 Q. Oh, okay.
- 12 A. Yeah.
- 13 Q. Okay. So LaSalle's kind of a little bit more dim than --
- 14 A. Yeah, a little bit more dim.
- 15 Q. -- some other stations, okay. So there's lights at the
16 station, right? And then you've also got a light on the front of
17 the train?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Okay, okay. And is that a very bright light?
- 20 A. I'm not sure if -- I mean, I'm not sure about that, it was --
21 at that time it was bright or anything, I'm not sure. I don't
22 remember.
- 23 Q. Yeah. Okay. And that's kind of a subjective sort of
24 question, I guess.
- 25 A. Yeah.

- 1 Q. You know, do you think it would be helpful if it was
2 brighter, you know, or does it seem like it's about appropriate
3 for, you know --
- 4 A. No, it should be brighter.
- 5 Q. Okay, okay.
- 6 A. Yeah, it should be brighter.
- 7 Q. So like a brighter head -- you know, headlamps which would --
- 8 A. Yeah, headlamps.
- 9 Q. -- make it a little bit easier for you to see what you're
10 doing at night?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Okay. Let me just back up a little bit to your -- and I
13 apologize if I missed this. Could you kind of talk about, you
14 know, your tour of duty? You know, what are your usual hours that
15 you work in a week?
- 16 A. So my usual hours is working like at night shift --
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 A. -- and so it's probably like about 1700, the time, 1700,
19 every time I start about 1700.
- 20 Q. Okay.
- 21 A. Like it's either 1720, 1700, like that.
- 22 Q. Okay. And then when do you usually get off (indiscernible),
23 does it vary?
- 24 A. It varies.
- 25 Q. Okay.

1 A. But it's maybe before 2:45 a.m., before that, a little bit
2 before that.

3 Q. Two forty-five a.m. Okay, all right, sounds good. And then
4 does your -- does it vary, do you only do, you know, Wednesday
5 through Sunday or does it -- does the day of the week depend on
6 the schedule or --

7 A. Could you say that again?

8 Q. Oh, I was just -- I was just wondering, do you work the same
9 nights every week or do you work different nights?

10 A. They're the same, about the same timing.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. The schedule is about the same.

13 Q. Okay, okay. Great, great. Thanks. Does that work okay for
14 you? I mean, do you find it hard to work the night shift or --

15 A. No, because at night, I also feel comfortable, I feel that I
16 could -- I have more awareness at night, like I feel very -- I
17 feel more confident, too, I feel more -- I picked it because I
18 also feel like I could see everything, I could see the people, I
19 could feel good about, you know, working the night shift picking
20 up people like that, so it was not uncomfortable or anything like
21 that.

22 Q. Yeah. Okay, okay. Now, these are just standard questions,
23 don't read into this or anything, but I notice you wear glasses.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Do you see okay with your glasses?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yeah, I just had testing, eyeglass exam, not too long ago.

4 Q. Uh-huh.

5 A. Yeah, so I got these glasses.

6 Q. Okay. Good, good. Okay. All right. So, you know, I know
7 this is really difficult to talk about --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- you know, coming here today and we appreciate you coming
10 in. You know, I'm just wondering if you can kind of just, you
11 know, walk us through, you know, what happened and, you know, I
12 think that's -- at least in terms of my punch list, that's kind of
13 the last thing I want to talk about here today is just, you know,
14 what was your experience, you know, and just kind of -- if you
15 could just kind of walk us through your shift.

16 You know, I know you said it was raining, any conditions that
17 you noticed, you know, any discussion about the performance of the
18 train, if you can kind of just give us a little bit of, you know,
19 a narrative of the night of the accident, we appreciate it.

20 A. Okay. I mean, when I was -- are you talking about when I
21 started from my --

22 Q. Yeah, yeah, just kind of start with, you know, the beginning
23 of your shift, you know, what --

24 A. All right.

25 Q. -- time you went on the shift and -- yeah.

1 A. Most likely, what I usually do is like before starting, I --
2 well, I don't need to call in, you know, I just come in to the
3 clerk and I get my radio and get everything set up, I call the
4 supervisor, what time do I leave, and then basically I just --
5 when it's time to operate, I see my train, I call in to the
6 supervisor, which side. There are three pockets, so I tell the
7 supervisor which is my train, you know, which track to pick out
8 and that and he would tell me if it's number 1, number 2, number
9 3.

10 So I pick the train where he tells me to go and then before
11 going there, I check the headlights, the back of the lights, if
12 it's off center or anything like that, if it's off center, then
13 most likely I'll call it in, if it's off center, you know, like
14 supplies that were coming in. Otherwise, then I check the
15 destination signs, I take all the -- if there's any graffiti or
16 anything like that, I check any springs are loose, you know. So I
17 walk it through.

18 I also check if the doors are -- well, most likely they pull
19 the doors when passengers leave, so I just -- I just, just in
20 case, check the doors, if they close or not and by doing so, then
21 I do -- I go over to my head car, go inside, stick -- put my
22 reversal key into the -- to operate, to turn on the train, then I
23 stick my head out and check the doors, is it clear to open the
24 doors and pull the doors and I open the doors, then I check the
25 lights or illuminate and then I close it back as soon as -- if

1 it's clear, I close it back in to test the door, if I have a door
2 relay. And so when I have a door relay, I check everything, most
3 like everything is okay. Then I go back to the procedure where I
4 put my run number, I put my -- I put the OCU, I put my run number
5 in there and then I turn around, like this is I'm going to carry
6 to the loop, Kimball to the loop. And then, after that, when it's
7 time for me to go, I close -- I stick my head out again, close my
8 doors, check all the lights are off, the door lights are off,
9 which is red lights, you know.

10 So then I proceed on going and that's -- and before going to
11 every stop, I make myself awareness about the train tracks before
12 me, the signals, you know. So when it's -- if there's a -- the
13 signals are black or, you know, if it's green, red/black, I know
14 it's going to diffuse and I would've called control, but most
15 likely it was going where the signals were approving me to go and
16 then when I go to the stations, after the eight-car mark, go to
17 the eighth car, I look at the passengers as I reach this after the
18 mark.

19 Then I relieve myself from the -- from the handle and go
20 towards the head cab, I mean go towards the other side of the head
21 cab, stick my head out, see if all the passengers are about to
22 come in, open the doors, let the passengers come in and then let
23 all the passengers go out. I also make a step in my head, where I
24 say like -- I say one and two, like one is like I open the doors
25 and to make sure that I close those doors, I say two and that

1 reminds me that I close all the doors and then I do my procedure,
2 go back to the handle and so I operate again, see the signals.
3 And then I was -- as I -- when I reached up to the -- when I was
4 reaching up to that night in Quincy, that night in Quincy, there
5 was a little rain going on and the rain was slipping and sliding.

6 So in that procedure, most likely I would go into coast and
7 when I go, when I go into coast and then I try to have some
8 control on the train, coast and back to power, you know, I try to
9 have some control of the train. It was slipping and sliding. So
10 during the rain or snow, I mostly try to have control of the train
11 and that's what I was mostly concentrating and that's how the days
12 (indiscernible).

13 Q. Yeah. Yeah, that's really helpful. Yeah, I think it's
14 interesting, you know, how you're talking about your -- and it
15 sounds like what you needed to control the train is a little bit
16 different when it's wet --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- outside. So I think you said that, if I heard you
19 correctly, you said that you prefer -- when it's dry, you'll
20 coast, but when it's wet you don't coast?

21 A. No, no.

22 Q. I take it that flipped.

23 A. No, it's when it's kind of sliding --

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. -- I put it in to have control over it, you know, I put it

1 into coast and then try to go into power if I have some control
2 over the train.

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. You know.

5 Q. Got you, got you.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Okay. All right, so -- yeah, so you know, again, I just --
8 so you kind of talked to us a little bit about, you know, your
9 trip on, you know, when the accident happened. Can you kind of
10 walk us through, you know, just to the extent that you remember,
11 you know, what happened when you came into LaSalle that night?

12 A. Yeah, I was leaving Quincy --

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. -- and when I was leaving Quincy, it was raining at that
15 night --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- and it was slipping and sliding. So most often when I was
18 reaching up to the curve by the 10 miles per hour and noticed
19 something, like you know how it -- when it's raining, the train is
20 appearing a little bit -- it feels awkward, like you have to have
21 control over it. So I had to have control over it, I was applying
22 the procedure of how to put it into coast and how to put it into
23 power, I was kind of more concentrating on that and when I was --
24 when I go up to the -- up to -- when I was going up to LaSalle, in
25 my head I wanted to -- you know how you kind of want to be

1 accurate, you want to -- you want to go into the platform, like
2 you don't want to have auto-control, you don't want to -- you
3 don't want to -- it's like where you have this feeling that you
4 want to look at your surroundings and try to reach up to the
5 eight-car mark.

6 Q. Um-hum.

7 A. So that's what I was --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah, (indiscernible).

10 Q. Yeah, that's helpful. You know, it sounds like, just to kind
11 of rephrase what you're saying, I think, you know, because of the
12 difficult, you know, wet conditions, it sounds like you were kind
13 of focusing on controlling the train and trying to make sure that
14 you, you know, got to that mark --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- appropriately, so --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Okay, yeah, that's helpful. And again, I know this is
19 difficult, but -- and you don't have to give us, you know, any
20 really unnecessary details here, but can you kind of tell us, you
21 know, when was the first point where you noticed something
22 atypical was going on?

23 A. Well, when I -- atypical, you mean like --

24 Q. Well, just, you know, when did you realize that, you know,
25 the accident impact, you know, when did you realize that an

1 accident had occurred?

2 A. Well, I didn't feel no accident or I didn't feel any impact.
3 I smelled, when I reached the eight-car mark, I smelled something
4 burning.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And that's when I was saying okay, when I smell something, I
7 said to the -- I went to alight the customers first, made the
8 announcement on the train and told control that I felt something,
9 the train is smoking, you know. I said I'm going to check on the
10 lights. As soon as I go towards the right of way, there's no --
11 there's no door that, you know, you could go to, so I tried to --
12 well, I tried to go over it and this (indiscernible) to go over
13 it, then I saw the body and that's why it was horrible on me, I
14 felt something, you know, like I couldn't have control, like I
15 just had to call control to off the power. You know, I didn't say
16 -- like I didn't say like -- what I said, I see a body, you know,
17 and I was not -- I'm really not sure what I said at that moment,
18 but control had off'ed the power --

19 Q. Um-hum.

20 A. -- at that moment and CFD was coming.

21 Q. Um-hum, um-hum. Great, thank you. Thank you.

22 A. Yeah.

23 MR. HOEPF: Yeah. Thanks, that's all the questions I've got
24 for right now. I'm going to pass it back to ICC Mike Bachmeier.

25 BY MR. BACHMEIER:

1 Q. Okay. You doing all right there, bud?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Doing all right?

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. Okay, Yahya. Okay, when you were talking about slip and
6 sliding, I just want to make sure, are you talking about the wheel
7 slip of the drivers of your -- when you're running so kind of like
8 the wheels are slipping on the rail?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. And then where you were talking about coast and power,
11 you're basically -- I don't know if you have like run 1, 2, 3, 4,
12 5.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Or whatever. So you just go back to idle?

15 A. Yeah, idle.

16 Q. It's just so you're not -- so your drivers are not slipping,
17 right?

18 A. Yeah.

19 MR. BACHMEIER: It's that kind of -- so I just want to make
20 sure we're -- I thought I was on the same page, but I just wanted
21 to make sure of all of that stuff, because some of the terminology
22 is not always the same. Okay. Other than that, I have no further
23 questions.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have any questions.

25 BY MR. BACHMEIER:

1 Q. I take that back. Mike Bachmeier, IIC, I do have one. So
2 when you're coming in that station, what is the speed limit?

3 A. So the speed limit, like I want to say it's about 10 miles
4 per hour.

5 Q. It is 10?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Ten MPH?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. And then your normal shift is 1700 to 2:45.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And your rest days are what?

12 A. Wednesday and Thursday.

13 Q. Wednesday and Thursday. Okay, so you're working Friday
14 through Tuesday.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. And you get off Wednesday morning.

17 A. Wednesday morning.

18 Q. Okay. Five years. So when did you start? Five years. What
19 was your date when you started? Do you know?

20 A. I think it was -- oh, yeah, 09/15/14.

21 Q. Oh-nine/fifteen/fourteen. Do you know when you became an
22 operator?

23 A. Yes, at 03/2021.

24 Q. March of '21?

25 A. Yes, March of '21.

- 1 Q. Okay. Okay. And the eight-car mark, you're saying, is --
2 that is on the station, that's on the platform.
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. It's not a sign?
- 5 A. There's a sign underneath it, too.
- 6 Q. Okay, underneath the platform?
- 7 A. Underneath the platform.
- 8 Q. Okay, okay, okay. Station sign, you're coming in, the speed
9 limit's 10. Is there a mile per hour on the curve, too?
- 10 A. Yeah, there's a mile per hour.
- 11 Q. What's the curve speed?
- 12 A. Ten, ten.
- 13 Q. Ten.
- 14 A. Ten.
- 15 Q. Ten MPH. So 10 all the way around the curve --
- 16 A. Yeah.
- 17 Q. -- into the station?
- 18 A. Into the station.
- 19 Q. Okay. What is the speed like between stations? I know
20 you're pretty much on a curve the whole, but there are --
- 21 A. Yeah.
- 22 Q. -- some straight-aways. What is your --
- 23 A. I was not sure, but I don't really speed up if any of the
24 curve is coming.
- 25 Q. Yeah. But no, I'm just talking about normal running times,

1 do you -- what is the speed limit out there, is it 25, 30?

2 A. I remember the most, where like -- for instance, like if it's
3 like Addison, if it's from Irving Park to Addison, I'm going to go
4 up to like -- like 55 miles per hour on that, you know.

5 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay, okay. Okay, that's all I got.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have anything.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't have anything else.

8 BY MR. GRAHAM:

9 Q. Yeah, a couple questions. Graham with CTA Safety,
10 G-r-a-h-a-m. So personnel like myself with more of a buff
11 background, you mentioned earlier on-site operations.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. What does that mean?

14 A. On-site operation is like where you point, you pinpoint, like
15 for instance, you pinpoint the signal, the signal is right there
16 and the signal number and then you pinpoint again the eight-car
17 mark and you announce it, you know, you announce it to yourself,
18 this is the eight-car mark coming up. So this is the four-car
19 mark, this is the eight-car mark, like that.

20 Q. And so would that be also point and acknowledge?

21 A. Yeah, point and acknowledge, yeah. Yes, yes.

22 Q. You mentioned the eight-car mark previously. So in terms of
23 LaSalle Station, prior to arriving to the eight-car mark, anything
24 unusual?

25 A. No. I don't recall anything unusual.

1 MR. GRAHAM: Again, thank you and those are all the questions
2 I had.

3 MR. HUSSAIN: All right. Thank you, sir.

4 BY MR. ASKEW:

5 Q. Askew with the State Safety Oversight. You said you were a
6 flagman before?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. For how many years were you a flagman?

9 A. I was about maybe -- maybe two years in flagging.

10 Q. And have you been on any location other than the Brown Line
11 or nights, operating?

12 A. No, no other location.

13 Q. So you've been on nights, so --

14 A. Yes.

15 MR. ASKEW: No further questions.

16 BY MR. HERBERT:

17 Q. Phil Herbert with the Federal Transit Administration. You
18 said it was raining the night this occurred.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Did you have to activate -- was raining hard enough that you
21 had to activate the windshield wiper on the train? Is there a
22 windshield wiper?

23 A. Yes, there's a windshield wiper, yes.

24 Q. All right. Was it activated?

25 A. Yes, it was activated.

1 Q. Okay, so --

2 A. I always check the -- I always tell the supervisor, too, like
3 if my windshield wiper's working. I always have in my own hand
4 two wipers.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. So that night, that train windshield wiper was working?

8 A. Yes, it was working.

9 Q. Okay, how hard was it raining, was it a downpour or was it
10 just steady?

11 A. Well, it was just enough for the slip and sliding, like you
12 know, that's how it was.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. So it was not a downpour but a steady rain, would you call
16 it, you know, a steady rain or just --

17 A. Well, it was -- I would call it a steady rain. It's like it
18 was raining where you had to have some control over the train.

19 Q. Um-hum. I mean, was it a thunderstorm?

20 A. No, not a thunderstorm.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. It was just --

23 Q. So it wasn't that the rain was coming so hard that you didn't
24 have visibility.

25 A. Right. Kind of --

1 Q. You had visibility with the use of the --

2 A. I had visibility, yes.

3 Q. -- with the windshield wiper.

4 A. Yes.

5 MR. HERBERT: Okay, that's all I needed, thanks.

6 BY MR. HOEPF:

7 Q. Mike again here. And just to piggyback off of that question,
8 the windshield wipers, were they in good condition? Was there any
9 streaking or anything like that, that was obstructing your
10 visibility or was it --

11 A. No. It was just like it had a regular streak on the wipers.

12 Q. Uh-huh.

13 A. It had regular streaks, like it didn't have any -- usually
14 the 2600 or 3200, they're like the streakings are there, you know,
15 so --

16 Q. So it was okay?

17 A. It was okay.

18 Q. Okay. Was there like a little bit of streaking, though?

19 A. Yeah, a little bit of streaking.

20 Q. Okay. I mean, do you think a fresh set of wipers would've
21 maybe made it a little bit better to see?

22 A. Yes, with better wipers, I always -- I felt that they need
23 improvement with the wipers.

24 Q. So there is room for improvement --

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- with the wipers?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay, okay. So just to summarize, it sounds like there could
4 be room for improvement with both the wipers and the brightness of
5 the headlamps?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay, okay. I got you. And it sounds like the lighting at
8 LaSalle Station is -- on the platform is somewhat dim, as well.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. So it sounds like there's also some room for improvement
11 potentially in terms of the light coming out of the platform?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Okay, okay. While we're on that topic, is there anything
14 else you can think of that might enhance the visibility of the
15 train?

16 A. Not right now.

17 Q. Okay, okay. The last thing I want to just talk to you about
18 is just generally, just in general, as you're going about, is it
19 often that you would see something obstructing the tracks? Like,
20 can you think of, you know, in your experience as an operator,
21 have you ever had anything in the tracks obstructing your path?

22 A. Obstructing, you mean like --

23 Q. Like, I don't know, I guess it's maybe some debris, a fallen
24 tree, something like that that maybe would obstruct the track.

25 A. No, I did not. There was -- I mean there's, you know, little

1 rodents and anything like that, but I didn't see anything that was
2 obstructing the tracks.

3 MR. HOEPF: Okay, okay. Got you, got you. Okay. I think
4 that's all I've got, so thank you. Mike, any other questions?

5 BY MR. BACHMEIER:

6 Q. Okay. One thing, he was talking about visibility and all of
7 that kind of stuff, like -- and we're in towards the end of the
8 interview. In a cab, is there anything that you take exception
9 of, viewing out the cab or anything, is there anything that you
10 can see to improve or is everything okay in there?

11 A. Well, I feel that the partitions, the partitions, like it
12 should be -- the cab should be a little bit more open, like, you
13 know, for the operator, more open, you know, it should be -- I
14 mean, the windows, the windows are there, but I'm just saying they
15 should be a little bit -- well, there should be like you said,
16 brighter lights or something like that. The train, where the
17 cabins are, the partition should be a little bit, you know, where
18 we're able to see everything, you know, so --

19 Q. Are you talking -- so when you're looking off the front --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. -- is there a partition right to the left side of you?

22 A. Yeah, where there's the -- a little bit where the switches
23 are and all that.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. It should be -- it should be a design where it should be a

1 little bit more open, you know, so --

2 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay, okay.

3 MR. HOEPF: Can I just piggyback off of that, Mike?

4 MR. BACHMEIER: Yeah.

5 BY MR. HOEPF:

6 Q. So you're talking about not out the front window, but the
7 sides, you're saying?

8 A. Yeah, how you enter the motor cab and then there's a
9 partition right here.

10 Q. Uh-huh.

11 A. And there's little switches like, you know, off, positive and
12 all that, and that part should be a little bit clear, it should be
13 a little bit open, you know, it should be a little bit breathable
14 space.

15 Q. Uh-huh.

16 A. You know.

17 Q. Are you seeing limited visibility --

18 A. Visible. Visibility.

19 Q. -- to the sides?

20 A. To the sides, yes.

21 Q. Okay, okay, thanks.

22 A. Yeah.

23 MR. HOEPF: I just wanted to clarify that. Sorry, Mike.

24 MR. BACHMEIER: Okay, okay. With that, do you have anything
25 you'd like to add to our interview?

1 MR. HUSSAIN: This experience was big on me, you know, and I
2 wanted -- I feel that I -- of the person, too, what had happened,
3 and that I cannot take away, I cannot, but that's what I was
4 feeling about that.

5 MR. BACHMEIER: And we're with you and we're -- we seen the
6 video, we seen how you -- everything there. We appreciate you,
7 all your -- how you conducted yourself. Thank you very much --

8 MR. HUSSAIN: Thank you.

9 MR. BACHMEIER: -- for taking the time to come in and visit
10 us. If we do have any follow-up questions, could we get a hold of
11 you at a later time?

12 MR. HUSSAIN: Yeah.

13 MR. BACHMEIER: On behalf of the NTSB and our working group,
14 thank you for coming in and for your time and cooperation. This
15 concludes our interview.

16 (Whereupon, the interview concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: CTA EMPLOYEE FOUND DEAD ON TRACKS
 AT LASALLE/VAN BUREN STATION
 IN THE LOOP IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
 ON JULY 16, 2022
 Interview of Yahya Hussain

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD22LR012

PLACE: Chicago, Illinois

DATE: July 18, 2022

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.



David A. Martini
Transcriber