

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

\*

CALTRAIN COLLISION WITH \*

CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT NEAR \*

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, \* Accident No.: RRD22LR007

ON MARCH 10, 2022 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: GILBERT M. PADILLA, IV, Watchman

TransitAmerica Services, Incorporated

San Francisco, California

Saturday,

March 12, 2022

APPEARANCES:

DICK HIPSKIND, Railroad Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

RICK BRUCE, Track Safety Specialist  
Federal Railroad Administration

JAMES RIDGEWAY  
California Public Utilities Commission

ROBERT SEBEZ, Acting Director, Safety and Security  
Caltrain

JIM BROWN, Safety Officer  
Caltrain

DEREK BROWN, Deputy General Manager  
TransitAmerica Services, Incorporated

MITCH MCCARTHY, Vice Chairman  
BMWED

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Gilbert M. Padilla, IV:	
By Mr. Hipskind	6
By Mr. Bruce	22
By Mr. Ridgeway	23
By Mr. Sebez	23
By Mr. Derek Brown	25
By Mr. McCarthy	26

I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. HIPSKIND: All right. Good afternoon, everybody. My  
3 name is Dick Hipskind, and I am a railroad accident investigator  
4 for NTSB, and I am the track and engineering group chairman for  
5 NTSB for this accident. We are conducting this interview on  
6 March 12, 2022 with Gilbert M. Padilla, IV, who works for the  
7 TransitAmerica Services, Incorporated as a watchman. The  
8 interview is being conducted in person at the Westin Hotel in  
9 San Francisco, California.

10 This interview is part of NTSB's effort in conducting a  
11 series of follow up interviews with the parties to the  
12 investigation in which we are conducting an ongoing investigation  
13 of Caltrain train's number SB506, its collision and derailment  
14 that occurred on March 10, 2022 on Caltrain's railroad on main  
15 track 2 in San Bruno, California. The NTSB accident reference  
16 number is RRD22LR007.

17 Before we begin our interview and questions, let's go around  
18 the table, introduce ourselves. Please spell your full name, and  
19 please identify who you are representing and your title. I would  
20 remind everybody to speak clearly and loudly enough so we can get  
21 an accurate recording. I'll lead off and then ask for the other  
22 interviewers to identify themselves according to the order  
23 previously established.

24 Again, my name is Dick Hipskind. The spelling of my full  
25 name is D-i-c-k, H-i-p-s-k-i-n-d. I am a railroad accident

1 investigator for NTSB on this accident.

2 Rick?

3 MR. BRUCE: Rick Bruce, R-i-c-k, Bruce, B-r-u-c-e, I'm with  
4 the Federal Railroad Administration. I'm the track safety  
5 specialist.

6 MR. RIDGEWAY: James Ridgeway, J-a-m-e-s, Ridgeway, R-i-d-g-  
7 e-w-a-y. I'm with the CPUC Track.

8 MR. SEBEZ: Robert Sebez, R-o-b-e-r-t, S-e-b-e-z, Safety with  
9 Caltrain.

10 MR. JIM BROWN: Jim Brown, J-i-m, B-r-o-w-n, with Caltrain  
11 Safety.

12 MR. DEREK BROWN: Derek Brown, D-e-r-e-k, B-r-o-w-n, Deputy  
13 General Manager for TransitAmerica Services, Incorporated.

14 MR. HIPSKIND: All right. To all the interviewers, thank  
15 you. Prior to recording our interview, I spoke with Gilbert to  
16 request his permission to record our discussion today, and to  
17 obtain his permission to go on a first name basis. Gilbert, has  
18 there been any change to your affirmation to those conditions?

19 MR. PADILLA: No, there has not.

20 MR. HIPSKIND: All right. And you'll have to speak up just a  
21 little bit. Hearing no objections, let us proceed with the  
22 interviewee's introduction. But before I get to that, do you want  
23 to have a representative with you today?

24 MR. PADILLA: Yes, I do.

25 MR. HIPSKIND: Mitch, would you put yourself on the record?

1 MR. MCCARTHY: My name is Mitch McCarthy, M-i-t-c-h, last  
2 name McCarthy, M-c-C-a-r-t-h-y, and I'm a vice chairman for the  
3 BMWED representing Mr. Padilla.

4 INTERVIEW OF GILBERT M. PADILLA, IV

5 BY MR. HIPSKIND:

6 Q. All right. And, Gilbert, would you please put yourself on  
7 the record?

8 A. Okay. I'm Gilbert Padilla, IV. G-i-l-b-e-r-t, P-a-d-i-l-l-  
9 a, I-V. I'm a watchman for TransitAmerica.

10 Q. All right. Thank you, Gilbert. I'm going to give you a  
11 couple of questions just to kind of get your background with us.  
12 Please give us a synopsis of your work history, bringing us up to  
13 your current position, and how long you have held it, and we're  
14 asking you for your railroad related employment.

15 A. I started the railroad on September 13 of 2021. Roughly been  
16 here for six, seven months. First started as -- on the track,  
17 track maintenance gang. I worked with them for two months until I  
18 filled in a vacancy spot for welder helper, so I started welding  
19 for another two to three months with the welders, and then right  
20 after that I bided for a watchman position. I've been there for  
21 roughly a month or so. I've just been shadowing other experienced  
22 watchmen and they're teaching me how to become a watchman myself,  
23 and what's the right thing to do, and everything to do safely and  
24 protect our contractors, and just learning the ropes in every  
25 different individual to have and provide different types of safety

1 and how everybody can set perspectives on how they work and brief  
2 everybody to their jobs.

3 Q. Gilbert, is it fair to say that you're trying to expand your  
4 skill set?

5 A. Yes, sir, I am.

6 Q. Okay. Thank you for that. And in your position on the day  
7 of the accident, please describe to us your duties and  
8 responsibilities in that position.

9 A. So on the day of the accident, my duties were to shadow  
10 Tim Hidalgo. I was shadowing him because I never been in a form B  
11 (ph.) before, so he was going to teach me how to run a form B  
12 before, so he was going to teach me how to run a form B and he was  
13 teaching me how to hyro on tracks and it's a little bit of  
14 piloting in everything, but mostly it was mostly to learn the form  
15 B and how everything in the form B works, how to talk to the  
16 (indiscernible) employee that was in charge, and slowly learn how  
17 they talk to the train engineer so they can attach the form B nice  
18 and safely for us, and how to clear out and do everything properly  
19 for the form B.

20 Q. Okay. And on the day of the incident, kind of give us an  
21 idea of when you started and where you met up with the other  
22 members of the group and conducted a job briefing if that's what  
23 you did.

24 A. Well, at the time we started was 6:30. I met up with  
25 Tim Hidalgo. We went to his work truck and moved all this stuff,

1 and then we grabbed some of my watchman gear and put into a hyro  
2 truck. We got everything situated and made sure the hyro truck  
3 was inspected and everything was nice and good. We had to grab  
4 track warrants and other form B number, and grab a case of water,  
5 and then we waited for Wilber to talk to the manager, the  
6 (indiscernible) manager, and all three of us got into the truck  
7 and we met up with Claude (ph.), had visitations, do a briefing at  
8 7:30.

9 We roughly got there around 7:20, 7:25, and then Claude had  
10 the briefing ready, and then he let me do -- speak out for the  
11 briefing because he wanted to know how I briefed the people  
12 because, you know, everyone has a difference, so I briefed the  
13 contractors, and then right after I was done briefing the  
14 contractors, Claude, he added more to the briefing to show me like  
15 more detail to get into explaining how to get more in depth with  
16 the contractors and the briefing to make sure they got everything  
17 understandable, and then you talk about everything that needs to  
18 be done. Then during that briefing, Claude was saying that what  
19 they were doing, they said first we're going to do the -- put up  
20 the red -- yellow/red flags for the form B, so him and Wilber were  
21 going to do the flags for the southbound trains, and me and Tim  
22 were doing the flags for the northbound trains, and then he said  
23 right after that we're going to meet up with the contactors at  
24 Center, Center Street, and then we're going to wait for tracking  
25 time, brief there, wait for tracking time so we can get on track



1 so we can go to San Bruno yard so we can -- so they can grab  
2 materials, the poles so they could put up the (indiscernible)  
3 poles because that's what they were going to do that day inside  
4 the form B limits.

5       So right after that, me and Tim, we grabbed our flags and  
6 made sure we had our flags and bolts and everything we needed, and  
7 we went to 11 -- I think it was 11.9 to put down the yellow red  
8 flags, and then right after that we went to -- made sure we put  
9 those up right, make sure that the flags were facing the right  
10 way, then right after that we went to 9.8 to put up the red flags  
11 for work zone. Once we put those up, we made sure that it was --  
12 they were good, facing the right way, made sure they were in the  
13 right spot, lined up perfectly, and then after that we went to  
14 Center Street and met up with the contractors, and then we had a  
15 little briefing with some to make sure what track we were going  
16 and exactly what we were doing. They said we were going to be on  
17 main track 2, or hired only on main track 2 and they were going to  
18 San Bruno yard at 11.7, and then once we -- they explained that,  
19 him and Tim, Tim told them that we were waiting for Claude to get  
20 check in time for us and make sure everything was confirmed that  
21 we were able to go on track. And then we waited roughly around  
22 20, 25 minutes the track time, and then once they got -- once  
23 Claude got the track time, he called Tim. He gave us the track  
24 time. The first track time he gave us was authority number 209.  
25 It was between Sierra and Scott on main track 1, roughly I think

1 it was around 0931 when he got it, and he acknowledged us that at  
2 0932. And then roughly after that he gave us authority number  
3 2010. That was going to give us on track between North Scott to  
4 Center on main track 2. He got that I think at 0932, and then he  
5 acknowledged us at 9:34, and then once he got that, I got -- me  
6 and Tim got our hyro trucks onto the tracks, and then he told  
7 Claude to -- if we could get main track 1 between Scott and Center  
8 so we could get the crane trucks in because there was going to be  
9 a -- before they put on the tracks they were going to be blocking  
10 both tracks so there's a tight space so Claude got him on main  
11 track 1.

12 As soon as I got on the tracks, I went up like two cadney  
13 (ph.) poles up and then Tim would wait for check time on main  
14 track 1, so he was on the crossing with the contractors. I was in  
15 the truck waiting because I wasn't going to let the truck be by  
16 itself on the track because you never know what is going to happen  
17 if the truck rolled off, so I stayed in the truck. Then I saw  
18 that Tim got the tracking time for main track 1, so then I seen  
19 them putting both crane trucks on the tracks. Then once they got  
20 both crane trucks on the tracks I went up a little bit, let the  
21 crane trucks clear out in the crossing. Once they cleared out,  
22 Tim walked to the truck and told me let's go, we're clear, and I  
23 was all right, and then we were going to the San Bruno yard at  
24 11.7, and then once we got there, we jumped out of the truck.  
25 Once we got out of the truck, the contractors was saying that

1 they're going to start grabbing the materials and everything, and  
2 me and Tim said okay. Tim grabbed a watchman disk, I grabbed two  
3 irons and then he gave me a radio, and he had a radio, and they  
4 were on the platform right by our truck, you know, just watching  
5 to make sure they weren't going to following the other tracks  
6 between tracks when they're walking around, grab stuff out of the  
7 trucks, and we had a southbound come by and then roughly after  
8 that we had a northbound come by. Tim was grabbing his lunch box.  
9 He was eating a snack right before the northbound passed us, but  
10 once the northbound passed us, he got done then eating, so he just  
11 grabbed another snack and everything, and then he asked me if I  
12 wanted to take a lunch. I told him, no, I took one like roughly  
13 an hour after that because he said we're going to be busy. I was  
14 like, no, I'm okay right now, and then right after that he was  
15 going inside -- he leaned over inside the driver's side of the  
16 truck, he was putting his lunch box away, and then I was just, you  
17 know, just looking out and make sure trains, you know, honk my  
18 horn when I see a train coming, and then I heard on the radio a  
19 southbound was coming, it went through a form B limits and then  
20 Claude excused it. I was like, okay. So we had a southbound  
21 coming. I knew the southbound was coming, so I started seeing the  
22 lights of the southbound, and then when I seen the lights, I  
23 honked my horn to let the contractors know that we had a train  
24 coming, to not be in the middle of the tracks, to stay on our  
25 tracks on the platform, but they were supposed to be on the

1 platform. All of them went on the platform. One of the  
2 contractors from one of the crane and then once after that I made  
3 sure that everybody was not in between the tracks, and then I see  
4 -- I looked over at the train. I was watching the train, and then  
5 I seen the train was exactly on main track 2, and then I froze  
6 there for a quick second, and I yelled at Tim, like Tim, Tim, Tim,  
7 the train's on our track, the train's on our track. Tim looked  
8 up, panicked. He got on the radio, emergency, emergency, and we  
9 just started yelling and yelling and yelling, and then next thing  
10 you know, the train's like right in front of our truck. We ran  
11 towards the train like on the platform towards the train to stay  
12 away from the debris. We just yelled. Tim was going crazy on the  
13 radio, emergency, emergency.

14 The next thing you know the train real quick passed right by  
15 us, just hit our truck at impact, and then hit everything, and I  
16 remember that, just hit our truck and then a burst of flame came  
17 up, black smoke, and then I just -- at that moment, it didn't feel  
18 real, and then I just felt like I was in a dream, and then I kept  
19 telling Tim, I was like what was -- what's going on, dude. I was  
20 like we was supposed to have tracking time. This track's supposed  
21 to be out of service, we're supposed to be protected, positive,  
22 and he didn't know what to say. He just panicking. He's on the  
23 radio, and then I tried keeping myself together, and I seen all  
24 the passengers coming out of the train, and then some passengers  
25 were on the tracks, and I told them to stay off the tracks because

1 sometimes, you know, you never know that a train might be close by  
2 and hit our debris or whatever is on the other track. I kept  
3 forcing them to get off the track. Some of them wouldn't get off  
4 the track, but there was only so much I could tell them, and I  
5 told them just stay off the tracks, I'm going to find them a way  
6 because they said the other entrance on main track 1 is locked. I  
7 told them that just stay off the tracks, I'll find you guys a way  
8 out of the tracks, and then we grabbed one of the fences from the  
9 yard and lifted it up and moved it, and we told all the passengers  
10 to get off the track safely, just hurry up, move it up fast, don't  
11 take your sweet time. Some didn't listen, so one of the  
12 contractors was there with us. He was yelling at them, too, just  
13 get off the track, get away from the trains, like go to the street  
14 side, and then right after that, I seen the conductor come out of  
15 the train and I told him that everybody out of the train. He said  
16 everyone's out of the train, everybody's out of the train, and  
17 then he said we can't contact our engineer, and we couldn't get a  
18 hold of him, and I told okay, let's clear the tracks and we can  
19 try to at least see if we can get in contact with him because we  
20 were going to go and see if he was still there, but there was too  
21 much black smoke and fire everywhere, and everything was just --  
22 there was a lot of debris everywhere. And then right after that  
23 everyone cleared the tracks, the fire department and the police  
24 came, everybody came. I made sure that all the contractors were  
25 accounted for, and they said -- I seen them put one contractor in

1 the truck. They said they were going to take him to the hospital,  
2 so at that point I knew that one contractor was hurt, but nothing  
3 serious, but the only serious that they said that -- I heard the  
4 that contractor went on fire a bit, but they took it out, so they  
5 took him to the hospital. And I talked to the other contractor,  
6 told him that they had everybody accounted for. He said they had  
7 everybody, everybody's safe, just one guy going to the hospital.  
8 I was okay, so all I knew that the engineer wasn't responding to  
9 nobody, so I was scared that he was pretty hurt. I didn't want to  
10 have any type of critical injuries or anything. I just wanted  
11 everybody to be safe. And after that when the fire department  
12 started taking out the fire and everything, I made sure Tim was  
13 okay. Tim kept blaming himself. I told him it's not your fault,  
14 we don't know what happened, dude. We did everything we could.  
15 We had tracking time. I don't know what happened, and after that,  
16 I feel my whole body pull down. I just started like crying and  
17 everything because I was so scared because the train was like  
18 right next to us. If it wasn't for me looking again at the train,  
19 we could have had a pretty bad fatalities, so -- and then right  
20 after that, just everything -- the day just went by slow.

21 Q. Okay. Thanks for all of that, Gilbert. I appreciate that  
22 you went through everything and we didn't have to ask you a lot of  
23 questions, but I do want to go back and I do want to ask you a  
24 couple of questions about the job briefing. Was everybody that  
25 was on that particular task for that day, were they present at the

1 job briefing, physically present?

2 A. Yes, they were there.

3 Q. Okay. And kind of characterize for us what was the takeaway  
4 in terms of tracking time, not the form B, but in terms of  
5 tracking time, what was relayed to the group? Did you -- was  
6 there any tracking time that was talked about?

7 A. All I heard was that tracking time was going to be just from  
8 -- to Sierra to Scott and North Sierra to Center.

9 Q. You have to speak up a little bit.

10 A. I'm sorry. I'm thinking. All I heard was tracking time was  
11 going to be from Sierra to Scott and then from North Sierra to  
12 Center, but they were just saying everything was going to be the  
13 same from yesterday, and then I asked Tim actually what was from  
14 yesterday, and he told me they were just going to go to San Bruno  
15 yard because it was my first day with them on the form B. That  
16 was the whole week because I guess they'd been with chug (ph.) the  
17 whole week so they knew exactly what was happening. It was my  
18 first day with them on the form B because the manager wanted me  
19 there to get learning for the form B so I know what to do if I was  
20 ever on a form B, but besides that, they said tracking time was  
21 just going to be the same as yesterday and the day before, and  
22 that's when I asked Tim what was the tracking time that we're  
23 having, and that's when he told me it was Sierra to Scott and  
24 North Scott to Center on main track 2, both of them, so that's all  
25 I remember that was discussed.

1 Q. Okay. But you took a swipe at conducting a job briefing.  
2 It's all part of your kind of internship or --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay. So did you tell the group that they had tracking time  
5 on either main track at the job briefing?

6 A. No, Claude told them that we were waiting on tracking time  
7 because we didn't have approval at that time because the approval  
8 was at 9:30 and it was only like around 7:30, so he said we had to  
9 wait, so they never -- in the first briefing we never had a  
10 discussion, really a discussion about tracking time until we got  
11 to Center, and that's when we -- me and Tim discussed tracking  
12 time with them.

13 Q. Okay. Did you overhear the conversation that Tim had with  
14 Claude?

15 A. When he received the two tracking time limits, I did hear  
16 that. I was next to Tim when he received both of them, but  
17 anything about releasing any tracks I did not hear none of that.  
18 I wasn't there.

19 Q. Okay. What was your understanding -- you mentioned two.  
20 Take us through what you believe you heard about the two tracking  
21 times, which track were they on and for how long, and the limits  
22 if you remember.

23 A. Okay. The first tracking time was at authority 209 from  
24 Sierra to Scott. That got okayed at 9:31. It was until 1600 I  
25 believe it was. And then our second piece of tracking time was



1 210, it was okayed at 9:34 between North Scott and Center, and  
2 that one was until call.

3 Q. And please take me through the 209 was for what track?

4 A. Both of them was on main track 2. It was on 209 and 210.  
5 They were both main track 2.

6 Q. Okay. And who got those two pieces of tracking time?

7 A. Claude got both of the tracking times.

8 Q. And how did you hear that? He was having a conversation or  
9 did it come over the radio? How should I understand that?

10 A. Well, as I was informed that our WIC of the group was going  
11 to grab tracking time, and then once he grabbed the tracking time,  
12 he was going to call Tim, so we were able to copy it down and get  
13 acknowledged what time to get on track, so that's what I was  
14 informed of, and that's what happened after he called the -- after  
15 he grabbed the tracking time, he called me and Tim and gave us the  
16 tracking time so we could be on the tracking time so we got  
17 rolling.

18 Q. Okay. And the tracking time of the other one, 210, that was  
19 on main track 2 as well?

20 A. Yes, that was on main track 2.

21 Q. Okay. And was the track -- was the next authority for  
22 tracking -- or request for authority for tracking time, that was  
23 211?

24 A. I believe it was. I wasn't there when he gave Tim the  
25 tracking time, but I heard that it was 211, but any other

1 information on that I don't know about.

2 Q. Okay. Does it make sense that they would have reached out to  
3 the dispatcher to get tracking time to set the equipment on, and  
4 that would have been for filing main track 1?

5 A. Yes, sir. It was.

6 Q. Okay. Let's go back to the job briefing again.

7 A. All right.

8 Q. Did you or anybody at the job briefing, did you detail what  
9 specifically you were going to do after you set on main track 2?

10 A. Yeah, I was informed that we were going to get on at Center  
11 on main track 2, and we were going to go to 11.7 to San Bruno yard  
12 to pick up poles, and right after that we were going to go to our  
13 work zone inside of form B right after they loaded up and drop off  
14 the pole -- either drop off the pole or they were going to install  
15 the pole first, and then we were supposed to make our way back to  
16 San Bruno yard at 11.7 to grab more, I guess another pole among  
17 materials, and then go back into the form B and then stay inside  
18 of form B for the rest of the day and just work.

19 Q. So the description about going to 11.7, stopping and picking  
20 up material, is that something that you expressed to the group as  
21 part of the task, the sequence of task, or was that something that  
22 Claude covered?

23 A. Claude covered that one. It was me, and the contractors, and  
24 -- but he -- the contractor's foreman was the one who said that we  
25 were going to stop at San Bruno yard first at 11.7.

1 Q. Okay. So let me kind of truncate what I understand. After  
2 the job briefing, the sequence was equipment, go down to Center,  
3 don't set on, wait until somebody arrives, we'll get protection  
4 for you, we'll get you tracking time on two, we'll get you  
5 tracking time on one while you temporarily follow it, but the idea  
6 was that after you're on track 2, go up to 11.7, the fabrication  
7 yard and load up material.

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. Typically how does that -- how long does that take?

10 A. I was never with them on how long it took, but we were there  
11 probably for a cool 20, 30 minutes before they put the first pole  
12 on the trailers, and I didn't know what else they were doing. I  
13 don't know if they were grabbing another pole or they were  
14 strapping that pole down to the truck, but roughly I don't know  
15 how long that takes them to do it because I never been with them,  
16 and seen how fast they go, so -- but we're roughly there for like  
17 20 to 30 minutes just loading up one pole and then getting the  
18 little trailer on tracks.

19 Q. Okay. In your training, if somebody has tracking time  
20 authority, talks to the dispatcher, and is intending to release  
21 that tracking time authority, whether it's on main track 1, main  
22 track 2, whatever, do they typically call the people that that  
23 will affect?

24 A. Yes, they make sure that -- so if somebody's on the tracking  
25 time, they make sure they call and let them know that they're

1 going to be releasing time (indiscernible) and all of that to let  
2 the guys be clear from the track and then if there's going to be  
3 no tracking time, so they're going to be following the track to  
4 provide TAW, and then if there wasn't no wait on tracking time, we  
5 made sure that nobody was following the tracks when he released  
6 the tracking time, and then just make sure that like if they need  
7 to follow the tracks that let us know so we can provide any type  
8 of TAW, but we always make sure that there are people or  
9 contractors and watchmen to clear of the tracking time and let  
10 them know -- inform them that we're going to release them before  
11 we release them.

12 Q. TAW stands for what?

13 A. Train approach warning.

14 Q. Okay. You can't use train approach warning for everything,  
15 right?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Can't use it for having -- if you're having equipment within  
19 four foot of the tracks or any type of equipment on tracks you  
20 cannot have TAW. You only can provide TAW if it's only hand work,  
21 hand tools, and maybe a little bit of power tools, but no type of  
22 big equipment, excavators, skid stairs, and all that.

23 Q. Okay. At the time, were you with Tim this whole time from  
24 when you set on at Center, trammed up to the fabrication yard to  
25 load up equipment, were you in his presence 100 percent of the

1 time?

2 A. 100 percent of the time because when the contractors are  
3 sitting on track he wasn't with me. I wasn't with him. I was in  
4 the truck, he was at the crossing. I went up more to stay in the  
5 truck to, you know, make sure that the truck doesn't move on or  
6 whatever, but he was at the -- he said I'm going to stay at the  
7 crossing to make sure that they're going. Just go two poles up,  
8 you know. Once they're getting on just -- I'll meet you in the  
9 truck, you just stay where you're at. I was like, okay, that's  
10 what we're going to do.

11 Q. Okay. Do you have any recollection of any conversation that  
12 Tim would have had with Claude or Claude calling Tim to discuss  
13 the release of a tracking time authority on main track 2?

14 A. No, we were not informed nothing about having anything  
15 released on main track 2. We knew that the only way that we were  
16 going to release main track 2 was if Tim called Claude to say that  
17 we're clear from our limits. That was -- that's what Tim told  
18 Claude. He's like we'll let you know when we're out of limits so  
19 you can release, he said, but now we're not. We're going to stay  
20 on track, but I'll call you back to whenever it's -- once we clear  
21 our limits.

22 Q. Okay. And by clearing that, I don't want to put words in  
23 your mouth, but that would have been after you got up and entered  
24 Claude's form B.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Right?

2 A. Right after we passed North Scott, that's when Tim was going  
3 to call Claude to release track time on 210.

4 Q. Okay. Gilbert, thank you for all that.

5 MR. HIPSKIND: Let's see what the other interviewers have on  
6 their mind.

7 BY MR. BRUCE:

8 Q. Gilbert, how was time transmitted specifically? Phone or  
9 radio?

10 A. It was between the company's phones.

11 Q. Phones?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. How many folks with your work group, and be specific,  
14 contractors to your employees?

15 A. That was there at the San Bruno yard?

16 Q. No.

17 A. Oh, just at the briefing.

18 Q. Just at the briefing at Center Street.

19 A. There were four contractors, three Caltrain employees. There  
20 was -- no, no, four Caltrain. There was me, Wilber, Tim and  
21 Claude, and then it was four (indiscernible) contractors. There  
22 was eight of us all together.

23 Q. That's all I have.

24 MR. HIPSKIND: Thanks, Rick.

25 Jim?

1 MR. RIDGEWOOD: Yes.

2 BY MR. RIDGEWOOD:

3 Q. So when he was communicating, Robins (ph.) was communicating  
4 to Hidalgo, did they do it on the company phone I understand, but  
5 do they -- did they do it on speaker phone? Could you hear or  
6 were you just getting one side of the conversation?

7 A. No, he was on speaker phone when he was collecting the  
8 (indiscernible) authority number at 209 to 210. He was on  
9 speaker. He was on the passenger side of the truck, I was on the  
10 driver's side, and we were both copying it down.

11 Q. You both copied it.

12 A. Yeah, I put it -- when he was copying it down, I put it on a  
13 little notebook that I had in my pocket. I wrote it all down that  
14 what we had, but he wrote it down on our tracking time book, but I  
15 believe that was inside of our truck when that happened, so --

16 Q. That's all I got.

17 MR. HIPSKIND: Thanks, Jim.

18 Robert?

19 MR. SEBEZ: Dick, I'd just like to ask for your courtesy if I  
20 could ask about the adjacent track at form B. I assure you that  
21 it does have relevance.

22 MR. HIPSKIND: Sure, go ahead.

23 BY MR. SEBEZ:

24 Q. So sounds like you were -- you comforted Tim, you were sure  
25 what your limits were, right, when you were at San Bruno yard?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. Okay. And were you involved in the work the day prior?
- 3 A. No, I was not.
- 4 Q. No. Have you been involved in that type of work before?
- 5 A. Not with that specific group, but putting up poles I was  
6 always with surveying or the OCS crew, or just putting regulators  
7 up.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. But this typical group I was never with. This was my first  
10 time with them.
- 11 Q. Okay. Was -- do you know if main track 1 was ever to be  
12 followed throughout the course of the day?
- 13 A. Well --
- 14 Q. Besides sitting on at Center?
- 15 A. Yeah, well, they said -- what I've heard is that they may  
16 follow main track 1, but it wasn't a for sure because they didn't  
17 know if they needed to do anything on main track 1, but it was  
18 either -- it was -- the foreman of the contractors said they might  
19 follow main track 1 just to see what they had to do the next day,  
20 but besides that, everything was just going to be on main track 2  
21 that day.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- 23 A. That there shouldn't be any type of work on main track 1.
- 24 Q. Sure, and the crane was used at San Bruno yard?
- 25 A. Yes.



1 Q. And there was no tracking time, no form B for that?

2 A. There was only tracking time on main track 1.

3 Q. On main track 2, right?

4 A. Oh, yeah, main track 2.

5 Q. That's okay.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And what is the reason why Claude wasn't at San Bruno yard?

8 A. Because he was putting the flags up on the southbound trains  
9 with Wilber and then he told us that we're going to meet at  
10 San Francisco station, south San Francisco station, that me and  
11 Tim were just going to -- we were going to meet down at south San  
12 Francisco station while they just stay over there, and we just  
13 hydro there after our work's done.

14 Q. Okay. All right. No more questions. Thank you.

15 A. Okay.

16 MR. HIPSKIND: Jim?

17 MR. JIM BROWN: I have no questions. Thank you.

18 MR. HIPSKIND: Derek?

19 MR. DEREK BROWN: Yes, I've got one question.

20 BY MR. DEREK BROWN:

21 Q. At any time were there any discussion with you regarding the  
22 tracking time on the main track 1 while you all were getting at  
23 Center?

24 A. No, I did not hear nothing about -- the only thing I was  
25 informed at, we were going to get tracking time on main track 1,

1 but I wasn't there. I didn't hear them discuss about Tim  
2 receiving the main track 1 from Claude or releasing it, so, yeah.

3 Q. Okay. Thank you.

4 MR. HIPSKIND: Is that all, Derek?

5 MR. DEREK BROWN: Yes, sir. That's all.

6 MR. HIPSKIND: Mitch, let's hear from you if there's anything  
7 you want to clarify.

8 BY MR. MCCARTHY:

9 Q. I think it was pretty thorough. You did a great job. Thank  
10 you for your input even though you had to relive the situation.

11 It is very important for the safety aspect. I do have one  
12 question. Is the San Bruno yard and the visitation location the  
13 same?

14 A. No, they're like -- they're way different.

15 Q. And -- okay, so the job briefing in the morning, was that at  
16 the San Bruno yard or at the visitation?

17 A. That was at the visitation.

18 Q. Okay. All right. That's fine.

19 MR. MCCARTHY: Thank you. I have no further questions or no  
20 further --

21 MR. HIPSKIND: All right. Thank you. Gilbert, are you still  
22 good to go?

23 MR. PADILLA: If you have any other questions I'm able to  
24 answer, yeah.

25 MR. HIPSKIND: Okay. Rick? Jim? Robert? Jim? Derek? Any

1 other questions?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm finished.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have no other questions.

4 BY MR. HIPSKIND:

5 Q. I just want to touch base. Maybe we didn't ask the right  
6 question, but for all the conversation about all the tracking  
7 time, you've told us what you know.

8 A. Yes, I did.

9 Q. Okay. And I just want to confirm, if there was a tracking  
10 time that Claude released with the dispatcher, you are not aware  
11 that that was done.

12 A. No, I was not aware.

13 Q. Okay. All right.

14 MR. HIPSKIND: Gentlemen, that's all the questions I have.  
15 If nobody else has any, we'll close out.

16 MR. PADILLA: Yeah, we can.

17 BY MR. HIPSKIND:

18 Q. Let me ask you just these few questions. Is there anything  
19 that you would like to add or change about your conversation with  
20 us today?

21 A. The only thing I would add is that you guys -- that the last  
22 time I seen Claude was the visitation. Anything else we didn't --  
23 him and Wilber were gone and we were just going to meet them at  
24 South Center just to make that clear, inform you guys that that  
25 was the last time we seen Claude before the incident, so that's

1 all I have to add.

2 Q. But that was part of the plan. Everybody knew that.

3 A. Yeah, me and Tim knew that that's what we're going to do.

4 Q. And are there any questions we should have asked but did not?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay. And do you have any suggestions for preventing a  
7 reoccurrence?

8 A. Preventing a reoccurrence? I feel like that if you're  
9 getting tracking time or adding tracking time, someone -- if  
10 you're with a group, more than two people, that other person  
11 should be next to you and knowing if you guys -- if anybody has  
12 people, so like you have like a second perspective of everything,  
13 make sure everything's clear and that they heard it, that --  
14 before any type of getting or releasing or any type of thing that  
15 makes everybody feel safer than just one person going on because  
16 then if one person does something, then not everybody knows, and  
17 no one knows what really happened or any type of thing, so I feel  
18 like any time you get tracking time or releasing tracking time,  
19 you should always have somebody, even if it's a contractor that  
20 knows the area or another Caltrain employee, they should be by you  
21 referring and making sure that everything's right before you get  
22 -- or release it.

23 Q. Okay. Let me just make an observation. I think what you're  
24 alluding to is a lot of this communication with the dispatcher  
25 probably is being done on cellphones, and not radios.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Is that what you're kind of pointing out or not?

3 A. Well, not really. I was just saying that like say that we  
4 have more than two people by each other, right, like Caltrain  
5 employees. I feel like that everybody should refer like -- let's  
6 say that somebody's releasing track or getting tracking time, the  
7 other person next to him should go over it again and make sure  
8 that everything's clear, everything's good and safe because  
9 there's different aspects that -- recurrence or any type of thing  
10 that could happen that might not -- because I just want to like  
11 know what happened, why did this happen, like I know you guys are  
12 the same, want to know why this happened, and I feel like why it  
13 happened have like different types of conclusions in my head, what  
14 could have -- what happened, what didn't happen and everything,  
15 but I feel like it should be better reference or type of protocol  
16 of calling tracking time and stuff like that.

17 Q. Better communication.

18 A. Yeah, better communication.

19 Q. Especially when it concerns tracking time and release --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- of tracking time.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Is there anyone else we should interview? We  
24 interviewed Claude, Tim, you. We'll probably interview a couple  
25 more personnel that were out there.

1 A. No, I think that's it.

2 Q. Okay.

3 MR. HIPSKIND: Listen, Gilbert, great interview. We  
4 appreciate your assistance to the investigation, and with that,  
5 we'll close the interview.

6 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: CALTRAIN COLLISION WITH  
CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT NEAR  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA  
ON MARCH 10, 2022  
Interview of Gilbert M. Padilla, IV

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD22LR007

PLACE: San Francisco, California

DATE: March 12, 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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lois D. Rush  
Transcriber