# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations

**Interview Regarding Investigation PLD21FR002**

**Atmos Energy Corporation Natural Gas-Fueled Explosion During Routine Maintenance in Farmersville, TX on June 28, 2021**

Name: Marco Rodriguez

Organization: Bobcat Contracting

Title: Foreman

Date of Interview: 6/30/2021

I have reviewed my transcript(s) from the above referenced accident and:

- [x] I have no comments to make.
- [ ] My comments are submitted herewith.
- [ ] My comments are marked on the attached copy.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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| Investigation of: | * | |
| | * | |
| NATURAL GAS-FUELED EXPLOSION DURING ROUTINE MAINTENANCE FARMERSVILLE, TEXAS ON JUNE 28, 2021 | * | Accident No.: PLD21FR002 |

Interview of: MARCO RODRIGUEZ, Foreman
Bobcat Contracting

McKinney, Texas

Wednesday,
June 30, 2021

APPEARANCES:

SARA LYONS, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

STEPHEN JENNER, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ALVARO RODRIGUEZ, Pipeline Accident Investigator
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

KEVIN COLTERYAHN, Pipeline Safety Inspector
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EDUARDO JIMENEZ
Occupational Safety and Health Administration

MICHAEL TAYLOR
FESCO, LTD

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Bobcat Contracting

GLEN CARTER
Bobcat Contracting

JOHN McDILL
Atmos Energy

I N D E X

I N T E R V I E W

MS. LYONS: This is NTSB Pipeline Case Number PLD21FR002. This interview is June 20, ’21 gas -- natural gas flash fire in Farmersville, Texas. These interviews will be -- are being conducted at the Spring Hill Suites Hotel in McKinney, Texas, and today is June 30th, 2021.

This interview is being recorded for transcription at a later date. Copies of the transcripts will be provided to the parties and the witness for review once completed. Transcripts will be redacted to remove any personal and sensitive information before being entered into the public docket prior to release of the final report.

For the record, Marco, please state your full name with spelling, employer and job title.

MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: Marco Rodriquez, M-A-R-C-O R-O-D-R-I-G-U-E-Z, and foreman is the position.

MS. LYONS: Okay. And you’re allowed to have one other person of your choice present during the interview. This other person can be an attorney, friend, family member, coworker or no one at all, and it looks like you, you have someone with you today. Can you just introduce yourself?

MR. CROSS: Marshall Cross, Bobcat Contracting, M-A-R-S-H-A-L-L C-R-O-S-S, coworker.

MS. LYONS: Okay. And I’ll now go around the room and have each person introduce themselves for the record. When you

introduce yourself, please include your name with spelling and your employer's name. I'll start, and then we'll progress around the table clockwise starting from my left.

So my name is Sara Lyons, S-A-R-A L-Y-O-N-S, and I'm with the National Transportation Safety Board.

MR. JENNER: My name is Stephen Jenner, S-T-E-P-H-E-N J-E-N-N-E-R. I'm also with the NTSB.

MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ: Good morning. My name is Alvaro Rodriguez, A-L-V-A-R-O, Rodriguez, R-O-D-R-I-G-U-E-Z. I'm a pipeline accident investigator with PHMSA.

MR. COLTERYAHN: Kevin Colteryahn, K-E-V-I-N C-O-L-T-E-R-Y-A-H-N. I'm with the Railroad Commission of Texas. I'm a pipeline safety inspector.

MR. JIMENEZ: I'm Eduardo Jimenez, E-D-U-A-R-D-O J-I-M-E-N-E-Z, and I'm with OSHA.

MR. TAYLOR: Michael Taylor, Michael Taylor, FESCO, LTD.

MR. CARTER: Glen Carter, G-L-E-N C-A-R-T-E-R, with Bobcat Contracting.

MR. McDILL: John McDill, J-O-H-N M-C-D-I-L-L, with Atmos Energy.

MS. LYONS: All right. So with that, we'll get started with the interview.

INTERVIEW OF MARCO RODRIGUEZ

BY MS. LYONS:

Q. So you're employed by Bobcat.

A. Yes.
Q. Can you tell us about your time with them, your experience?
A. It's been, well, closing in on four years here. I moved around a couple times. I started with a different crew back in 2017. Early 2018 is when I shifted over with Marshall and I've been with him ever since doing this pigging stuff, cleaning lines here and there, station work, whatever is asked of us.
Q. Okay. Great. So can you discuss the events on the day of the accident, just going back from, you know, your first becoming assigned to the accident and just walking through in as much detail as you can and, you know, if you're talking for a while and you need to take a break, just let me know.

But this is just your opportunity to walk through, like, becoming aware of this task, people that maybe you talked to or coordinated with, what happened today and then let me know if you need a break. So we're just listening.
A. Okay. I'll, I'll start from the moment we got to the location.
Q. Okay.
A. We had just picked up the gauge pig, which is a tool we use in the line that we were going to launch the next day. Me, Adolfo and Uni (ph.) got there. It was raining at the time. Shortly after we got there, Atmos Energy got there, Chris Thomas got off and said, we will hold off until this hard rain blows by, which we did maybe 10 minutes and then it turned into a light drizzle.

So we got off. I unloaded the -- the gauge pig from Adolfo's truck and then we started working on it. We had to put a transmitter inside the pig so we can track it in case anything goes wrong. If it stops somewhere in the line, we can track it.

After that, as I was doing that, that's when FESCO ended up showing up. They got off. They met with Atmos, got the okay to start blowing the line down. As they were blowing down, I went back to the main line just, I always check just to make sure it's close as they're blowing down.

I went back and got my board. We have these boards we take pictures of with the pace we're running that day just with information about the job, what type of pig. Took my pictures. FESCO finished blowing down. There was no more flames coming out of the flare.

We got the okay to open the door. Me and Adolfo worked on opening the door. As soon as we got the door open, I got inside the TRACON, inside the machine. I went to lift the gauge pig to put it inside the line. They removed the straps. I backed up. Then they proceeded to grabbing the push/pull, which is a pull we use to push the gauge pig into the pipeline.

They got their bonding cables on there. That's when I went and put the bucket in the machine onto the back of the push/pull. Chris Thomas was the spotter that I was watching. He gave me the signal to move forward with pushing the pig into the line. As soon as he said stop, I stopped.

I came off the pole. I started tracking back. As soon as I started tracking back, I turned my cab to see where I was going. As soon as I turned my cab, that's when I hear the explosion. I turn around and I see four guys on the ground. I get off the machine.

I see Deric. I see Ethan on the ground. I see the other FESCO guy on the ground. He's mobile. He's moving. I see Adolfo. He gets up. His eyes are bloodshot red. They're tear -- they're like, tears in his eyes. His face is all covered in black stuff.

I go and try and see if Ethan and Deric are okay. I move -- I tried to wake them up, but -- but no response. Atmos then proceeds calling 9-1-1 and that's when -- when I saw that Deric and Ethan just wouldn't respond. That's when I called my boss, Marshall.

Then after that, shortly -- a few minutes after that, maybe three, four minutes after that, that's when you start hearing the sirens and people start coming and after that, it's just when everyone got there. I mean it all just happened so fast.

Q. Okay. Yeah. Thank you for walking us through. I know it's difficult.

But so if we could, like, backup even further. So was there a discussion about, like, the steps that everyone would be going through before the work started, like, maybe a safety briefing or something like that?

A. Well, we always before. I mean know what we're going to do. It's like a routine every single day.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. I mean, yeah, we go with the process of just blowing the line down and then once it's good, Atmos will give us the okay to open the door and just stuff like that.
Q. Okay. So this was a type of job that you had done many times before?
A. It's a routine job. Yes, ma'am. We've been doing this at that location for about a week and it -- nothing has been different. I mean it's always been the same every single day. We know what we got to do, but not -- I just don't know what happened the other day.
Q. Okay. So was there anything that was different that day that you thought of?
A. Aside from it being a different pig, no.
Q. Okay.
A. Or raining, because it was -- when we started opening the door, harder rain did start coming down.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean that -- those are probably the only two things that may have been different is a bit heavier rain and just different type of pig we put on the line that day. But --
Q. Okay, and how about the people? Was it typically the same team of people?

A. Last week, for FESCO, we had two other guys. One of the guys went on vacation, I believe, so they sent two other guys.
Q. Okay.
A. But I've worked with Deric. Deric is a very good worker. He knows what he's doing. He's --
Q. So you had worked with --
A. Deric, yes.
Q. -- all of -- with Deric --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and the --
A. And the other FESCO guy.
Q. Okay.
A. Yes. I have worked with them.
Q. So you've worked with the before --
A. Yes.
Q. -- on similar jobs?
A. It's nothing new to them.
Q. Okay.
A. So --
Q. Okay. So that day, you wouldn't have had a safety briefing because it's routine, is that correct, and then maybe at the beginning of a new job like this? So you had been out there for --
A. Yes.
Q. -- a while and you --

A. Yes.
Q. So at the beginning of that sequence of, you know, the job at this site, what steps were taken to, like, walk through, make sure -- even though it is kind of routine, were there discussions that took place to just make sure everyone was on the same page?
A. Well, you just make sure the right valves are closed. You might -- you make sure the right ones are open. For example, a bypass maybe leave that open. A kicker line should be closed. The main line valve should be closed.

I mean that's really the only process that leads to when we start blowing down the actual line, and the FESCO just does their own thing. They blow down from another valve and they open it when they get the okay from Atmos.
Q. Okay. So your responsibility was mostly related to operating the bobcat, is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay, and is that the same responsibility you usually have when you're out doing jobs like this?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So that's pretty much your task when you're --
A. Yes.
Q. -- when you're out?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay, and so I guess you've done this so many times it sounds like maybe you're aware of the entire sequence of events, but

that's not really your area. Would that be fair?
A. I don't understand your question.
Q. Like, you're not checking for gas? You're not necessarily making sure? You're just operating the bobcat?
A. No. We try and check for everything. If there's maybe gas seeping through somewhere, we notify Atmos.
Q. Oh, okay.
A. Stuff like that. No, I mean we all work together. I mean if they need help, we'll help them if they need help doing something. I mean I don't just strictly stay back and let everyone else do everything. No, I try and help if they need help --
Q. Okay.
A. -- along those lines, but --
Q. So what, was there anything like that on the day of the accident?
A. No, not that day. Like I said, when FESCO started blowing down, me and my guys were taking pictures that we needed to of the pig.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Atmos was watching over FESCO while they did that, but --
MS. LYONS: Okay. Well, thanks, Marco. I appreciate walking through it. That's all the questions I have for this round.
Steve?
BY MR. JENNER:
Q. Okay. Hi. This is Steve Jenner. I'm with the Safety Board.

Thank you for your story. You're the first person we're talking to on scene, so we appreciate you getting us up to speed.

There are names that I'm not familiar with, so if you could establish who the names of the people and who they're with that would be helpful.

A. Okay.

Q. So we'll start with your guys.

A. Ethan Knight.

Q. And what -- who is he with and what was his title out there.

A. He's with Bobcat Contracting. He's general labor.

Q. Okay.

A. And Adolfo Ruiz, A-D-O-L-F-O R-U-I-Z.

Q. Okay.

A. He's also with Bobcat and he's also labor.

Q. We'll call him general labor?

A. Do skilled labor.

Q. Okay.

A. And then just myself, Marco Rodriguez.

Q. Right, and you were -- what was your title?

A. Foreman. Foreman operator.

Q. And you worked the equipment?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Okay, and from FESCO, do you know the names?

A. I know Deric and I believe his last name is Tarver, D-E-R-I-C, I believe, Tavern --

Q. Okay.
A. -- T-A-V-E-R-N.
Q. Okay.
A. And he's with FESCO and I think he's an operator, but I'm sure he's in a hard position now. I don't really know his position.
Q. Okay.
A. And then the other guy I don't know the name of.
Q. Uh-huh. Do you know what his title would've been?
A. No. I just know --
Q. Okay.
A. -- it's FESCO.
Q. Okay, and there were Atmos people on scene?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you know their names?
A. Yeah. Chris Thomas.
Q. All right.
A. And Rodger Ballinger. I believe that's how you pronounce his name.
Q. Okay. And what were their titles?
A. FCC. I know Chris Thomas is in FCC and Roger may be also. I think he works under Chris. So --
Q. Okay. So of the two Atmos people, Chris was in charge of -- he was more the veteran guy with Atmos?
A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Okay. So I'm just going to bounce around with questions. Just in terms of your background, you gave us an overview. What sort of training classes have you taken to prepare yourself for your position?

A. Well, I mean I would say it's mostly on field experience. You start from knowing nothing. You start from the bottom. You work around guys that have experience. You learn from them. They teach you. They tell you where you're wrong, where you're not wrong.

It's just you learn over the years, and then aside from OQ classes and that we take whenever they (indiscernible).

Q. Right. Can you tell me about some of the OQ classes you have taken?

A. I mean it's just all work in pipeline, there's tapping, there's just coding, there's digging hot lines, there's -- I mean --

Q. Are those, like, annual requirements for you?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you find them helpful? Those type of classes?

A. Yeah. You learn. You learn a lot.

Q. Okay. So how long in your -- how long have you been a foreman in that position with the company?

A. About two weeks, I would say, a week and a half.

Q. Oh, so before two weeks --

A. I was an operator.

Q. -- you were never a foreman?
A. A foreman.
Q. Okay, and so prior to that, you were an operator?
A. Yes.
Q. And how long were you an operator?
A. Let's see, maybe you can jot down a year, year and a half, two years. I can't really gauge it.
Q. Okay. So how does one become a foreman once they've been an operator?
A. I guess you just -- you know what you're doing. You know the steps. You're -- the people above you see what you do, how you work, make sure you know what you're doing. I mean they're not just going to hand you that position if they don't believe you can do it.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. I mean you just work your way up. That's the way I see it.
Q. All right. How did those two weeks as a foreman go for you? Did you feel comfortable?
A. Yes. Every single day was fine. I know -- I know what I'm doing. I knew what I was doing. We've done it multiple times, not just these past two weeks. As a labor hand, I've done this. As a skilled laborer, I've done this. As an operator, I've done this.

I mean we've been doing this for over -- almost three years, the same thing --

Q. Uh-huh.
A. -- the same procedures, same process. I mean it's nothing new. I mean --
Q. Right.
A. I wasn't nowhere nervous or scared or nothing. I mean it's just another day.
Q. Okay, and in terms of what piece of equipment were you operating that day?
A. An excavator.
Q. Okay. And how long have you been operating an excavator?
A. Like I said, maybe two years.
Q. Two? Okay, two years. Did you have any issues with this excavator in terms of mechanical issues?
A. No.
Q. Worked well for you?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So what, as a foreman, what are some of the duties that are unique to being a foreman that weren't -- you weren't responsible as an operator?
A. You have a bigger responsibility. You need to make sure everything is in place, make sure everything's going right.
Q. Are you able to do that, because you're operating the excavator and -- but you also have more duties? How do you manage that sort of workload?
A. What needs to be done on the ground as -- I take care of that

before I ever get on the machine. Once I get on the machine, everything that's on the ground should have already been taken care of aside from maybe someone putting a strap on something I need to lift because obviously, I mean, I need a lift with the machine. I mean --

Q. Right.

A. -- you know, that's just how I take it.

Q. So the people who you were on your team, Ethan and Adolfo, had you worked with them before, and how frequently?

A. Yes. Ethan, he got hired on, I believe, in January.

Q. Okay.

A. And I --

Q. Of 2021?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay.

A. I've been with him almost every day -- every day we worked since.

Q. And how was your -- how did you see him, his abilities?

A. I mean he's new, but he, he worked hard. He was a quick learner.

Q. Okay. So how new was he? New to the pipeline industry?

A. That I do not know.

Q. Okay.

A. I don't know his background before he got here.

Q. Right. So what was his duties on that day, if we can talk

about Ethan?
A. Helping with putting the pig in the line. He's one of the guys that would grab the push/pull, which is the pull we use to push the pig into the pipeline.
Q. Okay. So when you say he was new, is he still learning the trade?
A. No. He knew he -- he pretty much knew what he was doing along those lines.
Q. Right.
A. He's been doing it for months now. I mean --
Q. Right.
A. -- it wasn't anything new to him. But --
Q. So helping put the pig in the line and he's manipulating the pole. So what else is he doing?
A. At that moment in time, I mean there's nothing for them to do. The rest is for the operator to push the pull in.
Q. Okay, and then Adolfo, can you describe his duties?
A. Pretty much the same thing. I mean helping with anything we need on the ground if I'm on the machine.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Same thing with the pole. We usually have two guys on the pole. It's a pretty heavy pole. I mean they just push the pig in the line and proceed with me pushing it in with the machine.
Q. Okay.
A. Spotter. I guess you could call him also a spotter.

Q. That's Adolfo?
A. Yes.
Q. Yeah. So spotter, is he -- he's helping direct you?
A. Uh-huh, but sometimes you can't see your spotters. So sometimes you have other guys outside spotting you, maybe watching them. They spot them and then they spot me. But that's usually how it goes.
Q. Right. So how did it go that day compared to the other days in terms of efficiency and --
A. I mean it was the same thing. I mean they would relay signs, I would watch the FCC tell me when to stop. I would stop. Tell me to go, I would go.
Q. Okay. We haven't talked about the FCC yet. So if you can describe how you interact with the FCC? What is their role on scene as it relates to -- as applies to what you're doing?
A. We can't do anything unless the FCC's there. So without them there, we can't do anything.
Q. Okay. So once they are there, then --
A. We --
Q. -- then how do you interact with them?
A. I ask them, is it okay to do this next step, whether it's FESCO being there. Well, is it okay if they struggle on the line down? They proceed doing that. After that, I ask the FCC, okay. Is it okay? Can we open this door? They say, yes. We proceed doing that, and they just -- I mean they supervise us as we do our

job making sure everything's going --
Q. All right. So the way you described it, it sounds like a very close supervision? They're onsite near you and you're --
A. Yes.
Q. -- interacting with them --
A. Yes.
Q. -- every significant move?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Had you worked with the FCCs before?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. How was your working relationship?
A. It's good. It's good.
Q. Were both of them together, the two FCCs?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And I think you described that -- that Chris was maybe the lead of the two?
A. I would say yes.
Q. So did you have most interaction with Chris?
A. Yes. Well, and Ron. I mean I would have equal to both of them. I mean --
Q. Okay.
A. -- but Chris seemed to be the one to be more in charge of that particular station.
Q. I see. If you could talk about measurements, any equipment that is used out there to, to measure gas and other things before

you're able to do your next step, so is there handheld equipment for pressure measurements or gas, gas levels?
A. I mean there's gauges.
Q. Right.
A. Pressure gauges.
Q. And if you'd walk me through. Who uses the gauges and when -- of, of the two contractors and the FCC?
A. Atmos. Sometimes we do, but we -- Atmos usually had it on this job. They would get their gauges out.
Q. Did they do that on this day?
A. I do not remember.
Q. Would you have expected them to have done it that day?
A. I mean they've done it before the other days so, yes. I just don't remember that day.
Q. Okay. At what points do they use their gauges?
A. Either when they're -- as the line is blowing down just to watch it -- watch the pressure going down and then they leave it on there once it's blown down just to gauge how much pressure is left on the line before we open it.
Q. Right. So do you, you only open it when the gauge has a certain gas reading?
A. Yeah.
Q. Is that zero?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you recall getting confirmation that we are at zero? You

just don't recall either --
A. I -- no.
Q. -- but you is that something you would expect --
A. Yes.
Q. -- to have heard?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay.
A. Yes.
Q. So you don't make a move? You don't start opening and closing doors --
A. No.
Q. -- until it's zero?
A. Never, or you get the okay from the FCC.
Q. Right. Is the FCC the only ones uses gauges? Is FESCO --
A. I -- I --
Q. -- using it?
A. I believe FESCO also has gauges. I don't recall, but I think they have -- I don't know if their flare has a gauge. I'm not sure.
Q. Okay. So you would -- I know you don't recall this day, but you would expect them to do their own measurements, as well? Is that fair to say, FESCO?
A. Either that -- yeah.
Q. Okay. Do you guys, Bobcat, also take readings or is it just the FCC and FESCO?

A. I mean there's times where we sometimes get our gauges out and put it on a valve just to see how much pressure we have.
Q. Right. Of the three of you, who would've done that that day?
A. Me.
Q. Okay. Do you recall doing it that day?
A. No.
Q. You don't recall? So maybe you did, maybe you didn't but --
A. No. I didn't.
Q. You did not?
A. I did not get a gauge out.
Q. Okay. Do you normally get a gauge out?
A. No, because Atmos has been doing it.
Q. Okay. So on the previous days, you would not have gotten a gauge out?
Okay. Are the gauges, do you know how they're -- how do you verify that they're working?
A. We get them calibrated.
Q. That's for your own gauges and --
A. I'm sure they get theirs calibrated also.
Q. Got it. Okay. Tell me how rain affects this process?
A. Just -- it's just rain. Maybe slip, trips and falls, but I mean we had none of that that day. If there's maybe lightning around. We can't work around lightning, so --
Q. Right.
A. -- but, yeah, I'm sure if there was lightning around the

area, we would not have been allowed to do anything. So --
Q. Okay.
A. -- I don't recall any lightning that day.
Q. Right.
A. Just rain. Light drizzle. Then as we started actually proceeding with the job, it started falling a little bit harder. But that's it.
Q. Does rain affect the gauges?
A. I don't think so. I mean sometimes we put plastic baggies over them, but --
Q. Okay. Does it affect the -- how pressure's being vented, gasses being vented?
A. I don't think so.
Q. Okay. So the rain's just sort of cause you postpone operations, but if I'm hearing that you don't think it affected it?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Is there anything particular about this site that concerns you in terms of getting equipment around or visibility?
A. No.
Q. Okay. How long were you at this site over the last days?
A. I would say a week.
Q. Okay. Doing this every day, you were doing the same thing?
A. Yes.
Q. Is that normal for a site that you would do the same thing

every day? You would go into the next site?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean loading a pig really -- I mean it's so routine to do. There's steps to them. I mean when you blow the line down, stuff like that, I mean it's -- I wouldn't say it changes much --
Q. Okay.
A. -- from job to job.
Q. About what time did you arrive on site?
A. Maybe 3 o'clock. I don't -- I can check my phone. I don't -- if y'all need me to.
Q. That's okay. So about 3:00 p.m.?
A. Right around that.
Q. Okay. If things went well that day, routine, what -- how long of a job is that typically?
A. If we don't have to rebuild a -- what you call a mandrel pig, which is a different type of pig -- if we don't have to rebuild it that -- that day before launching it, I would say maybe 30 to 40 minutes max. Just a window. It's around that.
Q. Right. So tell me about the rebuild of the pig? Sometimes you use different pigs on different days?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So up until the day of the accident, did you just use one type of pig?
A. Aside from last Monday? That Monday we used what we call a

foam brush pig -- I'm sorry. Not Monday, Tuesday. We ran it on Tuesday.

Q. Like a week ago --

A. Yes.

Q. -- Tuesday?

A. Yes. We ran it on Tuesday. I'm sorry.

Q. And you're telling me the type of pig you use?

A. Is the foam brush.

Q. Okay. On the day of the accident, did you use a foam brush pig?

A. No.

Q. But the other days you --

A. Tuesday, we used that.

Q. Okay.

A. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, we used a mandrel, a brush mandrel you can call.

Q. A brush mandrel --

A. Yes.

Q. -- pig? Okay, and on the day of the accident, what kind of pig?

A. It was a gauge pig.

Q. So are you, I'll say, building a gauge pig?

A. Well, that one was already sent to us how it is. You don't really need to modify it in any way. You just make sure the -- it comes with two plates. You just make sure they're not worn,

they're not used, which they weren't.
Q. So you do a little inspection of the plates to make sure they're in good shape and the --
A. Yes.
Q. -- proper size?
A. Yes.
Q. Were things in good shape --
A. Yes. I mean the --
Q. -- and proper --
A. -- pig looked fine to me.
Q. Okay. Are you the one who --
A. I did, yes.
Q. -- verifies that? Okay. Are some pigs easier to work with than others?
A. They're not all hard but, I mean, there's just different processes you take on using which ones, as far as the rebuilding process. You don't rebuild a foam brush pig. It comes how it comes. You put a transmitter in it and you run it. Really the only one you actually dissemble is the brush mandrel and the gauge pig.

But that's at the very end of the run when you take the plates it has on just to take measurements.
Q. Okay. So what, does this type of pig present any type of different challenges than the others?
A. No.

Q. Okay. Okay. Before the event, the explosion -- would you call it an -- did it sound like an explosion to you? How would you describe it?
A. Just, like, a loud bang. Like I said, I didn't see. I was turning around tracking the machine back when it happened. All I, I heard a loud bang and I turn around and I just see four guys on the ground.
Q. Okay.
A. As well as the gauge pig. It shot out of the line. I don't know how, but it left the line. It came out of the line.
Q. Do you know if -- when it came out of the line, if it struck anyone?
A. My -- if I had to guess --
Q. Right.
A. Yes.
Q. What, one person, two people?
A. Maybe one.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't know about the other, but maybe one. I mean --
Q. Who -- yeah, I know it's a guess. Who would you have guessed that it struck?
A. Probably Ethan Knight.
Q. Okay. Okay. So just to recap, this sounded like a routine day for you?
A. Yes.

Q. You weren't concerned about the equipment, about the pig, about the people you worked with?
A. Nothing.
Q. Okay.
A. Nothing.
Q. The weather didn't concern you?
A. No. I mean we just can't work in harsh weather. We won't work -- they won't let us work.
Q. Okay.
A. But no.
Q. Your interaction with the -- with FESCO, when the FCC was pretty routine?
A. Yes.
Q. And you had confidence in your employers -- employees you were supervising?
A. Yes. Yes.
MR. JENNER: Okay. I appreciate all that. Thank you. If you need a break, we can take a break or we can continue on.
MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: I'm good.
MR. JENNER: Great. Thank you. Just identify yourself.
MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ: All right. Thank you very much for your time. And the first question that I have is --
MS. LYONS: Can you introduce yourself?
MR. JENNER: What's your name?
MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ: Oh, I'm sorry. My name, Alvaro

Rodriguez with PHMSA.

BY MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ:

Q. And the first question that I have is do you have a procedure to walk through the pigging operations?

A. Yes.

Q. And do you have it on hand when you're working or that's something that you already do as a routine job?

A. Yes. I would say for it's like muscle memory. It's a routine. It really never changes what we do, how we do it.

Q. And the procedure changes from one pig to the other?

A. It can, yes.

Q. Okay. And how it can change?

A. Maybe getting the pigs ready.

Q. Okay.

A. Like I said, sometimes you have to rebuild. For example, the brush mandrel. Something you don't do with a foam brush.

Q. Okay.

A. There's also smart tools, but we don't really get hands on with those. There's a different company that has their smart tools. They come and they do everything they need to do with the tool. All we do is help load it inside the pipeline.

Q. Thank you.

A. Yes.

Q. Is there anything you do differently when weather conditions are not favorable?

A. I mean you just, you watch out for one another. You watch for slips, any trips. You know you're in a wet area. I mean just be careful. If there's lightning, you don't -- we don't work when there's lightning around. Heavy rain, we won't work under heavy rain.

Q. Okay. Do you use anything to cover the launcher or to cover the area of the launcher?

A. No. I mean that day we did have an umbrella --

Q. Okay.

A. -- but hovering over us but, no, typically no.

Q. Okay. And how did you communicate with each other? Did you carry any radios or you just --

A. It's vocal.

Q. -- verbal?

A. It's vocal.

Q. Okay. And are there any points you have to communicate with the control room or control center?

A. I did not. No.

Q. Okay.

A. If Atmos did when I wasn't around, I don't know. But no, I didn't. I don't communicate with them.

Q. Okay. Do you know who would manage the gas flow in the --

A. No.

Q. -- launcher? Okay. Do you recall if the flare was on when the explosion occurred?

A. We had the -- it was ventilating. I know that. The valve was -- the two inch valve where they blow down through the flare that one was open.

Q. Okay.

A. There was no flames coming out after it had been blown down though.

MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Sounds good. I don't have any other questions at the moment.

MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

BY MR. COLTERYAHN:

Q. Hi. Kevin Colteryahn with the Railroad Commission of Texas. So at the beginning of these, typically you're -- a pigging project, normally would you have a tailgate safety meeting?

A. I would say at the -- I -- let's say we get to a new job, the first days, yes.

Q. And that would be led by the FCCs possibly?

A. And Bobcat. I mean we both work --

Q. Each? Everybody have a portion?

A. We both work together on what --

Q. Right.

A. -- we're going to do.

Q. Okay. So we talked about that you had run the foam pig and three brush mandrel gage pigs the week before?

A. Yes.
Q. Were there any issues with those runs. The gas was blown off, flared off, everything went as expected. Any indications with any of those runs of gas seeping by one of the -- either the main line valve or the kicker valve or anything?
A. No. The only issue we had with that particular valve was on Monday when we blew it down, it kept continually blowing. We did find the right spot to where it would stop.
Q. And that was on the main line --
A. Yes.
Q. -- with the 24 inch valve?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. And you were --
A. And then --
Q. -- aware of that and you got that --
A. Yes. After that, that was the very first day we were on that jobsite that we --
Q. And that was the thumb pig?
A. Well --
Q. Or --
A. -- since we've been preloading --
Q. Uh-huh.
A. -- on Monday, we got there, blew the line down and preloaded the pig we were going to run on Tuesday.
Q. Right.

A. So on Monday, we noticed the slight detail and we ended up fixing it to where it just stopped --
Q. Okay.
A. -- and we marked it and everything and we've been --
Q. Okay, because we did notice the marks on there that y'all had marked that. Okay.
A. And then every single day after that, there has been no problem with that.
Q. And you didn't have any issues with that?
A. No, sir.
Q. Okay. All right. On the previous runs, did the FCC use a gauge on the barrel?
A. Yes.
Q. And where did he have that placed?
A. There is a blow down stack right above --
Q. Right above the door?
A. Yes, at the very top.
Q. At the very top, the one inch --
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So you would have -- Bobcat would have a file with the procedures in your vehicle on location? You have an Atmos procedure for pigging on location?
A. I do not. Aside from the Appendix B, I don't think I have one.
Q. And you were -- with the previous run, you had identified a

part -- the leakage by the valve. Would you -- do you recall if that would be an AOC on that procedure or just something in your experience that, hey, that's -- that's kind of an abnormal operating condition and we need to correct that before --

A. Yeah. What made it abnormal is the flare kept blowing. Usually when you blow the line down and everything gets sealed off --

Q. Uh-huh.

A. -- and the flare stops, you know everything is sealed off. There's no gas seeping through anywhere. But that day, it just kept blowing.

Q. Okay. Okay. So the one FESCO, I believe, Deric I guess you worked with before?

A. Yes.

Q. And he had been with this project for the previous week?

A. No.

Q. No? Oh, he switched out. Somebody went on vacation? Okay. And so he come in just this week?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. But you know of him and had worked with him in the past?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So were the FESCO guys assisting Adolfo and Ethan with the push/pull and everything at the time?

A. Yes.

Q. And that's just --
A. They were not asked to.
Q. It's just courtesy that --
A. Yes.
Q. -- they're good workers and want to help out?
A. Yes. Like I said, we always trying to help one another.
Q. Right. There was a grounding cable on location?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. And would y'all use that cable in the operations?
A. Well, you bind it from a part of the pipeline to the actual pole --
Q. To the pole.
A. -- to ground it.
Q. Okay.
A. To prevent anything.
Q. And that was in place during that?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So you said that Chris was directing you to push the pig in. You got to the point --
A. That's --
Q. -- where it went past the shoulder where you needed it to be that he stopped you and said that's good.
A. Yeah. When he told me to stop, I stopped.
Q. Okay, and then you released the bucket off of the pole?
A. Yes. At that point, whenever I'm pushing in with the

machine, the guys near the trap door stand back, and then I'm watching. As soon as it's okay to remove, they go back in and hold the pole so I can come off it to keep it --

Q. Keeping it from banging --

A. -- keep people from falling, yeah.

Q. Right. Very good. How does -- how would Chris know how far in?

A. You can gage the pole from --

Q. Okay.

A. -- from the side. As you're pushing in, you see the pole going in. I mean maybe it was as far as he wanted to go in, but I just stopped when he stopped, when he told me to stop.

Q. Didn't know if there was, like, a flag or a paint spot or something to say, okay, this where we're at and this is where we need to get to. Just his knowledge of what's going on. Okay.

A. Yes.

Q. And so he stopped you. Those guys come in to hold the pole. You release he pole and start to back up?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you have kind of an elapsed time from you released off the pole? There's no indications of anything wrong at that point? The pole stayed there?

A. They held it in place.

Q. They held it in place.

A. It was fine.

Q. Do you have a -- kind of an estimation of a time from when you released and turned to when you heard the explosion?
A. Seconds.
Q. Okay.
A. Almost -- I wouldn't say instantly. I removed, tracked, turn around --
Q. You were able to track a little bit --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and turn?
A. Yes. As soon as I did that, that's when I heard the -- the loud boom.
Q. So with that being that quick and you not quite getting -- or just barely getting of the way, would that indicate that they were still holding the pole or in the process of pulling it out, because you have, what, 20 foot possibly a pole in there to be pulling out. So they'd be in the process of pulling that out?
A. Yes.
MR. COLTERYAHN: Okay. That's kind of the only (indiscernible) questions that I have at the moment I do believe.
MS. LYONS: Okay.
MR. COLTERYAHN: That's all I have. Appreciate it. Thank you very much.
MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, sir.
MS. LYONS: Do you need a break?
Okay. So, Michael, if you don't mind introducing yourself

and any questions you have.

MR. TAYLOR: Michael Taylor, FESCO, LTD. at this moment, I have no -- no questions.

MS. LYONS: Okay.

BY MR. CARTER:

Q. Glen Carter with Bobcat Contracting. Marco, do you remember who was where on the pole?

A. No.

Q. Okay.

A. I don't know if I can remember. No, I --

Q. Okay.

A. I don't remember.

MR. CARTER: That's fine. That's fine. That's the only question I had.

MS. LYONS: Okay. All right. So we're going to go through --

MR. McDILL: Oh --

MS. LYONS: I'm sorry, John.

BY MR. McDILL:

Q. John McDill with Atmos Energy. Marco, thank you --

A. Yes, sir.

Q. -- for being here for sharing your story with us. It was really helpful. You said earlier that a typical job like this may take 30 to 40 minutes? And just -- I'm not clear on the process so you've helped me out a lot. The -- can you talk about the

determination of how you -- how a decision is made to open the door or the pig trap? Can you kind of walk through that process again for me?

A. We make sure the line is blown down. We left the -- on that particular job, we left the flare open. I mean usually if there's still gas, you see flames coming out. There's nothing -- there was nothing come out at that moment in time. Before we went in though, you just always make sure the right valve is closed.

For example, the main line valve. But after that, I mean you get the okay from whatever Atmos representative is there. If he feels like it's good to open the door, then we proceed to open the door.

Q. Okay. You talked about gauges earlier with, you know, determination of pressure. Is there any other instruments that are used to help determine -- or decision whether to open the door or not?

A. Well, no, unless FESCO has something on their end that I'm not too familiar with. I don't mess with their equipment.

Q. Okay.

A. I mean to gauge the pressure on the line, I would say no. No, sir.

Q. Okay. And you said earlier that you don't recall whether gauges were being used that day?

A. That day.

Q. You do recall gauges being used the other days that --

A. Yes.
Q. -- proceeded that?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay.
A. Like I said, I mean it was raining. I mean --
Q. Sure.
A. I don't really recall.
MR. CARTER: Right. Okay. I think that's all the questions I have. Thank you.
MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
BY MS. LYONS:
Q. So this is Sara Lyons again. So I have a sketch that was provided of the scene. There's some below ground piping shown as well that might be good for just, like, orientation. So I was wondering if you could walk through -- and we can write on this too -- the job and the minutes before the explosion and explain to us, like, who was where? Maybe let's start from before the door is opened.
A. Okay.
Q. And the questions about decision. So we'll start back there, who was where, kind of who did what and, you know, feel free to draw on here. Maybe we could write folks names --
A. So before --
Q. -- if you'd like.
A. -- we ever open the door?

Q. Yeah.
A. Atmos, so I'll put Chris, Roger, I would say me, Ethan and Adolfo were right here.
Q Uh-huh.
A. FESCO was around right here monitoring their flare.
Q. Okay
A. We're here. As soon as I got done taking my pictures, we were just waiting on the flare to be done flaring and get the okay from Atmos to proceed opening the door.
Q. Now at that point, which valves are closed and which are open? Like --
A. This one right here should be closed. It's a kicker line.
Q. Okay. Can I have that pen? I'm just going to --
A. Okay.
Q. I'm just going to write with you, like, when you're saying stuff. Okay. So this would be closed?
A. Yes. And this main line route should be closed. That keeps gas form going in here anywhere.
Q. Okay. So you're just isolating this --
A. Yes.
Q. -- small section?
A. Yes.
Q. And then on the day of the accident, do you know those to be closed?
A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Okay, and then continue. Sorry. Walking through who -- so who did what there? So you guys have all -- you're waiting for the flare to go out?
A. Yes.
Q. And then what? What happens next?
A. We get the okay from Atmos.
Q. Does FESCO make a call about the flare or everyone sees --
A. Well --
Q. -- it's out?
A. Well, FESCO and Atmos both, well, it's okay to go, and then they give us the okay --
Q. Okay.
A. -- that they're done flaring. There's no gas.
Q. And does Atmos do anything -- do they need to -- so there's a gauge somewhere that they're going to look at or has that already --
A. I don't know if FESCO has a gauge on their equipment.
Q. Okay.
A. That I don't know. But usually there has been a gauge up here --
Q. Okay, to measure --
A. -- monitoring pressure.
Q. Okay. So there's a pressure gauge there and typically Atmos looks at that and the flare and then they give --
A. Yes.

Q. -- you a decision? Did they do that that day?
A. I don't recall.
Q. You don't recall. Okay. Okay, but the decision was made and then the door was opened?
A. And everything seemed fine.
Q. Okay.
A. There's nothing out of the ordinary that I recall once the door was open.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't recall any gas -- nothing.
Q. No sounds?
A. I don't recall that.
Q. No smell that you remember?
A. I don't recall that.
Q. Okay.
A. But it's just another routine day. I mean you open the door and we proceed by loading the pig that we're going to load in that day.
Q. Okay. And then what happens next?
A. Well, you open the door. I get on -- once I know the door's open and we're ready to load the pig, the machine is stationed back here, pig that day was -- it's usually around right here.
Q. Okay.
A. Okay. So on this day, Adolfo, he's the one that put the strap on the pig, which I use the machine to lift and drive over

here and proceeded to loading the pig inside the line.
Q. Okay.
A. Okay, and then once we got it loaded, the guys --
Q. Can -- sorry. Can you just step through the loading process? So you have the strap on the pig. You're moving the pig towards the launcher --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and then you get it partially inserted --
A. Yes.
Q. -- in the line?
A. Yes. Uh, they remove the strap. I come down with the machine. They put some pressure on it just so it won't fall.
Q. Manually?
A. Yes.
Q. So who's doing that?
A. That day, it was Adolfo and I believe it was Deric.
Q. So you remember, like, who was where?
A. They were right here, right on the --
Q. Okay.
A. -- edge of the trap. I mean you come off it. They remove the strap and then they slightly push it in just to the edge of the door and then they proceed to grabbing the pull -- the push/pull and then they place it on the back of the pig and then manually push it until they hit the dead end, which then you use the machine to actually seat the pig --

Q. Okay.
A. -- in the line just so it can be well, in place and that's really the procedure to loading that.
Q. Now for that -- so you said helping initially with the pig was, sorry, Adolfo and --
A. I think it was Deric.
Q. -- and Deric.
A. For sure, Adolfo. I remember him.
Q. And then the strap's removed?
A. Yes.
Q. And then you get the push/pull out? Who does that?
A. The guys on the ground, which would be Adolfo and Ethan and then --
Q. Okay. So Adolfo --
A. -- FESCO --
Q. -- can walk away at that point and help with the --
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So he --
A. Yes. Well --
Q. He can walk away.
A. -- everybody can walk away at that point. The pig is inside the line. It won't fall out or anything.
Q. Okay.
A. And then at that point, Adolfo and Ethan grab the pull, but FESCO proceeded in helping them.

Q. Uh-huh.
A. And then once they do that, I mean manually they'll shove the pig as far as they can in manually and then they leave it up to the machine to just nudge it a little bit just to make sure it's in place.
Q. Okay. So they had done that. Once they get the pull in place and you're going to use the machine, then about where are they typically located?
A. They're holding the pole up until I touch the pole.
Q. Okay.
A. Once I touch the pole, they scatter back and that's when the hand signals start coming to come forward.
Q. And would they -- the people holding the pole at that stage also be Adolfo and --
A. Ethan.
Q. -- Ethan?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So -- okay, Ethan.
A. But in this case, FESCO also helped. So --
Q. Even at that part, as well?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay.
A. They were all there.
Q. Okay, and so you got it loaded in.
A. Uh-huh.

Q. Atmos gives you the clear that it's in as far as it --
A. I was watching.
Q. -- needs to go?
A. Yes. I was watching them and then they said, stop, so I stopped.
Q. Okay, and then you -- so all four of them are now around helping?
A. Yes.
Q. And -- okay, and then you back up a little bit?
A. Before I back up, they go back in and place their hands on the pole because if I let go, it's going to -- it's just going to fall and it's going to make a loud raucous. So we don't want any of that.
Q. Right.
A. So they go back in there and they hold it in place. I come off it. As soon as I get out of their way, they start proceeding back in -- backing the pole out.
Q. Okay, and so how far out does the pole usually stick at that point? Like, how much room is there for four guys?
A. I can't really gauge. The bucket covers me, but --
Q. Okay. If you're not sure --
A. -- a few feet.
Q. -- that's fine. A few feet?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Okay, and that's basically all you saw?

A. Yes. After removing, like I said, I tracked back. I started turning around to see where I was tracking behind me and that's when I heard the loud bang.

Q. Okay. Okay. So it sounds like everybody is really working together as a team even though have really, like, sub-teams from different companies onsite. But can you discuss the role of, like, Bobcat versus FESCO versus Atmos going and just -- I know you've touched on it already -- when you're coming into this task?

A. Well, for us, Bobcat, our main job is to follow Atmos procedures. Our job is to load the tool we're running that day. My guys on the ground, they assist with spotting me as I'm on the machine. If there's anything before me getting on the machine, I help them whether it's prepping the pig, stuff like that.

As soon as we get done with that and we proceed to loading, then that's when we start doing our job to load the machine. FESCO really is there only to control that flare.

Q. Okay.

A. We didn't ask them to help. It's just out of kind of their heart that they decide to help us. I mean I don't recall ever telling another contractor, hey, come help me do this. No, I mean, if they help, they help. Same with me. FESCO, whenever we're rigging them up, their equipment, they never ask for help unless we're on a machine.

But if I'm on the ground, I mean, I always help them. I don't have to, but just helping them get the job done.

Q. Okay. Just helping working as a team --
A. Yes. I mean that's --
Q. -- working together?
A. -- just what -- at least that's just what I do. I don't know. But Atmos was just there making sure everything was okay, and everything seemed fine. There was nothing out of the ordinary that day. They were there supervising us, making sure we were doing everything right.

Nothing that we could tell that was out of the ordinary that day.

Q. Okay. Thank you. Okay, and then on here, what other instrumentation was there? Was there, like, any monitoring for gas -- or I think you mentioned there, on the pig, there was a location sensor?
A. Yes. It's a -- it's a transmitter --
Q. Okay.
A. -- which sends off a signal to another device that we usually have -- that you could track the pig with.
Q. Okay, and how about for monitoring for gas? Was anyone doing that?
A. Yes. Like I said, there's usually a gauge up here.
Q. Okay. So pressure gauge, but --
A. Yes. That day, I don't recall. Like I said, I mean it was raining. I don't recall that day.
Q. Okay.

A. I can't give you a straight answer. Maybe Atmos knows, but I couldn't give you a straight answer.

MS. LYONS: Okay. Okay. Let's see. That's all I have. Thank you.

MR. JENNER: How are you doing? Do you want a brief break?

Great. Okay. I just have a couple follow up questions and then I'm going to change directions a bit.

BY MR. JENNER:

Q. I think you mentioned that there are times that you're taking pictures. For what purpose do you do that?

A. I send them off to my boss. I believe they send in reports. I don't know if they send in reports with what we're running. My job is just to take the pictures. I just ship them up to him, whether it's at the launcher, at the receiver labeling them. I mean it's just informational pictures about what we're running that day, job number, date, type of pig, stuff like that.

Q. So are you taking pictures of particular -- at particular times in the process when -- at any particular time are you most interested in taking pictures?

A. Before we proceed to loading the -- the tool, the pig.

Q. Okay. How about afterwards?

A. After we receive it? After we pull it out, I start taking pictures also --

Q. Okay.

A. -- of the tool and along with the board.

Q. Okay. So this is just matter of routine every day?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Okay. I'm going to change pace on you. One of the hats that I wear is a human performance person. So we're quite interested in the process and the circumstances, but what I'm going to ask of you, if that's okay, and I'll ask of -- of everyone who's onsite --
A. Okay.
Q. -- is just your overall health and your -- your work schedule. So if I can ask you? There, you know, can be a little personal questions about your overall health. Can you talk about and, you know, how were you feeling that day and -- and how was your medical condition?
A. My medical conditions are -- is fine. [redacted]
Q. Okay.
A. I felt good that day. I mean it's just another day for me.
Q. Okay. I'll ask the specifics. Do you have any chronic conditions, high blood pressure or, you know, anything of that nature?
A. [redacted]
Q. Do you have any short term things like a cold or allergies?
A. [redacted]
Q. Okay. Are you taking any type of medications?
A. [redacted]

Q. Okay. I'll ask you about your sleep. Have you ever been diagnosed with any type of sleep disorder? Do you know if you snore? Anyone ever told you that?

A. [redacted]

Q. Okay. How is your quality of sleep? When you wake up, do you feel rested? Do you -- how do you feel?

A. [redacted]

Q. Okay. Let me talk to you about your schedule. So this accident happened Tuesday. If we can go back to Saturday, did you work Saturday, Sunday and Monday?

A. I did.

Q. Okay. What? Were they the same work hours as Tuesday?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Can you recall the work hours? If we start -- let's start Sunday?

A. Okay.

Q. What was your -- when'd you go on duty?

A. Sunday, I woke up at 5:00.

Q. 5:00 a.m.?

A. a.m., yes. To be onsite at 6:00 a.m.

Q. Okay.

A. I worked from 6:00 a.m. to -- oh, this was a different job, okay? This was not this job.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. I worked at a different job on Saturday doing the same thing

though.
Q. This Saturday or Sunday?
A. Saturday and Sunday.
Q. Okay. So we'll talk Sunday. You woke up at 5:00 a.m. --
A. Yes.
Q. -- you got onsite --
A. Okay. Yes.
Q. -- 6:00 a.m. --
A. Yes.
Q. -- worked from 6:00 a.m. until?
A. About 3:00 p.m. on that job.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. And then from 3:00 p.m. to I want to say 4:00, around there, about 4:00 pm.
Q. What was that 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.?
A. Oh, we moved to our job --
Q. Oh, oh.
A. -- which is the -- I'm sorry, which is the location where the incident happened --
Q. Right.
A. -- and we preloaded a brush mandrel Sunday afternoon.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. And then after that, we purged the line back up and we get out of there for the next morning.
Q. Right. So what time did that shift end, your day end?

A. 4:00.
Q. 4:00. Okay.
A. Not counting the drive home.
Q. Right. So you drive home? How far is your drive home?
A. It's only about an hour, with traffic hour and a half.
Q. Okay, and what did you do Sunday? You go home and you eat? You relax?
A. Yeah, just relax.
Q. Okay. And what time would you go to bed on Sunday?
A. That day, I went to bed about 8:00 maybe.
Q. Okay. And you slept until Monday morning?
A. Yes.
Q. And what time -- about what time would you get up?
A. About 2:00 in the morning.
Q. Okay. That's pretty early. So what'd you do Monday?
A. Well, we had to go be at work at 3:00 --
Q. Oh, I see.
A. -- in the morning.
Q. And that -- is that the same site as the accident?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So you work 3:00 a.m. until what time?
A. That day, well, that was when the incident happened.
Q. This is Monday is when the incident happened?
A. Yes.
Q. Yes. I'm a day off. Okay.

A. Yeah. So that Monday morning, once we launched the brush mandrel and received it, in Rockwall, we drove to Atmos to go pick up the gauge pig that was sent to them.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. After that, we went to the location where the incident happened and that's --
Q. Okay. So maybe I'm confused a bit. What time, approximate time, of the incident?
A. I would say maybe 3:30 p.m.
Q. 3:30. So you're onsite a long time or you're -- you're 3:00 a.m. you're starting your work day?
A. Yes.
Q. So 12 hours before the accident happened, and so just tell me the activities from 3:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in general?
A. Well, 3:00 a.m. we get there just to be ready for Atmos to get there. We -- there's some valves that we need to open and close in order for us to launch the actual pig.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Once we do that, me and two other guys, we track the pig in different locations along the pipeline giving timestamps of where -- what time it passed, how fast it's going, stuff like that.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Just to give Atmos and the tool company information on how it's actually running inside the pipeline.
Q. Uh-huh.

A. We track the line until it reaches the receiver, which is where we end up pulling the mandrel that we launched at the launcher. We pull it. We wash it. I take my pictures before washing, wash it and then if we needed to rebuild it, we would've gone to the launcher and rebuild, but that day we didn't have to so --

Q. Uh-huh.

A. -- we just set it off to the side and that's when me and my guys went to the Atmos office and got the gauge pig, and then after that, that's when we went to the location where the incident happened and we proceeded with this procedure of reloading another pig for the next day.

Q. Got it. So overall, you felt pretty good that day?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. So no concerns about your -- your alertness or how well you felt?

A. No.

Q. Great.

A. No, sir.

MR. JENNER: Okay. Thank you.

BY MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ:

Q. Thank you very much. Alvaro Rodriguez with PHMSA. What records do you keep onsite?

A. Sorry?

Q. What records do you keep onsite?

A. I mean the Appendix B. As far as records, just what we do during the day. I mean I write down in my notes everything we do every single day just to keep tab of what we've done throughout the day, what we're doing and stuff like that.
Q. And what is Appendix B?
A. It's just a form that we have to have.
Q. And what do you record in the form?
A. Well, no. I don't record anything. I thought -- I misunderstood when you said records.
Q. Oh, okay.
A. I'm sorry.
Q. Okay. That's fine.
A. As far as records, record and me recording stuff, it's I record everything we do that day --
Q. Okay.
A. -- on my notes.
Q. And what kind of notes do you take? Do you record any pressure any significant information?
A. It's just what we did that day --
Q. Okay.
A. -- but getting onsite, loading this, tracking, receiving, washing, just stuff like that.
Q. Okay.
A. Those are the type of records that I keep.
Q. Okay, and what do you do with those records?

A. I just keep them for notes.
Q. Okay. So you don't have to provide this to anyone?
A. When we do time, there's a, like, employee time putting in the hours. There's a notes tab and we have to write down what we did that day. So that's reason why I keep them.
Q. I understand. Thank you. Do you have to sign in before getting in the facility? Is there a form for everyone?
A. Not there. No, sir.
Q. Okay, and beside the notes that you take, do you have any checklist when you go through the pigging process, either receiving or launching any pig?
A. I do, in my notes, yes.
Q. Okay, and that's only for your --
A. Well, just I like double-checking myself.
Q. Oh, okay.
A. I know what I'm doing, but I know -- I always double-check.
Q. Okay. Perfect.
A. Just stuff we may need. For example, a fire extinguisher, bonding cables, stuff like that.

MR. ALVARO RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Thank you very much. Miss, on that, I don't have any other questions. Thank you.

BY MR. COLTERYAHN:

Q. Kevin Colteryahn with the Railroad Commission again. I'm going to drop back to your previous pig runs. The one where -- the original one, I guess it was, that you had an indication that

the value had some seepage, gas seepage by.
A. Well, we assume it was that, right? The valve -- the door was closed --
Q. Right.
A. -- but there was still flames coming out. There had to --
Q. Right.
A. -- be something seeping somewhere.
Q. Okay. So that was kind of my question. What --
A. Yes.
Q. What gave you that indication, but the flare was --
A. Yes.
Q. -- still going?
A. Yes. It wouldn't stop.
Q. Okay, and then you adjusted the valve --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and the flare went out?
A. Yes. Yes.
Q. Okay. Okay, and so when on the day of the incident, do you have approximate timespan from when the door was opened to when you inserted -- started to insert the pig?
A. Not exact time. Maybe a minute, two minutes maybe.
Q. So it was pretty --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- quickly after you opened the door?
A. Yes.

Q. Your pig's there ready? You've already --
A. Yes.
Q. -- got it hanging on the excavator?
A. No, not yet because I'm on the ground at that point.
Q. Okay.
A. We're opening the door.
Q. Okay.
A. As soon as we see that it's open, I get on the machine and then I pick up the --
Q. Okay. So it's already tied to the machine ready to pick up or you had to hook it up?
A. No.
Q. Okay.
A. We usually --
Q. There's a little bit of time from when --
A. Yes.
Q. -- that opened --
A. Yes.
Q. -- to when you actually got the pig --
A. Yes.
Q. -- attached to the machine --
A. Yes. Machine --
Q. -- lifted --
A. Machine wasn't on.
Q. Okay.

A. The pig was on the ground.
Q. So you had to start the machine?
A. Yes.
Q. Get ready to hook the pig up?
A. Yes.
Q. Pick that up?
A. Yes.
Q. Did you have to track over to the door or were you pretty much in that position?
A. I had to track a little bit to get closer.
Q. Okay. So that door was open for a little bit of time, should have --
A. Yes.
Q. Indications are it should have aired out somewhat before you started the pig? Okay. All right. For all these long hours, previous pig runs and these long hours, were all these pig runs the same Atmos FCCs?
A. Yes, except early last week. I don't think Chris Thomas was there for one, I believe.
Q. The earlier ones, but as far as over the Sunday operation?
A. Sunday afternoon, yeah. Sunday morning, no. Like I said, I was at a different job Sunday morning.
Q. Okay.
A. Sunday afternoon, yes, the same FCCs that have been there were there Sunday.

Q. They come in Sunday afternoon for this project and were there early Monday morning?
A. Yes, sir.
MR. COLTERYAHN: Okay. All right. I believe that's all I have at this -- on this run, as well. Thank you.
MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
MS. LYONS: Okay. Michael?
MR. TAYLOR: Michael Taylor with FESCO. No questions.
MR. CARTER: Glen Carter with Bobcat. No questions.
BY MR. McDILL:
Q. John McDill with Atmos Energy. Just a few more questions; the process you described of loading the pig the day of the accident by using the TRACON, push/pull?
A. Yes.
Q. Is that a similar process that you had to use for the days leading up to that at the accident site?
A. Yes, sir. Nothing changed.
Q. Okay, and the flaring operation, I think you described because you had the -- something is continuing the flare on the Monday or whatever day that was. The first day of the job that y'all -- every day that the pig was run, was it also was flared?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Go ahead. I'm sorry. Did you --
A. Oh, no. No, I'm good.
Q. As you mobilized to this jobsite you described a safety

meeting. Can you describe more about the safety meeting when the team mobilized to the jobsite? Can you tell us more about that?
A. Well, just the -- speaking of what we do every day, what we're going to do. I mean we just huddle. Okay, Atmos, okay, we're going to load this pig in. We're going to pull line down. Just same process.
Q. Is that -- was that led by Chris or someone else or --
A. Well, I --
Q. -- can you describe how all that worked?
A. I wouldn't say led, but it -- we just -- we're all just there talking about what we're going to do, you know. I mean Chris is the final word there. He's the one in charge. We just go with the procedure of, okay, first we've got to flare the line down. Then after that, I just get the okay from them to open the door.
Q. And that, the participants would be FESCO, Bobcat and Atmos?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Okay. When the -- can you describe the process y'all went through again about the valve and marking the valve?
A. Okay. Well, that was Monday of last week. When we first got there, the first thing we had to do was flare the line down, blow the line down. It hadn't been more than 30 minutes and the flare just wouldn't stop. So we gave it a little bit longer. We made sure the kicker line was closed, but nothing.
I mean it just kept flaring, and that's when we went over to the main line valve kind of nudged it a little bit, placed it in a

certain spot to where it just ended up the flare starts slowing down, and after a while it just stopped and that's when it got marked and ever since then, that's where we've always put the mark and ever since then we've never had a problem with that gas flowing or through the flare or nothing.

Q. So the other times the -- when you closed the valve to the mark, the flare went out as you would expect?

A. Yes.

Q. And based on your years of experience, is -- have you had a similar matter with a valve as you described?

A. I mean there's been times where, yes, the valves do leak and they just don't stop leaking. Atmos may come and grease them to keep them from leaking, but typically, I mean, if they're going to leak, they --

Q. And if there's a problem that needs addressing, can you -- you raise that with Atmos?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You raise that with others, as well for, like, repair of that?

A. Mainly Atmos or if one of my bosses is there, we'll let them know and if they need to contact someone that I don't have contact, then they'll do that.

Q. In your experience with raising an issue like that, is -- are those issue get addressed?

A. Yes. I'm one to speak up if there's something wrong.

Q. And if you felt like there was a problem on the jobsite that felt unsafe, do you have -- can you stop the work?

A. Yes. And I will.

Q. Do you need Atmos' approval to stop work?

A. Well, I'll bring it to their attention. But if it's crucial, crucial, I -- I mean I'm not putting anyone else's life in danger.

Q. Have you had a circumstance like that?

A. No, sir. Never.

MR. McDILL: Thank you. Thank you.

MS. LYONS: All right. Thanks, Marco.

So just before we finish up here, I wanted to ask if there's anything that we haven't asked today that you think would be beneficial to the investigation?

MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: No.

MS. LYONS: Okay.

MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: No. No.

MS. LYONS: All right, and, you know, I'll give you my contact information after and you can always reach out to me.

MR. MARCO RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

MS. LYONS: But this completes our interview for today.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.

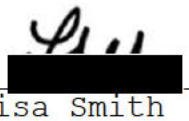
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

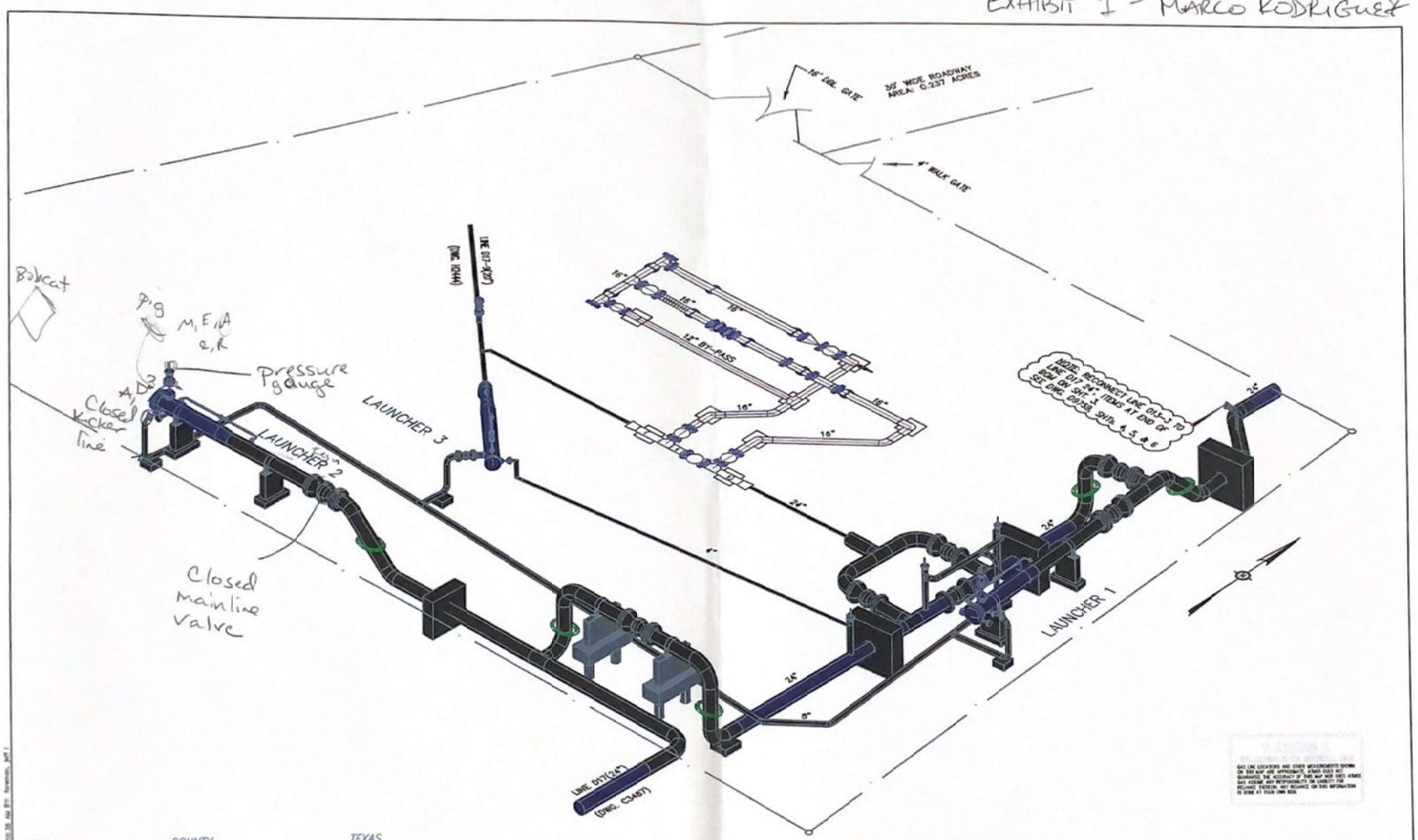
| | |
|---|---|
| IN THE MATTER OF: | NATURAL GAS FLASH FIRE,<br>FARMERSVILLE, TEXAS<br>ON JUNE 28, 2021<br>Interview of Marco Rodriguez |
| ACCIDENT NO.: | PLD21FR002 |
| PLACE: | McKinney, Texas |
| DATE: | June 30, 2021 |

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.



Lisa Smith
Transcriber

EXHIBIT 1 - MARCO RODRIGUEZ

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