UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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

Interview of: MICHAEL GLOVER, Pipeline Technician
FESCO

Via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday,
July 14, 2021

APPEARANCES:

SARA LYONS, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

STEPHEN JENNER, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LOREN KLITSAS, Esq.
(On behalf of Michael Glover)

I N D E X

I N T E R V I E W

MS. LYONS: We're on the record with Michael Glover. This is NTSB pipeline case number PLD21FR002, Atmos Energy June 20, '21, natural gas/fire in Farmersville, Texas. These interviews are being conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams, and today is July 14th, 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 it being entered into the public docket prior to the release of the final report.

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

MR. GLOVER: Hello, my name is Michael Easton Glover, Jr. I'm currently an employee of FESCO. I've been working there for two and a half years and my job title is a pipeline technician.

MS. LYONS: Okay. And you're allowed to have one other person of your choice present during this interview. This other person can be an attorney, friend, family member, coworker, or no one at all. If you would, please indicate who you've chosen to be present with you during the interview?

MR. KLITSAS: This is Loren Klitsas and I'm his attorney, and I'm present.

MS. LYONS: And that's who you've selected, Michael?

MR. GLOVER: Yes, ma'am, that's correct.

MS. LYONS: Okay. So we'll go around the room and have each person introduce themselves for the record. Please include your name, with spelling, and your employer's name. I'll start and we'll progress talk-wise -- well we'll progress to Steve and then Loren. So my name is Sara Lyons, S-A-R-A, L-Y-O-N-S, and I work for the National Transportation Safety Board.

MR. JENNER: This is Stephen Jenner, S-T-E-P-H-E-N, J-E-N-N-E-R. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB.

MR. KLITSAS: This is Loren Klitsas. I'm an attorney in Houston, Texas, L-O-R-E-N, last name is K-L-I-T-S-A-S, and we represent Mr. Glover.

INTERVIEW OF MICHAEL GLOVER

BY MS. LYONS:

Q. So Michael, to begin, can you give us a little bit of your background as far as working in pipeline natural gas systems and your employment with FESCO?

A. Well, again, I've worked with FESCO for two and a half years. We service pipelines for different companies. We're a traveling company and we go all over the U.S.A. -- all over the U.S. servicing pipelines.

Q. Before FESCO, did you work in any other natural gas systems, or was that your first job with that facility?

A. FESCO was my first job doing pipeline. I started my career doing pipeline with FESCO.

Q. Okay, thank you. So if you can go through the day of the accident, just focusing on a time before the explosion occurred from arriving at the accident site, thinking about any details that you remember; what was going on, what were you doing, what you were thinking, how you were feeling as things progressed between the time that you got to the accident site and if you remember any times associated with the activities you were involved in or observed until the ignition occurred, not going beyond that point?

A. Oh, we had a very great day. Michael Glover, myself, and Mr. Deric Tarver. We traveled from one location to another location. I'm not sure with one location what we did like a rig down, and rig downs is where we take down all the pipe that we put up on another location, me and some other guys, me and Mr. Tarver started the rigger down by himself and we had additional help come and help us like, later on because they was still traveling.

After we successfully rigged that one location down, we traveled back to Farmersville to do -- what we do is this thing we call pushing the pig. And we put the pig inside the receiver, I mean, put the pig inside the luncheon and we ship it to the receiver. They was going excellent. Mr. Deric Tarver himself, (indiscernible) that I work with, very skilled as a steel worker. I've worked with him for two and a half years. He's been there 17 years. We have a good friendship, good relationship. We both have high energy, both excited, we were having a great day.

When we got a ride to the location, I think it was around 2:30, 2:30 we got out. I drove to the location, started on the passenger side. We got out. He went to put the -- he went to put the flare stack. This thing is -- we have an instrument called flare stack. He went and put the flare stack in service. I walked to the 2 inch valve that was connected to our FESCO equipment. He put the flare stack in service. Myself, Michael Glover, walked to Atmos Pipeline and I opened up the valve. The reason I opened up the valve, I opened the valve so we could burn off any gas that was inside the pipeline -- inside Atmos' pipeline. And doing so, that takes -- it could take up to 15 to 20 minutes and I think it took around like, 15 or 20 minutes to completely blow all the gas out of the line.

And once we flare all the gas out of the line, we wait 15 minutes and we were now able to -- we are now able to open the door because we give time for the gas -- any trapped gas or anything trapped gas in the pipeline, we give it time to evaporate, equal out -- I mean evaporate. So we try to make sure there's any leftover anything -- anything trapped in the line, we make sure that it is all gone before we open up the trap door to load our instruments in, which is -- it was a gauge plate pig.

Q. So now on the day of the accident, there were three different organizations there working on the site. There were you and Deric from FESCO as you mentioned, three employees from Bobcat and two employees from Atmos. Can you describe the different roles of

each organization and the work that was being done that day?
A. Organization -- I'm not sure what you mean, the -- I'm not sure what they reported was, but I know exactly what our job title was. Again, this is our first time working with those guys -- my first time working with that crew right there over at Bobcat.
Q. Oh okay, so this day was your first day working with these -- with this particular crew?
A. Yes, ma'am.
Q. Okay. So your role -- you and Deric's role that day, what did that include?
A. Well, we were simply there just to blow the gas out of the line and make sure all the gas is out of the line; to make sure there wasn't any trapped gas or anything trapped in between -- inside the pipeline from where -- like I said, like I indicated, we had a flare stack and we constantly burned gas out. That was our equipment set up. And we only had like, one flare stack there, I think we had like, a 2-inch valve and we had like, two things hooked up to that, and a few inches of pipe hooked up to our equipment. That's the only thing that we had on that property was the flare stack, two 90's, 1 inch valve, and a few inches of pipe -- a few foot of pipe there.
Q. So your responsibility, and correct me if I'm wrong, your responsibility was doing the flaring activity?
A. Yes, ma'am, that's what I was doing.
Q. And that was the extent of it? Okay, okay so I have a

photograph of this site that I'm going to share with you. Let me see how I can do that. And -- just a second. So can you see that picture, that first photograph?

A. Yes, ma'am, I see it, uh-huh.

Q. Okay and I have some labels just so that we're using the same terminology and, you know, doing this virtually, can't really point at anything but we can use the labels to help with orientation. So could you walk me through as far as you remember like, who was where and what they were doing from that time when you started using the flare system until the ignition occurred?

A. Okay, like I said, see where I was trucked at, we parked right there, of course. This little igniter box, that's the box that Deric Tarver walked to and he put that in service. I, myself, Michael Glover, I walked to this this 2-inch valve right here and I opened -- I cracked the valve, which I mean, cracking means like, barely open it, just a little bit. We don't want to rip it bit we don’t want to blow too much out at one time and we eased our way into it. And as we start to blow the gas down, we watched the flares -- we watched the tip of the flare to make sure we don't overdo it. You know, we just opened it up just enough to keep everything stabilized -- stable everything. We don't want to -- we'd never want to rip it open, so we gradually opened up until we had the valve completely opened up.

Again, Deric was right here by the ignitor box. After Deric turned the ignitor box on, he walked back to this valve that you

have like, this flow line -- a flat flow line's a flare (ph.). He came back there and he was watching me. He was close to me as I was opening up that -- as I opened up the valve, because he only had like, two switches to hit on this ignitor box to put this flare stack in service. And he, he walked by -- he walked right there next to me on the -- on that valve right there by the wheel, by the main line and we just -- like I said, we had our equipment hooked up to that, that they had two -- we had a 2-inch valve right there.

We had a 1-inch valve right there and we opened it together. He watched me as I was opening up the valve to make sure -- again, to make sure everything was done the proper way, and he was comfortable with me doing it. I was comfortable doing it, and especially with him watching over me to make sure everything was done in a safely manner, as we always do our activities.

Q. Okay and then how long were you standing there?

A. I think around that time, I think it took -- I think it took like, almost 15 minutes to get all the gas completely out that line from this valve to that trap door -- to the launcher door I mean, to the launcher door, it took about 15 minutes to blow all that gas out of there.

Q. And then how did you know that there was (indiscernible) done?

A. How did I know what?

Q. How did you know that it was done?

A. Oh, because we have -- it -- you won't see any more fire come out of it. And it'd have a certain sound, and we can watch it to make sure -- and we have a certain sound and the fire is completely gone out after it's -- after all the gas is blown out of the tip of the flare.
Q. So what do you do at that point now that the fire is out?
A. At that point, again, we wait 15 minutes before we open anything to make sure that -- and we leave the valve open just to make sure that everything was completely gone and we leave the valve open. We never close it, we leave it open.
Q. So during the initial ignition of the flare, it sounded like you had the valve just partially opened and you over time opened it all the way. And once it was open all the way, you're saying that he never closed it again, you never partially closed it, you just left it open; is that correct?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. So let me -- I have one other photo I meant to show you. Sorry, for some reason it’s not wanting to go full screen. Can you see this one?
A. Yes, ma'am, I can see it.
Q. Okay, okay, so in the second photo, let’s see -- you can see the 1-inch valve that you're talking about, we refer to it as valve B; so that's the one where you were standing near, correct?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Okay, and then did anyone else go near that valve after you

opened it?
A. Not, not to my knowledge. Not to my knowledge anyone went there but then again, I'm not 100 percent sure, but I can't recall anybody going back to that -- to our equipment.
Q. Okay, and it sounds like from your testimony earlier, you may have answered this, but just for clarity, did you see if the valve went out on its own?
A. The -- excuse me?
Q. The -- I'm sorry, the flare. Did you see the flare go out on its own?
A. Yeah, it went out. Mm-hmm.
Q. Now, in your previous pig loading jobs where a flare system has been used, have you had many of those?
A. Yes, ma'am. I've been on a couple flare jobs, yes, ma'am.
Q. About how many would you estimate?
A. I'm sure more than 20.
Q. Okay and the -- for pig loading?
A. Uh-huh, yes, ma'am.
Q. Okay, and have you ever noticed any issues with the flare system or the operation in any of those past jobs?
A. No, ma'am.
Q. Okay. So when you’re assigned to a job like this job where you're there to operate the flare system, is it typical for you to assist with pig loading?
A. We -- again, we have -- we work with each other. Sometimes

we've been on jobs where we actually load everything, we load everything ourselves. We actually load the pig inside the trailers, part of our assignment. Actually sometimes we, we have Bobcat or we have other contractors there. Sometimes, sometimes it's negotiated inside the contract that we load the pig, wash the pig, take the pig apart, put the pig together. It just all the vary -- it all depends on what FESCO's -- whatever they put in their contract. But sometimes we actually there by ourselves loading up these pigs and taking them out, putting them together, cleaning them, taking them apart and putting them back together, rebuilding them. It all depends on what FESCO negotiate in the contracts and that's above my job description, so I'm not sure how they work it. I'm not sure how they work 100 percent.

Q. All right. In the past jobs that you've done that were similar pig loading activities, has there ever been an indication that natural gas remained in the pig launcher after the flaring activities were completed?

A. Say that again?

Q. Has there ever been any indication that there was natural gas remaining in the pig launcher?

A. I'm not 100 percent of sure that. You know, I mean, I'm not 100 percent sure.

Q. Okay. I just mean in your experience on jobs you've worked on.

A. I'm not sure because like, we service so many different

lines, I can't remember if there ever was any leak (indiscernible), anything was -- gas that's inside of line, we service so many and -- we do so many jobs and I just don't recall that ever taken place like that. I'm not sure.

Q. So did you -- on the day of the accident, did you run into any difficulties with the flaring system?

A. Flare system, the flare system right there it worked, it worked 100 percent the way it's supposed to operate. Didn't have any issues with it at all on that particular, we had no issues with it.

Q. So when you were on site, did you monitor for gas at all?

A. Excuse me? I don't understand the question.

Q. Like, monitor for gas? Like, some people wear an LEL monitor and there's like, different ways to monitor --

A. I wasn't wearing an H2S monitor.

Q. Did you notice if anyone else was monitoring for natural gas?

A. I'm not 100 percent sure of that as well.

Q. So thinking about after the flaring system, the flame had gone out, and the next activities were in progress of loading the pig; can you walk me through your role there? Like, if you were at all involved in opening the launcher door, how you knew it was safe to do that and, you know, how you assisted and who you were assisting?

A. Well, I was assisting Bobcat. This trap door is just a little bit different than the normal doors we would normally use.

This -- again, this job was set up for Bobcat and they had -- they have different tools, different instruments of opening up this door. Like I said, this door was very different from any other door I ever serviced.

Again, Bobcat had the tools, they was opening the door and Deric and myself was just assisting those guys as they're getting the door open and we was just helping them out, getting the doors open to the launcher.

Q. So were you right near them when they were opening the door?

A. Yes, ma'am. We -- all three of us -- we was all three standing right there; two Bobcat guys and Deric and myself was right there, hand in hand, working with those Bobcat guys. We was right there working hand in hand with those guys.

Q. To get the door open?

A. To get the door open, uh-huh.

Q. Did you notice anything unusual about the door opening, like any pressure pushing the door back or just anything that seemed out of the ordinary to you?

A. No ma'am, everything seems -- it was -- I was watching because -- like I said, it was different, the way you open the door because they was using like, some kind of instrument, like a drill or something like that to open the door and close the door. They was -- that was something very different. When they usually just have handles on it when you can hand open the door and you close it back like that. It was just like a (indiscernible) thing

you do with your hands, not with a drill or anything like that; it was just a little different, the door.

Q. And so once they got the door open, can you walk me through like, the steps?

A. Uh-huh. Yeah, once we got the -- once we opened the door, I'm not sure what -- who was on that -- who was on the -- we got the door open successfully. We had one of the Bobcat guys get on the track hold, which is the bulldozer. He lifted up, brought it close to the launcher door. Again, the strap was still on the gauge plate pig. He brought it to the trap door. The door was -- of course, the door was completely opened. It was open for at least about ten minutes at that time, ten or 15 minutes, at that time the door was just open. We loaded up, we brought it to the door, he can only do so much and after you get it closer to the door, we -- us four guys, we pushed the pig inside the trailer by hand.

Again, we lifted it with a -- we used a lifting strap, what's called a restraint, so I took the -- I took -- after we got the pig halfway inside the trap -- I mean, halfway inside the launcher door, I took the restraint off, or the strap -- or the lifting strap, whatever you want to call it, I took it off and I had it in my hand. And I think Deric -- I think it was Ethan Adolfo (ph.), that used -- they used the pig puller that I think is a little -- our instrument -- a little instrument right here, and we pushed the pig in as far as we can by hand.

After we loaded all we can by hand, we had the operator of the track hold push the rest in with the bulldozer -- with the pipe. So we pushed it in, we used the aluminum pipe and used the bucket of the track hold to push the rest of the gauge plate pig into the reducer. Again, I had the strap in my hand. The door was open for about -- that time, about, 15, 20 minutes.

Deric and Adolfo, I think they were standing on the left-hand side and I was standing on the right-hand side of the launcher door. I had the strap in my hand. The reason I keep saying -- I keep repeating myself by me having the strap in my hand because that will kind of like, make the difference in my issues and I think that's how I avoided -- you know.

So I turned like, a step away from the trap door to put the strap on the ground and as soon as I went to go do that -- and an explosion just came out of the middle of nowhere. Like, I don't -- and it just happened -- just then in -- just that quick. All I did was took one step to put the strap on the ground, and I think that made all the difference in my life. After the explosion, it just sent all three of us in the air and I fell on my right shoulder. I was lying there and Deric got blown back.

Q. Okay. We don’t have to go through that part.

A. And my injuries -- I woke up -- I mean, I blacked out when I hit the ground. I was laying on my right side. I felt my shoulder hurting a little bit. I didn't know how bad my injuries was. I looked and I think I was waking up by -- and then by the

time I woke up it was raining so I was soaking wet -- and I woke up I was soaking wet. And I was calling those guys names, I'm telling everybody to get up. I was telling them guys to get up. I said man, you got to get up man, we got -- we got to get back home. And I can't hear myself talking because we was right in front of the -- we was right in front of this trap door when the explosion took place. I couldn't hear myself talking, I couldn't hear anything. I thought I was deaf, I thought I lost my hearing.

And I also thought I was bleeding out the ears but it was the rain -- the water from the rain, and suddenly I woke up, it was like, a heavy shower, I was drenched and soaking wet. And I remember calling those guys names, but I -- I'm hearing myself -- I'm listening to myself scream to the top of my lungs but I couldn't hear anything because we was right in front of the door when the explosion happened. And I still -- we all three just went up in the air and again, I remember falling and I blanked out and I was calling these guys names.

I could hear myself call -- I couldn't hear myself, but I know I was screaming loud. And like I said, I thought I went deaf and I thought I lost my, my hearing and I thought I was bleeding out the ears but it was like, rainwater. And I think I blacked out again. I think I blacked out again and this time, the ambulance -- I mean, I -- the ambulance was putting me on the -- I was getting loaded up onto a stretcher -- on the stretcher, and I was trying to call those guys names. I said -- I asked -- I was

telling the EMS that -- I said I can't hear, I think I'm bleeding out of my ears. I think my ears are bleeding. I can't hear anything and they lifted me up and he loaded up the -- was cleaning it and they showed me it was just, it was just rainwater.

I said we can't -- I was just telling them we can't leave those other guys down there and all of a sudden, I was looking at my coworker, he, he didn't move. And I looked down at the Bobcat guy and he didn't move as well. It was just -- I was like, come on man, we can't leave you guys out here, man. We've got to go home.

(Pause)

And I just felt helpless that I couldn't help them out and they wasn’t moving. And I was like man, he has to go -- we got to go, he has to get back home to his family. Like, this wasn't supposed to happen. And again, I have no idea what happened but I know that it shouldn't ever happened because that door was opened for almost 20 minutes and -- I don't know how it can -- that much gas come out of a line like that and it was way too much. It was way too much. It was way too much just -- even if the valve was even just leaking, that was way too much. Too much gas and too much fire come out that -- out of that trap door like that for the thing to be opened as long as it was open.

And I trust Deric with my life because he's very knowledgeable and he's very -- he's a very skillful worker. He's been doing it for 17 years. He knows everything about this. He

knows everything about this job. He knows it and I trust him. And to see him lying like that and to see this -- to see it happen to him and he just -- it just wasn't right.

He's -- this man's been doing for 17 -- he know -- he knew this work. He's high rank in this field of business. I mean, he's done this over and over and over and I work hand in hand with him so wherever he's at, I'm right there with him. And I just feel -- I feel so -- I feel guilty just to be doing anything because we was all right there together. That's why it was so hard for me to even just come do this interview because I don't -- my last memory was this guy just smiling and just being happy. Life ended.

MS. LYONS: My God, you know, I'm -- let's go off the record for a second.

Off the record.

(Off the record)

(On the record)

MS. LYONS: So back on the record with Michael Glover.

BY MS. LYONS:

Q. If we could just back up to a little bit earlier, that same day, when you arrived to the site or maybe right before you got there, were there any safety meetings discussing the work that you were going to be doing that day?

A. Yes, ma'am. There was a safety meeting.

Q. And when was that and who was involved?

A. I think the Atmos guys was going to -- they were -- the Atmos guys were doing the safety topic and they just let us know what we was going to be doing.

Q. Did they get everyone together? Was that just like, you and Deric with the two Atmos employees?

A. It was me and Deric; I think it was two Atmos guys and I think it was Bobcat.

Q. Do you recall what was discussed?

A. Just -- I think we just -- we gone blow down, we just going to flare out the gas that was trapped inside the pipeline and we was going to load the pig into the trap -- I mean load the pig up into the launcher. It's -- yeah. It was a simple job -- it was supposed to have been a simple job. And again, like, we done it a couple of times so we knew what our job description was. But again, they had the safety meeting to cover everything that was supposed to be taking place.

Q. So you mentioned it was raining for some of the time that you were there, was it raining when you arrived?

A. It had rained earlier. When we had arrived, yeah, it had rained earlier so -- but it wasn't raining when we got to -- it wasn't raining while we was flaring and all that. It wasn't raining at all when we were flaring.

Q. So it was raining before you got there -- it looked like it had been raining?

A. It looked like it had been in the area. Like, again, we had

left one location and went to another location so yeah, the ground was -- you just know it rained over there in the area.

Q. And was it -- when was the first time you noticed -- did you notice that it was raining prior to the explosion?

A. I believe it had drizzled a little bit. I think it drizzled -- it rained a little bit. It rained a little bit. It rained a little bit.

Q. And do you recall what activities were going on while it was raining?

A. By that -- when it was raining, I think we had -- I think this time we was standing around waiting. That's right after we had finished with our flare stack. After we finished the process, I think it started raining heavy when -- I think it started raining during the process of standing around just waiting for, you know, the 15 minutes before we we're able -- before we were able to open up the trap door. I mean the launcher door.

Q. And then how about when the launcher door was opened, do you remember if it was raining then?

A. No, it was still -- I know it was still, I know it was still kind of damp a little, but I don't just -- it wasn't -- I don't think it was fully raining like that. I don't think it rained until I, I woke up soaking wet.

Q. Do you remember the weather changing any of the work that was done that day? Did it influence when things were done or what was done?

A. Excuse me?
Q. Like, did the rain, or any other weather but I'm guessing rain because that's what you mentioned, did it influence the way people were doing their job?
A. I don't think so. I don't think so. I mean, it was -- it's all -- everything -- we still -- we do everything the safe way. We try to do everything the safe -- make sure everything is done a safe way. If the weather was incoming -- if it was that bad, then we wouldn't try to service anything, we'd just have to wait it out. It's not that it's -- nothing's more important than making sure that we're doing things the right way, the safe way. We never want to do things the fastest way. We want to do everything the safe way, and, and we -- myself, Deric, and everybody has the right to not do something they feel is unsafe.
Q. So you have that authority when you're doing work?
A. Well, me and Deric -- we all discussed that.
Q. Do you sometimes cancel jobs because of the weather?
A. If it's lightening -- if you see lightening, I think within -- I think 20 or 30 yards, we stop work -- we cannot work under those conditions. I think that's FESCO policy and I think it's a lot of guys' policy. It's -- in the oil field business.
Q. Do you recall smelling gas at any time on the accident site, either before or after the explosion?
A. It's kind of hard to say. I didn't smell any gas. I didn't smell any gas while we was flaring the gas, I didn't smell

anything then. But whenever you open up those doors like that, you always going to -- it's all going -- it's going to smell different because it's trapped, it's been there for a while so. And sometimes it's kind of hard to determine if anything -- if there's anything leaking in it or anything like that because it's -- it has a sound to it when you open up the door. I don't know whether it's trapped steam or something make, (indiscernible) that, you know, that -- and it's kind of hard to tell when you open up the door because you're going to have a different smell any time you open up that door. It's going to -- you're going to smell gas, anything inside -- trapped inside that -- inside those doors back there. Whether it be from condensate or wet gas, any kind of leaks, any kind of fluid that could go in inside those pipelines, so it's going to always smell different. It's all going to be -- it's all going to have some kind of smell to it.

So -- and especially with gas being there. So of course you're going to smell like some kind of gas but it's not -- you don't know if it's leaking or not. Sometimes you don't know if it has leaked by or not.

Q. So would you characterize the smells at the site typical of any other pig launching job or was there anything that stood out to you about this particular job?

A. No, other than the way the doors was set up on it, I think everything was, I think everything was just the same, the same job that we've always done. It's always pretty much the same steps

except the only thing different was that they used power tools to open up the trap door versus just using a hand -- manually opening with your hands and things like that. So the doors was -- that was a little different but the vapors on the doors, it always -- it’s all going to smelled funny when you open up the door of anything that’s trapped. Same as your refrigerator, it's all going to have a -- a different -- you don’t smell anything on the outside but when you open it up, you going to get a different fragrance. And we have like, a lot of vapors coming out that door and it has a loud sound when it's opening up.

Q. So you typically smell something when you open a door?

A. Yes, ma'am.

Q. So did you notice when they were -- I guess all four of you were using the push pull, did you notice if the grounding cable was attached to it?

(Pause)

A. I believe so. I believe it did have the, I believe it did have the -- that cable.

Q. Did you happen to see where it attached to?

A. It attached to, it either attaches to the pipe, the pipeline -- I mean, the pipe itself or it’s on a trap door, and it's on the -- it's grounded and we put it on the rod.

Q. So on the rod, and then as far as where it connected to the launcher, you're not sure exactly, it might have been on the door, it might have been on the launcher itself?

A. Mm-hmm. Yes, ma'am.

MS. LYONS: Okay. So that's all I have for now, so I'm going to turn it over to Steve. Thank you.

MR. JENNER: Hi, Michael, thanks so much for, you know, the details that you provided so far. I'm just going to bounce around.

BY MR. JENNER:

Q. While you were talking, I was taking some notes and I just had some follow-up questions for you, if you can elaborate on some areas. To start, you said you were employed about two and a half years with FESCO. I was just curious about what type of training they provided you to perform your jobs?

(Pause)

A. Well, they trained me -- they trained us on our equipment -- how to use our equipment. They give us the breakdown on the flare stack. They let us know how to use it, how to put it in service, how to take it out of service, how to ignite it, how to use -- how to turn the gas on, how to turn it off, and how to create a spark without over -- without overdoing it. And they probably trained us on those flare stake on the job that we were doing out there for that particular day. They showed us everything about those -- about the flare stack.

Q. Is that through like, on the job training or is there also some classroom training?

A. It’s classroom training and it's, it’s classroom training and

it's in the field; it's hands on as well.
Q. So when it came time to start performing those duties, did you feel comfortable about what you were doing?
A. I feel 100 percent comfortable in doing what I was doing.
Q. While we're talking about flares -- now you had mentioned that when -- during the flaring operation, you didn't recall -- well, you didn't believe that it was raining at that time. Can you sort of educate me on the effects of rain and flares? Is that a concern when you're doing the flaring operations?
A. No, you can flare in the rain, just as long as it's not either lightening or thundering. If it's lightening or thundering, we cannot run the flare stacks at all. It's against FESCO policy.
Q. Have you ever had to perform operations, flaring operations in the rain before?
A. I -- we've operated in the rain before. Yes, we've operate our flare stacks in the rain before, that's correct.
Q. Did that --
A. But just not lightening and thundering. If it's already -- we're already flaring, it just so happens to start raining, we continue to flare. We feel like anything that's life-threatening, we feel like, it's just unsafe for any given reason, we'll stop working through it and we'll stop it. If they get it -- if it's getting too bad, we feel like anything could go wrong, we'll just stop doing everything all at once.

Q. Sure. Have you ever had the flare go out unexpectedly, either due to rain or to wind or other -- some type of other conditions?

A. No, it's only hard to ignite if it's windy real bad but once the flare is lit, it's lit. It's kind of hard to put it out, you know. It's -- I don’t think the rain is -- the rain won't put it out, wind won't put it out, once it's -- once the lighter is lit (verbatim). Once it's lit, it's hard to -- the way it -- the regular wind just won't blow it out.

Q. Now you had discussed you were operating the -- I believe the 2-inch valve on the pipe.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you have to manipulate any other valves on the pipe?

A. No, sir. We was only serving our equipment that we hooked up. That's the only thing we -- only thing we're servicing. Only instrument we needed with that was a crescent wrench. Only thing we needed was a crescent wrench to open it up.

Q. And just to clarify, was this your first day at this site?

A. No, it was the -- I think it was the second day.

Q. When was the prior day that you had worked on this site?

A. The day before, I think the 27th.

Q. Okay, was that similar operations, pigging operations?

A. We launched a pig that day.

Q. Did that involve flaring system?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay.
A. Same thing we did the day before. It only took like, maybe 20, 30 minutes to do that.
Q. So as far as you can recall, were there any differences between the day before the accident and the day of the accident?
A. Only thing different was the weather was a little different. One day it was sunny, hot, the next day it was like, cloudy. That's the only difference.
Q. Did anyone tell -- discuss with you about any of the other valves on the pipe? I know there is a 24-inch mainline valve. Was that up -- brought up in discussion at all?
A. No, that wasn't part of the discussion at all. Not to FESCO employees it wasn't. And what the other guys did among each other, I'm not 100 percent sure on.
Q. You had -- I think I recall you saying that you verified that the gas is out of the pipe based on your observation of the sound -- of the flare, and I think you may have said there's a certain sound associated with that; is that correct?
A. It's a sound. We check it, we listen, we listen for gas, we cut that ignitor box off, and make sure there's no vapors coming out the top of the flare. And again, we give -- we'll give -- we give it 15 minutes for everything to dissipate. We give like, 15 minutes to make sure everything is clear and by that time, all the gas and -- all the gas should be evaporated, but (indiscernible) us opening the door right as we felt like everything flared off

and we still give it 15 minutes to make sure that everything is safe.

And whenever we open up the doors, if anything's trapped behind the door, it would be hard to open any door because we know it’s -- any time you try to open up a door, on the launcher or the receiver, the door is hard -- it would be hard to open because -- and there’s no -- there’s any -- there’s pressure behind it. It lets you know there's pressure behind it and that's -- and the door will open easily, so that let us know right then and there that there wasn't anything behind the door when we opened up on day one.

Q. And what do you recall happens, are you doing -- are you guys doing during this 15-minute period or is -- what is Bobcat or Atmos doing during this time?

A. I mean, we can stand -- we stand around, we’ll wait, we'll negotiate about whatever taking place. It's just a conversation among us guys, just fellowship, pretty much. It's just fellowship and talking about whatever it is that we may want to discuss, anything like that. It's like an open 15 minutes to talk or prepare yourself for what the next job duty is; whether it's getting everything prepared where we had to roll plastic out, or we had to, you know, pull pillars together, get our glue, grease, or whatever we need to prepare for that -- for that time for we'll open up the trap door, we’ll get everything prepped and prepared so when we close the door, we have all the equipment, we have

everything we need right there in hand. So that's -- we use that time -- we use it valuable and we communicate with each other in the process -- or that -- waiting that 15 minutes. It’s a couple things we can do. I was just grabbing the plastic, grabbing the, grabbing the grease to grease the door back before we -- safe to close it, getting the ground wire, the pig pullers, just put everything right there by the trap doors. All that -- we know we’re going to use to close the door, that’s what we’re going to use.

Q. If you could describe your interactions with Atmos, the two people there, are they giving you directions or are they just sort of observing what you're doing? Can you discuss that?

A. They wasn't a part of us doing what we was doing, getting everything prepped to open up the door. They was kind of like, standing back. They used their monitors. They -- you can sit back and monitor as we -- as we're doing our job, doing our job task. They usually sit back and watch us do whatever we're doing. And like I said, if they feel like we was doing something unsafe, they would have just stopped us.

Q. Right. So is that including the flaring operation, they are just sort of monitoring?

A. Yeah, they monitor. They monitor it as a whole. As an entire group out there, was it Bobcat involved or was it FESCO or anybody else out there? They sit back and they'll observe stuff.

Q. I see. You were asked earlier if there was any monitoring

for gas going on, I guess either during the flaming operation or afterwards, and I think you said there was no monitoring for gas using equipment. Is there any occasions where there is monitoring for gas?

A. Yes. If we're working on a job and if a job -- I mean if -- working on certain type of jobs, like I said, whoever can negotiate the contracts, they let us know oh, this don't have HUS on it, this job here is that and you need this, you need this right here because all jobs are different. None of the jobs are the same. We do the same service, but it depends on what kind of gas and what we're doing with the line. Was we -- whether it be wet gas or be condensate, or it just was fluids, anything like that, what -- they let us know what we need for that particular job and what safety things we need prior to doing the job as well. So I mean, it's the same concept, but the jobs are different.

Some you're dealing with wet gas, some you're dealing with gas, some you're dealing with fluid, or some you have to inject chemicals in. It's like, all the jobs are just different and this right here was one -- like I said, it's one of the easiest, smallest job that we provide.

Q. Okay. I just wanted to make sure I heard you correctly. You said it took a while to open the door, some equipment was being used to open the door. Can you recall how long it took for the door to open?

A. No, I can't recall how long it took to open the door. I know

it was longer than ten minutes. I don't know the exact time, but it took at least ten minutes. Like I said, the door was completely different than the door that we normally use or I -- the lines (indiscernible) service is different. That door was different.

Q. Right. So what -- what's happening during that ten minutes? Is it -- was this -- the door opening a surprise to Bobcat or was -- it just takes that long?

A. I think Bobcat was well equipped. They knew exactly what they was doing for that job. They brought the proper tools for that job so I'm sure that somebody let them know exactly what kind of tools to bring to that job to open that door because it's not a normal door that we normally do on any line. And so they was well familiar with it -- with the right kind of tools they might need to get the job done because they brought devices that I'd never seen them use before.

Q. And you assisting -- you described you assisting with the putting the pig in the launcher. During that time, was -- what was Atmos' role?

A. Atmos' role, like I -- again, I guess they was the overseer of everything. They was hanging back and watching us do everything that we supposed to be doing, I suppose.

Q. Did they give directions about how far to push or when to stop pushing, anything like that?

A. No, sir.

Q. Okay. I think you answered this in so many words, but you described, you know, the smells and the sounds, but was there anything at any point of the process, even at the time or upon reflection, that gave you concern?
A. I mean, again, vapors is always a concern. It's always a concern. Any job you do -- like, any job you're doing it's just always a concern. But you go -- you did them with gas, you did them with fire, you did it with -- you don't -- we don't know what's behind -- we don't know what's inside these lines, we don't know what's coming out these lines, we don't know what's behind these doors until we open them, so there's always a concern there. There's always a concern. And again, we practice safety over and over and over again, that's our main thing. We practice safety.
Q. So given that vapors is always a concern, did you feel comfortable in the measures that you took, the safety measures during this process, and that others took as well?
A. I feel comfortable with doing it because I had one of the best field technicians out there with me, guiding me along the way, so I feel 100 percent comfortable doing things with this individual.
Q. Okay, appreciate that. Michael, I'm going to change directions on you. I -- when I introduced myself, I stated I'm a human performance investigator, so I'm interested in both the task that is being done and I'm interested in the people. So if I may ask you, and I've asked this to other people that we've already

interviewed, I'm just interested in your health and, you know, how you were feeling that day, and if you had any medical concerns, you know, entering the job. So this is before the incident, so if I can ask you, you know, how was your overall health going into that job?

A. My overall health, I felt good. I was having a great day, having a great day, as always.

Q. Okay.

A. I -- when I -- I felt 100 -- I felt good that day, wasn't feeling not at all fatigued or anything, I felt energetic and I was just happy to -- I was happy to be working. I was happy to be doing what I -- what I'm doing. I enjoy doing what I do. I enjoy working for the company I work for.

Q. Okay, thank you for that. I'm just going to ask some specifics and did you -- do you have any long-term medical conditions, high blood pressure, fainting, blackouts?

A. [redacted]

Q. I see.

A. [redacted]

[redacted]

Q. Sure, anything less serious? Maybe colds or allergies or anything like that?

A. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Q. Right.

A. [redacted]

Q. You said you were feeling very good that day, [redacted]

A. [redacted]

Q. Very good.

A. That -- it is it.

Q. Right, and I heard you say you were not fatigued, so you felt alert going into your job?

A. I felt very alert. I felt very aware. Very alert and very aware, not at all fatigued. I felt energetic, I felt excited, I'm working with a guy that -- that's familiar with everything we're doing so I feel comfortable doing everything that we was doing that particular day.

And again, [redacted] that's it. I don't have any other, any -- no, no cold, no allergies, and wasn't sick, wasn't ill, wasn't no fatigue, anything of that nature, none of those. [redacted]

Q. Very good. I appreciate you sharing that with me.
A. Mm-hmm.
MR. JENNER: Michael, that's all the questions I have right now, so thank you very much.
MR. GLOVER: Thank you sir, absolutely.
MS. LYONS: So I have a few additional questions to follow up on.
BY MS. LYONS:
Q. So during any of the pig loading activities, have you ever noticed or observed problems keeping the grounding cable attached to the push pull?
A. No ma'am, those magnets are strong. They -- they're really strong and the only way you get them off, you have to pretty much take them off yourself. Once they stick, they stick and they're pretty strong, they’re heavy duty. Those magnets are very strong, they are built for the job we use them for.
Q. And any observations from the day of the accident regarding the grounding cables?
A. No, sir -- no, ma'am, not at all.
Q. Do you recall -- so thinking about the -- that final activity before the explosion when everyone was pulling the push pull out of the launcher, do you recall who was standing closest to the launcher door and whether they were on the side of the chain link fence or not?
A. It was three guys. It was Deric, I think it was Ethan

Adolfo, I'm not really sure which one it was, but I think it was Ethan and myself. Deric and -- Deric and Ethan was on the left-hand side and I think myself, Michael Glover, was on the right-hand side of the pig puller because I was standing right there directly in front of that door.

Q. Okay. So you and Adolfo were on the side of the fence?

A. No, Deric and Adolfo was on the left-hand side. I was on the right-hand side.

Q. Okay. So when you say left hand and right hand, you mean when you're looking at the door?

A. They was on the left-hand side of the stick -- of the pole and I was on the right-hand side. The pole, it was in between -- we were separated between the pole, they was on the right-hand side and I was on the left-hand side of the puller. They were holding it with their right hand, I was holding with my left hand.

Q. Do you recall how far out the tool had been pulled out? Like, was it almost out or did it just start to move back?

A. What do you mean?

Q. So you were -- the pig had been put in the position that --

A. The pig was put in position and you -- I mean, it was pushed to the reducer -- to the -- as far as we could go inside the pipeline that, that we -- that they close the door and start -- and finish the process of launching the pig. It was pushed far enough inside the reducer.

Q. Okay. And then you, you all were pulling the tool out?

A. Yeah, we was pulling the pole out, yes, ma'am, that's correct.
Q. Was it -- do you recall if it was almost out or if it was about halfway, or do you know?
A. That I -- that -- this right -- in the process of doing all of that, that's when the explosion took place.
Q. Okay. So you're not sure exactly how far because the explosion happened.
A. I just know the pig was inside the reducer and I know everything was prepped to get ready to close the door down, that was the next part of the process. But you know, due to exposure, we wasn't able to finish that part of the, that part of the job.
Q. I'm just -- I know you explained this, but I just want to make sure I understand. So in this photo, I think I understood that you and Ethan were on this side?
A. No, Deric and -- I was on that side. I was on the left-hand side by myself. Deric and Adolfo was on the right-hand side of the pig puller on the right side. I was on the left-hand side. I was closest towards the gate, to make it -- I was closest toward the --
Q. Yeah, thank you. So you were closer to the fence here.
A. Yes, ma'am, uh-huh. That's correct.
Q. And Deric and Adolfo were on the other side?
A. They were closer to the truck. That side by the truck, they was that way.

Q. Okay. And was Ethan in front of you or behind you?
A. No, I was the last one. I was the -- I think I was -- I want to say I was the last one on the stick -- on the pole -- holding the pole.
Q. And do you recall on the other side -- on the side nearest to the truck, was --
A. I don't know if Deric was in front, I don't know if Ethan was in front, I'm not sure but I know both of them was on that one side. That's what I do know. That's what I do remember.
Q. Okay. And I'm just going to repeat that again so that I understand. So closest to the launcher door on the side of the chain link fence was Adolfo. On the same side, the side of the chain link fence, behind Adolfo was you. On the opposite side, near the truck, was Ethan and Deric and you're not sure which one was closer to the launcher door; is that correct?
A. I'm not sure which one of those guys were closer to the launcher door. If I had to guess, I would think Deric, I would think Deric was closer to the launcher door, then Ethan, and then myself. Like I said, they was on the -- I was on the side where the gate sits.
Q. Okay.
A. The side I was on.
Q. Okay. Thank you for doing that. All right, so let's see. So prior to the accident, were you provided -- or did you have access to the pig launching procedures? Those are the Atmos

procedures.
A. What are you asking me?
Q. The actual like, written procedures; did someone share those procedures with you?
A. I'm really trying to understand what -- exactly what you asking me.
Q. Okay. So for example, Atmos has procedures -- written procedures that describe how pig launching occurs on their system; did you have access to those procedures?
A. In like, a hand-written statement? No, I didn't have a hand-written statement. No, I did not.
Q. Okay. It would be like, typed up procedures?
A. I understand what you're ask -- I understand the question now but no, they didn't hand me anything. They didn't hand me anything in my hand letting me know what the procedure was. It’s like, it’s always a discussion.
Q. Okay. And then for the flaring activity, did you have any written procedures on that?
A. Well, that is our equipment and Deric was in charge. Deric was in charge of that and he does the JSAs on the flare stacks, stuff like that.
Q. Of course. And similarly for abnormal operating conditions, like if something isn't going quite as expected, did you have any procedure or training related to abnormal conditions?
A. We just go up wind like if -- like, the opposite direction of

anything that's going wrong, yeah. It's just the basic -- the basis of being out of the way, and knowing where to go, doing the -- what you call it, the -- knowing where your nearest exit at.

Q. Okay. Where was the nearest exit area for that that day?

A. Towards the gate, the exit gate -- the entry gate, because I think there’s only like, I think there's only one way in, and one way out.

Q. All right.

A. The entrance gate.

Q. So when you were doing the work on site the day of the accident, did you have any records or notes that you were taking describing the work that was being done?

A. No, no ma'am. Again, they only discussed it in the circle, and we talk -- they talk about it. They don't -- we don't -- they don't hand us written statements of what the job activity’s going to be about. They just talk to you about it in a group.

Q. Okay. I think sometimes people have little notebooks, they just take little notes for themselves of what was done; did you have anything like that?

A. No, we didn't take notes. We didn't take notes on that.

Q. Okay. and then do you know about what time you got to the site?

A. I think it was around 2:30.

Q. Around 2:30. Do you have any record of that? Like, you got to the site and made a phone call, or anything that would help

establish the time?

A. No ma'am, I don't have any -- I didn't really use my phone for that particular -- I mean, around that time, I didn't use my phone at all. I don't have -- as matter -- when we're out on the field, we don't even really use our phones. We just focus on what we -- our job is to do.

We don't usually get distracted by phone calls or anything like that. And if we was -- if somebody was to have a phone, it would be the project manager at the time to -- just to communicate with people on the outside. But myself, you know, I'm just -- I'm his assistant, so I don't really feel like it's necessary for me to use my phone or bring my phone or have my phone out when we're doing jobs like this and we're in the field. I think it's just unnecessary for me to have my phone, so I don't get distracted by anything.

MS. LYONS: Okay. Well, that's all I have for now. I just have one question at the end. I'm going to give Steve another chance to ask any second questions that he has first.

MR. JENNER: Actually, I don't have any other follow-ups so thank you. And thank you, Michael.

MR. GLOVER: You're welcome, Steve.

MS. LYONS: So Michael, considering this interview and everything we've talked about today, are there any things that we didn't ask you that you think might be important to the accident?

MR. GLOVER: No, I just want to know what's going to happen

at the end of -- I want to know what's going to happen at the end because I want to make sure we figure out what happened and get to the bottom of that because no one should feel safe going in the field like that if we can't identify what happened at that particular -- to that particular line as -- it’s a concern. And there’s a concern about what actions taking place so wherever the investigation come up with, I would just like to know what took place on that particular day. Because I am confused when it come to that part right there. That's the only -- that's my only question. I just want answers for it. That is it.

MS. LYONS: So I'm going to take you off the record.

Off the record with Michael Glover.

(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-FUELED EXPLOSION DURING ROUTINE MAINTENANCE, FARMERSVILLE, TEXAS ON JUNE 28, 2021 Interview of Michael Glover
ACCIDENT NO.:	PLD21FR002
PLACE:	Via Microsoft Teams
DATE:	July 14, 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.

Jeanie Powell
Transcriber


Bobcat truck
umbrella
launcher door
equalizer
kicker valve
chainlink fence
2" flow line to flare
24" mainline valve
Igniter
flare tip
Flare trailer with stack


flare tip
1-inch ball valve "B"
launcher door
kicker valve
2" flare flow line