

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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MARATHON PIPE LINE OIL *

RELEASE IN ~~EVANSVILLE~~ EDWARDSVILLE,* Accident No.: PLD22FR002

ILLINOIS ON MARCH 11, 2022 *

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Interview of: JACE MORRIS, Welder
Marathon Pipe Line

Roxana, Illinois

Monday,
March 14, 2022

APPEARANCES:

ALEX COLLETTI, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

MARK DOUGHERTY, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration,
Investigation Division

AARON MARTINEZ, Regulatory Compliance Manager
Marathon Pipe Line

TONYA WITTENMYER
Marathon Pipe Line

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1 I N T E R V I E W

2 (7:06 a.m. CT)

3 MS. COLLETTI: All right. We are on the record for the Jace
4 Morris interview. Good morning. Today is March 14, 2022. It is
5 now 7:06 a.m. Central Time. My name is Alex Colletti. I'm the
6 investigator in charge for this accident for the National
7 Transportation Safety Board in Washington, D.C. We're holding
8 this interview at the Rocks Arena, also known as the Incident
9 Command Post in Roxana, Illinois.

10 This interview is being conducted as part of the
11 investigation into the Marathon Pipe Line crude oil rupture and
12 release that occurred on March 11, 2022 in Edwardsville, Illinois.
13 The NTSB case number for this accident is PLD22FR002.

14 This interview is being recorded and may be transcribed at a
15 later date. A copy of the transcript will be provided to the
16 interviewee for review prior to being entered into the public
17 docket. This is your opportunity to correct things that the
18 transcriber may have incorrectly transcribed. It's not your
19 opportunity to add or elaborate on things, so if you have
20 something that's factual that you'd like to add, during the
21 interview's the best time.

22 You're permitted to have one other person present during the
23 interview. This person is of your choice; an attorney, spouse,
24 supervisor, friend, family member or nobody at all.

25 Jace, for the record, please state the spelling of your full

1 name.

2 MR. MORRIS: Jace, J-a-c-e, Morris, M-o-r-r-i-s.

3 MS. COLLETTI: Great. And then if you could state your job
4 title and who you select to be present with you today.

5 MR. MORRIS: Welder.

6 MS. COLLETTI: Welder. Okay.

7 MR. MORRIS: Yes.

8 MS. COLLETTI: And then who have you selected to be with you
9 today?

10 MR. MORRIS: Oh --

11 MS. COLLETTI: Tonya?

12 MR. MORRIS: -- Tonya. Yes.

13 MS. COLLETTI: Okay. That's great. All right. We're all
14 going to introduce ourselves on the call. Please remember to
15 spell your name and state your title and organization. I'll go
16 first.

17 Alex Colletti, Investigator in charge. That's A-l-e-x,
18 C-o-l-l-e-t-t-i, and I'm with NTSB.

19 MR. DOUGHERTY: Mark Dougherty, M-a-r-k, D-o-u-g-h-e-r-t-y,
20 NTSB, Hazardous Material Accident Investigator.

21 MR. MATHEWS: Wesley Mathews with the PHMSA Investigation
22 Division. Wesley is W-e-s-l-e-y, Mathews, M-a-t-h-e-w-s.

23 MR. MARTINEZ: Aaron Martinez, A-a-r-o-n, M-a-r-t-i-n-e-z.
24 I'm the Regulatory Compliance Manager with Marathon Pipe Line.

25 MS. WITTENMYER: Tonya Wittenmyer, T-o-n-y-a, W-i-t-t-e-n-m-

1 y-e-r, with Marathon.

2 MS. COLLETTI: Okay. Great. Thanks for agreeing to
3 interview with us today. We really appreciate your time. It's an
4 important task we have to recall your memory from that day. It
5 helps us get a good picture of it.

6 What we talked about earlier, please don't speculate, but
7 just provide as much as you can remember and the more detail the
8 better. If you're asked a question and you don't remember, it's
9 completely fine to say I don't know. However, the more you can
10 give us the better it is and the less fall out questions you'll
11 have.

12 INTERVIEW OF JACE MORRIS

13 BY MS. COLLETTI:

14 Q. So before we get into the day of the accident, can you talk a
15 little bit about your background? How long have you been a
16 pipeliner, how long have you been a welder?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Most important man on the scene.

19 A. Yeah, I don't know about that. Graduated high school in
20 2010, started welding after that. Run around in refineries and
21 plant work, and then I'd say I did that for two or three years,
22 and then I started -- threw a rig together and started pipeline
23 work and Jace Pipelines wherever they were, and then in two -- I
24 guess I've been here two years with Marathon. I got hired on, and
25 just hired on here to get close to home and get the family back

1 home, so not on the road so much.

2 Q. I'm sure they appreciated that.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Yeah. Now you're part of the CM crew?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Can you talk me through what you guys do?

7 A. We do a lot of anomaly digs.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Not real big station work, but smaller station work like pig
10 traps and just anything smaller. We don't really take on big
11 jobs, you know. Contractors do that, but mainly we focus on
12 anomalies and stuff like that.

13 Q. Okay. And for my recollection for the record later,
14 construction maintenance, correct?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Yeah. Okay. Great. Making sure. So in terms of what you
17 were doing the day of the accident, let's -- this is the part
18 where I'm going to ask you to really take your time, and if you
19 need a second to refresh your memory, that's fine. But we'll ask
20 you to walk through, like you said, probably about 30 minutes of
21 talking, so if you need a break, take a break.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. There's water, so fire aware.

24 A. That day --

25 Q. That day as soon as you -- from the start. As soon as you

1 got -- I know it's going to be a long time.

2 A. Oh, boy.

3 Q. That's why I told you if you need a break --

4 A. There's been a lot going on since that day.

5 Q. I know, I know. So take a minute if you need to.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. But really when you first got notified, when you first got
8 out there --

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. -- all the way to when you were off shift, headed home.

11 A. Well, we was actually working on the wood pat line, just
12 doing anomaly digs on it. We were by Grant Fork (ph.), so in this
13 area, and we just getting to have another day of doing digs,
14 prepping sleeve. Just got the first 10 foot section put on the
15 pipes, start welding, and I was down there welding, and my phone
16 rang. I can't get it out in time.

17 Another guy hollered down at me and said, hey, you need to
18 call Clyde, so that's the supervisor I was filling in for kind of,
19 taking his spot. And he called me and told me, hey, they're
20 having some issues, don't -- kind of quit what you're doing, get
21 out of the ditch, and be by your phone so, you know, you're ready
22 to go do whatever whenever. And then so I did that, got out, went
23 and sat in the truck, and put my phone on charger because I knew
24 if it was real, I mean, my phone wasn't going to last too long, so
25 did that.

1 He called back a couple minutes later and then told me that
2 they were -- had a loss of pressure on the line or whatever, you
3 know, and we had a crew -- we were split up in two crews. Our one
4 crew was, and we a crew just to the north of us, and he told me to
5 call some of them and tell them to get on the side-by-side in
6 trucks and kind of work -- drive the right-of-way they could,
7 spots they couldn't cross, creeks, you know, go around, get back
8 on the other side and work their way back west towards Wood River,
9 you know, and just look for any signs of anything.

10 And then, oh, I don't know, that probably -- I got a bunch of
11 other phone calls in the time being just, you know, seeing where I
12 was at, what we were doing, and what we all had ready, available,
13 like trailer wise and where all that stuff was at --

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. -- if needed to be, and I don't know, I can't really say how
16 long from the last time I talked, but then I got -- Clyde called
17 and said go to Grant Fork block valve, and we was just east of
18 that actually, pretty close. He said go there and shut it down,
19 and that's all he said. Then he said grab someone else with you,
20 so I hollered at Tyler and I said, hey, come on, Clyde said we got
21 to go shut Grant Fork block valve right now.

22 So we drove over there and we -- well, we got to thinking,
23 we're like, you know, it's kind of a do we shut it because, I
24 mean, is there a bunch of head pressure, do they have a line down,
25 so I made one more phone call to Todd Walkins (ph.), and I said,

1 hey, does this -- do you really want us to shut it. He said, yes.
2 He said make sure you call OC (ph.), so then Tyler said I'll call
3 OC, so he did, and did all the procedures, you know, that -- and I
4 can't say a time really. I don't --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I mean, it was morning, not early, early, but --

7 Q. It's okay.

8 A. -- mid-morning or so, and so then he called OC. We got the
9 lock off, shut it, and then relocked it and then called OC back
10 and said, hey, Grant Fork block valve shut, and so then called
11 Clyde back, let him know, and he said, okay. He said now you guys
12 just go straight to the scene.

13 So I went to where the release was because at that time they
14 found it, so they told us where it was at, there up on 43, so he
15 -- I told Tyler go back. They got -- they were finishing --
16 because they didn't really know what they all needed, so they were
17 kind of just tidied up where we were at to be able to leave it for
18 however long we needed to be, and they get tools and the trailer
19 we had there ready and side-by-side loaded, and sand blaster, and,
20 you know, all of that ready out by the road because we was off the
21 road a ways.

22 And we got all that, and then got over to the scene and asked
23 Jayson -- is that the area? What's his last name?

24 Q. I've got it. It's Jayson Nohl.

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. You're good.

2 A. He was there, and I asked him what he needed, what we needed
3 done and everything, and then I got a phone call, and -- from
4 Clyde again and he said, hey, you're going to be kind of in charge
5 of -- there's a matting company coming for access to these places.
6 You're going to be kind of the main guy for now in charge of that,
7 and so just took phone calls from them, and from other contractors
8 in places that Marathon -- you don't need access to get back
9 trucks and boom deploy and everything like that in as soon as they
10 could. So started that, and I called -- sent some calls from
11 other guys on just trailers and tools just gathering, you know,
12 kind of everything because you didn't know what you needed -- so
13 -- and that kind of -- then I started helping get access to where
14 the actual release was, you know, stuff out of the way that was
15 already there to get a road built and everything like that. I
16 don't know. That's about all.

17 I mean, that period took forever, you know, on into Friday
18 night and everything, and then Saturday morning, you know, but
19 called light plans that needed to for -- so people can see
20 because, you know, it was starting to get dark in the evening, and
21 just -- I guess just tried to help out any way we could.

22 Q. All right. That's great.

23 A. Is it?

24 Q. Yeah, that's great. That's great. That's what I was looking
25 for. I'll go back into more detail on a couple of things, but

1 that's great. That's perfect. Do you need a break? Do you need
2 water? Are you good?

3 A. I'm fine.

4 Q. Yeah, okay. I know it's a little bit to talk straight, so I
5 want to back up to a couple of things. OC is control center,
6 right?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Yeah. Great.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. It's GCC on the gas side, so gas control center, so --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- just making sure we're all on the same --

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. -- taking notes. The Grant Fork valve that you shut, that's
15 IN-1? Is that the -- that's okay.

16 A. Yeah, I don't know.

17 Q. That's fine. Let's go -- all right, let's go back to the
18 work you were doing before you got the call.

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. You were doing welding work for an anomaly? What did that
21 look like? What's the anomaly you guys were out there working on?

22 A. That one --

23 Q. Where were you at?

24 A. I think -- we was -- a lot of this on this line would have
25 been crack light features in the seam, along the seam.

1 Q. Along the seam. Yup.

2 A. So I'm pretty sure that was the call out on that one, and we
3 were chasing to find landing zones, and yeah, so that was --

4 Q. That was -- okay.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Have you had to do any work on girth weld anomalies?

7 A. Yes, there was -- there had been some call that we have,
8 but --

9 Q. Okay. Yeah, yeah. Just trying to get a sense of history on
10 the pipe. We got some of that from the IM guys, but --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- yeah. All right. Well, so you're filling in for Clyde.
13 I met Clyde. Nice guy.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Oh, really?

17 Q. Yeah, he's nice to me.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. I don't work for him, so -- that's fair.

20 A. No.

21 Q. So you were near Grant Fork, right?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. About how far were you from that valve?

24 A. I hate to say an actual number because --

25 Q. No, that's okay. A couple of miles or --

1 A. Maybe a couple.

2 Q. Okay. Yeah.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Around about --

5 A. The way a bird flies, I mean, you could probably -- don't see
6 it if the ground, you know --

7 Q. Yeah, I get it.

8 A. -- a little hill or whatever, but, yeah, it wasn't too far.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. And then you mentioned that you started -- you
10 guys started driving the right-of-way essentially of trying to get
11 down to the location. Talk me through that.

12 A. I didn't do it. Some of the other guys did.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. They just wanted them to where they were at, start driving
15 west --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- because they figured that was I guess they figured -- it
18 was somewhere in between there --

19 Q. Gotcha.

20 A. -- and they wanted to get --

21 Q. Get eye contact.

22 A. Yeah. Yeah, as fast as they could to see where it was at.

23 Q. Gotcha. Okay. So you had stayed there, were just sitting on
24 call --

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- and then ready to go --

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. -- as soon as they told you how to head out. Now I'm
4 familiar what all is involved on a gas pipeline in terms of
5 shutting a line.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. I imagine liquid is fairly different, so talk me through what
8 that looks like, and I know you said there were a couple other
9 guys with you. I think I heard Tyler.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- but I don't know, you know -- give me a lot more detail on
12 that.

13 A. On the valve?

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. Well, whenever we got -- whenever I got the call to -- and
16 that was all it said was go shut it, like you don't just -- they
17 always say you open a valve before you shut a valve, so we're
18 like, I don't know, we better make another call just to be sure
19 that's what they want done, so that's when we called, and they
20 said, yeah, go ahead and shut it, and so we did, and then we made
21 sure we called October so they knew, and -- because that valve was
22 not actuated valve, it's a manual valve, so we shut it, and then
23 called them back so they knew they could -- whatever they do in
24 the room. I don't know. I've never been in there, but --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- you know, if they got a big deal in there, they got an X
2 on it or what they do so they know, and, yeah, we just wanted to
3 make sure because, I mean, with liquid products you've got head
4 pressure. You can't just -- we didn't want to shut it and then
5 you got a bunch of head pressure and then, yeah, you're going to
6 have a blow, you're going to blow that out, so --

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. -- yeah.

9 Q. Yeah, well, that's the thing, you know, and this is where I
10 want to get into -- I'll actually get you to walk me through like
11 the actual physics of shutting it because on a gas pipeline you
12 can just turn it and slam that valve pretty much. I mean, it's
13 not quite that fast --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- but the biggest problem that we have there is a loss of
16 operating pressure. A lot of times they're power operated, power
17 gas operated from the feed from the line --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- and by that point you've got to break your lowering
20 pressure.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. So what's that look like for you guys in terms of -- are you
23 using the pressure of the line to shut it? What kind of valve is
24 it? Walk me through the actual like logistics. You get there,
25 what are you turning? What are you doing?

1 A. Well, you've got your big wheel that you got to turn. I
2 don't know what kind of valve that might be on that one, that
3 there. I didn't really pay that much attention, you know. It was
4 kind of a blur it seemed like, just trying to hurry.

5 Q. Yeah, understood, understood.

6 A. Yeah. But, I don't know, ask your question.

7 Q. So it's just a turn wheel? That's the --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- gist of it?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. Okay. There's no --

12 A. I mean, you've got your stem, you know, all the --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

16 A. Everything.

17 Q. Okay. Great. Just trying to get a sense of the actual
18 physics of it.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Yeah, yeah.

21 A. And, I mean, it's buried --

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. -- you know, so all you see is the stem and --

24 Q. Yeah. So is it vaulted then or you have the stem above
25 ground?

1 A. No, it's above ground.

2 Q. Okay. So the stem's above ground.

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. Okay. Okay. Great. And then who were the guys that were
5 out there with you? Do you remember who was --

6 A. Tyler.

7 Q. Tyler?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Do you have a last -- do you know a last name for him? I can
10 get it later if you don't.

11 A. Emboden (ph.).

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. And then were you all taking turns turning because I know
15 it's not like a --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. It's a lot of physical work.

18 A. And it was fairly hard, and once we got it down and he said
19 -- he was turning. He said I think I'm there, he said, but put
20 your hands on it, too, to make sure this thing's shut, so I mean,
21 we did and that's kind of go, but, I mean, we didn't try putting a
22 cheater bar in it, you know what I mean.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. You don't want to do that because --

25 Q. It's a great way to --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- damage it, yeah.

3 A. You don't want to (indiscernible) the seats or anything on
4 it, so, yeah.

5 Q. So really hand tight is how you know that it's closed --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- and sealed. Do you have any other indications to know
8 that it's fully closed?

9 A. Your stem, but I believe the stem when we closed on that one,
10 once it got so far, you could still close it more without seeing,
11 you know -- without like having actual, okay, it's closed, stem's
12 all the way down, you know.

13 Q. Yeah, okay.

14 A. So, yeah.

15 Q. Okay. And that's something you've got to be OQ'd to do.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Yeah. Okay.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Is that something -- I mean, that's normally part of your job
20 to close valves? Probably not.

21 A. No.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. It's -- no.

24 Q. Probably not. When was the last time you'd done it before
25 then? Do you remember?

1 A. No, I don't.

2 Q. Okay. I mean, it's physically hard.

3 A. Just --

4 Q. It's not hard to remember how to do it.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. But it's physical work.

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Yeah, yeah. Okay. That's fine if you don't remember.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. That's absolutely fine.

11 A. Because usually we just let, I mean, operations, they do it

12 every day so --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. -- if they're -- they do it, yeah.

15 Q. Right. You stick to what you like, welding, right?

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. Yeah, yeah, yeah. After that, so we'll jump forward, you're

18 at the site. It sounds to me like you were doing a lot of

19 logistics work, so you're getting site access, you're getting

20 equipment there. Is that the gist of your role?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. Big picture?

23 A. At the time of the -- yeah.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. So --

1 Q. Okay. Who were you working through? Like who was your
2 communications chain? Was that Clyde?

3 A. Yes, Clyde and George Lixy (ph.) which would be I guess
4 Clyde's boss --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- or main, yeah.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Preceding him.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Just kind of -- and he just wanted to know where everything
11 was and that we had stuff in place that if needed be we could get
12 it readily available.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. So --

15 Q. Now for the CM group, are you guys a roping crew? Are you a
16 local area crew? So we had -- we had CM crews but they would
17 cover probably large stock, very -- like three or four operating
18 divisions, so they were always on the road.

19 A. I see, yeah.

20 Q. Yeah. It sounds like you picked this job to be closer to
21 home, so my guess is not so much.

22 A. Well, I'm still gone, I don't know, 70 percent of the time.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. But like we kind of cover Cushing, Oklahoma to just a little
25 east of Patoka, so I mean that area in there seems to be where we

1 mainly go.

2 Q. Okay. Yeah. Busy out there at Cushing, isn't it?

3 A. Yeah, but we don't -- I mean, Marathon only has deals arced
4 out that way, so it ain't too bad.

5 Q. Okay. Good.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. That's good. Some of the other operators aren't quite so
8 lucky.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. It can get pretty packed down there, a little RB Forest of
11 sorts --

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. -- yeah, yeah. Have you ever responded to any kind of
14 emergency response event like this?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. Can you talk me through that with your experience on
17 that?

18 A. Just another leak, you know, and I mean I guess on them I
19 never was the first --

20 Q. First responder?

21 A. First, you know -- yeah --

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. -- you know, I mean, like --

24 Q. I know what you mean.

25 A. -- we came, but we had to travel and I mean, maybe got there

1 that night or, you know, everything was already set up, you know,
2 kind of.

3 Q. Yeah, yeah.

4 A. You got there and they gave you, okay, this is what we're
5 doing, and --

6 Q. And was that with Marathon or was that with another company?

7 A. Yeah, one was with Marathon. We had a farmer who line
8 struck, so --

9 Q. Yeah, pretty common.

10 A. -- yeah.

11 Q. Yeah. Where was that out on? Was that on Wood Pat (ph.)?
12 Was that Ozark --

13 A. No, it would have been on the -- I don't know what -- can I
14 ask them a question if they know?

15 MR. MORRIS: Do you know, Aaron? Was it Fox? Do you
16 remember the Fox release?

17 MR. MARTINEZ: Yeah.

18 MR. MORRIS: What line was that on?

19 MR. MARTINEZ: Fox was on --

20 MS. COLLETTI: This is Aaron Martinez speaking.

21 MR. MARTINEZ: Yeah, I'm sorry, yeah, Aaron speaking. I
22 don't remember -- Robinson. Robinson until Lima.

23 MR. MORRIS: That's right, yeah.

24 MR. MARTINEZ: Robinson to Lima.

25 BY MS. COLLETTI:

1 Q. Okay. And then I'm assuming because he pretty struck pretty
2 close to the 12:00 it wasn't quite as big of a release as this
3 one.

4 A. It was -- yeah.

5 Q. Yeah. And the scale was probably a little smaller in terms
6 of response and attention --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. -- and all that kind of thing.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. What kind of training do you guys have on these kind of
11 events?

12 A. We have just supervisor kind of -- I don't know if they're
13 just annually you could say or something, and, I mean, walk
14 through little things, and we try to keep -- I mean, we keep a
15 good assortment of diapers and make sure boom deploy, you know,
16 booms and everything like that. We have a big trailer that we
17 have a bunch of bolting equipment in it and just kind of all the
18 diapers and containments and, you know, we go through all that,
19 and we have work orders on them to make sure like they don't
20 mostly that -- you go through your check, everything's in there,
21 and then, I mean, we just talk it over, you know, if this happens,
22 and then you kind of say, like on us since we're usually trying to
23 repair it if this happens do we have this, or, you know.

24 Q. Gotcha.

25 A. -- do we need to get that in case it does because it could

1 speed it up or whatever; would this help us with things. So I
2 guess that's kind of how we do, you know, being the CM part.

3 Q. Gotcha.

4 A. A lot of times we're not this, I guess -- I've only been on
5 that one, but not as close, you know.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. It's usually area first, and then, yeah.

8 Q. So normally your role is a lot different essentially. You're
9 there to do repairs --

10 A. Normally, yeah.

11 Q. -- and the getting the pipe back to restart kind of thing, as
12 opposed to in this case, you're not going to be in the right
13 location every time.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Go ahead. I'm sorry.

16 A. I don't know what I was going to say now.

17 Q. I broke my rule.

18 A. I can't remember.

19 Q. That's why I --

20 A. I can't remember.

21 Q. I broke my rule. This is why I try not to do it because --

22 A. Well, it was something with that, but I can't remember. I
23 don't know.

24 Q. Yeah, that's okay. If it comes back to you.

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. Is there anything about the night that like, you wish you had
2 done a little different or things that you wish you'd been a
3 little bit more prepared for?

4 A. Not that I can think of.

5 Q. Okay. Did you feel like you had a clear understanding of
6 what your job was to do when you were out there?

7 A. Yes. I think, you know, yeah.

8 Q. Yeah. How did you do most of your communication? Cellphone
9 or --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Cell phone. Okay. Do you guys do radio -- I guess you don't
12 really need them out here. It's a good spot.

13 A. Yeah. I mean, we have radios in our trucks, but it's kind of
14 hard on something like that because guys are in and out and trying
15 to holler at them, and, yeah, they're --

16 Q. Yeah, you just stay on the phone --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. -- for eight hours. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Okay. I think I've got my section, so I'm going to pass it
21 off to Mark.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. Do you need a break? You're good?

24 A. I'm fine.

25 Q. Okay.

1 BY MR. DOUGHERTY:

2 Q. Okay. So, Mark Dougherty with the NTSB. Just two questions
3 for you. First one backing up to the training, do you recall
4 having any type of formal, informal or classroom training on how
5 to respond to this type of incident in the case, in the event that
6 a scenario like this?

7 A. Yes, we have emergency response. I guess Maralarms (ph.),
8 what you would -- you know, our company through the company,
9 they're emergency response.

10 Q. Is that like an annual training?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Over CBT.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. We do have that.

16 Q. And then the second question, what do you feel was your
17 biggest challenge on site or responding to the incident?

18 A. I don't know. It's kind of a hard -- I know the whole
19 thing --

20 Q. So the whole thing was a challenge.

21 A. I'm not really into the predicament that I was in, you know
22 what I mean?

23 Q. Right.

24 A. So I don't know. I probably just -- the duty that I was kind
25 of given would be just access to things and trying to have stuff

1 that, you know, trying to gets the mats there quick enough, you
2 know that I mean, just -- I don't know how else you would -- I
3 don't know how you'd do it any different, you know --

4 Q. Right.

5 A. -- rather than have 2,000 mats sitting here, you know, at
6 each station or something, you know, what ain't probably feasible,
7 but, yeah, I don't know.

8 Q. Okay. And then the last question, can you go into detail a
9 little bit on what you observed when you arrived on scene?

10 A. We arrived, like I said, Jayson was there, and it looked like
11 he was about ready to pull his hair out just trying to get
12 everything, you know, just talking to people, and the Edwardsville
13 Fire Department was there with their response truck and there's
14 some police there, and there was a handful of, you know, red
15 Marathon trucks running around trying to do, you know, get -- do
16 whatever, and there's just a lot of people there trying to help
17 and see what needed to be done, where booms need to be deployed
18 and trying to get the stuff in the river, creek, whatever they
19 call it, or are calling it, or a canal I guess. Yeah, but try to
20 get it stopped from going further.

21 Q. All right. Okay. Do you happen to know around about the
22 time that you arrived on scene?

23 A. I don't.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I don't know. I can't even try to guess really. Yeah.

1 Q. Okay. That's all the questions I have.

2 BY MR. MATHEWS:

3 Q. This is Wesley Mathews with PHMSA. Jace, if you don't mind,
4 so you get the call, you're going to the valve site. How do you
5 know where that valve site is?

6 A. Because two years ago we did a bunch of wood pack cutouts.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And we pushed the pig right past that valve when we perched,
9 and that was the -- we did from Wood River area all the way to
10 Grant Fork. I can't remember how many cutouts we did between
11 there, but we did a bunch of cutouts. I think that would have
12 been two years ago on that, so that's how, and that was out --
13 when we did them, obviously we pushed some pigs past that valve
14 and then shut it, and then we opened that valve flange and skilled
15 it for double isolation there from any, you know, back pressure or
16 anything, and that's how I knew right where it was.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Yeah, we did a lot of time there. We had craft tanks there,
19 we had all kinds of stuff set up there.

20 Q. Okay. And so you were familiar with it.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Could you describe the site to me on that day? Did you have
23 to get through a fence and then --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. We had to -- obviously the valve is fenced off and you had to
2 C key, you know, lock, C key lock on it that everybody had, you
3 know, Marathon has, so we got in it and then you had the valve
4 lock, and you've got a key for it, so we got it and unlocked it
5 and then closed it and locked it back.

6 Q. All right. Now for me that was basically it. Thanks for not
7 using a cheater bar because --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Yeah, that's all I have for now. Thank you.

10 BY MR. MARTINEZ:

11 Q. Yeah, so this is Aaron. So he took some of my questions, but
12 I think I want to ask a little bit deeper into -- as far as
13 accessing the valve site or operating the valve, any issues, any
14 things you came across that were unusual and unexpected? Did it
15 operate as contended or would you have expected?

16 A. I think so. I mean, it seemed close, like you would want it
17 to. I mean, that valve takes a lot of turns to close it, so by
18 the time you get done, you're about winded. That's why, but, you
19 know, I took Tyler along to help speed that process up. It seemed
20 to work fine.

21 MR. MARTINEZ: Okay. That's all.

22 MS. COLLETTI: Okay. Alex Colletti again.

23 So, guys, remember, last round.

24 BY MS. COLLETTI:

25 Q. I'll piggyback off of what Aaron had. How long did it take

1 you guys to shut that do you think, roughly? 5 minutes? 15
2 minutes? Half an hour? Do you have any idea?

3 A. Not really.

4 Q. Okay. That's fine.

5 A. But I'd probably say it didn't take that long. I mean, I
6 don't know if it took a minute really.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. I mean, it seems forever, but I don't know, you know.

9 Q. It's hard to know.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Yeah, totally understand. Totally understand. That's fine.
12 So it doesn't sound like as part of the regular job you do a lot
13 of out closures. Why are you okayed for it? Just curiosity?

14 A. I guess just in case we ever have to do it, you know. I
15 mean, at least you have familiarity, you know.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. When you're around them all the time, everywhere you go
18 there's a valve, so I mean, you might as well be a little bit, you
19 know, but -- know something about them.

20 Q. Yeah. Yeah. Is that normal for a CM group or you guys to be
21 OQ'd on valves?

22 A. Yes, I would say so, yes.

23 Q. Okay. Some of the questions I was going to ask next were
24 already asked kind of which is when you got to the site what that
25 looked like, but what the drive look like from where you were to

1 getting to the valve site?

2 A. It's all -- one would have been probably County Highway.

3 It's a two lane road asphalt, and then where the valve is it's a

4 bowl and chip back road, you know, the way they are around here --

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. -- so, yeah.

7 Q. Did you have any access issues?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. Okay. How long did that drive take you?

10 A. I don't -- I hate to say a number just because --

11 Q. No, that's okay.

12 A. -- you know, not --

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. It didn't take very long.

15 Q. Okay. Yeah, you were a couple of miles away.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. So you get -- you're in the ditch welding, you miss a call.

18 A. Um-hum.

19 Q. Next time you get a chance to notice your phone --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. -- they say button up. What's buttoning up look like when

22 you're halfway through a job?

23 A. That's -- just get to where you can -- luckily we had four

24 other welders down there at the time. You know, there were more

25 so just kind of usually if you're in the middle of a weld, you've

1 at least got to finish that pass, or most time you have to have
2 two passes in something before you can walk away from it, so,
3 yeah.

4 Q. So somebody else was swapping in for you.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay. That makes more sense.

7 A. Yeah, yeah.

8 Q. Yeah. Or maybe you were on your second pass --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- already on the radio, and I know how that all works, so --

11 A. No.

12 Q. -- hoping they didn't make you cut off the work you just did.

13 A. No. We make sure that it was, you know, good to leave for
14 however long we needed to.

15 Q. So you get on that, you get in the truck. Did you have to --
16 I mean, were you off on the right-of-way probably?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. How -- what does that drive look like to getting back to main
21 roads?

22 A. We have side-by-sides and everything, so I took a side-by-
23 side with the truck because -- and we have Marukas (ph.) so, you
24 know, when it's muddy, we're not trying to tear up landowners, you
25 know, as much as we try not to as much as we can, so we -- I mean,

1 the trucks are parked up at the rock road, so -- that access to
2 get in up that way, so, yeah.

3 Q. So you hop in side-by-side.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Head back to the truck and then --

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. Okay. Okay. Is there anything I haven't asked you about
8 that I should have?

9 A. I don't think so.

10 Q. Okay. Well, that's going to be it for me then.

11 MS. COLLETTI: All right. Wesley? Or, actually, I'm sorry.

12 MR. DOUGHERTY: Yeah.

13 MS. COLLETTI: I'm forgetting mark there.

14 MR. DOUGHERTY: It's okay.

15 MS. COLLETTI: Mark will forgive me eventually.

16 BY MR. DOUGHERTY:

17 Q. Mark Dougherty, NTSB. Just one more question for you. Can
18 you describe your conversation at the control center when you
19 called to confirm that the valve was okay to close?

20 A. I didn't do that. Tyler did.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So -- just because I was calling the -- Todd and then he
23 already had the number pulled up --

24 Q. Gotcha.

25 A. -- so that's --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- where that -- yeah. But I know, I mean, he -- I'm pretty
3 sure I can remember him, you know, say his name, all that.

4 Q. Okay. Okay. That's all I have.

5 MS. COLLETTI: That's all you got?

6 MR. DOUGHERTY: Yup.

7 MS. COLLETTI: All right. Wesley, you're up.

8 BY MR. MATHEWS:

9 Q. This is Wes Mathews with the PHMSA. And so you described
10 when you got to the site you saw Jayson going all over the place.
11 Could you describe for me kind of sensory elements, like what were
12 you hearing, what were you smelling, that kind of stuff? Did
13 anything like really stick out? Were you afraid of anything?

14 A. No, not really. Can't say I even really smelled it, you
15 know, like that much until maybe you actually tried to walk closer
16 to it, but, yeah -- but, no, just people talking, you know, trying
17 to figure out what to do to get, you know, try to get going on
18 getting it cleaned up and --

19 Q. Would you say that they were doing a good job?

20 A. I'd say so, yeah.

21 Q. All right. Also one last question is the -- you were
22 involved in the logistics. What was your focus? Could you kind
23 of step through once you got this done, you did this?

24 A. it was kind of I guess the first one was to get Max at the
25 landfill because they couldn't get no trucks access back to where

1 they wanted to get to on the creek back there, so it was kind of
2 like after we got that, it was where else do they need access to
3 the creek, you know, to stop oil and put booms out and try to get
4 it slowed down, stopped, so -- and then from there we worked out
5 way back to the kind of the release, you know, kind of like
6 downstream and then came back because I don't -- that's about it
7 there, I guess.

8 Q. Okay. I guess, sorry, follow up on -- you said you guys had
9 boom and stuff. Did you deploy some?

10 A. We didn't, no.

11 Q. Or you --

12 A. We didn't do none of that so, but --

13 Q. I just wanted to make sure I said -- but that's it for me.
14 Thanks so much.

15 BY MR. MARTINEZ:

16 Q. Yes, this is Aaron Martinez. So kind of have a general
17 question here, but -- and obviously I don't know if you can ever
18 be prepared for everything you'll ever come across, but do you
19 feel that you were properly prepared to play the role that you
20 played during this incident?

21 A. Yeah, I think so. I think we got a lot of stuff that, you
22 know, we just -- we have a lot of tools that we never use, but
23 have just in case, you know, we may need something.

24 Q. Is there something in learning from this event that you would
25 say, hey, I'd like -- there's a good change we could make to

1 better be prepared in the future?

2 A. Off the top of my head right now I can't really think of too
3 much. No, I don't know.

4 Q. That's all I have.

5 MS. COLLETTI: All right. Well, we've done our two rounds
6 and I promised you just two, so we're going to finish up here, but
7 I want to thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate
8 it. This is going to be really helpful for us and I know you had
9 a long night, so we appreciate you coming in after shift.

10 Is there anything else that, you know, I haven't asked you,
11 someone else hasn't asked you that you want to cover or?

12 MR. MORRIS: No.

13 MS. COLLETTI: You ready to go?

14 MR. MORRIS: Yes.

15 MS. COLLETTI: All right. Well, with that, it is 7:47
16 Central Time and this concludes the interview of Jace Morris.
17 Thanks so much.

18 (Whereupon, at 7:47 a.m. Central, the interview was
19 concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

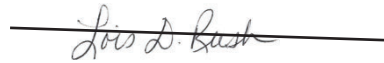
IN THE MATTER OF: MARATHON PIPE LINE OIL
 RELEASE IN EVANSVILLE, ILLINOIS
 ON MARCH 11, 2022
 Interview of Jace Morris

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD22FR002

PLACE: Roxana, Illinois

DATE: March 14, 2022

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



LOIS D. RUSH
Transcriber



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

May 16, 2022

Mr. Jace Morris:

Reference: **Interview Regarding the March 11, 2022, Edwardsville, Illinois Pipeline Rupture and Crude Oil Release - NTSB case number PLD22FR002**

Attached is a transcript of your interview on March 14, 2022 as a part of the on-going investigation of the above referenced accident. Please review the transcript for accuracy and make any necessary editorial changes.

You may either reference the relevant page and line number along with the suggested change or redline a copy of the document. Please initial any changes when marking up or redlining the original document.

When replying be sure and checkmark one of the three statements below, even if you have no changes.

Please submit replies to me via email no later than **May 30, 2022**.

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

I have no comments to make.



My comments are submitted herewith.

My comments are marked on the attached copy.

Please note that these transcripts must be treated as confidential at this time. These transcripts are for your use only, and not for release outside of the investigation. If you have any questions, please contact me by phone or email.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation,

Alex C. Colletti

Pipeline Accident Investigator

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and Hazardous Materials Investigations

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