

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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MBTA RED LINE PASSENGER

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FATALITY IN BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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ON APRIL 10, 2022

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Interview of: ASHLEY KENNEDY AUPONT, Driver

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Boston, Massachusetts

Monday,

April 11, 2022

APPEARANCES:

ZACH ZAGATA, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

RUBEN PAYAN, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

GEORGE GOOD, Accident Investigator
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ARUN MODH, Transit Engineer
Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

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Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

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Carmen's Union, Local 589

ROUDY JEAN, Delegate
Carmen's Union, Local 589

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I N T E R V I E W

MR. ZAGATA: Good afternoon. My name is Zach Zagata. I am the NTSB IIC for this accident. We are conducting an interview on April 11, 2022, with Kennedy -- or Ashley Kennedy Aupont, who works for MBTA.

This interview is in conjunction with NTSB investigation of an accident in Boston. The purpose of this investigation is to increase safety and not assign fault, blame, or liability.

Before we begin our interview and questions, let's go around and introduce ourselves. Please spell your last name, your title. And I'll start off and then pass to my right. Again, my name is Zach, Z-a-c-h. Last name Zagata, Z-a-g-a-t-a. And I am the NTSB investigator in charge for this accident.

MR. GOOD: Good morning. My name is George Good, G-e-o-r-g-e G-o-o-d. I'm an accident investigator with the Federal Transit Administration.

MR. PAYAN: Good morning. My name is Ruben Payan, P-a-y-a-n. And I am also an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board.

MR. CULP: I am Steven Culp, S-t-e-v-e-n C-u-l-p. And I am the chief investigation officer at MBTA.

MS. ADAMS: Hi, I'm Jalila Adams. J-a-l-i-l-a A-d-a-m-s. And I'm the lead safety investigator for heavy rail MBTA.

MR. RICHMOND: Good morning. Patrick Richmond, P-a-t-r-i-c-k R-i-c-h-m-o-n-d. My title is chief transportation officer for

1 heavy rail at the MBTA.

2 MR. MODH: Hi. Good morning. I'm Arun Modh, A-r-u-n M-o-d-
3 h. I'm transit engineer for (indiscernible).

4 MR. ROMAN: Good morning. My name is Paul Roman. P-a-u-l R-
5 o-m-a-n. Compliance officer with Mass DPU.

6 MR. ANACLETO: Good morning. My name is Francisco Anacleto,
7 589 union rep.

8 MR. JEAN: Good morning. Roudy Jean. R-o-u-d-y J-e-a-n.
9 Carmen's Union delegate.

10 MS. KENNEDY AUPONT: Ashley Kennedy Aupont. A-s-h-l-e-y K-
11 e-n-n-e-d-y A-u-p-o-n-t.

12 MR. ZAGATA: Thank you. And the accident number is
13 RRD22LR008.

14 MS. ADAMS: Can you repeat that? I'm sorry.

15 MR. ZAGATA: RRD22LR008.

16 MS. ADAMS: Thank you.

17 MR. ZAGATA: Do we have your permission to record our
18 discussion with you today?

19 MS. KENNEDY AUPONT: Yes.

20 MR. ZAGATA: Thank you. Do you understand that the
21 transcript is to be part of the public docket and as such, we
22 cannot guarantee confidentiality?

23 MS. KENNEDY AUPONT: Thank you.

24 INTERVIEW OF ASHLEY KENNEDY AUPONT

25 BY MR. ZAGATA:

1 Q. I appreciate it, Ashely. Now, if you could just kind of
2 start out by giving us an overview of your career here at MBTA.

3 A. I started in 2018. And I've been driving the trains
4 (indiscernible).

5 Q. Can you go ahead again?

6 A. I started in 2018. And I've been a motorperson since.

7 Q. Appreciate it. Now, if you could just kind of give us an
8 overview of your day on the day of the accident.

9 A. It was my last half -- my last trip. I left Ashmont a little
10 after midnight. Got to Broadway Service Station. Checked for
11 door autos. I had door autos. I proceeded out of the station.
12 About 25 feet into the station, my train dumped. I mean, 25 feet
13 departing the station my train dumped. I rebuilt it. And
14 proceeded out and kept going. Got to -- I think they told me to
15 stand by for two minutes at South Station.

16 I stood by for two minutes with the doors open. Then after
17 the two minutes, I proceeded to Downtown Crossing. And that's
18 when they told me to stand by to release. Then after some time
19 went by, they told me to unload my train. I unloaded my train.
20 And stood by waiting for further clearance.

21 Q. Thank you. Have you had any issues with the doors previously
22 while working MBTA?

23 A. I've had door failure previously.

24 Q. What did that consist of?

25 A. A car not opening.

1 Q. Have you ever had any issues as far as the doors closing or
2 anything like that?

3 A. No.

4 Q. And as far as seeing people messing around on that platform,
5 have you ever had any issues at Broadway at all?

6 A. Not particularly at Broadway but -- I mean, I don't know.
7 People, at all the stations, they play around all the time.

8 Q. You see that quite a bit?

9 A. Every day.

10 Q. By playing around, what do you mean by playing around?

11 A. They'll stand and pretend like they're going to jump.
12 They'll stick their arm out and their foot out as the train is
13 going by. Just anything.

14 Q. Have you ever had to put the train in emergency when
15 something like that has happened or --

16 A. No.

17 Q. No. Have you ever seen the individual, the deceased, before
18 at that location?

19 A. I don't even anything.

20 MR. ZAGATA: That's all I got for now. I'll pass it over to
21 my right.

22 BY MR. GOOD:

23 Q. George Good, FTA. Just a question. You said the train
24 dumps. What are the procedures -- I'm just curious. What are the
25 procedures that you have when the train dumps? Is there

1 procedures for that?

2 A. I don't know. I just rebuild it. You just rebuild it. And
3 if it builds, then you're all set to go.

4 Q. What are some things that would make it dump?

5 A. I don't know. The trains dump all the time. And that area
6 in particular is very popular for silver trains.

7 Q. Have -- you were saying all the -- you see a lot of
8 passengers playing around on the platform and everything. Have
9 you ever had any issues with the sensitive edge or anybody ever
10 getting caught on the doors? Have you ever seen that before?

11 A. Elaborate your question.

12 Q. I'm sorry?

13 A. Can you go more into depth about your question?

14 Q. Yeah. I'm just wondering. Had you never noticed that in the
15 past in the years you had been a motorperson of the doors ever
16 closing on somebody, and do they kick back open or -- have you
17 ever had any problem with somebody being --

18 A. People --

19 Q. -- caught in a door?

20 A. People stick objects as well as their limbs in the door.
21 Yes.

22 Q. And normally, they open -- the doors open back up from what
23 you've observed or known about?

24 A. Motorpeople open them back up to do it. I don't think the
25 doors automatically open back up. No, I don't know.

1 Q. That's all I had. Thanks.

2 A. It all just depends. Sometime they bounce. They will open
3 back up. But sometimes they won't. If you don't catch it, you
4 just open the doors.

5 MR. PAYAN: That's all you had?

6 MR. GOOD: Yeah.

7 BY MR. PAYAN:

8 Q. This is Ruben. Going back a little bit more in your days.
9 Did you work Saturday?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I'm sorry?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Yes. What time did you get off?

14 A. 2 a.m.

15 Q. 2 a.m. Then what time did you report for duty Sunday?

16 A. 6.

17 Q. I'm sorry. I'm having a hard time hearing you.

18 A. I think it was about 5 or 6 p.m.

19 Q. And that's when you reported for duty?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. About how far away do you live from work?

22 A. My mother lives about 10 minutes away.

23 Q. You got a good night's sleep?

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. Then you showed up for work. Were you with the same train

1 the whole day?

2 A. No.

3 Q. No. Where did you start? Where did you report for duty?

4 A. Ashmont.

5 Q. Ashmont. Then you picked up a train there.

6 A. I do two trips, took a break.

7 Q. Ashmont. I'm not familiar with the system. So you ran from

8 Ashmont to where?

9 A. Alewife. Back to Ashmont. Back to Alewife. Back to
10 Ashmont. I swung off. Took a break. Went back on. Did one trip
11 from Ashmont to Alewife. Back to Ashmont. Then that was my last
12 trip. So I was leaving Ashmont to Alewife. Then I would have
13 been the last southbound train going back to Ashmont.

14 Q. How long was your break that you mentioned?

15 A. Maybe about 40 minutes.

16 Q. Then this particular train that was involved in this
17 accident, when did you pick up that equipment?

18 A. After my break.

19 Q. After the break. So you were with that train from that break
20 through --

21 A. For one trip. One trip and a half.

22 Q. One trip before the accident?

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. You picked it up at Ashmont?

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. You ran to --

2 A. Alewife.

3 Q. Then on the return trip is -- that was your last run?

4 A. No. I picked it up at Ashmont, went to Alewife, went back to
5 Ashmont. Was leaving Ashmont and that's when it happened.

6 Q. Oh, okay. During the -- from your break until the accident,
7 did you have any issues with the brakes, the train equipment at
8 all?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Nothing? Any problems with the doors?

11 A. No.

12 Q. I'm not familiar with your system. So when you're operating
13 the train, you're in the operator's compartment. What's the
14 procedure when you depart a station? What do you do? What are
15 you required to do? How do you get the train?

16 A. You check for autos. There's a button that you press. And
17 that button will make like a buzz noise. And that basically is
18 saying that all doors are secured. Then the train moves. If you
19 press that and you don't get the buzz, that means that the doors
20 are not secure and a train wouldn't move.

21 Q. Have you ever tried moving the train with the doors open?
22 Will it let you?

23 A. No. The train won't move.

24 Q. So that's (indiscernible) locks to prevent that?

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. Do you ever have to look out the window or camera or how do
2 you know --

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. -- if there is a problem with the doors?

5 A. Because your head is out of the window. When you first come
6 into the station and you stop, you open the window, stick your
7 head out, open the doors. And you wait for the platform to be
8 clear. You close the doors and the light is supposed to go out.
9 Then you go back. Check for door autos and proceed out.

10 Q. So you close the doors, observe it, and then you look for the
11 buzzer that you mentioned?

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. And everything -- you did that at the last station. Nothing
14 unusual?

15 A. Not that I recall. No.

16 Q. Then on -- from your break until the accident, had your train
17 dumped any time before that?

18 A. No.

19 Q. That was the first time that day?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. When you say dump, is it an emergency dump, air brake dump
22 or --

23 A. I don't know. Something, I guess, at the bottom of the train
24 could like trip it. I don't know. If it was an emergency,
25 meaning if somebody pulled an emergency, the train wouldn't

1 rebuild for me to proceed out.

2 Q. But is it like a penalty or -- I'm trying to figure out --
3 when you say dump -- is it the signal system, the mechanical or --

4 A. It happens. There's really no excuse for why. It happens.

5 Q. But it's your air pressure, you lose your air brakes, or you
6 lose -- you dump the air brake pressure?

7 A. The air goes out. Yes.

8 Q. How long does it take to rebuild?

9 A. A couple seconds.

10 Q. And the procedure is just to rebuild the train anytime you
11 dump or do you have to go through procedural checks or of what
12 caused it or anything?

13 A. No. You just try to rebuild it. And if it rebuilds, you
14 proceed out. If it doesn't, then you call OCC and go from there.

15 Q. You rebuilt it and how long did you say that took about?

16 A. A few seconds. Maybe like --

17 Q. Oh, so pretty quick?

18 A. I don't know. Like 30 seconds or so.

19 Q. How long was your train?

20 A. What do you mean?

21 Q. How many cars did you have?

22 A. Six cars.

23 Q. Six cars. Builds up pressure that fast.

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. Oh, okay. So you departed after you rebuilt it?

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. Did you know that an incident had happened?

3 A. Nope.

4 MR. PAYAN: Okay, that's what I thought. That's all I have.
5 Thank you. Mr. Culp?

6 MR. CULP: Thank you for being, Ashley, to -- answering these
7 questions.

8 MR. ZAGATA: Steve, state your name.

9 MR. CULP: Oh, sorry.

10 MR. ZAGATA: Just speak clearly, too.

11 BY MR. CULP:

12 Q. Oh, sorry. Steven Culp. Thank you for being, Ashley, to
13 answer our questions today. On the door automatics, if there's an
14 obstruction in the doors, will it pick up if the door is closed or
15 will you still get (indiscernible) automatics?

16 A. As I stated, if something is stuck in the doors, you will not
17 have door automatics. You're not supposed to should I say.

18 Q. When you came into Broadway Station, did you see any activity
19 on the platform?

20 A. No, everything was normal.

21 MR. CULP: I have no further questions at this time. I might
22 have one later on. Thank you.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't have anything off the top
24 right now. No.

25 BY MR. MODH:

1 Q. Arun Modh. I just have one question. From your brakes --
2 like trip and a trip -- like trip-and-a-half from Alewife to
3 Ashmont, Ashmont -- Ashmont to Alewife, Ashmont to Alewife,
4 Ashmont to Broadway, did you have to recycle your doors any time
5 at any of the stations like for any reason if you remember that?

6 A. I don't recall. No. I might have -- as I'm closing them, I
7 might have reopened them for somebody running. But far as
8 recycling them, no.

9 Q. No. So you might have open for somebody you see running to
10 the doors but --

11 A. That's running for the train.

12 Q. -- not (indiscernible) --

13 A. For the train. Yes.

14 MR. MODH: That's all I had.

15 BY MR. ROMAN:

16 Q. Paul Roman, R-o-m-a-n, DPU. Ashley, thank you for coming to
17 speak with us today. Just have a couple questions. What model --
18 what type of train were you operating? What red line train were
19 you operating?

20 A. It was a series of different trains but we call them silver
21 birds. I don't know. It's a 15 -- I know my head car was a 1500
22 and my last car I know was a 1700.

23 Q. Broadway Station, can you tell us about the platform? Is it
24 curved kind of or is it straight, the platform?

25 A. Towards the Back of the platform kind of it's kind of curved.

1 Well, yeah, it's a curved platform. It's definitely not straight.

2 MR. ROMAN: That's all I have for now. Thank you.

3 BY MR. JEAN:

4 Q. Roudy Jean. J-e-a-n. Boston Carmen's Union. Ashley, was
5 there any SBT or monitors on the platform?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Was it working?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. How was the lighting on the platform?

10 A. It was okay.

11 MR. JEAN: (Indiscernible).

12 MS. ADAMS: I'm sorry, Ashley. Jalila. Can I ask you a
13 question?

14 MS. KENNEDY AUPONT: Um-hum.

15 MS. ADAMS: Was it --

16 MR. ZAGATA: Can you please identify yourself just for the --

17 MS. ADAMS: I'm sorry. Jalila, J-a-l-i-l-a. Adams, A-d-a-m-
18 s.

19 MR. ZAGATA: Thank you.

20 BY MS. ADAMS:

21 Q. The night in question, was it Ashmont to Alewife or Ashmont
22 to Harvard? Was it the diversion going on that weekend?

23 A. Oh, yes, it was. So it was Ashmont to Harvard.

24 Q. So that cuts down on your trip a little. Right?

25 A. Yes.

1 MS. ADAMS: Thank you.

2 BY MR. ZAGATA:

3 Q. NTSB. Zagata, Z-a-g-a-t-a. If you could just help me
4 understand. As far as when you're departing again, I'm not clear
5 on (indiscernible) Ruben. So you open the window and you look out
6 and you push the button. And if it buzzes, that means there's an
7 obstruction. Is that correct?

8 A. After you close the window. Yes.

9 Q. After you close the window?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And then if you get that buzz, what do you do if you can't
12 get it to stop buzzing? What --

13 A. It doesn't continuously buzz. You just hit it and if it
14 buzzed, then you know that the doors are secured and you can
15 proceed out and the train will move.

16 Q. But if you can't get it to stop buzzing, then you call
17 somebody you said?

18 A. No. If you don't get a buzz, then you know that your doors
19 are not secure so you go back to the window and you see what's
20 causing it.

21 Q. Oh, okay.

22 A. It could be a bouncing door, a door stuck open, a stuck
23 (indiscernible), somebody in the door. It could be anything. It
24 just means that the doors are not secured.

25 Q. Have you experienced that before?

1 A. I don't recall.

2 MR. ZAGATA: That's all I got for now. I'll pass it back.

3 BY MR. GOOD:

4 Q. George Good, FTA. Ashley, just one question if you can
5 remember. When that -- when you made that stop at Broadway prior
6 to -- just prior -- that last stop before your brakes dumped, how
7 crowded was the platform? Do you remember?

8 A. Are you asking once I got back on the train from my break or
9 you asking before my break?

10 Q. I'm talking about the very last stop you meant -- made right
11 prior to the -- you know, the incident that was discovered.

12 A. So that would be Andrew.

13 Q. Yeah. So whatever it -- was like 12:30 in the morning. How
14 crowded is the -- was the platform or is it normally?

15 A. So you want to know how crowded Andrew or Broadway was?

16 Q. Broadway.

17 A. It was not that crowded at all actually.

18 MR. GOOD: That's all I had. Thanks.

19 BY MR. PAYAN:

20 Q. This is Ruben with the NTSB. So going back to the buzzer.
21 You look out the window, you hit the buzzer, and you verify the
22 doors are closed.

23 A. No. You stop the train, you get up from your seat, you walk
24 to the left view, you open the window, you stick your head out of
25 the window, you open the doors, you wait for the platform to be

1 clear, the pilot lights to go out, you close the door. You close
2 -- I mean, you closed the window door. You walk back over to your
3 seat which is to the right of you, you press the buzzer. If you
4 hear a buzz, you can proceed out.

5 Q. Have you ever experienced where you go through that procedure
6 and all the -- you verify all those are closed. And has anybody
7 ever pried the doors open? Do you get an alarm for that or has
8 that happened?

9 A. I don't know.

10 Q. Have you ever had it happen?

11 A. I don't know. I don't know how to answer that question.
12 Like I said, people -- every day, they stick their arms and legs
13 and bags and baby strollers, I'm umbrellas, purses, everything in
14 the doors. So I don't know.

15 Q. No. I was just wondering if it's even possible. Can
16 somebody physically open the doors after they've been closed and
17 would you be notified?

18 A. I don't know.

19 MR. PAYAN: That's all I have.

20 MR. CULP: Steven Culp. No further questions.

21 MS. ADAMS: Jalila Adams. No further questions.

22 MR. RICHMOND: Patrick Richmond. No further questions.

23 MR. MODH: Arun Modh. No questions.

24 MR. ROMAN: Paul Roman. No questions.

25 MR. JEAN: Roudy Jean. No questions.

1 BY MR. ZAGATA:

2 Q. NTSB, Zagata, Z-a-g-a-t-a. So when you looked back there,
3 when you open the window and you look back, was there anybody on
4 the platform?

5 A. I don't -- I recall seeing a lady coming down the escalator
6 as I was closing the door. And I opened them back up for them to
7 get on and once she was in, the platform was clear and I closed
8 the doors.

9 Q. So after she got in, it was clear. You didn't see anybody
10 else back there?

11 A. I didn't see anybody else.

12 Q. At that platform, can you see all the way back to the end of
13 your train? Can you see the entire platform?

14 A. Maybe by like the fifth and sixth cars, it's kind of
15 difficult a little bit because it's a curve and they have these
16 red pillars in the middle on the platform. So it is kind of
17 difficult. But that's what the monitor is for. But even with the
18 monitor, it is still kind of difficult to see back there.

19 Q. You said the lighting is pretty good there?

20 A. I don't know. It's okay.

21 MR. ZAGATA: That's all I got. Does anybody else have any
22 additional questions?

23 BY MR. GOOD:

24 Q. This is George Good. I had one -- just one more. When you
25 -- you said you have the monitor and you look out the window. Do

1 you do both?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you normally look at the monitor and look out the window?

4 A. Um-hum.

5 MR. GOOD: That's all I have. Thanks.

6 BY MR. ZAGATA:

7 Q. Last question I got. So as far as looking back on your
8 train, is there any lights that gives you an indication of what
9 doors is blocked or anything when you look back there on the side
10 of the train at all?

11 A. Yeah. You have pilot lights. It will stay lit if a door is
12 not closed or something. Or even if a door is closed and it's
13 stuck. I don't know. It will stay lit.

14 Q. What color are those pilot lights?

15 A. Red.

16 Q. Red. And there was no pilot lights?

17 A. Not that I recall, no.

18 Q. Are you able to see all those pilot lights clearly?

19 A. Not all the time. No.

20 Q. Well, that's all we have for questions. Do you have anything
21 to add or anything that you think would prevent something like
22 this from happening again?

23 A. I don't know. I guess make more announcements to the
24 passengers letting them know that it's not safe to dodge into a
25 closing door or -- whether they're from the inside or the outside,

1 don't put objects in the doors. I think it's very imperative that
2 they need to know that because they do it quite often.

3 Q. What is there -- as far as announcements, what is there -- as
4 far as departing, is there any announcement that comes on? Do you
5 announce the train departing or something?

6 A. On a silver, you make the announcements. Yes. You'll state
7 the next stop.

8 Q. Is that just -- is that after you closed the doors or prior
9 to leaving?

10 A. Well, you make one approaching, you make one in the station,
11 and you make one departing.

12 MR. ZAGATA: I appreciate that. And once again --

13 BY MR. CULP:

14 Q. Quick question, Ashley. This is Steven Culp. When you're
15 about to close the doors, is there any internal or external sound
16 that the doors make to let people know -- on that model train? I
17 know on some other trains it does.

18 A. Yeah, it goes bing, bing.

19 Q. So it alerts people that the doors are going to be closing?

20 A. Um-hum.

21 BY MR. ZAGATA:

22 Q. Is there any -- like goes over -- like speakers on the
23 platform at all to let people know that -- or standing on the
24 platform or approaching the platform, that the train is going to
25 be moving.

1 A. Ask that question again.

2 Q. Is there any announcement that's made over -- like speakers
3 on the platform to let people know they're on the platform or
4 approaching the platform to say train departing or something like
5 that?

6 A. Yes. It says trains are arriving and approaching. And it
7 says the train is now boarding. But it doesn't say that the train
8 is departing. No.

9 MR. ZAGATA: I appreciate it. Anybody else have any
10 additional questions?

11 MR. JEAN: I just have on more. Roudy Jean, Boston Carmen's
12 Union. (Indiscernible) know that -- when did you find out the
13 incident happened on your train?

14 MS. KENNEDY AUPONT: Honestly, I -- when I was in Downtown
15 Carson after the train was unloading at 1:13 I was trying to
16 figure out what was going on. And I heard very like quick that
17 there was a fatality. And that was pretty much it. But I didn't
18 know anything else other than that until just last night I was --
19 I Googled what happened on the red line. And it said that a guy
20 had his arm stuck in the door or something like that.

21 MR. JEAN: That's all I have. Thank you.

22 MR. ZAGATA: Thanks. Anybody else for questions? I
23 appreciate it. If we have additional questions, okay to contact
24 you?

25 MS. KENNEDY AUPONT: Sure.

1 MR. ZAGATA: Thank you. With that, we'll conclude the
2 interview. Thank you.

3 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

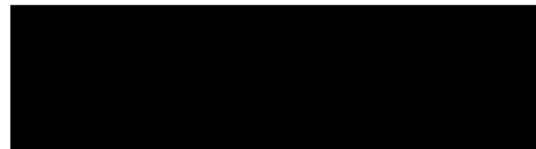
IN THE MATTER OF: MBTA RED LINE PASSENGER FATALITY
IN BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
ON APRIL 10, 2022
Interview of Ashley Kennedy Aupont

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD22LR008

PLACE: Boston, Massachusetts

DATE: April 11, 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.



Katie Leach
Transcriber