



MOTOR CARRIER FACTORS ATTACHEMENT

Westfield Transport Driver Interviews

Randolph, NH

HWY19MH010

(26 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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TRUCK/MOTORCYCLE COLLISION *

RANDOLPH, NEW HAMPSHIRE * Accident No.: HWY19MH010

JUNE 21, 2019 *

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Interview of: DSHAMAL RAGIBOV
Driver, Westfield Transport

Wednesday,
June 26, 2019

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL FOX, Highway Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E XITEMPAGE

Interview of Dshamal Ragibov:

By Mr. Fox

4

I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. FOX: This is Michael Fox, investigator for the NTSB,
3 Washington, D.C. office. Today is Wednesday, June the 26th. I'm
4 interviewing one of the drivers for Westfield Transport.

5 And, sir, can you just state your name, please? What is your
6 name?

7 MR. RAGIBOV: Dshamal.

8 MR. FOX: Dshamal. What's your last name?

9 MR. RAGIBOV: Ragibov.

10 MR. FOX: Can you spell your last name?

11 MR. RAGIBOV: R-i-b-o-v -- g --

12 MR. FOX: G-o-v?

13 MR. RAGIBOV: Yeah.

14 MR. FOX: R-i-b --

15 MR. RAGIBOV: No.

16 MR. FOX: R-I --

17 MR. RAGIBOV: R-g-i-b-o-v.

18 MR. FOX: R-i-g-o-v?

19 MR. RAGIBOV: No, no. Give me that --

20 MR. FOX: R-a-g-i-b-o-v. Okay. Thank you. So the spelling
21 is R-a-g-i-b-o-v.

INTERVIEW OF DSHAMAL RAGIBOV

22
23 BY MR. FOX:

24 Q. And how long have you worked for the company?

25 A. Seven months.

1 Q. Seven months? And you said you live in Dayton, Ohio?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. How did you get here today?

4 A. (Indiscernible) drove truck trailer.

5 Q. You drove the truck and the trailer?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And since you're living in Dayton, Ohio, and you're here
8 since early this morning, did you -- when did you arrive from
9 Dayton, Ohio, were you coming in off of a trip?

10 A. Oh, I'm driving that yesterday.

11 Q. You were driving a load yesterday?

12 A. Yesterday, yes. I'm driving at 11, starting, and stopping at
13 9. And today morning starting something 7:30, start, 2 hours and
14 back here.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. And I have my logbook, and I finish sometime -- the traffic
17 and roadwork and construction --

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. -- yesterday, I'm -- finish to my logbook, I'm starting
20 sleeping.

21 Q. Where do you sleep?

22 A. I'm sleeping in --

23 Q. Do you sleep in the truck?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. And is -- what, is there a mattress in there that you

1 sleep on?

2 A. Yes, in the back.

3 Q. Who fixed it up that way?

4 A. (Indiscernible)

5 Q. You fixed it that way? Okay. Do you own that truck?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Who owns the truck?

8 A. My boss.

9 Q. Your boss. Who do you work for? Who's your boss?

10 A. Dunyadar.

11 Q. Hmm?

12 A. Dunyadar. Damien.

13 Q. Damien? Okay.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And what type of cargo do you haul? What do you transport on
16 this vehicle?

17 A. Truck. We drive car --

18 Q. Cars?

19 A. Yeah. Something car. Not truck, car.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. (Indiscernible)

22 Q. Did you know the driver, the accident driver?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Have you ever met him or anything?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay. Is there anything that you know about the crash that
2 you would like to discuss? That you know about the crash or
3 something about the company that you could tell me that might be
4 helpful?

5 A. Just something -- the company told me I see that something
6 internet.

7 Q. Huh?

8 A. The internet (indiscernible).

9 Q. Internet?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Just stuff that you saw on the internet? Okay. So you don't
12 know anything about the driver or anything else?

13 A. No. No.

14 Q. Okay. All right, sir. Well, you've been helpful. I
15 appreciate your time. Thank you very much. I'm going to let you
16 go. You can go ahead and pull your truck over.

17 A. (Indiscernible) pull the truck?

18 Q. Yes. Thank you.

19 A. In the parking?

20 Q. You can park it. Thank you.

21 MR. FOX: This is concluding the interview.
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: TRUCK/MOTORCYCLE COLLISION
RANDOLPH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
JUNE 21, 2019
Interview of Dshamal Ragibov

ACCIDENT NO.: HWY19MH010

PLACE:

DATE: June 26, 2019

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.



Kay Maurer
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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TRUCK/MOTORCYCLE COLLISION *

RANDOLPH, NEW HAMPSHIRE * Accident No.: HWY19MH010

JUNE 21, 2019 *

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Interview of: JOSHUA STEPHENS
Driver, Westfield Transport

271 Western Avenue
West Springfield, Massachusetts

Wednesday,
June 26, 2019

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL FOX, Highway Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E XITEMPAGE

Interview of Joshua Stephens:

By Mr. Fox

4

I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. FOX: This is Michael Fox, investigator for the National
3 Transportation Safety Board. Today is Wednesday, the 26th of June
4 2019. I am located at 271 Western Avenue in West Springfield.
5 This is where the motor carrier keeps his trucks and trailers, and
6 we're going to be speaking with Josh Stephens, who is a driver.

7 Mr. Stephens, can you please state for the record your full
8 name, your title, and spell your last name?

9 MR. STEPHENS: My name is Joshua Thomas Stephens. My last
10 name is spelled S-t-e-p-h-e-n-s. I was a driver for Westfield
11 Transport.

INTERVIEW OF JOSHUA STEPHENS

12
13 BY MR. FOX:

14 Q. Are you still a driver for Westfield Transport?

15 A. I haven't worked in over 2 weeks.

16 Q. I see. And can I hold your license, please? So you --

17 A. Yeah. My start date had to have been somewhere in November,
18 because in order to drive, I had to get this medical card, and it
19 was about -- I got the medical card about a month or two before I
20 started. So the date on it is 9 [REDACTED] of 2020, so it was roughly
21 about a month or so later that I started for this company.

22 Q. So this license is a non-CDL?

23 A. Correct. And I have not -- I've been driving a non-CDL
24 combination. I do have my permit to test for a CDL license, but
25 I've been driving a non-CDL combination for this company.

1 Q. And where do you normally haul?

2 A. The entire Northeast. We had a lot of contracts with the
3 Port of Baltimore, going down to Maryland, West Virginia. I've
4 been to Ohio, Indiana, the entire state of New York, Maine,
5 Vermont, New Hampshire, Mass, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware,
6 Maryland.

7 Q. Okay. And what do you normally haul?

8 A. Cars. I only haul cars. Because my combination is -- you
9 know, this combination here is under 26,000, I mainly haul the
10 lightweight vans. We have a lot of, like, new vans, new dealer
11 stock, like the Dodge Ram Cities and stuff like that. I was
12 hauling a lot of those. And what we would do is we would supply
13 the dealer with, you know, all their new inventory. Another thing
14 we were doing is I would pick up for Homeland Security. We hauled
15 the Border Patrol vehicles. We hauled all the new cruisers out to
16 all the Border Patrol outposts. And then we would take the --

17 Q. And where would that be? Where are we talking?

18 A. All over the -- everywhere that the Canadian border borders
19 the United States. We supplied all the outposts with their new
20 cruisers. And then for a backhaul, we would take some of their --
21 like the old cruisers that they didn't need anymore?

22 Q. Right.

23 A. We would take those and bring them down to Pennsylvania to
24 the auction. And a lot of times it'd be like, you know, like a
25 little car like that, or it might be an SUV, you know what I mean,

1 but --

2 Q. I see.

3 A. Yeah, anything that pretty much ran and drove. Because this
4 combination does not have a winch system on it, so I wasn't able
5 to winch up cars like some of these other guys. They have a winch
6 setup.

7 Q. I see. And how many hours would you run a day?

8 A. Well, I mean, a lot of times, because of loading and
9 unloading, you know, you could run -- say, for instance, if I left
10 here and I made it up to Maine to make a delivery, you know, it
11 would probably take me like 6 to 8 hours. And then I'd have to
12 stay a night in Maine to reload in the morning, because a lot of
13 places aren't open, you know, after hours. So I would generally
14 try to run 11 hours a day. That's what the -- you know, that's
15 what my log allows.

16 So I would try to run the 11 hours, but a lot of times I
17 wouldn't even get the 11 hours because, you know, the dealers are
18 closed. You know, you can pick up at the port 24 hours, but -- I
19 mean, it's pretty much -- a 10-hour day is about average.

20 Q. I see.

21 A. And, you know, my logbook will show that. And --

22 Q. Now did you ever go over your hours of service?

23 A. No. I mean, there was a time when I was in New York where
24 they had construction and I ran out of hours and I literally -- I
25 couldn't stay where I was, so I had to wait until I could get off

1 the highway because it was all construction. But my logbook will
2 show all that.

3 Q. And when you say you have to lay over, where would you stay?
4 Would you get a hotel room?

5 A. I've gotten hotel rooms, you know, here and there sometimes.
6 But a lot of times, some of these places that you're going to, you
7 know, there's like -- say, for instance, Fort Kent, Maine, or some
8 of the places that are, you know, these Border Patrol outposts,
9 they're so far away from anything that when you get out there,
10 there is no hotel. There's nothing. There's that outpost and
11 that's it. So in order to like -- like, say, for instance, I
12 would leave -- I would leave here, I would go to the -- I would
13 get as close to the outpost as I could, or get to the outpost,
14 within my time of driving, and then I would stay in the truck.

15 And what we did was we took the seats out of the back of the
16 truck and installed -- you know, I had a mattress in this truck
17 before the next driver took it. So I had a nice bed and
18 everything in there, and I would bring a cooler with some food and
19 stuff like that. And you could always find, like, a random gas
20 station and, you know, or truck -- they have truck parking in
21 places like that. And you could stay, you know, in the parking
22 lot a lot of times. You know, the store owners, they understood
23 because you're in the middle of nowhere, you know what I mean,
24 there's nothing there. So they would understand. Or, you know,
25 you give them a couple bucks and they'd let you stay in the

1 parking lot.

2 Q. I see. And did you know the accident driver?

3 A. No. I never met him before. I mean, he was -- well, I guess
4 his start time was when I stopped driving. So I've never met him.

5 Q. Now the vehicle that you just got weighed on, is that similar
6 or identical to the vehicle that was involved in the accident?

7 A. Yes. It's the same combination.

8 Q. The same?

9 A. Same truck. The same exact weight specifications, same
10 dimensions, same engine, same transmission, same exact trailer,
11 same exact gross vehicle weight, everything. It's identical.

12 Q. Now the company that you work for, Westfield Transport, what
13 kind of company is that?

14 A. It's an auto transport company. All they do is cars. They
15 don't haul -- like, you'll see a lot of hotshot trucks out there
16 that are hauling freight, they're hauling steel, wood, you know,
17 all kinds of different stuff. All we do is cars. That's all we
18 haul, is automotive stuff. We don't do motorcycles. You know,
19 we'll do some vans, trucks, but mostly, I would say, new cars is
20 what we hauled. We would go to the port, you know, wherever. You
21 know, Rhode Island, there's a port down there that we were hauling
22 a lot of stuff out of. And Baltimore, we hauled a lot of stuff
23 out of there.

24 Q. So is there anything that you can tell me about the carrier
25 that would be helpful in our case and in our investigation?

1 A. Damien is a very hardworking, honest man. As far as the rest
2 of them, I never cared for the rest of them, but Damien is a
3 hardworking, honest guy. He's always told me, you know, hey man,
4 you know, I'm sorry, you know, you're not going to get home this
5 weekend, you know. Because if we run out of hours after -- I
6 think it's like 80 hours. We run out of hours, he's like, I'll
7 get you a hotel, you know, I'll pay for your dinner, you know,
8 just stay where you are for the weekend, you know, and I'm really
9 sorry.

10 You know, he was always honest and open, upfront. He didn't
11 lie, you know what I mean. He wouldn't try to cheat me out of
12 anything, which you run into a lot out here. You know, you get a
13 lot of dishonest people. And he was just -- he was straight,
14 honest, and forward with me, and that's why I took the job.

15 Q. How about the brother?

16 A. Dartanyan? I mean, I never really saw Dartanyan do anything,
17 you know what I mean. He never, as far as his -- he didn't run
18 his own equipment, really. You know, he was trying to do some
19 dispatching or something, you know, or hiring or firing or
20 whatever, but he just never really -- he wasn't a motivated
21 person. He didn't have the motivation to get in the truck and do
22 the work, where Damien would. You know, here's a guy who's
23 working -- you know, he expects me to work hard and be away from
24 home. And a lot of times you'll see, you know, guys, they just
25 sit at home. Well, Damien was the kind of guy, he'd get in the

1 truck and run just like everybody else. And that really, you
2 know, that set the two of them apart. You know, here's a guy
3 that's willing to work for what he's trying to accomplish, and
4 here's a guy that looks like he's just riding coattails, you know
5 what I mean.

6 Q. So would -- you said you didn't care so much about the other
7 folks. What made you dislike them?

8 A. Well, English is a big thing. When you don't speak English,
9 it causes problems on the road. Because the people that you're
10 dealing with, they speak English. And if you go into some of
11 these ports, which I've seen this happen, you know, they'll go in
12 there and, not speaking English, they kind of give an attitude to
13 the people that I have to deal with. And then when they see our
14 company pull in, they're like, oh jeez, you know, here's another,
15 you know, whatever, you know, non-American. You know, here's
16 another guy who doesn't speak English.

17 And then when they see me, they're like, holy cow, here's a
18 guy that speaks English, you know what I mean. And it just -- it
19 made, it kind of made things a little more difficult, I think, for
20 me because, you know, the people that they're dealing with, they
21 expect them to have like a nice attitude and --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- and they, sometimes they don't. They just have this
24 attitude that, you know, like, oh, well, you're going to do
25 whatever I say anyways, and a lot of places you go that's not the

1 case. Especially at the port, because you deal with the Port
2 Authority.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. And down there, they don't take -- you know, those girls down
5 there, they don't take no crap from nobody. So if you don't go in
6 there with respect, you're going to leave there without the load.

7 Q. Now during your course of employment here, were you ever
8 asked to do anything illegal or not --

9 A. No, absolutely not.

10 Q. -- not within the hours of service?

11 A. No. The only thing that I was asked to do was drive that
12 truck. One thing I volunteered to do when I was driving the truck
13 is like, you know, if I saw that there was a tire that was, you
14 know, regularly getting soft or something, I'd be like, look, man,
15 I'm just going to go and get this tire replaced, you know, or you
16 know, the brakes or anything like that. You know, I would just, I
17 would make sure that, you know, the truck was kept so that, you
18 know, it would -- I wouldn't have any problems.

19 Q. Now do you own that truck?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Who owns that truck?

22 A. That truck came from either John or Nick, I believe, is the
23 owner of that particular truck.

24 Q. So that's another driver?

25 A. That's the cousin of Damien.

1 Q. Of Damien? Is he here on the property today?

2 A. Damien, yeah.

3 Q. No, I know Damien, but is his cousin here?

4 A. Nick is. I saw Nick over there, yeah.

5 Q. Okay. Before you came to Westfield, who did you work for?

6 A. I was actually working for Maytag.

7 Q. Okay. So this is --

8 A. I was an appliance technician.

9 Q. This is new for you?

10 A. Yeah. It was something -- well, I met John and Nick through
11 another yard that I run. I have -- I collect trucks and that was,
12 it was just kind of a hobby.

13 MR. FOX: We're going to take a break here for just a second.
14 I need to take a photo. Hold on.

15 (Off the record.)

16 (On the record.)

17 MR. FOX: We're back on the record.

18 BY MR. FOX:

19 Q. We were saying had the company ever asked you to do anything
20 that was not within hours of service or not within the law, and
21 you said --

22 A. No.

23 Q. No.

24 A. Damien prides himself on DOT inspections, getting no
25 violations. If we got violations for our logbooks, I was going to

1 get fired. And that was -- that's the way he always -- as soon as
2 I started, he's like, look, you're going to run -- I like to run
3 at night because at night there's less traffic, you can get in and
4 out of the cities a little nicer, you know. It's just -- it's a
5 lot easier, you know. And so he's like, no, he's like, you're
6 running during the day; you're going to get up in the morning, run
7 during the day. And a lot of that was because the scales are
8 open.

9 Q. I see.

10 A. And so I have in my vehicle two very recent DOT inspection
11 reports showing that they found no violations on that truck. And
12 they went to the State of Maryland and the State of New Hampshire,
13 went through everything that they could on that truck very
14 recently. I mean within the past month and a half, within the
15 past 6 weeks, that truck went through two DOT inspections with me
16 as a driver and it passed both inspections.

17 And there's texts where I'm like, hey man, you know, I
18 showed -- because we have to send pictures to him, obviously,
19 because he's the owner and -- or the boss. And he's like good
20 job, you know, all right, that's what I like to see. You know, we
21 might talk about a raise or a bonus or something. You know, keep
22 up the good work. You know, and that's -- he prided himself.
23 That's why this is the death of someone who actually cared.
24 That's what sucks.

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. You know what I mean? Because, I mean, I see a lot of
2 companies out here that, you know, they just don't even care. And
3 here's a guy who, to me, always showed me like he cared. And, you
4 know, he's probably -- he's going to lose everything because of
5 this.

6 Q. Now when you first started with the company, did you receive
7 any training?

8 A. The brother -- I started working with the cousins. And the
9 brother John, he took me with him. We did a run up to Maine
10 twice, I think, which was just a day trip. It wasn't overnight or
11 anything, it was just, you know, up and back. And not even very
12 far. It was like probably Exit 4, I think, in Maine. And we did
13 that a few times. And then I took the truck and then I ran it
14 ever since, really.

15 Q. So just to follow up and bring it to a conclusion, is there
16 anything that you can add to our investigation that would be
17 helpful in us trying to figure out what happened? Is there
18 anything that you can shed light on that might be helpful for us?

19 A. The only thing, on these Dodge trucks, when I saw what had
20 happened -- and again, I've been off the road for almost 3 weeks.
21 So when I saw what happened, you know, after I thought about it,
22 then read as much as I could, you know, and stuff and trying to
23 figure out, you know, what the hell could have happened, the only
24 thing that came to my mind was there's a recall on these trucks
25 for the steering linkage. Because I read one of the witnesses

1 said that the truck was going -- you know, swerving erratically, I
2 thought -- it clicked. And it was like 2 o'clock in the morning
3 I'm reading this and it clicked: Did that linkage break?

4 Because I got the recall on the truck that I was driving here
5 and it said in the recall, which I have -- I think it's in an
6 envelope at home with my bills. In the recall it said, if this
7 steering linkage breaks, the first thing that's going to happen is
8 you're going to lose all control of the vehicle and may result in
9 serious injury or death.

10 So I'm like, you know, obviously, if you lose the steering
11 wheel, that's -- you know, and then if you hit the brakes, if one
12 grabs a little bit more than the other, you know, obviously that
13 would cause erratic -- you know, what would appear to be an
14 erratic swerve. I mean, and that's the first thing that I said to
15 myself and I'm like, holy crap.

16 So I asked Damien, I was like -- because the last time that I
17 was at the dealership, there's no -- there still was not a repair
18 for that. They had no repair for that steering linkage breaking.
19 So my vehicle, as far as I know, and it could be different now
20 because I haven't been driving it for a few weeks, there was no
21 repair for that. And then when I saw that, I was like, that might
22 be something to look into, you know what I mean, because all these
23 trucks have that recall.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. And I don't know if -- you know, I mean, I'd have to look at

1 the truck to see if that steering linkage or something broke.

2 As far as the kid goes, I never met the kid. I heard about
3 his driving record. It's horrific that he was even in a truck.
4 You know, he shouldn't have been anywhere near this business. And
5 I'm just sorry that that happened. And it looks like we're out of
6 business.

7 MR. FOX: All right. Well, at this point we're going to go
8 ahead and conclude the interview. It's 11:47.

9 Thank you, sir. I appreciate it.

10 MR. STEPHENS: You're welcome. Thank you.

11 (Whereupon, at 11:47 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

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IN THE MATTER OF: TRUCK/MOTORCYCLE COLLISION
RANDOLPH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
JUNE 21, 2019
Interview of Josh Stephens

ACCIDENT NO.: HWY19MH010

PLACE: Springfield, Massachusetts

DATE: June 26, 2019

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.


[REDACTED]
Lisa Fuerstenberg
Transcriber