



Witness Group Attachment 2 – Family Response to Request for Information

Mountain View, CA

HWY18FH011

(8 pages)

March 20, 2019

Sent via Email to donald.karol@ntsb.gov

Don Karol
Senior Highway Accident Investigator
Office of Highway Safety,
National Transportation Safety Board

RE: *Huang, et al. v. Tesla, Inc., et al.*
Date of Accident: March 23, 2018

Dear Mr. Karol,

I apologize for the delay in responding to your questions of the Huang family. Here are their responses. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Very truly yours,

MINAMI TAMAKI LLP



B. Mark Fong, Esq.

Enclosure: questionnaire responses

Vehicle Information

1. Tesla invoice information indicates a delivery of a new 2017 Tesla Model X to Walter Huang on about November 1st, 2017. Can you verify this date and discuss how the Tesla was delivered to the family?

Response: November 18, 2017. Walter went to the Fremont Tesla dealership to pick up the car.

2. When the Tesla was delivered to Walter can you explain any type of training he may have received regarding the vehicle's operation or the installed advanced driver assistance systems?

Response: His family believes Walter had some training but doesn't know the details.

3. Were any written manuals or other documents provided describing the vehicle's operation and do you know if Walter spent time reading any materials provided?

Response: Unknown.

4. Was Walter the primary driver of the Tesla Model X? Did any other family members drive the car?

Response: Walter was the primary driver. Sevonne also drove it on weekends.

5. Did Walter discuss the operation of the Tesla with immediate family members or friends? If so, who? What type of information (positive or negative) did he share?

Response: Walter talked to his friend, Hans Ting, about the car. Hans also owns a Model X. They talked about the lane keeping technology in their Teslas, a patch to that system, and how that affected their cars' operation. He complained to Hans about the problem he was having with his car veering toward the subject gore point.

6. Did Walter ever describe any problems he was having with the Tesla? Who did he share the information with and what did he say?

Response: Walter told Sevonne he was having problems with the Autopilot of his Tesla, and the malfunctioning falcon wing door.

7. I spoke briefly with Walter's brother William who provided some general information that Walter had experienced problems with the autopilot system malfunctioning in the same general area of where the crash occurred. There has also been information disseminated in the media in this regard. I am interested in determining exactly what Walter may have relayed in this regard.

Response: Walter told Sevonne the Autopilot would cause his Tesla to veer toward the barrier involved in his crash, prior to the crash.

8. What exactly did Walter say would occur with the vehicle when he experienced problems?

Response: Walter said his car would veer toward the barrier while on Autopilot.

9. Was there a specific location or time of day that the problem would occur? Can you remember any approximate dates that he experienced the problem?

Response: Walter said the car would veer toward the barrier in the mornings, when he went to work

10. Did Walter tell anyone else about the problem other than his wife?

Response: Possibly Hans Ting.

11. Did Walter ever share problems he was having with the Tesla via electronic means such as e-mail, messaging or some other means? Is this information retrievable now?

Response: Hans may have text messages with Walter.

12. Many Tesla owners join online Tesla forum groups to share their experiences with Tesla vehicles. Did Walter belong to any of these groups and if so, do you know his user's name?

Response: Walter was a part of the Facebook group: Tesla Model X Owners Club. His user name was Walter Huang.

13. Since receiving the Tesla in November 2017, how many times has the vehicle been brought in for service and for what problems?

Response: Twice. The first was to install firmware which Walter was unable to update from home. So he brought the car in, and it was updated and repaired. The second time was for the door malfunction and navigation system error. The sensor on the door was replaced. However, Tesla said they couldn't duplicate the navigation error, so it remained unfixed.

14. Do you know if Walter ever brought in his car for service to remedy problems with the navigation system, cruise control or autopilot system? If so, how was the problem remedied by the service center?

Response: Yes, Walter brought the car in for the navigation error, but the problem was not fixed because the Tesla maintenance department said they were unable to duplicate it

15. Do you know if Walter ever made any online or electronic complaints regarding the Tesla?

Response: Unknown.

16. Tesla operators having problems with their vehicles have the capability of filing a “bug report” at the time they experience an issue. Do you know if Walter ever filed any “bug reports” with Tesla while driving?

Response: Unknown.

17. Any additional information you think is pertinent regarding the Tesla which can assist the NTSB in understanding the circumstances of this crash?

Response: Walter mentioned that he pulled over to the shoulder of the road once, to wait for wireless assistance from Tesla. Sevonne doesn't remember when this was or what it was about.

Driver Profile / 72-Hour History

In NTSB investigations we work to develop a profile of drivers involved in crashes for at least the 72 hours leading up to an accident. NTSB speaks with co-workers, family members, friends and examines work records / electronic communications to develop this information.

As part of this effort, I would like to ask the family the following questions:

1. Can you describe what a typical day would be for Walter (step through the day).

Response: Walter usually woke around 7 - 7:15AM to make breakfast for the family. Around 7:50AM he walked daughter Trinity to school. Around 9AM he took son Tristan to school. From there, he went to work. He worked out (exercised) from 12 – 1PM. He finished work usually between 4 – 7:30PM, depending on how busy he was that day. After dinner, at around 8:30PM, he gave the kids a bath. Around 9:20PM, he read bedtime stories to the kids. After the kids went to sleep, he usually talked with Sevonne, watched TV, or played video games. Between 10:30 – 11PM, he showered, and went to sleep around midnight.

2. March 23rd activities: Can you describe Walter's activities on Friday morning, March 23rd (time he awoke, breakfast?, transport kids to school?, workout at the gym?, time departed to work?, etc.)

Response: Normal daily routine, as above.

3. March 22nd activities: Do you remember what time Walter went to sleep on Thursday evening, March 22nd? Does Walter have any difficulties sleeping at night? How long would it usually take him to fall asleep when he went to bed? Does he wake up in the middle of the night? Does he snore?

Response: Walter went to bed between 11:30PM – 12:30AM. He rarely had trouble falling asleep, and usually fell asleep immediately. He usually did not wake in the middle of the night. He snored. On the evening of March 22, he fell asleep immediately and did not wake during the night. He snored.

4. March 22nd activities: Can you describe Walter's activities during the day on Thursday, March 22nd. What time did he awake, when did he depart for work?

Response: On March 22, Walter woke around 7AM, as usual. Sevonne doesn't remember when he went to work, but he was following his normal daily routine that day.

5. March 21st activities: Do you remember what time Walter went to sleep on Wednesday evening, March 21st? Note: Walter was at a Game Developer's Conference in San Francisco on Wednesday evening.

Response: Walter went to sleep on March 21 around 11PM – 12AM. A colleague of his from EA (Electronic Arts) had driven him home.

6. March 21st activities: Can you describe Walter's activities during the day on Wednesday March 21st?

Response: Walter dropped off the kids in the morning, went to work, came home around 11 – 11:30AM, picked up the kids with Sevonne around 12:30PM, and had lunch with them. At around 2:30PM he took an Uber to San Francisco for the Game Developers Conference.

Operational Information

1. What is Walter's driving history? Do you remember him ever getting any tickets or being involved in any accidents?

Response: As far as the family knows, Walter never got any tickets involving his driving. He got into a very minor car accident 12 years ago, which resulted in a small dent in his car's front bumper.

2. Do you know if Walter has had any other types of driver education or training beyond what is required to get your driver's license?

Response: Not to the family's knowledge.

3. Can you provide any information regarding Walter's driving habits? How frequently would he use technology installed within the car?

Response: Walter was a careful driver. He used the technology installed in the Tesla all the time.

4. The accident occurred on US 101 at the interchange of SH 85. Do you know how familiar Walter was with this route of travel?

Response: Walter drove this stretch of road on his way to work for the 3 months before the incident.

5. What was Walter's normal route of travel to his work facility for Apple?

Response: All Sevonne knows is Walter took US Highway 101 to work each day.

6. Can you describe any information Walter would share about his trip to work? Traffic conditions, construction, etc.

Response: It was peak rush hour traffic.

7. When Walter would make phone calls from his car do you know if he made the calls by talking into his Apple iPhone or would he speak through the Tesla's infotainment system? (hands-free communications?)

Response: Walter used hands-free communication in his car.

General health

1. Did Walter have any health issues or concerns around the time of the accident?

Response: No.

2. Has he had any health issues in the past? An Apple co-worker mentioned Walter having a persistent cough in the weeks prior to the crash which he caught from his child? Did Walter ever see a doctor for this condition? Was he taking any over-the-counter or prescription medication for his cough?

Response: Yes, Walter saw a doctor for his cough, and took a prescription medication for that. Around March 21-23 he rarely coughed, and was almost fully recovered by the 23rd.

3. Who was Walter's primary doctor? When was his last visit and/or physical?

Response: [REDACTED] Unknown when his last visit or physical exam was.

4. Was Walter taking any medicines around the time of the accident?

Response: Unknown.

5. Walter was an avid weightlifter and spent a lot of time at the gym. Can you describe his work out schedule? Did he have any injuries associated with his work out routine?

Response: Sevonne believes Walter worked out (exercised) every day at noon, but does not know his workout routine. She doesn't recall him ever hurting himself from working out, just having occasional muscle soreness.

Sensory Acuity

1. How was Walter's vision generally? Did he have any current or previous sight problems?

Response: Walter had Lasik done 3 years before the incident, after which he described his vision as roughly 20/20.

2. Did he wear glasses or contacts?

Response: Before he had Lasik, Walter wore glasses and contact lenses regularly.

3. Did he see an optometrist/ophthalmologist? (Contact information?)

Response: Unknown.

4. How was Walter's hearing generally? Any current or previous hearing problems?

Response: Walter had no hearing problems.

5. Was Walter under the care of an audiologist or other doctor for his hearing? (Contact information?) Did he wear a hearing aid?

Response: Walter did not see a doctor for his hearing, and had no hearing aids.

Life Habits and Routine

1. Did Walter's schedule change during his days off? If so, how?

Response: On days off, Walter spent his time with his family and friends. During the winter he took the family skiing, and during the summer took them swimming.

2. Were there any current life stressors (work problems, family sickness, etc.) in Walter's life around the time of the accident?

Response: No.