

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA You're just sitting there just going, oh,
man. When are we going to get there? So, those are the things I
remember.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Accident No. WPR18MA087

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Interview of: SCOTT BOOTH
Pilot

Thursday,
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APPEARANCES:

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:50 a.m. PDT)

MS. KELIHER: -- listen. And then I'll ask you some direct questions. We'll all go around. But I'm hoping at the end, depending on how much you want to know, then I'll share with you what we've learned in this investigation and show you some pictures and things that I think you might be interested in.

MR. BOOTH: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: But I'll kind of give you more up-to-date -- usually I talk to a pilot so much sooner after an accident happens, so I've been anxiously awaiting to talk to you this morning. I'm glad you came here.

MR. BOOTH: Yeah, I know. I guess -- I mean, maybe we could've done it sooner, but I was in a lot of pain and I'm highly-medicated, so I could've given you -- I mean, my memory's clear enough now. I think before and when I was in Vegas it was tough, so.

MR. TOBIN: Are you on pain medication today, Scott?

MR. BOOTH: Of course.

MR. TOBIN: That's what I thought.

MR. BOOTH: No, just the --

MR. TOBIN: It's just your life, huh?

MR. BOOTH: Just the -- yeah. It's mostly nerve pain medicine because I -- like, the -- I can't explain it, but the neurons and stuff are still firing in my legs, so it's really --

1 like, it feels like little tingling or hot little matches
2 periodically. So, they give you, like, a nerve medicine and just
3 a -- they keep a really low baseline so that you're constantly --
4 I mean, there's pain, but you're just not in too much to where
5 you're, you know, really uncomfortable and screaming and stuff.
6 So, I'm not mentally affected in any way, if that's what you're
7 asking.

8 MS. KELIHER: All right. Can you read?

9 MR. BOOTH: Yes.

10 MS. KELIHER: How are you passing the time?

11 MR. BOOTH: I watch TV shows. I have a lot of visitors
12 because I'm local to my -- where I grew up. My friend brought me
13 these trashy magazines yesterday, so I was going to -- these are
14 my favorite, so --

15 DR. WILSON: Catching up on celebrity trash?

16 MR. BOOTH: Yeah.

17 MR. TOBIN: Oh, yeah.

18 MR. BOOTH: I like when they show them shopping in the
19 grocery store and stuff.

20 MS. KELIHER: They're just like you.

21 MR. BOOTH: They're just like you, yeah. You know what I'm
22 talking about?

23 DR. WILSON: All right. So, that's your time in the
24 hospital --

25 MS. KELIHER: She's familiar with those magazines.

1 MR. BOOTH: They're great for the airplane rides to the East
2 Coast because each one of them is good for about 45 minutes. So,
3 if I don't fly JetBlue and I don't have my TV, then I'll get a
4 couple of these and just all of the sudden we're there, you know?

5 DR. WILSON: I'm sure (indiscernible) --

6 MS. KELIHER: I don't even recognize who the people are
7 anymore.

8 DR. WILSON: I know. I think the same thing.

9 MS. KELIHER: It's no Brad and Angie.

10 MR. BOOTH: How about who wore it best?

11 INTERVIEW OF SCOTT BOOTH

12 BY MS. KELIHER:

13 Q. That's some good stuff. I'm sure everyone asks you visiting
14 what happened.

15 A. No. Are you asking me?

16 Q. I'm sure everybody else has.

17 A. No, they don't most people don't. My friend, Tanya, came to
18 visit me last night and she hasn't seen me in over a year. And we
19 didn't talk about anything related to the accident. Most people
20 don't. Sorry.

21 Q. Just give you some tissues. I can't even imagine what you've
22 gone through and what you keep going through. And what you'll
23 continue cycling through and --

24 A. Yeah. I'm just --

25 Q. -- the emotional toll.

1 A. Burns are -- what I learned is they're just not, like, day or
2 week or month. It's literally, like, years. So, your skin will
3 continue to -- like, this looks healed, but it's not. These are
4 skin grafts. And this just -- blisters just open. You can't --
5 like, it is what -- you just have got to deal with it. There's
6 no -- the doctor here told me that only a time machine can heal.
7 Thought that was pretty funny.

8 Q. That's what they say with a broken heart and accidents and
9 death of family members. Have you seen your daughter?

10 A. Oh, yeah. She's home for the summer from college, so she's
11 been here, like, three or four times, at least, maybe more. And
12 my mom comes a lot.

13 Q. You sound like you've got a lot of community out there.

14 A. Yeah. The physical therapist said that she's never seen so
15 many guests, you know? And the pilots show up a lot in Vegas.
16 Brad Anadeal (ph.) just texted me right now and said, "Good
17 morning."

18 MR. TOBIN: Very good.

19 MR. BOOTH: Former pilot.

20 BY MS. KELIHER:

21 Q. Yeah. It seems like a lot of people have been in and out who
22 know you.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. We know a lot of the same people.

25 A. Cool. Pilots are good.

1 Q. Yep. The community is definitely supporting you and that's
2 why we're here is to try to figure out what happened. And we
3 understand that your recollection and what you went through might
4 not be the answer that we're looking for, but that's why we're
5 looking at everything and that's why we've got Eurocopter/Airbus
6 here and we're looking at the certification process.

7 We just interviewed the FAA a few days ago in Vegas, FDSO.
8 We're looking at everything because, as you know, we're pilots.
9 We're all trying to protect each other and have this not happen
10 again. So, any insight that you can give us, I think I just want
11 to sort of -- if you can tell us what you do remember, starting at
12 the day of the accident, and walk us through, would be probably
13 the most helpful of anything that you can think of.

14 And when I say walk us through, I mean in a lot of detail.
15 So, like, if you were going to describe -- if you asked me of,
16 like, how I brushed my teeth this morning, this is kind of -- this
17 is how I would give you the answer. I was at my dad's house. I
18 decided to stay there and save the Government money and I noticed
19 that he had Close-Up Toothpaste, which was in a red container,
20 which I thought was odd.

21 So, I opened it up, and there was, like, a serrated top,
22 which was covered in toothpaste and I started to turn it. And I
23 was turning it and I realized that it had been sealed on. So, I
24 put it down on the counter, which was, like, a blue linoleum and
25 it stuck on there. And when I turned over the cap, I noticed that

1 it had been sealed shut.

2 So, I pulled out my -- my toothbrush was in my travel bag
3 that was to the right of the sink, which was kind of, like,
4 elongated silver. So, that's the kind of detail I'm looking for.
5 A. Wow, that thorough.

6 Q. Yeah. It's going to be hard. This is not going to be easy
7 to go through, and I encourage you to close your eyes and give us
8 as much as you possibly can, even if you think that it might not
9 be pertinent. Anything can be helpful.

10 A. Don't remember the exact day of the week it was. Friday,
11 perhaps?

12 MS. KELIHER: Saturday.

13 MR. BOOTH: It was a Saturday. I usually work -- when I pick
14 up days for the company -- so, meaning instead of, like, a pilot
15 sending an email out asking for, does anyone want to cover this
16 day? I ask the lead pilots, do you guys need help these days?
17 And they'll send me a list of the month of the days that they're
18 short-handed or that they could use me. So, I -- it was one of
19 the days that I picked up for the company.

20 So, I stayed at my -- well, I stayed at Rob's house, which I
21 rent a room there just -- and Bill Orvis lives there, too. He's
22 the chief pilot of Sundance. Yeah. We barely see Bill because he
23 goes home to San Diego every Thursday after work. And I usually
24 come into Las Vegas on Thursday afternoon and then do my Trader
25 Joe's and my Whole Foods, get my shopping lined up for the week or

1 however long I'm going to be there.

2 And then I go home, watch TV and I use work afternoons. So,
3 there's usually two shifts. It could be staggered more but, at
4 Papillon, there's, like, a group of people, like, if they're at
5 5:30 and then a group that comes in, you know, 10:30 or, let's
6 say, in the summertime it could be 12:30, like right now, because
7 of the sun -- you know, because of the -- right? So, I --

8 BY MS. KELIHER:

9 Q. Do you want me to switch positions? Is it hard for you to
10 look over this way?

11 A. No. I can talk this way, too. So, I prefer afternoons.
12 It's not that I stay up late or anything, it's just physically and
13 psychologically I like the heat of the desert sun and I like
14 working afternoons. And I like flying the sunset tours back from
15 the canyon. I find that pretty.

16 So, that day I believe I flew three flights. I had already
17 done two flights that were canyon landings. One of them could
18 have been an air tour. I don't know. Obviously, you guys know
19 the difference between a landing and air tour, I would imagine,
20 but I think I did two landings or it could've been landing air.

21 And the final flight of the day was a landing. And I
22 remember going to the kiosk, if you will, where we get our flight
23 manifests printed from. It has your aircraft number that you're
24 going to fly in. It has your passenger's names, weight and
25 balance, and everything on it so you're -- you know that you're in

1 good graces, if you will.

2 I called the passengers to -- it was a -- it was busy. All
3 the pilots were grabbing their passengers. So, I waited
4 until -- what I usually do is I wait until everyone's got their
5 groups. It makes it a lot easier to find if you guys were my
6 people. Now, the waiting room is less crowded, so now I can
7 easily find people. So, I found them. I can't remember anyone's
8 name. I know they were British. I'm almost certain everyone was
9 British.

10 And went to the aircraft and did our safety briefing. And
11 then the manifest tells where everyone is supposed to sit for
12 weight and balance, so everyone sat where they were supposed to.
13 And I did my walk around, got in, did -- went through my checklist
14 and I was one of the last aircraft to take off. So, there was
15 probably six to eight. I'd be guessing, but in front -- and I was
16 one of the, probably, tail-end of a group that were all landing in
17 the canyon.

18 So, departed on this flight. Departed Boulder City, like I
19 always do, at the sub-station, which is right in Boulder City. I
20 made my last radio call and switched over to the tour frequency.
21 And then you follow -- you just get in line with everyone else.
22 There's no deviating of altitude or direction. You just follow
23 the chain.

24 Sundance, Maverick, 5 Star Sunny. So, everyone meets at the
25 Hoover Dam and you just -- you know, it's either your decision to

1 slow down and let them come in or keep the speed up and keep it
2 really tight. And then you just -- you talk to each other. So,
3 it was uneventful. I don't -- I've done this over a thousand --
4 roughly a thousand times and it was just an ordinary flight to the
5 canyon in an afternoon.

6 So, I was going east and across -- over Lake Meade and the
7 bay, and it wasn't -- I don't recall it being any turbulence or
8 being bad weather. I don't recall. I don't recall it
9 being -- there was no rain or lightning or -- I don't recall it
10 being bad visibility. It was just a par flight and I don't even
11 recall it being extremely windy in the lake area or closer to
12 Pierce Ferry.

13 Sometimes, there's a little dip in the hills where if the
14 wind is really howling you'll feel it. The aircraft will hop up a
15 little bit and I don't recall that happening. Usually when it
16 gets that hop, you can tell you're in for a little bit of wind at
17 the entrance of the canyon. And nothing the aircraft can't
18 handle. It handles bad weather pretty good.

19 So, I went to the entrance of the canyon and from there it's
20 about a couple minutes until you get to the Bat Towers, which is a
21 reporting point to either stay on the air tour or leave. The name
22 of the tour route is the Green 4. So, you leave the Green 4. So,
23 you'd say, Papillon five-five at the Bat Towers, coming off the
24 Green 4, landing quartermaster base. That's a very fair radio
25 call. So, I'm sure I said that.

1 And started the descent down, so -- and you don't go down on
2 the collective. You don't reduce your airspeed on your descent,
3 you just do a little forward cycle, you know, which it pushes it
4 forward and you keep your speed up because -- in case there's
5 people behind you. You don't want to slow down and be overflowed,
6 especially by another company when you're not on -- you don't have
7 the ability to talk to each other, unless it's on the main radio
8 frequency.

9 So, I -- as I got closer to the -- I call it the
10 quartermaster base, there's multiple landing spots for our
11 company. Don't quote me or hold me to it, but it -- I want to say
12 10 to 12 aircraft can fit, and possibly more if you just keep
13 extending them back or use the other areas. There's a lot of
14 room.

15 So, there was a few aircraft already there and I spotted some
16 nice open spaces on the -- straight inside. So, there's two
17 decisions you can make -- and which a lot of the times I go what's
18 called through the notch. When the wind is no factor, I like to
19 go through the notch because it gives the passengers a view of
20 the -- where we're going to land, and also they get a nice big
21 left turn, and we get to come around and land downriver with the
22 flow of the water.

23 This time -- that's called a straight-in, which is an upriver
24 landing. That radio call is Papillon five-five at the river,
25 straight-in, quartermaster base. Or you can say, going through

1 the notch and landing downriver. It's a good radio call because
2 two of the competitions, specifically Maverick, when they land at
3 the swamp, they're low, and you don't want to -- to make sure
4 you're on the same page with them coming in to land at the swamp.
5 And you coming around the notch, you want to keep eyes on each
6 other.

7 So, when I got just prior to the river, I could see also the
8 direction of some aircraft were pointed downriver. Some aircraft
9 were pointed upriver, which generally means to me that the wind is
10 not as much a factor because pilots are shooting the notch and
11 upriver. So, it's -- right. But then I saw the windsock and it
12 was -- it called for a straight-in landing. And I can't remember
13 if the windsock was pegged straight, like a frozen rope out, which
14 would mean, you know, some pretty significant wind, but I do
15 recall seeing it waver a little bit, like, kind of waffle.

16 And I -- as I got closer to the landing spot, I was, you
17 know, slowing down, I couldn't go straight-in. I just got hit
18 with a violent gust of wind, like, similar to a microburst that
19 would come down on you. It was like, I don't know, I want to say,
20 like, when you experience low-level wind shear that they talk
21 about sometimes that you experience in Vegas that the ATIS
22 reports.

23 And what it did was, it just took the aircraft from me. It
24 just spun it and I couldn't fly it. It just took it so quickly.
25 And I just -- after that I remember being on the ground on about

1 50 feet from the aircraft up on a -- kind of a ledge and I
2 remember my pants being on fire. And I remember sitting there,
3 dusting my pants off.

4 I don't remember how I got out of the aircraft and I don't
5 remember how much -- I know the pilots came over and one of them
6 used their belt to -- I think it was a belt to do a tourniquet on
7 my left leg because my left leg was really badly broken. And the
8 couple -- the pilot stayed with me and eventually some flight
9 medics came, some nurses, and I remember -- I just remember them
10 putting jackets on me, like, covering me with, like, blankets and
11 stuff.

12 And I really -- I don't remember the helicopter taking me out
13 of there. And I think it was one or -- one and a half months
14 later when I reopened my eyes at UMC. That's all I got.

15 Q. So, take us through a -- walk me through in the toothpaste-
16 style example of when you first called out bat tower, what you can
17 remember.

18 A. I don't remember because it's been something that I've done
19 roughly over 1,000 times. So, it wasn't anything out of the
20 ordinary until the aircraft got taken away from me. I mean, I
21 could say at the bat towers, I gently nudged the cyclic forward to
22 decrease our altitude but, I mean, that's such a common
23 sense -- nothing was out of the ordinary. Nothing was out of
24 training guidelines.

25 Everything I did was what I've done a thousand-plus times.

1 It was business as usual the whole way down until the gust of wind
2 just picked up and just grabbed the aircraft. I don't think I can
3 toothpaste it for you. I don't have any memory of anything out of
4 the ordinary.

5 Q. Any feelings that you had? Pedals? Stick?

6 A. No. No, it was a normal -- it was a -- it was probably an
7 aircraft -- if we go back and look, it's probably an aircraft I've
8 flown maybe 100 times. They all have their -- for the most part,
9 they're all the same. Some of them, like, maybe the seat doesn't
10 go back as far as the one in the other aircraft, so you have to
11 adjust your pedals, maybe, closer to you or farther away from you.

12 But I sit the same configuration in every aircraft: seat all
13 the way back, pedals all the way forward. Even for my height,
14 most people flip the pedals out to give them more room with their
15 legs, but I like mine close because I like to be on the pedals and
16 really feel -- especially when I'm leaving the airport base -- the
17 airport and the -- you get a crosswind or a tailwind.

18 It's a lot easier for me to hover and keep low to the ground
19 with my feet in that position. So, they were in that position on
20 the day of the accident.

21 Q. If I was going to make a documentary movie and I'm setting up
22 the film of how everything should be to recreate what it was like
23 in the accident, what -- do you remember of any of the helicopters
24 of which way they were pointing? Was anyone behind you? In front
25 of you? Maverick? Sundance? Do you remember anything of --

1 A. I remember our quartermaster base had an aircraft pointing
2 upriver, so straight-in landings, and had an aircraft pointing
3 downriver, through the notch landings. I don't recall. I think
4 there was one Papillon aircraft behind me. You guys would have to
5 check and verify that. I don't recall. And as far as Maverick
6 and Sundance, definitely don't recall. And they wouldn't be a
7 factor for me on a straight-in landing anyway.

8 Q. Do you know which pads you were going to?

9 A. Yeah. I was going to park the aircraft behind the last ones
10 that have already -- on a upriver landing, there's -- they
11 can -- you can fit one, two, three, four, five where the picnic
12 area is. You can -- so, if you're sitting at the picnic area
13 facing upriver, you can put an aircraft right up in the picnic
14 area out to the right and then you can just stack them behind.

15 So, there's always room. You can go -- it goes very far back
16 towards the canyon wall. There's always room. So, I saw an area
17 where I know I've landed before when there's been three or four,
18 five aircraft already in front of me. So, that's where I was in
19 my mind and I was setting up for that. So, I was slowing down,
20 doing all the muscle memory maneuvers that you do to get
21 your -- to shoot your approach. And -- yeah.

22 Q. When did you encounter the wind?

23 A. Excuse me. I'm not 100 percent sure, but it was when -- it
24 wasn't when I was facing straight into the base. It's when -- so,
25 let's say the -- all the landing spots are over here. As I came

1 this way and started, like, a left turn -- and then just got hit
2 with it and started --

3 Q. How did it feel in your seat, do you remember? Up, down,
4 high G, low G, right, left? Do you remember any of the
5 sensations?

6 A. No. It was so fast. I don't remember.

7 Q. Do you remember feeling what it was like on your pedals?

8 A. No.

9 Q. So, you've done this so many times. Have you ever felt wind
10 there before?

11 A. Not like this. Nothing even close. I've had -- I've landed
12 before where I went through the notch and landed, and I felt a
13 slight tailwind. But the windsock was indicating -- when I flew
14 in, was indicating a downriver landing. So, it made -- it
15 went -- that's why I went through the notch and landed downriver.
16 But when I came in for the final, could feel a little wind and
17 then the wind had shifted.

18 And it -- and then it was saying, oh, you should do a
19 straight-in landing. So, those are ones where you can get all the
20 way to the ground and then do a pedal turn and then put yourself
21 into the wind and land, or you can just land because the aircraft
22 can handle a little bit of a tailwind. It's not a big deal for
23 most helicopters on the light turbine side. It can -- but,
24 so -- yes, I've experienced wind down in the canyon before.

25 And I mean, I've been in there in thunderstorms in that

1 vicinity, but I've never experienced just -- it was like being
2 blindsided by a wave, like an invisible wave, that just wanted to
3 take the aircraft and run with it. So, that's all I remember.

4 Q. Do you remember hearing anything?

5 A. No. Oh, I remember hearing the passengers make some noise,
6 like, whoa. Something like that. I do remember that. So, that
7 was kind of eerie. And the -- I've thought about that before, you
8 know, because I feel really connected to those people. It's just
9 such a tragic accident. So, to remember that a couple of months
10 after the accident is tough.

11 Q. Do you remember where people were seated as far as gender or
12 what they're wearing or anything of where everyone's situated?

13 A. I believe there was a girl up front and then, to my right and
14 in the back was a guy. I want to say back-right. But, no, I
15 don't remember.

16 Q. Do you remember anything that they were talking about or
17 saying during the ride?

18 A. They were -- I know they weren't quiet, but I don't remember.
19 I mean, I -- we always -- I always play music and point out a few
20 things, but I think I recall that they weren't too interested in
21 facts about -- you have to learn about your passengers, you know?
22 If you just talk the whole time, you can ruin the flight for them,
23 so I think these are the -- I tend to point out some things and
24 share some facts. And if they want to talk, I'll talk to them,
25 but I don't recall these people want -- being chatty towards me,

1 for sure. Yeah.

2 Q. Do you remember what you were listening to?

3 A. I listen to the same stuff. It's the tour music tracks that
4 we have in there. I just hit it on what's called a play all and
5 it just plays all the way through, starting at -- with the first
6 song, goes all the way through. So, I don't even remember what
7 songs are on that list anymore. I think there's, like, some U2,
8 Where the Streets Have No Name, which is always nice when you go
9 into the canyon. It kind of makes a pretty soundtrack to
10 the -- what you're seeing. And there's some Elvis for when you're
11 flying out Vegas. It's fun to play some Elvis when you're flying
12 down the strip.

13 Q. What about when you're landing? What do you hear
14 (indiscernible)?

15 A. It's just whatever's on the -- like I said, if you hit play
16 all, it just -- I don't recall what song would be on when you're
17 coming in for landing. But it's not -- just to clarify, it's not
18 blaring, it's really low and in the headsets. And with -- when
19 there's any doubt of if I need to be extra vigilant, because it's
20 busy, I just turn it off in my headset.

21 Q. I see.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Do you get really chatty passengers?

24 A. Sometimes.

25 Q. I can imagine.

1 A. Sometimes. And sometimes you get groups of foreign people.
2 Most of the guests are foreign. Sometimes you get groups from
3 certain countries that they don't -- they just speak to each other
4 whole time in the headset and they can't understand any English
5 anyway, so they just chat nonstop. And that's fine by me. I can
6 turn them off so I don't have to hear it and -- or, if I feel like
7 it, I listen to them.

8 Q. What do you usually carry with you?

9 A. My headset bag and -- which is in my backpack, which has my
10 water bottles and car keys. Sometimes I have my computer with me
11 because, you know, some -- when I'm in the office, if my flight
12 doesn't sell or there's maintenance on my aircraft for some
13 reason, then I can get on my laptop and get some -- you know, it's
14 just fun to have your laptop there so you can, I don't know, read
15 the news or whatever you want to do.

16 Q. Do you remember how you got the weather that day?

17 A. It's on our briefing sheet. So, when I came in, I just look
18 at the forecast that's on the sheet. And you have to initial in
19 and sign in what time you got there. And then that's on one doc
20 and then another doc is -- it's got, like, the takeoff and landing
21 times. How you can't -- you know, don't take off to go to the
22 canyon after this time and things like that.

23 So, you initial and then it has notes at the bottom that I
24 can talk about. You know, don't park your aircraft this direction
25 today because we're doing washing of the tarmac or whatever. So,

1 you have to read all those notes and then you initial.

2 Q. Do you remember anything about what the briefing sheet said?

3 A. No.

4 Q. And then in between flights, do you look at any other
5 weather?

6 A. No, because you were just in the canyon. And I believe my
7 flights were back-to-back-to-back. There wasn't, like,
8 a -- wasn't an hour- or 2-hour break between each flight. It was
9 pretty much land and take the passengers to the door. And then go
10 wipe down the aircraft, and maybe go to the bathroom and drink
11 some water, and get ready to go back out there. It's only a half-
12 an-hour flight, so it's not like you're exuding a lot of energy.
13 And it wasn't especially -- it wasn't hot that day.

14 Q. Do you remember if it was bumpy at all during the day?

15 A. I don't remember. But if it was, I would remember because
16 it's not bumpy. Does that make sense? It would be an unusual
17 occurrence because the flight is 90-percent-plus smooth all the
18 way to the canyon. Except sometimes you'll get a very rare -- and
19 it's been -- I can count on a couple of fingers where I've gotten
20 a -- like, a 40-, 50-knot tailwind. So, you're just flying to the
21 canyon. Like just -- and then when you come back, you're
22 just -- you're, like, at 80 --

23 Q. Dog.

24 A. Yeah. You're just sitting there just going, oh, man. When
25 are we going to get there? So, those are the things I remember.

1 Like, I can remember, again, on this same hand, passengers
2 throughout the last 6 years that were not nice. But most of them
3 are beautiful and perfect, so I don't remember them. I only
4 remember a couple of people that were just nasty or really drunk
5 and I had to, like, not just -- get people to help me, like,
6 explain to them that they can't go flying. Stuff like that.

7 Q. Do you remember if the passengers had anything onboard with
8 them?

9 A. Such as?

10 Q. Purses, anything?

11 A. No. I don't -- it was just another flight with just another
12 group of people, so I wouldn't remember. Nothing out of the
13 ordinary.

14 Q. When you said you were coming in and you felt that wind, how
15 did you know it was wind?

16 A. I mean, it wasn't any -- there wasn't someone physically
17 pushing the aircraft, it was just -- and you tell that it -- you
18 could just feel it. It's just a feeling in the aircraft you can
19 feel that when -- I've seen -- okay. So, see this? I've seen an
20 aircraft parked on the ramp and then heavy wind came through the
21 airport and actually spun the same aircraft 180 degrees while it
22 was tied down on the ramp. Now, that was the effect of what
23 happened to me -- us, except it went around a couple of times. I
24 don't know how many.

25 Q. Do you know which direction?

1 A. I don't remember. But I'd be speculating. I think it was
2 right, clockwise. I think.

3 Q. But you couldn't -- you don't remember feeling --

4 A. No.

5 Q. -- which way it was taking you?

6 A. I don't remember much about the accident except the aircraft
7 just starting to spin. And then me being outside of the ship with
8 my pants on fire.

9 Q. And going back, you don't know or have any recollection of
10 which way you were ejected out?

11 A. No, I didn't even know -- I don't know how I got out. I
12 don't think anyone pulled me out or else I would've heard that
13 story. Unless someone doesn't want to come forward and share
14 that.

15 Q. Do you remember what type of briefing that you gave the
16 passengers?

17 A. I gave the standard briefing required by the company and the
18 FAA. It wasn't -- I don't -- it wouldn't have been anything out
19 of the ordinary. It would have been, here's your life belts, you
20 know, life jacket belts. Here's how to put them on. Here's how
21 to use them. Don't smoke. Don't open the doors in flight.
22 Here's the location of the fire extinguisher. Here's how to use
23 the seat belts and get out of them.

24 I always include how to use the radios because they'll string
25 them all up, like, looked like a -- what do you call that? Puppet

1 show. Make it look crazy back there. They'll get out of the
2 aircraft and the seatbelt will still be partially buckled, and
3 that's just -- it's crazy. No, nothing out of the ordinary for
4 the briefing, just the standard stuff.

5 Q. But they watch a video beforehand, anyway.

6 A. They do.

7 Q. Do they usually know how to use seat belts?

8 A. The five -- it's the harness. And I would say depending on
9 what country you're from would dictate how you -- how good you are
10 with the seat belts, but I don't think -- I don't recall these
11 people having any problems, but I still demonstrate it.

12 Q. What about people from the U.K., usually?

13 A. They're usually fine.

14 Q. Oh.

15 A. I mean, it's India that struggles. And I think it's just
16 because they don't wear seat belts there. There's quite a few
17 countries that don't wear seat belts at all. There's probably
18 more countries don't wear seat belts than do, if I had to guess.

19 Q. When you're trying to figure out what the weather's going to
20 be like at quartermaster, what do you do look at? How do you
21 determine if you have tail wind, head wind?

22 A. You can hear from the pilots that have already been down
23 there. That's one. Direction will say, hey, the wind is -- a lot
24 of -- they'll call in and say, hey, straight-in looks really good
25 today. Or they'll say, hey, guys, it's going to be downriver.

1 That's one way because, like I said, I'm not the first one down
2 there. So I can pick it up that direction or our pilot -- our
3 lead pilots could tell us because they gathered some information.

4 So, it's just more info that we have. Or the -- you know,
5 the windsock. I use the windsock and the other aircrafts that are
6 already down there. So, like I said, if they're all pointing
7 downriver and the windsock shows a downriver landing, then that's
8 something you want to do. You just -- you can do the downriver
9 landing, but you can still land at an upriver spot. You just
10 point the other direction. There's nothing wrong with that. So,
11 that's how.

12 Q. You said that somebody had come in just before you. Do you
13 see them land?

14 A. I didn't see anybody land.

15 Q. Do you remember if anyone's blades were still turning.

16 A. No.

17 Q. You don't remember or they weren't turning?

18 A. I don't remember. I don't think so and I don't remember.

19 Q. What happens if you're setting up for landing and passengers
20 are getting your pad that you were aiming for?

21 A. You can do a go-around or you can kind of slow down. If
22 there's -- if the situation presents itself where you have enough
23 power and you're into the wind and stuff, you can slow down a
24 little bit more and give -- typically, what will happen is the
25 other pilot of those passengers will grab them and get them out of

1 the way. But you can do a go-around. It's pretty common. Go-
2 arounds are pretty common. I've done quite a few down there
3 to -- if people are in the way or if the wind was doing something
4 different than I thought it was. Yeah.

5 Q. When you chose the pad that you were going to, you said that
6 you normally do the notch approach. Why did you not go through
7 the notch? Do you remember what the decision was?

8 A. Yeah. I think because the windsock was showing at the time a
9 straight-in landing was best and there was room for a straight-in
10 landing. So, that was -- you see -- I mean, straight-in landing
11 is -- it's no-brainer. There's always a pad or landing spot
12 available towards the very back. It might not be ideal and we
13 have to walk farther to get to the picnic area under the
14 shaded -- I don't know what they call it. A ramada or something.
15 But it's -- yeah.

16 Q. Do you remember anything about your flight in January?

17 A. January. What do you mean?

18 Q. Just anything about the last time that you had flown prior to
19 the accident?

20 A. No. Again, it's like muscle memory. It's like -- it's just
21 like we all drive our cars. It's like, even though I'm not there
22 every day -- I used to be there 7 days straight, 7 days off. And
23 even when I started working not in a full-time capacity, I was
24 still -- oh, let me -- it'll go forever. Can you grab that? I'll
25 tell them to stop. Hi. I'm going to call you back, okay? Thank

1 you. It's lunch.

2 Q. Ah.

3 A. But if you don't answer, it'll go, like, 20 -- it'll go 20
4 times. Sorry, what was I saying?

5 Q. Muscle memory --

6 A. Oh, no, no.

7 MS. KELIHER: You were talking about not -- when you started
8 not working full-time.

9 MR. BOOTH: So, when I went to a part-time capacity, I still
10 worked, I believe that month, 8 to 10 days. And I've consistently
11 been in the 8-day level, except for, you know, vacations or -- one
12 time in October of 2017, I went to Nepal. And I told everybody
13 well -- like, months ahead of time -- like, 6 months ahead of time
14 that I was doing this trek through the Himalayas and this
15 is -- I'm not going to be available.

16 And they were slow anyway. They didn't -- you know, they
17 said fine. But I don't -- first of all, I love flying and I love
18 the company. So, I like to -- and I like Las Vegas. And I like
19 my roommates. So, there's no reason not -- like, if I'm sitting
20 around doing nothing, why not go to work? So, I like to go -- I
21 like going there.

22 Q. And I saw that you didn't have that many AStar hours. Did
23 you purposely choose to only do the (indiscernible) --

24 A. I wanted to fly out of Las Vegas. And I flew almost
25 specifically out of Las Vegas for, like, a year, maybe more. I

1 was only -- every time I went to work, I was only flying out of
2 Las Vegas and they don't fly the AStars out of there. And that
3 was my -- I really enjoyed that.

4 But the reason why I don't have too many AStar hours is
5 because I had a poor flight on my check ride with a gentleman and
6 I thought he was a less-than-stellar pilot. And I don't -- I
7 didn't like the way he was -- he'd tell me to do something, and
8 I'd execute it, but the way -- and not the way he would've done
9 it. He wasn't a very high-time AStar pilot at all, but it just
10 turned out he was doing my check ride.

11 So, he said, let's -- when we went back to the airport, he
12 said, let's just discontinue this and, you know, let's pick it up
13 later. And I just didn't bring it up and they didn't bring it up.
14 So, I basically stayed in the B4 and kept myself in Las Vegas,
15 which I like flying out of anyway even though it's a longer day
16 and longer flight. That's the reason why I don't have the AStar
17 time is because I -- we didn't choose to do the check ride again.

18 Q. Did you like flying the AStar?

19 A. It wasn't as comfortable to me as the B4. I like -- it
20 just -- the bigger bus feeling of the aircraft. A lot of the guys
21 like flying the B3e by themselves and going up to the top. And
22 they just yank it up and just shoot up like a rocket and all that
23 stuff. But, I don't know, that's not me anyway. It's not my
24 style of flying. I'm pretty methodical and slow and boring. I'm
25 a boring pilot.

1 Q. Have you ever ran out of pedal in a B4?

2 A. In hovering at the airport, I've had the pedal pretty darn
3 close to the limit, but I've never ran out. I always tell people,
4 if you're going to run out, just set the aircraft down. Sorry,
5 I'm itchy. Itchy.

6 Q. That's what happens with pain meds.

7 A. No, it's the -- my back is -- so, my right leg had a lot of
8 skin grafts on it before I came to this -- from the other
9 hospital. And before I came here, they took all the skin from my
10 back to do that. And because they'd harvested my back so many
11 times, this time it's not healing. So, they're trying, like,
12 three different pain medication -- or, three different ointments
13 to get it to work.

14 And until it heals, I can't go to rehab because it's a
15 different hospital and they don't have -- they're not set up to do
16 wound care the way this hospital is in a burn ICU. So, the
17 doctor's actually going to look at my -- he called it a flank.
18 They're going to take down all my dressings and look at it this
19 afternoon at 3:00. And if he says that it's something that's
20 healing good enough, then they're going to send me to Long Beach
21 Memorial Acute Rehab early next week. So, that'll be my next step
22 to recovery.

23 Q. Go back to Long Beach.

24 A. Yeah. Where I start -- you know what's really funny is
25 that's the hospital I was born at.

1 Q. Wow. That's right. You went to Wilson, right?

2 A. I went to Lola Rogers, Wilson, Long Beach City, and Cal State
3 Dominguez Hills.

4 Q. I was at Millikin.

5 A. So were my cousins. My cousin Greg and Mike both graduated
6 from Millikin. It's a good school. The Rams. I buy my tennis
7 shoes right by Millikin. They have a specialty tennis shoe shop
8 for people with wide -- one foot's wider than the other. So, pay
9 them a little bit more money, but you get a good shoe.

10 Q. I see.

11 A. I don't know how they do it, but they do it. I took them to
12 Nepal with me and used them all -- used them more than my boots.
13 You know, everyone's hiking in these huge fancy \$200 boots, and I
14 was just having fun in my New Balance. Walked the whole way down
15 in my New Balance. All 3 days. The Sherpas laughed at me the
16 whole time.

17 Q. Do you remember your last training and check ride?

18 A. It was in -- it's always in December. Yeah. I remember
19 the -- I did a -- I know I did a training flight with Daniel
20 Hicken and I'm almost -- don't hold me to it, but I think I did my
21 check ride with Tyler Carver. Is that right?

22 Q. I don't remember if the check ride was with --

23 MS. KELIHER: Tomlinson.

24 MR. BOOTH: Oh, was it?

25 Q. Tomlinson.

1 A. Mike Tomlinson? Yeah, it was. Okay. Yeah. I remember
2 that.

3 Q. Do you remember anything about them?

4 A. The check ride, I remember, was pretty straight-forward and
5 we didn't have any issues on that. It's something I've done,
6 like, six times, anyway. And the ground was fine. I think in the
7 training we had encountered some pretty high-wind situations at
8 the airport, where we couldn't hit our spot on the 180 autos.

9 It was just coming up short or -- it's like you made -- as
10 you had a nice tail wind, and then soon as you entered the
11 downwind and made the right turn, it was coming up short. But it
12 had a little bit to do with Daniel, too, because he teaches -- the
13 way he likes to do it is different than the way Celeste likes to
14 do it, which is different than the way Tomlinson, and everyone one
15 of those -- everyone teaches a quick stop different.

16 And that's the situation I ran into on the AStar with that
17 particular instructor, is that they he -- they were adamant about
18 one way, but -- no. But Daniel's a great pilot and very safe,
19 very safety conscious, and a nice, just calm, nice person. All
20 business. No joking around. But I remember that we -- the only
21 issue on that training was the 180 autos and the high wind. And
22 without the wind, those are no-brainers, you just -- and on the
23 check ride, I nailed it, like, no problem. And the wind was
24 nothing to what it was when we were out doing our training. And I
25 don't recall if -- yeah. Sorry.

1 Q. Were those -- did you do those at Boulder City?

2 A. Boulder City. You do -- we do all our flight training out of
3 Boulder City.

4 Q. Do you dread when it comes December and you have to redo
5 everything?

6 A. You know what? Everybody, every pilot, dreads the re-
7 currency stuff because it's the AvStar, which -- on the computer,
8 which takes -- you know, if you do it right, it takes a while.
9 You know, if you just click, click, click, click clicking, and
10 you're okay with mediocre, like, an 80 percent or 70 percent, then
11 you can get through it in a couple of days. But, you know,
12 it's -- check rides are always a pressure until you're doing them.

13 And it's just super calming because it's the same maneuvers
14 that you've done so many times, you know? But, yeah, I would say
15 every December it's just like, oh, no. I got to do this again?
16 And who am I going to get? Am I going to get -- which examiner am
17 I going to get to -- what are they going to make me go through,
18 you know? But --

19 MR. TOBIN: (Indiscernible).

20 MR. BOOTH: Oh, thanks bro. That's okay.

21 DR. WILSON: It's like you need a roll.

22 MR. TOBIN: Yeah. There (indiscernible) --

23 MR. BOOTH: That's good.

24 BY MS. KELIHER:

25 Q. So, I'm assuming you don't do any autos all year, and then in

1 December --

2 A. Right. Because you're flying with --

3 MR. BOYD: Can't see you from that side. Yeah. I got a
4 better angle now.

5 MR. BOOTH: Thanks. Yeah. Because you can't do autos with
6 passengers. It's illegal and you get fired. It's just no point
7 in it. All those reasons, right? So, it's true, you only -- and
8 I believe that's the case with, like, PHI and a bunch of other
9 companies. You know, training is expensive, too. But you're
10 supposed to be able to have those skills and carry them out
11 throughout the year.

12 Q. When you did the training flight, how does it usually space
13 out of -- then you do the check ride that day?

14 A. It can be that day, but mine were spaced out throughout a
15 couple days. Maybe, like, a week. Did a flight with Daniel, did
16 another flight with him, maybe one more, and then -- could have
17 been two. It's usually two.

18 Q. Two training flights.

19 A. Two training flights, usually. Some people have -- I think
20 they've knocked it out in one, but I believe -- you'd have to ask
21 Burl and them, maybe. But I think it's -- I think I did two. And
22 then the -- on the actual check ride was -- yeah. It's just two
23 and then the check ride. I mean, it's plenty of time to get
24 your -- to hone in your skills.

25 Q. When did you decide to go part time?

1 A. Well, I actually quit. And I believe it was December 2014 or
2 '15. I don't know. Exact date, I don't know. But what happened
3 was -- is I resigned to the chief and then he asked me -- and this
4 was in, like, August. And he asked me when my currency ran out
5 and I told him December. And then the lead pilot over in Las
6 Vegas -- her name was Yoshi Macklow. She's just an angel, and
7 probably one of my best friends. Sorry.

8 She wrote an email to Simon, who was the chief at the time,
9 and -- like, a really nice email and asked if it would be a good
10 idea to keep me around. And Simon said I could stay through
11 December if I worked. And I ended up working, like I said, 8 days
12 a month starting in August, September, October. I just worked.
13 And in December, I think Tyler Carver came to me and said, I sent
14 your passcode for the Avstar. And that meant they were going to
15 give me another check ride. So, I'm like, this is the best. I'm
16 going to get to keep this job.

17 Q. Do you use the flight benefits a lot?

18 A. You know what? Just to go back between Long Beach and Las
19 Vegas. And I drive half the time. So, no one enjoys the
20 benefits. And my dad's 94 years old and he's not going to get on
21 a plane. He's been around the world a thousand times. My mom was
22 a stewardess and she hates flying, so she's not -- she doesn't use
23 them. And she would rather pay \$500 than wait on standby in an
24 empty plane. That's just her style.

25 She's like, I'm not going to be kicked off a plane and

1 embarrassed. And so -- but I don't jet off to Paris every weekend
2 if you're -- you know, keeping the flight benefits was nothing to
3 do with keeping flying at Papillon. It was the people. It's
4 just --

5 Q. Isn't it constantly changing, the rotation?

6 A. Yeah. Constantly getting new friends.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. And keeping the old ones. I mean, I've -- probably have,
9 like, 500 -- or, 300 pilots in my phone. They're all good people.

10 Q. Do you find anything challenging about not flying as much?

11 A. No.

12 Q. No?

13 A. What's Curtis' last name?

14 MR. TOBIN: Cornelius.

15 MR. BOOTH: Curtis Cornelius, he didn't fly for 10 years.

16 And I asked him the same question and he said, not at all. He
17 flew in Vietnam and flew EMS back before there was night vision
18 and -- at night, he's an amazing pilot. I think he's taking this
19 harder than I am.

20 BY DR. WILSON:

21 Q. Did you ever want to fly EMS? Did you have an end goal of --

22 A. That was my -- that's something I wanted to do in my 50s, but
23 now I can't do it. But DeFuniak Springs, Florida, wanted to sit
24 on the porch swing and wait for a call.

25 Q. So, you started flying here?

1 A. Long Beach.

2 Q. And then can you just go -- walk us through, you were flying
3 here and then you went to Missouri thereafter?

4 A. Sure. I started at Rotor Aviation in Long Beach. I went and
5 checked out Silver State and they wanted, like, a ridiculous
6 amount of money. And I Googled them and just found out all these
7 horror stories, so they were out right away. And I went over to
8 LA Helicopters and they were -- there was, like, a couch that a
9 dog had eaten through and, like, one helicopter and a bunch of
10 foreign people, like, all British guys that were instructors and
11 stuff and it didn't feel right.

12 And then I found Rotor Aviation, which only had -- it had a
13 brand new R22, that was actually leased to them by a
14 cardiovascular surgeon from this hospital, and had a 44 that was
15 leased to them. And I went over there and you walk through this
16 private -- it's an FBO to get to their office, so it's, like,
17 cookies and iced tea and a big, huge aquarium. And then I was
18 like, wow, this is nice. And then when I went in up to their
19 office and it was, you know, typical flight school office with two
20 desks for the lead pilots and a couch and a whiteboard and charts
21 and things like that.

22 But it -- and then I took -- went and did a demo flight. And
23 then I had some money coming to me from a company I worked for and
24 it was about enough money to cover flight school, except they
25 could -- they'd only pay you a certain amount each year, so I just

1 paid for the flight school on my credit card every time I flew
2 out. I'd let them run the card and then I'd get the reimbursement
3 money from my -- that company at the end of each year and I'd just
4 reimburse myself.

5 But I started at Rotor and my instructor went to be -- went
6 on to Papillon and his instructor before him went to Papillon.
7 And Robert Downie, who I flew with, went to Papillon and then Nick
8 Phong (ph.), who I flew with there at Rotor went to Papillon. And
9 then Nick and Rob got me in the door. It was a hard door to get
10 in, let me tell you, bro. They weren't in need. It was a -- they
11 had a stacks of resumes like this much and I had to get mine in
12 there.

13 Anyway, I would go back to the flight training. So, I got
14 my -- I think I got my private in about 5 months, just pretty
15 standard. And then after getting my -- I did all my check rides
16 with Tim Tucker. So, after getting the private rating, I started
17 working on the commercial and -- which you need to build a lot of
18 hours and I -- cross country and stuff. So, these -- an
19 opportunity came from Brazil where a guy that owned a Robinson
20 dealership down there, clients were -- didn't want to buy new ones
21 because they didn't want to pay -- the sales in Brazil, they have
22 a high luxury tax. But if they're flown in, something can be
23 done.

24 And so, they bought a couple 44s through the owner of the
25 Rotor Aviation Company and then they wanted to -- they needed

1 pilots to fly them down there. And so, I was able to negotiate, I
2 believe, for \$100 an hour to fly one of the 44s from here to
3 Brazil. So, it's to Florida, then through the Caribbean, and then
4 Guyana, Suriname, French Ghana, and Macapá, Brazil, and then all
5 the way -- you can take the coast or you can go interior and down
6 to Sao Paulo area.

7 So, I think I got, like, 83 hours on top of the 60 that I
8 already had put me almost to the commercial level. And then
9 I -- and for -- it was, like, \$8,500 I got, which would've -- 44
10 rental time is \$400 to \$500 an hour, so I got, like, a smoking
11 deal and I got to fly the whole way as a brand-new pilot. I
12 was -- I got to do all kinds of -- land at tons of different
13 airports, and, you know, do the radios and do general
14 declarations, and go up to the towers and file flight plans, and
15 do flight followings.

16 It was way out of my comfort zone because my comfort zone was
17 talking to Long Beach, talking to Torrance, going through Compton.
18 Talking to El Monte, talking to Fullerton and going through LAX
19 and going over to Van Nuys and -- I mean, which is really hard to
20 do for people that don't fly in airspaces like they have in L.A.
21 up north from San Jose to SFO.

22 And that -- there's Mountain View Airport, there's San Carlos
23 Airport, there's so many to talk to. Similar to Florida when
24 you're on the 95 going south, it just like, Charlie, Delta, Delta,
25 Delta, Delta, Delta, Charlie, Delta, Delta, Orlando, Bravo. And

1 it's fun. And I find that stuff really fun. So, it was more of a
2 challenge to do this huge international flight with the raft, you
3 know, with the emergency supplies and the flares and the raft at
4 your feet.

5 And you had to plan, you know, okay, if something happens,
6 you're going to do the auto. And then when we get to the water,
7 you know, we'll get the raft -- we'll throw the raft out. I said,
8 well -- I said, why do we want -- should we throw the raft out?
9 Does it even float? I was serious and we didn't know. You know,
10 that was also something we laughed about. We all said we'd throw
11 the raft out first and then swim to it. And I was like -- we'd
12 laugh later. Does it even float? Or does it float only when it's
13 removed out of its package, right? Because it's heavy.

14 So, I got the commercial then I started working on the
15 instrument with Bill Orvis. And we did our instrument and I took
16 the test -- the written test for instrument instructor at the same
17 time because they're actually the same questions. And then I took
18 the -- both of those tests with Tim. And I passed my flight
19 instructor test on the first time.

20 I had a really good book that I built for teaching. And then
21 I passed my instrument instructor test on the first time, too,
22 which I was proud of because a lot of people have to redo the CFIs
23 test. They get -- you know, they get beat up pretty bad in those.
24 Yeah. So, yeah.

25 Q. And then built some hours before going over to Missouri.

1 A. I think I did another Brazil flight, though. A very famous
2 race car driver in Brazil has bought a 44 and he sent his brother
3 to pick it up, but his brother didn't have the right certificate
4 to pick it up from the factory or to be able to fly in the United
5 States legally. So, he needed -- they needed a pilot and no one
6 was really available but me.

7 So, I actually got paid a couple grand to give him flight
8 lessons here at the -- in Long Beach at the airport. And then go
9 to Brazil. And he and I had a great time. We got along so well.
10 And he was probably in his late '50s, early '60s. And it was
11 great to have someone that spoke Portuguese when we got to Brazil.
12 And so, that brought me over to, like, I want to say -- I can't
13 remember, but I want to say 600 hours or so; 5-, 600.

14 And Nick, who worked at Rotor Aviation, had got a job from
15 Ryan who worked at Rotor Aviation, so Ryan hooked up Nick. And
16 this was at, like, the Ozarks and it's, like, 2-minute, 5-minute
17 and 10-minute rides, in a 44 just down the -- around the lake.
18 So, they -- Nick got me in the door there and I had an interview,
19 and I flew out there and did a flight with the chief, who was
20 working at PHI at the time or just quit because his wife was
21 pregnant and she didn't want him to be out there doing that job
22 anymore. Yeah. So, I did -- I think I started at, I want to say,
23 Labor Day weekend. Is that in May?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 MS. KELIHER: September, October.

1 MR. TOBIN: Memorial --

2 BY DR. WILSON:

3 Q. Memorial Day.

4 A. Oh, it's -- okay. So, I did Memorial Day. I went out there
5 and did Memorial Day weekend and then flew back, got the rest of
6 my stuff and drove to Missouri with -- I brought one of my
7 motorcycles with me and so I was towing it on the back of the car.
8 And had a roof rack full of -- I basically had a ton of stuff and
9 I drove out to the lake and it was a great job. It's the greatest
10 minimum wage job I ever had.

11 It was, like, \$8 an hour and I got to fly poker runs when
12 the -- with these boats that were going, like, 120 miles an hour.
13 And the camera guys would want to -- they'd want to be right
14 there. So, I'd fly right over the top of the boat and then kind
15 of give it a turn so the guy on the camera could shoot down onto
16 the boat and stuff. It was really fun.

17 Q. So, how did you decide to go to Papillon as opposed to
18 Maverick or Sundance or --

19 A. Well, I didn't have any turbine time, so I -- Maverick was
20 out of the question. And then -- it's also the schedule that was
21 offered was seven-and-seven at Papillon and that worked best for
22 my -- for what I wanted in life. And so, I was the last seven-on,
23 seven-off pilot hired out of the Boulder City Office by Papillon.
24 And in my class was a guy that was hired to do five-and-two.

25 So, the schedule really made it appealing and I only applied

1 to Papillon. And in addition, I didn't know anyone at any other
2 company, so it only made sense to follow Nick and Rob, Mischa,
3 Richard, all the people that have -- and two of them were still
4 there. Like, Nick and Rob were still there, so they could bug the
5 training director and stuff about me.

6 Q. And then, the training that you received in your starting
7 class, can you recall anything about it? How would you rate it?

8 A. It's overwhelming with regards to learning the systems of an
9 aircraft, the engine and just things. They're really thorough. I
10 think all the companies are really thorough and I know the
11 training manuals that Papillon gives us that we work through are
12 thick. And then it's all illustrated by PowerPoint slides, so
13 every -- and then they do a good job of showing the slide,
14 explaining it, following it up in the book, and then going out to
15 the actual aircraft and putting your hands on it and understanding
16 how things work.

17 And so -- but it was still a lot to take in, you know? You
18 take it in class for half a day and then go home. And, you know,
19 you could check out books from them and stuff, and go home and try
20 to learn more about it. But I'd already had the Avstar. They
21 want that completed before you go into the training. So, that --
22 thanks, bro. So, that helped a little bit to be prepared.

23 But, yeah -- and their flight training is good. I think you
24 get 5 hours in the aircraft minimum. If you need more, they'll
25 give you more. I think I needed a little bit more than the

1 initial five. Another guy in my class only needed five but he had
2 a bunch of JetRanger time.

3 Q. Do you ever feel pressure to fly?

4 A. Never at any company, especially Papillon. They're really,
5 really good about backing up the PIC, you know? If there's
6 weather or wind -- I mean, we had -- for example, we had a person
7 that, whenever there was lightening, they would say they're not
8 going to fly, even though the lightening was 10 miles over here.
9 They would say, it's visible, it's in the vicinity, I'm not going.

10 And that's not -- maybe that's not something I would've done
11 because I know it's moving this way and it's over there, and if
12 nothing's showing over here and it's clear. But, yeah, as far as
13 high turbulence, if you want to turn around for any reason,
14 it's -- any valid reason, you're 100 percent backed up. Never
15 felt any pressure to do anything.

16 Q. Anything change with Simon becoming the chief pilot?

17 A. Got better. More regimented. Like, he's not your friend,
18 he's your boss. And he's fair and he equally dishes it out, too.
19 So, you could be -- no matter if you're 5 minutes late, you're
20 late and you're going to hear about it. And, you know, if your
21 uniform's sloppy or dirty, he'll let you know. If your shoes are
22 not the right color. He was just -- he's good about not playing
23 favorites.

24 He was a -- just a good boss and a pleasure to work for. And
25 I like him personally, too. And I'm on the older side of the

1 pilots, too. Like, I'm in my 40s. A lot of the pilots are
2 younger and it's their first job, so maybe they never experienced,
3 you know, a strict boss before. And I had already had probably
4 25, 30 jobs since I was 12 years old. And I had crazy bosses, so
5 Simon was, like, a pleasure. And he's a pleasure to talk to.

6 Q. How about the leads?

7 A. The leads are good, too. When I first started at Papillon,
8 the leads were a little bit not approachable, but I was maybe a
9 little intimidated by them because they were leads. But as I got
10 more experience and a lot more time in the aircraft, and, you
11 know, flew into turbulence, and flew in the thunderstorms, and
12 flew -- just got a lot of experience in different situations, I
13 felt that I could handle the aircraft just as good as someone
14 that's a lead.

15 But I mean, they have -- some of them went to the factories
16 and got training, and they did a lot of flight training, so
17 they're going to be -- going to have more muscle memory on some of
18 the emergency procedures than I would. But the leads are
19 very -- now at Papillon, very approachable, very kind, great to
20 fly with, and accommodating for people that want to switch a
21 schedule or switch a day, or something like that.

22 Q. You indicated -- when you were talking with one of the leads,
23 you indicated that you were having some family problems. Is there
24 anything going on in your life?

25 A. No, I wasn't -- I couldn't have been happier. Like,

1 everything's -- my life was perfect before the accident. Like,
2 literally perfect. I had everything I wanted and all the little
3 toys, like, my little boat and my motorcycles and -- no. I don't
4 know why anyone would say that.

5 Q. Well, I just saw the text messages between you. You said
6 something about family issues.

7 A. No. Let me see the text.

8 Q. They're buried in my computer.

9 MS. KELIHER: It said something like, oh, sorry it took me a
10 while to get back to you. I was dealing with some family stuff,
11 or something like that.

12 MR. BOOTH: Yeah. But nothing to -- I mean, I don't know --
13 I'd have to know the context. It could have been -- I mean, my
14 dad's 94 and he calls me the name of my oldest brother. And I'll
15 make him breakfast and he'll forget what -- he'll forget that it
16 was what it was or he'll -- we'll go to the restaurant and
17 he'll -- he won't know what he wants to order, so I'll have to
18 order for him. It could have been something simple like that.

19 But he has a hell of a good life. He just turned 94 and had
20 a birthday party with -- that Batman mask was actually from his
21 birthday party. My mom brought decorations and masks and stuff.
22 The people that are still alive from my dad's fraternity were
23 there. But, no, I honestly do not have any family problems, not
24 with my daughter, not with social life, not with friends, not with
25 anyone at work. Before this accident my life was perfect.

1 BY DR. WILSON:

2 Q. Did you normally take three flights a day?

3 A. That's what you're given. They want everybody to fly at
4 least two, but mostly it's three. Sometimes four. When we're
5 short-handed, I've done four landings in a row. I did it for,
6 like, two H's (ph.) straight, so two 7's straight -- 7 days
7 straight of four landings. And then came back then a week after
8 and did 7 days straight.

9 So, a lot of people like it because you get a lot of flight
10 time and you get a lot of tips, you know? Sorry, that did
11 irritate me, that family thing. I don't know why that would --

12 Q. It just seemed like a passing thing but I just wanted to
13 check (indiscernible) --

14 A. It'd have to be -- I'd have to know the context of it. I
15 usually respond to my text messages almost immediately because
16 that's what they're for. They're for quick responses. Unless you
17 guys get my mom's phone number, then you will get diatribes.
18 You'll get essays. She talk-texts and everybody just -- it's so
19 embarrassing, I can't even talk about it anymore, so.

20 Q. I saw that -- and we were talking with Robert Downey was
21 flying with you that day.

22 A. I don't recall.

23 Q. He said that he didn't get the third flight, but you did.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Is it just a luck of the draw? How does it work of --

1 A. He's one of the most, if not -- he's almost the most senior
2 pilot out there. So, if he's already done two and there's brand
3 new people that have literally only done two or one, then Rob most
4 likely will not do the third one because he doesn't get paid any
5 more money if -- he doesn't get another dollar for doing the third
6 one. And he's been there for almost 10 years, so it's respect to
7 let him go home early as opposed to making him do another one when
8 the guy that just started a month ago is, you know, knocking off
9 after coming in in the afternoon, doing one and going home.

10 For morale, for specifically to Rob -- and he knows I'll tell
11 this to his face, so I'm not saying behind his back. For morale
12 purposes, that drives him nuts and he can't let it go. He'll have
13 to tell -- he'll have to vent it to somebody, and usually it's me
14 and then it goes to the leads. So, I -- they make -- I make fun
15 of him at the office. I speak in his Afrikaans accent and make
16 fun of him. And so, all the pilots are always like -- they're
17 like, do Rob. Do Rob. I'm like, the leads. The leads, they make
18 me fly again.

19 Q. When I was talking with a lot of the Maverick pilots, they
20 said that they all start up together, fly out together, shut down
21 together once they get to the swamp, but Papillon seems to
22 stagger, as does Sundance. Do you see any preference?

23 A. I prefer when the manifest is out and I have my passengers.
24 I know what I'm doing. I know I go east. I know my altitudes, I
25 know my radio calls, I want to get my passengers, and I want to

1 get going. I don't wait for three or four or five more people to
2 get their groups, and then everybody starts up and then everyone
3 does their pedal turn at the same time. Maverick is a different
4 animal. They wear wranglers and cowboy boots. That's just their
5 style over there. And, bro, didn't their owner used to work for
6 Papillon?

7 MR. TOBIN: Yeah.

8 MR. BOOTH: Yeah. From what I understand --

9 MR. TOBIN: No, no. They worked for Sundance.

10 MR. BOOTH: Oh, Sundance? From what I understand, Maverick
11 is, let's say, more militant. Let's say, it's like a military
12 school and it's a little higher pressure. And I -- for
13 your -- everyone has -- like you said, everyone had to do the same
14 thing. Everyone has to do their pedal turn. I actually used to
15 really like getting in the middle of them just for fun. I'd be in
16 Vegas and they'll call up, and they'll say Vegas Tower, Maverick
17 2, the first of 11, ready to go.

18 And I'd already be spun up at the takeoff area ready to go.
19 And I'm like, I'm not going to hover here for eleven Mavericks to
20 take off. So, I'll -- I just get in on the radio really quick.
21 And I'd get in and they'd hold them, so I'd be in between, like,
22 the second and third one, and then I'd be in their little chain on
23 the way out. And then when we get to the -- what's called Indian
24 Pass, they go off to the right, the south more, and Papillon stays
25 the most north.

1 So, everyone's got their -- so, it'd be Papillon and
2 then -- I'll just do the big three. So, it'd be Papillon on the
3 left, then Sundance on the right and Maverick on their right. And
4 then everyone kind of keep their distance. You kind of meet again
5 at the entrance to the canyon and you want to stay vigilant there
6 because -- and then, also, certain times of the year,
7 Sundance -- or, excuse me, Maverick will fly out to the -- fly to
8 the canyon, but they'll make a left turn at Lake Las Vegas. And
9 then they'll go out here and then they'll come up on your left.

10 So Papillon, thinking you're the most farthest left and no
11 one can surprise you, you'll just look over and see a silver
12 helicopter flying, you know, a mile off your left side, and then
13 you want to -- it's something I always tell the new guys
14 that -- to look for in certain -- I think they only run that tour
15 in the summertime. I don't know what the name of it is, but that
16 was something that bothered me a little bit that I'd periodically
17 find them over there and I had to learn their radio calls to
18 figure out where they were.

19 So, when you hear Iceberg Canyon, then you knew you had an
20 aircraft on your left and you had to know how far -- if they were
21 behind you or in front of you or you were paralleling them. So,
22 that's all. But, no, Papillon is great for just the camaraderie
23 and --

24 Q. When you have new people flying with you, do you -- like,
25 when they're new hires, do you have to fly any differently?

1 A. No. But I'll help if they're a little off-course. I might
2 tell them that -- something. And if they say -- if they come back
3 and 90 percent of the time they'll say, oh, thanks, man. Or once
4 in a while you'll get somebody that says, well, that's the way I
5 was just trained. And you're like, okay. Because I'm not going
6 to -- there's no time to -- they're still doing their job, it's
7 just they could be off just a, you know, couple hundred yards over
8 here.

9 Again, I was trained by someone who was trained by someone.
10 Simon was trained by someone, everyone -- but it's all right
11 there, just maybe one percent is couple yards off or something
12 like that. But I like helping the -- giving the new pilots
13 suggestions and -- which makes me feel so mad and upset about this
14 accident is because I was looked at as someone that doesn't make
15 mistakes or anything. And I don't. I'm so careful with the
16 aircraft. So, I just -- you know? It's been really upsetting.

17 Q. Have you ever had an emergency?

18 A. I've had the low fuel light come on when I wasn't PIC and
19 that made me pretty uncomfortable, but it was in the airport
20 environment in a foreign country. But, no -- you know, nothing
21 that said I got to auto this thing, get it on the ground right
22 away, so I've been pretty fortunate.

23 Q. Do you usually take pictures with the passengers?

24 A. I take a initial picture with them that's required by the
25 company. I get in that picture. If they don't want me in the

1 picture, then I won't be in it. But they always want the pilot
2 and I put my -- if it's appropriate, like, I might put my arms on
3 them, but it really depends. I think I do most -- yes. I take
4 the pictures most of the time, unless they don't want me in it.
5 And then they sell it to them when they leave. That's part of a
6 package. And in the canyon I'll take pictures for them with their
7 phones, but I'm not in those unless ask me -- unless they want me
8 to be in them.

9 Q. Do they usually want you in them?

10 A. Do they usually want me in them? No.

11 Q. Do they usually have their phones out when they're --

12 A. Oh, yeah. They usually have their or cameras on their laps
13 the whole time they're flying. Sometimes I have to remind them to
14 take pictures because they're just going, ah, look at this
15 beautiful canyon. And I say, don't forget to take pictures
16 because we're going to go out the other side and it's not going to
17 be as pretty as this. So, then they all take them out and start
18 shooting pictures.

19 Q. When can you start hearing people when you're in the canyon
20 on company frequency that are at quartermaster?

21 A. You mean on our -- what we call our EC freq?

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. You can hear that probably from Pierce Ferry as you climb up
24 to -- as you get that altitude till you're over the canyon. But I
25 don't know. I don't know that answer.

1 Q. So, if someone was giving PIREPs on the ground, when do you
2 think you'd be able to start hearing it?

3 A. I don't know.

4 Q. Okay. Just trying to determine that.

5 A. Yeah. That'd be -- I mean, usually it -- usually I hear them
6 when I'm entering the canyon and I -- one of the ones I remember
7 most was this -- one of the pilots came on the radio and said,
8 it's going to be a straight-in landing, boys. That one I'll
9 always remember. And I -- and when we came in, the windsock
10 was -- indicated as straight-in landing.

11 So, it was nice to have already heard that, but you still
12 want to be -- you know, want to watch out for wind direction
13 shifts and that. But, I mean, most of the time it's perfect out
14 there, you know? There's just no wind. It's just beautiful
15 flying. And then a few days here and there, you just get some
16 violent weather.

17 Q. And if they say straight-in, when can you see the windsock
18 where you can start determining if it had changed or not?

19 A. When you're close to the river. There's also a windsock that
20 you can see at Sundance's base. So, as -- if you fly a little
21 lower as you come in, you can look down and you can see -- just
22 prior to getting to our area, you can see the direction of
23 Sundance's Aircraft Park and you can see their windsock.

24 It's a little harder are to see ours, the Papillon one,
25 that's at the Ramada because we're higher altitude at that time.

1 There's one down there, just to see it really well -- you can
2 obviously see the direction the aircraft's parked, but just not
3 the sock. Yeah. But close to the river.

4 Q. When you're crossing the river, what altitude and air speed
5 are you -- would you predictably be at?

6 A. I don't know the altitude. A couple hundred feet off the
7 ground and, you know, you can be any -- depending if you're going
8 through the notch or if you're going straight in, that's -- so,
9 straight-in is you're setting up your approach well before the
10 river. You don't -- we don't quick stop into the -- into our
11 spots as other companies do.

12 But we set it up so the notch -- you know, you can
13 keep -- easily keep 80-plus knots to go to the notch because, as
14 soon as you make that left turn and slow it down, you're going to
15 bleed from -- you'll bleed all that air speed off and set yourself
16 up a really nice, smooth approach into the landing zones. But,
17 yeah, straight-in, I start that at -- I start slowing down by the
18 river, maybe a little before, sometimes a little after. It just
19 kind of depends.

20 Q. A crossing?

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. And how high, by the time you get over the river, do you
23 think that the helicopter is?

24 A. I don't know. I mean, it's a feeling. You're not eye-level
25 with your landing zone or above it, so you can still come in and

1 shoot at a nice approach, nothing steep, nothing shallow. But as
2 far as the number, I don't know.

3 Q. And we were looking at the different approaches that people
4 do of -- some people go -- when they're doing the straight-in,
5 they'll go closer to the notch in that canyon to turn around.
6 Some people will just kind of go -- or, if they get a winning
7 point, they'll just go straight. How do you know how you
8 determine of how far back in you go to that -- into that canyon?

9 A. I think it depends how fast you're going, how much air speed
10 you need to bleed off, how much wind there is. That will help you
11 determine, you know, how much space you need to bleed off the air
12 speed. But, yeah, some people do go higher to the notch then come
13 back around and land on an upriver landing.

14 I tend to do all -- set myself up for all that before -- well
15 before getting up as high as the notch so that I slowed by the
16 river and then just kind of -- maybe before I could do a gentle S-
17 turn if I want or just come right around. And I -- so, I just
18 come right around and make the left turn and set myself up for the
19 approach. And like I said, there's always room for an aircraft
20 there. The landing space goes far back.

21 Q. Yeah?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And then what about when you're departing out? Do you ever
24 have to overfly helicopters?

25 A. Well, we don't overfly helicopters, but everyone spins off

1 and they're really good about talking on the radios. So, if
2 there's a row of aircraft, typically the one that's in front goes
3 first. And you don't have one and -- like, if I was the fourth
4 one, I wouldn't pick up and then disturb not only the people that
5 are maybe still eating down here, but you're just going to blow
6 the doors and dust and irritate the pilot behind you and in front
7 of you. And it's dangerous. So, you just wait and they call you
8 on the radio and we -- everyone coordinates that.

9 But it's pretty common that the person that gets there first
10 parks farthest up. And if they're that far up, they're going to
11 leave first unless they don't manage their passengers and let them
12 just run everywhere and let them be late. But everyone's really
13 good about watching the clock and getting everyone back to the
14 aircraft on time.

15 Q. Do you recall if the people behind you were new or how many
16 people they were?

17 A. The aircraft?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. I only know that there was someone behind me because that
20 person came to visit me at hospital and he told me.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. And that they were -- they had been there almost maybe 2
23 years. But I didn't know that there was someone behind me until
24 they told me. I mean, I thought there was maybe someone behind me
25 from Papillon. I don't recall -- I don't remember Sundance or

1 Maverick or one of the other companies. But I thought I wasn't
2 the last one. But that person came to the hospital and told me
3 that they were behind me.

4 Q. Do you remember hearing anyone do radio calls?

5 A. No. Regarding the accident?

6 Q. No. Or radio calls of reporting any type of wind.

7 A. No. No, not reporting any type of wind. Any calls would've
8 been the standard calls of bat towers and entering the Canyon, bat
9 towers and at the river. So, I definitely heard those, but
10 nothing special.

11 Q. Do you remember anyone saying if their blades were turning?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Nothing specially with it?

14 A. No.

15 Q. When you're going in, where are you usually looking? Where
16 is your eyes?

17 A. I'm looking at everywhere. I mean, I got my whole total
18 sight picture, so I'll go from the left where -- it depends, also,
19 if I'm going straight in or if I'm going through the notch. If
20 I'm going through the notch, then I'm looking -- all our -- I've
21 already listened and everything to make sure that I'm going to be
22 low enough so that any Sundance or Papillon that is climbing the
23 wall going to the right, they're going to be typically 3,000 feet
24 at the notch. And I'm going to be, like, you know, 1-5 or 1-7.

25 So, that's -- you just want to keep that in your mind if you

1 hear them departing the Ramada or upriver, then you've got to know
2 there's going to be someone off your right side and high. So,
3 going through the notch, I'll just look down at the whole landing
4 area and where I want to land and keep that in mind. But there's
5 so many options of where you can land that you know -- you already
6 know you're going to be fine with space. But I typically have my
7 spot picked out before I cross the river. And, you know, you -- I
8 keep my head on a swivel, but through the notch I'll make sure
9 that there's no Mavericks coming off the swamp.

10 But again, if everyone's doing their job, those are radio
11 calls you would've heard and you guys can catch those, so you
12 don't go too far out and they're coming up the middle. You keep
13 that under control. Yeah. I'm looking straight and to my left,
14 just -- I'm sitting left. It's left-side drive.

15 Q. Is there anything that you think, and now of course looking
16 in retrospect, that you would have been able to predict that that
17 wind would have been there?

18 A. No. It's completely just a freak gust of wind and shift in
19 direction that caught the aircraft.

20 Q. Do you feel like you had enough power?

21 A. Yeah. I mean, the aircraft's strong. It's got plenty of
22 power. It's just -- power wasn't an issue. It's just the issue
23 of having the aircraft taken away from me and started to spin,
24 which I couldn't recover from.

25 Q. And with the big tail out there, do you feel like you've had

1 it where you -- the wind has been an issue where you can't control
2 it?

3 A. I've never had wind like this before. It's just something
4 I've never experienced. I've had pretty -- like, 25 sustained
5 wind at Boulder City Airport when I've come in and, you know, had
6 to land in a crosswind and things like that. And I'm -- you know,
7 you're getting close on pedal, but you still feel way in range and
8 comfortable, and you're close to the ground. But I've never
9 experienced a wind shift and power and velocity that I experienced
10 at the accident.

11 Q. We're trying to go through and build a simulation and throw
12 everything we can at the helicopter to see what wind we can get to
13 make it do that. And the weather people and the performance
14 engineer begged me to ask you of anything that you could remember
15 of direction or how it felt, of up or down, or left and right that
16 we can get an idea of --

17 A. I think it spun clockwise.

18 Q. But of your feeling of -- and if you don't remember, that's
19 fine, but --

20 A. No. I wish I --

21 Q. They wanted to know the weight in the seat of how --

22 A. No. I can't answer that. I don't know.

23 Q. We're really looking at how the helicopter performs in wind
24 and how you can be in the flight envelope and lose control. So,
25 that's one of our things that we're looking at, all the

1 certification. Do you know when you started to feel that you were
2 losing it?

3 A. It was on short approach to the base, but I don't remember
4 exactly where. I believe I was past, I want to say I was past the
5 river, which makes sense because the aircraft made it across the
6 river, but I don't remember.

7 Q. And have you ever felt like you had a close call of landing
8 in that direction?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Or quartermaster at all? Ever felt uncomfortable?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Even when you started?

13 A. When I first started, my very first day, there was nowhere to
14 land. I landed on the handicapped spot, which is one of the
15 sloping spots closest to the Ramada. And one of the new -- one of
16 the senior pilots came over to me and said, hey, on your first
17 week, you're not supposed to land there. And I was like, okay.
18 But that was the only place -- that was -- I didn't know that I
19 could go farther back on -- as far as -- as far back.

20 I found spots that were farther back that would have been
21 less sloped. So, when, you know, I did, it was like this, my
22 first -- that was my very first landing in the canyon. So, that
23 one I always remember. I don't remember who came over to me, but
24 I was, like, embarrassed at the same time.

25 Q. I'm going to pull out my computer after -- when everyone else

1 starts asking questions, but I'm going to ask you if you can put
2 spots on the pad so we can see all the different pads that are
3 at -- so I think that will help give everybody a better idea of --

4 MR. TOBIN: You've been going about an hour and 40. Do you
5 want to take a break? Are you okay?

6 MR. BOOTH: I'm good.

7 BY MS. KELIHER:

8 Q. Do you recall, you know, when you felt like the helicopter
9 got away from you, what you did to try to recover?

10 A. I don't remember. It was so violent and quick that I don't
11 know what I -- I don't know what I could have done. Even in
12 hindsight, I -- but I don't -- it was so fast. I don't recall.

13 Q. Okay. And that's okay. I mean, it was a long time ago and,
14 obviously, traumatic. Do you recall any warnings or horns, any
15 lights?

16 A. No. I never heard any horns. That I can say for sure that I
17 never -- no lights and no horns. But again, a light could have
18 sprinkled somewhere and I missed it. But not during the flight or
19 during the approach was anything out of the ordinary with the
20 aircraft.

21 Q. Okay. Do you recall on the prior landing, you did a landing
22 in the morning -- or, first, and then you did an air tour,
23 according to the schedule.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. Do you recall on the first flight what approach you did? Did

1 you do the straight-in or the notch?

2 A. I don't recall but, if you go with my history, I like to do
3 the notch. I like it because it's fun for the passengers, too,
4 because they get a nice turn and there's also lots of landing
5 spots. So, I don't recall what I did. I would have done what the
6 wind tells us to do. But if it was calm and -- or very light and
7 variable, I would've -- I most likely would've done the notch.

8 Q. Okay. Do you recall if the winds had increased from the
9 earlier flights to the later flights?

10 A. Well, they obviously did. But the flight in the morning, no,
11 there was nothing on the morning. It was just another normal day
12 at work.

13 Q. Okay. Until, you're talking about the -- that big --

14 A. Until the --

15 Q. -- wind gust.

16 A. Yeah. And I believe that it was really windy down there. I
17 mean, people told me later that there was, like, high winds going
18 through that area. Other pilots said that they had a lot -- like,
19 when they were leaving, they had a lot more wind than when they
20 came in, so I think that's just what happened to me is just
21 a -- like, a -- I don't want to use the word microburst, but it
22 just was a violent push.

23 Q. Do you think if a pilot had told you that it was windy on
24 their approach, would you have done anything different?

25 A. I would have asked them what -- you know, what direction and

1 what they thought for a good landing would've been. I would've
2 maybe kept my airspeed up so that I was in a good place to do a go
3 around. I could even that it -- would've taken it as far as not
4 even trying to land, just doing an overflight, looking at where
5 everyone's positioned, looking at the direction of the windsock,
6 and then just telling the passengers, you know it's -- whatever I
7 want.

8 It's crowded down there or the wind won't allow us to land,
9 and just gone back to Boulder City. And, you know, they would've
10 got a -- maybe a slight refund --

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. -- for not getting a landing tour.

13 Q. Have you ever flown in there expecting some kind of wind
14 shear? Has that thought ever crossed your mind when you're flying
15 (indiscernible) quartermaster?

16 A. It always crosses my mind. When I'm landing, when I'm
17 taking -- everything. I'm always wind-conscious, but I've never
18 experienced a violent wind shift like I did that day. But I've
19 been down there when wind is -- you know, you looked at
20 it -- like, I was planning a land downriver because the -- that
21 was what the wind was showing. And then I did the downriver
22 landing and then it was, oh, you should have done an upriver.

23 Well, by the time I went around it, it had shifted, but it
24 wasn't a 20-knot -- I wasn't landing in a 20-knot tail wind where,
25 you know, you could put yourself into a situation. This was very

1 light.

2 Q. Okay. As you're coming in to do your approach, do you let
3 the passengers know, you know, to stop talking or that you're
4 going to turn them on isolate or anything like that?

5 A. No. We do have a -- kind of a policy where we just -- at the
6 bat towers, we just really concentrate on -- like, not -- I don't
7 talk to the passengers anymore and plus it's so pretty. I just
8 say, hey, guys. We're going to be starting our descent to land
9 right now. You can go ahead and, you know, enjoy the ride.
10 Listen to music, take some pictures and I'll speak with you when
11 we're on the ground.

12 And that's what I like to say because then it takes the
13 pressure off me having to tour guide them. And then, also, now
14 I'm really free to listen to aircraft, other company freq and on
15 the outside.

16 Q. If a pilot -- do pilots landing before you influence your
17 decision at all? Like, oh, that guy can do it so, you know, I've
18 got to be able to do it, too.

19 A. Let's just say this. If five pilots before me all land
20 straight-in, there's a really good reason why five experienced
21 pilots with over -- well over 1,000 hours to even apply for the
22 job decided to go straight-in. So, I would most likely think that
23 it's going to be a straight-in landing and plan accordingly.

24 Unless I get so close and the windsock just is flat, hanging
25 down, and then I would make a decision to go through the notch.

1 But there's not competition. There's no, like, oh, wow. This guy
2 landed at the wedding point in high wind so the next time I come
3 down here I'm going to do it. But I'm going to do it down river
4 and make it really memorable. Because, no, there's -- we don't
5 have any pilots like that and I'm not one of them, anyway.

6 Q. During the safety briefing that you give the passengers
7 before you leave, do you brief them on emergency evacuation from
8 the helicopter?

9 A. I show them where the emergency exits are as far as how to
10 pull those handles, and then I make a joke, like, but don't pull
11 the handle unless I tell you. And then when we land, let me let
12 you out of the aircraft. For many reasons, you don't want your
13 passengers escaping with other aircraft landing down there. So,
14 I'm always conscious about telling them be careful of other
15 aircraft.

16 Q. And you said you brief the location of the fire
17 extinguishers, also?

18 A. Mm-hm.

19 Q. Do you recall that day what the radio chatter was like? Did
20 it seem unusually busy or (indiscernible) --

21 A. I don't recall.

22 Q. Okay. Have you ever challenged, prior to leaving Boulder
23 City, a lead say, yeah, we're going today. And you don't think
24 it's safe, so you tell him, I'm not flying.

25 A. I've never -- I don't know how to answer that. I've never

1 had a problem making a decision like that. My lead has never
2 said, go fly or else. Or just, go fly because, by the time you
3 get there, it should be okay. You know, because when you do make
4 those decisions to go fly and not err on the side of caution, you
5 end up stranding people out in the canyon area that have to take
6 buses back, which has happened before. But I've never felt any
7 pressure or -- is that what you're asking?

8 Q. Yes. So, you would feel comfortable saying, I'm not flying.

9 A. One hundred percent.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And they would have no problem with that.

12 Q. Do you recall how -- I know you said you didn't recall how
13 you got out of the helicopter, but do you recall how quickly the
14 fire started after --

15 A. I don't recall anything about the fire --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- except that I was on fire --

18 Q. All right.

19 A. -- when I woke up.

20 Q. Any recollection of how other passengers might have gotten
21 out of the helicopter?

22 A. No. I believe there was one girl that got out and she was
23 walking around, so I knew she was okay. At least, you know, for
24 the most part. I didn't know that she was burned. And she ended
25 up being burned, I believe, most -- like, hands and -- but, yeah,

1 I don't -- I'm very -- I don't recall the -- how the fire started
2 or where.

3 Q. Okay. Do you recall your interactions at all with the first
4 responders when they got there?

5 A. I remember there was -- they were pretty strong ladies. And
6 they came to visit me in the hospital, you know, a couple of
7 months after, and that was nice. I didn't know a lot about what
8 had happened, so anything I tell you now is what they told me.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. You know, like, I asked them how they kept me alive and
11 what drugs did they give me, and so they told me. And I asked
12 them how I was reacting and, you know, they said I was pretty out
13 of it.

14 Q. Did they tell you if you said anything about what you think
15 had happened?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Do you recall them mentioning -- asking you if you could walk
18 to the river for the evacuation?

19 A. No, I don't think they would ask that because -- I mean, if
20 you looked at my body it was pretty -- my leg was so busted that
21 it was -- there's no way I could've walked. And judging from what
22 I remember, when they were putting the tourniquet on me, like, I
23 would have -- walking down there, I would've bled out.

24 Q. Okay. Do you recall if you were hoisted out?

25 A. No idea. I believe a helicopter landed down closer to the

1 river and they were able to carry me --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- down to this spot, and I was -- that's how I got out. I
4 was -- I remember saying to one of the flight nurses -- I just
5 remember saying, I don't want to die down here. And I knew it was
6 serious when he said -- I don't recall what he -- exactly. He
7 said something about, I'm going to try and not let that happen.
8 And that's a lot different than someone saying, don't worry,
9 that's not -- you know? It was, I'm going to try. And I was
10 like, oh, my. This is really bad.

11 Q. Do you recall when you got into town, into Vegas?

12 A. No.

13 Q. No. The night before the accident?

14 A. Oh, no, because it's such a typical process for me.

15 Q. Would you typically come in the day before?

16 A. I always come in at least one or 2 days before in case
17 my -- you know, the car breaks down or the flights are canceled,
18 you have another way you can get to work.

19 Q. I know you said you don't typically stay up late, but do you
20 recall when you might've gone to bed in the few days prior to the
21 accident?

22 A. No. 10:00, 10:30-ish.

23 Q. Okay. That's your normal -- all right. At what time do you
24 typically wake up?

25 A. I wake up about 7:00 and then make breakfast, take a shower

1 and kind of do some little exercises and stuff. And usually ready
2 by 9:00 to do it -- start my day. But I don't think -- on this
3 day, I don't know what time I would have got there. I'd have to
4 look at the time of my first flight and then an hour before.

5 Q. Okay. So, if you had to be there at 10:30, what time would
6 you leave from your house?

7 A. 10:10. It takes 15 -- it's 13 miles and it's all freeway, so
8 it's -- and there's no traffic. So, it's -- but I like to do
9 20 minutes ahead of time. But even when you're 20 minutes ahead
10 of time, you're still going to get -- you're still going to be
11 well over an hour before your flight. So, you're -- you have time
12 to look at notes, talk to the lead, sign in, and then look for
13 your -- what aircraft you're flying and wait for it to come in.

14 Q. Okay. Recall any issues sleeping, staying asleep at night?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Do you recall if you felt rested when you woke up that
17 morning?

18 A. I don't recall. I'm sure I did because I didn't go out or
19 anything.

20 Q. Ever been diagnosed with a sleep disorder?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Now, you said prior to the accident, things were going really
23 good. But any major changes in your health, or personal life,
24 financial situation, anything in the 12 months --

25 A. No.

- 1 Q. -- prior to the accident?
- 2 A. No, everything's good.
- 3 Q. Okay.
- 4 A. Very fortunate.
- 5 Q. How would you have rated your health?
- 6 A. On a scale of what?
- 7 Q. Scale of 1 to 10, prior to the accident.
- 8 A. Ten out of 10.
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. I mean, I was in really good -- not bragging, I'm just saying
- 11 I was -- I had just come back from Mount Everest base camp, so I
- 12 was in pretty good shape and -- yeah. I eat really healthy most
- 13 of the time.
- 14 Q. Any issues with your vision?
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. Hearing?
- 17 A. No.
- 18 Q. Did you take any prescription medication at the time?
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. Any over the counter --
- 21 A. No, I wasn't taking any medicine and I'm not -- I wasn't
- 22 taking any over the counter either.
- 23 Q. Okay. Smoke tobacco, chew tobacco?
- 24 A. I don't smoke or I don't use any tobacco products.
- 25 Q. Okay. Drink alcohol?

1 A. What's that?

2 Q. Do you drink alcohol?

3 A. On occasion.

4 Q. Yeah? Do you recall the last time before February 10th?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Any use of illicit drugs?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Do you recall in the 72 hours before the accident whether you
9 took any medications, prescription or non-prescription that
10 might've affected performance?

11 A. Yeah, I can recall. I didn't.

12 Q. Okay. Any issues getting along with your passengers that
13 day?

14 A. No issues. I do remember them not being super -- the guy, in
15 particular, not being super attentive to the -- you know, what was
16 going on. He was more, like, just kind of happy party guy. I
17 kind of remember that. But, you know, most of the time people are
18 excited, nervous. And he was way more like, whatever. Let's just
19 go do this.

20 Q. Yeah? Receive any training for settling with power at the
21 end?

22 A. No, that's not something you practice or train.

23 Q. Not in ground school either?

24 A. No. It's in your flight training and -- I mean, I've
25 practiced it right out here over the -- about a couple thousand

1 feet up. I've done it with Robinson Factory Safety Course pilots.

2 But, no.

3 Q. Any concerns that you have landing in quartermaster? Did you
4 have any concerns landing there?

5 A. That day?

6 Q. Just in general.

7 A. No, it's -- there's tons of room downriver and upriver, and
8 you always have the opportunity to go around. And you have the
9 opportunity to convert into an air tour.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. And that's all backed up by the company, so no concerns.

12 Q. Okay. And specifically that day, any concerns?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Do you know if anybody's ever questioned why the landing
15 zones are laid out the way they are or anything?

16 A. I mean, it just makes sense the way that -- I don't know. I
17 mean, I'm not privy to those white-collar meeting discussions, but
18 it seems to me it makes really sense because it's all cleared and
19 it's not sloped. It just -- just, they fit like puzzle pieces,
20 you know?

21 Q. Do you ever recall anybody ever being confused about where
22 they were supposed to land going in there, like, where the paths
23 were?

24 A. No, I mean I could tell you a funny story of being down in
25 the Ramada and under the canopy, and being completely overflowed by

1 a pilot on, like, his first day. And blew -- like, blew -- the
2 champagne that people all had, blew it all over their face and all
3 over their -- so, that -- I mean, he wasn't confused, he
4 just -- he was just a little too low to the ground and I let him
5 know. He actually texted me the other day and wrote me a message.
6 And he said, I can't believe that that happened to you. And he
7 said, out of all the pilots, he said, you're, like, the only one I
8 would trust with my family and stuff. And so, that was that guy.

9 MS. KELIHER: I think that's all I have for now. Thanks.

10 Manny?

11 BY MR. FIGLIA:

12 Q. On the day of the accident, you got there later in the day,
13 so you weren't at the early morning briefing.

14 A. The 5:30 briefing? No, I wasn't there.

15 Q. Okay. You mentioned you did a weight and balance on the
16 aircraft.

17 A. No, it's on the sheet.

18 Q. Or you reviewed it.

19 A. Yeah. If it's out of balance, it won't print.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So, you know, if you're out of CG or anything, the manifest
22 won't -- it won't -- the guys up in the tower, it won't run, it
23 won't compute.

24 Q. Do you review the, let's say, in ground effect hover
25 capability and out of ground effect based on the gross weight?

1 A. Those are on the briefing sheet that you review in the
2 morning briefing. They put those into the sheets that's on the
3 wall. So, when I come in, I could see -- you know, it says, max
4 and max. It'll tell you based on the temperature that day, I
5 believe, it was max at Bolder and max at GCW.

6 Q. When you were flying to quartermaster, did you realize there
7 was another aircraft behind you? I think you mentioned you didn't
8 know if anyone was behind you.

9 A. No, I'm saying I don't recall because it's so routine that
10 there are aircraft behind you. So, when I was making my -- for
11 example, when I'm making my radio call to go into the canyon, I
12 can't tell you for certain that another aircraft behind me made
13 the same call within a minute or 30 seconds. I don't -- I just
14 don't recall.

15 Q. When you were going into the quartermaster zone, you said you
16 saw aircraft facing one another, so therefore they made their
17 approach some through the notch and some not through the notch.

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. There were aircraft that landed before you that basically did
20 the straight-in.

21 A. I would assume so, yes.

22 Q. Okay. Did you see any of those aircraft land in front of
23 you?

24 A. No.

25 Q. When you were shooting your approach, would you classify it

1 as a steep approach?

2 A. No. Normal. Normal sight picture.

3 Q. Normal angle?

4 A. Yep.

5 Q. Based on the landing spot you selected, was there room for
6 someone to land behind you?

7 A. I would assume they could, yes.

8 Q. So, you're not -- you don't know for sure if you took the
9 most rearward spot?

10 A. I would've been taking one of the farthest rear spots, but I
11 don't know if there would've been additional room based on how I
12 would've parked.

13 Q. When you mentioned the aircraft spun, do you know what air
14 speed you might have been at?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Do you know what altitude you might've been at?

17 A. I don't recall.

18 Q. The aircrafts aren't equipped with the radar altimeters?

19 A. I believe every aircraft we have has a radar altimeter.

20 Q. When you mentioned training and different IPs have different
21 ways of doing a maneuver, I'm gathering there might be some
22 inconsistencies (indiscernible) --

23 A. No, there's no -- I'm only talking about quick stops. So, I
24 want to clarify that. I'm not talking about -- well, some
25 instructors might want to enter -- when they demonstrate their

1 auto rotation, they might enter -- depending on the wind, they
2 might enter a little earlier than I would. And they do a
3 different glide path to get there. But there's -- as long as
4 you're safe and in control and you get there, that's what
5 everyone's looking for. But I'm talking specifically in quick
6 stops is every pilot -- there's some that do this and then balloon
7 up, and then let it come down. There's some that turn into a long
8 flare and balloon a little bit.

9 So, it's hard -- it would be hard to say -- and you could ask
10 Burl, I guess. But it'd be hard to say that you could get every
11 pilot that works at any of the companies to do -- to demonstrate
12 that maneuver the exact same way. I don't think it's possible.

13 Q. You mentioned quick stops. You're referring to the flare at
14 the end of the auto rotation.

15 A. No, no auto rotation. Basically, let's say I'm air taxiing
16 down a taxiway and all of a sudden an aircraft pulls out in front
17 of me, that's -- then I would initiate a quick stop where I flare
18 and then balloon up a little bit and then settle it down. Yeah.
19 I'm saying, that maneuver is demonstrated differently and
20 performed differently throughout the companies, throughout the
21 world. There's no way you're give it exactly the same --

22 Q. You've mentioned the AStar, which there was a -- was it
23 training flight or check flight? I don't recall. Where there was
24 some inconsistencies based on the IP's point of view on certain
25 maneuvers.

1 A. Mm-hm.

2 Q. Okay. Is that -- am I accurate by saying that in other
3 words, there's some inconsistencies on different IPs on how --

4 A. The exact -- there was two issues with that flight. One was
5 that instructor asked me a limitation of the AStar, let's say
6 torque, and I got it wrong in flight. I gave him the -- either I
7 gave him the before number or I was off. That was something
8 that -- that was an issue that he had. The second part was, he
9 said, take me to Boulder City, and we were on the west side if
10 McCarren Airport. Well, so, Boulder City's way over where you
11 are, McCarren Airport's here, we were way over where the ladies
12 are.

13 Now, I wasn't Las Vegas trained at the time, so the
14 only -- so, I did -- I got back to Boulder City the way I
15 would -- flew across country. I called the approach and told them
16 where I was and what I wanted to do. They told me to contact the
17 helicopter frequency, which I did. Then they gave me the
18 Tropicana transition, which I told them I was unfamiliar with.
19 And then they guided me on that and then they gave me the Boulder
20 City highway transition, so they guided me on that. Then they
21 released me -- frequency change, you know, good day. And then I
22 got into Boulder City and made the radio calls and landed.

23 Now, that particular person was our chief pilot at the time.
24 He didn't like any of that. So, it was a -- I'm not blaming
25 anyone but myself. I had a bad flight. It was -- I wasn't --

1 personality-wise, we -- I don't think there was a connection and I
2 could've flown better. I just had a bad flight and he -- you
3 know, so that's where that -- but it worked out really good,
4 anyway, because I'd been flying out of Las Vegas.

5 Q. Have you ever been shown those routes, the Tropicana
6 transition?

7 A. Yeah. We covered our Vegas training.

8 Q. But you took a departure route that was based on someone who
9 was unfamiliar with the area and then decided to basically do a
10 (indiscernible) violating any airspace or --

11 A. No, I got permission to go and I stayed outside of McCarran
12 space to the west -- and before I got permission to go through.
13 And then they -- it was -- where I was, I was already west and
14 right on Tropicana, so they just told me head -- keep that heading
15 and then, you know, they cleared me across the approach end of one
16 of the runways. And then, you know, kept the same -- kept the
17 altitude till the time to turn right to Boulder City.

18 Q. What type of uniforms do you wear normally while you're
19 flying?

20 A. We all wear white -- a white pilot shirt with the four-bar
21 epaulets and our wings. And then we all have our badges, McCarran
22 badge and crew badge. And then it's either black pants and black
23 shorts. I've actually never worn shorts there, so I always do
24 black pants and then it's black shoes.

25 Q. Does Papillon recommend wearing specific type garments,

1 whether they're full cotton or no necks or --

2 A. No. It's black pants, black shorts, black shoes and the
3 white shirts are all the same with the -- and then in wintertime
4 we have the polyester jacket that we wear.

5 Q. Last question. Do you recall making any statements right
6 after the accident? To anyone who approached you regarding what
7 had transpired?

8 A. I remember a lady praying over me, which kind of freaks me
9 out. I don't remember -- I must've had some conversation with
10 her, but I don't remember anything about it. I just remember
11 being prayed over. I remember the pilots there to tourniquet my
12 left leg. But I don't remember talking to them about anything. I
13 might -- I could've said something, but I don't remember.

14 MR. FIGLIA: Scott, thank you very much.

15 MR. BOOTH: Okay. Thank you.

16 MR. TOBIN: I have no questions.

17 DR. WILSON: I've got some further questions.

18 BY DR. WILSON:

19 Q. Do you -- you said that -- sometimes that you do tailwind
20 landings. How much wind can you -- have you landed in the
21 tailwinds?

22 A. Well, I think what I said was the aircraft is capable
23 of -- and I'm capable of tailwind landing in quartermaster, but
24 not -- nothing significant. Like, I'm talking, like, 5 to 10
25 knots max is what I like to keep safe down there, which means the

1 wind sock is maybe showing a straight-in approach. But at the
2 same time, it's so -- I don't want to use the word, limp. Is that
3 fair?

4 Q. Yep.

5 A. It's nothing drastic that's going to affect the aircraft
6 where I'm going to get into a -- you know, like, a settling issue
7 or being -- having to do a go-around because I didn't have -- I
8 didn't shoot at the right approach.

9 Q. You've had a while to examine your injuries. Do you -- is
10 there anything that you can recognize of injuries that you have of
11 where a seatbelt might've been, where buckles might've been --

12 A. No.

13 Q. -- where if the cyclic might've hit you, collective, anything
14 that you can recognize?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Okay. And then my last question before showing you pictures
17 is what do you think that Papillon could change now in hindsight
18 of this accident? Helmets, gloves, flight suits, do you think any
19 of that would be more appropriate?

20 A. I'm really not in a -- knowledgeable to answer that. I
21 think --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I think that everything's fine.

24 Q. Okay. I'm going to show you -- set it up here
25 (indiscernible) --

1 A. Do you want me to move this out of the way?

2 Q. Let me pick it up so that I can sit it on the -- and I'll
3 give you a mouse for control. Lots of different things here.
4 I'll take away your hot cup and pen there. All right. So, I've
5 got a pen selected. Can you show me what the windsock was showing
6 you, that you can remember, as you're going in?

7 A. What do you -- like, draw and arrow?

8 Q. Mm-hm. (Indiscernible) --

9 A. Is that little thing?

10 Q. (Indiscernible).

11 A. Well, it's --

12 Q. Oops, maybe I didn't select it. There you go.

13 A. Yeah. So, you can see all the landing spots. One, two,
14 three.

15 Q. (Indiscernible) --

16 A. There's actually one later. Okay. So, this is -- trying to
17 draw an arrow, but -- so, what I -- here, I'm flying in. I see
18 the windsock showing a straight-in landing right into here.

19 Q. So, to draw a cone, it's pointing that way or it's pointing
20 this way?

21 A. You'd have to draw it. It's better -- you're probably better
22 at it than I am. But it's showing that the --

23 Q. Which way is this going? That way, that way? Can you
24 remember?

25 A. This way, I believe.

1 Q. Like that?

2 A. Yeah. I think so.

3 Q. To the best of your memory?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. And then if it's showing that way, what would be your paths
6 that you would take? Can you draw it?

7 A. Well, I wouldn't have -- I don't know how to say. I would've
8 been -- I probably would've been over here.

9 Q. Yeah. This isn't normal site picture that you have.

10 A. No.

11 Q. It's too high up. I've got one that's lower.

12 A. Okay. I mean --

13 Q. Can you drag and show me where all the paths are? I have a
14 collection of dots there. You can just move them.

15 A. There's one -- I think there's one right there. There's
16 definitely three here. I can't -- it's hard to see here, but
17 there's definitely --

18 MR. TOBIN: Want me to pull that down that way a little bit?

19 MR. BOOTH: Yeah. That's okay. It's okay. Oh, shit, I
20 didn't do it right.

21 BY DR. WILSON:

22 Q. Oh, don't worry.

23 A. Are you sure?

24 Q. (Indiscernible).

25 A. Well, there's two -- you can fit two in that area. So, there

1 might be -- that one might be one, just not sure. I might have
2 too many in this area taking up more space. Maybe this one's
3 here. (Indiscernible). So, this is pretty realistic. There
4 might be -- I want to say there's one here because you can do
5 three in a row. This might not be one anymore. There used to be
6 this cactus and you could fit it in between this one and this one.
7 I think that -- I don't -- maybe that's one and that's one and
8 that's one, maybe. I think that's -- I think this is a really
9 good look at it.

10 Q. Do you remember which one you were going for?

11 A. I was going here.

12 Q. The green one?

13 A. Yeah, in the back. There was already some loaded here and I
14 was going to be either this one or this one in the back, that way
15 you have plenty of room.

16 Q. All right. We can go to the next one. I know it's pretty
17 tedious, but if you can show me from this one.

18 A. No, it's be -- so, it'd be either here --

19 Q. Can you line them up again from this angle where they all
20 are?

21 A. Do we have more?

22 Q. I can make more.

23 A. Okay. Anymore?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. I think it -- I think here. Here. I think it's fine. I

1 want to say you can get another one here if you need to. Yeah. I
2 think this is good.

3 Q. So, do you know which one you would've been going for?

4 A. Yeah. Here. This area. My favorite one is this one.

5 Q. Why is that?

6 A. Because it's a table rock and you can come through the notch
7 and fly just, like -- so, you go through the notch like this and
8 you just come around. And you can just be like this the whole way
9 through the notch right to the spot and be like this. Without
10 even -- no hover landing, just -- that's my favorite one.
11 Sometimes with these, you've got to hover a little bit more to get
12 into the right spot and find the slope and --

13 MR. FIGLIA: (Indiscernible) maybe looking at this one here.

14 MR. BOOTH: Yeah. This area.

15 MR. FIGLIA: Okay. And you're referring to -- when I asked
16 you about a spot behind you, it would've been maybe this one.

17 MR. BOOTH: Maybe this one, yeah.

18 MR. FIGLIA: Okay.

19 MR. BOOTH: I just know that there's -- from my experience in
20 being down there, I just know that there's -- you can make room in
21 this area. It's just not -- it's not as clean, as you can see
22 here with all the -- the wind is blowing the rocks clean and the
23 aircraft have landed on them so many times. But these are spots
24 over here. There are people right there. (Indiscernible).

25 BY DR. WILSON:

1 Q. And then -- so, that's how the helicopters were at the time
2 of the accident, which we got just based on everybody's pictures.

3 A. Really? Yeah. So, I was pretty right. They're in both
4 directions. And then this is my -- this is where I was going.

5 Q. So, which one do you think that you would've aligned to?

6 A. I would've pulled up behind the farthest one up, so most
7 likely I would've gone in here. I recall -- I thought there was
8 more over here. Like, I thought there was this here, too. So,
9 this is the area where I thought I was going. And you can see
10 there are spaces behind it, here and here.

11 Q. So, with the windsock like that, how do you think you
12 would've been coming around? Do you just go straight in?

13 A. No. The wind -- if the wind -- so, if the wind was like
14 this, then it'd have been a downriver landing. And it
15 wasn't -- the windsock, when I saw it, was not indicating a
16 downriver landing. It was indicating straight-in. And you can
17 see by these aircraft, how they park, that some of these pilots
18 did the notch and some of them did straight-in, which is a
19 variable wind day. And I chose straight-in because that's what
20 the windsock was showing me.

21 Q. This is just -- I have no idea of why you guys don't go this
22 way over the river and land. Why do you go through the notch and
23 do that?

24 A. Well, Maverick's -- see here? Right here?

25 Q. So, just because of other traffic?

1 A. Well, Maverick's coming over here, going down to the swamp.
2 So, it's -- where our -- we just come this way, go through the
3 notch and then come around and land here. It's cleaner and it
4 makes more sense than to go across the river, and then turn and
5 then come this way. I mean, I guess it could be done, but seems
6 to me like the notch is the right way -- the right thing to do.

7 MR. FIGLIA: Do you know when these other aircrafts arrived?
8 Were they part of the group aircraft that took off from Boulder
9 City?

10 MR. BOOTH: Most likely, they were from Boulder City. There
11 could've been one from Las Vegas, which probably would've been
12 this one because there was a wedding. And so, there would've been
13 one here from Las Vegas and then everyone else is Boulder City.

14 BY DR. WILSON:

15 Q. Are there any other pads that are open here?

16 A. Yes. There's one right here. So, it's either this area or
17 this area because you can fit three here. So, I'm not sure that
18 helicopter's in the right place. It's here, then here, and then
19 it could be --

20 Q. Right behind that?

21 A. -- another one. Yeah. But this goes back three deep --

22 Q. Got it.

23 A. -- here, here. So, I -- no. I think this one's wrong.
24 Like, that one's wrong. I think that one should be here.

25 MR. FIGLIA: (Indiscernible)?

1 MR. BOOTH: Yeah.

2 BY DR. WILSON:

3 Q. And then, when you're going, how far deep do you go into the
4 canyon?

5 A. It really depends. It depends on your airspeed. Sometimes
6 you can just literally come off the river and go straight into
7 the -- if the wind is valid, you can go straight into the spot or,
8 you know, this -- as you can see, the windsock here is showing a
9 downriver. You just can't tell how significant it is but, I mean,
10 it must've been a pretty decent wind day to have that kind
11 of -- that much wind. And then I heard -- like, again, I heard
12 later from other -- the other pilots and rescue pilots how windy
13 it actually was and much more than normal.

14 Q. But you don't remember seeing any of that?

15 A. I remember feeling it.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Yeah. I like to -- yeah. So, you can see the -- this is
18 really good. You can see the parking spaces here, how these --
19 this is handicap and you can fit one behind it. And you can see
20 (indiscernible) just park one after the other, after the other
21 here. And then you can start using this side. And you can go all
22 the way back into here. But, yeah, I would've come up the river
23 and started the -- started to make the turn a little bit over
24 here, this area. And, you know, low and getting ready to just
25 come in and --

1 Q. (Indiscernible).

2 A. And shoot the approach.

3 Q. So, when you're going through that turn, what's your speed?

4 A. Sixty knots.

5 Q. And if you have wind from that direction, and all of the
6 other paths are taken, where do you go?

7 A. This is -- again, it depends how -- it depends on the
8 strength of the wind. It depends if it's variable, if it's
9 moving. It's just hard -- it's hard to say if the -- you know,
10 this kind of looks like a downriver landing to me. But you can
11 come around like this. You can come around and make the approach
12 and turn it into the wind a little. See? You can come around and
13 put it -- then you can face a little bit that direction or you can
14 go all the way to the ground, and then pedal turn it and get in a
15 line, you know?

16 Q. Like a buttonhook?

17 A. Sure. That's what I did that day. I just came over here and
18 made the -- as I made the turn, I reduced the air speed and got
19 lined up. It's just -- that's when I just started to -- and I
20 don't know how many times (indiscernible).

21 Q. And do you feel strange winds? I see that a lot is down
22 there. But I see that the canyon has different levels. Do you
23 feel that as you're flying over? Ever? The mechanical
24 (indiscernible)?

25 A. Yeah. You can feel the wind coming down through the -- on

1 certain days. I mean, this -- every day's different down there,
2 right? Ninety percent of days are -- it's calm and you don't
3 think twice, so you just execute your -- what your training is and
4 your maneuvers. When drive a bus, fly it like you know how to do
5 it.

6 Q. Well, that's all the picture drawings. So, I do have some
7 more PowerPoints of showing kind of what witnesses said and
8 anything like that. Are you curious to see that?

9 A. Mm-hm.

10 Q. So, from looking at pictures, we see that the wind looked
11 like it was going like this. We tried all the pictures of
12 timestamping out of exactly when the accident happened and such.
13 We're trying to do a wind study, but we might not get the approval
14 for it, to look and see what type of wind is going through that
15 canyon and how it changes with the turbulence and the different
16 canyon over here.

17 A. Approval because it costs money?

18 Q. They want \$150,000 for it, the wind study.

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. So, we're still looking at how we're going to do it. We did
21 a whole mapping of the area. But what we really want to do with
22 the simulator is need the different speeds. So, what we did was
23 we took Appareo data, we had Simon fly the route, and we took the
24 Appareo data. It's recording all of that and we're putting it in,
25 with help from Airbus, of figuring out what we can do to throw at

1 it to see if we can get the helicopter to do what we think it did.

2 We don't have any video footage. The recorders didn't
3 survive. So, we didn't know which pad you were really going for,
4 but it looks like probably that far one.

5 A. Yeah. I would've lined myself up behind the last aircraft.

6 Q. We know that he wasn't on radio, the last aircraft.

7 A. Who's he?

8 Q. John Davis.

9 A. (Indiscernible).

10 Q. He was a new guy.

11 A. What does it mean he wasn't on radio?

12 Q. He was just shutting down the helicopter.

13 A. Oh, okay.

14 Q. So, he said he hit the rotor break and saw people starting to
15 run.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. So, I didn't know, of talking to all the different pilots, if
18 you would've tried to land further away from him, if his blades
19 were still turning or not.

20 A. No, because I didn't see any blades turning.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. And if they were slow blades, I would've slowed down and
23 parked well off away that I wouldn't have had any chance of doing
24 some damage to his aircraft.

25 Q. And so, we were just trying to determine -- and it seems like

1 everybody has a different route of how they go, of getting in.

2 And of talking to him before --

3 A. Yeah. Some go a little higher up. It's just -- there's no
4 exact you have to do this because, if you stick to exacts, it's
5 not fair, it's not practical. It needs to be -- you need to have
6 flex, like you said, in order -- if someone is shutting down, you
7 need to be able to maybe do -- go up a little farther and bleed
8 off some speed or -- so that you're not coming in too steep or
9 things like that.

10 Q. In this turn, where do you think you felt the wind?

11 A. Around this area. I think it just -- either it came down
12 this canyon or over this ridgeline and just caught the tail, and
13 just -- that's what I think happened. But I think it happened
14 over here, closer to this side, closer to this area.

15 Q. So, this is what the witnesses said. So, that's what the
16 windsock looked like.

17 A. That day?

18 Q. Just before the accident. But again, we don't know how many
19 minutes.

20 A. Fifteen to 25 knots. So, this is the one I like right here,
21 that's my favorite one. See that? How they're up on that rock?
22 It's a little sloped. That's the one I land on, usually, the
23 most. Which would've been a nice -- for that wind, it'd have been
24 nice. But I didn't see the wind like that. I saw it more
25 straight, dictating the straight-in. And you can see from your

1 other photos that you got half --

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. -- the aircraft were straight-in. And I wouldn't -- this
4 is -- 15 knots at the airport environment, no -- I can handle
5 that. But 25 knots out of the airport environment in a tailwind
6 in the canyon, that's not advisable. But in the airport
7 environment, you know, you've got to park on the pads, so that's
8 more manageable off the concrete in typical crosswind numbers.

9 Q. With this wind, what approach do you think that you would've
10 come in at? Like, seeing this sock, I guess that vantage point's
11 kind of hard.

12 A. It looks like a downriver landing, I think. I mean, that's
13 what I'm kind of seeing here. And you can see all the people just
14 landed downriver. But what I'm saying is, at the time of -- when
15 I approached, I didn't see the sock that direction. It was
16 straight-in.

17 Q. So, reverse of that?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. So, this is what our best witness saw. Do you know why you
20 would have been pitching up?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Have you ever felt that -- a reason why it would be -- you
23 would be pitching up at all?

24 A. No. I don't remember it doing that.

25 Q. Well, would you have slowed down for anything?

1 A. Well, I would've slowed down to set up my approach, but never
2 at an altitude like that. I mean, you would've -- if I was going
3 to slow down for the landing, you wouldn't even have seen it
4 pitch. That's, like, quick stop level. That's, like, flaring at
5 auto level.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. We don't do that.

8 Q. So, then they saw you pointing toward it, but almost like the
9 helicopter was moving back.

10 A. Is this witness a guest or a pilot?

11 Q. A Papillon pilot.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. And we take witness statements with a grain of salt.
14 Everyone saw something different.

15 A. Yeah. I mean, I'm a witness and I can't even give you the
16 answers right from the cockpit.

17 Q. Which is predictable.

18 A. Really?

19 Q. Completely. We just wish we had video of it. I always say
20 my job has changed so drastically in the last 15 years because now
21 we usually have a camera somewhere. And people's memories, yeah,
22 I saw things on fire. Going down. And then you look at the video
23 and it's completely different than their memory. But I just
24 wanted to share with you, kind of, what other people had seen
25 because I'm sure you're confused. And then we've pretty much got

1 it where everyone saw --

2 A. Left turn and -- so, that's what I thought, two, three -- so,
3 I was right. It went to the left. Okay?

4 Q. They said that you never really stopped turning, that it just
5 was a left turn and just kept going.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. Which is consistent with your wind pushing.

8 A. It's what I thought happened.

9 MR. FIGLIA: I thought you mentioned it was turned clockwise.
10 This would be counterclockwise.

11 MR. TOBIN: Okay. You had said clockwise.

12 MR. BOOTH: Yeah. I recall saying clockwise. I definitely
13 said it, but when I -- now that I see the rotations, that's -- I
14 mean, that makes more -- that's bringing back my memory to how I
15 moved, like, how I got pushed a little. But I definitely -- I
16 know I said clockwise.

17 BY DR. WILSON:

18 Q. And I'm sure you've Googled pictures of it.

19 A. No. I didn't look at anything. That's not me. Yeah. So,
20 you have two downriver and two upriver in the same area, and lots
21 of open space to land. Can you reverse a couple because I want to
22 see -- now I see this, it's making more sense to me on how it
23 turned. But can you go back a couple more so I can --

24 MR. FIGLIA: I didn't mean to stick my head in your way.

25 BY DR. WILSON:

1 Q. Sorry. We have a very open space here.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. Do you ever get blanking out of wind from that cliff right
4 there when you go over the river?

5 A. I don't know. I don't think so.

6 Q. That was also the things that we wanted to see in the wind
7 study, but we have our meteorologist that is working it, trying to
8 figure out from pictures of smoke and such -- trying to determine.
9 But again, the simulator, once we start putting wind in different
10 directions at it to try to simulate what happened, the biggest
11 thing that we're trying to figure out is what your altitude and
12 air speeds would've been. That's kind of our missing pieces. But
13 from looking at the way that Simon flew the approach and doing the
14 bracket of plus minus 100 feet and 5 knots.

15 A. It's all going to be low. It's going to be -- yeah. We
16 don't do anything steep and we don't do anything shallow. It's
17 your normal approach to land. Yeah. I don't know why -- I mean,
18 I'm kind of confused on why I said the clockwise direction
19 because -- yeah. I don't know. My memory's so bad. I'm trying.

20 MS. KELIHER: Well, you've been actually extremely helpful.

21 DR. WILSON: We thought you wouldn't remember anything at
22 all.

23 MS. KELIHER: Right. So, it's been really, really helpful.

24 MR. BOOTH: Okay. I wish I -- and certain things I'm glad I
25 don't remember, such as the fire and things like that, because I

1 think that would make me way more sad and --

2 MS. KELIHER: Yeah.

3 MR. BOOTH: -- miserable. But other things I'm happy -- if I
4 could help in any way and help, you know, you guys and everybody,
5 so that it never happens again. That's a good thing.

6 DR. WILSON: Yeah. Is there anything else that you can think
7 of that we didn't ask you about or you think would be relevant?

8 MR. BOOTH: No, ma'am.

9 MS. KELIHER: Okay.

10 DR. WILSON: If you think of anything, you know, you can
11 reach out through Tom to us or to us directly. And, you know,
12 typically, our investigations will take at least another 12
13 months, probably, until we get a final report out.

14 MR. BOOTH: Okay.

15 DR. WILSON: We really appreciate you taking the time to talk
16 to us. It was, like I said, extremely helpful.

17 MR. BOOTH: Okay. Good.

18 MR. FIGLIA: I really can't imagine what you're going
19 through. I know we're all, hearts just out.

20 MR. BOOTH: Thank you.

21 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
22
23
24

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON HELICOPTERS CRASH

* Accident No.: WPR18FA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: BRETT ALOHA

Monday,
February 12, 2018

APPEARANCES:

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N T E R V I E W

MR. ALOHA: Okay. So 5,000 feet to the Bat Towers. The canyon was a little bit turbulent. It was definitely -- it was my third flight for the day. I had done the first two, and this is -- and that was going to be the last one for the day. So the wind had picked up. It was turbulent in the canyon as we began the descent. Everything was normal for the most part. Passing, there's a boat dock that we call the Ramada. And down, there's a windsock down there that I always look at. And you're about 3,000 feet when you're abeam or next to that Ramada, that windsock.

So I noticed that there was an up canyon wind. So when I see that, I always prepare myself if I'm going to be going -- which direction on how to land. Obviously, the goal is always to be in a headwind. So I always doublecheck that. Then I'm coming down from 3,000 feet to below 2,000 feet. I was about 1800 feet as I crossed the river approaching to Quartermaster Base, and then looked off to my left down below, and on the windsock confirmed the exact same thing. And the pilot in front of me had gone over the river and then -- I don't know if you know, but it's called through the Notch. It's just going around to give myself the headwind approach down into Quartermaster Base.

I noticed there was one last spot open. So as I came across the river and noting -- looking down at that point, I had a left quartering tailwind. As you go through the Notch, there was a little bit of turbulence, as I totally expected. And then flew around, continued that left turn to end up on final approach, and

checking the windsock one more time. And in that situation, that put me at a right quartering headwind for my approach to land.

And as I set down, I had switched over my frequency from the C-TAC frequency into the Grand Canyon to the -- our company frequency. And there was three people behind me that I knew of. And Christina Sotos Rascon, that you just talked to, she was in 50. And so I warned, hey, Sotos, watch out, tailwind. You know, think about -- just be careful on the approach. And then she said yeah, okay, I'm still going to be going upriver. And so she came in, and I saw her making her approach and land, and that was fine.

So then shut down the helicopter, got all my passengers. Briefed them on that there were going to be a few other aircraft coming in to land -- and if I'm going too fast, tell me to stop. Okay. And I told them, you know, if there's aircraft, be careful. Get over to this shaded area into that little picnic table area.

So then we took pictures with them, and then I walked over to those tables and began to set up, set up my -- the meals. As I was setting up the meals, John Davis, he came in to land. I did not watch his approach. The windsock was still standing in up canyon wind. And then as I was finishing the last basket, that's when Scott crossed the river.

So I don't know why, but I looked up and watched him come in. As Scott was coming in, I noticed he was -- let's see. He was in a nose-up attitude, I'd say, of about 15 degrees. Nose up, decelerating to turn to land. Now I've -- as a quick side note

off of this, I've done this same exact approach when I was probably 3 months into flying out here. And I had gotten caught in this -- kind of the same situation that he got caught in, where that I experienced a loss of wind entirely and sunk out and had to get out. And so I -- with that experience, I didn't want to do that again, so I took the headwind, and I knew that there was an issue with that. So I kind of felt bad, like thinking about what should these guys do, what kind of approach they should make.

So I looked up, saw him coming in. He was decelerating in a nose-up attitude. You can tell that he was trying to turn around to make this approach to land. I'm assuming it was behind Sotos. Just one of those spots, the up-canyon wind spots or up-canyon landing spots. As he decelerated, he began the left turn to come in to face -- so he's going nose up, yawing left. And when he comes around to face the landing zone, the aircraft went level and thinned to a nose latitude. I could tell he was trying to gain airspeed to come back in, but as he was in nose low, he was slightly moving aft. It was that much of a wind shift, from that nose up to trying to get back into it, moving aft.

And now in the nose latitude, that yaw did not stop and continued to a full 360 at that point. Then you could tell he just pulled aft to try to hold level and control the yaw, but it didn't stop. And it started to descend. The aircraft was descending, a flat pitch. Then it continued a second 360, still descending. I started to run over, and then as it began the third

360, it disappeared below the bluff and continued into the impact. I'd say 5 to 10 seconds later, fire started.

Ran over to the edge. Saw someone was alive, someone was running around, one of the women. And that's kind of where things went -- I don't know how much you want me to go beyond that.

Q. Yeah, keep going.

A. Okay. And then after that, there was probably at least three explosions. I'm not sure what it was. I could speculate, but I'm just going to -- there were definitely three explosions as their -- that one was around -- I didn't see much more than heard going around. I just kind of turned around and started to control passengers at that point, so -- yeah. Do you want to keep going? I mean, how much do you want me to go into?

Q. All the way.

A. Okay. Yeah, so again, the explosions were going off, and then from that on, it was just more so turning around, realizing that people were trying to run down there with fire extinguishers. I at first tried to stop those guys because I didn't want them to be running down into the mess, into the fire. And then two of my passengers -- one was a nurse, the other one was a veterinarian. They wanted to help, so they went down.

A lot of the pilots were trying to figure out what to do. Everyone was kind of like, what do we do, what do we do, what do we do? Trying to get everyone away from the edge, pull people back to the tables. And then I remembered that in my training we

had a sat phone. So I was like, okay, let's get the sat phone out; let's try to call someone.

So I ran over to the sat phone, pulled the sat phone out. And there was directions with the sat phone. It said open it up, press the red button to start and, you know, pick one of the four batteries and put it in there. There were not four batteries. There was just the one that was in the thing. Turned it on, and the battery was, it was -- said low battery. We tried to make a call because we had all the phone numbers on the sheet; you know, it was all laminated and it said like, tower, leads, chief, all that kind of stuff. So we wanted to call -- oh, what phone number were we trying to call? The lead phone. So we tried to call the lead phone, then the battery died.

Then we knew that all -- the aircraft that were up on the top, they had Spidertracks that -- some of those are powered off the aircraft's battery. Some of them were like the car charger for, like, the cigarette lighter; some were not. We found one that was, pulled that off -- because it had like a car charger for the sat phone. So we plugged that in, put the -- hooked the thing back up, and then we tried four more times to call. And that sat phone never worked. It just always had call incomplete, call incomplete. Did not work. So that -- we just kind of stopped at that.

Then with the -- some guy came back up. They needed water. So we got all the waters we could together, put it into one of the

big red bags for all our food. They ran that down. And then we called Guano Base, our base at the top at the Grand Canyon West Airport, and told them what's going on. Then we had -- and then another passenger came up with a cell phone, had kind of what happened -- they had a preliminary idea of people down there, what needed to happen, if we needed to get, you know, firefighters down here.

So then we got a helicopter to come down and get firefighters, and that was Martijn. I forget what number he was in, but he saw the crash and he went up top. He grabbed firefighters, came down. He was the first one down. And then we started loading up full passengers and putting them in helicopters. Because just like in aircraft, you know, all your passengers get out here; they don't need to be here anymore. We don't want to have too many people down here. So they went up, and then Bonita Hayes, she brought down the second load of firefighters. And we helped unload them. And then she took off and then went back up top of the canyon.

So those firefighters went down. I started to help carry their gear down, and then they got word that they needed three helicopters. So then I gave my gear to the other firefighter, went back and then started talking to Guano again. Said hey, we need three medevac helicopters down here. And then started just to talk to Chris, the manager at the Grand Canyon West Airport. And so I was more talking to them, making sure that they

understood what was going on, trying to help with them and to kind of coordinate what was happening down below.

So all of the survival down below, I was not a part of. That was Finney and John Davis, which -- they'll talk about that stuff. But I was coordinating with them. And then DPS, and then you had two helicopters come out and show up, and then DPS showed up. And that was more to help -- and Edgar from DPS coordinate with our guys up top to figure out what was going on with the aircraft. And then controlling passengers to make sure that there was enough spot to get guys down. And then one of the pilots from Classic, Opie, he gave me his radio and I was helping him clear the aircraft to get in and out to shuttle passengers up top to the Dove. I know it's not as detailed as you guys wanted, but it's just -- I was up till like 11:30 p.m., up to midnight.

Do you want to keep going?

Q. Yeah.

A. Okay. So the big issue was, I guess, trying to get aircraft down. The wind was always an up-canyon wind. It seemed like all night the wind was pretty strong, and so even the EMS helicopters were having issues coming in to land. I think every guy did like two defined go-rounds per aircraft to try to get in there and land. It was dark. I could totally understand their -- we're working on the NVGs and trying to get down in the, into the canyon spots. Because we had -- other helicopters were kind of -- not in the way, but you know, if you didn't -- haven't landed them

before, you don't really know where is a good spot to go.

And then one of the Classic helicopters tried to get down and actually land in the canyon with the survivors. He was able to get low but not put a skid on the ground. Or maybe he did put a skid on the ground. I'm not, like, I'm not sure on that. But then Finney tried helping out with them, trying to set up an LZ to get down there. And that was one that brought up Scott. And then we helped put him into another Classic helicopter that brought him back to EMT where he's at now.

Yeah, I'm -- and I'm not sure what happened to the two women. I'm not sure actually how they got out, but I know that there was an aircraft that went down and picked them up. But I never saw them. I only saw Scott and I saw the Pave Hawk, that long line to the burn victim, that 95 percent burn victim that -- but I'm not sure how the other two got out. It was mostly trying to get blankets down to them, keep them warm. Clothes, jackets to control shock on all those -- on all the victims in the bottom of the canyon.

Q. When you said you saw smoke, can you describe it?

A. Yes. So impact, and then smoke started, black. Thick black smoke. The flames were -- I could see from my perspective down below, I could see a corner of the wreckage. I could see two of the blades on the ground. Woman running around screaming. And then the flames were 20 feet plus, and then above that was just black billowing smoke. And that wreckage burned until the fuel

was gone, until all the fuel had -- no one -- I think people went down with the fire extinguishers, but no one was able to put it out. It just burned itself out.

Q. Do you remember what direction the smoke was blowing?

A. Everything was up canyon. Yeah, it was blowing into the Notch. Yeah.

Q. Aside from batteries for the sat phone, is there anything that you wish you would have had?

A. Yeah, I think having maybe a good amount of water in the emergency box. And there was -- there's one metal litter that down there that was on top of a big black box. And we were told during training that's our emergency gear. And it was padlocked shut. And one of the passengers took a rock and beat the padlock off of the box to get into it. Inside was a foldable aluminum stretcher that Scott ended up on, emergency blankets, straps for the stretcher that I found later. And I guess they didn't make it down, because they duct taped him onto the stretcher. And some other gear in there as well.

But that was odd that it was padlocked shut. That was really weird. And it was like, it was a -- it wasn't a key lock. It was a combination lock. And no one knew the code, so we just beat the shit out of it until it opened up. Yeah, I think -- yeah, the sat phone thing was weird. That was kind of the most odd thing. That was like, that was -- we were told about it, but I think having batteries would have been better.

Q. What do you estimate the wind was?

A. Like I said in the statement, 20 to 25 up canyon. Yeah, it was -- I could show you on Google Earth if you want me to to kind of give you the direction. It was, like, enough to -- I think that a pilot could think that he could make a headwind out of it. But the problem is, if you look on Google Earth -- and you were -- were you down there today?

Q. Yeah.

A. So you saw that there was this little spine of a ridge before that bowl. And I've experienced that wind coming up canyon. Rises up that spine, comes down and swirls. So you get this swirling motion with a downward flow. And I've gotten a pocket where there -- it just sinks you. It sinks you right down. And that's what happened.

Q. So when you saw it, can you go and take this through it? With the exact --

A. Yeah, so let's use -- because that's recording, I don't want to get in the way. I'll use my wallet instead. Let's see. So let's say this is Quartermaster. We have a landing here. So I got a ridge coming up and -- say, well, your phone will be the Notch. So then we have the bowl here. So you kind of have the wall there. Yeah, that's perfect. And then you got to have a spine right there.

So I'm standing here next to that little shaded area next to the tables. And we have the river coming in like this. So in a

perfect world, right, you want wind down canyon. So when you come to -- come in to land, you're turning into a headwind and that's good. It was more of an up-canyon wind like that. So in a perfect world, yeah, sure, you got a left crosswind, but by no means is that going to help you. So as you come across the river, he was nose up, decelerating. Went to turn, pointed nose low. And then the yaw continued and then he went flat and spun. And into that little ravine.

Q. Can you slow it down?

A. Sure. Totally. Yeah.

Q. Yeah, so --

A. So all right. So he's coming -- so coming down -- here's the river. Coming down to 2,000 feet, coming across the river. Decelerating. Decelerating. And then here we go from the nose up -- and he wanted to land here, so as he comes around, kind of turns into a level-pitch attitude into a nose low. And this is right where I noticed a little bit of a, like, an aft motion. And that -- what I took was that that motion of the wind. And then as he comes nose low, then the yaw continued.

I'll start from up here so I have a little more altitude to play with here. So coming around again. Cross the river, nose up.

Q. I'm going to take a video.

A. So right here? So from my perspective, from my vantage point here, the aircraft came across the river, began a nose up

deceleration. As he was slowing down, started the left yaw to aim for final approach. The nose dropped into a nose latitude. And then from this situation, from this point, from this nose latitude, the aircraft continued the left yaw into a flat pitch spin. Like, and he did two full rotations, started a third, and then disappeared below the bluff into the vertical impact.

Q. And that was the direction that you remember seeing?

A. Well, I -- now I talked to Finney on the direction of the wreckage. I just remember seeing --

Q. But the direction of the spin, the rotation?

A. Absolutely. Absolutely, yeah. It was the left yaw induced by the pilot to get up with final approach that continued into a -- and like, and I'm not going to speculate, but it became a flat spin coming straight down, and into the ground.

Q. Was anyone on com with them?

A. I don't know. The person who was flying was Martijn. Martijn was behind him. Like, and John Davis landed right prior to him. And I was just standing on the ground. I'm not sure who was talking to him. I do not know.

Q. And you said that you have been in a situation that had similar characteristics?

A. I was in a situation in that same location in the past where I had lost airspeed and started a descent that I didn't anticipate.

Q. So now I'm going to ask you for the Google Earth where that

started. So here I've got a few just PowerPoint slides that I want you to draw on. So it would be like -- you can, just wherever you think would be a best way of representing it.

A. Let me see. Where's Quartermaster?

Q. Right there. Right there.

A. Oh, perfect. Okay. Yeah, so it's -- and then we have -- oh, okay.

Q. And there's this -- so take it right there. But if you can just come in of where you're coming from or coming in --

A. Let's see.

Q. (Indiscernible) so wherever you're comfortable with.

A. Oh, perfect. Okay. Yeah, let me sit in this seat.

Q. Here, you can take --

A. All right. I'm sorry. Let me just kind of orientate myself before I start drawing here. You want his path or my path on the day?

Q. Why don't you do your path on the day. Of just kind of showing that --

A. Okay. Yeah, absolutely.

Q. We can actually do both, where I can --

A. Oh, yeah. Double color?

Q. Yeah, or I can just duplicate it.

A. Oh, I got you.

Q. Oh yeah, we can do different colors. So what was your path?

A. Okay, so I'm just going to orientate myself. So we have

landings here. I'm assuming that this is going to be the -- oops.

Oh, you can touch it?

Q. Yes.

A. Oh, that's magical. Let me go back? Control Z, right?

Q. Yeah.

A. Sweet. I'm just going to move this out of the way then. I don't want to -- so yeah, so okay. So this is the Notch. We're landing here. Okay, so for -- my path would have been -- okay, coming across the river.

Oh, it didn't work. Oh, it didn't work. Why isn't it working? Okay, let's try this again.

Q. Try it again.

A. Okay. Okay. So yeah, coming across the river, through the Notch and then into descending left turn to line up final approach and landing right there.

Q. So that's a severe right quartering headwind.

A. No, no, that's -- the wind is doing -- you want me to make a little arrow for you?

Q. What's our sock look like?

A. Yeah, I can do an arrow. That's pretty dang close.

Q. Okay.

A. Yeah. Or you want me to do a sock?

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, okay. Let's do that -- oh no, it's not working now.

[recorder turned off]





UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON HELICOPTERS CRASH

* Accident No.: WPR18FA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: CHRISTINA RASCON

Meadview, Arizona

Monday,
February 12, 2018

APPEARANCES:

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N T E R V I E W

MS. RASCON: Well, I had already landed. And I can show you on -- you know, where I landed. And I had taken the food out of the helicopter. There's a cooler, there's two -- there's a cooler and -- a food cooler and a drink cooler. And so I'd taken those over to the nearest picnic table. I'll show you where that is too.

And I'm setting up the picnic baskets. I had six passengers, six baskets. I set up the drinks as well, which just is placing water bottles on the table wherever, and --

Q. I'm going to get you a pen so you can go along with it. There you go. And draw us a little diagram.

A. So as far as the Quartermaster Base -- do you want me to draw, like, the table or the --

Q. Just the area so you can set the stage with what you were doing and where you were.

A. So basically, here's the Notch. And then, you know, you have this whole area, this whole platform and it goes up the mountain here, where we land in this area here. And here is this ravine. You know, I parked about, I would say, right here and at this angle. And I had a picnic table that was approximately right there. And then here, of course, is the main canopy.

So at this point, you know, I walk over here. My passengers are taking pictures. I wasn't paying too much attention to what they were doing. I just had told them to stay in the area like I usually do, because some of them try to wander up to the mountain.

I set up six picnic baskets. I did do that. It was a bit breezy, so I had to -- we have these cups that they give us that are plastic for the champagne. So we have to assemble those cups individually and place them, as well, on each basket here.

I got through about two and I think I was on my third cup. And I remember having to kind of -- the third -- when I was assembling the third cup and it had -- because I had placed them on the baskets. I realized that there were still more helicopters that were going to come in, and I didn't want them to blow the cups off the table. Because there was space available, you know, right around here.

So at that point, I -- that's when I looked up and to this general direction here so I could see how far away the next helicopter was from coming in. And so I could see how much time I had to kind of reassemble my table a little bit and prepare for the downdraft that we would get. And at this point, as soon as I looked over, I saw a helicopter spinning. And I do not recall the direction of rotation of which it was spinning.

Q. Okay. Just close your eyes and tell me if you can recall, in as much detail as possible, what you saw.

A. I can tell you the approximate altitude that it was at the time of its spinning. I don't know if it had already been spinning. I didn't see what it was before that. I didn't see it come in at that point. It was -- I forgot to draw this one part here. This is called Wedding Point right here. I saw it from the

time it was here to when it disappeared. So it had come in this way, as we all do, but I didn't see it come in from that point. I only saw it from this point as I looked over.

And I really don't remember the direction it was rotating, but it made full -- two full rotations. And I kind of initially just thought I was watching a movie for a second. It took me a second to process the image. It made two full rotations. And by the second rotation, I turned around -- I turned to the right, and I yelled to my co-worker. I yelled his name as loud as I could. He was the first person I saw over there. And at that point I turned back to the left to the scene, and the helicopter was no longer in sight. I didn't hear any unusual sounds. I waited for about 3 seconds and I was expecting a sound, but I never heard a sound. But about 10 seconds later, we saw the smoke. But I did not see the impact. I only saw those two rotations, and then it was gone.

Q. When you say rotations -- I'll take your pen.

A. Oh, yes.

Q. I know this is more airplane style, but if this is the rotor --

A. Yeah. We usually have a bunch of model airplanes or model helicopters in here. So this is the rotor. Oops. It's basically just lateral rotations like this. And it was sinking. It was dropping at a good rate, and I don't know how -- couldn't guess the rate, honestly. But it was -- you know, I didn't observe it

for very long, just for it to go like one, two. And it was almost at that pace. It was just one, two --

Q. Now if you're looking straight at it, just like that -- pick that up -- which direction was it moving?

A. It was going this way.

Q. Got it. So from your right to your left?

A. Correct.

Q. Descending.

A. Descending. And it was -- the elevation here is roughly 1700 feet MSL. And at the time when it was rotating, I would say that it was about 100 feet from that elevation, so I estimated it to be about 1800 MSL. It was already pretty low.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is this an okay stopping point, or at some point soon? I think you wanted -- did you want to go to that --

MS. RASCON: I really don't.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- Red Cross --

MS. RASCON: No, I'm okay. Even if I go in late, it's fine, but --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's entirely up to you. Because we brought you in here saying you could go if you wanted to and -- but it's entirely up to you.

MS. RASCON: You know, I -- no, I'm okay. I'm okay. I'd like to keep going, honestly. I don't -- I mean --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's your choice.

MS. RASCON: I'll go -- I'll get over there. I'll get over there later.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Do you know what time you landed there?

A. I didn't look my watch. I know what time we took off. They have a record of that. It takes about 25 minutes to fly out there.

Q. About how long were you on the ground?

A. I said -- approximately, I think it was 4:20 or somewhere around there.

Q. Do you know about how long you were on the ground?

A. Well, that's when I said the incident was. I think it was -- it would have been about -- yeah, 4:20. I was on the ground for -- it was not more than 10 minutes. Two other helicopters at least landed next to me before that happened.

Q. And can you write on there what helicopter you were flying?

A. Oh, this is 50.

Q. Got it. Which is the --

A. It's the gold one.

Q. I was going to say, which is --

A. It's a G2.

Q. Oh, got it. What was it like when you came in to land? Can you show me your approach?

A. It was -- the windsock, windsock was pretty all over the place. It was much like -- I want to say, if that's an accurate

assessment of the angle. So this means that the wind is coming in this direction essentially. Wind was about 15 knots, maybe 20. It was strong, but you know, I know a lot of these guys had concerns about -- you know, that they were saying things about the turbulence on the way out there. It honestly never even crossed my mind, any of it. It didn't seem abnormal to me. I was comfortable with it. But it's a definite -- you know, my awareness was heightened, though, for landing because, you know, there's -- there are dangers in landing the other way. So I just used -- exercised caution as much as I could.

Q. What does that entail?

A. Just, you know, you come in and -- we already knew the direction of the wind anyway, but --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm sorry, it's nearly 3:00. Do you want to carry on?

MS. RASCON: It's okay. Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Are you sure?

MS. RASCON: Yeah, yeah. We'll just --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right, okay. All right, thank you.

MS. RASCON: -- we'll just keep going. Thank you, though.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

MS. RASCON: What was I saying?

MS. KELIHER: You were doing your path.

MS. RASCON: Oh, yes.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Can you just do it in a dotted line of how you got in there?

A. Of how I got in? So it was the same trajectory, you know, as he was doing. I was higher, and I believe I was faster. You know, when I saw him, he was already spinning. But I kind of go this way, so this is what I -- dot, dot, dot, dot. There is a mountain here, but I gave myself a really wide path and got myself right into the wind.

And then I was facing -- the whole way in you can fly sideways. It's not a problem and it's safer. But I was like this until -- once you get closer to the ground, then you get the ground effect. And at that point, you can reposition to line up with the terrain. So that's how I did it. But I was -- I had airspeed this whole time. I was very careful to look at the -- at everything, all the factors.

Q. How fast do you think you were going?

A. I was going at least about 60. About -- yeah. About 60. And you know, we -- it was gusty, you know. It was a tailwind. But yeah. I was higher. I came in at -- well, here's the -- let me do this for you. Here's the river, by the way. River. I came in at about -- I think it was like about 2100 feet crossing the river.

Q. So where do you lose most of it?

A. And then at this point, I was going about probably 80 until about here, but I kept it up. I kept the speed until I got into

the wind, and at that point you can slow it down. But you know, my main priority is land this way.

Q. Have you ever done training in a turbine of settling with power?

A. No.

Q. Where did you do your transition?

A. We talk about it, but I don't know if they -- I don't know. We never actually simulated it here. I have done a lot before in the piston helicopters for, you know, R22s, R44s.

Q. Where did you do your transition training?

A. Mauna Loa Helicopters is where I did my -- most of my career. I got my private and commercial in Maui on -- through a private instructor in a 44. And then I did -- I completed my CFI instrument II over at Mauna Loa.

Q. And they did all the transition training?

A. For?

Q. Turbine?

A. Oh, no. That was all done here. Yeah, this was my -- this is my initial turbine job.

Q. Got it.

A. Yeah. Yeah, this is the only turbine experience I have, is here at this company.

Q. Do you feel --

A. And it's only the ECs. I don't fly the AStars.

Q. Oh. People aren't usually qualified on both?

A. Well, they do. I mean, they've asked me several times, but I didn't want to get burned out on tours, and it's kind of a different series of jobs that you do when you fly the AStar. And I think people get a little burned out easier.

Q. Yeah. Why do you think that is?

A. But they want the experience because they want to do EMS, and I've just always been interested in tours.

Q. What do you think the difference is of why they would get burned out on AStars more?

A. They're doing a lot of this shuttling up and down, and they're in the seat a long time, and the schedule gets a little wild. Yeah.

Q. That's interesting.

A. But everybody really likes to fly, and at least it's fun.

Q. And then after the crash happened, what did you do?

A. After it happened, I had the closest helicopter. I ran over and I got on the radio. And so I established communications with our Grand Canyon West Base. And then, you know, I talked to them for a while. They wanted details. We didn't know what number it was, and they were asking me -- they wanted to know who it was. And we had some difficulty figuring out who was missing, because they're all spread out. You know, from there it was just communication.

And my passengers were all in the army. So they ran down -- I didn't even see them. They just, they disappeared to help out.

So I'm really glad they were there. But yeah, I just -- I was on the radio. You know, it was just -- it was a scattered scene for a while there. Yeah. I was just trying to get a solid response from Grand Canyon West and, you know, what to do with the passengers and, you know, next steps. And giving them -- trying to give them as much information I could about what happened, but -- yeah.

Q. And then as the night progressed?

A. Well it was a, it was kind of a worst-case scenario. It was a really long night. You know, I don't know. Is that part of the report?

Q. Oh yeah. Definitely. A lot of it's survival factors issues.

A. Yeah, well --

Q. And things that you wish that you would have had on the helicopters. So things that we can think of that were helpful or not helpful or -- gloves, sneakers, things like that, of -- required flying things that you think that you can make recommendations that would have been nice to --

A. Yeah, I wish the sat phone would have worked. I really, really -- I wish -- we had a nurse there. She was very disappointed in the conditions of our first aid kit. But you know, we had first aid kits. We took them all out of all the helicopters and gave them to the people who went down there. But, you know, I didn't see what was in the kits, so I'm only -- and I'm not an expert. I'm not a nurse by any means. But I think

there were some things that were unacceptable about them. They weren't very happy with the conditions.

And flashlights that worked as well, with batteries. Probably need them in each helicopter at some point. And blankets. Just, I think in the future, because it's such a remote area and I didn't realize that it would be such an involved process to get people down there and to get EMS, you know -- and I didn't coordinate that. But, you know, maybe to prepare with blankets and just have something down there for -- anticipating the max amount of people that can be there at all times. You know, just to supply things for them.

Because yeah, we really had not even bare essentials down there. It was -- but a lot of that was communication too, and trying to figure out, you know, getting people -- I mean, we got blankets and everything eventually, which was really great. We got coffee thermoses and -- but yeah, I think initially, I think things could have gone better if we had some more supplies in terms of the first aid stuff. And not just the absolute bare basics, since it's such a remote area.

Q. Do you know Scott?

A. Yes. Yeah.

Q. How often do you interact with him?

A. Not very often. Not very often. He's a part-time employee. He usually fills in for people. He was supposed to work for me Sunday. But, you know, he had been working here longer than I

have. So I did know him.

Q. Did you guys ever talk about flying, anything that you would think would be --

A. No. You know, I never had a casual conversation with him. It was just I saw him at work and, you know, while you're at work, you just talk about things. But not really. It wasn't anything specific. It was just about what we were doing at the moment and what do you have right now, you know. But it's -- yeah, it was just come and go, come and go talk.

Q. Is that the normal flight path that you do when you have upriver winds?

A. Down.

Q. Downriver.

A. Yeah. So the best option, the best option is to go through this -- it's called the Notch -- and then land in this direction over here. Just facing -- there are -- there's one pad here, another pad back here, one here and then one down here. And there's only about -- and there's only four of these areas. So alternatively, you can come through here and go over and then land opposite side facing the other direction as well.

I have done this approach many, many times in this kind of wind condition. I felt completely comfortable with it. These three were taken up at the time when I landed, and there was -- you know, there's a lot of new guys right now, and I'm trying to give them the easy spots. So I was totally fine with doing this.

Q. How many are over there?

A. Oh, this is kind of -- you know, usually there's one here, one here, one here. You can squeeze another one back here if you want to. You can put possibly one here and one here. It's essentially just a strip of dirt, you know, that had been cleared out. This spot that I was in is usually reserved for people that are handicapped or need to be closer to the tables. Oh, and of course there's the Wedding Point down here. So I, you know, left these spots open, and this, and then I just -- there was somebody here for the wedding. And then, yeah, I just, I just parked right here.

And I also did that because of the direction of the wind, too, for my own safety. You know, it was a little bit bumpy coming in. I remember having trouble, once I got to the bottom, just keeping it steady to touch down on the gravel there. But yeah, you know, this just gave me a little bit more time to do my approach, just to move a little bit further like that. So it's just how the angle worked out.

Q. Where were other people located?

A. There were here, here, here --

Q. Can you put X's up there?

A. Oh, yes. And I honestly can't recall if it was here or here. It was one of these spots. So I'm just going to say these three. This was a wedding out of Vegas. This was a wedding out of Vegas. And I was here. And then after I landed, this guy shows up, this

guy shows up. And that was it. And then Scott came in.

Q. Yeah. So there would essentially have been four spots for him to have come --

A. Yes, and I think he, you know, wasn't planning on going through the Notch because -- I mean, I -- actually, no. I take that back. I don't know. I don't know what his plans were. I didn't hear his radio call. I was already out here.

But you know, there -- oh, you know what? I think there was -- I think somebody else landed here. Yeah, so when I came in, I landed, and then another guy went around the Notch, and then somebody landed here. Somebody landed here. Yeah. There were a bunch of people there. You know, and two out of Vegas because we had weddings. It was kind of busy. So, you know, if these are all taken up, which they were, this is really the only option over here.

Q. All right. All right. Well, I'm going to send you an email where I'll, kind of put a little graph together of that, and if you can just tell me if that's right or wrong.

A. Okay.

Q. And then I'm sure you're going to remember other things too that are going to come up, so --

A. Yeah, absolutely.

Q. But that would be greatly appreciated.

A. Do you want me to label anything otherwise?

Q. Just put your name on it.

Q. And how -- you said in your statement you put a wind, but what did you think that the wind was?

Q. Okay. From that direction?

MS. KELIHER: All right, well thank you so much.

MS. RASCON: Yeah, thank you. I hope I helped.

MS. KELIHER: Yeah, you definitely did. I appreciate it.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON HELICOPTERS CRASH

* Accident No.: WPR18FA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: DERRICK MOJICA

Tuesday,
February 13, 2018

APPEARANCES:

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N T E R V I E W

MR. MOJICA: So on that day, I was working out of -- I was assigned to Las Vegas, the base Las Vegas. And my scheduled time of arrival was -- on that day, was 8:15, because my first flight was a 9:15 Skywalk shuttle for me to bring out five passengers to the Skywalk, to go out there. So we went out there. Everything, you know, normal. At the beginning of the day it was nice, clear, you know, small breeze to calm. Went out there, and while I was there, of course, everyone was doing our operations. It seemed, not busy, but consistent. So after I was there for about 45 minutes, my passengers returned, and then, of course, I walked them out to the aircraft, brought them -- to bring them back.

My next flight, it was a 12:15 departure for a Canyon landing. Had five passengers on that aircraft, or that flight, as well. Same aircraft. I was in the same aircraft all day, in Aircraft 41. Departed out, it was still pretty good weather, you know, light -- it was a light breeze. The winds were starting to become noticeable. Not to the point where it's like, it's windy, but you could feel the winds are now coming up.

Went out to the Canyon. Everything went normal out there. For that landing, I can't remember exactly -- oh, there was one aircraft that did show up, and that was Pollyanna, in a B3e out of Boulder for a Canyon landing. She showed up maybe about halfway through the time I was there, so I departed before she did.

Came back, everything was normal. When I came back in, noticed the -- you know, the winds were still kind of -- they're

slowly starting to pick up. And then my last departure was a wedding that I was going to conduct, and that departure was at -- I believe at 3 is the scheduled departure, if I remember correctly.

And myself, and then Venida Hayes, she was in, I believe -- I can't remember the, I can't remember the tail number she was in, but she was out doing a wedding as well. Same departure. We left within maybe a minute of each other. And then there was a third helicopter out of Las Vegas, David Gutierrez. He was just doing a normal landing, so he was also at Quartermaster with us.

As we got into the Canyon, the winds were definitely picking up. They were noticeable. It was, you know, a little bit of a bumpy ride. Not too much to really be aggressive quite yet. As we descended -- as I descended in the Canyon, I was the second to arrive. Venida Hayes arrived maybe about 2 to 5 minutes before I did.

I was coming into the Canyon, of course, and on the way in doing all of my normal radio calls, my procedures, but as well as giving a tour to the couple in the front, and then I had the minister in back seat -- our position 7, so back seat to the right side in the passenger side. The photographer was, I guess -- Teddy was the photographer, the one who has pictures everywhere. He was sitting behind me, against the door.

So as we come in, we -- I noticed it was bumpy. The winds at the time -- I can't -- it was gusting. I can't remember the exact

numbers it was gusting up to. And as I started my descent from the Bat Towers, down toward Quartermaster Base --

Q. Okay. Slow down for a minute. This is where we're going to want you to get as much detail as --

A. Okay.

Q. So if you can just relax. We've got tons of time.

A. Okay. So I come up to the Bat Towers, that's, you know, of course, abeam the Bat Towers, Guano Point, right there, altitude at 5,000, airspeed indicated somewhere just above 100. I know it wasn't very high. I began my descent. I lowered down collective. I usually will lower it down to about 7 on the FLI6 to begin my descent because -- I normally do that because as I start coming around, I like to point out the Grand Canyon Skywalk above to the right. I give them a quick information about that, and then I tell them that I'm just going to continue the descent down into the Canyon.

After I played a song -- I don't remember what song I played as I was going into -- I was beginning my descent. I had already heard Venida Hayes on the radio taking Wedding Point. So our -- my other -- the other wedding site that we use is a downriver spot. So I began my descent, coming down in. As I come down, I always take note of the Ramada where they do the heli and the boat tours down there. I noticed the windssock was showing that the wind was coming upriver, so I always keep that in mind as I come in.

Continued my descent. I remained at about 2,000, between 2,000, 1900 as I crossed over the river. Noted the windsock again, and it was showing a pretty significant wind upriver. Made my call for Papillon 41 going through the notch, landing Quartermaster. Went through the notch, noted -- and I had noted Venida, when she had landed she was also facing downriver in favor of the wind. And they were already starting to get out of the aircraft to start setting up for their event, their wedding.

I came through the notch. As I did, it was a little bumpy as I went through, behind the hill there, coming in. So I maybe started setting up for my approach, to making sure that I had enough airspeed and my approach angle was proper to get to the site that I wanted. I started making my left turn in, nice and shallow, lined myself up. Once I got into the headwind, I noted my airspeed was probably -- was around 50 to 60, between those two increments, and my ground speed was showing below 40.

I approached my spot. I always like to come in a little bit slow to that spot, especially with the wind coming up, making sure I come fully into the area. As I came in, came in 2-foot hover, noticed that my airspeed indicator was still showing readable airspeed but it was below the 20 indication mark. As I came in, I set down. As soon as I set down, I immediately lowered collective, rolled throttle down. And as soon as I rolled throttle down, I applied friction to the cyclic, and I always hold that with my legs as I reach over to lock the collective. Reached

over, pushed down on the collective, slide the lock forward.

Once I have -- once I knew that everything was rolled down, then I told my passengers, I immediately -- I talked to my passengers again and I told them, all right, welcome to Quartermaster Base. Please stay in your seats. Do not open doors, and please keep your seatbelts on until I have everything shut down.

Shut down, start my timer. And every time I shut down, it's always -- maybe a Robinson thing, something they always taught me. I always keep my hand on the collective as I'm doing things, just because I just don't want something -- I don't know, just force of habit. Reached over, so I start my timer and I immediately grab my checklist, which I keep up on the left side of the dash, kind of wedged between the air vent and the dash. Reached for that, pulled it over, flipped it over to where it said engine shutdown, and started going through my checklist on turning off components.

So I would turn off pulse lights, position lights. It had a strobe on there, so I turned the strobe off, and I even made sure the music was off.

So once everything was shut down, or once everything started winding down even more, waited for rpms to go below 100. Applied my rotor brake, and as I did, I grabbed my rev sheet out so that way I could start getting the engine reports off of the VEMD. And on this aircraft, the brake was actually really good so it slowed the rotor brake -- or the rotor down, you know, fairly quickly, so

I actually had to stop writing and finish the brake before I continued to write.

Once I wrote that stuff down, I told my passengers, all right, guys, welcome. Of course, you can leave anything in the helicopter you don't want to carry with you. Your PFDs, you could take them off. And I always like to make the joke saying that I know they don't look really good in pictures, having a bright yellow pack on your hip.

So once the brake was done, everything was shut off. Of course, all I had left to turn off was direct battery and the master power. So once I shut that off, I opened the door, and as soon as I opened the door, I really felt how strong that wind was because it was pushing back against it and kind of closing back on me.

So I got out, and I always step out by, you know, kind of propping myself up on my left foot and swinging my right leg under, kind of like, you know, a weird donkey kick. Reached out -- or got out, stepped out, immediately closed my door. Went to the sliding door. Slid that open, the -- where the photographer was sitting. He stepped out, walked around to the other side of the aircraft, opened the door for the couple.

As they stepped out, of course, you know, I had them watch their step. At our downriver site, it wasn't too rocky, but just enough to where you don't want to catch a small rock or something to mis-foot, or misplace your foot. Once they stepped out, the

minister stepped out. I immediately, once the minister stepped out -- and he was an older gentleman so he kind of took his time getting out. Once he did, you know, of course, my right hand on the handle, left hand on the door, kind of just abeam it, closed it to make sure it was fully closed before latching it. Once I latched it, they immediately started going into their things, setting themselves up for where they were going to actually do the ceremony.

As they were doing that, I walked back around the side of the aircraft and went into -- I had to close the sliding door to get into our compartment on the left side. Opened up the compartment, and all that was in there was a red cooler with a bag that had four plastic -- our champagne glasses, two tall, and two were the shorter ones. Pulled that out to -- pulled that out, went into the side of the aircraft, because I couldn't set anything up outside because it was too windy and it would've blown everything away.

And of course, as I was setting it up, I was looking around. Venida was already starting on hers, and that's when I took note of the windsock. The windsock -- it was gusting, but the windsock was about straight every time I saw it, just straight, vertical. Or not vertical, but straight horizontal.

I opened up the cooler. Inside all there was, was a champagne and about seven water bottles, and of course water and ice. Pulled out the champagne, and I put the glasses inside --

and I kept the glasses and everything inside the helicopter in the back seat on the floor with the doors kind of closed a little bit so no wind would blow them over.

From there, I stood at the end -- or stood right next to the helicopter. They proceeded to do their reception and their wedding. And every time I get out, as I let out the passenger on the other side, I always start a timer on my watch because 30 minutes for the rule, so I don't go over it. So at this time I looked at my watch and it was about 7 minutes into my landing. Had everything set up, continued.

As soon as they said their I do's -- and at this time, I'm sorry, about this time David Gutierrez had came in and landed. He came in about 5 minutes after us with his normal landing. My guess is he had six passengers with him. I don't remember the exact count. But they of course started up their picnic and I noted, of course, as he was pulling things up, he kept baskets closed so nothing would blow away. And he parked also downriver, abeam me, in the middle spot, and it's just kind of elevated and slightly forward or -- I'm sorry, I'm sorry -- slightly back from where our downriver pad is.

So once he -- once I noted he came in and landed, of course, you know, into the -- favoring the headwind, the right quartering headwind coming onto the spot there. My wedding continued. Once they said their I do's, I went back into the helicopter, grabbed the bottle in my right hand, reached around with my left and

started opening up. As it opened up, you know, got the little pop, put the cap in the plastic bag, and again, left everything in the back of the helicopter there. Poured the two tall champagne glasses, left -- put the bottle back down, and I walked the glasses over to the couple.

As I handed it to them, congratulated them. They were both, you know, very happy, and the bride, she was actually -- she was really concerned about the wind and her hair. She kept saying the wind was messing up her hair. And even when they were taking pictures, she was on his left side as they were facing the photographer with their backs to the river because that was keeping her hair behind her and not in her face. And of course, the groom was wearing actually a pretty a nice blue suit. I was kind of jealous.

So they continued to take pictures with their champagne, with their champagne glasses. Once they finished it, they set it down to take some more pictures. I walked over there so that way they didn't blow away off the end. I picked them up and I asked them if they wanted more. The groom said, yes, he would like a little bit more. The bride said no thank you.

Walked back, and then on the way back, I asked the -- I even asked the bride if she wanted a bottle of water. She declined. I asked the minister and the photographer if they wanted water or a little bit of the champagne. They both declined to both of those offers. Once I returned to the helicopter, I got the bride's

glass, left it on the inside with the two unused shorter glasses. I filled up halfway with the groom's glass, and I was kind of leaning inside to the helicopter to pour it so that way nothing got blown away or didn't spill.

Stepped out, and they were still doing their couple pictures on the ledge there, so I kind of held back, and I started talking to the minister a little bit. He began to tell me his first wedding. For some reason, they did it at Pearce Ferry. He was telling me how, you know, that was his first time doing it, and they were wondering -- he was wondering why they did it at Pearce Ferry and not actually into the Canyon. He began to talk about how, you know, the wind was probably going to blow him away. And you know, he was slow stepping around the area, just, you know, being a little bit more careful, you know, being elderly.

Once they -- I kind of saw them take a little break in the pictures as the photographer was kind of looking around for some more shots. I walked up to the groom, handed him his glass with my left hand. Left the bottle in the helicopter. So he kind of started drinking that a little bit. The bride, of course, didn't want any. They were trying to see what other pictures to take.

I stepped back to the nose of the helicopter, kind of hung out there next to the minister, and the photographer had the idea to take a picture of some -- of them sitting on some nearby rocks just right there in the same spot, probably not even like 20 feet away, with the Canyon in the background.

And as they walked over there, the photographer showed them where he wanted, so like, sat -- he sat down to give an example to sit here, you know, have the bride sit right next to you and, you know, get some pictures with you on these boulders with, you know, the background. As they did, I even -- David Gutierrez's group was kind of behind them, walking around. I started joking with them. It's like, hey, do you want me to go over there and kick them off the spot to get them out of the background? And the photographer said no, so I didn't proceed anywhere else. Kind of stood right there in the area.

The groom, he had his champagne glass still, so I asked him if he wanted me to grab it so that way he could continue the pictures without that in his hand. So I walked over, he said yes. Of course, there was nowhere to put it down, because it would've been blown away. As I walked over --

Q. Sorry.

A. As I walked over, I grabbed the glass, returned to the helicopter and I set it down on the inside. And at that point, he had finished it all the way before I grabbed it, so there was nothing in the glass. Walked back to the helicopter, set it down, and kind of closed the door almost all the way so that way the wind wouldn't blow it, blow anything away. At that point I continued standing next to the photographer, and that's when a few of the helicopters started coming in.

The first one that came in was Pollyanna. She came through

the notch to -- and made a left turn to make her approach downriver with the wind. And on the downriver pads, there was four of us. I don't remember if she was the third or the fourth one into that landing site. I just saw her. I looked to the helicopters that were starting to come in. Now that the downriver pads were all filled up, they started making their approaches to the upriver pads. The first one that I noted coming in was Helicopter 50 with Christina Rascon. Well, we always call her the pilot formerly known as Sotos.

When she came in, from my vantage point, she did make -- she came in, of course, and made a wide left turn to come in so that way, as she came in, she favored at least the headwind before pedal turning and setting down. I don't remember the -- there was two other helicopters, maybe three other helicopters, that came in behind her. I didn't really pay attention to their approaches because I was still watching the photographer take his photos, and I was kind of still engaged with the minister about his time in a helicopter and how much he enjoys coming down. And we even discussed the wind a little bit, like how it was kind of a -- not really too often there was that much, that strong of wind at the bottom of the Canyon.

And so, next, another helicopter was making his approach in. I didn't see the tail number. I didn't know who it was, and I knew some new guys were down there with us on the same round of landings from Boulder City. He started coming in to make his left

turn. It didn't seem as deep of a turn in as 5-0, but it wasn't just a direct. As he came in -- he came in and, you know, started kind of rotating to the left, and it appeared as if he was doing this to get into the headwind. As he did that, I kind of thought like, okay, that's how we're going to come in to avoid so much -- like too much of a, like a tailwind there.

Q. Here, why don't we -- we'll give you a prop to show us where --

A. All right. Can I have a paper and pen? So if we have the Ramada, we have kind of the ledge here of the Canyon. I was sitting on this area down here, downriver, facing there. We had David -- I can't remember how far back he was, but he was up over here, kind of elevated from me. And then, the other helicopters.

So here we have areas to set down right here. It kind of circles around and back here is the notch. So he was coming in -- and then of course the river makes its way back. So he was coming in, his approach -- and 5-0, when I say, you know, a deep turn, and that's the windsock.

Q. And where are you?

A. I'm here. I was sitting right here. With me -- bride, groom, minister, photographer. So the bride and groom were facing the river; photographer was facing the couple; myself and the minister were facing them. So as I was watching them, I also have a clear -- like, I had a view of everyone back here.

So 5-0, when she came in, she actually went so far back here

that she kind of disappeared out of my view because of the rising -- the hills over here, but she came in and landed. I believe she took this spot right here. It was either this spot or this spot. I know she was one of the ones in the middle. She came in and she landed. The way the windsock was, was like that, and it was pretty horizontal with the ground.

Now when Booth came in, I didn't know what helicopter he was in. I don't remember if there was one after him or someone immediately before him. He came in, and as I saw at this point right here, I thought he was making a wide left turn, just kind of like 50. But then the helicopter just kept rotating. I saw half the rotation, going onto the -- going onto one full rotation, and he disappeared below my line of sight. Because I was at lower elevation here and then the terrain rises, so he disappeared out of my sight in the middle of almost -- I almost saw a full rotation all the way around, and it just sank.

As soon as I saw the rotations get beyond a full 180, I immediately sprinted from here, and then of course you have Wedding Point, where Venida was, out here. So I immediately sprinted to this area.

Q. Can you just start and walk us through that just a little bit slower from when you first saw it?

A. So --

Q. Of -- just close your eyes. Think about the pitch, think about all the things that you can remember of where the rotor was,

what --

A. I honestly wasn't -- the only thing that I was looking at was the body of the helicopter. I can't really, I can't really say about the angle of the pitch or anything, especially with like the different -- the background. But I just remember the helicopter, he came in and he didn't look like he was steep. He didn't look like he was eye level. It looked almost like a normal approach angle, height above the area, above the ground.

And as he came in, he turned, and it seemed like the helicopter -- as he came in and started his rotation, like the helicopter seemed to have lost any forward speed, because once it started its rotation it wasn't moving forward. It wasn't moving to the side. It seemed -- it appeared to me to almost go straight down.

So as he came in, kind of keeping on approach, and it's not like -- he wasn't banked over real hard. He wasn't in just a super shallow turn. It looked just like a normal turn like the rest of us had been doing. But as he came out here, the helicopter went almost from a normal turn and it seemed to had leveled out, began its leftward rotation, and as it rotated it just seemed to catch -- like the rotation almost began to speed up, but it dropped out of my view before he made one full rotation.

I didn't hear anything. I -- the first thing and the only thing I really truly remember hearing is Venida screaming. All I

heard, because she was standing out over by Wedding Point as her couple was here doing pictures. The first thing I heard is just immediately screaming of Venida saying, oh, my God, call 911; get on the radios.

I immediately started running because I just -- at this point, as my running, I didn't know any sounds. I didn't see any smoke or anything yet, so my mind, I thought he was going to just somehow magically pull out and I thought I was going to see him out over the river. I made my way to the end. By the time I made it to the end, the aircraft was at rest on the ground and on fire with black smoke.

At that point -- and we had -- there was passengers, because there was about seven or eight helicopters that were already down and their passengers were out exploring. Everyone was kind of standing everywhere, and I just remember seeing -- I couldn't recognize the nose. I couldn't recognize the tail. I couldn't recognize anything. It was a ball of fire.

As soon as I saw that, passengers wanted to start making their way down, which I started advising people to stay put. Just, I just told people, don't go anywhere, like just stay put. And I was just watching, hoping, and praying that I could see someone, because my immediate reaction was, oh, my God, we've lost a helicopter with all the people.

Shortly after, to me -- I don't know how long; it seemed like forever -- I saw one female passenger exit. Still had a yellow

PFD on her hip. Didn't seem to know where she was going. She just began walking out. She started walking away from the wreckage and kind of started, just stood there.

After that, I heard another screaming, and all it was -- all I was hearing was, help. So I thought someone was trapped inside in a seatbelt or something and burning. As soon as I heard these screams of help, and it was a female's voice screaming for help, no other sounds, passengers started making their way out there.

I don't know how long it took me, but I started making my way out there as well, as well as the only other person I saw making their way out there as well was Davis, one of the new guys. I didn't see Finney head out there, but he made it out there before I did.

But as I started making my way out, I had multiple passengers trying to make their way out as well, which I was trying to stop them and trying to explain that I can't risk any more passengers going out there. They were very persistent to not obey me at all, and a few of them saying that they had medical experience, so I kind of just -- I just didn't want to deal with them anymore.

Heading over there, it was very rocky terrain. I don't know how long it took me. It seemed like forever to get down there. The last about 100 feet of going down was almost just straight down, and I had to like turn around and crawl down the side of the rocks. I remember, as I crawled down, the whole time I was just thinking, like, who is the pilot? Like I don't know the pilot. I

don't know the tail number. I don't -- all I heard was one lady's voice screaming. I don't know who was down there.

I finally made it down. First thing I noticed was -- the first thing I noticed was the exhaust. The exhaust was in such a position where -- this out here is the river. We had Wedding Point, and then the edge of all of our stuff. So this is Wedding Point. We had this first kind of ravine, went in, and then of course we had a larger wash down in here. The aircraft had settled down here.

I had to make my way around here, across, and then the last wall here was just straight down of rocks. So I somehow made my way down there, and I probably came down the wall around right here. As soon as I came down, in this flat area, the only two people I saw was a female walking around in just her bra and underwear and her skin looked pink.

She was pacing back and forth yelling for Jason. All she kept saying was, oh, my God, Jason; somebody help me get Jason. As she was doing that, I noticed a male standing back here. He didn't seem to kind of be aware of what was going on. He was just standing there. He was also pink. He looked -- he was bald, but you could see patches of hair on his head, was not wearing any clothes from at least the waist up.

There was blood all on the ground right here as if somebody was tracking blood, and it appeared to be leading to either the lady or the male. I don't know where it was leading. I

immediately went up to them and I asked them, who was your pilot? Please tell me who your pilot was.

She kept screaming and I just kept saying, like, please tell me who your pilot was. So one of them said Scott. I turned around and I was just like, oh, my God, we lost Scott. But I noticed -- I believe it was Finney. I'm not 100 percent sure. I didn't pay too much attention. But I believe it was Finney, he was over here with Scott and there was blood all around him on the ground, and he had already started applying the tourniquet to Scott's left leg above the knee.

Now when I approached Scott, he was not wearing a shirt, and I do not remember any pants or underwear on him. His body looked pink as well. He was sitting up, looking around, and he was holding himself up like this, leaning -- sitting back, leaning back with his legs out in front of him.

And if he was -- if this was the helicopter down in, down here, like the river's out over here, from the way that it appeared with the exhaust, it was laying kind of over a little bit on its right side, the tailboom was resting like this with the tip of the fenestron here. So it almost appeared as if the helicopter was like this, came to rest like this. The fenestron itself, the main portion looked to be charred and burnt. The rest of the tailboom seemed almost fully intact except at the base where it broke.

When I looked at Scott, he was up, leaning like this. And if

he was sitting facing this way, the wreckage was over here on his right. I came up to Scott and he was sitting here, and the first thing I noticed was his leg. About just below the knee, between his knee and his shin, it was just almost severed. Farther down, I just remember seeing his foot, his boot, like this much of his leg, and a bone just sticking out, pools of blood at the bottom of his leg, and Finney -- I believe it was Finney or Davis, one of them, was tying a tourniquet.

As he was trying to do a tourniquet, he looked at me and said, grab a stick; just please grab a stick. So I went looking around, found a stick, and I immediately ran back. And where I found the stick -- I found a stick kind of closer to where these passengers were, these injured passengers over here. And I remember two people helping them. I don't know who they were. I don't remember if it was another pilot helping them or a passenger helping them. They were helping.

I found a stick and I immediately sprinted back over here, and I remember, it wasn't even a stick, it was like a piece of root that kind of comes out of the ground and dried up. And I had to actually break it free of the ground. It was probably no larger than a foot long. Went over to Finney and handed it to him, or Davis, I can't even remember who he was. And he started twisting the tourniquet to tighten it up.

And as he did, Booth was saying how much he was in pain. He just said, I'm hurting; I'm in pain, and he even said please don't

tighten it too tight. And they just -- like we told him, it's like, we don't have a choice. We started that -- he looked for something, it was either Finney or Davis, a pilot started looking for something to tie it off, and asked me, we need something to tie this off so that way the stick didn't unwind and loosen. I immediately gave him my belt. He tightened it through, put it through the loop, tightened it all the way down, but he couldn't fasten it because there was no hole for the prong.

So at that point -- I always have a knife on me. I pulled it out. I made a hole in there. He put the prong through and tightened that down. And the whole time I was just telling Booth, like, don't worry, man; like, we're here for you, we're here for you. And I remember kind of leaning down next to him where he was sitting in front of me here facing this way, and he just put his head on my -- like against my leg, and just said thank you. Like he just said thank you; like I don't want to be here. I'm like, dude, like, I know; like, I know, man.

And then -- Booth is the type of guy, he's really -- he just -- there's just times he just can't help it, he has that personality where he just -- every now and then, you just can't help but like, dude, like, really? You know, like, you can laugh about it. Or the next thing he asked me was how was his face, which his face seemed uninjured, maybe a scrape going down his left cheek. And I told him, like, I'm looking at him like, dude, your face is fine. He just was like, okay, good. And like, to

me, it's like, in my mind, it's like -- well, like, this is Booth. This is, you know, Booth.

But he was in pain. Like I said, I remember just looking at him. He didn't even appear to have any underwear on. He just looked pink. But he was looking around. He was saying he was in pain. And he just said, I don't know what happened; it just fell.

After that, I'm standing there and I turn to look at the wreckage, because at this point there's smaller pops, not really -- like, kind of like explosions, smaller pops where sparks were coming out of each pop. And I was looking at the aircraft in my mind thinking maybe I could pull someone out.

The only thing I recognized was the exhaust, the shield of the exhaust coming off the back, and maybe a doorframe. Other than that, it looked like a smashed can. I couldn't -- it looked like somebody just like put a can on the ground and stepped on it, and it was just in fire -- like on fire.

At this point I began to feel extremely helpless, and I'm trying to walk back and forth between Booth and these other passengers, but I don't know what to do. A couple other passengers made their way down. I started yelling at them to get back because we couldn't have more people getting down there. He came in with a first aid out of a helicopter. I immediately grabbed it from him, walked down to where these burned -- where these other injured were, not Booth.

I walked over to them, set it down and I just remember I

couldn't open the latches. For some reason my hands couldn't open the latches, like very easy flip up latches; I couldn't open it. I had to hand it off to one of the other people that were down there helping. As soon as I handed it off to them, I just remembered how dark it was starting to get. I never looked at my watch. I never looked at the time. I just remembered it's getting dark; we have to leave.

So I started climbing back up toward the passengers -- or toward the main Quartermaster landing site. As I was walking up, I remember thinking how out of shape I was. I started slowing down as I started heading back, every rock I climbed over. And as I did, two more passengers were starting to walk the opposite way and I told them to go back. One of them said, don't worry, I was in the Air Force. I yelled at him too -- I yelled at him, me too, but there's nothing more we can really do besides who's already down there. I don't remember if they followed me back up or if they continued down to the site.

As soon as I made my way back up, Pollyanna and Venida Hayes and Sotos were all standing there looking at me, and I remember Venida crying because they didn't know who it was. As soon as I got up to the top and I told them it was Scott, that -- everyone just kind of lost it at that point and were standing there. And I told them he's alive, but he's not good.

So at that point, we were still trying to figure out what to do. We all just kind of stood there like should we leave; should

we go? At that time we tried to go use the satellite phone. We ran over to the box and opened it up with the instructions on the inside on how to use it.

We turned it on, but the battery light was flashing, and we tried to dial out and it died, but it had a -- one of those like car charger adapters to it. So we ran to a helicopter and plugged it in, which it worked, but we still couldn't get a signal. We tried dialing Boulder, the -- like, Boulder, just the tower, somebody. Calls were not going out. It kept losing service.

We were trying to call Guano Base up at the Canyon West. And immediately when this happened and we all started running to the edge there, Christina Sotos got in 5-0 to call base. Our first instructions were to just stand by and just kind of, I guess, wait further instructions, because we couldn't get a hold of anyone else but Guano. So we all stood down there.

And after I made it back up, we were trying to figure out what to do, so we started getting a hold of Guano Base, and we started telling them we need to start getting people out. And as soon as he said, yes, like, start bringing passengers up, I went to each one of the pilots and I told them -- I was like, who -- it's like, if you can mentally fly, get your passengers and go. If you can't, please don't fly.

I immediately went to the passengers, basically announced to all of them or yelled at them. I don't know, I was yelling the whole time at everybody to go back to your helicopters and wait

for your pilot. Now we had numerous passengers down at the site, in transition to the site, so no one knew whose passengers were where. And -- sorry, I feel like I'm going all over the place. But before I came up, before I told passengers to start going back and before we decided to start taking passengers back, Martijn Adriaanse -- I think is how you pronounce his name -- came in, in another helicopter, and he came in with the first set of four EMS and some of their gear.

When he made his approach in, he basically came over this hill and made a direct landing to this open area right here, nose that way. I was still standing here with Venida and Brett Ahola. As he came down and set down, I came up to the helicopter to open the doors for the EMS, and I believe Brett Ahola came to the other side to open up these doors.

As they stepped out, they started making their way out. I walked with them for maybe about 50 feet, kind of told them there's -- I only saw at the time two passengers out, and then the pilot. I told him that they looked like they all had burns, and the pilot's left leg had been almost severed. From there, they continued on with Brett Ahola, and I just stood here because I didn't know what to do.

After that, Adriaanse lifted, took off to go back up top, I'm assuming, for more EMS or whichever else. So they were on their way out, and then, after that, that's when we decided to start getting passengers to get out of here. All my passengers, my

couple, my minister, and the photographer, they were already by the helicopter, and I honestly did not know the photographer made his way over here to take those pictures and video. I had no idea he was there.

I saw Venida's photographer taking pictures and video, and I actually yelled at him to put it away, which at the time, he did, but he had his phone out and his camera out. I yelled at him. We got everyone back to the helicopters. 3-9, yeah, David was in 3-9, and he actually had made his way out toward the site but he didn't go all the way. He stopped here before actually seeing the site itself, to hand down waters.

And the waters they had put in our red carrying cases. They emptied out all the meals and gathered as many water bottles as they could to put it in here, and two of them, each carrying one handle, made it around this way and over here to hand it down to the people down there, but not to go all the way down. He returned, and on his return, I was running around to these tables collecting meals in bags to put them away so that way they weren't just thrown everywhere.

I told his passengers, and I even asked them, I was like, is anybody missing from your group? They said no, they have everyone. So I told them just stand by the helicopter, their pilot will be back. From there, I ran over to Venida as she was loading up. She had just finished closing her sliding door and she was about to hop into the seat, and I told Venida, and I asked

her, are you okay? She said yes. I was like, okay, go up to the Dove to drop your people off. See if they need us to do anything. So she said all right.

She started up. She was already spinning by the time I got in and I had buckled myself and everyone in. By the time, before I started, she was already lifting, and since she was facing this direction, she took off here. Once she got speed, she started climbing and then continued her climb on out. I started up, and I remember sitting in my helicopter, look -- staring at my checklist. I was like, okay, double checking absolutely everything, make sure everything was on, make sure everything was operating, position lights especially, because it was already dark, getting dark. I don't remember the time. I never looked at it. Making sure my landing lights were on, absolutely all my lights and everything were on as needed, passengers were buckled in and ready to go.

I took off. When I took off, I made sure I had 60 knots, because at this point I was terrified of going slow. And at 60 knots in power, I began a turn because I did not want to fly over the site. I began a climbing turn, holding 60 on the indicated, and continued my climb out. David shortly followed me in the same manner and followed me out as well with his passengers.

As I started climbing out, I went up, I stayed in the middle of Quartermaster Canyon. Usually our operation, when we're going to get fuel or going up to Grand Canyon West, we kind of -- we

don't stay in the middle, we stay to the right so that way we could go up out of the Guzzler. I stayed in the middle as I climbed up because it was still turbulent. I was getting, you know -- I don't -- not updrafts and downdrafts, but just, I was hitting turbulence where the helicopter was, you know, getting heavy, then light, heavy and light, but I still managed to maintain it all the way out.

I climbed out of the back side of Quartermaster probably within a mile of the Guzzler, on the south side of the Guzzler, turned inbound. And at this point, Guano -- or Grand Canyon West's radio was just -- there was a lot of chatter, people talking to each other, people trying to get helicopters organized, trying to -- people trying to understand who was on top, who was still down below.

Venida, I heard on the radio her lifting with a second set of EMS to start reentering the Canyon to drop them off. As I made my approach through Buck and Doe, toward housing, I called in, because that's the only time I was actually able to get a call through, and told them Papillon 41 is on top; I have four passengers inbound to Grand Canyon West.

After that, on the radio, I was told -- I was asked how much fuel I had, and I told them I had 85 gallons. It was 85 -- no, it was 84 gallons. I'm sorry. It was 84 gallons, and I was from Vegas, but I'm coming in. They said John Becker wants everyone to return to their bases. At that point it was -- sunset had already

set and I asked, I said, I am in 41; I am from Las Vegas with 84 gallons; do you want me to go to Vegas or Boulder? They said John Becker said return to your bases.

So I said, okay, immediately diverted toward the Grand Wash Cliffs, and began a climb. And by the time I got off the Wash, David Gutierrez, probably maybe 5 minutes -- roughly about 5 minutes behind me, and he said by the time he got off the Wash, it was about 5:40 to 5:45. On the return route, I just remember thinking to myself, I have to keep my mind distracted.

I listened to the ATIS for about 10 minutes of flight. My passengers didn't say a word. I didn't say a word to them. My radio calls were there, but I had -- it took a lot out of me to make radio calls, and I just remember the visibility not being very good at all. And when I mean not very good at all is I couldn't see 20 miles in front of me. I could see -- I could definitely get 10 miles, but I just -- it just, it was decreasing because of the sun and the blowing dust. It was definitely a lot of dust.

Once I got back to the Narrows, I still couldn't see the Las Vegas lights, and at this time I'm flying at 4500 feet and I'm just almost white-knuckled on the controls just because the turbulence at that point, any little bit, kind of scared the crap out of me. So continued at 4500 past Callville, is when I started seeing the lights and I could even make out the terrain in front of Vegas, so that way I knew my altitudes.

Started making my way in, called Las Vegas tower, told them Papillon 41, 2 northeast Lava Butte, 3,000 for the arrival, and I believe the information was Whiskey, and it was a special. It wasn't a normal ATIS. It was a special, gusting 28. I don't remember the first number. I just remember gusting 28 out of 010, because I set it on my heading bug on my HSI and I kept repeating that number to myself.

Soon as I got over -- or soon as I made contact with them, they didn't ask any -- they didn't ask any questions. I was expecting a question. I don't know why I was expecting them to ask me something, but they just gave me the clearance and coming inbound. So I continued my normal route along Charleston, intercepted Boulder Highway over Fremont, made my left turn, and along the railroad tracks, all at 3,000 feet.

And by the time I reentered Las Vegas, I was stood at 7 on the FLI. I didn't want to go any more than that. Going over Frenchman's Ridge at like 3.2 really beat me up. David Gutierrez said he passed over at 3.5 and he got beat up pretty good too, and even asked tower for permission to be at that altitude.

Movement area -- moving area, non-moving area, we had circles here to land. And this right here is parallel, 1-9 and 1. Two other helicopters were already here, were ready on the ground, facing this direction. I came in and I came in landing parallel 1.

As I came in and I landed, I side stepped over, because I

didn't want to turn -- I didn't want to turn at all into the wind, or out of the wind. Sidestepped over, set it down, rolled down, locked my collective, locked my cyclic, pulled out my checklist, and I just remember kind of sitting there. I didn't read it. I just remember staring at it.

Kind of snapped out of it a little bit, went through my checklist one button at a time. I shut down, waited for the rotors to stop. I got out, opened up my sliding door, and I don't know why, but I was just -- I just opened up my door and I just told them, all right, guys, welcome back; please leave your PFDs inside. Walked to the other side, opened up the door, told them the same thing.

Travis Feld, Jose Hernandez, and our mechanic over there, Teddy, were down over here. They walked over. Feld grabbed the door for me. I walked away and broke down here. 3-9 shortly came in after and took a transient spot here.

Q. I think we're going to work up to that. Can you go back to when Finney was putting on the tourniquet and you were sitting next to Scott? Just anything that you can remember of how he was looking, what direction he was facing, what he was saying --

A. So --

Q. -- of how the conversation went.

A. If this is that ravine, over here is Quartermaster. The wreckage of the helicopter was here, exhaust, and again, the helicopter seemed to have not been right side up but kind of

almost at a 45-degree on its right, facing this direction with the fenestron, tail leading off. And then, of course, this whole section of the fenestron was burnt.

Scott was here facing this direction, not against the wall, but against -- but just holding himself up, feet out in front of him. And it was either Davis or Finney was standing here, starting to apply the tourniquet, and I was standing here kind of right abeam his shoulders. I remember him with his curly hair, and I just remember seeing his body just pink, and I only really recognized, like, from the waist down as being pink.

This was his leg. His foot was over here, bone out and barely attached, and all of this was blood. A tourniquet was applied above the knee here. I don't know what he used to -- I don't know if it was cloth. I don't know if it was -- or what to actually, you know, what he used to wrap around, but I had to go grab a branch. So I actually -- the other passengers are standing over here. I ran -- I was kind of walking around, found a branch, and then ran back. Handed it to him. He applied it, twisted it on, and then needed something to hold it in place.

I immediately gave him my belt. And so the stick was in line with that and I gave him my belt to wrap it over here, and that's when I had to puncture it in with the knife. Now, as he was doing that, I just remember Scott looking around and saying, my body hurts; I'm in so much pain. He goes, I don't know what happened; it just fell. And that's when I told Scott, it's okay, man; we're

here. And he said thank you, and then asked me how his face was.

And then, after that -- I was there not too long. I walked over here, and that's when I started trying to grab the first aid kits that were brought down. I left them with these passengers and the person who was helping them. From there, I made my way back.

Q. Did you talk to Scott after that?

A. Uh-uh. And I absolutely have no idea how he made it out of that helicopter.

Q. When you said that you heard screaming, how do you know where it came from? What did it sound like and where were you when you heard it?

A. It sounded like it was in the distance from the direction of the helicopter, but at the time of the screaming I couldn't see who was screaming. I just heard that -- from where I was standing over here, I just heard screaming coming from this general direction, from the site. I didn't know if it was someone who was walking around. I don't know if it was someone who was in the helicopter. I don't know who it was. When I got to the bottom, that's when I saw that lady walking around in her underwear and bra screaming Jason.

Q. Was it the same screaming, or unknown?

A. It sounded all -- I believe it was the same. It was, it was the same person. When I was up here, it was screams for help, help us. When I was down here, it was screams for Jason.

MS. KELIHER: I'm so sorry you had to go through that.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You did a phenomenal job with this, creating this for us.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. I'm going to ask you a few follow up-questions that I -- I've have been piecing together of -- how do you guys decide which side of the pad to land on? I'll show you a picture. And I'm going to have you draw on this later too. How do you decide which one to go on, or which side you're going to be landing on?

A. As we come inbound, we look at the windsock. Well, as we cross the river, we try to get the best view of the windsock we can. One of the things, when I came in -- and it's kind of noticeable between our groundspeed to airspeed coming inbound as well, and I noticed a much higher groundspeed than an airspeed, so at that point I had already determined I was going to go down here. And then, on top of that, since it was two weddings, we do one wedding at Wedding Point, the other wedding we do down here. So I knew for a fact I had to go down there regardless, but I still noted the winds.

Q. But normally when you're just, on any given day --

A. So normally, on any given day, if we can't see --

Q. And this is what you're seeing, right?

A. Yes. This is kind of what we're seeing, and it's kind of easy if the windsock just turned in one direction or the other, because of how bright it is on the background, besides our

airspeed to groundspeed. But as we come in here, we always look for that windsock. If we see that it's favoring a downriver approach, we always go for the notch, come around to land there.

Q. If you can draw it out --

A. So as in, like, our approach path? So we'll cross the river of course coming here. And on the way in here, if we're trying to do -- if we're going to go for the notch, of course we'll call for the notch and we'll keep it at around 2,000 to go through the notch. And then, from there, we circle around and of course we descend down.

So it would go down here, come around here, and of course slowing down, keeping our approach angle, and coming into the spot we want. Because especially since Maverick's down here, we don't want to swing it all the way out, so we'll come down here in approach.

Now since these were on -- for the other side, if the winds are, you know, calm or favoring the opposite, we'll come around here kind of the same way, or we'll come in the same way here, and as we do, we'll come in this way. And as we're making this turn, we're always trying to keep that normal approach so that way we don't try to come in below this rim, but at the same time we don't want to be super high, where now we're doing a steep approach.

So we'll come in here, and if you're the first one, we make our approach all the way over to the end over here. If it's someone who happens to be a little -- when it comes to like being

handicapped, on crutches, or anything like that, we have kind of a handi-pad that's kind of close right there, that we'll make the approach to. But we always want to make it direct to that approach, especially since it's just a drop here.

Now, as it fills up, everyone will continue to come in here, of course make their approach into there, into there, or even to this lower spot down there. Now when Booth was coming in, only these last couple spots were open. Four was taken up here, and there was already, I think maybe three or four -- I don't know the exact number of helicopters down here besides the one that was at Wedding Point facing up, or facing downriver. So when he came in, he got to about this point here. That's where it started rotating, and then just kind of rotated down. And they disappeared out of my sight before he made one full complete turn.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So is -- are these procedures or is this written guidance, or is this just kind of common knowledge?

MR. MOJICA: It's -- we all do this in our training. We all have route training, and every time we go down, each person does an approach to each pad. So everyone will come around to land on this side at least one time. So everyone will come around to land on this side, and they'll even take us to Wedding Point because since it's kind of more a pinnacle.

And as we come in and we land there, they have us go all the way in, and then they'll have us set down, then they'll have us pick up and do a departure. Now when it comes to the land, they

always tell us, keep it into the wind. So if a wind is coming from -- like, let's say it's a crosswind from either direction. Coming on this side, we'll make an approach and we always want to make the approach into the headwind, and if we have to, then pedal turn to our spot.

Now if the winds are coming fairly strong out in this direction -- you know, if there's a lot of us going down there, and then, being from Vegas, I didn't know how many people there was coming out because there was only three of us, they even said, you know, it's very -- or it's -- you know, if you have to, come in and land downriver, and just come all the way up.

So it's just -- we're always told to make our approach into a headwind, even if it's not something like -- let's say if these are all filled up and it's like, oh, no, I have to take a tailwind, we still have the option of going through to make that tailwind or not to --

MS. KELIHER: Fly over them?

MR. MOJICA: To make a headwind. I mean, of course, you don't want to just fly over them, but again, if you have to, at the same -- but with this situation, you know, with -- Scott was, I think he was the last one or one of the last ones in, and all that was open was that -- those -- these spots back here.

But everyone, if they still land in this direction, we can still come into this as much as we need to so that way when we re-approach, we could be facing this way, come into ground effect,

and then do our pedal turn to set down. So I believe that's what he was doing. But this area right here, like, in my experience, this area right here, it could get a little difficult to tell the winds because it's kind of a bowl right there.

So with the terrain and everything, it'll shift the wind where it could make it kind of tricky to come in. Even if the windsock shows one direction, like, it can change in that area. So that's where it makes it, you know, kind of hard to predict what the winds are doing in here because it's just a bowl, and the ledge up here is up here.

So at that time, you know, we see how the winds are here, just sometimes the winds aren't doing the same thing here, which, you know, I've experienced a little bit of a -- you know, coming in, and all of a sudden it starts to descend a little bit. I didn't -- it wasn't anywhere near extreme, but I decided to do a go-around and remake my approach.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. Is that something you guys talk about a lot? I mean, do you guys, do you guys talk, discuss the --

A. When we, when we land --

Q. -- approaches and variations in weather?

A. When we land down here, I mean, one thing we -- all the pilots do when we land here and we know people are behind us, we tell them, hey, it's a little windy, probably do a downwind. Probably do -- or a downriver. Probably do an upriver.

When we're -- after a round and we get back, we'll even talk about it around the terminal. Like, hey, yeah, it was doing this earlier; you know, watch out for it. If we could see that the winds are getting stronger later and -- but at the bottom of the Canyon, it's not going to do the same thing it's doing at the top. We have the Ramada to kind of look at, but that's down at the river and almost a straight alley. This is on a corner, so that's kind of where it --

Q. What frequency are you doing that on?

A. We do it on our company frequency. Most of the time if it's for -- it's for us because this is, you know, Maverick, Sundance to land there.

Q. Okay.

A. So we'll be on our own company frequency coming in, and we'll use it as we shut down too, to make sure no one's behind us as we, you know, flip the switch off. So that way it doesn't start getting a bunch of --

Q. That's the 126 --

A. Yes, 126025.

Q. -- 025. Excellent. Thank you.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. As far as the helicopters, can you kind of move them where you remember them being positioned?

A. So this was me, of course, and I was down there. This one is up there. This one here. He was there. And then there's one

more pad in the back, though -- it's a designated pad for them right there. Those are all, you know, all pads for us. So we're, you know, like that.

Venida Hayes was at Wedding Point here. I know he was here, and 5-0 -- I can't remember exactly if 5-0 was here or here. I'm kind of leaning a little bit more toward 5-0 being here.

Q. And then did I label the open pads correct?

A. Open pads -- because we'll usually come in right here, so they'll -- this isn't a pad over here. We'll have a pad here. This is like the handi-spot. We'll let people come in, but of course, you know, if everything's closed, we'll come and land back here. This helicopter will probably come up here a little bit, making room for one here, and then an open pad here.

Q. Okay. Are there any more back there? Or up here?

A. No. This is all -- there's no pad. This is all hill. This is all an incline right here, so this is absolutely no pads there. But we'll usually come in here, and between here and here, just kind of, the helicopter has this room to land in. So for Scott, he had this -- basically these -- this area right here to pick from the landing, which I believe he was going for -- and I don't remember this was open at the time or if there was a helicopter there or here.

I just specifically remembering these two, because as I ran by to run over here, Christina Sotos -- or I mean, Rascon, she ran to her helicopter, which was 5-0, and that was really close by

because she didn't have to run very far to get there. I just don't remember if her bird was here or if it was here, and then the open pad would've been there.

Q. Okay.

A. Because the whole time I was down over here watching people come in, and then as Scott came in, that's when I just ran over. So I didn't really ever stop to look exactly where all the helicopters were.

Q. So was there a written -- I mean, did you see anything ever showing you how to get in and out?

A. Yeah. We have stuff up in our building, of course, that shows it, and they even have little markers, kind of like how you have here, markers of landing spots for them. And --

Q. And where is that?

A. It's in our terminal building.

Q. Okay.

A. It's -- I believe it's still over kind of in our briefing area, right by our briefing area.

Q. Who is your lead pilot?

A. At the time I was out of Las Vegas, so earlier that day, it was Kyle Davis.

Q. Oh, so it changes?

A. Well, I'm in Las Vegas. In Boulder City, they have, you know, they have a lead pilot turnover, but I don't know who was the lead pilot at the time in Boulder City. I was just -- over in

Vegas, it was Kyle Davis that day.

Q. So it's a lead pilot for the shift --

A. Yeah.

Q. -- is how it works?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. And then how often do you interact with the trainers or the chief pilot?

A. Like the lead pilot or like the people who are specifically there for training?

Q. For training.

A. Well, I mean, all the lead pilots will be training, we see them every day when we go in. We even check out with -- we even check with them when we leave, so that way we know we're not, like, leaving with something open-ended that we had to get done. Anytime we have any sort of, like, issues or questions, we go directly to them. So we're in contact with them a lot.

Q. What about with the chief pilot?

A. The chief pilot, Simon, he's always available as well. You know, of course, we go through the leads, but if the leads aren't there, we'll go to Simon. But Simon is -- you know, he's available as well, as well as, like, you know, Tyler Carver and even Burle. They're always in the office and available to go talk to.

Q. Do you ever do it?

A. To go talk to them?

Q. Yes.

A. Yeah, I'll go talk to them if I have a question about something and the leads aren't there. I'll go to Tyler, or if the leads aren't sure, you know, they'll go with me to either Tyler or Simon. You know, they're very -- it's very easy to go and talk to them.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. How about reporting issues? Squawks, irregularities, stuff like that?

A. Just in general?

Q. What's your experience? Yeah.

A. My experience is -- my irregularity reports, of course, I'll report it if it's just something that's not normal that day, whether I had to turn back because of a light or I had to stop a flight because it was like an unruly passenger or someone -- just kind of something like that, I would make a report.

My -- I'm trying to remember what my most recent irregularity report was. I know I made an irregularity report. What was it? I even remember, because every time I make one and I'm unsure, I go to Burle or Simon. I just always go to them because I don't ever want to put one of those things in there wrong.

And this last one, I went to Burle just to -- oh, it was, it was for a radio. I wasn't getting the reception that I needed. It was our -- it was one of our FM radios. I was coming off the Wash, and I had to get ahold of Boulder and I couldn't, so I just

called Guano to say, hey, can you relay to Boulder, so that way I was in contact still. And when I came back and I told them -- was it that one? Because I know I had that issue, but it was -- it wasn't. Oh, I'm sorry.

It was a generator light. The FM thing, that of course was handled. This was a generator light. In the morning we have our run-ups. So I went out, I did my pre-flight. We do our morning run-ups. I ran it up, and my generator wasn't coming online. The light was on and I wasn't getting a positive charge on the amps, and the voltage was at 24, like 23.8, and it was underlined in yellow.

So after that, when we went to our morning meeting, and then I went to -- I let the leads know, then I went to the mechanic. The mechanic went out there, he -- you know, he checked all the wires, he checked all of the leads and everything, kind of made sure everything was secure, and I did a run-up for him. Everything worked as advertised. So I was like, okay, cool.

I had a flight, and I don't remember -- I don't remember if it was a 7:00 flight or the 9:15 flight was my first flight of the day. And I went out there with passengers, got everything -- put them in, started it up, and the issue was back; the generator light was on.

Checked to make sure my generator had been indeed pushed in. I even undid it, put it back. The light remained. Hit the generator reset; that remained. I looked at my amps, wasn't

charging, and the voltage, again, was underlined in yellow. So at that point I called the lead desk to let them know, and once they knew, I shut it down, walked the passengers back inside, and that's when another pilot took them out on 4-6 to go.

And for that -- I walked back inside, and since I had to stop the flight, cancel flight -- or not cancel it, shift the flight over, I remember going to Burle and said, hey, you want me to put a -- like, I'm going to put an irregularity report, like, that's what you -- like, what we need to do, right? And he said, yes, put it in. So I went in; I put it in, but you know, I always double check with Burle and Simon to make sure that I'm not just, like, throwing it in because I got like a fly on the windshield or something.

But, you know, when that was put in, they encourage us to put them in. And you know, when something comes up and if I have a question about it, of course I'll put it in. I'll put it in, and I even -- I'll even, you know, seek some guidance if I have to.

Q. Is there any closed loop follow-up or anything like that?
Not particularly with you. I mean, that would be kind of strange if they called you --

A. Yeah. Like --

Q. -- and hey, we fixed this. But with the company in general, so all pilots know that this happened and here as the resolution?

A. With my personal experience, I don't think I've ever really brought something forward that I needed a closed loop, because it

was always something that has to do with like flight related, like kind of like because we -- you know, I went off -- like I had to deviate or something like that.

So, in my experience, I haven't had -- I haven't been in that issue to need it. Or, I mean, I like to think, like, yes, they'll take care of it because everyone is really receptive. No one kind of -- no one discourages us from doing it, of course. Everyone really encourages it, even if we're unsure if it should go in there. But I can't really say, because my experience, I've never had to, had to really done that and I don't really go to other pilots and say, hey, what was your issue? Or --

Q. No, I just -- no, because it sounds like a the gas light or the generator light coming on, it sounds like a maintenance issue.

A. Yes.

Q. You know, and so, is that a, is that -- I'm trying to identify or distinguish between squawks, irregularities. They both go to the same place?

A. Well --

Q. I mean, generally, or just --

A. Well, the -- when it comes to more irregularity, it's more of a -- something that wouldn't have to do with maintenance would be like, let's say if it was windy and we decided to turn it into an air tour over a landing. When that goes into an irregularity report -- because that wouldn't be like a squawk or anything like toward maintenance. When it goes into an irregularity report and

they hear about it, they're like, okay, cool. Like, all right, you diverted because of wind; that's fine. And they'll look into, like, okay, is it still windy there? Or, you know, they'll tell other pilots what happened so that way those pilots can be aware so, if they feel the need to, they can do that as well. So I'm sorry, I'm --

Q. No --

A. -- like, I'm trying to answer the questions --

Q. No, no, no, no. I -- no. No, you answered my question.

MS. KELIHER: Well, I'll ask a few follow-up questions, but I'll open it up to everybody.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm good.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One minor thing. Like, with the generator thing, did you document that?

MR. MOJICA: Yes. That went into our book, the logbook for it. And when it comes to maintenance, we ask them how we want them to write it up -- how they want us to write it. So that way, nothing's like, kind of like, oh, yeah, we fixed it; it's fine. We always tell them that it's going to be written up. We just kind of want to make sure we put in the right wording. Because I don't want to put in, like, yeah, generator light, you know, in flight 5,000 feet, upside down or something. You know, like, just something that's like unnecessary wording to the -- but it does get documented.

Like even if they come out and we need -- let's say we have a

hydraulic indicator pop, we will put it in there as, okay, this happened, and maintenance knows, and they don't have a problem coming out and signing it off or anything. But yes, that definitely gets documented.

MS. KELIHER: Did you -- okay. Did you ever fly with Scott?

MR. MOJICA: I've never been in the same helicopter with him, no. I've been out on flights where he was also flying.

MS. KELIHER: Okay.

MR. MOJICA: But I've never -- we've never been in the same helicopter for training or anything else like that.

MS. KELIHER: Did you guys see each other outside of work?

MR. MOJICA: Sometimes. Not too often, because he's a part-time guy. But there's been occasions where, you know, a group of pilots, we'd all meet up and, you know, go out and get some wings and, you know, hang out and just, outside of work. Yeah, I've seen him a few times.

MS. KELIHER: Did he ever express anything about the helicopters or the company, flying, anything like that?

MR. MOJICA: No. He always loved to fly. He never really had a problem covering for anyone. Like he didn't really -- he was kind of like an easygoing guy. I mean, if you got him worked up about Trump, that was something different, but nothing ever really -- nothing ever really came up about work or any complaints. Nothing that I can recall.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He -- we know he has another job. Do

you know anything about that?

MR. MOJICA: I knew he had a partner doing something, but I didn't know -- I don't know what specifically it is. He would just talk about, yeah, me and my partner, you know, we're working towards something, but I don't -- I never really asked specifics and I don't really know the company or actually what other stuff he does.

BY MS. KELIHER:

Q. Have you been talking to other people that were -- I'm sure you guys have, of what they saw and what they did and, at the accident site --

A. I've been --

Q. -- the other pilots?

A. It's -- we have, kind of more of, because each person kind of seems to have -- I don't want to say seen different things, but has different segments of what happened.

Q. Yeah.

A. Like Venida saw -- she didn't see the approach or the initial spin, but she said she saw the impact and the first explosion. I only saw the initial spin. I never saw it impact because it disappeared in my line of sight, and by the time I did see it, it was already on fire. But then, of course, she didn't see the bottom where I did. And like David Gutierrez didn't see anything, just the fire. So when we talk, it's just kind of like piecing our stories together to kind of make one big picture.

Q. Have you heard what Finney said that he heard Scott say?

A. I haven't really talked too much to Finney about exactly what Scott said. I just -- what I heard from Scott. Finney hasn't even actually mentioned anything about -- to me, about anything that Scott said.

Q. He had heard Scott say to you that, something along the lines of, dude, I settled.

A. I just -- he was kind of babbling. But the part that I heard was like, I just -- I fell. That's what I heard. I heard him starting to say I fell. And he was saying a couple things here and there. I just wasn't -- I was kind of, I don't know, I was kind of like scatterbrained. But yeah, I just remember going up to him and him saying he was in pain. He goes, I don't know what happened; I just fell. And then, he's like -- I don't know. He was just telling me how, like, he was in pain.

Like if he -- he might've said that and I just didn't catch it. But I just heard him saying, like, he fell and he was in pain and he was just happy we were there. And then, of course, about his face.

Q. And then speaking of settling with power, were you ever trained?

A. Yeah. I've been trained, or --

Q. At Papillon?

A. For Papillon, here we talk about the recovery. Physically going out and doing it, I don't recall. But, I mean, in flight

school, they did it all the time. We'd talk about it. We even discussed the Vuichard maneuver. So it's just kind of like one of those things where everyone seems to know what to do.

But in that situation, like, I don't really see if that -- if that happened, I don't see an escape out of there. I think that's kind of why I was hoping that somehow, magically, he would've flown out of it, but --

Q. Did you take any pictures at all?

A. I -- no, I didn't.

Q. Even things that could've caught something in the background of during that time?

A. I didn't even think to -- I had my phone on me. I didn't even think to take any sort of photos.

Q. Did -- when you were flying back or after the flight, did any of the passengers mention that they had any photos?

A. When I got back, I didn't see it, but I was told that my photographer was showing the limo drivers. And because, again, I didn't know my photographer was taking photos, because I told -- I've told other people, like, I would've told him to get rid of it or something. But I did not know. And then, since we were going back to Las Vegas, you know, no one was there --

Q. Yeah.

A. -- to kind of really intercept him. And I was already inside and someone had told me, like, yeah, your photographer's out there showing the limo drivers. By the time I left, he wasn't there

anymore.

Q. Well, if you hear anyone that has anything that we can use --

A. Yes.

Q. -- even far distance, anything like that to help with --

A. Yeah. That's --

Q. -- the calculations.

A. That's kind of one thing where I was kind of surprised with the amount of passengers that were down there, like there isn't more. I just don't know if no one had the time to pull out their phone or no one was looking in that direction. Because every time a helicopter comes in, someone's taking a photo or someone's taking a video.

Q. Yeah.

A. But I didn't, I didn't even think to take out my phone.

Q. And then, my last question is how do you think of the pay here and how you guys are treated, pilots?

A. I think -- you know, this is my first job outside of flight instruction. Like I know there's other companies that pay more and there's other companies that pay less. The -- with the incentive flight stuff, I mean, I live decently. I've never really had a complaint about pay. Working here, I think it's a really -- I like being here. I've walked into Sundance and I've walked in Maverick, and this is kind of like the spot I kind of felt most comfortable.

Q. Yeah.

A. Maverick, it's -- I mean, of course it's my opinion, it's too uptight. You know, kind of straight edge. Sundance, you know, I walked in and they're like, oh, hey, what's going on, but not really like -- it was all right. It was like -- it was all right, but Papillon was just welcoming. As soon as I walked in, everyone was like, oh, hey, you dropping off a resume? Oh, you'd love it here and -- everyone was real good.

And then, especially with all of this that's going on, it's an amazing support here. All the pilots, you know, outstanding. Supervision, management, there's been -- like that's been absolutely amazing. So I think it's a good company.

I mean, of course, every company, you know, has something someone can work on somewhere, which, you know, maybe -- I don't know. But I think it's a good spot. I like it. I feel comfortable here. I don't feel a rush to go out the door and I feel like I could always come back if I had to.

Q. Cool. Thank you so much, again. I can't even imagine what you've gone through.

A. Like I said, I mean, at the time, I just didn't know how to help, so I'm just kind of happy that this is something I can do.

MS. KELIHER: Oh, yes. It really does help.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Really, you've provided an outstanding amount of information, so we really appreciate you coming down.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I ask one question?

MR. MOJICA: Yes.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. And when you are, you've been very courageous, and it's very impressive. So it's very hard to think. It's pure hypothesis, but you're more trained and you're more intimate, the main person we could talk to, do you have a hypothesis?

A. I honestly think, with our -- with that location, we just have to be super vigilant. I believe, in my opinion, is that he hit some sort of swirl in there that is not uncommon for that area. I just believe it kind of surprised him when it did. And with -- as it rotated, you know, kind of descending into the Canyon, I just feel like he, somewhere along the line, he either lost the headwind somewhere or something and, you know -- I don't know what his reaction would've been.

I just think he hit some really weird winds, because there's been -- you know, I've hit some weird winds, but you know, and I've noticed, you know, coming in, a nice headwind and all of a sudden it drops to a tailwind and then comes back up to a headwind. So I just think he just hit it, came into some really, really weird winds. Because it's like a bowl effect right there sometimes.

Q. So what, in your training, or what are you going to do to ensure that never happens to you? What actions do you plan to take?

A. I mean, honestly, I'm going to keep doing what I've always done: Pay attention to that headwind. If I feel at any time that

I may not make it or something, I'm going to get my escape. I have -- you know, it's like that ravine right there, kind of just aim toward that and make my call and get out of it and try to adjust my approach accordingly.

Q. Keep moving forward.

A. Yeah, definitely.

Q. Forward and down. Right?

A. That's -- yeah, definitely. Like I said, I've always made sure that's what I've done, and you know, I'm going to make sure I keep doing that, because it's kind of what's keeping me up.

Q. That's super. Thank you.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. I have two quick ones. So first, thank you for everything you said. You did a good job, and as they said, very courageous. Do you -- is -- are you part-time, full-time now?

A. I'm full-time.

Q. What did you do before this? Just --

A. I was a flight instructor for Universal Helicopters in Scottsdale.

Q. Okay.

A. That's where I did all my training prior to my receipt of AA. So, you know, I trained there. I -- students there and everything there. My last 4 months with Universal Helicopters, I got moved up to Prescott, Arizona, and I did flight instruction for commercial and private there before, you know, I finished my

employment there and then started here in April.

Q. Just curious, any fixed wing time or --

A. I started fixed wing time, where I maybe have 10 hours, but just -- I went to -- I attended a little bit of UND down in Mesa in Arizona -- or not Mesa, Gateway. And just, kind of the school just kind of rubbed me the wrong way. And then, because at the time I was still flight instructing but I had a schedule to go with them, it just kind of like rubbed me the wrong way and I just wasn't -- I just didn't find myself as interested or as, like, willing to continue with it, so I stopped.

Q. The school or with them?

A. With them. So with their flight training.

Q. Do you have a degree or --

A. I have a degree through Dodge City that, you know, we get. Because I'm VA, so we had to have a higher learning along with our flight training. So I have a -- I have an associates in applied science of flight instruction.

Q. Okay. So last question is, when you come in, in the morning, are you assigned these routes or do you get to pick or select?

A. When it comes to the routes?

Q. Sure. And when you go into work do you know what you're going to do?

A. Yes. We know, we know what we're going to do. Every flight that we could be assigned to, we are trained a route on. So if it's a Canyon landing, there is an assigned route, altitude, and

way to get there. If we're assigned a shuttle, there's a designed route, airspeed, altitude and everything to get there. So everything that can possibly come up for us to do for that day, we have gotten trained on it.

Q. So question again is, do you select what you're -- your day?

A. Oh.

Q. Go and say, we have Canyon tours and we have straight tours or --

A. Oh, no. That's pre-assigned the day before. So we will look up on a schedule that gets sent out the day before, and that right there could kind of give us an idea of what we're doing, but we do not select the schedules. The schedules or our routes and what we're doing for that day is selected for us.

Q. So do you ever tell them, I don't like going to the Canyon? Or is that deterred or --

A. Like, in general, or like when it comes to like weather-type situations?

Q. In general. Let's say, is there anyone that they get to say -- are you typecast, you're the Canyon guy? You're the --

A. No. They keep a pretty good rotation. No one, in my knowledge, has gone up and said, hey, I don't want to do air tours anymore, or I don't want to do shuttles anymore. They allow preferences and requests to be made, and they do -- you know, pretty good at honoring some of that, as long as it fits into the schedule. But I haven't really had anyone turn down a flight just

because they don't like the route or the altitude or something like that.

MS. KELIHER: What is Gutierrez's normal landing?

MR. MOJICA: What is his normal landing?

MS. KELIHER: Yeah, you said he always does his normal landing.

MR. MOJICA: Like in what context?

MS. KELIHER: I must've misheard you. You said you think it's normal. Does Gutierrez --

MR. MOJICA: Like at the Canyon?

MS. KELIHER: Yes, when you were next to him.

MR. MOJICA: Oh, well, he was just, you know, doing his -- just like a normal landing. I didn't mean it in any special way. But, you know, we all have our normal landings. We go direct to our spot. His landing pad was just kind of like at a higher elevation, kind of out a little bit more. So when I saw him, it was just normal operations. Normal landing, came in, nothing really special about it. Just -- because as he came in, that favored the headwind anyways, so he didn't have to, like, do anything weird to get to that downriver spot, versus the upriver areas, you know, they kind of had to take it a little bit more of a wider turn to really get that headwind in there. So he just landed, you know, next to me. Headwind already favored that area, so he didn't really have to do anything weird or crazy.

MS. KELIHER: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think you have a question.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm just -- I think that when he said that he was on a wedding tour and Venida was on a wedding tour and David was doing a regular tour --

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

Zoe Keliher
Thomas Tobin – Rep
Katherine Wilson
Stephen Stein
John Waugh
Burl Boyd

650 pm start edt
Via telephone
3/20/18

Ashley Venida Hayes

Employed since march 13, 2017
Total time – 2785 hours, ec130 – 650 hours

Walk thru day of accident –

Out of vegas that day, went in at usual 530 showtime, preflight, had barrel that day for first and last flight of day. Went home and came back for sunset landing, had wedding party. 2 wedding out of vegas that night. Not sure if I departed first or not. Comfortable with wind so not any issues for me. Landed at quartermaster, windsock shifty a little bit but favoring a downwind landing. Approach was diff than ever before cuz needed to go to wedding point, other person take other pad for landing. Made downwind and landing at wedding point facing downwind, never done before but smooth approach, went thru notch, xx, then to wedding pint. Bumpy but when landed and guest said not so windy here but then gusts came. Winds coming and going throughout ceremony.

Tracking time to head back to vegas. Needed to start wrapping things up, putting pfd on guest, reverend said is helo supposed to do that, looked up and already spinning. When loading them up, boulder birds coming in to land, one app coming and lot of guys on line for 2 weeks, saw 50 come in, made really nice wide turn, around notch like everyone else? Didn't notice any other approach at that point, only saw hers to landing. When saw helo spinning, another helo avoiding helo coming in behind it. Prob 100 feet to go and it was 2 or 3 rotation before made contact with ridge line, remember in m y head trying to say recover but knew after hit I screamed back to get on radio. I was running to edge of ridge line to try to go down there. When he hit, the tail started to separate, then rolled down ridge line and I didn't see helo anymore. Instantly ignited and main explosion went off. Flames going halfway up ridgeline, but stopped cuz didn't think safe for me to go down there.

Timeline rest of night is spotty, turned back to other pilot and remember saying who was it. They were out of boulder and I had no idea who was scheduled. Just saw a 3 didn't know other number. Everyone on phone and radio. Went back to helo to get on radio but others calling it in. then throughout night was like should we leave, but felt bad cuz didn't want to leave with them down there. I remember saying help on the way, was thinking 10 mins but ws linger than that. 45 mins after accident, 40 came in with first set of firefighters, 3 came out with equipment. Starting get dark and more problem by having paz there after dark, dont know whether to leave or stay.

20 mins before sunset, decided to leave. Still had all mine cuz short wedding and I collected mine. Went to top and then came back to get more pax. First to lift off, called guano and request permission to get more pax. Got to a8 to pick up firefighters. Pax unloaded, then crew loaded equip. asked how many I can have. I had 81 gal of fuel and a lot of equip and firefighters not light, only felt comfortable with 2. On radio, whoever was on Unicom for gcw kept saying get off pad. Was annoyed cuz telling me to get off when other pads avail. Chris as guano saying something to other guys, asked to repeat and said head back home. Crap I have these people to get out from bottom, was hoping we could have had more to get pax out. Firefighter asking questions, what I knew, still on fire, how many people out and inside, their conditions. Told him I would show him where site was. When lifted off, little fire going, not sure if reignited, unloaded crew. Took party of 5 back with me. When got back asked to go back down but told no go to flight line and shut down.

No one at quartermaster at pad when I went back. Ems telling me to get off
I was first one to land at quartermaster that night for sunset round.

Thru notch, wrapped around dip flew over sunshine space, maneuver into wind, so had headwind all the way to wedding point. Bad if have to face downriver if wind coming from that direction. Since I had a wedding I'm required to go to wedding point, which is easy to land cuz not flying over other helos. you can approach it directly or go like I did.
have to bleed off airspeed or altitude after crossing river? Kind of hook a little bit. Xx If wind from upriver point, have to face wind for last 500 feet of approach. never landed at wedding point with a downriver wind. Only landed facing upriver. First time I had landed downriver.

Was right on diagram, helo was facing downriver. So I had headwind for approach. First time I did that. Most of the time the wind isn't coming from downriver, it's coming from upriver. How discuss who will land where? Before we got party off bus in vegas, we said who ever lifts or gets to canyon first gets wedding point first, the other takes other pad. Discussed before we got passengers.

What we relay to boulder city, not an issue with sunset flight, most of time we only have 1 wedding, discussed no one lands there cuz there's a wedding.
Pick pad based on where wind coming from and where other helos are.
If downriver pads taken and winds from downriver, how decide to land? Whatever you are most comfortable with. Done both approaches where downriver pads taken but gone through notch and bypass then facing the wind. Done it where wrap before notch and turn wide into wind. Done that type of approach twice, not often. Don't see downriver wind too often.
Try to get best info is GCW wind, not guaranteed at bottom, look at ramada windsock and then at quartermaster base. But try to get it at ramada of where wind coming from and decide if I need to come down early or keep it up.
Usually have like 1 minute between landings. If slowing down for some reason, let person behind us know. Say slowing down for spacing. Get on radio to share that stuff.

Nothing unusual about flying day of accident, I was completely comfortable flying in those conditions. Pax made comments, but always get comments when bumpy. Only had 4 people so would feel more than if fully loaded too. Ask wedding party if you want a tour or music, I would

isolate myself if music on. Photographer giving tour and I like to listen to radio so block him out. Bride worried about hair. Not upset about it being bumpy. My face shows I'm content cuz I'm used to this. Its not like that when people are scared of helos in general, its not just wind. Photog and rev behind me, I would look over and see bride laughing. Never saw concerned face. I'm not looking pax faces during takeoff. Right after flight at wedding point, said what a good job I did with landing. Rev and photog seemed impressed with my flying.

First day of thunderstorm wasn't uncomfortable but when first flying here, used to wind not uncomfortable but just aware to hear reports from base or other pilots. Never nervous. visibility is my concern. Very windy areas where did training. So I'm very comfortable with wind and I know there is a limit. Didn't feel close to it that night.

Ec130 in wind handles better than a Robinson. Ec can handle it a lot better.

Fly astar too.

Astar is more squirrely. Ec is like flying a big boat. Astar you put a small input and more responsive, more sporty.

Overspeed at papillon- no

Cancelled a flight – yes, think a couple of times. Most of time for wind. One it gets uncomfortable for pax. No point to be in that much wind, especially if they get sick, couple times like that. Or thunderstorms close to canyon. By time we get there it will be in mature stage so stuff like that.

To cancel, most of time we are in leads office looking at radar, current conditions, etc and looking at trends. If getting worse, lets not go. If starting calm down, go out there and if not comfortable come back. Always telling us to come back if not comfortable. Turn into an air tour or come back. Discuss it with pilots and lead. Sometimes we are on the fence, sometimes we know. If on fence, we discuss.

Sometimes don't know what to expect in canyon.

Low clouds are my weakness. For winds, If I get report that someone had to do a couple go arounds, we don't get at each other about it. All at different levels and never get on each other about not going.

Pick pad based on who's behind you? As far as upriver pads, go to upriver pad so you can put someone behind you. Don't think there's an easy pad, if something new, I would rather them follow me. I wouldn't say go this way. Never thought of giving someone an easier pad. I think people have the special pad they like to go to if winds are calm. You just go where you can have best approach to headwind.

Trying to free up pad? No was trying to think of getting people out before dark before they got stuck there. We are creating a bigger problem by staying down here. So many people down there.

Vegas is further from canyon, we usually leave before them or right after they land. Not freeing up pad.

LTE in ec130? No

Settling with power? No

Dropping on one approach when windy at quartermaster, but wasn't settling cuz had airspeed. It was on approach. Landing on upriver pad cuz that's where wind, it was over crash site, didn't spin out or anything, this was an upriver wind.

Turbine transition at papillon? Yes

Practice settling with power – no. Talking about it but don't recall doing it in flight.

Stephen – none

Didn't want to land at quartermaster. Don't remember doing anything differently. I'm always very cautious. Don't think I changed my flying habits at all. Did things slower, concentrate on everything so mind didn't wander. As far as flying habits or style, nothing changed.

Above 35 knots steady, gusts would prob be 20 cuz hard to set it down. I flew tours in LA so when get into wind, they get sick

We get wx at boulder and before entering canyon and get GCW weather to get idea of up or downriver winds.

Weather worse than reported? Prob a couple times. Never felt like that was stupid as far as wind.

Never thought stupid to land here. I know to take it slower, not to be afraid. Prepare for gust.

Gotten so use to that. So automatic not sure what I'm thinking about. Not afraid to go around.

Never gotten to situation where had to go around in quartermaster cuz of wind, it was cuz I set up approach wrong. Keep eye on windsock for any wind shift.

Never tried to land and aborted completely. Heard of others doing that but never been in situation.

Call up guano or boulder base and say turned into air toru, come back to base. Lets csr to handle customer when back.

Don't know if customers get money back.

Pay for me is regardless of landing or not

Ever feel pressured? Don't think so. Times when nervous to take off but then did it and not that bad. Never felt pressured from anybody

On flight and duty reports to file safety concerns. Fill it out. Submit with name or anonymously.

Heard of other pilots being uncomfortable cuz some people say they shouldn't have taken off from other pilots. Yeah go out and try and then didn't feel comfortable

Daily rate for 2 flights, if do 3rd flight get more on top of that. Most of time just 3 sometimes 4 flights. Get paid even if don't go.

1-2 years is normal.

People go to ems or utility jobs.

Could be beneficial to have training to settle with power. Would be good to have recurrency there.

Here its clear all the time. So visibility it my concern.

Flight and duty system is where we put start and stop, flight time, irregularity reports, and safety report. No haven't submitted one. Most of the time if any safety concern it would be on irregularity report. We turned landing into air tour. Most of time, there's a suggestion of what you would do next time, so safety report in irregularity report.

Would feel comfortable submitting a safety report, think company would be responsive, open discussion between lead and pilots, we talk to them too, joint thing like procedures not necessarily safety but just about something.

Went to each of bases, papillon sundance and maverick to see what to expect. I wanted to make a choice that was better suited to me. Papillon was better for me. Simon was very welcoming. Sat

down with me and told me about schedule and what to expect as far as operation. Had an open conversation with him. Really nice env and talking with other pilots. Didn't get that feel from other two bases.

Feel like all companies comparable for safety.

Feel like we are always first to shutdown for weather.

John –

Helo spinning and falling, 100 feet of falling before impacted ridge line. Hit pilot side first then rolling to other side where couldn't see him anymore. Surprised a pax walked out of helo.

Descending quickly, like it was falling and lost lift. Going straight down and spinning. Pilot side where pax are it hit, closer to front, surprised that pilot got out cuz it hit his side first. Don't think it hit door but where his skid was and crunched up. Ridge line has rounded edge, not sharp.

Impact to final resting point? Can't guess. Over a hundred. Just saw first roll then it disappeared.

Impacted and tail started separating, tail following ac to bottom and getting closer to front of it.

Winds shifting at quartermaster is when we've had issues before. Not me personally but heard from other pilots. Told if wind shifts, go around and set up for next headwind.

Winds directly from downriver during wedding party

No change in winds from when I landed until accident occurred.

Direction was coming from downriver, Speed of gusts at time of accident were probably 20 knots. Don't think it was more than that.

Knew pilot, not the closest but one of the closer pilots of the bunch. When he came in to town, we would invite him to get a beer. Never just hung out with just him.

Lived with Robert downy in vegas when here; didn't live with him. Had a room there when he came to vegas.

Maverick has two landing areas. We have more options than they do. Not sure about other base cuz I don't fly over there.

Never landed at other area so cant say what its like.

Personality first day second flight, chief called me into office, just talk to him xxx. Nothing since then. I'm stern with my customers. I don't let them get away with anything.

Felt like landing sideways – that's me crabbing. Looked at all air tour operators. If don't do that you will go off course. That's textbook.

Update weather? If concerns yes but if no change then no. we are kept in loop if wind or thunderstorms. No concerns no doubt in my mind when took off on day of accident.

Speculate on what happened and how to prevent – I didn't see approach, even when others described, its not a clear picture. Can't give an opinion on what other people said they saw. I wasn't inside that cockpit. He was already spinning by time I saw him. Don't like other people's opinions unless I see it myself.

Papillon told you what to say or not – direct any media inquiries to PR. After accident, papillon had a statement sent to ntsb.

Burl – none

Ended at 8 pm

1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
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3 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
4
5 * * * * *
6 Investigation of: *
7 *
8 PAPILLON HELICOPTERS CRASH * Accident No.: WPR18FA087
9 FEBRUARY 10, 2018 *
10 *
11 * * * * *
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13 Interview of: JAMES FINNEY
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21 Monday,
22 February 12, 2018
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APPEARANCES:

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

STEPHEN STEIN, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

TOM TURBIN

I N T E R V I E W

1
2
3 A. So for this flight leading up to the accident, I was in EC130,
4 Row 4; number down the row is 23.

5 As I was coming into the canyon, it would have been a little
6 bit windy. It was windy when we went in. We took off and windy
7 throughout the flight. Once we entered the canyon, a little bit
8 of turbulence, a little bit of bumps here and there, which would
9 have been a symptom of the northerly winds that we had that day.

10 As I was dropping down into the canyon and making my turn to
11 Quartermaster base, the bumps still continued a little bit, and I
12 recognized that I had a bit of a tailwind, not -- I didn't
13 recognize necessarily how extensive it was, but there was a
14 tailwind. As I continued descending, I tried to slow up airspeed
15 a little bit because of the tailwind.

16 And as we passed the Ramada and the beach, you know, I just
17 really wasn't coming down as quickly as I needed to, so gained a
18 little more airspeed to continue to the descent to have the
19 appropriate heights crossing the river. As I was approaching the
20 river, surveying the landing zone, I recognized that there were
21 four aircraft that were parked on the upriver side of our landing
22 area there. There was one aircraft that was parked on what we
23 call Wedding Point. All of those, those five aircraft, were the
24 nose was pointed downriver. There was on aircraft, that was
25 aircraft number 50, which was parked on our -- the other side of
26 the landing zone, which was nose pointed upriver. As well as

1 coming in, observing the windsock, verified that it did generally
2 have a tailwind the way I was pointed as I was approaching the
3 river.

4 So at this point in time I was trying to decide, make a
5 decision which way to make my path and approach. So option one
6 was to do the normal approach into the landing zone, which is what
7 I ended up doing; or option two, to go through the notch and
8 skirting to the uphill side of all the other aircraft parked on
9 the other side of the landing zone, to land to the far end of the
10 parking zones that were on the western side of the landing zone
11 there.

12 I knew there was a couple aircraft relatively close proximity
13 behind me, and to do something that I'd circle around, I deemed it
14 maybe a little bit more prudent to take the direct crosswind for
15 the approach coming into the landing zone than circling around and
16 potentially causing a collision hazard with intersection aircraft
17 in close proximity.

18 So as doing or executing that approach, we crossed over the
19 river, and we crossed over a slight rise and kind of up into a
20 slight valley, and then we normally turn around as it -- to kind
21 of set up for our into the landing zone.

22 It was upon that turn that I -- the aircraft, as I was coming
23 around, shifted pretty rapidly. Not a large amount but it did --
24 the tail did try to kick behind me. With the big tail on those
25 helicopters that would be -- it kind of acts like a sail to push

1 you around whenever you catch a wind. So at that point in time,
2 with that heavy shift, my eyes immediately jumped down to my rate
3 of descent.

4 Airspeed indicator was reading probably 45 or 50,
5 thereabouts; not exact on that number. But rate of descent was
6 about 400 foot per minute, which I tried to reduce down to,
7 unsure, less -- 300, approximately 300 for the rest of the
8 descent.

9 As I was descending down into the landing zone, again
10 choosing to pick the farthest pad forward that was available to
11 allow room for landing aircraft, if they did come -- or that would
12 be coming in behind, took a look at the passengers and the
13 aircraft that were in the vicinity. At that point in time the
14 pilot from number 50, which was the other -- which was the first
15 aircraft that landed nose upriver, was carrying her basket to the
16 Ramada, or the picnic tables. So she -- making sure she was out
17 of the way. There's no passengers. There's a handful of
18 passengers already at the picnic tables, some taking pictures
19 of -- or watching myself as I was making my approach. The wedding
20 or the photographers were taking pictures of the bride and the
21 groom out on the Wedding Point, pointed downstream to coming in.

22 Also looking at the windsock, appeared to be, as I expected,
23 a direct crosswind, left crosswind. But talking about the
24 windsock, as I stated earlier in the report, was 10 to 15 knots.
25 And so there were some gusty conditions and the windsock was

1 bouncing back and forth a little bit. So more shifting towards
2 more of a tailwind component for me at that point in time.

3 Outside of that, as I continued descending, watching the rate
4 of descent, picking my -- or trying to get to the landing zone,
5 applying heavy amount of right pedal to try to keep the nose
6 straight because that wind was so -- really pushing on that tail.
7 And coming inbound, it was actually crabbed, so not going
8 straightforward the majority of the way down to the landing zone,
9 until I got maybe 15, 20 foot above the ground and was able to
10 actually straighten out with, to parallel the slope. At which
11 point I set the aircraft -- was able to set the aircraft down and
12 start the shutdown procedure. At which point in time I contacted
13 the pilot that was coming in behind me to advise me of whenever he
14 was down to make sure that I could keep my blades spinning and --
15 so he can, wouldn't come in and potentially damage the aircraft
16 from his downwash as I shut down with slow blades.

17 About that time as he -- he said he had landed. I shut down
18 and kind of got my note board ready to starting taking my numbers
19 down for the flight that the aircraft computer shows, and right
20 about the time that I was able to start applying the rotor brake,
21 which probably about 30 seconds after shutting the engine down,
22 all of a sudden all pilots and everybody that was outside of the
23 aircraft started running aft, in the direction towards the canyon
24 where the accident happened, which was directly behind me.

25 At which point in time I knew something had happened. Not

1 exactly the extent of what had happened. And then at that point
2 in time, once the aircraft was safely shut down, I opened up the
3 doors for the passengers and made sure I left it at that, let them
4 get out, closed up the swinging door, and then at which point in
5 time I proceeded to the canyon edge where everybody had gathered.
6 As I was walking, running -- I can't remember which I was doing at
7 that time, more like running -- over there I noticed smoke coming
8 out of the canyon or the crevice.

9 And masses of people, passengers, as well as pilots, all had
10 gathered at the canyon edge. Once I got to the canyon edge, all I
11 could see was some of the flames flickering. I could also saw one
12 gal on the canyon floor walking around, screaming. Couldn't
13 really hear what she was saying. And some of the flames, which
14 shortly thereafter started hearing occasional popping throughout
15 the, basically the rest of the time of this narration.

16 At this point in time I started yelling at passengers to
17 start going back to the picnic tables, trying to put cameras away
18 and trying to get everybody back and away. And then heard one of
19 the other pilots -- I'm not sure, can't remember who it was; I'm
20 not sure who it was -- yelling at three gentlemen that had already
21 started down the canyon trying to work their way to the crash
22 site. So along with him, I tried to wrangle them up, shouting out
23 for them to come back, and started working my way to where they
24 could actually hear what we were saying.

25 By the time I met them up, got them stopped and kind of

1 started them the other way, slight exchange of words of them
2 wondering why nobody was trying to go to help, and me trying to
3 explain that we've got -- it could be more dangerous for them to
4 continue and that they needed to go back at that point in time, or
5 a liability, not knowing who they are, or what their
6 qualifications were, which ended up they were from the Australian
7 Air Force, found out later, and actually did end up helping in the
8 bottom of the canyon. But after I got them turned back, I
9 continued down to the canyon floor, which -- at which point in
10 time I was the first on-site on the canyon floor.

11 As I started working down, the aircraft was still on fire.
12 It wasn't, per se, a large fire, but it was burning very good,
13 quite well. At that point in time it looked like the nose of the
14 aircraft was downstream, which later on, after everything
15 subsided, I recognized it was -- actually the nose of the aircraft
16 was upstream. What I had seen was some of the bearings and some
17 of the fuselage that was still remaining was down. So I'm not
18 sure exactly what it was, but it was probably more than likely
19 like the engine cowling or something like that, which was
20 remaining at the bottom end of the crash scene. And the fire was
21 up above that, just up above it.

22 Also, just kind of on that note, on the fire, it's more maybe
23 experience a little bit later on, but there was, there was a -- it
24 wasn't just a normal fire. There was a brilliance to the glow or
25 something similar to like if something magnesium was on fire. Not

1 sure what it was, but there was a -- definitely a bright glow to
2 the center and base of the fire.

3 As I worked my way down, I got to the canyon floor.
4 Immediately to where I was able to drop in there were three
5 persons, two females and one male. The male was completely
6 burned. All of his clothes were gone. He was completely naked.
7 The second female had most of her clothes on, burnt hands, singed
8 hair, slight cuts that I could observe immediately. And then the
9 other female was just sitting in her bra and panties, singed hair,
10 some large cuts and lacerations on her heels and ankles, some up
11 and down her hands, as well as slight burns along her arms as
12 well.

13 Just behind her there was a rolled up piece of cloth, which
14 I'm assuming was clothing of some sort that -- I'm not sure how it
15 got off but more than likely burned off and was laid there. I
16 don't know if somebody, they took it off. The female that was in
17 her bra and panties was the first one that I did see from the top
18 of the canyon floor, just -- she was the only one that was blonde
19 down there, so that was one recognizable feature, that she was
20 walking around.

21 At that point in time kind of gathered names, just real
22 quickly. Tried to assess really who needed aid first, and then I
23 heard something uphill a little ways further, saw there was
24 another person up there, at which point in time I went up there.
25 That was where the pilot was positioned, lying on his back up

1 against the rock walls approximately 50 foot away from the
2 aircraft. I'm not sure distances-wise, but well away from the
3 aircraft. And at which point in time he's calling out to me
4 saying, help me, help me, I'm going to bleed out up here.

5 When I got up there, he was naked as well. It appeared to,
6 was the recollection that all clothes were burnt off of his body
7 as well, slightly singed hair. His hair wasn't completely gone
8 but substantial burns. And his left leg, mid-tibia and fibula was
9 broken off completely, and -- I don't know how to explain this --
10 sticking out at least 45 to 90 degrees away from where it would
11 normally be aligned and all that was holding it there was the
12 muscle of his calf and skin. And pooled -- blood pooled up in
13 there, at which point in time I knew he immediately needed a
14 tourniquet. Excuse me here.

15 Q. Just take your time.

16 A. Sorry. It was at this point in time I took my floatation
17 device off, which was the only thing I could think of immediately
18 that would work as a makeshift tourniquet, and started applying it
19 just above his knee on his left leg.

20 About the time I was getting the first cinch down and needing
21 something to twist over it, and I was looking for -- nothing in
22 the immediate vicinity, a second pilot had made his way down to
23 the canyon floor. He was pacing about pretty flustered, or very
24 upset. He was upset on the top of the canyon wall. Now that I
25 recall I think he was the -- I think one of the ones that was

1 trying to wrangle the first three passengers that were walking
2 down the canyon. I called over to him and let him know that I
3 needed a strong, sturdy branch, that he needed to find something
4 for me. Took maybe about 30 seconds where he could -- he found
5 something, came back with a branch, at which point in time placed
6 in the tourniquet, tightening it down.

7 This was about at the point in time, where once it got
8 tightened, we needed to secure the branch so it would stay
9 fastened and tight. As I was tightening it, the pilot very
10 clearly said that it hurt a whole lot as I was doing it, and I
11 advised him that we needed to do that. He also -- at which point
12 in time before the -- I apologize. I'm going to step back here
13 because --

14 MS. KELIHER: Yeah, slow down. Take your time. This really
15 is -- this is kind of the crucial stuff of what we need to know.

16 MR. FINNEY: Yeah. As I was originally up there talking to
17 him, just quickly advising -- or a series of things that he said,
18 there was a number of things that he said. At some point in time
19 of the timeline, and this is what I'm not sure of exactly of where
20 it was; it could have been at this point in time or a little bit
21 later whenever I was talking with him, which was probably a little
22 later. He did tell me that -- I mean, he initially, multiple
23 times said he was going to bleed out down there, and a definite
24 possibility with the nature of his wounds, told me to let his
25 family know that if he didn't make it, that he loved them very,

1 very much.

2 I'm applying the tourniquet. As I was -- as we're securing
3 or as, just after it was secured -- the pilot, I didn't really
4 know. I had actually only seen him that day for the first time
5 around here. So I remember a relatively new pilot, had only been
6 here just over a month, so didn't quite know everybody's names. I
7 just knew that his last name was Booth. That was about it.

8 It was at this point in time that he talked to the other
9 pilot which knew him much better and he said something similar --
10 it was in my written statement, but something along the lines of,
11 bro, I got settling or, bro, I settled, which in helicopter terms
12 automatically assume that settling power was his evaluation of
13 what happened to him. A number of other things -- it could have
14 been a number of other things, but that was from the pilot's
15 mouth.

16 Following that, after we got him secured, it was about that
17 time the other three passengers that we had originally tried to
18 hold back had made their way down. So he was as stable as what we
19 could make him with what we had at that point in time, a
20 tourniquet installed, no other really noticeable bleeding outside
21 of the burns, not much else we could do for him at that point in
22 time. So advised at least one person to come up here, just kind
23 of stay and talk. I believe it was about this time the other
24 pilot that helped me with the tourniquet had return. He was --
25 and I don't, I'm not sure why, but I talked with him briefly, but

1 just today and it wasn't the place for him.

2 So at this point in time worked my way over to the other
3 three passengers, which one of the three Australian fellows -- or
4 sorry, it was two Australians, one American fellow, I believe,
5 made it down right away. The two Australians were, it turns out,
6 Australian Air Force, so had some sort of at least first aid
7 experience and training. They were starting to work on and see
8 what they could do for those other three passengers.

9 At this point in time a lot of stuff started happening pretty
10 quickly. I'm not exactly sure about what time, but somebody
11 shortly thereafter had brought one of the aircraft first aid kits.
12 So with those three, we at least were able to start wrapping
13 wounds, cleaning them out as best we can. We had very little
14 water, actually none to speak of at first. Some water started
15 trickling down from people carrying over and ended up bringing
16 some water to us to be able to -- but first off, we maybe only had
17 about three bottles, partial bottles that had made their way down
18 initially to try to clean out wounds and dress them as best we
19 could.

20 On, I believe it was the Jenny, which was the gal in the
21 panties and bra, which had the worse cuts and lacerations hands,
22 when she was -- pretty much used all of the bandages and gauze
23 that we had on her, initially not even enough to really cover up
24 her feet, a few minutes later another first aid kit had made its
25 way down as well so we were able to finish up at least covering up

1 her wounds. She wasn't bleeding necessarily badly but it was --
2 there were good cuts on her legs.

3 And then able to go over to the next gal, which was Ellie,
4 which had most of her clothes on, but cuts on her hands, and that
5 was about all I could see at the point in time. So she was
6 wearing long pants, had her shoes on. The gentleman that was
7 burnt also had his shoes on still. And just tried to take care of
8 them as best we could at that point in time.

9 All the while, the fire was still burning. Jenny was calling
10 out for a gentleman named Jon, assuming husband. You guys would
11 know better. I don't -- I didn't know the passenger manifest or
12 anything, but calling out for him, asking what -- where he was,
13 why nobody was trying to help him, which getting down there, the
14 majority of -- the initial arrival there, the majority of the
15 cabin was completely burned, and as I said, and what I thought was
16 the nose was still burning. But at which point in time there was
17 way too much risk to -- you weren't going to save anybody and, in
18 fact, you're probably going to cause much more damage. So just
19 tried not to tell her anything and tried to get her mind off that,
20 but she continued calling his name and asking why nobody was doing
21 anything to help for hours, so -- understandably so.

22 Outside of that, there was, accident-wise, I was trying --
23 kind of initial condition of the wreckage, as I told you there --
24 obviously you can follow up with any other questions, but the
25 outlying areas approximately -- well, about halfway between Scott,

1 who was the pilot, and the other three passengers, there was
2 shards of glass from the window sitting in the sand, which later
3 one were well trampled and broken, but they were decently large.
4 I'd say at least 10 by 12 inches, I mean thereabouts. A handful
5 of shards of glass there.

6 The tailboom, which was sitting in a tree, still there. That
7 didn't change throughout the night. Nobody really touched
8 anything from the accident. There was no reason to go into it or
9 even look at it outside of anything else.

10 There was a couple things that were on the rocks between
11 Scott and the accident -- well, actually not quite next to the
12 aircraft, but on the same large rock that Scott was on. So he
13 being down there, he was -- it was a large, long, sloping
14 sandstone-type rock. On top -- one thing I saw on there, there
15 was one wallet sitting on top of it, which I know for sure was
16 picked up by one of the medics at some point in time that night,
17 which he handed to -- that wallet, by investigator, Chris. I'm
18 not sure if you have spoken with him or not, at all.

19 But either way, later on, that was well into the night
20 whenever we were trying to set up an LZ for aircraft to
21 potentially come in, that was handed to him, which that wallet
22 ended up being Jon's. I believe his name was Jon, the gentleman
23 that was burnt over 95 percent of his body. So that ID in there
24 was his. So it more than likely fell as his clothes were burning
25 off, 100 percent my opinion on what happened with that. But its

1 position, it was well -- it was halfway between where Jon was
2 sitting and the aircraft. So in some time, point in time in
3 transition the wallet was lying there and singed on the outside.

4 Another thing I noticed was there was a white cell phone. It
5 was sitting face down, relatively close, similar proximity to
6 where the wallet was. As -- again, this one was a little bit
7 closer to the accident site, between Scott and the helicopter.
8 This is another one, I think a really important thing to track
9 down if you guys did not receive it. This was picked up by one of
10 the firefighters that was down there, one of the first responder
11 firefighters, a female. I don't -- I do not know her name. She
12 advised Chris of that later. She was like, oh, I found this over
13 there, I picked this up. Chris, the investigator said, told her
14 to hold on to it at that point in time. He's like, that somebody
15 would be needing to get it.

16 In my opinion, again, 100 percent my opinion on just my
17 experience with flying with passengers, the proximity of maybe
18 where it was, it did not appear to be burnt, the phone did not, as
19 far as I could tell. But oftentimes coming into the canyon --
20 this is why I think, to me, is one of the more important things in
21 my mind was, many times the passengers will carry their phones,
22 taking videos or taking pictures especially at that point in time,
23 because that is usually where they can see where they're landing.
24 They know that they're coming down, and potentially in somebody's
25 hand during the process of the accident.

1 Again, if that was something that you did not receive, a
2 point of contact for that would the investigator with -- I didn't
3 get his last name -- with the Hualapai Police. He was the only
4 one with the Hualapai Police that made it to the bottom of the
5 canyon much later in the evening. His name was Chris. I know he
6 advised me if I needed anything just call up the Hualapai Police
7 and ask for Chris. So he would be more apt to be able to give you
8 the name of the firefighter or at least the firefighters there
9 could give you her name and see if that could be tracked down.

10 Outside of that, at that point in time it took maybe 30 maybe
11 45 minutes of time before the first initial firefighters made
12 their way down, maybe 30. I'm not sure on timeline at this point
13 in time. But it wasn't long for them to actually make it down to
14 the, actually to the crash site. At which point in time directed
15 them to Scott, which was the visibly worst off. All the other
16 three were, in my opinion, at that point in time -- and they
17 agreed that he was definitely a priority.

18 So they started, the first two started working on him right
19 off the bat. It was sometime after the second two were able to
20 make their way down as well and began working on the others.

21 At this point in time a lot of questions were going on. We
22 had zero communications with the top. Down there the firefighters
23 had -- they did not have radios. We had no way of being able to
24 communicate with the top, which I did not know at the time. One
25 of the firefighters that was working on Scott advised us that we

1 needed to get the passengers down to the river for extraction. So
2 a couple issues that I think went majorly wrong and definitely a
3 hindsight-type situation, first off, it was -- the route down
4 there was no reconned well enough. And second of all, we jumped
5 without asking a question of, like, is somebody on their way and
6 did they tell us that's where they want us.

7 Jon, the fellow that was burned with 95 percent of his body,
8 and Ellie, which was the gal that had all of her -- the majority
9 of her clothes on still, we tried to get some shirts, and number
10 of general people had been down there at that point in time and
11 taking off their shirts and try to give them to them for warmth.
12 But they both advised that they would be able to walk. And so a
13 handful of people accompanied as they started trying to walk them
14 down to the river.

15 I remained there with Jenny, and I believe it was about this
16 time, Katie, who had -- when I was initially working my way to the
17 accident site, had advised me that she was a doctor. There was
18 another gal that said that she was a nurse. I let them know we
19 might need them, but at this point, eventually they did make it
20 down there. It was about this time that she started working with
21 Jenny, or it was just before we started moving them -- I apologize
22 -- that she was working with the three, and then eventually when
23 they said, we've got move, she focused her attention on Jenny at
24 that point in time, which she advised she would not be able to
25 walk and would have to be carried, so -- from her opinion.

1 So they tried to walk the other two down, while we continued
2 to stay with Jenny and Scott, up top, is where I remained at that
3 point in time.

4 Maybe about 5, 10 minutes later, one of the other pilots that
5 was down at the bottom, John Davis, came up and said, we need a
6 litter and a rope if we need to get them down to the canyon floor.
7 So at which point in time, we're trying to talk to people that
8 were ferrying stuff back and forth, and sending messages up to the
9 top to try to send rope in and a litter to try to lower them down.
10 I guess there was a couple of -- the estimate was 8-foot cliffs
11 that they would have to go down, or boulders that they would have
12 to go down. I didn't quite seem them myself, but it wasn't going
13 to be possible to get them down just by walking.

14 I'm trying to think. It was a similar time frame around --
15 sorry, my time frames are jumping here as I'm trying to recall
16 details. The second firefighting crew was down there roughly at
17 about the same time that they said, or we knew that they weren't
18 going to get down there by walking. Advised them, like, okay, we
19 had two people down or down the gully a ways that would need
20 attention, too, but they remained up there focused on Scott until
21 they got him mostly stabilized and then worked their way down
22 there, which about this time it was dark, it was pretty dark, or
23 starting to get dark, if not dark.

24 Firefighters had carried down two lights, that's -- which we
25 set up the initial laid area and the area that the accident. So

1 myself, I had one flashlight and my cell phone. People were
2 trying to use their cell phones and like trying to conserve
3 whatever light we had, because we had nothing down there. I
4 eventually gave my flashlight to one of the persons and then went
5 back up to the top of the hill, because I think it was the Mercy
6 Flight had actually arrived and I wanted to at least talk with one
7 of the pilots to, at least, if they were planning on coming down
8 to try to let them know what the situation was, train-wise and
9 possibilities-wise. As well as to gather flashlights, and at this
10 point in time, we needed blankets and water sorely at the bottom,
11 and a couple other things that the medics asked to -- asked for.

12 About halfway on the way back, I bumped into the first Mercy
13 Flight medical crew. Met them about halfway, and asked them if
14 they had brought a number of things that they, the firefighters
15 had asked for. And they said, no. I kind of pointed them in the
16 right direction to walk and I went and continued back to the
17 aircraft. I talked to the pilots there. Eventually two more
18 medevac flights had come in. I had gathered my headlamp which was
19 still in my aircraft, in my go-bag in the aircraft, and was
20 talking to the pilots, just trying to get a, just a -- something
21 what was going on, to maybe give them some sort of word on the
22 bottom, which they really didn't know much at that point in time
23 either. So there wasn't much to tell. So at which point in time
24 I decided to go and head back and see if they needed any more
25 assistance.

1 The third medevac helicopter that landed advised me he had
2 radios, so I gathered up one handheld radio. He provided me with
3 a t-shirt for myself, since I was shirtless and I advised him that
4 there was a number of other people that had no shirts down on the
5 bottom and it was going to get cold. So he had a couple of t-
6 shirts. Gather a couple of solar blankets that medical crew had
7 as well and went back to the crash site.

8 I can actually give you an exact time of when all that
9 actually happened. One moment here. Because that happened at --
10 that was approximately 7:30 Arizona time, that I was back on the
11 LZ, the only time I actually had reception and received a text
12 from my wife at that point. So that was about 7:30, so roughly 2
13 hours after the accident had occurred.

14 Back down, walking back down, I walked down with one --
15 another one of the medical crews. I forget which aircraft they
16 came off of. Their names were Andrew and David, I believe. But I
17 walked them down. They wanted to go down as well, at which point
18 I think by the time they got down there, that made five or six of
19 the nurses and air medics were working now down on station and
20 with the passengers that were injured. So they were able to bring
21 their kits, and one immediately -- or I believe they both
22 immediately went down to the two that were downstream and looking
23 at them and started working on them.

24 At this point in time I really didn't have much to do, so I
25 was just walking back and forth between the two, the separated

1 passengers and patients, and seeing if anybody needed anything,
2 hauling a few bottles of water, which we had to actually try to
3 get to the people that were helping out to drink some water
4 because at this point in time I was parched, everybody was. There
5 was no water. At one point in time there was -- we have some soft
6 coolers; it was completely full of water, which somebody had
7 carried down earlier when it was light. And I dumped it out on
8 the ground and every single one of those bottles were gone. I
9 mean, that was probably 20 or -- roughly 20 bottles of water. I
10 mean, just a rough estimate. So all water had been used up.

11 And at this point in time I was just kind of there to haul
12 whatever I could, hold flashlights. It's kind of what everybody
13 was there for. Or we had been able -- somebody had carried down,
14 at some point in time had brought down a basket and two
15 backboards, which were up on the LZ, and eventually we moved Ellie
16 from downstream back up, and they used the basket for that. So
17 there was a lot of just kind of going back and forth amongst a lot
18 of people.

19 Eventually, once the medics had everybody stable for the most
20 part, and had -- now that they had radios and could talk to people
21 up top and actually had an idea of what was coming this way, that
22 way, they eventually stated their -- they stated that they wanted
23 all passengers and everybody that was not medical crew out of the
24 canyon. So myself, I stayed. I saw that there was a purpose for
25 me, if they were going to make an LZ or coordination to have

1 somebody that was a pilot down there. So I remained with the
2 radio, and all the passengers, as well as the other pilot that was
3 down there, John Davis, headed back.

4 The t-shirts that I handed out, we repossessed them at that
5 point in time because they were sorely needed. We did not have
6 nearly enough blankets or anything to keep the victims warm, and
7 it was getting cool, so -- I gave both of my flashlights away to
8 all those guys because very few flashlights and it was a very
9 treacherous hike, to say the least, to go back in the dark.

10 I wouldn't say timeline here wise, but at one point in time
11 they were going to try to carry Ellie up. One of the other medics
12 said absolutely not. One medic was trying to push it. He then
13 asked if I would go see if, uphill, there was possibly an easier
14 way out. And kind of went up that way, momentarily kind of seeing
15 what there was. It was just, it was even worse than where we were
16 to try to get it out.

17 At this point in time I decided I wanted to walk around the
18 backside of the aircraft, but, as I had observed, I had not
19 observed if anybody had actually looked on the backside of the
20 helicopter, if there was any bodies or a person, persons back
21 there. Walked around, looked, trying to scope out potential LZs
22 as well. Got up on a hill, and another point that I think is
23 potentially extremely important. As I was walking back down, I
24 noticed -- this is well above the crash site, I saw a round black
25 disk, about this size. So for recording purposes, approximately 4

1 or 5 inches in diameter. It was black and looked to me like it
2 could have potentially been a fuel cap.

3 And being -- I understand post-crash fire that could be a
4 major factor in anything. I didn't pick it up. I didn't verify
5 it. Just as I saw it, like, was trying to pay note of anything
6 that I saw. I mean, there's pieces of blades kind of all strewn
7 all over. But that was one thing that stood out that I did see
8 that was -- it was like, like that, if that's -- I wanted to pay
9 note of that and definitely let you guys know. I don't know if
10 you recovered anything like that.

11 MS. KELIHER: Yes.

12 MR. FINNEY: Did you? Okay. So good. And then I just
13 worked my way back down to the aircraft.

14 After that it was playing the waiting game, really, waiting
15 for word on what was going to happen, what was going to be needed.
16 Eventually one of the medevac pilots, the one that actually had
17 given me the radio and the shirts -- his name was Opie (ph.), with
18 Classic Helicopters. He had actually flown his helicopter down
19 into the canyon when we were trying to still coordinate with the
20 Hualapai Police officer that was down there trying to find a
21 potential place to land.

22 He came down, found a place that he said was suitable but he
23 couldn't land there, right there just because of stuff that was on
24 the LZ. So he had us go up there and clear it out, and then they
25 kind of -- it took a little while before they hashed out the plan,

1 arranged the plan for being able to start moving passengers
2 closer, because it was up the hill quite a ways, probably 200
3 yards. I don't know. I don't know if you guys saw the landing LZ
4 up there. It was marked with a -- I tried to mark it with a body
5 bag because we had no chem sticks or anything like that. That was
6 what that was.

7 So we had no chem sticks. They were wanting us to try to
8 mark the LZ for the pilots because it was in the middle of --
9 well, bad illumination, in the middle of a bowl. It was like
10 going to be very, very difficult to find. Then I had that -- I
11 was using the body bag at that point in time as a source of warmth
12 and I saw it as maybe the best means of them to be able to maybe
13 get some visual reference aside from somebody standing in the
14 middle of it.

15 Once they got the plan hashed out, they moved Scott about
16 halfway to two-thirds of the way up. They staged him there, at
17 which point in time I proceeded just downhill from the LZ and
18 guided the helicopter in. Talked him through the landing,
19 positioning to try to get him to the right place. And then we --
20 then I guided the rest of everybody else up to the helicopter.
21 They loaded Scott; took off. Then I went back down to get the
22 next, which was Ellie. She's the one that they were originally
23 going to try to carry out, so she was already sitting in a basket.
24 But it took a number of minutes before they got there and then the
25 DPS helicopter came down.

1 We were able to get him landed after some jockeying and I
2 actually had to go talk to the pilot to try to get him in a better
3 position, because just knowing the LZ since I'd walked in and knew
4 it a little bit better than what they could probably see coming
5 in. Got him in position and then they got Ellie loaded up, which
6 we had -- actually had to transfer her out of the basket onto a
7 backboard, you know, because the basket wouldn't fit.

8 At this point in time I just kind of remained at the LZ for a
9 little bit. Then I went down because Classic, the guy from
10 Classic had requested that on the next flight, one of the Classic
11 nurses was going to be going out with that one and I needed to try
12 to hand off the radio with her. And so just kind of verified a
13 couple of things there, but made sure to get that to her, but
14 helped guide them up to the LZ. This time it was Jenny, and we
15 were able to actually get her much, much closer to the LZ as we
16 waited for the next aircraft to come in.

17 Again, I don't know how much help it was, but hopefully it
18 was something, talking to the pilot on the radio. I was on the
19 radio trying to guide him in and get him in position since he
20 hadn't been down there yet. So the first aircraft that landed was
21 the original person that was there, so he kind of knew a little
22 bit more of what he was getting into. The other two were flying
23 blind essentially. So got him on the ground. Then we got Jenny
24 into the aircraft as well.

25 And then once they took off, went back down and it was

1 waiting for the Pave Hawk from the Air Force to come in to hoist
2 Jon out, or the burn victim, because that was the only way they
3 were going get, really get him out, more than likely. Because
4 none of the other aircraft could land on the bottom and, yeah, and
5 the hoist was definitely the best option for him. So once the
6 Pave Hawks came in, they hoisted him up. Then it was really time
7 for us to leave.

8 Everybody just kind of gathered up what gear they could carry
9 out and we started hiking what we could out. Eventually over half
10 of the gear we actually left on top of the first mountain because
11 everybody was exhausted and beaten. We just didn't want to hurt
12 ourselves on the way back, so we just kind of staged it for
13 removal the next day. And everybody went back to the original LZ.
14 And some of them ended up staying there the night, but DPS, other
15 DPS aircraft was, I think, shuttling some people back, up and down
16 to GCW to try to get them out of the canyon.

17 So by the time they terminated operations, it was five
18 passengers, four pilots from Papillon, and six to eight of the
19 search and -- well, I think six or seven search and rescue and
20 Chris, the Hualapai investigator, and maybe one of his
21 counterparts was there as well, still. And those were all that
22 stayed there throughout the night.

23 I'm not sure that I've got anything else outside of that,
24 except for if you need the information on the way out, but I don't
25 know if that's going to be --

1 [interruption and begins to draw the accident site]

2 BY MR. STEIN: Okay

3 MR. FINNEY: So actually this is a -- had a tree here. Had
4 the tailboom -- I'm just going to draw a circle -- the tailboom
5 sitting in the top of the tree and hanging down below. Everything
6 from here down, this was all -- all this was burnt, almost ash
7 really, burned. I'm going to say ash for the most part, most of
8 this, from initially getting there.

9 This area right here was still on fire, right here. And kind
10 of covering up this area, right, the -- this is -- let me label
11 this here as downhill, if that helps for you. This was cowlings
12 and such, as I said earlier, but what I thought was the nose of
13 the aircraft. So initial impression was this was the nose of the
14 aircraft. I don't know if I just coming off because the tail was
15 up here, but -- I mean, I saw it was red airframe, so -- or not
16 airframe. Excuse me. So -- I'll just write this out.

17 Initially thought it was the nose, ended up being just
18 probably some part of the engine cowlings as I looked at it later,
19 which was actually eventually completely gone. Or (indiscernible)
20 was able to sort of red with gold markings, so the paint features
21 were still on that. Outside of that, we had somewhere in there
22 the rudder head was in the middle. We had one blade kind of
23 roughly out that way burned, scorched. Trying to think.

24 This was the fenestron. So I'll label that for you. And it
25 was caught in, it was caught in the tree. So caught in the tree,

1 and the rest of the tailboom was hanging down to the ground.
2 Outside of that, crash-wise, accident site -- see here if there's
3 anything -- I need to do this in two phases here. So this is
4 initial arrival.

5 Q. And about what time was that?

6 A. Shortly after 5:30, I believe. I mean, within 10 minutes of
7 the actual accident would be my best guess. So you need -- want
8 me to write a time on here for you, or --

9 Q. Yeah, if you wouldn't mind.

10 A. Approximately. Let's see if there's anything else
11 outstanding just for the actual aircraft. Well, I can't think of
12 anything. If I think of something, I'll just put it there.

13 Q. Oh, it's -- yeah, it's the button here.

14 A. Approximately, it would have been -- it was probably like
15 12:30 a.m., which point in time I was actually looking at the
16 wreckage with the investigator that was down there. We actually
17 were trying to look for -- he was trying to look for remains, just
18 to see if he could verify. He ended up seeing one set of remains.
19 I didn't actually see them myself, so --

20 So we still had a tree here. We had the tailboom that was
21 still in the same position; nothing had changed with that. As for
22 the accident site or the aircraft, everything was now ash at this
23 point in time. So kind of extended out about like this. So
24 everything that was initially thought to be the nose, was down
25 here. So ash.

1 This is something I will draw because I noticed that --
2 initial thoughts, what I thought -- was down there, I thought this
3 was the back of the seats, but right here we had the firewall or
4 looked to be a firewall. And here, kind of in this vicinity, the
5 remains of the main rotor gearbox, which -- and back here lying
6 on, laying on its side was the engine. All else -- right about
7 here, was one of the locations that the -- the location the
8 investigator thought he saw one of the remains.

9 Aside from that, again, noticed just the rotor blade was kind
10 of -- and everything else was ash. All the noticeable things that
11 I could call out and say without a doubt, that was what it was.

12 Q. For a third -- I'm going to ask you to do one more drawing.

13 A. That's fine.

14 Q. The third one I want to do initial arrival. You don't have
15 to go to the same level of detail as the main wreckage. You know
16 where I'm going?

17 A. Yeah. I wanted to do a larger scale of like where the
18 passengers were.

19 Q. You're five steps ahead of me.

20 A. So -- no, no, that's all right.

21 Q. Sorry for inferring anything.

22 A. No, no. Well, I could have forgot about it by now. So see
23 if I can figure this out. So that's the east, so let's say
24 eastern wall here. Had west wall of the canyon. Had, let's just
25 say, a tree. The wreckage here. This was a large sweeping rock,

1 something like that, kind of a little platform on the top. I
2 remember that. This was -- I'll draw little stick figures here.
3 Location of pilot. All right. And some sand/gravel. This was
4 the location of the bits of window that -- we had another kind of
5 large rock. We had three persons sitting here. So this was --
6 okay, if I use names?

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. This was Jenny. This was Ellie and Jon. This was also,
9 through here, right here, primary point of ingress as persons were
10 coming down. So, you probably saw the trail, but this was -- so
11 this is where obviously initial care of Jon was taken care of. He
12 was a few past -- later on he was transported down here. I think
13 they were going to try to get him on the river and then said, no,
14 just kept him here. Is that a point of interest that you would --

15 Q. Yes, please.

16 A. Okay. So both -- I think this is a big rock here.

17 Q. I'm not looking back on this computer because there's
18 something more interesting, because I've got graphics --

19 A. No, I imagine you got the pictures and stuff so --

20 Q. He's got a picture -- that's exactly right, yeah.

21 A. Gravel incline. Okay. So pilot was repositioned here. Jon
22 was airlifted from this same spot as well. Let's see. Is there
23 anything --

24 Q. Do you want to kind of encapsulate this area since this
25 happened at a different time, correct?

1 A. Yeah, these were both --

2 Q. So this was --

3 A. I can give kind of a time frame for this here. This was --
4 so Jon was -- the pilot was repositioned here when I was on top.
5 So when I came back down, he was here. So what time did I say
6 that was? That was -- I apologize.

7 Q. No apologies necessary.

8 A. So between 6:30 and 7:30. Sorry, I think that was Boulder
9 time. So between 7:30 and 8:30. I'm not sure of the time that he
10 was repositioned there. That Jon was. I just know that's where
11 they lifted him out.

12 Q. How about the main wreckage, did you happen to observe the
13 remaining occupants in the wreckage at all?

14 A. I did not. It was -- as some point in time when everything
15 had calmed down and just before we started to go look for the
16 potential LZ, that I walked over to look at the wreckage. Or the
17 inspector or the investigator that was down there wanted to go at
18 least look at it. He knew there was nothing to investigate, but
19 he did want to -- he did take one picture down there at the time.
20 But it was -- at that point in time the fire was out and should
21 have been as you guys have seen.

22 But we went to the -- he went to the wreckage to really
23 primarily try to see if he could see any of the remains. And he
24 pointed his flashlight at something and he said, I think I see one
25 set of remains there. I didn't see it, what he was looking at,

1 but it was a very pointed spot. And I know I did hear him later
2 giving his report to somebody saying he had seen a skull, a femur
3 and a couple bones that were just extremely brittle, just one set.
4 To the extent of my knowledge, that's all that he saw, that I
5 knew. Outside of that he didn't really, it was a moot point at
6 that point in time. It wasn't anything to go there and look at.

7 Let's see. Sand/gravel. Jon and Ellie. Would you also like
8 me to kind of show, draw an even bigger scale of the LZ, where
9 they repositioned them?

10 Q. So the -- actually on the subject of the LZ, I did have a
11 question. I was wondering if you --

12 A. Absolutely.

13 Q. -- could draw the LZs at the time you landed? Yeah, so draw
14 the LZ --

15 A. Oh, the LZ up top?

16 Q. The LZ up top, exactly, at the time of landing.

17 A. Absolutely.

18 Q. With where each aircraft, as you remember it, was positioned.
19 You can use just a T to indicate what direction they were in,
20 including yourself.

21 A. I'm just going to say -- there was a lot of heavy foot
22 traffic this way and that. I don't know if that's pertinent for
23 you. And the -- I guess, there was a lot of traffic eventually
24 whenever we started moving the people out here. So I'm not --

25 Q. So these were the two egress routes, was down here and up

1 here?

2 A. Yeah, egress. So a lot of -- if this was the canyon -- I can
3 draw this in larger, like a much larger scale if you'd like it.
4 But they repositioned these two halfway down the canyon, so -- I
5 mean, well, well down here, so this was the only way to get there
6 because this is all a big drop-off. And then getting to the
7 evacuation LZ, that was the egress route, that way.

8 Q. So -- and yeah, so I'm going to not cancel but delay my next
9 request. I think that's a great idea. So if you could -- and I
10 know this is extremely time consuming and we appreciate your time
11 here. If you want to grab another piece of paper and give us
12 large scale and show the egress routes.

13 A. Yeah. Absolutely.

14 Q. And at the site LZs, would be great.

15 A. Okay. I'm going to use an eraser on this one.

16 Q. Forgive me. I just need to --

17 A. Absolutely.

18 Q. -- to send a message to somebody. Not -- because there's a
19 schedule involved.

20 A. Put in some of the features that correspond with that. A lot
21 of foot traffic this way, down there, back and forth. And then
22 other -- sorry -- scale. I used to draw house plans so the
23 scale's going to really annoy me. A lot of traffic there. I do
24 know one other thing that I saw, or actually I found. So
25 somewhere right in here was a window shade from one of the -- from

1 the aft of the helicopter, a reflective shade. Yeah. Okay,
2 that's kind of just the grand scale. Is there any other things
3 that you'd like to see on here?

4 Q. So that was the evacuation LZ?

5 A. LZ.

6 Q. That's where the helicopter --

7 A. That's where they actually touched down. We had one
8 potential backup LZ here, which we never used. The spot where I
9 found the -- or saw what I thought was the gas cap, was
10 approximately right in here.

11 Q. And Jon was hoisted out here?

12 A. Jon and Ellie were initially brought to here. Then this is
13 where they brought Ellie back up to the basket, just set her here
14 while they were debating whether trying to carry her out or not,
15 and then eventually was brought up here.

16 Q. So Jon --

17 A. Jon was repositioned here. I'm not sure when, but this is
18 where they lifted him from.

19 Q. And Ellie was taken to the evacuation LZ?

20 A. Yeah. All the three -- of the patients were carried on
21 backboards or the basket to the evacuation LZ.

22 Q. Okay. Next slide please, as we roll the --

23 A. All right. So the initially landing LZ?

24 Q. -- (indiscernible). Yes, sir.

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. At the time you arrived.

2 A. The time I arrived. All right. So --

3 Q. For this use as much graphic detail as you possible can.

4 A. Okay.

5 Q. Think of this as you just witnessed a crime at the LZ and
6 you're telling a law enforcement official exactly where everything
7 was at the time.

8 A. Okay. I don't know the aircraft numbers, but -- I apologize
9 -- got that backwards. In that direction, this way. A handful of
10 passengers here observing the, observing approach. Up here,
11 windsock. The windsock was pointing that way.

12 Q. Was the wind -- the windsock was extended full out?

13 A. It was varying, but it was for the most part full out, so
14 anywhere from at least 10 knots to 15 and above. I'm assuming is
15 a 15-knot windsock. Outside of that, there was -- the scale's
16 going to get a little bit -- on this one here, but -- aircraft,
17 aircraft and then -- I apologize here, but --

18 One more aircraft here, which I thought was unique. The
19 first time I'd actually seen four landed over there. But --

20 Q. And there were -- could you note the empty LZs?

21 A. Yeah. So right here we have LZ, and we have another wrap-
22 around one that kinds of goes back like this. LZs --

23 Q. These are multiple LZs here?

24 A. Usually we can fit three to four here.

25 Q. Three to four?

1 A. Three or four aircraft, and I'll put that there. And this
2 one, the wrap-around, two aircraft at the most. That was the
3 location I landed. Aside from that -- I'm going to draw this down
4 here. It kind of goes this way. So between, so between picnic
5 tables and taking pictures, this is where the majority of all the
6 -- I think four or five picnic tables here.

7 Q. That's where they do the champagne toasts?

8 A. Yeah. So any of these tables, we set up an individual table
9 for our flight or our passengers.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. But outside of that, that was everything that I recall, that
12 I recognized on the way in.

13 Q. And finally, if you could draw an arrow indicating your
14 approach route, your arrival route?

15 A. Okay. Mind if I do a different drawing for that?

16 Q. Sure.

17 A. I'd like to make the scale a little bit bigger here.

18 Q. Yeah. I was just trying to make it easier on you, but that's
19 okay.

20 A. No, no, it's --

21 Q. I'm kidding.

22 A. Do you mind if I put in a reference to where the accident
23 site was here?

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. Something like that.

1 Q. Okay. Perfect, yeah. So you were doing the --

2 A. So the --

3 Q. You were doing the -- what's it called? So you went, you did
4 go through the notch?

5 A. No, the -- oh.

6 Q. Because here's the notch. Okay.

7 A. So I'll just put that here.

8 Q. So that's the next --

9 A. Yeah, that's --

10 Q. -- next --

11 A. Notch. So these are just the little bit of hills and the two
12 canyons in between. So the standard arrival into the
13 Quartermaster, or direct actually would be a better term for that.

14 Q. Is that the -- so there's an upriver and a downriver.

15 A. This is upriver. So --

16 Q. And this is using upriver?

17 A. I can -- yeah, the winds were kind of coming through the
18 canyon that way.

19 Q. Which way?

20 A. The winds were coming -- so pretty much the canyon goes this
21 way, I mean all the way down there, coming through that, that way.

22 Q. Did you have a crosswind?

23 A. Yeah. So the windsock was kind of pointed about -- just
24 about like that. It was kind of bouncing back and forth though.

25 Q. Which is that normal for this or is it normally north or

1 south? Right, I can --

2 A. I don't have enough experience to say what is the normal
3 condition.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I haven't had but one other windy day since I've been here,
6 so --

7 Q. Thank you for your candor.

8 So those drawings that you just did actually answered all my
9 remaining questions. Well, how many people were on board your
10 aircraft?

11 A. I had six personnel on my aircraft.

12 Q. Six people.

13 A. Excuse me. Yeah. I think, I had four in the back, two up
14 front. So I had five. So I only -- I had one of the aircraft
15 that could only carry five passengers. No, I had six.

16 Q. Six. Okay. Four in the back, two up front?

17 A. I do have my old manifest if you want me to get the exact
18 number for you. I think it's in my aircraft.

19 Q. We'll circle back if we need to.

20 A. Two up front, four in back -- that's correct -- six.

21 Q. And what time did the evacuations conclude?

22 A. Again, the evacuations concluded about 1:45. Or, I mean,
23 that -- 1:45 was about the time I got back on top of the canyon.
24 So about a half hour, at least, to get out of the canyon. So
25 1:15, I'd say, or 1:00.

1 Q 1:00 in the morning?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay. It's late in the day and my brain is not functioning
4 like it's supposed to.

5 A. I understand a little too well.

6 Q. Oh, did any of your passengers, to your knowledge -- did you
7 guys have any -- did they take any record of the site, accident
8 site, any footage, camera footage?

9 A. To my knowledge, no one that I saw on the canyon floor took
10 any footage. As for on top, there was lots and lots of people
11 with phones out and cameras, but nobody on the canyon floor except
12 for the inspector is the only one that I know of that took a
13 picture.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I thought about it once, I think, and I regret the decision
16 not to take photos when things died down a little bit.

17 MR. STEIN: How are you supposed to know, really? Okay. I
18 don't have any further questions for you at this time.

19 BY MS. KELIHER:

20 Q. Just a few clarifying questions. When you were talking about
21 somebody calling you on the radio before you were coming in, what
22 was --

23 A. Nobody called me, I don't believe, on the way in.

24 Q. Okay. So you called to tell somebody about a tailwind or
25 they called to tell you?

1 A. I didn't. I didn't either. So I came in, I didn't ever
2 recall hearing anybody mention calling for a tailwind.

3 Q. Okay. Because I heard that you contacted a pilot who landed,
4 or who --

5 A. Oh, I apologize. Yes. We have -- company protocol is if
6 somebody's blades are slow and you come in, you can actually
7 potentially chop off a tailboom. So the pilot, John Davis,
8 actually the one that was on the bottom of the canyon floor with
9 me, he was coming in right behind me. So I was at the point where
10 I could have shut my aircraft off, but I asked him to let me know
11 when he was down to let me know essentially when I could actually
12 shut them off, because I had to protect the aircraft.

13 Q. And did you hear anything else on the radio after that?

14 A. Nothing else on the radio after that. As soon as I shut down
15 it was -- I turned my avionics off, so my radios were dead at that
16 point in time.

17 Q. And you said everyone -- you didn't hear anything but
18 everyone started running? How did you -- what caused you to think
19 that that was an alarm?

20 A. The expression on people's faces and the urgency. I mean,
21 everybody -- when a mass of people just start running in one
22 direction, it's just an automatic assumption that something had
23 happened. Again, didn't know what it was, but something had
24 happened behind me.

25 Q. And when you were talking about the -- when you had made your

1 way down and then the second pilot was on his way down.

2 A. I made my way down, was when I was applying the tourniquet, I
3 noticed that as second pilot had made his way down as well. And
4 that's when I asked for his assistance, so --

5 Q. Do you know who that was?

6 A. That was Derrick Mojica.

7 Q. And is he a pilot here?

8 A. He's one of the pilots as well. Again, he was one of the
9 ones that -- he was the first one trying to gather the, the few
10 guys that had initially started working their way to the accident
11 site. But after applying the tourniquet -- I'm not sure what time
12 he returned back up the hill, but it was, I think, relatively soon
13 after. He knew the pilot really well, so -- go ahead.

14 Q. So it's, when he came to assist you -- I'm trying to get the
15 timeline of, and it doesn't have to actually be time, but the --

16 A. Time span.

17 Q. -- in the discussions that the pilot had with you during --
18 from you being there and the other pilot being there, of what you
19 guys were talking about that whole time?

20 A. The injured pilot?

21 Q. The injured and Derrick.

22 A. Derrick was purely helping me with the tourniquet, do this,
23 do this, and I need this, and that was about it. So for the
24 injured pilot, conversations that we had was at some point in
25 time, as I mentioned, to tell his family that he loved them, that

1 he was going to bleed out there if he didn't get help, reiterated
2 that multiple times. The statement saying that, to the other
3 pilot -- I believe it was directed at the other pilot at that
4 point in time, that he had settled and --

5 Q. Can you tell me what the situation was around there, where
6 you were positioned? Just take -- if I was going to shoot a
7 documentary and we were staging everybody of where they were going
8 to be and what the exact script was?

9 A. Yeah. Absolutely. So when I had initially got up to the
10 pilot, he was laying prone on his back. His left leg was propped
11 up, so his knee was up in the air. And as I described earlier,
12 the remainder of his leg was cantered off about almost 90 degrees
13 off to the left, pretty much just dangling there. His right leg
14 was down flat, as I could see. And his head was -- his feet were
15 uphill, or upstream in relationship to the canyon.

16 He was up against the canyon wall on top of that kind of
17 shelf on the big rock. And his head was more towards the
18 downstream area, but he was right up against the wall. Myself,
19 when I got there, determined he needed a tourniquet. I was
20 straddling over his other leg, so his right leg, working over his
21 left knee, which was already propped up. So applying the
22 tourniquet.

23 As for Derrick, when he initially came down, the first place
24 I noticed him -- because we were actually back behind a rock
25 outcropping, couldn't see the other injured passengers from that

1 vantage point. Derrick had come down the, as I labeled out there,
2 just the -- it appeared, by the other passengers. So right next
3 to where they were is where he had come out. And he came out and
4 he was in that gravel area between the two large rocks there, just
5 kind of looking at everything, and said very emotional, was just
6 saying a number of things. I didn't really catch what he was
7 saying, but definitely flustered and very emotional about what was
8 going on.

9 That was the point in time when I called over to him. I
10 said, I need a branch. I knew there were some small little
11 bushes, like, next to him. I didn't know if they were strong
12 enough. He grabbed the first one. He said, that's not strong
13 enough. Walked off kind of out of view, came back with a much
14 larger, a much larger stick we could use for the tourniquet.

15 At this point in time he was near the pilot's -- kind of off
16 the shelf right next to the pilot's head and right shoulder, is
17 where he was standing, so -- and as the pilot said the phrase we
18 settled or I settled, or whatever the actual verbiage was, the
19 reason I was pretty sure it was directed at Derrick is because he
20 had turned his head kind of in that direction as I was working on
21 the tourniquet.

22 Then we needed something to secure the branch, and Derrick
23 then shifted up closer, kind of next to his hip, took off his
24 belt. Because I had to -- he had to actually help me put it on
25 because I had -- either -- I can't remember if he put the -- I

1 think he put the belt on, then we had to punch a hole out. We had
2 to actually get out his knife to punch a hole in the belt to get
3 it tight enough to at least hold the branch.

4 And there just kind of started talking with -- that's the
5 point in time just kind of talking with Scott a little bit. Just
6 trying to kind of see where he was at, how he was doing. And at
7 some point in time in there, that's when I no longer saw Derrick
8 really after that point.

9 Q. Do you remember what you were talking about?

10 A. A couple things. That may have been probably the time he
11 actually talked about his family, a number of other things.
12 Eventually a little bit later on, I said again about that time,
13 close proximity, that's when somebody else came down, and I had
14 them come over and just keep him company so I could start looking
15 at the other passengers.

16 He was -- throughout the time he was pretty coherent right at
17 that point in time. Eventually we were trying to get count of
18 passengers and he told us that he had six passengers. So somebody
19 asked like, hey, how many were in the aircraft? Six. Like, okay,
20 so five passengers? He's like, no, I had six. So he was in that
21 respect coherent and very helpful. Outside of that, that was
22 about the most interaction I had with him until much later,
23 whenever he was drugged and talking with nurses and such.

24 BY MR. STEIN:

25 Q. So Derrick Mojica was one of the folks that was -- that

1 responded as well?

2 A. Yeah. And my recollection, he would have been the second one
3 on-site. Did not remain on-site long though. So --

4 Q. Do you by chance, and this is a long shot, but do you
5 remember the names of the folks, that you remember, who you knew
6 that -- pilots, at least, that were either up top at the landing
7 zone or down with you?

8 A. So John Davis was down at the bottom of the floor. I'll go
9 through the ones that you've actually interviewed today. Hold on.
10 We had -- I can't remember. The last name was Rascon. I can't
11 remember her first name. I apologize.

12 Q. It's a she?

13 MS. KELIHER: Christina.

14 MR. FINNEY: Yeah, Christina. Thank you.

15 So those were the, all the pilots that remained there. Who
16 else was on the floor or actually there on the scene, we had -- we
17 talked to was Pollyanna, or we call her Polly. I'm unsure of her
18 last name.

19 BY MR. STEIN:

20 Q. Is she with Papillion?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. The only pilots I know of were Papillion. I heard some
24 Maverick pilots had ran over but, I don't know their name and what
25 time frame that happened. Let's see. Who else was down there?

1 It was -- so Derrick Mojica, David Gutierrez. I think -- how many
2 names is that? I'm trying to think if that accounts --

3 MS. KELIHER: 1,2,3,4,5 -- six.

4 MR. FINNEY: Six. Including myself, seven, which would
5 account for one other pilot. I'm not sure. But there should have
6 been one other pilot there.

7 BY MR. STEIN:

8 Q. John Davis, does he go by Jonathan?

9 A. I'm not sure. He was the first that was --

10 Q. We can talk about it offline.

11 A. I'm not sure. I haven't heard anything other but John.

12 Q. All right. Okay.

13 A. As for -- oh, this -- so pilots that were following the
14 crashed aircraft, one, Martijn Adriaanse. So I believe he was the
15 next in line behind the crashed aircraft and the first to bring
16 down first responders. So he immediately went around, went up to
17 the top, and so Martijn Adriaanse.

18 Q. Martijn Adriaanse.

19 A. And, I apologize, I'm totally blanking on the second pilot's
20 name that. I was talking with her earlier and she said she saw
21 it. But I believe she was the other pilot to bring firefighters
22 down, so it would have been the second pilot.

23 BY MS. KELIHER:

24 Q. And then you said when you got down there, the fire was still
25 burning. How did that feel?

1 A. What's that?

2 Q. How did it feel?

3 A. It wasn't superhot, if that's what you're asking. It wasn't
4 superhot. It wasn't like intense-intense heat, but judging, again
5 in my opinion, now after having -- once I saw everything burnt and
6 knowing that that was the main rotor gearbox, potentially oil or
7 materials from the engine just remaining, it wasn't very, very
8 hot.

9 Q. How tall was it when you walked up to it?

10 A. The flames? Probably 10 foot, 10 to 15 foot, 15. It wasn't
11 -- it wasn't super, supertall but it was not just a campfire size
12 either, so --

13 Q. How tall was the actual wreckage?

14 A. The wreckage -- the wreckage, which eventually burnt up, that
15 I could see, maybe 4 foot tall.

16 Q. Have you ever had settling with power training?

17 A. I have.

18 Q. In a turbine?

19 A. I don't recall like practical training in turbine.

20 Q. And you said you recently started with Papillion?

21 A. Just the beginning of January.

22 Q. Where did you do your turbine transition?

23 A. Turbine transition, I did -- initial turbine transition in
24 initial flight school.

25 MR. STEIN: Where?

1 MR. FINNEY: In my initial flight school.

2 MR. STEIN: Oh, your initial flight school?

3 MR. FINNEY: Yeah, my initial flight school, so at Universal
4 Helicopters. Then just did the aircraft transition here.

5 BY MS. KELIHER:

6 Q. About how many hours total time do you have?

7 A. Approximately 2,400.

8 MR. STEIN: Did you start in Robinsons down there with
9 Universal?

10 MR. FINNEY: I did.

11 MR. STEIN: Okay.

12 MR. FINNEY: Yeah, it was primary -- mostly Robinson time.
13 Just, you know --

14 BY MS. KELIHER:

15 Q. So I'm going to ask you to do some drawing for us now over
16 what I understand (indiscernible) those drawings. So if you could
17 come over here, or switch places with Stephen.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. So I'm going to have you show me -- here's the windsock. You
20 can move it around like whichever way the wind was going. And
21 then if you can take this fleet --

22 A. And place the aircraft where they were?

23 Q. And place the aircraft where they were, and that being you.
24 And you can rotate them around, too, to however they were
25 positioned. I kind of tried to just --

1 A. That's fine. Here's the route that we had around there, and
2 there.

3 MR. STEIN: Do you want to stop recording?

4 MS. KELIHER: Yeah.

5 (Off the record.)

6 (On the record.)

7 BY MS. KELIHER:

8 Q. What do you think that there could have been in the
9 helicopter that would have been useful?

10 A. Useful would have been a solar blanket. That would have been
11 definitely something we needed, stuff like that. And handheld
12 radios. The biggest thing we had going against us was there was
13 no communication with the platform for a couple of hours.

14 Q. What did you think of the first aid kits?

15 A. The first aid kits were well stocked. They were excellent.
16 But I mean, with something of this magnitude -- they're good for
17 one person, not three people. So once we got the three first aid,
18 three or four first aid kits and then the large one that's
19 normally stationed up there, we were all right with, for the most
20 part, bandages that we needed, but -- they were good. They got us
21 started.

22 Q. Were you in the right attire? Would it have been useful to
23 have gloves, sneakers? What are you required to wear? Flight
24 suits? Helmets?

25 A. The only thing that would have helped me better is if I had

1 harder soled shoes. That would have been better for the walking.
2 But our normal day in/day out, they're actually -- they're all
3 right, but -- so shoes definitely were not appropriate.

4 If I had brought a jacket, that would have been better as
5 well. I normally carry a jacket. It was so warm that I'm like,
6 not going to need a jacket today. I keep gloves in my bag already
7 for preflight and stuff like that, so I did have a pair of gloves
8 for later, once I actually went back and got my headlamp. Outside
9 of that, for normal day in/day out, our attire was acceptable. It
10 was just the shoes were the big thing that definitely could have
11 been better.

12 Q. You said your phone said 8:30, 7:30 Arizona time?

13 A. 7:30 Arizona time. It was 6:30 Nevada time when we set,
14 so --

15 Q. So what time do you think the accident happened?

16 A. Approximately 5:30, judging by about the normal time we take
17 off, the normal time it takes to get there, roughly.

18 Q. It happened at 5:30?

19 A. P.M., Arizona time.

20 Q. So if it happened around 5 Mountain Standard --

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. -- and that call was made at 8:30 Mountain Standard, so
23 3½ hours?

24 A. I think it was 7:30 Mountain Standard.

25 Q. Okay. Because I want to make sure because initially you said

1 it was 8:30 Mountain Standard. You confused me.

2 A. Did I? Let me clarify it one more time. Here it says, 6:30
3 here. So it would have been between 6:30 and 7:30. Sorry.

4 MS. KELIHER: All right. I really, really, really appreciate
5 it. I know that was kind of arduous.

6 MR. FINNEY: I hope it was helpful. So --

7 MS. KELIHER: Very helpful. It gives us a lot to go on and a
8 lot more stuff that we can pursue, and definitely the first thing
9 is going to be seeing if we can locate that white cell phone.

10 MR. FINNEY: Yeah, it was a -- hope you can get it and
11 hopefully there's something on it, but -- I don't know.

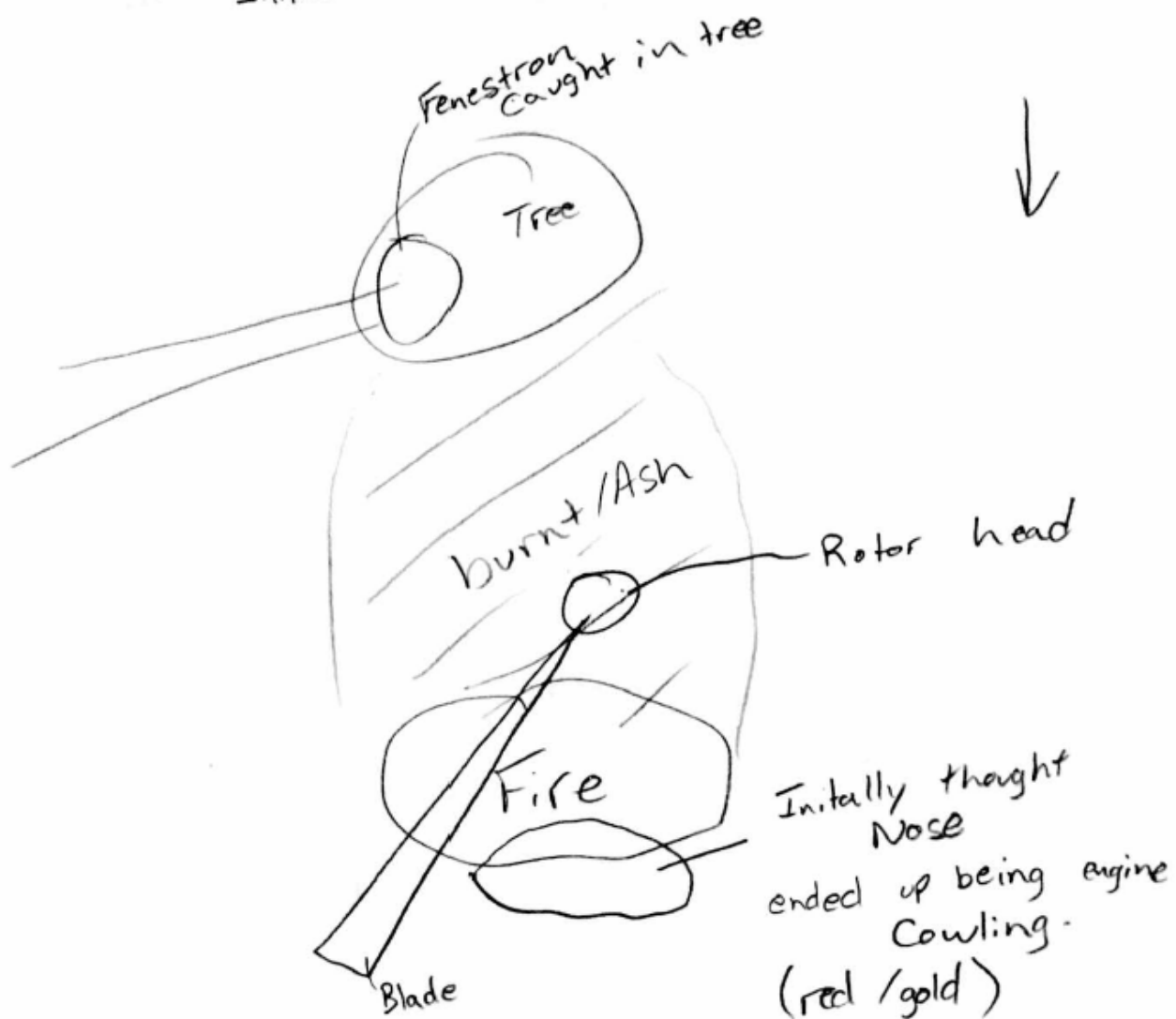
12 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
13
14

In the series of events leading to the accident, I was piloting the aircraft that was two in front of the accident aircraft. As I was descending down to quartermaster towards the south I had a tailwind, as I made the turn towards the east for landing to the LZ in quartermaster the tail of my aircraft swung around quite quickly as I turned to the left, which I attributed to turning to the crosswind. On approach into the LZ observing the windsock that was present at the LZ I had a direct left crosswind with a little variability shifting slightly aft. Judging by the windsock the winds were upwards of 10 to 15 knots if not slightly more. Once on the ground one other aircraft landed behind my aircraft. I was still in the aircraft when the accident occurred so I was not able to observe the accident.

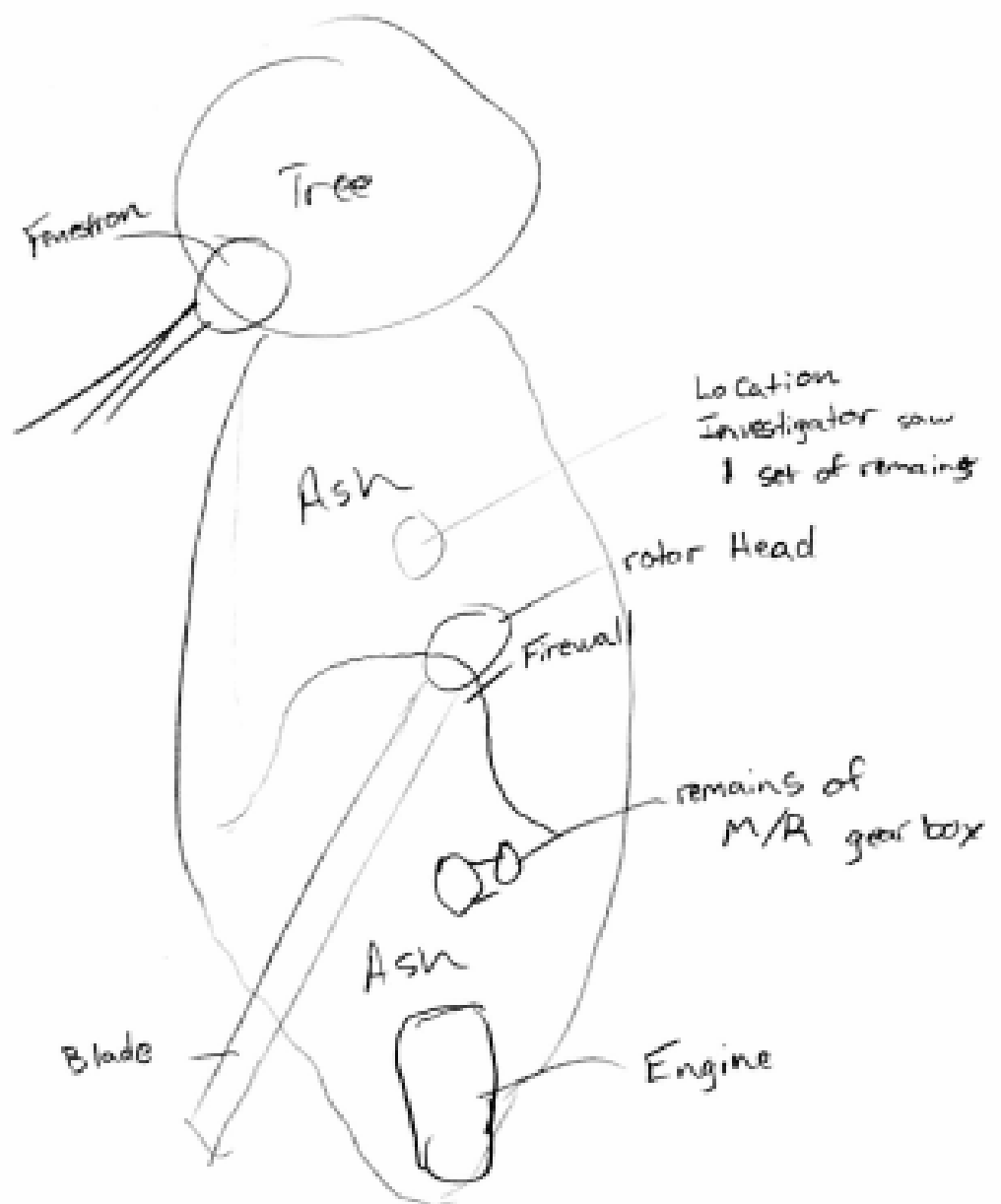
On another note I was the first person on the scene of the accident, and began giving aid to the injured. At the moment the pilot was the most urgent due to the nature of his injuries. As myself and another pilot were placing a tourniquet on his leg he stated to the other pilot assisting me , "Dude, I got settling."

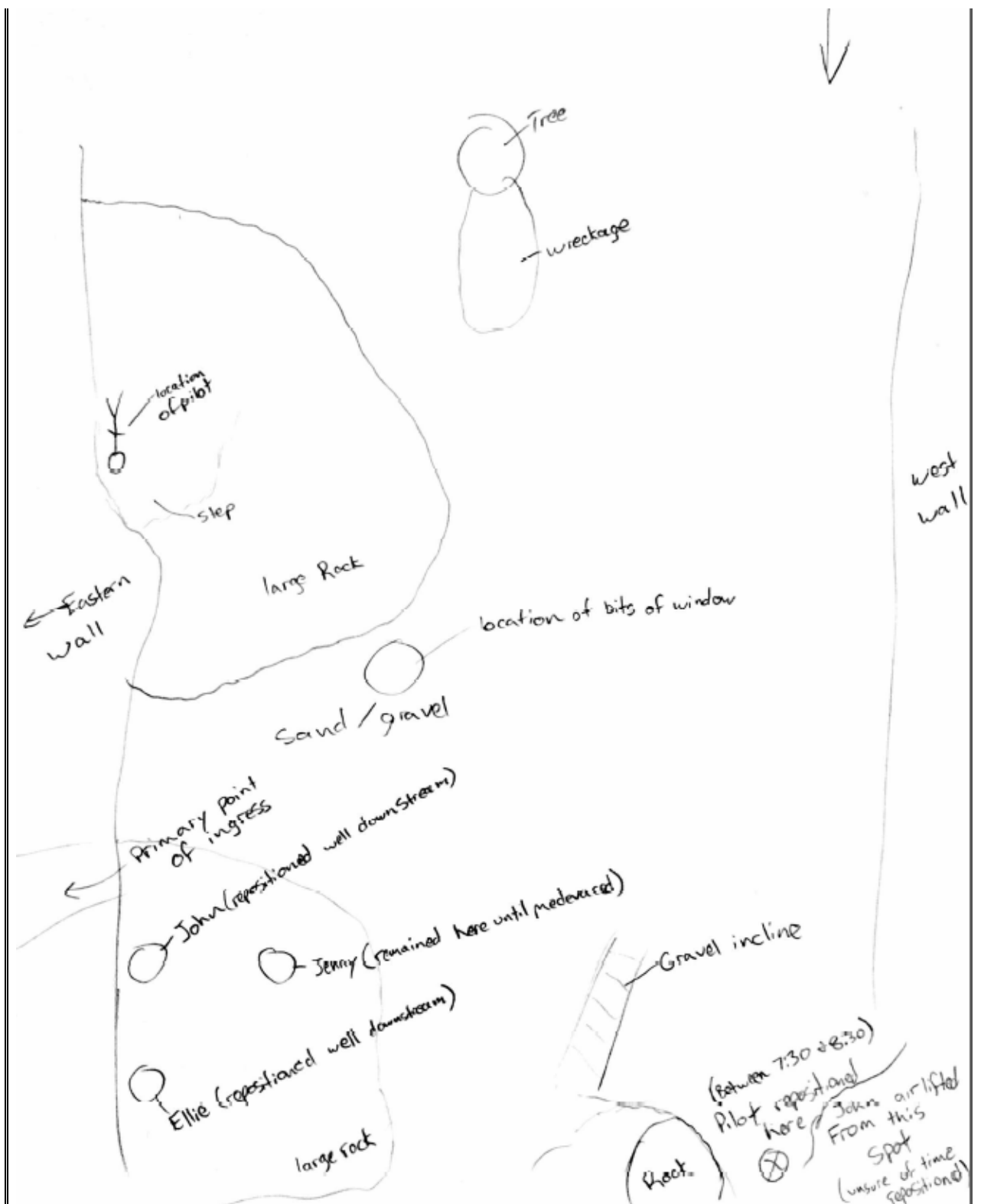
These are all the pertinent details of the moments leading up to and following the accident that I can recall.

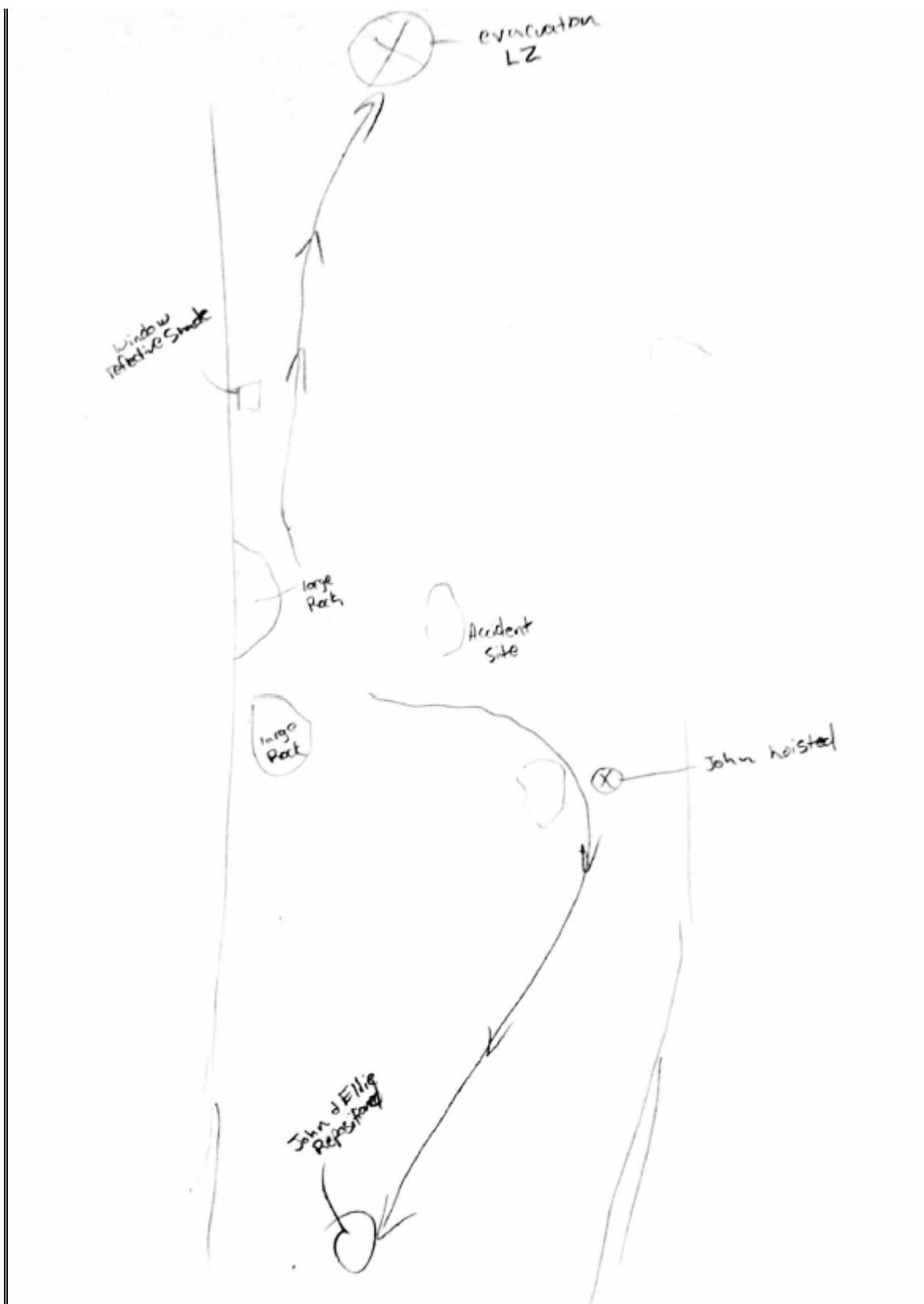
Initial Arrival \approx 5:30 PM



Later \approx 12:30 A.M.









Upriver Approach

notch

Landing
Location

LZ'S

Ramada

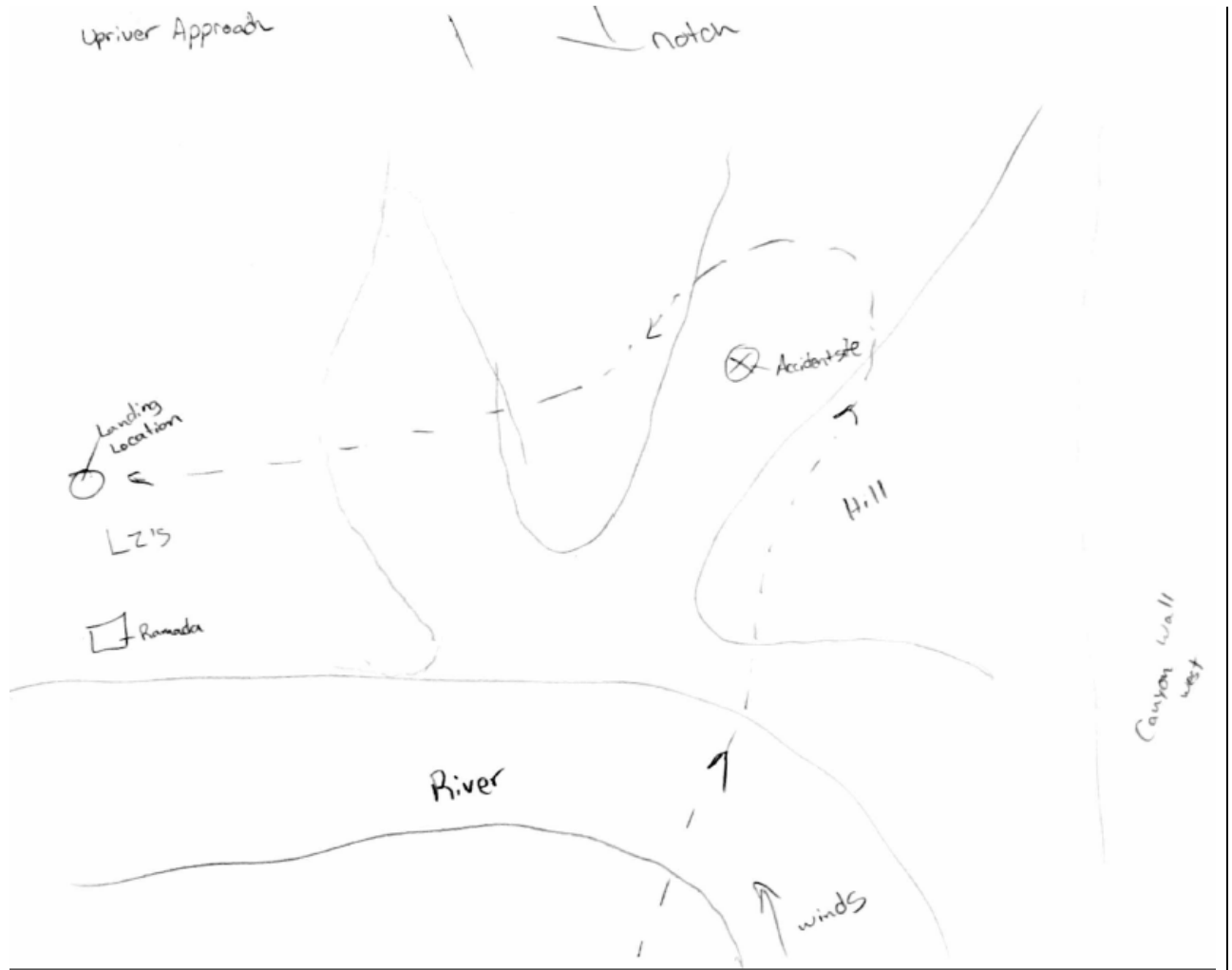
Accident site

Hill

River

winds

Canyon wall
west



1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
2
3 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
4
5 * * * * *
6 Investigation of: *
7 *
8 PAPILLON HELICOPTERS CRASH * Accident No.: WPR18FA087
9 FEBRUARY 10, 2018 *
10 *
11 * * * * *
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13 Interview of: JOHN DAVIS
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23 Monday,
24 February 12, 2018
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APPEARANCES:

ZOE KELIHER

National Transportation Safety Board

I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. DAVIS: I had landed my helicopter at Quartermaster Base.
3 And Scott was about a minute and a half, 2 minutes behind me. I
4 saw -- just as my blades were slowing down -- because I knew he
5 was going to land behind me, I was making sure I had them stopped,
6 because I didn't want the blades heeling from him landing behind
7 me. I saw him cross the river, and then I looked back to my
8 helicopter, made sure the blades were stopped.

9 And I was writing down my flight report. And I was getting
10 ready to turn it off, when I saw everybody out my left window
11 running towards the back of the helicopter. One of the other
12 pilots came up to me -- I had my door open. She said that a
13 helicopter had just crashed. So I got on our FM frequency, called
14 Guano Base and let them know. And heard one of the helicopters
15 that was doing a go-around, heard him reporting it up there. So
16 it was out of my hands, so I got out of the helicopter and ran
17 over to the crash, ran across and down the cliff.

18 Q. I'm not going to interrupt you with any questions. I'll ask
19 you follow-up questions. But just as much as you can go into
20 detail.

21 A. I was -- my blades were slowing down. They were almost to a
22 stop. I looked out my left window, the passenger -- no, not the
23 passenger. The pilot's left window. I saw a helicopter on final
24 approach. He was probably still 400 or 500 feet above the ground.
25 I watched him cross the river, the Colorado River, and -- which is
26 our -- where we start our approach into Quartermaster Base.

1 There's a bluff on that route in. We call it the upriver
2 approach. He looked stable, in control. I didn't see anything
3 unusual. And as he got to the bluff, I lost sight of him. I
4 didn't see any of that after that point.

5 And so then I went back to make sure my helicopter was
6 completely shut down, filled out my pilot report off of the VEMD
7 in front of me. And then I noticed all the passengers and pilots
8 running towards the west end of Quartermaster Base. And somebody
9 told me that the -- a helicopter had crashed. I didn't know if it
10 was that one behind me or another one at that point. I just knew
11 a helicopter had crashed, so I reported it. I switched to my FM
12 frequency for Guano Base up at 124, Grand Canyon West, reported
13 that a Papillon helicopter had crashed in the Canyon. I had to
14 repeat it three times, I think. I don't know, two or three times.
15 And I couldn't give any further details.

16 And then I looked out my window again. My door was open at
17 this point. I don't know when I opened it. Looked out the
18 window, saw another helicopter going overhead, and they were
19 reporting on the FM frequency. So I think I turned off my
20 helicopter, the battery power; I think I turned that off. I don't
21 remember. Somebody may have later. I got out of my helicopter.
22 Another pilot was getting my passengers out. And I started
23 running towards the west side of Quartermaster Base.

24 I saw a lot of black smoke coming up. I heard bangs that
25 sounded like explosions. I could see a fire. And I started going

1 as fast as I could through the terrain to get over to the
2 wreckage, climbed down, and surveyed the casualties, the wreckage.
3 There were three casualties already out to the east.

4 Q. Can you close your eyes and just take me there in as much
5 detail as you can when you get down there? That's what's going to
6 be really important to me.

7 A. I finished climbing down the cliff. There were two pilots
8 down there. And I saw two passengers that were in front, up top;
9 they were the Australian Air Force guys, they were already down
10 there. I went as fast as I could to get down to the bottom.

11 As soon as I got down there, I noticed three passengers,
12 probably 40, 50 feet to the east of the helicopter. They were --
13 one female was laying on one of the rocks, flat, and kind of
14 trying to sit up. Another was burned really bad; it was a male.
15 I think his name was Jon, I think. And he was kind of sitting on
16 one of the rocks. He was in shock. And there was another female
17 that still had some of her clothes on, sitting next to him.

18 I looked at them. I didn't see any immediate concerns,
19 bleeding. I could see the burns, but there wasn't anything I
20 could do immediately. So I went towards the wreckage to the west
21 side. So I walked towards the wreckage, it was still burning. It
22 was probably about knee-height at this point.

23 I found Scott laying probably 20 feet to the southeast of the
24 helicopter. He had a broken leg. It looked like it was broken,
25 his tibia. It was a 90-degree angle, open fracture. Didn't look

1 like he was bleeding really bad anymore. One of the pilots,
2 Jimmy, was -- or he may -- he was working on Scott and trying to
3 get a tourniquet on his leg, his left leg. Scott looked to be
4 really burned, but he had two or three people there trying to
5 render aid. So I immediately went to the wreckage, trying to see
6 if I could find anybody else.

7 I knew that one of the ladies were screaming the name Jason.
8 I had to ask about one of the other passengers. And so I tried
9 looking if there was anybody else in the wreckage. I couldn't get
10 too close. It was still really hot. Fire was burning, and the
11 wreckage was down really low. I'm not saying the wreckage was
12 low; I was at the same level as the wreckage. It just -- there
13 was nothing left that I could possibly get somebody else out of.

14 Walked all the way around the wreckage, looking for any other
15 passengers. And made a decision at that point that, having not
16 seen anybody else, that any other passengers would have been in
17 that and there was no sounds coming from it, there was no way
18 anybody else could have been alive in there. So I went back to
19 taking care of the passengers that were out and Scott,
20 coordinating supplies coming down the hill and ensuring that
21 bandages were and clothing was put on the passengers. We didn't
22 want to cause any further damage to the burns, so I gave up my
23 shirt and my undershirt to wrap around one of the passengers.
24 People were giving up their clothes, shirts, pants, trying to
25 cover them and make them as comfortable as we could while trying

1 to apply what little first aid we had available.

2 I immediately started looking for more passengers once I knew
3 that those passengers were being taken care of. I walked in about
4 a 100-foot radius around the wreckage, looking for additional
5 passengers, asking, if anybody could hear my voice, make a sound.
6 Took about, I don't know, 20, 30 minutes doing that. When I was
7 certain there was nobody else that had been thrown from the
8 aircraft anywhere else around there, I went back to taking care of
9 the passengers and looking for a route to evac them.

10 And then we were out of first aid kits, really. There wasn't
11 anything good that we had. That's when I started talking to all
12 the passengers, making sure they were comfortable, watching for
13 shock, trying to keep everybody talking.

14 And EMTs arrived after that from down the hill. And the
15 firefighters, they came from the cliff, the same route we had. I
16 started shuttling up and down the cliff, trying to help bring
17 equipment and people down. Doing everything I can, going up and
18 down the cliff, trying to make sure more supplies got down to
19 people. And just trying to maintain control of the situation. I
20 tried getting people's names of passengers and pilots that were
21 down there, and trying to get the names of the victims. Make sure
22 everybody knew where everybody was at.

23 Once the EMTs figured that we had the evac them and we knew
24 we couldn't get them up the cliff, I went down the crevasse a
25 little bit more, trying to look for a route. And I knew people

1 were following me with two of the passengers. I tried to tell
2 them to wait there until I could try to find a route, but
3 everybody kept coming, so I tried to help the passengers as much
4 as I could while reconning the route up ahead.

5 After about maybe 100 meters, realized there was two 8-foot
6 drops and there was no way we could have got them down there. So
7 those two passengers, the female and the -- Jon, the burn victim,
8 we left them at that location with some of the other passengers
9 from up top. And I kept going back and forth trying to make sure
10 all the passengers were good, keep an eye on what was going on.
11 And at that point it was just a waiting game, trying to get more
12 blankets, more supplies there to help out everybody we could. And
13 I didn't know if anybody was going to make it. I just wanted to
14 try to make them as comfortable as I could.

15 After several hours of being down there, it started getting
16 really cold. I don't know. I think it was around 11 or 12, I
17 don't know, we knew there was nothing else we could do down there,
18 and I had a lot of passengers that weren't doing anything anymore.
19 So I got names of everybody that was from Papillon and passengers
20 that were staying down at the bottom. I took 13 passengers in a
21 list back up to the top. I didn't want people going up and down
22 the cliff all night because I didn't want any further injuries.
23 So I led them up. Well, I learned the Australians led them up the
24 top when I wasn't back to make sure nobody got lost along the way,
25 got them up top. And blankets, and got them into my helicopters

1 to keep warm. We were able to shuttle a couple of them out.
2 There were five passengers remaining when -- alone, just got down
3 too bad. We couldn't get anybody else out.

4 And then Jimmy down at the bottom was able to get an LZ set
5 up, and the winds had died down enough. The helicopters -- when
6 EMS got there prior to that, they tried and tried. The wind was
7 much worse than it had been. It was probably doing 30, 40 knots
8 in that little slot canyon where the wreckage was, and just
9 spinning round and round. There was no way for a helicopter to
10 land down there at that time. The wind had gotten a lot worse.

11 I don't know. I feel terrible. I landed right before Scott.
12 And I knew -- I have experience flying in mountains. And I knew
13 it was windy, and I thought there might be a wind shear right
14 there, so I was prepared for it. And when it hit me, it was more
15 than I expected and it took everything I had to control that
16 helicopter and land it. But I was prepared for it, and I could
17 have got on the radio and said, hey, there -- don't come this way;
18 there's a wind shear. I don't know what happened. I don't -- all
19 I know is it easily could have been me too.

20 That was -- I almost lost control of the helicopter. I had
21 to pull power completely up and as much right pedal as I could to
22 keep the nose back, coming back straight. I made that turn to go
23 into Quartermaster, my nose swung 90 degrees to the left and I
24 went from having airspeed to not having any at all. I don't know
25 how I kept it straight. I keep thinking about that. Had I said

1 something on the radio, maybe he would have not followed that
2 direction. I was just relieved I was on the ground, and I knew
3 that people behind me knew what they were doing.

4 Q. You had nothing to do with it. I mean, there's just so many
5 what-ifs.

6 A. I told myself when I got in the canyon that, if it was still
7 bad, if the wind was bad, I wasn't going to land. And it was
8 nice. It was less. It was much worse above the canyon. And so
9 it was a real comfortable approach in. But I knew that I had a
10 tailwind coming in and so I knew that there might be wind shear
11 right before Quartermaster. And I was ready for it. It just --
12 it was nothing like what I expected. It was much stronger than I
13 expected. And that was just -- I don't know if he hit the same
14 shear I did. I don't. He was 2 minutes behind me, so -- I don't
15 know.

16 Q. Well, I'm going to pull up some pictures, and I hope that you
17 can kind of show me when you come over here of what path that you
18 took, so I can see it a little bit more.

19 A. I could do that.

20 Q. I think maybe this one because --

21 A. I've seen tragedy. I spent 15 years in the combat arms and 5
22 in the reserves now. This was different. I didn't see him crash.
23 I saw him right before he crashed. I did not see him crash.

24 Q. All right. So first I'm going to -- just going to let you
25 draw with this. All right. So here is your drawing tool. Blue

1 pen. So if you can tell me where you were --

2 A. This is our whole approach.

3 Q. Yeah. So I'm going to show you different things, but can you
4 just show me where you were, which pad you were at?

5 A. I was right there.

6 Q. All right. And so that one -- will it show -- can you show
7 the approach there?

8 A. Kind of comes across over here.

9 Q. Here, let me first get the -- all right.

10 A. Across over here. That's about where I lost sight of him.
11 And then coming this way, and then it comes around.

12 Q. So I tried to draw it.

13 A. If you have a top-down view, it would be much easier.

14 Q. No, this is it.

15 A. Because it's right here.

16 Q. I don't know -- I see that too. I don't think I ever got
17 high enough. I tried to do it on Google Earth, and let me just
18 see if this was close to it. Does that look anything like what he
19 would do, have come up and around the canyon?

20 A. Not quite as high. More like this. You come over this area
21 right here, left of this bluff, and kind of come over that spot
22 right there. But maybe about this high over this spot right here,
23 not over there.

24 Q. So move it down?

25 A. Probably, yeah.

1 Q. Like that?

2 A. Yeah. Right about like that.

3 Q. And was he landing at Wedding Point?

4 A. I don't --

5 Q. You wouldn't know?

6 A. No, I doubt -- if there was somebody there, he would have
7 been landing right behind me.

8 Q. And so behind you would have been about over here?

9 A. Way over here.

10 Q. Okay. And when we look at those pads --

11 A. So if he --

12 Q. And that would be --

13 A. That's a good one. So he would have been going to one of
14 those.

15 Q. So I know that Wedding Point is named. Are any of these
16 named?

17 A. Yeah. So he would have been coming across right here. This
18 is about where I hit my wind shear. And coming across right here,
19 probably about --

20 Q. Well, he's going --

21 A. -- 300 to 500 feet, and then come in like this. So we come
22 in, then turn.

23 Q. So when we were coming in, we were going this way. But you
24 come in --

25 A. Yeah, we come in from upriver, go like this. We have two

1 approaches. We come in from upriver and land this way, or we come
2 through -- go through this notch that's right here and come around
3 and land.

4 Q. But you're coming that way, correct?

5 A. It's not from way up there. We come in and land like that.

6 Q. But up here is Bat Towers.

7 A. No. Bat Towers is way over there.

8 Q. Do I have that -- no? Because that's Wedding Point.

9 A. Yeah. Bat Towers is that direction.

10 Q. The accident's right here.

11 A. Accident's right there.

12 Q. Oh, I see. This is just a weird viewpoint.

13 A. This is that rock that we couldn't get down.

14 Q. Oh, so this is that circle. Okay.

15 A. You're looking at it towards the west.

16 Q. Got it. Yeah, so you come from --

17 A. We all come from over here, cross the river to come over
18 through here, left turn into Quartermaster. Wind was kind of
19 about like this, so I knew I had a tailwind until I turned to
20 final.

21 Q. So what did the sock look like?

22 A. Right about that direction. So wind coming this -- so it's
23 coming up and blowing this way.

24 Q. So you come in, and about when did you feel it?

25 A. Right there. As soon as I had made my left turn, the nose

1 whipped around to the left. And I kind of started sinking, pulled
2 in all the power I had. Got some forward airspeed because I lost
3 all my airspeed, and just forward and right cyclic, lots of power,
4 and every bit of right pedal that I had.

5 Q. Were you in a AStar or 130?

6 A. 130. Same type of helicopter.

7 Q. It's like a sail.

8 A. What's that?

9 Q. I said it's like a sail, that tail.

10 A. Well, yeah, I think the wind pushed on it and -- but just
11 going from airspeed to no airspeed. When we're -- when we have
12 airspeed, it picks up a lot of the load, so we're at a lot of left
13 pedal, and left pedal is not our power pedal. So when we're
14 hovering, it's a lot of right pedal, no airspeed. So I went from
15 airspeed to no airspeed instantly, so it required a lot more power
16 and a lot more pedal.

17 Q. Did you talk to Scott at all about what happened?

18 A. Uh-uh. I just tried to keep him lucid. I didn't ask him
19 what happened to him. I just told him everything was going to be
20 all right and he was going to make it. I said I'm not leaving him
21 down there, and he wasn't going anywhere and we were going to see
22 him up top and it's going to be good. I didn't know him very
23 well. I've only been here since January.

24 Q. That's what I was going to ask. How long have you been
25 employed?

1 A. January 8th.

2 Q. Where did you come from?

3 A. Black Hills. I was flying tours around Mount Rushmore, and
4 Silverhawk Aviation in Idaho prior to that.

5 Q. Where did you get your transition training?

6 A. Turbine transition in Idaho. I did, obviously, another one
7 here, but I did long-line mountain flying course at turbine
8 transition in Idaho. But that was in a different type of
9 helicopter. It was in a Robinson R66. All the mountain flying at
10 turbine transition was done in a 66.

11 Q. Did you practice any type of settling with power?

12 A. Not here.

13 Q. But at --

14 A. Yes. And I was taught by Nick Weber. He used to be in the
15 FAA.

16 Q. I know him.

17 A. You know Nick?

18 Q. I do.

19 A. Nick was my instructor for mountain flying at turbine
20 transition. And I want to give him a hug right now. He taught me
21 everything I know about flying in the mountains, and I use it
22 always. Always.

23 Q. So had you just met Scott?

24 A. I'd seen him a couple of times. My real meeting him and
25 talking to him was while he was on his back at the bottom.

1 Q. When you said that you were knee-height, what does that mean?

2 A. I mean the wreckage. That helicopter is tall. When I got
3 down there, that helicopter was this tall. It took me 10, 15
4 minutes to get down there, and it had already burned down to
5 nothing. It was -- there was no way of getting anybody else out.

6 I heard a lot of bangs on my way down. You could see the
7 smoke billow up a little higher. There was obviously something
8 blowing up a little bit, maybe different parts and pieces, but it
9 was burned beyond -- I never even saw rotor blades. Apparently
10 some people said they may have seen some laying around. I never
11 personally saw rotor blades. I could make out where some of the
12 seats had been. I don't know. Maybe it could have been the
13 seats. I don't know.

14 MS. KELIHER: Do you have another pen and paper where we
15 could have him draw? Just give him a --

16 MR. DAVIS: I am a terrible artist.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, this is even better. It's not
18 ruled. There we go.

19 MR. DAVIS: Terrible. Like, my daughter makes fun of me
20 because I can't draw a helicopter.

21 BY MS. KELIHER:

22 Q. Well, first, can you just draw the normal approaches, one
23 side with one direction of wind and one side with the other?

24 A. Don't laugh.

25 Q. Just do what you can. Maybe kind of walk me through what

1 you're thinking when you're doing it.

2 A. Can we pull up a Google Earth and look down at it? That
3 would be easier.

4 Q. Just from your memory.

5 A. I have no conceptual skills. At all. There's Wedding Point.
6 You seem to know that spot. And then the Ramada. So our landing
7 would -- and there's more terrain here. And here's some -- the
8 river. I would come in like this and land. The river or -- this
9 is downriver landing called through the notch. You go around,
10 there's, like, terrain right here. Through the notch, come around
11 and land.

12 Q. What do you think your altitude is right about that delivery
13 point?

14 A. 2-, 300 hundred feet. Your approach really starts right
15 here, and then you come in right -- 200, 300 feet. Some areas,
16 like right here, maybe only like 100, maybe 300, maybe 200. And
17 coming in --

18 Q. When do you get a good look at the wind sock to determine
19 when you're going to land?

20 A. Back here.

21 Q. Okay. Where it's visible enough?

22 A. Um-hum. You know where you're going to -- which way you're
23 going to go when you're deciding when you cross the river. We
24 give a call right here. And crossing the river, landing upriver
25 or landing through the notch.

1 Q. And how do you determine which pad you're going to land on?

2 A. It's which one's open. I usually kind of base where I'm
3 going to land, how I'm going to land based on who's here when I
4 was coming in. All of the downriver locations were taken so I
5 chose to come in upriver. I knew I was giving myself a tailwind,
6 that I was going to come around a little bit more and make sure I
7 had more of a headwind component.

8 Q. So is that what we were -- what you were showing me when I
9 was stretching out the line, that it goes more into the canyon the
10 more tailwind you have?

11 A. I didn't do that. I stayed here. I was farther left than I
12 usually would, because I didn't want to be over here in case there
13 was a shear.

14 Q. And you've experienced shear there before?

15 A. No. No, this is my first windy day here.

16 Q. What do you think the wind was when you landed?

17 A. 15, 20 knots in this direction.

18 Q. Can you write that in? Just an arrow.

19 A. That would be my guess, looking at the groundspeed.

20 Q. And then when did it change?

21 A. Right there.

22 Q. So what do you think direction?

23 A. I have no idea. No idea. I went from 50 to 60 knots to
24 zero. And that's registering airspeed, so that was 50, 60 knots
25 of wind coming into my Pitot tube to none.

1 Q. And what ship were you flying?

2 A. 5-3.

3 Q. Can you write that down too?

4 A. So this was my path.

5 Q. And your nose -- you ended up pointing that way. Did you
6 ever -- pedal turns to face the other direction or anything like
7 that?

8 A. I was new. I didn't want -- I knew -- I thought the shear
9 right here would be worse so I figured I had a better option doing
10 this than going through the notch.

11 Q. Do you have the 500, the Garmin 500 --

12 A. No.

13 Q. -- on board? So the only thing you have for weather is the
14 wind sock for wind?

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. Do you use any of the -- I guess it would be downriver, the
17 ASOS? Do you ever listen to those?

18 A. All the time. As soon as I come into the canyon I listen to
19 that, but that is not a good representation of what it is at the
20 bottom.

21 Q. I was going to ask. But even --

22 A. And it was blowing harder outside the canyon than it was when
23 I got into it. That was my first go/no-go decision.

24 Q. But the ones at the docks, do you listen to those?

25 A. At the docks?

1 Q. That are up -- that are 1.4 miles north?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. Did anyone of the passengers -- I'm assuming everyone
4 always carries cameras and things like that. Did anyone show that
5 they had anything? Did you guys look through anything to see --

6 A. One of my passengers followed me down there and he helped me
7 all night. And his girlfriend stayed up here until we got back.
8 And they wouldn't get on another helicopter out until I left.

9 Q. So nobody mentioned having any of it caught on camera?

10 A. None of my passengers would have. We were all facing away
11 from it.

12 Q. Do you remember what the other ships were that were on the
13 ground, or any of the other pilots?

14 A. I know Polly was --

15 Q. You don't know which one?

16 A. I don't know which one she -- I don't know who was who was
17 who was who. I don't remember. I wasn't looking. Until I came
18 back up with all the passengers later that night, I didn't even
19 know anybody was still up here, when I got up here and then saw
20 Brett and Christina up here. I thought me and Jimmy were the only
21 two left.

22 Now that I think about it, you're obviously a lot more than
23 300 feet because that's probably about a 600-foot drop, 5-, 600
24 feet. I don't know.

25 Q. Well, I really appreciate it. Is there anything else that

1 you can think of that I should --

2 A. I don't know. I don't know what happened to him. All I know
3 is what I went through. I didn't see the crash.

4 Q. During your training did you ever talk about the different
5 winds in the canyon?

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. What was -- how was it presented to you?

8 A. It was you make your decision. Winds can get really strong,
9 especially in March. You make your decision. If you're not
10 comfortable, you go around. If you're not comfortable with it,
11 don't land and keep going.

12 And so at first, I wasn't comfortable at the beginning of the
13 flight. It was really bumpy, especially over at the dam. And,
14 you know, and that's when I -- my brain kicked in, said stop
15 flying tour route altitude; climb, get out of the roll. And it
16 was a comfortable flight the rest of the way.

17 But that was in the back of my head that, hey, the canyon may
18 be worse. So I made a decision. When I -- I said if it's bumpy
19 again when I get down out of the canyon, air tour, I'm not going
20 to land. And it was smooth; it wasn't bad. I had no issues
21 coming in. In fact, I felt great all the way. And I felt that
22 shear right here; it was nasty.

23 Q. Did you have a flight earlier?

24 A. I had done two other flights that day.

25 Q. And how was the wind during the --

1 A. None of them -- it was easy. Nothing out of the ordinary at
2 all.

3 Q. And then can you draw when you -- if you can make a
4 representation, I guess, of the way that the helicopter was
5 positioned when you got to it.

6 A. So canyon wall here. Canyon wall there. There's the tail
7 cone with fenestron. And there was that -- I have no idea which
8 way it was facing. No idea at all. I thought that might be the
9 rear, but I can't -- no idea at all.

10 Q. And where were the passengers?

11 A. Scott was right here, about 20 feet. This is north. And the
12 other passengers -- there's a little alcove right here. There was
13 a female, Jon and other female, probably about 40 feet.

14 Q. Is there anything that you had wished that you had been
15 equipped with?

16 A. Lots. I can't even describe that list. Like safety
17 equipment everywhere. Like we need a giant box with the insane
18 amount of passengers that we would have at the most time up at
19 Quartermaster.

20 Q. Would it have been easier if you had different type of
21 equipment, like gloves or sneakers or -- did anything hinder you
22 during the investigation?

23 A. No, I was actually really happy with my slacks. I'm going to
24 call the company and say they did a good job. They call them
25 Rugged Wear for a reason. They didn't rip at all. You know, and

1 part of me thinks that flight suit would have done a lot for
2 Scott.

3 Q. When you saw him laying there, what position was he in?

4 A. Head, feet. On his back.

5 Q. Do you recall seeing any seats around?

6 A. No, there was no -- nothing. Nothing here. Everything was
7 all in here. I think I saw what could have been maybe two seats
8 right there, maybe. Most of the fire was in this location. This
9 was all kind of done burning.

10 Q. Do you have anything in your cell phone of a record of
11 exactly what time -- I guess you were on the radio.

12 A. No, I -- no, I have --

13 Q. We're trying to pinpoint a more precise time.

14 A. Find the wife. So 1759 Arizona time I sent that. "Honey, if
15 you get this, I'm fine. I'm helping with the crash. It wasn't me
16 or any other new guys." It was -- didn't go through, obviously.

17 Q. So 1759.

18 A. That was probably an hour or so after.

19 Q. Yeah. That's quite a --

20 A. Yeah, I don't, I don't know how long it took me to send that.
21 I was not -- that's when I was doing more command and control
22 than --

23 Q. Did you take any pictures on your cell phone?

24 A. No. I had 1 percent battery. There was no way I was going
25 to take pictures. There was no way I was going to take pictures

1 of -- like I said, I was 20 years in the army and I've seen -- I
2 know what pictures do. They have no place. I'm not even thrilled
3 about the fact that apparently there's video of me walking around
4 down there.

5 Q. Well, hopefully the footage that we have will help us figure
6 out a lot of the safety issues.

7 Well, I really, really appreciate you being so forthcoming.
8 If you can think of -- I know you probably will think of other
9 things. I'm going to send you an email with all my contact
10 information, and you can forward it along. Or if you hear of
11 anybody that has any other information --

12 A. I have a really good memory, and I don't think I'll think of
13 anything else. That's really everything. I don't know what
14 happened. I didn't see the crash. I just know what I went
15 through.

16 Q. Do you remember the heat that you felt, temperature you felt
17 as you were getting closer?

18 A. It was warm. It was very warm when the --

19 Q. When you were near Scott --

20 A. It was, it was warm. That -- by the time I got down there --
21 and I don't think where he was at he could get burned from the
22 ambient heat, but when I first got down there I couldn't get
23 within 5 feet. I tried, and 5 feet was about as close as I could
24 get. Most of the fire had gone out by the time -- like I said, it
25 took me 10, 15 minutes. I don't know how long it took; I assume

1 10, 15. Felt like forever. Could have taken me 2, but it felt
2 like forever. I knew I wasn't going fast enough.

3 Q. Did the passengers or Scott indicate that they got out on
4 their own?

5 A. No, I don't have any idea how anybody got out. I don't think
6 any of us helped anybody out. I don't know. I didn't. And I
7 asked Jimmy when I got down there, and he didn't help anybody out.
8 I don't, I don't know. I don't know how they got out.

9 Q. Anything that you can remember of the conversation that they
10 were having with you?

11 A. Not me. Weren't talking to us, really. This female was
12 screaming for Jason. They were all wondering why it was taking so
13 long. Everybody was worried. This female could walk. She really
14 wanted to get out of there. She was like, I can walk, let's go,
15 let's do it. But no, everybody was really wondering why it was
16 taking so long. That was their concern. That's not unusual.
17 They were in disbelief. I can't believe it's happening.

18 MS. KELIHER: Well John, I really appreciate it. Thank you
19 so much.

20 MR. DAVIS: Sorry, it's a terrible picture.

21 MS. KELIHER: That's very useful, especially with the winds.
22 I'll probably draw you a diagram and make sure that I got it
23 correct. We'll see --

24 MR. DAVIS: If you have a top-down view --

25 MR. KELIHER: Yeah.

1 MR. DAVIS: -- show you a better route.

2 MS. KELIHER: Perfect. Or they can do whatever, just Google
3 it. Thank you so much.

4 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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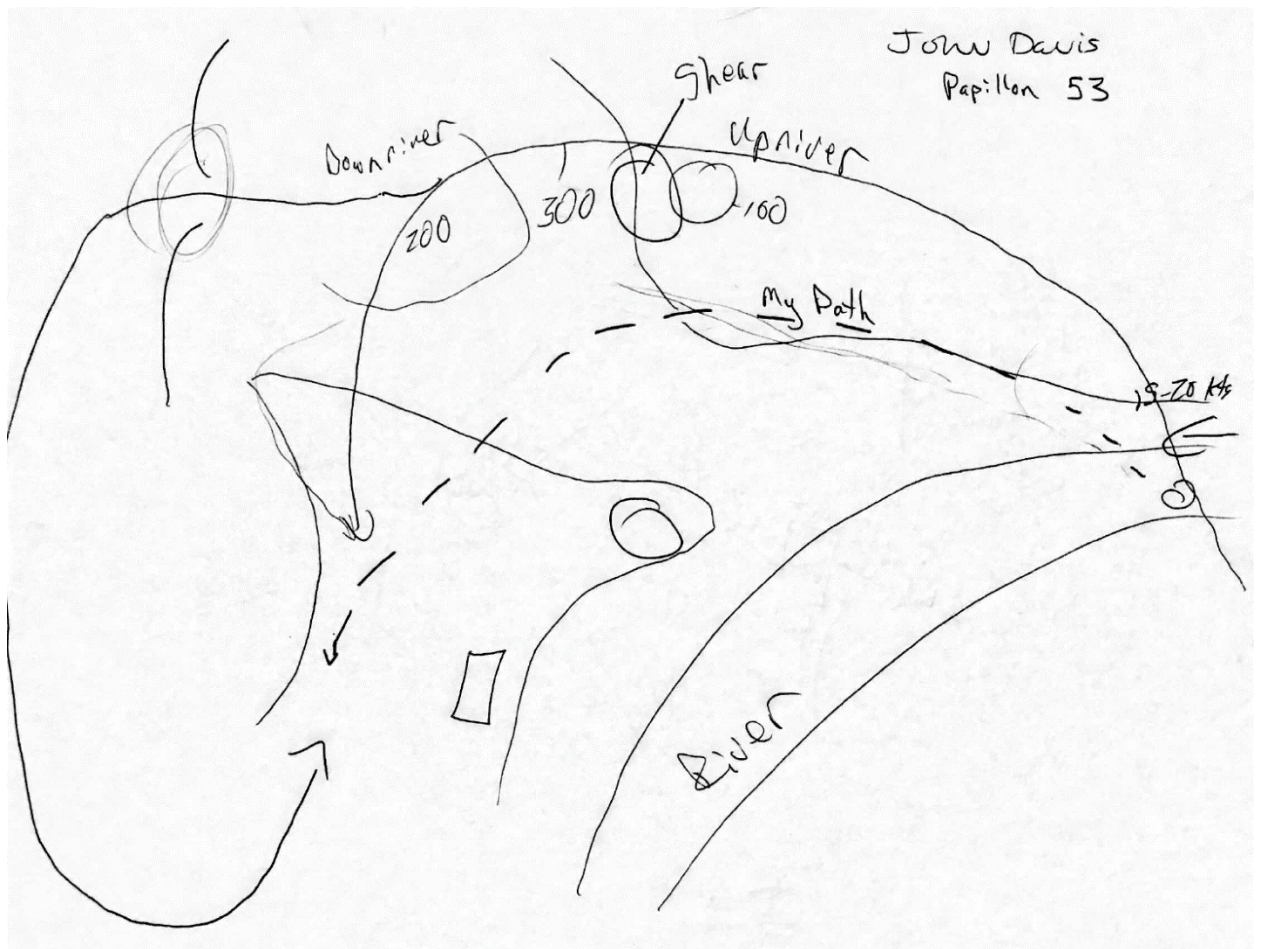
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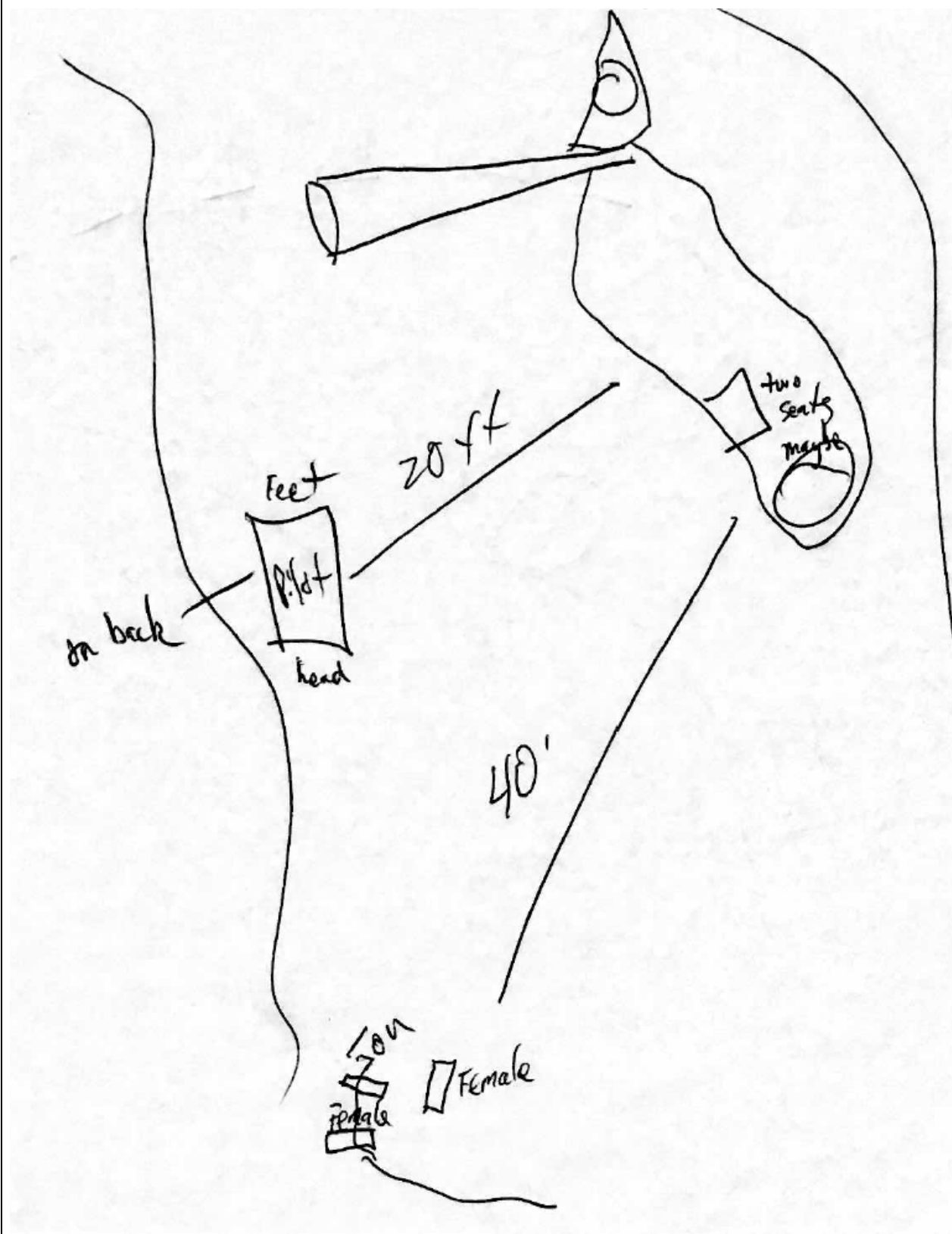
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I started my descent into Quartmaster base from the Bat towers and even though the wind and been blowing hard above it wasn't as bad down in the canyon. Wind was blowing up river at approximately 15-20 knots. Scott was behind me approximately 2 minutes. Upon crossing the river I chose to land up river in front of the notch which created a left quartering tail wind. As soon as I passed the bluff starting my left turn towards the EAST and I immediately encountered a very strong wind shear. My indicated airspeed went from 55 knots to 0 immediately creating a very strong sink rate and a large pull on the nose to left. I immediately pulled in power to about 9.7 on the FLI and applied full right pedal. I corrected the yaw and tilted the disc forward and right arresting any strong descent rate. I had anticipated the shear so I was trying to hug the left side of the terrain to prevent the strongest of it. I established a stablized normal approach into a landing at Quartermaster base. Upon set down I waited 30 seconds and started my shutdown procedure. As soon as I got the blades stopped I saw everyone running outside my window towards the back of the helicopter. I opened my door and one of the other pilots notified me that Scott had crashed so I immediately notified GUANO Base on FM about the crash. The helicopter following Scott chose to go around and fly to GCW also relaying on FM about the crash. While one of the other pilots unloaded my passengers I began running over to the crash site. It was located approximately 300 meters horizontally from my location and 500-600(estimated) ft vertically. I noticed a lot of smoke coming from the wreckage and several loud bangs that sounded like something blowing up. It took me approximately 15 minutes to make it down to the wreckage. I was probably the 3rd or 4th person down to the scene. I surveyed the wreckage and knew we couldn't get anyone else from there because it was burning and there was no chance of any other survivors. I located 3 passengers that were badly injured approximately 40 ft east of the wreckage and the pilot was about 20 ft south east of the wreckage. I started checking all the injured for the most grievous wounds and did my best to ensure that they were comfortable and began trying to treat them as best we could while trying to coordinate which passengers who were down at the crash site assisting and maintaing positive control of the situation until EMS could arrive.

1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
2
3 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
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5 * * * * *
6 Investigation of: *
7 *
8 PAPILLON HELICOPTERS CRASH * Accident No.: WPR18FA087
9 FEBRUARY 10, 2018 *
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11 * * * * *
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13 Interview of: MARTIJN ADRIAANSE
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21 Monday,
22 February 12, 2018
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APPEARANCES:

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

INVESTIGATOR PAT
FAA

I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. ADRIAANSE: So took off from Boulder City. Flew out
3 there and got to the Bad Towers pretty much, you know, without
4 incident. It was windy, breezy but nothing out of the ordinary.
5 I made the radio call to get office at Green 4, and started
6 descending. Got to Quartermaster Point and noticed a lot of
7 turbulence, a lot of gusting wind, wasn't super comfortable. I'm
8 new, still getting a feel for the aircraft, and so I had already
9 kind of decided that if I couldn't get a pad that I liked, I was
10 to go around, go up top and call it a day.

11 And sure enough, I get there, I didn't see anything I liked.
12 So I'd already kind of decided I was going to go away. And then I
13 hear, helicopter down, smoke. And sure enough, you know, I come
14 up to the site, see the smoke as I approached, and, you know, see
15 a fire, piece of tailboom laying on the ground. And needless to
16 say, went around, back up to the top, dropped off my passengers,
17 got just a little bit of fuel, maybe 10 gallons or so, and picked
18 up EMTs and their luggage, flew them down, dropped them off, went
19 back to the top and asked if I should drop off anything else or
20 anybody else.

21 He said, no, you're good; just go back to Boulder. And I
22 also had, you know, a 2-month old baby on board, so I didn't want
23 to keep those people waiting too long, and, you know, considering
24 all that. So went back to Boulder. Very, very windy conditions.
25 Very turbulent, very windy. And so -- but, you know, the flight
26 went without incident, and landed back in Boulder.

1 Q. So can you describe a little more slowly, you went -- the
2 first time you come in, do you hear anyone on the radio?

3 A. No mayday calls, no.

4 Q. No wind calls, anything? Any reporting position, any calls
5 at all?

6 A. No. No, not that I remember, no.

7 Q. And describe coming in and seeing the pad of nothing
8 available. What do you like and what do you not like?

9 A. So the way the wind was blowing, and I was kind of looking at
10 my groundspeed versus airspeed, which is, you know, a good primary
11 indicator what the wind's doing. I noticed I had a tailwind, and
12 -- do you have a picture of the landing area?

13 Q. Yeah. Actually, why don't you draw it first before I taint
14 your memory.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could you give him a good pen.
16 Thanks. That green one.

17 MR. ADRIAANSE: The green one is like invisible ink?

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, yeah. That will be probably
19 (indiscernible) --

20 MR. ADRIAANSE: Do you want me to blow on it?

21 All right, so let's see here. It's kind of a point, right?
22 So it's like this, then you've got the little shelter. And then
23 there's like some pads here, like that. Terrible artist, by the
24 way.

25 BY MS. KELIHER:

1 Q. Do you want me to go get -- you'll get a (indiscernible) --

2 A. So, and then there's kind of like these long, these two long
3 kind of strips that you can come in on, right? So, and then
4 there's kind of notch. It's called the Notch, right here.

5 So the wind was kind of coming from this direction, as far as
6 I could tell. And there's a little windsock up here. So the
7 windsock was doing that. And I figured that if these were open,
8 because what you do is you kind of come around and then come in
9 like that. So here you'd have a right quartering headwind, and
10 these three pads would have been sweet. These were taken, as well
11 as a couple people, you know, parked here, sort of with a left
12 quartering tailwind, which I'm not super excited about. So I
13 think there was a little spot here that I could have landed but I
14 just wasn't comfortable with that.

15 Q. Okay. I'm going to make you now show me -- can you drag over
16 where the helicopters that you thought had taken spots? You can
17 just put them over wherever they went and then where your open
18 spots were?

19 A. They're like right here. There was like -- I think there's
20 one or two like --

21 Q. So right there?

22 A. Yeah. Right there, and like maybe there or something. And,
23 you know -- so yeah, I wasn't happy with that. So when I came
24 back the second time, I actually --

25 Q. Can you draw what you saw from that? I'll give you another

1 one, too. Oh, just put where the windsock -- you can just rotate
2 it and show me where it was, which way it was pointed.

3 A. Yeah, I kind of --

4 Q. Here just take another.

5 A. Okay. Yeah. I was thinking it was like that, maybe like
6 that. Something like that. Well, maybe that's a little too
7 aggressive. Maybe like that. So somewhere in that direction.

8 Q. And then were any of these taken?

9 A. Yeah. So there's a helicopter here, and I think one here and
10 maybe one here. I think there was even somebody here. So, yeah,
11 like that. And so really the only area was here, and that's where
12 I ended up landing with the EMTs when I came back. But when I
13 came back, I kind of did things in a backwards, you know, setup.
14 So I came around through the Notch, and then kind of went around
15 these helicopters and landed like that into the wind. And that
16 was fine. You know, it wasn't the prettiest landing because it
17 was super windy, but --

18 Q. Why wouldn't you have done that before?

19 A. It's just kind of a -- that setup there is just, there's a
20 upriver and downriver pads. Or at least that's the way I
21 understood it. So I figured if I couldn't get a downriver pad, I
22 wasn't having it.

23 Q. Why is that?

24 A. New in the aircraft, not comfortable, you know, and still
25 learning what I can and cannot do. And didn't want to learn where

1 my limits were that day.

2 Q. Have you been in situations --

3 A. You got it, the Notch, yeah.

4 Q. Have you landed on all this --

5 A. Yep, yep.

6 Q. By doing that?

7 A. Certainly.

8 Q. And have you felt uncomfortable?

9 A. No, not any more than normal, you know, considering it's my
10 third week on the line, so --

11 Q. But have you experienced a time where you felt wind?

12 A. No. No, not anything that made me question landing there.

13 Q. So when you flew over, can you just draw your -- why don't I
14 give you the little drawing pad. Draw how you did -- how you went
15 out of the canyon, your approach from here.

16 A. How I went --

17 Q. When you went -- when you did your go-around?

18 A. When I did my go-around, I just -- I came around and flew
19 basically just to the left of the crash site, and then through the
20 Notch, back to the top, like that.

21 Q. So you flew over the crash?

22 A. Yeah, it was just on my right. So it was just to the left of
23 the crash site.

24 Q. So is that why you decided to land and do your go-around?

25 A. No. I had already kind of made my mind up because I could

1 see how, you know, the lay of the land was with everybody being
2 parked where they were before the crash. And as I was thinking
3 about that, I heard "Helicopter down," and I could see the smoke
4 starting to come up.

5 Q. About where were you when you heard that?

6 A. Here. So -- it's not -- so, yeah, okay, so maybe a little
7 bit more to the left.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. Getting ready to cross the river. Maybe a little bit further
10 back, because I couldn't really see in the canyon at that point.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. So a little bit further back, but okay, maybe like right
13 here. Yeah. No, maybe a little bit further back even.

14 Q. And it was -- can you see the windsock from there?

15 A. No.

16 Q. So how did you know that the wind --

17 A. Groundspeed versus airspeed.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah. Which is, you know, it's not everything, but it's sort
20 of a preliminary indicator. And then I was going to scope it out
21 as it got closer, and that kind of confirmed what I saw from that
22 point and just didn't like it.

23 Q. So this is when you heard helicopter --

24 A. Yeah. You know, I think from here I would have been able to
25 see him get out of control. And I didn't, I didn't see that. I

1 just saw the aftermath of that. So maybe a little bit further
2 back.

3 Q. And when -- what did you see?

4 A. Just, like I said, see a fire and a tailboom.

5 Q. Anything else that you could make out?

6 A. No. I didn't -- I was so busy flying the aircraft that I
7 looked and kept going, you know.

8 Q. Did any of your passengers take photos; do you know?

9 A. Not that I know. I didn't ask. They saw it, you know. They
10 were like, what's that? I was like, accident. We're going up
11 top.

12 Q. But that was the first thing you heard was, helicopter down?

13 A. Helicopter down, smoke in the canyon. Yeah. That's what I
14 remember.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, that came up in 126, through the
16 company frequency?

17 MR. ADRIAANSE: 12195, or maybe 12065. Yeah, I don't know,
18 one of those. I don't know.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry.

20 BY MS. KELIHER:

21 Q. And then during your training, was there specific training on
22 all the different approaches that you should do?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Was anything written or given, presented to you? Or just
25 people telling you?

1 A. I don't remember. Yeah, I don't remember. Yeah, I just
2 don't.

3 Q. Had you met Scott before?

4 A. I had. Yeah, very fond of him.

5 Q. Yeah. Did you have any discussions with him?

6 A. I did not, no. I mean, aside from, you know, how's Long
7 Beach? He lives in Long Beach and I used to live in Long Beach.
8 And, you know, just idle chat, basically.

9 Q. Did you mention you were new, anything of the sort?

10 A. Yeah. So when I started working here, I was looking at an
11 aircraft and going over parts, and he asked me what I was doing.
12 Studying for the check ride. So he took his time and kind of went
13 over all the parts and explained everything to me and was being
14 super helpful. And then, you know, just run into each other daily
15 on a day-to-day basis, talk about small things, you know.

16 Q. Did you ever talk to him about the --

17 A. No.

18 Q. -- Quartermaster?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Did he know, or would have known or possibly not at all, that
21 you were right behind him?

22 A. I'm sure. Yeah, because we're -- you know, make the Bad
23 Tower call. Yeah, he probably knew that.

24 Q. But you didn't hear him make a call?

25 A. For crossing the river, you know, I don't remember. He may

1 have. I just don't remember.

2 Q. Well, that's fine. Is your helicopter that you were flying,
3 was that equipped with the video?

4 A. No.

5 MS. KELIHER: I don't have any other questions.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I do. Just a real quick one.

7 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

8 Q. I'm sorry. I missed your name and --

9 A. Yep. I'll spell that for you because it's difficult. It's
10 M-A-R-T-I-J-N, first name. Do you want my middle name, too, or --

11 Q. Yeah, just your last name.

12 A. Last name, A-D-R-I-A-A-N-S-E.

13 Q. What is that?

14 A. Dutch.

15 Q. Nice.

16 A. Thanks, mom and dad.

17 Q. What was your aircraft number?

18 A. Forty.

19 Q. Forty?

20 A. Yeah, Papillon 40. I can get you the N number, if you want.

21 Q. No, no, that's --

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. Was it a AStar or a B4?

24 A. B4. Yeah.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

1 INVESTIGATOR PAT: So I'm Pat. I'm accident investigation,
2 the FAA. I'm the harmless part of the FAA.

3 MR. ADRIAANSE: Okay.

4 INVESTIGATOR PAT: And we, our role is just to find out --
5 you know, she finds out why, and I'm just trying to go what, you
6 know, what happened? So I appreciate your pleasant demeanor and
7 your being candid. I know this is hard, some things.

8 BY INVESTIGATOR PAT:

9 Q. What were you doing before here? You probably already told
10 everybody, but what -- was it instructing?

11 A. I worked as -- yeah, a CFI. Yeah.

12 Q. Where at?

13 A. At LA Helicopters in Long Beach.

14 Q. Oh, yeah.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Well, and I really appreciate a very good man and pilot that
17 knows his limitations. So I really respect that. I really do.
18 And, you know, it's -- you're going to have a long illustrious
19 career and you can ease into it, you know, so you're showing a lot
20 of wisdom. So I asked the question before of the other pilot and
21 we only ask you because you're intimately trained; you've gone
22 right through the training program, so your opinion counts. So
23 it's just a pure hypothesis. But it's so we can channel our
24 investigation after this. What do you think happened? You were
25 there. There was wind.

1 A. And these winds, my first gut instinct was settling with
2 power, possibly combined with LTE -- which you guys are helicopter
3 or airplane?

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. Okay. So something like that, settling with power, LTE.
6 Just the way the wind was swirling, moving, the way it felt, you
7 know. It's based on feel.

8 Q. Yeah, yeah.

9 A. You know, just the way the air was -- settling with power,
10 LTE. Kind of --

11 Q. You know, technically we call it squirrely wind. Yeah.

12 A. Yes. Yeah. And that's a good technical description.

13 Q. So what in your training would prevent that from happening to
14 you? You've had training here.

15 A. Sure.

16 Q. What would keep that --

17 A. Well, a no tailwind approaches, watch your rate of descent on
18 the way in, you know. If you feel shudders or if your airspeed
19 drops all of a sudden, you know, wind sheer type things, go
20 around, you know, get going.

21 Q. And you said watch your rate of descent. What do you mean?

22 A. Well, you're bringing power and your rate of descent
23 increases, you've got issues, right? You got a big vortex pulling
24 you down. And so just be mindful of that. And you feel it, you
25 know, you -- I don't know if you've guys have experienced settling

1 with power? If you've done training in that procedure?

2 Q. Well, I've only flown turbine helicopters, so we -- Zoe and I
3 were having the discussion, we being the cowards, we just try to
4 avoid it.

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. So, and I know in Robinsons, you immerse yourself in it.

7 A. Oh yeah, super easy.

8 Q. You can do it. But in a Huey, that wouldn't --

9 A. You just pull more power and --

10 Q. We just learned, we just learned -- it'd be like training to
11 hit your hand with a ball-peen hammer, you know.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. So we just -- but anyway, did you -- your training here for
14 LTE and settling with power, do you think that was enough
15 preparation for you to avoid those, or bad situations, or --

16 A. Yeah. I think the training here is very good. In fact, I'll
17 be honest, I failed my stage check because I did exactly that. I
18 did a tailwind approach. I was looking at the Garmin, 500 has a
19 wind indicator. And so, the instructor said, here's your
20 pinnacle; land on that pinnacle. And so on the way, because I
21 know this thing is not accurate -- the 500 is not accurate when
22 you circle. So, you know, on the straight and level on the way
23 in, I marked the wind. I kind of set my HSI to the wind
24 direction. I get there and it's nothing like that. So I did an
25 approach with a tailwind. And I thought it felt a little strange,

1 like, hmm, I'm sure I have a headwind but it feels like I'm kind
2 of, you know, settling.

3 Q. Did you make the pinnacle landing?

4 A. No. We went around.

5 Q. Oh, I was going to say, I would have probably passed you just
6 for --

7 A. We went back and debriefed, so --

8 Q. -- just for skill, you know.

9 A. No, no, nothing like that. So, did a go-around, went back
10 and discussed why I failed the stage checks.

11 INVESTIGATOR PAT: Well, actually you're bragging about your
12 company, so that's good. So anyway, thank you. I know --you're
13 being very brave and everything. I know it's hard. So we
14 appreciate it a lot. So thank you. That's all I had.

15 MR. ADRIAANSE: Okay. You guys are more than welcome. Thank
16 you for what you guys do, and I'm sure it's not fun hearing all
17 these stories day in and day out. So --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thanks for coming in.

19 MR. ADRIAANSE: You're most welcome. So that was really
20 short, so either I did good or really bad.

21 MS. KELIHER: I was actually cutting it short.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You were waiting so long --

23 MS. KELIHER: You didn't see it.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You waited so long, I think we should
25 take you out in the parking lot and ask you another hour's worth.

1 Thank you so much.

2 MR. ADRIAANSE: No problem. Thank you guys. You're going to
3 shred this right, because it's embarrassing.

4 MS. KELIHER: We've got to put it with it.

5 MR. ADRIAANSE: All right.

6 MS. KELIHER: Take care.

7 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

8

9

10

11

I was piloting Papillon 40 on a sunset canyon landing tour with 6 passengers and a baby. Aside from strong winds and turbulence the flight was going normally. As I was approaching our landing zone at quartermaster I noticed very strong gusting winds and turbulence. So much so that I decided if I could not get an ideal landing zone into the wind I would go around and break off to 1G4. (As I was one-way fuel). Right as I was thinking about this decision I heard a radio call about a helicopter down and there being smoke. I noticed the smoke coming up from the canyon before quartermaster at that time. As we passed the crash site I noticed a sea of flames and pieces of a red helicopter. Chaos on the radio ensued. At that point we continued climbing out to 1G4 and I dropped off the passengers and got 10gals fuel so I could drop off three EMT's at the bottom. There were issues with communication between helicopters at the bottom of the canyon and the base at 1G4. The ride down with the EMT's was very turbulent but the landing at the bottom worked out ok as I was able to secure a spot into the wind. After the EMT's were dropped off I flew solo back to 1G4 and got fuel and my passengers. The flight back to KBVU, although very windy/turbulent went without issues.

Interviewee: Polianna Perotto

Date/Time: March 20, 2018, 1800 edt

Location: via telephone

Present: Zoe Keliher, Katherine Wilson, Stephen Stein – NTSB; John Waugh – FAA; Burl Boyd – Papillon

Representative – Thomas Tobin

During the interview, Ms. Perotto stated the following:

On the day of the accident, the winds were coming downriver and she performed a downriver landing flying an approach “behind the notch.” She flew through the notch and landed facing into the wind behind another pilot who had just landed at Quartermaster. She saw another pilot landing on the east side of the landing zone, lining up with the winds. When aircraft 34 was coming in, he was going to land on the east pads like the others.

The accident pilot crossed the river and where she could see it, he was settling down, spinning. She did not see the crash itself. As the accident helicopter was making its turn for the final approach she saw it going down and spinning. It went out of her view because the tent was in front of her.

She was asked to describe the day of the accident starting from her takeoff from Boulder City. She said the takeoff was fine; she did not remember much about the takeoff but it was fine. Flying wise, it was fine. When she was going into the canyon, the wind was coming from behind as they descended from Bat Towers. It was not anything out of the ordinary; it was windy but doable.

Because the wind was coming from behind, she went through the notch and made her landing in a headwind. The next pilot did the same thing so the west side pads were now full. The remaining helicopters had to land on the other (east) side. For those landings, there was a crosswind.

Her landing was fine as she remembered it; she had no issues.

From what she could tell, the accident helicopter did the same landing as everyone was doing, but when he made his turn for the final approach, the helicopter settled. That was what she could see until the tent blocked her view. People started screaming because the helicopter crashed and started running in the direction of the crash.

She had been employed by Papillon for about 1 year. Her total time was about 1700 hours and she had about 600-700 hours in the EC130.

She was not flying the EC130 the day of the accident; she was flying the A-Star, Papillon aircraft 10.

Comparing the A-Star and EC130, she said the A-Star was a little more powerful and the tail rotor on the EC130 was more efficient, but the start up and procedures were the same.

For her, flying either helicopter in the canyon did not matter; she liked flying both helicopters. There was no difference in either helicopter when it was windy.

She did her turbine training at Papillon.

To get the weather at Quartermaster, there was a windsock; there was no electronic weather. Also, about 1-2 miles before Quartermaster, there was a windsock at Ramada. When coming to land at Quartermaster, pilots would see the Ramada windsock first and then the windsock at Quartermaster. In Boulder City, pilots could see the Ramada weather online. If there were winds that day, she would check the Ramada weather in Boulder City. Throughout the day, if she was flying and it was windy she would go back online with her altimeter setting and get the weather before each flight. She did not recall the name of the online weather site that they used.

She would check the stations at Ramada, Boulder City, and Grand Canyon West (GCW). Papillon also had a weather brief in the morning before any helicopter departed. They covered performance calculations, weather information, NOTAMS, and wind conditions. The brief occurred about an hour and 15 minutes before the first departure. If she was not scheduled for the first flight of the day, she would not participate in that briefing but would get a sheet with that information that she would look through before her flight. The lead pilots gave the morning briefing.

The briefing on the day of the accident was normal; it was briefed that winds would be in the area. She did not recall anything else except that the performance calculations were normal and the lead pilot said it would be windy in the area.

They could also get weather during the day from PIREPs; whoever was flying would tell the tower about the weather. Pilots were also communicating with each other at the gate before they got their passengers. She did not recall getting any PIREPs on the day of the accident.

She had cancelled a flight because of weather. It was the pilot's decision if s/he did not feel safe or if the pilot felt like the weather or winds were too strong; the pilot would call the lead pilot and say s/he did not feel comfortable going. She said "we had cancelled once" and there were "plenty" of other times that the lead pilot cancelled flights because of weather. Pilots still go paid if a flight was cancelled. Asked to clarify the "we" in her previous statement, she said that the decision not to fly was that of the pilots flying and pilots would back each other up. If they did not feel comfortable, they would call it off; they would call the lead and he would say okay. She never felt uncomfortable cancelling a flight. She would not feel embarrassed doing so and no one "ever ever pushed" her or made her fly. It was always the pilot's decision; she never had anyone push her to go and fly.

She was the 4th flight to land on the downriver pad the day of the accident. She chose to land there because of the wind coming upriver so she decided to land downriver to face the wind. If the downriver pads were full, she would land on the east pads with a crosswind. She would overfly pads for a headwind landing if there were no helicopters on those pads; she would try to

avoid other helicopters to land with a headwind. She would make sure she was not overflying anything and would make sure she was landing with a headwind.

If there was a tailwind and only the upriver pads were available, she would fly over the notch and then land facing into the wind. She would not overfly helicopters.

She had never experienced loss of tail rotor effectiveness, settling with power in the EC130.

She never felt unsafe flying the Grand Canyon.

She did not know the accident pilot well; she could count how many times she saw him at the base. He was a part time pilot so she would see him and talk to him but she did not know him that much.

She never felt unsafe flying to the Quartermaster.

There was nothing unusual on the day of the accident; it was “just a normal day” with winds.

She had never taken a flight after another pilot had said s/he was not flying; pilots usually backed other pilots up.

Cancelling a flight depended on the situation of the day; winds could be strong and flights could be cancelled but then the winds could decrease and they would fly to the canyon later. There were a lot of factors to consider.

Passengers were briefed at the counter at check in to let them know it was going to be windy and turbulent.

She had cancelled landing at Quartermaster after takeoff a few times because of weather, for example when a thunderstorm was coming. In that case, she would do an air tour instead.

After landing at Quartermaster when pilots were coming in behind others, pilots would report on the Papillon frequency to let them know that the winds were coming from behind.

The approach flown to Quartermaster depended on the weather. When there were no winds, she would not typically go over the notch. She did not have a preferred approach; both were safe to her.

If she was cancelling a landing at Quartermaster, she would call base to tell them what her plan was. They would say okay and to let them know when “off the wash.”

After the accident, she got her passengers back to the helicopter but left two passengers at the accident site because they were helping the injured occupants. She brought 4 passengers back to Boulder City and did not return to the accident site.

She had not changed how she flew since the accident.

Papillon had made a few changes since the accident to emergency procedures and emergency calls to make in case of an accident; the company was improving things for better rescue.

Safety concerns could be reported on the flight and duty site. It was the pilot's decision whether to submit their name or submit the report anonymously. She had submitted a safety concern before and included her name. The reports she submitted usually were about weather, or when the GPS or satellite phone was not working. The company responded by getting new satellite phones; the feedback loop came back to the pilot and the system was working now.

She estimated the winds at the time of the accident to be less than 25 knots with some gusts. The winds were coming upriver. She was fine with the steady winds. For her, the maximum winds she was comfortable with was about 35 knots.

She would not have done anything different on her approach and landing at Quartermaster if she was flying the A-Star versus the EC130. She had never been flying in the Grand Canyon and wished she was in the A-Star versus the EC130.

On the day of the accident when on the ground at Quartermaster with her passengers, she did not notice a change in the direction of the winds but they felt a little bit stronger.

She had heard flying around the notch could be tricky when there were winds; it was like a bowl in there and the winds could swirl so pilots had to watch out for that. Regarding any guidance on flying there, she said pilots were told to keep their airspeed up when they turn and come in to land.

She did not have any suggestions on what could have prevented the accident from happening.

She had an overspeed event in a Robinson R22 but not at Papillon.

She did not think there was a difference regarding wind conditions and ability to make headwind landings for pilots landing at the Quartermaster versus the landing pads used by Maverick.

The interview ended at 1841.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: JOHN BECKER

Boulder City Airport
Boulder City, NevadaWednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration
(Observing)

THOMAS TOBIN, Attorney
Wilson Elser
(On behalf of John Becker)
New York, New York

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:20 a.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Thank you, everyone, for being here again today.

This interview is part of our fact-finding phase of the investigation of the February 10th accident.

I am Katherine Wilson. I am the Human Perform Investigator on this investigation. We'll go around the room and allow everybody to introduce themselves. We'll start with Zoë.

MS. KELIHER: I'm Zoë Keliher with the NTSB for operations.

MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FAA, Las Vegas.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety, Airbus.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA, Las Vegas.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety, Papillon.

MS. WILSON: Great. And as a part of this interview, you're entitled to have one person represent you. Is there someone you would like to have?

MR. BECKER: Yes, Thomas Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Great. And what we'd like to do is we'd like to record this interview so that we have -- we are able to create a transcript of this interview that will then become a part of our public docket. Is that okay?

MR. TOBIN: Yes.

MS. WILSON: Great. So our role here is strictly from the safety side. We don't do any enforcement action or place blame. So we strictly want to understand what happened as a part of this

1 investigation to prevent it from happening again.

2 Is there any questions that you have for us before we get
3 started?

4 MR. BECKER: Not yet.

5 MS. WILSON: If you don't understand a question, please ask
6 us to clarify. If you don't understand or if you don't know the
7 answer to a question, I don't know if perfectly fine.

8 MR. BECKER: Okay.

9 MS. WILSON: For the record, can you please state your full
10 name?

11 MR. BECKER: John Edwin Becker.

12 MS. WILSON: Great. And Zoë will start the questioning.

13 INTERVIEW OF JOHN BECKER

14 BY MS. KELIHER:

15 Q. Good morning, John.

16 A. Good morning, Zoë.

17 Q. Can you tell me how long you've been at Papillon in your role
18 here and job description?

19 A. I started working at Papillon in July of 1994. So that puts
20 me, this is my, I believe, 25th season with the company. And my
21 current role is as the chief operating officer for Papillon, as
22 well as the director of operations.

23 Q. And if you were to advertise for this position for somebody
24 to take over for you, in your upcoming retirement, what would you
25 describe as what you do to them and what they're going to be

1 signed up for, as your role?

2 A. What is my role in the company?

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. I oversee operations for the company. I oversee our manuals.
5 I oversee numerous employees in their duties.

6 Q. So the person that's going to be replacing you, what are they
7 going to be -- what is all the things that when you say manuals
8 and overseeing, how would you describe to them what your day in
9 and day out is? What should they be expecting?

10 A. It's a very complex position, that covers many bases. I want
11 to make sure that we operate this company safely first and
12 foremost. I want to make sure that we comply with all FAA
13 regulations. I want to make sure that we maintain our fleet
14 professionally and that we oversee our operations on all our
15 duties that we perform. It's a very complex position.

16 Q. And who do you directly report to?

17 A. I report to Geoff Edlund, the president of the company, and
18 follow on to the chief executive officer, Brenda Halvorson.

19 Q. How much are you in communications with them?

20 A. Constant.

21 Q. And what areas are you discussing with them?

22 A. I'm not sure what you're asking.

23 Q. What are you talking about all the time? You're in constant
24 communication with them.

25 A. We talk about the operations of this company as a whole. I

1 mean it differs from day-to-day.

2 Q. So from your GOM, I took an org chart and it has CEO and then
3 the next line over is the director of safety, director of
4 operations and then the president.

5 A. Um-hum. The current -- I'm not sure that you have a current
6 organizational chart.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Okay. Geoff Edlund has been promoted to the president of the
9 company, and I answer to both him and Brenda Halvorson.

10 Q. Okay. And so then the director of maintenance now reports to
11 Geoff as well?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. So no reporting to you or there's no --

14 A. There's no direct report between me and Luis Garcia, the
15 director of maintenance. We communicate obviously on a day-to-day
16 basis.

17 Q. And how does Burl fit into that?

18 A. Burl answers directly to the chief executive officer of the
19 company, Brenda Halvorson.

20 Q. Okay. So you are all separate prongs?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Luis, yourself --

23 A. Burl does not answer to me.

24 Q. Luis, yourself and Burl.

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. How much interaction do you have with the FAA, your POI?

2 A. I have him on speed dial. I communicate with Paul all the
3 time.

4 Q. And does he have an assistant that you communicate with as
5 well?

6 A. No, all my communication for the most part is with Paul.

7 Q. And I know that you don't live in the area, but how often are
8 you actually at (indiscernible)?

9 A. I'm here weekly. My week differs based on what I've got
10 going on in my day-to-day schedule. I could be here on Monday and
11 then on Wednesday, I go back home and spend the night and go up to
12 the South Rim of the Canyon and spend two days there. It could be
13 that I spend a week at the South Rim and then the following week,
14 I may spend a week here but it depends on the needs of the company
15 and where I need to be.

16 Q. And who dictates where you need to be?

17 A. Both me and Brenda. If I feel I need to be somewhere, I talk
18 to my boss, and I say, I think I need to be at the South Rim. So
19 I'll be there this week, and she's fine with that. She might say
20 that, well, I do need you here for a meeting on Wednesday. It
21 could be an insurance renewal. It could be one of many different
22 things that she wants my support on, and I'll be over here for
23 that.

24 Q. So are you the highest -- does she go to you for more of the
25 helicopter operations?

1 A. I am only on the helicopter certificate.

2 Q. And is -- I guess what I'm trying to see is, how -- why she's
3 always having to contact you because obviously there's many
4 different parts of this company, but every time she has anything
5 helicopter related, it's basically from your desk?

6 A. Me or my team.

7 Q. Yeah, but you're the first in line and then you delegate?

8 A. Well, it's the president of the company which is Geoff and
9 then me on operations.

10 Q. So does Geoff have a lot to do with the helicopter operations
11 as well?

12 A. Yes, he's the president of the company.

13 Q. Okay. So how is his familiarity with helicopter operations
14 and such?

15 A. How did Geoff come into the company?

16 Q. Well, how is his familiarity? I know you've been here 25
17 years and have a lot --

18 A. Geoff's been here for seven years. He grew up with the
19 Halvorson family around helicopters his whole life. He worked for
20 the company years, years ago when he was going to college.
21 Nothing's given to anything in the Halvorson family. If you know
22 them, they've got to prove themselves.

23 When he graduated college, he would have liked nothing more
24 than to come work for the company, and the company told him to go
25 out and prove himself. He went out into the real estate business

1 and was extremely successful in the real estate business.

2 And when we started doing succession planning for the
3 company, it was time to bring in the third generation. She
4 offered him a position in the company which he accepted, and he
5 went through an 18-month training program that I helped develop
6 where he worked in every single department of this company. He
7 worked in customer service, transportation, did the job. It was
8 very beneficial to him because he got a chance not only to learn
9 how the company was, but learn how a decision in one department
10 affects another department.

11 It also had the ability to get him face-to-face time with all
12 the employees to get to know him. So when he was elevated 18
13 months, 2 years later, into the general manager's position,
14 everybody system-wide knew who he was and he knew what their jobs
15 were and how that related in the company.

16 So it was a two year program for him to train to be the
17 general manager and follow on several years later to become the
18 president. I will say that he's a very good student, and he's
19 extremely motivated. And he's very intelligent, and he's very
20 good at what he does.

21 Q. How has your job changed since him coming in?

22 A. Well, it helps to relieve some of the pressures I guess here.
23 He's a very approachable person. We have an open door policy. So
24 he has a lot of employees who come in and talk to him on a regular
25 basis, but I think that he adds another level of management to the

1 company to help manage it as the company grows. So it's been a
2 positive impact on me.

3 Q. Speaking of growth, can you kind of walk me through the last
4 25 years of how it started and what it's become?

5 A. Yeah. Papillon -- when I joined the company, Papillon, I
6 believe we had 12 helicopters. We were operating off of the strip
7 at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. At that particular point,
8 we were only flying the Bell 206 copters. We had Jet Rangers, and
9 we had Long Rangers, both the L1 and the L3. Some of them had a
10 C28 engine in them. Some of them had a C30 engine in them.

11 And I watched that grow into our fleet of helicopters now
12 which is 56 helicopters. We're flying the AS350 B3e, the AS350
13 B2, EC130 B4 and T2 and the Bell 206. We do have one MD-900 on
14 contract. So the growth of the fleet was large. The growth of
15 the bases that we operate were far. At that point, when I joined
16 the company, Papillon helicopters also operated on all the Islands
17 down in Hawaii. The family tells me that it got difficult for
18 them to travel back and forth to Hawaii all the time. So they
19 sold that operation in '93-'94 timeframe to Crescent Airways who
20 liquidated the company.

21 And we had an opportunity to look locally, when I say
22 locally, on the mainland, we looked into New York for expansion
23 and we decided that wasn't a good idea. And then we looked at Las
24 Vegas, and Las Vegas kind of fit our model.

25 Okay. At the same time that was going on, I was taking

1 helicopters, working in the utility world as well as the tourism
2 world of Papillon. And we grew the utility division.

3 We had had the National Park Service contract several times
4 over the years, 1965, and we were able to get that contract back.
5 I was operating a helicopter at the time down in Tucson, and I was
6 procuring contracts for the company. So there was Tucson Electric
7 Power which is a power line company down there where we do power
8 line patrols with them.

9 Southwest Helicopters who was operating out of Tucson at the
10 time had a contract with Arizona Game and Fish which was a
11 lucrative contract. They flew about 1,000 hours a year with four
12 Bell 206 helicopters doing animal surveys, animal capture,
13 development, long line work. So we were able to get into that
14 market.

15 And it just kind of spring loaded from there with contracts
16 with U.S. Forest Service, contracts with Department of the
17 Interior, contracts with Bureau of Land Management, and other
18 agencies, the Bar 10 Ranch, pulling people off the river. We were
19 doing (indiscernible) at the time. Call when needed, DOI on call.
20 So back then it was aircraft rental agreement, ARA contracts with
21 the Government. And then after about three years of doing that,
22 Brenda said that she wanted me to manage that portion of the
23 company.

24 Q. What year was that? Around.

25 A. It was in the late '90s. So I hired on in '94. I would say

1 '97, '98 timeframe. I was in the lead pilot position/utility
2 operations/contract pilot. I was flying the MD-900 when we got
3 that contract in the National Park Service, doing everything up
4 through short haul on that. I was a game capture pilot. I was
5 one of the few pilots in the United States that could capture
6 endangered species. So they have a subspecies in the Cabeza
7 Prieta down in Southern Arizona called the Sonoran Pronghorn. So
8 we did capture work on them and capture work on big horn sheep and
9 stuff like that. So it was a multiple of things that we did.

10 It was good for me, because it prepared me for this job
11 because there's not very many jobs that we do in the tourism
12 business or in the utility business that I haven't done myself.
13 So I know pitfalls along the way, and I can guide people on what
14 they should do and what areas to avoid, that kind of thing.

15 Q. Were you just on a 133 certificate?

16 A. No, we had a 135 certificate, a 137 certificate, and a 133
17 certificate to do that because it was required by contract. Also
18 that is the timeframe that we started to come into the Las Vegas
19 market as well, and I was one of the first pilots to start up this
20 operation with, who the director of operations at that point was,
21 Rick Carrick.

22 Q. And how many people were at this base during this time?

23 A. I can't remember. We started it with two Bell 206
24 helicopters early on.

25 Q. Right here?

1 A. No, it wasn't here in Boulder City. It was in Las Vegas
2 McCarran.

3 Q. And that was the late '90s?

4 A. That was the late '90s, yes.

5 Q. So now focusing just on the tours, so late '90s, it was two
6 Bell 206s out of McCarran?

7 A. Yeah, it was a strange time. The concierges on the strip
8 pretty much controlled the business. They didn't like people
9 sitting aft facing, going from Las Vegas in on hot days. So they
10 more were Optisell (ph.), a forward facing seat in an AS350 or
11 EC130 at the time. So the Bells didn't work out very well here.
12 So the Bells went back to the South Rim, and we started to get
13 into the Eurocopter business.

14 Q. When you say the concierges, I keep hearing this kind of --
15 some people -- businesses are concierges and some businesses are
16 not.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. What does that mean?

19 A. There's several ways that customers come to us. Customers
20 come to us on the internet. We're very strong internet based.
21 We've got a salesman marketing team that's very robust. They
22 speak seven languages between the two of them, and they go
23 worldwide talking to bus companies and airlines and stuff, for
24 people that are traveling into the United States. A large portion
25 of our business is international travel. So they bring them in.

1 So you can book on the internet or there's hotels that have
2 concierges in them, right, bell captains and such as that, and
3 they also at that time, because it's not a strong part of our
4 business right now. I think if you look around the industry, and
5 you talk to the other operators, they've got a grip on a certain
6 part of the industry's clients, right, that they cater to.
7 Maverick is a high end client. So they're looking for the high
8 rollers and they sell that product high end and they're very
9 active with the hotels and the bell desks. Our business is more
10 internet based and consumer direct.

11 Q. So obviously in the late '90s, it wasn't (ph.) internet
12 based. How did that come to be?

13 A. You know, I really wasn't -- I really wasn't in senior
14 management at that point. The person that was running this base
15 was the director of operations at the time, Rick Carrick.

16 Q. And so how -- take us through the '90s and how you decided?
17 Was it just because of the front facing seats of how the fleet
18 kind of built and how --

19 A. No. Well, quiet technology was a big thing. Noise issues
20 were very big in the Grand Canyon. There is very few helicopters
21 available. I will tell you that Papillon was forward facing and
22 they were pushing quiet technology in the industry to the point
23 where the owner of the company developed his own quiet technology
24 helicopter, the S55QT. And that particular helicopter is --
25 there's three of them that are in service today still. I don't

1 know exactly what they're doing because I'm not associated with
2 that part of the business, but I'll tell you that Elling developed
3 the quietest helicopter in the world that was tested by NASA that
4 pushed the industry into quiet technology, and I think that when
5 he was getting with Blue Hawaiian and Sundance and Papillon, they
6 approached all the companies at the time, and Eurocopter was the
7 only one other than MD, McDonnell Douglas at the time, who were
8 looking to quiet technology.

9 So MD had the NOTAR system which is what we fly in the Grand
10 Canyon for the Grand Canyon National Park, the MD-900, and
11 Eurocopter at the time, was dealing with the Fenestron tail rotor
12 and the EC130 before. And that is quiet, and those are the
13 airframes that -- and when we were there also, we told them what
14 we needed on a tour ship. We needed visibility outside. We
15 needed forward facing seating. We needed theater style seating
16 where passengers in the back seat had a view and Eurocopter at the
17 time was very active in developing a helicopter that would fit our
18 needs and that works great. And if you look around the industry
19 now, at the Blue Hawaiians and Mavericks and Papillons of the
20 world, it's a very popular tourism ship.

21 Q. At what point was it decided that it would be better to have
22 more people on a ship than doing R22 tours back and forth --

23 A. We never flew R22 but I don't know when the decisions were
24 made. That was management before me.

25 Q. And so when you got into management, how much were you

1 dealing with the financial decisions of purchasing and acquiring
2 more and more helicopters?

3 A. I still to this day am not involved in purchasing decisions
4 for this company. The ownership decides what they want. They
5 might come to me and ask me questions about a particular aircraft
6 or what I think about it, but they -- I am not involved in the
7 financial decisions of buying and selling the aircraft.

8 Q. Well, I'm assuming, which might be wrong, correct me, when
9 they're making decisions about purchasing aircraft, it's what do
10 you see the demand is, how do you see the industry going, which I
11 assume that they're going to do that.

12 A. I can give you an example of when I had involvement in
13 purchasing of an aircraft. We needed an aircraft that was going
14 to be able to work out of Grand Canyon West doing our elevator
15 flights from the top to the bottom. I insisted that that aircraft
16 has to be left-hand drive. I thought it was a safety concern or
17 there was some risk that maybe we wouldn't want to take. If we
18 were going to purchase new aircraft, we needed them built for our
19 needs. So I decided that a left-hand drive helicopter would be
20 number one, keep controls away from the passengers, right. So
21 that was a good thing. That was a safety plus for us. It was a
22 lot more expensive I believe at the time. It was a 60, \$70,000
23 change out for the aircraft when you're purchasing it to have the
24 aircraft outfitted to be a left-hand drive rather than a right-
25 hand drive. But if you look at a B3e left-hand drive front seat,

1 you have two full seats in the front for passengers to sit. If
2 you look at a right-hand drive B3e or B2, it's kind of a seat and
3 a half because your controls are in the middle of the helicopter
4 and the collective and throttle is available for manipulation by a
5 passenger possibly inadvertently.

6 Okay. We also -- so you had the safety aspect of the left-
7 hand drive, keeping the controls isolated to the pilot. You had
8 the comfort of having two full seats for passengers sitting in the
9 front seat, and you also had commonality in the fleet because
10 standardization was big with me. I learned reading articles about
11 Southwest Airlines, how they went through the 737, and they
12 standardized every cockpit. It was my goal to get as absolutely
13 standardized as we could. So having a left-hand drive B3e as well
14 as an EC130, it made sense. So that was the fleet mix.

15 Moving forward, we made a decision that the EC130 and the
16 AS350 would be the fleet moving forward, one manufacturer.
17 There's cost savings there. But it takes time when you've got 50
18 some helicopters to retrofit.

19 Also, we have quiet technology issues that we were dealing
20 with, and we needed to be able to have an aircraft that met the
21 needs of the Grand Canyon National Park for all the flights to be
22 quiet by the year 2027 which is a requirement under the SFAR.

23 The other thing I would say is that a lot of people told me
24 that it was a bad idea to outfit the aircraft left-hand drive
25 because a B3e was also a very popular aircraft in the industry for

1 utility work, right. So when you're doing long line work, it's a
2 little bit easier to long line out of the aircraft on the right-
3 hand side than it is the left-hand side because of the way the
4 aircraft sits, and it's easier to see a line beneath the
5 helicopter at 50 foot, 100 foot, 150 foot, but we found out that
6 it was a training issue, and we were able to train our pilots all
7 the way up through short haul in the AS350 B3e. It wasn't as big
8 a problem as they were making it out to be. We do it all the time
9 now. We've got several pilots that are short haul pilots that do
10 live short haul missions for the National Park and Forest Service.

11 Q. So why the decision of not just sticking with all Astars and
12 even adding the EC130s?

13 A. Well, the EC130 is a requirement for the Grand Canyon
14 National Park. Remember, we are a tour company. It's a wider
15 aircraft. It's a more comfortable aircraft. So that aircraft
16 made sense plus the Grand Canyon National Park requires quiet
17 aircraft technology by the year 2027. So anybody flying the Grand
18 Canyon in the year 2027, has to be flying what is a quiet
19 technology aircraft and the Grand Canyon National Park has
20 designated the EC130 as quiet technology in an aircraft that meets
21 that requirement. And that's by law.

22 Q. And the Astar doesn't qualify?

23 A. The Astar does not qualify.

24 Q. So what are you going to plan on doing --

25 A. Okay. So the utility side of the house would also be using

1 Astars because the EC130 is not a good utility aircraft. It's not
2 a popular aircraft with the industry. The Bell 206 is being
3 phased out because it doesn't have the performance of the AS350
4 and when we're doing up and downs for the boat product out of
5 Grand Canyon West, the AS350 is a better ship for that.

6 Q. How is that going to change in 2027?

7 A. The west end of the Grand Canyon is not regulated on the
8 Hualapai Reservation because it doesn't enter the SFAR. If you
9 look at a map --

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. -- the Grand Canyon and follow the boundary --

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. -- there's a notch at the end of the Grand Canyon that is
14 uncontrolled airspace and that's not -- you don't have to have
15 quiet technology operating at the west end of the Grand Canyon.

16 Q. Were you part of organizing with the Hualapai Tribe of
17 getting Quartermaster and how that negotiation goes?

18 A. I was not involved in negotiations but I was one of the first
19 pilots to operate. I've got thousands of hours of operating out
20 of the Quartermaster Helo Base with the Bell 206 helicopter
21 because in '97, '98, '99 timeframe. Back in those days, we would
22 go out there and we'd service the west end of the Grand Canyon for
23 up and downs, from the South Rim, and we'd fly four to six
24 helicopters out there daily. We'd haul 4 to 600 passengers a day.
25 We didn't do the river product initially. We were just up top.

1 We had some (indiscernible) client that we were working with and
2 we would bring six people down to the bottom. We had loaders down
3 at the bottom. They would get out of the helicopter and walk
4 around the landing site. We'd go back up top, get six more. You
5 bring them six back, load the other six back up and it was just
6 kind of an elevator flight back and forth, but we've operated out
7 of there since 1997 if my dates are correct.

8 Q. And then when did you start operating out of Boulder City?

9 A. I'm not sure of the date we started. I'm not sure when we
10 actually started operating on the Boulder City Airport. I can get
11 that date for you.

12 Q. Like approximate year?

13 A. 2000 -- I'm not going to give you a date because I can't give
14 you the exact date.

15 Q. And when you did start, was it this building? What
16 facilities here?

17 A. No. It was I believe Lake Mead Air is who we bought this --
18 the lease from and operated over at the pilot side of the house
19 where you were doing interviews yesterday.

20 Q. And how many helicopters started at this base?

21 A. I don't remember.

22 Q. And when you started over here, what was your position, when
23 Boulder City started?

24 A. I never was officially based out of Boulder City. When I
25 became the director of operations, it became my responsibility as

1 well, and I started coming over here to oversee this operation as
2 well.

3 Q. So just for clarity, can you walk me through the different
4 titles that you've had since being here?

5 A. I was initially a seasonal pilot from July until about
6 November of 1994. I was asked by the company at that time,
7 because I lived in Tucson, to take a helicopter and see if there
8 was business opportunities for that helicopter in Tucson over the
9 winter because there's a large population of people that visit in
10 the wintertime. It's a very popular, they call them snowbirds
11 down there.

12 So the initial plan was to go down there and do air tours of
13 the Tucson area. We had two different tours. We had a 30 minute
14 tour and a 1 hour tour that kind of fit with our business plan
15 here.

16 The short tour went over old Tucson Studios and the Tucson
17 Mountains and kind of circled the city, over the bone yard which
18 is a very -- it's where the military puts all their aircraft, and
19 it came back into Spirit Aviation on the international airport.
20 It was a FBO, and that's where we landed.

21 The long tour did all that plus went out to the Biosphere in
22 Oro Valley and showed people the Biosphere, came over the top of
23 Mount Lemon, showed the ski resort and then we came back down
24 through town and landed. That was an hour tour.

25 It was clear that there was business for that, but there

1 wasn't -- it wasn't a good business plan that was going to be able
2 to supply the needs that we needed. So I started looking towards
3 the utility market, and that's when I started picking up contracts
4 with Tucson Electric Power. I wasn't --

5 Q. What was your job title during --

6 A. Pilot.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Pilot. The business, I wasn't writing contracts. I was
9 calling Rick Carrick and sending him papers saying here's a
10 business opportunity, right, and I would send it to him and the
11 company would bid the contract, and we were very successful at it.
12 Just about everything we put our hands on was good. We would get
13 the contract for it. And then as that grew, I would go back to
14 the South Rim in the summertime and do tours. And then in the
15 wintertime, we moved the helicopter down to the Tucson area, I
16 think it was a three year period that we would do that.

17 When I was back at the South Rim, they finally promoted me to
18 lead pilot. So I was running day-to-day operations on the South
19 Rim. And that fall, Brenda asked me if I would manage the utility
20 division because it grew to a size that needed its own manager.
21 So I managed that and flew then contracts for the company for some
22 years.

23 Q. Right. What was the title?

24 A. Utility division.

25 Q. Manager?

1 A. Utility division manager.

2 Q. And then after that?

3 A. After that, I went to the director of operations position,
4 and then I was made the chief operations officer after that. The
5 actual years that that happened, I'd have to look at my history to
6 figure out what those actual years are.

7 Q. What's the difference of when you were added on as having the
8 title of COO? What other things were added to that as opposed to
9 just director of operations? Responsibilities, what other duties?

10 A. It was -- the base had grown to several different bases. So
11 even though director of operations is responsible for all of that,
12 I started doing that. I started helping with budgets with the
13 company, right, for all the different departments, and I started
14 taking on other departments as well. So the flight line answered
15 to me. For a while, the customer service counter answered to me,
16 and as the company grew even more, then some of the departments
17 were farmed out to other managers.

18 Q. How do you make budgets for --

19 A. I oversee -- I've got a very competent staff, okay, and they
20 were taught how to do a budget. All right. So they know how many
21 pilots -- we tell them how many craft we want on line a day. And
22 then we determine what the staffing needs are going to be for them
23 aircraft, and then they provide me with a budget for their payroll
24 of what it's going to be so we can budget the year. The final
25 approval of that and the ones who do that budget are Brenda and

1 Geoff.

2 Q. And when you're saying how many aircraft you need, that's all
3 done with the skeleton quarter office check?

4 A. It changes every year. Some years we might decide that we're
5 going to change it up a little bit where we're going to take some
6 tours off and add tours. At one point, we discontinued doing a
7 long tour in the Bell products, right. So we'd get more quiet
8 technology aircraft in the Zuni Corridor, to get natural quiet
9 back into the Zuni Corridor. So different aircraft, different
10 requirements, different training.

11 Q. And are you making that decision?

12 A. No, the final decision is made by the president and CEO of
13 the company.

14 Q. Are you presenting that to them?

15 A. Yes, they're asking me to do work that I complete and I give
16 back to them.

17 Q. I guess I'm trying to figure out how you determine what tours
18 you want to do.

19 A. It's a very moving target, very dynamic, depending on the
20 needs of the industry, what the passenger is wanting to do and
21 sales and marketing and those types of meetings are high end
22 meetings by Brenda, and she tells me this is how many -- this is
23 what I want the schedule to look like and that's what I do.

24 Q. Got it. And when you're hiring these competent people, how
25 do you determine to hire I guess -- well, first of all, let's

1 start with who directly is under you?

2 A. Okay. The chief pilot answers to me, and I've got two chief
3 pilots. I've got a chief pilot for the 119 certificate which is
4 Simon, and I've got Mark Diamond who is the chief pilot for the
5 South Rim Operation. Jeff Bubier who is the general manager for
6 South Rim Operations. He's also the drug and alcohol coordinator
7 for the company, and he also manages my fuel funds for me. Peggy
8 Sterns is a customer service manager for South Rim. Ilse Harvey
9 (ph.), human resources for South Rim. And you can look down the
10 company org chart and you can see the people that answer to me
11 there. The utility division manager answers to me for utility
12 operations.

13 Q. All I have under here is flight line manager, chief pilot 119
14 and chief pilot South Rim and director of utility.

15 A. You're going to have to show me that.

16 Q. And so here, without any South Rim, who directly reports to
17 you?

18 A. Simon Whiteley reports directly to me.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. He's the chief pilot.

21 Q. And no one else?

22 A. Simon Whitely reports to me from this side, yes.

23 Q. That's the only person.

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. Okay. And then how did you choose on hiring Simon?

1 A. At the time we had some turnover in the flight department.
2 I'll tell you that the normal progression with Papillon, if you
3 look to the company, are employees that do very well in the
4 company and have shown themselves to be quality employees, are
5 very good at their job. Okay. And so we try to promote from
6 within.

7 Okay. At the time, I didn't -- my assistant chief pilot
8 here, Joe Hernley (ph.) was the chief pilot and he was South Rim
9 based, and I had an assistant chief pilot on this side, Mark
10 Schlaefi.

11 Okay. Mark Schlaefi was offered a position away from the
12 company with Sundance Helicopters as their chief pilot which
13 followed on for him to be the director of operations for that
14 company.

15 So I was looking to replace him. I didn't feel I had a
16 suitable candidate at the time. So we went external and looked
17 for somebody and Simon had very good qualifications. He was the
18 assistant chief pilot for Air Methods. He was flying the EC130
19 and the AS350. He was a FAA designated check airman in those
20 aircraft. He was -- he interviewed extremely well. His resume
21 was very well. We liked his resume. We interviewed him two times
22 before we pulled him back and offered him the position.

23 Q. And do you have any decision of who becomes lead pilot? Are
24 you part of that --

25 A. Yes. I trust in my staff, Simon especially, right, and Mark

1 to interview good candidates, and when they have finalized who
2 they would like, it's my final decision whether it's a good fit or
3 not. And if they bring it to me and they sign off on him, unless
4 there's something out of the ordinary that I don't agree with,
5 that we will talk about, they pretty much decide who's going to be
6 that person but I have buy in on who they choose.

7 Q. How has things changed on the front line since Mark left the
8 company and Simon's come in?

9 A. Since Mark?

10 Q. Left, Mark Schlaefi.

11 A. Mark Schlaefi.

12 Q. Schlaefi.

13 A. Right. Well, the company's moving all the time. I'd have to
14 sit down and think about all the changes. You're asking me on the
15 spot to tell you what all the changes were. I'd have to sit down
16 and get back to you on that, but there's been a lot of changes in
17 this company. Since the accident, there's been a lot of changes
18 in this company. When we make changes, we try to be forward
19 moving. We try to think ahead. I think if you look at our
20 industry and what our reputation is, I feel it's a very good
21 reputation. I think it's a company that's always looking on
22 enhancement of safety.

23 One of the things that we've done since that was moving the
24 (indiscernible) over to the close proximity to the Delta taxiway
25 and the possibility of something happening, and we moved the

1 (indiscernible) to the other side. But I don't know that I can
2 pinpoint the actual changes. I can get back to you on it.

3 Q. All right. How many total helicopters does Papillon own?

4 A. Fifty-six.

5 Q. And how many are out of Boulder?

6 A. It's about a 50/50 mix between Boulder City aircraft and
7 South Rim aircraft. Those are the two bases.

8 Q. So about 20?

9 A. Twenty-six, twenty-seven on each side.

10 Q. And how many total pilots?

11 A. I think we hire -- I think we gear up to 120 pilots between
12 the two bases.

13 Q. And how many are out of Boulder?

14 A. I think again there's probably 70 at this side, and the
15 remainder on the South Rim side.

16 Q. And how many passengers total per year?

17 A. System-wide --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is this confidential?

19 MR. BECKER: It very well could be.

20 MR. TOBIN: Could we agree that this would be marked
21 confidential in the record, and it would not be part of your
22 public disclosure if, in fact, it is confidential.

23 MS. KELIHER: I believe it's on their website. So I can put
24 what's on the website, but what I'll do is have everything
25 submitted before we put it open, and then it's -- you can say then

1 we can't release this information.

2 MR. BECKER: It's a hard number to come out with because, you
3 know, on the utility division, we haul a lot of people, too,
4 right, and we're not really tracking those numbers because it's a
5 Government contract, but I would believe we're flying 350, 400,000
6 people a year. I don't know what that exact number is.

7 BY MS. KELIHER:

8 Q. And then how many are you flying under tours?

9 A. You're asking for a number. I'll have to get back to you
10 with the exact number because I don't want to give you an
11 incorrect number.

12 Q. Okay. Because basically it's standard for every operation to
13 have a paragraph that goes something like this. Papillon has this
14 many helicopters. This many are based out of Boulder City which
15 haul this many passengers and this many do the tour that's exactly
16 similar to --

17 A. Sales and marketing would be a good place for you to go to
18 get those numbers. They track the numbers.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I track operations. I can tell you we fly over 50,000 hours
21 a year.

22 Q. 50,000.

23 A. Helicopter flight hours annually.

24 Q. And how many of those are from Boulder?

25 A. I believe again the operation is about a 50/50 split.

1 Q. Okay. Do you know an estimate of how many of those are
2 landings, that land in Boulder City?

3 A. It can vary depending on the needs of the client, what they
4 want to do. So we have a yield manager that manages the yield.
5 So if he sees a higher demand for landing tours, he'll change the
6 schedule moving forward to open up availability for that
7 particular product. If we have a higher demand for the Sky Walk
8 product, right, which lines us up top, not at the bottom, he'll
9 shift and he'll change the product line to that. If we have a
10 higher demand for air tours without landings, we'll change the
11 product and that's a moving target as well that he changes all the
12 time.

13 Q. So something to note which we're going to be asked during the
14 Board meeting and what we need to know, the question the public's
15 going to ask is, well, how many times has this happened? How many
16 landings has this happened prior to the accident? So.

17 A. We've never, since 1997, this was the first incident that
18 we've had at the Quartermaster Landing Site.

19 Q. So they're going to say but how many landings was that? How
20 many passengers? How many? So that's why I wanted to quantify --

21 A. Nobody's ever asked me how many landings were out there. We
22 track flight hours, all right. So I'm sure that we can get into
23 AL-Pro somehow and pull reports since we started.

24 Q. And we don't need an exact number, just to show this has been
25 done 400,000 times before having an incident. It gives you more

1 of a Delta.

2 A. And what's the period of time you want me to research?

3 Q. Well, since operations. So how many passengers has Papillon
4 taken to Quartermaster during the same type of flight as the
5 accident flight? And how many passengers does that equate to?

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. If the company can advise how many passengers --

8 A. It's a large number. It's a very large number.

9 Q. So as far as choosing Quartermaster versus the other sides
10 that the other companies have chosen, do you know how that
11 decision was come to?

12 A. No. I was not involved in the operations of picking. I was
13 a line pilot back in them days at South Rim. Rick Carrick was the
14 one that did that, and figured out the contracts back then. That
15 wasn't me. I have no clue.

16 Q. How much interaction do you and Burl have?

17 A. Burl and I talk all the time.

18 Q. And what type of discussions are between you? The operations
19 side or the safety side.

20 A. Safety. Burl's got a responsibility to audit the company
21 quarterly. Burl manages all of the external audits that the
22 company, TOPS, IS-BAO, clients who come in that want to audit us,
23 bus companies that want to come in and audit us. So we talk about
24 those audits all the time, when they're scheduling them, how those
25 things are going on. We converse on things that he might have

1 found within the company that need fixing, and we come up with a
2 plan to get them fixed. He's very forward looking. So he's
3 always looking for stuff that is a potential problem. So we're
4 talking about that stuff all the time.

5 We talk about any irregularity reports, and he might have a
6 irregularity report that requires my attention or a irregularity
7 report that he hasn't gotten closed out and he needs my assistance
8 in getting it closed out. So we talk about that stuff.

9 It's non-stop. If I need anything, I call Burl and we get it
10 done. He also helps me post manuals. I take posting manuals very
11 seriously. So I try to post manuals myself. There's so many
12 manuals that I can't and because of my location, not being here
13 five days a week, Burl handles the posting of all manuals here, to
14 make sure the manuals are correct, and that we get everything
15 posted.

16 Q. And what was your experience before starting with Papillon?

17 A. I was 20 years in the United States military. I was an
18 enlisted soldier for nine years. I was a staff sergeant when I
19 went to flight school. When I went to flight school, I came out
20 of there as a warrant officer, and was a line pilot, was an
21 instructor pilot, was a senior instructor pilot, was a maintenance
22 test pilot and maintenance officer, production control manager,
23 and retired in 1994 and came to work for Papillon. And I'm very
24 proud of the fact that I've had two jobs in my adult life.

25 Q. How do you see the company changing in the next 10 years?

1 A. I don't know what the growth is going to be. I don't know
2 that the growth -- I don't know that we're interested in growth
3 opportunities out of our local area. We always look for the
4 possibility of growing the company. I see the company moving to a
5 full Airbus fleet of EC130s and AS350 aircraft. Standardization
6 would be very nice where you have less training, and less
7 maintenance on different airframes. So that standardizing the
8 company, moving forward, we're actively trying to do that as time
9 permits.

10 We just added more management. So Simon is going to be
11 elevated to the assistant director of operations position. Tyler
12 Carver is going to be moved into the chief pilot's position, and
13 we're interviewing right now.

14 I had an interview with David Oest who is an extremely
15 competent young man, and we're looking at moving him into training
16 director's position. So back to earlier, how we try to groom
17 people from inside the company, move them, elevate them to
18 management positions, because they know the company so well. They
19 know the operations so well. It just is a good fit, and it's
20 better than bring someone from the outside who doesn't know the
21 company or the operations at all. So I see that happening.

22 I see some day that Simon will be the director of operations,
23 and I will be in my elderly years, maybe a compliance officer for
24 the company, to make sure that the bases are operating. There's
25 some talk about splitting the certificate between two

1 certificates, having the South Rim on a separate certificate and
2 this certificate. We do have a certificate with Air Grand Canyon
3 that we could change to a helicopter 135 and have that up and
4 running. So there will be some work to split that certificate and
5 get our manuals together but we would want them to be as
6 standardized as they possibly could be. So there would be a
7 director of operations on the South Rim, a director of operations
8 on the Boulder City side.

9 And then I would be the compliance officer to make sure those
10 certificates and there's a lot of tribal knowledge that I've
11 learned over the years I call it, and there's no pun intended
12 there. But it's that there's a lot of knowledge within the
13 company that I have that I need to pass on. So we are looking
14 right now very actively at transitioning the company for when some
15 of the senior people of the company start to depart, so we leave a
16 very vibrant, safe company behind.

17 So I'm working very hard with Simon right now to pass a lot
18 of that knowledge onto him and to Mark on the South Rim side, and
19 to my utility on the South Rim side because I've held that
20 position as well, to get them guys up and running, so that when my
21 time comes to retire, I can step away from the company knowing
22 that I left a strong company behind.

23 So everybody that works for Papillon should have somebody
24 that they're mentoring to take their position when they either
25 move up in the company or move out of the company. So on the

1 South Rim, I've got a young man named Rusty, and he's very -- he
2 comes from Hillsboro (ph.) that has a very strong safety culture
3 in their company and SMS program. And he's a natural fit and I'm
4 already sending him to school to be able to replace Burl when Burl
5 departs the company, and he's excited that he might have that
6 opportunity moving forward.

7 I have like I said, Tyler, to take Simon's position, have
8 Simon to take my position.

9 MR. TOBIN: I'm sorry to interrupt. Is this confidential?

10 MR. BECKER: Well, I don't want the public knowing that we're
11 getting ready to split certificates.

12 MR. TOBIN: That's why I asked.

13 MS. KELIHER: So the things that we will have can be redacted
14 out and labeled -- blacked out and labeled.

15 MR. TOBIN: (Indiscernible) okay with that.

16 MS. KELIHER: Before it ever comes to the public, it's given
17 to every respective -- and I'm assuming you'll be going through
18 everything with a fine tooth comb.

19 MR. TOBIN: I'm sorry to interrupt. It just made me nervous.
20 Go ahead.

21 MR. BECKER: Okay.

22 BY MS. KELIHER:

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. You asked about the changes.

25 Q. I guess now we're --

1 A. You asked me -- I was about to say it anyway, right. So we
2 very well possibly might do that. We're looking at that
3 internally. So it would be a change to the company.

4 We're looking at outfitting the EC130, AS350 fleet. Other
5 than that, those are the changes that I see moving forward.

6 Q. Do you see there ever being a change down the future, this
7 could be many, many years, of a different landing spot or
8 different type of tour or different (indiscernible) going to a
9 different part of the Grand Canyon?

10 A. You're asking me to speculate, and I don't know.

11 Q. Let me -- because you've been flying here for so long, are
12 there other areas, are there different things that you've had
13 ideas, of why do we keep doing the same thing, just because we've
14 been doing it --

15 A. That would be confidential information because if that did
16 come public, then all my competitors would say, that's a great
17 idea. Why don't we do this? I'm not looking right now, nor do I
18 know of the Halvorson family looking at a new venue to be going
19 to.

20 Q. I guess from our side, what we're looking at and, of course,
21 everyone's major reaction is, suddenly we're going to say this is
22 an unsafe operation and --

23 A. Whoa, whoa.

24 Q. -- the risk assessment makes this --

25 A. What makes you think this is an unsafe operation?

1 Q. Because we had an accident. That's why we're looking at it,
2 right?

3 A. It doesn't mean we're unsafe. We had an accident.

4 Q. So what we're looking at is are there safer ways to operate?
5 And I'm asking you, because you've been doing this for so long,
6 you know the area so well, and you know the operation and how it
7 goes, and you're kind of the person to ask. Are there other areas
8 and safer ways --

9 A. We're always looking -- we're always looking for a safe
10 operation, okay. We always look to learn from things that
11 happened. Nobody wants to know what happened on the 10th of
12 February more than I want to know because trust me, I don't like
13 sitting here with you explaining this either, right. So we want
14 to find what happened just like you do. So I would ask you the
15 same question of do you have any ideas to operate safely because
16 that's why we're a party to this investigation. We've made
17 several changes already to the way we do operations at Grand
18 Canyon West, and I've given Steve a list of things that we've
19 done. And we continue to move forward doing things a little bit
20 different at the sit.

21 I'll go back and say that we've operated out of that
22 Quartermaster Landing Site since 1997 with thousands and thousands
23 and thousands of landings down there, and thousands and thousands
24 and thousands of departures every single year, and have had not
25 one incident up until this point. Right. So I would like to know

1 what type of -- was it meteorological? Was it pilot error? I
2 would love to know what caused that accident. We've made those
3 approaches in and out of there day after day after day in the same
4 kind of weather conditions. And why all of a sudden, on this
5 date, did that happen? I would like to know that. And I'm sure
6 you do, too. And the public deserves to know that. So help me
7 help you.

8 We're trying. Well, I'm not going to wait for a result from
9 the NTSB. I'm trying to make change now to make sure it doesn't
10 happen again. We've put the additional windsocks out there. We
11 put the additional equipment out there. So help me help you. You
12 know, you tell me what you're thinking.

13 Q. Yeah, so that's why what I say is, I don't have the
14 knowledge. I don't have 25 years of doing this. So I'm trying to
15 get your ideas of -- I mean -- that's why --

16 A. I would say that you've really got to be careful because
17 change can also have consequence, right. So a knee jerk reaction
18 to something and you put change in, could cause something else to
19 happen. So you've got to really be careful when you're making
20 changes that you're not moving to a point where you're reinventing
21 the wheel or now you expose yourself to other risks that you
22 didn't anticipate.

23 Q. Of course, which is why changes have discussions. So we
24 discuss --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- and then I say, oh, well, what about this? And you say,
2 well, that couldn't work because of this. Oh, okay. I've never
3 thought of that because I haven't been operating for this long,
4 but that's why I was asking you, do you see anything that -- of
5 different areas of the Canyon or different ways to operate that
6 you have -- I know you've been doing it this long, but that's
7 usually not a good answer, right.

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. That's -- okay. Well, now technology has changed and things
10 have changed differently. Are there other ways that you've seen
11 that the SFRA could be different or the landing sites could be
12 different or part of the tour can be different. I mean what if
13 they just put an airport out there instead.

14 A. There is an airport out there.

15 Q. Well, down in the Canyon I mean. There's all these different
16 things of what --

17 A. I don't know how you'd put an airport in the bottom of the
18 Canyon.

19 Q. So --

20 A. You've seen the terrain down there.

21 Q. I don't know what it's like further up, and there's just
22 things that I'm wondering that of all your hours of flying and
23 sitting in the cockpit --

24 A. I have not, I have not found another place that we can go or
25 another area or we would have been there already.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And I'm not saying -- I want to make it clear that you
3 insinuated that this is an unsafe landing area because we had an
4 accident, and I will challenge you to say that I don't feel that
5 is an unsafe landing area or we wouldn't be doing it.

6 Q. That was not my insinuation. It was --

7 A. That's what you said.

8 Q. -- something unsafe happened, an accident.

9 A. Right.

10 Q. So.

11 A. Well, you actually said we were unsafe.

12 Q. Well, that flight was unsafe.

13 A. That flight had an accident, right. We don't know what
14 caused the accident. To say that flight was unsafe is an
15 incorrect statement.

16 Q. All right. It might just be semantics but what I'm trying to
17 get your knowledge and your viewpoint of having all this
18 experience of if there's ideas that you think of this specific
19 tour that could be changed or --

20 A. I think we've answered that already.

21 Q. I was just clarifying what I was going to say.

22 MS. KELIHER: I'm done, Katherine.

23 MS. WILSON: Okay. We've been going at this almost an hour.
24 Are you feeling okay?

25 MR. BECKER: I'm fine.

1 MS. WILSON: Ready to move on. All right.

2 BY MS. WILSON:

3 Q. I have a few follow ups to some of the questions that Zoë
4 asked. You said you weren't part of the decision making for the
5 Quartermaster, and you I think said Rick somebody?

6 A. Rick Carrick who's passed by now by the way.

7 Q. Is there anybody still at Papillon that was involved in that
8 decision making?

9 A. Brenda, the ownership, the ownership of the company.

10 Q. Okay. Do you know if any pilots were involved in that
11 decision making process?

12 A. Again I wasn't at the operation over here when the decision
13 was made. That was a part of the growth, too, of Boulder City.
14 At that point, I was a pilot. I'll tell you that I was checked
15 out on the route going back and forth to Grand Canyon West, but I
16 didn't operate out of this base. I was out of the other base. I
17 was helping with photo shoots and stuff like that as a pilot, but
18 I wasn't.

19 Q. Okay. When you said that --

20 A. By the way, Rick Carrick was a pilot as the director of
21 operations, and he still was actively flying, and he had a chief
22 pilot and he had other people that were working with him, that
23 were helping him make the decisions I'm sure.

24 Q. Okay. Great. You mentioned posting manuals, that you take
25 that very seriously.

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. And I think you said you work with Burl to make sure that
3 they get posted. When you say that, where are they being posted?

4 A. Okay. So our general operations manual, we have to have
5 accessible inside the facilities. We have 86 manuals I think
6 between the whole company. They're split 50/50 between Boulder
7 City side and the South Rim side. Each aircraft has its own
8 manual in it. So when it comes to posting manuals, you have to
9 have a process that if you have an ops spec change, or you have a
10 change to a portion of your GOM. We're at change 30 in our GOM.
11 A GOM is a living document. Okay. So periodically you change
12 things. We just consolidated and updated Appendix E on change 30.

13 Okay. So that means every single one of them manuals needs
14 to get that change in them, and it needs to be done correctly.
15 And I've found in my military career, when you depend on the
16 average employee to post that manual, they do not get it posted
17 correctly. They might forget to take the old change out. There's
18 a lot of things that can go wrong. So by having one or two people
19 assigned to making that change, you're less likely to make the
20 mistake of not posting it correctly.

21 So I have a sheet with all of our manuals on it, and I sit
22 down and I take the change and I remove the old documents. I put
23 the new documents in, and I sign on the deal (ph.) that the
24 manual's been updated and I sign the sheet that this manual's been
25 done, right. So we can chronologically go through and make sure

1 that every single manual has been posted correctly.

2 So when I say I take it serious, that's what I mean because I
3 want to make sure that they're correct and the pilots have the
4 most current information available to them in the manual.

5 Q. Okay. So we're talking about updating physical manuals
6 versus posting online or -- is there an electronic manual that
7 pilots can access?

8 A. We do not have an -- we try and post all our manuals and all
9 of our training materials on the flight and duty tracker website.
10 So when someone is coming up for -- due for a checkride, they have
11 all the materials available to them to be successful in their
12 training and their flight. So we do make that stuff available to
13 them on the site. It is -- the official manuals for the company
14 are the manuals that we have hard copies of. We do not have
15 electronic manuals yet.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. We do not have electronic logbooks so to speak.

18 Q. And you mentioned recent audits that have been or audits that
19 are done at the company by various outside organizations. Have
20 there been any recent audits done at the company?

21 A. There have been. I had the 2018 TOPS audit completed which
22 came out very well, and I had IBAC come out. IS-BAO did an audit
23 on us, and we were just elevated or we were recommended, we're
24 waiting to hear back from IBAC, but the recommendation from the
25 auditor who was with the FAA for 29 years that does his own thing

1 now, to move the company to Stage 3 which means that we've a very
2 strong SMS. I don't know any other tour operator that has reached
3 level 3 with their SMS yet. By the way, SMS is not required for
4 135. It's something that we voluntarily have been doing over the
5 years. So we're 10 years into our SMS, and we've -- now we're
6 able to reach Stage 3. I don't know. Are you familiar with SMS?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. I'm very proud of that. I think that shows that we're
9 forward looking and we're actually trying to get ahead of issues
10 at all times, and make sure that we're a safe company.

11 Q. As a result of any of those audits, anything -- any concerns
12 come out about flight operations?

13 A. No, I'll be happy to share the audit with you if you want.

14 Q. Great. We talked about lead pilots and that you have the
15 final say in who gets selected. What are the qualifications that
16 you're looking for?

17 A. I'm looking for someone that has good decision making
18 processes. I'm looking for someone that's very competent. I'm
19 looking for someone that knows his aircraft and knows our
20 operation very well. Some people pick up on that very quickly.
21 Some people are a little bit slower than others. So I trust that
22 -- that's what I'm looking for in an individual.

23 We have an interview process. We post the job posting within
24 the company. We have several people that apply for it. We sit
25 down and interview them, no different than if we were interviewing

1 someone new. Yesterday for the training director's position, for
2 instance, Simon came to me and said that David Oest is a good
3 candidate for training director. I interviewed him. I liked him.
4 I'm thinking about putting him in the training director's
5 position.

6 So Geoff Edlund and I sat down with David Oest for about an
7 hour, hour and a half yesterday and talked to him about that
8 position and what the expectations of that position would be, what
9 his plans were for his future, where does he see himself within
10 the company moving forward. And we proposed some challenges that
11 he might have to that, and things of that nature, and I think that
12 he'd be a very good candidate for that position. So he'll
13 probably get the position. So that's how it goes.

14 Q. Is there any minimum time with the company or minimum flight
15 hours that you would expect a lead to have?

16 A. I think that time with the company is important, but some
17 people could be here for seven months and be a phenomenal
18 candidate because of their background. Keep in mind, that we're
19 not -- we're hiring into this company people that have been -- I
20 think 80 percent of our pilots or more, are flight instructors and
21 they've been flight instructing in a flight school somewhere. So
22 they're very competent with the machine. These are people that
23 are potential people to do training flights and become FAA check
24 airmen.

25 In fact, the majority of our lead pilots eventually move on

1 to be designated check airmen with the FAA. So they can give
2 checkrides within the company.

3 So I'm looking for a guy that's forward thinking. He's got a
4 maturity about him, in many cases beyond their years, and that are
5 very well at handling the limited operational control decisions
6 that I give them for the tours going back and forth, and they're
7 familiar. I don't have a time lock in how long they have to be
8 with the company because some people mature within the company
9 differently than others.

10 I mean I had the opportunity after 90, 100 days with the
11 company, to take an aircraft down to Tucson, Arizona, and build
12 the utility division that I was able to build. So was I the wrong
13 guy for that position? I don't think I was. But I was only with
14 the company for three months, four months, when they did that, you
15 know. And so I think that you've got to look at the individual
16 maturity and their decision making process and their ability to
17 fly the helicopter and, and how they've handled issues in the past
18 and make your decision based on that.

19 Q. Do you still fly the line at all?

20 A. I do not fly the line. I do not. I've flown just about
21 every airframe that we've owned over the years with the exception
22 of the AS350 series but I was rated in the EC130, the MD-900, Bell
23 206, 407, Sikorsky S55QT, 250 hours in that thing. I've got 7,000
24 hours of flight time, with success.

25 Q. Great. How do you think the culture, the safety culture has

1 changed here over your 25 years?

2 A. Oh, it's immense. I think that every year the company's
3 gotten stronger and stronger and better and better. Anybody that
4 knows the ownership of this company knows the safety culture. I
5 think it's a very strong safety culture, and I think it continues
6 to improve.

7 I will tell you that a lot of companies talk about safety.
8 This family opens up their checkbook to safety each and every day.
9 A good example, in the last working group, I think I shared this
10 with you with child seats, okay. You can put a child on board any
11 helicopter without a restraint under two years old. It's legal in
12 the regulations. It doesn't make sense. I don't think it makes
13 sense personally. I went to the ownership, and said, look, I want
14 to buy car seats and I want to put these kids in FAA approved car
15 seats under the age of two, right. And it's going to cost us a
16 seat, but I think it's the right thing to do. I didn't get any
17 pushback at all. It's like, well, that's great, John. We think
18 it's a great idea. Why don't you go ahead and do that, and then
19 we'll push the TOPS organization to kind of adopt that. So that's
20 the safety culture of the company. They don't want to see
21 accidents either.

22 So SMS. SMS is not a requirement. I don't know if every
23 company out there has SMSes, but we were in front of the industry,
24 our SMS. Ten years ago, SMS was just a term that they were using,
25 right. It wasn't -- 121 operators were doing it, but 135

1 operators certainly weren't. But we developed that SMS. It cost
2 a lot of money to have that safety management system in place, but
3 it doesn't matter. It's the right thing to do. The ownership
4 realizes that, and they gave me free rein to initiate that program
5 and move forward with that. I've never had a pushback ever from
6 this company.

7 Q. Great. I know that you weren't a part of the original
8 decision to fly in and out of Quartermaster but is that landing
9 site --

10 A. Whoa, say that again.

11 Q. That you weren't a part of the decision --

12 A. Okay. Yes.

13 Q. -- to fly in and out of Quartermaster. Is that landing site,
14 however, evaluated or assessed on some kind of regular basis for
15 additional new risks or --

16 A. Yeah, it's part of Burl's quarterly safety audit.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. So he goes to the outlying bases as well as the main bases
19 and audits them periodically to make sure that things are correct
20 down there. We have our lead pilots, our chief pilots, our
21 training directors, flying in and out of there on a regular basis
22 as well. So they know the operations.

23 Q. Is an actual risk assessment performed?

24 A. There has not been an additional risk assessment performed on
25 that helo base other than the things that we're looking at right

1 now, and a long-term risk assessment on how we want to continue
2 with operations in light of what happened.

3 Q. So there was an initial risk assessment performed?

4 A. I wasn't part of the risk assessment in 1997, whenever it
5 was. I don't know what was done --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- at the base back then. You're asking me to speculate, and
8 I don't know how that went down.

9 Q. Since the accident, has the company gone back and looked at
10 either irregularity reports or any sort of other flight
11 performance data to understand if similar incidents like this have
12 happened or near misses?

13 A. We continually trend our incident reports to try and get in
14 front of them and see if there's something we can be doing.
15 That's what SMS is all about, taking everything full circle and
16 bringing it back to the pilot pool to change operations and run
17 that. And then making sure that any changes that we put in place
18 are reevaluated later on to make sure that the change is actually
19 working. So we do that whole process within our SMS. So we're --
20 yes, we do do that.

21 Q. But specifically since the accident, have irregularity
22 reports or any other data been targeted specifically to landings
23 at Quartermaster, high wind conditions, anything like that?

24 A. Burl is receiving irregularity reports, and he's trending
25 them for me, and he brings any trends that he sees that needs my

1 attention, he brings to my attention.

2 Q. But specifically, because of this accident, has somebody gone
3 back in the data to look to see if there -- at what the incident
4 reports flying into Quartermaster are?

5 A. Absolutely. That's why there's another windsock out there
6 because we're seeing that wind could have been a factor in this
7 particular accident, we think, right. We don't know what the
8 winds were doing. You guys are hiring experts to go back there
9 and pull meteorological data. You did a drone flight over the
10 aircraft. We went down there with the NTSB to do the drone
11 flights down there to map the accident scene and look at that type
12 of stuff. Absolutely.

13 We've got 10 pads out there at that helo base, and we very
14 slowly came back. We went to four aircraft to six aircraft to
15 eight aircraft. We held it at eight aircraft. We went back to
16 the Hualapai and got an additional landing site to move two
17 aircraft to an additional landing site.

18 Before we opened up that landing site, we were training
19 pilots going in and out of there. We had to put a windsock in at
20 that landing site as well. It's in close proximity to the
21 Quartermaster Landing Site. There's now three windsocks out there
22 so we can evaluate what the wind conditions are doing. So, yes,
23 we do this all the time. This is an ongoing culture of the
24 company.

25 You say did I specific go back and say, give me all the

1 incident reports that we've had, right. Burl went down and looked
2 at all the incident reports and looked for trends. We didn't see
3 any trends that were alarming that we needed to re-look at.

4 Q. Okay. With those two additional landing sites that you got,
5 how --

6 A. Two additional landing pads. One actual landing site. I
7 misspoke.

8 Q. -- how was that communicated to pilots? Was it something
9 that needed to be communicated to pilots? And if so, how was that
10 communicated?

11 A. When -- I'm trying to understand. When we had the approval
12 to land at that other landing site?

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. When we had the approval to land at that other landing site,
15 the first thing that happened was the safety director, the
16 training director and the chief pilot went down to evaluate the
17 landing site that the other company was landing. Keep in mind,
18 this was a landing site that we had previously. So we were
19 pretty familiar with the landing site any way. Okay. We noticed
20 that there was some things that needed to be changed there. The
21 biggest one, that they didn't have a windsock there. So we had to
22 put the windsock there. So there was no operations conducted
23 until we got the windsock up.

24 Okay. Now the pilots are aware that we've got the landing
25 site, but they're not allowed to land at that landing site until

1 they get in an aircraft with one of my instructor pilots to go
2 down there and land at that site and show them what their options
3 are to land at that site.

4 Q. And was a risk assessment done of that --

5 A. Yes --

6 Q. -- additional landing site?

7 A. -- there was a risk assessment of the landing site.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Actually I did a management of change, and that's still in
10 progress.

11 Q. Does the FAA need to be involved in that new --

12 A. No.

13 Q. -- the decision to have another landing site or landing --
14 yeah, one landing site?

15 A. No, the FAA wouldn't be involved if you're landing anywhere
16 else in the world. They don't ask their approval every time you
17 have to land a helicopter.

18 Q. What communications do you have with other operators in and
19 out of the Canyon, Sundance, Maverick?

20 A. We are a very close knit group. We talk all the time. We
21 identified years ago Papillon and John Sullivan from Sundance,
22 evaluated the route structure going out, back and forth to the
23 Grand Canyon, and we identified areas of concern that different
24 operators were doing. So we went to the FAA and asked the FAA to
25 host meetings between the operators so we could develop a

1 (indiscernible) agreement so everybody knew what everybody else
2 was doing. The goal of that was to have one training document
3 coming out of that to where everybody was training to the same
4 agreement. And so we were training that. This is where Maverick
5 is. This is where Sundance is. This is where 5 Star is. And
6 everybody's a signature to that training agreement and that's how
7 that was developed.

8 So the air tour industry here in Las Vegas maybe doesn't have
9 the same challenge that operators might have in Hawaii or Alaska
10 or other places in the world. We all get along. I think the
11 unwritten motto is that the sales and marketing team can figure
12 out how that whole thing goes, but when it comes to operations,
13 we're all going to operate safely. If I see a Sundance helicopter
14 or a Maverick helicopter or another operator going out there doing
15 something that I feel is unsafe, I have a direct line to the
16 director of operations and chief pilot. They're very receptive of
17 it. We share reports back and forth between each other. If they
18 see something that one of my pilots is doing that is unsafe, they
19 will send that to me, so I can take action and investigate on it
20 as well.

21 Q. And the LOA, is that updated regularly?

22 A. It's updated all the time. We just did an update recently
23 for -- I forget what the update was. It was a couple of months
24 ago, but we're updating that all the time.

25 Q. Okay. And the FAA is a part of that process?

1 A. No, it's an agreement between the operators. The FAA is
2 aware. The POIs are aware of when changes are going to happen.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But I don't think they're signature to the document.

5 Q. Were you a part of the decision that said the lead pilots
6 will make the go/no go decisions?

7 A. I give the lead pilots the ability to -- the lead pilots
8 advise me when -- or they advise Simon when something's out of the
9 ordinary, right. Everybody in this company has the ability to say
10 no with no punitive action. That's what a just culture is, right.
11 So nobody is ever penalized for anything. Everybody, to include a
12 loader, a fueler, a customer service, has the ability to say, stop
13 operations, because we see something in conflict here, where we
14 can review that.

15 So if a lead pilot decides that the winds are too high or the
16 temperatures are too high or the weather doesn't look right or
17 they just don't feel comfortable, they have the ability to throw
18 up the red flag and stop at any given time. No punitive action.

19 Q. Are you involved in development of training or when there are
20 changes to training?

21 A. Most of the time, I leave that to the chief pilots. I am
22 involved when there is huge changes. Minor changes, no.

23 Q. I understand that you, with Burl, are looking at trends and
24 irregularity reports and things like that. Are there any other
25 data that's being looked at, like a FOQA program or something to

1 ensure --

2 A. I'm not familiar with that program.

3 Q. Okay. Something where you're looking at data to understand
4 adherence to procedures by pilot standardization? Are you looking
5 at Spidertracks data, for instance, to make sure that pilots are
6 flying routes that they're supposed to be flying, aren't
7 deviating?

8 A. Yes. I am in AL-Pro on my days off. I pull up Spidertracks
9 on my phone all the time, right, to see where people are going.
10 We institute programs for the emergency, for SOS's. So I'm
11 involved in all those items. So I don't know what you're asking
12 me specifically. But I'm very active. I want to know where my
13 aircraft are at all times. If there's an aircraft in the air, I
14 want them positively flight followed in some which way or shape or
15 form.

16 Spidertracks, I want to caution, that is a secondary flight
17 following. That is for me, right, to where if I have a reported
18 issue, I can identify where they are at any given time. There are
19 rare occasions where I do use it for flight following when an
20 aircraft is departing early in the morning on a contract or
21 something like that, so I know where they are. But I'm addicted
22 to making sure that I know where my aircraft are at all times to a
23 fault. And I say that in that, but I get neurotic about it. If
24 an aircraft is due at a certain time, and he hasn't checked in,
25 I'm the guy that's spring-loaded to the worst case scenario right

1 away, and I depend on my staff to calm me down because I go to the
2 point where I might even launch aircraft to figure out where they
3 are and that type of deal. So I'm on it all the time. I'm very
4 conscious of it.

5 Q. And you feel that with the tracking that you're doing, that
6 you have a good handle on whether pilots are adhering to SOPs?

7 A. Yes. One good thing about the tour industry, there's
8 normally someone in front of them. There's normally someone in
9 back of them. We're following the conga line so to speak, going
10 out to the Canyon and back. I've got a relationship with the
11 other operators. They have a relationship with me, that if
12 something is going wrong, they will tell me or we will tell them.
13 I think an accident in aviation affects all operators, not one
14 operator. So I think we all watch each other's back as well. So
15 I feel that I have a good solid control on what's going on in this
16 company safety-wise.

17 There's senior pilots out there in the Canyon all the time.
18 There is lead pilots, training director, chief pilot. You do have
19 to pull people back to center at times, and we get that. So you
20 start to see some mission creep on what people are doing, and
21 you've got to get out there and you've got to pull that back to
22 center, right. Tribal knowledge I call it. You know, that people
23 kind of drift, and you have to pull. I don't think that's any
24 different with this company than any other company.

25 Q. Have you ever let a pilot go for safety violations?

1 A. Absolutely.

2 Q. And what is your involvement in the SMS program? Does that
3 fall under Burl? Do you play a part in it or does it fall under
4 you?

5 A. I'm still mentoring Burl with the SMS. I stay involved with
6 SMS because I think it's an industry must so to speak. Now I'm
7 working with the TOPS organization. I'm trying to institute a SMS
8 program as a requirement for all TOPS operators. So this year, as
9 I'm on the audit committee, I'm actually the chair of the audit
10 committee as well as on the board of directors for TOPS. So what
11 our goal is this year, during the audit, was a gap analysis of
12 where all the TOPS operators are with their SMS or if they even
13 have a SMS, and then how we're going to implement SMS based on
14 Part 5 guidance from the FAA and have everybody have a SMS.

15 So SMS is big with me. I wasn't a big believer in SMS when
16 it first started coming out, but once you get into SMS, and you
17 start realizing the benefits you get from it, it's addictive. And
18 I find myself going to Burl and saying, Burl, this is a management
19 change deal. We need to start on a management of change document,
20 how we're going to move forward at Hoover Dam or how we're going
21 to move forward in other aspects of the operation, new aircraft
22 coming on line or it could be a variety of things but we're always
23 looking to get ahead of it and make sure we're documenting it.

24 Q. Irregularity reports, are they required under Part 135?

25 A. No.

1 Q. So the program that you have in place, is that a part of SMS?

2 A. It is a part of my SMS.

3 Q. Okay. Since you implemented SMS, do you feel like there has
4 been a positive increase in reporting of safety concerns?

5 A. Absolutely to a fault. I don't want to say to a fault
6 because you want as many reports coming in as you can. I've got
7 to say when the NTSB wanted all of my irregularity reports, it was
8 a huge concern, and I actually marked them confidential for a
9 reason because the average individual needs to be comfortable
10 writing that report, and the report doesn't push disciplinary
11 action. I've had people write a report on something they did.

12 I gave the example of forgetting a logbook in the aircraft
13 one day because he flew in one aircraft and went to another
14 aircraft, forgot, and didn't realize that the logbook wasn't in
15 there, but he came back and he wrote an irregularity report on
16 himself saying that, hey, I took off without my logbook in the
17 aircraft, you know, and this is how it happened. So as a
18 management team, we put a procedure in place or evaluate if that
19 was a one time deal or -- so your wanting all that, and when the
20 NTSB is asking for the irregularity reports, I was worried that
21 people were going to say, whoa, if these things are going to be
22 public knowledge, then I'm not going to write another irregularity
23 report, you know, for the company. You can require them to do
24 that, but they would be hesitant to write it and maybe they
25 wouldn't give you the documentation that you need in the

1 irregularity report to actually make the change.

2 So I've got to tell you, to this date, it still scares me
3 that you ask for those reports because I don't want to stop my
4 employees from giving me their reports because that ties my hands
5 to make the changes that we might need for the company. I don't
6 care that you see what's in there. I have nothing to hide, but on
7 the individual level, they might see it that way.

8 Q. Spidertracks data, you said that that's not the primary means
9 of flight following?

10 A. No, it's a backup for us. Our primary means is through AL-
11 Pro.

12 Q. Okay. And there's various times that you can receive pings
13 from Spidertracks?

14 A. I have the ability to go in. In fact, we're working with
15 Spidertracks right now on a permanent two minute or one minute
16 ping on our aircraft.

17 Q. Okay. And what is it now?

18 A. It depends on what the mission is. So I determine based on a
19 mission profile, if an aircraft is on a specified route from Point
20 A to Point B, and I know they're going to be somewhere right along
21 that route, right, then there's no reason to ping that aircraft
22 every two minutes, okay. So I had an eight minute ping. Then I
23 move to 15 minute ping, felt that was ineffective, and I brought
24 it back to an 8 minute ping. I think most of the operators you'll
25 find are probably doing the same thing. They're probably pinging

1 their aircraft about every eight minutes.

2 Spidertracks is actually coming with a proposal to me for a
3 flat rate two minute ping, from your flat rate one minute ping.
4 So we've been active with them to try and get that worked out but
5 if they're on a specified route, to and from the Grand Canyon,
6 where I know where they're going to be at any specific time based
7 on the amount that he's been gone. The sole purpose is where do I
8 start looking for this guy if he doesn't show up.

9 Okay. Now if I've got an aircraft that's going out to do
10 game capture, he's get a two minute ping. If I've got someone
11 going away from the local air tour route doing something different
12 on a charter, then I'm going to ping him every two minutes. So I
13 have the ability to go into Spidertracks and change the ping rate
14 at any given time and it's immediate, right. Change copter 2 to a
15 two minute ping. Change it back -- 2 back from a two minute ping
16 to an eight minute ping because this is a mission he's been doing.
17 And Jeff Bubier and Burl oversee that and change them pings for me
18 all the time. And then I talked earlier about having the ability
19 to self-monitor on a two minute ping for training or whatever.

20 Q. And at the time of the accident, the accident helicopter was
21 on a 15 minute ping?

22 A. He was on a 15 minute ping.

23 Q. How do you think the pay -- how does the pay at Papillon
24 compare to other operators?

25 A. I think we're higher than other operators in some areas, and

1 we're below some of the operators in other areas. The culture of
2 the company is that we don't want to be the highest paying. We
3 don't want to be the lowest paying. We want to be in the mid spot
4 somewhere, right, with the industry. My utility pilots do very
5 well in fire season, and the tour pilots, first year pilots are at
6 the lower end of the pay scale, but I've got pilots that are
7 making six figures, and I've got pilots that are six figures
8 (sic).

9 Q. Did you know Scott Booth?

10 A. I knew Scott Booth. I met Scott Booth. I didn't hang out
11 with Scott Booth. I've got 120 pilots on this side, and I also
12 have some interaction, very minimal, only on a social basis, with
13 the pilots on the airline side. So we have 120 pilots, and they
14 have probably 70 or 80 pilots. So walking up to somebody and
15 remembering their name. I knew who Scott was, all right. I
16 visited Scott. I met Scott at the salmon bake. He came up to me.
17 He was a very nice employee, very complimentary to the company.
18 So I'm a fan of Scott's.

19 But I try during in brief to go down and talk to the new hire
20 pilots to let them know that we have a lot of pilots. I want them
21 to know what my safety culture is at this company. I want them to
22 know that I have an open door policy and they can talk to me. I
23 actually give them my business card that's got my cell phone on
24 it. If they have any problems, they can call me, and I want to
25 develop that just culture where they feel comfortable going back

1 and forth. But I also tell them that we have 120 pilots, and it's
2 a family run operation, but it's a big family run operation. So
3 please come up to me when you're on the flight line and talk to
4 me, and if I don't remember your name, please don't get upset with
5 me. Please don't get hurt, right, because I've got a lot of
6 people's names, and then you start looking at customer service and
7 everything else. There's a lot of people that work for this
8 company.

9 Q. Since the accident, have you -- did you go back to Scott's
10 personnel file, training file, review his records?

11 A. I personally did not. The accident happened. I told Scott
12 -- I told Simon that he needed to seal the records, right, which
13 he did. And when Zoë asked for them, we gave her the current
14 records that he had. I understand that there's the "Smith" file
15 and we'll get you all that stuff, too, but those records have been
16 sealed, of course, since the accident. And what you have on
17 Scott's records is how Scott's records appeared in his file on the
18 10th of February.

19 Q. So how were you informed about the accident?

20 A. I was informed right away. Chris, the dispatcher, and the
21 supervisor at Grand Canyon West, called me right then. It was
22 early on.

23 Q. And then what did you do?

24 A. I activated the emergency response plan. I was actually on
25 my way out the door to go to dinner, and I set up a table in my

1 house and I started -- I had my phone with me on my kitchen
2 counter, and my wife left, and I was there alone, and I just
3 started going through the emergency response and doing anything I
4 could to facilitate that.

5 Q. And you mentioned earlier there have been some changes since
6 the accident.

7 A. Yeah, I've got a list. Steve Stein asked me for a list of
8 things that we're doing. The emergency response, there were some
9 equipment issues, communications issues that we had because of the
10 location of the accident and the time of day that it was going on.
11 So we put new satellite phones down at the helo bases. Those new
12 satellite phones have an SOS capability to them, so that once you
13 press SOS, even if the satellite ain't right where it needs to be
14 when it is, it will send the SOS.

15 We test them phones all the time now. The phones come back
16 here at the end of the day. They're put on a charge. They go
17 back out in the morning with two additional batteries on them.
18 I've got six radios set aside for communication.

19 So the Hualapai couldn't communicate down to their landing
20 site and into the investigation, they realized that we had the
21 ability to talk to Quartermaster Base. All right. So they were
22 kind of relaying information. So their information was coming out
23 spotted. So we've got those radio down there now. We've got that
24 satellite phone down there right now. The emergency response
25 equipment that the Hualapai had out there was unsatisfactory in

1 our opinion. So at all the landing sites down there, we have
2 trauma kits. We have evacuation equipment down there with skid
3 hoes and we send people to a trauma course and they're bringing
4 that trauma course back here to teach our individual pilots on
5 that trauma course. There's AEDs down at the bottom. They were
6 there, and they weren't operational. So we did that.

7 We weren't sure. I kept hearing from investigations on this
8 about shifting winds, reports from the pilots talking about
9 shifting winds and depth of the canyon and that type of thing. So
10 we collectively decide to put another windsock down there in a
11 position where the pilots had good recognition of it, and they
12 compared that windsock with the windsock at the Ramada to see if
13 the winds were shifting down there. So we did that.

14 There was a slow start up there. So we started with four
15 aircraft, six aircraft. We limited that site to eight aircraft
16 because I'm hearing that there might be congestion problems down
17 there. So on landing aircraft, I don't allow no more than eight
18 aircraft to land down there. There were 10 that was landing there
19 previously, and then we've negotiated these other two landing
20 spots that are a little bit of a distance away, that we had in the
21 past, to get them back.

22 We are now looking into the training program on settling
23 (sic) with power and we're demonstrating on the initial
24 qualification, settling with power in the aircraft. So we're
25 trying to put the aircraft into a settling with power training

1 condition to demonstrated what that would feel like so they would
2 know which is not a requirement to do in the aircraft but we're
3 doing that just on this side now. We are -- there's a lot of more
4 changes than that. But we're just trying to be looking forward to
5 make sure that this doesn't happen again. We're actively looking
6 at things we need to change, and I don't know if they're in line
7 with what caused the accident because we don't know yet. I would
8 rather be proactive than non-proactive.

9 Q. Thanks, John.

10 MS. WILSON: That's all the questions I have for now.

11 BY MR. FIGLIA:

12 Q. Hi, John. Tyler Carver, who does he report to?

13 A. Tyler Carver reports to the chief pilot who is Simon
14 Whiteley.

15 Q. And Simon reports to?

16 A. Me.

17 Q. Okay. Do you have regularly scheduled like safety meetings
18 or safety council?

19 A. We do.

20 Q. Okay. Who attends the safety council meetings and are
21 minutes kept?

22 A. All our safety focal point managers. So Burl has a list that
23 he can give you of all the people who attended last one.

24 Q. Okay. And do they keep minutes?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Is the CEO there?

2 A. The CEO is not there.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. The president is invited and is often there.

5 Q. Okay. Who chairs the meeting?

6 A. Safety director.

7 Q. Are hazard reports and irregularity reports brought up at

8 these meetings?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. And are the hazard and irregularity reports

11 distributed amongst --

12 A. Let me step back. We do not bring all irregularity reports

13 to that safety meeting. If there's a trend or an issue that we

14 see, that issue would be brought up.

15 Q. Okay. Distributing the irregularity reports and the hazards,

16 how is that done?

17 A. Through management. Any time an irregularity report is

18 filed, I automatically get that report on my iPhone. It comes to

19 me by e-mail. The safety director, the chief pilots, there's a

20 management chain of command, the ownership, also sees every single

21 irregularity report that is filed. In case it's a safety of

22 flight, we can put a stop right away. So my phone will ring when

23 an irregularity report, any time one's filed.

24 Q. Okay. And how is that information filtered down to line

25 pilots?

1 A. Okay. The process would be that the director of safety gets
2 the irregularity report. He determines the seriousness of that
3 report, and who is responsible to take action on that report.
4 Once the action has been taken, if it's an issue that the line
5 pilots need to be aware of, then that information should go into
6 the daily safety briefing in the morning, and we have notes in the
7 safety briefing that "X" amount -- we've noticed this in it. You
8 need to be aware that this happened.

9 Q. And who makes that decision?

10 A. Director of safety.

11 Q. Okay. If the submitter of the --

12 A. Let me step back. The director of safety is responsible for
13 making the decision. I often say, Burl, this is something that we
14 really need to get back to the line pilots on. So just make sure
15 we get this in the safety briefing for the next 14 days so all the
16 shifts get it.

17 Q. Okay. Along those lines, if an originator is on the
18 irregularity or the hazard report, does he get the response to his
19 filing or making of that report?

20 A. You need to talk to Burl on he handles that. I would assume
21 that he would.

22 Q. Okay. Obviously you're on the mishap response plan. Okay.
23 On the audits that are done quarterly --

24 A. Internal audits?

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- and safety improvements that are brought to management, is
3 there anything that's been said, well, no, we --

4 A. I have never had the ownership of this company come to me and
5 tell me that I couldn't do something that I felt would make it a
6 safer company.

7 Q. And that's based on audits as well?

8 A. That's based on anything.

9 Q. Okay. Level 3 SMS, if I'm not mistaken, I believe a Level 3
10 SMS has to incorporate a flight data monitoring program.

11 A. I'm not familiar.

12 Q. Okay. So you're not familiar with flight data monitoring,
13 capturing flight data information for your SMS program?

14 A. You need to talk to Burl.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. It's very in depth. I mean our audit is that thick literally
17 on the items that are required within the SMS, and we've met all
18 the gates for that SMS for IS-BAO.

19 Q. Okay. But you -- do you have a flight data monitoring
20 program?

21 A. Explain what data you want me to capture.

22 Q. They capture within an aircraft, there's several methods.
23 One is telemetrics which can be recorded and then downloaded. On
24 those telemetrics, you can have triggers. You can have triggers
25 that you want to set. In other words, if the aircraft exceeds 60

1 degrees angle on bank, you get a notification.

2 A. No, I think it's -- I think what we're talking about is the
3 depth of what data we're capturing. We try to have monitoring on
4 all our aircraft in some way, shape or form, whether it's
5 capturing the deck (indiscernible) or whether it's an older
6 aircraft like a Bell 206 where we've got tattletale gauges. Or my
7 torque exceedances that we might have in a Bell 206 or my TOT
8 exceedance we have. We have gauges that tell us any time the
9 exceedance has happened and the pilot doesn't have the ability.
10 So we have the ability through our technology to be able to
11 capture certain data. I don't know how in depth you're trying --
12 you're requesting that I go. I don't have the ability to see if
13 an aircraft exceeds an angle of bank of 60 degrees on all aircraft
14 because I just don't have the equipment available.

15 Q. And I would venture to say you wouldn't have anything that
16 would say a high vertical descent would be able to be captured.

17 A. No. Spidertracks could give me from one ping to another what
18 the descent would be, because it reports altitude, but I don't
19 have anything in like the Bell 206 that would say it exceeds 1500
20 foot (indiscernible) right in the center.

21 Q. Okay. The POI, has he looked at operations outside of here
22 at Boulder for --

23 A. My POI is in this company a lot. He's at the South Rim.
24 He's in Page (ph.). He's here. He has very close oversight. We
25 have a very good working relationship with the local FSDO and

1 always have.

2 Q. Okay. And he has observed the operation at the
3 Quartermaster?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And how often does he do that?

6 A. Sometimes he does it without telling me. So he's out there
7 full time.

8 Q. Okay. In coordination between Maverick and Sundance,
9 obviously you have a good working relationship in the work here
10 locally. And obviously you work with TOPS as well.

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. If there's an irregularity let's say on the weather, if let's
13 say Maverick decided not to launch aircraft or Sundance based on
14 visibility or weather, are you informed of that information?

15 A. I would believe that we would -- no, not all the time. I can
16 only see what's going on, on this heliport or at the South Rim
17 what's going on at that heliport. I'll tell you what I get mostly
18 is why are you shut down while the other operator's working?
19 Right. I'll be shut down here and I'll watch one of the other
20 operators that chooses whatever their limits for operation are,
21 are still operating. There's times that at Grand Canyon West that
22 we'll shut down because our temperature gauge is reading a degree
23 or so different than the Sundance gauge. It doesn't mean they're
24 being unsafe. They're a very professional operator, right, but we
25 make our decision when to shut down based on what our tolerances

1 are, and it doesn't necessarily bound with the other.

2 But I have been approached by the Hualapai before. We were
3 flying Bell 206s out of Grand Canyon West. The other companies
4 are flying AS350 doing up and downs Grand Canyon West. We were
5 shutting down the Bell product with the rotor system we have on
6 that and turbulence earlier than the other operators were shutting
7 down. So there was a question to the company, why are you shut
8 down? We've met the limits of our capabilities. So we're not
9 going to fly no more, but the other operator's still flying. Too
10 bad, that's just the way it is. So we're shut down.

11 Q. So there's no central dispatch like EMS operators have, if
12 one EMS operator turns down a flight and you accept, your weather
13 minimums are higher than the original --

14 A. No, I don't know that our weather minimums compared to the
15 other companies are any different. I don't know what their
16 weather minimums are, but I'll tell you, normally the way I see
17 it, we're shutting down before someone else is. I do coordinate
18 out of Grand Canyon West with Sundance that, hey, look, we're
19 going to shut down, and I'll tell you, 99 times out of 100,
20 they'll agree with that decision and they'll shut down as well.
21 Or if they decide to shut down, we shut down, too.

22 MR. FIGLIA: Okay. That's all I have.

23 BY MR. WAUGH:

24 Q. I have a few questions. Many of the people that don't have
25 the knowledge that you do of the Canyon and the operations. How

1 many different landing sites are there in the west end of the
2 Canyon?

3 A. Several. You've got -- Maverick has a landing site.
4 Sundance has a landing site. Papillon has two landing sites, now
5 three that we've opened up the site. I take that back. Maverick
6 has two landing sites. They also have a swamp area that they land
7 at. 5 Star has a landing site out there. And Sundance has two
8 landing sites. So there's several landing sites out there.

9 Q. Okay. If you were to grade them, I'm sure they're not all
10 the same level as far as hazards and such, but the ones that you
11 guys operate right now, on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the worst,
12 1 being the best, where do you think that your sites individual,
13 the three, where do each of those fall into that?

14 A. I think we're in a good location. I would put them in the
15 top 2, 3.

16 Q. And where is the first site that you guys go up to?

17 A. So we've got the Ramada site for the up and down. We've got
18 the Quartermaster site and then the site right next to the
19 Quartermaster site is the Waterfall site if you're familiar with
20 that.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So we just opened up the Waterfall site to Papillon. The
23 company out of Hawaii --

24 MR. BOYD: Sunshine.

25 MR. BECKER: -- Sunshine Helicopters were operating. So they

1 gave that site back to us.

2 BY MR. WAUGH:

3 Q. And you -- because you had aircraft operating out of Vegas.
4 Are there any flights any more coming from the South Rim?

5 A. To Grand Canyon West?

6 Q. Yeah, shuttle flights.

7 A. No, we do -- since we're the utility part of the company,
8 boat fuel's got to go to the bottom. So we'll launch a South Rim
9 aircraft to go do the long line work and boat fuel but it's -- we
10 do not operate Grand Canyon West from South Rim. I have pilots
11 that are trained to operate out there and from time to time, I do
12 have a pilot if they're short. I could send an aircraft out there
13 and we have in the past sent an aircraft out there to do up and
14 downs during the day, but they've been through the training
15 program and they've operated out there before, and they're
16 familiar with the letter of agreement and operations out there.

17 Q. So would you say that the landing site at the bottom of the
18 Canyon is the only hazards that your flights going from here and
19 coming from Las Vegas --

20 A. I don't know that I would consider that that's a hazard to go
21 to that landing site.

22 Q. Okay. But I mean a potential hazard. If an aircraft, any
23 aircraft was to leave a hangar and goes to any landing site,
24 that's a potential hazard, right?

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. And if it's in a hangar, it could be struck by lightning and
2 that's --

3 A. I don't consider it a hazard to go to a landing site.

4 Q. A hazard is bad word. How about an area of concern for --

5 A. An area of maybe high risk --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- because it's an offsite landing rather than pavement.

8 Q. So what I'm saying is, just the landing site where they're
9 going, is that basically the only area of risk would you say
10 between here and there for say Boulder City?

11 A. I'm not quite sure what --

12 Q. Are there any other things in your day that would draw your
13 attention as far as the (indiscernible) of areas?

14 A. Okay. We've got an aircraft that's up at Hoover Dam Lodge.
15 It's not at an airport. It's up there. It's isolated. We put
16 senior pilots out there to fly that operation, right. So that
17 would be something that was different.

18 Night strip tours. We chose to get out of the night strip
19 tour business 8, 10 years ago, right, because there's a level of
20 risk there that we're not willing to accept. All right. If you
21 look at the night strip tour, over the years, because there were
22 concerns about the number of operators that were on there, and the
23 altitudes they were flying, we initially raised the altitude
24 because the ground lights and the aircraft at night, dark nights,
25 you can lose that aircraft in the ground lights of Las Vegas. So

1 we raised the altitude initially. The second thing we did was
2 said, well, okay. So if you lose them, how can we light the
3 aircraft up? So we outfitted strobes on the aircraft. We did
4 that, and it come to a point where Part 91 operators out of North
5 Las Vegas were entering the role, too, with younger pilots in
6 there, all right.

7 So we just decided that it was a level of risk that we didn't
8 want to take, right. So we walked away from all that night strip
9 tour business, right. Our sales and marketing team had a huge
10 issue with it, right, because what we didn't know, we stepped away
11 from the night tour business, that there's operators out there
12 that run a one stop shop, right. So they want to have clients
13 that are going to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, but they've got
14 another client that they're working with in the same group that
15 wants a lower end product that maybe it's only \$70 to fly the
16 strip tour, and they want to do that, too. So they said, well, if
17 you don't do a night strip tour, then you're going to lose the
18 rest of this business, and we said, too bad, so sad. This was the
19 decision we made.

20 We compromised that we do a sunset or a twilight strip tour
21 when the other operators aren't on the trip, and there's still the
22 glow from the setting sun, but the lights are starting to come up
23 in Las Vegas. So we do one round of strip tours before the
24 aircraft are out there. We did try to go to two rounds, but we
25 were bumping up to the other guys. I've got no go times. If that

1 aircraft isn't in the air by this time, the flight doesn't go,
2 right, because I want them on the ground before the end of the
3 (indiscernible). So that was an area of concern that we took
4 action on it.

5 Q. But going back as far as the Rim, like I'll just kind of ask
6 this. Like the area of Hacienda. Well, first going out of
7 Boulder City Airport with the operation of multiple aircraft, is
8 that an area of risk?

9 A. Say that again now.

10 Q. Is that an area of risk, the aircraft, multiple aircraft --

11 A. Sure, it is.

12 Q. Going around the area of Hacienda --

13 A. Yeah, it's murky traffic there.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. That was actually one of the choke points that we identified
16 in the letter of agreement with the other operators.

17 Q. S turns at the dam?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Why is that? Why would that be an area of risk?

20 A. Because as you're going into the S turn and another operator
21 emerging from the Hacienda coming in there, two aircraft in close
22 proximity while you're making your turns, somebody could be in a
23 right-hand drive helicopter, somebody could be in a left-hand
24 drive helicopter, you're looking across each other's cockpit. All
25 right. So you want to maintain visual separation there.

1 Q. Okay. How about Indian Pass? You have S turns at Indian
2 Pass. What about that?

3 A. I don't know. I don't know that it's a higher level of
4 concern, but it's an en route sector -- section.

5 Q. All right. (Indiscernible) well, actually, we can talk in
6 depth on some of the other operators crossing the lake but let's
7 go, let me go to climbing at the entrance to the SFRA, is there --
8 do you know if that is a risk factor?

9 A. Area of concern, I'll tell you that I think what you're
10 getting at, we put procedures in place on all these areas of
11 concerns and have radio calls set up en route where there are area
12 of concerns because you know emerging traffic in particular
13 locations and you want to advise the other operators that we're
14 there. So each one of them areas, there's a radio call required
15 at them areas that we've identified as choke points so everybody
16 would know where everybody else was on that frequency, I think is
17 what you're asking.

18 Q. Well, the granddaddy of them all is what about flying in the
19 SFRA?

20 A. Yes. Okay. So there's -- it's a congested area of
21 operation. I mean not congested. It's a high volume of traffic
22 in that area. You've got operators that are going to different
23 landing sites. We're very active with FAA and with the other
24 operators in safe operations. So you've got operations going up
25 and down that are going to the -- boat dock landing pads, and over

1 the course of our risk analysis type deal, we've decided that,
2 well, let's move this traffic to the north side of the river.
3 We've moving down to this altitude, make a radio call here. All
4 right. So the operation I don't think is unsafe out there. I
5 think that we've addressed those issues as an industry, not as an
6 operator, to put checkpoints and check and balances in place where
7 we're flying.

8 So from an outside guide that's never seen that before, they
9 might go in there and say, holy cow, what a bee's nest, but I
10 don't think they realize how far we have went to make that safe
11 and how it's just like this en route agreement and the Grand
12 Canyon West agreement on how we're going to do operations out
13 there, and how we've structured that airspace industry to make it
14 safe, and an exportable training package, so we're all trained off
15 the same document. I don't know that there's any other operations
16 that I know of.

17 Hawaii has got the Hawaiian operator's guide that they go by,
18 but we have as an industry here in Vegas, I think led the charge
19 on how different operators can get along for operations and
20 safety. We talk to each other all the time, and if someone sees
21 something that's unsafe, they're calling somebody about it. We're
22 talking to each other about it, and we know what's going on out
23 there. Very active.

24 Q. Okay. Can you remember meeting with several -- any of the
25 different operators over the years on some of the points we've

1 just talked about?

2 A. Absolutely.

3 Q. The different locations.

4 A. Absolutely. And FAA's hosted those meetings a lot of times,
5 but --

6 Q. Also to paint a picture because again not everybody's had the
7 luxury of the experience you have. We've got all these multiple
8 companies, with all these multiple aircrafts and you've got 107
9 pilots. But if we were to sit on a bench at the Bat Towers at
10 Guano Point, right, today. How many hundreds of aircraft would we
11 see coming down the Canyon, coming off the SFRA going into the
12 Canyon?

13 A. I don't know that at any given time that we'd have hundreds
14 of aircraft in there, right. Periodically you'd see somebody
15 coming in on the green 4 route. Periodically you'd see someone in
16 the Descent Canyon going down, but it's not like there's 100
17 aircraft right now, right there, at one time.

18 Q. So I'm not saying -- I guess that picture -- when I say you
19 look at the numbers, the sheer numbers, you have all these
20 aircraft. What does that relate to when we see it out there?
21 What does that actually relate to?

22 A. It's no different than the operations that come in and out of
23 this airport. All right. You've got 5 Star and Serenity and
24 Papillon are on the same schedule with departing here, and doing
25 it safely on departures. There was a photograph in -- what

1 magazine? *National Geographic Magazine*, a time lapse photo, of
2 operations at the Grand Canyon West which is bizarre. It's photo
3 shopped obviously, all right. I will tell you that I have an
4 aircraft landing at my Ramada Landing Site about every three, five
5 minutes. So I've got four to five aircraft out there doing up and
6 downs and that aircraft -- each one of them aircraft can take off
7 three to four times in an hour. So you've got 5 aircraft that are
8 going through 20 operations in an hour to that one landing site.
9 Okay. We're launching 10 aircraft 6 times a day to go out to
10 Quartermaster to land at the Quartermaster Landing Site, and not
11 all of them -- it's not 10 aircraft every flight that goes out
12 here. So on a maximum day, in the busy heat of the summer, I've
13 got 60 aircraft total landing at that landing site maximum.

14 So it's not as congested, as busy as you think it would be.
15 It appears that it's busy but in reality, 10 aircraft every 2 to 3
16 hours at that landing site, one landing, one departure. And I'm
17 assuming that the other operators are similar. We're able to do
18 six turns out of here where the operators that come out of Las
19 Vegas can only do five turns because of the duration of the day.
20 So if they had 10 aircraft going out and they've got 50 aircraft
21 maximum per day going to their landing site, and it might be
22 overlapping my time of day that I'm going. So it's not like
23 there's 100 aircraft every hour landing in the Grand Canyon. It's
24 more sporadic than that.

25 Q. When you talk SMS, has the company considered or are you

1 considering ASAP or MSAP programs?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. What is -- does that look like it's going to happen or not
4 going to happen?

5 A. It's going to be part of our Ramco. All right. So we're
6 looking at doing Ramco right now. We've got Ramco had been here
7 three or four months, collecting data to move to Ramco. We'd like
8 to go to electronic logbook. So we're looking at those programs
9 right now and getting them implemented. It's not going to be
10 something that's implemented over the summer because it's busy.
11 We propose to do it at the slow time of the year during
12 wintertime. So I think the Ramco will be a swap over this winter,
13 where we have to make sure that it's operating and we're catching
14 all the pitfalls before the implementation but, yes.

15 Q. In your irregularity reports, you brought up the subject as
16 far as if there was something that was regulatory brought up by
17 self, you know, by a pilot. So how does the company handle that
18 if it's regulatory?

19 A. If it's regulatory, self-disclosure.

20 Q. Okay. And the other thing is, you alluded to, is there a
21 briefing log that the pilots go through?

22 A. Say that again.

23 Q. Is there like a briefing book or something that the pilots go
24 through with safety information?

25 A. Yes. All of our materials are upon the flight and duty

1 tracker website. All of the pilots have access to that and are
2 required to access that. Their schedule is on that as well as e-
3 mail to them on a daily basis. All that information is available
4 to them on our website.

5 Q. And so for pilots who go on days off, how far back do they
6 have to review? Do they have to review every item that's posted
7 on there?

8 A. They have to review any new items that are posted on the
9 document. You have to sign on and off. There's a timestamp on
10 that, but they're responsible for reading that.

11 Q. Okay. So if you have a pilot, part-time pilots, what's the
12 standard time that they can possibly not --

13 A. We're not doing part-time pilots any more.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. We've just decided not to do that. Scott was our last part-
16 time pilot. He worked very well at the company. He flew a lot of
17 hours with us. He was the oddity. He might have been listed as
18 part time, but he was flying a lot of flight hours for us, picking
19 up a lot of days, but it just didn't make sense. We don't have
20 that now.

21 Q. Okay. That's it.

22 MS. KELIHER: I've got some follow-up questions.

23 MR. TOBIN: Before we do that, can we do a five minute break?

24 MS. WILSON: Let's give Burl his chance to ask first.

25 MR. TOBIN: If we could just do a five minute bathroom break.

1 MS. WILSON: Okay.

2 (Off the record.)

3 (On the record.)

4 BY MS. KELIHER:

5 Q. Earlier on, you said incident reports. Is that the same as
6 an irregularity report?

7 A. I'm sorry. I misspoke. An irregularity -- we used to call
8 it an incident report, until I realized that incident was an FAA
9 term.

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. Right. That required FAA notification. So, yes, thank you
12 for clarifying it. It is an irregularity report. We had it
13 misnamed years ago. So pardon my tribal knowledge.

14 Q. I just wanted to make sure. And then because you and Burl
15 are in the same room, just for me to clarify, there's hazard
16 reports, too.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And that's (indiscernible) trips.

19 A. Yeah, it's a ground. So a passenger might -- the aircraft is
20 shut down. The flight is over. They might be exiting the
21 aircraft. They miss the step on the aircraft and skin their knee.
22 A hazard report would go for that.

23 MR. BOYD: In fact, we call that an unsafe condition or
24 hazard report.

25 MS. KELIHER: Okay. And then what -- are there any other?

1 MR. BOYD: Yes, we do have an incident report but it has
2 nothing to do with the aviation portion. That would be somebody
3 that -- a passenger or somebody got injured, something like that,
4 but we have changed. We have added a new one so that it goes
5 straight to our customer relations people.

6 MR. BECKER: If there's a problem with a customer because
7 they're being unruly or something like that.

8 BY MS. KELIHER:

9 Q. So those are the only type of pilot reports.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So if a pilot is flying and they have an experience with jack
12 stall, if they have an incident, an event that happens, is there
13 any way that they report that?

14 A. That's the irregularity report.

15 MR. BOYD: Any time it has to do with a flight, it's an
16 irregularity report.

17 BY MS. KELIHER:

18 Q. So from what I understood, talking to Burl yesterday,
19 irregularity report is only if you deviate from the flight?

20 A. That would be if he has an event in the flight would be an
21 event in the flight, yes, that would be an irregularity report.

22 MR. BOYD: Over torque, a caution light, a door that comes
23 open, a jack stall, anything that has to do with the flight, if
24 it's not a standard, routine, every day flight, they have
25 something go differently, then they do an irregularity report.

1 BY MS. KELIHER:

2 Q. Okay. And then were pilots ever unionized here?

3 A. No. Don't say that.

4 Q. And I've been trying to think how I'm going to frame this
5 without evoking some type of emotion here, without doing a leading
6 question, but just for my own rationale, how I'm thinking of it.
7 If there is passengers that are planning on going on a tour and
8 there possibly could be weather out there, and the pilot decides
9 to take off and then gets to the entrance of the Canyon and then
10 comes back, is that at least, in your opinion, is that more or
11 less desirable than the pilot just staying here on the ground?

12 A. The pilot has the opportunity to make the decision. I mean
13 you can't --

14 Q. I know it's a decision, but on a company basis, is it more
15 about paying or cost or something?

16 A. It doesn't matter.

17 Q. So there's no preference either way?

18 A. There's no preference. I mean, no. I mean the object is to
19 operate safely. If we -- trust me. We're not going to launch an
20 aircraft if we think he's going to encounter weather along the
21 way. We have now made the decision that this flight can be
22 conducted safely in VFR conditions from here to the Grand Canyon
23 and back during the timeframe that we're going to launch that, all
24 right. Now Mother Nature being like she is, a storm might be to
25 the south. It starts to move. A storm might develop or the winds

1 might pick up, and the pilot gets out there, and based on his
2 decision making, he decides that he wants to turn around and come
3 back. He can do that. That's fine.

4 Q. I guess what my thinking is, and I'm challenging myself, and
5 I'm curious if this was correct, is if a higher up says, well,
6 take these passengers and go look and see, and then they look and
7 see and it's worse, and they come back, and it would be more of a
8 pain for you guys, paperwork and the passengers and --

9 A. It's a challenge because you reimburse money and stuff like
10 that and you're dealing with customers that really would have
11 liked to have landed at the bottom of the Canyon. I'm sure
12 they're disappointed when they come back, but it is what it is. I
13 mean you're trying to operate safely. You do everything you can
14 to do that. But there's not a push to go when you shouldn't go.

15 Q. I just kind of guessed challenging, I would think there would
16 be a push not to go because it's like, well, we don't want to deal
17 with you guys coming back. I was wondering whether it's --

18 A. Well, we sent you a report that shows the number of flights
19 that we've canceled prior to departure.

20 Q. And that's what I was kind of looking at that versus the
21 irregularity of people turning back. It seems like from comparing
22 those numbers, you're erring any more on the side of let's just
23 cancel it because we don't want to --

24 A. Yeah, we've canceled the whole day at the beginning of the
25 day. Now does that mean we have pilots sitting around here

1 waiting for the weather to clear? It depends on the area forecast
2 and the time of the day. But if the flights -- if we feel that
3 the weather is not going to be conducive to completing that flight
4 safely, then the flight doesn't go.

5 Q. Well, I guess I'm not even thinking that. I'm just more
6 asking from your perspective of the business side of the amount of
7 work.

8 A. It's more challenging for the customer service. If a flight
9 leaves and goes to the Grand Canyon and comes back, there's no
10 interaction with customer service. If the flight goes out and
11 comes back and doesn't get to land and that's what they want, then
12 customer service has to refund money. So be it. I mean it's the
13 nature of the business.

14 Q. But is there any repercussion where it comes back and
15 customer services says why didn't launch these guys. Now we have
16 to deal with all this.

17 A. I haven't heard -- I don't know about other members of the
18 company, but I haven't heard that. I'm sure that -- I mean you've
19 been -- heard that before with Delta Airlines or American, where
20 your flights get canceled. That ticket counter becomes a zoo when
21 they're trying to reschedule people and stuff like that. It's
22 something that's part of the business. It's something we do on a
23 regular basis. It's part of their job. If that particular event
24 happens, they're trained to deal with it accordingly.

25 I'm sure if you ask Delta Airlines, they don't like refunding

1 money, not money, but rescheduling people on their tickets and
2 stuff like that. I imagine it's difficult for them people to do
3 that.

4 Q. I guess it's just a difference of whether it's utility or
5 flight trainers and then everything's like, we'll just go walk and
6 check it out over there. But with passengers, it's bigger.

7 A. We have lead pilots and chief pilots and training directors
8 to be watching out on a daily basis of what's going on. That's
9 why we put (indiscernible) times in there. That's why we do a lot
10 of things we do.

11 Q. And because you're both there, and we're already getting down
12 to the -- Manny was kind of touching about this, because you do
13 have some of the helicopters that have Appareo systems, those are
14 never randomly looked at.

15 MR. BOYD: Yeah, they're checked. Maintenance checks those
16 every time they come back in.

17 MS. KELIHER: Luis goes over all the --

18 MR. BOYD: No, Luis doesn't --

19 MR. BECKER: When they come in for the major inspection.

20 MR. BOYD: Everything is operational. We don't go through
21 every one of the Appareo. I think we'd be better off with a GoPro
22 ph. It would give you better video than Appareo --

23 MR. BECKER: Might I remind you, that this is my interview.

24 BY MS. KELIHER:

25 Q. I was figuring that if I asked you, the Appareo I'm not sure

1 if you would say that's a Burl issue and Burl would say that's --
2 A. Any information you can get from the aircraft is valuable
3 information, right. So I welcome the Appareo. I think that the
4 Appareo system could have been a lot better system. I'm
5 frustrated because when you pull a card and you look at the data
6 that comes off of that camera, and you want to zoom in for
7 instance and find out what power settings a pilot was at to see
8 where he was just because you might be checking up on something
9 through SMS and say, hey, you know what? Let's pull the card from
10 John Becker. His last approach in here might have been a little
11 bit quick. Let's see what he's doing. So you pull the card to
12 check that. We have the ability to do that.

13 If you zoom in on the dashboard of that, I don't know if
14 you've had the opportunity to do that, it is like a 1950s
15 television in snowy conditions. You know, you can't really focus
16 and really get a good visual which is very frustrating because the
17 technology was already out there. My iPhone has better clarity
18 than an aircraft --

19 Q. I wasn't talking about the recording, but the actual data
20 recorder I suppose.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. Following the tracks on Google Earth and plotting them out
23 and seeing what they're actually doing.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Looking at the -- is that ever looked at?

1 A. Only if we have reason to go in and look at it.

2 Q. That's it.

3 A. I was talking earlier about different items that we have for
4 safety, and I missed the most important one. Obviously in this
5 accident, the fuel cell rupture was a big deal. Fuel cells were
6 not available on the EC130 before or AS350 for retrofit.
7 StandardAero come out in December of last year with a fuel cell
8 and I just wanted to let you know that part of this accident also
9 led us to retrofit all of our aircraft with crashworthy fuel
10 cells. So we now have two fuel cells that have been delivered and
11 installed on our aircraft, one B2 and one B4. We're the first
12 EC130 B4 to have the retrofit fuel cell in it. We've got another
13 fuel cell coming this month and we have two scheduled for the
14 following month for retrofit. We're trying to get our aircraft
15 totally retrofit with crashworthy fuel cells in the next two
16 years. That's the agreement that we signed with StandardAero.

17 We also reached out to Airbus because they have a fuel cell
18 that's available for the B3, B2 retrofit. We're not as successful
19 getting them fuel cells in as we have been with getting fuel cells
20 from StandardAero. They're tooling up to get us the cells as
21 quick as we possibly can. The delivery date for the fuel cells
22 for Airbus aren't coming until July of 2019. So there was not --
23 even though they have a retrofit, we're not able to get any. And
24 we put purchase orders in for I think 8 or 10 fuel cells because
25 we wanted to get them coming from as many agencies that can

1 provide that fuel cell for us so we can get them put into the
2 aircraft.

3 So I think the biggest thing, and the biggest change we've
4 made because it's such a big part of this accident, because there
5 were thermal injuries involved, was how to retrofit this fleet
6 with crash resistant fuel cells. I've been part of the rotorcraft
7 occupant protection working group for the past two and a half
8 years, on how the industry's going to move forward with that. So
9 we've been forward thinking about this, and have them cells come
10 available to (indiscernible) and stuff like that. So we are
11 retrofitting our fleet with crashworthy fuel cells.

12 Q. And then one more question. I also remember reading
13 somewhere in my notes of people that we've talked to, that there
14 used to be medical equipment on each helicopter and that was
15 removed?

16 A. No, we had survival equipment on that fuel cell -- on the
17 aircraft going back and forth, and we've never ever had even close
18 to an incident where we had an aircraft in the position where we
19 couldn't get to them within an hour or so. So it didn't make
20 sense to have the equipment there. It made sense to have the
21 equipment at Grand Canyon West where that could potentially
22 happen. So we removed some of that equipment, not all of it, some
23 of it. We still carry emergency water when it's hot out and
24 things of that nature but as far as 10 days of food, at a certain
25 calorie, survival kits, things like that, we took that out of the

1 aircraft.

2 Q. When was that?

3 A. Years ago.

4 Q. What was the equipment that was on the --

5 A. I forget what was in there. There was some food rations in
6 there, and there was some emergency water in there, and I can't
7 remember what else. It wasn't like it was this big survival kit.
8 They called it a survival kit because it had things like that in
9 there. There wasn't blankets. There wasn't tents or nothing like
10 that in there because we are 30 minutes from our product which is
11 the Grand Canyon West. So those survival kits that they called
12 them, which had emergency rations and emergency water in it, were
13 taken out and we put emergency water in there. We've got coolers
14 in there as well that have refreshments for the -- and sandwiches
15 and stuff for the people in a normal day anyway. So it just
16 didn't make sense that we needed that.

17 Q. But that cooler -- so let me just make sure. The cooler and
18 the water that you have are for the land, not the air tours. They
19 don't have --

20 A. Every flight that lands at the bottom, we advertise that
21 they're going to get a meal at the bottom. It has a sandwich in
22 there. It has a cookie in there, maybe a bag of chips. Maybe a
23 breakfast bar or --

24 Q. For the air tours, no water or anything?

25 A. And when the temperatures get above 80 degrees, I believe is

1 the temperature, I have to recheck, we put what we call emergency
2 water. There's two jugs of water on there in addition to a cooler
3 full of sodas and waters that are brought to the landing site to
4 supplement their lunch or their meal that they're eating at the
5 bottom.

6 Q. For the air tours?

7 A. For the air tours, they have the water on board. They have
8 emergency water that stays on board that aircraft during the hot
9 months in case they have to do a precautionary landing out in the
10 desert somewhere. It could be an hour, could be 45 minutes to an
11 hour before we could get an aircraft out to them. So we have that
12 water on there to last that long.

13 BY MS. WILSON:

14 Q. Anything else? You've shared a lot with us.

15 A. You've asked a lot of me.

16 Q. Anything else that you think would help in this
17 investigation?

18 A. No, I think that I've been forthcoming. I'm passionate about
19 this company. I think it's a very safe company. It's unfortunate
20 that we had that happen, what happened to us, and we don't ever
21 want it to happen again, and anything we can do to help you, and I
22 would challenge you to coordinate with us if you have ideas, even
23 maybe before the report comes out, that we could do things
24 differently to help us be a safe company. I look this as an
25 opportunity to make us better and to avoid things like this

1 happening in the future.

2 MS. WILSON: All right. Thanks, John.

3 MR. BECKER: Um-hum.

4 (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: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of John Becker

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE: Boulder City, Nevada

DATE: June 20, 2108

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.



Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

* Accident No. WPR18MA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: BURL BOYD

Wednesday

June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

THOMAS TOBIN, Attorney
Wilson Elser
(Observing)

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:32 a.m.)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here with us today. This interview is part of a routine fact-finding phase of the investigation on February 10th. We would like to record the interview so that we can create a transcript of this and put this in our public docket. Is that okay with you?

MR. BOYD: That's fine.

MS. WILSON: You are also entitled to have one person represent you. It can be a friend or a colleague or a lawyer.

MR. BOYD: Tom Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Tom Tobin. Great. And I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoë Keliher, Operations with the NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety, Airbus.

MR. BOYD: My name is Burl Gene Boyd. I'm the director of safety for Papillon Helicopters.

MS. WILSON: Great. So, what we'll do is each person will have an opportunity to ask questions. If you don't understand the questions, please don't hesitate to ask us to clarify, or if you don't know the answer, saying I don't know is okay. You're obviously the expert in this area, so we want to get as much information from you as possible.

INTERVIEW OF BURL BOYD

BY MS. WILSON:

1 Q. How long have you been with Papillon?

2 A. Just over 4 years.

3 MS. KELIHER: Before we go, I don't think we got it on record
4 if it's okay that we record it.

5 MR. BOYD: Yes, she did.

6 MS. KELIHER: Oh, okay.

7 MS. WILSON: Thank you for clarifying, though.

8 BY MS. WILSON:

9 Q. Four years?

10 A. I started here February the 3rd of 2014.

11 Q. Okay. Great. And what did you do, brief synopsis of your
12 aviation career leading you up to Papillon?

13 A. Okay. I joined the military in 1974, went to flight school
14 with the military, with the United States Army in 1976. And I
15 spent 20 years in the army, retired in October of 1994. I went to
16 work for a small operator in western Colorado, thought I'd be able
17 to go back to my home state and call that home. And I worked for
18 him for about 3 years. He told me one day that he was making
19 payroll with his credit card and I might want to look around.

20 So we took a vacation, the first one we had in 3 years, and
21 came to Las Vegas. I dropped a résumé off at Sundance
22 Helicopters, and before I could get out of the door, I was asked
23 if I could interview, and then a flight. And I started working
24 for Sundance Helicopters on May the 5th, 1997. Then I was with
25 Sundance for over 16 years. Sundance sold out to Air Methods, all

1 the management got let go, and I'm here now.

2 Q. What positions did you hold at Sundance?

3 A. I started off as a utility pilot, line pilot, and later I
4 became the chief pilot. And I was the chief pilot for a while,
5 and then I became the assistant director of operations for about a
6 year just to see if that was a function that we wanted to do. We
7 decided to not do that. And the chief pilot that had replaced me,
8 he left and went to Florida, to the Seminole Indians.

9 I went back to being the chief pilot and continued at that
10 vocation till such time as Air Methods bought the company out,
11 fired the director of operations. I became the interim director
12 of operations for about 4 or 5 months, I guess, and then they
13 hired a new director of operations. I went back to being the
14 chief pilot. And then July the 26th, 2013, I was released.

15 Q. And what position were you hired on for at Papillon?

16 A. Line pilot.

17 Q. How long were you a line pilot?

18 A. For about 3 months, I think.

19 Q. And then what other positions have you held?

20 A. Just the director of safety.

21 Q. Okay. So that I'm understanding, line pilot with Papillon
22 for about 3 months, and then you became the director of safety.
23 And is it director of safety or safety director?

24 A. Director of safety.

25 Q. Okay. What helicopter were you flying here?

1 A. I flew the EC130.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And the AS350B2.

4 Q. About how much total time do you have?

5 A. Over 10,000. I have no idea.

6 Q. Any idea how much you have in the EC130?

7 A. I don't have a lot on the EC 130.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. Most of my ASTAR time is in the B2 and the BA.

10 Q. Do you still fly ever?

11 A. No.

12 Q. No?

13 A. No.

14 Q. As the director of safety, what are your duties and

15 responsibilities?

16 A. My duty is to just monitor the safety aspects of the company.

17 I report to Brenda Halvorson, work directly for her, work in

18 conjunction with the director of operations, and I work in

19 conjunction with the director of maintenance. I do company audits

20 and I manage outside audits when they come in. I'm the point of

21 contact for all of that. Anytime we have a vendor that wants to

22 do an audit, I'm the one who performs those audits for the

23 vendors, also.

24 Q. What internal company audits do you do?

25 A. I do a quarterly audit for Boulder City and for the South

1 Rim. I do 6-month audits. They are semiannual audits for Grand
2 Canyon West, Las Vegas -- well, all of our satellite operations.

3 Q. Do you have any direct-reports to you?

4 A. Do I have what?

5 Q. Any people that report directly to you?

6 A. Oh, no. No, I'm a loner.

7 Q. What would you say your typical workload is like? Is it
8 high, low, medium?

9 A. Well, it just depends on what's going on.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. During this year, it's been extremely high because we not
12 only had our accident, we also had our IS-BAO audit, which was in
13 April, we had our TOPS audit, which was in May, and because of the
14 accident, we've had a lot of outside vendors wanting audits done.
15 So I've been extremely busy.

16 Q. And when you're doing these internal audits, what
17 specifically are you looking at?

18 A. I go through to check, I'll check the number of pilots to see
19 if we've got a pilot shortage, or if the pilot, chief pilot
20 believes that we've got a large turnover rate or not, or whether
21 we -- and we do the same thing with maintenance, see if the
22 mechanics, is there a high turnover rate. And that kind of
23 fluctuates, you know, with the time of year. And then I'll check
24 pilot records, maintenance records. A lot of just observations,
25 just to go out and look and see if I can identify things that are

1 problems.

2 Q. In terms of the observations, are you going out and flying
3 with the pilots?

4 A. I ride along with the pilots. I go to different bases with
5 the pilots and I go to our landing sites.

6 Q. So Quartermaster would be included?

7 A. Oh, yes. And I've flown that canyon so many times. I've
8 made a lot of landings down there.

9 Q. Any risks that you identify flying in and out of there that
10 you've recently mitigated or had to mitigate?

11 A. One that I saw just recently was when we opened up our --
12 well, we haven't opened it up totally, but the Waterfall landing
13 site. I have never landed at that location. But we went out
14 there, Simon and I rode along with Tyler Carver, and we went to
15 the Waterfall site and we were going to check to see the
16 conditions, see what we needed to do out there.

17 And as we were coming in, we came through the notch, we saw
18 both our two windsocks at our location, which is Quartermaster
19 Helibase. We went through the notch, getting ready to shoot an
20 approach with the same wind conditions that we saw at our site.
21 When we made that turn towards the Waterfall site, we could see
22 Maverick's windsock, which was totally different. So we made a
23 couple of orbits around and our site, at the Waterfall site was
24 very similar to the wind condition that Maverick had.

25 So I wouldn't have realized it, just the distance, the

1 elevation and the location could have changed the wind that much.
2 But it was not the same wind condition at our Waterfall site that
3 it was at our main base, main helipad.

4 Q. So, was there some mitigating --

5 A. Well, we put a windsock up there.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. There was no windsock there. That's what we were going down
8 there to check on. So the following Monday -- I think that was on
9 a Friday. I think the following Monday Simon took one of our
10 maintenance people out there and he put up a set up for the
11 windsock, got that in place. We got some umbrellas set up for the
12 tables. Just getting it ready to go. Now we're in the process of
13 doing training.

14 Like I said, I've been here for 4 years and I had never
15 landed at the Waterfall site. So I know that there's a whole lot
16 of people here that haven't landed there. So in order for us to
17 do that, and that's part of my managing of the change on that, is
18 that we have to do the training for the pilots.

19 Q. And is there some risk assessment being done for that?

20 A. That's part of my management change is a risk assessment on
21 that.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And notice the winds and the windsock being put in place.

24 Q. Okay. Since the accident, have you done any risk assessment
25 of the original Quartermaster landing site?

1 A. What we did on that one -- and I've heard several people say
2 that there's this many landing sites there and there's this many
3 landing sites there. What John did was, when this all happened,
4 he reduced the number of landings at that location. Not
5 necessarily the pilots all knew that this is what happens, but
6 through Jerry San Nicholas, who's our -- he manages a number of
7 aircraft that do these kind of landings, and he restricted it to X
8 number of landings. And then he increased it up to -- now it's at
9 eight landings, plus the two we'll have over at the other
10 location.

11 I would expect that after every -- a lot of it was not
12 because it was a safety issue. I think a lot of it, to begin
13 with, John put it that way so that the pilots had a comfort level.
14 But I would assume that in the fairly near future we'll probably
15 go back to around 10 landings there. There's decent landings at
16 that location.

17 And I would say as far as the spot goes, it is absolutely not
18 a confined area. Best case would be maybe a pinnacle. But it's
19 very open. You know, you've got access in different directions.
20 You know, there's a lot worse sites out there that there are
21 people landing on than our two. I would say probably the three
22 best landing sites are Sundance up on the Quartermaster Bluff,
23 ours at Quartermaster Helibase, and the Ramada.

24 Sundance was the first operator out there, so they picked
25 Quartermaster Bluff. It's a pretty nice area, pretty big and

1 open. And the good part about that is it's sunny in the mornings
2 when it's cold. In the summertime, because it's hot during the
3 summer regardless of where you are, but in the winters you're
4 getting the first sun there. So it's a nice place. Sundance got
5 a good spot. And Heli USA was using the Ramada. And so, in my
6 opinion, Papillon has the best third spot out there. I mean,
7 they're all similar, but that's, I'm sure that's the reason that
8 Papillon picked the way they did.

9 Q. So given the -- I think you said your workload's been pretty
10 high because of the different audits and the accident. Do you
11 feel like you were able to adequately still do your job?

12 A. Yes, ma'am, I do.

13 Q. Okay. What's your interaction with the FAA?

14 A. I have a very good rapport with the FAA. Do I use them as
15 part of my job, no, but I do have a good rapport. And I've been
16 here for so many years that I know most everybody at the FAA, and
17 they know me, so it's a good rapport.

18 Q. Coming from Sundance over to Papillon, how do you think the
19 safety culture compares?

20 A. I think that Sundance's SMS program was behind Papillon's.
21 And I'm just going to go by the SMS program, safety program,
22 because I think that most everything else was very similar. Well,
23 I used to work very closely with the chief pilot here, and our
24 director of operations. I've known John for a long time, long
25 before I started working here. And so, we interacted a lot.

1 Probably Sundance and Papillon interacted more together than any
2 other operators in the valley.

3 There was times where we were working on an SMS at Sundance
4 and they were working on an SMS here, and there was a lot of
5 interchange in information. Same with hazmat, non-carry and carry
6 hazmat issues. So the DO of Papillon and the DO at Sundance
7 worked hand in hand on getting those two items set up. So it was
8 a good rapport. Which I'm really glad it was because I'm pretty
9 sure that's the reason I'm here.

10 Q. Why do you -- do you think the interaction with Sundance was
11 because you were both working on -- between Sundance and Papillon
12 was because you were both working on the SMS program?

13 A. No, it's also that it was primarily Sundance and Papillon
14 that started identifying the chokeholds or the problem areas in
15 the routes to and from the Grand Canyon and we wanted to get it
16 where everybody was doing the same thing, or at least everybody
17 knew what the other operators were doing.

18 And Sundance and Papillon are the ones that pushed the FAA to
19 see if they would host this group. And it has changed from just
20 being Heli USA, which is out of business now, but it was Heli USA,
21 Sundance, Maverick, Papillon, and I think that was about it, in
22 the beginning. And then we've added Serenity and Five Star. But
23 no, I think it's been a good relationship for a lot of years.

24 Q. Why do you think that is? Why do you think Sundance and
25 Papillon have worked so well together?

1 A. I think a lot of it was because the owners of Sundance were
2 also on a friendly basis with the Halvorsons. There was a lot of
3 relationship back in those days with Elling Halvorson and the way
4 he did business. But Sundance was in this valley before Papillon
5 was. I remember when Papillon first started flying down to their
6 location.

7 Q. Oh wow. Describe for me the different safety programs that
8 are in place at Papillon.

9 A. Well, it's our SMS program, and SMS is -- I am just kind of
10 the custodian for it. It's Brenda's SMS program, and all of the
11 managers are involved with it or it wouldn't be called a
12 management system. The way I see it is our SMS program, it has to
13 have the foundation of management. Just like building a building,
14 if you don't have a foundation, you don't have much to build on.
15 And above that, we have a, basically a floor of being a just
16 culture, because if you don't have a just culture, you don't have
17 a program at all. And then the safety aspects of that make up our
18 SMS program.

19 But it's a growing or it's a living program. So, when you
20 see something that needs to be done, you have to deal with it.
21 You need to make changes to your SMS manual, you need to maybe
22 train something differently. I think one of our shortcomings to
23 start with was we had a fatigue management program in place, but
24 we didn't have any way to measure it. And we had an IS-BAO come
25 in and ask about, you know, how do you measure your SMS program.

1 And when I pulled out a ruler, they didn't think that was too
2 funny.

3 So we've got a process now so that if somebody has an issue,
4 whether it's fatigue or anything else, we have an adjustment to
5 duty. They fill that out and say why they're going home early.
6 It might be a family issue, it might be a family emergency, it
7 might be an illness, or it might be fatigue. But whenever those
8 come in, somebody in management, so most of the time it's the lead
9 pilot, will sign it, the person that fills it out will sign it.
10 And then I will sign it, date it, and I scan it into my emails so
11 I've got a file. That's all it is.

12 Now, I didn't have to have anything to illness. I didn't
13 have to have anything for emergency departures, or anything else.
14 But it's kind of like when you have an SFAR deviation, you're
15 supposed to keep those for 90 days. But if you -- I'm telling you
16 now, if the FAA comes in and says, let me see your deviations for
17 the SFAR for the last 90 days and you open a file and there's
18 nothing in it and say, well, I just purge it every time I get to
19 90 days, they'll say, well, we're not sure you've got one. But I
20 had SFAR deviations when I was the chief pilot over there from
21 back in 1994, before I ever started, because you couldn't tell me
22 that I didn't have a deviation program.

23 It's the same thing with our fatigue management. I've got to
24 have something there. I think I've got one person to put in there
25 that he was leaving because he was fatigued. They do a really

1 good job of managing the schedule so that people -- especially in
2 the summertime when it's hot, it is a time where you can get
3 fatigued. They do two separate schedules. So I think that the
4 fatigue management program is good. Maintenance has got the same
5 program for their fatigue management as what the government has
6 for our OAS and government contracts. So there is something in
7 place for fatigue management and time limitations.

8 Q. Who do you report directly to?

9 A. Brenda.

10 Q. Okay. If I'm a pilot and I call in fatigued or I fill out
11 the form and I say that I'm fatigued, I need to leave early, what
12 happens then? Do I get -- do I have some sort of sick leave, or
13 do I get my pay cut?

14 A. It might be PTO. And I don't have any idea how that works.
15 I am not involved in that. I could care less how that works. All
16 I want to know is if you're fatigued, you're not on a flight line.
17 And there's never anybody that says, no, you've got another
18 flight, dude. It doesn't happen.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. If you fill out that form and say I need to leave, then
21 you're gone. But pay-wise, I have nothing to do with pay, I have
22 nothing to do with management.

23 Q. If I had a safety concern as a pilot, what are my means of
24 reporting those safety concerns?

25 A. You could do it in an irregularity report if it was a flight-

1 related issue. You could do an unsafe condition or hazard report
2 if that's what it was. Or it could be an incident report if it
3 was something to do with a slip or fall. You know, like oh he
4 said he fell off the helicopter and broke his wrist. You know,
5 that was an incident report.

6 Q. And what if I wanted to report something anonymously?

7 A. You can go to Flight Data Tracker and go to -- for the
8 pilots, they go to flight, and then they put in Papillon with a
9 capital P, and it comes up with the forms, and then you click on
10 the form that you want it to be, and the one that's anonymous is
11 an unsafe condition or hazard report. You can put your name on
12 there and click anonymous or you can leave your name off of there
13 and click anonymous.

14 Because the only person that gets unsafe condition or hazard
15 reports are me. And I told everybody during our initial training,
16 if you tell me you want to be anonymous, no one in our
17 management's going to ask me who it was. Because if I ever give
18 that, if I ever breach that trust in me, then no one's going to do
19 any reports. So rarely. I think I've had a couple anonymous
20 reports, but rarely do I get that. They put their name on it
21 because they are not having any issues with -- hey, this is a
22 problem, we need to get it fixed. And sometimes it's almost like
23 a prideful thing that, hey, this is a safety issue and I want my
24 name attached to it because I'm the one that saw it.

25 Q. On the irregularity reports there's the section where a pilot

1 can put in a recommendation of maybe how to mitigate it. What's
2 done with those?

3 A. They're all on file, and they're all closed. But do I look
4 at what they say can be done?

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. Yeah. Most of the time, what they put down there is just not
7 too reasonable. Sometimes you get a good idea, and if you've got
8 a good idea, you use it or promote it. But, you know, a lot of
9 the times it's -- sometimes the pilots get a little frustrated
10 when something happens and they'll put something in there that
11 just wouldn't fly. Now, I don't have to, or management doesn't
12 have to address what they wanted done. They have to address what
13 the cause was.

14 And if it's an issue where a pilot had -- well, just say it's
15 an over torque. We get those quite a bit on the Bells. And we've
16 got the Diamond J gauges over there, so it tells right away. So
17 they write up this thing. And when those come in, I don't
18 normally have to even say anything, but most of the -- if I do,
19 I'll just send something to their chief pilot over. Normally,
20 he's already on top of it. He gets hold of the pilot and they
21 discuss it, you know, what was the deal here, you know. And then
22 he fills his portion out. And when he's done, he lets me know and
23 I'll close it.

24 If it's something that everybody needs to know, maybe it's
25 the pilot pool here that needs to know it but it wouldn't affect

1 anybody at the South Rim, then we put it in our morning briefing
2 for a minimum of 14 days. That way, regardless of what schedule
3 you're on, eventually you're going to be here when that item comes
4 up. If it only applies to the South Rim, then the same would
5 occur over there. If it's company wide, then we put it in both
6 locations. But everybody will work at one of those locations in a
7 14-day period.

8 Q. So, how do you close the loop on the irregularity reports
9 that come in? Are pilots alerted when a report is closed, or do
10 they see the comments that you put in?

11 A. They would see the comments on the flight duty -- or on the
12 morning briefings, yeah.

13 Q. Okay. But there's no -- they don't get, let's say, an email
14 to say your irregularity report's been closed?

15 A. No. I do not do that, no.

16 Q. Has Papillon considered starting an ASAP program?

17 A. Yes, we have. We've talked with -- I've talked with our POI
18 about that. I would like that. I would like to see that happen.
19 I would also like to see, even though we are IS-BAO SMS, I would
20 like us to be Part 5 of the FAA's SMS program. Because I think if
21 we can meet the requirements of one, we can meet the requirements
22 of the other.

23 If there's a little additional stuff that we need to do, I
24 don't think there would ever be a thing that, well, we have to
25 stop doing this to meet their requirement. I think if there was

1 something in Part 5 that required something more, which I don't
2 think there is, then we could meet that requirement, too. And
3 then if the FAA ever does say, okay, Burl, you are required now to
4 have a 135 SMS Program Part 5, we're in place already. We don't
5 have to worry about it. ASAP would be great, also.

6 I've got a question about ASAP. If we were ASAP and we had
7 an incident or accident, would the ASAP reports be released to you
8 guys?

9 Q. I don't believe we get ASAP reports.

10 MS. KELIHER: We do subpoena, but that all came from, well,
11 the accident report.

12 MR. BOYD: Well, I'll tell you, I have had a big problem with
13 turning over my irregularity reports. I don't want my pilots and
14 my other people to think, well, jeez, what is supposed to be
15 something that we trust in you to be released to other people.
16 And I've had a problem with this and I just want to be upfront
17 about it.

18 BY MS. WILSON:

19 Q. Yeah, let's talk about that after.

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. Because I understand your concern. Is there any sort of
22 safety newsletter that goes out to pilots?

23 A. No. And I have looked at different ways to do that. I'm not
24 a real sharp computer guy. I wish I was, because I would like to
25 put out a news bulletin, maybe on a quarterly or semiannual basis.

1 But no, I do not have one. I'm not ruling that out by any means.

2 I've been looking at trying to figure out how to make that work.

3 Q. So, how are safety issues shared with the pilot group?

4 A. Well, I don't consider that it's just the pilot group. I
5 think the whole company is involved, and so we have our quarterly
6 safety meetings and we address different topics. And those
7 managers go back to whoever they're managers of if there's issues
8 that they want to put out, they can put that out in their meetings
9 with their employees.

10 Q. Are there ever any meetings, though, where pilots could
11 attend, the pilot group could attend if they wanted?

12 A. A representative, yes.

13 Q. Okay. Has any information been shared regarding this
14 accident?

15 A. Not that we can put out, because we don't know the cause of
16 it. We've certainly put out information about what we have done
17 to try to mitigate the problems. We've gone through doing
18 training, an outside source coming in and doing training with us
19 on emergency equipment and how to utilize that. We've done
20 classes. Those people trained have given classes, also. We've
21 talked them about, well, the windsock that's out there. We've
22 been pushing a lot about Papillon being on the leading edge of
23 trying to get crash-worthy fuel systems that could possibly take a
24 survivable accident and not make it an inferno. So we're talking
25 about that a lot, also.

1 So I think that we put the information out there, only with
2 what we can. Do I speculate with the pilots what my thoughts are
3 on the accident or any -- I don't. But until we have the NTSB
4 final -- and even at that, you guys are going to do us a best
5 guess. I don't know whether you can say that this is definitely
6 the reason.

7 Q. I guess I'm thinking not maybe necessarily specific to the
8 cause of the accident but a reminder to pilots to adhere to SOPs
9 or to make (indiscernible).

10 A. Oh, yeah.

11 Q. Have those things been reinforced with pilots?

12 A. I don't even think that we need to do that, but we do. But
13 we have never had any issues with the number of reports that we
14 get in here. And that has grown over the last 4 years quite a
15 bit. So we get lots of irregularity reports. I had what, 360
16 irregularity reports last year. I think that just slightly under
17 that for 2016, or maybe just slightly over that. But I've had a
18 lot of reports.

19 People are not only willing, I think a lot of times they're
20 anxious to get their information out there and say this is what
21 happened to me and I would like to not have that happen to
22 somebody else.

23 Q. So I'm sorry, just to clarify, you -- there hasn't been
24 anything specific to this accident, any reminders about following
25 procedures? You're saying that you do that sort of in general,

1 but there's been nothing since the accident?

2 A. I don't put that kind of stuff out there. For the pilots, it
3 would be the lead pilots and the training director and the chief
4 pilot who would give information on making sure that you follow
5 the SOP. Our SOP has been redone and everybody has gone through
6 that. We get a monthly exam that's written out by someone,
7 either -- normally, it's either the chief pilot, the director of
8 training, or myself.

9 We've had, since the accident, one that was just on SMS. So
10 it was their monthly quiz. We've had a monthly quiz on the
11 contents of Appendix E, which is SOP. It used to be an SOP. The
12 FAA said, guys, we don't mind you having an SOP, but we want to
13 have a copy of it that's always current. So if we make any change
14 to our SOP, we have to -- because it's in our GOM, it has to go to
15 the FAA, not for approval or acceptance but just because they get
16 a copy of it. And at that point, we will put it in our GOM.

17 Q. Tell me more about these monthly quizzes that you do.

18 A. I just did one, I think, maybe April or something like that,
19 maybe May. But Simon will write up a, you know, 10-question quiz
20 on any subject, it doesn't make any difference. And Tyler's got
21 all of those. If you want to take a look at the monthly quizzes,
22 you're sure welcome to see that.

23 But that way, the pilots can also keep these monthly quizzes,
24 and when it gets time for their check ride, they go through and
25 review that. Because a lot of the stuff that's on there might be

1 in an oral or during a check ride. But it's a monthly thing. I
2 think, without fail, over the last 2 or 3 years, maybe, something
3 like that, ever since Tyler became the director of training. He
4 is phenomenal.

5 Q. And then what's done with -- is there -- do people get
6 graded? Do the pilots get graded?

7 A. They get graded. They get graded. And there have been times
8 where he's -- well, one of the things that Tyler also started was
9 we have a pilot of the quarter. That pilot of the quarter isn't
10 elected, or isn't picked by Simon or Tyler or one of the lead
11 pilots, it's an election by their peers. So who's out there
12 helping, you know, turning aircraft, getting things ready to go, a
13 very good mentor, all these kind of things. And that pilot of
14 quarter gets one of these \$200-a-year parking spots for a quarter.
15 So that is a real good morale builder. But my hat's off a lot to
16 Tyler Carter. I think he's an excellent person.

17 Q. Have you seen any increase in irregularity reports since the
18 accident?

19 A. I don't think so, no.

20 Q. Have you gone back to the irregularity reports to identify
21 whether there have been issues with landing in the Quartermaster?

22 A. So, you know what? I don't recall seeing any of those. To
23 actually go back through the years and do just a search on that,
24 it would be difficult because it doesn't have a particular -- it
25 might have -- I've got a bunch of different parameters that I can

1 query. You know, I can query door openings. I can query bird
2 strikes, chipped lights, electrical issues. I can query all that,
3 but I don't have one that says Quartermaster Helibase. And so, I
4 would have to go back and read all of them. I could rule some of
5 them out and not have to read everything, but I can't do just
6 that. And I could probably put it in there, give a block to --
7 just for landings. We've got one for unscheduled landings, but
8 that one --

9 Q. As the director of safety, do you oversee all the bases?

10 A. Mm-hmm.

11 Q. Okay. Are you involved at all with the LOA between the
12 operators?

13 A. I get a copy of it emailed just to look at it, but that's
14 Simon and Tyler that go through that and decide what they need to
15 do. I was very instrumental in getting it started, but I don't
16 much anymore.

17 Q. Okay. And do pilots get trained on SMS?

18 A. Oh, yes.

19 Q. Is that something that you developed or was --

20 A. It was developed before I got here. But we do SMS training
21 for all of the pilots as they come through. I do the SMS
22 training.

23 Q. Okay. You actually administer it?

24 A. I do the SMS training for the new pilots here. And Rusty
25 Knudsen (ph), who's kind of the -- he's kind of being groomed to

1 take my place. He's not being groomed by me, but he's doing a lot
2 of the stuff on that side, and we communicate a lot. But most of
3 our communications is by telephone. He's been on the fires and
4 things, so I haven't seen him personally in several months now.
5 But we do talk a lot. So he does the safety portion at the South
6 Rim. The guy who used to do it before Rusty is Ken Stevens (ph),
7 who works for Airbus now. He's one of their instructor pilots.

8 Q. Going back to the irregularity reports, are those required
9 under Part 135?

10 A. No, not at all.

11 Q. Okay. So that's a part of -- but it's a part of your SMS
12 program?

13 A. It is.

14 Q. And how would pilots know when they're supposed to fill out
15 an irregularity report?

16 A. They'd be just told that anytime you have an issue, please
17 fill one out.

18 Q. Is there something --

19 A. There's nothing in this.

20 Q. Is there something in the GOM that says these are the times
21 when you should fill one out?

22 A. I don't think so. I don't believe there's anything in the
23 GOM about -- it might be in -- I'll have to look in Appendix E. I
24 think it's mostly they understand that if something is not a
25 standard flight, regardless of what it is, that they fill out an

1 irregularity report so we can -- we know what's going on. If it's
2 a maintenance issue, then we find out what Maintenance did about
3 that. And the way those are closed is we find out what was
4 written up in the log can (ph) and what maintenance did to correct
5 the action.

6 Now, sometimes it's written up in the log can and they've
7 done something and then it happened -- something, you know,
8 similar happens again. So it might not be that you close it right
9 away till you have no more issues with that on a couple dates, and
10 then at that point you can close it because, evidently, whatever
11 the case may be, it's been resolved.

12 Q. All right. I think that's all the questions that I have for
13 now, Burl.

14 A. Okay. Thank you.

15 Q. Thanks.

16 MS. WILSON: Zoë?

17 BY MS. KELIHER:

18 Q. Yeah. I missed a few things. You said July 2006 [sic] and I
19 missed the year.

20 A. July 2000 --

21 Q. I mean, July 26.

22 A. Oh, oh, when I got let go from --

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. That was 2013.

25 Q. 2013. And then you were hired here --

1 A. On February the 3rd. I had a 6-month non-compete from
2 Sundance because they were re-branding themselves. They changed
3 their logo and the paint jobs on the aircraft, and I knew all
4 these things, and so they said non-compete, you can't talk to
5 anybody about anything. So they paid me well for it. I mean, I
6 didn't work for 6 months.

7 I realized then that I didn't want to be retired. I was 60
8 years old when that all happened and I'm thinking who in the world
9 is going to hire me at this age? You know, it's kind of scary.
10 But regardless, I came to work right at 6 months to here. I mean,
11 it was a few days because of the class date, but, I mean, it was
12 right at 6 months that I was working here.

13 And I was called by John Becker shortly after all this
14 happened and he was just asking some questions about a pilot that
15 we both knew. And I couldn't ask for a job and I couldn't say
16 anything about that, which I did not, and John didn't offer me a
17 job. But the last thing he said to me on that conversation, he
18 says, oh, by the way, Burl, when your time's up, you have a home.
19 That's all he said. You know, you can read into that whatever you
20 want, but I read into it that -- phew. And that's how that went.

21 Q. What was your relation with Becker before?

22 A. We worked together quite a bit. During meetings, you know,
23 during these meetings about getting our routes structured on paper
24 so that everybody had an idea of what every other person is doing,
25 when you hear a radio call from Maverick at such-and-such

1 location, we've trained on that here so that we ought to know
2 where Maverick is at that point in time. Because not all of our
3 routes are exactly the same, but if we know that they're at this
4 location, they're not a factor to us. But if they call this other
5 location, now they would be a factor to us.

6 So we've worked quite a bit on that. We had a lot of
7 meetings, and John was at these meetings, and I was at these
8 meetings. We had meetings with Clark County Aviation Department.
9 It used to be about -- god, it seemed like there for a while about
10 every month, but we've done these for so many years now that we're
11 now down to every 6 months we'll have a meeting with the users at
12 Clark County Aviation. And those meetings talk about our route
13 structure within Class B airspace, and they've given us certain
14 gates and they've tracked us, I mean right down to the nose,
15 whether we make these gates. And we're well into the 98 to 99
16 percent of the time all the companies are making those gates.

17 There was a lot of noise-sensitive areas up around the Las
18 Vegas -- on the Las Vegas Strip, up by the Stratosphere because
19 there was some congressperson that lived up there and complained,
20 so there was a gate put up there. And, you know, it's just I knew
21 John through that.

22 Q. When your 6 months was up, was it you and John that were
23 discussing that you would eventually -- that they needed a
24 director of safety?

25 A. No, what happened was I came in here and, oddly enough, when

1 I was sitting there being interviewed by Brenda and John, Brenda
2 got a phone call and she said, can I call you back, I'm
3 interviewing a potential chief pilot. And so, right after that
4 was over, I said, John, I don't want to be your chief pilot, I
5 want to be responsible for Burl and only Burl. And so, that was
6 let go. I didn't even realize that that was a thought.

7 But right after I started here, the director of safety, David
8 Bales (ph), he left to go fly EMS. He was working here part time.
9 But he left, I think it was in that February timeframe that he
10 left the position, and John asked me if I wanted it. And I said,
11 John, I really -- I've had enough of taking care of other people,
12 watching over other people, I said, I just maybe want to do my
13 final days as a pilot, just flying.

14 Q. So your relocation was to be a line pilot?

15 A. Be his line pilot, yes, it was. And then it seems to me,
16 like, it was, like, April, maybe May, I don't remember exactly
17 when it was, but I had just landed with my passengers, took them
18 into the building and went back out to my aircraft, and I was done
19 for my -- that flight. I didn't have another flight. And I saw
20 John walking across from the pilot's area, back over to this
21 building, and I walked over to him and I said, John, did you get
22 somebody to fill that position? He says, no, you got somebody
23 that wants to put their name in the hat? And I said, I kinda
24 thought maybe I'd do that. And he said, I'm glad you said that.
25 And the next day, I was interviewing with him and Brenda again,

1 and there I was.

2 Now, I'll tell you, during that interview something that -- I
3 made a comment that I got shut down on pretty quickly, and I'll
4 never forget it. I made a comment that I understand that everyone
5 says that, you know, safety first and you always have to -- that's
6 our goal, safety first. But I also understand that you can't be
7 in business if you're not making a profit, so I understand that
8 profit and safety run hand in hand.

9 And Brenda shut me down right then and I felt like I just
10 lost this job. She said, safety is first, and if you can't do --
11 if you can't operate with safety as the primary objective to your
12 business, then you don't need to be in business anyway. Profits
13 will come if you maintain safety. I was all, wow, because I had
14 never heard anybody say that to me before. I've always heard, you
15 know, it's a safety and profit kind of deal. But I was totally
16 impressed.

17 Q. So it's been 5 years, about, that you've been in this
18 position?

19 A. No, four, just a little over four. I started here in 2014,
20 February 2014. I left Sundance on the 26th of 2000 --

21 Q. '13.

22 A. July 26th of 2013.

23 Q. Okay. You said the SMS program is Brenda's program?

24 A. It is Brenda's program. She's the CEO and if you don't have
25 the backing and the -- if it's not the CEO and top management's

1 program, then it'll never work. It has to be that they are all on
2 board. I don't mean that they -- she doesn't go out and do the
3 safety ops. She doesn't do those, she's got me to do that. But a
4 safety management system, if it wasn't management taking care of
5 that and being on board with just culture, being on board with
6 putting money where it needs to be put to make things safer, then
7 you wouldn't have a safety program. You can't have a safety
8 program from the bottom up. It's got to be from the top down.

9 Now, reporting and everything else that goes along with it,
10 it absolutely comes from the bottom. But you've got to -- all of
11 the people that make these reports and have input in it have to
12 understand that we've got the blessing from the people who make
13 the rules and who enforce the rules and who have paid the bills.

14 So, yeah, I totally believe that it's like a house. This is
15 management. This is your foundation. And this is just culture.
16 And then you've got all the other four elements of that, that make
17 up the structure of it, and then you put on the roof on it, call
18 it an SMS program, but yet, you're going to make changes to it.
19 You know, you might have to do an addition to something just like
20 you would a building, you know. Or you might have to do
21 renovations or upkeep on it. So SMS, to me, is a living,
22 breathing animal.

23 Q. What does just culture mean to you?

24 A. Just culture means that if somebody does something that was
25 not intentional, wasn't malicious, wasn't deliberate, and wasn't

1 meant to be a problem, they can report that. It's just like an
2 ASAP program. So I made a mistake, I did something wrong. You
3 report it, and when that report comes in, you say, okay, well,
4 let's talk about that. I'll give you an example of how this
5 works.

6 We had a pilot who picked up an aircraft, it was an EC, and
7 out at the Grand Canyon West there is a concrete pad back behind
8 the pad that you actually land on, and it's just raised just a
9 little bit. Now, this is on a whole bunch of them. Well, the
10 pilots were landing on this pad and the stinger on the EC130s
11 was -- when you pick up, it goes down, and sometimes the stinger
12 will bump the ground.

13 I mean, that's what it for. It lets you know you're in a
14 tail load attitude. You can still be within CG, but when you're a
15 single pilot in that aircraft getting ready to go back down and
16 pick up passengers, so if you were to pick up and move backwards
17 at all, you could bump that stinger on the end of it, which puts
18 pressure on the vertical fin, which tin-cans it and you've got
19 damage to the aircraft.

20 So this happened, and so we pulled the pilot in to Simon's
21 office to discuss this whole thing. And John said, so give me a
22 good reason why we should keep this guy. And I went over and I
23 got my little sheet of paper that's got our just culture on it and
24 I said, what he was doing, was it deliberate? Yes, he was
25 deliberately out there flying the helicopter. Was he following

1 the rules? Yes, he was following the rules. Okay. And then was
2 it intentional? No, it wasn't intentional. So you go to the next
3 leg and it says substitution test. Substitution test is could it
4 happen to somebody else. It had happened to somebody else. So,
5 yeah, it could have happened.

6 So the pilot was kept, no disciplinary action. And that
7 pilot became one of our lead pilots later on down the line because
8 we have a just culture here. Just culture means just what it
9 says. You shouldn't have pressure put on you because of
10 unintentional issues.

11 Now, it could be that you'd get some sort of disciplinary
12 action depending on what the deal was, but it's not that just
13 because this happened, you get fired. There should be no
14 retribution on honest mistakes. We should learn from them. We
15 should make sure that everybody else understands that this is what
16 the case may be.

17 And after that happened, I went out there to the landing site
18 and where that landing site was, I put a red line across that pad
19 and I said when you land that helicopter, you put your butt right
20 there on that red line. That way, your stinger won't be lined up
21 so that that can happen. Your stinger will be over that concrete
22 pad. And if you do touch, it's perfectly fine because that's what
23 that stinger is designed for.

24 Q. You said there shouldn't be retribution on honest mistakes.
25 What about just mistakes of a pilot screwing up?

1 A. If it's malicious, absolutely. But if you're going out
2 there -- we had a pilot that -- we have zero tolerance on things,
3 how you fly. We fly by top standards. And we had something
4 happen where one of our pilots got videoed doing maneuvers that
5 were not close to standards, and that pilot was gone as soon as we
6 found out. No question asked. There is no just culture in doing
7 things maliciously.

8 Q. What if it's just a stupid mistake like --

9 A. Stupid mistakes happen. There we go to the substitution
10 test. Could it have happened to somebody else? You can go back
11 in history and find where, yeah, it probably happened to somebody
12 else, probably in this company. And if that's the case, then, you
13 know, maybe we have to go do some more training, maybe we have to
14 limit that person from doing that particular flight until they get
15 to a different level of abilities. But no, just because you made
16 a mistake doesn't mean that you should be fired. It doesn't mean
17 that you should lose, you know, 2 weeks of pay. It just
18 shouldn't.

19 Q. So, when you said that you should go back and look to see
20 what's happened to other people, what would you look through?

21 A. Well, you could look through, possibly, irregularity reports,
22 but you can also look through -- I've been in this business a long
23 time and I've seen a lot of different things, and I remember a lot
24 of different things that happened to pilots that worked for me.
25 So I say, well, you know what, this happened to old George, the

1 same thing, flying the same kind of helicopter, flying in the same
2 environment, yes, I have seen this happen before.

3 Q. So just anecdotally?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Because before you said you can't look through all the
6 irregularity reports.

7 A. It probably wouldn't be where I'd go right to the
8 irregularity reports. I could possibly recall seeing something
9 that was similar and try to go back and see at that point if we
10 had something like that. And it might have been that it had a tag
11 on it where I could actually -- or if I remembered the pilot, I
12 can go through by pilot. If I remember about the timeframe that I
13 saw something like that happen, I can go back by time.

14 Q. Okay. I guess I don't understand how you're not using the
15 irregularities or you can't go through them.

16 A. You know, I guess I don't need to, to -- I can go through all
17 of these irregularity reports, and there's a whole bunch of little
18 blocks on there that says engine malfunction, chip light, weather,
19 bird strike, door, whatever the case may be. There's a whole
20 bunch of those on there. And I can go back through whenever they
21 tag something like that. Let me just pull one up.

22 Q. Well, I know -- so I was provided --

23 A. Okay. Well, right here. All these little checkmarks, if
24 they put the checkmark on there, I can go back and I can see
25 flight altered for weather, and I can pull up every aircraft,

1 every flight for a period of time or from the time we started this
2 program of flights deviating for weather, or any of the other
3 locations. However, if you go on there, you won't find one that
4 says landing at Quartermaster Helibase.

5 Q. Yeah, because you look at -- you know, you just affirmed.
6 Well, A, I read all of them.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. But I didn't take -- I mean, there's only a sentence, so it
9 didn't take me that long, but then you can just search, right?
10 Search Quartermaster? I guess that's what I wasn't understanding
11 of when something happens that you can be like, oh, Quartermaster.

12 A. What I was talking about is when you go through and you pull
13 up everything that has that on the bottom, where it has the
14 checkmark on it?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Where it says altered for weather?

17 Q. Yeah, I noticed that some of them don't even check it even
18 though it --

19 A. Well, is that one altered for weather?

20 Q. Well, this is --

21 A. That one's door (indiscernible) so --

22 Q. But some say weather even though the person got sick, and so
23 that was like --

24 A. Well, they can put on there anything that affected it. It
25 might have been that the weather was bad, rough, and a passenger

1 got sick and they returned because it was too rough to fly. So he
2 returned because of weather, but you also had a passenger that got
3 ill. And the door might have come open while you were on your way
4 back, and you hit a bird. So all those little marks, you can
5 click on any one of those, and then I can go back and I can just
6 search whatever I'm looking for in there. I can put a word in
7 there and hit find and just find that word, I guess, but that's
8 not normally how I go about doing that.

9 Q. Okay. But I mean, even -- I only got 242 of them. I was
10 trying to get all of the ones from the last 2 years.

11 A. You know, I sent every single irregularity report and,
12 evidently, it didn't go through to you. I sent them to John.
13 John said he's going to give you a thumb drive?

14 Q. Yeah. So, what --

15 A. Well, that's a lot of stamping confidential on each one of
16 those, too. It took a long time to do that, also. I was not a
17 happy person. I will let you know, I was not a happy person.

18 Q. I had to read all those. What is the difference between an
19 incident report and an unsafe hazard report?

20 A. Unsafe condition or hazard report, that would be like there's
21 electrical cords across the walkway in the hangar and a mechanic
22 can say, jeez, that's a hazard right there. He can go and -- a
23 mechanic can fill out one of these, anybody from the tour
24 coordinators or over here in our admin, anybody in this company
25 has a way to get into the Flight and Duty Tracker and do an unsafe

1 condition or hazard report. It's not pilots and mechanics, it's
2 everybody in this company can do that, whether it's here or at the
3 South Rim or Grand Canyon West, they all have access to this.

4 And one of the first things that we do when they come in to
5 work here, we show them how to get into that, what the thing, what
6 the password is for it. They can do it anonymously or they can
7 put their name in there. But we have them fill one out as a test,
8 and we'll date. And I've got copies of those. It's just so that
9 somebody like Funka tells you that he doesn't know how to do a
10 report anonymously, I will go back and show Mr. Funka that he has
11 one in my folder that has his name on it. And I'll go back and
12 review with him how to do that.

13 Q. Well, have you ever done it? Because if it's him, it's
14 probably other people as well.

15 A. Possibly. But I get plenty of them. It's not like -- and it
16 could be that he felt stressed because he was sitting in here with
17 you guys asking him questions, too. You know, some people do
18 that.

19 Q. The unsafe hazard --

20 A. But I will go back --

21 Q. The unsafe hazard report is what you're talking about?

22 A. Unsafe condition or hazard report.

23 Q. So that is in the program that they have to log into?

24 A. Mm-hmm.

25 Q. So if they log into it, it's not anonymous.

1 A. Oh, yes, it is. Go to Flight and Duty Tracker.

2 Q. Well, we can finish up the interview and then
3 (indiscernible).

4 A. Okay. So what you do is you log in Flight Duty on the Google
5 or whatever you use as a search engine. And then when it says log
6 in, you log in. For pilots, you put in Flight for the user's
7 name, and then you put in Papillon with a capital P, and that will
8 give you access as somebody in the flight department. It doesn't
9 come up to me as being somebody from the flight department. It's
10 just their access. If it's maintenance, they just put in
11 Maintenance Papillon. And then there's this block where you can
12 put your name in it or you can click anonymous, or you can put
13 your name on there and click anonymous. Either way, it's going to
14 be anonymous because I am the only person that gets those reports.

15 Q. So, where is that trained?

16 A. Every person coming into this company gets trained that when
17 they start here. And each manager has a copy of the ability to
18 get into it. So if you go down here and ask Andria can one of her
19 people get into and file a report, I'll guarantee they can.

20 Q. I guess I'm asking for the pilots, when do they learn that
21 login and when is that --

22 A. They're trained during their -- when they first start here.

23 Q. In the indoc?

24 A. They're taught during initial training. And I train that
25 myself with the pilots. Rusty trains it himself at the South Rim.

1 Q. So, when looking at your PowerPoints that describe all of the
2 forms, I don't see anything in there. Is that during that module
3 that you would be doing it?

4 A. When you -- my PowerPoint for what?

5 Q. I just was provided where it talks about irregularity reports
6 and --

7 A. Okay, do you have all of our --

8 Q. I mean, I asked for everything was done for --

9 A. Do you have one for safety?

10 Q. Mm-hmm.

11 A. Open that one. No, that's not -- go to -- there.

12 Introduction to Safety.

13 Q. So I don't see, like, an example of this is the --

14 A. Is there -- do one of these have A Flight and Duty Tracker on
15 it?

16 Q. That's why I didn't --

17 A. Well, open it up so I can just go through each one so I can
18 read it, because I can't read those little bitty things.

19 Q. Well, we can go over it, but you think there is a PowerPoint
20 that has that module information?

21 A. Yeah, I know there is.

22 Q. I guess I'll just ask for them again.

23 A. It's on there. It's on there. I'll just show you when we
24 get done with this. If you can just open this up right here so I
25 can see it. Is this the one that --

1 Q. So this is what I was talking about.

2 A. Keep going, keep going.

3 (Pause.)

4 Okay, open one of the others because that one's --

5 Q. I did a keyword search so it's not --

6 A. Okay. I'll show you on my computer because that's the one I
7 use.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. But it's on -- what it is, all it is, is a -- I click on it
10 and it opens up Flight and Duty Tracker and then I go through and
11 explain how to do this, and then I have everybody go through and
12 do it.

13 Q. Okay. So it's just a hotlink to show --

14 A. It's a hotlink to Flight and Duty Tracker, that's all it is.

15 Q. And who is Borden Miller?

16 A. Borden Miller used to -- you know, if they've got Borden
17 Miller on there, it's an old one. Borden Miller was, he was our
18 safety representative or coordinator, whatever, for the South Rim.
19 He was also the charter manager. He was with a company about 27
20 years. He just retired maybe a year and a half ago, something
21 like that. And he used to also be our DER for our drug program.
22 But Borden is no longer here.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And that's why Rusty is kind of mentoring me now.

25 Q. And so, the difference between the unsafe and the incident,

1 because I still don't get the difference between those.

2 A. Unsafe and incident. Incident would be somebody that got
3 hurt on a flight, like fell off of the helicopter while they're
4 pre-flighting, a mechanic that slipped off of a ladder. A lot of
5 those also come into HR because that might be something that we
6 need for workmen's comp. Incident has nothing to do with
7 helicopter operations because of the connection with incident and
8 the FAA issue. That's why incident was taken off of the
9 irregularity report. We actually started that at Sundance,
10 because we had the same program at Sundance with Flight and Duty
11 Tracker, and we had irregularity reports versus incident reports.

12 Q. So, what is the main tool that you use to get a snapshot of
13 what's happening?

14 A. Observation. I don't think that you can have a better one
15 than just observation. If I come over here and sit up here in
16 this break room and just watch what's going on with the ramp and
17 they're making sure that the passengers are being care for
18 properly as they're walking out to the aircraft. It might be that
19 I'm at the South Rim and I see that the loaders aren't paying
20 attention as people are getting out of the aircraft and helping.
21 So it's just -- I think management, by walking around -- though
22 I'm not a manager, I believe in walking around and seeing what's
23 going on. You can't sit in an office and know what's going on
24 around you.

25 Q. Is there any type of risk assessment?

1 A. Yes. We have a risk assessment for every flight that is
2 unusual to our regular canned scenario flights to the Grand
3 Canyon. So every charter flight that goes out, every firefighting
4 flight that goes out, every ops check flight that goes out, with
5 the exception of the three ops check flight pilots. That's their
6 regular routine, so they don't do an irregular -- or a risk
7 assessment for each one of those flights. However, if it's one of
8 our line pilots or lead pilots, then we do have a risk assessment
9 that they have to go through and evaluate. And so, all of our
10 charter stuff, they've got a big, thick file folder of risk
11 assessments.

12 And management of change is also a risk assessment. If you
13 go out here -- when we started to open up our location over here
14 at the Hoover Dam, went through to find out what are the issues,
15 what are the risks in doing this and do we want to do this. John
16 and I also went and did a management of change when they --
17 marketing was trying to get us to do the Strip tours again. And
18 we went out there at different locations and watched what was
19 going on and did our risk assessment.

20 We took two helicopters, one that was flying front, John was
21 in one, I was in the other one, and one would go down and you
22 could lose it in the lights, and then come back up and you could
23 see just fine. And then other aircraft, and if people weren't on
24 the exact route, you know, you could lose them off to the side if
25 they weren't flying at speed. So we did the risk assessment on

1 that through our management of change and we deemed that that
2 wasn't something we wanted to do. I mean, we deemed it that we
3 still didn't do it. Because we haven't done that since 2009, I
4 believe.

5 Q. What does Papillon do to help alleviate pilot pressure of
6 performing the tour to what was advertised, what the passengers
7 expect?

8 A. I have no clue what you mean.

9 Q. Is there anything that is done to help alleviate what would
10 naturally would be a pilot pressure to complete the tour as the
11 passengers expect?

12 A. I would believe that would be training. We train everybody.
13 They go on ride-alongs to see what the other pilots do, how they
14 deal with the passengers. So it's not like you just say, okay,
15 you passed the 135 check ride and you passed your SFRA check ride,
16 jump out there and go do this. They get to go on at least three
17 ride-alongs. They can go on as many as the want until they feel
18 comfortable with it.

19 There is not a pilot out here that their first flight they
20 don't have a little apprehension. Not a problem about flying the
21 aircraft or knowing where they're going or what they're going to
22 do when they get there, but it's their first flight with
23 passengers, yeah, there might be some apprehension, initially.
24 But I don't have people coming in to me saying, gosh, I just can't
25 deal with these passengers. This is tough. If I was just driving

1 a helicopter, I wouldn't be having all these problems. I don't
2 see this as an issue.

3 Q. How would they even get that information to you?

4 A. Come talk to me. You saw my cubicle's got an open door. And
5 they do come and talk to me. It's not something that people
6 hesitate. If they've got an issue, they come and talk to me about
7 it. And that was a joke, by the way, my cubicle with an open
8 door. Sorry.

9 Q. I know that -- and I don't mean to belabor this, but because
10 we're going to have it laid out in report format, I want to make
11 sure that I'm capture it correctly. The anonymous reporting is
12 the unsafe hazard report that they go into Flight and Duty
13 Tracker?

14 A. Mm-hmm.

15 Q. If anything happens in flight, then it's supposed to be an
16 irregularity?

17 A. If they want to remain anonymous, they're going to do an
18 irregularity report if there was an issue. If they have a problem
19 where they don't want somebody to know that, then they need to do
20 an unsafe condition or hazard report, because I'm the only one who
21 gets those. If it goes to Flight and Duty Tracker on irregularity
22 report, you saw how many people get those reports. Brenda gets
23 it, Geoff gets it, John gets it, all the chief pilots and training
24 directors get it.

25 Q. I guess what we heard from the lead pilots, and maybe this is

1 where I'm not understanding, is that the irregularity is if there
2 is a deviation in the flight.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. But if there's not a deviation, if it was just --

5 A. So, what are you calling a deviation?

6 Q. Well, so, what we heard, and even when somebody did actually
7 deviate, but when they said if you deviate from your normal route,
8 then you have to --

9 A. No, that's not what -- an irregularity report is if anything
10 is irregular to a normal, everyday, standard, no-issue flight,
11 then you put an irregularity report. That's why it's called
12 irregularity, because it's not a standard flight. We had a chip
13 light that came on, we had an engine malfunction, we had a door
14 open, we had a bird strike, we had a sick passenger. Anything
15 that's not standard. If it went out there smooth and came back
16 smooth, no issues, no report. If they go out there and they had a
17 battery (indiscernible) even though it wouldn't be --

18 Q. I see that with maintenance, and I saw those things, but
19 there wasn't like as we heard somebody say, I got so much
20 turbulence that I was like whoa, or somebody said that the
21 passenger -- the bags fell.

22 A. Did they come back because of the weather?

23 Q. No, they can just continue on.

24 A. And it was on a report?

25 Q. No, that's what I'm asking. Where would those things be

1 reported? The flight continued on track but something --

2 A. Then they must have not felt that it was an issue that they
3 needed to report. I don't know. They should have -- if there was
4 any reason they thought that they should report it, then they
5 report it. Who was this somebody? I don't want to ask who, but
6 was one of the pilots said that they had a problem --

7 Q. Well, you were there when we were doing the interviews.

8 A. Who was the --

9 Q. Well, so, what I'm getting at is, when we've talked to
10 pilots, they have -- things will come up. Somebody's water bottle
11 flew out, or somebody -- so it seems like an irregularity report.
12 I don't get just like --

13 A. So somebody dropped a water bottle and it made a noise and it
14 kind of scared them or something like that?

15 Q. And they had to pull it out and do -- you know, something
16 like that. They get a jack stall, it's like a normal thing,
17 something --

18 A. No, a jack stall is not a normal thing.

19 Q. But it didn't make them deviate is what I'm saying.

20 A. Okay. Then that was their choice whether they did an
21 irregularity report or not.

22 Q. Okay, which I hear you say, but then I look through 2 years
23 of irregularity reports and I don't see anyone had reported that.
24 So everyone's choosing not to.

25 A. 300-and-something reports and you think that everybody's

1 choosing not to report? I thought our reporting was pretty damn
2 good here.

3 Q. Well, I guess what I'm asking is I didn't see any benign
4 things like that.

5 A. All right.

6 Q. So then I'm asking

7 A. I'll work on that, Zoë.

8 Q. But I'm saying what other things --

9 A. I don't have any idea. I can't answer your question. I
10 don't know. I just don't know.

11 Q. And because I haven't seen the unsafe hazards, I guess what
12 I'm getting at is maybe they're reported in a different manner.
13 And I'm not asking the right question.

14 A. I don't get any unsafe hazard reports for that kind of
15 issues.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Normally, it's something that's a safety issue. I don't
18 know. I don't know where to go with this, Zoë.

19 Q. I'm just making sure that I'm not missing a question where
20 you would just say, oh, of course, they would do the fill-in-the-
21 blank, and I'm like, oh, I wouldn't have thought to ask that.

22 A. If it's not on there, they decided it wasn't necessary to
23 report it. Because they're all told please give us all the
24 reports that you can. And nobody gets any kind of reprimand for
25 it, so, normally, it's a thing that they want to do. And I'm

1 sorry, if I missed somebody saying that they had an issue and
2 didn't report it.

3 Q. And then I know that I've been asking, since you're my group
4 member, of where I was asking for all Scott's records of anything
5 in the company. And I keep feeling like there's other things. Is
6 there anything else that we're missing where we can get some type
7 of idea.

8 A. Simon would have the records for him, for flight, his flight.
9 And Dawn Nicole gave you the records for his personnel records. I
10 do not have any records on anybody other than what might be a
11 flight duty -- or an irregularity report.

12 Q. Okay. And then, also, from possible customer service.

13 A. Yeah, but she said she never saw anything, any issues with --

14 Q. I guess what I'm looking at, too, because there wasn't
15 sorting, is you were at Sundance and part of the Kamikaze. I'm
16 looking -- was there something of people --

17 A. Ooh. Ooh. I didn't like that at all.

18 Q. Well, just that type of report, somebody saying like, whoa,
19 that was a really bump ride and then we can look and say, oh, that
20 was --

21 A. That's not what you said that I didn't like.

22 Q. The type of reports like the Kamikaze reports, the emails
23 that you found.

24 A. Yeah. Thanks. Are we about done?

25 Q. Yeah. I didn't mean to -- that wasn't supposed to be

1 offensive. I'm just trying to see if --

2 A. Oh, it was.

3 Q. Oh, it wasn't meant to be offensive at all and I'm so sorry
4 if you took it that way. But I'm just trying to see if there's
5 any other things that we might be able to -- that we're missing
6 that --

7 A. Well, I don't have anything that you're missing. So if
8 you've got something missing, it's either Simon, Tyler or Dawn
9 Nicole.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Whether they've got anything else, you might find something
12 on Yelp or something like that. But we go through that kind of
13 stuff, also. We've got people that go through our website
14 locations of complaints about flights or whatever and we address
15 those.

16 Q. Do they report that to you?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Is that to the chief pilot?

19 A. I don't know where that would go. It doesn't come to me.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I don't get customer complaints unless it's a safety issue.

22 Q. So if someone says like, in a complaint -- you don't get any,
23 you said. So if someone says, I almost ran into a tail boom or
24 I -- that wouldn't go to --

25 A. If one of the pilots (indiscernible)?

1 Q. No, if it was like a Yelp or a -- when you said --

2 A. A passenger?

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. Almost ran into -- I would have heard that from the pilot or
5 another pilot that would have been out there to see. I mean, why
6 would we have a passenger almost hit. We have had people move
7 towards the tail rotor at the South Rim where we hot load, and
8 we've had loaders that have grabbed a hold of the passenger and
9 kept them from going down there. And I would probably be able to
10 go back and find something from the South Rim on issues about
11 passengers being close to the tail rotor. I could probably find
12 something like that. I'd have to go search for it, but I probably
13 could find something like that.

14 Q. I guess I'm just looking at if things are reported that they
15 see online, of the different sources that people say, does that
16 ever go to --

17 A. You know, we report more than just about any other operator
18 in the country and you're asking me for more stuff? I don't know
19 what else to give you.

20 Q. I'm actually just asking because I'm thinking I might not
21 be -- it's not an attack, it's because I think I might be missing
22 something.

23 A. It feels like that you're trying to use our SMS program as
24 something that's not good, and I think it's tremendous.

25 Q. Oh, really, that's not it at all. I'm just making sure that

1 because you have such an infrastructure of it, we have questions
2 to then go off and look. And so I want to make sure it's all
3 captured and we -- you've obviously put a lot of work into it and
4 I want to make sure that when we present it to the public that
5 they see that.

6 A. I don't think that's how they're going to see it, and that's
7 what I'm afraid of.

8 Q. We very much intend to capture all of the work that has been
9 put in and the different things that you've done which we know are
10 not required by the FAA.

11 A. I don't know what else to tell you.

12 Q. All right. Well, then I'll end it there.

13 MS. WILSON: Manny, do you have any questions?

14 BY MR. FIGLIA:

15 Q. Roughly, during your career, which is a long career, where
16 did you receive safety training?

17 A. My first safety training was at HAI years ago. I wasn't even
18 in a safety position but I was able to go to HAI's safety course,
19 which was, like, a day long. So, I don't really count that as too
20 much. I wasn't safety personnel at all till I got here and I
21 started doing some courses here. I went to the NTSB crash
22 investigation course. I've gone to two of the workshops for IS-
23 BAO. NBAA, I have two different certificates from that. Let's
24 see, what else? I've got it all in my office as to things that
25 I've gone through.

1 Q. In your safety meetings, there are minutes that are kept?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And you're the chairman of that meeting?

4 A. Yes. And I've got those minutes.

5 Q. Is Brenda generally there at meetings?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Is there anyone else from management at the meetings?

8 A. Normally, Geoff is. There's been a time or two where Geoff
9 has not been able to be here. But John is -- co-chairs, or a
10 representative. The last time we had one, John was in Washington,
11 D.C. Is that correct? I think he was working on a work group
12 about the crash-worthy fuel systems, okay? And so Simon sat in
13 for the director of operations on that one. We have almost all of
14 management from here and the South Rim, we do a conference call,
15 and so it's a large number of people. It's not just a small
16 group.

17 Q. Okay. Are the pilots represented there, as well?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Do you have an assigned flight safety officer? Do you
20 have anyone else assigned to (indiscernible)?

21 A. I'm the director of safety.

22 Q. You're the director of safety but you don't have a flight
23 safety officer, per se?

24 A. No. No.

25 Q. The mishap plan, how often do you update the mishap plan?

1 A. My mishap plan?

2 Q. Your aircraft mishap plan, what you refer to after an
3 accident, how often do you update that?

4 A. I'm not following. A file?

5 Q. Do you have an aircraft mishap plan? Emergency response
6 plan?

7 A. Oh, yeah, absolutely.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah, we've got an emergency response manual.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. You bet.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And it's -- right now, we are in the process of redoing our
14 family assistance program. In fact, we had a meeting on Monday.
15 There's three of us who are working on that, the safety director
16 from the airline and our vice president for operations -- or
17 what's his -- Mark Slack (ph.) and myself. And come October, the
18 three of us are going to the NTSB training facility for family
19 assistance. Hopefully, we get trained by Max Green, who is
20 phenomenal, absolutely phenomenal. I really was impressed with
21 that man.

22 Q. Like on the hazard report, you're the person who sorts and
23 determines which gets distributed (indiscernible)?

24 A. Yeah, I'm the custodian of that, yes.

25 Q. Okay. And you'll reply to anyone who's submitted one? In

1 other words, if I submitted a hazard report and I say there's some
2 deviation on the flight line --

3 A. I might not respond directly to that person. If that was
4 something that everybody needs to know, it will be in the
5 briefing. And the pilot that put in that report should know that,
6 yes, okay, that's mine.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But I don't want to -- I want it to get to everybody that
9 needs to have it.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. But I don't want the person that -- that particular person to
12 have to go tell everybody. So they'll know when it's been
13 responded to. I did ask one. I had an irregularity report, and I
14 can't remember what it was about, but I went to the pilot and I
15 said I think this is really important that everybody sees this
16 irregularity report, do you have a problem with me sending it to
17 the pilot pool on the email? Because I've got the email
18 address -- I'm on the pilots' email address though, you know,
19 management is not. And he -- he or she, I don't even remember
20 that -- said, no, please do. So I copied it and, with my
21 response, and I sent it out to everybody so they could read it.
22 And they all appreciated that. I can't remember what it was
23 about. I don't --

24 Q. Let's say the South Rim filed an incident or a hazard report
25 and you reviewed it, is it kept regionally or is it as a company

1 looked at?

2 A. I've got the company's -- everything's here.

3 Q. When you do receive a hazard report on your SMS, is there a
4 risk matrix that you use for probability of what the ramifications
5 may be of that hazard?

6 A. It's in our SMS manual.

7 Q. Okay. Do you use that risk matrix?

8 A. I do use it, yeah.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I use it more on an individual flight basis, but when I'm
11 doing a management of change, I try to look at, okay, what's the
12 probabilities and --

13 Q. Okay. I'm not a computer person, either. Do you -- does the
14 Company subscribe to safety publications and --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- put them out available to (indiscernible)?

17 A. Yeah, I've got several of them that I get on a -- I've got
18 one that I get on a daily basis, I think (indiscernible) in
19 Portland.

20 Q. When you were evaluating the waterfall pad for a landing, how
21 was that information disseminated to anyone involved as far as
22 utilizing that?

23 A. Well, the way it's going to be, they're going to get that
24 information because every pilot is going to have to be trained at
25 that location. And I was there, along with the director of

1 training and the chief pilot. So all three of us were there
2 evaluating it at the same time and deciding what we needed to do.
3 And we've decided that, you know, even though it's very close and
4 probably everybody's flown right over it, it does have different
5 risks. So we want to train it.

6 Q. And again, hypothetical: It's obvious that management is
7 very pro safety and you're out in front of it. If you were to
8 recommend, let's say, that every one of your lead pilots was to
9 receive some kind of safety training, whether it was from the
10 NTSB, FAA, TSI, University of Southern California, at Embry-
11 Riddle, would they view that as a positive? Would they --

12 A. Oh, if our pilots could do that? Absolutely. Absolutely. I
13 think that everyone here -- I get talked to quite often by the
14 pilots saying, man, I want your job when I grow up, you know. You
15 don't have to grow up to be as old as I am to have the job. So,
16 yeah, I'd like to see a lot of people go into the safety industry.
17 I think it's where we need a lot of good people.

18 Q. I see on our schedule at Airbus that our maintenance
19 technicians come out to do maintenance training. Does everyone in
20 your maintenance department take advantage of OEM training?

21 A. All of our people go through, all of our technicians go
22 through factory training. And even our training pilots will sit
23 in on those classes if they can. We learn quite a bit. And Andy
24 that used to come out here and fly with our maintenance pilots was
25 very, very good. Matt Evans is extremely good at teaching, and he

1 came out, I think, the last time and did the maintenance with the
2 maintenance guys and touchdown with our lead pilots. Yeah, you've
3 got some really talented pilots there.

4 Q. Do you know if maintenance does FOD walks and does generally
5 the Company --

6 A. Yeah. They carry a FOD bag on them when they're out there
7 working. So anything, they got FOD, they stick it in the bag.
8 You'll see it on their hip. Do we still find FOD on the ramp?
9 Yes, sir, we do.

10 Q. There's so much wind out here, it's inevitable. Again,
11 getting back to the risk assessment, you had mentioned what you do
12 as risk on the (indiscernible) that there's a set assessment
13 there. How do you assess risk with the dynamics of flying and so
14 many changes, whether it's weather? Obviously, wind is a big
15 factor here. Even higher gross weights is a consideration. Is
16 there a plan in mind to kind of look at risks and kind of work
17 dynamically to see what each flight risk may be?

18 A. I think over the number of years that we've been operating
19 out of here, since '97, we have tried to identify every risk
20 that's out there. And we constantly are looking at different ways
21 to do things. I think you come to a point where something like
22 what we just had happen is to say, well, maybe we need to do this
23 in conjunction with whatever else we've done.

24 But you're talking about a landing site that might be a
25 pinnacle. It's not a confined area by any means. And, you know,

1 the winds are the winds no matter where you're flying. Whether
2 you're flying in Kentucky or you're flying in Alabama or Nebraska
3 or here, winds play havoc on different things, especially when
4 you've got mechanical turbulence. It is something that you learn
5 as a pilot to deal with.

6 Q. Now I'm talking outside the accident. As an example, today,
7 where the max temperature is 108, do you --

8 A. Okay, we, if it's required, we'll download the aircraft so
9 that we're not -- we can't fly with as much weight on the
10 aircraft.

11 Q. Is that done for every individual flight or is that done as a
12 general risk assessment?

13 A. They will do it as the worst condition aircraft. Like, we'll
14 just say at Grand Canyon West Airport. They take the aircraft
15 that comes up with the least amount of weight that it can carry
16 for the day and they downgrade every other aircraft so that
17 there's nobody loaded onto that aircraft, on any aircraft that
18 would exceed the least capable aircraft.

19 That way, when you go down to the bottom, you don't know who
20 you're picking up. You might be picking up another load. So if
21 you're taking down a heavy load with an aircraft that will carry
22 it and now you're going to go down there with a B2 and try to pick
23 them up, sorry about that. So everything is done by the weakest
24 link.

25 Q. Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

1 BY MS. WILSON:

2 Q. I've got a question about the risk assessment. Is the risk
3 assessment form, is that in the GOM or somewhere?

4 A. No, it's in the SMS manual.

5 Q. In the SMS manual? Okay. And is that the same risk
6 assessment that you're using for, like, the Waterfall landing
7 site?

8 A. Our daily risk assessment that we use for flight, no, it's
9 not the same.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. They're different.

12 Q. And is that process, the risk assessment, being documented?

13 A. It's done through my management of change.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I don't have a -- I use the chart, but I don't write it down
16 as, you know, this is what this is. I just do it in my management
17 of change information.

18 Q. Okay. And what is management of change specifically?

19 A. Management of change is anything that you're going to do that
20 you haven't been doing in the past. And you go through -- well,
21 right out here on this helipad, FADO-4 (ph), we went through a
22 management of change. Some of the things that we looked at was,
23 okay, is this going to affect general aviation, good or bad.
24 Well, it actually affected them in a good way, and it's affected
25 our airline company in a good way. Is it going to increase the

1 wait time on a ramp and give us a larger chance of an encroaching
2 aircraft merging together so it doesn't.

3 It relieved that a lot. Because our aircraft coming in, they
4 hold for the aircraft going out. So our aircraft on our ramp go
5 out here, go to the FADO, turn, and off they go after they've made
6 their clearing turn. And that's a disused runway or an unused
7 runway, so our other aircraft coming in, they can land one behind
8 the other and be all ready to come in. And so once our ramp is
9 empty -- and there's only one time a day that really affects, is a
10 big effect.

11 But then once all those guys come in, then the first one goes
12 to the FADO and then into the ramp, and the next one, the next
13 one. We don't have the tie-up of people doing 360 orbits trying
14 to wait their turn and general aviation trying to avoid people
15 because they don't know that we're going to orbit south of the
16 runway. It has helped out a great deal.

17 But it was our management of change that not only did we do
18 that with Papillon, we did it in conjunction with Grand Canyon
19 Airlines to come up with the best of everything before we ever did
20 it. And it has worked out. It's been a big plus.

21 Q. So is management of change just a process or is it a manual?
22 Is it an online system?

23 A. It's part of our SMS program.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. It's in our SMS manual.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Management of change is.

3 Q. And how were you notified about the accident?

4 A. John Becker called me.

5 Q. And then what was your role after?

6 A. I was in here as -- on my way as soon as it happened. And
7 then, you know, honestly, everything is such a blur to me now
8 because we were, you know, talking on the telephone and meeting
9 and trying to discuss things. We were trying to get information
10 from the site to here, and John was getting information, and some
11 of it didn't gel too well. So it was a long night. We didn't get
12 out of here till, I would imagine, around midnight or so.

13 And at that point, even then we didn't realize, we thought we
14 still had some emergency people on the ground, but we didn't
15 realize we still had passengers. The way I remember it, didn't
16 know that we had passengers still on the ground because John had
17 told them to get everybody out, and that's what he thought had
18 happened. Well, you know, it's kind of like *Cool Hand Luke*, you
19 know, sometimes there's a failure to communicate.

20 And we have tried to fix all of those issues so that it never
21 happens again. And, you know, like you were talking to John
22 earlier about how many flights have we had go in there and then
23 this one is an accident. Well, I hope that we never have another
24 one, ever, ever, but -- and I'm not talking about just Papillon,
25 I'm talking about any helicopter operator, but you know that's not

1 going to be the case. You know there's going to be another
2 helicopter crash someplace, with somebody operating it, and
3 they're going to have to go through all of this, too. And I hope
4 that they learn something from us in the process of going through
5 this. But more than that, I hope that they learn something so it
6 never does happen to them. You know, I wouldn't wish this on
7 anybody.

8 Q. Does the emergency response manual, does that fall under you
9 or is that under Operations?

10 A. I make the changes to it.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. It's basically part of our SMS program.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Though it's a standalone manual. And so, if there's any
15 updates -- so if John says, hey, you know, I think we need to do
16 this here, and Geoff agrees with him, then they'll come say, okay,
17 Burl, what do you think on this right here; we probably need to do
18 this.

19 Well, for an example, our family assistance program. You
20 know, we had a lot of stuff in there, but it wasn't organized
21 well, not well at all. Until you start to use that, you don't
22 realize that, hey, this is not good. But it's been rewritten.
23 It's going up for review with Brenda and Geoff the end of this
24 month. If it's all the way they want it, then we will place that
25 into our SMS manual and put it out. It'll probably be a complete

1 revision.

2 Q. Okay. Great.

3 MS. WILSON: Anyone else? Zoë or Manny, some more questions?

4 (No audible response.)

5 Thank you so much, Burl. We really appreciate you taking the
6 time to talk to us. Any last thoughts, anything that you want to
7 share?

8 MR. BOYD: I just have a question, and this is a question for
9 you, Manny. Is this okay?

10 MS. WILSON: Do you want it on the record for being
11 transcribed or is it something that you would like to do after the
12 fact?

13 MR. BOYD: I'd just as soon be on here.

14 MS. WILSON: Okay.

15 MR. BOYD: I would like to know why all the questions about
16 loss of tail rotor effectiveness.

17 MR. FIGLIA: It's a question based on how you conduct
18 training, and it's a picture of what you conduct while you're
19 doing training.

20 MR. BOYD: Okay. Well, my question is, we do training for
21 loss of tail rotor effectiveness in the Bell 206s because it's in
22 the POH. It tells you where the critical wind azimuth is. But
23 it's not in the Airbus manuals on any of the aircraft, so I'm just
24 not understanding. How do we train that if we don't have
25 something in the POH that guides us that way?

1 MR. FIGLIA: The POH is not a complete document as far as
2 training. As an example, the POH does not explain how to do it
3 when you fly the airplanes. But yet, you are doing you're doing
4 it in flying the airplane as an operator. So my question was
5 based on --

6 MR. BOYD: Oh, okay.

7 MR. FIGLIA: -- what type of training and where are you doing
8 the training.

9 MR. BOYD: Yeah.

10 MR. FIGLIA: You know, is it in the aircraft, is it in the
11 ground school. And I'm not saying I'm looking for a particular
12 answer.

13 MR. BOYD: Okay.

14 MR. FIGLIA: It's just do you do the training, getting a
15 picture of it.

16 MR. BOYD: It is in place for the 206 because we've got
17 documentation telling us basically what we're looking for in that.
18 And if you go to the FAA AC 90-95, even though it's old, it's
19 still, I guess, in place, it talks about this much about European
20 and Soviet aircraft. But everything else is rotor blade turning
21 counterclockwise. And it tells about the critical azimuths and it
22 says when you get low air speed in a right-hand turn with power
23 applied, that the aircraft could possibly start turning to the
24 right.

25 And as we were -- this aircraft was coming in, turning to the

1 left, reducing air speed and pulling in power for approach, and it
2 started spinning to the left. And I just -- that has been on my
3 mind a lot as to where does this role play.

4 MR. FIGLIA: Okay.

5 MR. BOYD: And we probably -- we need to look at this pretty
6 hard about training for this. That's all I have.

7 MS. WILSON: Thanks, Burl.

8 (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: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of Burl Boyd

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE: Las Vegas

DATE: June 20, 2018

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.



Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

*

PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

* Accident No. WPR18MA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: TYLER CARVER

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration
(Observing)

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I N T E R V I E W

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here. This interview is just a part of our routine investigation. There's nothing clandestine about it. It's just again part of our fact-finding phase. We want to talk to people who are management positions here and also who might have known the pilot.

We are strictly here from the safety side. We are not here for blame or enforcement actions. We are asking if you would mind if we record the interview because we would like to do a transcript of the interview that would then be a part of our public docket. Is that okay?

MR. CARVER: Standard procedure I would imagine?

MS. WILSON: Yes. We will go around the room and introduce everybody. I am Katherine Wilson. I am a Human Performance Investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher, Operations with NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety for Airbus.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety for Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. RAMIREZ: Richard Ramirez, FAA Las Vegas.

MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one person represent you in an interview. Is there someone that you would like to have represent you?

MR. CARVER: I've got Thomas Tobin here.

MS. WILSON: Great. And before we get started, do you have

1 any questions for us?

2 MR. CARVER: No. Not right now.

3 MS. WILSON: If we ask you a question you don't understand
4 please ask us to clarify. If you don't know the answer saying I
5 don't know is also okay.

6 MR. CARVER: Very good.

7 INTERVIEW OF TYLER CARVER

8 BY MS. WILSON:

9 Q. For the record, can you state your full name?

10 A. Tyler Troy Carver.

11 Q. And what is your position?

12 A. Current position is training director transitioning into
13 chief pilot.

14 Q. And how long have you been the training director?

15 A. October 2014, I believe.

16 Q. What was your date of hire?

17 A. 2013, sorry, October 2013. Date of hire was May 21st, 2012.

18 Q. And what other positions have you held at Papillon?

19 A. Lead pilot and line pilot.

20 Q. Total time?

21 A. Just under 3500, about 3500.

22 Q. And time in the EC130, guestimate?

23 A. Guestimate about 1,000 hours I would say.

24 Q. Do you still fly the line?

25 A. Occasionally when needed.

1 Q. But there's no requirement as a part of your position?

2 A. No requirement as part, no.

3 Q. Okay. What did you do before coming to Papillon?

4 A. I was a flight instructor for Universal Helicopters.

5 Q. And as the director of training or training director, what
6 were your duties and responsibilities?

7 A. To assist with the managing the training program. To assist
8 with the records. To assist with keeping track of people's -- the
9 pilot's currencies and to assist with any type of general record
10 duties and things like that. And the actual training and check
11 rides.

12 Q. Did you actually perform any check rides?

13 A. Uh-huh. Yes.

14 Q. As a lead pilot or --

15 A. As a lead pilot I was a check airman and then I was training
16 director of check airmen.

17 Q. How many lead pilots do you oversee?

18 A. (No response.)

19 Q. Let me backup. Do all lead pilots report to you?

20 A. Not to the training director.

21 Q. Okay. What about in terms of it being during the check
22 rides; they still report to?

23 A. Simon -- specifically or the chief pilot specifically they
24 will report to. But the training director also has a lot of input
25 as far as scheduling who's available for check rides and who isn't

1 because it's dynamic as you can imagine.

2 Q. Do you have anybody that reports to you?

3 A. No.

4 Q. When will the transition to chief pilot be fully complete?

5 A. Once all the letters get to the FAA and most of the documents
6 have already been drawn already. So, it's just whenever we submit
7 it. So, I think we are getting this first out of the way for this
8 week and then probably next week.

9 Q. And what made you want to change from training director to
10 chief pilot?

11 A. It's career ambition. I mean for anybody who enjoys
12 management and enjoys challenges and tasks that's kind of a likely
13 step. So --

14 Q. Okay. Do you teach any ground school or --

15 A. Uh-huh. That is correct.

16 Q. What aspect of ground school do you teach?

17 A. All types of aspects as far as from the aircraft realm,
18 aircraft -- any type of all the ground -- all our ground classes I
19 will teach and can teach. So, aircraft realm, the tops the SRGON,
20 all of our general subjects.

21 Q. Okay. How do you determine that training is working?

22 A. Usually from the outcome, success of the outcome. It's kind
23 of a, you know, outcome based granted, right?

24 Q. Uh-huh.

25 A. So, that's some of the aspects. Also, you know, we will get

1 feedback from the pilots. At the end of every new hire there is
2 an end of course critique that we have them fill out and we use
3 that to assist us to make sure that we can improve because there's
4 always room for improvement.

5 Q. Is that critique anonymous or do they put their name on that?

6 A. They put their name on it. I don't think it's anonymous. It
7 does have their name so it's not anonymous, per se, but --

8 Q. Do they have the option to submit it anonymously?

9 A. Never really thought about that.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. If it is any consolation. After the training, check rides,
12 everything is complete, do they fill that out. So, there's no --
13 hopefully no reason for them to not fill that out.

14 Q. What changes have been made to training based on feedback
15 that you have received from pilots?

16 A. One of the things is the room sometimes can be quite
17 distracting pilots having to enter that training room. So,
18 typically we've created signs. We've created ways to notify other
19 pilots that a training class is going on when available we have a
20 more secluded room we'll use. But right now, rampo (ph.) is in
21 there. So, that's kind of displaced us for a moment. Those are
22 kind of the things. And standardization with the pilots. As best
23 as we can, we try to be standard. So, we have quarterly
24 standardization meetings so that we can make sure we're trying to
25 be on the same page. So, that's some of the aspects that we've

1 come up with.

2 Q. Are you aware of how it was determined which parts of
3 training will be via Avstar and which parts will be included in
4 ground training? Are you involved in that decision --

5 A. Right.

6 Q. -- because pilots get online training --

7 A. Right.

8 Q. -- and then they've got ground training?

9 A. Right. We always assign them, all of the online training.
10 That's regardless. They are going to have that even if we double
11 it up on the ground. So, we have a basic induct ground class that
12 we do for new hires. And then they will still do the Avstar as
13 well even if it doubles up. And then for recurrent the Avstars
14 are recurrent.

15 Q. Okay. How were you notified about the accident?

16 A. FAA.

17 Q. Okay. Did you have any involvement in the investigative
18 process; since the accident have you done anything on the company
19 side?

20 A. Nothing other than I flew Zoe and Steven to the site the day
21 after.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Right? Day after? Yeah.

24 Q. Thinking back to when you were a line pilot any issues flying
25 in and out of Quartermaster?

1 A. Not really. I mean nothing -- nothing that I felt like I
2 needed to come talk to anybody about.

3 Q. Uh-huh.

4 A. So, not really.

5 Q. Okay. We saw that on some PowerPoint presentations that
6 there's information on routes exiting the Quartermaster --

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. -- there's preferred routes for getting in and out of Boulder
9 City, but we didn't see anything on specific routes into
10 Quartermaster. Do you know why that is?

11 A. Into Quartermaster the specific route to our -- well, it's
12 all in the LOA. So, there is actually -- the LOA is what dictates
13 where we go in and out. There is one option in as far as exiting
14 the Green 4 Quartermaster. So, there's not options. Whereas
15 getting out of Quartermaster you have options. You can either go
16 to the backside of the Quartermaster. You can go to GCW or you
17 can potentially rejoin the Green 4. So, that's why you would
18 probably see an option as opposed to really not getting in the
19 Quartermaster.

20 Q. So, I'm thinking that we heard pilots refer to either the
21 canyon approach or the Notch approach. So, that's not something
22 that you would consider to be different approaches into the
23 Quartermaster?

24 A. Straight into Quartermaster? Sure. You know or the Notch I
25 guess that would be a -- I thought you were -- sorry. I thought

1 you were referring to exiting from the Green 4 Quartermaster as
2 far as that goes.

3 Q. Well, just landing. So, we --

4 A. Right.

5 Q. I'm familiar with the Green 4 --

6 A. Right.

7 Q. But in terms of how the pilot actually gets to the pad in
8 Quartermaster there's no suggested routes; it's just the pilots
9 determine how they are going to get to the pad?

10 A. Based on wind.

11 Q. Okay. So, there are more than two ways?

12 A. No. There's only -- you can either go down river or up
13 river.

14 Q. Okay. And there's no -- how are pilots trained on that? How
15 do they know that those are the two ways to get in and out of
16 there?

17 A. Based on the route training they will receive and they will
18 also receive a Google Earth Training. So, we'll sit them down and
19 fly Google Earth.

20 Q. Sit them down and fly Google Earth?

21 A. Yeah, like in front of a computer --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- and we do the whole this is how you get in, here is
24 straight in based on the wind conditions here or here's going
25 through the Notch.

1 Q. Okay. So, straight in is potentially what we've heard as the
2 Canyon approach?

3 A. I guess.

4 Q. The Canyon is new to you, huh?

5 A. Yeah. I've not heard the Canyon approach.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. I don't know if that's a common term because nobody makes
8 that radio call at the bottom of the Canyon saying Canyon approach
9 to Quartermaster.

10 Q. And what do they say, straight in?

11 A. River Quartermaster.

12 Q. River Quartermaster. And then if they are going over the
13 Notch what is it?

14 A. It is River Notch.

15 Q. Okay. That's the first I've heard that that's helpful.

16 A. Well, that's probably because I'm quoting the LOA to you.

17 Q. Okay. Are you involved in the LOA process at all?

18 A. No. Other than whenever we get a new LOA --

19 Q. Uh-huh.

20 A. -- then it's published to us. The person who is in charge of
21 the LOA is Matt Benner for 5 Star.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. But I do know he's looking to try to give up that role. And
24 I'm not raising my hand no. No. I've got enough on my plate. No.

25 Q. Okay. So, what's the process if there is a change to

1 training that you want to make? What's the process for making
2 changes?

3 A. Well, it would go through updating the training manual and
4 submitting that to our POI and then upon approval then we can go
5 ahead and do that as far as that goes. If it changes from the
6 training manual.

7 Q. Uh-huh. Any changes to training since the accident?

8 A. Nothing training as far as the manual is concerned. I don't
9 know what or to say because what if, you know, contributing
10 factors are there. It's always been because as pilots coming here
11 they've got 1,000 hours of experience. They are commercial pilots
12 so they have received some basic training so that's implied. In
13 the past we've always just orally covered the settling with power.
14 But just to, you know, why not if we can help, whatever, during
15 the flight training portion now we will just do the recognition of
16 settling with power and recovery. Not get fully into settling
17 with power and we've implemented that. Still it's an oral eval on
18 the check ride.

19 Q. Uh-huh. But there is a practical portion?

20 A. Yeah. Yep.

21 Q. Okay. In training do you cover irregularity reports?

22 A. Absolutely.

23 Q. Okay. What specifically is covered?

24 A. On how to do -- how to like find the irregularity report.
25 What's the medium. And then how to fill one out.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. So, corrected irregularity reports can be quite, I don't
3 know, encompassing in ranges of styles, you know, what it is. So,
4 it's kind of hard to give an example of every single one.

5 Q. And do you cover when pilots should fill out an irregularity
6 report?

7 A. Yes. Yes.

8 Q. Is deviating for weather one of those?

9 A. If you deviate for weather you would fill out an air
10 irregularity report.

11 Q. Do you get copies of those?

12 A. I do.

13 Q. Okay. And then what do you do with them once you get one?

14 A. If -- well, I do see them, but if it's been assigned to me to
15 investigate, to go further, then I will investigate that and then
16 once I've finished my investigation I will put a conclusion and
17 then I will turn it back in.

18 Q. Otherwise it's just informational?

19 A. Yes. Otherwise it's just informational.

20 Q. Is there any meeting that management where you get together
21 and you discussed irregularity report looking for trends?

22 A. Yes. We do safety seminars. We just had one just the other
23 day. I wasn't able to attend that one. Unfortunately, I had to -
24 - I was called away for a flight but, yeah.

25 Q. Who typically attends those?

1 A. All the management in a lot of aspects, you know, of the
2 company, not just the flight persons.

3 Q. What's a recent topic of discussion that's come up where they
4 did the flight ops?

5 A. Well, let's see. Our putting in a windsock down at
6 Quartermaster. That was an interesting topic.

7 Q. Any feedback from pilots on how that's working out?

8 A. They like it. Yeah, more information is great.

9 Q. Okay. Did you know Scott?

10 A. I did. Not very well, professionally.

11 Q. Okay. Ever fly with him?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Yeah?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. What was he like as a pilot?

16 A. He was just like -- I mean that's kind of cliché to say, but
17 he was like just about like any other pilot, you know.

18 Q. No concerns?

19 A. No real concerns, no. I would be lying if I ever said I
20 didn't have any concerns because I'm -- it's in my nature to be
21 critical. Right? So, I'm always going to be critical, but if I
22 felt concerned then I would have said something, done something.

23 Q. We heard earlier today that he, Scott during his last
24 recurrent training had an unsat on his training ride.

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. Would that be something that you see? If a pilot was to get
2 an unsat?

3 A. Yes. I would see that.

4 Q. Do you recall?

5 A. I don't recall that.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And I would see that.

8 Q. What would typically be the process if you had seen that?

9 A. The reality is the only unsat that I know of really was after
10 the fact somebody else. And when the unsat and the lead came to
11 me I was like, this is not -- he's not ready. You know because we
12 always do or try to always do at least the two hours. Even if
13 they are ready in one hour we try to always do the two hours.
14 Sometimes that's just can't happen or it doesn't happen for a
15 reason or another. But this person had received their two hours
16 and the person is like not ready for a check ride. Great. No
17 check ride tomorrow. We are going to do another training event.
18 So, we did another training event, and then after that training
19 event was able to figure out what he was sticking on. And then in
20 this case it was just one simple, you know, maneuver aspect of it
21 and he was able to work that out. And then went to his check ride
22 and things went well.

23 Q. Just to clarify, that was not Scott?

24 A. Not Scott.

25 Q. Okay. I hate when things just disappear out of my head. As

1 a director of training, you are the director of training for all
2 bases?

3 A. No. Just Boulder City.

4 Q. Just Boulder City. Okay. And how many lead pilots/check
5 airmen are at Boulder City?

6 A. There are six lead pilots and there -- right now we only have
7 two of the lead pilots as check airmen.

8 Q. Okay. So, becoming a lead pilot does not mean that you will
9 be a check airman?

10 A. Does not mean it.

11 Q. Can you be a check airman without being a lead pilot?

12 A. Probably. Not here. I mean no, because you're going to put
13 IP time in the aircraft. So, --

14 MS. WILSON: I think I'm going to open up the questioning to
15 Zoe.

16 BY MS. KELIHER:

17 Q. All right. So, I just came from LA Helicopters as a CFI with
18 1200 hours.

19 A. Congratulations.

20 Q. I start January of this year, what have I gone through?

21 A. You started January or you start?

22 Q. I started.

23 A. What have you gone through?

24 Q. Yeah. It's been six months.

25 A. You've gone through the ground training. You've gone through

1 the flight training. You have gone through the route training.
2 And you are on the line and maybe by this time, maybe you're in
3 the ACE350.

4 Q. So, can you break it down of how much flight time is usually
5 given?

6 A. I can give you a basic ballpark, but there's not a -- there's
7 only a minimum. There's not a maximum. Most people -- I'm
8 guestimating here just because I don't have to look at the
9 numbers, which is nice and numbers are not. You never said, hey,
10 you spent too many hours this training class. That never even
11 mention that. But I would say most people between five and eight
12 hours for their initial.

13 Q. What's the minimum?

14 A. Four.

15 Q. And I have written down way in my past notes and I don't
16 believe it's so, I'm going to ask you. Do you do full downs?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Can they do the turbine transition, do they go anywhere to
19 get (indiscernible)?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay. All right. And do describe more of the route
22 training; how would you do that when I sit down and what do you
23 tell me?

24 A. So, first off, they will have performed at least three of the
25 ride alongs while they are in their, you know, before they pass

1 their (indiscernible) ready for a check ride. So, I've done at
2 least three ride alongs as that minimum. They may do one more or
3 two, whatever if we can fit it in. But minimum three ride alongs
4 and then they will get a flight from here to their -- to see the
5 canyon with a lead or somebody where they get to hear all the
6 radio calls and ask questions and all that stuff. And then come
7 the SFRA training day they will have at minimum two training
8 routes and then a third one for eval.

9 Q. And before they are taking passengers, about how many
10 landings would you estimate a pilot does at Quartermaster?

11 A. At Quartermaster? I estimate about four to seven. Just
12 varies on.

13 Q. But a minimum of four?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And then what do you teach about irregularity reports?

16 A. How to access it when you are supposed to fill it out and how
17 to submit it.

18 Q. So, that's what I said but what you teach, what do you say?
19 I'm 1200 hour --

20 A. I teach them how to access it so they'll go through flight
21 and duty. That's part of their indoc, so that's how they know how
22 to clock in, clock out and they know how to get paid. They know
23 how to get all their documents, everything that -- so, they'll use
24 that website to fill that irregularity report out. And then
25 they'll see how to complete it. So, in there it's kind of self-

1 explanatory. So, as you read some of the embodiment, you know, it
2 asks the questions for you. and then allows the pilot to give the
3 factual content and then allows them to give their opinion aided
4 content of what they could do to hopefully make it better. I mean
5 that's the whole point.

6 Q. That was going to be my next question; what is the point?

7 A. To track irregularities. To hopefully find a trend whenever
8 there is a trend and reverse that trend if we can.

9 Q. So, how does that?

10 A. Burl Boyd per the safety management system.

11 Q. So, in looking through the irregularity reports I see that
12 sometimes there will be a group of three people that head back but
13 only on irregularity report is filed.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. Why does that happen?

16 A. I don't know.

17 Q. Okay. You're not the person that looks at the irregularity
18 reports ever?

19 A. I have access to seeing them. But I'm not the one who
20 specifically oversees them to make sure that, you know, it's done.

21 Q. So, if somebody submits one --

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. -- are you pretty much going to for sure see it?

24 A. Pretty much going to -- pretty much for sure.

25 Q. Like does it ping your mailbox?

1 A. It just goes into my mailbox and I try to read every one I
2 can.

3 Q. So, they are disseminated into --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Who else gets those?

6 A. Not exactly sure.

7 Q. Okay. It doesn't have a too line on it?

8 A. No. It won't have a to line on it.

9 Q. Okay. Have you talked to people about what they've written
10 in their irregularity reports?

11 A. I have

12 Q. Okay. Where wee ==

13 A. I can't remember. I mean I talked to them, some of them
14 where they may have voiced opinions in the actual embodiment where
15 they missed certain facts that would have been useful. And it's
16 really just to clarify the facts to make sure that we are
17 understanding it correctly. You know, and if that's the case then
18 we have them add more information.

19 Q. What's the differentiation that you see of why to keep it
20 factual as opposed to their viewpoint?

21 A. Oh, no. They are welcome to their -- it's going to be their
22 viewpoint of the facts, right. I mean it's written by them not by
23 us. We don't -- we don't fill it out. It's written by them. But
24 oftentimes there might not be enough information. So, we will
25 follow-up and say, hey, you know, what's this, you know, why are

1 you doing this or what's going on here. And, of course, they are
2 definitely welcome to their opinion in the what would the pilots
3 do, you know, portion. What could we do to make it better. If,
4 of course, that's got enough applicability to it.

5 Q. So --

6 A. But that's just I mean it sounds like that you're saying that
7 that happens a lot. That's definitely the exception. Most pilots
8 do a very good job of filling out an irregularity report.

9 Q. So, what would be your idea of a complete reason to fill it
10 out completely?

11 A. If they deviate for weather maybe they didn't include where
12 they were at when they deviated for weather. They just said, I
13 was doing a canyon landing and I deviated for weather. Okay.
14 Great. Where was this at? Oh, yeah, Pierce Ferry is where I
15 turned around. Perfect. Would you include that please?

16 Q. Is there any repercussions for irregularity reports?

17 A. Absolutely not. I would hope not ever.

18 Q. Has there ever been scheduling differences that people get
19 punished for or changes in?

20 A. No punitive damages. That's actually one of the questions
21 that we ask when we interview a new potential lead. Make sure
22 that they is -- the schedule is not used for punitive because then
23 you use your credibility.

24 Q. Have you ever heard anyone direct a pilot of what to write in
25 their irregularity report?

1 A. Can you be more specific? Like, are you asking in management
2 or just a fellow line pilot or just anyone in general?

3 Q. Somebody in management, including yourself.

4 A. I've directed somebody to include where they were at and
5 things like that. So, if they are missing information I've
6 directed them to include more information.

7 Q. So, just the location would be --

8 A. That was an example.

9 Q. Okay. I'm reading one of your irregularity reports --

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. -- and it just said turn around Joker Mine due to lightning
12 and thunderstorms?

13 A. Perfect. Location, reason and we didn't complete the tour.

14 Q. So, that's what you're looking for --

15 A. Yes. Because that way we can track. That's got what
16 happened, where I was at and what the outcome was.

17 Q. So, yours compared to other peoples' what we have seen as a
18 trend is when people turn around from weather they include and two
19 other people turned around too, and I saw --

20 A. I might have been solo that day. I mean I don't even --
21 without knowing what that is I could have been the only one
22 flying, you know, on that round. I don't even -- what, when was
23 that?

24 Q. August 2017.

25 A. Okay. Yeah, so I really, honestly couldn't tell you if I was

1 in line with five people or one person --

2 Q. So, what my example is is do you know why other people would
3 have to or feel that they would need to justify it?

4 A. Oh. I have no clue.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I don't know. Maybe I don't know why somebody would want to
7 justify it or need to -- feel like they need to justify it.

8 Q. Do you hear Simon recommend people for decisions they make?

9 A. (No response.)

10 Q. Question their decision of turning back?

11 A. I don't hear Simon question people for the reasons why they
12 turn back because it's not very common. You may -- what do you
13 mean by that because if somebody said, hey, I turned back. I'm
14 going to say, why did you turn back? Well, the weather was bad.
15 Well, what was the weather like? It was this. Oh, okay, great.
16 Guess what, we are not launching the next round. You know,
17 something like that, sure. That would be expected I would hope.

18 Q. So, if somebody turns back what's the process of who they
19 speak to and what they go through?

20 A. When they come back they'll (A) notify tower. You know, say,
21 hey, we are turning around because flight following they will want
22 to notify tower. And then that way tower can give CXRs an update.
23 You know, hey, these guys are going to come back so probably going
24 to have to deal with that. And tower generally will want to know,
25 did they make it into the canyon because, you know, it affects the

1 people differently and so, -- and when they come in leads will be
2 like, okay. Don't forget to fill out an irregularity report. And
3 that's it. No body's -- not that I've ever seen anybody again be
4 punitively damaged for that decision and oftentimes it's a good
5 decision. Thank you.

6 Q. Have you ever heard anyone being threaten by things going on
7 their PRIA report?

8 A. No. No. I've never heard anybody ever before me or before
9 Simon, you know, or otherwise threatened with PRIA action.

10 Q. Do you know if Simon has ever filed a PRIA report on anybody?

11 A. We have to file a PRIA report, that's required. Any time
12 anybody asks they submit a form 8060-10 or 8060-11 or 12 we have
13 to file that.

14 Q. Of an action to submit of something happening, something
15 occurring --

16 A. No, the PRIA is the training record of somebody, right? So,
17 we have to support and send the information for the PRIA.

18 Q. So, if someone makes a mistake or does a piloting mishap?

19 A. You know what, I'm not exactly sure what -- I'm not sure what
20 you're asking because the PRIA is the Pilot Records Information
21 Act.

22 Q. Uh-huh.

23 A. So, it's required for 135, for the past five years to submit
24 to all previous employers the request for that, right, and so we
25 have to. We are obligated to submit a PRIA if requested.

1 Q. Yeah, but to add an action to somebody's PRIA file -- that's
2 okay.

3 A. Are you -- okay. Are you asking like a disciplinary action
4 or something?

5 Q. Correct.

6 A. In somebody's records? Okay. That's -- I thought you said a
7 PRIA on somebody. Of course, we have to do PRIAs. It's required.
8 Disciplinary action if it's poor pilot performance that's part of
9 their record. if it's not performance then we wouldn't want to
10 sent that. We generally don't send that. We wouldn't send that.
11 I don't know because I don't send them. So, I'm just guessing as
12 far as that goes.

13 Q. Have you talked to Simon about that are you guys in
14 discussion about --

15 A. Yeah. Absolutely.

16 Q. So, what kind of things --

17 A. No, not right now, but we will be in discussion when I start
18 having to send the PRIA records. I'll definitely, you know, go
19 through a training program of what, you know, how he wants it
20 done, how it's handled and everything like that. At this point I
21 haven't submitted anybody's PRIA records to anybody to include any
22 type of disciplinary action.

23 Q. And then I'm looking through the irregularity reports I see
24 that in the same flight, because I can tell from the date and the
25 time --

1 A. Right.

2 Q. -- there will be two people that say they return for weather
3 and one person will say that they had to set down because the door
4 popped open. Is there a reason why somebody wouldn't necessarily
5 say that they had to return for weather and they would have used
6 another excuse?

7 A. No. That sounds odd. I don't -- I don't get that. That
8 sounds really weird because maybe that person did have a door
9 open. I don't know.

10 Q. I was just curious of why somebody would, if there's any
11 other type of things that we're missing of a repercussion of
12 turning around for weather?

13 A. There's never -- I've never ever even know anybody getting in
14 trouble whatsoever of turning around due to weather. So, I've
15 never even, literally I've never seen anybody in trouble for
16 turning around for weather.

17 Q. So, when people say that they don't necessarily want to go
18 out because their passengers have gotten sick, turbulence or
19 something like that, what is usually the stance that's taken?

20 A. When you say people are you talking about --

21 Q. Passengers.

22 A. Passengers?

23 Q. A line pilot --

24 A. I've never get to talk with the passengers. So, I don't --

25 Q. No, so the line pilot goes in and says the passengers were

1 getting sick because of turbulence.

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. What would the response be from the lead pilot or from
4 yourself?

5 A. I don't know what the lead pilot would say. But myself would
6 be all right is it turbulence induced? Like what kind of -- first
7 off. What kind of turbulence were you experiencing? You know, is
8 it -- what are the weather days? Is it somebody -- is it just --
9 only this group of passengers? Was it this particular group of
10 passengers that maybe imbibed too much the evening before and
11 could you tell that they were still maybe suffering maybe from the
12 effects of the evening before? But everything -- that's a case by
13 case type of scenario. But if somebody was to experience because
14 of it's bad weather turbulent weather like approaching a moderate
15 turbulence or moderate turbulence by definition of the FARs then
16 by all means don't fly. Come back. We can do it another day.

17 Q. What if it's the weather if within the GOM?

18 A. The PSE has always got the -- here's the thing. The GOM as
19 far as the weather minimums, that's a guideline because the PIC at
20 the end of the day per the GOM has the final authority. So, if
21 it's inside -- if it's inside the GOM weather minimums but outside
22 of the PIC's minimum then please don't fly. Better to not fly.

23 Q. Okay. And then you said you were notified by the FAA --

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. -- of the accident. Who from the FAA called you?

1 A. Paul Alacontis (ph.).

2 Q. The POI? And so, are you the main contact?

3 A. No, no. So, I don't know why it went there. I can give you
4 a guess of what I think. That when that happened I'm not going to
5 be the first person they contact, you know, I wouldn't be the
6 first person. And it's not in the protocol for them to contact
7 me. So, those guys were busy making the phone calls that they had
8 to do and deal with the situation they had to deal with. Paul got
9 a phone call but got no information. So, he tried to call the
10 routes that we typically call but couldn't get through. So, he
11 called me hoping to get through and that's how I found out. It
12 was within I know minutes of them finding out, anybody finding
13 out, you know. So, that's how I found out.

14 Q. How often does Paul come here?

15 A. More than -- I don't know. It's a couple to several times a
16 month, just depends.

17 Q. What does his visits usually entail?

18 A. anything from ram checks to dropping off some signed
19 documents that we need for updates on the manuals to doing check
20 rides to, you know, just always official type FAA business.

21 Q. How would you describe the rapport between the FAA and
22 Papillon?

23 A. I would like to think we are on pretty good terms. I have
24 good relationship with them, with everybody that I've ever dealt
25 with.

1 Q. Have you wanted things to happen that you find resistance or
2 bureaucracy or --

3 A. I find more bureaucracy than resistance. I don't find
4 resistance. I don't think -- I've never found somebody who didn't
5 want to help. I have a smaller scope of how I deal with them and
6 it's generally just trying to get them to be able to give us a
7 check ride and they are not always able to because they are not
8 always current for a reason or another and it's usually well, and
9 it's May. So, in August I'll be current and then we can do the
10 check ride. Okay. Again, not for the lack -- I think they -- I
11 think they truly want to help.

12 Q. We were noticing that a lot of the lead pilots seem to have
13 less experience and less seniority than other pilots here.

14 A. That may be the case, some of them. It's kind of a merit-
15 based pilot responsibility.

16 Q. How are they chosen?

17 A. Interview and what -- their history, you know, and
18 performance based, you know, how well did they do on their check
19 rides. How well did they -- you know, what was their previous
20 experience like? How much -- because as a lead pilot, instructor
21 pilot is one of the duties of a lead pilot. And so, we want
22 somebody who's got instruction background.

23 Q. So, of having lower time pilots that have less hours do you
24 think it creates an awkward situation of them doing the check
25 rides for the more senior pilots?

1 A. Well, usually the lead pilots that are doing the check rides
2 are guys who have had a little bit more instructing pilots. So,
3 that generally doesn't become the case, probably less than a
4 handful of guys that may have more hours than them. But let me
5 tell you at that point they don't even care.

6 MS. KELIHER: I know we've transitioned where you can start
7 asking a lot of the flight training stuff.

8 MS. WILSON: Manny.

9 BY MR. FIGLIA:

10 Q. Training meetings what are you covering (indiscernible)
11 quarterly training meetings?

12 A. All the instructor pilots. And we cover just the basic
13 training maneuvers so whatever training deficiencies that we may
14 have seen, especially during check rides if we see any type of I
15 don't know -- I don't want to say -- just any reoccurring
16 deficiency, you know, where we can try to be better at it.

17 Q. Do you discuss new pilots as well, status of where they are
18 at and where --

19 A. Not in the quarterly, but we do that more on just during the
20 progress of training.

21 Q. Who from management is it leads?

22 A. Chief training director and all the instructor pilots.

23 Q. All right. You did walk through the pilot hire. Generally,
24 how many flights, how many hours -- that's a loaded question, for
25 someone coming through --

1 A. Their proficient. It's till they are proficient.

2 Q. Okay. Your training syllabus, do you have a spelled-out
3 training syllabus for each individual aircraft?

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. For your four specific --

6 A. All of our airframes.

7 Q. Okay. How is your GOM formulated? How do you make changes,
8 is it the original formation of it how can you come to support
9 that document?

10 A. A little bit more specific.

11 Q. General operating manual, how do you make changes, how did
12 the original inception come, how is that based?

13 A. I couldn't really speak free on the original inception
14 because I wasn't here when it was, you know, when it was created.
15 But that is a document generated by Papillon submitted to the for
16 approval. And then upon that approval then it becomes a working
17 document. Any time we decide to make changes it has to go through
18 that same process. You have to submit it, any revisional changes
19 and then that gets reviewed, vetted and then approved.

20 Q. Have you seen any of those changes since you have been here?

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. Can you give me an example?

23 A. Yeah. We've changed our appendix E. We had to change --
24 we've gone through chief pilot changes. So, we've had to amend
25 that.

1 Q. For your training do you use scenario-based training?

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. Give me an example of a new hire what scenarios you may use
4 to make his training?

5 A. A good example of scenario-based training would be somebody
6 coming to land off airport, what kind of conditions that we'd
7 encounter, ranging from brown out to, you know, sloped trains,
8 things like that. Also, submitting a flight plan for even their
9 check ride. Their check ride will be a scenario-based training
10 using, you know, the mission of -- you know, the put forth through
11 the check riding. So, --

12 Q. Specific on differences training, when you have a new hire
13 coming in and doing H130, that's generally the first --

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Okay. For differences training, how do you (indiscernible) do
16 you start them back off the ground zero or do you have them in a
17 circle do established point first and then do the differences
18 training?

19 A. We do first a ground zero, establish a point and then the
20 differences.

21 Q. So, in other words, from a H130 to a B2 to start?

22 A. That's a whole -- that's a lot of differences with the
23 transition. So, it wouldn't be differences. Differences would be
24 a B4 to a T2 where the AS350 would be a transition. So, that's a
25 whole ground of --

1 Q. Have any of your pilots or yourself been to the FAA to check
2 our main course?

3 A. No.

4 Q. For designated towers?

5 A. A check airman course put on by the FAA?

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's not a normal hoping to put in
7 DPs.

8 BY MR. WAUGH.

9 Q. In other words, do you have any present who was DP at one
10 time or --

11 A. 141 check out but I'm not a DB.

12 Q. I'm going to get big on the FAA. Mountain climbing, have any
13 of your pilots been to a formal mountain climbing post?

14 A. I'm some have attended the HAI course as far as that goes.
15 As far as one where they went and did stick climb I couldn't tell
16 you. They haven't brought that to my attention.

17 Q. Is that something you think you company be able to do?

18 A. I don't know. I wouldn't be able to speak for them.

19 Q. Your POI, you said he comes here about three to four times a
20 month.

21 A. Some months maybe no. I don't know. I don't know keep track
22 of it because he can come in here and take care of business while
23 I'm out flying. So, that's something I'd be speculating.

24 Q. Have you seen or are you aware of him specifically looking at
25 various operations whether it's going into Quartermaster or

1 whether it's a flight line check?

2 A. Sure. Yeah. He come and looked.

3 Q. He's actually seen the operation I'm talking about?

4 A. Yeah, he's -- well, I don't know. But I know he's been out
5 there to look at our flight operations.

6 Q. You said there's basically about three ride alongs --

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. -- over (indiscernible) Canyon; is that --

9 A. He's with another pilot and their passenger. So, they get to
10 see the routes and things.

11 Q. And this is after they are training?

12 A. This I during their training.

13 Q. So, ride along counts as part of their training for --

14 A. Sure. Yeah, but it doesn't count as the two required at
15 minimum flights and then the third evaluation flight does not
16 count as that.

17 MR. FIGLIA: That's all I have.

18 MS. WILSON: Great. Burl?

19 MR. BOYD: Yes, I do.

20 BY MR. BOYD:

21 Q. Have you ever had any training or any of the other lead
22 pilots had any training outside of Papillon or is it all Papillon
23 especially?

24 A. We all received copious amounts training to get there.

25 Q. Was it by any outside source?

1 A. As in?

2 Q. Somebody that's not Papillon?

3 A. I mean just to get our ratings and stuff like that.

4 Q. Have you not flown with anybody from Airbus?

5 A. Oh, I see what you're saying. Yes, all the -- well, I
6 shouldn't say all the lead pilots but most of the lead pilots and
7 we try and it just whenever we can we schedule factory training
8 where we get to do the pulldowns. That's the only time we get to
9 do pulldowns.

10 MR. BOYD: That's all I have.

11 MS. WILSON: John?

12 MR. WAUGH: No.

13 MS. KELIHER: I've got some too.

14 BY MS. WILSON:

15 Q. Notice any change in the quality of new hires that --

16 A. Not really actually. I would have thought I would have
17 because the numbers are getting less. It's just -- it's happening
18 the shortage; pilot shortage is happening. We still -- there's
19 still enough resumes where we are able to fill what we need. But
20 I thought -- I was worried -- really, I was worried about that and
21 so far, it has not manifested itself. So, two people just passed
22 their check rides yesterday and they did a fantastic job. You
23 know, as far as their knowledge as a whole. They did a good job.
24 Q. is there any -- you mentioned some Airbus training for lead
25 pilots.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. Is that that was?

3 A. Yeah. Lead pilots and maintenance test pilots, so when we
4 can we try to get the lead pilots to where they can do the
5 emergency procedures training. And so, we get to go out there and
6 do all the tuff stuff as they say and then go through the
7 maintenance test pilot program too.

8 Q. Any other training for the lead pilots, when somebody get --

9 A. What's in -- well, other than what the training manual
10 dictates.

11 Q. What is in that?

12 A. Yeah. For a lead pilot you have got to have an hour of
13 instruction and then typically we give more than that. So, we
14 give instruction for -- well, they have to have the left seat or
15 right seat depending on which aircraft you're in time, in order to
16 instruct in that. And then so they'll fly all the maneuvers.
17 We'll make them fly all the maneuvers first and then we will play
18 the dumb pilot and go out there and do everything wrong and make
19 sure that they can save the day. And then they get checked out.

20 Q. Okay. In addition to yourself and then there's two other
21 check airmen --

22 A. And Simon.

23 Q. And Simon.

24 A. So, right now there's four check -- I'm sorry. You just
25 asked how many leads work --

1 Q. I know and that's why I'm clarifying now.

2 A. Yeah. So, Simon is a check airman -- this side Simon is a
3 check airman, I'm a check airman and then two lead pilots.

4 Q. And then are there additional ground school instructors or do
5 the four of you --

6 A. No. the IPS can also become -- they'll become ground school
7 instructors and things like that. it's just they most likely
8 won't become check airmen.

9 Q. Okay. And so then how many instructor pilots do you have?

10 A. Six. So, all the leads will become an instructor pilot.

11 Q. They will become --

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. -- but they are not necessarily --

14 A. Check airmen.

15 Q. Okay. All the lead pilots are instructor pilots. But only
16 two of them are check rides?

17 A. Are check rides, yes. Yes. Two different hats.

18 Q. Got it. Yes, all right. Thank you.

19 MS. WILSON: Zoe.

20 BY MS. KELIHER:

21 Q. So, I see that the whatever (indiscernible) PowerPoint for
22 training --

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. -- that a lot of them are based off of Michael, I'm assuming
25 the chief pilot before?

1 A. Mark?

2 Q. Mark.

3 A. Slofe (ph.)?

4 Q. Yes. So, I'm wondering of what the process is of updating
5 the training materials. I see that a lot of them have been
6 modified since by you.

7 A. Right.

8 Q. So, is that normally what can happen it's based off of --

9 A. It's based off actually Airbus training manual.

10 Q. I guess things specific like the routes and the SFAR and --

11 A. Right. Yeah, as the -- it's based off the LOA. So, as LOA
12 gets updated we will update what we need to do.

13 Q. And I noticed that some of them are recently modified after
14 the accident --

15 A. Oh, that changed.

16 Q. Yeah, so what was the things that --

17 A. A lot of verbiage. Sometimes the route as you exit the --
18 certain things just change. You know, so, as they change you got
19 to update.

20 Q. Okay. And I didn't feel like I quite got what you were
21 saying of the unsat with Scott. Did you know about that?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah, I truly don't know of the unsat. I just warned of
25 this. So, I truly don't. And I guess that's going to --

1 Q. And then I saw in his training file there had been other
2 unsats that had happened.

3 A. right. nobody unless you're chop gator is going walk in this
4 door and do every maneuver satisfactory. So, there's training
5 involved so you got to take them through it and they are going to
6 become sat.

7 Q. So, when they first have that initial training flight --

8 A. Right.

9 Q. -- if they get an unsat, how is that usually handed off or
10 told?

11 A. Recorded on the TR7.

12 Q. Okay. And then how is that relayed to the person who is
13 going to do the check ride if at all?

14 A. Everybody looks at the TR7. So, you could look at what
15 maneuver was unsat.

16 Q. And then you said you recently heard of it, meaning in this
17 interview?

18 A. No. I just yesterday I think it was for something, because
19 somebody was asking me about that. I really don't -- truly don't
20 know, you know.

21 Q. But then I guess I'm a little confused of how training
22 happens and what the steps are of how it gets reported to the
23 chief pilot to the training director, to the other instructors?

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. Is that -- how does that information get shared?

1 A. So, --

2 Q. Is that on your --

3 A. No, no. I would be in the TR8 form, which is just the
4 recurrent training and it's just -- it's not -- there's not a
5 whole bunch of breakdown on the maneuvers. It's just training was
6 performed. And so that's where I heard U was.

7 Q. Okay. So, as I understand it correctly if somebody fails
8 their training a maneuver is not satisfactory, that is not
9 necessarily disseminated to the chief pilot and the lead pilots;
10 there's no procedure set up of how that information is shared?

11 A. Right. The only time that somebody has ever failed that I
12 know of, right, was the other day, different pilot. And when that
13 person was the instructor pilot came and said, hey, not
14 satisfactory. Not ready for the check ride. Perfect. Okay. We
15 will change the scheduled check ride to a training flight again.
16 We will get them satisfactory and then based on that we will
17 schedule the check ride.

18 Q. So, since October 2013 when you started as a training
19 director you have never had someone unsat except until recently?

20 A. Before -- yeah. Yeah. Before -- within the two hours,
21 everybody has been able -- two, two-and-a-half hours, whatever.
22 Before they have gone to their check ride they have been able to
23 get all the maneuvers that they need to -- commercials has
24 standards to move on.

25 Q. Okay. I'm still not sure I quite get it but I can send you a

1 follow-up e-mail --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- laying that out because I need to see how that works.

4 Because I guess I'm confused because you said that you -- of
5 course, everyone can't be perfect.

6 A. right.

7 Q. A lot of people get unsats, then you said there was only one
8 unsat.

9 A. Yeah. I think I know what your confusion. The TR7 is where
10 -- is the initial -- I'm not going to use our terms. I'm just
11 going -- the initial training record is where you have the
12 breakdown of all the maneuvers, right, so all the types of
13 maneuvers, their recurrent training is just a record of recurrent
14 training and not a breakdown of all the maneuvers. So, the
15 recurrent training is always a sat before they go to their check
16 ride. And so that's why I've never had this issue. So, it's the
17 recurrent training it's just put -- it's a single line entry and
18 so it's not, you know, a full-blown entry of all the maneuvers
19 that were done, you know, it's just was this portion done to
20 satisfactory or not. You know, so it might have had some unsat
21 situations and then finished satisfactory or not, you know. And
22 so, that's how that works and we always allot for two hours
23 minimum. And based on that they -- once they have received their
24 required flight time then we submit them to check rides.

25 Q. For their initial?

1 A. No. For their recurrent. This is where the U was the
2 recurrent check ride, not the initial.

3 Q. Because from when I'm looking at the schedule and I'm sorry
4 to --

5 A. No worries.

6 Q. -- anybody else --

7 A. Well, no, it's tough the look at somebody else's records and
8 totally make sense of it.

9 Q. So, what I'm saying is I have you scheduled as a FT, which
10 was an in AVSTAR training.

11 A. AVSTAR training.

12 Q. And then there's a day in between and then I see a CK.

13 A. Check ride. Schedule for a check ride.

14 Q. So, the FT --

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. -- was the unsatisfactory.

17 A. So, I have been told. I don't know -- I still haven't seen
18 that. I didn't see a U. I don't know if that U was there. I
19 didn't see it. I wasn't made aware of any U. had I known I
20 wouldn't want him to go to a check ride. However, I will say he
21 did go to a check ride. So, I can't say whether or not there was
22 a U or not. I'm not going to say whether or not there was a U or
23 not because I don't know for sure, but I can tell you this for
24 sure, he went through a check ride and he passed all the maneuvers
25 sat on the first try, first go of it.

1 Q. So, now, I'm confused when you said there's a minimum of two
2 hours. Is that the FT combined with the CK?

3 A. No. Two hours -- we try to give everybody two hours. On
4 this case he went the check ride in lieu of training. So, that
5 would tell me more precisely that he actually did the maneuvers
6 satisfactory. Else he wouldn't have gone to a check ride. But I
7 don't know.

8 Q. Because usually there's two FTs?

9 A. Not -- doesn't need to be two FTs. You can get your two
10 hours in one day.

11 Q. Okay. Okay.

12 A. And when is say two hours it could be 2.8 hours or 2.1 or
13 whatever.

14 Q. Well, we saw that the FT was 1.7.

15 A. Yep.

16 Q. And then I'm wondering if the check also is counting as the -
17 - toward the two hours?

18 A. No. Because his 8410 showed the check ride slip says check
19 ride in lieu of flight training.

20 Q. What slip says that?

21 A. His 8410, his check ride.

22 Q. So, the actual FLA --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay. Got it. Okay. I'll probably need clarification just
25 to make sure.

1 A. Trust me I get how it could sound pretty confusing. So --

2 MS. KELIHER: (Indiscernible).

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I do.

4 BY MS. KELIHER:

5 Q. You said we've never had anybody -- have you ever have
6 anybody failed a check ride; is that correct? have we ever had
7 anybody wash out of training?

8 A. No. Not failed the check ride, no. it was just the training
9 portion. Somebody said there was a U. I didn't know there was a
10 U. That's all I'm saying. For just the training event before the
11 check ride.

12 Q. But have we had failures in check rides?

13 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, we've had failures in check rides and that's
14 documented and remedial training was given and submitted to
15 another check ride and whether they pass or not, you know, and
16 we've had people wash out of the training program before too.

17 BY MS. KELIHER:

18 Q. And then when I'm looking at the schedule of looking at the
19 lead pilots, in the sheet from the training at the top --

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. What is the -- what are these?

22 A. Administrative duties.

23 Q. And then BO?

24 A. Boulder lead, and VO would be Vegas lead.

25 Q. Got it. And the person giving the check ride is the one with

1 the check, so I just match that up and I can see who gave a check
2 ride to anybody?

3 A. Maybe.

4 Q. So, like right here there's a check for Davis, so I know that
5 Davis gave the check ride to --

6 A. No. He didn't give the check ride. He probably received a
7 check ride that day.

8 Q. Oh.

9 A. So, they have to go through check rides as well.

10 Q. So, how do you see --

11 A. Who gave the check ride? Who is scheduled to give the --

12 Q. It's not on here?

13 A. It's not on there, no, it won't be on there.

14 Q. Okay.

15 MS. WILSON: Do you have more questions about that?

16 MS. KELIHER: (Non-verbal response.)

17 MS. WILSON: I do have one question.

18 BY MS. WILSON:

19 Q. All right. So, I'm looking at the training records and this
20 may be sort of splitting hairs --

21 A. Right.

22 Q. -- but I just want to make sure that trying to figure out
23 which is accurate information.

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. So, on his schedule as Zoe pointed out the 20th he's got FT.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. The 22nd, CK, check ride.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. Now, on his training records he's got the 20th, the recurrent
5 flight training which has an S.

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. -- potentially a U.

8 A. Right. Yes. And that would be -- that's the one.

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. That would be the one.

11 Q. And then there's the check ride listed on the 21st, not the
12 223nd, which is what the schedule says. So, --

13 A. I don't know like maybe they are planning on doing the check
14 ride on the 22nd and then they changed the date. The lead maybe
15 forgot to populate that date or if the date on the check rife
16 whoever was the check airman put on the wrong date on the 8410. I
17 don't -- without looking at it -- I'd have to do some
18 investigative --

19 Q. Okay. So, the best way then for us to understand really what
20 his actual schedule was would be the duty --

21 A. Flying duty.

22 Q. -- flight and duty tracker to make sure that --

23 A. That's what I would look at and because it takes two
24 independent, you know, inputs there and, you know.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Might be in the log book too.

1 MR. CARVER: Yeah.

2 MS. WILSON:

3 Q. So, if --

4 A. And a lot of times it just for that flight schedule that
5 might be what we intend but it may not exactly happen the way we
6 intended as far as that schedule with the CK and the FTE and all
7 that stuff.

8 Q. Okay. Now, if he had gotten a U --

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. -- let's just say on the 20th and then he did an additional
11 flight training ride --

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. -- would that be a separate line or would it replace the U?

14 A. No, it would have been a separate line. So, it would have
15 been another training event right underneath that.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So, it would have been another line. If it was on another
18 date.

19 Q. It would if it was the same date?

20 A. Same date it --

21 Q. Or would that not happen?

22 A. No. I wouldn't say it wouldn't happen but if it's all on the
23 same date it bears the same -- I would have still made two entries
24 even if it was the same date just because it would have been two
25 separate events.

1 Q. And it wouldn't -- I guess my thought is it would not have
2 overridden the Usat?

3 A. No. No. it would have been two entries.

4 Q. Okay.

5 MS. WILSON: Last time around the room. Zoe.

6 MS. KELIHER: No, thank you for that. That was a good
7 question.

8 MS. WILSON: Burl, John?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Tyler.

10 MR. CARVER: Sorry, about the -- and I get it. Sounds like
11 you're catching on though what I was putting down.

12 MS. WILSON: Anything else that we didn't ask you that you
13 were hoping we would ask you or --

14 MR. CARVER: Yes, and more than.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's the end of the day she's tired.

16 MR. CARVER: It's a tough job that you guys have because, you
17 know, how to come in and kind of be the bear and that may not be
18 who you are, you know, and it doesn't always -- you probably don't
19 get that enough. So, definitely appreciate whatever you guys do
20 and whatever we can learn that's good.

21 MS. WILSON: Thank you. And is there anything else that you
22 can think of that you want to share though that you think might
23 help with our investigation?

24 MR. CARVER: Nothing that I can think of. However, I'm sure
25 I will have a way of being able to e-mail you, contact you or

1 anything like that if I think anything could definitely assist.

2 MS. WILSON: Absolutely.

3 MR. CARVER: Or you might think would help.

4 MS. WILSON: Yep, please do that. Thank you so much.

5 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

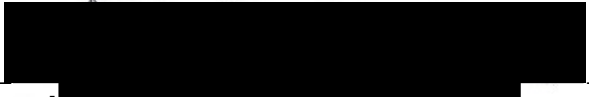
IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of Tyler Carver

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2108

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.


Letha J. Wheeler
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

* Accident No. WPR18MA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: KYLE COUTTS

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

THOMAS TOBIN
Wilson Elser Law Firm
(Representative for Kyle Coutts)

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By Ms. Wilson		31

I N T E R V I E W

(2:15 p.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: All right. Thank you, Kyle, for being here with us today. This interview is just a routine part of our investigation of the February 10 accident. We want to always talk to people that are involved in the operations so we can better understand it. And ultimately, our goal is to prevent an accident from happening again. We don't have any enforcement authority. We don't assess blame. Strictly from the safety side.

We would like to record the interview. That will allow us to create an interview transcript that then becomes a part of our public docket. Is that something that you're okay with?

MR. COUTTS: That's fine. Yeah.

MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one representative with you during an interview. Is there somebody that you would like to have?

MR. COUTTS: Mr. Thomas over here.

MS. WILSON: Great. We'll go around the room and introduce ourselves, and then give you a chance to ask any questions. I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a human performance investigator with the NTSB.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher. I am operations with NTSB.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, director of safety here at Airbus.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety from Papillon.

1 MS. WILSON: And before we get started, do you have any
2 questions for us?

3 MR. COUTTS: No. No questions.

4 MS. WILSON: Okay. If we ask you a question and you don't
5 understand, just ask us to clarify.

6 MR. COUTTS: Okay.

7 MS. WILSON: If you don't know the answer, saying I don't
8 know --

9 MR. COUTTS: Okay.

10 MS. WILSON: -- is also --

11 MR. COUTTS: Sounds good.

12 MS. WILSON: Okay. Great.

13 MR. COUTTS: Yeah. Understandable.

14 MS. WILSON: For the record, could you state your full name,
15 please?

16 MR. COUTTS: My name is Kyle Raymond (ph.) Coutts.

17 MS. WILSON: Great. And I will turn it over to Zoe, who will
18 start questioning.

19 INTERVIEW OF KYLE COUTTS

20 BY MS. KELIHER:

21 Q. Can you tell me how long you've been at Papillon?

22 A. A little over two years.

23 Q. What were you doing before this?

24 A. I've actually worked for various aviation companies. I
25 worked for Atlantic. I also worked with Sundance with Burl. Did

1 that for about four years before. I just came back from
2 Washington before that. I was working in the food industry. But
3 yeah, I've been doing aviation for about eight years.

4 Q. Can you tell me what your job title is here?

5 A. I used to be a ramper. At the time I was a ramper. And then
6 now I'm up in the tower. So I'm a flight follower. And I did
7 that -- I started a couple months ago.

8 Q. So what does that job position entail, being a ramper?

9 A. We're supposed -- as a ramper, we're supposed to fuel and
10 then take care of meals and ballast, would be weight. So that's
11 our job. We're responsible for when we get fuel loads from the
12 tower, make sure they go roundtrip, one-way. And then when we get
13 meals, we make sure that they go in the right compartments, weight
14 goes in the aft, and then we got (indiscernible) compartments for
15 the meals. That's our responsibility. And if we got to hot turn
16 or, you know, hot load people off, we do that from time to time.
17 Not normally out of here, but it does happen sometimes. So that's
18 the responsibility of the ramper. Make sure the security of the
19 ramp also. So anyone that's around the area looks suspicious,
20 we'll call it in.

21 Q. Do you have any interaction with the passengers?

22 A. No, unless we're going to be hot fueling them or hot loading
23 them off, yeah. That's the only time. Or if there needs to be a
24 seat change, but it's very, very rarely that we do that on a
25 normal basis.

1 Q. Were you working the day of the accident?

2 A. I was working that day. I was training a guy that works
3 currently right now on fuel. Did not -- I did speak to Scott that
4 day. Yeah, I know he did go roundtrip that day, but I didn't
5 really talk to him too much because I was training a new employee,
6 so -- at the time. And we had our whole round going out, so --

7 Q. Did you fuel the accident helicopter?

8 A. Yeah. Or well, Tyler (ph.) did. I was, I was shadowing him
9 at the time. Yeah.

10 Q. Did he say anything?

11 A. Scott?

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. Just wondering how I was doing. You know, that's how he was.
14 Scott's always, you know, asking how I was. I have a couple kids
15 and I have a wife. So asking how the kids were doing. But other
16 than that, yeah, I didn't have much time because we have, like --
17 the other thing we do on fuel, we have time limits pretty much, we
18 -- for performance-wise. So we need to, you know, get it done by
19 a certain time or it holds back everything. So we pretty much
20 just go onto the next aircraft. So we're just not chitchatting or
21 anything like that. Yeah.

22 Q. Can you recall as much as you can of (indiscernible)?

23 A. I mean other than -- honestly, quick turning in, which would
24 be getting the life preservers and getting the seatbelts and
25 making sure that the fuel was done correctly, I mean, and talking

1 to him just about my family because I haven't seen him for a
2 while, other than that, I didn't really -- nothing really stood
3 out to me. Yeah.

4 Q. Was there any mentioning of another fueler?

5 A. Another fueler?

6 Q. Yeah. Was he talking about anything like that? We had
7 reports that somebody had told him that a fueler was just fired?

8 A. Would have been Craig (ph.). Yeah. Craig was terminated a
9 little bit before that, yeah.

10 Q. Who was -- how did that go? Who was Craig?

11 A. Craig was just a ramper before. That's what Tyler took over
12 for. So he was just, you know -- if he was asking about that,
13 then I wasn't aware of that. He must have been asking Tyler or
14 someone, that he was trying to ask why did -- why is Tyler here
15 and not Craig? That could have been a possibility.

16 Q. What happened with Craig?

17 A. Craig was -- he over-fueled aircraft.

18 Q. What did -- (indiscernible) --

19 A. That's why he got fired, was because he over-fueled aircraft.

20 Q. How does that happen with this --

21 A. It just -- they're either not paying attention to the actual
22 meter or getting -- you know, writing down the wrong pieces of
23 paper, or for fuel loads. Just over-fueling aircraft. Yeah, so
24 he had performance issues.

25 Q. What happens when you over-fuel?

1 A. It can put us in a bind. We might not be able to get it to
2 pounds so that -- they're not supposed to lift if it's overweight.
3 If you can't make it go into CG, then we're not supposed to lift
4 with it. So if you put too many over, we can't move things around
5 and then the round doesn't go out. Or we have to, you know, move
6 other aircraft. Sometimes we don't have that, so yeah. Pretty
7 important things, yeah.

8 Q. I'm sure you see all the time of the photographers coming
9 out, taking pictures of the pilots.

10 A. Right.

11 Q. We heard sometimes pilots take pictures and sometimes they
12 don't. What do, what do you see?

13 A. I mean, they're not supposed to take photos with the pilots.
14 You know, they're not supposed to just take individual ones.
15 Supposed to be the photographer takes pictures for the actual --
16 you know, the group. So I don't really see that. We're not
17 supposed to -- you know, the photographers are supposed to know,
18 if they see anything like that, for that not to happen. So I
19 mean, if it was in that particular day, I wouldn't have, wouldn't
20 have seen that, yeah.

21 Q. But with the pilot in the picture that the photographer is
22 taking.

23 A. Yeah, they do that. That's a normal -- what they sell at the
24 store?

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. Yeah, that's a -- that's what they do. Yeah. They try to
2 sell them their picture if they want it, yeah.

3 Q. We see that sometimes it looks like the pilot goes in the
4 picture and sometimes they don't.

5 A. It's just if what -- if the group wants it or not. Sometimes
6 the pilots come into it. I mean, I don't know if, you know,
7 that's their own belief. I couldn't tell you if that was -- like,
8 they don't do it. I don't really pay attention to that. I mean,
9 it's not a wall up there, but I don't ever see that stuff, so
10 yeah.

11 Q. Do you ever hear the passengers complain?

12 A. I mean other than, like, in the summer. It's, you know, the
13 heat and all that. Or sometimes we do get one-wayed, you know,
14 and they do have to go get refueled out of GCW. So we do have to
15 let them know about that, that they are going to be getting, you
16 know, hot loaded off. Sometimes when they know that, they're
17 like, okay, this kind of sucks. But that's just really part of
18 how the industry is. I mean, sometimes these guys lie about their
19 weights and we have to just do the best we can to make it work.
20 But yeah. I mean, we don't ever send it lower than one-way, so
21 something that, you know, we don't do, so --

22 Q. How long was your training to become a flight follower?

23 A. I did it for a month. Yeah. Before I was left on my own.
24 Yeah.

25 Q. And in the tower, what do you do of when you get here in the

1 morning? What's your process?

2 A. I mean, make sure that these guys or the rampers are here, so
3 I can actually give them fuel loads and give them weight and meal
4 counts. Then I see what's on the board on AllPro, see if people
5 are checked around, if I got to move weights around. Sometimes
6 this doesn't -- sometimes it works, you know, easily; you don't
7 really have to move things around. Most of the time I do. But
8 that's when I make sure that the rounds can go out with
9 -- our goal is always to have them go roundtrip and that's, you
10 know -- we have all kinds of different working parts around here,
11 so our -- the efficiency and on-time would be trying to get these
12 guys to go roundtrip. So that's usually our goal. So we -- I
13 have to move things around. That's not weight and needles or
14 pilots sometimes, you know. Or if we have broken aircraft, we got
15 to move other aircraft to other people.

16 Q. And will you describe the flight following process at
17 Papillon?

18 A. I mean, once these guys are calling up, we -- you know, we'll
19 get a radio call. They'll tell us how many people they have in
20 their aircraft, what number it is and how much fuel they have, and
21 then we write it down on a piece of paper. We also look at, you
22 know, if there's any inbound or outbound, or anything that's
23 around the area. Usually we got Scenic that comes by, which is
24 the plane side. So we're always making sure that, you know,
25 there's -- they have ample time. And if there are slow blades,

1 anything like that, we're just making sure that they are safe to
2 lift.

3 And then after that, we launch them on AllPro, and we've got
4 them on paper always. And then we're making sure that they have
5 -- the times are right. When they get to the canyon, they're
6 supposed to be there within 30 minutes. If we don't get anything,
7 then we're letting -- there are certain people that we need to
8 know. The leads know. If we can't get -- if we can't reach them,
9 we try to have GCW call them, because they might have radio
10 issues. And then they have time limits. When they do landings,
11 it's 50 minutes. Make sure that they're lifting. You know,
12 sometimes, like today for instance, we have people that are new,
13 so they take a little bit longer. So you know, we make note to
14 that. So if there's certain things like that, or they got one-
15 wayed, the GCW takes a little bit longer because, you know, they
16 have their whole -- I got inbound/outbound out there, things like
17 that.

18 So the situation's a little bit different, but yeah, for the
19 most part, that's -- we're making sure everything is, you know, on
20 time, and making sure if there's anybody that's running, you know,
21 low on time, that they're supposed to be calling us, things like
22 that.

23 Q. Is there any type of warning that you get?

24 A. Yeah, we have -- when those -- they're all set at certain
25 times. Like, landings will be -- I think it's 110 minutes. And

1 then, like, the airs will be a little bit shorter. So we'll get
2 -- you know, little indications will go off on AllPro when they're
3 not supposed to be -- you know, they should have been calling us.
4 But usually they go off, and we have gotten five-minute calls, so
5 we, you know, just extend the time by five minutes. If they're
6 right there and we can have visual contact or visual eye contact,
7 then we don't do anything. We just wait for them to land.

8 Q. So by the time that they're entering in the canyon, what is
9 the time that usually takes for where you expect to hear back from
10 them?

11 A. Fifty minutes if it's a landing. It's 15 minutes once they
12 enter the canyon for an air. So they should be calling off the
13 watch within 15 minutes, unless they got one-way fuel, you know.
14 So landings are 50; we're supposed to hear something back by then.
15 And then 15 minutes for an air. Supposed to do their little turn
16 on the canyon.

17 Q. When you are lifting people, how do you decide of who gets --

18 A. Depending on if it's -- like for instance, today we got a big
19 brother and big sister. So they -- if someone that's the big
20 brother is calling up and we have someone that's not -- you know,
21 that's brand new, we wait for those guys. They'll start spinning,
22 but we'll hold them to make sure that they're with their big
23 brother and sister. So we'll put those guys kind of out of
24 priority because we're usually not as quick as the veteran pilots.
25 So we'll let the veteran pilots, if they call up, we'll make them

1 go first. And if someone's gotten one weight, we usually have
2 them go first, because the more they spin, the more fuel they
3 waste. So we also do it based off that too.

4 Q. How do you know which pilot is which?

5 A. I mean, I know. If someone just came in and -- I mean, they
6 would have to get used to who's a veteran. But since I know
7 pretty much everyone here --

8 Q. Is it by voice, or could you see it on the --

9 A. Yeah. I see it on the AllPro, so I know who they are. Yeah.
10 I know who can spin up and call up within a, you know, reasonable
11 amount of time.

12 Q. So the accident flight, Scott was one of the last people,
13 even though he was a more veteran pilot. Do you know why that
14 would have --

15 A. Yeah, see, I don't -- I mean, I didn't -- I wasn't doing -- I
16 wasn't flight following then, so I have no idea. I mean, could
17 have got held back. Could have had a -- could have been photo,
18 could have had someone do a request of something. I have no idea,
19 yeah. Unfortunately on that last round, I -- we have the landings
20 that go first and then we have the airs. So then we have to take
21 care of the airs too, so that day was particularly busy. I do
22 remember that. And then between that, taking care of the airs,
23 making sure that my new hire was taking care of his job -- yeah.
24 I mean, I wouldn't have been able to see if someone, somebody was
25 held up. Normally it is photo, or there are last-minute requests.

1 Maybe they had to go to the bathroom, things like that. Yeah.

2 Q. Being on the FM, can you hear that as a ramper?

3 A. On a ramper, no. We just have a one -- like a direct one-to-
4 one talk. So whatever we hear is -- can't change, like, the radio
5 coms or anything like that, the actual frequencies. We're just
6 talking directly to the tower.

7 Q. Okay. So you wouldn't hear things that the pilots are saying
8 --

9 A. No. No, we don't have any way of being able to do that.

10 Q. But now as a flight follower you can.

11 A. I can hear if, like, for instance, say if Scott did say
12 something, I'd be able to -- if he was requesting something and
13 said, hey, I'm going to be a little late. If he was talking to us
14 in the aircraft, I'd be able to listen to what he's saying if he's
15 calling up base, but that's about it.

16 Q. What if he was calling flight ops and calling to a lead
17 pilot?

18 A. I can hear that, yeah.

19 Q. Did you -- so you can hear that as a ramper.

20 A. No, no, no. I meant just --

21 Q. Just as a follower.

22 A. -- as a flight follower. Yeah. Yeah. I can hear if he's
23 calling on the FM. Yeah.

24 Q. Have you ever heard pilots talk about how they don't want to
25 fly?

1 A. No, I can't -- I don't, I don't hear any of that stuff.

2 Q. As a, as the lead follower?

3 A. I don't hear any -- no. I can't hear.

4 Q. Like, hey, man, I can't believe I got to go out right now, or

5 --

6 A. No.

7 Q. -- it's so hot, or anything like that?

8 A. Not as a -- I mean, they know if they get one-wayed, it's,

9 like I said, it's kind of like the passengers that -- it sucks.

10 But I mean, it's -- that's part of the, part of the business, so

11 yeah. It's going to happen. Unfortunately we just don't -- in a

12 perfect world, we can't make them all go roundtrip because we just

13 -- we go based off weight and balances, and half the time, the

14 passengers don't -- we go from kilos to, you know -- they go from

15 stones to all that. And just a flick of the wrist, they could --

16 someone could have entered it wrong and it changes everything.

17 And we have to go with that, so it's -- never works out the way we

18 want it to. It seems like it's -- unfortunately someone said,

19 hey, I didn't, I didn't go to the buffet the other day and now I

20 weigh ten pounds more. And then -- yeah. Everything changes, so

21 --

22 Q. Do you remember of Scott loading people into helicopters

23 versus anybody else?

24 A. No. I mean, not any different than -- yeah, unfortunately,

25 like I said, like, for the ramp, I mean, we don't -- other than if

1 we were helping them with a door or something like that, I mean,
2 we're off doing, you know, fueling, taking care of weight, things
3 like that. So I mean, we're not just watching how they are.

4 Yeah.

5 Q. I was just wondering --

6 A. Usually once we have --

7 Q. -- if he put seatbelts on people, if he doesn't, if he --

8 A. No, I -- yeah, I can't --

9 Q. Briefings.

10 A. No. I mean, we can -- like specifically now, I mean, that
11 I'm in the tower, I can see if they're taking a little bit longer,
12 you know, than normal. Or I could probably see them a little bit
13 better, but as far as when I was doing the ramp, I mean, I
14 wouldn't see how they do their briefing and say, hey, this is --
15 you know, we're going to be over a body of water, things like
16 that. I just, I didn't -- you know. We're not really supposed to
17 be in front of the passengers while we're -- we're supposed to
18 have all our stuff done so they can walk out and do their whole
19 thing. We're not really supposed to be there, you know. Unless
20 they have, like, a cane, or someone needed help for, like, you
21 know, a wheelchair or whatnot. That's the only time we'd really
22 be with the actual packs. Yeah.

23 MS. KELIHER: I don't have any other questions.

24 MS. WILSON: Okay. Thanks.

25 BY MS. WILSON:

1 Q. You mentioned that you're checking time, so you know, they're
2 supposed to make a call in 15 minutes. Are you only checking
3 times, or do you ever track pilots on Spidertracks?

4 A. Yeah, we're -- I mean, that's -- we're supposed to do it --
5 we're not -- that's not what we're relying on, is Spidertracks,
6 but we have Spidertracks on, you know.

7 Q. And how many people are normally in the tower?

8 A. Three.

9 Q. Three?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And what are, what are the job (indiscernible) --

12 A. Well we usually have -- Ryan's (ph.) there except on the
13 weekend, which is my -- the manager for the tower. And then it's
14 -- me and Jordan (ph.) would be the other two. And then on the
15 weekends, we have a supervisor and then we have another tower
16 person. And that's on the weekends only.

17 Q. Okay. And then you and Jordan divide up your duties?

18 A. Yeah. Like one day we'll do -- one person just does radios,
19 which would be flight following. The other one is manifesting.
20 We take turns.

21 Q. Do you switch off throughout the day, or it's for the whole
22 day?

23 A. It's usually only for the day, yeah. We don't -- unless,
24 like, today, or something weird comes up, then we got to switch
25 off like she's kind of doing -- yeah.

1 Q. Like you have to come do an interview?

2 A. Yeah. But normally we just -- yeah, we keep it --

3 Q. Sorry to mess up the routine.

4 A. It's okay. We got to, we got to do something.

5 Q. When you were a ramper, were you a supervisor on the ramp?

6 A. We don't, we don't -- a supervisor is just -- strictly does
7 the tower and they oversee the rampers. There is no, like, lead
8 or anything.

9 Q. So Ryan also oversaw the rampers?

10 A. And Brian (ph.), yeah.

11 Q. And Brian?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Different than Ryan?

14 A. Different than Ryan. Yeah. He's --

15 Q. So Ryan is the manager, Brian is the supervisor?

16 A. For the weekend, yeah. Yeah.

17 Q. Are you ever able to go out and do observation flights?
18 Just, like, ride-alongs?

19 A. I mean, we don't do that anymore. If we had anything that
20 was -- like, we had maintenance. We used to be able to do that,
21 but we don't do that anymore. We haven't done it in a long time.

22 Q. How about when you got hired? Was that something --

23 A. I mean, I used to go out to the GCW when I used to work at
24 Sundance, so I kind of already had enough. I used to do that
25 every day, so I mean, particularly for me, I had no reason to do

1 it. But for the new hires, I mean, we don't, but I know a lot of
2 the people that need to know the tours and stuff like that, we try
3 to get them on there.

4 Q. Who would be people that need to know the tours?

5 A. Well you know, sales or ticket counter. If we can get them
6 on there -- it's kind of hard in the summertime, but in the
7 wintertime, if we have time, we do put them on there.

8 Q. So do most people get hired first through GCW to come onto
9 that base and then get transferred here?

10 A. No. I mean, it just -- like, you know, there's job fairs,
11 things like that. Or just in the newspaper, people hear. I mean,
12 it just depends on what's open, to be honest with you.

13 Q. I guess what I'm, what I'm trying to ask is, you're a flight
14 follower; is it beneficial to have ridden along on some of these
15 flights so that you have an understanding of the operation before
16 you become a follower?

17 A. Yeah, I mean, if -- yeah, it would be nice, but -- I mean,
18 yeah.

19 Q. But it's nothing that's required that you know of?

20 A. No, not that I'm --

21 Q. Okay. You said that you had a month of training to become a
22 flight follower.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. What did that include?

25 A. Just we -- you know, we go over our handbooks, what -- you

1 know, we have things that we need to. A test to make sure that we
2 get the basic knowledge of it, things like that. I mean, mine was
3 a little bit different because I already knew the ramp, things
4 like that, the general operations of the area and what we do. But
5 I mean, most people that just come through there, it's a little
6 bit different. We make sure that they have a little bit more
7 training.

8 So I mean, like, we have a person right now. She's been here
9 about -- I'd say about six weeks, almost. And it's a little bit
10 different. She's never done aviation before. So just make sure
11 that, you know, she's picking up on everything, she's good with
12 radios and manifesting, things like that, before we let her go and
13 do her own thing.

14 Q. Right. So was it -- the training, was there like a ground
15 school? Like, you sat and listened to some -- watched PowerPoint
16 presentations?

17 A. No, we're just going over -- I mean, we do videos. We have a
18 little bit of --

19 Q. Okay. Videos.

20 A. Yeah, to make sure that -- it's the same thing, kind of,
21 like, when we do the ramp. We have a ramp test, make sure that we
22 have basic knowledge of what's going on around here. You know,
23 what the aircrafts are, what kind that we have, you know, things
24 like that. The operations that, when the air -- the helicopter's
25 coming in, where they're coming from and whatnot, you know.

1 Q. And do you do on-the-job trainings where -- are you shadowing
2 somebody and then somebody shadows you?

3 A. Yeah. You know, that's what we normally do. Yeah. They go
4 over. We just kind of -- you know, show us how to do AllPro, and
5 then if we were doing ramp, just have -- like, I was usually the
6 guy that would teach the guys what -- you know, how to do ramp.
7 So that's what I kind of did before, yeah.

8 Q. So if you had to divide up that month of training, would you
9 say it was a 50/50 split of watching videos and tests
10 (indiscernible) --

11 A. No, I would say about a week's worth of actual, okay, I don't
12 know how to do some of these things. And then the rest is just,
13 like, practical, just learning, okay, you don't do this, Kyle.
14 Don't do that. Say this, you know, on the radio. Look out for
15 that.

16 Q. And as a flight follower -- we can sort of infer from things
17 that you've said, but if you had to say what your duties and
18 responsibilities were as a flight follower and also doing
19 manifests --

20 A. Well I mean --

21 Q. Like, what are your duties and responsibilities?

22 A. I'm just --

23 Q. So you radio calls, things like that.

24 A. Making sure that, yeah, the radios are good, that -- most
25 importantly, that the aircraft, you know, the CGs, that they can

1 actually lift. That, you know, we're not over-fueling aircraft.
2 If it's -- something is -- versus different on the manifest that
3 we give the pilots, that they're actually being, you know, safe
4 out there, that they're not, you know, damaging other aircraft.
5 That there's not any kind of suspicious activity around here. I
6 mean, we're talking to, you know, sales, we're talking to ticket
7 counter. I mean, yeah. We're talking to the crew down below, the
8 ramp crew. I mean -- yeah. A lot, a lot of moving parts.
9 Talking to the leads constantly, making sure that we don't -- if
10 we do have broken aircraft, that we're getting it swapped to an
11 aircraft that can run. Yeah.

12 Q. I know you were part of the morning safety briefing
13 yesterday. Is that common to attend that?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Okay. Is there --

16 A. The tower does, yeah.

17 Q. The tower. Is there ever a time when the tower wouldn't
18 attend?

19 A. If someone's running -- someone's late and we have to, most
20 importantly, get up to the tower, is the first and foremost. So
21 if we don't get there at a certain time, then -- we're getting
22 constant calls up there. So if someone's running late. But for
23 the most part, we're down there.

24 Q. If you wanted to report a safety concern, how would you do
25 that?

1 A. I mean, anytime I have a problem, like if there's something
2 that we're noticing, then I let the leads know. I'll put it in
3 the notes. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay. Can you file a report online?

5 A. Yeah. I can, I can do one, yeah. Or do one anonymously if I
6 want to. Yeah.

7 Q. All right. Is that through the Flight & Duty Tracker or
8 something else?

9 A. Um-hum. No, I've done it before.

10 Q. Okay. Has it, has it been really just to a pilot's -- an
11 observation that you had with the pilots (indiscernible)?

12 A. No, it's actually something that happened on the premises,
13 but yeah. But I can do multiple things if I wanted to, report-
14 wise.

15 Q. Have you ever had to --

16 A. Yeah. I had --

17 MR. BOYD: Is it the battery?

18 MR. COUTTS: Yeah. Yeah, we had a, we had a battery smell at
19 one point, and we didn't know where it was at. And pretty much
20 thought that we were going to have a safety hazard, you know,
21 fire-wise. So I had to let Burl know that we had a problem, and
22 so I had to do a report. Yeah.

23 MS. WILSON: Okay.

24 BY MS. WILSON:

25 Q. Have you ever had a safety concern, or concern about a pilot,

1 that you've talked to the lead pilot or someone else about?

2 A. I mean, if I do see -- usually most of the time, like,
3 specifically I would say now in the tower more than ever, because
4 we do talk to the pilots more than I would the ramp, other than in
5 pass-through. If there's anyone that says, hey, I'm tired, or I'm
6 just not going to do a flight, then 99% of the time, we just shift
7 it over to someone else. So it just goes to another pilot. Not,
8 we've got to cancel packs. If there's something we can't do,
9 we're just moving it over. So 99 -- like I said, 99% of the time,
10 it's -- they're just not going to fly it, so yeah.

11 Q. And are the pilots reporting that to you because they want to
12 have the flight changed, or is it sort of in passing and then you
13 say --

14 A. Yeah, we need to know, because the longer it takes -- like,
15 if we just get a phone call from the lead, that's usually the
16 last, and then everything's not running efficiently.

17 Q. Like you just --

18 A. So we just kind of get it from the get-go, then yeah.

19 Q. That makes sense.

20 A. Makes things a little bit easier.

21 Q. But you haven't observed a pilot do something that you felt
22 was unsafe and then reported that --

23 A. No.

24 Q. -- to the pilot?

25 A. No.

1 Q. When you're doing the manifest, you know, the weights come
2 in. How do you determine which passengers go on which helicopter?

3 A. I mean, it all goes through, like, the -- you got aircraft
4 that have different weights. So like, for example, of 30, it's
5 usually about our best weight, gross weight-wise, versus like 40,
6 which is like 100 pounds less. And then it depends on the pilot.
7 So the pilot in that weight, you factor that in, so you're
8 shifting -- you know, you're just kind of, like, doing a little,
9 okay, match here, match there, get one on one side, get one on the
10 other, get one in the front. And then we're just waiting to see
11 if it goes green. So once we get everyone checked in, then that's
12 when we are making sure that they can go one way or go roundtrip.

13 Q. So you're doing that manipulating. It's not AllPro doing
14 that.

15 A. No, AllPro lists -- no, like, we can't launch something
16 that's red. So if it looks like it's good and then it's off by,
17 like, a couple pounds, then it's going to be, like, it's going to
18 be top-heavy. So we have to throw weight, and there's only --
19 sometimes you can only throw so much weight, because we have
20 limits for the aircraft. So we can only throw 175 pounds in the
21 aft. We might have like -- it might tell you you have 300
22 available, but there's only so much you can throw up there. So we
23 just have to, you know, toss that idea out, shift some more
24 people, make it work.

25 Q. When you're assigning passengers, is there ever, like, you

1 know, you like a guy better so you're more likely to give him a
2 roundtrip versus a one-way?

3 A. No, the only time we ever -- like, so -- like we just had
4 today. If we have, like, a handicapped person, that goes
5 roundtrip. We have to make sure they're not getting in and out of
6 the aircraft other than doing their tour. And so we have to make
7 sure that they're good. So sometimes we just got to focus that or
8 manipulate, you know, who's going to go here. So someone might
9 have to go one way, but it depends on what we have. Or if
10 there's, like, a certain condition that they have, or they're
11 scared of it. So we might say, hey, you got to -- you can't be
12 next to the window. Children are not supposed to be next to the
13 window. Lap children are not supposed to be next to the window.

14 So I mean, things like that, we have to -- but not like, hey
15 -- unless it's like a family member. We're not -- you know, if --
16 we do sell front seat upgrades. So if they have people that can
17 request a front seat, then that will be something that we -- okay,
18 we either can do it because it works for weight-wise, or it
19 doesn't. We have to let the ticket counter know.

20 Q. Okay. I guess what I'm asking is, you know, you've never
21 gotten a call from the lead pilot that says, like, hey, this guy
22 is, you know, being a jerk; give him a --

23 A. Yeah, I mean, if you have --

24 Q. -- give him a crummy ride?

25 A. I mean, if there's someone that says, hey -- I mean, I've

1 kicked people off, if that's what you're saying. But not hey, I
2 don't want this guy in the front. Other than in --

3 Q. I'm talking about from the pilot's perspective.

4 A. No, I mean, other than -- I've had, I've had to kick someone
5 because they're intoxicated or -- but no, not as, like, hey, you
6 have to have this person there. We're not supposed to do, like,
7 any last-minute changes unless there was a situation where, like,
8 that person said they had their -- they were supposed to get the
9 front seat and they said they paid for it. And they just might
10 have not have put it in the notes, and we can, we can change it
11 last minute. But not, hey, Kyle, I need you to, you know, swap
12 all this stuff out. Because we just don't have time for that
13 anyways. Once it's manifested, it's pretty much ready to go.
14 Yeah.

15 MS. WILSON: Thanks. I have nothing else. Manny?

16 BY MR. FIGLIA:

17 Q. What's a stone? What's the conversion, weight-wise, for a
18 stone?

19 A. I don't do -- I don't deal with that. The ticket counter
20 does that. So any of the weights that come in there, they might
21 have it -- they have it in pounds. But that doesn't get to us.
22 It just might have been when they had it preset in there. They
23 gave it in stones, and then they put it in the computer, yeah. So
24 I couldn't really tell you.

25 Q. Thank you. It's about 14 pounds, I think, per stone, I think

1 is about right. Okay. All right. You were talking about
2 suspicious activity that you may be looking for. Is that company-
3 generated, or do you do TSA training or is that all
4 (indiscernible) --

5 A. I mean, I did, I did that with Atlantic. That was part of
6 our training, just because it's an FBO. You know, we have plans
7 and everything, so that's just me. But I mean, we're supposed to
8 -- you know, we're supposed to make sure, like, the gate is
9 closed, things like that. That is, that is our --

10 Q. When you did the ramp training or doing ramp duty, what
11 specific training did you have as far as safety? In other words,
12 refueling an aircraft --

13 A. Yeah, we're always -- I mean, every day, like, first thing if
14 you're on field, you're doing a field sample from the truck.
15 Making the truck -- you know, making sure the fluids are good with
16 the truck and inspecting the truck. So when you're on field,
17 that's your first thing. It's inspecting the truck, making sure
18 it has good clean fuel. And then, you know --

19 Q. Okay. And if you're -- are you trained in case there's a
20 fire or something after refueling or before refueling or anything
21 (indiscernible)?

22 A. Yeah, we -- I've been fire extinguisher training.

23 Q. Okay. Does everyone in the company do that training?

24 A. Yeah, we do training. Yeah.

25 Q. Up in the tower, movement of aircraft. Are you responsible

1 for clearing them to lift?

2 A. Yes. When you're doing flight following, you are. Yeah.

3 Q. And what criteria do you use for an aircraft that -- be
4 backing up in order to make its departure?

5 A. Well if there's any slow blades, we don't lift them until
6 they're actually done spinning up. If there's any kind of packs
7 moving around that, you know -- we have a vision up to a certain
8 area, but once they're passed there, we can see if there's packs
9 moving to the back. Pilot has their packs, so we're doing that.
10 If there's any fog or anything like that, we're making sure --

11 Q. Do the fuel trucks have radios in that you can --

12 A. No, we have -- they're just sight. You know, just walkie-
13 talkies.

14 Q. Okay. Can you communicate with them from the tower?

15 A. From the walkie-talkie, yeah, but there's nothing in the
16 truck, no. There's not, like, listening to the outbound/inbound,
17 anything like that.

18 Q. And you're required to carry those walkie-talkies?

19 A. Yes. Yeah.

20 MR. FIGLIA: Okay, that's all I have.

21 MS. WILSON: Burl?

22 MR. BOYD: I think I have one -- see if I can clarify your
23 question to him.

24 MS. WILSON: Okay.

25 MR. BOYD: I think what she wanted to know, has ever a lead

1 or a chief pilot or a training director contacted you as the tower
2 and said, hey, I want that guy to have a one-way fuel
3 (indiscernible) --

4 MR. COUTTS: Yeah, the only way time we would have one-way
5 fuel --

6 MR. BOYD: -- because he's been --

7 MR. TOBIN: Wait for the question.

8 MR. COUTTS: I'm sorry.

9 MR. BOYD: -- because he's been a pain in the butt, or
10 something like that.

11 MR. COUTTS: No, never. No. I didn't -- yeah, I didn't know
12 what you were --

13 MR. BOYD: Yeah. Is that what you were looking for?

14 MS. WILSON: It was. I figured I was going to let it go.

15 MR. COUTTS: Yeah, sorry. I thought you meant something
16 else. But yeah, no.

17 MS. WILSON: Thanks, Burl.

18 MR. BOYD: You're welcome. That's all I have.

19 MS. WILSON: Anything else?

20 BY MS. WILSON:

21 Q. Anything else that you think would be helpful to us?

22 A. I mean, helpful? I mean -- trying to think. I mean, there
23 could always be more room for training for anything, but that's
24 normal. I mean --

25 Q. Like what?

1 A. I mean, anything. I mean, if there was someone that maybe,
2 you know -- every couple months, we redo something, make sure that
3 someone's not complacent at something. I mean, that's in any of
4 our fields. I mean, that could -- that always helps out. And
5 we're trying to prevent things from happening, so -- but I mean,
6 more standard things like that, you know. And if there is
7 something that anyone does see suspicious, you know, maybe, you
8 know, do say something.

9 But other than that, I mean, I've been doing this a long
10 time. I mean, unfortunately, I've been in -- with Sundance, when
11 they had something happen, I was there. It sucks. I mean, we
12 don't want any of this stuff to happen, so I mean, yeah. As long
13 as I feel like it'd be -- maybe in some annual training. Could
14 always help.

15 Q. So you don't have any recurrent training once you --

16 A. Yeah, we do, we do yearly training. I just meant maybe a
17 little bit sooner, you know, if someone has any questions, you
18 know. Sometimes we do go a little bit quick, at least as far as,
19 you know, when we're down people. Sometimes we do need a little
20 bit more training. But we don't always get people that have
21 experience, so -- but as far as pilots go, I mean, they always
22 have ample training, I feel like. Yeah.

23 Q. Do you feel like rampers and tower personnel, do you feel
24 like they feel comfortable speaking up or reporting any concerns
25 that they have?

1 A. I mean, we have great bosses. I'm like -- I've known the
2 leads for a long time. I mean, I feel like we can go to them for
3 anything if we have a problem. But yeah.

4 Q. Great.

5 MS. KELIHER: Quick question too. When you're entering the
6 information in when you first get it, is that you entering, like,
7 a passenger name?

8 MR. COUTTS: No. No, like, same thing with the weight. So
9 they're, like, pre-generated from a phone call, the names and the
10 weights. Until they actually check in, like, there's not a lot of
11 notes, you know. Like, I'm with this group, I'm with -- other
12 than a reservation. So once they check in, then things start
13 changing. We'll see, oh, they were split. Okay, yeah, they
14 didn't check in at 200 pounds; they checked in, you know, more.
15 Then we'll get -- like, once they all check in, then we see that
16 information. Yeah.

17 MS. KELIHER: All right.

18 MR. COUTTS: (Indiscernible).

19 MS. KELIHER: Okay.

20 MS. WILSON: Thank you, Kyle.

21 MR. COUTTS: No problem.

22 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of Kyle Coutts

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 20, 2018

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.

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the transcriber.

Eileen Gonzalez // // -
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: ROBERT DOWNEY

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

Tom Tobin, Esquire
Wilson Elser

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I N T E R V I E W

(14:50)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here with us today. This interview is just a routine part of our investigation into the February 10th accident. We always -- we want to talk pilots in an operation to understand the operation and your procedures. But we also understand that you shared or, I'm sorry, Mr. Booth (ph.) had rented a room from you --

MR. DOWNEY: Correct.

MS. WILSON: -- I believe. So that was another reason that we wanted to speak with you. We would like to get your permission to record the interview. That way we can create a transcript of this, and it will be a part of our public docket. Is that okay?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes.

MS. WILSON: And then, as a part of the interview, you are entitled to have a representative with you. It can be anybody of your choosing.

MR. DOWNEY: That's okay.

MS. WILSON: You could state who --

MR. DOWNEY: No, no. I'd like to have Tom Tobin be --

MS. WILSON: Great. And we will go around the room and introduce everybody. I'm Katherine Wilson. I'm a Human Performance investigator with the NTSB.

MR. DOWNEY: I know.

MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher. I'm Operations with

1 NTSB.

2 MR. DOWNEY: Nice to meet you.

3 MR. FIGLIA: I'm Manny Figlia, Director of Safety with
4 Airbus.

5 MR. DOWNEY: Oh, nice to meet you, Manny.

6 MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety for Papillon.

7 MR. DOWNEY: Hi, Burl. Nice to meet you.

8 MR. BOYD: Thank you.

9 MR. TOBIN: And I'm Tom Tobin with Wilson Elser.

10 MR. DOWNEY: Thanks, Tom. Oh, Robert Downey --

11 MR. TOBIN: Thank --

12 MR. DOWNEY: -- pilot, Papillon.

13 MS. WILSON: If we ask you a question and you don't
14 understand it, please don't hesitate to ask us to clarify. If you
15 don't know an answer, I don't know is a perfectly fine answer as
16 well.

17 MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

18 MS. WILSON: Do you have any questions before we get
19 started?

20 MR. DOWNEY: No. Why would I need representation?

21 MS. WILSON: You don't.

22 MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

23 MS. WILSON: It's just an option that you have.

24 MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

25 MS. WILSON: And not everybody takes it, so you are -- you

1 actually could ask --

2 MR. DOWNEY: Am I going to go it alone?

3 MS. WILSON: -- him to leave.

4 MR. TOBIN: No, you're not. It's all right.

5 MS. WILSON: What Tom can do, Tom can be here to advise you
6 to not answer a question. He cannot answer any questions for you
7 or --

8 MR. DOWNEY: Okay, that's fine.

9 MS. WILSON: Or if you need to confer about something,
10 that's something that can be done. But you have to be the one to
11 answer the questions that we have.

12 MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

13 MS. WILSON: All right, with that I will turn it over to Zoe
14 to start questioning.

15 INTERVIEW OF ROBERT DOWNEY

16 BY MS. KELIHER:

17 Q. Robert, how long have you been at Papillon for?

18 A. July, it'll be nine years, and the ninth full year -- 2009,
19 July of 2009 I started.

20 Q. What's the approximate total time?

21 A. 5,000. I'm away with 5,000.

22 Q. How much of that is in the EC-130?

23 A. 2,200-2,300 -- around there. I can get it off the computer,
24 exact, but it's over 2,000.

25 Q. That's an estimate, yes. What were you doing before coming

1 to Papillon?

2 A. I worked on Los Angeles for a company. I did instruction. I
3 did ferry helicopters, did a lot of Ferry flights down in Brazil.
4 I did all kinds of stuff at -- instruction, proper -- whatever. I
5 did appraisals for a mortgage company. So I flew all around the
6 basin for years, for appraisal fraud. So I'd take pictures of
7 houses and that had junk in the backyard that they'd say wasn't,
8 so --

9 Q. Pre-drones?

10 A. Yes. Exactly.

11 Q. How has Papillon changed in nine years of being there?

12 A. Well, I've been here over nine years, so I do like the
13 company. If anything, I'd say it's gotten better. I think
14 there's always a learning curve. As you go, other things change,
15 but, you know, I'd say it's gotten better, definitely on the -- I
16 commented on this to Tyler (ph.) on the media training, the AStar
17 that we have access to from when I started to the last two years
18 have been way better.

19 Way better understanding of how the engine works. I'll tell
20 you, it's definitely improved. I mean, it's -- yeah. I don't
21 know how much more to elaborate on that, but it's definitely
22 improved.

23 Q. Are you qualified both on the AStar and the EC-130?

24 A. Correct, yeah.

25 Q. What do you enjoy flying more?

1 A. The EC, just purely for comfort. It kills my leg, the AStar.
2 I complain a lot. Just been flying an hour. I'm ready to go
3 home.

4 Q. So sit here.

5 A. Seven days. No, I'm just teasing.

6 Q. Are you on the seven day on/seven day off?

7 A. Yeah, they grandfathered us in.

8 Q. Oh.

9 A. So there are three of us, I believe, that are still on it.

10 Q. Is -- that seemed to be preferred among pilots?

11 A. You know, the new guys say they would like it. But, you
12 know, I think it's a harder schedule for the company to maintain
13 because I think you have to have more staff, from what I
14 understood. You got to staff more people, more pilots. I prefer
15 -- I wouldn't -- you know, I was married, so I used to commute
16 from Seattle for five years, using -- the company's got great
17 travel benefits. So that was a huge plus for me.

18 I would definitely, you know, I'd go to a company that
19 does five and two, for me. I know it's my age, but it's hot out
20 there. You're tired after -- I'm tired after seven and, you know,
21 we've been slow. But normal seven is you're flying three hours a
22 day, but four hours is a push for me in this heat.

23 Q. Do you live here now full time?

24 A. Yeah, yeah, I got a house in Vegas. It's sort of -- it's
25 kind of a pilot house. I rent to two other pilots that are old

1 friends of mine -- well, one was Scott.
2 Q. Yeah.
3 A. But the other one is another friend of mine.
4 Q. Who is the other pilot?
5 A. It's Ben Lewis (ph.). Am I allowed to say that? He's the
6 chief pilot at --
7 Q. I talked to him, yeah.
8 A. Yeah, yeah, he's a good friend of mine.
9 Q. He didn't mention us, huh?
10 A. Oh, he did?
11 Q. No, I said he didn't mention us.
12 A. Oh.
13 Q. Cause he --
14 A. Oh, no. Yeah, yeah, no, he did.
15 Q. -- yeah, he told --
16 A. He told me. But he didn't specify what. He just said you're
17 going to get smacked (ph.), bro.
18 Q. Some friend he is.
19 A. Yeah, throws me right under the boat.
20 Q. So often would you see Scott?
21 A. Whenever he came into fly or he had conventions. He'd -- he
22 was a -- he's a smart guy. He had -- he had a lot of business.
23 His main income wasn't from helicopters but he, when he'd come
24 into town, I don't know. He'd definitely -- he always made an
25 effort to fly at least every two weeks. That was his goal,

1 because, I mean, apart from being cheap, like me, he wanted to
2 justify his rent, number one, here in Vegas. And he wanted to
3 stay current, so --

4 Q. Did you guys talk often?

5 A. Yeah. The guy was a good friend of mine.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. I flew with him -- I don't know if I would -- yeah, I flew
8 for, with him for a long time.

9 Q. Have you ever flown with him or just since --

10 A. Yeah, I've flown with him. I've delivered my helicopter to
11 Brazil with him. He was a student. He paid --

12 Q. Oh, so you were flying out of Long Beach too?

13 A. Yeah, yeah.

14 Q. And you guys both started Papillon. Who came first?

15 A. I'd been here for quite a few years, and then I've got him
16 maybe two-year, yeah.

17 Q. Did he have any comments about flying here? Or did he talk
18 about it recently?

19 A. He loved it. Oh, recently?

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. No, he was -- me and him kind of think the same, you know,
22 hard work pays off. And he's a hard-working guy. He's
23 successful. And you would laugh because a lot of the young guys
24 would complain about stuff, but they'd never been in another job
25 before. Until you've had other jobs, you realize it's actually,

1 it's not too bad. You know, everyone thinks -- but, no, he's a
2 hard-working guy. What was about him? Sorry to --

3 Q. Yeah, just kind of describe Scott to us.

4 A. Oh.

5 Q. I haven't met him yet, so.

6 A. Oh, yeah? Oh. He's hungry, you know, he was always working,
7 always hustling it, always had something going. And he enjoyed
8 traveling. You know, I've traveled, me and him are big into World
9 War II, so we'd arrange trips. And I've done many trips -- well,
10 not many, but, I mean, I've -- Vietnam, Bastogne, the Normandy
11 Coast. I didn't do it with him, but he went first and like I'm
12 going to do Bastogne now, planning on it today, but. So I just
13 want to go cause of the World War II -- my -- both my granduncles
14 fought in it, so.

15 But, yeah, so Scott -- we had so many interests. He's just
16 a good dude, you know. He was a hard-working guy and liked
17 traveling. He's got his own -- have you met his daughter? He's
18 got a fantastic daughter. Got her head screwed on. She's at US
19 San Diego. Yeah.

20 Q. Anything that had happened in the recent year prior to the
21 accident that he would talk to you about -- of flying and
22 different performance factors of the helicopters? Anything
23 flying-related that you can think of?

24 A. No. You know, if -- if I worked -- if I was working on the
25 same week that he was there -- a lot of times he wouldn't be there

1 because he did start off as a full-time seven on and seven off.
2 You know, we'd talk about passengers, you know, the usual moaning
3 about passengers.

4 But -- or if you had a good passenger, that we had a
5 good tour, you know. But there was never anything -- there was
6 never any big scares or, you know, maybe just grumbling, you know,
7 just peewees -- not peewee. What do you call it? No, cause we
8 never sat down and discussed how each flight went -- I had a good
9 day or I had a bad day or, you know, but.

10 Q. Or like my passenger got sick today or anything?

11 A. Oh, yeah, stuff like that. That's what I mean about
12 squeamish passengers or somebody will ask the same dumb question
13 50 times and you want to -- you're really sucking deep and --
14 sorry. Am I aloud?

15 MR. TOBIN: Yeah.

16 MR. DOWNEY: Am I going to get fired after this?

17 MALE 1: Not yet.

18 MR. DOWNEY: Yeah, it's that kind of frustration. I don't
19 know what -- you know, you probably like hearing me say, oh, god,
20 that idiot from South Africa, he lost -- wants to say -- so it's
21 whatever irritates you, frustrates you about a job. You're an
22 attorney. You probably, you know, have things that irritate you.

23 MR. TOBIN: Clients.

24 MR. DOWNEY: Exactly. So --

25 MS. KELIHER: Yes.

1 MR. DOWNEY: You know, so, no, it was that kind of stuff.
2 It was never -- it was never -- it was, because there were no --
3 we never had any major, you know, scares, you know or moments. I
4 can tell you, on the ferry to Brazil, me and him landed in, at
5 night, in Jennings (ph.), Alabama because it was dark with -- and
6 the cloud was coming in. It's in the Gulf, on the tall wind and,
7 you know, it's stuff like that that made the right call and, pat
8 ourselves on the back that we did. But I think we were also a
9 little bit stupid back then. We shouldn't even been flying at
10 night -- we shouldn't -- you could have, but it was just stupid to
11 push it, but, anyway.

12 BY MS. KELIHER:

13 Q. Had anything that you know, of personal life, been going on
14 with him prior to the accident?

15 A. No. He had a girlfriend. He just really liked her. It was
16 the first girlfriend that he actually, you know, showed that he
17 was -- and he had -- because he had quite a few girlfriends, but
18 this girlfriend he really liked because he was buying her
19 expensive bags. I just remember that. I was teasing about it,
20 bought himself an expensive -- I don't know how, but it was pretty
21 expensive. So I was like, man, so you like this girl.

22 Q. We saw on a text message, before the accident, that he had
23 sent something about he was having some family problems. Do you
24 know what that would have been?

25 A. No, I don't know anything about it. Was it about his dad,

1 maybe? No, I don't know. His dad is an older guy.

2 Q. Would he usually tell you beforehand of when he was going to
3 be getting into town?

4 A. Yeah. He -- just courtesy. I'd tell him if I was coming
5 back from Seattle. Say, hi, I'm going to be back. The only
6 reason why I live with those two guys, because I know them and I'm
7 too old for roommates, but it's just they like -- it's a pilot
8 house. It's quiet. There's no partying. There's nothing. You
9 know, it's just -- it's air-conditioned. And it's set up nicely.
10 There's no adjoining wall. It's a new house. And I built -- I
11 had it -- it's, you know, it's a track home. But it works really
12 well if you've got -- and I just did it because they pay my
13 mortgage.

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. So, you know, that's how it's just set up. Sorry, what was
16 the question again? I'm tired.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. I'm sure.

19 Q. I'm going to ask you to look in your phone and can you tell
20 me of when Scott let you know that he was coming into town before
21 the accident?

22 A. I don't think I'd have a record.

23 Q. He wouldn't have sent a text? Did he call?

24 A. No, usually he called.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. But I don't -- I don't ever recall -- he might have, but I
2 don't -- I delete them, you know. I -- message, I pull them up.
3 But, I mean, it's been a while, February, so prior to that, no, I
4 don't think I've got a text. He'd either call -- and if he did
5 text, I mean, I can look, but I don't think I have, you know --

6 Q. Do you have just anything that would have jogged your memory
7 of when he was made aware that he was going to come?

8 A. I think I remember -- I don't think I've got any saved texts
9 from him. These are the only ones that I have, you know, in and
10 outbound, just from friends of mine. So I don't have a -- can you
11 -- is there a way to pull up old texts?

12 MALE 1: Not if you deleted them.

13 MR. DOWNEY: No, I've deleted them.

14 MS. KELIHER: Oh, okay.

15 MR. DOWNEY: It's all I've got, I just -- in and out texts.
16 Yeah, and these ones I'm keeping just because they've got
17 information that I need.

18 MALE 1: If you had a -- if you have an illegal server on
19 your Facebook, you can get that.

20 MR. DOWNEY: Yes.

21 BY MS. KELIHER:

22 Q. So anything that you can think of that had happened -- did he
23 come in the night before?

24 A. Yeah. I -- we spoke.

25 Q. Do you remember about what time he came in?

1 A. Yeah. It was about 5:00 because he kept a car here. I think
2 it was about 5:00, but I know -- I had an early show, so I wanted
3 to go to bed. And 8 o'clock I said, I'm hitting the sack, you
4 know, we were just -- I hadn't seen him for a while, couple of
5 weeks, I think. And I said, I'm hitting the sack early. And we
6 spoke a little bit, and I actually remember what we spoke about
7 because me and him always talk about stocks and stuff. And, you
8 know, he'd -- he's -- he manages his money really well.

9 And we -- he was telling me how he'd set up a trust for
10 Kelly (ph.), and it's through LegalZoom. So I don't -- but I
11 don't want to -- I don't want to throw him under the bus, telling
12 you stuff that, you know, that's -- you know what I mean, that
13 you're going to get -- tell, yeah, that's what we spoke about. I
14 don't want him to get into trouble with people suing him and --

15 Q. No.

16 A. You know, like, oh, he's got a trust, you know?

17 Q. No, no. I mean, basically we're just trying to get any
18 information --

19 A. Oh, okay.

20 Q. -- and see what happened over the last 24 hours prior --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- and 48 hours prior.

23 A. Yeah, so we spoke about that. That I remember because I
24 wanted to -- my little brother in South Africa, we got a trust for
25 him, me and my older brother. We manage a trust for him. My

1 parents set it up. So we take care of him. He was born with, a
2 little bit slow, but.

3 So I remember Scott saying he'd set it up because we were
4 talking about Kelly and getting to -- he was really proud that she
5 got into San Diego. I mean, he actually teared up because he's
6 like, wow, I got my daughter into San Diego -- and on full
7 scholarship. So, and he's paid, you know. It was a big
8 achievement for him. So that, we did speak about that. But
9 that's the only thing I really recall.

10 And then I did speak to him right before he took off.
11 We were -- he came up to me -- I was on the ramp. I was going
12 home. And, you know, we chatted. And I said, I'll see you later.
13 And that was it. And then, you know, the whole thing happened.
14 And later that night, you know, it was chaos.

15 Q. So before that, he gets in at 5:00 p.m. on Friday night.

16 A. Yeah, it was about 5:00. I think it was about 5:00. I mean,
17 I could be wrong. But I know it wasn't in the morning.

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And then any idea of what time he went to bed?

21 A. Shortly -- when I did. You know, I think he had some emails
22 he said he had to work on. So it wasn't -- he was also, I think,
23 you know, we had a later schedule. And I don't know if you -- you
24 must be able to pull when he came in.

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. I can't remember.

2 Q. 10:30.

3 A. Was it 10:30? Yes, I think I -- I want to -- I can't
4 remember if I had the early shift or the -- because I usually
5 prefer afternoons and so did he. So, but I do -- I know we
6 overlapped here. So, but it wasn't late, you know. Nobody got --
7 and I -- everyone goes to sleep early in our house.

8 Q. I see.

9 A. We're all old.

10 Q. You showed up at noon.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Do you remember coming at noon the day of the accident?

13 A. Does it say I showed up at noon?

14 Q. Mm-hmm.

15 A. Yeah, it must have been. I don't know why I was there, but I
16 usually go to bed early anyway. But usually, if I've got an early
17 show, then I'll go to -- you know, I prefer to go to bed early or
18 try anyhow. I can't go to sleep at 8:00, but I just go to my
19 room.

20 Q. So when you come in at noon, what do you usually -- what's
21 the first thing you do -- when you have a showtime at noon?

22 A. At 12:00?

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. You come in, sign in, check the briefing sheet, see if
25 there's any new notes, check the weather, check your aircraft to

1 see if -- check the schedule because it changes a lot. I always
2 prepare my lunch the night before and then I, you know, I have it
3 together. And I plan my meals around what I've got during the day
4 just because I've got to have in the tank and, you know, so that's
5 how -- I cut everything up and everything's ready the day before.

6 And then, you know, then I wait for the helicopter to
7 come back. And then when it does, you know, you walk out, help
8 the pilot turn it and just get ready for the flight. Do a
9 preflight -- you know, check the log book, make sure the times are
10 right and make sure that the previous pilot signed it, opened it,
11 you know, did everything legally. And then I mentally prepare for
12 the flight. That's what I always do. I have to do that.

13 So, if you don't, I feel like I've forgotten something.
14 It's like when I walk around, do a walk-around. I've got to touch
15 something that I haven't touched. I've got to do it again. It's
16 just a weird, you know, thing.

17 Q. Do you remember anything about flying that day?

18 A. Not really. It was just a normal -- can't even remember if I
19 had a landing or an air tour. I don't remember. I know that my
20 last tour didn't sell. That's why I left. But nothing out of the
21 ordinary stood out.

22 Q. What do you mean, your last tour didn't sell?

23 A. It didn't -- I didn't have a flight tour, scheduled flight.
24 It left -- there were no passengers on it.

25 Q. When that happens, do you still get paid the same amount?

1 A. Well, I've got a different thing to the other guys because I
2 -- so does Jim (ph.). I think he interviewed -- you interviewed
3 him?

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. So we've just got the daily rate. They -- when they changed
6 everything, they offered us to have it with the three -- the, you
7 know, as you go, base and then your three flight pay or four,
8 five. But up till now we've been -- one of the guys did a
9 spreadsheet because in the winter it slows down. So you're not
10 going to get four flights a lot of times.

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. So it just made no sense, money-wise, to switch over.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. So that's -- we kept.

15 Q. And then do you -- the flight that you thought you would have
16 would be that last flight?

17 A. Yeah. And it wasn't sold.

18 Q. So when did you -- can you imagine what time it would be of
19 when you would talk to and had a trans -- talked to Scott prior to
20 him --

21 A. Prior to him taking off?

22 Q. Mm-hmm.

23 A. I was at the desk waiting because you wait at the -- you
24 know, I wait there to make sure -- things break. They might move.
25 They might be too heavy for -- to get everyone on one flight and

1 they might have to open another aircraft. So you just wait till
2 the flight goes and then -- us -- I was talking -- I can't
3 remember what we were talking about, usual B.S., you know. We
4 always, you know, rub each other. But I can't remember exactly
5 what it was. And I just -- and then his flight, he got his
6 passengers, and he left. And I waited, and it was, you know,
7 nothing going to go of mine. And then I left. I came here and
8 logged out, talked up and did what I had to do -- went home.

9 Q. So when he -- when you're sitting there, he -- how does he
10 get assigned? How is it notified where he gets his manifest?

11 A. It prints from the tower. They print it out. Their printer,
12 you guys, I think you guys were there.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. Yeah, it prints out there. You get your manifest, check the
15 altimeter settings. Just make sure it looks right. It won't
16 print if it's out of CG, so everyone looks at the CG, but it won't
17 print if it's out of CG, from what I understand. So, yeah, you
18 just go over your manifest to try and -- a lot of guys will look
19 and see where their passengers are from, see if they're going to
20 get a tip.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. But, I don't know. I've never done it. I just load them up,
23 you know.

24 Q. So I've been hearing a lot of this, that there's certain
25 countries that you think you'll get tipped versus not tipped.

1 A. There's certain countries that have not only tipping traits.
2 They've got stupidity traits as well. Russians will open doors.
3 Japanese will walk with a selfie stick. It's not racially, it's
4 just funny.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. It's always the same thing. Every door that's popped open
7 that I've known, on me and on other guys, usually are Russian.
8 They're just -- it's weird. Where are you from? All right. You
9 tell them, don't pull that red U -- as you left. Ah, the door.
10 So it does -- it's really funny traits of people.

11 And you learn to pick them out. I'd always worked -- more
12 vigilant walking on a ramp if I've got a lot of Japanese -- well,
13 wait -- it's -- you can tell them 20 times, don't use your phone.
14 Do you understand English? Yes. Do you want to -- yes. And
15 they'll still walk out and someone's snapping pictures. And then
16 Simon, you know, he gets pissed off and writes you an email. And
17 so I don't know. Short of tackling them on the ramp and saying,
18 you cannot take photos, I don't know what to do anymore. That's
19 my pet peeve. I'm frustrated with that.

20 Q. So what's the stereotype of English passengers?

21 A. British?

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. Or --

24 Q. UK.

25 A. Well, my grandfather's British and Scot -- and my

1 grandmother's side's Scottish. I love the Brits. They've got a
2 great sense of humor. And they -- you'll get -- it's a crap
3 shoot. If they -- a lot of them will think, oh, you're a pilot.
4 You're earning megabucks. And then a lot of them will tip because
5 they've -- you know, Londoners will tip. If the guy's got bad
6 teeth, he generally won't tip.

7 So it's -- trust me, human psych -- I've learned a lot flying
8 tours. But the Brits are great. I had a -- they always ask the
9 funniest -- like when you fly back to Vegas, you go over, you
10 know, Sunrise Mountain there, where you go over the -- where the
11 Waste Management company fixed --

12 Q. Right.

13 A. Waste Management had this landfill that they never fixed.
14 They had a flash flood and all the garbage went into the springs
15 and they had a big lawsuit. But I had a old British lady. She
16 goes, well, where's the garbage dump? And we happened to be going
17 over it, and I said, right there. See that mass of beautiful
18 shit? Oh. But, you know, but where's the -- it was, where's the
19 garbage dump?

20 And I -- I always hear, where -- do you have bus service at
21 Lake Mead? It's weird, huh? Do you have buses and trains? I mean,
22 Meadview, sorry. Meadview. You know, there's a little town in
23 the high desert. Sir, do you have a bus service? Catch me if --
24 I get the British humor, so. I mean, and they, for the most part,
25 really -- you know the Brits are very, very nice passengers. I've

1 never -- it's easy to identify when you have a common language and
2 a common heritage. I lived in London for a year and a half. I
3 worked in a -- I worked in a sandwich shop and I always talk to
4 them about that because it's a really famous sandwich shop now.
5 It was bought out by Pepsi for hundreds of millions of dollars.
6 And there were only three when I started there so. But, yeah,
7 they're nice.

8 Q. Do you normally talk to passengers when you're --

9 A. Yeah, I mean, I'm a little bit jaded because I've been doing
10 it a long time. I get a vibe. And a lot of passengers don't want
11 you to yack away. You get a feel. A lot of passengers want the
12 narration if it's in their language. The narration's outdated.
13 And it's old and the Koreans always laugh at it and, you know,
14 then you get a tap on the shoulder. They say -- some of the
15 information is not 100 percent up to date. I believe, I don't
16 understand what they say in those languages, but that's what I've
17 been told. No, so you get a feel, you know.

18 Q. Do you offer the narration?

19 A. I do if the -- when I get the passenger and I see who I've
20 got, then I say I have this available. But a lot of -- what they
21 don't get is that they think their language is going to be
22 isolated in their headset specifically for them. But everyone
23 hears French. Everyone hears Dutch.

24 So you get four -- and you do -- you get sometimes four
25 different languages and you're toggling the swish, playing it and

1 you get to tap on the shoulder. And I hate that. I say, don't
2 touch me. Don't ever touch me. You can -- it's just rude, you
3 know? And you're flying. You're concentrating, and people do the
4 dumbest thing. They think it's a Go-cart. It's a -- it's a
5 sensitive machine and it's and -- yeah, so I brief them. I try
6 and be as thorough and as polite as possible. I've got to check
7 myself sometimes because I am a bit jaded, because you get to -- I
8 get -- I find my tolerance has been reduced quite a bit.

9 Phil, you don't need to talk. But, you know, you're always
10 polite. They are coming to see a tour. They're coming to see,
11 you know, one of the seven wonders of the world. And you've got
12 to make the experience. That's what Papillon pays me to do. So,
13 yeah. But it's human nature, you know?

14 Q. So would it be typical that passengers from the UK would be
15 listening to narration?

16 A. No, because there is no English narration. I do the
17 narration.

18 Q. Yeah?

19 A. I am the narration of the English.

20 Q. So, of course, I'm sure you're so sick of saying it over and
21 over again --

22 A. Please don't tell me to do the tour.

23 Q. So that's exactly it.

24 A. I will start crying. Seven days on.

25 Q. I'm sure you wake up saying it. But do you start doing --

1 where you're just not --

2 A. I've got my spiel down. And I can -- I kind of gauge it.
3 And I know where to say what. And when the guide -- you're trying
4 to make money as well because tipping's about -- it can be 10,000
5 bucks a year --

6 Q. Oh, my.

7 A. -- if you add it all up. But I just got different points.
8 You know, you have different guys with different styles and then
9 obviously they partnered it up with -- now they've thought of --
10 we've don't talk over the wall, you know, in the sterile cockpit
11 from their bed towers. And, but I've just got my little spiel. I
12 did, in the beginning -- you know, and I think a lot of guys will
13 just yack away and people don't want to hear your voice just
14 droning on. So I kind of -- I've got good at gauging what to say
15 when and -- when -- and I do have like important bits of
16 information that the company wants you to tell and they're not --
17 and it's stuff that I've looked up and has interested me about
18 Hoover Dam. And any, you know, if you get a bunch of people that
19 are -- you know, if they're the older guys, you're probably talk
20 about the engineering a bit. The young kids, maybe it's wrong to
21 assume that, but they probably want to -- they're not as
22 interested in how many cubic feet of concrete were poured in it,
23 you know?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. And how many liters or gallons the lake holds when it's full.

1 And that's all stuff I've got off the national -- just out of my
2 own interest.

3 Q. Do you tell people usually of -- we're at -- that tower's
4 like we can't talk now?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Or no put them on ISO or what do you --

7 A. Yeah. No, I tell them. I go, we've got a sterile cockpit.
8 I'll talk to you and relay -- I'll give them a little bit of a
9 brief before -- how long are we going to be on the ground for. I
10 generally do it once we go -- I may make a radio call going into
11 the canyon, west end of the Green 4,000-5,000 eastbound.

12 But then I'll say -- because you go -- it's -- passengers are
13 like managing people. You've got to corral them. You've got to
14 tell them this is where certain nationalities just don't give a
15 crap about the time. You've got to tell them, you've got a half
16 an hour, so 25 minutes on the ground; five minutes to shut down
17 and fire up. And then 10 -- 20 -- you don't want to seem like
18 you're rushing them, eating their sandwich, but I just to say to
19 them, you got 20 minutes and I'm going to start cleaning up.

20 So I'm polite, but then they know. And that just saves you a
21 lot of headache afterwards. But every once in a while, somebody
22 will go rogue and they don't care, and then you shout, and I
23 whistle. And at that point, the gloves are off. I still get
24 tipped.

25 Yeah, it's the first 5 minutes, the last 5 minutes. The rest

1 is -- you got to open the sale and then close it here, if you
2 were. I hope I'm not saying too much, yeah?

3 Q. Anything else that you can remember about the conversation
4 that you were having with Scott?

5 A. When?

6 Q. The different -- right before he was loading up his
7 passengers and going out?

8 A. No. It was short. We were -- he was ready to get it -- get
9 going, and I was ready to go home. And I said, I'll see you.
10 We'll talk when we get home, you know. That was it, yeah. It
11 wasn't much. He was getting his passengers together.

12 Q. We saw that he was one of the last ones out.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Do you know -- any idea why that was?

15 A. No. I don't know why. You know, it's -- sometimes -- I
16 don't know if you followed it long. It can get that -- they're
17 balancing aircraft. They're trying to -- you know, you might have
18 problems with families being split up or passengers not with their
19 friends. So wouldn't -- there are a bunch of reasons. I don't
20 know what -- why he was last out.

21 Q. Do you normally take pictures with the passengers, with the
22 photographer?

23 A. If they want. And I -- yeah, I have a fake smile. No, it's
24 just Paulette (ph.) told me that I wasn't smiling in Vegas a few
25 years ago. So one of the previous chiefs said, can you please

1 smile in the photo? I go -- and it was -- and then 12 men. It
2 was my third flight. I was trying to smile, okay. You just --
3 you can't smile. Follow along and see if you smile. Come and do
4 four flights with me and then see if you can smile on the last
5 one. No, it -- so I ask them.

6 Q. Were you guys discussing that weather at the time at all?
7 Did he mention anything about that?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Is there anything that you would have been concerned about?

10 A. No because I think I did air tours that day, if I remember it
11 correctly. Now it's coming -- kind of coming back to me. No. We
12 didn't talk about the weather at all, down at the bottom there,
13 you know, down at the count.

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. It was just short, you know. You know, he'd done his thing
16 and I've done my thing and -- to get ready. I know I'm flying
17 because you -- he came up to me, in my helicopter, on his way to
18 get his passengers. You know, he was just, see you later and --
19 if -- he spoke about the -- I forget what it was, some trip for --
20 it was something. You know, he was BS'ing. I can't remember
21 exactly what it was.

22 Q. Shifting gears, when your interaction with the lead pilots --
23 how does that work -- of you talking to them on the ramp and them
24 interacting with you the whole day -- how does that work?

25 A. Well like, if you're in the afternoon, they'll give a

1 briefing at 12:45, if you have an afternoon in the summer, where
2 they split the schedule.

3 Q. What about like in February?

4 A. Oh, in February? You mean, on that specific day?

5 Q. If you don't remember, just what it would be like in
6 February, of how that interaction would go.

7 A. It would -- there wouldn't be a whole lot of interaction.
8 They're generally doing -- you know, you're just taking care of
9 your flights, getting your helicopter ready. I mean, you know
10 your job -- unless there's an issue where you have to get hold of
11 them and, obviously, they'd get involved.

12 But for the most part, during the day, I just try to avoid --
13 you know, you try to solve the problems that -- if there is a --
14 minor problems can be fixed without anything like dragging him
15 away and at least deal with it. Yesterday, this thing that I
16 sorted out and I radioed in and told them what I was going on.
17 And they sent out a guy, and we looked at it and solved it and
18 picked it up, set it down, and we did the flight. So, you know,
19 that's kind of the interaction is -- for me. I don't know about
20 the other guys. Some guys will maybe call for lesser, you know.

21 Just -- and a lot of it's because I'm used to, over the
22 years, of knowing what certain things do on those helicopters --
23 of governors and if you're if getting MO flashing Gov Light, you
24 know, you shut it down. Some guy -- we had one guy had the light
25 on. And he said I've got a light on. And he came back. It was

1 was actually you just had the light on and it said Light.

2 So he did, you know, do -- he was a ex-military pilot. He
3 said, I've got a light on. Turned around and came back. Said,
4 yeah, your light's on because it was a new -- this was a
5 (indiscernible) and it said Light, in green. Light on -- yeah,
6 you've got the light on, you know, so.

7 Q. Have you ever applied to be a lead pilot?

8 A. I don't think so because they -- they would have taken the
9 seven and seven away, so I wouldn't -- you know, I was trying to
10 work out my marriage for five years, so, no. I might have sent a
11 resume at the time, like thinking about it, when they had seven
12 and sevens. But I don't -- I was never serious about it. Just as
13 I said, it's not for -- I like working and being done. These guys
14 have all that other stuff to deal with. That's just not my cup of
15 tea.

16 Q. What -- so when you're coming in the afternoon you don't have
17 any interaction with them?

18 A. Yeah, I was -- you know, I agree -- well, if we do the
19 briefing, you know, if you --

20 Q. But if you're in the afternoon, in February.

21 A. Oh, in February? Oh, you know, it was -- well, sometimes,
22 and, you know, it's a split schedule. It's not broken up exactly
23 mornings and afternoons because of the time. Sometimes you'll get
24 a barrel -- you know, you're either the first of the last -- first
25 one, last two -- first to -- maybe one in the afternoon or one big

1 day. So then you'd be either in the morning and do the morning
2 briefing at 5:45.

3 Or if you come around a little bit later, it's your
4 responsibility. He's not going to brief you every passenger. You
5 got to look at the notes and the briefing sheet and, you know,
6 greet them. And it depends how the personalities are. Maybe
7 clash, buck score -- no, I'm kidding.

8 Q. And what do you -- how do you check the weather?

9 A. I go off the briefing sheet.

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. If it's -- if it looks like, you know, in my phone I look --
12 I always check -- I like the radar, the thunderstorms, not on the
13 -- you know, and if it looks like it's going to be crappy day,
14 I'll always look at home. I can just pull up the tab for Vegas
15 and the area and the forecast. And, but usually here. I just get
16 used to, you know, kind of what the weather's going to do a lot of
17 the time, over the years.

18 A. How do you look at the wind?

19 Q. How do I -- I look at the briefing sheet, you know, what the
20 -- what the forecast is, what the weather, the temps are at 6,000
21 because that's the highest we go. And then if it's windy, you
22 know, I'll pull up, you know, I'll listen to the ADIS here before
23 I takeoff. We've got five different windsocks, but it can be in
24 different directions, so you got to pay attention.

25 Q. Do you know how Scott would look at the wind?

1 A. Probably the same way. He was diligent. He didn't take
2 shortcuts. That's what I mean, he never took shortcuts. You
3 know, he would -- he'd like laugh a lot. You know, he was a smart
4 guy. He wasn't going to shirk on the wind or cut corners. It
5 just doesn't work.

6 Q. When you're looking at the wind on the briefing sheet, what,
7 specifically -- what area looking at?

8 A. You mean, area along the route or --

9 Q. No. When you come in and you said you sign off on the sheet,
10 the briefing sheet.

11 A. It's all on the briefing sheet. It's the TAF, yeah.

12 Q. So that's the main thing that you look at, is the TAF?

13 A. Yeah, yeah. And then it gives you winds and temps and loft,
14 that's on there as well. And the area forecast for the day, yeah.

15 Q. Going into Quartermaster, can you describe what you're -- as
16 you're flying toward there, what you're looking for to gauge the
17 wind?

18 A. So -- I was just trying to run through my -- so when I start
19 at the back towers, the first thing I'll, you know, look at my
20 descent rate. I'll look at my indicator airspeed and my ground
21 speed to see if I'm getting a tailwind. You can feel it. Over
22 the years, I've gotten -- I know a lot of times, when I leave
23 here, I know what the winds are going to be kind of like.

24 If they've -- out of the Southwest, hard, I know where
25 they're going to bump over the ridges and how it's going to affect

1 the -- I know -- I've tell -- I brief -- I prepare the passengers.
2 I go, when we go through Wilson's Ridge, I said, as we go through,
3 it's going to rock. And you get rocked. And, you know, when you
4 do -- S-turn the dam, depending -- if the wind's out of the
5 Southwest or the South you're going to get, you know, certain
6 burrows out of the terrain that you wouldn't get from the north.

7 And then vice versa, when you go around fortification if the
8 wind's out of the North, you're going to come over the top and
9 you're to get bumped around, so you maybe you stay a little bit
10 higher. But the back towers, and they're not -- you know, I'll
11 look at the Ramada, which is a big -- it's a wind -- it's quite
12 hard to see that windsock. But I'll look there.

13 I'll listen to aircraft ahead of me, what they're doing. If
14 they are, if not. I can -- I've learned to tell with the one
15 windsock that -- there's another one now, but I can tell which way
16 it is from a distance, which way I'm going to set up my approach.
17 And then I base it on that. And then, obviously, you know, where
18 the -- prior to that. But I know where the wind's -- the big
19 thing is you can feel it pushing you if it's -- if you've got a
20 tailwind. So you know you're not going to land up=road here. I
21 mean, probably down-road over there.

22 But usually when it comes out of the south and the west,
23 comes down that canyon, it hits the notch and splits. And so over
24 the years --

25 Q. Splits over the notch? Okay.

1 A. Well, I don't it that's what happens, but it's what it feels
2 like, but.

3 Q. I've got a piece of paper. If you can draw it for me and --

4 A. I don't know. That's all right? So what do you mean? Like
5 --

6 Q. You've got a pen?

7 A. Yeah, I've got a pen.

8 Q. So draw -- if we had a --

9 A. So here's -- okay, from a top view --

10 Q. So let's split it here. If we've got a windsock going this
11 way, and you've got the windsock going this way.

12 A. Okay. So this would be, assuming the ruler's --

13 Q. The arrows, right.

14 A. Yeah. So this would be a down -- so the notch would be here
15 somewhere. So, this is a -- yeah, so this one would be winds
16 coming down from -- you'd come through the notch and land down
17 river. This is kind of a quartering cross wind because, I mean,
18 it's a little bit hard with exactly where -- you know, the Ramada
19 -- the Notch is there. The Ramada's here. This one, you know,
20 the old way I used to do it was go up that gulley, which I don't
21 do anymore, and then turn to get more into the wind. But you can
22 end with the cross-wind. You've just got to be aware, what, you
23 know, can happened.

24 Q. SO you just describe your procedure --

25 A. So --

1 Q. -- if you went up the gulley?

2 A. If I went up the gulley?

3 Q. Mm-hmm.

4 A. So I'd go in and I'd keep my airspeed up. You've got to
5 manage your power, you know, you got to watch -- if it's a hot
6 day, you've got to make sure that you aren't descending too
7 quickly, but you've also going to get down to get to the spot. On
8 really hot days you don't have a whole lot of room for error. You
9 know what I mean? It's just, you've got to be on your game.

10 And then I turn into the wind and just make sure my descent
11 rates less than 30 feet per minute. And I've got some forward
12 airspeeds I can get out of it. And then done so, get into
13 settling and then set up my approach and just come and if it's a
14 little bit shallower. I know I've done it so many times. That's
15 how I've always done it.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. So when you say, get down, you mean --

19 A. We'll get down -- so you're not higher -- when you've got no
20 forward airspeed and you're suddenly be yanking in power and you
21 just -- you know, it's just you want to be too high.

22 Q. Like near the ground and effect?

23 A. Yeah, exactly.

24 Q. So is --

25 A. So that's downriver. Because your wind's coming like this.

1 You got to go through the notch, land. And I would -- that the
2 notch and the pads are here. I would usually land on the one pad
3 that's over here. This is the one that's right by the river.

4 Q. Can you draw where the pads are? How many are there?

5 A. I think there are two. I -- okay, so this is the little
6 Ramada here, yeah. The river's here. So this is the one -- the
7 river's here. This is the one that's right alongside the river.
8 Then you get another one up here. Then you get the ones behind
9 it. It's obviously not to scale. There's a whole area here where
10 you can put one, two, three -- and then it goes around the
11 notches. There's a -- forget this is a notch.

12 There's another one another one and another one there. Then
13 there's -- the winning point's down here. You put one on the
14 winning point. And then you could put one here for the handicap
15 and there's another one here, another there, I believe. And then,
16 obviously, the the waterfall's down there. So downriver landing,
17 I'll usually shoot for this pad here. That's what I always did.
18 When I first started getting used to aircraft, that's the pad I'd
19 always shoot for.

20 Q. Okay, but what if someone's there?

21 A. Then I'll take one of these two -- the new, this is we used
22 to -- now it's, you know, you pull forward. It's, you know, you
23 pull forward to -- that's what Simon wants or they want us to pull
24 it to the furthest. And then everyone comes in behind you and
25 vice versa if you're coming --

1 Q. But following that the situation of how you've done it for
2 nine years.

3 A. Right.

4 Q. So you're in for his pad, but it's full, where -- where would
5 you go?

6 A. If these were -- this is what I would usually -- because we
7 didn't have to land like it was -- you know, in the past. So if
8 these were open, then I would just land, yeah, you know, straight
9 into the wind where the wind's coming, you know, down river.

10 Q. So if the wind's this way --

11 A. Yeah, this is down river.

12 Q. And that's full.

13 A. Then I'd be -- well, if there was somebody they had go around
14 to that door and if it was open --

15 Q And if that's full?

16 A. Well, yeah, I'd take one of these here.

17 Q. And if those were full?

18 A. Down river.

19 Q. And if that was full?

20 A. What? You mean if they were all full? If every single pad
21 was occupied?

22 Q. Over on this side.

23 A. On that side? As long as I'm into the wind, you know, I
24 could choose one of these here. You know, the main thing is
25 keeping your nose into the wind --

1 Q. So --

2 A. -- and not -- you know, it's quite -- it's rising terrain
3 there. So you get to, depending on -- you got to watch your
4 power; you got to watch your blades aren't being too tight, you've
5 got to watch for passengers. But, you know, I've never had it
6 where I've had to land down river in one of these two -- in nine
7 years of flight. Yeah, that's always been one of those tough ones
8 that I've --

9 And if I did and you were uncomfortable landing with your
10 skid down river, you know, because it's sloping -- it's sloping
11 down to the right, towards the river, you could just turn it once
12 you, you know, you got a hover.

13 Q. Outside?

14 A. You'd turn and then turn it back if the wind -- you know, but
15 the wind could flip on you now there, as well. So it, you know,
16 whatever it is, it might not be the same when you take off, and
17 you would have to do a turn.

18 Q. So in nine years you've never had a wind coming from the west
19 where the eastern pads are full? You've ever had this situation
20 where these pads are full?

21 A. I've always -- I've never had a problem landing there. You
22 know, there's always been one that I can get to. I don't know
23 why. I can't think of -- offhand, I don't remember ever having to
24 come downriver, on a downriver landing, and land at that handicap
25 spot. I might have landed here. I've never landed -- I don't

1 recall landing all the way around towards the notch. You know,
2 the -- did you -- have you been down there?

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. Okay, so that one there, the furthest one if you're doing an
5 upriver or this landing, with the wind this direction. I don't
6 ever remember pulling forward with that. I've always done it like
7 that. I'll be the -- always been in first or second or third. I
8 don't know. I just -- I have been last but, I just don't remember
9 it, pulling all the way forward. I always found a pad.

10 You know, a lot of times there, some guys might come in and
11 do the approach with a crosswind --

12 Q. So that's like --

13 A. -- not with a tailwind, yes.

14 Q. -- Christina did for landing at the handicap. So she came in
15 and did the --

16 A. Yeah. So, I mean, you've got to work it -- I wouldn't do it
17 if there was a tail wind. If it's a blatant tailwind, you're not
18 going to do that. But you can land with a crosswind. You're just
19 got to be prepared, you know.

20 Q. Prepared for what?

21 A. Well, be on your game that, you know, you don't get into
22 trouble.

23 Q. Do you take different paths according to who's behind you,
24 like if it's a new guy or --

25 A. No, not really. I, you know -- well, now they want us to

1 pull forward, all the way.

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. Or pull forward all -- they have to, you know, depending on
4 which way it is, take the furthestest (sic) and then let people
5 stack up behind you. Before, it was always if you were there
6 first, just take the pad that's available with the correct one.
7 And then it would fill in behind. You know, most of the time, it
8 would be, if it's an upriver landing, most people land upriver.

9 And you can land upriver, yeah, or downriver. It's just as
10 easy. This one, yeah.

11 Q. Is there any consideration of what's -- of the newer people
12 and how you treat them?

13 A. Yeah, I think, you know, you want to be, you know, it's quite
14 hairy, the flight, hours here as well and it can be hairy, you
15 know, your first couple of landings, if you're not familiar with
16 it. So, yeah. If -- I mean, you're not going to just -- you're
17 not going to overtake and, you know. You've got to be courteous
18 and, you know, polite.

19 You don't want to scare the guy. You let him -- if -- you're
20 not going to try and overtake him just to get pole position on the
21 pad. You're going to follow the rules.

22 Q. There was a new person flying behind Scott.

23 A. Was it?

24 Q. And I was just trying to think of what -- and they had been
25 friendly with each other. He knew he was new.

1 A. Right.

2 Q. And I'm wondering if that would have changed anything, that
3 you would think of if somebody was behind you that was new.

4 A. No, I don't think it would have. I think, you know, he,
5 setting, he would have liked everyone to set your approach up
6 based on the one guy behind you needs to keep his distance. The
7 rule is you can't overtake once you're down there. You know, he'd
8 set it up and concentrate on your approach and your landing.

9 I don't think he would have, you know, overshoot it and be
10 trying to land somewhere else for this guy.

11 Q. When you're down on the ground, do you call if you've got a
12 different type of wind coming in? Do you call on the radio and
13 let somebody know?

14 A. Some people have. You know, I don't do it because it ties
15 the radio up and the wind can -- I can make the call and 30
16 seconds later it'll be different. So it's the pilot who sets up
17 the approach. He's got to look at that windsock and make the call
18 to go around or to --

19 Q. So is the windsock pretty accurate as to what wind you're
20 going to feel in the air --

21 A. Yeah. The one --

22 Q. -- coming up to it?

23 A. We didn't have this other one. You have, Tyler and Scott.
24 We only had the windsock for years, and that's the one I always
25 used.

1 Q. But, yeah, so that windsock, do you find it --

2 A. Yeah, it tells you, you know, what you -- it can flip you on
3 a dime. I mean, I'm not -- it has -- I've had 0 cramps once or
4 twice where it's whew. And often, as you know now, I think about,
5 when I'm down there more, you know, since he crashed. And I
6 remember counting five times, at the picnic, the winds shifting
7 from a downriver to an upriver; downriver to an upriver. And then
8 it'll -- you'll suddenly -- and it's easy to see. Your garbage
9 blows away. And now suddenly you get this gust of wind that blows
10 all the crap everywhere and you tell your passengers to, you know,
11 put a -- hold their things down. But it -- it'll flip on you.
12 It's -- it can be a tricky little landing spot.

13 Q. What about when you're in the gully? Is that different? Or
14 going over the notch. You said wind splits. Does that present
15 this --

16 A. Well, this is my opinion. I don't know if it's true, but if
17 -- when the wind comes down it -- I think one of the reasons why
18 it has that, it feeds, you know, it can transfer (indiscernible),
19 because when the wind hits that, it comes over either side or it
20 comes either over of the top and it changes the wind pattern
21 there. You get a lot of eddies or something on either side or it
22 comes right over the top in a gust and then it, you know, it comes
23 down. So that's just my -- what I sort of it -- it could be
24 completely wrong, but it would be flying it and feeling.

25 If it's a lot of -- if it's mild winds, I don't really -- I

1 don't think about it too much. But if it's windy when I take off
2 here, set myself up, right. So when I get the back tower, I know
3 now, okay, what I'm going to anticipate the crappy day wind and
4 then I brace myself and prepare for it.

5 And those are the steps I take. I'll look at the windsock,
6 you know, my speed, everything down around. I have had go-
7 arounds--s not too many, but I have in the years that I've flown
8 here. And then it's just, you know, managing the aircraft. It's
9 --

10 Q. Have you ever run out of pedal?

11 A. No. Not yet. If anything close to it, on this right up
12 here.

13 Q. Yeah?

14 A. No, but, no, I haven't.

15 Q. Have you ever decided not to land because of the wind?

16 A. I might have -- not me. The call might have been made and
17 then it turned into an air trip. I mean, I have to look. I've
18 done -- it doesn't stand out in my memory of bailing. I've
19 thought of it maybe. Yu know, I thought, oh, it's getting pretty
20 noisy down there, but I haven't.

21 I've done it and not because somebody else has already done
22 it. But that doesn't affect my -- I'd do it anyway if somebody --
23 you know, because it's different. He might have had a nice calm
24 approach. So, but I can't -- nothing stands out in my mind,
25 having canceled or turned it into the air tour and bailed on an

1 approach.

2 Q. Would you feel that you would have to explain it?

3 A. No. I mean, you tell them why you did it. You're changing a
4 tour and you write it up. But nobody's going to -- you tell them
5 why and nobody's going to give you any trouble about it.

6 Q. Do you ever get questioned of different things that you do?

7 A. No, I really -- I haven't really -- I can't even think of the
8 last time. I don't know if people are like me. I don't know.
9 No, nobody's really -- I don't recall.

10 I've never being -- you know, I think, years ago, when Mark
11 Chef (ph.) he was a chief, maybe -- Dave Sawyer (ph.) was a lead.
12 He was a really bombastic lead and he butted heads with a lot of
13 people. And he would question your approach and if -- why did you
14 land with a tailwind?

15 And he's on the ground in an office and he can't see. I
16 mean, to do that is just dumb anyway. So I know another guy he
17 did it to and he might have asked me -- oh, he asked me why did I
18 make a radio call to South -- I do remember that -- this was ten,
19 eight years ago -- to South on an average fuel (ph.). Because
20 each one of those drifts is one mile south. So, I mean, sorry,
21 dude, it felt like two miles. I apologize -- 6,000 feet, you
22 know?

23 So it was perspective and he's a mile behind me and it's an
24 area of parallax. He doesn't know where I'm making my call. I
25 mean, that's why I never harp or -- I mean, if you see somebody

1 make a -- miss a radio call right about a certain reporting point,
2 you know, because you're over and he's over there and he's making
3 the radio call and you know he's forgotten.

4 But most times, you look at a guy who's ahead of you and he
5 makes the right call doesn't look like he's making the radio call
6 where you think that position report should be. So I wanted to,
7 you know --

8 Q. You don't feel that Simon or one of the leads has questioned
9 or --

10 A. No, I've not -- I've never -- I've never had any of the leads
11 ask me. They might have -- to other guys, but I've haven't been
12 asked on some of the decisions I made.

13 Q. When you said that part of the duty is have to fill out
14 something.

15 A. Yeah, a report. You do a, you know, if you change the tour,
16 you do, I think it's an irregularity report.

17 Q. So what's that?

18 A. You fill out -- it gives you like, you know, the time of the
19 aircraft, time on the aircraft and why you changed it -- if it was
20 for weather or if it was for a passenger being sick. If you
21 (indiscernible) the course, and then you fill it out you go to the
22 people that need to see it.

23 And, you know, you explain it in a paragraph as best you can,
24 record it and factually and then, yeah, I mean, people riding
25 along wanted the stuff.

1 Q. Do you ever feel that they question you about them, the
2 report?

3 A. No. You mean in a negative way or -- no.

4 Q. Or anything?

5 A. No, unless it's like something that might affect safety or
6 where you can contribute something to why -- how can we make
7 things better. But I've never -- most -- I've had silly things
8 like I turned past -- I've never had any major. I think don't so.
9 I've been -- I forget. I had a fuel -- not a fuel -- engine chip
10 light a long time ago at Grand Canyon West, I think.

11 But, yeah, no, no they don't question you unless they need
12 to. But if it's self-explanatory, then --

13 Q. And if you see something unsafe, would you put it in an
14 irregularity report?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Have you done that?

17 A. I don't know. Can't remember. You tell me. I might have.
18 I know one time we put too many helicopters -- I don't know. I
19 might have. I can't remember if wrote -- I thought of maybe
20 writing one once when something happened once.

21 Or, I know the times I've told Burl and he'll say, not a lot
22 but I think, I mean, I know -- he said put in an -- but it's
23 something I just wanted to vent about or it wasn't like unsafe
24 enough or where I needed to write something.

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. But, yeah.

2 Q. Are there any other ways that you can report things? What if
3 you saw like a pilot smoking pot in the back?

4 A. Oh, you walk in. It's a just culture, and so you walk in
5 anonymously and say -- if you feel like, well, Hal (ph.) could
6 care less. You could smoke pot here and the mechanic, you know,
7 is smoking pot. Are you going to work on the machine that I'm
8 going to get in? So, yeah, I'll just flat out, you know, address
9 it with whoever needed to hear it.

10 Q. Is there any way to tell anyone of anonymously, though?

11 A. Yeah, through the Just -- I forget the name of the form that
12 it is. You can write to -- I forget. We just did it, the safety
13 -- the Just Culture, you know. I forget exactly. Sorry, I was
14 addressed in that.

15 Q. So have you ever filled --

16 A. What? An anonymous one?

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. No. I don't think so. No, I don't think.

19 Q. Do you find that you mentor the newer people, kind of telling
20 them how things work?

21 A. If they ask.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. It's weird. Some people don't like being mentored. They
24 know it all. And so I just -- somebody asks, yeah, sure. Or if
25 they ask me to. I took a new guy on my helicopter the other day.

1 And, you know, you try but, you know -- but, you know, but I
2 always find the same route boring. You know, I don't do a lot of
3 -- I've seen guys hot dog in the past. And I just do -- it's a
4 job. I need an income. I got a mortgage.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. I'm a boring -- you know, you got a passenger -- can you do a
7 loop? No. Flat off.

8 Q. Do the lead pilots ask you questions? I know a lot of them
9 are newer and they started as a lead. Do they ask the senior guys
10 different things?

11 A. Yeah, they'll bounce -- we'll bounce stuff off each other,
12 you know. They lay it -- on windy days, you know, like I've had,
13 you know, with Curtis (ph.), you know, we -- wind comes down that
14 Red Lake like a freight train and when you can see it and they got
15 this dust cloud coming down. And then, you know, when it's windy
16 I have made, you know, maybe you should consider this. And they
17 usually appreciate it and take -- you know, they use all the tools
18 they have.

19 Q. When you take your passengers out to the helicopter, what
20 briefing do you give them?

21 A. I ask them if they watched the safety briefing and, if they
22 have, it's covered me legally. If they haven't -- well, 99% of
23 the time, they have. But if they haven't, then I'll do what's
24 required and then -- but what I always do, just to -- I just know
25 what I'm going to have to repeat or help with. So I cover that

1 again, even though it's been in the video.

2 It's stuff that's just going to make me mental if I have to -
3 - I just, you know, I cover it. I put the microphone in your left
4 ear. That's how you do the seatbelts, how you tighten the
5 seatbelts. Don't open the --

6 Q. Do you usually have to do people's seatbelts and take them
7 out of their seatbelts?

8 A. If I don't do my little spiel, then my -- a lot of times I
9 will. But sometimes I'll do my spiel and they'll still jack it up
10 even after -- but I understand that though. You never got into
11 that machine before. You know, it's -- it's confusing. It's a
12 funky seatbelt, you know, it's a three-harness. And I put it in
13 the wrong hole and -- I tease them. I go, if you -- I always go,
14 tighten it simultaneously so the buckle's at your belly.

15 And now one guy, it's down here. And I said, sir, check
16 your neck. It's going to cut your neck, and you're going to sue
17 me. And, you know, I just -- I said it's really for your own
18 comfort. So I try and preempt to make my day smoother -- preempt
19 stupidity. Well, not stupidity, but you know what I mean.

20 Q. Yeah. In the front, do -- what if people have stuff? Do
21 they just leave it on the floor?

22 A. Well, you can't put it in the seat. I say either put it at
23 your -- if it's a purse, put it at your feet, between your feet.

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. I offer to put in the back if it's light and then, you know,

1 and it's below. But, yeah, they just keep it at their feet.

2 Q. Have things ever gone --

3 A. I've had water bottles fall down to the front before.

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. I always tell them, you know, don't -- make sure that --
6 they'll put it there and think it'll balance and then with the
7 vibration, eventually, it will fall down. And so I always catch
8 it in time, once or twice. It's one of the things that I'll tell
9 him when I see them put it -- I'll say -- phfft. I've learned,
10 over the years, how to counter to the -- you can see it. It's
11 going to happen, and you just preempt it. Preemptive strike.
12 It's a war between me and my -- no. I'm kidding.

13 Q. Manny will ask you --

14 A. Sorry, no, please don't pass. I've got to work her a couple
15 more months.

16 Q. He'll ask you about flight training, but, specifically, have
17 you ever got an unsat on any of your check rides?

18 A. Maybe for one -- a maneuver. I don't remember. I think I
19 have, yeah.

20 Q. What happens when --

21 A. Oh, we do it again and as long as you can get it to
22 satisfactory, you know, but I -- I can't remember which. I mean,
23 you'd have to look in the records, but I think I might have got an
24 Unsat on -- I can't remember which maneuver. I might have
25 overshot an auto rotation or -- I can't remember, but I've -- I

1 know I have. It hasn't been perfect, yeah.

2 Q. During training, have you? Usually we're doing --

3 A. During the check ride or during training?

4 Q. Well, that's -- so, usually do you do training before the
5 check ride?

6 A. Yeah, you train and then you do the check ride.

7 Q. Are those usually on the same day?

8 A. No. Usually it's before. I might have had to do a little
9 bit -- no, no. I don't think I've ever done the check ride the
10 same day as my --

11 Q. And then have you -- do you get graded on your training?

12 A. Grade?

13 Q. Is that Sat or Unsat?

14 A. It's not a grade, but he'll tell you whether you're screwing
15 it up or help you. It's a learning -- trainings also to refresh
16 because it's a lot of stuff you don't use, you know, throughout
17 the year. So, yeah, it's a refresher. And if you're messing it
18 up, he will help you get it right, yeah.

19 Q. And then you take your check ride?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. A few days later?

22 A. Once you -- I think it's you've met the hourly requirement
23 that you're supposed to have for the training for 135. And then,
24 yeah, you do your check ride, usually, the next day. And then
25 you, you know, depending if it's the long or the short one, the

1 for -- 135 check ride or just the aircraft specific. So like
2 mine's usually in February and then my aircraft, EC, is in
3 October.

4 Q. Do you know when Scott's is?

5 A. I don't.

6 Q. Do you guys ever talk about --

7 A. Yeah, he --

8 Q. -- doing that?

9 A. We've spoken about it at the house, like doing flight plans
10 and stuff.

11 Q. What has he said about --

12 A. No, he just, you know, he said they give you a scenario where
13 you got to fly from and to. And, you know, he'll just bounce it
14 off. He'll do it and he was pretty -- he had good notes. He
15 studied for his check rides. I'd say he studied more than I did.
16 He -- it might be because I flew a lot more than he did.

17 You know, mine's full-time. But he differently, you know, he
18 would -- he was -- he worked hard on his check ride. But he's got
19 notes and stuff and he's -- because all his stuff's still at my
20 house -- but a lot of it they got.

21 Q. Yeah. Have you talked to him?

22 A. Yeah, I visited him.

23 Q. Yeah?

24 A. I visit him all the time -- not all the time, but when I can.

25 Q. Has he talked to you about the accident?

1 A. Nothing. Not a word.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I've asked him, not about the accident. I've said to him, I
4 know you've been through hell. If and when you want to talk to me
5 about it, feel free. And I said, I just hope you're getting help,
6 mentally. And he said he's getting -- yes, I think he might just
7 want me to say. But other than that, we've -- you know, I try and
8 -- you know, it's such a huge thing. You know, you talk -- it's
9 hard to think about what to talk about because I don't want to,
10 you know, bend him up, you know. But I think it's better for him,
11 as an incentive, to get his -- you know, get new legs and to do
12 trips that he wants to do again and --

13 Q. Yeah? Have you heard anyone that has talked to him about the
14 accident?

15 A. No. I don't know. He doesn't talk to me much about it. I
16 mean, I know a lot of people visit him, but he doesn't tell me
17 who's there or who has, no.

18 MS. KELIHER: I don't have more questions. What about
19 (indiscernible)?

20 MS. WILSON: All right, mine's going to be a little piecemeal
21 and I'm going to have some follow up questions to what Zoe asked.

22 MR. DOWNEY: Okay.

23 BY MS. WILSON:

24 Q. The day of the accident, do you recall if passengers were
25 being weather advised?

1 A. No, I don't recall.

2 Q. When you've --

3 A. They might have been. I can't remember what the weather
4 conditions were.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I think it -- I think they were -- I don't know if it was --
7 it was windy. And I said to Mark, I don't know what the team
8 encountered.

9 Q. How much time do you typically have between flights?

10 A. Usually, it's 40-what -- 7:00, 9:15, 11:30 -- depending on
11 landings or airs, but I think it's half an hour. But if the
12 aircraft runs late, it's, you know, you're turning that aircraft
13 fast. And if you're doing air tours, you know, depending on if
14 you've got -- depending -- it you can't be nothing. It can be
15 five minutes. It can be load, fly, unpack, turn, suck down with
16 some water and electrolyte or whatever and then go again.

17 It's hard. I'm at my breaking point. I'm kidding. But, no,
18 it's hard. It can be. It can be testy.

19 Q. Do you recall, the day of the accident, if you saw Scott
20 before you left the house? Did you see him that morning?

21 A. No, I don't recall. I don't think I did. You know, I do my
22 thing. I get in my car and go. His door might have been shut or
23 he might been in the shower. So I don't know.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I don't -- know, I don't remember seeing him the day before -

1 - I mean before the -- that morning.

2 Q. All right. You mentioned that Scott was full time before,
3 but now he's part time. Do you know why he made the switch?

4 A. I think he wanted to focus more his business. It was a
5 financial thing.

6 Q. I think we sort of danced around this. I don't know if we
7 specifically asked. Did he ever have any complaints about the
8 safety of the company, any safety concerns that he talked to you
9 about? Zoe had asked if you talked about training and things like
10 that with Scott, but did he ever mention if he got any Unsat --
11 unsatisfactory grades in training?

12 A. No, he didn't to me. You know, a lot of -- for many years,
13 when he was here full-time, one of the reasons I rented him the
14 room is he'd be on the opposite week to me. So we'd be, hey,
15 what's up man? Boom. And then he'd go back to Long Beach.

16 And then I'd go -- and then my week off, I'd go straight up
17 to Seattle. So it would just be, you know -- and it worked great
18 because he -- you know, but it's -- yeah.

19 Q. I know you said that you guys would all go to bed kind of
20 around the same time or at least go back to your rooms.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Did he have a TV in his room?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Any idea when he would typically wake up on a given day?

25 A. I know he sometimes worked at night. I know he worked -- I

1 mean, he was always on his laptop. I don't what time he was -- he
2 was on the opposite side of the house. And if I was monitoring
3 closely, I would feel weird, so.

4 Q. Okay. I wanted to have you walk through the passenger
5 briefing that you give, but what you seem to not want to do that.
6 So I will ask that the seatbelts -- do you get into the seat and
7 put them on?

8 A. No, but I could should you how to do it. It's pretty, pretty
9 clear how to -- you know, I make sure they understand it.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. But you don't climb into the seat and put it on you?

13 A. No, some guys do -- I don't. No, if they've seen the video,
14 they've seen the demonstration. I do it purely because I know
15 that one of them's going to yank one side and it's going to chafe
16 their neck. And I just do to put in the middle, put the buckle
17 along and move this thing. That's the only reason why, but no.

18 And I -- you know, you demonstrate it and they get it. And
19 they shake their head, yes, yes. And there's still people that
20 stuff it up, so.

21 Q. Ever see anyone struggle with taking the seatbelt off?

22 A. No, not even -- the most common area is the one -- the
23 buckle's attached to one of the belts permanently. It's part of
24 the system. And I've seen people try to get it -- no, that's
25 permanently attached. That's the only thing. No, most people get

1 it.

2 Q. So the brief time that you did see Scott, the day of the
3 accident, did he seem normal? Did anything seem out of the
4 ordinary?

5 A. No. In his usual good mood. He's a happy guy. Sorry. He
6 was a happy guy. He loved life. I mean, he -- the guy went all
7 around the time and he had his life arranged pretty sweet. We
8 were -- we always had a race, and I've got 54 countries in my
9 passport. He's got 57. So this is just kind of -- it's like,
10 I've traveled my whole life, so I like traveling.

11 MS. WILSON: All I have, thanks.

12 MR. DOWNEY: Oh, you're welcome.

13 MS. WILSON: Manny?

14 BY MR. FIGLIA:

15 Q. How would you rate the training the company has offered?
16 You've been here a while. What's your opinion about the quality
17 of training your received?

18 A. It's good. I don't -- there was nothing that's glaring that
19 stands out like I don't do enough. Or if you want to do more in a
20 rotation, I've done them with Simon. I said, I want to do a few
21 more because I don't get to practice it. Or when I trained with
22 Simon a couple of years ago, we were out at (indiscernible) and we
23 just did it.

24 You know, it's -- they'll let you do whatever you need to do.
25 There's no -- you know if you want to fly more or practice what

1 you have to practice -- you know, a lot of people don't want to do
2 it, but, I don't know, it's --

3 Q. Okay. And in the training, you really stressed performance,
4 planning and performing, how the aircraft performs as far as
5 weight.

6 A. The weight in back? Well I wouldn't say that -- obviously,
7 you know, they -- it's not -- it's part of the training, yeah.
8 But it's not, you know, anything that stands out more than the
9 other -- it's part of the whole overall -- and it's in the
10 briefing in the morning, the performance accounts.

11 Q. How about confined area operations? Do you -- do trainees
12 act with you? Compare it from when you first hired on until --

13 A. Till now?

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. I don't think it's changed a whole lot. You know, some --
16 somebody's -- I taught for years. I taught plenty of courses and
17 all confined. Some guys have this spot they'll go to because of -
18 - some guys will be more cautious because they don't want to, you
19 know, it's training. You don't want to get into a real problem.
20 And then some guys will get quite technical, confined area
21 landings. It just depends on the -- who's doing the training.

22 Q. And do you receive training yearly or it's just a check ride?

23 A. No, it's training every year.

24 Q. Training every year?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And there's a subsequent --

2 A. Yeah. You do your training and then the check ride.

3 Q. Okay. Besides our rotations, what other emergency procedures
4 do you --

5 A. Hovering orders. You -- we go -- we descending with power.
6 What else do we do? Some stuck pedal, depending on what area, you
7 know. Run-on landings, you know, you might -- they don't want to
8 drag the skids, but I don't use -- yeah.

9 Q. In the training, you discussed LTE?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Which aircraft do you -- you're H130, T10 as well?

12 A. Yeah, all of them.

13 Q. And AStar B2?

14 A. B2, yeah.

15 Q. With your experience in this company, have you ever been
16 asked to take a flight that, let say, a junior pilot didn't feel
17 comfortable doing? As an example, let's say the winds are really
18 -- they're still within limits. You're -- someone who hasn't been
19 with the company or with your experience level wasn't comfortable
20 doing it. Have you been offered such a flight?

21 A. I've been a weather bird. If that's, you know, when it's
22 been real bad, it gets foggy, I believe, once in a while, when you
23 get a big system and then you have some real guidance here what it
24 looks like over the dam, and I've been a weather bird before, for
25 a long time. Yeah, I've done it once or twice.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I didn't volunteer. I was asked. I was put on it.

3 Q. I'm told that -- and, again, as far as the company's
4 concerned, have they ever utilized your expertise on doing, let's
5 say, a briefing. Besides the elite products, I've seen that from,
6 you know, obviously (indiscernible), you know, the chief operating
7 officer or in the elite pods. Have they ever asked you to, say,
8 hey, you've got pretty good knowledge here. Why don't you give us
9 a brief on what you've seen or --

10 A. I've never been called out. I've offered it, like if we're
11 having a talk about something involving whatever -- whatever it
12 may be. But I -- am I -- well, this, in the past, Willis (ph.),
13 that when he comes down there from Red Lake, you know, I've
14 offered what I've experienced in the past.

15 Q. And do you think that they accepted it and --

16 A. Yeah, totally. People -- and even -- and 90 -- I mean, I
17 think you've got to be pretty stupid if somebody comes up and says
18 how about -- and offers you -- hey, I'm not trying to tell you how
19 to do it, but this is what you can anticipate, what might happen.
20 And most people are pretty receptive to it. I don't do it often.
21 I just kind of mind my own business unless it's clearly --

22 Q. Have you been offered training outside the company, as an
23 example, the track --

24 A. That pre-training? Not through Papillon, but in my
25 (indiscernible) we (indiscernible).

1 Q. You used your company?

2 A. I've got my (indiscernible).

3 Q. With respect to, let's say if someone filed an irregularity
4 or a hazard report, do you know what the information is regarding
5 strictly what the hazard is? In other words, that information was
6 shared within the company?

7 A. Right. Well, I don't understand the --

8 Q. In other words, if another pilot filed a hazard report or,
9 let's say an irreg, let's say that there was a near miss --

10 A. Right, right.

11 Q. -- somewhere. Is that information filtered down to --

12 A. Yeah, absolutely.

13 Q. And where is that document?

14 A. It will come down in the briefing, you know, that the airport
15 and its incidents. But it'll be in the briefing. Watch out for
16 this; watch out for that. This is what happened.

17 MR. FIGLIA: That's all I have.

18 MR. BOYD: No questions. Can't understand him.

19 MR. DOWNEY: That's part of the plan.

20 BY MS. WILSON:

21 Q. When you're a weatherbird, do you have passengers with you?

22 A. No, usually it's you, lead or -- when I've done it, it's like
23 if you're going to GCW, it's usually -- when I've done it it's
24 been winter. So, no, you might have crew, but no paying, no
25 really passengers.

1 Q. So would a lead say, hey, why don't you go check it out and
2 see if it's --

3 A. No, it'll be like I've got to launch a helicopter to see if
4 it's lifted, you know, if it's -- if you can do it. And then if
5 it isn't, you just turn back. And that's what I've done -- or you
6 get through.

7 Q. So given your nine years of experience and seeing all the
8 pilots in and out here, right, what do you think Papillon or
9 Airbus or the FAA could do to make it safer for you to fly?

10 A. I think the bases are pretty well covered. You know, for me
11 personally, just getting older and the heat and my -- but I talk
12 to them. And I never have a problem and I feel good. You know,
13 if you're living in Vegas long enough, you -- sinuses are terrible
14 here. Everyone has sinus issues and -- excuse me. My mouth's
15 really running when I -- so.

16 Yeah, I have -- I can't think of anything that stands out.
17 No. Is it -- how much has it (indiscernible)? It's been a while.

18 Q. Do you think that you see 130 gets the performance that you
19 see in the RFM?

20 A. Yeah. You've got to manage it in summer. And R aircraft
21 that are not as -- as ones that stand out that don't have it, it's
22 more for hot, high DA days. And you just know. I flew one
23 yesterday. It's a beast. But it's within, you know, it's legal.
24 But you've got to fly it. You know, you got to -- in summer,
25 you're managing power all the time, you know. You're right on the

1 yellow line, in and out, and they're doing now. And it's hard to
2 have six pounds to spare. And it's -- you got to work, so.

3 Q. Yeah. Do you know if Scott would play music in the
4 helicopter during the --

5 A. Play the radio?

6 Q. The loop?

7 A. Yeah, fantastic songs we have on there.

8 Q. Do you recall anything different about Helicopter 34?

9 A. No. I don't think I ever -- I've flown them all so many
10 times.

11 Q. None of them stand out?

12 A. Well, sort of like I know which ones are, you know, just like
13 a struggle with me, with my weight. Not struggle, but, you know,
14 that that you've got to -- just don't have as much power and
15 people are going to pass you. But that's just the helicopter,
16 yeah.

17 Q. If you have this wind and you're landing on one of these
18 pads, where are your eyes? Where are you looking as you're coming
19 in crossing the river?

20 A. And I'm coming in? Oh, I'm scanning -- I'm continuously
21 scanning, scanning my instruments. But now I -- look, I know how
22 to fly where -- I mean, I used to, you know, always look at the
23 parameters for settling with power. Now you can just feel. You
24 know when you're going to slow or you don't have enough power,
25 pulled it out a little too much.

1 I'm scanning mainly for other traffic. You're scanning
2 windsock traffic. Everything. It's all, you know, and the
3 passengers on the ground and then sitting and making a decision on
4 how you're going to set up that approach. And your instruments as
5 well. But, you know, at that point, eyes outside most of that
6 approach, my eyes will be outside.

7 Q. If you're crossing over the river and you see someone's blade
8 still turning where you're going to be parking next to, what do
9 you do?

10 A. Go around if you have to. I mean, if he's far away enough,
11 you could, you know, you just remember which way the wind's
12 blowing. You could land -- just if the wind's blowing your rotor-
13 wash into him you don't want to, you know, do that. It's -- if
14 you -- if it's the other way around, then you, you know -- but as
15 long as he's far enough away, it's common sense.

16 Q. How long does it usually take to get them slowed down enough?

17 A. Well, when you -- some rotor brakes are a little better than
18 others. And, you know, that you -- we pull it at 100. Or I
19 usually pull it at 100 just to save the rotor brake. And it's
20 depends. You don't want to yank the thing till you're blue in the
21 face. You just, you know, get it to slow down as far.

22 Sometimes -- some days you can pull it completely and lock it
23 on and it's just going to take its own sweet time. Some of them
24 are more receptive to the brake. So probably a little two -- kind
25 of. That was the question, right? How long does it take before -

1 -

2 Q. Yeah, and just what you do to manage it, of going around or
3 do you talk to them more?

4 A. You can. A lot of times, he might have turned his avionics
5 off so he's not on the radio anymore. Yeah.

6 Q. Any other things that you look for in trying to assess what
7 the wind's going to be?

8 A. Off the top of my head, what I haven't told you already?

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. I generally try and -- I -- driving to work, you know, I've
11 just -- just because I've been here a long time and I'm just
12 familiar with it, so I kind of know, okay, this is what out day's
13 going to be like. And, you know, I've looked at the forecast and
14 a lot of times I look to see if we get canceled flights and I can
15 go home. No, I'm kidding right now.

16 Q. So at the briefing sheet on the day of the accident, one of
17 the TAFs was 14 gusting to 22 and then 18 gusting to 28. Does
18 that seem significant to you?

19 A. No, that's pretty standard in the northern, the wind, yeah.
20 Yeah, that's not excessive. We fly in that all the time, for
21 years we've flying in that.

22 Q. Would that put you are on alert that it's probably going to
23 be bumpy?

24 A. Yeah. You can -- I look, when I drive down the road, I look
25 at the windsock, if it's standing all the way out. Yeah, I just -

1 - it's just -- it's -- probably a lot of it's subconscious. I
2 just start setting it up, you know, in my brain. I'm like, okay,
3 this is what we're going to anticipate. Even when -- and then
4 when you pick it up, yeah, you're looking at different readings
5 from different windsocks, but you got, you know, mechanical
6 obstruction or, you know, the building and you got all kinds of
7 things you consider, and which way are you going to take off,
8 especially station today. Today I took off -- really, it was the
9 other day, I did four air tours.

10 One flight I took off to the West. And then another flight I
11 took off to the east. And it looked like it was favoring a little
12 bit one way or the other each time. So that's why I made my
13 decision. But all I'm trying to do is get as much lift as I can
14 because I'm yellow line. You know, I've just got no power, very
15 little power. And it's just hot like hell and it slowed it up.
16 That's how I make my decision. In touch with it, hopefully it
17 keeps working.

18 MS. KELIHER: Well I really appreciate it, Robert.

19 MR. DOWNEY: Oh, anything for you to help find out exactly
20 what happened. You know, I still don't know anything about it. I
21 just read the preliminary. Am I done?

22 MS. WILSON: Yeah.

23 MR. DOWNEY: Done?

24 MR. BOYD: Thanks, Robert.

25 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of John Becker

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 27, 2108

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.


Kimberlee S. Kondrat
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

* Accident No. WPR18MA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: ANDRIA ELLETT

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

THOMAS TOBIN
Wilson Elser Law Firm
(Representative for Andria Ellett)

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:40 a.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being with us today. Conducting these interviews is just a routine part of our factfinding mission. We want to talk to different parts of an operation to understand what the processes, the procedures are so that it helps us better understand the accident. We have the ultimate goal of wanting to prevent something like this from happening again. We're from the safety side, not from enforcement or trying to place blame on anybody.

We would like to record this interview. That will allow us to create a transcript that will then become a part of our public docket. Is that something you're okay with?

MS. ELLETT: Um-hum.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could I please put my computer away real quick? (Indiscernible) are you okay with me putting the computer --

MS. WILSON: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Everybody else is okay with that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Indiscernible). He was so happy to get out of here.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You bet your butt.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're very nice people.

MS. WILSON: So as a part of this interview process, you are entitled to have a representative sit in with you. It can be a

1 colleague, a friend; it can be a lawyer. Is there somebody that
2 you would like to have as your representative? Can you state his
3 name, please?

4 MS. ELLETT: Thomas W. Tobin.

5 MS. WILSON: Thank you. I'm Katherine Wilson. I am a human
6 performance investigator for the NTSB.

7 MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher, operations, with the NTSB.

8 MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, director of safety for Airbus
9 Helicopters.

10 MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety for Papillon.

11 MS. WILSON: So we'll each take turns asking you questions.
12 If you don't understand a question, please ask us to clarify. If
13 you don't know the answer to the question, that's okay too. Just
14 say --

15 MS. ELLETT: Okay.

16 MS. WILSON: -- that you don't know. And I will allow Zoe to
17 start the questioning.

18 MS. ELLETT: Okay.

19 INTERVIEW OF ANDRIA ELLETT

20 BY MS. KELIHER:

21 MS. KELIHER: How long have you been with Papillon?

22 MS. WILSON: I'm sorry. Can we state the full name?

23 MS. ELLETT: Andria Ellett.

24 MS. WILSON: Okay.

25 MS. ELLETT: I have been with this company 11 years.

1 BY MS. KELIHER:

2 Q. And where were you before this?

3 A. I was with Scenic Airlines before Grand Canyon Airlines
4 bought -- or Grand Canyon Airlines bought Scenic, so I've been
5 doing it for 22 years.

6 Q. Wow. And how many people do you oversee here?

7 A. On my customer service staff, I have 16 agents. I also
8 oversee the airplane ramp, which has eight agents on there.

9 Q. And we have you listed as the customer service manager for
10 Boulder City.

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. Okay. And what -- were you an agent before? What was your
13 prior position?

14 A. With Papillon, I've always been a manager.

15 Q. And can you just tell me what your daily operation -- what
16 you do every day?

17 A. Okay. Lots of different things. My counter -- we're a
18 little different than some of the other counters because we do
19 have airplane and helicopter passengers checking in at our
20 counter. So what we're doing is getting the weights for the
21 passengers and entering those into the computer. Depending on the
22 different tours that they're doing, we'll give out some stickers
23 that are color coded so that we are able to separate those for
24 boarding. If they're doing a helicopter, they'll go directly into
25 the safety briefing, or if it's already playing, we'll make

1 announcements for that since there's not -- it's not a huge room
2 where everyone can go at one time.

3 And then we collect any money that is due. We do some
4 upgrades for front seats, window seats, different tours. So we'll
5 collect that at the counter. And then we will assist with the
6 boarding for the airplane side. The helicopter pilots board their
7 own passengers, so -- but for the airplanes, we get them ready and
8 they get boarding cards for that. And then any customer service
9 stuff that comes up.

10 Q. So when a passenger arrives, what's the process that an agent
11 (indiscernible)?

12 A. So they come in from the bus. And then when we call them up,
13 first thing we ask them is where they're from so that we can have
14 that information in their reservation, and that also goes on the
15 manifest for the narration that gets played. We weigh them in,
16 make sure that we have their names. We'll also enter any
17 children's ages so that that can be entered. It shows on the
18 manifest. And then once they've weighed in and they've got either
19 their sticker or that, then they just wait in the terminal until
20 they're called.

21 Q. So when you say they come in and they're called, does that
22 mean you're expecting them? When you say you call them, what is
23 --

24 A. When they, when they check in, when we get their weights, we
25 either give them the sticker, or if they're on a helicopter, we

1 tell them to listen for their name. So then they just wait in the
2 terminal until we either call their sticker color or the pilot
3 calls their name.

4 Q. The actual name of the passenger.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. So if they drive here by car and they walk in, they
7 just go up to the counter.

8 A. They come up to the check-in counter up here.

9 Q. Okay. And the screen that you're entering this information,
10 what -- how do you -- first do you ask them their name and that's
11 what pops up?

12 A. We ask them their name because we have a lot of languages.
13 We ask for their IDs. That helps us find their names as well. If
14 they speak English, it's easier to find their names because
15 they're all listed by departure time. We do have groups that, you
16 know, they might not -- they might try to check in separately
17 where they're under one name for a group booking, so we have to --
18 if we can't find their name, obviously we have to look through
19 some of the other reservations just to see if their names --
20 because the front name of the reservation is what shows on our
21 screen.

22 Q. Is that sometimes the person that booked it, like the travel
23 agent or the --

24 A. Not usually. Usually it's the passenger name. I mean, every
25 once in a while a tour guide will put it under their name, but the

1 tour guide is with them, usually, when they do that. So he gives
2 his name.

3 Q. And then what that screen comes up, besides weight and age,
4 are there other --

5 A. So we have a, we have a screen that we use for the check-in
6 which has every passenger's first and last name, where they're
7 from, their -- a place to enter their weight. And then we have a
8 box where we check in after we've entered their weight that makes
9 it go through the system to show that they are checked in. So if
10 everyone's checked in on that aircraft, the tower could manifest
11 the aircraft.

12 We also enter the seating notes. Seating notes are based on
13 each agent's first and last initial, and just a 1-1 just so that
14 they know who needs to be seated together or -- because sometimes
15 you have maybe a group of eight people and it's two different
16 families, so you want to try to seat the mom and dad with the kids
17 or something like that. So we do enter seating notes to help the
18 tower manifest do that.

19 Q. And there's just different codes for that?

20 A. We just use -- the way that the agents do it is their first
21 and last name -- or first and last initials. So I use A.E. And
22 the first reservation I would check in for that departure, I might
23 do A.E. 1-1 for the two people on this reservation. So when the
24 tower is going through the names and stuff, they can see that
25 these two are traveling together, because they may not be able to

1 -- they can't see that in the manifest screen without the seating
2 notes. Just helps them to know that they are traveling together.

3 Q. Is there any place to enter contact information for them,
4 like a phone number?

5 A. The front of the reservation has a phone number and an email,
6 a place for a phone number and an email. That's not usually
7 something we do at the check-in counter; that's done through
8 reservations or when they book online. There's a place for them
9 to enter that information.

10 Q. But when you click to check them in in that screen that pops
11 up, is that information there?

12 A. No. There's three different screens in our reservation. The
13 general screen, which has the first name, the agency, phone
14 number, email. There's a notes section so that -- it's open
15 notes. You can write anything into that. The pricing for what
16 tour they're doing is there. And then the next screen is where we
17 enter to make sure that the names and weights are entered in
18 there.

19 Q. So for that first screen that you were just talking about,
20 can the agent change anything on that?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. And then the weights, are most of the time they in
23 there already, a guess --

24 A. They give us an estimated weight most of the time. Not
25 always, but most of the time. And that will -- you can put --

1 enter it in in kilos, stones or pounds. And then our agents are
2 required to make sure it's in pounds.

3 Q. Got it. Is there always a senior or lead or a manager --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- that's available? So how many agents are usually working?

6 A. It can be anywhere from four to eight at a time.

7 Q. With one management --

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. Who is the person that's (indiscernible) --

10 A. I have -- I'm the manager, and I have -- two, three -- four
11 supervisors.

12 Q. So is it -- so you are a supervisor or is there a supervisor
13 and --

14 A. It can be just me as the supervisor, or there's a supervisor
15 for morning and afternoon that's going to help me schedule it.

16 Q. In February --

17 A. But there's always one.

18 Q. In February, would it have been the same?

19 A. Yes. Although in February, because our days are a lot
20 shorter, we don't have, like, a double shift. So we have, we have
21 like a -- because we don't -- in the summer we're here till, like,
22 9 o'clock sometimes, so we obviously can't do 5:00 a.m. to 9:00
23 p.m. So in the winter our last departure is at 3:00, 3:15 to 4
24 o'clock, just depending on what time of the year it is. So the
25 supervisor is the same all day.

1 Q. Okay. And plus, potentially, you? So the supervisor and
2 you?

3 A. There's potentially the -- there could be two supervisors
4 working that day. Because we're at very minimum -- more minimal
5 staff than we have during the summer.

6 Q. When you start in the morning, what's the first duties that
7 you do before passengers start coming?

8 A. I'll look through the check-in screen, looking for groups,
9 any special bookings through maybe sales and marketing. Just look
10 through the screen, look at, look at the aircraft so that I can
11 see if we have overbookings or anything like that. I'll just go
12 through the screen -- the aircraft screen and the passenger
13 screen.

14 Q. And then just wait for passengers to come in?

15 A. The person who closes at night kind of sets some stuff up for
16 the next day. So for -- especially for the airplane sides when we
17 have the stickers. So we'll make sure that that first flight,
18 with whatever groups we have, we have them set up by -- with all
19 their stickers. Or we do have passengers with bags who are going
20 to the river, so we have to set up all that as well. So it's
21 mostly just making -- getting the stickers that are then prepared
22 on what computer they're going to be checking in at.

23 Q. Does anyone go to the briefing, the pilots' briefings?

24 A. If we can't go to the safety briefing, we call the lead pilot
25 in the mornings. Because the safety briefing is at 5:45, and

1 that's when I have about 300 people standing at the counter
2 checking in. We kind of saw that yesterday, I know. So normally,
3 if we know -- if we have five or more aircraft going out on just
4 the plane side, we call the leads before the meeting.

5 Q. And what do they brief you on?

6 A. We ask about the weather, if there's anything that we need to
7 be weather advising for that day, anything that maybe we need to
8 know about, any charters that they have set up or their -- they
9 have -- taking people different places on different aircraft or --
10 you know, that we may not see on our screen, so --

11 Q. What's the weather advisory?

12 A. A weather advisory is something that we give to the
13 passengers when we have not perfect weather. So if it's getting
14 windy, then we'll advise them that there could be some turbulence
15 on the flight. Usually the leads, in the mornings, will say, we
16 need to start briefing at this time of day, or we need to brief
17 all day. Like for tomorrow, we're going to have some heat
18 temperatures at the bottom of the canyon, so we'll be advising the
19 passengers, you know, if it reaches a certain temperature at the
20 bottom of the canyon, that we're not able to do the landing
21 portion of that. And if they're not able to do the landing
22 portion, then we'll be refunding that portion once they return
23 back here.

24 Q. So how does that go when they check in? How do you -- you
25 have to brief (indiscernible).

1 A. We have to brief every passenger. We have the weather
2 advisory form that we go through, and we mark what we're advising
3 for. And then they initial each section. They mark yes, that
4 they still want to continue. We give them the option to continue
5 with the tour by signing the weather advisory. If they would like
6 to reschedule for a different day, they have that option, or if
7 they'd like to cancel with a full refund, they have that option.

8 Q. And if that's advised in the morning of a certain time, where
9 is that kept or where is that noted? Or do you just remember it?

10 A. Our forms are at the counter, and we'll just let all the
11 agents know this is what time we're going to be starting weather
12 advisories, or we're starting right now. So the weather advisory,
13 soon as we know when we're going to do it, we put the weather
14 advisories on the counter by their computers.

15 Q. Do the agents, the four to eight, do they all arrive at the
16 same time?

17 A. No.

18 Q. What's the stagger, usually? In February, what would the
19 stagger be?

20 A. In February, we have at the most five agents in a day. So
21 usually four of them are going to arrive, and then a closing
22 person will arrive a little later.

23 Q. What's the arrival time?

24 A. It just depends. It could be anywhere between 6:00 and 9
25 o'clock. A.M.

1 Q. But they'll be staggered like that. So two could arrive at
2 6:00 and --

3 A. No, usually the four are going to be in first, because that's
4 when we have the majority of the flights going out. And then the
5 closing person will be the last person during the winter to come
6 in.

7 Q. And so for that last 3:15 flight, there would be the closing
8 person. And then other agents (indiscernible) --

9 A. A supervisor and possibly one other agent, or possibly two.
10 We do have agents that are scheduled from, like, 5:00 to 1:00.
11 But if it's a particularly bigger round -- we have a group or, you
12 know, it's just a busy round -- then we'll have the 1 o'clock
13 agent stay for the last round.

14 Q. And the stickers. So just talking the airplane or the
15 helicopter side, when somebody comes in to check in, they're
16 advised to --

17 A. Go to the safety briefing room or listen for the announcement
18 for the safety briefing. And then once they watch the safety
19 briefing, that's the only sticker that they get.

20 Q. So it's (indiscernible) --

21 A. Not color coded or -- CSRs or -- I have a redcoat (ph.) that
22 -- he's not tied to the counter, so he tries to keep up with that
23 as well.

24 Q. So it could be the person checking in.

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. Okay. And then from your information that's entered and
2 after everyone's checked in, it goes up the tower. Are you
3 involved at all anymore, or they're just waiting and --

4 A. We could be involved if we have to split passengers traveling
5 together. They may call and say that we can't make weights with
6 this six passengers, so we're going to need to split -- maybe a
7 family of six, we need to split them four and two or, you know,
8 maybe we have to split them three and three. That's -- after
9 they've checked in, that's probably the most interaction we would
10 have. Or if a passenger goes out to the helicopter and says, oh,
11 I paid for the front seat, when they -- it's not on the manifest
12 or -- you know, so the pilot will bring them back in; the tower
13 will give us a head's up with that. But as far as, like, actually
14 preparing the manifesting, you know, just, if something comes up
15 that needs to be -- we need to talk to the passenger about is when
16 they would call us.

17 Q. When the pilot comes in, if they can't find the passengers or
18 people are in the bathroom or (indiscernible) --

19 A. They'll come and help -- have us help them locate them. And
20 the passengers, they'll -- they worry that, I won't hear my name
21 because -- you could see it is very loud in there sometimes. So
22 the pilots are very good at -- you know, we can't find this person
23 or -- and to verify their names, so we always tell them they're
24 not going to leave you, so just wait patiently. If you can't hear
25 it, we'll come and find you.

1 Q. We talked to a passenger that was on the flight before the
2 accident flight, and they were saying that the pilots were calling
3 them out by the country they were from. Do they usually do --

4 A. When we ask -- at check-in, we ask them where they're from,
5 mostly to -- so that they have the right narration for the pilot
6 to play. And they do use that as -- you're from United Kingdom.
7 It kind of helps them to -- I'm from United Kingdom; are they
8 going to call my name, type of a thing. So yeah, the pilots will
9 use that.

10 Q. And do you have a -- or is it just the tower that are
11 assigning different passengers together? Like if they're not --
12 like, how do you decide who goes in what helicopter?

13 A. If they're not traveling together?

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. That's just based on the weights. The tower does all of
16 that.

17 Q. And when the pilot is getting their manifest and their
18 people, do they get that from you?

19 A. No, they get it at the back counter. It prints over there
20 for them.

21 Q. Do pilots come in -- we saw that it was staggered. How do
22 they come in to get their group? Do you know, like, the time?

23 A. If it's the first flight of the day, as soon as their
24 helicopter -- they've done their preflight, their -- all the stuff
25 that they need to do and they have fuel and they're ready to go,

1 they'll usually come and wait at the back gate there where the
2 manifest prints. Throughout the day, it gets a little bit more
3 staggered because they're not all coming and going at the exact
4 same time. So they're usually -- once they get here, they walk
5 their passengers in, clean the windows, get the aircraft ready for
6 the next departure. And then once they have fuel and they're
7 ready to go, they come back in.

8 Q. Do you have interaction with the pilots at all?

9 A. Some.

10 Q. Did you know Scott?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Have you ever had any complaints about him?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Can you tell me anything about --

15 A. I mean, I know who he is. I'm not -- I talked to him. Like,
16 he was looking for passengers, maybe. I mean, that's not a lot of
17 interaction with him. I just know who he is because he's been
18 here for a while and I've been here for a while. So we don't have
19 a huge -- we have probably more interaction with the airplane side
20 of it because we are boarding and we see them every single time
21 we're boarding, whereas the helicopters -- we do see them, and if
22 they have any problems with a customer or anything, they'll come
23 over. But they board their own passengers so we don't --

24 Q. But if passenger complaints -- do those come to you too?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Have you ever had any complaints about Scott?

2 A. No.

3 MS. KELIHER: I think that's the only question I have for
4 now. Katherine?

5 MS. WILSON: Yeah. Thanks.

6 BY MS. WILSON:

7 Q. So the forms that you have the passengers sign for the
8 weather advisory --

9 A. The weather advisory.

10 Q. -- do you keep those?

11 A. At the end of the day, we -- they're all together and they go
12 to guest relations.

13 Q. Okay. Do you --

14 A. I'm not sure how long she keeps them. But she's the one who
15 gets those.

16 Q. You said guest relations?

17 A. Guest relations.

18 Q. Were you working the day of the accident?

19 A. No.

20 Q. No? Do you know, by chance, whether they were doing any
21 weather advising on that day?

22 A. I don't think they were. We did ask guest relations if she
23 had those and she did not, so I don't think they were.

24 Q. The safety video briefing that you direct passengers to, is
25 it -- so what happens? They go into the room, and then what?

1 A. After the video, they get the sticker. So they get the --
2 they only get the sticker after the video, or when they went in
3 the video and we've locked up the room with that retractable rope.

4 Q. And does somebody stand outside of the briefing room?

5 A. Not all the time. The person who was at the computers at the
6 very end of the counter, they will be the ones watching that
7 unless I have my redcoat, and then he will watch that.

8 Q. Okay. So what if the safety video's playing and somebody
9 checks in. How does that work?

10 A. The safety -- it plays all the time. So there's always
11 people checking in, a lot of the times when the safety briefing --
12 once we start the video and pull the string, then if you're not in
13 there, you have to wait until the next one.

14 Q. Okay. So somebody can't enter once the --

15 A. They could enter. I mean, there is that possibility because
16 it's not a -- you could crawl in there. But the CSR right there
17 could see if someone does that and they'll be like, you need to
18 watch the next video.

19 Q. Okay. So there is a possibility that somebody could
20 potentially only watch a portion of the video, but there is a
21 customer service person nearby to hopefully catch that.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And do customer service agents ever give the safety briefing,
24 or is it only via video?

25 A. No, not at my counter. I know they do that at a different

1 counter. At other counters, they have given them. I'm not sure
2 that that's still the case. But we don't do it here.

3 Q. You mean like at other bases?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Yeah. Are you given any training on giving a safety
6 briefing?

7 A. No.

8 Q. What if somebody doesn't want to be weighed? Do you use
9 their guessed weight or do they have to be weighed once they come?

10 A. We weigh them. We tell them we have to have the weight for
11 the weight and balance of the aircraft.

12 Q. Okay. And I may have misunderstood. Did you say that you
13 also oversee agents on the ramp?

14 A. On the airplane ramp.

15 Q. Airplane ramp.

16 A. Not the helicopter ramp.

17 Q. Okay.

18 MS. WILSON: That's all the questions I have. Thanks.

19 Do you have any questions, Manny?

20 BY MR. FIGLIA:

21 Q. Have you been on any flights? I mean, in 11 years I'm sure
22 you've --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. -- taken a flight. Okay. You enjoyed it?

25 A. Of course. I've been in the canyon lots of times.

1 Q. Do you do annual TSA training?

2 A. TSA training?

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. No.

5 Q. The Transportation Safety Administration doesn't come here
6 and talk about any type of --

7 A. No.

8 Q. You weren't here the day of the accident. But are you aware
9 of what's in, let's say, the mishap response plan that the company
10 has? And you're familiar with that?

11 A. I did come in as soon as they called me.

12 Q. Okay. And would you say your manifest information on the
13 passengers are accurate?

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. Okay. And there's enough information there for, let's say,
16 if an aircraft did have an incident --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- you would respond. Okay.

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

20 MS. WILSON: Burl?

21 MR. BOYD: I have nothing.

22 BY MS. WILSON:

23 Q. One follow-up. Do customers ever approach you or the
24 customer service agents about safety concerns about flying in
25 helicopters?

1 A. I would say that, of course, there's always somebody that's
2 like, is this safe? Or as they're checking in, are we going to be
3 safe? And that's probably increased a little bit more since
4 February. But we're always, you know, the -- we're not going to
5 take any chances. I don't feel like we are pushing, like, okay,
6 we have to do this or -- you know, that's why in the weather
7 advisory we do give them the options to cancel. And people do go
8 out to the aircraft and be like, okay, I don't want to go. So you
9 know, we do have -- we always have people who are asking stuff
10 like that.

11 Q. Do you have guidance to follow of what to say to passengers?

12 A. As far as --

13 Q. Like if they, if they had a safety concern. Like you said,
14 you know, we're not going to take any chances, those type of
15 thing. Is that something that the company has advised you to say,
16 or that's just something that you feel is the appropriate thing to
17 say?

18 A. That's just something we feel is appropriate.

19 MS. KELIHER: I've got a few.

20 MS. WILSON: Okay.

21 MS. KELIHER: I'll give you some time.

22 BY MS. KELIHER:

23 Q. Do you find it's more difficult for them to fill out a
24 weather advisory? Does it take -- I mean, that takes more time?

25 A. Yes, it takes more time. As we've done weather advisories

1 over the years, we've learned that you have to be very specific
2 and very thorough on what you're telling them and what the weather
3 is going to be like. So if they're -- say it's a windy day. And
4 it's pretty windy, but you know, but we're still within the limits
5 of being safe. We'll tell them it's bumpy. And it does take a
6 lot longer. And there is a lot of passengers who don't speak
7 English, so we do have to have Google Translate up to help us with
8 that. So yeah, it takes a lot longer to check in and get through
9 the process when we have weather.

10 Q. Do you think there would be an easier way of doing it?

11 A. I mean, we have thought about, because of the majority of our
12 passengers are -- book online, about -- you know, we do have one
13 thing on there, on there that says, you know, weather conditions
14 can cause changes or cancellations for flights. But because the
15 weather -- I mean, every day is just so different, I feel like we
16 have to tell them every day. I mean, because here, you can see
17 it's a perfect day. But at the canyon, it might be snowing, so
18 you just -- I don't know how we would communicate that to every
19 passenger without doing it as they check in.

20 Q. And then in the morning when they call over if you don't go
21 to the brief, when they say weather -- so say if they say it's
22 windy. Do they tell -- how do they quantify it? Just say it's
23 going to be bumpy, it's going to be windy? Do they tell you the
24 knots?

25 A. They just tell we're going to -- say we're going to have

1 winds today, so you'll need to start weather advising right now,
2 or with the first flight. Or sometimes they'll say, you might
3 want to call us back at 9:00 or 9:30 and say, check on the
4 weather. Obviously there's times where weather isn't forecast and
5 it happens. So there is times where passengers don't get the
6 weather advisory just because we were not able to -- the weather
7 -- monsoon season. A thunderstorm came up quicker than we could
8 foresee or something like that. So there's times where they don't
9 get the weather advisory, but the pilots -- the lead pilot tells
10 us, you know, it's going to be stormy or we have low clouds or
11 windy, whatever that's going to be. And that's what we brief,
12 according to their tour.

13 Q. And then will they call you back later in the day to make
14 sure they're confirmed?

15 A. They could call us back and say, we're canceling the rest of
16 the day because the winds are getting stronger, or they will call
17 us back and say -- because maybe we started with the first flight
18 and it's through now 11:30 and now it's not cloudy anymore or it's
19 not windy anymore. So they will call us back and say, you don't
20 need to weather advise anymore. Sometimes that happens.

21 Q. And then if someone gets sick on the flight or airsick or
22 something like that, is that reported to you when they get back?

23 A. Not usually. That'd be -- some days, that would be a lot of
24 -- I mean, they have the sick sacks. I mean, the only time we
25 would normally get a call about a sick passenger is if we need to

1 go to the aircraft and help them once they're off the aircraft to
2 get them inside, or if we have to call paramedics for them.
3 That's usually the only time we know about airsickness or a sick
4 passenger.

5 Q. And then are people that are regular fliers, like
6 photographers or the people who marry people, the passengers, are
7 they in your system already in your normal --

8 A. We don't do a lot of weddings at this -- we actually don't
9 normally -- I mean, once in a while, we'll see someone who's been
10 married, but they don't -- we don't have weddings from here.
11 They're mostly out of Las Vegas. I don't even know that we've had
12 a wedding in eight or nine years out here. They're always out of
13 Las Vegas. But as far as their photographers and our regular
14 people, I don't know about that.

15 Q. And then do you think it would be difficult -- I know given
16 the (indiscernible) best person to answer this question -- to get
17 an email address or a phone number for each person as they're
18 getting weighed?

19 A. It would be very time-consuming. Because summer, I mean, you
20 have reservations from 1 person up to 80 people. And if you had
21 -- I mean, I -- you could, you could print something out maybe and
22 have -- give it to the tour guide and have them fill it out, but
23 as far as if you had to type in every phone number and email for
24 each passenger, it would get very time-consuming.

25 Q. So even if it was as they're stepping on the scale and you're

1 confirming it's this person, this weight, if there was another box
2 and you said, okay, and what's your phone number --

3 A. With the language barrier, it would cause issues. Because I
4 mean, that group of 80 may be French or they -- I mean, I have --
5 I do have some people who speak other languages, but not every
6 language, so --

7 Q. Okay.

8 BY MS. WILSON:

9 Q. The customer service agents, do they check in for Grand
10 Canyon Airways and Papillon?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Is the safety briefing offered in other languages?
13 The video?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Do you have any training in weather?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. Do you think that would be helpful, or is the
18 information that the pilots give you fully --

19 A. The information they give us is pretty good. I mean, I can
20 look at the weather on the internet or, you know, the pilots give
21 me some sites that I can look at the radar and I can look at the
22 forecast and stuff, so I can kind of plan that. But as far as,
23 like, reading the weather and -- there's an airline weather
24 whatever, I can't read that.

25 Q. Okay. And that's not something that you think you would

1 need.

2 A. No. I feel like the pilots give us information. And I mean,
3 they can -- they'll also talk to me about, you know, we're still
4 within the limits to go, but what's the customer service
5 experience going to be? If I -- I don't want to send them out
6 there. Yeah, we can, we can get there, but the canyon is covered
7 in clouds. I don't want to send them out there so that I have to
8 give all the refunds when they get back, so --

9 Q. If a landing tour turns into an air tour, you -- do you only
10 refund the landing portion? Do they still pay for the air tour
11 itself?

12 A. They would be charged the difference from a landing to an air
13 only, and that can vary depending on how they booked their
14 reservation, if they booked through an agency, if they booked
15 online. So that amount can vary depending on how they booked.

16 Q. Is there ever a time when they would, they would get a full
17 refund?

18 A. If they took off and the weather got worse or changed and had
19 to come back, then we would give them a full refund.

20 Q. Like if they didn't even make it to the canyon?

21 A. Right.

22 Q. When passengers have to be rescheduled, are they usually
23 rescheduled for the next day, or does it --

24 A. Whenever is convenient for them. During the summer or busier
25 months, it's probably not going to be for the next day because

1 we're already sold out. Sometimes we have to offer them alternate
2 tours than the one that they had because we're sold out. So it
3 just depends on what's going to work for them.

4 Q. Do you notice, is there any pressure -- so let's say that the
5 day before there was a lot of cancellations because of weather.
6 Now it's the next day. Do you feel like there's any pressure for
7 flights to go --

8 A. no.

9 Q. -- that you can see? Okay. I know you said you don't really
10 have passengers coming in and saying that they got sick or
11 something like that, but would there ever be a case where you
12 would call the lead pilot and say, you know, I've had some
13 passengers complaining of turbulence or something, and you know,
14 what's the weather doing?

15 A. Throughout the day -- because passengers will ask how
16 turbulent is it. So throughout the day, there are several times
17 we call to see, you know, is it really bumpy? Is it just slightly
18 bumpy? So that we can tell the pilot -- or the passengers that.

19 Q. All right. Thanks.

20 MS. KELIHER: And when they come back in, if they complain
21 and say, the pilot was swearing the whole time and -- is that
22 recorded anywhere?

23 MS. ELLETT: No.

24 MR. FIGLIA: They can, they can put that in our --

25 MS. ELLETT: Well you mean, like --

1 MR. FIGLIA: -- guest (indiscernible).

2 MS. ELLETT: We can put what they said in the notes. I can
3 -- I mean, if that's what -- how you're asking it. But it's not
4 like -- we don't have video or recordings of that. Is that what
5 you mean?

6 MS. KELIHER: No.

7 BY MS. KELIHER:

8 Q. Is there any way to make a note of it?

9 A. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. Sorry, I misunderstood that. Yeah, we
10 would enter notes and we would queue that to the guest relations
11 queue.

12 Q. Where do you enter the notes into the --

13 A. In the reservation, there's a note field that's freeform
14 notes.

15 Q. So you would say, what's your name?

16 A. What's their name, pull up their reservation and they'll --
17 that reservation. Depending on, you know, what the issue is,
18 sometimes their headset didn't work or -- you know, sometimes
19 that's something that we can just resolve at the counter. But if
20 the -- I really haven't had anyone come and complain to me about
21 the pilot like that. But if I did get something like that, then I
22 would report it to the chief pilot or the lead pilot.

23 Q. What are the main things that you hear that are the
24 complaints? Make sure you put everything in (indiscernible).

25 A. I wanted the front seat; I didn't get the front seat. I paid

1 for the front seat -- which they always think they paid for it,
2 but they -- no one can pay for it until we have the weight and
3 balance and we know for sure you're going to get it. That's when
4 we collect for the front seats. I didn't hear my language. Don't
5 really get a lot of complaints.

6 Q. (Indiscernible).

7 A. I mean, obviously some people don't come to the counter to
8 complain. They'll go to -- they'll wait till they get back and
9 maybe send an email to guest relations. Or you know, maybe we had
10 to split four or six passengers, and one aircraft was 15 minutes
11 behind the other one. So they may be -- they may complain that
12 they weren't together at the bottom of the canyon that whole time
13 because of the staggering of the helicopters.

14 Q. Food.

15 A. Maybe the food. Once in a while, someone will say, well, I
16 wanted a veggie meal, but you know -- we can do that, but we have
17 to know in advance because we have a caterer. So they may
18 complain. Or maybe they were short a meal at the bottom of the
19 canyon, and there were seven people and we only had six meals that
20 got put into the -- so that, something like that has happened.

21 Q. How much leeway are you given to give refunds of certain
22 things?

23 A. I can, I can refund components of, like, a meal or no
24 narration or something like that. As far as, like, delays on the
25 helicopter, I go up to \$50 at the counter for a two-hour delay, if

1 it got to a two-hour delay. And then beyond that, we work with
2 guest relations. And sometimes it's -- they go further, sometimes
3 we don't. But ultimately, I work with guest relations on that, or
4 the supervisor.

5 Q. All right.

6 MR. FIGLIA: I have one more question. What if you have a
7 safety issue? How would you, how would you report that?

8 MS. ELLETT: On Flight & Duty Tracker. We have that for both
9 sides, so whatever side it's on, we have -- we can go log in
10 there, put in an incident. If it's a -- there's different things
11 we can do. Safety. We see a safety hazard and we want to report
12 that, we can do it on Flight & Duty Tracker. Or any time we have
13 a passenger illness or a passenger hurts themselves getting in and
14 out of the helicopter, all of that we fill out an incident on
15 Flight & Duty Tracker.

16 MS. KELIHER: Do you ever hear any of the passengers complain
17 about seatbelts? Anything about it?

18 MS. ELLETT: No.

19 MS. KELIHER: All right.

20 MR. FIGLIA: Okay, just one -- do you attend safety meetings
21 on a regular basis, like quarterly or --

22 MS. ELLETT: Yeah. I'm on the safety committee, so --

23 MR. FIGLIA: Okay. Great.

24 MS. KELIHER: That's good.

25 MS. WILSON: Great. Thank you so much.

1 MS. ELLETT: Okay. Thank you.

2 (Whereupon, at 11:22 a.m. PDT, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of Andria Ellett

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 20, 2018

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.

—  —
E
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: ALEXANDRE FREIRE

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration
(Observing)

THOMAS TOBIN
Wilson Elser Law Firm
(Representative for Alexandre Freire)

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By Ms. Wilson		22

I N T E R V I E W

(1:24 p.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Okay. Thank you for being here today. These interviews are just a part of our routine investigation. We're obviously investigating the accident that occurred on February 10 earlier this year.

I am Katherine Wilson. I am a human performance investigator with the NTSB. We'll go around the room and introduce everybody else.

MS. KELIHER: Hi, I'm Zoe with the NTSB as well. I'm doing operations.

MR. FREIRE: Okay.

MR. FIGLIA: I'm Manny Figlia, director of safety for Airbus helicopters.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety for Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FAA Las Vegas.

MR. FREIRE: Okay.

MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one person represent you during this interview. It can be anybody. It can be a colleague, a friend or anybody of your choosing. Is there someone that you would like to have?

MR. FREIRE: Yeah, I have Tobin here.

MS. WILSON: Okay. And what we'd like to do is we'd like to record the interview, and that way we can do a transcription of

1 the interview that will then be included in our public docket as a
2 part of this investigation. Is that okay?

3 MR. FREIRE: Yeah, absolutely.

4 MS. WILSON: Okay, great. And just so that you know, we're
5 here strictly from the safety side. We're not looking at blame or
6 enforcement action. We simply just want to understand what
7 happened and hopefully prevent this from happening again.

8 If we ask you a question you don't understand, please ask us
9 to clarify. If you don't know an answer, saying, I don't know is
10 okay too. We don't want to force you into any specific answer.

11 Do you have any questions before we get started?

12 MR. FREIRE: No.

13 MS. WILSON: Okay, great. For the record, can you state your
14 full name, please?

15 MR. FREIRE: Full name is Alexandre. And last name is
16 Pedrosa Freire, F-R-E-I-R-E.

17 MS. WILSON: F-R-E-I-R-E?

18 MR. FREIRE: Right.

19 MS. WILSON: Great. Okay. And I'm going to turn it over to
20 Zoe, who's going to start questioning.

21 MS. KELIHER: All right. We have two pilots that have very
22 similar names.

23 MR. FREIRE: Oh really?

24 MS. KELIHER: Freredore (ph.)?

25 MR. FREIRE: That's weird. That's wrong here.

1 MS. KELIHER: That's a --

2 MR. FREIRE: It's F-R-E-I-R-E. Yeah.

3 MS. KELIHER: Yeah. F-R-E-I -- all right, there we go.

4 Thanks for speaking with us.

5 MR. FREIRE: No problem.

6 INTERVIEW OF ALEXANDRE FREIRE

7 BY MS. KELIHER:

8 Q. So I'm just going to ask you some basic questions. How long
9 have you worked at Papillon?

10 A. I got hired in January class -- beginning of January, so
11 almost six months now.

12 Q. And how many hours total time do you have?

13 A. Does that have to be precise? Around 1500.

14 Q. And what about on the EC-130?

15 A. About 250. These numbers might --

16 Q. Very busy.

17 A. -- vary a little bit, so --

18 Q. Yeah, of course. So you were in the John Davis (ph.) class
19 and the --

20 A. That's correct, yeah.

21 Q. Got it. So I see that on here, and why we wanted to speak
22 with you, is you were flying on the day of the accident?

23 A. I had one flight on that day, yes.

24 Q. Because you were scheduled for the 7:45 time?

25 A. I have to go look back. I'm not -- I think it was in the

1 afternoon, but I think my flights were unsold, the last flights.
2 So I'm pretty sure. I have to look at it again. I'm not 100%
3 sure.

4 Q. How does the schedule normally go, like, that far?

5 A. Either you have the morning shift, which is early. At that
6 time of the year, I think it was 5:30 showtime, yeah. Or you get
7 the afternoon, 12:30. Yeah.

8 Q. So I see it broken down where it says 5:30, 7:45, 8:15 --

9 A. Yeah, there's --

10 Q. -- 9:30 --

11 A. -- a few schedules in between, but generally speaking, you
12 get either the morning or the afternoon, yeah. There's only
13 couple pilots that will come at -- you know, in between. So 7:45
14 or the 9 o'clock, or the over-dam pilot, which is 8:45.

15 Q. All right, can you remember of what it was like flying on the
16 day of the accident?

17 A. Yeah. It was, it was a windy day, like normal. A normal
18 windy day here. That's what I remember. Yeah. As far as flying-
19 wise.

20 Q. So just take me through the -- what it's like of arriving
21 here, what you do. Kind of walk me through all the steps of --

22 A. So if you get here in the morning, the very, the very first
23 shift of the day, you go preflight your helicopter. And then
24 after that, we come here for a, for a briefing, morning briefing.
25 And then at that time of the year, we do the runup as well on the

1 helicopters in the morning. And then if you're sold, you go in
2 the terminal and get your passengers, and ready to go. If
3 everything's good, of course.

4 Q. So if you arrived at 7:45, how would that work?

5 A. Was that the time I arrived?

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. Yeah, I don't, I don't remember exactly the schedule that I
8 had. I have to go look at it. Probably had a 7:45. Probably had
9 a 9 o'clock flight or 8:45 flight, something like that. That's
10 kind of weird time, to be honest. I don't remember exactly why I
11 came here at 7:45. Yeah.

12 Q. But how would that work of -- if you (indiscernible) --

13 A. Okay, yeah. If you have a 7:45, they always -- you're always
14 required to be at least one hour before. So that's how the
15 schedule works, so you have enough time to preflight a helicopter
16 or brief yourself as far as the weather. Like I say, in the
17 morning, they do have all the pilots meeting for the briefing.
18 But if you are in these shifts that they already had the briefing,
19 you go and do your briefing yourself, sign the sheet. And that
20 means -- yeah, you're getting the weather for that day.

21 Q. And how do you do that?

22 A. Well you'll use the briefing that we have. Everything they
23 say on the briefing, it's written on the paper. So not a big
24 difference. It's watching the lead pilot telling you the briefing
25 and set up your reading, which is an official briefing to --

1 weather briefing, so -- and that's basically it.

2 Q. So describe walking in there. What do you do? If I'm going
3 to, if I'm going to shoot a documentary of you coming in and what
4 you normally do, what would the script be?

5 A. Okay, so from parking car, all right, you walk in the
6 building. So you go inside here. That's the very first place.
7 You log in, of course. You clock in and get your briefing, read
8 the briefing, see how the winds are going. Then you go, after
9 that, you go look in the weather. And then you look in the
10 aircraft. If your aircraft is good for the day, if it has been
11 preflighted from a different pilot. If not -- but you're still
12 responsible for preflighting again. That's basically it. So
13 making sure your aircraft is good to go, and then the weather,
14 already got it. So it's your decision anyway to fly or not.
15 That's pretty much it.

16 Q. When you go get your passengers, do you know who you're
17 getting? How does the transition of the manifest and collecting
18 passengers -- how does that work?

19 A. Yeah, you go inside the terminal, and you got the computer
20 with the names on the, on the computer, on the program. And when
21 it comes out, when it's finalized, it's -- they've been weighed
22 and everything, you got fuel in the helicopter, the weight and
23 balance is good, maybe we'll print your manifest. And then -- and
24 you call your passengers. You make sure that you have the right
25 passengers. And is that, is that your question? Yeah.

1 Q. And then -- so when you get your passengers, what do you do
2 with them?

3 A. You greet them. You asked if they watched the safety
4 briefing. Ninety-nine percent of the time, they watched the
5 safety briefing. I would say -- I don't think I've ever had a
6 passenger that came to me without watching the safety briefing.
7 But we still, you know, like to touch a few things here and there
8 with the passengers as far as safety, especially the ramp here and
9 seatbelts. Anything that you think it's important to add it up to
10 the safety briefing, you can do as a pilot as well.

11 Q. Do you remember anything specific about that flight?

12 A. No. About my flight? No, no.

13 Q. Do you remember if it was an air or did you land?

14 A. I don't remember. Yeah. I should have looked at it since I
15 knew I was coming here. I didn't even know what was my shift on
16 that day, but yeah. I wasn't here on that time of the accident.
17 I was actually shopping with my wife, and then I got an email from
18 the lead just saying we've had an incident, so -- but I wasn't
19 here. So that's why I was little surprised that you guys wanted
20 to talk to me.

21 Q. I guess we just wanted to see, in the morning when you come,
22 of what that was like. Because it looks like Scott got here
23 shortly after you.

24 A. Yes, it was actually -- yeah. I met him on that day,
25 actually. And we didn't talk to each other much on that day. But

1 I believe he had the same -- maybe similar schedule than I did.

2 I'm not sure, so --

3 Q. Do you remember anything that was exchanged, or anything
4 about him?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Can you describe to me of -- with your indoctrination
7 training and coming in here, of how was it described to you of
8 landing at Quartermaster? How did you, kind of, learn about
9 everything that goes into that?

10 A. As far as, I mean, training?

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. We do a lot of training here off-airport, in different
13 mountains. Kind of similar places that we land in Quartermaster.
14 On Quartermaster, I think we do a couple trainings there as well,
15 and there's nothing too special about that spot. It's a, it's a
16 normal -- for a, for a helicopter pilot, it's a normal landing
17 spot. And then we go over the ifs. Whether the winds are coming
18 this way, that way. So what's the best approach you could do and
19 stuff like that. But nothing too special.

20 Q. Did you ever feel uncomfortable flying into Quartermaster?

21 A. I mean, if it's a windy day and stuff like that, and then if
22 you don't feel safe, that's -- they always mention here at
23 Papillon. If we don't feel -- you shouldn't land, just don't
24 land. You know, just do the air tour instead of the landing tour.
25 So I've never had a day that I felt that way, so --

1 Q. So I saw that you flew January 20, which was the day that a
2 whole bunch of things happened, and there was lots of irregularity
3 reports because people got stuck over there and there was lots of
4 wind.

5 A. I flew on that day, yeah.

6 Q. Do you remember anything about that? It was -- it's kind of
7 eventful. A lot of people didn't come back.

8 A. Yeah, I remember -- I think I flew the morning that day. I'm
9 not sure. Again, you -- to be honest, it's a long time ago. But
10 I wasn't here to know what was going on, so I'm assuming I was in
11 the morning, maybe, shift. Yeah, but I heard that people got
12 stuck there because of the weather, as far as weather. So I'm
13 really not aware of that day, to be honest with you, and --

14 Q. When you got into Quartermaster, have you ever felt like you
15 ran out of pedal?

16 A. No, no.

17 Q. Have you ever felt like you wanted a pad that was taken?

18 A. If I wanted to land in one specific pad that was taken?

19 Q. Yeah, or a side, if you wanted to --

20 A. Right, right.

21 Q. -- make an upriver versus downriver approach.

22 A. No.

23 Q. How do you decide what pad to land on?

24 A. So the way we do, if the winds are coming -- favoring, for
25 example, upwind, depends who is -- I mean, that's what we try to

1 do, or we are told to do. The first, the first helicopter started
2 to land further so it would be easier approach for whoever's
3 coming behind you. So pretty much it. So you -- let's say you're
4 the last one, there's going to be probably two or three pads left
5 for you to choose from. That's pretty much it. It's not like --
6 nothing too hard.

7 Q. Yeah. What about if your blades are still turning? Do you
8 have -- how do you communicate that, of where somebody's going to
9 land? How does that all work?

10 A. Yeah, if the blades still turning, we use the frequency that
11 the company uses to talk to the other pilots. That's pretty
12 common. We just say, I'm still spinning, or keep it spinning.
13 Let's say I'm coming to land and there's people landing right now.
14 I just say, hey, are you still down there? Just keep it spinning;
15 I'll be coming behind you. Stuff like that. No major problem,
16 yeah. Yeah. I mean, if anything, if you see they already shut
17 down their engine, you can do a couple go-arounds. But I haven't
18 had to do that yet.

19 Q. Do you feel that the communication is pretty open with the
20 more senior pilots here?

21 A. Yeah. Yeah.

22 Q. Have you ever reported different conditions of going into
23 Quartermaster to the person behind you?

24 A. No, not me. We had one flight one day that we did -- we
25 turned into an air tour. The other pilot in front of me, a little

1 more senior, just said hey, I was coming in; the winds were a
2 little bumpy. We just turned it into an air. It was good. Might
3 just -- did the same, and no problems, nothing asked from the
4 company. It's all -- from the day one, they always told us that,
5 if you, if you're flying or if you even don't want to fly, it's
6 your decision. They don't ask you pretty much. They're pretty
7 open as far as that, so --

8 Q. Did you file an irregularity report?

9 A. I don't think so. No.

10 Q. Have you, have you ever -- do you know what those are?

11 A. Yeah, yeah. I know what these are.

12 Q. Have you filed one at all?

13 A. I filed one, but it wasn't anything specific as far as
14 flying. It was more kind of stuff from the Quartermaster, the
15 ground of the Quartermaster, so --

16 Q. Like what?

17 A. We did the tents, so I felt a couple nails on the ground. So
18 I just reported that, but --

19 Q. And that was in an irregularity report that you did that?

20 A. I think it was an irregularity report. No, I think it was a
21 hazards report. I'm sorry. I think it was a hazards report.
22 Yeah.

23 Q. What's the difference between those?

24 A. Anything that can be a hazard. So I was just concerned about
25 passenger maybe step on a nail or stuff like that, but yeah.

1 Q. If you make a weather decision, do you have to do anything?
2 Like when you went back, do you have to report to the lead pilot
3 or anything like that?

4 A. No, no. I was very surprised there, because as a student --
5 I think I was a student. I don't know the dates. If you ask me
6 the day on that flight, I don't know, and probably it's going to
7 be very hard to find it as well because it was no big deal.
8 Because like I said, they didn't ask me anything. No questions
9 asked. What's safer is safer. So I told the passengers, hey,
10 we're going to try to land; if it's, if it's unsafe, we just do an
11 air tour. And then they were very nice about it too, so --

12 Q. Do you know when the passengers fill out a weather advisory,
13 or they're warned that it might turn into a different tour?

14 A. If I know if they're aware?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Yeah, our CSRs, they usually tell the passenger. If it's a
17 windy day, they let them know up front what it can be, make sure
18 they are okay with that as well, so --

19 Q. Have you -- do you know when they've gotten that, though? Of
20 when they've signed it and when they haven't?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. They don't make you aware of it.

23 A. No.

24 Q. When you were training of going in here, how many approaches
25 --

1 A. Actually I think they -- sometimes they do. I'm going to
2 rephrase that. A lot, a lot -- sometimes they do say they signed
3 the waiver. Yeah, yeah. Sometimes they do.

4 Q. When you first started flying into Quartermaster, about how
5 many approaches did you do before you started taking passengers?

6 A. As far as me flying, I think about two or three. I would say
7 two or three, yeah. Yeah.

8 Q. And with the approaches, you -- how would that go? Would you
9 do the actual full tour, or would you just do an approach and then
10 take off, and then do another approach?

11 A. I do approach and then leave, and then do another approach.
12 Yeah. But not like circling. Yes. You just cannot go there.
13 Yeah. It's just more like on the route training you get to do
14 that, and then --

15 Q. When you bring passengers to the helicopter, do you usually
16 have to help them with their seatbelts and things like that?

17 A. Yeah. I sit on seatbelts, I explain how to put them on. And
18 I always ask them. I don't, I don't do it. I just say, how do
19 you guys take your seatbelts off? And then most of the time they
20 know. You know, spin the wheel. Every now and then you got to
21 push the button, you know, and then it's not tough. That's me
22 personally. I always like to go over the seatbelts. Yeah, so
23 that's the first -- one of the main concerns, because they need to
24 know how to take the seatbelts off, so -- and I think most of the
25 pilots here, if you go on the ramp right now, that's --

1 everybody's very specific about the seatbelts. Because you know
2 they are watching the safety briefing, but sometimes they're not
3 100% paying attention on that. So yeah. I show them, and I, and
4 I ask questions about seatbelts.

5 MS. KELIHER: All right, I'm going to have Manny ask the
6 flight training questions part of it.

7 BY MR. FIGLIA:

8 Q. Which aircraft are you assigned to or check out here?

9 A. The EC-130, and then originally the B2, the A-Star.

10 Q. B2. Okay. And you hired on six months ago?

11 A. Yeah, I hired on a January 8 class.

12 Q. Okay. And so you had training, and then the check ride soon
13 after?

14 A. Yeah, it was in between that week right there, from 18, 22 --
15 probably the 22nd, 23rd might be close.

16 Q. Okay. And that's the only training that you've had thus far,
17 because you've only been here six months and that was the initial
18 --

19 A. Right. That was the initial -- yeah.

20 Q. What was the training like? Was it online or was it ground
21 school? Was it a combination of both?

22 A. Yeah, we do the, we do the online training, which I forgot
23 the name of it right now. It's very common.

24 Q. Aft Star (ph.) or something?

25 A. Aft Star. Exactly. Aft Star. We do the Aft Star. And then

1 we do a lot of ground training here at the company. I think the
2 first week is just ground training. Then the second week is a
3 combined fly and ground, yeah.

4 Q. You refer to that as indoctrination training?

5 A. Say that again?

6 Q. Is that -- that's basically referred to as indoctrination?

7 A. Right, right.

8 Q. And how long did that last?

9 A. About two and a half weeks. Yeah.

10 Q. All right. And what do, what do you think of the training?

11 A. As far as --

12 Q. Quality.

13 A. -- flying or ground? It was --

14 Q. All of it.

15 A. -- it was a good training, yeah. I felt good. I felt really
16 good as far as the training.

17 Q. Okay, and where did you get your prior experience from?

18 A. I started in LA, a flight school in Los Angeles. Star
19 Helicopters. That's where I did my OO (ph.) training and then
20 became a flight instructor there.

21 Q. And what kind of aircraft were you on?

22 A. R22 and R44. Robinsons. Yeah.

23 Q. Specifically to the training here, how much performance
24 training based on the DH-130 (ph.) and the, and the -- you said
25 B2?

1 A. Yeah, the B2 was very recently, so maybe more specific about
2 the EC-130, right?

3 Q. Yeah. Are they specific on performance as far as aircraft
4 weight and balance, height had a ground effect on those type
5 parameters within the aircraft?

6 A. I would say it's a good training. They're pretty thorough on
7 the training.

8 Q. Okay. Specifically on -- and you talked a little bit about
9 it. You did some training at Quartermaster on confined area
10 operations. Did you do that type training elsewhere?

11 A. Yeah, so we -- during the training, we do a lot of off-
12 airport operations. And it's about 10, 15 miles south of here.
13 We got a lot of -- I wouldn't say similar, but very confined spots
14 and -- yeah. Pinnacles, all that stuff.

15 Q. Okay. And as far as emergency procedures, did you -- were
16 you trained on loss of tail-rotor effectiveness and settling with
17 power?

18 A. I'm not really sure. Not really sure if we did the settling
19 with power training. I don't want to say no, but I'm not 100%
20 positive on that one.

21 Q. Okay. And did you cover that in ground school?

22 A. Yeah, a lot. Yeah.

23 Q. Okay. Explain what the company does for risk assessment.
24 How do they assess risk, and how do they mitigate risk within --
25 in your opinion, your point of view.

1 A. I believe for them, risk -- how do they -- that's a, kind of,
2 pretty open question. Could you be a little more specific in --

3 Q. Sure. There's risk associated with flying. And here, I
4 would say, a predominant risk factor is winds, wind conditions and
5 aircraft performance. How does the company mitigate that? How do
6 they mitigate the risk that you may face in your everyday job?

7 A. Well the company -- well from the beginning they -- from the
8 day one on the training, they -- very open as far as your own
9 limits, your personal limits as far as the pilot.

10 So first of all, they are not hiring brand new pilots. So
11 the first requirement is a little experienced pilot. I know it's
12 not super experienced, but minimum 1000 hours they consider here.
13 So you're pretty much -- every pilot that's here, they've been
14 flying for a while at least, so -- and they're very open as far as
15 the flights. So let's say you have a very windy day. It's your
16 decision. If it's super windy, they will, they will start
17 canceling, so -- but you can take that decision and just say, no,
18 that's my limit; I'm not flying this day.

19 And it's pretty much it, yeah. So far as far mitigating the
20 risk, it's more like you as a pilot to take the decision for each
21 flight, you know. And if you feel like you should do it, and it's
22 your decision. The good thing is they don't ask any questions.
23 You just say, I don't want to fly this flight because of this and
24 that. It's, like, okay.

25 Q. Specifically, going into Quartermaster landing zone. So how

1 many available spots are there in that, in that area where you can
2 physically land?

3 A. Counting really quick from the top of my head, about 11.
4 Eleven, twelve spots. Eleven spots with a decent distance from
5 each helicopter. And 11, 12, that's pretty much it.

6 Q. The approaches into the Quartermaster, are they sometimes
7 more challenging than others based on how many aircraft are
8 already in there?

9 A. It can be. It can be, depending on where the other pilots
10 land and -- or the winds are, you know, shifting or not. So it
11 can be. It definitely can be, but -- yeah.

12 Q. And you generally don't overfly other aircraft when you're
13 going into Quartermaster?

14 A. I mean, right on top? No. But there's ways you can still
15 make -- let's say that your one aircraft is here; you have to land
16 it here. There are ways you can still do it without physically
17 flying around on top of the other one. But it definitely makes it
18 a little challenging. If you're flying -- especially upwind and
19 you have a spot here, so now you don't want to fly the aircraft;
20 you don't want to fly the tents where the passengers are. So
21 that's -- I say, it's -- everybody tries to land upwind so
22 whoever's coming behind have these spots behind you available, so
23 --

24 Q. And if there's a quartering wind, how do you, how do you
25 negotiate that?

1 A. Yeah. So I mean, we try to leave -- if you have any wind, if
2 you cannot make a headwind, at least get a slightly right
3 crosswind. It's better. But yeah. Try to, try to land into the
4 wind most of the time.

5 Q. So you're saying a right crosswind is better.

6 A. Yeah, I mean, quarter.

7 Q. And were you taught that here, or was that from your previous
8 --

9 A. I was taught here. Yeah.

10 MR. FIGLIA: All right. That's all I have for that.

11 BY MS. WILSON:

12 Q. Why is the right quartering tailwind better, as you
13 understand it?

14 A. The right crosswind. I mean, that's the way I was taught
15 here from training. Yeah.

16 Q. I mean, are we comparing this to, like, a left quartering
17 tailwind? What would happen with the left quartering tailwind?
18 Does the helicopter respond differently or --

19 A. No. I don't know how to answer that question, yeah.
20 Aerodynamics, breezes, maybe, on the EC-130. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay.

22 MR. TOBIN: Just as a quick clarification, you asked about a
23 quartering tailwind --

24 MR. FREIRE: No, no. Not tailwind. Quartering headwind.

25 MS. WILSON: We're talking about -- okay.

1 MR. FREIRE: Yeah. No, you don't want to land with the
2 tailwind. Yeah. Thank you.

3 BY MS. WILSON:

4 Q. I don't think -- I didn't mean just in landing. In general.
5 So we're talking about just a crosswind and a headwind, right?

6 A. Yeah, we try to come with the headwind, of course, always.
7 But if there's no way you can get a headwind, at least you can get
8 a slightly right crosswind. Not completely a right crosswind. A
9 kind of quartering head crosswind, not tailwind. Yeah. Then if
10 you have a tailwind, you shouldn't do that. You should come from
11 the other direction.

12 Q. Right. Okay. So is a, is a right quartering headwind
13 different than a left quartering headwind?

14 A. Yeah. I mean, the way I was taught here, yeah. It's -- you
15 should favor more the right crosswind. Yeah.

16 Q. You mentioned the time when you turned the tour into an air
17 tour because that pilot in front of you had mentioned that it was
18 bumpy. Did you actually attempt to land during that, or you just
19 took his PIREP and decided --

20 A. I took his -- yeah. Took his PIREP and then just made it
21 into an air one.

22 Q. When Manny was asking you about whether you had training for
23 LTE and settling with power, you said that it was covered in
24 ground school. But I didn't know whether you were referring to
25 both or just one of those being covered in ground school.

1 A. For both. Yeah.

2 Q. Both of them?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Okay. Anything from the training that you wish you had more
5 training on?

6 A. No. I think -- I wish I had -- I mean, the training that I
7 felt that I needed more training was off-airport, and they trained
8 me a lot on that, so yeah. I was the last one in my class to get
9 a check ride because of that. So it was a thing that I wanted to
10 train more and then they just kept training me on that off-
11 airport, so --

12 Q. You said you saw Scott that morning. That was the first time
13 you had met him, the morning of the accident?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Anything seem unusual about him, or did he seem like every
16 other pilot that you've met?

17 A. I mean, I was still new. It was February 10, right?

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. So it was probably my second week in line. So if --
20 everybody was still new to me. A lot of pilots was meeting the --
21 on the -- you know, as I was going. So a lot of pilots here, even
22 nowadays, you don't see for two, three weeks. So on that first
23 two weeks, everybody was new, so I didn't know about Scott or
24 anything. So I met him on that day. Nothing seemed weird,
25 because there's nothing I could compare with it.

1 Q. Okay. How would you describe the culture, the safety
2 culture, at Papillon?

3 A. Safety culture. We had a, we had a couple questions about
4 that. I mean, we're always doing quizzes, monthly quizzes. We
5 had one that was about that. What would you like to know exactly?

6 Q. Well I mean, do you, do you feel like safety is a priority
7 here?

8 A. Yeah, definitely. Yeah, yeah, yeah. From the day one, they
9 -- and they always mention, and it's -- and you think it's,
10 they're just saying that because they're just saying that, you
11 know? After all, it's all money, right? But no, they're really
12 safe. About, I think, two weeks ago, we had a windy day, and then
13 the end of the day, it was dying down. And then three pilots were
14 in Vegas. I was one of them. Just say, no, we're not going to
15 fly; it's still windy. They didn't say anything. The lead pilot
16 even congratulated me on -- congratulated us on the next day.
17 Good, smart decision. Yeah. If you don't feel like you're
18 flying, that's it. So as far as safety, for them it's priority.
19 They seem not to care much if they're losing flights as far as
20 safety.

21 Q. Do you feel that that's the same from the lead pilots versus
22 the chief pilots (indiscernible)?

23 A. Yeah, I felt the same way. Yeah.

24 Q. Ever take a flight that you wish you hadn't after you lifted
25 off?

1 A. No. I mean, you have windy days and -- but not really, like,
2 regret taking the flight. It's still safe to fly. If you take a
3 flight and then you come back, if you're not safe, you just --
4 hey, I'm not going anymore. You know, that's -- even getting the
5 pilot reports in the air, and they start canceling the next round.
6 So that's how it works. Yeah.

7 Q. Any issues, particularly wind, getting into Quartermaster?
8 Sharing information on the radio, either -- just talking on the
9 radio? Is it pretty busy, or do you feel like you can get, you
10 know, your radio call in?

11 A. No, I feel like it's okay. Usually we get training to
12 isolate the passengers, and we get bat towers, what we call it,
13 start our descent. So you're not hearing passengers anymore.
14 You're just -- it's pretty easy to focus on the radio at that
15 point.

16 Q. Do you ever notice people stepping on each other on the
17 radio?

18 A. Yeah, but that's not just there. Anywhere. So it depends on
19 the pilot, though. But it's -- overall, it's decent. Yeah.

20 Q. I heard that a second windsock has been added to
21 Quartermaster since the accident. What do you think about that?

22 A. It helps a little. Yeah, but -- and when you get there, you
23 already have an idea where the winds are coming from just from
24 descent. So that helps. That windsock helps. The other one
25 helps as well. That one helps a little more because sometimes you

1 have helicopters down there, and then the windsock becomes
2 unreliable because now it's being moved by the propeller. So that
3 one doesn't -- take that wind from the helicopter. So it helps.
4 Yeah.

5 Q. Okay. And what has been shared with pilots since the
6 accident? Any information about things to look out for, different
7 considerations when you're flying in and out of Quartermaster?

8 A. Well yeah, the same kind of training that we went. Just keep
9 an eye on the wind and basically make a good judgement. If you
10 feel not -- the winds are crazy, because the winds change down
11 there very fast. So go around. Don't land, don't land if you
12 feel you shouldn't land. Just go around, try again if it's not
13 safe. Just go.

14 Q. Have you done that, where you've tried to land and had to go
15 around?

16 A. I have not. No.

17 Q. You've seen pilots do that?

18 A. I have seen, yeah.

19 Q. And do they usually come back around and land, or do they --

20 A. I've seen two, three attempts and they land. Sometimes they
21 don't land. I've seen both, yeah.

22 Q. All right. Thanks, Alex.

23 A. No problem.

24 MS. KELIHER: I'll open it up for the rest, but before --
25 were you just recently told that you were going to come and talk

1 to us?

2 MR. FREIRE: Yeah. It was very recent. Yeah.

3 MS. KELIHER: Did they tell you anything about what to say
4 and what not to?

5 MR. FREIRE: No, I mean -- yeah, just what we're going to --
6 I mean, I was asking, what can they possibly ask me? But no. No,
7 general -- I wish they had told me. I would have looked at my
8 schedule that day.

9 MR. TOBIN: I'm going to object to anything further based on
10 attorney/client privilege. I don't have anything to hide,
11 actually, but --

12 MS. KELIHER: Does he --

13 MR. TOBIN: To inquire --

14 MS. KELIHER: (Indiscernible) --

15 MR. TOBIN: -- what his attorney had talked to him about
16 prior to speaking is an awkward area.

17 MS. KELIHER: I didn't realize that --

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Didn't he say --

19 MS. WILSON: (Indiscernible) --

20 MR. TOBIN: I'm representing him for the purpose of the
21 interview.

22 MS. WILSON: But I thought he said he hadn't met you before
23 this.

24 MR. FREIRE: No, no, we talked. We had a telephone call.

25 MR. TOBIN: We had a telephone call this morning.

1 MR. FREIRE: Yeah, but not in person.

2 MS. WILSON: A phone call?

3 MR. FREIRE: Yeah, yeah. Not in person, yeah. But we talked
4 over the phone.

5 MS. KELIHER: Okay, I'm going to open it up for the rest of
6 -- everybody else.

7 MR. FIGLIA: I'm good. Thank you.

8 MR. BOYD: I'm fine.

9 MR. WAUGH: No, thanks.

10 MS. KELIHER: All right. Thanks so much.

11 MR. FREIRE: We good?

12 MS. WILSON: Anything else to share? Anything that we didn't
13 ask you that you were hoping we would?

14 MR. FREIRE: No. I mean, no.

15 MS. WILSON: All right.

16 MR. FREIRE: All the pilots, we want to know what happened
17 exactly. And then that's all.

18 MS. WILSON: Thanks, Alex.

19 MR. FREIRE: All right. You're very welcome.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Alex.

21 (Whereupon, at 1:58 p.m. PDT, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of Alexandre Freire

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2018

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.



Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

*

PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

* Accident No. WPR18MA087

FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: DAVID GUTIERREZ

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration
(Observing)

THOMAS TOBIN
Wilson Elser Law Firm
(Representative for David Gutierrez)

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I N T E R V I E W

(4:30 p.m. PDT)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for joining us. This interview is a part of our routine investigative process, the part of our fact finding phase. It's common for us to talk to pilots and operators. We know that you were at Quartermaster the day of the accident, so it's not unusual for us to want to talk to people that were nearby at the time of the accident, or just other pilots who can let us -- inform us about your procedures, your training, things like that.

We're here strictly from the safety side. We don't have -- we're not here to place blame. We don't have any enforcement authority. So it's strictly just to understand what happened, hopefully prevent something like this from happening again.

We would like to record the interview. That will allow us to create a transcript of this interview that will then go into our public docket. Is that okay, if we record this?

MR. GUTIERREZ: Yes.

MS. WILSON: Great. And you are also entitled to have one person represent you during the interview. It could be a colleague, a friend, a lawyer. It's anybody of your choosing. Is there somebody that you would like to have represent you?

MR. GUTIERREZ: Yes. It's Tom.

MS. WILSON: Tom?

MR. GUTIERREZ: Thomas. Yes.

1 MS. WILSON: Tom Tobin, correct?

2 MR. GUTIERREZ: Tom Tobin, yes.

3 MS. WILSON: Great.

4 And we will now go around the room, and introduce yourselves.
5 I am Katherine Wilson. I'm a human performance investigator with
6 the NTSB.

7 MS. KELIHER: And I'm Zoe Keliher with the NTSB doing
8 operations.

9 MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, director of safety with Airbus.

10 MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, director of safety for Papillon.

11 MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA Las Vegas.

12 MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FAA Las Vegas.

13 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Nice to meet you guys.

14 MS. WILSON: Great.

15 MR. TOBIN: And Tom Tobin, a partner with Wilson Elser in New
16 York.

17 MS. WILSON: So we'll each take a turn asking you questions.
18 If you don't understand a question, please stop us, ask us to
19 clarify. If you don't know the answer to a question, it's okay to
20 say I don't know also. Do you have any questions before we get
21 started.

22 MR. GUTIERREZ: No, ma'am.

23 MS. WILSON: Okay. Can you please state your full name?

24 MR. GUTIERREZ: David Omar (ph.) Gutierrez.

25 MS. WILSON: All right. And with that, I will turn it over

1 to Zoe, who is going to start questioning.

2 MS. KELIHER: All right, I've been wanting to talk to you for
3 a while. We talked to everyone that was at the landing site
4 except you, so I really appreciate this and I'm sorry we're late
5 on this.

6 MR. GUTIERREZ: No, don't worry.

7 MS. KELIHER: We did read your statement though, and I just
8 refreshed everyone on the statement that you had had before. But
9 we just wanted to ask you some more questions.

10 INTERVIEW OF DAVID GUTIERREZ

11 BY MS. KELIHER:

12 Q. And first, I'd really like if you can go back into your
13 memory bank, and I'd love to hear from the start of the flight
14 that day, of the day of the accident, of you entering into the
15 canyon all the way to the time of the accident. And when I'm
16 going to ask you to recall, I would like you to try to give it in
17 details. And I'm going to give you an example of what I'm looking
18 for.

19 So as I -- I'm going to tell you about me driving here from
20 my hotel this morning. So as I approached my car -- it's a white
21 rental car. It's a Jeep Cherokee. I've never rented a car like
22 that. I had the keys in my pocket, which I could feel in my right
23 pocket hip that were bulging out, and when I went to click it, it
24 snapped back in a forward motion. And as I opened it up, I
25 rotated my body toward the leather seat, which I only knew was

1 leather because it was hot to touch, but I don't know if it was
2 actual leather or not. I swung my feet over --

3 So you can get that type of detail that I'm looking for, of
4 taking us from entering into the canyon and going around to land.

5 A. Okay. Okay.

6 Q. And feel free to close your eyes. Take as long as you need.
7 We've got time.

8 A. Okay. So on that, on that day, I was actually stationed or
9 based out of Las Vegas, so it was me and two other pilots. It was
10 Derek Mohica (ph.) and Venita Hayes (ph.) that was actually coming
11 out from that -- from Las Vegas area. And they both had a
12 wedding. So normally our routine that we have here, when we have
13 weddings coming out, for example, from Vegas, we have a point
14 where we call Wedding Point, where they have priority to land
15 there because of the whole wedding and the location. And then we
16 have a secondary one that is also on -- I guess you could kind of
17 say, as we land downriver, it is closer to the riverbank there,
18 just so that you can actually see the river and everything when
19 that happens.

20 So I believe I was flying. I don't really recall which
21 aircraft it was now, but I want to say it was 39 that I was flying
22 at. So it was -- I was actually -- I know I wasn't the first one
23 out, but I was -- I don't remember if I was the second or the last
24 one that -- to leave. So normally, whoever leaves actually lands
25 there first. But I do remember, we actually did have to go

1 downriver.

2 So as we entered the canyon, it was a little bumpy. Usually
3 on our normal common spots that we have a little bumpiness, so we
4 know exactly where that's at. And as we actually began to
5 descend, all three of us went out to Quartermaster, because
6 procedure is Quartermaster is Wedding Point. There has to be at
7 least two helicopters to land at our other location, which is
8 going to be the Ramada (ph.). But since I was the only one that
9 didn't have the wedding, I would have to go with them, so we all
10 landed at Quartermaster.

11 So Venita went around. As she took her approach, she went
12 downriver and landed at Wedding Point, what we call Wedding Point.
13 And I don't remember if it was me or Derek that came in second,
14 but he landed on that other spot that we have -- that's another
15 Wedding Point -- that's another area for Wedding Point. And then
16 I landed also. We all landed, came downriver. And I landed the
17 middle pad that is pretty much facing in front of the little
18 picnic area, as you can kind of imagine.

19 So we did actually take off a little late, because I do
20 remember Pollyanna (ph.) that was in a B3 that landed right behind
21 me. So as I landed, I remember I was waiting for her to shut down
22 she can land, because of all the turbulence and the downwash that
23 they actually create. So as she -- she came around and landed
24 downriver as well. She landed behind me. Actually after she
25 landed and everything, we shut down. Winds were actually coming

1 out from, I guess, the north, you want to say. So if you land
2 downriver, they were pretty much facing -- kind of coming in at an
3 angle. But they were favored to downwind.

4 So I got out. Our normal procedure is we get out. We always
5 talk to our -- explain to our passengers that there's going to be
6 other aircraft and everything landing there, so tell them to just
7 keep in mind it's going to be a lot of aircraft coming in. As
8 they're actually going around taking pictures and everything,
9 that's when we set up the picnics. So the way -- when I -- I
10 chose a picnic area that wasn't able to see the whole crash site,
11 so if you can kind of picture it -- I could draw it out right
12 here. The picnic area -- so here is, I guess, Wedding Point. And
13 then here's our notch as we come around here. Here's what we call
14 the notch here. So this is where Derek landed. Venita. I landed
15 right here in the middle, and then Polly landed down here.

16 So there's two actual -- here's our picnic area, and of
17 course there's some benches and everything inside. And then out
18 here on the open, we have two little green picnics areas. So I
19 chose this one right here. This is the one that I was -- that I
20 chose. So normally what I do, I always put out the food baskets
21 and everything, but I don't -- I wait to pour the champagne just
22 because it was windy, so they won't be blown off or whatever. And
23 of course, all the other aircraft.

24 So as my actual -- as my packs actually finally came to the
25 little picnic area that I had the lunches at, that's when I began

1 to start serving the drinks. So by then, that's when all these
2 other helicopters began to land. So I really don't remember who
3 landed who. I do remember that 50, the gold helicopter, was the
4 first one that landed what we call upriver, but what she did was
5 -- so this was pretty much where the crash site was actually at.
6 So as she came in, she kind of came in a little bit in and kind of
7 turned around so she could face landing into the, into the wind.
8 And that's what everybody else did. So she was the first one, and
9 she landed in this area right there.

10 And as everybody was coming in, I do remember there was two
11 other guys that kind of came in and landed upriver, so they pretty
12 much kind of landed with a little tailwind here, with the
13 tailwind. There was two guys here. After that, this kind of --
14 this is just like a blur to me. So I do remember they were here
15 because -- I do remember that they landed upriver, just because I
16 did have to -- I did wait for them to land so I could pour the
17 champagne.

18 But after they finished landing here, all -- there was some
19 more helicopters landing in this direction here. I'm not sure how
20 many. But as I was pouring the champagne to one of the
21 passengers, they were asking me questions, typical questions. How
22 long have I been here, and everything. And that's when I heard
23 Venita down here at Wedding Point started yelling, like, somebody
24 go get help, somebody get help. And as I turn around, I wasn't
25 able to see anything, just because the picnic area was behind me.

1 So I had no idea what was going on, but I saw everybody running in
2 that direction towards the crash site. And of course I put
3 everything down and I ran as well, and then that's when I just saw
4 a bunch of smoke come up.

5 Q. So can you take me through when you were right here, and walk
6 me through in as much detail as you can remember to right there?

7 A. As far as when I was landing?

8 Q. Um-hum.

9 A. So yeah. So we all coordinate. What I do personally is, as
10 I begin my descent -- so we're coming in in here, and as I begin
11 my descent, there's a little area out here right before which is
12 the Ramada, and I always look at that windsock to kind of help me
13 judge it. And as I start slowing down, that's when I look at my
14 airspeed and my groundspeed to see how the wind is. So we all --
15 it was strong enough winds that we knew, all knew we were going to
16 come down -- we're going to go downwind. So I mean, as I was
17 coming in, we pretty much just go through the notch, and as we go
18 through the notch, we kind of come around. We kind of come around
19 the notch and then we land downriver kind of deal.

20 As far as specific details, that it was bumpy, as far as the
21 controls or inputs that I put in, I really don't recall what I did
22 or anything. All I knew was it was obviously a little bumpy, just
23 because we get a little bit of turbulence from this notch right
24 here. But as far as how much it was, it wasn't -- I can't really
25 recall. Even if I kind of take a minute or close my eyes, I

1 wouldn't be able to remember.

2 Q. Did anything seem abnormal?

3 A. From, like, other times? Not abnormal. I mean, the winds
4 were strong. As long as you land into the wind -- there weren't,
5 there weren't crazy winds. Of course, we did get some good gusts
6 there that would all of a sudden just come at us. But nothing,
7 like, crazy. So what I -- probably would I double-guess it? I
8 mean, yeah, if the winds -- because they were actually a little
9 bit -- the windsock, the windsock that was at this actual picnic
10 area sometimes kind of starts moving, you know. So I mean, you
11 could tell that the wind does change. It doesn't come straight at
12 one angle, so it would kind of change and stuff, but -- and I
13 really don't recall much.

14 Q. If you were to come in and all of these pads were full, how
15 would you do the approach?

16 A. They always tell us if these were actually full -- like,
17 because normally what we do, even before the crash, I shouldn't --
18 like, if -- these are all downriver. These are all river pads, so
19 obviously we land here, and the first one goes up to the first pad
20 and everything till they fill up. And then these guys start
21 coming upriver, but they always tell us, like, just be PIC, you
22 know? Be PIC. Always land into the wind, make the right choice
23 and stuff like that.

24 Q. So how, in that situation, do you land into the wind? Just
25 doing it like Polly or -- I guess explain to me of how it would be

1 --

2 A. Landing downriver. We always land downriver.

3 Q. So the pads that were open and the wind that you saw, how
4 would you have had to come in if you were in Scott's position and
5 he was -- had already landed there? How would you have done your
6 approach?

7 A. You mean if I was in Scott's spot and he was in my spot?

8 Q. Um-hum.

9 A. Well I mean, the winds were strong enough where I personally
10 would -- probably wouldn't land upriver. If anything, what I
11 would do is I would probably even -- because the biggest thing
12 also we have to keep in mind is actually just blowing all the
13 passengers and everything as far as the meals and everything. I
14 would actually go around the notch and probably even come in, and
15 if anything, probably -- what I -- usually what I will do if they
16 will tell me is, like, kind of come in and I would hog this wall
17 over here and kind of make my approach landing downriver in these
18 areas down here.

19 Q. Do passengers wander up?

20 A. Occasionally, but we tell them to stay close by. But that's
21 why we always give them a briefing. I always give them a briefing
22 before we get out of the aircraft that there's going to be other
23 helicopters. If you see one coming your way, move off to the
24 side. Don't take a picture in front of where -- if there's one
25 coming your way. So I always tell them right before they --

1 because as soon as you open the door, they start going off and
2 taking pictures, and they have no idea what's going on. So as I'm
3 shutting down the aircraft, I tell them, hey, we have so much time
4 down here. See a helicopter, obviously don't -- move off to the
5 side and everything.

6 I mean, they're always really good. All the other pilots are
7 actually really good as far as, if there's one coming in, they'll
8 tell the passengers to come over, move off to the side.

9 Q. Have you flown in conditions that were as windy as the day of
10 the accident?

11 A. There has been times that we actually have flown, you know.
12 But like I said, there'll be -- we all talk up there. Like, let's
13 say if I'm just getting out of Boulder and there's another guy
14 that's closer to, like, Quartermaster or something like that.
15 Hey, it's too windy. I'll probably just call back base. Hey, how
16 are the winds looking? I don't feel comfortable. And right away,
17 he's like, all right. Turn around, come back or something.

18 Q. How long have you been with Papillon?

19 A. A year and a half.

20 Q. And what's your approximate total time?

21 A. Of flight time?

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. Last time I checked, it was like 2520? Two thousand, five
24 hundred and twenty hours.

25 Q. And how much of that is in the EC-130s?

1 A. I want to say about, like, 800 hours. So somewhere around
2 there.

3 Q. I saw that you had filed irregularity reports over the last
4 couple of years. But I've seen that you have done it for weather
5 conditions, where you had weather cancellations. Can you tell me
6 what the process is to file an irregularity report?

7 A. Like just in general --

8 Q. Um-hum.

9 A. -- what we do? So we file irregularity reports if we, for
10 example, go off our route, feeling sick, we have to take a
11 different course of action or something like that. For example,
12 like in my, in my situation, my example, I have actually had to
13 write some reports because we get out to the canyon and it -- all
14 of a sudden, it got -- visibility went low. There's clouds in the
15 canyon and stuff. So obviously we're not going to fly into that.
16 I'm going to have to alter my course, either go back or do
17 something. And then of course, then when I come back, that's when
18 I write the report saying, you know, I was off the green four
19 (ph.) for this reason, because there was clouds in my, in my
20 route, or something happened.

21 Q. Are you instructed to do that?

22 A. Yeah. They tell us that -- to write reports.

23 Q. When you get back?

24 A. Yes, we have about 24 hours to write a report.

25 Q. And who tells you?

1 A. It's either, for example, like the lead pilots, our lead
2 pilots and stuff like that, so --

3 Q. Do they ever instruct you what to put on the report?

4 A. No, we write it in.

5 Q. And have they ever asked you to change what you've written?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Have you ever felt any ramifications or been -- felt
8 chastised or punished or --

9 A. As far as, what, for writing the report?

10 Q. Yeah.

11 A. No.

12 Q. Or any decisions that you've made?

13 A. Um-um.

14 Q. Been questioned at all?

15 A. Um-um.

16 Q. With being here a year, I'm sure you've now seen other people
17 cycle in. What is the difference of flying with pilots that were
18 just hired versus after you guys have done a summer together, if
19 any, when you're landing at Quartermaster?

20 A. Just talking about, like, the new pilots compared to the
21 pilots that -- when I came in?

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. The biggest thing that I've seen after this whole crash thing
24 is, let's say, the first pilot -- so usually, like I was saying,
25 as we come in, if we had to land downriver, like in our situation

1 right here, the first pilot will land where either I would be at,
2 where Derek takes closer to the river, or Wedding Point if there's
3 no weddings there. So those are, those are the ones that you fill
4 up first, and then of course, all of them go back down.

5 But now, I guess what we're doing is, if we have to land
6 downriver, the first aircraft that comes in actually comes all the
7 way in to pretty much this corner and starts filling up the
8 spaces, you know? So everybody else could actually go behind
9 them, so --

10 Q. How did that change?

11 A. You know, I really don't know how it changed or why, but they
12 would actually -- we would talk and that's -- it just, it just
13 happened and now it's pretty much like a routine.

14 Q. But was there guidance given before of fill up only to the
15 half point as opposed to, you know, fill up, I guess, to those?

16 A. Well yeah, because -- well I mean, there's only so many spots
17 that are in this area and there's only so many spots in this area.
18 So obviously when you fill these up, then you go to these spots.

19 Q. But how are you trained of taking these first as opposed to
20 now, being trained --

21 A. When I first came in --

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. -- is what you're talking about? They would just tell us
24 these are the spots you fill in first. Because if you're the
25 first one to land there, you're going to be the first one to

1 leave. So obviously, when you take off, if you land behind here
2 and you have another guy, you don't want to fly over this
3 aircraft, you don't want to fly over these passengers and stuff.
4 You want to have a safe, clean takeoff clear of any, of any
5 obstacles and anything.

6 Q. So now what happens with taking off and filling it all the
7 way forward?

8 A. Well for example, like, if this guy, if this guy lands first,
9 he'll be down here first 30 minutes and then -- because that's how
10 much time we have down here. And then after he's on, he'll be the
11 first one out and there's nobody in front of him. And then of
12 course the second guy goes, and the third and the fourth.

13 Q. I guess I'm trying to figure out what the change was, of who
14 said, okay, now we're going to be doing it this way.

15 A. Well because we all pretty much just started talking. I
16 mean, from what I see, it's from the crash that happened. So
17 because of the crash. Because before the crash, we were still
18 coming up, landing upriver in a tailwind. So they were landing in
19 a tailwind upriver. So after the crash, we all just started
20 talking. And we all pilots get together and everything, and we
21 just started landing that way.

22 Q. What else has been talked about, of different things that
23 could change, or different things that you can think that would
24 have prevented this accident?

25 A. Prevented the accident? I mean, from what actually comes to

1 my mind, the bladders -- so we recently just started giving fuel
2 bladders in the aircraft. I know that takes time and you just
3 can't buy that from one day to the next. But I have seen that we
4 are starting to install fuel bladders in our systems.

5 Q. If you were -- if this was your fiefdom and you were the king
6 of the day and you could change anything with the FAA or Papillon
7 or the way Airbus flies and the -- what do you think you would
8 change that would make it safer to keep flying to Quartermaster?

9 A. Well, make it safer? Well I mean obviously that little notch
10 where that area happened was -- it's pretty much a really -- a
11 little swirl, little area you don't really want to get into. What
12 did help is they did install a windsock out there, and that
13 actually really helped us out as well.

14 Q. Do you find that the windsocks are indicative of what you're
15 going to find on the ground?

16 A. As far as what they both -- they both mean the same --

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. -- thing? Yeah. Yes, for the most part, they do.

19 Q. So when you're flying over, you find the wind and the
20 conditions in air are the same as what the windsocks are
21 indicating on the ground?

22 A. For the most part, yeah. I mean, of course there's always
23 going to be different times when you -- it's a little bumpy up
24 there and when you land it feels clear as day. But for the most
25 part, those windsocks are facing the same direction.

1 Q. Have you ever run out of pedal when you're flying into
2 Quartermaster?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Have you ever had any overspeeds?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Did you know Scott?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Did you guys hang out?

9 A. We didn't really hang out too much outside of work, just
10 because he had so much other stuff. But here in workwise, yeah.
11 I mean, I would see him. He wasn't, like, a fulltime employee
12 where I would see him every day. He was a part-timer, so he would
13 come in when we needed help and stuff like that. But there has
14 been times I did work with him.

15 Q. Did he ever talk to you about flying or Quartermaster or
16 anything that you can think of that would help us out?

17 A. Nothing.

18 MS. KELIHER: I'm going to give it to Katherine.

19 BY MS. WILSON:

20 Q. So would you consider Scott, like, a seasoned pilot, that if
21 you had a question you would go to him to ask for his advice or --

22 A. Oh yeah. Yeah.

23 Q. Yeah?

24 A. Yeah, I would ask him questions.

25 Q. Do you think other pilots thought of him that same way?

1 A. Yeah. Yeah, we all -- he got along with everybody, and he
2 would give us advice and stuff like that.

3 Q. Okay. You mentioned that, with the decision to -- or this
4 new, sort of, landing procedure that you have, you said the pilots
5 get together and talk. Is that -- are you talking about, like,
6 just here in the crew room --

7 A. No, I mean like on our --

8 Q. -- or do you mean, like, outside of work you talk about --

9 A. Yeah, outside of work. Yeah, we'll go hang out and stuff
10 like that, so --

11 Q. And then, in order to make a change like that, is that
12 something that needs to be cleared with lead pilots or the chief
13 pilot, or is this just, if the pilots all agree that this is how
14 we're going to land there, that's fine?

15 A. We all talk. Like I said, we all talk in the air. Hey,
16 how's the winds down there? Does it look pretty good? You know
17 what? The windsock's showing this but it's dead; it's calm, man.
18 But at the end of the day, it's PIC decision. If I don't feel
19 right coming in, even if this guy landed upriver, if I don't feel
20 right, I'm not obviously going to do that, you know. I'm going to
21 do a different approach.

22 I have actually had some times where I would be coming in
23 where I thought -- I would look at the windsock at the Ramada.
24 Okay, it's an upriver pad, so I'm just going to go from the river
25 straight in. But as I get closer, it does look like it's a lot

1 more -- it's a tailwind, so I go -- I've pulled power and gone
2 through the notch. Hey, it's Papillon, whatever, is going --
3 landing downriver. Ultimately it's a PIC decision.

4 Q. Okay. You said that you had 24 hours to fill out an
5 irregularity report. Have you ever been called out for not filing
6 one within 24 hours?

7 A. No.

8 Q. No?

9 A. Um-um.

10 Q. How do you know when somebody's coming in behind you after
11 you've landed in Quartermaster?

12 A. Well this is -- I mean, if you're going to land in
13 Quartermaster, you pretty much know from the beginning, from when
14 we take off from Boulder, you know. There's different ways, from
15 seeing the schedule when we're here picking up our passengers to
16 when they start up here. Even throughout the whole tour here, I
17 mean, you're going to hear their radio calls, you know. Hey,
18 we're all going the same way. As we get to what we call bat
19 towers in the canyon -- that's a little spot there -- that's where
20 we begin our descent. If you're going to be doing a landing,
21 you're going to begin your descent at bat towers coming down, or
22 you're going to continue one what we call the route, the green
23 four, and continue on as an air tour. So obviously if I hear, I'm
24 calling, hey, bat towers, I'm descending, landing at Quartermaster
25 base, I know he's right behind me.

1 Q. What is the amount of time, about, from passing bat towers
2 until you're touching down?

3 A. I would say, I would say about a song and a half. So I go
4 off by songs, like, as far as the passengers and stuff like -- it
5 gets awkward when they don't sing -- hear anything. But I would
6 say about four, five minutes, so --

7 Q. And so that's adequate time. If you've touched down and you
8 hear somebody saying, I've just passed bat towers, that's enough
9 time for you to shut down --

10 A. Yeah. Definitely yeah. And then of course -- I mean, since
11 I've been here a year, you pick up little things, like, okay, how
12 far it's going to be at. And of course, every time I cross the
13 river to land here, I always have to see how close the other guy
14 behind me is. I could see his pulse lights, how far he is, stuff
15 like that. And that kind of gives me a good judge. So he won't
16 be right behind me if I have to slow it down, if I have to do a
17 go-around or whatever, you know?

18 Q. And are you, are you making calls saying, don't shut down;
19 I'm right behind you?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay. And then, so if you're coming in, are those calls
22 always made? You know, the don't shut down; I'm right behind you,
23 or --

24 A. If he -- if you have any doubt that he's going to be close to
25 you while you're shutting down. You know, I always call the other

1 guy. Hey, how long? I'm about to shut down. And he'll tell me,
2 I'll slow it down, or just wait till I get there, or stuff like
3 that.

4 Q. Okay. So let's say you've had that communication. Are you
5 still watching his blades as you're coming in, or are you trusting
6 that he's -- okay.

7 A. Yeah. Oh yeah, definitely. Yeah.

8 Q. So you're not, you're not necessarily just relying on his
9 word that he (indiscernible).

10 A. No, no, no. Yeah, you're -- I'm always watching.

11 Q. So what would happen if you were coming in and then you
12 noticed that, you know, the aircraft was starting to shut down
13 right near the pad that you were going to land? What would you
14 do?

15 A. What I've done a couple times is, if I have -- let's say if
16 I'm coming in through the river, I know I'm going to land there
17 and he's still going to be shutting down, I'll pick another spot,
18 probably even do a go-around or something, you know, so --

19 Q. Okay. Would you try to slow down, or is that --

20 A. If I have enough time. If I'm, like, on the other side of
21 the river, yeah, I'll slow down.

22 Q. Okay. And do you feel like there's adequate time to make --
23 have those communications on the radio, or is it too, you know, I
24 don't know how frequent (indiscernible)?

25 A. There are, sort of, spots that I don't, I don't touch the

1 radios. Even if you guys will call me, if I'm coming short on
2 final, obviously my hands are on the controls and stuff. But if I
3 have plenty of time, let's say, if I'm on the other side of the
4 river -- I'm not sure if you've been down there, but if I'm on the
5 other side of the river, I have plenty of time to switch over.
6 Hey, I'm coming in, or whatever. Go back to the regular canyon
7 frequency.

8 Q. Okay, so you're on the canyon frequency. You'd switch over
9 to the Papillon frequency and --

10 A. Yes, there's an EC -- so we have three different radios.
11 There's one for us, only us Papillon up there. There's the canyon
12 frequency that we talk to everybody in the canyon. And then of
13 course we have our base frequency that I communicate back here in
14 Boulder.

15 Q. So how is the -- explain to me -- this is probably written
16 somewhere that I could look it up, but I'd appreciate it if you
17 explain. So there's a base frequency; so you're talking to the
18 tower. And then there's another just pilot-to-pilot frequency?

19 A. So we have three radios in there. One, like you were saying,
20 we call the EC freq, the EC-130 freq. And that's the one that we
21 talk to. We communicate with everybody up in the air. Only
22 Papillons. So only Papillon's frequency. And that's when I talk
23 to, hey, slow blades or whatever, I'm coming in too fast, or I'm
24 going around, or how's the winds looking?

25 There's the second radio that is going to be the Grand Canyon

1 West frequency. Or if we're in Lake Mead, that's going to be our
2 open frequency. And that's the one giving my position reports,
3 what altitude on that, where I'm going. Talking to the other
4 companies; for example, Maverick, Sundance, stuff like that.

5 And then our third radio is going to be our FM radio or our
6 frequency that we communicate with base back here. So either with
7 tower or with our lead pilots or whatever, so --

8 Q. Okay. And so you have three radios. You could have all of
9 those frequencies dialed in, like, tuned in, and then you just
10 switch.

11 A. Yes. Yeah, there's options where we can actually have all
12 three listening at one time. So I could be on one frequency --
13 for example, on the Grand Canyon frequency -- and I could hear the
14 other guys talking to me on the EC, on the EC frequencies, so --

15 Q. Okay. Or you can just isolate and listen to one --

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. -- frequency. And so you're only on the Canyon West
18 frequency from that time that you're in the canyon, and then after
19 that it's just the two frequencies?

20 A. No, no, no. I'm sorry. Well we actually -- so the one that
21 we're in the canyon, and that's the one our -- frequency to talk
22 to everybody else, I can't really -- I can't find the words. But
23 when we're in the canyon, we talk to the frequency inside the
24 Grand Canyon. When we're out in the open -- for example, in Lake
25 Mead frequency -- we talk to the aircraft out there. And then of

1 course, if you're in Vegas, we're on the Vegas frequency.

2 Q. Okay. And so when do you -- when you say "in the canyon," is
3 that the canyon west frequency, or is that something different?

4 A. Yes. In the canyon. Yeah. As we're coming in, we kind of
5 have a little spot we call Pearce Ferry right before the canyon.
6 That's when I give both my calls. I give the Lake Mead frequency
7 saying, hey, I'm at this point. Everybody knows, or should know,
8 that I'm going to be changing over, but I give my last call. Hey,
9 I'm here; I'm going to be heading east to the canyon. And then I
10 switch over to the Grand Canyon frequency and I tell them, hey,
11 I'm here and I'm continuing to the canyon. So both sides --

12 Q. And then you monitor that. You're on that frequency --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- the whole time that you're in the canyon.

15 A. And then when I get out of the canyon, which -- we have
16 another spot where we exit the canyon. Once again, I make my last
17 canyon call that I'm at the canyon; I'm going to -- about to
18 leave. And then I switch over to the Lake Mead frequency. And
19 I'm here in the canyon but I'm leaving, heading eastbound, or I'm
20 heading west. Whatever.

21 Q. Got it. Thank you for explaining that.

22 A. Yeah, no problem. I still don't get it. Sounds like --
23 yeah, that's -- we have our routes and procedures.

24 MS. WILSON: Great. That's all the questions I have.

25 BY MR. FIGLIA:

1

2 Q. David, tell your background. Where did you get the majority
3 of your flight training?

4 A. I started flight training in Phoenix, Arizona. It is the
5 school, flight school -- it's called UH. Universal Helicopters.
6 Out in Scottsdale -- they have about six, seven locations. One
7 location is the one in Scottsdale where I trained at. I was there
8 -- started in January 2014 and finished my training the end of
9 2015. And then I worked there as flight instructor.

10 Q. And is it from 22, 44 --

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. What other aircraft are you checked out in here at Papillon?

13 A. Here in Papillon, I have -- I'm checked out on the EC-130 B4,
14 the T2, the AS-350 B2 and the B3.

15 Q. Okay. Overall, what do you -- what's your impression of the
16 overall training program here at, here at Papillon? Mainly for a
17 new hire, when you came on back in -- was it 2017?

18 A. Yes, correct.

19 Q. How would you characterize the training, the quality of
20 training?

21 A. Good, good. Good training.

22 Q. In your training, were you exposed to what they call
23 scenario-based training?

24 A. Here in, here in Papillon?

25 Q. Yeah.

1 A. As far as scenarios, yeah. They would actually give us
2 scenario-based training.

3 Q. Could you give me an example of what scenario --

4 A. For example, when we were learning our emergency procedures,
5 and they said, hey, you have an amber governor light come on and
6 you're at Benelli (ph.) Bay, one of our reporting stations that we
7 have out there. What do you do? Do you continue on to the
8 canyon? Do you just ignore it? Do you call base? What would you
9 do, you know? And that's -- those are the situations they would
10 actually tell us.

11 Q. And in the training, how did you do performance-type training
12 and put that to practical use? In other words, whether it's
13 weight, whether it's different aircraft configurations, how did
14 you, how did you go about that?

15 A. As far as, like, the scenario questions that they would give
16 me when I was in training? Like, did I fly that?

17 A. Yeah, so -- right. Exactly.

18 Q. I think I did pretty -- I think I do pretty well. I mean,
19 obviously when you're a first -- when you first start out, there's
20 a lot of questions that you ask. And you're always, you're always
21 kind of like, should I do this, or this and that? But since I've
22 been here for a while, I am a lot more comfortable, where if I
23 don't feel comfortable flying with this governor light or there's
24 something in the aircraft that I feel -- the EP (ph.) says to
25 continue flight or something and I feel something that doesn't

1 feel right, I'm going to land, you know. Or just little things
2 like that.

3 Q. Did you do confined area training when you, when you first
4 hired on, and as well as recurrent training?

5 A. Yes, yes.

6 Q. Okay, and did you use the Quartermaster for some of that
7 training?

8 A. Not for training landing at confined areas. We would
9 practice our confined areas just south of Boulder City out here.
10 So out in the open.

11 Q. Okay, but part of the route check you did --

12 A. Oh yes. Correct. Yeah. Yeah, we did actually train as far
13 as our route training out there.

14 Q. Okay. What other type emergency procedures besides
15 autorotations did you -- were you exposed to, either in ground
16 school or in flight training?

17 A. And we're just talking about Papillon here, correct? We're
18 not --

19 Q. Yes, yes.

20 A. So they would tell me, for example, that we'll be flying, and
21 all of a sudden, for example, like, the instructor says, hey, you
22 know, we hit a bird. And all of a sudden, he does a scenario
23 where maybe I lost my tail rudder. You know, what do you do in
24 that situation? Okay. And then I would explain it, and if he
25 wanted me to do the procedure or something, I would, I would go

1 ahead and do it. Or all of a sudden, it's like, hey, your oil
2 pressure looks low. What would you do, you know? All right,
3 well, I'm going to look at my engine pressure light and, you know,
4 so forth.

5 Q. Okay. Did you -- were you specifically trained, whether it's
6 ground school or flight training, loss of tail-rotor effectiveness
7 and settling with power?

8 A. So yes. They did train us. They did, they did explain it to
9 us. So we didn't teach it in the air, but we did go over it as
10 far as scenarios, EPs, what it is on the ground.

11 Q. Okay. On that diagram, can you point out which way the wind
12 were coming -- were out of when the accident happened?

13 A. So the winds was -- like I said, the windsock is here, so the
14 wind was coming in in this direction, so -- and like I said, the
15 winds would kind of shift. So like in this direction. So the
16 windsock, you would sometimes see it being in this direction, and
17 then look at it again and it'll be in this direction. But in this
18 general area is where --

19 Q. So in other words, as it pointed -- coming toward me.

20 A. Yes, correct.

21 Q. Okay. And where was the accident aircraft?

22 A. The accident would be, like, in this area right here.

23 Q. Okay. And which direction -- I mean, you didn't see it, but
24 which direction do you believe that aircraft was moving?

25 A. As far as --

1 Q. Which direction was that aircraft intending to land?

2 A. Intending to land? So he was actually trying to land
3 upriver, but for what I pictured, I believe he was actually trying
4 to go inside the canyon, this little notch or whatever, and turn
5 around and land into the wind, or at least have crosswind as he
6 came in landing.

7 MR. FIGLIA: All right, that's all I have.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Burl?

9 MR. BOYD: I have nothing.

10 BY MR. WAUGH:

11 Q. Have you experienced wind shear in a helicopter?

12 A. There's been a couple of times when, I mean, you could feel a
13 little bit of turbulence and stuff like that.

14 Q. Okay. Have you ever experienced it at Quartermaster?

15 A. The common place where I could, where I could -- where I felt
16 it is as we climb the wall of Quartermaster to get out of the
17 canyon. So that's when --

18 Q. That is Quartermaster canyon itself?

19 A. Um-hum. That's when you would feel -- that's when I would
20 feel a couple of -- bumpiness there.

21 Q. All right. And is there anything peculiar about landing at
22 Quartermaster if the wind is upriver or if it's blowing downriver
23 that has to be done different than -- as far as technique or
24 procedure or anything like that?

25 A. No. I mean, for the most part, for the most part, if the

1 wind is coming -- because that's like a little -- it's like a
2 little, it's like a little wind tunnel for the wind, you know?
3 There's not too many places the wind could go. It's either going
4 to come in this direction where there's a huge hole, or it's going
5 to come in in this direction, kind of deal. So I mean, there's
6 either land this direction or land that direction. There's not
7 too much where it's kind of just, like, an open area.

8 MR. WAUGH: That's it.

9 BY MS. KELIHER:

10 Q. Okay. I'm going to have you, if I could -- if you can draw
11 by moving these dots and show me where all the pads are actually
12 located.

13 A. So just put the circles on where the pads are?

14 Q. Um-hum.

15 A. Okay, so --

16 Q. So of the east ones and then of the west ones.

17 A. I see. Okay. So here's one right here.

18 Q. Do you need more of those? Is there (indiscernible).

19 A. No, I mean, like, we land all on top here.

20 Q. And then for the accident area, with that, where would you
21 think that the pads that were open were? I can give you a
22 different view too. So if that's you --

23 A. Yeah, this is -- and this is the part where it kind of gets a
24 little blurry. Because like I said, I only remember these two
25 helicopters here: the gold one, and then Venita here. I really

1 don't remember --

2 Q. But if you were flying in, where would you think the open
3 pads were?

4 A. So I would actually be like -- the open pads would be, like,
5 in these -- out here. And then of course, if you have enough room
6 where this aircraft scoots up a little bit, you could also put one
7 right there.

8 Q. So are there any back here?

9 A. Yeah, I mean, you could also land back here.

10 Q. You can't -- do you guys go that far back?

11 A. We can. But I mean, that's if we have, like, 12 helicopters,
12 something like that so --

13 Q. At the most, how much does it fill up?

14 A. At the most? I mean --

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. -- I would say about, like, 12 has been the most that I've
17 ever seen it down there. So there might be more, but -- and then
18 of course it all depends. For example, like, these helicopters in
19 front, if they have -- if one lands in one area and then all of a
20 sudden another helicopter lands but lands way shorter a little
21 longer, leaves a huge gap in there, obviously there's a lot less
22 room for the aircraft right behind them.

23 Q. Got it.

24 MS. KELIHER: All right, I don't have anything.

25 MR. GUTIERREZ: Is that the day of the accident?

1 MS. KELIHER: This is from -- as best as I can tell, of how
2 I've labeled all of you guys by canyon time and where you were all
3 located. And then I got pictures and video from all of the people
4 that I could get a hold of that were on your helicopters, and
5 piecing it all together. And I didn't know if there was any pads
6 back there--

7 MR. GUTIERREZ: There is one back here. So this is where I
8 landed. Pollyanna. And then there's one back here that -- it's
9 really not too hard to see -- yeah, sorry, I kind of touched it,
10 but there's really one that's really hard to see, but there is one
11 back there.

12 MS. KELIHER: Okay. And so from here, would there be a spot
13 possibly next to --

14 MR. GUTIERREZ: Yeah.

15 MS. KELIHER: Okay. All right, I don't have any other
16 questions.

17 MS. WILSON: Anyone else?

18 Anything that we didn't ask you that you were hoping we would
19 ask you, or anything you think would be helpful to our
20 investigation?

21 MR. GUTIERREZ: Not really. I feel like I didn't really -- I
22 was down there, and of course I was kind of helping bring waters
23 and stuff. But as far as seeing the accident, I didn't see
24 anything until it was on the ground. Yeah. There's really not
25 too much.

1 MS. WILSON: Well if you think of anything, don't hesitate to
2 get a hold of John Becker, and he can contact Zoe and I.

3 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay.

4 MS. WILSON: Thanks so much.

5 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay. Appreciate it.

6 (Whereupon, at 5:12 p.m. PDT, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of David Gutierrez

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2018

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.

—
E

Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA.

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: JAMES McCOURT

Tuesday

June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration
(Observing)

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I N T E R V I E W

(10:55 a.m.)

MS. KELIHER: -- everyone around, but first, I was hoping that you would agree to have this conversation recorded.

MR. McCOURT: Sure.

MS. KELIHER: We might have it transcribed, but a lot of it's just to keep notes if we don't.

MR. McCOURT: Sure.

MS. KELIHER: Excellent. So then I'll go around introduce all of us.

MR. McCOURT: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: You also -- the information that you're going to be providing will likely go into our public docket with all of the other interviews that we're doing --

MR. McCOURT: Mm-mm.

MS. KELIHER: -- and be available for the purpose of trying to prevent an accident --

MR. McCOURT: Right.

MS. KELIHER: -- like this from happening again. And as part of the NTSB process, you have right to representation.

MR. McCOURT: Mm-mm.

MS. KELIHER: And you can choose whoever you want whether it would be your mom, your personal lawyer, or this gentleman right here.

MR. McCOURT: Yeah, there's one right here. Okay, I guess

1 I'll take him.

2 MR. TOBIN: It's not a coincidence.

3 MR. McCOURT: Good deal.

4 MS. WILSON: Can you just state who you're going to have as
5 your represent?

6 MS. McCOURT: Tom Tobin.

7 MS. WILSON: Great.

8 MS. KELIHER: And, then, we can just go around the room and
9 this, is as I've said, Katherine;, myself, Zoe.

10 MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety with Airbus.

11 MR. McCOURT: Okay.

12 MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Director of Safety at Papillon.

13 MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FA Las Vegas.

14 MR. RAMIREZ: Rich Ramirez, FA Las Vegas.

15 MR. TOBIN: And Tom Tobin with Wilson Elser, New York.

16 MS. KELIHER: So why we chose you, out of every pilot, is
17 because you were here on the day of the accident.

18 MR. McCOURT: No, I wasn't. Nope.

19 MR. TOBIN: So you're done.

20 MR. McCOURT: See you later guys. Fantastic.

21 MS. KELIHER: So we have you as coming in on that day.

22 MR. McCOURT: That day I was sick.

23 MS. KELIHER: You must have just been scheduled.

24 MR. McCOURT: I usually -- yeah, so that's probably what you
25 saw. I was wondering why, you know --

1 MS. KELIHER: Well, we still have lots of questions for you.

2 MR. McCOURT: Okay.

3 INTERVIEW OF JAMES McCOURT

4 BY MS. KELIHER:

5 Q. How long have you been employed here?

6 A. Since '07.

7 Q. So you're one of the senior pilots. And what's your
8 approximate total time?

9 A. Around 7,000.

10 Q. Anytime in EC130s?

11 A. I'd have to look it up. It's actually on the computer. But
12 I -- a quarter of that or -- I'd have to look it up. I really
13 don't keep track of that, that much.

14 Q. So can you tell me about flying for Papillon?

15 A. Yeah, well, I've been here a long time, so obviously I like
16 it here and it's a tour operation, so it's very redundant but,
17 yeah, other than that it's a good company.

18 Q. So over 11 years?

19 A. Mm-mm.

20 Q. You must see a lot of people in and out of here?

21 A. Yeah, unbelievable. Yeah, a lot of people.

22 Q. How do you think that effects the operation?

23 A. Well, there's a lot of training going on continuously because
24 there are a lot of people that come and then they leave. And,
25 but, I mean, it's pretty much the way it is, you know, everywhere.

1 It's pretty much the same thing. So, but, yeah, they have to
2 retrain new people all the time, so.

3 Q. What's it like flying as a senior pilot in February versus at
4 the end of summer, in August? What's it like at Quartermaster of
5 the difference of flow and communication and --

6 A. From February compared to August? Well, typically August
7 would be busier because that's the big busy time of the year.
8 It's hotter, so you have to be a little more cautious. But then,
9 in regards to, like, communication or whatever, there's really not
10 a big difference. If you're speaking of like new pilots --

11 Q. Mm-mm.

12 A. -- compared to old pilots, they're pretty much trained on the
13 typical verbiage, so it's not like you're going to hear that much
14 difference except for maybe somebody new that's just picking it
15 up.

16 Q. How do you treat pilots differently when you're flying with
17 them if you know they're new versus not?

18 A. I answer a lot of questions to the new guys. And how do I
19 treat them differently? I don't really treat them differently.
20 Like I said, they may have a lot more questions when they're new.

21 Q. What kind of questions do they have?

22 A. Can you, like, let's say we're flying out of Vegas, can you
23 go over the north flow opposed to a south flow departure
24 procedure, you know, just go over it with them because, you know,
25 they've been trained but they haven't done it a lot, so something

1 like that.

2 Q. What about questions specific to Quartermaster?

3 A. Typically, it's more questions, like, can we stay here a
4 little longer because of this or that. But, in regards to flying,
5 they're pretty well trained up. I mean, you would think they'd
6 ask, like, can we land -- they're certain spots we don't land at
7 typically. And I would think that somebody new -- if I was new,
8 can we -- could I just come, land here? I don't even hear that
9 too much, so there's not -- I got to -- I'd have to think to get a
10 specific, but I'm sure, you know, there's new guy questions, but I
11 can't think of a specific one.

12 Q. It seems like some of the lead pilots that we talked to are -
13 - they're pretty low hours when they become lead pilots. Has that
14 always been the case?

15 A. I've been here a long time. So when I got here there were
16 some older ones, but then it was -- when I got to Boulder it just
17 started this, you know, when I got -- they just started flying, so
18 these guys were ex -- they were older because it was really
19 mellow, so there wasn't a lot of work going on and it was a lot
20 smaller operation, you know, so they were older, a few of them.

21 And, then, as it shuffles through, you know, they get
22 younger. Just, you know, and then, a lot of the older guys, a lot
23 of ex-military guys, they don't want to deal with this many
24 people. That's really what it's about.

25 Q. So do you find the lead pilots come to you asking questions?

1 A. No. I mean, specific -- once in a while, what did -- did you
2 ever -- did we do, you know, something different in the past
3 maybe, you know. Was there always this many helicopters over here
4 versus there or, you know, I've seen things we've done differently
5 over the years, so.

6 Q. I didn't see, in the package I got, of any irregularity
7 reports that you filed. Do you file them ever?

8 A. Yeah, I have. If -- I don't know, about five of them.
9 Transponder went out in Vegas. I had to deviate due to a sand
10 storm or a dust storm one year where we were flying way higher
11 than normal to get above it. What else? I don't know, yeah, I
12 have filed a few.

13 Q. It seems that some of them that I've seen, when they're
14 reporting weather and they're out and they deviate because of
15 weather, they always have some qualification of -- well, two other
16 Papillon pilots went back or some Maverick go back or, do you
17 think -- do you have any idea of why people would have to justify?

18 A. No, I don't.

19 Q. Have you ever seen Simon, so I guess, the not Chief Pilot,
20 but have you ever seen him question anybody's decision?

21 A. No, but, you know, I'm not around when -- if he ever had a
22 question.

23 Q. Do you ever hear anything on the radio?

24 A. No. No, I don't think so.

25 Q. It's been hard to determine of the day of the accident where

1 some people say that they'll call in what they experience when
2 they were landing Quartermaster for the guys behind him.

3 A. Mm-mm.

4 Q. Do you ever do that?

5 A. Oh, yeah. You mean, like, what the weather is when you're
6 entering the canyon?

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. Sure.

9 Q. Or when you're landing Quartermaster, so of the -- right as
10 you have done your approach?

11 A. In the years of being here, sure I have. We -- they're so
12 many now that it'll be an established approach typically because
13 they already know. But in the old days, yeah, you would go, hey,
14 calls for a downriver landing or an upriver landing, but there's
15 now it's -- there's a lot, so that's not needed typically. Plus,
16 we have a windsock there, but yeah.

17 Q. Is the windsock pretty indicative of what you're going to
18 experience coming in?

19 A. Well, for me, I use a windsock at a different base way
20 earlier than I get there. I don't know what other people do, but
21 that's what I do, so I have a pretty good idea of what -- and I'm
22 going to do what I'm going to do pretty much, so.

23 Q. So if you got a plan going in there -- and I've been trying
24 to figure this out, what if all the pads that you were going to --
25 in the direction that you were going to go, if you were going to

1 go to the notch and all the east pads are full, what do you if the
2 pads are all full of the direction that you were planning on
3 landing?

4 A. If they were absolutely ridiculously full, I've -- I have
5 never done that, but I have seen somebody just not even go and he
6 went to the airport up top, but typically over the years, and
7 we're talking years, I've even directed someone into a spot that
8 didn't know that they could go there, but that's pretty full if
9 it's like that, you know what I mean, so.

10 I've always been lucky where I'm at some point where it's
11 really not an issue. Plus, you know, there are -- there's even
12 pads that we never use. It's a very far walk that you can always
13 pretty much get to depending on the wind speed.

14 Q. What's your Go/No-Go decision where you've made a decision
15 that you're not going to land there?

16 A. I have -- it's not a Go/No-Go decision, I have done an
17 alternate pattern to it where the winds -- it's a turbulent day
18 and the sock is actually doing a circle and I will follow it.
19 This has happened when I'm alone, but, yeah. So, but, I've never
20 gone, okay, I'm not -- let's see, I have -- typically you haven't
21 made your descent if you do a No-Go. I have exited the canyon
22 because it's just too turbulent, but I've never really been down
23 there going, okay, now I'm going to leave. It's usually made
24 before, you know what I mean, but.

25 Q. Did you know Scott?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Do -- did you guys hang out?

3 A. Yes. Friend of mine, he lives with a friend of mine, yeah.

4 Rob.

5 Q. Rob.

6 A. So, yeah.

7 Q. Have you ever flown with him?

8 A. I might have. Maybe he's flown with me. I've never flown
9 with him, you know, but.

10 Q. Have you heard anything about him of his piloting, anything
11 that we should be aware of?

12 A. No.

13 Q. You haven't heard any complaints about him?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Anything different about having a part-time pilot coming in
16 and out, do you see any difference?

17 A. No. I mean, most part-time pilots -- I don't know you guys
18 don't do this, but we've done this so much in their primary time.
19 They don't go part-time until they've been here. They won't even
20 really -- or at least typically they won't even allow you to go
21 until you've been here for quite some time, so, you know, yeah, I
22 don't -- yeah, no, I don't really see a problem with that.

23 Q. Have you seen pilots feel any repercussions on choices
24 they've made, like, scheduling and have you heard about just
25 pilots sitting around bitching to each other of having to take

1 sick days or leave days?

2 A. Oh, lead --

3 Q. Not being on the schedule or getting a bum schedule, anything
4 like that?

5 A. Just that they have to do five and two. You'll hear that,
6 bitching on to get -- cover their vacation. They all complain
7 about that.

8 Q. But nothing from repercussions and decisions they've made,
9 actions they've done?

10 A. No. No, they don't -- it's, yeah, they -- that doesn't
11 happen.

12 Q. I kind of -- I'll let Airbus kind of go over more of the
13 other flying questions that we're going to have, but how many pads
14 are there at Quartermaster?

15 A. Gosh. There's really about 12 that you can use, and then we
16 typically, we'd keep it at eight. Eight is what you want and,
17 yeah, that's a good number. It's pretty --

18 Q. Why have you decided to not be a lead pilot or move
19 elsewhere?

20 A. Because I get a seven on seven. When I was hired it was
21 seven on, seven off, and I had some other income coming in. So
22 for me, it's a way better job because I can travel and, you know,
23 less headaches.

24 Actually, I'd consider it if I worked in Vegas. I have but I
25 didn't want that particular sigh -- you know, seven. I'd have to

1 switch to the other seven off. In any event, this is just --
2 there's just a lot of miles to deal with, so, yeah.

3 Q. So from all the changes of Chief Pilots, Lead Pilots, do you
4 think that it's -- the culture has changed?

5 A. No. Well, naturally it'll change through -- you have --
6 yeah, I mean, but, yeah, I can't -- I mean, it just varies when
7 you have this many people coming in. You'll have a time when
8 certain people are coming from one school and then another time --
9 yeah, I don't know. You know what I mean, it's just different.

10 Q. If you're coming in on approach and you've already crossed
11 over the river to Quartermaster and you see someone's blades still
12 turning, what would you do?

13 A. Well, if there's an open spot that's way far away from that,
14 leads to an up -- you know, into the wind landing then there
15 wouldn't be a problem for me. However, if I have to or the only
16 spot would be -- you'd only -- you'd just have to go around it
17 until they stop. Maybe communicate with them if they're still on
18 radio, which they probably wouldn't be, but --

19 Q. So you've done just a circle, just orbit around?

20 A. I have, not for that particular problem. I can typically
21 find another spot that is well far enough where it's not going to
22 affect the rotor blade that's slow, you know, but if I -- if that
23 -- well, I mean, maybe it has happened. I can't remember, but
24 that's what I would do. I would just stall. It's not, you know,
25 you have plenty of fuel you just go around a couple of times and

1 come back.

2 Q. If you were to experience -- because you've flown the AStars
3 too, right?

4 A. Mm-mm.

5 Q. If you were to experience something like server transparency
6 or something like that, would you report that?

7 A. Oh, yeah.

8 Q. How would you report it?

9 A. I'd report that, well, to the -- to our little tower first
10 initially, of course, and I'd -- to every -- to a lead, to
11 maintenance, something like that, sure.

12 Q. But you don't -- do you write it in anywhere? Is there any
13 reporting method? I didn't see any irregularity report, so that's
14 why I was just wondering. I guess, that's the flight that didn't
15 deviate, but I was wondering if there was any method of --

16 A. If you had a servo issue, is that what you're speaking --

17 Q. No, just if you experienced Jackstall.

18 A. Yeah, you would write a report because that would be a major
19 -- I -- are you talking about just a small tap? Yeah, I've never,
20 never really had that, but other people have and I'm sure they've
21 written a report, but I've -- if you had a major, you know, servo
22 issue or something, like, you're feeling it bumping a bunch, yeah,
23 you'd definitely report it. And, yeah, you'd write a report. A
24 written one.

25 Q. Have you ever run out of pedal of going into Quartermaster?

1 A. I've gotten where it's low, but like I said, I'm really
2 cognant (sic) of getting that thing into the wind, so I'll do
3 things a little differently than other -- I will get -- make sure
4 that's into the wind, so I've gotten away from having that
5 problem. And I really haven't -- I've had it close. I've had
6 seven because we've had mechanical turbulence coming through there
7 really strong. And I've had it where you almost have to keep it
8 moving pretty quick to get it down. But in Quartermaster, not me
9 really, you know, so.

10 Q. Have you ever, I guess, of course, those been times, can you
11 remember real time where you felt uncomfortable flying?

12 A. Yeah, I was doing an air tour and it was so turbulent that I
13 actually turned towards -- I -- instead of going our normal route
14 back, I tried to make it as short as possible by going by GSW kind
15 of like we do a fuel run. And, yeah, because it was just too
16 turbulent, so, yeah, I didn't feel comfortable. And, then, yeah,
17 and whenever, yeah, or if you do up and downs we'll cut the day
18 off because it's starting to get -- you trying to get it -- it
19 usually keeps getting worse, so you cut it as early as you can.
20 But that particular time, yeah, it did -- I didn't like that.
21 That was pretty bad.

22 Q. And because you have so much experience in the 130, do you
23 find that the performance is actually what it says in the RFM?

24 A. Yeah, I'd say so. I mean, I've had it gross weight before
25 and it's, you know, it's, at that day, at that time, it -- it'll

1 be good and in ground effect hover it's done it. I've done it, you
2 know, got, you know, from the fuel stop. We have to get fuel.
3 It's hot up there. It's 5,000 feet at GSW, so, yeah, I'd say so,
4 you know, it does have a tendency to weathervane because it's got
5 a big tail, but performance wise, yeah, it's pretty much from what
6 I've felt, yeah.

7 Q. Have you ever gotten an unsatisfactory on any of your check
8 rides?

9 A. Might have had to redo a 180 auto once, so, yeah. But I
10 don't know if that was -- I didn't go, you know, yeah, so. You'll
11 have to go to on my records.

12 Q. That's all the questions I have, Captain.

13 BY MS. KELIHER:

14 Q. When you're flying into Quarter Master --

15 A. Mm-mm.

16 Q. -- there's two approaches that typically you would take?

17 A. Yeah, there's the two-typical approaches.

18 Q. Mm-mm.

19 A. Mm-mm.

20 Q. Can you walk me through the differences between the two?

21 A. Yeah, well, like I said, but see, where they're basically
22 just determined on where the winds coming from. So, one would be
23 from the river, let's saying that the wind is coming down, it's
24 coming down river, so it favors an upriver approach, so you would
25 go call from the river pretty much straight in or it could be

1 varied where you would turn a little bit into it and then you
2 would pick one of the spots for this, so you have the other people
3 coming in. And, then, the reverse would be going through the
4 notch, which is the wind coming upriver, which favor it downriver.
5 I mean, those are the two.

6 Q. Mm-mm. What if the winds favored a canyon approach, but the
7 pads didn't, where you'd have to fly the notch. How do you
8 manipulate that or how do you work that as you're coming in?

9 A. Well, if it, like, where is the wind coming -- what are you
10 saying?

11 Q. Well, you're saying the notch would be, if you were doing an
12 up -- the upriver approach?

13 A. The notch would be like you were going to fly downriver.

14 Q. Okay, downriver. --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- approach. So --

17 A. So you go through it and come, yeah.

18 Q. Okay. So what if you -- what if the winds favored an upriver
19 approach, but the pads available didn't favor that type of
20 approach?

21 A. There's a couple options. One, there -- typically, we have a
22 wedding spot that's not used, and you'd find out typically no on
23 the schedule.

24 Q. Mm-mm.

25 A. A lot of people won't use that, so you could just go to that

1 spot and people leave it open. Another way you could do it, it
2 would be to, let's come around downriver and then you would just
3 pass the, let's just say there was one open at -- further --
4 somebody didn't go all the way. You can do that, and then you
5 could just clear your tail and come over sideways while you're
6 still in the wind. You could, yeah, so there are ways to do it,
7 but it, preferably it'd be everyone moves to the furthest, so
8 everyone comes in behind.

9 Q. Right. Do you have a particular approach that you prefer to
10 fly?

11 A. The less turbulent approach would be a down -- as if you were
12 flying downriver, it would be less turbulent. Typically, not
13 always. Like I said, I vary mine.

14 Q. And that's flying over the canyon or is that through the
15 notch, which is the downriver?

16 A. The -- if you're going to flow -- land like you're going with
17 the river down, you would go through the notch, like, you're
18 coming back towards Vegas, and the winds, well, I mean, obviously
19 You have wind.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. But I like my -- yeah, I like the discretion for the pilot to
22 do whatever works best, so --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- I don't like the rigidity of many things, so.

25 Q. How do you receive PIREPS when you're out flying?

1 A. Typically, you'll hear someone -- if you're at this base or
2 the other base, the one base goes first, maybe if you're lucky,
3 and you'll -- you can listen to the FM and you'll hear them, and
4 they'll call it in. And they'll say what they see. Where there's
5 a storm out 20 miles that way, you know, whatever. And, then, the
6 base can look at what they see on the radar, but, yeah, I'll
7 usually hear it. If you're in the area, you'll hear it from
8 someone ahead of you or if you're on the ground, you can listen to
9 the FM, either ways.

10 Q. And you're talking -- you've mentioned storms, weather --

11 A. Mm-mm.

12 Q. -- weather-related thunderstorms, rain. What about winds?
13 Would pilots also be reporting that over the radio?

14 A. Yeah, they would report. If it's really bad and then we'll
15 probably say no more as if somebody uses the term moderate
16 turbulence. And that means you're coming out of your seat. It's
17 bumpy.

18 Q. Have you ever made a call over the radio for the turbulence?

19 A. Mm-mm.

20 Q. Yeah?

21 A. Yeah, like that one specific one and other times, yeah, well,
22 yeah. I mean, I'll call the base.

23 Q. Okay. So that's considered -- so when you're making the
24 call, you're calling base to say you're coming back, you're not
25 necessarily making a call to other pilots --

1 A. Yeah, what happens is --

2 Q. -- to let them know that's it turbulent?

3 A. -- everyone is on the freq -- base or you'll initiate it if
4 it's bad enough or base might go, can you give us PIREP and then
5 you'll try to give them everything you know from where you are on
6 that route, you know. So, yeah.

7 Q. Okay. You've been here for a while with Papillon. How do
8 you -- is there any coordination that happens between Sundance and
9 Maverick that you're aware of? Any sharing of information?

10 A. Just between those two and not us? Or --

11 Q. Oh, yeah, the three of you. Do you all get together and
12 share information at all?

13 A. Over the years, sometimes we'd call Sundance to see if
14 they're going to maybe cancel a flight and vice versa. And I was
15 doing up and downs the other day and they were coordinating with
16 us because it was getting windy and we were going to call it,
17 which we did, but we were also helping them get their rafters out,
18 so, yeah, there's coordination not so much with Maverick, but may
19 be higher up than me. If there is, I don't know.

20 Q. Okay.

21 MS. KELIHER: Manny, are you going to ask questions about the
22 different training that they do?

23 MR. FIGLIA: Mm-mm.

24 MS. KELIHER: Okay. I have a follow-up after that. So, I
25 think that's my last question for now. Thanks.

1 BY MR. FIGLIA:

2 Q. Okay. Do you have a flight instructor rating?

3 A. Yeah, I do.

4 Q. How often do you receive training here at Papillon? Is it
5 yearly, six months?

6 A. It's bi-annual or, I mean, it's yearly. Sorry.

7 Q. Okay. So would that include a ground school flight?

8 A. Yeah, well, we have to do a APSTAR, that's the computer
9 based, and then, we'll do an oral kind of a ground school --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- you know, before the -- then we'll go and do a check ride.

12 Q. Do you cover performance planning?

13 A. Yeah, they'll give you a spot to go to and then you'll --
14 they give you a little flight plan to do and --

15 Q. Now that performance planning, do you use the actual
16 performance of the aircraft? In other words, you're at 5,000
17 pounds gross weight and you threw out your in-ground effect, out
18 of ground effect, do you actually check and see -- utilize those
19 numbers based on what the performance calculations were?

20 A. Yeah, when we do the check ride, we do and then, you know,
21 everyday we -- they actually do the performance, so in real life
22 it's done for you and you check it, like, each aircraft is
23 different with, like, an in or out of ground effect hover, so
24 yeah, we --

25 Q. Do you actually check those numbers in the aircraft? In

1 other words, during your training flight or your check ride?

2 A. No, it's more of a scenario-based thing. So he'll say we're
3 going to go here. It's this height, it's this temp, and then, we
4 have this many people, but do we -- yeah, it's usually an oral
5 type thing.

6 Q. Okay. How about confined to your landings. Do you spend
7 about how your -- do your annual training and check ride in
8 confined to your operations?

9 A. Yeah, well, the flight portion we'll find a small, maybe a
10 ravine or something small and then they'll check you on, would you
11 do it, how would you do it. Then you would do a recon and then
12 you -- if you decide to do it, then you would do it and it's
13 somewhat pretty confined, yeah.

14 Q. Obviously, you do emergency procedures in your training, do
15 you perform settling with power as part of training in --

16 A. Performant? Performant?

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. Yeah, we do.

19 Q. How about loss of tail rotor effectiveness?

20 A. We talk about it. We wouldn't perform that. I mean, you get
21 a tailwind every day here, you'd kind of have to train with that.

22 Q. Okay. You mentioned going into Quartermaster. The first
23 aircraft that get there obviously use the forward part of the
24 zone. So in other words --

25 A. They should, yes.

1 Q. Okay. And what's the purpose of that?

2 A. If you have a strong wind and you're landing into it, you
3 want everyone else to be able to land without having to go around
4 that person or maybe alter their approach. So that is the purpose
5 of it, so you can -- first guy in, everyone gives up the spaces
6 behind him.

7 Q. Okay. And, again, you mentioned going to Quartermaster,
8 you've gotten away with landing, I don't know the exact term, but
9 you said, quick to get it down. In other words, down into -- I'm
10 not saying, but talking about the ground effect, was that what
11 you're referring to?

12 A. Wait.

13 Q. You had mentioned going to Quartermaster and again, you
14 talked about -- there was something about wind direction and you
15 said you got away with landing toward, you know, you said quick to
16 get it down.

17 A. And, I didn't mean quick. What I was referring to is I was
18 just, I think, you're talking about where I would keep it -- they
19 were asking about the different ways we land.

20 Q. Right.

21 A. And, I was saying that if you have a day where it's wind
22 shear, where in the sock is turning, I would follow it around.
23 I'm never quick to get it down. I said follow it around. I think
24 that's what you were referring --

25 Q. Okay. And, again, obviously transitioning from flight to a

1 confined area. You might get transitional lift --

2 A. Mm-mm.

3 Q. -- from the ground effect.

4 A. Mm-mm.

5 Q. Sometimes going to the Quartermaster is that sometimes an
6 issue? You may not get into ground effect and you're out of
7 ground effect, but your speed is low based on not having that room
8 to maneuver, does that happen on occasion? Based on how many
9 aircraft are parked out there?

10 A. I mean, it could be conceivably, sure. If somebody, let's
11 just say there -- yeah, it conceivably if you were going to take a
12 spot where, let's say you had to go over everyone, which would be
13 ridiculous, but, yeah, you could slow it down and, yeah, but if
14 you're planning, you wouldn't really have to do that, you know.
15 But it does get mechanically turbulent down there sometimes.

16 Q. And landing into Quartermaster, you can't use any of the 360
17 -- 360-degree, as when they get in there, because you have some of
18 crevices and some high terrain around there, so you can't come in
19 from any direction you want, so it's kind of --

20 A. Kind of, but there are ways of doing it. If you have a wind,
21 let's say, coming from where our wedding spot is, and it's
22 shooting up, so it's not downriver, it's not upriver, it's
23 basically -- it's a side river. You can come in, which I'll do
24 kind of along the slope and you're still into the wind and to your
25 spot, so it's a little different because the wind isn't exactly

1 like it's planned for the -- yeah.

2 Q. Okay. You mentioned that there are 12 spots in landing zones
3 or 12 pads in Quartermaster.

4 A. Mm-mm.

5 Q. Okay. And you said eight are generally used?

6 A. Yeah. That's what it should be, or at least --

7 Q. Okay. So there's no real set standard on how many -- they're
8 not marked, they're just spots and some people may not even know
9 about this spot, but that's conceivably where you can land --

10 A. Mm-mm.

11 Q. -- an aircraft?

12 A. Yeah, yeah.

13 Q. Okay. All right. With your experience, you -- have you
14 happened to take in a flight, which let's say, someone else had
15 turned down. In other words, let's say junior pilot couldn't fly
16 or didn't feel comfortable in certain conditions, yet it was still
17 within the confines of what the GOM said. Have you taken any of
18 those flights?

19 A. Like, somebody where they -- it passed to me because somebody
20 didn't want to do it for some reason?

21 Q. Yeah, and, again, it may have been they just didn't feel
22 comfortable, yet it still was in the requirements within the GOM.
23 And based on your experience, did you --

24 A. Yeah, I can't really remember. The only thing close to that
25 would be leaving Las Vegas because I'll fly out of there where we

1 only have four aircraft, and it's a little different, what they're
2 going through. And so I -- I've made the determination that it's
3 all right. And it's because the report is more of a Boulder-based
4 report, it's very -- really windy here, and it isn't really there.
5 We don't even -- we come back on the other side of the lake, but
6 as if -- I haven't really taken someone's flight that -- I don't
7 like the idea of somebody says no and then I go, you know, that's
8 stupid.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. In fact, I like it when, if someone says it's a weather
11 problem, if no one goes after that, so.

12 Q. Okay. Which -- are you called qualified on all four of the
13 air frames?

14 A. Yeah. I mean, four -- you mean the, like --

15 Q. You have B2s, you have B3Es, you have H130s. You have--

16 A. Yeah, I --

17 Q. -- H32s.

18 A. Yeah, Yeah.

19 Q. You're qualified on all of them?

20 A. Yeah, yeah. I thought you meant over at -- I did the South
21 Rim, too.

22 MR. FIGLIA: Okay. That's all I have for now.

23 MS. WILSON: Burl? John?

24 MS. KELIHER: I do have a follow-up question.

25 BY MS. KELIHER:

1 Q. Assuming that you were to be there the day of the accident
2 where you would have gone at 9:30, how do you get the weather?

3 A. Well, it depends on -- you got your standard briefing and
4 then we can call either one of the leads or our tower to get,
5 like, if it's a rain type thing, you know, to look at the radar.
6 And, you can also check GCW, has the winds as they are right now.
7 And that's what I would do if I was on the ground before I go,
8 just check that. Or you can call, which I have called, actually,
9 GCW and asked them for an update, and just real-life stuff, like,
10 even though it's -- you got a wind, like, it -- has it been
11 picking or up or going down, you know, it vary. And you can get
12 different ways.

13 Q. Do you find that the windsock at Ramada is in indicative of
14 what's at Quartermaster?

15 A. Not always. Not always. But it does help a lot to prepare
16 for what you got because if you -- and I don't know if everyone
17 does what I do, okay, but it'll give you -- if you have that wind,
18 which is pretty -- if it's strong, it's pretty good indicator, and
19 then you can see what spots are open. So you can start getting
20 this all down without waiting to -- I mean, if you're waiting just
21 to see that windsock, it can be a little tricky, which I don't do.
22 I totally look at the Ramada windsock first.

23 Q. How far after, and maybe you see it at Ramada, can you start
24 accessing what spots are open?

25 A. Ramada, you got to -- you could tell there's a couple

1 helicopters. Maybe you'll see two red dots there further. You
2 kind of know that they're in a, you know, the downriver area where
3 you might see. But you don't know, but you can kind of go, you
4 already know that the wind's blowing, let's say, downriver, so
5 you're going to go straight into it. That -- and then you'd start
6 looking for what's available there.

7 Q. You said that you'll take the wedding spot if it wasn't there
8 -- written in there, do you choose spots, ever, based on thinking
9 that somebody behind you is newer?

10 A. Mm-mm, yeah.

11 Q. By leaving them an easier spot?

12 A. Mm-mm, yeah, for easier --

13 Q. And what would the easier spots be?

14 A. The easiest spot would be next to the Ramada or next to where
15 we have shade, that would be the easiest -- open. And then the
16 ones passed it, if you were going to upriver would be the next
17 easiest and then the one next to the river, it's got that little
18 cliff, that's actually a very easy spot because you can just shoot
19 right from the river to it. You could -- if the -- you don't have
20 to go, you know, you can vary it without even going, so some of
21 them you can hit from the right. That one you can go straight
22 into. So and then the worst would be, I would assume, would be
23 maybe the what we call the handicap spot, which is a very -- it's
24 a little sloped, which new people don't know it's overly sloped,
25 you know, so that would be the only problem with that is it

1 creates a lot wind on everyone.

2 Q. And how do you know who's behind you? Do you recognize
3 people's voices?

4 A. Oh, one more thing that the toughest would be the wedding
5 spot. Sorry. Just saying. What's that? What was the question?

6 Q. How do you know who's behind you? Do you recognize their
7 voice?

8 A. Yeah, but if you don't recognize their voice, you go by their
9 number, you know. So let's say it's someone new in 27 or whatever
10 30, but, yeah, I'll recognize the voice, but you'll know the
11 numbers. Typically, I'll remember, at least, two behind me where
12 they are, how far they are. So I know if I could possibly shut the
13 blade down or not when I get down there and yeah, so.

14 Q. And you know they're new because you're listening to them
15 take off or you see them when you're -- how -- I guess, how do you
16 know who is in 35, 55?

17 A. Just because I don't recognize their voice probably, you know
18 --

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. -- or I saw them when we were loading up or, you know, or --

21 Q. Did you ever apply for a lead position?

22 A. No. I considered the Las Vegas, but, like I said, it wasn't
23 posted on-line, and it was on the opposite shift that I'm off, you
24 know, so I would have to change some stuff. But that I would have
25 considered, yeah.

1 Q. But it wasn't posted so how did they choose the people?

2 A. No, they posted it over here. It just wasn't posted -- I see
3 -- I'm sorry. I was working in Vegas constantly that particular
4 year or whatever, I was over there a lot. Like, my seven-on I'd
5 be there pretty much, so it was posted over here, and then, I got
6 the word kind of late. And, then, I -- I'd just -- then I would
7 have had to change some stuff to, so, I never did it. But, yeah,
8 I considered that. That, you know, I like the amount of, yeah.

9 Q. So Simon has stated his goal is to get people to stay here
10 longer and not to have much attrition, which apparently has worked
11 for you. How do you think that Papillon could retain people?
12 What could they do to keep people here?

13 A. I think if they paid more they could for sure. If they, I
14 don't know had a -- I think if they brought back at least where if
15 you worked here a year, you could go to four and three. Where you
16 don't -- that way you wouldn't have to live in Las Vegas and then
17 maybe after that bring back the seven and seven.

18 You used to have a lot of people that were military pilots
19 here, that would work here because if you had the seven and seven
20 they'd have other income coming in from their pensions and they'd
21 stay here for quite a while. They stay here maybe three years,
22 maybe five. We had a guy -- so. But that's a lot of people.

23 The EMS job for that pays more and they have more time off
24 and they don't live here, so why would they not go there, you know
25 what I mean, so, yeah. I think it's going quicker. The door's

1 spinning faster now, the way it is just, just with five and two
2 schedule.

3 MS. WILSON: I do have a follow-up.

4 BY MR. WILSON:

5 Q. The training that's offered typically regarding settling with
6 power, do you think it's adequate starting with when it was just
7 discussed in ground school?

8 A. Well, you couldn't really simulate it in a helicopter, unless
9 you went up to, like, 10,000 feet and put weight in the thing and
10 did some drastic crazy stuff. So, yeah, you know, there's
11 probably -- we go over it. I mean, and, you know --

12 Q. Right. Have you had a training cycle since the accident?

13 A. No. I already -- I just had mine in January or December --
14 or February, right in that -- I did both, so I guess, maybe I did
15 after. I don't know, but I have mine at the normal time.

16 Q. So there was no -- in the training that you had, you didn't
17 have any practicing even approaching settling with power?

18 A. Yeah. We haven't practiced that one.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah, only when I was in -- when I was teaching with the
21 little helicopter we could get it to do it without doing something
22 crazy.

23 Q. And you said that there is no training for LTE?

24 A. I think we go through that on -- in the oral and then it's
25 definitely on our APSTAR on the computer, but --

1 Q. And do you think that's adequate?

2 A. You can always go more over that with an EC130, you know, you
3 get a tail -- it can get weathervaned pretty easy, so, but, it's
4 yeah, I don't know. It wouldn't hurt to go over that more, but I
5 think they go over it, it's just --

6 Q. They talk about the weathervaning?

7 A. Oh, yeah.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. But it's -- it does it and if you're new you have to
10 experience it and I don't know, you can always go over more of
11 that.

12 Q. Okay. Thank you.

13 MS. WILSON: All right.

14 MR. WAUGH: Actually, I do have some now.

15 BY MR. WAUGH:

16 Q. Since you've been here, you were talking about mechanical
17 turbulence and, that we're talking about Quartermaster now, is
18 there -- if you were to kind of draw it out mentally, what part of
19 the Quartermaster landing area would you say that, that you would
20 anticipate if it's windy that you've experienced with mechanical
21 turbulence?

22 A. Let's say if you made a turn right at the notch, you have the
23 wind coming downriver and it's not a day that it's strong wind,
24 it's a day that it's that, like, I was saying when the -- when you
25 see the sock spinning, that's the time you're going to get a real

1 bumpy ride. It'll start to try to fall out from under you, you'll
2 come up, and that's -- that -- you'll get that the most from the
3 notch. However, you do use that direction when it's not like, you
4 know --

5 Q. And that's downriver with -- or you got a strong wind going
6 upriver?

7 A. Going up? Okay. It's really not that bad going upriver
8 because you're getting away from most -- if you're doing it --
9 you're coming -- you're going for the notch, you can widen it out
10 where the terrain is flat and pretty good. And you don't get
11 that. The notch area you'll get it where it I think it's -- it
12 just starts to swirl because you have the ground that's going down
13 below you and you can get a lot more, but you don't get that as
14 much. We used to land at the, we call the waterfall site, and
15 there was definitely -- if you could aim in the way you're talking
16 about downriver there you'd definitely get that, you know, when we
17 landed, we don't land there anymore, but if we were coming
18 downriver, but Quartermaster because the way the terrain is you
19 don't -- it's a much smoother ride.

20 Q. Okay. Would you consider Quartermaster a confined area?

21 A. No, not really.

22 Q. Okay. And with that you get, like, 12 spaces that you can --
23 parking areas. How many -- is that something that you would shoot
24 an approach to your landing pad? You're going to land at or do
25 you shoot your approach to something else?

1 A. What do you mean?

2 Q. If you're coming up to land and there's -- it doesn't matter
3 how many aircraft are there, but you're going to go to a landing
4 pad, whichever one you want to pick, do you do your approach right
5 to the pad?

6 A. No, I wouldn't. I -- it -- well, if it's open pad, I will
7 approach. It depends on the wind, I'll come into the wind and
8 then to the pad, so hopefully it -- you can do it if the wind is
9 coming so you're aiming at the pad, you know, so, yeah, I would go
10 to the pad. I'd approach to it, but I wouldn't end it way before
11 the pad. You know, you come through ETL and then you try to just,
12 like, you always, you know, transition to the ground effect at the
13 the pad. If it's open. Now, if it wasn't, you could go to the
14 right of it and then just ease over.

15 Q. Okay. I'm sure you've had time to think about this whole --
16 everything that had happened. In your mind, with your experience
17 -- and do you have any ideas what might have happened?

18 A. You know, I wasn't there, so I don't know. I -- either -- I
19 don't know, but, yeah, I --

20 MR. WAUGH: All right. That's it. Thanks.

21 MS. WILSON: That's it.

22 MR. McCOURT: Okay.

23 MS. WILSON: Thank you so much.

24 MR. McCOURT: Yeah, No problem.

25 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA.
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of John Becker

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2018

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.


Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: RYAN NEWBURN

Wednesday,
June 20, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

THOMAS TOBIN, ESQ.
Wilson Elser

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By Ms. Keliher		25

I N T E R V I E W

(4:20 p.m.)

MS. WILSON: Thank you for being here with us today.

MR. NEWBURN: Yeah, no worries.

MS. WILSON: This interview is just a routine interview that we do as a part of the fact-finding phase of our investigation. We're obviously investigating the accident that occurred on February 10th.

MR. NEWBURN: Yeah.

MS. WILSON: What we would like to do is we would like to record the interview. That allows us to create a transcript of the interview that will then be a part of our public docket. Is that something that you're okay with?

MR. NEWBURN: Yeah, that's fine.

MS. WILSON: Great. And as a part of the interview, you're entitled to have a representative sit with you. It can be anybody that you choose. You can choose not to have somebody. Is there something that you would like to have as your representative today?

MR. NEWBURN: Hey guys, this is my man right here.

MS. WILSON: Can you please say his name?

MR. NEWBURN: Thomas Tobin.

MS. WILSON: Great. Thanks.

MS. WILSON: And we'll go around the room and introduce ourselves, as well. I'm Katherine Wilson, I'm a human performance

1 investigator with the NTSB.

2 MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

3 MS. KELIHER: Hi. I'm Zoe. I'm with the NTSB in operations.

4 MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

5 MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, I'm the director of operations --
6 sorry, director of safety of Airbus Helicopters.

7 MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

8 MR. BOYD: And I'm Burl Boyd, director of safety for
9 Papillon.

10 MR. TOBIN: And I'm Tom Tobin, a partner at Wilson Elser.

11 MS. WILSON: Thank you.

12 Could you state your full name and also your position?

13 MR. NEWBURN: Yes, I'm Ryan Newburn, I am the tower and the
14 ramp manager for Papillon.

15 MS. WILSON: Great. And so, we'll each take a turn asking
16 questions. If you don't understand a question please stop us and
17 ask us -- ask us to clarify.

18 MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

19 MS. WILSON: If you don't know the answer to a question, say
20 I don't know. It's also okay.

21 MR. NEWBURN: Okay.

22 MS. WILSON: There's no right or wrong answers; we're just
23 trying to get the knowledge that you have to help us in our
24 investigation. We're here strictly from the safety side. We
25 don't have any enforcement authority. We don't place blame.

1 Strictly just trying to prevent this accident from happening
2 again.

3 MR. NEWBURN: Yeah.

4 MS. WILSON: Any questions before we get started?

5 MR. NEWBURN: No.

6 MS. WILSON: Okay. With that, I will turn it over to Zoe.

7 INTERVIEW OF RYAN NEWBURN

8 BY MS. KELIHER:

9 Q. Ryan, how long have you been working at Papillon?

10 A. Since October 6th of 2008. No, 2007; sorry. 2007.

11 Q. Eleven years.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And what have your positions been all that time?

14 A. I was hired back then as a CSR for customer service with --
15 with Andrea. And then about four years into that I transferred up
16 to the tower. And then after two years of that I became the
17 supervisor -- the weekend supervisor of the tower. And then
18 management -- manager after -- a few years back.

19 Q. So, who do you manage?

20 A. I manage Jordan, Brian, Kyle, Dallon, then every -- all the
21 guys on the ramp, which is Tyler, Bryce, and then the two new guys
22 that I just hired, which are Jack and Quinten.

23 Q. And who do you report to?

24 A. I report to Jerry St. Nicholas.

25 Q. So, can you describe to me what your daily activities are?

1 A. Yeah. So, every day's a little bit different. First thing I
2 do is I come in and I check in with both my departments, make sure
3 everything's okay. Make sure nothing's -- nothing abnormal. And
4 then after that I do all the -- I do all the ordering for -- like
5 all the meals, the sodas, everything that goes into the
6 helicopters. I do all the equipment ordering for all -- all of
7 our staff. And then I do -- and then I just -- I manage them.
8 Most my time I spend up in the tower. So, I do a lot of the --
9 I'm also there to help breakout those guys, you know, if anybody
10 needs to go to the restroom, I step in. And any problems that
11 happen, I -- I try to help out and solve all those. So, my day's
12 spent kind of roaming all over the place and helping wherever it's
13 needed, you know.

14 Q. Are you always in communication with radio?

15 A. No. I have my cell phone so -- so if anybody needs me and
16 I'm not up in the tower -- that's pretty much where everyone calls
17 me. They say the tower and if I'm not up there, they would call
18 me on my cell phone if I'm in my office or something.

19 Q. About how much during the day do you spend up in the tower?

20 A. Quite a few hours. The majority of my day is up there, yeah.

21 Q. When you're up there you can hear the pilots on the FM
22 talking amongst each other?

23 A. Yeah. Yeah, most the time.

24 Q. Do you ever hear and have you ever heard conversations
25 between the lead and the pilots of them discussing different

1 issues of choices of going, not going?

2 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, for sure.

3 Q. What kind of -- what kind of conversations do you hear?

4 A. Well, a lot of times in the tower we'll ask the pilots for
5 PIREPs, and we'll -- we'll be on the phone with the lead, and the
6 lead will get the PIREP and the leads just kind of -- like, if
7 it's -- if it's getting windy, hey, you guys if it gets too
8 choppy, your -- don't like it, you guys -- it's a PIC, come back.
9 Or if there's rain or something like that, if you guys don't think
10 you're going to make it just come on back. But usually it's --
11 that's how it goes.

12 Q. Do they ever say they don't want to go?

13 A. Like before they leave?

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. Not that I've ever heard.

16 Q. You've never heard any of that?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. The conversations that -- that ensue of talking about it, are
19 they usually started? Or is everyone just kind of waiting for
20 some -- somebody to make a call?

21 A. For -- for like the -- like the PIREPs that we get?

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. Well, usually the first person out there will ask, like hey,
24 how's the weather looking? They'll give us the PIREP. And then
25 they'll -- they'll all make their individual decisions from there.

1 Well, just like last week we had -- it got real windy and one of
2 the pilots said it's too windy for me, I'm not going to go. And
3 they -- all the pilots pretty much followed suit. So, the leads
4 didn't cancel it; they all made their choice to cancel that one.

5 Q. Okay. I bet you've heard them do the cancellation of a whole
6 group before?

7 A. Oh, yeah.

8 Q. Do you know the pilots' voices now where you can tell whose
9 making these calls?

10 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah. That's how I know most these people. I
11 don't see them a lot in their face, so I talk to them a lot more
12 on the radio or the phone, so that's how I know most of them.
13 Yeah.

14 Q. Do you find that there's always certain people that will make
15 a call?

16 A. No one that -- like saying is there one that's -- makes the
17 decision to cancel more? Not that -- not that I believe put
18 together.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. Everyone seems to be on the same page. No one usually makes
21 that call first. There's not a single pilot that I can think of,
22 at least.

23 Q. It's not like oh, Manny, every time he goes out he --

24 A. Yeah, yeah, no. Not that I've noticed, at least.

25 Q. Or the senior guys versus the junior guys, do they --

1 A. A lot times when -- when we ask for PIREPs we try to ask
2 someone that's been there a little bit longer --

3 Q. Right.

4 A. -- because they know, they've -- they've done it so many
5 times, so we -- we do try to -- I try -- I personally try to ask
6 them for the PIREPs, yeah.

7 Q. And so, you'll request from a certain helicopter?

8 A. Yeah. A lot of times, like the first one out there, or if
9 there's a couple that went out at the same time, maybe if there's
10 a couple of people that have only been here a month versus someone
11 that's been here a year, I might ask the one that's been here for
12 a year just because I've had more communication with them. And
13 they kind of know more about what we're looking for, you know what
14 I mean. So.

15 Q. Are you part of the training? Do you -- when their doing
16 their INDOC and just starting out, do any of the tower people come
17 and tell the new pilots what they're looking for? What they --
18 what the communications going to be like? Introduce yourselves?

19 A. Yeah, so everytime we have a class, Simon brings them all up
20 to the tower, and we -- we all introduce ourselves, whoever's up
21 there, and the pilots do the same thing. And we -- Simon kind of
22 just goes through what we do, and how we interact with them with
23 all their calls and all that stuff. And pretty much that --
24 that's the -- that's what we get out of it.

25 Q. Will you describe how flight following works for a trip of a

1 pilot taking off?

2 A. Yeah. So, the whole steps is they get checked in at the
3 counter. Then the person out there doing the manifesting will
4 print off all the manifests once they get the puzzle put together.
5 And then the pilots will get their manifests, calls their packs
6 (ph) up and then load them up. And when it comes to flight
7 following, we -- they call us up. They call up with however many
8 packs they got, their fuel load, and what kind of tour they're
9 doing. And then the tower will repeat that, make sure that
10 it's -- we're all on the same page. Make sure we have the same
11 amount of packs and fuel loads. And then after that, if their
12 tail is clear, we -- we clear their tail. And if there's anybody
13 inbound, anything else going on out there, we let them know about
14 it. And then from there, they -- they take off and when they get
15 into the canyon, they -- they call us in the canyon. Usually
16 takes about 26, 27 minutes. And then depending on the tour, if
17 it's a landing, they get 50 minutes in there. If it's an air
18 only, it's 13 minutes. And then they call us off the wash,
19 depending on what tour they're doing, and then they call us five
20 minutes out, about 20 minutes later.

21 Q. Okay. How often do you refer to the Spidertracks?

22 A. Me personally? Not very often.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. I -- I look at it, you know, just to -- because it's -- it's
25 kind of cool, but I -- I've -- I always use the radio. I've been

1 here so long and I've been doing it so long, we haven't had
2 Spidertracks that long, so I kind of am set in my ways with it,
3 you know what I mean? So, I don't use Spidertracks that often.

4 Q. Have you ever been like where did that guy go? Did he even
5 land? What --

6 A. Yeah, I've never really done that. Now, if it's out doing
7 like contract work I might look up and see where it's at, but we
8 still -- we still stick to our radios up there pretty -- that's
9 how we do it.

10 Q. With landing tours, are they always going out together, one
11 after the other?

12 A. We try to, but we have days like today where we've had
13 maintenance on helicopters and everything can kind of get
14 stretched out a bit. So, there are tours, like the 12:30 that
15 leaves an hour after the 11:30, which might only be one or two
16 helicopters. So, if they're -- if it's a regular normal day and
17 everything's running on time, yeah, everyone usually leaves at
18 about the same time. But it's not always like that.

19 Q. And do you know when the Las Vegas people are being launched
20 out, as well?

21 A. Yeah, they -- they call us, yeah. So, we do the manifest and
22 the flight following for Vegas, also.

23 Q. So, how does that coincide with keeping track of Boulder City
24 versus keeping track of Vegas?

25 A. Well, we have it all written down up there, so we write it

1 down and we just do a different sheet or a different section for
2 Vegas. Their tours leave at different times than we do.

3 Q. All right. I think that's what I was looking at. So, do you
4 separate them out when you're doing it? Is this -- is it
5 separated out of Vegas would be on a different --

6 A. Yeah. So, is what you got going on here -- so these ones are
7 going to be the Boulder City landings. So, if you slide down a
8 little bit more, all right, so you're going to have your Boulder
9 City landings, your air-onlys, and then there will be another
10 section, if you go down a little bit more, that's going to be your
11 Vegas -- your Vegas birds.

12 Q. So, you usually just have a -- a highlighted --

13 A. Yeah. Just kind of keep them separated. It makes it easier
14 for us up there when we're looking, that way we know those guys
15 are going to be -- it takes them a little bit longer to get to the
16 canyon, it takes them a little bit longer to get home because
17 they're going a little bit further, and that -- because if you
18 start mixing things up it gets confusing.

19 Q. And then I noticed on -- sometimes they know that these
20 numbers --

21 A. Air onlys --

22 Q. -- for like here's Boulder 8, 8 --

23 A. Thirty-one.

24 Q. -- 11, do you know what that is?

25 A. I have -- I don't know.

1 Q. I was assuming it was a pad of --

2 A. Oh, maybe they requested a special pad, yeah. That could be.
3 That way, we put a little note over there, when they get back they
4 want to go back to 8 or they want to go to 11. Whatever they
5 prefer.

6 Q. Why would a pilot want a certain pad?

7 A. A lot of times it's -- the 8 and 11, those are the back pads.
8 You can face any direction when you land. And if there's a higher
9 tailwind they might want to face into it. If -- the pads 4, 5, 6,
10 7 you have to face towards the building, so they might -- like if
11 they're new -- if that's a new pilot, automatically goes -- I
12 mean, that was the first thing, were any of them 8, so if they
13 want to park facing South or North, they can -- they can do what
14 they're -- what they choose.

15 Q. So, that might not even be requested by them, it's the person
16 making the --

17 A. Yeah, so sometimes if it's a new person the lead will call
18 up, they're like hey, it's getting kind of windy. Let's give them
19 pads 11 -- 8, 9, 10, 11, one of the back pads or something, you
20 know. So, yeah.

21 Q. Got it. How often do you talk with Grand Canyon West to try
22 to see what the weather is over --

23 A. On a weather day?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. Quite often. We'll -- we'll use them as one of our PIREPs

1 for sure. And the lead does the same thing; we call them, how's
2 it looking before we send stuff out? If it's looking all right,
3 it could be in the middle, but that's when we send out like a
4 weather bird or something like that.

5 Q. When you send out a weather bird, do they ever have
6 passengers on?

7 A. Sometimes it could be crew, you know what I mean? Weather
8 scouts. Or say we have a 8:00 -- or a 9:00 air only leaving
9 before the 9:15 round or something like that, we'll -- we'll use
10 that as our weather scout. So.

11 Q. And who makes that decision?

12 A. The leads.

13 Q. Yeah.

14 A. The leads do.

15 Q. So, you're definitely in constant contact and communication
16 with the leads?

17 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah, we talk to them quite a bit.

18 Q. Do you find -- do the leads have to pass things through Simon
19 a lot?

20 A. Yeah. Yeah.

21 Q. So, is it a lot of you asking the questions and --

22 A. They go get the answers that we need, yeah.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. Because even if -- when it comes to like to maintenance or
25 something like that, we go -- can call leads up and they can --

1 they're next door, they can just walk over there. Call you right
2 back type of stuff. So, we -- we talk to the leads a lot. A lot.

3 Q. And how has that changed in 11 -- well, I guess you were a
4 CSR for a while.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Did they -- it used to have to be all the back and forth? Or
7 did the leads used to be able to make more on demand decisions?

8 A. It's always been back and forth, you know. They've always
9 been real helpful getting us the answers that we need when -- be
10 we have to tell the CSRs and all the other departments of what's
11 going on, so the leads go find us our answers a lot of the time,
12 which is nice.

13 Q. If the weather starts getting bad and somebody decides to do
14 a weather advisory, does that go through you?

15 A. A lot of times like, so the wind starts picking up, the --
16 we'll talk to the lead and hey, should we start weather advising?
17 That's when we call the CSRs, yeah. Sometimes the leads do call
18 straight to the CSRs and tell them themselves. Or the CSRs will
19 call over and be like, hey it's starting to get windy, should we
20 weather advise? But a lot of times it goes to the tower. Most --
21 most communication goes to the tower.

22 Q. I don't know if I asked you this; were you working on the day
23 of the accident?

24 A. Yes, I was.

25 Q. And what -- do you know -- remember what your shift was?

1 A. Yeah, I was -- I was just getting ready to go home, I -- but
2 I was sitting up in the tower and we got a call from GCW and they
3 said that -- that there was an accident. They didn't know who it
4 was; if it was one of our or someone else's. And then we called
5 the leads and the leads had already talked to GCW. So, our first
6 thing is -- to do is get a hold of the leads, get a hold of them
7 so they can get a hold of Simon or Becker and just kind of go from
8 there.

9 Q. Do you remember that day if there was any discussion about
10 wind?

11 A. No. There was no discussion that I was aware of about it.

12 Q. Do you know if there was weather advisory [sic]?

13 A. If they handed out weather advisories that day? I'm not sure
14 on --

15 Q. That you talked about at all? Do you remember hearing lead
16 and pilots talking about weather at all?

17 A. (No audible response.)

18 Q. You don't remember or they weren't talking about it?

19 A. I -- not that I remember.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Not that I remember.

22 Q. It seems like, I'm just looking, there's a wide spread of --
23 even when they're going all together -- of sometimes somebody will
24 dribble out later on, I'm assuming that's like a bathroom or --

25 A. Exactly, yes.

1 Q. -- or something like that.

2 A. Yeah, that happens.

3 Q. I was going to say how frequently does that happen, that
4 everyone --

5 A. Quite often. Quite often. So -- when I say they all go
6 together, they all go within 15 minutes, you know what I mean?
7 But a lot of times I'll call up and you'll have a group or a
8 family that all needs to go to the bathroom and all that, just
9 delay that for about 5 or 10 minutes or -- so, that happens quite
10 often.

11 Q. Do you know Scott?

12 A. Yeah. I do. We worked together for a long time.

13 Q. Did you chat with him? Hang out with him aside from work?

14 A. A few times, yeah. Yeah.

15 Q. Did he ever mention anything about flying for Papillon that
16 you can remember?

17 A. We -- yeah, we've talked about work and stuff like that, but
18 just normal stuff, because if he ever had questions or anything
19 like about rampers or something he would always come to me and --
20 because I was the supervisor or manager back then. So, we talked
21 quite often.

22 Q. What things would he discuss?

23 A. Oh, just like one time I had a ramper that -- that drove away
24 from the fuel farm when he was still hooked up and ripped the hose
25 off, and he was like hey, how's Anthony doing? You know, like it

1 was -- it was an accident. He was like he is all right? Is he --
2 is he going to get in trouble for that? And I was like it was an
3 accident, you know, nothing big, but -- he was he was a very -- he
4 was a very personable person, so he always liked to know. Like,
5 hey, how's this guy doing or how's this person doing? And stuff
6 like that.

7 Q. Did he seem to enjoy doing tours?

8 A. Yeah. Yeah. I think so. He always seemed to -- he was
9 always in a good mood. That was -- he was a happy fellow. He was
10 always in a good mood. So, he always seemed happy to me. He was
11 always very helpful.

12 Q. As far as his seniority, compared to some of the other
13 pilots, was he pretty senior would you estimate?

14 A. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

15 Q. Would he be one of the people you would call for PIREPs
16 and --

17 A. Oh, for sure. Yeah. Definitely. Yeah, he was -- he was
18 definitely up there on -- on my list for pilots that I was
19 comfortable with getting those kinds of things going on. So,
20 yeah.

21 MS. KELIHER: I don't think I have any other questions right
22 now. Katherine?

23 BY MS. WILSON:

24 Q. How often would you call pilots for PIREPs?

25 A. We do it round by round on weather days.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. Yeah. So, if it -- if the wind got -- got high enough we
3 would do it kind of as every round goes out we would ask them. Or
4 days that it rains. Stuff like that.

5 Q. Um-hum. Do you recall if that happened on the day of the
6 accident?

7 A. No.

8 Q. You don't recall it? Not it didn't?

9 A. I don't recall.

10 Q. It was a long time ago, I know.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Do you recall if you saw him -- saw Scott or talked to him on
13 the day of the accident?

14 A. I saw him but I didn't talk to him. I -- because where they
15 set up, my office is right behind Departure Gate 2, so I was on my
16 way and I -- and I saw Scott and I know him really well, but he
17 was busy and I was on my way to do something, so it was just kind
18 of like, oh, you know --

19 Q. Understand.

20 A. -- hey, how you doing?

21 Q. And a pilot being busy like that, is that normal? Or is that
22 something unusual, higher workload that day than normal?

23 A. No, he was just -- when I walked by, he was just talking to
24 his passengers, so I didn't want to interrupt, you know what I
25 mean? So.

1 Q. That makes sense. You said that -- let me backup.

2 If a -- if a pilot decides that he wants to come back,
3 he's -- goes into the canyon, realizes it's too windy, that gets
4 relayed to you and then do you relay that to the lead pilots?

5 A. The leads and the CSRs, yes.

6 Q. Okay. Would they ever contact the leads directly? Or they
7 would always go through the tower?

8 A. No, they -- there's a lot of times they'll -- they'll get on
9 a radio with a lead, hey, it's too windy. I'm coming back. Okay.

10 Q. Okay. And so, then you would just overhear that?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Would -- if the leads wanted to call back all the flights,
13 would that go through the tower and then you would call? Or would
14 the leads make that call?

15 A. It's -- we've done it both ways. Say, the lead's tying down
16 a helicopter on 20, we could call him on the cell, hey, it's
17 getting -- these two have turned around. They might just be like
18 all right, if they're turning around let's have everyone come
19 back. Something like that. We've said to them, hey, we're going
20 to weather cancel, you guys come back.

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. Or a lot of times they'll -- they'll just get on the radio
23 and say, hey, we're just all coming back.

24 Q. Have you ever had Spidertracks give you an alert for an
25 overdue -- or how would you know if an aircraft was overdue?

1 Besides the timing, do you get an alert anywhere?

2 A. Yeah. Allpro (ph). Allpro. So, each tour or every flight
3 that goes out, we build in a time for it. So, like a landing's
4 automatically built in. Now, if it -- as soon as it's a minute
5 late it will go red on the computer. At five minutes, it sends of
6 a horn. So, it will make like (makes horn sound).

7 Q. So, because Scott's flight was in that 50-minute window for
8 doing a landing, would that not have triggered -- there would have
9 been nothing triggered?

10 A. Not for 50 minutes.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And even -- and it doesn't -- it's the tour duration, so it
13 won't go off until he's not back here on the ground for five
14 minutes. We're going to catch it on paper at 50 minutes when he
15 hasn't called off the wash.

16 Q. Okay. So, Allpro isn't catching the 50 minutes, that's
17 something --

18 A. That's something that we do as a flight follower.

19 Q. Does Spidertracks give you any indication if there's an
20 accident? Is there an alert from that?

21 A. They do have a -- they do have a button that they can switch
22 that can -- that can put off an alarm.

23 Q. What about ELT signals? Do you -- would you get that in the
24 tower? Is there any way --

25 A. We -- I think that's something that these guys get. They get

1 it on like -- like a text message or an email that they get.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. But we don't.

4 Q. So, until you got the call there would have been no way for
5 you to have known that the accident had happened?

6 A. Not for 50 minutes.

7 Q. You said that if somebody has to step out of the tower you
8 will -- you'll fill in for them?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Is there a handoff that happens? Or how do you know what's
11 going on and what you need to be monitoring?

12 A. So, like when Kyle was just down here, I was -- I was up in
13 the tower helping out up there. So, Jordan knows what's going on.
14 Or if say it was the end of the day and Kyle had gone home and it
15 was Jordan up there, if she had to use the restroom, I would come
16 up there, anything going on? We would just kind of -- we would
17 talk to each other and make sure there's nothing -- if something
18 was running late, hey, 50 -- 53's running late, something like
19 that. But --

20 Q. Okay.

21 MS. WILSON: I think that's all the questions I have, thanks.

22 MR. NEWBURN: Welcome.

23 MS. WILSON: Manny?

24 BY MR. FIGLIA:

25 Q. You said you're responsible for about seven or eight

1 employees.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Are you involved in their training, let's say on an annual
4 basis?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. After you heard there -- there was an accident, did
7 you kind of refer to Spidertracks to see maybe what information
8 might be there because you obviously didn't know where or --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And do you kind of receive training on Spidertracks and how
11 it works? Or is that pretty much --

12 A. Yeah. I've -- I've actually worked with -- I've been here
13 for a while, so whenever Spidertracks people came in I --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. -- I picked their brain quite a bit.

16 Q. Okay. On the PIREPs that you receive from pilots, is that
17 just held within the company? Or is that shared anywhere else,
18 let's say with the FAA or is that filed anywhere else? Or it's
19 just within the company?

20 A. Just within the company.

21 Q. Overall, do you feel you're an integral part of the company's
22 overall safety program?

23 A. Up in the tower? Us? Or me?

24 Q. Meaning your job function.

25 A. Oh, yeah, I do.

1 Q. Okay. And what -- what makes you say that? What has the
2 company -- have done overtly or covertly to make you feel that
3 way?

4 A. Well, safety wise, us in the tower are the people that are
5 going to be the first responders to any sort of accident, if
6 someone's missing, anything like that. And I train all the people
7 up there to make sure that they're all trained properly to do
8 that. Yeah.

9 Q. Great. Thank you.

10 A. Cool.

11 MR. BOYD: No questions.

12 BY MS. KELIHER:

13 Q. See if I -- reiterate again; have you heard any arguments on
14 the radio, either between pilots or between the lead and pilots?

15 A. Arguments? No.

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. No.

18 Q. Or any contentious conversations?

19 A. No, I've never heard it. No.

20 Q. Okay.

21 MS. KELIHER: All right, that's it. Thanks.

22 MS. WILSON: Thanks so much.

23 MR. NEWBURN: No worries.

24 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of Ryan Newburn

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 20, 2108

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.



Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: DAVID OEST

Tuesday,
June 19, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Operations Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

JOHN WAUGH
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

RICH RAMIREZ
Las Vegas Flight Standards District Office (FSDO)
Federal Aviation Administration
(Observing)

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I N T E R V I E W

MS. WILSON: Welcome.

MR. OEST: Hello.

MS. WILSON: Thank you for joining us today. We are conducting this interview as a part of the investigation into the accident on February 10th. This is a routine interview that we do. There is nothing out of the ordinary for us to talk to various pilots that worked the day of the accident or who might have interacted with the pilot things like that. So, there is nothing to read into this interview as being different than any other investigation that we do.

MR. OEST: Sure.

MS. WILSON: We will take a moment to go around the room and introduce everybody who is here so that you know who's participating in the interview.

I'm Katherine Wilson, I am a Human Performance Investigator with the NTSB.

MR. OEST: Okay.

MS. KELIHER: And I am Zoe Keliher, I'm being the operations of the NTSB.

MR. OEST: Very good.

MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Safety with Airbus.

MR. OEST: Okay.

MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Safety Director of Papillon.

MR. WAUGH: John Waugh, FAA, Las Vegas.

1 MS. WILSON: And you are entitled to have one person
2 represent you during the interview. It can be anybody that you
3 choose.

4 MR. OEST: Um-hum.

5 MS. WILSON: Would you like to have somebody represent you
6 today?

7 MR. OEST: Sure. Mr. Tom Tobin please.

8 MS. WILSON: All right. Thank you. And what we would like
9 to do is we would like to record the interview. This will allow
10 us to either type in a summary of our notes or produce a
11 transcript that will then be a part of our public docket. This is
12 a part of our fact-finding phase --

13 MR. OEST: Sure.

14 MS. WILSON: -- of the investigation.

15 MR. OEST: Absolutely.

16 MS. WILSON: Great. And just so that you know our role is
17 strictly from the safety side. We are not here to assign blame to
18 the accident. We just want to prevent this from happening again.

19 MR. OEST: Absolutely.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you want him to introduce himself?

21 MS. WILSON: We will, yeah.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

23 MS. WILSON: Thank you. Do you have any questions before we
24 get started?

25 MR. OEST: No, ma'am.

1 MS. WILSON: Okay. And Zoe is going to start off the
2 questioning.

3 MS. KELIHER: This is Rich Ramirez, also from the FAA. So,
4 we see that you were the --

5 MS. WILSON: Could you just state your name for the record?

6 MR. OEST: David Michael Oest.

7 MR. OEST: Thank you.

8 INTERVIEW OF DAVID OEST

9 BY MS. KELIHER:

10 Q. We specifically want to talk to you because we saw that you
11 were working on the day of the accident.

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. Can you tell me when you started with Papillon?

14 A. I started May 9th of 2016.

15 Q. And what's your approximate total time?

16 A. 2900 hours.

17 Q. And how much of that is in the AC130?

18 A. 550.

19 Q. Great. And then when did you transition to the lead pilot?

20 A. Seven months after I got hired, which was December '16.

21 Q. Can you tell me what you do as lead pilot?

22 A. I do a lot of things. I'm responsible for either opening,
23 closing, flying the dub or GCW operations, scheduling and flight
24 training is kind of the basic gist of it.

25 Q. What's different about being a line pilot as opposed to a

1 lead pilot?

2 A. A lead pilot you -- you know, you don't fly the tours every
3 day. So, my responsibility, let's say I'm an open lead. I come
4 in in the morning. I generate the morning briefing. I brief that
5 to the pilots and then I deal with any pilot issues and/or
6 maintenance issues. Try and coordinate with different
7 departments, ticking, tower, maintenance department, to make sure
8 that we are on track and that things are handled in the way they
9 are supposed to be handled.

10 Q. Where were you flying before you came here?

11 A. I was flying at a flight school in Prescott, Arizona, called
12 Universal Helicopters. I was one of the flight instructors there.

13 Q. And so, seven months, that's pretty quick (indiscernible) on
14 the lead.

15 A. Yeah. That is pretty quick.

16 Q. When did you start thinking you wanted to do that?

17 A. Day one. So, I guess I came here with a little bit more
18 hours than the average bear. I came here with around 2,000 hours.
19 A lot of people come here with, you know, 1,000, 1,500 range. So,
20 I like flight instruction. That's part of the gig here being a
21 lead pilot. So, I wanted to get back into that.

22 Q. Did you apply right off the bat? Did you have any
23 conversations before you got hired with Simon?

24 A. As far as being a lead pilot?

25 Q. Um-hum.

1 A. No. Nope.

2 Q. How was the job posted?

3 A. The lead pilot job?

4 Q. Um-hum.

5 A. It was posted on the Baltimore out there and several other
6 pilots to apply as well.

7 Q. Was there any discussion of the other pilots of why you got
8 chosen?

9 A. Well, I'm sure there was with me being here seven months and
10 some of the pilots been here two and three years. I'm sure there
11 was some kind of discussion. But as far as my knowledge that's
12 all. I'd be guessing as far as what they would say.

13 Q. So, you never talked to people about it?

14 A. Not really. I mean I talked to them about my specific
15 interview but I didn't really ask those other guys what they had
16 thought about it.

17 Q. How is your rapport with Simon?

18 A. Pretty good. I have a good working relationship with him and
19 we are on the same page a lot of times. And I ask him and he's a
20 good mentor towards me.

21 Q. Great. So, were you the morning or the afternoons shift?

22 A. On the day of the event?

23 Q. (Non-verbal response.)

24 A. Yeah, I was the morning lead, the opening lead.

25 Q. Okay. Can you remember anything about you filling out the

1 morning briefing sheet or during the briefing?

2 A. I remember I did the morning briefing sheet. I can't
3 remember any specifics on that. I'm sure you guys have it.

4 Q. Um-hum.

5 A. I was the one who did generate that and briefed the pilots
6 that morning, yes.

7 Q. How do you usually get the weather information?

8 A. Oh, we have a website. We have login 1-800 WX brief online
9 there. We have an on Papillon lead pilot account and that's where
10 we generate the weather from.

11 Q. So, how -- when I think of the step of what you think is the
12 most important, how do you pull it off?

13 A. I look at a lot of things. I look at current conditions,
14 forecasted conditions, maximum temperatures, area forecasts, when
15 in temple loft, PIREPs, AIRMETs, SIGMETs, convective SIGMETs,
16 anything adverse weather and then current conditions as well. Max
17 performance, temperatures, max temperatures for Boulder and GCW
18 for performance for four different airframes. There's a lot of
19 different stuff that goes into consideration. I'm pulling weather
20 I look at NOTAMS closures, any NOTAMS looking for TFRs things of
21 the such. Anything that would affect our, if you will, normal
22 operation.

23 Q. So, I'm looking at the sheet and I see that the me tars are
24 in there, which were pulled it looks like early in the morning

25 A. Right. Whenever I generate it, you know, 5:00 to 5:15 a.m.

1 Q. And then you get the TAFs from?

2 A. The TAF that's on there is the Los Vegas TAF, which is from
3 1-800 WX Brief.

4 Q. And I see you have got some check marks from it.

5 A. That very well could be. It could be me trying to remember
6 times to convert them in my head, ZULU time. I'm trying to read
7 that so I can tell the pilots so they don't have to do the work
8 for them. So, in my briefing I say it's going to be X time local.
9 That could be. I have been known to do that in the past. I don't
10 know.

11 Q. And then I see you have got an area forecast synopsis it
12 says.

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. Where do you get that from?

15 A. Well, it's recently changed because they stopped offering the
16 area forecast. So, we started going to 1-800 -- excuse me --
17 faaweather.gov. I type in Bolder City and then there's the
18 forecast discussion, which is what they use to make the area
19 forecast anyway. So, now I put in the forecast discussion. I
20 find where it says aviation McCarran and I put that in there.

21 Q. So, what's the difference between the aviation versus the
22 discussion?

23 A. Basically, it's the old area forecasts were not in plain
24 language, if you will. Now, these new ones are in plain language.
25 Just like someone types it out it's going to be dire winds. They

1 are going to come out of the south. We expect to be for
2 conditions or whatever it says. It's not in a code, like a me tar
3 almost so that more plain language. But it still accomplishes the
4 same thing.

5 Q. Trying to give weather briefings and pulling the weather did
6 you have any different training for the weather?

7 A. I don't understand that question.

8 Q. Did you have any special training with Papillon of knowing
9 whether --

10 A. Something we review in the interview process for new pilot
11 hiring and then we do Avstar media as well, which helps us learn,
12 you know, basic weather theory on up from there.

13 Q. And I recall I remember somebody saying that you were married
14 to Bennett (ph.)?

15 A. She is my fiancée.

16 Q. Fiancée?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. So, she was another part time pilot as well?

19 A. Correct. Yes. So, she works for a different company now.

20 Q. Did she ever discuss with you what it's like being a part
21 time pilot versus being a full time?

22 A. It was very brief for her. She did enjoy it because she
23 moved on to the flight safety team at Allegiant. She just
24 finished up her Master's in aviation human factors and all that
25 stuff. So, she's kind of on that side of the house now. So, she

1 enjoyed flying part time just because it wasn't every day. So,
2 but that's all she really told me about it.

3 Q. As a new pilot --

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. -- did you see any difference of having Scott or whoever the
6 part time pilot was versus a full time?

7 A. Besides the fact that I didn't see them more than normal, no.

8 Q. Do you do training as well?

9 A. I do. I'm one of the company check pilots and instructor
10 pilots here.

11 Q. And that was at the time of the accident too?

12 A. So, at the time of the -- let me think.

13 Q. Because all I see is Tomlinson and --

14 A. You talking about their records?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. So, I -- yes, I was a company check pilot at that time but I
17 had never flown with Scott. I never did any training flight with
18 him or any review flight or a check ride with him.

19 Q. Got it. Can you describe to me of -- when you said you
20 schedule pilots of how you mix the newer pilots with the senior
21 pilots?

22 A. Yeah. So, say it's day one on the line for a new pilot. We
23 would assign them, you know, what we call it a big brother or a
24 big sister to help them throughout the day. That can be their
25 mentor for that particular day. Now, they have already done the

1 tours. They have already flown. They've already done their 135-
2 checkride and been found competent and all that. But it's nice to
3 have someone who can -- who has been there and done that before on
4 your day-to-day and your first in line you are a little bit
5 nervous. You got the unknown there to help them out.

6 So, we assign those and the knowledge that they are going to
7 have questions and we pick pilots that are willing to help those
8 new pilots on the line. So, you know, we schedule that and we
9 talk to them after every flight and say how was it. How was it at
10 the end of the day, how was your day. And then we do that for as
11 long as they want. As long as they want that big brother.

12 Q. Did you think Scott was one of those big brother pilots?

13 A. I know when I first started here he wasn't my big brother
14 like assigned to me, but I asked him several questions. He had
15 worked here much longer than I had and I remember asking him in
16 the canyon one day like: how is my parking job? Should I have
17 been over here, over there or whatever? It's a lot going on on
18 your first couple of days. But he did mentor me on certain
19 aspects when I was a new pilot here at Papillon.

20 Q. What do you find some of the most common questions are about
21 Quartermaster from the new pilots?

22 A. Parking is a big one down there. And then a lot of it it's
23 not even aviation-related per se. It's, you know, how do you get
24 your passengers, you know, back in the helicopter? What time do
25 you start loading them back up? How do you set up your meals?

1 You know, and it's all personal preference on that stuff, but it
2 may not even be aviation related but there's a lot of questions as
3 far as that stuff is concerned.

4 Q. So, after you do your briefing --

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. -- so, it would be the morning of the accident, when people
7 start trickling in --

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. -- how do you -- how does that work of them --

10 A. So, the have different -- each pilot is assigned a show time.
11 And we expect them to be here at their assigned show time. They
12 call the night before and that's already posted for them.

13 Now, in the wintertime and we are still under the winter
14 operations at this point, if you come in say for a midday shift or
15 a later shift, you're supposed to self-brief.

16 Now, right now during the summertime we have a 12:45 briefing
17 as well which whoever the lead is doing it will get updated
18 weather information and read that out to the people who are
19 attending the meeting.

20 Q. Can you just take me through of what you can remember of the
21 day of the accident of how --

22 A. I remember opening. And I remember Mr. Johnson relieved me.
23 He was the closing lead. So, he'll come in. I give him a quick
24 debrief of what's going on for the day. And then I kind of depart
25 and do my own thing for the rest of the day.

1 I remember I was with Shelby. We were about walking out the
2 door to go to Costco and then I guess the phone call saying that
3 we had an accident.

4 Q. What time were you relieved?

5 A. Sometime -- I don't remember. It would be pure speculation
6 at this point. I can't remember.

7 Q. But do you remember like what your normal schedule was?

8 A. Yeah. For that time, it would have probably have been
9 anywhere between 10:00 a.m., I'm assuming.

10 Q. So, that's just a quick --

11 A. Yeah. In the wintertime the leads if you're opening be just
12 because the amount of daylight we don't fly at night. You don't
13 have to work terribly long day. So --

14 Q. Do you remember anything about what you briefed Mr. Johnson?

15 A. I don't.

16 Q. Okay. Did anything stand out with you about a briefing that
17 morning?

18 A. No, ma'am, did not.

19 Q. How do you -- the passenger weather warning that you give how
20 does that --

21 A. Weather advising.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. So, it can be any time throughout the day whether I -- when I
24 decide or another lead pilot, the chief pilot, training director
25 decides that we need to weather advise it could be for any number

1 of things. It could be for wind, rain, anything like that,
2 temperature. So, I would call the ticket counter, speak to
3 someone there and say, hey, can we weather advise from this
4 timeframe on until further notice? And then when they check in
5 over there they weather advise the passengers.

6 Q. What triggers you to give a weather advisory?

7 A. Any time I think we could be possibly turning around for
8 thunderstorms, rain, any kind of in climate weather, whether it be
9 wind, temperature, precipitation, anything like that.

10 Q. So, what wind would have to trigger that?

11 A. There is no specific number for that.

12 Q. But for you?

13 A. Anything -- my personal limit once we start approach gust
14 spreads of say 15 knots and sustain runs maybe over 30.

15 Q. So, wind over 30 gusting spreads --

16 A. Gust spreads over 15.

17 Q. Any idea of why you just wouldn't always have them sign a
18 weather advisory?

19 A. For the passengers?

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. That's not my job. I wouldn't know why they would need it
22 every time. It's more of a courtesy to the passengers. Saying
23 hey it might be windy or rainy. The pilot might decide if going
24 into Quartermaster is not a good idea he might not get a landing
25 tour. It could just be turned into air tour. And then once they

1 got back here we would, you know, praise the pilots for making a
2 good decision, we move on.

3 Q. Have you ever seen there be repercussions of pilots deciding
4 not to?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Any type of scheduling repercussions that they get?

7 A. No. You are specifically told when you are a lead pilot the
8 schedule is not to be used for punitive action. So, I can't
9 schedule somebody for a bad schedule or a less desirable schedule
10 just because they made a mistake on the paperwork or they showed
11 up late or whatever the case may be. You are specifically told
12 you cannot do that.

13 Q. And has that always been the case since you have been here?

14 A. Since I've been here, yes.

15 Q. All right. Going into Quartermaster --

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. -- how do you determine what pad you're going to land on?

18 A. Well, it depends on several factors. Main factor being the
19 wind, of course, always want to land into the wind, you want to
20 land downwind. As I'm coming in to the canyon I should have
21 already listened to the weather information at UCW do I have an
22 idea of what the winds are at top. At the bottom they are always
23 the same. So, I'm kind of painting my options in my head as I
24 come inbound. I try to view the wind socks at Ramada and the
25 beach sometimes it can be hard too. And then I have the wind

1 socks at Quartermaster itself. And so, based on where the
2 passengers are at Quartermaster, where the helicopters are and
3 where the wind is is where I -- is how I decide how I'm getting in
4 and out of Quartermaster.

5 Q. What if the spot that you had planned mapped out based on the
6 conditions that you just said were taken?

7 A. Well, if there are no other spots available then you go
8 around and you come back home if there's no suitable spot. Now,
9 if there's something where -- I've been on approach before and
10 then a passenger decides to run to the spot I was going to, then
11 go around, come back and land again. If there's no where to go
12 then, obviously, you can't land.

13 Q. So, I've looked at the irregularity reports --

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. -- and that's never happened so --

16 A. Well, it's pretty rare that -- to end the day where you could
17 not land the helicopter down there if the weather and everything
18 was not a factor.

19 Q. So, how many helicopters have you seen landed at
20 Quartermaster?

21 A. I've seen ten.

22 Q. Never more?

23 A. I'm not going to say never, but it wasn't memorable in my
24 mind.

25 Q. But you would always be able to find a spot?

1 A. Yes. I've never been to Quartermaster and not been able to
2 find a spot due to other helicopters being in the way.

3 Q. Can you tell me about irregularity reports?

4 A. Sure. What would you like to know?

5 Q. Anything.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. Everything.

8 A. Irregularity report is anything that I would fill out in the
9 instance that your normal tour whether it be an air tour or drop
10 return or whatever the case may be didn't go as planned or as
11 scheduled or as trained. So, you go on to flight duty. You can
12 fill it out. You want to keep it as factual and to the point as
13 possible. You are not writing a novel. But that's the way -- the
14 avenue to fill that irregularity report.

15 Q. Explain more about that.

16 A. So, if I turned around for weather I'd write an irregularity
17 report. I over sped a helicopter on a training flight I would
18 write an irregular report.

19 Q. Well, explain the novel part of --

20 A. Oh, I'm saying when you're filling out the reports they don't
21 need to be -- they should be kept to a factual basis and that's
22 it.

23 Q. Why is that?

24 A. Because that's all that needed to be in there.

25 Q. So, then what's the point of it I guess?

1 A. To let management know that I was going to do this and this
2 and something else happened that was irregular.

3 Q. So, it says pilot recommendations to prevent reoccurrence?

4 A. Sure. That's in there as well.

5 Q. But a recommendation by nature I guess isn't factual?

6 A. Right. But in the main body of the -- while you're writing
7 the irregular report should be factual information. Nothing more.
8 Nothing less.

9 Q. I guess I'm wondering what the -- if there's -- I guess what
10 happens with the irregularity reports then?

11 A. What gets happened -- what happens to them after the pilot or
12 whoever submits them it goes out to the proper people who have
13 access to that. I assume Burl, Simon, Tyler, Brenda, Geoff, John,
14 I guess all those people. The DO will have that as well. So, I
15 don't have access to irregular reports.

16 Q. Oh. The pilot submits it to the lead pilot, correct?

17 A. No. It gets submitted through flight and duty.

18 Q. So, if a pilot comes back --

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. -- do you tell them to submit an irregularity report or is it
21 they just do it?

22 A. It can be both.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. So, if I find something that I decide you should submit an
25 irregularity report on that then they do. Or they can self-do it,

1 they can self-disclose that information.

2 Q. So, I mean like they are turning back for the weather?

3 A. Um-hum. They all know that they should fill one out but I
4 would remind them as well. Say, hey, guys, don't forget to fill
5 out your irregularity reports.

6 Q. Do you look at the report?

7 A. Me personally, no.

8 Q. So, you have never looked at a pilot's irregularity report?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Okay. But you have seen them when they write novels?

11 A. No. I have heard in our morning briefings that they were and
12 they are supposed to keep it factual.

13 Q. Okay. Have you heard anything about them being submitted
14 that would make you -- lead you to believe that anything is being
15 done with them?

16 A. Well, we have morning meetings and we have daily specific
17 topics. So, if there's a certain area where we are getting more
18 than one irregularity report then we would bring that up to the
19 pilot pool. If it was an isolated incident then I'm sure
20 management talks to those pilots about that particular event and
21 kind of does a corrective action with the individual pilot.

22 I assume if it's something like bird strikes then that
23 information would be disbursed to us and say, we might change our
24 route a little bit to avoid that high area or that high
25 concentration of bird strikes because we have so many irregularity

1 reports for that specific area. So, if it's something the rest of
2 us need to know about we get briefed at the -- our briefing notes
3 on the briefing sheet, the daily topics, if you will.

4 Q. So, you have never had any because you said management goes
5 over it, but management meaning Simon?

6 A. Simon, Tyler, Burl.

7 Q. Okay. But that's not relayed to you what was in --

8 A. I don't read the specific reports, no.

9 Q. Or have no access --

10 A. I don't have access to them.

11 Q. So, I'm looking like specifically a day when you were a lead
12 pilot --

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. -- January 20th, where there were lots of people that had to
15 turn back for weather or were grounded --

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. -- and I would only see like one or two, even though I know
18 other people came back --

19 A. Sure.

20 Q. -- and I see -- that was just an example.

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. -- but a lot of that was triggered like that?

23 A. Sure.

24 Q. Where only one person, although it was reported that three
25 people came back, so how do you know who's submitting them or not?

1 A. Well, there was an old -- I don't know how the rumor got
2 started and this has since been changed. But there was a rumor
3 that if, let's say, five helicopters launched. Five helicopters
4 turn around because of weather that only one pilot out of the
5 group had to fill that irregular report out kind of for the group,
6 if you will. And that has since been changed. That might be an
7 example of why multiple helicopters turn around and need to have
8 less irregularity reports.

9 Q. Most of the reports that I see where they turn around for the
10 weather, it's always with a disclaimer that Maverick turned around
11 too or two Papillon pilots ahead of me turned around.

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. So, they are always giving like a justification.

14 A. Well, they may be. I've never seen the report.

15 Q. But why would you think that they would need a justification?

16 A. They don't need a justification to turn around for weather.

17 Q. Do you have any ideas of why they put that in?

18 A. I couldn't tell you. It would be pure speculation.

19 Q. Well, what do you speculate?

20 A. I don't have a speculation on that. I'm not the one writing
21 the report so I couldn't tell you.

22 Q. Have you ever written a report?

23 A. I have.

24 Q. And what were they for?

25 A. I had a passenger at Ramada fall and scrape up their leg

1 quite a bit. So, I had to take them, that passenger, they got
2 care at the bottom to the EMS pad up top near Alpha 8 on transient
3 up there. So, it's something irregular. Had to deal with EMS and
4 all that and so I filled out an irregular report for that.

5 Q. Got it.

6 A. And there might be more than that but that's the one that
7 comes to my head.

8 Q. How is your pay different from a line pilot?

9 A. Once you get hired on as a lead pilot it is \$60 added to your
10 base pay. And then once you get checked out in the aircraft to
11 become a flight instructor in those aircraft then it's another \$80
12 on top of your base pay. So, whatever your base pay is it's based
13 off that.

14 Q. So, then any other bonuses or different things that go into
15 it?

16 A. No. I mean we still get incentive pay. If I go fly a GCW
17 I'm still in the pilot pool pay for the up/downs. And if I come
18 in and I pick up a day for a line pilot and I'm flying the line
19 three flights I still get my incentive pay.

20 MS. KELIHER: I'm going to let Manny go more into the
21 training questions since you are a trainer.

22 BY MR. FIGLIA:

23 Q. Not to beat up on the irregularity but as a lead pilot you
24 have an aircraft turn around, let's say weather --

25 A. Sure.

1 Q. -- you don't see that irregularity report?

2 A. I do not, sir.

3 Q. Okay. What aircraft do you instruct in and which ones are
4 you check airman in?

5 A. I'm a check airman in the EC130B4 and T2. I can instruct in
6 the EC130B4, T2, AS350B2 and AS350B3.

7 Q. Okay. Do you participate in ground training as well, ground
8 score?

9 A. Yes, sir. I do.

10 Q. Tell me a little bit about how you use the (indiscernible)
11 portion of the ground training, let's say performance in ground
12 score and apply that to a training flight or a check flight?

13 A. So, what was your question one more time for me? I'm sorry.

14 Q. If you have -- if you're doing ground score or either a
15 briefing and you are using performance planning how do you use
16 that information and relay it to a check ride or to a training
17 flight?

18 A. I'll give a scenario.

19 Q. Sure.

20 A. So, there's several factors that we have to think about when
21 we are talking about performance. Fuel load, weight and time of
22 flight, temperature, IGE, OGE, HV diagram, all those things go
23 into play there. So, it can be a very lengthy process as far as
24 that is concerned.

25 Q. Do you actually demonstrate those performance parameters in

1 the aircraft? In other words, if you're in ground -- or at a
2 ground effect performance is 7,000 do you demonstrate that?

3 A. Sure. We'd talk about it for sure because, obviously, when
4 we do training we only do it in a specific area.

5 Q. You said you talk, do you do it in the aircraft?

6 A. Yes. We talk about it in the aircraft. And I show them at a
7 certain point when we land and we have say, out of ground effect
8 cover performance how that helicopter is acting differently,
9 performing differently versus a smooth hard flat surface here at
10 the airport. So, it's something that we talk about, yes.

11 Q. Briefly tell me how you either train or check on
12 (indiscernible) check ride fund area operations, what are some of
13 the basic things you're looking for?

14 A. Looking for a high recognizance, first and foremost looking
15 for size, slope, suitability, surface surroundings, wind,
16 obstructions, path-in/path-out and power available to do that.
17 So, there's -- you're kind of accomplishing all those in your high
18 recon. There's several different methods as far as your low
19 approach or a low recognizance to do that kind of depends on the
20 terrain to that specific area. And as you're inbound, you know,
21 constantly checking and cross checking everything on your low
22 approach or your low recon and confirming everything that you know
23 from the air and never being afraid to do a go-round if you need
24 be.

25 Q. Okay. Do you use some of your operational landing sites like

1 Quartermaster for training and check rides?

2 A. Absolutely, yes.

3 Q. How many landing sites are available for Quartermaster?

4 A. Like I said before I've seen ten helicopters down there. So,
5 ten plus.

6 Q. But there's no specific number?

7 A. No, sir.

8 Q. With the same approach whether it's up river or down river
9 (indiscernible) it's the quartermaster, do you find some of the
10 approaches different based on the power valve on the aircraft? In
11 other words, being able to utilize transitional lift and power
12 gavel or some parts are different, in other words, were you cannot
13 use transitional lift, in other words you have to come straight
14 vertical to one of the paths there?

15 A. I've never had to do a straight vertical approach or take off
16 at Quartermaster.

17 Q. Okay. Would you say that every approach may be different
18 into Quartermaster based on how many aircraft (indiscernible)?

19 A. I think every approach into every spot is different no matter
20 if I'm doing 100 approaches in one day to the same helipad, every
21 approach is different.

22 Q. Do you train or whether it's training or quality check ride
23 loss of (Indiscernible)?

24 A. It's something that we orally talk about, yes, sir.

25 Q. You don't demonstrate the aircraft?

1 A. No.

2 Q. How about power settling?

3 A. Settling to power, yes, sir. We do oral and a practical on
4 that.

5 Q. During the training and let's say differences training
6 between (indiscernible), do you talk about or demonstrate the
7 differences between the (indiscernible) trust and let's say wind
8 direction or wind effect based on a finished (indiscernible)?

9 A. Sure. It's pretty apparent because when we start people here
10 they start in the AC130B4 and a T2. When they make that
11 transition to the Astar B2, B3E, it's very apparent for that pilot
12 early on because they're hydraulically boosted and the response
13 based upon that being hydraulically boosted for me, in my opinion,
14 is much crisper, if you will in the Astar versus the AC130. And
15 so, if it were my choice to fly a helicopter in the wind I would
16 choose the Astar.

17 Q. Okay. And that's based on hydraulics?

18 A. Based on the feel and the feedback I get from the pedals when
19 I'm flying that aircraft. That's just my personal opinion or
20 something that we talk about.

21 Q. You mentioned like a self-brief. Is that when there is not a
22 formal briefing? In other words --

23 A. Correct. So, like in the wintertime operation when there's
24 shorter days we don't have a 12:45 afternoon briefing. So, the
25 pilot is responsible to check the weather on that sheet then

1 initial it saying that they did check that.

2 MR. FIGLIA: That's all I have for that.

3 MS. KELIHER: I'll let you go Katherine.

4 BY MS. WILSON:

5 Q. All right. You mentioned the settling to power that there's
6 an oral and a practical.

7 A. Um-hum.

8 Q. Is it practical since the accident or is that something that
9 was done prior to?

10 A. It was done since the accident, correct. The practical
11 portion only.

12 Q. The practical?

13 A. Yes, yes. Sorry, I just want to make sure I'm on the same
14 page as you are.

15 Q. Have you ever felt pressured to fly when you didn't feel
16 comfortable flying?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Any pilots ever complain about that?

19 A. Not to me. If they did otherwise I wouldn't know about it.

20 Q. Ever heard of pilots making the decision not to fly and that
21 decision being challenged by even another lead pilot or Simon?

22 A. No, ma'am.

23 Q. So, if a pilot didn't want to fly would they come to you or
24 do they go to Simon?

25 A. On the day-to-day operation they would typically follow the

1 chain of command and come to me.

2 Q. Okay. And then do you go to Simon with that or then do you
3 say you should talk to Simon?

4 A. Depends on the scenario. Typically, no, because I wouldn't
5 force any pilot to fly. I never -- I always tell the guys, I
6 never force you to fly. So, I might talk to Simon about that
7 decision what we had spoken about if he feels like there needs to
8 be, you know, further training or just sit down and talk with the
9 pilot and say, what was your, you know, what was your mindset,
10 your thought process here but it would never be a punitive action.

11 Q. Do pilots ever use like weather apps on their phone or
12 anything to get weather? I know I've heard mentioned the
13 computers that are here --

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. -- let's say they are out, you know, they are at
16 Quartermaster and they want an updated weather. Is that something
17 -- can you get weather apps on the phone or --?

18 A. They might. It would be pure speculation as far as me. I've
19 never done it before. You have really bad service down there to
20 begin with. So, I've never seen that no.

21 Q. Okay. When there's a 12:45 briefing --

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. -- is that weather sheet in the room updated?

24 A. So that sheet stays the same. The one they initial on.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So, if I'm the lead pilot doing that briefing I will pull an
2 updated current TAF and ME TAR for all the locations and give them
3 that as well.

4 Q. So, the folks that come in at 12:45 do they sign the 5:45
5 briefing?

6 A. They sign the same one, but they get an updated weather
7 briefing quarterly. Yes.

8 Q. All right. Do you have any recent examples, is there any
9 risks that's been identified that the company has mitigating
10 through via change in flight operations?

11 A. Yeah, we've limited the number of helicopters going to
12 Quartermaster. We've recently required the waterfall site to
13 allow more breathing room, if you will at Quartermaster. They've
14 sent myself and several other pilots here to more of like a combat
15 trauma training with a separate company to help either ourselves
16 or passengers if this ever does happen again where we have loss of
17 life anything like that, yeah.

18 Q. Okay. The weather advisory given to passengers, is there
19 also something that they have to sign that they received that
20 weather advisory?

21 A. The passengers that check in?

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. Not to my knowledge. There might. I couldn't tell you yes
24 or no.

25 Q. Okay.

- 1 A. It would be speculation on my part.
- 2 Q. Do you know if on the day of the accident if the weather
3 advisory was given?
- 4 A. I could not tell you.
- 5 Q. You didn't issue one?
- 6 A. Not -- I can't remember.
- 7 Q. Okay.
- 8 A. It's been a while. I'm sorry. I can't remember.
- 9 Q. If flights are cancelled --
- 10 A. Um-hum.
- 11 Q. -- the weather let's say the day before; is there any
12 pressure to fly on the next day so that you can get passenger --
- 13 A. A lot of times on our notes it will say reschedule packs or
14 something like that. But operationally for me I'll cancel ten
15 days in a row if I have to. Then I'll tell the pilots that too.
16 If it's not safe then turn around. So, operationally, if as far
17 as canceling flights and trying to, you know, make up for it the
18 next day doesn't happen.
- 19 Q. I apologize if these questions are redundant because things
20 start to blur together from earlier in the day.
- 21 A. Sure. No worries.
- 22 Q. But any concerns about Scott being a part time pilot?
- 23 A. On my opinion?
- 24 Q. Um-hum.
- 25 A. No.

1 Q. That you heard of?

2 A. No.

3 Q. So, how do you ensure that a part time pilot is ready to fly?
4 Perhaps they haven't flown in a month --

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. -- and now they are coming back; is there any concern that,
7 you know, it's been a while since they have flown?

8 A. Well, I mean if they still pass their 1135 check ride they
9 are still current as far as that is concerned. If someone takes
10 an extended period of time off, we would give them a recurrent
11 training flight --

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. -- or a refresher flight if you will. We've had pilots get
14 sick, take extended period of leave. I broke my ankle falling off
15 a helicopter. I came back and did a quick flight if I remember
16 correctly, just to make sure I was still comfortable in the
17 aircraft.

18 Part time pilots fly as much as the EMS pilots in my opinion.
19 So, I don't think there's any more or less risk in that point.

20 Q. Did you ever hear anybody state that Scott had a history of
21 noncompliance either with things in the GOM or checklist or
22 anything like that?

23 A. I've never heard anything like that. And, like I said, I
24 never flew with him personally. So, I never witnessed anything
25 like that first hand or heard anything like that second hand.

1 Q. Would you hear something like that? If there was some
2 concern about a pilot would that be circled back to the lead
3 pilots or is that --

4 A. Maybe.

5 Q. -- with the chief pilot?

6 A. Yeah, if I had any -- if anybody brought a concern to me with
7 that aspect, I would consult the chief pilot before addressing
8 that with the particular pilot.

9 Q. But if somebody went directly to the chief pilot would that
10 information typically trickle down to the lead pilots?

11 A. It probably would if it was a -- if the chief pilot found it
12 was a just finding, if you will, or had cause behind it --

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. -- I'm sure it would.

15 Q. Thanks.

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. Have you ever heard anyone getting threatened with something
18 going on by Pierre?

19 A. No.

20 Q. I'm looking at the briefing sheet that you did --

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. -- and I'm sure you can't remember exactly how you pulled the
23 weather.

24 A. I can't.

25 Q. But at least you know of where in that time area you would

1 have pulled that weather from.

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. Specifically, I was looking at the area forecast and the
4 aviation section that was in there wasn't what was under the
5 synopsis. So, I'm just wondering where you got that?

6 A. I can't remember when that change happened because the area
7 forecast stopped being offered on aviation -- 1800WXBrief, that
8 website. So, I can't remember when we transitioned over from
9 using that to using FAA.gov that forecast discussion McCarran
10 portion of that forecast discussion. I can't remember.

11 Q. Do you know I don't -- I saw that it was from a lead pilot,
12 but I didn't know which one it was, who scheduled Scott for that.

13 A. That would not have been me. I don't know who it was. It's
14 typically the job of the closing lead pilot to schedule the next
15 day's schedule. So, I would assume it was whoever closed the
16 night prior put him on that particular flight.

17 Q. I think it was just days before because he was the fill in.

18 A. I'm not sure what you're saying there.

19 Q. Because he's a part time pilot --

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. -- it would normally be where he would call in because you
22 knew --

23 A. Sure, sure, but still if a part time pilot says I want to
24 work on Monday and this Wednesday and he wants to work on the next
25 Monday, the pilot on Sunday still schedules him for Monday.

1 Q. But who makes that decision? Because I saw it was days and
2 days before and they said somebody was sick or wanted to just swap
3 or something like that. So how --

4 A. Okay. To put it on the master schedule; is that what you're
5 asking?

6 Q. No. How that works. Obviously, it wasn't you that did the
7 screen shot of your text going back and forth with him I guess is
8 what I'm asking?

9 A. No. No.

10 Q. And then in the briefing sheet it's -- one of the spots that
11 are checked is wind 18 gusting to 28.

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. And wind 14 gusting to 22.

14 A. Um-hum.

15 Q. On the TAF.

16 A. On the TAF. Yeah, because I probably was reminding myself to
17 say from this time to this time, guys, say from noon to 3:00 it's
18 forecasted to be that and to emphasize that in the morning
19 briefing.

20 Q. So, would 18 gusting to 28 wouldn't a passenger advisory
21 wasn't --

22 A. I couldn't tell you if it happened or did not happen.

23 Q. It didn't happen but --

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. -- I'm wondering if that would trigger you now of just

1 thinking of if you saw 18 gusting to 28 would that normally
2 trigger you?

3 A. If I didn't do a weather advising then, no, typically, no.

4 Q. Okay. And this is just my last question before I open it up
5 to them behind you.

6 A. Sure.

7 Q. If you had your (indiscernible) of the day and you can make
8 any changes with the FAA or with Papillon or anything of how you
9 think this could have been prevented and making it safer, what
10 would you do if you could change regulations, change the aircraft,
11 change anything?

12 A. That's a loaded question.

13 Q. What do you see that --

14 A. I know that there's been speculation of possible settling
15 power in this instance. I would like to see the FAA start
16 implementing and backing the different recovery from settling
17 power personally. There's kind of couple different names for it
18 but do the Bouchard maneuver, if you will. I've never done it
19 here at Papillon. I've done it at flight school. And that can be
20 another effective way of getting out of settling power. So, I'd
21 like to see personally some backing, get it in the PTS as an
22 alternate way of recovery for that unplanned maneuver.

23 Q. Do you teach that ever?

24 A. The Bouchard maneuver?

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. I've never taught the Bouchard maneuver. I've had it
2 demonstrated to me at flight school and I did it myself at flight
3 school with my chief pilot there.

4 Q. Anything with Papillon that you think could back up pilots,
5 or make it feel more safe or make them --

6 A. Not off the top of my head, no. I've got nothing for you.

7 Q. Anything about Grand Canyon operations that if you had the
8 world --

9 A. No, ma'am.

10 Q. -- according to you?

11 A. No, ma'am. I think we do not only us, but the, you know, the
12 Mavericks, and the Sundances and all the other people who do
13 thousands of flights there a year and, obviously, something isn't
14 working. Obviously, something didn't work this day I get that and
15 that's why we are here. But as a whole I don't think doing any
16 knee jerk reactions is going to fix anything.

17 Q. Well, aside from knee jerk reactions --

18 A. Sure.

19 Q. -- what about non-knee jerk reactions?

20 A. I have nothing else. No. No, ma'am.

21 MS. WILSON: All right, Burl.

22 BY MR. BOYD:

23 Q. On your daily briefing those notes at the bottom there --

24 A. Yes, sir. They used to be on the bottom. Now, they are on
25 the reverse side. Yeah.

1 Q. Where do those come from?

2 A. Those come from any number of things. They could come from
3 you. They could come from Tyler. They could come from Simon. Or
4 it could come from any of the lead pilots or anything that a line
5 pilot brings to my attention that we need to change and/or do
6 better.

7 Q. How long do they stay on there?

8 A. It varies. But they are on there for I'd say at least two
9 weeks at a time.

10 Q. And why is that?

11 A. To make sure that everyone who cycles through, i.e., a part
12 time pilot or someone who is taking time off has a chance to read
13 those and ask questions if they have any.

14 Q. Any of those pass down notes to the pilots think they would
15 come from irregularity reports?

16 A. Yes.

17 MR. BOYD: Thank you.

18 MS. WILSON: John?

19 BY MR. WAUGH:

20 Q. How many -- other than Quartermaster how many sites have you
21 landed at in the Canyon?

22 A. I've landed at the waterfall site, Quartermaster, and the
23 Ramada.

24 Q. Okay. Have you experienced any kind of wind shear?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And is there any of the sites that because of wind, any
2 condition where it's more prone or you might expect it, the
3 possibility of a wind shear?

4 A. Well, I was expecting in any one of those three, any of those
5 three points. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Is there anything within Quartermaster that, anything that is
7 ever as far as the wind being in a certain configuration that
8 where it's more worse than or better?

9 A. Well, obviously, a calm wind day is going to be easier to get
10 in and out versus a 30-knot wind day.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. It would just mean for me in my head I have to watch the wind
13 and look for any wind sheer based off of aircraft performance,
14 pilots going ahead of me reporting certain things and/or wind
15 socks at Quartermaster.

16 Q. Okay. And have you specifically experienced any kind of wind
17 sheer at work when you are landing Quartermaster?

18 A. Me personally, yes, I have.

19 Q. What kind of -- what was the circumstances?

20 A. It was pretty dusty and I was trying to do a Blooper (ph.)
21 landing. I got a wind shear from the right. So, I went around
22 and by the time I got back around it had calmed down, calmer I
23 should say, and I landed the helicopter.

24 Q. Okay. And you have flown both platforms as far as --

25 A. Sure, the (indiscernible) --

1 Q. -- AS-350 or EC-130.

2 A. Sure, right, correct, sir.

3 Q. Have you noticed any difference in any of those aircraft when
4 it comes to that?

5 A. As far as feeling it? I feel like the Astar is a little bit
6 more nimble as far as that's concerned. Like we mentioned before
7 the boosted pedals I feel more comfortable in the Astar flying it
8 than a EC. But as far as performance and getting in and out I
9 have never had a problem with either aircraft.

10 Q. Have you ever noticed any difference in the -- of the
11 aircraft response as far as when it comes to loss of tail rotor or
12 Fenstron effectiveness or --

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. -- or weather vanning with the wind conditions at
15 Quartermaster?

16 A. No, sir.

17 Q. Okay. And then you said that as far as you mentioned the
18 Bouchard maneuver. So, what -- in your mind what does that
19 entail?

20 A. So, it entails actually going against everything a
21 traditional helicopter pilot has been taught since day one
22 following the PTS and FAA standards based upon that. instead of
23 the down and forward, if you will, getting out of it you have to
24 do full power on the lateral cycle can have proper pedal and can
25 go out of it the vortices laterally versus down can be very

1 effective in my opinion in a low altitude situation.

2 Q. Okay. And with this situation you have already been -- you
3 have to play king for a day and do the grandiose change, what
4 about just without really putting anything specific, have you got
5 anything in your mind of what might have possibly happened in this
6 --

7 A. It would be pure speculation. I wasn't there. I didn't see
8 it happen.

9 Q. Even with that, your gut feeling, everything else, you have
10 flown in and out of there --

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. -- is there anything that you can think of that might have --

13 A. Possible settling power is in there, yeah. Besides that,
14 that's all I have, sir.

15 Q. Okay. That's it, thanks.

16 A. Whose next? Oh, here we go.

17 BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

18 Q. You said since the accident you limited the number of
19 aircraft on to the Quartermaster.

20 A. Correct, sir. They scaled it back.

21 Q. Whose decision was that?

22 A. Mr. Becker's.

23 Q. And why do you think that was made, that decision was made?

24 A. I couldn't speak to his decision making, sir.

25 Q. That's all I have.

1 A. Okay.

2 MS. WILSON: All right. Thank you.

3 MR. OEST: We all done?

4 MS. WILSON: Yep.

5 MR. OEST: All done.

6 (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: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 February 19th, 2018
 Interview of David Oest

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: June 19, 2108

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.



Le
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH

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PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018

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Interview of: PAUL ALUKONIS

Principal Operations Inspector

Tuesday,
July 31, 2018

APPEARANCES:

KATHERINE WILSON, Ph.D., Senior Human Performance
Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ZOE KELIHER, Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MANNY FIGLIA, Director of Safety
Airbus Helicopters

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

PAT HEMPEN
Federal Aviation Administration

BURL BOYD, Director of Safety
Papillon Airways

MARK TOMICICH, General Counsel
Federal Aviation Administration
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Alukonis)

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I N T E R V I E W

(12:42 p.m.)

DR. WILSON: As I already said, thank you for being here with us today. This is a part of the Grand Canyon accident that occurred in February of this year involving Papillon Airways. We're here strictly from the safety side so what we'd like to do is record this interview so that we can create a transcript and then include that in our public docket. Is that something that you'd be okay with?

MR. ALUKONIS: And I'd like -- I have agreed to that also.

DR. WILSON: Thank you. And you are entitled to have one person represent you in this interview.

MR. ALUKONIS: I have Mark -- ah, I'm going to mess this up.

MR. TOMICICH: It's Tomicich.

DR. WILSON: Great. We'll go around the room and have everybody introduce themselves. That way you'll know who we are and then we'll obviously ask you questions about who you are.

IF you at any point don't understand any questions that we ask you or need clarification please don't hesitate to ask us to clarify that.

Zoe?

MS. KELIHER: I'm Zoe Keliher and I will be doing operations for the accident.

MR. ALUKONIS: Okay.

DR. WILSON: Katherine Wilson. I am a human performance

1 investigator with the NTSB.

2 MR. BOYD: Burl Boyd, Papillon Director of Safety.

3 DR. WILSON: Manny?

4 MR. FIGLIA: Manny Figlia, Director of Aviation -- I'm sorry,
5 Director of Aviation Safety with Airbus.

6 MR. HEMPEN: And Pat Hempen, AD 100, FAA Headquarters.

7 MR. TOMICICH: And for the record, Mark Tomicich, Office of
8 Chief Counsel. I will be representing Paul.

9 DR. WILSON: Great. And if you could state your full name
10 for the record?

11 MR. ALUKONIS: Paul Alukonis, Principal Operations Inspector
12 for Papillon Airways.

13 DR. WILSON: Great. Would you like to start the questioning?

14 MS. KELIHER: Yeah.

15 INTERVIEW OF PAUL ALUKONIS

16 BY MS. KELIHER:

17 Q. So Paul, how long have you been with FAA?

18 A. Eight years.

19 Q. Can you tell me kind of about your career?

20 A. In the FAA?

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. I came into the FAA as an ASI like most and went through
23 spring training. Early on, I'm trying to think, you want
24 operators that I had oversight of, just general what the job is
25 because you're basically starting with accidents, incidents,

1 occurrences, pilot deviations, on-demand work, certification work.
2 I think early on that was about it.

3 As time progressed and I was given Papillon as my primary
4 operations and having oversight of them, there have been other
5 operatives that have come and gone depending on staffing of the
6 office. But over, for the most part I'm thinking 5, 6 years of
7 being principal for Papillon.

8 Q. And how long have you been with -- are you still WP19?

9 A. We are still WP19. Sorry. We are now called the Nevada
10 FSDO, and this is the Las Vegas Office of the Nevada FSDO because
11 we're one happy family of three.

12 Q. Oh.

13 A. Okay?

14 Q. And so the whole time has been, all 8 years have been --

15 A. Have been in this FSDO, yes.

16 Q. And then what was your -- what were your qualifications?
17 What did you do before worked (indiscernible)?

18 A. Before I was with -- I'll just go backwards chronologically.
19 Before the FAA I was the Director of Operations of Heli USA.
20 Prior to that I was the Director of Operations for Westcor
21 Aviation. I was their chief pilot for a time. I was a line pilot
22 at a time. And prior to that I was a flight instructor.

23 Q. About how many hours do you have in helicopter?

24 A. About 9,200.

25 Q. And in 5 years of being the POI for Papillon have you ever

1 had an assistant?

2 A. Never.

3 Q. How many other operators do you have?

4 A. Currently? I have to other operations and two DBs. (ph.).

5 Q. Who are the other operators?

6 A. HighRoll and 5 Star. I think it's 5 Star Helicopter Tours,
7 LLC, and the other one is HighRoll Air, Inc.

8 Q. So how many total helicopters are you overseeing?

9 A. As far as aircraft?

10 Q. Um-hum.

11 A. Well, you have the 56 for Papillon and High Roll has -- High
12 Roll and Five Star combined have 5, so total, what, 61?

13 Q. Um-hum. Any 91 or Part 61 (indiscernible)?

14 A. No.

15 Q. How do you think your workload is?

16 A. Well, it comes and goes in wavs. Right now it's pretty light
17 right now and that's because I've completed an awful lot of work
18 right now.

19 Q. What is the staffing level now compared to last, what, 6
20 years?

21 A. You know, we were real short-handed some years back, but the
22 staffing levels are a lot better than they have ever been. But
23 what has really helped is the office has developed what they call
24 a geo team and they're handling most of the complaints, accidents,
25 pilot deviations, those kinds of things that has helped out the

1 principal inspectors enormously. So the only time I really
2 receive a complaint or, say, a pilot deviation is -- if it's an
3 operator of my own. But generally I never see one anywhere.

4 Q. I hadn't even heard that the FSDOs were doing that. What is
5 that?

6 A. Well, what I think what they did is we had -- we were looking
7 for ways to get more staffing in the office.

8 Q. Um-hum.

9 A. And that's something management decided to do because, you
10 know, at that time the principal inspectors we were just buried in
11 work. I mean, we could barely breathe. So that was a way of
12 getting more staff in the office to alleviate workload on the
13 inspectors.

14 Q. So they just created FTOs for it?

15 A. I don't know. I don't know what FTO is.

16 Q. The full-time position that they --

17 A. Full-time, yeah, they call it geographic. But they handle
18 the 121 -- 129 operators. They take care of all the 91 operator,
19 you know, 91 operators that have no complexity. And then
20 basically a lot of the on-demand work.

21 Q. Do they ever help you with any of your operators?

22 A. Well, you had John Wan, who's on the, on the geo team help
23 you with this investigation. They have done some inspections for
24 Papillon for me.

25 Q. Sure.

1 A. But those were random inspections.

2 Q. How has it been working with the SAS system?

3 A. It took a lot of time to get used to it because we use --
4 with our items we used to go out and we had one single task.

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. So we could go print out our guidance and we could run out
7 and we could do the inspection. With SAS when we print it out the
8 first thing I do is cross out everything that doesn't apply.

9 Q. Hmm.

10 A. Okay? But it's not one set of guidance that you're looking
11 at. It's multiple sets. So the inspection takes place instead of
12 in one day it takes place in this block of time because there's so
13 much to do --

14 Q. Does it have --

15 A. -- for one.

16 Q. -- the R items?

17 A. No. The term R items refers to (indiscernible) now.

18 Q. Hmm.

19 A. And so SAS they call them DCTs. You know, we love our
20 acronyms and we remember the acronyms but sometimes it's hard to
21 remember what the acronym stands for. So anyhow, DCT is basically
22 an inspection that is a surveillance inspection.

23 Q. So how many DCTs have you had with Papillon in say, like, 2
24 years? We'll probably ask for copies, well, I know I will, for
25 copies of --

1 A. Yeah, I don't -- you know, I can give you an estimate, but we
2 might be off one or two, but I'm going to -- so you said 2 years?
3 I'm going to say --

4 Q. Yeah, since from --

5 A. -- ballpark about 16.

6 Q. And that would be 2 years back from the accident, so February
7 11?

8 A. Yeah, something like that. And then they are risk-based and
9 they have time intervals for those. They do vary. There are some
10 that are due in 2 years, you know, some in one year and I think
11 others are end.

12 Q. How does it flag you now to let you know that it's upcoming
13 or an interval is about to become due?

14 A. It doesn't really. It doesn't really flag you. So what
15 you're doing is you're planning your year.

16 Q. Um-hum.

17 A. So that's up to the individual inspector. So if I look at
18 things and let's say I have two operators and we have a DCT that's
19 called, let's say, onboard operations, which I somewhat of a in
20 route inspection. There's more to it than that, but what I would
21 do is group the two operators with the same DCT because I can save
22 a lot of work by bundling those, meaning that you're looking at
23 the same sets of guidance.

24 Q. Hmm.

25 A. You're looking at the same regulations. And that way you're

1 not doing one thing over here and one thing over there and then
2 have to redo it later in the year. So I try to bundle it in that
3 manner if I can.

4 Q. So of the 16 activities that are recorded can you describe a
5 year of what it's like of being a POI for Papillon?

6 A. If you can kind of elaborate a little bit so I understand a
7 little more?

8 Q. Maybe just tell me, like, what you've been doing over the
9 last year? How your relationship is, how the visits go, how much
10 you're hearing from getting the calls and problems and anything?

11 A. Well, I try to visit as often as I can And if I'm, say, in
12 the neighborhood doing an inspection on somebody else, even at a
13 minimum I'm going to pop by and say hello at the minimum. And,
14 you know, continue to take a look around, talk to people to get an
15 idea how the company's functioning.

16 I might, you know, sit down with Burl here and ask him how
17 things are going with him. Do we have anything outstanding, IOUs
18 either way? I would pop in and see the chief pilot and, you know,
19 oftentimes I'd pop upstairs to see the Director of Operations if
20 he was in.

21 Relationship with Papillon has been absolutely excellent.
22 They are very, very receptive to my suggestions. They're, I'm
23 trying to see where I can go with all of this. If they have
24 issues I assist in, you know, addressing those issues. If I have
25 issues then they obviously address them as well. But we have had,

1 I mean, no real regulatory issues. They might have questions
2 about things, of some of the things they might be planning in the
3 future and ask my advice on that in terms of a regulatory manner.
4 Or maybe they just need help navigating our various, you know,
5 systems such as the guidance and so on and what policies are and
6 how to proceed about, you know, developing some program that they
7 might want to.

8 Q. Do you give the check airman check runs?

9 A. Yes, I do.

10 Q. How many check and run do they have?

11 A. Seven right now. It's typically about one.

12 Q. How do check rides work there? Do they do training before
13 they give check rides for the 135?

14 A. So you're asking about check airman check rides or pilot
15 check rides?

16 Q. Pilot check rides.

17 A. Pilot check rides pilots go through a very extensive training
18 program and then at the end of the training program they're given
19 a check ride by the check airman.

20 Q. But every year how does that work when they do the recurrent?

21 A. I don't --

22 Q. Do you know how they get -- do they have yearly training --

23 A. They do.

24 Q. -- at Papillon?

25 A. They do. They have recurrent training.

1 Q. And how does that work? Is it just a flight or a couple
2 flights?

3 A. No, it's ground school and flight.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Several flights (indiscernible).

6 Q. Well, what accounting place?

7 A. I believe the recurrent training requires -- I'd almost have
8 to look in their manual. I think it's 2 hours of flight training,
9 but we have some specialties. They have to be current in the SFRA
10 as well. So there might be additional flights for recurrency in
11 the Canyon.

12 Q. And do you ever give the pilot check rides or just the check
13 airman?

14 A. No, I don't give the pilot check rides. I'm more interested
15 in the check airman.

16 Q. I know that you obviously inherited the S row, but have you
17 seen any problems with Grand Canyon operations in how -- where
18 they're supposed to fly and out --

19 A. You're talking about the SFRA specifically?

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. Okay. As far as air tour operators, no, there have been no
22 problems in the SFRA with routes and so on. We have quarterly
23 safety meetings that address any issues.

24 Q. What issues have you seen come up?

25 A. Typically the issues involve -- now, we're talking all

1 operators not Papillon --

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. -- so typically we might have issues of a pilot being off the
4 route and one company addressing that with another company to say,
5 look, this is what we saw your person doing. Please correct that.

6 Q. Do they loop you guys in?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. How does that work?

9 A. We do that at the safety meetings. I become privy to it.

10 Q. So are they voluntary safety meetings?

11 A. Voluntary, yes.

12 Q. That all the companies --

13 A. And they all participate.

14 Q. Okay. What have you seen of that have been Papillon
15 complaints?

16 A. For routes? On occasion they might have somebody that
17 deviates from the route. Now, when we talk about deviating from
18 the route we're not talking about miles. We're talking about
19 very, very tight, tightly controlled procedures that the pilots
20 are expected to follow. And, you know, we have, we have tourists
21 talk about these routes being, you know, a half mile wide and so
22 on. Those routes are followed much more tightly than that. And
23 so, you know, you might have another aircraft that complains about
24 somebody that's not right on the spot. So we try to keep all the
25 operators controlling their people as tightly as possible to

1 ensure that everybody is exactly on that route.

2 Q. Have you heard complaints about Papillon?

3 A. As far as --

4 Q. Anything.

5 A. -- just route stuff? I've had noise complaints, but I
6 haven't had any -- I'm trying to think. I'm sorry. I can't
7 really think of any off the bat. I know that I had a few in
8 Boulder City about I think it was runway crossings. Those issues
9 were solved quite some time ago when you guys opened up helipad 4
10 on the closed runway. And that solved all those issues. That's
11 really the only thing I can think about right now. There might
12 have been a few other things, but --

13 Q. Wouldn't that be in the SPAS? Do you put that in?

14 A. No, not really because that -- in SPAS it doesn't leave you a
15 whole -- so the way that that works in one of the elements you
16 would have to find something negative. And if you put something
17 negative you can leave a comment. But if you have something
18 that's compliant then it becomes positive you can't put a, you
19 know, a comment or anything.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. In the old PTRS if you say satisfactory and you're going to
22 put a comment you put information in the comments. It's kind of
23 the same thing.

24 Q. Yeah, I know. Did you know Scott?

25 A. No. They have so many pilots. Maybe he said hi or I said hi

1 to him or something, but I did not know him, no.

2 Q. How many times have you been to Quartermaster in the last
3 year?

4 A. All operators I'm going to say probably -- I'm going to say,
5 think about twice.

6 Q. And what situations would that have been?

7 A. Those were in route inspections.

8 Q. Can you describe an in route inspection?

9 A. Sure. An in route inspection is to determine that if a pilot
10 is following basically, you know, flight rules and not exceeding
11 limitations on the aircraft and so on and general company
12 procedures.

13 Q. Do they get any notification that they're going to get it?

14 A. I do not.

15 Q. How does that work with the passengers? You just have to
16 find --

17 A. Well, if I want to do any in route with Papillon typically
18 what I do is I just walk in the building and I schedule with what
19 they call CSR, so the customer service reps. They'll weigh in and
20 schedule me on an aircraft. I typically do not like the pilot to
21 be notified that an FAA inspector is coming onboard with them
22 because I want to see how they are doing things.

23 And so I get a real good look at how they actually operate.
24 And thinking about something else. I did another in route but it
25 was a night strip tour. So when I told you two I think maybe one

1 was with another operator and one was with Papillon and the other
2 one was a night strip tour. So I might have been getting confused
3 there, but I am going off of memory so I apologize.

4 I'm sorry. That was the previous question. What's this one?

5 Q. Oh, in your in route inspections you don't tell them that
6 you're going to be going along?

7 A. I typically don't because I want to see how the manifest is
8 printed out. I want to see what that looks like. Obviously at
9 some point I have to tell the pilot because I have to gather
10 credentials and so on. And, you know, I listen to the pilot's
11 briefing and I hop onboard. I see how they're treating the
12 passengers and there are certain times as pilot in command you
13 have pause to operate the aircraft and how they're dealing with
14 passengers versus it's time to operate the aircraft if something
15 is safety sensitive, you know, beginning with starting the engine.
16 They're not talking to the passengers while they're starting the
17 aircraft. And once they get it started and everything is, you
18 know, normalized at that point they, you know, would talk to the
19 passengers a little bit, tell them what to expect and so on.

20 Q. When do you tell them that you're with the FAA?

21 A. I tell them after I check in that I'm going on their flight
22 and I show them my credentials and I ask them for theirs.

23 Q. So they do know that you're on?

24 A. They do. Yeah, it's not a, you know, it's not a secret. I
25 just don't tell them that I'm coming.

1 Q. Do you do any type of surveillance of just watching them
2 operate at Quartermaster ever?

3 A. All the time.

4 Q. So how do you --

5 A. There's a couple, a few ways of doing that. So if I'm doing
6 a check airman observation with another company I can still see
7 Papillon's aircraft operating. Now, Papillon has no idea that I'm
8 riding with another operator.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. And I can see what their aircraft are doing on the route. I
11 can see what they're doing at the landing sites. If I land at an
12 adjacent site I can see what they're doing, you know. For
13 example, the neighboring landing site at Maverick, if we land
14 there, then I can see Papillon aircraft landing at their site.

15 Q. Do you talk to other operators about Papillon?

16 A. In terms of what?

17 Q. Anything.

18 A. The only thing I can explain, we do talk about each other's
19 companies as a industry, but if you are asking me do I talk about
20 Papillon to other operators about proprietary stuff, the answer is
21 no.

22 Q. If you're at the Swamp and you hear somebody saying, oh, you
23 should look at Papillon. They're always landing like this or they
24 -- would they tell you that? Would they tell you this is what I'm
25 observing --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- of Papillon?

3 A. And they do. They do. And my response to that is have you
4 called Papillon yet? Because these companies work together.

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. And that's the idea is that their operations department work
7 together and they solve industry problems together. Having
8 somebody doing something inappropriate that makes another company
9 nervous, they need to work with each other. And that's going to
10 be with all the companies.

11 Q. Is that the same with the POIs? Do you talk to, like,
12 Sundance's POI?

13 A. Yes. Um-hum.

14 Q. Do you feel like you get support from your superior of
15 whatever surveillance you do?

16 A. I receive ultimate support from this office, from my managers
17 and the officer manager.

18 Q. Have they questioned you on different activities of
19 surveillance that you want to do and you're not able to because --

20 A. That I'm not able to?

21 Q. Yeah, where you've requested to do types of surveillance or
22 have different interactions with Papillon that you don't feel
23 supported in?

24 A. I've never felt unsupported with any surveillance. The
25 office has always supported me in what that I needed -- whatever I

1 needed to do. If I ever needed funding to do travel with Papillon
2 -- I don't -- but if I ever needed funding to travel they would
3 fund it without a hitch. They would expect it to be planned
4 somewhat, but they would have no problem funding it.

5 Q. Have you monitored the training?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. How often does that happen?

8 A. About once a year.

9 Q. How do you think the quality of pilots that they're getting
10 in has been over the last couple of years?

11 A. They're extremely selective in who they hire.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And that is actually been better over the years.

14 Yeah. And then it begins with a very extensive weeding out
15 of resumes before the person even calls. And then, like you said,
16 they're very selective on who they hire. I have sat through their
17 interview process and I like the way it's done. You know,
18 typically there's a, like, an interview board and then they might
19 take them out for a pre-employment flight. And then the groups
20 get together and make a determination whether or not they want to
21 employ that person.

22 Q. How do you think their training is compared to other
23 operators?

24 A. Well, when we're talking about all operators the only way I
25 can describe it, we have three very large companies. And I find

1 that all three companies their training programs are excellent.
2 It's when you get into the three smaller companies that it, you
3 know, that you can tend to find issues. I can tell you that their
4 training program is extensive. They expect a lot from their
5 pilots. We haven't had this in a while, but, you know, if
6 somebody's not progressing in training, you know, they wash them
7 out of training. They don't take the risk.

8 Q. Have you been to the morning briefings?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. How do they get weather throughout the day of the -- pilots,
11 how do they obtain that?

12 A. How are they monitoring weather?

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. I believe it's called, I think it's called SkyVector that is
15 up and the Chief Pilot monitors that throughout the day. So do
16 the lead pilots. Oftentimes it's up on big screen TVs to where
17 the line pilots can see it as well.

18 Q. It sounds like it's changed a little bit, and we have talked
19 to some of the other operators, the way they're set up with their
20 lead pilots, just having lead pilots and them not flying the line
21 as much. How do you think that that setup works at Papillon?

22 A. In terms of lead pilots flying the line?

23 Q. Well, from what I gathered the structure is there's the Chief
24 Pilot.

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. And then there's the lead pilots and there's the line pilots.

2 A. Right.

3 Q. How do you think that that structure works at Papillon?

4 A. I think it's excellent that you have numerous eyes on a
5 situation.

6 Q. And then --

7 A. It's an excellent way to have operational control.

8 Q. And how does that work of the numerous eyes? When you say
9 that what do you mean?

10 A. Well, if you have a single person monitoring something a
11 single person can miss it simply because they're a human being.
12 Or, you know, they can make an inappropriate decision. But if you
13 have multiple people looking at it going, hey, what do you think
14 about this, they can make a decision.

15 Q. How were you notified about the accident?

16 A. The Director of Operations called me.

17 Q. That night?

18 A. Yes. He called me at 4:00 -- I don't know what the time of
19 the accident was. He called me about 4:00 something, 4:20 is kind
20 of ringing a bell. Does that sound about right? We probably have
21 a time different though between Arizona and here.

22 Q. Yeah. It's been confusing.

23 A. And he didn't have much information at the time, so --

24 Q. How much interaction do you have with the check airman?

25 A. You're talking about general interaction? Most of the time

1 the interaction would be in an observation setting, which would
2 occur once per year unless they're in multiple aircraft, which
3 Papillon tends to put most of them in two aircraft so I'm seeing
4 them in 6-month intervals with, I'll call that a deep interaction.

5 Q. Have you been the POI of any of the other big operators?

6 A. Yes. I have been Sundance's POI. I have been Maverick's
7 POI.

8 Q. So you can really compare them.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. So how do you think that they do compare?

11 A. Like my daughter would say, they're the same but different.

12 (Laughter)

13 A. They all do very, very well. The procedures are similar.

14 You know, the aircraft are similar. They all tend to have the
15 same, you know, for the most part the same training programs.

16 They're going to the same places. You know, their landing sites
17 are a little different, but for the most part it's all the same.

18 Q. If you could change anything about Grand Canyon operations
19 because you head whatever you want to go --

20 A. Head of the world?

21 Q. If your fiefdom, what would you change?

22 A. Right now I would be looking at the helipad at -- all the
23 money in the world and my wish list, right? I would get rid of
24 that slope at the airport. For the helipad facility I'd enlarge
25 the fados (ph.). Route structure is excellent. That's really all

1 I can think of. I would leave it at that. The landing sites down
2 at the bottom are natural, which is probably the way it should be
3 for, you know, customer experience and the sacred land for the
4 Indians. I think that's about it.

5 Q. And you said the slope at the airport do you mean --

6 A. Well, the western helipads --

7 Q. Hmm.

8 A. You've been out there from the parking areas upwards towards
9 the fados. It climbs uphill and I can't figure out why they
10 didn't level all of that off flat, which I think the hill itself
11 is, you know, it would be better if there wasn't one.

12 Q. And comparing, and I know that you were the office that
13 oversaw all the operations comparing the Swamp, Quartermaster --

14 A. There's a bunch of them. I can't remember their names.

15 Q. And I know I can't remember any of them all. The Bluff, oh,
16 what do you think -- do you have any comparison of them?

17 A. They're all pretty much the same. You know, they've all
18 been, you know, leveled as much as they can. They've brought
19 gravel in in certain circumstances to level them out. They've
20 cleared the area of bushes. And I think they're adequate for what
21 they're used for.

22 Q. Do you think Quartermaster is any more dangerous or unsafe
23 than any of the other ones?

24 A. No. No.

25 Q. And when you said that you think that the route is excellent,

1 I just keep looking at all the different possibilities that it
2 could have been and obviously you inherited it. The route was
3 made a long time ago. You don't think there is anything that
4 could be done to make it safer?

5 A. Well, you know, anything we do can be improved, okay? But I
6 would say this. I'm an FAA inspector and yes, I have pilot
7 credentials. I don't consider myself a pilot anymore. I'm an FAA
8 inspector now. The experts in this area are the operators, and
9 that's why we have the safety meetings because they're the
10 experts. They know what the issues are and they know how to solve
11 them.

12 Q. Did you feel that way when you were at HeliUSA?

13 A. No. I felt like my hands were tied and just go fly the
14 route.

15 Q. Okay.

16 (Laughter)

17 A. So --

18 Q. And you were in Hawaii?

19 A. I've been to Hawaii but no, I did not operate in Hawaii.
20 That isn't -- you mean as a --

21 Q. When you were with HeliUSA.

22 A. No. No. My career HeliUSA was short-lived.

23 Q. Do you have 130 times (indiscernible)?

24 A. A little bit. Not enough to really count for anything.
25 Maybe 10 hours? Maybe?

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. And that was in a B-4. I never flew a T-2.

3 Q. When you're giving the check airman rides are you ever doing
4 it in the T-2s?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. The difference of working with an operator and now being a
7 FSDO inspector do you feel that the structure of how they operate
8 in the Grand Canyon is adequate for the amount of passengers that
9 they have going in and out?

10 A. You're talking about volume of traffic?

11 Q. Yeah.

12 A. You know, obviously you have been down there and I'm not sure
13 if you have flown the routes and see how organized they are. So
14 if you understand how organized they are then it's not a problem
15 as long as everybody does what they're supposed to do and they're
16 all on the route. I don't think we've had any instances that I
17 can think of to where anybody has been off-route. And like I
18 said, they, those are very narrowly flown routes. You know, their
19 listed as being a half a mile wide, but when you look at it for
20 the most part the pilots are dead on where they need to be. And
21 if they continue that there's no issues with that.

22 Q. It was interesting of me saying how the different operators
23 go out in groups together where, like, Maverick starts up all at
24 the same time and leave at the same time and lands at the same
25 time and shuts off the engines at the same time. Do you think

1 there's an advantage or disadvantage of doing that?

2 A. Well, you know, the companies are in business to make money,
3 so, you know, maybe a wish list that we stagger the flights from
4 one operator to another the first complaint you're going to get is
5 why do I have to give up my flight, you know, in the morning when
6 you guys get to do yours? I don't ever see that happening. You
7 know, they are in business to make money and they're trying to do
8 it in the safest manner possible. So the advantage to launch them
9 all at the same time is they all come back at the same time. Your
10 busses arrive for the next passengers. So throughout the day you
11 have delays and then it starts to get scattered towards the end of
12 the day. And that's all operators, not just Papillon. I mean,
13 heck, that happens to American Airlines.

14 Q. Right, of course.

15 A. Right? So --

16 Q. I guess there's going to be time and do we make that request
17 through you of pulling all the surveillance records?

18 MR. BOYD: Yeah, (indiscernible).

19 MS. KELIHER: Well, that's all the questions I have right
20 now.

21 DR. WILSON: Okay, and I apologize. I'm going to be jumping
22 around a little bit.

23 MR. ALUKONIS: Okay.

24 DR. WILSON: -- filling in some of the holes in my
25 understanding.

1 BY DR. WILSON:

2 Q. We talked about you mentioned that sometimes at Papillon
3 there might be a pilot that would wash out of training. Are you
4 notified if a pilot washes out of training?

5 A. Yes, they tell me.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And my first question is why?

8 Q. Hmm. Is there any sort of pattern that you see as to why
9 pilots wash out of their training?

10 A. Well, the pattern in this is that they're not advancing in
11 the training, so either they're not opening up the books and
12 taking it serious or if it's a flight issue then they're, I don't
13 know, just making something up. But let's say that they're
14 teaching them a normal approach or something like that and in that
15 aircraft the pilot's not getting it. And, you know, eventually
16 they have to look at it and say if I keep training this pilot he
17 may never get it. So I just don't want to, you know, pursue that.

18 Q. How often does that happen?

19 A. It's, it's I'm going to say once every couple of years.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. This year there were none. And you can attribute that to the
22 high hiring standards that they have.

23 Q. What if a pilot just gets an unsat in a training ride or a
24 check ride? Would you be notified of that?

25 A. So I think we have to clarify this a little bit. So if you

1 have a check airman that is checking a event for a pilot and, you
2 know, the pilot fails that event during the check ride but he
3 fails it because it's something that the check airman believes he
4 can fix, he could stop that evaluation and he can train the pilot
5 and say, okay, it looks like you've got it now so let's continue
6 with the evaluation.

7 In that circumstance, say, you're putting an unsat and then
8 satisfactory basically on the record of the flight check, if a
9 pilot could not pass the check ride, you know, like at all, which
10 never happens, my first thing is what's wrong with the training
11 program? Because how did he make it all the way to a check ride
12 to fail him? That shouldn't happen. That's never happened with
13 Papillon. I've never seen that.

14 Q. Since the accident have you heard of any training failures
15 that -- or unsatisfactories that the accident pilot may have
16 received?

17 A. No. I have -- I have not been privy to this investigation at
18 all. I have not seen the pilot records at all.

19 Q. Okay. Zoe asked you if you monitored the training at
20 Papillon, which you said you did. How do you do that
21 specifically?

22 A. I do it over multiple visits. I don't do it in one sitting.

23 Q. Hmm.

24 A. I do it in pieces. So if I come over to visit for any reason
25 one of the first things I do is pop around and go on into the

1 training room and see if anything's going on. I might sit down
2 and listen. If they take a break I'll talk to their new hires.

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. I'll get to know them a little bit, tell them what I do, why
5 I'm here and what I'm looking at. And I will ask the new hires
6 about the training. You know, what did you do today? What do you
7 think of that? What, you know, is there something you'd like more
8 of? But it's done over a period of time. It's not -- I typically
9 don't do it in one setting because one setting I might get
10 aircraft systems, you know, but I'm not getting the whole broad
11 range of the training program. So it's best to be done in pieces
12 unannounced and I can see what's going on.

13 Q. Are you familiar with how Papillon trains either loss of tail
14 rotor effectiveness or settling with power?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. How do they do that?

17 A. Which one would you like first?

18 Q. You can pick.

19 A. Okay. Loss of tail rotor effectiveness is discussed in the
20 ground, but the loss of tail rotor effectiveness applies to Bell
21 helicopters. Airbus, I'm going to say slash Eurocopter, forgive
22 me I if use the old term. It's kind of engrained in me. But they
23 don't publish anything on loss of tail rotor effectiveness for the
24 Airbus. And I don't even know if the aircraft's susceptible to
25 that or not.

1 So I do know that they train in the ground setting and of
2 course you're not training something like that in flight. So
3 they're making the pilots aware of it, but, you know, the only
4 time you're getting in-depth with that is when you're talking
5 about Bell helicopters. And they do have the 206s at the South
6 Rim.

7 Q. Okay. And what about settling with power?

8 A. Settling with power they train it in a ground setting. The
9 last flight observation I did, are you talking about technique
10 about how they train it?

11 Q. So I think just understanding what settling what power is and
12 then how to respond, if they get into that situation?

13 A. So what it is, how you recognize it and how you recover is
14 what they train on the ground.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Okay? And then it's expected in flight that, you know, the
17 pilot experiences that and recovers from it.

18 Q. And is that a change since the accident or were they doing
19 that training before the accident?

20 A. I have observed that I training I believe earlier this year.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. And I've observed that in a check airman observation, which I
23 believe was this year. I might be getting my quarters mixed up,
24 but it was fairly recently. Now they have -- they had asked me
25 about techniques because we have this -- it's becoming more

1 popular what they call the Vuichard method. And they would ask me
2 which one do I prefer? I don't really have a preference over one
3 or the other as long as they train one of them. But I'm kind of
4 an old school guy so I liked the older method. But it's up to the
5 operator which one they want to train.

6 Q. Is one air inspection a year pretty typical for -- at
7 Papillon or?

8 A. No. So the way SAS works it's risk-based, right? So I look
9 at things like, all right, if I jump onboard with somebody to do a
10 flight and they know that there's an FAA inspector onboard, okay.
11 While I'm looking at the training program I might ask the pilot
12 about a few things procedurally. I get to see the weight and
13 balance. I get, you know, but I think the best way to handle that
14 is external (indiscernible) and re-inspection, you know, because
15 if I'm going to look at risk then for me the highest risk is how
16 are they interacting with the other companies in terms of routes?
17 Okay? We have a high volume of aircraft going back to the Canyon
18 that's primary.

19 Q. What would be the most inter-inspections you might do in a
20 year with one operator?

21 A. Oh, I'm not sure, maybe three with one operator, maybe three.

22 Q. Have you ever observed or have you heard of other operators
23 having concerns about Papillon making tailwind landings?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What did you do with that information?

1 A. I brought it to Burl here.

2 Q. Okay. And what was the --

3 A. And I said here's, here's the situation. Can you guys look
4 at this and find out what's going on?

5 Q. Um-hum. And how --

6 A. Now, there's a couple things, okay? One, I was -- it was an
7 impression. This was post-accident, and it was an impression that
8 the other operator took an opportunity to throw rocks at Papillon
9 because it depends on your frame of reference. But I asked the
10 management staff to take a look at their operation and see if this
11 is going on for now, and if it is you stop it and you correct it.

12 Q. And did you follow up with them?

13 A. I did.

14 Q. What was --

15 A. And they're finding it -- that it's nothing.

16 Q. Okay. And nothing like it's not happening or?

17 A. It's not happened.

18 Q. No.

19 A. It's (indiscernible).

20 Q. How did they come about knowing that?

21 A. Their own observations, interviews with their own personnel.

22 Q. Okay. So did they have a report or anything or was this
23 just, like, a verbal exchange?

24 A. No, it was just a verbal exchange.

25 Q. Any random inspections that you mentioned, the go --

1 A. GOT.

2 Q. -- GOT. I want to say go team, like, at the port. What
3 information do you get after a random inspection is completed? So
4 you said John Wan helped you?

5 A. So in SAS what I ended up with is you will see that they had
6 some negative comments about hover heights that came and went.
7 And I went and took a look at that and said, hey, this is going
8 on. You guys need to fix this. As an immediate result, Papillon
9 installed a big screen TV in the chief pilot's office with cameras
10 so they could watch.

11 Q. Any concerns that were mentioned about Quartermaster, landing
12 in Quartermaster?

13 A. None really.

14 Q. No? None really or none?

15 A. No, I can't think of any.

16 Q. Okay. You've got several operators that you're the POI of.
17 How do you divide the workload? Papillon's obviously much larger
18 than the other two operators, but what's the percentage of your
19 workload that goes to Papillon versus other DBs?

20 A. Well, I was just handed the other two operators just
21 recently, so --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- you know, I'm trying to think. I really haven't done
24 anything for them yet. Well, no, that's not true. I -- we just
25 made a check airman with one of the other operators. And I think

1 that's the extent of the work I've done. But like I told you, I
2 try to bundle them together.

3 One of the things that happens here in this office,
4 management staff works with us. When we had to divide up
5 operators I chose those operators because they were at the same
6 airport. That's more -- makes my time more efficient because it's
7 one-stop shopping. Like I tell you, I try to bundle, align the
8 inspections together so that doing the same inspection on each
9 operator at the same time.

10 Q. Okay. You mentioned that you visit Papillon operations. Do
11 you go to all the bases? Do you primarily go to one base?

12 A. Oh, I go to all the bases.

13 Q. Yeah. How often are you doing that?

14 A. It depends. It depends on time of year and so on. And to
15 give you an example, if I went to McCarran in the middle of winter
16 I might find one helicopter there. So there's really not a lot
17 going on. If I go in the middle of summer, you know, there might
18 be four aircraft and some passengers in the lobby and I can see
19 what's going on at that base.

20 South Rim, unfortunately that one I typically have to
21 announce that I'm coming because I have to ride on their sister
22 company to get there. So they usually know that I'm coming when
23 I'm looking at records and so on and that stuff.

24 Q. And when you visit bases are you just observing or are you
25 talking with folks? What's your sort of procedure when you get

1 in?

2 A. All of the above. I talk to the regular line pilots, telling
3 them how I'm, you know, hi, I'm your principal inspector, never
4 mention the work, you know? I might watch those pilots, just
5 observe take off and regular operations, take off landing,
6 loading, unloading, you know, weighing procedures, manifesting
7 procedures. I might go up to their, I like to call it a control
8 tower. It's not really a control tower. It's where the flight
9 calling is, but I'll go up to the tower to watch. Sometimes I'll
10 watch other operators while I'm up there that I might watch just
11 airport activities. I might talk to the flight callers over there
12 and say, hey, that aircraft, I'm just curious, how's it footed?
13 Where is it going? When is it coming back, just to see how much,
14 you know --

15 Q. What has been -- what's your role as Papillon's fellow beamer
16 SMS program? What interaction are you having with them regarding
17 that?

18 A. They've had an SMS program for a very long time.

19 Q. Um-hum.

20 A. What they have done is enhanced it under IS-BAO, but as far
21 as me being an inspector and our guidance for SMS there's really
22 not a whole lot for me to do with it other than I would actually
23 come by and talk to Burl for a little bit and, you know, we've had
24 situations where we've talked about incident reports or how many
25 of this and how many of that, how it's being recorded. And as

1 long as the company's aware of what's going on that gives them an
2 opportunity to fix and address any risks or hazards that they
3 might discover.

4 Q. After taking over as Papillon's POI, did you do any
5 evaluation of Quartermaster as a suitable landing site?

6 A. Now, you're talking about personal evaluation?

7 Q. Well, either yes, yourself or were you given some sort of
8 guidance to show you or documentation that their landing site is
9 suitable?

10 A. No, I was never given any documentation of that nature. You
11 know, that's way before my time. All I can tell you is my
12 experience from my industry experience I've landed in a lot
13 tighter places than that. When I look at the operation and the
14 types of things that helicopters do and the things that -- and
15 situations that helicopter pilots in general are put in, it just
16 doesn't get any easier than this. And that site I find to be
17 extremely adequate for what your typical helicopter pilot is going
18 to have to face on a daily basis.

19 You know, you take a Medevac pilot and you're going to land
20 him in an intersection he's never landed before and he's going to
21 do it at night, we don't have that here. You're going to the same
22 place. You're being trained to go in and out of there. And then,
23 you know, even when they do their SFRA evaluations they're going
24 in and out of the site as part of, you know, a test. So I, you
25 know, if there was a concern with the site, you know, I would like

1 to know what that is. But, you know, I look at it and I go, okay,
2 there's really no obstacles potentially. And it's a clear and
3 smooth area.

4 Q. So if you did have a concern, I mean, do you have any
5 guidance that you can rely on to determine its adequacy?

6 A. Well, I'm thinking what we would have at our guidance I can't
7 think of anything that is in our guidance offhand that would drive
8 me towards that. The one exception I would have is that airports
9 division would have, I don't know here, I don't want to say that.
10 We have an advisory circular for helipads that kind of addresses
11 some of those issues. But as far as a, you know, a private
12 landing area that's up to the operators if they want to improve
13 it. I don't know if we could improve this much more anyway with
14 it being, you know, Native American land.

15 Q. So Papillon wanted to -- let me back up. How many at the
16 Quartermaster site do you know how many pads there are or how many
17 aircraft Papillon can get there at Quartermaster?

18 A. I would have to Google Earth it and look.

19 Q. Okay. So if they wanted to, and I'm going to make this
20 number up, let's say they basically land 10 helicopters there or
21 they wanted to land two more. Is that something that they would
22 need to get approved or authorized by you?

23 A. No.

24 Q. No? Okay. If they wanted to land at another site, nearby
25 site, do you have, like, any approval or authority over that?

1 A. No. No. That's strictly property owner.

2 Q. Okay. So you then as their POI you don't have any say over
3 that?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I might make a suggestions if I thought something was
7 hazardous. I would say, you know, I don't know about that, guys,
8 what do you think about that? What are you thinking?

9 Q. Um-hum. Are there any rules that companies have to follow,
10 you know, for a landing site that's, you know, graveled not, you
11 know, maybe not, what's the word that I'm looking for?

12 A. You know --

13 Q. You know, not, you know, not a designated helipad. It's a
14 sort of off-airport landing site.

15 A. No, the only thing --

16 Q. Right.

17 A. -- that they would have to do is have permission from the
18 property owner. That's primary. You know, if it becomes there's
19 some guidance for Medevac operations, say, going into a hospital
20 it has to meet certain dimensions, et cetera. But as a private
21 operation going to private lands, no.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I mean, there's suggested criteria in an advisory circular,
24 but that's about it.

25 Q. The advisory circular that you mentioned --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- previously for helipads?

3 A. Yes. And I can't quote the number, but it's a heliport,
4 something heliports. I can't remember the name right offhand.

5 Q. Would that -- that would typically be like a paid heliport,
6 though, versus the --

7 A. Not necessarily.

8 Q. No? Okay.

9 A. No.

10 Q. So when you took over as the POI, I know that it was before
11 your time where Quartermaster was approved as, you know, the
12 landing site for them. Was there any discussion about how it came
13 to be? How they mitigated risks landing there?

14 A. No, not to my -- it was so -- that was so, you know, far back
15 in the past I don't even know when all that was created.

16 Q. Is that something that you think needs to be evaluated on a
17 regular basis or, I mean, approved 10 years ago, 20 years ago do
18 we need to be looking at new risks that are maybe popped up there?

19 A. You're talking specifically about landing sites in the
20 airport? Because the airport's inspected by the Air Force
21 Division POI --

22 Q. Right. These off-airport --

23 A. -- but I don't, you know?

24 Q. -- sites, so Quartermaster.

25 A. As far as off-airport sites, you know, I don't -- I simply

1 don't know.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. And, you know, I don't know who would do that. Is, you know,
4 that the Hualapai that would do that? Is it the AFA that would do
5 that? I don't know who it is.

6 Q. Do you have any involvement with the LOA between operators
7 and the -- so from the routes standpoint you just sit in on the,
8 say, quarterly safety meetings --

9 A. Right.

10 Q. -- but you don't --

11 A. But we have multiple LOAs so I need to know which one.

12 Q. Oh, boy.

13 A. We have the McCarran Tower LOA. We have the route structures
14 agreement LOA --

15 Q. Yeah, that. Yes, the route structures.

16 A. Okay. Route structures, yes, I attend the quarterly safety -
17 - we went quarterly on those I believe. I attend the quarterly
18 safety meetings on those.

19 Q. Okay. But that LOA is -- is that strictly between the
20 operators and you just sit in on the meetings or do you --

21 A. That's correct.

22 Q. -- input on that at all?

23 A. But that is the agreement before -- that is a gentleman's
24 agreement between the operators --

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. -- of how they're going to do things. And those meetings are
2 about deconflicting traffic.

3 Q. Ever hear any concerns from pilots about the winds flying in
4 and out of Quartermaster?

5 A. Pilots never told me anything about the --

6 Q. No?

7 A. -- winds, no.

8 Q. Complaints about taking flights that they didn't feel
9 comfortable with?

10 A. Yes. I had one pilot that was concerned some years back, but
11 that had to do with maintenance activities.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And those were, just to let you know, those issues were
14 resolved when Papillon put in their, what they're calling
15 maintenance test pilots.

16 Q. How does Papillon ensure that their pilots are doing the
17 right thing when flying those routes?

18 A. They're, if they're still doing this, I haven't seen this in
19 a while, but typically when they put a pilot on the line they're
20 being followed by a lead pilot or a check airman and they're
21 observing them as they go forth. But they also have Spidertracks
22 that they're tracking the aircraft with.

23 They implemented -- let me think of what this thing is
24 called. All the operators bought a device called a Bad Elf and
25 they were periodically putting it, they're basically sneaking it

1 in the aircraft without a pilot knowing and they're seeing and
2 monitoring what that person is actually doing. Each company has
3 their various ways of doing it. I don't know what Papillon's
4 doing at the moment but it got -- I might be getting that blended
5 with other companies. So --

6 Q. And the video safety briefing that the passengers lodge, is
7 that considered the primary safety briefing? Or is that -- or is
8 the pilot briefing that the pilot actually gives at the helicopter
9 (indiscernible)?

10 A. There's two briefings. So the initial one is the video and
11 then when the pilot walks the passengers out to the aircraft the
12 pilot will actually ask the passengers if they had watched the
13 video. The pilot will also go through a secondary briefing as
14 well.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. So there's a redundancy in the briefing.

17 Q. Is the video, is that, you know, approved by you?

18 A. It was approved by the prior --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- Principal Inspector, but it meets all the requirements.
21 It's been inspected.

22 Q. Have you watched it?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Any issues?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Ever observe any passengers having problems taking off the
2 rotary seatbelts?

3 A. No, I don't -- I've never seen it.

4 MR. BOYD: Okay. When we get to a point could we take a
5 break wherever it's convenient for you?

6 DR. WILSON: Sure. I think I just have about five or six
7 more questions and then --

8 MR. BOYD: Sure.

9 DR. WILSON: Will that work?

10 MR. BOYD: Perfect.

11 DR. WILSON: Great.

12 BY DR. WILSON:

13 Q. If Papillon wanted to make a change to that video that would
14 need to be approved?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Since the accident have you increased any inspections of
17 Papillon or done anything different in your role as POI?

18 A. I've visited the operations a lot more just to see what's
19 going on.

20 Q. Anything --

21 A. I've talked to some of the new hires. Post-accident the --
22 we all of a sudden had this concern about the wind, not just with
23 Papillon but, you know, throughout the industry. You know, which
24 I think is good because this is bringing light to that. But I'm
25 not really seeing -- I'm not really seeing anything that's, like,

1 has fallen apart. I'm seeing, you know, a company doing what it's
2 always done and producing, you know, a very good pilot at the end
3 of the day.

4 Q. Is there an issue with the accuracy of weather so we get our
5 weather report at the airport, now we get into the Canyon and
6 we're relying on a windssock?

7 A. Yeah, that's always been an issue.

8 Q. Hmm.

9 A. And that has to do with the environment. Now, to go back in
10 history a little bit, usually the only information you had was
11 what was here at McCarran. There was a camera at Temple Bar that,
12 you know, you could see a little bit of weather. But since then
13 we now have an AWOS at the Grand Canyon Airport, which is
14 excellent. You know, you obviously have the windssocks down at the
15 bottom. You have two companies. I don't know if Maverick
16 installed them, but Sundance, both Papillon and Sundance installed
17 weather stations down at the bottom where they can get that real-
18 time weather, which are excellent choices.

19 Q. You mentioned the Spidertracks. At the time of the accident
20 Papillon was using 15-minute pings. Is that something that you
21 would be made aware of when they made changes like that? Or is
22 that just an operator decision that's being made?

23 A. No, I think the operator's just making those decisions. My
24 responsibility is to ensure that they're following their flights.
25 Unfortunately, I don't have control over, you know, how often are

1 we following every minute --

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. -- because there was a time where, you know, we didn't have
4 GPS and all that fun stuff. You were following it, you know, with
5 a launch. But now that we have Spidertracks at least we have an
6 idea of where it's going. Spidertracks does have some features to
7 it. And one of the things they do train so, you know, for
8 example, their training outer rotations and then engine failure.
9 One of the things they're expecting the pilots to do is hit the
10 button so that immediately pings, you know, we've got an issue
11 somewhere and we need to start looking for you. And that
12 information gets disseminated among, you know, the management
13 people so there's more than one person getting that message. Good
14 stuff.

15 Aside from that, well, that's getting into route stuff again
16 and we'll talk about Bad Elf, but all the aircraft, you know, have
17 Spidertracks.

18 Q. Um-hum.

19 A. But that's up to them how often they want to ping it.

20 Q. Okay. One more question and then we'll take that break. I
21 know we've got the structured routes going in and out of the
22 Canyon, but when it comes to landing at Quartermaster there's
23 nothing documented that says these are -- this is the type of
24 approach that you should fly --

25 A. I've never --

1 Q. -- coming in there.

2 A. I would never do that.

3 Q. Okay. Why is that?

4 A. And so here's why, okay? I'm happy with them telling them
5 how to get in the vicinity of the landing area, but you never,
6 ever, ever take the pilot command out of that aircraft. They need
7 to make the decision on what the safest approach is. So if I told
8 them this is the way you're going into this spot every single time
9 and they go, okay, well, you know, I had a tailwind when I went in
10 and I crashed because Paul made me go this way, you know? We're
11 not going to do that. We're not taking the pilot command out of
12 the aircraft.

13 DR. WILSON: Okay. All right. Let's take a 5-minute break?

14 MR. BOYD: Yeah, that would be great. Thank you.

15 DR. WILSON: All right.

16 (Off the record.)

17 (On the record.)

18 DR. WILSON: Okay. We are back and we will start questioning
19 with Manny.

20 BY MR. FIGLIA:

21 Q. How many public POIs around this office?

22 A. POIs, so you're talking like it's -- We're down -- other than
23 me we're talking three, so a total of four. We just lost one to
24 an air carrier. So what you're seeing back here, this is actually
25 a different office, WP39. This we have some air carrier people

1 back here. That's why you see so many cubicles.

2 Q. Do they have oversight on Part 91 operators in the area as
3 well?

4 A. Our other principals?

5 Q. Yes, for Part 91 operators.

6 A. So Part 91 operators there are a few 91 operators that carry
7 complexity in a small amount, 10 point something like that because
8 they have turbine jets. So some of those principals are carrying
9 those 91s. The 91 operators that carry no complexity have been
10 handed over to the geo team.

11 Q. On the inspections, you referred to them as DCTs?

12 A. They're called DCT, Data Collection Tools.

13 Q. Data Collection Tools.

14 A. Data Collection Tools.

15 Q. Okay. Can you walk me through -- you mentioned you did,
16 like, 16 of them in the past --

17 A. Yeah, but that's just -- you know, that's kind of a rough
18 estimate. That number could be off I guess once you get the
19 printout to see how many there actually are. So I'm sorry to
20 interrupt you, but go forward with your question.

21 Q. Yeah, and they're separated into different phases?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Can you give me an example of one phase? You mentioned like
24 a route phase.

25 A. Oh, yeah. So one of them might be called operational

1 control, okay? So that DCT will take you through every piece of
2 guidance and every regulation on operational control.

3 Q. When you visit Papillon or another one of your oversights,
4 let's say 5 Star and you talk to the Director of Safety, Director
5 of Operations, Chief Pilot and also some of the line pilots.

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. Is there anyone else you specifically talk to within your
8 organization?

9 A. Well, are we talking inspections or are we talking what I
10 would call an ancillary?

11 Q. Ancillary.

12 A. Ancillary, yes. So with Papillon oftentimes I will speak to
13 their president and I will talk to a gentleman there named Alan
14 Stevens. And when --

15 OPERATOR: Rich Ramirez to the front office, please? Rich
16 Ramirez to the front office.

17 A. -- I speak to Alan Stevens I'm talking to him about Grand
18 Canyon SFRA-specific stuff, okay? Or I might be talking to him
19 about the Glen Canyon Recreational Area and things like that. He
20 sits on a -- in an industry FAA board that works on voluntary
21 agreements between operators, which was just recently signed in
22 the Glen Canyon Area. And I will talk to him about issues of that
23 because of his extensive knowledge about it.

24 But I don't discuss general Papillon, you know, inspections
25 and items with him. That's not his job function at all.

1 Q. And on the DCTs, is there a specific one for any kind of
2 site-specific operation like Quartermaster?

3 A. No. See -- no. Once you address a DCT there is a field in
4 the program that allows you to put the location that you are
5 examining. Okay? So if I want to do this DCT for, say, onboard
6 operations it's up to me where I want to do it. I can do it in
7 McCarran. I can do it in Boulder. I can do it in the South Rim.
8 But once I'm complete, when I'm closing it out I would put the
9 location that I conducted that inspection.

10 Q. Quarterly safety meetings with the operators in the area, who
11 attends those meetings?

12 A. It depends on which ones you're talking about. So first type
13 of meeting is I call them the Clark County Helicopter Users
14 Meeting. In those meetings are all the operators, McCarran, ATC,
15 Clark County Department of Aviation, the Metro Police Department,
16 all of the 91 operators that supply strip tours and those are
17 typically presented by a man named Jack Jabois (ph.) that works
18 for Clark County Aviation, and they track the noise complaints,
19 drone activity and compliance with the route structure over the
20 strip and entrance and exit of the class Bravo on the way to the
21 Canyon. And when we talk about compliance they want the pilots to
22 fly through what they call gates and that is strictly noise
23 abatement.

24 Q. Okay. Have you ever come across anything else at those
25 meetings related to safety other than what you've mentioned?

1 A. Boy, that's kind of general.

2 Q. Specifically the operator operating in an unsafe manner. Is
3 that brought up at that meeting?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. When you -- during an inspection let's say site-
6 specific or let's say an onboard, have you been able to do that
7 with multiple aircraft operating in a close proximity, like at
8 Quatermaster where there's, like, 10 aircraft operating there at
9 the same time? Have you ever been on a route check when that
10 occurred?

11 A. With multiple aircraft leaving at the same time, yes. Uh-
12 huh.

13 Q. How about multiple aircraft operating in the same area
14 outside of the airport?

15 A. Well, I guess I'm -- I guess mentally I'm having a bit of a
16 time following you. So for example, if I departed on a flight
17 with Papillon on the way to the Grand Canyon I might have, you
18 know, for other operators operating multiple aircraft all at the
19 same time on the same route going to the Canyon and landing at
20 different places or just doing air-only tours. So yeah, you're in
21 the mix.

22 Q. And specifically have you ever been at Quatermaster when
23 they were operating, let's say, more than eight aircraft at one
24 time?

25 A. Yes. I don't know if it's eight, but multiple aircraft.

1 Q. Have you ever witnessed or done an inspection during the
2 weekends when the volume is higher?

3 A. I don't know if the volume is higher on the weekends. Maybe.
4 I can't remember if I have or not.

5 Q. You mentioned you sit in when somebody interviews for new
6 hires?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Have you or do you have any influence to the company if they
9 are going to hired or not? Are you --

10 A. No. I was invited to sit through the interview so that the
11 company asked me to. I didn't ask to do that. They asked me to
12 sit through the interview because they wanted to show me what
13 their process is. And I'm very glad that I did. But when I sat
14 through the interview I don't think the applicant was ever told I
15 was an FAA inspector.

16 Q. Have you ever received any safety information from an
17 organization called U.S. Helicopter Safety Team?

18 A. I've never heard of that organization.

19 Q. When you receive a complaint from another operator,
20 mentioning, let's say, the other operator was executing a downwind
21 landing, have you ever asked based on an SMS program to receive
22 any flight data monitoring (indiscernible) that confirm or
23 ascertain that that information wasn't true? In other words, have
24 you used a company's SMS to gain further information?

25 A. I don't know when a specific circumstance of that nature, but

1 the accident or incident -- the internal company incident
2 reporting process I have used for to understand what occurred
3 because that's typically going to be a pilot statement or another
4 employee aboard the aircraft that witnessed whatever had occurred.
5 I have done that. But is that really a part of the -- that is a
6 part of your SMS program I suppose.

7 Q. How about --

8 A. I've done that.

9 Q. -- imaging onboard the aircraft?

10 A. There no imaging to my knowledge.

11 Q. That you've used?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Okay. So there is imaging but you haven't used it?

14 A. I haven't used it, no.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. The only time I've heard of that being used was one of their
17 other accidents and it was tightly controlled by the NTSB.

18 Q. For the check airman when you're doing check rides are you
19 examining all aircraft, the H-125s, the B-2s, H-130s and the T-2s?

20 A. It depends on what they're designating that check airman at
21 at the time.

22 Q. But have you done check rides in all those type aircraft?

23 A. The T-2s, the B-4s, the B-3s, the B-2s, the MD-900, the Bell
24 206s and the Bell 407s when they had them years ago, yes.

25 Q. Okay. To what extent did your emergency procedures join the

1 check rides? Did they do auto-rotations?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. They do power, settling of the power?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. You mentioned limited time in the H-130. How do you feel
6 about doing an evaluation ride yet you mentioned you had about 10
7 hours (indiscernible)?

8 A. Well, we're talking about check airman observations, okay?
9 So I am in the EC-130s. I'm sitting in the front right seat. I
10 do not have controls in front of me. You have a pilot
11 manipulating the controls. You have a check airman as a evaluator
12 and safety pilot.

13 Q. A check evaluator?

14 A. He's -- he has the function -- the check airman has the
15 function of an evaluator to evaluate the pilot flying. He also
16 serves as a safety pilot in the event that the pilot flying is not
17 performing a maneuver correctly.

18 Q. And where is he positioned in the aircraft?

19 A. He's in the middle with dual controls, but that's just the
20 one specific aircraft.

21 Q. So basically that instructor pilot per se, you're evaluating
22 the --

23 A. Check airman performance.

24 Q. -- performance while you're sitting in the extreme other
25 seat, not the middle seat as with the instructor. You're

1 sitting --

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. Is the Vuichard maneuver in the flight operations manual?

4 A. No.

5 Q. But --

6 A. Neither is settling with power.

7 Q. But you still do that as part of your check ride evaluation?

8 A. That's correct.

9 Q. And you also do the Vuichard maneuver?

10 A. It doesn't have to be the Vuichard maneuver. Papillon
11 doesn't use that maneuver. They don't do that. You know, that's
12 and operator preference. Their Director of Operation made a
13 decision that they were going to use, I'm going to call it, the
14 standard recovery method for settling with power. I think that a
15 average pilot would go right into recovery where the Vuichard
16 method I don't think your average pilot would intuitively go into
17 that type of recovery.

18 Q. Have you been offered training by any operator to train in
19 their aircraft without that?

20 A. Yeah. They, well, I'm going to say this. They offer but I
21 can't accept that. We have a flight program office where I have
22 to receive my training and (indiscernible) of the flight program
23 office. So I can't accept their offer to do that. Years ago
24 prior to the flight program office being opened we were allowed to
25 fly with other operators for currency. I did fly with Papillon

1 for currency and that's how, you know, I was able to fly some of
2 their various aircraft.

3 Q. And how often are you afforded the training, to go to
4 training?

5 A. Well, annually, they have a formal course which is about 2
6 weeks and they put quite a bit of time on us in a Schweizer and a
7 Bell 206. And then quarterly we're going one day and they're
8 flying us twice a day, you know, 2 hours VFR and basically -- I'm
9 sorry, an hour and a half VFR and an hour and a half on
10 instruments.

11 Q. On mentioning the improvement specifically with Quartermaster
12 as far as the approving the operation there, do you feel that
13 using a less number of available landing spots there is a
14 improvement, not to use all --

15 A. Not necessarily. You know, they don't all depart at one time
16 and they don't all land at the same time. You know, they're
17 staggered so it doesn't matter if there's another aircraft there
18 or not, for example, if they're departing.

19 Q. Specifically do you think it's more challenging to land in
20 that LZ when there are multiple aircraft that you are not to
21 overfly?

22 A. It's going to cause the pilot to make some decisions of how
23 he's going to ingress or exit.

24 Q. But you would say that --

25 A. But I don't -- I don't look at that as being any kind of

1 hazard. I look at that as aeronautical decision-making. That's
2 your job as a pilot.

3 Q. I'm saying specifically improvement.

4 A. Improvement.

5 Q. Or improvement, increasing your margin of safety using less
6 aircraft and specifically in that zone?

7 A. I don't think it matters one way or the other in terms of
8 safety.

9 Q. That's all I have.

10 DR. WILSON: All right. I've got some follow-up, too.

11 BY DR. WILSON:

12 Q. When did you get -- you said recently you got 5 Star and
13 HighRoll. When did you get those?

14 A. About 2 weeks ago maybe?

15 Q. Okay. So at the time of the accident?

16 A. At the time of the accident I had an operator, a single pilot
17 operator in Moab, Utah.

18 Q. That you were providing geographical (indiscernible) for?

19 A. No. Actually they were certificated here and they had a
20 satellite operation in Moab and then they shut down the, I'll call
21 it their main base here and then moved to Utah. That has now been
22 transferred to Salt Lake City.

23 Q. Do you know any other operators that have part-time pilots?

24 A. Part-time? Yeah, I don't know.

25 Q. Did you have a --

1 A. Actually I've never asked that question.

2 Q. Did you know that Papillon had part-time pilots?

3 A. I knew that they had some pilots that were on varied
4 schedules, but as far as I'm not sure if that makes them part-time
5 or not. But that's about the extent of it. So part-time, what do
6 you mean? Like, less than 40 hours a week type thing or?

7 Q. Yeah, like, doing a couple flights a month.

8 A. No. I was not aware of that.

9 Q. Do you know Mike Tomlinson?

10 A. I do.

11 Q. Check airman?

12 A. I do.

13 Q. Can you describe what he's, like, found?

14 A. Sure. He's an excellent pilot. He is very, very
15 knowledgeable. I think he's (indiscernible).

16 Q. And how about Higgins?

17 A. Daniel Higgins. I guess you're getting at they're both lead
18 pilots, both check airmen. You know, they're at a very high
19 knowledge level and they have all the flight skills and that's,
20 you know, why they were chosen for those positions. So, you know,
21 you say, well, how is it to fly with somebody like that? You
22 know, without elaborating on it I don't know what you're really
23 asking me other than are you asking about their flight skills,
24 their knowledge?

25 Q. All of it.

1 A. All of it? They're extremely knowledgeable. That's because
2 they're company instructors. They've got their face in the books.
3 They're into, you know, they're having to teach the courses which
4 forces them to be knowledgeable. They're both the evaluating as
5 check airmen. And just so you know, Mike Tomlinson no longer is
6 employed with Papillon, if you did not know that. I found them
7 both to be very good evaluators.

8 Q. How has the company changed since Simon became the Chief
9 Pilot?

10 A. Simon is no longer the Chief Pilot. Simon has been moved up
11 to an unrecognized position by the FAA called an Assistant
12 Director of Operations. He is being trained to become a Director
13 of Operations. They have moved Tyler Carver, who was the training
14 manager into the position of Chief Pilot.

15 Q. So I guess at the time of the accident --

16 A. So --

17 Q. -- how was it when Simon came in? Did you -- because you
18 were still the POI when there was the past?

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. So how did it change when Simon became the Chief Pilot?

21 A. I don't remember who the Chief Pilot was before Simon. Can I
22 ask Burl bruise I can't remember.

23 MR. BOYD: Mark Schlaefli.

24 MR. ALUKONIS: Was that Mark Schlaefli? Mark Schlaefli. And
25 Simon came in with a very extensive resume and a lot of experience

1 with a very, very positive attitude. I had talked to Simon about
2 some interesting programs that I really liked that the FAA has,
3 such as the ASAP program. And Simon was in favor for it, really
4 not knowing how to go about it. And, you know, we've had multiple
5 discussions about that. And really the ASAP program and what
6 Papillon actually does in terms of safety committees, is really
7 identical. The only difference is ASAP would put it in a formal
8 format, which is what I was hoping. And then I would be a part of
9 that and that way you get to see everything in moving forward with
10 safety. So I'm hoping that when Simon does become the Director of
11 Operations that he will continue and go forward with that and move
12 into ASAP. It's one of my items on my wish list.

13 BY DR. WILSON:

14 Q. Do you have a personal relationship with anyone in the
15 company?

16 A. No.

17 Q. You don't see anybody?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. In your 8 years have you been a POI for an operator
20 that has had an accident?

21 A. That's really difficult to say. And the reason it's
22 difficult for me to determine that is I'm a rotorcraft specialist.
23 I assist the POIs here with their operators. So I'm involved with
24 all the other companies even though I'm not their principal. I
25 have been other operators' principals here and there, but to say

1 that I was the principal at the time of an accident is difficult
2 for me to recall. I believe we had, but I don't know if those are
3 accidents.

4 Q. Well, I mean --

5 A. I simply don't know, but, you know, in my function I've, you
6 know, I've -- trying to think of who has had accidents and I can't
7 think any. I know we've had some incidents, but whether or not I
8 was a POI I don't know.

9 Q. But at Papillon you've been the POI when there have been
10 accidents?

11 A. I've been the POI, yes.

12 Q. And how have they responded to accidents?

13 A. They are usually very proactive to find out what the cause of
14 that accident is. And you know, as in terms of being an
15 investigator, you know, it might take you a year, year and a half
16 to figure out what actually happened. But from the operator's
17 standpoint and the FAA's standpoint we have to be proactive and we
18 have to make some judgments about what occurred so we know what to
19 fix.

20 And I have found Papillon to be very proactive in fixing
21 something when they -- once they kind of understand what, you
22 know, might have been the, you know, cause of the accident. So,
23 you know, I can talk about specifics if you like, if you want to
24 talk about one of the specific accidents that (indiscernible).

25 Q. Sure, like the collective interference? I remember you

1 worked on that, right?

2 A. The collective interference, so, you know, they looked at
3 that and, you know, it was really indeterminable what was going
4 on. So, you know, we had a, trying to think what the name of that
5 stuff is, give me a sec. There's a bundle of wires with strength
6 tubing that runs through a gear and that was cracked and peeling
7 from heat and storing the wires in a curved motion around the dual
8 collective that was removed. We thought that maybe those cracks
9 and de-lamination of those wires may have gotten in the gears,
10 between the gear and the rack that allows the throttle controls to
11 talk.

12 We tried to duplicate it. It couldn't be duplicated. Airbus
13 looked at it. Couldn't be duplicated. We looked at debris maybe
14 getting down through the switchbox and down the collective tube
15 and interfering with the gears. We couldn't duplicate any of
16 that.

17 So at the end of the day we really didn't have anything to
18 really kind of hang our hat on and say this was why this happened,
19 but what I did, and it was more so than just Papillon, it was all
20 the operators that operate the ECs, I asked their maintenance
21 people not to store those collectives with those cords curled
22 around the collective, to keep them straight. And I remember one
23 operator they ended up with tool boxes with phones and you could
24 put the collective there and hold the cord straight. That problem
25 was resolved with the T-2 with a plastic standoff that holds that

1 cord straight. The B cords don't have that standoff. So does
2 that kind of answer your question?

3 Q. With this accident what have you seen change?

4 A. Well, I've seen an additional windsock. I've seen a lot more
5 concern about weather and winds. The former Chief Pilot Simon
6 approached me with how they are going to teach setting with power.
7 He was concerned about techniques, whether or not you're going to
8 start from a stationary hover or if you're going to make it
9 similar to an approach. And then he was concerned about what kind
10 of recovery do I like and so on.

11 None of that matters to me as long as the pilot can recognize
12 it, understand it, get out of it, recover as practiced. Other
13 than that, it's up to them what type of technique they use.

14 Q. So have they changed anything else?

15 A. I have not personally seen anything else other than
16 additional awareness.

17 Q. And I think that's it. (Indiscernible)?

18 MS. KELIHER: I don't know, otherwise we just have Burl?

19 MR. BOYD: I don't have nothing.

20 DR. WILSON: Pat?

21 BY MR. HEMPEN:

22 Q. So let's go back to the old FSDO days versus today. So I
23 think when we say the geo team we're talking about geographic
24 inspection.

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. So it's like the days previously were basically in a FSDO
2 office, and I'm just asking, say correct or not, FSDO, Flight
3 Standards Office you have the principal inspectors and they're the
4 ones looking after certificates and then the geographical were the
5 ones, all the outliers, the extra work, all the people that
6 wouldn't fall under certificate oversight. Is that still a
7 reality?

8 A. Yeah. So just a bit of history on this, so we had the
9 Allegiant Certificate in this office, the 121 certificate. And
10 then we had your general aviation inspectors in this office. For
11 whatever reason the FAA decided to start the CMOs. We had a split
12 in the office. The 121 folks went to WP39 and these other people,
13 the general aviation inspectors, stayed here under 19.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Okay? But now the office manager's faced with a problem. We
16 still have oversight of the 129s that come in.

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. We've got all these 91s and all this stuff and all the
19 assistants that are 121 inspectors we're providing the office,
20 well, they've exited. They're no longer under the management of
21 this office.

22 Q. Yeah.

23 A. So you still have to do those functions and one part of that
24 was to develop the geo team to take care of those functions that
25 were normally done by the 121s.

1 Q. So that three it sounds like it's we're sort of going back to
2 the days of old --

3 A. With the GADOs --

4 Q. -- and that the geo team, which we call geographic, or sort
5 of they're like -- they fill all the stopgaps, all the things that
6 are under their geographic area of influence of that FSDO they
7 take care of all of that, the Part 91s, the, like you say, the
8 pilot deviation, spanner toes, air shows, those kinds of things.
9 Is that correct?

10 A. Um-hum.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Well, not -- I mean, not air shows and I do that.

13 Q. Oh, you do --

14 A. Yeah, I do the air shows.

15 Q. -- so that's an additional duty then?

16 A. Yes. Yes.

17 Q. So that's good because that sort of segues, you know, your
18 routine. I'm sure your in basket has a lot more than just
19 Papillon.

20 A. It does.

21 Q. When you walk out (indiscernible).

22 A. So two times a year we have the Nellis Air Show and so I'm
23 usually inspector in charge for that. I deal with all the Grand
24 Canyon issues, the Grand Canyon manual, revising the Grand Canyon
25 chart, on the work group for that.

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. I just got put on a work group for the 91 operators operating
3 the strip tour.

4 Q. And you have to travel. You do check rides for other people
5 other than Papillon. Is that not correct?

6 A. I do. I do travel, what we call FSO requests as needed.

7 Q. And you still have to go to Alliance Field --

8 A. For currency.

9 Q. -- in currency in what type of craft?

10 A. Schweizers -- Schweizer 300s and Bell 206s.

11 Q. So just to travel alone is time-consuming.

12 A. True.

13 Q. Or is that correct?

14 A. True.

15 Q. And then -- and so in the days of old I know you could, like,
16 run out in the afternoon, do some currency flying and be home that
17 night. Well, those days are over.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. Correct? So you, your time commitment is pretty enhanced,
20 trying to make all that currency --

21 A. That's true.

22 Q. -- and everything. So I know the life of the FAA inspector,
23 you know, you have, you have what you legally can require
24 operators to do and a lot of what you do is advise and consent.
25 When you look at the high volume in the Quartermaster is there a

1 time where you could just say you were not comfortable knowing
2 that, you know, your legal regulatory oversight is limited, but
3 just from the high volume? Or maybe make suggestions, like, maybe
4 have a marshaler or something like that? Is that -- do you ever
5 have any of those discussions?

6 A. We used to -- talked about having marshalers. I don't know
7 if that's even feasible or not. I think we talked about that at
8 one point in time, but -- and that was with a front line manager
9 that we had. So when we're talking about Grand Canyon operations,
10 you know, we have what I call our legacy companies that have been
11 here a long time.

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. They've been operating a long time. In many ways they view
14 it as, you know, their turf, their territory, but the reality is
15 that, you know, if you have a newcomer come in and he signs a
16 contract with, you know, the Hualapai Nation, all of a sudden that
17 operator's in the mix. And so where the hazard becomes is getting
18 this company to where they need to be and then having them attend
19 these safety meetings, which is usually an absolute surprise to
20 them that, oh, my gosh, all of these operators here help each
21 other out, watch each other and look out for each other. You
22 know, they let their marketing departments compete, but as far as
23 operations all these companies are on top of it as an industry.

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. And, you know, one of the things that I've preached over and

1 over and over, I mean, when you -- you don't even have to have an
2 accident in the Grand Canyon. But if your company name's attached
3 to it it's national news.

4 Q. Yeah.

5 A. And you've got a lot to protect. So we have this very unique
6 thing here where we have these companies protecting their
7 industry, and taking a newcomer into this they, you know, they're
8 like, oh, my gosh, I don't want to tell a competitor about all
9 this, you know? But eventually they're either going to play game
10 or they're going to be out.

11 Q. Yeah. So I hear what you're saying and sort of changing
12 years a little bit, like, the medical helicopter they have to fly
13 in an unapproved, unknown area versus a landing zone that's well-
14 established and well-rehearsed. But when it's a high tempo
15 operation is there any way where the companies providing the
16 information to the operator, like, on the accident it was a high
17 wind day, to the point where some of the aircraft decided not to
18 land. Is there a way where the company can provide the
19 information in the flight following? In other words, other than
20 just following the aircraft are people having conversations with
21 the crews, the pilots? Did you ever look at that kind of
22 operation? Like, when you look at their operational control you
23 walk into the tower, is the communication two ways? Are they able
24 to convey information to crews that are in the -- operating out in
25 the Canyon?

1 A. I've heard radio transmissions about conditions in the Canyon
2 going back --

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. -- to other aircraft. And where this gets to be really
5 interesting is, you know, on a day like today, you know, it would
6 be quite boring in terms of operational control. But when you
7 start having weather issues that's when everything comes alive,
8 and that is the best time to do an observation on operational
9 control because you start seeing all the communications throughout
10 the company and to the point where you can watch them and how they
11 shut down.

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. Because most of their operations deal with passenger comfort
14 and visibility. You're not going to take somebody to the Canyon
15 in horrible conditions because the, you know, passengers aren't
16 going to have any fun. They're going to write a bad review. So
17 most of this stuff is it's we're not even getting close to
18 regulatory stuff. We're getting, you know, it deals with, you
19 know, the passengers and their ability to enjoy the Canyon.

20 Q. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. That's all I have, thank you.

21 DR. WILSON: You have anything else?

22 BY MS. KELIHER:

23 Q. Yeah, I've got a couple of follow-ups. Do you review any
24 irregularity reports at Papillon?

25 A. I do on occasion. So I come in and I usually talk to Burl

1 and then if Burl has something he wants to share or ask me about
2 I'll look at it and see if that's something that the FAA needs to
3 be interested.

4 Q. Is there anything recently that you can think of?

5 A. I haven't had anything. Well, no, I'm sorry. I take that --
6 I take that back. Yeah. So, I mean, I'm thinking, like, we've
7 seen -- you know, we did have a recent incident that's under
8 investigation at this point. And then we had another service
9 difficulty report that I haven't even really taken a look at at
10 this point.

11 Q. And so when something comes under investigation that means
12 that the FAA's looking into it?

13 A. I'm looking into it, yes.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And then would you expect -- what's the interaction with
17 Papillon? There would be some sort of course of action that
18 Papillon may need to take as a result of that? How does that
19 work? How is that documented --

20 A. Well --

21 Q. -- that process?

22 A. -- on the side of the FAA or on the side of Papillon?

23 Q. Oh, both.

24 A. Papillon would write up an incident report. And I might as
25 well just talk about this. We had an aircraft that left Canyon

1 West. It departed and during a transition the aircraft descended.
2 It hit the ground. They had -- and this was the last flight of
3 the day with employees exiting, and they had a mechanic that
4 exited, looked at the aircraft to make sure it was okay. They re-
5 boarded the aircraft and departed to Boulder. And once they
6 arrived in Boulder they noticed the aircraft was damaged. Okay.

7 So looking back at that the first thing that the company did
8 is they had the pilot and the passengers, which were all
9 employees, document that in an incident report. I gathered all
10 those incident reports. I've also gathered, you know, weight and
11 balance information for the aircraft and some standard information
12 for the aircraft at this point. But it's -- right now it's under
13 investigation so I don't know what the result's going to be. It
14 does look like it's going to be an incident.

15 Q. Okay. And you've had this type of thing before where there's
16 been some irregularity report that then you, the FAA has
17 investigated?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. And then what typically would come out of something
20 like that? Would there be some action items for Papillon that
21 would be (indiscernible)?

22 A. It depends. It depends. So there's a few things that I look
23 at, okay, and did Papillon's system fail? That's one thing I'm
24 looking at. If their system failed then we're looking for clarity
25 in the system. Or is it a training issue that somebody didn't

1 know about a policy or procedure or something like that? Or did
2 we have a little subculture develop where, you know, you start
3 having people thinking this is okay because this is the way we
4 always did it.

5 What the company has done to resolve those issues, and I
6 really, really like it, is they have little tests monthly for the
7 pilots which causes the pilots to look at the GOM and so on and
8 get the face on the book and see what the company policies are and
9 so on. And they do that on a monthly basis. And they might even
10 do that on systems of aircraft or whatnot, just to keep the pilots
11 involved with textbook knowledge-type, you know, stuff.

12 Now, the other, the other side of it if Papillon's system
13 didn't fail then why did we have employees that went outside of
14 the company policy? Did they not know? Is that training or did
15 they just -- or were they in a hurry to go home?

16 Q. Okay. You mentioned the BAD ELF just before we took a break.

17 A. Yeah. The BAD ELF is a GPS device that you -- that's an
18 inexpensive -- I think it's about \$100, \$150, something like that
19 and it's a very small device, about the size of your tape recorder
20 here that you can throw it in an aircraft --

21 Q. Um-hum.

22 A. -- and you can follow that aircraft very closely and see, you
23 know, exactly what the flight profile was.

24 Q. Does Papillon use those?

25 A. They had. They bought a few of them. I'm trying to think

1 that when this came about. I'm going to say about a year ago in
2 one of our safety meetings all the operators decided to buy those
3 and periodically put them in the aircraft.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. That's not something I followed up on recently, so I can't
6 force them to do that, you know? So --

7 Q. Okay. How valuable are PIREPs when flying in and out of the
8 Canyon?

9 A. I'm going to call it unofficial PIREPs, okay, because
10 helicopters fly at lower altitudes. Most of the weather that is
11 reported is reported for airplanes. Generally those kinds of
12 weather reports are not very helpful to your helicopter pilot.

13 So the types of when I say unofficial PIREPs those are coming
14 from other Canyon helicopter pilots that are reporting back to
15 other aircraft over the Canyon frequency.

16 Q. So those unofficial PIREPs are those important? Are they
17 critical to the operation?

18 A Yes. Yes.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I would say that they are.

21 Q. When you do your observations do you feel like pilots are
22 making PIREPs?

23 A. They, they do. Yeah, you know, a pilot might leave and, you
24 know, I mean, a lot of times, you know, this weather pops up very
25 rapidly. But a lot of times, you know, they'll -- you're not

1 going to note something until you're literally on your way out and
2 you'd say, you know what? I've got clouds blocking the Grand Wash
3 Cliffs. I can't get to the Canyon. I have to turn around. So
4 everybody behind me, you know, not just Papillon but all the other
5 companies are going, well, yeah, it's blocked. And they radio
6 back their companies to say we need to shut down.

7 Q. When you fill in, and specifically with Papillon but possibly
8 with other operators, too, how busy are the radios particularly
9 when coming into the landing sites? Is there a lot of chatter?

10 A. PICs in a -- you mean unofficial chatter or --

11 Q. Right. So, you know, coming in on a land tier (ph.), don't
12 shut down I'm right behind you, is there that type of talk going
13 on?

14 A. Well, don't forget you have Canyon frequency and then you
15 have company frequencies.

16 Q. Right. So that's why I'm asking when you're doing your
17 inspections --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- which would be the company frequencies?

20 A. So they, you know, they might be talking about shutdowns and
21 stuff like that on --

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. -- a company frequency, not the Canyon frequency because you
24 don't need everybody in the world to know that.

25 Q. Right. Did -- I guess what I'm trying to understand is how

1 busy is the chatter? Is there time for pilots to make an
2 unofficial PIREP, you know, if they just came in and the winds
3 were really shifty? Is that something there would be enough time
4 for --

5 A. There's time to do that.

6 Q. -- pilots to make --

7 A. There's time to do that, yeah.

8 Q. Okay. Since the accident have you made any suggestions of
9 changes to the operation at Papillon?

10 A. Not at this point because, number one, I have to -- I have to
11 have a really good feel for, number one, what happened, and I
12 haven't been privy to the accident. I don't have all the data
13 that you do. Kind of hoping that we have a little good idea of
14 what happened and we can move forward from there.

15 You know, right now I'm kind of looking at employees, what
16 are we doing with employees and procedures and having them
17 understand not just aviation rules but the general company
18 policies that are expected of them because it seems to me that
19 we're getting into a -- we could get into a situation where we
20 have one of these subcultures develop and we don't want to do
21 that. We need the operator to, you know, audit themselves, which
22 they typically do a really good job at. But about the time
23 they're doing something great here, you know, something else pops
24 up, and that's just life.

25 Q. When lead pilots are out flying, so Papillon lead pilots or

1 maybe even the chief pilot, are they doing observations of other
2 pilots? Are they -- is there some kind of reporting method where
3 they come back and, you know, are -- sorry. Take two. Are they
4 doing observations of other line pilots who are flying at the same
5 time and then coming back and making any sort of reports about
6 that?

7 A. Okay. I haven't been privy -- I know what their policies are
8 in doing that. I know with a new pilot they will follow that
9 pilot and make sure that they're on route and they might even
10 correct it over the radio.

11 Q. Hmm.

12 A. Say you need to be over there, aim for this. Or they might
13 do some things like that. They don't just want to turn a new
14 pilot loose. Existing pilots I can't imagine a lead pilot or a
15 chief pilot following somebody that's doing something incorrect
16 and he would not say something to that person, but to ask me if I
17 actually know of that, yeah, I don't.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I don't actually know.

20 DR. WILSON: That's all that I have. Does anyone else have
21 any follow-ups? Anything else that -- we've asked you a lot of
22 questions.

23 MR. ALUKONIS: Well --

24 DR. WILSON: But anything else that you think we --

25 MR. ALUKONIS: -- you know, I guess I'd look at things, you

1 know, moving forward and I've known this company for a very long
2 time. And I know the family that runs it. And what I can tell
3 you is this company tends to do the right thing even if it costs
4 them an awful lot of money. And so moving forward, you know, I
5 see them putting in orders for fuel bladders so that we don't have
6 a tragic accident like this again. I mean, if we do have an
7 accident maybe, you know, the cost of human life won't be so high.

8 That's going to cost the company just an inordinate amount of
9 money, but their willing to do it anyway because they think it's
10 the right thing to do.

11 I do believe that they're looking at doing some things like
12 possibly splitting their certificates and having two separate
13 operations. Now, they're doing that for strategic reasons, but
14 the end result would be smaller companies with more oversight.
15 That might be a good thing if they actually go forward with it.
16 But that's going to be a business decision.

17 DR. WILSON: Cool. How would they be splitting the
18 operation?

19 MR. ALUKONIS: Well, they're looking at the South Rim and the
20 West Rim operations, and that is one of the reasons that Simon was
21 moved up to what they're calling the assistant director of
22 operations until he can be trained. And then you'll have two
23 chief pilots, two directors of operations, two separate
24 certificates, two separate companies. So the end result of that
25 might be beneficial for more oversight and more control.

1 You know, that's kind of the big thing that I'm seeing right
2 now. That's something I'm kind of hoping for ASAP. I'm looking
3 forward to working with Simon when he does become the Director of
4 Operations and I do believe he is a big advocate of the ASAP
5 program. I think that that would be extremely beneficial to the
6 company.

7 You know, these things are really hard because you see a very
8 high quality company with very good procedures, a very good
9 training program and very good evaluations and a lot of smart
10 people, you know, running the organization. And sometimes you
11 just go, oh, my gosh, you know, why -- how does this happen to
12 somebody that -- you know, I actually view it as somewhat low
13 risk. But it's happening to a company that really has a lot of
14 low risk. And it's, you know, it's really tragic, but, you know,
15 everything, every organization can improve. It's just a matter of
16 finding out where those areas are that they can improve it.

17 DR. WILSON: Well, thank you, and we really appreciate --

18 MR. ALUKONIS: Yeah.

19 DR. WILSON: -- you taking the time --

20 MR. ALUKONIS: You're very --

21 DR. WILSON: -- to talk to us today.

22 MR. ALUKONIS: -- you're very welcome.

23 DR. WILSON: If you think of anything, you know, after the
24 fact we'll be doing this investigation for probably at least
25 another 12 months. So you know how to reach us --

1 MS. KELIHER: So --

2 DR. WILSON: -- for (indiscernible).

3 MR. ALUKONIS: So given that I've already been interviewed is
4 there anything you can share with me that would give me some real
5 insight?

6 (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: PAPILLON AIRWAYS CRASH
 PEACH SPRINGS, ARIZONA
 FEBRUARY 10, 2018
 Interview of Paul Alukonis

ACCIDENT NO.: WPR18MA087

PLACE:

DATE: July 31, 2018

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.



Teresa Holevas
Transcriber

JOHN DAVIS (53); DEPARTED 16:38

I had landed my helicopter at Quartermaster Base. And Scott was about a minute and a half, 2 minutes behind me. I have experience flying in mountains and I knew it was windy so I thought there might be a wind shear right after crossing the river and was prepared for it. And when it hit me, it was more than I expected and it took everything I had to control that helicopter and land it. But I was prepared for it, and I could have got on the radio and said, hey, there -- don't come this way; there's a wind shear. I don't know what happened, all I know is it easily could have been me too.

I almost lost control of the helicopter. I had to pull power completely up and as much right pedal as I could to keep the nose back, coming back straight. I made that turn to go into Quartermaster, my nose swung 90 degrees to the left and I went from having airspeed to not having any at all. I don't know how I kept it straight. I keep thinking about that. Had I said something on the radio, maybe he would have not followed that direction. I was just relieved I was on the ground, and I knew that people behind me knew what they were doing. As soon as I had made my left turn, the nose whipped around to the left. And I kind of started sinking, pulled in all the power I had. Got some forward airspeed because I lost all my airspeed, and just forward and right cyclic, lots of power, and every bit of right pedal that I had. The EC130 tail acts like a sail in wind and when going from having airspeed to no airspeed you are not left with a lot of pedal authority. Of not having that airspeed requires a lot more power and a lot more pedal.

I told myself when I got in the canyon that, if it was still bad, if the wind was bad, I wasn't going to land and it was nice (much worse above the canyon). And so it was a real comfortable approach in. But I knew that I had a tailwind coming in and so I knew that there might be wind shear right before Quartermaster. And I was ready for it. It was nothing like what I expected (much stronger). I don't know if he hit the same shear I did since was 2 minutes behind me.

My helicopter blades were slowing down. They were almost to a stop. I looked out my left window, the pilot's window. I saw a helicopter on final approach. He was probably still 400 or 500 feet above the ground. I watched him cross the Colorado River, which is where we start our approach into Quartermaster Base. I was making sure my blades were stopped, because I didn't want the blades moving from him landing behind me. I saw him cross the river, and then I looked back to my helicopter, made sure the blades were stopped. He looked stable, in control. I didn't see anything unusual. And as he got to the bluff, I lost sight of him. I didn't see anything after that point. I was still in the helicopter when somebody told me that a helicopter had crashed. I didn't know if it was that one behind me or another one at that point.

I determined the landing pad that I'm going to use, by seeing which one is open. I usually kind of base where I'm going to land, how I'm going to land based on who's here when I was coming in. All of the downriver locations were taken so I chose to come in upriver. I knew I was giving myself a tailwind, that I was going to come around a little bit more and make sure I had more of a headwind component. I was farther left than I usually would, because I didn't want to be over here in case there was a shear. This was my first windy day at quartermaster, and would estimate the wind to be 15 to 20 kn. When approaching into the canyon he went from 50 to 60 kts to about 0 kts. I was new and thought the shear right here would be worse so I figured I had a better option doing this than going through the notch.

Notes:

- Started Papillon in January
- Was taught settling with power in a R66, but not at Papillom

I started my descent into Quartmaster base from the Bat towers and even though the wind and been blowing hard above it wasn't as bad down in the canyon. Wind was blowing up river at approximately 15-20 knots. Scott was behind me approximately 2 minutes. Upon crossing the river I chose to land up river in front of the notch which created a left quartering tail wind. As soon as I passed the bluff starting my left turn towards the EAST and I immediately encountered a very strong wind shear. My indicated airspeed went from 55 knots to 0 immediately creating a very strong sink rate and a large pull on the nose to left. I immediately pulled in power to about 9.7 on the FLI and applied full right pedal. I corrected the yaw and tilted the disc forward and right arresting any strong descent rate. I had anticipated the shear so I was trying to hug the left side of the terrain to prevent the strongest of it. I established a stablized normal approach into a landing at Quartermaster base. Upon set down I waited 30 seconds and started my shutdown procedure. As soon as I got the blades stopped I saw everyone running outside my window towards the back of the helicopter. I opened my door and one of the other pilots notified me that Scott had crashed so I immediately notified GUANO Base on FM about the crash. The helicopter following Scott chose to go around and fly to GCW also relaying on FM about the crash. While one of the other pilots unloaded my passengers I began running over to the crash site. It was located approximately 300 meters horizontally from my location and 500-600(estimated) ft vertically. I noticed a lot of smoke coming from the wreckage and several loud bangs that sounded like something blowing up. It took me approximately 15 minutes to make it down to the wreckage. I was probably the 3rd or 4th person down to the scene. I surveyed the wreckage and knew we couldn't get anyone else from there because it was burning and there was no chance of any other survivors. I located 3 passengers that were badly injured approximately 40 ft east of the wreckage and the pilot was about 20 ft south east of the wreckage. I started checking all the injured for the most grievous wounds and did my best to ensure that they were comfortable and began trying to treat them as best we could while trying to coordinate which passengers who were down at the crash site assisting and maintaing positive control of the situation until EMS could arrive.

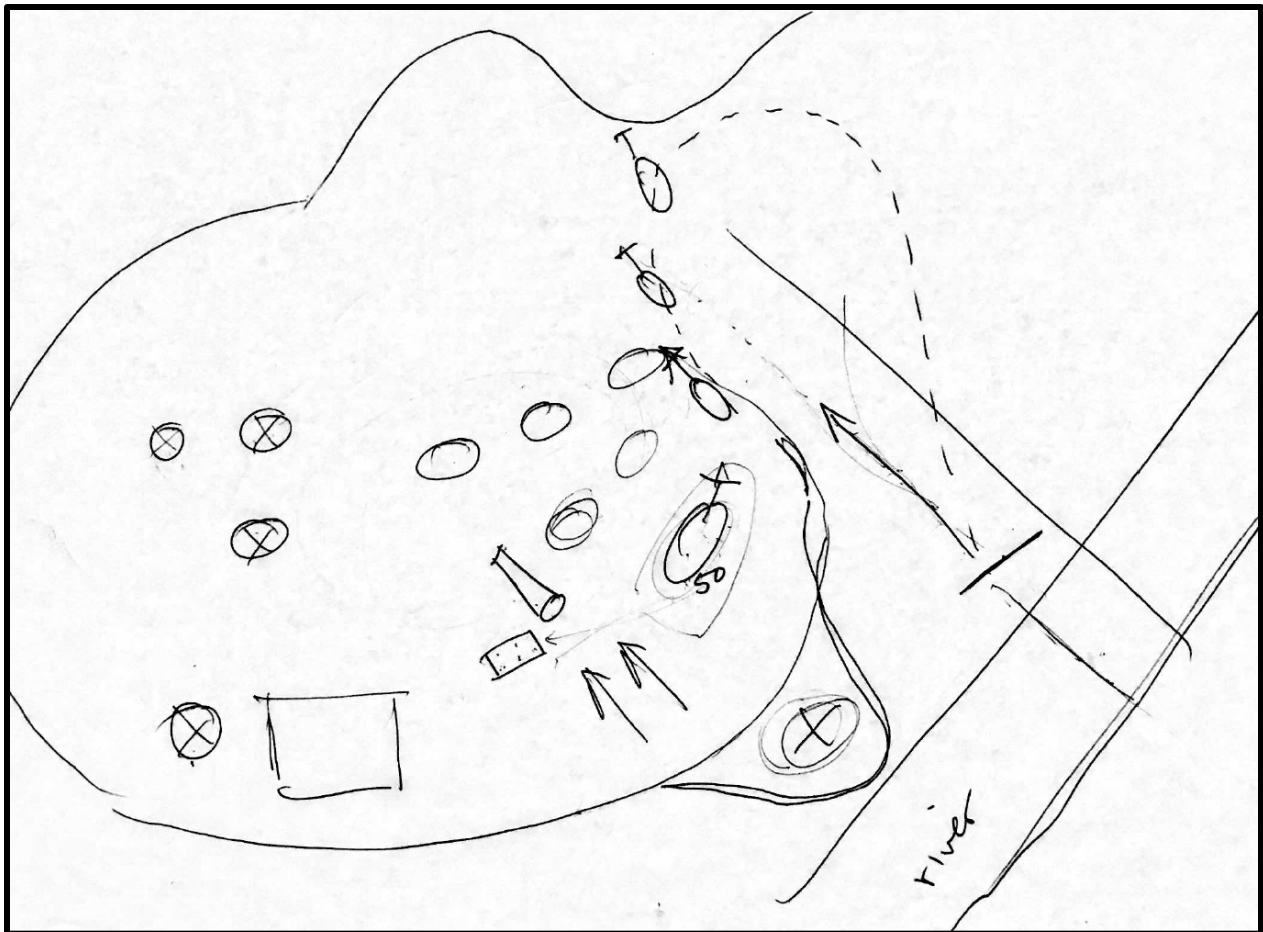
CHRISTINA RASCON (50); DEPARTED 16:35

I came in about 2100 ft msl across the river and stayed higher than normal for turbulence/wind. I took an extra fly sideways toward the landing point to give myself a headwind and then when you get into ground effect you can reposition with terrain. I made sure to keep my airspeed up to 60 kts. When there are upriver winds (coming from the west) the best option is to go through the notch and land facing West. Alternatively, you can go over the canyon and then land on the west side facing east. The east pads were taken up when I came in to make the approach and I knew that there were a lot of new guys and I try to give them the easy spots. I remember when I was coming into land that I was having trouble keeping the helicopter study to touch down on the gravel.

I was setting up my baskets and realized that there were still more helicopters that were going to come in, and I didn't want them to blow the cups off the table. Because there was pads available right near the area of the picnic tables. I looked up and to this general direction here so I could see how far away the next helicopter was from coming in and determine how much time I had to kind of reassemble my table a little bit and prepare for the downdraft that we would get. And at this point, as soon as I looked over, I saw a helicopter spinning. And at the time when it was rotating, I would say that it was about 100 feet from that elevation, so I estimated it to be about 1800 MSL. It was already pretty low.

NOTES:

- Started Papillon July 2016- TT 2200, EC130 950 hours (normally flies the T2)
- Wind was 15 to 20 knots- wasn't concerned with the wind/turbulence- wasn't abnormal
- Never did SWP training in a turbine (talked about it, but no practical training)
- Her turbine transition was at Papillon



At approximately 4:20 pm Nevada time on 2/10/18, I was setting up the picnic for the Passengers at quartermaster base. My passengers were walking close to the table taking photos. As I completed assembling the table, I looked up at our approach path for landing at the LZ. (The winds I would say were approx. 15 knots and we were making mostly downriver landings.) As I looked up I saw 34 at an altitude of about 1800' MSL (roughly 100-200 feet above the LZ altitude). The helicopter was spinning; I cannot recall which direction it was rotating). It completed 2 full turns as it descended. At that moment I turned back toward the picnic area and yelled for one of the other pilots. Once I turned around the helicopter disappeared below. I did not hear any impact; however I saw a black plume of smoke about 10 seconds later.

BRETT AHOLA (30); DEPARTED 16:32

It was turbulent in the canyon as we began the descent. Everything was normal for the most part. Passing, there's a boat dock that we call the Ramada. And down, there's a windsock down there that I always look at. And you're about 3,000 feet when you're abeam or next to that Ramada, that windsock.

So I noticed that there was an up canyon wind. So when I see that, I always prepare myself if I'm going to be going -- which direction on how to land. Obviously, the goal is always to be in a headwind. So I always doublecheck that. Then I'm coming down from 3,000 feet to below 2,000 feet. I was about 1800 feet as I crossed the river approaching to Quartermaster Base, and then looked off to my left down below, and on the windsock confirmed the exact same thing. And the pilot in front of me had gone over the river and then -- I don't know if you know, but it's called through the Notch. It's just going around to give myself the headwind approach down into Quartermaster Base.

I noticed there was one last spot open. So as I came across the river and noting -- looking down at that point, I had a left quartering tailwind. As you go through the Notch, there was a little bit of turbulence, as I expected. And then flew around, continued that left turn to end up on final approach, and checking the windsock one more time. And in that situation, that put me at a right quartering headwind for my approach to land.

And as I set down, I had switched over my frequency from the C-TAC frequency into the Grand Canyon to our company frequency. And there was three people behind me that I knew of. Christina Sotos Rascon, was in 50 and so I warned her to watch out for a tailwind and be careful on the approach. She responded that she would still land going upriver. As I was setting up the meals, John Davis, he came in to land and the windsock was still standing in up canyon wind.

I've done this same exact approach as the accident pilot when I was probably 3 months into flying out here. During this experience, I lost airspeed and started a descent that I did not anticipate. And I had gotten caught in this same situation that he got caught in, where that I experienced a loss of wind entirely and sunk out and had to get out. There was this little spine of a ridge before that bowl. And I've experienced that wind coming up canyon. Rises up that spine, comes down and swirls, where the wind is a swirling motion with a downward flow. I've gotten a pocket where it just sinks the helicopter. It sinks you right down and it looks like that was what happened. And so, with that experience, I didn't want to do that again, so I took the headwind. I knew there was an issue with flying to the west pads feeling bad about what the pilots should do and the approach they have to make.

I looked up and watched the accident pilot come in. As he was coming in descending down to 2,000 feet, at which point he comes across the river. The helicopter continues to decelerate. He then goes in a nose-up attitude, I'd say, of about 15 degrees. Nose up, decelerating to turn to land. You can tell that he was trying to turn around to make this approach to land. I'm assuming he was trying to land in one of those spots, the west pad. As he decelerated, he began the left turn to come in to face the pads (the helicopter is assuming a nose-up attitude and yawing left). And when he comes around to face the landing zone, the helicopter transitioned to a nose level attitude. Then it turns from a level-pitch attitude into a nose low. And this is right where I noticed an aft motion, which appeared to be from the wind. And then as he comes nose low, then the yaw continued. I could tell he was trying to gain airspeed to come back in, but as he was in nose low, he was slightly moving aft. It was that much of a wind shift, from that nose up to trying to get back into it, moving aft.

And now in the nose level attitude, that yaw did not stop and continued to a full 360 at that point. Then you could tell he just pulled aft to try to hold level and control the yaw, but it didn't stop. And it started to descend. The aircraft was descending, a flat pitch. Then it continued a second 360, still descending. I started to run over, and then as it began the third 360, it disappeared below the bluff and continued into the impact. I'd say 5 to 10 seconds later, fire started.

NOTES:

- Estimated wind was 20-25 kts up the canyon
- TT-2350



On the sunset flight to the canyon the wind had picked up. On approach to quarter master base I noted a large up canyon wind, I can estimate the wind velocity to be 20 kts gusting 25 and decided to land through the notch for a down river headwind approach to quarter master. As I went through the notch I experienced a good amount of turbulence. As I come on short final I again noted the strong headwind and warned incoming pilots of the up canyon wind. I shut down, unloaded passengers and went over to the tables to set up the meals. As I finished setting up meals I looked up and saw 34 coming in to land and saw he was going for an upriver landing. As the aircraft crossed the river the nose pitched up and started to slow, I could tell he was attempting to lose altitude and airspeed as he brought the aircraft into a slow nose up, descending left turn. Then the aircraft continued to yaw left and the nose dropped to a nose low attitude. As the aircraft began to point towards the landing zone the nose did not stop rotating and continued to spin left. As the aircraft completed a full 360 degree turn the nose became level and continued to descend straight down at zero airspeed. The aircraft completed a second 360 left spin and the descent rate increased. I began to run over towards 34 and I saw it complete a third 360 degree spin straight down before it disappeared below the plateau and impacted with the ground. I heard the impact and then a few seconds later smoke began to rise with the fire engulfing the aircraft.

As I was coming into the canyon, it would have been a little bit windy. It was windy when we went in. We took off and windy throughout the flight. Once we entered the canyon, a little bit of turbulence, a little bit of bumps here and there, which would have been a symptom of the northerly winds that we had that day. As I was dropping down into the canyon and making my turn to Quartermaster base, the bumps still continued a little bit, and I recognized that I had a bit of a tailwind, not -- I didn't recognize necessarily how extensive it was, but there was a tailwind. As I continued descending, I tried to slow up airspeed a little bit because of the tailwind.

As I was approaching the river, surveying the landing zone, I recognized that there were four aircraft that were parked on the upriver side of our landing area there. There was one aircraft that was parked on Wedding Point. All of those, those five aircraft, were the nose was pointed downriver. Papillon 50, which was parked on the other side of the landing zone, had its nose pointed upriver. As I was coming in, observing the windsock, I verified that there was a tailwind as I was approaching the river.

So at this point in time I was making a decision which way to make my path and approach. My first option was to do the normal approach into the landing zone, which is what I ended up doing; or my second option was to go through the notch and skirting to the uphill side of all the other aircraft parked on the other side of the landing zone, to land to the far end of the parking zones that were on the western side of the landing zone there. The windsock was for the most part full out, so anywhere from at least 10 knots to 15 and above. I'm assuming is a 15-knot windsock.

I knew there was a couple aircraft in relatively close proximity behind me, and to circle around may have potentially been a collision hazard. Therefore, I determined it maybe a little bit more prudent to take the direct crosswind for the approach coming into the landing zone. I crossed over the river, over a slight rise in terrain and up into a slight valley. Thereafter, I did the normal turn to set up for landing. During that turn the helicopter shifted pretty rapidly and the tail tried to "kick behind me." With the larger, fenestron tail on the EC130, it acts similar to a sail and pushes the helicopter's direction when there is wind (weathervane).

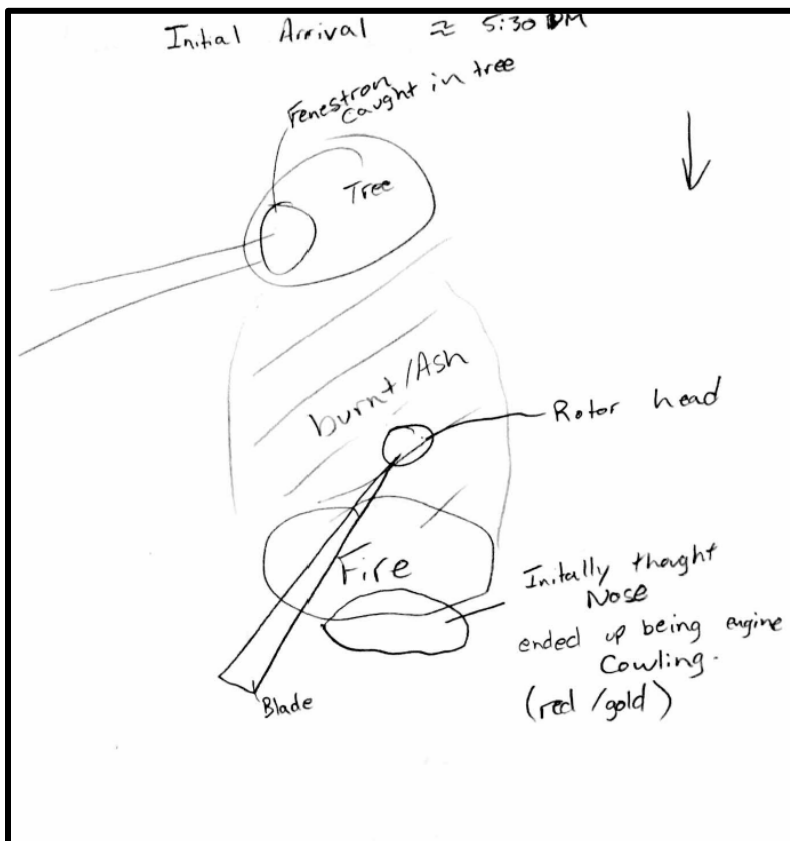
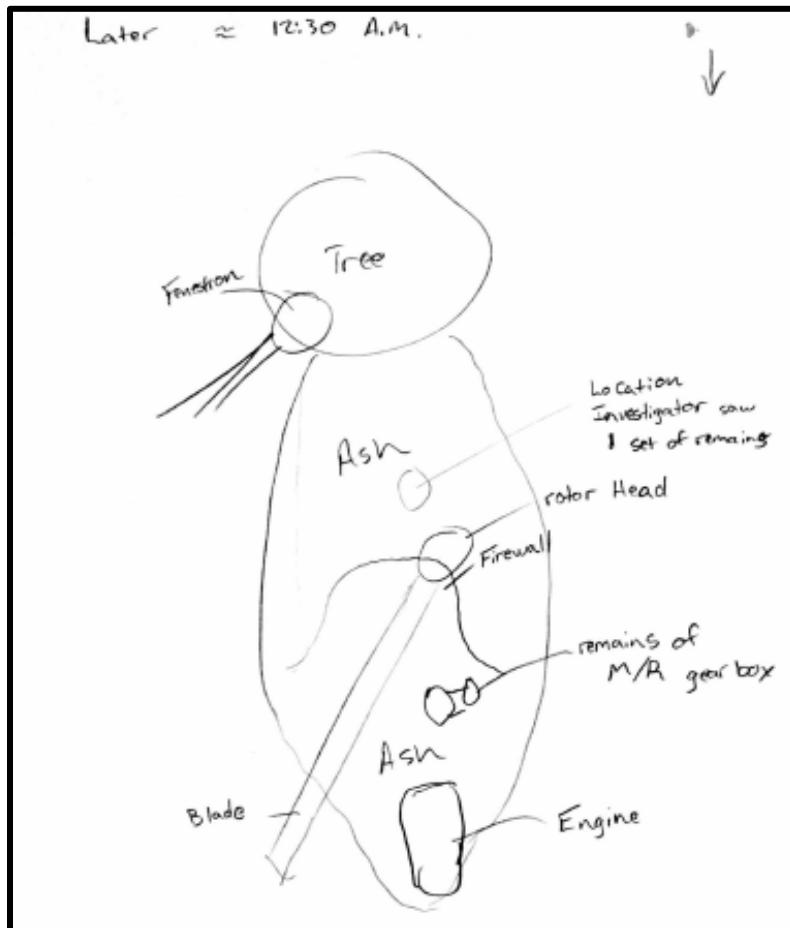
With the major shift, I was immediately concerned of my rate of descent and noted that the airspeed indicator showed 45 to 50 kts with a descent rate of about 400 feet per minute. I attempted to arrest the descent to about 300 feet per minute. As the helicopter was descending down into the landing zone, he decided to set down on the farthest pad to the east, enabling another helicopter to land behind me. I noted that the windsock, appeared to be, as I expected, a direct left crosswind about 10 to 15 knots. There were some gusty conditions and the windsock was bouncing back and forth a little bit, which created a tailwind component.

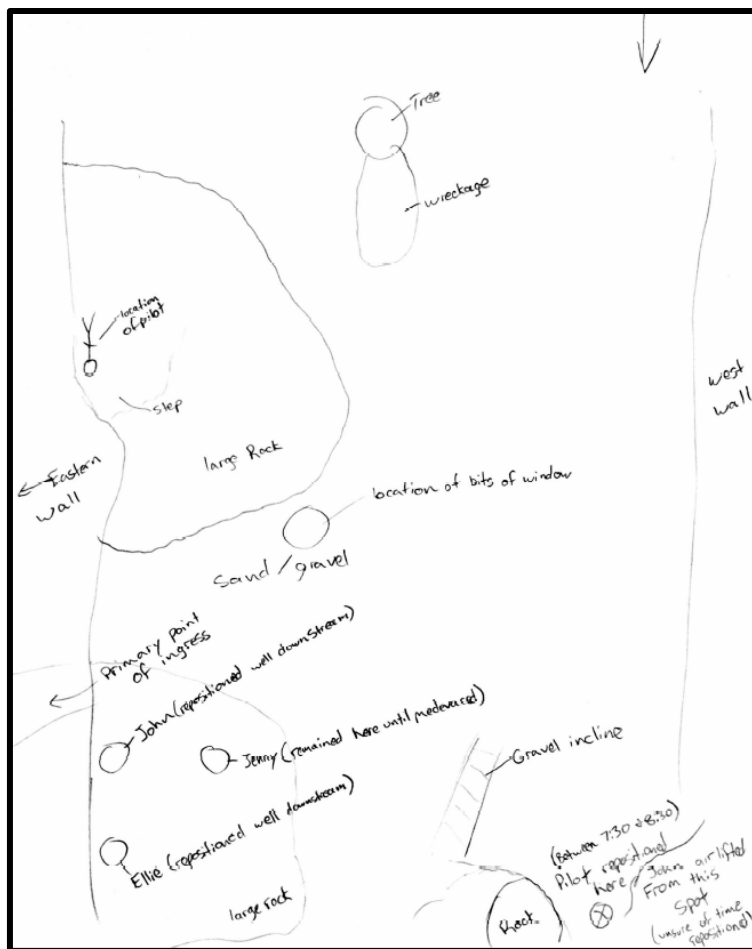
As I continued descending, watching the rate of descent, he continued toward the landing zone, applying heavy amount of right pedal to try to keep the nose straight because the wind was heavily pushing on that tail. While coming inbound, the helicopter was crabbed, until reaching about 15-20 feet agl, at which point I was able to actually straighten out and touchdown parallel to the slope. John Davis was the pilot that landed the helicopter immediately after me. As per the company protocol, when the helicopter's rotor blades are slowing down, you have to notify the person behind you to avoid potentially chopping off the tail boom. When I initially touchdown, I asked Mr. Davis to let me know when he landed so he could protect the helicopter. When I started to apply the rotor brake, I noticed that all the pilots were running to the canyon, which was directly behind the helicopter.

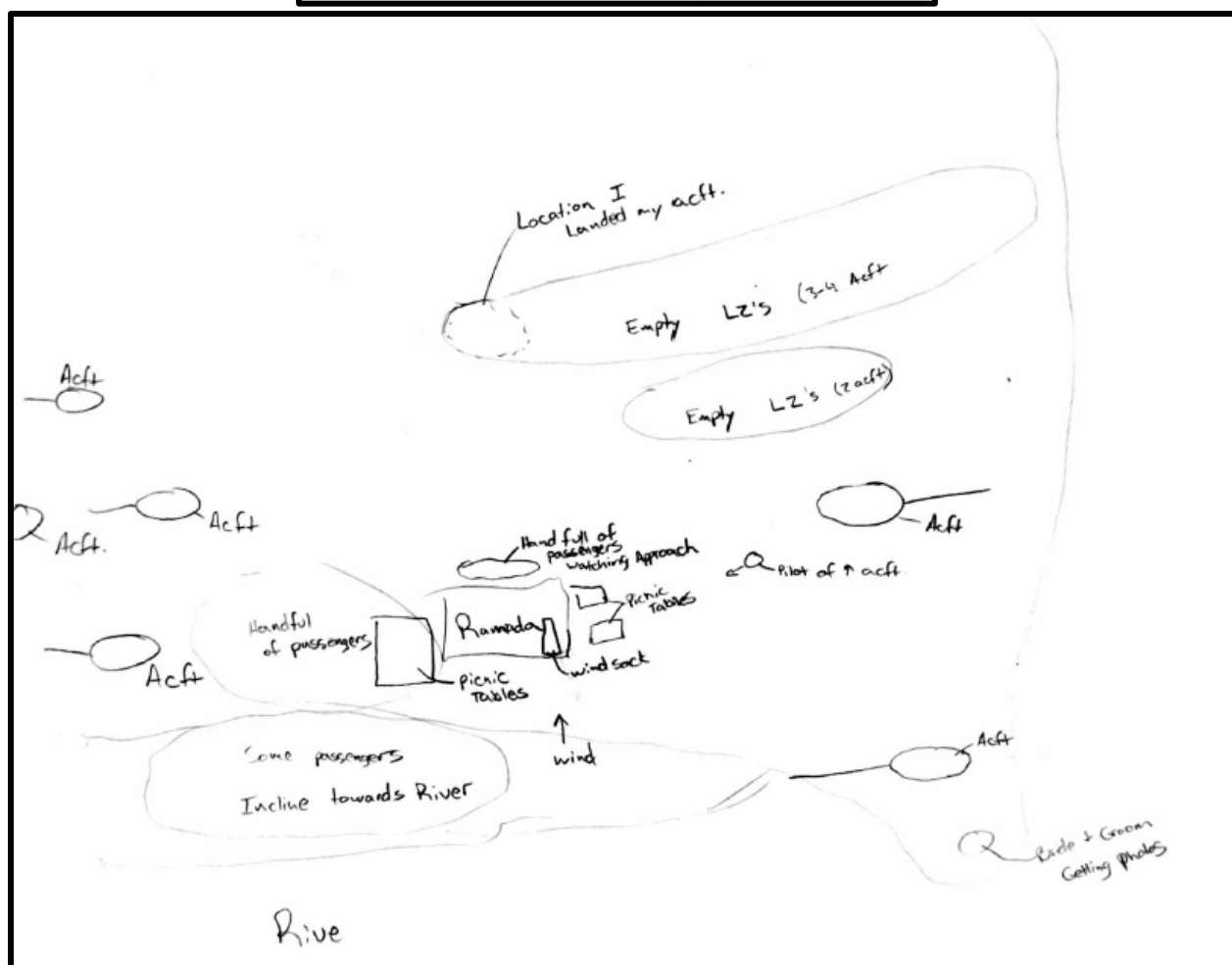
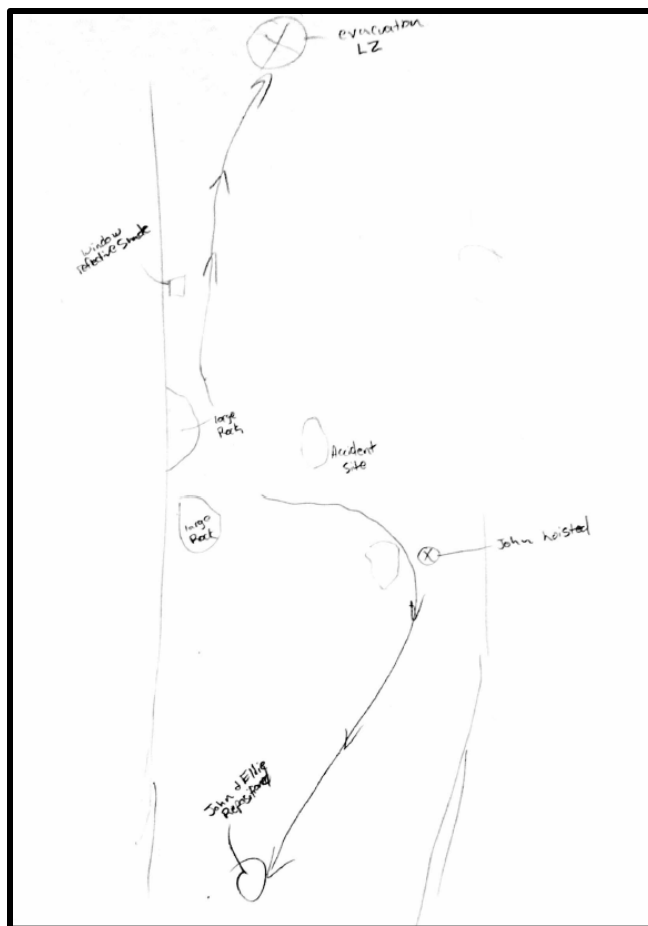
After I ran down the canyon and began to attended to the accident pilot, we were wrapping his leg. Since, I am a new pilot I didn't know the accident pilot very well and he was talking to another pilot, Derrick Mojica, who he knew better. It was at this time that he said something along the lines of "bro, I got settling" or, "bro, I settled," which in helicopter terms automatically assume that settling power was his evaluation of what happened to him. It could have been a number of other things, but that was from the pilot's mouth.

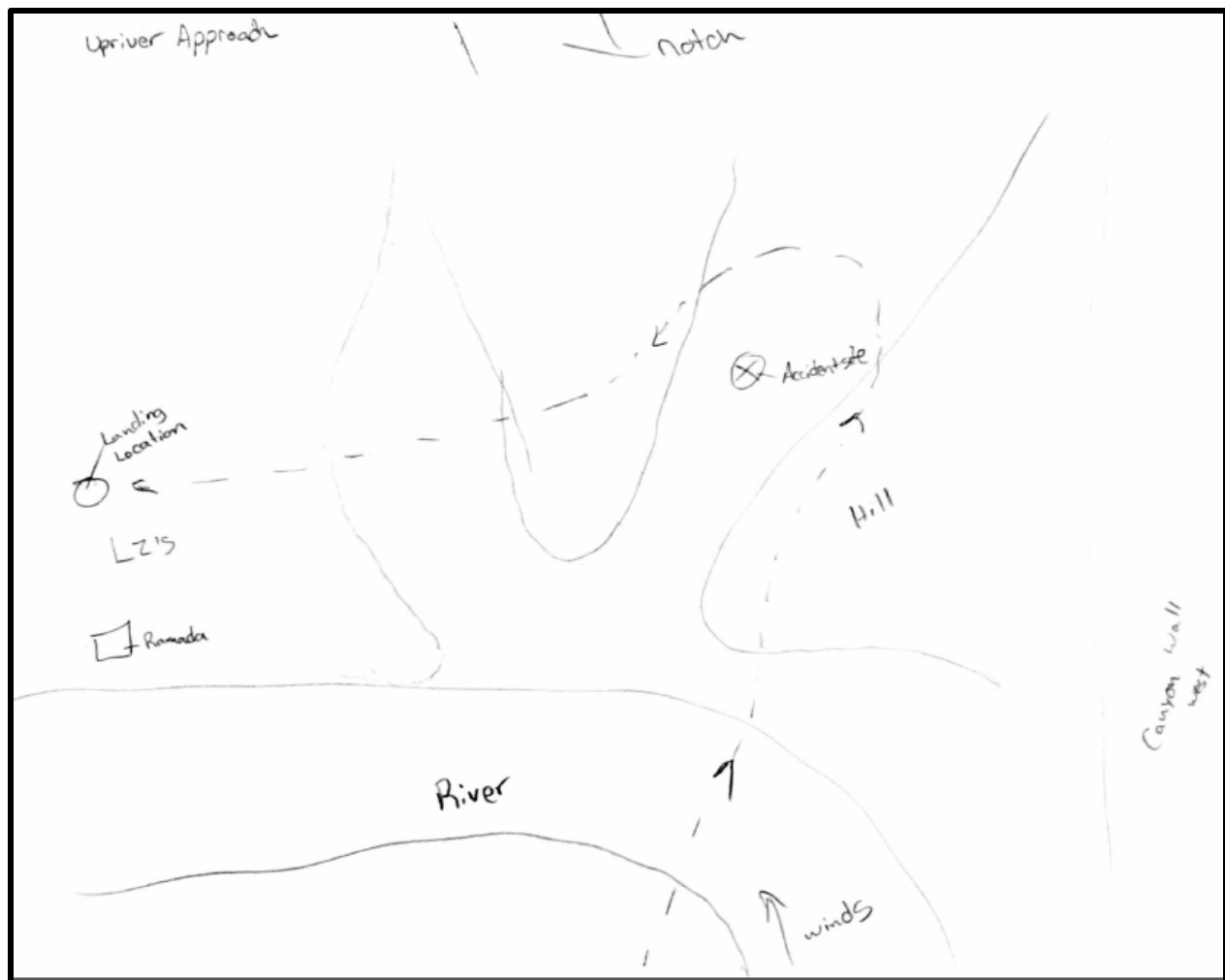
NOTES:

- He did not make any radio calls about the wind
- He has had training regarding settling with power but could not recall practical training in a turbine.
- He was hired at Papillion in January and has approximately 2400 hrs total time.









In the series of events leading to the accident, I was piloting the aircraft that was two in front of the accident aircraft. As I was descending down to quartermaster towards the south I had a tailwind, as I made the turn towards the east for landing to the LZ in quartermaster the tail of my aircraft swung around quite quickly as I turned to the left, which I attributed to turning to the crosswind. On approach into the LZ observing the windsock that was present at the LZ I had a direct left crosswind with a little variability shifting slightly aft. Judging by the windsock the winds were upwards of 10 to 15 knots if not slightly more. Once on the ground one other aircraft landed behind my aircraft. I was still in the aircraft when the accident occurred so I was not able to observe the accident.

On another note I was the first person on the scene of the accident, and began giving aid to the injured. At the moment the pilot was the most urgent due to the nature of his injuries. As myself and another pilot were placing a tourniquet on his leg he stated to the other pilot assisting me, "Dude, I got settling."

These are all the pertinent details of the moments leading up to and following the accident that I can recall.

So I come up to the Bat Towers at an altitude of 5,000 ft, airspeed indicated somewhere just above 100. I know it wasn't very high. I began my descent. I lowered down collective. I usually will lower it down to about 7 on the FLI6 to begin my descent. I had already heard Venida Hayes on the radio taking Wedding Point. So the other wedding site that we use is a east spot. So I began my descent, coming down in. As I come down, I always take note of the Ramada where the windsock was showing that the wind was coming from the west.

I remained at 1900 as I crossed over the river. Noted the windsock again, and it was showing a pretty significant wind from the west. I also note my groundspeed versus airspeed to determine the wind. Made my call for Papillon 41 going through the notch, landing Quartermaster. Went through the notch, I had noted Venida, when she had landed she was also facing west favor of the wind. And they were already starting to get out of the aircraft to start setting up for their event, their wedding. I came through the notch. As I did, it was a little bumpy as I went through, behind the hill there, coming in. So I maybe started setting up for my approach, to making sure that I had enough airspeed and my approach angle was proper to get to the site that I wanted. I started making my left turn in, nice and shallow, lined myself up. Once I got into the headwind, I noted my airspeed was probably -- was around 50 to 60, between those two increments, and my ground speed was showing below 40.

I approached my spot. I always like to come in a little bit slow to that spot, especially with the wind coming up. As I came in, came in 2-foot hover, noticed that my airspeed indicator was still showing readable airspeed but it was below the 20 indication mark. After landing I shut the helicopter off and soon as I opened the door, I really felt how strong that wind was because it was pushing back against it and kind of closing back on me.

The windsock was gusting, but the windsock was about straight every time I saw it, just straight horizontal. The first one that came in was Pollyanna. She came through the notch to -- and made a left turn to make her approach downriver with the wind. And on the downriver pads (east), there was four of us. I looked to the helicopters that were starting to come in. Now that the downriver pads were all filled up, they started making their approaches to the upriver (west) pads. The first one that I noted coming in was Helicopter 50 with Christina Rascon.

When she came in she made a wide left turn to come in so that way, as she came in, she favored at least the headwind before pedal turning and setting down. I don't remember but there was two other helicopters, maybe three other helicopters, that came in behind her. I didn't really pay attention to their approaches because I was watching the photographer take his photos. I did discuss the wind a little bit, talking about it was not too often there was that much, that strong of wind at the bottom of the Canyon.

The accident helicopter started coming in and everything looked normal (height above the ground, etc). He began to make his left turn. It didn't seem as deep of a turn in as 50, but it wasn't just a direct. As he came in, the helicopter started kind of rotating to the left, and it appeared as if he was doing this to get into the headwind. As he did that, I kind of thought like, okay, that's how we're going to come in to avoid so much -- like too much of a, like a tailwind there. And as he came in, he turned, and it seemed like the helicopter had lost any forward speed, because once it started its rotation it wasn't moving forward. It wasn't moving to the side. It seemed it was going straight down.

So as he came in, kind of keeping on approach, and it's not like -- he wasn't banked over real hard. He wasn't in just a super shallow turn. It looked just like a normal turn like the rest of us had been doing. But as he came out here, the helicopter went almost from a normal turn and it seemed to had leveled out, began its leftward rotation, and as it rotated it just seemed to catch -- like the rotation almost began to speed up, but it dropped out of my view before he made one full rotation.

I ran to the accident site and another pilot, James Finney, was already helping the accident pilot. I was sitting next to the accident pilot with his head near my lap. He told me he was in a lot of pain. And he just said, I don't know what happened; it just fell. He might've said something else and I didn't hear it. But I just heard him saying, like, he fell

We practice approached into Quartermaster in our training. We all have route training, and every time we go down, each person does an approach to each pad. So everyone will come around to land on this side at least one time. So everyone will come around to land on this side, and they'll even take us to Wedding Point because since it's kind of more a pinnacle. And as we come in and we land there, they have us go all the way in, and then they'll have us set down, then they'll have us pick up and do a departure. Now when it comes to the land, they always tell us, keep it into the wind. So if a wind is a crosswind from either direction. Coming on this side, we'll make an approach and we always want to make the approach into the headwind, and if we have to, then pedal turn to our spot. We're always told to make our approach into a headwind, even if it's not something like -- let's say if these are all filled up and it's like, oh, no, I have to take a tailwind, we still have the option of going through to make that tailwind or not to -- To make a headwind. I mean, of course, you don't want to just fly over them, but again, if you have to, at the same -- but with this situation, you know, with -- Scott was, I think he was the last one or one of the last ones in, and all that was open was that -- those -- these spots back here.

But everyone, if they still land in this direction, we can still come into this as much as we need to so that way when we re approach, we could be facing this way, come into ground effect, and then do our pedal turn to set down. So I believe that's what he was doing. But this area right here, like, in my experience, this area right here, it could get a little difficult to tell the winds because it's kind of a bowl right there. So with the terrain and everything, it'll shift the wind where it could make it kind of tricky to come in. Even if the windsock shows one direction, like, it can change in that area. So that's where it makes it, you know, kind of hard to predict what the winds are doing in here because it's just a bowl, and the ledge up here is up here. So at that time, you know, we see how the winds are here, just sometimes the winds aren't doing the same thing here, which, you know, I've experienced a little bit of a -- you know, coming in, and all of a sudden it starts to descend a little bit. I didn't -- it wasn't anywhere near extreme, but I decided to do a go-around and remake my approach.

NOTES:

-Started April 2017, TT 1800, EC130 525 hours

-At Papillon they discussed settling with power but would not physically go and try it. They have discussed the Vuichard maneuver



While doing a wedding out of Las Vegas I was parked at the lowest downriver pad. The wind were strong and gusting up river. All four down river pads were filled and three or four other helicopters occupied the upriver pads and themselves had a hard time landing. 34 was making his approach to one of the remaining open up river pads. As he did a circling left turn to quarter master the aircraft began to rotate to the left and sink. It continued to rotate over 180 degrees before disappearing below my line of sight. I started to run over the ledge along with other pilots. Shortly after the helicopter dropped out of sight there was an explosion followed by smoke and fire. After a brief moment of silence I began to hear screaming for help coming from the sight and saw two women emerge from the crash. While making my way toward 34 I tried to get passengers to return to quarter master but most disobeyed. Once I reached the bottom I saw three passengers who had severe burns and no clothes and bleeding. They appeared dazed and in shock. After I saw Booth. He was conscious and talking. He had an open broken leg at the shin and most of his body burned with no clothes on. Finny had began to apply a tourniquet to Booths leg. I made my way back to the top and noted how late it was getting. We tried to use the Sat phone but the battery was dead. We had to plug power adapter to another helicopter but had no service. After about an hour the EMS crew arrived and the remaining pilots began to collect passengers to return to our bases.

MARTIJN ADRIAANSE (40); DEPARTED 16:39

I took off from Boulder City. Flew out there and got to the Bad Towers pretty much, you know, without incident. It was windy, breezy but nothing out of the ordinary. I made the radio call to get office at Green 4, and started descending. Got to Quartermaster Point and noticed a lot of turbulence, a lot of gusting wind, wasn't super comfortable. I'm new, still getting a feel for the aircraft, and so I had already kind of decided that if I couldn't get a pad that I liked, I was to go around, go up top and call it a day. So the way the wind was blowing, and I was kind of looking at my groundspeed versus airspeed, which is, you know, a good primary indicator what the wind's doing. I noticed I had a tailwind.

And sure enough, I get there, I didn't see anything I liked. So I'd already kind of decided I was going to go away. And then I hear, helicopter down, smoke. And sure enough, you know, I come up to the site, see the smoke as I approached, and, you know, see a fire, piece of tailboom laying on the ground. The east pads you'd have a right quartering headwind, and these three pads would have been sweet. These were taken, as well as a couple people, you know, parked here, sort of with a left quartering tailwind, which I'm not super excited about. So I think there was a little spot here that I could have landed but I just wasn't comfortable with that.

I was piloting Papillon 40 on a sunset canyon landing tour with 6 passengers and a baby. Aside from strong winds and turbulence the flight was going normally. As I was approaching our landing zone at quartermaster I noticed very strong gusting winds and turbulence. So much so that I decided if I could not get an ideal landing zone into the wind I would go around and break off to 1G4. (As I was one-way fuel). Right as I was thinking about this decision I heard a radio call about a helicopter down and there being smoke. I noticed the smoke coming up from the canyon before quartermaster at that time. As we passed the crash site I noticed a sea of flames and pieces of a red helicopter. Chaos on the radio ensued. At that point we continued climbing out to 1G4 and I dropped off the passengers and got 10gals fuel so I could drop off three EMT's at the bottom. There were issues with communication between helicopters at the bottom of the canyon and the base at 1G4. The ride down with the EMT's was very turbulent but the landing at the bottom worked out ok as I was able to secure a spot into the wind. After the EMT's were dropped off I flew solo back to 1G4 and got fuel and my passengers. The flight back to KBVU, although very windy/turbulent went without issues.

DAVID GUTIERREZ (39); DEPARTED 16:30

I was on the sunset landing flight leaving from Las Vegas on February 10, 2018. Since we had two weddings and three landings total leaving from Las Vegas, we all had to land at Quarter Master Base. I was the last aircraft to land from the Las Vegas birds. The two wedding birds landed down river as well as I did. As I was serving my passengers champagne all the other aircrafts from Boulder City were landing. The first few took the down river pads and the last couple begin to land up river. I was in the middle of serving champagne to my pax's as I first heard Venida scream " Someone call base," "We need help!" I turned around and everyone was running towards the crash site and as I got closer is when I saw the black smoke fill up the sky. We all began to see who it was and bring the fire extinguisher and first aid kit closer to the crash site. We also began to try to use the satellite phone thats located there, but was dead and needed a recharge. Passengers began to hike the hills to get closer and ignored our orders to stay close to the picnic tables. Once one passenger came back from the crash site, he began to yell that they needed water and a first aid kit. We all began to put bottle waters in one of the meal bags and myself and another passenger took them to the crash site. I didn't go all the way down to the crash sit, but got close enough where I could see the aircraft and the survivors laying on the floor screaming for their loved ones. I began to hike back as I realize it was getting late and dark. When I got back to quartermaster base, Christina Rason told me to get my pax's and get out of there. I got up to the top to get fuel and Guano base said to get fuel and return back to Las Vegas per John Becker's orders. I got 75 Gallons of fuel and went back to Las Vegas.

POLIANA PEROTTO (10); DEPARTED 16:35

#34 was coming for the sunset landing at quartermaster, winds are strong coming upriver...
#34 came for a upriver landing , when #34 was to turn base to final for its app, it was on a left, downwind configuration when the helicopter started to spin and settled all the way to the ground.
attached is the picture where I believe #34 crashed

I was at wedding point with my wedding party. I was preparing them for the trip back to vegas. I believe 5 aircraft from boulder have already landed at Quartermaster. I was on the pilot side with the Reverend and the Photographer when one of them said "Is the helicopter supposed to do that?" That's when I looked over and 34 (which I didn't identify at the time) was spinning uncontrollably and descending fast. The helicopter then hit the edge of the ridge line tail and fuselage separating, then tumbled to the bottom. When it hit the bottom, an explosion immediately went off and was in a ball of fire.

I immediately yelled to any pilot to get on the radio for help over and over. When the helicopter hit I was already running to the edge. I saw Sotos immediately go to her helicopter and was on the radio. I had no idea what to do next so I ran back to my helicopter to get on the radio. It took me a few seconds to figure out how to turn them on. I heard immediately on the SFRA frequency that a Papillon helicopter was heading back to the backside and someone else was calling it in. More pilots on base were heading over to the edge. We were all asking each other who it was. All I recalled was seeing a 3.

From this point on we didn't know how to handle the customers. 2-3 of them were already heading to the crash sight. I was trying to call them back because it was dangerous terrain and the helicopter was still in flames with blasts going off every 5 minutes or so. I first saw only one survivor at this point and I could hear screaming. No idea if it was from inside or the survivor walking around.

The battle at this point was what do we need to do. Start getting the passengers out of there or stay. Sotos was on the radio again and GUANO base told her for us to stay put. The passengers and pilots that went to the crash site kept coming back up asking for First Aid Kits, water, tourniquet, ect. We tried to provide them with anything that they needed. I believe it was 40 that first showed up with the first set of rescuers. Probably 30-45 minutes after the crash.

At one point pilots and I tried to get on the Satellite phone to call boulder for any further directions or updates on when an EMS helicopter will be here. There were quite a few customers at the site trying to help and were having a hard time controlling the passengers. They were everywhere. 20 minutes to sunset, 4 of us, Poly, David, Mojica and I decided to head out. I lifted first. As I was climbing the wall I called GUANO. I asked permission to drop my passengers off then to head back down to get more. He got back on saying that I can but to bring more EMS crew down.

I landed at A8 where our line crew took my passengers and helped the EMS crew with loading their gear and them. I had 81 gallons and their equipment were heavy and the line crew asked how many crew I could take. Since I didn't have manifest or any idea how much the equipment weighed, I told them only 2. When I lifted from A8, I heard Chris get on the radio saying something to the 4 of us pilots. I had him repeated after I told him I had lifted. He was stating what Becker said for the other to head back to boulder and Vegas.

On the way back down the rescue crew was asking questions about the site, if it was still on fire and such. When I lifted it didn't seem like it was still on fire but there was a small flame still when I came in on approach. My approach to go through the notch was a wide left to show them the site. Then proceeded through the notch and landed downriver at the edge of the upriver pads. Sotos and Ahola came up the helicopter to help the crew out and get their gear. They then helped get a party of 5 loaded up in the helicopter. I let Sotos know what Chris told the 4 of us and said ill try to come back down for more if he will let me.

WITNESSES

LYSANDER SANDBERG

Unfortunately I wasn't looking in the direction nor in the area of the crash when it was happening (I had thought to look for a way down to see the Colorado river) so really anything that I witnessed started at least a minute after the crash. However, after being involved with helping the patients I'd rather not have to recount too much unless it's necessary, if that's alright?

MARK BRANCH

I sent over the photos that I had. I can also tell you, there was a wind advisory for that day. There were gusts of wind up to 30 mph if I had to guess. A cold front moved in quickly and there was a drop in temperature of at least 20-25°. We experienced a lot of turbulence that day. I recall coming up around the canyon on our decent, and that is when the crash happened. I saw helicopter catch fire and black smoke rolling. At that point you could barely see the tail of the helicopter. I hope I was some help. Please let me know if you need anymore info.

MITCHELL WOOD

Was on 1545 flight out of Boulder City. Pilot warned before departure it would be a bit windy. There were some pretty big gusts over the Lake Mead area, but approach to the Landing Zone (LZ) seemed pretty smooth.

Was on ground for 5-6 minutes prior to crash. Two other helicopters landed in the time between them and the incident helicopter. Was facing the other way and did not hear any noise. Noticed people at the landing zone running the other way and then saw black smoke. There was the LZ, a ravine, a ridge and then another ravine. The smoke was coming from the second ravine. Started running to the site with Johnson and two civilian males (one ex-marine). 2-3 Pappillon pilots yelled at them to come back. Was scared and torn, but knew had to get to the site when heard screams. 2 pilots caught up with the group and a third was with them when they got to the site. The seven of them were the first on the scene.

On arrival saw three people with the helicopter off to the left. The tail section had separated and was facing the other way, perched on a rock. Couldn't tell which way the fuselage was facing, but it looked to be 180 degrees out. The fuselage was burning like a fuel fire, black smoke, very hot, big fireball. Tail wasn't burning. Small parts were strewn down the hill. Honey combed metal and red body sections of the aircraft. Couldn't tell if there was another impact area. Wreckage seemed to be centralised within a 10m radius.

Scott, the pilot, didn't make it far from the wreckage.

EMS landed 40-45 later, then plus the 30 minutes to get to the site. Assisted EMS with drips and painkillers for Scott. Recollection is vague, but recalls a conversation with Scott along the lines of; tried to give it power to get out of it, but it was too late. Johnson was with Jenny, trying to calm her down.

There were no communications with the LZ, so ran a message to LZ of a list of supplies to radio back with. At start of ferries it was for water and first aid kits. Smashed open locked first aid box (no one had combination for lock) at LZ to get access to two stretchers, one metal one and one backpack one. People started to bring down what they could. A female vet and female anaesthetist arrived. The anaesthetist was awesome, instructed people how to treat burns including washing off chemicals with water. Gave proper medical advice.

At some stage a decision was made to move Jon and Ellie to the river. They didn't send a scout and found they could only get ¾ of the way there before encountering a big drop.

Frustrated that the survivors wouldn't be airlifted. Quite a while before the Blackhawk plan came about. It seemed to be planning in isolation, Plan A until it didn't work and then switch to Plan B. thought could have had multiple parallel plans in effect.

Has photos from LZ, none of incident helicopter. Last photo at 1618 Arizona time, incident not even a minute after that.

Wind on the ground was very gusty, sustained, but gusts a lot stronger. Wind got stronger at night, surprised they were flown out at 2220-2230.

NEAL FOXWELL

Had been in the landing zone for five minutes, had back to the incident. Did not hear anything at all prior to screams from the victims. Turned around and saw black smoke and fire. The site was about 500m away.

Made way toward the crash site and heard 5-7 popping sounds on the way. Started to see parts of the wreckage 30m away from the fuselage site. The aircraft tail boom was intact. The fuselage was destroyed by fire, could not even tell the orientation.

When applying first aid to female survivor, Ellie Woodward, she stated that she couldn't get her seat belt off and couldn't get out.

It took 45 minutes for assistance to arrive in the form of 2 x firefighters and 1 x EMT.
Weather at the time was clear with the wind strong and gusty.

WEI-LUN KAO

At approximately 1630 (Arizona time) saw incident helicopter coming in on approach. It was doing the same S manoeuvre from over the river to line up with the landing zone that their helicopter had just done. During the turn the helicopter started spinning, not sure which way, but did two full rotations before going out of view behind the ridgeline. Before the spin the helicopter was level and approaching the point it would start its descent. The first spin was level then it appeared the pilot lost control and it accelerated downward. Spin rate was constant. Couldn't hear any engine or other noise due to the helicopters running at the landing zone. At the time it went out of view it was approximately 3 degrees pitch down. Did hear a faint pop over the other noise which assumed was the impact.

The crash site was about 400m away, Johnson and Wood ran straight to the site. They would be there in 10-12 minutes. Kao waited at landing zone until saw survivors, grabbed a first aid kit and made way to crash site. Was at crash site about 20 minutes after the crash. Once there saw that the rotor was snapped off, the tail and fuselage were both pointing up hill. The fuselage was on fire, the tail was intact. There was a constant popping sound for about 30 minutes from the fire.

Spent the rest of the time ferrying supplies from LZ to crash site (water, lighting, IV).

Has photos from the LZ before the incident, none of the incident helicopter, last one taken at 1614.

DANIEL JOHNSON

Had been at the landing zone (LZ) for about five minutes. Heard screams, turned around and saw people running. Saw black smoke from behind the ridge. Started running toward the site and was amongst the first to arrive. On way over heard 2-3 explosions. 7-800m, 10 minutes travel over the ridge.

Wreckage on fire, looked pretty destroyed, tail intact with paint still on it.

Some more bangs and pops, but nothing as loud as before. The wreckage was burning pretty bad and burned for the rest of the time first responders were there.

One of the female survivors said she couldn't get her seatbelt off. She just kept asking what happened.

It took 90 minutes to 2 hours for rescuers to arrive.

The weather at the time was clear. Gusts of wind. Felt the gusts in the helicopter on the way in, they were noticeable. In the canyon it got a bit hairy, not scared but 'whoa'.

The wind increased that night.

Photos of the LZ up to 1618. No helicopters in them.

JOEL TREMBATH

Was on the other side of the tourist viewing area. Heard shouts and yelling from the other side and started running. Saw black smoke which recognised as aircraft fire from the Growler accident two weeks prior. Grabbed a fire extinguisher from the four located in the centre of the tourist area. Dropped the fire extinguisher when saw how far it was and the terrain. Helicopter in the next ravine over, 6-700m away. Only had partial view of the fire itself, black smoke indicated it was intense.

Looked for the rest of own group. Saw Johnson and Wood on way over to site. Could hear pops which associated with aircraft fire. Pappillon pilots were saying to go back to tables. Asked female pilot about first aid kits, grabbed one from the back of a helicopter and sprinted toward site. As they approached the crash site, another pilot told them to go back, responded that had a first aid kit, was told that he didn't care. Ignored direction, gave the first aid kit to Wood who instructed Trembath to get water. Went back to LZ to get water.

On arrival back at the site, Johnson was applying first aid to the three passengers together. Pilot was separated due to immobile with leg injury. Survivors didn't know what happened, just in shock and kept asking what happened. It took a long time for EMS to arrive, felt like an hour. The group was split with Ellie and Jon going toward the river. Gave clothes to victims to cover burns.

Wind direction at the LZ was variable. Wouldn't say strong but windy. Before the flight all pilots said it was going to be sporty because of the wind. On way to canyon, pilot noted turbulence in normal places.

Has photos of LZ (one with helicopter in it but not the incident helicopter at 1616 Arizona time, attached).