

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION PIPELINE

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LEAK AND MULTISTORY STRUCTURE

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EXPLOSION IN HARLEM, NEW YORK

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MARCH 12, 2014

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Interview of: CHRISTOPHER REGINELLA

New York City Office of
Emergency Management
165 Cadman Plaza
Brooklyn, New York

Tuesday,
September 30, 2014

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: RAVI CHHATRE
Investigator-in-Charge

APPEARANCES:

RAVI CHHATRE, Investigator-in-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

KALU KELLY EMEABA, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

FRANK McCARTON, Deputy Commissioner
Office of Emergency Management
New York, New York
(Party Representative)

LEON HEYWARD, Deputy Commissioner
New York City Department of Transportation

LEONARD SINGH, Chief Engineer
Gas Distribution Services
Con Edison
(Party Representative)

CHRIS STOLICKY, Utility Supervisor (Safety)
New York State Department of Public Service
(Party Representative)

SONJA ORGIAS, Assistant Counsel
New York City Fire Department
Bureau of Legal Affairs
(Representative on behalf of Chief Reginella)

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I N T E R V I E W

MR. CHHATRE: On the record.

Good afternoon. Today is Tuesday, September 30, 2014.

We are currently in New York City's Office of Emergency Management Facility located at 165 Cadman Plaza, Brooklyn, New York. We are meeting regarding the investigation of natural gas distribution pipeline leak and multistory structure explosion that occurred on March 12, 2014, in Harlem, New York.

My name is Ravi Chhatre. I'm with National Transportation Safety Board located in Washington, D.C. and I'm Investigator-in-Charge of this accident. The NTSB Investigation number for the accident is DCA-14-MP-002.

I would like to start by notifying everyone present in this room that we are recording this interview and we may transcribe it at a later date. Transcripts will be provided directly to the interviewee for review and identifying any typographical errors. The transcripts may be posted in NTSB's public docket.

Also, I would also like to inform Chief Reginella --

CHIEF REGINELLA: Reginella.

MR. CHHATRE: -- Reginella, that you are permitted to have one other person present with you during the interview. This person is of your choice: your supervisor, a friend, family member, or, if you choose, no one at all.

Please state for the record your full name, spelling of

1 your name, the organization you work for, your title, business
2 contact information such as building address, and whom you have
3 chosen to be present with you during your interview.

4 CHIEF REGINELLA: Christopher Reginella, New York City
5 Fire Department, Battalion Chief, C-h-r-i-s-t-o-p-h-e-r, R-e-g-i-
6 n-e-l-l-a. And present is Sonja Orgias, New York City Fire
7 Department lawyer.

8 MR. CHHATRE: Do you have business contact information
9 so we can send you the transcript.

10 CHIEF REGINELLA: Division 6, Battalion 17.

11 MR. CHHATRE: Any other contact information, business
12 phone, business e-mail?

13 CHIEF REGINELLA: No, that's good.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

15 CHIEF REGINELLA: I'll get it.

16 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Now I'd like to go around the room
17 and have each person introduce themselves. Please state your
18 name, spelling of your name, your title, organization that you
19 represent and business contact information. Starting from my
20 left.

21 MR. HEYWARD: Leon Heyward, H-e-y-w-a-r-d, New York City
22 Department of Transportation, Deputy Commissioner, [REDACTED] --
23 sorry -- [REDACTED], e-mail address [REDACTED] -- sorry,
24 that's wrong, too, [REDACTED].

25 MR. STOLICKY: Christopher Stolicky, S-t-o-l-i-c-k-y,

1 Utility Supervisor (Safety) for the New York State Department of
2 Public Service. I'm the New York State party rep in this
3 investigation. My e-mail address is
4 christopher.stolicky@dps.ny.gov.

5 MR. McCARTON: My name is Frank McCarton,
6 Deputy Commissioner in the Office of Emergency Management here at
7 the City of New York. My e-mail address is fmccarton@oem.nyc.gov.
8 And I'm a New York City party rep in the investigation.

9 MR. EMEABA: Kalu Kelly Emeaba, K-a-l-u, K-e-l-l-y,
10 E-m-e-a-b-a, NTSB investigator. My e-mail address
11 [REDACTED].

12 MS. ORGIAS: Sonja Orgias, Assistant Counsel, New York
13 City Fire Department, Bureau of Legal Affairs. E-mail is
14 [REDACTED]. Mailing address is [REDACTED]
15 Center, Brooklyn, New York 11201. Telephone number is [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED].

17 MR. SINGH: Leonard Singh, Chief Engineer, Gas
18 Distribution at Con Edison. That's [REDACTED]. L-e-o-n-a-
19 r-d, S-i-n-g-h, NTSB party rep on this investigation.

20 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you much.

21 INTERVIEW OF CHRISTOPHER REGINELLA

22 BY MR. CHHATRE:

23 Q. Chief Reginella, let me begin by asking you, since you
24 were the first person on scene, if you can describe the event on
25 that day, how you learned about the accident, what you did, kind

1 of walk us through the process?

2 A. Well, I was in the firehouse, fire station. It's
3 approximately 5 blocks away, 113th Street, and got an alarm just
4 for a street corner. I think it was 117th. It was the name of
5 the actual street corner. But a couple of the members heard an
6 explosion. I didn't hear it. But we responded, and as we got up
7 to Park Avenue, I made a left and headed north, heading up the
8 hill, a lot of civilians were waving us in excited, you know; we
9 knew something was going on. As we turned left on 116th Street,
10 we came out from underneath the Metro North train, I could see
11 rubble and a large volume of fire from the area. And, you know,
12 just putting it all together real quick, figuring out what
13 happened -- there were people scattering and running around, and
14 my first thought was the building that was standing to the south,
15 if that -- how structurally stable that was, and if people were in
16 there.

17 So the unit that was with us on scene, Ladder 26, I
18 think three members went inside and I went there and ordered my
19 members to stretch a hand line to go into that building in case we
20 had to take people out and search and look for people, because
21 there was a large amount of fire on the north side of that
22 building and on part of the roof and there were cracks in it and
23 smoke inside of it. So we had to get in there and make sure
24 everybody was out, and that's what we did.

25 I had my men stay on the sidewalk ready to bring it in.

1 I wanted to limit people in the collapse area, you know, the
2 dangerous area, and Ladder 26 said that a quick cursory search,
3 they didn't find anyone and we immediately directed our hand line
4 to the fire, putting it onto the fire. And that was all in a
5 matter of 1 minute, you know, 2 minutes, pulling up on the scene.
6 The apparatus was out of the collapse area on a good water source,
7 and when the -- there were civilians that were out of the area;
8 they were across the street. There was a lot of smoke and a lot
9 of fire. So it was chaotic in the first minutes of it.

10 Q. Just referring to this map, can you tell us where --
11 which way you came, where you parked and --

12 A. This is the building. This is the train. So we were
13 heading north up this hill. This whole thing was on a grade.
14 This is downhill. This is downhill.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's going south.

16 CHIEF REGINELLA: Oh, where's 116?

17 BY MR. CHHATRE:

18 Q. Yeah, this is 116.

19 A. Oh, I'm sorry.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You were coming from here.

21 CHIEF REGINELLA: Okay. So we're coming up. This is
22 kind of the peak, 116th Street. So we're coming up the hill and
23 the collapse is downhill. So I didn't see it until we made that
24 left and came out from under the train, then I could see what we
25 had.

1 BY MR. CHHATRE:

2 Q. Okay. So you were coming from --

3 A. Coming north up that hill, up Park Avenue.

4 Q. Up Park Avenue and you made a left here.

5 A. Made a left and this is downhill again. So that's when
6 I could see what we had.

7 Q. Where did you park?

8 A. We parked on this hydrant right here.

9 Q. Engine 58?

10 A. Engine 58. And I -- Ladder 26, if I remember, was
11 somewhere right here. And they went inside this existing that was
12 standing, and I went in with them as my guys stretched the line
13 and met me at this door.

14 Q. Okay. When you say hand line, you're meaning your water
15 hose --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- the fire hose being stretched by hand --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- (indiscernible)?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Can you describe what you saw on 44 and 46? Do you go
22 close to those buildings or you are just standing still --

23 A. You know, the rubber was out -- there was a fence here
24 underneath the train keeping you from going underneath. The
25 entire brick and rubble were out, covering the entire street,

1 covering the cars that were sitting there, and there was smoke and
2 dust everywhere, you know, limiting visibility. But, I mean, you
3 can obviously see the fire. I didn't know it was two buildings at
4 the time. I just knew it was a pile of rubble and a large amount
5 of fire. So like I said, my priority was --

6 Q. 42.

7 A. -- life, you know, and obviously the collapse danger of
8 that building and my guys standing in front of it and us going
9 inside of it.

10 Q. Did you rescue anybody from 42?

11 A. No, there was no -- there was negative to search. There
12 was no one inside.

13 And then a little later on, as we were putting water on
14 the fire, and it was -- the entire north side and roof were
15 engulfed in fire. I went in again because I just had to make sure
16 nobody was in there, and just -- I wanted to see if fire was
17 extending in there so I could pass that info onto the chief
18 because he had so much on his plate, you know, with so many
19 companies. But it was negative and fire was not extending in.
20 But there were cracks inside, so the whole time I was afraid of
21 that building coming down. We were near a train and I was -- I
22 wanted to make sure train movement had stopped because that could
23 cause collapse if it's already damaged.

24 Q. And how long did you stay at the accident scene on that
25 day?

1 A. I was there from 9:30 a.m. to about 5:30 -- 5, 5:30 p.m.
2 I was there all day.

3 Q. Okay. And what other activity were you involved in
4 during that day?

5 A. We just -- we stayed there extinguishing fire. When the
6 second engine company arrived, I directed him to stretch another
7 hose line off my apparatus and the two of us simultaneously were
8 holding the fire back as we ordered what are called tower ladders
9 for outside streams with more volume water because of the large
10 amount of fire. And we made sure -- we were directing them how to
11 respond in because we wanted it on the north and the south side.

12 Q. Was there any issue about not having enough pressure on
13 the water line when you arrived?

14 A. No, pressure wasn't a problem. It was volume of water
15 compared to the amount of fire, you know. The large caliber
16 stream gives you more water and pressure and, yeah, we needed more
17 pressure to reach the back end of the -- we just didn't have
18 enough. There was too much fire.

19 Q. Were you there when they started manual cleanup coming
20 from north, what we are told, and they're removing debris from
21 north?

22 A. They removed -- the first victim that I saw removed was
23 right here --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- underneath a thin pile of rubble. And fire was

1 starting to extend on the people trying to get him on a board. So
2 we moved our hand line to push that fire back so they could get
3 him out of there.

4 Q. Okay. Were you there when they saw a hole in the
5 street?

6 A. Yes, that was much later on. After all that rubble was
7 cleared away, a fence was cut away so that we could stand under
8 the train for protection and to keep distance, and then I saw a
9 hole in the street.

10 Q. Do you recall roughly what time was it?

11 A. It was I would say noon or early afternoon. I don't
12 know.

13 Q. If you don't remember, you don't remember.

14 A. Yeah, I don't remember the time. I don't know --

15 Q. But you (indiscernible) watch --

16 A. No, I do not have a watch.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I didn't know the time.

19 Q. Were you present when the secondary explosion occurred
20 in that hole?

21 A. Yes. An explosion happened there while we were --

22 Q. (Indiscernible).

23 A. -- on the level early on, very early on, an explosion
24 happened in that rubble and fire shot up through the rubble.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Right next to us where we were standing. And then many
2 hours later, when that rubble was cleared and that hole was
3 exposed, another shot up, yes.

4 Q. So there were two?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So one was while the rubble -- it was still covered with
7 rubble?

8 A. Yes. So I didn't -- we didn't -- I never smelled gas
9 the entire time, so I didn't know what was going on. You know,
10 we're trying to figure it out as we're operating.

11 Q. Did anybody have a meter that they can measure the gas
12 content?

13 A. You know, I was operating the hose line.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. So --

16 Q. You do not know?

17 A. Yeah. That would have been one of the later units, as
18 they're starting to get -- you know, life is the first thing, and
19 then --

20 Q. Anything else you want to add that we forgot to ask you
21 or we should know in terms of the accident or --

22 A. That was it. I just -- like I said, my priority was
23 that other building coming down. We were standing in front of it.
24 Many people were standing in front of it, and I didn't trust it
25 with the cracks.

1 Q. Were you involved in your past career, past year,
2 something like this before, or this was the first big one for you?

3 A. So early on, yeah, first, first one for me early on.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. I've been to them hours into it, yes.

6 Q. Thank you so much.

7 MR. CHHATRE: Kelly.

8 BY MR. EMEABA:

9 Q. Okay. Mr. Reginella, correct?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I heard what you said a few minutes ago, and I wanted to
12 understand better. You just mentioned there were two explosions.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. One from the rubble.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And one from the hole.

17 A. Many hours later, yes.

18 Q. So (indiscernible) apart from the main explosion that
19 occurred with the residence, there were two more explosions?

20 A. Yes, obviously much smaller, yeah. And fire with it,
21 you know, a quick flash, just very quick.

22 Q. Okay. The one that occurred from the rubble, what
23 location of the rubble are you talking about please?

24 A. I would say close to this X right here.

25 Q. Okay, from the rubble.

1 A. Because that's where we were standing on the rubble,
2 putting fire -- because this entire 42, this whole north side of
3 the building was engulfed --

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. -- up to the roof. So then --

6 Q. And then the one from the hole is where?

7 A. Pretty close to this X but close to the curb. So -- she
8 just gave me a pen. Right here probably would be my guess right
9 here. So if this is the curb and it was there, somewhere right
10 around there.

11 Q. Okay. Which you just said the one at the rubble was
12 just a little bit north from the one at the hole?

13 A. Well, it was the same -- I would -- I mean, I have to
14 guess it was that same location where the hole was later.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. It was in that vicinity. But it was hard to tell where
17 the curb ended and the street began because the entire thing was
18 full of brick and rubble.

19 Q. Okay. Was there anything spectacular you can tell from
20 the time you arrived to the time you actually left the scene that
21 occurred?

22 A. What do you mean spectacular?

23 Q. Something different, you know, unusual.

24 A. No, it was -- you know, a building collapse is
25 spectacular. I mean, that was it. It was --

1 Q. Something extra --

2 A. I was amazed everyone was out of that building that was
3 standing, you know. That must have scared them out of there.

4 Q. Okay. How often have you used a gas sniff paper? Have
5 you, you know --

6 A. Sniff paper?

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. I've never used paper. We have a gas meter, not paper.

9 Q. Okay. Have you ever received letter from the gas
10 company or through your training a sniff test, a gas sniff test
11 paper?

12 A. No.

13 Q. You never did? Do you actually -- if you smell gas,
14 will you know?

15 A. Will I know?

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. Yes. We respond to a lot of gas leaks. I know the
18 smell, the odor that they add to it, yeah.

19 Q. Okay. Because you mentioned throughout while you were
20 there you never smell gas.

21 A. I never smelled gas until much later in the day when
22 they drilled the hole, what I was told, and they were trying to
23 shut it down.

24 Q. Which hole please?

25 A. Just a little south of the -- I guess it would be in

1 front of the building that was standing. They did some sort of
2 drilling there afterwards. I'm not sure what they were doing. I
3 just smelled very little, very little.

4 Q. You mean drilling hole or excavating hole. Which one?

5 A. I mean it's all -- not excavating. It looked like they
6 drilled a hole. There was a problem with shutting the main, water
7 main. They wanted to get us off that water main and we had to
8 move our rigs to another hydrant because they wanted to shut that
9 main for the building.

10 Q. Yeah. Can you give me an idea of where they drilled the
11 hole you mentioned please?

12 A. I would say it's somewhere right here or even maybe a
13 little south. Somewhere over here.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where are you looking at?

15 BY MR. EMEABA:

16 Q. In front of 1642 also?

17 A. Yes, or maybe just a little south, further up the hill.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. You know, I did not see anyone drilling. I got a quick
20 smell and whoever was standing next to me said, yeah, they were
21 drilling over there.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. You know, this was many hours later when we were trying
24 to shut things down and move things and prepare for a long
25 operation. It was not the initial operation.

1 Q. Okay. And the drill, the hole that was drilled, you
2 mentioned was that by the gas company?

3 A. I don't know.

4 Q. You don't know. I know there were about three fire
5 banks. Was any hole -- if the man from the gas company can help
6 out, that were drilled in front of 1642?

7 MR. SINGH: Yeah, by the L. Under the L by 116th and
8 Park, on either side of 117th.

9 MR. EMEABA: Correct. Those are the one.

10 BY MR. EMEABA:

11 Q. Yeah, that's what I'm interested to, you know, get more
12 explanation from you, when you say when they drill the hole. But
13 from what you just indicated, there was no hole at that point.

14 A. You know, I could be wrong. I think I saw a mark in the
15 street, and when I said I smelled some gas, someone just said, oh,
16 yeah, they're doing some drilling over there. So they could be
17 wrong. Maybe that's -- I don't know. That's just a marking in
18 the street that they pointed at.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. So what I'm drawing now, it's the mark in the street. I
21 never saw any drilling.

22 Q. Now you mentioned that you went into 1642 twice --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- for rescue reason.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. At those times you passed through there, was
2 there a hole in front of 1642 that you could actually observe?

3 A. No, that's when all the rubble was still there. It was
4 very early on.

5 Q. Okay. And apart from the rubble, were there -- was
6 there any vehicle also parking in front of 1642?

7 A. There were vehicles there crushed with rubble on top of
8 them.

9 Q. Rubble on top. Thank you so much.

10 MR. CHHATRE: Chris?

11 MR. STOLICKY: This is Chris Stolickey.

12 BY MR. STOLICKY:

13 Q. During this last conversation, you were talking about
14 when you may have smelled gas and someone drilling a hole. You
15 indicated that they wanted you guys to move off that water main.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Approximately what time of day was this?

18 A. I would say it was 3 to 5 p.m. --

19 Q. Okay. So, so based on that --

20 A. -- later in the day. There was water coming out of that
21 hole.

22 Q. Okay. So --

23 A. Spraying. So they wanted to shut that main --

24 Q. There was a hole --

25 A. -- but that was supplying all of our hoses. So we had

1 to move off of that main.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. That's why.

4 MR. STOLICKY: That's all I have.

5 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Frank?

6 MR. McCARTON: Sure.

7 BY MR. McCARTON:

8 Q. Can you upon your arrival describe again the locations
9 of the fires that you saw upon arrival?

10 MR. CHHATRE: You can use the map if you want to.

11 CHIEF REGINELLA: Yeah, mostly along 42 and a lot in the
12 rear, but it was all just climbing, climbing here, but it just --
13 it increased quickly, you know. From the time my search, then
14 came down, it was more. Within 5 minutes, the entire rear was
15 spreading all over here. You know, then when the tower ladders
16 came and were putting it out, it was still pockets, you know. It
17 was just hard to reach up in the pockets.

18 BY MR. McCARTON:

19 Q. Did any civilians come up to you and tell you what
20 happened or what was going on?

21 A. No, no. I never spoke to any civilians.

22 Q. And then describe the street for me, what the street
23 looked like.

24 A. I would say from this area back, it was all rubble to
25 that fence, or close to that fence with rubble on top of the cars.

1 Q. How many cars approximately were there?

2 A. I would say about, I don't know, three, three of them
3 right here, you know. So it started like from here back. So I
4 assumed the car that was here was able to drive away. Maybe they
5 were sitting at that red light. I don't know.

6 Q. And when you arrived, you hit what hydrant?

7 A. This hydrant right here, 116 and Park.

8 Q. Did you ever lose any pressure on the hydrant?

9 A. No. Water was never a problem, not that I know of.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Not with my hand line.

12 Q. And let me ask another question. The first arriving
13 truck company then, who had the first arriving truck company after
14 you guys come in and set up?

15 A. They actually pulled in before us. They were ahead of
16 us, and I think they set up right here on the corner.

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. But then they had to reposition to let the tower ladders
19 in.

20 Q. So that was a tower ladder they brought in?

21 A. The first one was not.

22 Q. It wasn't?

23 A. No.

24 Q. A ladder?

25 A. Yeah, it was just an aerial ladder.

1 Q. And they moved to put a tower in there?

2 A. Yeah. That was probably a good 5 minutes or so,
3 whatever it took for them to respond. The second ladder company
4 was a tower ladder. So they may have come around here because
5 this is where they were; Ladder 14 and Ladder 13 came this way.

6 Q. So Tower Ladder 14 was here and Tower Ladder 13 were
7 there fighting the fire across 42 --

8 A. Yes, and we --

9 Q. -- and 46?

10 A. And 58 and 35 were operating hand lines --

11 Q. Hand lines.

12 A. -- from the street.

13 Q. Off this location here?

14 A. From the rubble, yeah. Hand lines coming off of here
15 and this engine I assume was supplying 14. That I don't know for
16 sure. I think it was.

17 Q. All right. Thank you.

18 MR. CHHATRE: Leonard Singh.

19 MR. SINGH: Leonard Singh from Con Ed.

20 BY MR. SINGH:

21 Q. I'm sorry. I missed, the battalion chief for what
22 location?

23 A. 1-7, 17.

24 Q. 17. Okay. So you weren't part of the initial first
25 responder, being 58 and 26?

1 A. I was in -- I was a captain at the time in Engine 58
2 that day.

3 Q. Yes. All right. Sir, the question I have is some of
4 your predecessors that were interviewed today mentioned that
5 someone reported they thought it might have been a gas-fed fire.
6 Would that -- who would have -- would that have been?

7 A. Someone said it, it was later on, just talking,
8 wondering when things calmed down.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. You know, speculation. I never smelled gas operating
11 the hand line till much later on that I was talking about.

12 Q. But even looking at the configuration of the fire, you
13 didn't think it was a gas-fed fire that you --

14 A. It was accelerating quickly.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. Especially towards the rear.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. So it was a fuel, it was something.

19 Q. Right. But you were able to put it out though, right?
20 I mean, typically a gas fire, if you put it out, you can smell --

21 A. We couldn't have put it out with two hand lines and two
22 tower ladders. It took a while. Tower ladders, it took a while
23 but they finally got it.

24 Q. And both times you went, the crews -- either your
25 firefighters or yourself that went into 42, you didn't smell gas

1 in that building?

2 A. No.

3 MR. SINGH: I think that's all I have.

4 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Does anyone else have any
5 questions? I've just got a couple of questions --

6 CHIEF REGINELLA: Sure.

7 MR. CHHATRE: -- for you.

8 BY MR. CHHATRE:

9 Q. When you were here, did you observe any clearing that
10 was going on here? We heard earlier was --

11 A. No, I never really --

12 Q. -- the cleaning started from north to south. That's
13 what I understand.

14 A. Yeah. I never went down --

15 Q. You were not involved?

16 A. -- 1 north really. I --

17 Q. You were focusing mainly --

18 A. I stayed over here because it was my apparatus supplying
19 water.

20 Q. Sure. Okay. Did you suspect gas fire when you arrived
21 or you did not suspect that?

22 A. I kind of was just dealing with facts and not guessing.

23 Q. If you didn't suspect --

24 A. I didn't it.

25 Q. -- I don't want to put words in your mouth. I'm trying

1 to find out what --

2 A. Yeah. I was more worried what I have right now and what
3 I should do right now, not the cause. That's --

4 Q. And what time did you leave the scene?

5 A. Approximately 5:30 -- 5 p.m., 5:30 p.m.

6 Q. Do you came back again on the scene?

7 A. No. Much -- like a couple of days later.

8 Q. A couple of days later.

9 A. Yeah, for something, yeah.

10 Q. Okay. Did the fire department determine the cause of
11 this explosion --

12 A. Not that I know of.

13 Q. -- that you know of?

14 A. No one told me, you know.

15 Q. Okay. They haven't determined yet. And how will the
16 decision be made? What is the process for deciding -- let me back
17 up. You guys have your own investigation to decide what happened?

18 A. I mean that's a question I think for the deputy --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. -- chief on the scene. I'm not sure how this works
21 above me.

22 MR. McCARTON: I think that's more a question for the
23 marshals, correct?

24 CHIEF REGINELLA: Yeah, or the marshals.

25 MR. McCARTON: Right? Sal's group?

1 MR. CHHATRE: Yeah. Okay. That's all I have. Anybody
2 have any questions? If not --

3 MR. EMEABA: One more question.

4 BY MR. EMEABA:

5 Q. If you respond to an incident location and there's gas
6 fire or gas or fire whereby gas, what do you do?

7 A. Everything depends on life.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. That's going to factor all my decisions afterwards,
10 civilian life, my life, my numbers, the guys I'm working with. If
11 I can shut the supply, I'll maybe do that before I put the fire
12 out.

13 Q. The supply of what?

14 A. The supply of gas.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Shut down the fuel. Simultaneously getting ready to
17 extinguish it. But if I have to extinguish it to save someone's
18 life, I'll extinguish it without shutting it. And we have to know
19 that, you know. Someone has to tell us that that's what started
20 it, you know. Because it could be dangerous just letting gas go
21 and fully extinguishing it and without shutting it, that could be
22 dangerous also.

23 Q. Okay. So if you do not know that the source is gas,
24 what do you do? I mean, you see the fire burning. Do you go
25 ahead to cut off --

1 A. It's all speculation. It depends what I have in front
2 of me. It depends on the life. Is it a junkyard? Is it a school
3 with children? It's all speculation. It all depends on what I
4 have in front of me, and then I can tell you what I'll do, you
5 know. Like I said, sometimes I extinguish it. Sometimes I'll
6 shut the supply first.

7 Q. Thank you.

8 MR. EMEABA: That's it.

9 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you, so much for coming.

10 CHIEF REGINELLA: Okay.

11 MR. CHHATRE: I appreciate your time.

12 CHIEF REGINELLA: Thank you.

13 MR. CHHATRE: Thanks for the help, off the record.

14 (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: NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION PIPELINE
 LEAK AND MULTISTORY STRUCTURE
 EXPLOSION IN HARLEM, NEW YORK
 MARCH 12, 2014
 Interview of Christopher Reginella

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-14-MP-002

PLACE: Brooklyn, New York

DATE: September 30, 2014

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.

Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber