UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*
	*
NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION PIPELINE	*
LEAK AND MULTISTORY STRUCTURE	* Docket No.: DCA-14-MP-002
EXPLOSION IN HARLEM, NEW YORK	*
MARCH 12, 2014	*
	*

Interview of: KEVIN FAGAN

Con Edison
4 Irving Place
New York, New York

Thursday,
August 7, 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

MATTHEW NICHOLSON, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

RICHARD DOWNS, Survival Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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

ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS, Director of Field Operations
Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations
Department of Environmental Protection
New York, New York

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)

ROBERT ALBANO, Esq.
(Representative on behalf of Mr. McBrien)

I N D E X

I N T E R V I E W

MR. CHHATRE: Good afternoon. Today is Thursday, August 7, 2014. We are currently in Con Edison's facility located at 4 Irving Place, New York. And we are meeting regarding the investigation of natural gas distribution pipeline leak, and multi-story 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 public docket.

Also I'd like to inform Mr. Kevin Fagan that you are permitted one other person present with you during the interview. This is a person of your choice: your supervisor, friend, family member or, if you choose, no one at all.

Please state for the record your full name, spelling of your name, organization you work for and your title, business contact information such as mailing address, and whom you have chosen to be present with you during your interview.

MR. FAGAN: My name is Kevin Fagan; K-e-v-i-n, F-a-g-a-n. I am the operations manager at the Gas Emergency Response Center for Con Edison. That is located at [redacted], that's M-a-t-t-h-e-w-s, Matthews Avenue, Bronx, New York. My contact telephone number is [redacted]

MR. CHHATRE: And whom you have chosen to be with you?

MR. FAGAN: Mr. Robert Albano, A-l-b-a-n-o.

MR. CHHATRE: Thank you for that.

Now I'd like to go around the room and have each person introduce themselves. Please state your name, spelling of your name, your title and organization you represent, and your business contact information, starting from my right.

MR. NICHOLSON: Matthew Nicholson, Investigator NTSB. Spelled M-a-t-t-h-e-w, N-i-c-h-o-l-s-o-n;

[redacted]

MR. DOWNS: Richard Downs, D-o-w-n-s. I'm a survival factors investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board, NTSB, out of Washington, D.C. Contact e-mail:

[redacted]

MR. EMEABA: Kalu Kelly Emeaba -- K-a-l-u, K-e-l-l-y, E-m-e-a-b-a -- investigator with NTSB. My e-mail address is

[redacted]

MR. McCARTON: My name's Frank McCarton, Deputy Commissioner in the Office of Emergency Management, City of New York. I'm also the New York City party rep on the investigation.

My e-mail is [redacted]

MR. ALBANO: Robert Albano; R-o-b-e-r-t, A-l-b-a-n-o. I'm here accompanying Mr. Fagan.

MR. SINGH: Leonard Singh; L-e-o-n-a-r-d, S-i-n-g-h. Chief Engineer of Gas Distribution, Con Edison; Con Edison's NTSB party rep as part of this investigation. [redacted]

MR. STOLICKY: Chris Stolicky, S-t-o-l-i-c-k-y. I am the New York state party rep in this investigation. I'm Utility Supervisor (Safety) in the New York State Department of Public Service. E-mail address is [redacted]

MR. CHHATRE: Thank you very much.

INTERVIEW OF KEVIN FAGAN

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. Mr. Fagan, for the record please state your formal educational background, any training, any work-related experience, and your responsibilities as an operations manager.

A. I have my bachelor's degree. It was a pre-law program from Queen's College, City of New York. Graduated in 1982 -- in 1992, rather, I'm sorry. I have completed 26 years at Con Edison. I was hired in May of 1988 and I have -- I was hired in May of '88 in Queen's gas operations as a mechanic. I worked my way up through general utility work to A-mechanic. I was then promoted. I have been assigned various management roles at levels as first-line supervisor, second-line supervisor, in all four of Con Edison's gas operating areas. And I am presently the operations

manager in the Gas Emergency Response Center where I oversee a 24-hour, 365-day-a-year operation, where our primary responsibility is the timely dispatch and prioritization of reported gas leak emergencies, as well as nonemergency work as related to PSC mandated inspections.

Q. Okay. And can you briefly describe what the dispatch center looks like? Operation-wise, how many people work on each shift?

A. Yes. The Gas Emergency Response Center is broken up into four -- it's a square with each area assigned a geographic area of our service area. So there would be four dispatchers typically working, plus -- one for Bronx, one for Westchester, one for Queens, one for Manhattan. Along with that would be support dispatchers that come in at various times throughout the shift.

We work a 12-hour rotating shift. Typically there are some 8-hour shifts involved. There are presently 16 troubleshooter dispatchers which is a weekly or union title. There are also an operating supervisor, a first-line supervisor that typically works Monday to Friday, 7 to 3. And there are six band-2 operating general supervisors, second-level management personnel, that work a rotating shift. They're on a 12-hour shift predominantly. There are some 8-hour shifts that they work. And they all report to me. And I work typically Monday through Friday, and my hours are 10 to 6, but I'm typically in at 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. And then of course I'm on call as needed.

MR. SINGH: Ravi, can we go off record for a minute?

MR. CHHATRE: Sure. Off the record.

(Off the record.)

(On the record.)

MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. So 10 to 6, and on call as needed?

A. That's correct.

Q. Can you just briefly describe what happens when the -- what is it, the title -- when they get the call for gas odor, your service representatives or customer representatives --

A. Troubleshooter dispatcher.

Q. -- then your department gets involved; is that correct?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. So just walk us through when you get that notification until the person is dispatched.

A. Okay. Typical scenario, a call is received in the Gas Emergency Response Center from our customer service call center which receives reports of gas odors from the public. They enter a ticket into our mainframe system, which then is on a continual display in our Gas Emergency Response Center as well as our dispatch system. We run two different systems concurrently, and they're both a check and balance of each other to make sure that electronically we are receiving everything in case there's a breakdown in one system, we know that we have continual

information coming in on the other.

When a gas leak call is entered by the custom service rep at the call center, we see it appear on our mainframe ECS system. We also see it -- it's typically within a second, it appears in our dispatch system. And that is also followed up with a phone call upon entry by the call center rep to the troubleshooter dispatcher in the GERC alerting that we do have a report of a gas leak.

The address is reviewed. The complaint is reviewed. The part supplied or the apartment, if it's a private dwelling, those facts are reviewed with the troubleshooter dispatcher. There has to be a confirmation of understanding and validation of the information that's provided. You're telling me that there is, for example, there's an outside leak, yet the ticket that you put in said there's an inside leak. So we validate that via phone.

Additionally to that, we also get a hard copy of the ticket prints out with an audible alert, alerting -- there's a motion sensor on the printer so when the paper comes out there's also an audible alert. So there's multiple checks and balances.

At that point the dispatcher will check his dispatch screen. We run GPS on all our emergency responders. It gives the position of where the reported leak is. That's depicted with a symbol that's highlighted in red on this screen noting where an unassigned leak is. And there is also a depiction, a graphic depiction, of where all the emergency responders are. And then

based upon the closest location of a qualified available emergency responder, that person is contacted via radio. They are told what is expected of them, that they're to proceed to the address, what the complaint is. There's voice confirmation, and then the job is electronically dispatched to their vehicle-mounted computer.

Q. Now is it -- when the customer service rep sends you a ticket, it's displayed on your computer. Is it automatic or somebody has to enter something?

A. No, that's automatic.

Q. Automatic, good.

A. Automatic.

Q. And it is displayed -- it's also displayed on the dispatch screen also automatically? Nobody has to do anything?

A. That's correct.

Q. And if there are multiple calls, let's just say, coming in, they all are displayed on the screen? Or how does that work?

A. Yes, yes. And they all -- every call follows the same process. So if someone was to call in Apartment 1, and then somebody else calls at the same location at Apartment 2, and Apartment 3, the same process happens.

Q. So all the calls are displayed?

A. That's correct.

Q. And when does the call disappear from your screen?

A. It comes off our unassigned screen and goes to our completed screen once the field mechanic actually completes the

work. There's multiple communications that are made throughout the course of a typical job. And then upon completion of the job, the field mechanic will also say, okay, I'm complete with the job, I sent it back, and we should no longer see it on our assigned screen but we should see it on our completed screen. And that -- there's normally a confirmation and then assignment onto the next job happens.

Q. So that automatic display then goes away?

A. Yes, it comes off of one and then it goes onto the other automatically. There --

Q. Nothing -- no human intervention is needed?

A. No, that's correct. That is correct.

Q. And you said you look at the GPS. That GPS is also automatic or somebody has to look for it?

A. Yes, it is. No, that's automatic.

Q. So everything is automatic?

A. Yes.

Q. And before I hand it over Mr. Downs, do you have a backup computer system in case computer -- what if your computer goes down, do you have a backup system that kicks in automatically?

A. Well, that's why we run two independent systems concurrently, so that we have our mainframe system running 24 hours a day as well as our MobileUp dispatch system runs 24 hours a day. So if one system should fail, the other one is always up

and running; always up and running.

Q. And how long this data stored in your system?

A. Years, to my knowledge. Years of data.

Q. Okay, so you can go 3 years and still retrieve the data if you needed?

A. Absolutely, absolutely.

MR. CHHATRE: At this time I'll stop and let Rick Downs --

MR. DOWNS: Thank you, Mr. Chhatre.

BY MR. DOWNS:

Q. Mr. Fagan, thank you for joining us today. Just a quick housekeeping here. What role does your assistance or your accompaniness play in this? Is he with the company or what --

A. Yes. Mr. Albano is a company employee and he's assigned to the law department.

Q. Law department, okay. Very good.

Let's see. So prior experience you actually had field experience for many years working as a mechanic and such and --

A. That's correct.

Q. -- and so on? Okay, great. Can you give me a brief history of your initial training with the company? You went through the mechanic training program and everything?

A. That's correct. At our learning center there's a new employee orientation that you have to go to, and then there is training for each level of promotion. Prior to going you have to

show proficiency in the field as well as proficiency at those tests.

Q. And is there recurrent training from your current position now? You had training to get into your position presumably?

A. Yes.

Q. And is there any recurrent training that you have to undergo, periodic testing for your role? Or as a manager is it assumed that you have that experience?

A. That's correct. But there is a formal dispatcher and GERC class that all personnel have to attend.

Q. Every year, or whatever?

A. Once.

Q. Once a year, okay. And your current on all your training and everything?

A. Yes, I am.

Q. Great. Okay. Now just for the record, you were the manager on duty at the time at the event?

A. That's correct.

Q. Okay, great. On the day of our event were there any other unusual events occurring at the time prior to the accident? Nothing unusual that day, just a regular run of the mill day; your usual calls that were coming in?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And there were no distractions or anything like

that?

A. No.

Q. Your computer was running just fine?

A. Yes.

Q. Yeah, we had testimony from our customer service representative they had computer problems on that day. You did not experience anything, though, on that day?

A. No, we did not.

Q. Okay, great. Can you tell us -- you gave us a little bit of a rundown of the action routine of how you would respond to a given gas leak call. On the day of the event, what is your recollection of the specific event activity, step by step, that you were involved with when the call came in?

A. The call came in. And I typically sit on the side of the Manhattan dispatch desk. I'm typically 10 feet away, at the most, from the Manhattan dispatcher. I was doing other GERC related work and I was monitoring work. I monitor work for my station for the entire gas system. I look at all incoming work, not just specific to one geographic area.

So I was going through work and I know that Mr. Kelly, Jack Kelly, the Manhattan dispatcher assigned that day, I remember hearing that he was questioning a call center rep as -- that these -- the order that came over is specific to two types of leak conditions. It was reporting an inside and an outsides leak, yet I only received an inside leak; I will need another ticket for the

outside leak, which is 100 percent by our procedure in training. So that's what caught my attention.

What was the location? He told me. I heard him dispatch the job to John Vasilak of Manhattan GDS. I looked on the screen to see where John was. John appeared to be the closest available dispatcher per the graphic display of GPS that I referenced. And there was nothing else out of the ordinary until -- and I guess that was at about 9:15 in the morning, thereabouts, 9:13. We dispatched it by 9:15.

At 9:34 I received a call from one of our emergency response center personnel that was at a meeting that picked up a report on a fire department scanner of hearing a report of an explosion at 114th Street, 1-1-4 Street, and Park Avenue; did I know anything about it? And I knew that there was nothing because I was monitoring all of the incoming work, and I said no, but, you know, start to head that way -- because I could always call him off -- start to head that way and I'll call the fire department and see if they have any reports of anything. So I called the fire department right away. We have an automatic phone tie line. I spoke to the fire department dispatcher. I said, do you have a report of an explosion? She said yeah, 100- --

Q. Would that be a transcript of what you're talking about?

A. If I could just --

Q. Help refresh your memory.

A. Yes.

Q. So that was at 9:40?

A. No, that was at 9:38. 9:34 is when I was called by my emergency response group person. By my record, I believe -- I thought it was at like 9:38 I spoke to the fire department dispatcher. So it might have been a minute or two. That's fine.

Q. Okay. That's another document we don't have here in terms of the GERC recordings. Was it on a non-recorded line perhaps?

A. No, tape -- no, it was a recorded line.

Q. We do not have that 9:34.

MR. SINGH: Is that the call between -- 9:34 call?

MR. DOWNS: 9:34, yeah, okay.

BY MR. DOWNS:

Q. Go ahead. I'm sorry, go ahead.

A. And then, excuse me, I lost my train of thought for a second. Oh, yeah. So then at that point I told the dispatcher page John Vasilak and find out what his ETA is. Because I know he was going to 116th and Park. We have a report of something two blocks south; I don't know if it's related, not related. Page him and find out what his ETA is. I could see that the vehicle on the screen was very close, but I wanted to know exactly where he was. At that point that was at 9:38.

Q. 9:38.

A. And John Vasilak had reported back that he was stuck in traffic at Park Avenue and East 119th Street. The road was

blocked with fire apparatus, a lot of fire apparatus, a lot of activity, and he could see in the distance smoke and fire. He said something's going on. So I said, okay, this is what we have, get back to me right away.

Q. Does that look familiar to your dialogue on that point?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay, good.

A. Yes, it does.

Q. So that's at 9:39, we're showing. Okay, go ahead. Pardon me.

A. At that point I -- another Manhattan responder, who was not assigned for leak response that day, had seen the smoke while traveling to another location and had turned around and responded, having seen all the fire apparatus and the commotion, and he called in at location at 0940. His name was Brian Morgan, and he said I'm here, you know, I'm reporting that there was a major event. It appears to be an explosion. I don't know what, you know, if it's gas or not, or whatever.

And I had told him that John Vasilak was there; tie in with John, identify yourselves to the fire department. Could you identify the buildings? He could not give me specific building numbers. I said, you know, can you tell is it the second building from the corner, the first building on the corner, the middle of the block; give me something to go by so I can give you some gas and facility information so that we could try and make the

condition safe. And at which point he could not identify the building numbers from where he was.

Q. That would be the transcript we're talking about right there?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. And that was quite extensive in terms of dialogue with him, having him describe what he was seeing at that site?

A. That's correct.

Q. Very good.

A. That's correct.

Q. Thank you. The reason I ask is that we don't have -- necessarily have names; they've been redacted on this, and having their names and identities helps us sort through these.

A. Okay. And at that point I had initiated a code MuRRE?

Q. MuRRE?

A. M-u -- M-u-R-R-E, a Multiple Resource Response Event, based upon what was being reported to me. I alerted the dispatcher and the other management personnel in the room as to what we had. Our radio dispatch system allows us to transit. We run two radio systems concurrently, a primary and a backup system. We broadcast out over both radios at the same time on the open air. I broadcasted out that we have a report of an explosion, I need an all-hands response. Immediately various supervisors from different departments called in that they were responding.

Q. And that would be this transcript we're looking at right

there?

A. Yes. That's correct.

Q. Okay, very good. That's your code MuRRE.

MR. CHHATRE: I know you have the document, but let him complete, because otherwise the transcripts won't get it, your information --

MR. DOWNS: I know, but I don't know, because the names have been redacted --

MR. CHHATRE: I understand.

MR. DOWNS: -- I don't know if this relating to what he's talking about.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

MR. DOWNS: So it's for my purposes.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay, but I would let him finish and then you can show the documents, what your concern is. Otherwise the transcripts will not get it.

MR. DOWNS: Okay.

MR. FAGAN: I also instructed John Morgan -- Brian Morgan, I'm sorry, that John Vasilak was on location. I said, can you get to the curb valves? He said, no, there was too much rubble and debris. And I told him, okay, tie in with John, identify yourselves to the fire department and start to protect the buildings and the occupants of the buildings that were surrounding. We couldn't do anything with what had exploded, but we had an obligation to protect life and property, make sure that

nothing else happened at that time.

At that point we -- I had the map in our Gas Emergency Response Center -- we have a large video wall where we can display a large portion of the gas system, and I had the area up on that display and I was -- had identified what I was felt was, because there were no valves in the immediate area to shut off, what would be a shutdown plan once the emergency response supervisors arrived and they took over the responsibility of being the incident commander on the scene, I can provide some information to them what mains were tied, what mains weren't tied, and where some potential stop-off points could be. I wanted to have that all prepared by the time they got there.

Q. Okay, very good. Thank you. That was a very good description.

Preceding the actual explosion event, in your experience was this particular response here typical of response to a gas odor?

A. Yes, yes, yes.

Q. Nothing unusual up to that point?

A. Nothing at all.

Q. Okay, and we kind of touched of this question before. Was there anything during the execution of the event that might have hindered you in your response event?

A. No.

Q. Okay. About how often does the GERC receive and process

gas odor complaints?

A. Approximately 32,000 times a year. We receive approximately 32,000.

Q. 32K a year?

A. Approximately, yes.

Q. And that works out to about how many per day?

A. 100-and -- 100 a day on the average.

Q. About 100 a day or so? Okay. Do you have enough resources to be able to address them all?

A. Yes. Certainly.

Q. Okay, great. You have your computer based data entry system which gets completed as you work along the process. Is there manually recorded paperwork that the GERC generates as a result of this process?

A. No, no. No, there's no manually generated paperwork or reports like that, no.

Q. Our previous witness indicated that he keeps a scratch sheet just to maintain little crib notes and such. That's not unusual; that's typical?

A. Yes, that's typical, yes.

Q. Great. And are all calls recorded in the GERC?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Is the data that you recorded a complete record of the event to your best knowledge?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay, there's no other documentation that you're aware of?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Are there operations or procedural manuals that are used as part of your process?

A. Oh, yes. Yeah.

Q. Can you give us a rundown as to what they are?

A. Sure, well, we -- there are specifications for response and actions to reported outside leaks, inside leaks. There's specifications that govern when regulatory agencies need to be notified, what conditions, and within what timeframes. There's specifications for -- specific to the GERC dispatchers and GERC operations, management personnel as well, as to the dispatching of emergency work as well as the dispatching of nonemergency work.

Q. Okay.

A. As well as, you know, volumes of other specifications for the other tests we perform.

Q. Right. But that's the big ones --

A. Yes, yes.

Q. -- in terms of an event such as this?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. Okay, great. And these are available in printed form or on the computer screen or --

A. Both.

Q. Both. And they're available instantly should they need

be needed?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Is there a checklist in these manuals that prescribes what each employee is supposed to do step by step for responding?

A. There's a detailed description, yes. A checklist, per se, but a detailed description, yes. That's correct.

Q. And has it been your experience that your field technicians, your mechanics pretty much know these rote and they're able to do the processes without even thinking about it?

A. Yes.

Q. Great. Did you or anybody that worked in your shop there have to use the manual, to your knowledge, that particular day? Or did they use the manual in terms of checking off the steps that they performed?

A. To my knowledge -- I really don't know.

Q. You don't know, okay.

A. I mean, I handled the event as far as the GERC went and I know I didn't have to refer to a printed document.

Q. Okay, great. And this is kind of a lessons learned benefit of hindsight. Knowing what you know now, is there anything that you would have done, your shop would have done differently should there be a future even such as this? Any lessons learned you can think of?

A. I can't think of anything that I would have done differently.

Q. Great, okay. Got that. Okay, I'd like to chat with you a little bit on the topic of remotely operated shut-off valves, and you might not be the right person to ask, but let me ask them anyways. Were there remotely shut-off valves in the area of the gas odor site, reported site, or not?

MR. SINGH: Can I clarify? Con Edison's distribution system does not have ROVs; our transmission systems do.

MR. DOWNS: Okay. Well, that answers the question. That's fine.

BY MR. DOWNS:

Q. So every time there's a report, you actually have to go find someplace to shut off the gas, whether it's an installation of stoppers or whatever to be able to do that?

A. That's correct.

Q. Okay. And probably the next question is a moot point. Could remotely operated valves have helped in this situation? You may not be the right person to address that.

A. I'm not the right person.

Q. Okay. Let's see. Well, again a policy question. If you can offer me thoughts, meaning technical considerations, as to why Con Ed does not make wider use of such valves to quickly shut off the gas? The reason I'm asking is, it was a several hour process to be able to close the gas off in this particular event. We've had other events that we've worked, for example, that they've had remote valves that they can instantly close and so on.

MR. SINGH: Can I answer the question, from a technical standpoint?

MR. CHHATRE: Let him try first. Then you can clarify.

MR. SINGH: It's not his area.

MR. CHHATRE: It's not his --

MR. FAGAN: I was just going to say that's really not my area of expertise.

MR. CHHATRE: Oh, no, I'm saying he can tell, hey, look, it's not my area.

MR. DOWNS: Yeah, it might expedite the process if Mr. Singh answers that then.

MR. SINGH: So our low pressure system was never designed with valves back in the 1800s. Our current practice is to install intersection valves and isolation valves as we rebuild the system or replace the system.

MR. DOWNS: I see.

MR. SINGH: A high pressure system typically has more valving, but again, ROVs is not typical in an industry on a distribution system; more on a transmission system.

MR. DOWNS: And would it be advantageous to have any valves? It sounds to me like you don't have that many events that would really necessitate a valve.

MR. SINGH: So that's -- to your point, yes, first of all. And second of all, you're talking thousands upon thousands of installation of ROVs and, you know, you got to balance that

system with the cost effectiveness of doing and the practicality of doing that. So I think, you know, it's something that's not that easily accomplished. But is it impossible? Absolutely not; it can be done.

MR. DOWNS: Very good.

BY MR. DOWNS:

Q. Okay, I'd like to address the topic of 911 versus the Con Ed customer service line versus 311. I don't know if you would be the right person to address that, but let's touch on that a little bit.

A. Okay.

Q. In this particular case the customer called customer service. There's been discussion as to whether or not calling 911 would have been more expeditious. I understand the process now is to call 911 simultaneous, or the instruction is given out to the public to call 911; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay, versus 311. Are there technical considerations on that point that would come into play here, or just 911 would be a more expeditious way to get resources to the site?

A. I don't know if there's any other advantages. As I understand it, 911 is the most expeditious way.

Q. Very good. Okay.

Does Con Ed have a material data, material safety data sheet, MSDS, for natural gas product?

A. I don't know if they do or not. I'm not aware.

Q. That it gives to it's customers. You're not familiar with it?

A. I'm not familiar. That's not my area of expertise.

Q. Okay. Yeah, because I didn't see one in the Con Ed operations emergency response plan -- that's your EMP 200 Plan -- or your Con Ed dispatching emergency and nonemergency work document, the GERC manual, or otherwise, and having that in the field sometimes would be helpful to a responder. Okay, so you're not familiar with it.

And we had previous testimony from the field mechanic that he was familiar with the emergency response guide. That's the orange book.

A. Okay.

Q. Do all of the mechanics carry that in their truck; do you know?

A. To my knowledge they do.

Q. Very good. Does the GERC have a backup operations site in the event that your site becomes incapacitated for whatever reason?

A. Yes, we do.

Q. And I don't need a location, don't divulge any secret locations, but it's redundant to your operation pretty much?

A. Yes, it is.

Q. Okay, very good. Do you happen to know, were there any

Con Ed employees working out of the GERC or whatever that sustained any reportable injuries in this event?

A. I'm not aware of any, no.

Q. None. All right. I do believe that's all I have at the moment.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

MR. DOWNS: Mr. Chhatre.

MR. CHHATRE: Kelly?

BY MR. EMEABA:

Q. Just a follow-up note. You already answered some questions on the remote control valve, which you don't need in situation like this. But based on this incident and the time it took to actually cut off the gas line -- and maybe you answering or Mr. Leonard answering -- has the company considered the need to install critical or, say, junction valves in most of your system as to reduce the time taken to actually cut off the gas supply to an incident site?

MR. SINGH: So the answer to that is yes. Our current procedure is, as we replace and repair mains, requires us to install valves, yes.

MR. EMEABA: Okay. But if the main are not replaced, based on the existing system, has the thought come into mind in your program to install such, instead of waiting until you cut the pipeline or do the tap-in, because that takes you a longer while.

MR. SINGH: So we're replacing roughly -- we're

replacing roughly 65 miles of main a year right now. So in that program, we didn't feel there was a need currently above that to do additional installations. Currently.

MR. EMEABA: Okay, so if you have a situation, we don't pray for that, that a similar incident occurs again or reoccur, what do you do?

MR. SINGH: I'm not sure I understand the question.

MR. EMEABA: If you have another section of New York City or New York that is a similar incident of gas leak, you know, should occur, what would be your procedure in order to shut off the gas pipeline?

MR. SINGH: Same procedure we have in place today. It's either you -- if you have valve, the operator valve. If you can isolate -- or if not, if it's a low pressure leak, you isolate with a shutdown. You kind of move back to where you can do that. It might have to be a wider area, but you go back -- if it's an immediate need, you go back as far you can with the valve. If not, you have to dig fire pits -- fire banks and install stoppers.

MR. EMEABA: So in that case, based on your statement, there is no current effort to reduce the time lapse from the time of the incident to the time of shutdown?

MR. SINGH: Right. So I don't know what you mean what you mean by time lapse. There is no standard time --

MR. EMEABA: For instance --

MR. SINGH: There's no standard time to shut down a gas

main.

MR. EMEABA: Hold on. When an incident occurs --

MR. SINGH: Right.

MR. EMEABA: -- it took you about one and a half hour or more to shut down the pipeline, for instance, or 3 hours. I'm just giving -- I understand 3 hours --

MR. SINGH: Right.

MR. EMEABA: -- that is what this one took. Have you considered how to minimize the time to about one hour or less?

MR. SINGH: So the point I've before about installing valves as we rebuild the system includes that.

MR. EMEABA: I understand.

MR. SINGH: Right.

MR. EMEABA: I said based on the current system, without replacing in an area, what plans do you have to minimize the time of shutdown?

MR. SINGH: See, I don't know which time you're looking to minimize. Because no two incident could be the same, right?

MR. EMEABA: Understood. The fact you don't have -- currently do not have no sectionalizing valves or critical valve in an area, that's what I'm asking. Lesson learned, this has happened, is there anything in the program right now apart from replacement --

MR. SINGH: Right.

MR. EMEABA: -- as to say install critical valves or

junction valves prior to replacement of the pipeline that could help you reduce the time?

MR. SINGH: The answer's no.

MR. EMEABA: Okay, thank you. I'm okay with that.

MR. CHHATRE: Off the record for a second.

(Off the record.)

(On the record.)

MR. CHHATRE: Back on record.

MR. EMEABA: Thank you for the answer. So the answer is no.

BY MR. EMEABA:

Q. Are there a group of people who have been predetermined as being emergency responders or are mechanics just selected and called emergency responder?

A. No. There are a group that are emergency responders. They're trained and they're available for and assigned to for work for work that's dispatched from the GERC specific to a gas leak emergency response.

Q. Okay. Can you explain to us what kind of special training they receive as emergency responders?

A. They're trained and qualified from our learning center in gas leak emergency investigation and classification and emergency response. Basically all our gas distribution services mechanics, all the mechanic A's are all emergency responders. They're all emergency response trained.

Q. Okay. So are there any difference at all to these emergency responders to those that actually perform your routine?

A. No. They can be one and the same. They might be doing routine work one day and they may be pulled off routine work in order to do emergency response work if they're the closest available responder.

Q. Your group, which is the GERC, are you -- do you serve as a liaison or do your group actually go to the field for any reason?

A. No, we don't go to the field. The troubleshooter dispatchers, the supervisors, or myself, we do not respond to the field.

Q. And how do your group determine if there will be -- there is a need for modifications to what you actually do, how you respond to incidents?

A. I'm not sure I understand the question.

Q. How do your group determine the need to have some modifications in what do you actually do in your response proceeding?

A. If I understand correctly, if someone sees a need for a change or an improvement? Am I correct in that understanding?

Q. Yes.

A. Yes. Certainly anyone can speak up and we will consider that and we can always make a change to procedures, to standard operating protocols, if there's something that's seen that needs

to be changed.

Q. Okay. There is a (indiscernible) that you expect your responders or whoever that goes to the field to fill out for such kind of recommendations, or is it verbal?

A. Well, typically a field responder would report to their local management personnel. I was referring specific to GERC dispatchers and the supervisors that report to me. Certainly we have -- we encourage open dialogue and the exchange of ideas if there's ways to improve something.

Q. You said GERC dispatchers?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So how do you work directly with the responder?

A. We interact with them every day, 24 hours a day. Many of the dispatchers and many of our supervisors, both first-line and second-line supervisors, as well as myself, have interacted with many of these responders actually in the field in prior assignments. So a lot of them are our known co-workers over the years. And we always have voice communication throughout the course of the day and during dispatching various assignments.

Q. Okay, so do you get a direct feedback from the responder themself or their the supervisor? How does it go?

A. We get direct feedback or reports back from both the responder and/or it could be an emergency response supervisor as well.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay, Kelly? Chris?

MR. STOLICKY: Hi, Kevin.

MR. FAGAN: Hi, Chris.

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. Chris Stolicky. A couple questions. Emergency response time, how does the company measure that time? Meaning if a call comes into your call center 8 a.m. and then your qualified first responder gets there at 8:30, how long is that for your response?

A. That's a 30-minute response time.

Q. So that would be the time that the call was answered in your call center?

A. The time that -- right. From the time it's received in the call center to the time -- that starts the process; not the time I get it, but the time that the call center receives it -- until the time that a qualified responder arrives on location, that's the entire length of time for the arrival time.

Q. And when that responder arrives on site, how do they notify GERC, I guess, or create that record?

A. It's done two ways, again redundancy. We always want to maintain voice communication with our responders. We never want to rely solely on a computer system. We want to make sure that we're constantly talking, we're communicating. So it's done electronically on the responding mechanic's vehicle-mounted computer there, MDT mobile data terminal. There's a button that they hit, "arrived on location." So we would see that the status

of the job changed from en route, or I was traveling, to arrived. And then they are required to call us and tell us "I'm on location." And then we typically provide a time verification as well, based upon the time stamp on the computer, back to the mechanic as well.

And that process is tracked until -- it's an actively managed process from the time the mechanic is dispatched till the time they arrive on site. We track their time, and we would page them at various intervals if there is some delay that we can see or they will notify if there's some delay: a traffic jam or I'm stuck behind a school bus, whatever.

Q. What do you do if you have trouble with voice communications?

A. We have multiple radio systems. We have two radio systems. We use a Sprint as well as a company -- one is a CDMA system and another one is an IDEN technology system. So there's two radios that are employed at all times. They're tested at the start of each shift. We send test pages to each of our crews at the start of the shift before they leave the yard to ensure that both radio systems are working properly, with test pages that are acknowledged back and forth. Both radios are monitored throughout the course of the day, 24 hours a day. And if one system is unavailable, the other system is always up and working.

Q. Does that include dead spots around tall buildings or in basements?

A. That's correct.

Q. Some questions, or some clarity I'm seeking on here. Your inside versus outside leak procedures, and how this work with the responder versus GERC.

GERC receives notification of a call based on information collected from the call center and then a determination is made on whether it's an inside or outside gas leak. But in Con Edison, versus some other companies that I have experience, you guys have two separate procedures. And the way I understand this, and correct me if I'm wrong, if it's, let's say, an inside gas leak notification, your responder is sent to that location in mind that he's supposed to follow the inside gas leak investigation procedure?

A. That's correct.

Q. Now, in this situation, from what I'm learning, is that there are actually both an inside and gas leak tickets created, but you had one responder?

A. That's correct. Based upon the initial call, as I remember the complaint, the caller had reported an odor in the bedroom, but it could be from outside. If -- so based upon that, we would wait for the mechanic's investigation or indication of what he found, and then based upon that information coming back, we would make a determination if additional resources would be required.

Q. So the responder would have to take some (indiscernible)

reading on site, stop, call you, and then try to figure out where to go next? How would that work?

A. It shouldn't be that he should have to figure out where to go next. Based upon the readings that he has and his training and the specification, dictates what he has to do next. So that's all based upon training and specification.

MR. STOLICKY: Okay, that's all I have.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Frank?

MR. McCARTON: I'll pass for right now.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Lenny?

MR. SINGH: Yeah.

BY MR. SINGH:

Q. Kevin besides emergency response times, arrival time, how do you measure effectiveness of dispatching and keeping the system safe?

A. Well, certainly we want to make sure that we're using the closest available responder by using GPS. We track dispatch response times. We look to see if we notice trends. Certainly there's a multitude of reports that are run to track performance, time of day, and just try to understand how it is that our response times are adequate.

Q. So besides the code MuRRE you mentioned where we triggers to FDNY, do you have any other interactions with the FDNY?

A. We've got many interactions with FDNY. We'll -- not only the code MuRRE process, but there are many, many times that

we encounter scenarios that don't meet the threshold of a code MuRRE but we want to engage the fire department early on in the process based upon information that we're seeing. So if we get a report of a gas leak in a lobby, I smell gas on the whole fifth floor in the hallway, certainly we dispatch the fire department right away. If it's a sensitive location, a school, a hospital, a nursing home, any areas that have large amounts of people may be in, that certainly is another trigger where we would engage the fire department early on in the process. We would dispatch them at the same time we're dispatching our first responder. We -- so yes, there are many, many -- actually thousands of times a year that we engage the fire department.

Q. Okay. How do you keep the skills of your dispatchers fresh and how do you know they're being effective?

A. It's an actively managed process. All activity happens right in that room. There are typically three other supervisors on shift besides myself on a continual basis so the process is actively managed. There's training that dispatchers must attend, a 3-day training. There is performance that we look at. We track dispatch response times. It's not only just dispatching the job quickly, it's are we dispatching it effectively? Are we giving it to the closest available responder?

I could dispatch someone from lower Manhattan and send them to Harlem and that means I could get it out in 1 minute, but that's not the best dispatching. Am I dispatching, am I looking

for the right person, am I paging people that may be close by? Am I saying, hey, listen you've been on this job for an hour; are you wrapping up? I've got something a block away from you. You can get there quicker than anybody else can.

So it's an actively managed process that goes on all the time. So we're constantly looking at ways to -- or we're constantly self-assessing the process in the room.

Q. You have any guidelines, procedures, expectation, once a job is dispatched to follow up with that mechanic?

A. Yes. Again, it goes back -- I like to say that it's an actively managed process. We do not dispatch and then forget it. We own that job until we can get the responder to the location safely and we get an arrival time, and based upon the information that comes back, that we will actively manage that job until either the condition is made safe or local management shows up.

What we do is, we will track -- just as in this case, if we get other information incoming into the GERC, that may prompt me to page that mechanic: Hey, listen, we just got a report of this; where are you? It's at 30 minutes. We page the mechanic, you're now at -- the leak is now 30 minutes old, where are you; give me an ETA based upon the conditions that you're seeing. At 40 minutes, at 45 minutes, at 50 minutes, at 55 minutes, at 60 minutes, until the party arrives, we actively manage that. We're constantly tracking the response. And again, it's not for an arrival time. It's we have an obligation to ensure that we're

protecting life and property, and we take that very seriously.

Q. You mentioned about an on scene IC, as opposed to?

A. The GERC would be -- assumes the role of the white hat, incident commander, in this case, until either it is made safe or local management establish the incident command system on location.

Q. So what's the role of that IC from the GERC's perspective?

A. We would determine what actions the mechanic should take. If there were valves that we wanted staffed and operated, we would direct the responders to operate valves to evacuate buildings based upon reports that are coming in. Any other -- and we would assign multiple responders.

MR. SINGH: That's all for now Ravi.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Matt?

BY MR. NICHOLSON:

Q. Yeah, just a couple. I heard a lot about the time and how you measure time and all the rest. I didn't hear, though, do these emergency responders from your group, your emergency mechanics, do they ever perform drills or exercises with the fire department?

A. I just want to clarify. I have the dispatchers. I don't have field mechanics.

Q. Oh, I'm sorry. Okay. Terrific.

A. But yes, actually we do. And we benchmark -- we started

approximately 4 years ago where we benchmark with our counterparts in the fire department and actually OEM watch command as well, where we will -- we meet annually and we review not only common terminology -- what do you mean when you report a gas main as broken? Is that the same as my understanding as a utility employee of what a gas main is? Sometimes you may refer to the piping inside a house as a main and it's not the same terminology. So we review -- when I give you measurements of where a service may be located or if I say something, what is low -- it's a low pressure system, medium pressure system, high pressure system, what we mean by that. And just make sure that there's a common understanding between our municipal partners.

There was a part of our annual training curriculum and we review this with our counterparts in the city, is the need -- it came out, I believe it was in 2012, was the emergency communications during -- to municipal agencies, and it was a DOT advisory that came out, and that is part of our core curriculum in our training for dispatchers, and we go over that with our municipal partners: this is what we expect, this is what moves we're going to make, and this is our expectations of you; what are your expectations of us? We review -- actually go over tape jobs and we listen to call recordings. This worked well; this didn't work well; what do you think about that? And we go over that with our, again with OEM watch command as well.

We have back up radios as well from OEM watch command

which we secured so just in case there was a total failure of all communications, how could we get the -- engage the fire department to respond and how could they engage us. And we did that through OEM watch command, where we actually have two of their handheld radios: one at our alternate site and one at our main site.

And we have test pages on that and we'll -- and again, it's constantly, are we looking at everything? Are we considering everything? Are we planning for everything in advance of it happening? And we try to take that very seriously.

Q. Good. Was that done following the incident in March of this year?

A. No, that was all -- that was done approximately 4 years ago.

Q. Okay, well, it sounded like it's kind of an ongoing thing. You have an incident, you go back and hot wash it or --

A. Well, actually, we don't even wait for an incident, and we do this with our counterparts in Westchester County also, there up in 60 control. It's just an annual thing. We'll pull out six jobs, we'll ask them please pull out six jobs that are of note to you. Let's discuss what worked well, what didn't work well.

We also conduct training with our emergency response partners. To date this year we've conducted approximately 85 training sessions and we've touched approximately 1,850 emergency responders. Fire department, police department. Actually excavators. Contractors. We also have a transmission

notification protocol that we started in 2011 after seeing what happened at San Bruno we said listen, you know, we need to bring the fire department and OEM and those emergency responders into the process very early on. So before we even do work on a transmission main, we bring the local fire chief in and we say listen this is the scope of the work. This is what our plan is. Just in case something goes wrong, so that you know what we're doing, this is the duration of the project, this is what the physical area is. And a lot of times, you know, are you aware that we're going to have the street blocked, because if a building goes on fire, how are you going to access the fire hydrants. What do you need from us? So we try to map that out early on in the process.

Q. Okay.

A. And again just trying to think of things in advance before they happen so that they don't happen.

Q. Terrific. You told -- you mentioned earlier in your narrative of the events. You said Brian -- you told Brian and John, I forget his last name, to report to the incident commander on scene?

A. Yeah, I had said to identify --

Q. Did they ever do that?

A. I had said to identify themselves to the fire department.

Q. Okay.

A. Let the fire department know that you're there. Identify themselves to -- and everyone's trained to look for the white hat.

Q. That is part of the training?

A. Absolutely.

Q. All right.

A. Very much so. Look for the fire chief, look for a fire officer. If you can't locate the fire department command post where the white hat would typically be situated, identify yourself, stay together and protect buildings. We have an obligation to protect life and property and that was the first orders that they had.

Q. And did they report back after they made contact with the incident commander?

A. They did not report back that they made contact with the incident commander. Within, I believe it was 8 minutes, a local -- one of the local Manhattan gas operations planners, one of their level two supervisors arrived on location, identified himself that he was going to be the white hat and communicator. And then he was subsequently relieved. No, actually a communicator had arrived and took over the communications role, Bob Culpa I believe was the --

Q. Bob who I'm sorry?

A. Culpa.

Q. Culpa.

MR. EMEABA: Culpa?

MR. FAGAN: Yes, yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have their transcripts.

MR. NICHOLSON: Good.

MR. FAGAN: And then once he identified himself then I was no longer the incident commander, because a field ICS had been established and I worked to support him and get him what he needs.

MR. NICHOLSON: Okay, thank you.

BY MR. EMEABA:

Q. I wanted to get you back. There was question Chris asked, he said in an incident if you know there are both inside and outside gas leak, you would be dispatching two mechanics to that? Or you said you will.

A. To clarify; so in this case the party had said they smelled it in their bedroom, but it could be coming from outside. So it was kind of like they didn't know where they were getting. Certainly if we were to get an outside odor also. Somebody called up, I'm standing in front of the building I smell gas, we would dispatch a second mechanic.

Q. Okay, question whenever tickets are generated in the system do you receive all of them?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So in this case then two tickets were generated, one for inside, one for outside, does that qualify sending two people at the same time?

A. No, because it's from the same person and really the person was saying that they didn't know where they were smelling it. They smelled it in their bedroom. So that's where they said they smelled it, but it could be coming from outside.

Q. Okay. All right, thank you.

MR. CHHATRE: Back to you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I can follow up if I may.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay, no if Matt is done then I'll ask a couple questions and we'll move for a follow up, but you were interrupted.

MR. NICHOLSON: No, I was finished, thank you.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Everybody asked what they had to ask, just a couple of follow up questions.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. You mentioned I believe the question -- you contact the fire department or have someone contact fire department on this call.

A. Yes, I actually did as soon as, yes.

Q. Now is that call the second call? Because I think was told earlier that when the ticket is generated there are certain, I guess, trigger criteria then the fire department is automatically called?

A. They would be typically be called if certain criteria are met.

Q. Okay, and I thought we were told that those were met and

the fire department was contacted?

A. The fire department was called and they were called approximately 5 minutes after this call was received, 4 minutes after this call was received.

Q. Okay, so I just want to make sure that you're --

A. Yes, yes.

Q. -- that would be the second call to the fire department, just for clarity.

A. Yes, I'm sorry, yes, that's correct.

Q. I just want to make sure of that, okay, and that's all.

A. That's correct, yes.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay, that's all I need. Follow up questions.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I do, go ahead Chris.

MR. CHHATRE: Go ahead, go ahead.

MR. STOLICKY: I just have kind of two follow-ups and I think we may have covered these earlier, I just want to make sure we're all clear on this.

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. If you get multiple gas leak calls in an area or combined commodity calls how are those identified. And then what do you do?

A. That would be a code MuRRE trigger or multiple resource response event.

Q. But how would you recognize that you had multiple calls,

multiple events?

A. Well if we receive multiple calls at the same location, right, from different callers, right? So every call generates a ticket so I would receive notification I would see electronically and I would receive a telephone call from the call center alerting okay I just another leak from 120 St whatever the location is. And so I would know that, so that's my second, that's automatically a code MuRRE and I have to call the fire department and assemble.

Q. But is that because it's channeling through you?

A. Not me personally, that it's channeling through the GERC.

Q. But, how does the GERC (indiscernible) different people. How would that be recognized?

A. There's a specification. And that's part of formalized training.

Q. Meaning if three different people took three different tickets they would be able to look at a centralized location to determine that it was near, they were near one other? Just try to help us with a visual?

A. Yes, yes. Because what happens is, so if you get a graphic depiction of where the leak is on your GPS map. Every time --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's on the big board.

A. Right every time a leak appears there's a red pin that

shows you that job just came in. Red means it's a leak, right. So if it's a red pin you can see that jobs are starting to cluster that's on a graphic display, there's also a tabular display that you can actually see jobs listed and they can sorted, the building numbers parsed and another column is the street name. So Park Avenue, Park Avenue, Park Avenue, or Jones Street, Jones Street, so you start to see some indicators as well as on the tabular display as well as on the graphic depiction.

MR. MCCARTEN: Can I just jump onto to that. So that's even if you're getting a call from Manhattan fire. Manhattan fires are all going into that system also right? As you get those calls, because you got a ring down phone in there right?

MR. FAGAN: That's correct so the only difference when fire or OEM watch command would call in, we take those calls those calls are not routed to the call center, that's a direct dispatch input right in the GERC so we get it firsthand from our emergency responders and that information goes into the same systems.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think for a point reference too, as we go forward for the witness list for the fire PD, is to bring up the fire on dispatcher that was working that day on, okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So they could describe the side of what their seeing on back and forth also.

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. So would an electric event show up on that map?

A. An electric event would not.

Q. Or is that the gas emergency response?

A. There's a pop up message that we get that our legacy system, our mainframe system, ECS. That's used by both gas and electric. So when a ticket comes in that says let's say there's a burn out if that's what you're referring to or flickering lights. It matches the location within 250 feet of each other. So if there is an electric burn out 150 feet away from a reported gas leak that pop-up appears both the electric control, as well as in the gas control room. And remarks automatically populated on both tickets. So the gas room mark would appear on the electric ticket. And the electric remarks would appear on the gas ticket. That automatically prompts a fire department response. So if somebody says, yeah I've got a smoking manhole and I've got a strong gas odor. That's probable I probably have a burnout, but if somebody has flickering light 150 feet away from a gas leak that may not be a probable combined commodity event, but we dispatch the fire department immediately anyway. Even though it doesn't meet the threshold of a code MuRRE probable combined commodity event. We dispatch GDS, a supervisor as well as the fire department upon receipt of the ticket.

Q. And you said this was your legacy system, not your main system that each?

A. No, and that also -- so this pop up comes up out of our

host system, our main system that feeds our dispatch system. And our dispatch system has the remarks that are contained in those same flickering or burn out or side out, as well as the -- the main gas leak complaint remarks.

Q. So it'd be visibly obvious to you?

A. Yes.

Q. TO your guys --

A. On both systems.

Q. -- look at the console, both systems. They'd say we got something big going on here.

A. That's correct.

Q. And it's instant awareness rather than starting to compare notes between each of you. Is that fair assessment?

A. That's -- yes. And the one other thing when that pop-up message comes onboard Chris you cannot do anything on your computer screen until you acknowledge, so it's not like you can keep doing it and ignoring. You could be typing away and basically the screens are frozen until you acknowledge that, you open it, read it, and then it's acknowledged.

Q. Okay. Is there a process in place for Con Edison of other utility incidents, meaning like water or sewer or says there's a big event horizon or something, is there a mutual working agreement with other utilities and infrastructure?

A. I'm not aware of that. I know we do receive reports through -- we also have a ring down line for New York City DEP

and they will alert us when we have a report of a water main break. Or if we -- we discover a water main break in the course of gas leak response or routine work, we will also notify them as well or we'll go through our counterparts in OEM watch command as well to see if they have any reports. But, I'm not aware of any working agreements, that's not my area of expertise.

Q. And would steam work the same way as electric?

A. As far as?

Q. if there's a steam incident?

A. There's voice communication between the steam control. If the steam dispatch control room and the GERC, yes.

Q. And what about the fuel line?

A. That I don't have any knowledge of, I typically have never, to my knowledge I haven't received any notifications, I'm not aware of that.

Q. Just one more question, and you may have talked about these processes earlier, but if a gas leak call goes to 911, at what point and how does GERC get notified?

A. As I understand the process. 911 calls once the caller reports a gas odor or a gas like odor, or that call is immediately transferred to the fire department dispatch operations center.

With basically the fire department dispatchers. They in turn dispatch a fire company in response. And then we're notified based upon what's encountered. Certainly if there is a report of an explosion a major event or anything out of the ordinary. If

they receive a report that perhaps there is a damage, the main is pulled up and gas is blowing. They call us before they're even there for response. And we have that same capability back.

Q. So when it comes to measure response times and real world response time there's an inherent delay if that's the process that's followed. I mean, it could 5, 6, 10 minutes, before you guys, you guys being Con Edison are notified of a gas leak?

A. I don't know how long it takes them to process through I don't have?

Q. You said the average response is say 5, 6, 8 minutes.

A. For?

Q. The fire departments.

A. Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's not that long.

MR. STOLICKY: Four minutes, 3 minutes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think their response time for this incident alone whether it was early --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Two and a half or something it's pretty quick.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, 2½ minutes. I mean, 4 minutes is the average response time for fire anyway, so I mean --

MR. STOLICKY: But at that point in time Con Ed could be notified of a gas leak and then that's when your response will start?

MR. FAGAN: Yes, as soon as we're notified, yes.

MR. STOLICKY: Okay, that's all I have.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Follow-up.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. Okay, if we could go back to our code MuRRE a little bit. To go through the timeline again, we got the initial connect from a customer service to your GERC shop at 9:14, it was a half-minute call or whatever. And then GERC got the call and were in the process of dispatching the field technician, that's fine.

We then are showing at 9:19 a call from your shop, again I don't have a name on it, a disadvantage here. It looks like a call from your shop and our witness Kelly, John Kelly said it wasn't him it was somebody else from your shop. And the call went out, I'll give you the essence of the call. IT was only a 32 second call to the fire department, hey 781 we need you on location up in the Manhattan, okay the address, and gives him the address and so on. It was also commented, we got a guy who's already there, okay this was at 9:19, but your field technician or mechanic wasn't there yet.

A. That's correct.

Q. So was that a mistake statement or did he really mean we got a guy on route?

A. He really meant we had a guy en route. The way the GERC operates we don't want someone to sit back if their area isn't

busy and somebody is doing something. We, all though it's a small group, we own every gas leak together. So if you're quiet in Queens, you don't have anything going on at the Queens' desk at the time, and that was the Queens' dispatcher and you know something is going on at Manhattan, it's encumbered upon you based upon our internal protocols to get involved. I don't need somebody sitting back. We need to actively manage. The public has an expectation that when they call us for help we're going to come running. And the Queens dispatcher, overhearing the conversation that Jack Kelly had, the Manhattan dispatcher with both the mechanic in the field and the call center rep took it upon himself, correctly so, to get involved. He called the fire department, engaged the fire department right away. Again, based upon, going back to the core training that the PHMSA advisory that came out in 2012, you have to communicate with the emergency responders early on in the process, this is what we have, we need your help.

Q. Okay, second part of this question line. Right after that your troubleshooter comments to the fire department, right we got an inside leak there, and then he pauses, hold up, no sorry, hold on one second, hold on, hold on, I'll call you right back.

A. I think that was mistake. What had happened was the fire department, he believes that he gave -- or it's my understanding that he gave all the pertinent information, he also had a Queens mechanic who was responding to a leak in his area,

and he was -- it was approaching a time that he needed to check in with the mechanic, how are you doing with that response. Should have he said, goodbye, that probably -- I believe that's what he meant to say, I don't believe he meant to say I'll call you back.

Q. In which case the fire department would have dispatched to this site.

A. That's my understanding.

Q. Because, we don't have any record from the fire department responding to the 1652 site, until the 911 calls came in. So in retrospect, would this be a lesson learned type of scenario that could be addressed?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay, very good. Now your mention here about fire department notification to the GERC we don't have that occurring until 9:41, is it? Yeah, 9:41 is when the fire department actually contacted the GERC okay with all the other particulars. So we have no connection from the GERC to the fire department other than this truncated call which was a mistake?

A. But, I called the fire -- I personally when our emergency response group, quick responders, emergency responders they typically are the ones that interact with the fire department on large incidents. When they picked up on a fire department scanner report of an explosion, I personally called the fire department before our responder was there and --

Q. Before, okay.

A. -- I asked do you have a report of an explosion, and they said yes at 114 and Park.

Q. Right.

A. And I knew that wasn't the location that our responder was going to, and that's why I said get me an ETA, because it may or may not be one and the same.

Q. Right, we have that. We have that discussion it lasted only 18 seconds and that's fine. Operations manager, that's you, inquired did you have any reports? I'm not showing, I'm just asking.

A. Right, right.

Q. that was you?

A. Right, I didn't want them to think that I was reporting an explosion.

Q. Right.

A. I wanted to be clear that I'm just asking do you have anything there.

Q. And they indicated yes, we've got an explosion building collapse and so on, at 114th street.

A. Right.

Q. SO right away the dots are lining up here for you.

A. Yes.

Q. And said, we got something big going on here.

A. Exactly.

Q. Okay. Correct me if I'm wrong you have not conducted a

review, internal review of this particular with your staff, because you'd given instructions not to further review it?

A. That's correct, yeah.

Q. And you're going to be conducting a hot wash at some point, a review of the situation, lessons learned, and all that sort of thing?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. Okay, I can request that when that gets done that we get that documentation, okay. All right that does it for me at the moment. Oh, my scanner question. Is there anything, meaning any thoughts or factual observations that you can think of right now based upon our dialogue that wasn't mentioned here today that you would like to add to your testimony? Any follow-up thoughts or questions, opening thoughts that you have?

A. No.

Q. Nothing further?

A. No.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Does it for me.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Frank?

MR. McCARTON: I'm good.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. Just one question. Customer service representatives in your office are they located on the same floor, same building, where is the location?

A. No, the call center reps are located at the, typically

at the Flatbush avenue, 30 Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn. But we do have a benchmark process where we have them come up to visit our site, spend a day understand what we do. And we go there as well, but typically they are not located in the same location.

Q. And this number implies, are they strictly gas or they are gas and electrical?

A. No, strictly gas.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay, that's all I have, thank you much. If nobody has any questions, thanks for coming and helping us.

MR. FAGAN: thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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 Kevin Fagan
DOCKET NUMBER:	DCA-14-MP-002
PLACE:	New York, New York
DATE:	August 7, 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.

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Keith J. Maurer
Transcriber