HUMAN PERFORMANCE ATTACHMENT

OSHP Interview of the Freightliner Driver

Etna, OH

HWY24MH001
(45 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	
MULTI-CAR COLLISION & POSTCRASH FIRE ON INTERSTATE 70 NEAR ETNA, OHIO ON NOVEMBER 14, 2023	Accident No.: HWY24MH001

Interview of: JACOB MCDONALD, Freightliner Driver

APPEARANCES:

TROOPER MATTSON
Ohio State Highway Patrol

TROOPER APPLEGATE
Ohio State Highway Patrol

I N D E X

ITEM	PAGE
Interview of Jacob McDonald:	
By Trooper Mattson	4
By Unidentified Speaker	6
By Trooper Applegate	34

I N T E R V I E W

INTERVIEW OF JACOB MCDONALD

BY TROOPER MATTSON:

Q. I'm Trooper Mattson (ph.) (indiscernible). Just coming to check on you, ask you a few questions.

A. All right.

Q. Do you know -- do you remember what happened?

A. I can't remember any -- the first thing I remember -- the only thing I remember is seeing fire outside of my truck. And that's the only thing I remember. I don't remember anything right before that. I remember -- I don't remember any kind of anything before that -- anything. I just remember fire coming outta my truck.

Q. You just remember -- that's all you remember? Do you remember -- was -- do you remember any vehicles that were in front of you? Do you remember any vehicles around you?

A. I don't -- I don't remember any -- I was out in the road. I don't -- I know that. I left the house this morning. And I was out in the road, and -- like normal. And then, next thing I remember, it's like I just woke up, and I seen the fire outside my truck. That's the only thing that I remember. And then, I'm like, I gotta get out of this truck.

And I pulled the handle on the door, and it opened. So, I kind of rolled out of the truck and I seen -- then, I seen all kinds of stuff going on. And I seen there was a red something. I

don't know what it was, but red -- I see red. Outside (indiscernible) and I tried to get him out. And I start hollering for some people to come over there because there were some people still in it, in the fire, of course, I looked and it was really bad in the truck, because I could (indiscernible). And they told me to get over to the side.

Q. Do you remember -- so, you don't remember -- did you hit your head at all during the crash, do you know? Do you --

A. I don't know.

Q. Did you have your seatbelt on?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. So, you did?

A. So, I probably didn't hit my head. I mean --

Q. Do you have any medical conditions or anything? Are you diabetic?

A. Not that I -- I am a diabetic.

Q. (Indiscernible) or anything like that?

A. I am a diabetic.

Q. You are?

A. I'm a borderline diabetic. I take Metformin.

Q. Okay. Do you -- did -- were -- was your sugar -- do you know if your sugar was low or anything like that or?

A. It -- not that I know of. I mean, I --

Q. Was your medical card for -- your medical card's good for your -- for your CDL?

A. Yes.
Q. Okay. When was your last exam?
A. It's been less than a year ago. I don't remember, you know, right off, but it's been definitely less than a year.
Q. How -- every year or --
A. I've been taking it -- well, they made me take it. They said I didn't have to take it back in a year. That's how I know it's been less than a year.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't remember (indiscernible), but --
Q. All right.
BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
Q. What was the last moment that you do remember while driving? Do you remember where you were at?
A. I remember -- let's see. The last thing I remember when I was driving. Our yard is on 126, and I was passed it by then.
Q. So, you were passed the 126?
A. I'm pretty sure I was passed the 126.
Q. Okay. Which direction were you heading?
A. I was headed east -- westbound --
Q. East -- west? Okay.
A. Yeah, I was heading westbound.
Q. Do you travel that route often?
A. Yeah. Every day.
Q. Every day?

A. Yeah. Every other day. I go from Ohio -- Marysville, Ohio to Pennsylvania area.
Q. Okay. What were you hauling?
A. Batteries.
Q. What kind?
A. Honda.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. Just the little, small batteries that you put up in the front?
A. In the cars. Yeah.
Q. Okay. How many do you have? Do --
A. I had -- there was eight, two, and -- it was 12 palettes total.
Q. Twelve palettes? How many is typically in a pallet?
A. I'm not even sure.
Q. Oh, okay. Do you know your approximate weight that you were running?
A. Probably, maybe 15, 16,000.
Q. Okay. Roughly 16,000?
A. I'd say. I don't know, just a rough estimate. I'm not sure exactly.
Q. Okay. What time did you leave Marysville?
A. Well, I didn't leave Marysville. I left my house --
Q. Oh, okay.

A. -- and I was going to Marysville.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah. But I left my house this morning, let's see, I don't know -- I don't even know what time it was when I left the house. It was -- I would say it was probably around -- between 8:00 and 8:30.
Q. 8:00 and 8:30?
A. Yeah.
Q. Where do you live at?
A. In Zanesville.
Q. Zanesville?
TROOPER MATTSON: What's your address?
MR. MCDONALD: It's [redacted], Zanesville, Ohio. One of y'all has my driver's license, right?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, okay.
MR. MCDONALD: Or one of the cops on the scene.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.
TROOPER MATTSON: We weren't on the scene. We weren't -- they're still out there on the scene.
MR. MCDONALD: Okay.
BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
Q. So, the -- what lane do you typically travel in?
A. Right lane.
Q. Right lane? Do you ever get over to the left, or do you recall ever getting over to the left, or were you right lane the

entire time?
A. I think I was in the right lane pretty much the entire time.
Q. Okay.
A. I mean, from what I remember, I was in the right lane.
Q. Yeah. So, when you were at -- you said it was the 126, is what you remember last?
A. Yeah, I remember that.
Q. When you were at the 126, do you remember what was in front of you, around you, anything along those lines?
A. There wasn't a lot of traffic.
Q. Yeah.
A. I don't remember a lot of the traffic being (indiscernible).
Q. All right.
TROOPER MATTSON: What's at the 126? Do you know?
MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, the truck stops because that's where our yard is. The truck stops, and our yard's right up the road from there.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.
TROOPER MATTSON: So, you didn't stop at the yard?
MR. MCDONALD: No, no, I --
TROOPER MATTSON: You were just -- you were driving from your house up to Marysville.
MR. MCDONALD: Up to Marysville, yeah. And then, I always go back to the yard, and I went back.
TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. So, you were -- you were empty now when you were getting --

A. No, I had batteries.

Q. Oh, okay.

A. I was loaded.

Q. Oh, okay. So, when did you pick up the batteries?

A. Yesterday in Thompson, PA.

Q. Okay. And you drove them to your house for overnight?

A. Yeah. I drove out of the house and then I'd go on down to Marysville.

Q. Yeah. You did your -- did you -- did you do your pre-trip?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. All right. Was there any issues that you found or anything like that in your pre-trip?

A. No issues. No issues.

Q. Okay. Is that your truck or is that a company vehicle?

A. Company. Company vehicle.

Q. Okay.

TROOPER MATTSON: Was the air -- the air was good the whole time? Like for your brakes, and everything?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah. Yeah, I didn't have no problem -- no issues with them.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. So, you don't remember anything after the 126 at all?

A. Well, I don't remember anything that stood out. I mean, I don't -- I don't remember how much farther I went or anything.
Q. Yeah.
A. I don't -- I don't really remember. I guess you could say -- I don't remember after 126.
Q. Right.
A. (Indiscernible) weird. I mean, I don't know where it happened. I don't know where it happened. I don't -- I don't --
Q. I'm not sure which mile marker.
TROOPER MATTSON: 118, right in front of Amazon. The big buildings.
MR. MCDONALD: (Indiscernible) way since then.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.
TROOPER MATTSON: 310. It was passed 310 -- State Route 310.
MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, I know about where it's at.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: How much sleep did you get last night?
MR. MCDONALD: Plenty. I mean, I went to bed.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Are you a good sleeper, or are you -- I mean, I wake up six times a night. So --
MR. MCDONALD: Wow. Yeah, I'm not gonna say I'm a good sleeper because I don't really know. I mean, I sleep. Even when -- I mean, if I get four or five hours of sleep, I'm feeling good.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.
MR. MCDONALD: And I felt good this morning when I left.
BY TROOPER MATTSON:

Q. Did you eat breakfast?
A. No, I didn't eat any breakfast.
Q. You didn't eat anything for breakfast?
A. No.
Q. Did you have anything, a cup of coffee? Tea? Just --
A. I had water.
Q. Some water?
A. Yeah, some water.
Q. Okay.
BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
Q. Did you -- the medicine that you're on, does that -- if you take it on an empty stomach, does it make you nauseous or anything?
A. No, it normally -- it normally don't bother me at all.
Q. Yeah.
A. That's what's scary.
Q. Have you ever had periods before where you've traveled up to eight miles without remembering anything or --
A. Not that I can remember.
Q. How long you been driving for?
A. About 20 years.
Q. Oh yeah? Have you ever been involved in a wreck before?
A. Nothing more than a minor -- I had a truck hit me.
Q. Yeah.
A. Nothing major.

TROOPER MATTSON: Do you have -- what was I gonna say? I had a question on the top of my head, now I can't think of it. I'll come back to it. Keep going.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you run an electronic logbook?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay. That's -- do you have kids (ph.) -- or do you have dashcam? Is there any dashcam on your -- on your truck?

MR. MCDONALD: I ain't -- I don't think I've used dashcam on my --

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you run alone, or do you run partner?

MR. MCDONALD: Alone. I mean, I don't wanna lie on you about anything.

TROOPER MATTSON: So, you didn't have a passenger?

MR. MCDONALD: No.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. Is it a sleeper berth or is it just day cab?

A. Sleeper berth.

Q. Okay.

A. It's a sleeper birth.

Q. Okay. So, you don't remember anything pertaining to any kind of collisions or anything? You just -- last --

A. I mean -- I'm trying to think. Not a lot. I remember a

fire, and the damage to my right. Or to my -- yeah, to my -- coming from over on my right side. I remember seeing that.

Q. Yeah.

A. That's the only thing I remember.

Q. Yeah.

TROOPER MATTSON: Would you be willing to provide a voluntary urine sample?

MR. MCDONALD: Sure. I ain't got nothing to hide. I ain't --

TROOPER MATTSON: Other than the medicine --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is there a way you pause these things?

(Background conversation.)

BY TROOPER MATTSON:

Q. You've been taking that for a while?

A. Yeah, I mean (indiscernible).

Q. About what? One year, two years, three years?

A. Well, we were going to try to (indiscernible) with the blood pressure medication I think -- I've probably been on that for about a year maybe.

Q. A year maybe?

A. That's the -- at least a year.

Q. Is it the same dosage you been taking the whole time?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's just loud out there.

TROOPER MATTSON: She's having a bad day. You don't remember feeling any impacts or anything like that? Like, anything from the front or the back, or side?

MR. MCDONALD: Not really. I mean --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Have -- they ran you through some scans here.

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, they ran me through a body scan, yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Have they told you anything? Or --

MR. MCDONALD: They told me that I wasn't gonna be able to get this off for about 30, 45 minutes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, okay. Is anything hurting on you?

MR. MCDONALD: Lower back a little bit, but that's about it. I really wasn't hurt that much. I mean, I was sore, you know, when I got outta the truck, I felt like I was --

TROOPER MATTSON: You said you did have your seatbelt on though, right?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, I did have my seatbelt on.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay. Does your truck have airbags?

MR. MCDONALD: It's a newer truck, so you'd think it would. I don't know.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Were they deployed, do you remember?

MR. MCDONALD: I don't -- I don't think they were.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: I don't remember no airbags.

BY TROOPER MATTSON:

Q. So, this is gonna be kind of a stupid question, but when you got out of the truck, the truck was stopped, right?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay.

A. Yes. Definitely was stopped.

Q. Okay. Did you turn it off?

A. I did.

Q. Do you remember turning it off?

A. I remember reaching down and I was like, let me turn this thing off. I don't even know if it was on, but I turned the -- I (indiscernible) turned the key on.

Q. Is it a manual or automatic?

A. Automatic.

Q. Did you put it in park?

A. It should've automatically went to park when I turned it off, but it might've been (indiscernible).

Q. Okay.

A. I mean, they got -- them trucks are kind of weird.

Q. Right, especially with the -- all the electronics around there.

A. I'm used to a standard truck up until about a year ago when I got that one. That's the first automatic I ever drove.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. And not knowing -- how does -- how -- is the gear selector

like a standard knob? Like a vehicle knob?

A. No, it's a -- it's in neutral normally.

Q. Okay.

A. And to get it to go into drive or reverse, you gotta push the brake and push the knob down -- or up or down.

Q. Okay.

A. And that's how it works.

Q. So, it's like a tractor more so with the -- yeah.

A. The back (indiscernible).

Q. Okay.

BY TROOPER MATTSON:

Q. So, you remember seeing a red SUV when you got out of the --

A. I do remember seeing a red SUV beside me. (Indiscernible) --

Q. Do you remember seeing any other semis or bus, like a charter bus or anything like that?

A. I remember seeing, it was in front of me.

Q. The charter bus was in front of you?

A. I do remember seeing that.

Q. Do you remember -- was there -- do you remember seeing -- so, you got -- you saw the red SUV, you saw the charter bus. Do you remember seeing a vehicle between your truck and the charter bus at all? Or --

A. Just to the side, the SUV.

Q. Just that red one?

A. Yeah.

Q. So, you don't remember anything between your truck and the charter bus, right?
A. No.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Your truck?
BY TROOPER MATTSON:
Q. And was -- they were all on fire?
A. The truck was on fire.
Q. Your truck was on fire, and the charter bus? Or --
A. I don't remember. The charter bus was on fire later, I think. I don't know if it was on fire then or not. I'm not sure, but I do remember seeing after I'd gotten out and was standing at the rear end, the charter bus was on fire.
Q. Were your fuel tanks -- were they full, empty, half?
A. Probably a little under half.
Q. A little under half?
A. Yeah, because I hadn't been to the yard. I always fuel at the yard on the way back.
Q. Yeah.
A. So, that probably was a little under a half.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So, you run diesel, not compressed natural gas? Diesel?
MR. MCDONALD: Yes.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Did you run single-side saddle, or did you have dual-side saddles? Do you have saddles on -- tanks on both sides of your truck or just the one?

MR. MCDONALD: Both sides.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Both sides.

TROOPER MATTSON: Did anybody say anything to you, or did you hear anybody say -- talk anything about the crash as soon as you got out?

MR. MCDONALD: No.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: Nobody didn't come over to me until I got away from the truck. And I seen this guy in there, and he was telling, get me up, get me up. And I went over to him, and I said, I don't know if I can get you up, but I'll try. And then, I was like trying to. He said -- I said, are you hurt?

(Background conversation.)

MR. MCDONALD: He should have asked to use the bathroom, because I think I can now. But -- what was I saying?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Did anybody say anything to you? You said there was one guy that was trying to get you --

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah. I went to the guy, and I said, I'll try to get you up. And I couldn't, and I went out and started hollering, there's a guy in that car, there's a guy in the car. And he was getting hot in the truck. I said, there's a guy in this car, and some people come over then. And they said, you need to get over there, and they got him out.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The guy in the red SUV?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah.

BY TROOPER MATTSON:

Q. Do you know how many vehicles were involved total?

A. No.

Q. You don't? Okay.

A. No, (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The red SUV, was it next to your truck? Was it --

MR. MCDONALD: It was beside my truck.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Underneath your truck? Was it just sitting there beside your truck?

MR. MCDONALD: It was sitting there beside my truck.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Had it been hit?

MR. MCDONALD: It'd been hit.

TROOPER MATTSON: The driver's side of your truck?

MR. MCDONALD: I'm not sure whether --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Of your truck.

MR. MCDONALD: Oh, my truck?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

TROOPER MATTSON: So, it was to the side. It wasn't to the --

MR. MCDONALD: It was to the side of my truck.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And it was kind of -- when you got out of your door, was it a little bit behind the door frame?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So, it was by your duals?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah. Exactly, by my duals. That's about right.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. Do you remember how damaged it was? Do you remember what kind of damage it had?

A. No, I --

Q. But you couldn't open the door?

A. I opened it -- his passenger door.

Q. Okay, you got the passenger door open.

A. I went around the truck and got in his passenger side.

Q. Okay.

A. And I was trying to get him out.

Q. But there was damage to his driver's door?

A. I don't -- I don't even know. I honestly didn't see the driver door -- when I come out, I come around the -- because it was a little behind me. I come around the passenger door. When I seen he was in the passenger side, I opened it up. And he was kind of -- it was kind of weird because I asked him, was he the driver because he was in the passenger side of the car, fortunately (ph.).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So, he was kind of over the center console?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, he was on the -- his seat was on this side of the center console.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay. On the passenger?

MR. MCDONALD: On the passenger side. And that's what kind of -- kind of weird. And I asked him, are you okay, have you got any back -- because I wanted to know before I moved him if he had any back injuries.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

MR. MCDONALD: And he said, I think I'm all right. I just need to get up. And so, I tried helping him up and that's when -- he was an older guy.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: And that's when I hollered for help.

TROOPER MATTSON: And he was the only one in the car?

MR. MCDONALD: Huh?

TROOPER MATTSON: And he was the only --

MR. MCDONALD: He was the only one in the car, and he said -- I was standing beside him -- or sitting beside him. Once he got out the side, I asked him again and he said, yes, he was the only one in the car.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Would you have noticed if there was driver's side damage on that vehicle?

MR. MCDONALD: I don't -- not the way I come around. I don't think so.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah? Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: (Indiscernible). Because when I come out of the truck, I went away from that truck and came around to the passenger side. Well -- yeah, the passenger side.

TROOPER MATTSON: So, was that car facing the same direction as your truck?

MR. MCDONALD: It's kind of weird because I was trying to think that when you said that. And I'm really -- he was facing the opposite way of my truck, I think.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay. So, he was --

MR. MCDONALD: Because I came in -- yeah, that would have -- I'm not sure. I'm not sure. I mean, I'll be honest, I'm not sure.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: I would think that if I would've done that, it would've been his driver's side. But I was actually looking at the side that he should've been on.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right.

MR. MCDONALD: So, I might be confused about that because -- so, I'm really not sure about that.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay. I'm trying to think. There was another one that I thought of, and it escaped me already. Question, was he -- was his vehicle on, like, the zipper? Or do you know, like, where it was in relation to the lane? Is it one

lane --

MR. MCDONALD: It was, like, in the middle -- it was -- it was on the -- it was like, in the middle of the road. And then (indiscernible).

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: And then they were like, on the -- he was -- he was on a rap point (ph.), I'm fairly certain, in the back (indiscernible). But I don't remember which way it was pointing. Because (indiscernible) that one, and I was thinking passenger side.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. Is that a two-lane section or is it the split two-lane, or -- so, how many lanes were on your side of the road?

A. Two.

Q. Two? And then there's the shoulders?

A. Right.

Q. Do you remember where your truck was in relation to that lane and --

A. My truck was to the right.

Q. Was it on the shoulder or was it all the way in just that right lane?

A. At that point, I'm not really sure.

Q. Okay.

TROOPER MATTSON: You don't remember hitting your breaks or

anything or --

MR. MCDONALD: I don't remember anything.

BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Q. You said traffic was pretty empty, pretty desolate out there? It wasn't heavy traffic?

A. Yeah. When I -- the last I remember, it was pretty -- it wasn't really, really heavy.

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, the last I remember.

Q. Is it typically heavier than that normally on --

A. Yeah, I thought so. Because I was like, dang, there ain't a lot of people out here today. Because I remember earlier, you know, thinking that there ain't a lot of people out here today. But see, usually, it gets worse as you get past that exit on (indiscernible). He had to be turned. The SUV had to be turned --

Q. Facing the opposite way?

A. -- facing the opposite direction because now that I think about it, he was kind of in the back seat, like.

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, so it had to be turned the other direction.

Q. So, he was kind of --

A. Yes.

Q. He was almost all the way to the back?

A. Exactly. Yeah.

Q. Did you ask him his name or anything like that? Do you remember?
A. I didn't.
Q. You said he was an older guy. Was he tall, short? Skinny?
A. Shorter than I am.
Q. Shorter than you -- how tall are you?
A. I'm 5'11.
Q. Oh, okay.
A. He was probably, like, 5'9.
Q. Okay.
A. Probably about --
Q. Skinny little guy or was he thick or --
A. He was middle.
Q. Okay.
(Side conversation.)
BY UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
Q. And then this other guy, you said he was all the way in the back seat. He was alone in his car. You said he was older than you?
A. Yeah, he's definitely older than I was. Well, I don't know, I'm 60, now. I don't think of it that way.
Q. Yeah.
A. But he's probably -- I would think he was older than me.
Q. Yeah. All right. Did he have, like, a beard -- scraggly beard or anything, or longer hair, or kind of looked like

maintained?
A. I don't remember a beard. I don't remember a beard. I remember he had a -- like, a red top -- red shirt on.
Q. Okay.
A. I don't remember a lot about it.
Q. Yeah. Does he look like he was maintained? Like, decently groomed or is he kind of let himself go a little bit?
A. I can't tell -- I can't remember.
Q. Okay.
By TROOPER MATTSON:
Q. Mr. McDonald, how do you spell your first name?
A. J-A-C-O-B.
Q. J-A-C-O-B?
A. Yeah.
Q. And it's M-C-D-O-N-A-L-D?
A. Yes.
Q. Is it M, little C, big D, or just McDonald, like --
A. (Indiscernible).
Q. Okay.
A. I don't even (indiscernible).
Q. Okay, we will get the urine sample here? Is there anybody that we can call for you?
A. Well, I tried to call my fiancé many times.
Q. What about your --
A. I don't know if they talked to them or, yeah, you can

probably talk to them. Probably don't even know about it.

(Background conversation.)

TROOPER MATTSON: How's it going? Trooper Mattson back to speak with you again.

MR. MCDONALD: Okay.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: I'm Trooper Applegate (ph.). We work out of the same place.

TROOPER MATTSON: So, what we were -- and I know we already talked to you for quite a while.

MR. MCDONALD: Right.

TROOPER MATTSON: We were looking -- we got the voluntary urine sample. We were gonna try and do a voluntary blood sample from you as well. Is that something that you'd be willing to give?

MR. MCDONALD: That's fine.

TROOPER MATTSON: All right. Due to the fact that it kind of is a little bit more intrusive than the urine, they do --

TROOPER APPLEGATE: They'll stick you in the arm.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah. They want us to make sure you're advised of all your rights, okay?

MR. MCDONALD: Okay.

TROOPER MATTSON: So, I'm gonna read through all those.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Just because it's more intrusive.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah, just because it's not something as easy as taking it out of that little urine jug. So, I'm gonna

read through all those for you. And then I'll -- there's a consent form that we have, and I'll have you sign that consent form, okay? So, I'll read through them line by line, just the way they are listed. Like I said, just because we're going a little bit more intrusive.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: You are recording, correct?

TROOPER MATTSON: Correct. And everything has been audio and video recorded. The previous conversation, this conversation, everything.

MR. MCDONALD: I don't remember if either one of those guys told you about that from the beginning or not.

MR. MCDONALD: That's all right.

TROOPER MATTSON: But standard rights, it's same as what the -- what all the movies show you. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in court. You have the right to talk to an attorney for advice before we ask you any questions have -- and to have him present with you during questioning. If you wish to have a question -- jeez. Skipping lines, reading was hard. If you're unable to pay for an attorney, one will be appointed prior to any questioning if you so desire. If you wish to answer questions now without an attorney present, you have the right to stop answering at any time. You have the right to stop answering at any time until you talk to your attorney. Do you understand all those? All right. And then, like I said, there's a consent form.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Sorry.

TROOPER MATTSON: He gave you the lights but not the camera or the action. But there's a consent form. It has your name, the Jacob D. McDonald, your date of birth, [redacted]. And then, like I said, that's my name, Trooper Mattson with the patrol. And then it's saying that you're giving us consent to take your -- from your person or any of your personal belongings, your whole blood. So, that's that -- the blood that he's gonna draw.

MR. MCDONALD: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Jacob D --

TROOPER MATTSON: Jacob D. McDonald, that's correct. And you are granting us that, correct?

MR. MCDONALD: That's correct.

TROOPER MATTSON: Thank you, sir.

MR. MCDONALD: I don't care.

TROOPER MATTSON: And then I'll have -- you can give me a quick autograph right there.

MR. MCDONALD: Ah, shit.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Is it M-A-C or M-C?

MR. MCDONALD: M-C.

TROOPER MATTSON: M-C-D-O-N-A-L-D. All righty. Sign that side.

(Background conversation.)

TROOPER MATTSON: And did you say you did take the Metformin this morning?

MR. MCDONALD: I don't remember.

TROOPER MATTSON: You don't remember? Okay. I was gonna say --

MR. MCDONALD: I thought I did, but I don't think I did.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: Now that I think about it, I don't think I did.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah. Do you --

MR. MCDONALD: I don't know if took -- (indiscernible), but I --

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah. Do you feel like your blood sugar is low? Or --

MR. MCDONALD: Now, it don't feel low.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: Matter of fact, they took it -- they took it when I came in on the ambulance. And it was a little bit high, it wasn't low.

TROOPER MATTSON: Oh, okay. Oh, so it was -- it was high back then?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, it was, like, 170 when I came in on the ambulance.

TROOPER MATTSON: What do you typically run?

MR. MCDONALD: Around 100 and something. Around 100.

TROOPER MATTSON: Around 100? So, 170 isn't --

MR. MCDONALD: It's a -- it's a little bit high, but it's

fine.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Sign the second one.

TROOPER MATTSON: What's that?

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Sign that second one (indiscernible).

(Background conversation.)

TROOPER APPLEGATE: The time --

TROOPER MATTSON: Is 13:38.

(Background conversation.)

TROOPER MATTSON: Oh, what is -- what is your phone's phone number?

TROOPER APPLEGATE: And then the carrier.

MR. MCDONALD: (Indiscernible).

TROOPER MATTSON: Sorry, slower. [redacted]?

MR. MCDONALD: [redacted].

TROOPER APPLEGATE: [redacted]?

MR. MCDONALD: Yes, sir.

TROOPER MATTSON: And that is through?

MR. MCDONALD: AT&T.

TROOPER MATTSON: AT&T?

TROOPER APPLEGATE: And that's [redacted] area code?

MR. MCDONALD: Yes.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Okay. That a company phone, then?

MR. MCDONALD: No, it's (indiscernible).

TROOPER MATTSON: You said you were able to get ahold of your

fiancé?

MR. MCDONALD: Yes (indiscernible).

TROOPER MATTSON: Oh, okay. From Zanesville?

MR. MCDONALD: Yes.

TROOPER MATTSON: All right.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: How do you do your logbooks? Is it on iPad or --

MR. MCDONALD: (Indiscernible) on iPad.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Does it automatically push, or do you have to go back and dock it at the end of the day?

MR. MCDONALD: I dock it at the end of the day usually.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. So, if your truck burnt up then, and that iPad was in it, and the -- or the --

MR. MCDONALD: (Indiscernible) burning up (indiscernible).

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah. Does your company ever have any video cameras on your trucks? Or --

MR. MCDONALD: They have before, but I don't -- I don't know why they took them off. I don't --

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: GPS. Do you have GPS?

MR. MCDONALD: I think so.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: It's a company truck, you're not a --

MR. MCDONALD: No, it's a company truck.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: -- contractor? Okay.

(Background conversation.)

TROOPER MATTSON: Do they -- do they do the limiter on there too? Like, your truck, is it limited out at certain speeds?

MR. MCDONALD: It's 70 on the cruise.

TROOPER MATTSON: Seventy?

MR. MCDONALD: And it's 75 on the foot.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay. Do you usually set the cruise?

MR. MCDONALD: I usually will.

TROOPER MATTSON:: Yeah. That's the same way I drive.

MR. MCDONALD: I have -- I drive (indiscernible) this morning.

TROOPER MATTSON: What's that?

MR. MCDONALD: I (indiscernible) this morning, and I had it set earlier, but I don't -- just like I said, I don't remember.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah.

BY TROOPER APPLEGATE:

Q. What's the last thing that you remember?

A. About -- I was passing the truck stops at the 160 -- 126.

Q. 126?

A. Yeah. And that's the last I --

Q. Do you remember, like, thinking about anything? Or, you know, just daydreaming kind of deal? Or --

A. I don't -- I don't remember anything.

Q. You don't remember anything? Remember looking over and seeing the truck stop and that was it?

A. Yeah.

Q. Were you starting to feel bad at all?
A. No. And, you know, I could -- I leave stuff along the way, but I don't remember doing it. It's not there. I mean (indiscernible).
(Overlapping voices.)
Q. (Indiscernible) diabetic?
A. Huh? Oh, probably borderline for about a year, year and a half.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.
MR. MCDONALD: Probably a year --
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So, diabetes is kind of a new thing to --
MR. MCDONALD: Well, a couple years, yeah.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.
MR. MCDONALD: But I really haven't had any problems with that, so I don't know --
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing to your memory that you felt different than other mornings or anything like that?
MR. MCDONALD: No.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you remember what lane you were in when you were passing the truck stop?
MR. MCDONALD: No. I think I was in the right lane. But I'm not sure. I can't -- I can't swear that.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.
(Background conversation.)

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Do you know what model your truck was and all that? The year and --

MR. MCDONALD: Not a year. I can't remember. It was Freightliner, I know that.

TROOPER APPLEGATE: Freightliner?

TROOPER MATTSON: Freightliner?

MR. MCDONALD: Newer Freightliner. Yep.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay.

MR. MCDONALD: It was. Now, it's a piece of ash, right?

TROOPER MATTSON: I imagine so. I haven't been --

MR. MCDONALD: Well, it was a piece of ash when I left. I can tell that.

TROOPER MATTSON: Oh, was it?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, it went fast. I remember seeing that (indiscernible) fast.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What color was it?

MR. MCDONALD: White.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: White?

MR. MCDONALD: Yeah, the truck and trailer was pretty much ash by the time --

TROOPER MATTSON: Really?

BY TROOPER APPLEGATE:

Q. Was that your truck every day?

A. That's the one I normally drive, yeah.

Q. Okay.

A. Another truck, but it's the one I normally drive.
Q. And do you go and pick that up, or do you drive it home every day?
A. I drive it -- I go by the house. I stopped at the house last night.
Q. From my understanding, you go to, like, PA every other day or something?
A. Yeah. But I left the house this morning in Zanesville sometime between 8:00 and 8:30.
Q. So, did you make the run to Pennsylvania yesterday then, and then when you came home, you just stopped at your house instead of going back to the yard?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. What time was it that you got back to your place from PA?
A. About -- it was -- it was a little after 6:00.
Q. Okay. Did you stay up and watch any football or TV shows or anything?
A. I stayed up a little while, but --
Q. What time did you go to bed?
A. About 10:30, 11:00.
Q. 10:30, 11:00? And then got up at what time?
A. About 8:00. About 7:00, 8:00 -- actually, I get up when my wife goes to work.
Q. Okay.

A. She goes -- it's usually about 7:30.
Q. 7:30?
A. When I actually get up.
Q Okay.
A. Do I sleep well? Is that the next question? Like, not very -- not very. I mean, you know what I mean? Up and down.
Q. Yeah. Okay.
A. You get older, you'll find out what I'm talking about.
Q. I make multiple trips to the restroom.
A. But I didn't feel tired or anything when I left.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You didn't have anything to eat this morning, you said?
MR. MCDONALD: Not that I remember.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You don't normally eat anything in the morning?
MR. MCDONALD: No, I normally don't.
TROOPER MATTSON: You said you've been driving for over 20 years. Has it been that same Honda route the entire --
MR. MCDONALD: No, I (indiscernible).
TROOPER APPLEGATE: That'd be a little boring, I think.
TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah, that's what I was gonna say.
MR. MCDONALD: (Indiscernible). Actually, this is the first time I've been on any kind of dedicated route.
TROOPER MATTSON: Oh, okay. Just for the past year?
MR. MCDONALD: Yeah.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah.

(Background conversation/overlapping voices.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Gonna step out here, finish this paperwork. Do you need anything from me, sir?

TROOPER MATTSON: What's your badge number?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 823.

TROOPER MATTSON: Okay. Thank you.

(Background conversation.)

BY TROOPER MATTSON:

Q. Is there anything else that you can think of that we haven't asked you?

A. No.

Q. All right.

A. Y'all pretty much went through it earlier with me.

Q. When was the last you were -- you had used your phone previous to the crash? Do you remember?

A. I don't even know if I called anybody this morning.

Q. Oh, okay.

A. I'm not sure, I think.

Q. Do you have a headset, or do you --

A. I have a headset. Not anymore, but I did have a headset.

Q. You had a headset?

A. I had one. Matter of fact, it was laying -- when I got out the truck, it was on my -- on my head. And I remember it falling off. I think it may have fell in the truck, so it's

(indiscernible) by now, as hot as it got. I wasn't going back to get it.

Q. Yeah, no. Not worth it.

A. Because I sit there for a minute not realizing that the damn truck was on fire.

Q. Right.

A. And I kept looking around like, how the fuck -- how -- I better get outta here.

Q. Yeah. Was it in, like, the airbox? Like, was that where -- about where the fire was, or was it all the way up in the front?

A. It looked -- it was basically -- the flames were coming up by the truck by the passenger side window.

Q. Oh, yeah. So, all the way back there. Oh wow.

A. Yeah, about half -- but it may have -- may have been started earlier, but the flames were actually coming up (indiscernible) by the passenger side window.

Q. Yeah. Is that where your batteries are? Is that why the -- it started back that far? I don't -- I'm not familiar with trucks.

A. Battery's on the driver's side.

Q. Oh, okay.

A. Battery's on the driver's side, and that's where I was, sitting right there.

(Overlapping voices.)

A. Well, there were batteries all over the -- batteries all over

the road because that's what I was carrying.
Q. Yeah.
A. But they were dry batteries, I guess. I was hauling the non-hazmat batteries. I thought all batteries were hazardous.
Q. So, did I. That's interesting.
A. Well, I think it's more of an exemption thing which I don't understand. You got hazmat, you got to have that.
Q. Right, I would think so.
A. But they -- Honda is exempt because of the way their batteries are.
(Background conversation.)
BY TROOPER MATTSON:
Q. You didn't hit your head on anything, left, or right? I guess, the right you don't really have much.
A. (Indiscernible). I had my seatbelts on. And, you know how big them damn trucks is, so --
Q. Oh, yeah.
A. -- I wouldn't have hit my dashboard.
Q. Right. That would've been a long way to travel to hit the dashboard. We've seen them up there.
A. You couldn't have the seatbelts on and do that, I don't think. Unless them seatbelts malfunction.
Q. Yeah.
A. And I definitely had my seatbelt on.
Q. Is it -- is it the shoulder and the lap, or is it just the

lap or --

A. Yeah, it's the shoulder and the lap.

Q. Okay.

A. Well, it comes up -- actually, yeah, it's -- shit, you had to ask. Yeah, it's shoulder and lap.

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, because I pull it up and it comes and it hooks over here and snap above the shoulder.

TROOPER MATTSON: At least they got the collar off you now, so you're not sitting there talking like Darth Vader.

MR. MCDONALD: I don't see how y'all can hardly understand me right now.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah, that was why we had to close the door at one point, because it did -- it was a little bit difficult.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I mean, they're used to speaking to drunk people, so they understand a lot. You know?

MR. MCDONALD: Well, they ain't gotta worry about that. I got -- any alcohol. Because, hell, it's probably been six months since I drank any alcohol.

TROOPER MATTSON: Oh, yeah?

MR. MCDONALD: And I don't smoke. I haven't smoked in at least 15, 20 years.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah.

MR. MCDONALD: I ain't -- and I don't do drugs. So, I'm all against that.

TROOPER MATTSON: Yeah.

MR. MCDONALD: You're gonna (indiscernible).

TROOPER MATTSON: Right.

MR. MCDONALD: I mean, (indiscernible) I'd be wondering what the hell.

TROOPER MATTSON: Starting to look at that fiancé, see if she's drugging you type thing.

(End of recordings)

CERTIFICATE

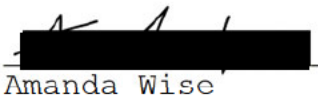
This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: MULTI-CAR COLLISION AND POSTCRASH FIRE ON INTERSTATE 70 NEAR ETNA, OHIO ON NOVEMBER 14, 2023
Interview of Jacob McDonald

ACCIDENT NO.: HWY24MH001

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.



Amanda Wise
Transcriber