

TED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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CPKC TRAIN DERAILMENT IN *

BORDULAC, NORTH DAKOTA * Accident No.: RRD24LR012

ON JULY 5, 2024 *

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Interview of: KENT FARQUHAR, Operations Manager
Specialized Response Solutions

via Microsoft Teams

Thursday,
August 15, 2024

APPEARANCES:

PAUL STANCIL, Senior Hazardous Materials Accident
Investigator and Hazardous Materials Group Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board

DION MILLER, Hazmat Inspector
Federal Railroad Administration

RON LAWLER, Senior Director, Mechanical Services
Trinity Leasing

RAUL GONZALEZ
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

BOBBY BREED, General Manager
Specialized Response Solutions (SRS)

EDWARD DANKBAR, Director, Emergency Management and
Hazmat Response
CPKC

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I N T E R V I E W

(2:02 p.m. ET)

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3 MR. STANCIL: Okay. So the recorder is on. Today is August
4 15th, 2024. The time is 2:02 p.m. Eastern Time. This interview
5 is being conducted in connection with the July 5th, 2024
6 derailment of CPKC Train 242-03 in Bordulac, North Dakota. The
7 NTSB number is RRD24LR012.

8 My name is Paul Stancil. I'm a senior hazardous materials
9 accident investigator with the NTSB and the hazardous materials
10 group chairman for this investigation.

11 This is an interview of Mr. Kent Farquhar of Specialized
12 Response Solutions or SRS.

13 Mr. Farquhar, are you aware that this conversation is being
14 recorded?

15 MR. FARQUHAR: Yes, I'm aware..

16 MR. STANCIL: And do we have your permission to record the
17 conversation?

18 MR. FARQUHAR: Yes, sir.

19 MR. STANCIL: Thank you very much. We are conducting this
20 interview via Microsoft Teams conference call. And so now I'll
21 ask those attending the call to introduce themselves, and we'll
22 begin with the FRA, Mr. Miller.

23 MR. MILLER: Dion Miller, FRA inspector, in Minot, North
24 Dakota.

25 MR. STANCIL: Thank you, sir. Mr. Gonzalez.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Raul Gonzalez, accident investigation from
2 PHMSA.

3 MR. STANCIL: Thank you. Mr. Lawler.

4 MR. LAWLER: Ron Lawler, Trinity Leasing.

5 MR. STANCIL: Mr. Dankbar.

6 MR. DANKBAR: Ed Dankbar, CPKC, hazmat and emergency
7 response, director for our northern region.

8 MR. STANCIL: And Mr. Breed.

9 MR. BREED: Bobby Breed, general manager, SRS, and national
10 response --

11 MR. STANCIL: Thank you, sir. And Mr. Farquhar, could you
12 give us your full name and the spelling of your last name please?

13 MR. FARQUHAR: Sure. Kent Farquhar, F-a-r-q-u-h-a-r.

14 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Appreciate that.

15 Okay. Mr. Farquhar, if any of our questions are unclear to
16 you, or you don't understand the question, just please ask the
17 questioner to clarify or restate the question. And if you don't
18 know the answer to any of our questions, it's okay to tell us that
19 you don't know, okay.

20 MR. FARQUHAR: Understood.

21 MR. STANCIL: And so what we don't want you to do is to
22 speculate if you don't know the answer. And so that -- yeah, just
23 feel free to tell us what you know and be candid on what you don't
24 know.

25 The sole purpose of this investigation is to improve safety.

1 It is not -- it's purpose is not to assign fault, blame or
2 liability. The mission is to improve transportation safety and
3 prevent accidents. As such, the NTSB cannot offer any guarantee
4 of confidentiality, immunity from any legal proceeding by any
5 other agency, whether it be local, state or federal.

6 A transcript of this interview will be placed in the public
7 docket for this investigation. Is that all understood?

8 MR. FARQUHAR: Yes.

9 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Thank you.

10 INTERVIEW OF KENT FARQUHAR

11 BY MR. STANCIL:

12 Q. All right. Let's begin. If you would tell us about your
13 background, your education and your expertise please.

14 A. My background -- I currently serve as the operations manager
15 for SRS. I've been with them for 18 years. I started as a
16 technician with them and worked my way up through the ranks. And,
17 now as the operations manager, I run day-to-day operations for
18 SRS. As far as the schooling goes and background, education, I've
19 been to multiple tank car schools. I teach at multiple tank car
20 schools. I originally started as a firefighter and part time in
21 the environmental world, and then I joined SRS almost 18 years ago
22 now.

23 Q. Perfect. And how long have you served in your current
24 position?

25 A. About 2 years.

1 Q. And what is your current title, sir?

2 A. Operations manager.

3 Q. Operations manager. Okay. Could you sort of explain what
4 your duties are and who you report to?

5 A. I report to Terry Rockwell who is the senior operations
6 manager of the US and Canada for SRS. My day-to-day duties,
7 beyond responding, are employee scheduling, you know, just basic
8 day-to-day operations, revenue monitoring, safety monitoring,
9 things of that nature. And then I also still respond out in the
10 field with all of my employees.

11 Q. Okay. Thank you. I'll start off with this. I'll just ask
12 you to tell us as completely as you possibly can, what happened
13 after you were notified of this incident and sort of walk us
14 through your initial actions to support the emergency response to
15 the train derailment. In doing that, just tell us about the
16 firefighting and site assessment actions if you would, and give us
17 the most complete accounting of your involvement in the incident
18 response, what you did, what you saw, communications with others
19 and other organizations that were on scene.

20 A. That's a pretty broad question, sir. Are you asking me when
21 I arrived onsite, from that point on?

22 Q. Yeah, take it from when you arrived onsite. Well, when were
23 you first notified, and then when you arrived onsite, and then
24 tell us about all of the actions that occurred during those first
25 couple of days.

1 A. Okay. We'll take it bit by bit. Let me know as we go.

2 Q. Take your time -- all the time you need.

3 A. There was a lengthy derailment. So it's going to take some
4 time.

5 Q. No problem.

6 A. So I was notified around 0400 by Mr. Ed Dankbar of the CPKC.
7 Myself and part of my team arrived approximately 1300 hours onsite
8 in Bordulac. I checked in with Mr. Dankbar. We also formulated a
9 site safety plan for Specialized Response Solutions specifically,
10 checked in with my team, made sure that the team understood the
11 properties of the products involved, the situation involved, and I
12 was instructed by CPKC to go downrange and start assessing the
13 situation in general.

14 Once I got downrange, I noticed fires. I noticed several
15 tank cars on their side. Some were hopper cars in the derailment
16 as well. There was clearly fire throughout the derailment.
17 Plastic pellets, methanol and anhydrous ammonia were the three
18 products that we were notified that were in the derailment.

19 With my knowledge and background, I could tell that obviously
20 the methanol was burning, being a flammable liquid, the plastic
21 pellets were burning and there was some leakage of anhydrous
22 ammonia.

23 Once I went downrange and assessed the situation, I came back
24 to the command center, advised CPKC what I saw, and they
25 instructed to start moving firefighting assets towards the

1 derailment which they own which we did. In about 2 hours-ish, we
2 had started putting water on the fires. Our priorities were given
3 to us by the CPKC of starting to reduce the fire level, starting
4 to reduce the heat load on the rail cars, and that's what we
5 proceeded to do.

6 Q. All right. So you arrived onsite around 1300, and you said
7 you went downrange to assess the situation, and then saw fires
8 burning with anhydrous releases. Can you describe the anhydrous
9 releases? What -- how were they releasing? Was it pressure
10 relief devices or breached cars? What did you see there?

11 A. So the initial assessment, it was very hard to see. There
12 was a lot of thick black smoke. As we got downrange and started
13 putting water on the fire, we noticed pressure relief devices
14 activating both constantly and intermittently, and then we also
15 noticed breaches in a couple of the tank cars. I wouldn't be able
16 to tell you today which ones it was specifically with car numbers.
17 I've definitely slept since then. So, but we did notice a couple
18 of breached rail cars and pressure relief devices activating.

19 Q. When did you first observe pressure relief device activation?

20 A. When I went downrange for my initial assessment.

21 Q. Okay. And that would have been roughly what time?

22 A. 1330-ish approximately.

23 Q. Now, do you have any knowledge whether they were actuating
24 prior to that or was that the first time one of them popped off?

25 A. I have no knowledge. I wasn't there before then.

1 Q. Okay. So, you mentioned that you didn't -- you don't have
2 good recollection as to which cars were releasing material. Is
3 there any documentation or notes or written description of what
4 was going on there in terms of the, you know, each tank car and
5 breaches and releases of material?

6 A. Not during the firefighting efforts, no. We would radio in
7 our observations, but I was not in a position to be able to take
8 notes during the firefighting efforts.

9 Q. Okay. But at some point later, there was some tank car
10 damage assessment work done. Did you participate in that?

11 A. I did not participate in that. Some members of my team did,
12 but I did not.

13 Q. Okay. Can -- do you have any knowledge about that that you
14 could share with us?

15 A. About filling out the forms?

16 Q. No, about the tank car damage assessment, what they found?

17 A. I wouldn't begin to speculate on what they found. I did not
18 see their forms, and they went directly to the CPKC.

19 Q. All right. Going back to your firefighting efforts to
20 mitigate or reduce the fire load, can you describe what exactly
21 that entailed? What equipment was brought to the scene? What
22 assets your company provided that?

23 A. SRS did not provide any physical assets. We provided
24 manpower and expertise. The CPKC had onsite two of their
25 firefighting trailers that were moved towards the derailment. We

1 utilized one firefighting trailer with a master stream nozzle,
2 ground set portable, to begin cooling the anhydrous ammonia cars.
3 We utilized a second fire trailer with the master stream nozzle to
4 begin suppression efforts on the plastic pellet cars.

5 Q. And how did that, how did that work? How successful was
6 that?

7 A. It took some time. You have to understand we were drafting
8 water that was around the derailment. We didn't have a good water
9 source set up at the time, and the road was too dynamic to start
10 bringing in water trucks. So, we were drafting with ground water
11 that was around the derailment which there was plenty of, reducing
12 our access to the derailment. So, it wasn't the cleanest water
13 but it was fairly effective. It just took a little bit of time.

14 Q. Okay. Did your company have any or did you have any role in
15 locating and identifying where the hazardous materials cars were
16 located in the train?

17 A. Other than visual observation, being able to tell the
18 difference between the general service rail car and a high
19 pressure rail car, we did not.

20 Q. Did you have any difficulty or was there any difficulty
21 locating any of the tank cars, any of the specific hazmats?

22 A. I wouldn't say difficulty. Visual observation from our side
23 of the derailment was limited, but we could definitely tell where
24 the tank cars were at.

25 Q. Okay. Did you or anyone at SRS have any role to play in the

1 incident command for this incident?

2 A. We did not.

3 Q. Did you provide any technical support? And if so, can you
4 explain what that was?

5 A. Can you elaborate on technical support?

6 Q. So, in terms of the likely outcomes for what might occur with
7 the tank cars or mitigation methods that should be used.

8 A. The CPKC relies on us for our firefighting expertise and our
9 hazmat expertise. But, all priorities and directions were handed
10 down by the incident command system. We did provide evaluations
11 and ideas, but ultimately the ultimate plan was never solely
12 written by us.

13 Q. Okay. What sort of mitigation methods were used to control
14 the anhydrous releases on scene?

15 A. Very quickly, once the fires were out, we started applying a
16 water curtain on all the breached rail cars via the fire
17 suppression method. So, after the fire suppression was over, we
18 immediately shifted to vapor suppressions and started applying a
19 water curtain via master stream nozzles on those breached cars.
20 Later, we transitioned into sprinkler systems. Same method
21 drafting water and using a lesser amount because we were clearly
22 using overkill of our master streams with the fire nozzles. So we
23 transitioned to a sprinkler system that we got approved by the
24 CPKC incident command system and applied those. And then we also
25 applied tarping material to try and trap the vapor suppression,

1 and on top of that, kept the water curtain going. And then at one
2 point, we utilized magnets to try and cover the holes and direct
3 the vapors to either a flare or the water curtain.

4 Q. Okay. And how would you characterize the effectiveness of
5 all of that?

6 A. I think it was very effective. It allowed us in certain
7 areas to work easier because of the -- it knocked the vapors down
8 significantly.

9 Q. Okay. And was SRS involved in transloading or flaring the
10 tank cars after the fires were extinguished?

11 A. Yes, we assisted transloading some of the tank cars, not all
12 of them, and then we also assisted in some of the flaring
13 operations.

14 Q. As you were doing that, was anyone keeping records as to the
15 quantities of materials transloaded or recovered versus what had
16 been released?

17 A. I can't speculate on -- if anyone was keeping records on the
18 release. We were not, but we were radioing in the transload
19 amounts. As we transferred it into a truck transport, we would
20 radio in those quantities to the command post for a record.

21 Q. Okay. So you were communicating that with the command post.
22 Who would that have been?

23 A. I believe it was -- we called the command trailer. There
24 were several people in there. I believe STARS (ph.) was the main
25 group controlling the recordkeeping, but again I'm speculating on

1 that. I don't know for sure.

2 Q. Okay. But somebody was keeping track of transload amounts,
3 correct?

4 A. Absolutely.

5 Q. Okay. Why -- what sort of alternatives were considered when
6 flaring was the method for dealing with the other cars?

7 A. I guess I don't understand the question. Say what?

8 Q. What methods were considered to deal with the materials that
9 could not be transloaded? What sort of alternatives were there
10 for dealing with those cars?

11 A. As far as my task goes, I don't know of any alternatives that
12 were getting ready to be employed. I wasn't privy to those
13 conversations.

14 Q. Okay. So why would -- what would a flare -- I guess the
15 question would be why did some cars have to be flared versus
16 others that could be transloaded? Was it equipment related?

17 A. Damage.

18 Q. Equipment damage.

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. And specifically what type of equipment was damaged that made
21 that necessary?

22 A. The cars were holed. They had holes in them, and there was
23 also valving damage.

24 Q. Okay. How many of the tank cars did you see that were
25 mechanically or -- yeah, mechanically breached, the anhydrous

1 cars?

2 A. I believe there was four, and again to this day, you know,
3 sitting here right now, I believe it's four, but I couldn't
4 testify that it was absolutely four right now. It's not in the
5 front of my memory.

6 Q. Can you describe what you saw? How were they breached and
7 where were they breached?

8 A. There was a -- one tank car had the complete protective
9 housing ripped off, and the valving -- where the valving used to
10 be was leaking. There was a head end breach towards -- at least
11 towards the head end. I wasn't involved in tarping that one. So
12 I didn't see it exactly. I just now we tarped the head end of it.
13 There was a sidewall of a tank car breached that we put a magnetic
14 patch on. And I believe there might have been five, now that I'm
15 sitting here staring at the wall thinking about it. I'd have to
16 look at the tank car damage assessment that are filled out 100
17 percent but there was a hole in top of one of the cars as well
18 that was covered with dirt.

19 Q. But all of that, if we wanted to go back and see specifically
20 what was found, these would have been listed in the tank car
21 damage assessments?

22 A. I would assume so. Again, I didn't fill out the tank car
23 damage assessments. So I can't speculate on that.

24 Q. Who was doing that? Who did the tank car damage assessments?

25 A. There were several people and from several companies doing

1 it. All I can say from our company is Mr. Chip Day and Mr. Travis
2 Hudson from SRS were assisting with the tank car damage assessment
3 of specific cars, not all the cars.

4 Q. Okay. Was there a focus on the ones that were leaking?

5 A. There was a focus on all the cars.

6 Q. Okay. All right. Did anyone from your company collect
7 photographs from the scene?

8 A. Not that I'm aware of.

9 Q. So you don't have any photographs of the tank cars during the
10 course of doing this damage assessment?

11 A. I do not. I am one of the world's worst about taking
12 photographs.

13 Q. Okay. You're busy working?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Okay. All right. With respect to the methanol cars, was
16 there -- what can you tell us about those?

17 A. So, several of the methanol cars had holes in them. They
18 were obviously breached because I witness methanol burning. I was
19 more focused on anhydrous ammonia cars throughout my time there,
20 but just being onsite, there was a couple of methanol cars that
21 were breached, and there was also a couple that were non-breached
22 that -- I don't know who but someone transloaded them.

23 Q. Okay. During the course of all of this transloading and
24 post-incident dealing with the tank cars, did your company or
25 anyone that you observed remove any valves or do any alterations

1 to any of the tank cars in order to conduct those activities?

2 A. We tried to operate the valves for flaring operations and/or
3 transfer operations. I don't recall, and I wasn't privy to anyone
4 removing valves at least under or while I was there or under my
5 direction.

6 Q. So you said you tried to operate the valves. Were there any
7 that were not operable?

8 A. There was a few that was not operable. They had damage to
9 them. Obviously the ones that were ripped off were not operable
10 during the derailment, and there was another car I believe that
11 was -- all I know it by is A6. I don't have the car number.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. We tried to operate those valves, and the packings were
14 burned out, and we decided not to proceed with them because they
15 were just going to be causing more to leak.

16 Q. Okay. Any other cars besides A6 in particular?

17 A. Not that I personally dealt with.

18 Q. Okay. All right. I think at this point, I'm going to pass
19 it around the virtual room here, and let some of my colleagues as
20 you a few questions.

21 MR. STANCIL: Mr. Miller.

22 MR. MILLER: I don't have any questions.

23 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Mr. Gonzalez.

24 MR. GONZALEZ: I don't have any questions.

25 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Mr. Lawler.

1 MR. LAWLER: I have no questions.

2 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Mr. Dankbar.

3 MR. DANKBAR: No questions. Thank you.

4 MR. STANCIL: Okay. Mr. Breed, would you like to ask your
5 employee any questions?

6 MR. BREED: No, I would not. Thank you.

7 MR. STANCIL: Okay. I appreciate that.

8 BY MR. STANCIL:

9 Q. Bear with me one second. Just a couple of final questions.
10 What was the size of the SRS response to this incident? How many
11 folks from your company, how much equipment was brought to this
12 scene?

13 A. We brought zero equipment, and at the -- let's see, at the
14 initial onset, there was -- it was a total of 11 people overall.

15 Q. And how long were your folks present on scene?

16 A. The large group of us were on scene for 14 days, and then I
17 kept 4 more people for support for approximately another 6 or 7
18 days.

19 Q. Okay. All right, sir. Is there anything that we should be
20 aware of that we haven't asked you about?

21 A. I do not.

22 Q. All right, sir. Well, I appreciate it. I think that is all
23 the questions we have.

24 MR. STANCIL: I think at this point, we'll go ahead and
25 terminate the interview, unless there are any final questions?

1 Anyone?

2 (No response.)

3 MR. STANCIL: Okay. I'll go ahead and terminate the
4 recording, and thank you very much for your time, Mr. Farquhar.

5 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: CPKC TRAIN DERAILMENT IN
BORDULAC, NORTH DAKOTA
ON JULY 5, 2024
Interview of Kent Farquhar

ACCIDENT NO.: RRD24LR012

PLACE: via Microsoft Teams

DATE: August 15, 2024

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.


Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber



National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C. 20594

Transcript Errata

Subj: Transcript Review Request for: Derailment of CPKC Freight Train 242-03 with Hazardous Materials Release in Bordulac, North Dakota, on July 5, 2024.

Accident No.: RRD24LR012

To: Kent Farquar,

The enclosed transcript of your interview on August 15, 2024, is provided for your review and comment to ensure its accuracy. It is not for public release.

The transcript is investigative information of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) created as part of the NTSB's investigation into the derailment of CPKC freight train 242-03 with hazardous materials release in Bordulac, North Dakota, on July 5, 2024. (NTSB Accident No. RRD24LR012).

NTSB regulations prohibit the public release of investigative information prior to release by the NTSB without the permission of the NTSB Investigator in Charge (IIC). See 49 C.F.R. § 831.13(b). The IIC has not approved public release of this information at this time. Therefore, we request that you refrain from any further dissemination of this transcript.

Kindly review this transcript for accuracy and provide corrections, if any, in the attached table. Please print, sign, and return it to me via email by **October 4, 2024**. Please delete or destroy the transcript after providing your comments.

Requests for an extension of this deadline must be in writing and received prior to the due date. If comments are not received by the due date, we will consider the transcript to be final without comment.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any question regarding the process, please feel free to contact me.

Paul L. Stancil, CHMM

Senior Hazardous Materials Accident Investigator

National Transportation Safety Board

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