

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

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AMTRAK TRAIN 188 DERAILMENT NEAR \*

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA \* Docket No.: DCA-15-MR-010

MAY 12, 2015 \*

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\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: ANTHONY SNEIDAR

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Monday,  
May 18, 2015

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: DANA SANZO  
Survival Factors Investigator

## APPEARANCES:

DANA SANZO, Survival Factors Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

GENA EVANS, Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

LARRY DAY, Passenger Railroad Safety Specialist  
Federal Railroad Administration

CHARLES E. COX, Regional Emergency Manager  
Amtrak

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I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MS. SANZO: My name is Dana Sanzo. I am an investigator  
3 with the National Transportation Safety Board, and we are  
4 conducting an interview today regarding the derailment of Amtrak  
5 Train 188 that occurred on May 12, 2015 in Philadelphia,  
6 Pennsylvania. NTSB accident number is DCA-15-MR-010.

7 And we'll take a moment to just go around the table, and  
8 if everybody could just state your name and what organization  
9 you're with. And I'll go to my right.

10 MR. DAY: Larry Day, D-A-Y, Federal Railroad  
11 Administration, Passenger Rail Safety Specialist.

12 MR. SNEIDAR: Anthony J. Sneidar, Jr., S-N-E-I-D-A-R,  
13 Deputy Chief with the Philadelphia Fire Department.

14 MR. COX: Charles E. Cox, Regional Emergency Manager  
15 with Amtrak.

16 MS. EVANS: Gena Evans, NTSB.

17 MS. SANZO: And thank you, Chief, for doing this for us  
18 today.

19 MR. SNEIDAR: You're quite welcome.

INTERVIEW OF ANTHONY SNEIDAR

20  
21 BY MS. SANZO:

22 Q. And just to start off with, if you could just start us  
23 at when you were notified of the accident and just take us through  
24 the evening.

25 A. Okay. My notification actually wasn't a notification of

1 sorts. I heard the -- I heard -- I'm listening to the radio  
2 constantly. I heard Battalion 10, Chief Mulray come up on radio  
3 responding and ask for further information. I didn't hear the  
4 initial dispatch. So, of course, my ears turned a little bit and  
5 I listened and the FCC said, we have a report of a passenger train  
6 that's gone off the tracks.

7 A few seconds -- you know, now of course I'm really  
8 keyed waiting to hear the rest of this. It couldn't have been a  
9 minute or two later that Vince came up, Chief Mulray, came up on  
10 radio and said that they had multiple rail cars off the tracks.  
11 I'm trying to remember specifically, but it's, you know, it's  
12 paraphrasing. And just -- I'm trying to think if he asked for  
13 more resources right then and there, but basically gave that  
14 statement and for all companies to proceed and go into service.

15 At that time I wasn't dispatched, but I dispatched, I  
16 self-dispatched. I grabbed my aide, who was also listening  
17 because he knows when my radar kind of turns on. We jumped in the  
18 car. I was listening to the TAC channel and I heard the chief  
19 give an update to communications, Joe Gardner, who is Battalion  
20 10's aide, giving a little more in-depth information.

21 And I immediately picked up the radio, spoke to FCC on  
22 the radio and told them to classify the incident as a mass  
23 casualty incident, strike out a second alarm and dispatch the mass  
24 casualty unit. I still wasn't dispatched but they knew I was -- I  
25 had told them I was en route. So that was the extent of the

1 notification on my part. And then just listen to the TAC channel.  
2 I'm not going to interfere with Vince trying to get set up,  
3 because that's the most important aspect of any incident is  
4 getting that first -- getting the first thing right lends itself  
5 to a good operation, so I didn't want to interfere with him. And  
6 then it was getting on scene at that point.

7           So that's as far as the initial dispatch and whatnot.  
8 The second alarm was being struck as, pretty much, I pulled up or  
9 maybe just before that, right about that time frame.

10           Q. And that's -- you're doing great. If you could just  
11 continue on taking us through the evening.

12           A. Okay.

13           MR. DAY: Do you know about what time the second alarm  
14 was struck?

15           MR. SNEIDAR I can tell you exactly. But in order to do  
16 that I have to take these -- put them on. I can't do this with  
17 (indiscernible). You have to bear with me. I have a lot of --  
18 have you guys seen this?

19           MS. SANZO: Not yet. I think it's on the way though.

20           MR. SNEIDAR Probably. Okay, shut down entire Northeast  
21 Corridor. That was Vince, he asked to shut down the entire  
22 Northeast Corridor. 25, Battalion 12 -- just bear with me. Okay,  
23 so that's Battalion 1, so the second one was going to be in here.  
24 Okay, second alarm, 2136 and 51 seconds is what I'm showing here;  
25 2137:45 is when the actual dispatch went out. The request was

1 2136 --

2 MR. DAY: I'm sorry. The initial dispatch went out at  
3 what time?

4 MR. SNEIDAR Well, here's the thing, at 2135 I requested  
5 it from Deputy 2, okay. At 2137 is when it got dispatched.  
6 They've got to figure out what companies as they're pulling up and  
7 whatnot.

8 MR. DAY: Sure.

9 MR. SNEIDAR So that's when it went out. Okay, when I  
10 got there my location was -- and that's why I brought this over.  
11 On Frankford Avenue -- have you guys been to the scene?

12 MS. SANZO: Yes.

13 MR. SNEIDAR Okay. So on Frankford Avenue, if you're  
14 traveling south on Frankford and you pass Wheatsheaf, you come  
15 down the next road on the right, and it's only on the right,  
16 before you cross under the bridge is right about where I was,  
17 right there before the bridge. And I want to just pull that up  
18 and then I can actually show it to you so we make sure we're all  
19 talking about the same thing because everybody's terminology is  
20 different.

21 When I pulled up, there were what seemed like 300 police  
22 cars everywhere blocking the street from every which direction.  
23 You couldn't get out of the car without -- I almost got hit trying  
24 to get my gear on. It became quite interesting. So I called  
25 Battalion 10 on the radio. I asked him what his location was and

1 specifically how he got there. And I had to do that three times  
2 and three times still didn't cut it because I still couldn't  
3 comprehend; I couldn't picture. It wasn't registering exactly  
4 where he was. After the fact it was quite easy to see what he  
5 said but during that point it wasn't quite as easy.

6           So I made my way through the field -- and that's why I  
7 want to pull this up, through the field what would be the -- if  
8 you're coming north on Frankford, under the bridge, first building  
9 right next to the tracks and then there's a vacant lot. That's  
10 where I walked up through, which would bring me to the tracks.  
11 And I use the tracks as a reference of north-south. If that's the  
12 case, then I came from the south. I showed up on the tracks on  
13 the south side of Car No. 7.

14           Car No. 7 was pretty much in line with the tracks but  
15 off the tracks, obviously, but still in the track area. I went  
16 down -- I crossed over and went down the embankment and went on  
17 the east side. I want to back up here. When I was coming through  
18 the field or through the lot, before I got to the end of the  
19 building, I was greeted by a scene that can best be described as  
20 Dawn of the Dead: bodies and people and things broken and  
21 bleeding and cops and firemen and everybody. So my thought there  
22 was, all right, this is crazy. I got a zillion cops out here.  
23 There's nowhere to move to because they've got it all blocked off.  
24 We designated a staging area for us, but they don't think that  
25 way. So they've got all kinds of cars every which way, which

1 became an issue a little later, but we identified it as best we  
2 could, but it is what it is.

3           And I asked -- the first wave that hit me, there was  
4 four to five police officers right there, and I stopped them, and  
5 I was in full fire gear but that doesn't mean much to them and out  
6 ranked them all if you added them up, but that still doesn't  
7 matter to them. I said, guys and gals, because there was a female  
8 officer and I think one female officer and about three or four  
9 male officers and they were -- I mean, they were busting their  
10 butts. I said, what I need you to do is just go down here just a  
11 little bit further and I need you to stop there. I need you to  
12 sit everybody down and relax; everybody, I can't get you to the  
13 street.

14           I wanted a casualty collection point is what I wanted.  
15 I can't stand there with them to do it, and they didn't listen to  
16 me. They kept going right into the street. It became an issue.  
17 It wasn't good. But, and that's from -- again, this will be  
18 hearsay that I heard that they went into the street because my  
19 guy, my aide, said it just -- they just got overwhelmed.

20           So I proceeded down and around, and it's still people  
21 and bodies and cops and flashlights are going everywhere -- it's  
22 pitch black -- and made my way around what now would be the east  
23 side of the cars. So I went behind 7, along 6 and 5, and then it  
24 kind of -- as it swung around, I was on what would be the east  
25 side traveling north, ultimately take me to right where Car 2

1 stopped. I saw the, what do you call it, locomotive or engine up  
2 a little bit up there. It didn't look terrible except it was way  
3 off the tracks. It didn't look like it got beat up as most of the  
4 other ones did. And then I circled around. I just wanted to get  
5 a scope of what I was dealing with.

6           And then I saw the other car and I was like, wow, you  
7 know, I mean, that's amazing the damage that that sustained. I'm  
8 still trying to figure out how that, you know, how that occurred.  
9 But at that point trying to figure out my resources and, I don't  
10 know, probably 150 cops and firemen there already, trying to get a  
11 grasp of that was interesting. The first thing I did was, I just  
12 took -- I called command, which was Vince, Battalion 10, and I  
13 said, look, I'll take command; I want you to take East Division.  
14 I made Battalion 8, Chief Wright, the West Division. And I said,  
15 it's reference to tracks, east and west. West is the Frankford  
16 Avenue side of the tracks; East is the Walmart side of the tracks,  
17 just so we all get an understanding as to what we're talking  
18 about.

19           And I know -- I believe that one of the railways uses as  
20 east-west as far as the tracks but that doesn't matter. What I'm  
21 using is basically Washington to New York is south to north, let's  
22 go one side or the other. For us it's very simple; we just  
23 designate it east and west, just so we can understand each other  
24 and speak. And then it was matter of getting the rest of the  
25 people that could be moved quickly out.

1           We tried to establish two casualty collection points  
2 because I knew we had people going out from what would be the  
3 north side and the south side, the north side being Wheatsheaf  
4 Lane and the south side being the field and the vacant lot that I  
5 had walked up through. I passed that onto the EMS, and I forget  
6 which specific officer. I've actually been told some things I  
7 said and don't even recollect saying. It was an interesting 3 or  
8 4 hours of just non-stop.

9           This went on for a while. We still had some trapped  
10 people. I had people working on extrication for them in multiple  
11 cars, and trying to identify which units I had where was a  
12 nightmare. And again, the cops are right in there, right with our  
13 Guys. Not that they should have been, but they're not going to  
14 listen to me, and you know what, you kind of got to take what  
15 you're dealt with and make it work. So they should have been in  
16 the cars. They had no protection or any protection. You know  
17 they're not going to get out if I make, why make a scene? Why  
18 make it worse than it is? So I decided on a number of things not  
19 to do based on, you know, being realistic.

20           So we're watching, we're checking, we're still  
21 searching. I'm trying to organize a search so that we can get  
22 that done. And I had searches going from exterior  
23 counterclockwise; I had interior being done only on the cars that  
24 we weren't doing any extrication. But it's so many people, very  
25 little light, just flashlights that we had. We're working on

1 trying to get our resources back there asking for -- I pulled a  
2 third alarm at -- let's see. And there's a multitude of things I  
3 did on the radio that I'm not, just not going to remember line by  
4 line, but -- there wasn't much after 37 -- okay, 2148 third alarm.  
5 So that's your time on that.

6 MR. DAY: You did your assessment and then ramped up  
7 quick --

8 MR. SNEIDAR I did my 360, saw what I had, saw that I  
9 wasn't -- I wasn't going to be able to get a hold of that in a  
10 quick period of time and I knew we still had people to take care  
11 of. There's no point in me trying to waste time and figure who I  
12 have; it's too big. But I also needed more bodies because, first  
13 off, I'm looking at how many are busting their butts, it's hot,  
14 they're in their gear, I may need a breakdown -- at some point  
15 they're going to crash, you know, physically, mentally, however.  
16 I've got to be prepared for that. I requested the third alarm at  
17 that point and they all went in service when they got there. It  
18 was just non-stop, people out, getting them down and getting them  
19 back, and now we're trying to get equipment up here that's showing  
20 up.

21 We, the fire department, doesn't have the equipment we  
22 should've had for a distance like that. I will tell you that  
23 right now. And I'm talking about portable lighting -- some of the  
24 stuff the other folks had, and I don't know who had them, but they  
25 were handheld lights that they kind of like a suitcase, they

1 opened up, lights, oh, this is great LED lighting. But, you know,  
2 whenever you buy for emergency services it's a \$1,000 unit that  
3 was \$200 at Home Depot, you know. You know how it is. So, you  
4 know, \$1,000 dollar toilet seat for the government claims. I  
5 understand.

6           So anyway, there's some things that we can use we're  
7 going to recommend that we get, just because we don't typically  
8 carry it. Handheld tools and I don't mean -- I mean handheld  
9 power tools, battery-operated type power tools that the rescue and  
10 SAR companies have. We don't have them on our apparatus as  
11 standard from my company's engines and ladders. Invaluable. Just  
12 easier to move, easier to get back there.

13           So we're working with second alarmers, we're working  
14 with Amtrak Police, we're working with our police, we're working  
15 with OEM. Sam shows up and she come up to me and she said, you  
16 know, are you in charge? I said, yeah. She said, what do you  
17 need? I said, everything, everything. I said, what can you get  
18 me? I need lighting. I had gotten along with Joe Sullivan, I  
19 yelled over to him and the deputy commissioner -- oh, he's on the  
20 posters for the college for St. Joe's. I said, Chief, I said, ask  
21 your choppers to put their lights on us. Give us all the light  
22 you can, because it was handheld still. So it was very  
23 frustrating in that regard, but our people were going to town,  
24 doing their thing.

25           We started to pick up resources. We started to get some

1 more lighting. We started to, you know, put it around the scene,  
2 basically concentrating from -- we had lights placed over on  
3 Wheatsheaf right by the fenced area where it was gated off, where  
4 they initially made entry over there. They had portable lighting  
5 that was able to be placed there on generators that just the masts  
6 went up and they projected light from there.

7           We had handheld and -- I call that portable; that's  
8 mobile -- portable, really portable, brought down and we started  
9 to bring it down and tried to circle as much as we could to give  
10 us as much light. And I'm guessing it's about that time that  
11 Car 3 showed up. That's Bob Corrigan, our deputy commissioner,  
12 who had the duty that night. He showed up, asked me for, you  
13 know, a report, an update, and I gave him what I could, but it was  
14 just crazy.

15           And I told him, I said, look, we got a lot of people  
16 here. We got three alarms. They're all here; they're all doing  
17 something. Who's here? I said, my board's over there. My aide's  
18 got -- you know, my aide is handling all that on a -- basically a  
19 big, I'll say, chalkboard, but it's not. It's got magnetized  
20 little placards for each unit and this, that and the other thing.  
21 And so he got a good feel of what's going on. I mean, you could  
22 see it's, I'll say, an organized mess, which is typically what we  
23 do. So he takes -- he says to me, he says, look, you keep running  
24 things; you're going to be operations. I'm going to take command.  
25 I'll take some of this other stuff off you.

1           I had already designated a safety officer. I had some  
2 other things going on. The safety officer, I told him one of the  
3 things that typically a safety officer identified in the fire  
4 service is safety for our operation. But I said to him one of the  
5 important things I wanted was the safety of the people going out,  
6 because we still had the wires on the tracks. We had no other way  
7 but to go over them. We're really trying to be as equipped and  
8 efficient as we can. I hate it. The pucker factor was a 10 if  
9 not a 12. I mean, you just don't know.

10           We're trying to work on getting the power shut down.  
11 We're trying -- and it's not a -- it's a process. I was told, I  
12 was told -- I don't know who told me -- that Amtrak eventually had  
13 to do something to basically blow some transformers to get it to  
14 go, that it wasn't as quick, as easy -- I don't know. That's what  
15 I was told, that somebody had worked with -- you know, and this is  
16 all stuff that you hear, like yesterday I went to the service that  
17 was down there. So I don't know how true that is, but -- that  
18 they were having an issue making sure that they were down.

19           And then we finally got confirmation that the fourth  
20 line was grounded, and that was like a sigh of relief, you know,  
21 that we were sure that we were good there. But it took some time,  
22 I mean, an hour or two. You know, and initially it's telling FCC  
23 to shut down the Northeast Corridor. And when you look at that  
24 location there, you've got a blind curve coming from behind, you  
25 got a blind curve coming from in front of you. It's like, oh, my

1 God, if something comes around one of these corners, we're in  
2 trouble. But nobody was stopping them, you know.

3 So we had set up -- although EMS doesn't know it, we had  
4 set up an EMS branch. They thought that -- I don't know what  
5 terminology they were using, but we're in the midst of a big  
6 change in the department and EMS hasn't quite caught up to  
7 everything. They did a hell of a job. Just their terminology  
8 isn't quite up to snuff yet, but we're going to work with that.

9 Once we got everybody out, what I did was I grabbed  
10 Chief Sullivan and I said, look, I said what we need to do now is  
11 move everybody away so I can do a technical secondary search. And  
12 what I wanted was a meticulous, literally -- like when I was in  
13 the service we called it a police call; we stood arm-in-arm and  
14 walked. And that's what we did.

15 And we did it again on the outside, and then once we did  
16 that we went -- I sent Craig Murphy and his gang, they did the  
17 interiors to make sure we didn't miss anything. Because now we  
18 had at this point, it was obviously the most resources were back  
19 there, we had the best lighting we were going to have, and we were  
20 able to do some better things. I know the dogs were en route at  
21 this point. They weren't there yet. So we did the search there.

22 I believe it was at that point that we -- no, the dog  
23 keyed on Victim, I think, No. 6, that was in the car where the  
24 other two were. And again, I'm not -- you know, for some reason  
25 that all, stuff wasn't getting to me but it was getting to the

1 people that really needed to know. Because we had at the one car,  
2 I believe it was, 2 -- was it 3 where there was two bodies? They  
3 were kind of in and out. The car was really turned on its side.  
4 I can't remember if it was 3 or 4. But anyway, I think we  
5 identified a third in there that we hadn't seen before.

6           And then, you know, we did the searches; we didn't come  
7 up with anything else. Then the dogs got there and then they  
8 started their thing. At that point it was in a sense winding down  
9 for us actually right there. EMS was still going, you know, guns  
10 a blazing getting people still, you know, getting them to the  
11 hospitals. One of the things I had asked for early on was the  
12 SEPTA buses, and they made a huge help in getting multiple -- you  
13 know, a group of people at a time to the hospitals. I think  
14 initially I said give me four. I was thinking 50 people per bus,  
15 just guessing.

16           And then it kind of wound down a little bit to where it  
17 was a very low-key, somber, you know. So at that point I  
18 established -- and I talked to the police. I said, I don't know  
19 how you're going to address this, I said, but I'm going to set up  
20 an R&R. And I set up the R&R on Wheitsheaf right down there. And  
21 I got with EMS and I said, look, I want to make sure that we  
22 document, every unit gets called in, every unit gets checked. I'm  
23 not so much -- on this instance, I'm not so much concerned on the  
24 blood pressure and the heart rates and all that. I said, watch  
25 the stares. I want to make sure they're mentally okay.

1           So they knew, you know, where I was coming with it.  
2   Some of these folks got to see some pretty horrific things. So  
3   they sat that up; they were working with our people there. We  
4   didn't have anything reported that was considered, you know, out  
5   of the ordinary. Getting waters back, I mean, now I've got my  
6   fourth alarm people, cases upon cases upon cases of water, you  
7   know. And that was just trying to take care of our people to make  
8   sure they were okay and looking at it at a DIMO issue at that  
9   point.

10           BY MS. SANZO:

11           Q.   Do you have an estimate of about what point that was?  
12   Do you have an estimate on the time about what point that was?

13           A.   The DIMO?

14           Q.   Um-hum.

15           A.   Oh, geez.

16           Q.   Or not. We can always get that off a paper later.

17           A.   Yeah. I'm probably guessing -- and this a guess without  
18   looking at this. I know at about 1:30 we decided we were already  
19   in the process of really breaking it down to two engines and two  
20   ladders, because what we wanted to do was -- and those two engines  
21   and two ladders typically are the first two engines and two  
22   ladders on the -- the response was a box, which is four engines,  
23   two ladders, it was the chief, and it was an ALS unit.

24           But breaking it down to that aspect with the battalion  
25   chief, and what I said was I wanted people, what we call relief on

1 the fireground. So what we lined up was two more engines and two  
2 ladders to come in and relieve them so they could go back. And  
3 that was about 1:30. So we were already in the process at 1:30.

4 Now, when it occurred, by 2:30 most of the people were  
5 gone. But specifically -- well, let's see. We're here  
6 transporting -- see, at 1:51 we're still transporting four  
7 patients. So at 1:51 we're still transporting people. I mean,  
8 they're less serious, but that's -- I mean, there was a lot.  
9 Okay, available on request. So it looks like we're getting some  
10 available, some available -- units started to go available -- let  
11 me see when we're available. Squad 47. So the squad company, the  
12 first squad company we got out of there would look to be about 34  
13 minutes after midnight, 0034; water tower 38, 0046. And that's  
14 when it really kind of started to kick in, right around quarter  
15 till 1.

16 And it was stretched out because some of them couldn't  
17 get out because the cop cars had them blocked in. So what we did  
18 was set up a DIMO officer and he was to go assess, not so much in  
19 order of response to the scene, but what vehicles did get out, and  
20 decided on, based on that, is how we would relieve. There's no  
21 sense in relieving them if they can't get out, you know. So we  
22 kind of looked at that and took that into consideration as well.

23 We still had our safety officer. We had our department  
24 safety officer there much earlier than that. I had set up the  
25 initial safety officer and then he came, so we had department

1 safety officer took over the safety officer responsibilities in  
2 ICS. We had the assistant safety officer, who was the previous  
3 safety officer I had designated. That was Battalion 2,  
4 Chief Perros (ph.). So we had the two safety officers kind of  
5 working at that point as well.

6 What else?

7 Q. That's outstanding. Thank you so very much. Before I  
8 let others ask a question, I'm just going to -- there was one  
9 acronym in there. I'll just ask what it is. FCC?

10 A. That's our radio room.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. FCC. You got me.

13 Q. That's good enough to know what it is. It's the radio  
14 room.

15 A. Yeah, it's our radio. Yeah, our radio.

16 Q. That's all we really need.

17 A. I know the acronyms -- I mean, when I was in the Army  
18 and even now, when you start looking at the government stuff  
19 within, it's like this now. There's a book on acronyms for NIMS.  
20 I'm like, are you kidding me?

21 Q. So much for --

22 A. He's laughing. He knows.

23 MS. SANZO: Well, I'll take a pause and I'll start to go  
24 around the room. And we'll start to my right and, as we go  
25 around, if you could say your name, so --

1 MR. DAY: Sure. Larry Day, FRA.

2 BY MR. DAY:

3 Q. You said even when you pulled up on the scene there was  
4 a lot of police cars blocking --

5 A. Everything.

6 Q. -- everything. Your first -- did you end up having to  
7 set up a staging area or --

8 A. The staging area had been set up and ordered by  
9 Battalion 10's aide. And the staging area was right where I  
10 pulled up, which was -- and I meant to pull that up for you, but I  
11 don't want to get it incorrect. And let's see if it's documented  
12 on here. It was Frankford Avenue and Wheatsheaf Lane. I couldn't  
13 get to Wheatsheaf Lane because of all the police cars.

14 I was on Frankford, south of Wheatsheaf, and I couldn't  
15 get to it. That was the initial staging area. It was -- I just  
16 have to -- bear with me one moment. (Phone ringing) If it's my  
17 son I am going to talk to him only because he's in Okinawa and in  
18 the service. It's not him. I'm not answering it, sorry. My son  
19 is on the Army now; he's coming home this summer hopefully after  
20 being over there for 3 years.

21 So -- okay, so let me find this. And Port Richmond --  
22 okay. Somerset. Let's get over here. Rose. I believe I was on  
23 -- right here. Okay, so I was at Frankford at Buckius and it was  
24 a mess. Not that far; it's a block.

25 MR. COX: How do you spell that, Chief?

1           MR. SNEIDAR B-U-C-K-I-U-S. And that's where it just  
2 was a wall of police cars. It was crazy. Now, the staging  
3 area -- and this is the thing, the staging area had been set up at  
4 Frankford and Wheatsheaf. That's not a staging area. For us,  
5 fire department, for a box, sure, we can pull over and block one  
6 lane and be okay with it. The problem is on an incident of that  
7 magnitude, you're really limited because the best staging area,  
8 literally, is to come all the way around Frankford, cut around  
9 Wheatsheaf, and come around the back side to the Walmart parking  
10 lot, because you have Walmart and Lowe's, you have a huge parking  
11 lot that we could have used. The problem is they're going to walk  
12 quite a ways to get to it, so it would have taken some  
13 coordination with police and their vans and they weren't  
14 listening; it just wasn't going to happen.

15           So we understood from the medical transport aspect that  
16 we needed access and egress. We weren't getting it. We  
17 eventually had to literally get on the radio with every -- with  
18 the higher-ups and say, look, you've got to move them cars.  
19 They're just killing us here.

20           So that became to what extent of an issue, I'm not sure;  
21 I just know it became an issue. I wasn't out there. I was  
22 concerned with being a little closer. You know, I still don't  
23 know if maybe I should have backed up even further. I don't know.  
24 I think I got the whole scope by where I was because I had walked  
25 around it to get there. So that's kind of what I had had.

1           So does that answer your question?

2           BY MR. DAY:

3           Q.    Yes.  Thank you.

4           A.    Okay.

5           Q.    Another question.  In talking to your folks that were  
6 working the equipment, what difficulties did they encounter trying  
7 to access victims that were trapped within the car, those types of  
8 things?

9           A.    From what I'm gathering from the folks and the comments  
10 that I've heard, the interior of the cars for the most part was  
11 trapped between seats and the luggage-type racks or whatever.  
12 That seemed to be -- you know, and a reciprocating saw with a good  
13 metal blade will take that apart.

14                   And again, trying to get a generator back there, you  
15 know, therein lies the big issue.  When the squad company came  
16 back with those tools, that's a huge, huge advantage; quick, easy,  
17 they operate well.  We don't carry them on all our apparatus.  You  
18 know, it's something that we mentioned today with Car 3, and Chief  
19 Corrigan -- I don't know if you've spoken to him, but he's our  
20 Deputy Commissioner of Technical Services.  He was the one who  
21 took over command for me.  We mentioned that to him.  I mean,  
22 Ladder 10 has a saw that I got them from Lowe's because I know the  
23 manager and he gave us a saw, two batteries, and a battery  
24 charger.  So they keep it charged and they keep them --

25                   When I first got to Battalion 10 -- that was my last

1 assignment as a battalion chief. I was there, 2 years ago I got  
2 there, and when I got there -- we had responded to an accident  
3 very close to this incident, by the way, to where we had some  
4 difficulty getting a gentleman out of his vehicle. I don't think  
5 it would have mattered; he had broken his neck, but it was  
6 frustrating for our guys. And I said to them, I says, well -- we  
7 sat down; we always sit down and talk about things. I said, what  
8 makes it easier? And they said, we need this kind of equipment,  
9 we need -- I said, I can get you one. And we went over to Lowe's  
10 the next week and we got one. The manager gave us one, you know.  
11 So those kind of tools are important that we don't carry. You  
12 know, the money only goes so far.

13           So, but they were -- the SAR companies having them  
14 seemed to be the answer to what we were really needing. You know,  
15 that probably is the biggest thing that I've heard.

16           Q. Okay. Now, transitioning over towards the Amtrak and  
17 the Northeast Corridor. So have you responded to incidents along  
18 the corridor where you've had to deal with the wires and make sure  
19 the power has been shut off before?

20           A. I have a long time ago, but not in a capacity of a  
21 leadership position. A long, long time ago. So I have no insight  
22 onto that.

23           Q. Okay.

24           A. It wouldn't be, you know, fair to make any judgment on  
25 something; I was just a fireman.

1 Q. Okay. Next question along the Amtrak lines is, when is  
2 the last time that you participated in any type of training and/or  
3 drills with Amtrak?

4 A. Well, the training we set up, usually -- is it every  
5 other year, we'll go to one of the rail yards, usually it's Wayne  
6 Avenue, and we'll look at the -- and it's usually SEPTA that we  
7 see the different types of cars, the way to get in, way to make  
8 access easily, how to get the windows out, you know, the power  
9 that they're containing, the overhead lines, what they're holding,  
10 how to address that. I said that to Car 3 today, I said, you  
11 know, the airport has drills -- I was the training captain at the  
12 airport for a period of time back a number of years ago and, you  
13 know, they had the EPEX drills. I said, we need a drill. We need  
14 a drill on this, you know, we really do.

15 And, I mean, given the situation at night when we  
16 couldn't have -- we didn't have direct access -- and that was  
17 probably easier; there's probably other spots that are probably 10  
18 times worse to get to. But that's something that we should, I  
19 mean, we need to look at, I think, from the fire department  
20 standpoint and the police department, everybody. I mean, you have  
21 multiple agencies responding to this, and to work well together we  
22 really need to understand, you know -- I think it could have gone  
23 better, but again, I don't think it would have made more of a  
24 positive outcome on what we had. It would've made it more smooth.  
25 I think we did a pretty decent job.

1           I picked myself apart on what I did, but that's what I  
2 do so I don't do something again or I make sure I do something  
3 that I may have been remiss in and, you know, maybe just make it  
4 easier for somebody else to understand what we're doing. And I  
5 try to paint a picture for everybody.

6           When I talk on the radio I try to paint a picture so  
7 everybody understands and gets the concept. And basically I'm  
8 giving them my IAP. You know, I'm giving them verbally on the  
9 radio as I'm saying, hey, you have this resource; what else do you  
10 need? Hey, you have this going on. So and so has got this going  
11 on; what else do you need? So everybody gets a good sense of the  
12 whole scene. Without spending a lot of time, I try to be as  
13 detailed as I can without getting crazy, but it paints a picture.  
14 Because initially I don't need a written IAP for this. There's no  
15 -- I can't -- oh, you all have a planning meeting and -- no,  
16 that's not happening here. They can worry about that down the  
17 road and worry it about the second operational period, which I  
18 know they did, but I wasn't part of that. I left the scene around  
19 4:30.

20           So we need a drill. If you can help them all get  
21 together and make that happen, I'm in.

22           MR. COX: I can make that happen.

23           MR. SNEIDAR Okay. I'm in. We can use it. We all  
24 could, you know. Whoever -- I don't know that you're ever  
25 prepared for something like that and I think we did pretty good;

1 maybe we could have done better, you know.

2 MR. COX: One of the things I tell all chiefs is that  
3 you'll never ever hear me say you did anything wrong because I  
4 can't expect anything more from you other than your knowledge and  
5 experience in responding to an incident. What I may say is, I  
6 would have done it differently.

7 MR. SNEIDAR Right, right. Oh, yeah.

8 MR. COX: But the thing of it is, is that you guys did a  
9 wonderful job of what you had to work with initially. But I just  
10 wanted -- Larry, do you have any other questions?

11 MR. DAY: No, I'm good, thank you.

12 MR. COX: Actually, this is going to lead me right into  
13 what he's talking about.

14 BY MR. COX:

15 Q. What about your communication with Amtrak, have you had  
16 any previous communication with Amtrak prior to this incident?

17 A. No, not me personally.

18 Q. Okay. What about information from Amtrak, in other  
19 words, when you arrived on scene were you able to speak to one of  
20 the conductors or assistant conductors to get any information?

21 A. No. And that's -- and I don't have a reason why or why  
22 not. I just know that where I was wasn't where they were. I  
23 don't know who they were. You had myself, the police, OEM,  
24 somebody else, but it seemed like -- I've got to be careful how I  
25 say this. It seemed like the people with more here had an area

1 that they wanted that didn't really jive with what I had.  
2 Although they weren't part of the ICS, they have -- and it just,  
3 kind of just seemed like they were drawn, everybody was drawn to  
4 that instead of me running as the IC. And then as operations, I'm  
5 like, they're giving me information -- well, the Amtrak guy said  
6 this. And I'm going, well, where the hell is the Amtrak guy?  
7 Bring it to me, I'm -- yeah, it was frustrating.

8 Q. Do you know who that Amtrak guy was?

9 A. Not the faintest idea.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And every time I turned around -- and then there was  
12 Amtrak, there was Conrail, there was -- I saw some Conrail guys.  
13 I said, were you guys that gave -- no, that's the Amtrak guy.  
14 Where is he? Oh, he just walked away. I'm like, you know, guys,  
15 we always stay right here. But they're trying to work too. And I  
16 think it's a matter of understanding that they have to understand  
17 who's running the scene, you know. And it's a little frustrating  
18 because they think they have a job to do and I think I have a job  
19 to do, and it's -- (phone ringing) -- I got -- I'm sorry, I got to  
20 -- hello?

21 MS. SANZO: We'll take a pause.

22 (Off the record.)

23 (On the record.)

24 BY MR. COX:

25 Q. And these are some of the things -- well, really, it

1 leads me to my next questions about training. Your first in  
2 really hasn't had any Amtrak training?

3 A. I would -- I can't say yes or no. I would guess no. I  
4 mean, we get the basics but, I mean, you know -- like I said, I  
5 met with Vincent and Chief Corrigan today, and what we've had is  
6 really scratching the surface. You know, we know we have power  
7 issues, we know we have train issues, we know we have time  
8 distance issues. You know what I mean, by the time distance? It  
9 takes those trains a long time to slow down and stop and a long  
10 distance. So we understand that. But to really integrate well  
11 together, it could be a lot of better.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. At least from my position on this incident.

14 Q. What about your SOD, are you familiar with the SOD  
15 having any type of Amtrak training? And the reason why I'm asking  
16 that, and while we're doing this I also have my people looking  
17 into the training that was provided here in the Philadelphia area.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. And I'm not quite sure how that's going to mesh right  
20 now. I know we did some training with the PD, but I don't know  
21 exactly how all of that is going mesh in.

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. And this actually relates back to the question that  
24 Larry had asked about difficulties in entering the equipment. Did  
25 you have any difficulty entering the equipment as far as the

1 emergency windows, the doors? Were you able to get into the  
2 equipment --

3 A. I didn't have any -- now again, that would be taking me  
4 really down to the task level, which I didn't get into. What I  
5 observed, I would say any difficulties that were encountered were  
6 based on damage to the cars, not necessarily a door being locked  
7 or whatever, or windows being intact. There were a lot of windows  
8 that were out.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. I mean, it just -- so I never heard anybody really  
11 complain about any of those type of issues whatsoever.

12 Q. Okay. So to the best of your knowledge, your guys had  
13 no problems gaining entry into the equipment to begin your primary  
14 searches?

15 A. Right.

16 Q. What about on-board lighting?

17 A. It was fine because there was -- no, that's a bad term.  
18 It wasn't fine, you know, but it was -- some cars the lights were  
19 on; some cars they were off.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. That's all I can tell you. And the lighting that was on  
22 was very minimal. I'm sure it was on battery of some sort.  
23 Obviously, it's got to be on that, you know, but it provided them  
24 some lighting. But, you know, their flashlight provided more  
25 light, you know. I'm trying to think. The car that had the

1 lights that I recall was car number -- I think, it was 4.

2 Q. Okay. I'm just going to put a question mark down.

3 A. Yeah, I think it was 4, because I did a --

4 Q. We do have on-board emergency lighting. I just wanted  
5 to see --

6 A. Not on all of them. I think it was 4 that they were on;  
7 2, 3, 4 a little bit, 5, 6, 7. I'm pretty sure it was 4 that the  
8 lights were on.

9 Q. Okay. So you don't recall any of the other ones or  
10 getting any feedback from any of your guys, that the emergency  
11 lighting was on, the track lightings or --

12 A. Now the -- again, something I wasn't going to pay too  
13 much attention to because that's -- it's just not something I, you  
14 know -- but being relayed to me or passed along to me, no.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. With all the lights we started to get and all the  
17 lighting we eventually got, I mean, we lit up that whole place,  
18 you know, like Christmas.

19 Q. Um-hum.

20 A. So, you know, but initially it was -- you know, you saw  
21 the news from the incident, you see the flashlights just going  
22 everywhere. That's what it was. And it was, you know, it was --

23 Q. Accessing the scene at all, did you have any problems --  
24 other than the police, did you have any other problems accessing  
25 the scene?

1           A.    They had to take the gate there at Wheatsheaf, which was  
2 typical.  That's, you know, that's a ball cutter.  Where I came  
3 through was nothing.  There was no -- you couldn't get a vehicle  
4 back through there, but walking back there was -- that's wide  
5 open.

6           Q.    What about over on the east side?

7           A.    Well --

8           Q.    Did you have any responders coming in from there?

9           A.    We did but not from me.

10          Q.    Okay.

11          A.    And so I saw a private ambulance over there at one  
12 point.  There is a way to get back in there, but because we had  
13 all of the people going that way, that's what I concentrated on.  
14 Plus, in order to get to where we were, they had to pass the other  
15 two rails where the tank cars were and it wasn't -- I didn't have  
16 the resources to go say, go check this all out, scope this all out  
17 and see what you can get back here.  It was so fast, the amount of  
18 resources, that we kind of kept it all going to that side.

19          Q.    Okay.  And I guess that creates some of that congestion?

20          A.    Oh, yeah.  But we were trying to line up to basically  
21 have the ambulance be able to pull it one way and go out another,  
22 and it wasn't -- the cop cars were killing me.

23          Q.    Yeah.

24          A.    So, you know, figuratively on the radio -- so finally, I  
25 don't know if it was Chief Sullivan or which one, but they got on

1 the radio and said everybody who has a car, get out there and move  
2 them. You know, I heard that go over their radio.

3           You know, so, I mean, we were trying to make it work  
4 nice and smooth with, you know, picking them up. We had -- we  
5 were tagging people, we were doing all -- you know, EMS was doing  
6 a good job. Their terminology is a little lacking. Like I said,  
7 we're going to work on that, but we've had a major reconfiguration  
8 with EMS over the last year or so. It's a process.

9           Q. That's all the questions I have right now, but I'd like  
10 to be able to speak to you a little bit later on --

11          A. Sure.

12          Q. -- you know, about some of the things that we can make  
13 happen to help you guys out.

14          A. Absolutely. Absolutely.

15          Q. Because we want to be a good partner.

16          A. Right. Yeah, absolutely.

17               MS. EVANS:

18          Q. Well, I'm actually -- now with you saying that EMS  
19 generally coordinates the transport to the hospitals and not the  
20 fire department incident command, I was just curious on how it  
21 determines -- how it was determined what patients go to which  
22 trauma center. Because my understanding is that one of the trauma  
23 centers got sort of a barrage and I know that, you know, generally  
24 it's --

25          A. To give you the answer would be, for me, the procedure

1 would be for them to coordinate with medical command --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- with their process and identify which hospitals can  
4 handle what level patients and how many.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I know I heard the number of hospitals and medical  
7 facilities that handle patients and it was pretty extensive. I  
8 know there's a procedure and I know they follow it. But, you  
9 know, there's -- no system is perfect because we're human. I know  
10 they were with the triage. They were tagging, they were following  
11 appropriate protocols for that. They were establishing -- you  
12 know, there was a lot of people they were putting on a bus that  
13 could go on a bus or buses and there was others being transported  
14 by ambulance. And I would catch every bit of that here and there.  
15 I am not going to get involved in the sense with EMS, and what it  
16 is, it would be taking me down to the task level.

17 Q. Yeah, okay.

18 A. I had the EMS branch and I kind of, yeah, they got to do  
19 their thing. It's just their terminology sucks. But, again, it  
20 didn't hurt the operation. It's just it was frustrating on my  
21 part to hear it because I'm a stickler when it comes to that. I  
22 can talk NIMS and we've been, you know, trying to bring a full  
23 cycle or full circle with NIMS and, you know, you get that  
24 pushback; that culture doesn't want to change and we've been doing  
25 it this way for years. We can't do it the way we used to, you

1 know. But it's a process. But, you know, it's a play on  
2 terminology; it didn't affect me, the incident. And we're aware  
3 and it's going to be addressed. But again, it's a terminology  
4 issue. It's not an outcome issue.

5 Q. Okay. With that, that's all that I have.

6 MS. EVANS: Dana, do you have any more?

7 MS. SANZO: Let's see.

8 BY MS. SANZO:

9 Q. As long as we're talking about on the EMS side, EMS side  
10 of things, was -- prior to the reorganization was EMS a completely  
11 separate organization or just --

12 A. Still part of the fire department.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. It's just we've had -- the reconfiguration has put a  
15 number of paramedics in a leadership position as lieutenants and  
16 moving lieutenants up to captains. It's reconfigured. We're  
17 still part of the same department. There's no separation. It's  
18 just they're not firefighters. They're not trained as  
19 firefighters. We all work together. I mean, it's just -- and  
20 it's just, again, a terminology thing, you know. But they were --  
21 I mean, I've listened to it every, you know, and I can hear that  
22 we have this many class this, we have this many class this. I  
23 mean, they were on their game. It's just the terminology is not  
24 up to par, you know. And from a guy that knows NIMS, it's  
25 frustrating. You know, it's just frustrating, you know. But, you

1 know, having been down to Emmitsburg and the National Fire Academy  
2 for, I don't know, 9 or 10 or 11 courses, NIMS is, you know,  
3 but --

4 Q. And so there's a little bit of information we talked  
5 about as far as after you do your 360 and set up your command  
6 post, who was in your line of sight? Who was, like, standing  
7 right by you as far as the other organizations that you could just  
8 sit and talk to?

9 A. I had police right here, right -- 15 yards, 15, 20 feet,  
10 not even 15 yards. At one point no one -- I was asked earlier.  
11 No one from Amtrak came up to me and said, hey, I'm here from  
12 Amtrak or I'm here from Conrail or I'm here for this. I would  
13 have to say to somebody, hey, did you talk to the guy? I said,  
14 no, where is he? Oh, he's over -- oh, he's gone. Just nobody  
15 ever came to me and said -- and again, I think it was the fact  
16 that when they set up CP1, which is not the command post, you have  
17 all the big wigs out there. I mean, I think that's where kind of  
18 people may have gravitated towards, may have.

19 I'm not sure. I don't know what they were doing. You  
20 know, we were getting information but it wasn't coming from me. I  
21 don't know who -- I was getting told that, hey, the guy from  
22 Amtrak said this and that's coming from I don't know who, you  
23 know. Well, I don't remember who, you know, confirmation that the  
24 fourth line was shut down. I don't know who it came -- it came  
25 from one of my guys who was -- but never with me.

1           And we had designated the command post basically right  
2 what would be to the rear of the engine when you look up at the  
3 footbridge right here and you're standing with Car 2 right here  
4 and you look at the engine, the pillar and the post for the  
5 footbridge is what we had designated as the command post, just so  
6 we have a specific location. It wasn't ideal. You know, some  
7 people say as an instant commander I should be way, way back. I  
8 needed to be there and see what I was dealing with. I can't sit  
9 back on the street and just listen to, you know -- there's not  
10 enough information there. You need to have, I think, a better  
11 view, you know.

12           I would've loved to have been up on that foot bridge, is  
13 where I would really like to have been, and I tried to get  
14 somebody up there. But whoever owns it, whichever rail company  
15 owns it, or whether it's Conrail or Amtrak or whoever, saw our  
16 guys working with a saw on the far gate closer to where all our  
17 triage treatment and transport area was and said, knock it off, we  
18 don't trust it. We don't know if it's safe. And that sucked,  
19 because I could've gotten somebody right up there to look over top  
20 of this -- if you saw it, it's beautiful. I would've gone up  
21 there and stood up there with my radio and ran it from there  
22 because that would've given me a better view.

23           So it was a little frustrating not to have that. That  
24 was Vince Mulray, I had sent him up to try to get up there to get  
25 a view from up there but he said he was told, no, it wasn't safe.

1 It was unfortunate because I think it would've made things a  
2 little bit easier. But I had done my 360 and seen what I was  
3 dealing with, so I had a pretty good idea what was going on.

4 Q. And you just mentioned now triage transport area. Where  
5 was that set up?

6 A. Out at Wheatsheaf Lane. And we initially, I had tried  
7 to set up two areas: Wheatsheaf and then also the area where I  
8 pulled up, and basically because people were going both  
9 directions. So I let EMS know what they were dealing with and  
10 suggested that you set up two different locations. I don't know  
11 that they did. I know that they got to everybody, but I don't  
12 know how specifically they did.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. I mean, you had every EMS officer all the way up to  
15 Car 4. The deputy commissioner was out there of EMS, you know, so  
16 -- I mean, they were -- I mean, they were moving. You could hear  
17 them. Everything was going good, it's just, you know -- and they  
18 were getting people and they were taking care of it and, you know,  
19 again, having people go out two different directions about -- you  
20 know, if they go out the one direction at Wheatsheaf Lane, they've  
21 got to go 200 yards before they get to Frankford and then down 150  
22 yards to get to here, which is where other people are going out  
23 here. So that's quite a distance if you're hurt. So that's why I  
24 tried to set up two different areas initially.

25 To be honest with you, I guess they did it. I didn't

1 hear any complaints of we need more of this or that. They kind of  
2 handled their EMS issues without really bringing me into it, which  
3 is fine, that's what they're supposed to do. You know, we've got  
4 the resources, they were cycling the ambulances out to the  
5 hospital, back to the scene, out to the hospital, back to the  
6 scene. The same with the buses and the police vans.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. I know.

9 MR. COX: How did that work?

10 MR. SNEIDAR They don't like listening to firemen. You  
11 know. And, you know, if I was a cop --

12 MR. COX: I'm sure they tracked their transports.

13 MR. SNEIDAR No. Well, that's the problem. We were  
14 even trying -- at one point we were trying to get names; just give  
15 us a name, give us something. And these guys are in their own --  
16 they're in their police mode, you know, swoop and scoop or scoop  
17 and swoop, whatever.

18 MR. COX: It sounds like a seagull.

19 MR. SNEIDAR Um-hum.

20 MS. SANZO: We'll go one more time around.

21 MR. DAY: Sure.

22 BY MR. DAY:

23 Q. Larry Day, FRA. Did you -- at your command post, did  
24 you request any railroad people when you heard to come directly to  
25 the command post?

1           A.    I was too busy.

2           Q.    Okay.

3           A.    Because I kept getting told that they were there.  So  
4  it's like to trying to catch them as they walk by.  And, you know  
5  -- and I know I spoke to somebody at one point, but it was for a  
6  brief couple minutes, and that's who actually said to me, no,  
7  that's Car 2, that over there is Car 1, and so on.  And we actually  
8  renumbered, if you see -- if you saw the pictures and you were  
9  there, you saw the renumberation -- is that right?  We renumbered  
10 them to make it correct because we weren't -- we didn't know.  You  
11 know, I just -- at the point I said to them, we're going to count  
12 this as 2.  We're going to start here as 1 -- I'm sorry, I mean, 2  
13 to me was 1.  And when I got the -- I'm like, what the hell am I  
14 doing with this one in the middle here, you know.  And I forget  
15 what SOC initially did, but that's another request we made already  
16 today that each of the battalion chief's cars keep cans of spray  
17 paint on them too.  We didn't have them.  We had to wait for SOC  
18 to go get them.  You know, just something that we have, you know,  
19 just to make it that much, you know, more smooth.

20                    So, I mean, I talked to the guy and then he was gone,  
21 and where we really need to have, you know, a unified command is  
22 what it needed to be.  And it didn't quite gel.

23                   MR. COX:  Charlie Cox with Amtrak again.

24                   BY MR. COX:

25           Q.    Do you guys have a heavy rescue attached to your

1 individual fire departments and stations?

2 A. No. Just we have -- within the city we have one heavy  
3 rescue unit that responded with the collapse unit, but just in  
4 case, I guess, the different tools and, you know, keep any from  
5 rolling over further if that were the case.

6 Q. Keep the car intact?

7 A. Yeah. As well as two squad companies, which is Squad 72  
8 and Squad 47.

9 So we have all three of those, and those are the units  
10 that I used for that secondary technical search. Those are the  
11 units that I used for that. With every piece of equipment I said,  
12 anything you need to make your search, go get it and we're going  
13 to do a real good thorough, I mean, walk a line type search,  
14 inside and outside.

15 Q. And this has nothing -- I mean, I saw the scene almost  
16 immediately -- well, not immediately, the next morning.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. Stabilization, structural collapse, you didn't need any  
19 special equipment for that?

20 A. I don't think that we identified any issues --

21 Q. You didn't do any cribbing, paratech --

22 A. No, not that I'm aware of. On the exterior of anything,  
23 I didn't see anything. Nobody mentioned to me anything that they  
24 needed something or that they had done something; it never got  
25 back to me. And again, I didn't see anything either because I

1 also every so often would do another -- I couldn't do a 360  
2 because I couldn't get past those wires; I wasn't walking there.  
3 So I would go down there and I'd come back around and go back  
4 around this way, just to keep my, you know, mind open to the  
5 possibility of something changing.

6 Q. The reason why we ask that, I'm also an ad hoc professor  
7 at Texas A&M and teach two 40-hour classes there a year.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. And we teach utilizing, cribbing and also paratech as  
10 far as stabilization and --

11 A. Right.

12 Q. -- structural collapse.

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. And I was just looking for some more information.

15 A. Yeah. That I know of, we didn't have to utilize any of  
16 that or do anything of that nature. Everything seemed stable in  
17 what it was. Now, Car 1 we couldn't do too much in. We could do  
18 what we could get to but -- you know, and they were in Car 2 but  
19 that wasn't going anywhere. The trenches that they drove into the  
20 ground, they weren't going to rock anywhere, they were pretty  
21 stable. And we had people all over and they weren't budging. So,  
22 I mean, they took a trench -- well, you guys went down and saw it,  
23 so --

24 I didn't see any major safety issues. When I walked up,  
25 that's one of the things I was looking for, was to look at that

1 being an issue and the safety of our folks and I didn't see that  
2 being a problem at all.

3 Q. Thank you, Chief.

4 A. Um-hum.

5 BY MS. EVANS:

6 Q. The only thing I'm wondering, do you think this  
7 confusion with the CP and the CP1 because, you know --

8 A. I often wonder --

9 Q. -- I was thinking in the heat of the moment --

10 A. Yeah, and I often wonder that. I guess, you know, to  
11 say there is or isn't, I'm not sure.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. There could be, sure. I mean, people are drawn to  
14 lights into this, and where I'm standing, I'm just a guy in a  
15 white helmet and a white coat and, you know, so that certainly --  
16 and that's something else that we identified today that would have  
17 been phenomenal for us, is having something to designate the  
18 command post being right there, whether it's a pop-up tent with a  
19 flashing green light or whatever the heck it is. Chief Corrigan  
20 and Mulray and I decided today that would've been something that  
21 would have been a huge help just so everybody knew, you know,  
22 where we were.

23 And, you know, it's funny because Sam Phillips came back  
24 from OEM and Sullivan was there and I was there -- oh, Ross, Chief  
25 Ross, deputy commissioner for the police, he was the other one

1 back there. That's who I couldn't remember earlier. You know,  
2 they were right there all the time but there was nothing there for  
3 everybody to know and everybody to go, that's the command post,  
4 and we really could have used that.

5 Q. Right, right.

6 A. But where we were -- and, first off, we don't even have  
7 the resources -- on our firegrounds, on our incidences, what we're  
8 supposed to do is all the apparatus lighting, the emergency  
9 lighting, is supposed to be turned off and the command post is the  
10 only one that's supposed to have emergency lights on so everybody  
11 knows what it is. Out there we had no apparatus, we had no  
12 nothing. I mean, you know, you almost want to get one of those  
13 little helmets they sell at the store with the little flashing red  
14 light. You know what I'm talking about?

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. Like we could have used it.

17 MR. COX: Blue light special.

18 MR. SNEIDAR Yes, yes. Attention Kmart shoppers. So  
19 yes. So that was an issue without a doubt. And that may have  
20 been the root cause of the disconnect --

21 BY MS. EVANS:

22 Q. Right.

23 A. It wasn't a complete disconnect, but it wasn't -- again,  
24 I think we could have done better. I don't think the outcome  
25 could have been any better. You know, we have a lot of good

1 people, so -- you know, I always, I beat myself up on things. I  
2 could have done this, I should have done that, or that or that. I  
3 mean, there's a million things like, you know, that I decide  
4 and -- but you know what? Hearing people say that I did pretty  
5 good, I'm okay with that, you know.

6 Q. Oh. And I think we're all in agreement that --

7 A. It was interesting.

8 Q. Now also, how often do you guys have coordinated mass  
9 casualty drills with the other agencies?

10 A. How often? I haven't been to one ever, 23 years on the  
11 job. Not that they haven't had them, but you've got to understand  
12 the fire department in the field is 2 day works, 2 night works,  
13 off for 4 days. It's a platoon system. So if they do it once  
14 every year, they might get you every four. If they do it once  
15 every 2 years it's once every 8 years.

16 Now, they do the airport drills are required every 3  
17 years, I believe. But even then, the airport works on a four  
18 platoon schedule, so often are they getting it? And that's what I  
19 said today; we need a drill out here. We need a drill like that.  
20 We need a drill to test us, take us to task, and teach us. That's  
21 how you get better. You know, but again, it's time and it's  
22 money. And these are things that if the department gives us the  
23 time, they don't have the money; that's all we hear.

24 You know, I do a lot of things on my own. I do a lot of  
25 training on my own. I've instituted things that I can while

1 staying within the guidelines of the department. But I have  
2 things in my division -- I have half the city. I do things within  
3 my division to bring us closer to where we should be than where we  
4 are. I demand certain things and my guys are better off. You had  
5 the best platoon working that job that night because the people  
6 you had working are my guys and gals. So, you know, I know that.  
7 I'm not bragging, but we take pride in it. And I do more things  
8 with my guys than most of the other guys do. So it's just, you  
9 know, I insist on certain things.

10 Q. Thank you.

11 BY MR. COX:

12 Q. As a follow-up to Gena's question with the incident  
13 command as far as identifying a location of the incident command,  
14 and this is something I had at another scene, but the section  
15 chiefs, did you guys have vests, you know, incident commander  
16 officer --

17 A. Well, no. Because by the time we got out there,  
18 realized what we had, it was too late to go all the way back. It  
19 was quite a hike.

20 Q. But you guys do have them?

21 A. We do have them.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Oh, yeah, we have -- now, I don't think we're going to  
24 have -- we're going to have safety officer, we're going to have  
25 incident commander. And I didn't have mine.

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. And I could have grabbed mine, I should have.

3 Q. Believe me, I mean, you know, that's --

4 A. Right. No, that should be a secondary thing.

5 Q. But, no, the thing of it is, my big concern is exactly  
6 what you said, you know, that the Amtrak people once they arrived  
7 on scene didn't make contact or didn't ask where the incident  
8 command was.

9 A. Whoever they talked to, they thought they were talking  
10 to somebody of importance because the information was getting to  
11 me, but I wasn't able to say, well, what about or what about --

12 Q. You didn't have them attached to your heel and that's  
13 what you need. Understood.

14 A. And that falls on me, as far as I'm concerned. As soon  
15 as somebody said, well, the Amtrak guy said this. I said, you  
16 bring the Amtrak guy to me, that's what I should have done, bring  
17 him right to me. And then when he gets here, I say, look, this is  
18 the command post, stay with me, or get your boss to come and meet  
19 with me and stay with me. And I didn't do that. And these are  
20 the things that work in my head going, I could have done this,  
21 could have done that and, you know.

22 BY MS. SANZO:

23 Q. Okay. I'm going to -- we're going to get to wrap things  
24 up here, but I want to ask -- we talked about a number of lessons  
25 learned. How about some things that worked well, that you think

1 worked well?

2 A. Well, there's a whole bunch of things that worked well.  
3 It's just that you just had a lot of people that take pride in  
4 what they do. I mean, first off, that's simple fact. You know,  
5 we worked well -- you know, I don't know. It's difficult for me.  
6 I mean, we all did our jobs, so I don't think it's -- I just  
7 always think that's our job. You know, we were fortunate in a  
8 number of ways -- you know, everything is not perfect.

9 So, I mean, our people in what I did, again, I didn't  
10 have radio contact with any law enforcement. I had verbal  
11 communications with Chief Smalls, Chief Sullivan, and Chief Ross,  
12 and anything I asked, they did right away. But I didn't bother  
13 them too much, you know, just -- you know, like I said I got, he  
14 and I got into it just -- but once he realized why, he was good  
15 and that's all it takes, you know. I know the police like to be  
16 in charge.

17 MR. COX: Do you guys have an emergency channel that  
18 both police and fire go to in a mass incident like this?

19 MR. SNEIDAR We could. But if you listen to what we had  
20 already, there was no way that would've worked.

21 MR. COX: Okay.

22 MR. SNEIDAR Their first report from a police officer,  
23 because basically because when they cut the gate, he ran up in  
24 front of our guys. He called his radio room, two different radio  
25 rooms now, and said send me everything you have. That's why the

1 influx of police cars. They came from everywhere, South Philly,  
2 West, everywhere. So I know when I'm beat.

3 MR. COX: Stand (indiscernible).

4 MR. SNEIDAR: Yeah, there's no sense of me trying to get  
5 on the radio with him. I had a tough enough time with the radio  
6 going on with me and trying to teach EMS that there's only one  
7 logistics officer and there's not six. You can't write that down.

8 But, again, we -- what went well, I think EMS as a  
9 whole, given the situation and given that the egress points with  
10 people coming out at them and the numbers of people, 230 -- how  
11 many did we get a final count? 238, 237?

12 MS. EVANS: No, I think it was like 236.

13 MR. SNEIDAR: That was total?

14 MS. SANZO: The number that we have --

15 MR. SNEIDAR: Right.

16 MS. SANZO: -- that was given to us, though it sometimes  
17 can vary, was 211 transported.

18 MR. SNEIDAR: Okay.

19 MS. SANZO: But we'll, of course, work on getting that  
20 number updated or corrected if needed.

21 MR. COX: That information is still coming in.

22 MR. SNEIDAR: Yeah, 211 people and everything from, you  
23 know, all the way to a sore finger to, you know, severe, severe,  
24 you know. So I think, you know, I give them a lot of credit for  
25 what they did. Again, none of us were perfect, but -- and the

1 same with the cops. We could've never gotten them all out there  
2 by ourselves. There is just no way, you know.

3           So I think our interoperability could be a little  
4 better. I think our command post structure and maintaining it  
5 could be a little better. A lot of little things, you know, like  
6 I said, I see on my part. I think one of the biggest things that  
7 went well was we monitored as best we could and understood that we  
8 had an extreme safety hazard with where we were operating.

9           What I did when the safety officer got there was, and I  
10 didn't get a face-to-face with him. I believe it was over the  
11 radio that I told him, I said, what I want you to do is primary  
12 assessment safety concerns and I want a safety message broadcast  
13 and I want a safety message broadcast every 5 minutes thereafter.  
14 Usually I'll go with 10 minutes. On a fireground of any  
15 significance, I want it every 10 minutes usually. This was so  
16 extreme that I wanted a safety message every 5 minutes.

17           So, you know, I just felt it was that important. And  
18 there were so many -- the cops and firemen were all working like  
19 this so you could hear whatever's on each radio everybody heard.  
20 And then he was also working with making sure those people out  
21 there, the civilians that we were getting outside, were  
22 maintained, we were keeping their safety as well.

23           So, you know, he had his hands full but he was doing a  
24 good job with it. So he's a -- I'm trying to think, what is it,  
25 E8 or E9 in the Marine Corps in the Reserves. Sharp guy. I spoke

1 to him today; he called me. And I asked all these guys before  
2 they left, I said, you guys need to go home you start writing,  
3 start writing down anything you can remember because we're going  
4 to need it, you know.

5 So, I mean, we obviously will do an interdepartmental  
6 lessons learned, but I think importantly we're going to get  
7 hopefully with OEM and the police department and discuss some  
8 things, you know, to make it, God forbid, better next time, God  
9 forbid there is one. You know, try to be better prepared.

10 MS. SANZO: Well, I'd like to thank you very much,  
11 Chief, for this tremendous amount of information you've been able  
12 to give us, and we're very grateful, very grateful for your time  
13 this evening. So with that, I will end the recording.

14 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)  
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:           AMTRAK TRAIN 188 DERAILMENT NEAR  
                                  PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
                                  MAY 12, 2015  
                                  Interview of Anthony Sneidar

DOCKET NUMBER:           DCA-15-MR-010

PLACE:                     Philadelphia, PA

DATE:                      May 18, 2015

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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Michelle Smirolodo  
Transcriber