

Docket No. SA-531

Exhibit No. 2-F

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C.

Operations Group Chairman
Interview Summary – Manager of flight Standards
Sheri Baxter

(63 Pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES

* * * * *
Investigation of: *
*
CRASH OF CONTINENTAL CONNECTION *
FLIGHT 3407, OPERATED BY *
COLGAN AIR, INC. * Docket No.: DCA-09-MA-027
FEBRUARY 12, 2009, 2217 EST *
CLARENCE, NEW YORK *
*
* * * * *

Interview of: SHERI McOLIVE BAXTER

NTSB, Conference Room C
429 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.
Washington, D.C.

Wednesday
March 11, 2009

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: ROGER COX

APPEARANCES:

ROGER COX
EVAN BYRNE
National Transportation Safety Board

KEN WEBSTER
Regional Senior Investigator-Operations Air
National Transportation Safety Board, Canada

EUGENE CONWAY
ASI Air Carrier Operations, FAA

CAPTAIN TIM DITTMAR
Colgan Air

HARLAN SIMPKINS
Q Series Custom Liaison Pilot
Bombardier

CAPTAIN MIKE WICKBOLDT
Air Line Pilots Association

DANE JAQUES, ESQUIRE
Dombroff Gilmore Jaques & French
1676 International Drive
Penthouse
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 336-8800
(703) 336-8750 (fax)

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Sheri McOlive Baxter:	
By Mr. Cox	4
By Mr. Byrne	22
By Mr. Conway	43
By Mr. Simpkins	46
By Mr. Webster	50
By Mr. Wickboldt	53
By Mr. Dittmar	57
By Mr. Cox	59

I N T E R V I E W

(11:40 a.m.)

INTERVIEW OF SHERI McOLIVE BAXTER

BY MR. COX:

Q. Sheri, I'd like to start off by just getting some sort of basic background information about yourself first. So the first thing is obviously your full name.

A. Sheri McOlive Baxter (ph.). One R and an I.

Q. I think we got that. Your age, please?

A. Forty-one.

Q. And your current title?

A. Manager of Flight Standards.

Q. I presume that you're probably qualified?

A. Yes.

Q. What are your certificates and licenses, please?

A. Airline transport pilot, with type rating on the Saab 340 --

Q. Um-hum.

A. -- and Boeing 757 and 767 SIC privileges.

Q. Um-hum.

A. Commercial, with instrument for the single engine.

Q. And I didn't -- not on the Q400?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Your flight experience, starting with your total time?

1 A. 5100, 5200 right about now.

2 Q. Um-hum.

3 A. PIC total is 2500, 2800, something like that. Probably
4 about 1200, I would say, Turbine 121. Oh, to the ratings, CFI --

5 Q. Um-hum.

6 A. -- double I and MEI, also.

7 Q. Um-hum. When did you become manager at flight
8 standards?

9 A. April, early April last year, 2008.

10 Q. When were you employed at Colgan first?

11 A. First in October of 2002. I left in June of 2005. I
12 came back --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- in September of '07, part time --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- as an instructor.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And then started the full-time position in April of
19 2008.

20 Q. Okay. So you were a part-time instructor from
21 September '07 until April of '08?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Do you have a line number now?

24 A. Do I have what?

25 Q. An employee pilot line number.

1 A. I have a seniority number, yes.

2 Q. Seniority number, yes, okay. So from '05 to '07, were
3 you employed doing something else?

4 A. '05 to '08 I was a first officer at North American
5 Airlines --

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. -- on the Boeing 757 and 767.

8 Q. Okay. Okay, prior to 2002, what were you doing prior to
9 that, then?

10 A. Flight instructor --

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. -- from May of 2001 until I got hired at Colgan.

13 Q. Um-hum.

14 A. And taught both the flying and I taught the ground
15 schools there also.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And I was also, during that time, an adjunct professor,
18 teaching private pilot ground schools at a local university, in
19 their aviation program.

20 Q. Where was that?

21 A. The University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

22 Q. All right. As the manager of flight standards, can you
23 briefly describe your duties?

24 A. The primary job is to be in charge of all the check
25 airmen in the company, on all of the aircraft leads, and

1 increasing flight standards amongst the pilot group, which is done
2 through both management, they, the check airmen, and development
3 of a number of different programs that I've done over the past
4 year, new programs, in order to focus on information
5 dissemination, educational information and different programs that
6 are to improve those flight standards; also working with other
7 members of the flight standards department and the flight
8 operations and in the training department, in order to develop new
9 programs or bulletins, the things for their manuals, in order to
10 provide better procedures and supports -- with pilots, too, with
11 the flight standards.

12 Q. To whom to do your report?

13 A. The Director of Flight Standards is Captain Jeb Barrett.

14 Q. Okay. And do you have anyone that directly reports to
15 you?

16 A. Not in a direct mode. The check airmen do, when they're
17 doing their check airmen duties.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. But it's not, I wouldn't say, a direct supervisory role,
20 because it would overlap with their duties as a pilot, which would
21 then report to the chief pilot.

22 Q. Okay. In your role as being in charge of check airmen,
23 are you involved in the selection of the check airmen?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Since you've become manager, have you selected or been

1 involved in selecting a check airman?

2 A. Yes, one of the programs that I've actually implemented
3 last year was there was never a formal process for the selection.

4 Q. Um-hum.

5 A. With the amount of probes in the past couple of years,
6 it's -- I just really felt that there needed to be a greater
7 infrastructure, so I developed a list of minimum standards for
8 check airmen, ideal standards --

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. -- and also a very complex, competitive selection
11 process, which I implemented, I believe, at the end of last
12 summer. Maybe August timeframe I implemented that.

13 Q. Um-hum. It sounds interesting. Can you tell me a
14 little bit about those minimum standards, ideal and the process?

15 A. Minimum standards are at least six months as captain on
16 an aircraft and at least 500 hours as pilot in command.

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. No failures on their last proficiency check and no
19 violations or letters of warning or anything in the past, I
20 believe, of two years, I put. Also no letters of reprimand or
21 anything like that, and their human resources record and for --
22 and at least one recommendation from a current check airman.
23 Idealized are two recommendations from check airmen, a thousand
24 hours as pilot in command and at least a year as pilot in command
25 on an aircraft.

1 Q. You had mentioned that you were involved in several new
2 programs, in creating several new programs. Can you tell me what
3 you mean by that?

4 A. I also implemented a random flight observation program
5 last year. In addition to and prior, it was only the annual line
6 check that's done on captains --

7 Q. Um-hum.

8 A. -- or if some feedback got through. Like if there was
9 an issue with a certain pilot, then that response was done. This
10 made just random flight observations out there and both for on the
11 ramp, to do ramp checks on crews, to kind of check to make sure
12 equipment is appropriate, and then also random in the seat, to
13 kind of -- so more of a you never know when the check airman's
14 going to show up, so it's not like a studying event. And I
15 implemented that, again, right around August-September timeframe,
16 and I think it was about 40 or 50 of these random flight
17 observations were conducted over this past five months of the
18 year.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And also two major standardization drives occurred last
21 year, one in April and one in August, that were two weeks and
22 those additionally had -- one of those drives had about a hundred
23 flight observations that were conducted, it was the April.

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. And then the other one had -- I don't remember exactly

1 the flight number, but 114 pilots, I do remember that statistic,
2 were touched in some way for a ramp check or a flight observation,
3 which was, I believe, over 20 percent of the pilot group.

4 Q. Would these observations be considered part of your LOSA
5 program?

6 A. No, it is separate from the LOSA. The check airmen are
7 trained on LOSA programs and conducting the LOSA safety audits. I
8 worked with Robert True, who's the manager of safety, and he's
9 been very active in wanting to promote the LOSA program.

10 I also worked with him in trying to develop a new LOSA
11 form in order to use it with the -- one is very complex and we
12 worked together and worked with the check airmen in order to
13 develop a more streamlined LOSA form and also one that better
14 supports our operations. When those LOSAs are set up, he works
15 with the check airmen directly in establishing when he wants those
16 done. When I have them do them, it's just regular flight
17 observations. The information comes to me because the safety
18 audit ones are confidential with safety.

19 Q. So these observations that you initiated last year, the
20 August-September one and then the 100 observations, those were for
21 some special purpose?

22 A. Yeah, just for increasing standardizations. I think I'm
23 going to do two again this year. The first one in April was in
24 response to over-speeds on the Q400 and that was right when I was
25 starting in the position.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. The one in August, I just kind of felt it had been a
3 while since the earlier one and I thought it might be good to kind
4 of have another one and it also preceded an FAA audit that we had.

5 Q. Okay. Are there any other standardization issues,
6 besides over-speed, that promoted you to want to do these
7 observations?

8 A. Not in the August one. It was just that there was the
9 FAA audit and I felt that the one in April had been very
10 successful in giving some good information and changing some
11 procedures. I thought that might be a good thing to do a second
12 one later that year.

13 Q. Have there been any changes in procedures in the Q400,
14 as a result of these observations?

15 A. I've sent a lot of e-mails in relation to better
16 clarification for cockpit -- cabin communications. That requires
17 an effort for the changes in the flight attendant manual. What
18 I've been really doing is more clarifying correct procedures in
19 newsletters that I send out for it. I do know, for the Saab, from
20 the observations, that there have been procedures bulletins that
21 have been changed for that one.

22 Q. Okay. Is there any formal program at Colgan for
23 managing pilots who may have a marginal performance in some area,
24 who pass checkrides but for some reason or other you feel should
25 be monitored or observed or, in other words, in other ways,

1 overseeing by flight standards?

2 A. I implemented a first officer evaluation program last
3 year. I started working on that in about last summer of last
4 year, went through a couple revisions of the program and the form,
5 making sure the -- asking check airmen for input, making sure that
6 it was user-friendly for them and it got the information that we
7 would need, and implemented it in December of last year.

8 Q. Um-hum.

9 A. It's a one-page form that's also available on the
10 website. It's a requirement in the first year that every first
11 officer must have a minimum of one -- a month.

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. After the year, I still -- it's almost not a requirement
14 to have. I still say that please still, you know, do them. And
15 it's the responsibility of both the captains to ask the first
16 officers, have you had this done, let me do one on you, and it's
17 also the responsibility of the first officers to ask the captains
18 to do that.

19 Q. But speaking more specifically, not of the first officer
20 evaluations, but as a result of pilots who may have had trained
21 proficiency type of results on checkrides or who might otherwise
22 have come to the attention of flight standards, some method or
23 some program in which you specifically monitor specific pilots for
24 performance.

25 A. Like if someone just had a like a trained proficiency on

1 a simulator check PC, is that what you're --

2 Q. Well, I only give that as an example of one reason that
3 you might want to conduct some kind of a program of that nature.
4 I just wondered if you have a program of that nature.

5 A. Well, prior to the first officer evaluation, it would be
6 pilots -- mostly check airmen would be contacting me and providing
7 me written information on the performance of specific pilots. As
8 a response to that, I would either schedule a check airman to fly
9 with that other pilot or schedule him to do an observation,
10 depending on schedules and what worked best or types of feedbacks
11 I was getting.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. I can think of one specific incident where it was a
14 check airman that recommended this and I scheduled the first
15 officer to fly with the check airman on their next couple of
16 pairings --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- to help in bringing them back up to speed, giving
19 them those supports they need.

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. Also recently in a proficiency check, the individual,
22 the first officer, received two TPs, which is a passing and
23 there's no program, but the captain -- the check airman called me
24 and said, I'd just like to, maybe in the next month or so, do a
25 follow-up with this person and make sure that they're -- the

1 things that we talked about and discussed in the post-briefing are
2 staying in his mind. So there are, I guess, more informal
3 processes. As they call me, then I schedule these observations to
4 be done.

5 Q. Okay. So for me to just recapitulate what I think you
6 said, you have individual instances of individual pilots who may
7 be monitored, but you don't have an existing standard program
8 ongoing for pilots in general?

9 A. The first officer evaluation program is the formal
10 program of that. And there's a requirement, if they get the
11 lowest mark or needs retraining, we would follow up with the
12 discussion with the captain to find out more information and then
13 we'd go schedule a check airman for that event, and to get them
14 more objective information rather than just from the pilot or the
15 captain himself.

16 MR. JAQUES: I need about a two-minute break.

17 MR. COX: Sure.

18 (Off the record.)

19 (On the record.)

20 BY MR. COX:

21 Q. Since you're not qualified on the Q400, within flight
22 standards, within the organization, who would be the senior person
23 that you would depend upon to be the Q400, you know, most senior
24 check airman?

25 A. Of the check airmen group or in our department of

1 management?

2 Q. You tell me. In other words, who is the person you
3 would depend upon to be the most knowledge senior Q400 person
4 within flight standards?

5 A. In the department --

6 Q. Um-hum.

7 A. -- the two individuals that are typed on the aircraft
8 are the fleet manager --

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. -- P.D. Weston.

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. And also the Director of Flight Standards, Jeb Barrett.

13 I ask them both questions.

14 Q. Okay. Do either one of those individuals conduct
15 checkrides?

16 A. Jeb Barrett is qualified to do line checks.

17 Q. Okay. So then, speaking of other people within flight
18 standards and/or check airmen, other than those two individuals,
19 who would be the next person you would turn to in terms of --

20 A. In the check airmen group?

21 Q. Uh-huh.

22 A. Typically the two air crew program designees in the
23 program, Tim Dittmar and Sam Omair.

24 Q. Okay, okay, great. All right, let's come back just
25 briefly to the issue of monitoring pilots who may have proficiency

1 issues. I think that what you told me was that you deal with that
2 on a one-on-one basis.

3 A. The formal program is through the first officer
4 evaluation program.

5 Q. Yeah, I wasn't referring to --

6 A. Other things are an informal program, as we receive
7 feedback.

8 Q. Okay. What would you do, from the point of view of
9 flight standards, with a captain who might have a proficiency
10 issue or problem?

11 A. I'd first ask the check airman to make a written report,
12 so it's a documentation trail rather than a verbal trail.

13 Q. Um-hum. Okay.

14 A. I usually discuss it with the Director of Flight
15 Standards, Jeb Barrett, and depending on what the issue is, if we
16 need to get the training department involved, sometimes that's
17 often the course. And then you look at the different parameters
18 and issues, deciding if we need to make an observation or conduct
19 retraining or have a check airman fly with them. We make the
20 decision based on that, depending on the feedback we received and
21 how much feedback we received.

22 Q. Do you have any Q400 captains who would fall into the
23 category of possibly having proficiency issues that need to be
24 dealt with by flight standards?

25 A. I cannot think of any specific ones that I've sent

1 recently for specific follow-ups.

2 Q. Okay. Did you know Captain Renslow?

3 A. I had not flown with him; I had met him.

4 Q. Were you aware of any proficiency issues that
5 Captain Renslow may have had?

6 A. I am familiar with this training record. That's all I
7 could speak on officially.

8 Q. When he came up for transition to become captain on the
9 Q400, were you involved in any review process of his records or
10 his performance before he transitioned --

11 A. No.

12 Q. -- on the airplane? Are you familiar with
13 First Officer Shaw?

14 A. I, again, knew who she was. I had met her once and that
15 was it.

16 Q. Had you received any first officer evaluation forms on
17 First Officer Shaw?

18 A. The first officer evaluation forms are submitted to the
19 chief pilots --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- of their respective areas. If there are low marks or
22 remarks needing further comment, they're forwarded to flight
23 standards. I had not received any that were forwarded to me by
24 the regional chief pilot.

25 Q. Okay. Are you familiar with the regional airline tail

1 stall video that's shown in recurrent training?

2 A. I think it's about a 25, 30-minute video, I believe, by
3 NASA that I've seen.

4 Q. By NASA?

5 A. That's the one you're referring to, yes.

6 Q. You've seen that video?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Were you ever involved in approving that for being shown
9 at training?

10 A. No.

11 Q. In that video it discusses certain procedures for
12 handling what's known as tail stalls. Has anyone ever considered,
13 to your knowledge, incorporating any of that training into your
14 formal training procedures on the Q400?

15 A. It's been talked about but it cannot be simulated in the
16 flight simulator.

17 Q. Okay. So would the reason that it wouldn't be
18 incorporated into the program because it couldn't be simulated?

19 A. It's talked about in ground school. It can't be done on
20 the flight simulator. That pretty much as far as the discussion
21 has gone.

22 Q. Any discussion about incorporating it into your actual
23 crew manuals or policies and procedures?

24 A. Prior to me being in this position, I don't know. I
25 have not been not involved in any such discussion.

1 Q. Okay. Do you keep figures on the checkride failure rate
2 of Colgan pilots as a whole?

3 A. One of the new things that I've been working on
4 implementing is I've developed a form for all the APDs to fill out
5 on a monthly basis, to create it a more formal. It's been
6 informal in the past. They must contact us any time that there's
7 a failure, and we know it doesn't need a 20-percent rate. It's
8 significantly below that. I'm going to, with this new program,
9 start tracking that more formally.

10 Q. So based on the information that you have to date, can
11 you tell me what the failure rate is of your crews, overall, on
12 checkrides?

13 A. I wouldn't know exact percentages, but I know it does
14 not meet 20 percent.

15 Q. It's less than 20 percent?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You said you'd instituted a new program. When is that
18 going to be underway?

19 A. When the new flight operations training manual is
20 approved. Chapter 8 is the flight standards section and that is
21 written in there. When that gets approved and is published, then
22 it'll be implemented.

23 Q. Would that be a new version of this manual?

24 A. No. Currently is called the crew member and dispatcher
25 training manual. It's going to be re-titled the flight operations

1 training manual.

2 Q. So when that manual comes up, that part of that will be
3 incorporated will be a formal failure rate tracking --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- concept or something?

6 A. Yes, there's a paragraph that addresses that.

7 Q. And when is that going to be issued?

8 A. I'm not involved in that process. I wrote my chapter
9 and that's my involvement.

10 Q. Okay. So in your position in charge of flight
11 standards, what method do you use to keep up with failure rates or
12 pilots who are not passing checkrides?

13 A. When the check airman call to inform me of what that
14 failure rate --

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. -- is, I know, on the numbers that are given every year
17 versus the numbers of failures that I get, it doesn't even come
18 close to 20 percent.

19 Q. Sure. So do you have any idea of what it is less than
20 20 percent?

21 A. I would probably say more like around one or two
22 percent.

23 Q. One or two percent, okay. Of the failures, is there a
24 most common reason?

25 A. That certainly isn't tracked, so I can certainly -- I

1 couldn't really say what it is, because that's nothing that's
2 really written down formally in any program.

3 Q. Do you get any regular feedback from any of the safety
4 reporting systems?

5 A. Which?

6 Q. Any of the pilot safety reporting systems.

7 A. The ASAP program?

8 Q. Well, any of the ones that you have. I believe you have
9 an irregularity program, you have --

10 A. The irregularity reports the safety -- forms from the
11 FOPPM.

12 Q. Um-hum.

13 A. They go to the safety department.

14 Q. I understand that. And from the safety department or
15 elsewhere, do you get informed about any of those events that take
16 place or reports that take place?

17 A. They are not circulated to the flight standards
18 department. It would be great if we were involved in it.

19 Q. Are you involved in pilot selection hiring?

20 A. I've conducted simulator interviews when I was a part-
21 time simulator instructor, but since I've been in this position, I
22 haven't been involved in hiring or interviewing.

23 Q. Can you tell me a little bit about ECAPS and what that
24 is?

25 A. Enhanced crew awareness procedures system. It's every

1 time ATC uses an all short clearance or any type of a taxi
2 clearance, who's ever talking on the radios will say it to the
3 other pilot and the other pilot must repeat it back, both on the
4 ground and in the air; make sure that both the pilots are hearing
5 the same things and are on the same page conducting those
6 directives.

7 Q. Okay. Can you tell me if the Q400 aircraft is
8 susceptible to tail stall?

9 A. I am not typed on the aircraft, so I have not read the
10 entire AFM, but I do know that Bombardier issued a public
11 statement, saying that it would be highly unlikely that it would
12 -- that would happen.

13 Q. Can you tell me if the Saab 340 is susceptible to tail
14 stall?

15 A. I haven't seen anything in the AFM discussing that.

16 BY MR. BYRNE:

17 Q. Hey, Sheri, just some follow-up questions for you. You
18 started this position in April 2008?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Who had the position before you?

21 A. Dean Bandavanis.

22 Q. And what happened -- why did he vacate the position?

23 A. He moved into the chief pilot position --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- at that point.

1 Q. Okay. And how were you selected for this position?

2 A. I knew that Captain Bandavanis was taking the chief
3 pilot's position. I inquired about it when they formally posted
4 it. I sent my resume and a letter of interest to the HR
5 department, recruiting, Chuck Hogan and also to
6 Captain Jeb Barrett, because I knew he was the Director of Flight
7 Standards, stating my interest also. Then they called me and I
8 had interviews with both of those individuals.

9 Q. Okay. Once selected, what job-specific training did you
10 receive?

11 A. I had to go through the formal. I had already received
12 the indoc classes that every new hire goes through, having been
13 part time. If I would've started initially at that time, I
14 would've had to have done that all over again.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I had already received that training, so I didn't need
17 to do that. As far as the job-specifics, it was just, I guess,
18 more OJT type of things and here's the training manual and names
19 of the check airmen and you know, company manuals and -- flight
20 standards, that your job.

21 Q. You've been there less than a year. What would you
22 characterize as your biggest accomplishment?

23 A. There's a lot of programs that I implemented last year.
24 I increased the check airmen numbers by over 20 percent; the two
25 major standardization drives; implementation of a monthly check

1 airmen newsletter that goes out to all check airmen, that focuses
2 on just various issues, different -- explanations of bulletins
3 better; different things I wanted them focusing on on line checks
4 or on proficiency checks. And as a result of that, so many line
5 pilots were interested in reading it. I then also implemented a
6 quarterly newsletter, a flight standards newsletter, that is
7 distributed to all pilots.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And I get data from this and also from the ASAP
10 information and reports, and also from another program that was
11 started last year, flight operations incident investigation
12 program. Our dispatch, any time that there's certain events,
13 they're required to report. This includes gate returns, air
14 returns, diversion, aborted takeoffs, bird strikes. I'm sure they
15 have a long list of them. They send the details of those flights
16 out to certain individuals in the company.

17 We follow up on most of those and kind of keep a written
18 narrative from that. Then I include those in the newsletters as
19 lessons learned, you know, hey, these guys did a great job, if you
20 have this happen, just to kind of show like real-life scenarios of
21 things in the aircraft, on the line. I think those newsletters
22 have been a real big support for the crews and everything out
23 there.

24 Q. Go on.

25 A. I've also written a number of educational documents to

1 support pilots. I wrote a document called, is your PC
2 approaching? It's kind of like a syllabus to help a pilot prepare
3 for their proficiency check and kind like a week-by-week study
4 guide of the chapters they should be focusing on to kind of
5 disperse their time. It also provides information for them of the
6 items that will be covered in the proficiency check and what they
7 can expect. Kind of basically like a syllabus. You know, since
8 we don't -- not being in school anymore, a syllabus for the pilot,
9 in order to prepare for this examination.

10 A couple examples of the other documents that I had
11 written was an IOE prep sheet for first officers, new hires coming
12 on IOE, to kind of give them a little step by step of how the flow
13 of operations of the flights goes. They can kind of sit in a
14 chair and fly at home. I also wrote a document, the seven habits
15 of the highly effective first officer. I have a few more of these
16 documents that I'm having reviewed before I post them. But I had,
17 I think, maybe four of those that I had written last year. Four
18 or five of those.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. That's all that's coming to mind right now, new
21 programs.

22 Q. I guess, you know, a lot of stuff seems to be
23 implemented in a very short period of time since you've arrived in
24 this position, I guess. Is there a reason why all of that stuff
25 has been implemented?

1 A. I saw a need for creating more infrastructures with the
2 taking on of the new fleet, a lot of expansion, number of pilots.
3 I feel my strength is in building infrastructure, so I just saw a
4 lot of these systems and everything that I could put in place in
5 order to help the company in their growing and also provide
6 supports to pilots, to ensure flight standards, to support them in
7 doing their job and making sure that the information is
8 disseminated out to them.

9 Q. Okay. Anything in your past experience help prepare you
10 for what you've been doing since April?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What specifically?

13 A. Both educational and professional background. My
14 educational background, I have a bachelor's in biology and a BS in
15 social ecology. I have a master's in public administration,
16 basically a lot of administration and organization. I'm also
17 currently ABD right now, my Ph.D. in public policy.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Again, pretty much my emphasis is taking a lot of
20 organizational development types of courses. Aviation is a second
21 career. I spent 15 years in the public sector. I managed
22 nonprofit programs. I founded three nonprofit organizations,
23 pretty much taking -- once I got a federal grant, taking the
24 program from absolutely nothing, to taking it to a full -- the
25 program that I'm most proud of that went from absolutely nothing

1 to a program where I ended up training 20 people to continue my
2 job after the three-year grant was over, and it was a statewide
3 program.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So I felt like I had a lot of practice in creating and
6 managing programs from end-building of the structure.

7 Q. What's your biggest challenge in this position?

8 A. Not having enough time to do all the ideas that I want
9 to implement. I guess that's personal.

10 Q. As far as just some specific follow-ups, Roger asked, as
11 far as, is there a trend or a primary reason pilots are failing
12 checks and you said nothing really came to mind. But what about
13 -- think of the most recent check and what was the failure for,
14 the check failure and what was the reason?

15 A. The first one that I specifically was the person giving
16 the checkride or just the feedback?

17 Q. No, as feedback, in your position as manager of flight
18 standards.

19 A. Well, I know that there was one issue, but I've not been
20 involved to know what the exact specific verbalization was. I
21 mean, I know like a 30-second briefing that I received on it, so I
22 couldn't speak very explicitly on that. But I do know that there
23 was a failure yesterday.

24 Q. Prior to yesterday's failure, what was the last one you
25 were briefed on?

1 A. Yesterday morning, there was a first officer that was
2 pulled from the line. It wasn't from a line check. It was a ramp
3 check that was done prior to a flight; that his manuals were out
4 of date, so we pulled from the line.

5 Q. And was that a company ramp check or a FAA ramp check?

6 A. It was one of the check airmen that was -- he's
7 dedicated to flight standards for the month and he was doing some
8 checks on the crews and found the manuals out of date and -- for
9 proficiency reasons, pulling from line.

10 Q. Okay. And with respect to yesterday's failure that you
11 were talking about that you weren't involved in, what involvement
12 do you have or when were you briefed and by whom?

13 A. I received a phone call this morning. It was very quick
14 because I was coming here. All I heard was that a flight
15 observation line check was being done on a captain on the Q and it
16 was unsatisfactory.

17 Q. Those are the only details you have?

18 A. All I know is something had occurred during the approach
19 flight into the airport and that's all I know.

20 Q. Okay. Was it a scheduled line check or --

21 A. That, I do not know if it was a scheduled one or if it
22 was one of our observations.

23 Q. And to clarify as far as the reports that you do or you
24 do not have access to or get involved in, the ASAP reporting
25 program.

1 A. I am the company management representative on the ERC
2 committee --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- for ASAP. So I've been involved with the ASAP
5 program and sometimes I do some of the follow-ups.

6 Q. Okay, I'll follow up on that in just a second then.
7 Just to clarify a question as far as -- I guess it's the
8 irregularity reports you don't get involved in?

9 A. They don't get forwarded to us.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. If I know that one's been submitted and I want it, I
12 request it.

13 Q. Okay. And you said it'd be great to be involved in
14 getting those. Why? What would it provide you to help you do
15 your job?

16 A. More information for when I follow up with flight
17 operations investigations. I could have both the formats to
18 gather information, to write narrative reports.

19 Q. Have you made a request to someone to be plugged into
20 that information source formally?

21 A. Yes, the manager of safety. We've actually had
22 conversations on this and he'd been working with the IT department
23 in order to get it, so when it's submitted electronically, it
24 would automatically be e-mailed to relevant parties in the
25 company.

1 Q. Okay. So has it been denied or is it in the process?

2 A. I don't know the stage of that. He has been managing
3 that. I just know he's been working on that.

4 Q. Okay. How often do you observe line operations?

5 A. I typically fly about four days a month and I'm
6 typically also out on the line maybe two days, two or three days
7 extra a month, beyond what I fly.

8 Q. And when you fly it's in the Saab?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. How often do you observe Q400 operations?

11 A. I have before. It's a little more rare. The last
12 flight I was on was a flight -- I went up to Newark for some
13 things and I took one of our flights and I sat up in the cockpit
14 jump seat on that flight up there. I would say I probably
15 observed maybe 20, 25 Q400 flights.

16 Q. Okay. What are your observations from those flights, as
17 far as pilot standardization?

18 A. The majority of the flights that I had observed were in
19 the April drive in April 2008, with the issues with the over-speed
20 warning. And the biggest thing that came into my mind that I
21 observed was with the new automation. Having come from an
22 aircraft that had a lot of automation I noticed this, that a lot
23 of pilots, when they first come to using the flight management
24 system, they get a little bit, too, more overwhelmed in using that
25 management system and I just -- I put out some information in the

1 newsletter, as a result of that, saying make sure one person's
2 always looking outside and only one person is in the computer at a
3 time.

4 Q. What's your observation or based on those observations
5 in the Q400, what did you observe with respect to adherence to the
6 standard operation procedure?

7 A. Not knowing the exact -- how to fly the Q400 and not
8 being on the plane, I don't know the various specifics of that, as
9 far as like a sterile cockpit, the procedures that are pretty much
10 standard across all aircraft fleets. I found them to have good
11 communications and a good, sterile cockpit and I do remember that.

12 Q. Okay. As far as the initiatives that you've put in
13 place, what feedback do you get from pilots, about those
14 initiatives?

15 A. From what I've heard through both check airmen and some
16 regular line pilots is that they love the amount of communication,
17 they love getting the real story of what happened, and they feel
18 that it's supports and everything to help them do their jobs
19 better. They feel like, hey, someone's, you know, thinking about
20 us out there.

21 Q. What about the random line checks?

22 A. Even when I go out to fly the line, I do know that they
23 think, what have I done recently? I do know they kind of are like
24 watching their guard. In a way, that's good for them to be like
25 that, but I wish they were like -- you know, hopefully that stays

1 with them so they'll be like that all the time. That's the
2 message I pass on.

3 Q. What feedback about the programs that you've implemented
4 do you get from the Director of Flight Standards?

5 A. He was really supportive of all of these programs that
6 I've been doing, and every time I come up with an idea, I tell
7 him, hey, what do you think about this, and he's, yeah, run with
8 it. Just give me a draft and you know, let's make it happen.

9 Q. What about others in the company, has there been any
10 pushback at all on any of the programs that you've been initiating
11 since April?

12 A. There is one program that I had submitted. I think it's
13 more logistical, trying to get a check airman that's totally
14 committed to doing and I would like eight a month now, I think, is
15 what I submitted and designated to the markets. And I think it's
16 just between getting through scheduling versus taking them off the
17 line and reserves. Getting that coordinated, I think, has taken a
18 little bit longer. But I would like to have a dedicated check
19 airman to do nothing but flight standards work for an entire
20 month.

21 Q. And do you have a staff to administer the programs?

22 A. I increased those check airmen numbers by over 20
23 percent so I have that little bit extra. And I got those numbers
24 -- it's now just a little bit over 10 percent. I talked to flight
25 standards departments at other airlines to kind of get a good

1 gauge of what are good numbers to have. So I increased it to just
2 over 10 percent of ours numbers and -- which I feel is a little
3 bit extra so I can have those dedicated check airmen to be doing
4 the flight standards work.

5 Q. Okay. What's the company learning from the FO
6 evaluation program?

7 A. The only ones I get are the ones that the check -- the
8 chief pilots receive and where it's got comments of needing
9 retraining. From those, it's a more of an individual issue rather
10 than specific trends, and then it's the follow-up, in order to get
11 that specific pilot the supports they need in order to -- maybe
12 it's a, you know, specific issue or just, you know, overall like,
13 you know, kind of getting more up to speed on the things that they
14 need to be doing for their jobs.

15 Q. What tools exist to allow a first officer or a flight
16 attendant to provide information about a captain?

17 A. Typically, they have -- I think another thing that's
18 better for having a lot more check airmen presence out on all the
19 bases, is there's just about a check airman at one of our bases,
20 so the first officers do have a method of going to that check
21 airman that's their base, to discuss situations. Most of the time
22 I know, when the check airmen are talking to me, that they're able
23 to deal with it there on the base. If it escalates, then the
24 check airman contacts me. Informal program.

25 Q. And with respect to ALPA coming on the premises

1 relatively recently, is there a liaison to a professional
2 standards group at the union?

3 A. I know that they've developed a pro-standards committee.
4 Several of those individuals are some of the check airmen, which I
5 was glad to see, but there's been no formalized process.

6 Q. Okay. You spoke of the flight -- the FOTM or the other
7 acronym for it that's going to evolve into the FOTM with the
8 development of that. Are you involved at all in the TFM
9 development?

10 A. Not specifically writing. Like if there's certain
11 issues that -- in order to implement the things, if they kind of
12 ask me, how do you see this thing being implemented by the check
13 airmen? Then we get a little feedback. More involved in the Saab
14 operations, having been, you know, flying the Saab, I work closely
15 with that fleet manager. But it's more of just like, you know,
16 reading it, yes, I see this as being able to be implemented,
17 rather than directly writing it.

18 Q. Does the Saab have a CFM like this?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Why not?

21 A. It's got a CFM that's got a lot more systems in it. The
22 aircraft has been around for a significantly longer amount of
23 time, so its manual is the size of the FOPPM down there.

24 Q. Is there a plan to, I guess, change this manual or make
25 it thicker?

1 A. Yes, it's been written and I'm not -- not being involved
2 with the writing of that manual, I know that it's been written. I
3 don't know what stage. I think it was just recently sent off
4 again to -- it's been going back and forth between the different
5 parties for that approval.

6 Q. Okay. And is the manual going to be less forward-
7 referencing or cross-referencing to other manuals that are onboard
8 the aircraft?

9 A. It'll be part of the ATAS (ph.). It's going to be one
10 the ATAS-compliant manuals, yeah.

11 Q. Okay. As far as the current version of the CFM, does
12 that -- how does that affect check airmen or how does that affect
13 standardization on the line?

14 A. I know that they definitely wanted something more
15 formal. That is something that I've heard. And I know that
16 they've been working on it a lot over the past year, to get this
17 more formal manual out to them.

18 Q. The ASAP process -- and you said you're part of the ERC?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And that program has been around for how long?

21 A. I believe it had just started right about the time when
22 I had come. I'm thinking it's maybe coming up on a year. That I
23 don't know, having -- a couple months after I was in this position
24 as manager of flights standards, they asked me to be involved in
25 the ERC committee.

1 Q. Okay. How often does the committee meet?

2 A. Always at least once a month. Depending on if there's
3 more recent issues that have happened, it's often more than that.
4 We might hold emergency meetings. Lately, it's been once a week.

5 Q. Okay, once a week. Lately, as defined as prior to the
6 accident or after the accident?

7 A. Just the past few weeks we've had -- there was one
8 yesterday. I was flying, so I wasn't able to be involved in that.
9 There was one last week and I believe, also one the week before
10 that.

11 Q. Okay. What's the average number of reports that the ERC
12 is working with when they meet?

13 A. I'm just going off memory. I don't know the statistics
14 at all. I would say, carryover from the month before, that we're
15 waiting to gather more information on, maybe 12 to 15, and some of
16 those have been carried over for several months. And then the
17 brand new ones, maybe 10. Five to 10.

18 Q. Okay. What is coming in through ASAP, with respect to
19 adherence to standard operating procedures?

20 A. The most recent ones, like, I'm thinking, in the past
21 month, are the three runway incursion reports. I'm trying to
22 think of ones that it would adhere to the SOPs. The ones that I'm
23 really thinking about are the runway incursion events. There's a
24 couple, but everything was handled perfectly fine. They were
25 diversions that there was no issue and we just said thank you for

1 submitting. It's was fine. I think they just did that --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- as a safety precaution for themselves.

4 Q. What's your role in the development of the flight
5 standardization manual?

6 A. I first started writing it last year, as an entire
7 manual. As I started writing it I saw a lot of duplication with
8 the flight training -- flight operations training manual. So I'm
9 working with the training department. We decided that it should
10 be a chapter in the flight operations training manual. Chapter 8
11 has been devoted to flight standards and we also have Appendices
12 A, B and C that includes forms, the job aides.

13 Q. Okay. And outside of the ERC and the ASAP program, what
14 is your -- what's the nature of your day-to-day interface with
15 flight safety? Who do you report to or who's your liaison there?
16 What's the nature of the communications? What are the problems
17 that you're looking at now?

18 A. In what --

19 Q. In flight safety, in the safety department, who do you
20 refer -- who do you communicate with and what's the nature of
21 those communications? What are the problems that you're looking
22 at?

23 A. I mean, I most specifically, in the safety department,
24 will work with Robert True, being that we're equivalent management
25 levels and we're in the same kind of -- we're more the doers

1 rather than, you know, implementing the types of programs. As far
2 as specific safety issues, I certainly know he's -- I'm also
3 involved with the focal. He's been trying to get the focal
4 program going, so I've been on that steering committee and tried
5 to get that program implemented. I know I've written some of the
6 feedback reporting forms or the safety reporting forms that I send
7 off to the department to bring attention to some issues. And I
8 usually do that as a response -- you know, I hear certain things
9 -- in order to get the change done. The things that I couldn't
10 directly influence, I've submitted those forms. But other than
11 that, there's nothing --

12 Q. There's no formal safety committee? Are there any
13 committee meetings that you're --

14 A. I wouldn't be involved in it. I don't know if they have
15 their separate meetings of their own. That would be a safety
16 department function.

17 Q. Okay. You've covered the output that you're providing
18 to the pilots. And those newsletters, are they e-mailed or
19 printed? How do they get to the pilots or get into their hands?

20 A. Multi-method. I will e-mail them to the entire check
21 airmen group, also the original chief pilots, and several other
22 flight management personnel --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- and saying here it is. And I also post it on the
25 website, which is available to all crew members. I have created a

1 special flight standards section on the website that has -- even
2 several sections after that. There's a check airmen newsletters
3 section. There's also an area for all the check airmen forms that
4 they utilize, general check airmen information, and then also
5 there's a tab for all pilots and that has all those newsletters
6 and other educational documents underneath there.

7 Q. Okay. And the check airmen newsletters are monthly; the
8 all-pilots newsletters are quarterly.

9 A. Quarterly. And there's also a little longer.

10 Q. Okay. Let me shift now to observations of
11 standardization. The Q400, as I understand it, has -- there's
12 three bases of operation, Norfolk, Albany and Newark?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. What information do you have as far as standardization
15 across those bases, for the operations of the Q400, as far as the
16 pilots flying that aircraft?

17 A. For the first officers, for that evaluation program,
18 it's -- they all get turned in to the regional chief pilot at
19 Newark and it's not tracked as opposed for one base or the other.
20 It's certainly something that might be -- if it is one of the out-
21 station bases, it might be something that we look at and handle
22 within that certain base itself, rather than just, you know, at
23 Newark, but that's not really something that's tracked
24 specifically as, you know, oh, it's just this base.

25 A. Is there any information that you have that tells you

1 that there is -- there are difference across the bases, as far as
2 standardization among the flight crews?

3 A. That isn't anything that I really -- that isn't noticed
4 to me as any type of a trend or occurrence at certain bases, less
5 standard, you know, than another one.

6 Q. Okay. As far as First Officer Shaw, do you have any
7 knowledge as far as her reputation as a pilot?

8 A. She's someone I had never heard anything really ever on.

9 Q. What about Captain Renslow, any knowledge of his
10 reputation as a pilot?

11 A. The same thing, I never really heard anything one way or
12 the other about him.

13 Q. And how did you become familiar with Captain Renslow's
14 training record?

15 A. Being in the office world, the other training personnel
16 -- some of the pilots that I'm just familiar with, and then, after
17 the accident it was pulled, so I read it and looked at his
18 history.

19 Q. So you became familiar with his training record prior to
20 the accident or after the accident?

21 A. I think I might've looked at it before, but I wouldn't
22 have remembered it specifically.

23 Q. And do you recall a reason why you would've looked at it
24 before?

25 A. I think, when he was going up for the checkride, I

1 might've pulled it. You know, I have them printed off a lot. I
2 vaguely remember. It's not something that sticks out in my mind.
3 It's something I would've done. I do it --

4 Q. As far as the process for the check airmen selection
5 process that you've implemented, where do the -- where do you come
6 up with the standards, the criteria?

7 A. To me, in my mind, I just kind of did what made sense.
8 I just happened to be doing an observation, sitting in the jump
9 seat of a Saab and the individual that was the captain had
10 expressed interest and from that I kind of thought, I'm watching
11 the line check and I need to create a formal program for this.
12 That's where I came up with the idea for the line check. So I
13 developed a program and then, after I implemented it, somebody
14 told me that it was pretty similar to what Southwest does, so I
15 figured I must've been on the right track.

16 Q. Okay. What is your interface with the FAA?

17 A. I do work with the POI and the APM a little bit in
18 certain different programs. One of the people that's assigned to
19 us, the FAA inspectors, is -- also serves on the air/sea
20 committee, so I have pretty regular interaction with him. That
21 individual also happens to be the APM for the Saab, so I interact
22 with him on the Saab issues, for that. Also, since I'm involved
23 in setting up all the observations for new check airmen, I'll work
24 with, you know, all of the inspectors for that.

25 Q. Regarding the LOSA, your check airmen are out doing the

1 LOSA observations?

2 A. They can. I don't specially request them. They've been
3 trained on it. That is the safety department, they assign it.
4 Since they've been trained, they can utilize them to conduct LOSA
5 audits.

6 Q. Are there other individuals that have been trained and
7 qualified to do the LOSA audits, who are not check airmen?

8 A. I knew, though, that he had developed a program for
9 that. I'm not involved in that. That's the safety department. I
10 don't know many --

11 Q. And from your perspective as manager of flight
12 standards, how would you characterize the safety culture at
13 Colgan?

14 A. Well, I certainly know that in talking with the pilots,
15 that safety is always very important with them. We had a safety
16 road show last year that really kind of increased that safety
17 culture, which I think was good to have that face-to-face
18 interaction and everything with the pilots.

19 Q. And the road show -- I'm not sure. Have you talked to
20 us about that yet? Is that part of the two --

21 A. That was part of the safety department's -- that they
22 had done -- where they went around throughout the entire system
23 and had a presentation through the safety department, to interface
24 with the pilots.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I think it was both -- and the message of safety is
2 important to us and here's how we're here to support and work
3 together, and also having that face-to-face interaction with the
4 pilots. I kind of saw that it's a good support, good
5 communications and face-to-face and everything to improve that
6 safety culture.

7 MR. BYRNE: Okay. Sheri, thank you.

8 BY MR. CONWAY:

9 Q. Hi, Sheri, just a couple of questions here.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I want to focus a little bit on your relationship with
12 the check airmen and I have questions, if it's within your
13 purview, on curriculum or to whatever extent you have anything to
14 do with it or any input on the curriculum for the various airplane
15 types. So it's the Saab and the Dash 8 --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- right now. With respect to the check airmen, you
18 said they basically -- they're responsible to you, in their
19 professional jobs as check airmen, is that true?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And the APDs, tell me about their function with you, on
22 the one hand, and with the APM, on the other. Who's in charge?
23 You know, who do they report to when they function as APDs?

24 A. In a way, I guess it would be both. They wouldn't have
25 direct contact with the APM for the program. It's done through us

1 unless the inspector happens to be out during the conduct of those
2 APD duties.

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. They also have to have that one annual evaluation done
5 by the inspector, also.

6 Q. From the APM?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. The FAA -- okay. So it's a little bit of both, that
9 responsibility there?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Tell me also about designees, that is to say contract
12 check airmen. Are you familiar with that term?

13 A. Yes, we've been -- when the Q400 program was initially
14 starting, we were using the designees through Flight Safety
15 International.

16 Q. Okay. For the record, would you tell us what a contract
17 check airman is? What does that term imply and who are they
18 responsible to, when they function as a contract check airman?

19 A. They go through our training programs, but we still use
20 their credentials from their program, being at flight safety, and
21 they're authorized, too, depending on the approval that we get
22 from the POI or the APM for the program, to do either proficiency
23 checks or both proficiency checks and type ratings.

24 Q. Does Colgan train them, then, to Colgan standards?

25 A. They have to keep up the proficiency checks and

1 everything with us, also, for that.

2 Q. Okay. Now sort of in relation to that, let's talk a
3 little bit about the curriculum that's being taught, that leads to
4 an APM -- correction, a contract check airman possibly doing a
5 proficiency check or a type rating ride. Whose curriculum is that
6 that's being taught presently by -- well, let me back up from
7 that. Is any of the curriculum presently being taught by
8 non-full-time Colgan instructors?

9 A. I do know also that when we were having all the ground
10 schools being taught flight safety, we had those flight safety
11 programs the ground schools approved, through our FAA office, as
12 okay. So that would've been a FlightSafety instructor that those
13 individuals would've received the training from but that was
14 approved that they could do that for Colgan. Now I believe we
15 don't have -- I think there's one individual that remains with the
16 FlightSafety, that can do that. We've taken over completely, so
17 it's all of our instructors. We haven't done any additional
18 contract check airmen from that.

19 Q. Would that one individual be Mike Young from St. Louis?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. So I think I'm understanding that you say that
22 even when FlightSafety was delivering this training, largely, at
23 least recently largely, it was being -- it was already approved by
24 Colgan, i.e., the Colgan POI. Would that be --

25 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. -- right? Okay. I think that's all I have, Sheri, but
2 let just quickly look over. I think I had one little note here.
3 The gentleman that is on the ASAP committee and the ERC with you,
4 from the FAA.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Who is he?

7 A. Inspector Richard Bell.

8 Q. Richard Bell, okay.

9 A. He's the primary. Sometimes, if he's unable,
10 Inspector Jack Strange (ph.)_has filled in once or twice, I
11 believe.

12 MR. CONWAY: That's all the questions I have. Thank you
13 very much.

14 BY MR. SIMPKINS:

15 Q. I had a question. Going back when you were discussing
16 the tail stall and you mentioned that it couldn't be replicated in
17 the simulator, and that there was a statement that you're aware of
18 from -- saying it wasn't relevant to the Q400. All that being
19 said, is it still being considered to be included in part of
20 training?

21 MR. JAQUES: I'm going to have to object. You
22 mischaracterized her prior testimony.

23 BY MR. SIMPKINS:

24 Q. Okay. Going back to the tail stall that we were
25 discussing, did you make a statement that it could not be

1 replicated in a simulator?

2 A. I don't know of any way to replicate it. There's no
3 button in a flight simulator in order to be able to tail stall.

4 Q. So because of that, is it true to -- would be it correct
5 -- it'd be correct to understand that the tail stall training
6 procedure is not in Colgan manuals because of that reason, because
7 it can't be replicated in a simulator?

8 A. That has been my assumption, that it hasn't been
9 conducted in the simulator but it's talked about and discussed as
10 part of the ground training curriculum.

11 Q. Okay. Now, you mentioned that the manufacturer,
12 Bombardier, has released a statement, saying that tail stall is
13 not relevant to the Q400?

14 MR. JAQUES: That's what I'm objecting to. That's not
15 what she said. You can ask her to clarify.

16 BY MR. SIMPKINS:

17 Q. Can you clarify your understanding of what the statement
18 from the manufacturer is?

19 A. The press release that I had heard was that Bombardier
20 said that the possibility of a tail stall would be highly unlikely
21 in the aircraft.

22 Q. Okay. With that knowledge of that statement, is there
23 any plans to change the training program to take the tail stall
24 curriculum out of ground training if it isn't relevant to the
25 Q400?

1 A. The part with that video that's showed by NASA, really
2 more has to do with the -- rather than specific aircraft, it
3 showed it for all aircraft fleets. It's just a good, basic safety
4 video. As far as I know, we're planning on keeping that and we
5 haven't any discussions about taking that out.

6 Q. Okay. If it's not a relevant procedure to a specific
7 type of aircraft that Colgan is operating, do you feel it's
8 valuable information to provide an operational procedure that's
9 not relevant to an aircraft?

10 MR. JAQUES: I'm going to object again. You're
11 referring to it as not relevant. She didn't say that. I object
12 to that --

13 MR. SIMPKINS: Okay.

14 MR. JAQUES: -- part of the question.

15 BY MR. SIMPKINS:

16 Q. If the manufacturer has produced a statement, saying
17 that the tail stall is not relevant to the Q400, is that not what
18 was just stated?

19 MR. JAQUES: You can ask her --

20 MR. COX: Okay, stop. Stop this. Stop.

21 (Off the record.)

22 (On the record.)

23 BY MR. SIMPKINS:

24 Q. Can you please refresh my understanding of what your
25 understanding is of the recommendation from the manufacturer

1 regarding tail stall?

2 A. From what I remember hearing in the press release was
3 that having a tail stall in this aircraft, in the Bombardier Q400,
4 was highly unlikely.

5 Q. With the knowledge with the statement from the
6 manufacturer that tail stall would be highly unlikely, is Colgan
7 still considering, in their training, to include tail stall
8 information?

9 A. I believe that that video is still going to be presented
10 and discussed in the ground school training sessions. I have not
11 heard information otherwise.

12 Q. Maybe I'll come back to that question. Regarding the
13 newsletters that you publish and send out, I believe I heard you
14 say that you send them out to the check airmen and the newsletters
15 are then posted on the website for the rest of the pilots to
16 see --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- is that correct? Now, I know there's a lot of
19 documentation that comes out from Colgan to their crews, in the
20 form of redesigns, bulletins, memos, newsletters. I assume
21 there's another form of documentation. Is there any mandatory
22 reading requirement of your newsletters?

23 A. No.

24 Q. So it's optional?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You mentioned one of your newsletters talked about FMS
2 SOP, heads down, heads up. Has that information from that
3 newsletter made its way into a read-and-sign or a bulletin change
4 to a manual, or is that specific FMS operation just an optional
5 read information newsletter, if that makes sense?

6 A. Yeah, the newsletter is just for additional information.
7 The check airmen wanted to support the check airmen in doing their
8 jobs. The pilot one is to support them in doing their jobs
9 better. There's been no bulletin that says, you know, don't --
10 put heads down while flying, you know, operate the FM so you can
11 hear it.

12 Q. There hasn't been a bulletin, but is that an SOP for the
13 company, or currently, could both pilots be heads down with an
14 FMS?

15 A. Not being typed in the aircraft, I don't know if there's
16 a statement that says do not do this or not. To me that's one of
17 those things, is good common sense. There's a lot of things that
18 aren't written down that you shouldn't be doing.

19 MR. SIMPKINS: I don't have anything further, thanks.

20 MR. COX: Ken.

21 BY MR. WEBSTER:

22 Q. Hi. So if I heard you correctly, you are in charge of
23 the check airmen?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How many check airmen are at Colgan?

1 A. Right now, I could get my list out and count exactly, if
2 you would like. Around 50.

3 Q. Fifty.

4 A. Fifty, fifty-two.

5 Q. And how many for the Q400?

6 A. About 23. Twenty-two, twenty-four, around in there.

7 Q. Now, with the check airmen -- during checkrides, is
8 there a script that they follow or is it left up to that
9 individual check airman to conduct the ride?

10 A. That is one of the items that I've been developing about
11 over the past six months, to develop a scripted of both the
12 practical examinations and an oral examination.

13 Q. Does Colgan have check airmen meetings?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Who is in charge of the meetings? Who conducts them?

16 A. Myself and also the Director of Flight Standards comes
17 on for -- always the one that's held in Newark, the Q check
18 airmen. Sometimes for the other ones.

19 Q. During these meetings, has there been any issues brought
20 up with anything related to the VTS standards and protecting
21 information regarding VTS standards?

22 A. When I set the agenda for the meetings, I look at both
23 feedback that I've seen in ASAP reports over the past few months,
24 flight operations, incident investigation reports that we've
25 conducted, and also the random flight observations conducted by

1 the check airmen, and pick those issues that I kind of see as most
2 relevant, kind of highlight some very specific cases, you know, to
3 demonstrate things that have happened, and then open up a
4 discussion on to make sure, you know, crews are doing this or how
5 can we change this procedure and everything. That's the way I've
6 been treating that.

7 Q. Okay. So in all of that, has anything specifically come
8 to your attention as far as VTS standards for stall recovery?

9 A. I can't think of anyone that's specifically regarding
10 stall recovery, no.

11 Q. Has anybody brought any issues to your attention of
12 anything in the training department? Is that part of your area as
13 well?

14 A. We work with the training department. On certain issues
15 we'll overlap. Feedback that we receive from these various
16 reporting and evaluation methods, sometimes we'll find things that
17 need to be maybe included into the training curriculum and then we
18 work with them in order to make sure that that's adapted in there.
19 Also, these reports that we generate are on line and can be
20 accessed while they're teaching ground school classes. In the
21 center they can access these reports, to use these issues also as
22 real practical examples.

23 Q. Are you familiar with PTS standards?

24 A. The practical test standards? Is that for ATP?

25 Q. What the limitations are?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. How about for stall recovery, are there limitations for
3 PTS?

4 A. Minimal loss of altitude.

5 Q. When you say minimal loss of altitude, can you describe
6 what that means?

7 A. It doesn't have like an exact, you know, within a
8 certain amount of feet. It's a minimal loss of altitude, you
9 know, for the safe conduct of the flight. To me, I've kind of
10 treated it as plus or minus --

11 Q. So then, if somebody was to fail a checkride because
12 they descended 200 feet on a stall recovery, would that be a
13 fail --

14 A. It would depend on what they did. If they did the wrong
15 procedures that caused them to that, then that would be.

16 Q. If they would've done the right procedures?

17 A. If they did the right procedures --

18 Q. As per the syllabus.

19 A. -- and they did their profiles, that's -- and then they
20 started getting the positive rate of climb and they did everything
21 appropriate, I would pass that and probably just do a second stall
22 just to see an improvement.

23 MR. WEBSTER: No further questions.

24 MR. COX: Mike.

25 BY MR. WICKBOLDT:

1 Q. Sheri, have you asked to be typed in the Q400 at all?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And what's the answer that you've gotten?

4 A. Time taken away from this position, because it would be
5 quite a few weeks of time out from doing this job in order to get
6 that certification.

7 Q. Who do you ask for that? Who do you turn to?

8 A. I've asked my supervisor, who would then ask his boss
9 for the okay for going and doing that.

10 Q. Do you feel being typed in a Q400 would help you in your
11 current position as being the manager of flight standards, of two
12 fleet types?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. When you were mentioning your flight operations
15 investigations, you were covering a list of items that get
16 reported to dispatch, that get bounced to the flight standards
17 department for follow-ups. Is that how that works?

18 A. We get all the reports when dispatch sends them out.
19 For this list of items we get all of them. We select from those
20 because there's some, like a bird strike, that isn't going to
21 really give any good, valuable information. So gate returns, you
22 know, engine wouldn't start, it's not going to really create a
23 whole lot of good, valuable information. Some of the gate returns
24 are going to create some good information that we can kind of
25 identify problems. All aboard at takeoffs, all air returns and

1 all diversions, those always give good, valuable information. And
2 then from those, once we contact, we write the reports and they're
3 on the network drive so that it can be accessed by the company.

4 Q. Are go-arounds included in those lists?

5 A. Depending on what was the causing. If it was ATC that
6 said, you know, we want you to go around, I'm not saying a whole
7 lot. If it was something that was more of a pilot-involved one,
8 then, yes, we follow up for that.

9 Q. Do you have an example, maybe the last go-around you
10 remember, in which flight standards got involved with?

11 A. Yes, about a week ago, it was an item that was also sent
12 on to the ASAP report and I think the investigation is still going
13 on.

14 Q. When yourself and Even were discussing the CFM, the
15 company's interim CFM for the Q400, you made a statement, saying,
16 they have asked for something more informal. Who is they?

17 A. Something more formal, as far as the manual?

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. All the pilots. That's the feedback I've received from
20 the pilots telling me and also the check airmen saying that they
21 want a CFM equivalent to that they had previously on either the
22 Beech or the Saab.

23 Q. Is that CFM FAA-approved?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How is it approved, in conjunction with the AFM and AOM

1 inside the aircraft?

2 A. The AFM, which is also kept in the aircraft.

3 Q. Okay. Have you physically seen the AFM and AOM inside
4 the aircraft?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. How many volumes would you say it is?

7 A. A lot. Maybe seven or eight.

8 Q. Are those AFM/AOMs issued to the pilots?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Would it be reasonably expected that a pilot could
11 reference or cite the AOM in flight?

12 A. I would say that would be kind of difficult to be able
13 do that in any great depth that would be significant for their
14 learning.

15 Q. Who's responsible for writing the new CFM?

16 A. The fleet manager for the Q400.

17 Q. Has the flight standards inquired about the status of
18 the -- I don't want to say -- of the permanent CFM?

19 A. Being that that isn't my specific role, I do know that
20 the Director of Flight Standards, my boss, has asked the fleet
21 manager many, many times. I've heard some of these conversations,
22 not all of the conversations, to know that, yes, he's been
23 pressing them for the development of this manual.

24 Q. Earlier in the year 2008, was the procedure in which
25 check airmen were allowed to perform LOSAs different than it is

1 now?

2 A. Yes. When I first started doing that, they were doing
3 those LOSA forms, then working with Robert, just in order to
4 ensure both the integrity, the confidentiality of the LOSA program
5 and also so flight standards could get some feedback, because
6 those LOSA programs went directly to the safety department.
7 Flight standards wasn't getting information on this. So we kind
8 of separate them, where Robert would assign those LOSAs and work
9 with them, and then I developed a flight observation and ramp
10 worksheet where now flight standards is getting more information
11 in order to kind of crunch the numbers and make those changes.

12 Q. Since that time, would you say more or less LOSAs since
13 the time -- are more or less LOSAs being done now than they were
14 in early 2008?

15 A. That I wouldn't know. Robert would probably have that
16 information on how many are done.

17 MR. WICKBOLDT: Okay. Well, thanks for coming. I
18 appreciate it.

19 THE WITNESS: Um-hum.

20 MR. COX: Okay.

21 BY MR. DITTMAR:

22 Q. I just have a bunch of stuff, actually, just for
23 clarification purposes. Before, you were talking about safety
24 forms, you're not being basically in the loop of issues brought to
25 safety.

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. Do you participate in conference calls, daily
3 operational conference calls?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Are safety personnel on that conference call?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Do they usually discuss procedures from the day before
8 or issues that have been happening?

9 A. Yeah, they usually bring up those different issues, of
10 certain ones of those reports that they've received, I'm assuming.

11 Q. Okay. If it's a significant safety issue, are you
12 informed, as far as the standards department, to react and do
13 something with a certain pilot or individual?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Just to clarify from before, you were talking about tail
16 stall and you were referring to -- actually, forget that question.
17 Have you seen anything specifically from Bombardier, or anywhere
18 else, stating that tail stalls cannot happen with Q400?

19 A. No, I don't remember seeing or hearing that.

20 Q. Are you aware of the FMS policy in the Q400 CFM? Are
21 you current on that?

22 A. No. I've read the manual once, but I'm not explicit on
23 every single one of the procedures of it.

24 Q. Okay. So it would be safe to say that you would not
25 know, if it was already an existing procedure, if pilots --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- cannot be heads down on the FMS?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. You were talking about standardized checkrides. Does
5 the PPS specifically say what we can and cannot do on a checkride?

6 A. It states the minimum requirements of things that can be
7 done and tested on.

8 Q. And going back to you not being typed on the Q400, do
9 you think that you do your job inadequately or substandard because
10 of the fact that you're not typed on the Q400?

11 A. I certainly hope not. I mean, there are some things
12 that I can relate to that kind of make sense of just my experience
13 in aviation, but I just know that having that type rating, knowing
14 it better, it would just make me get that much better of knowledge
15 base in order to work more effectively with the Q400 check pilots
16 and the regular pilots.

17 Q. And as a manager of flight standards, would you say your
18 primary role is dealing with the Saab 340 and not the Q400?

19 A. As far as aircraft operations, I am involved a little
20 bit more in working with the Saab fleet manager in developing
21 procedures and bulletins, just because I am typed on it.

22 MR. DITTMAR: I have no further questions.

23 BY MR. COX:

24 Q. Anything else? I only wanted to delve into one small
25 area and that is, have you had any captains terminated for

1 proficiency reasons since you've been a manager?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Can you recall, not by name, but can you recall the
4 circumstances?

5 A. He failed a proficiency check in the simulator and he
6 had also had a couple of other issues prior to that and both in
7 training record and human resources, and I wasn't involved in
8 that, other than the check airman calling me after he failed.

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. And then they had the meeting. It was the chief pilot,
11 with human resources, when he was let go.

12 Q. Okay. Which fleet was he on?

13 A. That was on the Q400.

14 Q. The Q400. Do you know what proficiency area he failed
15 on his checkride?

16 A. The check wasn't even conducted, period. He was
17 terminated before the practical examination began.

18 Q. Okay. Are there any other instances of captains being
19 terminated for proficiency reasons, that you know of?

20 A. That's the only one that can come to my mind. There was
21 another one that was an FAA-related incident and not proficiency.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. The hotline.

24 Q. Okay. And is there any combination of successive
25 failures or multiple failures on the part of captains at Colgan

1 that would result in an automatic termination?

2 A. There's nothing in a set standard or policy. I guess it
3 would be kind of determined on case, like exactly what -- the only
4 policy that I can think of is more of like an operational, for,
5 you know, not conducting a flight. That would result in that and
6 not his proficiency. It's more of case by case.

7 Q. Have you taken the opportunity, with all that you had to
8 do, to look through the training records of your captains at
9 Colgan, to see if there are any captains who have a record of
10 multiple failures on run -- on the checkrides?

11 A. I do not have access to crew qual. system in my
12 computer, so I can't do that unless I ask them to do it.

13 Q. Could you do that if you took the initiative to do that?

14 A. I would have to have them print all 500 pilots' records.
15 That's the only way I can think of doing that.

16 Q. Or you could possibly have somebody do it or --

17 A. Yeah. I don't know how the system works in order to
18 say, do the so-and-so report.

19 Q. So I believe the conclusion I might draw from that is
20 that you don't really know if you have captains who have multiple
21 failures on their training record at this point in time?

22 A. I wouldn't know. There's no list.

23 MR. COX: Okay. I think that's all I got. Thank you,
24 Sheri. Thank you for taking the time to come down here and help
25 us.

1 (Whereupon, the interview in the above-entitled matter
2 was concluded.)

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

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

IN THE MATTER OF: CRASH OF CONTINENTAL CONNECTION
 FLIGHT 3407, OPERATED BY
 COLGAN AIR, INC.
 FEBRUARY 12, 2009, 2217 EST
 CLARENCE, NEW YORK
 Interview of Sheri McOlive Baxter

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-09-MA-027

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: March 11, 2009

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

Timothy Atkinson
Official Reporter