

Docket No. SA-531

Exhibit No. 2-S

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C.

Operations Group Chairman
Interview Summary – Manager of Flight Safety
Robert True

(41Pages)

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

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Investigation of: *
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CRASH OF CONTINENTAL CONNECTION *
FLIGHT 3407, OPERATED BY *
COLGAN AIR, INC. * Docket No.: DCA-09-MA-027
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* * * * *

Interview of: ROBERT TRUE

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

Thursday
March 12, 2009

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: ROGER COX

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:00 a.m.)

INTERVIEW OF ROBERT TRUE

BY MR. BYRNE:

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5 Q. Robert, let's start off with your current position
6 title.

7 A. I'm the Manager of Flight Safety.

8 Q. Okay. And how old are you?

9 A. I'm 26.

10 Q. Describe your professional background prior to assuming
11 this position.

12 A. Before this, I was a captain on the Saab at Colgan,
13 followed by a first officer and then a flight instructor.

14 Q. And your date of hire at Colgan?

15 A. The middle of April 2005.

16 Q. 2005. And what pilot certificates do you hold?

17 A. Airline transport pilot, certified flight instructor.

18 Q. Commercial multi?

19 A. Commercial multi.

20 Q. And about how many hours total time do you have?

21 A. Thirty-five hundred.

22 Q. About how many hours did you have when you joined in
23 2005?

24 A. About a thousand.

25 Q. And what's your academic background outside of the pilot

1 background?

2 A. I have a bachelor's degree in aeronautical science and a
3 master's in aeronautical science, with human factors and safety.

4 Q. Okay. Where were those obtained?

5 A. Embry-Riddle.

6 Q. And how are you -- you became manager of safety when?

7 A. October of 2007.

8 Q. October 2007. How were you selected for that position?

9 A. The position was open and I applied for it and was
10 subsequently hired.

11 Q. Once you were hired, did you receive any special
12 training for that position?

13 A. Manager's training and then on-the-job training.

14 Q. Okay. What do you mean by manager's training?

15 A. HR-type training, how to be a manager.

16 Q. Okay. Who was in the position before you?

17 A. His name was Vernon Androdi (ph.).

18 Q. What happened to him?

19 A. He left to go another airline.

20 Q. Why did he leave?

21 A. Pursue his career.

22 Q. And who do you report to?

23 A. I report to Daryl LaClair, Director of Safety.

24 Q. And does anyone report to you?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Briefly describe, in your words, what your duties and
2 responsibilities are.

3 A. My duties and responsibilities are pretty much to
4 oversee the ASAP program. That's my primary responsibility.
5 Other than that, I just get asked for input on other programs,
6 LOSA. We're developing a focal program now, so I'm in charge of
7 that.

8 Q. Okay. Now, going through the company documents, FOPPM
9 and AAG, there's a listing for a manager of safety and one of the
10 duties and responsibilities is that you serve as the resident
11 expert on operational safety requirements, standards and their
12 application to the company's employees and daily operations. How
13 do you do that?

14 A. Basically, if there's a question, which is rare, though,
15 come to me.

16 Q. And are you typed on the Saab 340?

17 A. Um-hum.

18 Q. And you're not typed on the Q400?

19 A. No.

20 Q. How about, how do you assist with audits and inspections
21 and document their findings? That's another --

22 A. Basically, I haven't been involved with -- well, first
23 of all, let me back up. What type of audits and inspections are
24 you speaking of?

25 Q. You tell me. It's one of the duties and

1 responsibilities listed in the manuals.

2 A. Yeah, that's antiquated. I don't have really any
3 oversight on station audits or inspections.

4 Q. Another duty and responsibility in the manuals is that
5 you provide safety training for all levels of management, as
6 required. Is that something that you do?

7 A. Not really. It's not necessarily for management.
8 That's more higher-level stuff. That comes from Dan and Daryl.

9 Q. Okay. Have you provided safety training to folks below
10 -- other non-management people at the company?

11 A. Safety training with respect to education on the safety
12 programs that we have.

13 Q. Okay. Can you elaborate on that, what form that took or
14 when that was?

15 A. Usually the safety training occurs during indoc of all
16 the employees. We'll go through and spend about 45 minutes
17 talking and educating about the various safety programs that we
18 have at Colgan.

19 Q. Okay. And just going down the list of some of the
20 duties and responsibilities, how do you ensure there's adequate
21 supervisor and employee knowledge of flying safety requirements,
22 policies and programs?

23 A. Say that again.

24 Q. The element was ensure there is adequate supervisor and
25 employee knowledge of flying safety requirements, policy and

1 programs.

2 A. That's implied with their training. If there's ever an
3 issue, then they would come to me, but there haven't been any.

4 Q. Okay. How often do you jump -- do you still currently
5 fly the line?

6 A. No, I'm --

7 Q. And when you took the job, did you give up your
8 seniority number?

9 A. No.

10 Q. How often do you jump seat the line?

11 A. I haven't been out in a few months.

12 Q. Why?

13 A. I just don't have time.

14 Q. Is it a requirement for you to do that?

15 A. No.

16 Q. One of the duties and responsibilities is manage the
17 ASAP and focal programs and the database, so let's talk about the
18 ASAP program. What is the history of the program, as you know it,
19 at Colgan?

20 A. When I took over, it was just turning over from a
21 demonstration program to a regular recurrent program.

22 Q. Who's involved in the program?

23 A. Well, now we have four different groups, but with
24 respect to the pilot group, there would be the three -- and myself
25 as the administrator of the program.

1 Q. When was the MOU -- excuse me. When was the MOU signed?

2 A. Well, the demonstration program was before I even took
3 over the recurrent program around the time that I got placed in
4 the position.

5 Q. Okay. And so it covers pilots. What about flight
6 attendants, dispatchers and mechanics?

7 MR. cr: I'm sorry, I need verbal responses.

8 THE WITNESS: Yes for all.

9 MR. cr: Thank you.

10 BY MR. BYRNE:

11 Q. And the personnel working the program at Colgan, you're
12 the primary -- you're the coordinator?

13 A. Yes, I basically coordinate the ATC -- not the ATC, the
14 ERC findings and make sure that those, the corrective actions, are
15 disseminated to the appropriate --

16 Q. Okay. And I guess, can you elaborate on your
17 responsibilities as coordinator, as far as what you do?

18 A. Manage the reports, manage the communication channels
19 between the submitters, the ASAP group, in the meetings.
20 Basically, I just make sure that they're adhering to the MOU,
21 which is never a problem. And yeah, I mean, like I said, the
22 corrective actions, I take those back to the company.

23 Q. What role did you have in developing the forms used by
24 the pilots or the people submitting ASAP reports?

25 A. Well, the electronic forms that we use are not designed

1 by me, but we do have input with respect to what's on them.

2 That's pretty much it.

3 Q. Who were the electronic forms designed by?

4 A. The FAA has assigned a contractor that oversees all of
5 that stuff.

6 Q. What contractor?

7 A. I think it's UTRS.

8 Q. Okay. And as far as the data collection, is that
9 something that you're -- are you maintaining a database at Colgan?

10 A. The UTRS database is where all the reports come in and
11 that's where you can do all the analysis.

12 Q. Okay. And talk about how you do the trend analysis, or
13 do you do trend analysis on the database?

14 A. Pretty much every quarter we'll issue a report and then
15 there's an annual report, too, that covers that the whole year,
16 and we go in and analyze the top trends, the top airports where we
17 have incidents and that kind of thing.

18 Q. About how many reports are submitted annually?

19 A. Well, there's 25 a month, so roughly.

20 Q. Okay. And has that number remained fairly steady since
21 October 2007?

22 A. It's actually grown quite a bit, just because of
23 education efforts.

24 Q. Sounds good. With respect to the trends and the
25 quarterly and annual reports, what are the top issues that are --

1 that the company's learning about through ASAP?

2 A. The most recent two that we had was -- and we're still
3 working on the runway incursion one now. We've had a few of those
4 just recently. And I guess a couple months back we had an issue
5 on the Q, with departure procedures out of Newark.

6 Q. What was the issue?

7 A. It was related to the fact that we were in a transition
8 period with the ACARS printers being removed and we found that
9 there were no toll cards in the airplane, so that was one of the
10 recommendations among a few other things.

11 Q. As far as the trends or the issues that are coming up
12 when you do the summary quarterly reports and the annual reports,
13 what's come up in the last year on SOP deviations?

14 A. We've had a few, but nothing to really trend. I mean,
15 they were very sporadic.

16 Q. What was the nature of those issues?

17 A. I know, when we first got the Q, there were issues with
18 speed control.

19 Q. In what phase of flight?

20 A. Mostly probably descent, coming out of increased
21 altitude.

22 Q. And what aspect of speed control?

23 A. What do you mean?

24 Q. High speed, low speed.

25 A. High.

1 Q. What has the company learned as far as adherence to
2 sterile cockpit through the ASAP program?

3 A. There's really no reports of breaking sterile cockpit in
4 ASAP.

5 Q. None in the last 12 months?

6 A. Not that I can recall.

7 Q. The quarterly and annual reports that you develop, what
8 form are those reports, are they multi-page documents?

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. Do you create them or is this something that's
11 contracted out?

12 A. I create it.

13 Q. And when you create them, where do they go? How are
14 they disseminated?

15 A. They're disseminated through the manager channels and
16 then down from there.

17 Q. Management channels. Who in the company sees them?

18 A. Flight standards, flight operations.

19 Q. Do they go to the directors or do they go to --

20 A. They go to the directors and below. Everybody can see
21 them now that they're posted on the website.

22 Q. Okay. Can pilots see them?

23 A. Um-hum, yeah.

24 Q. The reports that come in, are they forwarded to -- I
25 guess, once Colgan processes them, are they forward-populated to

1 the NASA ASRS database?

2 A. If the submitter chooses.

3 Q. And that's a checkbox or something on the original
4 submission?

5 A. Right.

6 Q. If the submitter doesn't choose or doesn't check that --
7 is the box yes or no or just -- if the submitter doesn't choose to
8 forward it but you, upon your review of the form, believe that it
9 would have --

10 A. I can't.

11 Q. -- system-wide -- you can't?

12 A. I cannot.

13 Q. Okay. How does the data, the ASAP data, come to get
14 used?

15 A. Well, basically, it's for trending. The other part of
16 it is, is that when we get the reports, we make sure that we make
17 tailored, specific corrective action for that crew, and then
18 globally we'll make awareness. And then, of course, we have the
19 quarterly and annual reports.

20 Q. And by what process do you -- what process do you go
21 through to determine the appropriate level of corrective action?

22 A. That's not my decision. It's the ASAP ERC decision.

23 Q. Okay. So it's the committee?

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. And as far as how the data get used in training, I

1 guess, can you give an example of how something from ASAP, since
2 you've been here working, has led to a change in the way pilots
3 are trained at Colgan?

4 A. I know, with the runway incursions, we beefed up the
5 training on that. Back when I first took over, we had a couple.

6 Q. Is the ASAP data used to -- used in any way in recurrent
7 training?

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. How?

10 A. Basically, what they'll do is they'll go over some of
11 the more salient topics that have come through, through the annual
12 and quarterly reports and Sheri helps facilitate a lot of that,
13 Sheri Baxter.

14 Q. Okay. And as far as the -- in what phase of recurrent
15 training does this happen at?

16 A. That's not for me to really to decide.

17 Q. No, I guess is it -- it's not a discreet module or
18 course, but --

19 A. Maybe an addendum to an existing module.

20 Q. Would it be in the CRM? Would it be in general indoc?

21 A. It depends on the subject topic.

22 Q. Okay. What examples do you have as far as data from
23 ASAP coming in and affecting a change in operating procedures at
24 the company?

25 A. Well, like I said, one the recent issues was the toll

1 card, there wasn't a toll card in the airplane, which was causing
2 issues with transcribing clearance. So pretty much the ASAP
3 committee decided that there's need to be a toll card -- that was
4 one.

5 Q. The information is brought into training and how often
6 -- just let me clarify. I'm trying to look at how this
7 information gets to the pilots and one way sounds like it's
8 through training.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. The other way sounds like the quarterly reports and the
11 annual reports are available to the pilots if they choose to
12 access them, right, on the website?

13 A. They should be posted on the safety bulletin board as
14 well.

15 Q. Okay. And is there any regular newsletter or any other
16 sort of compendium of reports that goes out to the pilots?

17 A. Okay. Flight standards takes some selective topics, and
18 that's Sheri, again, and she includes it in her newsletter.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Also, if there's a hot topic, we'll issue a safety
21 bulletin.

22 Q. When was the last time there was a hot topic?

23 A. Probably a couple months ago.

24 Q. What was the topic?

25 A. I don't remember off the top of my head. I issued 18 of

1 them last year.

2 Q. Okay. And those called hot topics?

3 A. No, they're called safety bulletins.

4 Q. Safety bulletins. And the source of those safety
5 bulletins could come from -- it's basically anything coming into
6 your department?

7 A. Um-hum.

8 Q. It's not just exclusive to coming in through ASRS?

9 A. It has nothing to do with ASAP, specifically.

10 Q. Or through ASAP.

11 A. It's not exclusive to that.

12 Q. How about the focal program?

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. Is there a focal program here?

15 A. It's in development.

16 Q. And talk us through its current status and the
17 timetable.

18 A. It's in procurement and we're shooting for July 1st.

19 Q. July 1 of next -- of this year?

20 A. Of this year, current year.

21 Q. And is the Q400 QAR-equipped?

22 A. It will be.

23 Q. And what about the Saab?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No. So the focal program is going to apply to --

1 A. The Q400.

2 Q. -- just the Q400 fleet? How long has it been in
3 development, the focal program?

4 A. A little over a year.

5 Q. And is that something that your -- it was in the duties
6 and responsibilities in the manuals. Is that something that when
7 it does come on line, is also going to be on your plate?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. What obstacles exist between now and July 1, in
10 implementing this program?

11 A. Setup and installation.

12 Q. Is the union on board?

13 A. I'm sorry?

14 Q. Is the pilots union on board?

15 A. As far as I know.

16 Q. And has the equipment been ordered?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Or purchased, I guess?

19 A. Yeah, it has been purchased.

20 Q. What's your involvement in the LOSA program?

21 A. The LOSA program, I basically assist the IP auditor,
22 which is also our Director of Safety right now.

23 Q. Since you've been here, has the IP auditor -- has that
24 position been filled? You said the Director of Safety is in that
25 position.

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. Since October 2007, has there been a person in that
3 position, other than the Director of Safety?

4 A. It was him until the last Director of Safety left. He
5 ended up stepping in and -- to remedy the overlap, I guess,
6 because in the regs it says Director of Safety has to be a full-
7 time position.

8 Q. Um-hum.

9 A. We've been working on training some field auditors to go
10 out, pilots that are not check airmen, to go out and audits for
11 us.

12 Q. Okay. And I guess your understanding of that program,
13 give us a brief overview of what it is.

14 A. For LOSA it's basically a non-punitive observation of
15 flight deck procedures. It's a way to identify trends and rectify
16 them.

17 Q. Is it a one-time -- are you sampling the company at
18 discreet time points or is this continuous observations? How are
19 you collecting the data?

20 A. I mean, obviously, I know in the history of LOSA it's
21 usually, you know, the first thing that you said there. It's
22 usually like a one-time sampling and then you analyze the data,
23 basically to maintain an ongoing database to identify trends.

24 Q. How many observations have you conducted?

25 A. I don't know a specific number off my head. Daryl has

1 all that filed.

2 Q. Okay. How long has the program been in effect?

3 A. Before I got here.

4 Q. Okay. To your knowledge, what is the reason why the
5 company's doing continuous observations versus sampling
6 discreetly?

7 A. I don't know the company's stance on it, but I know,
8 logically speaking, it's a great way to get a view of what's
9 really going on and make sure that we understand the process and
10 get the feedback.

11 Q. And I guess, from the perspective of -- tell us a little
12 bit about why the company is using check airmen and how that fits
13 into the concept of this being no jeopardy observation?

14 A. I guess the check airmen thing was something that was
15 going on right around the time I took the position, but it's been
16 -- I don't know, been questioned by myself, I know, you know, as
17 to how is it no jeopardy if we have check airmen. On the other
18 side of that, at least they're trained in observation and they
19 know what to look for, which is why we're getting away from using
20 check airmen for that.

21 Q. And the people you're using, are the other pilots at the
22 company? Are they external consultants?

23 A. They are other pilots.

24 Q. In the development of the LOSA program, has the company
25 used any external consultants?

1 A. Not to my knowledge.

2 Q. In its current implementation, are there any external
3 consultants being used?

4 A. No.

5 Q. And I guess, are there protections in place or
6 procedurally what happens as far as what's communicated to the
7 pilots regarding the check airmen coming on board, doing the LOSA
8 observation?

9 A. Basically, on the top of the form there's a statement
10 that says that you don't have to accept this LOSA ride. They are
11 aware of it. Last summer we went out and educated everybody on
12 the different safety programs, to include ASAP, and that was a big
13 push for that.

14 Q. Okay. How long before the other observers are trained
15 and qualified to do the observations?

16 A. We had two in the pipeline and one of them went to the

17 Q. The other one, he's out working now.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And we're working on getting more.

20 Q. How many do you think you need to fully implement the
21 LOSA program on the Q400 fleet?

22 A. On the Q400, the hope was five to 10.

23 Q. And how many would you need for the Saab fleet?

24 A. We're going to do it regionally, so about the same in
25 Houston and then probably about the same in the Dulles region.

1 Q. What reports are produced by the LOSA program?

2 A. Basically, there's a database we go through and we trend
3 the information to see if there's any commonalities between
4 mistakes that are made. From what I've seen, there's really
5 nothing. The guys do a really good job.

6 Q. Are there quarterly reports or annual reports developed
7 on LOSA, like with the ASAP program?

8 A. No, not to my knowledge.

9 Q. Is the information accessible by the average line pilot,
10 in the summary form?

11 A. No.

12 Q. I'm just catching up, making sure I don't ask you
13 something twice. Let's shift now to meetings, safety meetings at
14 Colgan. What meetings take place and what meetings are you
15 involved in?

16 A. Okay. We have a safety council meeting and we have a
17 safety review board meeting and those are held quarterly.

18 Q. Who's on the safety council?

19 A. The safety council is senior staff. The review board is
20 middle management.

21 Q. And by senior staff, you've got to help me, I'm --

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. -- not familiar with --

24 A. It's usually directors.

25 Q. What departments?

1 A. All of the various departments.

2 Q. And you said the senior council meets how many times?

3 A. Quarterly.

4 Q. Quarterly. And do you attend those meetings?

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. Is there an agenda for those meetings?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Are minutes taken?

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. What sort of summary documents are produced as a result
11 of those meetings?

12 A. Basically the proceedings of the meeting.

13 Q. And talk about the safety review board then.

14 A. Okay, that was middle management. We take a lot of the
15 -- I guess, the issues that we've had, that have come up through
16 reports or otherwise, and solicit opinions and ideas for
17 mitigating future occurrences.

18 Q. Specifically, who's the middle management that's on the
19 board, the safety review board?

20 A. That one, it's usually managers. If they can't fill it
21 because they're out, then directors will step in.

22 Q. Okay, but as far as the work units or the departments?

23 A. It's across the board, yeah.

24 Q. What meetings do you attend or how do you stay current
25 in industry practices regarding safety?

1 A. Well, I just finished my degree six months ago and then,
2 of course, I subscribe to the newsletters, like in my e-mail and
3 stuff.

4 Q. Did you attend any conferences or workshops?

5 A. Not this past year, no.

6 Q. And prior to last year?

7 A. Well, I've only been in it for a year and a half, so --

8 Q. Have you asked to attend any conferences or workshops
9 about system safety, SMS --

10 A. Yeah, yeah, I did actually go to one on fatigue, last
11 summer. That I remember.

12 Q. The one locally here?

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. At Tysons.

16 Q. Speaking of fatigue, what fatigue risk management
17 programs exist at Colgan?

18 A. We have one in place, but I was working on making --
19 basically, if a pilot feels that they're fatigued and unfit to
20 fly, they can fill out report.

21 Q. What sort of fatigue education is provided to pilots?

22 A. That's in the training department.

23 Q. But as far as the, I guess -- what aspect -- what were
24 you trying to make more robust, or how? What were you trying to
25 make more robust?

1 A. The education of it.

2 Q. And how are you doing that?

3 A. I was developing a pamphlet that discusses all of the
4 different programs and I included a lot of research because I did
5 my master's thesis on fatigue.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So I included a lot of research in there. It still has
8 to go to print, but --

9 Q. When's that going to be out?

10 A. I do know.

11 Q. Characterize the safety culture at Colgan.

12 A. It's good.

13 Q. Why? Or, I guess, how -- on what are you basing your
14 characterization?

15 A. Well, we have a lot of programs in place that, you know,
16 allow the groups to participate and provide feedback and then
17 we're able to, you know, as a result of the reports, act on the
18 reports and make corrective action and make change. I think,
19 without some of these programs, like ASAP and like LOSA, we
20 wouldn't have a good view of what's really going on. So it gives
21 us an extra layer of surveillance out there. And the great part
22 is, is that the pilots and all the other groups that are covered
23 by an MOU are able to buy into it and actually participate, and
24 it's successful.

25 Q. How do you measure safety culture?

1 A. I don't --

2 Q. I guess, how do you measure --

3 A. Well, it's such an abstract thing. I mean, you can't --

4 Q. Yeah, I guess what you described is structure and
5 programs in place. How do you measure -- how do you assure
6 yourself as manager of safety that the attitudes and the behaviors
7 associated with safety are the ones that you're looking for at
8 Colgan?

9 A. General feedback. You know, there's always a buzz. We
10 always solicit input, how can we make things better. And a lot of
11 times I've had communication with pilots that have participated in
12 one of the programs, mostly ASAP, and they really -- they like the
13 process, they like knowing what's going on, you know. They know
14 that they're giving valuable feedback. And we've even had pilots
15 volunteer information, issues that they've seen out there, so that
16 we can take action and forward those reports to the correct place
17 to get -- to mitigate future occurrences.

18 Q. Um-hum. What do you see as your greatest challenge at
19 Colgan in the coming year? What are you going to be focusing most
20 of your time on?

21 A. Well, obviously the continuation of the ASAP program,
22 making sure that that's going strong, and bringing focal on line.

23 Q. Thank you, Robert.

24 A. Um-hum.

25 BY MR. COX:

1 Q. Good morning, Robert.

2 A. Good morning.

3 Q. You're a very highly educated fellow. It sounds to me
4 like Colgan's lucky to have a fellow of your ability working in
5 the safety department. So my compliments to you.

6 A. Thank you.

7 Q. Just a couple of follow-ups about the safety program,
8 because I want to try to understand. When we were talking about
9 the ASAP program and we were talking about the fact that there's a
10 memorandum of understanding there, how does it detail how you
11 would go about contacting a crew in the event of an ASAP report
12 that you felt needed follow-up?

13 A. If I get a report that's pretty vague, I'll call them
14 and say, can you be a little bit more descript? For the most
15 part, I really try to stay out of what the ERC should be handling,
16 which is if they need more information, then we would table a
17 report.

18 Q. So how are you able to identify the crew?

19 A. I can see the information as the administrative
20 assistant.

21 Q. Uh-huh. Is there any de-identification element in your
22 ASAP program?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Can you describe to me its nature?

25 A. It's all packaged within that solution that the FAA has

1 contracted out with UTRS. You click a button and it pulls out all
2 of the identifying information.

3 Q. Is there a protocol or a spelled-out timeframe in which
4 that's done?

5 A. It's basically done at the time of agenda creation. It
6 does it automatically.

7 Q. Most like, as you get a report, you're aware of who
8 submitted the report?

9 A. I am, yes.

10 Q. At what point do you lose your ability to identify the
11 crew?

12 A. I don't.

13 Q. So you keep that indefinitely?

14 A. Yes. There's basically two layers. When somebody
15 submits are report, it makes two copies and one is editable by
16 me --

17 Q. Um-hum.

18 A. -- only to pull out. If they mistakenly type in
19 something in the narrative section --

20 Q. Um-hum.

21 A. -- I would fill it in with a star, or if they use the
22 name of the captain --

23 Q. So if you are able to identify a crew of a quasi-
24 anonymous report indefinitely, how does it become a de-identified
25 program?

1 A. It's de-identified with respect to the ERC does not know
2 who the crew members are, and unless the company has knowledge
3 from outside of ASAP, they don't know, either.

4 Q. I see. So you would be able to identify the crew, but
5 the event review committee would not be able to identify the crew?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. Do you have an arrangement under this MOU in which the
8 ERC might decide that it's necessary to contact the crew?

9 A. They can interview the crew, yes.

10 Q. And how do they go about identifying the crew and
11 bringing them in to interview them?

12 A. They would ask me to get that information.

13 Q. I see. When you contact the crew, do you tell them that
14 it's mandatory that they come in for this interview?

15 A. That's never -- well, I can tell you right now, in my
16 time here, that we've never had to interview a crew.

17 Q. Uh-huh.

18 A. So to be honest, I don't think that a crew member would
19 have any issue where I would have to say, well, it's mandatory
20 that you have to show up.

21 Q. You don't?

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. What I'm getting at is, under your ASAP program --

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. -- I believe that's spelled out by -- does a crew who is

1 contacted by you have the right to simply say, no, I'm not going
2 to come in?

3 A. I really don't know.

4 Q. You don't know. Is ALPA a signatory on your MOU?

5 A. That's in development right now.

6 Q. In development?

7 A. Um-hum. We're generating a new MOU.

8 Q. I see. When's that going to happen, do you know?

9 A. It's at the FAA.

10 Q. It is?

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. Okay. All the ASAP reports automatically get sent to
13 ASRS?

14 A. No.

15 Q. No. What's the process by which you decide which ones
16 go and which ones don't?

17 A. I don't decide.

18 Q. Well, who does?

19 A. The submitter.

20 Q. The submitter?

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. So check the box on the ASAP and it says, I want to
23 forward this to ASRS?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And if you don't check the box it doesn't go?

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. Was that the way that UTRS basically said was the model
3 that they thought was the best way to do it?

4 A. Originally, I remember when I first took over we had an
5 issue with that and I called them and they fixed everything. They
6 set it up now, to where the submitter has to select whether or not
7 to submit it to ASRS.

8 Q. I see. So what was the normal method that UTRS
9 recommended when they set up the program?

10 A. It was something that you had to sign off on, sign a
11 letter, and it was compulsory. So if they submitted a report, it
12 automatically copied in ASRS.

13 Q. Okay. So that's what UTRS recommended, but what Colgan
14 has modified the program to do is to only submit reports that are
15 checked by the submitter?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. And why did Colgan go that way?

18 A. It was a request from the pilot group.

19 Q. Can you recall who in particular from the pilot group
20 asked for that?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Can you tell me?

23 A. I think it was Mr. Wickboldt.

24 Q. To your knowledge, within the safety department, does
25 the top official in safety, the vice president, have direct access

1 to the CEO?

2 A. I'm sorry, to the what?

3 Q. To your chairman, to the head of the company.

4 A. Does he have direct access? Oh, yes, he does.

5 Q. Okay. Do your safety programs have adequate funding for
6 your staffing programs?

7 A. I'm not responsible for the budget.

8 Q. I understand that. I just thought maybe you would know.

9 A. No, I don't know.

10 Q. You don't know, okay. Has your CEO made any public
11 statements in support of your safety programs, such as ASAP?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. In the establishment of your new focal program, who
14 really was the initiator of deciding that that was a good program
15 that needed to be put in place?

16 A. That was before my time.

17 Q. Would you say that management of Colgan was the ones or
18 are the ones who are actively supporting the installation of the
19 focal program?

20 A. You mean in the beginning, like the conceptual period?

21 Q. Yeah, the decision that, yes, we're going to go forward
22 with this.

23 A. I really don't know.

24 Q. You don't know. Has the FAA been active at all in
25 encouraging Colgan to put in the focal program?

1 A. I haven't heard any, really, chatter on it, but I know
2 they would support it and I know they've signed off on the INO
3 plan already. So I would say, yes, they do support it.

4 Q. Would you be the one who will be selecting the
5 parameters that will be evaluated off the focal data?

6 A. Yeah, they're already decided, but of course they'll be
7 tweaked, as necessary.

8 Q. They're already decided. So were you involved in
9 setting those parameters?

10 A. Um-hum, that's part of the INO plan.

11 Q. Okay. Is the activation of a stall warning one of those
12 parameters?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Just you personally, it sounds to me like you're pretty
15 highly qualified safety professional. Do you intend to stay as a
16 safety professional or do you think you might go back on the line
17 at some point?

18 A. Yeah, I do plan on remaining a safety professional.

19 Q. Okay. With Colgan?

20 A. Actually, Tuesday's my last day.

21 Q. I'm sorry?

22 A. Tuesday's my last day.

23 Q. Oh, is that right? Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Do you
24 mind sharing your plans with us?

25 A. I don't mind. I'll basically be working on the SMS

1 contract, for the FAA, with a government contractor.

2 Q. Oh, great, perfect. In the last year and a half that
3 you've been administering the ASAP program, have you seen any
4 reports regarding any activation of stall warning systems?

5 A. Not that I can recall. Well, hang on, we just had one
6 the other day.

7 Q. Well, okay, we know about that.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Have you had any reports regarding events involving
10 severe icing?

11 A. No, not that I can recall.

12 Q. Have you had an reports of temporary loss of control of
13 the airplane?

14 A. No.

15 MR. COX: Well, I think I'm going to pass it along to
16 the rest of our parties here, to see if they have any questions.

17 MR. BYRNE: Gene?

18 MR. COX: Pardon me?

19 MR. BYRNE: Gene.

20 BY MR. CONWAY:

21 Q. Okay. Robert, that's Robert True?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. T-r-u-e?

24 A. Um-hum.

25 Q. Robert, how did you know -- how did the information

1 about the stall warning event come to you and what was the
2 timeline on that?

3 A. This most recent one?

4 Q. Um-hum.

5 A. The first officer sent me an ASAP report by e-mail. I
6 got it yesterday morning.

7 Q. Yesterday morning. And today is -- that was Wednesday
8 morning?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And the event was a Tuesday event or what day was that?

11 A. What is today? Today's Thursday? I think it happened
12 Tuesday evening.

13 Q. Tuesday evening.

14 MR. JAQUES: Let's go off the record for a second.

15 (Off the record.)

16 (On the record.)

17 BY MR. CONWAY:

18 Q. So you learned yesterday morning. Was that your first
19 recognition, yesterday morning, or did you learn from several
20 sources, in other words, or was that -- that wasn't -- or was it
21 common knowledge before you had that notification that you're
22 referring to?

23 A. Well, when I woke up, I checked my e-mail before I
24 headed out to work and then I saw it. I hadn't heard about it
25 from anybody else before that.

1 Q. Did you have interaction with other managers on that
2 information, after yesterday morning?

3 A. Well, yesterday, after I left here, it was common
4 knowledge.

5 Q. And who were some of those other managers?

6 A. The manager of flight standards and the regional chief
7 pilot up in Newark.

8 MR. CONWAY: Okay. And that's the only thing I ought to
9 ask. Thank you very much.

10 MR. BYRNE: Tim?

11 BY MR. DITTMAR:

12 Q. Let's see. You were talking about the runway incursions
13 and the runway heading issues. Was there any other change or
14 difference that was happening at the time of these runway heading
15 issues at Newark? Was it a change with departure procedures?

16 A. Yeah, that was all contributing factors that were
17 contributing to that. I guess the focus of the ERC was to
18 identify all of the facets that were contributing to it and to
19 basically attempt to stop them from occurring again. And they
20 issued several recommendations about what the pilots can do to
21 refresh their memories on what they're supposed to be doing.
22 There had been talk about requiring both crew members to be in the
23 cockpit at the time of clearance delivery.

24 MR. DITTMAR: No other questions.

25 MR. BYRNE: Mike?

1 BY MR. WICKBOLDT:

2 Q. Hey, Robert, first and foremost, is there someone that's
3 been named to take over for you after this Tuesday?

4 A. Not to my knowledge.

5 Q. With the focal information coming on line, that stuff is
6 new to me and to the company. How is that data planned on being
7 used?

8 A. The data?

9 Q. Um-hum.

10 A. Basically, the way the whole process works is that the
11 data will be downloaded on a secure server that only basically one
12 person and a gatekeeper, which will be a representative from ALPA,
13 will have access to. After a certain period of time, from what I
14 understand, nobody will have access to the crew members'
15 information, including the administrative assistant. So what
16 should come out of use of that data is to identify trends, based
17 on airports, if we're setting off certain systems, like -- what's
18 causing it, and then that way we can issue safety bulletins and
19 say, you know, hey, be on alert at this airport because we're
20 getting -- alerts, that kind of thing.

21 Q. Does the company safety department have a legit interest
22 in working with ALPA's safety department's safety reps?

23 A. I can't speak for them, since I would be the one that
24 was overseeing it. Yes, I did have a genuine interest in working.

25 Q. With regards to the pamphlet on the fatigue and the

1 research that you had recently submitted and is currently going to
2 print, is there anything different about what's going to print,
3 than what was originally submitted?

4 A. Yeah, I had written probably five or six pages, you
5 know, pared down my research, to provide some insight as to why
6 people get fatigued and some of the trends, industry trends, based
7 on that research and it got chopped down to about two pages.

8 MR. WICKBOLDT: That's it. Thanks, Robert, I appreciate
9 it.

10 MR. BYRNE: Ken?

11 BY MR. WEBSTER:

12 Q. Do you receive any safety reports from instructors or
13 check airmen, regarding training or checking procedures?

14 A. No.

15 Q. How about standard operating procedures?

16 A. Well, first of all, let me just back up and say I don't
17 know if they're check airmen or not. So if they're submitting --
18 I'm assuming you're talking about ASAP reports.

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. There's really no way for me to --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. -- discern whether or not they're check airmen and --

23 Q. How about just --

24 MR. JAQUES: Let him finish, please.

25 MR. WEBSTER: Sorry.

1 THE WITNESS: Okay. And if there are -- I guess, if
2 there are no -- what was the first topic you asked for -- and
3 training issues? Those are really not reported to me. That would
4 be flight standards-type stuff, if they're in a training capacity.

5 MR. WEBSTER: Okay, thank you. Nothing further.

6 MR. BYRNE: Harlan?

7 BY MR. SIMPKINS:

8 Q. Since the accident, have you issued any type of memo or
9 bulletin as a direct result of the accident?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Or information from your department, that's gone out
12 with any findings, so far, that you may have --

13 A. No.

14 Q. -- learned through -- okay.

15 BY MR. BYRNE:

16 Q. Robert, as far as the fatigue pamphlet, following up on
17 Mike's question, who did chop it down or edited it?

18 A. I don't know who actually did the chopping, but I did
19 send it up the chain and it came back, saying, remove this. So I
20 don't know who is responsible for making that decision.

21 Q. What was the reason given to remove it?

22 A. There really wasn't a reason.

23 Q. And with respect to your departure, I'll ask about your
24 future challenges, that the company didn't know you were leaving
25 and I guess the concept is, when did you make your decision to

1 leave Colgan?

2 A. Well, I got a job -- you know, an offer two weeks ago,
3 almost three weeks ago, so that's when I made my decision.

4 Q. How long have you been planning?

5 A. Not very long.

6 Q. When did you apply at your new company?

7 A. Is it relevant?

8 Q. With respect to your decision making, it is.

9 A. Probably 30 days ago.

10 Q. And I guess, when did you notify Colgan that you were
11 leaving?

12 A. Well, about a week and a half ago.

13 Q. What's going to happen, I guess, with your departure
14 next Tuesday -- and we heard yesterday that the ERC is meeting
15 monthly, in recent past. What's going to happen with respect to
16 the ASAP program without a coordinator in place?

17 A. I know the management team has interviewed somebody. I
18 don't know who it is. As of right now, I've heard that the Vice
19 President of Safety and Regulatory Compliance will step in until
20 they get somebody else.

21 Q. And with respect to your new employer, is it a pay
22 increase for you?

23 A. Yes.

24 MR. BYRNE: Roger, do you have any follow-up?

25 BY MR. COX:

1 Q. Yeah. Well, if you're leaving the airline industry, is
2 there any particular reason related to being in the airline
3 industry that affects your personal choice of employment?

4 A. No.

5 MR. COX: That's all I've got.

6 MR. BYRNE: Anybody else? Robert, thank you.

7 MR. COX: Thanks for taking off and coming down.

8 (Whereupon, the interview in the above-entitled matter
9 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: CRASH OF CONTINENTAL CONNECTION
 FLIGHT 3407, OPERATED BY
 COLGAN AIR, INC.
 FEBRUARY 12, 2009, 2217 EST
 CLARENCE, NEW YORK
 Interview of Robert True

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-09-MA-027

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: March 12, 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