

DOCKET NO. SA-516

APPENDIX X

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC**

**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
NYANG TSGT. ANTONIO RAMOS
JANUARY 15, 1997
(14 pages)**

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BEFORE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20594

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IN THE MATTER OF TWA FLIGHT :
800; INTERVIEW OF: :
ANTONIO RAMOS. :
- - - - - X

TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

The above entitled matter came on for interview pursuant to notice before NORM WIEMEYER, NTSB Official, at the New York Air National Facilities in Westhampton Beach, New York, on January 15, 1997.

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APPEARANCES:

NORM WIEMEYER
NTSB Official

LOU BURNS
Air Line Pilots Association

I N D E X

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WITNESS:

ANTHONY RAMOS/C-130 Crewman, New York Air National
Guard.

(Tape 4, Side A, second interview.)

(No exhibits were presented or accepted into evidence
at or as a result of this interview.)

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Today's date is January
3 15th, 1997. We're at the Air National Guard Base to
4 interview Mr. Ramos who was a C-130 crewman on the
5 night of July 17th when TWA 800 was lost.

6 The persons present are the person being
7 interviewed, myself, Norm Wiemeyer, with the National
8 Transportation Safety Board, and Mr. Lou Burns who is a
9 captain for TWA and is representing the Air Line Pilots
10 Association.

11 Mr. Ramos, for the purposes of getting some
12 administrative things, would you state your full name
13 and spell your last name, please?

14 MR. RAMOS: My name is Antonio Ramos. And
15 the spelling is R-A-M-O-S.

16 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. That's not picking
17 up --

18 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: -- on here.

20 (Pause)

21 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. And how are you
22 called? Tony?

23 MR. RAMOS: Tony.

24 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. If you have no
25 objections, I'll just call you Tony.

1 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. What was your
3 involvement with regards to the events surrounding the
4 loss of TWA 800?

5 MR. RAMOS: On that particular evening I was
6 flying as a loadmaster for the Air National Guard. And
7 we were going out and doing a -- a night sortie, which
8 consisted of night training.

9 MR. WIEMEYER: What time did you depart the
10 base here on your flight?

11 MR. RAMOS: I don't know. It's been so long
12 now I can't give you a -- a time. I can estimate it.

13 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. That'd be fine.

14 MR. RAMOS: We usually brief around 1830.
15 So, you figure around 1930 we were airborne. 8:00 -- a
16 quarter to 8:00 -- 7:45, something like that, we were
17 in the air.

18 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. And just go ahead and
19 tell us what transpired on that flight?

20 MR. RAMOS: I was sitting at the loadmaster's
21 position, which is behind bulkhead 245, the lefthand
22 side, at the scanner's position when I heard the call
23 from the pilot -- I think it was the pilot of a -- of
24 an explosion, or what seemed to be an explosion, from
25 the -- some sort of explosion.

1 He says, holy cow, look at that -- and that's
2 not a quote. That's just roughly what he said.

3 Then we went in to -- I -- I guess what was
4 going on. And one of the guesses was that it -- maybe
5 one of the ships blew up that was in the shipping lane.
6 So, we headed out towards that direction.

7 And then, as we were heading in that
8 direction we had a reevaluate and said, maybe it's an
9 airplane. And so we steered in an -- I don't know the
10 headings, or anything like that. And this is just
11 information that was being fed from the -- and then I
12 began to see the smoke on the lefthand side of the
13 scanners -- on the lefthand side of the aircraft
14 through the scanner's windows I was able to see some
15 smoke emanating from what appeared the surface of the
16 earth, or the top of the water.

17 At which time I went up to the cockpit and --
18 no, correction. Sorry. At that time I went to the
19 back of the airplane and prepared the airplane for
20 survival -- to send out the survival equipment.

21 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. What type of equipment
22 did you carry?

23 MR. RAMOS: Okay. We have an MM-1 kit, which
24 is a two man -- a 20-man life raft, and three bundles
25 which contain survival equipment: water, radios,

1 medical equipment. And I had that on the -- on the --
2 on the ramp, because we were going out to do air
3 refueling and that has to be in a very position for air
4 refueling.

5 So, I opened the door and I got myself
6 prepared to -- to launch that equipment out to the
7 survivors. While looking out the back of the aircraft
8 I was able to see what appeared to me, it was a --
9 like, a -- a raft and a light. 'Cause later it was not
10 a -- a raft and light. It was later determined that it
11 was one of the slide-down ramps, and it had a light
12 attached to it.

13 And I stood there waiting for the aircraft
14 commander's directive to either launch the equipment,
15 or whatever. And I stayed back there for a while. And
16 then, he advised me to close up because apparently
17 there are no survivors, and there was no need to launch
18 the -- the equipment.

19 I secured the back of the aircraft and then
20 went up front. While I was up front, then I was able
21 to see what was in the water. And all I saw was
22 just -- strangely enough I didn't say it to the captain
23 but -- the aircraft commander, but later down the road
24 I said -- I said to myself it looked like an airplane.
25 The configuration of the -- the -- the crash site was

1 if you look at it -- I don't know if I was interpreting
2 it in my own mind -- but it looked like an airplane.

3 So, that's basically all that I saw.

4 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. During that time were
5 -- you were on the ICS on your headphones.

6 MR. RAMOS: Uh-huh. And intercom.

7 MR. WIEMEYER: Were you also monitoring a
8 radio transmissions?

9 MR. RAMOS: No, I wasn't. Well, I'm -- I
10 have Victor 2, which is the primary frequency for us
11 for flying that particular night. And that allows to
12 -- to hear what was going on with -- with Tower, and
13 flight safety -- or the traffic controllers. So, I
14 have access to that information.

15 But when I disconnected from the back of the
16 airplane and moved up front to the airplane I didn't
17 have my headsets plugged in. So, until I got to the
18 cockpit, and then I plugged in.

19 And at that time, I don't totally recall, but
20 I don't think there was any traffic going on. You know
21 they -- it was just mostly intercom stuff of what was
22 -- what we should; what we were going to do; what we
23 see; what our interpretations were.

24 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. You -- so, you don't
25 recall any specifics of radio traffic?

1 MR. RAMOS: No. The only thing that I can --
2 I can recall is that our aircraft commander was
3 concerned in not giving out false information. He was
4 very concerned about getting a -- a proper fix of the
5 crash site -- or whatever this -- the incident was at
6 time, because we didn't know what it was.

7 And he was very -- how would you say? --
8 specific about not putting out information that he knew
9 nothing about. Just get the -- the thing that sticks
10 out in my head is he says, get -- get the fix, get the
11 coordinates, call back, and get that information back
12 here.

13 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay.

14 MR. RAMOS: That's the -- that's what I
15 remember vividly about his particular actions in the
16 air. And then we -- we became a command center to
17 coordinate. So, we became on-scene commanders to -- to
18 -- to bring in the assets.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. I don't think I have
20 any further questions.

21 MR. BURNS: Tony, Lou Burns. I have no
22 further questions.

23 MR. WIEMEYER: This is Norm Wiemeyer, with
24 the Safety Board again.

25 Tony, is there anything else that you recall

1 during the sequence of the entire evening that you
2 think would be of value or of interest to us in this
3 investigation?

4 MR. RAMOS: It's been a while. And I -- I'm
5 trying to relive that moment mentally now, and see if I
6 can come up with something I haven't stated or might be
7 of some importance.

8 MR. WIEMEYER: Were you interviewed by the
9 FBI?

10 MR. RAMOS: Yes, I was.

11 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. Did you participate in
12 the --

13 MR. RAMOS: After hour brief?

14 MR. WIEMEYER: -- big press conference or
15 brief? Or whatever --

16 MR. RAMOS: No. What --

17 MR. WIEMEYER: -- you call it?

18 MR. RAMOS: I -- what I took -- participated
19 was in the -- when we got down from the flight the FBI
20 had us go into a room and they kind of debriefed us on
21 what transpired in the air.

22 With regards to -- to the media, I had no
23 participation in the media, other than that -- that I
24 was in the background. That was it.

25 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. That brings to mind

1 another question. When you returned from the flight,
2 or series of flights that night, there is an officer
3 here who is -- also works for the FAA. And were you
4 questioned or asked to give him any information or
5 write anything down for him?

6 MR. RAMOS: No.

7 MR. WIEMEYER: Are you familiar with what I
8 -- with what --

9 MR. RAMOS: Yeah. I think you're talking
10 about Col. -- his name slips me now.

11 MR. WIEMEYER: Yeah. It slips me too, that
12 it --

13 MR. RAMOS: God. What's his name? Col.
14 Chuck Stevey.

15 MR. WIEMEYER: Stevey? Yeah.

16 MR. RAMOS: Yeah.

17 MR. WIEMEYER: Stevey.

18 MR. RAMOS: That's right.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay.

20 MR. RAMOS: He was concerned also about what
21 transpired and I'm trying -- he spoke to us. But I
22 can't remember -- I don't want to paraphrase it, or
23 anything like that. I just don't have recollection of
24 what he said. I know he spoke with us.

25 MR. WIEMEYER: That's fine.

1 MR. RAMOS: Yeah.

2 MR. WIEMEYER: One other question. How many
3 flights did you fly that night in support of the TWA
4 800 loss?

5 MR. RAMOS: Okay. We flew the initial flight
6 when we took off and observed what -- what transpired.
7 We remained on-scene be -- for as long as we possibly
8 could until fuel dictated us to get back in. We were
9 -- we came -- we landed and then we were going to go
10 back out to provide support again. And they told us
11 that it wasn't required at this time.

12 And then they launched us again to -- to put
13 out flares for the -- the search --

14 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay.

15 MR. RAMOS: -- search flight.

16 MR. WIEMEYER: Hang on just a minute.

17 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

18 MR. WIEMEYER: Okay. We're back on the
19 record. That's all the questions I have.

20 Lou, do you have any follow-ups?

21 MR. BURNS: No.

22 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

23 MR. WIEMEYER: Tony, thank you very much.

24 MR. RAMOS: It was my pleasure.

25 MR. WIEMEYER: Thanks for --

1 MR. RAMOS: And if there's --

2 MR. WIEMEYER: -- the help.

3 MR. RAMOS: -- anything I can do to help, I
4 -- please, you know, contact --

5 MR. WIEMEYER: Yeah. If you run across
6 anything, you know, as you think about this -- and I
7 know all of you've thought about it over the months
8 that have transpired. You know, feel free to -- if
9 you'll get a hold of Col. Stack, he knows how to reach
10 me, pretty much 24 hours a day.

11 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

12 MR. WIEMEYER: And I'll be glad to come out
13 and revisit with you.

14 MR. RAMOS: All right.

15 MR. WIEMEYER: And if you get the opportunity
16 and like to come out to the hangar we could --

17 MR. RAMOS: That would be interesting. I
18 would like to come out to the hangar.

19 MR. WIEMEYER: -- we could make arrangements
20 for that.

21 MR. RAMOS: Yeah. That I would like to see.
22 I would just like to see how you guys -- the science of
23 putting it back together. That's mostly what I'm
24 interested in. I'm not with -- I'm not too interested
25 in seeing the disaster. I just -- I'm trying to figure

1 out how you guys do that.

2 MR. WIEMEYER: Thank you, sir, very much.

3 MR. RAMOS: Okay.

4 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded [no
5 time noted.] (Tape 4, Side A rest of side is blank.
6 Interviewing resumes on Tape 4, Side B.)

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